

346

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JAN 30 1990

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 Baker Presbyterian Church
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 3015 Groom Road N/A not for publication
city, town Baker N/A vicinity
state Louisiana code LA county East Baton Rouge code 033 zip code 70714

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> objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

Leslie Tassin January 26, 1990
Signature of certifying official Leslie Tassin, State Historic Preservation Officer, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism Date
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. Entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet. 3/1/90
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

Shelene Byers _____
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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)

Gothic Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____ brick
walls _____ weatherboard
roof _____ tin
other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Baker Presbyterian Church is a one-story clapboard structure in the Gothic Revival style. Erected in 1905, the building stands within a large religious compound near the center of town. Lush vegetation on the grounds partially hides the church's two-story crenelated bell tower. With the exception of changes to the building's rear wall which are not visible from the street, the church remains remarkably intact.

The church building stands in the shape of a simple rectangle with a slightly projecting bell tower attached at one front corner. Although hammerbeam-inspired Eastlake decoration highlights the peak of the church's front-facing gable, the crenelated and louvered belfry is the structure's most outstanding architectural feature. The castellated polygonal bell tower rises from a square base, which itself is distinguished by a flaring skirt-roof with tiny decorative brackets. Showing the influence of the Queen Anne style still popular when the church was built, several rows of fishscale shingles differentiate the skirt-roof from the plainer clapboard siding covering the rest of the belfry and the church. The building's pointed lancet windows reinforce its Gothic Revival styling. A large lancet window, subdivided by a simple tracery design into three sections, pierces the facade. Two similarly shaped entrances, each consisting of double doors below three-part pointed windows, open into a vestibule below the belfry. Both sides of the nave are pierced by rows of narrow lancet windows, each holding large one-over-one square panes of colored glass and outlined by smaller panes of colored glass in the Queen Anne style. Each of these windows is also framed by shutters. The Queen Anne glass treatment is repeated within the windows of the apse; however, these openings lack shutters.

The rectangular church nave, entered from the square corner vestibule, is highlighted by a coved ceiling with pressed metal panels depicting a laurel-like design. The original pews, pulpit, and an Eastlake grille with spindles and scrolls which frames the apse, also remain intact. The floor is angled downward from the rear to the front, allowing members of the congregation seated at the rear to look over the heads of other members of the audience.

Assessment of Integrity

The only significant alterations to the church since its construction in 1905 have occurred on the rear of the building. A door has been cut on one side

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Baker Presbyterian Church, Baker, East Baton Rouge Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

of the apse, while on the other side the wall has been moved a short distance outward to accommodate sound equipment connected to a modern organ. Minor changes to the building include the installation of chimes inside the belfry, the replacement of the interior wallpaper and part of the ceiling with celotex, the addition of ceiling fans, the replacement of the wooden front steps with brick, and the addition of a ramp with hand rails leading to the east vestibule door. Thus, the Baker Presbyterian Church appears almost exactly as it did in 1905 and retains its National Register eligibility.

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
1905

Significant Dates
1905

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Harris McVea

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

The Baker Presbyterian Church is locally significant in the area of architecture within the context of the East Baton Rouge Parish community of Baker. The church is one of only a handful of historic buildings left in the community and is the only example of the Gothic Revival style in the city.

Although Baker was founded in 1884 in conjunction with the arrival of the railroad, the majority of the community's architecture is that of a mid-twentieth century suburb. Business needs are met by strip shopping centers typical of commercial development between the 1950s and 1980s. Most of the city's public buildings and churches also date from this period. Baker's housing is equally unpretentious. With very few exceptions, the dwellings date no earlier than the 1940s. Most of the city's homes are modern slab on grade ranch houses which resemble those found in any other city.

Against this background, the Baker Presbyterian Church is a conspicuous landmark. Of the approximately eight buildings left from the first decade of this century (no earlier buildings appear to survive), the church is one of only three which display both significant age and rich architectural styling. The church is especially noteworthy for its crenelated Gothic bell tower with flaring skirt-roof; its interior Eastlake grille hanging above the apse; its coved ceiling with pressed metal panels; and its lancet windows, many of which also display Queen Anne styling in the treatment of the glass panes. In summary, the Baker Presbyterian Church is an architectural landmark within a community which has lost most of the symbols of its heritage. As such, it is a strong candidate for National Register listing.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Site visit by National Register staff.

Windshield survey of Baker, Louisiana, National Register staff.

Historic photograph of Baker Presbyterian Church.

Church records documenting date of construction. Copies in National Register file.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A 15 675540 3385230
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description Please refer to enclosed property plat map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification Boundary lines follow legal property lines on the east, south, and west sides. The northern boundary cuts close to the rear of the church to exclude a modern recreation hall which is linked via a covered walkway.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff
 organization Division of Historic Preservation date November 1989
 street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone 504/342-8160
 city or town Baton Rouge state Louisiana zip code 70804

