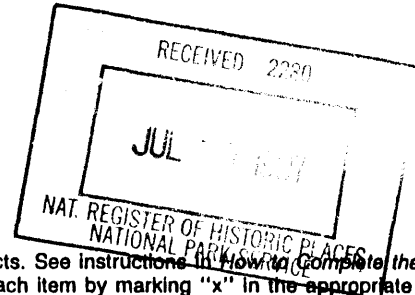


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# 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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Old Cedar Baptist Church

other names/site number ONM-1

## 2. Location

street & number 1040 Claxon Ridge Road  not for publication N/A

city or town Owenton  vicinity

state Kentucky code KY county Owen code 187 zip code 40359

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David L. Morgan, SHPO and  
Executive Director 7-1-97  
Date

Signature of certifying official/Title  
Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office

State of Federal agency and bureau

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

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

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

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Patrick Anders

8/18/97

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s), district, site, structure, object

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

Table with columns for Contributing and Noncontributing resources, listing counts for buildings, sites, structures, objects, and a Total row.

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & Early 20th Century American

Movements: Classical Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls STONE

roof ASPHALT

other CONCRETE

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1929-1949

Significant Dates

1929

1949

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Wilson, Brother W.M., builder

Lawson, Rev. Edward N., architect

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Kentucky Heritage Council

Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Old Cedar Baptist Church  
Name of Property

Owen County, Kentucky  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.098

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 116 68781810 4251181410  
Zone Easting Northing  
2               

3                 
Zone Easting Northing  
4                 
 See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

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

### Boundary Justification

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

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Donna G. Logsdon, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization Logsdon & Logsdon Architects date 5/24/96

street & number 1135 Glen Logsdon Road telephone (502) 528-4698

city or town Horse Cave state Kentucky zip code 42749

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

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

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

#### Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

#### Additional items

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

### Property Owner

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

name Old Cedar Baptist Church

street & number 1040 Claxon Ridge Road telephone     

city or town Owenton state Kentucky zip code 40359

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky

**7. Narrative Description**

The Old Cedar Baptist Church (ONM-1) is located in Owen County, Kentucky, south of downtown Monterey, at the northeast corner of State Route 607 and U.S. Route 127. The property consists of 1.098 acres and is situated at the bottom of a steep hill on the east side of U.S. Route 127 facing this major thoroughfare. The church is accessed directly off of both U.S. Route 127 and Route 607 by an L-shaped driveway. A parking lot is located on both the west and east sides of the building.

This two-story, stone Classical Revival styled church building was originally conceived of by pastor Edward N. Lawson who came to the church in 1928. He drew the plans for this two-story building which was built over a period of twenty years. Construction of this native fieldstone building began in 1929. Realizing a lack of funds, due in part by the stock market crash and the Great Depression, construction stopped before the entire structure was built. A large open space, built partially below grade, was completed and covered over with a front gabled, felt shingled roof. The main sanctuary floor was built over the basement with donations of money and labor from church members and the community twenty years later, in 1949. Today, this outstanding fieldstone church remains visible from two major transportation routes and is the only building on this property. It possess historic integrity in terms of its location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling, while representing the year it was completed, 1949. The site proposed for nomination includes the church building and adjacent parking lot.

**Descriptive Statement**

The Old Cedar Baptist Church was named for Cedar Creek where the first log church building stood near Ford's Spring. The congregation grew out of their first building and built a larger wood-frame church on this present site in 1839. By 1929, construction began on the existing church building completing only the basement level. Using similar materials and construction techniques, the main sanctuary, or second floor, was added doubling its capacity in 1949 and completing the original building design. Today, this church remains the only surviving church building with its roots from the original Mouth of Cedar Church which was organized in 1820. Currently, it is one of two Baptist Churches that serves the residents of Monterey.

The Old Cedar Baptist Church is prominently located at the bottom of a steeply sloping hill on the northeast corner of U.S. Route 127 and State Route 607. It was built behind a wood-frame church originally built on this site in 1839. After construction was partially completed on this new stone church in 1929, the old wood-frame church was used as a parsonage until it was torn down in 1952. The materials were used to build a private residence

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**Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky**

on U.S. Route 127 near the Gratz Road, or State Route 355. This split level home is covered with grey vinyl siding and does not resemble the 1839 church.

The Old Cedar Baptist Church is a two-story Classical Revival building constructed of random ashlar native fieldstone found in the area. Although prominent public buildings, such as schools, churches, and courthouses are commonly built of stone or brick throughout the United States, native stone masonry buildings are rare in Owen County. The raised central entry is accentuated by the four massive stone columns supporting the pedimented roof. Wood tracery in the arched stained glass windows and a transom over the central entry door, surrounded by simple wood molding, is a character-defining feature which emphasizes the openings, and displays the workmanship involved in the design and details.

