City of Chicago

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Office of the City Clerk

Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	6/22/2022
Sponsor(s):	Misc. Transmittal
Type:	Ordinance
Title:	Historical landmark designation for Monumental Baptist Church at 729 E Oakwood Blvd
Committee(s) Assignment:	Committee on Zoning, Landmarks and Building Standards

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

CITY OF CHICAGO

JUN14 '22 1:22PM

June 14, 2022

CHGO CITY CLERK1

COUNCIL DIVISION

The Honorable Anna M. Valencia
City Clerk
City of Chicago
Room 107, City Hall
121 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602

RE: Ordinance designating Monumental Baptist Church (729 E. Oakwood Boulevard) as a Chicago Landmark

Dear Clerk Valencia:

We are filing with your office for introduction at the June 22, 2022, City Council meeting as a transmittal to the Mayor and City Council of Chicago the recommendation of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks that Monumental Baptist Church be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

The material being submitted to you for this proposal includes the:

1. Recommendation of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks; and

2. Proposed Ordinance.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Dickhut
Deputy Commissioner
Bureau of Citywide Systems and Historic Preservation

encls.

cc: The Honorable Sophia King, Alderwoman 4th Ward *(w/o enclosures)*

ORDINANCE

Monumental Baptist Church

729 E. Oakwood Boulevard

WHEREAS, pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Municipal Code of Chicago (the "Municipal Code"), Sections 2-120-620 through -690, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the "Commission") has determined that Monumental Baptist Church (the "Building"), located at 729 E. Oakwood Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois, as more fully described in **Exhibit A**, attached hereto and incorporated herein, satisfies five (5) criteria for landmark designation as set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (3), (4), (5) and (7) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the Building exemplifies the significant role that religious institutions played in the development and sustenance of Chicago's neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, originally constructed between 1899 and 1901 as Memorial Baptist Church, the Building housed a congregation associated with the University of Chicago and it conveys the area's initial development as Grand Boulevard, a neighborhood of high-quality urban-boulevard residences interspersed with large scale houses of worship; and

WHEREAS, the Building conveys the heritage of the Great Migration and the Civil Rights Movement. In 1934 the Building was purchased by a Black Baptist congregation and rechristened Monumental Baptist Church which continues today. During the Great Migration, African Americans brought to Chicago a tradition of church attendance. Over the course of the twentieth century Monumental Baptist became a vital institution in the African American community of Bronzeville that in addition to worship offered social, intellectual and political uplift that was relevant to the daily lives of African Americans; and

WHEREAS, during the twentieth century, a succession of capable and energetic pastors moved Monumental Baptist from strength to strength during the Civil Rights Movement, at the same time the church developed a strong musical program led by accomplished vocalists and choir directors; and

WHEREAS, Rev. James Lafayette Horace (pastor from 1933-1954) used his pulpit at Monumental to host events relevant to issues facing the African American community, including a conference on housing conditions for African American families, and lectures on African and African American history. As a combat veteran of World War I, Rev. Horace became during World War II a nationally significant advocate calling for an end to segregation and Jim Crow practices in the U.S. armed services and defense industries; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Morris Harrison Tynes (pastor from 1954-1967) maintained Monumental's position as a place of cultural uplift and social justice as the modern Civil Rights Movement picked up steam. 1n 1957, Tynes helped organize and led a Chicago delegation to the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom in Washington, D.C., an early event in the movement; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. Dearine Edwin King (pastor from 1967-1986) was a close friend and colleague of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and joined him at the head of Civil Rights marches. Rev. D. E. King was also a founding member of Operation PUSH and hosted important early meetings of the then-new civil rights organization at the Building; and

WHEREAS, during the tenure of these three pastors, Monumental Baptist Church developed a strong musical program. In 1934, vocalist Arthur S. Logan began directing the choirs at the church, and led its Goodwill Spiritual Choir to performances throughout Chicago and record albums; and

WHEREAS, beginning in 1968 and spanning over three decades, Monumental Baptist Church became well known for its sold-out Christmas production of Georg Friederich Handel's "Messiah." The performance was initiated by soprano Hortense Love, a member of the congregation and its choir director, and supported by internationally famous actor and baritone William Warfield, best known for his starring role in the 1951 musical film "Showboat" as Joe, singing "Ol' Man River" and as co-star of the stage production of "Porgy and Bess." Acclaimed Chicago soprano Edna C. Williams, life-long member of the congregation, also joined performance for decades; and

WHEREAS, the Building is an enduring, fortress-like structure of brick and terra cotta with a picturesque roofline. The design conveys the strength and permanence associated with religious life; and

WHEREAS, with its tall, central tower wrapped with an arcade of windows and surrounded by projecting gables, the overall form of the Building is that of a central lantern church, paying homage to H. H. Richardson's Trinity Episcopal Church from 1877 in Boston; and

WHEREAS, the Building is an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival Style of Architecture. Character-defining features of the style include its visually massive masonry walls, round-arched entrances and windows, rusticated stone plinth, and ornament based on medieval foliate and geometric ornament; and

WHEREAS, the Building was designed by the prominent architectural firm of Patton, Fisher, & Miller led by Normand Patton. Patton's firm and its successors made a significant contribution to institutional architecture in Chicago and the Midwest, including public schools, college, library buildings and churches; and

WHEREAS, significant buildings by the firms associated with Normand Patton in Chicago include: the Main Building and Machinery Hall, Illinois Institute of Technology (both designated Chicago Landmarks), the Chicago Academy of Sciences in Lincoln Park, and the Belmonte Flats, an apartment building at 4259 S. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive; and

WHEREAS, the firms associated with Normand Patton are especially noteworthy for dozens of library buildings, many built with money donated by industrialist Andrew Carnegie, designed for towns and cities throughout Illinois and the Midwest; and

WHEREAS, as a large-scale Romanesque Revival church surrounded by low-scale residential buildings and the open space of Mandrake Park, the Building is afforded a prominent visual appearance. Drivers exiting Jean-Baptiste Pointe DuSable Lake Shore Drive onto Oakwood Boulevard encounter a significant view of the Building standing near this familiar gateway to the Bronzeville neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, consistent with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, the Building has a significant historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value, the integrity of which

is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value; and

WHEREAS, on May 5, 2022, the Commission adopted a resolution recommending to the City Council of the City of Chicago (the "City Council") that the Building be designated a Chicago Landmark; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:

SECTION 1. The above recitals are hereby adopted as the findings of the City Council.

SECTION 2. The Building is hereby designated a Chicago Landmark in accordance with Section 2-120-700 of the Municipal Code.

SECTION 3. For purposes of Sections 2-120-740 and 2-120-770 of the Municipal Code governing permit review, the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Building.

SECTION 4. The Commission is hereby directed to create a suitable plaque appropriately identifying the Building as a Chicago Landmark.

SECTION 5. If any provision of this ordinance shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the invalidity or unenforceability of such provision shall not affect any of the other provisions of this ordinance.

SECTION 6. All ordinances, resolutions, motions or orders in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION 7. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and approval.

