OMB No. 1024-0018

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.

	Signature of commenting official:	Date		
	In my opinion, the property meets does n	not meet the National Register criteria.		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government				
	Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date		
	ABCD			
	nationalstatewidelocal Applicable National Register Criteria:	I		
	In my opinion, the property meets does not recommend that this property be considered significate level(s) of significance:			
	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.			
	As the designated authority under the National Histor	ic Preservation Act, as amended,		
	3. State/Federal Agency Certification			
	Street & number: 101 West Summit Street City or town: Battle Lake State: MN Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A	County: Otter Tail		
	2. Location			
	N/A (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple prop	perty listing		
	Name of related multiple property listing:			
	1. Name of Property Historic name: First Baptist Church Other names/site number:			
	i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i			

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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 the Keeper	Date of Action	
	Date of Metion	
5. Classification		
Ownership of Property		
(Check as many boxes as apply.)		
Private: X		
Public – Local		
D.11: Co.		
Public – State		
Public – Federal		
<u>—</u>		
Category of Property		
(Check only one box.)		
Building(s) X		
District		
Site		
Structure		
Object		

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Number of Resources within Prope	rtv	
(Do not include previously listed resc		
Contributing	Noncontributing	
_	•	1,:1,41,
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total
6. Function or Use Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.) RELIGION/religious facility		
Current Functions		
(Enter categories from instructions.)		
RELIGION/religious facility		

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7. Description		
Architectural Classification		
(Enter categories from instructions.)		
LATE VICTORIAN/Gothic Revival		
		
Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)		
Principal exterior materials of the property: Wood, stone	e	

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes 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.)

Summary Paragraph

The First Baptist Church is located at 101 West Summit Street in Battle Lake, a city in west-central Minnesota with a population of approximately 900 (Figure 1). The church fronts Lake Avenue, the main thoroughfare in Battle Lake. The building occupies Lots 7 and 8 of Block 3, Bowman and Dunton's Addition. The lots collectively measure fifty feet by one hundred thirty-four feet.

The First Baptist Church is a one-story, rectangular building measuring fifty-six feet long and twenty-two feet wide (Photos 1 and 2). A steeply pitched, gable roof with dark brown asphalt shingles covers the building. The building is clad with a combination of clapboard siding and wood shingles and represents an example of the Gothic Revival style with elements of the Shingle style. The church was constructed in 1893 and designed by architect Warren Dunnell of the Minneapolis firm of Dunnell and Elliot. The building continues to serve its original function.

The First Baptist Church rests on a raised brick foundation. Clapboard siding rises from a water table up to the level of the windowsills. Upper wall surfaces, including the gable ends, are clad with wood shingles. Gothic-arched windows are spaced along all sides of the building except for

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the rear elevation. The double-hung windows contain multiple panes in the upper sash and a single pane in the lower sash. A segmental wooden window hood frames the upper portion of each window and is linked to a horizontal band that connects all the windows and the entrance doors. The clapboard siding and trim are painted white while the shingles are painted dark brown. The church has sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The period of significance is 1893.

Narrative Description

East Elevation

The east elevation features three, twelve-over-one, double-hung windows spaced along this side of the building at the sanctuary level (Photo 3). The gable roof, supported by four brackets, projects beyond the surface of the wall. A large Gothic arch is formed within the gable end (Photo 4). The arch is framed with a segmental wooden surround similar to those that cap the windows. A wooden frame is set within the arch and contains a panel stating, "Baptist Church." There is a slight flare to the gable roof at the eaves. The east elevation features a cornerstone at the lower right carved with the year 1893 in stone (Photo 5). A profile of the water table is clearly seen just to the upper right of the cornerstone (Photo 6). There are also two, two-light casement windows set in the brick foundation wall.

North Elevation

The brick foundation wall is clearly visible along the north elevation and includes four, two-light casement windows (Photo 7). A portion of the underlying stone foundation is also visible. The eight courses of brick were added to the original stone foundation in 1921 when the building was raised to accommodate the installation of a full basement.

The main entrance doors are located at the east end of the north elevation. The paired wooden doors are original to the building and feature a combination of horizontal and vertical recessed panels (Photo 8). A three-pane fanlight with a pointed arch is positioned above the doorway. Two brackets support the roof where it projects over the entrance. When the building was raised, the entrance doors, fanlight, and associated framing and trim were all lowered slightly to bring the entry to near grade level.

Five windows are positioned to the right of the entrance at the sanctuary level. The window immediately to the right of the entrance is identical to the windows on the east elevation and features twelve-over-one, double-hung sash. The remaining four windows to the west are somewhat larger and feature twenty-over-one, double-hung sash.

A tower projects from the north slope of the roof just above the entrance (Photo 9). Clad with wood shingles, the tower originally featured an open belfry, although the three arched openings have been infilled with wood panels. However, a bell was never installed in the belfry. The tower is covered by a steep, six-sided spire. The spire is capped with a finial that appears to be original

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when compared with a historic photograph from 1895, although it is missing a round ball at the very top.

An addition, completed in 1921, is visible at the west end of the north elevation. The addition only extended the building by an additional six feet and is clad with clapboard siding and shingles identical to the original wall treatment.

South Elevation

The window configuration of the south elevation is similar to that of the north elevation with one somewhat smaller window near the east end followed by four larger windows (Photo 10). A brick chimney is attached to the wall between the fourth and fifth windows and extends through the broad overhanging eave. The chimney was likely added in 1921.

The brick foundation wall is visible and includes four, two-light casement windows.

West Elevation

The west elevation features the same broad overhanging roof as the east elevation and also forms a large Gothic arch (Photo 11). Based on the oldest known interior photograph of the church, it does not appear that this elevation included any windows originally.

Two additions have been added to the west elevation. In ca. 1912, a six-foot long, sixteen-foot wide, addition was built and centered on the west elevation to provide space for a baptistry. In 1921, the addition was extended to the north by three feet, bringing it flush with the north sidewall of the building. The additions are covered by a combination of a gable roof and a shed roof with a lesser slope and were carefully positioned within the projecting Gothic arch formed by the roof, so the design of original building's roof was not impacted.

