

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Shiloh Baptist Church  
other names/site number Siloam Baptist Church (1856-1891)



## 2. Location

street & number 3565 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue  not for publication  
city or town Sacramento  vicinity  
state California code CA county Sacramento code 067 zip code 95817

## 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 forth 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national    \_\_\_ statewide    \_\_\_ local

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- \_\_\_ entered in the National Register
- \_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register
- \_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register
- \_\_\_ removed from the National Register
- \_\_\_ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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**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.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	2	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	2	<b>Total</b>

**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**

N/A

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

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

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

Religion/Religious Facility = Church  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Religion/Religious Facility = Church  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

**Materials**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement: Mid-Century Modernism  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

foundation: \_\_\_\_\_  
 walls: Concrete/Stucco  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 roof: Other: Composition shingles  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### **Summary Paragraph**

The Shiloh Baptist Church was built beginning in 1958 and completed in 1963. The church, designed by James C. Dodd, FAIA, is an early example of mid-century modern architecture in Sacramento, incorporating a clear yet dramatic geometric form, up-angled roof lines that are reflected in the entryway and sanctuary spaces, horizontal bands of glass, an open interior, and minimal adornment inside and out. The asymmetrical placement of the building on the site emphasizes the geometry of the building and enhances the drama of the angled roof lines.

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### **Narrative Description**

The main sanctuary plan is square, but oriented at a 45-degree angle to the street to appear diamond-shaped. The triangular roof rises to one-and-a-half stories on an angle above the sanctuary. This section of roof is placed on a diagonal which, with the clerestory and entrance assembly, distinguishes it from the rest of the building. The roof and portico provide planar lines to an otherwise conventional building. Square in plan, the building has two wings on the northeast and southeast elevations. The roof is covered with composition shingles, and the walls are a uniform stucco finish with redwood fascia and louver accents. Stained glass windows and an elevated cross define the front of the building.

#### Main Entrance

The entrance assembly includes a portico with a flat roof and steel support posts set into an elevated concrete landing. Iron rails divide the continuous landing, emphasizing the dramatic angular roof line. The entrance is composed of multi-sized divided glass lites with two pair of solid doors on either side. The angled sanctuary roof is set back approximately 18' and is glazed with two multi-lite red and white glazed windows that extend from the portico roof to the sanctuary roof. The steel support posts extend above the portico to support a structural tower that reaches skyward culminating with a lighted cross. An additional steel beam ties the cross the sanctuary roof. This assembly—the angled roof, elevated cross and steel supports—reaches towards the skyward while still remaining grounded and connected to the Church, symbolizing the spiritual purpose of the building.

#### Left (southeast) elevation

The one-story reception hall, extending from the southeast elevation, is defined by a wooden louver window with a white cross integrated into it on the east elevation. The reception hall is also flanked by two unique patterned custom windows glazed with opaque stained glass. The north-facing side of the reception hall has a group of three one-lite windows topped with transoms, and a solid door. One of the windows has been infilled.

#### Right (southwest) elevation

The one-story southwest elevation contains one door and several different types of windows. Two pairs of four-light translucent windows are found at the south corner, letting light into the restroom. North of those are seven single-light windows, grouped in four and three. There was once a door between these sets of windows, and two concrete steps are extant. A wood pergola runs across this space, over a concrete area. North of the windows is a recessed exit door system, with a single-light window at the right and a mail slot below. Two transom windows appear to have been filled in. The roof of the sanctuary descends behind this elevation.

#### Northeast elevation

The northeast elevation is comprised of several one-story boxes housing the kitchen, library and several restrooms. Apart from the geometry of the boxes, this elevation is fairly spare. Several pairs of opaque single-light windows allow light into the kitchen storage room and the library. A solid recessed exit door between the kitchen storage and library discharges onto a concrete pathway. A small addition with a shed roof was added on to the east side of the classroom wing. Five small windows punctuate the addition just below the eave, and several pieces of mechanical equipment can be seen on the roof and both sides. The northwest side of the classroom wing has three sets of three two-light aluminum sliding windows just below the eave. The diamond-shaped sanctuary roof descends to a point above the storage room.

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### Northwest elevation

A one-story office wing runs the length of the northwest elevation, punctuated by individual two-light aluminum sliding windows covered with metal security grates. Three solid doors—one facing northeast, and two facing northwest (one at the north end and one at the south)—exit the building. A second-story room, used as a dressing room for baptismal ceremonies, is located at the northwest end of this elevation. The room has a hipped roof and two pairs of aluminum sliding windows facing northwest; a smaller set are located on the northeast elevation.

### Interior

The sanctuary is the focal point of the interior. It is a simple diamond-shaped, two-story open space with an angular ceiling that reflects the dramatic roof line, and pendant light fixtures. The painted walls are sheathed with a prefabricated wood panel wainscot. Floor-to-ceiling stained glass windows flank the wood entry doors, carrying a Wrightian influence to the interior. The floor is carpeted, and honey-colored wood pews furnish the space. The pulpit is raised four steps and is surrounded by a wood-paneled wall that matches the pews. The lectern is also wood, placed at the center of the pulpit. The pulpit contains seats for the choir, and is entered through a wood door in the rear. On a balcony above the pulpit is the baptismal. The ritual of baptism is intended to be witnessed by the entire congregation, “a ceremony reserved for adults only, since they alone are capable of comprehending its significance: a symbol of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and of the death and resurrection of the sinner into a new Christian life.”<sup>1</sup> The ceremony takes place within a pool on the balcony that is hidden by curtains when not in use.

