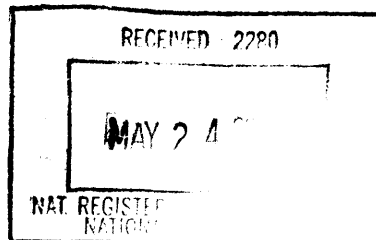


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



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### 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 location 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 FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

other names / site number FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 5WL2495

#### 2. Location

street & number 503 WALNUT ST. N/A not for publication

city or town WINDSOR N/A vicinity

state COLORADO code CO county WELD code 123 zip code 80550

#### 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  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark Wolfe Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer 5/17/04  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society  
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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- 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  See continuation sheet.
- other, explain  See continuation sheet.

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper 7/7/04 Date of Action

FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
Name of Property

WELD COUNTY, COLORADO  
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1	1
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		
		1	1
			Total

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

Number of contributing resources  
previously listed in the National Register  
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
RELIGION / religious facility

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
RELIGION / religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY  
REVIVALS / Classical Revival

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
foundation CONCRETE  
walls BRICK  
roof ASPHALT  
other SANDSTONE  
other TERRA COTTA

Narrative Description

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

FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
Name of Property

WELD COUNTY, COLORADO  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**  
(Mark "x" in one or more locations 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.

**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1915  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1915  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Criteria Considerations**  
(Mark "X" in all locations that apply.)

Property is:

- 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

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

SMITH, JOHN R.  
\_\_\_\_\_

WELTON, RICHARD J.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(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:**

WINDSOR BEACON  
GREELEY MUSEUM AND ARCHIVE

FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
Name of Property

WELD COUNTY, COLORADO  
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	13	508157	4480658	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
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 RON SLADEK, PRESIDENT

organization TATANKA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATES, INC. date 4 FEBRUARY 2004

street & number 612 S. COLLEGE AVE., SUITE 21, P.O. BOX 1909 telephone 970 / 221-1095

city or town FORT COLLINS state CO zip code 80522

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)

Property Owner

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

name FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

street and number 503 WALNUT ST. telephone 970 / 686-2368

city or town WINDSOR state CO zip code 80550

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. 470 et seq.).

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

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Property FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

WELD COUNTY, COLORADO

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**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY**

The 1915 First Methodist Episcopal Church, now known as the First United Methodist Church, is located in the core area of Windsor, a small northern Colorado plains agricultural town approximately halfway between the much larger cities of Fort Collins and Greeley. Found on the southwest corner of 5th St. and Walnut St. in the historic residential neighborhood south of the downtown commercial district, the 26,125-square-foot property is dominated by a one-story masonry church building ornamented with Classical Revival design elements. The 52' x 72' church is located in the northeast quadrant of the site, and the areas between the building and the adjacent curbs, particularly to the north and east, are crossed by sidewalks and planted with grass and mature trees and shrubs.

West of the 1915 church, occupying much of the west half of the site, is a 52' x 100' Postmodern Style addition constructed in 1995 to house a fellowship hall, kitchen, offices, and classrooms. The original church and its addition are connected by an enclosed 14' x 21' modern causeway that enters the west wall of the historic building at its northwest corner. Set back from the front wall of the original church, the causeway is lower in height and constructed of new materials to distinguish visually between the old and the new. The exterior of the fellowship hall addition employs a dark brick base, simple brick pilasters framing the entrance, stuccoed walls, muted colors, cornice-level banding, and a roof that is straighter and lower than the original building. Also, the addition's 100' north-south length extends toward the rear of the property and cannot be seen from the adjacent streets. These modern design elements have allowed the 1915 building to continue to dominate the site.

The southeast corner of the property contains the parsonage, a split-level home erected in 1971 with a fenced yard to the west. South of the church addition, in the southwest corner of the site, is a paved parking lot accessed by way of the rear alley. Because of their locations to the west and south of the original church, the modern addition, parsonage and parking lot are predominantly located behind or to the side of the historic building and, except for the fellowship hall's north facade, cannot be seen from Walnut St. or the church's main entries. Beyond the property lines of the First Methodist Episcopal Church, the site is surrounded by Walnut St. and historic residences to the north, 5th St. and historic residences to the east, and historic residences to the west and south.

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Property FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

WELD COUNTY, COLORADO

**DESCRIPTION OF THE 1915 CHURCH BUILDING**

The First Methodist Episcopal Church rests upon on a raised concrete foundation, finished around the entire perimeter with a band of brown brickwork that rises approximately 36" above grade, and capped by a single course of red sandstone blocks. Above this dark visual base of brick and stone, the exterior walls are finished with blonde pressed brick laid in running bond coursing. These walls are frequently interrupted by an abundance of Classical Revival ornamentation, consisting of terra cotta tiles, brick pilasters with stylized terra cotta capitals, dark brick banding and window surrounds, square and rectangular stained glass entry and office windows, and large arched stained glass sanctuary windows. Even the less ornate rear wall exhibits a brick and stone base, blonde brick walls, rectangular stained glass office windows, historic stairways and doors, a horizontal terra cotta band, a full entablature, a small amount of dark brick banding, and a single half-circle window.

