

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAY 15 1979
DATE ENTERED JUL 10 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Church of the Ascension
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Southwest Corner of High and Broadway *Sts*
CITY, TOWN *Mt Sterling* VICINITY OF
STATE Kentucky CODE 021 COUNTY Montgomery CODE 173
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 07

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Church of the Ascension C/O The Reverend Lewis Tanno
STREET & NUMBER West High and Broadway
CITY, TOWN Mt. Sterling VICINITY OF Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Montgomery County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN Mt. Sterling STATE Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky
DATE 1978
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Kentucky Heritage Commission
CITY, TOWN Frankfort STATE Kentucky

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Church of the Ascension is located on the southwest corner of High and Broadway in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky. The structure is situated just off the courthouse square on the northwest fringe of the commercial section. Further north and west of the church is a late nineteenth century residential area. Mt. Sterling, with a population of approximately 5,000 is the seat of government for Montgomery County which lies northeast of the central Bluegrass region of Kentucky.

Designed by Frank Fitch in 1878, the white, board and batten, Gothic Revival structure (see photo 1), embodies a partial cruciform plan in that the south transept is lacking. The absence of the transept is likely due to the existence of a structure on the adjoining lot south of the church at the time of construction. The church now owns this south lot, and since 1953, has maintained a prayer garden on that site.

The building's gabled, east facade contains a tripartite arrangement composed of three cinquefoil arch windows united under a wooden, pointed arch hood mold. Above this in the gable peak is a triangle-in-trefoil opening, and a simple Latin cross adorns the shingled roof. Seven bays deep, the side walls of the structure are pierced by narrow cinquefoil arch, stained glass windows over which are wooden hood molds (see photo 2). Two-tiered buttresses are interspersed between the windows and are located at the corners of the building. Small, triangular, dormer-like windows corresponding to each bay project from the steeply pitched roof. The trim on these windows resembles a combination of the cinquefoil arch and a modified Latin cross. At the west end of the church is a polygonal apse with a gabled roof terminating in a conical form (see photo 3). Windows in the apse are identical to those in the main body of the church, and a triangle-in-trefoil opening pierces the west gable above the apse.

Access to the church is on the north side with one entrance at the east end of the nave and another in the transept. Both are pointed arch openings with wooden hood molds and are contained within small, gabled projections lit by slender trefoil arch windows. Stairs on the south side in the prayer garden were built in the 1950s to reach the recently excavated basement under the sanctuary.

On the interior, the five-foot wainscot is of chestnut with walls above of board and batten construction. The trusses form a series of pointed arches which span the nave and terminate in corbels on the side walls (see photos 4 and 5). The ceiling is constructed of beaded boards. Electric lanterns suspended above the center aisle

(continued)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1878

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Frank Fitch

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Church of the Ascension, built in 1878, is a rare example of board and batten, Gothic style church architecture in this region of Kentucky. As such, the structure is significant in its references to the nineteenth century Ecclesiological Movement and to the work of American landscape architect, Andrew Jackson Downing.

The church was designed by Frank Fitch who had come to Mt. Sterling just a few years earlier from Connecticut. With but two exceptions, both apparently unavoidable due to the church's location, his Gothic design adhered to what was considered the proper style for Anglican churches as espoused by the Ecclesiological Movement in England. The church was obviously intended to embody a cruciform plan. The absence of the south transept would appear to be due to the fact that another building occupied the lot south of the church. The basic plan of an east-west nave with the altar located at the east end was reversed, again it would seem as a result of the shape and size of the lot. The use of board and batten construction is a direct reference to the architectural ideology of A. J. Downing.

The Church of the Ascension was organized as a parish in 1858 and admitted to the Episcopal Diocese of Kentucky in the same year. The present church structure is the second to occupy the site, the first being a brick building already on the lot acquired by the parish sometime between 1858 and 1860. During the Civil War, Mt. Sterling served as a Union garrison, and the church was used as a combination of camp, hospital, and post office by Federal troops from 1862-66. As a result, the building was heavily damaged and its furniture and pews burned for firewood. When the parish finally regained possession of the structure, over \$1,000 had to be spent in repairs (Swinford and Lee, p. 235).

During the war years the population of Mt. Sterling, and subsequently the size of the parish, dropped. However, in the following years with the influx of Englishmen and businessmen from the East associated with the building of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad and the coal and timber industries in the eastern mountains, the population grew and the need arose for a larger church building. The present structure was begun in 1878 and consecrated in 1882.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Swinford, Frances Keller, and Rebecca Smith Lee. The Great Elm Tree: Heritage of the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington. Lexington, Kentucky: Faith House Press, 1969.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1/4 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Mount Sterling Quadrangle

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 117 241760 4216050
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A rectangular lot 110' x 85'. Beginning at the southwest corner of High and Broadway, extending 110' west along the south side of High Street, turning south 85' along
 (continued)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Charlotte Schneider, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE

April 1979

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

502/564-3741

CITY OR TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Donna C. Hopkins

TITLE Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

5-10-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *Charles Adams*
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

7-10-79

ATTEST: *John H. Osborne*
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

7/6/79

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now light the interior; however, the original gaslight fixtures remain along the side walls. The walnut choir rail and pews were carved by Fred Vischer, a native of Germany. The ends of the pews reveal raised cinquefoil arch panels containing a Latin cross and a fleur-de-lis finial completes the composition.

The nominated property consists of a rectangular area (110' x 85') comprising the church and the prayer garden. The prayer garden, enclosed on three sides by brick walls, is attractively landscaped with brick walks, trees, and shrubs. This sheltered, tranquil setting relates both spatially and spiritually to the church structure.

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the sidewalk which then connects with the brick wall, turning east 110' following the brick wall (property line), turning north 85' along the west side of Broadway to the point of origin.