The addition is clad with clapboard siding and shingles as was used on the original building and the horizontal band linking the windows is also carried across the addition. An entrance door at grade level is positioned at the north end of the addition. The wooden door features four recessed panels. Two, one-over-one, double-hung windows are centered below the peak of the gabled portion of the roof. The brick foundation wall is also visible along with portions of the underlying stone foundation. One, two-light casement window is centered below the double-hung windows.

Interior

The main entrance opens into a small entry (Photo 12). One can proceed to the right and up three steps through double doors into the sanctuary or straight ahead and up three steps through a single door into a vestibule originally referred to as a parlor. At the left side of the entrance is a stairway to the basement.

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The vestibule is square-shaped room with triple doors leading into the sanctuary (Photo 13). The sanctuary is a rectangular space with a high ceiling reflecting the gable roof structure near the sidewalls while the center portion of the ceiling is flat (Photos 14 and 15). Pews set at an angle flank a center aisle. The chancel is at the west end of the sanctuary and includes an altar and pulpit resting on a raised platform. When viewed from the interior, it becomes clear that the windows are rectangular in shape with their Gothic arches formed by the exterior window frames. Modern folding shutters with louvers can be closed to cover the windows.

In about 1921, fiberboard was installed on the walls and ceiling of most of the entry, vestibule, and sanctuary (Photo 16). The fiberboard was installed as a wainscot and above the wainscot the fiberboard simulates stone blocks. In 1962, the chancel was enlarged slightly by expanding into the ca. 1912 addition, which was originally used as a baptistery. When viewed from the sanctuary, the new space is essentially a recess framed by a high Gothic arch that is paneled in wood. Three raised crosses are placed below the peak of the arch. A door on the left side of the recess leads into the addition, which now consists of a hallway and stairway leading to the rear entrance. From the rear entrance, the stairway continues down to the basement level.

Basement

The building was raised by nearly two feet in 1921 to accommodate a full basement. The original basement was likely a low unfinished, or partially finished, space. The stairway to the basement off the main entry is rather steep and awkwardly positioned and thus is not believed to have been part of the original plans.

The basement contains one large room for meetings and dining, a kitchen, space for the furnace, and a restroom (Photo 17). The original stone foundation walls are visible as are the brick walls placed atop the foundation when the building was raised (Photo 18). A hallway along the north wall at the back of the basement leads to the stairway to the rear entrance on the west side of the building. The walls along the stairway are clad with beadboard (Photo 19).

Assessment of Integrity

Considering that the First Baptist Church is now over 130 years old, the building retains a remarkably high level of integrity. It remains largely unchanged since the modifications that were completed in 1921. The building retains integrity of location as it remains in its original position. Integrity of setting has been somewhat modified since 1893 as Battle Lake has expanded in proximity to the building. Integrity of feeling and association remains high as the building retains its original function. Integrity of design, workmanship and materials has been minimally impacted by the additions to the west elevation and by raising the building to accommodate a full basement. The highly compatible additions are small in scale and were constructed with massing and materials consistent with the 1893 design. They sensitively preserve the major design feature of the west elevation; namely, the projecting Gothic arch incorporated within the gable roof. Raising the building in 1921 exposed the new brick foundation and also resulted in the lowering of the main entrance. However, these changes have

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not had any appreciable impact on the Gothic Revival style design of the building. No features were obscured or removed by these modifications.

One loss of integrity is the replacement of the original Gothic style windows, except for those above the entrance, with metal sash, although the replacements replicate the historic multi-pane configuration.

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8. St	tatement of Significance		
	cable National Register Criteria "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for ".)	National Register	
	A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant broad patterns of our history.	contribution to the	
	B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in or	ur past.	
X	C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, periodistruction or represents the work of a master, or possesses his or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose continuity individual distinction.	gh artistic values,	
	D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important history.	nt in prehistory or	
Cwitan	·ia Considerations		
	"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 pas	t 50 years	

Peder O. Peterson

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Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.) ARCHITECTURE	
Period of Significance	
Significant Dates	
Significant Person (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)	
Cultural Affiliation	
Architect/Builder Warren Dunnell Dunnell and Elliot	

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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.)

The First Baptist Church is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under National Register Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an excellent local example of the Gothic Revival style. The building remains in remarkably original condition from the time of its construction in 1893 and represents the best example of the Gothic Revival style in Battle Lake. The finely detailed design of the building not only represents a skillful creation by architect Warren Dunnell, but the diminutive building also holds a unique position within his important body of work, which is generally known for large institutional projects and public buildings. The First Baptist Church expands our understanding of his talents as a designer.

The extensive documentation about the building also provides a unique opportunity to fully document its design and construction. The archives of the First Baptist Church retain original architectural drawings, minutes of the building committee that was assembled to manage the construction of the church, correspondence regarding the building, including letters relating to architect Warren Dunnell, photographs, as well as cancelled checks documenting the construction costs. Collectively, the documentation allows for unusual insight into the construction of a late-nineteenth century building.

The period of significance is 1893, the date of construction of the building. The building is of local significance.

The First Baptist Church meets National Register Criterion Consideration A for Religious Properties because the property derives its significance from its architectural distinction.

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

The History of Battle Lake

Battle Lake is located in Otter Tail County in west central Minnesota, 20 miles east of Fergus Falls, the county seat. The name Battle Lake commemorates a battle, or series of battles, between the Ojibwe and Dakota, said to have taken place on the shores of West Battle Lake, which is located on the northern edge of the town.

