

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PHO 675 890

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
APR 25 1979	
RECEIVED	
DATE ENTERED	JUN 6 1979

**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
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
5900 Seventh Avenue

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Kenosha

__ VICINITY OF

First

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Wisconsin

55

Kenosha

059

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

__DISTRICT

__PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

__AGRICULTURE

__MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

__UNOCCUPIED

__COMMERCIAL

__PARK

__STRUCTURE

__BOTH

__WORK IN PROGRESS

__EDUCATIONAL

__PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

__ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

__OBJECT

__IN PROCESS

__YES: RESTRICTED

__GOVERNMENT

__SCIENTIFIC

__BEING CONSIDERED

__YES: UNRESTRICTED

__INDUSTRIAL

__TRANSPORTATION

__NO

__MILITARY

__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Rector, Wardens and Vestrymen of St. Matthew's Church (attn: Father Malcolm

STREET & NUMBER

(McClenaghan)

5900 Seventh Avenue

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Kenosha

__ VICINITY OF

Wisconsin 53140

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Kenosha County Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

912 - 56th Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Kenosha

Wisconsin 53140

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1971

__FEDERAL STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Madison

Wisconsin 53706

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church is constructed of Racine and Joliet limestone. The random ashlar on the exterior walls is rusticated while the trim around windows, doors, beltcourses and copings is dressed stone. The tall nave section is sheltered by a steeply gabled roof with stone copings capping off the front and back ends. Shed roofs cover the side aisles underneath a clerestory of double Gothic lancets with faceted glass added in 1974. Aisle windows are larger lancets of stained glass grouped in twos between wall buttresses. The buttresses end above the roof line with decorative stone finials and support flying buttresses attached to the clerestory walls.

Tucked into the nave section at the southeast corner is a squat, square tower which features buttresses at each corner, a clock, simple square wooden louvers trimmed with Gothic tracery and a castellated parapet. In the tower is a bell cast by G. H. Holbrook at Yeday, Massachusetts in 1843. Presented to the congregation in that year by Rev. H. Hatch, it was said to be the first church bell in the community and the third in the territory. A gabled roof resting on stone sidewalls and decorated by a scissors-truss bargeboard shelters the main entrance. Above, double lancets and a rose window are enclosed in a large stone Gothic arch. A small square turret trims the southwest corner of the main facade.

At the north end projects the polygonal apse. A twin gabled sacristy wing extends to the west and a larger gabled chapel wing is attached to the east side. The only major exterior location has been the replacement of the original slate roof with a similar roof of the same material in 1974.

The interior is also in excellent condition. Heavy round columns supporting molded Gothic arches separate the nave and aisles. The molded trim was added sometime after 1888 (the original decorative scheme was painted on). Above the arcade, timber trussing, with decorative tracery in the form of vertical lancets between the collar beams, collar braces and king posts, springs from corbels. A belt course, also added later, separates the clerestory from the arcade. The polygonal apse is pierced by Gothic lancets. The original belt course in the apse has been removed and ribbing shortened to spring from corbels rather than the belt course. Bays in the aisles are demarcated by plaster arches and timbers support the aisle roofs.

A pipe organ was added in 1926 by Earnest M. Skinner, who built the organ on the site. The pews are not original. The floor is quarry tile.

The chapel at the northeast corner is a simpler, smaller version of the church and features corbelled plaster moldings and wooden trusses similar to those in the church. A Victorian wooden altar used in the church from 1888-1910 and delicately traceried wainscoting from the church has decorated the chapel since 1910.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1872-1879¹

BUILDER/ARCHITECT A. H. Ellwood²

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The oldest extant church in Kenosha, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church is a major landmark on Library Park, a tree-shaded green around which were historically located some of the finest residential and religious buildings in the city. Many of these structures have been demolished, especially around St. Matthew's which is closest to the downtown commercial core of the city, but the character of a Yankee green has not been lost.

Architecture

St. Matthew's is a fine example as interpreted in America of the English Gothic Revival style popular especially for the construction of Episcopal churches. In 1879, when the church was brand new, a county history stated, "the edifice is a massive structure built in the Gothic style, a rare and exceptional combination of symmetry and solidity; one of the most attractive, architecturally speaking, and commodious houses of worship in the city, as also the State."³

The church was designed by A. H. Ellwood, an architect from Aurora, Illinois, who made a "specialty of churches, schools, and public buildings."⁴ Ellwood spent several years practicing architecture in Chicago before settling in Aurora in 1870. In addition to the many buildings in Illinois and religious structures in five states, he designed the Cathedral in Omaha. He later moved to Elkhart, Indiana. Ellwood's design is more sophisticated in its archeological correctness than most churches of the early 1870s in Wisconsin. Particularly unusual is the fact that the design has remained uncompromised since the 1870s when the church was built. It is among the three finest Victorian churches remaining in Kenosha County.

History

St. Matthew's Church was first organized on April 17, 1840 by Bishop Jackson Kemper, missionary bishop of the northwest territory. It was the fourth church organized in the territory and served the Yankee community--the early settlers of Kenosha who dominated the social and economic life of the settlement throughout the nineteenth century.

In 1841 a small frame chapel was built as the first house of worship for the congregation. As early as 1857 the parish was thinking of building a larger church, and in that year \$12,000 was raised for the purpose. However, further progress on the project was stopped by the financial panic. It was not until 1871 that the lot which the present church

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

see continuation sheet.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .346

QUADRANGLE NAME Kenosha, Wis.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 432800 4714490

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 58 in the SE 1/4 of Section 31, Town 2 North, Range 23 East of the Fourth principal meridian.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mrs. James R. Braun, Curator of Programs and Planning

ORGANIZATION

Kenosha County Historical Society

DATE

June 25, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

6300 Third Avenue

TELEPHONE

414-654-5770

CITY OR TOWN

Kenosha

STATE

Wisconsin 53140

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Richard M. Kuey

TITLE

Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

4/18/79

FDR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

6-6-79

ATTEST:

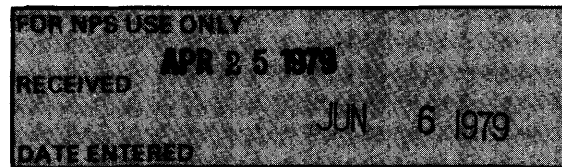
William H. Brahan

6-5-79

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



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

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

occupies was purchased for \$2,250. The site on Library Park was selected both for its picturesque desirability and also because the original center of the community had moved southward to the area around the park. In the same year an additional \$10,700 was raised. The congregation chose to build of "stone with appropriate buttresses," the deluxe plan submitted by Ellwood.⁵ The parish chapel was constructed first and worship held there until the large church was finished. The construction went slowly due to financial constraints, but the building was finally completed (except for a spire which was never built) in August, 1879.

Since then, a number of individuals significant to the history of Kenosha have worshipped at St. Matthew's. Among the most notable were Lewis Bain of the Bain Wagon Company, one of the first manufacturing interests in Kenosha; Volney French, early settler; Jacob and Fred Gottfredsen, early brewers and the owners of a general store; Josiah Bond, lawyer, railroad businessman and one of the first settlers; and Frank Lyman, early local historian.

Thus St. Matthew's exemplifies the nineteenth century parish church in the hub of a pioneer Yankee community. The church is one of the few remainders of the early Yankee beginnings of a community in which most vestiges of its early days have been lost.

¹Parish records, May 3, 1872 and History of Racine and Kenosha Counties, 1879, p. 535.

²Ibid.

³History of Racine and Kenosha Counties, 1879, p. 535.

⁴Holland's Aurora City Directory, 1874-1875, pp. 44ff.

⁵"The Holiday Herald."

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
APR 25 1979
JUN 6 1979
DATE ENTERED

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

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

Item #9, Major Bibliographical References:

Property Abstract.

- Lyman, Frank H., The City of Kenosha and Kenosha County, Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1916, v. I.
- Tanck, Albert J., "The History of St. Matthew's Parish," 1956, in the collections of the Kenosha County Historical Society.
- Bond, Josiah, "History of St. Matthew's Parish," in Celebration of the Semi-Centennial of St. Matthew's Church, Kenosha, Wisconsin, 1890.
- "The Holiday Herald," newssheet printed in Kenosha, Ladies of St. Matthew's Church, 1874, in the collections of the church.
- Cropley, Carrie, Kenosha, from Pioneer Village to Modern City, 1835-1935, Kenosha: Kenosha County Historical Society, 1958.
- History of Racine and Kenosha Counties, Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1879.

Item #11, Form Prepared By:

Katherine E. Hundt, Architectural Historian
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
816 State Street
Madison

October 2, 1978
608-262-2970
Wisconsin 53706