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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1004

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: Salem Baptist Church

Other names/site number: N/A

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: 2001 Seiler Road

City or town: Alton State: IL County: Madison

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐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 ___C ___D

DSHPO 11-7-2013

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

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**

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:) _____

for Edson N. Beall 12.31.13

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:	x
Public – Local	
Public – State	
Public – Federal	

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	x
District	
Site	
Structure	
Object	

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
1	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
3	2	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
FUNERARY: cemetery

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: religious facility
FUNERARY: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19th AND EARLY 20th CENTURY REVIVALS: Late Gothic Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:
Concrete (foundation; textured block walls)
Asphalt (roof)
Glass (windows)

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

Salem Baptist Church is located in the Foster Township of Madison County, Illinois, approximately six miles north of the City of Alton. Situated northwest of the Seiler and Wood Station Roads intersection, the building is a one-story, gable-front plan, Gothic Revival style church constructed in 1912. Salem Baptist Church has an L-plan, which includes a rear one-story wing constructed in 1979. The church has an asphalt-shingled gabled roof, exterior walls of textured concrete block, and a poured concrete foundation. The building faces south toward Seiler Road (County Road 52). The parcel is bounded at the south and east by Seiler Road and at the north and west by adjacent property lines. A portion of Sadie Lane extends north from Seiler Road, crossing the southwest corner of the property (west of the church). The church is located near the northeast end of the lot, which holds an asphalt paved parking lot (east), a cemetery (north and west), outhouse (west), and prefabricated outbuilding (west). The surrounding landscape is rural. Mature trees, including a cedar, extend east/west just north of the church, roughly bordering the northern lot line. A contemporary detached sign, bearing the name of the church, fronts the property facing Seiler Road (south). The property consists of a church (contributing), cemetery (contributing), sign (non-contributing), outbuilding (non-contributing) and outhouse (contributing). Landscape features include a parking lot, trees and other plantings, and a portion of the road (Sadie Lane).

Integrity Discussion

Salem Baptist Church retains its historical location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Most changes to the property occurred during its period of significance (prior to 1964) and were minor (such as the addition of exterior security lighting near the parking lot and entrances). The exterior of the building was not painted until after 1925, but this alteration (made prior to 1950) falls within the period of significance. Changes that occurred after the period of significance include standard improvements such as the addition of a bathroom, construction of a rear wing for offices, a new roof, the addition of a baptistery, and handicapped access facilities. Table 1 provides a list of the property's alterations and associated dates. The most significant alteration was replacement of the original window lights in 1959 (which falls within the period of significance). This alteration does not compromise the integrity of the building for two reasons. In relation to physical composition, the replacement lights were placed within the framework of the church's original windows (see Figure 1, which illustrates the church as it appeared in 1925). Additionally, the replacement of the original glass is important to the building's significance under social history. The window project was spearheaded by the Ladies Aid Society of Salem Baptist Church, which undertook fundraising.

Section 8 (page 17) discusses the importance of Salem's Ladies Aid Society in relation to the property's social history.

Modifications that occurred during and following the building's period of significance (1903 – 1963) have in no way altered or diminished the integrity of the property.

Table 1. Alterations to Salem Baptist Church, 1940-1991

Year	Alteration
1940	Security lighting added
1950	Open bays on bell tower filled with wood vents
1955	Basement remodeled
1959	Gothic window lights replaced
1973	Bathroom added in basement (former coal room)
1979	New roof shingles; rear wing addition; baptistery; side entry wing; handicapped access (ramps, chair lifts, etc.)
1991	Paired glass doors replaced original wood doors on main elevation

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Narrative Description

Exterior Description - Church

Salem Baptist Church is a one-story gable-front plan building with exterior textured block walls. The primary (south) elevation features a bell tower (also constructed of textured block) at the southeast corner of the building. The foundation wall is concrete and visible above ground. A concrete band divides the foundation from the textured block walls. The primary elevation has a facing gable wall with two centered Gothic arched windows filled with multi-paned marbleized glass. The window arches are capped with concrete arches and keystones. Windows have concrete sills. One of the windows (east) has an opaque exterior covering. The eaves are covered with synthetic siding. The primary entry is situated near the base of the bell tower at the southeast corner of the building. The tower bay projects slightly away from the primary elevation. A set of concrete steps lead to a stoop. The steps are bordered by wrought iron rails. A frame wheelchair ramp extends from the west end of the stoop across the primary elevation. The entry bay is filled with paired single-light and aluminum doors, which lead to the vestibule. Above the doors is a single-light transom. Above the transom is a fanlight arch window that has been painted over. An arched hood supported by frame braces and capped with asphalt shingles extends above the entry and painted fanlight window. Similar to the window openings, the entry bay is capped with concrete "headers" that create an arch above the bay. The upper bell tower

(south elevation) holds a louvered vent. The tower is capped by a steep pyramidal roof clad with asphalt shingles.

The west elevation of the church has three six-light foundation level windows and three Gothic arched windows above the foundation windows. The main level (Gothic) windows are similar in appearance to those on the primary elevation. All of the windows have a lower awning style insert, and all are covered with opaque protective coverings above the awning light. The windows are filled with marbleized glass. An interior brick flue is visible near the north end of the roofline. At the north end of the church is a one-story wing with a low gabled roof. The wing is clad with synthetic siding and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Eaves are enclosed with synthetic materials. The west elevation of the rear wing holds a wood door with an upper diamond shaped light. The door is offset by an exterior lighting fixture. The entry bay is accessed via a raised concrete block stoop with concrete steps and a metal balustrade. At the foundation level (near the lower windows on the west elevation) is a low metal fence that surrounds an air conditioning unit.

The rear (north) church elevation comprises the rear wing, which is slightly lower in height than the primary church wing. The original rear exterior wall of textured concrete block is visible above the gabled roofline of the rear wing addition. The rear elevation has three basement level (raised foundation) windows of single-sash design. The upper wall holds two small double-hung, one-over-one windows. The gable field has a louvered vent. A metal flue is visible at the roofline of the rear wing.

The east (side) elevation of the church faces the paved asphalt parking lot. This elevation retains the original concrete block walls (south end), a slightly projecting synthetic clad section (central) and the rear wing that projects further west than the two remaining sections of the elevation. This latter portion of the elevation is also clad with synthetic siding. The corner tower bay flanks the south end of the elevation and retains original glass block lights on the west and north elevations. These windows have concrete sills and flat arches. The upper section of the towers' east and south walls support louvered vents. The remaining block wall on the primary east elevation holds a single Gothic arched window with marbled glass. The central section of the east wall projects slightly away from the block portion of the elevation. The projecting bay holds a half-story gabled entry wing leading to an interior hallway. The entry leading to the hall consists of a single-light glass door. Offsetting the entry is a Gothic arched window. This window is narrow and taller than the other Gothic windows on the church. The window is covered with an opaque material. The remainder of the east elevation comprises the rear wing (north end of the elevation). This portion of the elevation holds a small double-hung window filled with an air conditioning unit. A sign posted on the elevation, below the window, indicates that the adjacent parking space is reserved for the pastor of the church.

An exterior light affixed to a wood telephone pole is situated in the parking lot east of the church. The pole also supports a metal mailbox.

