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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See Instructions to 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 United Methodist Church
Other Names/Site Number: N/A
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & Number: 2727 Jackson Ave.
City or town: Alexandria State: LA County: Rapides
Not for Publication: Vicinity: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 nomination request for determination of eligibility meets, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national state local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D


Signature of certifying official/Title: Phil Boggan, State Historic Preservation Officer Date: 10/2/15
Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting official: Date
Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Certification

I hereby certify that the 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: _____

Jim Smith 11-19-2015
 Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site
<input type="checkbox"/>	Structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Non-contributing	
1		Buildings
		Sites
		Structures
1 (fountain)		Objects
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): religious: religious facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): religious: religious facility

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7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.): other: Mid-Century Modern; Wrightian

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: concrete

walls: brick

roof: asphalt

other:

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.)

Summary Paragraph

The focus of the First United Methodist Church National Register nomination is a mid-century modern brick church with attached chapel built in 1967-68. Both the sanctuary and chapel feature notable artwork. They are part of a much larger complex (fellowship hall, classrooms, offices) of the same date. While the church is connected to the complex via a corridor at one corner, the building has a discrete presence. It “reads” as a single composition. The complex is located roughly a mile-and-a-half southwest of downtown on Jackson Avenue, a busy, two-lane thoroughfare traversing an early to mid 20th century residential area. (It was here to the southwest that the city grew in the post-war years.) A small stream called Bayou Robert meanders through the northeast end of the site, just behind the sanctuary. The sanctuary and chapel at First United Methodist retain a high degree of integrity. The only change to the sanctuary itself has been the replacement of the banks of pipe organs. The attached chapel is unchanged.

Narrative Description

General Layout:

The complex is anchored by a broad courtyard, open on the side facing Jackson Avenue (see attached plan and Photo 1). At the head of the courtyard is the sanctuary with its great, sharply angular pitched roof. A small side chapel (the Crowell Chapel, Photo 3) extends from the northwest corner of the sanctuary. At the foot of the court is the capacious fellowship hall under its equally angular hip roof (see Photo 4). The sanctuary and hall are linked by a broad, mainly glass-lined, flat-roofed corridor that forms the southeast side of the courtyard. It houses the complex’s principal entrance, provides for a display gallery and connects with office and classroom wings to the southeast and southwest (see left side of Photo 10 for the rear of this connector).

The courtyard features a gallery formed of brick columns fronting the fellowship hall, brick columns marking the courtyard entrance to the sanctuary and a central rectangular fountain (“Trust in God”, by Wilbert Verhelst of Dallas, TX, see Photos 5 and 6) with distinctive bronze abstract

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sculptural figures. All of the various parts of the complex are linked, and given a measure of unity, by a continuous modest-size sheet metal skirting roof set at a slight angle.

Sanctuary Southwest (Main Façade) Elevation (Photos 1, 2, 3, 5, 6):

The First United Methodist sanctuary is a study in contrasting geometrical forms. Easily its most striking architectural element is the soaring steeple set at one corner. Although the spire connects with the off-angle building front of the Crowell Chapel, it reads as a free-standing element. The spire consists of a tapered hexagonal brick tower and a sheet metal-over-frame spire with a set of distinctive sharply formed ribs in the lower section. Capping the composition is a slender faceted needle surmounted by a modest silver crown. Surely the inspiration for this most distinctive design was Frank Lloyd Wright's extraordinary spire at the Marin County Civic Center in California (see Photo 25). Construction began on this, Wright's last commission in 1960, a year after his death. First Methodist's steeple follows the style and general proportions of the Marin Civic Center spire. It also employs very similar acutely fashioned ribs, and it follows the general base-ribbed portion-faceted needle top configuration of the Marin spire.

Contrasting with the strongly vertical spire is the much lower façade of the sanctuary. Most of the façade is encompassed within the great angle formed by the roof. The roof juts forward in the manner of a ship's prow to create a broadly angled upper façade. The broad angle is filled with an abstract stained glass composition (described below) marked by vertical ribs. Below the glass-filled great gable is a linear brick and glass flat roofed one story composition capped by a metal skirting roof. This corresponds on the interior to the entrance lobby. At its center is the original wooden double door entrance to the lobby. Like the other numerous doors in the complex, it has small abstract art glass openings and handles formed of crosses.

Sanctuary Northwest Elevation (Photos 2 and 3):

The contrasting geometrical forms in the design are particularly evident along this long side elevation facing Jackson Avenue. Broadly speaking, there is the spire (which looks particularly needle-like from this view); the great expanse of roof jutting forward, with small clerestory windows at the edge; and below that, the side aisle and chapel delineated by a metal skirting roof. Four tall slit-like windows punctuate the otherwise solid brick wall of the side aisle. The chapel is windowless on this elevation.

Sanctuary Southeast Elevation (Photo 10):

The southeast side elevation is almost entirely incorporated into a one story section of the complex.

Sanctuary Northeast (Rear) Elevation (Photo 7):

The rear of the sanctuary is a broad angle brick wall with no openings that faces onto Bayou Robert. It has the same ships' prow shape as the main façade.

Sanctuary Interior (Photos 13-18):

The high sharp angular roof of the sanctuary provides for the complex's most notable interior. The sanctuary interior is noteworthy for its deft integration of art and architecture in a single space,

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notes LSU Art Professor Dr. Matthew Savage. The artists in question will be mentioned in connection with their work. Biographical sketches are provided in Part 8.

The entry area in front (Photo 18), under a flat roof, gives way dramatically to the worship space with its high roof and floor that slopes toward the altar. The sanctuary is basilican in plan with a central nave and side aisles. The side aisles are for circulation and display; they do not contain pews. Laminated wood shafts, separating the aisles from the nave, rise to the center of the roof to form single-center pointed arches rendered in abstract simplicity. Like the laminated arches, the boards of the high ceiling are of wood with a natural finish. The arches, which complement the dramatic effect of the acute angular ceiling, also divide the sanctuary into bays (see Photo 13).

The sanctuary ceiling provides for a clerestory window band on each side of the nave (see Photo 17 and Photo 27). These are set atop the side aisles. The clerestory windows are also divided, within each bay, by fin-like elements that follow the lines of the arches. These fins connect at the bottom with baton strips that carry the eye down and forward to the paneled ceilings of the side aisles – a spatially complex composition that should be considered Wrightian in inspiration.

Below the great roof, the walls are of the same warm beige brick as the exterior. The northwest brick wall features four narrow vertical windows that mark the internal bays. The windows are filled with abstract art glass (see Photos 15-16 and Photo 28). The southeast wall is incorporated into the mass of the building complex and thus has no openings. Original woolen cloth banners (Photo 26) depicting Biblical themes in stylized designs correspond to the art glass windows of the northwest wall (Gregor Goethals).

At the head of the sanctuary is the altar, marked by a soaring wide section of beige brick flanked by stands of organ pipes. The focus of the brick section (and indeed, the focus of the altar) is a dramatic 24 foot high abstract wall copper sculpture entitled “Life, Death and Resurrection” by German-born and educated sculptor Heri Bert Bartscht. It features a huge central cross, an image of man (representing the resurrection), a sunflower (life), and a thorn bush (death). The mortar lines of the brick directly surrounding the metal sculpture are fitted with scores of polished metal shards to give a shimmering, glistening effect (see Photo 14). A copper sculpture at the base of the communion table and the baptismal font are also by Bartscht. The copper sculpture atop the Italian marble baptismal font shows three leaping fish, the latter a well-known early Christian symbol.

