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# EBENEZER METHODIST CHURCH

21042 N.W. 3 AVENUE

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## Designation Report



City of Miami

REPORT OF THE CITY OF MIAMI PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
TO THE HERITAGE CONSERVATION BOARD  
ON THE POTENTIAL DESIGNATION OF  
EBENEZER METHODIST CHURCH  
1042 N.W. 3<sup>rd</sup> AVENUE  
AS A HERITAGE CONSERVATION ZONING DISTRICT

Prepared by Sarah E. Eaton  
Historic Preservation      Date  
Planner

Accepted by Arthur King, Jr.      4/25/88  
Chairman, Heritage      Date  
Conservation Board

Designated by Miami City Commission  
Ordinance No. 10493  
Date 10/27/88

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**I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

Historic Name:

Ebenezer Methodist Church

Current Name:

The House of God of Nazarene Church

Location:

1042 N.W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue

Present Owner:

House of God of Nazarene  
2000 N.W. 93<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Miami, Florida 33147

Present Use:

Religious

Present Zoning District:

CR-2/7

HC Zoning Overlay District:

HC-1

Tax Folio Number:

01-0101-040-1010

Boundary Description of HC Zoning District:

The north 50 feet of Lots 1 and 2 of Block 14 of the plat of MIAMI NORTH (PB B-41)

HC Zoning Classification:

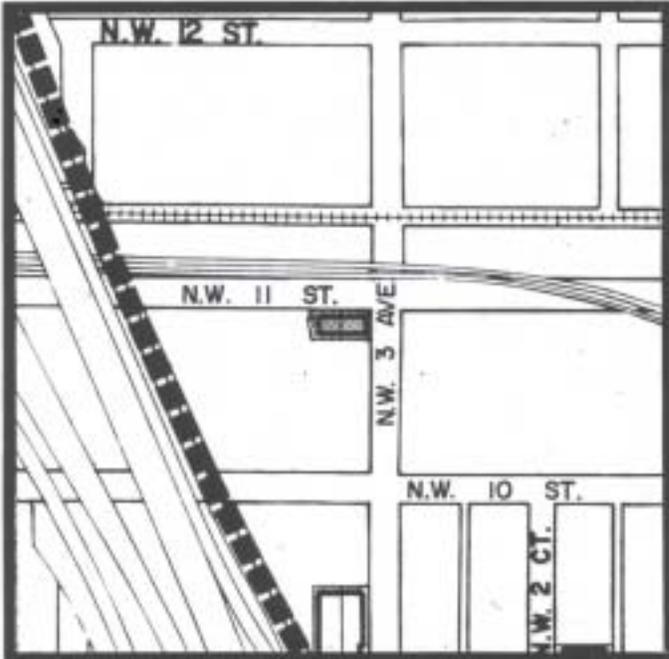
Historic Site

# EBENEZER METHODIST CHURCH

1042 N. W. 3 AVENUE



location



site plan

## II. SIGNIFICANCE

### Statement of Significance:

The Ebenezer Methodist Church is architecturally significant because it represents a fine example of twentieth century Gothic Revival architectural styling. The Ebenezer Methodist Church building is also significant for its historical associations with one of Overtown's oldest congregations. Although less than 50 years old, the building is exceptionally significant because of the quality of its architectural design, the visual prominence of the church in Overtown, and its associations with an important early congregation.

The exterior of Ebenezer Baptist Church embodies the distinctive physical characteristics of the "modern" Gothic Revival style of architecture, a popular design expression for mid-century religious buildings. The appearance of the building, however, is exceptionally significant in that there are few buildings like it in Overtown, the neighborhood it serves. The majority of buildings in Overtown have little, if any architectural styling, thus imparting major significance to buildings like Ebenezer that do possess a sense of design. The excellence of the building's design and detailed articulation is particularly evident in the composition of the principal elevation. The recessed entrance and the lancet windows on the side elevations represent a noteworthy adaptation to the area's local climate by allowing maximum natural ventilation while services are being held.

Ebenezer Methodist Church was originally built to house one of the oldest congregations of Overtown, known as "Colored Town" throughout the early years of the twentieth century. The present church building was built to replace an older frame church building constructed during the early years of the twentieth century. Construction of the present building began in 1947, with the original construction contract being awarded to the firm of Scott-Whitaker in the amount of \$50,000.