Settlement was underway by 1881 when the Northern Pacific, Fergus Falls and Black Hills Railroad laid tracks through the town. That same year the village of Battle Lake was platted. By 1884, the town was thriving and included businesses selling farm machinery, lumber, hardware, dry goods, tinware, stoves, and general merchandise. The town also included a hotel, restaurant, bank, real estate and loan office, post office, school, drug store, meat market, and the offices of

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the *Battle Lake Review*, a newspaper that continues in publication to this day, as well as a number of churches.¹

On March 25, 1891, a number of citizens petitioned Otter Tail County Commissioners to incorporate. The petition stated that the area to be incorporated included about 420 acres and a census taken on March 20, 1891 confirmed there were 231 inhabitants. The county approved the petition and ordered a vote to be held on April 28, 1891, which approved the incorporation of Battle Lake.²

While Battle Lake served the surrounding farming community, by the late nineteenth century the town also developed into a tourist destination. The many lakes in the region began to attract visitors from southern states who came north to escape the summer heat and take advantage of recreational opportunities. One early hotel owner was James Allison "Cap" Colehour, a Civil War veteran, who with his wife Catherine (Kate) established the Prospect House hotel in 1887 (NRHP, 2013). Prospect House is located on a hill overlooking West Battle Lake one block north of the First Baptist Church.³

Another early pioneer was Edmund A. Everts, who was also a Civil War veteran. Everts settled on a homestead in Otter Tail County and in 1881 opened a lumber business in Battle Lake. The business continues to this day and is still operated by the Everts family. The Colehours and Everts were to play prominent roles in the history of the First Baptist Church.⁴

Building History of the First Baptist Church

The first Baptist church in Minnesota was established in St. Paul in 1849. Over the next decade several regional associations of Baptist churches were formed, but then consolidated as the Minnesota Baptist State Convention in 1859. By 1861, there were 93 Baptist churches with 2,384 members. By 1904, there were 267 churches with 21,788 members. ⁵

One way to promote the establishment of congregations was through "Chapel Car Evangelism," in which a dedicated railroad car traveled to communities throughout the state and conducted services. A Chapel Car is known to have made stops in a number of communities that later established Baptist Churches including Bemidji, Little Falls, and Battle Lake.⁶

The First Baptist Church in Battle Lake was organized on June 5, 1883, by six founding members who met at the home of W. H. Kephart. Articles of incorporation were drawn up and notarized by Orris Albertson on June 6th. Kephart was named the first pastor of the congregation on July 31st.

¹ After the Battle: A History of Battle Lake, Minnesota, 1991, 25.

² After the Battle, 18, 24.

³ William E. Stark, "Prospect House," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, November 2013, State Historic Preservation Office, St. Paul, Minnesota, 7-8.

⁴ After the Battle, 38-40.

⁵ Robert D. Stanford, ed., *Sketches: The Baptist Heritage in Minnesota and Iowa*, 1994, 1-2.

⁶ Stanford, 2-3.

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The congregation continued to meet in homes until January 27, 1884, when they first met in their newly acquired chapel, which had been the original schoolhouse of the village. The log building was located on the northwest edge of town by the First Lutheran Cemetery. At the time, it was the only church in Battle Lake where services were conducted in English.⁷

The congregation met on May 1, 1893, and decided to construct a new church. A building committee was appointed and held its first meeting on May 22, 1893. The committee members included J. A. Colehour, E. A. Everts, Dr. M. S. Jones, and B. B. Warfield. A checking account was created specifically for the purpose of depositing the funds raised for the construction of the building and for the payment of the associated expenses. The first order of business was to authorize and issue check No. 1 in the amount of \$40.00 to pay architect Warren Dunnell's fee for the plans and specifications. The purchase of a book to maintain the committee's meeting minutes was also authorized (Figure 2).

The First Baptist Church was under the auspices of the Minnesota Baptist State Convention, headquartered in Minneapolis, and the congregation had already discussed their intent to build a new church with the state organization. The State Convention had to approve the construction project and also insisted that no debt should be incurred, although they also provided some funds toward the cost of construction. Their level of involvement is illustrated by the following note dated May 20, 1893, from Rev. T. R. Peters of the State Convention to J. A. Colehour in which he explained that he had met with architect Warren Dunnell and had been assured that the architect's fee would not exceed \$40.00 (Figure 3). Peters clearly formed a high opinion of Dunnell. In a subsequent letter to J. A. Colehour he wrote, "Think you have acted wisely in employing Mr. Dunnell." Peters personally visited Battle Lake to discuss the construction of the building. 11

The next meeting of the building committee was held on June 20, 1893. A number of bills were approved by the committee, including a payment to Peter Larson for excavating the building site. He was paid \$2.50 per day for 4.75 days. He was assisted by a "boy" who was paid \$1.00 per day for 3.5 days. Larson was also paid .75 cents per load for delivering eight loads of stone to the site for the foundation walls. Four additional men were paid for delivering a total of 45 loads of the stone. ¹²

On July 10, 1893, the committee signed a contract with Peder O. Peterson to complete the carpentry work on the building. A check was issued to E. Ellison for \$21.50 for laying the foundation.¹³

⁸ "Minutes of the Building Committee," First Baptist Church Archives, May 22, 1893, 1.

⁷ *After the Battle*, 96.

⁹ T. R. Peters to J. A. Colehour, May 20, 1893, First Baptist Church Archives.

¹⁰ T. R. Peters to J. A. Colehour, May 26, 1893, First Baptist Church Archives.

¹¹ Battle Lake Review, May 25, 1893, 4.

¹² "Minutes of the Building Committee," First Baptist Church Archives, June 20, 1893, 3; *Battle Lake Review*, June 15, 1893, 4.

¹³ "Minutes of the Building Committee," First Baptist Church Archives, July 10, 1893, 5.

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The next committee meeting was held on July 24, 1893. Two checks were issued to E. A. Everts, a committee member who also owned the local lumber company, which he had established in Battle Lake in 1882. One check was in the amount of \$300.00 and was described as "on lumber account." A second check was for \$194.05, representing \$194.00 for mill work and \$4.05 for a freight charge. A check was issued to carpenter Peder Peterson for \$25.00. Each edition of the minutes included a running total of the expenses to date. Thus far, \$633.30 had been expended, including the architect's fee of \$40.00.¹⁴

At the next committee meeting, held on August 9, 1893, several bills were paid for various supplies including a bill for plaster and a bill for 10 gallons of stain. Peder Peterson was paid \$50.00.¹⁵ Additional bills were approved on August 29, 1893, including a bill for \$35.00 from Elmer Hinkston for plaster work.¹⁶ A number of payments were approved at the meeting held on October 3, 1893, including a payment of \$159.39 to E. A. Everts and \$75.00 to Peder Peterson. George Willie, the painter, was instructed to "stain (the) tower with creosote stain."¹⁷

The majority of the cancelled checks issued by the building committee have been retained in the church archives, providing an unexpected level of documentation concerning the construction of the building. These include checks issued to carpenter Peder Peterson and painter George Willie (Figures 4 and 5).

