

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 Morning Star Baptist Church
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 631 S. Douglas Avenue not for publication
city or town Pasco vicinity
state Washington code WA county Franklin code 021 zip code 99301

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria

X A B C D

Alphon W August 17, 2022
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

WASHINGTON STATE SHPO
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

MORNING STAR BAPTIST CHURCH
Name of Property

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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

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

The Black American Experience in Pasco, WA

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: Religious facility

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7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: CONCRETE

roof: ASPHALT

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.)

The Morning Star Baptist Church and its associated paved parking area occupies lots 69 through 72 of Block 2 of the Terrace Heights Addition in Pasco, Franklin County, Washington. These lots are located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Douglas Ave and Butte Street, with the church facing west towards Douglas Ave. The main building on site is the church, which sits in the southwest corner of the parcel. Lawn and a variety of shrubs surround the west, south, and east sides of the church, while the asphalt parking area is located adjacent to the north wall of the building. A small garage sits northeast of the northeast corner of the church, within the paved parking area. The parking area, including the asphalt portion as well as a graveled area to the north, is enclosed on the west, north, and east sides by a chain-link fence.

Morning Star Baptist Church (contributing building)

The Morning Star Baptist Church is a one-story masonry building with a rectangular footprint. Both the original component and an addition (which covers most of the length of the original volume's north wall) are constructed with concrete blocks laid up in a standard running bond pattern, over a full raised concrete basement. A wood-frame gable roof covers the bulk of the volume in the original component, with flat-roofed sections on its east and west sides. The north third of the flat roof section on the east side of the building is only a half story high. Stepped parapets finished with three courses of red brick top the flat roof sections of the roof. Roof covering on the gable section is asphalt shingles, while the flat-roofed sections are covered with built-up roofing. The east and west gable ends in the original volume (visible above the flat-roofed sections) are covered with vertical tongue-and-groove boards. The west gable end has a narrow metal vent, while the east has a smaller rectangular vent.

A 10 ft. by 12 ft., one and one-half-story steeple, is located at the southwest corner of the original volume. The exterior walls of the steeple extend about 2 ft. beyond the west and south walls of the original building, contributing to its slightly irregular plan. The steeple has a flat roof and is also topped with a red brick parapet like those in the flat roofed sections at the west and east sides of the building. The west and south walls of the steeple are enhanced by a large inlaid brick cross.

Most doors and windows in the original component have Gothic arch openings outlined in red brick with brick sills. The exceptions include two pedestrian entries in the rear (east) wall of the original volume, both of which are simple rectangular entryways. Window openings contain a combination of a fixed sash above a one-by-one-light sliding vinyl sash, or a one-light fixed wood sash. Window openings in the north addition contain fixed, twelve- or six-light metal sashes and have concrete brick sills.

West (front) wall: The west wall of the church contains two main entrances—one centered in the wall beneath the gable end and one in the steeple. The central entrance is accessed by a concrete ramp fitted with metal pipe railings painted gray. This entry contains a pair of flush metal doors with three fixed lights in the arch above the door. Window openings flank each side of this entrance. The entrance into the ground floor of the steeple also contains a pair of flush metal doors with a single fixed light in the arch above the doorway. Metal address numbers (631) are affixed to the wall adjacent to the right side of the steeple entry. There are no door or window openings in the west wall of the north addition.

South (side) wall: The south wall of the gable-roofed section of the church is divided into four bays by three concrete block pilasters. The three bays beneath the gable-eave each contain a centered window opening in the ground floor with a single fixed light above a one-light by one-light sliding, vinyl sash. The fourth bay at the east end of the building (within the flat roof section of the building) has a square window opening with a one-light sash. At the basement level, all four bays contain one centered, rectangular window-opening with a one-

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light sash. The south wall of the steeple contains another entry and a brick cross identical to those in the west steeple wall. A granite plaque which reads "MORNING STAR BAPTIST CHURCH / FOUNDED 1946 / DEDICATED 1953," is inset into the concrete wall blocks to the left (west) side of this entry.

East (rear) wall: A single pedestrian entry is located at the south end of the rear wall. It is accessed by a concrete stair with a metal pipe railing and contains a flush metal door. A square window opening is located in the center of the wall (north of the entry) and contains a one-light fixed sash. Another larger square window opening in the upper north corner of the wall appears to have been retrofitted with a smaller, twenty-five light, fixed wood sash; the excess area is infilled with vertical boards.

The east wall of the north addition has one entry offset slightly north of center. It contains a single, flush metal door. A three-light fixed transom is located above the door.

North (side) wall: On the north side of the building, an entry is located at the portion of the original volume not covered by the north wall addition. It contains a flush metal door. The north wall of the addition has six window openings evenly spaced across the wall. From east to west these include: three, twelve-light fixed sash; two, six-light fixed sash; and one twelve-light fixed sash.

Inside the church is a modest space with newer finishes and simple ornamental detail. The main sanctuary is carpeted and has a dropped ceiling with recessed lights. The side isles are defined by stained pine wainscotting and a simple cap. A raised alter area, for the band, choir and centered pulpit, frames a Gothic arched opening for a full-emersion Baptism pool. Entry to the sanctuary is through a set of wood, double doors with cross glass openings in the upper half.

The narthex area is carpeted and segmental arched openings lead to the office wing on the north side of the building and stair access to the basement fellowship hall and meeting rooms. The wooden stair railings are original and form a modified Chippendale balustrade pattern.

Garage (non-contributing building)

The garage, built in 2000, is a one-story, masonry building with a wood-frame front-gable roof and a concrete slab foundation. The concrete wall blocks are laid up in a running bond pattern. The roof has enclosed eaves and is covered with asphalt shingles, with vertical T-1-11 plywood siding in the gable ends. A twenty-panel overhead metal garage door fills the south wall of the building. A concrete ramp leads to the interior of the garage. There is a pedestrian entry at the south end of the west (side) wall that contains a flush metal door. This entry is accessed from a low concrete stair. The north (rear) and east (side) walls contain neither doors nor windows.

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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.)

RELIGION

ETHNIC HERITAGE / Black

SOCIAL HISTORY / Civil Rights

Period of Significance

1957-1972

Significant Dates

1957

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Completed in 1957, Morning Star Baptist Church is historically significant under criteria "A" for its direct association with the history of Black Americans in Pasco, Washington and as a building that was designed to meet the spiritual needs of the local community. The church was the first Black congregation founded in the area after WWII. Thereafter, Morning Star became one of the key foundational institutions of the community, and its physical and cultural core. The church served as one of the primary bases for a broad array of community organizing—especially civil rights organizing—in East Pasco, and the Tri-Cities at large. It served as the site for a variety of meetings for organizations such as the NAACP, the State Board Against Discrimination, and the Congress on Racial Equality, as well as hosted local community meetings such as the PTA, the YMCA, Veterans groups, and the Elks Lodge.

The church also meets the registration requirements as set forth by *The Black American Experience in Pasco, WA Multiple Property Documentation*. With the document, Morning Star is directly tied to the three defined historic contexts: 1) Making the "Mississippi of the North": WWII and The Advent of the Segregated Tri-Cities and its Black Community, ca. 1940-45; 2) The Tri-Cities' Black American Community in Postwar Pasco, 1940s-70s; and 3) Civil Rights, Integration, and the Changing Racial Landscape of the Tri-Cities, 1940s-1970s.