A notable amount of decorative colored glass, abstract in design, distinguishes the sanctuary interior. Its designer was the particularly prolific Gabriel Loire of France, whose stained glass commissions span the globe. The work is executed in two stained glass methods: the traditional method of glass set in lead and a particular specialty of Loire’s – *dalle de verre*, pieces of colored art glass set in concrete or epoxy resin. Pioneered in France in the 1920s and ‘30s, *dalle de verre* was considered particularly appropriate for modern church designs. The four windows on the northwest side (*dalle de verre*) depict events in the life of Christ (Baptism of Christ, Temptation of Christ, Christ and the Woman at the Well, and Crucifixion of Christ). They are boldly formed and precisely rendered with a rocky, chard-like quality to the individual pieces of colored art glass. Because the figures are abstractly rendered and simplified, one has to look closely to discern the event being depicted. The clerestory window bands (along each side of the nave) feature boldly formed leaded glass in abstract patterns. The color of the clerestory art glass warms in hue as one moves closer to the altar.

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The largest of Gabriel Loire's commissions at First Methodist, a strongly abstract stained glass composition (using the traditional lead), fills the great front gable of the sanctuary (see Photo 18). With its strongly vertical lines, notes Dr. Savage, it reflects and re-enforces its architectural environment. According to a published church history, the window depicts "the Christian community in the recurrent rhythm of gathering and scattering." The archives of Gabriel Loire's studio preserve the original scope of work sent by the architects (Bennett and Bennett of Dallas) to the artist. Therein the artist was asked to create a window in the "abstract style of G. Loire" that depicted the theme of Christ accompanying parishioners from the church as they leave to practice Christianity in the world.

Other notable interior features of the sanctuary and its entry include: (1) the floors, of slate, in various tones, cut in acute angle shapes; (2) the original hanging light fixtures; (3) wooden doors with abstract art glass windows (windows by Gabriel Loire) and handles formed of crosses.

Side Chapel (see Photos 19-21):

The Crowell Chapel (seating 50) is accessed via twin heavy wood doors from the side of the sanctuary's entry area. To the right of the entrance is a stylized wall sculpture entitled "Tuscan Crucifix" by Thilo Steinschulte, a local architect and artist. The small trapezoidal chapel features smooth paneled wood walls, in a natural finish, and a wood ceiling with delicate beams set in a complex repeating triangle pattern. The focus of the room (the short side of the trapezoid) is a wall size tile mosaic (9 feet, 5 inches by 15 feet) by Gregor Goethals, a Yale educated female theologian and artist at that time on the faculty of the Rhode Island School of Design. In warm hues, it features two human figures kneeling and sharing a cup of water. This is superimposed over a large stylized image of a dove (representing the Holy Spirit). The mosaic is dramatically side-lit via a hidden art glass slit-like stained glass window by Gabriel Loire. At its front is a period altar rail of brushed aluminum and bronze matching the one in the sanctuary.

Fellowship Hall (see Photos 4 and 22):

The large fellowship hall is characterized on the exterior mainly by its huge roof defined at the edges by a metal skirting roof. Below the metal skirting roof on the Jackson elevation is a solid brick wall. The elevation facing the courtyard is mainly of glass with a gallery formed of brick posts.

The fellowship hall on the interior is largely one immense room. The high-pitch hip roof features laminated wood pointed arches. The ceiling is tongue and groove boards in a natural finish laid horizontally. At one short end of the hall is a modest stage with a proscenium of two superimposed beige brick walls on each side and a baton paneled wood effect on top.

Miscellaneous Exteriors/Interiors (see Photos 9, 10, 11, 23, and 24):

The classroom/office wings of the building are one story, flat roofed, and of plain brick on the exterior. They feature narrow vertical slit-like windows, evenly spaced and set fairly close together, with brushed aluminum details. Functionally, they should be seen as a nod to the "form follows function" ethos of the period.

The offices, classrooms, and access corridors are characterized by the standard institutional features of the mid 20th century era. Corridors have gypsum walls and linoleum floors. Most offices and classrooms have walls of painted concrete block. Ceilings throughout are mainly acoustical tile.

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Courtyard Fountain (Contributing Structure):

The above referenced fountain is being counted as a contributing element because it is original to the church; it represents an important component of mid-century modern aesthetics – abstraction; and it contributes to the art and architecture theme developed in Part 8. Wilbert Verhelst of Dallas was the designer.

Alterations:

Since dedication in 1968, the complex has received the following enlargements (see sketch map):

1. a large wing at the southeast side (a youth activities center with a gym and pool)
2. an addition between the two original classroom wings, creating, in the process, a new courtyard
3. two porte-cocheres.

These additions, all one story, have occurred entirely to the southwest and southeast of the original complex, on the opposite side from the significant features and spaces and, hence, their visual impact is minimal. In short, the important view sheds are not diminished. Additionally, the youth center, classroom addition, and two porte cocheres do not negatively impact how the property is experienced. The main outdoor spaces and primary interior spaces of the church itself still flow the same way as when they were first constructed. The locations and siting of these additions was done in a way that they are ancillary and are not part of the main experience when entering the complex and building.

The banks of organ pipes in the sanctuary have been replaced. The old organ pipes were masked behind a cloth screen. Today the pipes are exposed. These burnished gold finished pipes do not read as additions. They certainly have not detracted from any of the other myriad elements that establish the sanctuary's distinctive visual character. Because of the minor alterations made to the building, the First United Methodist Church retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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.
X	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:

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	G	Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.): architecture; art

Period of Significance: 1967-68

Significant Dates: 1967-68

Significant Person (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above): N/A

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion D is marked above): N/A

Architect/Builder (last name, first name): Architects: Bennett, J. Murrell, and Bennett, Edward M.; Associate Architects: Glankler, Eugene, Jr. and Broadwell, James L.; Contractors: Tudor Construction Co.

Artists: Loire, Gabriel (stained glass windows); , Goethals, Gregor (chapel mural and sanctuary wool hangings); Bartscht, Heri Bert (altar sculpture, baptismal table and sculpture); Verhelst, Wilbert (courtyard fountain); , Steinschulte, Thilo (wall sculpture at chapel doors)

Period of Significance (justification): The period of significance for the building is 1967-68, the years that the building was constructed and the art created.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary): This property falls under Criteria Consideration A, as it is a church; however, it is not being nominated for religious significance, but rather for its architectural and artistic significance. The property also falls under Criteria Consideration G, which is further elaborated on below.

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 United Methodist Church of Alexandria is of exceptional local significance under Criterion C (design) and Criteria Consideration G (properties that have achieved significance within the last 50 years). At its sanctuary and chapel, art and architecture come together to create a superlative and singular statement of mid-century modern aesthetics in houses of worship within the City of Alexandria. Clearly it took a coordinated effort among the architectural firm of Bennett and Bennett and various artists to produce such an integrated design. It is assumed that Bennett and Bennett assembled the team of artists. The artists are the internationally known French stained glass master Gabriel Loire of France; Gregor Goethals, a female theologian (Yale Divinity School) and mosaic artist on the faculty of the Rhode Island School of Design; Henri Bert Bartscht, a German-born

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and educated sculptor based in Dallas, Texas; sculptor Wilbert Verhelst, also based in Dallas; and local artist and architect Thilo Steinschulte. (See biographical sketches below.)

The below evaluation of First United Methodist is based on research, analysis and fieldwork done by the authors for (1) three other Alexandria mid-twentieth century properties successfully listed on the National Register under Criterion C at the local level: Alexandria Post-War Suburbs Historic District; Guaranty Bank, Park Avenue Branch; and Gemiluth Chassodim Synagogue; (2) historic context statements on Louisiana Architecture: 1945-65; and (3) additional fieldwork focused on mid-century modern houses of worship in Alexandria specifically for this nomination.

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

Mid-Century Modern Ecclesiastical Architecture in Louisiana:

The post-war decades were a period of great church and synagogue building activity in Louisiana (and across America). As suburban growth accelerated, new congregations were created and new houses of worship were built. Existing congregations outgrew their buildings and oftentimes decided to follow the population shift to locations outside the old downtown core. While the traditional look was far from dead, most congregations in the state opted for modern.

