

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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received JAN 4 1985  
date entered 1/30/85

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 LA IGLESIA METODISTA MEXICANA, EL DIVINO REDENTOR

and/or common Mexican Methodist Church of Flagstaff

2. Location

street & number 319 South San Francisco Street N/A not for publication

city, town Flagstaff N/A vicinity of

state Arizona code 04 county Coconino code 005

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name El Divino Redentor Board of Trustees

street & number 319 S. San Francisco Street

city, town Flagstaff N/A vicinity of state Arizona 86001

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Coconino County Courthouse

street & number Northeast corner of N. San Francisco Street and Birch Avenue

city, town Flagstaff state Arizona

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Flagstaff, Arizona, Historic Property Survey Report has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Phoenix state Arizona

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>1925</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

#### SUMMARY/CONTEXT

El Divino Redentor, constructed in 1891, is a one story, vernacular Gothic Revival church building sited facing east on a corner lot in south Flagstaff. The small gable-roofed structure sits on a volcanic rock foundation and is built entirely of wood with simple wood trim. The primary exterior architectural features are a bell tower, articulating the juncture of the primary facades, and Gothic arched windows on three elevations. The original shiplap siding is in place beneath a sheathing of asbestos shingles.

The surrounding neighborhood is a dense grouping of small, predominantly single story residences framed by the Santa Fe Railroad tracks and downtown Flagstaff on the north and the Northern Arizona University campus on the south. The community of Flagstaff, located at the base of the San Francisco Peaks at an elevation of 6,900 feet, is the historic hub of northern Arizona and has a present day population of 40,000.

#### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

##### Exterior

The front (east) elevation of El Divino Redentor is dominated by the squat bell tower on the southeast corner. A small concrete deck with five steps and pipe railings leads to the entry door located at the base of the tower. The entry is highlighted by a round arched fan light window positioned above double wooden doors. The tower is punctuated above the entry and on the south side with rectangular wooden louvers. To the right of the entry is a double Gothic arched window unit. The window configuration, double hung with the top half subdivided into three pointed arched panes and painted to simulate stained glass, is consistent on all of the windows of the building.

The north elevation is detailed with three single window units. Two recently installed heating vents are attached to the wall surface and rise through the shallow eave. The lower two-thirds of the original chimney projects from the northeast corner of the roof.

The rear (west) elevation was recently exposed by the partial demolition of a nonsignificant addition. The only opening on the rear is a wood door positioned on the south end. The removal of the addition exposed the original shiplap siding on the entire facade.

The south elevation, with three window openings, is identical to the north, except for the bell tower positioned on the east side.

The walls of the building are surmounted by a wood shake gable roof. The eaves on the east and west are shallow and detailed with a raking cornice and simple fascia board.

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

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

For NPS use only	JAN 4 1985
received	
date entered	

Continuation sheet 1

Item number 7

Page 2

Due to structural deterioration, the rear addition to the building has been partially demolished with the south and west walls intentionally left standing to provide temporary security for the rear door. The remaining walls will be removed in the spring of 1985, and the area will be landscaped.

Interior

The interior of El Divino Redentor is comprised of a small entrance foyer and the larger nave. Most of the original features and materials are intact, including paneled doors, tongue-and-groove wainscoting, herringbone-patterned tongue-and-groove ceiling, wood flooring, pulpit, pews, and altar. The altar is detailed with a curved and balustraded altar rail framed by chamfered newel posts and a Gothic arched altar screen framed by fluted Doric pilasters and infilled with tongue-and-groove boarding in a herringbone pattern.

Four iron tie rods connect the north and south walls below the cathedral ceiling. The interior is lighted by six suspended light fixtures; the location and rods are original but the fixtures are not. Four of the six exhibit an Art Deco motif while the two above the altar have exposed bulbs.

Integrity

The first modifications to El Divino Redentor were made in 1925 when the building was moved seven and one-half blocks south of its original location. At that time the tower was lowered twelve feet, and the building was shortened by the removal of the rear quarter. The bell tower had been capped by an intersecting gable roof positioned on top of double louvered openings. The truncated tower was then topped with a gable roof supported by exposed wood trusses, and single louvered openings were constructed. It is presumed that the entry opening was modified from a pointed arch to the round fanlight at that time. Also, the concrete steps were poured to replace the original wood porch.