Interior Description – Church

The interior sanctuary of the Salem Baptist Church is a central aisle plan with an off-center entrance from the side vestibule/entry at the southeast corner of the building (east wall). Paired swinging wood doors with upper rectangular lights lead from the vestibule to the sanctuary. The vestibule is situated within the church's southeast tower. Scrolled original wooden pews with upholstered backs and seats flank the central aisle. Gothic arched windows are situated as three on the east and west walls and two on the south wall. The south elevation windows are narrower than the remaining Gothic windows. Each window has an upper centered cross pattern. Lower awning lights each have a centered diamond pattern of red and blue. Red bands create a rope like pattern around the outer design of the window glass. The vaulted ceiling of the sanctuary features beaded diagonal wood patterning that is original. Original pendant lights with chains hang from the ceiling as do two contemporary ceiling fans. The pulpit and altar are centered at the north end of the sanctuary. A baptistery with a painted religious scene backdrop is situated behind the pulpit. The pulpit is raised and holds seats for the choir (east end), a lectern and pedestal (west end), and central communion rite table. An original turned altar rail separates the pulpit from the rest of the sanctuary. The altar area holds an organ and table (west end), and a piano and drum set (west end). A door is situated at the northwest corner of the sanctuary (north wall), leading to the rear wing. The door is raised and accessed via three steps. The floor of the sanctuary is carpeted.

Behind the sanctuary at the upper/primary floor, is a cross hallway that leads to offices and a staircase (east end). The staircase leads to the basement and east elevation door that opens into the parking lot. The rear wing floors are carpeted. Fluorescent lighting is attached to the hall and office ceilings as are circular air/heat vents. Restrooms, storage space and the pastor's office are all situated off the hall leading to the east staircase. The pastor's office is located at the east end of the hall. The office has a single double-hung window, carpeted floor, and ceiling light/vent. The basement holds a kitchen area (north end) and dining room. Finishes are contemporary and overhead fluorescent lighting is attached to the ceiling. The staircase steps and basement floor are concrete (over brick).

Outhouse

Situated northwest of the church and east of Sadie Lane is an outhouse constructed in 1903. The concrete block building has an asphalt-shingled hipped roof. The south elevation (facing Seiler

Road) holds a frame door composed of two upper vertical panels and a large plywood single bottom panel. There is no other fenestration. A rear door (north elevation – used originally as the ladies' entrance) has been filled with concrete blocks. A contemporary sewage tank is situated immediately east of the outhouse.

Outbuilding (NC)

North of the outhouse is a prefabricated metal outbuilding erected in 2002. The walls and low gabled roof are seamed metal. A solid door is located on the east wall of the outbuilding.

Cemetery

The north end of the parcel holds a cemetery established in 1903 when internments were moved from another cemetery on Blue Ridge Road in Macoupin County.[1] Many of the burials are unmarked. A collection of early-twentieth century and contemporary marble and granite stones mark approximately a dozen of the burials and include flat stones with bronze markers and one pedestal marker. Some of the grave markers are early stones that are simple granite and limestone markers placed on the burial site. The cemetery holds a mature cedar tree (east end) and burials are directed facing the east. The site holds 54 documented burials.[2]

Sign (NC)

Near the southwest corner of the church is a contemporary sign for the church. The sign is composed of metal and plastic and supported by two metal columns at either end. Attached to the rear portion of the marker are three frame slender crosses that rise above the worded section of the sign.

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[1] (Madison County Genealogical Society), *Cemeteries & Tombstone Inscriptions of Madison County, Illinois, Volume II* (Edwardsville, IL: Self-published, 1985), 21.

[2] Ibid. Of note, based on an interview with Charlotte Johnson whose family is associated with the church, Rev. J.H. Johnson (1812-1863) is not buried in the cemetery at Salem Baptist Church. The burial was incorrectly recorded by the Madison County Genealogical Society in 1984.

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.)

- [x] 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.)

- [x] 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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance
1903 - 1963

Significant Dates
1903
1912
1960

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Banks, Madison / Builder
Walker, John / Builder
Marshall, Samuel / Builder

Statement of Significance - Summary

Salem Baptist Church at 2001 Seiler Road, Foster Township, Madison County, Illinois, was constructed in 1912 for an African-American congregation organized in 1819. The associated parcel includes the church (contributing), a 1903 outhouse (contributing), 1903 cemetery (contributing), 2002 outbuilding (non-contributing) and a contemporary sign (non-contributing). Throughout the early to mid-twentieth century, Salem Baptist Church served as the local African-American community's center of social activities. The building in addition to its religious associations, supported community events, clubs, meetings and civil rights activities. The **level of significance** for Salem Baptist Church is **local**. The church is significant under **Criterion A** for its associations in **Social History** and **Ethnic Heritage**. The **period of significance** is **1903 – 1963**. The year 1903 represents the property's earliest aboveground contributing resources (outhouse and cemetery). The year 1963 reflects the property's significance, which has been achieved within the past 50 years, prior to passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties

Salem Baptist Church meets Criterion Consideration A (Religious Properties) for its social and ethnic associations (Criterion A) within the local African-American community. Religious properties are not typically eligible for their religious roles but may be eligible for "important historic or cultural forces that the property represents."[3] Salem Baptist Church meets this requirement. The church served as a center for cultural, social, and other non-religious activities for African-Americans living in Foster Township (Upper Alton/Wood River vicinity). African-American churches frequently served as vital components of black communities and Salem Baptist Church was no exception. Over the years, the building was central to the local black community. Throughout the period of significance (1903 – 1963), African Americans living in Foster Township were frequently restricted from opportunities that whites took for granted, including activities related to communal and professional liaisons. In this regard, Salem Baptist Church served an important role in providing support to blacks – particularly during the years prior to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin.[4] The church's role in the local black community extended beyond religious associations that white churches typically assigned themselves. Salem

[3] United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: Self-published, 1991; rev. 1995), p. 26.
[4] United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary, "Recess Reading: An Occasional Feature from the Judiciary Committee – The Civil Rights Act of 1964," Available at http://www.judiciary.senate.gov/about/history/CivilRightsAct.cfm (Access date: 20 August 2013).

