

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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



1. Name

historic Trinity Presbyterian Church
and/or common Mission United Presbyterian Church

2. Location

street & number 3261 - 23rd St. (at Capp St.) not for publication
city, town San Francisco vicinity of congressional district Sixth
state California code 06 county San Francisco code 075

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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: community center

4. Owner of Property

name Mission United Presbyterian Church, U.P.C.U.S.A.
street & number 3261 - 23rd St.

city, town San Francisco vicinity of state California 94110

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office (book B666, page 198)

street & number City Hall

city, town San Francisco state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title 1976 Architectural Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date (rated 4 (= "Excellent")) federal state county local

depository for survey records San Francisco Department of City Planning

city, town 100 Larkin Street, San Francisco state California

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Trinity Presbyterian Church (known since 1972 as Mission United Presbyterian Church) was built in 1891/92 and designed in the Romanesque style by the prominent San Francisco architectural firm of (George W.) Percy and (F.F.) Hamilton. Corner-stone-laying ceremonies were held on August 15, 1891. The formal dedication service was held on March 6, 1892, at which time the completed cost of the church was reported to be \$40,100, exclusive of the cost of the lot. The church has a brick base (with a ground-level auditorium and meeting rooms) and a shingled upper structure with a large cross-shaped sanctuary. The sanctuary has a hammer-beam ceiling and is lighted by many stained-glass windows, including three large rose windows. The church is located on the southwest corner of 23rd and Capp streets and is marked by a tall steeple with four round bartizan turrets and a high peaked roof with transept. This fine steeple makes the church a major landmark in the Mission district.

The ground floor base has smooth brickwork punctuated by stilted arches for its windows and two Romanesque-inspired arches with a central column with a florid capital at the main entrance. The entrance vestibule is recessed into the body of the structure. Two pairs of oak doors lead to a central hallway that opens into the auditorium. Two flanking staircases ascend from the entrance vestibule to the narthex before the sanctuary on the second floor. The ground floor hallway is flanked by several meeting rooms with sliding doors. Carved wood decorations on all door frames in the building are unimpaired. There have been no apparent alterations and all of the rooms have their original wainscoting. Large metal rods with saddles and turnbuckles support the ceiling in the ground-floor auditorium, precluding the need for columns.

The spacious sanctuary on the second floor is cross-shaped and rises two stories to a hammer-beam ceiling, whose multiple wood arches form a trusswork of exceptional beauty and strength. It is furnished with the original pews. The semi-circular balcony curves back to the wall at the forward end on each side, and is partially supported by sturdy curved wood brackets beneath, at the walls. Large stained glass windows (some slightly damaged) light the sanctuary. The north-central part of the balcony was walled off in 1943 to provide an extra meeting room. The north wall of this room is lighted by the rose window of the front facade. This is the only significant alteration to the building. The original organ pipes (with elaborate decorations) are built-in to the right of the altar. Seating capacity of the sanctuary is estimated to be roughly 800.

Behind the sanctuary on the second floor is a small room with a bay window that looks out to Capp street, which serves as the minister's study. There is also a room in the upper level of the steeple that once served as the caretaker's quarters.

The church has undergone only insignificant alterations, principally the walling-in of part of the balcony, as mentioned above, and the addition of two small sheds on the west (unseen) side of the ground floor (one being used for storage and the other as a kitchen extension). The brick base is in good condition and the structure appears to be sound. Most of the exterior shingle work is in fair condition; the steeple exterior only is in poor condition. The church is distinguished by the beauty, strength and fine proportions of its overall construction features, and by the grace and artistry of its interior woodwork and stained-glass windows.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	humanitarian
<input checked="" 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 1891

Builder/Architect Percy & Hamilton (architects)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Trinity Presbyterian Church is of both architectural and historical significance to San Francisco. Percy & Hamilton were important San Francisco architects, much of whose work was lost in 1906. This church is a good example of their work, in virtually unaltered (if weathered) condition. The steeple is particularly well-designed and is a local visual landmark. It and the spire of St. John's Lutheran Church (a block away on 22nd St.) serve as visual bookends at either end of the outstanding row of Stick style houses that line the east side of Capp Street, which were built in 1889/94. Trinity Presbyterian, St. John's and the Capp Street row create an architectural whole of the greatest importance to the architectural history of late Victorian San Francisco. Perhaps no other cluster of row houses and churches better displays the skyline, texture and streetscape of San Francisco's historic Mission district. Trinity Presbyterian is architecturally significant both in itself and for its place in this extremely rare urban ensemble. The social and historical significance of Trinity Presbyterian is also noteworthy. This church is an almost perfect barometer of the social changes that have taken place in San Francisco's Mission district. Built in 1891-92 when the sunny Mission district was a prosperous semi-suburban area, the ups and downs of this congregation perfectly chart the population history of the heart of San Francisco. One of San Francisco's most well-liked and famous mayors, "Sunny Jim" Rolph, was married here in 1900 to the daughter of a church member. The church was virtually undamaged by the 1906 earthquake and was outside the fire area. and served as a relief center immediately after the 1906 fire. Following the fire, which destroyed a large part of the Mission district, industry moved in and many of the large old homes were converted into tenements, thus changing the Mission from an "upper-middle-class" to a "working-class" neighborhood. The church then saw many of its more prosperous members move to suburbs. By 1919, Trinity became Trinity Center under the direction of the Board of Home (Presbyterian) Missions, with a program of evangelism and community service "where the Gospel would be interpreted in the terms of social, civic and industrial relations" (ref. A). The church responded to the new needs of the Mission and operated seven days a week as a religious, recreational and social center for the community. Citizenship classes, maternity clinics, legal clinics, musical instruction, and a host of other programs served the community's physical needs while its spiritual needs were also attended to. Trinity Center, and other congregations that merged with it, became active proponents of the "social gospel". At Christmas of 1930, during the hard times of the Depression, one hundred tons of food was distributed to over 3,000 hungry families. While its deficits mounted and transiency among its members increased, Trinity heroically served the needs of San Franciscans. As new groups such as Spanish-speaking and Hungarian-speaking residents moved into the Mission, Trinity reached out to serve them. Several years ago, when "gay" Christians needed a place to worship, Trinity, now Mission United Church, opened its doors and made the Christian gospel real. Even today, the use of the sanctuary and halls is shared with other religious and community groups. Through this old building has ebbed and flowed the history of our people. It is a monument not just in the physical sense but in the social sense as well. Here are intertwined the essential strands of American

9. Major Bibliographical References

UTM NOT VERIFIED

- Ref. A: "Ninety Years in San Francisco's Mission District: A History of Trinity Presbyterian Church, 1868-1958" by Stanley T. Borden (copy avail. at church)
- Ref. B: San Francisco Chronicle, August 16, 1891
- Ref. C: San Francisco Examiner, August 16, 1891
- Ref. D: San Francisco Chronicle, March 7, 1892

10. Geographical Data

(newspaper articles available at SF Public Library)

Acreeage of nominated property 0.1779

Quadrangle name San Francisco North

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	0	5	5	1	3	5	0	4	1	7	9	8	4	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

A rectangular lot at the SW corner of 23rd & Capp Streets, measuring 100 ft. along Capp St. and 77.5 ft. along 23rd St. (see sketch)

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

state	code	county	code
<u>CA</u>			
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

Winchell T. Hayward, member, Victorian Alliance
name/title Randolph Delehanty, urban & architectural historian

organization Victorian Alliance date April 30, 1980

street & number RD: 1427 Larkin St. #4, SF 94109 (415) 386-6544
telephone (415) 673-7482

city or town San Francisco state California

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature K. M. Ellon

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 10-13-81

For HCPS use only

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

William H. Brackman date Aug 8 1981

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of _____

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 20 1982

DATE ENTERED

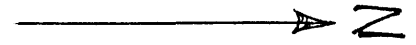
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 2

urban history. This fine old building, house of prayer, community center, school, clinic, place of joy and service is our history both as a people and as an idea.

Map of Block #3642
(showing lots into which block is subdivided)



Mission St.



Capp St.

Trinity Presbyterian Church
(cross-hatched area)
(name changed in 1972 to "Mission
United Presbyterian Church")

San Francisco, San Francisco Co., California

SK-800429-WTH
Scale: 1" = 50'