The property's period of significance extends from its finished date of construction in 1957 through 1972 (the 50 year cut-off). Its significance derives not from its religious status but from the role it played in the development of the Black community in Pasco and the Tri-Cities at large.

Founding of Morning Star Baptist Church

Morning Star Baptist Church began in 1945 "with a small group of singers meeting in the [westside] homes of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Williams and Mr. and Mrs. Luzelle Johnson." As Velma Ray (then Mrs. Joe Williams) recalled, "we practiced singing and it got spiritual ... We started having prayer meetings and conversations about starting a church." Soon, "news of the singing spread and the Reverend J. L. Stewart and his wife Cozetta joined the group. The church was formally organized in April of 1946 in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Luzelle Johnson under the auspices of the Baptist Home Mission Board, with the help of Dr. Ira M. Henson, Rev. D.D. Banks, Rev R.R. Banks, Rev. D.H. Greegs, and Rev J.L. Stewart. The church began with ten official members. Services were moved from the Johnson's home into a building on west Lewis Street.

However, membership steadily grew under the ministry of Rev. Stewart and by 1946 he purchased and donated two lots on Wehe Street for the construction of a dedicated church facility in East Pasco.^{ii iii} By mid-November 1947 the new Morning Star facility at 703 S. Wehe Ave. was "almost completed." Rev. Stewart resigned as pastor in October of 1948 and the Rev. E.M. Howard was elected pastor in November 1948.

From this original Morning Star building, Black residents joined together to build community foundations not only metaphorically but literally: "people in the community volunteered their time to build the church ... founder, Luzelle Johnson, said 75 to 100 people donated their hard work to the project. The group borrowed money from the National Baptist Home Mission Board. 'We had such a little amount of money that we paid back about \$25 a month on what we borrowed,' Johnson said. 'After we paid for about a year, they said 'you're scuffling so hard we'll give you the rest.'" Regional Black church organizations also supported the establishment of Morning Star's new building, with "The Reverend D.D. Banks of Walla Walla and the Reverend D.H. Griggs of Spokane,

ⁱ "50 Years of Spiritual Harmony."

ⁱⁱ Tri-Cities Ethnic Players, "Cultural Awareness: Pasco's Black Community (in Celebration of Pasco's Centennial, 1884-1984) [Pamphlet]," sec. Religion; Interview with Dallas Barnes, Webster Jackson, Albert Wilkins at Morning Star Baptist Church, Pasco, WA.

ⁱⁱⁱ "Tri City Church Focus: Morning Star Baptist Church (Newspaper Clipping)."

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representing Negro missions in eastern Washington” tracking and reporting on its progress.”^{iv} Local church authorities, like “Reverend C.T. Hatten, Pasco,” did the same.^v

Morning Star’s establishment reflected a development pattern that had become common throughout the American West, where “once a significant number of Afro-Americans migrated to a town or city, the first community institution usually established was a church.” As they did throughout the United States, these churches typically became the central institution of Black communities. These churches “*sponsored or fostered other activities such as social clubs, literary societies, and fraternal orders. Typically, the church building was used as a meeting place for these organizations and for political gatherings. Predictably, local black ministers became the community leaders and spokesmen. Besides attending to the immediate needs of its congregation, the church also provided a fundamental psychological link to the national Afro-American social and cultural setting.*”^{vi}

Morning Star’s facility immediately became the cornerstone of a rapidly growing Black community in Pasco and the larger Tri-Cities area. Over the next 50+ years the church would host countless meetings of community leaders and outside institutions. Among the earliest was playing host in July 1948 to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) which began meeting in the basement of the church on a regular schedule. Morning Star’s men’s, women’s, and children’s choirs quickly became noted for their skills and were highly desired entertainment groups for other churches and a host of community events.

As the Black community grew in Pasco, in January the *Spokesman-Review* reported that “three new churches have been established by Negro congregations” in Pasco, and from these institutional foundations the Tri-Cities Black community continued to build.^{vii} Among them was the Church of God in Christ which outgrew its original location in the First Street home of Mrs. Geneva Brocks and then “moved to a location on the corner of Helena and Main” in East Pasco (where it remained in the same vicinity in the 1960s, “off of “A” Street), just a few blocks from Morning Star.^{viii} Black residents soon organized other congregations as well. In 1953 “New Hope Missionary Baptist Church was organized in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Milton Norwood, Senior.” Residents remember New Hope as growing directly out of, or branching off from, the burgeoning Morning Star congregation and, like Morning Star, New Hope occupied several locations over the years. New Hope “services were held in various homes” and then in a location on Beech Street and subsequently “in the East Pasco Elks Club until a building was constructed in 1955” on the corner of Butte Street and Waldemar Avenue, three blocks east of Morning Star Baptist.^{ix}

Within three years of completion of the New Hope church on Butte and Waldemar, East Pasco residents had organized two additional churches as well. These, too, grew in Morning Star’s orbit. One was the East Pasco Church of God, which occupied several locations in the Morning Star vicinity, including “113 South Oregon Street in an empty restaurant” and, in 1970, 217 North Douglas Street. At the same time, the Reverend R.J. Gholar organized the Greater Faith Baptist Church. Like New Hope, residents remember Greater Faith as growing directly out of, or branching off from, the Morning Star congregation as well. After its founding, Greater Faith occupied several locations around Morning Star, including “a building on South Oregon Street” as well as “The Reverend Gholar’s store front located on [1119 ½ East] Hagerman Street.” On June 4, 1961, Greater Faith dedicated a new modern church, which “The Reverend Gholar . . . designed and built,” at 512 South Sycamore Avenue, just a couple blocks northeast of Morning Star.^x

^{iv} “Play Jury Due from Audience”, “Tri City Church Focus: Morning Star Baptist Church (Newspaper Clipping)”, “50 Years of Spiritual Harmony.”

^v “Action Planned in Pasco Area: W.S.C. Survey, Council to Help Solve Boom Problem.”

^{vi} Taylor, “The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest,” pg 345.

^{vii} “Action Planned in Pasco Area: W.S.C. Survey, Council to Help Solve Boom Problem.”

^{viii} Tri-Cities Ethnic Players, “Cultural Awareness: Pasco’s Black Community (in Celebration of Pasco’s Centennial, 1884-1984) [Pamphlet],” sec. Religion; Interview with Bryan and Rhonda Rambo.

^{ix} Tri-Cities Ethnic Players, “Cultural Awareness: Pasco’s Black Community (in Celebration of Pasco’s Centennial, 1884-1984) [Pamphlet],” sec. Religion; Interview with Reverend Jeannette Sparks. “Church Finds New Hope.”

^x Tri-Cities Ethnic Players, “Cultural Awareness: Pasco’s Black Community (in Celebration of Pasco’s Centennial, 1884-1984) [Pamphlet],” sec. Religion.

