

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 100001433

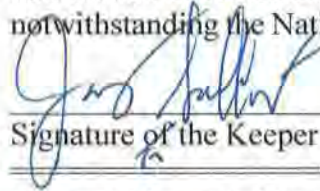
Date Listed: 8/2/2017

Property Name: First Christian Church, Hammond

County: Tangipahoa

State: LA

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

8-2-2017

Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8: Architect(s)

Canizaro, James T.
Town, A. Hays

The architects for the Memorial Hall portion of the building complex were left off of the list of architects. While the focus of the nomination is the Desmond-designed sanctuary (and education wing), the Memorial Hall's construction begins the period of significance and the building reflects the overall design of the church complex.

The Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

56-1433



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 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 Christian Church
Other Names/Site Number: N/A
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & Number: 305 E Charles Street
City or town: Hammond State: LA County: Tangipahoa
Not for Publication: Vicinity: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 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

Kristin P. Sanders

6/16/17

Signature of certifying official/Title: Kristin Sanders, State Historic Preservation Officer (Deputy)
Date
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**

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State

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: _____

[Handwritten Signature]
Signature of the Keeper
For

8-2-2017
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
		Objects
1	0	Total

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

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.): Modern Movement: New Formalism

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Wood: weatherboard; Brick; Stucco

roof: Wood: weatherboard; Stucco; Metal

other: Glass; Metal; Stone: slate, terrazzo.

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

First Christian Church was designed by modernist architect John Desmond and constructed in 1960. In addition to the main church building, the Educational Building (1958) and the Sanctuary (1960) portions of the church complex are all prime examples of Mid-Century Modern architecture. The church is located in Hammond, Louisiana, Desmond's hometown, and home to a number of his most important works. The First Christian Church Complex occupies a half city block bordered by North Holly Street to the east, East Charles Street to the south, and North Cherry Street to the west. The columned arcade and side elevation of the Sanctuary face East Charles Street. The Hammond City Hall Annex is directly across East Charles Street from the church complex. First Christian Church faces a parking lot and some residential properties on its west elevation and is bordered by large trees and residential properties on its north and east elevation. First Christian Church is constructed of wood, brick, stone, stucco, and metal. The church complex is one story throughout, with cathedral ceilings in the Sanctuary. Also part of the campus is the Memorial Building, 1950, which was designed by architects James T. Canizaro and A. Hays Town. The Memorial Building consists of a 252-person auditorium, a fellowship hall and kitchen, a library, a choir robing room, and the minister's study. While the complex consists of these defined spaces, all are interconnected and function as one overall building. Despite slight changes to the interior design and some water stains, John Desmond's First Christian Church still retains a remarkable stylistic integrity and is eligible for National Register listing.

Narrative Description

First Christian Church is a prime example of Mid-Century Modern religious architecture. One enters the church complex on a slate path and is faced with a white stucco arcade with four arches, reminiscent of Italian Renaissance architecture. To the right is the Education Building which consists of three large paned glass windows, a wooden door with two vertical pane glass windows to either side; and to the left is the Sanctuary. There is a horizontal white awning in front of the Education Building with four posts and a brick wall enclosing the courtyard. The brick wall, which faces E. Charles Street, has delicate masonry openwork in a repeating cross motif that allows light to enter the courtyard. There is a U-shaped stone bench facing the Sanctuary. Through the stucco arcade is the

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

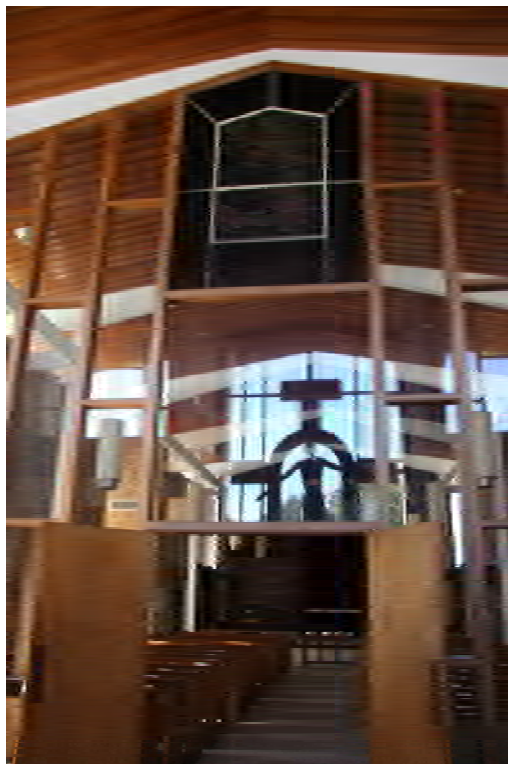
Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State

entrance to the Memorial Building, which consists of a 252-person auditorium, a fellowship hall and kitchen, a library, choir robing room, and the minister's study.

