

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

OMB No.

0024-0018 RECEIVED 2280

OCT 16 2001

NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1. Name of Property

historic name: Arco Baptist Community Church

other name/site number: Arco Baptist Church

2. Location

street & number 402 West Grand Avenue [N/A] not for publication

city or town Arco [N/A] vicinity

state Idaho code ID county Butte code 023 zip code 83213

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination
[] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property
[X] meets [] does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
[] nationally [] statewide [X] 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:

[X] 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 Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall 11/29/01

Arco Baptist Community Church
Name of Property

Butte County, ID
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
☒ private	☒ building	Contributing	Noncontributing
☐ public - local	☐ district	1	buildings
☐ public - State	☐ site		sites
☐ public - Federal	☐ structure		structures
	☐ object		objects
		1	0
			Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
RELIGION / religious facility	RELIGION / religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque	foundation CONCRETE
	walls STONE
	roof METAL
	other

Narrative Description

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

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

Arco Baptist Community Church
Name of Property

Butte County, ID
County and State

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** a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

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

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1924-1929

Significant Dates

1929

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/builder

American Baptist Home Mission Society (Designer)

Arco Baptist Community Church
Name of Property

Butte County, ID
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

1	<u>12</u>	<u>314 150</u>	<u>4833 590</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet).

[X] See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

[X] See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dale M. Gray
organization Frontier Historical Consultants date August 10, 2001
street & number HC 85 Box 211 telephone (208) 834-3061
city or town Grand View state ID zip code 83624

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

name/title Arco Baptist Community Church
street & number 402 West Blaine telephone (208) 527-8533
city or town Arco state ID zip code 83213

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, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470).

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 the data needed, reviewing existing information, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form, including suggestions for reducing the burden, should be sent to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 178, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Section number 7 Page 1

Arco Baptist Community Church
Arco, Butte County, Idaho

Narrative Description

The Arco Baptist Community Church is located at the corner of West Grand Avenue and Blaine Street, four blocks from the center intersection of the town of Arco, a community of approximately 1,200 people in south-eastern Idaho. The church's location on Grand Avenue positions it with the primary thoroughfare in Arco in front of the building and Arco's main residential neighborhood behind the building.

The church is an el-shaped, two-story structure built from plans obtained from the American Baptist Home Mission Society. The building is 88 feet wide and 70 feet long. The Romanesque heritage of the structure is not at first apparent due to the substitution of native lava rock for the more traditional rectangular stone ashlar facing. However, the 1925 blueprints clearly show rectangular stone facing. Vestiges of the rectangular stone are apparent in rectangular concrete blocks used in the main entrance door surrounds, in the associated Romanesque-arch lintel and in the selection of roughly rectangular lava rock blocks for use in corner quoins. Other Romanesque features include inset windows, broad roof planes and a relatively short tower. The structure's overall effect depends more on mass than on decoration.

The structure has a formed-concrete basement; uncoursed rough-cut lava rock walls; deep-set windows; partially returned, enclosed eaves; and a metal-clad, gabled roof. The central tower has paired window openings set with louvers, concrete string coursing and concrete pediment coursing. Water is diverted from the back of the tower by a shallow, gabled dormer. The northeast side of the tower has a pair of double-hung, stained-glass windows. A short, rectangular, stone chimney rises from the northwest side of the sanctuary, but does not reach the elevation of the roof ridge.

The main entrance of the building, facing Grand Avenue, has a three-lite double door. The concrete stoop is accessed by concrete steps with formed concrete cheek walls. One-piece, round, metal handrails have been added to either side. Above the double doors is the aforementioned arch with a prominent keystone. This motif is echoed on the stained glass windows on the front of the sanctuary. Within the arch is an opaque, arched window. The rear entrance of the building is a one-lite door with transom, opening onto the modern wheelchair ramp. A small, modern, enclosed porch with two doors provides wheelchair access to the sanctuary or allows traffic to continue up a ramp to the back door.