Secondary spaces are arranged around the perimeter of the diamond-plan sanctuary, primarily on the northeast and northwest sides of the building. The sanctuary is flanked by corridors on these sides of the building, and classrooms, offices, a library and restrooms open off the corridor. At the southeast elevation, the reception hall is entered from the lobby, as does an additional classroom. A kitchen, which appears to retain its original finishes, is located off the reception hall. A nursery and additional restrooms are located on the southwest side. These spaces are simple and have changed little since the construction of the Church. It appears from a comparison of the original drawings and current floor plan that the nursery on the southwest elevation was converted to additional seating circa 1979.

### Landscape Features and Garage

The Church is located mid-block and is surrounded by single-family residences. The landscape includes cultivated lawn in the front with the remainder of the lot devoted to parking. According to Church history, a two-bay stucco garage with a shed roof that is adjacent to the driveway on the east side was built in 1978. A larger wood structure with a screened clerestory appears to be an addition to the garage, presumably to house the buses used for the Shiloh Bus Ministry. Several mature trees dot the east side of the parking lot. The original concrete walks, set at an angle, to the portico are intact, as is the slightly curving driveway shown on Dodd's plans. Varied foundation plantings are found at the front of the building. The west driveway is gated with an automatic gate. The parking lot to the west along 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue is shielded by a planting bed, and an isolated tree is located in the northwest corner of the lot, south of Anderson Hall. The garage is a non-contributor due to its later date of construction, and was not designed by James Dodd.

### Outbuildings

Anderson Hall, built circa 1971 and located in the northwest corner of the lot, is a one-story concrete block building with a flat roof. It has aluminum sliding windows, and a set of double doors on the east elevation, sheltered by a flat porch roof supported with wood posts. It is a non-contributor due to its later date of construction.

### **Integrity Assessment**

Shiloh Baptist Church retains many important aspects of its historic integrity. The building is in its original location and retains many of its original features of design, setting, materials, workmanship and association. The Church building has not undergone any significant changes to the exterior or interior since its construction, other than changes in function to auxiliary rooms. The overall setting has changed somewhat due to expansions in parking and the addition of outbuildings; however the overall character of the building and property has not been adversely affected by these changes.

<sup>1</sup>Albert Christ-Janner and Mary Mix Foley, *Modern Church Architecture, A Guide to the Form and Spirit of 20th Century Religious Building*. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1962) p.239.

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**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 grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Ethnic Heritage, Black

Architecture

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1958-1963

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

April 13, 1958: Groundbreaking ceremony

October 13, 1963: Official dedication of new

church building

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Dodd, James C., Architect

Cooke, Reverend Willie P., Builder

Warner, Joseph, Contractor/Builder

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The church was built starting in 1958 and completed in 1963. Because the construction of the resource began more than 50 years ago but construction overlaps the fifty year period by less than two years, the period of significance does not require exceptional significance consideration under Criteria Consideration G.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

This church is a religious property meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration A, deriving primary significance from its association with historic events (the relocation of Sacramento's African American community during the redevelopment era) and its architectural distinction (as the first major work of master architect James Dodd.)

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## SECTION 8

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Shiloh Baptist Church is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C at the local level of significance for its role in the history of Sacramento's African American community during the redevelopment era and for its Mid-Century Modern architecture as designed by master architect James Dodd. The property's period of significance is from 1958 until 1963, the period from groundbreaking until the completion of its construction. The property meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration A due to deriving primary significance from historical importance other than its religious role, and its architectural distinction.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Shiloh Baptist Church is historically significant for its association with Sacramento's African American community during the redevelopment era of the 1950s and 1960s, and the work of James C. Dodd, Sacramento's first African-American licensed architect. It served as the focal point for the African American community of Sacramento's Oak Park neighborhood, and was constructed by the congregation in accordance with Dodd's plans. A vast majority of the construction was completed by Reverend Willie P. Cooke, pastor of Shiloh, with the assistance of congregation members. The Church and its construction by Reverend Cooke and his congregation is a monument to the motivation, dedication and determination of the Shiloh community that continues today.

Under **Criterion A**, Shiloh Baptist Church is significant because of its important association with the patterns of Sacramento's history. As the second-oldest African-American congregation in Sacramento, the Shiloh Baptist Church is a symbol of the determination of the congregation and Sacramento's larger African-American community, and the Church's evolution from a 40-member organization to one of the largest African-American congregations in the region. The formation of Shiloh Baptist Church "was a further symbol of the sense of permanence that blacks were beginning to feel for Sacramento." It was also a symbol of the developing diversity in the growing African-American population in California.<sup>ii</sup> The Shiloh Congregation has been associated with a number of influential individuals as well, including Reverend Willie Cooke and Netta Sparks, who were recognized for their contributions to many civic organizations and the larger community. In short, Shiloh Baptist Church is a symbol of the enduring African-American community in Sacramento and in California. The relocation of Shiloh Baptist Church and its congregation from downtown Sacramento to the neighborhood of Oak Park during Sacramento's redevelopment era showed the continuing resilience of this community.

