1. Name of Property
   Historic name: _First United Methodist Church________
   Other names/site number: ___N/A___________________________________
   Name of related multiple property listing:
   _N/A________________________________________________________
   (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location
   Street & number: __500 South Johnstone Avenue____________________________
   City or town: _Bartlesville___________ State: _Oklahoma____ County: _Washington___
   Vicinity: ________________________________________________________________________________

3. State/Federal Agency Certification
   As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
   I hereby certify that this _X__ 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 _X__ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria.
   I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following
   level(s) of significance:
   ___national   ___statewide   _X__local
   Applicable National Register Criteria:
   ___A   ___B   _X__C   ___D

   ________________________________
   Signature of certifying official/Title:                       Date
   ________________________________
   State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

   ________________________________
   Signature of commenting official:                            Date
   ________________________________
   Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government
4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) ________________________

Signature of the Keeper ___________________________ Date of Action ________________

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:  X

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

Building(s)  X

District

Site

Structure

Object
First United Methodist Church  
Name of Property

Washington County, Oklahoma  
County and State

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

<table>
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<th>Noncontributing</th>
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</table>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

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6. **Function or Use**

#### Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Religion: Religious Facility
  - 
  - 
  - 
  - 
  - 

#### Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Commerce/Trade: Professional
  - 
  - 
  - 
  - 

- Vacant/Not in Use
  - 
  - 
  - 
  - 

Sections 1-6 page 3
7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
- Modern Movement
- Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: _Brick; Concrete; Ceramic Tile (roof)_.

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 United Methodist Church at 500 South Johnstone Avenue, Bartlesville, Washington County, Oklahoma is a church complex with a rectangular plan and central courtyard (Figure 3). A three-story rectangular 1927 education wing, 1954 modified A-Frame sanctuary, 1956 L-plan chapel, and a two-story 1987 rectangular-plan education and administration wing form the complex (Figure 3). The 1927 education wing fronts East 5th Street and forms the northeast corner of the complex. The 1954 A-frame sanctuary anchors the complex and fronts South Johnstone Avenue. The L-shaped 1956 chapel connects the sanctuary and education wing at the north and east elevations respectively. The 1987 administration and education wing adjoins the sanctuary at the south elevation. Each component of the complex retains the exterior expression and interior spaces that communicate its historic function. They each maintain exterior entrances while interior corridors connect all additions. Buff brick masonry unifies the complex while distinct rooflines correspond to each wing (Photo 1).
Narrative Description

Setting
The First United Methodist Church is near the southern edge of the downtown business core and approximately one block south of the Bartlesville Downtown Historic District (NRIS #91001905) (Figure 1). The streets follow an orthogonal grid skewed slightly northeast-southwest. The downtown business district is bound by Delaware Avenue to the east; Southwest Adams Boulevard/Highway 60 to the south; railroad tracks to the west; and East Hensley Boulevard to the north. Low- to mid-rise civic, commercial, church, and municipal government buildings in a variety of styles characterize the built environment. A few high-rise office towers are in the vicinity. Asphalt surface parking lots are interspersed throughout the blocks. Concrete curbs and sidewalks line most streets. Small public plazas and greenspaces occupy lots to the west. Trees and plantings along the street characterize the remaining landscaping.

The First United Methodist Church occupies the west half of a large city block on three lots (Figure 2). The block is bounded by South Johnstone Avenue on the west; East 5th Street on the north; South Dewey Avenue on the east; and Silas Street on the south. A concrete alley divides the block and the First Presbyterian Church occupies the east half. An asphalt surface parking lot occupies the southern half of the First United Methodist Church property. Concrete sidewalks line the north, west, and south boundaries of the property and diagonal street parking is located at the north and south edges. Foundation plantings characterize the vegetation at the north elevation while small grassy areas comprise the landscaping at the west and south property edges.

Exterior
The First United Methodist Church includes wings constructed in four building campaigns and completed in distinct architectural styles. The building will be described elevation by elevation and each addition will be described within the elevation description. Figures 4 through 8 illustrate addition dates and denote specific building campaigns per elevation.

West Façade
The 1956 Sneed Chapel defines the north portion of the primary façade (Photos 1-3). Four bays organize the chapel. Historic dalle de verre windows fill each bay (Figure 21).1 Concrete panels clad the chapel above, below, and between the window bays while buff brick clads the remaining planes. The historic primary entrance links the chapel and 1954 A-frame sanctuary to the south. The entrance contains two sets of paired aluminum doors with glazing. An aluminum and clear glazing system surrounds the doors. A cantilevered canopy shelters the entrance. Six historic fixed aluminum windows extend above the canopy.

The 1954 A-frame sanctuary to the south dominates the façade (Photos 1-3). A recessed concrete panel-clad channel bisects the tent-church form. Historic dalle de verre windows occupy the north

and south sides of the channel and illuminate the sanctuary interior. An integrated, buff brick horizontal planter spans the A-frame base and emphasizes the triangular form. The sanctuary roof slope is steep and clad with multi-colored ceramic tile shingles which mimic slate tile. The side walls are asymmetrical, with the north higher than the south. The north wall terminates at the offset side vestibule which contains the primary entrance and links the 1954 sanctuary and 1956 chapel.

The 1987 administration and education wing abuts the 1954 sanctuary at the south (Photos 1-2). The addition has a flat roof and rectangular massing. Concrete panels clad the cornice. Buff brick clads the 1987 wing, which lacks fenestration. The brick differs slightly in color than that which clads the adjoining sanctuary, highlighting the distinction between construction phases. A large cross motif executed in buff brick projects slightly from the broad, flat plane. A secondary entrance pierces the north end at ground level. An aluminum system with glazing surrounds the paired entry doors. A concrete cantilevered canopy extends above the entrance. A narrow brick connection links the sanctuary and the 1987 wing at the second story and is slightly recessed from the façade plane.

North Elevation
The 1956 chapel and 1927 education wing are visible at the north elevation (Photos 3-5). Seven bays organize the chapel portion of the building. An offset recessed entry with a pair of metal doors with full glazing defines the seventh bay at the first story. A wide concrete stoop extends from the entrance. Buff brick planters with concrete caps flank the stoop. Historic narrow steel-framed sidelights flank the doors and a historic three-light transom tops the entrance. A larger window at the second story above the north entry has eighteen-lights and operable pivot and hopper sash. Narrow, vertical, six-light, historic, steel windows define Bays 1-6 at both stories in the chapel portion of the building. The narrow bays are equidistant from each other. Concrete panels clad the spandrels above and below the windows. A narrow vertical channel clad with concrete panels spans both stories and ornaments the wall west of the entrance bay.

A full-height, open stairwell with multi-light glazing and a decorative stained-glass cross motif links the 1956 Sneed Chapel and 1927 education wing and is associated with the chapel construction (Photos 3-4). Two pedestrian entrances open to the stairwell. Each entrance contains a pair of metal doors with glazing. A wide concrete stoop extends from the entrances. Buff brick planters with concrete caps flank the stoop.

The 1927 education wing rises three stories with a raised basement and has a flat roof with cast stone coping (Photos 4-5). Five bays organize the education wing at the raised basement level. Single, non-historic, one-over-one, aluminum, hung windows fill the outer two bays. The central portion of the elevation contains three central bays that step forward slightly from the two outer bays. Pairs of non-historic, one-over-one, aluminum hung windows with a wide mullion fill Bays 2 and 4 while a group of three one-over-one, non-historic, aluminum hung windows with wide moldings fills Bay 3. The upper three stories have the same configuration of bays and windows as the first story. All window bays feature decorative cast stone lintels and sub-sills. Narrow concrete stringcourses delineate the stories. A continuous cast stone band forms a crenellated pattern above the third-story windows.
East (Rear) Elevation
The distinction between the construction phases is most visible at this elevation due to the lack of unifying elements such as canopies and repeated decorative elements, including stained glass, concrete ornament, and metal windows. The 1927, 1954, and 1987 construction phases are visible from north to south (Photos 6 and 9). The places where the construction phases abut are visible in Photos 7 and 8.

