

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: REMOVAL

PROPERTY NAME: St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: LOUISIANA, Terrebonne

DATE RECEIVED: 2/13/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/31/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89000331

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: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 3.31.15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

REMOVED
from
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA Remove

REVIEWER Edson Beall

DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 3.31.15

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

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service331
MAR 27 1989National Register of Historic Places
Registration FormNATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 243 Barrow Street N/A not for publication
city, town Houma N/A vicinity
state Louisiana code LA county Terrebonne code 109 zip code 70361

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/ANumber of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this
☒ 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 ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Leslie Tassin, State Historic PreservationMarch 22, 1989

Date

Dept of Culture, Recreation & Tourism

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:

- ☒ 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:) _____

Adams Byer Entered in the
National Register 5/1/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION - Religious structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION - Religious structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Gothic Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls weatherboard

roof asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church (1892) is a one-story frame Gothic Revival structure with a two-story front corner bell tower. The church was enlarged in 1913 by the addition of a parish hall which adjoins the nave at a right angle. The matching Gothic Revival styling of the parish hall reinforces the design of the older building and does not compromise its integrity or National Register eligibility. Located in central Houma, the church stands on the corner of a five-lot religious compound which also includes an 1892 rectory, a modern Episcopal school, and the school's playground. The grassy compound is shaded by tall trees which only partially cushion the buildings from the noise of two busy nearby streets. Only the church with its parish hall wing and the rectory are being nominated to the National Register.

The attachment of the church to the parish hall creates an L-shaped plan. Each of the two spaces is basically rectangular in nature, although both church and parish hall are subdivided internally. The church section contains a corner entrance foyer, a nave with a center aisle, slightly projecting transepts, an apse, and a narrow vestment room tucked behind two short rows of pews in the right transept. The parish hall's major space consists of a large meeting room which opens into the nave adjacent to the south transept. A series of smaller chambers (including restrooms, kitchen, and storage area) extends along one side of the hall in a straight line connecting with the transept's vestment room.

The clapboard church reflects the full maturity of the Gothic Revival style as it developed in hinterland areas. Many of the style's most identifiable characteristics are present. Gothic massing is reflected in the steeply pitched roof whose ridge is lined with metal cresting. A round window pierces the resulting front gable in its peak. Narrow pointed arch windows open into the nave on both sides of the structure. Larger pointed and subdivided windows pierce the facade, apse, and north transept, creating Gothic window tracery. The church's main entrance is located in the bell tower, where a set of double doors opens into the foyer. These doors are protected by a pent roof hood from which another subdivided Gothic window rises. Round windows, each divided by geometric tracery, pierce the walls of the bell tower at a higher level. The bell tower also exhibits pointed and louvered spaces subdivided in the same manner as the windows below. Miniature towers rise from each corner of the bell tower's roof, and the steeply pitched roofs of these small towers repeat the pitch of the larger tower's roof. Crosses top both the bell tower and the miniature towers.

☒ See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Houma, Terrebonne Parish

Section number 7 Page 1

Another entrance is located on the facade's second corner. This set of double doors is protected by a porch which cuts into the corner at a diagonal angle. Two open Gothic arches give access to this porch. The foundation is vented by grilled oval openings outlined by bas relief scallops. The clapboarded parish hall also exhibits narrow Gothic windows which stretch in bands across its primary elevation. A projecting porch with a pointed gable roof serves as the entrance to this addition. The porch is distinguished by a Gothic arch springing from Tuscan columns. This opening creates the suggestion of a Gothic Palladian window.

The church's interior is also a well-developed expression of the Gothic Revival style. Paneled throughout by stained, diagonal tongue and groove boards above a horizontal tongue and groove wainscot, the space rises to an elaborately ornamented hammerbeam ceiling. Pointed arches open into the transept areas, and the balusters of the chancel rail form a miniature Gothic arcade. The lectern exhibits Gothic quatrefoils. Two large paneled doors roll upward to open the tongue and grooved paneled parish hall to the nave. The old wooden floors of the parish hall are still visible, and the room contains a wooden sliding door which can be used to divide the space.

Assessment of Integrity

St. Matthew's has experienced a number of changes since its construction in 1892. As mentioned above, a stylistically compatible parish hall was added to the church in 1913. Original clear windows were replaced with stained glass, the front window between 1903 and 1908, the apse window by 1911. In 1926 a hurricane destroyed the upper portion of the open bell tower and blew out the windows along one side of the nave. These windows were replaced after the storm, then replaced again by stained glass during the 1950s. Parish members replaced the destroyed bell tower with an inappropriate substitute, but this problem was corrected around 1960 by the erection of a louvered belfry otherwise very similar to the open original. The roof's early polychrome finish was replaced by asphalt shingles. The exterior, once painted in contrasting colors, is now a pure white. On the interior, the altar has been moved out a few feet from its original position against the apse wall, conduits carrying electrical wires have been unobtrusively attached to walls, the church floor has been carpeted, and the vestment room has been changed. The paneling, which had darkened over time, was lightened to its original shade around 1982. The parish hall kitchen has been modernized twice. Most of these changes are minor in nature, and none compromises the integrity or National Register eligibility of the structure.