The façade of the Sanctuary, 1960, consists of three sections, with the middle section protruding out. The middle section is constructed entirely of glass panes with projecting brick walls to the left and the right. The sections to the left and right both have double doors and are otherwise constructed with glass panels and brick walls. The doors are made of wood. Each of these components is bisected by a white stucco awning. After the initial construction, these were thoughtfully expanded to hide the newly installed HVAC system. Metal bisects all of the window panes above this awning in a pleasantly symmetrical geometric pattern. In 1977, a sculpture of the Ascension was added to the middle section with Desmond's direction. The roof is slightly pitched with deep eaves and the underside of the roof is accented with beautiful alternating depth woodwork.

The southern elevation of the Sanctuary, facing E. Charles Street, has three narrow vertical windows with orange and green stained glass windows on the transept. To the left of the transept, the protruding choir room has three narrow windows with the same delicate masonry openwork in a repeating cross motif from the courtyard at the roofline. The western elevation of the Sanctuary consists of five sections, with the middle being the largest (a blank brick wall), and the two narrow flanking divisions stepped back from the central section, the outermost section being lined with a thin vertical window on each side. The northern elevation of the Sanctuary mirrors the southern elevation, with the addition of a brick retaining wall.

The interior of the Sanctuary is a divine mixture of intricate masonry, warm woodwork, and beautiful lighting. Brick walls are on the left and the right throughout the Sanctuary; a wall of glass bisected by wooden beams separates the narthex from the nave of the Sanctuary.



*View from the Narthex looking into the Sanctuary, First Christian Church, Hammond, Louisiana.
Photographed October 4, 2016.*

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State

At the top of the glass wall is a suspended piece of stained glass from the original 1890's First Christian Church that stood on the same site. Through the wooden double doors is the nave of the Sanctuary. The ceiling throughout is composed of beautiful West Coast Cedar planks installed at alternating depths. There are white steel beams throughout the nave of the church. Wooden pews line both sides of the aisle along the length of the nave with light liberally streaming in through the windows. The orange and green stained glass windows let in a great quantity of beautifully colored light. Terrazzo flooring is used throughout the Sanctuary. The altar is detailed with luxurious red fabric and wooden lattice work on each side. There are a series of iron hieroglyphs affixed to sliding mahogany doors that reveal a beautiful baptismal font.



Tom Hardy's iron hieroglyph sculptures on the mahogany doors concealing the baptismal font, First Christian Church, Hammond, Louisiana. Photographed October 4, 2016.

To the left and right are canopies for plant life, which are located above the entrances for the choir rooms. There are six columnar cream light fixtures hung evenly throughout the church. As one walks throughout the transept and ambulatory, light permeates the space bringing the careful woodworking to life.

The Education Building, 1958, is located to the right of the Sanctuary. One must walk directly through the arcade to enter the Education Building which consists of a youth lounge, parlor, kitchenette, nursery, and eight classrooms along with storage and service rooms.

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State



View from the Youth Lounge looking onto the courtyard, First Christian Church, Hammond, Louisiana. Photographed October 4, 2016.



View of the Ladies' Parlor, First Christian Church, Hammond, Louisiana. Photographed October 4, 2016.



Exterior view of the Education Building featuring classrooms on the left and the entrance to the Youth Lounge on the right, First Christian Church, Hammond, Louisiana. Photographed October 4, 2016.

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State

After passing through the fellowship hall of the Memorial Building, one reaches the Education Building's youth lounge, which has a beautiful view of a private interior courtyard bordered by the classrooms of the Education Building on the right and the fellowship hall of the Memorial Building on the left. There is an intact mid-century modern kitchen on the left side of the youth lounge. The rest of the room has a variety of uses including sock hops, table tennis, and community gatherings. The original tables survive in the space. The walls are covered in beautiful wood paneling on three sides save for the side that faces the courtyard. The ladies' parlor, kitchenette, nursery, and eight classrooms are built with wood, brick, stucco, and asbestos ceiling tiles with terrazzo floors throughout the building. Floor to ceiling windows that perfectly evoke Mid-Century Modern style are utilized throughout the building.

Opposite the glass curtain wall that looks onto the interior courtyard is a hallway that leads to the remaining portions of the Education Building. To the right is another entrance flanked with floor to ceiling windows that provide a picturesque view of the façade of the Sanctuary and the main courtyard. The wall shared with the youth lounge is constructed of brick and the wall shared with the ladies' parlor is wood paneled. Directly ahead is the entrance to the ladies' parlor. The room has prominent exposed wooden ceiling beams and hearth at the focal point with built-in planters flanking each side. The wall on the left is paneled in wood and the wall on the right is composed of floor to ceiling windows with a low, built in wooden window seat along the length of the wall. There is an entrance to a small kitchenette on the left with access to a bathroom and nursery. At the end of the main hallway are the classrooms. There are four classrooms inside and four outside facing the interior courtyard. The walls of the interior classrooms are covered in wood paneling and each classroom has several windows that look out onto the hallway and the outside of the building. The classrooms outside have red doors and paneling. The wall that faces the courtyard is almost entirely composed of glass windows. The courtyard is bordered to the north by a brick wall, to the east and south by the Education Building, and to the west by the Memorial Building. This interior courtyard feature is repeatedly employed by John Desmond in many of his other public and private buildings.

To the west of the Education Building is the Memorial Building, 1950, designed by architects James T. Canizaro and A. Hays Town¹. The Memorial Building consists of a 252-person auditorium, a fellowship hall and kitchen, a library, a choir robing room, and the minister's study. The fellowship hall is directly connected to the Education Building. The room has wood paneling throughout with a kitchen at the north end of the room. One must cross through the fellowship hall to reach the main hallway of the Memorial Building which leads to the main courtyard. The library, choir robing room, and minister's study are located off of this main hallway. At the north end of the main hallway is the entrance to the auditorium. There is a secondary entrance to the right of the stage. The auditorium has beautiful wood paneled, curved walls that provide for excellent acoustics. To the west is a small lobby and the main entrance to the auditorium. The western elevation of the Memorial Building has three white stucco arches framing three sets of wooden double doors. The building is primarily constructed of brick.

There have been no substantial alterations to the original Mid-Century Modern appearance of the church complex. The only noticeable difference is the increase of the width of the bisecting awnings which now cover the HVAC which was installed at some point after 1977 on the façade of the Sanctuary. Unfortunately, the exact date of the HVAC installation has not been recorded. The First

¹ In 2015, a multiple property submission entitled "The Architecture of A. Hays Town in Louisiana, 1939-1991" was accepted by the National Park Service. He is considered one of Louisiana's Modernist master architects.

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State

Christian Church complex is an excellent example of Louisiana Modernism and is eligible for listing on the National Register.

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:

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

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.): Architecture

Period of Significance: 1950-1960

Significant Dates: Dedication of the Reimers Memorial Building, March 19, 1950.
Dedication of the Education Center, designed by John Desmond, January 18, 1958.
Dedication of the Sanctuary, designed by John Desmond, March 6, 1960.

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): Desmond, John

Period of Significance (justification): The period of significance spans the period of construction and expansion of the church: the Reimers Memorial Building was constructed in 1950; the Education Center, designed by John Desmond, was constructed in 1958; the Sanctuary, designed by John Desmond, was constructed in 1960.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary): While the building is a church, it is not being listed for religious significance. Rather, it is being listed for architectural significance.

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State

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 Christian Church in Hammond, Louisiana is significant at the local level under Criterion C: Architecture. First Christian Church is significant as it is a work of noted Louisiana Modernist architect, John Desmond, and it is a remarkable, intact example of his work. John Desmond opened his architectural firm in the Florida Parishes in the city of Hammond, Louisiana.² There are several John Desmond buildings in Hammond and this is an integral part of the visual fabric of the city. John Desmond, is a well-known Louisiana mid-century architect who could quite easily be considered one of the state's master architects with further scholarly research and recognition.

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

Criterion C: Architecture

The First Christian Church is a beautifully coherent seminal work of celebrated Louisiana Modernist architect, John Desmond. The Sanctuary and Education Building are perfect examples of Modern architecture as a southern Louisiana-influenced iteration of the New Formalism style. Desmond, a nationally recognized architect, designed a large number of buildings in Hammond, his hometown, from 1953 to the early 1970's.³ He is responsible for over 80 structures in Hammond, 8 of which are religious structures: First Baptist Church, First Christian Church, First Methodist Church, Grace Episcopal Church, Holy Ghost Catholic Church, Southeastern Louisiana University – Baptist Student Center, Southeastern Louisiana University – Catholic Student Center/St. Albert the Great Catholic Church, and Woodland Baptist Church.⁴ While each of these structures are outstanding in their own right, First Christian Church is the most eloquent iteration of John Desmond's trademark aesthetic that retains a steadfast integrity to the original design.

