

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

RECEIVED 2280

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

OCT 30 2015

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" if applicable. For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

1. Name of Property

Historic name Gibbon Baptist Church

Other names/site number Gibbon Heritage Center; BF03-015

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 917 2nd Street

City or town Gibbon

State Nebraska

County Buffalo

Not for publication Vicinity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 nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D



SHPO/Director

10-22-2015

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Nebraska State Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of Commenting Official

Date

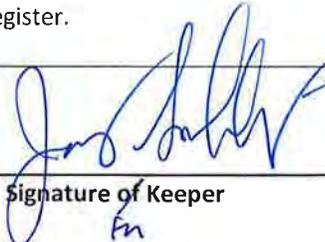
Title

State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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 Keeper

3-21-2016

Date of Action

Gibbon Baptist Church
Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska
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5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- Private
- Public-local
- Public-state
- Public-federal

Category of Property (Check only **one** box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	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

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)

Late Victorian, Gothic

Materials (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick

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Description

Summary Paragraph (Briefly describe 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.)

The original part of the Gibbon Heritage Center building was built in 1889 as the Gibbon Baptist Church. A 1975 article in the Kearney Hub stated that the building is the oldest existing church building in Buffalo County. It is a red brick Late Victorian Gothic style building. It was built with the labor of the local men of the church. Much of the brick used was made at a local Gibbon brick yard. The building still has the original brick, original solid color stained glass windows and the opera house seats that were originally installed in the sanctuary. Restoration of the building was Gibbon's Bicentennial Project in 1975-1976.

The building is located in the center of the city of Gibbon and is in the area platted as the original town. There is currently an apartment building to the east of the building. The Gibbon library is across the street to the north. There is a new residential development across the street to the west. This new residential development is on the former site of the Gibbon Public School. The building is an L shaped structure and is about 85 feet by 65 feet on its long dimensions.

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

The original part of the Gibbon Heritage Center was built in 1889 as the Gibbon Baptist Church. According to the Buffalo County Beacon, April 20, 1890, the original structure was a front gabled brick church and measured 35 feet X 46 feet with a 10 feet X 30 feet annex on the south side to be used as a dressing room (see figures 1-2 for plans). The church's walls are laid in common bond, with brick buttresses that divide the east and west walls into four bays. Lancet windows with wood tracery are located in the bays, with four on the west side of the church and three on the east. The front façade has two brick buttresses that rise to the gable, two full lancet windows, and two half lancets which are adjacent to the brick buttresses. A date and name stone is located in the center of the gable of the façade. A brick, crenellated bell tower is located on the western end of the north side of the building. Originally the tower was topped by a wood steeple; this was destroyed by lightning in 1908 (figure 3). There were originally two pointed arched entrances on the north side of the building, one on the east and one on the west incorporated into the bell tower. The east entrance and pointed arch vestibule on the north side of the building was removed in 1943 and the opening filled in. Another pointed arched entrance is located on the east side of the church building adjacent to the 1950 addition. The surviving entrances feature wood doors under arched transom windows with wood tracery. With its pointed arch doors and windows, steep roof and front facing gable the church building is an example of vernacular Gothic Revival architecture.

The original structure was built by men of the church under the direction of Robert E. Furgason, with the majority of the exterior brick made at the R. W. Wallace Gibbon brickyard. Some of the brick, marked with a D, came from Doniphan, Nebraska. Stone and lumber for the foundation came from Omaha. The Date/Name tablet was made of Kansas magnesia and given by Mr. A Watenpaugh and engraved by his son, Irvin Watenpaugh. The design and painting of the tablet was a gift of Mr. W. L. Bovee. The windows in the sanctuary are stained glass consisting of solid colored panes. The original part of the building contains the sanctuary and is a single floor. The building still has the original brick and stained glass windows and as a result still retains its historical appearance. However, some of the windows were destroyed in a hail storm in July, 2014. The original chairs for the sanctuary are Andrews opera chairs which according to local lore came from an opera house in Chicago and were similar to those in the Metropolitan opera house. The original chairs are still in the sanctuary, which also retains its historic sloping wood floor and raised dais on the south end (figure 4). The

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sanctuary and chairs are still usable and events are occasionally held in the sanctuary. The pulpit was made locally by W. M. Winchester and the Stoniger organ came from Ohio.

The original steeple was destroyed in 1908 by lighting/fire/tornado (sources are conflicting as to the cause of the damage) and replaced with a new steeple of Gothic design in the same location (figure 5). The 1908 steeple still stands. The steeple replacement work was done in 1908 by William G. Tritt, a well respected masonry contractor from Shelton, Nebraska.

A 24 ft X 30 ft brick addition on the south side of the building was built in 1915. This addition was built to be the same height as the original annex. The addition is hipped roofed, and has 1/1 double hung sash windows, with three on the west and south sides, and one on the east adjacent to the 1950 addition. Adjacent to the main body of the church on the west side is an original arched 1889 entrance to the annex. Above this entrance is a partially obscured name and date block; the visible portion reads "Baptist Church 1889." The 1915 addition also contained a kitchen. The original annex and 1915 addition had a wall between the kitchen and the rest of the addition. There was a second wall that divided the area into two rooms used for Sunday school. The original annex and the 1915 addition are now one room, however, the space retains its historic floors and iron floor registers. The room is currently used as a museum display room. The contractor for the 1915 addition was Charles Hibberd.

Construction of a wood and brick gable-roofed addition to the east of the 1915 addition was started in 1950. The current main entrance to the Gibbon Heritage center is on the north side of this addition. The addition has a variety of multi-light casement windows, including three 6-light windows (two in the south elevation, one in the north), three 9-light windows (one in the north elevation, two in the east), one 16-light window in the south elevation, and two 20-light windows for the attic space (one in the gable and one in a gabled dormer facing south). Construction was done by men of the church. This addition included a kitchen and Sunday school room. A restroom was also included. The second floor of this addition was initially an attic. The second floor of this addition was finished in 1955. This addition is currently used for museum displays and contains archive materials. There is a basement under the 1915 and 1950 additions. The basement was constructed as part of the 1950 addition, and included excavating under the 1915 addition to create a large open space. The basement contains museum items. The walls dividing the 1915 addition into rooms were removed at the time of the construction of the 1950 addition.

