

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 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: Spruce Street A. M. E. Church & Parsonage

Other names/site number: St. John Temple A. M. E. Church & Parsonage

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1660 Spruce Street & 518 N. 19th Street.

City or town: Terre Haute State: IN County: Vigo

Not For Publication: ☐

Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A B x C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

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 or 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

☐

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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

2

Noncontributing

0

buildings

0

0

sites

0

0

structures

0

0

objects

2

0

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: religious facility

RELIGION: church-related residence

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Tudor Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation:	CONCRETE
walls:	BRICK
	METAL: aluminum
roof:	SYNTHETICS: Rubber
other:	METAL: steel

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Spruce Street A. M. E. Church is located on the northwest corner of Spruce and North 19th Streets on Terre Haute's near northeast side. The former parsonage is directly north of the church and faces 19th Street while the church faces Spruce Street. The tall one-story church building was constructed in 1927 in the Tudor Revival style. The walls are composed of brown-colored brick molded with a pattern to resemble Flemish bond coursing. The brick type creates an interesting dynamic in the building's arches and belt courses. The building has several historic stained art glass wood windows mixed with a few large-pane, stained art glass windows from after a fire in 1976. The parsonage is a one-story gable-front home built in 1929.

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Narrative Description

Setting

The Spruce Street African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church is located on the northwest corner of Spruce and North 19th Streets on Terre Haute's near northeast side (photo 01). The church's former parsonage is directly north of the church and faces 19th Street (photos 04-05) while the church faces south to Spruce Street. Both occupy the same current legal parcel, consisting of two lots in the Probst Subdivision. Sidewalks are along the streets and a private walk leads to the corner entry of the church and the parsonage. The property has an open lawn and a wide vacant lot is to the west (owned by the church but not part of this nomination). The property is two blocks south of a former railroad and about five blocks north of old Highway 40/the National Road. The church is in a neighborhood of mostly early 20th century one-story frame homes. A modern metal church sign is in the southeast corner of the property and is not counted as a resource. The church, built in 1927, occupies the site of the former c. 1905 Second A. M. E. Church.

Spruce Street A. M. E. Church, Tudor Revival, 1927. Contributing

The tall one-story building, with balcony, is on a raised basement with a concrete foundation. The walls are composed of brown-colored brick molded with a pattern to resemble brick in Flemish bond coursing (see photos 01-03). The brick type creates an interesting architectural dynamic in the building's arches and belt courses. The church has several historic stained art glass wood windows mixed with a few large-pane, stained art glass windows from after a fire in 1976 (photos 02-03). The windows have stone sills. A belt course composed of soldier brick trimmed by courses of header brick extends around the perimeter of the building and over the top of the large windows of the sanctuary. The parapet is capped with stone coping and the building has a flat roof.

The building is dominated by a large, square corner tower on the east side of the front (south) façade. The tower features a tall set of concrete steps that lead up from the west to a porch with brick walls capped with stone. The steps have metal pipe railings. The congregation installed lattice-like ironwork corner posts that support a metal awning-like roof; these features were added c. 1960. The entry is in the south wall of the tower and is composed of a pair of wood doors with a diamond-shaped window in the east door. A slight ogee Tudor arch, filled in with brick (original), is above the doors. The entry is flanked by pilasters capped with stone and historic iron lanterns. The east façade of the tower features a small 2/1 wood window in its south end and a wood door with three small windows in its north end. The door has a Tudor arch, filled with brick (original), and is flanked by pilasters with stone caps. The door has a concrete stoop with ironwork and metal roof matching the front porch. The west wall of the tower features a 2/1 wood window in the raised basement and a small, stained art glass window in the first story.

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A cornerstone is on the southeast corner and is carved on its south face with the words:

ST. JOHN TEMPLE
A.M.E. CHURCH
ORGANIZED 1893
REBUILT 1927
J.S.A. MITCHAM PASTOR

The second story of the tower features three stained art glass windows in the south and east facades. The windows have a belt course/sill course that continues onto the south and east facades of the sanctuary at the base of the parapet. Steel anchors for a former sign are located on the southeast corner of the second story. The belfry has a stone sill course and three segmental arched openings on all four sides. The arched openings were filled with modern brick, c. 1976. The belfry has a crenellated parapet capped with stone.

The front (south) façade west of the tower features a row of three 3/1 wood windows near the center of the façade in the raised basement. A small 2/1 wood window is in the east end, at the corner with the tower. The first story features a row of three tall, stained art glass windows centered in the façade. The art glass design features full-round arches in the tops of the windows and painted depictions of Christ in the bottom, as well as the names of the patrons who sponsored the windows (photos 08, 11, 13). The front façade features a stepped parapet.

The east façade north of the tower features two pairs of 3/1 wood windows in the raised basement (photo 02). The first story features two tall, stained art glass windows (1976) divided into two sashes with four large colored panes in each sash. The north half of the east façade features concrete steps flanked by brick walls capped with concrete that access a stoop and wood entry door with small window in the first story. A stained art glass wood window is in the upper part of the façade above the door. The north end of the east façade features a wood-framed basement staircase enclosure with a metal door. The enclosure is covered with insulbrick and has a low-pitched gabled roof covered with metal. The enclosure dates to c. 1950. The north end of the first story features a 1/1 wood window and a smaller wood window in the upper part of the façade.

The raised basement of the west façade features a 3/1 wood window in its south end and two pairs of 1/1 wood windows near the center of the façade (photo 03). A small 2/1 and 1/1 wood window are in the basement in the north half of the façade. The first story features two tall, stained art glass windows (1976) divided into two sashes with four large colored panes in each sash. The north end of the east façade has a short projecting section that extends north and bumps out from the north façade. It has a 1/1 wood window and a former entry that is covered with plywood.

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The north (back) façade features a row of three 3/1 wood windows in the raised basement, near the center of the façade (right side of photo 02). A cross-shaped window composed of glass blocks is centered in the first story. This was an alteration to the facade c. 1976. A projecting bay, shorter than the main building, extends from the west corner of the façade. It has a window in the west wall and a louvered opening in the north wall of the raised basement. The first story features a 1/1 window. The projecting bay has a stone parapet cap. A chimney is in the corner of the bay and façade.

The interior of the building is organized with a large, central sanctuary space off the southeast corner entry tower. The tower has a foyer on the first story (photos 09-10) and stairs that lead down to the basement and up to a stepped balcony at the back of the sanctuary (photo 13). A room is at the top of the stairs in the tower with a doorway to the balcony (photo 12). The front of the sanctuary features a raised platform with a recessed altar area (photo 07). A choir loft steps up behind the pulpit and altar area. The altar and choir loft are recessed into a broad, full-round arched opening. The back wall of this recessed area features a stained art glass cross-shaped window (protected from the outside by glass blocks). The recessed area is flanked by rear entry stairs to the east and a pastor's study (photo 14) to the west. Both have doorways on to the raised platform. A treasurer's room is located behind the study; it is in the projecting bay on the back of the building.