While there has been no exhaustive survey of houses of worship constructed in Louisiana for the period in question, the following general statements can be made based on research and fieldwork in high probability areas of the state: (1) It is an extremely diverse body of work. Designs are the most wide-ranging of any property type for the period. Some are one-of-a-kind creations. (2) On the whole, they look like places of worship, in contrast to some mid-century modern houses of worship that from the exterior could just as easily be a school or clinic were it not for a religious symbol (such as a cross or menorah) displayed prominently. (3) Roofs are the major design element, both inside and out. Roofs are typically huge – great pitched tent shapes, A-frames, roofs that jut forward like a ship's prow, and symmetrical curving roofs that reach their apex at the ridge (as seen from the front). There are few houses of worship in Louisiana with a squared-off flat roof design. (4) Steeples or bell towers, where they exist, are typically asymmetrically placed – sometimes free-standing. Often the only element that conveys religious use is a cross, either applied, for example, to the face of a rectilinear brick shaft, or atop the steeple or bell tower. (5) Survey work to date suggests that most are basilican in plan (with an aisle down the center for processions). (6) The very best, like First United Methodist, exhibit a high level of craftsmanship and artistic creativity. (7) Abstract art glass fills typically narrow and tall side windows and the great gables of the facades. (8) Some of the most singular designs bear the influence of mid-century forms associated with Frank Lloyd Wright. (9) A small minority display modern takes on the traditional Gothic arch.

Alexandria Historical Background:

Alexandria is one of five second-tier cities in Louisiana. Like its fellows, it is the economic hub of a region of the state, in this case Central Louisiana. And like its fellows, it experienced post-war growth and new construction.

Located on the Red River in the center of the state, Alexandria was founded in 1807 by Alexander Fulton (originally from Pennsylvania) and his business partner Thomas Harris Maddox. It

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was incorporated as a town in 1819. Despite this relatively early date, Alexandria was a small community hugging the banks of the Red River on the eve of the Civil War (population 1,461 in 1860). Set afire by Union troops in May 1864, the town recovered slowly (population 1,800 in 1880). The period of 1890 to 1910 saw the greatest population growth in Alexandria's history. The population increased almost 100% in each of these decades, arriving at 11,213 in 1910. Railroads (and what they made possible) were responsible for this explosive development. With its central location within the state, the town emerged as a railroad hub, which made possible the huge lumber boom of the 1890 to c.1920 period. Located amidst a vast region of virgin pine, Alexandria had some seventy sawmills within a forty mile radius.

The military became the town's economic foundation beginning in August and September of 1941 when massive United States Army training exercises were conducted in the area in preparation for probable involvement in WWII. Some half million soldiers engaged in mock battles in what has come to be known as the Louisiana Maneuvers. Numerous huge military camps sprouted around Alexandria. Multi-lane MacArthur Drive, a bypass, opened in 1942 to facilitate tank movement. But with the end of the war, the temporary military camps were closed. In the generally booming decade of the 1950s (for America as a whole), the city's population grew by only 15%, reaching 40,279 in 1960. In 1967, the city's mayor lamented that during the past twenty years, his town had been surpassed in size (within the state) by first Monroe and then Lafayette.

While the City of Alexandria did not experience the explosive population growth of other American cities in the post-war boom years, the population nonetheless increased (by about 5,500 in the 1950s). Ranch house subdivisions appeared on the edges of the city, and businesses and institutions began to move to the suburbs. This suburbanization occurred generally to the southwest of the downtown -- some closer to the old core (for example, First United Methodist) and some further away, beyond MacArthur Drive.

First United Methodist Church History:

First Methodist Church as an institution traces its origins to 1847, when the Louisiana Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South was formed. Published church histories indicate that it is uncertain how many church buildings preceded the Classical Revival edifice erected in downtown Alexandria in 1906-07 (the immediate predecessor of the candidate).

According to a church history published in 1997 (on the occasion of the church 150th anniversary), issues of growth, space needs, and "proximity to membership" faced church leaders in the 1950s. "Voices calling for a new church home began to be heard as early as the middle 50s." Some wanted to renovate (presumably expand) their existing church, while others (labeled "visionaries" in the church history) "prophesied that the membership locale was changing rapidly and that the church needed to be more centrally located." The "visionaries" won the day. The land where the candidate is located was purchased October 1, 1959. Groundbreaking, however, did not occur until December 5, 1966. The reason for the delay is not documented; most likely it was a matter of fundraising (actual cost of \$1,303,000). The building committee chose Bennett and Bennett, a Dallas firm, as the lead architects, with local firm Broadwell and Glankler, as associate architects. According to Gene Glankler, who was interviewed for this nomination, the building committee chose Bennett and Bennett because they specialized in church architecture, particularly Methodist churches. (The senior Bennett, of the father and son team, was a Methodist, per his obituary. See biographical sketches below.)

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There is no documentation as to why the building committee chose modern over traditional. A building committee member interviewed for this nomination did not recall a discussion on this matter. The local newspaper covering the June 1, 1966 groundbreaking quoted Judge George M. Foote, chairman of the building committee, as recalling that the committee wanted “a church that looks like a church” as well as one that blended well into the neighborhood in which it was built. Of course, “a church that looks like a church” could quite readily have been traditional. But the design that emerged and was built is indeed a modern one that “looks like a church” (which is not true of all mid-century modern ecclesiastical architecture).

Alexandria’s Mid-Century Modern Architecture:

Like cities across the country, Alexandria experienced significant building activity in the post World War II era, and the vast majority of this sizable legacy remains. Some of it was documented by the authors within the last two years as they prepared a residential historic district nomination now listed on the National Register. To augment the knowledge gained from this fieldwork, the authors subsequently conducted a windshield tour of the city’s post-war architecture with the guidance of local preservationists.

Among the hundreds of buildings that survive from the period, a small but notable number (estimated at 100 or so) can be termed mid-century modern. The overall legacy of mid-century modern buildings includes the following general property types: 15 to 20 contemporary houses of varying quality and in various permutations (classic flat roofed, 3 or 4 Eichler style roofs, one butterfly roof, and one Tiki style roof); ranch houses that feature a modernist touch here and there (most notably, windows that turn the corner); dozens of small free-standing commercial and professional buildings; and several houses of worship (see below). The small free-standing commercial and professional buildings are almost all one story and for the most part undistinguished. All appear to be “builder jobs,” with the exception of the architect-designed Guaranty Bank, Park Avenue Branch (National Register). To complete the picture, it should be noted that there are no steel and glass skyscrapers in the city.

With the help of local preservationists, the authors have identified nine houses of worship in Alexandria from the period 1945-1970, eight of which are modern (rather than traditional) in style. The eight are: (1) the nominated property; (2) Holy Redeemer Lutheran, 4809 Masonic Drive, 1961, Broadwell and Glankler, architects (Alexandria); (3) St. Timothy’s Episcopal Church, 2627 Horseshoe Drive, 1961, architect unknown (4) B’Nai Israel Traditional Synagogue, 1960, Broadwell and Glankler, architects (Alexandria); (5) Gemiluth Chassodim Synagogue, 2021 Turner Street, National Register, 1960-61, Max J. Heinberg, architect (Alexandria); (6) Parkview Baptist, 2101 MacArthur Drive, 1968, architect unknown; (7) Grace Presbyterian, 4900 Jackson Extension, exact date and architect unknown; and (8) Horseshoe Drive Baptist, 2022 Horseshoe Drive, 1960, architect unknown. These eight will be evaluated below. The ninth church, Emmanuel Baptist, was built in 1950 (Favrot and Reed, New Orleans) in the Gothic style.

