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TERRITORIAL ERA CARPENTER GOTHIC CHURCHES OF NORTH CENTRAL OKLAHOMA

3. Morrison Baptist Church (Photos #10-13 and No. 3 on Sketch Map)

Location: ✓ 202 Third Street
✓ Morrison, OK 73061
✓ County: Noble Code: 103

Owner of Property: Morrison Baptist Church
% Chester Speer
202 Third Street
Morrison, OK 73061

Location of Legal Description: Office of the County Clerk
Noble County Courthouse
Perry, OK 73077

Description: The Morrison Baptist Church, built in 1903, is a one-story, detached, gabled roof church with clapboard finish. The overall dimensions of the original building are 30' x 44'. The central gable has a north-south orientation with a one-story intersecting gable (12' x 26') on the west side.

The facade (south side) has a wood double door entryway in the bell tower and three double-hung sash windows in original part of the building. There is a round opening in gable end of facade. The intersecting gable has two double-hung sash windows and one round opening in gable end above windows. There is one double-hung sash window in south and north walls of the intersecting gable. One double-hung sash window is located in main wall plane of the west side. The rear (north side) has three double-hung sash windows.

The east side has a one-story addition (12' x 30') completed in the 1960s. It has weatherboard finish and a flat roof. There are two 1/1 sash windows in north and south walls, three 1/1 sash windows in east wall, and one plain wood door (near southeast corner) of the addition.

Decorative elements include pointed arch windows with simple traceries and wood hood moulds. There is a pointed arch transom above the entryway. The second level of the bell tower has fish scale trim. The belfry has tent roof with square base. The gently pitched slopes rise to a decorative finial. The bell tower also has pointed arch elements. The original bell is still in use. The 12' x 30' addition does not significantly detract from the architectural integrity of the church because similar construction materials and color were used.

Statement of Significance: The Morrison Baptist Church is both historically and architecturally significant because: (1) it is the only original church building which remains in Morrison, and (2) it is the oldest example of Carpenter Gothic architecture in Morrison.

Built in 1903, this Territorial Era church represents the strong determination of

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pioneer families to provide a moral and religious force in newly-established frontier communities. Local laborers donated time and the availability of timber allowed for the relatively inexpensive construction of this church. The Morrison Sun of June 26, 1903 reported that the local congregation, formed in 1899, had raised \$4,000 to construct their new building.

Gothic arched openings, white clapboard finish, and gently pitched, tent-shaped belfry typify the Carpenter Gothic vocabulary. Fish scale shingles on the belfry, round openings in gable ends, and wood surrounds of window openings provide additional decoration.

Although an addition was completed to the east side, it does not detract from the overall architectural integrity of the property because similar materials and color were used. Continuous services have been held in the church for more than 80 years, thereby retaining its historic integrity.

Major Bibliographical References:

Personal Interview: Chester Speer (church historian), June 6, 1983.
Morrison Sun, June 26, 1903

Quadrangle Name: Morrison, Oklahoma

Scale: 7.5 minutes

UTM: 14/678920/4018700

Verbal Boundary Description: Lots 24-28, Block 2, Original Townsite of Morrison, OK.