The Old Cedar Baptist Church is reminiscent of the Classical Revival style with its monumental proportions, stone exterior, symmetrical front facade with a uniform arrangement of square stone columns supporting the front facing pedimented portico, rectangular windows with double-hung sashes, and simple wood moldings on the interior and exterior. Plain semi-circular arched fanlights over rectangular double hung windows and the main entry doors are similar to the Adamesque style deviating from the highly elaborate door surrounds that are typical of the Classical Revival style.

This church is situated on a narrow lot adjacent to broad flat, low lying farm land which was used as an airplane landing strip in the 1940s. This farm land was known as Karsner's Air Field for native Harry Clark Karsner, a World War II airplane pilot who was the owner and instructor of Karsner's School of Flying. He taught commercial flying classes to students in the small, log pole structure which remains adjacent to the present church building today. Karsner was instrumental in placing the pink neon sign on the north side of his hangar facing U.S. Route 127, in 1946, with the message "Christ is the Answer" because he became a Christian at the Old Cedar Baptist Church. Since there was no electricity in the airplane hangar, the church became responsible for lighting the sign. It continues to serve as a community landmark, a check point for airplane pilots, and a beacon to travelers day or night.

On the south side of State Route 607, is a residential and farming community including several buildings built before the turn-of-the-century. Since the construction of State Route 607 in 1949, newer homes have emerged in this area in recent years.

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Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky

List of Resources

<u>Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Dates of Construction</u>	<u>Evaluation</u>
1	Old Cedar Baptist Church	1929, 1949	Contributing

Building Characteristics

1 The Old Cedar Baptist Church is a symmetrical rectangular building plan type highlighted by a projecting central entry stair rising to an open pedimented portico which is supported by four massive stone and mortar columns that are two feet square. The paired wood central entry doors are accented with a semi-circular fanlight arched transom. Stone arches curve above the stained glass windows with wood tracery complimenting the 6-over-6 light windows located on both sides of the central entry door and at various intervals along the sides of the main church sanctuary walls.

The basement level, constructed in 1929, was accessed through a pair of wood-frame and multi-pane glass doors on the east end of the building, down a series of concrete steps. Built partially below grade, windows appear on three sides of the building just above grade level, allowing light to penetrate the basement. Within this one large open space, church pews built between 1839 and 1929 were moved from the old church building and placed facing the west end of the building where the pulpit stood. A thin wire strung across the space held khaki canvas curtains that were closed to form two separate classrooms for Sunday School.

When road construction crews began digging up new State Route 607 in 1949, along the south side of the church, members of the congregation requested them to leave the big stones around the perimeter of the church building in anticipation of constructing the second floor. Eventually, rocks were piled so high that no light came through the basement windows. The men in the congregation provided free labor to build the second floor in 1949 and Pastor W.M. Wilson supervised the construction. Some church members pledged up to \$ 500.00 to help pay for the rest of the building materials.

Two rows of wood columns were evenly spaced throughout the basement to support the new second floor. A wood panel door system was designed and connected to the outside walls with new interior partitions butting up to each column making separate Sunday School Classrooms on either side of a central hallway. A kitchen was added and, in 1956, separate male and female restrooms were completed.

An L-shaped wooden stair in the northwest corner of the building accesses the main sanctuary. A small Sunday School classroom, located at the top of the

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**Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky**

stair in the southwest corner next to the main central entry door, can be closed off by a hinged wood panel door system or can be opened up to allow more seating for the main church sanctuary. A small door in the entry vestibule accesses the balcony which features three narrow rows of seating. The main sanctuary is lighted by Art Deco opaque white glass tubular light fixtures and is enhanced by reflections of multiple colors from the tall arched stained glass windows.

The main sanctuary area has a centrally located rostrum raised up two steps with a choir loft on each side. The pastor's study and library, hidden behind doors situated at an angle to each other on either side of the rostrum, are located two steps down on the same level as the main sanctuary seating.

Carpet covered only the aisles and rostrum in the main sanctuary, allowing the beautiful hardwood oak floorboards to be visible in 1949. Later, the entire floor was covered with carpet to eliminate reverberation sounds that produced poor acoustics in the space. Although the basement was first heated by wood then coal stoves, an oil furnace has continued to warm the entire building since 1949. Plaster walls and ceilings in the main sanctuary and basement remain in good condition presently. New pews and pulpit furniture were purchased by Brother W.M. Wilson and deacons of the church in 1950, prior to the church dedication on October 1, 1950.

Three large old maple trees shade the front lawn of the Old Cedar Baptist Church. A basketball net, located to the rear of the building, is used during church youth activities. Today, church membership stands at 135 with three church services offered weekly: Sunday morning, Sunday evening and Wednesday night.