Contributing Element

The St. Matthew's Rectory (1892) is included as a contributing element because it is contemporaneous with the church. A one-and-one-half story

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Houma, Terrebonne Parish

Section number 7 Page 2

clapboard planter's cottage with a five bay porch, double doors, transom, side lights, and Victorian bays at each end, the rectory was renovated sometime after the turn of the century. Changes to the structure included raising it on tall concrete piers and the addition of a frontal shed dormer which allowed the conversion of the attic to room space. Despite these alterations, the rectory is recognizable as an 1890s structure and retains its eligibility as a contributing element to the St. Matthew's National Register nomination.

8. Statement of Significance

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

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☒ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1892

Significant Dates
1892

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church is locally significant in the area of architecture because it is an outstanding example of the Gothic Revival style within the context of Terrebonne Parish. The church especially illustrates the adaptation of high style architecture to the simpler needs and resources of a hinterland congregation.

Popular primarily between 1830 and 1860, the Gothic Revival was one of several decorative styles competing for acceptance during the early years of the Victorian era. Promoted through the books of landscape architect and architectural critic Andrew Jackson Downing, the style was applied to residences, churches, and public buildings. It reached Louisiana with the construction of the State Capitol Building in the 1840s. Despite its early popularity, the Gothic Revival was slow to spread to rural Louisiana and made virtually no impact in Terrebonne Parish until around 1890. At that time two outstanding examples appeared there. The first was Ardoyne, a high style plantation house added to the National Register in 1982. The second was St. Matthew's. Because the Episcopal Church had adopted Gothic styling as the appropriate image for its religious architecture during the mid-nineteenth century, the construction by a somewhat affluent congregation of an old-style church was not as unusual as it might otherwise seem. There are two other churches exhibiting Gothic elements in the parish. Both merely insert pointed arch windows into otherwise non-Gothic designs, and neither attempts the verticality and massing usually associated with the Gothic Revival style. Poor attempts at replication, neither church reaches the maturity of design found in St. Matthew's.

St. Matthew's is conspicuous for its characteristic Gothic massing, its pointed arch windows with subdivision resulting in Gothic tracery, its intact paneled interior and hammerbeam ceiling, and its illustration of the Episcopal preference for Gothic design.

☐ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Terrebonne Parish Survey, Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.
Site visit by National Register staff.
Historic photo of church showing original appearance.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)
has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings
Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

☐ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property approximately .6 acre

UTM References

A

1	5
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7	2	0	9	4	0
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3	2	7	6	1	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

D

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--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Please refer to enclosed sketch map.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Boundaries follow the property line on three sides but cut close to the Church and Rectory on the east side in order to exclude several modern buildings which serve as an Episcopal School campus.

☐ See continuation sheet

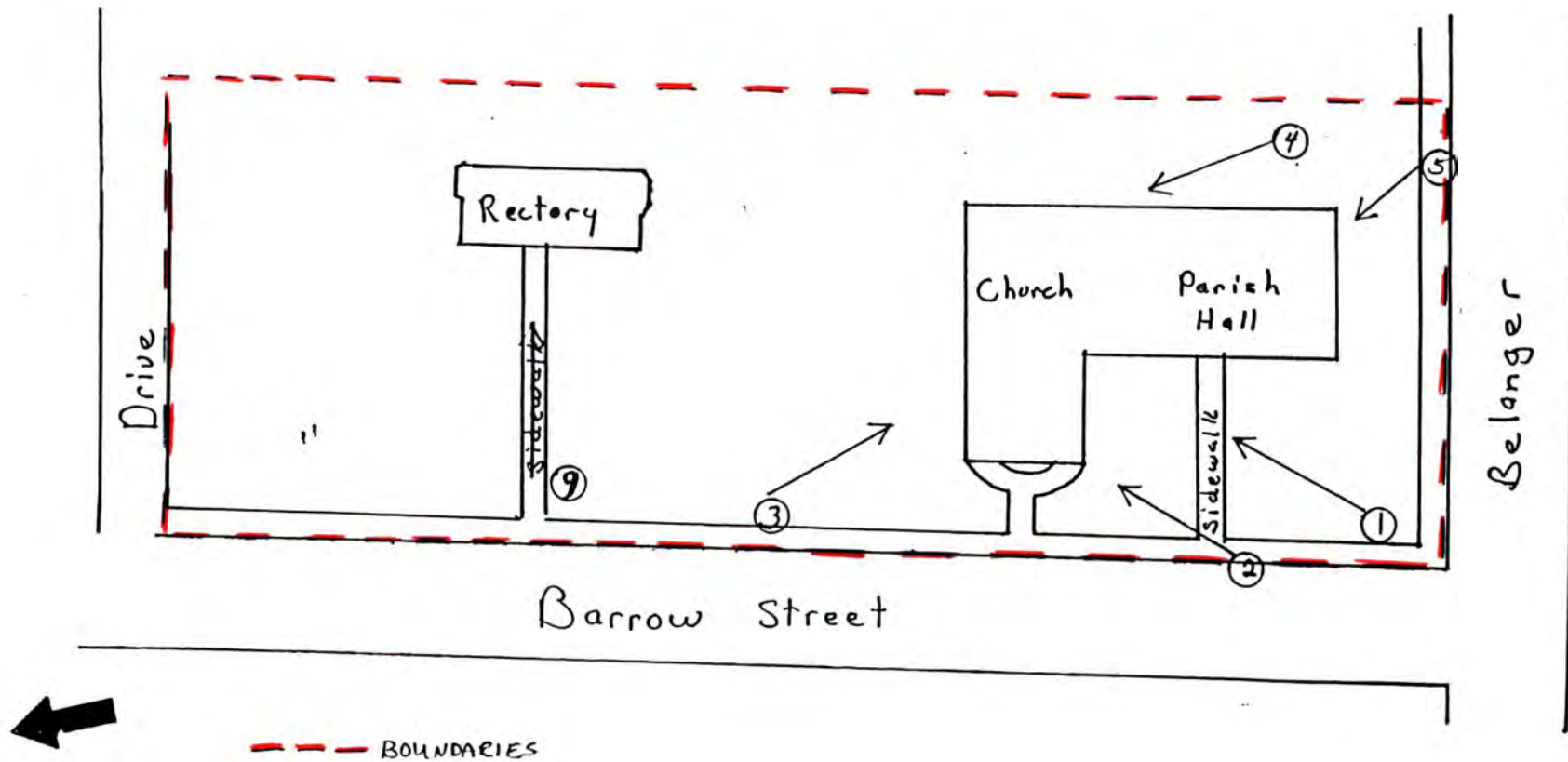
11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date February 1989