Nine bays organize the 1927 education wing at the raised basement level (Photo 6). A metal slab door with fixed glazing fills Bay 2 (from left to right in Photo 6). Pairs of non-historic, one-over-one, aluminum hung windows fill Bays 3-5 while single non-historic one-over-one aluminum hung windows fill Bays 1 and 6-9. Ten bays at each story organize the upper three stories (Photo 5). At the first story, single, one-over-one, non-historic, aluminum hung windows fill Bays 1-2 and Bays 7-10. Pairs of one-over-one, non-historic, aluminum hung windows fill Bays 3-6. Single, one-over-one, non-historic, aluminum hung windows fill all ten bays at the second and third stories. Soldier brick lintels span each window opening at the basement and first and second stories. A continuous header brick sill spans the elevation below the basement windows while narrow, cast stone stringcourses flank the first story. Two narrow, stacked cast stone stringcourses top the third story window bays.

The east elevation of the 1954 A-frame sanctuary has four bays at each story, although the bays do not align vertically. Four sets of three historic, narrow, vertical, aluminum windows fill each bay at the first story (Photo 7-8). At the raised basement level, Bays 1-3 contain historic louvered metal vents. A recessed entry with a concrete porch fills Bay 4 and abuts the 1927 education wing at ground level. Non-historic, paired, metal slab doors fill the entrance bay.

The 1987 administration and education wing forms the southern portion of the east (rear) elevation (Photos 8-9). The east elevation of the 1987 wing has four bays, each containing symmetrically spaced, three-light, narrow, vertical, fixed aluminum-framed windows. Narrow rectangular voids in the tall parapet align with the windows and create the appearance of abstracted crenellations. A subtle change in brick color occurs at the junction between the 1987 addition and the adjacent 1954 sanctuary (Photo 8).

South Elevation
The 1987 administration and education wing forms the south elevation and features two-story buff brick with a tall parapet (Photo 9). Exaggerated crenellated battlements at the parapet illustrate the abstraction of historic stylistic elements and eclecticism, a defining element of Post-Modernism, and clearly reflect the era of construction. A simple concrete cornice spans the elevation. Seven bays organize the elevation. Bay 5 contains a recessed pedestrian entrance and a pair of metal framed doors with full glazing. Fixed, four-light, inset, aluminum windows fill the remaining six bays and extend to the parapet. Projecting brick piers flank each window and emphasizes the narrow, vertical windows. Pointed concrete finials span the voids that contain metal grates above the window bays and interrupt the cornice. A concrete port-cochère extends from the entrance.
Courtyard
The central courtyard is roughly square in plan and accessed through the main entry vestibule (Photo 10). Doors in the east wall open to a low, two-tiered concrete stoop which spans the width of the entrance. Paver walkways extend from the stoop to access the courtyard perimeter. Concrete benches line the south perimeter adjacent to the sanctuary. A grassy open area occupies the courtyard center while deciduous trees and shrubbery are concentrated along the perimeter walls. The courtyard is a contributing site.

Interior
The First United Methodist Church has a complex interior plan which reflects the multiple building phases (Figures 11-14). Doorways and stairwells connect the wings in several locations. Although connected, each wing retains distinctive features which illustrate its respective construction era.

1954 Sanctuary
The historic primary entrance accesses an offset entry vestibule which links the 1954 sanctuary and the 1956 Sneed Chapel (Photo 11). The large entry vestibule is associated with the 1956 Sneed Chapel and opens to the historic 1954 sanctuary entrance vestibule at the south end (Figures 11 and 15). The sanctuary vestibule is rectangular in plan. Finishes include tile flooring, brick walls, and a smooth drywall ceiling. A historic staircase at the north end of the sanctuary vestibule accesses the second floor (Photo 14). A historic railing with a simple wood handrail and geometric metal balusters lines the concrete stairs. Two sets of historic paired anodized aluminum doors with textured glazing dominate the south sanctuary vestibule wall and open to the sanctuary antechamber.

The narrow antechamber is rectangular in plan and spans the width of the 1954 sanctuary. Finishes include exposed brick walls, carpet flooring, and a lightly textured drywall ceiling. A rectangular brick projection is centered on the west wall and corresponds to the exterior recessed channel. Historic dalle de verre windows line the north and south projection sides. The sanctuary entrance is centered on the east wall. Paired historic doors with wood veneer and decorative glazing fill the entrance. Large, historic fixed windows flank the sanctuary entrance and provide sightlines into the sanctuary. Heavy historic wood trim cases the windows. Recessed secondary sanctuary entrances are located to the north and south. Single doors in these entrances match the central sanctuary entrance. Paired non-historic slab doors with wood veneer pierce the antechamber’s south wall and link the 1954 sanctuary and the 1987 administration and education wing (Figure 11).

An open, rectangular plan and A-frame volume characterize the 1954 sanctuary (Photo 12, Figures 11-12). Evenly spaced laminated wood trusses line the ceiling and extend to the floor level. Narrow historic dalle de verre windows pierce the north and south sanctuary walls between the laminated trusses. Drywall soffits span the space between the trusses at the base while a wood grid between the trusses contains drywall acoustical panels that form the ceiling (Photo 12). Historic wood seating with central and perimeter aisles occupies the floor space. The sanctuary flooring is historic composite tile beneath the seating and carpet in the aisles. A brick parabolic arch spans the
sanctuary’s east end and highlights a raised, carpeted chancel below \((\text{Photo } 13)\). The sacristy and storage rooms flank the raised chancel. Horizontal fins accent the wood plank covering of the parabolic ceiling above the chancel. A narrow balcony spans the sanctuary’s west end and overlooks the seating below. The balcony is accessed via a second floor vestibule which links the sanctuary and the Sneed Chapel. The vestibule retains its historic finishes including brick walls, composite tile flooring, and a historic railing with a wood handrail and metal balusters. A doorway in the south vestibule wall opens to the balcony. The balcony features historic terraced seating, historic wood flooring, and contains a historic pipe organ. A brick projection with historic dalle de verre windows bisects the west wall and terminates at the ceiling. The projection corresponds to the exterior recessed channel.

The sanctuary basement is rectangular in plan and contains a fellowship hall, kitchen, and mechanical rooms \((\text{Figure } 14)\). A north-south corridor roughly bisects the basement. The fellowship hall occupies the west portion. Evenly spaced, squared columns line the perimeter and storage closets line the west wall of the fellowship hall. Finishes include a drywall and acoustical tile coffered ceiling, drywall partitions, and a composite tile floor with a contrasting open square motif. A kitchen and large mechanical room occupy the east portion of the fellowship hall. The kitchen is rectangular in plan and retains historic finishes including a smooth drywall ceiling, ceramic tile flooring, and tile wainscot. Historic metal cabinets are extant. A large mechanical room with a concrete floor and concrete walls abuts the kitchen to the east. A doorway in the mechanical room’s south wall connects to the 1987 wing mechanical room. A narrow east-west corridor abuts the kitchen and mechanical room to the north. Historic concrete stairs at the east corridor end access an exit which opens to ground level while historic concrete stairs at the west corridor end access the 1927 education wing. Historic, simple metal railings line both sets of stairs.

