



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 100-0211

1. General Property Information

Property name: Oakland Baptist Church

Property address: 3408 King Street

City or Town: Alexandria City, Alexandria, Virginia

Zip code: 22302

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Alexandria City

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):

Building X Site Structure Object

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 0.43

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban Suburban X Town Village Hamlet Rural

Briefly describe the property's overall **location and setting**, including any notable landscape features:

The Oakland Baptist Church, located at 3408 King Street in Alexandria, VA 22302, sits just north of the historic downtown area known as Old Town Alexandria. The church's urban setting is landlocked, surrounded by a mix of buildings and roadways, with no particularly notable landscape features. Facing King Street, the building stands at the intersection where King Street meets West Braddock Road.

Architecturally, the Oakland Baptist Church exhibits a vernacular style influenced by modest Gothic Revival elements, reflective of the craftsmanship and dedication of its congregation. Constructed in 1999 and designed by Robert Johnson Nash, the church is a testament to the enduring spirit of its community. While its builder remains unknown, the structure embodies a blend of tradition and resilience.¹

On the left of the church is Alexandria City High School (*formerly known as T. C. Williams High School*). A roadway separates the church from the school. The church is located directly across from a Shell Service station that gives this quaint **setting** a feeling of a larger city while in a suburban setting.

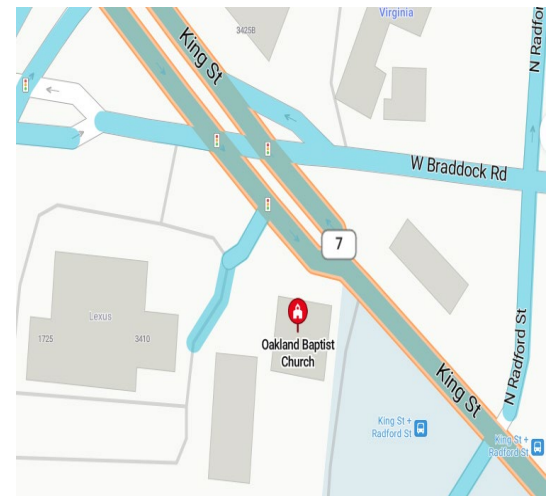


Figure 1 - Photograph of Location for Oakland Baptist Church

¹ Oakland Baptist Church Property Description, Architectural Style and General Characteristics, 2025

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Gothic Revival style

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: Robert Johnson Nash, Architect²

If the builder is known, please list here: Unknown

Date of construction (can be approximate): Original **1893**, Rebuilt **1940**, Renovated **1999**³

Narrative Description (Please do not exceed one page in describing the property):

Briefly describe the **property's general characteristics**, such as its current use (and historic use if different), as well as the **primary building or structure** on the property (such as a house, store, mill, factory, depot, bridge, etc.). Include the **materials and method(s)** of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions or other major alterations.

Oakland Baptist Church's architectural style is best described as *vernacular with modest Gothic Revival influences*, shaped by the hands and hearts of its own congregation.

The Church in 2025 – Properties & General Characteristics

Several residents of The Fort were founders of Oakland Baptist Church, which is located about one mile southeast of the cemetery at the intersection of King Street and Braddock Road. The congregation started worshipping as Oak Hill Baptist Mission in 1888 and moved to its current location in 1893. Some descendants of The Fort's original families continued to own their land through the early 1960s, when the City of Alexandria established Fort Ward Park and Museum. Residents of this neighborhood included the **Adams, Ashby, Jackson, Javins, Shorts, McKnight** and **Terrell** families, and several others.⁴

The church is **generally described** as a two-story **brick building** with a gabled roof and symmetrical façade. While it lacks elaborate ornamentation, its pointed-arch windows and vertical emphasis nod to the **Gothic Revival style**, a common choice for ecclesiastical buildings in the early 20th century. The simplicity of the design speaks to the congregation's resilience and resourcefulness, and the building's evolution over time, including a renovation in 1999—reflects the community's ongoing stewardship.⁵ It is **currently used** as the **primary building** that is **used as a place of worship** for members of the Oakland Baptist Church.

The church's **exterior** has symmetrical façade features a central projecting entry bay with double paneled wood doors beneath a pointed-arch transom. Above the entrance are paired lancet-style stained-glass windows, repeated along the side elevations, which provide vertical emphasis and filtered interior light. The brickwork is laid in common bond with a raised foundation and a modest belt course separating the first and second stories. A shallow brick cornice with corbelling adds subtle articulation beneath the eaves exterior.



Photograph 2 – Picture of Renovated Church as of 1999.

² City of Alexandria Planning Commission. (1997, June 3). *Master Plan Amendment #97-0001; Rezoning #97-0001: Oakland Baptist Church Quaker Lane Apartments* [Meeting document]. Department of Planning & Zoning, Alexandria, VA.

