Form No. 10-300  REV. (9/77)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY.-- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Chestnut Street Baptist Church

AND/OR COMMON Quinn Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 912 W. Chestnut Street

CITY, TOWN Louisville

STATE Kentucky

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY DISTRICT Building(s) Structure Site Object

OWNERSHIP PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO

PRESENT USE AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL

GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY

MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Quinn Chapel A.M.E. Church

STREET & NUMBER 912 W. Chestnut Street

CITY, TOWN Louisville

STATE Kentucky 40205

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER Sixth & Jefferson

CITY, TOWN Louisville

STATE Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Kentucky Survey of Historic Sites

DATE 1980

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN Frankfort

STATE Kentucky
The Chestnut Street Baptist Church is located on the eastern edge of the Russell neighborhood, just west of the central business district of Louisville. The church is in an area which has suffered greatly from Urban Renewal clearance. Chestnut Street Baptist Church is close to the Chestnut Street Methodist Church, South (National Register, July, 1979) and Union Station (National Register, August 1975).

The Chestnut Street Baptist Church is an ornate Gothic Revival structure. The red brick church is richly ornamented with terra cotta. The facade of the structure consists of a central gabled section with two towers. The main feature of the central section is a fine porch reminiscent of a medieval cloister. Short composite columns which are banded rest on brick bases. Five pointed arches spring from the columns which have a terra cotta boss at each of their junctions. The area above the arches is filled with small terra cotta squares. The main facade is set behind this porch. Four geometrically styled stained-glass windows are surmounted by four arched windows and a small rose window. The gable face is ornamented by a decorative terra cotta sheathing.

The right tower is three stories in height and buttressed. The ground floor has a narrow double door of wood with an arched transom of stained-glass and tracery. The second story is pierced by a rose window. A corbel band articulates the top story of blind pointed arches.

The left tower repeats the ground floor opening of the right tower. A highly decorative chamfered section makes a transition between the ground floor and the hexagonal upper tower. This hexagonal section is pierced by lowered arches and capped with a steep roof.

The sanctuary is an open hall with no columns. The room is two stories in height with a flat ceiling. The ceiling has eighteen recessed panels which are decorated by painted floral motifs. The lower walls are wainscotted in dark wood and pierced by large pointed arched stained-glass windows with vivid-colored geometric decoration.
The Chestnut Street Baptist/Quinn Chapel Church is a significant example of Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture in Louisville. It is also an important part of the history of one of the city's earliest and most important black congregations.

The Chestnut Street Baptist Church was built around 1884 and later known as the Weaver Baptist Church. The church became the fifth home of the Quinn Chapel A.M.E. congregation in 1910. The Quinn Chapel congregation is one of the oldest black churches in the city and had its beginnings in 1838 as the Bethel congregation. The church takes its name from Bishop Paul Quinn, an early black church leader and abolitionist and the first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal faith to visit Kentucky. The congregation of Quinn Chapel was comprised of free men who were active in the anti-slavery movement and gained the church the title of the "Abolitionists' church". The first school for black children in Louisville was started by the congregation in the late 1840's.

Henry Wolters, the architect of the church, was born in Hanover, Germany and educated at the Berlin Polytechnic Institute and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Wolters was one of the engineers of the Suez Canal before coming to America in 1872. Wolters had an office in both New Orleans and Louisville. His work exemplified the exuberance of detailing associated with the Victorian style and the attention to compositional elements, the hallmark of Beaux-Arts training. Wolters' work is found throughout the southern part of the United States. His work includes the design of fifty railroad depots for the Central Georgia Railroad Company, the New Orleans Cotton Exchange, the Birmingham and Montgomery, Alabama Railroad Depots, the Evansville Indiana Courthouse and the Memphis Cotton Exchange. In Louisville his designs include the 1892 Kaufman-Straus Building (destroyed); Nor'on Hall of the Baptist Theological Seminary (destroyed); the Tyler Block (National Register, 1973, destroyed); Kentucky Wagon Works (destroyed); the Knights of Phydias Building (National Register, November, 1978) and the Bamberger Bloom Building (National Register, West Main Street District, March, 1974). The Chestnut Street Baptist Church is the only extant ecclesiastical building in Louisville which can be assigned to Wolters.

The Chestnut Street Baptist Church is a richly detailed example of the Gothic Revival style. The church is one of a very few historic structures left in a large urban renewal area. The structure is exemplary of the exuberance in decorative detailing found in the work of the German-born architect, Henry Wolters (1845-1921).
9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Caron Directory of the City of Louisville. Louisville: C.K. Caron, 1880-1900.

"Henry Wolters Dies; Famed as Architect." Louisville Courier Journal. 30 August 1921.

Inland Architect and News Record III. (July) 1884.


10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

1:24,000

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY

QUADRANGLE NAME Louisville West

ZONE EASTING NORITHING

A 1 6 0 7 8 9 0 4 2 3 4 0 2 0

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

City of Louisville Block 13H, Lot 198

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Marty Poynter Hedgepeth

ORGANIZATION Landmarks Commission

DATE August 8, 1980

STREET & NUMBER 727 West Main Street

TELEPHONE 502/587-3501

CITY OR TOWN Louisville

STATE Kentucky

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL __ STATE ___ LOCAL V

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

12 THOMAS A. HOPKINS

TITLE Acting SAPO

DATE 10-22-80

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. Ray Pace

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 12/3/80

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION
Chestnut Street Baptist Church, 912 W. Chestnut Louisville, Jefferson, Ky. Map 2 Sanborn Real Estate Map
Chestnut Street Baptist Church
912 W. Chestnut
Louisville, Jefferson, Ky.
Real Estate Atlas of Jefferson County
Vol. 1, Real Estate Directories, Inc.
1972.

Map 3