

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NOV 16 1992

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Mount Zion A.M.E. Church

other names/site number 8DU232

2. Location

street & number 201 East Beaver Street n/a  not for publication

city or town Jacksonville n/a  vicinity

state Florida code FL county Duval code 031 zip code 32202

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Suzanne P. Walker / Deputy SHPO 11/12/92  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
  - determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
  - determined not eligible for the National Register.
  - removed from the National Register.
  - other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper *Delores Byers* **Entered in the National Register** Date of Action 12/30/92

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Property

County and State

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

Historic Buildings of Downtown  
Jacksonville, Florida

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion: Religious Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion: Religious Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian: Romanesque

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Glass

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Ethnic Heritage: Black

**Period of Significance**

1905

**Significant Dates**

1905

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

**Cultural Affiliation**

n/a

**Architect/Builder**

Carr, J.B. & Company, architect

Unknown builder

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church  
Name of Property

Duval Co., FL  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than 1 acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

B 1 

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3	3	5	5	4	4	0
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Zone Easting Northing  
2 

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3 

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Zone Easting Northing  
4 

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 See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Stephen Olausen/Barbara E. Mattick, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date November 1992

street & number R.A. Gray Bldg., 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church

street & number 201 E. Beaver Street telephone  

city or town Jacksonville state FL zip code 32202

**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. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Section number 7 Page 1 Mount Zion A.M.E. Church, Jacksonville, Duval Co., FL

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**SUMMARY**

The Mount Zion A.M.E. Church is a two-story edifice located at 201 East Beaver Street in the downtown area of Jacksonville, Florida. The building, with its arched windows, bell towers, and impressive interior detailing, is a classic example of Romanesque Revival architecture. It contributes to the Historic Buildings of Downtown Jacksonville multiple property group cover under associated property type F.6, Historic Religious Buildings of Downtown Jacksonville, 1901-1927.

**PRESENT AND ORIGINAL APPEARANCE**

**Setting**

The Mount Zion A.M.E. Church, located on the 200 block of East Beaver Street, occupies lot 1 of block 85H of Jax Harts Map subdivision, Jacksonville, Florida. Located at the intersection of East Beaver Street and North Newnan Street, the church is the only building on the block. Neighboring buildings on North Newnan and East Beaver Streets consist of high rise residential and two-story commercial buildings.

**PRESENT APPEARANCE**

**Exterior**

Built on a raised basement, character defining features of this Romanesque Revival church are found in its steeply-pitched gable-on-hip roof, red brick exterior wall fabric, buff brick quoins, arched windows finished with stained glass and traceries, and its two towers. Towers on the south facade, one higher than the other, serve as principal entrances to the sanctuary (Photo 1). They are detailed with arched windows, castellated parapets and steeply pitched spire roofs which rise to a simple point. Access to the building is provided by two separate stair cases constructed with rough-faced cast concrete block. The south facade is symmetrical, and has a series of stained glass windows, the center window being the largest. A gable pavilion roof extends over the basement entrance at the bottom of a stairwell near the southwest tower entrance.

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The west elevation is comprised of a series of full height stained glass windows a transept and a parapet bay (Photo 2). The parapet bay has a grand window similar to that on the south elevation. The transept has a hip roof, arched windows and a straight stair leading to an access which serves the rear of the sanctuary.

The north elevation, or the rear of the church, is comprised of a rectilinear vestibule containing a strip of arched stained glass windows (Photo 3). A round stained glass window is located in the steeply-pitched gable end which is accentuated by a stepped parapet. A low-rising one-story brick addition has been attached to the north elevation. Also visible is the two-story office addition which has been attached to the east elevation.

The east elevation, similar to the west elevation, has projecting bays comprised of the entrance tower and a gable extension with a grand stained glass window (Photo 4).

