

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic St. Augustine's Roman Catholic Church

and/or common Christ Baptist Church

2. Location

street & number 3114 Lismore _____ not for publication

city, town St. Louis _____ vicinity of

state MO 63107 code 29 county City of St. Louis code 510

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Christ Baptist Church

street & number 3114 Lismore

city, town St. Louis _____ vicinity of state MO 63107

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Louis City Hall

street & number Market Street at Tucker Boulevard

city, town St. Louis _____ vicinity of state MO 63103

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Missouri State Historical Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date June 1986 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Missouri Department of Natural Resources

city, town P.O. Box 176 Jefferson City, MO 65102 _____ state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Christ Baptist Church (originally St. Augustine's Roman Catholic Church) is an 1896 Gothic Revival buff brick church adjoining a 1928 Tudor Gothic brick rectory. The buildings are located on the corner of Hebert and Lismore Streets on St. Louis' north side. The structures survive with only minor alterations.

The church's buff brick walls rise from a limestone foundation. The building measures approximately 155 long, 64 feet wide at the nave, with a transept 88 feet wide. Facing west, the primary facade of the church features a large stained glass rose window (partially boarded) above a central portal; the entrance is framed by stone-trimmed pinnacled buttresses, stone colonnettes in the jambs and a wood traceried tympanum (Photo #1). Two towers flank the facade. The larger north tower is articulated with a cylindrical turret pierced with irregular fenestration on the west (primary) elevation and a with a stone-trimmed, gabled entrance on the north (side) elevation (Photo #2). Ornamental brick corbeling and/or blind arcading enrich the towers, apse and the gables of the nave and transept (Photos #1 and 2). Buttresses with stone set-backs are employed on all elevations. Nave and transept are gable-roofed. A polygonal apse pierced with pointed arch windows terminates the east end of the church (Fig. 1; Photo #2). The only notable alteration to the exterior has been the reconstruction of the spires on the two facade towers - probably as the result of damage by the 1927 tornado. A comparison of Photo #1 with Fig. 2 (showing the original design) reveals that alterations to the south tower consisted only of shortening the spire; alterations to the north tower involved removal of small gables above the louvered, pointed arch windows and reconstruction of the spire with a flared base. (An undated elevation drawing of the new spires exists from the firm which designed the church, Wessbecher & Hillebrand.) Since the spire alterations closely followed the lines of the original forms, they have not impaired the church's integrity of design.

The interior features a two bay, pointed arch nave arcade and one bay transept from which spring plaster rib vaulting (Photo #3 and 4). A two level choir gallery exists at the west end of the church (Photo #4). The nave, transept and apse are installed with traceried stained glass windows; the five windows in the apse and two in transept are narrative figural scenes while nave windows display non-figural ornamental designs. Several of the windows are now boarded. Original wood pews and a Gothic detailed communion rail are intact as is a ceramic tile floor in the vestibule.

The gabled roof rectory was constructed in 1928 of buff/yellow brick above a limestone foundation (Photo #1). The north side of the house is joined to the church by a passageway. The four bay primary facade features a projecting brick porch pierced by open stone arches and trimmed with a

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crenellated parapet; rectangular double-hung windows have stone surrounds. North and south bays of the front facade project forward slightly and are accented with stone-trimmed gables echoing gables on the church. The north and south (side) elevations are articulated with an irregular fenestration pattern; windows are double-hung with soldier course brick lintels and stone sills. The rear (east) elevation features a projecting two-story brick porch with open segmental arches; fenestration is irregular with double-hung windows headed with soldier course brick lintels and employing stone sills. The exterior of the rectory appears to be unaltered. The interior survives with original dark oak millwork and built-in bookcases.

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 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 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 checked="" 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 1896, 1928

Builder/Architect Louis Wessbecher (church); Henry Hess (rectory);

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Christ Baptist Church is eligible for listing in the National Register according to Criterion C and is significant in the following area:

ARCHITECTURE: Constructed in 1896 for St. Augustine's Roman Catholic parish, the church is a good representative example of German Catholic architecture in St. Louis, expressing ethnic identity in the hall church plan. Designed by German-trained St. Louis architect Louis Wessbecher, the Gothic Revival building features fine brick masonry trimmed with stone and stained glass windows. The rectory, built in 1928 in Tudor Gothic style, was designed to relate harmoniously to the church.

