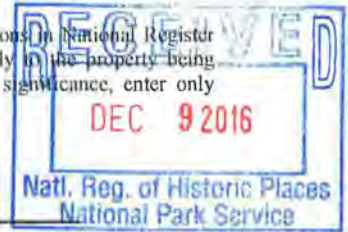


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

56-558

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Other names/site number: First Lutheran Church, First German Evangelical Lutheran Church, SB0768

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 1115 North D Street

City or town: Fort Smith State: AR County: Sebastian

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,


I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide   X   local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

  A   B   X  C   D

 <hr/> <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b> <u>Arkansas Historic Preservation Program</u> <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	<u>11-29-16</u> <hr/> <b>Date</b>
<p>In my opinion, the property <u>   </u> meets <u>   </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p> <hr/> <b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	
<hr/> <b>Title :</b>	
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	

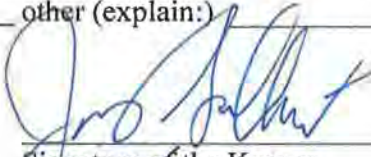
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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

  
Signature of the Keeper

1-24-2017

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register           

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: Religious Facility: Church

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: Religious Facility: Church

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY: Gothic Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: Stone  
Walls: Stone  
Roof: Stone: Slate; Metal

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The First German Evangelical Lutheran Church, now known as the First Evangelical Lutheran Church, in Fort Smith, Arkansas, is located at the north corner of the intersection of North "D" Street and North 12<sup>th</sup> Street. The church was designed in the Gothic Revival style by W. H. Blakely and Hoffman, architects. The church was initially designed from 1900 to 1901 and built by Heilmann Construction Company of Joplin, Missouri, from 1901 to 1904. The church was constructed using limestone quarried from land near Eureka Springs, Arkansas. The structure stands on a stone foundation. The church is topped by a high-pitched gable roof that runs from northeast to southwest and a cross gable that runs from northwest to southeast and creates a crossing near the eastern altar space of the inner sanctuary. Two front towers flank a central, elaborate entry portal along the southwestern façade, including a tall bell tower at the southwest corner of the structure. The structure also includes multiple stained-glass windows of various sizes, most in pointed arch openings.

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## Narrative Description

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church is a limestone structure built in the Gothic Revival Style during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in the historic core of Fort Smith, Arkansas. The main entry façade faces North “D” Street near its intersection with North 12<sup>th</sup> Street. This intersection is only a few feet north of Grand Avenue, a major thoroughfare in downtown Fort Smith. The exterior of the structure is faced with rusticated cut stone with detailed stonework above the pointed arch window and door openings and detailed stonework along many of the rooflines. A string course of smooth cut stones is visible on all facades, only a few feet above the surrounding ground level. The entire structure sits on a stone foundation and there is a partial basement space that houses mechanical equipment. The stone foundation extends slightly above the surrounding ground resulting in the main sanctuary floor level being slightly higher than the surrounding ground level. There are various rectangular vents just above the ground level on each façade that serve to vent the partial basement space. The church is topped by a steeply-pitched gabled roof. The intersection of the two cross gables is topped by a relatively short, eight sided tower with vents along each side under an eight-sided roofing structure. This short tower is topped by an ornamental metal spire. All four main roof gable ends are topped with a cap of smooth stone and topped by ornamental spires. The southwestern entry façade is flanked by two towers, both of which are square in plan. The western tower is shorter than the eastern tower and houses an internal stairwell. The eastern tower is three stories tall and serves as the bell tower for the church. All of the windows have wooden frames inset in the stone openings. The largest windows include geometric tracery. The pointed arch openings throughout the church include equilateral arches, lancet arches and drop arches.

The church sits along the edge of the sidewalks along North “D” Street and West 12<sup>th</sup> Street. A large school building, owned and operated by the church that also includes church offices and fellowship spaces, is located to the northwest and northeast of the older church structure. This education building wraps around the northern corner of the historic church, however, it is not connected to the church building in any way. The area around the church is landscaped and well maintained and connected to the education building by concrete walkways. A large paved parking lot exists in the half block to the north of the church and school.

### Southwest (Front) Façade

The front façade is divided into three vertical bays, including a western tower, a central elaborate entry bay and a three story bell tower to the east. Both towers are square in plan with stone buttresses at each exterior corner. The western tower includes one, tall, pointed arch, stained-glass window on the front façade. This western tower is topped by a steep pyramid form roof with an integrated guttering system along the lower edge of the roof. This tower is topped by a small metal cross. The central bay is dominated by a large, double-door entry portal, flanked by triple stacked, engaged spires of smooth-faced cut stone. The wooden double-doors are topped by a pointed arch of smooth stone that extends into a steeply sloped gable of stone that is partially engaged to the front façade. The peak of this stone gable extends over the large central stained-glass window located at the second story level of this bay. The large stained-glass

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window includes a round glass panel set over a pair of vertical panels topped with shallow pointed arches. These panels are trimmed by elaborate thick dividers between the stained-glass panels. The entire window is set into a wide opening topped with a shallow pointed arch. The central bay is topped by the gable end of the main roof of the structure. This gable is topped by a large stone cross. There are four additional, relatively small pointed arch, stained-glass windows within this bay; one to either side of the entry portal and one to either side of the second story large window opening. Within the gable end of the roof, a small cross composed of square blocks is visible in the rusticated stone of the façade. The entry portal is set above the surrounding street level and is reached by a set of eight stone steps. The double entry doors are topped by a stained-glass window within a wide pointed arch opening. This window included the name of the congregation "Evangelical Lutheran Church of the UAC."

