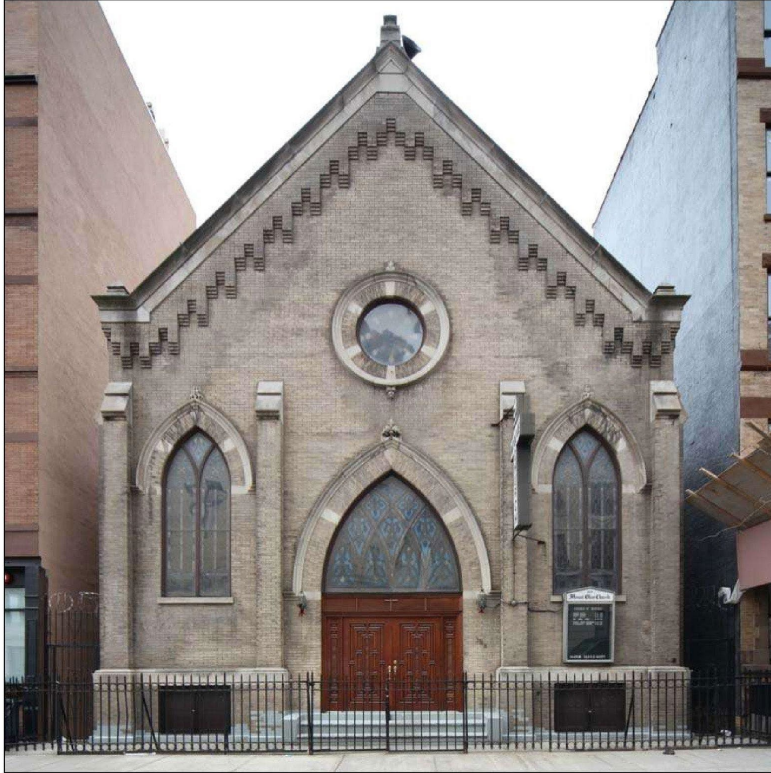


Mount Olive Fire Baptized Holiness Church

Individual Landmark

308 West 122nd Street

Designation Date: June 23, 2009



Mount Olive Fire Baptized Holiness Church (former Second Reformed Presbyterian Church)

304-308 West 122nd Street

Borough of Manhattan.

Photo: Christopher Brazee, 2009

The Mount Olive Fire Baptized Holiness Church, with its distinctive façade combining elements of the Gothic Revival and Romanesque Revival styles, was constructed in 1897 for the Second Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America was founded in the late 18th century by Irish and Scottish worshippers who were fleeing persecution at home for their refusal to take oaths of loyalty to the British government.

As church membership in New York City grew, so did the need for a second geographical division that would serve congregants living in Manhattan north of Chambers Street. On June 11, 1830, the Second Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America was organized, occupying a structure at 166 Waverly Place. In 1897, the Second Reformed Presbyterian Church constructed this house of worship at 304-308 West 122nd Street.

The selection of the Harlem site for the building is reflective of the increasing popularity of the neighborhood as a residential community, largely a result of the opening of elevated rail lines

through northern Manhattan in the late 1870s, and a proposed subway route in the late 1890s. In 1943, the Mount Olive Fire Baptized Holiness Church of God of the Americas purchased the church and continues to worship there today. The Fire Baptized Holiness Church of God of the Americas was founded in 1898 in Mountville, South Carolina, by a Methodist preacher, William Edward Fuller, Sr., after he received the “Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire” while praying alone in a corn field near his home.

The one-story, beige brick building was designed in the Gothic- and Romanesque-Revival styles by architect James W. Cole. Distinguishing features of the building include its symmetrical facade featuring pointed-arched window openings, terra cotta ornament, stained glass windows, crenelated brick corbelling at a prominently gabled roofline, and decorative pinnacles. James W. Cole designed numerous commercial and residential buildings throughout Manhattan, and examples of his work can be found in the Gansevoort Market, Greenwich Village, Mt. Morris Park, and the Upper West Side and Central Park West Historic Districts. Among Cole’s notable works is the Gothic Revival style Charles A. Vissani Residence at 143 West 95th Street, a designated New York City individual landmark, constructed in 1889.

[Read the full NYC LPC designation report here.](#)