Integrity

The church retains a high level of integrity, which is maintained by its current use as a local history museum. The original 1889 sanctuary preserves its original interior organization, including inclined floor, raised dais, and opera chairs. It also retains its historic bell tower; however, the eastern front entrance was removed in the 1940s. A majority of the colored glass windows also remain. The building retains a good level of integrity of materials, design, workmanship, association and feeling.

Significant alterations consist of the 1915 and 1950 additions to the rear of the sanctuary building. However, these additions do not negatively impact the most historically significant portions of the 1889 building, particularly the sanctuary space, and reflect the increasing size of the congregation and the importance of education to the church membership.

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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.)

Property is:

- A** Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** Removed from its original location.
- C** A birthplace or a grave.
- D** A cemetery.
A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- E** A commemorative property.
- F** Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Criterion C: Architecture

Period of Significance

1889

Significant Dates

1889

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

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.)

Gibbon Baptist Church is historically significant under Criterion C: Architecture for its design, which is an adaptation by a small town congregation of the auditorium church form popularized by large, urban evangelical protestant denominations. The Gothic Revival church is located near the center of Gibbon, Nebraska, a small community along the original transcontinental railroad line settled by Union army veterans from the northeast and Midwest. The church was constructed in 1889, and incorporated key characteristics of the auditorium

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church design including curving rows of seats instead of pews, an elevated preaching platform, and an inclined floor. The church building, now a local history museum, meets Criteria Consideration A as it derives its historic significance from its architectural design. The period of significance is 1889, the year of its construction.

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

The site of Gibbon Nebraska was uninhabited until the Union Pacific railroad constructed its transcontinental main line through the future spot of the town in 1866 and established a passing siding known as “Gibbon Switch”.¹ The town was established five years later in 1871 when the site was selected by Col. John Thorp to establish a new settlement consisting of Union Army veterans.² The settlement was originally known as the “Soldiers Free-homestead Temperance Colony” and consisted of 139 families that arrived in April, 1871.³ The town grew quickly, and before the end of the year it was designated the Buffalo County seat following a vote in October 1871.⁴ The town served as county seat until 1874 when the county seat was moved to Kearney Junction to the west. In 1872, the First Baptist Church of Gibbon was founded. It would meet in various locations throughout town until 1889, when a new church building was constructed for the congregation.

Criterion C: Architecture

Gibbon Baptist Church is a representative example of vernacular Gothic Revival architecture, and specifically is a small town or rural implementation of the auditorium church form that was extremely popular among 19th century evangelical protestant denominations, as identified in Anne Loveland’s *From Meetinghouse to Megachurch: A Material and Cultural History*. Popularized in the early by Robert Mills, auditorium style churches facilitated charismatic preaching and the growth of evangelical congregations. New auditorium churches were often of round or L-shaped plans, but the associated seating arrangements could be adapted to rectangular spaces, such as at Gibbon Baptist Church.⁵ The architectural style of these churches could vary, including gothic, Romanesque, and classical revival styles.

Auditorium churches were characterized by their interior organization, which focused attention on the charismatic preacher. Curved seating, in the form of pews or individual chairs on inclined floors, was oriented to give attendees direct sightlines to the preacher, who gave his sermons from an elevated platform instead of a traditional enclosed pulpit.⁶ The platforms were open and featured moveable furniture, which allowed for preachers to move back in forth in front of their congregations.⁷ In large, urban Baptist churches, a baptistery was built into the platform, allowing the entire congregation to view the ritual.⁸ These characteristics were popularized by well known preachers and architects, and by architectural and religious journals which touted the designs as modern and appropriate for the new form of American evangelical Protestantism.⁹

¹ “Gibbon—Buffalo County” Virtual Nebraska... Our Towns, University of Nebraska, available online at <http://www.casde.unl.edu/history/counties/buffalo/gibbon>, accessed online July 23, 2015.

² “Gibbon—Buffalo County”

³ A. T. Andreas, “Buffalo County Part 8: Gibbon” *Andreas’ History of the State of Nebraska* (Chicago: The Western Historical Company, 1882), available online at http://www.kancoll.org/books/andreas_ne/buffalo/buffalo-p8.html#gibbon, accessed Oct 20, 2015.

⁴ Andreas; “Gibbon—Buffalo County” Virtual Nebraska... Our Towns.

⁵ Anne C. Loveland and Otis B. Wheeler, *From Meetinghouse to Megachurch: A Material and Cultural History* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2003): 33-65.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 44-45.

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Constructed in 1889, Gibbon Baptist Church was a simplified and traditional interpretation of the auditorium church. It was designed by members of the congregation in a basic Gothic revival style and constructed by the congregation under the direction of a local mason of locally fired red brick. The design incorporates key gothic elements, including pointed arch stained glass windows, arched doorways, a steeply pitched roof, and a tall bell tower with a steeple. After the steeple was struck by lightning in 1908, it was removed and the tower was given crenellations, in keeping with the gothic revival style. The interior of the church was a simple meeting space, plastered and painted white, with an elevated preaching platform at one end for the pulpit fronted by a basic communion table. An inclined floor dipped towards the platform, allowing congregants seated at the back of the church a clear view of the pastor during services.