Under the two front tower roofs, the stonework includes a short band of extended stones supported on small stone brackets, creating a repeated pattern on each of the facades of the two towers. The front façade of the bell tower, which forms the southernmost bay of the front façade, includes one tall, pointed arch window at the first floor level, a single, shorter stained-glass window at the second floor level and two pointed arch wooden openings with wooden louvers. The tower is topped by a steeply-sloped, steeple roof with ornamental gables on each main face of the roof. The roof is topped by a metal cross. Two wooden, pointed arch openings with wooden louvers are present on each side of the bell tower at the third story level. A cornerstone is set into the lower portion of the southern exterior buttress of the bell tower. This cornerstone reads "FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH. 1868 - 1902".

### **Southeast (Side) Façade**

The southeast façade of the three story bell tower includes two wooden framed, pointed arch openings with wooden louvers at the third story level. A single stained-glass window is located at the second-story level. This single window is topped by a large lintel stone with a carved, very shallow ogee arch on the underside of the stone which imitates the upward thrust of the pointed arches of the other windows throughout the church. The first-floor level of the southeastern façade of the bell tower includes an elaborate secondary entrance portal with a set of wooden double doors, surrounded by a reduced version of the spire and gable surround of the entry portal on the front façade. The spire and gable surround is composed of smooth stone, contrasting the rusticated stone of the rest of the façade. The double-doors are topped by a pointed arch stained-glass window. This secondary entrance is located above the surrounding ground level, and is reached by a set of seven stone steps. The north and east facades of the bell tower include only the two wooden-framed pointed-arch openings with wooden louvers at the third story level.

The central section of the southeastern façade, adjacent to North 12<sup>th</sup> Street, is set back from the rest of the façade. It includes three pointed-arch, stained-glass windows, with two exterior buttresses. Two downspouts are also located along this façade, located one next to each of the buttresses.

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The eastern section of this façade is extended toward the street and is topped by a steep gable end, the extension of the secondary cross gable over the eastern alter space of the interior sanctuary. A curved concrete walkway leads from a single entry door along the western edge of the extended bay to the sidewalk, creating a handicap accessible entrance to the church. The southeastern façade of the extended bay is flanked by buttresses that extend above the lower roof, creating small towers topped with pyramidal stone caps. The bay is pierced by a central, large, pointed-arch stained-glass window with geometric tracery, including an upper quatrefoil over four pointed-arch panels with various angel lights. This central window is flanked by a single pointed-arch stained-glass window to each side. Directly under the apex of the gable on this façade is a set of three small windows, composed of a central pointed-arch opening flanked by a single rectangular opening to each side. The gable is topped by an ornamental stone spire. The easternmost section of the southeastern facing façade is composed of a one-story block that extends slightly from the adjacent gabled bay and is topped by a flat roof, with an echo of the stone banding above repetitive stone supports seen under the tower roofs. The southeastern corner is supported by an exterior stone buttress. A single entry door is located at the center of this block and is topped by a pointed arch and an inset window. A short flight of steps leads to this single entry door.

### **Northeast (Rear) Façade**

The rear façade includes the rear wall of the sanctuary above three lower extended bays, including a one and a half-story central bay with a one-story block to each side. The rounded central bay extends toward the east enclosing the eastern walls of the interior apse space. The southern side block includes a pair of rectangular, double-hung windows with geometric stained-glass panels. The central bay includes three, short, pointed-arch stained-glass windows which provide light behind the interior altar piece. The central bay is topped with a partial flat roof and a conical roof that connects the bay with the rear wall of the sanctuary. This rear wall features a central gable that is the rear wall of the main roof gable. The gable end includes five square blocks in a cross pattern under the apex. The gable is topped by an ornamental stone spire. The northern, one-story side block includes a single doorway reached by a short flight of stone steps. An air conditioning unit has been installed on the flat roof above this rear side block. This northern side block also includes an exterior buttress at its northeastern corner. A thin stone chimney is located at the intersection of the northern one-story block and the rear wall of the sanctuary which serves the furnace in the basement of the church.

### **Northwest (Side) Façade**

The northwestern façade of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church echoes the massing and spacing of the southeastern façade. The only differences are the pair of double-hung, rectangular windows centered in the eastern one story block and a thin, pointed-arch window centered on the northern façade of the tower at the northwest corner of the church. This window serves to light the stairwell, located in the tower's interior, that provides access to the sanctuary balcony.

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## Interior

The interior of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church is dominated by a high ceiling sanctuary space with heavy arched beams supporting a central flat ceiling with angled side panels. The ceiling planes and walls are painted white, while the beams are left as dark wood. The southwestern end of the sanctuary includes an entry vestibule with a balcony above. The pews are arranged in two large east-facing sections with a central aisle running from the entry portal at the west to the altar space to the east. The pews are slightly curved, creating an auditorium feel to the space. The altar is set slightly above the level of the rest of the floor. The apse includes a single wooden door along each side that leads to two secondary storage and entry spaces. The stained glass throughout the church includes very colorful figural biblical scenes, portraits of biblical figures, geometric and floral patterns and biblical symbols throughout. The floor is wood with a matching wooden wainscoting throughout the sanctuary. All of the doors are of a matching dark wood. A restroom is located at the base of the bell tower and the southwestern front tower houses an internal stairwell for access to the balcony. A carved stone pulpit and baptismal font are located near the stairs leading to the apse at the northeastern end of the sanctuary.

