

HISTORIC RESOURCES OF DALLAS COUNTY
DALLAS COUNTY, ARKANSAS

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

Survey Number DA-28

Owner Reverend Norris Steele

Property Name First United Methodist Church Address United Methodist Church

E. 4th and Spring Sts.

436 S. Main Street

Location Fordyce

Monticello, AR 71655

Significant Date/s 1925

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The First United Methodist Church in Fordyce is located on a corner lot one block deep that is bordered by East Fourth Street to the south, Spring Street to the east and East Fifth Street to the North. Designed by John Parks Almand, a noted Arkansas architect, the church was built in 1925. Demonstrated in the building's design is the architect's familiarity with the English Arts and Crafts movement, the characteristics of which were frequently applied to American buildings of this period. Built of brick with stone and stucco trim, the church has an irregular plan consisting of a rectangular central block that faces East Fourth Street, with two wings projecting from the rear. The roofs are gable, with the notable exception of the clipped gable roof above the front entrance. Constructed on a concrete foundation, the church is three stories high with an attic. A pair of brick wall buttresses detail each end elevation, extending above the brick parapet. A single interior brick chimney rises above the roofline.

The front facade is dominated by its unusual center entrance that recognizably divides the building in half according to function. The portion to the left, which recedes slightly, consists of three floors of offices and Sunday School classrooms, each with five fenestrations. Windows are double casement with transoms, with a coupled pair positioned closest to the entrance. The opposite half of the front elevation has five coupled lancet windows of stained glass with stone surrounds that illuminate the sanctuary.

Its height slightly exceeding the ridge of the principal gable roof, the three story projecting entrance with a clipped gable roof, buff brick face and stucco sides is the most striking feature of the building. This projection intersects the roof ridge and terminates with a gable on the north slope of the principle roof. Three story brick octagonal buttress piers with buff brick banding, stepped caps and conical spires flank the entrance, which consists of double glass doors with ten lights each, surrounded by multi-paned sidelights and a transom. An arched buff brick and shingled hood is positioned above the door and beneath a large fenestration, the latter composed of casement, fixed and transom windows. Above this large window, which illuminates the second floor, is a compound lancet arch with louvered vent.

Two wings extend from the rear elevation, the largest of which is within several feet of the west corner and projects at a right angle. Between this wing and the sanctuary wall, a second gabled wing, with slopes of

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unequal length, projects at a forty-five degree angle. An entrance at the end of this wing provides access to the narthex. The sanctuary wall is identical to the front, with five stained glass windows. A gabled continuation of the front entrance projection extends from the midpoint of the roof slope. The west end elevation features an elliptical arched stained glass window, two entrances and a louvered vent. Other end elevations have uniformly placed casement windows, wall buttresses and louvered attic vents.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Striking in its appearance, the First United Methodist Church eloquently demonstrates the creative capabilities of its designer, John Parks Almand. Unlike any other structure in Dallas County, the design of this church reflects the influence of the English Arts and Crafts movement. Though its plan is untraditional, this building successfully serves its intended purpose to provide space for the worship, education and administration of the second oldest congregation in Fordyce.

Though the exact date of the first religious service held by Methodists in Fordyce is not known, the First United Methodist Church acquired its first pastor sometime in 1883. Prior to constructing their own church, this congregation joined the Presbyterians in conducting Sunday School classes at the First Presbyterian Church at the corner of Main and Fifth Streets.

On February 27, 1886, the Methodists purchased a lot on the southeast corner of East Third and Moro Streets. This lot was exchanged later that same year for property on the southwest corner of the same block. In 1887 the congregation constructed their first church on this land. As Fordyce grew, so too did the membership of the First United Methodist Church. In 1899 a second church was built at East Third and Spring Streets to accommodate the growing congregation. In 1922, this structure was destroyed by fire, thus necessitating the construction of the present church. Church records indicate the approximate cost of this building, including the pipe organ and interior fixtures, was ninety thousand dollars.

