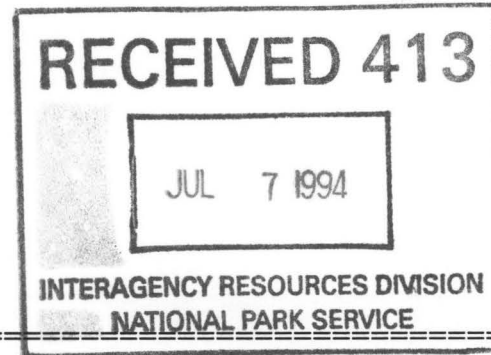


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

historic name: First Baptist Church

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: Southwest corner of 12th and Louisiana Streets

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Little Rock

vicinity: N/A

state: AR county: Pulaski code: AR 119 zip code: 72202

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>      </u>	buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

=====

#### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Cheryl A. Slater  
Signature of certifying official

6-21-94  
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

=====

#### 5. National Park Service Certification

=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

X entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the  
National Register  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the  
National Register  
\_\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register  
\_\_\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

B. R. Fugate

3/9/97

/s/ Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date  
of Action

=====

#### 6. Function or Use

=====

Historic: RELIGION

Sub: Religious facility

Current: VACANT/NOT IN USE

Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

=====

## 7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification:

Collegiate Gothic

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other Description: N/A

Materials:	foundation	<u>Stone</u>	roof	<u>Ceramic tile</u>
	walls	<u>Stone</u>	other	<u>Stained glass</u>

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

=====

## 8. Statement of Significance

=====

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Locally.

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: 1941

Significant Dates: 1941

Significant Person(s): N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: McAninch, A. N.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.  
X See continuation sheet.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

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**Summary**

The First Baptist Church, located at the southwest corner of Louisiana and 12th Street and just north of the Governor's Mansion Historic District, is a single-story, cut stone church building designed in the Collegiate Gothic style. Its defining architectural features include its intersecting gable roof plan, eastern monumental stained glass window, twin front towers and stepped buttresses.

**Elaboration**

The First Baptist Church, located at the southwest corner of Louisiana and 12th Street and just north of the Governor's Mansion Historic District, is a single-story, cut stone church building designed in the Collegiate Gothic style. Its plan is symmetrically-arranged around an axis running from the eastern or front elevation to the western elevation; it includes a large sanctuary flanked by shallow, single-story aisles set between full-height, gable roof bays that project from the northern and southern elevations. The building design includes no chimneys. The ceramic tile, intersecting gable roof and cut stone walls are supported by a continuous stone foundation.

The eastern or front elevation is anchored by the large, central monumental stained-glass window above the broad first story recessed entrance. These are flanked by two shallow towers which are in turn flanked by the remainder of the end wall and the entrances to the side walls of the projecting gables. The monumental window is composed of a single row of eight square window openings set below four tall lancet windows, each capped with a trifol, and five quatrefoils at the top. The recessed entrance below is framed by a broad, spreading pointed arch and filled with three sets of modern double glass doors. A low, spreading staircase leads up to the entrance. The flanking towers are each fenestrated with a single, central, stone-trimmed window at the lower level and capped with decorative stone trim. The remaining wall surfaces of the gable end section are blank, and the side walls of the projecting side gables each contain a double-leaf entrance accessed via a staircase and stoop on the first floor and a pair of square-headed windows on the second floor.

The northern and southern elevations are almost identical. Each features two levels of windows, the lower of which are virtually all square-headed and glazed with either stained glass or a single clear pane. The upper level is glazed exclusively with stained glass set into large pointed arch openings, each of which contains three tall lancet windows. The eastern projecting gables on both elevations are identically fenestrated, with three square-headed windows on the lower level



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

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that step-up from east to west surmounted by a large, combination Gothic window. The western projecting gables are slightly different from one another. That on the northern elevation contains a large Gothic stained glass window on the second floor and three square-headed windows placed directly above a double-leaf entrance below while that on the southern elevation is asymmetrically fenestrated with a total of seven square-headed casement windows placed irregularly across the gable end wall. The aisle and clerestory between are symmetrically fenestrated on both elevations, with the aisle wall being lit by a total of four groupings of three casement windows each, and the clerestory containing four large Gothic windows placed directly above. Each of these window bays is separated by a large stepped buttress that projects significantly above the aisle roof and out from the clerestory wall. The projecting gable ends on both elevations feature gabled parapets.

