Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAR 23 1976
DATE ENTERED APR 21 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

** HISTORIC The Church of the Messiah (First Unitarian Church)

AND/OR COMMON
First Unitarian Church

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 805 South 4th Street, SE corner of York Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Louisville

__ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
3 and 4

STATE
Kentucky

CODE
021

COUNTY
Jefferson

CODE
111

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	X RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME First Unitarian Church

STREET & NUMBER
805 South 4th Street

CITY, TOWN
Louisville

__ VICINITY OF

STATE
Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
Jefferson Street

CITY, TOWN
Louisville

STATE
Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Survey of Historic Places in Kentucky

DATE
1975

__FEDERAL X STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN
Frankfort

STATE
Kentucky

(continued)

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The First Unitarian Church is located on the southeast corner of Fourth and York Streets just south of downtown Louisville. It is only a block south of Broadway, the main upper-class residential street of the city in the mid-19th century, and faces onto Fourth Street, which with Third Street was the major north-south thoroughfare of the city and of the Old Louisville Residential District (listed on the National Register of Historic Places on February 2, 1975). In 1876, shortly after the present church building was erected, its outline appeared on the Atlas of the City of Louisville (Map 2). At that time, the half-completed Calvary Episcopal Church (approved for the National Register at the State level on December 4, 1973) was a few lots south; the First Presbyterian Church was a block north; Temple Adas Israel was three blocks away on Broadway; the most fashionable public school, the Fifth Ward (Monserrat) School, later and until recently the Museum of Natural History (approved at the State level on October 21, 1975), was a block west. Since then, the Main Branch of the Louisville Public Library has been located across the street from the church to the north; Temple Adath [sic] Israel has moved to the same block, which also includes the Presentation Academy and the main buildings of Spalding College. Other churches and institutions are or have been located in the immediate area in the century during which the Unitarian Church has remained downtown and near the city's business as well as religious and cultural center.

Although the church is located on a fairly restricted lot, the grounds of the library to the north provide a somewhat parklike setting and enough perspective to allow appreciation of the picturesque composition of the church's facade and asymmetrically-placed tower. Just to the south of the church is a handsome late 19th-century Italianate limestone-faced townhouse that still provides a valuable clue to the scale, material, and style of the original residential surroundings of the church (in contrast, Calvary Church just beyond is now flanked on both sides by parking lots). There is also an earlier 19th-century residence converted to other uses east of the church across an alley (see photo 2).

The best description of the church as it was first built in 1869-71, and presumably as it was rebuilt immediately after the fire of December 31, 1871, appeared in the Louisville Courier-Journal on January 16, 1871, on the occasion of the dedication of the first church:

> The building...is one of the neatest and most convenient church edifices in the city.
>
> In style the building is Gothic and early English. It is something entirely new in the West and does credit to the architect, Mr. H.P. Bradshaw. The lot upon which it is situated is ninety-five feet front by two hundred feet deep, and is surrounded with an elegant

(continued)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	X RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	X EDUCATION	__MILITARY	X SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	X PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The First Unitarian Church of Louisville (known as the Church of the Messiah for approximately fifty years after the acquisition of the assets of the former Universalist Church made possible the construction of the present building) has a long history of religious, intellectual, and social-humanitarian contribution to the community. Among several outstanding ministers during the 19th-century was James Freeman Clarke, step-grandson and in many ways the inheritor of James Freeman, one of the founders of the Unitarian movement in America; and himself a leading spokesman for Transcendentalism. Education -- both religious and secular, including pioneering efforts on behalf of women and blacks -- was a keynote of the civic concerns of the Reverend John Healy Heywood, Clarke's successor, whose tenure from 1840 to 1880 was highlighted by the erection of the limestone Gothic Revival edifice that remains a landmark of downtown Louisville.

The original First Unitarian Church in Louisville was erected in 1831 on the southeast corner of Fifth and Walnut (see photo 10, the only known contemporary rendering of the building). According to the 1832 Directory it was a long rectangular meeting house:

> The front of this handsome specimen of the art of building, presents the style of the Grecian Doric with four columns supporting a pediment frieze and entablature...This building is receiving a coat of marbled stucco, which promises to place it in taste and beauty beyond any building in the city.

The Greek temple form was characteristic of American housesof worship in the 1830s: even Christian religious institutions partook of the general fervor for Greek forms, and they seemed especially suited for the Unitarians, with their ideal of open-mindedness. When the more self-consciously ecclesiastical Gothic Revival style was not preferred (as it was generally in Louisville as elsewhere after the 1830s), it was natural to resort to the Greek model. Only one of these early 19th-century classical churches has survived: the simple Grecian structure at College Street east of 2nd designed by John Stirewalt.

