

December 8, 2020

St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission
Teresa Kimker, Chair
25 W. 4th Street, 1400 CHA
St. Paul MN 55102

Re: Certified Local Government Comment on the nomination of: Woodland Park Baptist Church,
860 Laurel Avenue, St. Paul, Ramsey County to the National Register of Historic Places

Dear Teresa Kimker:

The above referenced property may be considered by the State Historic Preservation Review Board (SHPRB) for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places on February 16, 2021. Because the City of St. Paul has been granted Certified Local Government (CLG) Status under the provisions of 36 CFR 61.5 and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office's "Procedures for Applying For and Maintaining Certified Local Government Status," the nomination (copy enclosed) is being sent to the Office of the Mayor and to the Heritage Preservation Commission for review at this time.

This nomination is classified as an architectural nomination. (A digital copy of this nomination will be available online approximately one month before the scheduled meeting at: <http://bit.ly/StateReviewBoard>).

After allowing a reasonable opportunity for public comment, the Commission may prepare a report indicating its opinion as to whether the property meets the National Register Criteria (copy enclosed). At least one Commission member who meets the Federal Standards for Historic Architecture or Architectural History (see Appendix A of the state CLG procedures) should participate in formulating that opinion.

If the Heritage Preservation Commission does not include a member who meets the Federal Standards, the city may choose not to comment on this nomination through the CLG review process (in which case please advise the Preservation Office of that choice), or the Heritage Preservation Commission may obtain the opinion of a qualified professional in the subject area and consider the opinion in its recommendations. The comment must include both the credentials and opinion of the consulted professional. If the city chooses not to comment under the CLG process outlined above, comments on a nomination may be submitted to the Preservation Office in as much as any interested party may submit comments.

The Mayor may transmit the report of the Heritage Preservation Commission together with his comments on the eligibility of the property to Amy Spong, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, 50 Sherburne Ave., Suite 203, St. Paul, MN 55155. This response must be received before the close of business on February 12, 2021. Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, if both the Heritage Preservation Commission and the Mayor determine that the property does not meet the criteria, the nomination will not be further considered unless an appeal is filed with the state office.

We should note that the standard notification of SHPRB consideration of this property has been sent to the owner. Appropriate officials will be notified approximately one month before the scheduled meeting.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Amy Spong
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

enc.: National Register Program
National Register Criteria
Copy of National Register Nomination

cc: Unity Baptist Church
c/o Reverend Rosemary Williams
118 North Victoria Street
St. Paul, MN 55104-6521

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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Woodland Park Baptist Church

Other names/site number: Park Baptist Church; Unity Baptist Church

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 860 Laurel Avenue

City or town: St. Paul State: MN County: Ramsey

Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this 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 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 local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

<p>In my opinion, the property <u>meets</u> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

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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

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/religious facility

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVAL/Gothic Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; STONE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The 1907, Woodland Park Baptist Church is a neighborhood church constructed in the early years of residential development in the area west of St. Paul. The church is a two-story, brick building with an intersecting gable roof. The church is designed in the Gothic Revival style, which achieved renewed popularity in church design in the early twentieth century. The design exemplifies the patterns of St. Paul church architecture of the period. Especially in its use of a dark, finish brick with light stone trim details, the incorporation of a corner tower, and the dominant use of the Gothic or lancet arch.¹ The church retains a high level of historic integrity.

Further, the interior of the church retains its original floor plan on both the first and second floors. Specifically, the church retains the significant, character-defining, Akron Plan which dominated church design across the Protestant denominational spectrum from ca.1876-1918. The interior features an adjoining auditorium and classroom, ladies' lounge, large community space, and kitchen. With the original floor plan retained, the interior retains a high level of historic integrity.

The church's form and construction materials stand in contrast to other churches located in the Summit-University neighborhood, which are predominantly limestone constructions with a center aisle sanctuary. Woodland Park Baptist Church is the only church in the Summit-University neighborhood, of any style or construction material, that utilizes the Akron Plan.² Further,

¹ The type of stone used throughout the exterior remains to be determined. Given the building's construction date, the material could be cast stone rather than a natural material.

² The sole church identified in the 2001 "St. Paul Historic Context Study: Churches, Synagogues, and Religious Buildings: 1849- 1950" as using the Akron Plan is Central Presbyterian Church near downtown St. Paul.

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Woodland Park Baptist Church is the sole representative of this specific stylistic expression of the Gothic Revival style.

Narrative Description: Site

Woodland Park Baptist Church is in a residential neighborhood, west of the original town of St. Paul (Figure 02). Today, falling within the boundaries of the Summit-University neighborhood, the six blocks that comprise Bryant's Addition were, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, wedged between the large residential developments of Summit Park (to the southwest) and Woodland Park (to the east). Other small additions, such as Holcombe and Palace, adjoined Bryant's Addition in the developing residential area between Summit and Woodland Parks.

The blocks of Bryant's Addition and adjacent residential additions are visually characterized by their late nineteenth and early twentieth century development period. The streetscapes are dominated by moderate sized residences representative of the cross-section of stylistic influences of the early twentieth century; Neo-Classical, Late Victorian, and American vernacular architecture are all present. The mid-sized scale and dominant use of wood-frame construction in the neighborhood stands in contrast to the large, stone and brick, architect-designed homes that characterize the city's historically affluent neighborhoods, like that along nearby Summit Avenue. Residences are densely arranged, with minimal side yards. They typically share a common setback from the public sidewalk and the rear of the property often includes a small backyard and a garage abutting the alley.

The Church is located on the southeast corner of Laurel Avenue and N. Victoria Street (Photograph 01). The building shares the setback of the houses to its east. Although the grade on the residential lots is elevated by approximately four-feet, the site of the church building is nearly flat; a sharp change in slope between the church's east elevation and the adjacent house suggests that, at the time of construction, the church site was graded to level it.

Typical of the surrounding neighborhood, this block of Bryant's Addition is densely developed. The church building occupies Lots 14 and 15 of Block 1 in the addition. The parcel is bounded on the south by the public alley, on the west by the public sidewalk running parallel to N. Victoria Street, on the north by the public sidewalk running parallel to Laurel Avenue, and on the east by the property line that separates the church building from the adjacent house (Figure 03). A distance of no more than two feet separates the church from the residence.

Narrative Description: Building

The Woodland Park Baptist Church is a two-story, brick, 70- by 100-ft. building constructed on a limestone foundation. The building's visual character relies on its compressed footprint on a corner lot, its intersecting gable roof with prominent gable ends, corner tower with primary entrances on either side (north and west), its contrasting use of dark brick with light stone finishing details, and the incorporation of the Gothic arch in the most prominent of the church's openings (e.g. large stained-glass windows). The church interior houses a large auditorium-type sanctuary with dais,

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pipe organ, baptismal pool, and stained-glass windows. The adjoining educational wing houses two large Sunday school rooms, an office, and a ladies' lounge on the first floor, with a large community room and a kitchen on the second. Two large rooms in the basement are finished to serve as recreational and gathering spaces (Figure 14-15).

Exterior

As noted, the exterior character of Woodland Park Baptist Church relies on its compressed footprint on a corner lot, its intersecting gable roof with prominent gable ends, the corner tower with primary entrances on either side (north and west), its contrasting use of dark brick with light stone finishing details, and the use of the Gothic arch in the building's primary openings.

As a corner property, the Woodland Park Baptist Church has two primary elevations – the north and the west. The composition of the north elevation (fronting Laurel Avenue), with a doorway at the base of the corner tower and a large, stained glass window dominating the remainder of the elevation, reads as the façade. The fact that the historic address was Laurel Avenue supports that assertion.

The church building is comprised of two primary sections: an auditorium-type sanctuary and an education wing. The auditorium-type sanctuary is called out on the exterior by its intersecting roof and large, stained-glass windows set in gothic arch openings. The spaces in the education wing are called out by a secondary entrance on N. Victoria Street and the more utilitarian fenestration (i.e., located for interior function, without gothic arch, and clear-glazed).

The exterior of the building is finished in a brown brick laid in a running bond with raked joints of rose-colored mortar. The brick above the water-table is lighter in color and the bricks have various tones of brown, creating a slightly mottled effect. Below the water-table, the brick is dark brown - the contrast against the lighter brick creating a visual sense of grounding. Generally, the brick is in fair to good condition with numerous areas requiring repointing and other areas of poor-quality repairs, including the brick wing-walls and the southwest corner pier. Stone trim details are used liberally on the north and west elevations and conservatively on the rear and east elevations. The stone is used to frame window and door openings as well as to cap corner piers, gable ends, and the piers of the corner tower. It is also used for horizontal banding on the tower and water-table. The entire roof (including the tower) is currently sheathed in asphalt shingles.

Façade (North elevation)

The church façade (north elevation) features the corner tower and a large expanse of wall plane that is framed by the gable end of the intersecting gable roof (Photograph 02).

The corner tower follows the material and stylistic standards of the church body. The tower is square in plan and rises above the main roof ridge by approximately 20-feet. Corner piers rise approximately halfway up the height of the tower; the stepped piers are brick with three stone block details located along its length, including the termination cap. The tower entrances are located above grade, accessed by a series of steps flanked by stone-capped, brick wing walls. Non-

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historic, steel handrails are mounted to either side of the steps. The steps are relatively recent, concrete replacements of what were stone steps (the top stone tread is retained). Doorways are located on the north and west sides of the tower. Both openings are lancet arches and are framed in a wide, stone surround with a label molding and stop. A pair of heavy, panel and glass doors fill the opening. The doors are detailed with lancet and quatrefoil motifs. A lancet-arch transom surmounts the doors. The transom is glazed with stained-glass in an organic, fan-like motif. A Plexiglas exterior window has been added to protect the stained-glass. A grouping of three, louvered openings are in the upper portion of the tower. The openings are a lancet arch in form, they share a stone sill, and have a label molding with a stop that, on the northwest corner, extends to wrap around to the west tower elevation. The existing louvers are replacements of the original, the louvers of which were more widely spaced. A stone running band wraps around the tower, just below the transition to the tower's termination. The band has a label molding. The tower is terminated by short piers located at each corner. The piers have stone caps with label moldings. The roof eave extends between each corner pier for an approximate one-foot overhang. The current gutters are later iterations of the historic. The roof is sheathed in green, asphalt shingles and a simple finial is mounted at the peak.

The gable end of the intersecting roof frames the remainder of the façade (north elevation), with fenestration dominating the wall plane. A box bay is centered in the gable end on the first floor, the outer walls of the bay extending above the height of the bay itself. The bay has two pair of rectangular, wood frame, stained glass windows. Each window is comprised of a large window surmounted by a smaller, transom window (a configuration that is repeated on all elevations). Each pair shares a stone sill and stone header. One pair of windows is located on either side of the bay; the pair are the same in composition and detail as those located in the bay. Surmounting the bay is a large, lancet arch, stained-glass window. The window is divided into three lancet arches with three circles set into the voids formed by the pointed heads of the lancets. On the exterior, wood storm windows are arranged in this manner, while on the interior (described later) the forms are more elegantly executed.

The gable end is terminated by a corner buttress pier, similar in scale and detail as those of the tower. The gable end pier, however, is approximately two thirds the height. The roof eave passes through a narrow cut in the gable end parapet wall – a method of channeling rainwater to the downspout leader head, which appears original to the building. The gable end parapet has a stone coping with what appears to be a Celtic cross mounted at its peak.

West Elevation

The north end of the church's west elevation is largely a reiteration of the façade (this portion being associated with the church sanctuary), with the south end of the elevation (the educational wing) a variation on the theme (Photograph 03). The north end of the elevation features the corner tower, the details of which are identical to the façade. The historic paired doors are retained with stained glass transom also retained. In contrast to the façade, the stone steps are retained on the west elevation.

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The gable end form on the west elevation repeats the placement of large, stained glass window in the upper wall plane, with an identical window arrangement. The exterior storm is also retained, but in a deteriorated condition. The first-floor windows are the same in configuration as those of the facade but are arranged in a ribbon of five rather than in pairs. The ribbon grouping shares a single stone sill and a wide, stone lintel. A small louvered opening is located near the gable peak; it has a stone sill and lintel. The gable end parapet retains its stone coping.

A secondary entrance is located near the south end of the gable end form, marking the transition from sanctuary to educational wing (Photograph 04). The entrance is like those in the tower. The entrance has a lancet arch form, paired, glass and wood doors with lancet and quatrefoil motifs, stone and concrete steps with stone-capped, brick wing walls, and stained-glass transom with Plexiglas storm. The only apparent variation from the tower entrances is the absence of a label molding on the stone surround.

To the south of the secondary entrance is a canted bay; the main, interior staircase is located in the bay. The bay has a single, bricked-in window at basement level and a window in each of the three sides of the bay. The side walls have a single, double-hung window in a wood frame. The remaining wall has a pair of the same window type. All windows have Plexiglas storms and a shared stone sill and lintel. The roof of the bay is covered in a smooth, metal sheathing. The metal is flashed up the adjacent wall in an inappropriate manner. This was likely done as a result of run-off issues created by a shed roof, which extends from the main roof at the juncture of the intersecting gables. A large downspout directs rainwater from the shed roof gutter to near the foundation wall.

The west elevation south of the bay is a gable end form. This portion of the elevation is characterized by its fenestration, which is simple and functional. Four fixed windows are located at basement level. On the first floor, four windows align with the basement openings. The windows are configured with a double-hung surmounted by a transom. Each window is clear glazed with a dedicated stone sill and lintel. On the second floor, four windows align with those of the first. The windows are similar in appearance but lack a transom. All are clear glazed with a dedicated stone sill and lintel. A small louvered opening is located near the gable peak; it has a stone sill and lintel. The gable end parapet retains its stone coping. A corner, stepped pier with stone details terminates the south end of the west elevation.

South Elevation

The south (rear) elevation is characterized by its three-bay composition and gable end form, which is centered on the elevation (Photograph 04). The elevation lacks the decorative detail used on the west and the north. The limestone foundation is exposed on the rear, which slopes slightly moving from west to east.

A pair of brick piers with stone caps frames the center bay. Similar window groupings are located on the first and second floors between the piers. Each grouping is comprised of a large center window with a transom, which is flanked by tall, narrow, double-hung windows with transoms. Each opening has a segmental arched header, a soldiered brick lintel, and a stone sill. The large

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window of the first floor grouping originally held a stained-glass window depicting a verse from St. Luke. The window was removed at an undetermined time, framed, and is mounted on an interior wall in the second-floor community room. The opening is now clear glazed. The transom retains its historic diamond panes. The flanking windows also had diamond panes, which have been replaced. The large window of the second floor retains, what appears to be, the original window. It is wood framed, fixed with a three-over-three light configuration. The transom also appears to be original. The west bay has three windows at each level, located in alignment. The configuration of each is the same as those of the west elevation with the segmental arched header, soldiered brick lintel, and stone sill that typifies this elevation. The east bay is similarly arranged, with a door located in place of a first-floor window. Corner buttress piers with stone details terminate the east and west ends of the south elevation. The west pier and adjacent wall show signs of water infiltration, which has caused brick and mortar loss.

East Elevation

Evaluation of the east elevation is encumbered by the proximity of the adjacent building, which fully obscures the first floor (Photograph 05). The presence of heavy vines over the second story further impairs evaluation. Generally, the elevation extends to the north where it intersects the east facing gable end at the front of the building, which projects approximately six feet. The east elevation repeats the materials utilized on all elevations. Partially visible second story windows have segmental arched heads and likely incorporate the soldiered brick lintels used on the south elevation. Stone sills are visible. A large, brick chimney is located near the center of the elevation. The chimney rises approximately 20-feet above the roof height. On the first floor, a boarded window opening located in the east gable end is just visible from the alley; the window opening is in a first-floor space behind the sanctuary dais (it is not visible from the sanctuary). The opening has a lancet arch form with a soldiered brick lintel.

Interior

The interior of Woodland Park Baptist Church is comprised of the large, auditorium-type sanctuary and education wing that supports a variety of church functions including administration, congregating, sharing meals, and study. The interior retains a generally high level of historic integrity.

First Floor

The first floor is divided into approximately equal halves, with the north half dominated by the large sanctuary and the south half housing a ladies' parlor, a study, and three large classrooms.

The sanctuary is a large, auditorium-type, nearly square room with a sloped floor, vaulted ceiling, rows of wood, curved pews arranged in four banks, a raised dais with pipe organ on the east – all colored by the green and gold tones of the stained-glass windows located on the north and west (Photograph 06). The walls of the space are smooth, painted plaster with dark-stained window trim, baseboard, and crown molding. The floors are wood, with sections (including the dais) covered in low-pile carpeting.

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Typical of the auditorium-type, the primary entrance to the sanctuary is from the side, versus a centered entrance aligned with a center aisle (nave) that typifies sanctuaries of the Latin Cross or basilica forms. The primary entrance to the Woodland Park Baptist sanctuary is on the west through either the tower vestibule or the vestibule inside the secondary entrance. Both vestibules are in boxy forms at the rear of the sanctuary, the boxed forms being an integrated feature of the roof structure. At that location, the intersecting gable roof rises from the corners toward the center, creating a lancet arched frame for the north windows. The roof form is similarly articulated on all sides, with the intersecting roof rising high in the space to a flat plane at the center of the room. The ceiling is finished in smooth, painted plaster with applied ornamentation limited to a simple trim molding around the perimeter of the small flat ceiling plane at the center of the room.

The dais at the front (east) of the sanctuary stretches the full width of the room and is comprised of a curved, raised platform with a pulpit (Photograph 07). A choir loft and pipe organ are located behind the pulpit. Wood paneling provides the backdrop for the dais and the walls for the choir loft. The paneling is dark wood with a lancet arch motif repeated along its full length. The sanctuary remains largely unaltered; the sole apparent alteration involves alteration of a section of the dais paneling for use as a baptismal pool. The south wall of the sanctuary is dominated by a series of multi-paned, operable windows that connect the sanctuary to the adjacent classroom.

A large classroom adjoins the sanctuary. As noted, a series of casement windows runs the length of the wall between the classroom and the sanctuary (Photographs 8-9). This feature is typical of the Akron Plan, the focus of which was creation of flexibility to integrate classroom and worship spaces. The large classroom space is rectangular in form with a tall ceiling. Walls and ceiling remain plaster finished and painted, and the floors are currently covered in carpet. Typical throughout the interior, the classroom retains its original millwork including baseboard, window trim, and doors. An office is located at the east end of the space. A single leaf door flanked by small, fixed windows set high in the wall mark the location of the office. The openings are trimmed in dark, stained millwork. The south wall of the room is also comprised of multi-paned windows, with a two-leaf door set on center. That space is similar in character, with ceiling height and millwork retained, though painted. Plaster walls and ceilings are also retained, and the floor is covered in linoleum tile. The large window on the south wall of this classroom was the original location of the Heinrich Hofmann stained-glass window (Figure 10), now relocated to the second-floor community room.

The former ladies' parlor is in the southwest corner of the first floor. The room is long and narrow, with ceiling heights, wall and ceiling plaster, and millwork retained. Apart from carpeting and window treatments, the room is little changed.

The remaining spaces on the first floor include small storage spaces, a recently remodeled restroom, and a rear staircase in the southeast corner of the building. Except for the restroom, the character of the spaces is in keeping with the first-floor interior, with finishes largely retained.

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The main staircase to the second floor is in the canted bay located on the west elevation. The closed staircase is doglegged with a half-landing (Photograph 13). The sidewalls are plaster finished with dark wood coping and handrails. The treads, risers, and landing are also of dark wood.

The functional space of the second floor represents approximately one-half of the church footprint, the other half of the second floor accounted for by the ceiling height of the sanctuary. The floor houses a large community room with kitchen, an office/study, a classroom, and a restroom. Each space is accessible from the landing at the top of the stairs or off a narrow corridor. Generally, the second floor retains wood flooring (some carpeted over), plaster walls and ceilings, and the original millwork.

A small office (former pastor's study/administrative office) is located on the west, off the corridor. A single door with a pair of small, fixed-pane windows set high in the corridor-side wall mark its location. The room retains its historic plan and millwork, but the walls have been paneled and the ceiling covered in acoustical tile. A small restroom is located across the corridor from the office.

A classroom is in the southwest corner, adjacent to the community room (Photograph 10). The room is well lit by multiple windows, retains plaster walls, and original millwork. The ceiling has been dropped and the wood floor is currently carpeted. The room retains four original, six-panel wood doors with original hardware.

The community room is a large, open space with an adjacent kitchen (Photograph 11). The room has a wood floor, dark wood millwork, and plaster walls with a chair rail. The ceiling is covered in fiberboard tiles and retains early hanging light fixtures. The east wall has one door and a pass-through window opening into the kitchen and one door into a pantry. All doors are original, six-panel wood doors with original hardware. The community room is well lit by the large grouping of windows located on the south wall (previously described). The Hofmann window is framed and mounted on the north wall of the community room.

The kitchen is a long and narrow room on the east side of the building (Photograph 12). The room retains its historic ceiling height, plaster walls and ceiling, openings to adjacent spaces, and some of the early cabinetry. The floor is currently covered in linoleum tile.

Basement

The church basement houses the mechanical plant as well as rooms formerly used as gathering spaces. Generally, the finished spaces have lower ceilings than the upper stories, exposed steel support columns, composition tile floors, and painted walls. The area housing the mechanical plant is unfinished with stone foundation walls exposed.

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Summary

The 1907 Woodland Park Baptist Church was constructed in Bryant's Addition to serve the expanding city of St. Paul. The church was (and remains) a neighborhood church representative of its period of construction in its tie to the role of religious buildings within the city's residential development and in its expression of the Gothic Revival style exemplified by its use of a dark finish brick with light stone trim details, the incorporation of a corner tower, and the dominant use of the Gothic arch.

Further, the interior of the church retains its original floor plan on both the first and second floors. Specifically, the church retains the significant, character-defining, Akron Plan which dominated church design across the Protestant denominational spectrum from ca.1876-1918. The interior features an adjoining auditorium and classroom, ladies' lounge, large community space, and kitchen. With the original floor plan retained, the interior retains a high level of historic integrity.

The church's form and construction materials stand in contrast to other churches located in the Summit-University neighborhood, which are predominantly limestone constructions with a center aisle sanctuary. Woodland Park Baptist Church is the only church in the Summit-University neighborhood, of any style or construction material, that utilizes the Akron Plan.³ Further, Woodland Park Baptist Church is the sole representative of this specific stylistic expression of the Gothic Revival style.

Alterations

Alterations to the Woodland Park Baptist Church occurred multiple times over the many years since its construction. Although specific records of changes have not been located, general references to remodeling and redecorating provide clues to changes made. In addition, historic photographs provide points of comparison to present conditions. Most alterations appear to be cosmetic (e.g., replacement carpeting, fresh paint).

What is described as a "major rehabilitation program" was undertaken in 1934. Historic images included in a 1939 church directory document the results of the \$11,000 rehabilitation. The short description of the rehabilitation states that the "first floor was arranged to provide a ladies' parlor and Sunday school rooms." Some redecorating was also completed, and the sanctuary was re-carpeted.⁴

A 1939 image of the church exterior documents that no obvious changes had been made to the building through this date, including the roof finishes (Figure 06). The image does record the installation of a sign adjacent to (perhaps attached to) the corner of the tower. Also, the patchy appearance of the brick suggests the possibility that efflorescence was a problem at an early date. The church's roof was new in 1939. Worth noting, the tower roof has profiled tiles while the

³ The sole church identified in the 2001 "St. Paul Historic Context Study: Churches, Synagogues, and Religious Buildings: 1849- 1950" as using the Akron Plan is Central Presbyterian Church near downtown St. Paul.

⁴ "Park Baptist, Laurel at Victoria," unpublished booklet available at the church office, 08.

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remainder of the roof has a smooth character; a similar condition seen in a 1907 photograph (Figure 5).