Alexandria’s Mid-Century Modern Houses of Worship:

Broadly speaking, for the period 1945-1970 in Louisiana, it is among houses of worship that one finds a particularly high degree of art workmanship, exquisite joinery, and singular dramatic designs. This is particularly evident in small cities such as Alexandria, where well designed mid-century modern houses of worship are particularly important expressions of period aesthetics. They tend to be among the larger buildings of the period in a given town, and their designs make them

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visually quite prominent – in contrast to, for example, a small flat roofed mid-century modern house or a “builder” small professional office. Cities such as Alexandria were too small to have that great architectural icon of the period, the curtain wall skyscraper. The modular grid of the curtain wall skyscraper, of course, could be used to great effect in smaller buildings, but Alexandria has none of these. And period schools in the city are typical for most Louisiana communities, being architecturally bland, with one looking much like the other.

The above referenced eight mid-century modern houses of worship were examined in the preparation of this nomination.

Five are noteworthy expressions of mid-century modern ecclesiastical architecture (in comparison to the others). Each conveys the architect’s own vision of modern. Two have integrity issues.

(1) the nominated property (see below).

(2) Holy Redeemer Lutheran (1961). Holy Redeemer is indeed dominated by its roof. The roof sweeps in graceful curves to an apex with a cross at the top set within a small pavilion. (The cross is the only indicator that this is a place of worship.) A visually prominent curving feature extending to the ground (in the manner of a buttress) defines each corner of the roof. The front façade wall of the square-shaped sanctuary features clerestory windows and lower walls mainly of brick punctuated by tall slit-like windows. Regrettably, a large entrance pavilion incompatible with the original architecture has been added at one side. With the exception of the roof, the interior is rather simple. A number of openings feature small rectangles of colored glass (without a design). The only designed art glass is found in sidelights at two doors.

(3) Parkview Baptist (1968). A dramatic ship’s prow roof defines this large brick building. A massive faceted brick shaft extends from the point of the roof to the ground. The design would have been cleaner, been sharper, without the shaft – allowing the ship’s prow of the roof to dominate. The shaft blunts (works against) the effect of the jutting roof. Originally, the area between the shaft and the front wall was entirely open. It has since been enclosed at ground level. Parkview Baptist’s artwork (in comparison to First Methodist) is limited to narrow side windows filled with colored art glass in geometrical shapes and an abstract art glass window at the front and rear. (The latter are rather small in comparison to the great gable window at First United Methodist, occupying perhaps a fourth of the gable spaces. And alterations have diminished the original character of the interior (some new wall sheathing, acoustical panels, new lighting, and the addition of crown molding).

(4) B’nai Zion Traditional Synagogue (1960). This diminutive, flat-roofed rectilinear building is a good example of modernism achieved on a modest budget. The main material is concrete block painted white. Concrete block columns with superimposed concrete block fin-like elements divide the side elevations into bays. A portion of the façade is clad in marble panels. The only clue to the religious nature of the building is an elegant stylized menorah near the front door and the name of the congregation. The modest interior appears to be well preserved. The long side walls feature an alternating pattern of opaque glass windows (formed of rectangles and squares of varying sizes and colors) and sections of exposed concrete block. Light is provided via small clerestory windows along the sides. At the center of the roof is a small polygonal clerestory with half round windows; one suspects it was added at a later date.

(5) Gemiluth Chassodim Synagogue (listed individually on the Register under Criterion C.

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The other three modern houses of worship from the 1945-70 period, all of far lesser quality than the five above, are: (1) St. Timothy Episcopal Church, a simple A-frame building; (2) Horseshoe Drive Baptist, whose various parts do not come together cohesively; and (3) Grace Presbyterian, which might be described as quasi-modern/quasi-traditional (featuring a simple A frame design with a traditional-looking bell tower to one side).

First United Methodist Church Criterion C/Criteria Consideration G (Architecture and Art):

Not only does First United Methodist Church demonstrate the character-defining features of mid-century modern ecclesiastical architecture in Louisiana delineated at the beginning of Part 8, but it does so in a superlative manner. Its significance rests upon the virtually intact and intensively worked sanctuary and chapel interiors and artwork and the quite unusual steeple. In short, it represents an impressive confluence of modern design in several media.

First United Methodist's architectural design derives significant visual force and identity from architectural forms closely associated with Frank Lloyd Wright's post-WWII work. The Wrightian component is important because it reflects an important architectural phenomenon of the period – the re-emergence of Frank Lloyd Wright as a major architectural force – his so-called "Second Golden Age." Specifically, these forms are: (1) the jutting forward of the roof in the manner of a ship's prow (as seen most dramatically at Wright's Unitarian Meeting House, Madison, Wisconsin, 1947); (2) the great broad angles of the façade and rear, in contrast to the right angle of most mid-century modern architecture; and (3) most importantly, the steeple, a quite striking feature and the focus of the church complex's overall composition. The steeple is indeed unique in Alexandria and is the feature that most distinguishes First Methodist from other works. While the inclusion of a steeple in a church design is to be expected, the one at First Methodist is most unusual (within the context of steeples and/or bell towers observed by the authors across the state for the period in question). Not only is it similar in articulation to that at the Marin Civic Center (three stages, with ribs), but it is placed in a similar manner (at the edge of the composition). While the two steeples are not exactly the same, their designs are too distinctive and too similar to be a mere coincidence. Of the body of mid-twentieth century buildings in Alexandria that exhibit some Wrightian influence, First United Methodist's visually prominent steeple is unique and exhibits stylistically advanced taste.

Regardless of the inspiration, the steeple, ship's prow roofline, great broad angles of the façade and rear, and the intensively worked interior come together to create one of Alexandria's most notable mid-century modern landmarks. The sophisticated and singular design is in sharp contrast to the bulk of the city's buildings displaying influences of mid-century modern design – small builder vernacular offices and commercial buildings and ranch houses with modernist touches.

Many architectural and artistic elements come together in the sanctuary interior to create a tour-de-force in individually crafted, high-art space -- the soaring nave with its high acute angled wood ceiling; the abstract laminated pointed arches; the copious abstract and stylized representational art glass by Gabriel Loire, a well-known and masterful practitioner of the art of international stature; the paneled aisle ceilings; and the altar, with its dramatic metal semi-representational sculpture and its polished metal shard shimmering effect. The chapel's large wall-size tile mosaic by Gregor Goethals, depicting stylized human figures superimposed on a dove, is believed to be the only mid-century modern mosaic in the city. It is known to be the only mosaic in a period church in the city – and a particularly large one by a known artist. With its dramatic hidden natural lighting, the mosaic produces a very striking impression.

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Name of Property

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This integration of architecture and art and the abundance of “exceptional quality” art (per LSU art professor Dr. Matthew Savage) make First Methodist United Methodist Church a singular mid-century modern house of worship within the City of Alexandria and hence of “exceptional significance” (Criteria Consideration G). It is the only place of worship from the period 1945-1970 in the city with such an abundance of artwork and by known artists. The abstraction of religious themes so typical of mid-century modern houses of worship is well represented in the artwork and by accomplished artists from France, to the East Coast, to Dallas. Finally, its sanctuary and chapel (the sources of significance under Criterion C) retain a very high degree of integrity.

Of the five noteworthy mid-century modern houses of worship referenced above, First United Methodist and Gemiluth Chassodim Synagogue (NR) are the most important. While Holy Redeemer Lutheran and Parkview Baptist feature striking forms seen in mid-century modern ecclesiastical architecture, they are not as well preserved as First United Methodist (as outlined above). Also, per above, the design at Parkview Baptist is diluted by the use of a strongly rendered vertical element that competes with the outward thrusting prow of the roof. B’Nai Zion is a quite modest building architecturally built for a much smaller congregation, as compared to the others, with a small budget.