Baptist Church provided charitable, civic and community support throughout the period of significance, focusing primarily on the social and ethnic needs of local African-Americans.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Early History, Salem Baptist Church, 1819 - 1915

Salem Baptist Church was constructed for an African-American congregation, which obtained the property's associated parcel in 1845. Two churches predate the current building constructed in 1912. Initially, the church also supported Salem Baptist School (closed in 1889, no longer extant). The first Salem Baptist Church was frame, erected c. 1855. In 1876, this building was replaced by a brick church. The current building (1912) was constructed on the foundation of the 1876 brick church. The associated parcel has two contributing resources that predate the 1912 church – a 1903 outhouse and a cemetery moved to the parcel in 1903 from Macoupin County. The original cemetery in Macoupin County is the site of a former farmstead owned by James Stewart in the 1810s.[5] It is believed that Salem's first congregants were organized in 1819 on Stewart's farm by a Baptist missionary, James Ely Welch.[6] The individuals who comprised the early congregation were free people of color – most were born in Illinois. These individuals settled near Alton/Wood River prior to 1800 and included the Stewart Family (Moses, James and George Stewart), as well as the Barton, Perry and Mann Families.[7]

Salem's origination concurs with the activities of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS). During the 1810s, the ABFMS ordained missionaries to convert Native Americans, African-Americans (slave and free), and "western frontiersmen" to the Baptist faith.[8] Two men headed the ABFMS missions in Illinois and Missouri: John Mason Peck (1789 – 1858) and James Ely Welch (1789 – 1876).[9] Peck in particular became involved in Illinois' anti-slavery activities and settled in Rock Springs (St. Clair County). He conferred with Governor Edward

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[5] (Madison County Genealogical Society), "Salem Baptist Church," *Cemeteries and Tombstone Inscriptions of Madison County, Illinois, Volume 2* (Edwardsville, IL: Self-published, 1985), p. 21; Johnson interview.
[6] Mechal Sobel, *Trabelin' On: The Slave Journey to an Afro-Baptist Faith* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 280.
[7] Charlotte Johnson, Private collection, Salem Baptist Church and the Johnson Family of Fosterburg/Upper Alton/Wood River, IL; Madison County Genealogical Society, *The Stalker* (Volume 5, No. 2, 1985), p. 64.
[8] David Charles Laubach, *American Baptist Home Mission Roots 1824 – 2010* (Valley Forge, PA: American Baptist Home Mission Societies, [2010]), p. 4.
[9] Myron D. Dillow, *Harvesttime on the Prairie: A History of Baptists in Illinois 1796 – 1996* (Franklin, TN: Providence House Publishers, 1996), p. 27.

Coles on anti-slavery legislation during the 1820s and published a series of newspaper articles throughout the 1840s entitled "Slavery in Illinois."[10] Peck, Welch and other Baptist ministers in western Illinois (including James Lemen and John Livingston of the Pin Oak Township in Madison County) were influential in the area's early black churches. In 1839, John Livingston (the first ordained black minister in Illinois) led an organized effort to create the Colored Baptist Association and Friends of Humanity, of which Salem became a member. The organization was renamed as Wood River Baptist Association during the 1850s and is still in existence.[11] Of note, the phrase "Friends of Humanity" was always used by "the white and the African American Baptist associations of Illinois" operating as part of the Underground Railroad.[12]

In 1845, a local African-American farmer, (George) Washington Arbuckle (1814-1850) and his wife, Mariah, donated a portion of their property on Seiler Road to the Salem Baptist congregation.[13] A church and school were constructed in 1855, by which time the congregation was ministered by a former slave of the Coles Family (of Virginia), James Henry Johnson (1810-1863).[14] Johnson was emancipated by the Coles Family when he was brought to Illinois in 1819 but moved to Missouri, a border state which allowed slavery.[15] Both James Henry Johnson and his wife, Eleanor Madden (b. 1813) were "free" mulattos restricted by Missouri's emancipation bond legislation passed in the 1830s.[16] In 1845, the Johnsons finally acquired emancipation

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[10] Kurt E. Leichtle and Bruce G. Carveth, *Crusade Against Slavery: Edward Coles, Pioneer of Freedom* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 2011), p. 116; Roger D. Bridges, "John Mason Peck on Illinois Slavery," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (Autumn 1982,Vol. 75, No. 3), pp. 185-186.
[11] Eddie Mabry, *The History of Wood River Baptist District Association, 1996 – 2004* (Mahomet, IL: Mayhaven Publishing Inc., 2006), pp. 5-6; Jessie Carney Smith, *Black Firsts: 4,000 Ground-Breaking and Pioneering Historical Events* (Detroit: Visible Ink Press, 2012), p. 561.
[12] Mabry, p. 8.
[13] Warranty Deed, Madison County, Book 28, p. 44; United States Census, 1850 Mortality Schedule; Johnson interview.
[14] Johnson interview; Norm Parish, "A legacy on the land," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (29 June 2003), reprinted, *The Stalker* (Volume 24, No. 1, 2004), p. 23. United States Census, Agricultural Schedule (27 December 1850), Madison County, Illinois (Township 6, Range 9), p. 588, line 18; Sobel, 239.
[15] Johnson interview Lorenzo J. Greene, Gary R. Kremer and Antonio F. Holland (eds), *Missouri's Black Heritage* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1980, 1993 revised), 23-24.
[16] Elizabeth Launer, "African-American History of Washington County [MO] & Surrounding Area," Available at: http://www.freewebs.com/aawashco/ (Access date: 5 June 2013). Launer's website is well documented and an excellent resource for researchers, utilizing census, emancipation, probate and secondary resources. Her research complements family history gathered by

bonds and moved to a farmstead in Madison County, Illinois known as "Hilltop" – situated immediately south of Salem Baptist Church. Once the family became actively involved at Salem, they purchased yet another farmstead, Oak Leaf, approximately one-half mile south of the church.[17] The Johnsons' second-eldest son, James P. Johnson (born c. 1840), also became a minister at Salem and oversaw construction of the second church in 1876.[18]

Though the early black settlers in Foster Township were free, many (such as James and Eleanor Johnson) were former slaves who moved from Missouri, Tennessee, Kentucky and Virginia.[19] Illinois was a free state, admitted to the union as such in 1818, but the state allowed slavery to exist. Additionally, Black Codes (i.e., political measures designed to discourage blacks from moving to other free states) prevented full equality for African-Americans in Illinois.[20] Even so, free blacks could own land in Illinois and the state supported what some historians identify as the nation's first legally incorporated (1873) African-American town, Brooklyn (St. Clair County). After 1900, blacks continued to pour into western Illinois during the Great Migration (1916 – 1970) when many moved to secure jobs in St. Louis, East St. Louis and Alton.[21] Census records indicate steady increases in Foster Township's black population during the Great Migration but little else changed during these years. Most residents worked as farmers or laborers, most were natives of Illinois, and most were racially mixed (i.e., identified in early twentieth-century census records as "mulatto").[22]

Salem Baptist Church served as a place for worship and more importantly, as a community center for blacks living in Foster Township and Alton. The church constructed in 1912 reflects the local community's tight relationship – both blacks and whites – as well as those with

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Charlotte Johnson, who provided additional information here. Oak Leaf is still owned by the Johnson Family; Greene, et al, 64.

[17] Launer; Johnson interview.

[18] Parish (reprinted *The Stalker,* 2004); Dan Monroe, "Edward Coles, Patrician, Emancipator," *Illinois Historic Periodicals Online,* Available at: *http://www.lib.niu.edu/2005/iht1210502.html* (Access date: 1 April 2013).

[19] Johnson, private collection.

[20] Roger Bridges, "The Illinois Black Codes," *Illinois Historic Periodicals Online,* Available at: http://www.lib.niu.edu/1996/iht329602.html (Access date: 8 October 2012).

[21] Christopher C. Fennell, "Brooklyn Illinois Archaeology and History Project," Available at: http://www.histarch.illinois.edu/brooklyn/ (Access date: 6 May 2013).