EXHIBIT A

Building Address
729 E. Oakwood Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois

Permanent Index Numbers
20-03-208-007-0000

Legal Description
LOT 12 (EXCEPT THE NORTH 10 FEET THEREOF TAKEN FOR BOULEVARD, AND EXCEPT THE SOUTH 7 FEET THEREOF TAKEN FOR ALLEY) IN BLOCK 4, IN CLEAVERVILLE DIVISION, A SUBDIVISION OF THE NORTH ½ OF THE NORTHEAST ¼ LYING EAST OF VINCENNES ROAD IN SECTION 3, TOWNSHIP 38 NORTH, RANGE 14 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS. (EXCEPT ALLEY) WEST ½ OF SUB-LOT 5 IN RESUBDIVISION OF LOTS 1, 2, 8 AND 9 IN BLOCK 4 IN CLEAVERVILLE ADDITION IN SECTION 3, TOWNSHIP 38 NORTH, RANGE 14 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS. THE EAST 20 FEET OF THE WEST 60 FEET OF LOT 5 OR THE WEST 20 FEET OF THE EAST 40 FEET OF LOT 5 IN COUNTY CLERK'S DIVISION OF LOTS 1, 2, 8 AND 9 IN BLOCK 4 IN CLEAVERVILLE ADDITION BEING THE NORTH ½ OF THE NORTHEAST ¼ OF SECTION 3, TOWNSHIP 38 NORTH, RANGE 14 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

CITY OF CHICAGO
COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS

May 5, 2022

RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHICAGO THAT CHICAGO LANDMARK DESIGNATION BE ADOPTED FOR THE

MONUMENTAL BAPTIST CHURCH

729 E. OAKWOOD BOULEVARD

Docket No. 2022-02

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago:

Pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code of the City of Chicago (the "Municipal Code"), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the "Commission") has determined that the Monumental Baptist Church (the "Building"), is worthy of designation as a Chicago Landmark. On the basis of careful consideration of the history and architecture of the Building, the Commission has found that it satisfies the following four (4) criteria set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Municipal Code:

1. *Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*

3. *Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*

4. *Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*

7. *Its unique location or distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Chicago.*

I. BACKGROUND

The formal landmark designation process for the Building began on March 3, 2022, when the Commission approved a preliminary landmark recommendation (the "Preliminary Recommendation") for the Building as a Chicago Landmark. The Commission found that the Building meets four (4) of the seven (7) criteria for designation, as well as the integrity criterion, identified in the Chicago Landmarks Ordinance (Municipal Code, Section 2-120-580 *et seq.*).

As part of the Preliminary Recommendation, the Commission preliminarily identified the "significant historical and architectural features" of the Building as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Building.

Also, as part of the Preliminary Recommendation, the Commission adopted a Designation Report, dated March 3, 2022, the most current iteration of which is dated May 5, 2022, incorporated herein and attached hereto as **Exhibit A** (the "Designation Report").

At its regular meeting of April 7, 2022, the Commission received a report incorporated herein and attached hereto as **Exhibit B** (the "Department of Planning and Development Report") from Maurice D. Cox, Commissioner of the Department of Planning and Development, stating that the proposed landmark designation of the Building supports the City's overall planning goals and is consistent with the City's governing policies and plans.

On April 25, 2022, the Commission received written consent to landmark designation of the Building in a form dated April 22, 2022, and signed by Rev. Cleophus Lee, representing the owner of the Building.

II. FINDINGS OF THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code, the Commission has reviewed the entire record of proceedings on the proposed Chicago Landmark designation, including the Designation Report and all of the information on the proposed landmark designation of the Building; and

WHEREAS, the Building exemplifies the significant role that religious institutions played in the development and sustenance of Chicago's neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, originally constructed between 1899 and 1901 as Memorial Baptist Church, the Building housed a congregation associated with the University of Chicago and it conveys the area's initial development as Grand Boulevard, a neighborhood of high-quality urban-boulevard residences interspersed with large scale houses of worship; and

WHEREAS, the Building conveys the heritage of the Great Migration and the Civil Rights Movement. In 1934 the Building was purchased by a Black Baptist congregation and rechristened Monumental Baptist Church which continues today. During the Great Migration, African Americans brought to Chicago a tradition of church attendance. Over the course of the twentieth century Monumental Baptist became a vital institution in the African American community of Bronzeville that in addition to worship offered social, intellectual and political uplift that was relevant to the daily lives of African Americans; and

WHEREAS, During the twentieth century, a succession of capable and energetic pastors moved Monumental Baptist from strength to strength during the Civil Rights Movement, at the same time the church developed a strong musical program led by accomplished vocalists and choir directors; and

WHEREAS, Rev. James Lafayette Horace (pastor from 1933-1954) used his pulpit at Monumental to host events relevant to issues facing the African American community, including a conference on housing conditions for African American families, and lectures on African and African American history. As a combat veteran of World War I, Rev. Horace became during World War II a nationally significant advocate calling for an end to segregation and Jim Crow practices in the U.S. armed services and defense industries; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Morris Harrison Tynes (pastor from 1954-1967) maintained Monumental's position as a place of cultural uplift and social justice as the modern Civil Rights Movement picked up steam. In 1957, Tynes helped organize and led a Chicago delegation to the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom in Washington, D.C., an early event in the movement; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. Dearine Edwin King (pastor from 1967-1986) was a close friend and colleague of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and joined him at the head of Civil Rights marches. Rev. D. E. King was also a founding member of Operation PUSH and hosted important early meetings of the then-new civil rights organization at the Building; and

WHEREAS, during the tenure of these three pastors, Monumental Baptist Church developed a strong musical program. In 1934, vocalist Arthur S. Logan began directing the choirs at the church, and led its Goodwill Spiritual Choir to performances throughout Chicago and record albums; and

WHEREAS, beginning in 1968 and spanning over three decades, Monumental Baptist Church became well known for its sold-out Christmas production of Georg Friederich Handel's "Messiah." The performance was initiated by soprano Hortense Love, a member of the congregation and its choir director, and supported by internationally famous actor and baritone William Warfield, best known for his starring role in the 1951 musical film "Showboat" as Joe, singing "Ol' Man River" and as co-star of the stage production of "Porgy and Bess." Acclaimed Chicago soprano Edna C. Williams, life-long member of the congregation, also joined performance for decades; and

WHEREAS, the Building is an enduring, fortress-like structure of brick and terra cotta with a picturesque roofline. The design conveys the strength and permanence associated with religious life; and

WHEREAS, with its tall, central tower wrapped with an arcade of windows and surrounded by projecting gables, the overall form of the Building is that of a central lantern church, paying homage to H. H. Richardson's Trinity Episcopal Church from 1877 in Boston; and

WHEREAS, the Building is an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival Style of Architecture. Character-defining features of the style include its visually massive masonry walls, round-arched entrances and windows, rusticated stone plinth, and ornament based on medieval foliate and geometric ornament; and

WHEREAS, the Building was designed by the prominent architectural firm of Patton, Fisher, & Miller led by Normand Patton. Patton's firm and its successors made a significant contribution to institutional architecture in Chicago and the Midwest, including public schools, college, library buildings and churches; and

WHEREAS, significant buildings by the firms associated with Normand Patton in Chicago include: the Main Building and Machinery Hall, Illinois Institute of Technology (both designated Chicago Landmarks), the Chicago Academy of Sciences in Lincoln Park, and the Belmonte Flats, an apartment building at 4259 S. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive; and

WHEREAS, the firms associated with Normand Patton are especially noteworthy for dozens of library buildings, many built with money donated by industrialist Andrew Carnegie, designed for towns and cities throughout Illinois and the Midwest; and

WHEREAS, as a large-scale Romanesque Revival church surrounded by low-scale residential buildings and the open space of Mandrake Park, the Building is afforded a prominent visual appearance. Drivers exiting Jean-Baptiste Pointe DuSable Lake Shore Drive onto Oakwood Boulevard encounter a significant view of the Building standing near this familiar gateway to the Bronzeville neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, the Building meets four (4) criteria for landmark designation set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (3), (4) and (7) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, consistent with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, the Building has significant historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value, the integrity of which is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value; now, therefore,

THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS HEREBY:

1. Adopts the recitals, findings and statements of fact set forth in the preamble and Sections I and II hereof as the findings of the Commission; and

2. Adopts the Designation Report, as revised, and dated this May 5, 2022; and

3. Finds, based on the Designation Report and the entire record before the Commission, that the Building meets the four (4) criteria for landmark designation set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (3), (4) and (7) of the Municipal Code; and

4. Finds that the Building satisfies the "integrity" requirement set forth in Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code; and

5. Finds that the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are identified as follows:

   - All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Building.

6. Recommends the designation of the Building a Chicago Landmark.

This recommendation was adopted unanimously (7-0).

Ernest C. Wong, Chair
Commission on Chicago Landmarks

Dated: May 5, 2022

Exhibit A

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

MONUMENTAL BAPTIST CHURCH

729 E. OAKWOOD BOULEVARD

Final Landmark Recommendation Adopted by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, on May 5, 2022

CITY OF CHICAGO
Lori E. Lightfoot, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
Maurice D. Cox, Commissioner

Cover Illustrations:

Lower left: Young women's church service club, Monumental Baptist, ca. 1950. (Credit: Arthur S. Logan Papers, Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature)

Lower right: Internationally acclaimed baritone and actor William Warfield performing the "Messiah," a performance that became a three-decade long Christmas tradition at Monumental Baptist Church. (Credit: *Ebony*, December, 1979)

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Monumental Baptist Church

(Originally Memorial Baptist Church)

729 E. Oakwood Boulevard

Constructed: 1899-1901

Architects: Patton, Fisher & Miller

Monumental Baptist Church in Bronzeville, originally Memorial Baptist Church, is an enduring, fortress-like structure of brick and terra cotta with a picturesque roofline. The design conveys the strength and longevity of religious institutions and their houses of worship. The church was constructed between 1899 and 1901 by the Memorial Baptist Church, a congregation associated with the University of Chicago. The architects were Patton, Fisher & Miller, a Chicago architectural firm that specialized in institutional architecture throughout the Midwest. Stylistically it stands as an exceptionally high-quality example of Romanesque Revival architecture in Chicago.

In 1934 the church was purchased by a Black Baptist congregation and rechristened Monumental Baptist Church which continues today. During the Great Migration, African Americans brought with them a tradition of church attendance, and in Chicago houses of worship became vital institutions in the African American community that were not just about worship. Monumental was no exception. Guided by skilled and energetic pastors it emerged as one of the largest and most active African American congregations in the city. In addition to spirituality, Monumental was a platform for social, intellectual and political uplift that was relevant to the daily lives of African Americans. Monumental Baptist also became well known for its robust music program featured in sold out performances, radio and television broadcasts and albums.

Monumental Baptist Church is located on Chicago's South Side in the Grand Boulevard Community Area. Since the Great Migration to Chicago that began during World War I, Grand Boulevard has been an African American community. In 1930 James J. Gentry, publisher of the *Chicago Bee* coined the term Bronzeville for the neighborhood.

The Grand Boulevard Community Area and Bronzeville Neighborhood

Like all of Chicago, the area now known as Grand Boulevard on the South Side once belonged to Native Americans, specifically the Miami and Potawatomi nations. South Vincennes Avenue, located a block west of Monumental Baptist, follows the course of a Native American trail that connected settlements and hunting grounds spanning the route for 200 miles south to Fort Vincennes, a French outpost on the lower Wabash River. The Miami lived throughout northern Illinois until around 1700 when they were displaced by the Potawatomi who sought entrée into the region's fur trade. These peoples were compelled to cede their lands in the Chicago region through a series of treaties with the U.S. government in the 1830s. By 1835, the indigenous people of the Chicago region were displaced to territories west of the Mississippi River. At the same time, early white settlers began to build houses scattered on the prairie near the Vincennes trail.

Today, Monumental Baptist Church tells the history of two later chapters of the area's development. First, its emergence as Grand Boulevard, an affluent neighborhood settled in the late nineteenth century. Second, the neighborhood's transformation into Bronzeville, the epicenter of African American life and culture in Chicago in the early twentieth century.

The Grand Boulevard community area is located on Chicago's South Side and is bounded by Pershing Road on the north, 51st Street on the south, Cottage Grove Avenue on the east and the Rock Island Railroad tracks on the west. The area's name is derived from Grand Boulevard a broad, landscaped Boulevard running through the neighborhood from 35th to 51st streets. The boulevard was laid out by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux in 1869. When it was completed in 1874 it connected Washington Park to downtown Chicago. The boulevard itself was later renamed South Parkway and today known is named Martin Luther King Drive.

Residential development of Grand Boulevard began after the Great Fire of 1871. Completion of the landscaped boulevard in 1874 attracted wealthy Chicagoans who built high-quality houses on it and many still stand on Martin Luther King Drive. Both on the boulevard itself and in the broader community area, Christian and Jewish communities built massive, high-style houses of worship which conveyed the area's social and economic status. Monumental Baptist Church is a leading example of the neighborhood's religious architecture from this period.

Improvements in public transit to Grand Boulevard in the late-nineteenth century and first two decades of the twentieth attracted more middle-class residents to the area, primarily German Jews and Irish Catholics who settled in flats and apartment buildings. By the 1920s, the German and Irish population would begin to be replaced by African Americans.

African Americans resided in Chicago since at least the 1830s, but they had remained a relatively small percentage of the city's population until the early 1900s. World War I and the subsequent opening of job opportunities in the North for African American workers encouraged a "Great Migration" of southern African Americans to northern cities, including Chicago. By 1920, African Americans in Chicago numbered 108,000 – at least double the number that lived in the city before the start of the Great Migration.

Because of racially-restrictive housing practices, Chicago's African American population at the beginning of the Great Migration years largely lived in a restricted district dubbed the "Black Belt"– a long, relatively narrow strip of land on the South Side that was centered along Federal and State Streets and extended south from roughly 16th Street to 39th Street, and along neighboring blocks to the east and west.

What gradually evolved in the Black Belt was a complete and independent commercial, social, and political community. A thriving "city-within-a-city" known as the "Black Metropolis" gained nationwide publicity in the early 1920s as a model of African American achievement and the center of the city's African American social, economic, and cultural life. By 1930 the population of Grand Boulevard was 95 per cent Black and 99 per cent by 1950. It was during this transition that the original white Baptist congregation of Memorial Baptist Church closed its

doors and sold church to an African American Baptist congregation that rechristened the building as Monumental Baptist Church.

Building Design and Construction

Though today the building is known as Monumental Baptist, it was originally the Memorial Baptist Church from its dedication in 1901 until 1926. Memorial traced its origins to 1868 and the "old" University of Chicago. Though financial difficulties forced the university to close after 18 years, it is the precursor to today's University of Chicago. It was established in 1856 on ten acres donated by Senator Stephen A. Douglas at East 34th Street and Cottage Grove Avenue. The university had a strong Baptist influence and in 1868 Baptist faculty and students formed the University Place Baptist Church and began worshipping at the university's chapel. A year later they built a small chapel at E. 35th Street and Rhodes Avenue.

The "old" University of Chicago at 35th and Rhodes Ave where Memorial Baptist congregation was established in 1868. (Credit: University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center)

In 1882, the congregation purchased a wood-frame church built in 1868 and renamed itself the Memorial Baptist Church. This church was located at the site of the existing building on Oakwood Boulevard. The congregation worshiped here for 17 years before demolishing it in 1899 to make way for the present building.

The Chicago Tribune published the rendering of Memorial Baptist Church on the occasion of its dedication in 1901. (Credit. *Chicago Tribune*, April 14, 1901)

In January 1899, the Chicago Tribune reported that the congregation at Memorial Baptist Church, under the leadership of Dr. Lathan A. Crandall, was

Then primary façade with the central tower rising above the gabled transept which is flanked by low entrance towers. (Credit: Patrick Pyszka)

Then west elevation showing the Sunday School wing projecting to the rear of the church with its unusual clerestory. (Credit: Patrick Pyszka)

Exterior details. (Credit: Patrick Pyszka)

1. **Arcade of windows with gauged-brick arches.**
2. **The *porte cochère* with its rusticated brown sandstone plinth and foliate ornament.**
3. ***Trifora* window at the east transept.**
4. **A lively combination of pyramidal, octagonal and gabled roofs creates a picturesque roofline.**

planning to raise funds for a new church building. Later that year, the cornerstone was laid in a ceremony attended by William Rainey Harper, one of the founders and first president of the then "new" University of Chicago. The cost of the new church was reported to be $60,000 (or $2 million today). Labor unrest slowed its construction, but the building was dedicated on April 14, 1901, by which time the congregation had raised all of the funds for its construction.

In plan, the church is a modified Greek cross with three transepts extending from a central tower. This tower is square in plan and measures 57 feet on each elevation. The three transepts extend a relatively short distance from the tower with a projection of 16 feet. In lieu of a fourth transept that is typical of the Greek cross plan, Monumental has a large two-story Sunday School wing extending to the rear of the building measuring 210 by 300 feet.

The exterior walls of the church are brown pressed brick trimmed with brown terra cotta. At the front facade facing north onto Oakwood Boulevard there is a 6-foot-tall stone plinth at the base of the building built with ashlar Lake Superior brown sandstone quarried in Duluth, Minnesota.

The visual centerpiece of the church is its 80-foot-tall tower topped with a pyramidal roof. Below the roofline, the top of the tower has a projecting cornice of corbeled brick. Below this is an arcade of round-arched windows wrapping around the top of the tower creating a lantern admitting light into the interior. The arches of these windows–and throughout the building–are gauged brick, a high-quality method of arch construction that employs wedge-shaped bricks with consistent mortar joints radiating to the arch's center point. Colonettes flanking each window are constructed of disk-shaped bricks topped with terra cotta capitals. Octagonal turrets with lancets brace each corner of the tower enhancing the muscular, fortress-like appearance of the building.

The three transepts extend from the north (front facade), west and east elevations of the tower. These are topped with low and wide gables further emphasizing the weight and mass of the building. Each of the transept's gable ends has a *trifora* window, or a large arched window flanked on either side by a smaller arched window. At the front elevation the window arches spring from brick columns topped with terra cotta capitals rendered with foliate ornament. These arches, like all on the front elevation, are articulated with projecting brick archivolt. At the side elevations, the arched openings are simply punched into the wall.

At the front elevation facing Oakwood Boulevard, a one-story bay extends from the front of the transept marking the narthex or entrance foyer on the interior. At each end of this bay stands low corner towers each topped with a pyramidal roof. Each of these towers contains entrance to the church, deeply recessed in a round-arched carried by terra-columns with a beaded surface. Inside these towers stairways lead up to the gallery level of the auditorium. A brown sandstone stairway leads from the sidewalk to the entrance doors which are not original to the building. Next to the westernmost entrance tower a *porte-cochère* covers a carriageway leading to a separate entrance to the Sunday School wing at the rear of the church.

Interior views of the auditorium and Sunday School. (Credit: Patrick Pyszka)

1. **Looking toward the chancel in the auditorium.**
2. **The Sunday School with its wrap-around clerestory.**
3. **Akron Plan classrooms with removable partitions.**
4. **Staircase in the octagonal tower of Sunday School wing.**
5. **Oak millwork in the Sunday School.**

On the interior, a large auditorium has seating for 750. The grandly-scaled space features a soaring dome with four concave surfaces springing from arches at each side, a form known as a cloister dome. Windows at the top of the dome admit light to enhance the volume. The windows throughout the auditorium are stained glass with simple geometric designs rendered in green, blue and gold panes set in lead came.

At the floor level of the auditorium, the design optimizes hearing and seeing worship, a priority of Protestant ecclesiastical architecture that enabled ministers to exploit their oratorical prowess: the floor is sloped, no interior columns obstruct views, and pews are arranged in arches facing the chancel. This combination is known as an Akron Plan from its origin in that Ohio city. Additional seating is located in a raised gallery at rear of the auditorium.

At the front of the auditorium is the raised chancel reserved for the choir, pulpit and baptistry. The wall behind the chancel contains three large arches with the organ occupying the center, flanked by painted murals in the side arches. To the east a mural of the River Jordan, where the Bible says Jesus was baptized, towers over the immersive baptistry. To the west is a depiction of Christ as the Good Shepherd.

The large Sunday School wing extending to the rear (south) of the church is less visible and has less architectural treatment on the exterior, aside from an octagonal stair tower at the west elevation. The exterior walls of the wing are common brick with segmental arched window openings. This part of the building was completed first, and the congregation worshipped here while the church was under construction. Above the main roofline of this wing, which is flat, there is a hipped roof over a clerestory filled with windows that illuminate the Sunday School rooms of the wing. The wing contains 15 classrooms with movable partition walls that allow them to be combined or separated, and these rooms radiate off an open space with a raised platform. This particular arrangement of religious education spaces is also a characteristic of the Akron Plan. It allowed for children to be separated into small age groups as well as to be joined together, depending on the type of instruction. In addition to the Sunday School, the wing also contains a dining room, kitchen, library, club and reception rooms as well as the pastor's study.

Romanesque Revival Architecture in Chicago

The Monumental Baptist Church building is a fine example of the Romanesque Revival style, a popular architectural style in Chicago during the late 1880s and 90s. It was derived from medieval European architecture, primarily churches, built in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and is characterized by visually-massive masonry walls, round-arched entrances and windows, and ornament based on medieval foliate and geometric ornament. In addition, Romanesque Revival-style buildings frequently have picturesque rooflines composed of a variety of roof shapes used in combination. Monumental exhibits all of these features,

Henry Hobson Richardson's Trinity Episcopal Church (left) from 1877 in Boston is considered Richardson's greatest work and the most-developed example of Romanesque as interpreted by Richardson. (Credit: Historic American Building Survey, HABS MASS,13-BOST,131--37)

The form of Patton, Fisher, & Miller's design of Monumental Baptist Church (below) pays homage to Trinity with its central tower, corner turrets and gabled transepts. (Credit: Patrick Pyszka)

The use of the Romanesque Revival style by American architects was part of a widespread appreciation of historic architectural styles that dominated architectural design in the United States throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One of the earliest significant American examples of the style is the original building of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., began in 1847 to designs by architect James Renwick, Jr. However, it was not until the 1880s, with the rise to prominence of architect Henry H. Richardson, that the Romanesque Revival became a widespread architectural style.

Beginning in the early 1870s with Boston's Trinity Church and continuing until his death in 1885, Richardson developed a personal architectural style that utilized the visual characteristics of medieval Romanesque buildings in a simplified, strongly geometric manner that he considered suitable for modern building types, including libraries, government buildings, and schools. Richardson designed several prominent buildings in Chicago in the new style in the 1880s, including the John J. Glessner House at 1800 S. Prairie Ave. (a designated Chicago Landmark) and the Marshall Field Wholesale Store at Adams and Wells (demolished). It should be noted that the overall form of Monumental Baptist is clearly influenced by Richardson's Trinity Episcopal Church from 1877 in Boston with its central square tower topped with a pyramidal roof and flanked by gabled transepts.

The Architectural Firm of Patton, Fisher & Miller

Monumental Baptist Church was designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Patton, Fisher, & Miller. The firm, along with the preceding work of Normand Patton working on his own and the successor firm of Patton & Miller, was noteworthy in Chicago and throughout the Midwest for specializing in the design of institutional and religious buildings. They are especially noteworthy for their school and college buildings, and libraries, designing dozens of "Carnegie libraries"—public libraries funded by industrialist Andrew Carnegie—throughout Illinois and the Midwest.

Normand S. Patton (1852-1915) was born in Hartford, Connecticut, son of Reverend William Weston and Mary Boardman Patton. In 1857, Patton's family came to Chicago where his father served as pastor of the First Congregational Church. Later in his life, Normand Patton remained involved in the Congregational church and this connection may have helped him secure church design commissions from other Protestant congregations.

The young Patton was educated at Chicago public schools. He went on to Amherst College in Massachusetts and then to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where he studied architecture followed by a grand tour of Europe. In 1874, Patton came to Chicago to join the many other architects that saw the rapidly growing city as an excellent place to practice architecture.

Patton formed a series of partnerships throughout his career. After almost a decade of practicing alone or with early partner C. E. Randall, Patton joined with Reynolds Fisher in 1885, and the

John Farren School, Chicago, Ill.

Farren School, 51st and Wabash, demolished.

The Chicago Academy of Sciences, Lincoln Park, Chicago, Ill.

The Chicago Academy of Sciences, Lincoln Park.

Lake View High School, Chicago, Ill.

Lakeview High School, 4015 N. Ashland Ave.

Armour Institute, Chicago.

The Main Building at the Illinois Institute of Chicago, a designated Chicago Landmark.

New Trier Township High School, Winnetka, Ill.

The "old' New Trier High School, Winnetka, demolished 1954.

A selection of works by Patton & Miller in and around Chicago published by the architectural firm. (Credit: Patton & Miller, *View book of work, 1886-1912* at Chicago History Museum, Research Center).

two were partners for the next 16 years, until 1901, when Fisher moved to Seattle and, giving up the profession of architecture, became vice-president of a family business, the Pontiac Brick & Tile Company.

Patton and Fisher took a third partner, Grant Miller (1870-?) in 1898, and the newly named firm—Patton, Miller & Fisher—designed Monumental Baptist Church in 1899. Miller was born in Rockford, Illinois, and studied architecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1894 and a master's degree the following year. He then earned a degree in civil engineering from Cornell University in 1898, just before joining Patton and Miller in practice. After Fisher's departure in 1901, Miller remained with Patton until 1912 in the renamed firm of Patton & Miller.

Patton & Fisher designed several other noteworthy educational, institutional, commercial, and residential projects in Chicago and throughout the Midwest, primarily in the Romanesque Revival style. including the Chicago Academy of Sciences at 2001 N. Lincoln Park West (189, now the headquarters of the Lincoln Park Zoological Society) and the Belmonte Flats at 4257-59 S. King Dr. (1893, annex 1896, listed on the National Register). In addition, the firm designed houses in the Kenwood Chicago Landmark District.

Patton was appointed the Chicago Board of Education Architect in 1896. During his two-year tenure his designs included Lakeview High School (1898, 4015 North Ashland Avenue), Spry School (1899, 2400 South Marshall Boulevard), and Eugene Field School (1898, 7001 North Ashland Avenue).

Patton's work outside of Chicago includes school and college buildings as well as libraries. Including the Gardner Library in Quincy, Illinois; the Scoville Memorial Library at Carlton College, Northfield, Minnesota; and Emerson Hall at Beloit College, Beloit, Wisconsin.

Patton and his partners were especially noteworthy for their design of public libraries for many Midwestern cities and towns, including (to name a few) Kalamazoo, Michigan; Danville, Illinois; Highland Park, Illinois; Waukegan, Illinois; and Mason City, Iowa. In all, the firm under its various names designed more than 100 libraries throughout Illinois and the Midwest. Many of these libraries were funded in part by industrialist Andrew Carnegie, who encouraged the construction of "Carnegie Libraries" throughout the country in the early 20th century.

Normand Patton was also active in organizations that promoted the professionalization of architecture. He was a founding member of the Western Association of Architects and in 1889 was elected to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects where he served two terms on that organization's Board of Directors. Patton also served as president of the Chicago Municipal Improvement League which called for improvements to Chicago's lakefront and public buildings.

Patton continued to practice architecture until his death in 1915 at age 63. His obituary in the *Journal of the American Institute of Architects* praised Patton as having "the respect of all who

knew him, and was recognized as a leader in the profession."

Later History of the Memorial Baptist Church

From its dedication in 1901, the church served the Memorial Baptist congregation as a place for worship as well as a place where current events and social movements were reflected. In the nineteen-teens, Memorial Baptist's pastors spoke about topics relevant to the Progressive Era, including support of the temperance movement, the problem of children living in poverty in Chicago and women's suffrage. In 1913, Jane Addams spoke at the church to kick off a series of lectures led by suffragist Maybelle Tindell on women's right-to-vote.

Like most congregations, Memorial Baptist failed to integrate as the neighborhood transformed from white to African American during the Great Migration. In November 1925, Memorial closed its doors and put the building up for sale. It is not known whether the congregation re-established itself elsewhere or simply scattered. In April 1926, the building was bought by an African American Congregation and renamed the Oakwood Boulevard Christian church. Little is known of this congregation and their tenure in the building was brief. In 1934 the building was bought by a Black Baptist congregation and renamed Monumental Church which continues to this day.

A New Chapter: The Monumental Baptist Church Congregation

Since its 1934 transformation into Monumental Baptist, the church conveys significant aspects of African American culture in Chicago. After the Great Migration began in earnest in the 1920s, church membership at African American churches in Chicago skyrocketed. Monumental Baptist emerged as one of the largest and most active congregations in Bronzeville that, in addition to spirituality, has served as an influential social, intellectual and political force in its members' daily lives.

During the Great Migration, African Americans brought their religious practices with them to Chicago. In some cases, entire congregations moved together and reestablished themselves in northern cities. In their sweeping sociological and anthropological study of 1945, Black *Metropolis*, John Gibbs St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton reported that in 1928, Chicago's Black Belt was home to 295 churches distributed among nearly thirty denominations. A decade later, that number had nearly doubled to 500, claiming at least 200,000 members. Almost half of the churches, and over two-thirds of the people who identified themselves as church members, were affiliated with Baptist congregations like Monumental.

Black Baptist churches, perhaps more than any other African American Christian denomination, came to be seen by worshipers as having more freedom from both political and economic con-

trols of the white community. They embraced independent and authentic African American traditions, both in terms of religious ceremony and social action to advance the conditions of their congregants. The history of Monumental reflects this context.

Sixteen years before acquiring the building, in 1918 a group of five Black Baptists in Bronzeville began to gather in prayer under the direction of Dilllard Jackson, Fred and Ida Windsor, Evans J. Jackson and Dillard Jackson The following year, the group organized itself under the name Monumental Baptist Church. At the time, a Rev. J. H. Smith of Alabama was leading the fledgling congregation that began meeting in a storefront at 3029 S. Cottage Grove Avenue. By 1921, the congregation had grown to 100 members and under the leadership of a new pastor, also from Alabama, a Rev. William Madison, they moved from the storefront and purchased a church building at 3823 S. Wabash Avenue (no longer extant). At the time of his death in 1929. Rev. Madison had increased the membership of Monumental from 100 to 375.

By 1933, the congregation had grown to 300 members and began to thrive under the leadership of a succession of capable and energetic pastors who moved Monumental from strength to strength. Their work is known to us through newspaper coverage of the day.

The first of these is Rev. James Lafayette Horace who came to Monumental in 1933. He grew up in a farming community in Groveton, Texas, and in 1916 he graduated from Prairie View College in Texas, a Historically Black College. At America's entry into World War I, he enrolled at the U.S. Army's Officer Training School for African Americans at Fort Des Moines, Iowa. He graduated as a Second Lieutenant and served in Company G of the 365th Infantry, 92nd Division of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF). This was a prominent African American force In World War I that drew soldiers from all over the United States. The insignia chosen for the division was the American buffalo, reflecting the nickname "Buffalo Soldiers" given to African American cavalrymen in the 19th century. The 92nd served in combat in France, fighting alongside French forces, in the 1918 Battles of the Meuse–Argonne, then the largest and deadliest battle in U.S. history, and part of an Allied offensive that helped end World War I, a war that by the end had become a stalemate bleeding Europe.

After war, Horace returned to school to study banking, and worked in that field for six years before being drawn to religious work. He was ordained as a Baptist minister with his first post in Hot Springs, Arkansas. In summers he travelled to Chicago where he studied theology at Northwestern University and at the University of Chicago.

In 1934, a year after arriving at Monumental, Rev. Horace led the congregation to buy the current building and members of the congregation volunteered their time to rehabilitate it. Later in the 1930s, historians employed by the WPA's Illinois Writers Project observed that Monumental Baptist was one of the top six well-established and large African American churches in Chicago. At the same time, Rev. Horace used Monumental to host events relevant to issues facing the African American community, including a conference on housing conditions for African American families, and lectures on African and African American history. Also, the congregation began to

WAR DEPARTMENT GETS JIM CROW PROTEST

During World War II, Rev. J. L. Horace of Monumental, fourth from right, headed a delegation of Chicagoans to Washington D.C. to the War Department to demand better treatment of African Americans serving in the Armed Forces. (Credit: *The Chicago Defender*, April 5, 1941)

Rev. Horace also highlighted the valor of African American serving in World War II. In 1943 he invited sailor Doris Miller (right) to a speaking engagement at Monumental. Miller was awarded with the Navy Cross for heroism on board USS *West Virginia* during the Pearl Harbor Attack. (Credit: Naval History and Heritage Command)

establish a strong musical program.

Rev. Horace's combat service in World War I gave him vital perspective during World War II. Throughout the war, Horace advocated for integration and fair treatment of African American serving in the Armed Forces as well as those working as defense workers. On April 5, 1941, Rev. Horace led a delegation to the U. S. Undersecretary of War Robert L. Patterson calling for an end to Jim Crow practices in the military. (Patterson later worked to promote Blacks in the military, but stopped short of integration.)

In lectures and the media (print and radio), Rev. Horace highlighted the incongruity between African American fighting and dying in support of the U. S. war effort and their treatment back at home. After lynchings in Mississippi in 1942, Horace noted that African Americans were "freely asking if it is wise to fight to preserve a democracy which they cannot share although they are citizens." Horace toured 12 U.S. Army camps in the South and "found dreadful cases of discrimination and mistreatment." Near the end of the war, he wrote that Black "soldiers in the uniform of Uncle Sam are treated generally worse in being subject to discriminatory and humiliating segregation than are Nazi prisoners whom they are assigned to guard."

Horace also shined a light on an African American hero during the war–Dorris Miller. In 1943, he brought Miller to speak at Monumental. Many African Americans were assigned to "labor" positions in the war, instead of combat. In Miller's case the U.S. Navy assigned him the rank of Cook Third Class on the *USS West Virginia* stationed in Pearl Harbor. In the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the *West Virginia* was sunk, but before it went down Miller saved several wounded shipmates. In a superb act of courage, he also manned an anti-aircraft machine gun, for which he had no training, and shot down several Japanese planes. He was the first Black American to be awarded the Navy Cross, that service's second highest honor. A few months after his speech at Monumental, Miller was killed while serving in the Pacific aboard the *USS Liscome Bay* when it was sunk by a Japanese submarine.

Rev. Horace was also a national figure in the Baptist church, and in 1943 he brought thousands of his coreligionists to Chicago with the National Baptist Convention which convened at the Eighth Regiment Armory (a designated Chicago Landmark) as well as Monumental Baptist. In addition to spiritual matters, the convention discussed fighting segregation, ending the poll tax, and supporting candidates from the Republican party in opposition to the Democratic leaders in the South who supported Jim Crow.

By 1952, Monumental's membership had grown to 2,000. Two years later, Rev. Horace ended his 21-year career at Monumental for a new pastorship. In his place arrived Rev. Morris Harrison Tynes. A 30-year-old from a prominent Virginia family, a graduate of Yale Divinity School and former Dean of the Virginia Theology Seminary.

Tynes helped lead Monumental into the modern Civil Rights Movement. In 1957, he served on a national committee that organized the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom, an early event in the

Rev. Morris Harrison Tynes. (Credit: Chicago Tribune, March 27,1955)

Rev. Tynes used his pulpit at Monumental as a platform for lectures and mass meetings. This 1960 poster promotes a lecture by Black historian J. A. Rogers, sponsored by the Afro-American Heritage Association. The poster was likely designed by artist and vocalist Arthur S. Logan, see page 22. (Credit: Arthur S. Logan Papers, Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature)

Civil Rights Movement in Washington, D.C. It was the occasion of Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Give Us the Ballot" speech. Tynes was one of several pastors that led the Chicago delegation to the demonstration. In 1961, Monumental hosted a mass meeting of the African American Heritage Association to protest the murder of Patrice Émery Lumumba, the first prime minister of the independent Democratic Republic of the Congo, and an African pan-nationalist who helped transform Congo from a Belgian colony to and independent state. In 1963, Tynes joined a panel discussion with Malcolm X in Chicago on the Civil Rights Movement and relationship between Africa and African Americans.

In 1967, Tynes moved on to a new pastorship to be replaced by Rev. Dr. Dearine Edwin King. King held Divinity and master's degrees from the Howard University School of Religion. Before Monumental, he led Baptist churches in Louisville, Kentucky, and New York City. While at Monumental in 1972, Rev. King Joined the board of the then newly formed civil rights organization Operation PUSH led by Jesse Jackson. That year King invited the board to Monumental for its first meeting which included a veritable Who's Who of prominent African American leaders in politics, education, entertainment and sports, including composer Quincy Jones, Boston Celtics star Bill Russell and baseball great Jackie Robinson. King was a close friend of both with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his father, and he served as executive board member of Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

During the tenure of these three pastors, Monumental developed a strong music program that became known well outside the congregation due to radio broadcasts and albums. The program was led by talented and committed members of the congregation, many of whom were accomplished musicians in their own right. Special annual productions, especially the Messiah, were supported by nationally recognized artists and local orchestras.

The beginnings of this tradition began with Arthur S. Logan, a polymath with accomplishments in graphic art, singing, choir direction, music history and African American history. Born in Mississippi, Logan's family joined the Great Migration to Chicago's Bronzeville. He attended Chicago public schools, including Wendell Phillips High School (a designated Chicago Landmark), the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the Girvin School of Music in Chicago.

By the 1930s, Logan had established himself as an accomplished visual artist and vocalist. He began directing choirs at Monumental Baptist Church in 1937 and led the church's male chorus to record an album of spirituals. In 1942, Logan assumed the directorship of the Monumental's Goodwill Spiritual Choir. During the 1940s and 1950s the choir performed in the Chicago Folk Festival held annually at Orchestra Hall. In 1960 Logan recorded the Goodwill Spiritual Choir on Folkways Records, a Smithsonian label, with folk singer Ella Jenkins. The same year Logan directed Goodwill in a television series about the post-Civil War reconstruction period, "Ordeal by Fire," on Chicago's WTTW.

In addition to Logan and the Goodwill Spiritual Choir, for over three decades beginning in 1968, Monumental Baptist Church became well known for its sold-out Christmas production of

Rev. Dr. Dearine Edwin King. (Credit: *Ebony,* December, 1979)

Rev. King was on the founding board of directors of Operation PUSH and Monumental Baptist hosted the board's first meeting which included a veritable Who's Who of prominent African American men in 1972. Here a young Jesse L. Jackson greets Cleveland Mayor Carl Stokes in Monumental's Sunday School. (Credit: *Ebony*, March 1972)

Choir director Arthur Logan (front center) with Goodwill Spiritual Choir, Monumental Baptist Church, circa 1962. (Credit: Arthur S. Logan Papers, Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature)

Ella Jenkins and the Monumental Goodwill Spiritual Choir recorded an album of spirituals and gospel with a Smithsonian recording label in 1960. (Credit: Chicago History Museum, ICHi-112773)

Singer, conductor and congregation member Hortense Love (top) conducting Monumental's annual Christmas production of Handel's Messiah. For over three decades the event packed the auditorium at the church (below). (Credit: *Ebony*, December, 1979)

Georg Friederich Handel's "Messiah." The production was organized and conducted by Chicago soprano Hortense Love, a member of the congregation and its choir director. The star of the production was internationally-famous actor and baritone William Warfield, who reserved the third Sunday in December to return to Chicago to perform at Monumental's Messiah. Warfield is perhaps best known for his starring role in the 1951 musical film "Showboat" as Joe, singing "Ol' Man River" and as co-star of "Porgy and Bess," with his Leontyne Price, in its touring production from 1952 to 1972. Acclaimed Chicago soprano Edna C. Williams, life-long member of the congregation, also joined performance for decades. The vocalists were supported by a 140-voice choir and a 22-member orchestra, including members of Chicago's Symphony and Lyric Opera orchestras.

Criteria for Designation

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Section 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a recommendation of Landmark designation for a building, structure, object, or district if the Commission determines that it meets two or more of the stated "Criteria for Designation," as well as possesses a significant degree of historic design integrity. The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Monumental Baptist Church be designated as a Chicago Landmark:

Criterion 1: Critical Part of the City's History

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- Monumental Baptist Church exemplifies the important role that religious institutions played in the development and sustenance of Chicago's neighborhoods.

- Originally constructed between 1899 and 1901 as Memorial Baptist Church, the building housed a congregation associated with the University of Chicago and it conveys the area's initial development as Grand Boulevard, a neighborhood of high-quality urban-boulevard residences interspersed with large scale houses of worship.

- The building conveys the heritage of the Great Migration and the Civil Rights Movement. In 1934 the church was purchased by a Black Baptist congregation and rechristened Monumental Baptist Church which continues today. During the Great Migration, African Americans brought with them a tradition of church attendance to Chicago. Over the course of the twentieth century Monumental Baptist became a vital institution in the African American community of Bronzeville that in addition to worship offered social, intellectual and political uplift that was relevant to the daily lives of African Americans.