The basement is composed of a large fellowship hall in the central part of the building (photos 17-18). A short hallway leads from the corner tower stairs to a classroom along the south end of the basement (photo 15) and to a lounge and bathrooms in the basement of the tower (photo 16). A kitchen is centered across the north end of the basement with a mechanical room and bathroom to its west. A rear staircase is east of the kitchen and features a landing and entrance from the east side of the building (photo 19).

Most of the finishes in the church date to after the fire in 1976. The building has carpeting throughout the first story and concrete floors in the basement. Wood paneling covers the walls in the basement and first story. The ceiling in the sanctuary and fellowship hall is composed of acoustic tiles dropped into a metal grid. Other ceilings are covered with small square acoustic tiles. The sanctuary has glass and iron chandeliers from 1976. Most of the doors are wood veneer doors with a few historic five-panel wood doors in the toilet rooms and rear/east entry to the basement. Most of the stained art glass windows have the names of patrons painted at the bottom of the window or on plaques beside the windows.

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Spruce Street A. M. E. Parsonage, Gable-front House, 1929. Contributing

The one-story, front-gabled house has a foundation composed of concrete blocks and walls of aluminum siding (photos 04-06). The house has mostly 1/1 wood windows, and the roof is covered with metal. The front façade features an incised southeast corner porch with a concrete floor and wrought iron railings and corner lattice-like post. A wood entry door is in the north wall of the porch and a 2/2 original wood window is in the west wall. A group of three 1/1 windows is centered in the façade north of the porch. The middle window is wider than the flanking windows. While a few of the windows appear to be replacements, most are wood and likely original or early replacements.

The south façade (photo 04) features a small window centered in the façade (covered with wood), flanked by 1/1 windows. The north façade (photo 05) has a 1/1 window centered on the façade and a vinyl 2-sash sliding window in the west end. A one-story addition is on the southwest corner of the house and features a small 1/1 wood window in its south wall. A modern entry door is in the north end of its west wall and a pair of small 1/1 wood windows is in the south half of its west wall (photo 06). The addition has a shed roof covered with metal.

The interior is arranged with a living room and kitchen in the front/east end of the house. A hallway extends to the back/west, off which are bedrooms and a bathroom. The addition features a utility room. The interior has contemporary finishes.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☒ 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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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black

Period of Significance

1927-1975

Significant Dates

Significant Person (last name, first name)

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

Mitcham, James Starks Aaron

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Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins when the church building was constructed in 1927. Because of its use through the late 20th century by an African American congregation, the period of significance ends in 1975, the fifty-year mark for eligibility. A fire in 1976 destroyed many of the interior finishes and some historic art glass windows; features introduced during the rehabilitation do not necessarily add to the significance of the building, further making 1975 an established end year.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Consideration A is made due to the building's ownership and former use by the congregation of Spruce Street A. M. E. Church. The building's origins for use by a Black congregation, and its architectural styling, designed and constructed by the pastor at the time, make the property eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places using criterion A under the area of ethnic heritage for the church's close association with the growing African American community in Terre Haute. Black minister James A. Mitcham designed and built the church and parsonage for his own congregation. From its much earlier organization, through the building's construction in 1927, the church played an important part in the Black community into the late 20th century.

The property is eligible for the National Register using criterion C under architecture. The building is also a simple example of 20th century Tudor Revival religious architecture. The most unusual characteristic of the Spruce Street A. M. E. Church is its "jewel box" form with flat roof. A prominent Tudor era chapel could be the source of inspiration for Mitcham's design, or, he may have refined existing vernacular traditions for the project.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE

Spruce Street African Methodist Episcopal Church is a standing reminder and tangible link to Terre Haute's African American population of the early 20th century. From the time the congregation was organized in 1893, through construction of their first building to this one in 1927, it conveys an important association with Black culture and community.

Spruce Street's mother church, Allen Chapel A. M. E., located a few blocks south of the Vigo County Courthouse, is home to the oldest Black congregation in Terre Haute and much of western Indiana. The congregation was established in 1837 by Reverend William Paul Quinn.¹ Two years prior, the city's population census indicates that there were just 47 people who identified as Black. While the community of African Americans living in Terre Haute was slow to grow in the first half of the 19th century, the post-Civil War growth was exponential. A population census of the city in 1876 indicates that the African American population had grown to 271 people who identified as Black.² The largest number of these families lived in the city's third ward in the southeast corner of the city. Allen Chapel was in the fifth ward, approximately five blocks west of the third ward, in 1876. Two other African American churches had formed in Terre Haute by 1880. These were Third Baptist, or Free Will Baptist Church located on South 14th Street, and the Old South Seventh Street Baptist Church, which later relocated to Second Street between Main and Ohio Streets.³

Terre Haute's population grew tremendously in the late 1800s due to industry. The Black population had grown to almost 2,600 persons who identified as Negro in the 1910 census. As the city's Black population grew in the northeast corner of the city, it led to the formation of a second A. M. E. church closer to the community's new population center. The community grew along Spruce Street in the late 1800s and early 1900s, north of the old National Road. By the time the Spruce Street church congregation formed in 1893, and later built an impressive wood-frame house of worship, this neighborhood of Terre Haute had developed its own identity in the broader Black community with a handful of stores as well as the church. The first segregated school for Black children was constructed in 1886 on the south side of the city at the corner of 13th and Franklin Avenue; its capacity was doubled in 1889. In 1886, the school system leased a building for a segregated school on North 14th Street, which was replaced in 1889 by a new building located at the corner of 16th and Elm Streets, on the northeast side of the city.⁴ This was located approximately three blocks northwest of where the Spruce Street church would be constructed a few years later. In the 1911 Sanborn Maps for Terre Haute, the Spruce Street church and its parsonage are identified as the 2nd A. M. E. Church.

¹ Bradsby, pg. 593

² Bradsby, pg. 433

³ Bradsby, pg. 595

⁴ Bradsby, pg. 529

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Spruce Street A. M. E., then called 2nd A. M. E., was organized in 1893 through the efforts of Joseph Jackson, who led the church as well as being employed as the principal of the city's segregated Lincoln School. With the Black population growing in the north part of the city, a second church affiliated with the African Methodist Episcopal denomination was needed, hence its original name, 2nd A. M. E. Church. At what point the congregation adopted "Spruce Street Church" is unclear, however, the name was changed again about 1927 to St. John Temple, for which it is identified on the 1927 cornerstone. That name was dropped by the 1930s, after which it was known as Spruce Street A. M. E. Church. A 1964 booklet and follow up feature articles on "Negro Progress in Local Area" provides not only interesting aspects of the early African American community in Vigo County and Terre Haute, but also features a few of its prominent early members. These include Albert E. Meyzeek and Joseph Jackson, both of whose names are engraved in a memorial stone once located at the church.⁵ The memorial to the two men was originally located at the corner of 16th and Elm Streets but was relocated to the church in 1959. It was moved back to its original location within the last few years. Meyzeek advocated for a school for Black children in the north part of the city which opened in 1885 and he served as the sole teacher and janitor. He pressured the city to build a larger school for the city's Black children in 1888 at the corner of 16th and Elm Streets. He became the first African American school principal in Terre Haute and served from 1887-1890 at which time he left to work in Louisville, Kentucky, and died at the age of 101 in 1963. Joseph Jackson was the second African American principal employed in Terre Haute. He was employed in that role by 1892 and was named as the founder of Spruce Street A. M. E. Church in the 1964 article.⁶