**Integrity**

The Old Cedar Baptist Church is being considered for nomination under National Register Criterion C in the area of Architecture since it embodies distinctive characteristics of a Classical Revival style church built during a period of time when limited construction occurred in Owen County, beginning in 1929 and completed in 1949. It also represents a building that employed materials and methods of construction not presently seen in religious buildings in Owen County, native fieldstone masonry. The Old Cedar Baptist Church has retained a high level of integrity in relation to its location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling during the period of significance, 1929 and 1949.

The integrity of location of the Old Cedar Baptist Church is exemplified by the fact that this building has remained intact on this property since construction began in 1929. Situated at the bottom of a hill, its setting is



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Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky

enhanced by three old maple trees which shade the main church sanctuary and an L-shaped parking lot which provides access to U.S. Route 127 and State Route 607. Although the church is sheltered from the heavy traffic flow by being located down a steep slope and back from this major thoroughfare, the current widening of U.S. Route 127 proposes encroachment into the front yard and parking lot of the church which may alter the access route to the church from U.S. Route 127 and eliminate the trees possibly threatening the church's existence.

The Old Cedar Baptist Church is situated in a tranquil setting that has retained its integrity since the early 1900s as a peaceful farming community. Only a few new residences have been built in between earlier farm houses along State Route 607. A pink neon sign hung on the north side of the airplane hangar adjacent to the church announces the presence of the church to south bound traffic at night with the message "Christ is the Answer", further enhancing its setting.

Even though the building was constructed over a twenty year time span, due to the stock market crash and Great Depression depleting all available funds, the integrity of design of this two-story rectangular stone building has been retained through its original footprint, basement windows, native fieldstone exterior, stone and wood work details.

Originally conceived of and designed as a two-story edifice, only the basement was constructed in 1929 as one large open room and modified in 1949 by the addition of interior columns and walls designed specifically to support the new second floor sanctuary. Paneled doors, that are hinged at the walls, close against the columns forming separate Sunday School classrooms or, if left open, provide one large meeting room. The kitchen, added in 1949 to accommodate church dinner functions, and restrooms, installed in 1956, complete the basement alterations.

The main sanctuary, built directly above the basement walls, compliments the original foundation and has retained the integrity of materials by using similar native fieldstone masonry construction techniques. Thomas Kearns and his sons James and Charles from Dry Ridge, were the local stone masons who matched the stone construction in 1949 to the techniques used in 1929. A wide stone stairway, accented by square stone columns, form the prominent entry portico which accesses the main sanctuary from the west, or front, of the building.

Inside the main sanctuary, partition walls were added in 1950 to accommodate a pastor's study, library, and balcony. These rooms appear to have been a part of the original design scheme considering the diagonal wall and floor plan layout.

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**Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky**

The integrity of workmanship has been consistent over the twenty year time span by incorporating details from the 1929 construction such as the stone arches and plain wood trim molding over the windows and doors. The paired wood entry doors, highlighted by a semi-circular fanlight, and the double-hung multi-paned stained glass wood windows which flank the front door and pierce the side walls at intervals providing daylight to the interior, are representative of this period of construction, and display a high level of craftsmanship not frequently seen in Owen County.

The integrity of feeling has been maintained throughout the interior with the furnishings such as the piano and church pews in the basement which were built between 1839 and 1929 and used in the old church building; the restrained design of the metal tubular light fixtures with opaque white glass that are suspended from the ceiling in the main sanctuary; as well as the pews and organ which have remained intact since it was constructed in 1949. These interior furnishing combined with the exterior stone masonry walls, stained glass windows, large maple trees which frame the front of the church, and the neon sign on the airplane hangar announcing "Christ is the Answer", express the feeling of a historic place and time.

In summation, these modifications took over twenty years to accomplish in order to complete the original building design. This Classical Revival style church with its raised front entry portico supported by massive stone columns, plain window and door trim moldings, symmetrical front facade, and pedimented roof, exemplify the basic overall design concept originally conceived of by the designer and pastor of the church in 1928, Edward N. Lawson. The integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling are expressed by the retention of the overall basic design concept, maintenance of the exterior random ashlar foundation and second floor walls, the front facing gabled roof, multi-paned stained glass windows, and wood tracery in semi-circular arched stained glass windows. The integrity of location and setting of the **Old Cedar Baptist Church** combined with the design, materials, workmanship, and feelings represent the culmination of the historic Cedar Creek Church which was first organized in 1820 at Ford's Spring.