³ Ibid

⁴ [Microsoft Word - 100-5339 Oakland Baptist Church Cemetery 2017 NRHP FINAL](#)

⁵ [Trail Sign: The Oakland Baptist Church](#)

The church the (*primary and only building*) has been a cornerstone of spiritual and civic life, deeply intertwined with pivotal moments in American history, including the **Civil War, desegregation efforts, and the reparations movement**. The church has been **well-preserved**, with its **brick exterior, stained-glass windows, and wooden pews** remaining intact. The renovation in **1999** improved accessibility and updated infrastructure while preserving historic character. The church remains active and continues to serve as a symbol of **African American resilience and faith** in Alexandria. It stands as a testament to resilience, faith, and the enduring legacy of African American history.⁶

The **interior** of Oakland Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia, reflects both its spiritual mission and its deep historical roots. The sanctuary features classic wooden pews arranged in rows, a raised pulpit area, and modest but elegant lighting. The walls are adorned with subtle religious iconography or banners reflecting the church's mission and community milestones. Given the church's long history—dating back to its founding by members of the Fort community in the late 19th century, the interior, especially the downstairs, includes commemorative plaques and displays honoring its founders and legacy.⁷



Photograph 3 – Picture of Oakland Baptist Church

Architectural Characteristics

- **Style:** A *simple vernacular Romanesque* style that includes a *corner tower* with pyramidal-hip roof and arched windows (now enclosed), *front gable roof*, asphalt shingles, 7-course American bond brickwork, *elevated main level above an English basement*, *Grand stairway* to the entrance (now partially covered by a modern aluminum canopy), & *three bays wide*.

Materials and Condition

- **Materials:** Primarily brick masonry with concrete steps and wooden double-hung windows.
- **Condition (as of 1995):** Described as *Good–Fair*, with *no known threats* at that time.
- **Alterations:** Includes a rear brick addition and modern entry canopy—these are noted but don't detract significantly from the original character.

Site Context

- **Setting:** Suburban residential, adjacent to Alexandria City High School, formerly T.C. Williams High School..
- **Layout:** Church faces King Street with a parking lot to its east.
- The **physical integrity** was largely intact as of the 1995 survey, with Romanesque features and original materials still evident.

Pastoral Legacy

There have been ten (10) pastors of the Oakland Baptist Church from 1888 to the present: The pastoral legacy includes: Rev. E.R. Jackson (**1891 - 1899**), Rev. A.B. Catlett (**1900 – 1904**), Rev. O.H. Wood (**1905 - 1912**), Rev. J.H. Ford (**1912 - 1918**), Rev. Howard Barnes (**1919 - 1941**), Rev. Luther H. Mills (**1941 - 1972**), Rev. Authur R. Preston (**1973 - 1988**), Rev. Tyrone Queen (**1988 - 2006**), Rev. Donald C. Hayes (**2006 – 2021**), Rev. Larry Fox (**2021 – Present**).⁸ During each of these pastors' tenures significant progress was made to contribute to the church and the Alexandria community.

There are no additional structures

4. Property's History and Significance (Please do not exceed one page)

⁶ [Microsoft Word - 100-5339 Oakland Baptist Church Cemetery 2017 NRHP FINAL](#)

⁷ [The Oakland Baptist Church Historical Marker](#)

⁸ Oakland Baptist Church Anniversary Committee. (1966). *Seventy-fifth anniversary of the Oakland Baptist Church and the twenty-fifth of its minister Rev. Luther Mills: September 18, 1966, October 4, 1966*. Oakland Baptist Church.

Briefly explain the property's **historic importance**, such as **significant events, persons, and/or families** associated with the property. If the property is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

Oakland Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia, holds historical significance across several key areas that support its recognition as a historic building:

1. Post-reconstruction era (1877 – Mid 1960's)

This period generally refers to the period **after 1877**, when federal troops were withdrawn from the South, marking the end of formal Reconstruction. This era stretches roughly from **1877 to the early 20th century**, though its social and political legacies extended well beyond.^{9 10}

2. African American Heritage and Community Building & Continuity of Legacy (1888-1999)

1888 -- *The church was established as Oak Mission Baptist Church.*

1891 -- *The church changed name to Oakland Baptist Church.*

1893 -- *The original church was built at 3408 King Street, Alexandria, VA.*

1931 -- *The church was destroyed by fire.*

1931 -- 1940 -*The church was rebuilt.*

1999 -- *The church was renovated.*

3. Significant events include: homecomings, gospel concerts, and Sunday School excursions, reinforcing its role as a cornerstone of African American life in Alexandria.¹¹

4. Rebuilding/ Restoration (1931 – 1940) & (1999)

The church was rebuilt by founding by members of The Fort community—formerly enslaved African Americans and their descendants—the church represents a powerful legacy of **self-determination, faith, and resilience**. It served not only as a **place of worship** but also as a **social and cultural hub** for a community that faced systemic displacement and marginalization. The church was renovated in 1999.