[22] United States Census, 1930; "Madison Banks Rites," *Alton Evening Telegraph* (26 November 1926, p. 2); "Death of Mrs. Madison Banks," *Alton Evening Telegraph* (24 October 1942, p. 6). "Guide to Black History," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Available at: http://www.britannica.com/blackhistory/timeline?tocId=9433428&section=252279 (Access date: 6 June 2013).

different religious backgrounds. Not all persons involved in the building's construction were African-Americans and not all were members of Salem, yet these men worked together on both the church's construction in 1912 and the belfry that was added in 1915. Madison Banks (c. 1871-1942), a stonemason from Alton, was Salem's primary contractor. Banks was African-American but not a congregant of Salem. Samuel Marshall (b. 1863) worked as a contractor on the project. He was a well-known white builder from Alton.[23] Marshall fell from scaffolding about two months before the building was completed (March 1913) but returned two years later to construct the belfry and complete interior finishes.[24] Marshall was largely assisted by John Walker (b. 1891), an African-American farmer and member of Salem. The building's concrete blocks were manufactured by William Emery (b. 1884), also a Salem congregant.[25] The church was completed on May 7, 1913 and construction costs approximated $1,400.[26]

At about the same time that Salem Baptist completed its new church in 1913, a Presbyterian church (also named Salem) was erected approximately one mile west of the Baptist church. Both buildings remain standing on Seiler Road today. The Presbyterian Church attracted many of Salem's white attendees. As a result, Salem Baptist increasingly became referred to as the community's "black" or "Negro" church, whereas Salem Presbyterian functioned as a "white" church.[27] Despite loss of most white members to the Presbyterian Church, Salem grew steadily. In 1910, Salem had 54 members, of whom slightly less than half (20) were Caucasian.[28] The new church completed in 1913 attracted new members, most of whom were African-American. By 1930, Salem supported about 80 members. Gradual declines began in the 1960s and by 1970 the church had about 50 congregants.[29] The pattern of declining membership is similar to that experienced by both black and white rural churches during the 1960s-70s, though reasons vary for the reported declines. Most rural churches lost members as small-scale farming began to wane and younger members left for jobs and/or suburban areas.[30] For black churches, however, wavering membership also had much to do with civil rights legislation that finally broke barriers.

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[23] "25 and 50 Years Ago . . . March 15, 1913," *Alton Evening Telegraph* (15 March 1963), p. 4.
[24] "Notes," *Alton Evening Telegraph* (13 September 1915), p. 2; Johnson interview.
[25] Johnson interview; United States Census, 1930; "William Walker," *Alton Evening Telegraph* (4 December 1956), p. 9.
[26] George Leighty, "Salem Baptist Church Remembers its Past Glory as Future 'Dims'," *Alton Evening Telegraph* (24 April 1965), p. A-6; Johnson interview.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Johnson personal collection.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Benton Johnson, Dean R. Hoge and Donald A. Luidens, "Mainline Churches: The Real Reason for Decline," *First Things* (March 1993), Available at: http://www.firstthings.com/article/2008/05/001-mainline-churches-the-real-reason-for-decline-8 (Access date: 3 June 2013).

Following the Civil Rights Act of 1964, churches began to adapt a more religious (vs. social) role. Until blacks experienced equal access, however, the church (e.g., Salem Baptist Church) served as the primary forum for social and civic activities, which attracted black membership.

Criterion A: Social History

Salem Baptist Church has always served as a "community social center and meeting place" for African-Americans living in the Upper Alton vicinity.[31] Situated in northwest Madison County in the Foster Township, the church is approximately nine miles northeast of downtown Alton and five miles east of Godfrey. Following Illinois' admission to the union in 1818, free African-Americans began to settle in Foster Township. These early families included Samuel Bates, who arrived in 1822, G.W. Arbuckle (1830s), James Henry Johnson (1845), and James Ballinger (1865).[32] Foster Township's black residents engaged in farming and most were members of Salem Baptist Church. The Ballinger Family in particular provides a well-documented example of the typical African-American family living in the vicinity of Salem Baptist Church during the mid-to-late nineteenth century (see Figure 2).

In 1866, James Ballinger (1839-1920) purchased an 80-acre parcel in Foster Township. Ballinger was a farmer, born in Kentucky. His mother was a slave. Ballinger's wife, Matilda A. Jackson (1839-1920) was from Virginia, as were her parents. Both James and Matilda are identified as "mulatto" in early census records and "black" at the time of their deaths.[33] James Ballinger "migrated to Missouri" at age 17. He and Matilda settled in Boonville (MO) where their eldest child, William, was born in 1860.[34] Ballinger enlisted with the Missouri Volunteer Infantry (Company E) in 1862. After the war, the Ballingers moved to Alton (1865) and Foster Township (1866).[35] William Ballinger (the eldest of the Ballingers' seven children) continued his father's farming practices. William married Mary Johnson (b. 1863) in 1883 and the couple had four children. In 1886, William purchased 70 additional acres, increasing the family's farmstead to over 100 acres. In a local 1920s publication, William was noted as an "intelligent and enterprising agriculturalist . . . whose farm . . . in its improvements and appointments bears

[31] Johnson interview.
[32] United States Census,1870 – 1910; Johnson interview.
[33] United States Census, 1880; Illinois Death Index, 1920. Of note, Mr. and Mrs. Ballinger share birth/death years per census and state records.
[34] William T. Norton (ed.), *Centennial History of Madison County, Illinois and Its People, 1812 to 1912* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1912), p. 712.
[35] Ibid.

evidence of the industry, thrift and keen judgment of its owner."[36] Like most of their African-American neighbors, the Ballingers were active members of Salem Baptist Church.[37]

Salem Baptist, as did most early twentieth-century African American churches, "served a multitude of purposes [and one] of the primary functions was social . . . [Black churches] regularly brought people together within a structured setting to interact with each other and offer mutual support."[38] Though Salem Baptist did not restrict religious or social interactions to blacks only, once a "white" church (i.e., Salem Presbyterian) became established in the township, Salem was regarded as a "black" church.[39] Most of Salem's activities were advertised in the local newspaper and attended by blacks and whites. In 1923, the *Alton Evening Telegraph* noted that Salem's annual picnic was "well attended by the colored folks and many of their white friends."[40] A notice of the upcoming annual event in 1942 indicated that the picnic usually attracted "more white people . . . than colored" and "refreshment stands well supplied with fried chicken" were "always a big attraction to Alton folk."[41]

In addition to annual picnics, Salem Baptist hosted fashion shows, ice cream socials, "hay rack" rides, and "basket dinners."[42] The latter event was regarded by young African-Americans as a courtship ritual, in which young men purchased baskets with food prepared by young ladies they wished to pursue romantically.[43] Salem hosted social organizations as well – including a Progressive Club organized in 1938 that offered social, recreational and community activities for black youth (Figure 3). The church also supported a Ladies Aid Society (Figure 4), which grew out of a nineteenth-century quilting group organized in 1899 by five of the church's female members. These women, who wished to address the needs of the church and the larger black community, selected a name to reflect their goals. After 1912, Salem's Ladies Aid Society continued to focus on community and church fundraisers and established a college tuition program named for one of Salem's members, the Lucy North Scholarship Fund.[44] African-American social organizations frequently played a dual role, and women's clubs were among the most active. "Women . . . played a key role in raising funds to keep the [black] churches operating. They organized events such as bake sales, carnivals, suppers, dinners, teas and balls to

