

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NR Listed: 5-22-03

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Prosperity Baptist Church  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

street & number Hwy 8 West  not for publication  
city or town Ramsey  vicinity  
state Arkansas code AR county Dallas code 039 zip code 71742

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination   
request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic  
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets   
does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  
 nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional  
comments.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet  
 determined eligible for the  
National Register.  
 See continuation sheet  
 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
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of Contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Plain-Traditional

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation OTHER: petrified wood

walls WOOD: weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

**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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location
- C** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Levels of Significance** (local, state, national)

Local

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

SOCIAL HISTORY

RELIGION

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1904-1951

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1904

1945

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation** (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References****Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Prosperity Baptist Church

Name of Property

Dallas County, Arkansas

County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Age of Property 1.5 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 541380 3748170  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Beginning at SW corner of SE ¼ Section (5) Five, Township (10) Ten, Range (14) Fourteen West, and running 105 yards north from SW corner and 70 yards east and 70 yards east and 105 yards west containing 1 ½ acres.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes all land historically associated with the church

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Wendy S. Perkins, National Register Historian  
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 10 January 2003  
street & number 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center Street telephone 501-324-9874  
city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72201

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Prosperity Baptist Church  
street & number 2984 West Hwy 8 telephone 870-352-3085  
city or town Fordyce state Arkansas zip code 71742

**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 listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

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## SUMMARY:

Constructed in 1904, Prosperity Baptist Church is a T-shaped, Plain-Traditional style wood frame church building sheathed in weatherboard siding. The single story church building was constructed for the community of Ramsey located in the central portion of Dallas County. This simple, gable roofed building is of the Plain Traditional style that rural congregations have employed since the mid-nineteenth century for their houses of worship. The original auditorium remains the same in shape as when constructed, but the original steeple was removed at an unknown date, and the eight (8) original windows were replaced in 1965 with aluminum two over two double-hung windows. Other alterations include a front porch and a rear addition of a classroom and fellowship hall added in approximately 1945, forming the T-shaped design of the current building. The building sits atop a foundation of petrified wood stone and concrete block piers. Many of the church records were lost in a house fire in 1980.

In 2002, Prosperity Baptist Church, through a restoration grant from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, replaced the 1965 eight (8) aluminum windows with eight (8) wooden windows with eight panes each, four over four, on the main auditorium of the church. Also, the front hollow core doors were replaced with solid wood doors with raised panels. These changes and designs were approved by AHPP. A steeple was added by the parishioners where the original one had been, structurally reproduced upon the memories of the older church members.

## LABORATION:

Prosperity Baptist Church is a single story, T-shaped, wood frame church building with the original auditorium being constructed in 1904. In 1945, a rear addition was added giving the building its current T-shape. The building is topped with a composition shingle roof and sits atop a concrete block and petrified wood foundation. The building is located in the community of Ramsey, located in the central portion of Dallas County. The boards used to sheath the building were milled at a saw and planer mill that R. N. Parham built in Ramsey. Local craftsman from the Ramsey Community built the church in 1904 and the building has remained in continuous use since its construction. Dallas County is known for its petrified wood and many of the original petrified wood piers remain intact. The original steeple was removed at an unknown date and the original windows were replaced with aluminum windows in 1965. However, in 2002, the aluminum windows were replaced with historically correct wooden windows. Also in 2002, the front doors were replaced with historically correct wooden doors, and a reproduction steeple was placed where the original had once stood.

## West Elevation:

The façade of the building faces west and features centrally located double doors. The roof of the building is very steep with an eight in twelve-inch pitch, and when a fire was kept in the building during bad weather, the steep gable allowed snow and ice to easily slide off. The roof was originally wood shingle, but it is now covered with composition shingles. At the time that the original roof was being covered, the church steeple was removed. A reproduced steeple has since been added. A small gable roofed porch was added to the front of the church circa 1945 and is supported by simple square wood columns on concrete piers. The original wood floor was removed and replaced with concrete in 1960. An A.D.A. wheelchair ramp was added in 1998.

## South Elevation:

The south elevation of the original portion of the church is fenestrated by four four-over-four wood replacement windows. The original multi-pane wood windows were removed in 1965 and replaced with two-over-two aluminum windows. The 1945 addition runs perpendicular to the original structure and gives the building its current T-shaped floor plan. This addition houses four Sunday school rooms and a kitchen/fellowship hall. The section of the addition that intersects with the south elevation of the original building, faces west and is fenestrated with a very small door and an original four-over-four window. The height of the addition is lower than the height of the original structure and has a four in twelve-inch pitched roof. Each room in the addition has an original multi-pane wooden window centered in it. The siding is closely matched to the historic portion of the building.