Gibbon Baptist Church's simplicity, a reflection of the limited resources of the pioneering congregation, also contrasted from the increasing opulence of auditorium style urban churches. However, comfortable seats were provided for the congregation in the form of 134 wood and iron Andrews Opera Chairs arranged in curving rows focusing on the pulpit. This interior arrangement links it to the auditorium church, which placed the focus on the pulpit and the preaching of charismatic pastors. It also reflects the late 19th century trend that stressed the comfort of parishioners. In many contemporary churches, pews were eliminated and replaced with individual seating, often in the form of opera chairs oriented towards the pulpit.¹⁰ Published church history states that the chairs were salvaged from an opera house in Chicago; however, the presence of communion cup holders and wooden pockets for hymnals what appear to be made of the same wood as the chairs suggests either that the chairs were possibly from a closed church, or that the Andrews company provided kits for modifying their chairs for religious use, or that the chairs were purchased new from the A. H. Andrews Company. The change in church seating is currently on view in the former sanctuary, where a curved pew from the former Gibbon Presbyterian Church is located in front of the first row of the original Baptist opera chairs.

The Gibbon Baptist Church was the second substantial brick church in town, and reflected the 19th Century acceptance of the Gothic style as the standard style for protestant Christian churches, which was often reflected in the popularity of the carpenter or rural gothic style for wood framed churches. The nearby Methodist church was constructed in the carpenter gothic style, and incorporated the L-shaped cross gable plan popularized by church pattern books in the 19th century, unlike Gibbon Baptist Church's more basic hall or single room plan. The first Presbyterian Church, where the Baptists initially met prior to 1889, was of a similar form to the existing Gibbon Baptist church, consisting of a simple wood frame hall with a tower, veneered in brick. However, this church was demolished and replaced in 1908 with a larger, wood and masonry Romanesque revival church; this later church was demolished in 1977 and replaced with a new building. The Gibbon Baptist Church, preserved as the Gibbon Heritage Center, is the last of the town's original churches to survive intact and speaks to the town's early growth and architectural development.

Criterion Consideration A: Religious Properties

The 1889 Gibbon Baptist Church is an intact example of the once common brick gothic revival church. The interior preserves its original 1880s organization, including the original Andrews opera chairs arranged in an auditorium format. It is locally significant as one of the oldest structures in town that speaks to the community's unique religious history. The church derives its historic significance primarily from its historic design, which is an example of a rural, small town adaptation of the auditorium church design commonly utilized by evangelical protestant denominations in eastern urban centers.

¹⁰ Ibid., 58.

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Additional Historic Context

History of Gibbon Baptist Church

From its inception, Gibbon was characterized as a religious settlement. A. T. Andreas, writing in 1882, said of Gibbon: "...it has been noted for its moral and religious influences. There are now Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, and Congregational Church organizations...These churches are all in prosperous condition, each having a good membership."¹¹ The first religious service in Gibbon was held two days following the arrival of the colonists on the railroad. Held outside, the service consisted of a sermon by Rev. Josiah N. Allen and a speech by Christopher Putnam calling for the establishment of "honesty, integrity, and sobriety."¹²

The First Baptist Church was established the following year. Religious services were held and a sermon delivered in the 1871 school house at Gibbon on Tuesday evening, January 16, 1872 by Rev. J. N. Webb, general missionary of the American Baptist Home Mission Society.¹³ A group of persons attending the service voted to form themselves into a church to be known as the First Regular Baptist Church of Gibbon, Nebraska. They adopted as their church government and articles of faith and practice those that had been drawn by J. Newton Brown and published by the American Baptist Publication Society. The Baptist church was among the first churches officially organized in Gibbon, predating the Presbyterians by four days.¹⁴

The Baptists met in various buildings over a period of 17 years. Regular services and covenant meetings were held in the schoolhouse until August of 1876; they then met at the Presbyterian Church until October 1881 (figure 6) when they met in the chapel at the new Baptist Seminary (figure 7). The Baptist Seminary was established in 1880 by the Nebraska Baptist State Convention, and was established in Gibbon following the town's offer to donate the former Buffalo County Courthouse to the school.¹⁵ The building, constructed between 1871 and 1873, had served as the county courthouse for two years until 1875, when the seat was moved west to Kearney.¹⁶ The building was used as a school by the Gibbon School District until it was donated to the Baptist Seminary. The seminary was closed in 1885, when it was relocated to Grand Island.¹⁷

Following the closure of the Baptist Seminary, First Baptist Church met in the Odd Fellows Hall and the Presbyterian Church. At the same time, the congregation began planning to build a church of their own. On January 18, 1887 the church met and decided to give up the Odd Fellows Hall and appoint a committee to see about building a church, at the same time voting to retain the pastor half the time.¹⁸ Soon thereafter, however, the congregation split over monetary issues and the construction of the new church, resulting in the reorganization of the Gibbon Baptist Church under those who were in favor of the new building.¹⁹ On July 7, 1888 the church met and "A motion was then made to instruct our trustees to sell our church lots and whatever furniture and books we have to the new Baptist Church, which is soon to be organized in Gibbon."²⁰

¹¹ Andreas.

¹² Samuel Clay Bassett, *History of Buffalo County and Its People* (Chicago: C. S. Clarke Publishing Co., 1916), 82, available online at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nebuffal/bassett/po67.htm#80>, accessed Oct. 20, 2015.

¹³ Gibbon's first school building is still extant; however, it has been moved to a new location and is now used as a residence.

¹⁴ "Gibbon—Buffalo County" Virtual Nebraska... Our Towns.

¹⁵ "Nebraska Baptists" *The Baptist Encyclopedia* (1881), Baptist History Homepage available online at <http://baptisthistoryhomepage.com/nebraska.baptists.html>, accessed Aug. 6, 2015.

¹⁶ Bassett, 128.

¹⁷ Bassett, 129.

¹⁸ *Faith of the Generations, 125th Anniversary Book* (Gibbon, NE: Gibbon Baptist Church, 2013) 9.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 10.