The sanctuary appears today very much as it does in the 1939 image (Figure 07). The sanctuary windows remain intact and without alteration. The vaulted ceiling, pipe organ, arrangement of pews in curved rows, the sloped floor, the raised dais, and the choir loft are all retained. The 1939 written narrative indicates the sanctuary was re-carpeted as part of the 1934 rehabilitation; that was undoubtedly not the last time the carpet was replaced. Today, the wood floor remains exposed under the pews, with carpet used elsewhere in the space. It does appear that some alteration of the wood paneling at right rear of the dais was made after 1939. That area of the dais is now occupied by a baptismal pool, which is incorporated into that section of historic paneling.

Creation of the ladies' parlor occurred as part of the 1934 rehabilitation (Figure 08). The space was described as "dignified for meetings, comfortable for informal affairs, attractive for teas and receptions... as lovely as it is practical." Although the written description notes that the "first floor was arranged" to create a ladies' lounge, it does not appear upon observation of the existing conditions, that an actual change to the floor plans was made to create the room. Today the room remains unchanged from the 1939 image save for paint color, window treatments, hanging light fixtures, and the choice of carpeting. Retained are the full ceiling height, room dimensions, windows, doors, and millwork (including baseboards, door and window trim).

Located on the second floor, the pastor's study was set apart for prayer, meditation, and study (Figure 09). The space also functioned as an administrative office. Today, the pastor's study is the most-changed room in the building. Although the interior windows with their privacy glazing, the exterior windows, and millwork are retained, the walls have been covered in wood paneling, the original picture rail has been removed, and the millwork is painted. The period carpet has also been replaced.

One of the first-floor classrooms was dedicated to the training of the "future leadership in Christian service" (Figure 10). The room contained what was described as "one of the finest windows in any church in the Northwest." A gift from Mr. and Mrs. D.D. Smith in 1906, the window is a depiction of Heinrich Hofmann's 1881 painting, "Jesus in the Temple."⁵ Sometime after 1939, the stained-glass window was removed from this location. It is now framed and mounted on the north wall of the community room (Photograph 11). Back lighting has been added to enliven the stained-glass. With removal of the glass from its original location, the opening was clear-glazed, but the diamond panes were retained in the upper portion of the opening. However, the diamond panes have been removed from the adjacent windows. Otherwise, the room retains its original ceiling height, plaster walls, millwork, and large expanse of windows on the opposite (north) wall.

Regarding the second-floor kitchen (Figure 11), the 1939 description notes that it had been "recently improved" to increase its "efficiency that our women consider it a real pleasure to avail

⁵ "Park Baptist," 1939 and "Park Baptist Church, 1883-1971," 18. While the content of the imagery is based on the work of the German painter, Heinrich Hofmann, the artisan who crafted the window is unknown. Hofmann is well-regarded as a late 19th & early 20th century painter and is best known for his paintings depicting the life of Jesus.

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themselves of its facilities whenever the occasion requires.” Although some minor changes were made subsequent to the 1939 improvements, the kitchen retains its character-defining features including the original floor plan, historic ceiling height, light fixtures minus globes, door and window openings including the pass-through into the adjacent community space, millwork, some cabinets, and the long center work table. Changes include the addition of tile linoleum over the wood floor, removal of the shelf located on the center worktable, and the addition of some cabinets. A narrow pantry is located adjacent to the kitchen, on the south.

Spaces in the basement were remodeled for use by groups within the congregation (Figure 12). The “Rec Room” was refitted by the Young Married People’s Class. The 1939 description notes that the room had ping-pong tables, a piano, a phonograph, radio, and easy chairs. Today, the room appears much as it did in 1939. The ceiling remains covered in tile, the floor in linoleum tiles, and the posts are exposed. The lower, boxed out section seen in 1939 has been removed, but the capital is retained; ceiling light fixtures have been replaced with florescent fixtures, and the walls are painted a single color, which diminishes the horizontal articulation.

A second basement room was remodeled at that time. The finishes are similar to that depicted above. The room was used as a Bible classroom by the men of the church, known as the Brotherhood. The room remains intact and used as overflow storage.

A new boiler, known as the “iron fireman” was installed in 1937. Although now without the “iron fireman” the furnace room retains its historic character as an unfinished space, with limestone foundation walls exposed.

Subsequent remodeling was undertaken in 1944-45 and again in 1960. Although no specific information has been found outlining the scope of either undertaking, a \$10,000 price tag associated with the 1960 project indicates a substantial amount of work, at least a portion of which “resulted in the beautiful sanctuary and more than adequate facilities” in place in 1971.⁶

Historic Integrity

When considered through the filters of location, setting, association, materials, design, workmanship, and feeling, Woodland Park Baptist Church retains a generally high level of historic integrity.

Retained on its original site, *integrity of location* is high.

Associated with the early twentieth century trend of applying the Gothic Revival style to church design, retention of exterior, character-defining features results in a high level of historic *integrity of design and workmanship on the exterior*. A study completed in 2001 notes that St. Paul’s early twentieth century Gothic Revival churches were commonly executed in dark red or brown brick

⁶ “Park Baptist Church: 1883-1971,” 09.

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with cream stone trim, a corner bell tower with crenellations and lancet-arched windows.⁷ Woodland Park Baptist Church, a neighborhood church, exemplifies that specific manifestation of the Gothic Revival with all major features of the type retained.

As it relates to *integrity of materials on the exterior*, the resource retains a very good level of historic integrity. The most significant loss of material integrity relates to replacement of some windows. It appears that all stained-glass windows are retained, though the condition of the boarded, lancet arch window on the east gable end is unconfirmed. However, a number of clear-glazed windows located in the non-sanctuary spaces have been replaced. Because the historic configurations of all replacements on the west elevation and most of those on the south elevation are retained, the impact to integrity of design is minimized. While generally the masonry remains intact and in sound condition, water infiltration has resulted in deterioration of joints on the entrance wing walls and pier at the southwest corner. In addition, an isolated area of brick loss is located on the south elevation, near the southwest corner. Loss of the original windows adversely impacts integrity of materials in a manner that cannot be reversed. Damage to masonry, however, can be repaired without significant loss of historic materials.

Regarding *integrity of design and workmanship on the interior*, church histories in 1939 and 1971 make mention (without much detail) that the church interior was remodeled on multiple occasions. While those alterations certainly impacted the design character by changing paint color, laying carpet over wood floors, and/or changing out window treatments, there is no evidence that the original floor plan on any floor was altered. Further, ceiling heights are retained except in one room (and the original ceiling is very likely retained above the dropped ceiling), window openings are retained on the primary elevations (one closure in the basement), and walls appear to be retained without alteration resulting in the retention of the original relationship between functional spaces. Most significantly, the historical relationship between the auditorium-type sanctuary and adjacent classroom (indicative of the Akron Plan) remains unaltered. As a result, integrity of design on the interior is high.

Integrity of materials on the interior is high. The resource retains wood flooring in the large majority of the rooms where that was the original floor finish. Plaster walls and ceilings are retained with one exception. Millwork (including the elements of the sanctuary dais, deep baseboards, door and window trim, and the original six-panel wood doors) is likewise retained. Stained-glass windows stand as the most prominent feature, with the colored light they throw in the sanctuary part of the experience of the space; significantly, all stained-glass windows in the sanctuary are retained as are those located over the primary entrances and the west entrance.

Woodland Park Baptist Church retains a high level of *integrity of historic association and setting*, with its physical relationship on this corner site and within the residential neighborhood it was built to serve retained intact.

⁷ Carole Zellie and Garneth O. Peterson, "Churches, Synagogues, and Religious Buildings: 1849-1950," St. Paul Historic Context Study completed for the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, 2001: 16.

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Finally, when experiencing the church building, visitors find it very much as it was when it was placed in service in 1907. Because Woodland Park Baptist Church retains a high level of historic integrity as it relates to location, association, setting, design and materials, visitors can experience the building much as the first congregation members would have. Further, surrounding residents continue to experience the church as an important feature of their historic neighborhood. As a result, *integrity of feeling* is considered high.

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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.)

- 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

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Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1907

Significant Dates

1907

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Reardon, Timothy

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Woodland Park Baptist Church is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a distinctive local example of the Akron Plan. The resource is locally significant as the only church in St. Paul's Summit-University neighborhood, of any style or construction material, that utilizes the Akron Plan. The plan, which dominated design across the Protestant denominational spectrum from ca.1876-1918, features a large open space surrounded by smaller classrooms on one or two levels opening onto a rotunda or auditorium by means of folding doors or sliding shutters. The philosophy central to the Akron Plan was that the Sunday school had a central role in spreading the Gospel, a notion that certainly fits with the church's move into a developing neighborhood where the growing population provided an opportunity to educate an expanding congregation.

Further, Woodland Park Baptist Church is the only extant church in the Summit-University neighborhood of St. Paul representative of a Gothic Revival style church in this form and stylistic expression. While a number of Gothic Revival style churches of a similar construction date are located in the neighborhood, Woodland Park Baptist is the only church representing that particular form and the early twentieth century trend toward construction with dark brick trimmed in light-colored stone.

The Period of Significance and Significant Date is 1907, the year the church building was placed in service.

Because Woodland Park Baptist Church derives its primary significance from architecture, the resource meets the standard established under Criterion Consideration A. As noted, Woodland Park Baptist is significant under Criterion C as the sole example of the Akron Plan found in the Summit-University neighborhood.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Woodland Park Baptist Church was established as a mission church of the First Baptist Church and located on the corner of Arundel and Selby Avenues in a "fine residential area" of the St. Anthony Hill neighborhood in 1883. The construction of a new church building (the subject property) some twenty years later was prompted by a desire to move away from the bustle and noise of that busy intersection and to extend the mission work of the Baptist church into the expanding residential neighborhoods west of the city's historic core. The church relocated to its new church building in Bryant's Addition (now part of the Summit-University neighborhood) in 1907 and remains a functioning neighborhood church to this day.

Historical Background and Establishment of Woodland Park Baptist Church

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Widely regarded as St. Paul's first Baptist, pioneer schoolteacher, Harriet Bishop arrived in the city in 1847. Upon her arrival, Bishop opened the State's first permanent public school where she also taught Sunday School. In 1848 Bishop was one of twelve constituent members to organize the First Baptist Church. The first church building, located at the edge of the then-prestigious Lowertown neighborhood of St. Paul, was completed in 1854. A decade later, a stone chapel was built on Wacouta Street, with the present First Baptist Church (NRHP) completed in 1875. Designed by well-known Chicago architect, William W. Boyington, the church is a three-bay, with center aisle, Gothic Revival style building constructed of Kasota dolostone.⁸

Through the 1870s, the First Baptist Church in downtown was the only Baptist church serving St. Paul's white population. The expanding city, with its newly platted subdivisions and extension of streetcar and rail lines to growing residential neighborhoods, supported the expansion of religious bodies as well. The church was a typical feature of the new neighborhoods established during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. New church buildings were commonly constructed in the early stages of residential development; often standing for some time amid just a few new houses.⁹ Over time, such church buildings became an integrated feature of numerous, fully developed residential streetscapes.

In the early 1880s, two female members of the First Baptist Church worked to establish a mission branch of First Baptist that would provide a Sunday School and Ladies Aid in the St. Anthony Hill district of St. Paul. The St. Anthony Hill district was at the time, "the finest residential area in Saint Paul," which was then a city of 75,000. The Hill district was developing rapidly with numerous Baptists among the newcomers.¹⁰

Organization of the new Baptist church began in the spring of 1883, with almost \$5,000 for construction of a church building raised by mid-June of that same year. While plans for construction were being arranged, the newly established church body gathered at the Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church. A resolution organizing the church body, to be known as Woodland Park Baptist Church, was passed on July 12, 1883.¹¹ The church building rose on the corner of Selby and Arundel Avenues, in the heart of the expanding St. Anthony Hill district.¹² It was dedicated, free of debt, on February 03, 1884. Later that month, Woodland Park was officially recognized at an ecclesiastical council as a regular Baptist church.¹³

The economic depression of the 1890s impacted construction of new religious buildings. Beginning in 1900, however, churches began to feel the positive effects of a returning economic prosperity. Congregations began to settle their debts and look to the future possibility of constructing new churches. In March of 1905, notice appeared in the local newspaper indicating

⁸ "Woodland Park Baptist Church, 1883-1971: 5 and Susan Granger, "First Baptist Church of St. Paul," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1981.