Joseph Jackson was born into slavery in Goochland County, Virginia in 1855 and had moved to Terre Haute with his father's family by 1870. He married Ella Clark in Vigo County in 1884. By 1900, Joseph and Ella Jackson lived on Spruce Street, and he is identified as a schoolteacher. At that time, their neighbors were largely white, but by 1910, the Jacksons' neighborhood was largely occupied by Black families. He began a Sunday School class in his home, then advocated for the creation of a church for Blacks who could not make it to Allen Chapel. He is again identified as a schoolteacher in 1910 and their home was located at 1930 Spruce Street. Jackson served as the principal of the segregated school from 1891-1919. While in his tenure, he created a library of books largely from his own collection, and a circulation system for the library. Ella died in 1914 and Joseph died in 1919. It appears that Joseph Jackson also provided sermons at 2nd A. M. E. Church and likely coordinated the construction of their first house of worship in about 1905. Joseph Jackson, identified as "Professor" has the prominent, middle stained art glass window in the church's south facade dedicated in memoriam to him by his daughter, Ellen Jackson Gillum (middle of photo 11).

In 1926, James S. A. Mitcham became pastor of the church and is credited with its design and the construction of the building in 1927 (photo 01). Mitcham was born in Arkansas in 1883 and after the death of his father, left home at 12 years old to work on roads, a bridge crew in Louisiana and for the Iron Mountain Railroad. From there, he went to the Tuskegee Institute at

⁵ Clippings file photos of the Vigo County-Terre Haute Library

⁶ "Negro Progress in Local Area" *Terre Haute Tribune*. 12 Feb 1964. Pg. 8, cols. 1-4

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21 years of age where he learned masonry, carpentry, and how to read blueprints. Mitcham went to attend a Chicago masonry school but was unable to attend because it did not enroll African Americans. Instead, Mitcham felt a call to go into the ministry and went to Moody Bible Institute and later finished his education at Beloit College in Wisconsin. His first pastorate was at an A. M. E. church in Chicago, then he was sent to Marion, Indiana in 1920 where he excavated a church basement for a fellowship hall and constructed a parsonage while he pastored the congregation. From there, he was sent to Terre Haute in 1926 where he found the Spruce Street church building to be dilapidated, but with a solid congregation of 200 members. He was both mason and carpenter in the construction of the Spruce Street church, donating his labor while pastoring the church. Mitcham likely also constructed the parsonage in 1929 (photo 04). He then went to St. John's A. M. E. Church in Indianapolis in 1933 and remained for sixteen years. He then went to Battle Creek, Michigan where he pastored and constructed another church.⁷ Mitcham lived to be 91 years old, spending 61 years in the ministry. He retired in Indianapolis and died and was buried at Floral Park Cemetery in 1974.

After construction of their new house of worship, Spruce Street A. M. E., then known as St. John Temple, hosted the Indiana Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1927. The event was organized by Joseph Churchill, A. M. E. District Manager and member of the Spruce Street church.⁸ The state conference was hosted again by Spruce Street A. M. E. in 1949 with over 200 ministers and laymen delegates in attendance.⁹ At that time, William Ogleton was pastor of the Spruce Street church and A. M. E. district elder until his retirement in 1958.

The Spruce Street neighborhood retained its identity and viability into the middle part of the 20th century through its church and stores. One of these, Reeve Grocery (2150 Spruce Street), included this statement in an Indiana Negro Directory entry (1939-1940): where colored Spruce Street buys its food. The grocery had been built and maintained for 20 years by the same owner. Hicks Soft Water Shampoo Shoppe was also listed in the directory at 2143 Spruce Street. The directory listed all the African American churches in Terre Haute in 1939-1940. There was Allen Chapel, Calvary Baptist, First Free Baptist, Friendship Baptist, Saulters Chapel, Second Missionary Baptist, St. Paul Baptist, Shiloh Baptist, and Spruce Street A. M. E. The majority of these were now in the north part of the city. The Negro Motorist Green-Book entries for Terre Haute (1940, 1946, 1958 consulted) featured a few locations for taverns and inns on Cherry Street/U.S. 40 a few blocks south of Spruce Street.

Spruce Street A. M. E. functioned like most other churches. It provided special Christmas and Easter programs, such as the annual Christmas auction in the fellowship hall and Christmas Choral Cantatas from the 1940s well into the 1970s. In 1948, Spruce Street A. M. E. hosted a joint Thanksgiving service under the auspices of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance which represented African American churches in Terre Haute.¹⁰ The alliance fostered other joint services for these churches that were held throughout the city in member churches. Spruce Street

⁷ "Mainly About Folks" *Battle Creek Enquirer*. 2 March 1950. Pg. 12, cols. 1-3

⁸ "Terre Haute" *Indianapolis Recorder*. 10 Sept 1927. Pg. 7, col. 1

⁹ "Conference in Session Here" *Terre Haute Tribune*. 29 Sept 1949. Pg. 6, col. 1

¹⁰ "Colored Churches Plan Union Service" *Terre Haute Tribune*. 24 Nov 1948. Pg. 14, col. 3

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A. M. E. also hosted regular “lawn socials” provided for the neighborhood. The one in 1949 was held on the golf lot on Spruce Street between 22nd and 23rd Streets. Harvest Home Week was an annual program held in October with special music. The 1950 event included music by Mrs. Louise Braxton and her Kentucky Harmony Singers, a regionally famous Black women’s quintet that traveled the country and sang Negro spirituals at churches during the 1920s-1940s.

Lost Creek A. M. E. Church had its annual homecoming events at the Spruce Street church from at least the 1950s into the 1960s. This was a congregation that formed in Lost Creek Township, in rural Vigo County between 1829-1832.¹¹ In 1960, Spruce Street A. M. E. held the 65th Annual Anniversary Observance of its founding followed by revival services that year in cooperation with Saulters A. M. E. Church. It was likely Pastor Lewis Carter, taking pastorship in 1958, who began the church’s movement into civic affairs during the late 1950s-1960s.

The Spruce Street church had active participation in several community organizations. These included a Garden Club that met at the church and “Washington Teas” for the Look Out club that also met at the building during the 1960s. While unclear, the teas may have been part of the church’s activity during the Civil Rights Movement. By the 1950s, the church had strong ties to Prince Hall Freemasonry for men and its sister organization, Prince Hall Order of the Eastern Star, for women. These organizations were for African American membership in international organizations related to Freemasonry that were segregated. During Indiana’s Prince Hall Grand Chapter Convention at Indiana State College (Terre Haute) in 1960, a program for attending members was given at the Spruce Street church. The church also hosted meetings and supported a local Boy Scouts troop beginning by 1957, as was evident from a recognition they received in 1969 by the Wabash Valley Council of Boy Scouts affirming twelve years of serving the troop. The composition of the troop that met at Spruce Street church most likely was composed of boys from the neighborhood’s Black community.

Like many other Black churches during the 1950s and 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement became a significant part of the churches’ programming. This included hosting events, organizational meetings, and speakers. Terre Haute had not been immune from racial tensions during its history. The most notable incident of this occurred on February 26, 1901, when a white mob lynched George Ward, who had been accused and arrested for the murder of a white woman. Ward, a husband and father of two, was being held at the jail when a mob who had heard of alleged confessions, used a battering ram to break into the jail and took and beat Ward until he collapsed. They then took him to the Wabash River Wagon Bridge where they hung him from a noose tied to a trestle. The mob then cut down and burned the body on the west riverbank where about 1,000 people watched.¹² Indiana Governor Winfield Durbin, in responding to a fervor of growing white angst, stated “I do not know what can be done, it is my understanding the people favoring the lynching are decidedly in the majority.”¹³ As late as 1950, an incident of racial discrimination, while far less ghastly, had risen to segregation in the city’s theaters.

¹¹ “Negro Progress in Local Area” *Terre Haute Tribune*. 12 Feb 1964. Pg. 8, cols. 1-4

¹² Terre Haute Community Memorializes George Ward with Historical Marker: Equal Justice Initiative: <https://eji.org/news/terre-haute-community-memorializes-george-ward-with-historical-marker/>

¹³ Campney, Brent. This Negro Elephant is Getting to be a Pretty Large Sized Animal: <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/578230>

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Iverson Bell, a Black veterinarian who had moved to the city, was asked to move to where Blacks were permitted to sit separated from whites.¹⁴

The earliest record establishing the Spruce Street church's connection to the Civil Rights Movement is an article from April 1957 stating that the church played host to the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) community tea.¹⁵ Terre Haute's chapter of the NAACP was established in 1918, only nine years after the national chapter. The relationship between Spruce Street A. M. E. and the NAACP local chapter remained strong through the 1960s, with frequent newspaper notices of meetings of the organization at the church. During an annual observance of the founding of the Terre Haute Chapter of the NAACP, called Founder's Day, in 1963, a program was held at the Spruce Street church coinciding with President Lincoln's birthday. Dr. Joseph Taylor, research consultant for Flanner House in Indianapolis and associate professor of sociology at Indiana University, spoke at the event followed by a carry-in dinner. At that time, Samuel P. Jones (pastor of Saulters A. M. E. Church) was the executive director of the local NAACP chapter.¹⁶

The local chapter of the NAACP brought a nationally recognized play to Terre Haute in 1965 that was performed at the Spruce Street church. The play, created by Martin B. Duberman, had first been performed in New York in 1963 and was entitled "In White America." It recounted the history of the Negro in the United States from the days of slavery to the school crisis in Little Rock, Arkansas. The locally-cast performance was open to the public.¹⁷ In 1967, the NAACP took time to recognize one of its founding members and past president, Samuel Jones, upon his relocation from Terre Haute to Indianapolis. Jones was the former pastor of Saulters A. M. E. Church in Terre Haute as well as secretary of the Terre Haute Council of Churches. The recognition occurred at Spruce Street A. M. E. Church during the NAACP's fourth annual observance of Medgar Evers Day, named for the NAACP field secretary who was killed in front of his Mississippi home in 1963.¹⁸ Reverend Jones would return to pastor Spruce Street A. M. E. during the mid-1970s.

Other activities of Spruce Street A. M. E. Church during the 1960s included a public banquet in 1962 dubbed the Lincoln-Douglas Banquet, in honor of President Lincoln's birthday and his work toward emancipation.¹⁹ The church also had a society of women who helped in poor relief, named the Dorcas Society. Dorcas groups were common in Protestant churches at that time. They were named for a New Testament biblical figure, Dorcas, who aided the apostles in helping the poor. A new pastor was installed at Spruce Street A. M. E. in 1969, Reverend Elmer Arnold. He continued the congregation's engagement in civic affairs and became the executive director for the Terre Haute Human Relations Commission. As a member of the Terre Haute Council of Churches, Arnold was invited to speak about the role and activities of the Commission, which

¹⁴ Racial Discrimination Not Uncommon in past: Vigo County Library:

<https://indianamemory.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/vcpl/id/10805>

¹⁵ "Local Branch NAACP Community Tea" *Terre Haute Tribune Star*. 4 April 1957. Pg. 75, col. 3

¹⁶ "NAACP to Observe Founders Day with Program Tuesday" *Terre Haute Tribune*. 11 Feb 1963. Pg. 7, col. 4

¹⁷ "Negro History Traced in Play Given by Local NAACP" *Terre Haute Tribune*. 3 March 1966. Pg. 14, cols. 1-2

¹⁸ "NAACP to Honor Rev. Sam Jones" *Terre Haute Tribune*. 12 June 1967. Pg. 5, col. 4

¹⁹ "Social News, Church Notes" *Terre Haute Tribune Star*. 4 Feb 1962. Pg. 33, col. 6

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sought to foster understanding among community members.²⁰ The need for such advocacy became evident as tensions were rising on college campuses, including Indiana State University.

Tensions during the late 1960s on college campuses across the United States, due both to racial inequality and the war in Vietnam often created volatile situations. Nationwide protests in the spring of 1969 found their way to Indiana State University's campus in Terre Haute. Though limited to a sit-in on May 1st at the administration building, largely over rising tuition costs, the Terre Haute campus was now experiencing unease.²¹ The university then became a location where racial tensions progressed into a riot on April 23, 1970. A clash between white and black students had taken place which led to broken windows in dormitories, private homes, and automobiles around the campus. The city police riot squad was dispatched to the campus and Terre Haute Mayor Larrison sought relief from Governor Whitcomb. A crowd of 300 white students, carrying lighted torches, were marching to Statesmen Tower residence halls when riot police intercepted them. The police asked the crowd to disperse, but they refused, and warning shots were fired into the air followed by tear gas deployment, after which the crowd dispersed. A small crowd of Black students had barricaded themselves in the dorm. The incident seemed to have been triggered by a sit-in demonstration of about 75 Black students in Blumberg Hall earlier in the day. Several incidents between white and black students occurred throughout the day and in the previous two weeks leading to the mob with torches. University officials met with students in the cafeteria following the incident.²² A trustee's meeting was held the following Friday with students to address demands from the Black Student Union for racial equality on the campus as it related to programs, facilities, and representation, which had prompted the sit-in.²³