Background:

St. Augustine's Church (now Christ Baptist) was founded in 1874 as a national parish exclusively for the use of German Catholic immigrants. The location of the parish on Hebert and Lismore Streets in north St. Louis was an indicator of the swelling tide of German immigration to St. Louis and the expansion of German settlement into subdivisions west of the riverfront wards. Within five years after the establishment of St. Augustine's (the sixth German parish to locate on the north side) fifteen or nearly one-third of the city's Catholic churches had been set apart for German Catholics who represented approximately half of St. Louis' total German-born population. By 1898, twenty-one German parishes were distributed almost evenly between the north and south sides of the city. Answering urgent needs of St. Louis' growing foreign population for German priests and instruction in their native tongue, the foreign language parishes served important social and religious functions during the difficult years of transition from the Old World to the New. The liturgical art and architecture of these churches are among the city's most valuable records of its rich German heritage and cogent testimony of the close alliance of religion and nationality in the 19th century.¹

The building history of St. Augustine's parish well illustrates the growth and progress of German Catholics in St. Louis. The parish's first church, completed in 1875, was a small, simple brick building (47 X 85 feet)² which for twenty years served both as church and school for an expanding working-class German neighborhood. In 1895, when plans were approved for a larger church capable of seating one thousand, parish membership was reaching two thousand. While the construction of the new church was clearly a prestigious symbol of German Catholic achievement, it also inspired civic pride, enhancing the city's north side with a monumental landmark. For the

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laying of the cornerstone May 3, 1896, ten thousand people gathered in procession to the church site and the event was covered in detail by both the English and German press. The ceremonies and festivities held for the dedication of the church on August 29, 1897 included a belated celebration honoring St. Augustine (patron saint of the parish) whose official feast day was observed on August 28, the day before.⁴ Perhaps the most renowned and influential theologian and philosopher of the early Church Fathers, St. Augustine is represented in stained glass in the Hebert Street church.

Architecture:

The design of St. Augustine's reveals cultural links to the fatherland expressing a distinct German Catholic ethnic identity. Described by contemporary 19th century writers as built in the Gothic style of the 13th century, St. Augustine's plan follows that of a hall church, a medieval plan used widely in Germany from the time of its appearance in St. Elizabeth's at Marburg, Germany in the 13th century. Characteristic of the German hall plan is St. Augustine's lofty, unified, open interior space, created by the use of a short transept and a nave height which approximates that of the side aisles (Fig. 1; Photos #2, 3, 4). The termination of the nave in a tri-part east end formed by a polygonal apse and two flanking chapels (Fig. 1; Photo #2) also follows medieval German models. The recurrent use of the hall plan (most often in Gothic style brick buildings) in eleven of twenty-one German Catholic churches built between 1875 and 1910 is one of the clearest architectural expressions of German ethnic consciousness remaining in the city. A comparison of St. Augustine's with two other 1890s ethnic churches designed by Louis Wessbecher (1857-1940), the German-born and -trained architect of the Hebert Street church, succinctly illustrates the local practice of expressing ethnic/religious distinctions through church plan: Polish Catholic St. Stanislaus Kostka (listed in the National Register) features a domical central plan; Bethlehem Lutheran (German), in the Hyde Park Certified Local District, employs an unaisled auditorium plan. St. Augustine's along with other German churches also markedly departed from church designs for Irish Catholics (the city's second largest ethnic group) which were modeled after English Gothic churches and were usually designed by architects of English or Irish descent.

The stained glass windows installed in the church are documented as the work of St. Louis' foremost designer of church glass, the Emil Frei Art Glass Company. Born in Germany, Frei (1869-1942) was trained as an artist in the Munich Academy of Arts. Around the turn of the century, Frei established a stained glass studio in St. Louis specializing in figural art glass which was installed in numerous local churches and in more than 200 churches across the country. In addition to St. Augustine's windows, Frei received commissions for at least eight other German Catholic churches including his own parish,

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St. Anthony's. Only three of the seven figural art glass windows in St. Augustine's are unboarded and visible. A large impressive window installed in the south transept depicts the Adoration of the Magi. On the south side of the apse, another window illustrates a well known legend from the life of St. Augustine referring to the Bishop-Saint's profound studies on the nature of the Trinity. Meditating on the Trinity, St. Augustine is shown walking along the seashore where he encountered a child with shell in hand, attempting to fill a hole in the sand with the ocean. When the Saint remarked on the futility of the child's effort, the youngster replied, "No more so than for a human intelligence to fathom the mystery you are meditating."