The western or rear elevation is symmetrically arranged and relatively plain. Three windows at the northern and southern ends provide the only interior light from this elevation; otherwise the wall is blank and divided into a total of five blank recessed panels that rise almost to the full height of the elevation.

Significant exterior details are virtually all executed in the stone trim that surrounds and connects the various door and window openings. Of particular note are the trifolds and quatrefoils that ornament the central window grouping on the front elevation and three of the four projecting gables on the northern and southern elevations (the only exception being the western gable on the southern elevation). Also of note are the monumental flanking towers on the front that rise above the gable roof and the stone-trimmed, stepped buttresses that project from the clerestory walls. Finally, the ashlar-faced cut stone -- shaped into long, short blocks that prefigure the Modernistic stone construction that will become especially popular after WW II -- provides an unmistakable texture to the exterior that both recalls the Medieval and heralds the Modern.

The interior furnishings have been largely lost in the relatively recent past; and yet, most of the original architectural features remain. Most notable, of course, is the original stained glass, which remains in abundance throughout the interior and to which it continues to lend its rich hues of blue, purple and red. Other significant original stone trim remains also. Other than these changes, the First Baptist Church remains largely intact and in good condition.

Also included is the single-story, gable roof, yellow brick parsonage located immediately to the south of the church building. Constructed in 1943, it is contributing.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 1

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**Summary**

Criterion C, local significance  
(Criteria Consideration A)

The First Baptist Church, constructed in 1941, is locally significant under Criterion C by virtue of its status as the best extant example in its particular neighborhood of a church building designed in the Collegiate Gothic style. Designed by Little Rock architect A. N. McAninch, it remains one of his best known interpretations of this national architectural style.

**Elaboration**

The congregation that would become the First Baptist Church of Little Rock traces its origins to July 24, 1824, when the city's first Baptist congregation met at the home of Issac Watkins. This small congregation continued to meet in private homes until 1825, when they constructed their first house of worship, a hewn log meeting house structure located on Third Street between Main and Scott Streets. However, this congregation effectively disbanded a few years later when a persuasive evangelist drew most of its members away to another congregation known as the Christian Church. The Baptist congregation remained dormant until 1858, when Dr. P.S.G. Watson and Rev. E.N. Chenault constituted the First Baptist Church for the second time. This congregation, though small (in 1860 it could claim a total of 38 members), remained active through the Civil War and Reconstruction.

In 1873 this congregation merged with that of the Union Baptist Church to form the new Central Baptist Church. In 1880, this new congregation merged with yet another congregation -- the Eighth Street Baptist Church -- to form the Calvary Baptist Church. Thus by 1881 this congregation could boast of not only about one hundred members, but also of two meeting houses: one at the intersection of 3rd and Izard Streets (used primarily for baptisms) and the other on Eighth Street, used for Sunday meetings.

However, by 1884 a split occurred between original members of the Central Baptist Church and original members of the Eighth Street Church. The Eighth Street church was returned to those original members who desired to return to a separate congregation (which then renamed itself the Second Baptist Church) and the remaining congregation purchased a lot for a new building, known once again as the First Baptist Church. The new lot was located on the east side of Louisiana Street, between Eighth and Ninth Streets; the new building constructed there was called the Ninth Street Chapel.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

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The congregation remained here until 1889, when they erected a "permanent" structure further south at the intersection of 12th and Louisiana, on a 95 x 140' lot. Their new building, a large, handsome brick edifice constructed in the High Victorian Gothic style, sheltered its first services on May 1, 1890. By 1891 the church could boast of a membership of 306.

The First Baptist Church grew steadily into and through the early twentieth century, reaching a membership of almost 1,000 souls by the early 1920's. However, the late 1930's heralded a dramatic surge in membership in all aspects of the church's activities: Sunday School, mission work, revivals and stewardship. All of this increased activity greatly strained the church's existing facilities and demanded the construction of new facilities.

Fortunately, some years before the First Baptist Church had come under the direction of a person equal to these challenges. Pastor Arden P. Blaylock was called to the church in 1931 and served the congregation as a powerful and persuasive evangelist who frequently spread the word outside the confines of the church proper at various missions and revival meetings. In addition to his other activities and responsibilities he shepherded his congregation through the construction period, when the old building was being demolished to make way for the new building.