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The new Gibbon Baptist church was organized July 21, 1888. On September 22, 1888 Lots 3 and 4 of Block 14 of the Village of Gibbon were purchased from the First Baptist Church at a cost of \$250.²¹ The nascent congregation employed local builder George Sutton as the contractor for the new brick church, which would be constructed with over 100,000 locally fired bricks and other materials imported from Omaha.²² Congregation members supplied the labor under Sutton, who was characterized as a “fine brick mason who kept his plumb line and level close by his side to use often” in the 2013 church history.²³ Construction lasted approximately ten months, from July 1889 until April 1890. The church dedication drew attendance from the entire town regardless of denomination, with over 300 people present for the closing ceremonies that evening.²⁴

The Baptist congregation in Gibbon continued to grow over the following decades, keeping pace with the community. Originally 26 members, the congregation grew to 57 by 1900.²⁵ Growth brought with it additional resources that allowed for the expansion of the church holdings. For example, in 1915 a gift of \$600 allowed the church to build an addition of 24 x 30 feet on the south side of the church building which expanded upon an existing rear ell and provided space for a kitchen, dining room, and reception room.²⁶ The value of the church property was \$6,000 and the parsonage was \$2,500; there were 143 members in 1915.

The church building helped tie the congregation together, as they worked to maintain and update the building. Annually, the men of the congregation met at various neighboring farmsteads cut wood to heat the church through organized “wood cutting days.”²⁷ In 1935, enough wood was collected at the Elton Lowell farm that there was sufficient fuel for the next year as well. While the men worked collecting fuel or conducting repairs on the church, the women regularly met at the church to prepare communal dinners or to decorate the church by wallpapering. Additionally, organizations such as the Baptist Young Persons Union and the Ladies Auxiliary met in the church, which served as a meeting space and center for their social outreach programs.²⁸ Celebrations associated with the 50th anniversary of the cornerstone laying led to a large turnout at the church, with pastors from Omaha and Kansas City leading the day-long celebrations, which included the choir singing the song “The Little Red Church” which was associated with the building.²⁹

The 1940s were a period of great change for Gibbon Baptist Church. The congregation continued to grow, requiring additional changes to their church building, which was funded by community activities. The sanctuary dais was enlarged to accommodate an expanding choir, and the rear addition was reconfigured to hold larger Sunday school classes.³⁰ By 1945, the membership exceeded 226, which was greater than the number of seats available in the sanctuary. Multiple services were most likely instituted to accommodate all parishioners. In 1948, the membership discussed construction of another classroom addition but actual construction was delayed until 1950 until sufficient funds were raised.³¹ The congregation again banded together, raising money through the sale of livestock, establishing Lord’s Acres (whereby farmers set aside one acre’s yield for the

²¹ Ibid., 17.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 23.

²⁵ Ibid., 26.

²⁶ Ibid., 26-27

²⁷ Ibid., 28.

²⁸ *Faith of the Generations*, 27

²⁹ Ibid., 28.

³⁰ Ibid., 29.

³¹ Ibid.

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church), conducting fund-raisers and potlucks, and utilizing volunteer labor in the construction of the new addition.³²

By the late 1950s, the Baptist Church began considering replacing its 70 year old building. In 1958, an inspection of the church by a Lincoln-based contractor determined that the church required extensive repair and repointing.³³ As the current building was too small for the current congregation, the building committee decided to consider replacing the church with a new edifice. In 1959, the Omaha-based firm of Troy and Stalder was engaged to draft an initial plan and estimate for a new church located on the same property as the existing building.³⁴ The congregation voted to construct a new church on August 13, 1959; the plans called for a new, fully furnished and air-conditioned building estimated at \$120,000.³⁵ However, the congregation lacked the capital to immediately commence construction, and resorted to proven fundraising methods to acquire the funds to construct the new church—between 1960 and 1964, \$41,166 was raised for construction.³⁶ The church congregation continued to grow during this period, and by 1963 the church membership recognized that the current site of the church could not accommodate the expanding membership, even with the demolition of the existing buildings. Therefore, Gibbon Baptist Church purchased a new plot of land on the south edge of the city for their new church.³⁷ Construction commenced in June, 1965 by Garret Construction of Lincoln, and was complete by March of 1966.³⁸

Gibbon Baptist Church was the first of Gibbon's churches to replace their historic building with a modern structure. The Presbyterians and the Methodists united their congregations in 1970, and constructed a new church in 1974.³⁹ The 1908 Presbyterian Church and the 1900 Methodist Church were both deconsecrated and sold, and eventually demolished by the end of the 1970s.⁴⁰ The last service in the old church was on February 26, 1966. The building was purchased by D. E. McGregor in 1966 and was used as a community center for youth gatherings. The Girl Scouts also used the building. In 1975 Mr. McGregor donated the building to the City of Gibbon. Restoration of the building was Gibbon's Bicentennial project in 1975-1976. In 1976 the building became the Gibbon Heritage Center.⁴¹

As the congregation grew over the years the building was updated and expanded to grow along with it. The Baptist congregation was and is an important part of the Gibbon community, which was home to only three churches—Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian. The nearest Lutheran Church, Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, was located to the east in the vicinity of Shelton, while the nearest Catholic Church was located in Kearney. The distribution of these congregations is directly associated with Gibbon's foundation as a colony of Union veterans from the Northeastern States, in contrast to the European immigrant populations which settled other towns along the Union Pacific line.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid., 31.

³⁴ Ibid., 32.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 33.

³⁸ Ibid., 34-35.

³⁹ "Our History" Faith United Church, available online at www.gibbonfaithunited.com/mission.htm, accessed on Oct. 21, 2015.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ *Faith* 41-42.

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9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (Insert bibliography here – cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Trail Dust to Star Dust. Gibbon Centennial History Book. Gibbon, NE: City of Gibbon, 1971.