The church survives with original finely crafted oak pews and a communion rail with Gothic detailing. Installed in the vestibule is the original ceramic tile floor in grey, blue and buff colors.

Shortly after the church was completed, a new parochial residence was built on the south side of the church. In 1928, however, another large rectory replaced the earlier house which may have been damaged by the tornado of 1927. The new priests' house was constructed by contractor W. Diemert & Son; plans were drawn up by Henry P. Hess, a prominent St. Louis architect of Catholic institutional buildings. The buff brick Tudor Gothic house was designed to harmonize with the colors, materials and forms of the church. Inside, original dark oak millwork and built-in bookcases further distinguish the house.

St. Augustine's remained a strong and vital parish well into the mid 20th century when the city's north side began its dramatic decline, eventually forcing the church to be closed. More fortunate than numerous northside churches which have been demolished over the years, St. Augustine's church was purchased in 1982 by Christ Baptist Church. Through the energetic leadership and commitment of Rev. D. W. Jordan, preservation is underway of two architecturally significant buildings which are important legacies of St. Louis' German heritage.

FOOTNOTES

1 Mary M. Stiritz, "Expressions of Ethnic Identity in St. Louis German Catholic", Interpretations: A Journal of Idea, Analysis and Criticism, 13 (Spring 1982), 72-86.

2 Camille N. Dry and Richard J. Compton, eds., Pictorial St. Louis-1875, (St. Louis: n.p., 1875), reprint ed., (St. Louis: Harry M. Hagan, 1971), p. 118.

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3 St. Louis Republic 4 May 1896.

4 St. Louis Globe Democrat 30 August 1897.

5 Francis A. Thornton, ed., The Notable Catholic Institutions of St. Louis and Vicinity, (St. Louis: Finkenbiner-Reid Co., 1910), p. 122. St. Louis Post Dispatch 22 September 1942.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Granite City, IL/MO

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

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

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification Lots 20, 19, 18 & West 25' Lot 17 of Block 37, Union Addition fronting 143' 8" on Lismore by 175' on Hebert and alley; 3114-24 Lismore, City Block 1073.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By [©] Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc.

name/title ¹Mary M. Stiritz, Research Director

organization Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc. date 7/7/86

street & number 917 Locust, 7th Floor

telephone (314) 421-6474

city or town St. Louis

state MO 63101

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Wayne C. Don

for title Frederick A. Brunner, Ph.D., P.E., Director, Department of Natural Resources, and State Historic Preservation Officer date 8/22/86

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Dry, Camille N., and Compton, Richard J. eds. Pictorial St. Louis-1875. St. Louis: n.p., 1875). reprint ed. St. Louis: Harry M. Hagan, 1971.

Stiritz, Mary M. "Expressions of Ethnic Identity in St. Louis German Churches"
Interpretations: A Journal of Idea, Analysis and Criticism. 13 Spring
1983.

Thornton, Francis A., ed. The Notable Catholic Institutions of St. Louis and
Vicinity. St. Louis: Finkenbiner-Reid Co., 1910.

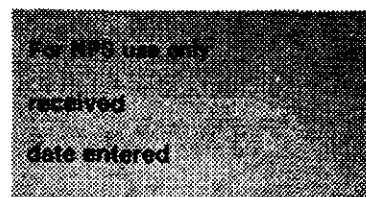
St. Louis Globe Democrat 30 August 1896.

St. Louis Post Dispatch 22 September 1942.

St. Louis Republic 4 May 1896.

