

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name First Congregational Church
other names/site number Lindsay Street Hall

2. Location

street & number 901 Lindsay Street N/A not for publication
city or town Chattanooga N/A vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Hamilton code 065 zip code 37402

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

E. Patrick McElroy, Jr. June 1, 2010
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register.
- other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

First Congregational Church
Name of Property

Hamilton County, Tennessee
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

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- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

1

buildings
sites
structures
objects
Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGIOUS

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Auditorium, Music Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Gothic Revival

foundation cut stone

walls brick, plaster

roof asphalt

other glass, pressed tin, wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

First Congregational Church
Name of Property

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage: African American
 Social History
 Architecture

Period of Significance
1905-1967

Significant Dates
1905, 1967

Significant Person
(complete if Criterion B is marked)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Adams, George and Bearden, Charles
Alston, L.C. and Johnson, A.J.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:
Cornerstones, Inc./Bicentennial Library- Chattanooga, TN

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreeage of Property 0.2 acres Chattanooga, TN 105 SE

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UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>654393</u>	<u>3879355</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Archambault/Historic Preservation Planner and Patrice Hobb Glass/Preservation Consultant
organization Southeast Tennessee Development District date February 2010
street & number 1000 Riverfront Parkway telephone (423) 424-4266
city or town Chattanooga state TN zip code 37402

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Kenneth Crisp telephone (423) 322-1872
street & number 721 S. Seminole Dr.
city or town Chattanooga state TN zip code 37412

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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VII. Description

The First Congregational Church, located at 901 Lindsay Street at the corner of M.L. King Blvd. and Lindsay Street (historically 9th and "A" streets) in Chattanooga, Hamilton County, Tennessee, is a single-story red brick building set upon a cut stone foundation. The building, completed and dedicated in 1905, is representative of the Late Gothic Revival Style. It features a hipped roof with gabled bays on the north, east, and south elevations each containing large arched stained glass windows topped with decorative wood tracery featuring a Gothic quatrefoil design. A three-tier square, brick narthex tower with a hipped roof and chimney is located at the southeast corner of the building. The church building sits on a flat lot bordered by sidewalks on the north and east elevations and parking lots on the west and rear elevations. Relatively small additions were added onto the west elevation in the 1930s. Restoration work was conducted on the building from 2007-2009 and a majority of the original exterior and interior elements were retained.

Architectural elements consistent on all elevations of the exterior of the building include decorative curved brackets along the cornice, a decorative arched line of raised brick above the windows and doors, brick corbelling underneath the central gable stained glass windows, stone window sills, and a stone belt course along the top of the cut stone foundation wall.

The historic façade of the building faces north towards M.L. King Blvd. Featured in the central bay is an original arched large stained glass window with a wood, Gothic quatrefoil designed frame. Two bays with arched stained glass windows in each bay flank the central gabled bay. The northeast bay features a cornerstone above the cut stone foundation and arched stained glass window, which is in the location of the original entrance of the church.¹ Inscribed on the cornerstone are the dates of construction (1903-1904) and the organization of the church in 1867. The northeast bay was originally the base of an architecturally prominent four-tiered square, brick bell tower with hipped roof and arched stained glass windows on the upper tier. Due to deterioration and threat of pedestrian injury along M.L. King Blvd., the tower was removed in 1967.

The northwest bay is slightly recessed with an arched stained glass window followed by an additional recessed bay that was added in the 1930s and housed the pastor's office. It features a hipped roof that includes concrete steps and an original two-paneled wood entrance door with glass and single pane transom. A one-over-one wood sash window is located east of the door.²

¹ Note: An arched stained glass window is situated at the location of the original entrance. The date the original entrance was moved from the façade to the rear of the northeast bell tower is pre-1940 based on information from former member, Wallace Roberson. It is presumed the present arched stained glass window was originally located at the rear of the northeast bell tower.

² Note: Specific date of the addition that housed the pastor's office is not known. It is believed to have occurred in the early 1930s and possibly late 1920s.