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Early Black residences clustered around Morning Star, the heart of the community. Among those who lived near Morning Star during this period was Mae Fite, who moved back to Pasco permanently with her family in 1950. Fite remembered that “*when we moved back, there was a little home there across the street from Morning Star Baptist Church. We lived in there in like a little fourplex*” for several years before moving, by 1953, to Parkside Homes on the west side of the railroad tracks. Fite’s father would later build the family a home not far from Morning Star, “*over on Owen Ave. in east Pasco, and then that’s where we grew up.*”^{xi}

When Fite’s family settled near Morning Star in 1950, the Reverend E.M Howard had been pastor for a couple years, taking over from Pastor Stewart in 1948. Howard came “from Antioch Baptist church in Oakland, Calif.,” and carried on the tradition of Black church leaders being community leaders more broadly.^{xii} He immediately began working for the betterment of the Black community in general while ministering to the Morning Star flock. The Rev. Howard was among the East Pasco residents who joined the newly-established City of Pasco Human Relations Committee, and subsequently worked actively with the Committee in expressing, and addressing, “many concerns about life in East Pasco.”^{xiii}

At the same time, the Rev. Howard led his congregation in its daily and weekly religious affairs, and in life’s rites of passage. Sometimes those life events made regional newspapers. Such was the case for the June 1950 Morning Star “funeral services for Charlie Harper, who drowned in Coffee Pot lake in Lincoln County.” (Harper, a Pasco resident, was “survived by his wife, Beatrice, and a son, Charlie Morris, Jr., at the family home”).^{xiv} Funeral services for community stalwart Mrs. Louise Pruitt, 40, also made the papers. Pruitt, who “was born in Pickins Co., Ala., July 3, 1913,” was survived in Pasco by her husband and two of her sisters, i.e., Abbie Bush and Annis Washington. The Rev. William Wilkins joined the Rev. E.M. Howard in officiating her August 1953 services at Morning Star.^{xv}

A New Church Home: The Core of the Community, 1957-1970s

While the Morning Star congregation buried Mrs. Pruitt, it was working on plans to build a new building to accommodate its growing membership. By the fall of 1953, just six years after completion of its original East Pasco facility, the congregation decided to build a new sanctuary several blocks east on Butte, at the northwest corner of Butte Street and Douglas Avenue. With the initial construction budget of \$45,000, the new concrete-block Morning Star church was noted as one of the “big jobs” among 1953 “building permits for new construction in Pasco.”^{xvi} Construction, completed by all-volunteer labor, started in the late fall of 1954. The 3,200 sq ft facility was planned to have a seating capacity of 430 parishioners. It included a full basement with six Sunday School classrooms, an auditorium, a baptismal pool, pulpit, and double choir stand.

Construction of the church was a bit slower than expected. Reportedly in March of 1957 the congregation marched to the new facility, which was only sixty percent completed. The church was formally dedicated on April 14, 1957. The dedication address was given by Rev. E.M. Howard, moderator of the General Baptist Association of Washington. The total final cost for the building was estimated at \$65,000.

Completion of the new building on the prominent, centrally located East Pasco corner, cemented Morning Star’s status as the physical, cultural, and institutional core of the Black community. For another five years, the church continued to be led by the Rev. E.M. Howard—who occasionally spoke at other regional churches for special events, like Spokane’s Calvary Baptist Father’s Day tea and musical program in June 1954—while guiding his home congregation through life’s triumphs and trials, like the shooting of Lendon Parker, whose October 1957 funeral the Rev. Howard officiated.^{xvii} The following March, “The Rev. E.M. Howard, pastor of the

^{xi} Interview with Mae Fite.

^{xii} “Baptist Minister Leaves for Alaska.”

^{xiii} Tri-Cities Ethnic Players, “Cultural Awareness: Pasco’s Black Community (in Celebration of Pasco’s Centennial, 1884-1984) [Pamphlet],” sec. Politics; Hayes and Franklin, *Northwest Black Pioneers*, 9.

^{xiv} “Charlie Harper.”

^{xv} “Mrs. Louise Pruitt.”

^{xvi} “Building Permits Reach \$195,796.”

^{xvii} “Tea, Musicales Honor Fathers”; “Gun Victim’s Funeral Set.”

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Morning Star Baptist church for ... ten years, preached his final sermon at the church.” He then decamped “for the Shiloh Baptist Church at Anchorage, Alaska.” Upon his departure, newspapers noted that “at the time he came” to Pasco ca. 1948, “the Morning Star congregation numbered only ten parishioners. Within the pastor’s first year, 275 members were added to the church and since that time the church has constructed a completely new building.”^{xviii}

After Howard’s 1958 departure, the Rev. F. A. Allen took over as pastor of Morning Star. Like his predecessor, the Rev. Allen embodied the tradition of Black pastors’ active leadership work in the broader community. The church thrived under his leadership. By 1965 they had 225 members, two choirs, 13 auxiliaries, and six Sunday School classes.

Rev. Allen tended faithfully to the religious needs of his congregation, such as officiating “services for Mrs. Leona Banks, 59” (who lived a couple blocks away at 731 S. Wehe Street) in early January 1961; or the funeral for Edward Martin, 71, a year later; or the 1971 burial of 52 year-old Jacob Braziel, a Texas-born railroad worker who’d come to Pasco in 1963 and “was an evangelist for the Baptist Church.”^{xix} At the same time, he also devoted himself to a variety of community and civil rights efforts while ensuring the Morning Star itself nurtured the broader Black community and the institutions and movements it built and relied upon. Among the Rev. Allen’s prominent leadership activities during his Morning Star tenure was serving as chairman of the East Pasco Self-Help Cooperative Association during the 1960s. In this capacity Allen worked directly on local issues while also building a broader political network in support of Pasco’s Black community.

In the spring of 1966, for instance, the Rev. Allen helped lead local efforts to empower the Black community through greater political representation. At that time, despite years of efforts by the Black residents, the Pasco city government remained exclusively White. In April 1966 “citizens of East Pasco . . . packed the city council chambers to ask that Charles Evans, 31, a Negro, be appointed to the council to fill the vacancy created by the death of Clarence Griggs.” Community members organized a signature drive before the meeting, and were armed with a petition of some “275 names of persons who want Evans to be councilman. In a letter to the council, the Rev. Mr. Allen said since 90% of urban renewal plans for Pasco related to property owner or occupied by Negroes, a Negro should be on the council.” The council demurred, voting instead to fortify the all-White power structure of Pasco by unanimously appointing the son-in-law of deceased councilman Griggs’ brother.^{xx}

In another instance, the Rev. Allen was again in the news, when Morning Star and its pastor hosted Washington Governor Dan Evans. An article in the November 7, 1959, Spokane Chronicle noted that Governor Evans was

“the guest of honor at an informal reception given by the East Pasco Self-Help Cooperative Association at 7 p.m. at Morning Star Baptist Church...The Reverend F.A. Allen, chairman of the East Pasco group, said that to his knowledge this is the first time that a governor has ever asked to visit East Pasco. The pastor said the reception is being held because the governor had asked if he might visit with the members of the association. The association has spearheaded formation of cooperatives and other activities in the depressed area of East Pasco without war on poverty funds. The Rev. Mr. Allen said he doubted that any other Negro organization in the nation had ever received such a request from a governor.”^{xxi}

As the story of Evans’ historic visit to Morning Star suggests, the Rev. Allen’s community leadership dovetailed with the church’s role as the physical and metaphorical foundation of the community. Over the years, Morning Star frequently hosted a wide array of events and organizations; housing and nurturing the Tri-Cities collective Black community in countless realms. It also hosted speakers and events from outside the community,

^{xviii} “Baptist Minister Leaves for Alaska.”

