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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 Miami Community Church
Other names / site number Miami Presbyterian Church, Community Presbyterian Church, Divine Grace Presbyterian Church

2. Location

Street & number 305 Live Oak not for publication
City or town Miami vicinity
State Arizona Code AZ County Gila Code 007 Zip code 85539

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.)

James W. Dawson AZSHPO 31 JANUARY 2005
Signature of certifying official / Title Date
ARIZONA STATE PARKS
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 / Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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.
- other (explain): _____

[Signature] [Date]
Signature of the Keeper Date of action
Edson H. Beall

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- building(s), district, site, structure, object

Number of Resources Within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Table with columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total. Values: Contributing 1, Total 1.

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

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.)

Mixed

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation concrete, walls stucco, roof built-up, other concrete

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 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
Social History

Period of Significance

1920-1950

Significant Dates

1920

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Trost & Trost, architects
Holberg & Burdick, builders

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:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	12	512320	3695380	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 Mark E. Pry
 Organization Southwest Historical Services Date January 26, 2005
 Street & number 315 E. Balboa Drive Telephone (480) 968-2339
 City or town Tempe State Arizona Zip code 85282-3750

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

Name Divine Grace Presbyterian Church
 Street & number 305 Live Oak Telephone 928-473-3158
 City or town Miami State Arizona Zip code 85539

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 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.

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Miami Community Church
Gila County, Arizona

Narrative Description

Summary

The Miami Community Church, which today is called Divine Grace Presbyterian Church, is a large rectangular-plan church building located on Miami's principle thoroughfare, at the southeastern fringe of the downtown area. Described at the time of its construction as "built along Spanish lines," it is a simple stucco-clad concrete building with minimal ornamentation. Its arches and implied bell towers evoke Gothic and Spanish mission churches of antiquity, yet its clean lines and unadorned walls give it something in common with early Modern buildings. Constructed in 1920, the building has been in continuous use as a church since that time. The building has been well maintained, is in good condition, and retains most of its historical integrity.

Setting

The church is located on the south side of Live Oak, which is Miami's principal commercial street and the highway (US 60) connecting Miami with the nearby town of Globe and with the Phoenix metropolitan area. Because of its location on the highway, the church is seen yearly by thousands of passing motorists.

Though the building was once separated from Live Oak Street by a parking or drop-off area, it now is separated from the roadway only by a narrow sidewalk. In the vicinity of the church, Live Oak is lined with one-story and two-story commercial buildings as well as a single residence, all interspersed with vacant lots. The church is roughly two blocks southeast of Miami's historic commercial district on Sullivan Street.

Immediately to the west of the church building is a two-story commercial building occupied by a mortuary; the two buildings are separated by a ten-foot-wide passageway. An alley runs behind the church, and on the east side there is a graveled parking lot used by the church. This parking area, which is at the same grade as the church's lower floor and therefore is below the grade of Live Oak, is fronted by a concrete retaining wall

topped with a wrought-iron fence (which apparently was moved back when Live Oak was widened in the late 1950s). The east side and rear of the parking lot are enclosed by a chain link fence, with a gate on the east side, and the perimeter of the lot is lined with shrubs and small trees. Three large trees are situated inside the parking lot, in a row parallel to the eastern wall of the church building.

To the east of the parking area is a vacant lot once occupied by the residence of Cleve Van Dyke, the founder of the Miami Townsite Company. The driveway to the church's parking area is located on the western edge of this vacant lot.

Exterior

The rectangular-plan building is constructed of cast-in-place concrete clad with rough-textured stucco. All of the exterior windows are wood-framed. The flat roof is hidden by a parapet topped with a simple raked concrete cornice.

The facade of Divine Grace is divided into three bays. The central bay is framed by two pilasters, with a third pilaster in the middle ending at a raked concrete cornice that extends across the facade and partway along both sides of the buildings. The parapet of the central bay is distinguished by its triangular shape and lack of a cornice. Two Roman-arched doorways are centered in this bay; each is crowned by relief ornament that suggests Gothic arches. The two other bays on the facade, which perhaps were intended to suggest bell towers, have only one ornament: the cornice, which (as on the sides of the building) is sheathed in copper.