1956 Sneed Chapel
The 1956 Sneed Chapel wing has an L-shaped plan which connects the 1954 sanctuary and the 1927 education wing \((\text{Figure } 11)\). The primary entrance opens to a large entry vestibule. It is rectangular in plan with a tile floor and historic brick partitions. A non-historic aluminum glazing system with paired doors forms the east entry vestibule wall. Although non-historic, the configuration of the doors corresponds to historic photos and the 1956 architectural plans. The glazing system illuminates the entry vestibule while the doors access the building’s central courtyard. Wide openings at the north and south ends of the entry vestibule open to the Sneed Chapel and the sanctuary vestibules, respectively. Historic anodized aluminum trim accents the south doorway. The opening in the north side of the main entrance vestibule leads to the chapel vestibule. Vestibule finishes include carpet flooring, brick walls, and a smooth drywall ceiling. A pair of historic slab doors with wood veneer pierce the north vestibule wall and open to the chapel space which occupies the northwest corner of the wing. The chapel is rectangular in plan with an alter at the north end. It retains its historic finishes including composite tile flooring, wood veneer paneling with dark stain, and a textured drywall ceiling with laminated wood beams \((\text{Photo } 13)\). Historic pendant lighting remains intact. Character-defining historic dalle de verre windows pierce the west wall and illuminate the chapel.
A north-south corridor abuts the chapel to the east and connects to the vestibule. Corridor finishes include carpet and a dropped acoustical tile ceiling. The partitions are historic drywall. Rounded, drywall projections extend from the wall surface at the north end of the corridor and are a historic feature. Bathrooms and an elevator line the corridor’s east wall. The bathrooms retain historic tile wainscot and flooring. An east-west, double-loaded corridor intersects the north-south corridor. Event and classroom spaces line the corridor. Typical finishes include non-historic dropped acoustical tile ceilings and carpeting. The drywall partitions are historic. Most event and classroom spaces retain historic wood slab doors and metal casings. Historic concrete stairs with simple metal handrails are positioned at the end of the east corridor. The stairs rise to meet the enclosed staircase landing which links the 1956 Sneed Chapel and the 1927 education wing.

The plan of the second floor is the same as the plan of first floor (Figure 12). A choir room occupies the northwest corner, directly above the first floor chapel. Like the chapel, the choir room is rectangular and open in plan. A low, terraced stage with carpet occupies the north end. A brick projection bisects the stage and corresponds to the recessed exterior channel. Historic steel windows line the east and west sides of the projection and illuminate the stage. The choir room retains historic finishes including painted concrete masonry unit walls, dalle de verre windows, composite tile flooring, and narrow perforated metal ceiling panels.

Historic finishes of the second floor corridor include composite tile flooring, drywall partitions, and metal door casings. The corridor ceiling is dropped acoustical tile. The bathrooms retain historic tile wainscot and flooring. Classroom finishes are similar to those on the first floor. Demountable partitions clad in wood veneer panels further subdivide some classroom and event spaces. Historic concrete stairs with simple metal handrails are positioned at the east end of the corridor. The stairs rise to meet the landing of the enclosed staircase that links the 1956 Sneed Chapel and the 1927 education wing.

The chapel wing basement contains classroom spaces arranged along two double-loaded corridors which meet at a right angle (Figure 14). The corridors retain historic composite tile flooring, painted drywall walls, and metal door trim. The ceilings are dropped acoustical tile. A large, rectangular classroom space lines the west wall. Historic plans suggest this classroom was once divided into three spaces. Typical classroom finishes include historic composite tile, drywall partitions, and dropped acoustical tile ceilings. Historic acoustical tile is present above the dropped ceiling system in many locations. Historic wood veneer demountable partitions further subdivide some classroom spaces. The bathroom locations stack and are in line with the first and second floors. The bathrooms retain historic finishes including tile wainscot and flooring, drywall walls, and smooth ceilings. Historic fixtures remain in both bathrooms. Historic concrete stairs at the east corridor end link the 1956 chapel wing and the 1927 education wing.

1927 Education Wing
The 1927 education wing includes three floors and a full basement. The current configuration and finishes are associated with a 1957 renovation, completed in conjunction with the Sneed Chapel construction. Floors one through three feature classroom spaces arranged along a central north-south, double-loaded corridor (Figures 11-13). An east-west, double-loaded corridor spans the
south end of the floors. A historic staircase is at the west end of the corridor. The staircase features concrete stairs with carpet. Metal bar railings top the solid drywall balustrade. Wood trim accents the balustrade. The drywall balustrade enclosure is an alteration, completed at an unknown date. Bathrooms are centered on the east-west corridor’s south wall. A narrow north-south corridor east of the bathrooms connects the education wing to the rear of the sanctuary at the first floor.

Partitions are drywall and demountable partitions with wood veneer further subdivide some classrooms. Typical corridor and classroom finishes are dropped acoustical tile ceilings, carpet, and composite tile flooring (Photo 15). The composite tile is likely associated with the 1957 renovation. Most classroom doors are hollow wood with narrow fixed glazing and metal grates. These doors are likely associated with the 1957 renovation. The doorways have simple metal casings. The historic 1927 wood floors have been exposed in one corridor and one classroom on the first floor. Adhesive remnants coat the wood floor. The bathrooms retain their historic mid-century tile wainscot and flooring while mid-century fixtures remain in most locations. The bathroom finishes are associated with the 1957 renovation.

The 1927 education wing basement is roughly rectangular in plan (Figure 14). A U-shaped double-loaded corridor and stair landings connect the 1927 wing to the Sneed Chapel and the 1954 sanctuary to the west and south, respectively. Classroom and technical education spaces line the corridor. Historic stairs at the northwest and southwest corners access the first floor. The historic stairs are concrete with simple metal railings. An additional staircase is at the south half of the east perimeter wall accesses a secondary entrance at ground level. Typical corridor and classroom finishes include dropped acoustical tile ceilings, drywall partitions, and composite tile flooring (Photos 29-30). The composite tile has been removed from some areas, exposing the concrete floor surface below. Classroom doors are hollow wood with narrow fixed glazing and metal grates. These doors are likely associated with the 1957 renovation.

**1987 Administration and Education Wing**

The non-historic 1987 administration and education wing includes two floors and a full basement (Figure 11, 12, and 14). The west entrance opens to a vestibule at the northwest corner of the first floor. The vestibule accesses a staircase in the east wall and a lobby for the office space to the south. Beyond the lobby, an east-west, double-loaded corridor extends approximately two-thirds the length of the building. Office spaces flank the corridor. The east-west corridor terminates at a short north-south corridor that contains an elevator and bathrooms. A second entrance with a vestibule opens to a north-south corridor. A door in the east wall of the north-south corridor accesses an additional office space with its own internal lobby. Stairs on the east side of the vestibule access the basement and second floor. Typical first-floor finishes are ceramic tile and carpet flooring, drywall partitions, and dropped acoustical tile ceilings. On the second floor, classrooms flank an east-west, double-loaded corridor that runs the length of the 1987 wing. Most classrooms contain private bathrooms and small sink areas. Second floor finishes include drywall partitions, carpet flooring, and dropped acoustical tile ceilings. The classrooms have hollow wood doors and large fixed windows.
The basement of the 1987 administration and education wing is rectangular in plan (*Figure 14*). The east stairs provide access to the basement from the first floor. The basement landing adjoins a narrow, zig-zagging corridor which separates the basement into east and west sections. Storage space and small rooms line the north and south walls in the west half and flank a large open area. Mechanical rooms, storage closets, and bathrooms occupy the east end of the basement. The basement exhibits significant water damage. Consequently, many partitions and finishes have been partially removed. The partitions are drywall on metal studs. Bathroom finishes include ceramic tile floors and walls. Floors in the remaining spaces are composite tile. Dropped acoustical tile ceilings are present throughout the 1987 basement.

The 1987 wing is linked to the 1954 sanctuary in two locations on first floor, with doors in the north wall of the west vestibule and the north wall of the east lobby (*Figure 11*). Doors in the mechanical room and in the north wall of the north-south corridor provide connections to the 1954 sanctuary in the basement (*Figure 11*).

**Integrity**

The First United Methodist Church complex retains excellent integrity of design, location, setting, materials, and workmanship. The church retains its historic location within downtown Bartlesville. The 1954 Modern Movement A-frame sanctuary, the central functional component of the church, retains its character-defining features including an open plan, volume, laminated wood trusses, brick parabolic arch, seating with a central aisle, and raised chancel. The distinctive form remains intact and retains a strong feeling as a mid-century religious space. The 1927 education wing, 1956 Sneed Chapel, and 1987 administration and education wing are complimentary in scale, massing, and exterior cladding materials. Buff brick cladding with concrete trim and accents visually unite the complex across all periods of construction. Alterations to the exterior are limited. While the education wing windows are replacements, they are complimentary in style and fill historic openings, keeping the historic fenestration pattern intact. Historic steel and dalle de verre windows remain in historic openings in the sanctuary and Sneed Chapel. The 1987 administration and education wing is non-historic, however it does not detract from the complex’s appearance or significance. The addition is distinct and subordinate, yet harmonious with the three historic portions. The buff brick cladding is slightly lighter in color and consequently harmonizes with the adjacent sanctuary cladding while preserving the distinction between the two construction phases. The addition is complimentary in scale and size. It does not obscure the historic, character-defining form of the adjacent sanctuary nor does it prevent the complex from conveying its historic associations and significance. The historic plan and interior finishes remain intact throughout the building. Finishes vary between each wing and communicate the multiple construction periods. Typical historic finishes include wood veneer paneling, painted concrete masonry unit and drywall walls, composite tile flooring, and ceramic tile wainscot in the bathrooms. Historic, wood veneered demountable partitions are located in the 1927 and 1956 wings. In the 1927 education wing, these historic finishes are alterations completed during a 1957 renovation associated with the Sneed Chapel construction. While alterations, these historic changes have since gained significance and represent the building’s evolution during the mid-twentieth century.
8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☐ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

☒ 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 past 50 years
First United Methodist Church

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1954-1957

Significant Dates

1954
1956
1957

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Coston, Frankfurt, & Short (1954), Architect
Buck & Associates (1956)
Frank Riehart (1987)
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 United Methodist Church at 500 South Johnstone Avenue, Bartlesville, Washington County, Oklahoma is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an excellent example of the architectural evolution of religious facilities during the twentieth century. The First United Methodist Church represents four construction phases which occurred over a sixty-year period between 1927 and 1987. Each wing represents its era of construction through architectural style. Although each portion of the building was constructed during a separate phase, continuity of materials and architectural elements unify the sections and create a cohesive complex. The 1954 Modern Movement A-frame sanctuary represents the second construction phase and operates as the central functional component of the church complex. The dramatic form serves as the focal point of the complex and provides the dominant architectural style. Secondary complex elements include the 1927 education wing, 1956 Sneed Chapel, and the 1987 administration and education wing addition. The 1927 education wing communicates a restrained expression of the Collegiate Gothic style through buff brick cladding and simple cast stone trim. In contrast, the dramatic A-frame form of the 1954 sanctuary, with its buff brick and concrete exterior, was an early example of an architectural trend that moved away from previous revival styles in religious architecture during the mid-twentieth century. The 1956 Modern Movement Sneed Chapel employs the same materials to visually and physically link the 1954 A-frame sanctuary to the 1927 wing. The 1987 administration and education wing expresses a Post-Modern aesthetic through exaggerated crenellations and pointed arch windows. As with the previous construction phrases, buff brick cladding is employed to unify the 1987 addition with the three previously constructed elements of the complex. Although the 1987 addition is not historic, it does not prevent the complex from conveying its significance.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The First United Methodist Church complex is notable in downtown Bartlesville as an institutional building that utilized the Modern Movement style to construct its most significant space. One of largest American religious building booms occurred between World War II and the late 1960s. During this period, Modern Movement architecture became the preeminent style for congregations that sought to expand their membership through a progressive image. This trend is reflected in the 1954 A-frame sanctuary as well as the 1956 Sneed Chapel. The period of significance is 1954-1957. This period captures the construction dates for the primary elements of the church complex that represent the early-to-mid-twentieth century evolution of architectural trends in religious building construction. Criteria Consideration A applies to the First United Methodist Church, as it was constructed as a religious facility. However, the Church complex still qualifies for listing in the National Register of Historic Places because its significance is derived from its representation of the architectural evolution of religious complexes rather than its association with religious doctrine.
First United Methodist Church
Washington County, Oklahoma

Founding and Early Growth, 1835-1897

In 1835, the Treaty of New Echota confirmed land that contained what is now Washington County as Cherokee territory.2 At the time, Washington County was sparsely populated. James Butler, an intermarried Cherokee, opened the first post office to serve the area in 1859.3 The site was near the Caney River and Butler Creek and included a school and trading post.4 The area remained largely unpopulated through the mid-nineteenth century. The already sparse population further decreased during the Civil War as residents fled the region.5 As a result, Butler closed his post office in 1866.6 During this time, the Cherokee and Eastern Delaware continued to populate the area. White residents were intermarried Cherokee or Delaware or received permits to live within the territory.7

Jacob H. Bartles, a white settler intermarried into the East Delaware, relocated to Washington County from Wyandotte County, Kansas in 1873.8 Bartles promptly established a trading post and post office in present day East Bartlesville near 1st and Delaware streets.9 In 1875, Bartles and Nelson Carr, an intermarried Cherokee and the area’s first non-Indian resident, formed the Carr-Bartles Mill.10 The mill, located in present day Johnstone Park, was Bartlesville’s first industry. In addition to the mill, Bartles also established a blacksmith shop, boarding house, general store, and livery stable.11 These resources attracted other local residents and the resultant village thrived. However, in 1884 residents began to relocate to the south when George B. Keeler and William Johnstone opened a store south of the Caney River. A decade later, the 1893 Dawes Severalty Act officially opened the area to permanent white settlement and the population began to increase.12 Bartlesville incorporated four years later and Jacob Bartles’s post office was relocated to the Keeler-Johnstone store.13

Mid-Continent Oil Years

While the presence of oil in the region was noted as early as 1830, Oklahoma’s first oil enterprise, the Chickasaw Oil Company, was not organized until 1872.14 However, federal officials refused

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3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
12 While the 1887 Dawes Severalty Act established the allotment system, it did not pertain to the Five Tribes (Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole). The 1893 Dawes Severalty Act was formed to negotiate similar agreements with the Five Tribes to end tribal land ownership and establish individual land allotments.
13 May, “Bartlesville.”
to grant lease rights to non-Indians and the effort was soon ended. Subsequent enterprises formed and failed in the following years due to financing difficulties, personal tragedy, ongoing lease rights disputes, and a lack of transport for any recovered crude oil. Jennie Cass struck Oklahoma’s first successful commercial oil well, the Nellie Johnstone No. 1, near Bartlesville in 1897. This discovery sparked interest in the area for oil exploration in what was later designated the Mid-Continent Field. The Nellie Johnstone No. 1 produced fifty barrels a day and soon flooded the local market. Without the infrastructure necessary to transport crude oil to the nearest refinery, which was in Kansas, the owners abandoned and capped the well in 1948. An accidental fire in the mid-1950s destroyed the Nellie Johnstone No. 1.

Small-scale oil production in the area continued, however, the lack of transportation for crude oil to refineries limited profitability and efficiency. This was remedied in 1899 when the Kansas, Oklahoma and Southwestern Railroad built a line into Bartlesville on eighty acres offered to it the previous year. The new railroad line bypassed the previously established small business district at 1st and Delaware streets, which had grown from the Keeler-Johnstone store, and shifted commercial development to the west. The rail line had an immediate and immense effect. When complete, it connected Bartlesville with Neodesha, Kansas which housed the nearest crude oil refinery. With transportation secured, the oil industry in Bartlesville boomed. Several large projects associated with the industry included the Prairie Oil and Gas Company pipeline loading rack at the Bartlesville railroad depot (1900) and a storage tank capable of storing thirty-five thousand gallons of crude oil (1903). Oklahoma’s first trunk pipeline was constructed in 1904 and connected Bartlesville to Humboldt, Kansas.

The railroad facilitated oil transport to refineries and distant markets which sparked an oil boom that extended from 1900 to 1920. By 1904, 150 different oil companies maintained offices in Bartlesville. Bartlesville’s population boomed as well. During this period, the population rose from 698 to over 14,000. Many Bartlesville residents found employment at the Phillips Petroleum Company. Brothers Frank and Lee Eldas “L.E.” Phillips founded the Phillips Petroleum Company in Bartlesville in 1917. The brothers entered the oil business in 1903 and found success with their first large well north of Bartlesville in 1905. In addition to oil exploration, the Phillips brothers also experimented in banking. The brothers founded the Citizen’s Bank and Trust in

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15 Ibid.
17 The Mid-Continent Field extends through parts of Oklahoma, Kansas, Louisiana, and Texas.
18 Franks, “Petroleum Industry.”
19 The Nellie Johnstone No. 1 was destroyed when leaking oil was accidentally ignited and spread to the well. Franks, “Petroleum Industry.”
20 Later purchased by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe (AT&SF) Railroad.
21 Bryans, “Bartlesville Historic District:”8.39
22 Franks, “Petroleum Industry.”
23 Trunk pipelines are large diameter pipelines that transport crude oil intrastate or interstate. Franks, “Petroleum Industry.”
24 Bryans, “Bartlesville Historic District:”8.39
26 Ibid.
Bartlesville in 1905.\textsuperscript{28} Shortly afterwards, they acquired Bartlesville National Bank. The Phillips’s briefly left the volatile oil industry for the stability of banking in 1915.\textsuperscript{29} However, the outbreak of World War I triggered an oil boom and the brothers quickly re-entered the oil industry and established the Phillips Petroleum Company on June 13, 1917 with headquarters in Bartlesville.\textsuperscript{30} The firm became a significant national oil company and served as Bartlesville’s largest employer throughout the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{31}

The First Methodist Church in Bartlesville

*Founding and Early Twentieth Century, 1895-1946*

The Methodist Church in Bartlesville was first founded in 1895 as the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.\textsuperscript{32} A mission church was established in Indian Territory on the Caney River on what would later become North Delaware Avenue.\textsuperscript{33} Early church services were held in the home of Josephine Cass Keeler, wife of prominent Bartlesville settler George Keeler. The congregants built a wood-frame church between Delaware and Shawnee avenues on the north side of East 4th Street in 1898. Two years later, they moved the church to the current site at East 5th Street and South Johnstone Avenue. Concurrently, the Methodist Episcopal Church was also meeting and built a church on nearby East 6th Street and South Johnstone Avenue in 1903.\textsuperscript{34} The congregations soon joined and, in 1905, formed the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Bartlesville, Indian Territory.\textsuperscript{35} The newly combined congregation was small, totaling only 121 members in 1906.\textsuperscript{36} With congregations combined, the First Methodist Episcopal Church built a large Classical Revival church at the southeast corner of East 5th Street and South Johnstone Avenue in 1909.\textsuperscript{37} Membership in the First Methodist Episcopal Church continued to climb in the early twentieth century and by 1920 reached 860.\textsuperscript{38}

Church trustees, including Frank Phillips, were named to the building committee for an education building in 1924.\textsuperscript{39} A June 1925 article in the *Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise* reported the planned addition was estimated to cost $60,000 and would house adult education facilities as well


\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{32} In 1844, the Methodist Episcopal General Conference split into two conferences due to tensions over the power of bishops within the church and slavery. The church did not reunify until 1939.


\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{37} This previous church occupied the northwest corner of the property where the 1956 Sneed Chapel wing now stands.

\textsuperscript{38} Miles, “Brief History of Methodism in Bartlesville.” 1.

\textsuperscript{39} *Our First Century*, 15.
as three additional departments for the church school. Congregation members raised $40,000 for the building fund and the remaining balance was borrowed. The new education wing was completed for $66,547.28 and dedicated September 11, 1927. Frank Phillips of the Phillips Petroleum Company served on the board. Years later, Phillips paid the balance of local church debt, including the Methodist Church building loan in 1937. Additional changes came to the congregation in 1939. That year, the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Bartlesville was renamed the First Methodist Church.

**Post-War and Mid-Century Expansion, 1947-1970**

Membership in the church steadily grew during the next decade and in 1947, the Church convened a second expansion committee. The committee recommended a new, larger sanctuary with a 700-person capacity to accommodate increased membership following WWII. A planning committee formed to secure plans and launch a finance campaign. Trustees authorized the committee to purchase property adjoining the 1909 sanctuary. They initiated the expansion fundraising campaign in 1951. Conducted throughout the summer and into fall of that year, the campaign raised $250,000 for the proposed sanctuary. The planning committee engaged Architect Truett Coston of Coston, Frankfort, and Short to design the sanctuary; Wickersham Construction Company of Tulsa won the construction bid. The contract for $400,000 included funding for the lot, building, and furnishings. Groundbreaking for the sanctuary occurred on July 27, 1952. Construction continued for over one year and the Church conducted consecration activities between April 4th and April 8th, 1954. Programs produced for Consecration Week advertised the features in the new wing including the “sanctuary interior designed for a worshipful attitude,” and the latest modern kitchen equipment. The program also included future building plans. Although the new sanctuary expansion had just been completed, plans for further expansion were already underway. A two-story chapel wing with a basement was planned for the 1909 sanctuary site.

The Church employed local architects Buck Associates to design the new wing. The plans completed in June 1956 differed slightly from those advertised in the Consecration Week program. While the Consecration Week program rendering proposed a north-south-oriented gabled chapel with a traditional rose window and rectangular east wing, the Buck Associates plans featured an L-shaped plan and simple, rectangular massing with modern elements including vertical metal...
windows and concrete panels on both street-facing elevations. These plans also included renovation of the 1927 education wing to meet contemporary classroom needs. The Church demolished the 1909 sanctuary in 1956 to clear the site for the new construction. The new chapel wing construction and education wing renovations were completed in 1957 for an estimated cost of $370,000. The congregation donated six thousand labor hours to the project. The chapel wing was named Sneed Chapel to memorialize recently deceased church leader and sanctuary expansion committee leader, George Sneed. The chapel completion expanded available service facilities for the congregation and church attendance quickly reached new records. With increased attendance came an increased variety of programming. In addition to Sunday school and religious education, the First Methodist Church began to offer choir lessons, prayer groups, women’s groups, and secular activities such as Boy Scouts. Continued program expansion occurred during the 1960s with youth clubs, elderly residents groups, and various local charity associations meeting at the church. The church name changed once again during this period. In 1968, the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Church merged. In response to this merger, the First Methodist Church of Bartlesville became the First United Methodist Church.

Late-Twentieth Century Growth and Expansion, 1970-2010

In 1971, the Bartlesville First United Methodist Church was one of the five largest United Methodist Churches in Oklahoma when ranked by membership. As membership continued to grow, it became apparent the existing church could not sufficiently house church activities. However, change was slow to come. The First United Methodist Church footprint remained static until the late twentieth century. In the 1980s, the Church once again sought to expand. The Church’s comprehensive plan for the remainder of the twentieth century included the expansion. In 1986, the First United Methodist Church published an informational pamphlet which detailed the need for a new wing as well as the Church’s plans for future programs. The Church stated it had outgrown the present facilities and cited crowded Sunday school classes, safety and security concerns, and outdated kitchen and HVAC equipment as reasons for the proposed expansion. Furthermore, the Church stated a building expansion would facilitate many new programs it sought to initiate. These programs included a religious preschool, daycare services, and recreational activities. In addition to providing a community benefit, it was thought such programs would benefit the Church itself.

