

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The First Presbyterian Church of Ruston (1923-24) is a six bay, brick, Gothic style, basilican plan building with a contemporaneous service wing. The church is located in the Ruston central business district near the eastern edge. Despite a few alterations, the building retains its National Register eligibility.

The Flemish bond brick structure is trimmed with limestone. The gable parapeted nave is entered by means of a crenellated single bay porch which is surmounted by a large lancet window. The single side tower also has a crenellated top and an ornamental needle spire formed of sheet metal. All lancet windows on the church are of the two center type. The two story service wing features a gabled pavilion which is visually connected to the church by a two bay arcade formed of Tudor arches. Perhaps the intent here was to suggest a cloister.

The nave features a complex exposed truss roof with ornamental brackets accenting each bay. The original pews and cabinetwork remain.

Integrity:

Since construction the following changes have been made in the church:

1. Air conditioning and a new organ have been installed.
2. An unobtrusive rear wing has been added.

In our opinion, these changes should not be regarded as detrimental to the church's architectural integrity. Its Gothic style features remain plainly visible both inside and out.

Specific dates	1923-24
Builder/Architect	Architect: C. E. Olscher Builder: C. C. Davis

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)
Criterion C

The First Presbyterian Church of Ruston is locally significant in the area of architecture because it is one of Ruston's most sophisticated early-twentieth century buildings.

The Louisiana Comprehensive Historic Structures Survey reveals the extent of Ruston's post-Victorian architectural heritage. There are approximately 450 bungalows (some of which are two story structures in the bungalow style). There are also approximately 100 one and two story commercial style structures. Finally, there are about fifteen Colonial style structures. In addition to these, there are a few higher style structures which are articulated in a well developed, more or less consistent historic style. Of these, the First Presbyterian Church is the only Gothic structure. It stands therefore as a landmark within the context of Ruston's early-twentieth century architectural patrimony.

Major Bibliographical References

Graham, John P. Historical Sketch of the Presbyterian Church, Ruston, Louisiana, 50th Anniversary, 1934

Graham, John P. An Historical Sketch of the Presbyterian Church of Ruston, Seventy-Fifth Anniversary, 1959.

Lincoln Parish Survey, LA State Historic Preservation Office.