^{xix} “Edward Martin Services Held”; “Mrs. Banks’ Funeral Set.” “Service Planned for Rail Worker.”

^{xx} “E. Pasco Group Wants Negro Citizen on Council”; “Negro Loses: Ballot Used in Choosing Councilmen.”

^{xxi} “Gov. Evans, Jackson Due in Tri-Cities.”

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facilitating educational opportunities at every turn. Speakers ranged from “Dr. James Boyce, professor of sociology at Washington State University,” who in November 1959 spoke at a Morning Star meeting (“sponsored by the East Pasco improvement association”) “on slum clearance and other related subjects,” to the “secretary of the National Baptist Church of America,” who in August 1962 spoke—“condemning any kind of philosophy that would advocate hatred”—“at the opening of the five-day Baptist Convention of the Northwest,” that was being held at Morning Star.^{xxii} The church, the first in the Tri-Cities area to host the General Baptist Convention, also hosted the 1967 and 1972 conventions. Other cultural events included “The Festival of Afro-American Arts,” that in February of 1970 opened the festival with a “Sunday with a program at Morning Star Baptist Church. Workshops, guest speakers and a drama group will present aspects of black culture during the week-long observance.” The festival featured “Rev. Floyd Bullock,” pastor of a church on “Owens Street, Rev. James... New Hope Baptist,” and speakers from Columbia Basin College.^{xxiii} It culminated with the crowning of neighborhood teen Wanda Green as Festival Queen.^{xxiv}

Itself nurturing the community more broadly, Morning Star also acted—along with the nearby Kurtzman Park Youth Center—as the primary incubator of other Black community institutions and organizations in Pasco. In the 1950s and 60s, Morning Star Baptist Church also served as a gathering place for the local civil rights movement. The aforementioned East Pasco Self-Help Cooperative Association, of which the Rev. Allen himself served as chairman for a time, is a prime example of Morning Star’s institutional incubation. Originally established and led by Art Fletcher in 1965, the East Pasco Co-op—“set up to bring new businesses to other services to the predominantly Black community—held meetings in the church in the late 1960s and early 1970s.”^{xxv}

For its first organized effort, the East Pasco Co-op aimed to “establish a neighborhood improvement project and to use the organization as an experiment to demonstrate to others what can be accomplished.” Almost immediately after the Co-op’s establishment, “its members voted to open its own business, they chose an abandoned service station, renovated it, and opened it in September” 1965. Within weeks, “the co-op next took over the management of the Day-care Center administered under the Office of Economic Opportunity, which provided a badly needed service for the community and a training ground for the five persons employed there.” The Co-op day-care center was operated “downstairs ... in [the Morning Star] church.”^{xxvi}

Over the next few years the co-op “applied for—and received—a charter from the state, which enabled the group to create a credit union ... to provide small business loans with which residents can purchase necessities such as trucks during harvest time,” and also broke ground “for the first phase of [a planned] development program ... drawn up to improve the physical appearance of East Pasco,” i.e. a new “four-bay service station” located on Lewis a few blocks northwest of Morning Star.^{xxvii} By early 1968, the co-op boasted “300 members in the Tri-Cities.”^{xxviii}

Part of the co-op’s goal was broader empowerment of the Black community. As Fletcher put it, “we don’t want to observe democracy—we’ve been doing that for 300 years—we want to participate in it.”^{xxix} This goal is shared with other organizations active at this time in the Tri-Cities, where “many community programs were initiated in the 1960s to address the concerns of minorities, the poor, and the disadvantaged. The Community Action Committee (CAC) started in 1965 and the Community Affirmative Action Program (CAAP) were two products of the new programs under the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). The Community still remembers the strong leadership provided by Leon Harris and Wally Webster of the CAC. These organizations

^{xxii} “Speaker Set”; “Church Leader Raps Muslims.”

^{xxiii} “Afro-American Arts.”

^{xxiv} “Afro-American Queen.”

^{xxv} “50 Years of Spiritual Harmony.”

^{xxvi} Interview with Dallas Barnes, Webster Jackson, Albert Wilkins at Morning Star Baptist Church, Pasco, WA.

^{xxvii} “Co-Op Idea Called Answer to Racial Problems.”, “Self-Help Unit Breaks Ground in East Pasco.”

^{xxviii} “East Pasco Co-Op at Work.”

^{xxix} “East Pasco Co-Op at Work.”

MORNING STAR BAPTIST CHURCH

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provided services and support which gave the Black community a feeling of control in shaping its future.”^{xxx} Morning Star became a base of operations for these and other organizations, and their community leaders—like Wally Webster)—as well.

As Webster recalled of the period’s achievements:

“all of that came out of the basement of Morning Star Baptist Church. Reverend Allen was the pastor at that time. So I think if you point to almost any significant accomplishment, the genesis of it came from the spiritual and religious community. ... It functioned as a meeting place... That’s where the people went. I mean, when you wanted to do something, you go where the people are. On Sunday morning, that’s where you’re going to find them, and that’s where you make your point. You convince the pastor that it’s worthwhile, and then they’ll let you get up and make announcements and talk to the congregation where you’ve got a captive audience. That’s how you got your message across. So it was—because you didn’t have a newspaper or TV channel or radio station or any of those, except for a routine newscast or something. But if you wanted to tell your whole story, you had to go to the church.”^{xxxix}

Morning Stars continued to be the heart of the Tri-Cities’ only Black neighborhood. Available sources indicate that African American dwellings clustered densely in the vicinity of Morning Star. Among the families that lived in the immediate environs of the church was that of current Morning Star pastor Albert Wilkins. Wilkins’ father was also a Reverend, and the young Wilkins remembered “living next-door to the church in ’53, ’54, ’55.”^{xxxix} Othal Hawthorne Lakey, pastor of the St. James Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, could be found a few blocks away. Circa 1956 he “live[d] at [the] corner of Butte and Wehe,” (i.e., at the same intersection that housed the 1947 Morning Star building).