**Interior****Basement:**

Patrons enter the basement through a below-grade stairwell, which is protected by the gable roof (Photo 1). The roof covers the porch area on the south elevation. The basement contains the administrative offices, sunday school classrooms, a choir area, pulpit area, storage space, a kitchen, and stair accesses to the sanctuary level (Photos 5, 6 & 7). Most of the basement area is open. Chamfered wooden posts and beams, the structural system for the sanctuary floor, form a grid across the ceiling in the basement area. The walls are finished in pine veneer paneling. The ceiling is beaded board. Lights are provided via rectangular boxes containing florescent tubes and are wired through metal conduit. Natural lighting is supplied through rectangular windows with 1/1 double-hung sash. Interior access to the sanctuary is achieved by a winding stair in the northeast room. This room also has a doorway to the two-story addition located on the northeast corner of the building.

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Sanctuary:

The sanctuary has two main entrances on the south elevation, a secondary entrance on the west elevation, and one through the addition located at the northeast corner. The main entrances are stair towers. Both have double doors providing access into the sanctuary and stairs which wind to the balcony. The stairs, constructed of wood, have carved railings, balusters, and large newel posts. The newel posts feature inset mirrors located just below the capitals. The ceiling, which conforms to the steeply pitched hip roof with several cross-gables, is finished with ornamental pressed tin. Ornamental knee braces, constructed of heavy pine beams, function as support systems for the sanctuary ceiling (Photo 8). Truss rods span the width of the sanctuary, providing tensile support for the exterior walls.

The oak pews, arranged in four sections, form a semi-circle which focuses on a raised platform on which the altar, pulpit, choir, and pipe organ are located (Photos 9 & 10). The pipe organ, installed in 1905, is one of the finest in Jacksonville. Its largest pipes exhibit painted-on stenciled designs. A low-rising balustrade, featuring a carved rail and wide balusters which have a curved profile, outlines the raised platform. Tin pipes, ornamented with three-leaf clover motifs, loom over the altar area and dominate the north wall of the sanctuary.

Natural interior lighting is provided through leaded stained glass windows with arched tops. Various biblical figures, motifs, and scripture citations are depicted in the windows. Electric lighting is provided by the original brass chandeliers. The main chandelier, suspended from the sanctuary ceiling, is quite grand. Some of the brass sconces, located near the entrance ways have been converted from gas to electric power.

The rectangular space behind the altar is divided into three rooms. The center room contains the works for the pipe organ. The northwest room has an enclosure which houses an air conditioning unit and corner fireplace. The fireplace has a wooden surround with a mirrored overmantel. The northeast room contains a winding stair leading to the basement, an entrance to the addition on the northeast corner, and a small enclosure which houses an air conditioning unit.

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**Balcony:**

The balcony is accessed through winding stairs in the south facade towers. The balcony platform is suspended by a series of horizontal beams which originate in the exterior walls. The north edge of the balcony, finished in wood fascia ornamented with applied lancet motifs. A carved balustrade conforms to the sweeping curve created by the leading edge of the balcony. The rows of pews are arranged in a semi-circle.

**ALTERATIONS****Exterior**

A modern two-story office addition with fixed windows and stucco exterior wall fabric has been added to the northeast corner of the church (Photo 4). The addition obscures very little of the original building.

**Interior**

The basement contains most of the interior alterations. The partitions of two offices and a Sunday school room have created additional spaces in the basement area. The original office and Sunday school room, still in use, are located in the area created by the foundation of the stair towers. A small addition to the north elevation behind the kitchen area, was added as a storage space.

The sanctuary is mostly intact. Pine veneer wainscot has been attached to the exterior walls. Air conditioner vents, which are located at the corners of the space near the ceiling, have been installed in an inconspicuous manner. The air conditioner rooms in the space behind the north wall of the sanctuary are the only conspicuous alterations to the sanctuary level of the church. There are no apparent changes to the balcony area.



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**SUMMARY**

The Mount Zion A.M.E. Church is significant at the local level under National Register Criterion C as an early example of Romanesque Revival architecture in Jacksonville, Florida. Constructed between 1901 and 1905, it is one of seven churches built in downtown Jacksonville between 1901 and 1910. One of two surviving Romanesque Revival edifices in Jacksonville, the church was designed by the Birmingham, Alabama architectural firm of J.B. Carr & Company.

Mount Zion A.M.E. Church, completed in 1905 after the Great Fire of 1901 destroyed its previous building, is also significant under Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage: Black as an example of the participation of Jacksonville's black community in the rebuilding of the city after the fire. The church was placed on the Florida Black Heritage Trail in 1992.

Mount Zion A.M.E. Church contributes to the Historic Buildings of Downtown Jacksonville multiple property group under historic context, Jacksonville Renaissance, 1901-1920 and associated property type F.6, Historic Religious Buildings of Downtown Jacksonville, 1901-1927.

**HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

Located at 133 East Church Street, the Mount Zion A.M.E. church is home to the oldest black congregation in Jacksonville. Founded after the Civil War by a "Society" of freedmen interested in religious worship, the Mount Zion A.M.E. Church was officially recognized by the regional diocese in Savannah, Georgia, in 1866. The church acquired the property on the northeast corner of Beaver and Newnan Streets, where it erected a small frame building for worship services. Several other buildings were erected on the site over the years, each progressively more impressive.

The Great Fire of 1901 destroyed their 1,500 seat sanctuary constructed in 1890. Immediately after the fire, J.B. Carr & Company, an architectural firm based in Birmingham, was hired by the congregation to design the present building. Completed at a cost of \$18,000, the church, with its arched windows, doors, square towers, contrasting brick quoins and stained glass windows was constructed between 1901 and 1905.

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**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Mount Zion A.M.E. Church individual nomination fulfills the architectural requirements outlined in Criteria C for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Its distinctive Romanesque Revival styling and its association with architect J.B. Carr & Company are supporting factors.

With its square belfries, arched windows, and steeply-pitched roof surfaces, the Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church embodies the dominant features of the Romanesque Revival style. Created by Boston architect Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-86), the Romanesque Revival style was the first truly American architectural design. The debut of his first Romanesque design, the monumental Trinity Church and rectory in Boston, came in 1879-80. The Romanesque style was always heavily massed, with the exterior wall surfaces textured by rough stone, and accentuated by turrets and belt courses. Structured with massive stone or masonry surrounds, the entrance and window openings are typically arched and spring from squat columns or from heavy piers.

The popularity of this style came after Richardson's death in 1886. In 1888, a sympathetic monograph on Richardson's life and work sparked interest in the style. Most of the outstanding examples of this style were constructed in the 1890s. The heavy massing and great expense of materials to execute the design properly, virtually dictated its use for large scale public buildings. The residential adaptation of the Romanesque style was rare and always designed by an architect.

The Mount Zion A.M.E. Church was the only Jacksonville commission awarded to the J.B. Carr & Company of Birmingham, Alabama. The First Baptist Church, constructed in 1903, is the other Romanesque Revival Church design in Jacksonville. The design concept is credited to Henry L. Klutho, an important local architect.

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### BIBLIOGRAPHY

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

All of lot 1, block 85 H of Jax Hart's Map subdivision,  
Jacksonville, Florida.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary includes the city lot that has been  
historically associated with the property.

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Photographs 1 Mount Zion A.M.E. Church, Jacksonville,  
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**INVENTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHS**

1. MT. ZION A.M.E. CHURCH
2. JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA
3. ROBERT BENNETT
4. 1991
5. HISTORIC PROPERTY ASSOCIATES
6. MT. ZION A.M.E. CHURCH: LOOKING NORTH AT SOUTH ELEVATION
7. PHOTO NO. 1 OF 10

