

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED  
APR 09 1991

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 First Baptist Church  
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Northeast Corner of Pine and Carruth Streets  not for publication N/A  
city, town Marvell  vicinity N/A  
state Arkansas code AR county Phillips code AR zip code 72366

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>      </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Cathryn A. Byrd 4-3-91  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  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:

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:)

Alonzo Byers 5/13/91  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Entered in the  
National Register

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Church  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Church  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Collegiate Gothic  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick  
walls Brick  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof Asphalt  
other Windows: Stained Glass  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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## Summary

The First Baptist Church is a single story, brick masonry church building designed in a simplified, vernacular interpretation of the Collegiate Gothic style. Its flat roof is set behind the brick parapet walls and is covered with asphalt roll. The walls and continuous foundation are brick. Pointed arch openings provide both access and light to the structure.

## Elaboration

The First Baptist Church is a single story, brick masonry church building designed in a simplified, vernacular interpretation of the Collegiate Gothic style. It features a relatively regular plan, with the sanctuary and vestibule occupying the full width of the building at its southern end and two storys of ancillary rooms wrapped around the northern end of the sanctuary. Its flat roof is set behind the brick parapet walls and is covered with asphalt roll. The walls and continuous foundation are brick, and there is a basement beneath the sanctuary that was designed to accommodate the Sunday School.

The southern or main elevation is divided into three principal bays. The square, crenelated tower to the west is taller than the similar tower to the east, and both are smaller than the broad central bay that is lighted by the large, pointed arch Gothic window. The western tower is lighted by a single, narrow pointed arch window in the second story (lighting a rear balcony stairwell) and accessed via the large Gothic entrance below with its blind concrete transom. A concrete stairwell with brick stoops provides connects the entrance with the sidewalk. The eastern tower also contains a stairwell and is thus lighted with a single central Gothic window. The broad central bay features a pyramidal parapet above the monumental wood Gothic window. The window itself is glazed with stained glass set into wood tracery.

The eastern elevation is composed of the single southern tower bay, the four bays of the sanctuary wall and the two bays of the rear ancillary rooms. The tower and sanctuary bays are each filled with a single Gothic window -- also glazed with stained glass -- while the two ancillary room bays are lighted with eight-over-eight wood sash windows on both the main floor and the basement. The western elevation is similar in that it is also fenestrated with a smaller Gothic window in the southern bay and four larger Gothic windows in the sanctuary wall. The wall of the rear ancillary rooms is punctuated only by a single-leaf wood door that is accessed by a concrete stairway.

The northern elevation is lighted by five eight-over-eight wood sash windows to the east -- two on the upper story and three on the lower story -- and by a single Gothic window in the upper section of the building to the west (another pointed arch opening next to it has since been filled with brick). A single-leaf entry accesses this elevation and is placed near the

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National Park Service**

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western end of the elevation, at ground level. Two metal flues vent the interior on this elevation.

The interior of the First Baptist Church has been altered somewhat. However, these alterations are largely limited to the ancillary rooms to the rear of the church, and alterations consist primarily of wood paneling placed over the original plaster. The sanctuary of the church is virtually unaltered, with the only changes being the covering of the original balcony front to create Sunday School rooms and the installation of an acoustic tile ceiling. The wood pews remain arranged in their original semi-circular plan, and the recessed choir is set behind a large, arched opening that provides the visual transition from the sanctuary to the choir itself. The original plaster walls and stained glass windows remain also.

As noted above, the principal alterations to the building are for the most part confined to the interior of the ancillary rooms at the back of the church. The only alterations of note are the removal of the original wood doors in the front entrance and their replacement with aluminum thermal doors.

The First Baptist Church is surrounded by an asphalt parking lot; there are no associated outbuildings, nor is there any record of there ever having been any.

**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  
1925  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder  
Unknown/Stratton, Mr.  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

See continuation sheet

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one

**UTM References**

A 

1	5
---	---

6	9	1	5	5	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	8	2	5	7	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
 Zone Easting Northing

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

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 Zone Easting Northing

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** Beginning at the point formed by the intersection of the eastern edge of Pine Street with the northern edge of Carruth Street, proceed easterly along said line to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running along the eastern elevation of the church; thence proceed northerly along said line to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running along the northern elevation of the church; thence proceed westerly along said line to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running along the eastern edge of Pine Street; thence proceed southerly  See continuation sheet along said line to the point of beginning.

**Boundary Justification**

This boundary includes all the property historically associated with this resource.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Ken Story, Architectural Historian  
 organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 3/29/91  
 street & number 225 East Markham, Suite 300 telephone (501) 324-9346  
 city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72201

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National Park Service**

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**Summary**

Criterion C, local significance

The First Baptist Church survives as the best example in Marvell of a building designed in the Collegiate Gothic style. In spite of its restrained use of the idiom, such typical features as the pointed arch openings throughout and the heavy, stylized wood tracery in the stained glass windows clearly reflect the strong influence of the architectural style that was eminently popular for Christian religious structures (and such other building types as schools and institutional structures) during the early twentieth century.

**Elaboration**

Marvell (Phillips County) existed as a small community prior to 1872, when it became a stop along the Arkansas Central Railroad (later the Arkansas Midland Railway) between Helena and Clarendon. Thereafter the town experienced its greatest period of growth, and by 1889 boasted of five general stores, four groceries, a furniture store, two blacksmith shops, and three churches. Located in the heart of the Mississippi delta, the chief export from Marvell was cotton for most of the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The Baptist church in Marvell was founded in 1877 with a total of nine charter members; the congregation became affiliated with the American Baptist Association of Churches by 1879. Their first church building -- the actual date and physical description of which has not survived -- was destroyed by high winds some time before 1880. The congregation then met in a Union Church (serving several denominations) until 1902, when they built a simple wood frame building with a corner belfry. The church decided to expand in 1925, largely due to their growth and increased activity as a congregation. It was at this time that the lots of the present church were deeded to the church by one Brother Bean. Even as of 1925, these lots were on the northern edge of the settled area of town and within an area that was relatively sparsely populated.

The name of the architect of the present building has not survived, but the contractor was a Mr. Stratton. The sanctuary was designed to seat 500 people, with room in the basement meeting room for another 250. The building continues to serve the Baptist congregation to this day.

The First Baptist Church survives as virtually the only historic church structure in Marvell that exhibits any influence of the Collegiate Gothic style. However, its vernacular rendering thereof, with its focused and economical emphasis on such identifying features as Gothic windows and crenelation at the expense of virtually all other detail, elevates it to a status unparalleled in Phillips County.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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### Bibliography

"A History of the First Baptist Church of Marvell," *First Baptist Church Centennial Program*, 1977 (unpaginated).

Goodspeed's *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Eastern Arkansas*, (1889), p. 748.

Hull, Clifton E., *Shortline Railroads of Arkansas*, (Norman, Oklahoma; 1969), p. 337.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY First Baptist Church  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Phillips

DATE RECEIVED: 4/09/91 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/24/91  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/10/91 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/24/91  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 91000587

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 5/13/91 DATE

Entered in the  
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_  
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_  
DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

---

CLASSIFICATION

count       resource type

---

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

---

FUNCTION

historic       current

---

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification  
 materials  
 descriptive text

---

SIGNIFICANCE

Period      Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

summary paragraph  
 completeness  
 clarity  
 applicable criteria  
 justification of areas checked  
 relating significance to the resource  
 context  
 relationship of integrity to significance  
 justification of exception  
 other

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage       verbal boundary description  
 UTM's       boundary justification

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ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps     USGS maps     photographs     presentation

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OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
MARVELL, ARKANSAS

Phelps Co

PHOTOGRAPHED BY P. ZOLLNER

OCTOBER, 1990

NEGATIVE ON FILE AT AHPP

VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH     Phelps Co  
MARVELL, ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY P. ZOLLNER

OCTOBER, 1990

NEGATIVE ON FILE AT AHPP

VIEW FROM SOUTHEAST



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
MARVELL, ARKANSAS

Phillips 2

PHOTOGRAPHED BY P. ZOLLNER

OCTOBER, 1990

NEGATIVE ON FILE AT AHPP

WINDOW DETAIL





FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

MARVELL, ARKANSAS

Philips CV

PHOTOGRAPHED BY P. ZOLLNER

OCTOBER, 1990

NEGATIVE ON FILE AT AHPP

VIEW OF SANCTUARY



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

MARVELL, ARKANSAS

Phillips Co

PHOTOGRAPHED BY T. ZOLLNER

OCTOBER, 1990

NEGATIVE ON FILE AT AHPP

VIEW FROM EAST



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

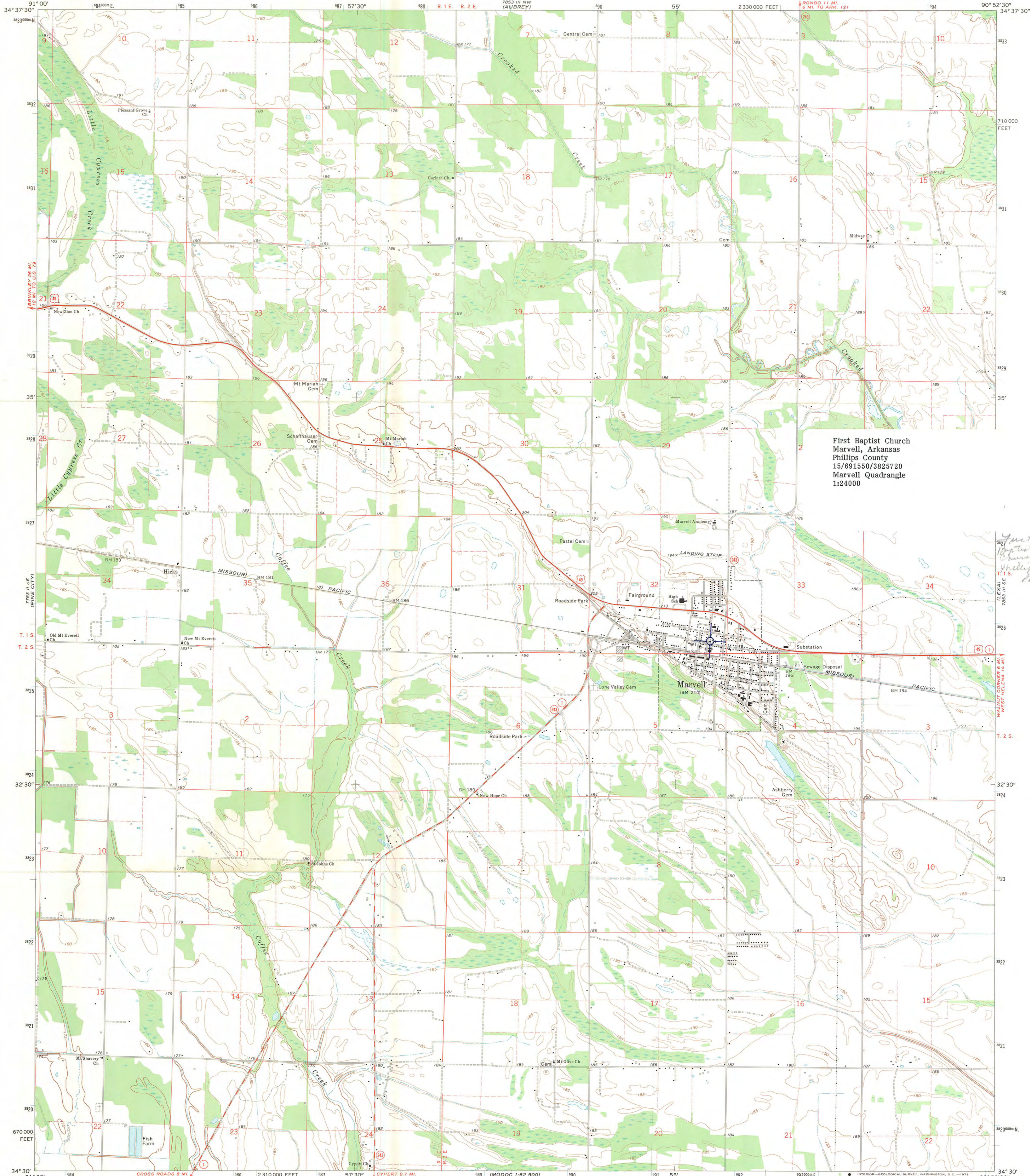
MARVELL, ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY P. ZOLLNER

OCTOBER, 1990

NEGATIVE ON FILE AT AHPP

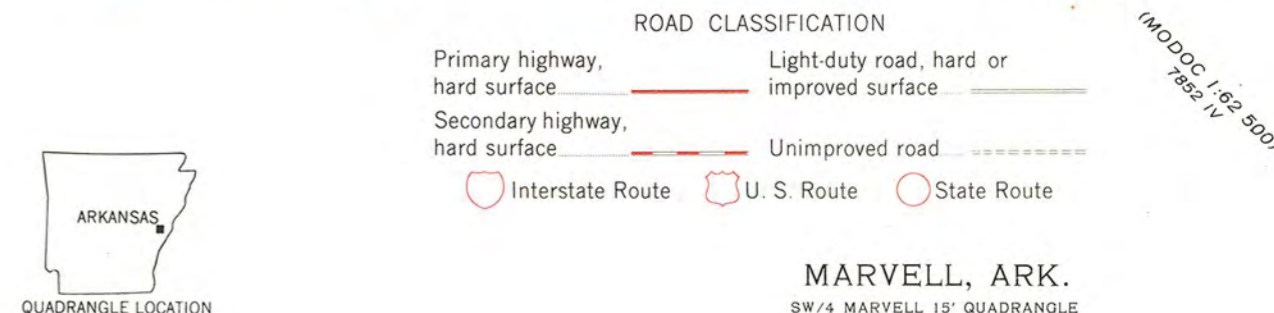
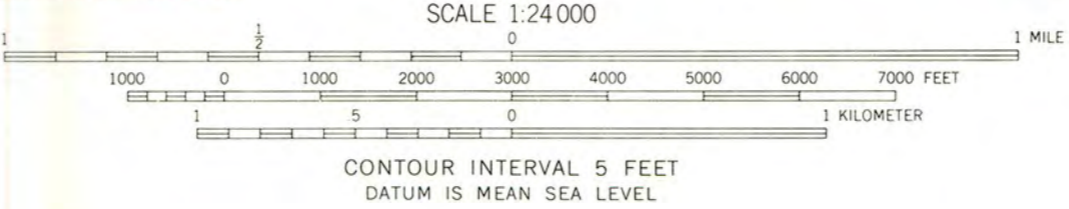
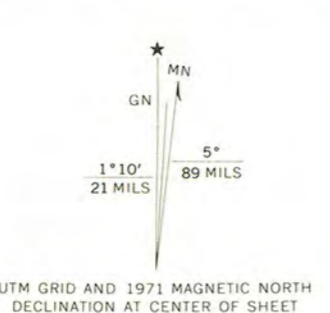
ENTRANCE DETAIL



First Baptist Church  
Marvell, Arkansas  
Phillips County  
15/691550/3825720  
Marvell Quadrangle  
1:24000

*Handwritten note:*  
First Baptist Church  
Phillips Co.  
T. 1 S.  
R. 2 E.

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial  
photographs taken 1970. Field checked 1971  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Arkansas coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 15, shown in blue  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where  
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

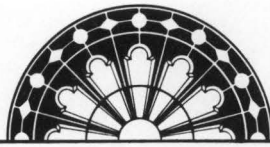


THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
AND BY THE ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

MARVELL, ARK.  
SW 1/4 MARVELL 15' QUADRANGLE  
N3430-W9052.5/7.5

1971

AMS 7853 III SW—SERIES V884



ARKANSAS  
HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
PROGRAM

RECEIVED

APR 09 1991



April 2, 1991

Carol D. Shull  
Chief of Registration  
United States Department of the Interior  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
1100 "L" Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

RE: First Baptist Church  
Marvell - Phillips County, Arkansas

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the nomination of the above referenced property. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathy Buford  
State Historic Preservation Officer

CB:kg

Enclosures

