

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

### SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 88002970

Date Listed: 4/17/92

St. Jophn's Baptist Church  
Property Name

Dade  
County

FLORIDA  
State

Downtown Miami MRA

Multiple Name

-----  
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

4/17/92  
Date of Action

=====  
**Amended Items in Nomination:**

Section No. 8

This nomination was amended to add Criteria Consideration A, since the resource is a church.

This amendment was confirmed by phone with the Florida SHPO (4/17/92).

**DISTRIBUTION:**

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

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. John's Baptist Church
other names/site number New St. John Institutional Baptist Church/8DA5127

2. Location

street & number 1328 N.W. 3rd Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Miami N/A vicinity
state Florida code FL county Dade code 025 zip code 33136

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked), public-local, public-State, public-Federal
Category of Property: building(s) (checked), district, site, structure, object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0, Total 1

Name of related multiple property listing: Downtown Miami Multiple Resource Area
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: Suzanne P. Walker (Deputy)
Date: 2/25/92
Signature of commenting or other official:
Date:
State or Federal agency and bureau:

In my opinion, the property meets (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official:
Date:
State or Federal agency and bureau:

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
[checked] 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: Patrick Andrews
Date of Action: 4/17/92

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
RELIGION: religious structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
RELIGION: religious structure

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick

roof ceramic tile

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Please see continuation sheet.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1940  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1940  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

McKissack and McKissack  
(architects)  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Please see continuation sheet.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Please see cover nomination.

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

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

**Specify repository:**

Bureau of Historic Preservation

**10. Geographical Data**

Acres of property Less than 1 acre

**UTM References**

A 

17	5	80	1	80
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28	5	2	185
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Zone      Easting      Northing

C 

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B 

--	--	--	--	--

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Zone      Easting      Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Miami, Lots 19 and 20, less the southerly 90.6 feet, of Block 2 of the plat of SOSTS SUBDIVISION (PB B-27)

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

Boundary includes the city lots that have been historically associated with the property and that maintain their historic integrity.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Tulie W. Taylor, Historic Sites Specialist Sarah Eaton, Preservation  
 organization Division of Historical Resources date 2-27-92 Planner  
 street & number 500 S. Bronough St. telephone (904) 487-2333  
 city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399

MAR 6 1992

United States Department of the Interior  
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DESCRIPTION

St. John's Baptist Church, 1328 N.W. 3rd Avenue, is located on the southwest corner of N.W. 3rd Avenue and 13th Street in Overtown, a historically black section of Miami. It is a rectangular, two-story masonry building clad in buff brick. It has a front gable roof covered in clay tile and parapets that are capped by a simple masonry coping. The church is an eclectic architectural blend of Art Moderne details on Gothic style massing. Designed by the black architectural firm of McKissack and McKissack, the church was completed in 1940.

The main (east) facade of the building is three bays wide and has a central entrance set beneath a tower that is flanked by a series of setbacks. The tower is embellished by a simple circular window with triple windows above it. The entrance is made up of three doorways, each capped by a rectangular transom, and is framed by a masonry surround that contains stylized ornamentation with religious iconography. The triple doorway is approached by a series of broad steps which conceal the church's raised basement. Tall window openings are recessed within the end bays of the elevation.

The side elevations are five bays long and are relatively plain except for a water table that wraps around the church and brick corbeling found at the cornice. Each bay contains an elongated, multi-pane window set into a simple wood frame that rests on a flat masonry sill.

The interior of the church sanctuary is rather plain and is characterized by a balcony located to the rear of the church. The alter, set at the west end of the sanctuary, is flanked by a choir gallery set above the sanctuary floor level. A raised baptismal font is located behind the alter. Flat brick pilasters divide the interior walls into bays.

The lower level of the church consists of an auditorium and classrooms which are accessible from a side entrance found on the south elevation.

The modernistic image of the building is enhanced by a monolith found in front of the church which serves as signage. It is composed of glass block and buff-colored brick, and contains an inscription that the church is "fully air-conditioned."

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St. John's Baptist Church has undergone very little alteration since its construction. The building maintains its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, location, and association.

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### SIGNIFICANCE

St. John's Baptist Church, an Art Moderne style religious structure with Gothic massing, was constructed in downtown Miami during the historical period of the Bust and Great Depression (1927 to 1942). It is architecturally significant under Criterion C at the local level as a rare mixture of Art Moderne details on Gothic style massing in a religious building in Miami. Located in Overtown, a historically black section of Miami, the building was designed by the black architectural firm of McKissack and McKissack of Nashville. Construction was completed in 1940.

The exterior of St. John's Baptist Church embodies the distinctive characteristics of Gothic massing with Art Moderne details. The visual composition represents a fine example of modernism in ecclesiastical architecture in Dade County, as evidenced in the use of buff-colored brick as a surface material inside and out, and for the use of streamline stylistic features. The scale of the building, its construction materials, and corner location make this church one of the most prominent visual landmarks in Overtown.