The Ebenezer Methodist Church was founded as the Ebenezer Methodist Episcopal Church in August 1898. The congregation built a house at N. W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street and N.W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and later moved to N.W. 10<sup>th</sup> Street and N.W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. In 1907, the congregation was one of six active religious organizations serving the Overtown community and boasted a church building with "preaching every Sunday." The site of the present church building is the congregation's third home. The present building was constructed under the pastorate of Reverend W.O. Bartley.

The present church building possesses historical associations with an important congregation which served more than the religious and humanitarian needs for Overtown residents; the church building was used as a social hall for a variety of functions which benefited all the Overtown community. The architect of Ebenezer Methodist Church has not been identified.

Relationship to Criteria for Designation:

3. Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic, or social trends of the community.

Ebenezer Methodist Church is historically significant for its associations with one of Overtown's oldest congregations.

5. Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction.

Ebenezer Methodist Church represents a fine example of twentieth century Gothic Revival architectural styling.

7. Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship of outstanding quality or which represent a significant innovation or adaptation to the South Florida environment.

The church building is particularly noteworthy for the composition of the principal elevation, while the recessed entrance and lancet windows on the side elevations represent a noteworthy adaptation to the area's climate.

### III. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

#### Description of Building:

The Ebenezer Methodist Church building is a large two-story masonry structure executed in a twentieth century adaptation of the Gothic Revival style of architecture. Construction of the church building was begun in 1947, but according to the cornerstone, the formal dedication of the church did not take place until 25 April 1965.

Fronting to the east, the principal elevation of the church is characterized by a tripartite arrangement of lancet arches leading to the sanctuary. A set of masonry steps leads up from the sidewalk and through the arches to the sanctuary entrance, located at the second story of the church. The lower story of the church is subdivided into a small auditorium and meeting rooms. The principal elevation of the church is embellished with two square towers flanking a central gable which echoes the form of the roof. The exterior of the church is clad in stucco, and its broad surface plane is broken by decorative ornamentation which is comprised of cast stone.

The side elevations of the church are six bays long, and within each bay is found a lancet window with a metal frame and casement-type sash. The bays of the side elevations are divided by stylized masonry buttresses which serve to emphasize the adaptation of the Gothic Revival architectural style. A photograph of the church under construction shows that the structure of the church is comprised of reinforced concrete columns and concrete block walls.

The interior of the church contains a simple altar located at the western end of the sanctuary and simple wooden pews facing the altar. There is a small area to the rear of the altar for ceremonial and/or choir use. Although the Ebenezer Methodist congregation no longer occupies the building, the House of God of the Nazarene Church still uses the building for religious purposes. The exterior appearance of the church has not changed much since the day it was constructed.

#### Description of Site:

Ebenezer Methodist Church is located on the southwest corner of N.W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and N.W. 11<sup>th</sup> Street. The building occupies the entire site.



Ebenezer Methodist Church  
1042 N.W. 3 Avenue

#### IV. PLANNING CONTEXT

##### Present Trends and Conditions:

Ebenezer Methodist Church continues to be used for religious purposes, although the Ebenezer Methodist congregation moved to a new location. The House of God of Nazarene congregation is presently using the church building.

Ebenezer Methodist Church was identified in the Southeast Overtown/Park West Development of Regional Impact (DRI) as a historic site. The church building has also been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

##### Conservation Objectives:

Ebenezer Methodist Church is a landmark structure in Overtown, and the continued preservation of the building should be encouraged. Any future alterations should respect the architectural character of the building.

These conservation objectives can best be achieved by maintaining the present zoning of the property. An HC-1 zoning overlay district will maintain the existing zoning, requiring only the review of physical changes to the property.

## V. HC ZONING ELEMENTS

### Boundaries:

The boundaries of the HC zoning district have been drawn to include only those lots on which the church building is located.

### Major Exterior Surfaces Subject to Review:

All four facades of the building shall be considered major exterior surfaces subject to review.

### Interior Surfaces Subject to Review:

The sanctuary of the church shall be subject to review. Review of alterations to this space shall be guided by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation."

### Major Landscape Features Subject to Review:

The major landscape features subject to review shall include any features which are subject to requirements for tree removal permits, as set forth in Chapter 17 of the City Code.