The new First Baptist Church Building was designed by the Little Rock architect A.N. McAninch in the early spring of 1941, with the construction proceeding almost immediately thereafter (the McAninch name appears frequently in church records, and so it is likely that McAninch himself was at least a Baptist, if not a member of the First Baptist Church itself). No record has survived of the various craftspersons and contractors who participated in the actual construction, but the building as-built remains almost completely intact today, with few alterations of any kind, and so survives as an intact artifact in its own right.

The massive, Collegiate Gothic composition, complete with monumental Gothic window openings and stained glass, is fairly typical of Christian church construction of the period, though it remains a rather good example thereof. Yet the glory of the design is the rich, lustrous stained glass. Set largely in non-figural, geometric patterns, this glass is noteworthy for the lustre of the reds, purples and blues that dominate the palette and lend a rich glow to the interior. Unfortunately, no information has survived regarding the identity of the stained glass fabricator and the location of his/her shop. Yet it should be noted that at this late date -- certainly the last gasp of the Gothic Revival as such -- commercially-produced stained glass was available via mail-order catalogues at extremely affordable prices, and such may well have been the source for the glass in the First Baptist Church. Nevertheless, it is remarkable for its

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3

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richness and quality, and stands among the finest stained glass craftsmanship known in the state.

The First Baptist Church is locally significant under Criterion C (Criteria Consideration A: Religious Property) as the best extant example of a Collegiate Gothic design in its particular neighborhood, and one of the best examples of stained glass craftsmanship in the entire city. It is also significant as the last known example of this declining style in any of Little Rock's historic neighborhoods.

City or Town: Little Rock State: AR Zip: 72201

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1

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**Bibliography**

Caylor, John, *First Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas, 1858-1965*, (Little Rock: 1965).

McAninch, A.N., architect, *Original Drawings for the First Baptist Church*, dated March 5, 1941.

*Proceedings of the Pulaski County Baptist Association in the Twenty-Fifth Annual Session Held With High Street Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas, October 7, 8, 9, 1940* (published 1940).

*Proceedings of the Pulaski County Baptist Association in the Twenty-Sixth Annual Session Held With First Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas, October 6, 7, 1941* (published 1941).

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY First Baptist Church  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Pulaski

DATE RECEIVED: 7/07/94  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/5/94  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST: 7/20/94

DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/21/94

REFERENCE NUMBER: 94000823

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N	DATA PROBLEM: N	LANDSCAPE: N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N	PDIL: N	PERIOD: N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N	SAMPLE: N	SLR DRAFT: Y	NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT ☐ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The First Baptist Church is significant under Criterion C (Architecture), as a fine local example of Collegiate Gothic style design within the community of Little Rock. Erected in 1941, the building is a rather late example of the style and features a striking use of stained glass in the major window areas.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept C  
REVIEWER PAUL R. LUSIGNAN  
DISCIPLINE HISTORIAN  
DATE 8/9/94

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



CLASSIFICATION

\_\_\_ count \_\_\_ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

\_\_\_ historic \_\_\_ current

DESCRIPTION

\_\_\_ architectural classification  
\_\_\_ materials  
\_\_\_ descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

\_\_\_ summary paragraph  
\_\_\_ completeness  
\_\_\_ clarity  
\_\_\_ applicable criteria  
\_\_\_ justification of areas checked  
\_\_\_ relating significance to the resource  
\_\_\_ context  
\_\_\_ relationship of integrity to significance  
\_\_\_ justification of exception  
\_\_\_ other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

\_\_\_ acreage \_\_\_ verbal boundary description  
\_\_\_ UTMs \_\_\_ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

\_\_\_ sketch maps \_\_\_ USGS maps \_\_\_ photographs \_\_\_ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



1st BAPTIST CHURCH  
LITTLE ROCK, PULASKI Co., ARKANSAS  
PHOTO BY K. STORY

MAY, 1994

NEG. ON FILE AT ANPP

VIEW FROM EAST





1ST BAPTIST CHURCH  
LITTLE ROCK, PULASKI Co., ARKANSAS  
PHOTO BY K. STORY  
MAY, 1994

NEG. ON FILE AT ANPP  
VIEW FROM SOUTHEAST





1ST BAPTIST CHURCH  
LITTLE ROCK, PULASKI CO., ARKANSAS  
PHOTO BY K. STORY  
MAY, 1994  
NEG. ON FILE AT AHDP  
VIEW OF PARSONAGE FROM SOUTHEAST