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Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky

**8. Statement of Significance**

The Old Cedar Baptist Church (ONM-1) meets National Register Criteria C and is significant in the area of Architecture because it embodies distinctive characteristics of a church building type locally, beginning in 1929 and ending in 1949, while employing native fieldstone masonry construction techniques not seen elsewhere in buildings in Owen County. It also meets National Register Criteria Consideration A because it is owned by a religious institution and is used for religious purposes. Criteria Consideration G: Properties that have achieved significance within the last fifty years was considered. It was determined that since construction began in 1929, over fifty years ago, and was completed in 1949, which overlaps the fifty year period by a few years or less, this consideration did not apply, according to National Register Bulletin # 15, page 41. Also, in reference to the evaluating properties that are less than fifty years old, "the fifty year period is an arbitrary span of time and that our ability to evaluate properties moves forward in uneven leaps of years" according to National Register Bulletin # 22, page 5.

The property was evaluated within the context "History of Church Construction in Monterey, 1847-1949" which focuses on the built environment and the people who made contributions to the religious growth and development of Monterey and Owen County. This context was developed as part of the survey of Monterey conducted during 1995 and 1996 and is included in the "Monterey Historic Structures Survey and National Register Nominations Summary Report" on file at the Kentucky Heritage Council in Frankfort, Kentucky. Excerpts from the context "History of Church Construction in Monterey, 1847-1949" is included in the following Statement of Significance.

**HISTORY OF CHURCH CONSTRUCTION IN MONTEREY, 1847-1949**

One great socializing influence in Owen County was the church. Country churches were often too poor to support a full-time preacher, therefore they would have services only once a month. After the advent of highways and automobiles, churches services were offered weekly. In the summertime, churches usually had two weeks of revival known as "protracted meetings" or "big-meetin's". Each church took turns following each other in succession (Houchens, 255).

**Monterey Union Church / Monterey Christian Church**

The Union Church was the earliest church in downtown Monterey. Used by all denominations in the late 1800s, each worshiped on their designated Sunday. Built between 1869 and 1871, (Murphy a, 23-24) the second floor of the Union Church was used as the meeting place of the W.G. Simpson Masonic Lodge

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**Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky**

(Murphy a, 225). This horizontal wood siding church building had two entries on the gabled end, a bell tower and a metal standing seam roof. This two-story wood-frame church building suffered through the flood of 1937 and burned November 18, 1953.

In 1953, the Monterey Christian Church (ONM-21) built a new two-story cut stone building on this site which remains intact today on the corner of High and Worth Streets (Murphy interview). Built after the period of significance, 1947, this two-story rectangular building has a raised central covered entry portico with windows flanking either side. A small cupola with a pyramidal shaped roof, sits above the main entry on the front facing gabled end roof. Evenly spaced stained glass windows pierce the side stone masonry walls.

**Monterey Baptist Church**

The Monterey Baptist Church (ONM-63) was begun as a mission point of the Concord Association in 1867 (Murphy a, 21). The mission did not become organized as a church until 1871 with a membership of 46 that year. Brother J.A. Head, the first pastor, lived in Monterey and was an outstanding civic leader in the county. Brother Williams left \$ 1,000 in trust to the trustees of the church with 75% of the interest to be applied on the general expenses of the church and 25% to be given to the Masonic Lodge.

Mrs. Mat Hardin Hughes donated the land where the Monterey Baptist Church is located, on the corner of High and Clyde Streets. Walter Gayle and Lee H. McGraw gave a considerable amount of money to finance the new church construction. In 1901 the present church auditorium was valued at \$ 4,600 after being built in 1900. The church was formally dedicated in June 1901 (Murphy a, 99). Eighty people were enrolled in Sunday School with 51 as the average attendance. Notably, E.D. Derrick and Nellie E. Merchant were the first couple married in the church on April 9, 1902 (Murphy interview). The church site overlooks the most beautiful bottomland at the edge of Cedar Creek facing the Kentucky River. This two-story brick building is designed in the Gothic Revival style with an auditorium seating capacity estimated at 250. The sanctuary floor is covered with carpet in the aisles and the rostrum. Natural oak pews accent the interiors (Murphy b, 100) as well as suspended light fixtures.

During the flood of 1937, many families found refuge here although records were lost. In 1947 Sunday School edifice funds were raised allowing construction of a ten room brick addition to begin in 1950 (Murphy b, 99). The auditorium was redecorated in 1951 (Murphy a, 217), a library added in 1960 (Murphy a, 252), and the nursery redecorated in 1964 (Murphy a, 264). The Carl Kemper Johnson Memorial Window was installed in the front of the church auditorium in 1962 (Murphy a, 265). The sanctuary was repaired and

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remodeled at a cost of \$ 7,000 in 1965 (Murphy a, 281). The church museum opened for the first time October 3, 1965 (Murphy a, 282). A small one-story brick addition, added to the rear of the building in the summer of 1996, does not detract from the overall historic building since it is compatible in design. Today, the Monterey Baptist Church is the most outstanding church in Monterey due to its level of detail in brick design and construction as well as its historical significance providing the community with spiritual comfort, a friendly atmosphere, and a safe haven from the floods.