First United Methodist is distinguished from Gemiluth Chassodim by the abundance of ecclesiastical art it contains and how well it is integrated into the architectural vocabulary of the church. While notable, the art at Gemiluth Chassodim is confined to narrow *dalle de verre* side windows and squares of colored glass in a rear lantern highlighting the bimah.

At First United Methodist, there is considerably more artwork – a dazzling abundance -- the huge abstract stained glass window by the internationally known Gabriel Loire, Loire’s *dalle de verre* windows on the southeast side; and his abstract clerestory windows on the northwest side. Even the art glass windows in the facility’s various doors are by Loire. As one enters the sanctuary, the view is dominated by the soaring ribbed roof and the dramatic copper altar sculpture by Heri Bert Bartscht superimposed on a softly shimmering beige shaft rising to the peak of the roof. The huge stylized man at the upper right corner, with his arms stretched heavenward, is particularly memorable. Finally, there is Gregor Goethal’s large mosaic in the chapel, made compelling by its simplicity and made dramatic by sunlight streaming from what seems to be an unknown source (actually a narrow side window of *dalle de verre* glass by Gabriel Loire). All in all, First United Methodist, as a statement of mid-century modern ecclesiastical art and architecture, is unmatched in Alexandria’s period houses of worship.

The Architects:

The complex was designed by father and son Dallas architects, J. Murrell Bennett and Edward M. Bennett, with Eugene Glankler, Jr. and James L. Broadwell of Alexandria, LA, as associate architects. The Bennett firm designed the building, with Glankler and Broadwell providing oversight of the construction (per an interview with Eugene Glankler).

J. Murrell Bennett was born in 1904 in Cedar Hill, Texas, and received his Bachelor of Architecture degree from Washington University in 1927. He was a partner in Gill and Bennett, 1938-42; partner in Bennett and Crittenden, 1944-64; and partner in Bennett and Bennett, beginning in 1965 when the firm was organized. He became a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1959. According to the 1970 AIA Directory, he was registered to practice in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, and Oklahoma. J. Murrell Bennett died in 1973. His obituary noted that he

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“designed more than 100 churches in the South and Southwest, including many in the Dallas area.” Edward M. Bennett, born in 1933, received a Bachelors of Architecture degree from the University of Texas in 1961. According to the 1970 AIA Directory, he was registered to practice in Arizona and Texas.

The foregoing biographical information on the Bennetts is from AIA Directories and the elder Bennett’s obituary. The authors attempted to find additional information on the firm, but with no success. The Texas National Register Coordinator indicated that there were no National Register nominations for the firm. The Dallas Preservation League was also contacted.

The associate architects (overseeing construction) were Eugene Glankler, Jr. and James L. Broadwell of Alexandria. Born in 1927, Glankler received a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Tulane University in 1952. He worked at the local firm of Barron, Heinberg and Brocato before forming Glankler and Broadwell in 1956. Born in 1924, James L. Broadwell received a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Tulane University in 1953. He too worked at Barron, Heinberg and Brocato before forming Glankler and Broadwell in 1956.

The Artists:

The best known of the artists contributing to First United Methodist is Gabriel Loire, a master of stained glass with an international reputation and portfolio. First Methodist Alexandria contains the only work by Loire in Alexandria and is one of only four buildings in Louisiana enriched by his work (there are four churches, one mausoleum, and one sanatorium in the state with Loire’s work). Born in France in 1904, Loire opened his own studio on the outskirts of Chartres in 1946. His work and importance is assessed in *Gabriel Loire/Les Vitraux/Stained Glass* by Charles W. Pratt and Joan C. Pratt, published in 1996 in French and English by *Centre International du Vitrail* (International Center of Stained Glass) in France. According to the authors, Loire was among the pioneers of *dalle de verre* and became “one of its foremost practitioners” around the world in the 1950s and ‘60s. His studio’s output was large and of great quality, with more than 400 commissions in France and more than 300 in other countries (including the United States, Germany, Great Britain, Japan and Africa). Windows for Salisbury Cathedral (Salisbury, England) are among his many commissions for landmark buildings.

Apparently Loire’s first commission in the United States was at First Presbyterian Church in Stamford, Ct. He was retained in the mid-1950s by the church’s architect, Wallace Harrison. The resolutely modern, boundary-breaking so-called “Fish Church” was well publicized in both popular (*Life* and *Look*) and professional (*Architectural Forum*) publications. It was this building that brought *dalle de verre* to the attention of American stained glass makers, wrote Charles W. Pratt and Joan C. Pratt in their book on Gabriel Loire. Eventually Loire Imports had representatives throughout the United States. Today, the Loire studio is continued by Gabriel’s son, Jacques, who provided important archival materials for this nomination.

Gregor Goethals (Martha Gregor Thompson Goethals) designed the chapel mosaic and the woolen banners in the sanctuary. She was a theologian, art professor, and practicing artist. Born in 1926 in Monroe, Louisiana, Goethals did her undergraduate work at Louisiana State University in fine arts and political philosophy. In 1952, she received her Bachelors of Divinity from Yale University and later an M.A. from Yale’s art school and a Ph.D. from Harvard. She then went to the Rhode Island School of Design, where she taught for almost 30 years. To date, there is no known compendium of her art. In addition to the chapel mosaic at FUMC and the woolen banners in the sanctuary, she is

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known to have designed mosaics for the Sunday School at Riverside Church in Manhattan and a mosaic triptych at Harvard.

Heri Bert Bartscht (1919-1996) was born in Germany and trained for six years at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. He and his wife moved to Dallas in 1953. According to a biographical note for his papers held at the Dallas Museum of Art, he quickly became involved in the local arts community, founded the Dallas Society for Contemporary Arts, and in 1961, was asked to establish a sculpture program at the University of Dallas, which led to an almost thirty year teaching career there.

His works include over 50 commissions for churches, many of them (including those at First Methodist) depicted in his self-published *Heri Bert Bartscht: Twenty Years of My Sculpture* (1968). In the foreword, Bartscht notes that he began in Germany to work in cooperation with architects – “an aspect of the sculptor’s profession that has given me a singular satisfaction.” “Here the sculptor’s endeavor enhances the architect’s intentions . . .” Bartscht also notes in the foreword that “his disposition” drew him to religious themes.

The sculptor continued his collaboration with architects in his new home. Among the Dallas architects that he mentioned as professional and personal friends was Murrell Bennett (of the firm that designed First Methodist). Bartscht created the distinctive copper sculpture that is found on First United Methodist’s altar.

Wilbert Verhelst (1923-2012), born in Wisconsin and educated at the University of Denver, joined the faculty at Southern Methodist University in Dallas in 1963, where he established the sculpture program. He retired from the faculty in 1986. According to an on-line resume he submitted, he concentrated from 1963 to 1974 on large-scale commissions in Colorado, Texas and Louisiana for banks, churches, and public spaces. In 1973 Prentice Hall published his textbook, *Sculpture: Tools, Materials and Techniques*. Verhelst designed the courtyard’s fountain.

Thilo Steinschulte (1926-2005), a German born and educated architect, moved to Alexandria, LA, in 1954 and joined the firm of Barron, Heinberg and Brocato. The firm and Steinschulte specialized in contemporary architecture. He was also an artist (apparently as a hobby rather than formal training) and quite active in the local arts community. Steinschulte designed the wall sculpture found in the Crowell Chapel.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

SEE ABOVE

9. Major Bibliographical Resources

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

Alexandria Mid-Century Modern Windshield Survey. March 2013.

Alexandria Mid-Century Modern Churches and Synagogues Site Visits. October 2014.

Alexandria Daily Town Talk. December 5, 1966; June 1, 1968.

First United Methodist Church

Name of Property

Rapides Parish, LA

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American Architects Directory, 1962, 1972.

Bartscht, Heri Bert. *Heri Bert Bartscht: Twenty Years of My Sculpture*. Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Co., 1968.

