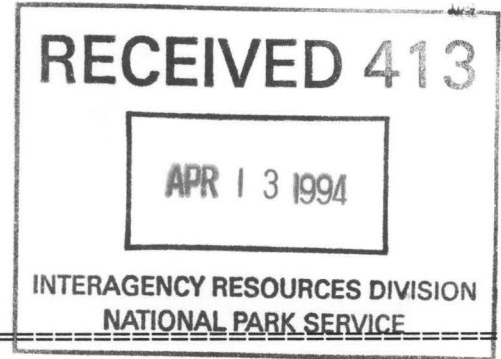


467

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: First United Methodist Church

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: 101 South Izard Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Forrest City

vicinity: N/A

state: AR county: St. Francis code: AR 123 zip code: 72335

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

=====  
**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**  
=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Cathryn K. Slater \_\_\_\_\_ 4-6-94  
Signature of certifying official Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

=====  
**5. National Park Service Certification**  
=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_ Edson H. Ball 5.19.94  
\_\_\_\_\_ 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the National Register  
for \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

=====  
**6. Function or Use**  
=====

Historic: RELIGION Sub: Religious Facility

Current: RELIGION Sub: Religious Facility

=====  
**7. Description**  
=====

Architectural Classification:

Classical Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation Concrete roof Slate  
walls Brick other Stained glass

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

=====  
**8. Statement of Significance**  
=====

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Locally.

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: 1917

Significant Dates: 1917

Significant Person(s): N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Gaisford, John/  
Jones, J. C.  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.  
X See continuation sheet.

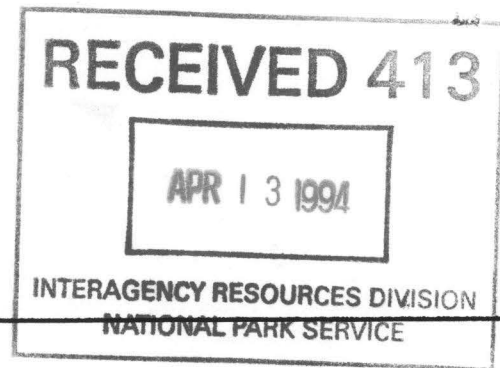
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

7

1

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_



Summary

The First United Methodist Church of Forrest City, located at 101 S. Izard Street just east of the historic downtown, is a two-storey, brick masonry church building designed in the Classical Revival style. Its plan is fundamentally rectangular, though the two-storey Classical portico on the western elevation of the sanctuary dominates the composition and projects slightly from the remainder of the western elevation. The slate roof and brick walls are supported upon a cast concrete foundation.

Elaboration

The First United Methodist Church of Forrest City is a two-storey, brick masonry church building designed in the Classical Revival style. Its plan is fundamentally rectangular, though the two-storey Classical portico on the western elevation of the sanctuary dominates the composition and projects slightly from the remainder of the western elevation. A total of four brick chimneys rise through the roofline: one at the building's southwest corner, another from near its southeast corner, and two from the northern slope of the sanctuary roof near the building's northeast corner. The slate roof and brick walls are supported upon a cast concrete foundation.

The western or front elevation is composed of the front of the sanctuary to the north and the side wall of the original office/classroom wing to the south. The sanctuary end wall is composed of four full-height Ionic *in antis* columns supporting a raised, pyramidal brick parapet. The wall surfaces to either side of the recessed porch are each ornamented with a central, panelled pilaster that rises to the entablature above. The back wall of the recessed porch is fenestrated with three symmetrically-placed window bays, the first storey of which features three tripartite wood windows and the second storey of which is filled with seven-pane arched windows composed of a central, tall arched pane that is flanked by square-headed sidelights, all of which is capped with a semi-circular, four-pane fanlight. The double-leaf entrances are found in both side walls of the recessed porch. A projecting stone cornice above the frieze (containing the words "FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH") separates the lower facade from the raised parapet above. The central pyramidal section of the parapet is blank, while the two flanking rectangular portions feature inset decorative stone blocks and decorative stone brackets. The raised porch is accessed via two flights of stairs that are flanked with brick stoops capped with stone. A single-leaf doorway, accessed via a set of descending concrete stairs, enters the basement to the north of the main staircase. The side wall of the office/classroom section to the south is fenestrated exclusively with square-headed windows and entered via a single-leaf entrance set into a slightly-