The upper areas of all four walls are finished with a full terra cotta entablature and projecting cornice, above which are central pediments on the east, west and north. Rising above the entablature and cornice are blonde brick parapets capped by a single course of terra cotta tile coping. The rectangular plan building has a complex roof consisting of flat roofs over the lower four corners and intersecting hips over the main sanctuary. These are drained through the parapet walls by round gutter drains that appear to be original to the building. The intersecting hip roofs meet above the center of the building, where a large octagonal lantern rises over an interior stained glass dome. The wood-frame lantern has paired windows on each side, with each fixed window consisting of eight triangular lights separated by muntins organized in a spoked pattern. Above its boxed eaves, the lantern terminates with a tin-clad, bell-shaped roof capped by a single tin finial and ball. Two tall blonde brick chimneys also project upward from the roof at the rear of the building.

**NORTH (PRIMARY) ELEVATION DETAILS**

The symmetrical north elevation of the First Methodist Episcopal Church faces onto Walnut St. and is the most heavily ornamented, exhibiting not only the wall details already mentioned, but also an identical pair of formal entrance porticos located at the northeast and northwest corners of the building. These entrances flank the three large central arched stained glass windows found on this elevation, symbolic of the Holy Trinity. The porticos are accessed from the front sidewalks by four concrete steps with metal pipe handrails and dark brown brick sidewalls capped by single sandstone blocks. Characterizing the porticos are concrete floors, brick sidewalls capped by sandstone blocks, segmented Tuscan columns with stylized capitals,

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brick pilasters with terra cotta capitals, full terra cotta and brick entablatures above the columns and pilasters, brick parapet walls capped with single courses of terra cotta tile coping, and flat roofs.

The entry on each of the porticos consists of a pair of wood slab doors, each with three small rectangular lights set on a diagonal. These doors are not original to the building and were installed around 1960. Above each of the doorways is a single horizontal stained glass window with a geometric pattern. Surrounding the doorway and stained glass window on each portico are wood framing and terra cotta tile surrounds. Above the doors is a single porch light with a glass bowl. The east sidewall on the east portico contains the building's rose granite cornerstone, which is inscribed with the following text: "First M.E. Church, Erected A.D. 1914" (the building was started in 1914 but completed in 1915).

The main wall of the north elevation is dominated by three arched stained glass windows, separated from one another by tall brick pilasters with stylized terra cotta capitals. These support dark brown brick bands and the terra cotta and blonde brick entablature, pediment, and parapet wall above. The raised basement contains four 1/1 double-hung sash windows with wood frames and surrounds, as well as sandstone sills. Set in wood frames, the three arched stained glass windows have dark brown brick surrounds and terra cotta lug sills. The central window's pattern is geometrical but also contains a central crown and cross. The slightly smaller flanking stained glass windows are ornamented solely with geometric and floral patterns.

### EAST (SIDE) ELEVATION DETAILS

The symmetrical east elevation faces onto 5th St. and is heavily ornamented with the same architectural details as on the north, although without the formal portico entries. This elevation features the same dark brown brick and sandstone base as the rest of the building, above which are blonde brick walls, stained glass windows, and Classical Revival ornamentation. The central wall area is dominated by three sizable arched stained glass windows. These are separated from one another by tall brick pilasters with stylized terra cotta capitals that visually support dark brown brick bands and a terra cotta and blonde brick entablature, pediment, and parapet wall above. The northeast and southeast flat-roofed corners of the building are slightly lower in height than the central area and are also ornamented with brick pilasters, terra cotta banding, terra cotta cornices, brick parapet walls, and stained glass windows.

The basement contains two small glass block windows with wood frames, along with four 1/1 double-hung vinyl windows with the original sandstone sills. Set in wood frames, the three large arched stained glass windows on the main floor have dark brown brick surrounds and terra

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cotta lug sills. The large central window's pattern is predominantly geometrical but also contains a central oval with lilies. The smaller flanking arched stained glass windows are ornamented solely with geometric and floral patterns. A square fixed stained glass window with a geometric pattern is set in the northeast main entry corner of the building, with a wood frame and terra cotta sill and surrounds. On the southeast office corner of the building is one 1/1 double-hung sash stained glass window with a geometric design. This window has a wood frame and surrounds, along with a terra cotta sill.

One entry is found on the east elevation of the building. A concrete exterior basement stairway that enters the building below the northeast main entry corner was enclosed around 1970 with a small tan brick structure. This structure projects from the main building and is minimally attached to the lower wall area. It is characterized by a south-facing metal door with one light, two four-light glass block windows on the east, and a low hipped roof. Although the structure is architecturally incompatible with the historic building, it has resulted in minimal impact to the visual character of the church as a whole and could easily be removed.