CRITERION 3: SIGNIFICANT PERSON

Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social or other aspect of the development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- During the twentieth century, a succession of capable and energetic pastors moved Monumental Baptist from strength to strength during the Civil Rights Movement, at the same time the church developed a strong musical program led by accomplished vocalists and choir directors.

- Rev. James Lafayette Horace (pastor from 1933-1954) used his pulpit at Monumental to host events relevant to issues facing the African American community, including a conference on housing conditions for African American families, and lectures on African and African American history. As a combat veteran of World War I, Rev. Horace became during World War II a nationally-significant advocate calling for an end to segregation and Jim Crow practices in the U.S. armed services and defense industries.

- Rev. Morris Harrison Tynes (pastor from 1954-1967) maintained Monumental's position as a place of cultural uplift and social justice as the modern Civil Rights Movement picked up steam. In 1957, Tynes helped organize and led a Chicago delegation to the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom in Washington, D.C., an early event in the movement.

- Rev. Dr. Dearine Edwin King (pastor from 1967-1986) was a close friend and colleague of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and joined him at the head of Civil Rights marches. Rev. D. E. King was also a founding member of Operation PUSH and hosted important early meetings of the then-new civil rights organization at Monumental Baptist Church.

- During the tenure of these three pastors, Monumental Baptist Church developed a strong musical program. In 1934, vocalist Arthur S. Logan began directing the choirs at the church, and led its Goodwill Spiritual Choir to performances throughout Chicago and record albums.

- Beginning in 1968 and spanning over three decades, Monumental Baptist Church became well known for its sold-out Christmas production of Georg Friederich Handel's "Messiah." The performance was initiated by soprano Hortense Love, a member of the congregation and its choir director, and supported by internationally-famous actor and baritone William Warfield, best known for his starring role in the 1951 musical film "Showboat" as Joe, singing "Ol' Man River" and as co-star of the stage production of "Porgy and Bess." Acclaimed Chicago soprano Edna C. Williams, life-long member of the congregation, also joined performance for decades.

CRITERION 4: IMPORTANT ARCHITECTURE

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship.

- Monumental Baptist Church is an enduring, fortress-like structure of brick and terra cotta with a picturesque roofline. The design conveys the strength and permanence associated with religious life.

- With its tall, central tower wrapped with an arcade of windows and surrounded by projecting gables, the overall form of the building is that of a central lantern church, paying homage to H. H. Richardson's Trinity Episcopal Church from 1877 in Boston.

- Monumental Baptist Church is an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival Style of Architecture. Character-defining features of the style include its visually-massive masonry walls, round-arched entrances and windows, rusticated stone plinth, and ornament based on medieval foliate and geometric ornament.

CRITERION 5: IMPORTANT ARCHITECT

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States

- Monumental Baptist Church was designed by the prominent architectural firm of Patton, Fisher, & Miller led by Normand Patton. Patton's firm and its successors made a significant contribution to institutional architecture in Chicago and the Midwest, including public schools, college, library buildings and churches.

- Significant buildings by the firms in Chicago include: the Main Building and Machinery Hall, Illinois Institute of Technology (both designated Chicago Landmarks), the Chicago Academy of Sciences in Lincoln Park, and the Belmonte Flats, an apartment building at 4259 S. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

- The firms associated with Normand Patton are especially noteworthy for dozens of library buildings, many built with money donated by industrialist Andrew Carnegie, designed for towns and cities throughout Illinois and the Midwest.

CRITERION 7: UNIQUE VISUAL FEATURE

Its unique location or distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or City of Chicago.

- As a large-scale Romanesque Revival church surrounded by low-scale residential buildings and the open space of Mandrake Park, Monumental Baptist Church is afforded a prominent visual appearance. Drivers exiting Jean-Baptiste Pointe DuSable Lake Shore Drive onto E. Oakwood Boulevard encounter a significant view of the building standing near this familiar gateway to the Bronzeville neighborhood.

Integrity Criterion

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architecture or aesthetic value.

The Monumental Baptist Church possesses remarkable integrity to convey its cultural history and architectural value, especially considering that for most of its 121-year history it has served a community that has endured economic disinvestment.

The building remains in its original location on Oakwood Boulevard, a street that was part of the city's park and boulevard system and a location that reflects the larger and later Bronzeville cultural context. The setting around the building remains residential as it was originally, albeit decades of disinvestment have resulted in demolition of what was a streetscape consisting of a continuous frontage of residential buildings.

The design of the building is preserved, as are most of its materials. Changes to the exterior include replacement of the original clay-tile roof with asphalt shingle, new entrance doors, and some new windows in the rear Sunday School wing. These changes are typical of a building of this vintage and do not diminish its ability to convey its value.

Significant Historical and Architectural Features

Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for Landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the significant historical and architectural features of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered the most important to preserve the historic and architectural character of the proposed Landmark. Based on its evaluation of the Monumental Baptist Church, the Commission recommends that the significant features be identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building.

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The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual building, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, First Deputy Commissioner's Office, City Hall, 121 North LaSalle Street, Room 905, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; web site: www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks

This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within a designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.

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Department of Planning
and Development

Department of Planning and Development

Bureau of Citywide Systems and Historic Preservation

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http://www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks

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Exhibit B

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

CITY OF CHICAGO

April 7, 2022
Report to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks
on the
Monumental Baptist Church
729 East Oakwood Boulevard

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) finds that the proposed landmark designation of Monumental Baptist Church supports the City's overall planning goals for the surrounding neighborhood and is consistent with the City's governing policies and plans.

Monumental Baptist is located in Bronzeville, one of ten neighborhoods that are part of the DPD's INVEST South/West community improvement initiative. Our goal is to re-activate neighborhood cores that have historically served as focal points for pedestrian activity, shopping, services, transportation, public spaces and quality-of life amenities for residents. In Bronzeville, the priority corridor is Cottage Grove Avenue and adjacent blocks on 43rd and 47th streets, which is five blocks south on Monumental.

As part of INVEST South/West, DPD's approach in Bronzeville began in 2020 with understanding the community's needs. That outreach revealed several priorities including the importance of aesthetics in the built environment and the community's pride in its history and culture. Landmark designation of Monumental Baptist Church will support these values.

Also in 2020, DPD issued an RFP for redevelopment of .6 acres of vacant, City-owned land in Bronzeville on the southwest corner of 47th Street and Vincennes Avenue. Last summer, DPD announced the selection the Legacy District: a $19.2 million redevelopment that will create a six-story building containing 12,000 square feet of commercial space and 25 mixed-income residential units. The project will generate 174 permanent jobs and 140 construction jobs.

Our planning work in Bronzeville, and INVEST South/West as a whole, is committed to Design Excellence which includes strengthening the culture of our communities, committing to cultural longevity and environmental sustainability. These goals are also consistent with landmark designation of historic works of high-quality design exemplified by Monumental Baptist Church.

Maurice D. Cox, Commissioner
Department of Planning and Development