## Integrity

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church has seen very few changes to its structure and finishes. The structural beams of the church originally included applied decorations to their undersides, which also served as sockets for the original electric lighting of the church. This decoration was covered over in the late 1940s when the original electric lighting system was updated to more standard hanging light fixtures. The sockets in the beams were hidden when the ceiling beams were resurfaced. The ceiling and side walls were also originally painted white with stenciled patterns along the edges of the ceiling panels and the top edges of the side walls as well as painted panels in the apse and above the altar. This patterning was painted over sometime after the mid-1940s.

A new organ was installed, with pipes behind the free-standing altar piece in the apse, in 1929. This installation covered three original stained-glass windows in the rear of the apse. The current carved pulpit was moved slightly from its original location, where it was raised about six feet above the floor level and covered by a carved white and gold canopy. In 1949, a major interior renovation was undertaken and a new lighting system and the wainscoting in the sanctuary was installed. In 1971, lightning struck the steeple and a few of the windows were broken. These windows were repaired, new carpet was installed and the paint on the interior was refreshed. In 1982, rain damaged the 1929 pipe organ beyond repair, and in 1987, the pipes were removed, revealing the original stained-glass windows at the rear of the apse. The choir space was moved from the front of the church, near the apse, to the balcony space. In 1999, a major redecoration and refurbishment was undertaken. The ceiling was repaired in the sanctuary, the interior was repainted, the interior carpet was repaired and the exterior stone was cleaned and sealed. Several stained-glass windows were removed, repaired and reinstalled in 2005. The original wood floors of the church were uncovered in 2010, when the carpet in the



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sanctuary was removed. A new oak floor was overlaid on top of the original pine flooring and new carpet runners were installed.

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### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1900-1904  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

May 15, 1904  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Architect: William Hornor Blakely  
Builder: Heilmann Construction Company  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church is an excellent example of a masonry Gothic Revival style church in Fort Smith, Arkansas. The design of the church includes many of the typical Gothic Revival characteristics, including the use of heavy, substantial materials such as stone, steeply pitched cross gables, pointed arch windows, detailed ornamentation, and wall surfaces that extend in the gable ends without a break. All of the building known to be associated with William H. Blakely in Fort Smith have been either substantially changed, such as the Fort Smith Carnegie Library, or have been completely demolished. The First Evangelical Lutheran Church is the only known surviving structure that still retains its historic integrity. The First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Fort Smith, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C**, with **local significance**, as an excellent example of a Gothic Revival style church designed by local architect Williams Hornor Blakely. The property is also being nominated under **Criteria Consideration A** as a religious property deriving its primary significance from its historical importance.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### Summary

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church was designed and constructed for the local German Lutheran congregation of Fort Smith from 1900 to 1904. The building is located just to the west of the historic heart of the town of Fort Smith, which surrounded the former army fort along the Arkansas River. The First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Fort Smith, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C**, with **local significance**, as an excellent example of a Gothic Revival style church designed by local architect Williams Hornor Blakely. The property is also being nominated under **Criteria Consideration A** as a religious property deriving its primary significance from its historical importance.

### Elaboration

#### The Lutheran Church in Arkansas

Lutheranism has existed in Arkansas since the arrival of German immigrants near Arkansas Post in the 1790s. During the 1830s, there were sixty known German-Lutheran families that had

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settled near Little Rock in the preceding decades.<sup>1</sup> Although these early settlers were identified as Lutheran, there were no known early Lutheran church buildings or organized congregations in Arkansas until after the Civil War.<sup>2</sup>

The Lutheran community of Fort Smith chartered the first formal congregation under the leadership of Pastor Martin L. Wyneken in 1868.<sup>3</sup> While traveling to Fort Smith in 1868, Pastor Wyneken also led services for Lutherans in Little Rock. The Little Rock congregation started First Lutheran Church by the end of 1868.<sup>4</sup> By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 14 formal Lutheran congregations had been formed in Arkansas.<sup>5</sup> These early Lutheran church services were held mostly in German, as was customary for the denomination. It wasn't until the few years before World War I that most of the Lutheran Churches in the United States, including those in Arkansas, switched to the English language for their services. This was, in part, a reaction to the hostility seen across the county towards anything perceived to have German connections. The language switch was also seen as an important way to increase the reach of their mission work by offering a more welcoming environment within the services for newcomers who were not necessarily of German descent.<sup>6</sup>

As the population of Arkansas continued to grow during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, more Lutheran congregations continued to be established. Often, an existing congregation would help to start a new congregation in another part of the state. For example, First Lutheran Church in Little Rock helped to establish several of the new congregations around the state. This included Immanuel Lutheran Church in Alexander in 1880, First Lutheran Church in Hot Springs in 1915, Grace Lutheran of Little Rock in 1914 and Trinity Lutheran of North Little Rock in 1943.<sup>7</sup> By 2006, there were ninety-one Lutheran congregations throughout the state of Arkansas.<sup>8</sup>

### **First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fort Smith**

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fort Smith started in 1843 with the arrival of six families that had recently immigrated to the United States from the State of Saxony within the modern day country of Germany.<sup>9</sup> These early Lutheran families initially settled on land about 12 miles to the south of the historic army installation of Fort Smith in a small community called Long Prairie.<sup>10</sup> More families soon followed and the need for a formal church and school

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<sup>1</sup> Steven Teske, "Lutherans", *Encyclopedia of Arkansas*, November 12, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> These included Salem Lutheran Church in Springdale, Immanuel Lutheran Church in Stuttgart, St. John Lutheran Church in Ulm, Hope Colony (Avill) in Saline County, Zion Lutheran Church in Saline County. Teske, "Lutherans".