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The east elevation of the building, now the primary facade, faces Lindsay Street and is similar to the façade. It has a central gabled bay with an identical large stained glass window and wood decorative frame. Two recessed bays, featuring arched stained glass windows, flank the central bay. The east elevation also features an entrance at the rear of the base of the former northeast bell tower. The wood replacement entrance doors include an arched stained glass transom inscribed with the words, FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. This entrance serves as one of the church's two narthexes and is accessed by concrete steps from the sidewalk on Lindsay Street.³

The southeast corner of the east elevation features a three-tiered square tower with a hipped roof and brick chimney sheltering the second narthex. The bottom tier of the tower includes the entrance facing Lindsay Street featuring a set of wood replacement doors and replicated arched stained glass transom, which includes the building's number, 901. It is accessed by concrete steps, reconstructed in 2009. It also includes an arched replacement stained glass window on its south elevation facing a small parking lot and outdoor reception grounds located at the rear of the building.⁴ The middle tier of the narthex tower includes four pairs of rectangular glass windows with concrete lintels and brick corbelling at the base. The upper tier features four brick support pillars on each corner with a pair of wood columns between each pillar.

The rear south elevation of the edifice features a central gable flanked by the tower to the east and recessed bay to the west. The central bay, like the façade and east elevation, includes the decorative framed stained glass window. Protruding from the southwest recessed bay is a one story brick addition that was reconstructed in 2008-2009. It shelters the new restrooms and part of the remodeled kitchen.⁵

The west elevation is a blank concrete wall that served as the support wall for the 1930s additions onto the west elevation.⁶ The addition to the southwest corner of the original building in the 1930s was constructed to accommodate the choir room and the addition on the northwest corner shelters the office with the entrance facing M.L. King Blvd. In 1981, local artist, Andre Willis, painted a mural on the west elevation wall depicting a black child under the protective arms of Jesus Christ. The mural, named "As a Little Child," served as a memorial to 29 children who were murdered in Atlanta the previous year. Thirteen years later, the mural was covered due to water damage and structural work that was conducted to secure the wall.⁷

³ Note: Concrete steps with stone work along the east elevation is not original. Work on the steps was completed in 2009; the wood replacement doors at the base of the former northeast narthex tower was the original location of the arched stained glass window now facing M.L.K. Blvd.

⁴ Note: The stained glass above the entrance doors facing Lindsay Street and the arched stained glass window facing the rear property are replacement pieces created by Bob Zakas.

⁵ Note: The original one-story addition on the rear elevation that sheltered the restrooms is believed to have been constructed during the late 1930s/ early 1940s.

⁶ A two or three story building originally stood directly west of the church which presently is a parking lot. The demolition of the building is unknown, but most likely occurred during the 1920s and 1930s before the construction of the church addition.

⁷ Shearer, John. "Landmark Mural on MLK Site Covered In Church Renovation," *Chattanooga Free Press*, 23 Dec 1994, p. B2.

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The sanctuary's interior is approximately 3,500 square feet with a pressed tin ceiling, new wood floors, original paneled doors, restored original stained glass windows with decorative stained wood frames on the north, south, and east walls, an arched alcove on the west wall, new wainscoting, and replacement ceiling light fixtures. A large majority of the daisy and diamond designed pressed tin ceiling is original. Only seventy pressed tin ceiling pieces were replaced in three out of the four angled corner ceiling sections where water damage occurred.

The sanctuary floor was originally a bowl-shaped pine floor that sloped slightly toward the pulpit and choir stage, located underneath the arched alcove along the western wall. Due to the deterioration of the original floor, all new wood flooring was installed and made level to better accommodate the building's new adaptive reuse purpose of hosting special events. In 2001, the three sections of original wood pews were removed after the church closed.

The sanctuary is dominated by large stained glass windows on the north, south, and east walls. All of the stained glass windows are identical in design except for different figures in the center of each Gothic quatrefoil. The window on the north wall features a crown and cross in the quatrefoil's center; the window on the east wall features a dove; and the window on the south wall features a bible.

Each window is encased in a stained decorative wood frame. The lower section of the frame includes a set of four arches, each featuring a bottom sash (inoperable) that pivoted inward for ventilation.⁸ The upper section features a gothic quatrefoil in the center with a set of two curving teardrop-shaped frames on both sides of the quatrefoil.

In 2007-2008, all of the original leaded stained glass windows were removed and the windows were repaired and refitted by Zakas Glassworks, a local stained glass company. Approximately seventy original stained glass windows with over 6,000 pieces were cleaned and reassembled, and missing stained glass pieces were replicated. The decorative Gothic quatrefoil designed wood frames were sanded and stained as well.

In addition to the large stained glass window on the north wall, an arched stained glass window is located to the west, and the entrance to the northeast narthex is located to the east. The narthex was originally the base to the four-tier square bell tower that was removed in 1967. An original arched stained glass window is located on the narthex's east wall and a replicated arched stained glass window is located on the narthex's north wall.⁹ A set of wood replacement doors and arched stained glass transom is located on the south wall. The transom window includes the name of the church. Located at the narthex's southwest corner, are original four-paneled double doors that lead into the sanctuary.