John Desmond (1922-2008) was born in Denver, Colorado and raised in Hammond, Louisiana. Desmond graduated from Hammond High School in 1937 and Tulane University with a degree in architecture in 1941. He earned a Master of Architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he studied under W.W. Wurster and Alvar Aalto. Desmond worked at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in New York City and with A. Hays Town in Baton Rouge before starting his own practice in Hammond, Louisiana in 1953. In the early 1970s, John Desmond closed the Hammond practice and began operating John Desmond & Associates exclusively out of Baton Rouge, Louisiana.⁵ Desmond retired from architectural practice in 2002.⁶ John Desmond was awarded numerous professional honors throughout his career, most significantly the American Institute of Architects Fellowship for Significant Contribution to Design and the Louisiana American Institute of

² "Preliminary Inventory: January 2004; Revised 2008, 2012." John Desmond Papers, Mss. 4792, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, p. 4.

³ "Preliminary Inventory: January 2004; Revised 2008, 2012." John Desmond Papers, Mss. 4792, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, p. 4.

⁴ Ibid. p. 17-42.

⁵ J. Michael Desmond. "John Jacob Desmond." In *KnowLA Encyclopedia of Louisiana*, edited by David Johnson. Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, 2010--. Article published on January 6, 2011. <http://www.knowla.org/entry/573/>.

⁶ "Preliminary Inventory: January 2004; Revised 2008, 2012." John Desmond Papers, Mss. 4792, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, p. 4.

First Christian Church, Hammond

Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA

County and State

Architects Gold Award Lifetime Achievement Award. Desmond is also the author and illustrator of *Louisiana's Antebellum Architecture*, published by Claiborne in 1970.⁷

First Christian Church is as an early expression of the New Formalism subtype of Modernism, which proved highly adaptable to public and civic buildings such as schools, municipal buildings, and public libraries. Perhaps the most well-known building in the United States designed in the New Formalist style is the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, which opened in 1971.

Although an offshoot of the International Style, a revolutionary modern movement conceived in Europe by architects who rejected adherence to historical precedent, New Formalist modern architecture was a reaction to some of the International Style's strict prescriptions. New Formalism's three most internationally notable proponents – architects Edward Durrell Stone, Philip Johnson, and Minoru Yamasaki – “had all achieved prominence working within the International Style but wanted to try new styles and materials. New Formalism architecture combines decorative elements and established design concepts of classicism with the new materials and technologies incorporated in the International Style. Edward Durrell Stone's New Delhi American Embassy (1954)... is considered to be the start of New Formalism architecture.”⁸

Embracing “traditionally rich materials” and classical precedents such as symmetry, New Formalism is present in the design of First Christian Church.⁹ The Education Building at First Christian Church is thoughtfully designed at the human scale with nature in mind. The youth lounge bears prominent wood beams, warm wood paneling on the east, south, and west walls, with an illuminating glass curtain wall facing north onto the enclosed courtyard. A trademark of Desmond's architecture, this is the first instance of a glass curtain wall overlooking an enclosed courtyard in his work.¹⁰ The room includes a custom counter and bar enclosing a kitchen area. The sleek Formica tables and chairs original to the design could easily be moved for the weekly Friday night parties the church held for the youth of the community. The glass doors of the curtain wall opened onto the courtyard to create a seamless flow between nature and shelter.

A parlor, kitchenette, nursery, eight classrooms, and necessary storage and service rooms are also in the Education Building. The parlor is the most striking architecturally. A brick fireplace, flanked by two built in planters, is the focal point of the space. This feature also became a trademark of Desmond's architectural practice, particularly in his residential designs. A curtain wall of windows looks out onto another courtyard facing the sanctuary. The horizontal lines of the planters, fireplace, and exposed wood beams create harmony between nature and the built environment within the space. Ash, locust, pine, cypress, oak, and magnolia wood are used throughout the Education Building, continuing the dialogue with nature throughout the structure and creating a warm and inviting environment. The use

⁷ “Obituary: John J. Desmond.” *The Advocate* (Baton Rouge, LA), Mar. 29-30, 2008.

<http://obits.theadvocate.com/obituaries/theadvocate/obituary.aspx?pid=10651985>; While John Desmond has not been officially recognized as a master architect in the state of Louisiana, his work and influence are certainly impactful. With further scholarship and recognition, the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation believes he will be remembered and documented as one of the state's master modern architects.

⁸ “New Formalism.” *Fullerton Heritage.org*. Last modified September 14, 2008.

<http://www.fullertonheritage.org/Resources/archstyles/formalism.htm>.

⁹ National Register of Historic Places, Tangipahoa Parish, Hammond, Louisiana, Miller Memorial Library Draft Nomination, February 2017.

¹⁰ Melanie Ricketts (Administrative Director of the Hammond Historic District), interview by Anna Marcum, October 4, 2016 and John Desmond Papers, Mss. 4792, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State

of human scale, the methodical use of horizontality and proportion, and the conscientious dialogue with nature make this structure a hallmark of modern architecture.