Under **Criterion C**, Shiloh Baptist Church is an early but defining example of Mid-Century Modern architecture by Sacramento's first licensed African-American architect, James C. Dodd, FAIA. Dodd's office worked on a wide variety of community project, including schools, military chapels, churches and low-income housing projects. Dodd was an active and well-respected member of the community, as well as the recipient of numerous awards. He was elected an FAIA Fellow in 1981; involved in the NAACP; Methodist Hospital Board of Directors; and the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, appointed by Governor Ronald Reagan as a charter member in 1968. He was nominated for Vice President of the AIA in 1982.<sup>iii</sup> Dodd was also a charter member of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) in 1970.<sup>iv</sup> Shiloh Baptist Church was Dodd's first major architectural commission, but clearly demonstrates Dodd's architectural skill as an example of Mid-Century religious architecture.

### Criterion A: Shiloh Baptist Church

Shiloh Baptist Church was organized in Sacramento in 1856. Originally called Siloam Baptist Church, it was founded and organized by the Reverend Charles Satchell, who also served as the first pastor. The congregation first met at a Chinese Chapel located on Sixth and H streets, currently the location of the Federal Building. The congregation raised funds

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<sup>ii</sup> Clarence Caesar, *An Historical Overview of the Development of Sacramento's Black Community, 1850-1983* (Thesis, California State University, Sacramento, 1985) pp. 59-61.

<sup>iii</sup> Central Valley Chapter, the American Institute of Architects, Press Release, April 6, 1981, provided by the Central Valley Chapter of the AIA.

<sup>iv</sup> Biography provided by the Central Valley Chapter of the American Institute of Architects

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through 1859 and 1860, and used the money to purchase a synagogue located on Fifth Street between N and O Streets, replaced in approximately 1960 by the "Pioneer Tower" superblock apartment complex.<sup>v</sup> In 1891, the name of the church was officially changed from Siloam Baptist Church to Shiloh Baptist Church.<sup>vi</sup>

In 1905, under the pastorate of Reverend J. Gordon McPherson, the Church purchased property on the corner of Sixth and P Street. On June 18, 1905, the cornerstone was laid for a new church. In August 1934, Reverend J.T. Muse became the pastor of Shiloh. Under his pastorate (1934-1947), the membership of Shiloh had increased to approximately 800 and was the largest Black Baptist Church in Sacramento.<sup>vii</sup>

In 1952, Willie Phillip Cooke joined Shiloh and acknowledged his call to the ministry. Reverend Williams licensed Reverend Cooke on December 16, 1953, and he was ordained by the Church on November 11, 1956.

In 1954, the Church purchased three lots located at Ninth Avenue and 36th Street at a cost of \$7,500.00. The city of Sacramento was undertaking several urban redevelopment programs in the downtown area and the board of Shiloh realized they would eventually have to relocate from Sixth and P Streets. At the time, the neighborhood of Oak Park was unrestricted, allowing African Americans to purchase property in Oak Park for a new church.<sup>viii</sup>

After ten years of service, Reverend Williams tendered his resignation as pastor of Shiloh on January 1, 1957. In February, Reverend Cooke became Pastor of Shiloh. As a result of the City's redevelopment activities, the new pastor arranged to have the church moved to the property at 9th Avenue and 36th Street.<sup>ix</sup>

### Construction History

In October 1957, Shiloh purchased additional property adjacent to the 9th Avenue property. With no funds, no plans on hand and a \$12,000.00 annual budget, Rev. Cooke was determined to build for the future. After much haggling with City Hall, a building permit was eventually granted. In collaboration with James C. Dodd, the first licensed African-American architect in Sacramento, the plans for the new church were drawn up. The plans were to construct a 12,000 square foot building with seating capacity for 400, educational facilities and a social hall. The estimated cost of the new building was \$120,000.00.<sup>x</sup> In April 1958, the building contract was given to Joseph Warner, a local African-American contractor, to build the Church at a cost of \$152,000.00.<sup>xi</sup>

The new building was expected to be completed by the fall of 1958. However, the Church was unable to secure a loan to complete the church at the proposed cost. They had to contract with Mr. Warner for the amount realized from the sale of the property at Sixth and P Streets, \$47,500.00. Mr. Warner agreed to use free labor to complete as much of the building as possible.<sup>xii</sup>

By September 1958, when approximately \$60,000.00 had been spent, the Church was forced to terminate the contract with Mr. Warner due to lack of funds. The building had only been framed and roofed. The Church then voted for Rev. Cooke to complete the Church with the assistance of the congregation.<sup>xiii</sup>

Much of the construction on the Church was done by Rev. Cooke, an electrician by trade. The congregation was fundamental in constructing the new Church. Members re-mortgaged their homes and others assisted in the construction. The congregation as a whole gave building materials and held fundraisers to help complete the building. On October 12, 1958, the second Sunday, the Shiloh congregation moved into the incomplete building and held the first service at the new location. This service and many services during the next five years were held under adverse conditions due to the

<sup>v</sup> Clarence Caesar, *An Historical Overview of the Development of Sacramento's Black Community, 1850-1983* (Thesis, California State University, Sacramento, 1985) p. 59.