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> "History of Lutheranism (Missouri Synod) In Sebastian County, Arkansas: First Lutheran Church, Fort Smith," *The Journal: Fort Smith Historical Society Inc.* Volume V, no 1 (April 1981): 3.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

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became apparent. On Christmas Day in 1852, the congregation was officially organized and regular Sunday services were instituted for the community.<sup>11</sup> During the winter of 1853, a log meeting house was built and a teacher was hired from within the local congregation. The church at Long Prairie became the main center of Lutheran worship for the surrounding region, including those who lived in and around the community of Fort Smith.<sup>12</sup> After the outbreak of the Civil War, the residents of the Long Prairie community quickly sought the protection of the nearby Confederate controlled army post at Fort Smith and moved their families into the town that had developed adjacent to the military installation.<sup>13</sup> Between 1861 and 1868, the Lutheran community of Fort Smith met in residences and ran a small school out of a member's home.<sup>14</sup> In June of 1868, a committee of Lutherans in the area met to formally organize the First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fort Smith.<sup>15</sup> Soon, a decision was made to try to find a resident pastor for the newly organized congregation. It became known that an employee of the local newspaper, the *Fort Smith New Era*, was planning a trip to St. Louis. This employee was asked by members of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church to make inquiries of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, the larger governing body of the Lutheran Church in the United States, concerning a minister.<sup>16</sup> With the help of the St. Louis office of the Missouri Synod, Rev. Martin L. Wyneken, a graduate of Concordia Seminary of St. Louis, was selected to become the church's first pastor on October 16, 1868.<sup>17</sup>

During the time that the church was searching for an official pastor, a constitution was drafted at a called meeting of the congregation. A five member Board of Elders was also elected. In 1868, on the same day that the church constitution was drafted, the congregation collectively decided to purchase six lots along North 12<sup>th</sup> Street from the Rogers estate for the eventual construction of a new church and school structure.<sup>18</sup> In November of 1868, the congregation agreed on the need for a church to be built on their newly purchased land. By December 19<sup>th</sup>, the church trustees were instructed to let the contract for the new church to the construction firm of Preusner, Bauer and Meier.<sup>19</sup> The cornerstone for the new frame church was laid on March 12, 1869. On August 22, 1869, the new church was dedicated by Pastor Rev. M. L. Wyneken, with a morning service delivered in German and an afternoon service in English.<sup>20</sup>

In 1875, Pastor Wyneken left the leadership of First Evangelical Lutheran Church when he received a call to lead a church in Cincinnati, Ohio. The following January, the church officially

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*: 4.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> "History of Lutheranism," *The Journal*, (April 1981): 4. The reference to 12<sup>th</sup> street is modern.

According to early Sanborn maps of the area, street names were changed in the 1880s from general names to numbers and letters.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> "New Church Dedicated: Impressive Services Mark Entrance of Congregation to Lutheran Church," *Fort Smith News Record* (Fort Smith, AR), May 16, 1904.

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became a member of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.<sup>21</sup> A new pastor wasn't found until February of 1876, when Rev. P. F. Germann of Topeka, Kansas, was selected to lead the congregation.<sup>22</sup> Through the next few decades, the church's membership continued to grow. In 1877, a parsonage was built for the sum of \$1,000.00.<sup>23</sup> In 1898, Pastor Germann resigned and Rev. J. K. E. Horst of Courtland, Minnesota, was installed to succeed him.<sup>24</sup>

As early as 1869, the congregation began planning for a new building to accommodate the continued growth in membership. The leaders of the congregation called for the design of a new stone structure that would not cost over \$20,000.00 to construct.<sup>25</sup> Sometime in late 1900 or early 1901, William Hornor Blakely was approached to create a design for the new church building. In May of 1901, plans for a new church structure were accepted by the church leadership. The Heilmann Construction Company of Joplin, Missouri, was soon hired to manage the construction of the church.<sup>26</sup> On October 12, 1902, the cornerstone of the new structure was laid.<sup>27</sup> In November 1902, only a month after the new church's cornerstone was laid, Pastor Horst accepted a call to a congregation in Allegheny, Pennsylvania (now Pittsburg, PA), and Pastor A. L. Rohlfing, of Farmington, Missouri, was chosen as his replacement.<sup>28</sup>

The new First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fort Smith was dedicated on May 15, 1904 with many local Lutheran dignitaries in attendance.<sup>29</sup> The dedication service included morning services in German as well as afternoon services in English. After a short morning service in the older church structure that was retained on the site during the construction of the new building, the congregation was led on a short procession to the new church space by Rev. Rohlfing. The old church building was retained and used as dedicated space for the continued operation of the church's day school and for Sunday school classes. This frame structure served as the church school until 1914, when a new, purpose-built school was constructed to the northwest of the new stone church. In October of 1911, the congregation finished paying off the debt for the construction of the church, which totaled \$27,000.00 for the building and all of the interior furnishings, including the organ.<sup>30</sup>

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church has seen very few changes to its structure and finishes throughout the years. In 1929, a new Kilgen organ was installed, replacing the original 1904 organ and necessitating the rearranging of the alter space layout, costing the church almost \$9,000.00 which included the construction necessary to house the various parts of the new

<sup>21</sup> "History of Lutheranism," *The Journal*, (April 1981): 4.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> This parsonage stood near the church until it was demolished in 1923. *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*: 5.