Updated facilities and services were deemed attractive not only to current congregation members but to potential new members as well. When combined with the church’s prominent downtown

54 Equivalent to $3,378,165.84 in 2019 currency. Our First Century, 19.
55 Our First Century, 19.
56 George Sneed led the construction campaign for the chapel. Our First Century, 19.
57 Miles, “Brief History of Methodism in Bartlesville,” 2.
59 Miles, “Brief History of Methodism in Bartlesville,” 2.
60 “Methodists Plan 75th Anniversary,” Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise (11 June 1971).
62 Ibid.
location, Church leadership expected the many child-centric programs would attract more non-
members, who would then potentially join the congregation. The Church engaged Frank W.
Reihart and Associates to design the new addition and the children’s and administration wing was
constructed in 1987. When completed, the church consolidated its administrative offices in the
new wing and opened a weekday preschool program on the second floor to serve the increasing
number of young families in the area who depended on childcare services.

Services and activities provided in the church continued to expand throughout the late twentieth
century, as did church membership. In 1995, the congregation reached 3,800 members from
approximately eight hundred families. In 2010, the Church purchased land approximately five
miles southeast of Bartlesville near Price Road and Madison. The land was purchased to build a
new campus to serve the expanding congregation and its needs. With the new campus
constructed, the Church relocated all services to the site by 2013. Following the move, the First
United Methodist Church became Bartlesville First Church. Professional offices now occupy the
1987 administration and education wing. The three historic wings are vacant.

Religious Buildings in the Twentieth Century

Early Twentieth Century Tradition

Throughout the early-twentieth century, traditional vernacular forms and historical revival styles
were favored for religious building construction. Classical revival elements, exterior
ornamentation, cruciform or basic hall plans, and heavy materials such as brick and stone typified
religious architectural trends. During this period, the Classical, Gothic, and Romanesque revivals
dominated church architecture in the United States.

References to Greek and Roman architectural elements including columns, symmetry, pediments,
and porticos characterize the Classical Revival style. Early-twentieth century churches constructed
in the style typically featured symmetrical façades and entrances ornamented with pilasters and
pediments. Columns typically accented the primary façade and large, often round-arched, windows
illuminated the interior. The Gothic Revival style peaked in popularity between 1830 and 1890 in
the United States. It was commonly used for institutional buildings and churches due to its
impressive visual impact and traditional forms which referenced Medieval architecture. Character-
defining features include masonry construction, asymmetrical façades with spires or towers,
steeply pitched roofs, and pointed arch windows and doors. Like the Gothic Revival style, the
Romanesque Revival church architecture during the early twentieth century employed heavy
masonry construction which lent a feeling of permanence and authority to the building. Rounded
arches, polychromatic masonry details, and rounded towers characterize the style. As reflected
through the prominence of historical revival styles, early-twentieth century church architectural

63 Ibid.
64 Our First Century, 20.
65 Our First Century, 20.
66 Our First Century, 34.
67 Bartlesville Area History Museum. A Spiritual Journey Through History: The 2010 Survey and History of Washington County
trends relied heavily on traditional antecedents. However, program expansion beginning in the 1920s soon influenced these trends.

Following the turn of the twentieth century, American churches fully embraced religious educational programming. Weekday schools, released-time classes, extended Sunday school sessions, young-adult Sunday evening programs, and weekday religious education programs proliferated.\(^{68}\) Program expansion often necessitated increased building space. Consequently, additions were commonly constructed to accommodate new programs. Additions typically reflected the existing building’s architectural style or architectural trends popular at the time of construction, particularly trends associated with the design of educational facilities. This pattern is evident in the First United Methodist Church expansion. During this period, the First Methodist Church congregation greatly expanded and new programs increased congregant participation in church activities. In 1915, service attendance was 586 persons while seventy-eight attended Sunday school.\(^{69}\) Within five years, church membership soared to 860 and the church established a Boy Scout troop.\(^{70}\) By 1921, the Church Service Class and Kumjoinus class held meetings at the church facilities.\(^{71}\) In expanding program offerings, the First Methodist Church followed nationwide trends. The 1927 education wing was constructed to house the expanded programming. In keeping with architectural trends, the new wing was completed in the Collegiate Gothic style.

The Collegiate Gothic style was an early twentieth century adaption of the previous nineteenth century Gothic Revival style. The Collegiate Gothic style emerged at the turn of the century and remained popular until c. 1940. It was utilized extensively for educational buildings, with many prominent universities constructing new buildings in the style during its period of popularity. The Collegiate Gothic style incorporated many elements characteristic of the Gothic Revival style. Gothic arch windows and doors, masonry construction, and porticos or recessed entries characterize the style. Buttresses, towers or spires, and crenulated parapets were also often incorporated. These elements, combined with heavy masonry construction, invoked a feeling of permanence and strength befitting an educational building.

The 1927 educational wing expresses elements of the Collegiate Gothic style through its brick masonry construction and heavy massing. The simple, crenulated band above the third story windows is a restrained reference to the crenulated parapets frequently present in buildings completed in the style. It also mimics the parapet of the square tower formerly located at the northwest corner of the educational wing as depicted in historic photographs (Figure 15).\(^72\) This restrained interpretation of the Collegiate Gothic style communicates the educational nature of building and was complimentary to the 1909 Classical Revival sanctuary extant at the time of its construction.\(^73\) With its pared down ornament and simplicity, the 1927 education wing reflects the

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\(^{69}\) *Our First Century*, 13.

\(^{70}\) *Our First Century*, 13.

\(^{71}\) *Our First Century*, 14.

\(^{72}\) The 1927 tower is not extant. It was replaced by the current stairwell during construction of the 1956 Sneed Chapel.

\(^{73}\) The 1909 church was demolished to clear ground for the 1956 Sneed Chapel addition.
financial means and resources of the church at the time, as well as its secondary but integral function within the church complex.

Modern Movement Architecture for Church Buildings
One of the largest religious building booms in American history occurred between World War II and the late 1960s. This building boom was largely a response to the concurrent baby boom and widespread movement to the suburbs following the end of the war. Post-war, spaces such as the chapel, classrooms, and fellowship hall became increasingly important elements of the building program. Eventually, they became equally important to the main worship space. During this period, the Modern aesthetic was considered desirable for those congregations that sought to promote a more progressive image as a means to attract new, younger members. Dramatic forms supplanted the ornament associated with earlier Classical Revival styles to create grandeur. Elliptical, oval, and rectangular plans replaced the cruciform plan and were topped with unexpected, often dramatic, rooflines. Simple, linear planes with modern materials characterize many Mid-Century Modern Movement churches. In addition to form, materials changed as well. Modern Movement churches incorporated an increased use of machine-made glass, concrete, metal, and brick.

During this period, the A-frame emerged as a distinctive dramatic form employed in Mid-Century Modern church construction. Eero Saarinen’s 1953-1958 Kramer Chapel in Fort Wayne, Indiana served as a model for many Mid-Century church buildings across the country (Figure 18). Although not the first example of the A-frame form, Saarinen’s design was a particularly important and influential example. The A-frame form soon took hold in church design and it is in this context that architect Truett Coston designed the First United Methodist Church sanctuary. The First United Methodist A-frame sanctuary dominates the building and serves as the focal point. The sanctuary was completed in 1954, only one year after Saarinen began his design for the Kramer Chapel, and serves as a relatively early example of the form.

The A-frame building features a triangular frame which forms a steeply pitched roof that simultaneously also functions as side walls. In one variation, low side walls may be present rather than eaves which extend to ground level. Brick and treated cedar are common exterior cladding. As churches nationwide adopted the A-frame for aesthetic and practical reasons, regional materials, such as stone and brick in the Midwest, customized the ubiquitous buildings. Wood, steel, or laminated wood trusses are typical framing materials. The gable-end is typically the primary facade, creating a dramatic entrance regardless of the entry-bay configuration. Interiors

75 Ibid,13.
76 Ibid.
77 Esley Hamilton and Catie Myers. *Mid-Century Modern Church Survey Religious Structures 1940-1970 in St. Louis County* (St. Louis, 2010), 5.
79 Buggeln. *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America*, 91
80 Ibid.
81 Ibid.
82 Ibid.
often feature a center aisle with seating on either side. A raised chancel is typically present and clearly demarcated.

