

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received APR 24 1987

date entered MAY 21 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic German Evangelical Church of Christ Complex

and or common Christ Evangelical Church; United Church of Christ Complex

2. Location

street & number 1236 E. Breckinridge Street na not for publication

city, town Louisville na vicinity of

state Kentucky code 021 county Jefferson code 111

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name United Evangelical Church of Christ

street & number 1236 E. Breckinridge Street

city, town Louisville na vicinity of state Kentucky

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse

street & number 6th and Jefferson Streets

city, town Louisville state Kentucky (40202)

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Kentucky Historic Resources

Inventory (JFEH 3030) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date November 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

7. Description

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|---------|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved | date na |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | | |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The German Evangelical Church of Christ Complex includes a church and its gymnasium addition as well as a rectory. All were constructed between 1902 and 1929 to serve ecclesiastical purposes. They share a corner lot formed by the intersection of East Breckinridge Street and Barret Avenue (see site plan). The Romanesque style church and the rectory building both face East Breckinridge Street and are consistent with the setback of other residences along the street. The primary facade of the gymnasium addition is more deeply setback and is nestled between the church and rectory (see Photo 2). Although the gymnasium addition to the church building was substantial in size, its site placement and architecture are sympathetic to the overall architectural integrity of the complex.

The neighborhood surrounding the German Evangelical Church of Christ Complex is predominantly residential in character but has a few scattered examples of buildings that reflect industrial and commercial uses as well. The strongest period of growth in the Germantown neighborhood occurred between 1861 and 1918. The small-scale buildings constructed reflect late Victorian architectural trends.

The German Evangelical Church of Christ Complex lies southwest of the Highlands National Register District (February, 1983), which is the largest district in Louisville and is noted for the quality and cohesiveness of its Victorian and post-Victorian style architecture. Several buildings in close proximity to the German Evangelical Church of Christ Complex have been honored for their architectural and historical significance. St. Therese Roman Catholic Church and Rectory date from 1928-1929 (National Register: July, 1975). They were designed by Fred T. Erhart in the Spanish Baroque style. The Hope Worsted Mill, designed by D. X. Murphy in 1904, and the Bradford Mill, constructed in 1910, are two excellent examples of industrial architecture in the Germantown neighborhood (National Register: October, 1982).

The Romanesque style church (see Photos 5 and 9), sited prominently on a corner, is the focal point of the German Evangelical Church of Christ Complex. The asymmetrically massed red brick building is dominated by a square, corner bell tower. Its basic shape is rectangular. Decorative brick-work accentuates the building's facade design. Leaded glass is used in addition to rectangular windows with one-over-one light configurations. The primary roof form is gabled but hipped and polygonal roofs are also present.

The principal facade of the German Evangelical Church of Christ (see Photo 3) faces East Breckinridge Street and is divided into three bays. An entry with double doors is located to the east. A full arch with brick voussoirs and a stone coping frames the transom window that tops the doors. A stone stringcourse delineates the first floor from those above. Three narrow, arched windows accentuate this bay's

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699 | <input type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900– | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Ethnic and social history |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | | |

Specific dates 1902 - 1929 **Builder/Architect** unknown; unknown; Redman, Herbert
(gymnasium addition to church)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The German Evangelical Church of Christ Complex is locally significant under criterion "A" in the area of ethnic and social history between the years 1902 and 1929. The German population was an important element to the settlement of Louisville. It was during this period the strength and influence of the German community was weakening due to national and international conflicts. The church, which is an excellent local example of Romanesque Revival style architecture, the rectory and the gymnasium addition, served as neighborhood symbols offering religious and social activities for its congregants to embrace (see Photos 1-3).

The Germantown neighborhood experienced its greatest period of growth and development between the Civil War and World War I. As the city became more and more crowded in the 1860s, expansion occurred in all directions. As a result, a significant number of the second generation German immigrants who had grown up in the Butchertown and Phoenix Hill neighborhoods moved into the Germantown area and established yet another neighborhood with strong ethnic ties. The parents of these new Germantown residents had fled Germany because of economic and political hardships but had instilled in their children a strong sense of German social, cultural, and religious values. The three local newspapers published in German, the Louisville Volksbuhne (Tribune), the Beobachter am Ohio (Observer on the Ohio), and the Louisville Anzeiger (Advertiser), helped to reinforce these socio-cultural values. They also kept these first and second generation German immigrants abreast of German dances, band concerts and political rallies. Germantown became an ethnic pocket where German was commonly spoken and read.