1ST BAPTIST CHURCH

LITTLE ROCK, PULASKI Co., ARKANSAS

PHOTO BY K. STORY

MAY, 1994

NEG. ON FILE AT AHPP

VIEW OF PARSONAGE FROM WEST



**FOR SALE**  
**224-9600**



1ST BAPTIST CHURCH  
LITTLE ROCK, PULASKI Co., ARKANSAS  
PHOTO BY K. STORY  
MAY, 1994

NEG. ON FILE AT AHPP  
VIEW FROM NORTHWEST





1ST BAPTIST CHURCH

LITTLE ROCK, PULASKI Co., ARKANSAS

PHOTO BY K. STORY

MAY, 1994

NEG. ON FILE AT AHPP

DETAIL OF STAINED GLASS WINDOW

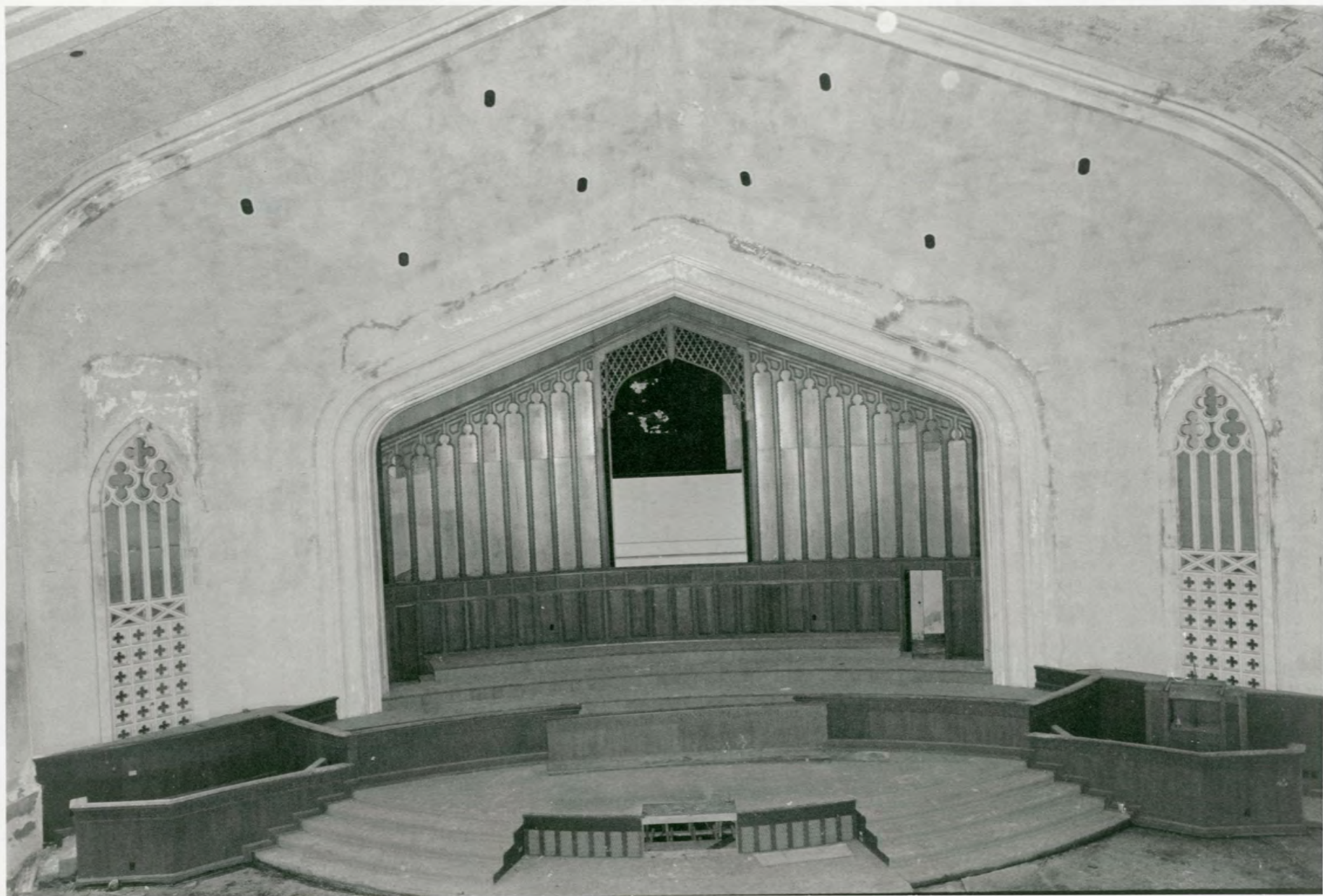






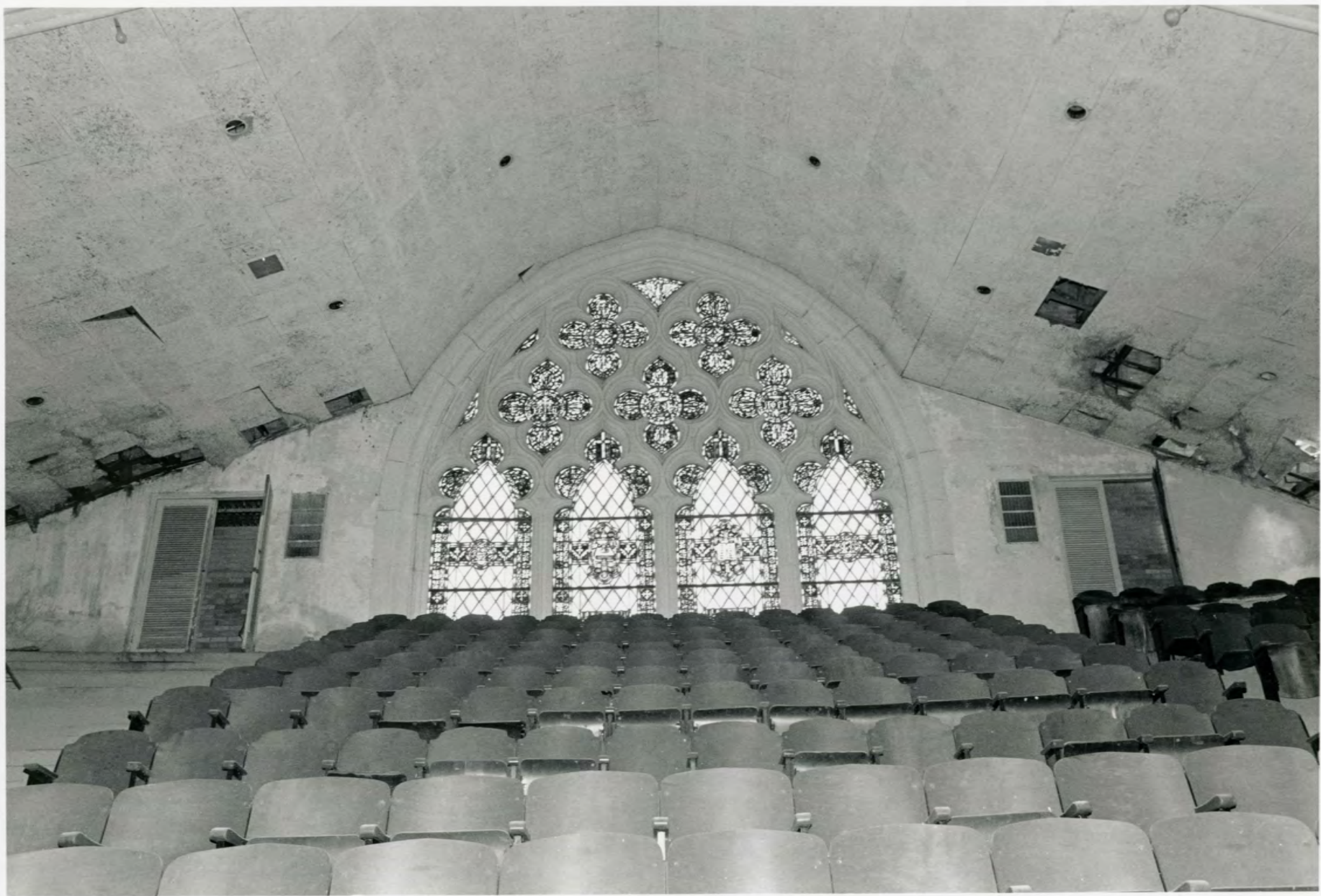
1ST BAPTIST CHURCH  
LITTLE ROCK, PULASKI Co., ARKANSAS  
PHOTO BY K. STORY  
MAY, 1994