The Sanctuary is designed in a cruciform plan evocative of the centuries old European tradition of church-building. While small in scale, the sanctuary possesses a verticality and quality of light reminiscent of Gothic architecture. The stained glass windows on both ends of the transept are geometric in design, reminiscent of Mondrian, and color light in shades of orange and green. Desmond sketched many cathedrals in Europe and seamlessly incorporated their features into the design of his religious structures in the United States.¹¹ The Sanctuary and Education Building face an open courtyard and are connected with a white stucco arcade. This feature perfectly embodies the tenants of New Formalism in architecture.

The ceiling of the Sanctuary is made of a beautiful West Coast cedar in horizontal registers of different depths, creating a beautiful minimalist design. The chancel is made of Philippine mahogany, showcasing a series of sculptures on either side of the pulpit by sculptor Tom Hardy of Portland, OR.¹² Hardy is a prominent West Coast sculptor with pieces in the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and many other prominent collections. The sculptor has also been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions.¹³ The combination of the minimalist design of the ceiling with the modernist sculptural program is a significant expression of the Modern Movement and New Formalism in Louisiana.

Importantly, First Christian Church is a very early example of the style, especially for a relatively small town in Louisiana such as Hammond¹⁴. According to one observer, “New Formalism, a glossy almost neoclassical take on modernism’s architectural vocabulary ... with columns, arches, frills, and decorative screens ... was [not] very important in Louisiana during the period 1945 – 1965. Most examples date from the late 1960s or the 1970s.”¹⁵

¹¹ “Preliminary Inventory: January 2004; Revised 2008, 2012.” John Desmond Papers, Mss. 4792, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, p. 44.

¹² *History of the First Christian Church of Hammond*. Hammond, LA: December 1961.

¹³ Cowan, KC. *Sculptor Tom Hardy: Oregon Art Beat*. Online video segment. 2005.
<http://www.opb.org/television/programs/artbeat/segment/sculptor-tom-hardy/>.

¹⁴ Currently, there are 2 National Register listed properties in Louisiana that are New Formalist – the International Trade Mart in New Orleans (built 1964-67) and the Rapides Parish Library in Alexandria (built 1964-65). Thus, the First Christian Church is certainly an early example of New Formalism in the state.

¹⁵ Fricker, Jonathan and Donna. “Louisiana Architecture 1945 – 1965: Modernism; National Register of Historic Places, Tangipahoa Parish, Hammond, Louisiana Miller Memorial Library Draft Nomination, February 2017. Triumphant.” *Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism*. Revised February 2010.
http://www.crt.state.la.us/Assets/OCD/hp/nationalregister/historic_contexts/modernismtriumphantfinalrevised.pdf.

First Christian Church, Hammond

Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA

County and State



The Nave (left) and Fellowship Hall (right) of the Catholic Student Center at Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, Louisiana. Photographed October 4, 2016.

Unlike Desmond's other religious structures in Hammond, First Christian Church is void of any contemporary alteration and exists as an early and holistic example of his architectural vision for religious architecture. The Catholic Student Center/St. Albert the Great Catholic Church at Southeastern Louisiana University, built in 1962, is the only other John Desmond church building that has not been significantly altered. Many features in the Catholic Student Center, such as the nave and metal rib arches, derive directly from the design of the earlier First Christian Church. John Desmond's First Christian is a pivotal work of architecture in the development of Modernism in Louisiana.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

The liberal use of wood in the design of First Christian Church was mandated by the Frederick W. Reimers family who made their fortune in lumber and were the chief benefactors for the Education Building and Sanctuary. The sculpture of the Ascension, made of bronze and wood, was commissioned by Mr. Reimers and installed in 1977 with Desmond's direction. Mr. and Mrs. F.W. Reimers moved to Hammond from Rock Island, Illinois, in 1914. The Reimers family donated the Reimers Memorial Building to First Christian Church on March 19, 1950. The auditorium was given to the church in memory of Lieutenant Frederick Fay Reimers, U.S.N.R., son of Mr. and Mrs. F.W. Reimers, who was lost at sea in March 1945 in World War II.¹⁶ The auditorium building of this structure hosted numerous performance artists at the bequest of Mrs. F.W. Reimers and continues to host gospel and bluegrass bands among many other performers.¹⁷ The Reimers Family is emblematic of the great Midwestern migration to Hammond. Beginning in the 1870s, the Illinois Central Railroad brought many Midwesterners in search of a warmer climate to Hammond through intense advertising.¹⁸ Hammond was shaped immensely by the Midwestern migration to the city and First Christian Church is part of that phenomenon.

9. Major Bibliographical Resources

¹⁶ *History of the First Christian Church of Hammond*. Hammond, LA: December 1961.