street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone (504) 342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state Louisiana zip code 70804



N

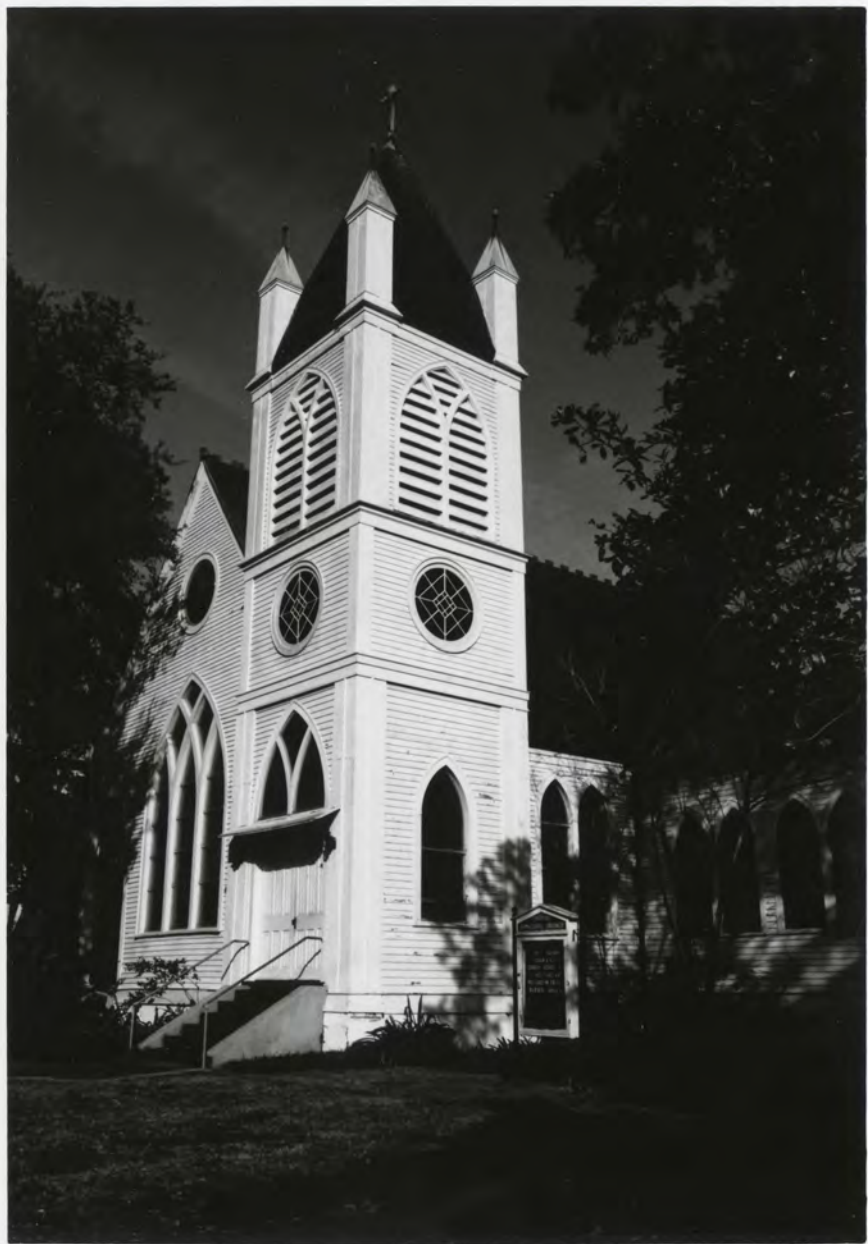
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Scale: 1" = 40'