⁹ Zellie, 12.

¹⁰ "Park Baptist Church, 1883-1971," 01.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹² *Ibid.*, 03.

¹³ *Ibid.*

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that the Woodland Park Baptist Church had purchased three lots at the corner of Ashland Avenue and Grotto Street. The congregation expected to start construction of a new \$40,000 church on the site, noting that their existing location at Selby and Arundel Avenues was undesirable due to the proximity of the streetcar line, the noise of which interfered with the solemnity of worship.¹⁴ That particular plan failed to materialize for an unknown reason. However, soon thereafter, the site at Laurel Avenue and N. Victoria Street in Bryant's Addition was secured and plans were made for a new church building at that location.

Bryant's Addition to St. Paul was one of several under development in the early twentieth century. Indeed, a six-block area around the church site represented no fewer than six additions. The 1903 fire insurance map (Figure 04) illustrates the sparsely populated character of the blocks at the time the church was preparing to buy land upon which they would erect their new building. In 1903 Block 1 of Bryant's Addition had fifteen houses on it, with fully fifty-percent of the lots undeveloped. With the exception of a full block of completed dwellings fronting N. Victoria Street on the west, the same was true of the adjacent blocks. This pattern is representative of church development in St. Paul, with churches seeking to expand or to relocate typically doing so at the leading edge of residential development.

Timothy Reardon was awarded the contract for construction of the Woodland Park Baptist Church and filed the application for a building permit on October 26, 1906.¹⁵ A carpenter by training, Reardon was a builder and contractor in St. Paul in the late 1800s and early 1900s. No information has been found about whether Reardon himself drew the design plans for the new church, used architect-drawn plans, or referred to pattern book plans. The building permit does not note an architect on the project. Certainly, the ready availability of pattern books and Reardon's apparent tendency to act as builder using the design plans of others suggests that Reardon either worked from design plans drawn by an unknown architect or adapted a pattern plan for the construction of the church building.

Reardon had preparations for construction of the new church building underway by early autumn of 1906, with the cornerstone laid the 30th of September. In it were placed a copy of Mrs. Griggs' history of Woodland Park Church, a church directory, a photograph of the interior of the chapel at Selby and Arundel Avenues, three Baptist papers, a copy of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch* for September 29, 1906, and a silk flag of the United States; all of which were wrapped in oiled silk and sealed in a copper box. The Woodland Park Baptist Church was formally dedicated on June 9, 1907. The congregation's former church building on Selby Avenue was sold and was reportedly in use as a garage and storehouse for Fidelity Storage Co., an omnibus firm, by 1914.¹⁶

¹⁴ "Will Build Church," *The Saint Paul Globe*, March 28, 1905: 02.

¹⁵ Ramsey County Historical Society, Building permit collection.

¹⁶ "Park Baptist Church, 1883-1971," unpublished booklet available at the church office; 07.

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Woodland Park Baptist Church Design

As noted, while Timothy Reardon is documented as the builder of the new Woodland Park Baptist Church building, the source of the building design remains undetermined. There is no direct evidence to explain the degree to which Reardon directed the church design; either the stylistic elements on the exterior or the adaptation of the Akron Plan for the interior layout. The practice of builders constructing St. Paul churches from readily available, published church plans has been documented.¹⁷ Certainly the design of Woodland Park Baptist Church is representative of church designs that predominated in the early twentieth century, making it likely that the builder and those persons in the church congregation tasked with making decisions about the church design were guided by existing examples, be they built or published design plans. Ultimately, the church design was a modest-sized building executed in dark brown brick with cream stone trim and featuring a corner bell tower with crenellations and lancet-arched windows. The Woodland Park Baptist Church is a well-preserved example of that specific manifestation of the Gothic Revival. The interior arrangement of auditorium with adjoining classroom reflects the influence of the Akron Plan, which promoted a flexibility between the sanctuary and classrooms.¹⁸

The design of church interiors began a marked evolution with the 1870 construction of the first church utilizing what became referred to as the Akron plan.¹⁹ Although developed in the Methodist church, the Akron plan dominated design across the Protestant denominational spectrum from ca.1876-1918. Initially developed for stand-alone Sunday schools, the Akron plan was soon adapted to church design and variations evolved to meet the requirements of individual congregations.

The concept for the interior spatial arrangement of the Akron Plan came from Lewis Miller, a founder and president of the Chautauqua Association. Miller devised the plan which, in his words, would “provide for togetherness and separateness; have a room in which the whole school can be brought together in a moment for simultaneous exercises, and with the minimum of movement be divided into classes for uninterrupted class work.” The main feature of the Akron Plan is a large open space surrounded by smaller classrooms on one or two levels, which open onto a rotunda or auditorium by means of folding doors or sliding shutters. First designed for stand-alone Sunday school buildings, congregations across the country were subsequently advised by the religious press and clergy to use the Akron design when making plans for new church buildings. In 1911 the Harvard Divinity School published a book by Marion Lawrance addressing the needs of the contemporary church and its Sunday school.²⁰ Great attention was given the importance and potential impact of the Sunday school during this period.

¹⁷ Zellie, 13.

¹⁸ Marion Lawrance, *House the Sunday School*, Modern Sunday School Manuals, ed. Charles Foster Kent (Cambridge, MA: Boston Divinity, 1911), 84-86.

¹⁹ The Akron plan was named for the city of Akron, Ohio, where the plan was first used.

²⁰ Lawrance, 9.

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As Lawrance noted, “there never was a time when so much attention was being given to housing the Sunday school as the present.”²¹ Churches were recognizing the enormous potential for religious conversions inherent in the work of the Sunday school. As a result, the design and size of the Sunday school were considered an investment in the future of the church body itself. Sunday school buildings of the day were called to provide separation of the students by departments and then by classes, with each department individually organized. The physical separation for periods of study was to be balanced by the ability to open the entire Sunday school, except to the youngest of the students, to a shared auditorium for opening or closing exercises. The ideal form of such an arrangement was the semi-circle, a proven form based on the early Greek theater and the later opera house.²²

Lawrence addressed three types of building plans, noting that a design whereby the Sunday school room is connected to and opens directly into the church auditorium with a moveable partition to separate the spaces, was the most common design of the time. When the partition was open the Sunday school rooms faced the pulpit and were thus directly behind the seated congregation. A church of this design was often nearly square with the pulpit placed in a corner. The design allowed for several variations by the architect.²³

The Akron Plan, as used at Woodland Park Baptist Church, is a modified version, likely altered to meet the specific needs of the original congregation. The church utilizes a nearly square auditorium-sanctuary space with pews arranged in a semi-circular form facing the dais at the front. The Sunday school space is located to one side of the auditorium, near the dais. A series of casement-type windows runs approximately 20-feet along the wall between the auditorium and the classroom (Photograph 07, Figure 14). This design (original to the building) allowed the classroom to be opened to the auditorium for portions of the service – the primary intent of the Akron Plan being the easy integration of classroom with the auditorium when the content of the service makes that desirable. The idea that the Sunday school had a central role in spreading the Gospel certainly fits with the church’s move into a developing neighborhood where the growing population provided an opportunity to educate an expanding congregation.

Merging Congregations

In the years after its construction in 1907, the congregation of Woodland Park Baptist Church continued to evolve to serve its neighborhood. In 1909 discussions were underway within the congregation about establishing the Merriam Park Baptist Church, a mission church. Fundraising began soon after and the purchase of an existing Presbyterian Church building was arranged in 1913. The new congregation held its first service in that building in September of 1913.²⁴

In 1927 a survey of the Baptist community was undertaken to consider merging the congregations of First Baptist, Woodland Park, and the Merriam Park mission church. The survey determined

²¹ Ibid., 12.

²² Ibid., 14.

²³ Lawrance, 44.

²⁴ “Recognition Service Merriam Park Baptist Church - 1913,” Unpublished booklet, Minnesota Historical Society Library.

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that First Baptist should remain downtown and recommended that Woodland Park and Merriam Park merge and relocate to a new church building in the vicinity of Snelling and St. Clair. The merger was approved and the first joint meeting of the two congregations occurred in May of 1928. The name Park Baptist was chosen, and a committee went to work to identify potential sites for a new building. The existing Woodland Park Baptist Church building was to be used until a new church was erected. Two lots on the corner of Summit and Pierce were obtained and an architect was hired to design the new building. However, plans for the new church were put on hold due to the depressed economy. Those plans never came to fruition and the lots on Summit Avenue were eventually sold. The merged congregations remained in the church on N. Victoria Street and Laurel Avenue, worshipping as Park Baptist Church.²⁵

Throughout those decades, the church congregation was predominantly (if not fully) white. The city's African-American Baptists were served by Pilgrim Baptist, which was established in 1863 as a mission of the First Baptist Church. Pilgrim Baptist Church building is located in the historically Black, Rondo neighborhood of St. Paul.²⁶ The church, which is Romanesque Revival in style with a center aisled was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991.²⁷

In the spring of 1992, following the acquittal of the police officers on trial in the Rodney King case, the white congregation of Park Baptist Church and the Black congregation of the Open Door Baptist Church undertook a reconciliation project.²⁸ Although a slow process fraught with challenges, the two congregations merged in February of 1998 to become Unity Baptist Church, with their home in the church on Laurel Avenue and N. Victoria Street. Today, known as Anointed Faith Missionary Baptist Church, the small congregation is predominantly Black and maintains a commitment to their long association with the church building.

Builder-Contractor: Timothy Reardon (1837-1915)

Timothy Reardon was well known in the city of St. Paul. Having emigrated from Cork County Ireland to New York as a child, Reardon learned the carpentry trade in the U.S. After moving to St. Paul in 1856, Reardon made a name for himself as a local builder, but also as an outspoken and sometimes defiant politician.²⁹ He was a vocal supporter of labor unions, with his position as

²⁵ "Park Baptist Church, 1883-1971," unpublished booklet available at the church office, 08.

²⁶ Today's Summit-University neighborhood boundaries encompass much of the historic Rondo neighborhood, including the location of Pilgrim Baptist Church. Pilgrim Baptist Church is the only other Baptist church located in the Summit-University neighborhood.

²⁷ Constructed in 1928, Pilgrim Baptist Church at 732 Central Avenue W. was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003 (ref # 91000438). The church, organized in 1863, is listed under Criteria A and B and recognized as the home of the first Black Baptist congregation in St. Paul.

²⁸ Coincidentally, Open Door Baptist Church was located in the former Catholic orphanage noted previously (page 25). The building, which is non-extant, was designed by architect Edward P. Bassford at 933 Carroll Avenue. Bassford appears to have been a regular collaborator with Timothy Reardon, builder of Woodland Park Baptist Church.

²⁹ Charles E. Warner, *History of Ramsey County and the City of St. Paul* (St. Paul: North Star Publishing Co., 1881: 596 and "Timothy Reardon Dies; Old St. Paul Resident," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, December 02, 1915: 15 and "Hon. Tim Reardon: Narrow in All That He Does," *The Saint Paul Globe*, April 24, 1896: 02.

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passionate advocate widely publicized in St. Paul newspapers, specifically during a carpenter's strike in June, 1887.³⁰ Reardon served on the St. Paul City Council for a number of years during the 1890s, with numerous news articles taking aim at him for his pugnacious attitude, impulsive manner, and "fierce roar."³¹ His re-election campaign in 1896 drew particular rancor from a St. Paul newspaper which stated,

Timothy Reardon is a candidate for re-election to the assembly. For two terms he has sat in that body and made a holy show of himself on nearly every question that has come up. He has time and again given exhibitions of his savage spite, his nasty temper, his narrow ideas, his slanderous tongue, his absolute disregard to the city's interest... he has been coarse and vindictive, selfish and thoughtless, and has made a record without parallel in the history of the city council of St. Paul. On top of all this he asks the sensible voters of St. Paul to tolerate him for two years more.³²

At the time of his passing in 1915, the Minneapolis newspaper painted a different picture, noting that Reardon was "well known for his unostentatious charity" and reminded readers of his generosity during the panic of 1893 when Reardon "fed a great many workmen for months at his own expense."³³

It has been noted that Reardon was responsible for the construction of "hundreds" of buildings in the city, though only a few have been specifically attributed to him.³⁴ Newspaper accounts include regular recordings of land purchases by Reardon in developing neighborhoods. In 1884 he had the foundations of "a block of three houses on 15th near Jackson" underway.³⁵ Another "block" on 9th between Robert and Minnesota was being criticized for the manner in which the new building aligned with the angle of the street.³⁶ In that same year, he was under contract to build the new Catholic "orphan asylum," a project in which the architect (Edward P. Bassford) is named, with Reardon working as a sub-contractor. Located at 933 Carroll Avenue about one-half mile northeast of Woodland Park Baptist, the orphanage is non-extant.³⁷ In 1901 Reardon was named the contractor for the new 8th Ward School in the Rondo neighborhood; the project architect was Clarence Johnston.³⁸ Many of the projects completed by Reardon were located in what is now the commercial downtown of St. Paul, the ongoing development of which resulted in the demolition of a number of Reardon's properties including projects at 6th and Cedar streets and the Reardon Block (aka Reardon Apartments and Reardon Hotel), which was built at 78 E. 7th Street in ca. 1887.

³⁰ "Ask Nine Hours," *The Saint Paul Globe*, June 07, 1887: 04.

³¹ "Attack on Gilbert," *The Saint Paul Globe*, August 17, 1894: 01 and "Pavilion Slighted," *The Saint Paul Globe*, June 05, 1894: 02.

³² "'Hon.' Tim Reardon," *The Saint Paul Globe*, April 24, 1896: 02.

³³ "Timothy Reardon Dies; Old St. Paul Resident," *Star Tribune*, December 02, 1915: 15.

³⁴ "State News Bits," *New Ulm Review*, December 08, 1915: 02 and Ramsey County Historical Society building files.

³⁵ "Growth of St. Paul," *The Saint Paul Globe*, April 27, 1884: 02.

³⁶ "Short Notes," *The Saint Paul Globe*, June 08, 1884: 11.

³⁷ "Short Notes," *The Saint Paul Globe*, May 18, 1884: 02 and "Where Orphans Live," *The Saint Paul Globe*, December 1887: 13 and Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office historic database (inventory RA-SPC-0479).

³⁸ "No Change in Site," *The Saint Paul Globe*, September 13, 1901: 02.

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Timothy Reardon is also credited with construction of a number of residences, including the home at 726 Dayton Avenue W. (extant), designed by architect E.P. Bassford (apparently a frequent collaborator) and constructed by Timothy Reardon in 1904. City directories indicate that Reardon and his family lived in the home from 1904 through Reardon's death in 1915; his widow, Ella remained in the home the following year.³⁹

Churches of the Summit-University Neighborhood

Woodland Park Baptist Church is the only extant church in the Summit-University neighborhood that, 1) utilizes the Akron Plan, 2) incorporates a corner tower with entrances into the auditorium-type sanctuary of the Akron Plan, and 3) is an example of the Gothic Revival style executed in dark brown brick with stone details to the Gothic arch forms. While a number of Gothic Revival style churches of a similar construction date are located in the neighborhood, they are arranged with a center aisle in a Latin Cross or basilica plan and are predominantly constructed of limestone. While the church now known as International Christian Faith Center is constructed of dark brick and trimmed in light-colored stone, the building has been significantly altered and is of the basilica plan form (not Akron Plan).

Neoclassical designs and English Revival styles were the most prevalent among churches constructed across the country in the early twentieth century.⁴⁰ The Gothic Revival style was first popularized in the United States in the early 1800s by Benjamin Latrobe and was disseminated nationwide by the prevalent availability of pattern books.⁴¹ George Palliser (later, the firm of Palliser, Palliser & Co.) was a prominent producer of pattern books. Although predominantly for houses, Palliser also provided plans for other property types including churches.⁴² The ready availability of design plans for churches undoubtedly impacted design choices in towns and cities across Minnesota. Although not confirmed, it is possible that builder Timothy Reardon, who was not himself an architect, relied on such a pattern for construction of Woodland Park Baptist Church; the scale and relative simplicity of the design supports the possibility.

The local context study, *St. Paul Historic Context Study: Churches, Synagogues, and Religious Buildings: 1849-1950*, completed in 2001, documented eleven extant churches constructed between 1881-1890 in the study area; seventeen constructed between 1891-1900 were extant; and fifty-seven constructed between 1901-1920 were extant.⁴³ In sum total, nearly one-hundred surviving churches constructed during the period of 1881-1930 were recorded in the Ramsey County historic resources database.⁴⁴ Today, fourteen churches (in addition to Woodland Park Baptist) built between 1881-1930 are located in the Summit-University neighborhood (Table 01).

³⁹ Mead & Hunt, "Neighborhoods at the Edge of the Walking City," Historic Context Study, 2011: 67 and St. Paul City Directories, 1904-1916.

⁴⁰ Mead & Hunt.

⁴¹ Ibid., 17.

⁴² Daniel D. Reiff, *Houses from Books* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 97 and *Palliser's Model Homes* (Bridgeport, CT: Palliser, Palliser & Co., Architects, 1878), 26-28.

⁴³ Zellie, 01.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 15.

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Of those fourteen churches, nine are Gothic Revival in style. Of those nine, seven are limestone, one is brick, and two are wood-frame. Each of the seven Gothic Revival style churches built of limestone have a primary entrance on-center and an interior plan that is of the Latin Cross or basilica plan form. Notably, four of the Summit-University neighborhood churches were architect designed. These examples contrast with Woodland Park Baptist Church, which is executed in dark brick with cream stone trim, a corner bell tower with crenellations, and a corner entry into an Akron Plan auditorium-sanctuary.

The closest known extant example of a comparable Gothic Revival church is Immanuel Baptist at 750 Watson, located in the West Seventh neighborhood some two miles south of Woodland Park Baptist Church. Immanuel Baptist is a small-scale, red brick church with a linear footprint and an understated design character. Though simple in execution, stone (or cast stone) is used for coping and decorative details. The corner tower is relatively short and lacks a steeple. The tower houses one entrance. The interior of Immanuel Baptist utilizes the Akron Plan, simplified for the small scale of the building. The auditorium retains a small dais, a baptistery integrated in a side wall, curved pews arranged in three sections, and sliding panel walls between the auditorium and adjacent community-Sunday school spaces. Historically this church served a different population and the development of the neighborhoods have their own, unique contexts.

Summary

At the time of its construction in 1907, the congregation of First Baptist Church in downtown St. Paul decided to expand its reach into a new and growing neighborhood. This provided an opportunity to add communicants to the congregation, thereby increasing the odds of long-term survivability of the church, all-the-while spreading the Gospel. In the years after its construction, the congregation of Woodland Park Baptist Church continued to evolve to serve its neighborhood and well as extended its impact into the larger community through establishment of other mission churches.

Woodland Park Baptist Church is locally significant as the only church in the Summit-University neighborhood, of any style or construction material, that utilizes the Akron Plan – an interior plan which dominated church design across the Protestant denominational spectrum from ca.1876-1918. Further, Woodland Park Baptist Church is the sole representative of this specific stylistic expression of the Gothic Revival style. While a number of Gothic Revival style churches of a similar construction date are located in the Summit-University neighborhood, Woodland Park Baptist is the only church representing the early twentieth century trend toward construction with dark brick trimmed in light-colored stone.

Because Woodland Park Baptist Church derives its primary significance from architecture, the resource meets the standard established under Criterion Consideration A. As noted, Woodland Park Baptist is significant under Criterion C as the sole example of the Akron Plan and the sole representative of a specific expression of the Gothic Revival style in the Summit-University neighborhood.

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_____. "Reardon's Kicks." June 06, 1893.

_____. "Attack on Gilbert." August 17, 1894.

_____. "Hon. Tim Reardon." April 24, 1896.

_____. "Tim Was Too Blunt." December 10, 1896.

_____. "No Change in Site." September 13, 1901.

_____. "Church Too Small." September 26, 1901.

_____. "Two New Corners." October 20, 1901.

_____. "Will Build Church." March 28, 1905.

Saint Paul Dispatch. "Cornerstone Ceremony." September 29, 1906.

_____. "Sunday in the Churches of the City." June 09, 1907.

_____. "Dedicated Free of Debt." June 10, 1907.

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The Brainerd Daily Dispatch. "Timothy Reardon is Dead." December 02, 1915.

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<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g4144sm.g04379190301/?sp=46>.

Ramsey County Assessor. Last accessed 01/21/2019.

<https://beacon.schneidercorp.com/application.aspx?app=RamseyCountyMN&PageType=Report&Page=PropertyTax&KeyValue=022823130040>

Living Places: Woodland Park Historic District.

https://www.livingplaces.com/MN/Ramsey_County/Saint_Paul_City/Woodland_Park_Historic_District.html

University of Minnesota Library

<https://www.lib.umn.edu/borchert/digitized-plat-maps-and-atlases#R>

G.M. Hopkins Real Estate Atlas of St. Paul, MN, 1884.

H.M. Smyth. Plat Map of the City of St. Paul, 1908.

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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: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): RA-SPC-4178

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one-acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 44.944668 | Longitude: -93.136170 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

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UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

AD 1927 or NAD 1983

- 1. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

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

Legal description: Lots 14-15 Block 1 of Bryant's Addition to St. Paul. The property is bounded by Laurel Avenue on the north, N. Victoria Street on the west, the public alley on the south, and the property line on the east.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property boundary encompasses all of the parcel associated with Woodland Baptist Church and to which it historically associated (Figure 03).

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Alexa McDowell/Architectural Historian
organization: AKAY Consulting
street & number: 4252 Oakland Avenue
city or town: Minneapolis state: MN zip code: 55407
e-mail alexa@akayconsulting.com
telephone: 515-491-5432
date: 08/15/2020

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15-minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

LIST OF FIGURES

01. USGS 7.5 Minute Topographic Map – St. Paul West Quad – 1993
02. Locator Map – 2020
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06. Historic Photograph – Exterior View – ca.1907
07. Historic Photograph – Exterior View – 1939
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09. Historic Photograph – Ladies' Parlor – 1939
10. Historic Photograph – Study/Office – 1939
11. Historic Photograph – First Floor Classroom (Hofmann Window) – 1939
12. Historic Photograph – Kitchen – 1939
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14. Photo Key – Exteriors
15. Photo Key – First Floor
16. Photo Key – Second Floor

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Figure 01. USGS 7.5 Minute Topographic Map – St. Paul West Quad - 1993

