

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received JUN 9 1983  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Sciola Missionary Baptist Church

and/or common Sciola Community Church

2. Location

street & number On U.S. 71 at Sciola (Section 16, T-72-N, R-36-W) not for publication

city, town Sciola vicinity of

state Iowa code 019 county Montgomery code 137

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	n/a/	<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:

4. Owner of Property

name Washington Township (c/o E. Artlip)

street & number Route 2

city, town Villisca vicinity of state Iowa 50864

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Clerk's Office

street & number Montgomery County Courthouse

city, town Red Oak state Iowa 51566

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title n.a. has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**    excellent    deteriorated **Check one**    unaltered **Check one**    original site  
   <sup>XX</sup> good    ruins    altered    moved date    1970  
   fair    unexposed

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Sciola Missionary Baptist Church is a very early (1871) surviving vernacular frame church building. It is visually more representative of its 1892 remodeling. The Sciola Church is rectangular on plan (28' x40') with gable roof. Originally the clapboarded church had four evenly spaced narrow double hung sash (4/4) windows on each side, a single window and a door with stoop and transom on the rear wall, and two doors with transoms on the front. Plain wooden surrounds and pedimented headings decorated each door and window.

An April 1892 windstorm damaged what is now the west side of the church and required a general rebuilding that same year. The damaged wall's fenestration was altered so that only the right-hand window remained unchanged in its location, and a three window grouping replaced the other windows. This grouping consists of a central window flanked by slightly shorter windows, all of which are surrounded by a flared "hour glass" shaped panel of cove butt cut wooden shingles. The main facade was altered by the enlargement of the left hand door to a double door, the addition of a dentiled heading, and by the replacement of the remaining door with a window. The rear window was sealed off. The chimney was relocated from the front of the ridgeline to a point west of the ridgeline and in front of the balcony. A narrow horizontal balcony window was added to the west facade beneath the eavesline in 1922.

The present church was last altered in 1970 when the building was moved, the chimney was replaced, and a basement of concrete block construction raised the building by a few feet. The church originally was based on red sandstone blocks. An exterior storm cellar entrance was also added. The church (refer to 1908 photo) was originally on a slightly sloping site with the rear door requiring a wooden stoop. The moving of the church has raised the building only in the front. Original plaster walls and ceiling were lost during the relocation. Baseboard and quarter round woodwork were also lost at this time.

Inside the church, the original pews, pulpit, inner double doors (1892) all survive and are of importance. A kitchen was added behind the sanctuary in recent years.

## 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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" 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** 1871–1929 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Sciola Missionary Baptist Church is the only remaining building from the community of Sciola, Washington Township, Montgomery County. As such, it survives, despite alterations and a minimal relocation, as a rare example of an early Iowa frame church building.

The Sciola Post Office was established March 2, 1855 as the first post office in the county, and finally was closed on June 30, 1905. Sciola appears to have been a small country crossroads settlement, being composed of a few stores, this church, and the post office. The center served as a township focal point during the early settlement and Civil War years. The Union League of America for example reported forty-seven members at Sciola as of October 1864. A local grange was centered here as of 1874.

The Sciola Missionary Baptist Church was organized in January 1869 with nine member families. John Yergey, a member, sold land to the congregation in June 1871 (and again in 1882 for cemetery space). The building was dedicated June 30, 1872, and cost \$1,600 to build. By 1881 average attendance at services was forty-five. The church usually shared a minister with Baptist churches in Grant and Villisca in neighboring townships. The church was always economically marginal but survived until mid-1929. In 1896 part of the cemetery was sold off and a store occupied that site. The church filled an important area function, housing Farm Bureau, 4-H, and similar needs.

This community service tradition continued when in 1946 the newly formed Sciola Community Church rededicated the building for its use. General elections, AAA, soil conservation, telephone board, school board, and 4-H township functions were all allowed to use the building. The use of the building for elections was recently resumed and takes place in the basement. Voting at this location was discontinued when the church was relocated in 1970. The church has been in township ownership since 1980, ten years after local efforts to save the church began.

The church was originally located on the east end of the present property, in close proximity to the highway right of way. The present day southern facade then faced east. The building was moved to the rear (west end) of the lot and reoriented 90 degrees to the south in order to save it from highway development in 1970.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Refer to Continuation Sheet 9-2

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Morton Mills

Quadrangle scale 1/24,000

### UTM References

A	1 5	3 3 3 0 7 0	4 5 4 4 2 4 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
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D			
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E			
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F			
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G			
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H			
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at a point which is 7 rods north of the southeast corner of the Northeast Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Sec. 16 T-72-N, R-36-W, 5th P.M., thence north seven rods, west nineteen rods, south seven rods, and east nineteen rods to pt. of beginning, including

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	n.a.	code	county
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the church and excluding the cemetery to the south. A wooden outhouse is included but is intrusive.

state	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title James E. Jacobsen, National Register Coordinator

organization Iowa SHPO  
Historical Building

date May 25, 1983

street & number E. 12th & Grand Ave.

telephone 515-281-4137

city or town Des Moines

state Iowa 50319

# 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

title Executive Director Iowa State Historical Department

date May 25, 1983

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Beth Curson  
Keeper of the National Register

date 7/8/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Bibliography

Item number 9

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Merritt, W. W. A History of the County of Montgomery. Red Oak: Express Publishing Company, 1906, pp. 260, 542.

History of Montgomery County, Iowa. Des Moines: Iowa Historical and Biographical Company, 1881, pp. 542, 544.

The Independent, 1887-1893.

The Red Oak Express . 1874-1981.

The Villisca Review. 1871-1981.

Montgomery County Land Records.

Sciola Community Church Minute Book.