<sup>26</sup> "Historic First Lutheran Church," Pamphlet, First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, Arkansas, April 4, 1981.

<sup>27</sup> "History of Lutheranism," *The Journal*, (April 1981): 4.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*: 5.

<sup>29</sup> "New Church Dedicated: Impressive Services Mark Entrance of Congregation to Lutheran Church," *Fort Smith News Record* (Fort Smith, AR), May 16, 1904.

<sup>30</sup> "History of Lutheranism," *The Journal*, (April 1981): 5.

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musical instrument.<sup>31</sup> This installation covered three original stained-glass windows in the rear of the apse. The structural beams of the church originally included applied decorations to their undersides, which also served as sockets for the original electric lighting of the church. As seen in historic photos of the interior of the church, this decoration was covered over in the late 1940s when the original electric lighting system was updated to modern hanging light fixtures. The sockets in the beams were hidden when the ceiling beams were resurfaced in recent interior renovations. The ceiling and side walls were also originally painted white with stenciled patterns along the edges of the ceiling panels and the top edges of the side walls as well as painted panels in the apse and above the altar. This patterning was painted over sometime after the mid-1940s. The current carved pulpit was moved slightly from its original location, where it was raised about six feet above the floor level and covered by a carved white and gold canopy. In 1949, a major interior renovation was undertaken and a new lighting system and the wainscoting in the sanctuary was installed. In 1971, lightning struck the steeple and a few of the windows were broken.<sup>32</sup> These windows were repaired, new carpet was installed and the paint on the interior was refreshed. In 1982, rain damaged the 1929 pipe organ beyond repair, and in 1987, the pipes were removed, revealing the original stained-glass windows at the rear of the apse. Also, the choir space was moved from the front of the church, near the apse, to the balcony space. In 1999, a major redecoration and refurbishment was undertaken. The ceiling was repaired in the sanctuary, the interior was repainted, the interior carpet was repaired and the exterior stone was cleaned and sealed. Several stained-glass windows were removed, repaired and reinstalled in 2005.<sup>33</sup>

In 2008 to 2009, a new, large family ministries building was built to the northwest of the church, taking up a significant portion of the surrounding half-block. This new building replaced a smaller brick school building that was constructed 1914, with additions from 1947. A new Lutheran school was constructed off-site, along Massard Road, from 1973 to 1976. The original wood floors of the church were uncovered in 2010, when the carpet in the sanctuary was removed. A new oak floor was overlaid on top of the original pine flooring and new carpet runners were installed.

### **William Hornor Blakely, Architect**

Benjamin Croy "B. C." Blakely was born in 1844 in either Kentucky or Ohio.<sup>34</sup> B. C. Blakely's father was an architect and house and boat builder and travelled extensively with his family in tow. B. C. Blakely and his father eventually made their way by river travel, with several other family members, to Batesville, Arkansas, before the outbreak of the Civil War.<sup>35</sup> B. C. Blakely and his father enlisted in the Confederate Army. During his service, B. C. Blakely was promoted to Captain, a title he would use for the rest of his life.<sup>36</sup> After the Civil War, Captain B. C.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*: 6.

<sup>32</sup> "Time-Line History of First Lutheran Church & School Fort Smith, Arkansas 1843-Present," Pamphlet, First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, Arkansas.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>34</sup> "Captain B. C. Blakely," *The Journal: Fort Smith Historical Society Inc.* Vol. VI, no. 2 (September 1982): 30.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*: 31.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*.



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Blakely became a federally licensed pilot for the Arkansas River and the Mississippi River in order to start a business to raft logs from Arkansas to New Orleans. Captain B. C. Blakely eventually started his own steamship company, operating a ship from Fort Gibson, Indian Territory, to New Orleans. Captain B. C. Blakely apparently learned the art of ship building from his father as he was involved in the building of various ships for his own use including several different steamships and tow boats throughout his life.<sup>37</sup> Captain Benjamin Croy “B. C.” Blakely became a prominent steamboat captain, river pilot, boat owner and builder and was considered one of the most well-known of Arkansas’s steamboat captains.<sup>38</sup>

Captain B. C. Blakely married Elizabeth Hornor from Helena, Arkansas, in 1873.<sup>39</sup> Captain B. C. and Elizabeth Blakely moved to Fort Smith from Jacksonport, Arkansas, in 1878. During their marriage, the couple had seven children, including their first son William Hornor Blakely who was born in Arkansas in 1874. Not much is known about the schooling and early career of William H. Blakely. It seems he spent his childhood in various towns in Arkansas, possibly due to the transient nature of his father’s career as a river pilot and steamboat captain. It does appear that William H. Blakely learned building skills from his father, much as his father learned from his father. Soon, William H. Blakely would become at least the third generation of the family to be involved in the building trades. However, it appears that William H. Blakely did not focus on the construction of boats or ships, rather focusing on structures on dry land.

William H. Blakely married Mary Alice Weaver, then age 21, in Fort Smith, Arkansas, on November 8, 1899, at the age of 25.<sup>40</sup> William and Mary Alice continued to live in Fort Smith where they had three children, including two sons and a daughter. William H. Blakey started his architectural career in Fort Smith in c. 1900, with most of his known architectural works being produced between 1900 and 1915. In the 1900 United States Census, William H. Blakely reported his occupation as “architect”. In local city directories for Fort Smith, Arkansas, William H. Blakely is listed under both “Architects” and “Superintendents” of construction in 1907, 1910 and 1911.