Name: St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
Location: Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA
Photographer: Patricia Duncan
Location of Negatives: LASHPO
Date taken: January 1989
Photo No: 1
Direction: Northeast



Name: St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

Location: Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Photographer: Patricia Duncan

Location of Negatives: LASHPO

Date taken: January 1989

Photo No: 2

Direction: Northeast



Name: St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

Location: Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Photographer: Patricia Duncan

Location of Negative: LASHPO

Date taken: January 1989

Photo No: 3

Direction: South/
Southeast

NB: Modern bldg to rear of church
is outside nominated acreage.



Name: St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
Location: Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA
Photographer: Patricia Duncan
Location of Negatives: LASHPO
Date Taken: January 1989
Photo No: 4
Direction: Northwest



Name: St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
Location: Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA
Photographer: Patricia Duncan
Location of Negatives: LASHPO
Date Taken: January 1989
Photo No: 5
Direction: Northwest



Name: St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
Location: Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA ^{Rectory}

Photographer: Patricia Duncan

Location of Negatives: LASHPO

Date Taken: January 1989

Photo No: 67 (Rectory)

Direction: East

Note: Modern bldg shown at rear is
outside nominated acreage.



Name: St. Matthews Episcopal Church

Location: Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Photographer: Patricia Duncan

Location of Negatives: LASHPO

Date Taken: January 1989

Photo No: 7

Direction: Interior



Name: St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
Location: Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Photographer: Patricia Duncan
Location of Negatives: LASHPO

