

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received NOV 28 1986

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

DEC 29 1986

1. Name

historic FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF FOND DU LAC

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 90 South Macy Street ___ not for publication

city, town Fond du Lac ___ vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55 county Fond du Lac code 039

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Karl-Mario and Alice A. Dunst

street & number 1561 County Highway Y, Box 240

city, town Campbellsport ___ vicinity of state Wisconsin 53010

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Fond du Lac County Courthouse

city, town Fond du Lac state Wisconsin 54935

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1986 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The First Baptist Church of Fond du Lac is located one block west of the central business district on the northwest corner of Macy and First Streets. The building is a two-story Neo-Gothic church structure. The plan configuration is modified cruciform; the roof is moderately pitched and its form is combination hip and gable. The foundations are rock-faced ashlar limestone, the walls are chocolate-colored vitrified brick, and the roofing materials are asphalt. Significant features include engaged buttressing piers and Bedford limestone trim on the gable parapets, kneelers, sills, springers, and keystones. The informally balanced fenestration juxtaposes Gothic and Tudor arches with perpendicular tracery and green stained glass on the east and south facades, and double-hung, singled-paned sash on the west and north facades. The principal entrance is through a small projecting pavilion similarly ornamented and opening onto Macy Street. The double doors include book matching tongue-and-groove paneling and wrought iron strap hinges.

The interior space is largely divided into the sanctuary and school, similar to the Akron plan. The sanctuary is a rectangular room with the organ, choir, and altar in a large central alcove. The pews arc to a central aisle, and the baptistery is to one side of the altar behind a low curtain. The school adjoins the sanctuary through sliding doors and consists of twelve cubicles on two levels, supported by iron columns and connected by a gallery. Each cubicle is labeled by grade and has an unfinished pine floor, blackboard, window, and curtain partition. A distinctive feature of the sanctuary and school is the extensive incandescent lighting along knobbed ceiling beams and the school gallery. Ancillary rooms include a pastor's study and choir room.

One Contributing Building

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 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1936	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1907¹ **Builder/Architect** Mat Dreis (Builder) M. O. Pillsbury (Arch)²

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The First Baptist Church of Fond du Lac is of local architectural significance as a fine example of early 20th century Neo-Gothic design.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The First Baptist Church of Fond du Lac organized in 1845 and built its first church at the corner of Forest Avenue and Union Street in 1853.³ This church building (demolished) accommodated the congregation until 1905, when the Baptists joined with the People's Church, an unaffiliated body organized in 1891.⁴ As a result of this merger the congregation was forced to plan for a new building, its Sunday school having become one of the largest in the city with over 500 students.⁵ In constructing the church, the congregation selected local architect Marshall O. Pillsbury and general contractor Mat Dreis. The total cost in 1907 came to \$30,000.⁶ An Estey organ was installed four years later with a \$1,000 matching grant from Andrew Carnegie.

While less imposing than the churches on South Marr Street, the First Baptist Church and its congregation played a more visible role in the life of the community. The congregation played a leadership role in union services with other leading churches, the pastors spearheaded local campaigns against vice, and the 50-voice choir presented ambitious recitals and concerts including Handel's "Messiah."⁸ By the 1930's the First Baptist Church had established itself as one of the most active congregations in Fond du Lac, along with the First Presbyterian Church, the Division Street M. E. Church, the Merrill Avenue M. E. Church, and the Church of Peace.⁹ The First Baptist congregation occupied the church until moving to a smaller structure in 1980.

ARCHITECTURE

The First Baptist Church of Fond du Lac is of local architectural significance as a fine example of early 20th century Neo-Gothic design. The delicately traced Gothic arched windows are glazed with green glass, and the heavy buttressing piers are applied to light masonry walls of brown brick. Outstandingly preserved, the First Baptist Church incorporates the coloration and proportions of Craftsman design with the ornament and structural features of Gothic tradition. Its interior, remarkably intact, similarly combines Gothic and Craftsman design: foliated arches adorn doors and paneling, while ceiling beams are pegged and fitted for incandescent lighting.

(CONTINUED)

9. Major Bibliographical References

McKenna, Maurice. Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin: Past and Present. S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1912. Chicago, Illinois. Two volumes, illustrated.
City of Fond du Lac Newspaper Index.
Sanborn-Perris Maps of Fond du Lac, 1884-1928.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .33
Quadrangle name Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

Quadrangle scale 1:62,500

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot Fourteen (14), Fifteen (15), Sixteen (16), Seventeen (17) and the south ten feet of Eighteen (18), all of Hamilton's Subdivision of Blocks "C" and "J" of Darling's Addition to the City of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bill Neer and Peter Adams

organization Peter James Adams & Associates date 4/30/1986

street & number P.O. Box 341 telephone 414/722-8963

city or town Neenah state Wisconsin 54956

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

title

date 11/19/86

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in
National Register

Keeper of the National Register

date 12.29.86

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF FOND DU LAC, Fond du Lac, Fond du Lac Co., Wisconsin
Continuation sheet Item number 8 Page 1

Late 19th and early 20th century churches in Fond du Lac nearly all reflect a strong Gothic influence. In the 19th century the common pattern included a rectangular or apsidal mass, a central tower, and engaged buttressing piers. In the early 20th century the common pattern included heavy stone masonry, and asymmetrical square towers recessed into a cruciform mass. St. Mary's German Catholic Church built in 1901¹⁰ and St. Joseph's Catholic Church built in 1909 followed this pattern.¹⁰ Plymouth Congregational Church built in 1910 was virtually identical to the other two, but is no longer extant.¹¹ The Division Street M.E. Church built in 1914¹² deviated from the pattern with a Classic Revival design.

The First Baptist Church also deviated from this pattern. It is one of two examples of early 20th century Neo-Gothic design in Fond du Lac. The other example is the First Presbyterian Church, built in 1915¹³ using the same building form as St. Mary's and St. Joseph's. While distinguished by their building forms, both the Baptist and Presbyterian churches incorporate a two-story gallery Sunday school. At the First Presbyterian Church both the sanctuary and school were extensively remodeled, including alteration to the aisles and pews, the school and meeting rooms, and the gallery partitions. At the First Baptist Church the interior is virtually intact: the Estey organ, the baptistery, the pews, and the entire Sunday school with its gallery, chalkboards, and curtain partitions remain as they were in 1907.

¹Daily Commonwealth; 4/22/1907.

²Ibid.; 2/7/1906.

³McKenna, Maurice. Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin: Past and Present. S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1912. Chicago, Illinois. Page 338.

⁴Daily Commonwealth; 3/21/1905.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.; 4/22/1907.

⁷Ibid.; 12/27/1910.

⁸Commonwealth Reporter, 3/4/1935. Daily Commonwealth, 3/11/1924; 1/2/1915.

⁹Commonwealth Reporter; 3/4/1935.

¹⁰McKenna, pages 333, 347-8.

¹¹Ibid.; page 340.

¹²Daily Commonwealth; 6/6/1914.

¹³Ibid.; 7/1/1915.