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[36] Norton, p. 712.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Jack S. Blocker, Jr., "Building Networks: Cooperation and Communication Among African Americans in the Urban Midwest, 1860 – 1910," *Indiana Magazine of History* (December 2003, Vol. 99, No. 4), p. 375.
[39] Johnson interview.
[40] "Fosterburg," *Alton Evening Telegraph* (21 August 1923), p. 5.
[41] "Salem Picnic Tomorrow," *Alton Evening Telegraph* (12 August 1932), p. 10.
[42] Johnson interview.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Johnson, private collection.

support the church. They were especially useful in raising money to pay for the construction of church buildings."[45] At Salem, the women's club promoted "intellectual and moral progress of the community."[46]

The emphasis of Salem's social role in the black community cannot be overstated. What evolved prior to the Civil War as central to the local African-American community – Salem Baptist Church – was no less important after 1900. Unlike larger cities, such as St. Louis and Chicago, which supported independent literary, social, professional and political groups for blacks, rural communities relied on churches to fill the social gaps for blacks.[47] The church provided communal support, was entrusted by the congregation, and served as a forum for civic activities that blacks otherwise may not have had access to during the early-to-mid twentieth-century. "[B]lack churches [also] provided one of the few forums in which potential black leaders could develop and refine their leadership skills."[48] Social, civic, and political support were all part of Salem's role in the local black community. These responsibilities became increasingly important once the modern civil rights movement gained momentum.

Criterion A: Ethnic History

African-American churches traditionally played multi-dimensional roles that supported the local community. The black church was central to African-Americans' social, educational, and political activities. Like most black churches, Salem's early history is related primarily through oral traditions, most of which are not well known outside of the local community, even today. As discussed previously, Illinois was a free state, yet Black Codes enforced prior to 1865 allowed racial barriers that kept blacks "in their place" – even in "free" states. Such restrictions continued long after slavery had been abolished, demonstrated most prominently through "separate but equal" practices that remained pervasive after 1900.[49] Where society failed African-Americans, black churches often filled the gaps. The black church fostered professional and personal relationships that allowed African Americans to openly engage in social and civic opportunities

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[45] Wilson Fallin, Jr., *The African American Church in Birmingham, Alabama, 1815 – 1963: A Shelter in the Storm* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1997), p. 46.
[46] Johnson interview.
[47] Nina Mjagkij (ed.), *Organizing Black America: An Encyclopedia of African American Associations* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2001), p. 604.
[48] Lorenzo J. Greene, Gary R. Kremer and Antonio F. Holland, *Missouri's Black Heritage (Revised Edition)* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1980), p. 68.
[49] Bridges, "The Illinois Black Codes."

available to whites, but not blacks. Like many black churches, Salem supported the civil rights movement in ways that went unnoticed by those outside the local black community.

> Negroes regularly attend church whether Christians or sinners. They have not yet accumulated wealth adequate to the construction of clubhouses, amusement parks, and theaters . . . Whether they derive any particular joy therefrom or not, the Negroes must go to church, to see their friends, as they are barred from social centers open to whites. They must attend church, moreover, to find out what is going on; for the race has not sufficient interests to maintain in every locality a newspaper of its own, and the white dailies generally mention Negroes only when they happen to commit crimes against white persons. The young Negro must go to church to meet his sweetheart, to impress her with his worth and woo her in marriage, the Negro farmer to find out the developments in the business world, the Negro mechanic to learn the needs of his community and how he may supply them.[50]

As has been discussed, Salem Baptist Church was central to the community as a social center. More importantly, however, was the church's direct relationship to local African-Americans in providing educational, social, and political support. This latter role because increasingly important as the modern civil rights movement emerged and African Americans openly pursued equality in education, housing, and employment. The church was a powerful vehicle in promoting and supporting the black struggle for equal rights. It provided a physical space where blacks could nurture their aspirations and openly engage in social activism – a place that did not exist outside the church for most African Americans.

While Madison County and its rural environs were spared much of the civil unrest experienced in larger cities throughout the 1950s-60s, the area was not without racial division or violence. Some of the most publicized events occurred in the 1960s when Alton's high school demonstrations became aggressive.[51] Violence, however, was not part of Salem's mission. The church adhered to the peaceful movement promoted by Dr. Martin Luther King. This does not mean that Salem was without a public voice in demonstrating its support of equal rights for African-Americans.

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[50] Carter G. Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church* (Washington, D.C.: The Associated Publishers, 1921), 191-192.
[51] Allen Klope, "Tension Closes Madison School," *Alton Evening Telegraph* (7 November 1967), p. 1; Ande Yakstis, "Eleven Injured, 3 Arrested In Alton High Race Battle," *Alton Evening Telegraph* (6 April 1968), p. 1.

Salem's manifestation of its civil rights activism is best demonstrated by a public event that occurred in 1960 when the church hosted a reception for Dr. Ralph Johnson Bunche (1904 – 1971). Bunche was well known by that time as a civil rights activist. He was the first African American to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 1950 and served as Undersecretary of the United Nations, which was his position when he visited Salem in 1960.[52] Bunche had family associations in Alton, Wood River and Fosterburg, where his mother spent some of her early years. In 1960, Bunche returned to Madison County to visit family and delivered a speech at Alton High School entitled "Energizing Africa and the United Nations."[53] His nearly week-long visit concluded with the reception at Salem Baptist Church, where Bunche spoke openly about civil rights to those he knew well and trusted, including Bunche's cousin, a 90-year member of Salem Baptist Church, Cyrus L. Johnson (1900-1991).[54]

Ralph Johnson Bunche was born in Detroit in 1903 or 1904 (sources vary) to Fred and Olive Johnson Bunch.* James Henry Johnson, Salem's minister in 1855, was Ralph Bunche's great-grandfather.[55] Bunche taught at Howard University and Harvard, where he completed his master's (1928) and doctorate (1934) degrees, respectively. He continued postdoctoral work at Northwestern, London School of Economics (1936), and Capetown University (1937).[56] In 1947, Bunche became Undersecretary for the United Nations. In 1950 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in establishing an armistice between Palestine and the Arab States. In these latter two accomplishments, Bunche was the first African American to do so. At the time, he was also the youngest person awarded a Nobel Peace Prize.[57]

Bunche's visit to Salem Baptist Church in 1960 demonstrates strong ties between the church, its African-American congregants and other community members who supported the civil rights movement.[58] His respected and well-spoken support of the black struggle found an actively

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[52] "The Nobel Peace Prize 1950: Ralph Bunche," The Official Web Site of the Nobel Prize, Available at: http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1950/bunche-bio.html(Access date: 16 April 2013).
[53] Morris, See to Head Bunche Reception," *Alton Evening Telegraph* (5 April 1960), p. 8.
[54] Johnson interview.
*Bunch(e) – the final "e" was added by Ralph J. Bunche when he was a teenager (See: Jack Salzman, David Lionel Smith, and Cornel West (eds.), *Encyclopedia of African-American History, Volume 1* [New York: Simon & Shuster MacMillan, 1996], p. 470)
[55] Nobelprize.org; "Ralph Bunche: Defender Background," Gale Cengage Learning website, Available at: http://ralphbunche.weebly.com/defender-background.html (Access date: 20 August 2013).
[56] Salzman et al., p. 470.
[57] Nobelprize.org.
[58] Ibid; Johnson interview.

engaged forum in Salem Baptist Church. Likewise, the use of Salem for this very public event demonstrates the importance of the church in promoting racial equality through peaceful measures. Though Salem was part of the larger movement in local civil rights activities – initially through the Friends of Humanity (i.e., Underground Railroad) and Wood River Baptist District Association – this did not mean that the church gave up on civil rights activism after the Civil War. Salem Baptist Church stepped into the role that in larger cities, black social organizations such as the NAACP and National Urban League led during the 1960s. Salem's support of ethnic and civil rights engagements granted African Americans the opportunity to organize and peacefully protest.