<sup>vi</sup> Church history.

<sup>vii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>viii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>ix</sup> Ibid.

<sup>x</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xi</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xiii</sup> Ibid.

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incomplete construction. The years of hard work by Rev. Cooke and the members of Shiloh resulted in completion of the building in 1963 at a final cost of \$207,000.00.<sup>xiv</sup>

On October 13, 1963, the official dedication of the new Shiloh Baptist Church was held. Rev. F.D. Haynes, Pastor of Third Baptist Church, San Francisco, California, delivered the dedication sermon. Since Shiloh's dedication, additional properties have been purchased on the east and west sides of the church for parking and additional educational facilities.<sup>xv</sup>

### **Shiloh Baptist Church in Oak Park: 1963-present**

Reverend Cooke was actively involved in the betterment of the larger community, establishing the Political and Social Action Committee in 1975 because he wanted the Church membership to become more politically active. Several members of the congregation were actively involved in the NAACP, including Eugene Covington, once president of the local chapter, and Netta Sparks, a pioneering member of that organization. In 1971, Shiloh sponsored the government subsidized housing project of Shiloh Arms. This housing development, in which James C. Dodd was also involved, provided reasonably priced housing for persons who were in need of low cost decent housing.<sup>xvi</sup>

On Sunday, December 23, 1979, a declaration was made of "Netta Sparks Day" in honor of Netta Sparks at the Shiloh Baptist Church. At a special afternoon program, she was honored by the mayor of Sacramento, Shiloh members, her families and many friends, churches and a wide variety of organizations throughout the city. Ms Sparks had been a member of the Shiloh congregation for 62 years and was very influential in the African-American community.<sup>xvii</sup> She was a pioneering member of the Sacramento Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), serving as the first secretary in the early 1920s, the youth council organizer in the 1930s and the president in the 1940s. Sparks was also a founding member of the Women's Civic Improvement Club, an organization aimed at addressing the lack of housing for African-American women in Sacramento following World War I. The club is still in existence today, providing assistance to residents. It is the oldest African-American center in Sacramento.<sup>xviii</sup>

In 1981, Rev. Cooke presented Shiloh with his decision to retire as Pastor of Shiloh. Rev. Cooke had the distinction of serving longer than any pastor in Church history. Rev. Cooke received messages from other churches, auxiliaries, community organizations, businesses, friends, individuals from throughout the country who were aware of his great ministry and leadership at Shiloh. Rev. Cooke officially retired on June 11, 1983, after 26 years.<sup>xix</sup>

In January 1983, Dr. Oscar C. Jones became the Pastor-Elect of Shiloh. Dr. Jones officially appointed Rev. Cooke as Pastor Emeritus of Shiloh. Dr. Jones resigned as pastor of Shiloh in 1985.<sup>xx</sup>

Since its construction, Shiloh Baptist Church has undergone few changes. The sanctuary was expanded into the nursery area in the 1970s to accommodate the larger congregation, and several outbuildings were added. The Church is currently undertaking a building program to add a multi-purpose building on the site.

Sacramento's African-American community began to establish itself around 1850, after finding some success as miners or servicing the mining industry. Many in the community found employment as laundrymen, cooks, porters, mule drivers and miners, as well as owners of eating houses, coffee houses, boarding houses and blacksmiths. The African-American population in Sacramento in the early 1850s was relatively small, at 191 persons, and had settled primarily on or around Third Street.<sup>xxi</sup>

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<sup>xiv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xvi</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xvii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xviii</sup> Netta Sparks Obituary. Art Campos, Sacramento Bee, November 24, 1993, Page B1.

<sup>xix</sup> Church history.

<sup>xx</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxi</sup> Clarence Caesar, *An Historical Overview of the Development of Sacramento's Black Community, 1850-1983* (Thesis, California State University, Sacramento, 1985) pp. 22-25.



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Once economically established, the African-American community began to establish social and religious institutions.<sup>xxii</sup> “The development of black community institutions in Sacramento were in many ways a response to a society that refused to treat blacks as equals. The churches, benevolent societies, schools, and social organizations created during the 1850’s were the linchpins of black community life in Sacramento during its earliest years. Of all these institutions, the churches had by far the greatest influence in shaping the character of the black community in its day-to-day struggles. The two major religious institutions of black Sacramento during this period were Saint Andrew’s African Methodist Episcopal Church, founded in 1850, and Siloam (later Shiloh) Baptist Church, which was founded in 1856.”<sup>xxiii</sup>

The formation of Siloam Baptist Church on 6<sup>th</sup> and H Streets “was a further symbol of the sense of permanence that blacks were beginning to feel for Sacramento.” It was also a symbol of the developing diversity in the growing African-American population in California. By 1860 the free black population had reached 4,085 in California, up from 962 in 1850. In addition to establishing religious institutions, the African-American community also began to establish cultural and social groups. These groups took on more significance as the struggle for civil rights began to subside in later decades.<sup>xxiv</sup>