In contrast to the dramatic A-frame 1954 sanctuary, the 1956 Sneed Chapel expresses the Modern Movement style through its rectangular massing, linear exterior planes with brick and concrete panel cladding, and regularly punched fenestrations with narrow, vertical windows. Stained glass windows in the dalle de verre style, popularized during the 1950s and 1960s, at the primary (west) façade and north elevation further reinforce the period of construction and modern aesthetic. Architectural firm Buck and Associates designed the addition to merge seamlessly with the 1927 education wing and the adjacent 1954 A-frame sanctuary. The simplified forms and materials common of the Modern Movement reduced construction costs while providing useful, meaningful spaces. The flat roof, simple massing, unadorned linear planes, and brick and concrete cladding of the Sneed Chapel are representative of this simplified Modern Movement aesthetic.

Post-Modernism and Late Twentieth Century Church Expansion
Following the mid-century church building boom, attitudes towards suburbs and their related churches underwent a drastic change. During the postwar church building period, church and culture were unusually strongly tied. This strong connection reinforced the church’s status as a community asset and served as an impetus for the church building boom. However, as American culture began to shift away from early postwar norms, the role of the church shifted as well. Nationwide membership trends resulted in shrinking congregations at local churches. This downward trend was the result of demographic shifts and changes in mainstream denomination configuration and membership.

To slow membership losses, many churches increased their focus on the community and community programming as a means to attract young individuals and young families to the church. Worship and religious services were altered as well, with elements such as modern music and more casual environments incorporated. Often, expansions were required to accommodate increased programming and changes to religious services. As reflected in the First United Methodist Church, program expansion, community involvement, and member recruitment were the main drivers for church complex expansion. When church complexes expanded, they often incorporated prevailing architectural trends.

Post-Modern architecture emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a reaction to modernism, especially functionalism which suggested buildings should only reflect function without unnecessary elaboration. Robert Venturi’s *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966) marked the first significant exploration of the Post-Modern style in its criticism of functionalism and lack of ornament in Modern Movement design. The movement gained momentum during the last quarter of the twentieth century as many architects moved away from modern...
functionalism due to perceptions that it was too boring or in response to negative public reactions. In contrast to the preceding modernist architectural trend, postmodern architecture incorporates ornament, often with restrained references to and interpretations of the revival styles. Playful incorporations of color and whimsy, nontraditional mixes of shapes, mixed materials, and abstract references to historic stylistic features with a modern twist characterize Post-Modern architecture. Exaggerated historical references, such as the pointed arches at the 1987 addition parapet, are a hallmark of the style.

Many Bartlesville churches built new facilities or expanded existing buildings during the late twentieth century. In May 1977, the First Christian Church announced plans to construct a new wing for fellowship activities and administration offices. The new wing was to join an educational building and chapel built ten years prior. That winter, both the Woodland Church of Christ and the Bartlesville Southern Baptist Church began construction on new buildings. The Bartlesville Southern Baptist Church plans included a 12,500 square foot facility with an auditorium. At an estimated 30,000 square feet, the Woodland Church of Christ complex was more than double the size. In 1982, Redeemer Lutheran constructed a new sanctuary. Like the First United Methodist Church, these congregations favored a Post-Modern aesthetic for their respective projects.

**Truett H. Coston and Coston, Frankfurt, and Short**

Truett Coston (1911-1997) was born in Mt. Vernon, Texas on January 18, 1911. He attended the University of Texas where he earned degrees in Architecture and English. The Texas native relocated to Oklahoma in 1942 while employed with the Austin Company where he designed war plants.\(^89\) In 1945, Coston and partner Wally W. Frankfurt joined to form the firm Coston & Frankfurt in Oklahoma City.\(^90\) Later that year, Harold Short joined the firm, which then became Coston, Frankfurt, & Short. The firm was active in Oklahoma and designed for a wide range of building functions, including churches, collegiate halls, and hospitals. In addition to the First United Methodist Church sanctuary, principal works include the Oklahoma City Baptist Hospital (1959) and the Research Foundation Building (1948) and Medical Research Building (1961) on the University of Oklahoma campus. While the firm received notoriety for its work, Coston’s designs for St. Luke’s United Methodist Church in Oklahoma City highlighted his individual contributions to the industry. Coston’s designs for the church were revolutionary for their inclusion of wheelchair accessibility features. For the 1950 education building, Coston designed multiple entrances to be flush with the sidewalk, allowing easy wheelchair access.\(^91\) When Coston designed the church sanctuary in 1951, he incorporated a ramp and terrace at the main entrance. Planters surrounded the ramp, turning it into an architectural feature on its own merit as well as an accessibility entrance point.\(^92\) An elevator was also added to the two-story building. Coston’s

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90 Little is known about Wally Frankfurt beyond his partnership with Coston. He appears in few AIA directories and archival research returned little biographical information.
92 Ibid.
designs for the St. Luke’s United Methodist Church are considered the beginning of the national movement towards designing for handicapped accessibility in America.93

The firm opened an office in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in 1960 as a branch office, which then became the independent firm Coston-Wallace in 1966.94 Shortly after, Coston retired to become a full-time artist and the firm was turned over to the sons of Frankfurt and Short.95 The firm became a professional corporation in 1977 and in 2000, the firm began doing business as W2A Design Group.96

Buck and Associates, Architects and Engineers

Buck and Associates was a Bartlesville firm led by principle Paul Millard Buck (1920-1997). The firm primarily operated in Oklahoma, although it is credited with numerous works in Kansas. Buck and Associates designed and constructed institutional and commercial buildings. Principle works include Holy Ghost Catholic Church, Vinita, Oklahoma (1951), First Methodist Church, Miami, Oklahoma (1954), and Broadhurst Hall, Winfield, Kansas (1965).97

Other Church Resources in Bartlesville

The First United Methodist Church is an excellent example of the architectural evolution of church complexes in Bartlesville. The 1927 education wing, 1954 sanctuary, and 1956 chapel represent architectural trends prevalent during construction as well as the congregation’s shifting needs and programming. The 1987 post-modern administration and education wing illustrates the final evolutionary period within the complex. The nearby First Baptist Church and First Presbyterian Church illustrate contrasting modes of architectural evolution.

The First Baptist Church occupies an entire block approximately three blocks northeast of the First United Methodist Church. The block is bound by East 4th and 5th Streets, to the north and south respectively; South Cherokee Avenue to the east; and South Osage Avenue to the west. Like the nominated property, it was constructed in several phases. Multiple mid-twentieth century additions are linked to an early twentieth century sanctuary (Figure 19).

The historic sanctuary was built in 1927 in the Classical Revival style. It has red brick cladding and a portico with pilasters heavily emphasizes the entrance. A c. 1950 Modern Movement addition to the rear features brick and concrete cladding. Aluminum windows fill the window openings. With its modern materials and design elements, the c. 1950 addition is visually distinct from the sanctuary. A worship center, constructed c. 1970, occupies the northeast corner of the block. A narrow, enclosed walkway links the c. 1970 worship center and 1927 sanctuary. The worship center displays many features which characterize Formalism, including a flat projecting

roofline, smooth walls, and symmetrical vertical lines which emphasize the building’s height and vertical rhythm. Although the c. 1970 addition utilizes similar brick and is physically linked to the sanctuary via a walkway, it is visually distinct from the historic church elements and presents a feeling of separation rather than integration.