Other Black-owned residences in the immediate vicinity of Morning Star included the fourplex that Thomas Moore built in the 1950s kitty-corner from the church on the corner of Butte and Douglas (at 704 E. Butte Street). The dwelling ultimately housed the Moore family in two of the units while they rented out the other two. According to Thomas and Ellenor’s son, Thomas Moore Jr., the senior Moore also owned or managed “a couple more houses behind [i.e. south of]” the four-plex that he rented out: one of the families he rented to early on was the Dorseys, whose daughter, Ellenor Louise, Thomas Moore Sr. ended up marrying.^{xxxiii} Right across the street was Ray Henry’s four-plex. Community members also recall “Mr. Mitchell’s duplex” as being in the neighborhood.^{xxxiv} Not far away, in the 1950s and 60s, was Duke Mitchell’s great uncle Willy Daniels, who Mitchell remembered during his childhood “just lived down the street on Douglas Street there in east Pasco, from Morning Star Baptist Church.”^{xxxv} Next door to Morning Star at the same time was the church’s pastor, the Rev. Allen, who during Urban Renewal ca. 1970 “was relocated over on 14th.... Across from Pasco High.”^{xxxvi}

Rev. Allen’s relocation under the mantle of Urban Renewal both reflected and symbolized profound changes in East Pasco in the 1960s and early 1970s, changes that signaled the end of an era for the neighborhood and the church at its heart. As the 1960s wore on, the Tri-Cities slowly became less segregated, a process that proceeded through both major events, like the 1965 closure of Whittier School, and minor ones, like families successfully procuring housing west of 4th Avenue in Pasco or occasionally in Richland (and even, eventually, a handful in the notorious conservative “sundown town” of Kennewick). De-segregation proceeded slowly until the late 1960s, when urban renewal wiped out thirteen entire blocks of East Pasco residences near Morning Star. By the end of the first Urban Renewal program in 1976, the Rev. Allen’s household was merely one

^{xxx} Tri-Cities Ethnic Players, “Cultural Awareness: Pasco’s Black Community (in Celebration of Pasco’s Centennial, 1884-1984) [Pamphlet],” sec. Politics.

^{xxxix} Interview with Wally Webster.

^{xxxii} Interview with Dallas Barnes, Webster Jackson, Albert Wilkins at Morning Star Baptist Church, Pasco, WA.

^{xxxiii} *Pasco’s African American History*.

^{xxxiv} Morning Star Church Interview with Pastor Albert Wilkins, Dr. Dallas Barnes, and Mr. Webster Jackson; *Pasco’s African American History*.

^{xxxv} Interview with David (Duke) Mitchell.

^{xxxvi} Interview with Dallas Barnes, Webster Jackson, Albert Wilkins at Morning Star Baptist Church, Pasco, WA.

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among hundreds that were forced to find other places to live. Regardless, Morning Star continued to be the religious, cultural, and institutional heart of the Black community but it was no longer its physical center.

In the late 1960s, as civil rights efforts gained attention and traction nationally, they did the same locally, and the de-segregation that dispersed the Black population of East Pasco was but one result. The Tri-Cities Black population fought tirelessly in this period, as before, for basic civil and human rights, and many of their activities continued to be based out of, and nurtured by, Morning Star Baptist Church. Indeed, sometimes the church's ongoing institution-building role became quite literal. After 1968, when Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated and civil rights issues came to the fore across the country, some leaders of Pasco's Black community began dreaming of a dedicated, purpose-built East Pasco community center. Soon the center had sponsors, and proponents were reporting that "land near Kurtzman Park is already available for the center."^{xxxvii} After several years of diligent work, construction of the Martin Luther King Center began in 1972, and the community center opened in November 1975 on Wehe, just south of E. Lewis, a few blocks northwest of Morning Star. As Wally Webster, leader of the community center effort, recalled years later, they eventually "got some \$440,000-\$450,000 to build what is now known as the Martin Luther King Center in east Pasco. ... And it became a community center. ... all of that came out of the basement of Morning Star Baptist Church."^{xxxviii}

The Rev. F. A. Allen continued to lead Morning Star into the 1980s. In 1983 Allen was succeeded by the Rev. A.S. Rhodes. By 1986, the Morning Star congregation "consist[ed] of more than 500 members."^{xxxix} In subsequent decades, the church continued as Black Pasco's prominent community core, its institutional leader. As a 1996 retrospective article noted, "White political leaders often include Morning Star as part of the campaign trail. Among them was Joyce DeFelice, when she was running for the Pasco city council, and former congressman Jay Inslee who also attended services at Morning Star."^{xl}

The church's pivotal role in the history of the Tri-Cities Black community has been recognized, and honored, in a series of historical publications and projects. These include a Morning Star webpage on Blackpast.org (an "online reference center" devoted to Black history); a Morning Star webpage on the National Park Service's Manhattan Project National Historic Park website; a Morning Star interview (with Pastor Albert Wilkins and several longtime church members) for the 2018 Hanford Oral History project; a 2019 Cultural Resource survey and report for the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation; and a 2019 video production under the auspices of the City of Pasco's Historic Preservation Commission.^{xli}

Morning Star Pastors:

Rev. J. L. Stewart – 1945 - 1947

Rev. E.M Howard – 1948 - 1958

Rev. F. A. Allen – 1958 - 1982

Rev. Alvin S. Rhodes – 1983 - 2000

Rev. Albert Wilkins – 2001- Present

^{xxxvii} "Pasco Center Gets Sponsors."

^{xxxviii} Interview with Wally Webster.

^{xxxix} "Tri City Church Focus: Morning Star Baptist Church (Newspaper Clipping)." Tri-Cities Ethnic Players, "Cultural Awareness: Pasco's Black Community (in Celebration of Pasco's Centennial, 1884-1984) [Pamphlet]," sec. Religion.

^{xl} "50 Years of Spiritual Harmony."

^{xli} Newman, "Morning Star Baptist Church, Pasco, WA (1946-)"; "Morningstar Baptist Church (U.S. National Park Service)"; Holschuh and Harris Environmental Group, "Survey of Historic Properties Associated with the African American Experience in East Pasco"; *Pasco's African American History*; Interview with Dallas Barnes, Webster Jackson, Albert Wilkins at Morning Star Baptist Church, Pasco, WA.

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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: Morning Star Baptist Church records

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

MORNING STAR BAPTIST CHURCH
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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less Than One Acre

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Or Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>46.228322°</u>	<u>-119.071795°</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude

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

The nominated area is located in Section 28 of Township 09, Range 30, east of the Willamette Meridian, in Franklin County, Washington and is legally described as lots 69 through 72, Block 2, of the Terrace Heights Addition, in Pasco, Washington. It is otherwise known as Parcel No. 113851217.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property encompasses all the land associated with the Morning Star Baptist Church including the adjacent paved and unpaved parking areas, and newer garage.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Delia Hagen, PhD (Edited by DAHP Staff)
organization Hagen Historical Consulting (HHC) date June 2022
street & number 210 N. Higgins Ave., Suite 328 telephone (406) 360-0120
city or town Missoula state MT zip code 59802
e-mail deliahagen@yahoo.com