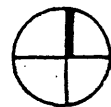
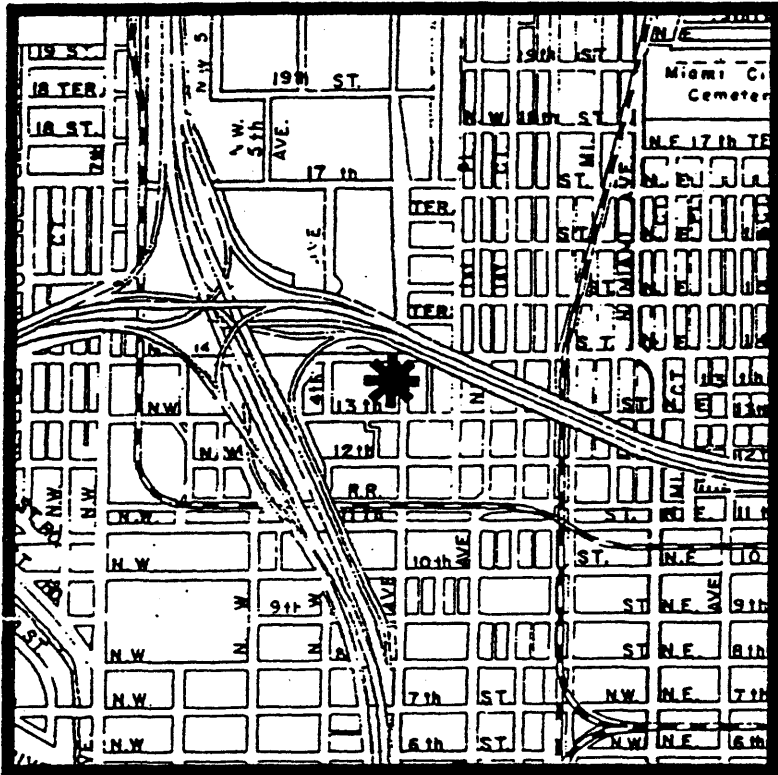
The church building houses a congregation that was organized on 17 June 1906. The first services were held in a small frame structure two blocks away from the present site. By 1939, with membership exceeding 1,000 parishioners, the present building was planned and subsequently built for approximately \$75,000.

The current building was constructed at the urging of Reverend J. W. Drake, one of Overtown's most well-known leaders. Drake was born in 1872 in Oglethorpe County, Georgia, and studied at the Baptist Seminary in Atlanta. He came to Miami in 1912 and transformed the Baptist Church in Overtown into one of the area's leading religious institutions. Drake died in 1951.

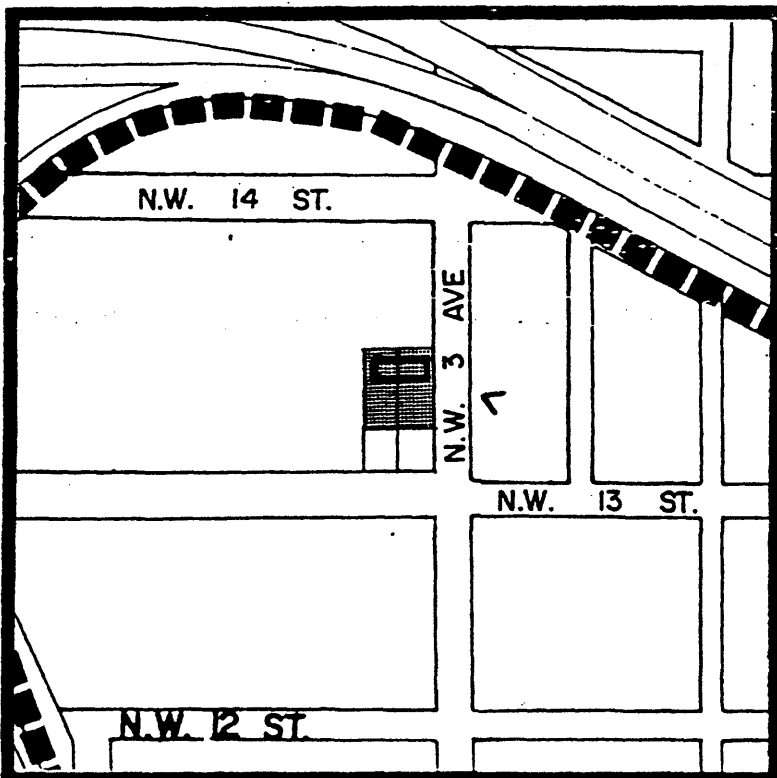


# ST. JOHN'S BAPTIST CHURCH

1328 N.W. 3 AVENUE



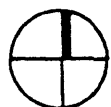
location



> = photo angle

SCALE 1/3 inch = 100 feet

Shaded area = nominated property



NORTH

site plan