5. The Civil Rights Era (1940 - 1960)

Maydell Casey Belk,¹² a former member of the “Fort” and the Oakland Baptist Church, played a critical role in the **integration of Alexandria’s public schools** by advocating for equal educational opportunities for African American students. In **1959**, she and other community members, including **Stanley O. and Julia Adams Bradby**, spearheaded a lawsuit against the **Alexandria School Board** to challenge segregationist policies.¹³

6. Prominent Families of Oakland Baptist Church -- From 1931 – Present

Many of the people listed have relatives who are currently active members Oakland Baptist Church.

Rev. Howard Barnes – Oversaw the reconstruction of the church after a fire in **1931** and led the church for **22 years**. **Rev. Samuel T. Moore** – Served as chairman of the **Trustee Board** and helped build the church’s second-floor sanctuary in **1940**. **Rev. Luther H. Mills**—The **longest-serving pastor** in Oakland Baptist Church’s history, guiding the congregation through critical periods of change. **Morris Johnson, Joseph Wanzer, Clarence Summers, Louis Douglas, Wilson Robinson, Amos Turner** were members of the **Deacon Board** who provided spiritual and administrative leadership in the **1940s**. **James Lewis Jr. & Delaney Colbert** – Long-serving deacons who helped shape the church’s **moral and social guidance**. **Elizabeth Henry Douglas** – A **Sunday School teacher** and active member in church education programs. Ms. Douglas passed away in 2014 and is featured on the Oakland Baptist Church Cemetery [website](#). **Frances (Johnson) Colbert Terrell** – A **deaconess, choir leader, and community advocate**, deeply involved in **historical preservation efforts**. **Frances Terrell** was honored in 2024 as a “**Living Legend of Alexandria**”.¹⁴ **Maydell Belk** – a leader in the Civil Rights Era.

7. Reparations Movement - 2019

The Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS) and Oakland Baptist Church are now linked through a formal *Reparations Covenant* that acknowledges shared history and seeks to build a more just future. VTS, located in Alexandria, was built and sustained in part by the labor of over 545 Black individuals—both **enslaved and free—between 1823 and 1951**. In **2019**, the seminary established a reparations program, now supported by a \$2.8 million endowment, to provide annual payments to descendants of those who labored there. But the effort didn’t stop at individual compensation.¹⁵

⁹ [Reconstruction: A Timeline of the Post-Civil War Era | HISTORY](#)

¹⁰ <http://Trail Sign: The Oakland Baptist Church>

¹¹ <http://media.alexandria.gov>

¹² [Plaque Honors Families Who Integrated Minnie Howard](#)

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ [Meet The Legends 2024 – Living Legends of Alexandria](#)

¹⁵ [Reparations | Virginia Theological Seminary](#)

Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property, such as deeds, census and tax records, and/or published articles and books. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

- Tax Records [032.01.pdf](#)
- The Zebra Press. (2020, February). *We built our own place: Oakland Baptist Church*.
<https://thezebra.org/2020/02/09/we-built-our-own-place-oakland-baptist-church/>
- Alexandria GIS Division. (n.d.). *Interactive GIS map of Fort Ward Park and cemeteries*. City of Alexandria.
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/gis/interactive-maps>
- <http://Trail Sign: The Oakland Baptist Church>

4. Property Ownership (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: X Public\Local _____ Public\State _____ Public\Federal _____

Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

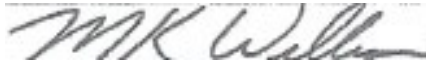
name/title: Oakland Baptist Church

organization: Church

street & number: 3408 King Street

city or town: Alexandria City state: VA zip code: 22302

email: _____ telephone: _____

Legal Owner's Signature:  Date: June 30, 2025

Chair of the Deacon Board, Oakland Baptist Church

• • **Signature required for processing all applications.** • •

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: Michael K. Williams, Chair of Deacons Oakland Baptist Church and/or
Iburia V. Hall-Haynes, Ph.D. – 571-331-2637

Daytime Telephone: 571-345-5209 for Deacon Michael Williams

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property) name/title:

Iburia V. Hall-Haynes, Ph.D. & Edwin L. Haynes, J.D. organization: members Oakland Baptist Church

street & number: 5908 Ewing Place

city or town: Alexandria state: Virginia zip code: 22310

e-mail: iburiayahaynes@aol.com telephone: 571-331-2637 Date: July 1, 2025

PLEASE DO NOT ATTACH CONTINUATION SHEETS TO THIS FORM. THANK YOU!

Dear Ms. Von Lindern,

Thank you for your thoughtful evaluation and continued guidance regarding the Oakland Baptist Church nomination. I appreciate your detailed review and the opportunity to clarify the church's historical significance and integrity.

Areas of Significance - Ethnic Heritage (African American) and Social History

This period aligns with the church's documented contributions to the local community and its development. The areas of significance for the existing church structure, although renovated, spans ca. 1940, with the of the current building, through 1975, encompassing . . .