⁸ Note: The pivoting feature on all of the large stained glass windows was also true with the smaller, single arched windows.

⁹ Note: Zakas Glassworks replicated original stained glass patterns for the restoration of the First Congregational Church.

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Located to the east of the large stained glass window on the south wall is the southeast narthex, which includes two separate entrances each with original four-paneled doors in its north and west walls. An arched entryway with a single wood replacement door and a replacement stained glass transom window, which includes the building's address number 901, is located on the east wall facing Lindsay Street. Located on the narthex's south wall, is a replicated, arched stained glass window.

Located to the west of the south wall's central window is an open doorway leading to the men's and women's restrooms. Originally, the open doorway served as a rear entrance on the southwest corner of the building into the sanctuary. The addition to accommodate restrooms was originally constructed in the 1930s/1940s. This addition was reconstructed in 2008-2009 to shelter the new restrooms.

An arched alcove sheltering the original pulpit, choir box, and baptismal pool, is centered on the west wall. The pulpit, now used as a stage for wedding ceremonies and musical acts, features two hinged wood doors in the floor with circular metal handles cover the baptismal pool at the front end of the stage. Located to the north of the stage is the pastor's office and to the south is the choir room/kitchen. These two rooms were added in the 1930s.

The pastor's office, approximately 150 square feet, includes a one-over-one sash window and a two-paneled door with a single pane of glass on the upper half in the north wall. This door leads to front steps and sidewalk on M.L.K. Blvd. A four-paneled door with transom leading to the stage is located on the south wall. The south and east walls are covered with plaster and painted green. Exposed brick is visible on the east wall. This room presently serves as the office for the owners of Lindsay Street Hall.

The original choir room and kitchen is approximately 100 square feet and located south of the stage. In 2008-2009, the room was renovated to serve as a full kitchen for catered events. A four-paneled wood door is located on its north wall and kitchen appliances on the along the east and west walls. An additional four-paneled door is located at the southeast corner of the room and a small storage closet is located on the south wall.

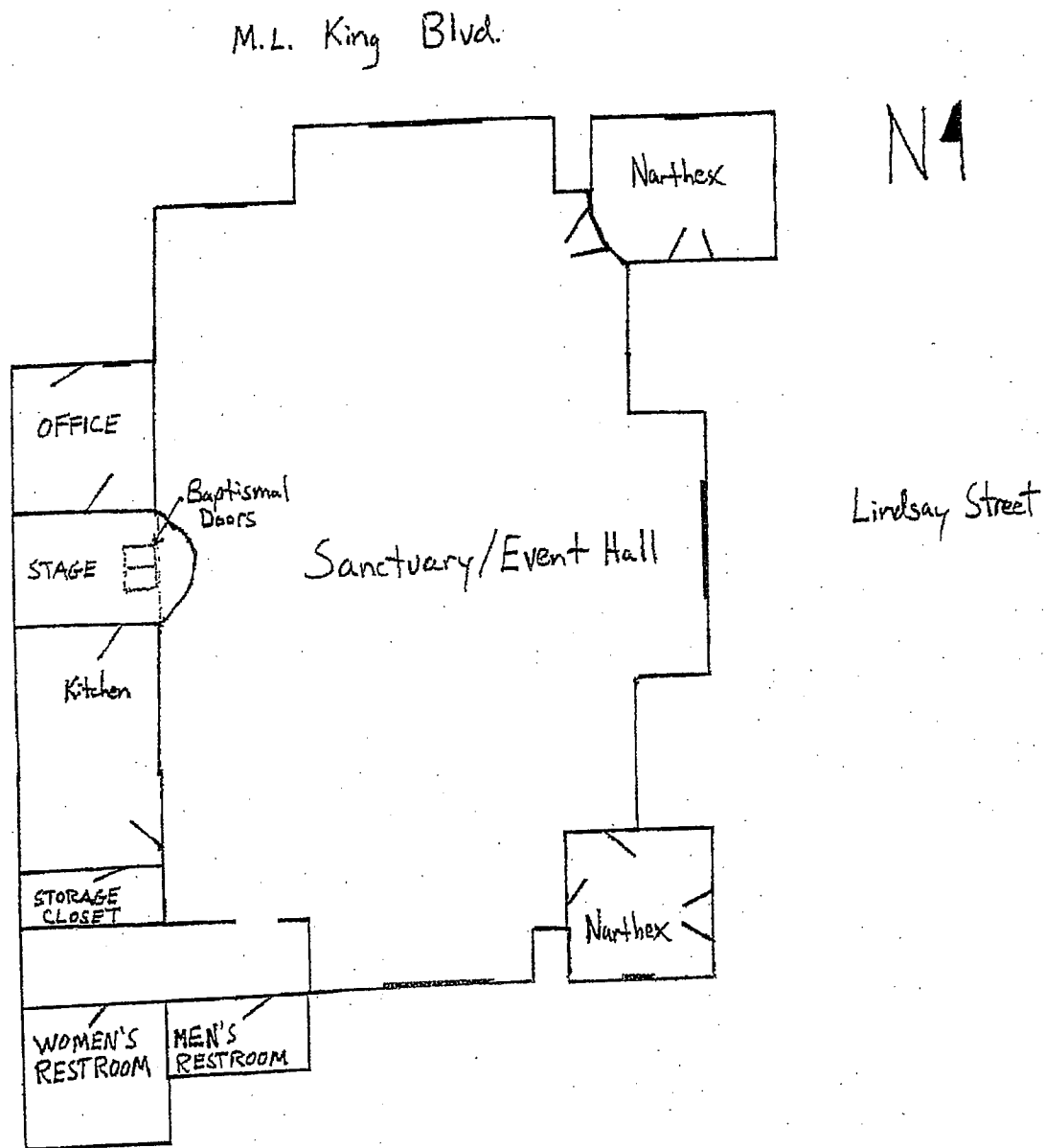
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VIII. Historical Significance