After the Civil War, however, churches of all denominations tended to abandon the classical style for variations of the Gothic -- the Italianate or Renaissance modes apparently seemed too frivolous for religious structures, and perhaps the Gothic had lost some of its earlier Popish overtones. The new Unitarian church at 4th and York Streets (then called the Church

(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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Bodley, [Temple,] and Breaux. "An Historical Sketch, First Unitarian Church." Louisville, 1930.
The Courier-Journal, Louisville, January 16, 1871.
The Dictionary of American Biography. "James Freeman," "James Freeman Clarke," "Henry Whitney Bellows," "James Barr Walker."

(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	16	608660	4233400
B			
C			
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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 Walter E. Langsam, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE March 9, 1976

STREET & NUMBER 104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE (502)564-3741

CITY OR TOWN Frankfort

STATE Kentucky

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE Edred W Nelson

TITLE

DATE 3/16/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Acting

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 4/21/76

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 4.19.76

GPO 888-445

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TITLE: Metropolitan Preservation Plan DATE: 1973 Local
DEPOSITORY: Falls of the Ohio Metropolitan Council of Governments
(now Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency)
Fifth and Ormsby Streets
Louisville, Kentucky

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stone and iron fence. The outer walls of the entire building are constructed of stone from the quarries at Beard's Station, except the dressed portions, which are of White river limestone. The roofs of the building are covered with slate, the spire also being covered with the same material. The cornices and other ornamentations are of galvanized iron.

The arrangements of the plans comprise a main audience room 95 feet deep by 48 feet in width, with transepts on each side 27 feet by 12 feet, the north transept being occupied by the organ and the choir. The roof is what is known as open timbered, the whole of the framework supporting trusses, etc., being dressed and forming the ceiling of the church. The height of the walls in the audience room is 23 feet and the height to the apex of the ceiling is 60 feet. The audience room contains 116 pews, and will afford comfortable accomodation for 700 people. The principal entrance is from Fourth street through a spacious vestibule.

There is also an entrance from York Street through the tower, as also two entrances from a cross hall in the rear building. The tower and spire are located on the north or York-street side of the building, immediately in front of the transept, and is 18 feet square at the base and 145 high to the top of the spire. In the rear of the main church is located a two-story building, corresponding in style of architecture to the church proper, containing on the first floor a Sunday-school or lecture-room...and also rooms for the pastor's study and Sunday-school library. The second story is occupied by the ladies' parlors and Bible-class rooms. The wood work of the entire interior has been constructed principally of black walnut and ash including pews, pulpit, etc. The pews in the main audience room are all handsomely upholstered, and those in the rear building are all made with reversible backs for the more convenient use of the Sunday-school.

The cost, including $11,000 for the lot, was $75,000 in all.

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The stylistic designation of the church is discussed in 8., along with what little information is now known about the architect. The 1871 description, however, can still be effectively used as an outline of the present condition of the church. The "elegant stone and iron fence" is still intact, somewhat deteriorated but a rare survival in Louisville and elsewhere (many of the mid-19th-century walls and fences in the city were removed when Third Street was closed to herdsmen in the late 19th century, and of course many others were utilized during the World Wars as scrap metal). The fence around the church provides a sense of enclosure to the precinct, while separating it slightly from the street traffic (photos 1-3,5).

Except for a sympathetic addition of a half-timbered and stuccoed second-story over the original Sunday school rooms at the east end of the church, the exterior is virtually unchanged (photos 4-5). The fine local limestone used in the construction of the walls becomes increasingly golden in tone with age and has weathered exceptionally well. The roof has suffered most from time and the elements, but most of the slates remain on the distinctive spire, which tapers from a four-sided to an octagonal figure above the base, with tall narrow dormers on each of the four main faces (photos 1-2). Below the spire the tower has three stages, with three-tier buttresses at the corners. A well-proportioned entrance faces north in the base, with a slanted shelf above serving also as the sill of two very tall lancets (photo 3). Above these on each face are triple windows, the highest in the middle. Flat machicolations provide a cornice below the spire.

Although actually almost flat, the west facade of the church is divided into three sections, with the much wider central unit defined by three-tier buttresses that die into the wall just before reaching the steep sides of the gable that fronts the actual roof of the sanctuary (photo2). The main entrance, approached by shallow stone steps, consists of two large pointed arches side-by-side and sharing a common cluster of colonnettes between. Above them is another shelf on which rest three narrow but larger windows. Below the cross at the peak of the gable is a curved-triangular opening. The center section is flanked by single lancets and the corners of the facade are defined by diagonal double-tier buttress. The five bays of the south side and the four of the north side (the tower takes the fifth) are separated by two-tier buttresses; each bay has a pair of lancets. The ends of the transepts are only slightly diminished versions of the west facade, with tall paired lancets and a curved-triangular window above them fitted into a generous blind arch. Most of the east end of the church proper was originally and has been been still further submerged in the Sunday school

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rooms and offices, but they too have stone walls with pointed-arch openings.

The details of the church are consistently bold and crisp rather than dainty. The gables are framed only by flat bands of stone. There are labels only over the tops of the windows, although the front doors do have full-length colonnettes. At crucial points use is made of diamond-shaped blocks of stone with vermiculated ("wormy" or worm-eaten) texture. The west windows have a curious proto-Art Nouveau stone tracery. Otherwise, the architect has relied for effect mainly on compositional outlines, the silhouette of the tower, and the quality of the masonry.

The interior of the sanctuary remained virtually as it was originally until the renovation undertaken by the firm of Jasper Ward Associates during the Centennial celebrations of 1970, which respected most of the structural features. A photograph of the east end of the auditorium prior to the alterations shows only the fittings of the altar-niche as no longer present (photos 6-7). Handsome angular brass light-fixtures are suspended from the pendants of the trusses. The ceiling between the splendid timber trusses is still dark-stained tongue-in-groove boards. As described in 1871, the auditorium is essentially a rectangle, with shallow transepts at the east end. These transepts do not detract from the feeling of a meeting-hall rather than a Latin-cross-shaped liturgical plan; the organ and choir originally occupied the north transept, and the south transept originally, according to tradition, contained the free (and therefore in a social sense nonexistent) pews. The east wall is flat except for a shallow arched niche in the center with a steep-sided ribbed vault on slender colonnettes like those of the main entrance. The impressive roof-trusses rest on corbels with similar foliate supports.

The 1970 modernization involved mainly the positioning of the new Steiner tracker organ in the niche of the east wall, and the rearrangement of some of the pews to allow more flexible use of the space, including dramatic performances on a platform that extends the altar area out toward the congregation (or audience). The handsome stained-glass windows provide the chief adornment of the interior, although only a pair of the earliest type survives in the south transept (photo 8).

In what might have been the apse of a Catholic-oriented church is the original Sunday School meeting room, behind the altar-niche and transverse hall, although not quite aligned on the axis of the sanctuary (photo 4). This meeting room, still used for forums prior to the regular Sunday services, has a half-octagonal east end and slender cast iron clustered colonnettes supporting the room above (photo 9). The new features of the educational wing are in keeping with the old.

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of the Messiah) was one of the first of the "low" sects to espouse the new trend. This was in keeping with the Unitarian position. As Paul Sawyer puts it, "A chief characteristic of our religious movement, manifested in our worship, our theology, and our life as a church community, is a constant tension between the two poles of the wholly new and the traditional." (Scholefield, p. 22.)

The new church was built in 1869-70, and dedicated in January 1871. On that occasion the Courier-Journal described it thus: "The building...is one of the neatest and most convenient church edifices in the city.... In style the building is Gothic and early English. It is something entirely new in the West and does credit to the architect, Mr. H.P. Bradshaw."

Although the design of the church is obviously Gothic and "Early English" usually meant in the mid-19th century the "Lancet" style to which the church conforms, it is difficult in retrospect to determine what was "entirely new" about Bradshaw's design. Perhaps its novelty lay in three main respects: (1) the exterior was completely of stone, up to the roof, using the fine golden local limestone, rather than of brick or wood stuccoed over as were many of the ante-bellum examples; (2) the model was ultimately English parish churches, rather than cathedrals or Continental churches reduced in size and workmanship. This is perhaps best signified by (3) the placement of the tower, with its subtly tapered spire, to one side of the nave, rather than centered on the entrance front, like earlier Gothic churches in Louisville and Lexington (see the National Register nomination for Christ Church Episcopal, Lexington, submitted for State approval March 9, 1976). This deliberately informal treatment of the tower, with the lower transept clinging to it, creates a constantly changing perspective, particularly appropriate on a corner site. Thus, the Unitarians moved a step toward the traditional Victorian style for churches, while injecting a new element of asymmetry and a certain modesty of association suited to an unpretentious intellectual emphasis.

The interior layout also reflects these characteristics. Although the usual medieval liturgical combination of nave, transept, and even chancel is present, as one might expect from the exterior massing, the first impression of the interior is almost of the typical New England meeting house (in which Unitarianism got its start): the "transepts" originally held an organ to the north and it is said, "open" pews for Negroes to the south -- obviously invisible. The "chancel" too was only a token, a shallow arch. The timber roof is not very prominent, and the total effect, in spite of stained glass, is light and open: exactly as intended to represent the lucidity and tolerance of reasonable religion.

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The original church actually burned shortly after completion, but was promptly rebuilt, in 1872, on the plan of the first. The architect, H.P. Bradshaw, appeared regularly in Louisville city directories in the third quarter of the 19th-century, and several of the leading architects of the next generation passed through his office. Few works have yet been definitely attributed to him. These include the impressive St. Louis Bertrand Roman Catholic Church on South 6th Street in Louisville (1871; see the National Register Nomination Form approved at the State level on October 21, 1975, for another work by Bradshaw). St. Louis has a number of resemblances to the Church of the Messiah, particularly in the handling of the limestone, although it is considerably larger and has a far more elaborate interior, as was considered appropriate for a Catholic church. Also by Bradshaw is St. John's Evangelical Church on East Market Street in Louisville (1866), a brick edifice with central west tower (never completed) and larger ogival-arched windows; the interior combines elements of both the Church of the Messiah and St. Louis Bertrand. It has been suggested that Charles Julian Clarke, one of the best-known architects in the Louisville area in the last quarter of the 19th century and a specialist in Gothic church design, may have been working in Bradshaw's office after the Civil War and may well have had a hand in these designs. As none of Clarke's known large-scale religious works of the 1870s has survived, it is difficult to confirm the hypothesis.

The interior has recently been altered by Jasper Ward Associates further to increase its flexibility and openness for services, but the original character has been respected.

History

A small Unitarian Society had begun meeting informally in Louisville in July 1830. By 1832 they had built "a neat, well-proportioned church. The Society had been organized by a few earnest Unitarians, mostly from New England. Services had been held for several years in different places, generally [and prophetically] in the schoolhouse of Mr. Francis E. Goddard, a man of attainments and an able teacher.

"John Pierpoint, Bernard Whitman and Charles Briggs were among the preachers who, in short visits to Louisville, had interested the worshippers. The church had been dedicated on the 27th of May, 1832. On that occasion Dr. Francis Parkman [the eminent historian] and James Walker -- [leader of the more liberal Unitarians as a young man in the 1820s, author, editor of The Christian Examiner 1831-39, and] afterwards president of Harvard College -- took part in the services." (E.E. Hale, in his biography of James Freeman Clarke, quoted in Johnston, Memorial History, I, 252.)

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The first pastor, the Reverend Mr. George Chapman of Massachusettes, preached his first sermon on June 24, 1832, in the new church. In spite of his success as pastor, he was forced by ill health to resign after only a year in Louisville (at an annual salary of $600).

Chapman was succeeded by the Reverend James Freeman Clarke (1810-1888),who became pastor in August 1833 and remained for seven years -- years eventful and stimulating not only to the budding church but also to the city as a whole. In the words of the 1896 chronicles, "Clarke was recognized and honored as a clear, vigorous, independent thinker by thoughtful men and women" prominent in the community. His "intellectual power, his compact, logical reasonings, his fine large scholarship, and his rare catholicity of spirit, were equally recognized by men of other communions....It was not only as a preacher that Mr. Clarke's influence was felt. He was a public-spirited citizen, deeply interested in whatever affected the welfare of the community. He devoted much time to the public schools of the city and, in 1839, was chosen by the City Council 'agent,' that is, secretary and superintendent." (Johnston, Memorial History, I, 252.)

Clarke, who had been graduated from Harvard College in 1829 and from the Harvard Divinity School in 1833, was ordained in Boston just before coming to Louisville for his first pastorate. Utilizing his Harvard and Boston connections, Clarke soon became not only a contributor, but editor from 1836 to 1839 of The Western Messenger, a monthly periodical published first in Cincinnati and then transferred to Louisville. Under Clarke's aegis the magazine published works by such notable authors as his friends William Ellery Channing, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Margaret Fuller.

In 1840 Clarke returned to Boston and founded a new Unitarian Church, The Church of the Disciples, and went on to become one of the most distinguished men of his day, active in both religion and civic affairs, in behalf of temperance, anti-slavery, and woman suffrage. A prolific writer, he was one of the most able popularizers of New England Transcendentalism in the third quarter of the 19th century.

During Clarke's few years in Louisville the congregation had gradually grown to include outstanding intellectual, social, and business figures of the city. This growth continued for almost half a century under the leadership of Clarke's successor, John Healy Heywood (1818-1902), pastor from 1840 to 1880. Also a native New Englander and graduate of Harvard Divinity School, Heywood soon became one of the leading citizens of Louisville. He too not only furthered the work of the church itself, "but was active in promoting educational and literary interests, serving upon the Board of Education, and being for

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fourteen years its president." (History of the Ohio Falls Counties, I, 346.) In this position, Heywood is credited with having put into operation the first city high schools, and with having been the leading advocate of schools for women and blacks. He also established the first "night schools" in the city as well as the first mission Sunday schools.

During the Civil War Heywood served with the Kentucky branch of the U.S. Sanitary Commission. The Commission, sometimes known as "Lincoln's Fifth Wheel," was a forerunner of the Red Cross, providing hospital and canteen services for the soldiers on the front by means of voluntary contributions by civilians. A highly organized and successful effort, the Sanitary Commission was founded by the Reverend Henry W. Bellows (1814-1882), prominent Unitarian minister of New York, and Frederick Law Olmsted, later to become the great landscape architect and developer of municipal park systems (including Louisville's).

In Louisville, Heywood, a staunch Unionist, became president of a Refugee Commission devoted largely to the care of refugees from the South. According to B.B. Huntoon, long a member of the congregation and himself director of the Kentucky School for the Blind, Heywood organized the work of the Commission, established its detention camps and hospitals, found homes for the thousands of homeless refugees who were burdening the city, and gathered funds that made these achievements possible. Heywood was also instrumental in forming the Old Ladies' Home and was for two years an editorial writer for The Louisville Examiner.

It was under Heywood that the present church building was erected. In 1853 the first church had been enlarged, but still proved inadequate. In 1868 the Universalist Society (a group ideologically related to, but not identical with, the Unitarian Society) proposed that the two societies should unite in the erection of a new church, toward which they would contribute $15,000. After some discussion, this proposal was accepted and in June 1869 the two bodies were united under the common name of "The Church of the Messiah."

Work on the new church at Fourth and York Streets was promptly begun and the edifice was completed in December 1870 at a total cost of about $75,000, including $11,000 for the valuable land. In January 1871 the church was dedicated.

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Early in the morning of Sunday, December 31, 1871, the new church building caught fire, destroying the entire interior and severely damaging the walls. Services nevertheless were held in the uninjured Sunday school building that day, and a campaign to rebuild was immediately undertaken. The church was reconstructed during 1872 and rededicated on December 15, the pastor being assisted by the Reverend H.W. Bellows -- a contemporary of Heywood's and no doubt an associate from his work on the Sanitary Commission.

Heywood was succeeded by the Reverend C.J.K. Jones of Brooklyn, New York, who was pastor from 1880 to 1898. His ministry was highlighted by a series of musical evenings that drew not only members of the congregation but also a wide spectrum of listeners from outside the church. Jones was also an enthusiastic advocate of the still controversial theory of evolution and other advanced scientific issues.

This unique combination of religious and secular, charitable and artistic, intellectual and social interest and activities has continued at the church through the years. Prominent members of the congregation have included members of the Speed family (close friends of both Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln, active in business, politics, and the arts); Joseph L. Danforth, successful businessman and member of the Board of Education; Miss Caroline Leib and Miss Margaret Merker, both social workers and activists; Charles Hermany, engineer for the Louisville Water Company and many other public works; Madison Cawein, once-famous poet; Victor Engelhardt, leader in the field of education; and B.B. Huntoon, mentioned above.

In the 20th-century there have been a number of ministers who have maintained the church's commitment to its downtown location. In 1924 the official name reverted to the original, The First Unitarian Church. In 1970, in celebration of the centennial of the building, the church was adapted to modern needs with minimal alteration of the original fabric. This sympathetic renovation symbolizes the congregation's commitment both to its traditional downtown location and to its continuing exploration of new ways to serve the community as a whole.

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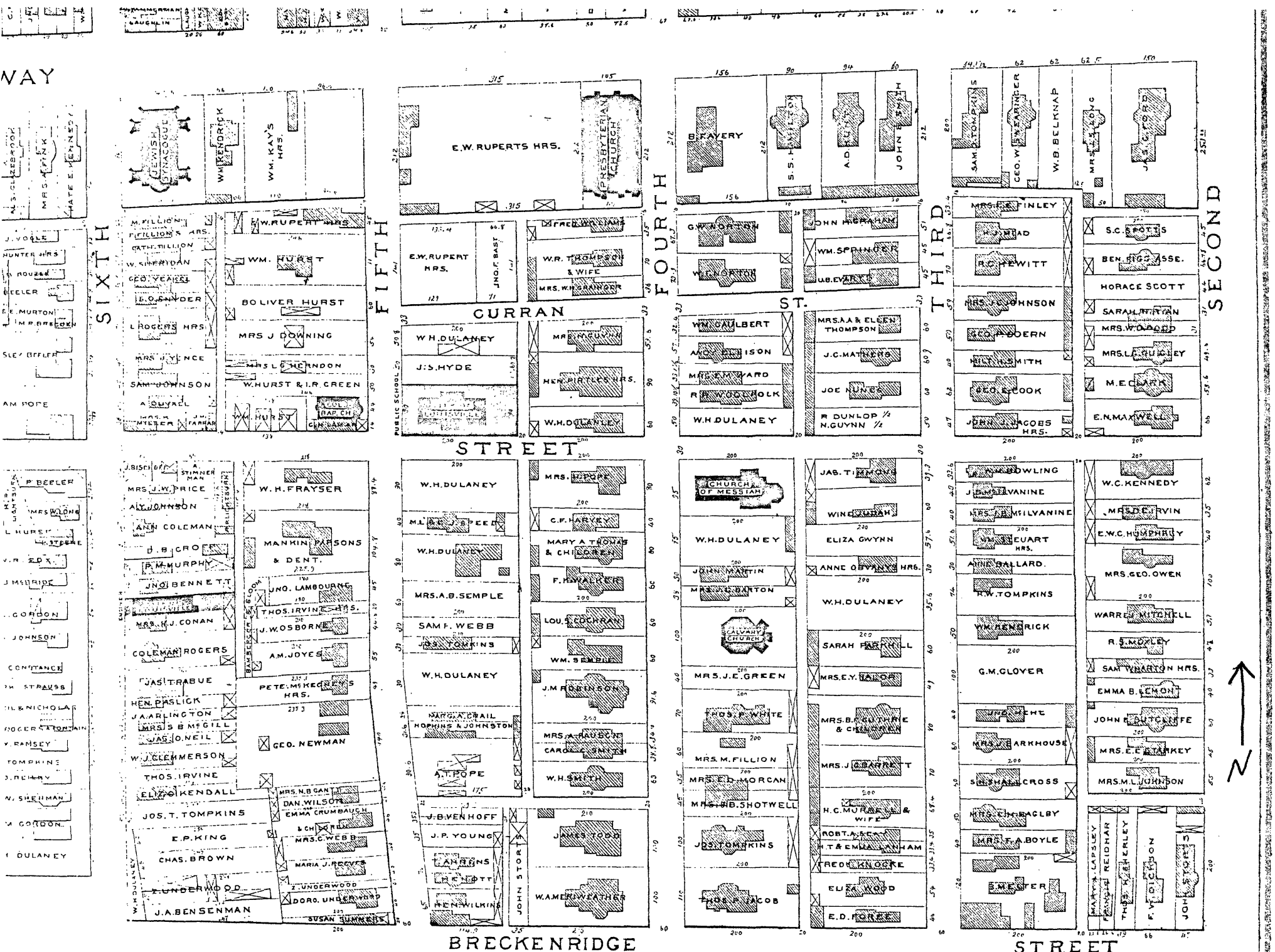

by the Louisville Abstract & Loan Association, Office S.E. Cor. Green & Center Sts. Louisville, Ky.

Form No. 10-301
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAR 23 1976
DATE ENTERED APR 21 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Church of the Messiah (First Unitarian Church)

AND/OR COMMON
First Unitarian Church

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN: Louisville
___VICINITY OF
COUNTY: Jefferson
STATE: Kentucky

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE: Atlas of the City of Louisville (Louisville: Louisville Abstract & Loan Co., 1876).

SCALE: Unknown
DATE: 1876

4 REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES

Detail showing Church of the Messiah near center. North is indicated by an arrow; Broadway is at the top of this detail.

INT: 2986-75

Map No. 2