The **Jim Crow era** – the era of legalized racial segregation and systemic discrimination against African Americans in the United States. The **Civil Rights Movement**, and the ongoing role of **the church in social justice**. This was a transformative period in U.S. history—primarily from the **late 1940s through the late 1960s**—when African Americans and allies mobilized to dismantle institutional racism, segregation, and disenfranchisement.¹

Period of Significance & Community Role and Social History (1940–1975)

During this period, Oakland Baptist Church served as a **crucial gathering space, spiritual refuge, and strategic center** for Alexandria's African American community. The picture below shows the leadership in the mid-1940's, *the pews, the layout, and the windows* of the church during this period. The current pews (after the renovation in 1999) retain the basic style.²

A closer look at the Attendance Board (*on the wall in the background of this picture*) shows the Attendance for that day was 35 and the Attendance the previous Sunday was 25.

This Attendance Board documents the small but significant congregation.



Courtesy Oakland Baptist Church and Frances (Johnson) Colbert Terrell, daughter, niece and granddaughter

Members (left to right) of the Oakland Baptist Church Deacon Board: (back row) Rev. Luther H. Mills, Morris Johnson, Joseph Wanzer, Clarence Summers, Louis Douglas, Wilson Robinson, and Amos Turner; (front row) Douglas Johnson and Richard Nelson. In the mid-1940s, these appointed officers assisted Pastor Mills, the longest-serving pastor in Oakland Baptist Church history, in the temporal, physical, and spiritual needs of the church.

¹ Encyclopedia Britannica. (n.d.). *Timeline of the American Civil Rights Movement*. Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved July 7, 2025, from <https://www.britannica.com/list/timeline-of-the-american-civil-rights-movement>

² [The Oakland Baptist Church.](https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/archaeology/TrailSignOaklandBaptistChurch.pdf)
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/archaeology/TrailSignOaklandBaptistChurch.pdf>



Courtesy Oakland Baptist Church and Frances (Johnson) Colbert Terrell

Superintendent Deacon Amos Turner (back row, center) and teachers, Deacon Morris Johnson (back row, second from right) and Elizabeth Henry Douglas (far right), stand with a mid-1960s Oakland Baptist Church Sunday School class. The church served as a house of worship and a social gathering place. Special programs such as "Homecoming" and "Family and Friends Day" involved sister churches. There were gospel concerts and "Tom Thumb Weddings," at which children assumed the roles of bride and groom. The Sunday School sponsored annual excursions to Sparrows Beach and Coney Island, followed by camp week at the Northern Virginia Baptist Center in Gainesville, Virginia.

3

The picture above was taken during the period of 1945 – 1960 outside of the Oakland Baptist Church. Although faint, the architecture of the windows can be seen, and it documents the same basic structure for the windows as they currently exist.

Oral histories and member accounts provide **specific information regarding the church's role:**

- The church hosted meetings where congregation members, many of whom were affected by segregationist policies, **organized responses to school board actions** and other local injustices.
- Oakland was actively involved in **voter registration efforts**, youth mentorship, and food security programs, particularly during the Civil Rights era.
- The congregation **supported displaced families**—many from "The Fort" neighborhood—by offering sanctuary and advocacy, as documented in our nomination materials and oral histories.⁴
- In 1959, Madell Casey Belk, granddaughter of Oakland Baptist Church founder John Wesley Casey, and Julia Bradby, a descendant of The Fort's Adams and Roy families, were among 17 plaintiffs in *Jones v School Board of City of Alexandria*.⁵

³ <https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/archaeology/TrailSignOaklandBaptistChurch.pdf>

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ *Otis E. Jones and Betty Jo Jones, Infants, by Leora Jones, Their Mother and Next Friend, et al., Appellants, v. School Board of City of Alexandria, Virginia, a Body Corporate, and T. C. Williams, Division Superintendent of Schools of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, Appellees, 278 F.2d 72 (4th Cir. 1960) :: Justia, Jones v. School Board of City of Alexandria, 278 F.2d 72 (4th Cir. 1960)*

The federal lawsuit, decided by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, was among many that found fault with the methodologies of local pupil placement boards in deciding where to enroll white and African American children in school. Such boards were established in Virginia after the Supreme Court’s 1954 *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* decision found the “separate but equal” doctrine that had been used to justify segregated schools to be unconstitutional. In practice, however, pupil placement boards often continued to decide children’s school assignments based on factors other than geographic location and academic performance; race often was a deciding factor.⁶

Desegregation. As Alexandria and the broader South moved toward dismantling segregation in the mid-20th century, **Oakland Baptist Church stood as both a spiritual refuge and a civic hub for African Americans navigating turbulent change.** Founded by formerly enslaved individuals and rooted in resistance to racial exclusion, the church entered the desegregation era with a long-established commitment to community empowerment. Desegregation had a profound and multifaceted impact on Oakland Baptist Church, especially given its deep roots in Alexandria’s African American community.

***Desegregation & the Civil Rights Movement: A Timeline Through Oakland Baptist Church’s Lens
& How the Church Was Used***

Year	National Event	Oakland Baptist Church Connection
1954	Brown v. Board of Education	Congregants begin preparing youth for integration; Sunday sermons emphasize dignity and courage.
1955	Montgomery Bus Boycott	Church meetings reflect growing activism; stories circulate of members donating to support travel boycotts.
1960	Greensboro Sit-ins	Youth at Oakland organize informal discussions on protest and racial justice, supported by adult mentorship.
1963	March on Washington	Members recall traveling to D.C. or listening over the radio together; The pastor preaches on “the dream.”
1964	Civil Rights Act Signed	Oakland holds a celebratory service acknowledging long struggle for dignity and justice.
1965	Selma to Montgomery & Voting Rights Act	Church hosts voter registration workshops; basement used to coordinate outreach.
1968	MLK Assassination	Church offers grief counseling and holds memorial service; community recommits to unity and nonviolence.

Broader historical patterns and significance can be drawn as the church’s known role in civil rights advocacy is documented by church member Maydell Belk’s lawsuit. The significance of the Oakland Baptist Church is highlighted during this time period. The church served as an active location that was impacted by national and local events as indicated through oral histories and legal documentation.⁷

⁶ Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

⁷ Thompson v. County School Board of Hanover County, 252 F. Supp. 546 (E.D. Va. 1966), Thompson v. County School Board of Hanover County, 252 F. Supp. 546 (E.D. Va. 1966).

The timeline that follows shows how **federal legal decisions**, like *Thompson v. County School Bd.* (1966), directly impacted **families connected to Oakland Baptist Church** and the broader Fort Ward community. The desegregation lawsuit filed in **Alexandria, Virginia** by the families of **Maydell Casey Belk** and **Stanley O. and Julia Adams Bradby** was supported by **NAACP attorneys Frank D. Reeves and Otto L. Tucker**. This legal action successfully challenged the Alexandria School Board’s segregationist policies and led to the integration of **Minnie Howard School** on **February 1, 1960**, when five Black children—including Judy and Vickie Belk—entered the school as enrolled students.⁸

Legal Milestones & Impact on Oakland Baptist Church Families

Year	Legal Milestone	Community Impact on OBC Families
1954	<i>Brown v. Board of Education</i>	Oakland Baptist prepares students spiritually for school integration.
1956	Virginia enacts Pupil Placement laws	Families experience confusion and discrimination in school assignments.
1966	<i>Thompson v. County School Bd.</i> decision	Legal validation of the community’s lived experience; race used to subvert desegregation.
1970	Full integration of Alexandria public schools	Youth from Oakland community begin attending formerly all-white schools; church expands youth programming. ^{9 10}

Oral History Account Excerpts

"We filled out all the papers, but somehow our child kept getting placed in the same school. The Pastor said it wasn't about performance—it was about race." — Oakland Baptist member, Mrs. Madell Belk 1966 recalls.

"My parents had to go all the way to D.C. for us to get the education denied here at home." — *Anonymous Uptown resident, recorded 1984.*

"Oakland was where we met, where we organized. Church wasn't just for Sunday." — *Maydell Casey Belk, Oakland member and civil rights advocate.*¹¹

In 1965, City of Alexandria schools desegregated; the same year, T. C. Williams High School opened on the site of the Seminary School. Construction of the much larger school included displacement of several African American property owners, as local resident Frances Terrell recalled years later.¹²

⁸ Alexandria Heritage Trail. (2025). First Minnie Howard School (1954–2024) Historical Marker. Historical Marker Database. Retrieved July 7, 2025, from <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=267783>

⁹ *Thompson v. County School Bd. of Hanover County*, 252 F. Supp. 546 (E.D. Va. 1966). Available at <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/FSupp/252/546/1410499/>

¹⁰ Oral Histories

¹¹ [Oral History: Belk, Maydell Casey](#)

¹² <https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/archaeology/TrailSignOaklandBaptistChurch.pdf>

The **City of Alexandria's Office of Historic Alexandria** hosts the *Alexandria Legacies Oral History Project*, which includes a 1994 interview with **Maydell Casey Belk**, a longtime member of the Fort Ward community and Oakland Baptist Church. Her recollections provide firsthand insight into church life, community resilience, and the impact of segregation and displacement.¹³

Interior Integrity and Architectural Features

The sanctuary visible in some of the photos was renovated. The original 1940 sanctuary does not exist as it was but retains several historic elements, including **pew designs, the altar design, ceiling structure**. The renovated sanctuary is used for special services and gatherings to preserve its historical integrity and purpose.

I will prepare and send additional interior photographs of the 1940 building in the coming week to support your evaluation. These images will focus on any surviving features and architectural details relevant to the period of significance.

The 1940 Sanctuary Then & Now

This **interior** photograph highlights architectural features of Oakland Baptist Church's original 1940 sanctuary. The images included support the church's integrity within its established period of significance (ca. 1940–1975). They document retained elements that reflect the congregation's spiritual and civic life during the Jim Crow and Civil Rights eras.

While the renovation in 1999 added additional space on the right side of the church, to maintain the historic integrity of the exterior church, four main features were reserved. These features included the steeple, the bell tower, the frontage of the church and the right side of the church.