The final set of meeting minutes is dated November 29, 1893. Among the bills approved for payment was a bill for \$9.85 from Elmer Hinkston and a bill for \$22.20 from George Willie. The minutes included the final tabulation for the cost of the construction of the First Baptist Church. The expenditures totaled \$1,167.11. 18

A special meeting of the church board was held on December 9, 1893, to dissolve the building committee and to thank the committee members for all their efforts. ¹⁹ The *Battle Lake Review* announced the completion of the building on December 21, 1893:

The new Baptist chapel in this village which was dedicated to the service of God on Sunday morning Dec. 10th, is certainly an ornament in the village and a credit to those who had charge since the work began. It was about a year ago when some of the lady members of the Baptist Society in this village made up their minds to have a new house of worship in a more central location. A meeting of the church members was called and it was at once decided to secure a suitable location and commence raising a church building fund. Each member agreed to raise a certain amount. It was also decided that a lot should be purchased, but that the work of building should not begin until all the money necessary had been secured. E. A.

¹⁴ "Minutes of the Building Committee," First Baptist Church Archives, July 24, 1893, 7.

¹⁵ "Minutes of the Building Committee," First Baptist Church Archives, August 9, 1893, 9.

¹⁶ "Minutes of the Building Committee," First Baptist Church Archives, August 29, 1893, 11.

¹⁷ "Minutes of the Building Committee," First Baptist Church Archives, October 3, 1893, 13.

¹⁸ "Minutes of the Building Committee," First Baptist Church Archives, November 29, 1893, 15.

¹⁹ "Minutes of the First Baptist Church," First Baptist Church Archives, December 9, 1893, 35.

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Everts, J. A. Colehour, R. B. Warfield and Dr. Jones were appointed (to) a building committee and they at once secured the lot on the corner of Summit St. and Lake Ave. and sent to Dunnell & Elliott of Minneapolis for plans and specifications.

The members, meanwhile, had commenced to do their work, and from the start they met with splendid success, and the work of laying the new foundation for the new church was begun. As soon as Mr. Ellison finished laying the foundation, P. O. Peterson commenced framing the building, and there was not a day lost until it was turned over to plasterer E. W. Hinkston, and from him to Geo. H. Willie, the painter.

The new church cost \$1,359.00. It is 24 by 50 feet on the ground. The auditorium is 22 by 36, the parlor is 14 by 14. It is pronounced by those who have seen it, one of the prettiest little churches in the state and Battle Lake people think that is right.

As stated above, the church cost \$1,359, every cent of which has been paid. Of this amount, \$750 was donated by people living in the Twin Cities or outside the state. . . . All of Battle Lake's summer guests also made liberal contributions. Our Baptist people feel very grateful to all who in any way have assisted them, not forgetting the large number of farmers who have helped by paying \$1 or \$2 each, and the good people of towns nearby whose checks for various amounts were sent in. The very liberal donations and prompt responses to calls for assistance made the building of the church possible, and the church people naturally feel very grateful. They now have a neat and cozy little chapel, centrally located, where they can meet together and praise God, and where all friends from far and near, and the stranger in the village, are welcome. ²⁰

A photograph from 1895 is the oldest known image of the building and depicts the church in its very original form (Figure 6).

Over the years, a number of minor changes were made to the church, although the building remains in remarkably original condition. Prior to about 1910, as seen in photographs from ca. 1908 and ca. 1910 (Figures 7 and 8) the building's shingles had been painted to a light tone. Also notable in the photograph is the original chimney designed by architect Warren Dunnell. The chimney was later removed when a new furnace was installed, and a new chimney was built along the south elevation in about 1921.

In about 1912, an addition was added to the west side of the building. The small addition measured sixteen feet wide and six feet long and was centered on the west elevation. The gable

²⁰ "The New Baptist Chapel," *Battle Lake Review*, December 21, 1893, 4. The newspaper article states the cost of the building was \$1,359.00, slightly higher than the final total found in the minutes of the building committee. It is likely the difference is accounted for by the cost of the land and related expenses.

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roof of this sensitive addition was incorporated within the Gothic arch formed by the roof of the church in order not to disturb the original design. The addition provided space for a baptistery.²¹ The entrance to the baptistery was located on the south elevation of the addition. Historic photographs depict this addition in its original form (Figures 9 and 10).

In 1921, the church was raised by about two feet to accommodate a full basement in order to provide space for a dining hall, kitchen, and for use by the Sunday school and for other activities.²² The *Battle Lake Review* reported:

The Baptist ladies aid society have been giving splendid suppers the past year, and have decided to use the money so earned in having the basement enlarged and made over. Work was commenced last week, Dell Hahn doing the excavating. The Baptist Sunday school will be held at the school house until the basement is completed.²³

The work on the building was completed by late July 1921.

The remodeling of the Baptist church is almost completed and the improvement is great. The church was raised several feet and a full basement with kitchen and furnace put in. The interior has also been refinished and looks fine.²⁴

The last sentence in the above quote might suggest that the fiberboard paneling in the sanctuary was also installed in 1921. Church meeting minutes confirm the completion of the work noting:

The basement remodeled and the church otherwise repaired and painted during the summer of 1921. Ladies Aid financing improvements. The State Board assisting to the amount of \$250.00.²⁵

Eight courses of brick placed atop the original rubblestone foundation walls support the raised building. Because the north elevation of the building abutted the sidewalk, the main entrance doors and associated framing and trim were lowered slightly to bring the entry to near grade level because of the impracticality of installing more than one step directly onto the sidewalk. This necessitated the installation of interior steps in the entry that led to the vestibule and sanctuary from the now lowered entrance. The change in the position of the entrance can be seen by comparing an 1895 photograph of the building with a current photograph (Figure 6 and Photo 7).