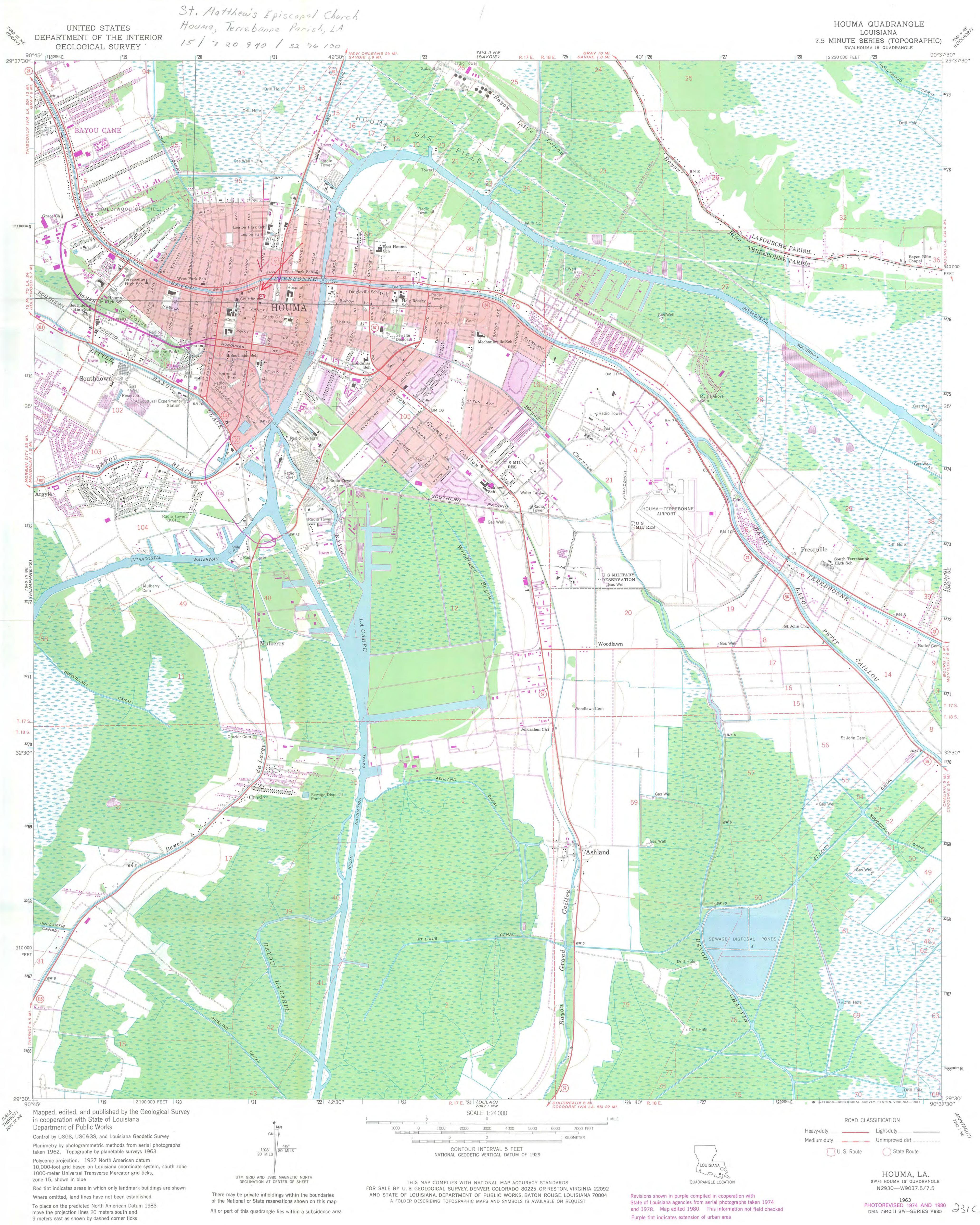
Date Taken: January 1989

Photo No: 8

Direction: Interior



Name: St. Matthews Episcopal
Location: Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA
Photographer: Patricia Duncan
Location of Negatives: LASHPO
Date taken: January 1989
Photo No: 96
Direction: Interior



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA
15 / 7 20 940 / 32 76 100

HOUMA QUADRANGLE
LOUISIANA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SW 1/4 HOUMA 15' QUADRANGLE

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
in cooperation with State of Louisiana
Department of Public Works
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Louisiana Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1962. Topography by planetable surveys 1963
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Louisiana coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 15, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Where omitted, land lines have not been established
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 20 meters south and
9 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries
of the National or State reservations shown on this map
All or part of this quadrangle lies within a subsidence area

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND STATE OF LOUISIANA, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70804
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with
State of Louisiana agencies from aerial photographs taken 1974
and 1978. Map edited 1980. This information not field checked
Purple tint indicates extension of urban area

HOUMA, LA.
SW 1/4 HOUMA 15' QUADRANGLE
N2930-W9037.5/7.5

1963
PHOTOREVISED 1974 AND 1980
DMA 7843 II SW-SERIES V885

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: LOUISIANA, Terrebonne

DATE RECEIVED: 3/27/89 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/12/89
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/28/89 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/11/89
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 89000331

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: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 5/1/89 DATE 5/1/89 National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

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

Signed _____ Phone _____

Date _____



Buddy Roemer
Governor

Paul Hardy
Lieutenant Governor
and Commissioner

State of Louisiana
Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Henry A. Truxillo
Secretary

Leslie P. Tassin, Sr.
Assistant Secretary

March 22, 1989

MAR 27 1989

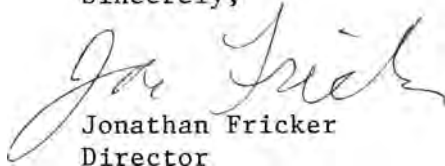
NATIONAL
REGISTER

Chief of Registration
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
P. O. Box 37127
Washington, D. C. 20013-7127

Dear Sir:

Enclosed please find the completed and signed nomination form for St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Terrebonne Parish, along with maps and photographs. If additional information is needed, please contact our office.

Sincerely,


Jonathan Fricker
Director

JF/bc

Enclosure

Jonathan Fricker, Director
Division of Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 44247 (900 Riverside North)
Baton Rouge, LA 70804
(504) 342-8160



JAY DARDENNE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

PAM BREAU
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

February 9, 2015

James Gabbert
National Register of Historic Places
1201 "Eye" Street NW
Washington, D.C., 20005

RE: Delisting of St. Matthews Episcopal Church, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Dear Mr. Gabbert:

The purpose of this letter is to notify you of our intent to delist the above property from the National Register of Historic Places. Originally listed on the Register on 5/1/89, the above property burned in November of 2010. Per 36 CFR 60, Sec. 60.15 (a)(1), we are requesting that the above property be officially delisted based on the fact that the property has ceased to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register because the qualities which caused it to be originally listed have been destroyed. To support this claim, we have included in this submission newspaper articles concerning the property's fire.

We have notified the property owner and the chief elected official and have included copies of those letters with this submission. We received no comment from either.

If you have any questions concerning our request, please contact our National Register Coordinator, Jessica Richardson via email at jrichardson@crt.la.gov or by phone at 225-219-4595.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Pam Breau".

Pam Breau
State Historic Preservation Officer

PD:JR/jgr
Enclosure



JAY DARDENNE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

PAM BREUX
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

January 7, 2015

Rector Church Wardens and Vestrymer
St. Matthews Church
243 Barrow St
Houma, LA 70360

RE: Delisting of St. Matthews Episcopal Church, Terrebonne Parish, LA

To Whom it May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to notify you of our intent to petition for the removal of the above referenced property from the National Register of Historic Places, a process known as delisting. This step is important as we strive to maintain an accurate record of properties in our state that are listed in the Register, still extant, and maintain integrity per National Register Criteria.