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
- University
- Other (Name of repository)
Gibbon Heritage Center

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): BF03-015

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one. USGS Quadrangle Gibbon South

(Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates. Delete the other.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

- | | | | | |
|----|----------|------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 1. | Latitude | <u>40.746773</u> | Longitude | <u>-98.845451</u> |
| 2. | Latitude | _____ | Longitude | _____ |
| 3. | Latitude | _____ | Longitude | _____ |
| 4. | Latitude | _____ | Longitude | _____ |

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

Lots 3 and 4, Block 14, Original Town, Gibbon, Buffalo County, Nebraska.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These are the lots that were purchased by the Gibbon Baptist Church to build their church building on.

11. Form Prepared By

Kevin McGregor, Chairperson, Gibbon Heritage Center Board; Ruben Acosta, NR Coordinator,
name/title NeSHPO
Gibbon Heritage Center; Nebraska State
organization Historical Society date January 26, 2016
street & number PO Box 625; PO Box 82554 telephone 402-471-4775
city or town Gibbon; Lincoln state NE zip code 68840; 68501
email gibbonheritagecenter@nctc.net; ruben.acosta@nebraska.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO for any additional items.)

Gibbon Baptist Church
 Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska
 County and State

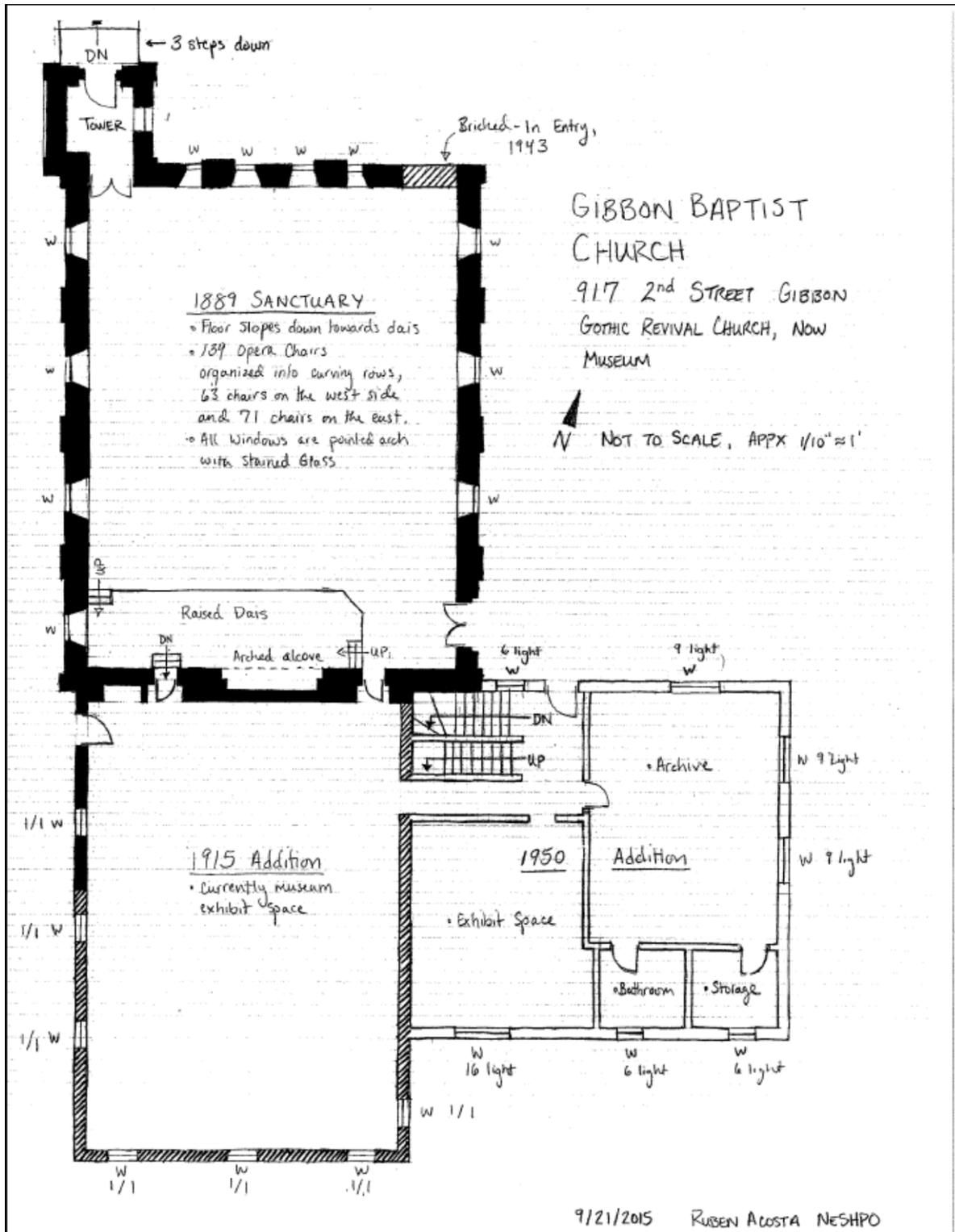
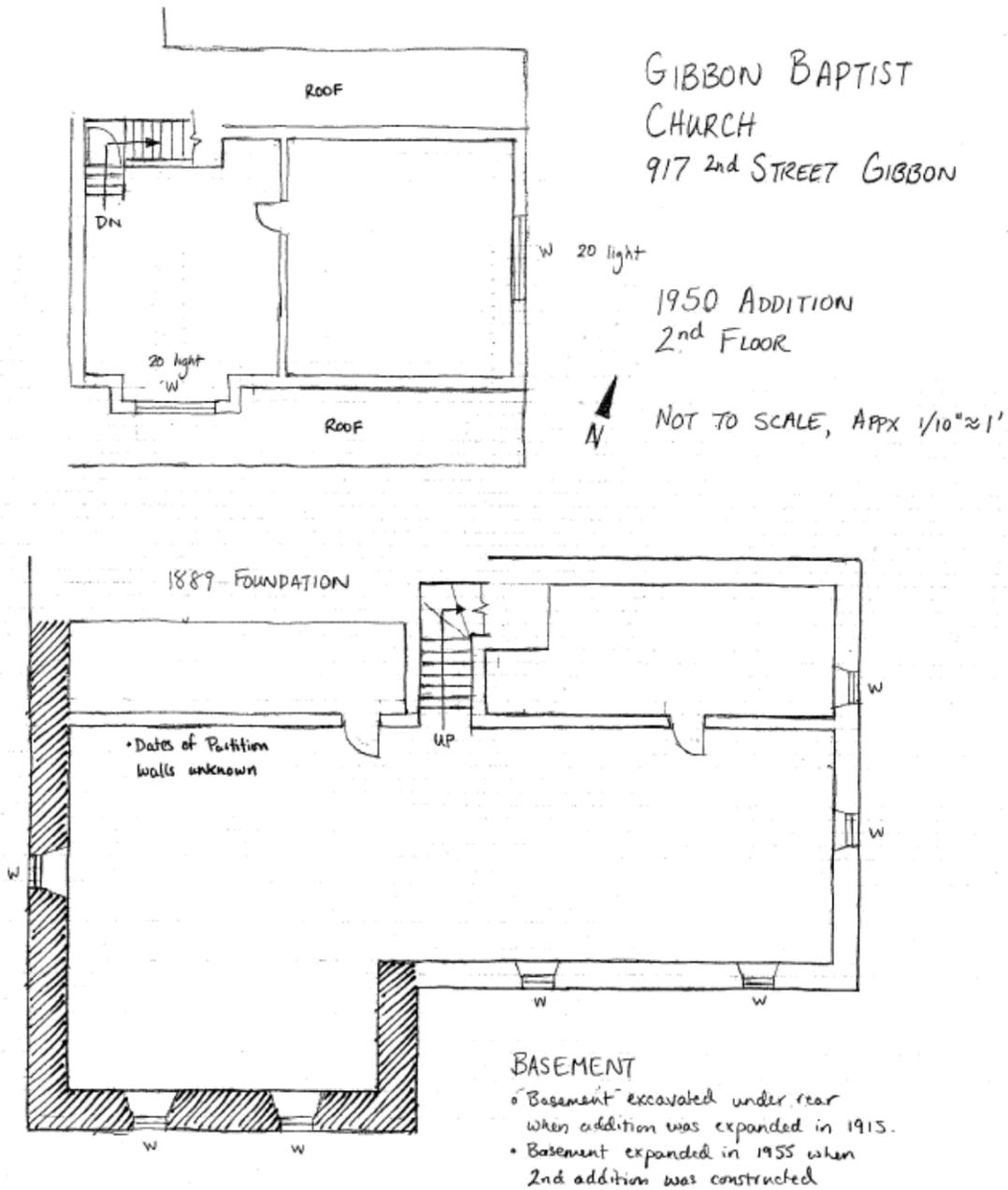