¹⁷ Melanie Ricketts (Administrative Director of the Hammond Historic District), interview by Anna Marcum, October 4, 2016.

¹⁸ Eric W. Johnson and Catherine H. Tijerino. *Hammond: Images of America*. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2015.

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State

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

Cowan, KC. *Sculptor Tom Hardy: Oregon Art Beat*. Online video segment. 2005.
<http://www.opb.org/television/programs/artbeat/segment/sculptor-tom-hardy/>.

Desmond, J. Michael. "John Jacob Desmond." In *KnowLA Encyclopedia of Louisiana*,
edited by David Johnson. Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, 2010--. Article published on
January 6, 2011. <http://www.knowla.org/entry/573/>.

History of the First Christian Church of Hammond. Hammond, LA: December 1961.

John Desmond Papers, Mss. 4792, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections,
LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Johnson, Eric W., and Tijerino, Catherine H. *Hammond: Images of America*. Charleston,
South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2015.

National Register of Historic Places, Tangipahoa Parish, Hammond, Louisiana. Miller Memorial
Library Draft Nomination, February 2017.

"Obituary: John J. Desmond." *The Advocate* (Baton Rouge, LA), Mar. 29-30, 2008.
<http://obits.theadvocate.com/obituaries/theadvocate/obituary.aspx?pid=106519855>.

"Preliminary Inventory: January 2004; Revised 2008, 2012." John Desmond Papers,
Mss. 4792, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge,
Louisiana.

Ricketts, Melanie (Administrative Director of the Hammond Historic District), interview by
Anna Marcum, October 4, 2016.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University (John Desmond Papers, Mss. 4792, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley
Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana)

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State

Other
Name of repository: First Christian Church Archives

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 1.3 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 30.505856 Longitude: -90.458430

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

From the Tangipahoa Parish Tax Assessment No. 01487507: S 200 FT OF BLK 47 HYER SUR LESS LOT 50 X 75 ON HOLLY IN NE COR OF S1/2 OF BLK 47 B433 P146 B418 P110 B381 P135 B382 P101 B215 P695 B217 P332. See submitted boundary map for clarification.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries selected are the boundaries of the land that that First Christian Church owned when the complex was constructed and continues to own as of 2017.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Anna Marcum, MPS Candidate 2017

organization: Tulane University

street & number: Richardson Memorial Hall, Ste. 105, 6823 St. Charles Avenue

city or town: New Orleans state: LA zip code: 70125

e-mail: amarcum@tulane.edu

telephone: 662.617.0809

date: 12/6/16

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 Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State

Photo Log

Name of Property: First Christian Church
City or Vicinity: Hammond
County: Tangipahoa Parish
State: LA
Name of Photographer: Anna Marcum
Date of Photographs: October 2016

Photo #1: Cherry Street elevation, camera facing northeast

Photo #2: E Charles Street elevation, camera facing northwest

Photo #3: View from E Charles Street, camera facing west

Photo #4: Entrance courtyard, camera facing north

Photo #5: Arcade, camera facing northwest

Photo #6: Façade of the sanctuary, camera facing southwest

Photo #7: Gathering area of the sanctuary, camera facing southwest

Photo #8: Nave of the sanctuary, camera facing southwest

Photo #9: Ceiling detail of the sanctuary

Photo #10: Stained glass window on the northern end of the transept, camera facing northwest

Photo #11: Detail of vine and wheat iron work, camera facing southwest

Photo #12: Detail of sculptural glyphs to the right of the altar, camera facing southwest

Photo #13: Detail of sculptural glyphs to the left of the altar, camera facing west

Photo #14: View of community space in the education center, camera facing northwest

Photo #15: View of community space in the education center, camera facing west

Photo #16: View of community space in the education center, camera facing north

Photo #17: View of parlor in the education center, camera facing southeast

Photo #18: Hallway in the education center, camera facing southeast

Photo #19: Breezeway to education center classrooms in the interior courtyard, camera facing northwest

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State

Photo #20: Interior courtyard, camera facing northwest

Photo #21: Education center classrooms and interior courtyard, camera facing north

Photo #22: Education center, community space, and interior courtyard, camera facing southeast

Figures Log

Name of Property: First Christian Church

City or Vicinity: Hammond

County: Tangipahoa Parish

State: LA

Name of Photographer: Frank Lutz Miller

Date of Photographs: 1960 (historic photos)



Figure 1: Frank Lutz Miller, First Christian Church, Hammond, Louisiana, façade of the sanctuary at night, 1960. Courtesy of the First Christian Church Archives.

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State



Figure 2: Frank Lutz Miller, First Christian Church, Hammond, Louisiana, narthex of the sanctuary at night, 1960. Courtesy of the First Christian Church Archives.

