

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

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

received JUL 2 1984  
date entered AUG 2 1984

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

**1. Name**

historic St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church

and or common Tempolo Sion Pentecostal Church

**2. Location**

street & number 1886-1906 Park Street N/A not for publication

city, town Hartford N/A vicinity of

state Connecticut code 09 county Hartford code 003

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Tempolo Sion Pentecostal Church

street & number 1886 Park Street

city, town Hartford N/A vicinity of state Connecticut

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hartford Municipal Building

street & number 550 Main Street

city, town Hartford state Connecticut

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

See continuation sheet

title State Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes  no

date 1983 federal  state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission  
59 South Prospect Street

city, town Hartford state Connecticut

## 7. Description

### Condition

\_\_\_ excellent  
xx good  
\_\_\_ fair

\_\_\_ deteriorated  
\_\_\_ ruins  
\_\_\_ unexposed

### Check one

\_\_\_ unaltered  
xx altered

### Check one

xx original site  
\_\_\_ moved    date

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church is a small but well-detailed brick Romanesque Revival church and built in 1900. The church is located in Parkville, a turn-of-the-century industrial neighborhood of Hartford, on the community's main street, Park Street. Facing southeast on an early twentieth-century commercial section, the church stands on the corner of Park and Amity Streets (Photograph #1). A two-story frame house (Photograph #4) located just west of the church on Park Street and a surface parking lot on Amity Street are also part of the church property.

The compact red brick sanctuary is asymmetrically massed with gabled pavilions projecting on the Park and Amity street elevations, a large square tower on the southeast corner, a smaller square tower on the southwest corner, a 2-story red brick Sunday School wing at the rear and a 2-story pavilion with a truncated hipped roof on the west elevation. A modern brick veneer gable-roofed wing (c.1960) is joined to the Sunday School wing by an open breezeway. The main block is sheltered by a high asbestos-shingle hipped roof and the foundation is rusticated stone blocks.

The Park Street elevation (Photograph #1) is dominated by a projecting gabled pavilion, placed off-center on the facade, and balanced by the large square tower on the southeast corner and the smaller square tower on the southwest corner. The corners of the pavilion are quoined and the gable peak is accented by a small narrow round-headed arch window. The window surround is brick and extends horizontally to the roof edge at the termination of the arch. Three large arched stained-glass clerestory windows illuminate the interior; the central window is the largest, flanked by paired arched windows under a common round-headed arched surround. The window lintels are brick and the sills are rusticated stone. These three large windows surmount four smaller rectangular stained glass windows. The latter are paired and arranged with two windows under the central arched window and one pair under each small arched window. Rusticated stone block lintels are used above these windows, while the sill is formed by a narrow course of the same rusticated stone stretching between the quoined corners. Between the large tower and the projecting pavilion is a section of the facade one bay wide. The delicately molded cornice is enhanced by brick corbelling in a denticulated pattern. The first story boasts an arched stained-glass window, while the second-story window is rectangular. The two-story square tower projects from the corner of the building. A corner-stone to the left of the door reads: "ST. PAUL'S M.E. CHURCH 1893 1900." The first story of the tower is dominated by large paired doors under an arched brick surround. The corners of the tower are quoined and brick corbelling in a denticulated pattern surmounted by three projecting graduated brick string courses terminates the first stage of the tower. The second stage has three narrow rectangular windows surmounted by three corresponding arched windows, the central arch being the tallest, as in the projecting pavilion. The second stage of the tower is currently terminated by a brick cornice and has a flat roof, but originally the church was built with an open-arched belfry with a pyramidal roof which formed the third stage of the tower. This stage was removed in 1938. The smaller square tower on the west side of the pavilion has a hipped roof of the same pitch as the main block. The brick denticulated cornice is similar to that in the one-bay section between the pavilion and the large tower. A narrow rectangular stained-glass window is set above an arched double-leaf door. Quoins are used on the corner of the tower, terminating at the beginning of the arched door surround.

The Amity Street elevation (Photograph #2) incorporates a number of the same features as

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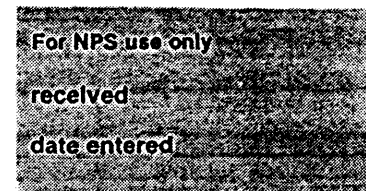
St. Paul's M.E. Church,

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Hartford Architectural Survey  
Hartford Architectural Conservancy  
on file at the Connecticut Historical Commission  
59 South Prospect Street  
Hartford, CT. 06106

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the main facade. The fenestration of the tower is similar except for the small arched stained-glass window on the first stage that illuminates the vestibule. The projecting pavilion is similar to the one on the Park Street facade. The two-story brick Sunday School wing, located at the rear of the sanctuary, projects (one-bay) from the main facade. This four-bay-wide wing is capped by a hipped roof and has its own narrow projecting central pavilion which is 2 bays wide. A shed-roof wing projects from the Sunday School wing toward Park Street. This ell shelters a vestibule and a stoop supported by sawwork brackets. Two narrow rectangular windows with rusticated lintels and sills illuminate the vestibule. The double-leaf entrance opens to face Park Street. Another entrance opens at ground level onto Amity Street. Behind the Sunday School wing is an open breezeway that leads to the gable-roof brick veneer 1960 Educational and Fellowship Hall. The Educational and Fellowship Hall is incompatible in design, scale and proportion with the older section of the church and does not contribute to its architectural significance.

The west elevation of the church (Photograph #3) is less regular than the Park and Amity street facades. A one-bay-deep pavilion projects under a truncated hipped roof. The elevation is ten bays wide and the projecting small square tower shields it from view along Park Street. The denticulated cornice of the Park Street elevation is carried around the west side. The tower has three irregularly-placed stained-glass windows. The brick lintels are peaked in contrast to the rest of the building, but the rustic stone sills are of similar design. Three square stained-glass clerestory windows are located north of the tower. The projecting pavilion is seven bays wide with a one-story three-sided canted bay at the rear. A door opens out of the pavilion facing Park Street and a stained-glass window with a peaked lintel illuminates the entry. The other first-floor windows of the pavilion have segmental arch surrounds and rustic stone sills. The second-floor windows are rectangular.

The west elevation looks onto the lawn of #1906 Park Street (Photograph #4), a modest early 1890s frame house, also owned by the church. The house has a shallow set back from the sidewalk and is 2 stories tall with a gable roof. A two-story cross-gable pavilion projects from the house and the Park Street facade is two bays wide. The house is sheathed in asbestos shingles and little of the original detail remains except for the simply molded barge-board. A gabled stoop shelters the entrance. The windows have plain surrounds with a one-over-one sash pattern.

The interior of the church is simple, but is enhanced with pleasant details. The plan has been little changed since the church's construction,\* and the changes that have been made are reversible.

The sanctuary, which occupies the largest amount of space in the building, is light and airy. Entrance is gained through a vestibule housed in the large corner tower. The church follows Kramer's Akron plan; the semi-circular altar is located in the northwest corner (Photograph #5) and is raised on a platform. Three groups of curved pews face the altar and the floor slopes gradually downward from the entrance to the altar rail. The curved pews with their carved trefoil motif on the ends are original to the church. Additional seating space is provided by a gallery. The gallery stretches along the south and east walls in a graceful and undulating curve. The balustrade is solid with a pattern formed by projecting vertical wooden uprights below a molded rail. The gallery is supported by deli-

\* For a description of the original interior arrangement see the account of the church's dedication in the Hartford Courant (Hartford), December 3, 1900, p. 8.

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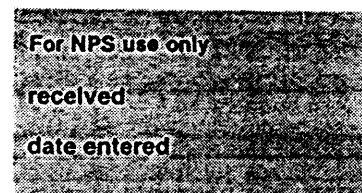
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cate Doric columns. The ceiling is coved with an unusual handsome wooden sawnwork medallion. The stained-glass windows are of fine quality; the main window on the Park Street side depicts Jesus flanked on one side by a sword, Bible, and anchor and on the other by a cross. On the Amity Street side the central window depicts another male figure, thought to be St. Paul. He is flanked by lilies, a dove and wheat sheaves. The main alterations to the sanctuary consist the addition of a non-bearing wall between the sanctuary and the Sunday School wing and the addition of waist-high wooden wainscot on the north and west walls flanking the altar.

Behind the sanctuary, as required by the Akron Plan, is the Sunday School complex. A large room, open to the second floor, with its own gallery, forms the central space. Probably large sliding wooden doors once separated this space from the sanctuary. Small rooms of various sizes open off this central space under the gallery. Access to the gallery of the sanctuary and the Sunday School wing is gained by a side door on Amity Street which opens into a vestibule housing a dogleg stair. The stair has a solid balustrade and the newel posts are both turned and chamfered. The L-shaped gallery of the Sunday School forms a corridor which accesses more small rooms on the second floor. The door in the small tower on the southwest corner of the building leads to a second stair similar to the main stair. This stair gives access to only one Sunday School room on the second floor and does not connect with the Sunday School rooms off the gallery. On the first floor, a short corridor leads to other Sunday School rooms. A door on the east wall of the corridor opens onto the sanctuary near the altar. A large basement is located in the building. A modern kitchen and an open fellowship hall occupy this space.

The St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church is a remarkably well-preserved example of a turn-of-the-century church following the popular Akron plan. With the exception of the removal of the sliding doors which connected the Sunday School wing with the main sanctuary and the erection of a partition, the interior plan is unchanged. The exterior is completely intact and the sturdy masonry building echoes turn-of-the-century ideals. The stained-glass windows are well-preserved as a whole, and are of a quality unavailable today. The sanctuary is pleasant and peaceful and the semi-circular arrangement of the pews gives a sense of intimacy to the largest gatherings.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	community planning	landscape architecture	xxreligion
1400-1499	archeology-historic	conservation	law	science
1500-1599	agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture
1600-1699	XX architecture	education	military	social/
1700-1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian
XX 1800-1899	commerce	exploration settlement	philosophy	theater
XX 1900-	communications	industry	politics government	transportation
Criteria A & C		invention		other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1900 **Builder Architect** George W. Kramer

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church is a small red brick Romanesque Revival structure built in 1900 and designed by George W. Kramer. The church's prominent position on Park Street, the main thoroughfare of the Parkville neighborhood, is an indication of its importance in the community. The church's history and the construction of the present building are intimately related to the establishment of Parkville as a working-class industrial/residential area of Hartford. The development of Parkville, in turn, is typical of the rapid industrial growth experienced by urban areas of the nation during the post-Civil War period (Criterion A). St. Paul's is a good representative example of a turn-of-the-century church designed for a working-class congregation by a nationally recognized church architect.

Although St. Paul's Church is relatively small in size it is the equal of many larger churches in terms of quality of design. The Romanesque style, which gained popularity in church design around the turn of the century, is not a style that tends toward heavy ornament. In the case of St. Paul's Church, the design is handled in a particularly elegant and restrained manner. The use of voids and solids is pleasing and the massing gives this compact structure a comforting solidity. The detail is crisp and the materials compatible in color and texture. The interior plan, popular in the construction of Methodist churches across the country during this period, is relatively unusual in Connecticut and still more so in Hartford. George Kramer, the architect, and originator of the Akron plan, although not currently considered by architectural historians as a leading church architect, was well respected during his lifetime. The pervasiveness of the Akron plan may well merit a reassessment of Kramer's work.

### Historical Background

Methodism in Hartford had its beginnings in the late eighteenth century when the city was visited by Reverend Freeborn Garretson and Bishop Francis Asbury. However, it was not until 1820 that the First Methodist Church of Hartford was organized. Despite several strong Methodist revivals in the late 1830s, the Methodist church was slow to expand in Hartford, and it was not until after the Civil War that a number of new Methodist congregations were formed. South Park Church, the first of these, organized in 1869, was the mother church of St. Paul's Church.<sup>1</sup>

Parkville, located on the west side of Hartford, was so named because of its position at the junction of the north and south branches of the Park River. Before 1870 the area was characterized by open fields and farms, but its position adjacent to the expanding industrial district of Frog Hollow, near a key railroad line, made it a natural choice for factory sites. The earliest factory housing was built in the area between 1871 and 1873, and the early working population was mainly of Irish descent, although later many French Canadians settled here. By 1890 the present-day street pattern was established with pre-determined industrial and residential areas. The greatest period of growth for Parkville was between 1890 and 1917, and most of the housing in the area dates from this era. Parkville was a working-class neighborhood at its inception, and has remained one

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

160 Years of Methodism in Hartford (prepared by the Methodist Churches of Hartford, 1980).  
New York Times (New York), October 21, 1938.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 1 acre

Quadrangle name Hartford North

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	8	6	9	0	3	2	0	4	6	2	5	9	0	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

C 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

E 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

F 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

G 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

H 

Zone		Easting						Northing						

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Hartford Land Records v. 1687, p. 37, v. 1508, p. 148, v. 232, p. 648, v. 362, p. 292, v. 363, p. 656, v. 967, p. 13.

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

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kate Ohno, Preservation Consultant edited by: John Herzan, National Register

organization Connecticut Historical Commission

date March 23, 1983

street & number 59 South Prospect Street

telephone (203) 566-3005

city or town Hartford

state Connecticut

## 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.

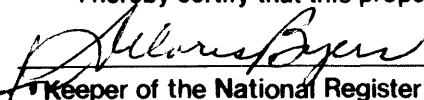
State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

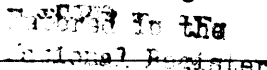
title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

date 6/25/84

### For NPS use only

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

  
Keeper of the National Register



date

8-2-84

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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to the present.<sup>2</sup>

On January 18, 1891, a meeting was held at the home of Mary and James Mayo on Park Street and Chadwick Avenue to found a Methodist Church in Parkville. The congregation of the South Park Church supported these efforts and a member of the First Methodist Church, George Parrish, was chosen Leader. According to the Wesley Plan, a class was formed, and prayer meetings were held at residences in the area. The class grew so large that the meetings were later held at Parkville Hall, opposite Madison Avenue. Reverend William Sage came to Parkville in April, 1893, as the congregation's first pastor. The church was formally organized on May 10, 1893, with 19 members and 3 probationers. During the following year a frame church was erected at the cost of \$2,000, on the corner of Park and Amity streets. The church was dedicated on October 28, 1894, but the property was not conveyed to the trustees of the church until the following month.<sup>3</sup>

In 1895 Reverend G.W. Carter became pastor of the Parkville Church and under his leadership it prospered. A lot was purchased on Sisson Avenue where a parsonage was erected. By 1898 the church membership had grown to 300, and the frame church became inadequate for the congregation's needs. Plans were made for a new, larger church on the same site as the old frame structure. The frame church was razed and while the new church was under construction services were held at Parkville Hall.<sup>4</sup>

The architect of the new church was George Washington Kramer, of New York City, a well-known designer of churches. Kramer was born in Ashland, Ohio, c. 1847 and his early architectural training was with a local contractor. In his mid twenties Kramer opened his own architectural practice in Ashland and in 1879 he became associated with Jacob Snyder, a prominent designer of churches. In 1885 Kramer became a principal in the firm of Kramer & Weary, which endured until 1894, when he moved to New York City where he established his own practice. Kramer's move to New York may have been precipitated by the recognition he gained when he won an international competition at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago for Sunday School plans.<sup>5</sup>

Kramer is best known as a designer of churches; he is said to have been the architect of 2,200 churches during the 55 years of his practice. He was the author of the popular "Akron plan," a semi-circular arrangement of Sunday School classrooms. The impact of the Akron plan on early twentieth-century church design was significant. Kramer designed churches both in the United States and abroad. His church designs were constructed in England, China, India, Cuba and Canada and he designed several major churches in the United States including Christ Church in Pittsburgh, Union Methodist Episcopal Church of New York, the Baptist Temple of Brooklyn, the Rockefeller Church in Lakewood, New Jersey, and Park Avenue Methodist Church, and Park Avenue Disciples of Christ Church, both in New York City.<sup>6</sup>

Although Kramer specialized in church architecture, he also designed twenty-four memorials for the Gettysburg battlefield and buildings at both Ohio State University and Oberlin College. Kramer was also something of an inventor. A church project in Canada led him to design a fan-furnace system for heating churches in the harshest climates. He was also the originator of a system widely used at the turn of the century whereby all cells in a jail could be locked by a master switch.<sup>7</sup>



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Kramer designed the Parkville Church c. 1900, six years after his move to New York. His Akron plan was at the height of its popularity and although St. Paul's Church was not one of his major works, it is a good example of a modest neighborhood church executed in the popular Romanesque Revival style by a nationally known church architect. The fenestration and power use of mass and detail give the impression of solidity and grandeur seldom found in so small a structure.

On December 2, 1900, the new church was dedicated and was christened "St. Paul's."<sup>8</sup> The church continued to prosper and in 1911 two parcels of adjacent land were added to the church's holdings.<sup>9</sup> On March 1, 1911, James J. and Mary A. Mayo, original members of the church, sold the house and lot at 1906 Park Street to the trustees of the Church. They had purchased the property in 1895.<sup>10</sup> The two-story frame house was probably built c. 1893, and was among the first to be constructed in Sidney A. Ensign's Parkville subdivision.<sup>11</sup> In October of the same year the church purchased the lot at #11 Amity Street from the estate of Catherine McDermott. An organ for the new church was made possible by a gift from Andrew Carnegie during the pastorate of Reverend J.E. Zeiter.<sup>12</sup>

In 1938 a hurricane damaged the tower and the upper stages were removed.<sup>13</sup> The rather awkwardly proportioned tower is a result of this effort to make the building safer.

In the late 1950s the Sunday School expanded tremendously, reaching the 300 mark by 1960.<sup>14</sup> The Sunday School, always important to Methodist congregations, was particularly significant in Parkville. The Sunday School in this working class neighborhood, as in many similar neighborhoods, became part of the movement to Americanize and domesticate attendees for the purpose of turning out good workers for the neighborhood's factories. In 1955 the lot at #17 Amity Street was acquired by the church and in 1960 a new red brick Educational and Fellowship Building was erected.<sup>15</sup> It was built at a cost of \$58,000, and was consecrated on September 18, 1960. In the early 1960s the interior of the church was renovated and was re-opened on November 27, 1963.<sup>16</sup>

During the next fifteen years many parishioners moved out of the city and by the early 1970s a church merger plan came under consideration. On January 1, 1975, St. Paul's merged with the First United Methodist Church. The facilities of the Park Street church were vacated by the congregation. For a short time the church was used as the Sounding Board Coffee House, the largest and most important coffee house in the state. This coffee house became a showcase for the major folksingers of the 1960s. On March 5, 1979, the church property was sold to Tempolo Sion Pentecostal Church, the present owners.<sup>17</sup> This change in use from an anglo-protestant congregation to a hispanic one is characteristic of the late 20th-century church movement.

The Tempolo Sion Pentecostal Church had its beginnings when the present pastor, Reverend Jose Santiago, attended a church meeting in Hartford. He saw the need for the establishment of a Spanish-speaking church in Hartford to meet the needs of the city's large Hispanic population. The first meeting held to establish a Spanish-speaking church was in 1957 and in 1958 the church's first meeting was held in a member's home at #10 Spring Street. The church faced much opposition in the early days and a meeting place was difficult to find, so many members offered their homes and meetings were held all over the city. In time the congregation outgrew the private homes and a storefront was rented at #142 Windsor Street.

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People came from Hartford and other surrounding cities to attend services. Gradually larger and larger storefronts were rented. Services were held at #1121 Main Street and later at #1223 Main Street. Around 1961 the congregation purchased a storefront at #19 Seyms Street. They later expanded into #17 Seyms Street as well. The congregation grew to be the largest Spanish-speaking congregation in Connecticut with Sunday School attendance reaching a high of 920 enrollees. Because of dissention in the church, Reverend Santiago resigned. He then began the first regular Spanish religious broadcast in the state. Later, he again began holding regular outdoor meetings and a new congregation was formed. This group rented a storefront at #2223 Main Street because of the success of the outdoor meetings. The congregation grew so large that in 1979 it purchased the former St. Paul's M.E. Church. It has an extensive Sunday School program and sponsors regular Spanish religious broadcasts.<sup>18</sup>

End Notes

<sup>1</sup>160 Years of Methodism in Hartford (prepared by the Methodist churches in Hartford, 1980) pp. 2-4.

<sup>2</sup>Hartford Architectural Survey.

<sup>3</sup>Methodism in Hartford, p. 6. See also Hartford Land Records v. 232, p. 648.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>5</sup>New York Times (New York), October 21, 1938, 23:3.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Methodism in Hartford, p. 7.

<sup>9</sup>Hartford Land Records, v. 362, p. 292 and v. 363, p. 656.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., v. 239, p. 285.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Methodism in Hartford, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