The First Congregational Church, completed in 1905, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its locally significant associations with African American culture (ethnic heritage) and social history. It also eligible for the National Register under Criterion C because it represents the late Gothic Revival Style that was prevalent among religious institutions in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Defining architectural elements include a narthex tower and large quatrefoil framed stained glass windows located in the church's three gabled bays. The nominated property served the African American community on M.L. King Blvd. (formerly 9th Street) as a religious institution and community center for approximately 96 years.

Beginning with its establishment in 1867, and continuing with the construction of the present day building in 1905, the First Congregational Church provided for the spiritual, educational, social, and physical needs of Chattanooga's African American community. Located on the edge of the city's historic M.L. King Blvd. Commercial District (NR 3/20/1984), it remains a physical symbol of the historic African American community.

During the Union Army's occupation in Chattanooga in 1863, thousands of newly freed blacks arrived in the city seeking jobs and a permanent settlement. After the Civil War, Chattanooga maintained its place as a major industrial center of the region with the presence of iron manufacturing facilities, rolling mills, and sawmills. Goods were easily transported by railroad and the Tennessee River. African Americans found jobs in the mills along W. 9th Street (M.L. King Blvd.) and quickly established themselves in the community.

By the late 1860s, thousands of freedmen lived in and around Chattanooga making it fertile ground for the northern evangelists moving south to assist freedmen in their transition from slavery to freedom.¹⁰ Ewing Ogden Tade, an Illinois native and Chicago Seminary trained minister, entered into this environment after the Civil War as a newly appointed American Missionary Association (AMA) field agent.

Arriving in Chattanooga in December 1866, Tade quickly began work to educate freedmen and was appointed as superintendent of the city's first public education system in 1867. Additionally, Tade served as cashier of the Freedman's Savings Bank. With his meager salary and money supplied by the AMA, Tade purchased land near downtown Chattanooga and sold it to the newly freed black population under good terms and low prices. Today, a significant portion of this land is recognized by the National Park Service through its listing on the National Register of Historic Places as the Martin Luther King Boulevard Commercial Historic District.¹¹

¹⁰ Gilbert E. Govan and James W. Livingood, *The Chattanooga Country: 1540 - 1976, From Tomahawks to TVA* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976), 211-252.

¹¹ C. Stuart McGehee, "E.O. Tade, Freedman's Education, and the Failure of Reconstruction in Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Society Quarterly*, 376-389.

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In addition to caring for the educational and essential living needs of Chattanooga's growing freedman population, Reverend Tade cared for their spiritual needs. On June 9, 1867, Reverend Tade and fourteen freedmen met on the corner of 9th (MLK Blvd) and "A" (Lindsay St.) Streets for worship. After meeting on the lot on the western end of the city's only black business district for a year, Reverend Tade purchased the 200 x 100 foot lot for \$300. Begun as a non-denominational place of worship, the congregation and Reverend Tade chose to join the Congregational Church in 1868, taking the name First Congregational Church.