### **The Oak Park Neighborhood**

The initial development of Oak Park—now the area bounded by Stockton Boulevard, Franklin Boulevard, Fourteenth Avenue, and Broadway—began on a 230-acre parcel of farmland owned by William Doyle, just southeast of the city limits. Real estate developer Edwin K Alsip bought Doyle’s land in 1887, with the idea to divide the land into small lots that would be affordable to the working class. Sacramento had a large working-class population, including many who worked for the Southern Pacific Railroad Shops in downtown Sacramento.<sup>xxv</sup>

A streetcar company, Central Street Railway, was formed in 1887 in order to serve Oak Park and the adjoining suburb of Highland Park. This company, owned by real estate developers Edwin K. Alsip and Leonidas Lee Lewis, was intended to carry commuters from downtown Sacramento to their new residential suburbs, Highland Park and Oak Park. Originally planned as a cable car line, Central Street Railway briefly experimented with battery-powered streetcars but abandoned them in favor of horse-drawn streetcars. In 1890, Central Street Railway converted to electric power generated by a steam engine at their car barn at 28th and M Street. In 1891, they purchased control of R.S. Carey’s City Street Railway and consolidated both lines, renaming the combined company the Central Electric Railway.<sup>xxvi</sup>

In 1892, H.P. Livermore and Albert Gallatin applied for their own streetcar franchise under the name “Sacramento Electric Power and Light Company.” They purchased the existing Sacramento streetcar lines and expanded them. In 1895, electric power generated at Gallatin and Livermore’s new hydroelectric generator 22 miles away in Folsom, CA, was connected to Sacramento. This generator provided enough electricity to power the streetcar system with surplus to sell to residential customers in neighborhoods adjacent to the streetcar lines. By 1895, the streetcar and power company had reorganized as the Sacramento Electric, Gas and Railway Company. In 1906, SEG&R became part of a larger, regional company, called Pacific Gas & Electric, or PG&E. By 1910, the park originally named Oak Park was renamed Joyland, an electric amusement park including the “Giant Racer” rollercoaster.

The newly established community of Oak Park grew rapidly in the first decade of the twentieth century. The first two churches, the Oak Park Baptist Church and the Oak Park Methodist Church, were established by 1901. The interurban railroad company Central California Traction built an interurban passenger, freight and streetcar line from Stockton Boulevard and up 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to Broadway in 1909, providing an additional streetcar link to downtown Sacramento as well as interurban freight and passenger service to the nearby city of Stockton. This construction coincided with the relocation of the California Agricultural Society’s State Fairgrounds to the corner of Stockton and Broadway, immediately east of Oak Park, and accessible by both PG&E streetcars and Central California Traction interurbans.<sup>xxvii</sup> Oak Park had a thriving business district and several thousand residents in 1911, but had insufficient resources to incorporate as an independent

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<sup>xxii</sup> Ibid, p. 26.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Ibid, p. 37.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Ibid, p.59-61.

<sup>xxv</sup> Historic Environment Consultants, “Oak Park Survey, 2005” (Prepared for the City of Sacramento Preservation Office, June 2005) pp.A 1-2.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Guido, Francis A., “Street Railways of Sacramento”, *Western Railroader* Vol. 19 No. 12 (October 1956) p. 3

<sup>xxvii</sup> Historic Environment Consultants, pp. A 5-7 and William Burg, *Sacramento’s Streetcars*, (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2006) p. 89.

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city, and had failed to install all of the promised amenities such as sewer lines. As a result, Oak Park (in addition to other adjacent neighborhoods) was annexed by Sacramento in 1911, the first expansion of the City's boundaries since its layouts in 1848.<sup>xxviii</sup> Voters in other annexed suburbs (including Highland Park, Homeland and East Sacramento) were generally opposed to annexation, but Oak Park's less affluent but much more populous residents made the difference in the vote for annexation.<sup>xxix</sup> New industries also located near Oak Park during the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, including the Western Pacific Jeffery Shops and the Libby McNeill Libby Cannery, providing access to jobs easily accessible on foot or by streetcar.

Oak Park underwent frequent ethnic change during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Early African American residents of Oak Park included George Dunlap, restaurant owner, whose residence in Oak Park began prior to annexation to the city of Sacramento. The family of labor activist Ernesto Galarza moved to Oak Park briefly after annexation, indicating the presence of Mexican immigrants in the neighborhood in the 1910s.<sup>xxx</sup> Previous research of city directories indicates that while the neighborhood began with generally northern European origins, it had evolved by the 1920s to a southern European, predominantly Italian, neighborhood. While nonwhite residents were present in Oak Park since the early 1900s, African-Americans began to move into the neighborhood in large numbers in the 1950s, and became the predominant demographic in the 1960s.<sup>xxxi</sup> This movement was due in large part to the demolition of the West End, an earlier African-American neighborhood in downtown Sacramento that was demolished in urban renewal projects of that era. Shiloh Baptist Church's previous location and most of its congregants were originally located in Sacramento's West End. As indicated in discussion of church history, Sacramento's African American population was primarily located in downtown Sacramento near Shiloh's original location, and this community saw significant growth during World War II, when Japanese Americans sent to internment camps were removed from the neighborhood and thousands of African Americans moved into the former Japantown seeking employment in Sacramento's waterfront industries. After the war, more African American servicemen came to Sacramento with their families, sometimes settling in the crowded West End but when possible moving to unrestricted neighborhoods in Sacramento's suburbs, including Oak Park. Oak Park thus represented an alternative location for Shiloh's congregants in the face of redevelopment: when the church relocated to Oak Park, the neighborhood followed.<sup>xxxii</sup>