Most of the inset window openings in the building are either 12/12 or 8/8 lite, double-hung, sash windows with concrete sills and lintels. On each side of the sanctuary are three banks of triple stained-glass windows with transoms. The northeast end of the sanctuary, corresponding to the front of the internal worship area, has a bank of three vertical, stained-glass windows with the center window raised. These windows have gray, smooth-cut, stone surrounds. The windows are topped with nearly white, concrete-block arches with prominent keystones. The effect created by the use of the narrow windows, raised center lite, and white concrete blocks is to draw the eye upward.

The church's exterior is little changed since its completion in 1929. The most prominent change is the addition of handicap accessible ramps, but these were made to the rear of the building and so have a minimal impact to the church's integrity. Another significant alteration can be seen in the roof material. In 1987, the original wood shingle roof was replaced with a standing-seam metal roof. Although this is a significant departure from the original material, it can be viewed as being ameliorated somewhat by the fact that the original blueprints for the building called for a metal roof. In addition, the pitch and dimensions of the roof remain unchanged. Finally, a wood cross was added to the front of the tower in 1999.

While these changes do slightly alter the appearance of the church, they do not affect its National Register eligibility, as the building retains strong integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association. Only the integrity of materials is minimally compromised with the addition of the metal roof.

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Arco Baptist Community Church
Arco, Butte County, Idaho

Statement of Significance

The Arco Baptist Community Church is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion C as an excellent example of a local adaptation to the Romanesque style. The original blueprints of the Church, obtained from the American Baptist Home Mission Society, show a Romanesque structure with a rock-faced, coursed, ashlar finish. Because rectangular stone was not available, the Arco church chose a locally available irregular-shaped rock to face the building. The community's location adjacent to the lava flows of the Craters of the Moon National Monument made the dark lava rock a natural local substitute for the design's more traditional rectangular building material. Reference to the more traditional use of rectangular stone are apparent in concrete blocks used in the main entrance door surrounds, in the associated Romanesque semicircular arch lintels, and in the selection of roughly rectangular lava rock blocks for use in corner quoins. The blending of the Home Mission Society design with locally available lava rock building material makes the Arco Baptist Community Church an important and unique example of the Romanesque style.

Background Information:

The Baptist Church is the oldest church community in Arco, Idaho and in the Lost River region of Idaho. It began in 1887 as a Sunday school that met in the home of Mrs. Steven Moe. On November 11, 1895, the Arco Community Church was formally organized with 10 members. A Baptist missionary minister, Reverend William H. Bowler, traveled over 60 miles from Bellevue, Idaho to preach to the small congregation. The church met in a variety of buildings and homes -- settling in a small log school house in 1897. Reverend Bowler continued to serve the fledgling church until 1899.

In 1901, a railroad spur line was built by the Oregon Short Line to provide service for mining communities to the northwest of Arco. When the rails passed through the Lost River region in September 1901, they bypassed the town of Arco by four miles. A new town of Arco was established along the right-of-way. The new town site was given a boost by serving as the railhead and freight transfer point.¹

The Baptist Community Church moved to the new town and built a small white church with an attached parsonage in the back. The church served as the focal point of many of the community's social and religious activities. By the 1920s, the church's congregation had outgrown the building, and a new-building committee was formed in 1923. Because the 1902 church was in a poor location, the congregation chose a new location to build a new church. A new site, owned by church members W. D. Naylor, Charles Gilbert, and Mrs. George Ferris, was selected along Grand Avenue, the main road into Arco. In 1923, an elaborate ceremony officiated by the Grand Lodge of the Idaho Masons laid a symbolic cornerstone on the site of the new church.

Though the congregation sought to build a larger structure, there were apparently no local architects available to design a suitable building. As a result, the congregation contacted the American Baptist Convention for church blueprints. The Department of Architecture of the American Baptist Home Mission Society prepared several designs for the Arco church. The church selected "Scheme D," the Romanesque design, in the first half of 1924. In January and early February of 1925, the American Baptist Home Mission Society completed a set of blueprints incorporating this design choice and sent them to the Arco church.

The American Baptist Home Mission Society was established in 1832 to provide for the spiritual needs of people on the American frontier. The Society was active through the 19th and 20th centuries and continues to support new churches as the National Ministry. When first established, the Home Mission Society's central purpose was "to preach the Gospel, establish churches and give support and ministry to the unchurched and destitute."² Providing both moral and material support for the creation and growth of new churches in the American West was one of their prime functions in the early 20th Century. The Arco Baptist Church blueprints are an example of this support. Later, when the church was unable to locally generate sufficient funds to complete the church, the Home Mission Society assisted the Arco congregation in obtaining a mortgage from the American Baptist Convention.