Figure 1: Plan, 1st Floor with additions labeled. Solid black walls date to 1889, hatched walls to 1915, and white walls to 1950. Original on file with the NeSHPO.

Gibbon Baptist Church
Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska
County and State



9/21/2015 RUBEN ACOSTA NESHPO

Figure 2: Plan, 2nd floor and basement.

Gibbon Baptist Church
Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska
County and State



Figure 3: Gibbon Baptist Church showing the original steeple and east entrance. (*Faith of the Generations*, Gibbon Baptist Church, 2013: 25)

Gibbon Baptist Church
Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska
County and State

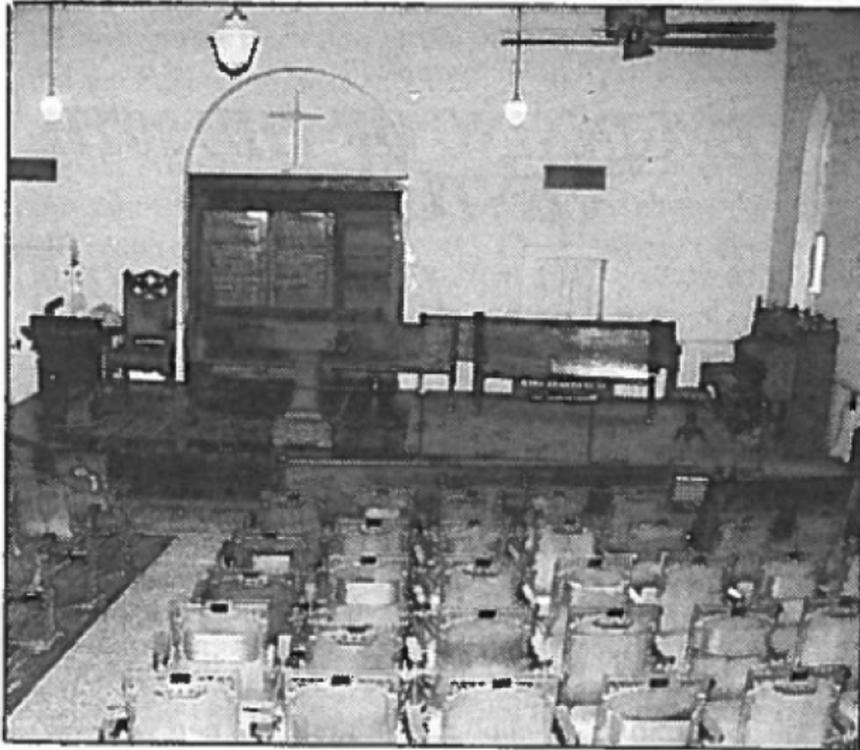


Figure 4: Interior view of Gibbon Baptist Church, n.d, most likely after expansion of sanctuary dais in the 1940s. (*A Century of Growth Through Caring 1888-1988*, Gibbon Baptist Church, 1988: 10)



Figure 5: Exterior of Gibbon Baptist Church following the replacement of the steeple (*A Century of Growth Through Caring 1888-1988*, Gibbon Baptist Church, 1988: 12)