Aside from his involvement in the NAACP and position with the city's Human Relations Committee, it is unclear if Reverend Arnold or Spruce Street A. M. E. Church were more directly engaged in the events between 1969 and 1970. Reverend Arnold was followed by Rev. D. R. Bailey, Jr., who oversaw an anniversary celebration in 1971 that recognized the oldest member of the congregation, Mrs. Viola Lafoon, who was a 75-year member of the congregation and 97 years old.²⁴ A fire in August 1976 caused considerable damage to the interior finishes of Spruce Street church. The church had recently been remodeled, but the fire caused \$65,000 in damages including the loss of several historic stained-glass windows in the sanctuary.²⁵ Pulpit furniture, the organ and piano, and carpeting were also damaged beyond repair by the fire however the recently installed pews had survived. By this time, Reverend Samuel P. Jones had relocated back to Terre Haute from Indianapolis and was pastor of the church. The church was restored through insurance settlements and community donations, and reopened on Easter Sunday, April 10, 1977.²⁶

²⁰ "Assembly of Area Church Council Meets Tonight" *Terre Haute Tribune*. 30 Nov 1969. Pg. 6, col. 2

²¹ "Indiana Schools Relatively Calm" *Terre Haute Tribune*. 11 May 1969. Pg. 1, col. 8

²² "State Promises Assistance if Local Police Needed" *Terre Haute Tribune*. 24 April 1970. Pg. 1, cols. 7-8

²³ "Trustees to Meet on Black Issues" *Terre Haute Tribune*. 25 April 1970. Pg. 1, cols. 6-7

²⁴ Clippings file at Vigo County-Terre Haute Library. Article from December 23, 1971. *Terre Haute Star*

²⁵ Clippings file at Vigo County-Terre Haute Library. Article from August 11, 1976. *Terre Haute Star*

²⁶ "Spruce Street AME Church Marks Reopening Sunday" *Terre Haute Tribune*. 8 April 1977. Pg. 9, cols. 4-5

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ARCHITECTURE

Spruce Street A. M. E. Church has features of the Tudor Revival style that was popular from the late 1800s through the 1930s. While the Tudor Revival style often featured timber and half-timber and stucco construction, as well as brick and stonework assembled to form multiple gables, some builders leaned away from timber and stucco and embraced more formality in masonry construction.

The Spruce Street A. M. E. Church has modest features of the style. These are most evident in the wide corner entry tower that has pilasters capped with stone that flank the entries (photo 01). The entries also have nicely detailed Tudor arches composed of brick. The tower's second story features a row of three stained art glass windows in its street facades that have a pattern that mimics label lintels with keys. The windows are positioned above a brick sill course, which continues as a belt course around the building, and below a stone sill course at the top of the tower's second story. The belfry rises above the second story and features a row of three segmental arched openings in each of the four walls (now filled with brick). The three-part design of the rows of windows and belfry openings is repeated in the tower's crenellated parapet. Each wall of the parapet has three stone table-like tops divided by two narrow crenellations and flanked by wide corner crenellations. The crenellations have pitched stone caps.

Apart from the tower, the building's stylistic features are limited to the belt coursing mentioned previously and a wide, stepped parapet on the front façade. The three historic stained art glass windows on the front façade feature a pane design with full-round arched tops and painted depictions of Christ in the bottom of each window (photo 11). A few other original, historic stained art glass windows are found in the facades, though the large art glass windows that were on each side of the sanctuary were destroyed in the 1976 fire. The original art glass windows that remain include patron and memorial names painted at the bottom of the windows. A new stained art glass window in the shape of a cross from after the sanctuary was refurbished in 1976 is in the back wall above the choir loft, in the north wall of the sanctuary. The building retains its cornerstone (southeast corner) and several 2/1 and 3/1 Craftsman style wood windows. One other important feature of the building's exterior is the type of brick used which is an interesting refinement. The building's walls are composed of molded brick with a vertical wire strike in the center to give the overall coursing assemblage the appearance of Flemish bond. Used on a grand scale for the size of this building, it gives the church added significance.

Though Rev. Mitcham did not design and build a typical Tudor Revival church, he may well have drawn general inspiration from a true Tudor period landmark. The idea for Mitcham's rectilinear, jewel box-like sanctuary with a short tower does resemble the atypical format of the Royal Chapel of St. Peter ad Vincula, London. This small, c.1520 chapel is on the grounds of the Tower of London and thus was a well-known sight to tourists and American servicemen. Its general design - that of a nearly flat-roofed masonry box with small tower and symmetrically placed large windows on the flanks - is the most likely precedent for the few flat-roofed Tudor Revival churches occasionally built in the United States during the interwar era.

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A less exotic design source could be the simple layout and corner tower format of many American rural churches. By the 1920s, architects and builders were applying Tudor Revival stylistic elements to these basic “one-room” churches. By the early 1900s, the fairly recent development of masonry veneering for wood frame or concrete block construction made it possible for these simple churches to have brick or stone exteriors, rather than the wood siding of past years. Viewed in this way, the Spruce Street A.M.E. Church is a later refinement of a pervasive late-19th century building type. This idea, however, does not explain Mitcham’s use of a flat roof, which is atypical of the “corner tower rural church” typology.

Unfortunately, much of the interior finishes were lost in the 1976 fire, however, two important features remain. These are the balcony along the south end of the sanctuary (photo 08) and the altar area, which is recessed into a broad, full-round arched opening (photo 07). The church retains its historic staircases in the entry tower and in the back, northeast corner, and a few five-panel wood doors. It also retains its stepped platform at the altar and the undivided spaces that compose the sanctuary and basement fellowship hall. Despite the loss of some historic art glass windows and interior finishes, Spruce Street A. M. E. Church still retains the important features that identify it as a building for religious use.

As identified in the Vigo County Interim Report of the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory, there are about twenty other buildings in the Jacobethan Revival style, classified separately from the Tudor Revival style (Indiana does not use Jacobethan Revival as a style any longer; all buildings mentioned here can be generally characterized as Tudor Revival). Only a few of these are single-family residences. There are seventeen buildings of a more public nature, which include three large apartment buildings, four churches (including Spruce Street), nine educational facilities, and one large downtown commercial building, the Chamber of Commerce Building at 623-629 Cherry Street (1924, listed on the NR, demolished 2016). All of the buildings are in or near Terre Haute and were constructed between 1911 and 1934, when the last of the style, a building at Indiana State University, was constructed.

The high number of school buildings feature brick walls with stonework, such as crenelations and quoining, and were built between 1917 and 1926. The three churches besides Spruce Street (identified in the survey as St. John Temple) are its mother church, Allen Chapel A. M. E. constructed in 1913 at 224 Crawford Street (listed on the NR), Westminster Presbyterian Church constructed in 1925 at 2200 Wabash Avenue, and the Otterbein United Brethren Church constructed at 801 South 25th Street in 1927, the same year as Spruce Street Church.

The Presbyterian church is brick with stone trim. It features two narrow entry towers with crenellated parapets and stained art glass windows with stone label lintels. The Brethren church is also brick with stone trim and features a narthex with a front and side gables and stained art glass windows some of which feature triangular arches with keystones.

Allen Chapel A. M. E. Church is located on the northwest corner of Crawford Street and Highway 421. The church is thought to be the oldest African American congregation in western Indiana, established in 1870 at this location. A tornado and fire in 1913 caused the building to be

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reconstructed in its present form, designed by local architect/contractor James W. Henson.²⁷ The yellow-colored brick building has a large corner entry tower, stone trim, and stained art glass windows with Tudor and Gothic arches. The building has a second rear entry tower (southwest corner), a tall base composed of block, and pedimented entries of stone. The building, and its corner tower, feature hipped roofs. A parsonage similar in design to Spruce Street is adjacent west of the church.

It is unknown if Henson had formal training as an architect. Census records, directories, and his death certificate typically identify him as a contractor or builder. It is unknown if he participated in any way in the design or construction of Spruce Street A. M. E. Church. Henson was a locally prominent member of the African American community in Terre Haute and was identified as both an architect and pastor. The construction and design of the Spruce Street church is attributed to a former pastor, James Mitcham.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

²⁷ Allen Chapel A. M. E. Terre Haute National Register of Historic Places. Audrey Acton Graham, 1975.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Allen Chapel A. M. E. Terre Haute National Register of Historic Places. Audrey Acton Graham, 1975.

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Spruce Street A. M. E. Church & Parsonage
Name of Property

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Racial Discrimination Not Uncommon in past: Vigo County Library:
<https://indianamemory.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/vcpl/id/10805>

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Terre Haute: 1911

“Social News, Church Notes” *Terre Haute Tribune Star*. 4 Feb 1962. Pg. 33, col. 6

“Spruce Street AME Church Marks Reopening Sunday” *Terre Haute Tribune*. 8 April 1977. Pg. 9, cols. 4-5

“State Promises Assistance if Local Police Needed” *Terre Haute Tribune*. 24 April 1970. Pg. 1, cols. 7-8

Terre Haute Community Memorializes George Ward with Historical Marker: Equal Justice Initiative: <https://ejj.org/news/terre-haute-community-memorializes-george-ward-with-historical-marker/>

“Terre Haute” *Indianapolis Recorder*. 10 Sept 1927. Pg. 7, col. 1

“Trustees to Meet on Black Issues” *Terre Haute Tribune*. 25 April 1970. Pg. 1, cols. 6-7

United States Federal Population Census for Terre Haute: 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930

Vigo County Interim Report Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 1984.

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 # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government

Spruce Street A. M. E. Church & Parsonage

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☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 167-628-20203

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property Less than one acre

Use the UTM system

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 16	Easting: 466577	Northing: 4369473
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Probst Subdivision Lots 15 and 16, which combined equal 80 feet east/west along Spruce Street and 140 feet north/south along North 19th Street, on the northwest corner of North 19th Street and Spruce Street.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This is the property historically associated with St. John Temple/Spruce Street A. M. E. Church in Terre Haute. It includes the church built in 1927 and parsonage built in 1929. The church owns vacant lots to the west of the church building, but they are not included in this nomination.

Spruce Street A. M. E. Church & Parsonage
Name of Property

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kurt West Garner
organization: Spruce Street A. M. E. Church & Parsonage
street & number: 12954 6th Road
city or town: Plymouth state: IN zip code: 46563
e-mail: kwgarner@kwgarner.com
telephone: 574-780-1423
date: April 12, 2024

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 this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)
-

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Spruce Street A. M. E. Church & Parsonage
City or Vicinity: Terre Haute
County: Vigo State: Indiana
Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Spruce Street A. M. E. Church & Parsonage
Name of Property

Vigo County, IN
County and State

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at the church building

1 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest at the church building

2 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking east at the church building.

3 of 19.

Photographer: Noah Nobbe

Date Photographed: April 9, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest at the church parsonage

4 of 19.

Photographer: Noah Nobbe

Date Photographed: April 9, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest at the church parsonage

Spruce Street A. M. E. Church & Parsonage

Name of Property

Vigo County, IN

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5 of 19.

Photographer: Noah Nobbe

Date Photographed: April 9, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast at the back of the church parsonage

6 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast inside the church sanctuary

7 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking south inside the church sanctuary toward the balcony

8 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking south in entry tower foyer

9 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Spruce Street A. M. E. Church & Parsonage
Name of Property

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Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking at staircases in entry tower foyer

10 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking at historic stained glass windows in south façade of sanctuary

11 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast in second story of entry tower

12 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

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

13 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest in pastor's study

Spruce Street A. M. E. Church & Parsonage

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14 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking west in basement classroom

15 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast in basement toilet rooms

16 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest in basement fellowship hall

17 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast in basement fellowship hall toward kitchen

18 of 19.

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Spruce Street A. M. E. Church & Parsonage

Name of Property

Vigo County, IN

County and State

Date Photographed: January 26, 2024

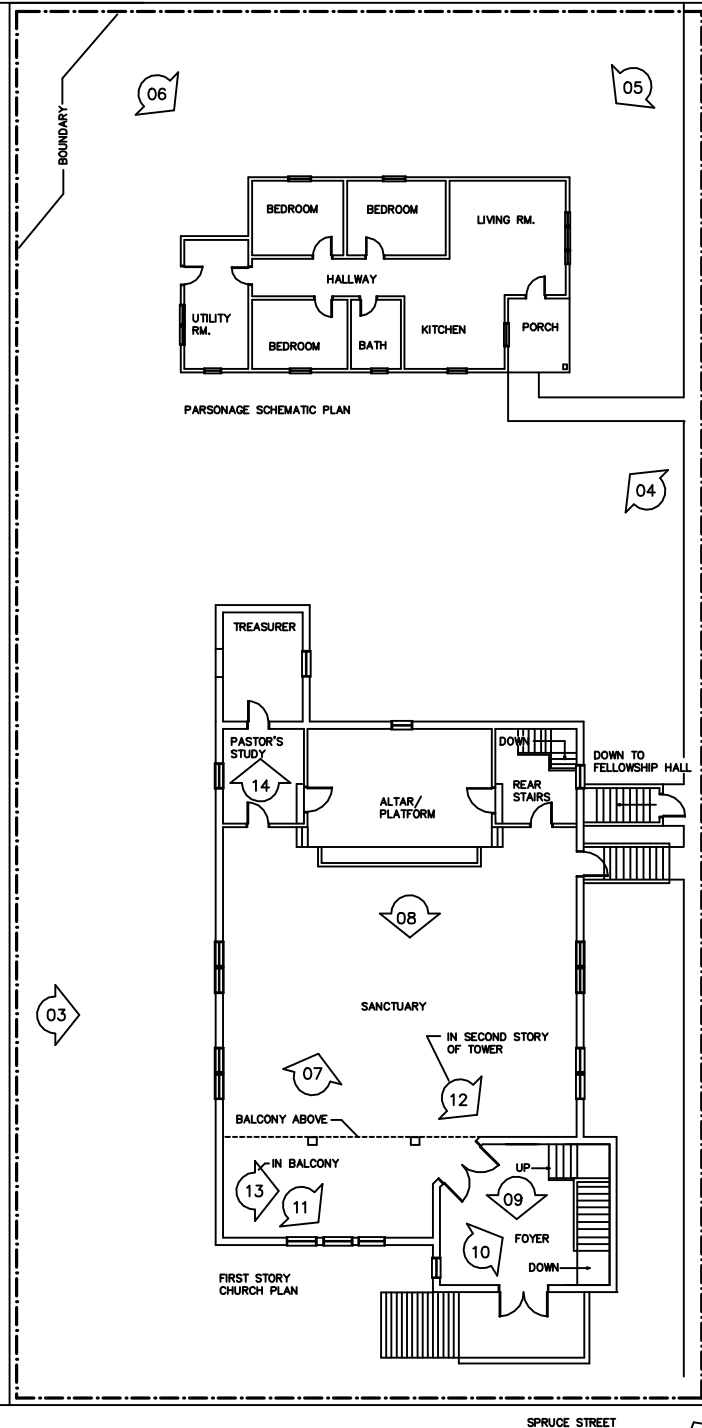
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking east in basement back entry/stairs

19 of 19.

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.

ALLEY

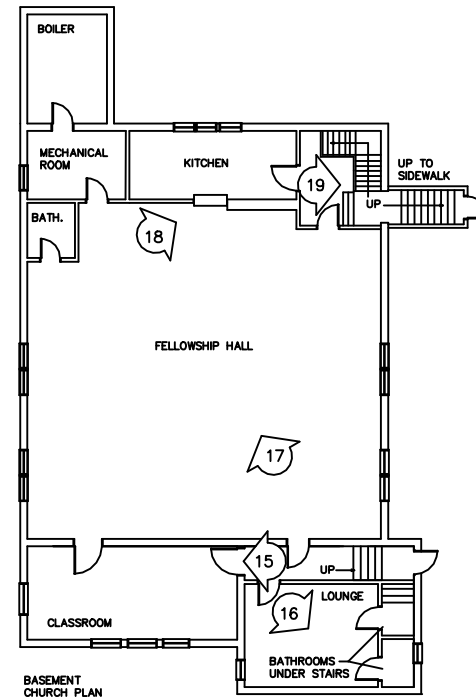


PARSONAGE SCHEMATIC PLAN

FIRST STORY CHURCH PLAN

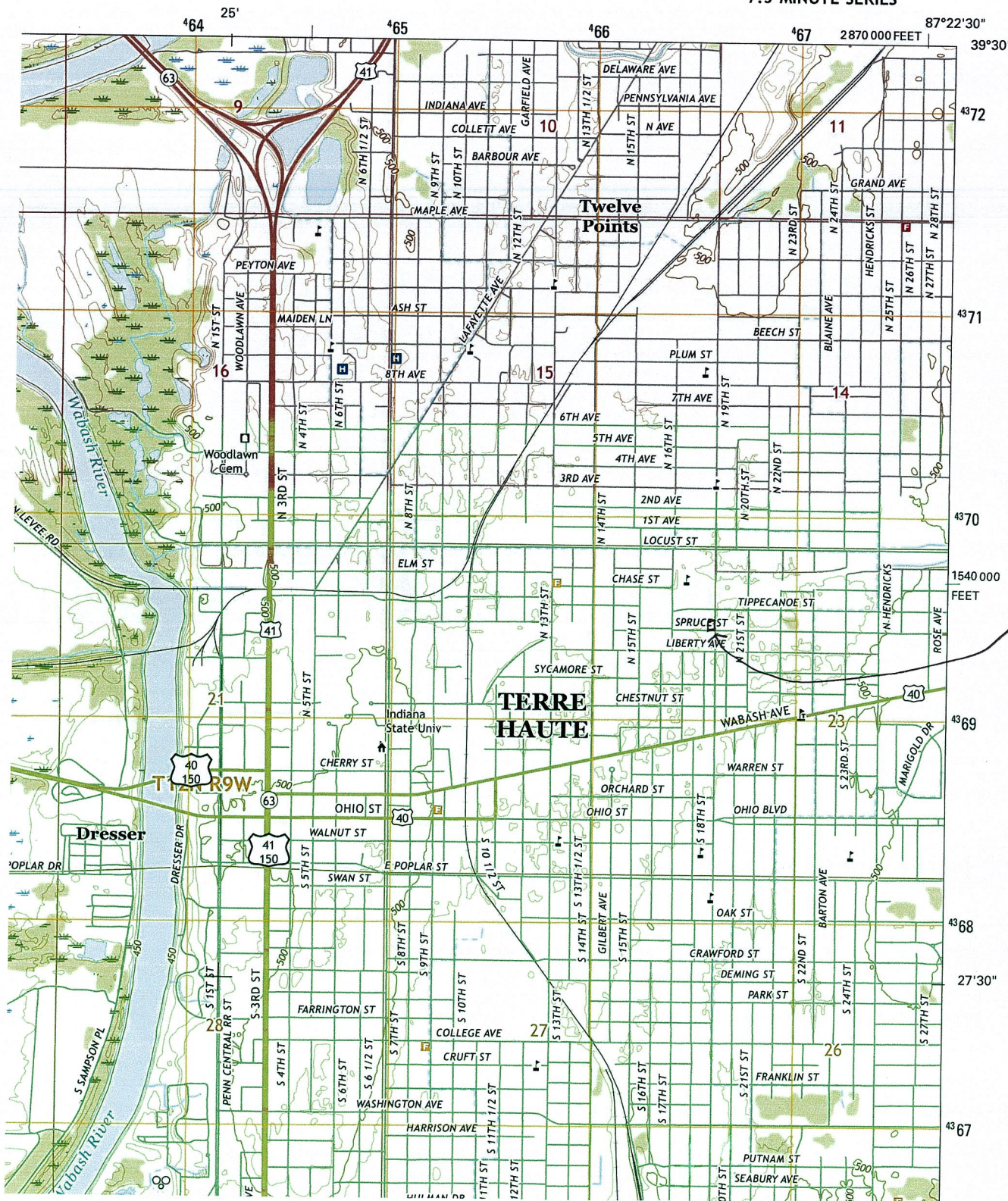
SPRUCE STREET A.M.E. CHURCH & PARSONAGE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
TERRE HAUTE, VIGO COUNTY, IN
1616 SPRUCE ST. & 518 N. 19TH ST.

