

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received APR 16 1984
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Peachtree Christian Church

and or common Same

2. Location

street & number 1580 Peachtree Street, N/W. N/A not for publication

city, town Atlanta N/A vicinity of

state Georgia code 013 county Fulton code 121

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Peachtree Christian Church, c/o the Reverend H. Thomas Money, Pastor

street & number 1580 Peachtree Street, N.W.

city, town Atlanta N/A vicinity of state Georgia 30309

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Fulton County Courthouse

city, town Atlanta state Georgia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title See Continuation Sheet. has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Peachtree Christian Church is a Gothic-styled red-brick church with limestone quoining on all corners and limestone molded-frame openings. It consists of a main sanctuary with a bell tower, an adjoining chapel and an education building. Entrance to the sanctuary is achieved through the narthex, which fronts on Peachtree Street. Both the main and south entrances are reached through stone bridges that cross a "moat." A playground is located on the south side of the church, adjacent to its lowest level.

The sanctuary and bell tower are a deep red brick, laid in running bond, with limestone quoining at all corners and limestone molding that frames the openings. The sanctuary is supported by stone and has two levels underneath. These lower two levels are faced with stone. The additions are brick with running bond, of a color similar, but not the same as, the sanctuary. Craftsmanship is excellent.

The sanctuary or nave has five large windows on each of its long sides. Each window has a Gothic arched opening with limestone molding. Below each of the large windows is a side aisle window with three lancet windows set in a large rectangular opening. The windows in the two lower levels and in the additions are six-over-six in rectangular openings frame in limestone.

The belltower, off the narthex or vestibule, rises high above the sanctuary. At the top, it has square, brick turrets with limestone quoining that extend above the parapet, which is also detailed in limestone. Double Gothic arches frame limestone louvers that hide the chimes which were made especially for this church by J.C. Degan, Inc., of Chicago, Illinois. They are said to be the largest and heaviest set of chimes ever made by that company.

The interior of the main part of the church follows the traditional floor plan of a Gothic church. One enters the narthex or vestibule from the street side through a Norman arch framed in limestone. The doors are of solid oak with iron hardware. On the left is a side entrance and a bride's room. On the right is the entrance to the chapel. From the narthex, one can enter the nave or sanctuary from one of three doors. The two side doors lead to the side aisles. These three doors are wood with paned-glass double doors.

The nave or sanctuary contains pews and has two side aisles. At the far end is the chancel or altar area, while at the opposite end, above the narthex, is the choir loft. The nave is divided into five bays, emphasized by the five Gothic arches that frame the stained-glass windows on either side. More than half of the wall space is stained glass. The glass was handmade by William Glasby of London, England, especially for this church over a twenty-five-year period. The windows were paid for by memorial contributions of members. It is one of the finest collections of handmade stained glass in the world.

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As with earlier Gothic churches, the stained-glass windows in the nave tell the story of the New Testament, while the windows in the side aisles depict parables. The chancel window depicts Christ's last interview with his disciples after the Resurrection. This scene shows a very rare view, one that is not often depicted by religious artists, and is considered an original depiction.

A Gothic vault runs the entire length of the ceiling of the nave and is painted predominantly red (symbolizing Christ's blood), blue (symbolizing purity and strength), and green (for the freshness of the gospel message). Wood coffering divides the geometric patterns of the ceiling.

At the far end of the nave is the chancel, which is set off by a Gothic arch decorated with a plaster grapevine that symbolizes a verse from John 15:5 ("I am the Vine, Ye are the Branches"). A man and woman kneel in prayer on either side of the arch, supporting the molding surround the arch. They symbolize equality in the eyes of God and that the church is a house of prayer.

The choir loft is above the narthex at the opposite end of the nave from the chancel. It is open to the nave except for a wooden bannister which is decorated with lancet-shaped moldings. Another large stained-glass window is located at the rear of the choir loft above the front entrance to the church. There are two organs, one on each side of the choir loft. One, built in 1928 by Henry Pilcher's Sons of Louisville, Kentucky, has thirty-six ranks; a new one, added in 1967, was built by Fratelli Rufatti of Padova, Italy.

The pews are of solid oak and were made by American Seating Company for this church. The marble altar, pulpit, baptistry, and chancel were made by Godfrey Marble Company of Atlanta. Embedded in the altar is a small Star of David made of blood-red marble from Palestine that was a gift of The Temple, the Jewish synagogue located across the street. The brass and bronze angel lecturn, silver cross and two bronze tablets were made by Gorham's of New York.

Behind the chancel are two baptistry rooms. An oil painting of the "Resurrection" is at the back of the baptistry area and runs the length of the altar. It was painted by Miss Nell Van Hook of Atlanta.

Chandeliers hang from each of the five bays on either side of the nave and have brass lancet details.

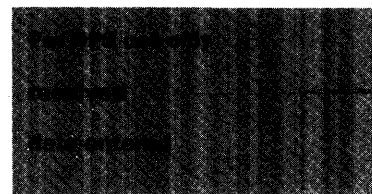
The church is built of stone, concrete and brick construction. The education-wing addition is concrete block and brick. The grounds are well kept but have a minimum of landscaping. Most of the unbuilt site, except for the playground, is paved for parking.

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The church is situated at a major intersection about a block from an interstate highway. A new exit ramp comes right behind the church. Nearby on one side is historic Rhodes Hall, formerly a residence, situated in a small shopping center, a restaurant, television studio, apartments, a large commercial enterprise and, as mentioned, the Jewish synagogue known as The Temple.

Changes to the church have been minimal. In 1949, the Annie Laurie Warren Chapel was added to the west end of the narthex. It was designed by George G. Blau, Jr., an Atlanta architect. It is one-story, with a separate outside entrance, and has three Gothic arched windows on each side. Its stained glass is American, made by Rambusch Brothers of New York. Three windows on the left depict Old Testament scenes, while the three on the right are from the New Testament. The rose window in the chancel depicts Christ. Above the altar hangs a brass, Italian chandelier in which burns an "Eternal Flame."

The second addition was the 1964 education wing. It is a large, L-shaped building that joins the two-story meeting and dining-room area behind the nave on one side and the chapel on the other. This leaves an open courtyard in the middle. The addition contains three floors, two of which are classrooms and the third an auditorium. The wing was designed by noted Atlanta architects Francis P. Smith, FAIA, and his son, Henry Howard Smith.

Because of the siting of the church, two entire floors of offices, classrooms, and other rooms exist under the main sanctuary area and the chapel.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1928

Builder/Architect Charles H. Hopson (architect)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Peachtree Christian Church is significant in architecture as a fine example of a twentieth-century Gothic-styled church whose sanctuary or nave is built on the historic Gothic floor plan and includes a vaulted ceiling, side aisles, arched window openings, ribs and bosses, all characteristic elements of this style. Local materials, such as brick, were used rather than the stone that would have been used in Medieval times. It is also significant in architecture as a work of Charles H. Hopson (1865–1941) of Atlanta, an English-born architect who was best known in Atlanta and other cities for his ecclesiastical structures. His churches show the variety of styles available during the early twentieth century, as well as his ability to adapt them to local settings and needs. His other works, including the Rock Spring Presbyterian Church, show other adaptations of English churches to Atlanta. Mr. Hopson was a member of this church.

The church is significant in art for its large collection of English stained glass made by William Glasby. He flourished in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries as a glass painter and stained-glass designer in England. Such a large collection created by one artist or studio gives the glass a unity of style and subject matter that other churches do not have.

The church is significant in religion because it is associated with the Christian Church, one of Georgia's smaller denominations. At the 1928 dedication, it was emphasized that the church was a "House of Prayer" for all people and that "no unkind word will ever be said of anybody's race or religion." Since the mid-nineteenth century, Georgia has been predominantly Baptist and Methodist; Presbyterians constitute a historic minority. The Christian denomination usually was found only in cities.

These areas of significance support property eligibility under National Register criteria A and C.

Historical Narrative

Peachtree Christian Church rests on land once owned by Amos G. Rhodes, Atlanta furniture dealer and large landholder. He built his own home, Rhodes Hall, in 1904, and it remains just across the street from the church. In 1924 and 1926, he gave land for the church. His son-in-law, the Reverend L.O. Bricker, was the founding minister here and served until June, 1930.

[continued]

9. Major Bibliographical References

Stidham, Pam. "Peachtree Christian Church." Historic Property Information Form, March 15, 1982 (Georgia Tech student project). On file at the Historic Preservation Section, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

See also continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 5 acres

Quadrangle name Northwest Atlanta, Georgia

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>1</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is all that is associated with the church and all that the owners own at this location. It is marked on the enclosed plat.

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian

organization Historic Preservation Section date March 26, 1984
Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

street & number 270 Washington Street, S.W. telephone (404) 656-2840

city or town Atlanta state Georgia

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 Elizabeth A. Lyon
Elizabeth A. Lyon

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 4/5/84

For NPS use only

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

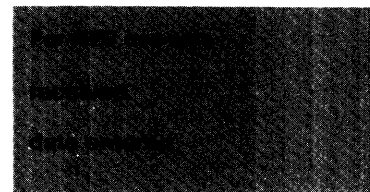
for Melvyn Byus Entered in the National Register date 5/17/84
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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Many of those who formed Peachtree Christian Church were members of First Christian Church of Atlanta. During the early-twentieth century, the need arose for a Christian church for the rapidly growing northern section of Atlanta. On May 10, 1925, 425 men and women met with the Reverend Bricker, their minister, at the Atlanta Women's Club on Peachtree Street in the first official service of this church body. Plans were soon underway for a new church building. The first part that was built and used was the church school assembly room, now the area to the rear of the nave. They met there in 1926. Realizing that funds were needed to continue the building program, Mr. Rhodes again came forward and offered to pay for the church building if the congregation would pay for the furnishings and an educational facility. His initial gift was for \$150,000, which he later supplemented. He died in 1928, just before the church was completed. The church was officially named the "A.G. Rhodes Memorial" in 1927. A portrait of him hangs in the narthex. The church was completed and dedicated October 7-14, 1928.

It was not an accident that Gothic was chosen as the architectural style of the church. The Reverend Bricker felt that it was a spiritual creation, "the only architecture which Christianity ever evolved." He referred to this church as "pure unmodified 15th Century English Gothic." He stressed at the dedication the symbolism of the various parts of the church. The altar symbolized Christ's supreme sacrifice and death, while the baptistry symbolized His burial and resurrection.

Most of the stained glass was by William Glasby of London, England. In the 1928 dedication, he was "said to be the greatest stained-glass artist in the world." Recent contact with the ongoing "Census of Stained Glass Windows in America" has shed more light on Mr. Glasby. He began his career as a glass painter and later designed stained glass in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in England. He is thought to have lived until the early 1940s. He worked first for James Powell and, in 1891, went to work with Henry Holiday, who was "one of the most important figures in modern stained glass." Glasby is believed to have worked for other firms after 1914. He is an example of an artist who was involved in every aspect of glass production, not just in design. All stained glass is considered handmade. English experts on stained glass by Glasby have indicated that a similar large collection of his work would be eligible for "Historic Monument" status in that country.

At Peachtree Christian, windows also exist by Glasby's daughters, the Misses Barbara and Dulcima Glasby, and H. Vernon Spreadbury. Those in the chapel were created by Rambusch Brothers of New York.

Peachtree Christian is a part of the Christian Church or Disciples of Christ organization but remains an autonomous church body. The congregation chooses

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its own ministers, owns its land, and handles its own finances. Four bronze plaques in the narthex commemorate the founders of the Christian Church movement, including the famous Thomas Campbell (1763-1854) and his son Alexander (1788-1866), who gave the movement the name "Campbellites" in its earliest days. The church began a radio broadcast with WSB Radio in 1926. From 1931 to 1970, WSB broadcast the Sunday-morning church service live.

Important dates in the history of Peachtree Christian Church emphasize its approach to equality of all people. In April, 1926, before the present sanctuary was built, it hosted the choir of Big Bethel A.M.E. Church.

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Continuation sheet Representation in Surveys
and Bibliography

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6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Title: a) Historic Structures Field Survey: Fulton County, Georgia
b) Category One List, Atlanta Historic Resources Workbook

Date: a) 1976
b) 1981

a) State
b) Local

Depository for Survey Records: a) Historic Preservation Section,
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
b) Atlanta Urban Design Commission
10 Pryor St.
Atlanta, Georgia

9. Major Bibliographical References

Hopson, Charles H. "Peachtree Christian Church." Copy of page one of Front
Elevation of the Church, 1926.

Jackson, Otis Mahlon. An Interpretation and Historical Sketch of Peachtree
Christian Church...1925...1975. Atlanta: The church, 1975.

McKelvey, Donald S., ed. An Interpretation of the Sanctuary and Clerestory
Windows of Peachtree Christian Church (cover title). Atlanta: The
church, 1975.

Order of Services and Ritual of Dedication of the Peachtree Christian
Church, Atlanta, Georgia, October 7th to 14th, 1928. Atlanta: The
church, 1928.

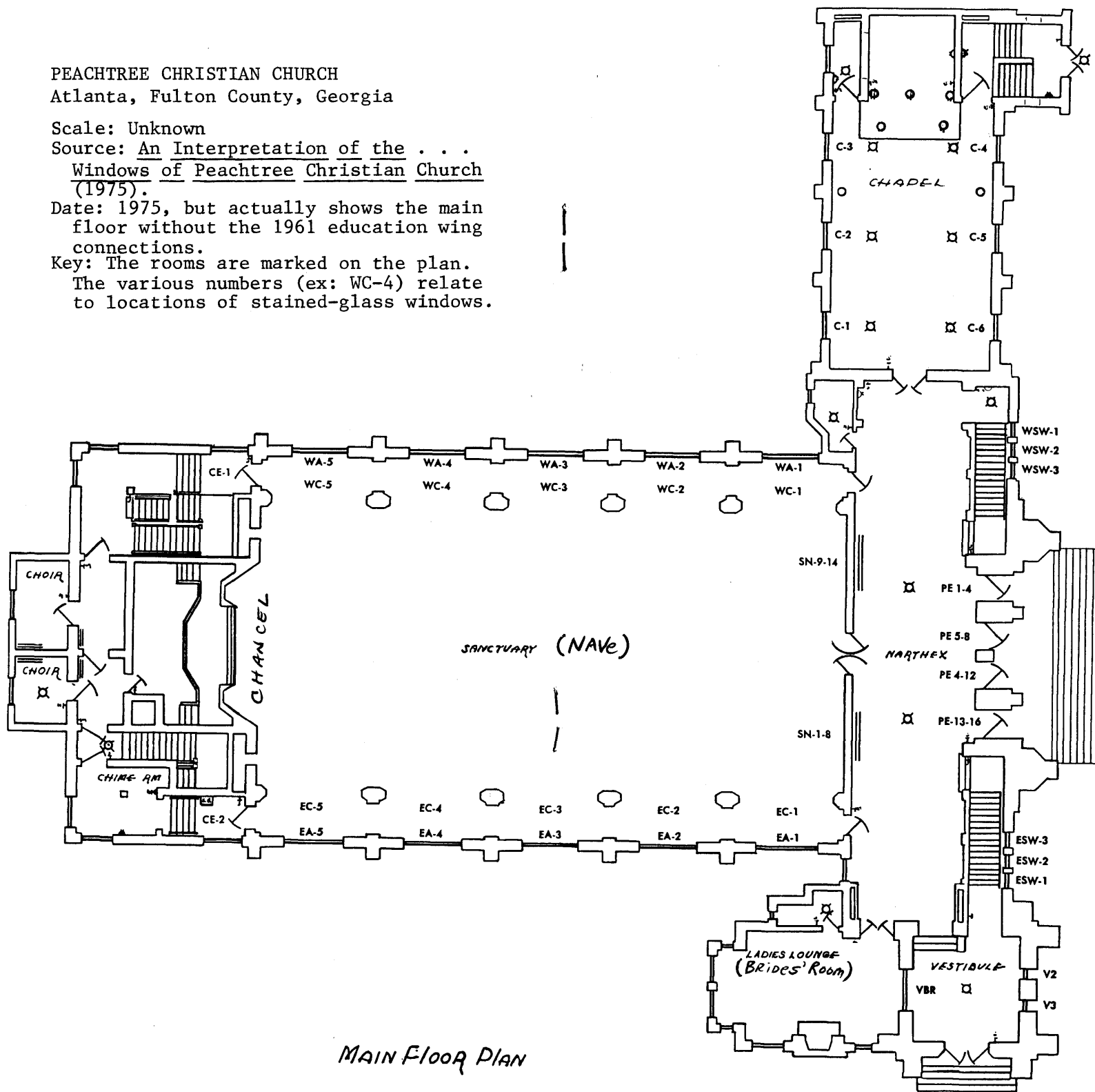
PEACHTREE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
 Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia

Scale: Unknown

Source: An Interpretation of the . . .
 Windows of Peachtree Christian Church
 (1975).

Date: 1975, but actually shows the main
 floor without the 1961 education wing
 connections.

Key: The rooms are marked on the plan.
 The various numbers (ex: WC-4) relate
 to locations of stained-glass windows.



MAIN FLOOR PLAN