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Arco Baptist Community Church
Arco, Butte County, Idaho

Construction on the new church began with the stockpiling of native lava rock for use in the building's walls. In October, 1924, the men of the church spent several Saturdays quarrying and hauling the lava rock from the H. M. George ranch near the town. Ground was broken on the new site in late November 1924.³ Concrete for the building came from a lime kiln that had recently been established near Arco. The Baptist Church was the kiln's first customer. One hundred and seventy-five barrels of lime were sold to the church and used primarily in the concrete basement, which was completed in time for the 1924 Christmas program.⁴

At the 1924 Christmas program it was announced to the congregation that \$6,035.76 in construction pledges had been received.⁵ Prior to construction, the cost to build the new church was estimated at \$15,000. The church began fund raising efforts through pledges of money, labor, and materials. The old church was sold to the Arco Grange for \$1,000. The land on which the new church was built was donated to the church on July 1, 1925.⁶ As work progressed, donations from the community were added. The "ladies of Moore and Darlington" furnished a set of side windows and another group from Bernice and Little Lost River Valley did the same. The Arco American Legion Post donated the window behind the altar.⁷ On June 26, 1926, the church treasurer reported that \$10,916.78 had been received for the new church. Seven thousand of this amount was raised locally, with the remainder being provided by the American Baptist Convention.⁸

The Arco Baptist Community Church building was constructed to the specifications of the Home Mission Society blueprints, but modifications were made to adapt to the availability of materials. Erection of the church began in the spring of 1925, when a team of men under the direction of Herman Rayer prepared footings in anticipation of the arrival of the stone masons.⁹ The stock-piled lava rock was used to build the uncoursed exterior walls instead of the rectangular-block, coursed, ashlar walls indicated by the blueprints. Initially, the lava rock was to be accented by "Arco Marble" window sills and front entry columns, but later concrete blocks were substituted for the marble, probably as a concession to funding difficulties.¹⁰ The church builders also covered the roof with wood shingles instead of the specified metal roofing.¹¹

The substitution of irregular lava rock for the specified rectangular blocks reflects the community's location on the edge of extensive lava flows and the complete lack of locally available rectangular stone. Arco is the closest town to the Craters of the Moon National Monument, which features volcanoes and vast lava flows. Because the Monument was designated in 1924, during the formulation of the church's final design plans, the event may have encouraged the use of lava rock as a building material. Several other local buildings, including the WPA-built auditorium building, have also taken advantage of lava rock as a building material.

Work on the Arco Baptist Church was completed late in 1929. Problems between the building committee, the pastor, Reverend George McDougal, and the contractor emerged late in the construction. In 1929, the interior plans provided by the American Baptists were supplemented by plans from the Boise, Idaho architectural firm of Tourtellotte and Hummel. Local fund raising was unable to meet the costs of construction. Additional construction and planning costs generated late in the project only widened the funding gap. The church once again appealed to the national American Baptist organization and was able to acquire the mortgage to complete the work. On November 3, 1929, the church was formally dedicated. The mortgage to the American Baptists was paid off in 1943.¹² The church has been in use by the same congregation since that time. In addition, it has also been used in ecumenical services, community basketball games, and serves as a distribution point for Butte County commodity distributions.

The Romanesque Style

The Romanesque Revival style of architecture derived from the medieval Romanesque style. This period of architectural favor, with its semi-circular arches, preceded the pointed arch, Gothic period in Europe. The Revival style is recognized by its use of, round arch windows and doorways - the windows deeply set and sometimes set in bands. The style generally has an asymmetrical outline, and employs the use of smooth-faced, coursed, ashlar stone and corbels. On church architecture, in particular, the use of square or polygonal towers, finished with a parapet or pyramidal roof, is common. This style was first introduced to the United States primarily through the work of architects James Renwick and Richard Upjohn in the mid-19th Century.