At the same time the building was raised, the addition on the west side was extended by three feet so that it was flush with the north elevation. The roof over this addition was of a lesser slope

²¹ H. S. Everts, "80 Years of Progress," 1883-1963, 9.

²² Based on the volume of stone delivered to the site in 1893, the building had full foundation walls, but the original basement was likely a rather low space and perhaps only partially excavated or useable.

²³ Battle Lake Review, April 14, 1921, 5.

²⁴ *Battle Lake Review*, July 28, 1921, 6.

²⁵ "Minutes of the First Baptist Church," First Baptist Church Archives, September 1921.

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than the gable roof of the ca. 1912 addition. The addition was built to accommodate an entrance providing access to the basement and the sanctuary. At the same time, the baptistry was removed from the ca. 1912 addition and the entrance door on the south elevation was also removed and the opening covered with clapboard siding and shingles. It is likely that the stairway to the basement located off the main entry to the building was also added at this time.

Other changes over the years include modifications to the chancel in 1962, which created a recess in the rear wall by utilizing space from the ca. 1912 addition. The recess was framed with a Gothic arch. In 1963, a wood floor was installed in the basement. In 2002, the stairway to the basement off the main entrance was modified and extended so the stairs would not be as steep.²⁶

The Architectural Drawings for the First Baptist Church

Remarkably, the First Baptist Church retains original drawings for the building by architect Warren Dunnell. Two sheets of drawings exist. One drawing consists of a scroll measuring 3 feet long and 16 inches wide that can be rolled up on a wooden dowel (Figure 11). The second drawing is a large sheet measuring 5 feet, 11 inches by 3 feet, 3 inches.

The drawings are stamped "Dunnell & Elliot Architects" in several locations (Figure 12). Rather than floor plans or elevations, various architectural features are depicted on the drawings and confirm the very original condition of the building. Examples of the various drawings include a window section (Figure 13), a section of a sill and of the water table (Figure 14), details of the framing for the elaborate sign board (Figure 15), a drawing of the original chimney, which is no longer extant (Figure 16), and details of the brackets under the tower and gable (Figure 17).

Dunnell's design represents a finely-detailed building and an excellent example of the Gothic Revival style. Features of the Gothic Revival style include steep gable roofs, towers with spires, pointed-arch windows, decorative bargeboards, and window tracery. High style versions are generally constructed in masonry, while frame buildings, such as the First Baptist Church, are usually more straightforward and classified as Carpenter Gothic. The First Baptist Church features Gothic arches that frame the windows as well as the entrance. Segmental window hoods imitate masonry, a design feature of the Carpenter Gothic. Instead of bargeboards, Dunnell's distinctive design incorporates a large segmental Gothic arch in the projecting mass of the roof structure on the east and west elevations. The tower is particularly inventive, the design of which, in part, takes on the form of a dormer, resulting in a scale appropriate to the size of the building. The belfry also features Gothic arches. Dunnell's attention to detail extends to both the design of the water table and the elaborate sign board as well as the finial atop the tower. His use of clapboard siding as well as shingles enlivens the wall surfaces and the overall design. The extensive use of wood shingles on the walls, gables, and tower also represents a characteristic of the Shingle style. The carefully considered design suggests that Dunnell's efforts were not compromised by his fee of \$40.00, which even at the time might have been considered a rather modest amount.

²⁶ "Church makes major improvements," Battle Lake Review, November 23, 2002, 14.

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Architect Warren B. Dunnell

Warren Barnes Dunnell was born in Norway, Maine, on August 23, 1851, the son of Mark and Sarah Dunnell. In 1863, the family moved to Winona, Minnesota, and two years later to Owatonna. Mark Dunnell served in the Minnesota state legislature and was later elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Minnesota's first congressional district.

Warren Dunnell attended the University of Minnesota in 1869 and later transferred to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He began his career in architecture with the supervising architect of the Treasury in Washington, D.C., and then left for Paris to study at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Upon his return, he resumed working for the federal government and supervised the construction of buildings in Memphis, Tennessee and Kansas City, Missouri.

Dunnell opened his own practice in St. Paul in 1876 and formed a partnership with Samuel J. Brown. His firm was then known as Dunnell and Brown. In 1876, the firm prepared plans for the Methodist Episcopal Church in Owatonna and also submitted a design for the competition for Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis. Both buildings were monumental in scale and represented examples of the Gothic Revival style, although neither building was constructed.²⁷ Brown remained a partner until at least 1877.

Dunnell resumed government service, but later returned to St. Paul in 1880 and entered the office of Abraham Radcliffe. A year later, he opened his own practice in Minneapolis. John Elliot joined the practice and worked with Dunnell from 1884-1887 and also from 1893-1894. The firm was then known as Dunnell and Elliot. After the partnership dissolved, Dunnell continued to practice on his own.

Dunnell's practice focused on public buildings and institutions, as well as churches, schools, and hospitals. His designs for churches also include Oliver Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis (1888), although the building is no longer extant, and the First Baptist Church in Owatonna (1892). He also designed the Douglas, Lowell, and Blaine elementary schools in Minneapolis.

Another building designed in Dunnell's hometown of Owatonna was the Music Hall (1892) at the Pillsbury Academy (NRHP, 1987). His father, Mark Dunnell, an active Baptist and president of the Minnesota Baptist Convention in 1872-1873, played a major role in locating the Baptist school in Owatonna.²⁸

But Dunnell is best known as the architect of several of the state's largest institutions including the Fergus Falls State Hospital (NRHP, 1986, 2016), the State School for Dependent and

²⁷ "Methodist Church, Owatonna, Minn.," Dunnell and Brown Architects, *The American Architect and Building News*, June, 24, 1876, 205; "Westminster Church," Dunnell and Brown Architects, *The American Architect and Building News*, June 29, 1876, 245.