### SOUTH (REAR) ELEVATION DETAILS

The symmetrical south elevation overlooks the parsonage behind the building and is the least ornamented. This elevation contains the same dark brick and sandstone lower walls on the elevated basement level as the rest of the building. Above that visual base, the walls are blonde brick punctuated with a small number of windows and doors and ornamented with slightly less terra cotta work. The central area of the elevation, rising several feet above and projecting a short distance out from the flanking corners of the building, consists largely of a blank brick wall with a small half-circle window just below the cornice. This window space is currently boarded, and was probably originally filled with stained glass as were all the other windows on the building (except for those in the basement). Surrounding the window are a dark brown brick segmental arch lintel and a terra cotta slip sill. Dark brown brick bands wrap slightly around the corners of this wall at the window level, above which are a terra cotta cornice and blonde brick parapet. Two tall blonde brick chimneys rise from the side parapet walls of this flat-roofed central area.

Flanking the central wall of the south elevation are the shorter, identical, mirror-image southeast and southwest flat-roofed corners of the building. These both contain the dark brick and sandstone lower exterior walls as on the rest of the building. Above the elevated basement level, the walls are blonde brick with terra cotta banding above the door and window, a terra cotta cornice, and a brick parapet capped by a single course of terra cotta tile coping. Rising from the concrete apron that surrounds the south and west elevations of the building are tall matching wood stairways with wood posts and handrails. These stairways, starting at the



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southeast and southwest corners of the building and rising toward the middle of the elevation, provide access to rear entries to the original church offices.

The basement contains four modern 1/1 double-hung vinyl windows with the original sandstone sills. Adjacent to the doors at the tops of the stairways are two matching 1/1 double-hung sash stained glass windows with wood frames and terra cotta tile sills. These windows are ornamented with geometrical patterns. Underneath the eastern exterior stairway is a modern door, largely hidden from view, that provides basement access. The entries at the tops of the stairways each contain a single wood panel door with one light, along with wood screens, all of which are original to the building. Finally, the half-circle window set high on the central wall is located behind the church organ and may have been boarded to prevent light from streaming through the organ pipes when they were installed five years after the church was erected.

### WEST (SIDE) ELEVATION DETAILS

The symmetrical west elevation overlooks the adjacent 1995 fellowship hall/office/classroom wing and is heavily ornamented with the same architectural details as the east elevation. This elevation features the same dark brown brick and sandstone base as the rest of the building, above which are blonde brick walls, stained glass windows, and Classical Revival ornamentation. The central wall area is dominated by three sizable arched stained glass windows, separated from one another by tall brick pilasters with stylized terra cotta capitals. These visually support dark brown brick bands and a terra cotta and blonde brick entablature, pediment, and parapet wall above. The northwest and southwest flat-roofed corners of the building are slightly lower in height than the central area and are also ornamented with brick pilasters, terra cotta banding, terra cotta cornices, brick parapet walls, and stained glass windows.

The basement contains five 1/1 double-hung vinyl windows with the original sandstone sills. Set in wood frames, the three large arched stained glass windows on the main floor have dark brown brick surrounds and terra cotta lug sills. The central window's pattern is predominantly geometrical but also contains a central oval with a bible and lilies. The slightly smaller flanking arched stained glass windows are ornamented solely with geometric and floral patterns. On the southwest office corner of the building is one 1/1 double-hung sash stained glass window with a geometric design. This window has a wood frame and surrounds, along with a terra cotta sill.

The west wall of the northwest main entry corner has been obscured by the construction of the connection for the adjacent 1995 addition. This 14' x 21' connecting structure, which contains a hallway and elevator, not only ties together the historic and modern areas of the church, but also provides interior handicap access to the sanctuary. The loss of this short section of the

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historic church's original west wall was sensitively completed to allow for the preservation of the remainder of the west elevation, which can be viewed from windows placed into the east wall of the adjacent fellowship hall. The historic square fixed stained glass window with a geometric pattern that was formerly located on the west wall of the main entry corner is incorporated into the new addition's main entrance above the doors on the north side of the building.

### DESCRIPTION OF INTERIOR FEATURES

The interior of the First Methodist Episcopal Church contains a number of the original finishes. Inside the matching main entries are the original wood stairs, along with their dark wood handrails, balustrades, newel posts, and door and window frames. Entering the main sanctuary from both stairways are pairs of original dark wood swinging doors. The sanctuary is rich in decorative features. Among these are the historic wood floor, wood pews separated by a center aisle, plastered walls, large stained glass windows on the north, east and west, central stained glass dome overhead, a raised stage for the altar and pulpit, and the 1919 pipe organ set into finely carved wood panels in the rear of the chancel.