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Arco Baptist Community Church
Arco, Butte County, Idaho

A later adaptation of the Romanesque Revival style was developed by American architect Henry Hobson Richardson - the style becoming known as Richardsonian Romanesque. His application of the elements of the style differed from the traditional applications in his use of heavy, coursed, often rusticated stone; massive arches; deeply inset windows; and a much more massive and horizontal massing. Richardson's style flourished into the late part of the 19th Century, but the Romanesque Revival style and the Richardsonian variation remained a popular style for ecclesiastical architecture well into the 20th Century.

The Arco Baptist Community Church is a very nice example of a Romanesque-style church, with distinctive local elements. The squat massing, truncated tower, round-arch windows and doorway, and heavy stonework provide the Romanesque framework, which is almost Richardsonian in its application. On the other hand, the rough, uncoursed lava rock exterior, make the Arco Baptist Community Church a unique, local example of the style.

Criteria Consideration A:

The Arco Baptist Community Church is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because its significance is derived from its architectural distinction as an excellent local example of the Romanesque Revival style, and not simply because it is the Baptist church in Arco.

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Arco Baptist Community Church
Arco, Butte County, Idaho

Endnotes

1. Jennie Sedgewick, "History of Arco, Idaho," Lost River Community Library, Arco, Idaho. N.d.
2. ABC National Ministries, "American Baptist Home Mission Heritage" website.
< <http://www.nationalministries.org/mission/heritage.cfm> >.
3. *The Arco Advertiser*, October 3, 1924; *The Arco Advertiser*, October 24, 1924; *The Arco Advertiser*,
November 28, 1924.
4. *The Arco Advertiser*, January 12, 1925.
5. *The Arco Advertiser*, December 26, 1924.
6. Butte County Courthouse, Quit Claim Deed, Instrument No. 9678, "Book of Deeds," p. 408.
7. C.A. Bottolfsen, "The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Arco Community Baptist Church," October 29, 1952.
8. *The Arco Advertiser*, March, 1925. Clipping provided by Reuben Damm.
9. *The Arco Advertiser*, April 25, 1925.
10. *The Arco Advertiser*, April 25, 1925.
11. American Baptist Home Mission Society, Department of Architecture, "Proposed New Building, First Baptist Church,
Arco, Idaho -- Scheme D," Project 846.
12. Reuben Damm, unpublished manuscript, dated October 3, 1993.

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Arco Baptist Community Church
Arco, Butte County, Idaho

BIBLIOGRAPHY

American Baptist Convention National Ministries

2000 "American Baptist Home Mission Heritage" website. <<http://www.nationalministries.org/mission/heritage.cfm>>.

The Arco Advertiser

Butte County

1925 Quit Claim Deed, Lots 1 and 2 Block 17 original townsite, Book 11, page 408.

Damm, Reuben

1993 Unpublished manuscript on the history of the Arco Baptist Community Church.

Department of Architecture, The American Baptist Home Mission Society

1924 "Proposed New Building, First Baptist Church, Arco, Idaho -- Scheme D." Project 846.

Sedgewick, Jennie

N.d. "History of Arco, Idaho," on file at the Lost River Community Library, Arco, Idaho.

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Arco Baptist Community Church
Arco, Butte County, Idaho

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots one (1) and two (2), in Block seventeen (17) of the original townsite of Arco, Butte County, Idaho.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the two city lots historically associated with the Arco Baptist Community Church.



Arco Baptist Community Church

Butte County, Idaho

Dale M. Gray

June, 2001

Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho

Front of Church as viewed to the northwest.

Roll #2, frame #7

Photo #1 of 4



Arco Baptist Community Church

Butte County, Idaho

Dale M. Gray

July, 1997

Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho

Southwest and southeast sides as viewed to the north,

Roll #1, frame 18

Photo #2 of 4



Arco Community Baptist Church
Butte County, Idaho

Dale M. Gray

June 2001

Idaho Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho

Church auditorium showing window detail as viewed to the south,
Roll #2, frame #1

Photo # 3 of 4



Arco Baptist Community Church

Butte County, Idaho

Dale M. Gray

June, 2001

Idaho Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho

Back of the church showing handicap ramps as viewed to southeast.

Roll #2, frame #3

Photo # 4 of 4