²⁸ Norene Roberts, "Pillsbury Academy Campus Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Registration Form, State Historic Preservation Office, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1986, 8: 1-2.

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Neglected Children (NRHP, 1975), the Minnesota Soldier's Home (NRHP, 1989), and the State Training School (NRHP, 1973). He died in Minneapolis on December 28, 1931.²⁹

It is not known how Dunnell obtained the commission for the First Baptist Church in Battle Lake. It is likely it was through his father's connections to the Baptist Church in Minnesota, through whom he likely obtained the commissions for his work in Owatonna that were also associated with the Baptist Church. Another possibility is that Dunnell's name became known in the Battle Lake area because of his concurrent work designing the immense state hospital in nearby Fergus Falls. Jay Johnson commented that the connection may have come through his great-grandfather, J. A. Colehour, a member of the First Baptist Church who also served on the building committee. One visitor to Colehour's Prospect House hotel was John Lauritzen, the construction foreman at the state hospital.³⁰

Craftsmen who Constructed the First Baptist Church

Documentation in the archives of the First Baptist Church identifies a number of the craftsmen who constructed the building. Additional information has been identified about several of these individuals.³¹

Peter Larson (1861-1943) excavated the building site. He was born in Norway and immigrated with his family to the United States, settling in Clitherall Township in 1869 where they established a homestead. He continued to farm on the family's land.³²

Hans Gilbertson (1843-1932) was among the several individuals who provided stone for the building's foundation. He immigrated from Norway and first settled in Canada before coming to the Battle Lake area. Gilbertson homesteaded 166 acres just to the west of Battle Lake. He was a farmer for over 50 years and also served as president of the co-operative creamery, vice-president of the Farmer's Elevator, Clitherall township clerk, and treasurer for the school district. His obituary noted he was the first permanent settler in the area.³³

Peder O. Peterson (1854-1929) was under contract to complete the carpentry work on the building. He was born in Oslo, Norway, and immigrated to the United States, coming directly to Battle Lake. He married Nicoline Groth on October 27, 1889. Peterson was a carpenter by trade, and built numerous buildings in Battle Lake, including the Farmer's Elevator, the Bondy residence, and an addition to a school. He was also in the lumber and coal business. The *Battle*

²⁹ Alan K. Lathrop, *Minnesota Architects: A Biographical Dictionary* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 63-64; File on Warren Dunnell, Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota Libraries, Minneapolis.

³⁰ Jay Johnson, discussion with Rolf Anderson, June 29, 2022.

³¹ Biographical information provided by Kathy Evavold, Curator of Collections, Otter Tail County Historical Society.

³² 1880, 1890, and 1900 Censuses, Clitherall Township, Otter Tail County; "Peter Larson Dies, Aged 82," *Fergus Falls Daily Journal*, December 16, 1943, 11.

³³ "Hans Gilbertson, Battle Lake Pioneer, Passes," *Battle Lake Review*, January 5, 1933, 1.

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Lake Review reported that when Peterson's funeral was held in 1929, "All business houses of the village were closed out of respect for this pioneer resident."³⁴

Elmer W. Hinkston completed the plaster work for the building. He was also a mason and a farmer. In addition, Hinkston served as a commissioner for Otter Tail County.

George. H. Willie (1855-1946) painted the building. He was a boatbuilder, carpenter, and painter. He served as mayor of Battle Lake for more than 30 years.

Adsit C. Hatch (1855-1929) received two payments from the building committee, although the minutes do not specify their purpose. He likely provided materials for the building as he was involved in hardware, implement, and elevator businesses. He was born in Wisconsin in 1855 and settled in Battle Lake in 1881. His obituary noted that his 48-year career in business was the longest of any person in Battle Lake.³⁵

The Gothic Revival Style in Battle Lake

In Battle Lake, the Gothic Revival style was limited to religious buildings. While the majority of the town's early churches have been demolished, two church buildings survive that date from the late-nineteenth and first part of the twentieth century and both may be compared architecturally to the First Baptist Church.

The **First Methodist Church** (101 Washington Avenue South) was built in 1892. A historic photograph reveals a very picturesque frame building with Gothic Revival style detailing. The building was either L or T-shaped with a tower at the intersection of the two wings. The graceful tower, clad with multi-colored shingles, tapered as it rose to an open belfry. Four-over-four, double-hung windows were capped with Gothic style arches. The church was later converted into a residence. The tower was removed, and all the windows were replaced with casements. The building has lost architectural integrity and no longer resembles the original First Methodist Church.

The congregation of **Trinity Lutheran Church** (207 Henning Street East) purchased a Battle Lake school building in 1908 to serve as their church. The school had been built in 1884 with an addition in 1897. The building served the congregation until 1930 when it was extensively remodeled into a distinctive Gothic Revival style church. The building featured large Gothic style windows and a tower with an open belfry, all with tracery. In 1966, congregation merged with the First Lutheran Church, and in 1970 the building was sold and converted into five

³⁴ "Another Battle Lake Businessman is Called," *Fergus Falls Daily Journal*, April 29, 1929, 4; "P. O. Peterson, Pioneer Resident, Dead," *Battle Lake Review*, May 2, 1929, 1; "Funeral of P. O. Peterson," *Battle Lake Review*, May 9, 1929, 1. The *Battle Lake Review* published a humorous article about Peterson on August 17, 1893. Referred to as the "boss carpenter," the article noted that Peterson was searching for a particular piece of wood for the church and found one in a nearby wood pile. He disturbed a nest of bees, however, and they chased him away.

³⁵ "Mr. A. C. Hatch of Battle Lake is Stricken, Dies," *Fergus Falls Daily Journal*, April 15, 1929, 4; "Life and Death of Mr. A. C. Hatch," *Fergus Falls Daily Journal*, April 16, 1929, 5.

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apartments.³⁶ As part of the conversion to an apartment building, all the Gothic Revival style windows were removed and replaced with rectangular casement windows, except for a Gothic style window above the entrance. The only other reminder that the building was once a church is seen at the top of the tower with the Gothic belfry still in place along with its original tracery and detailing. The building has lost architectural integrity.