NEG. ON FILE AT SHPP  
ENTRANCE DETAIL



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
LITTLE ROCK, PULASKI Co., ARKANSAS  
PHOTO BY. K. STORY  
MAY, 1994  
NEG. ON FILE AT ANPP  
INTERIOR VIEW OF CHANCEL





1ST BAPTIST CHURCH  
LITTLE ROCK, PULASKI Co., ARKANSAS  
PHOTO BY K. STORY  
MAY, 1994  
NEG. ON FILE AT AHPP  
VIEW OF FRONT WINDOW





1ST BAPTIST CHURCH

LITTLE ROCK, PULASKI Co., ARKANSAS

PHOTO BY K. STORY

MAY, 1994

NEG. ON FILE AT AHPP

VIEW OF INTERIOR WINDOW





1ST BAPTIST CHURCH  
LITTLE ROCK, PULASKI Co., ARKANSAS

PHOTO BY K. STORY

MAY, 1994

NEG. ON FILE AT AHPP

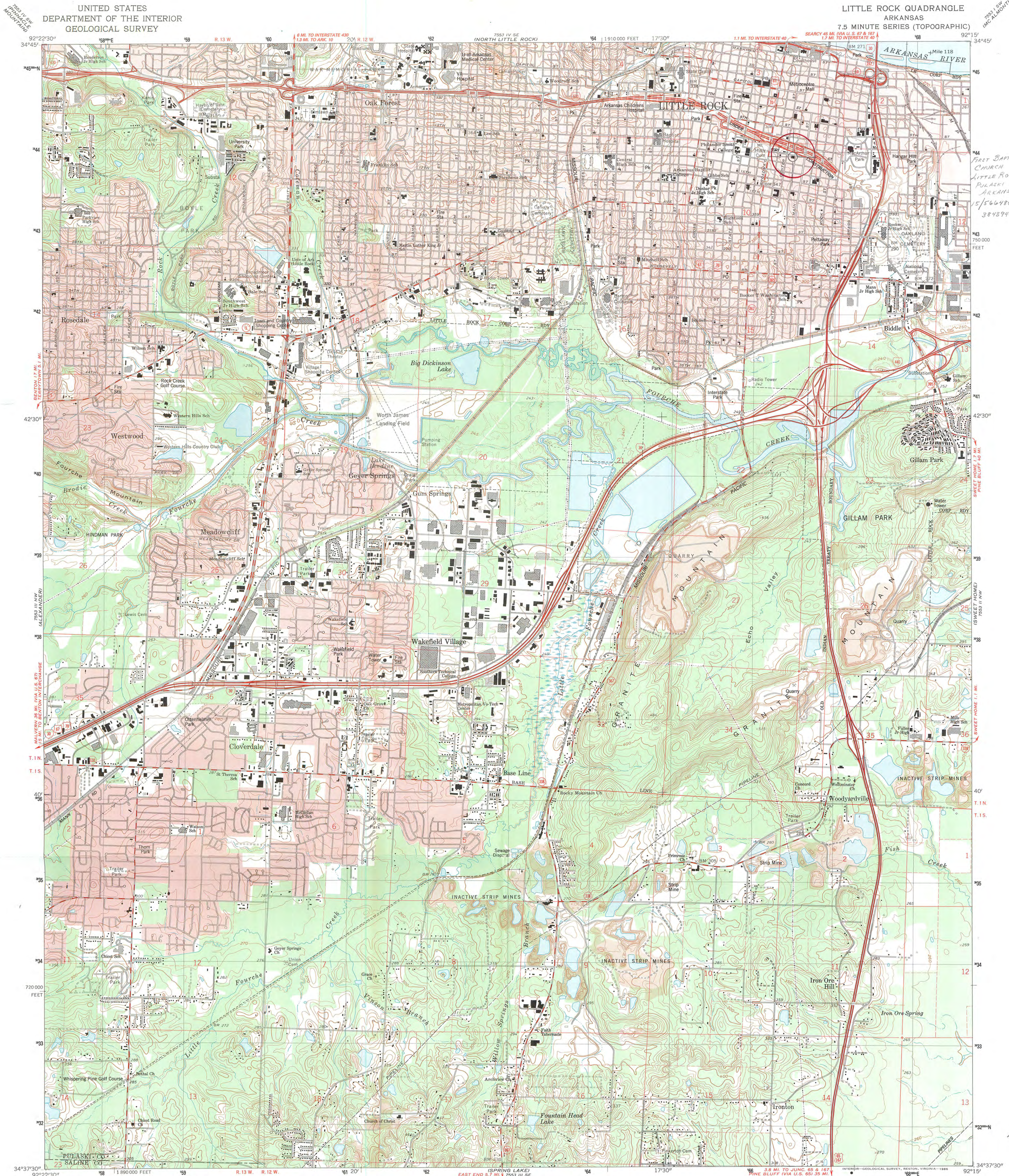
INTERIOR VIEW OF WINDOW





1ST BAPTIST CHURCH  
LITTLE ROCK, PULASKI CO., ARKANSAS  
PHOTO BY K. STORY  
MAY, 1994  
NEG. ON FILE AT AHPP  
VIEW OF INTERIOR CASEMENT WINDOW





Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1960. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1984

Field checked 1985. Map edited 1986

Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Arkansas coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)

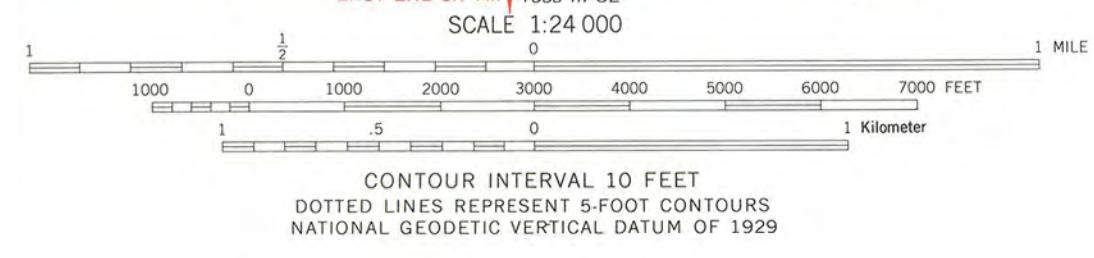
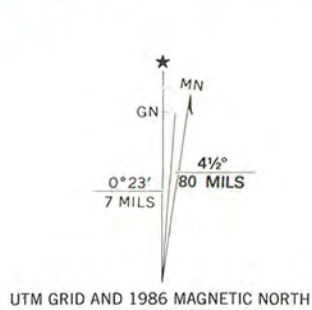