Salem Baptist Church illustrates the social and ethnic activities of a rural black church during the early-to-mid twentieth century. The property is an excellent example of the role that African-American churches played during the period of time when blacks struggled for full equal rights. Salem demonstrates how the local church filled the role of education, leadership, and civic commitment. Additionally, the church was a vital link between blacks and whites, as well as Protestants and non-Protestants living in Foster Township/Upper Alton. The church was a community center, open to all residents' use regardless of color or religious association. As noted by local historian, Charlotte Johnson, "Salem has a long and impressive history of being effective and central to the community. It has stood strong through the storms of time. Today, as in 1912, it is still the only prominently African-American church in a [predominantly] white community."[59]

[59] Charlotte Johnson, Draft National Register Nomination, Salem Baptist Church, Section 8:28 (2009).

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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:

x State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
x Other
Name of repository: Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc.

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre (approximately 0.88 acre)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 38.966868 Longitude: -90.122389

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries for Salem Baptist Church surround the parcel associated with the property at 2001 Seiler Road, Alton, Township 6, Range 9, Section 17 SE, Tax Lot No. 426.

Boundary Justification

The associated boundaries were selected because they encompass the parcel historically associated with Salem Baptist Church and Cemetery.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Ruth Keenoy, Historic Preservation Specialist; Charlotte Johnson, Historian; Tom Raglin (Member, Salem Baptist); Renee Johnson (desc. Rev. James Henry Johnson)
Organization: Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc.
Street & number: 911 Washington Avenue, Suite 170
City or town: St. Louis State: MO Zip code: 63101
E-mail: rkeenoy@landmarks-stl.org; CEJ2040@aol.com (Charlotte Johnson)
Telephone: 314-421-6474
Date: October 31, 2013

Additional Documentation

- **GIS Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans**

Property Owner:
Salem Baptist Church
2001 Seiler Road
Alton, IL 62002
Telephone: 618-465-6889

Photo Log

Name of Property: Salem Baptist Church

City or Vicinity: ALTON

County: MADISON State: IL

Photographer: Ruth Keenoy

Date Photographed: March 13, 2012

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

1 of 15. Primary elevation – camera facing NE
2 of 15. Primary and east elevations – camera facing NW
3 of 15. East elevation – camera facing W
4 of 15. Rear and west elevations – camera facing SE
5 of 15. Outhouse – camera facing NW
6 of 15. Cemetery – camera facing N
7 of 15. Cemetery – camera facing E
8 of 15. Sanctuary – camera facing NE
9 of 15. Sanctuary – camera facing N
10 of 15. Sanctuary – camera facing SE
11 of 15. Ceiling detail (sanctuary) – camera up facing N
12 of 15. Window detail – west wall
13 of 15. Pastor's office – camera facing NE
14 of 15. East hall – camera facing N
15 of 15. Dining/kitchen (basement) – camera facing NW

Index of Figures

Name of Property: Salem Baptist Church

City or Vicinity: ALTON

County: MADISON State: IL

1 of 4. Salem Baptist Church, 1925. Charlotte Johnson collection.
2 of 4. Location of Salem Baptist Church as illustrated in the *New Atlas of Madison County* (1892), p. 51.
3 of 4. Progressive Club, 1940. Jennie C. Johnson collection.
4 of 4. Salem Ladies Aid Society, 1936. Jennie C. Johnson collection.

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.

Figure 1. Salem Baptist Church, 1925. Jennie C. Johnson collection. The image features members of Salem Baptist Church and local residents attending Salem's "Friends and Family" program.