In each doorway on the facade, a pair of simple panel-and-frame doors is topped by an arched, divided-light transom with marbled obscure glass. Narrow divided-light casement windows, with glass identical to the transoms, are set in the two vertical recesses that divide the three bays. At the foot of each recess is a pedestal lamp set on a concrete plinth. The doors are relatively new, and the window glass was replaced in the late 1950s or early 1960s, but the window frames are original.

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Miami Community Church
Gila County, Arizona

On the eastern, or left, elevation of the building, the cornice wraps around from the facade and ends at a vertical recess that establishes the front corner bay and reinforces the suggestion of a front "bell tower." Indeed, at one time this bay was topped by a Mission-style arch with a bell, but now all that remains of this feature is a stepped parapet from which a much smaller (and apparently nonfunctional) bell is suspended.

A similar vertical recess is found toward the rear of the building, establishing a rear corner bay whose only distinguishing feature is a single double-hung window.

All of the windows on the east elevation have their original wooden frames. Each sanctuary window—there are four on each side—is composed of a pair of 3/3 double-hung windows topped by a divided-light arched transom identical to those above the front doors. The windows on the two corner bays are 1/1 and 3/1 double-hung windows, while those on the lower floor below the sanctuary are pairs of 3/3 double-hung windows. All of the lower-floor windows retain their original clear glass, while the others have the same green-and-pink marbled obscure glass as the facade windows (and which was installed in the late 1950s or early 1960s).

There is one entry on this side: a single door that connects the lower floor with the graveled parking lot.

Interior

The interior of the building (see the floorplans in "Additional Documentation") mirrors its exterior arrangement. Corresponding to the front corner bay as seen from the east elevation—the implied bell tower—is a multi-level section that contains the entry foyer, a front parlor, and a balcony that once overlooked the sanctuary, as well as stairs and landings that provide access to the sanctuary and lower floor. The remainder of the interior has two floors: the upper, which contains the sanctuary as well as a small office and utility room at the rear of the building, and the lower, which contains the fellowship hall, a meeting room, storage rooms, a restroom, a kitchen and pantry, and a nursery.

The entry foyer has two levels separated by a short stair. In the northwest corner, from the lower level, a

stairway descends past a landing with a ticket booth and exterior side door to the fellowship hall on the lower floor. In the northeast corner of the foyer, also from the lower level, a door leads to a parlor with a fireplace and bathroom. On the upper level of the foyer, two stairways (one on each side) lead up to landings that provide access to the rear of the sanctuary. These stairways continue up to the balcony, which once overlooked the sanctuary but is now closed to public access and used only as a utility space.

The sanctuary, which contains the original pews, is unchanged except for the carpeting that now covers the floor and other minor changes. The pulpit and altar are set on a raised wooden platform in the rear alcove, with an office in the southeast corner and a utility room in the southwest corner.

On the lower floor, the area underneath the entry foyer is given over to storage rooms. The area underneath the main section of the sanctuary is devoted to a large, open fellowship room, as well as a smaller meeting room. The rear of the ground floor contains a nursery, a storage room, a kitchen and pantry, and a restroom.

History of the Building

Construction of the Miami Community Church began in March 1920, with the work performed by the contracting firm of Holberg and Burdick at a cost of just over \$31,000. It was completed in November 1920, and the first worship service was held in the building on November 28 of that year. With minor exceptions (noted below), the plan and features of the building were identical to those of today. As described somewhat fancifully in the local newspaper, the building's exterior was designed along "Spanish mission lines" and the interior was "finished in the classic style."

The first change to the building came in 1930, when the roof was replaced after a fire seriously damaged the original roof. A year later, in 1931, an organ was installed in the sanctuary. Built in 1914 to serve as a theater organ, it was made by the Robert Morton Co. of Van Nuys, California. As installed in the

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Miami Community Church, the organ had four ranks of 264 pipes ranging in length from one-quarter inch to 16 feet, which were concealed in the rear wall of the sanctuary, with the sound passing through openings in the wall on either side of the altar area that were covered with cloth grills.

At some time in the late 1940s, the original coal bin (located in the southeast corner on the lower floor) was remodeled as a nursery. Also during that decade, the sanctuary windows were painted blue, but the paint was later removed in the early- to mid-1950s. Sometime later, in either the late 1950s or early 1960s, the original clear glass in all of the sanctuary windows, the facade windows, and the upper-floor side windows was replaced with an obscure marbled glass in pale shades of green and pink. Also during the late 1950s, Live Oak was widened from two to four lanes, bringing the street curb to its present location—only a few feet from the base of the entry stairs—and moving the front fence of what is now the parking lot.