¹³ City of Alexandria. (1994). *Oral history interview: Maydell Casey Belk*. Alexandria Legacies Oral History Project. Retrieved July 7, 2025, from <https://media.alexandriava.gov/docs-archives/historic/info/history/oralhistorybelkmaydellcasey.pdf>

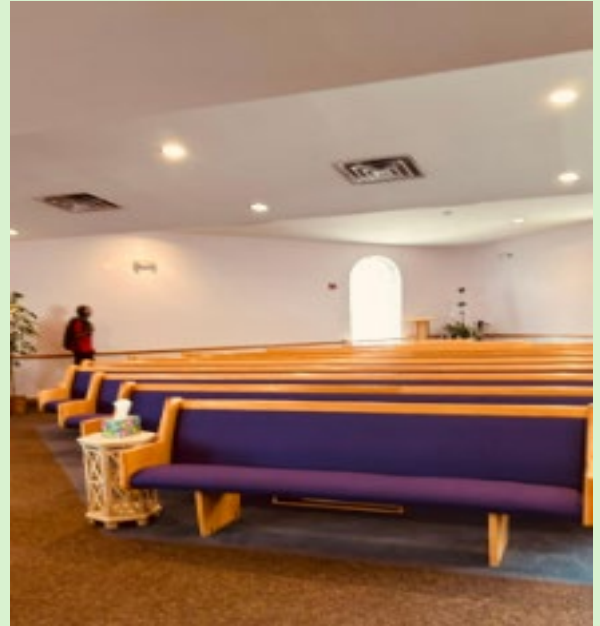
Description/Then	Maintenance of Historical Purpose/Now
 <i>Photograph 1 -- Church After Being Rebuilt in 1940</i>	 <i>Photograph 2 - Church After Renovation in 1999</i>
A comparison of the church pictures (1940 on the left) and 1999 Renovated Church on the right reveals: • an addition on the left • the windows on the steeple with the same basic size and pattern • the pointed frame above the step • the bell tower is maintained <i>Mr. Calvin Terrell, one of the members of the founding families of Oakland Baptist Church indicated in a phone interview (7/8/2025) that he recalls the designers/architects of the church making extra efforts and deliberate actions to maintain the historical integrity of the church by keeping the right side of the church intact as much as possible. Mr. Terrell also served as sexton of the church for many years. He is still an active member of the church and currently sings in the choir. Mr. Terrell is married to Frances Terrell, one of the Living Legends of Alexandria.</i>	

Original pews (1940) wood grain detail) were used during celebrations and key civil rights meetings. This picture shows the high ceilings. pews and the location for the pulpit. Wedding in 1981.



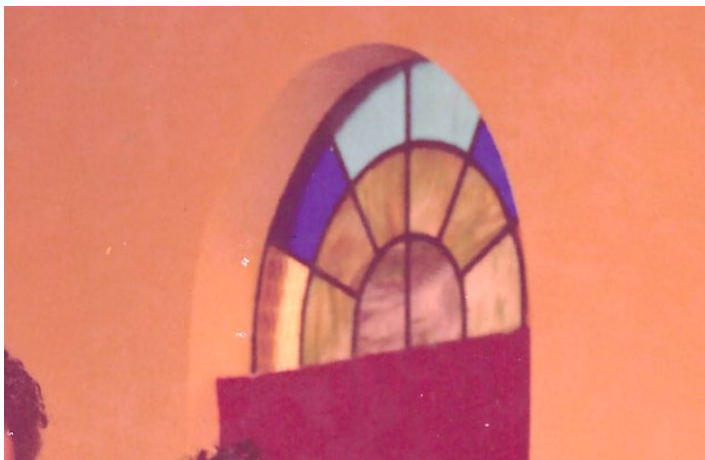
Photograph 3 - Original Pews in 1981 Wedding Ceremony

Updated pews after (1999) construction. Although the layout is different. The same style of pews is used in the renovated church. High ceilings are maintained.



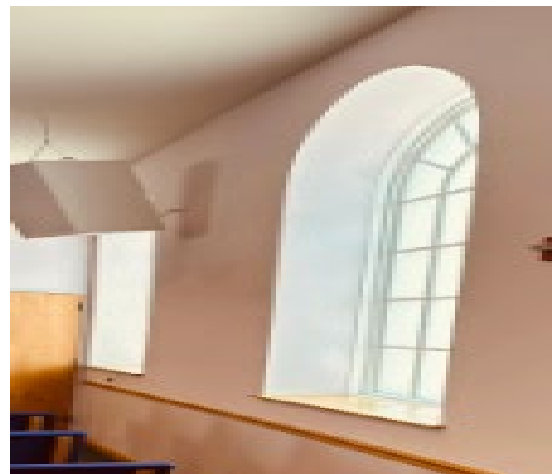
Photograph 4 - Pews after 1999 Renovation & As They Are Today