William H. Blakely is credited along with W. P. Hoffman for the design of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church. W. P. Hoffman may refer to an architect and house builder who practiced for most of his career in Tahlequah, Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). Not much is known about W. P. Hoffman other than the few surviving advertisements for his architectural and building practice in *The Telephone*, the local Tahlequah newspaper, during the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*: 31-32.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*: 30.

<sup>39</sup> This may have been a second marriage for Captain Blakely as there was a daughter born in c. 1868 who and died at the age of 30. There are no records of a mother or birthplace for this daughter listed on a surviving death record. “Captain B. C. Blakely,” *The Journal: Fort Smith Historical Society Inc.* Vol. VI, no. 2 (September 1982): 32.

<sup>40</sup> Ancestry.com. *Arkansas, County Marriages Index, 1837-1957* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

<sup>41</sup> Two examples can be found in the following editions: *The Telephone*, Tahlequah, Indian Territory, January 9 1890. *Cherokee Telephone*, Tahlequah, Indian Territory, August 6, 1891.

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In 1905, W. H. Blakely designed a new hospital structure known as St. Edward's Infirmary for the Catholic Sisters of Mercy in Fort Smith.<sup>42</sup> The brick building included large porticos supported by tall elaborate columns on at least three facades and a large colonnade around the entire structure, even under the porticos. The building was a complex jumble of columns and entablatures as seen in surviving postcards of the building from c. 1909. The structure was demolished during the construction of a new hospital on the site in 1924. This hospital building was located just to the east of the surviving Catholic Church and convent near the intersection of Garrison Avenue and North 13<sup>th</sup> Street.

During his career in Fort Smith, William H. Blakely also worked in partnership with a Mr. Parsons, sometime before 1910. A building magazine from 1907 stated that the "Parsons & Blakely Co." were the architects for the Carnegie Library, several buildings near the Catholic Convent (likely referring the St. Edward's Infirmary), and the First Baptist Church, all in Fort Smith, Arkansas.<sup>43</sup> Other documentary sources state that Blakely designed the First Baptist Church and St. Edward's Infirmary during the early 1900s. No other architect has been named for the Carnegie Library in Fort Smith, so this claim may be possible. The Fort Smith Carnegie Library was constructed in 1907 and was known to have been based on the design for the earlier Carnegie Library in Guthrie, I. T. (Indian Territory, now Oklahoma).<sup>44</sup>

Surviving national and regional trade magazines mention that William H. Blakely was involved in the design of other projects in the area; including plans for an Elk's lodge in Mena, Arkansas; plans for improvements to a hotel, an office building for Mr. Kennedy and for a building for the Fort Smith Automobile & Supply Company, all in Fort Smith, Arkansas.<sup>45</sup> All of these projects were dated to 1905 to 1907, immediately after the construction of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

All of the building known to be associated with William H. Blakely in Fort Smith have been either substantially changed, such as the Fort Smith Carnegie Library, or have been completely demolished. The First Evangelical Lutheran Church is the only known surviving structure that still retains its historic integrity. This building and the now lost First Baptist Church building were the largest and most detailed structures that William H. Blakely designed in Fort Smith, Arkansas. It appears that William H. Blakely moved away from the practice of Architecture after leaving Arkansas, focusing instead on a career in engineering for private corporations. By

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<sup>42</sup> "St. Edwards Infirmary, Fort Smith, Ark." Fort Smith Historical Society, Inc. August 31, 2016. [www.fortsmithhistory.org/HistoryImages/July2006/stedinfirmary.html](http://www.fortsmithhistory.org/HistoryImages/July2006/stedinfirmary.html).

<sup>43</sup> "Building Operations in Ft. Smith," *Rock Products*, Volume VI, No. 3 (January 5, 1907): 22.

<sup>44</sup> "The Carnegie library to be erected on the corner of Thirteenth and D streets will rbe designed after the building erected for the same purpose in Guthrie, I.T." *Fort Smith Elevator* (Fort Smith, AR), July20, 1906. John Spurgeon, "Carnegie Libraries," *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. Little Rock: Butler Center, Arkansas Studies Institute, September 9, 2015. Accessed September 1, 2016.

<sup>45</sup> *Daily Bulletin of the Manufacturers Record*. Baltimore, MD. Volumes 17-18. 1907. Note: While Blakely produced plans for the Elks Lodge in Mena, he was not given the commission for the design. The National Register listed Elks Lodge in Mena (NR listed 6.4.1998) was designed by an A. Klingensmith according to local newspaper accounts. Information from Elks Lodge National Register information file at the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

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1918, William and Mary Alice Blakely had moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma, with their three children. In 1918, William H. Blakely reported his occupation as Mechanical Engineer for the Oklahoma Natural Gas Company in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on his United States Draft Registration Card. William H. Blakely continued to live in Oklahoma until his death in Ardmore in 1935.

### **Gothic Revival Architecture in Fort Smith, Arkansas**

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church is an excellent example of a masonry Gothic Revival style church in Fort Smith, Arkansas. The design of the church includes many of the typical gothic revival characteristics, including the use of heavy, substantial materials such as stone, steeply pitched cross gables, pointed arch windows, detailed ornamentation, and wall surfaces that extend in the gable ends without a break. The First Evangelical Lutheran Church is one of the best examples of a large scale, masonry, Gothic Revival-style structure in the area.