Our research shows you to be the owner of the land where St. Matthew's Episcopal Church stood, which was listed on the National Register on 5/1/1989. According to the Federal National Register regulations [36 CFR 6.15 (a)(1)], a property may be delisted if it has ceased to meet the criteria for listing on the National Register because the qualities which caused it to be originally listed have been lost or destroyed. Per newspaper articles and local reports, we know that the building was destroyed by fire in November of 2010. The final delisting decision will be made by the Keeper of the National Register at the National Park Service.

The regulations [36 CFR 60.15 (g)] also require that the property's owner and the chief elected official be given an opportunity to comment on the proposed action. If you choose to comment, please respond via letter by **February 9, 2015** to the following address:

Pam Breux
State Historic Preservation Officer
Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation
PO Box 44247
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

If you have questions concerning the delisting petition or any other National Register issue, please contact National Register Coordinator, Jessica Richardson, by email at jrichardson@crt.la.gov, or by phone at 225-219-4595.

Sincerely,

Pam Breux
State Historic Preservation Officer



JAY DARDENNE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

PAM BREUX
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

January 7, 2015

The Honorable Michel Claudet
PO Box 2768
Houma, LA 70361-2768

RE: Delisting of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Terrebonne Parish, LA

Dear Parish President Claudet:

The purpose of this letter is to notify you of our intent to petition for the removal of the above referenced property from the National Register of Historic Places, a process known as delisting. This step is important as we strive to maintain an accurate record of properties in our state that are listed in the Register, still extant, and maintain integrity per National Register Criteria.

According to the Federal National Register regulations [36 CFR 6-.15 (a)(1)], a property may be delisted if it has ceased to meet the criteria for listing on the National Register because the qualities which caused it to be originally listed have been lost or destroyed. St. Matthew's Episcopal Church was listed on 5/1/1989, and per newspaper articles and local reports, we know that, unfortunately, the church was destroyed by fire in November of 2010. The final delisting decision will be made by the Keeper of the National Register at the National Park Service.

The regulations [36 CFR 60.15 (g)] also require that the property's owner and the chief elected official be given an opportunity to comment on the proposed action. If you choose to comment, please respond via letter by **February 9, 2015** to the following address:

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State Historic Preservation Officer
Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation
PO Box 44247
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

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Sincerely,

Pam Breux
State Historic Preservation Officer



Everything New Orleans

Fire destroys historic Houma church

The Associated Press By The Associated Press

on November 11, 2010 at 3:50 PM, updated November 11, 2010 at 5:17 PM

An early morning fire destroyed **St. Matthew's Episcopal Church** in **downtown Houma** Thursday, leaving little more than the historic building's front steps, part of the steeple and a wall standing.



View full size

Misty McElroy, Houma Courier via AP

A fire burns at St. Matthews Episcopal Church on Thursday in Houma. The fire destroyed the 155-year-old church and damaged a nearby school building. There were no injuries, and the cause has not yet been determined.

There were no injuries, and the cause has not yet been determined.

Firefighters, alerted of the blaze at 3:42 a.m., arrived to find a "big ball of fire," said Houma District Fire Chief Chris LeCompte. It took personnel from four departments hours to extinguish the flames, he said.

The fire consumed the church first, spreading to a wing of the adjacent church-run elementary school that was under renovation.

LeCompte said that flames went through that building's roof as well, prompting its

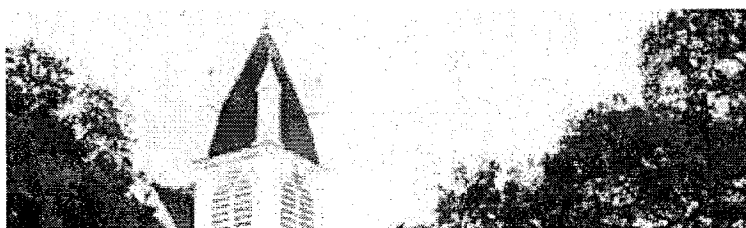
collapse.

That wing of the school, called the lower school building, had not been used for weeks, said Chuck Bourque, president of the school's Board of Trustees. All other school buildings were untouched by the flames, he said.

Classes were canceled Thursday and Friday but are expected to resume as usual Monday.

The church-run school has 258 students in grades pre-K through seven.