### Criterion C: Architecture

Under Criterion C, Shiloh Baptist Church embodies the distinctive characteristic of a type and period of construction as envisioned by master architect James Dodd. Shiloh Baptist Church's design was an early and prominent example of Mid-century Modern architecture in Sacramento. Mid-century modernists typically emphasized "simplicity and clarity of form, open-plan interiors, and the absence of clutter."<sup>xxxiii</sup> Like Shiloh Baptist, these buildings "tend to have clean, simple lines, a minimum of decoration, lots of glass, a flat or angled roofline."<sup>xxxiv</sup> This movement carried over to ecclesiastical architecture as well, with many denominations moving away from the traditional "church" form towards more abstract forms and the use of common surface materials. Under pressure to move, the Shiloh congregation likely seized this opportunity to make a contemporary statement about their faith.

Dodd created a strong new statement for the Shiloh Baptist Church congregation with the design of their new building. Taking his cues from the growing Modern trend in religious architecture, Dodd created a diamond-shaped building with a bold roof line, minimal adornment and a simple, clear form. Dodd played with the geometry of the building—skewing the placement to emphasize the diamond shape and pulling it apart at the roof to create the bold roofline and draw the eye—creating an overall visually dramatic interior and exterior inspired by the work of 20<sup>th</sup> century Modernist architects inspired by predecessors like Frank Lloyd Wright.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Historic Environment Consultants, pp. A 5-7.

<sup>xxix</sup> McGuire, Pamela, "Historic Overview for the Oak Park Redevelopment Area and Determination of Eligibility for Inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places for the Oak Park Land Development Areas (1) and (2)," (Survey prepared for City of Sacramento, April 1980)

<sup>xxx</sup> Galarza, Ernesto. *Barrio Boy* (University of Notre Dame: Notre Dame, 1971) p. 247-261

<sup>xxxi</sup> Lawrence Adams, "A Place Called Home," in *Sacramento's Oak Park*, Lee M.A. Simpson, editor. (San Francisco: Arcadia Publishing, 2004) p. 17 and Historic Environment Consultants, "Oak Park Survey, 2005" (Prepared for the City of Sacramento Preservation Office, June 2005) pp.A-13.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Caesar, p. 160-164

<sup>xxxiii</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modernism>

<sup>xxxiv</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mid\\_Century\\_Modern](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mid_Century_Modern)

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Shiloh Baptist Church's design was an early and prominent example of Mid-century Modern architecture in Sacramento. Mid-century Modern architecture "translated the ideology of Modernism into a sleek, cool, yet accessible lifestyle. Mid-century modernism was more organic in form and less serious than the International Style."<sup>xxxv</sup> Post-World War II technological innovations "enabled architects to experiment with a palette previously unavailable to them" including aluminum, stainless steel, flagstone and terrazzo.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Mid-century modernists typically emphasized "simplicity and clarity of form, open-plan interiors, and the absence of clutter."<sup>xxxvii</sup> Like Shiloh Baptist, these buildings "tend to have clean, simple lines, a minimum of decoration, lots of glass, a flat or angled roofline."<sup>xxxviii</sup>

With the development of the suburbs, "there was conscious effort on the part of most denominations to building a new type of church in which traditional ecclesiastic reference were being replaced with new and more abstract forms, and the use of more common surface materials, such as pre-cast concrete, came into wider use."<sup>xxxix</sup> Since the Church was under pressure to move due to redevelopment projects, the congregation likely saw this as an opportunity to make a contemporary statement about their faith.

It is possible that Dodd took inspiration from Wright's First Unitarian Society Meeting House (1947), a well-known early example of Modern ecclesiastical architecture. Wright's geometric theme is based on the diamond, and the Meeting House's signature feature is "the prominent blue-green copper roof with an angled glass "prow,"<sup>xl</sup> which rises out of the hillside toward the sky. Wright also made wide use of horizontally-placed glass on the main elevation. Dodd played with geometric form in his design of Shiloh, pulling the diamond shape apart at the roof to create a dramatic roofline, drawing the eye up towards the cross that explicitly reveals the building's purpose.