**CHURCH COMPARISON AND EVALUATION IN OWEN COUNTY**

Archival research into the church files at the Owen County Public Library produced a current listing of forty-two churches as follows: 26 Baptist churches, 2 Independent Baptist churches, 4 Christian, 4 Methodist, 1 Catholic, 1 Transfiguration, 2 Assemblies of God, and 2 Non-Denominational churches. A windshield survey of these churches, conducted in August 1996, found the majority were of wood-frame construction covered with wood or vinyl siding.

The most common building type of church design identified in the windshield survey had the following characteristics: a simple one-story, wood-frame rectangular plan type with a front gabled roof and a central entry with a modest portico often highlighted by flat, gothic, or roman arched windows flanking each side of the central entry door. This building design appeared to be the traditional common denominator for most churches. Two examples are the Elk Lick Baptist Church, built in 1924, Figure 1, and the First Christian Church of Owenton, built in 1915, Figure 2.



Figure 1, Elk Lick Baptist Church

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Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky



Figure 2, First Christian Church of Owenton

The present 1949 Old Cedar Baptist Church kept the traditional building form but deviated in building materials by using native fieldstone, reflecting the availability of materials and skilled labor in this area in 1929 when construction began and in 1949 when it was completed. Only two churches were found in the county constructed of native fieldstone, the Old Cedar Baptist Church and Harmony Church. Investigation into A History of Owen County Baptist Association and It's Churches by Mrs. Ira Arnold revealed a historic photograph of only one church that was similar in proportion and building materials as the 1929 Old Cedar Church, the Harmony Church. Located near State Route 227 on Harmony Road in the southern section of the county, it was built similar in style and appearance as the one-story 1929 Old Cedar Baptist Church with native fieldstone exterior walls and wood siding in the front facing gabled end. Today, the Harmony Church is completely covered with stucco, hiding its original 1941 appearance. Unlike Harmony Church, Old Cedar Baptist Church used this type of stone construction to complete their second floor.

The exterior appearance of the 1949 Old Cedar Baptist Church has the common elements found in other churches in the county with its front gabled roof, raised central entry portico, and windows flanking the centrally located pair of wood doors. The semi-circular arched transom window above the 1949 entry doors and stone arches above the stained glass windows on the main sanctuary level, makes this second level appear prominent, while possessing a higher degree of detail and workmanship in comparison to the flat arched windows in the 1929 basement level.

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**Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky**

Ordinarily, the main sanctuary is built first in most churches, then Sunday School classrooms, a kitchen, restrooms, and church offices are added later, usually on the same level, as is evident in the Elk Lick Baptist Church which was built in 1924. Originally 40 feet wide and 60 feet long, a Sunday School addition was attached to the rear on both sides of the auditorium, adding to its one-story footprint. By contrast, the main sanctuary of the Old Cedar Baptist Church was constructed on top of the basement twenty years later, converting the lower level to Sunday School classrooms. If it had been financially feasible to construct the entire two-story edifice at one time in 1929, it probably would have resulted in the church building we see today.

Given the fact that the majority of the churches in Owen County were constructed between the late-1800s and early-1900s, possessed different architectural styles, and were constructed of various materials, the basic traditional building form remains similar with their emphasis on a house of worship with a main sanctuary. Each church is a reflection of the membership's idea of a church design based on their financial status and moral beliefs. Although the members of the Old Cedar Baptist Church planned to construct a two-story stone edifice as their house of worship in 1929, their financial status at the outbreak of the Great Depression produced the decision to build only the basement level and use it as a sanctuary at that time. Increased membership and financial security during the next twenty years made it possible for their dream of completing the church as planned in 1929 to become a reality when the road construction crews began working on State Route 607 in 1949.

**Old Cedar Baptist Church**

The Old Cedar Baptist Church, located on the outskirts of downtown Monterey, is one of the six oldest Baptist churches in Owen County, according to research through the Kentucky Baptist Association's minutes and state historical records. At the time the church was organized in 1820, it was named Mouth of Cedar and consisted of 23 members. The Franklin County Association records show the church name being changed several times over the years to Cedar Creek in 1842, Cedar in 1871, and in 1921, Old Cedar. The church remained as a member of the Franklin County Association until 1899 when the letter was presented to Owen Association for membership and accepted (Arnold, 241). During this same time period the membership had increased to 201 in 1842, and 398 in 1871 with 17 African-Americans (Arnold, 242).

The first place of worship was near Ford's Spring which empties into Cedar Creek at the mouth of Sawdridge Creek. The land was donated by Mrs. Margaret Grady Ford (Arnold, 242), which is known as the Cook Farm today.