In 1871, Reverend Tade sold the property to the church for five dollars, and with assistance from the American Missionary Association, the congregation constructed a frame building on the south end of the lot. The 1878 yellow fever epidemic that killed over 300 people in Chattanooga greatly affected the membership of the church and it suffered in growth for a number of years, however by the turn of the 20th century, the congregation was the largest within the African American community. Needing a larger space, the congregation announced plans to construct a larger church building. Reporting the plans, a Chattanooga newspaper referred to the church as "the wealthiest colored congregation in the city."¹² Historian C. Stuart McGehee stated, "the religious institutions which blacks and sympathetic whites like Tade founded would prove the most durable social structures of Chattanooga's black community."¹³

In the early 1900s, local architects George Adams and Charles Bearden were selected to design the late Gothic Revival building. On Labor Day 1903, ground was broken for the construction. The selected contractors for the job were L.C. Alston and A.J. Johnson. Supervising mostly black laborers, Alston was responsible for the wood work and Johnson oversaw the brick work. A cornerstone was laid atop a cut stone foundation gathered from nearby Stone Fort on Thanksgiving that same year.

Charles Bearden, a prominent Chattanooga architect in the early twentieth century, was known for his design of religious institutions, office buildings, and school buildings in the region. He designed the Neo-Classical Style Richard Hardy Memorial School (NR listed 1982) in Richard City (South Pittsburg) Marion County, Tennessee in 1925. Bearden served as an associate architect for the First Presbyterian Church's sanctuary (NR listed 2009) and original Sunday School Department (non-extant) in 1909. The First Presbyterian Church is located on McCallie Avenue approximately five blocks northeast of First Congregational Church. Other notable buildings designed by Bearden in Chattanooga, which are now non-extant, include the following: Ochs Memorial Temple, American Bank Building, Tennessee Electric Power office building (6th and Market Sts.), Pine Breeze Sanatorium (North Chattanooga), and the Chamberlain Building (Chestnut Street between 8th and 9th Streets), which was designed with George Adams.¹⁴

¹² *Chattanooga Press*, January 23, 1901, 5.

¹³ C. Stuart McGehee, "E.O. Tade, Freedman's Education, and the Failure of Reconstruction in Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Society Quarterly*, 376-389.

¹⁴ "Looking Backward," *Chattanooga Times*, 21 Jan 1953, Chattanooga Architects (A-F) News Clippings Folder, Bicentennial

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Along with immaculate brick and wood work, the church featured architecturally prominent towers at the northeast and southeast corners of the church sheltering the front and rear narthexes. The northeast bell tower doubled the size of the southeast narthex tower standing approximately four stories. In addition, the central gabled bays of the façade, east elevation, and rear elevation feature stained glass encased in arched wood frames topped with a gothic quatrefoil design. The church's fine architectural detail represented the affluence of its members.

The church was completed in 1905 and dedicated by Reverend Joseph E. Smith, who served as pastor of the church from 1879 until his death in 1917. Furnished and ready for worship in February 1905, the congregation delayed the dedication of the building until December 10, 1905. Information provided to local newspapers at that time noted the congregation entered the new \$17,000 building with no debt. Reports also noted that the congregation raised all money, except for a \$2000 grant from the Congregational Building Society.¹⁵ Some parts of construction of the church were cut back so the church would not develop a debt for the building.

Sitting directly west of the Martin Luther King Boulevard Commercial Historic District, the First Congregational Church served its community not only as a place for religious worship but also as a gathering and educational place. Within the building, the congregation began the city's first daycare for African American children, taught social responsibility, and helped the city's black community through the eras of Jim Crow and desegregation.

In 1925, women of the church organized the Pi Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha, the city's first sorority for college educated African-American women. Together, the First Congregational Church and AKA's Pi Omega chapter established scholarships for young church members seeking a college education. The focus of education within its community by the church and some individual members, led Chattanooga's Board of Education to name schools after long time minister the Reverend Joseph E. Smith and church member James A. Henry.

In the 1930s, the congregation decided to construct an additional bay onto the west elevation. The addition created an office for the pastor at the northwest corner of the building, which included a new entrance on Martin Luther King Boulevard. A choir room/kitchen addition was constructed onto the southwest corner of the building. A later one-story brick addition in the late 1930s/early 1940s included restrooms onto the southwest corner of the rear elevation of the building.¹⁶

Library, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and Wilson, John. *Chattanooga's Story*. Chattanooga, TN, 1980.