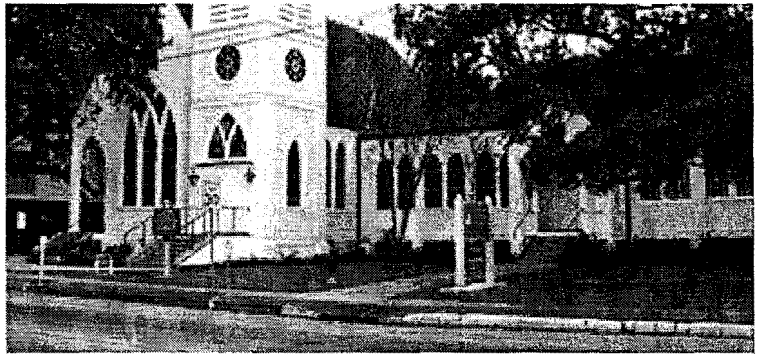
The church, a Houma landmark, had been Terrebonne's second-oldest and is on the National Registry of Historic Places. The cypress building where parishioners had



worshipped was built in 1896. The church was perhaps best known for its Gothic revival architecture and magnificent stained-glass windows.

Joann Plessala, 79, told The Courier she has been a member of the downtown church "forever" and was devastated to learn of its fate.

"You can rebuild a building," she said, "but you can't rebuild St. Matthew's."



The cypress building where parishioners had worshipped was built in 1896. The church was perhaps best known for its Gothic revival architecture and magnificent stained-glass windows.

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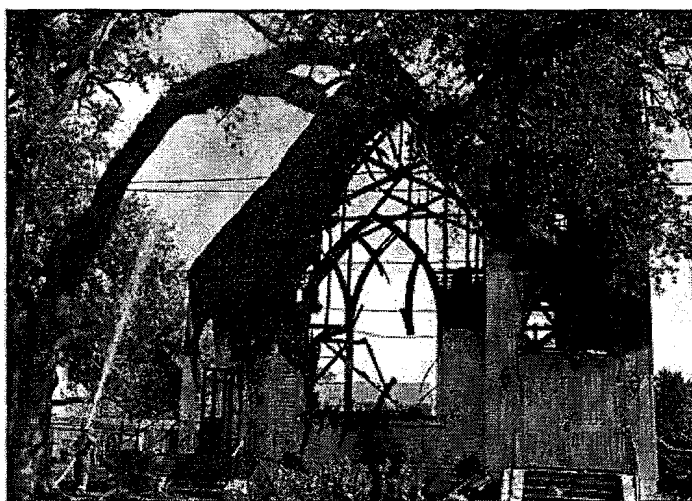


Mom arrested in fatal Houma fire



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Houma Fire Department Capt. Eddie Berthelot, Jr. douses hot spots in front of the charred remains of St. Matthews Episcopal Church in Houma Thursday.

Emily Schwarze/Staff

By Nikki Buskey
Staff Writer

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HOUMA — A charred front wall, stone steps and steeple are all that remain of Houma's historic St. Matthew's Episcopal Church. But it will live on in the memory of a congregation whose mothers, fathers, children and grandchildren were baptized, confirmed, married and mourned in the beautiful cypress church.



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The church was destroyed in a fire early Thursday morning that took hours to extinguish. A haze of smoke covered downtown Houma Thursday morning as firefighters worked to put out the remaining hot spots, and ash from the fire littered nearby streets.

There were no injuries. Houma Fire Inspector Mike Millet said the investigation into the cause of the fire is still ongoing, and could take weeks to complete.

But he added that firefighters don't suspect the blaze is related to other recent fires in the downtown area.

Church officials said there is no question that they will rebuild.

"We're not sure what it will look like, but the outpouring of support we've gotten from the community has been very encouraging," said the Rev. Craig Dalferes, pastor of St. Matthew's.

He added that much remains uncertain in the immediate aftermath of the fire. Church administration met Thursday night to focus on immediate needs, like where the congregation will meet on Sunday. Dalferes said a number of community churches have called to offer St. Matthew's aid.

Katherine Gilbert and her fiance Jay Theriot were scheduled to be married in St. Matthew's Saturday. The couple said they plan to go ahead with the ceremony, but are heartbroken about the loss of the church that had come to mean so much to them.

Congregation, community remember St. Matthew'sNikki Buskey

Houma Fire Department Capt. Eddie Berthelot, Jr. douses hot spots in front of the charred remains of St. Matthews Episcopal Church in Houma Thursday.