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**Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky**

The Mouth of Cedar, built in 1820 and used until 1839, was the first log structure and was located on the Indian and Cedar turnpike which came right up to the church. People rode horses and buggies that criss-crossed the creek on this road that parallels today's U.S. Route 127 (Hawkins interview). Membership increased to 77 in 1839, outgrowing the log structure, making it necessary for the congregation to move to a new wood-frame building in front of the present church (Arnold, 242). Located at the intersection of U.S. Route 127 and State Route 607, Owenton, Kentucky, in rural farmland south of Monterey, this large one-story wood-frame church building structure was constructed of yellow poplar and was used between 1839 and 1929, when the present church began construction. The 1839 church was then used as a parsonage until 1952 when it was torn down and removed from the site by Washington Atha. Materials from this old poplar building were used in the new construction of a private residence located on U.S. Route 127 near State Route 355.

The significance of the Old Cedar Baptist Church is its distinctive architectural design representing a period of development spanning twenty years while possessing historic integrity through its location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

The Old Cedar Baptist Church, exhibiting characteristics of the Classical Revival style, is the second of two edifices that has been constructed on this site serving the surrounding community of Claxon's Ridge and Monterey for over 157 years. The present church building began its first phase of construction in 1929, completing only a basement which served as the main sanctuary and Sunday School classrooms for twenty years. The second phase of construction, completed in 1949, doubled the capacity of the church with a second floor addition on top of the existing building footprint.

The Old Cedar Baptist Church was originally designed and planned as a two-story building by pastor Edward N. Lawson who came to the church in 1928 (Hawkins interview). The first phase of construction began on April 29, 1929, when thirty-five men and teams of workers came to break the hard ground and haul stone from the hillsides that were used in building the new walls (Arnold, 242). According to long time church member Lela Maude Hawkins, there was only enough money to build the basement of the church at that time due to the stock market crash of and the onset of the Great Depression that year. Money was so scarce that members of the church went to the bank to get a note to pay the pastor. Construction ceased and a front gabled roof of felt shingles covered the one-story church. Exterior stairs descended into the building under a covered entry located on the east side of the building. This entry remains intact today.



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Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky

The pulpit was originally situated opposite the covered entry on the west end where the kitchen is currently. Khaki material was hung on wires to separate the basement into two rooms for Sunday School classes. The pews and piano that came from the 1839 church were also used (Hawkins interview). Rectangular double-hung multi-light wood-frame windows pierced the random ashlar stone walls providing light to the interior open space.

The building was occupied in 1929 and church membership grew with most of the congregation coming from Claxon's Ridge. Worship services were held on the lower floor of the building until 1949 when the second floor was added (Arnold, 242).

After a period of twenty years, an incentive to complete the church building presented itself when the dirt and gravel road along the south side of the church was being prepared for new State Route 607. Phase two of construction began in 1949 when the road building crews unearthed native stone from beneath the ground and piled it all around the church at the request of some members of the congregation. A combination of increased church membership, availability of materials, funds, and labor allowed the completion of the second floor, or main sanctuary area, to become a reality. The church members voted to build the new addition with the men giving free labor. Reverend W.M. Wilson, the new pastor of the church between 1949 and 1955, lived in a trailer on the site and supervised the construction free of charge. Wilson was a leader and provided the inspiration required in completing the second floor of the new building by praying, working night and day, planning, directing others, and pleading for money. People pledged as much as \$ 500.00 or worked as a helper to complete the project (Hawkins interview). Work and sacrifice from members and friends of the church was sought after and the church was eventually erected almost entirely by the men of the church (Arnold, 242).

By 1949, Church membership increased. Approximately 100 people were enrolled in Sunday School, warranting the need for more individual Sunday School classrooms. In order to support the new sanctuary on the second floor, columns were added in the basement and a series of wood paneled doors situated between the columns created several small classrooms. A kitchen was partitioned off and the pulpit was moved upstairs. The benches, located in the basement today date between 1839 and 1929 since they were used in the old wood church that was previously situated on this site (Hawkins interview).

Only two wood and coal stoves heated the building prior to the oil furnace that was installed in 1950, which is still being used to heat the entire building today. Beautiful oak hardwood floors covered the main sanctuary, however, due to the resonating sound and poor acoustics, carpet was laid across the aisle and rostrum after it was constructed. Later the entire

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**Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky**

floor was carpeted and new pews and pulpit furniture were purchased in 1950. The balcony was also a part of this new construction and sliding wood paneled doors behind the main sanctuary were added on the right hand side of the church. This area allows for congregational overflow during worship services and can be closed off for Sunday School classes. The library and pastor's study rooms, located in the corners behind the pulpit area, were also added in 1950 (Hawkins interview).

The first church service was held in the new building June 11, 1950 with a formal dedication on October 1, 1950. On May 2, 1954, the last note on the church was burned (Arnold, 243). Since then, separate male and female restrooms were added in the basement raised up on platforms, in 1956.