The First Baptist Church in Bloomington, Indiana (1956, E.A. Sovik, architect) is another influential Modern ecclesiastical building that Dodd could have drawn inspiration from. The central idea of Baptist faith is that of universality, and therefore "any derivative, historic style in architecture, expressing as it does a restricted version of the Christian religion, is inappropriate. Even an attempt to emphasize unique Baptist characteristics could only defeat its purpose."<sup>xli</sup> Like many evangelical denominations, the Baptist faith has been preached where space was available: in tents, public meeting halls, and after-hours in stores. As such, little consideration was given to expression of Baptist religious attitudes in architecture until the construction of The First Baptist Church.<sup>xlii</sup> Shiloh's previous church on 6<sup>th</sup> and P Streets was a traditional church structure, and was indistinguishable from any other Christian denomination. The configuration of Shiloh Baptist is similar to that of The First Baptist, consisting of a predominantly one-story building with a two-story sanctuary and cross atop a tower "boldly proclaiming the Christian position and beckoning all to come..." while appearing "as a symbolic guardian to the low-lying buildings that house the earthly activities of the church."<sup>xliii</sup>

In another interesting parallel, during the construction of Wright's Meeting House the congregation hauled stone from the quarry, installed drywall, taped, plastered and painted, and the women of the congregation wove a hand-loomed decorative curtain for the main meeting space.<sup>xliv</sup> During the construction of Shiloh, the congregation was involved in all aspects of the construction, including provision of materials, furnishings and labor.

Dodd created a strong new statement for the Shiloh Baptist Church congregation with the design of the new building. Taking his cues from the growing Modern trend in religious architecture, Dodd created a diamond-shaped building with a bold roof line, minimal adornment and a simple, clear form. Dodd played with the geometry of the building—skewing the

<sup>xxxv</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mid\\_Century\\_Modern](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mid_Century_Modern)

<sup>xxxvi</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mid\\_Century\\_Modern](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mid_Century_Modern)

<sup>xxxvii</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modernism>

<sup>xxxviii</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mid\\_Century\\_Modern](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mid_Century_Modern)

<sup>xxxix</sup> First Unitarian Society Meeting House National Historic Landmark Nomination Form, p. 18

<sup>xl</sup> First Unitarian Society Meeting House National Historic Landmark Nomination Form, p. 4

<sup>xli</sup> *Modern Church Architecture, A Guide to the Form and Spirit of 20th Century Religious Building.*

Albert Christ-Janner and Mary Mix Foley (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1962) p.239.

<sup>xlii</sup> *Modern Church Architecture, A Guide to the Form and Spirit of 20th Century Religious Building.*

Albert Christ-Janner and Mary Mix Foley (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1962) p.239-241.

<sup>xliii</sup> *Modern Church Architecture, A Guide to the Form and Spirit of 20th Century Religious Building.*

Albert Christ-Janner and Mary Mix Foley (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1962) p.239-241.

<sup>xliv</sup> First Unitarian Society Meeting House National Historic Landmark Nomination Form, p. 9

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placement to emphasize the diamond shape and pulling it apart at the roof to create the bold roofline and draw the eye—creating an overall visually dramatic interior and exterior which, up until that point, had only been done by Frank Lloyd Wright.

### James C. Dodd

James C. Dodd Sr., accepted as Sacramento's first licensed African-American architect, was born on January 17, 1923 in Texarkana, Texas. He served in the Army as a first lieutenant, and then entered the University of California, Berkeley, earning a bachelor's degree in architecture. He arrived in Sacramento in 1952 following graduation, at which time he was employed by the State of California. He also worked for the firm of Barovetto and Thomas (now Carissimi Rohrer McMullen) before starting his own firm.<sup>xlv</sup> Dodd was licensed to practice architecture in California, Nevada, Utah and Mississippi.<sup>xlvi</sup>

According to John Petrucelli, who worked for Dodd's office from 1976-1978, Dodd was involved in a variety of business ventures, including developing a pre-fabricated panelized housing system from recycled materials, and real estate development.<sup>xlvii</sup> His housing system, called the Urfab System, was a factory built house that used a "big plank" system with wall and roof panels ranging in size up to 12' x 16' 6" thick. The Urfab System was approved by the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development in 1976. Two prototypes had been constructed by 1980, and over 100 had been ordered for 1981. Dodd also became a licensed contractor, to complete the construction of multi-family housing project in a low-income urban renewal area.<sup>xlviii</sup>

Dodd's office undertook an assortment of projects, including Federal Housing Administration projects in California and Mississippi; schools, as part of the Sacramento Associated School Architects collaborative; the Castle Air Force Base Chapel Center, as a member of the Western Military Architects; the preservation and restoration of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park; the construction administration for the rehabilitation of Sacramento High School; and a number of projects for religious institutions under the name Dodd Witt Associates, with architect Wesley Witt. Dodd also participated in the construction of Shiloh Arms, the housing development project undertaken by Shiloh Baptist Church, in 1971.<sup>xlix</sup>

James Dodd was an active member of the local chapter of the AIA, serving on the Board of Directors, as director and all the officer positions. He served state-wide as the director of the CCAIA Board of Directors, and at the national level as a Regional Director on the AIA Board. In 1979, he was one of the first two African-American architects directly elected to the Board by members in his Region. Dodd was elected as a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1981.<sup>i</sup> According to an April 6, 1981, press release, Dodd was also involved in the NAACP, Methodist Hospital Board of Directors, and the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, appointed by Governor Ronald Reagan as a charter member in 1968. He was also nominated for Vice President of the AIA for 1982.<sup>ii</sup> Dodd was also a charter member of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) in 1970.<sup>iii</sup>