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 2

recessed bay that also contains a pair of single-pane casement windows with transom in the second storey above. The entrance is trimmed with the same stone seen elsewhere on the building. The central wall section is fenestrated with three square-headed window openings on each floor. The three first-storey windows are capped with blind brick arches in the wall above; the original window frames, probably casements like those above, appear to have been replaced with single-pane stationary windows at some point in the recent past. The windows on the second-storey each retain the pair of single-pane casement windows like those seen elsewhere on the building. The recessed bay at the southern end of the elevation (which matches the recessed entrance bay at the northern end of the office/classroom section) also contains a pair of single-pane casement windows on each floor.

The northern elevation is almost completely symmetrical. The three monumental, arched, stained-glass and wood windows that light the sanctuary within are placed in the center of the elevation. These windows are flanked by a single narrow, stationary window on each floor, followed by two projecting, pedimented bays capped with flat, raised brick parapets. The western projecting bay contains an arched window on the second storey and a square-headed window on the first storey, both of which are identical to those seen within the recessed porch on the western elevation. The eastern projecting bay is slightly wider and contains a single-pane arched window in the second storey and a single-leaf entrance on the first storey. The entrance is accessed via a concrete staircase running to the west alongside the wall. The elevation is finished with a narrow window bay at the eastern end, each storey of which is fenestrated with a single, narrow window opening (the upper opening is filled with brick that actually could be original). Stone decorative blocks are set into the brick frieze running beneath the cornice and in the raised brick parapets.

The eastern elevation of the sanctuary section is blank except for two first-storey windows placed near the northern and southern walls thereof. The office/classroom section to the south contains a total of five window bays, all of which are filled with pairs of single-pane casement windows on each floor except for the single-leaf entrance in the second bay from the north. A broad, tall blind stone pediment frames the gable end.

The southern elevation (now facing the 1951 addition) contains only three windows on the first floor, all of which are placed near the eastern wall (it is likely that there were many more windows in this elevation originally but that most were removed and filled after the construction of the addition).

The significant exterior details are largely limited to the massive Ionic columns on the western elevation, the raised pyramidal pediment above them, the limestone trim used to accent the

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

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brickwork, and the stained-glass windows found throughout the building.

The interior of the building is remarkably intact; in fact, the addition of an interior partition wall to separate the sanctuary from the office/classroom spaces to the south constitutes the principal change. The bracketed, false-beam ceiling, the beveled proscenium arch that separates the chancel from the sanctuary, all of the exterior windows and the built-in liturgical furniture are all original. Of particular note is the abundance of stained glass, some of which reflects clear Tiffany influences and some of which reflects Prairie-style decorative ideas, particularly some of the windows in the office/classroom section.

The only major addition of note is the 1951 educational building, located immediately to the south; however, it should be noted that this building is connected to the historic structure only by a covered passageway. It is not included in the nomination.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 1**Summary**

Criterion C, local significance

Constructed in 1917 and designed by the Memphis architect John Gaisford, the First United Methodist Church in Forrest City is eligible under Criterion C with local significance by virtue of its status as the finest extant example of the Classical Revival style in this community. Its massive Classical portico, elaborate round-arched sanctuary windows and heavy decorative pediments are all characteristic elements of a national architectural style that became especially popular for such large public construction in the early twentieth century.

**Elaboration**

Forrest City, Arkansas, named for the Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest (who was also the contractor for grading the Memphis & Little Rock Railroad through this section of its route), was first platted in March of 1869 on the western slope of Crowley's Ridge, one of the few natural geographic features in the eastern section of the state. The town was incorporated by 1871, with the election of its first mayor occurring in that year.