HoumaToday.com November 11, 2010 5:27 PM

HOUMA — A charred front wall, stone steps and steeple are all that remain of Houma's historic St. Matthew's Episcopal Church. But it will live on in the memory of a congregation whose mothers, fathers, children and grandchildren were baptized, confirmed, married and mourned in the beautiful cypress church. The church was destroyed in a fire early Thursday morning that took hours to extinguish. A haze of smoke covered downtown Houma Thursday morning as firefighters worked to put out the remaining hot spots, and ash from the fire littered nearby streets. There were no injuries. Houma Fire Inspector Mike Millet said the investigation into the cause of the fire is still ongoing, and could take weeks to complete. But he added that firefighters don't suspect the blaze is related to other recent fires in the downtown area. Church officials said there is no question that they will rebuild. "We're not sure what it will look like, but the outpouring of support we've gotten from the community has been very encouraging," said the Rev. Craig Dalferes, pastor of St. Matthew's. He added that much remains uncertain in the immediate aftermath of the fire. Church administration met Thursday night to focus on immediate needs, like where the congregation will meet on Sunday. Dalferes said a number of community churches have called to offer St. Matthew's aid. Katherine Gilbert and her fiance Jay Theriot were scheduled to be married in St. Matthew's Saturday. The couple said they plan to go ahead with the ceremony, but are heartbroken about the loss of the church that had come to mean so much to them. Gilbert's father and son were baptized there and her parents' marriage was blessed in the church. Gilbert said she'd returned to St. Matthew's to worship four years ago, and Theriot also joined. Both were baptized and confirmed in the church. Theriot served as a lector, and Gilbert as a eucharistic minister. "After mass we always had coffee and cake, and everyone kind of hung around and touched base with each other," Theriot said. "It was great fellowship and connectivity. I don't know how we're going to carry that over to another church." The fire consumed the church itself and spread to a wing of the church-run elementary school that was under-renovation after a water leak. The flames went through that building's roof as well, prompting its collapse. The burned wing of the school, called the lower school building, housed kindergarten and first-grade students and had not been used for weeks, said Chuck Bourque, president of the school's Board of Trustees. All other school buildings were untouched by the flames, he said. Both buildings are likely a total loss, church officials said. Classes were canceled today. School officials have received permission to reopen the campus on Monday, Bourque said. The damaged sections of campus will be fenced off, and classes will resume as normal, Bourque said. The church-run school has 258 students in grades pre-K through seventh. Parents and children who attend St. Matthew's gathered for lunch at Chick-fil-a in Houma Thursday afternoon to show support for the school. Sophia Stathes, 10, and her classmates wore their St. Matthew's school T-shirts and were eager to talk about the school. Jeremy Thibodeaux, 11, said he cried when he heard the school and church had caught fire this morning. "The church was beautiful, and I hope they can repair it," said 10-year-old Ryleigh Thibodeaux. The church, a Houma landmark, was Terrebonne's second-oldest and is on the National Registry of Historic Places. The building was constructed from local cypress trees in 1892 after the original church was consumed in a fire sometime between 1888 and 1890, according to the church website. The church was perhaps best known for its Gothic revival architecture and magnificent stained-glass windows. "We've lost so much in a building that housed great spirit," Gilbert said. "It's heartbreaking to have lost this icon in the community." For those who have never been inside, she said, "it was a beautiful wood and stained glass piece of art. When you went inside and the sunlight was streaming through the windows, it was gorgeous."

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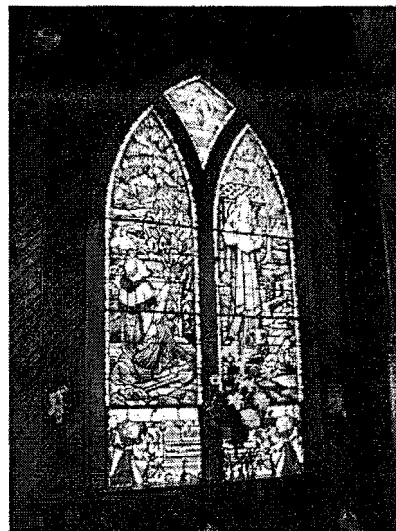
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WWLTV.COM

Historic church destroyed



by Wayne Carter / Eyewitness News

wwltv.com

Posted on November 11, 2010 at 7:29 AM

Updated Thursday, Dec 5 at 1:25 PM

HOUMA, La. — Parishioners at St. Matthews Episcopal Church are promising to rebuild after fire destroyed their church building Thursday morning. Fire investigators are trying to figure out what sparked the huge fire at the second oldest church in Terrebonne Parish.

(See viewer photos of the fire)

Neighbors called 911, around 3:45am, Thursday. Firefighters were still battling flames hours later. The same wood chopped down by the churches parishers in the late 1890's barely stands. Soot and charred rubble are all that's left of a building known for it's architecture and listed on the national historical registry.

The church is located on Barrow Street in the downtown area of Houma, near Terrebonne General Medical Center.

"It is a huge loss of the church building and the parish hall and one of our unoccupied school buildings," said Chuck Bourque, of the church's board of trustees, "We have already experienced a great outpouring from the community."

There is also a school next to the church. Most of the school buildings were not damaged in the fire, though one school building that was being renovated and not in use sustained damage.

Classes at the school will be canceled Thursday and Friday while investigators work to determine the cause of the fire.

Terry Leonard, the district fire chief, said no one was inside the church and no injuries have been reported. The call reporting the fire came around 3:40 a.m.

Leonard said that the church is a total loss. "It should be good to say that there will not be much left."

"It was a beautiful historic church. It was built in the 1800s. It had beautiful stained glass windows and the parishioners kept that church immaculate," said Connie Bourg. "It is such a tragic and terrible loss for Terrebonne Parish."

"We are a very strong church. St. Matthew's goes back about a 155 years," said Beulah Rodrigue, a parishioner since 1947, "and everything in it, I know we cannot replace."