

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received APR 9 1986  
date entered MAY 8 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Gibson Methodist Episcopal Church

~~and/or~~ common Gibson United Methodist Church

**2. Location**

street & number South Bayou Black Drive N/A not for publication

city, town Gibson N/A vicinity of

state LA code 22 parish Terrebonne code 109  
~~county~~

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Board of Trustees, Gibson United Methodist Church, Stanley P. Walther, Chairman

street & number P. O. Box 35

city, town Gibson N/A vicinity of state LA 70356

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Terrebonne Parish Courthouse

street & number Main Street P. O. Box 1569

city, town Houma state LA 70361

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title LA Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records LA State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Baton Rouge state LA

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>    N/A    </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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### **Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Methodist Episcopal Church (1849) is a small frame three-bay Greek Revival basilica located in the rural bayou community of Gibson. It has been little altered since construction.

Like many American country churches of the period, the building represents a diluted version of the classical temple form. In this case there is no portico and only the suggestion of a pediment. The pediment is indicated by the upper cornices of the front gable and by the gable end returns. Each of the side elevations has a full entablature, while the rear elevation is completely unadorned. The church is entered through a shoulder molded doorway surmounted by a full (albeit squat) pediment. Windows are 16 over 12 with beaded surrounds on the interior. The interior walls as well as the ceiling are composed of beaded planks. The pews are built into the side walls. The altar platform is raised one step above the floor and features a plain balustrade.

### Alterations

The present front doors date from about 1900. In addition, the marble front steps were salvaged from a recently demolished building, and one of the rear sills has been replaced. In our view, these changes should be regarded as minor.

South of the church is a large 1860 brick tomb with a pedimented roof. In the opinion of the State Historic Preservation Office, this tomb should be included in the nominated acreage as a contributing element under the "distinctive design values" portion of the criteria considerations for graves and cemeteries. It adds to the Greek Revival character of the property, and monumentally styled tombs such as this are very rare in rural Louisiana.

Cutting the boundaries to include this tomb necessitated taking in a small portion of the cemetery in which it is located. The other fourteen graves in the nominated area are for the most part relatively modern and none meet any of the exceptions for graves or cemeteries; hence they are non-contributing elements.

# 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1849 **Builder/Architect** Methodist Episcopal Church South

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)** Criterion C

The Methodist Episcopal Church is locally significant in the area of architecture as a landmark in Terrebonne Parish. It is the finer of only two Greek Revival churches remaining in the parish.

Despite the relative preponderance of country Greek Revival churches in the eastern states, very few of them are known to survive in Louisiana. Many parishes have no extant churches from as early as the Greek Revival period, and those which do generally have only one example. In most any parish, the Methodist Episcopal Church would be a worthy historic structure, but it is particularly important for Terrebonne Parish.

The parish was created in 1822 and its sugar based economy boomed in the thirty years or so prior to the Civil War. Given its early founding and development, one would expect Terrebonne to retain numerous nineteenth century churches. However, according to the comprehensive historic structures survey, there are only four pre-1900 churches in the parish. All are frame and relatively humble. Of these, the Methodist Episcopal Church in Gibson is the oldest (by 22 years) and one of only two with Greek Revival elements. The other Greek Revival inspired church is somewhat plainer, having no entablature and no end returns, and no articulated pediment shape to the front gable. Built in 1871, its only noteworthy Greek Revival element is the pediment shaped top found on two of the window surrounds.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Conveyance Records, Terrebonne Parish,

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property @ 1/5th of an acre

Quadrangle name Gibson, LA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 15 6914720 3286400  
Zone Easting Northing

B  
Zone Easting Northing

C  
Zone Easting Northing

D  
Zone Easting Northing

E  
Zone Easting Northing

F  
Zone Easting Northing

G  
Zone Easting Northing

H  
Zone Easting Northing

### Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE SKETCH MAP AND ITEM 10 CONTINUATION SHEET,

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff ASSISTED BY OWNER  
Division of Historic Preservation

organization State of Louisiana date February 1986

street & number P, O, Box 44247 telephone (504) 922-0358

city or town Baton Rouge state LA 70804

# 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 *Robert B. DeBlieux*

title State Historic Preservation Officer Robert B. DeBlieux date April 3, 1986

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*Shelton Byer* date 5/8/86  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Chief of Registration date

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Continuation sheet Gibson Methodist Episcopal Church, Terrebonne Parish, LA Item number 10

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Page 1

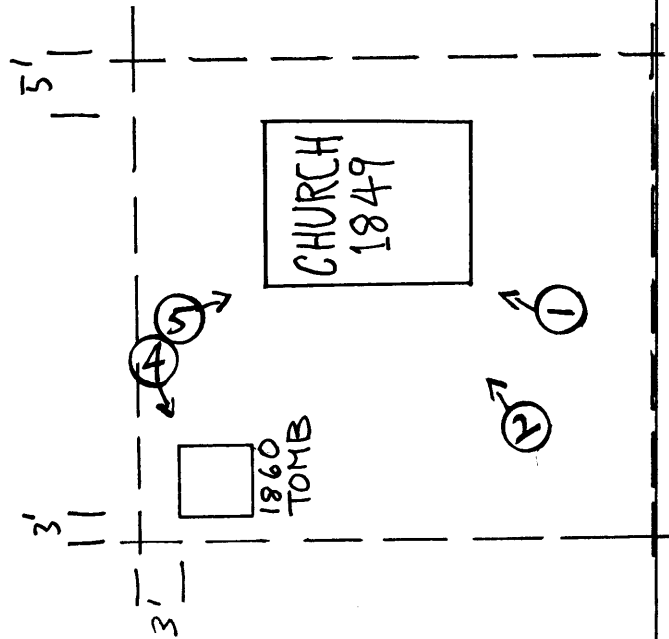
Boundary Description and Justification:

Boundaries consist of a rectangle fronting 70 feet onto South Bayou Black Drive and extending 100 feet to the rear of South Bayou Black Drive. See map also.

The entire acreage owned by the church was not included because it would have meant taking in the entirety of the cemetery surrounding the church. Except for the 1860 tomb noted in Item 7, the cemetery is for the most part relatively modern and does not meet any of the exceptions for graves or cemeteries. The boundaries were drawn to take in only the church and a small portion of the cemetery where the 1860 tomb is located. See also Item 7.

GIBSON UNITED METHODIST  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
TERREBOUNE PARISH,  
LA.

BOUNDARY LINES  
PARALLEL BUILDING  
OR TOMB ELEVATIONS  
AT THE DISTANCES  
SHOWN, EXCEPT THE  
NE. BOUNDARY WHICH  
FOLLOWS S. BAYOU  
BLACK DR.



(NOT TO SCALE)