Dodd was the recipient of numerous awards for his work and public service, including:

- § Masonry Institute Honor Award, Colley & McGhee Building, 1971
- § Central Valley Chapter AIA Merit Award, Sacramento Community Center, 1974
- § Golden Trowel Award, Flintoke Co./Calaveras Cement Division, Sacramento Community Center, 1974
- § Certificate of Recognition, CCAIA, 1974
- § NOMA, Onyx Award, 1975
- § Central Valley Chapter AIA Merit Award, Sacramento High School, 1978

<sup>xlv</sup> James C. Dodd Obituary. Yvonne Chiu, Sacramento Bee, February 10, 1999.

<sup>xlvi</sup> Biography provided by the Central Valley Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

<sup>xlvii</sup> John Petrucelli, personal communication with the author, 11/28/06.

<sup>xlviii</sup> Biography provided by the Central Valley Chapter of the American Institute of Architects

<sup>xlix</sup> John Petrucelli, personal communication with the author, 11/28/06.

<sup>i</sup> Central Valley Chapter, the American Institute of Architects, Press Release, April 6, 1981, provided by the Central Valley Chapter of the AIA; and African-American AIA Fellows Listing, <http://www.noma.net/forum/printable.asp?m=161>, 12/16/2006.

<sup>ii</sup> Central Valley Chapter, the American Institute of Architects, Press Release, April 6, 1981, provided by the Central Valley Chapter of the AIA.

<sup>iii</sup> Biography provided by the Central Valley Chapter of the American Institute of Architects

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- § Certificate of Recognition, CCAIA, 1979
- § Certificate of Appreciation, United Crusade, 1966
- § Certificate of Appreciation, Sacramento City Unified School District, 1966
- § Outstanding Service Award, California Community College Board of Directors, 1973
- § NAACP Citizens Award, Outstanding in the Field of Architecture, 1974
- § Certificate of Recognition, Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievements (MESA) Program, 1980<sup>liii</sup>

James C. Dodd Sr. died on February 3, 1999. Dodd's body of work encompasses both private and public buildings, including several churches:

- § Shiloh Baptist Church, 3565 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Sacramento (1958)
- § C & A Office Building, 1810 S Street, Sacramento (1965)
- § Shiloh Arms, 4009 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Sacramento (1971)
- § Vista Arms, FHA Project Buildings 1-6, location unknown (1972)
- § Kyle's Temple A.M.E. Zion Church, 2940 42nd Street, Sacramento (1984)
- § Netta Sparks Senior Center, Women's Civic Improvement Club addition, 3555 3rd Avenue, Sacramento (1989)
- § The Hill House, 35<sup>th</sup> and Broadway, Sacramento (1992)
- § Dodd Building, 2710 X Street, Sacramento
- § Sacramento High School rehabilitation, now known as Saint Hope Academy, 4104 Martin Luther King Blvd., Sacramento
- § Capitol City Seventh-day Adventist Church, 6701 Lemon Hill Avenue, Sacramento<sup>liv</sup>
- § The R.A. Herold Wing, Crocker Art Museum (with McCabe, Cox and Liske)<sup>lv</sup>
- § Roseville Community Christian Center, Dodd Witt Associates<sup>lvi</sup>

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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- The Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, California. Historic Structure Report (Draft)*. Page & Turnbull (San Francisco, 2003)
- Sacramento Archives and Museum Collections Center, James C. Dodd Collection

Newspaper articles and interviews as indicated in footnotes

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<sup>liii</sup> Biography provided by the Central Valley Chapter of the American Institute of Architects

<sup>liv</sup> Ibid and Sacramento Archives and Museum Collections Center, James C. Dodd Collection.

<sup>lv</sup> *The Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, California. Historic Structure Report (Draft)*. Page & Turnbull (San Francisco, 2003) p. II-15.

<sup>lvi</sup> <http://www.lewitz.com/P19.html>

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** \_\_\_\_\_

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	_____	_____	_____	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Parcel # 013-0341-081  
Property is located in the middle of the block, on the north side of 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, between 33<sup>rd</sup> Street on the west and 37<sup>th</sup> Street on the east.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This is the parcel on which structure is located.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Kathleen Forrest, Associate Planner and Genevieve Entezari, Graduate Student Intern  
organization City of Sacramento, Preservation Office date \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number 300 Richards Blvd., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor telephone 916 808-8259  
city or town Sacramento state CA zip code 95811  
e-mail Contact: rdeering@cityofsacramento.org

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property:

City or Vicinity:

County:

State:

Photographer:

Date Photographed:

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of \_\_\_\_.

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**Property Owner:**

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

name Monica Brown, Shiloh Baptist Church Board of Trustees  
street & number 3565 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue telephone (916) 452-5052  
city or town Sacramento state CA zip code 95817

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Figure 1. Groundbreaking of the new location of Shiloh Baptist Church, Rev. Joseph Williams pictured holding shovel.