A third Gothic Revival style church was recently demolished and is included in this discussion in order to expand the understanding of the Gothic Revival style in Battle Lake. The **First Lutheran Church** was built in 1888 and represented a straightforward example of the Gothic Revival style. In 1915, the frame building was moved to a location immediately to the west of the First Baptist Church. In 1951, the congregation built a new brick church with Gothic Revival style features just to the south of the 1888 building and in recent years the older building provided space for a youth center. ³⁷ The 1888 church had been altered with large additions, some window replacements, and the open belfry atop the tower was removed along with a tall spire. The building was demolished in 2023.

The First Baptist Church is likely the best example of the Gothic Revival style ever constructed in Battle Lake, at present, it is the best surviving example of style. It is also the only surviving church from the town's early years that retains architectural integrity.

Conclusion

The First Baptist Church has served its congregation for over 130 years. During this time the building has retained its strong architectural presence with essentially the same appearance since the time of its construction in 1893. Its impressive Gothic Revival style design remains a landmark in the Battle Lake community.

³⁶ After the Battle, 101.

³⁷ *After the Battle*, 98-99.

First Baptist Church Name of Property	Otter Tail County, MN County and State
9. Major Bibliographical References	County and State
7. Major Dibnographical References	
Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in p	preparing this form.)
After the Battle: A History of Battle Lake, 1991	
Stanford, Robert D., ed. Sketches: The Baptist Heritage in Minnesoto	a and Iowa, 1994.
<u>Newspapers</u>	
Battle Lake Review	
<u>Archives</u>	
First Baptist Church Archives, Battle Lake	
Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota Libraries	, Minneapolis
Otter Tail County Historical Society Archives, Fergus Falls	
<u>Interviews</u>	
Jay Johnson, great-grandson of J. A. Colehour, interview with Rolf A Prospect House, Battle Lake, May 17, 2024.	anderson and Reba Gilliand,
Previous documentation on file (NPS): preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)	has been requested
previously listed in the National Register	has been requested
X 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 #	

rst Baptist Church me of Property		Otter Tail County, MN County and State	
Primary location of additional data: State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University X_ Other Name of repository: First Baptis Historic Resources Survey Number (st Church_	_	
10. Geographical Data			
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2. Latitude:	Longitude:		
3. Latitude:	Longitude:		
4. Latitude:	Longitude:		

First Baptist Church		Otter Tail County, MN		
Name of Property		County and State		
UTM References				
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property.				
11 F P 1	<u> </u>			
11. Form Prepared	Ву			
name/title: Rolf T.	Anderson			
organization:	· inderson			
street & number: 21	12 West 36 th Street			
city or town: Minne	apolis state: MN	zip code: <u>55408</u>		
e-mail_ <u>roanders6@</u>				
telephone: 612-272-				
date: December 31, 2	<u> 2024 </u>			

Name of Property

Otter Tail County, MN

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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 this map.
- Additional items: (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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: First Baptist Church

City or Vicinity: Battle Lake

County: Otter Tail State: MN

Photographer: Rolf Anderson

Date Photographed: May 16-17, 2024

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

- 1 of 19. East and south elevations, facing northwest
- 2 of 19. North and west elevations, facing southeast
- 3 of 19. East elevation, facing west
- 4 of 19. Upper portion of east elevation, facing west
- 5 of 19. Cornerstone, facing west
- 6 of 19. Detail of water table, facing west
- 7 of 19. North elevation, facing south
- 8 of 19. Main entrance doors, facing south
- 9 of 19. Tower, facing southeast

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- 10 of 19. West elevation, facing east
- 11 of 19. South elevation, facing northwest
- 12 of 19. Entry with doors to the sanctuary at right and the door to the vestibule at left, facing south west
- 13 of 19. View into the sanctuary from the vestibule, facing west
- 14 of 19. View of the sanctuary toward the west end, facing west
- 15 of 19. View of the sanctuary toward the east end with doors to the entry at left and doors to the vestibule at right, facing east
- 16 of 19. Detail of fiberboard wall cladding on the north wall of the sanctuary, facing north
- 17 of 19. Basement, dining hall with view into the kitchen, facing southwest
- 18 of 19. Basement, with stone foundation walls topped with brick courses, and stairway to the main entry at right, facing southeast
- 19 of 19. Stairway off rear entrance with and stairs leading to a hallway and entrance to the chancel and to the basement (now shown), facing southwest

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.

First Baptist Church Name of Property



Figure 1. Location of the First Baptist Church, Battle Lake. Google Maps.

Name of Property

Figure 2. Meeting minutes dated May 22, 1893 from the first meeting of the building committee. First Baptist Church Archives.

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Minnesota Baptist State Convention.

REV. T. R. PETERS,

COR. SECRETARY AND SUPT. OF MISSIONS,

1406 SEVENTH AVENUE N.

J. A. Colehour,

MINNEAPOLIS, May 20, 1893.

Battle Lake, Minn.

Dear Brother: --

I returned the drawing to Mr. Dunnell, and had quite a talk with him concerning the same. He promised me that he would write you himself, guaranteeing the exact cost, and proposing to draw your final plans and specifications for \$40. I judge from what he tells me that you can depend quite confidently upon the figures which he gives you. Let me hear from you further.

Yours truly,

Dictated.

Figure 3. Letter to J. A. Colehour confirming architect Warren Dunnell's fee of \$40.00. First Baptist Church Archives.

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Figure 4. Example of one of the checks issued to carpenter Peder Peterson for his work on the First Baptist Church. First Baptist Church Archives.



Figure 5. Example of one of the checks issued to painter George H. Willie for his work on the First Baptist Church. First Baptist Church Archives.

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Figure 6. First Baptist Church, 1895. Photo 13537, Otter Tail County Historical Society.

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Figure 7. First Baptist Church, ca. 1908. Photograph courtesy Eveline Berg Lykken Heritage Room Collection, Battle Lake Senior Center.