The Colorful Stain Class Windows

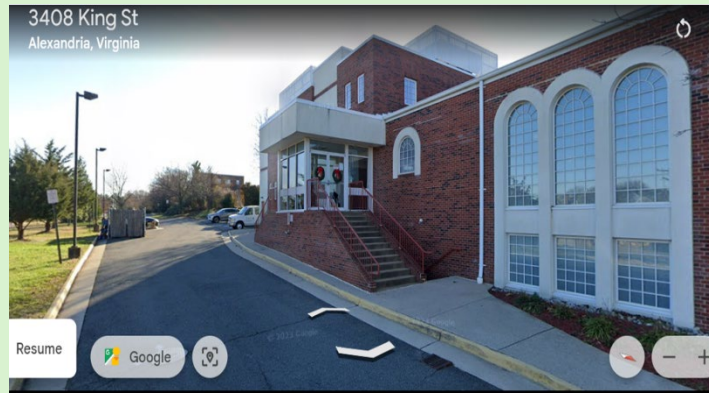


The original windows were colorful.

The Clear Stained Glass Windows inside



The renovated windows are clear stained class. Retained framing and glass consistent with early mid-century ecclesiastical architecture.



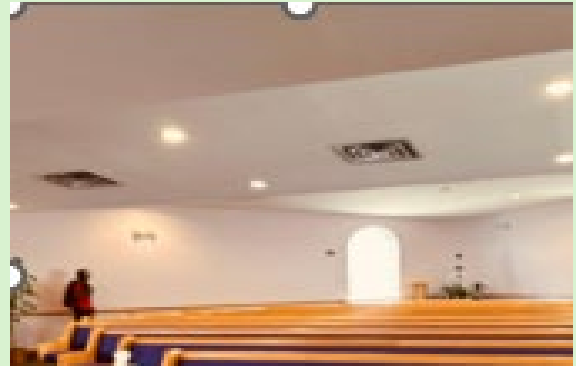
Altar and pulpit area
Spatial layout preserved; site of significant sermons & community organizing



Ceiling structure with visible workmanship,
 1981 appearance as constructed in 1940.



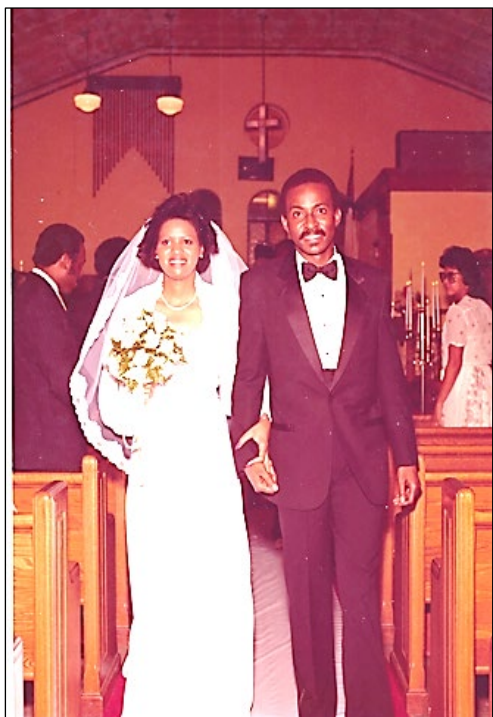
Ceiling modified in 1999 renovation.



Oakland Baptist Church (Circa 1940)

The 1940 sanctuary of Oakland Baptist Church represents more than an architectural structure—it reflects the cultural, spiritual, and political heartbeat of Alexandria’s African American community at a pivotal moment in U.S. history. Though modest in scale and materials, the sanctuary embodied profound meaning for its parishioners, many of whom were descendants of enslaved people and founding members of the congregation.

The picture that follows shows the pews in 1981 with the original pews from the 1940 construction. It also documents one of the wedding ceremonies held in 1981.



*Photograph 5 - Edwin & Iburia Haynes,
September 5, 1981*

Its rectangular footprint housed neatly aligned pews, with a center aisle leading to a raised pulpit. The pulpit was crafted as a visual and spiritual focal point—where church leaders, many trained informally, delivered impassioned sermons that blended scripture with calls for justice and self-determination.

The choir section (below the cross in this picture) was often filled by volunteers from the community, and its music carried not only spiritual uplift but messages of freedom and resistance.

Walls were adorned during special services: floral arrangements prepared by the church's mothers was a staple in the church. Mrs. Elizabeth Douglas assumed the role of floral arranger for many years.

Beyond its physical attributes, the sanctuary served as a refuge amid segregation and a quiet organizing space during the Civil Rights era. Founding families like the Belks fostered a legacy of resilience; Mrs. Maydell Belk maintained order as

an usher and helped host planning sessions for local protests and youth mobilization efforts. The sanctuary was a trusted space where African Americans could strategize away from public scrutiny, discuss voter registration campaigns, and instill values of dignity, resistance, and spiritual courage.