¹⁵ *Chattanooga Times*, December 10, 1905, 18.

¹⁶ Note: Specific date of additions are unknown.

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During the early 1960s, several church leaders and members played a role in Chattanooga's Civil Rights Movement. Dr. Horace Traylor, who served as the First Congregational Church minister in the 1960s, received his high school diploma from Howard High School in Chattanooga and earned his college degree at Zion College, located on E. 9th Street. Zion College was chartered in 1949 and its purpose was to train African American ministers and church workers. In 1953, Dr. Traylor became the first graduate of Zion College. Then in 1959 Traylor became president of Zion College and also served as president of the Council for Cooperative Action. He used his education and position to become a strong voice among African Americans in the 1960s.¹⁷

Numerous "sit-ins" swept through the upper South in February 1960 and included a couple held in Chattanooga on February 19th. It included 30 black Howard High School students who took to the lunch counters at McClellan Store Co. (713 Market Street) and Woolworth Company (729 Market Street) to protest the segregated cafeterias. Several months after successful and peaceful demonstrations, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. visited Chattanooga and spoke to a crowd of approximately 3,000 people at Memorial Auditorium. Traylor, who worked with Dr. King during the Civil Rights Movement, attended the event.¹⁸

Included in these sit-ins was a group of twelve students who, according to a newspaper article, gathered at First Congregational Church before walking downtown to stage a sit-in. Perhaps this action was simply putting into practice some of the information they had learned in classes held at the church on "what might be faced during sit-ins and attempted integration."¹⁹ During a recent interview, Dr. Traylor did not recall the students gathering in the church and stated that perhaps they had gathered outside the building.²⁰ Certainly it's location at the edge of an African American neighborhood near downtown would have made it a logical place to gather.

During his tenure as minister at the First Congregational Church, Dr. Traylor worked with city leaders and local businessmen to help with desegregation in Chattanooga. Dr. Traylor, in the early 1960s, worked with the University of Chattanooga officials to get faculty members to teach part-time at Zion College. Zion College, which later became Chattanooga City College in 1964, eventually merged, along with the private University of Chattanooga, to form the newly established University of Tennessee's branch campus in Chattanooga in 1967.²¹

¹⁷ Dr. Horace Traylor. Interview with author. April 29, 2010. See also, Lovett, Bobby L. "Zion College." *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*. Available at: <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>.

¹⁸ "Negroes 'Sit Down' Here; No Incident, No Service." *Chattanooga Daily Times*, 20 Feb 1960, p. 1 V.XCI No. 68. See also, Shearer, John. "Dr. King Made Memorable Speech In Chattanooga 50 Years Ago," *Chattanoogan.com*, 24 Jan 2010.

¹⁹ *Chattanooga Times*, February 5, 2005, B1.

²⁰ Dr. Horace Traylor. Interview with author. April 29, 2010.

²¹ Bobby Lovett. "Zion College." *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*. Available at: <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 10First Congregational Church
Hamilton County, TN

In June 1961, the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church unified to form the United Church of Christ. As a result of the merger, new positions were created and filled by the congregation. Wallace Roberson accepted the position of moderator in 1961 and remained in that position until the closing of the church in 2001.

The First Congregational Church lost a prominent architectural feature in 1967. The four-story square bell tower was removed due to its deteriorating state with occasional loose brick and cement falling to the sidewalk below. Its condition coupled with the M.L. King Blvd. widening caused the rapid removal of the tower.

In 1981, local artist, Andre Willis, was commissioned to paint a mural onto the church's west elevation. Willis was well known for his paintings of pop album covers and backdrop murals for baptismal pools. He decided that his mural would be dedicated to the 29 victims of the recent Atlanta Child Murders. The mural, titled "As a Little Child," depicted a haloed Jesus Christ comforting a black child. Willis said the mural was a visual representation of the scripture Matthew 18:1-6. The mural cost \$4,000, which was paid by local donors.²²

Unfortunately, the mural was covered by cement in 1994 due to a cracking wall and structural reinforcement that was necessary. There was much disappointment over the loss of the local landmark as it stood as a source of pride in the local black community.²³

Due to dwindling membership and increased financial strains, the congregation voted to dissolve in 2001. After serving as an important part of Chattanooga's African American community for 134 years, the congregation held its last worship service in the church on September 2, 2001. Upon its closing, the congregation gifted the building to Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee.

In 2006, Kenneth Crisp, developer, and his son, Ken Crisp, Jr., purchased the building for \$300,000. Restoration work on the building began in 2007, which included lead stained glass replacement, pressed tin ceiling rehabilitation, new flooring, new plumbing, and new HVAC system. The Lyndhurst Foundation, River City Co., and Cornerstones paid for the renovation of the stained glass windows.

In 2007-2008, local craftsman Bob Zakas and his assistant Alayna Kyle, worked to clean and refit the old lead and colored glass. The tedious work included over 6,000 individual pieces of glass. In addition, Mr. Zakas created and installed two replicated stained glass windows with original patterns in the southeast tower.²⁴

²² "Mural To Memorialize Slain Children," *Chattanooga News Free Press*, 24 Aug 1981, p. A1. See also, John Shearer. "Landmark Mural On MLK Site Covered in Church Renovation," *Chattanooga Free Press*, 23 Dec 1994, p. B2.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Casey Phillips. "A job with meaning: Stained-glass maker brings satisfaction to himself, others," *Chattanooga Times Free Press*,

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United States Department of the Interior
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First Congregational Church
Hamilton County, TN

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The property, at the present time, serves as a general events venue hosting wedding receptions/rehearsal dinners, company events, musical events, fundraising events, etc. The owners, through their business, wish to continually promote the history of the First Congregational Church and the role it played in Chattanooga's African American community on M.L. King Blvd.

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First Congregational Church
Hamilton County, TN

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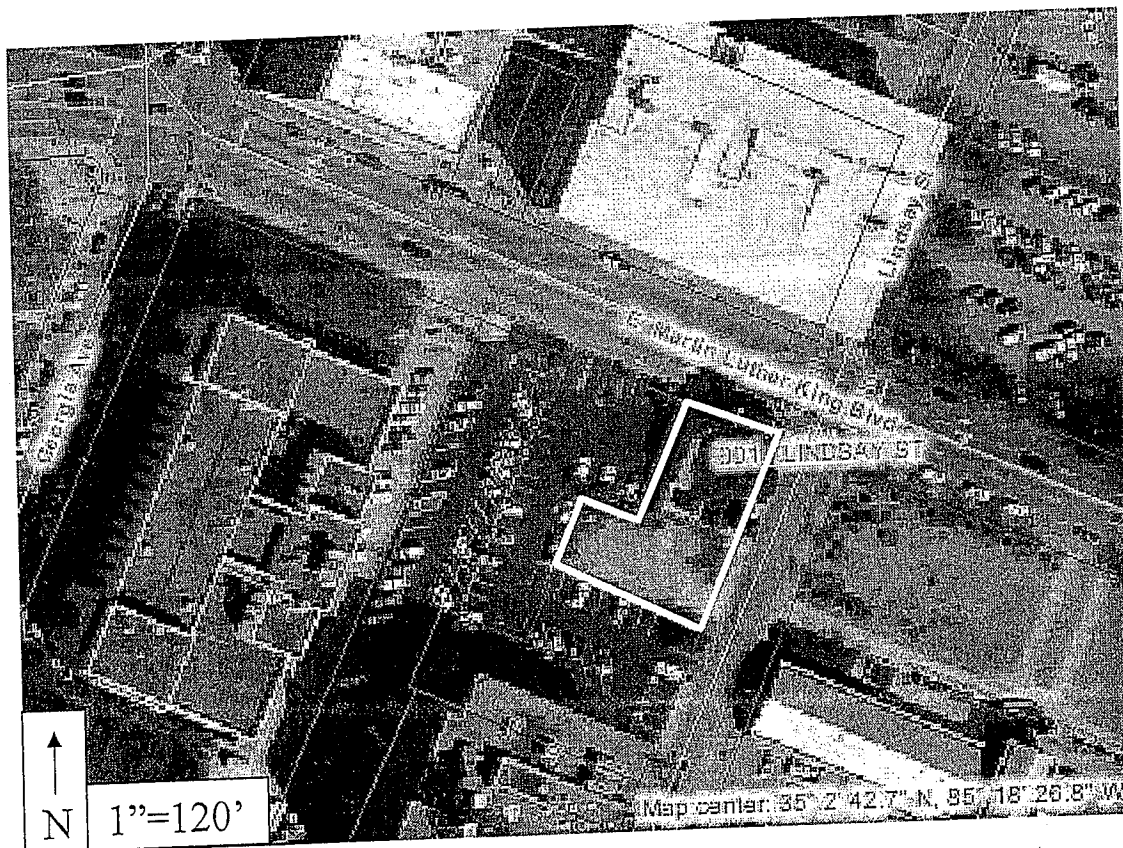
First Congregational Church
Hamilton County, TN