Gibbon Baptist Church
Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska
County and State



Figure 6: First Presbyterian Church. The Gibbon Baptist Church met here following its reorganization until their building was completed in 1890. (*Faith of the Generations*, Gibbon Baptist Church, 2013: 11)

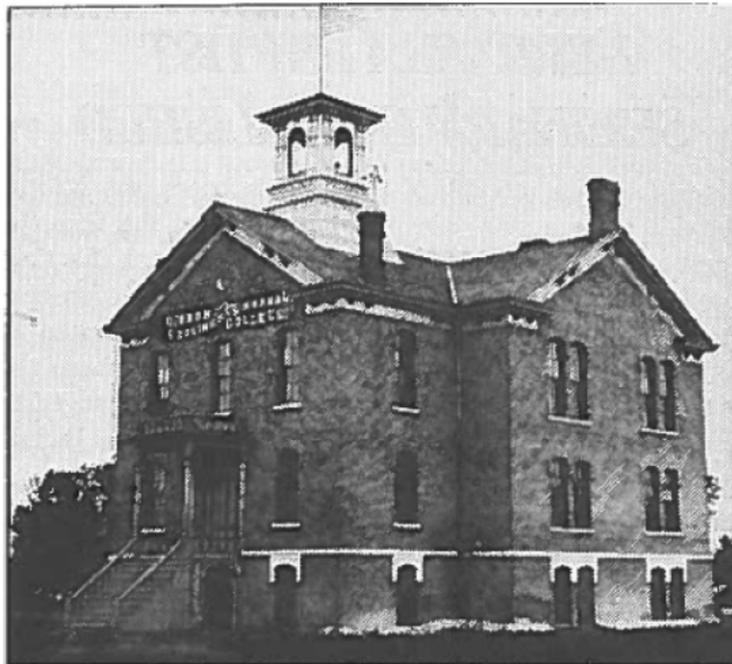


Figure 7: Nebraska Baptist Seminary Building, originally the Buffalo County Courthouse. The First Baptist Church of Gibbon initially held services in the school chapel. (*A Century of Growth Through Caring 1888-1988*, Gibbon Baptist Church, 1988: 5)

Gibbon Baptist Church

Buffalo County, Nebraska

Name of Property

County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, 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 Gibbon Baptist Church

City or Vicinity Gibbon County Buffalo State Nebraska

Photographer Ruben A. Acosta, NR Coordinator NeSHPO Date Photographed June 2, 2015

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

1. Front façade. View S.
2. West elevation. View E.
3. Rear addition 1915 that replaced original annex. View NE.
4. 1950 addition. View NW.
5. East elevation of the sanctuary. View W.
6. Detail, name and date block on front gable. View S.
7. Detail, name and date block over surviving portion of rear annex, now incorporated into west elevation of 1915 addition. View E.
8. Interior, sanctuary. View S.
9. Interior, sanctuary, View NW.
10. Interior, detail, opera chair front. View N.
11. Interior, detail, opera chair rear. View SW.
12. Interior, detail, stained glass window. View W.
13. Interior, 1915 addition. View SW.
14. Interior, 1950 addition. View NE.
15. Interior, basement. View NE.

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.