00 = Photographs



BASEMENT CHURCH PLAN

TERRE HAUTE QUADRANGLE
INDIANA-VIGO CO.
7.5-MINUTE SERIES



SPRUCE STREET A.M.E. CHURCH & PARSONAGE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
TERRE HAUTE, VIGO COUNTY, IN
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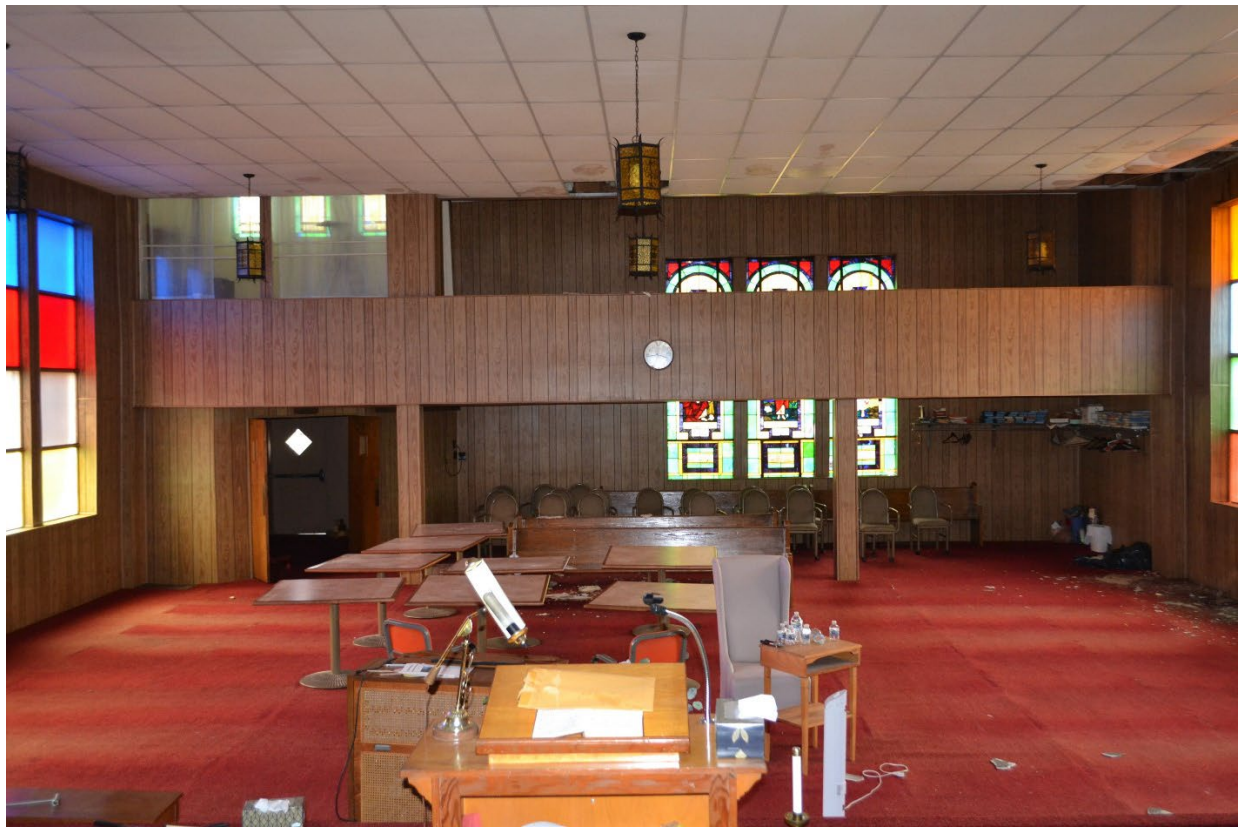
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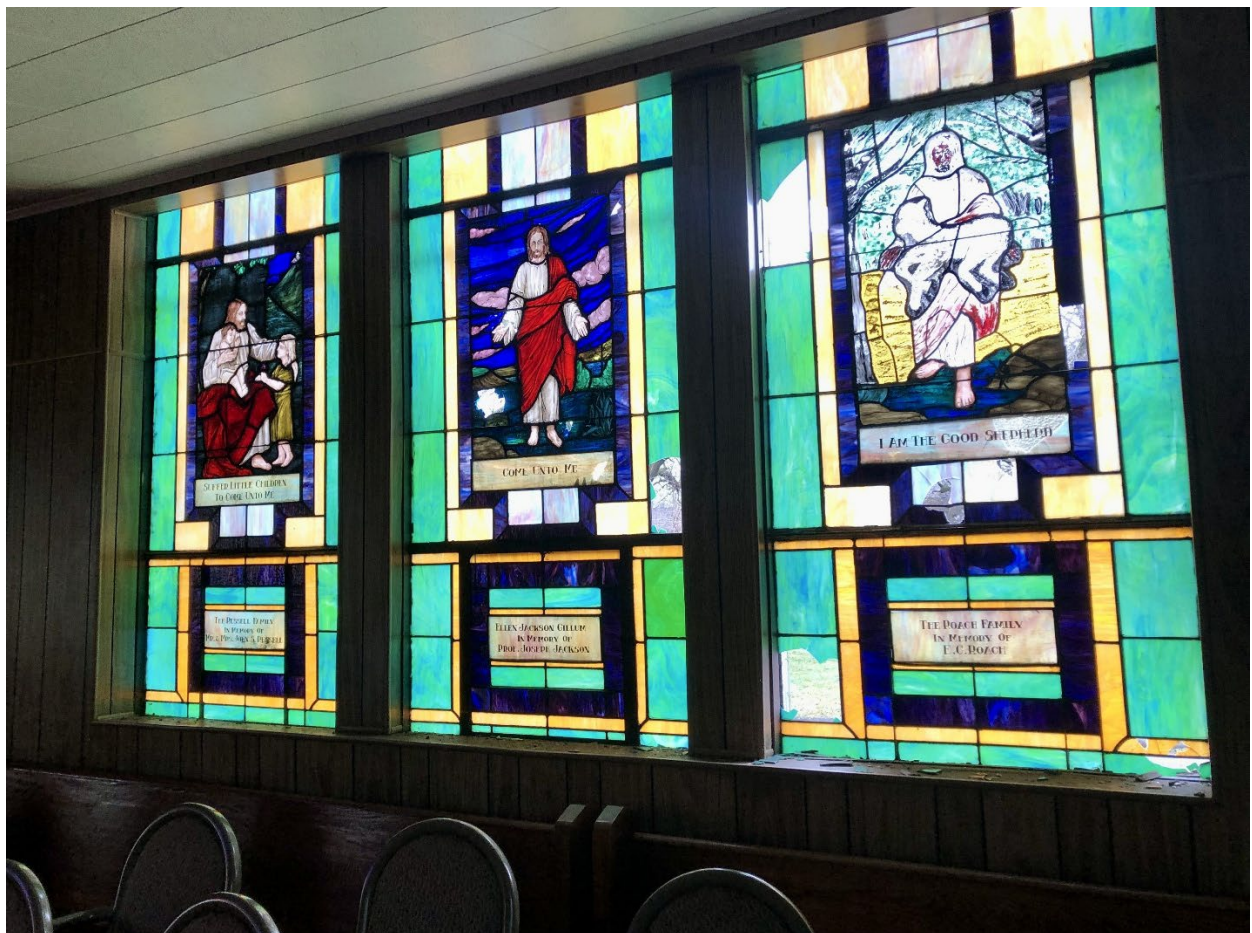
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IN_VigoCounty_SpruceStreetAMEChurch&Parsonage_0013