Unlike the First United Methodist Church and the First Baptist Church, which responded to changing needs through expansion while preserving their historic elements, the First Presbyterian Church met the challenge through replacement. The First Presbyterian Church is located at 505 Southeast Dewey Avenue and shares the block with the First United Methodist Church. A 1907 church occupied the site until 1970. At this time, it was demolished to clear ground for a new Modern Movement church. Low, horizontal massing, an irregular roof that rises at the south end, and a thin vertical spire characterize the church (Figure 20). Modern materials including brick, concrete, and glass further distinguish the church from the surrounding historic built environment. The First Presbyterian Church presents a strong contrast to the adjacent First United Methodist Church through both architectural style and its building program.

Conclusion
The First United Methodist Church at 500 South Johnstone Avenue in downtown Bartlesville, Washington County, Oklahoma is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The church is notable for its early embrace of Modern Movement architecture, as represented through its 1954 A-frame sanctuary which serves as the most prominent, character-defining element in the complex. By replacing the church’s most important space with the Modern Movement A-frame tent-church, the church established a basis for future complex elements, including the 1956 Modern Movement Sneed Chapel. With its dramatic A-frame sanctuary (1954) and Sneed Chapel (1956) the church complex is significant at the local level as an early representative of the Modern Movement in Bartlesville.

The First United Methodist Church is a distinctive example of the evolution of a church complex in Bartlesville. Like the other church complexes in Bartlesville, the First United Methodist Church was constructed in multiple segments. The two Modern Movement wings were designed to harmonize with the earlier 1927 Collegiate Gothic education wing through similarities in cladding material, size, and scale. The 1987 administration and education wing later employed the same considerations to create the final wing of the complex. While comparable church complexes primarily evolved through additions to their existing sanctuary spaces or replacement of the entire complex, the First United Methodist Church complex replaced an early sanctuary with a new building designed in the prevailing architectural mode. The primary functional component of the First United Methodist Church evolved while the 1927 education wing, a secondary element, was retained. Despite subsequent additions, the dramatic sanctuary remains the most prominent component and declares the complex’s function. With its clearly defined yet complimentary construction phases, the First United Methodist Church is a unique representation of church complex evolution in Bartlesville. Through its four distinct wings, the church communicates sixty years of shifting architectural and programming trends.
The First United Methodist Church retains its character defining features including buff brick cladding on all components of the complex; historic metal and dalle de verre windows; and dramatic A-frame sanctuary. The interior retains its historic configuration and most historic finishes including composite tile, drywall partitions, and mid-century wood and metal stair railings. The A-frame sanctuary and chapel strongly communicate the feeling of and associations with Modern Movement church architecture in the mid-century.
9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)


Consecration Services Program. The First Methodist Church of Bartlesville. April 1954.


Faulconer, Jean. “First United Methodist Looks to the Future.” In Consecration Services program, the First Methodist Church of Bartlesville. April 1954.


Previous documentation on file (NPS):

__X__ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested (Federal Part 1 Approved 2/6/2020)

_____ previously listed in the National Register

_____ previously determined eligible by the National Register

_____ designated a National Historic Landmark

_____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #

_____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

_____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

Primary location of additional data:

__X__ State Historic Preservation Office

_____ Other State agency

_____ Federal agency

_____ Local government

_____ University

__X__ Other

Name of repository:  First United Methodist Church of Bartlesville; Bartlesville Public Library; Bartlesville Area History Museum

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):  N/A
10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property**  Approximately one (1) acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**
Datum if other than WGS84:  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 36.758231  Longitude: -95.977511
2. Latitude:  \[ \text{Longitude: } \]
3. Latitude:  \[ \text{Longitude: } \]
4. Latitude:  \[ \text{Longitude: } \]

**Or**

**UTM References**
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

- [ ] NAD 1927  or  - [ ] NAD 1983

1. Zone:  Easting:  Northing:
2. Zone:  Easting:  Northing:
3. Zone:  Easting:  Northing:
4. Zone:  Easting:  Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The boundary of the First United Methodist Church nomination captures the church complex in its current form. It includes Lots 4, 5, and 6 of Block 46 in the Original Bartlesville plat. The property is bounded by South Johnstone Avenue to the west, East 5th Street to the north, and East 6th Street to the south. A paved alley bisects the block and forms the east property boundary.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The boundary of the First United Methodist Church nomination corresponds to the property’s current legal parcel lines.
11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Emily Lenhausen, Historic Preservation Specialist
organization: Rosin Preservation, LLC
street & number: 1712 Holmes Street
_city_or_town: Kansas City state: Missouri_ zip code: 64108
_e-mail: emily@rosinpreservation.com_
telephone: 816-472-4950
date: April 10, 2020

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 United Methodist Church

City or Vicinity: Bartlesville

County: Washington State: Oklahoma

Photographer: Brad Finch, f-stop Photography

Date Photographed: September 6, 2019
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 15: First United Methodist Church, overview, view NE.
2 of 15: West (primary) elevation, view ESE.
3 of 15: North and west elevations, view SE.
4 of 15: North elevation, view S.
5 of 15: North and east elevations, view SW.
6 of 15: East elevation, 1927 education wing, view SW.
7 of 15: East elevation, 1954 sanctuary and 1927 education wing, view W.
8 of 15: East elevation, 1987 administration and education wing and 1954 sanctuary, view W.
9 of 15: South and east elevations, view NW.
10 of 15: Enclosed courtyard, view NW.
11 of 15: Entry and chapel vestibules, view SE.
12 of 15: Sanctuary interior, view E.
13 of 15: Chapel interior, view N.
14 of 15: Sanctuary vestibule and historic staircase, view W.
15 of 15: Education wing, typical classroom, view SW.

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.
Figures

Figure 1. Location Map. Source: Google Maps, 2018.
First United Methodist Church
Name of Property
Washington County, Oklahoma
County and State

Figure 2. Context Map, nominated property outlined in white. Source: Google Maps, 2018.
Figure 3. Annotated Site Map. Source: Google Earth, 2018.
Figure 4. Annotated Overview Photograph.
Figure 5. Annotated Primary (West) Façade Photograph.
Figure 6. Annotated North Elevation Photograph.
First United Methodist Church
Name of Property

Washington County, Oklahoma
County and State

Figure 7. Annotated East Elevation Photograph.
First United Methodist Church
Name of Property

Figure 8. Annotated South and East Elevations Photograph.
Figure 10. Annotated Sanborn Map, 1927. Source: Sanborn Map Company, Bartlesville, Oklahoma. March 1927, Sheet 6.
First United Methodist Church
Name of Property
Washington County, Oklahoma
County and State

Figure 11. Exterior and First Floor Plan and Photo Map. *Source: Ambler Architects, 2019.*
First United Methodist Church
Name of Property

Washington County, Oklahoma
County and State

Figure 12. Second Floor Plan and Photo Map. Source: Ambler Architects, 2019.
First United Methodist Church  
Name of Property  
Washington County, Oklahoma  
County and State

Figure 13. Third Floor Plan and Photo Map. Source: Ambler Architects, 2019.
First United Methodist Church

Washington County, Oklahoma

Figure 14. Basement Plan. *Source: Ambler Architects, 2019.*
First United Methodist Church
Name of Property

Washington County, Oklahoma
County and State


First United Methodist Church

Washington County, Oklahoma

Name of Property


![Administration and Education Addition Construction](image1.jpg)

Figure 18. Kramer Chapel. Fort Wayne, Indiana. Source: *Google Streetview, 2016.*

![Kramer Chapel](image2.jpg)
First United Methodist Church
Name of Property

Washington County, Oklahoma
County and State

Figure 19. First Baptist Church, Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Source: Google Streetview, 2018.

Figure 20. First Presbyterian Church, Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Source: Rosin Preservation, 2019.
Figure 21. Dalle de Verre Window at the First United Methodist Church, Bartlesville.
First United Methodist Church
Name of Property

Washington County, Oklahoma
County and State
First United Methodist Church
Name of Property

Washington County, Oklahoma
County and State

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Name of Property

Washington County, Oklahoma
County and State