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State



Figure 3: Frank Lutz Miller, First Christian Church, Hammond, Louisiana, baptismal font behind sculptural program to the right of the altar, 1960. Courtesy of the First Christian Church Archives.

First Christian Church, Hammond
Name of Property

Tangipahoa Parish, LA
County and State



Figure 4: Frank Lutz Miller, First Christian Church, Hammond, Louisiana, community space, or “the youth lounge,” 1960. Courtesy of the First Christian Church Archives.

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 Christian Church, Tangipahoa Parish, LA



Latitude: 30.505856 Longitude: -90.458430

First Christian Church, Tangipahoa Parish, LA

----- Boundary



January 26, 2017

Thoroughfares

- Interstate
- Major Artery

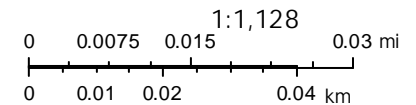
- Minor Artery
- Major Collector

Streets (911)

- Minor Collector
- Local Street

- Parcels
- Lots

0 1



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

**First Christian Church
Tangipahoa Parish, LA**

● Latitude: 30.505856
Longitude: -90.458430

Memorial
Building

Education
Building

Sanctuary

Google Earth

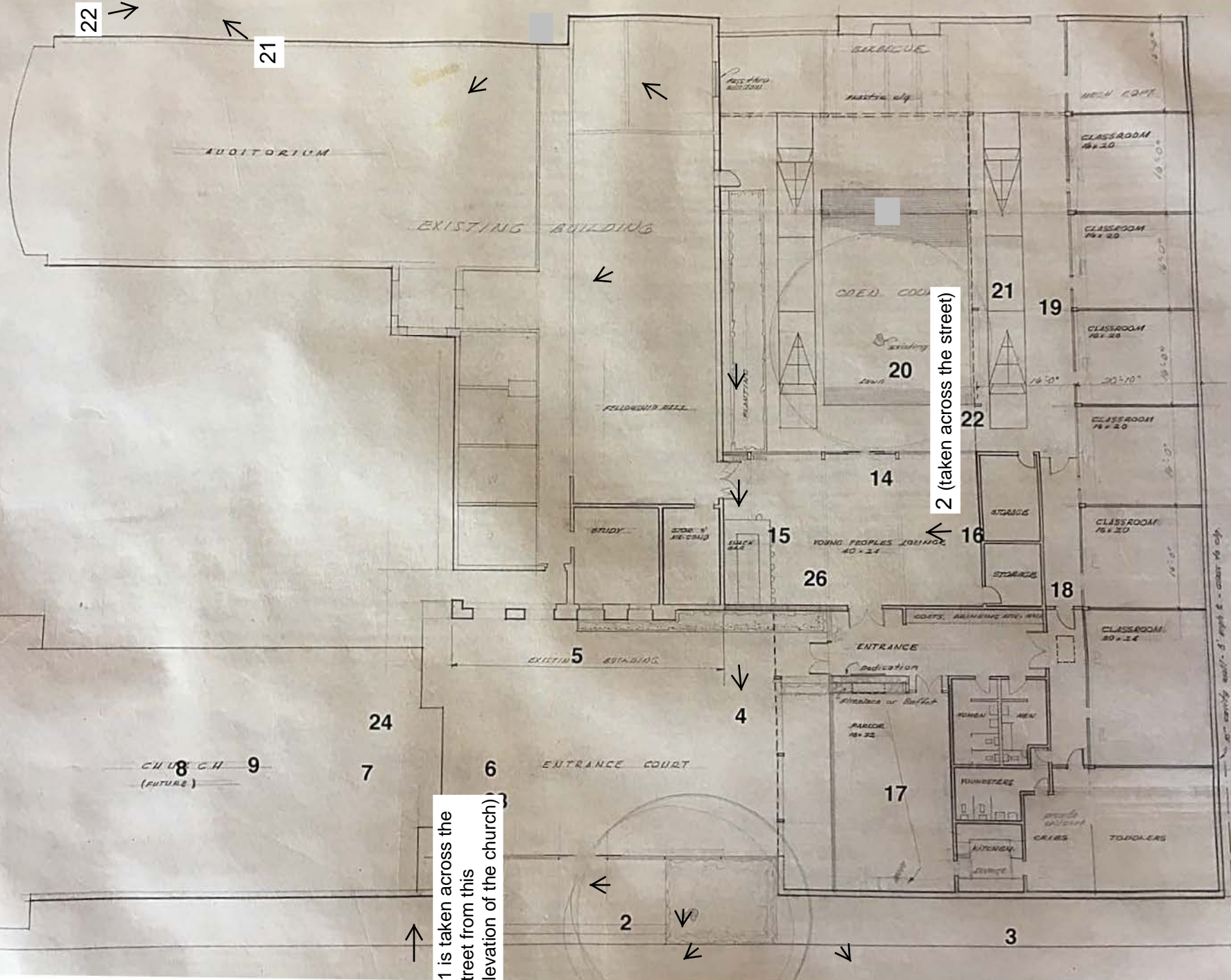
© 2016 Google



200 ft

First Christian Church Tangipahoa Parish, LA Photo Key and Floor Plan

(Plan image courtesy of the John Desmond Papers, Mss. 4792, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, LA)



