

Baptist Church
Charles Street between Prince
and King Streets
Beaufort
Beaufort County
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-290

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

HABS 50
7-BAUF.
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BAPTIST CHURCH

Location: Charles Street between Prince and King Streets,
Beaufort, Beaufort County, South Carolina

Present Owner: Baptist Church Congregation, Beaufort, South
Carolina

Present Occupant: Baptist Church

Present Use: Religious

Brief Statement
of Significance: A mid-nineteenth century church with attractive
architectural features.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

- A. Original and Subsequent Owners: Baptist Church Congregation.
- B. Date of Erection: 1844 (date on cornerstone).
- C. Builder: Richard Fuller.
- D. Notes on Alterations and Additions: Extensive repairs,
1959; addition of belfry and spire to tower, very recent.
- E. Sources of Information:
South Carolina, in American Guide Series (New York: Oxford
University Press, 1941).
Information supplied by Mr. and Mrs. Howard E. Danner,
Beaufort, South Carolina.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. General Statement:
 1. Architectural interest and merit: A representative
mid-nineteenth century Baptist Church plan with unusu-
ally fine Greek Revival plaster ornamentation.
 2. Condition of fabric: Excellent; extensive repairs
have been made in recent years.
- B. Detailed Description of Exterior:
 1. Number of stories: Single tier of windows gives the
appearance of one story.

2. Number of bays: Six bays in length.
3. Over-all dimensions: About 55' x 77'; the auditorium is 52' wide by 60' long.
4. Layout--shape: Rectangular, facing east.
5. Foundations: Stucco on brick; water table.
6. Wall construction: Stucco on brick, white in color. Wall treatment of full-height Doric pilasters; capitals have two successive echinus moldings. No base.
7. Structural system: Load-bearing brick walls.
8. Porches: On the east front is a recessed portico of three narrow bays flanked by a bay with pilasters on each side. Two plain stucco Greek Doric columns are placed in antis, about 25' in height. Flooring is of flagstones but the columns rest on sandstone blocks. A low wide flight of modern concrete steps leads up from sidewalk level. Three doorways lead to the interior from the porch, and a doorway on each side leads to stairs in the corner; there is also a front door on each side opening to the stairs. The porch has a pediment, extending the whole width of the building.
9. Doorways: The openings are plain, square-headed. The central door is double, each half being 3'-0" wide by 9'-3 1/2" wide. The other doors are 3'-10" wide by 7'-6" high. The two-panel doors, natural color, all appear original.
10. Windows: Openings are semicircular-arched, with a thin plain impost. Those on the sides are triple-hung, 24-over-24-over-24 light, with radiating panes above in the arch.
11. Roof: The roof is gabled, and covered with modern composition shingles. A Tuscan entablature surmounts the columns and pilasters to form a cornice for the whole building.
12. Tower: A square tower rises from the roof at the east end; it is of painted wood. There is a rusticated stage with a round opening on each side, having a base and cornice. Above this is a recently added open belfry stage, square in plan, with a semicircular-arched opening on each side framed by a pilastered Doric frontispiece, with pediment and attic course. Above this is an octagonal spire.

C. Detailed Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The auditorium is rectangular, with a gallery on three sides; a recessed porch and corner stairs occupy the east front.
2. Stairways: Stairs rise to a low landing, turn and continue beyond stair towers into the body of the church in a long flight.
3. Flooring: Entirely covered by carpeting.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster, painted; plain wood wainscoting the height of the pews.
5. Interior woodwork: Pews are in the form of benches, with paneled ends.
6. Order supporting gallery: Fluted Greek Doric columns, 9'-0" high, of plaster, carry a conventional entablature, with an attic course forming the gallery railing. Columns are spaced in six bays the length of the auditorium, and five bays across.
7. Ceiling: The ceiling has no interior supports. A large cove, beginning about 27' above the floor, is divided into vertical panels each bearing three plaster paterae, and bordered at the top by a band of smooth conventional leaves resembling cobra heads. This band carries around quadrants at the corners, on the ceiling; in each quadrant is a rosette. The main ceiling panel contains a large patera on axis at each end, and a large plaster or wood centerpiece, at whose center are several successive bands of smooth conventional leaves, radiating, outside of which are anthemions borne on stalks (this is very similar to the centerpiece of Beth Elohim Synagogue in Charleston, South Carolina, built 1840). From the centerpiece hangs a three-tiered brass chandelier (possibly modern). Below the cove is a molded cornice and a frieze ornamented with a foliage band in relief; its character is not Greek--possibly it follows Renaissance models of northern Europe. Below the frieze is a simple architrave. The ceiling was greatly damaged in 1959 by a storm; most of the ornament was saved and remounted, some recast.
8. West interior wall: There is no chancel recess; a paneled platform with pulpit projects from this wall, above which, on the wall, is a large panel with architrave moldings, crossetted at the head, carrying a frieze and pedimented cornice with antefixae.

9. Other interior finish: Window openings have no trim; modern interior blinds. Doorways have wood architrave trim. There is a box lock on the central door; other hardware appears largely modern.
- D. Site and Surroundings: This building and its churchyard occupy an entire small block. An accessory building erected in 1917 adjoins to the south and to the west.

Prepared by Harley J. McKee
Architect
National Park Service
August 1963

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600 Charles Street
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Beaufort County
South Carolina

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