Perhaps the most significant change to the interior of the church was the conversion of the balcony into a storage area. At some time—exactly when is unknown—the opening from the sanctuary to the balcony was closed and the balcony retired from use. Currently there are two evaporative coolers installed in the balcony, with two square grills on the rear sanctuary wall serving as registers for the cooled air.

The most significant exterior change was the removal of the Mission-style arch that served as the church's "bell tower." When this change was made is not known, and the only evidence of the arch's existence that survives today is a drawing of the church building in a 1923 Presbyterian church publication. Today only a small part of the arch remains, so that it appears more like a stepped parapet than a bell tower, and the bell is smaller and not operable. Also on the exterior, the original front doors, which were stained glass, were replaced at least once and possibly twice; the current wooden doors are relatively new.

In 1973 a mural designed to appear like a stained-glass window, entitled "Christ Among the Laborers,"

was painted by a parishioner, Lois Parker, and installed in the fellowship hall on the lower floor. In the 1990s, the organ, which had been repaired on at least two occasions but was no longer working, was removed and replaced by a digital electric organ. The organ pipes remain in the sanctuary walls, but the room on the lower floor that originally housed the organ blower is now a storage room. The speakers for the new organ replaced the original cloth grills for the organ pipes, which had been located on the rear sanctuary wall.

Over the years, minor changes were made to the exterior signage: the cross on the central bay was moved upward (the original mounting holes can still be seen), the sign board once located on the central bay above the cornice was removed (to be replaced by a larger sign board on the east elevation), a small hanging sign was installed on the middle pilaster of the front bay, and a message board was mounted on the middle pilaster between the two front doorways.

Overall these changes have been relatively minor, and the integrity of the building is quite good. Although the glass on the windows in the sanctuary and some other locations has been changed, all of the exterior window frames are original, as are almost all of the interior doors, woodwork, and molding. No changes have been made in the exterior walls, cladding, or ornamentation, and no changes have been made to the floorplan. The major interior change—the closing of the balcony—is likely reversible.

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Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary

The Miami Community Church is significant at the local level under Criterion C, for its association with the architect Henry Trost and his firm Trost & Trost, and under Criterion A, for its role as one of Miami's leading cultural institutions during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, when it not only housed Miami's largest Protestant congregation but also served as a community meeting place, recital hall, and social service center. The church is a reminder of the wealth and status that Miami enjoyed when it was one of Arizona's largest and most productive copper-mining communities.

Although it is and always has been a religious property, it qualifies for listing on the National Register under Criteria Consideration A by virtue of its local architectural, historical, and social significance.

Trost & Trost

The Miami Community Church building, which was erected in 1920, was designed by the El Paso-based architectural firm of Trost & Trost, which was known throughout the Southwest for its designs of schools, public buildings, residences, and office buildings.

The firm was founded in El Paso, Texas, in 1903 by two brothers, Henry C. and Gustavus Adolphus Trost. In 1908 they were joined by a third brother, Adolphus Gustavus Trost. The roles of these three partners were somewhat flexible, but Henry and Gustavus appear to have been the designers, while Adolphus worked as a structural engineer. According to biographers of Henry Trost, Henry was the chief designer of all the firm's work during his lifetime.

Henry Trost died in 1933, and the firm continued to operate under his two brothers. Gustavus died in 1950 and Adolphus died in 1957.

Henry Trost

Born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1860, Henry Trost was trained as a draftsman and started his career in the late 1870s in Toledo. In 1880 he moved to Denver, where he

worked as a draftsman, and in 1881 he moved to Pueblo, Colorado, where he established his own architectural firm and then went into partnership with another architect, Frank Weston. During the 1880s, Trost worked in Colorado and other states, sometimes with other architects and sometimes with Weston.

In 1888 Trost moved to Chicago, where he worked as a draftsman and ornamental iron designer. While in Chicago, he was active in the Chicago Architectural Club and may have worked for Louis Sullivan's firm, Adler and Sullivan, at the same time that Frank Lloyd Wright was also employed by Sullivan.

