

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Strictly architectural significance is derived from the building's monumental scale and thoroughness of Gothic detailing. It occupies a position of major importance on the Clarksville skyline, and is among the largest churches of its type and period in Tennessee.

The scale and quality of this architectural work is however, representative of something equally as important as its own self-evident esthetic virtues. Unlike much of the post-Civil War South in the 1880s and 90s, Clarksville was enjoying a time of prosperity. This prosperity was based on Clarksville's position as the center of a thriving agricultural region encompassing portions of Middle Tennessee and Southern Kentucky. Additionally the presence of small but diversified wholesale, commercial, and manufacturing enterprises, bolstered the general economy. The result was a large and reasonably cultured middle class, which held in esteem the then-popular virtues of learning hard work, gentility and reverence. Though by no means the only such pocket of prosperity in the late 19th century South, it is made unique by Clarksville's small size. This was at a time when the city's population did not exceed 15,000. The sort of economic conditions just described were more generally to be found in cities whose population exceeded 50,000. Yet this church, and its neighbor, the First Presbyterian Church, though built in the 1880s in Clarksville, were the equal or better of churches built in such larger cities as Nashville and Memphis. They reflect the tremendous pride in their church, their community and their accomplishment held by the citizens of that time. It is a fortunate coincidence that such a worthy structure should retain a congregation which apparently has never faltered in this pride. The excellent condition of the building today is a testament to this fact.

Aside from architectural and cultural considerations, the structural system of the building is also of interest. The massive roof trusses are actually made of iron and have been boxed in to simulate wood. An 1880s history of the city indicates they were fabricated by the Pittsburgh Bridge Company.