Though there is no question that the construction of the Memphis & Little Rock Railroad -- which had actually begun before the Civil War but which was interrupted thereby -- had a great deal to do with the siting of this community here and with the high hopes of its first settlers. Yet, in those first years after the Civil War, Forrest City was admirably situated in other ways also. It stood on the only elevated land to be found in the entire eastern third of the state, and was thus less prone to floods; it stood near the geographic center of the county, and so was likely to become the county seat (which it did in 1874); and it was centrally-located within one of the richest and most promising agricultural regions of the state. In addition to the cotton farming that had already proven itself were the extensive stands of timber -- bottomland hardwoods in particular -- that covered vast tracts of land throughout the county. This agricultural bounty and the existence of this relatively early railroad line encouraged the construction by the 1880's of an intersecting line -- the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern -- that connected Forrest City with St. Louis to the north and Texas to the southwest, in addition to Memphis, Little Rock, and points beyond. Forrest City thus became one of eastern Arkansas's largest transportation and processing hubs and the city flourished during the decades that followed.

This prosperity may have reached its apex during the second decade of the twentieth century. A spasm of private construction and public improvements occurred during these years, including the construction of a new high school, the completion of a system of public waterworks, the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2

initiation of a local street paving program, and the procuring of the first major paved automobile road to connect Memphis with Little Rock to pass through Forrest City (in fact, just to the north of this church). The local newspapers -- of which there were three -- were filled with advertisements for automobiles, motorized tractors and the like. Forrest City was definitely headed out of the nineteenth century and into the modern age.

It was within this atmosphere of heady optimism that the Methodist congregation here decided to erect a new building. Their earlier building had occupied this same site, but had become inadequate for the needs of a growing congregation. Under the tutelage of a new pastor, Rev. J. F. E. Bates, plans were begun to raze the existing structure and construct a new structure that would bring credit to the congregation and the city. The forming of a building committee was followed by the selection of the plans for the new church, designed by the Memphis architect John Gaisford. Bonds were issued and sold, and soon thereafter the foundations were poured and the walls raised. Though the oncoming of the First World War drew attention away from the building campaign for a time, the building was completed by the end of 1917.

Born in 1876 and educated in England, the architect John Gaisford emigrated to the United States in 1896, settling in Memphis, Tennessee. He enjoyed a thriving architectural practice in that city, designing private homes, the Memphis Y.M.C.A. (known as the Central Y.M.C.A. and located at 245 Madison Avenue), and a large number of churches. Church commissions must have comprised a significant percentage of his practice, as by 1912 he wrote a short book entitled "How To Build A Church" that was itself commissioned by the Board of Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky. This publication, authored, edited and profusely illustrated with the works of Gaisford, contained an assortment of recommended church plans for congregations of every size. It is interesting to note that within this publication are designs for such other Arkansas churches as the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in Batesville, Arkansas, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in Conway, Arkansas, and the Methodist Church in Clarendon, Arkansas. This design book reveals that though Gaisford was comfortable designing in the Gothic idiom, he clearly preferred the Classical, and celebrated its return to American popular favor.

The First United Methodist Church was probably one of the John Gaisford's last designs, as he died on August 31, 1916 (a stone plaque within the sanctuary identifies Gaisford as the architect and J. C. Jones as the builder). The design, though not overly ornate, obviously reflects Gaisford's Classical predilections. Taken together with the overall monumental symmetry, the impressive *in antis* Ionic portico at the front of the building, the large arched windows, and the use of the pediment form throughout harken back to the architecture of Classical Rome, a source of inspiration that became popular in America after the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3

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and chief architect Richard Morris Hunt's Classical program for all construction therein. The popularity of this exposition strongly influenced American architectural tastes thereafter, effectively turning it away from the medieval inspirations that had prevailed earlier and toward the architecture of Classical Rome. The Classical Revival style -- of which the First United Methodist Church is the finest extant example in Forrest City -- carried the day for the first two decades of the twentieth century, and continues to be popular for certain building types today.

=====

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

=====

X See continuation sheet.

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:

- X State historic preservation office
- \_ Other state agency
- \_ Federal agency
- \_ Local government
- \_ University
- \_ Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

=====

**10. Geographical Data**

=====

Acreage of Property: Less than one

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>702260</u>	<u>3876120</u>	B	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>
C	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	D	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>

   See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:    See continuation sheet.

Lots 3 and 4, Block 14, Original City of Forrest City, Arkansas.

Boundary Justification:    See continuation sheet.

This boundary includes all of the surrounding property historically associated with this resource.

=====

**11. Form Prepared By**

=====

Name/Title: Kenneth Story, Architectural Historian

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: 03/29/94

Street & Number: 323 Center Street, Suite 1500 Telephone: (501) 324-9880

City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1

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**Bibliography**

*Church Scrapbook*, First United Methodist Church, Forrest City, Arkansas.

"Corner Stone Laying of New Methodist Church," *Forrest City Herald*, April 13, 1917.

*Deed Records*, St. Francis County Courthouse, Forrest City, Arkansas; Book 1, p. 571.

*Family Scrapbook of Alice King Harrison*, Forrest City, Arkansas.

*First United Methodist Church Bulletin*, Forrest City, Arkansas, May 14, 1922.

Gaisford, John, *How To Build A Church*, (Louisville: publication date unrecorded, but probably around 1912).

Johnson, Eugene J. and Robert D. Russell, *Memphis: An Architectural Guide*, (Knoxville: 1990).

"The Land of a Thrifty and Progressive Population," *Forrest City Herald*, November 30, 1917.

"Methodism In Forrest City," *Forrest City Herald*, November 23, 1917.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: First United Methodist Church

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, St. Francis

DATE RECEIVED: 4/13/94      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/03/94  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/19/94      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/28/94  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 94000467

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    5.19.94 DATE    Entered in the National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_  
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_  
DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

\_\_\_ count      \_\_\_ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

\_\_\_ historic      \_\_\_ current

DESCRIPTION

\_\_\_ architectural classification  
\_\_\_ materials  
\_\_\_ descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period      Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- \_\_\_ summary paragraph
- \_\_\_ completeness
- \_\_\_ clarity
- \_\_\_ applicable criteria
- \_\_\_ justification of areas checked
- \_\_\_ relating significance to the resource
- \_\_\_ context
- \_\_\_ relationship of integrity to significance
- \_\_\_ justification of exception
- \_\_\_ other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

\_\_\_ acreage      \_\_\_ verbal boundary description  
\_\_\_ UTMs      \_\_\_ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

\_\_\_ sketch maps    \_\_\_ USGS maps    \_\_\_ photographs    \_\_\_ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



1ST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
FORREST CITY, ST. FRANCIS Co., ARKANSAS  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY P. ZOLLNER  
FEBRUARY, 1994  
NEGATIVE ON FILE AT AHPP  
VIEW FROM WEST



1st United Methodist Church

Forrest City, St. Francis Co., Arkansas

Photographed by P. Zollner

February 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

VIEW FROM NORTH



1st UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

FORREST CITY, ST. FRANCIS CO., ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY P. Zollner

February 1994

Negative on file AT AHPP

DETAIL OF CONNECTOR (TO NON-HISTORIC EDUCATIONAL  
BLDG.)



1st United Methodist Church  
Forrest City, St. Francis Co., Arkansas

Photographed by P. Zollner

February 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

*VIEW FROM EAST*



1st United Methodist Church  
Forrest City, St. Francis Co., Arkansas  
Photographed by P. Zollner  
February 1994  
Negative on file at AHPP  
VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST



1st United Methodist Church

Forrest City, St. Francis Co., Arkansas

Photographed by P. Zollner

February 1994

Negative on file with AHPP

VIEW OF SANCTUARY



1st United Methodist Church

Forrest City, St. Francis Co., Arkansas

Photographed by P. Zollner

February 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

VIEW OF BALCONY



1st United Methodist Church  
Forrest City, St. Francis Co., Arkansas  
Photographed by P. Zollner

February 1994

Negative on file at AMPP

✓ TAINED-GLASS DETAIL



1st United Methodist Church

Forrest City, St. Francis Co., Arkansas

Photographed by P. Zollner

February, 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

✓ STAINED-GLASS DETAIL



1st United Methodist Church  
Forrest City, St. Francis Co., Arkansas

Photographed by P. Zollner

February 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

STAINED-GLASS DETAIL

BUILDING COMMITTEE

W. F. EVANS, P. E.

J. F. E. BATES, PASTOR

EUGENE WILLIAMS, CHAIRMAN

D. C. WEBB, Sec'y R. C. ELDRIDGE, TREAS

T. A. BUFORD, F. W. DE ROSSITT

D. E. HOSHALL, S. H. MANN

L. C. MARSHALL, S. B. TRAPP

JOHN GAISFORD, ARCH'T J. C. JONES, BUILDER

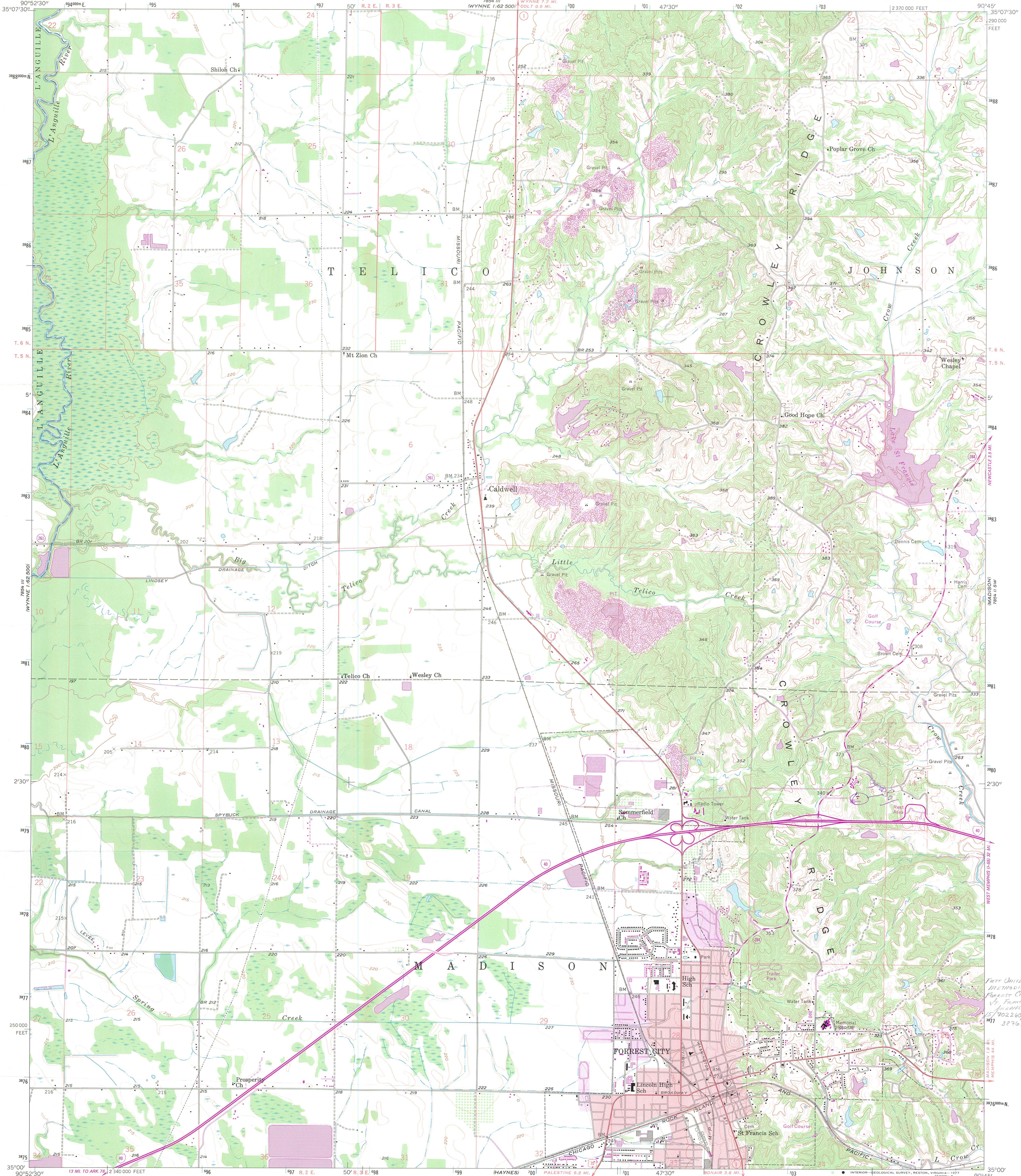
1st United Methodist Church  
Forrest City, St. Francis Co., Arkansas