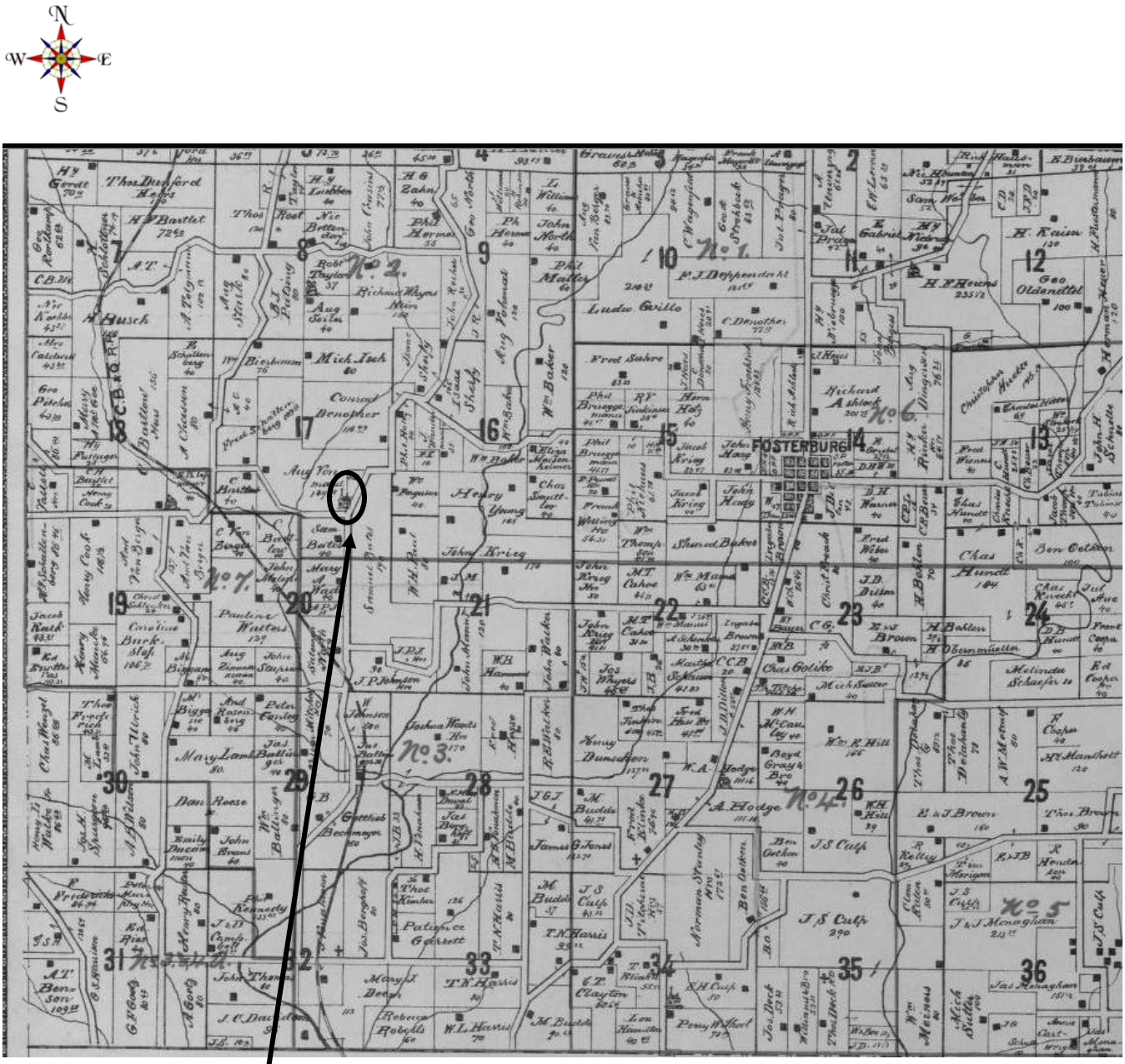


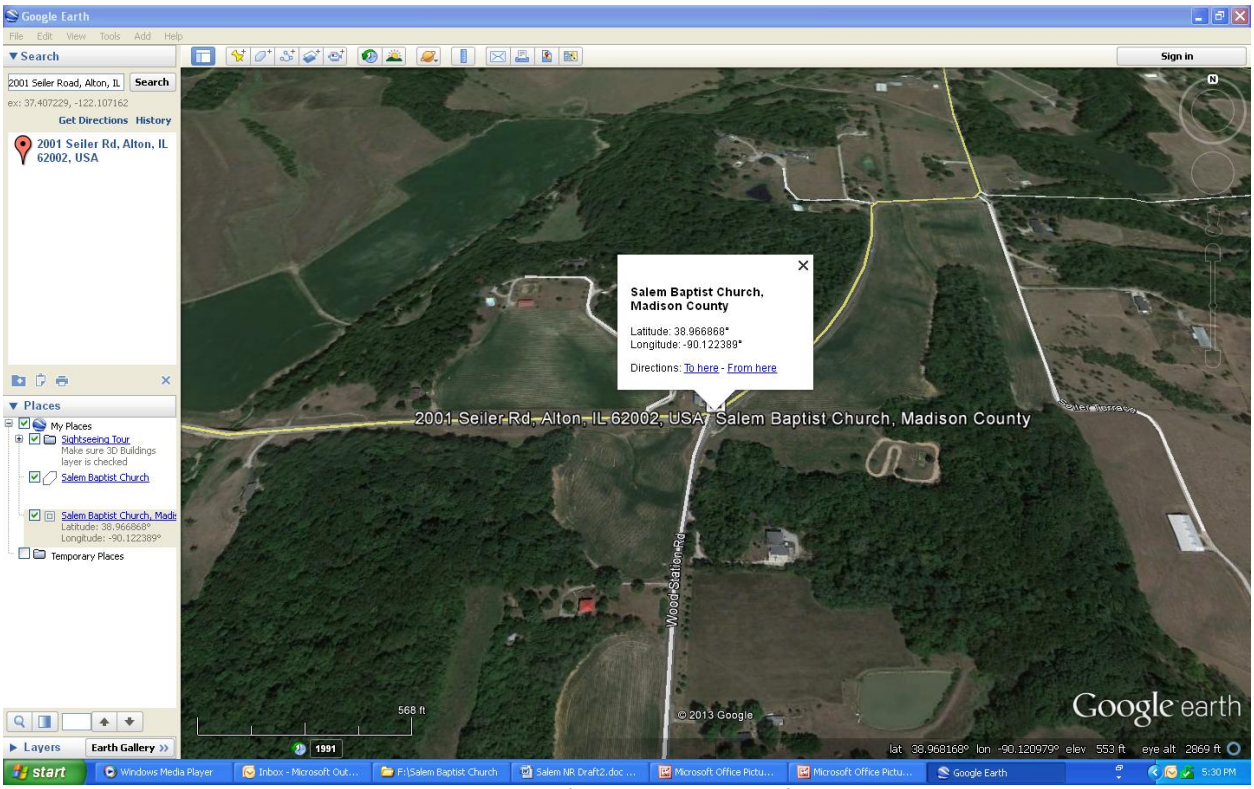
Figure 2. Location of Salem Baptist Church as illustrated in the *New Atlas of Madison County* (1892), p. 51. Note the names of neighboring parcels' owners (Ballinger, Johnson, Bates, etc.) which were Salem's early African-American members.

Figure 3. Progressive Club Members, 1940. Salem Baptist Church. Row 1: Elvira Ballinger, Jim Gordon, Mary Johnson. Row 2: Cyrus Johnson, Harold Johnson. Row 3: Lucille Johnson, Cleo Ballinger, Wilhelmina Gordon, Roberta Gordon, Bill Gordon, Virginia Johnson.

Each of these young people went on to pursue significant careers and a higher degree of education than would have been possible without Salem's societal clubs and scholarship programs. James Gordon graduated from the University of Pennsylvania. He was a 35-year-awardee employee of Army Finance. Cyrus Johnson graduated from the University of Illinois and from Harvard's Advanced Management Program. He was the first African-American Vice-President of General Mills, Inc., Harold Johnson graduated from Pepperdine University and worked as a professor at Pepperdine. He retired as Deputy Director of Los Angeles County (CA) Mental Health. Lucille Johnson Piggott earned her Ph.D. and served as Dean of Students at AT&T University in Greensboro, NC. Wilhelmina Gordon and Roberta Gordon entered the field of nursing.

Ladies Aid Society - pic.1936
All of the ladies are members of Salem Baptist Church
L-R -Lucy North, Julie Walker, Emma Gordon, ? Carrie Brown, Josephine Stevens, Iva Walker, Mildred Ballinger
In Front – Jennie C. Johnson with William Johnson – Birdie Swanson with Jimmy Swanson