For almost 50 years, the Old Cedar Baptist Church has retained the integrity of location and setting, by remaining on this site with same building footprint and being surrounded by large maple trees in a farming community. Although the overall building design has evolved according to the original plan over a twenty year period, it has incorporated similar building materials, such as native fieldstone, and displayed workmanship through the construction techniques employed. Almost all of the character-defining features of this historic church have been retained such as the wood tracery in the stained glass windows, simple wood trim molding, paired entry doors, pews, light fixtures and exterior stone walls which have remained intact and represent the significant time period between 1929 and 1949.

Today, three services are offered weekly: Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday nights with a current church membership of 135 (Hawkins interview). The Old Cedar Baptist Church serves as a testament to those who persevered through hard times with the willingness to serve the Lord and the courage to build a church for worship.

**History of Property Ownership**

Although the church believed they owned the property since 1820, a deed was not found. Therefore, Albert Karsner's heirs: Lela Maude Hawkins and John W. Hawkins, Sarah J. Karsner, Donald W. and Margo Karsner, Daniel C. Karsner, Myra Dale and Wesley Atha; and Lawrence and Marcella Wright, Daniel Diskell, and Orville and Patricia A. Miller, grantors and trustees of the Old Cedar Church, signed a quit claim deed in June 1995 in consideration for one dollar to the Old Cedar Baptist Church, its successors and assigns.

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Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky

9. Bibliography

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Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky

• **Newspapers:**

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• **Owen County Courthouse**  
Deeds, Tax Card Records

• **Secondary Resources**

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• **Volunteers:**

Mayor Becky Albaugh

Mrs. Leota Derringer

Mrs. Lela Maude Hawkins

Mrs. Margaret Karsner Murphy

Mr. Bill Hardin

Ms. Kathy Tingle

Mr. Jim Hudson

Mrs. Bettina Sommerville

Mrs. Reva Kemper

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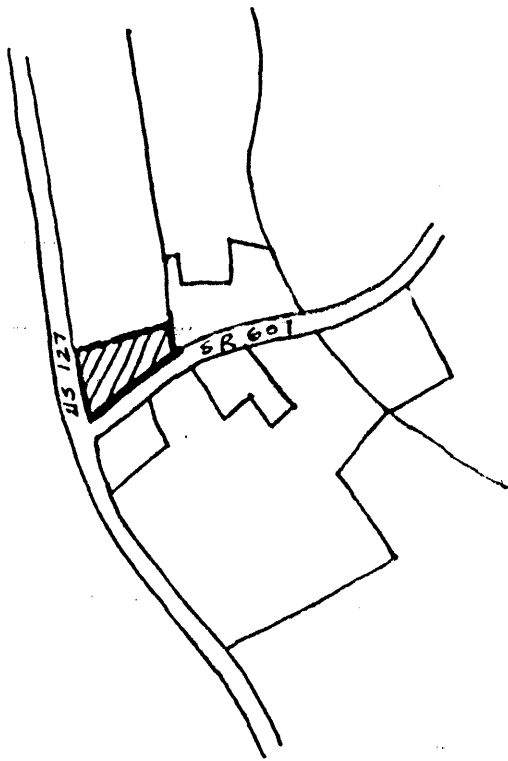
**Old Cedar Baptist Church, Owen County, Kentucky**

### **10. Verbal Boundary Description**

The Old Cedar Baptist Church is located on Property Identification Map 66, block 32 in Owenton, Kentucky. The property is situated on the northeast corner of U.S. Route 127 and State Route 607. The parcel is bound on the north by farm land, on the west by U.S. Route 127, on the south by State Route 607, and on the east by residential property. See attached map.

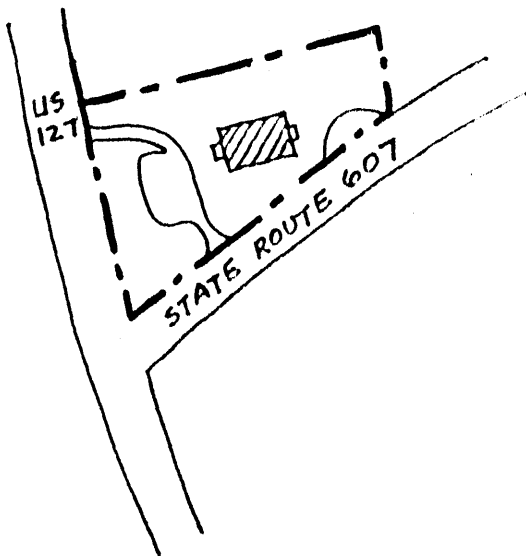
### **Boundary Justification**

The boundary chosen for this property encompasses the significant building known as the historic Old Cedar Baptist Church property. The entire 1.098 acres has been associated with the property since the construction of the church building in 1929 and its completion in 1949.