## East Elevation:

The east elevation is comprised of the 1945 addition. A pair of four-over-four windows fenestrate both the north and south facing ends of the addition. The part of the addition that faces east is fenestrated on the south end by a single four-over-four pane window.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

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### Summary:

The Prosperity Baptist Church located in the small community of Ramsey in Dallas County is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A and C with local significance**, as the last remaining element of the original town of Ramsey and as the best extant example of a Plain Traditional church building in the community. It is also being nominated under **Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties**, not for its religious merit but rather for its architectural value. Since its construction in 1904, the Prosperity Baptist Church has held continuous Sunday worship services.

### Elaboration:

The Ramsey Community was settled around 1845 by the Culbreath family and was known as the Redbud Community, probably due to the Redbud trees. The Culbreath family were bear hunters and after hunting declined, they moved to other areas. The second known settlers were the Wyatts. Mrs. Wyatt was the first person to be buried in the Ramsey Community. In 1852 the Dedmans emigrated from Alabama. R. D. Dedman is the only known charter member of Prosperity Baptist Church. Other pioneers were the Jones, Sissons, Proctors, Wheelers, Nutts and Smiths.

Timber was king in the Ramsey area. The land was covered in giant Oak, Gum and Pine. Several trees were cut measuring 20 feet or circumference at the ground. The area also grew cotton. J. B. Wheeler operated the first cotton gin and gristmill and powered both with horses. The first timber in the area sold for commercial use was by J. B. Wheeler in 1889. Timber is still the major enterprise in Ramsey and Dallas County.

Ramsey never had a permanent railroad; however, due to its vast resources of timber a rail line was constructed in 1893 by the Fordyce Lumber Company to haul timber from the deep woods. Fordyce Lumber Company later sold to Georgia Pacific. The first southern pine plywood mill was constructed by Georgia Pacific in Fordyce and is currently the major employer in the Fordyce area.

R. N. Parham was a plantation owner and was the first to establish a mercantile business in Ramsey. He also built the first saw mill and steam operated cotton gin. Frank Barnes sawed the first board at the mill. Today, the Barnes family owns several acres of timber, a small saw mill and the Fordyce Picture Frame factory. Squire Ramsey ran the first post office in the Redbud community. The Redbud Community was later renamed Ramsey, in honor of Squire Ramsey. Today, Ramsey is served by a Fordyce rural route. There are no commercial businesses in Ramsey today.

Two of the early churches that settlers attended were the Macedonia Baptist Church and the Redbud Methodist Church. The Macedonia Church was several miles from the Ramsey Community and the Redbud Methodist was in the Redbud (Ramsey) community. Not far from the Ramsey Community were the Temperance Hill Methodist Church and the Salem Presbyterian Church. Temperance Hill Methodist Church still holds services once a month. The Salem Church was organized in 1895 by Reverend J. M. Brown but later disbanded and was razed in 1924. The history of the Redbud Methodist Church is unknown, but the church does not exist today. The Macedonia Baptist Church still holds services.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

In 1902 W. E. and Callie Hawkins purchased land for a church from Fordyce Lumber Company. With the help of a home missionary named Reverend Southalland, along with others, they organized the Prosperity Baptist Church and built the church. The Hawkins deeded the land to the Church in 1908. R. D. Dedman is the only known charter member of Prosperity Baptist Church. Since its formation in 1904, services have been held each Sunday at the church. In addition to holding church services, it serves as a community center and voting precinct for Dallas County. Prosperity Baptist Church is the oldest structure remaining in the Ramsey Community.

### Significance:

Prosperity Baptist Church is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under **Criterion A** as the only extant building remaining from the early years of the Ramsey community and **Criterion C** with local significance as the best example of Plain-Traditional architecture in the community of Ramsey. It also falls under **Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties**.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

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### Bibliography:

*Warranty Deed*, Dallas County, Arkansas, Book "BB" Page 450.

Correspondence from Vick Wheeler to Tommy Jones, 1992.

Verbal conversation from H. C. Jones on Tuesday, December 12, 2000. H. C. Jones is the great, great grandson of R. D. Dedman, charter member of Prosperity Baptist Church.

Records and minutes of Prosperity Baptist Church

Pictorial Glossary taken from *A Field Guide to American Houses*, by Virginia & Lee McAlester published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1984.

Barner, R. K., *The History of Ramsey Community*, published in the *Fordyce News Advocate*, Thursday, July 6, 1933, Fordyce, Arkansas.