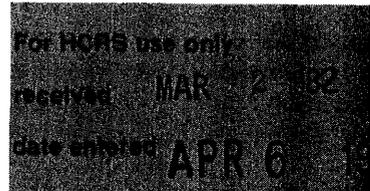


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Nineteenth Century Churches in Clarksville Thematic Resources

and/or common N/A

**2. Location**

street & number See Inventory Forms N/A not for publication

city, town Clarksville N/A vicinity of congressional district Sixth

state Tennessee code 47 county Montgomery code 125

**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 type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<u>Thematic Group</u>		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple Ownership

street & number N/A

city, town N/A N/A vicinity of state N/A

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse

street & number Second Avenue

city, town Clarksville state Tennessee 37040

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

Mid-Cumberland Council  
title Survey of Clarksville Churches has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Mid-Cumberland Council of Governments

city, town Nashville state Tennessee 37219

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" 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

Architecturally significant nineteenth century church buildings in Clarksville comprise this thematic group nomination. Six of eight buildings remaining from the nineteenth century have been included and all, except for one, continue to be used as churches. Two of the six buildings, the First Presbyterian Church and the Madison Street Methodist Church, are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The buildings of this nomination relate to one another as outstanding representative examples of ecclesiastical architecture from the nineteenth century in the City of Clarksville.

Only one church building, the 1831 Clarksville Methodist Church, remains from the first half of the nineteenth century. It is the only building of the group which is no longer used as a church. During the 1880s the building was renovated for use as a boarding house and has continued that use or use as residential apartments, as it is presently used, since the renovation. Although somewhat altered, the building retains much of its original architectural character. Moreover, it remains as the earliest church building and as one of the earliest brick buildings in Clarksville.

The remaining five buildings of the group were built within a sixteen year period, from 1873-1889. They represent various exceptional interpretations of the Victorian Gothic style of ecclesiastical architecture. Architectural elements typical of the Victorian Gothic style, such as tall spires, steep roofs, buttresses, broad gables, pointed arches, and use of contrasting materials are shared by each, although each in a different manner from the others to create distinctively individual church edifices.

Use of varying construction materials and placement of steeples mark the primary differences in the five buildings. Brown-toned brick are used for the First Presbyterian and Madison Street Methodist Churches, dark red brick for the St. Peter A.M.E. Church, gray-tinted rough cut stone for the Trinity Episcopal Church, and sand-colored molded stone for the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. Two steeples are found on two of the churches, one which prominently features highly dominating steeples on the right and left of and in front of the gabled facade, the other which features two smaller steeples at either side of and slightly recessed from the gabled facade. The remaining three churches feature single steeples, two with front right corner steeples and the other with a front central steeple. The highly ornate First Presbyterian and Madison Street Methodist Churches are larger, more massive buildings than the other church buildings, although each is large in scale. Decoration is simplified in the Trinity Episcopal and Immaculate Conception Catholic Churches, and even simpler in the St. Peter A.M.E. Church.

Extremely fine, ornate interior woodwork is found in all five churches. Each building remains practically unaltered with a wide, rectangular shaped sanctuary and semi-circular apse with a vaulted half-dome. Alterations to these buildings have been minor, mostly in the form of necessary updating or installation of heating and plumbing systems. Sensitively designed classroom additions to the First Presbyterian and Madison Street Methodist Churches do not detract from their architectural integrity. The remaining churches have no additions, for any classrooms and other needed space have been provided in buildings constructed within the twentieth century on the church property. Only two original church rectories remain, those of the Trinity Episcopal and Immaculate Conception Catholic Churches. They have been included in the nomination as contributing, integral parts of the church buildings of this nomination, for they each were built to architecturally complement the church buildings and they illustrate the types of residential architecture popular in the late nineteenth century chosen by church congregations for the building of their rectories.



# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<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 N/A Builder/Architect N/A

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Criteria C**

Exemplary ecclesiastical edifices from the nineteenth century in Clarksville comprise this nomination. The group consists of six church buildings, two of which were listed in the National Register in 1976, remaining practically unaltered from their original construction in the period 1831 to 1889. Five of the buildings are outstanding examples of the Victorian Gothic style of ecclesiastical architecture and the other, although the only one of the group no longer used as a church and somewhat altered, is the only church building remaining from the first half of the nineteenth century, the first brick church erected, and one of the earliest brick buildings in Clarksville. As such, it is the only surviving building in the city which illustrates a type of early church architecture.

The Trinity Episcopal, First Presbyterian, Cumberland Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, First Christian and Catholic Churches in Clarksville date to the first half of the nineteenth century. Each organized in the period from 1810 to 1842, and worshipped in private homes, the 1811 courthouse, and Masonic Temple. Although most churches had organized, it wasn't until 1831 that the first permanent church building, the Clarksville Methodist Church, was erected. Following the Methodists' example were the Episcopalians in 1834, First Presbyterians in 1840, Catholics in 1844 and First Christians in 1851. In 1841 the Cumberland Presbyterians had purchased the 1831 church building from the Methodists who in the same year began construction of a new, larger building. By 1859 when the population of Clarksville had reached 5,000, there were seven church buildings in the city. Of these seven, only the 1831 Clarksville Methodist Church has survived.

Although Clarksville suffered a dramatic decline in its economy during the post-Civil War years and a devastating fire that destroyed most of its commercial business district in 1878, it regained its position as a thriving center of commercial activity serving the surrounding rich tobacco-growing region during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Church building reflected this rapid phase of economic recovery, prosperity and renewed outlook, as was evidenced by construction of seven imposing edifices by the various church congregations during the period from 1864 to 1896. When the city's population had reached 10,000 in 1895 there were thirteen church buildings in Clarksville, of which were eight for white and five for black congregations.

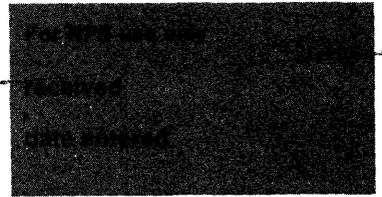
Only eight of these thirteen church buildings from this period have survived. Of these eight, six have been included in this nomination. The remaining two were excluded because they have been altered to the point that they lack sufficient architectural merit. While buildings used for religious purposes are generally exempted from listing in the National Register, these churches have been nominated because they are exemplary ecclesiastical edifices which possess high architectural merit, five as outstanding examples of the variations of the Victorian Gothic style of ecclesiastical architecture and one as the only remaining example of early nineteenth century church architecture in Clarksville.

Copies of the survey on which this nomination is based are filed at the Mid-Cumberland Council of Governments and Development District, a regional planning agency, and at the Tennessee Historical Commission. These are available for use by public agencies and/or private organizations.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Nineteenth Century Churches in Clarksville  
State TN

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- |     |  |                                     |                  |   |
|-----|--|-------------------------------------|------------------|---|
| 1.  | St. Peter African Methodist Church                             | Entered in the<br>National Register | Keeper<br>Attest | <u>Selous Byers 4/6/82</u>                            |
| 2.  | Clarksville Methodist Church                                   | Entered in the<br>National Register | Keeper<br>Attest | <u>Selous Byers 4/6/82</u>                            |
| 3.  | Catholic Church and Rectory                                    | <del>Substantive Review</del>       | Keeper<br>Attest | <u>WH Bralton 8.2.82</u><br><u>WMA Dink's 7/30/82</u> |
| 4.  | Trinity Church and Rectory                                     | Entered in the<br>National Register | Keeper<br>Attest | <u>Selous Byers 4/6/82</u>                            |
| 5.  | Madison Street Methodist Church<br>(Previously listed 5/13/76) |                                     | Keeper<br>Attest |   |
| 6.  | First Presbyterian Church<br>(Previously listed 4/30/76)       |                                     | Keeper<br>Attest |   |
| 7.  |  |                                     | Keeper<br>Attest |   |
| 8.  |  |                                     | Keeper<br>Attest |   |
| 9.  |  |                                     | Keeper<br>Attest |   |
| 10. |  |                                     | Keeper<br>Attest |   |