The use of the Gothic Revival Style started in England in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century with the remodeling of Sir Horace Walpole's country house in the medieval style.<sup>46</sup> This led to a boom in the use of the picturesque style, which relied on gothic characteristics to create fanciful constructions across England. The Gothic Revival style appeared in the United States in Maryland and was quickly adapted in pattern books, including books by Alexander Jackson Davis in 1837 and Andrew Jackson Downing in 1842 and 1850 respectively.<sup>47</sup>

These pattern books helped to popularize the style across the growing United States. In the United States the Gothic Revival style was seen as appropriate for rural houses, while in urban settings it was mostly used for large institutional, religious or civic buildings.<sup>48</sup> Colleges quickly adopted the style, leading to the proliferation of the Collegiate Gothic style. The use of Gothic Revival characteristics on university campus continued throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Church designers also used the Gothic Revival style, which was especially useful when architects wanted to create an air of age and substance in a specific congregation's new building. This historical association is due in large part to the association of the Gothic style with the large cathedrals of Europe. Although the Gothic Revival style's popularity was waning by the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century, interest in the style was revived due to the writings of John Ruskin in the 1870s.<sup>49</sup>

There are quite a few surviving examples of this style in area churches; however, many are built on a smaller scale or use different wall materials. Most of the following structures have been identified within the surveys of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. The growth of Fort Smith during the late 1800s and early 1900s may be one reason for the proliferation of Gothic Revival churches in the area. The style's association with history and large institutions also made it an appropriate style for congregations and institutions that wanted a substantial building that would illustrate the importance of the structures in the growing city of Fort Smith. During

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<sup>46</sup>Virginia McAlester and A. Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture*, First ed. Knopf, 1984. p 200.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

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this time period, the use the Gothic Revival style in architecture was just starting to decline in residential structure, while institutional use of the style continued well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Gothic Revival structures in Fort Smith include Dodson Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, constructed of brick with cut stone detailing in 1930 (NR listed 3.2.2006) and Echols Memorial Christian Church, constructed of brick on a rusticated stone foundation in 1911 (NR listed 2.21.2006). Saint Scholastica Convent, a five-story structure topped by a clay tile roof, was also designed and constructed in the late Gothic Revival Style in 1924 (NR listed 3.2.2006). The convent was constructed of brick with cut-stone detailing; all resting on a stone foundation. All three of these structures lack the upper floor rusticated stonework of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church. Also, the Dodson Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church and the Echols Memorial Christian Church were designed on a smaller scale. Saint Boniface Catholic Church in Fort Smith, constructed in 1938, was also designed in the late Gothic Revival style and was built of brick on a cast-concrete foundation. The nearby First Presbyterian Church, designed in Gothic Revival style and constructed of similar cut stone from 1894 to 1900, may have been designed by William H. Blakely based on its similarities to his known work but there has been no link found to date.

Two other large-scale Gothic Revival style structures in Fort Smith have been lost, including the Fort Smith High School building, constructed in 1897, and the First Baptist Church, constructed in c. 1900. The Fort Smith High School building was destroyed on January 11, 1898, when a devastating tornado hit the city.<sup>50</sup> The school was rebuilt in the same style; however, the building was demolished in the late 1960s to make way for a new Junior High school building on the site.

William H. Blakely is also credited with the design for the First Baptist Church that was located at the corner of North 13<sup>th</sup> and Grand Avenue.<sup>51</sup> The large stone church was a mixture of the Gothic Revival and Romanesque styles, designed by Williams H. Blakely and constructed in c. 1900. The structure served to replace a previous structure that had been destroyed by a tornado in January of 1898. The new Baptist church building was similar in style to the First Evangelical Lutheran Church design while different in massing and detailing, with rounded Romanesque detailing rather than pointed-arches. The First Baptist Church was completed in 1903 and survived until its demolition in the late 1990s.

### **Statement of Significance**

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church is an excellent example of a masonry Gothic Revival style church in Fort Smith, Arkansas. The design of the church includes many of the typical Gothic Revival characteristics, including the use of heavy, substantial materials such as stone, steeply pitched cross gables, pointed arch windows, detailed ornamentation, and wall surfaces that extend in the gable ends without a break. All of the building known to be associated with

<sup>50</sup> "Tornado Wreaks A Town," *New York Times* (New York: NY) January 13, 1898.

<sup>51</sup> "Indiana Oolitic Limestone," *Rock Products*, Volume VI, No. 9 (April 5, 1907): 27.

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William H. Blakely in Fort Smith have been either substantially changed, such as the Fort Smith Carnegie Library, or have been completely demolished. The First Evangelical Lutheran Church is the only known surviving structure that still retains its historic integrity. The First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Fort Smith, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C**, with **local significance**, as an excellent example of a Gothic Revival style church designed by local architect Williams Hornor Blakely. The property is also being nominated under **Criteria Consideration A** as a religious property deriving its primary significance from its historical importance.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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"Time-Line History of First Lutheran Church & School Fort Smith, Arkansas 1843-Present." Pamphlet. First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, Arkansas.

United States Census Rolls, 1890-1920.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- 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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** SB0768

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### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** >1 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

**Or**

#### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |               |                 |                   |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| A. Zone: 15 S | Easting: 371325 | Northing: 3916853 |
| B. Zone: 15 S | Easting: 371352 | Northing: 3916884 |
| C. Zone: 15 S | Easting: 317333 | Northing: 3916899 |
| D. Zone: 15 S | Easting: 371306 | Northing: 3916869 |

#### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

A tract of land located in Section 9, Township 8 North, Range 32 West in Sebastian County, Arkansas, bounded by the following UTM points, starting at a point A (Z: 15 S, Easting: 371325, Northing: 3916853) and traveling northeast to a point B (Z: 15 S, Easting: 371352, Northing: 3916884), then traveling northwest to a point C (Z: 15 S, Easting: 317333, Northing: 3916899), then travelling to the southwest to a point D (Z: 15 S, Easting: 371306, Northing: 3916869), then travelling southeast, returning to point A.