Bartscht, Heri Bert. Biographical notes from Bartscht Papers. Dallas Museum of Art.

dallasartsrevue.com. Biographical information on Wilbert Verhelst.

Dallas Morning News. "J. Murrell Bennett, Architect, Dies at 68." 7/29/1973.

Dallas Morning News. Wilbert Verhelst obituary. 12/23/2012.

First United Methodist Church Blueprints, August 1, 1966.

Glankler, Eugene. Interview with Donna Fricker. October 7, 2014.

Hess, Alan. *Frank Lloyd Wright Mid-Century Modern*. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2007.

Loire, Gabriel. Archives, Ateliers Loire, Leves, France. Material received via e-mail courtesy Jacques Loire.

Pfeiffer, Bruce Brooks and Gossel, Peter. *Frank Lloyd Wright Complete Works: Vol. 3, 1943-1959*. Koln, Germany: Taschen, 2009.

Pratt, Charles W. and Joan C. *Gabriel Loire: Les Vitraux/Stained Glass*. Centre International du Vitrail, 1996.

Price, Jay M. *Temples for a Modern God: Religious Architecture in Postwar America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Savage, Matthew, Dr., LSU Art Department. Personal communication with Jonathan and Donna Fricker.

"Symbolism at FUMCA." On-line material on artwork. www.fumca.org/documents.

Tapley, Philip A. "A History of First United Methodist Church of Alexandria, Louisiana." First United Methodist Church, 1989 revision of 1976 edition.

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

First United Methodist Church
Name of Property

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_____ 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): _____ n/a _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: approx. 3 1/2 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 31.294061 Longitude: -92.465759

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

The following is the legal property description of two parcels of land purchased by the church in 1959 for the purposes of re-locating their physical plant:

1. A certain place, parcel or tract of land, together with all buildings and improvements thereon, rights, ways and privileges prescription and perspective rights thereto belonging or in anywise appertaining, and being more particularly described as follows, to-wit:

From a point common to the center of Bayou Robert and the south side of Jackson Street as the point of beginning, run thence along the south side of Jackson Street 209 feet; thence at a right angle to the left 160 feet; thence at a right angle to the right 275 feet; thence at a right angle to the left 97.7 feet; thence to the right on an exterior angle of 77 degrees, 31 minutes 225.33 feet to the east side of Constant Street; thence to the left along Constant Street 50.69 feet; thence to the left 77 degrees, 31 minutes, 225.33 feet; thence to the right on an interior angle 102 degrees, 47 minutes, 97.7 feet; thence to the left on an interior angle of 113 degrees, 33 minutes, along the line of Victor Michiels tract 259.7 feet; thence to the left on an interior angle of 86 degrees, 47 minutes 138.2 feet; thence to the left on an interior angle 168 degrees, 12 minutes, 177.2 feet; thence to the right on an exterior angle 94 degrees, 11 minutes, 192 feet to the center of Bayou Robert; thence to the left on an interior angle of 80 degrees along the center of such bayou 223.5 feet to the point of beginning, containing 3.09 acres, all as shown by plat of survey by D. D. Sandefur dated September 18, 1958.

First United Methodist Church
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2. A certain piece, parcel or lot of ground, together with all buildings and improvements thereon, rights, way and privileges thereto belonging or in anywise appertaining, being, lying and situated in the City of Alexandria, Rapides Parish, Louisiana and being more particularly described as follows:

From the southwesterly corner of Block 4 of Hayden-Bolton Place, run out the easterly right of way line of Jackson Street and its Extension the distance of 355.8 feet to a point on the easterly right of way line of Jackson Street Extension, said point being the point of beginning of the property herein described; from said point of beginning so established, thence continue out the easterly line of Jackson Street Extension a distance of 125 feet, thereby establishing the front of the property herein described on Jackson Street Extension, and from the extremities of this front so established, thence run back between parallel lines drawn at right angles to the easterly line of Jackson Street extension the distance of 160 feet. Being the same and identical property acquired by Albert F. Lanier from Constant Petrus by deeds dated December 14, 1939 and December 27, 1939, in Conveyance Book 245, Pages 67 and 135 respectively, records of Rapides Parish, LA.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Boundaries follow the property lines of the parcel of land historically associated with the church complex and described above.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jonathan and Donna Fricker
organization: Fricker Historic Preservation Services LLC
street & number: 998 Stanford Ave., #203
city or town: Baton Rouge state: LA zip code: 70808
e-mail: jonathanfricker@gmail.com
telephone: 225-246-7901
date: September/October 2014

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.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 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.

First United Methodist Church

Name of Property

Rapides Parish, LA

County and State

PHOTO LOG

Name of Property: First United Methodist Church

City or Vicinity: Alexandria

County: Rapides Parish

State: LA

Name of Photographer: Donna Fricker

Date of Photographs: June and August 2014

Total of 25 photos

Photo 1

General View; Camera facing northeast

Photo 2

Sanctuary side elevation; Camera facing east

Photo 3

Sanctuary; Camera facing southeast

Photo 4

Fellowship hall; Camera facing southeast

Photo 5

Sanctuary façade; Camera facing northeast

Photo 6

Sanctuary spire; Camera facing north

Photo 7

Sanctuary rear; Camera facing southwest

Photo 8

Sanctuary rear; Camera facing southwest

Photo 9

Southeast side elevation; Camera facing southwest

Photo 10

Southeast side elevation; Camera facing northwest

Photo 11

Non-historic addition; Camera facing southeast

Photo 12

Non-historic addition; Camera facing north

Photo 13

First United Methodist Church

Name of Property

Rapides Parish, LA

County and State

Interior -- sanctuary general view; Camera facing northeast

Photo 14

Interior – altar; Camera facing northeast

Photo 15

Interior – sanctuary side windows; Camera facing northwest

Photo 16

Interior – side window detail; Camera facing northwest

Photo 17

Interior – clerestory windows; Camera facing southeast

Photo 18

Interior – sanctuary general view; Camera facing southwest

Photo 19

Interior – entrance to chapel; Camera facing northwest

Photo 20

Interior – chapel; Camera facing northwest

Photo 21

Interior – chapel; Camera facing northwest

Photo 22

Interior – fellowship hall; Camera facing west/northwest

Photo 23

Interior – sample corridor; Camera facing northeast

Photo 24

Interior – sample corridor; Camera facing southwest

Photo 25

General interior of sanctuary

Photo 26

Woolen wall hangings

Photo 27

Clerestory windows detail

Photo 28

Side stained glass window

List of Figures

First United Methodist Church
Name of Property

Rapides Parish, LA
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Figure 1. Supplemental photo – Marin County Civic Center, San Raphael, CA



First United Methodist Church
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Figure 2. Sketch of the church done c. 1967.