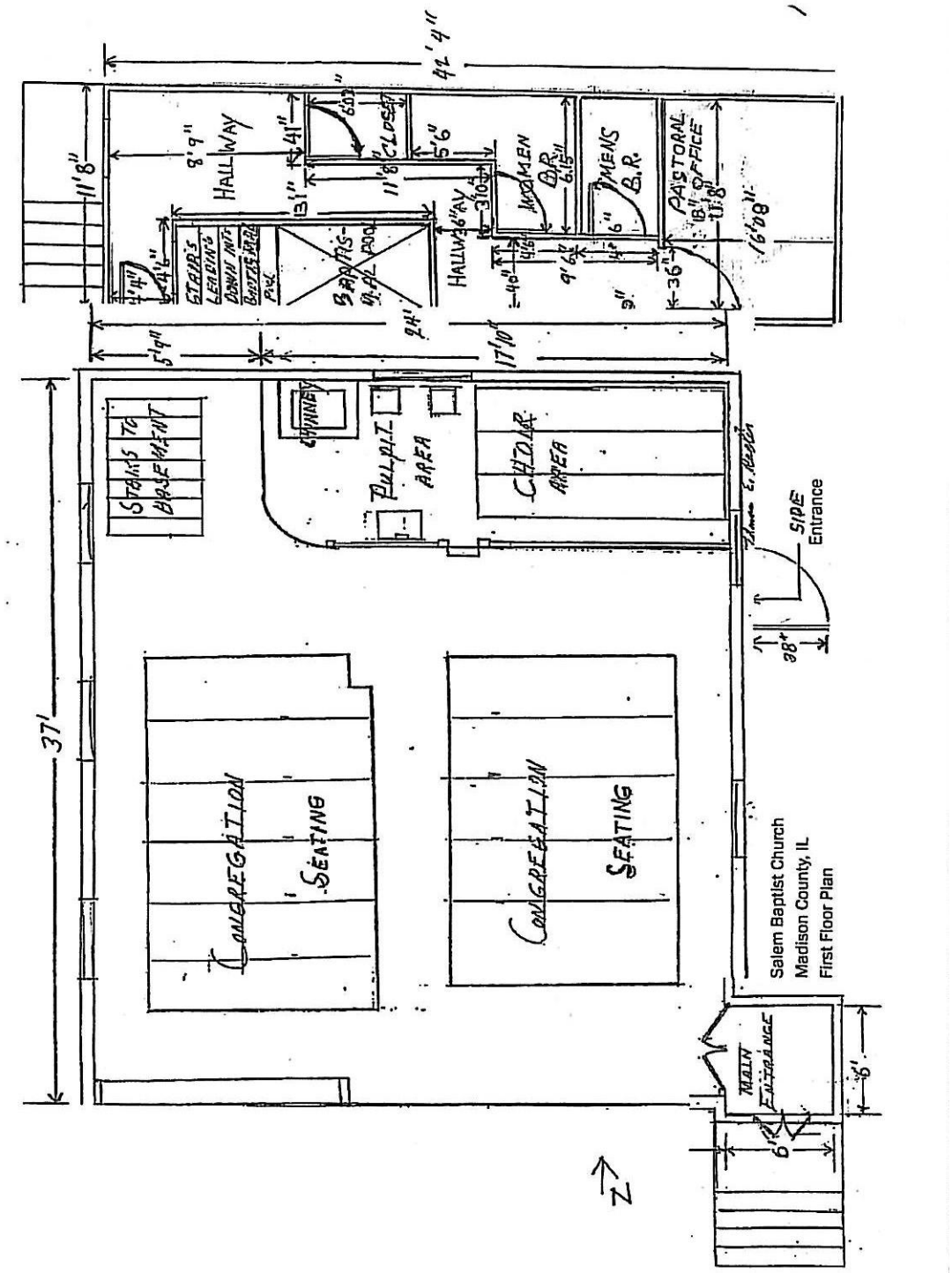
Figure 4. Salem Ladies Aid Society members, 1936.



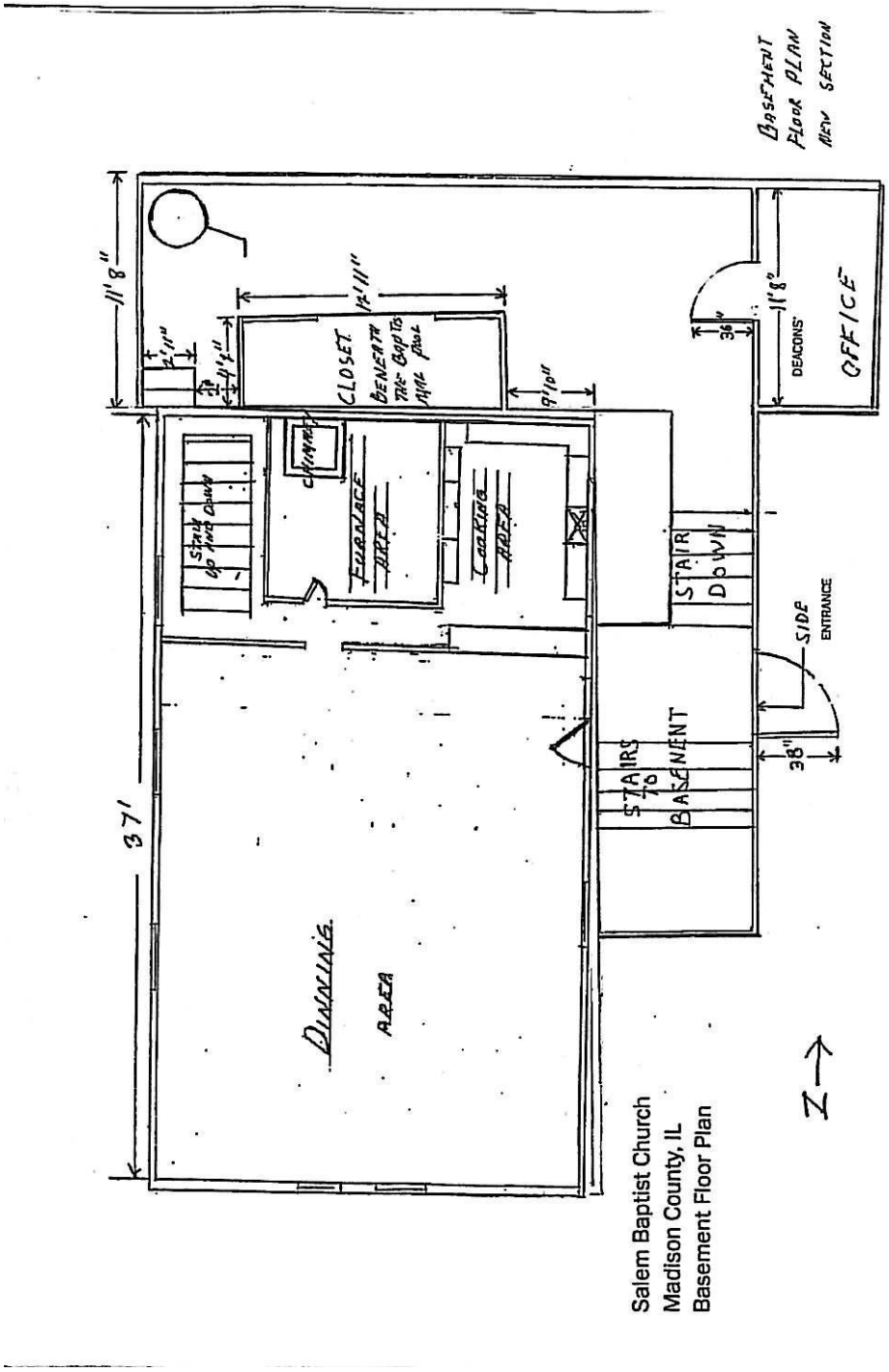
GIS Map – Salem Baptist Church, Madison County, IL

Site Plan for Salem Baptist Church, Madison County, IL
Scale: 1.5" = 95'

Of note, the two outbuildings situated west of the church include the 1903 contributing outhouse (south) and non-contributing 2002 pre-fabricated outbuilding (north).



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



Salem Baptist Church
Madison County, IL
Basement Floor Plan

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL 10 A M
CHURCH SERVICE 11 A M
PASTOR REV. WILLIS A BRUCE

STOP

BALLINGER

HYMNS
137
285

Come to Worship
Leave to Serve
Suffer it to be so now
Church Covenant

EXIT

Certificate of License
PASTOR

GENTLEMEN
MEN
EXIT