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2. James M. Denny
Chief, Survey and Registration
and State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
9th Floor, Jefferson Building
P. O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
Date: August 19, 1986
Telephone: 314-751-5376

CHRIST BAPTIST CHURCH

St. Louis, MO

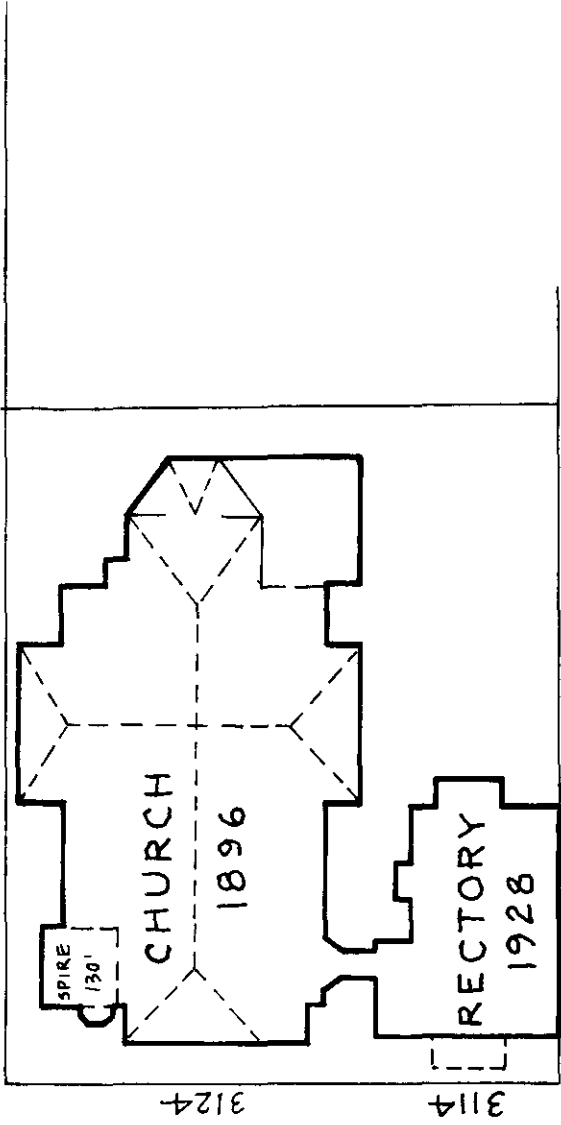
Figure #1 of 2

Site Plan, church and rectory

Drawn by: Pat Hays Baer

Date: June 1986

HEBERT



CB1073

SITE PLAN:
 CHRIST BAPTIST CHURCH
 (ST. AUGUSTINE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH)
 ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

LISMORE

CB1072



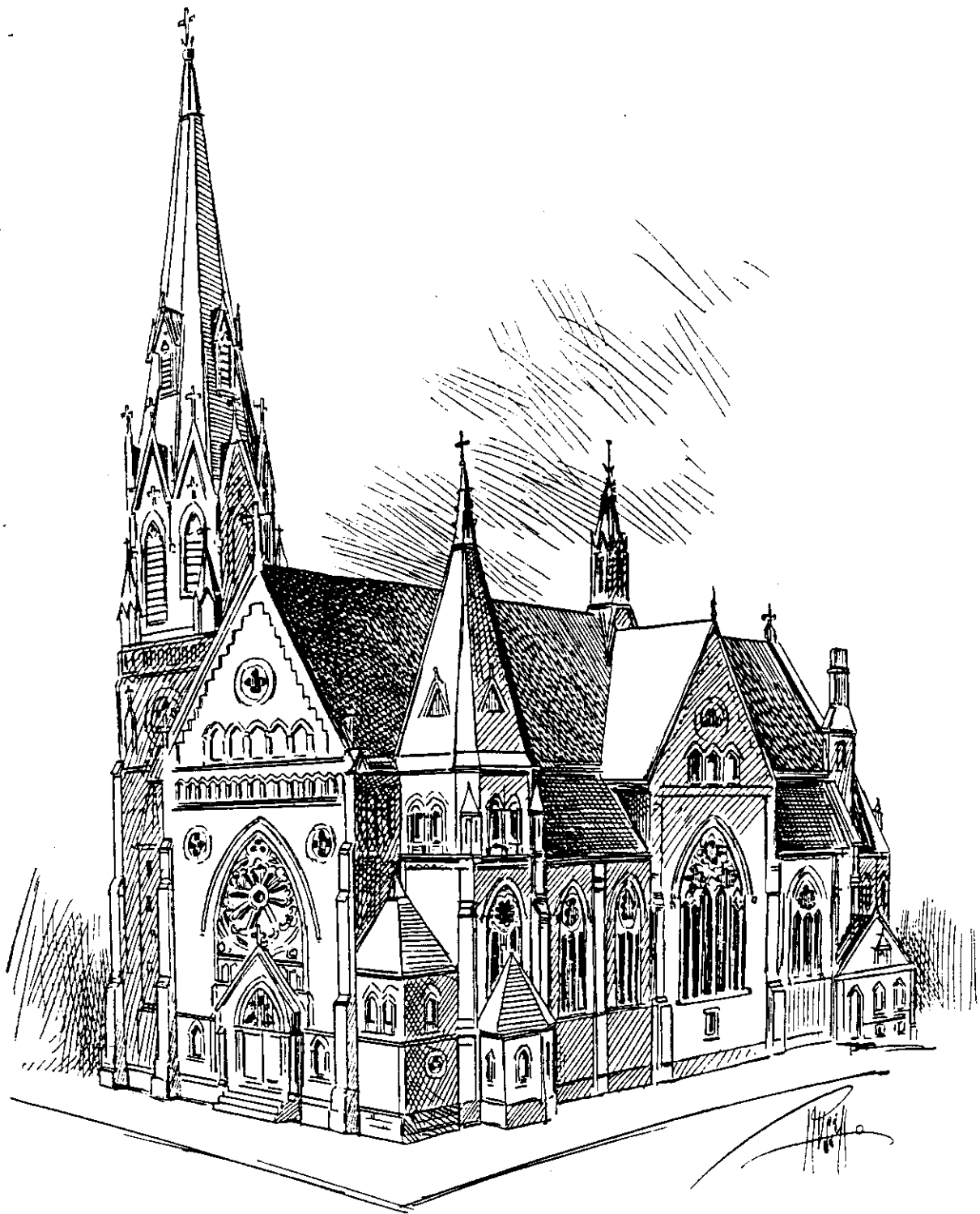
1" = 50' 0"

