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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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Unity Baptist Church  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number Corner of Sumter and Hart Streets  not for publication  
city, town Kershaw  vicinity  
state South Carolina code SC county Lancaster code 057 zip code 29067

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>3</u>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>3</u>	_____
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
Historic Resources of Lancaster County  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

Mary W. Edmonds 12/11/89  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, SC Department of Archives & History, Columbia, SC  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet. Entered in the National Register  
Mark J. Baker 2/16/90

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Religious Structure

Religion/Church-Related Residence

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Religious Structure

Religion/Religious Structure

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals

Gothic Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick/Concrete

walls Wood / weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Unity Baptist Church (1910) is located at the intersection of Hart and Sumter Streets in the small town of Kershaw in southern Lancaster County. It is significant as an example of an intact, frame, vernacular vernacular Gothic Revival church built in the early part of the twentieth century by an early black Baptist congregation of the South Carolina upcountry. Also being nominated are the church's parsonage and its privy (c. 1922), located on an adjacent lot immediately west of the church.

### Additional Information

The church is a one-story, frame, Greek cross plan building covered with wood clapboard siding a stepped brick pier foundation with brick infill. A pent cross-gabled roof with composition shingles covers the building. A four-level square bell tower projects between north and east gables. It contains two double six-panel door pointed transom-light doors on the first level. A skirt roof divides the first and second levels, which have cameo windows with wooden surrounds and keystones. The third level has peaked, arched louvered vents. A molded cornice separates the fourth level and the tower has a pedimented pent cross-gable roof. A continuous cornice is located at the first story level under the pent roofs and bell tower skirt. Windows are typically pointed arch windows with traceried upper windows and two-light lower double-hung sash windows. Double panel doors are in the center of the north projection flanked by single double-sash windows. The south projection has triple pointed arch windows flanked by single double-hung windows, while the east and west exterior sides have single doors with six horizontal panels and pointed arch transom-lights. East and west projections have three pointed arch double-hung sash windows.

The interior is intact with beaded board wainscotting and ceiling. There is a coved ceiling in the sanctuary. The pulpit and choir areas are raised from the floor of the sanctuary. The two areas are denoted by semi-circular projections. The pulpit extends further into the sanctuary than the choir area, which is separated by turned posts and balusters. Original hanging light fixtures still exist in the sanctuary. Two arched openings with paneled pilasters also delineate the pulpit from the choir

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture

1910

1910

Ethnic Heritage/Black

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Shropshire, George L.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Unity Baptist Church was built in 1910. Its congregation was an outgrowth of Kershaw's First Baptist Church and was the second separate black church established in Kershaw in the early twentieth century. It is significant both as a particularly intact example of Gothic Revival church architecture common in the period and as an example of early twentieth century institutions in Kershaw's black community.

The congregation was organized in November 1909 and originally met in members' homes. It occupied this sanctuary, built by Deacon George L. Shropshire, a local carpenter and contractor, in April 1910. Reverend A.W. Hill, while still a student at Benedict College in Columbia, became Unity's first full-time minister in 1911. His successor, Reverend L.C. Jenkins, was the first pastor to occupy the parsonage adjacent to the church, built c. 1922.(1)

Although the Unity Baptist Church is a religious property, it is remarkably intact, having undergone few alterations since 1910. It is eligible for the National Register under the themes of Architecture and Ethnic Heritage/Black.

NOTES

(1) Interview with Mr. Andrew T. Belton, Unity Baptist Church, Kershaw, S.C., 13 October 1989; Lancaster News, 25 March 1971.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

See continuation sheet

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

**Specify repository:**

SC Department of Archives & History,  
Columbia, SC

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

A 

1	7
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5	3	8	4	8	0
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3	8	2	2	6	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the nomination is shown as the black line on the accompanying Lancaster County Tax Map 156-I (156-P, Parcels D-1 & D-2), drawn at a scale of 1" = 100'.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated property includes the church and parsonage and their immediate surroundings.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title J. Tracy Power, NR Historian/Frank Brown III, NR Architectural Historian  
organization SC Department of Archives & History date 13 October 1989  
street & number PO Box 11669 telephone (803) 734-8610  
city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29211

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area. This choir area is flanked by two smaller rooms with exterior exits.

Two contributing properties associated with the church are included in the National Register boundaries. The parsonage is a one-story, L-shaped, frame building with clapboard siding and a brick pier foundation. The residence has an asphalt pyramidal roof with a central hipped dormer and gable roof rear ell. The main facade has a central-entry three-bay facade as well as a full-facade hipped-roof porch on the main facade with square posts. An L-shaped porch with replacement metal support is located in the ell. There is also a small front-gable roof privy with vertical plank siding located at the rear of the parsonage.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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Name of property: Unity Baptist Church  
(Historic Resources of Lancaster County  
multiple property submission)

Location of property: Lancaster County, South Carolina

Photographer: South Carolina Department of Archives & History Staff

Location of negative: South Carolina Department of Archives & History

Date of photograph: September 1989

1. Facade, left oblique
2. Rear elevation, right oblique
3. Parsonage, facade