

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0692638

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**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 Temple Adas Israel
AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Washington and College Streets
CITY, TOWN Brownsville VICINITY OF Seventh
STATE Tennessee CODE 47 COUNTY Haywood CODE 75
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Seventh
NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Congregation (Morton Felsenthal) ✓
STREET & NUMBER 513 Key Corner
CITY, TOWN Brownsville VICINITY OF STATE Tennessee

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Haywood County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER Court Square
CITY, TOWN Brownsville STATE Tennessee

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historical and Architectural Survey
DATE July 1972 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Tennessee Historical Commission
CITY, TOWN Nashville STATE Tennessee

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT

DETERIORATED

UNALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE

GOOD

RUINS

ALTERED

MOVED DATE _____

FAIR

UNEXPOSED

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Temple Adas Israel stands on the southwest corner of Washington and College Streets in Brownsville, two blocks north of the Haywood County Courthouse. The single-story, frame Gothic Revival building was erected in late 1881 or early 1882 and veneered with brick ca. 1920. The original building had a small steeple, but this was removed at the time of the ca. 1920 renovation. It has served the small Brownsville Jewish community continuously for ninety-six years.

Built with a rectangular plan, the temple rests on a brick foundation which has been coated with concrete, and it is covered with a slate roof. A single, brick stone flue is attached to and rises above the west wall. All four walls were laid in American stretcher bond.

The three-bay facade (east elevation) has a projecting frontispiece, which contains the lancet-arched entrance with its double-leaf, paneled doors and stained-glass transom; above this is a concrete Star of David and still higher a diamond window. Flanking the entrance are lancet windows, and surmounting these round windows. The distinctive roof line, which has a crest at the ridge, repeats on the west wall and in a slightly different form on the facade's projecting frontispiece. Stepped buttresses are located at all four corners of the building; the frontispiece is also buttressed. The windows are surmounted by brick lancet arches with concrete keystones and have plain concrete sills. All of the windows in the temple are stained glass and were installed in ca. 1910; Judaic symbols such as the Star of David, perpetual lamp, and menorah have been incorporated into their designs; except for some on the facade, the windows are lancet shaped.

The original interior plan was an open rectangle, but wooden screens, which were installed early in this century, have reduced its area and provide for religious instruction rooms and a vestibule. Much of the nineteenth-century interior trim and furnishings remain; the walnut paneled wainscotting and window architraves which incorporate label molds are still in place. The ark, which contains the 200-year-old Torah, and the lectern are original to the building. In the 1920s the congregation purchased an organ, enlarged the rostrum, and installed new pews. The wooden floors were covered with linoleum ca. 1930.

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 checked="" 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
	<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1881-82 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Joe Sternberg emigrated from Germany in the 1860s and settled in Brownsville. He carried with him a century-old Torah, and these scriptural scrolls provided the religious foundation for the Jewish community in this small West Tennessee county town. In 1867 Jacob and Karoline Felsenthal provided a room in their house for the Torah, and with this action the Adas Israel congregation was organized. Later the Anker and Rothschild families sheltered the scriptures and held services in their houses or places of business. The Brownsville Jews built Temple Adas Israel and dedicated it in 1882. This Reformed Jewish congregation has never had a rabbi, and during its entire history it has had only four lay readers. In the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries the Jewish community reached its population peak, and since then it has steadily decreased in number until today only a few members remain.

Although the temple was rather dramatically remodeled ca. 1920, there have been no major alterations in its appearance in nearly sixty years. The tiny congregation carefully maintains the building. There are plans to donate the property to the city or county for some public use if the congregation should become defunct.

Temple Adas Israel is an excellent example of type of building erected by nineteenth-century Jews in a small Tennessee city. Except for the use of Judaic religious symbols in the ornamentation and fenestration, it could easily be mistaken for the smaller Christian churches in the area.

In West Tennessee temples are located only in the cities of Memphis, Jackson, and Brownsville. Temple Adas Israel is the oldest such building still in use in this section of the state and possibly the earliest in Tennessee.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Information provided by Morton Felsenthal, Haywood County Historian, Brownsville, TN.

Sternberger, Helen G. "100th Anniversary Temple Adas Israel, 1867-1967," n.d., typescript.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Latitude 35° 35' 44"
Longitude 89° 15' 45"

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx..65

QUADRANGLE NAME Brownsville

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES No UTM grid ticks

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
E	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
F	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
G	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
E	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
F	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
G	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
H	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property nominated is a rectangular lot which measures 145' by 190' and is bounded as follows: beginning at the point of intersection of the southern edge of College Street and the western edge of North Washington Street (state route 76); thence south 145' paralleling North Washington Street; thence west 190'; thence north 145' paralleling North Lafayette Street; thence east 190' paralleling College Street to the beginning.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Barbara Hume Church, Architectural Historian
Robert E. Dalton, Director of Field Services

ORGANIZATION Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE August 1978

STREET & NUMBER 170 Second Avenue North

TELEPHONE (615) 741-2371

CITY OR TOWN Nashville

STATE Tennessee

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

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

Herbert E. Hagen

TITLE Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE 11/20/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

ATTEST: *Charles G. ...*
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
Robert E. Dalton
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 1-19-79

DATE 11/18/79