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 United Methodist Church, Rapides Parish, LA



Latitude: 31.294061 Longitude: -92.465759

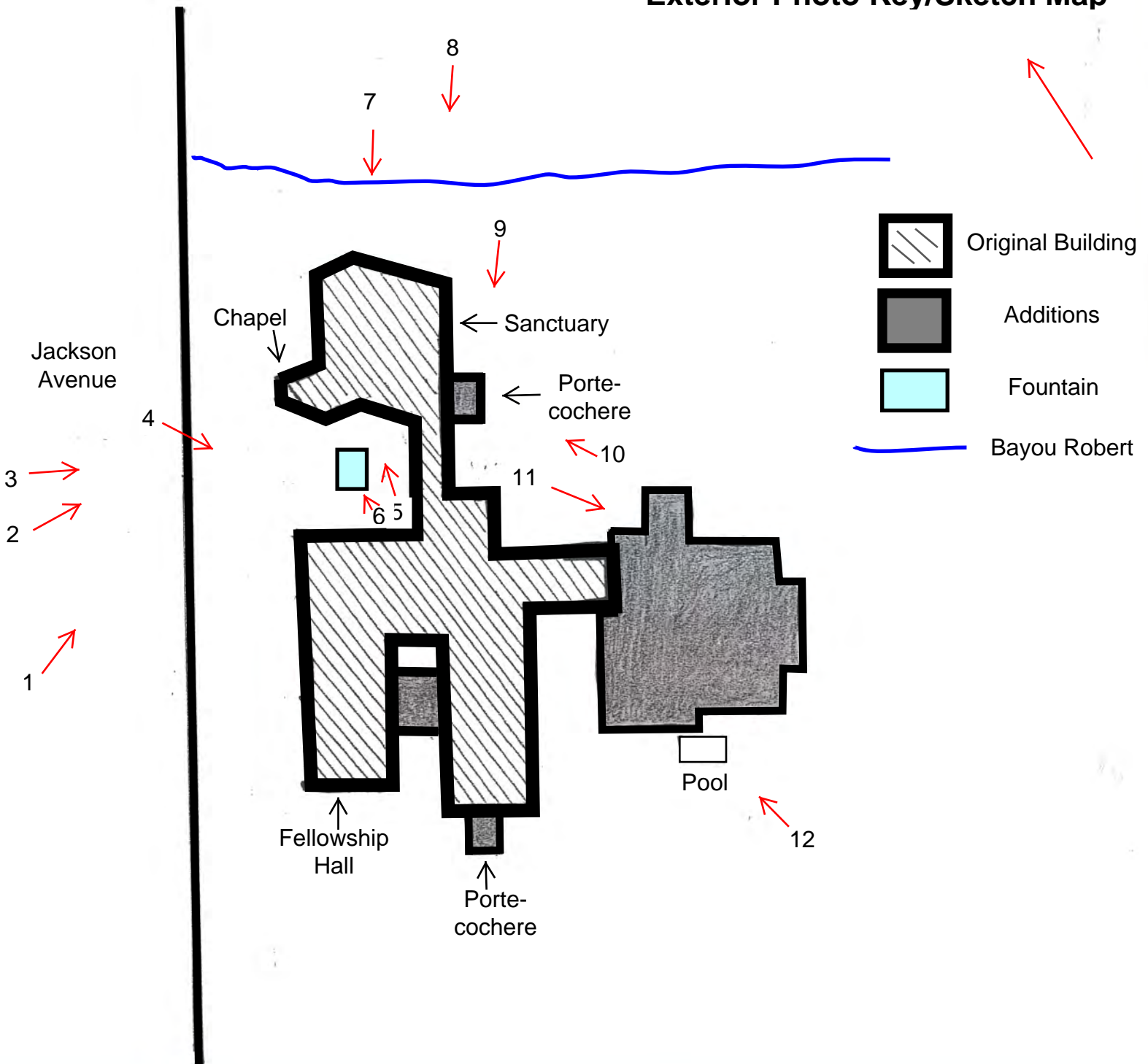
First United Methodist Church, Rapides Parish, LA