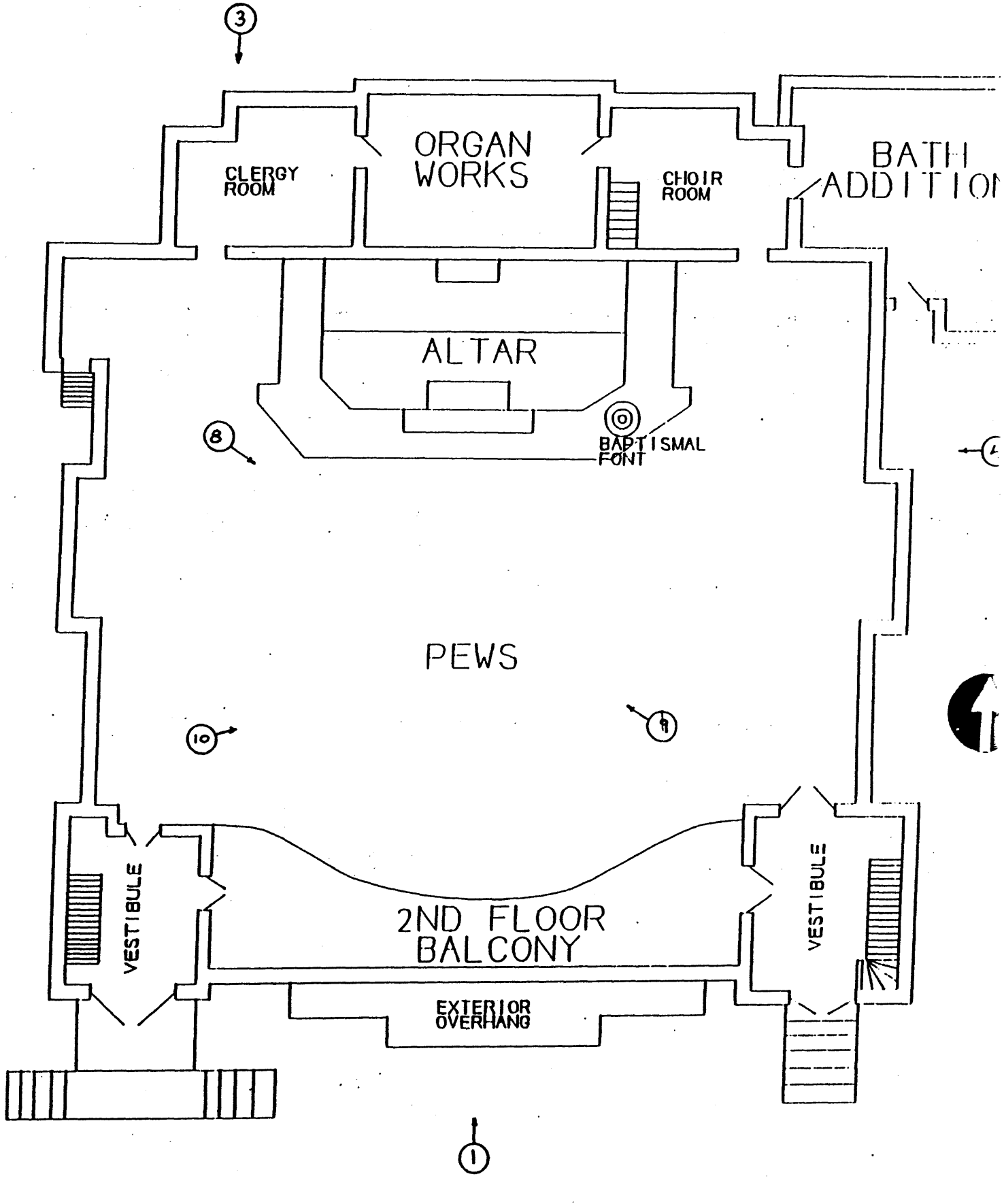
Numbers 1-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.