The smaller north end of the sanctuary, essentially the narthex, contains a seating area along with a light and sound control booth. Originally designed for classroom space in accordance with the "Akron Plan," this area could be separated from the main sanctuary by electrically lowering a large rolling wood door that retracts into the ceiling. Single wood panel doors on either side of the chancel enter the church's original offices in the southeast and southwest corners of the building. These offices contain their original wood doors and frames, stained glass windows, and plastered walls. Most notable is the complex star-shaped, coffered sanctuary ceiling, with its pendant lights and central octagonal stained glass dome. The eight angled side panels of this domed window are predominantly geometric in pattern, with a single small potted plant at the center of each. These triangular panels narrow as they rise to the peak of the dome, which contains a single octagonal stained glass window decorated with a profusion of flowers.

The basement, much of it updated with modern finishes, contains the boiler room, open classroom space, a kitchen, and a storage room for donated clothing. Original finishes are limited largely to wood panel doors and wood trim.

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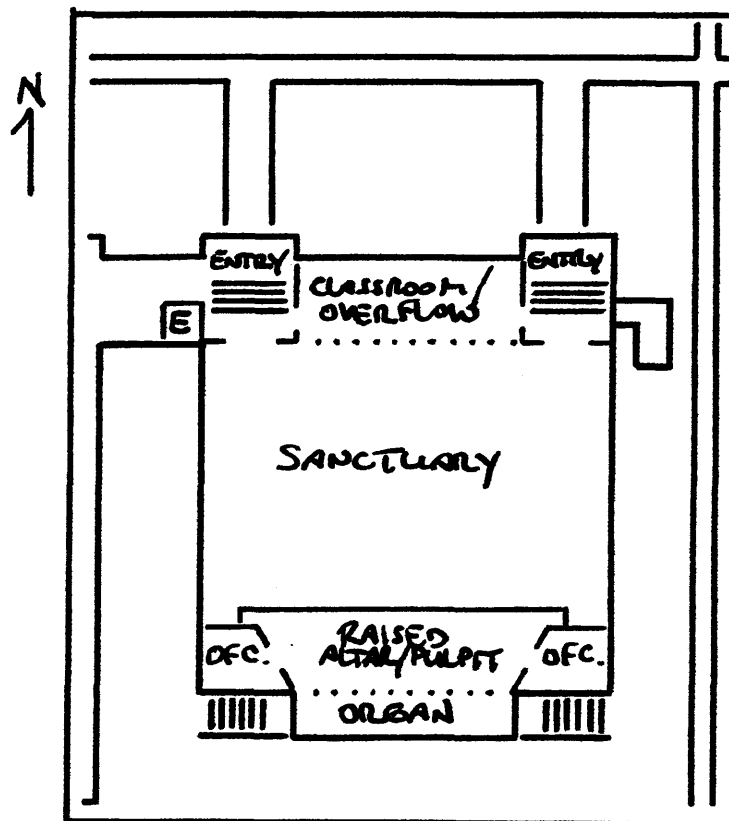
Property FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

WELD COUNTY, COLORADO

**ALTERATIONS TO THE BUILDING**

Alterations to the exterior of the building are limited to the early closure of the rear arched window, the installation around 1960 of wood slab doors in the north main entries, the circa 1970 addition of the small structure on the east that covers the basement stairway, and the 1995 construction of the hallway/elevator connection at the northwest corner of the building for the new fellowship hall addition. None of these changes have seriously diminished the historic integrity of the 1915 building.

**MAIN FLOOR INTERIOR PLAN**



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Property FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The First Methodist Episcopal Church is nominated under Criterion C in the area of architecture, deriving its distinction primarily from its style and detailing. For this reason, the church is eligible under Criteria Consideration A although it has been owned and used as a religious facility. Constructed in 1914-1915, the building is an excellent ecclesiastical example of Classical Revival exterior detailing and of the interior design elements of the Akron Plan, thus embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type and period of construction.

The building exhibits numerous elements of Classical Revival design on all four of its elevations. These characteristics include its symmetrical elevations, Tuscan columns, tall arched stained glass windows, brick pilasters, a full entablature, a profusion of terra cotta ornamentation (banding, cornice, coping, capitals, window surrounds and sills), brick parapet walls, and a pair of mirror-image formal entry porticos. Its bell-roofed lantern with ball finial perched high atop the central roof also provides the building with a distinctive touch of the exotic.

Popular during the period from the late 1890s through around 1920, the Classical Revival style amounted to a return to the forms of architecture perfected in ancient Greece and Rome. In the case of churches, the style was adopted not for its symbolism and pagan associations, but rather in appreciation of its beauty, symmetry, and sense of permanence. In early 20th century Colorado, the style was typically applied to major public buildings and adopted by many churches as they replaced their original, late-1800s edifices with modern structures. Straying from the basilica plan, with its columned central portico and tall central steeple, the richly ornamented First Methodist Episcopal Church exhibits a sophisticated collection of classical details yet looks as much like an auditorium or library as it does a church. From the adjacent streets, this historic building is the most visually arresting architecture in sight.

On the interior, the main sanctuary was designed to conform with elements of the Akron Plan, which originated in 1870 with the First Methodist Episcopal Church in Akron, Ohio. Spreading from this location over the following decades, the Akron Plan's concepts for standardized Sunday school curriculum tied to changes in interior church design impacted the construction of hundreds of Protestant churches across the country through the World War I era. This offshoot of the Sunday school movement called for modern churches to be designed so that students utilizing classrooms adjacent to the sanctuary could participate with the adults in parts of the services and then return to their studies by simply opening and closing movable walls. Large churches made use of multiple movable walls that opened to a number of different classrooms along the perimeters of sanctuaries, or "rotundas," that often incorporated elements of auditorium design such as raked floors, curved or angled seating, and a raised "stage" for the pulpit and altar. In the case of Windsor's First Methodist Episcopal Church, the large retractable

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wall at the rear of the sanctuary opened to a single classroom, which in addition to being used for Sunday school provided the congregation with available overflow seating space. Additional elements of the Akron Plan were adopted such as the raked floor, angled seating and raised stage where the altar, pulpit and organ are located in full view of the sanctuary and rear classroom/overflow space.

The 1995 Postmodern fellowship hall addition is almost entirely separated from the original building. The two are minimally attached near the northwest corner of the historic church with a modest connecting structure that houses a hallway and an elevator that provides handicap access to the sanctuary. To distinguish between the old and the new, the modern connection is set back from the original building's facade, and the addition as a whole is compatible in style, color, and scale. Also, the addition extends toward the rear of the property, is lower and flat-roofed, and is modest in ornamentation. These characteristics have reduced its visual impact, causing the addition to blend into the background while the original church building continues to dominate the site.

A number of churches dating from 1900 to 1920 have been documented throughout Colorado. Compared with these buildings, the Windsor church clearly exhibits an intact, creative and impressive example of period architecture and construction methods, and is an excellent representative of the Classical Revival style applied to an ornate but modest-sized church in a small Colorado plains agricultural community. The church's historic exterior is virtually intact, with minor modifications, none of which have diminished the building's historic integrity.

In terms of the modern fellowship hall addition, the Windsor church is similar to the National Register-listed Methodist Episcopal Church in Montrose, Colorado in one important way. The Montrose building, although Romanesque Revival in style, has a Postmodern addition of similar design and scale to that found in Windsor. Erected in 1991, the Montrose addition was attached to the original church in much the same way as that in Windsor, and both additions are distinct yet compatible with their architectural forebears. Both of these buildings serve as excellent examples of solving the need for greater space without destroying the historic integrity of their original churches.

The Windsor First Methodist Episcopal Church exhibits a high level of design and craftsmanship, and is a well-preserved example of high style architecture applied to a small town setting. Its period of significance is limited to 1915, the year the building was completed. While the historic building and its connected modern addition are contributing, the completely separate 1971 parsonage in the southeast corner of the property is non-contributing for the purpose of this nomination. The church is historically intact, in very good condition, and still used for its intended

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purpose by the same community and denomination that erected the building eighty-nine years ago. Despite the described changes to the property in recent decades, the 1915 building exhibits an excellent degree of historic integrity through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Begun in 1914 and completed in early 1915, the First Methodist Episcopal Church has continuously served the Windsor populace for 89 years as a center of faith, community, culture and learning in this small but growing Colorado agricultural town. The building's origins reflect the evolution of Windsor from a late-1800s pioneer railroad-era town and farming village to a 20th-century agricultural market center and bedroom community that increasingly served as the social, commercial and administrative focus of the surrounding farming economy.

The town of Windsor was platted in 1882 in the Cache la Poudre valley as the Greeley, Salt Lake and Pacific Railway was completed from Greeley westward toward Fort Collins. Along with a depot, commercial buildings, homes and churches were erected and the community grew quickly into a supply, processing and shipping center for a thriving agricultural region. With Windsor's importance established, the town was incorporated in April of 1890. Growth remained steady through the turn of the century, however the 1903 construction of a Great Western Sugar Co. factory on the east edge of town resulted in sudden expansion of the local population. Growth in the numbers and success of area farmers, followed by the rapid arrival of factory workers, led to a corresponding increase in the number of townfolk, many of whom attended local churches.

The first Christian denomination to plant roots in the Windsor area was the Methodist Episcopal, when in 1871 a group of local farmers began to meet regularly for services and started a seasonal Sunday school near Timnath. Two years later, the informal gathering was added to the Fort Collins circuit tended to by the Rev. R. W. Bosworth. Over the following five years, the group of area settlers continued to meet and grow. In 1876, they separated into two circuit districts, one of them based in the Whitney schoolhouse located one mile south of the present town of Windsor. The first church service in the tiny hamlet that was to become Windsor was conducted in the Fall of 1881 by Rev. Samuel A. Windsor of Fort Collins, the Methodist minister after whom the town was then named. When the Whitney schoolhouse was moved into Windsor in 1883, the Methodist Episcopal group meeting there became the first to hold regular services in the town.

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Vacant lots on the southwest corner of Walnut St. and 5th St. were soon donated to the church, which constructed a parsonage there in 1884 on the grounds now occupied by the 1995 fellowship hall addition. Two years later, the First Methodist Episcopal Church, a brick building with a prominent corner bell tower, was completed on the ground where the 1915 building is found today. Dedicated in May 1886 by Denver Bishop Henry White Warren, the new church immediately became the center of the community's social and spiritual life.

For the next fourteen years, the Methodist Episcopal church was the only house of worship in Windsor. It was joined starting in 1900 by the evangelical Christian Church of Windsor, the 1905 German-speaking St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, the 1906 German Congregational Church, the circa 1914 St. Alban's Episcopal Church, and the 1914 German-speaking Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church. These congregations erected buildings of varying, mostly modest styles for themselves, all within a few blocks of each other. The First Methodist Episcopal Church continued to draw a growing number of area families into its membership, and over a period of twenty-eight years adequately served the needs of the community.

By 1914, the church's membership roll had increased in numbers and affluence, and the congregation decided it was ready for a new, larger edifice to replace the existing building. Rev. R. N. Smith led the effort to construct this new home for the church, together with finance and building committee members R. S. Dickey, L. E. Bartz, William H. Peterson, John S. Cable, George F. Kern, E. P. Hickman, Leon Harrison and F. R. Harrington. Early that year, the church engaged architect John R. Smith of Lincoln, Nebraska to prepare plans for their new building. While waiting for the documents, Rev. Smith and the finance committee proceeded to secure more than \$12,000 in pledges from the membership.

Architect John R. Smith was born in 1870 and was residing with his family in Norfolk, Nebraska by 1904. He moved the family south to University Place (now incorporated into the city of Lincoln), where in 1909 he established the firm of J.R. Smith & Son, architects and contractors. The company, which included Smith's son Rolland, designed and erected buildings throughout the state of Nebraska. Little has been documented prior to this time about these men or the specific buildings they designed and constructed. However, the firm is reported to have been involved with a number of churches, commercial buildings, and residences. Windsor's First Methodist Episcopal Church is the only building in Colorado known to have been designed by John R. Smith.

Smith is documented to have designed the 1913 National Register-listed Carnegie Library in North Bend, Nebraska (Site #DD09-010), the Riley School in University Place, the 1916 University Place Carnegie Library, the 1928 Chadron Hospital, and the 1911 Eugene Levi House in Lincoln

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(Site #LC13:D7-361, Mount Emerald and Capitol Additions National Register District). Of these buildings, the two libraries are Classical Revival in design. The North Bend Library, designed prior to the First United Methodist Church in Windsor, is simple and almost rudimentary by comparison. The University Place Library, executed after the design for the Windsor church was complete, is much more sophisticated and may have benefited from Smith's experience on the building in Colorado. The dark brick, two-story Eugene Levi House is characterized by an unusual combination of Prairie Style massing with subtle Classical Revival details, exhibiting little that can be compared to the design of the Windsor church.

After closing his company in 1935, John Smith traveled the country for a number of years selling his own publication, titled the *Building Cost Calculator*. In the 1950s, he settled with his daughter in Denver, where he remained through the time of his death in 1957 or 1958. Rolland Smith moved to Washington, DC in 1940, where he was employed as a draftsman for the design of the Pentagon. He then moved to Philadelphia, where he continued to work as a draftsman and engineer of battleships, helicopters, shipboard cranes, and other mechanical projects.

Smith's architectural drawings and specifications for an ornate Classical Revival church building were received in Windsor in July 1914 and provided to contractors interested in bidding on the project. At the same time, Fort Collins architect Fuller (this was either Montezuma or his son, Robert) was hired by the church to oversee construction. On 23 July 1914, Windsor's newspaper, *The Poudre Valley*, wrote "this house of worship will be one of the prettiest and most modern for a town of this size to be seen anywhere in northern Colorado."

The following month, on 6 August 1914, *The Poudre Valley* published an article about the project, accompanied by a photograph provided by the architect of a building almost identical to the church that was about to be constructed in Windsor. Although the newspaper did not identify the building (its identity and location remain unknown today), it stated that the Windsor version would be somewhat smaller than the one depicted in the photo. In virtually every other detail, the two buildings were practically identical.

The new building was planned to consist of the sanctuary on the main floor, with the basement occupied by classrooms, a kitchen, lavatories, and a boiler room. Through the use of rolling partitions, the basement classrooms could be opened up into one large assembly room. The two small rooms on either side of the chancel were designed to be used as a pastor's study and a choir room. At the rear of the chancel, where the pipe organ is found today, was the choir platform and space for an organ. The open area to the rear of the nave, now occupied by pews and the sound control booth, was intended to be used as a classroom that could be opened to the main sanctuary as needed by retracting a large overhead door.



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On 10 August 1914, bids from contractors ranging from \$17,000 to \$19,000 were opened by the building committee. However, they were all rejected when it became obvious that the amount of funding available was inadequate, requiring changes to the plans. In addition, the plans did not include important features such as the heating plant, which would raise the overall cost of the building further. Adjustments were made and in late August the construction contract was awarded to Richard J. Welton of Greeley for a total cost of \$13,540. Still, the contract did not include items such as plumbing, heating, lighting, pews, or other needed interior furnishings. These were accounted for under separate contracts, bringing the total cost of the building to \$17,000.

A few weeks later, in mid-September, a crew arrived to begin razing the 1886 Methodist Episcopal Church. By the end of October, the building was gone and the grounds prepared for the erection of the new First Methodist Episcopal Church. Ceremonies were held on Sunday, 25 October 1914, at which the rose granite cornerstone, donated by contractor R. J. Welton, was laid before a large gathering. Included among the items placed inside the cornerstone were church magazines, a copy of the local newspaper, a list of businesses and professionals in the town of Windsor, lists of church officers and donors, the membership roll, a written account of the cornerstone laying ceremony, the contents of the 1886 cornerstone, a photograph of the old building, a United States flag, and a copy of the construction contract. The main address was offered by Rev. C. L. Mead of Denver's Trinity Methodist Church, who emphasized the significance of the life cycles to be celebrated by the community for generations to come within the new edifice. Present in the crowd were a number of church members who had attended the cornerstone-laying in 1886.

Construction proceeded at a rapid pace and continued throughout the final months of 1914. By mid-December, the roof was finished and the plasterers were about to begin their work on the interior. Work was delayed for a short time that month when contractor Welton was quarantined at home in Greeley after his daughter was diagnosed with scarlet fever. In its Christmas Eve issue, *The Poudre Valley* wrote that "the architectural beauty of the new M. E. Church building is manifesting itself as the work progresses." By this time, the building's exterior was largely finished except for the installation of doors and windows. The interior work proceeded into early 1915.

With the building nearing completion in late January 1915, the church began holding Sunday school and services in the basement. In the meantime, carpenters were busy finishing the interior and \$1,000 worth of sanctuary furniture had been ordered and was expected to arrive sometime in February. The project's end rapidly approaching, the church announced that it

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would be holding a dedication ceremony on the 21st of February. Celebratory programs, to which the entire Windsor community was invited, were planned for each evening between the 14th and 21st of the month and the following schedule advertised in the local newspaper:

February 14:	Rev. Pingree, Denver
February 15:	Rev. A. W. Luce, Windsor (minister of the Christian Church)
February 16:	Denver University Band
February 17:	Dr. Huett, Greeley
February 18:	Rev. George J. Schmidt, Fort Collins (former pastor of Windsor's German Congregational Church)
February 19:	Rev. C. A. Rowand, Fort Collins (minister of the Fort Collins Methodist Church)
February 20:	Chancellor Henry Buchtel, Denver University (also a former governor of Colorado)
February 21:	Dedication Ceremony and Address by Chancellor Buchtel

The programs varied between religious and secular subjects, underscoring the First Methodist Episcopal Church's past and future role as a centerpiece of Windsor's spiritual and cultural life. While some of the speakers addressed topics more heavenly in nature, Rev. Luce acknowledged the timing of Presidents Day to speak about the exemplary lives of presidents Washington and Lincoln. Chancellor Buchtel spoke eloquently of the measure of each life's influence for good or bad, and the important role of the church in the welfare of the community.

Heavy snow fell on the 21st, preventing some of the outlying church members from traveling into Windsor. Even so, the large crowd in attendance at both the morning and evening programs pledged \$5,200 in additional funds to be applied to the cost of the building over the following several years. Chancellor Buchtel encouraged the assemblage to dig deep into their pockets due to the snowfall, which he stated would increase the coming yield of area crops by at least \$5.00 an acre, enabling church members to comfortably meet their pledges. In 1923, the remaining \$5,060 indebtedness on the mortgage was paid in full and a ceremony held to celebrate.

While the new building was being erected, the church's Sunday school was also reorganized. Upon reopening in early 1915, the school found that attendance had swelled to nearly 200 children, an increase directly attributed by the church to their attractive new building. In addition to regular Sunday services, the church sanctuary was quickly put to use when, on March 22, the Ladies Aid Society hosted a performance by Charles McCalley, an entertainer, violinist and impersonator. Three days later, the women's group held a shower for the new building, at which gifts were brought to equip the kitchen and dining room with cooking utensils and dishes.

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In April 1919, the church ordered a pipe organ from M. P. Moeler of Hagerstown, Maryland, reported to be the largest builder of these complex musical instruments in the United States. Dr. Frank R. Porter of Windsor provided \$3,000 bequested by his mother, Helen Porter, for this purpose and the remaining \$750 required was donated by the membership. Operated by "electro-pneumatic action," the organ was designed by University of Colorado professor G. M. Chadwick, who oversaw its installation and voicing. Assembled in the space at the rear of the chancel behind dark wood panels, the organ's 603 pipes included a duplex chest, bringing it to the equivalent of 1,123 pipes. The organ arrived in several shipments during July and August and was stored on the sanctuary floor awaiting a crew from the factory, which came to Windsor to complete the two-week installation. On 24 October 1919, the organ was presented to an overflow crowd that attended an evening recital by Dr. Frank Wilbur Chase, dean of the school of music at the University of Colorado.

Over the following decades and to the present time, the First Methodist Episcopal Church has been a focal point of Windsor's social and spiritual life, hosting both church services and many other community events. With continued growth in the Windsor population and the church itself, the membership constructed a new parsonage in 1971 and in 1995 erected the Postmodern fellowship hall addition that provides adequate space to allow the church to remain at its historic location into the foreseeable future. While many of Windsor's public and commercial buildings were significantly altered during the 1960s and 1970s, the First Methodist Episcopal Church retained its intact early 20th-century facade. Throughout its existence, it has served as the single best example of Classical Revival architecture in the town, a source of community pride that fosters a sense of permanence and stability.

The story of this building's construction touches upon the early 20th century efforts of local faith communities of rising numbers and affluence to erect architecturally modern houses of worship that also served as venues for culture and social gathering. In this particular case, the church's membership was successful in erecting a building of sufficient architectural quality that it would be viewed with pride by the entire town for decades to come. In the context of Colorado plains development, the building was erected during the period of agricultural expansion and town building following the turn of the century, when churches experiencing growth in membership replaced or expanded their homes dating from the 1800s with larger, modern structures. The First Methodist Episcopal Church has served its membership and the town for 89 years and today represents the early maturation of Windsor into a growing, thriving center of area agriculture, commerce and community.

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Lots 2-10 and the East 1/2 of Lot 12, Block 20, Town of Windsor, Weld County, Colorado.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The nominated property includes, and is limited to, the land and improvements within the boundaries described above, including the 1915 First Methodist Episcopal Church (First United Methodist Church), its 1971 parsonage, its 1995 fellowship hall addition, and the surrounding grounds. These boundaries were selected due to the fact that they include all of the original property associated with the church, including the surrounding grounds that are important to the setting and historic integrity of the property as a whole.

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**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

The following information applies to all photographs submitted with this registration form:

Name of property:	First Methodist Episcopal Church
City, county and state:	Windsor, Weld County, Colorado
Photographer:	Ron Sladek
Date of photograph:	26 January 2004
Location of negative:	Tatanka Historical Associates Inc. 612 S. College Ave., Suite 21 P.O. Box 1909 Fort Collins, CO 80522

- Photograph #1: View of the north (primary) and east elevations of the First Methodist Episcopal Church, with the 1995 fellowship hall addition on the right. View from across the intersection of 5th St. and Walnut St. toward the southwest.
- Photograph #2: View of the north and east elevations of the church. View from across the intersection of 5th St. and Walnut St. toward the southwest.
- Photograph #3: View of the north elevation of the church, with the connection to the 1995 fellowship hall addition on the right. View toward the southeast.
- Photograph #4: Detail view of the main entrance portico at the northwest corner of the north elevation. View toward the south.
- Photograph #5: View of the east elevation of the church from across 5th St. View toward the northwest.
- Photograph #6: Detail view of the central wall of the east elevation. View toward the northwest.
- Photograph #7: Detail view of the east wall of the entry portico at the northeast corner of the building. View toward the west.
- Photograph #8: Detail view of the cornerstone on the entry portico at the northeast corner of the building. View toward the northwest.



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- Photograph #9: View of the southeast corner of the building, with the wood stairway rising to the rear office. View toward the northwest.
- Photograph #10: View of the south (rear) elevation of the building, with the rear of the fellowship hall on the left. View from the alley toward the northeast.
- Photograph #11: View of the west elevation of the building with the fellowship hall on the left, showing the minimal connection between the two. View toward the north.
- Photograph #12: Detail view of the lantern on the roof of the building. View toward the northwest.
- Photograph #13: Interior view of the sanctuary. View toward the south.
- Photograph #14: Interior view of the sanctuary. View toward the north.
- Photograph #15: Interior view of the sanctuary. View toward the northeast.
- Photograph #16: Interior view of the sanctuary. View toward the west.
- Photograph #17: Interior view of the northeast corner of the sanctuary looking into the northeast main entry stairway. View toward the north.
- Photograph #18: View of the 1919 pipe organ with its built-in paneling. View toward the southeast.
- Photograph #19: View of the sanctuary ceiling. View toward the southwest.
- Photograph #20: View of the octagonal stained glass dome in the sanctuary ceiling.

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**FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
(not to scale)