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 15

1927 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983, move the projection lines 7 meters south and 14 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

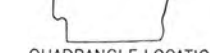
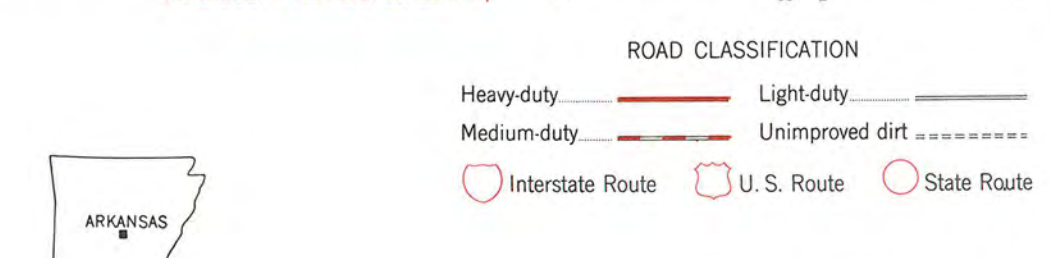
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 5-FOOT CONTOURS  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72204  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



LITTLE ROCK, ARK.  
34092-F3-TF-024

1986

DMA 7553 III NE-SERIES V884





ARKANSAS  
HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
PROGRAM



June 22, 1994

Carol D. Shull  
Chief of Registration  
United States Department of the Interior  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
800 North Capitol Street, Suite 250  
Washington, DC 20002

RE: First Baptist Church  
Little Rock, Pulaski County

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the nomination of the above referenced property. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathy Buford Slater  
State Historic Preservation Officer

CBS:kg

Enclosures