Photographed by P. Zollner

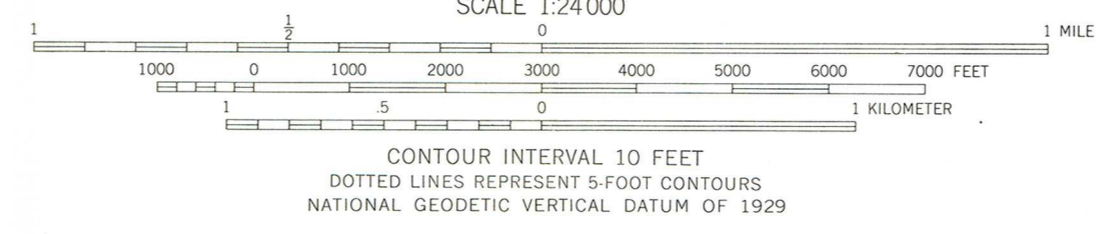
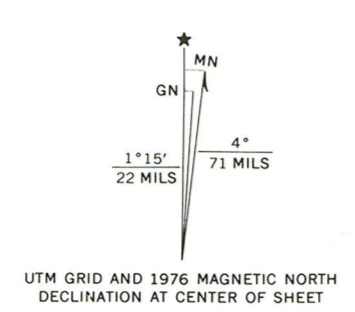
February 1994

Negative on file at AHPP

INTERIOR PLAQUE DETAIL



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography from aerial photographs by Kelsch plotter  
and by planetable surveys 1958. Aerial photographs taken 1957  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Arkansas coordinate system, north zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 15, shown in blue  
Red tint indicates area in which only  
landmark buildings are shown  
Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs  
taken 1976. This information not field checked  
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

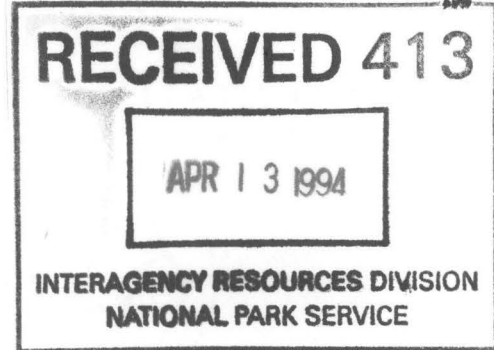
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72204  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

FORREST CITY, ARK.  
SE 1/4 WYNNE 15' QUADRANGLE  
N 3500 - W 9045 / 7.5  
1958  
PHOTOREVISED 1976  
AMS 7854 III SE - SERIES V884

First United Methodist Church  
Forrest City, Ark.  
St. Francis Co., Arkansas  
15702260  
3896120



ARKANSAS  
HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
PROGRAM



April 6, 1994

Carol D. Shull  
Chief of Registration  
United States Department of the Interior  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
800 North Capitol Street, Suite 250  
Washington, DC 20002

RE: First United Methodist Church  
Forrest City, St. Francis County

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the nomination of the above referenced property. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathy Buford Slater  
State Historic Preservation Officer

CBS:kg

Enclosures