The German Evangelical Church was organized in 1879 by Reverend John Brodman, a former pastor of St. John's Evangelical Church. After being housed in two locations in the Phoenix Hill neighborhood, the congregation decided to build a new church in Germantown. In June of 1901, the cornerstone for the present church was laid. The rectory at 1228 E. Breckinridge Street was constructed two years later.

The design chosen for the church (see Photos 5 and 9) was the Romanesque Revival style, popular in Louisville in the second half of the 19th century and consistent with building trends throughout the nation. The Ursuline Academy, constructed by John Bast in 1867 (National Register: June, 1978) and Holy Name Church, constructed by J. J. Gaffney in 1902 (National Register: September, 1983) are two local examples of this style that have been noted for their architectural excellence. However, it is Quinn's AME Church (National

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name East Louisville

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The legal boundary chosen for this nomination is based on the lot historically associated with the German Evangelical Church of Christ Complex. That lot is City of Louisville Block 22E Lot 35. The lot dimensions are 135'x160.5'

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state na code county na code

state na code county na code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joanne Weeter, Research Coordinator

organization Louisville Landmarks Commission date January 2, 1987

street & number 609 W. Jefferson Street telephone (502) 587-3501

city or town Louisville state Kentucky 40202

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature David L. Moya

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date 4-20-87

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

entered in the National Register

date 5-21-87

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

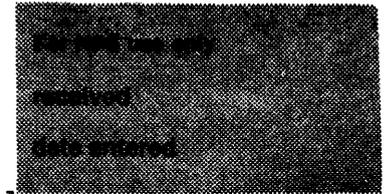
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vertical proportions. A row of dentils offsets a small gable with a louvered window in a trefoil shape. The bay is capped by a multi-sided roof that terminates with a finial. The corners of the tower have turrets with finials. The central bay is formed by a broad, front-facing gable with a semi-circular window and a Palladian window with louvers. A stone coping lines the cornice and a finial is located at the gable's peak. Superimposed in front of this bay is a one story, three sided, brick addition. It is topped by a gabled parapet wall. The west bay has a one story projection that houses an entry into the church proper. Above the door are two narrow leaded glass windows, a stone stringcourse, and a hipped roof.

The facade of the German Evangelical Church of Christ (see Photos 9 and 10) that faces Barret Avenue has an arched stained glass window framed by brick voussoirs and flanked by arched niches on its northern bay. The tower above is identical to the side of the tower that faces East Breckinridge Street. To the left of the tower is a recessed bay with arched windows and voussoirs. The next bay is formed by a projecting cross gable. It has arched windows in a group of three with a small, circular window above. The remaining bays vary in height from one story to two. All of the first floor windows are arched and have brick voussoirs while the second floor windows are rectangular.

The interior space used for worship in the German Evangelical Church (see Photos 12 and 13) is basically square in shape. The center aisle cuts a diagonal from one corner of the church to the other and is terminated at a raised altar. The pews are arranged in a quarter circle. Smooth plaster walls are pierced by groups of art glass windows.

The gymnasium addition to the German Evangelical Church, constructed in 1929-30, is a two story brick structure. The three bay facade is symmetrically arranged. The gabled parapet that tops the addition hides a shed roof (see Photo 2).

The gymnasium addition is entered by passing through a small porch with brick columns and a gabled roof. This protects an entry flanked and surmounted by arched windows with multiple panes. Above, a blind arched window is flanked by square blind windows. Stone coping adorns the addition's gabled parapet.

The interior of the gymnasium is dominated by a large room in which sports-related activities take place. Smaller meeting rooms branch from the gymnasium area. The interior space is trimmed in detail typical of the 1930s and is architecturally undistinguished.

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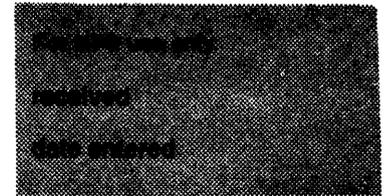
In 1929, when the gymnasium was constructed as an addition to the German Evangelical Church, the design was intended to architecturally reflect the previously built structure through its repetition of materials and architectural forms. The gymnasium area's broad, front facing gabled parapet mimics the church's facade in an extreme simplification of the three sided apsidal projection centered on the church's primary facade. The arched windows of the gymnasium addition echos the arched forms found on the sanctuary. The repetition of building materials contributes to the smooth transition and cohesiveness of these two elements. Common to both is the consistent foundation and floor height level and the use of brick with stone trim. The placement of the gymnasium addition on the rear of the lot minimizes the impact of this more recently constructed structure to the 1902 church structure. Therefore the gymnasium addition's impact on the church's architectural integrity is minimal.

The rectory (see Photo 1) is asymmetrical. Like the church proper it is constructed of red brick with painted stone trim. The windows are either single or paired one-over-ones. The varied roof forms include hipped, cross gabled, and conical roofs and, to the rear, a simple shed.

A one-story porch supported by brick columns with a denticulated cornice spans the facade of the rectory (see Photos 1 and 14). It originally had wooden porch columns that were replaced sometime after 1929 ("see pre-1929 view of the Complex (photocopy) from the Christ Evangelical Church: Souvenir of the Golden Anniversary") but this change was not substantial enough to affect the overall architectural integrity of the building. To the north is an entry with double doors surmounted by a transom. A large single light window, also surmounted by a transom, is located to the south. The second floor has one single and one paired one-over-one window. The gable that tops the building is offset to the south. It has a pair of square attic windows that are accentuated by brick corbeling and by board and batten.

The interior of the rectory reflects turn-of-the-century architectural trends. The floor plan is based on a four-square arrangement. The focal point of the house's interior and its most outstanding architectural features is a beautifully carved stairway (Photo 17) with details exhibiting Classical Revival influences. These details include egg and dart, bead and reel and acanthus motifs. Other interesting features of the house are the mantels that adorn each fireplace. The one pictured (Photo 16) is a simple wood and tile example with carvings that include beading and a foliate motif.

The nominated area includes two contributing buildings and no non-contributing buildings.

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Register: December, 1980), a Gothic Revival style building, located in the Russell neighborhood, that most closely resembles the German Evangelical Church in terms of massing and overall character. Designed by Henry Wolters in 1884, it is noted for a centered Gothic arcade on the first floor with a multi-tiered window arrangement of lancet arches and a rose window above. Squared towers complete the building's facade arrangement.

By the year 1903, when construction of the rectory was completed, the German character of the neighborhood had begun to show signs of change. The Germantown residents had begun the slow process of assimilation into America's melting pot. By 1906 the congregation mandated that the majority of the church services be heard, not in German, but in English. Similarly the parochial school, long considered an integral part of every German child's schooling, had failed due to lack of interest. The Sunday School at the German Evangelical Church provided religious education but it was not nearly as rigorous nor as comprehensive as the education one might receive in a parochial school. Despite these trends away from a German ethnic heritage, the German Evangelical Church continued to serve as a neighborhood focal point for social and religious activities. Fellowship suppers, banquets, fund raising activities and charity drives took place on a regular basis and the church library received a great deal of use.

The strong sense of ethnicity in Germantown was further diffused with the onset of national and international hostilities directed towards Germans during the years just prior to World War I. All activities with an emphasis on German culture ceased. This was due in part to a number of editorials in the Courier-Journal written by Henry Watterson expressing strong animosities towards Louisvillians of German descent. Around the city, newspapers written in German stopped publishing and German-owned lending institutions erased all traces of the word German from their titles. One of the most blatant expressions of anti-German sentiment occurred in 1917 when 600 acres of farmland inherited by the German Baron von Zedwitz were seized by the federal Alien Properties Office because its owner was German. Yet, the church thrived during the late 1910s. Physical improvements to the existing buildings were made and the number of congregants increased steadily. Between 1913 and 1918 the exterior trim of the church was painted and a new pipe organ was installed. When World War I was finally over, the ethnicity of the German Evangelical Church and the neighborhood in which it was located had totally disappeared. The church, however, continued to grow and in 1923 the church congregation reached the highest number of members ever. By the late 1920s, the effects of the

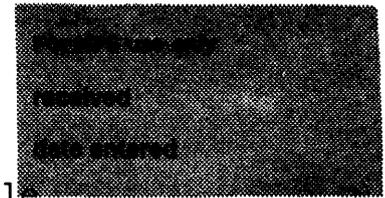
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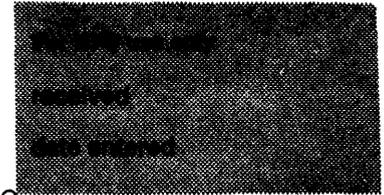
Great Depression were felt throughout the nation but the German Evangelical Church had grown to such an extent that an expansion of the existing church was needed. In 1929, a gymnasium addition, designed by architect Herbert Redman was built. When completed, both athletic and social events could be held in the facility as well as an occasional church supper (see Photo 20).

Little is known about Herbert Redman (1896-1979), his educational background, or professional career. He is listed as an attendee in the 1914-15 catalogue for the now defunct University of Louisville School of Architecture, and it is assumed he graduated from there. Information on the years between 1915 and 1929 are not available but by the time the effects of the Great Depression were felt in Louisville, Redman was a practicing architect without much work. During this lean period, he shared an office with two unemployed architects, Fred Elswick and Stratton Hammon. According to Hammon, their partnership was a rather loose one with each of the partners assisting one another only when the work for which they were hired was too much for one person to handle. As work was scarce during the depression, a design contest, sponsored by the Louisville Board of Realtors, elicited a large response. The design was for a model home to be erected at the 1929 Home Show. Redman won one of three honorable mention awards. In 1939, when World War II broke out, Redman entered the service and, because of prior military experience, eventually achieved the rank of full colonel. Sometime after the war Redman formed a partnership with Bergman S. Letzler but whether or not they collaborated on projects is unclear. It is unknown which buildings were actually built based on Redman's designs, but it appears that his commissions were small and may have been mostly residential. He died in 1979 at the age of 83.

In addition to construction of the gymnasium, other changes have been made over the years to the church complex (compare Photo 5 with pre-1929 view of the Complex). The first change was in 1929 and occurred simultaneously with the construction of the gymnasium addition. The exterior of the church, which originally had a central recessed ground floor porch with three Roman arches framing the entry, was changed to accommodate a three-sided, apsidal projection. The building's original entrances were then moved to the outer bays. The elevational profile of the new apse closely resembles the former recessed porch. Sometime after 1929 the ground level side door on the Barret Avenue facade of the church, as well as one of the arched windows, was bricked in. A single, two-story bay was also added to the rear. The change is true to the original structure's design. The only change that has been made to the rectory is a post-1929 replacement of the original wooden porch columns with square brick ones. The gymnasium

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addition's porch was glass enclosed sometime within the last ten years. The changes that have occurred to the buildings in this complex were not drastic enough to affect their overall significance.

The membership of the German evangelical Church, now referred to as Christ Evangelical Church, has dropped steadily over the years. This can be attributed to the death of many of the church's older congregants as well as to the urban flight by younger church members away from the Germantown neighborhood. Additionally, area hospitals purchased large tracts of land, demolished the existing houses, and constructed hospital facilities and parking lots, thereby decreasing the pool of potential church members. Many new commercial and industrial establishments have moved into the area as well, making the area less desirable for residential use. Despite these obstacles, the present congregation continues to support a strong commitment to the Germantown neighborhood and has no plans, at present, to relocate.

The German Evangelical Church of Christ Complex serves as an important reminder of Germantown's social and ethnic history between the years 1902 and 1929. The church, which is an excellent local example of Romanesque Revival style architecture, its gymnasium addition, and the rectory, symbolize the role of the church as a center for religious and social activities during times of political and social unrest, linked to people of a specific ethnic background.

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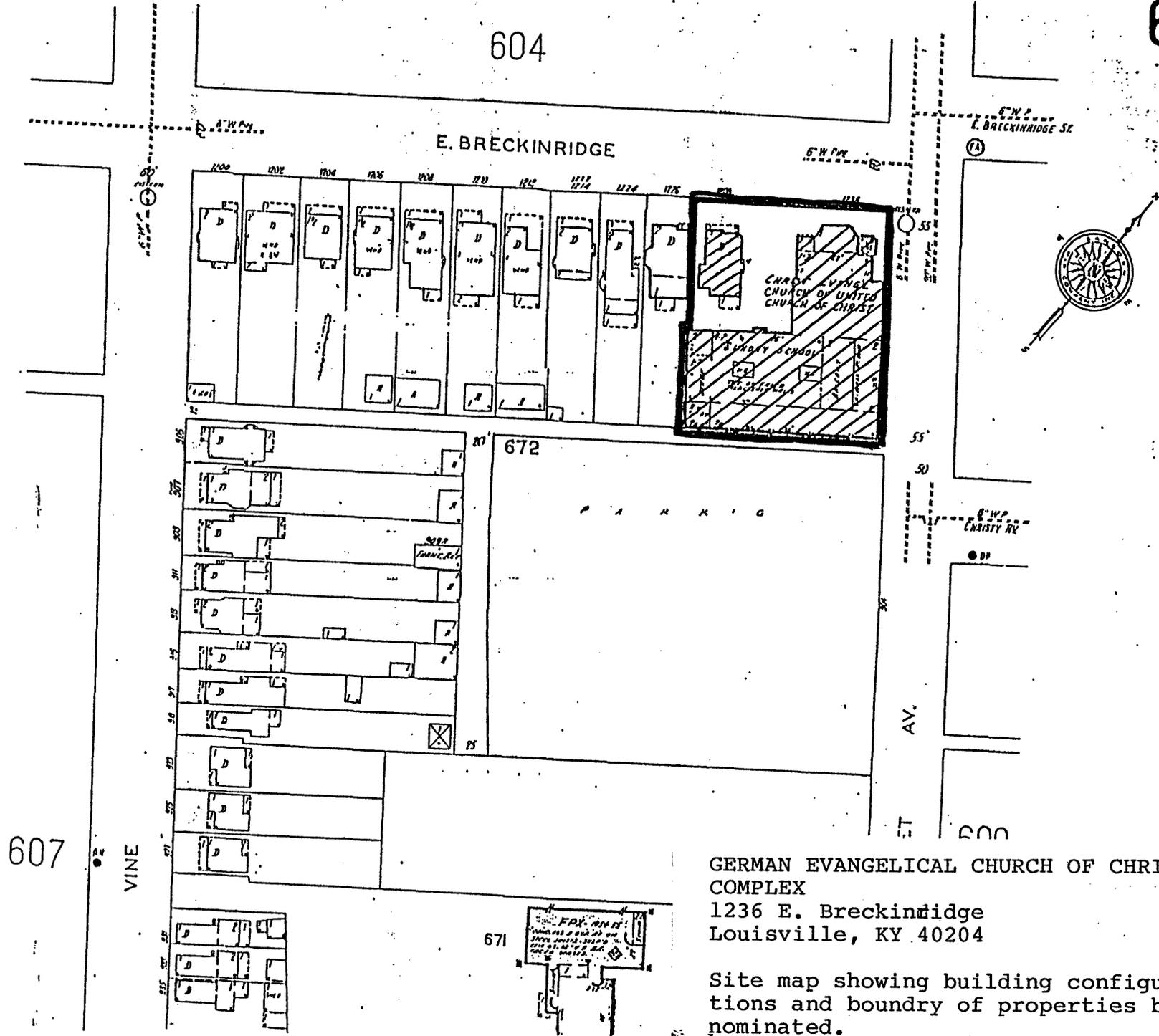
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- _____. Caron's Directory of the City of Louisville.
Louisville: Caron Director Company, 1900-1935.
- _____. Christ Evangelical Church: Souvenir of the Golden Anniversary.
Louisville: Press of the Masonic Home Journal, 1929.
- _____. Christ United Church of Christ: Eighty-fifth Anniversary.
Louisville, 1964.
- Hammon, Stratton, Hammon and Hammon Architects and Engineers,
Louisville. Interview, December 1986.
- _____. Louisville Survey East Report. Louisville: City of Louisville
Community Development Cabinet, 1979.



GERMAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF CHRIST
 COMPLEX
 1236 E. Breckinridge
 Louisville, KY 40204

Site map showing building configurations and boundary of properties being nominated.

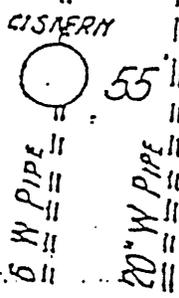
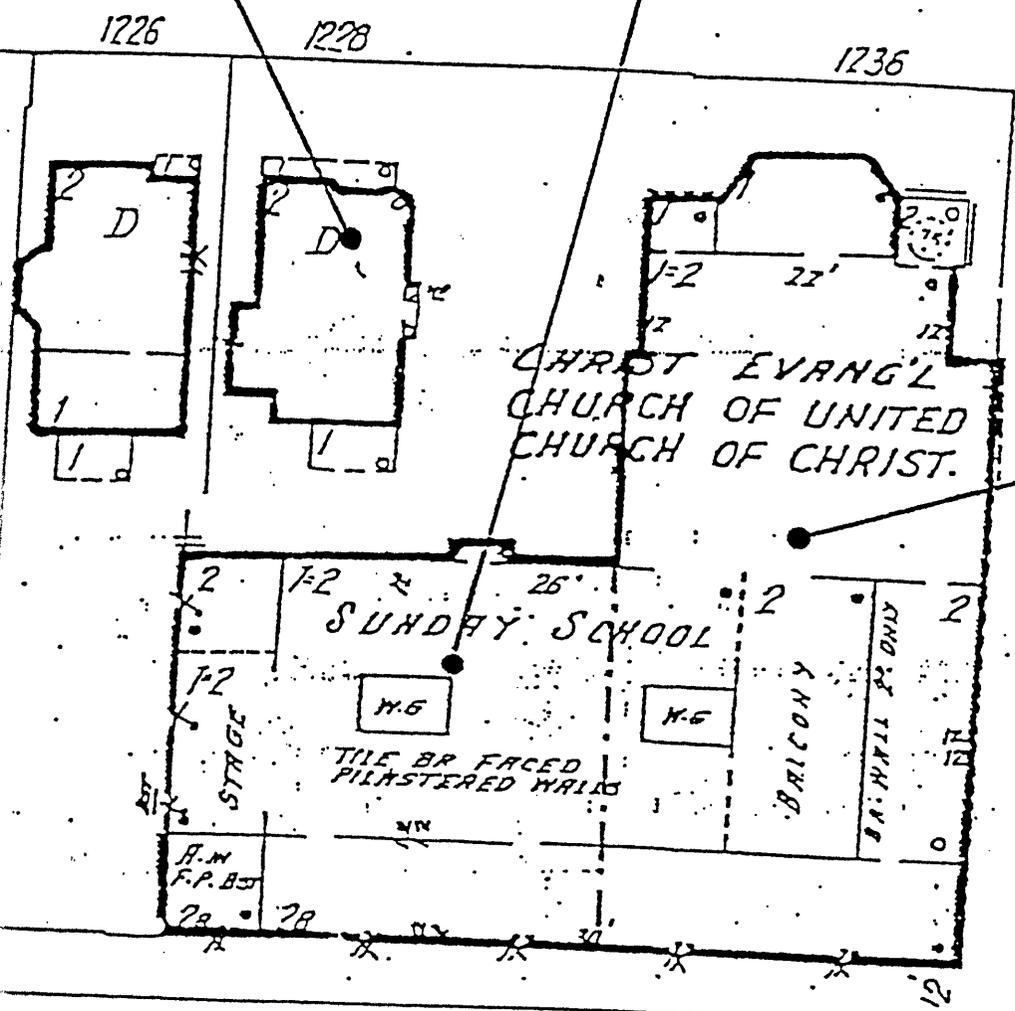
E. BRECKINRIDGE

(F.A.)

RECTORY (1903)

Gymnasium Addition (1929)

Church (1902)



55'

50'

6" W.P. CHRISTY-AV.

DH

GERMAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF CHRIST
 COMPLEX
 1236 E. Breckinridge
 Louisville, KY 40204

Site Map showing dates of
 construction

904