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**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the First Evangelical Lutheran Church.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Callie Williams, National Register Historian  
organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
street & number: 1100 North Street  
city or town: Little Rock state: AR zip code: 72201  
e-mail callie.williams@arkansas.gov  
telephone: 501-324-9880  
date: September 1, 2016

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: First Evangelical Lutheran Church

City or Vicinity: Fort Smith

County: Sebastian

State: Arkansas

Photographer: Callie Williams

Date Photographed: March 29, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 12: Front (southwest) façade, camera facing northeast.

2 of 12: Detail of front entry portal, front (southwest) façade, camera facing northeast.

3 of 12: Side (northwest) façade, camera facing east.

4 of 12: Detail of side (northwest) façade, camera facing south.

5 of 12: Rear (northeast) façade, camera facing southwest.

6 of 12: Detail of rear (northeast) façade, camera facing southwest.

7 of 12: Detail of side (southeast) façade, camera facing northwest.

8 of 12: Side (southeast) façade, camera facing northwest.

9 of 12: Detail of eastern tower along front façade, camera facing southwest.

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10 of 12: Interior of sanctuary, camera facing altar space, camera facing northeast from balcony.

11 of 12: Interior of sanctuary, showing eastern walls and windows, camera facing northeast from balcony.

12 of 12: Detail of Interior of sanctuary, showing western walls, windows and roof framing, camera facing north.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, Sebastian County, Arkansas



Google Earth

feet  
meters



UTM

NAD83

- |    |            |                 |                   |
|----|------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| A. | Zone: 15 S | Easting: 371325 | Northing: 3916853 |
| B. | Zone: 15 S | Easting: 371352 | Northing: 3916884 |
| C. | Zone: 15 S | Easting: 317333 | Northing: 3916899 |
| D. | Zone: 15 S | Easting: 371306 | Northing: 3916869 |

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, Sebastian County, Arkansas



Google Earth



UTM

NAD83

A.	Zone: 15 S	Easting: 371325	Northing: 3916853
B.	Zone: 15 S	Easting: 371352	Northing: 3916884
C.	Zone: 15 S	Easting: 317333	Northing: 3916899
D.	Zone: 15 S	Easting: 371306	Northing: 3916869



FIRST EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN CHURCH



























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 12/9/2016      Date of Pending List: 1/11/2017      Date of 16th Day: 1/26/2017      Date of 45th Day: 1/24/2017      Date of Weekly List: 2/1/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      1/24/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Jim Gabbert      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



THE DEPARTMENT OF ARKANSAS  
**HERITAGE**

Asa Hutchinson  
*Governor*

Stacy Hurst  
*Director*

September 30, 2016

Ms. Maggie Rice, Sr. Planner  
City of Fort Smith  
623 Garrison Avenue  
Stephens Bldg., Rm. 331  
Ft. Smith, AR 72901

Arkansas Arts Council

Arkansas Natural  
Heritage Commission

Arkansas State Archives

Delta Cultural Center

Historic Arkansas Museum

Mosaic Templars  
Cultural Center

Old State House Museum

Re: First Evangelical Lutheran Church – Fort Smith, Sebastian County

Dear Ms. Rice: *Maggie*

We are pleased to inform you that the above referenced property will be considered by the State Review Board of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, an agency of the Department of Arkansas Heritage, for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register of Historic Places is the federal government's official list of historic properties worthy of the preservation. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places provides recognition and assists in preserving our nation's heritage.

Listing of this property provides recognition of the community's historic importance and assures protective review of the federal projects that might adversely affect the character of the historic property.

Listing in the National Register does not mean that limitations will be placed on the property by the federal government. Public visitation rights are not required of property owners. The federal government will not attach covenants to the property or seek to acquire it.

We have enclosed a copy of the National Register nomination for your review. If you have any comments on the proposed nomination, please submit a letter with your comments, concerns, or concurrence to the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program at least 24 hours prior to the date of the State Review Board meeting.

You are invited to attend the State Review Board meeting at which the nomination will be considered. The board will begin meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, December 7, 2016 at the Old State House Museum at 300 West Markham Street, in Little Rock.

If you have any questions regarding the State Review Board meeting feel free to call Ralph Wilcox, Callie Williams or Travis Ratermann at (501) 324-9880.

Sincerely,

*Frances McSwain*

Frances McSwain  
Director



ARKANSAS HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION PROGRAM



National Historic  
Preservation Act 1966-2016



1100 North Street  
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THE DEPARTMENT OF ARKANSAS  
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Asa Hutchinson  
*Governor*

Stacy Hurst  
*Director*

Arkansas Arts Council

Arkansas Natural  
Heritage Commission

Arkansas State Archives

Delta Cultural Center

Historic Arkansas Museum

Mosaic Templars  
Cultural Center

Old State House Museum

December 7, 2016



J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief  
National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl.  
Washington D.C. 20005

RE: First Evangelical Lutheran Church – Fort Smith, Sebastian  
County, Arkansas

Dear Mr. Loether:

We are enclosing for your review the above-referenced nomination. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the First Evangelical Lutheran Church to the National Register of Historic Places. 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 Callie Williams of my staff at (501) 324-9789. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Stacy Hurst  
State Historic Preservation Officer

SH:clw

Enclosures



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