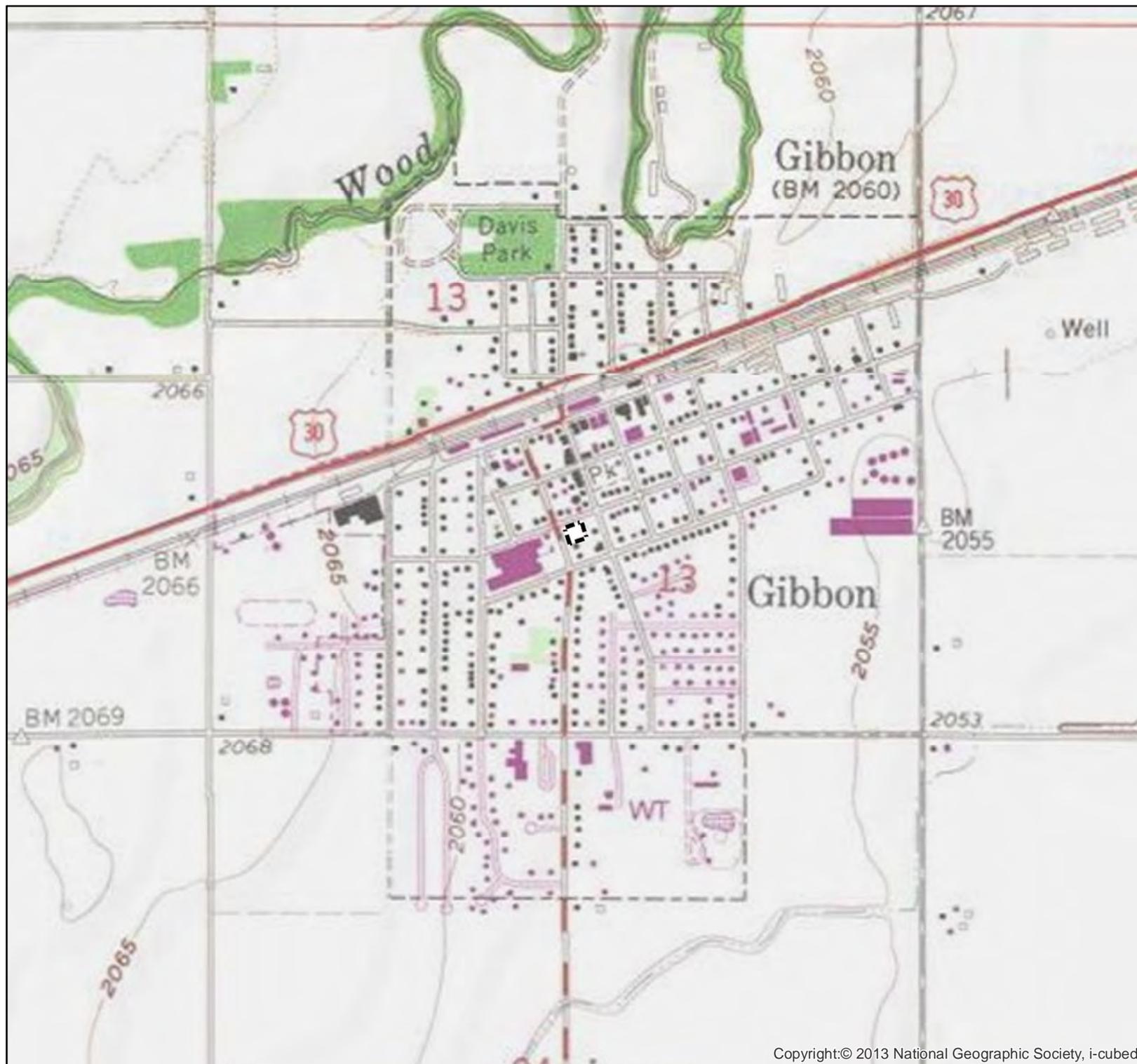
Gibbon Baptist Church

917 2nd Street
Gibbon, Buffalo Co.,
Nebraska

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates:

40.746773, -98.845451

Datum: WGS84



Legend

 Proposed NRHP Boundary

1:12,000



0 412.5 825 1,650 Feet

0 130 260 520 Meters

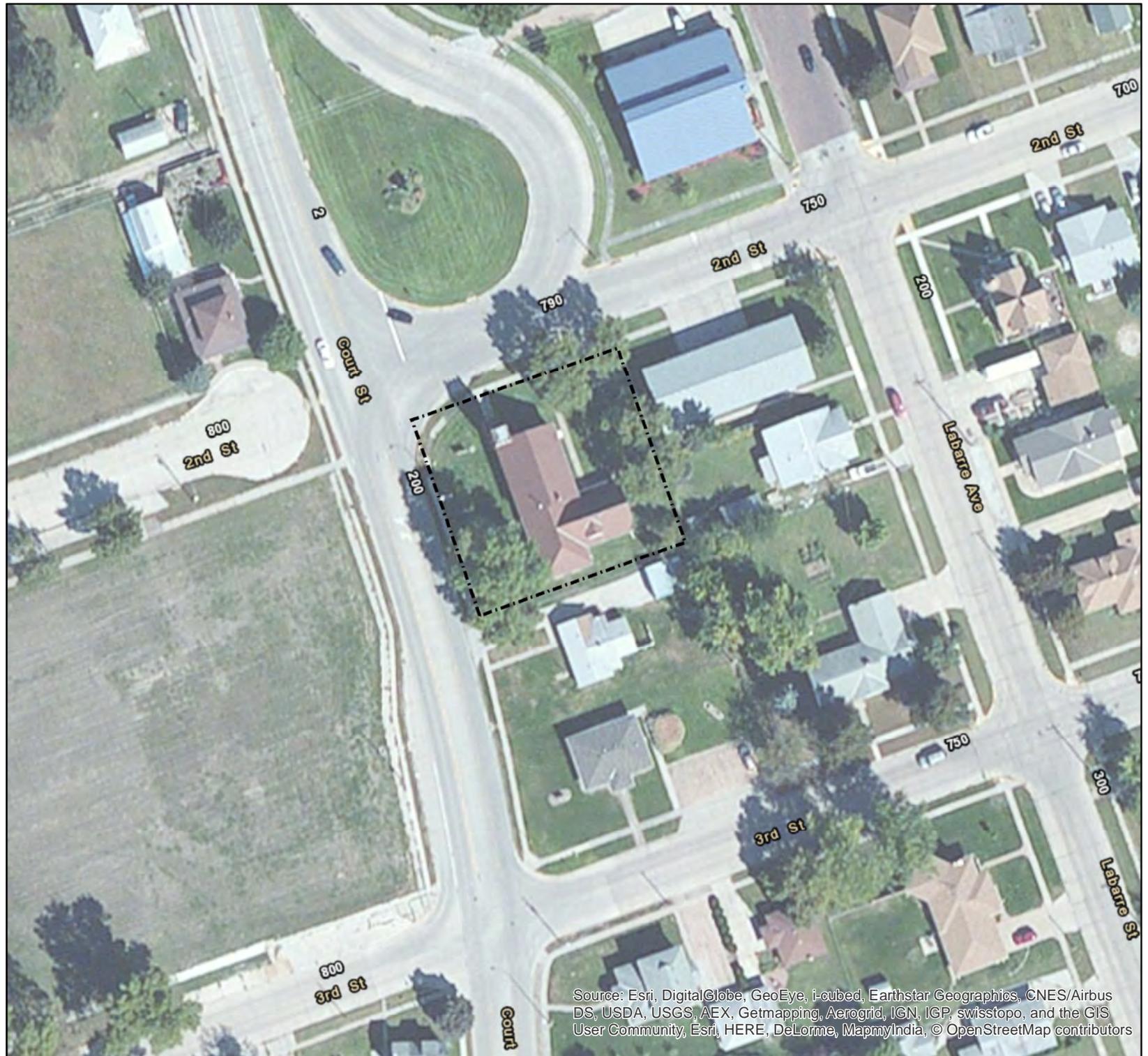
Gibbon Baptist Church

917 2nd Street
Gibbon, Buffalo Co.,
Nebraska

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates:

40.746773, -98.845451

Datum: WGS84



Legend

 Proposed NRHP Boundary

1:1,000



0 30 60 120
Feet

0 10 20 40
Meters

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community, Esri, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors



BAPTIST
CHURCH
1889

Gibbon Heritage
Museum



ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL









BAPTIST
CHURCH
1889

BAPTIST
CHURCH
1889













RSHAL
ON
CENTER