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Figure 8. Photo from ca. 1910 with the original chimney in place. Photo First Baptist Church Archives.

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Figure 9. Photograph depicting the rear addition, ca. 1912. Photo courtesy Eveline Berg Lykken Heritage Room Collection, Battle Lake Senior Center.



Figure 10. Photograph depicting the rear addition, c. 1912. Photo courtesy Eveline Berg Lykken Heritage Room Collection, Battle Lake Senior Center.

Name of Property

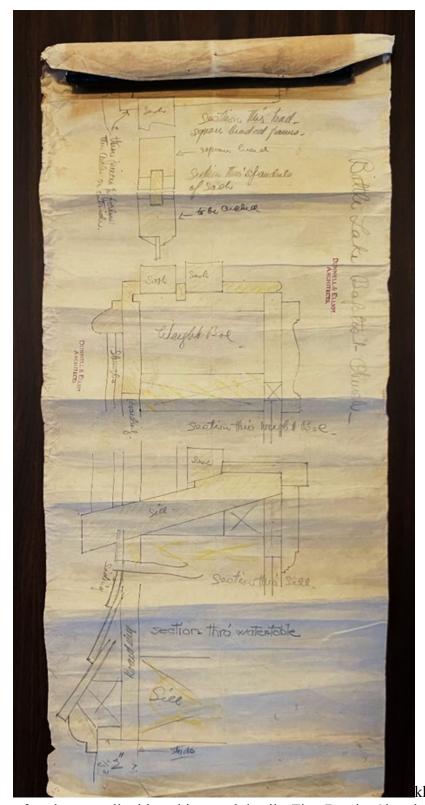


Figure 11. Three-foot-long scroll with architectural details. First Baptist Church Archives.

Name of Property



Figure 12. Drawing titled "Battle Lake Baptist Church" with the stamp "Dunnell & Elliott, Architects." First Baptist Church Archives.

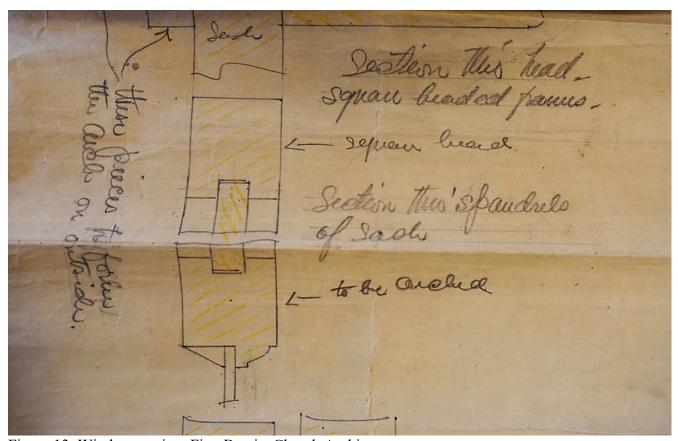


Figure 13. Window section. First Baptist Church Archives.

Name of Property

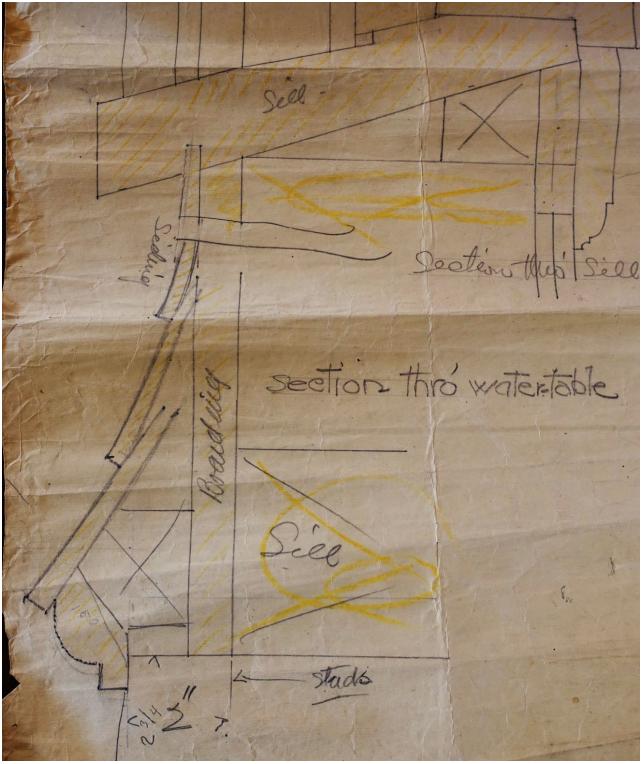


Figure 14. Section through a sill and the water table. First Baptist Church Archives.

Name of Property

Figure 15. Section through the sign board and frame. First Baptist Church Archives.

Name of Property



Figure 16. Chimney detail (no longer extant). First Baptist Church Archives.

Name of Property

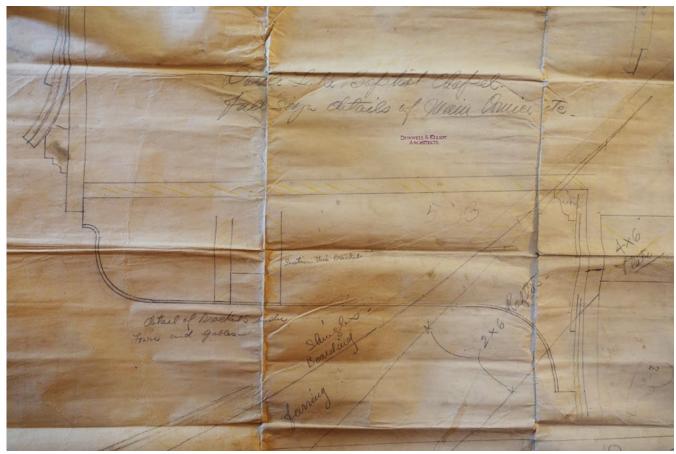


Figure 17. Detail of brackets under the tower and gables. First Baptist Church Archives.

Name of Property







Figure 18. USGS map, Battle Lake Quadrangle.