John Parks Almand, a native of Louisiana, first came to Arkansas in 1912, the year following his completion of the architecture program at Columbia University. Until opening his own practice in 1915, Almand worked for Charles Thompson. Almand earned the reputation of being an innovative and dexterous architect. Perhaps best known for his ecclesiastical and residential designs, Almand's commissions also include a post office in Fort Smith, a hospital in North Little Rock, and the Medical Arts Building in Hot Springs (NR 12-1-78).

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Acreage: less than 1

Quadrangle Name: Fordyce

Quadrangle Scale: 1:24000

UTM Reference: 15 554410/3741520

Verbal Boundary Description:

Block 1, Lots 6, 7, and 8 and Block 2, fractional, original city of Fordyce.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received 9/14/83
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 1 of 3

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Dallas County Multiple Resource Area
State Arkansas

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Amis House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 10/28/83

Attest

2. Atchley, Henry, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 10/28/83

Attest

3. Brazeale Homestead

Substantive Review

Keeper

Beth Grosvenor 10/28/83

Attest

4. Brewster House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 10/28/83

Attest

5. Butler-Matthews Homestead

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 10/28/83

Attest

6. Dallas County Courthouse

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 3/27/84

Attest

7. Elliott House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 3/27/84

Attest

8. Fielder House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 10/28/83

Attest

9. First Presbyterian Church

Substantive Review

Keeper

Beth Grosvenor 10/28/83

Attest

10. First United Methodist Church

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 10/28/83

Attest

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

First United Methodist Church (Dallas County
MRA)
Dallas County
ARKANSAS

Working No. SEP 14 1983
Fed. Reg. Date: 2-5-85
Date Due: 10/13/83 - 10/29/83
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 10/28/83
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Entered in the

National Register

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
		<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. 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

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

When the First United Methodist Church was listed on the National Register on October 28, 1983, the nomination erroneously stated that John Parks Almand was a native of Louisiana. However, Almand was actually born in Lithonia, Georgia, on May 8, 1885.

Information from: Almand, A. J. *John Parks Almand, Architect: A Biography of my Father*. Unpublished manuscript in the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 1976.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY First United Methodist Church
NAME:

MULTIPLE Dallas County MRA
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Dallas

DATE RECEIVED: 12/16/11 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/31/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 83003469

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 1-27-12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

~~REMOVED~~
~~from~~
National Register *EB*

Additional Documentation Approved

RECOM./CRITERIA *Accept*
REVIEWER *E Beall* DISCIPLINE *Hist.*
TELEPHONE _____ DATE 1-27-12

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.



DA-28
First United Methodist Church
Sarah Brown, photographer
June 19, 1982
Negative on file at the AHPP
View from the Northwest

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000025



**The Department of
Arkansas
Heritage**

Mike Beebe
Governor

Cathie Matthews
Director

Arkansas Arts Council

*

Arkansas Natural Heritage
Commission

*

Delta Cultural Center

*

Historic Arkansas Museum

*

Mosaic Templars
Cultural Center

*

Old State House Museum



**Arkansas Historic
Preservation Program**

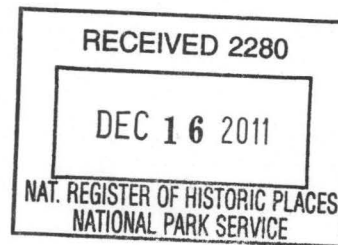
1500 Tower Building
323 Center Street
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 324-9880
fax: (501) 324-9184
tdd: (501) 324-9811
e-mail:

info@arkansaspreservation.org

website:

www.arkansaspreservation.com

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December 7, 2011

Ms. Carol Shull
Chief of Registration
United States Department of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
8th Floor
1201 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

63003469

RE: First United Methodist Church – Additional Documentation
– Fordyce, Dallas County, Arkansas

Dear Carol:

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

If you need further information, please call Ralph S. Wilcox of my staff at (501) 324-9787. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathie Matthews

Cathie Matthews
State Historic Preservation Officer

CM:rsw

Enclosure