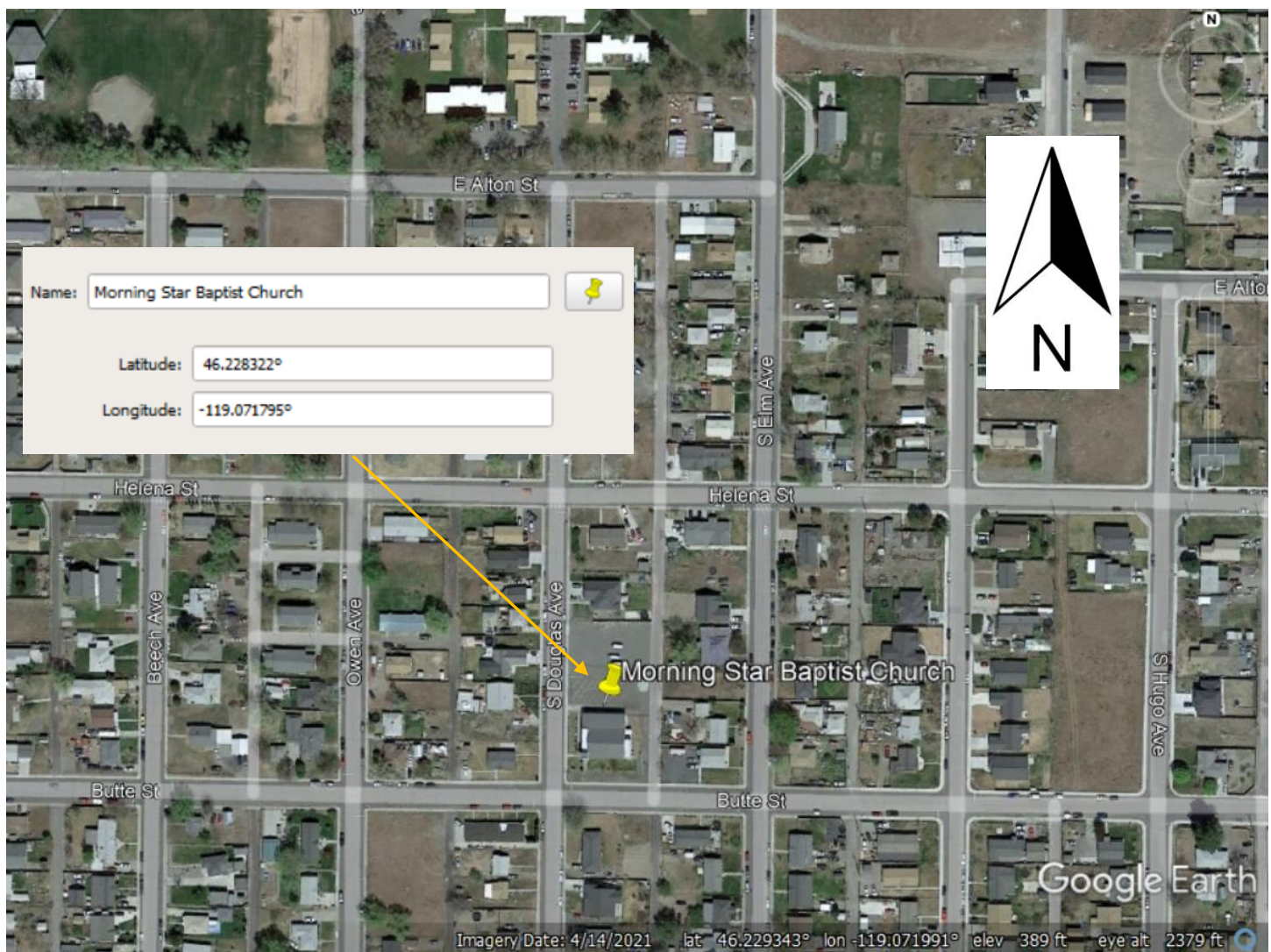
MORNING STAR BAPTIST CHURCH
Name of Property

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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.)



Google Earth Map
Morning Star Baptist Church
631 Douglas Ave S., Pasco, WA

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Nomination Boundary Map

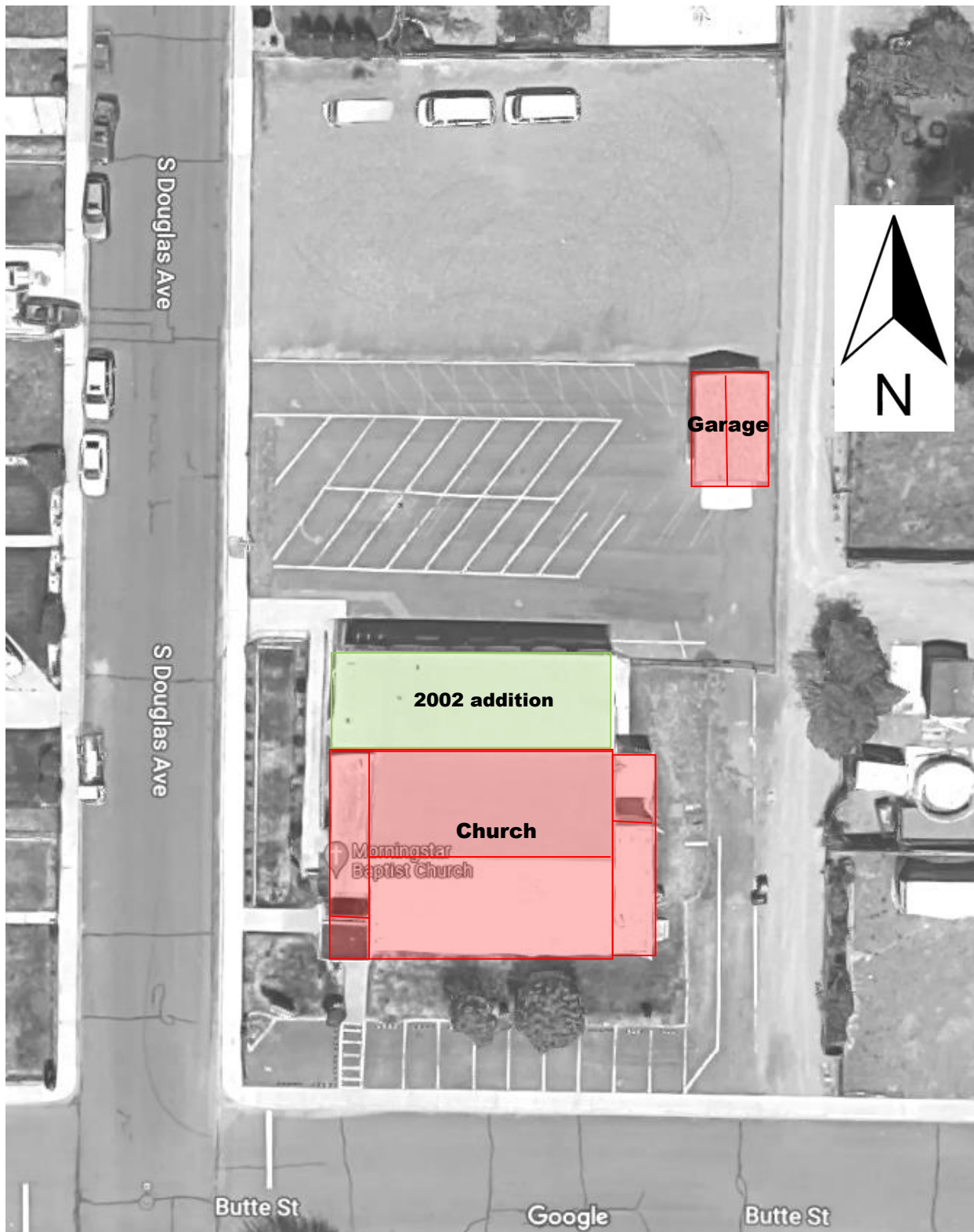
Morning Star Baptist Church
631 Douglas Ave S., Pasco, WA

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Site Map

Morning Star Baptist Church
631 Douglas Ave S., Pasco, WA

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GOING UP — Pasco's new Morning Star Baptist Church building is shown nearing completion at 632 Douglas St. The religious edifice, comprising a full basement and 3,200 square feet of floor space, is expected to be completed in September.