1

N

#1 is taken across the street from this elevation of the church)

2 (taken across the street)

30" cavity wall, 8" pipe & - cast in place



THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

1111



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH



First Christian Church

JOHN 14:6 / ACTS 4:12
SUNDAY SCHOOL 10 AM
CHURCH SERVICE 11 AM







COME UNTO ME

































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 6/23/2017 Date of Pending List: 7/18/2017 Date of 16th Day: 8/2/2017 Date of 45th Day: 8/7/2017 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 8/2/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

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

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



BILLY NUNGESSER
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

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

RENNIE S. BURAS, II
DEPUTY SECRETARY

PHIL BOGGAN
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

January 23, 2017

Melanie Ricketts
PO Box 2426
Hammond, LA 70401

Dear Ms. Ricketts:

We are pleased to inform you that the historic property listed will be considered by the State National Register Review Committee for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places:

**First Christian Church
Tangipahoa Parish, LA**

The National Register of Historic Places is the federal government's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation. Listing on the National Register provides recognition and assists in preserving our Nation's heritage. Listing of a property provides recognition of its historic significance and assures protective review of federal projects that might adversely affect the character of the historic property. If the property is listed on the National Register, tax credits for rehabilitation and other beneficial provisions may apply. Listing in the National Register does not place limitations on the property by the federal or state government. Public visitation rights are not required of owners. The government will not attach restrictive covenants to the property or seek to acquire them. A draft copy of the nomination and attachment is included with this letter.

One of your responsibilities as a Certified Local Government (CLG) is to review pending National Register nominations of properties within your community. This is required, in part, to detect any errors in fact, but also to provide local insight or knowledge concerning the property. I hope that you will consider the nomination for this property at your next meeting. After providing a reasonable opportunity for public comment, the Hammond Historic District Commission shall fill out the attached CLG review form as to whether or not, in their opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. Within 60 calendar days of notice from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the chief elected official shall transmit their report to the SHPO. If the SHPO does not receive the report and recommendation within 60 calendar days, the nomination process will continue. All comments received will be forwarded to the SHPO Director and the National Register Review Committee for consideration along with the nomination.

We have scheduled the nomination for presentation to the National Register Review Committee on **Thursday, April 6, 2017**, and would like to receive your comments by that time in fulfillment of the comment period. This letter serves as notification initiating the sixty-day comment period.

You are invited to attend the National Register Review Committee meeting at which the nomination will be officially considered. The location and time have not been confirmed yet, but will be found on our

Melanie Ricketts
January 23, 2017
Page 2

website. Should you have any questions about this nomination before March 17, 2017, please contact Jessica Richardson at 225-219-4595 or at jrichardson@crt.la.gov. For any questions after March 17, please contact Nicole Hobson-Morris at 225-342-8172 or nmorris@crt.la.gov.

Thanks,



Phil Boggan
State Historic Preservation Officer

**HAMMOND HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION REPORT FOR:
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION**

NAME OF CLG: Hammond Historic District

PROPERTY NAME: First Christian Church

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 305 E. Charles St.

DATE SENT: 1/23/17

DATE OF NATIONAL REGISTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING: 4/6/17

Does the nomination meet the Criteria for Listing on the National Register of Historic Places?

Yes No Criterion: A B C D

Has public comment been included? Yes No Explain:

Nomination was discussed publically at the Hammond Historic District Commission meeting on 3/15/17.

The Commission recommends that the property or properties should be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Commission would like to make the following recommendations regarding the nomination (use additional sheets if necessary):

N/A

The Commission recommends that the property or properties should not be listed on the National Register of Historic Places for the following reasons:

N/A

The Commission chooses not to make a recommendation on this nomination for the following reasons:

N/A

Leah Solomon
Historic District Commission Chair (Print Name)

[Signature]
Signature 3/27/17
Date

PETE PANEPINTO
Chief Elected Official (Print Name)

[Signature]
Signature 3/28/2017
Date



BILLY NUNGESSER
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

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



June 21, 2017

TO: Mr. James Gabbert, National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228, 1849 C St, NW, Washington, DC 20240

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

RE: First Christian Church, Tangipahoa Parish, LA

Jim,

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the First Christian Church 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: