

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Baptist Temple
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 360 Schermerhorn Street not for publication
city or town Brooklyn vicinity
state New York code NY county Kings code 047 zip code 11217

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
J.W. Alden 28 Sept. '95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of 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 Beth Boland Date of Action 11/20/95

Baptist Temple
Name of Property

Kings County, NY
County and State

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	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion/religious facility/church

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion/religious facility/church

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brownstone
walls brick
brownstone
roof asphalt & Spanish tile
other _____

Narrative Description

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

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OCT 13 1995

Baptist Temple
Kings County, New York

Section number 7 Page 1

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Description

The Baptist Temple is located on the southwest corner of Third Avenue and Schermerhorn Street, in the borough of Brooklyn, Kings County, New York City, New York. The church is situated just west of Flatbush Avenue, one of Brooklyn's widest and most important thoroughfares. It is in a mixed-use area, with residential, commercial, and institutional buildings on surrounding streets. To the east of the church, across Third Avenue, is an old school (1840 with additions), originally the Brooklyn Boys' Boarding School, later P.S. 15, and now a Board of Education office building. Farther east, across Flatbush Avenue, is the Brooklyn Academy of Music which is located within the boundaries of the Fort Greene Historic District (National Register listed). Northeast of the church is Temple Square, a small triangular site created by Flatbush Avenue cutting across the street grid. Elsewhere on Flatbush Avenue, in the vicinity of the church, are vacant lots and commercial buildings. Immediately to the south of the church is the side elevation of a three-story and basement brick Italianate style rowhouse with a one-story and basement rear addition. This building was probably erected in the 1850s. The house faces onto State Street which contains many pre-Civil War rowhouses. Farther south on Third Avenue are residential and industrial buildings. To the west of the church, on Schermerhorn Street, is Sixteen Sycamores Park, a small city park with trees, benches, and a playground. To the north of the church, on the north side of Schermerhorn Street, is a large vacant lot. The nomination includes one building that occupies almost its entire lot. The building retains its integrity to a very high degree.

The Baptist Temple is a Romanesque Revival style building erected in 1893-94 and reconstructed following a fire in 1917-18. The church is a simple, boldly massed structure with little applied ornamentation. It has a rock-faced brownstone base with the superstructure faced with subtly-textured brick; there is a slight variation in the appearance of the original brick and the brick used in the post-fire reconstruction. The facade has modest brownstone trim. The front elevation, facing onto Third Avenue, is divided into five sections: end towers, a wide central entrance pavilion, and a pair of connecting transitional wings. The gabled central pavilion contains a pair of entrance arches and a large rose window set into a wide, centrally placed, round-arched opening. From the center of the rose window down to the stone base, the brick of the gable is laid in a rusticated pattern. Each of the two central entrances has a pair of deeply recessed doors. Above the doors are pairs of round arches filled with stained glass; above these are single round windows flanked by spandrel panels. The arches are flanked by lamps. A projecting stone beltcourse marks the springline of the arches and extends across the entire front elevation. Above the arched entrances is a horizontal plaque inscribed with the name "BAPTIST TEMPLE"; the words flank a Greek cross set on a decorative roundel. This panel is flanked by square panels, each with a carved shield and foliate detail. Above these panels is a projecting stone beltcourse that serves as the sill for the rose window. The large rose window is set within a brick arch. A third projecting stone beltcourse extends from the center of the rose

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window. The gable of the central pavilion is marked by corbelled brick arches. At the peak of the gable are three small round-arched openings, capped by a finial.

The transitional wings that flank the central gable are identical. Each wing is divided horizontally into three sections. The lower level is marked by three blind recessed rectangular panels above which are three blind round-arched panels; all of these panels have stone sills. The stone beltcourse extending from the central pavilion separates the first and second levels. At the second level is a rectangular opening divided into four panels by stone mullions; the lower panels are slightly larger than those above. The windows are filled with stained glass and are capped by rock-faced brownstone lintels. Above these is a round-arched opening divided into arches, a round opening, and spandrels in the same manner as the windows over the central entrance doors. These windows are also filled with stained glass. The third section, divided from the second level by a continuation of the beltcourse at the center of the rose window, has no fenestration. The cornice line of each transitional wing is marked by a corbelled arcade.

Of the two corner towers, that to the south is somewhat lower than that to the north. This tower has three tiers of openings. At the base is an arched entry with stone steps leading to recessed paired doors above which is a fanlight with wooden mullions forming a series of narrow arches. The beltcourse running from the springline of the central entrance arches also demarcates the springline of this arch. The arch is flanked by lamps. Above the entrance is a corbelled arcade of eight small arches supporting a stone beltcourse. Below this beltcourse, the corners of the tower are constructed of brick resembling rustication. The beltcourse doubles as the sill for three narrow round-arched stained-glass windows. Near the top of the tower are three additional, albeit somewhat stouter, round-arched stained-glass windows. A mock balcony, supported by brick corbelling, extends in front of these windows. A projecting beltcourse marks the springline of these arches. The tower is capped by modest brick corbelling and is crowned by a pyramidal roof clad in Spanish tile. The south elevation of the tower, clearly visible from Third Avenue, is articulated by three levels of triple round-arched openings with stained glass. The beltcourses described for the front tower elevation at the sill of the windows on the second level and the springline of the arches at the third level continue onto the side facade. A square brick chimney with an octagonal cap rises from the southwest corner of this tower. The north elevation of the tower shows evidence that a trio of windows once articulated the top level. These windows were almost entirely covered when the roof of the church was raised following the 1917 fire. Attached to the south side of the tower, at the ground level, is a rectangular brick portal with gate leading to an alley that runs along the south side of the church.

The taller tower at the corner of Third Avenue and Greenhorn Street has four levels of openings. The elevations of this tower facing onto Third Avenue

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and onto Schermerhorn Street are identical. The entrance level takes the same form as that described at the south tower. Just above the base is a brownstone cornerstone; facing Third Avenue, the cornerstone gives the date of 1894 and notes the rebuilding of 1917, while the name "Baptist Temple," is inscribed on the Schermerhorn Street facade. Above the entrance are three additional tiers of openings. A projecting stone beltcourse separates the entrance from the second level, which consists of three round-arched, stained-glass windows. The end windows have a single stone transom bar, while the taller central window is divided by two stone transom bars. Above this grouping, at the third level, are three narrow round-arched, stained-glass windows, while above these, at the fourth level, are a pair of taller round-arched, stained-glass windows with a mock balcony, similar to that on the south tower. This top level of paired windows is also visible on the south and west elevations of the tower. A corbelled cornice line caps the tower. Corner towerettes extend along the tower at the third and fourth levels; conical copper caps have been removed. Following the fire, an octagonal turret with round-arched openings was constructed on top of the corner tower; this has been removed.

The Schermerhorn Street facade is divided into five sections: the tower described above, a central gabled pavilion, a low tower at the west end of the building, and a pair of transitional sections, one of which contains an entrance porch. On this elevation, the basement is visible, with its rectangular windows opening onto an areaway. The focus of this elevation is the gabled central pavilion. Near the street level, this pavilion is articulated by four rectangular stained-glass windows with brownstone lintels. Above these is a wide, round-arched, stained-glass window flanked by narrower round-arched, stained-glass windows. In the peak of the gable is a tiny round-arched opening, above which is a finial. At the west end of the Schermerhorn Street elevation is a tower with a rectangular street level entrance with double doors. Above the entrance is a pair of rectangular windows with stone lintels. Above these are three round-arched windows, with a taller central window and stone transom bars arrayed in the same manner as those on the second level of the corner tower. The tower is capped by brick corbelling and a pyramidal roof with Spanish tile.

The transitional wing between the corner tower and central gable contains three tall arches, each divided into two levels. The lower level of each arch contains a rectangular opening divided into four lights and capped by a stone lintel. The upper level openings are arched and are divided into pairs of arches with a round opening above. All of the openings are filled with stained glass. The wing has a corbelled cornice line. The transitional wing between the gable and the end tower is four arches wide. The two arches closest to the gabled pavilion contain rectangular and round-arched openings, while the two western arches only have the round-arched openings of the second level. Three of the four round-arched openings were bricked-in during the 1917-18 reconstruction for the creation of the organ chamber. An entrance porch with a round-arched opening, deeply recessed

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double doors, and brick corbelling, projects from the western end of this transitional wing.

The southern (side) elevation and western (rear) elevation of the church are clad in a less expensive brick than the street elevations. The southern elevation is simply articulated by segmental-arched and round-arched openings filled with stained glass. The major feature of this facade is the projecting central gable. The rear elevation is simply articulated with five round-arched openings. The roof slopes of the church are clad in asphalt shingles, covering the original tiles.

The church can be entered through four doorways on Third Avenue and one on Schermerhorn Street. Upon entering the church, one can either go down a flight of stairs to the lower sanctuary, or up one of four stairways to the vestibule and auditorium. The vestibule contains wood paneling, built-in benches, and several memorial tablets. From the vestibule, the vast open space of the auditorium can be reached via four pairs of swinging oak doors that hang on Bommer hinges. The auditorium seats about 1300 people on the main floor and in a balcony that extends around the entire space. The space is supported by six steel piers encased in plaster. The seating is laid out in a manner resembling that of a theater, with rows of individual wooden seats set in arcs on a raked floor. At the end of each row are metal side panels, each embossed with a "BT" cipher. These seats allow all congregants to see the altar and baptismal tank. The auditorium has a cork floor and plaster walls and ceiling. The ceiling, with two segmental-arched ribs over the balcony and two over the choir and a groin vault in the center, is hung from the roof on a steel truss. The balcony has an oak face and is supported on narrow cast-iron columns. The interior is extremely simple with ornament limited to Byzantine style plaster detail at capitals, corbels, ribs, cornices, and on projecting indirect lighting fixtures. These lights are supported by plaster angels. Seven large chandeliers of plaster lathe on steel painted to resemble bronze hang from chains from the ceiling. Ornamental features on these chandeliers include twisted columns and Greek crosses.

In the front of the auditorium is a semi-circular wooden platform on which is located the pulpit. At the rear of the platform is the baptistery and baptismal tank, surrounded by oak paneling. Above the platform is the choir balcony, the front of which is also paneled in oak. Oak stairways leading to the choir area flank the platform. On the choir balcony, immediately above the baptistery opening, is the organ console. Organ pipes visible to the left and right of the choir are merely decorative; the actual pipes are not visible, but are in organ chambers to either side of the choir. The stained-glass windows that light the side and rear walls of the church are primarily nonrepresentational panels with a few small panels with religious symbols such as a lamb, a cross, a book, and a sheaf of wheat. Each window has a memorial plaque. Behind the choir are five representational windows, with scenes or figures representing Bethlehem, Jordan, Jerusalem, Galilee, and Nazareth.

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The most important feature of a Baptist church is the baptistery and baptismal tank. These elements of the Baptist Temple survived the fire and are the only features of the interior from the original 1894-95 building. The baptistery is enclosed by wooden doors that are opened during baptismal services. The baptistery consists of a large metal tank used for baptisms. In the center of this tank is a waterfall with artificial rocks and plants. The only significant alteration to the auditorium has been the creation of two rooms in the rear in 1992, one at each side, for Sunday school use.

In the basement of the church is a large room once known as the "lower temple." This room was redesigned in 1954 when structural beams were added. Men's and women's lounges were once located to either side of the lower temple's entrance vestibule. The women's lounge has been converted into an apartment for the sexton. To the rear of the auditorium, accessible through a door at the northwest corner of the space, or from the entrance at the west end of the Schermerhorn street elevation, are a series of office, school, and meeting rooms.

Name of Property

County and State

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.)

- Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
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.
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:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
PERFORMING ARTS

Period of Significance

1897-1918

Significant Dates

1897-95; 1917-18

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architects: Weary & Kramer
Dodge & Morrison

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:

Baptist Temple

Kings County, NY

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>586141</u>	<u>4504243</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

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 contact: Peter D. Shaver, Program Analyst (see continuation sheet)

organization NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & H.P. date September 8, 1995

street & number Peebles Island, P.O. Box 189 telephone 518-237-8643

city or town Waterford, NY state NY zip code 12180

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 _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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. 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 20503.

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Statement of Significance

The Baptist Temple is significant under National Register criteria C as a building embodying the distinctive characteristics of a church designed in the Romanesque Revival style with an auditorium plan, a layout popular for Protestant churches in the nineteenth century. The church was designed by Brooklyn's oldest Baptist congregation and was erected on a prominent, centrally located site that would be convenient to large numbers of potential congregants. The building committee desired a simple building with a large number of seats and substantial space for Sunday school. The Reverend Cortland Myers, appointed as minister of the church in 1893, desired a large, light-filled building with comfortable seats and unobstructed views. After assessing the designs of many architects, the building committee chose the designs of Weary & Kramer. George Kramer was a prolific church architect, responsible for many late-nineteenth century Protestant churches and for the popularization of auditorium plan interiors. Begun in 1894, the church was completed in 1895 and soon attracted the large membership that had been sought. Much of the church was destroyed in a fire in 1917, but it was immediately rebuilt. The architectural firm of Dodge & Morrison, also specialists in church design, generally adhered to Kramer's conception in the reconstruction. Dodge & Morrison retained the surviving outer walls and rebuilt the interior and roof. Although somewhat deteriorated today, the church survives much as it was rebuilt in 1917-18.

The Baptist Temple traces its history to the organization of the First Baptist Church of Brooklyn in 1823.(1) This church was the first of the Baptist denomination in Brooklyn and the second on Long Island. The first church structure was erected by this congregation in 1826 on Pearl Street between Nassau and Concord streets, in an area now located near the ramps of the Brooklyn and Manhattan bridges. The congregation soon erected a second building on a nearby Nassau Street site. This was destroyed by fire in 1848, but was replaced almost immediately by an Early Romanesque Revival building designed by Joseph C. Wells.(2) This church burned in 1873. In 1840, members of the First Church had established the East Baptist Church, later known as the Pierrepont Street Baptist Church, on the corner of Pierrepont and Clinton streets in Brooklyn Heights, erecting a simple church designed by Minard Lafever. By 1873, First Church's location was becoming increasingly industrial and the congregation reunited with the Pierrepont Street congregation, moving to the Brooklyn Heights building. Six years later a larger church was erected on the Pierrepont Street site, but in 1892 this building was sold to the Brooklyn Savings Bank and the congregation was temporarily without a home.

In 1893, the Reverend Cortland Myers was called to the ministry of First Baptist. It was under his leadership that a new site was purchased and the present church building erected. In 1893, a site on the southwest corner of Third Avenue Schermerhorn Street was purchased. This site was central to much of Brooklyn's population. It was also near the Long Island Rail Road's terminal on Flatbush and Atlantic avenues and was well served by streetcar lines. Thus, it would be convenient to members who were scattered through

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the borough's residential neighborhoods and would be so well located that new people could easily join the church.

In 1894, shortly after the corner site was acquired, First Baptist established a building committee which sought an architect. More than twenty architects were discussed by the committee and twelve were chosen to receive a letter detailing the congregation's needs. Although this letter did not result in designs, the building committee met with several architects, including a Mr. Hubbard of Utica, New York, Frank Freeman and Parfitt Brothers of Brooklyn, and Weary & Kramer of Akron, Ohio and New York City. By May, 1894, Weary & Kramer had been chosen and George Kramer was instructed to have designs prepared by the firm's draftsmen in Akron. However, the design proved to be too expensive and there was much dissatisfaction with Weary & Kramer; the committee seriously considered dropping Weary & Kramer in favor of Hubbard. Weary & Kramer submitted a new design and a contract was finally signed for construction in October 1894.(3) It was during the construction of the new church building that the building committee decided to call it the Baptist Temple (the official corporate name remains First Baptist Church in Pierrepont Street).(4)

Although Weary & Kramer was the firm hired for the design, George Kramer was the actual architect of the building. George Kramer (1847-1938) was a prolific church designer and one of the leading popularizers of the auditorium plan church; i.e. a church with a raked sanctuary and seats arranged in a gentle arc resembling the plan of a theater. He also claimed to have invented the "Akron plan" church, a design with the Sunday school rooms arranged in a semi-circle around the auditorium so that they could be combined to permit children to partake in the service. This plan also permitted the enlargement of the sanctuary if extra seating was needed. Kramer was born in Ashland, Ohio where he began practice as an architect in 1873. In 1885, Kramer entered into partnership with Frank O. Weary in Akron, Ohio. Kramer was in charge of a department that specialized in ecclesiastical design. This department moved to New York City in 1894. Kramer was an enormously prolific architect, working in many states; there are six extant churches designed by Kramer in Brooklyn.(5) In addition, Kramer was the author of The What How and Why of Church Building, a book that popularized the auditorium plan for religious buildings. He believed that the interior and not the exterior was the most important aspect of church design, writing that the interior:

must first be planned and arranged to meet the...requirements [of the service] and then the exterior designed to consistently give expression to and explain the interior.(6)

Kramer also felt that in the design of a church there was no "sacred style," but that all styles could be appropriate:

The Architectural design of any building depends largely in the material employed in its construction, these depending of taste,

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availability and expense, and to a certain extent should be in harmony with the environment and latitude. (7)

Most of Kramer's finest churches were designed in the Romanesque Revival style, although he was also responsible for Gothic and Classical buildings. When Kramer retired in 1924, he was reputed to have designed over 2,200 churches. (8)

For the Baptist Temple, Kramer designed a simple and bold structure constructed of brick with stone trim. The building has impressive gabled pavilions and is anchored by three corner towers. The tallest tower is at the corner of Third Avenue and Schermerhorn Street where it would attract attention to the building from Flatbush Avenue, one of Brooklyn's main thoroughfares, as well as from Schermerhorn Street and Third Avenue, both of which are also important streets. As was typical of Kramer's auditorium plan churches, the Baptist Temple had a large unobstructed interior with a vaulted plaster ceiling, a gallery, and seats laid in a gentle arc. This arrangement permitted all congregants to focus their attention on the preacher at the pulpit. This plan must have appealed to the Reverend Myers, for he desired a new church with a large auditorium, unobstructed views of the pulpit from all seats, and an interior with plenty of natural light. The cornerstone of the new Baptist Temple was laid on December 22, 1894 and the completed building was dedicated on December 1, 1895. The construction work was undertaken by R.B. Ferguson, a local Brooklyn contractor.

On the night of March 7, 1917, the Baptist Temple burned. The Brooklyn Daily Eagle wrote on the following day that "flames, burning with the speed of a prairie fire, laid in ruins, in one brief hour, last night, the Baptist Temple." (9) The fire destroyed the interior and the rose window and caused the roof and part of the Schermerhorn Street elevation to collapse. Two days after the fire, J.W. Allis, president of the Board of Trustees, announced that the church "would be rebuilt as soon as possible," (10) The architectural firm of Dodge & Morrison was commissioned to rebuild the structure, based on Kramer's original design and plan. The Real Estate Record and Builders Guide noted that "although in general the new plans follow the lines of the destroyed building, certain modifications and improvements have been included that will heighten the architectural effect and furthermore make possible greater efficiency in handling the large congregations that habitually attend services in this church." (11) Dodge & Morrison specialized in church design and the firm was responsible for several Protestant churches in Brooklyn. (12) The firm rebuilt the interior in an auditorium plan with a gallery, but enlarged the scale of the structure by redesigning the corner tower so that it was 40 feet higher than the original, increasing the proportions of the walls to harmonize with the new tower, and raising the height of the ceiling by ten feet. The new ceiling was hung from a steel truss, permitting the elimination of the columns that had supported the original roof. In addition, Dodge & Morrison lowered the entrances, removing the long flights of stairs that had impeded

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rapid entry and egress. An octagonal spire placed atop the corner tower was removed at a later date.

The interior was kept simple with the focus on the pulpit. As in the original interior, the seats chosen for the interior are individual units, not the pews traditionally found in church structures. Most of the interior, including the walls and the vaulted ceiling, are plaster. The five memorial windows above the choir were designed by Corwin Knapp Linson and were produced by the Colonial Art Glass Company of Brooklyn. These are representative of locations in Palestine -- Bethlehem, Jordan, Jerusalem, Galilee, and Nazareth. Linson, who attended the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, based the choir windows on sketches that he had made during a two year stay in Palestine. The other windows in the church, including the rose window, are filled with richly-colored nonrepresentational glass; some of the windows have small symbolic insets.

Since the original organ was destroyed in the fire, a new organ was installed in 1918. The organ was manufactured by J.W. Steere & Son of Springfield, Massachusetts and is their opus 700.(13) The organ is one of the largest examples made by Steere that survives intact in its original installation. Comprised of 38 ranks, 49 stops, and 2553 pipes, the organ is located primarily in two large chambers at either side of the choir loft, with a smaller echo division in the southeast tower. Blower apparatus and static wind reservoirs are located in the northwest tower and wind trunks at the attic level carry air to the various divisions. The organ retains its original electrical switching.

The Steere organ has superb tonal design and is constructed with workmanship of the highest order throughout. This typifies the work of the Steere company - world-renowned organist Virgil Fox, upon playing the Steere organ at Symphony Hall in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1978, stated that "the Steere organ is the Stradavarius of organs."

The inaugural recital of the Baptist Temple's organ was played on April 23, 1918 by Charles-Marie Courboin (1886-1973). Courboin was the municipal organist of Springfield, Massachusetts at the time and later became organist at the John Wanamaker Store in Philadelphia and then at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. In 1993, the organ received a Recognition Plaque by the Organ Historical Society, the highest form of recognition given to an organ. The society noted that this was "an instrument of exceptional historic merit worthy of preservation."

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Notes

1. Much of the early history of the congregation from Historical Souvenir of the First Baptist Church in Pierrepont Street 1823-1898 (1898); "The One Hundred Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of The Baptist Temple: Historical Sketch," (1948); and Henry R. Stiles, History of Kings County (Brooklyn: W.W. Munsell, 1884), vol. II, pp. 1074-75
2. Wells was the architect of Plymouth Church on Orange Street in the Brooklyn Heights Historic District (NR listed) and the First Presbyterian Church, New York in the Greenwich Village Historic District (NR listed).
3. Details of the Building Committee's deliberations are provided in Minute Book, Building Committee First Baptist Church in Pierrepont St. March 5, 1894-September 25, 1895 in the archives of the Baptist Temple.
4. Building Committee Minutes, June 13, 1895.
5. Besides the Baptist Temple, Kramer's other Brooklyn churches are Andrew's Methodist Episcopal Church (now Andrew's United Methodist Church; 1893) on Richmond Street in Cypress Hills; Fourth Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church (now Fourth Avenue United Methodist Church; 1893) on Fourth Avenue in Sunset Park; former Third Church of Christ on Dorchester Road in Flatbush (1904 and 1914); Bushwick Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church (now Bushwick Avenue United Methodist Church; 1897); and Park Congregational Church (now Church of the Virgin Mary of the Byzantine Melkite Rite; 1903-04) on Eighth Avenue in Park Slope (NR listed in the Park Slope Historic District).
6. George Kramer, The What How and Why of Church Building (New York, 1897), p. 47.
7. Kramer, p. 66.
8. Henry F. Withey and Elise R. Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased) (LA: New Age, 1956), p. 354.
9. "Baptist Temple Laid in Ruins by Flames; Origin Near Pulpit," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, March 8, 1917, p. 1. "New Baptist Temple Soon," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, March 9, 1917.
10. "New Baptist Temple Soon," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, March 9, 1917.
11. "Rebuilding the Baptist Temple," Real Estate Record and Builders Guide 100 (Dec. 8, 1917), p. 752.
12. Besides the rebuilt Baptist Temple, Dodge & Morrison designed the addition to the Bedford Presbyterian Church (now the Bedford Central United Presbyterian Church; 1906) on Nostrand Avenue in Crown Heights and Christ English Evangelical Lutheran Church (now Central Baptist Church; 1898) on

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Kings County, New York

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Lafayette Avenue in the far eastern section of Bedford-Stuyvesant. The firm also rebuilt the Episcopal Church of St. Luke and St. Matthew (NR listed) after a fire in 1914.

13. Susan Armstrong, "Baptist Temple, Brooklyn, N.Y.: A Hidden Treasure," The New England Organist (July-August, 1992), p. 7.

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Major Bibliographical References

Armstrong, Susan. "Baptist Temple, Brooklyn, N.Y.: A Hidden Treasure," The New England Organist (July-August, 1992), p. 7.

Baptist Temple, Minute Book, Building Committee First Baptist Church in Pierrepont St. March 5, 1894-September 25, 1895.

"Baptist Temple Laid in Ruins by Flames; Origin Near Pulpit," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, March 8, 1917, p. 1.

"Baptist Temple Ready in January," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Dec. 22, 1917, p. 13.

Historical Souvenir of the First Baptist Church in Pierrepont Street 1823-1898 (1898).

"New Baptist Temple Soon," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, March 9, 1917.

"New Temple Dedicated," Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Dec. 1, 1895.

"The One Hundred Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of The Baptist Temple: Historical Sketch," (1948)

"Rebuilding the Baptist Temple," Real Estate Record and Builders Guide 100 (Dec. 8, 1917), p. 752.

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Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the Baptist Temple is shown as a heavy black line on the accompanying land book map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary incorporates the entire lot on which the Baptist Temple has historically been located.

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Kings County, New York

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Form Prepared By

Research and text prepared by:

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Preservation Consultant
116 Pinehurst Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10033

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Baptist Temple

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Kings

DATE RECEIVED: 10/13/95 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/24/95
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/09/95 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/27/95
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 95001334

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 11.20.95 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept - C

REVIEWER Roland DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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



BAPTIST CHURCH

RECORDING OFFICE
RECORDS SECTION
CITY OF WASHINGTON
1000 K STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

RECORDS SECTION
CITY OF WASHINGTON
1000 K STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

Photo 1

1. Baptist Temple
2. Kings county, N. Y
3. Photo: Andrew Dolkart 4. 3/95

5. Neg: Baptist Temple

360 Schermerhorn Street

Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217

6. View of church looking southwest

270311N3N621712



BROOKLYN'S FIRST
BAPTIST CHURCH
HOLDING FORTH THE WORD
OF LIFE SINCE 1853

He that heareth...
and believeth...
is passed from
death unto life.

John 5:24

SERVICES

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 A.M.
SUNDAY WORSHIP 11:00 A.M.

SUNDAY EVE 8:00 P.M.
WED. PRAYER MEET. 8:45 P.M.
A WARM WELCOME
AWAITS YOU

Photo 2

1. Baptist Temple

2 Kings County, NY

3 Photo: Andrews Dolkart

4. 3/95

5 Neg: Baptist Temple

360 Schermerhorn Street

Brooklyn, NY 11217

6 Front elevation looking southwest



27 0311 N-2 N-5 2 17 09

"TRUST IN THE LORD
WITH
ALL YOUR HEART"

1850



Photo 3

1. Baptist Temple

2. Kings County NY

3. Photo: Andrew S.
Dolkart



4. 3/95

5. Baptist Temple

360 Schermerhorn Street

Brooklyn, NY 11217

6. Side entrance looking southwest



Photo 4

1. Baptist Temple
- 2 Kings County, NY
- 3 Photo: Andrew S. Dolkantz
- 4 3/95
- 5 Baptist Temple
360 Schermerhorn Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217
- 6 Auditorium looking west

270311NNN421711

JUL 1995 N





27 0311 NN-1 2 17 06

Jul 1995 N



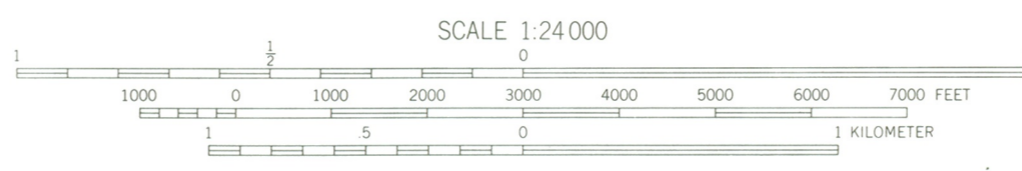
Photos

- 1 Baptist Temple
- 2 Kings County, NY
- 3 Photo: Andrew S. Dolkart
- 4 3/95
- 5 Neg: Baptist Temple
360 Schermerhorn Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217
- 6 Auditorium looking southeast



BAPTIST TEMPLE
Brooklyn,
KINGS CO., NY
Brooklyn QVAD
ZONE 18
EASTING-586141
NORTHING-4504243

Prepared and published in 1975 by the New York State Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.
Map base from 1967 U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangle.
Map revisions made using 1974 aerial photography, construction plans, official records and other sources. Features revised include: highways and other transportation facilities; civil boundaries; recreation sites; hydrography; and buildings. Grey tint indicates intensely developed areas in which only landmark buildings are shown.
Revisions may not comply with National Map Accuracy Standards.
Correspondence concerning this and other maps of the Department of Transportation should be directed to: Map Information Unit, New York State Department of Transportation, State Campus, Albany, New York 12232.
1975 revisions by F. G. Califano



Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum.
1000-meter ticks based on the New York Transverse Mercator grid.
Between 72° and 78° West Longitude, this grid is identical to Zone 18 of the Universal Transverse Mercator grid. Areas east of 72° and west of 78° are direct mathematical extensions of Zone 18.
10,000-foot ticks based on the New York Plane Coordinate grid.
Long Island Zone.
SPECIAL TOPOGRAPHIC EDITION
ENTIRE MAP AREA IS WITHIN THE NEW YORK CITY METROPOLITAN URBAN AREA
Contours, at 10-foot intervals, shown unrevised from 1967 U.S. Geological Survey map. Dashed lines represent 5-foot contours.
Datum is mean sea level.

BOUNDARIES:

State	-----
County	-----
Town or City	-----
Incorporated Village	-----
Federal-Aid Urban Area	-----

ROADS:

Touring Route markers:	Divided highways and streets:
Interstate	Wide mall
U. S.	Narrow mall or barrier
State	Undivided highways and streets:
State Highway number and limit	-----
County road	-----
Interchange number	Vehicle track; trail