



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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Methodist Episcopal Church

other names/site number First United Methodist Church

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number 117 Central Ave N not for publication N/A
city or town Pierre vicinity N/A
state South Dakota code SD county Hughes code 065 zip code 57501

=====

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jay D. Vogt 03-25-97
Signature of certifying official Date

SD SHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Edson H. Ball 5/9/97

- entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet.
determined eligible for the National Register
See continuation sheet.
determined not eligible for the National Register
removed from the National Register
other (explain):

Date of Action

Signature of Keeper

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- X private
public-local
public-State
public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- X building(s)
district
site
structure
object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, and Total.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

name of property Methodist Episcopal Church county and state Hughes, South Dakota

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Religion Sub: religious facility
church-related residence

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Religion Sub: Religious facility

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals: Late Gothic
Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete Covered Brick

roof Asphalt

walls Brick, Stucco

other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance 1910

name of property Methodist Episcopal Church county and state Hughes, South Dakota

Significant Dates 1910

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder F. Turner; contractor

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

- 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 # _____

- Primary Location of Additional Data
- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other

Name of repository: South Dakota State Historical Society, Pierre, South Dakota

name of property Methodist Episcopal Church county and state Hughes, South Dakota

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing
1 14 392165 4913780 3
2 4
See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Stephen Rogers SHPO Staff and Dave Timmons
organization South Dakota State Historical Society date January 1997
street & number 900 Governors Dr telephone (605) 773-6296
city or town Pierre state SD zip code 57501

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

name of property Methodist Episcopal Church county and state Hughes, South Dakota

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name First United Methodist Church
street & number 117 Central Ave N telephone (605) 224-5939
city or town Pierre state SD zip code 57501

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 reports, 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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

Narrative Description

The Methodist Episcopal Church in Pierre, South Dakota is an excellent example of local Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture. Built in 1910 as the third actual building for the church congregation, the building continues to serve the community today. Built by local contractor and devoted member F. Turner, the light brown brick building sits on a concrete clad, brick foundation and has a rectangular plan with apse, nave, and transept.

Exterior

The roof configuration is irregular as a whole but with simpler roof sections. The main church structure features a cross-gable plan. Each steeply pitched gable end is capped by a parapet roof line. An eight-sided hip roof tops the semi-circular apse at the north end of the building. The hipped roof section of the building at the south end was originally the church parsonage and is now used as office space and classrooms.

The fenestration of the building is indicative of the Gothic Revival style of architecture. Most openings are varying sizes of Tudor arches, while some are rectangular. All windows on the church proper are horizontally divided into three sections consisting of a large central pane with smaller panes above and below. The lower portion of the window is single hung and the other portions are fixed. The windows on the parsonage section of the building are one-over-one double hung sash windows. Most of the windows, especially the stained glass ones, have a lexan covering over them that was put in place in the early 1970s.

Large castellated turrets with Tudor windows and faux buttresses, located at three corners of the building, are illustrative of the Gothic Revival style. The tallest tower, located at the northeast corner of the building, serves as the bell-tower and the main entry to the church. Ten concrete steps flanked by brick wingwalls with concrete caps lead up to the front doors on the east elevation of the tower. A nonhistoric iron hand-rail has been added on either side of the steps. The entry consists of double batten doors with single, fixed, leaded-glass lights. A pair of small round pilasters run next to and up over the doors to form a Tudor arch. Above the arch is a concrete drip-mold. Between the arch and the drip-mold are two trefoils. Two original polygonal brass light fixtures with polygonal hipped caps are on either side of the door. Above the drip-molding and directly below a concrete belt course is a sculptured fern motif. Between this belt course and a second belt course are a second and third level of narrow windows. The second level windows are slightly shorter and wider than those on the third level and have concrete drip-moldings. The very narrow windows at the third level have concrete label moldings. Above the upper belt course is a fourth level with large Tudor openings on each of the four tower sides. These openings have arched, brick drip-moldings. Within this upper level is the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

church bell. Three of the four corners of the tower have brick buttresses which end at the third level. The southeast and northwest corners of the building feature two-story towers with similar fenestration, castellation, and buttresses. On the north elevation of the northwest tower is another entrance to the church similar to the main entry. The steps to this entry have been replaced with a concrete ramp for accessibility purposes.

On the facade or east elevation is a parapet gable with a square pediment. Directly below the pediment is a small louvered vent with a concrete label molding. This elevation features a large stained glass window with two pairs of smaller stained glass windows on either side. Between the large window and each pair of smaller windows is a brick buttress. Located in the center of the front facade is an entry to the basement. The west or rear elevation is similar to the front with a parapet gable, stained glass windows, and buttresses. This elevation was covered with stucco cladding in the 1940s.

The semi-circular apse at the north end of the church is perforated by short, flattened gothic arch windows with brick drip-moldings on the second level and rectangular windows with concrete label moldings on the street level. A polygonal roof with a decorative finial caps this portion of the building. Six buttresses surround the apse with two windows between each buttress. Above the polygonal hip-roof is a parapet gable with a square pediment. Directly below the pediment is a small vent.

The south end of the church features a single-story projection that was originally the parsonage of the church. It features a hipped roof with a center, cross-gable. The gable sits atop a two-story bay projection. At the peak of the hip is a tall chimney with a corbeled cap. Windows on the south elevation are one-over-one except for those in the center of the bay. These windows are paired casements with transoms. On the first and second floors there are two windows on each side of the bay. At the southeast corner of the parsonage is a hip roof porch with brick columns. This open porch features a door and window facing east, both with transoms. Above the porch are three small one-over-one windows. At the southwest corner is an enclosed sun-porch with a set of concrete steps leading to a simple door facing west. Above this porch are three small one-over-one windows.

A 4X8 metal storage shed sits at the southwest corner of the lot. Placed on the property in the early 1980s, the shed is not a contributing element.

Interior

The main entrance on the east elevation and the secondary entrance on the north elevation both open into small vestibules. Each vestibule features stairways leading up to the balcony and second floor classrooms and down to the basement. They also feature two sets of swinging doors, one of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7.8 Page 3

which opens directly into the sanctuary and another that leads to the apse and the classrooms located therein.

Gothic elements are found throughout the interior of the building. Doorways are Tudor arches. Each curved oak pew has an ornamental carved quatrefoil design that represents each of the first evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In 1958 an organ purchased from the Reuter Organ Company replaced the original pipe organ. It continues to play for every Sunday service.

The interior is completely finished with oak adding to the rich feeling of the Gothic Revival structure. Woodwork throughout the building is adorned with carved quatrefoils on the balusters of each staircase as well as the pews. Gothic style cutouts are visible in the sawn altar rail and on the balustrades of the balcony and the choir loft. The sanctuary features a vaulted ceiling, sliding pocket doors, and several original light fixtures. Original decorative light fixtures are also intact at the front entry and within the main vestibule.

The building houses offices for ministers and lay people and classroom space for Sunday School teachings in the basement and what was the parsonage. The parsonage at the south end of the building was converted into office and church school rooms in the early 1950s. The only alterations within the parsonage area were minor. A dividing wall was placed within a cased opening between two rooms. The original dining room still features a plate rail, skeleton wainscoting and a built-in cupboard. Extant elements throughout the parsonage include eight inch baseboards, a picture molding, crown moldings over windows and doors, and a 1910 Montgomery Ward style mantel with square pilasters and a brick face.

The basement features similar door treatments as the main floor, and the same quatrefoil design is used throughout the basement. A large fellowship hall retains a hardwood floor of maple, a material that is used in place of the oak found on the main level. The swimming pool that once stood at the south end of the basement was filled in and covered in the 1940s. The swimming pool was a unique feature of the church and was used in conjunction with the fellowship hall and kitchen in the basement for families and groups to gather. In the 1940s the need for classroom space outweighed the need for the swimming pool and it was filled in. The area was converted into a preschool and divided into separate classrooms.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Methodist Episcopal Church, later known as the First United Methodist Church, in Pierre, South Dakota, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, under criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and period of construction. More specifically, the Methodist

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 4

Episcopal Church typifies the second generation of church construction in eastern South Dakota and has local significance as the best surviving example of early twentieth century Gothic Revival architecture in town.

Many churches across the United States were constructed in the Gothic Revival style. As Gothic architecture spread to the United States it came to represent a departure from the cultural norms. Churches chose the Gothic Revival style because it was a return to an emotional, feeling architecture as opposed to the scientific, technological feeling associated with Classical Revival. Where Classical Revival was the style used in public structures as symbols of symmetry and solidity, Gothic Revival was adopted and adapted by churches as a symbol of separateness from the state. Although a common style for church building, the Gothic Revival style was seldom used in other types of buildings. Especially in small towns, the Gothic Revival churches built around the turn of the twentieth century were often unique examples of this architectural style and rare artistic forms within communities (Gowans, 153). The Methodist Episcopal Church is a unique example of Gothic Revival in Pierre, South Dakota.

Scholars of church architecture in the Great Plains have divided the evolution of church buildings in the region into several distinct phases. Because these phases tend to happen in generational cycles they have been termed generations. Typically a parish or congregation would be established in a given area when there was sufficient population. The first order of business for a newly organized church was to construct a suitable church building. In most instances the financial resources of a new parish dictated that the structure cost as little as possible. As a result most of the initial or first generation churches were simple frame buildings constructed by local carpenters or builders. In eastern South Dakota, first generation churches tend to date from the late 19th century with most buildings constructed during the First Dakota Boom, 1878 to 1893.

South Dakota, and the northern Great Plains in general, suffered heavily during the 1890s. A multi-year drought began in 1886 and devastated the rural economy. This situation was worsened by the national depression that struck following the Silver Panic of 1893. As a result, few church buildings were constructed until the return of relative prosperity at the turn-of-the-century. This period from 1900 to 1917, known as the Second Dakota Boom, found many eastern South Dakota churches facing an expanding membership and aging, inadequate church buildings. Many churches decided to construct new church buildings to replace their original first generation structures. These second generation structures were usually architect designed masonry buildings rendered in one of the popular ecclesiastic styles of the time. Despite the relative prosperity of the first two decades of this century, few eastern South Dakota churches could afford extravagant buildings. As a result, second generation churches tended to exhibit less expensive materials and construction techniques than those employed in more prosperous areas of the country.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 5

The First United Methodist Church was founded in Pierre in 1880 as the Methodist Episcopal Church. A frame church was completed in the downtown area in 1881. Two years after its construction, the building was sold and a new church was built on the other side of town. By the fall of 1883 a permanent wood frame church building, or first generation church, was erected in Pierre. This was built in the typical small scale vernacular Gothic Revival style (To the Glory of God, 17).

A few years into the new century thoughts turned to the need of a newer, larger church. The needs of the church were changing in terms of more church-related and church-sponsored activities (To the Glory of God, 20). Controversy arose over the construction of the new building. Ideological, financial, and social problems were all contributing factors of consideration. In the end, however, the vote for a new building prevailed and groundbreaking for the present structure began. The cornerstone for the new building was laid in 1910.

Not only was the Methodist church growing at this time, the City of Pierre was experiencing a construction boom between the years 1905 and 1910. In 1904, Pierre won the final fight for the state capital by defeating a bid by the city of Mitchell to move the capital (Schuler, 103). The assurance of keeping the capital in Pierre started this newest business boom. Some buildings constructed during this time include the State Capitol, the 1,200 seat Grand Opera House, the Saint Charles Hotel, a Carnegie Library, and the Methodist Episcopal Church (Schuler, 103). Many of the structures built during this time are still standing and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. New buildings were not the only improvements in Pierre during this time. A railroad bridge was constructed across the Missouri River, a complete sewage system was installed, sidewalks were put in place, and city streets were graveled. The growth of the Methodist church reflected the growth of the city.

The new building, constructed of brick in a more elaborate Gothic Revival style, was completed with an apse and castellated towers. The church features many of the characteristic features associated with Gothic Revival architecture. A steep cross gable roof, an asymmetrical floor plan, buttresses, pointed arch windows, and drip molds are all style defining elements of the building. Interior ornaments include quatrefoils on all of the pews and a pipe organ made by Reuter Organ Company of Lawrence, Kansas.

In order to economize finances a long time church member, F. Turner, was chosen as the contractor, and the building was completed by the end of the year. All of the art glass throughout the building was contracted through a Minneapolis, Minnesota firm and was purchased and installed for a price of \$1450.00 (To the Glory of God, 66).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8, 9, 10 Page 6

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, debate began about building a new church to handle the burgeoning congregation. However, because of the beauty and quality of the building, the congregation chose to remain in the existing structure. Additional usable space was achieved through the conversion of the parsonage from a residence to office and classroom space. These efforts resulted in the preservation and maintenance of one of the most impressive church buildings in Pierre. Minor changes in the parsonage, covering the swimming pool, and replacing the pipe organ are the only significant alterations to the structure in its 87 year history.

This building remains one of the best examples of Gothic Revival architecture in the town of Pierre. It is the largest and best preserved of the older church structures in the city and retains a high degree of historic integrity. Of the six churches built in this style at the turn of the century, three were demolished and two are no longer used as churches and have been greatly altered. Other churches were built later using Gothic Revival elements but none compare to the Methodist Episcopal Church. The chosen style for the building is not an unusual one, as it is common throughout the nation and to a lesser extent the state, but this building is the only remaining example from the early twentieth century in Pierre, SD.

Bibliography

Gowans, Alan. Styles and Types of North American Architecture. New York, New York, HarperCollins, 1992.

Schuler, Harold H. A Bridge Apart: History of Early Pierre and Fort Pierre. Pierre SD: State Publishing Co., 1987.

To the Glory of God. Pierre, SD: First United Methodist Church of Pierre, 1980.

Verbal Boundary Description

Third Railway Addition, Block 11, Lots 1,2 and 3, Pierre, SD

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the property historically associated with this building.