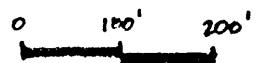
OLD CEDAR BAPTIST CHURCH

1090 CLAYON RIDGE ROAD OWENTON, K.Y. 40359

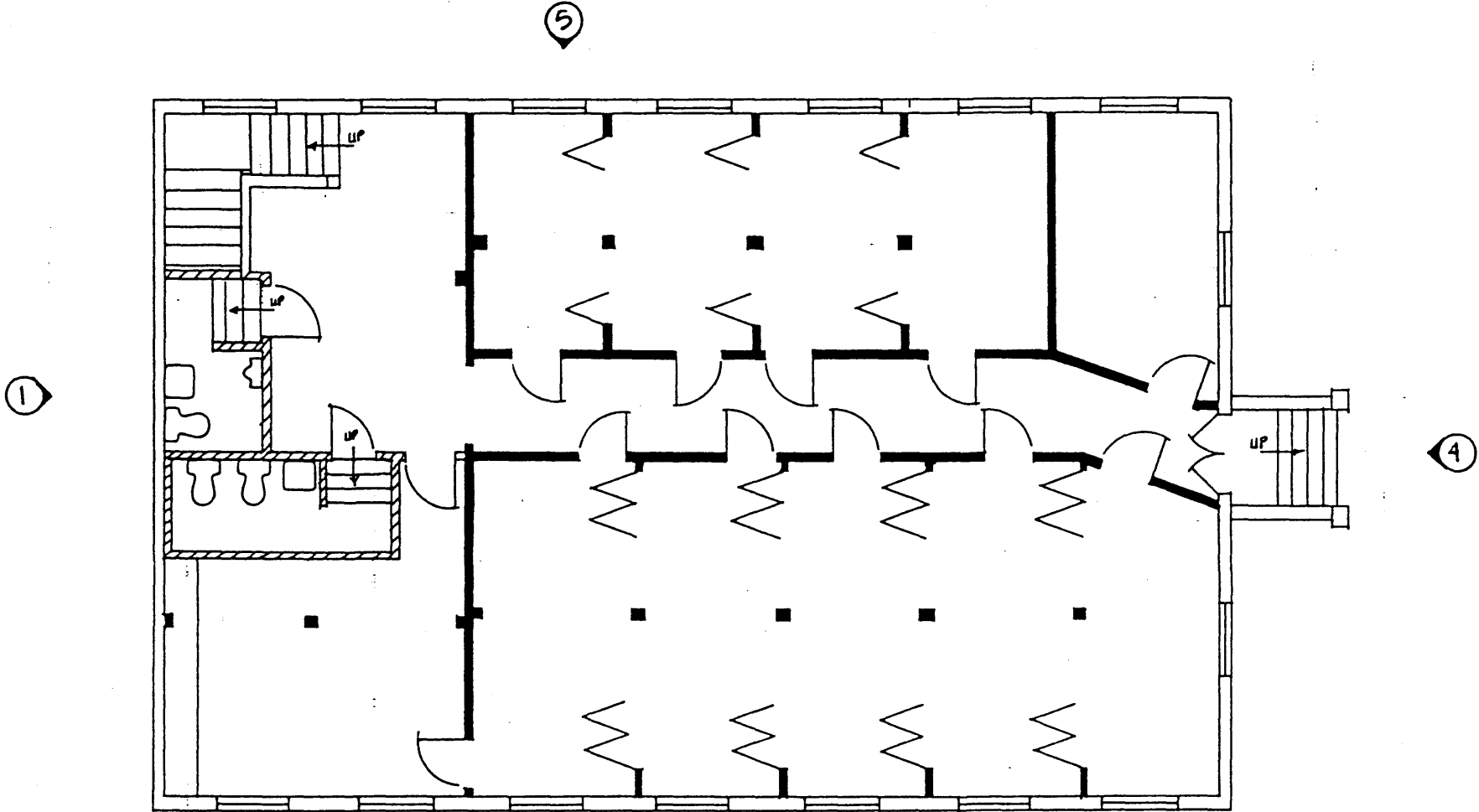


OLD CEDAR BAPTIST CHURCH

1090 CLAYON RIDGE ROAD OWENTON, KY. 40359







BASEMENT LEVEL - 1929

OLD CEDAR BAPTIST CHURCH

1040 CLAYTON RIDGE RD. OWENTON, KY. 40359

②



- 1929
- 1949
- 1956

③



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**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

NRIS Reference Number: 97000870 Date Listed: 8/18/97

Old Cedar Baptist Church Owen KY  
Property Name: County: State:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Multiple Name

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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.

Patrick Andrus  
Signature of the Keeper

9/5/97  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

This SLR makes a technical correction to the form. The property is nominated for architectural significance under Criterion C. Because it is a religious property, Criteria Consideration A should have been checked (rather than Criterion A). So, Criterion A is deleted and Criteria Consideration A will be entered in the database.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)