In 1896 Trost returned to Colorado, and then in 1899 he moved to Tucson, where he worked on his own as an architect before establishing a partnership with Robert Rust (Trost & Rust). While in Tucson, Trost designed several well-known buildings, including two homes for the Owl's Club (both on Main Street) and the Carnegie Library (1901), in styles ranging from Mission Revival to Neo-Classical.

After moving to El Paso and setting up the Trost & Trost firm, he designed hundreds of buildings in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and other states, as well as some in northern Mexico. These included churches, schools (elementary, secondary, and post-secondary), public buildings, residences, apartment buildings, and office buildings.

Trost did not have a signature style, and he worked in a variety of styles during his long career. His portfolio includes major buildings in Mission Revival (the first Owl's Club buildings, Tucson, 1899), Pueblo Revival (Franciscan Hotel, Albuquerque, 1923), Prairie (Trost House, El Paso, 1909), Art Deco (Bassett Tower, El Paso, 1930), Neo-Classical (El Paso High School, El Paso, 1916), and Sullivanesque (Mills Building, El Paso, 1912). Many of his buildings were eclectic in their design influences, drawing on two or more styles.

His noteworthy Arizona buildings, in addition to the Owl's Club in Tucson, include the second Owl's Club in Tucson (1902-03); the Luhrs Tower in Phoenix, built in 1929 in the Art Deco style; and the Gadsden Hotel, a building erected in 1907 in Douglas that is

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described by his biographers as "Sullivan-esque." Trost also designed the Bullion Plaza School in Miami, a Neo-Classical building erected in 1923.

Architecture of the Miami Community Church

No information is available to indicate which of the Trosts designed the building. However, based on the claims of Henry Trost's biographers that he was the firm's chief designer during his lifetime, it seems reasonable to assume that Henry was the principal architect of the church.

Currently this is the only church in Arizona attributed to Trost and his firm, which are known primarily for their commercial, educational, and residential designs. Henry Trost's biographers attribute just three churches to him: Temple Mt. Sinai and Westminster Presbyterian Church (later St. George Orthodox Church), both in El Paso, and the chapel at Loretto Academy in Las Cruces, New Mexico. No Trost-designed church is listed individually on the National Register.

At the time of its construction, the Miami Community Church was described somewhat fancifully in local newspapers as "built along Spanish lines." This characterization probably was made because of an architectural feature no longer present on the building: a Mission-style arch on the roof. Located atop the parapet on the facade end of the east elevation, above the northeast corner bay, the arch supported a large bell. At some time the arch was removed, and now all that remains of it is a stepped parapet from which a much smaller bell is hung.

Currently the building has no features other than its stucco cladding that would associate it with the Spanish Colonial Revival or Mission Revival styles. Still, its stucco cladding, blocky rectangular massing, triangular front parapet (which suggests a gabled roof), and corner bays (which suggest bell towers) together recall the simple mission churches built by the Spanish in the northern frontier regions of their American empire.

Indeed, what is most interesting about the building is how it incorporates architectural features that have

traditionally been associated with churches—that is, how it employs a vernacular of religious architectural symbols. Among these symbols are arches, which appear not only in the windows, which are Roman arches, but also in the relief ornamentation above the front doorways, which are Gothic arches. These symbols also include the corner bays, which are suggestive of bell towers. Created by vertical recesses in the facade and east elevation, these corner bays create a facade evocative of large Gothic cathedrals (which also were sources of inspiration for the builders of Spanish America's mission churches). This effect is further enhanced by the triangular parapet on the central bay of the facade, which suggests the gabled roof style typical for Gothic churches.

Why these ornamental features, and therefore the stylistic character of the building, are so muted is a matter for speculation. In part this may be a reflection of Trost's eclecticism, which found expression in many of his designs as he sometimes borrowed from as many as two or three styles. It also may reflect Trost's use of concrete, which in the early years of the twentieth century was pulling many architects toward cleaner, less ornamented designs—a trend that would find its fullest expression in Modern architecture.

Finally, another plausible explanation for its appearance is that this building project had to be carried out on a limited budget. Neither the town of Miami nor the local Presbyterian congregation was wealthy—a fact reflected in the town's architecture, which tended toward the utilitarian. Perhaps Trost cut costs by reducing the amount of decoration and specifying cast-in-place concrete for the building's walls. Not only was concrete familiar to Trost, who used it in many of his commercial buildings; it also was popular in Miami, and the materials and skilled labor needed to raise concrete buildings were readily available in the mining community.

History of the Miami Community Church

The congregation that built the Miami Community Church was founded in 1910 by local Presbyterians

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working with a Presbyterian missionary and supported by a Presbyterian congregation in nearby Globe.

The town itself had been founded only the year before, in 1909, when engineer-turned-developer Cleve Van Dyke established the Miami Townsite Company and began selling lots to business owners and miners employed in the local copper mines. Although full-scale production at the two largest mines near Miami, the Miami Copper Company and Inspiration Copper Company, was still two years away, the town grew rapidly, creating a need for cultural institutions such as the church.

Calling themselves the Miami Presbyterian Church, the church's founders held their first services in borrowed buildings around Miami. Then, in 1911, they built their own sanctuary, a one-room frame building located on the north side of Live Oak, across from the present-day church building. To finance its construction, the congregation sold a town lot donated by Van Dyke, who also donated the land on which this church was built.

The congregation struggled for its first few years, but as the town of Miami and the copper companies on which the town depended became established the church began to grow. By 1917, rising wartime copper prices had brought prosperity to Miami, and the Miami Presbyterian Church's fortunes reflected this. That year the church reported a membership of 88, Sunday school enrollment of 326, and a budget of \$9,000, and plans were being made to erect a new church building.

Some time between 1917 and 1920, Henry Trost's architectural firm was hired to design the new building. In March 1920 the trustees awarded a construction contract to the firm of Holberg and Burdick, and by November of that year the building was finished. It was erected on Live Oak across the street from the congregation's first sanctuary, on three lots donated by Van Dyke, whose Miami Townsite Company still owned substantial property in Miami and dominated town affairs.

The first worship service held in the new sanctuary took place on November 28, 1920. When the

congregation moved into its new building, it changed its name to the Miami Community Church. This reflected its position as the only Protestant church in Miami, and its dependence on the attendance and financial support of local copper mine officials and business owners. Members of "all evangelical churches" were welcome to attend, and those who wanted to join the congregation could do so without renouncing their membership in other denominations. However, despite this transformation into a community Protestant church, the congregation remained legally incorporated as the Miami Presbyterian Church, so that it could borrow money from the Presbyterian Board of Church Erection to help pay for the new sanctuary.

As inclusive as the congregation was, it did not welcome Mexican-American worshippers. They were served by a separate Presbyterian missionary church that had existed since at least 1913, when a Spanish-speaking Presbyterian congregation in Globe began holding services in Miami. Two years after the Miami Community Church was built, the local Mexican-American congregation inherited the Presbyterians' frame building on Live Oak. Soon their church, El Divino Salvador, was the largest Spanish-speaking Protestant church in the Globe-Miami area. That congregation remained in the frame building until 1944, when it was destroyed by fire.

Given its organization as a community Protestant church, the Miami Community Church was attended and supported financially by most of the executives and managers of the copper companies operating in Miami. However, the founding of a Methodist congregation in nearby Claypool (located between Miami and Globe), combined with the onset of the Depression, brought a precipitous decline in support for the Community Church. The financial resources of the congregation shrunk substantially and the congregation was in serious financial trouble by 1933, when the Miami Copper Company (the town's largest employer) temporarily closed for three years.

As the congregation struggled financially, it was approached in 1933 by the Globe Presbyterian Church

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with a proposal that the two congregations join in hiring a pastor. It does not appear that this proposal was accepted, but the Community Church's trustees did decide to formally return to the Presbyterian fold, a decision that required the dissolution of the church's board of trustees and the creation of a new board of elders organized under the Presbytery of Arizona.

The onset of the Second World War, which sent copper prices upward and brought new mining activity to the Miami area, helped revive the fortunes of the Miami Presbyterian Church, as it was now called. In December 1945 the mortgage on the sanctuary was paid, and the congregation's good fortune continued into the 1950s. Eventually, though, falling copper prices, along with the depletion of Miami's most productive mines, brought hard times back to the town. In 1959 the Miami Copper Company closed its underground mine, the town's economy went into decline, and the congregation once again struggled financially.

One problem facing the Miami Presbyterian Church during these lean years were the steadily escalating salary requirements for Presbyterian ministers. In response, the congregation voted in 1959 to join with the Superior Presbyterian Church to hire a shared pastor, an arrangement that lasted until 1969.

Another challenge was declining attendance, which reflected the drop in Miami's population following the mine closures. This led to a series of proposals to merge with other area churches, including El Divino Salvador and the Globe Presbyterian Church, but none of these early proposals met with the congregation's approval.

In 1969 the congregations of El Divino Salvador and Miami Presbyterian Church agreed to jointly hire a pastor, and the agreement was expanded to include Bethel Church, a Mexican-American congregation in Globe. This led to the formation, in 1971, of the Tri-City Parish, under which the three churches continued to maintain their own facilities but together offered services in English and Spanish, as well as a combined Sunday school.

They remained separate congregations until 1986, when El Divino Salvador and Miami Presbyterian

formally merged into a single congregation, taking the name of Divine Grace Presbyterian Church. In 1989, Bethel Church closed and its members were invited to join Divine Grace.

Social Role of the Miami Community Church

Throughout its period of significance, from 1920 until the late 1940s, the Miami Community Church (and later the Miami Presbyterian Church), played a central role in the community life of Miami.

The congregation was founded only a year after the town was established, and it was supported financially by many of Miami's largest business owners—with Cleve Van Dyke prominent among them—as well as by local managers and employees of the copper companies. For years it was the only large Protestant congregation in town, a fact reflected not only in its name but also in its generous membership policy.

It also was one of the largest public buildings in town, and the facilities on the lower floor of the building—the fellowship hall and other meeting rooms, as well as the kitchen—were used to host many community events. These included musicals, plays, social club meetings, banquets, political party luncheons, and lodge meetings. The Bereans, a women's Bible study group at the church, functioned as a kind of catering service for these non-church events. Acting as hosts for an organization's banquet or luncheon, the Bereans prepared the meals, served them, and then collected a fee that was donated to the congregation.

The church also served as a center for the informal distribution of social services, especially during the Depression, when needy families were assisted in obtaining food, coal, and firewood. During the Second World War, the church played a central role in organizing scrap and fat drives, and it was host to Red Cross volunteers who sewed, knitted, and rolled bandages.

Even the worship services held at the church occasionally served a larger community role. In 1932, to celebrate imposition of a new tariff on copper imports, a special service of thanksgiving was held at the church—

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a vivid reminder of how important the copper industry was to Miami and its residents.

As one of the largest and most prominent non-government public buildings in Miami, and as one of the few buildings in town to be designed by a well-known architect, the Miami Community Church was a symbol of Miami's prosperity during its copper mines' heyday from the 1910s through the 1940s.

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Bibliography

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Pry, Mark E. "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Bullion Plaza School, Miami, Arizona," October 2000. Phoenix: State Historic Preservation Office, Arizona State Parks.

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 305, 306, and 307, Block 11, Original Townsite of Miami.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property consists of the historic church grounds on which the building is located.

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Miami Community Church
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Historical Photographs

Facade View

This photograph of the front of the church was taken sometime before Live Oak Street was widened in the late 1950s.



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Miami Community Church
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Interior View

This undated photograph was taken from the balcony in the rear of the sanctuary, which is now closed. With the exception of the cloth grills over the organ pipes (seen above the doors on either side of the altar) and the wooden railing on the altar, all of the features shown here are still present.



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Exterior View

This drawing, which was copied from the cover of a regional Presbyterian Church publication from 1923, shows the Mission-style arch and bell that once stood above the bay on the northeast corner of the building.



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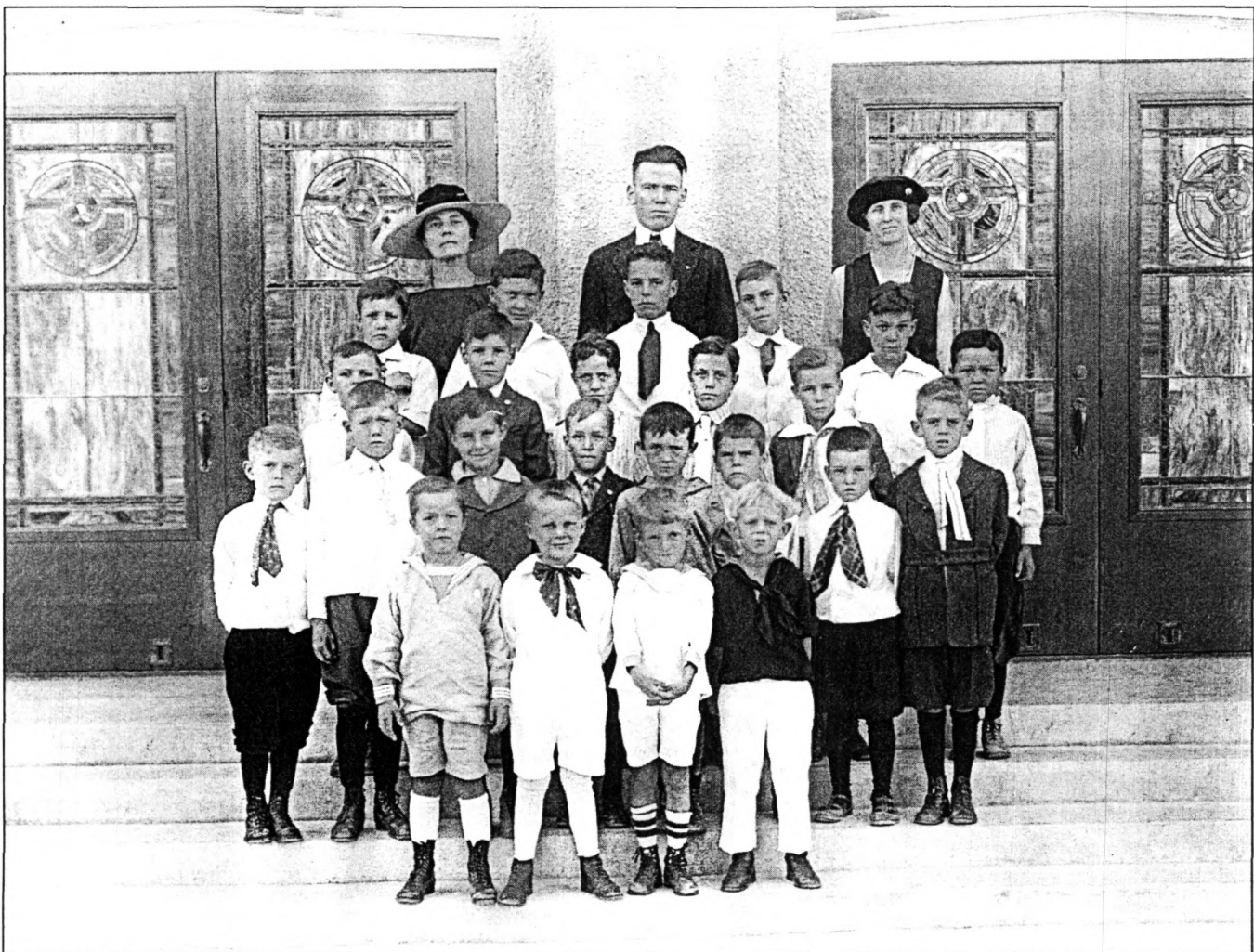
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Miami Community Church
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Facade Detail

This undated photograph of a Sunday school class on the front steps of the church, which may have been taken as early as the 1920s, shows the original front doors with stained glass.



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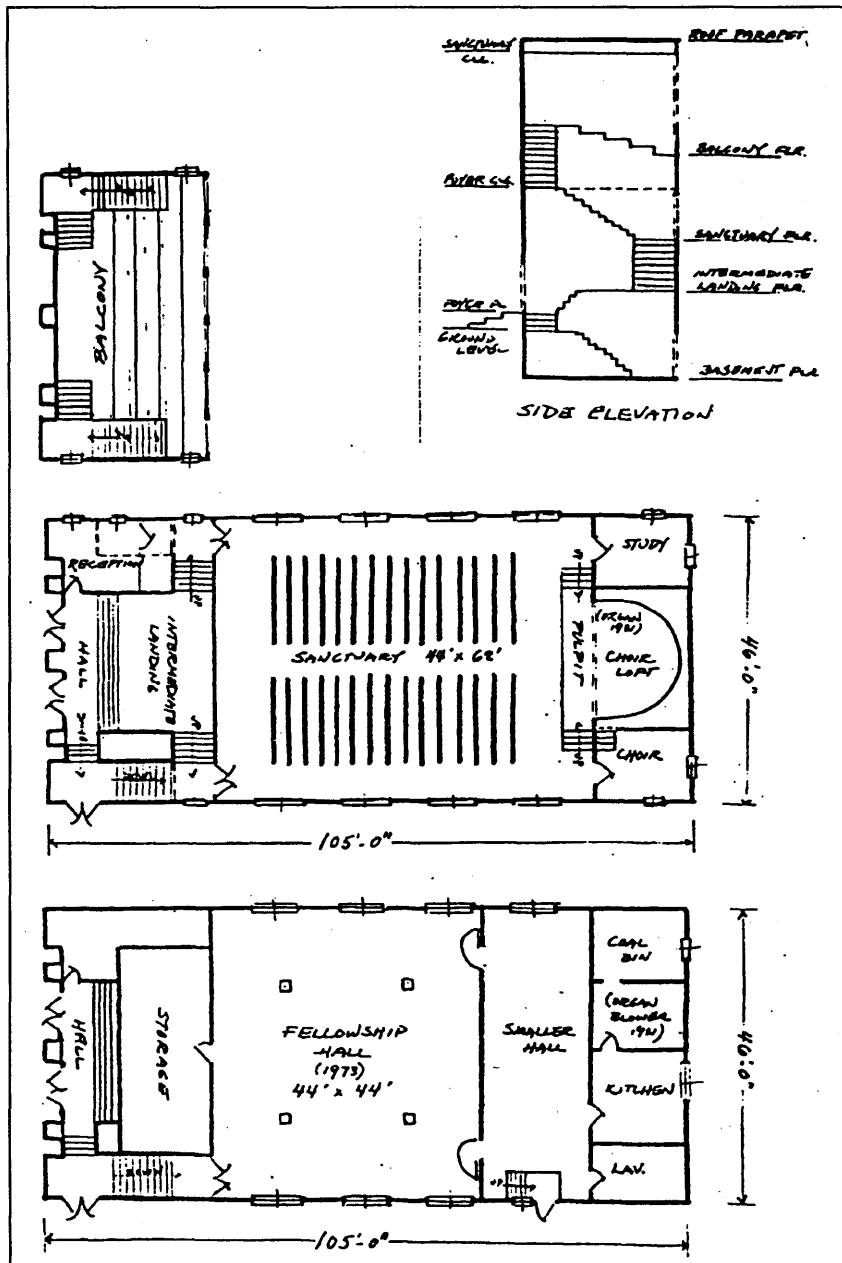
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Miami Community Church
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Floor Plan

This floor plan, taken from *The Copper Covenant*, a published history of the church, was drawn in the early 1980s.



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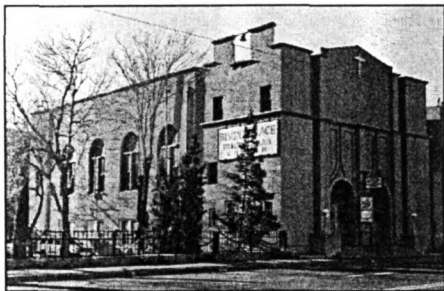
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List of Photographs

For all images

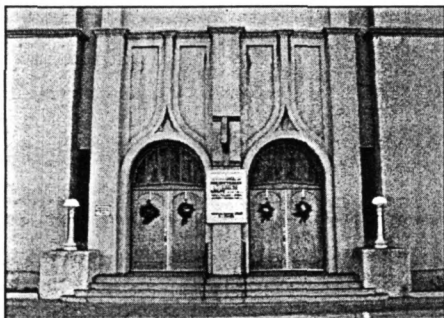
Property: Miami Community Church, Gila County, Arizona
Photographer: Mark E. Pry
Date taken: December 19, 2003
Location of negatives: Divine Grace Presbyterian Church; Miami, Arizona



No. 1 : Overall view of building: north-facing facade and east elevation, looking southwest from Live Oak Street.



No. 2 : Interior view: the sanctuary, with the altar in the background, looking southwest from the rear of the room.



No. 3 : Exterior detail: front doorways and facade ornamentation.