

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Other names/site number Trinity Chapel; Trinity United Methodist Church
Name of related multiple property listing N/A
(Remove "N/A" if property is part of a multiple property listing and add name)

2. Location

Street & Number: 240 1st Ave
City or town: Dayton State: TN County: Rhea
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A Zip: 37321

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 forth 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official:

Date

Title:

State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

 Signature of the Keeper

 Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Religious Facility

RELIGION/Church-Related Residence

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/Professional

SOCIAL/Meeting Hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Gothic Revival

Craftsman

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; STONE; WOOD; ASPHALT

Narrative Description

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church is located in Dayton, (2019 population 7,358), Rhea County, Tennessee and sits on a 0.14-acre corner lot at the southeast edge of Dayton’s downtown commercial area.¹ Single-family homes are to the south and east, while commercial buildings are to the west. The lot is bound by sidewalks and 1st street to the south and Church Street to the west. To the rear/north of the church is a parking lot that sits on the corner of 2nd and Church streets. This parking lot is outside of the church site’s boundary line. The site features a grass yard to the north and the parsonage on the east side. The church is common bond brick construction and was constructed in a simplified Gothic Revival style in 1887. It is constructed of handmade bricks with a painted limestone foundation, Gothic arches, original stained-glass windows, octagonal tower, and front-gabled asphalt shingle roof. A rear addition for classrooms was added ca. 1935, also in the common bond pattern with a painted concrete block foundation. The non-contributing parsonage is a Craftsman bungalow constructed ca. 1925 with clapboard siding, a side-gabled roof with central shed dormer and a full-front porch. First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church retains its overall historic integrity.

¹ “Quick Facts: Dayton city, Tennessee; United States,” United States Census Bureau, July 1, 2019, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/daytoncitytennessee.US/PST045218>, accessed August 5, 2002.

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First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church Building, ca. 1887, ca. 1920, ca. 1935 (contributing)

The south façade of the church has a front facing gable covered with asphalt shingles with extended eaves. The façade was constructed of handmade bricks in a six-course common bond pattern. Centered on this façade are three original Gothic arch stained glass windows with two windows flanking a larger central tripart window. The windows are double-hung wood sash and have rowlock brick arches with brick sills. The façade has a limestone foundation and a cornerstone on the west corner. The cornerstone states, “First Avenue M. E. Church 1887.” The limestone foundation was painted grey ca. 2017. Recessed from the main block of the façade, at the building’s west corner, is a square entry bell tower with a flat roof topped by an octagonal cupola with vertical wood siding and rectangular louvered vents on every other side. The cupola has a steeply pitched conical metal roof topped with a cross facing the south. The cupola is thought to have been added to the flat tower sometime between 1914 and 1920 based on the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps that do not show the cupola until the 1920 map.² The bottom half of the cupola sides were once covered with slanted panels as indicated by a ca. 1950 photograph (see Figure 1), but those panels were removed at an unknown date. A stone plaque is in the façade above the entrance stating, “Bell Tower donated by H. Spivey 1888.” The original centered entry is a 6-light paneled wood double door with a rectangular, 5-light stained-glass transom above. Above the rectangular doorframe is a large Gothic arch with a decorative wood sunburst pattern with rowlock bricks above. Flanking the front doors are two wall mounted lanterns. Six original limestone steps with new metal railings lead from the sidewalk to the door.

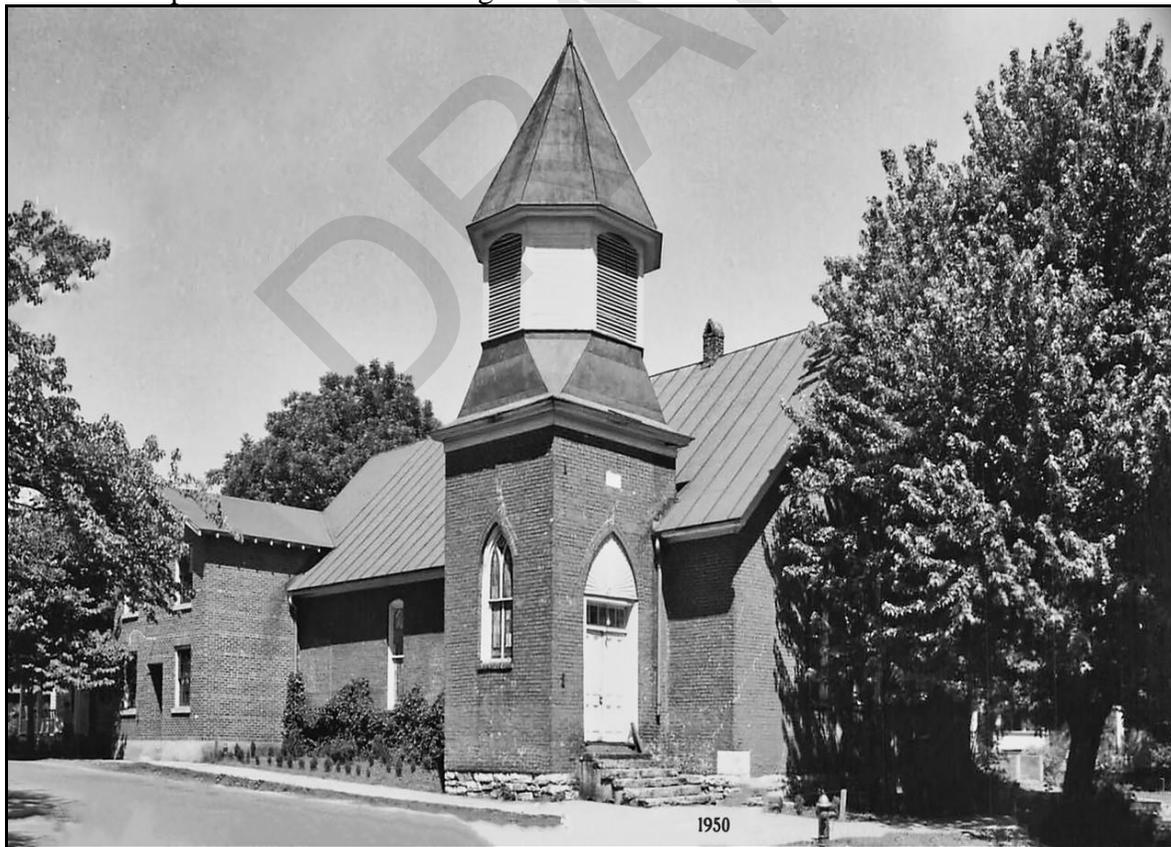


Figure 1: First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church United Methodist Church 1950.
Source: Rhea County Historical Society Photo Archives.

² Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Dayton TN, November 1920.

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The south end of the west elevation features the projection of the square entry bell tower. The west elevation of the tower has a Gothic arch double-hung wood sash paired stained-glass window. A new small metal sign is affixed above the window. Continuing north on the elevation, the main block of the church is four bays wide and has two tall rectangular double-hung wood stained glass windows with rowlock brick arches, brick sills, and Gothic arch details in the glass. Brick window wells are below for basement windows. There is a concrete stairwell leading down to the basement entry with a new metal railing. A poured concrete ramp leads to a replacement wood panel door with brick in-fill above and a rowlock brick arch showing the original location door and transom enclosed sometime before 1950 based on photographic evidence. Here, the ca. 1935 classroom addition/fellowship hall cuts into the original portion of the church and projects to the same plane as the bell tower. The addition has a gable roof with extended eaves and a seven-course common bond brick pattern. The foundation is concrete block with a header course of brick above. The addition's south elevation is three bays wide with two, 8/8 double-hung vinyl 2017 replacement windows on the second floor with a concrete sill and soldier course brick headers. The vinyl replacement windows match the pattern of the original 8/8 wood windows. The first-floor windows mirror the second floor's and have a central recessed entrance with a brick soldier course header and concrete steps leading to a 6-light paneled replacement door. The doors were replaced prior to 2017, when the current owners purchased the church. A new metal sign is affixed above the door.

The north elevation is four bays wide with 8/8 double-hung vinyl replacement windows and concrete sills in each bay. The first and second floor window align vertically. The foundation is concrete block with a header course of brick above. Above the addition's south elevation, you can see the gable-end of the original church building with extended eaves, board and batten wood siding, and an arched louvered vent.

The east elevation begins to the north with the ca. 1935 classroom addition that sits flush with the original church building. The addition is three bays wide with two, 8/8 double-hung vinyl replacement windows on the second floor with concrete sills in the gable-end with extended eaves. The first floor has a replacement panel door to the north with an 8/8 double-hung vinyl replacement window with a concrete sill. A single-light modern replacement door sits on the south portion of the addition. On the original church building section are four bays of tall rectangular original double-hung wood stained glass windows with rowlock brick arches and brick sills and Gothic arch details in the glass. At the south end is a bulkhead basement entrance with a shed asphalt roof. A chimney was removed between the first two windows to the south because of structural integrity in 2017.

Interior

The façade's main entrance enters into the bell tower. The floor was covered in 2017 with laminate flooring. The original plaster walls have been covered with decorative wood boards. The sanctuary is accessed via original six-panel double-doors on the east wall of the tower. The sanctuary has wood floors thought to have been installed ca. 1952. Exposed rafter beams stretch vertically and horizontally across the gabled ceiling with simplified corbelled brackets where the beams meet the walls on the east and west sides of the sanctuary. A beadboard wainscoting wraps the sanctuary under the window casings. Original wood panel doors are used throughout.³ The interior of the sanctuary no longer has its pews; these were removed sometime before the current owners bought the property. There is a Tudor arch over the chancel, which has a raised stage. The original plaster in the chancel were covered with decorative wood paneling in 2017.

³ Pauline Greer, Trinity United Methodist Church History.

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A six-paneled door on the north wall of the sanctuary, just west of the chancel, provides access to the rear classroom addition. The first floor of the addition originally held the fellowship hall. This area was converted into a kitchen in 2017, which require installation of new cabinetry, countertops, appliances, and cosmetic finishes including decorative wood paneling on the walls and laminate flooring. Similar finishes are found throughout the first level of the classroom addition. An exception is the second floor which retained its original wood floor, but it has been painted. Simple square wood balusters are used on the staircase to the second floor, located just north of the chancel and accessed via hallways between the sanctuary and the fellowship hall. Two restrooms are located at the south end of the first level. The second level retains its original floorplan with five rooms that originally function as classrooms. The walls on the second level are vertical wood paneling from ca. 1960 with square trim, crown molding and baseboards. Doors are original 3/4 light wood paneled.

The church was remodeled in 1987 by Wallace J. Greer Robert Couch, Betty Crawley and Juanita Marler.⁴ Changes to the sanctuary during this renovation included carpeting, which has since been removed, and the addition of new light fixtures that replaced the original schoolhouse lights. In 2017, the building was once again remodeled to bring the vacant building a new life. New lighting replaced the 1980s lighting in the foyer along with decorative wood paneling over the damaged plaster walls. The floors in the sanctuary were restored along with all the woodwork and stained-glass windows throughout the sanctuary. The first floor of the classroom/fellowship hall was remodeled to turn the hall into a full kitchen. Here the original schoolhouse lights from the sanctuary were reused. Cosmetic alterations include the addition of decorative wood paneling on the plaster walls and laminate flooring in the bell tower and first level of the classroom addition.

Parsonage, ca. 1925 (non-contributing)

The parsonage has a concrete block foundation, clapboard siding, a standing seam side-gabled metal roof, a central shed dormer with extended eaves and a pair of ca. 2017 6/6 double-hung vinyl replacement windows, and a full front porch. The original double-hung wood sash windows were 4/1. The façade is 3-bays wide with a central single-light wood door flanked by single-light replacement windows with modern shutters. The original front façade first floor windows were wood cottage windows with a large lower pane and transom above. The south side of the façade projects a few feet to the east of the front door with a second entrance on the west side with a paneled single-light door. The porch has tapered square columns and simple square wood balusters and railings that are original. The foundation is concrete block with central concrete block stairs and knee walls.

The west elevation is four bays wide with a wide overhanging eaves, wood soffit, wood triangular knee brace brackets with a notched and rounded detail on the bottom support and clapboard siding extending into the gable eave. The second floor has a central 1/1 double-hung sash vinyl replacement window. A wood belt course crosses the elevation to delineate the floors with drip mold above. The first floor has a central pair of 1/1, double-hung, vinyl sash windows flanked by 1/1, double-hung, vinyl sash replacement windows to the north and south.

The north elevation is four bays wide. The east corner of the elevation has an original 5-panel wood door with simple wood molding and a drip mold above. To the west is a smaller, 1/1, double-hung, vinyl

⁴ Ibid.

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replacement window with wood sill and modern shutter. A fixed single-light window is centered on the elevation with a wood sill and drip mold. To the west is a 1/1, double-hung, vinyl sash window with modern shutters. A concrete pad abuts against the elevation.

The east elevation is four-bays wide with a wide overhanging eaves, wood soffit, wood triangular brackets with a notched and rounded detail on the bottom support, and clapboard siding extending into the gable eave. A metal louvered vent is in the top of the gable, with a central, 1/1, double-hung, sash vinyl replacement window and smaller, 1/1, double-hung, vinyl sash replacement window along the eave to the north. The first floor has a single, 1/1, double-hung, vinyl sash replacement window to the south followed by three pairs of 1/1, double-hung, vinyl sash replacement windows with wood sills. Running along the top of the windows is a wood belt course with drip mold that delineates the floors. The second pair of windows to the north have been shortened from the original opening size. The final pair of windows is smaller and abuts the corner of the north elevation.

The interior of the parsonage has been remodeled but still maintains its original wood floor, window casings and trim and original panel doors with transom openings. The interior walls have Mid-century vertical paneling. The parsonage is now being used as a short-term vacation rental.

The parsonage is considered non-contributing because it does not contribute to the significant Gothic Revival architecture of the church. While the parsonage was built in a simplified version of the Craftsman style, it is not a significant example of the style within the local context as there are multiple better examples, and therefore it does not independently meet any significance criteria.

Integrity

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church maintains a good degree of integrity, as little has been altered to the exterior of the church outside the period of significance. First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church remains in its original setting and location at the edge of the small rural downtown of the City of Dayton. A good degree of historic materials, design and workmanship remain. The church retains its features necessary to convey its simplified Gothic Revival style, including its hand-made brick walls, prominent front gable, square bell tower with octagonal cupola and steeply pitched conical roof, Gothic arched stained-glass windows, and original entrance doors with a prominent arched sunburst design above. These features allow the church to maintain its integrity of association and feeling. The interior has experienced some alterations, but most are cosmetic in nature with new materials added above the original on the walls and floors in the entry area. These new materials do not impact the ability of the church to convey its style and architectural significance because they do not significantly affect the important characteristics necessary to convey the Gothic Revival style. The rear classroom addition is considered a non-contributing section because it does not add to the property's architectural significance and has experienced some interior changes. Its placement at the rear of the church means that it is minimally visible and does not significantly affect the features necessary for the church to convey its style.

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Figure 2: First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church and Parsonage ca. 1925.
Source: Rhea County Historical Society Photo Archives.

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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.)

Areas of Significance
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

ca. 1887, ca. 1920

Significant Dates

1887, 1920

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

- 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 the 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level of significance. First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church is a strong example of rural, small town vernacular church architecture, featuring a simple expression of the Gothic Revival style and high-quality craftsmanship. The church features its original form with a notable front gabled roof, original Gothic arch stained glass windows, extended eaves, arched entrance, and bell tower. The octagonal cupola was added to the bell tower ca. 1920, which has become an important characteristic of the church's design. The Gothic Revival style church maintains a good degree of integrity, especially in the areas of location, setting, association, feeling, design and workmanship. The period of significance is limited to its original year of construction of 1887 with an additional period of significance ca. 1920 for the cupola addition. The church meets the requirements of Criterion Consideration A because it was used for religious purposes during the Period of Significance, but it is nominated for its architectural significance.

Narrative Statement of Significance

History

In 1884, the issue of slavery resulted in the split of the Methodist church. It was during this time that the Methodist Episcopal Church South seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Southern Church conducted its activities in the southern states, while the Methodist Episcopal Church operated in the northern states. From the beginning of the Methodist Episcopal in America, the question of slavery has taken center stage at both the annual and general conference.⁵

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church was organized when the Methodist Church in Rhea County "split" over the slavery issue in 1844. First Avenue Church was associated with the Northern Methodist Branch, headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The property where the current church is located was purchased on May 17, 1886, and the church was built in 1887 with handmade bricks. When the building was completed, it was known as First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church. The property of First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, also known as Dayton Methodist Episcopal Church (north), was transferred to the Holston Annual Conference in 1887.⁶ The Reverend M.H. Munroe was pastor in 1888, and Webster Thomas was Superintendent of the Sunday school. In 1888, George Haliday Spivey donated the steeple to the church with specifications as the height and construction. The bell is still in use to this day and has a date of 1889. Also, in 1889, the Holston Conference held its annual conference at the church, with a photograph of that meeting still present in the church.

In 1925, the church was pastored by Reverend Howard G. Byrd. Byrd accepted evolution and a month before the famous Scopes Trial held in Dayton at the Rhea County Courthouse (NHL 12/8/1976), he joined a group of Dayton ministries in the defense of the Bible as, "the true source of wisdom." On July 12th, the first Sunday of the Scopes Trail, Byrd invited the pastor of the New York City's West Side Unitarian Church,

⁵ Pat Hawkins Guffey, *Pieces from the Past: Restoring Trinity Methodist Church*. 20 Nov. 2017, 1.

⁶ Randy Moore. *A Field Guide to the Scopes Trial*. Dayton, TN: Rhea County Historical Society and Genealogical Society, 2016, 69.

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Reverend Charles Francis Potter to preach on evolution.⁷ This invitation enraged the congregants, who then threatened to “lock the doors” and “wreck the church” if the invitation was not rescinded. The invitation was never rescinded, but Potter decided not to speak to the congregation. Instead, Potter posted a sign at Robinson’s Drug Store saying, “Dr. Potter has cancelled his evolution sermon this morning at the Methodist Episcopal Church owing to the threat of the congregation.” Potter was expected to testify for the defense in the trial, but instead became a freelance writer at the trial.⁸ Rev. Byrd then announced, “I have quit. I have not resigned; I have quit.” The congregation did not try to change his mind, although he was generally well-liked.⁹ Byrd was credited by a member of the Five Points Methodist Episcopal Church as being the “inspiration” for the trial.¹⁰

The Reverend W.H. Graves who began as Pastor in 1926 directed the building of classrooms at the rear of the church. The classroom addition is not shown on the 1929 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, but is depicted on the 1940 Sanborn, indicating that it was constructed in the 1930s.¹¹ The “Southern” Methodist and the “Northern” Methodist held a unification service at Memorial Auditorium in Chattanooga, Tennessee in 1939. During this meeting, the First Avenue Methodist Church became Trinity United Methodist Church.¹²

The 100th Anniversary and opening of the cornerstone was held on May 17, 1987.¹³ The cornerstone was opened for the anniversary with the following items being found inside: a paper showing that the first Sunday school was held at 9:30 on November 1887 with 86 present; at the end of the quarter, average attendance was 172, average enrollment 119; a list of members on October 21, 1887 including Mr. and Mrs. W. Thomas, F.A. and Jennie Fisher, W.A. Faust, J.W. Truex, W.J. Eakins, James Ward, Mr. and Mrs. W.A. Elder, the rest are not legible; at the close of the first congregation for the first three month period the average enrollment was 688; a paper published with Dayton Coal and Iron Company Store; and a newspaper dated October 12, 1887 called The Methodist Advocate.¹⁴

At the turn of the 21st century the church membership dwindled, and they could no longer sustain operations. The Trinity Community Center, an interdenominational organization that supports local ministries then used the church.¹⁵ In 2017, John and Lindsey Bamber bought the church and parsonage and have been using the church for office space and an event space. The parsonage is now being used as a short-term rental.

Architectural Significance

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church is representative of the trends in the late nineteenth-century religious architecture, adapted to fit the needs of a small-town congregation. Reaching the United States by the 1830s, the Gothic Revival style gained popularity in the late 18th and early 19th century as Europe and the United State entered the Romantic Movement. This movement proclaimed the superiority of the Christian

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Randy Moore and William F. McComas, *The Scopes Monkey Trial* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2016), 65

⁹ Moore, *A Field Guide to the Scopes Trial*, 69.

¹⁰ Moore and McComas, *The Scopes Monkey Trial*, 65.

¹¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Dayton TN, July 1929- Jan. 1940.

¹² Guffey, *Pieces from the Past: Restoring Trinity Methodist Church*, 1.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ *Trinity United Methodist Church History (Written Record)*.

¹⁵ Moore, *A Field Guide to the Scopes Trial*, 69.

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medieval past and revived the Gothic architectural style. It influenced residential, commercial, and religious buildings throughout the nineteenth century.¹⁶ According to architectural historian James Patrick, the 1845 St. John's Episcopal Church in Knoxville was one of the first examples of Gothic Revival style east of the Tennessee River. Declining in popularity among residential buildings by the mid-1860s, it remained popular for public and religious buildings until the early decades of the twentieth century.¹⁷

The Gothic Revival style was modeled after the Gothic Architecture that dominated western European building practices during the High Middle Ages, reaching its peak of popularity for religious building by the sixteenth century. Gothic Architecture, and the eventual Gothic Revival architecture, was an effort to glorify God through buildings that incorporated spires, towers, and windows that pointed heavenward. The Gothic Revival period in the United States has been divided into two phases: Early Gothic Revival and High Victorian Gothic. The early Gothic Revival grew in popularity after the Civil War with high style versions of the style focused on verticality with steeply pitched roofs, spires, and detailed towers. Pointed arch windows, often called Gothic arches, are key indicators of the style and often made use of stained glass when congregations could afford it. It often replaced original clear glass in Gothic arch windows in later decades.¹⁸

Constructed in 1887, First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church Chapel is eligible under criterion C for its architectural integrity representing a very simplified rural version of the Gothic Revival style. The church features Gothic arches, extended eaves, masonry in the common bond pattern and a bell tower. The church is a simplistic version of the architectural style in that it lacks many elaborate decorative elements such as the lacy bargeboard and foliated ornamentation that are prevalent in the Gothic Revival style. Added ca. 1925, the bell tower's octagonal cupola with steeply pitched conical roof references the Gothic Revival style's emphasis on verticality, and thus has become an important feature of the church's design and significance.

According to the Tennessee Historical Commission's survey of Rhea County, and previous National Register listings, there is only one other church representing the Gothic Revival style in Rhea County. Also located in Dayton, Tennessee, the First United Methodist Church was built a few years later in 1889. It is much larger in scale and more elaborate in style. The brick veneer exterior of the church was not added until 1948 when they built a fellowship hall addition and remodeled the church.¹⁹ This drastically changed the appearance of the church from its original clapboard siding and detailing.

¹⁶ Lindsay Crockett. "Shults Grove Methodist Church, Sevier County National Register of Historic Places Nomination," Tennessee. Nashville: Tennessee Historical Commission, 2016.

¹⁷ James Patrick. *Architecture in Tennessee: 1768-1897* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981).

¹⁸ Crockett "Shults Grove Methodist Church".

¹⁹ "History," *First Church of Dayton*, www.firstchurchdayton.org/history, accessed March 30, 2020.

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Figures 1 and 4: Historic Photos of the First United Methodist Church Dayton, TN.
Source: Rhea County Historical Society Photo Archives.

New architectural stylistic elements were also added during this time, such as the addition of Tudor style arches above the ribbon of three Gothic Revival style stained glass windows (see Figure 5). The church is similar in its asymmetrical design with a square bell tower with octagonal cupola to the south of the front facing gable of the sanctuary. First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church also includes a ribbon of three Gothic arch stained glass windows, but they are smaller in scale and are stepped in size, unlike on First United. Both churches feature Gothic arch detailing above the main entrance below the belfry, but the ones present today on First United were added in 1948 when the new brick exterior drastically changed the architectural detailing around the entrances.



Figure 5: April 2020, First United Methodist Church, Dayton, TN. Photo taken by author

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The typical building style of churches predominant in Rhea County is the Neoclassical Revival church style with a large front pediment, porch and central steeple. These differ greatly from the simplified Gothic Revival style of First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church and are all much later construction (see Figures 6-8).



Figure 6 April 2020 Graysville Seventh Day Adventist Graysville, TN. Photo taken by Author.

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Figure 7 April 2020 Central Baptist Church Spring City, TN. Photo taken by author.

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Figure 8 April 2020 Spring City United Methodist Church, Spring City, TN. Photo taken by author.

Located north of Dayton, in Spring City, is the First Presbyterian church. This church is similar in its asymmetrical form with a square bell tower to one side, but differs in its overall architectural style with half-timbering infilled with stucco in the gable ends and on the tower, cross gabled roof lines, a concrete block foundation, buttresses with concrete caps and segmental arched double-hung, 6/6 windows with brick rowlock arches. The church also has a much larger massing than First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church and does not have a copula atop the bell tower (see Figure 9).

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Figure 9: April 2020 First Baptist Presbyterian Church Spring City, TN. Photo taken by author.

Overall, First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church serves as a good example of a late 20th century simplified rural example of the Gothic Revival style. The chapel not only stands as the oldest church in Rhea County but is the only church that still represents the Gothic Revival style from its original construction without major alterations, such as those seen on the First United Methodist church in Rhea County.

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9. Major Bibliographic References

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Dayton TN, November 1914.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Dayton TN, November 1920.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Dayton TN, July 1929

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Dayton TN, July 1929- Jan. 1940.

Trinity United Methodist Church History, Rhea County Historical Society (Written Record).

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):		Primary location of additional data:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	<input type="checkbox"/>	State Historic Preservation Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously listed in the National Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other State agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously determined eligible by the National Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Federal agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	designated a National Historic Landmark	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local government
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	<input type="checkbox"/>	University
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Name of repository: Rhea County Historical Society	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): RH-392			

DRAFT

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property

Rhea County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than 1 **USGS Quadrangle** Graysville 111-NE

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

1. Latitude: 35.492954

Longitude: -85.011841

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is bounded to the south by East 1st Avenue, to the west by Church St., and to the north and east by private property lines. These boundaries correspond to the legal property boundaries of Rhea County Tax Parcel 0901 D 008.00. These boundaries are depicted on the enclosed tax map.

Boundary Justification

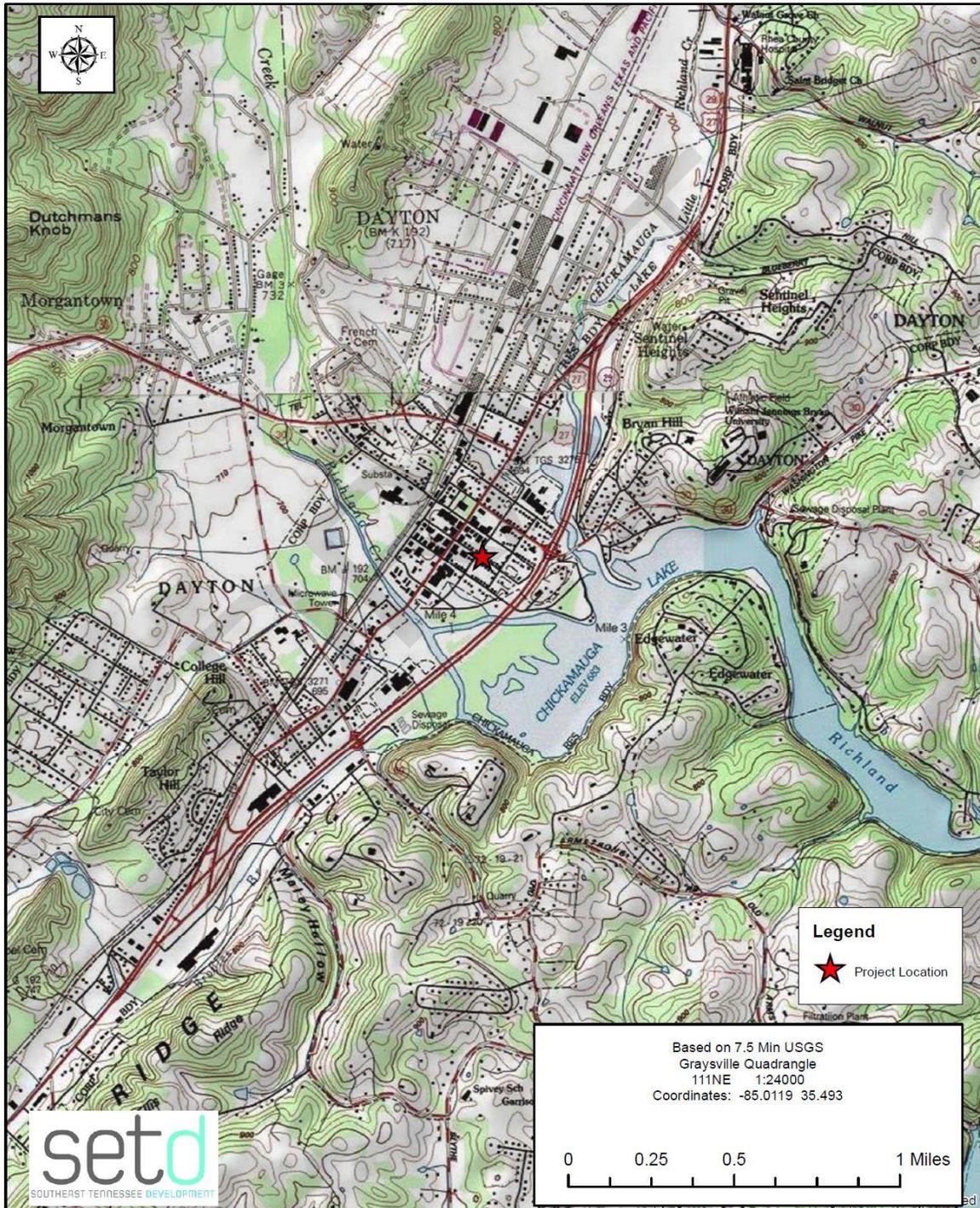
The boundaries were selected to include the church and parsonage as well as land that was historically and still currently legally associated with the church.

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property

Rhea County, Tennessee
County and State

USGS Topographic Map with church location marked by a Red Star

240 1ST AVE
DAYTON, TN 37321

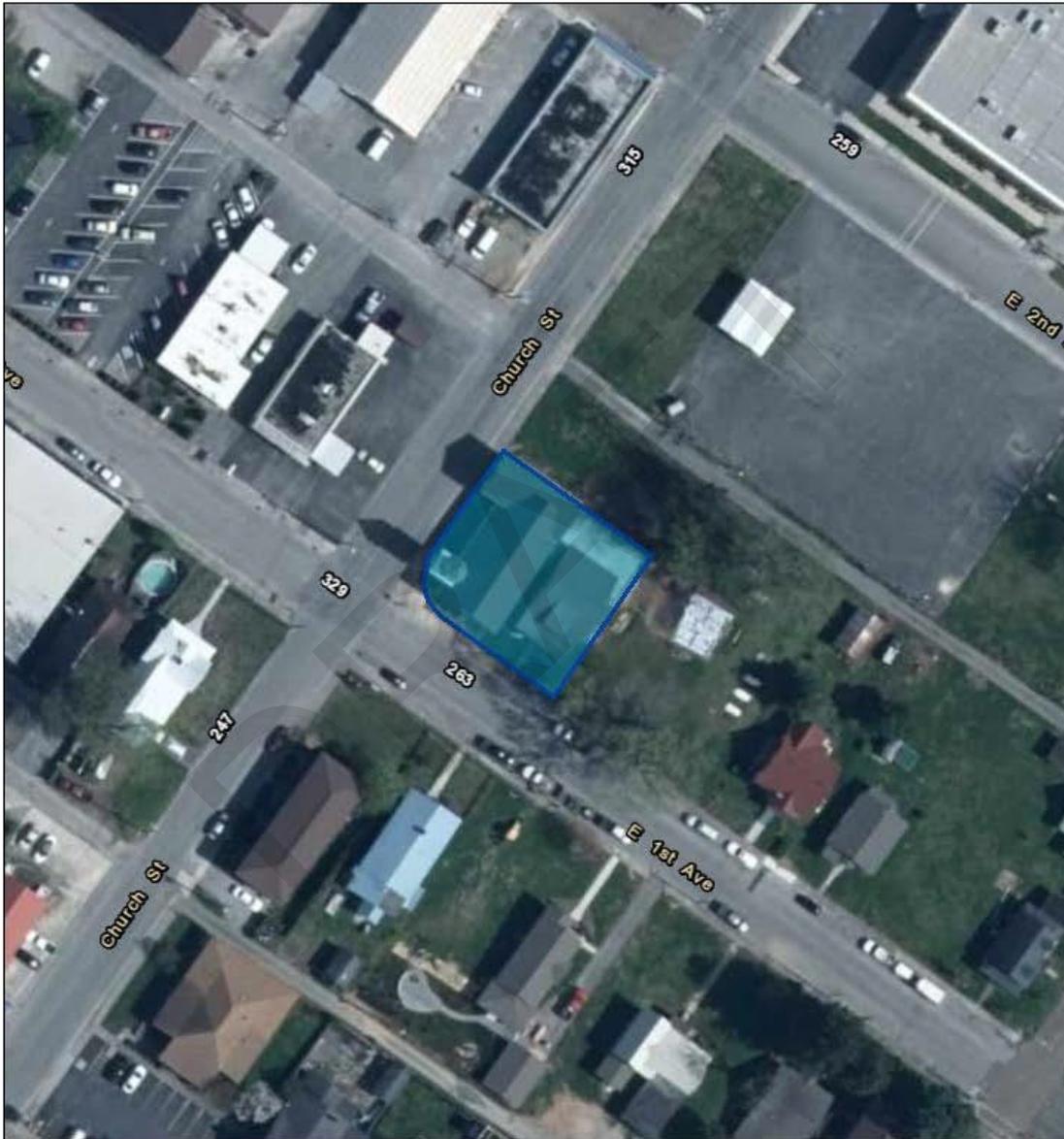


First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property

Rhea County, Tennessee
County and State

Property Tax Map

Rhea County - Parcel: 0901 D 008.00



Date: July 7, 2020
County: Rhea
Owner: BAMBER DAVID JOHN
Address: FIRST AVE 230
Parcel Number: 0901 D 008.00
Deeded Acreage: 0
Calculated Acreage: 0
Date of Imagery: 2018

Esri, HERE, Garmin, © OpenStreetMap contributors
TN Comptroller - OLG
TDOT

The property lines are compiled from information maintained by your local county Assessor's office. Do not rely on this as a guide to the true boundaries of your property.

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property

Rhea County, Tennessee
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

Name Melissa Mortimer

Organization Southeast Tennessee Development District

Street & Number 1000 Riverfront Parkway Date 4/15/2020

City or Town Chattanooga Telephone 423-424-4266

E-mail mmortimer@sedev.org State TN Zip Code 37402

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to map.
- **Photographs** (refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. should be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps)

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 listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property

Rhea County, Tennessee
County and State

Photo Log

Name of Property: First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
City or Vicinity: Dayton
County: Rhea State: Tennessee
Photographer: John Bamber
Date Photographed: September 2019

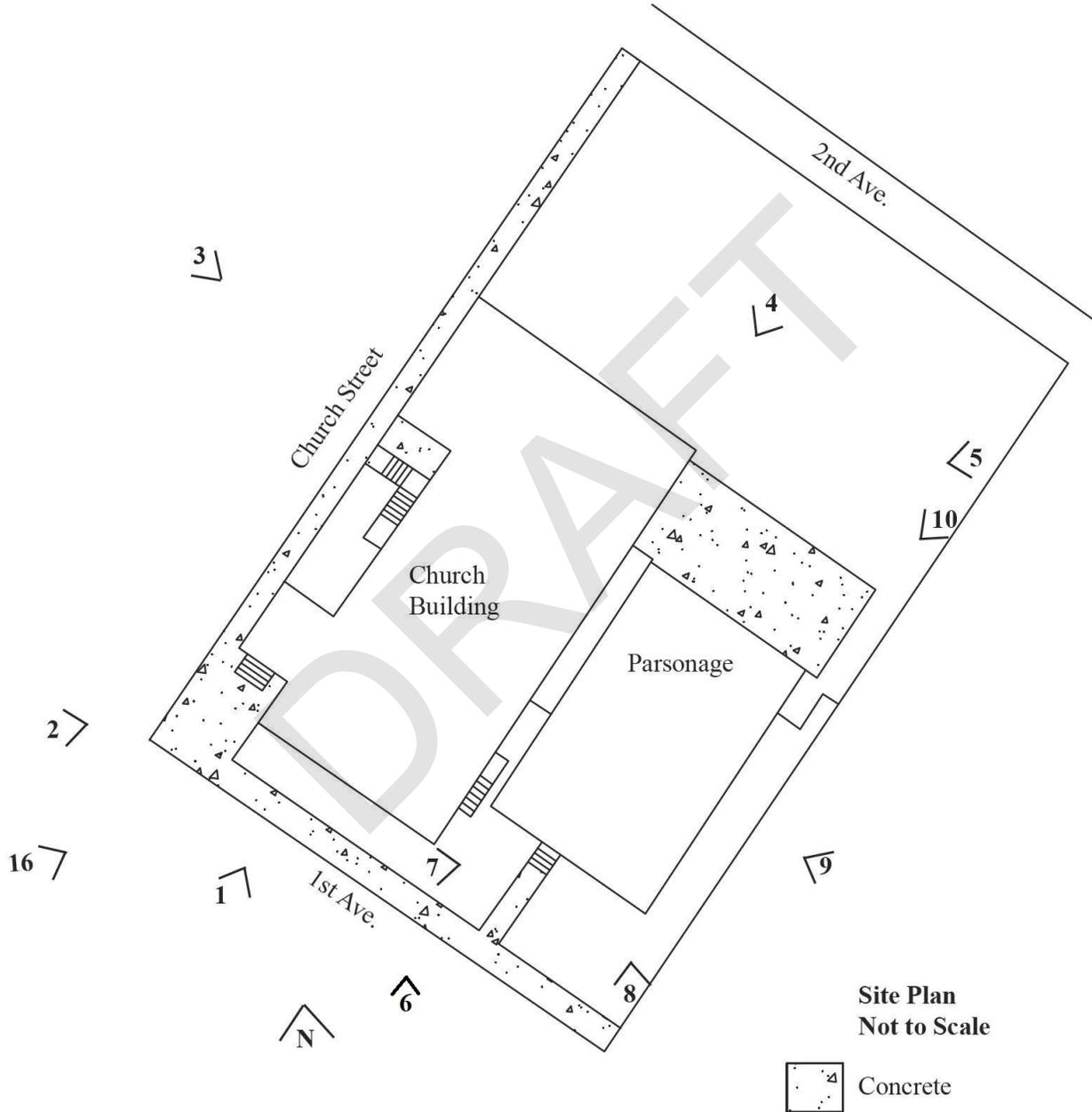
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 16. Façade (south) elevation. Photographer facing north.
- 2 of 16. Southwest oblique. Photographer facing east.
- 3 of 16. West elevation. Photographer facing southeast.
- 4 of 16. North elevation of parsonage and classroom addition of church. Photographer facing southwest
- 5 of 16. North elevation of parsonage and east elevation of classroom addition of church. Photographer facing southwest
- 6 of 16. Southeast oblique. Photographer facing northwest
- 7 of 16. Southwest oblique of parsonage. Photographer facing northeast.
- 8 of 16. Southeast oblique of parsonage. Photographer facing northwest.
- 9 of 16. East elevation of parsonage. Photographer facing northwest.
- 10 of 16. Rear/north elevation of parsonage. Photographer facing southwest.
- 11 of 16. Interior photograph of sanctuary. Photographer facing northeast.
- 12 of 16. Interior photograph of sanctuary. Photographer facing southwest.
- 13 of 16. Interior photograph of bell tower and entrance. Photographer facing west.
- 14 of 16. Interior second floor of classroom addition/fellowship hall. Photographer facing northeast.
- 15 of 16. Interior photo of fellowship hall meeting space, now kitchen. Photographer facing west.
- 16 of 16. Aerial photograph. Photographer facing northeast.

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property

Rhea County, Tennessee
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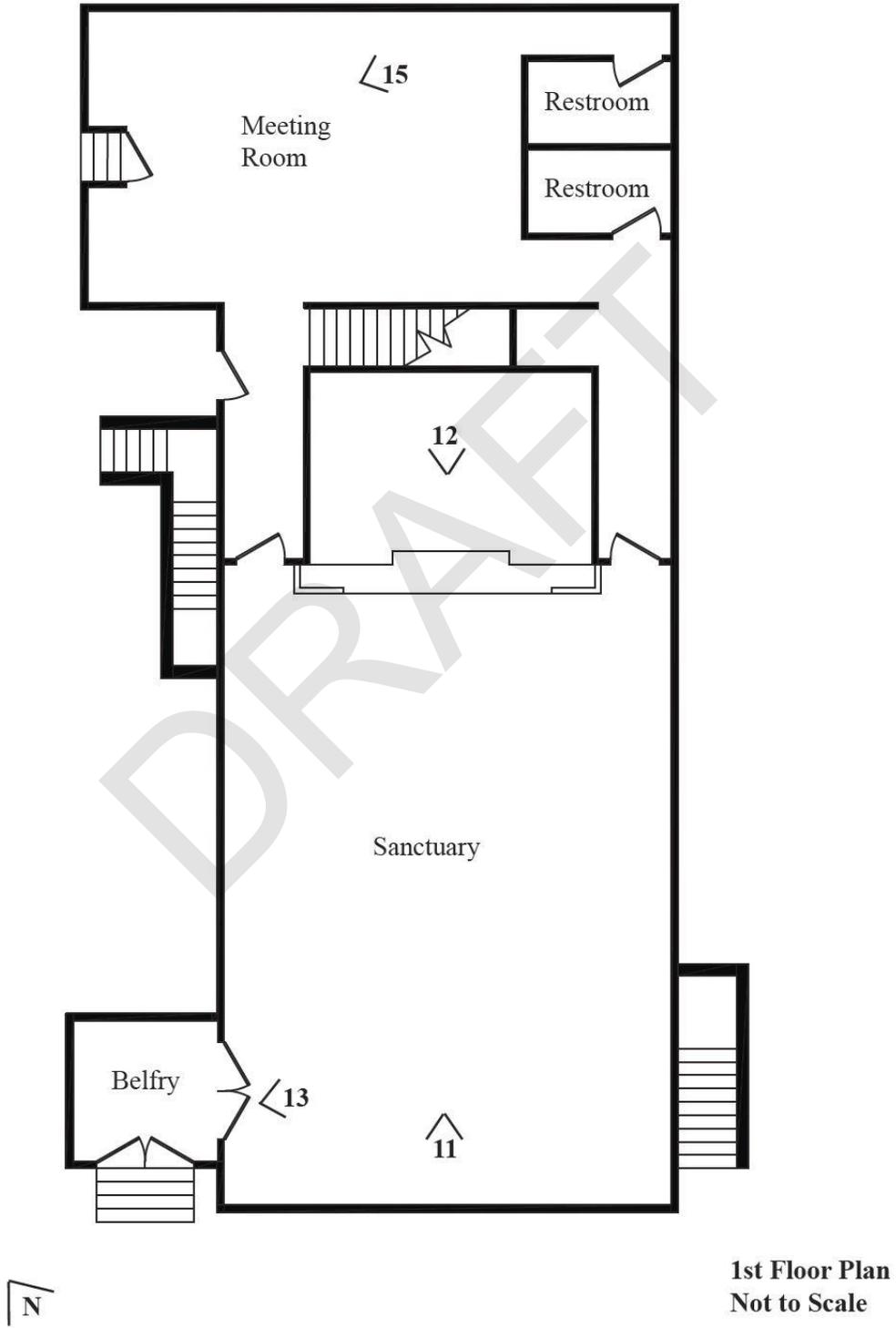
Site Plan



First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property

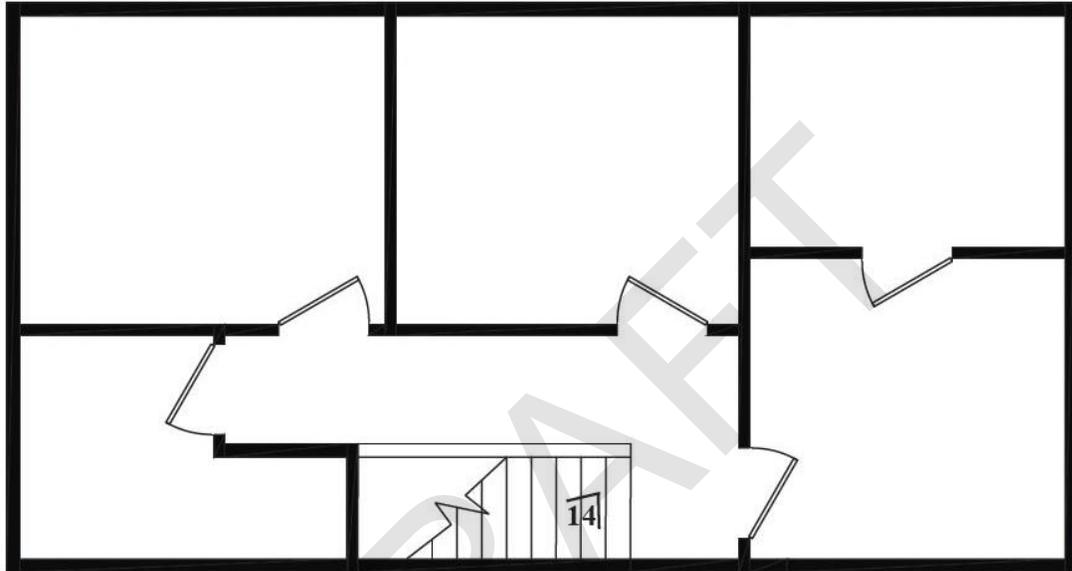
Rhea County, Tennessee
County and State

Floor Plans of Church



First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property

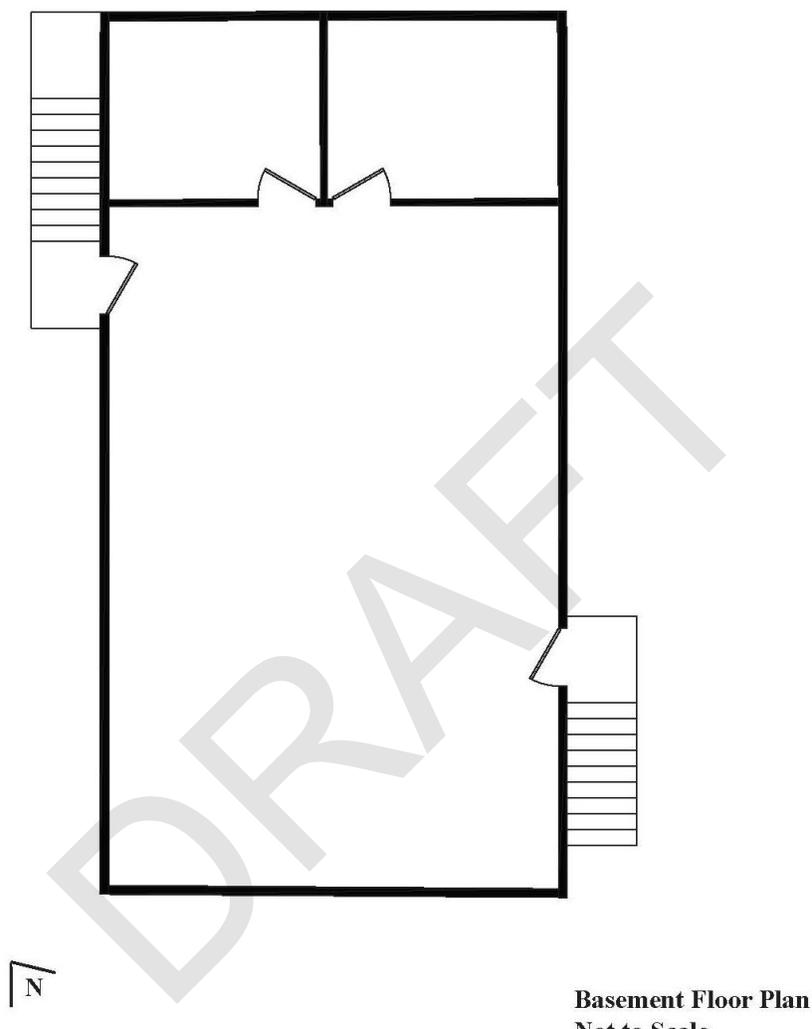
Rhea County, Tennessee
County and State



2nd Floor Plan
Not to Scale

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property

Rhea County, Tennessee
County and State



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property
Rhea County, Tennessee
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number ____ Page 29

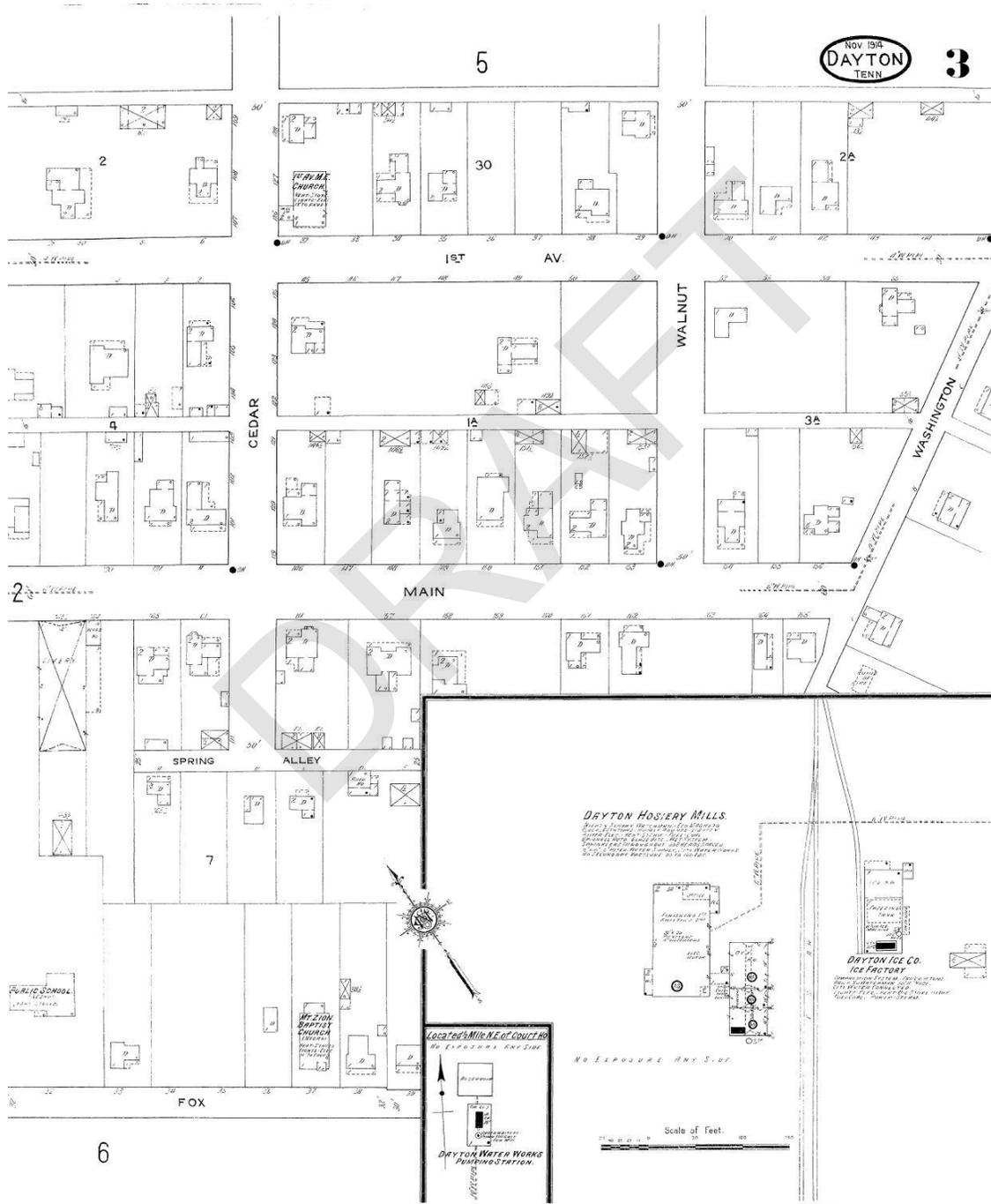


Figure 10: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Dayton TN, November 1914

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
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Rhea County, Tennessee
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Figure 11: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Dayton, TN, November 1920.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property
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County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page 31

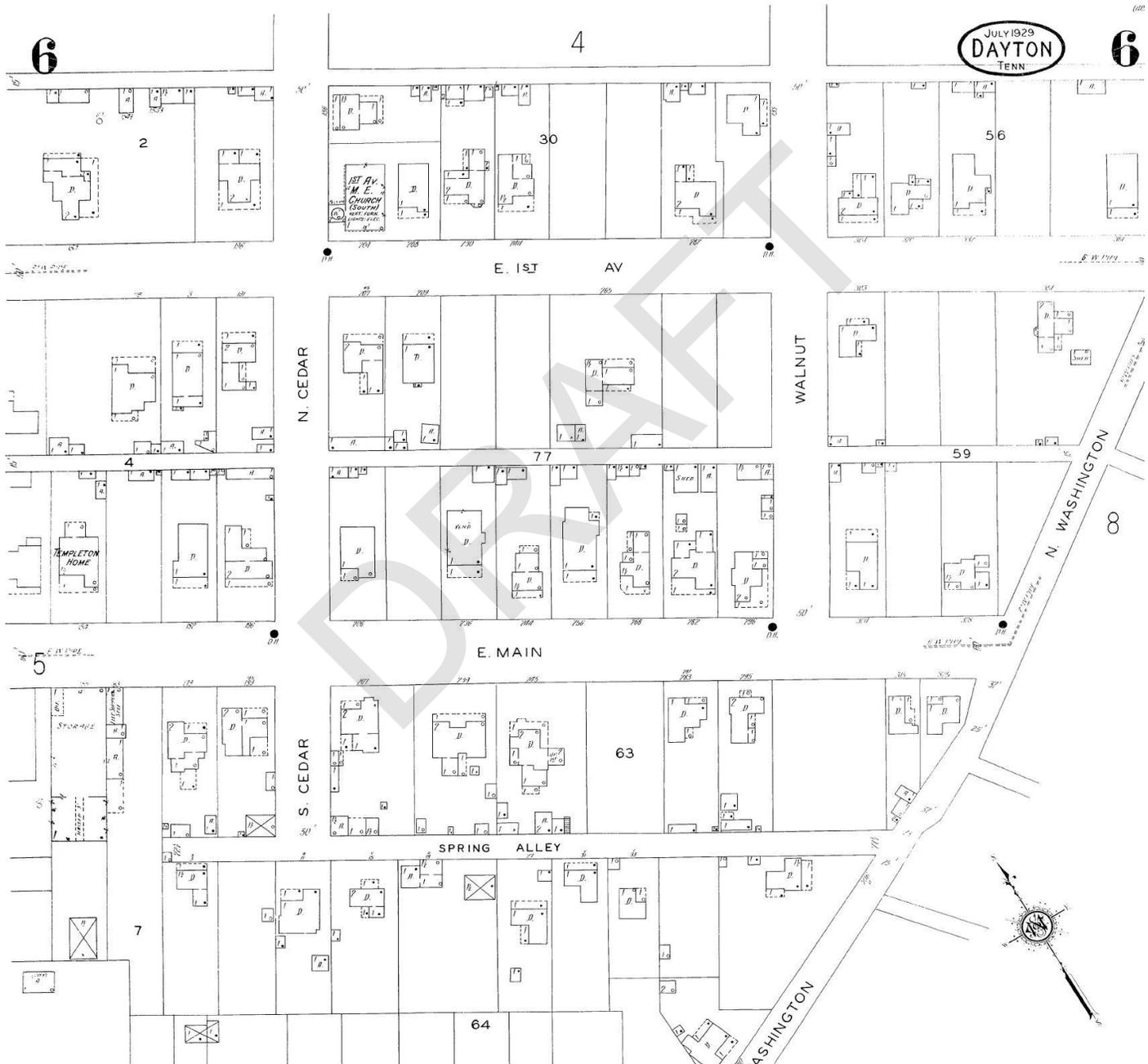


Figure 12: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Dayton, TN, July 1929

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

First Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property
Rhea County, Tennessee
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page 32



Figure 13: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Dayton TN, July 1929- Jan. 1940.

FIRST AVENUE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DAYTON, RHEA COUNTY, TENNESSEE



1 OF 16



2 OF 16

FIRST AVENUE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DAYTON, RHEA COUNTY, TENNESSEE



3 OF 16



4 OF 16

FIRST AVENUE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DAYTON, RHEA COUNTY, TENNESSEE



5 OF 16



6 OF 16

FIRST AVENUE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DAYTON, RHEA COUNTY, TENNESSEE



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8 OF 16

FIRST AVENUE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DAYTON, RHEA COUNTY, TENNESSEE



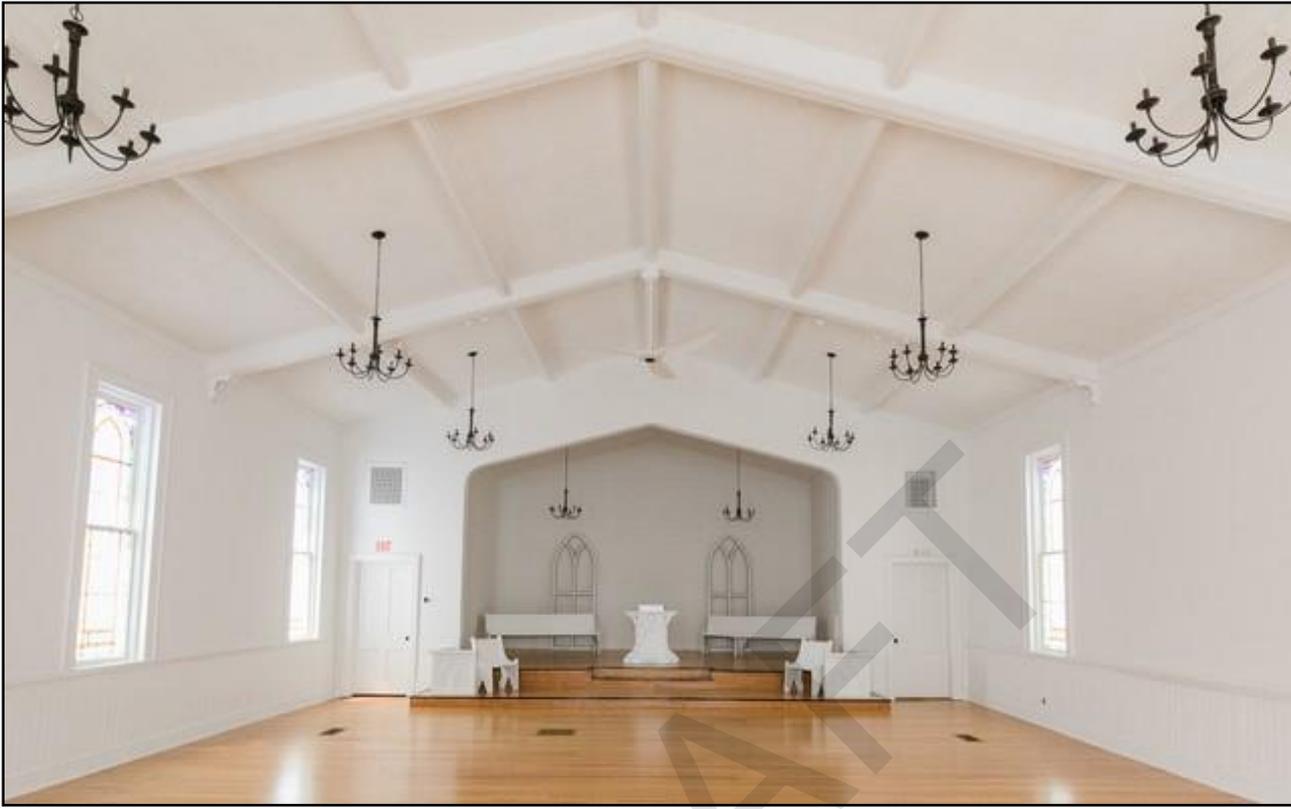
9 OF 16



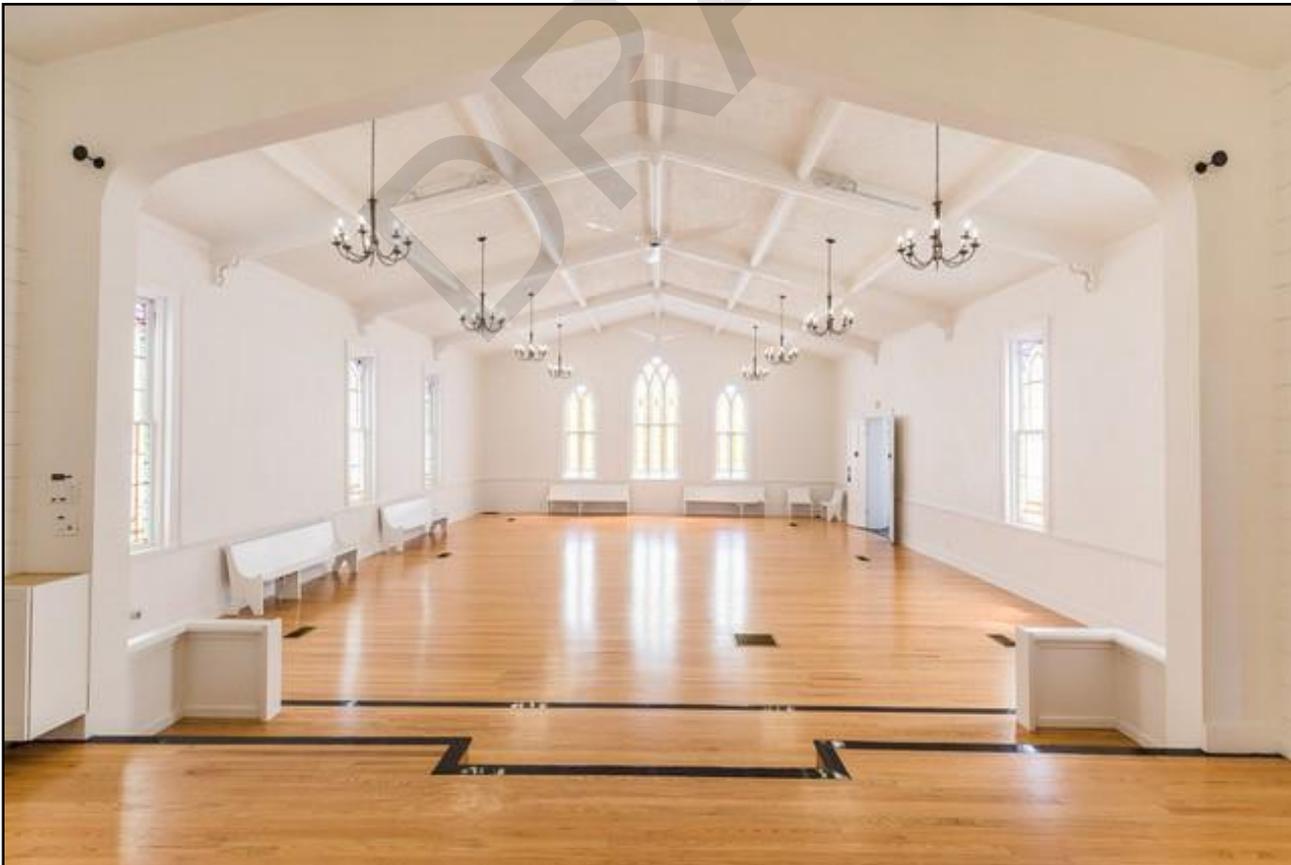
10 OF 16

FIRST AVENUE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DAYTON, RHEA COUNTY, TENNESSEE



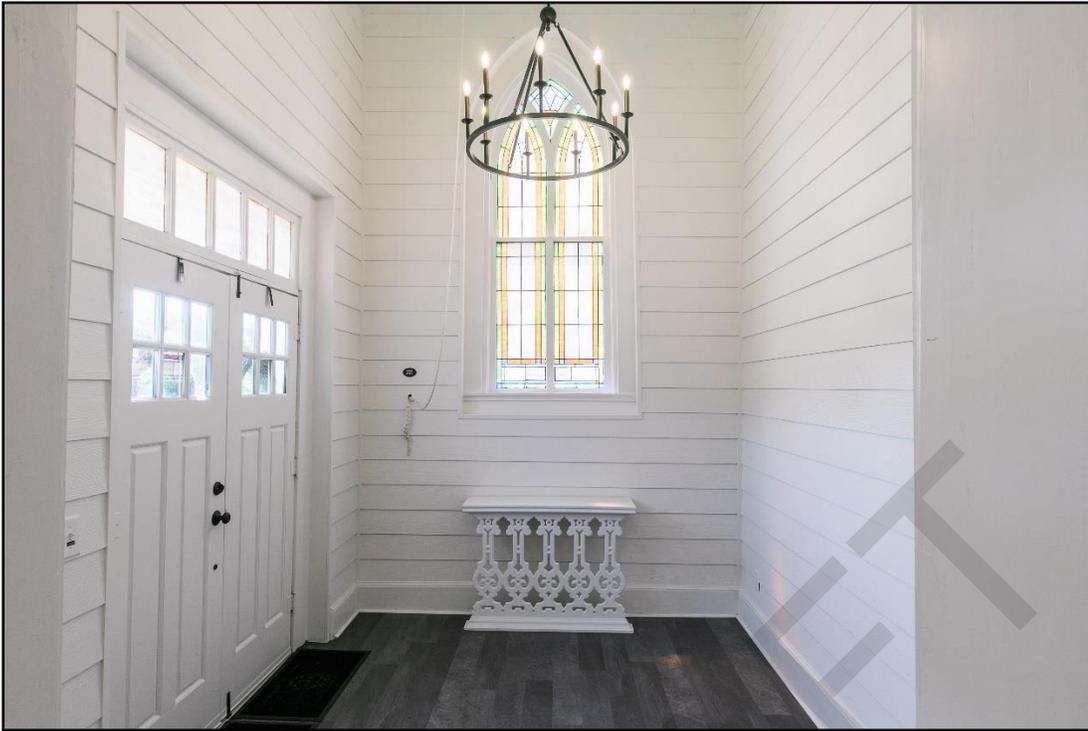
11 OF 16



12 OF 16

FIRST AVENUE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DAYTON, RHEA COUNTY, TENNESSEE



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14 OF 16

FIRST AVENUE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DAYTON, RHEA COUNTY, TENNESSEE



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