6. LOOKING NORTHEAST AT WEST ELEVATION
7. PHOTO NO. 2 OF 10
  
6. LOOKING SOUTHEAST AT NORTH ELEVATION
7. PHOTO NO. 3 OF 10
  
6. LOOKING NORTHWEST AT EAST ELEVATION
7. PHOTO NO. 4 OF 10
  
6. LOOKING NORTHEAST AT INTERIOR OF BASEMENT TOWARD PULPIT AND  
CHOIR AREA
7. PHOTO NO. 5 OF 10
  
6. LOOKING SOUTHEAST AT INTERIOR OF BASEMENT AT OFFICE  
PARTITIONS
7. PHOTO NO. 6 OF 10
  
6. LOOKING EAST AT INTERIOR OF BASEMENT AT ALTAR AND CHOIR  
AREA
7. PHOTO NO. 7 OF 10
  
6. LOOKING SOUTHEAST AT INTERIOR OF SANCTUARY
7. PHOTO NO. 8 OF 10
  
6. LOOKING NORTHWEST AT INTERIOR OF SANCTUARY
7. PHOTO NO. 9 OF 10
  
6. LOOKING NORTHEAST AT INTERIOR OF SANCTUARY
7. PHOTO NO. 10 OF 10

PHOTOGRAPH KEY

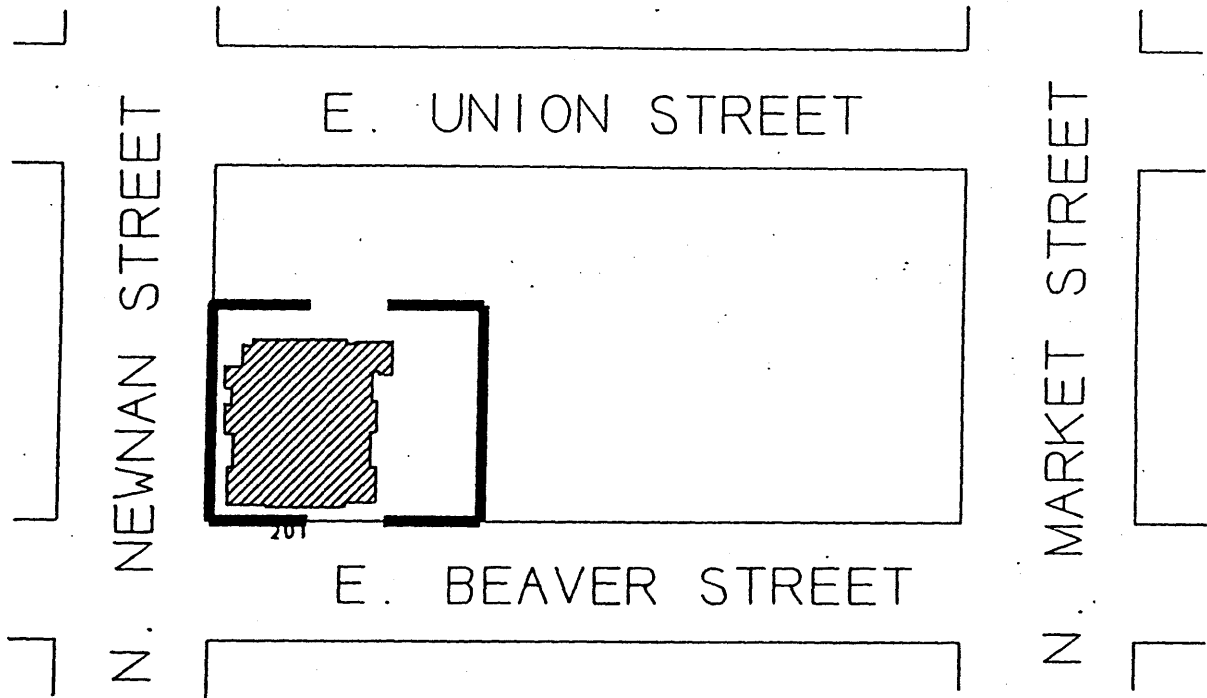
# Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church



scale: 1" = 11'



# Site Plan

## Mount Zion A.M.E. Church 201 East Beaver Street



**Key:**  
Boundary   
Contributing Building   
Scale: 1" = 125'