CHRIST BAPTIST CHURCH

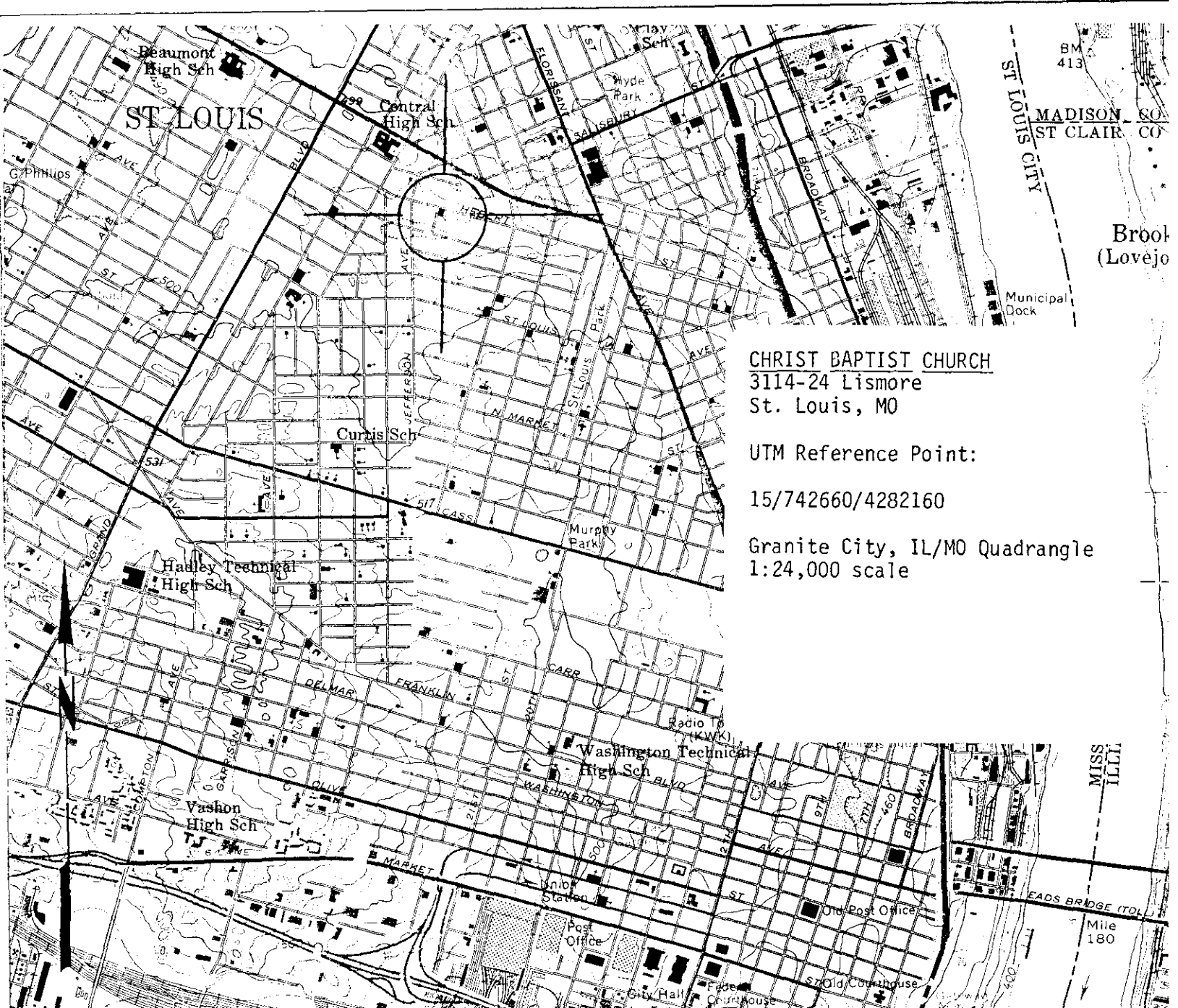
St. Louis, MO

Figure #2 of 2

From Das Katholische Deutschthum von St. Louis
in Seinen 20 Gemeinden, 1896.



Die neue Kirche.



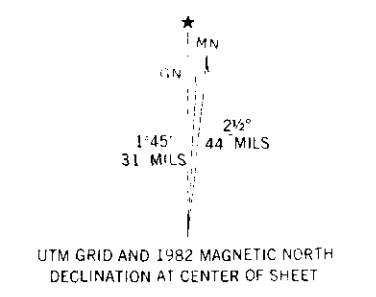
CHRIST BAPTIST CHURCH
 3114-24 Lismore
 St. Louis, MO

UTM Reference Point:

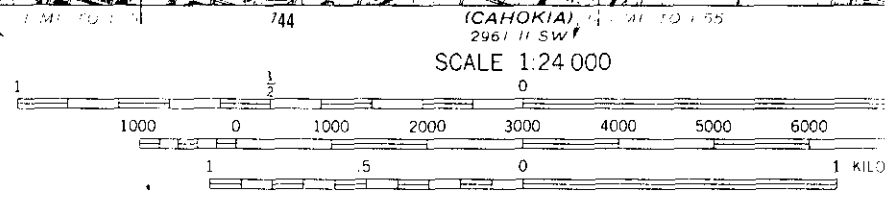
15/742660/4282160

Granite City, IL/MO Quadrangle
 1:24,000 scale

Survey
 Geological Survey 1930
 aerial photographs
 datum
 e system, west zone
 grid ticks, zone 15,
 ark buildings are shown
 1983



There may be private inholdings within
 the boundaries of the National or
 State reservations shown on this map



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
 DASHED LINES REPRESENT 5-FOOT CONTOURS
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON,
 STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, URBANA, ILLINOIS 61801,
 AND THE DIVISION OF GEOLOGY AND LAND SURVEY
 MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, ROLLA, MISSOURI
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON RE

CHRIST BAPTIST CHURCH

St. Louis MO

#1 of 4

Photographer: Cynthia Longwisch

Date: June 1986

Negative: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis, Inc.
Camera facing east (primary elevations,
church & rectory)



CHRIST BAPTIST CHURCH

St. Louis, MO

#2 of 4

Photographer: Cynthia Longwisch

Date: June 1986

Negative: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis, Inc.
Camera facing southwest (church, north and
east elevations)



CHRIST BAPTIST CHURCH

St. Louis, MO

#3 of 4

Photographer: Cynthia Longwisch

Date: June 1986

Negative: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis, Inc.
Camera facing east (church interior; nave and
apse)



CHRIST BAPTIST CHURCH

St. Louis, MO

#4 of 4

Photographer: Cynthia Longwisch

Date: June 1986

Negative: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis, Inc.
Camera facing west (church interior; nave and
choir gallery)