Section number 10 Page 13

X. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal boundary description and boundary justification:

The First Congregational Church (Lindsay Street Hall) is located at 901 Lindsay Street. It is located at the intersection of Lindsay Street and M.L. King Blvd. on a .2 acre flat lot. The nominated boundaries include the sanctuary building and narrow lot behind the building. It is listed as Parcel 003.00 on Hamilton County Tax Map 145 D.



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Continuation Sheet**Section number PHOTOS Page 14First Congregational Church
Hamilton County, TN**XI. PHOTOGRAPHS**Photographer: Paul Archambault
Southeast Tennessee Development District
1000 Riverfront Parkway
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402

Date: January 2010

North facade, photographer facing south.
1 of 13North facade and east elevation, photographer facing southwest.
2 of 13East elevation, photographer facing west.
3 of 13Top portion of southeast tower, photographer facing southwest.
4 of 13South elevation, photographer facing north.
5 of 13West and south elevations, photographer facing northeast.
6 of 13Sanctuary interior, photographer facing south.
7 of 13Pulpit area of sanctuary, photographer facing southwest.
8 of 13Large stained glass window unit in east wall, photographer facing east.
9 of 13Large stained glass window unit in north wall, photographer facing north.
10 of 13Pressed tin ceiling in sanctuary, photographer facing south.
11 of 13

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Continuation Sheet**Section number PHOTOS Page 15First Congregational Church
Hamilton County, TNNortheast narthex, photographer facing east.
12 of 13Pastor's office, photographer facing north.
13 of 13

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JUL 22 2010

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT NATIONAL REGISTER REVIEW

CLG: Chattanooga
PROPERTY: First Congregational Church
ADDRESS: 901 Lindsay Street

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION EVALUATION

NAME OF COMMISSION: CHATTANOOGA HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSION

DATE OF MEETING: 04.15.2010

HOW WAS THE PUBLIC NOTIFIED OF THE MEETING? LOCAL NEWSPAPER AD

- ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER
NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER

REASONS FOR ELIGIBILITY OR NON-ELIGIBILITY:

Churches play a significant role in the history of Chattanooga, both culturally and architecturally.

SIGNATURE: [Handwritten Signature]
TITLE:

DATE: 4.15.10

THC STAFF EVALUATION

- ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER
NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER

REASONS FOR ELIGIBILITY OR NON-ELIGIBILITY:

First Congregational Church is eligible as a good local example of the Late Gothic Revival style of architecture in Chattanooga. The church retains a three tiered tower and large decorative stained glass window units. The property is also eligible as a gathering place for the nearby African American communities. The church served the community by offering classes and serving as a gathering place for civil rights activities.

SIGNATURE: [Handwritten Signature]
TITLE: Historic Preservation Specialist

DATE: March 31, 2010

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND RETURN BEFORE: May 26, 2010

RETURN FORM TO:

BRIAN BEADLES
TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION
2941 LEBANON ROAD
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37214

LISTED

JUL 22 2010

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT NATIONAL REGISTER REVIEW

CLG: Chattanooga
PROPERTY: First Congregational Church
ADDRESS: 901 Lindsay Street

CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL EVALUATION

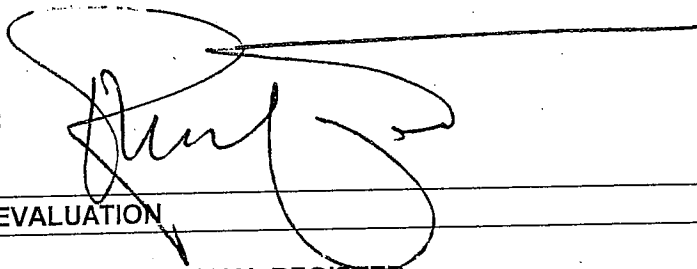
NAME OF OFFICIAL:

TITLE:

- ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER

REASONS FOR ELIGIBILITY OR NON-ELIGIBILITY:

SIGNATURE:
TITLE:



DATE:

4/8/2010

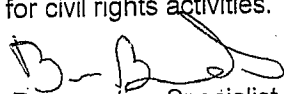
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