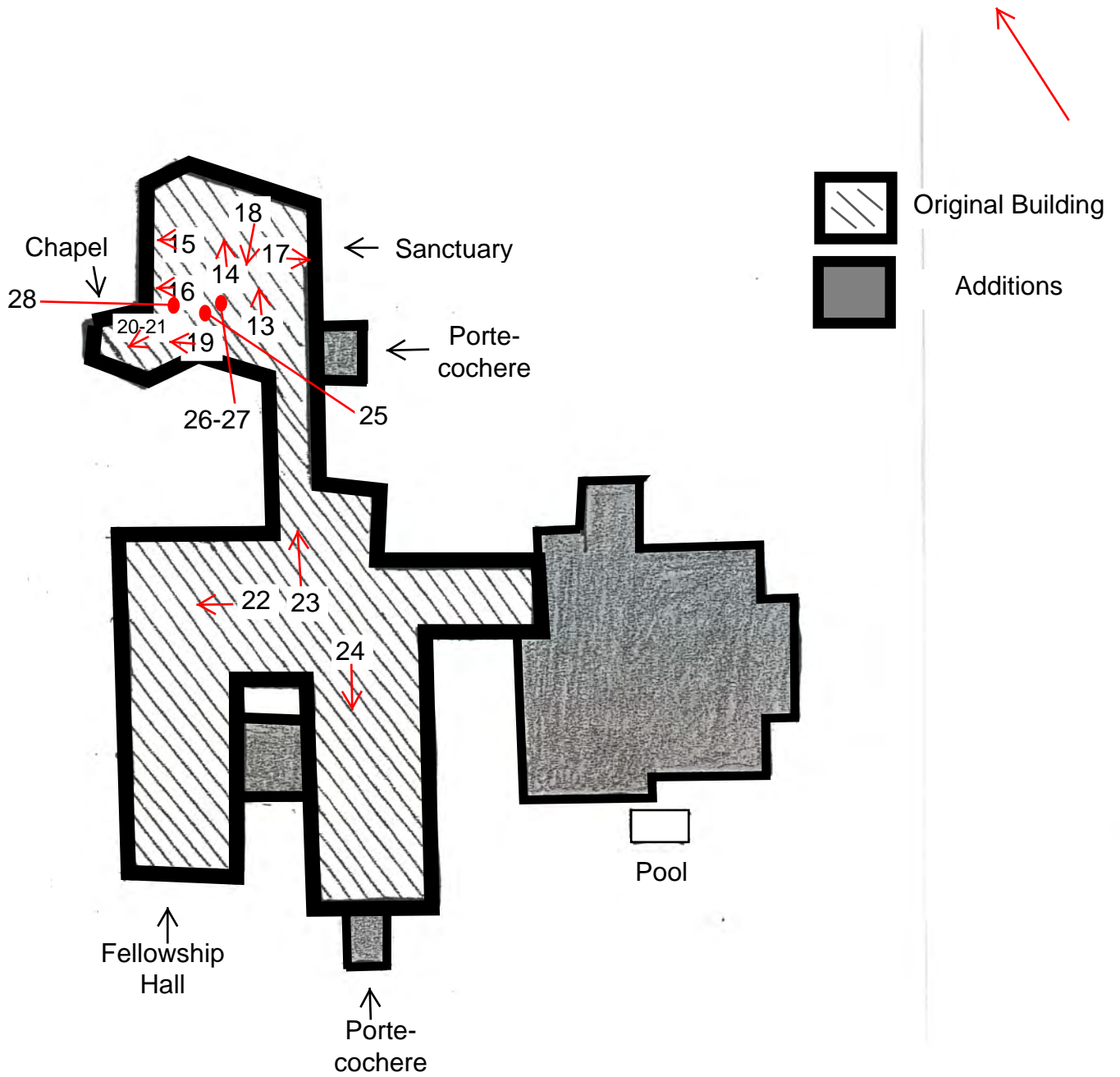
Latitude: 31.294061

Longitude: -92.465759

First United Methodist Church Rapides Parish, LA Exterior Photo Key/Sketch Map



First United Methodist Church Rapides Parish, LA Interior Photo Key







WEIRD
...YST CHURCH

...YST CHURCH

































CROWELL CHAPEL

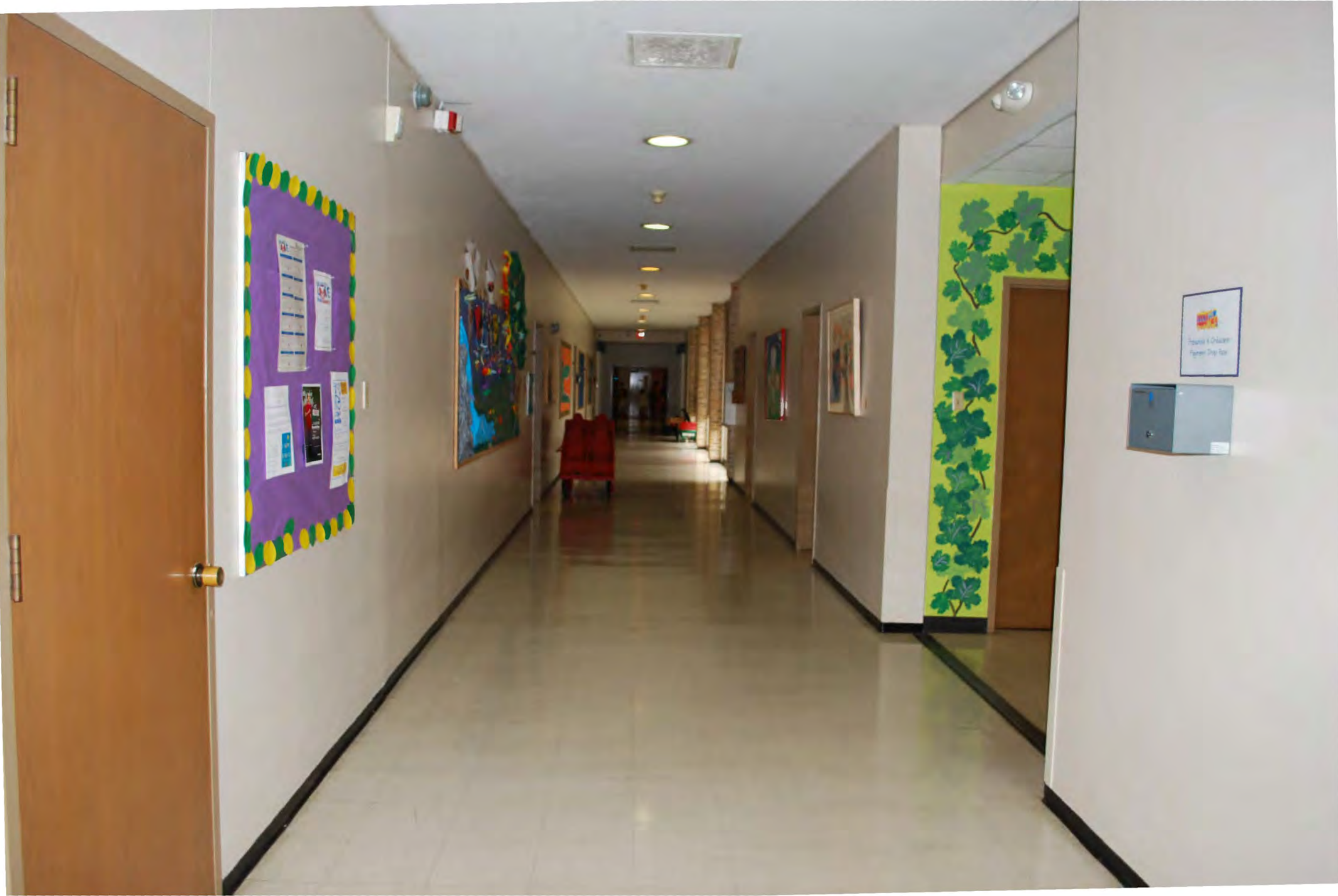




















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY First United Methodist Church
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: LOUISIANA, Rapides

DATE RECEIVED: 10/09/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/24/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14001172

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 11-19-2015 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Minimally Addresses Criteria Consideration G

It is the art that carries this rather pedestrian midwest church.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept C (g)

REVIEWER J. Gabber DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/~~N~~ see attached SLR Y/~~N~~



JAY DARDENNE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

FAM BREUX
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

December 1, 2014

TO: Mr. James Gabbert
National Park Service 2280, 8th Floor; National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" Street, NW; Washington, DC 20005

FROM: Jessica Richardson, National Register Coordinator
Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation

RE: First United Methodist Church, Rapides Parish, LA

Jim,

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the First United Methodist Church (in Alexandria) to the National Register of Historic Places. The second disk contains the photographs of the property in TIF format. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 225-219-4595 or jrichardson@crt.la.gov.

Thanks,

Jessica

Enclosures:

- CD with PDF of the National Register of Historic Places nomination form
- CD with electronic images (tif format)
- Physical Transmission Letter
- Physical Signature Page, with original signature
- _____ Other:

Comments:

- Please ensure that this nomination receives substantive review
- _____ This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- _____ The enclosed owner(s) objection(s) do _____ do not _____ constitute a majority of property owners.
- _____ Other:

We appreciate the opportunity to review this nomination and hope that you find these comments useful. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at (202) 354-2275 or email at <James_Gabbert@nps.gov>.

Sincerely,



Jim Gabbert, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
1/20/2014

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY First United Methodist Church
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: LOUISIANA, Rapides

DATE RECEIVED: 12/05/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/05/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/20/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/21/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14001172

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: Y
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 1-16-2015 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

See Return Comments

RECOM./CRITERIA Return

REVIEWER *Joe Day*

DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____

DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Return/Evaluation Sheet

Property Name: First United Methodist Church

Reference Number: 14001172

Reasons for Return:

This nomination is being returned for substantive revision.

The subject property was constructed in 1968, within the last fifty years. The nomination must address criteria Consideration G, and establish the exceptional importance of the church in architecture. The statement that it "could just have easily been erected in 1964" does not stand in place of a thoughtful evaluation of exceptional importance. The building simply wasn't built in 1964 or 1965. Exceptional importance in an architectural context requires a comparative context that establishes the nominated property as the *best* representative. This may be achieved by determining if there has been scholarly evaluation of the properties within the context, or by a more careful examination of all of the properties that make up the comparables. As noted in the *Bulletin How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, "several properties could become eligible with the passage of time, but few will qualify now as exceptionally important." One of the comparative properties identified in the nomination, Gemiluth Chassodim Synagogue (mis-identified in the nomination as being at 2727 Jackson Avenue), while others have strong architectural interest as examples of non-traditional, Modernist design (Holy Redeemer Lutheran and St. Timothy's Episcopal). It is unclear why First United Methodist is of exceptional architectural importance when placed in a context that includes one property already identified as significant architecturally, and others that have strong design qualities but a similar lack of evaluation. Did it achieve any recognition when it was constructed? Has it been recognized subsequently?

The art that is integrated into the facility, especially the sanctuary, is given scant attention. Does the modernist art play a role in the design? Does it supplement or enhance the design aspects of the complex? You may wish to explore the artistic merit of the complex as it relates to its significance.

In addition, when evaluating a property for exceptional importance in architecture, the analysis of integrity is very important. There is a large addition to the complex, as well as a number of smaller additions. A more careful analysis of the impacts of these additions is necessary. Do the additions (porte cocheres, for example) change how the property is experienced?

Criteria Consideration A also needs to be checked and justified.



RECEIVED 2280

OCT -9 2015

JAY DARDENNE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
HARVEY R. DAVIS
DEPUTY SECRETARY

PHIL BOGGAN
INTERIM ASSISTANT SECRETARY

October 1, 2015

TO: Mr. James Gabbert
National Park Service 2280, 8th Floor; National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" Street, NW; Washington, DC 20005

FROM: Jessica Richardson, National Register Coordinator
Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation

RE: First United Methodist Church, Rapides Parish, LA

Jim,

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the resubmission of the nomination for the First United Methodist Church (in Alexandria) to the National Register of Historic Places. The second disk contains the photographs of the property in TIF format. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 225-219-4595 or jrichardson@crt.la.gov.

Thanks,

Jessica

Enclosures:

- CD with PDF of the National Register of Historic Places nomination form
- CD with electronic images (tif format)
- Physical Transmission Letter
- Physical Signature Page, with original signature
- Other:

Comments:

- Please ensure that this nomination receives substantive review
- This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- The enclosed owner(s) objection(s) do _____ do not _____ constitute a majority of property owners.
- Other: