

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAY 12 1977
DATE ENTERED JAN 20 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
Grace Episcopal Church
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
SW Corner Main & Park Avenue
CITY, TOWN
Buena Vista
STATE
Colorado
VICINITY OF
CODE
08
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
3
COUNTY
Chaffee
CODE
015

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"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Grace Episcopal Church
STREET & NUMBER
Main Street
CITY, TOWN
Buena Vista
VICINITY OF

STATE
Colorado

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Register of Deeds
STREET & NUMBER
Chaffee County Courthouse
CITY, TOWN
Salida

STATE
Colorado

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites
DATE
Ongoing
DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
State Historical Society of Colorado, 200 14th Avenue
CITY, TOWN
Denver

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

STATE
Colorado

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT DETERIORATED
 GOOD RUINS
 FAIR UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Grace Episcopal Church is a rectangular board and batten structure with a one story modern addition in the rear. The basic architectural style is gothic as evidenced principally by the steep gable roof, the lancet windows and doors and the five double wooden buttresses on each side of the building. The church is one of two gothic styled frame Episcopal churches so far identified by the Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites as existing in Colorado. (The other, St. Georges Church, is in the Leadville National Register Historic District.)

The exterior is highlighted by a unique treatment. Wooden trim has been applied over the board and batten siding, resulting in an apparent simulated half timber construction. It is not known whether this was the builder's intention.

There are three lancet windows with plain glass placed on each side of the building. Two stained glass lancet windows frame a large stained glass tracery window with trefoil. Immediately below it, and just above the front door, is a smaller tracery window with gothic sash. The main entrance, a projected enclosed portico, features elaborately decorated doors topped by a small gable roof which reinforces the angular feeling created by the main roof of the structure. There is a small cross just above the entrance and another on top of a small square bell tower.

The building is virtually unchanged except for the addition of Grace Church Hall at the rear of the main structure in 1973. This small one story structure covered by aluminum siding does not detract from the simple elegance of the main church structure.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Ohl played a long and important role in the early history of the Episcopal church in Colorado. When the average length of service for most priests was one to three years, Reverend Ohl was active for over thirty. He served churches as far apart as Grand Junction, Glenwood Springs, Gunnison and Pueblo. A tireless preacher, he established a chain of preaching stations and was usually rector of more than one church at the same time. In 1892, Ohl became rector of the Ascension Church in Salida but continued to serve Buena Vista as well. During those years, the first buildings at the Colorado Reformatory just outside of Buena Vista were built. The rector of the Church also served as chaplain for the reformatory.

Throughout the early part of the twentieth century, Grace Episcopal Church remained a center of religious activities for most of the area. The church at Florence, Colorado, was served from Grace in 1897 as was that at Granite (1897-1916).

Other churches served from Buena Vista during this period included Breckinridge (1919-1924), Leadville (1911-1916, 1919-1924), and Westcliffe (1918-1919).

In 1955, the Bishopric established the "timberline circuit" directed from Grace Episcopal Church which included seven communities: Buena Vista, Leadville, Climax, Breckinridge, Frisco, Dillon, and Minturn. This move marked a revival in the church which is still going on. The church is now served by a rector in Salida.

Its first century almost complete, the Grace Episcopal Church continues to play an important role in the life of Buena Vista. An excellent example of a pioneer mission church, it is still an active force in the modern life of the town.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The history of the early Episcopal church in Colorado is one of ebb and flow. A few missionary priests were active along the frontier. Churches would be started and flourish for a few years until the original founders moved away or lost their flocks. Throughout it all, however, the Episcopal church did survive and grow.

On December 31, 1873, the Rt. Reverend John Spalding was consecrated Missionary Bishop of Colorado and Wyoming. He took charge of a district encompassing over three hundred thousand square miles composed of two self supporting parishes, three parsonages, about 700 communicants, and ten clergy. With tremendous energy--in the first year alone he travelled over 7,300 miles, 1,200 of which was by stage and farm wagon-- he set out to build a bishopric. By 1887, when the bishopric of Colorado was formally created, a cathedral system had been established, a hospital founded, and the church's schools further developed. Equally important, the two parishes had grown to seventeen which, along with over fifty missions, served more than 2,400 communicants and 13,000 baptized persons. The church had been planted in twenty-eight counties and had spread onto the western slope and into the San Luis Valley as well as down the Arkansas River.

Grace Episcopal Church was organized in 1882 as one of the Arkansas River missions and for the next two years was visited by Bishop Spalding for quarterly services. The first priest the Reverend Benjamin Hartley was appointed in 1883 and served the church until 1887.

The next year, a contract was let to build the present church structure. The successful contractors were the Lannan Brothers, a contracting firm in Buena Vista; the cost was \$2,160. Nothing is known about the architect or the origins of the gothic style. However, the church was consecrated on September 13, 1889, with the newly appointed Reverend John W. Ohl conducting the service and delivering the sermon.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Breck, Allen. Episcopal Church in Colorado-1860-1963. Denver: Big Mountain Press, C. 1963. p. 91, 94, 132, 135, 270, 337.
 Williamson, Ruby. Congregational United Church of Christ with Footnotes of Pioneer Church History. Gunnison, Co., B & B Printers & Lithographers. C. 1972. p. 17, 19.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY under one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,3	40,17,0,0	4,299,5,2,5	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Located on the SW corner Main & Park Avenue, 1/2 Block west of US 285

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Floyd Patterson

10/15/76

ORGANIZATION

State Historical Society

DATE

321-7265

STREET & NUMBER

200 14th Avenue

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Denver,

STATE

Colorado

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

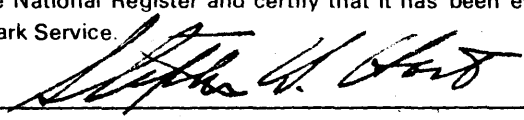
NATIONAL

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



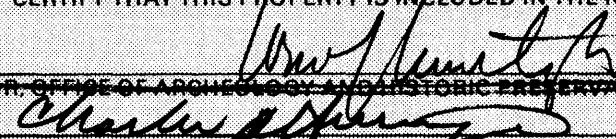
TITLE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

DATE

MARCH 31, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST: 
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 1-20-78
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 DATE 1-17-78