Construction photo - Tri-City Herald – June 10, 1955.



Advertisement - Tri-City Herald – November 12, 1965.

**Dedication
Of Church
Set Today**

Members of the Morning Star Baptist Church in Pasco will dedicate the church they will built at 3 p.m. today, the Rev. E. M. Howard, pastor, announced yesterday.

The dedication address will be given by the Rev. E. B. Reed, moderator of the General Baptist Assn. of Washington.

The church is located at Butte and Douglas Sts. It was built at a cost of \$65,000.

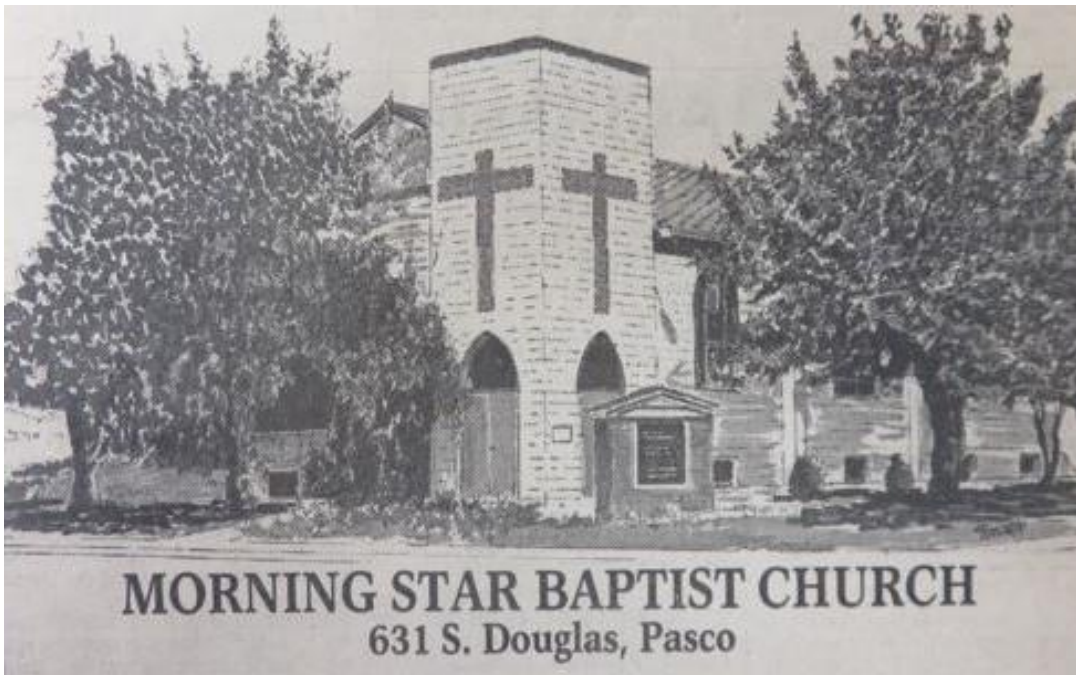
Dedication Announcement -
Tri-City Herald –
April 14, 1957.

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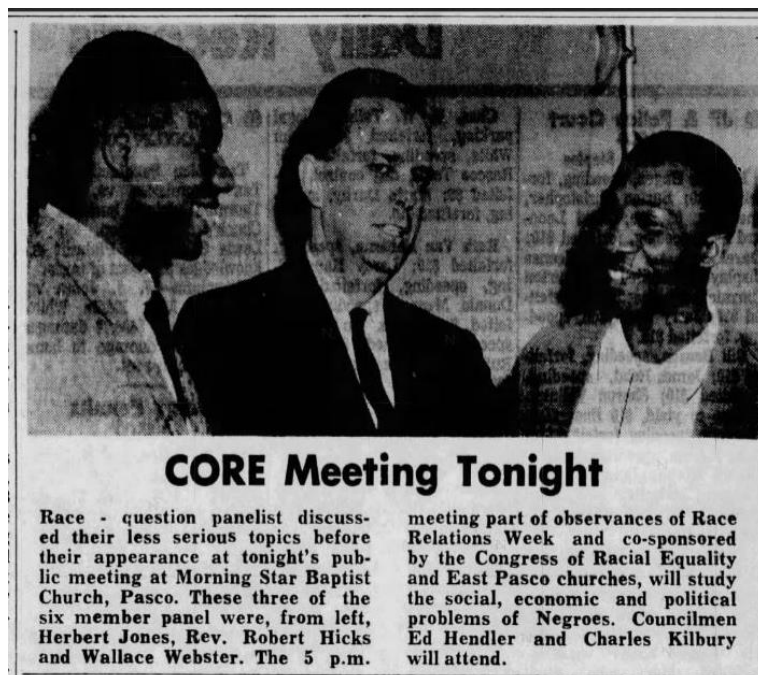
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Morning Star Baptist Church (sketch, 1986)



The Reverend F. A. Allen,
Tri-City Herald –
February 11, 1975.



CORE Meeting held at Morning Star, Tri-City Herald - February 23, 1964.

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HOLD DINNER — The choir of the Pasco Morning Star Baptist Church are shown at their recent Christmas dinner at the homes of Mrs. Lucinda Cloy. Standing, from left are, Mrs. C. Up-ton, Mrs. V. Williams, E. Ush, Beatrice Taylor, Mrs. M. Calhoun and Mrs. O. Benefield, president. Seated, from left, Mrs. Cloy, Mrs. Emily Jackson, Mrs. A. Gholur and Mrs. L. Givens

Choir of the Morning Star Baptist Church - Tri-City Herald – December 23, 1955.

Whittier PTA To Meet
Whittier School PTA of Pasco will meet Monday in the multi-purpose room. The Morning Star Baptist Church Choir will entertain.

Whittier School PTA Meeting held at Morning Star, Tri-City Herald – January 15, 1961.

**GENERAL BAPTIST CONVENTION
OF THE NORTHWEST
20th ANNUAL SESSION
at the
Morning Star Baptist Church
631 S. Douglas**
Rev. F. A. ALLEN - Pastor
Dr. O. B. WILLIAMS - President
Dr. LUKE W. MINGO - Guest Speaker

Baptist Convention of the Northwest held at Morning Star, Tri-City Herald – July 21, 1972.

**Civil Rights Rally Set
At Morning Star Church**
A civil rights rally, sponsored by the Pasco East Side Improvement Assn. and the Youth for Pasco, will be held Sunday at 3 p.m. at the Morning Star Baptist Church, Douglas and Butte Sts.
The groups have arranged for a state legislator and a minister to be the featured speaker. The legislator is Mike McCormack, Democratic representative from Richland, and the minister the Rev. Robert Waller, pastor of the Kennewick West Highlands Methodist Church.
McCormack will speak on "Past, Present and Future State Civil Rights Legislation," and Mr. Waller on "The Church and Social Responsibility."
At the close of the meeting, donations will be accepted for "Dollars of Immediate Improvements." The fund is to mainly go for more recreational facilities for youth.
The Rev. James A. Covington, pastor of the St. James Christian Methodist Church, will act as master of ceremonies. He said, "Confronted as we are by threats to our democratic way of life, there can be little question of our critical need today both to make positive re-affirmation of our democratic beliefs, and to strengthen the weak spots in our practice of democracy. From all sides comes testimony that our treatment of the Negro in America constitutes the most glaring 'beam in our own eye', the removal of which demands our most thoughtful and persistent efforts."

Civil Rights Rally held at Morning Star, Tri-City Herald – July 18, 1958.

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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: Morning Star Baptist Church

City or Vicinity: Pasco

County: Franklin **State:** WA

Photographer: Delia Hagen (0003, 0005, 0008, 0009, 0010, 0013-0015) &
Michael Houser (0001, 0002, 0004 - 0007, 0011, 0012)

Date Photographed: January 30, 2021, July 21, 2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number:



WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0001. Looking northeast to the church property.

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WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0002 Looking east to the west (front) wall of the church.



WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0003. Looking north to the south (side) wall of the church.

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WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0004. Looking west to the east (rear) wall of the church.



WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0005 Looking east-southeast to the north (side) wall of the church.

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WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0006 Main sanctuary space, view toward alter.



WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0007 Detail of Baptismal area.

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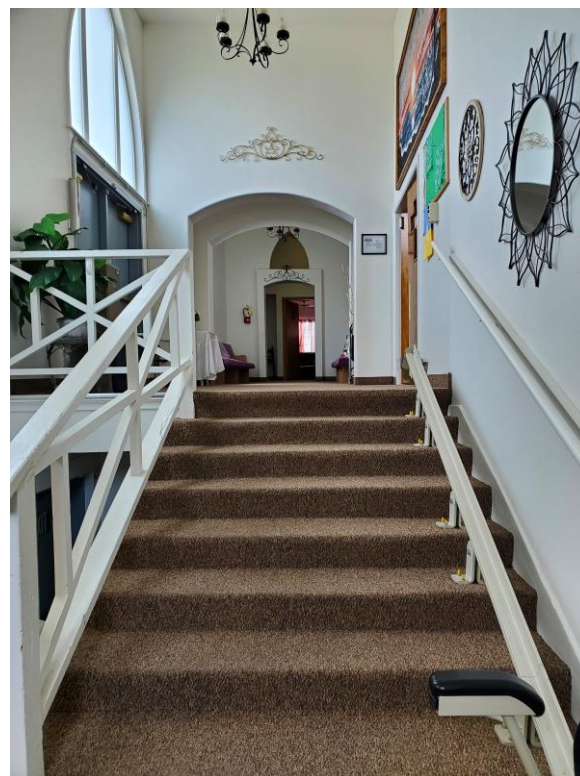
County and State



WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0008 Basement fellowship hall.



WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0009 Narthex area, main sanctuary doors and exterior doors.



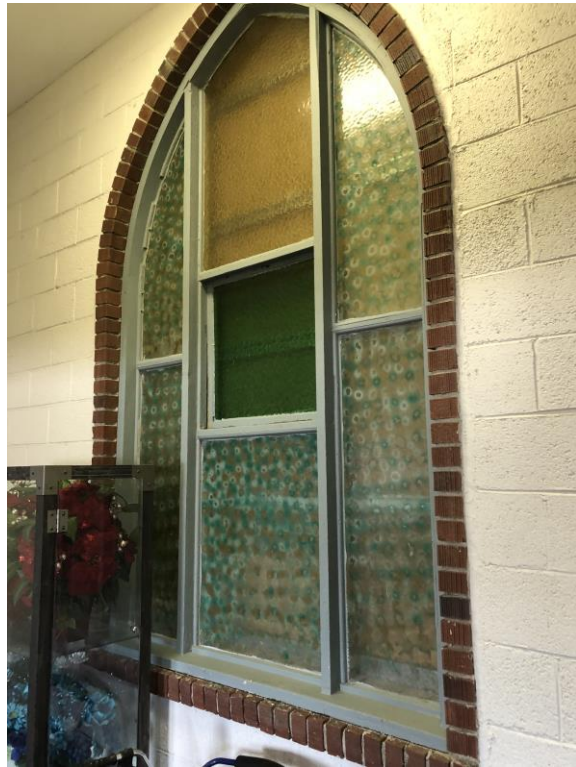
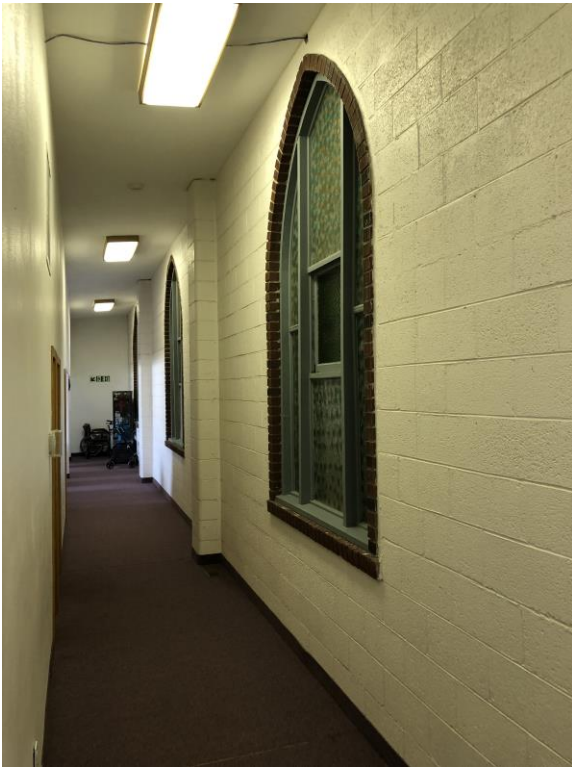
WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0010 Narthex area, view from basement stair landing.

MORNING STAR BAPTIST CHURCH

Name of Property

FRANKLIN CO., WA

County and State



WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0011 New hallway formed after 2002 addition.

WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0012 Detail of original window in main sanctuary space.



WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0013 Looking north to the south (front) and east (side) walls of the garage.

MORNING STAR BAPTIST CHURCH

Name of Property

FRANKLIN CO., WA

County and State



WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0014. Looking east-northeast to the west (side) and south (front) walls of the garage.



WA_Franklin_MorningStarBaptistChurch_0015. Looking southeast over the church grounds from the northwest corner of the graveled parking area.

MORNING STAR BAPTIST CHURCH
Name of Property

FRANKLIN CO., WA
County and State

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

name Morning Star Baptist Church – CO: Rev. Albert Wilkins
street & number 631 S. Douglas Ave telephone (509) 545-4027
city or town Pasco state WA zip code 99301

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.