Form No. 10-300 REV. (9/77)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

PH0678503

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DATE ENTERED MAY 8 1979

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
1046 N. Ninth Street — NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Milwaukee — VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Fourth

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Wisconsin	55	Milwaukee	079

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	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Reverend Ronald A. Fletcher, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church

STREET & NUMBER
1046 N. Ninth Street

CITY, TOWN
Milwaukee — VICINITY OF

STATE
Wisconsin 53233

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Milwaukee County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
901 N. Ninth Street

CITY, TOWN
Milwaukee

STATE
Wisconsin 53233

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Milwaukee Landmarks Commission designated landmark

DATE
1967 — __FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY X LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Milwaukee Department of City Development

CITY, TOWN
Milwaukee

STATE
Wisconsin 53201

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built of cream brick and Illinois sandstone, now darkened by soot, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church is a large Victorian Gothic edifice. It is located near the heart of downtown Milwaukee and is surrounded by educational, medical and industrial buildings. Only a handful of the houses remain which once formed the German residential neighborhood in which Trinity stood out as a landmark.

The plan of the church is cruciform with a projecting polygonal apse on the east end and asymmetrical towers on the west. The main entrance is in the larger northwest tower (200' high) which is composed of three stages marked by beltcourses. Above the third stage, the square tower becomes octagonal and is crowned by a tall, thin frame spire. The southwest tower is a smaller version (128' high) without the octagonal stage. The steeply-pitched gable roofs were covered with new slate to match the original in 1937 in celebration of the congregation's 90th anniversary. The walls of the nave and transepts are divided into a basement, main story and clerestory. The crossing is crowned by a large flèche, the transept ends by tiny gabled turrets and other turrets and gables by their original finials.

The facade is enlivened by pointed arch reveals, brick dentils and brick corbelling in a variety of designs imitating Gothic tracery. Wall buttresses are capped with stone copings. The windows, in the shape of double lancets of simple wood tracery are decoratively trimmed with brick quoins, bits of stonework and elaborately carved keystones.

Except for several repaintings and the addition in 1920 of a glass and wood partition at the west end to make a vestibule, the interior of Trinity is virtually unaltered from the day it was consecrated. It is in the form of a German hall church; the expansive vaulted cruciform-shaped space is unbroken by piers or columns. It is 145' long and 89' wide at the crossing. The walls are trimmed with wainscoting and plaster piers with elaborately carved Victorian composite capitals. The lancets are filled with pastel-colored stained glass in simple, geometric designs, except in the apse, where a high central round window depicts Christ blessing the little children and the side lancets display the four evangelists.

The style of the interior decoration is an eclectic, Victorian Gothic in the Eastlake manner, with built-up layers of flat designs and delicately-incised geometric decoration. Even the brass door hardware and heating radiators are embellished with Gothic designs. Much of the beauty of the interior lies in the oak and ash woodwork, preserved in its natural colors. The chancel and altar rails, with their massive square newel posts, hymns boards and chancel furniture are carved in this style, but the highlight of this craftsmanship is the pulpit, in the form of a huge goblet. A curved stairway leads from the chancel to the pulpit, all carved ornately. A baldachino, in a baroque shell shape with a concavely curved witches' cap roof surmounted by a foliate finial, projects out over the pulpit. It is supported only from the wall.

The altarpiece is also elaborately carved with crocketed Gothic arches and turrets capping off three colorful oil paintings which depict the Crucifixion, the Ascension, and the Resurrection. In front of the altar stands a baptismal font, simply carved of Vermont marble. To the right and left of the sanctuary are two small rooms used

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CONTINUATION SHEET ITEM NUMBER PAGE

Item #6: Representation in Existing Surveys

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places
1976 State
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Madison Wisconsin 53706

Historic American Buildings Survey (Data Report)
1973 Federal
Library of Congress
Washington D.C. 20540

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by the pastor and the officers of the church.

At the opposite end of the hall a curved organ loft projects into the space. It is supported by cast iron columns, the spaces between which were filled in 1920 by glass and wooden partitions trimmed to match the rest of the church. A curved stairway in the northwest tower with a massive Victorian newel post and Eastlake style balusters leads to the loft. The organ casing is white oak, richly carved with Victorian Gothic tracery, finials, and crockets. It is 30' high and 20' by 13' on the floor. It encases a two-manual instrument built by William Schulke of Milwaukee. It contains 1600 pipes and is the largest and one of the first organs to embody Schulke's improvement of providing each pipe with a separate valve. However, the mechanical workings have been modernized since that time.

The wood pews in the hall, also decorated with carving, are heated with steam pipes under each long pew. The basement was remodelled in 1961. A shady lawn separates the church from the former parsonage, a two-story cream brick structure that was extensively altered in 1968 to serve as an office and caretaker's residence. The original stairway, stained glass windows and woodwork, decorated in simple Gothic motifs, survive. The ground slopes away from the church and parsonage to a large lower parking lot which occupies the rest of the property.

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	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER	
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION	
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		__INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1878-1880[1] BUILDER/ARCHITECT Frederick Velguth[1]

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church is an excellent example of Victorian Gothic design and craftsmanship. According to Zimmermann, it ranks as one of the state's finest examples of the style.[2] In addition, Trinity congregation played an important role in the development of German Lutheranism in Milwaukee and the state. The edifice is the building most closely associated with this historic congregation.

Architecture: Trinity Lutheran Church is one of the few 19th century churches in Milwaukee to survive to the present almost unchanged. It was designed by Frederick Velguth, who was born in Magdeburg, Germany in 1838. Velguth came to Milwaukee in 1858 and worked for eighteen years as a contractor. He is also thought to have been a master stairbuilder.[3] In 1873 he began designing buildings; he listed himself as an architect in city directories from 1878 until 1915. Among his designs were the German Theater, St. Stephan's Lutheran Church and the skating rink. He also served as the practical architect for the North Point Water Tower and Water Works.

Velguth's meticulous attention to detail, from the elaborate and characteristically German brickwork on the exterior to the fanciful, eclectic and ornate woodwork metalwork on the interior, make Trinity one of the finest examples of German-inspired design in Milwaukee, a city famous for its Germanic architecture. The craftsmanship is also extraordinarily fine. Workmen on the project were mostly German-Americans and included mason Carl Bussack and carpenter Valentin Mandt. The galvanized ironwork was completed by Biersach and Niedermeyer, painting and glazing (now lost) by Peter Peterson and inside finishing by carpenter Julius Brust.

According to an 1881 local history, Trinity was "the finest church edifice within the Missouri synod."[4]

History: The Trinity congregation has its roots in the earliest German immigration to Wisconsin. In the late 1830s and 1840s Pomeranians emigrated from Germany to the United States in search of a place where they could practice their traditional Lutheranism without harrassment by the state. The first to arrive in Wisconsin settled in Milwaukee and near-by Freistadt and Kirchhayn. They followed Professor Grabau of the Buffalo synod, but a controversy in 1847 between the Milwaukee settlers and the pastor for the three communities led to the formation of the Trinity congregation. The group asked the newly-formed Missouri synod to appoint a pastor for them. The Missouri synod sent E. G. W. Keyl, one of their most important leaders from Germany, to Milwaukee, where Keyl formed a parish structure which served as a model for synod congregations throughout the midwest. Freistadt and Kirchhayn became mission churches of Trinity.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

see continuation sheet.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.4807

QUADRANGLE NAME Milwaukee, Wis. QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	16	424850	4765910
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Lots 1-8, Block 162 in the Plat of the East Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 29, Town 7 North, Range 22 East, City of Milwaukee, County of Milwaukee, State of Wisconsin.

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
Eleanor C. Bell, President

ORGANIZATION
Land Ethic, Inc.

DATE
10/15/78

STREET & NUMBER
813 S. Third Street

TELEPHONE
414-672-0361

CITY OR TOWN
Milwaukee

STATE
Wisconsin 53204

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE X 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 Richard Erney

TITLE Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin DATE 3/7/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE 5.8.79

ATTEST: CHIEF OF REGISTRATION Lucy B. Franklin DATE 5.3.79

GPO 921-803

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In the meantime, a small frame church was erected on Wells Street, between Fourth and Fifth. The congregation very quickly outgrew that structure and in 1850-51 built a new one on the site. Several times general and district meetings of the Missouri synod where held in this building (now demolished). In another facet of Lutheran history the rigorous admission policies set up by Keyl were an instrumental factor in the dispute which led to the formation of the Wisconsin synod.[5]

In 1869 the frame church was moved to the site of the present church and a school (now demolished) was constructed. Concordia College, still operating today, was begun in this school building in 1881.

Trinity was the mother church of all of Milwaukee's Missouri synod churches, and, as the result of Keyl's early work, most of the Lutheran churches in Milwaukee belonged to that synod. Direct offsprings of Trinity include Emanuel, St. Stephan's, Holy Cross, and Bethlehem.

By 1900 the congregation at Trinity included 1600 members. It continued to be a mainstay of Milwaukee's German culture, holding German language services until 1959. Because of drastic changes in the fabric of the neighborhood, however, its congregation now numbers only 576 members and is a mixture of old German families, who have long since moved away from the downtown, and inner city residents.

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[1] Cornerstone and Flower, p. 922.
[2] Zimmermann, p. 120.
[3] Young and Attoe, p. 59.
[4] Flower, p. 924.
[5] Hattstaedt, p. 22.

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Item #9: Major Bibliographical References

[Flower, Frank A.], History of Milwaukee, from Prehistoric Times to the Present Date, Chicago: Western Historical Publishing Co., 1881, pp. 921-924.

Hattstaedt, History of the Southern Wisconsin District of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, transl. by Wisconsin Historic Records Survey, WPA, Madison, 1941.

History of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, privately published booklet, 1972.

Milwaukee Sentinel, Sept. 6, 1879 and July 8, 1878.

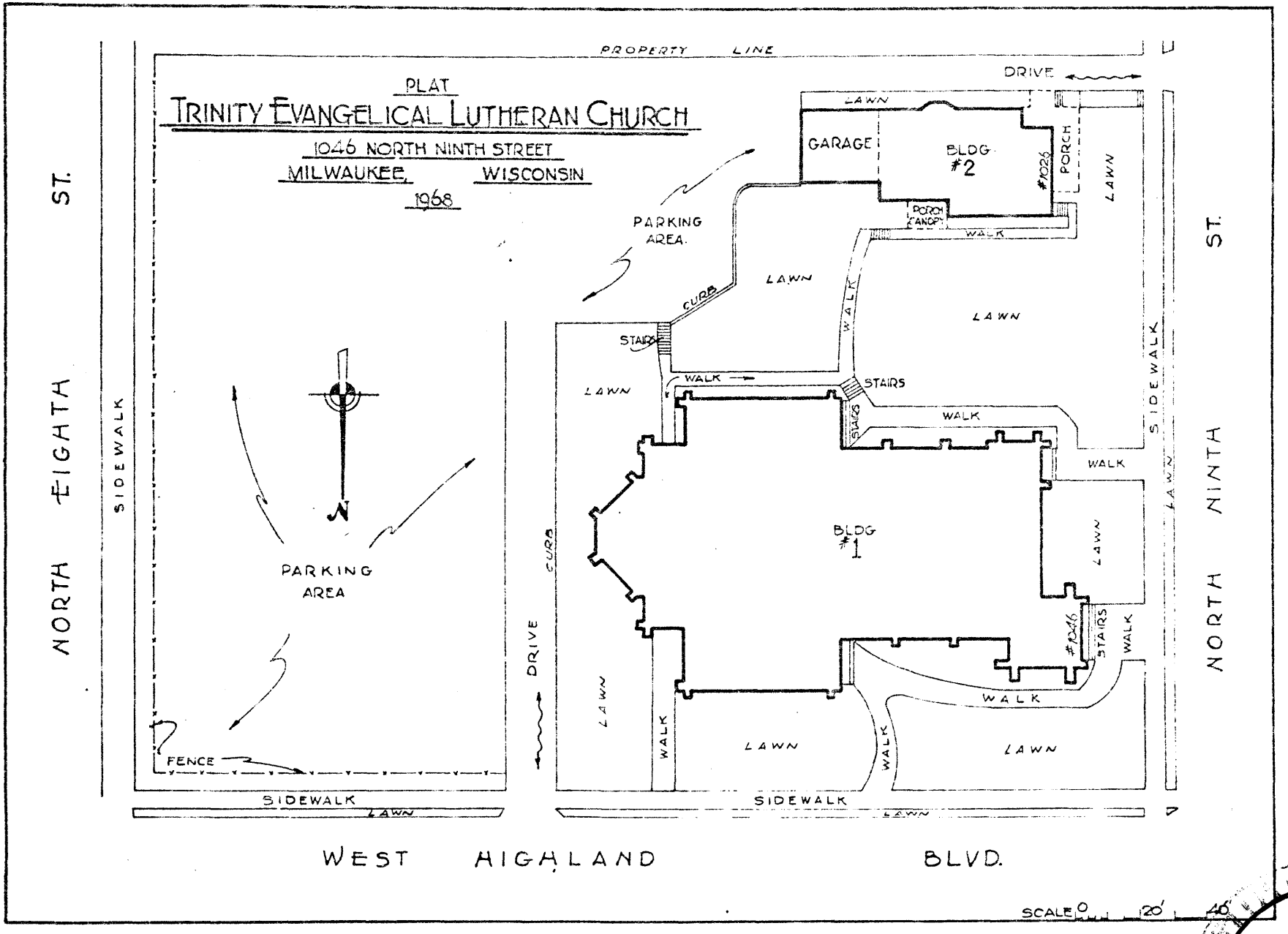
Powers, Maureen, Milwaukee Houses of Worship survey form, 1975.

Young, Mary Ellen, and Wayne Attoe, Places of Worship - Milwaukee, Milwaukee: no publisher, 1977, p. 59.

Zimmermann, H. Russell, The Heritage Guidebook: Landmarks and Historical Sites in Southeastern Wisconsin, Milwaukee: Heritage Banks, 1976, p. 120.

Item #11: Form Prepared By

Katherine E. Hundt, Architectural Historian
State Historical Society of Wisconsin 1/2/79
816 State Street 608-262-2970
Madison Wisconsin 53706



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