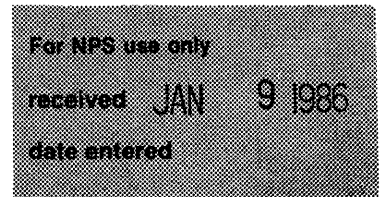


**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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



Murray Kentucky  
Continuation sheet Multiple Resource

Item number 7

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Name: First Baptist Church

Owner: First Baptist Church

Location: 203 S. 4th St.  
Murray, KY 42071

Classification: Building

Description: Constructed at the same time as the neighboring Murray Post Office, the First Baptist Church shares that building's decorative brickwork. The church's most distinctive feature is the beautiful orange and blue glazed brick used in the construction and decoration of the exterior. The two-story sanctuary of the church rest on a raised basement level. A beltcourse of decorative brickwork marks this basement level. A monumental flight of steps leads up to a recessed porch where double entrances lead to the sanctuary. Double brick piers support the three ogee arches defining the top of the entrance porch. Above this recessed porch are a pair of double stained glass windows that provide light to the sanctuary. Other stained glass windows on the facade rise with the double interior staircases to the balcony in the sanctuary. Another beltcourse of decorative brickwork and a stone cornice run across the top of the building. Rising above this is a parapet wall containing diamond panels of blue glazed bricks.

Two sides of the church have large stained glass windows with double panes of glass and a transom pane. Each window bay is divided from the next by a brick pilaster. Continuing on the sides of the building are several details from the facade, such as the basement level beltcourse, the stone cornice, and the parapet wall with the diamond panels of blue glazed bricks.

The 1958 addition to the church is very harmonious to the main building due to the careful matching of materials and details. This addition runs across the rear of the original church to create an L-shaped building. The addition has similar glazed brick, brick pilasters, and a stone cornice as the main building. This addition is mainly devoted to classrooms and meeting places.

Also on the property is a structure constructed in 1931 as a residence for the church's minister. This structure is a simple bungalow constructed of bricks matching the church. This building is now used for a church office.

Also running along a portion of the northern property line of the church is a cast iron fence that once was part of the fencing that surrounded the town square until 1906.

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

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

First Baptist Church, Murray, Kentucky  
Continuation sheet Multiple Resource Area

Item number

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Significance: The First Baptist Church of Murray is significant under Criterion C because it exhibits high artistic values in its exterior detailing. Although this eclectic building does not have significance as a type or style or architecture, it contains highly decorative brick work which is very uncommon in the region. Of particular interest is the corbelling in the entrance arch and the lozenge patterns in the parapet. The use of vertical brick in the belt courses indicate a creative use of a common building material during a period of economic hardship when institutions could not afford more expensive materials.

The church was founded in Murray in 1846. The first frame church was constructed in 1848 at a cost of \$440. A second church was built in 1901 at a cost of \$5,500. The monumental brick structure built by the First Baptist Church in 1931 was a testament to the strength of the congregation. Construction began on the structure in 1931 and wasn't completely finished for two years. The cost of \$130,000 was covered by a free-will offering under a "faith plan" type of budgeting. This type of financing kept the church free from debt at all times during the construction. This is especially remarkable considering the economically depressed period.

A 1931 history of Murray reports that First Baptist Church "worships in a beautiful and commodious building next to the government building now being erected. This church building is one of the most magnificent in Western Kentucky." The church was formally dedicated on October 25, 1958. A \$196,000 addition to the rear of the church was formally opened on June 22, 1958. The addition was harmonious to the original design of the church and enlarged the main auditorium to 1600 seats.

The pride of the congregation is reflected in the superb maintenance of the building. The congregation recently erected a historic marker in the front of their church explaining the history of the church.

Acreage: Approximately .75 acres.

UTM References: (Murray Quadrangle) 16/383620/4052100

Verbal Boundary Description: The First Baptist Church is located on the accompanying Murray tax map as Lot 3, Block 4.

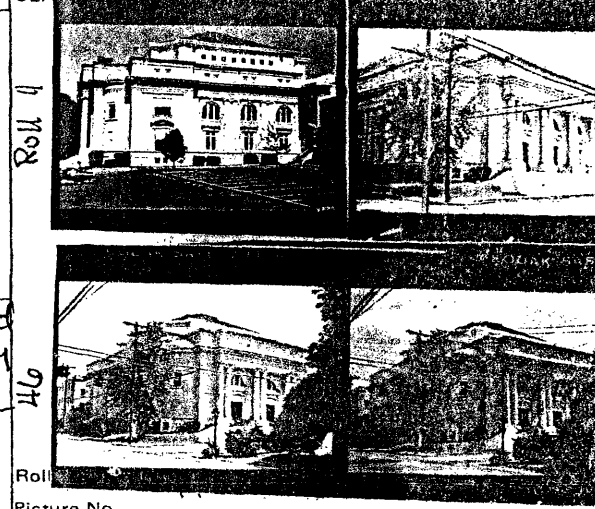
1. Historic Name (s) First Baptist Church  
 Original Owner Trustees  
 Present Name First Baptist Church - 1913\*  
 3. Owner's Name Trustees  
 4. Owner's Address 1216 ~~St~~ Chestnut St.  
 5. Location SE corner Chestnut and 12<sup>th</sup> St. - take ~~St~~ <sup>Chestnut</sup> ~~St~~  
 6. Open to Public  Yes  No  
 7. Visible from road  Yes  No  
 8. Ownership  Private  
 Local  
 State  
 Federal  
 9. Local Contact/Organization

22. ADD/County BARIV/WA  
 23. Zoning Classification  
 Magisterial District (B)  
 24. U.S.G. S. Quadrant (15'/75') Bowling Green South  
 25. UTM Reference Within District D  
 Zone Easting Northing  
 26. Prehistoric Site  
 Historic Site Building Object Structure  
 27. District  Yes  No  
 Name: College Hill  
 28. Significance Evaluation  Kentucky Survey

10. Site Plan with North Arrow  
 11. Architect Creedmore Flenor  
 12. Builder  
 13. Date 1913-1915  
 14. Style Roman Revival  
 15. Original Use religious meetings  
 16. Present Use religious meetings  
 17. Condition  Interior  Exterior good/excellent

29. Status  
 National Landmark  
 National Register  
 Landmark Certificate  
 Kentucky Survey  
 Local Landmark  
 HABS/HAER  
 30. Theme  
 Primary Religion  
 Secondary Architecture  
 Other  
 31. Endangered  Yes  No  \* 46

18. Description 2-story stone; cruciform plan; Roman  
 baths window units as principal openings on  
 3 fronts; pyramidal roof above clerestory  
 windows; Ionic order: engaged columns with  
 portico, pilasters other two fronts. Key  
 site in district



19. History \*\* The original Baptist Church was organized  
 in 1818 - called the United Baptist. The first meeting  
 house was on the corner of Center and Main  
 streets. The second one was built in 1854. The present  
 building was begun in 1913 - It is constructed of  
 Warren County Limestone  
 + Designed by Creedmore Flenor

33. Tape No. \_\_\_\_\_ Negative No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 34. Prepared by: JCH-KTG

20. Significance The first Baptist Church was organized  
 one year before any other congregation. Close proximity  
 to other similar historic structures.

35. Organization KHC  
 36. Date Spring 78  
 37. Revision Dates \_\_\_\_\_ 38. Staff Review \_\_\_\_\_

21. Source of Information \* plaque  
 \* Beard, Old Homes in and near Bowling Green Ky  
 + Mrs. Roy Morning Star