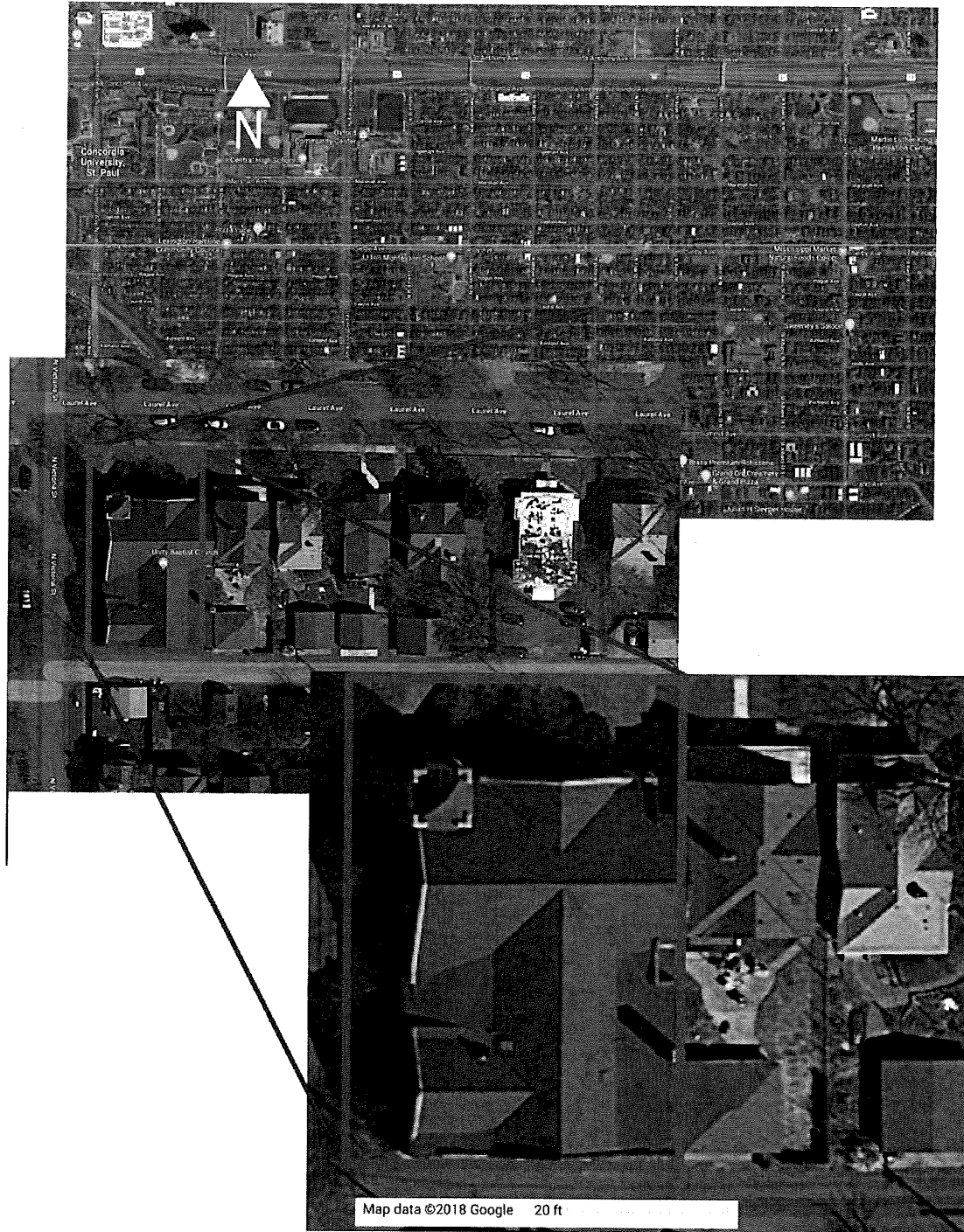


(Source: <https://store.usgs.gov>. Retrieved 03/23/2020.)

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Figure 02. Locator Map – 2020



(Source: <https://maps.google.com>. Retrieved 03/23/2020.)

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Figure 03. Assessor's Parcel Map – 2019

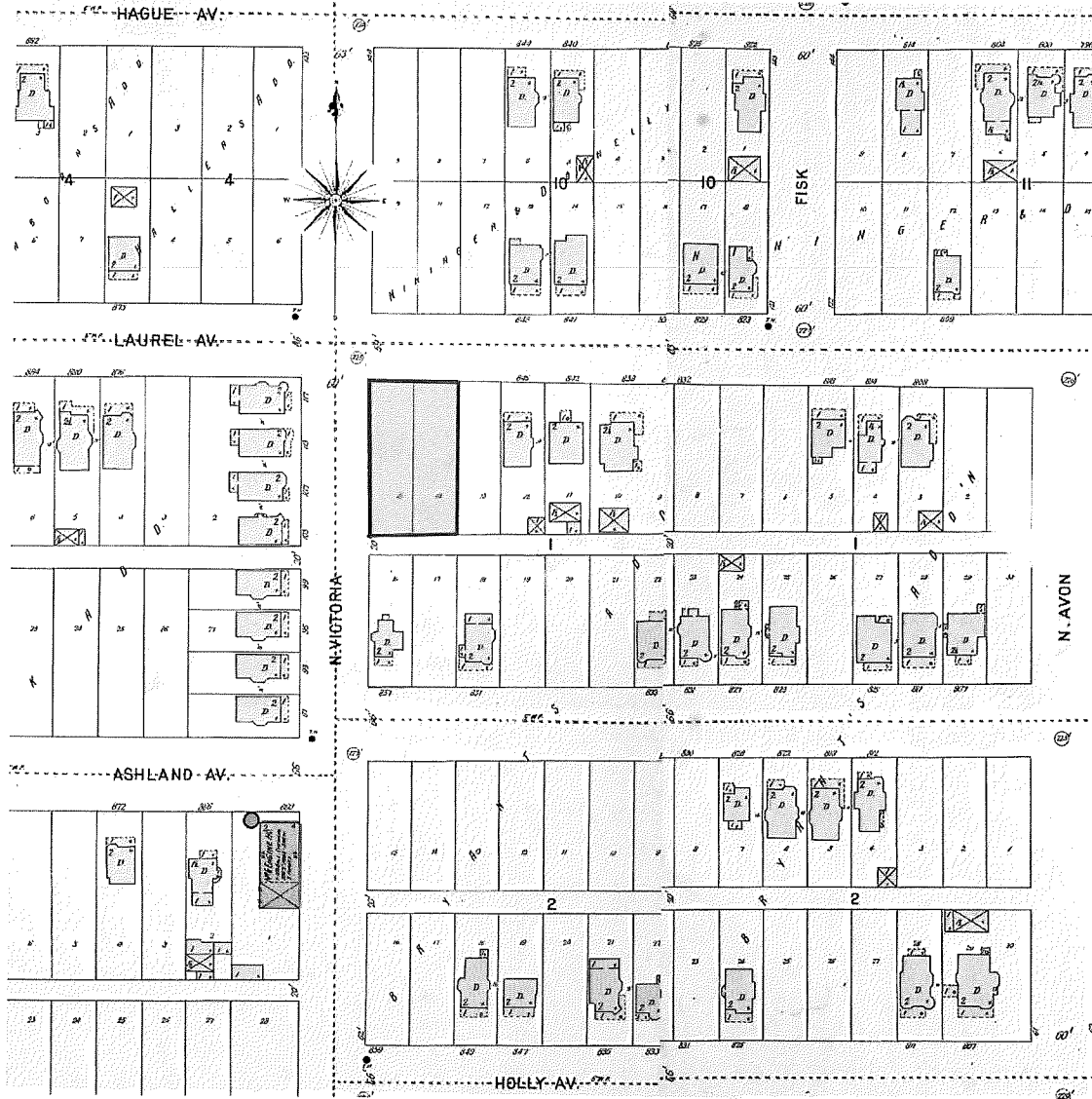


(SOURCE: <https://beacon.schneidercorp.com>. Retrieved 03/23/2020.)

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Figure 04. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map – 1903

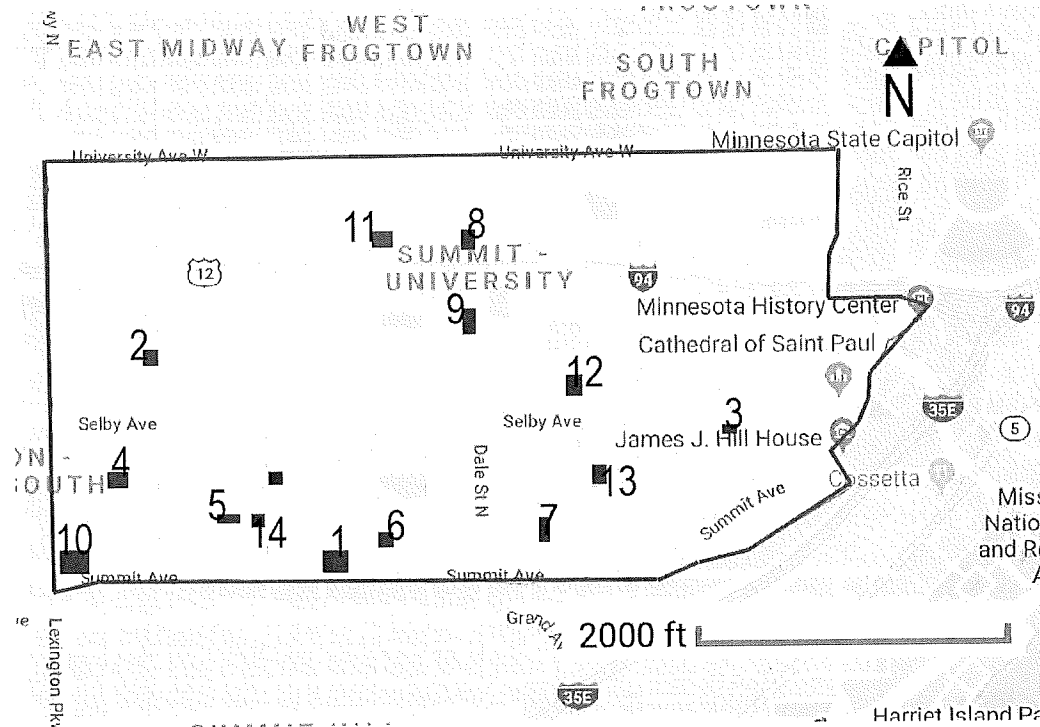


(Source: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps>. Retrieved 01/18/2019.)

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Figure 05. Summit-University Neighborhood Boundaries with Church Locations – 2020



(Source: Base Map - <https://maps.google.com>. Retrieved 03/23/2020.)

The location of Woodland Park Baptist is noted with the blue box. The remaining locations correspond to the table below.

MAP NBR.	Church	Built	Style	Plan	Material
01.	House of Hope Presbyterian	1913	Gothic Revival	Latin Cross	Limestone
02.	Int'l. Christian Faith Center	c.1920	Gothic Revival	Basilica	Brick
03.	Virginia Street Church	1886	Shingle Style	Basilica	Wood & Fieldstone
04.	Evangelical Lutheran Church	1913	Gothic Revival	Basilica	Limestone
05.	St. Clement's Episcopal Church	1894	Gothic Revival/ English Cottage Gothic	Basilica	Limestone
06.	Unity Church	1905	Gothic Revival	Basilica	Limestone
07.	St. John the Evangelist Church	1902	Gothic Revival	Basilica	Limestone
08.	St. Albans Church of God	c.1910	Gothic Revival	Basilica	Wood
09.	Evangelical Lutheran of the Redeemer	1910	English Gothic	Latin Cross	Limestone
10.	Church of St. Luke Catholic Church (St. Thomas More)	1926	Romanesque Revival	Basilica	Limestone
11.	Pilgrim Baptist Church	1928	Romanesque Revival	Basilica	Brick
12.	Dayton Avenue Presbyterian	1886	Richardsonian Romanesque	Basilica	Stone
13.	Old St. Paul's Universalist Church	1886	Gothic Revival	Latin Cross	Limestone
14.	Saint Volodymyr & Olga Church	1908	Classical Revival (Temple Front)	Central Dome	Stone

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Figure 06. Historic Photograph – View looking SE – ca.1907



(Source: Minnesota Historical Society.)

Figure 07. Historic Photograph – View looking SE – 1939

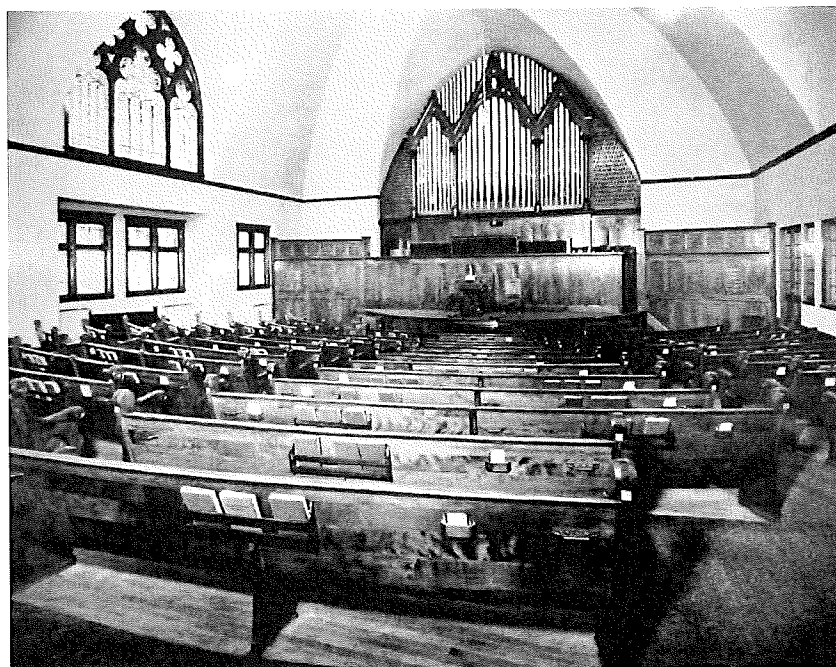


(Source: "Park Baptist, Laurel at Victoria." Booklet available at church office, 1939.)

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Figure 08. Historic Photograph – Sanctuary – 1939



(Source: "Park Baptist, Laurel at Victoria." Booklet available at church office, 1939.)

Figure 09. Historic Photograph - Ladies Parlor – 1939

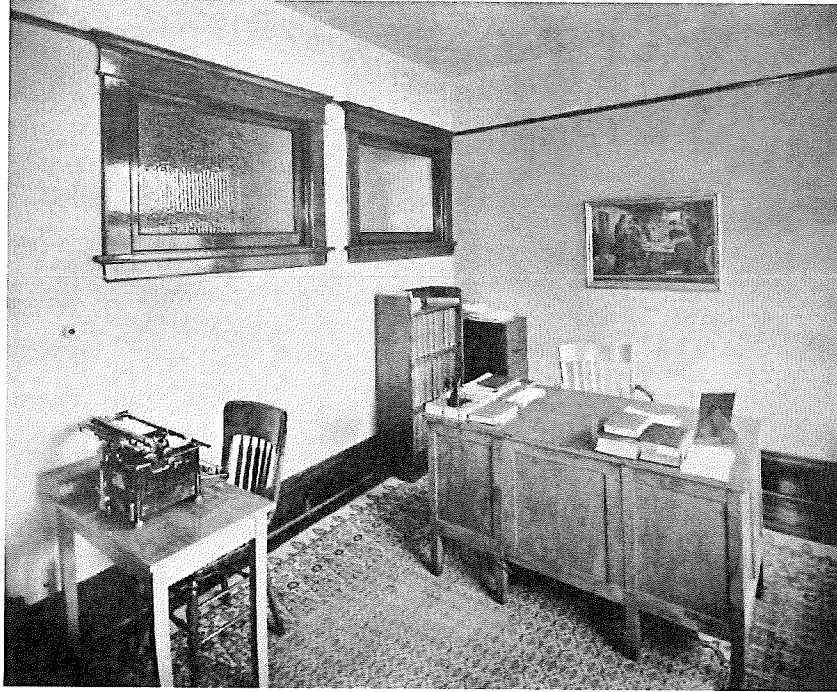


(Source: "Park Baptist, Laurel at Victoria." Booklet available at church office, 1939.)

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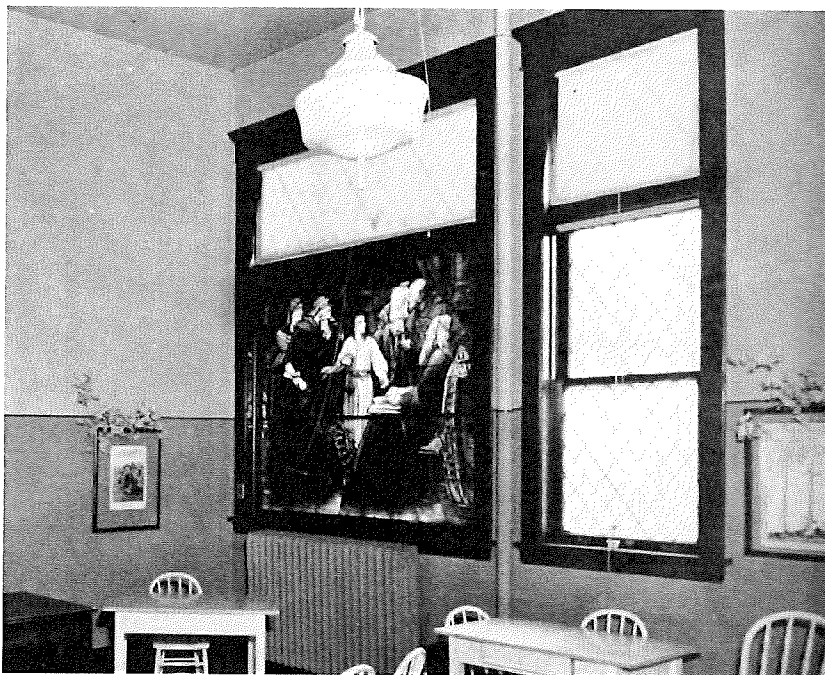
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Figure 10. Historic Photograph – Study/Office – 1939



(Source: "Park Baptist, Laurel at Victoria." Booklet available at church office, 1939.)

Figure 11. Historic Photograph – First Floor Classroom – 1939

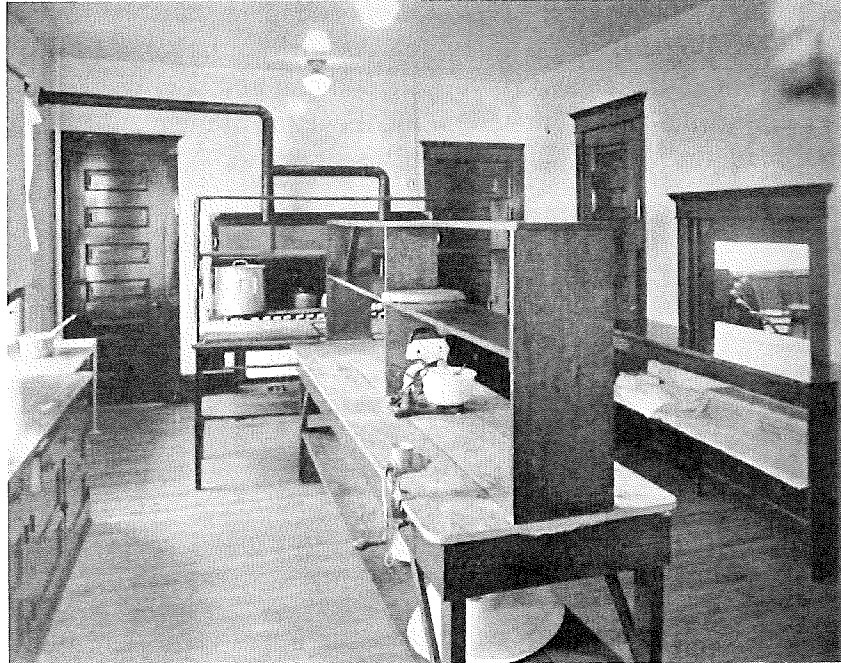


(Source: "Park Baptist, Laurel at Victoria." Booklet available at church office, 1939.)

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Figure 12. Historic Photograph – Kitchen – 1939



(Source: "Park Baptist, Laurel at Victoria." Booklet available at church office, 1939.)

Figure 13. Historic Photograph – Basement "Rec Room" – 1939



(Source: "Park Baptist, Laurel at Victoria." Booklet available at church office, 1939.)

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photo.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Park Baptist Church

City or Vicinity: St. Paul

County: Ramsey State: MN

Photographer: Alexa McDowell

Date Photographed: 10/11/2018 and 04/04/2020

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 22. Exterior – Looking SE across Laurel Avenue and N. Victoria Street
- 2 of 22. Exterior – View of the façade (north), looking south
- 3 of 22. Exterior – View of the west elevation, looking SE across N. Victoria Street
- 4 of 22. Exterior – View of the west elevation and south elevations, looking NE
- 5 of 22. Exterior – View of the rear (south) and east elevations, looking NW
- 6 of 22. Interior: First Floor – Sanctuary, looking NW
- 7 of 22. Interior: First Floor – Sanctuary, looking SE
- 8 of 22. Interior: First Floor – Sunday School Room (1), looking NNW
- 9 of 22. Interior: First Floor – Sunday School Room (1), looking SE
- 10 of 22. Interior: Second Floor – Classroom, looking north
- 11 of 22. Interior: Second Floor – Community Room, looking NW
- 12 of 22. Interior: Second Floor – Kitchen, looking south
- 13 of 22. Interior: Second Floor – Staircase, looking SW

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PHOTO KEYS

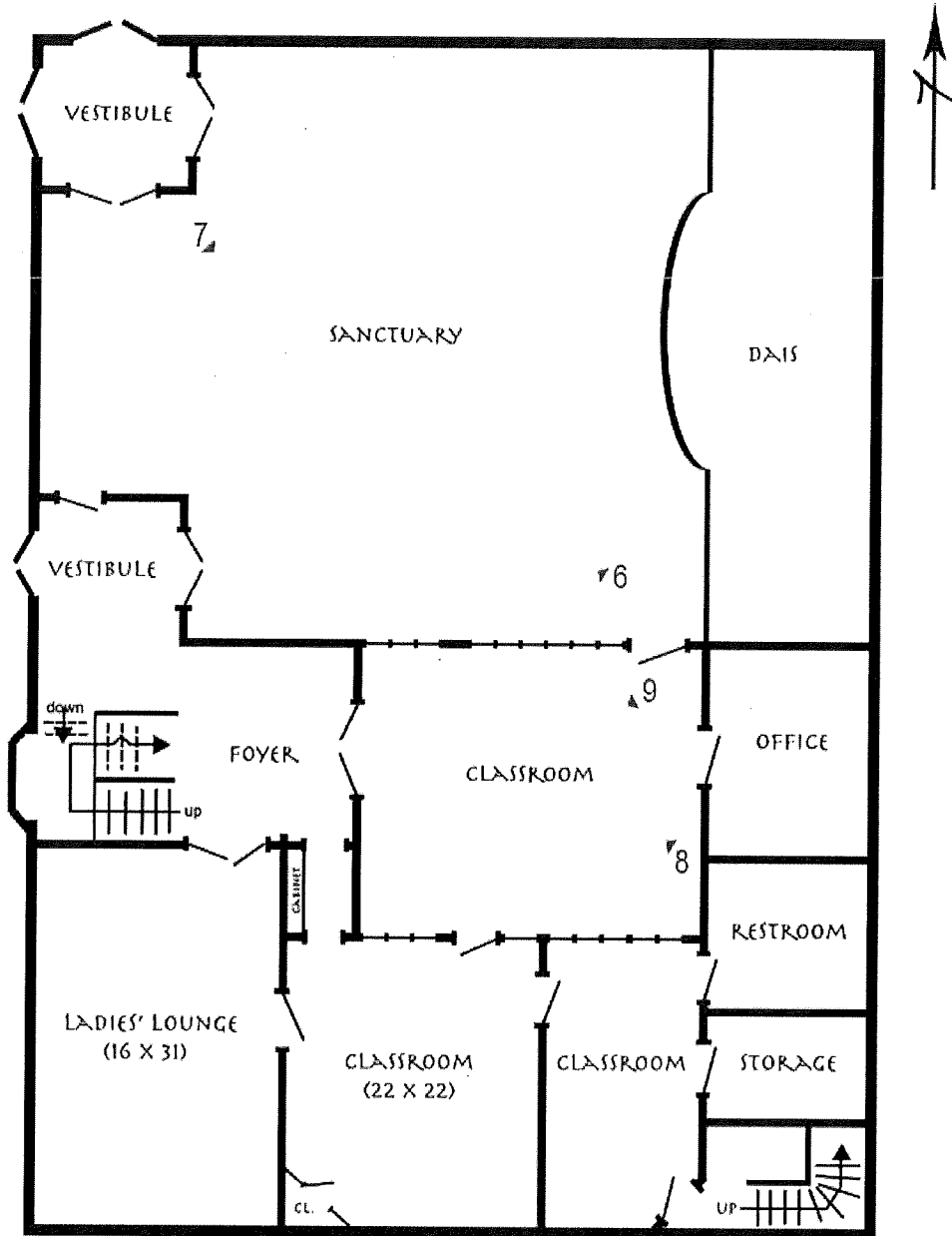
Figure 13. Exterior Views



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Figure 14. Interior – 1st Floor

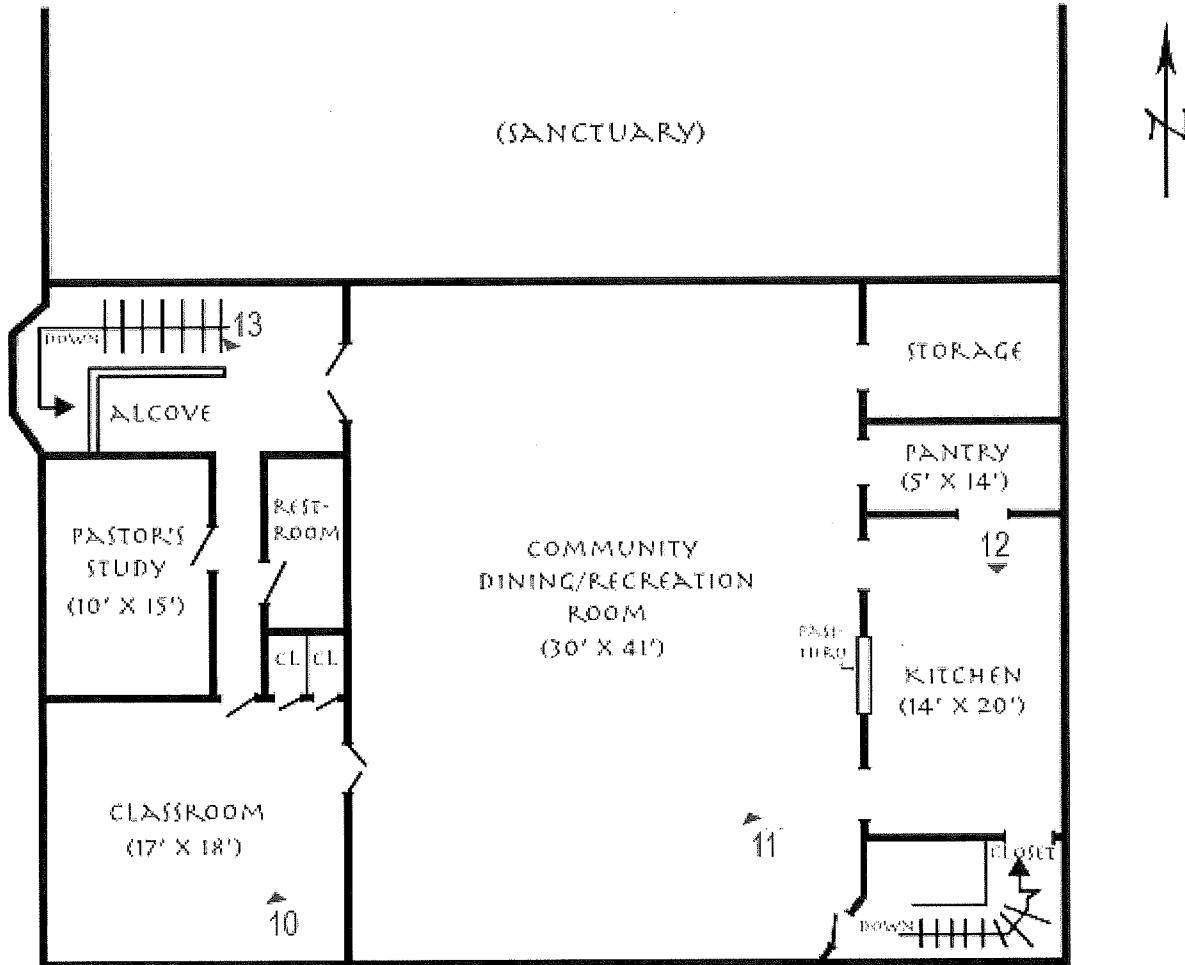


FIRST FLOOR PLAN
(NOT TO SCALE)

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Figure 15. Interior – 2nd Floor

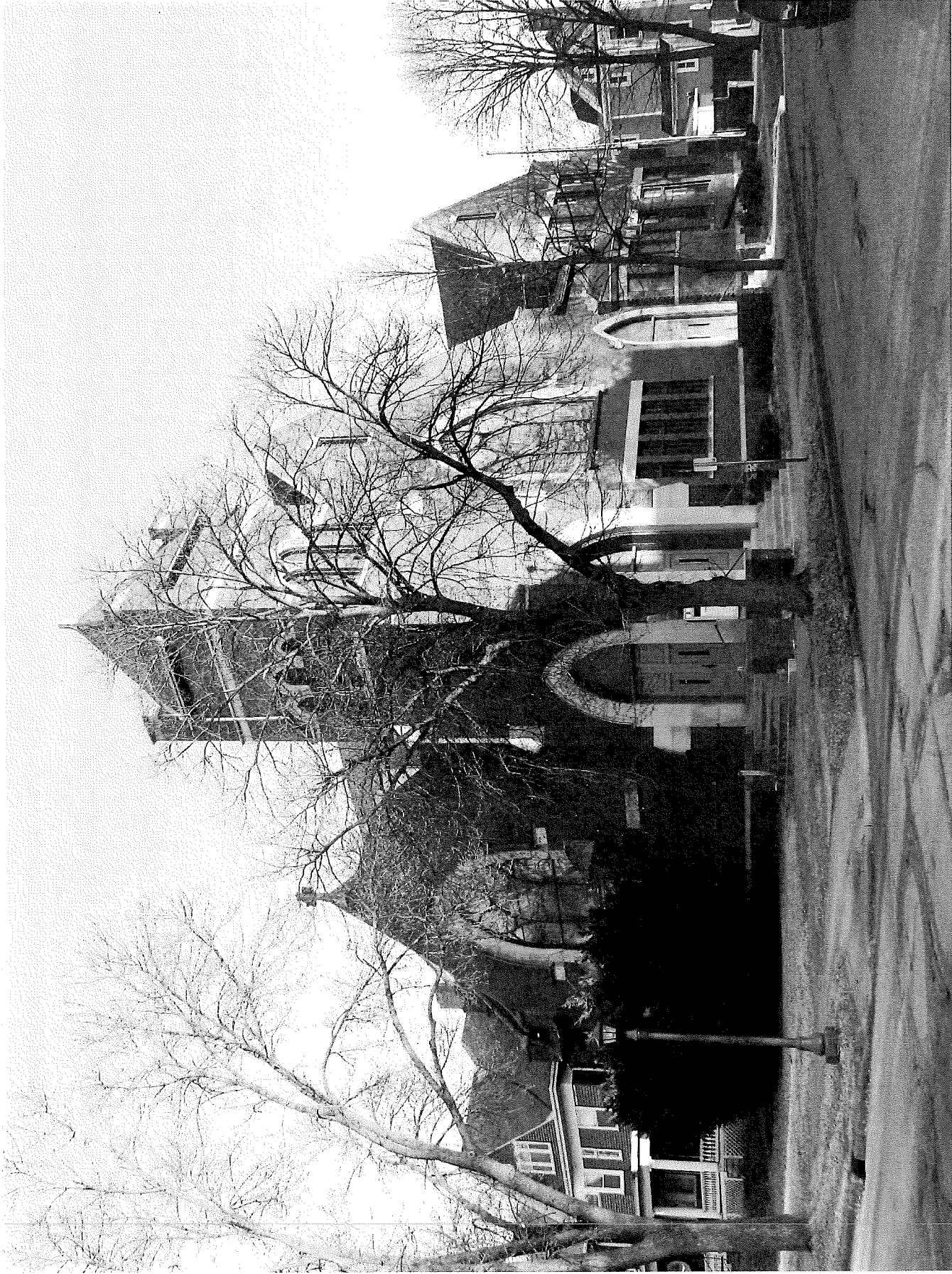


SECOND FLOOR PLAN

NOT TO SCALE

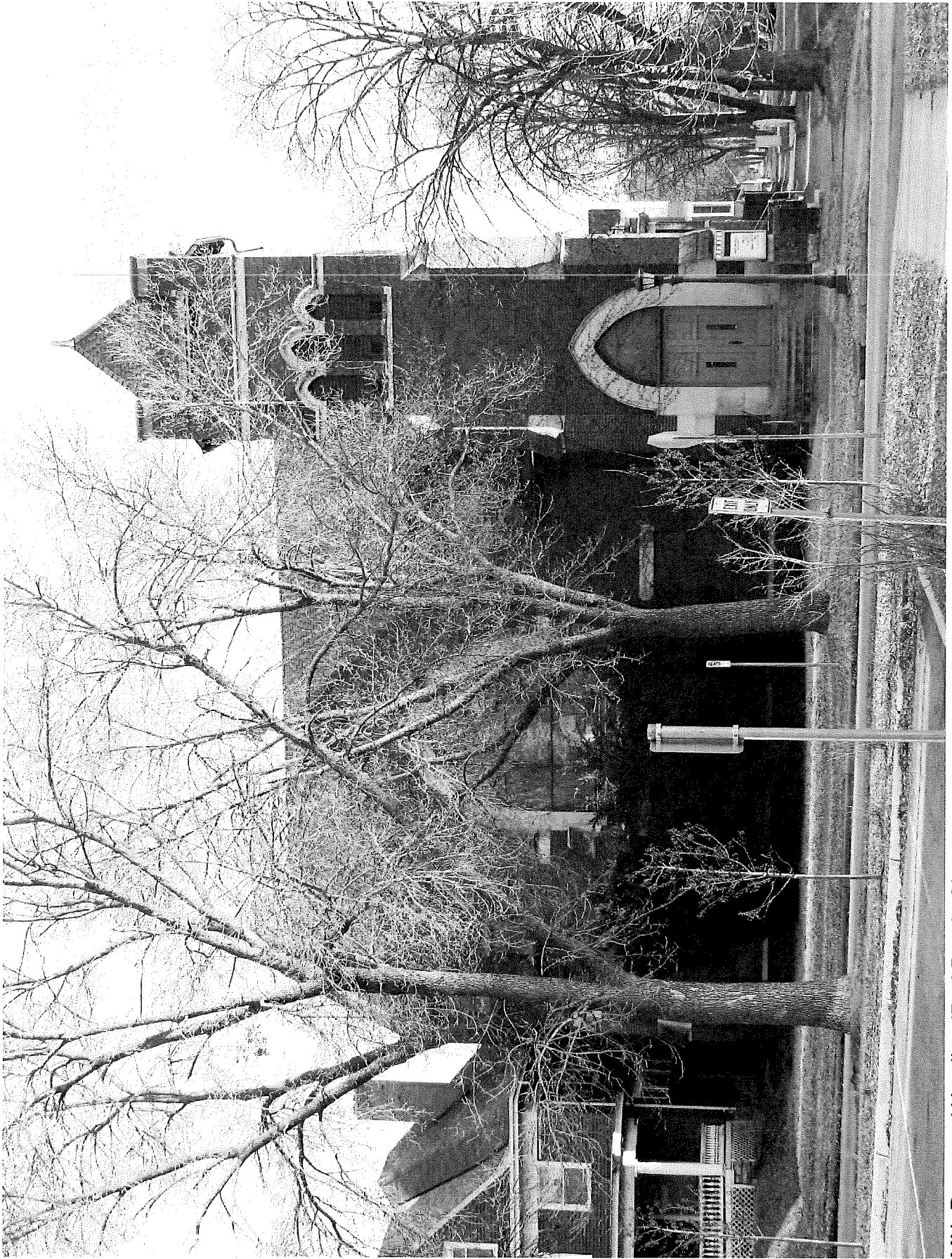
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain 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 100 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.



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0001

Exterior – Looking SE across Laurel Avenue and N. Victoria Street



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0002
Exterior – View of the façade (north), looking south



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0003

Exterior – View of the west elevation, looking SE across N. Victoria Street



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0004

Exterior – View of the west elevation and south elevations, looking NE



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0005

Exterior – View of the rear (south) and east elevations, looking NW



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0006
Interior: First Floor – Sanctuary, looking NW



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0007
Interior: First Floor – Sanctuary, looking SE



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0008
Interior: First Floor – Sunday School Room (1), looking NNW



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0009

Interior: First Floor – Sunday School Room (1), looking SE



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0010
Interior: Second Floor – Classroom, looking north



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0011
Interior: Second Floor – Community Room, looking NW



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0012
Interior: Second Floor – Kitchen, looking south



MN_Ramsey_WoodlandParkBaptistChurch_0013
Interior: Second Floor – Staircase, looking SW