At a later date, ca. 1940's, the asbestos siding was applied over the original horizontal shiplap.

The rear addition is presumed to have been built prior to World War II, but due to its strictly utilitarian nature and inferior construction, its removal actually enhances the church.

El Divino Redentor has exhibited the 1925 modifications for nearly sixty years. Furthermore, when evaluated within the context of the extant physical qualities of the structure, the modifications are considered to be relatively minor.

Of particular importance in the consideration of the integrity of the building is the renewed interest among the congregation and the local citizenry in a phased restoration process. The removal of the deteriorated rear addition will be com-

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

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

For NPS use only  
received JAN 4 1985  
date entered

Continuation sheet 2

Item number 7

Page 3

pleted within the next few months. The building was reroofed with wood shakes (similar to the original shingles), and all of the exterior trim has been patched and painted. The next major restorative measure will be the removal of the remaining asbestos shingles. The exposure and painting of the original shiplap siding will be a significant step toward recapturing the visual integrity of the exterior.

The interior of the church possesses a high level of integrity and a simple elegance with virtually all of its 1891 appointments intact.

Finally, because El Divino Redentor has been at its present location since having been moved nearly sixty years ago, and because the residential character of the area remains intact, it is deemed to possess integrity of both location and setting.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1891; moved 1925      **Builder/Architect**

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

SUMMARY

Although it is a religious property moved from its original location, El Divino Redentor meets the "criteria considerations" established for such properties.

Sited in its present location for sixty years, El Divino Redentor possesses architectural significance as a unique local expression of vernacular Gothic Revival Architecture and as the oldest extant religious structure in Flagstaff.

Additional socio-cultural significance is ascribed to the building for its historic association with the Mexican community of Flagstaff.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

The construction of the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad through the southwest in the late nineteenth century led to the establishment of many permanent communities at strategic points along the railroad alignment. Flagstaff, located in the midst of the largest Ponderosa pine forest in the country, was originally settled in 1882 due to the availability of water and the proximity of lumber for the construction of the railroad. The initial economy, with the railroad as its primary focus, was soon supplanted by lumbering, ranching, farming, and various related service industries. Small commercial and residential centers evolved and were well established by the late 1880's. The socio-cultural make-up of the community at that time included Anglos, Mexicans, Chinese, and Blacks, all of whom were employed in the various activities mentioned above.

The religious interests of many members of the small town led to the organization of the First Presbyterian Church of Flagstaff on Easter Sunday, 1891. With an initial membership of twenty individuals, the congregation acquired six lots on the southeastern corner of North San Francisco Street and Cherry Avenue, just to the north of the commercial core, and construction of a wood church building began in December of 1891. (Four lots were purchased from the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad; the company donated the other two.) Work proceeded rapidly, and the first service was held on January 28, 1892.

The building housed the Presbyterians until December, 1915 when they merged with the Flagstaff (Anglo) Methodist congregation and formed the Federated Community Church. The Presbyterians then abandoned their church (as did the Methodists), and Flagstaff's Protestant Mexican population began to use the building.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet 5.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1/4

Quadrangle name Flagstaff West

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

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

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Flagstaff Normal Addition Block 136, Lots 13,14,14

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bill Perreault, Historian/Registrar

organization Arizona SHPO, Northern Field Office

date October 1984

Riordan State Historic Park

street & number P.O. Box 217

telephone (602) 774-9562

city or town Flagstaff

state Arizona

# 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

*Donna J. Schover*

title SHPO

date December 19, 1984

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

*Linda McClelland*  
Keeper of the National Register

date 1/30/85

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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

For NPS use only	JAN 4 1985
received	
date entered	

Continuation sheet 3

Item number 8

Page 2

A Mexican Methodist Mission was formally established in 1917, and its congregation apparently began to hold services and other functions in the building on a regular basis although the first recorded meeting was not held until 1919. In 1925 the property was purchased by a local attorney, C. B. Wilson, who donated the church to the Mission. The structure was then moved seven and one-half blocks to the south on the same street and rededicated as Iglesia Metodista Mexicana, El Divino Redentor. Under this name it has continually served Flagstaff's Mexican-American population for nearly sixty years.

ARCHITECTURE

As both a type and style of construction, El Divino Redentor possesses a special significance within the architectural history of the community. First, as a type of construction, the building is distinctive as the oldest church in Flagstaff and as the only extant historic church to use locally cut pine wood as the primary building material. Flagstaff's first church, built and dedicated by the Methodists ca. 1885, was also of wood construction, but it was demolished decades ago. All of the remaining pre-1940 religious structures are constructed primarily of locally quarried stone; four are built of malpais (basaltic) rock, and one is built of sandstone.

The wood construction of El Divino Redentor is consistent with that of other churches built in the Arizona Territory during the late nineteenth century, but their existence today is a rarity. Two other known examples are the Community United Methodist Church in Williams, thirty-three miles west of Flagstaff, and an Episcopal church in Prescott, approximately eighty-five miles to the southwest. The property in Williams has been well maintained over the years and rests upon its original foundations, but the integrity of the church in Prescott has been seriously impaired. Therefore, El Divino Redentor can be seen as a rare surviving example of a building type which was once more common both locally and in the state.

El Divino Redentor is also significant as a vernacular interpretation of the Gothic Revival Style. The styles of the early churches in the Arizona Territory generally reflected those which were popular elsewhere in the country. One popular form was the Gothic Style, based historically on the Medieval European Gothic Style.

However, few, if any, were pure expressions of the style because their builders were constrained by the economic conditions of the frontier, and vernacular interpretations were the result. The primary reference to the Gothic Style was the pointed arch form which appeared on principal entries, windows, and bell tower louvers. This holds true in Flagstaff where the now-demolished Methodist Church and all of the surviving pre-1940 churches employ the Gothic arch motif in at least one of these elements.

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

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

For NPS use only	
received	JAN 4 1985
date entered	

Continuation sheet 4

Item number 8

Page 3

Because it was the second church known to have exhibited this style in Flagstaff, and because it is now the oldest survivor and the only one of wood construction, El Divino Redentor provides important evidence in the context of the history of church construction in the community. For these same reasons it meets the "criteria considerations" established for religious properties and moved buildings.

RELIGION/SOCIAL

Since the establishment of Flagstaff in the early 1880's, Mexican-Americans have been an integral component in the city's socio-cultural make-up. Finding employment in the various local industries, they established enclaves south and southwest of the downtown commercial area.

A segment of this population adhered to the tenets of the Methodist faith, holding services in their native Spanish.

Upon the Federation of the community's Anglo Methodist and Presbyterian congregations, the Mexican Methodists began using the building, and, when it was offered to them about ten years later with the provision that it be moved, they met the challenge and relocated it in the heart of south Flagstaff. It has functioned in this location for sixty years, serving its congregation as a landmark of religious and social activity. Through the years its members have been important elements in the social fabric of the community, and today's congregation is comprised of some original members and descendants of others.

As it relates to the broad patterns of local history, the significance of the church in its original context is unquestionable. However, great value is ascribed to the church for its role as Iglesia Metodista Mexicana, El Divino Redentor, an instrument binding together the Protestant Mexican-American population of Flagstaff since the early twentieth century.



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

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

For NPS use only  
received JAN 4 1985  
date entered

Continuation sheet 5

Item number 9

Page 1

ITEM 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Cline, Platt. They Came to the Mountain. Northern Arizona University with Northland Press. Flagstaff, AZ. 1976.
2. Downum, Garland, Ph.D. Brief History of the Federated Community Church. Privately printed, Flagstaff, AZ. 1956.
3. Gebhart, Jody. National Register of Historic Places Nomination (draft). 1977.
4. Hoffman, Charles M., Ph.D. National Register of Historic Places Nomination (draft). 1980.
5. Arizona Daily Sun, April 22, 1977. "Old Church Needs Building Repairs".
6. Arizona Daily Sun, November 20, 1983. "100 Years in Flagstaff . . . the Methodists".
7. Coconino Sun, November 19, 1891.