The sanctuary's form and function were symbiotic—its architecture shaped by love, its energy fed by unwavering faith. Though simple in design, the space embodied sacred resistance and communal memory, anchoring the wider historic significance of Oakland Baptist Church as both a spiritual and socio-political institution in African American Alexandria.

Thanks again for your support and guidance.

Warm regards,
Iburia

PIF BOUNDARY MAP

Oakland Baptist Church
City of Alexandria, VA
DHR ID# 100-0211

 Proposed Boundary

0 50 100 150
 Feet



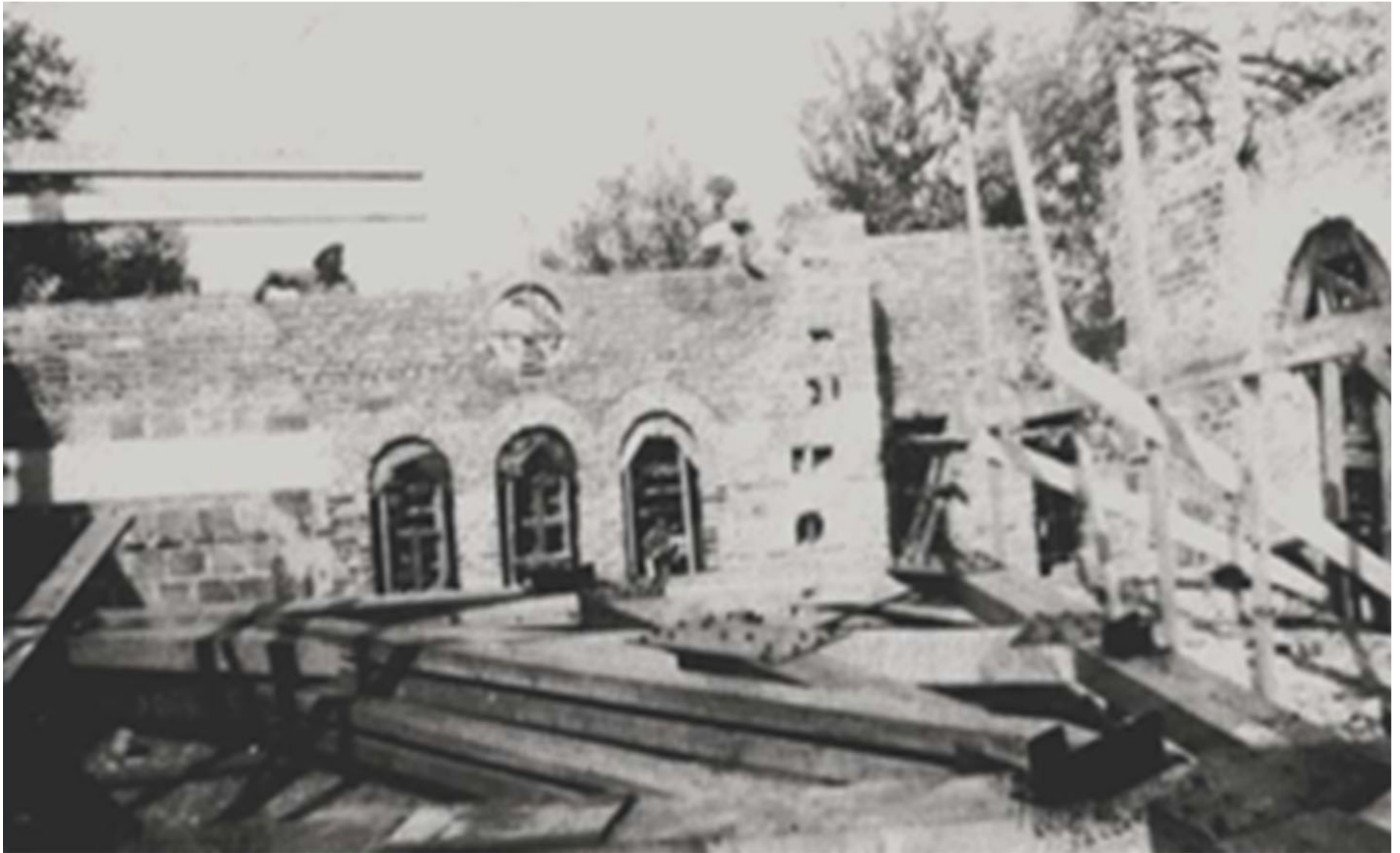
PIF AERIAL-VICINITY MAP

Oakland Baptist Church
City of Alexandria, VA
DHR ID# 100-0211

 Proposed Boundary

0 150 300 450
 Feet





Photograph 2 – Photograph of Oakland Baptist Church after the fire





Photograph 1 - Picture of Renovated church 1999.



Photograph 6 - Front of Church King Street View

3408 King St
Alexandria, Virginia



Photograph 8 – Photograph of Church, East Side Next to Alexandria City High School



Photograph 7 - East Side of Church



Photograph 3 - Photograph of Sanctuary



Photograph 4 – Pews inside the Church.



Photograph 5- View of Back of Church