

*Central Church of Christ*  
1401 S. Monroe St.

*First Baptist Church*  
1208 S. Tyler St.

The Downtown Amarillo  
*Historic Church Tour*

**Founded: 1908**  
**Builder: Frank Little**  
**1930**

The 1930s sanctuary of the Central Church of Christ stands in contrast to its modern counterpart, which was completed in the 1980s. The brick church has Gothic ornamentation and cast-stone trim. Massive brick buttresses give the church building its distinctive style. A short tower at the rear and a gable roof break up the rectangular design. Stained-glass windows adorn the building and take advantage of natural light.

In 2009, the church completed a \$3 million renovation and constructed a youth center on its campus.

The building is included in the Amarillo Historic Survey, published by the city of Amarillo in 1981.

**Founded: 1889**  
**Architects: Ferrand and Fitch of St. Louis**  
**and Guy Carlander**  
**1929**

The campus of the First Baptist Church completed its streetscape project in 2010 linking its original building with the Educational Building, which was built in 1954, and the sanctuary, which was completed in 1929. The streetscape also links the Family Life Center to the south with a dramatic new entrance and portico, bringing the architectural elements together.

The original building was constructed at 500 Pierce St. and later moved to the 200 block of North Taylor. The congregation moved the building to its present location in 1964, where it was restored.

The main sanctuary is a brick and terra cotta structure with distinctive Byzantine ornamentation defined by arches, which repeat in the main exterior entrance and the design around the altar and choir loft at the front of the church. A rear corner bell tower and green tile roof define the church against the downtown skyline.

The building is included in the Amarillo Historic Survey, published by the city of Amarillo in 1981. Both the original building and the 1929 sanctuary carry historical markers.

**Center City of Amarillo, Inc.**

Center City of Amarillo is a nonprofit organization dedicated to downtown revitalization. Center City is a nationally recognized member of both the Texas and National Main Street programs.

Through historic preservation, promotion and special events, Center City strives to make downtown Amarillo a great place to live, work, play, learn and worship for generations to come.

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Resources and study guides for the PBS documentary *God in America* are available at:  
[kacv.org/godinamerica](http://kacv.org/godinamerica)



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*First Presbyterian Church*  
1100 S. Harrison St.

**Founded:**  
**Architects:** Mount Zion Church  
**118 S. Van Buren St.**

Founded as Central Presbyterian Church, the stone structure is a Gothic Revival style designed around an open courtyard. Steeply pitched gabled roofs are brought close to the ground to keep the massive structure in scale with its residential neighbors. The walls of the complex are limestone with cast stone trim. Pointed arched windows frame the church. An open walkway continues the design element. The roof line is punctuated with both a steeple and a rear bell tower.

Stained-glass windows and beamed ceilings are distinctive interior details. The building is included in the Amarillo Historic Survey, published by the city of Amarillo in 1981. It is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



*Mt. Zion Baptist Church*  
118 S. Van Buren St.

**Founded: 1910**  
**Builder:** Unknown  
**1916**

Congregations in the black community met in homes until they could build churches. According to “African Americans in Amarillo,” by Claudia Stuart and Jean Stuntz, the First Baptist Church of Amarillo assisted with the site and frame for the original church structure of Mount Zion. The cornerstone was laid, and the church was dedicated in 1916. The brick structure is a landmark with the motto “Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church is the friendly church on the corner where we enter to worship and depart to serve.”

Originally, land located at Jackson Street and Second Avenue was purchased for a church site, and a small house was bought and placed on the lot for a pastorium. Later, with church membership expanding, it was determined that the lot was too small for a church building, and a new church site was purchased at Second Avenue and Van Buren Street. The church was built and dedicated in 1916. In 1998, Oprah Winfrey visited the church twice during her time in Amarillo for her libel lawsuit trial that she eventually won against Texas cattlemen.



*Polk Street Methodist Church*  
1401 S. Polk St.

**Founded: 1889**  
**Architects:** J. Roy Smith and  
**R.H. Hunt & Co.**  
**1928**

The first Methodist church in Amarillo, built in 1889 on Jackson Street, was a wood-frame structure. The church later moved to 800 S. Polk St. to a larger brick building. The current building was inspired by the First Methodist Church of Dallas. The main buildings are clad in a warm textured brown brick with cream terra cotta trim. A green gable roof contrasts with the stone, giving the church a massive presence. The main church complex is designed in the Gothic style, while the parsonage – or preacher’s house next door – is in the English Tudor style. The church has been immaculately maintained. Recently the congregation illuminated the dominant stained-glass window of the Good Shepherd above the main entrance so that it would be visible at night. An asymmetrical lighted bell tower gives the church a distinctive skyline at night.

The building is included in the Amarillo Historic Survey, published by the city of Amarillo in 1981. The survey indicates the building would be eligible for listing on the National Register on its architectural merits alone.



*St. Mary's Catholic Church*  
1200 S. Washington

**Founded: 1959**  
**Rebuilt: 2009**

The newly constructed sanctuary of St. Mary’s Catholic Church caps a long history of St. Mary’s in downtown Amarillo. St. Mary’s became a parish in 1959. At that time, the congregation met in a chapel moved from Amarillo Air Base. In 1981, the first St. Mary’s sanctuary was dedicated on South Washington Street. That modern structure was destroyed by a tragic fire in 2007. In 2009, the congregation dedicated the new building.

The sanctuary, gathering area and morning mass chapel have modern and classic lines. Radius pews echo the shape of the near-round sanctuary. Fourteen Stations of the Cross encircle about three-quarters of the space. The stations, which tell the story of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection in pictures, are boldly colored Italian mosaics against a gold background.

