

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED NOV 23 1976
DATE ENTERED AUG 16 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Munford Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Covington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

Seventh

STATE

Tennessee

CODE

48

COUNTY

Tipton

CODE

167

2 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

X OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

X BUILDING(S)

X PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

X RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

X YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

St. Matthews Episcopal Church of Covington, Tennessee, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER

Munford Street

CITY, TOWN

Covington

VICINITY OF

STATE

Tennessee

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Tipton County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Court Square

CITY, TOWN

Covington

STATE

Tennessee

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Tennessee Historical and Architectural Survey

DATE

June 1973

FEDERAL X STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS

Tennessee Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Nashville

STATE

Tennessee

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Shortly after Covington, the seat of government of Tipton County, was settled, the Episcopallians in the town organized a congregation; since the early records have been lost, the precise date cannot be determined. Prior to erecting a church in 1855 or '56 on the corner opposite to the present building, the congregation held services in a nearby opera house. On June 28, 1858 Robert I. Mitchell exchanged his lot No. 88, which contained nearly 16,000 square feet, for the lot owned by the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Tennessee and \$50; the church which stood on the property acquired by Mitchell was not included in the transaction. The congregation selected J. J. Malone and William P. Malone to erect St. Matthew's Episcopal Church. The cornerstone was laid in 1858, and the new building was probably completed a few months later.

The Carpenter Gothic church originally had a rectangular floor plan with a projecting tower in its east elevation. Built on a brick foundation, later covered with studco, it was framed using yellow poplar and red gum connected with mortise and tenon joints and trunnels; the studs and plates measure six by eight inches. According to tradition, all of the lumber was pit sawn by Fisher family slaves. The hand-dressed board and batten siding contained eight stained glass windows--four each on the north and south elevations; a crossbar divides each window into two lights. Shutters probably protected the windows, but these must have been removed many years ago. Modern composition shingles have replaced the original wood shingles on the high gable roof with its subtle bellcast flair.

A square, three-story tower dominates the main facade. This architectural element contains double-leaf, paneled doors confined within a traditional Gothic opening; a single-light, diamond-shaped window above the doors; and in the third tier, rectangular, louvered vents with arched mouldings; and surmounting all are gradeful battlements and a calvary cross. A spire may have topped the tower.

A slave gallery was originally located in the second level of the tower. The walls and ceilings were plastered over hand-split oak lath, and the floors were made of hand-planed, wide boards. The gallery still has the original plaster on the walls.

During the 1890s the interior of the church underwent extensive renovation. The slave gallery was closed, and all of the plaster and lath was removed from the walls and ceiling and replaced with beaded, pine boards and exposed rafters and posts. It is possible that the spire, if it existed, was removed at this time. In 1947 the congregation added a brick parish hall, classrooms, and rector's office to the rear of the building. Two years later a six-rank Shantz organ containing two manuals and pedal boards was installed; six more ranks were added, and the console was moved to the north transept in 1963.

Another major remodeling of the church occurred in 1956. Transepts were added to the northeast and northwest corners of the building, a new pulpit was placed in the sanctuary, and central heating and air conditioning were installed during this period. A residence located on the lot west of the church became available and the congregation purchased it in 1960. It has recently been renovated or "Christianized" for use as a Sunday School building, a covered walkway connects the education building to the parish hall.

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The present floor plan of the sanctuary is cruciform. A central aisle biseects the interior of the church, and at the west end of the aisle stands the raised altar in the recessed chancel which is framed by a large Gothic Revival arch. Triple-set stained glass windows with lancet heads focus the viewers attention to the paneled altar. The high ceiling and dark walls and ceiling convey the impression of interior spaciousness.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1858, 1890s

BUILDER/ARCHITECT J. J. Malone and William Malone

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church is the oldest religious edifice in Covington and one of the earliest in Tipton County. A fine example of the Early Gothic Revival style of architecture, it is one of the best Carpenter Gothic churches in southwest Tennessee. Stylistically St. Matthew's has established a pattern which has influenced two other churches within sight of it. Square towers and battlements adorn churches located east and south of St. Matthew's.

A unique feature of this building is the triple-set stained-glass windows in the chancel. The Right Rev. Charles Todd Quintard, the second Episcopal Bishop of the Tennessee Diocese, donated the windows to the church. Bishop Quintard's gift honors the memory of Rev. John Ambrose Wheelock, St. Matthew's first rector. It is reported that the windows are 200 to 300 years old and were originally installed in the cathedral at Canterbury. The bishop visited England during the time when the great cathedral was being renovated and acquired the windows which had been discarded. He had them shipped to Randolph, Tennessee, via New Orleans and the Mississippi River, and then overland to Covington; six months were required to complete the shipment. Each year Bishop Quintard spent a week at St. Matthew's and delivered sermons which were heard by citizens of Covington of every religious persuasion.

Although the church was remodeled several times and numerous additions have been attached to the building, St. Matthew's still largely retains its original appearance. The 118-year-old church remains a landmark in the community and a source of pride to the 119-member congregation.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Covington, Tennessee: 100th Anniversary of Church Building" A pamphlet prepared in 1958 by the Rector and Vestry of St. Matthew's

Interviews with the Rev. Mark Wilson and Peyton Smith in Covington, Tennessee, on September 9, 1976.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .5

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	6	2	6	0	7	0	0	3	9	3	8	4	5	0
ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING								

B

ZONE		EASTING			NORTHING		

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Robert E. Dalton, Director of Field Services

ORGANIZATION

Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

October 1976

STREET & NUMBER

170 Second Avenue North

TELEPHONE

(615) 741-2371

CITY OR TOWN

Nashville,

STATE

Tennessee

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Herbert P. Hays

TITLE

Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

11/15/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

Charles [Signature]

DATE

8/16/77

DATE

8-12-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER