

563115

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Christ Church
other names/site number Christ Church Oyster Bay
name of related multiple property listing N/A

Location

street & number 61 East Main Street not for publication
city or town Oyster Bay vicinity
state NY code NY county Nassau code 059 zip code 11771

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Signature of Certifying official/Title Roger Daniel Murby Date 9/24/18

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government DSYPO

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- ___ determined eligible for the National Register
- ___ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ___ removed from the National Register
- ___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper [Signature] Date of Action 11/9/18

Handwritten initials

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
4	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION / Church

RELIGION / Church-related residence

SOCIAL / Meeting hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION / Church

RELIGION / Church-related residence

SOCIAL / Meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY REPUBLIC / Federal

LATE VICTORIAN / Queen Anne

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

REVIVALS / Gothic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Brick, Stone

walls: Shakes, Stone veneer

roof: Asphalt, Slate

other: _____

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Christ Church is located at 61 Main Street in the Town of Oyster Bay, Nassau County, Long Island. The Oyster Bay hamlet is situated on the north shore of Long Island on the edge of a natural bay. The village's street grid reflects its organic development. South Street, its primary spine, and West Main Street are its primary commercial thoroughfares. East Main Street, which is offset from West Main Street, is generally more residential in character. Christ Church is one block east from Oyster Bay's business district at the center of the village. First Presbyterian Church (NR Listed, 1976) is located across the street from Christ Church, and the town library is immediately east of the church; it shares the church parking lot on the east side of the property.

A driveway runs between the church and parish hall buildings, curving east behind the church and connecting with the parking lot. The parcel has a manicured landscape dominated by large pine and cherry trees, flowering dogwood trees in the spring and annual-flower beds tended by the church sexton. A community garden is located on the land west of the rectory. The church itself dominates the highest part of the parcel, which is adjacent to the primary east-west road in the village. A flag pole and National Park Service information sign is located on the southern side of the lot; this provides information for visitors participating in village walking tours. The nominated parcel is the lot historically associated with Christ Church.

Narrative Description

Christ Church's 2.17-acre property includes three primary buildings, the church, academy/rectory, and parish hall, and a small historic churchyard.

Christ Church, 1878, expanded and renovated 1926-1938 (1 contributing building)

The front-gabled, roughly six-bay by two-bay, church has a rectangular plan with two transepts, a shorter, projecting nave, and a projecting foyer section; stone buttresses mark the bays and several of the sections' corners. The frame building is clad in variegated sandstone in varying sizes and rests on a stone foundation. An octagonal cupola extends from the slate roof. On the west elevation, the front-gabled, one-bay by one-bay foyer section has a central arched wooden door with strap hinges and a stone surround. A one-story, front-gabled cantilevered entry porch with large brackets shades the entrance. A small trefoil-style stained-glass window with a six-lobe pattern is located just above the roofline. The section has buttresses on either end of the façade and is capped by a small, open bellcote with a wooden roof. A narrow Gothic arched stained-glass window is located on the southern elevation, and an original stained-glass window from the 1878 building is located on the northern elevation. On the southern elevation of the section, the gable roof slopes downward to form a roof for a secondary entrance into the church; it features a door with strap hinges and a stone lintel and a bank of three rectangular stained-glass windows.

The north and south elevations of the church follow the same basic pattern. The three westernmost bays are separated by buttresses and each features a tripartite Gothic arched stained-glass window. Front-gabled transepts project from the second bay from the east. Each transept is framed by buttresses and features a

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large arched window with three lancets and six smaller windows in the stone tracery. The easternmost bay on each elevation has a single, narrow arched stained-glass window. The east elevation is framed by buttresses and has a central projecting front-gabled nave. The nave is flanked by single, narrow arched stained-glass windows. The nave features a large arched window with three lancets and six smaller windows within the stone tracery.

The church's interior is primarily one open space divided into a narrower, rear foyer and an open sanctuary space. The side entrance leads into a small entryway with stone veneer walls and a triptych of Oliver Smith stained-glass windows. An arched wooden door with strap hinges leads into the rear foyer. A chair rail runs around the foyer and trim surrounds both of the doors. One rectangular stained-glass memorial window with a three-lobed top, the former altar window from the earlier church, is located on the north wall of the foyer; it features a central figure of Christ, a decorative floral border, and hand-painted detail. A patterned tile floor extends from the foyer into the sanctuary. The sanctuary retains the original arched hammer beam trusses and tie rods from the 1878 church. A simple chair rail runs along the walls, which have a simple white finish; simple four-pointed star patterns are painted on the ceiling. Three Oliver Smith windows, each with a tripartite lancet windows design, are located on each side of the sanctuary. Larger windows are located in the transepts and behind the altar; each features tripartite lancet windows capped by a gothic arch. Completed in Smith's signature style, featuring small panes, bright colors, lead soldering of irregular thickness, narrow borders with geometric or woven patterns, and hand-painting, each window composition depicts a specific theme and features imagery illustrating different Bible stories. The smaller windows depict Old Testament tales, and feature the themes of Creation, Patriarchs, Exodus, Prophets, Royal, and Conquest. These windows each have three stories in each lancet, separated horizontally by simple geometric or floral patterns. The larger windows depict the New Testament themes of the Madonna, Ministry, and the Resurrection. These windows feature larger images in the central window and three stories per lancet in the side windows. The tile floor, copper lighting fixtures with a gothic arch and trefoil pattern, and an expansion of the altar platform into the nave are the result of the remodeling of the sanctuary in 1996. All of the pews, with the exception of the one recognized by this congregation as historically used by the Roosevelt family, were replaced at this time as well. A communion rail from the 1878 church fronts the altar space, which features wood paneled wainscoting with a gothic arch motif; an organ with a carved, light wood casing is on the south side of the altar space.¹

Academy / Rectory, 1802 with 20th century additions (1 contributing building)

The rectory is a two-story, five-bay by three-bay, side-gabled frame building covered in shingles and resting on a stone foundation. It was built in 1802 as an academy and has two additions reflecting its later use as a rectory: a ca. 1880 two-story, side-gabled wing projecting from the east elevation and a mid-twentieth century one-story, side-gabled garage on the west. On the façade (south elevation), a one-story, front-gabled entry porch projects from the central bay; the door has an arched Colonial Revival surround with a leaded glass transom and sidelights. There are four twelve-over-twelve windows and five twelve-over-twelve windows on the first and second floors, respectively. The east wing has matching twelve-over-twelve windows on the first and second stories. Two brick chimneys are visible over the roofline.

On the south elevation, there are twelve-over-twelve windows on each of the first and second stories of the main block. A two-story, one-bay by two-bay wing extends from the east elevation; this was built as a kitchen

¹ Bruce Snider, "Churches," *Remodeling* (magazine), June 1996, 53.

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addition by ca. 1880. On the first floor, a one-story, shed-roofed porch supported by simple square posts shades a wood-paneled entrance door. The entrance is flanked to the north by ten-paned casement windows; there is a twelve-over-twelve window on the second floor. The gable has a full pediment with a central arched vent. A mid-twentieth century, one-story, side-gabled garage addition extends from the west elevation.

The north elevation has an early twentieth century one-story, flat-roofed, three-bay wide wing on the east end, which connects to a one-story screened-in porch which runs across the remainder of the floor. The wing features a curved window with five twelve-over-twelve windows, a single twelve-over-twelve window, and is capped by a Colonial Revival cornice. The screened porch covers an original central rear panel door and three twelve-over-twelve windows. Remnants of carved student graffiti from the academy period are evident in the shingles on the rear elevation.

On the interior, the center-hall building is divided into a stair hall, parlor, dining room, and a contemporary kitchen space on the first floor and bedrooms on the second floor. The stair hall retains a Greek Revival staircase, simple wainscoting and trim, and an original historic panel door with a four-pane transom. The parlor and dining room retain tripartite Greek Revival mantelpieces and historic trim and doors. The parlor and dining room spaces were originally four rooms during the building's use as an academy. Subsequent nineteenth-century renovations removed the dividing walls to create larger spaces for the congregation to gather. The construction of the two-story wing by ca. 1880 provided improved kitchen spaces for the congregation and rectors; this space has been renovated multiple times.

Parish Hall, 1893 with 1909 and ca. 1955 additions (1 contributing building)

The parish hall is a two-story frame building covered in a combination of clapboard and shingle siding. It rests on a brick foundation and is made up of three distinct sections: the original, roughly three-bay by six-bay parish hall, a two-bay by two-bay curved wing on its north end, and a two-bay by three-bay 1955 addition on the southern end.

The original section has a steeply pitched hipped roof with wide, projecting eaves. A one-story, front-gabled entry porch with brackets projects over the double door entrance with arched transom; this reflects a reconfiguration from the original entrance, which was on the south elevation. The first floor has paired Gothic lancet windows with eight lower panes and a three-pane pattern in each bay. Four triangular eyebrow vents with trefoils project from each side of the roofline. The northernmost, one-story wing ends in a wide curve; this curved wing was added in 1909. This wing has a separate double door entrance with an arched transom; it is shaded by a front-gabled entry porch. A bank of four-over-four windows extend along the curved end of the building.

The ca. 1955, southern, addition is covered by a hipped roof with wide, projecting eaves. A vented gable projects from the southern end of the roofline. On the southern elevation, the first floor has three contemporary eight-over-eight windows on the first floor and one arched through-cornice dormer with an eight-over-eight window. The east elevation has two eight-over-eight windows on the first floor and three through-cornice dormers. A one-story, flat-roofed section projects from the first floor, providing additional connection between the new wing and original building; it is covered with shingles and has dentils under the cornice. The west elevation has three eight-over-eight windows on the first floor and three through-cornice dormers.

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On the interior, the parish hall largely reflects a 2008 renovation of the building to help it better accommodate its office space and community programming needs. On the primary floor, the original parish hall space is divided into a small conference room, a large auditorium space, and a gathering space located in the curved wing. These spaces retain historic trim, doors and windows. The ca. 1955 parish hall addition holds office spaces and classrooms.

Churchyard, 1751–ca.1860 (1 contributing site)

While the church yard was at various times used as a burial ground, today there remain only eleven headstones, most unreadable due to weathering. Most are slate and have the arched tympanum and shoulder shape typical of eighteenth-century burials; several have a carved death's head and wing or bone pattern. From the six that are discernable, the earliest appears to be that of Anna Doughty, who died in 1751 at the age of 23. Her brother, James Doughty, died in 1759, and their father, James Doughty, died in 1773 at 53 years of age. Lucas Kellogg, M.D., was buried in 1848 and Mary Lindley Devereau died in 1859. Sarah Doty's grave includes no dates, but she was the wife of Ammanias Doty. There are no headstones commemorating the burials (speculated to be Hessian soldiers) that were moved in the early renovations of the church when the building was reoriented; additional burials are located under the building as a result of this project. The Memorial Garden at the east end of the church is used today for scattering cremated remains; the names of eighty-eight parishioners are memorialized on plaques inside the north transept of the church.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Art

Social History

Period of Significance

1751 - 1968

Significant Dates

1802, 1878, 1893-4, 1926, 1938, ca. 1955

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Potter & Robertson

Delano & Aldrich

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for Christ Church begins with the earliest known extant burial in the churchyard (1751), includes the construction of the rectory/academy building (1802), the parish hall (1893-4), the church (1878) and its renovation (1926-1938), and extends through 1968 to reflect the continuing significance of the congregation in social history.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

While Christ Church is owned by a religious institution, the property is significant for its distinctive architecture and art and for its association with the history and growth of the congregation in Oyster Bay.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Christ Church is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of social history for its association with the history of one of Oyster Bay's earliest congregations, its missions and growth, and for its role in the history and development of the village of Oyster Bay. Founded in 1705, the Anglican congregation originally met in a combination town hall and church building. Two new churches were built on the same foundation over time, in 1750 and 1844, and a churchyard was established next to it. A portion of the original eighteenth-century burying ground is located on the south side of the current building; it contains the graves of several early parishioners and features representative examples of eighteenth-century funerary art. The 1750 building had become so decayed by the early nineteenth century that the congregation began using the nearby Oyster Bay Academy building as a worship space. The academy, founded in 1802, was one of the community's earliest schools; it lasted approximately 20 years, when it was replaced by free state-sponsored schools. The congregation was able to build a new church during the mid-nineteenth century but remained modest, flourishing only in fits and starts, until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Under the leadership of the Reverend George Roe Van De Water, the congregation began to thrive. It grew from 75 to 115 communicants during the late 1870s, while it was in the process of erecting a stylish new church. In response to the growing size and needs of the nearly 200-member congregation, as well as larger trends in religious education, the church constructed a parish hall in 1893-4. After Oyster Bay resident and Christ Church member Theodore Roosevelt became president in 1901, the church attained a greater level of local and national attention. Roosevelt and his family members were active in the life of the congregation, and Roosevelt's funeral was held at the church. During the early twentieth century, the congregation grew rapidly. In 1926, the church was expanded and received a stylish Neo-Gothic update in stone to better accommodate the 550-member congregation. Its continued growth and success into the mid-twentieth century is reflected by the ca. 1955 parish hall addition, which allowed for the creation of new classroom and community programming space which remains important to both the congregation and the larger community of Oyster Bay.

Christ Church is additionally locally significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture for its collection of diverse buildings reflecting the expansion of Christ Church over the past two centuries. Constructed in 1802 as the Oyster Bay Academy, the rectory is the oldest extant building on the campus and a good example of Federal and Greek Revival architecture in Oyster Bay. The congregation's modifications to the building for residential and congregational use are reflected in its Greek Revival and later Colonial Revival additions. Built in 1878 on the site of previous church buildings, Christ Church's Victorian Stick-style building was the focus of a major revitalization campaign during the early twentieth century. The frame church remains at the core of the 1925-26 Neo-Gothic building designed by the architectural firm of Delano and Aldrich. Christ Church's embrace of a Gothic design reminiscent of an English country parish church is reflective of larger trends in the design of Episcopal and Anglican churches which had emerged during the mid-nineteenth century. Delano and Aldrich effectively expanded the building, clad it in variegated sandstone, and added Neo-Gothic details while working with the constraints of the existing building. New stained-glass windows designed and fabricated by Oliver Smith were installed between 1926 and 1938. The Carpenter Gothic parish hall was constructed in 1893-4 and expanded ca. 1955 to provide a space for Sunday school classrooms and additional meeting space for the growing congregation. Located just west of the church, the parish hall's simpler design complemented the existing buildings and alluded to its religious use; while the ca. 1955 addition did not continue the use of lancet windows, it was designed to be compatible with the earlier building.

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The church is also significant under Criterion C in the area of art for its intact collection of stained-glass windows designed by Oliver Smith (1896-1980). Smith, a watercolorist and stained-glass designer and manufacturer, is known for his medieval-inspired, Arts-and-Crafts style windows. Dr. George E. Talmage, rector of Christ Church, approached Smith, still a young artist, with a proposal to create windows for the renovated church. Christ Church was Smith's earliest large commission. Working on site, he completed the three large windows in the chancel for the 1926 renovation; over the next twelve years, he completed the remaining windows at his studio. The 18 windows Smith designed and fabricated for Christ Church reflect his preference for medieval forms and colors inspired by Chartres Cathedral as well as his interest in using period techniques to fabricate the glass. They feature small panes of glass in jewel tones, narrow borders with geometric or woven details, lead soldering with irregular widths, and hand-painted figural imagery depicting Old and New Testament stories. By the time he completed Christ Church's windows in 1938, Smith had established himself as a regionally prominent early twentieth century stained-glass designer.

Early History of Oyster Bay & the Establishment of Christ Church

The official seal of Oyster Bay gives 1653 as the town's year of origin. That was the year of the Oyster Bay "first purchase," transferring land from the Matinecock Sachem Mohannes to Samuel Mayo, William Leverich, and Peter Wright. The Matinecocks, "part of the Algonquin language and cultural group," are thought previously to have occupied this part of Long Island for more than a thousand years.² The name Oyster Bay (referring first to the bay itself rather than any European settlement) is associated with the 1639 landing of the Dutch navigator Captain David Peterson de Vries, who wrote in his journal: "There are fine oysters here, whence our nation Holland has given the name of Oyster Bay."³ The 1653 purchase by Mayo, Leverich, and Wright included land subsequently set apart to be a town common, on which Christ Church, in one form or another, has made its home since around 1705.

Other religious communities represented in the area included the Society of Friends, which had a meeting-house in Oyster Bay as early as 1672-73, and the Baptists, which formed a congregation around 1700. Christ Church, as an outpost of the Church of England, was given a degree of preference at the local level. The church was started after a missionary, the Rev. George Keith, was sent to the Colonies by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), a Church of England overseas missionary organization. Keith set sail from England in 1702. During the voyage, the ship's chaplain, the Rev. John Talbot, resolved to join Keith in the mission. Travelling far and wide, Keith and Talbot came to Oyster Bay that autumn and were well received, conducting the first Anglican service there on Sunday, September 20, 1702. After more travels, Keith was back again that December, to preach "in Oysterbay in the Town-House." A few months later he wrote to his superiors in London about "the extreme desire that people have in several parts where I have traveled to have the Church of England Ministers sent to them"; he made special mention of "Oyster Bay in

² John E. Hammond, "The Early Settlement of Oyster Bay," *The Freeholder* (Spring 2003, Volume 7, no. 4.): 3-9, 18-19; Frances Irvin, *Oyster Bay: a Sketch* (Oyster Bay, NY: Oyster Bay Historical Society, 1987), 13.

³ A. Cornell Mulford, *Two Hundred Fifty Years of Christ Episcopal Church, Oyster Bay, L.I.* (Hempstead, NY: Salisbury Printers, 1955), 1.

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Long Island” and Hempstead.⁴ Local church officers were promptly elected: “On January 12, 1703, at a town meeting, one church-warden and four vestrymen were chosen for Oyster Bay.”⁵

Money was provided for a church building by vote of the town elders in Oyster Bay in 1706 or 1707. Some records from that time suggest that a church was indeed built. Land was set aside for a churchyard in 1710; the next year, funds were allocated to install seating.⁶ Oyster Bay Historian John Gable, however, points out that the Church Building Act of 1699 required towns to provide “public buildings” for Church of England services. He suggests that the community actually built a town hall, rather than a dedicated church building. The construction of a town hall was authorized in 1675, and a building was ultimately built on the town common, the land that would become associated with Christ Church. The next town hall, “authorized in 1707, was designed with seating for church purposes.” Gable’s analysis explains two things. First, it accounts for the “Town-House” in which George Keith preached in 1702. Secondly, it accounts for the direction of funds towards a “church” in the years from 1706 to 1711. “In short,” Gable states, “the town hall had morphed into a church, and in due course the town gave the common and the building to the Anglican congregation of Oyster Bay.”⁷ The congregation was clearly well placed to be allocated town property in this way, given the privileged status of the Church of England in the English Colonies.

Soon after Talbot’s visit, the Rev. John Thomas was appointed by the SPG to serve Hempstead and Oyster Bay together. Oyster Bay had been connected with the parish of Hempstead by the Ministry Act of 1693, which formally established funds for the Church of England’s ministry in New York; this would later be formalized by a Royal Charter in 1735. Inducted at Hempstead in December 1704, Thomas wrote several months later that he was serving “two distinct Churches, fifteen miles asunder, where I preach by turns.”⁸ Oyster Bay would share a minister from Hempstead for many years before having its own rector. Thomas served for two decades until his death in 1724. One of his more notable early successors was Samuel Seabury (rector, 1742-1764). Seabury’s son, also named Samuel Seabury (b. 1729), would become the first bishop of the Episcopal Church in 1784. The younger Seabury, who would have been 12 or 13 years old when his father became rector, was familiar with the region and Christ Church. Later, as the Revolution approached, young Seabury was firmly Loyalist, supporting and defending the British Parliamentary Acts and, entering the fray as an essayist, drew fire from a young Alexander Hamilton. At one point, he served “as a guide to the British Army on Long Island... where his familiarity with the terrain proved a valuable asset to the soldiers.”⁹

It seems not to have been until 1750, during the tenure of the elder Seabury, that the first dedicated church building was erected on the site (Figure 1). That October, Seabury wrote that the “new Church at Oyster Bay, which has been for some years in building, is so far completed as to be convenient for use, and was dedicated

⁴ John Allen Gable, “How Firm a Foundation: The Anglican Church in Oyster Bay, New York, and Colonial America,” (lecture delivered at Christ Church, Oyster Bay, Diocese of Long Island, New York, 2002), 15-16. As for Christ Church, it should be noted that the “Episcopal” denomination would not be known by that name in America until the 1780s, after the Revolutionary War.

⁵ Charles Egleston, “History,” Christ Church Oyster Bay website, <<http://christchurchoysterbay.org/about-us/history>>.

⁶ Mulford, *Two Hundred Fifty Years*, 5.

⁷ Gable, “How Firm a Foundation,” 19-20.

⁸ Mulford, *Two Hundred Fifty Years*, 4.

⁹ Anne W. Rowthorn, *Samuel Seabury: A Bicentennial Biography* (New York: Seabury Press, 1983), 29-32.

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to the service of God according to the Liturgy of England, on the 14th of June last.”¹⁰ A nineteenth-century account of the first church describes it as

a plain wooden building with shingled sides, standing high out of the ground and its actual site could be distinctly traced out as late as 1843... It stood east and west, with a turret & tall spire at its western end... It had two arched windows on the northern & two on the southern side and a larger single arched window on the east. The entrances were two, one on the west through the tower & the principal entrance on the south. The pulpit stood high in the air... on the north & the chancel on the east end.¹¹

The earliest surviving artifacts of Christ Church date from this time: three gravestones, dated 1751, 1759, and 1773, which mark the resting place of members of the Doughty family, just outside the south transept of the current church building. Another stone nearby suggests that the family’s connection with the church continued into the next century, by which time the spelling had been changed to “Doty.”

The congregation and 1750 building fell on hard times. Leonard Cutting, who succeeded Seabury as rector, reported in 1768 that the building was still unfinished and that the congregation was unable to complete it. By 1780, the spire had blown down and the turret was roofed over. Nonetheless, Cutting said that the church was “in general well-filled,” and described its members as “constant, serious and devout, though not equal in numbers to those of other denominations” in the town.¹² More damaging to the church even than wind and structural challenges was the Revolution. The congregation’s direct ties to the Church of England made its situation difficult, even while Oyster Bay was occupied and used as a base for British troops and despite its connections to Samuel Seabury, the chaplain of the King’s American Regiment. New York, which had established Anglicanism as the official religion in a few of its eastern cities and counties, repealed its support in 1777; after British troops departed in 1784, it also changed King’s College’s charter to transform it into Columbia College and remove much of the Church of England’s influence.¹³ Christ Church, as well as other Anglican congregations across the colonies, suffered. Functioning for a time as a barracks, the church fell into “ruinous condition” and was “exposed to every storm.”¹⁴ Mr. Cutting himself, a devout Loyalist, fled in 1783 or 1784.

The Revolution resulted in not only the loss of a rector, but also the complete disestablishment of the Anglican church in the new American Republic. As a result, congregations throughout the former colonies had to adjust to the loss of tax support, money, and ministers from colonial governments and the SPG.¹⁵ During the mid-1780s, the Episcopal Church was officially formed, now independent of its mother church, the Church of England. It was an American expression of Anglicanism, drawing its name and aspects of its liturgy from the Scottish Episcopal Church, since Scottish Bishops, who requiring no oath of allegiance to the Crown, had

¹⁰ Mulford, *Two Hundred Fifty Years*, 5.

¹¹ J.E. DeKay, “Sketch of the history of Christ Church Oyster Bay,” in *Register of Christ Church Parish Oyster Bay Long Island*. Unpublished manuscript, 291. Oyster Bay Historical Society Archives. It is important to note that DeKay believed the first church to have been built by 1707, and he presents this as a description that building. If we accept Gable’s view, however, this is likely to be a description of the 1750 building: it sounds much more like a “true church building” than one which doubled as a town house.

¹² Mulford, *Two Hundred Fifty Years*, 5-6.

¹³ DeKay, “Sketch,” 293; Robert W. Prichard, “The American Revolution (1776-1800),” in *A History of the Episcopal Church: Complete through the 78th General Convention*, 3rd ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2014), 112.

¹⁴ Irvin, *Oyster Bay*, 103.

¹⁵ Gable, “How Firm a Foundation,” 21.

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obligingly consecrated Seabury as a bishop in Aberdeen in 1784. As Anglicans across the former colonies established new denominational structures and navigated the changed environment under a new government, it took over a decade for the church to settle into a new structure.¹⁶

Individual congregations, such as Christ Church, typically took longer to adjust to new national and local conditions. The decades following the congregation were difficult for the fledgling Episcopal congregation. Hessian troops stationed at Oyster Bay in 1782-83 contributed to the ruin of the building, ripping out boards for the construction of barracks and berths and for firewood, until the structure finally blew down.¹⁷ The “communicants [were] scattered and church records lost. In 1801, what remained of the building was sold for the sum of sixty-seven dollars.”¹⁸ Approximately fifty years passed before the Anglican congregation was able to recover. Gable states that “Oyster Bay’s Anglicans were served only by occasional visiting clergy until the 1830s, when ... finally Christ Church returned to what it had been.”¹⁹

Christ Church during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

As early as the 1660s, Oyster Bay’s location had made it appealing as a mercantile center. By 1700, the village was very active in shipping; by 1750, local merchants enjoyed “extensive trade” with other ports on Long Island Sound and “even with the West Indies.”²⁰ The Revolution, however, changed all that. The war “shattered the shipping trade which had been promising so much prior to 1776.”²¹ Agriculture was also critical to the local economy, and “improvements in crops, in farm stock, [and] in extension of the farm land by a steady clearance of the brush and wildwood” propelled the local economy, as did the breeding of horses and the cultivation of apples. During the period, Oyster Bay was famous not only for its oysters, but for cider.²² Even so, for agriculture as for shipping, the Revolution left serious setbacks in its wake. The township was “so seriously drained of its resources, its fields had been so trampled on and destroyed, its granaries, when spared, had been so emptied, and its financial resources as reduced, that it took a long time to regain what had been lost.”²³

The physical devastation of the landscape was reflected in the devastation of Christ Church’s 1750 building, reduced to ruin. Movement towards rebuilding cannot have been helped by the church’s prior associations with the Church of England, including the flight of its last (Tory) rector. Its members were spiritually connected with a mother country from which their Anglican worship and theology were descended. That this connection was a social and political liability in the new Republic is suggested not only by the decimation of its congregation but by the lengthy gap, several decades long, between the abandonment of the 1750 building and any discernible movement towards the construction of a replacement.

¹⁶ Prichard, “The American Revolution,” 101-138.

¹⁷ DeKay, “Sketch,” 293.

¹⁸ Mulford, *Two Hundred Fifty Years*, 6.

¹⁹ Gable, “How Firm a Foundation,” 21.

²⁰ William S. Pelletreau, “Oyster Bay,” in *A History of Long Island from its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time*, vol. 2 (New York: Lewis Publishers, 1903), 131.

²¹ Pelletreau, “Oyster Bay,” 132.

²² Pelletreau, “Oyster Bay,” 132.

²³ Pelletreau, “Oyster Bay,” 132.

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Fortunately for the eventual revival of Christ Church's congregation and buildings, the demise of the 1750 church building dovetailed with local desire for a new school. While New York State established a Free Common School System during the late eighteenth century, it was minimally funded and did not require that communities build or operate these schools. Private, often religious, groups filled the gap by establishing schools that required students to pay tuition fees for their education.²⁴ In 1802, a group of citizens petitioned a town meeting for a plot of land which could be used as a "Seminary of Learning." A place on the town green which "had been used both as a Town meeting place and as a church by the Episcopal congregation" appeared an obvious, central location for the new institution.²⁵ With approval from the Episcopalians who remained and retained rights to the land, the Oyster Bay Academy was completed through subscription of funds by 1802. It was operating successfully and smoothly by 1805. In its time as a school, the building had a portico and belfry; these were later removed.

The Rev. Marmaduke Earle, a Baptist pastor from Connecticut, served as the school's first principal. When the academy opened, tuition rates per quarter were \$1.75 for reading and writing, \$2.25 for English grammar and ciphering, \$3.50 for mathematics and bookkeeping, and \$4.00 for "The French language, dead languages, moral philosophy or natural philosophy." Boarding with local families cost \$1.50 per week and there were 75 pupils in 1805.²⁶ The option of boarding suggests a clientele drawn not entirely from the village of Oyster Bay but also from the larger region. In 1821, in the time of a later principal, the Rev. J.N. Bletsoe, a small flyer advertised the establishment as Edmund Hall Academy. Instruction was offered "in Classical Learning and all other branches connected with polite Letters, whereby [students] may be qualified for the higher pursuits of life, or for entering college with credit and advantage." Charges were described as "very moderate," and boarding students could be accommodated "either with the Principal or Vice Principal [or with] several other respectable families," for "\$18 to \$25 per quarter, which includes washing and mending."²⁷ Perhaps fees could be offered at this rate thanks to support from Columbia College, which began in 1803, and state aid, which began in 1814. Nonetheless, the academy seems not to have flourished for long as a private educational institution. Its waning coincided with the establishment of the New York State public school system and the creation of a new Oyster Bay School District in 1823.²⁸

Still, the academy building, which reserved a portion of its space for religious services, had been something of a lifeboat for the vestigial Episcopal congregation. The regularity with which services were held between its construction and its decline as a school is unclear, but by the 1820s, as the academy began to fade, Episcopal life was becoming livelier. When the school closed, Episcopalians bought up stock from the academy's proprietors and voted "to give the building to the church as a rectory."²⁹ By 1822, an Oyster Bay resident, Edward K. Fowler, was officiating at services in the academy building as a lay reader. He was ordained soon after, and served both the Huntington and Oyster Bay congregations. He lived in Huntington and held services in Oyster Bay on alternate Sundays. Under his leadership, the congregation stabilized. He reported that "On every occasion of public worship in which I was engaged in the academy the congregation was respectable,

²⁴ James D. Folts, "History of the University of the State of New York and the State Education Department, 1786-1996," 1996, available online at: <<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/edocs/education/sedhist.htm#free>>.

²⁵ John E. Hammond, "A Brief History of Oyster Bay Schools," *The Freeholder* (Winter 2000, Volume 4, no. 3.): 6-9.

²⁶ Frances Irvin, "Sketch," 106.

²⁷ Mulford, *Two Hundred Fifty Years*, 6-7.

²⁸ Hammond, "A Brief History of Oyster Bay Schools," 6-9.

²⁹ Mulford, *Two Hundred Fifty Years*, 8.

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and oftentimes as large as the building would comfortably contain”³⁰ After Fowler’s time, Oyster Bay Episcopalians were served by an irregular succession of nearby clergy. During this period, the congregation removed interior partitions in the building associated with the school. As they grew more stable, they also updated the building by installing a Greek Revival staircase and parlor mantelpieces.

By the 1830s, Oyster Bay’s economy, which continued to rely on agriculture and oystering, had recovered from the general depression faced across Long Island in the decades following the Revolution. Christ Church was among the institutions in the village that benefited from the overall improvement in fortunes. Beginning in May 1834, the Huntington and Oyster Bay congregations came under the care of the Rev. Isaac Sherwood. The Oyster Bay parish also received some support in the 1830s and 1840s, at intervals, as a “missionary station” of the Episcopal Diocese of New York.³¹ Sherwood made great strides. Reporting on Christ Church to the New York Diocesan Convention in 1835, he said,

For many years past they have labored under depressing circumstances... During the past year they have assembled at regular intervals, and Divine service is now well attended. In June last [1835] the parish was reorganized under its former corporate title of Christ Church. Measures have since been adopted for the erection of a building.³²

A new edifice did not quickly appear, but momentum continued. In September 1843, Sherwood reported, “the interest in the Church remains firm; a regular and devout attendance upon its worship is given. All seem animated by the desire of accomplishing the long-delayed work, of erecting an edifice for our holy worship in this beautiful place.” Fortunately, financial resources were forthcoming too: “a considerable sum has been subscribed, and the work will probably be commenced in ... October.”³³ The congregation disagreed on where the new church should be built. Some favored the site of the old church; others preferred a new location on Cove Hill. They ultimately decided to remain at the original site; construction went ahead, and the parish “declared itself independent of Missionary aid,” which the denomination used to support weaker congregations.³⁴

A new church arose, 36 by 50 feet, at the cost of \$2800. According to a historic image of the 1844 church, it was a lightly decorated wooden Gothic structure with a church porch and spire topped by a small cross. On July 23, 1844, Bishop Benjamin T. Onderdonk consecrated the new building.³⁵ The bishop remarked, “The erection of this beautiful Gothic edifice was the consummation of a desire long anxiously cherished by me. It is erected on the site of a Church built before the Revolution, but long since destroyed. I never cast my eye on the ancient cemetery without longing to see therein another temple.”³⁶ Along with a new building and the parish’s elevation from missionary status, Christ Church at last had its own rector, with the arrival of the Rev. Edwin Harwood. He came to Oyster Bay from Philadelphia in 1844 and served for two years, departing for Trinity Church, New Haven, where he remained as rector, then emeritus rector, until his death in 1902.

³⁰ W.W. Munsell & Co., “Christ Church Episcopal, Oyster Bay,” in *History of Queens County* (New York: W.W. Munsells Co., 1882), 501.

³¹ DeKay, “Sketch,” 296.

³² Egleston, “History.”

³³ Egleston, “History.”

³⁴ DeKay, “Sketch,” 296-97.

³⁵ Munsell, *History of Queens County*, 502.

³⁶ Egleston, “History.”

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The Rev. Harwood was the first to use the academy building as a rectory; the congregation continues to use it for this purpose. Six more rectors served after Harwood over the course of three decades. One of them, the Rev. Richard Hutton (serving from 1861-1874), recorded 62 communicants in 1863. The following year he told the Diocesan Convention that Christ Church was free of debt, and “in a healthful and flourishing condition.” By 1867, the congregation had grown to 100 communicants.³⁷

Revitalization of Christ Church

During the mid-nineteenth century, Oyster Bay’s proximity to New York City contributed to its growth as a summer recreational and resort destination for wealthier families, including the Beekmans, Louis Comfort Tiffany, and Cornelius Van Schaak Roosevelt. The extension of the Long Island Railroad to Oyster Bay in 1886 accelerated this development, enabling more families of varying means to visit the community and for wealthier families to live in Oyster Bay year-round rather than only seasonally. As a direct result, the Seawanhaka Yacht Club moved to Oyster Bay in 1892, formally merging with the Oyster Bay Yacht Club. By the early twentieth century, many of the family farms and estates surrounding the village were in the process of being transformed into summer estates.³⁸ These changes infused new personalities and new wealth into the community and had a direct result on the development of businesses and institutions within the village.

By this time, the Episcopal Church was also undergoing its own renaissance. The denomination had avoided political involvement during the Civil War and grew in membership and influence in the decades that followed. The church’s association with England and elite society, which had been problematic in the years after the Revolution, was appealing to the American middle and upper class. Many prominent industrialists were raised Episcopal while others joined the denomination, attracted to its conservatism, formality, and rationality – and the opportunity to worship with others in their social set. It doubled again by the end of the century and surpassed one million members by 1915. By the turn of the century, the Episcopal Church had been described as a “virtually generic upper class religion.” Membership in the Episcopal Church grew dramatically, doubling to more than 350,000 in 1885.³⁹

Christ Church’s fortunes were buoyed along with Oyster Bay’s and especially by the influx of new upper class families visiting and establishing seasonal homes in the area. Only three decades after its construction, the 1844 building was considered to be structurally unsound and, perhaps, no longer the right fit for the changing congregation. Fortunately, this need coincided not just with wealthier adherents in the pews but with the right personnel in the pulpit: a dynamic young minister, the Rev. George Van De Water (rector from 1876 to 1880), was at the helm when it became necessary, yet again, to build a new church. The 1844 building was last used on March 17, 1878; work on its replacement began a week later. The remains of the old church, sold to a

³⁷ Egleston, “History.”

³⁸ John E. Hammond, *Oyster Bay* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2009), 8; Edward J Smits, *Nassau, Suburbia, U.S.A.: the First Seventy-Five Years of Nassau County, New York, 1899 to 1974* (Syosset, NY: Friends of the Nassau County Museum, 1974), 6.

³⁹ Peter W. Williams, Religion, *Art & Money: Episcopalians and American Culture from the Civil War to the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 2-4, 9-11, 16; B. Drummond Ayres Jr., “The Episcopalians: An American Elite with Roots Going Back to Jamestown,” *New York Times*, April 28, 1981.

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member of the congregation for \$100, were taken away “to be used in the erection of a private dwelling house.”⁴⁰

The architects of the new church were Potter & Robertson; the contractors, Lyons & Burns, both firms of New York; the interior decoration was by James Youngs. Unlike the previous church, the new building ran parallel to the road. As a result, the new building covered some of the area previously used as a churchyard. It was necessary to “take down the grave stones of several graves and lay them [flat] on top of the graves” so the building could be built on top of them.⁴¹ Skulls and other bones were found elsewhere on the site during building work. At the time, the congregation believed these were the remains of Hessian soldiers dating from the Revolutionary War, but they may also have been related to other burials associated with the churchyard that lacked gravestones.

On May 1, 1878, the cornerstone, still in place today, was officially laid by Van De Water in the presence of Bishop Abram Littlejohn, the first bishop of the recently formed Diocese of Long Island. As part of that ceremony, a history of the parish from 1703 to 1878 written by Van De Water, a copy of the Diocese of Long Island Journal of Convention (1877), the “Church Almanack” (1877), a Bible, Hymnal, Book of Common Prayer, and other items including the names of wardens, vestry, contractors, builders and architects, were placed inside the cornerstone.⁴² The cornerstone bears two dates: 1878, for the construction of the church, and 1705, when the congregation was established as a result of Rev. John Thomas’s active ministry in Oyster Bay. Building work continued apace throughout the summer of 1878 and was completed by September 8, when the first service was held.

The Rev Van De Water preached from the new pulpit at the morning service and the Rev. Charles Ward (Rector, 1874-75), preached in the afternoon. Van De Water’s sermon was on the text, “The Lord is in His Holy Temple”; Ward’s was on “The building of Solomon’s Temple.” Van de Water reported that “The Church was filled and all enjoyed the interesting services of the day.”⁴³ On June 11, 1879, the church was officially consecrated by Bishop Littlejohn, who had been overseas in the preceding autumn when services began. Careful notes survive describing the order of procession, the readers of lessons, and the appearance of the building, which was “most beautifully decorated with flowers of the choicest kind in large festoons and arranged in appropriate Emblems.” Afterwards, “over a hundred [people] from all parts of the Island partook of a bountiful collation which had been provided by the Ladies,” in the rectory. With great satisfaction, Van De Water wrote, “All left late in the afternoon expressing themselves highly pleased with the beautiful church, and the attractive exercises of the day – There ends that last demonstration of a long and faithful pull for a new church in the historic Parish of the Diocese – May God bless it always.”⁴⁴

The brick-and-timber Victorian Stick-style building had the hallmarks of the eclectic and exuberant designs typical of the period, including a corbelled brick foundation, a variety of wood cladding materials, and multiple, asymmetrical rooflines (Figure 2). Three large stained-glass windows ran through the low cornice on each

⁴⁰ DeKay, “Sketch,” 303. In the descriptions of events surrounding the building and dedication of the 1878 structure, the narrative in the Archival volume is written in a new hand, almost certainly that of Van de Water.

⁴¹ DeKay, “Sketch,” 303.

⁴² DeKay, “Sketch,” 304.

⁴³ DeKay, “Sketch,” 304.

⁴⁴ DeKay, “Sketch,” 305, 307-08.

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elevation and were capped by front-gabled dormers with slightly flaring eaves. The small panes and geometric patterns of the stained-glass were amplified by the stickwork detail in the gables and underneath the roofline. This building remains the architectural core of Christ Church. While the 1878 church's design was not retained as part of the 1925-26 English Neo-Gothic redesign, its massing and fenestration pattern would bear a strong influence on the later building.

The Rev. Henry Washburn (Rector, 1888-1911) was the second rector in the line of succession following Van De Water and the erection of the 1878 building. Van De Water left for a church in Brooklyn in 1880 and was succeeded immediately by William Montague Geer, who served for eight years. These were years of modest but steady congregational growth. The number of communicants rose from 115 in 1879, to 134 in 1880, to 151 in 1890, to 173 in 1895.

There was increasing need for a parish hall and Sunday school building and a successful capital campaign to pay for it.⁴⁵ Records of the consecration of the 1878 church building indicate that Sunday School classes were conducted in the rectory. This could hardly have been practicable in the ensuing decades, given steady growth in congregational numbers and the increased emphasis in churches of all denominations on the provision of good Sunday School programs for children. The need for a dedicated structure for both educational programming and social events was acute. Under the leadership of Washburn, the parish hall was built to provide this necessary additional space. Washburn told the Diocesan Convention in 1892 that the capital campaign was nearly over, and in 1893 he reported that the building was almost finished. In the absence of any clearer evidence, it is understood that the building was completed in 1893 or 1894 (Figure 3).⁴⁶ In addition to providing additional space, the parish hall was an effective architectural complement to the campus. Its Carpenter Gothic design, which featured a Gothic arched entryway and lancet windows, triangular trefoil vents, combination of shingle and clapboard cladding, and steeply sloping hipped roof, balanced the larger church and clearly referenced its religious use. While its builders are unknown, it is clear they were competent in period styles and responsive to the needs of the church. With this final piece of the layout complete – church, hall, and rectory – the Christ Church campus achieved its current configuration.

Theodore Roosevelt and Christ Church

Christ Church's 1878 building, which remains the core of the current church, was well-known to its most famous parishioner, Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919). Roosevelt's grandfather, New York banker Cornelius Roosevelt, had begun a family tradition of spending summers at a rented summer home in Oyster Bay. In boyhood Theodore attended First Presbyterian Church in Oyster Bay on the other side of East Main Street, although he was neither Presbyterian nor Episcopalian by upbringing. He was raised mainly in the Dutch Reformed Church, but the lack of a Dutch Reformed congregation in Oyster Bay led the family to choose an alternative while they were visiting. Roosevelt cemented his connection to Oyster Bay in 1885 when he built his home, Sagamore Hill, on farmland just east of the village. His connection with the Episcopal Church was sealed by his 1886 marriage to Edith Carow, his second wife, who was herself Episcopalian. When in Oyster Bay at Sagamore Hill, Theodore, Edith, and family worshipped at Christ Church. After driving them all from

⁴⁵ Egleston, "History."

⁴⁶ Incidentally, at this same time, 1893/94, electric lighting was first installed in the church.

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Sagamore Hill in a “crowded three-seated wagon,” Roosevelt adopted “the fourth pew from the door on the south aisle” for the family.⁴⁷

In 1902, the *New York Times* ran an article entitled “Clergyman Angers President Roosevelt.” It related Rev. Washburn’s mistake in transforming a memorial sermon meant to be about the late President William McKinley into a glorification of Roosevelt, who had become president a year earlier, upon McKinley’s assassination. Washburn referred to McKinley only “incidentally,” and then “devoted the greater part of his remarks to a eulogy of President Roosevelt,” even going so far as to ask “whether the killing of McKinley was an accident or a work of God ... bringing another David to the head of the Nation.” Roosevelt is said to have been furious, exiting Christ Church afterwards “with angry eyes blazing through his spectacles.” The article colorfully describes Roosevelt’s mounting rage as Washburn’s address unfolded, from his “fidgiting” to the redness of his ears, as he “glared at the rector” in a fruitless attempt to “hypnotize him to the degree that he might make him cease talking.”⁴⁸ Relations with Washburn seem not have been irrevocably damaged; however, a few years later the president and Mrs. Roosevelt were among those who made special visits to the rectory on the occasion of the Washburns’ twenty-fifth wedding anniversary.⁴⁹

Having the president as a parishioner yielded some unexpected events. Secret Service agents accompanied Roosevelt to church to protect him from harm and to protect the family’s privacy; Mrs. Roosevelt objected to pictures being taken of them on Sundays. One Sunday in 1906, Agent Sloan moved to stop a photographer from the *New York World*. In trying to restrain the photographer, Sloan struck him, following up with “a second blow,” which “struck a woman in the crowd and her infant child.” The photographer pressed charges for assault and Sloan paid a fine, in preference to the alternative, 10 days in jail.⁵⁰

Roosevelt was connected with the church not superficially but sincerely. At one stage, he even served as superintendent of its Sunday school. Christ Church was the venue for the marriage of his daughter Ethel, and the president was at the center of the commemorations when the parish celebrated its bicentennial on September 8, 1906.⁵¹ A large plaque on the north side of the narthex memorializes the service, listing the names of those who gave addresses, last among them Theodore Roosevelt, president of the United States. His speech on the occasion is preserved in *Presidential Addresses and State Papers* and was delivered “from the chancel aisle” rather than the pulpit.⁵² Quoting at length from James, Roosevelt stressed the importance of matching religious faith with moral conduct. The bicentennial plaque also lists names of the wardens and vestry in 1906.⁵³

⁴⁷ Irvin, “Oyster Bay,” 179; Today a small plaque and American flag mark Roosevelt’s pew, which was carefully preserved when all the other old pews were replaced in 1994

⁴⁸ “Clergyman Angers President Roosevelt: Glorifies McKinley’s Successor at Oyster Bay Memorial,” *New York Times*, Sept 15, 1902.

⁴⁹ John E. Hammond, *Oyster Bay Remembered* (Huntington, NY: Maple Hill Press, 2002), 119-120.

⁵⁰ John E. Hammond, *Oyster Bay Remembered* (Huntington, NY: Maple Hill Press, 2002), 294-95.

⁵¹ Irvin, “Oyster Bay,” 190

⁵² Mulford, *Two Hundred Fifty Years*, 10-11.

⁵³ It should be noted that among the vestry members was W.H.C. Pynchon, grandfather of the noted postmodernist writer Thomas Pynchon (b. 1937), author of *Gravity’s Rainbow* and *The Crying of Lot 49*. Notwithstanding global fame, Thomas Pynchon has successfully guarded his privacy for half a century. There are virtually no photographs – even when he has voiced himself on *The Simpsons*, his cartoon character has had a paper bag over his head – but among the small number of known biographical facts is that since 1990, he has been married to a great-granddaughter of Theodore Roosevelt, the literary agent Melanie Jackson.

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To the left of the bicentennial plaque is the only stained-glass window remaining from the 1878 building. Depicting Christ with his right hand raised in blessing, it was given in memory of Philip Youngs, "Delegate from this Parish to the Convention of the Diocese of New York under Bishop Provoost A.D. 1787," the year in which the Episcopal Diocese of New York was founded. Photographs show this window was originally located over the altar at the east end; it was moved to its current location when the church was remodeled in the 1920s, several years after President Roosevelt's death.

Newsreel footage and images of Roosevelt's funeral, which was held at the church on January 8, 1919, shows little of the outside of the old building, and nothing of the interior (Figure 4). The Rev. George E. Talmage, rector since 1911, conducted the brief service, which was held with "no music" and only "simple church ritual." Even Roosevelt's favorite hymn, "How Firm a Foundation," was recited rather than sung. The church itself was "gorgeous with color – carnations, orchids and roses, with the Christmas greens still hung in their place."⁵⁴ The simplicity of the service was in accordance with Roosevelt's wishes, as was the absence of any eulogies. This advance dismissal of opportunities for him to be praised at his funeral tallies with the intense reaction he had against being praised in church while he was alive. The Roosevelt family remained associated with the congregation after his death. Several large family plaques in the southwest corner of the church memorialize his sons Quentin (1897-1918), Kermit (1889-1943), Theodore Jr. (1887-1944) and his wife, Eleanor (1888-1960), and their son, Quentin Roosevelt II (1919-1948). Two small bronze plaques, beneath the larger ones, are in memory of Roosevelt's daughter Ethel (1891-1977) and her husband, Richard Derby, who was a Christ Church vestryman.

Early twentieth century revitalization of the congregation and church building

By the early twentieth century, Oyster Bay had largely transitioned from being a primarily agricultural area to its new, higher-profile status as a service-oriented summer community, home to many of the spacious estates which typified the legendary "Gold Coast" of the North Shore of Long Island. Such establishments provided barons of Wall Street and captains of industry with summer homes where they could enjoy family life but still be close to New York City and could employ dozens of full-time servants, groundskeepers, livery men, messengers, drivers, and others, many of whom lived on the estate or nearby. After Theodore Roosevelt became president in 1901, Oyster Bay became a hub of new activity. Politicians, friends, and supporters were drawn to Sagamore Hill, his "Summer White House," drawing both income and celebrity to what had previously been a sleepy community.

Oyster Bay also experienced growth as a result of Nassau County's formal split from Queens County on January 1, 1899. Residents of the western portion of Queens County had been proposing establishing a new county for decades; the creation of Nassau County was hastened by the annexation of one-third of Queens County as a borough of New York City in January 1898.⁵⁵ With the issue of government settled and a sense of optimism leading into the twentieth century, private developers began eyeing open lands in the new county as a frontier for new residential development focused on commuters. Nassau County's population grew from 55,000 residents in 1900 to 303,100 in 1930; a 500 percent increase in 30 years.

⁵⁴ Irvin, *Oyster Bay*, 193.

⁵⁵ Smits, *Nassau Suburbia*, 39-42.

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The Christ Church congregation continued to thrive under the tenure of the Rev. George E. Talmage (rector, 1911-1934). Under his leadership, the number of communicants rose from 199 in 1912, to 273 in 1913, to 548 in 1929. By the 1920s, the congregation became interested in updating the church once more to meet current fashion. This change seems to have arisen first from a desire to renew the interior, so that the main body of the church within might match a redecoration of the chancel. However, "...the walls of the building were found to be settling, so would it be wise to spend a large sum of money upon it? Why not build a stone church?"⁵⁶

As such questions were circulating, a large bequest was made by Miss Cornelia A. Beekman in 1917, and although there were technical snags complicating the bequest, her brother and residuary legatee, Mr. Gerard Beekman, "in lieu of the legacy, made a deed of gift of the same amount." He supplemented it with a further donation of his own.⁵⁷ Many others contributed gifts as well. Under the leadership of the Rev. Talmadge, the project culminated in a reconstruction of the nave, the expansion of the building with the addition of a new chancel and two transepts, and the completion of an overall redesign, which included adding stone veneer, to make the building reminiscent of an English country parish church.

This move toward a total redesign of the look and feel of the church building brought Christ Church into line with denominational architectural trends. The congregation's choice, in 1878, to build a frame church in a popular Victorian style ran somewhat counter to prevailing fashion in Episcopal and Anglican church construction during the nineteenth century. During the late 1830s and early 1840s, the Cambridge Camden Society (later known as the Ecclesiological Society) began to study medieval church architecture and promote its revival for use in new church construction. These ideas were quickly adopted by the Church of England's Oxford and Cambridge movements, and resulted in the creation of a distinctly English Gothic Revival style. As the Episcopal Church grew more prominent during the late nineteenth century, these designs served as the inspiration for the construction of new church buildings based on this established model. Through the style's continued promotion and evolution through the work of prominent architects and designers like Ralph Adams Cram and John Ruskin and its association with the Arts and Crafts movement, which placed a high value on artisan labor, it remained central to church construction into the twentieth century.⁵⁸

The 1925-6 English Gothic Revival renovation of Christ Church was the work of Delano and Aldrich, a prominent architectural firm. Delano and Aldrich were known for their work on country estates, homes for wealthy individuals, and the clubs that their wealthy clients frequented. For example, they designed the Knickerbocker and the Colony Clubs and over 40 major house commissions including the Willard Straight House in New York City. While they were occasionally commissioned to design churches, likely as a result of a connection to a client from another project, the firm did not specialize in ecclesiastical architecture. None of their drawings of the Christ Church are known to survive. The choice of the style was the matter of significant debate and compromise among the parishioners. Some preferred to simply expand their fifty-year-old building, while others wanted to update the building's style entirely, moving away from its then-outmoded Victorian design. The Delano and Aldrich design, which largely held to the form of the original building, was an attempt to compromise among the various factions.⁵⁹ There are some who believe that the design was ultimately determined by the taste and preferences of the major donors, primarily the Beekman family.

⁵⁶ John A. Warren, "History of Christ Church (continued)," *Christ Church Compass* (parish magazine) (March 1961): 11.

⁵⁷ John A. Warren, "History of Christ Church (continued)," *Christ Church Compass* (parish magazine) (March 1961): 11-13.

⁵⁸ Williams, *Religion, Art and Money*, 53-55.

⁵⁹ Allen, "Condition of the Parish Buildings," 31-39.

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The church's earlier Victorian Stick-style design reflected a popular aesthetic which was common within summer communities like Oyster Bay, particularly for hotels, cottages, and other buildings associated with seasonal visitors.⁶⁰ By contrast, Delano and Aldrich's 1925-26 redesign reflected Christ Church's interests in embracing its English roots, emulating a medieval English parish church, and perhaps a greater sense of community permanence. In its use of variegated ashlar masonry in a variety of sizes, horizontality, buttresses, and use of medieval-style stained-glass in a variety of Gothic window forms, the Delano and Aldrich's Neo-Gothic Christ Church successfully blends medieval inspiration and an Arts and Crafts aesthetic while balancing the constraints of the existing building. While ecclesiastical architects who held closely to designing new churches strictly based on medieval models were becoming less common during the period, Delano and Aldrich's familiarity with a variety of styles and flexibility may have proved an advantage while dealing with the complicated needs of the site.

An examination of the cellar suggests that the original church had consisted of one large room with a narthex at the west end and a chancel at the east end. The 1925 building was expanded from this footprint considerably, mostly to the east, to accommodate the growing congregation; the current plan features several large additions including a crossing, transepts, choir, and larger sanctuary. Despite this, Delano and Aldrich's design maintains the basic form of the church, retaining its projecting foyer with side entrance and sloping roofline, three window bays (shortened in height), steep side-gabled roof, and the location of the steeple. While the church's interior primarily reflects twentieth-century modifications, it retains original hammer beam trusses and tie rods.⁶¹

To mark the major renovation, a small stone marked "1925" was added on the outside of the south transept. The subtlety of this marker, along with the retention of the 1878 cornerstone, shows that this project was seen as a revitalization, and not a replacement, of the core building. The first services in the renewed church were held on Palm Sunday in 1926; on September 26, 1926, it was blessed by the Rt. Rev. Ernest M. Stires (Bishop of Long Island, 1925-1942).

Oliver Smith Stained-glass Windows

The most notable feature of the 1920s restoration of Christ Church is the magnificent set of stained-glass windows by Oliver Smith (1896-1980), a stained-glass artist and painter. Smith's work at Christ Church was his earliest large commission and is reflective of his aesthetic, which blended medieval technique and fabrication with the Arts and Crafts style. Smith was a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, which he attended for six years. After that, he took a course at the London School of Arts and Crafts and studied examples of medieval glass in Europe, "taking photographs, making watercolor sketches" of details, and accumulating voluminous notes."⁶² After returning, he worked for three years in the Pitcairn stained-glass studio in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. On the recommendation of Dr. Talmage, the job to fabricate windows for the revitalized Christ Church was offered to Smith in 1925. The large commission from Christ Church enabled Smith to establish his own studio and helped launch his successful and prolific career.

⁶⁰ Vincent Joseph Scully, *The Architecture of the American Summer: The Flowering of the Shingle Style* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1989).

⁶¹ Gerald Allen, "Condition of the Parish Buildings," unpublished report, Christ Church archives, 2001, 31-39.

⁶² Oliver Smith Studios, *The Art of Stained-glass* (Bryn Athyn, PA: Oliver Smith Studios, undated).

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The American stained-glass industry grew during the nineteenth century in large part as a result of the popularity of the Gothic Revival style for church construction, especially among Anglican and Episcopal congregations. As opposed to the opalescent, painterly style popularized by Tiffany, Neo-Gothic stained-glass was intended to serve as part of the overall architectural composition and help to establish the mood.⁶³ Like many contemporary craftsmen working in the Neo-Gothic style, Smith was particularly enamored of Chartres Cathedral. Chartres Cathedral's simple color palette, which primarily features red and blue glass, medieval iconography, and window shapes, would inspire much of his work. He found later stained-glass less compelling as it did not match the "glorious depth and color of the glass itself" expressed in these early forms.⁶⁴

Smith set out to rediscover the basic principles of the art, which he felt had been lost. He learned how the medieval glass makers mixed sand, lime, and potash, made from ashes of plants and seaweed, and melted them together in clay pots placed in a furnace. The scum rising to the surface would be skimmed off and the molten material could then be cooled until it became thick enough to work and blow into glass. For colored glass, the molten mixture would include metallic oxides such as copper oxide for ruby, oxide of cobalt for blue, iron for green, and so on. For one shade of yellow, the additive would be burnt oats; for another, the burnt cuttings of hair gathered from barber shop floors; for another, the scrapings of cows' hooves.⁶⁵ Smith imitated these methods to reproduce the splendid medieval colors. The glass would be made and blown in one building. Elsewhere, he prepared detailed sketches and full-size paper cartoons, or patterns, for cutting the glass "like the method used by dressmakers in cutting their cloth from paper patterns."⁶⁶ Once the glass was cut, construction lines would be burnt into it, in a kiln. Next, the pieces were put together on an easel with wax, so the shading and detailed painting could be completed. Again, those features were kiln-fired into the glass.

The last step would come when all the pieces were assembled and soldered together with strips of soft lead. After application of a waterproofing finish, the window was done. Given the detail of such labors, it is remarkable that Oliver Smith completed them with only one functioning arm. He had lost the use of the other due to infantile paralysis. He had pursued his artistic interests nonetheless, and one of his professors in Rhode Island supported him, saying "to be an artist, all you need is a good brain and a good hand. You have both."⁶⁷ Smith was also extensively helped by his wife, Hope Fales Smith, who was very much a partner in his studios.

Smith claimed to be one of only two stained-glass artisans in America during the period who actually made their own colored glass "from formulas followed by glassmakers of the 13th century."⁶⁸ The primary colors and other shades were of singular quality, using his secret recipes, yielding something far superior to mass produced commercial products.⁶⁹ Smith's work was the result of true arts and crafts, on the small scale of a

⁶³ The Stained-glass Association of America, "History of Stained-glass." <http://stainedglass.org/history-of-stained-glass/>

⁶⁴ These quotes and others that follow, along with descriptions of the process, come from Oliver Smith Studios, *The Art of Stained-glass* (Bryn Athyn, PA: Oliver Smith Studios, undated).

⁶⁵ "Stained-glass," *Philadelphia Record*, ca. 1950. Feature on Oliver Smith, clipping in Christ Church archives.

⁶⁶ John N. Warren, "The Rector's Letter," *Christ Church Compass* (September 1964), 17.

⁶⁷ "Warren, "The Rector's Letter," 13.

⁶⁸ Warren, "The Rector's Letter," 15. These words may be a quotation from the Oyster Bay *Enterprise-Pilot* (1941), of which Oliver Smith's father Charles was editor in the 1940s. Perhaps the claim was made by Oliver himself, given his knowledge of the trade and of his fellow artisans.

⁶⁹ Oliver Smith Studios, *The Art of Stained-glass* (Bryn Athyn, PA: Oliver Smith Studios, undated).

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cottage industry. Smith was “especially proud of his blues and greens.” Later in his career, he imprinted his letterhead with the words, “Makers of handblown glass in the colors of the 13th century.” As stated in the parish magazine, *The Compass*, “It is not an exaggeration to say that in Christ Church has been continued the traditional beauties resident in [Chartres].”⁷⁰ Dr. Talmage wrote, “Chartres Cathedral is the most famous in the world for its windows and we are fortunate when so many strangers seeing our windows at once detect their source.”⁷¹

Once the vestry employed him, Smith set up a temporary studio on the grounds of Christ Church. He made the three largest windows, to be located above the altar and in the transepts, on site. Later on, Smith made the windows for the main body of the church in his studios in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. The windows were made and installed gradually, as donor after donor gave what was necessary. The three initial large windows were given by the Beekman family. By the mid-1930s, the whole set was complete. The names of several prominent Oyster Bay families, including the Townsend, Underhill, and Weekes families, who paid for windows, are noted on plaques.

Smith’s windows have a grand design. They tell the Bible story, one stage at a time, moving from the Old Testament to the New, as the viewer moves from the back of the building (west) to the front (east). To the rear left, the first in the series tells the Creation story – Adam and Eve, the tree and the Serpent, their expulsion from the Garden of Eden. Then, Cain and Abel, followed by a beautiful triplet of scenes of Noah building the Ark, the animals getting on board, and finally the dove and the rainbow. The middle range on that side shows Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph and the building and the fall of the Tower of Babel. Finally, the windows show the stories of Exodus, from the infancy of Moses to his death, including the Burning Bush, meetings with Pharaoh, then the parting of the Red Sea, and the Ten Commandments. On the south side, the windows include the Israelites’ conquests, a “Royal” window featuring David, Solomon and others, and the Old Testament prophets.

The three largest windows, in the transepts and over the high altar, portray New Testament events. The north transept window includes scenes of the birth, youth, and earlier years of Jesus; it includes a central Madonna and Child surrounded by the Annunciation, the flight into Egypt, the 12-year-old Jesus talking to the Doctors in the Temple, Jesus in the Carpenter’s Shop with Joseph, and finally his baptism. The south transept window depicts scenes from Christ’s ministry; it includes blessing the little children, washing the disciples’ feet, stilling the storm, raising Lazarus, entering Jerusalem, and casting moneychangers out of the temple. The most magnificent window is the one above the high altar, showing scenes of Christ’s Passion and Resurrection. It includes the Last Supper, the agony in the garden, betrayal by Judas Iscariot, Christ bearing the cross, the Crucifixion, the empty tomb, his appearance to the disciples in the upper room, and his meeting in the garden with Mary Magdalene. All the scenes are surmounted by the grand figure of the Risen Christ in glory. The purpose, placement and design of the windows leads the viewer to move through time, from the Hebrew Bible to the New Testament and through the life of Jesus. This architectural storytelling harkens back to medieval times, when so many people were illiterate. Pictures in glass were a form of teaching, and such windows continue to serve this purpose today.

⁷⁰ Warren, “The Rector’s Letter,” 15.

⁷¹ George E. Talmage, *Christ Church Confidences*, May 30, 1926. Weekly parish newsletter written and distributed by the rector, Christ Church archives.

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While working on the windows for Christ Church, Oliver Smith began taking on a number of other commissions, mostly for churches in the northeast. With the assistance of his wife, son, and the stained-glass artisans in his studio, Smith worked prolifically. By his death in 1980, Smith had completed projects for at least 55 institutions, totaling 279 known stained-glass windows (Appendix 1).

Christ Church during the Twentieth Century

In the succession of rectors, the Rev. Dr. Harold Pattison served from 1934 to 1940. He was succeeded by the Rev. John N. Warren (1940 to 1967). Born in England, Warren had previously been a Baptist minister; then, before coming to Christ Church, he was rector of the Church of the Epiphany, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Warren was the longest-serving rector in Christ Church's history (27 years), and a towering figure in the life of the parish. Before his arrival, with the freshly refashioned church building and its completed set of fine stained-glass windows, Christ Church was poised to flourish, and Warren's tenure was a period of great strength. The impact of his commanding presence and communication skills were one factor. Others were the increasing suburbanization of Nassau County, widespread car ownership expanding access for those inclined to travel to the church from farther afield, and, in time, the baby boom. Together such factors yielded so great a harvest of members that Sunday school facilities became inadequate. Warren launched a major capital campaign to mark the parish's 250th anniversary in 1955. At that time the congregation was numbered at "287 families and 90 [single] individuals," plus "a countless number of friends who depend on it for guidance." The most urgent need was for more classroom space. In the first 14 years of Warren's tenure, Sunday school enrollment "jumped from 75 to 267 students" and was "growing at an unprecedented pace." This was attributed to "the continued rapid growth of the communities surrounding Oyster Bay." Shortage of classroom space was so acute that every nook of the parish hall was used, even basement hallways, and it became necessary to hold Sunday school in two sessions, one at 9:45 and the other at 11:00.⁷²

The proposed solution was a major expansion of the parish hall, creating a "New Christian Education Unit." The hall had been expanded once before, in 1909, with the addition of an octagonal room at its north end (which came to be known as St Hilda's Room). This new plan, however, designed by the architectural firm Ryder, Struppmann & Neumann, was far greater, and would create a two-story addition on the south end incorporating a new entrance, expanding the building's footprint nearly to the sidewalk. The campaign succeeded and the external result may be seen in the parish hall today, its architectural style in keeping with the original hall and the rectory, giving the church campus "a harmonious view" and the capacity to "enter a new and greater sphere of influence in the lives of ... hundreds of young people."⁷³

Another focus of the appeal was money for a new and better organ. As far back as the 1840s, Christ Church had made a priority of fine music, sometimes hiring professional musicians from New York City. Warren observed that "The music of the Episcopal Church is one of the finest elements of worship," but even among Episcopal establishments Christ Church came to be a standout. As is still the case today, its quality of music became a magnet for a "gathered congregation," people prepared to drive a significant distance, passing a number of other Episcopal churches on the way.

⁷² "A Pillar of Faith," Campaign appeal booklet, printed by Christ Church in 1955.

⁷³ "A Pillar of Faith."

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The growth of the church in the 1950s, partly stimulated by the need for better and larger Sunday School programs, reflected trends in the Episcopal Church nationally. Remarkably, “by 1960, one out of every fifty-five Americans was a member of the Episcopal Church.”⁷⁴ During this period, Episcopal churches abounded in programs, social life, and charitable work undertaken for worthy causes. The latter was embodied, at Christ Church, most notably in the work of St Hilda’s Parish Aid, a ladies’ society which combined friendship with outreach, including health clinics for children, knitting for soldiers, and a renowned annual fair. Other organizations included a men’s club which met weekly, a ‘Guild of the Christ Child,’ the Altar Guild, the Acolytes’ Guild, a weekly Young People’s Fellowship, and a group called ‘Friday Nighters.’ In 1946 the parish hall became the home of Christ Church Nursery School, for children aged 2 through kindergarten; the nursery school became organizationally distinct from the parish several decades later. This shift from “church” to “community” use of the parish hall, especially on weekdays, was to be extended in the 1970s when Christ Church first opened its doors to the Doubleday Babcock Senior Center (now the Life Enrichment Center of Oyster Bay).

Later History of Christ Church

The Rev. Robert T. Hollett was rector from 1968 to 1987. In his first year, he reported that Christ Church had 668 communicants. During Hollett’s rector-ship, the church installed a remarkable organ (1986), the work of Helmuth Wolff and Associates of Québec, one of the finest organs of its kind on Long Island. Hollett was followed by the Rev. Bruce Griffith (1987 to 2002). Griffith presided over a greatly admired remodeling of the church interior in 1995, the work of architects Allen, Harbinson & Associates of New York. The project included the addition of ceramic tile flooring and elegant lanterns and an alteration of the layout to better suit changing twentieth century liturgical movement and patterns of worship. At this time, the rectory also underwent a restoration and renovation and remains in use as the home of the rector; the space is also used for small church gatherings in the old school rooms. The parish hall was the center of many outreach programs instituted in the last half of the 20th century. The “Doubleday-Babcock Center, a program for senior citizens, started in the parish hall before they changed their name to the Life Enrichment Center and moved three buildings away to their own facility. The building also hosts a local chapter of Alcoholics” Anonymous, a local Spanish-speaking parish (El Camino de Vida), and a pre-school program (The Learning Tree Nursery, now independent of the church) throughout the year.

The Rev. Peter Casparian served as rector of Christ Church from 2004 until 2014. Under his guidance, an increasing number of local community organizations began using Christ Church for meetings and programs that they could not hold in their own facilities. The Parish Hall, which was restored and renovated in 2008 through donations from the Oyster Bay community, became the host for many of these programs. After this project, the Life Enrichment Center of Oyster Bay started holding their Daybreak Program for physically and mentally frail elderly in the parish hall. In 2015, the Sylvia Redington Community Garden was established on the church grounds.

In addition to music during church services, the Adult Choir of Christ Church and Festival Orchestra present an extremely popular annual Gala Concert for our local community and members of the congregation. A

⁷⁴ See “The Church Triumphant (1945-65),” in Prichard, 292.

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regular series of "Concerts at Christ Church" provides additional events featuring distinguished performers, including many local groups and touring ensembles, which are also very popular with the local community. Chiefly "secular" performances of classical music, from baroque to modern, these concerts are scheduled and supported by the church. Christ Church and its campus continues to address the spiritual and social needs of the Oyster Bay community as it has throughout the past 213 years.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.17 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>624070</u> Easting	<u>4525647</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

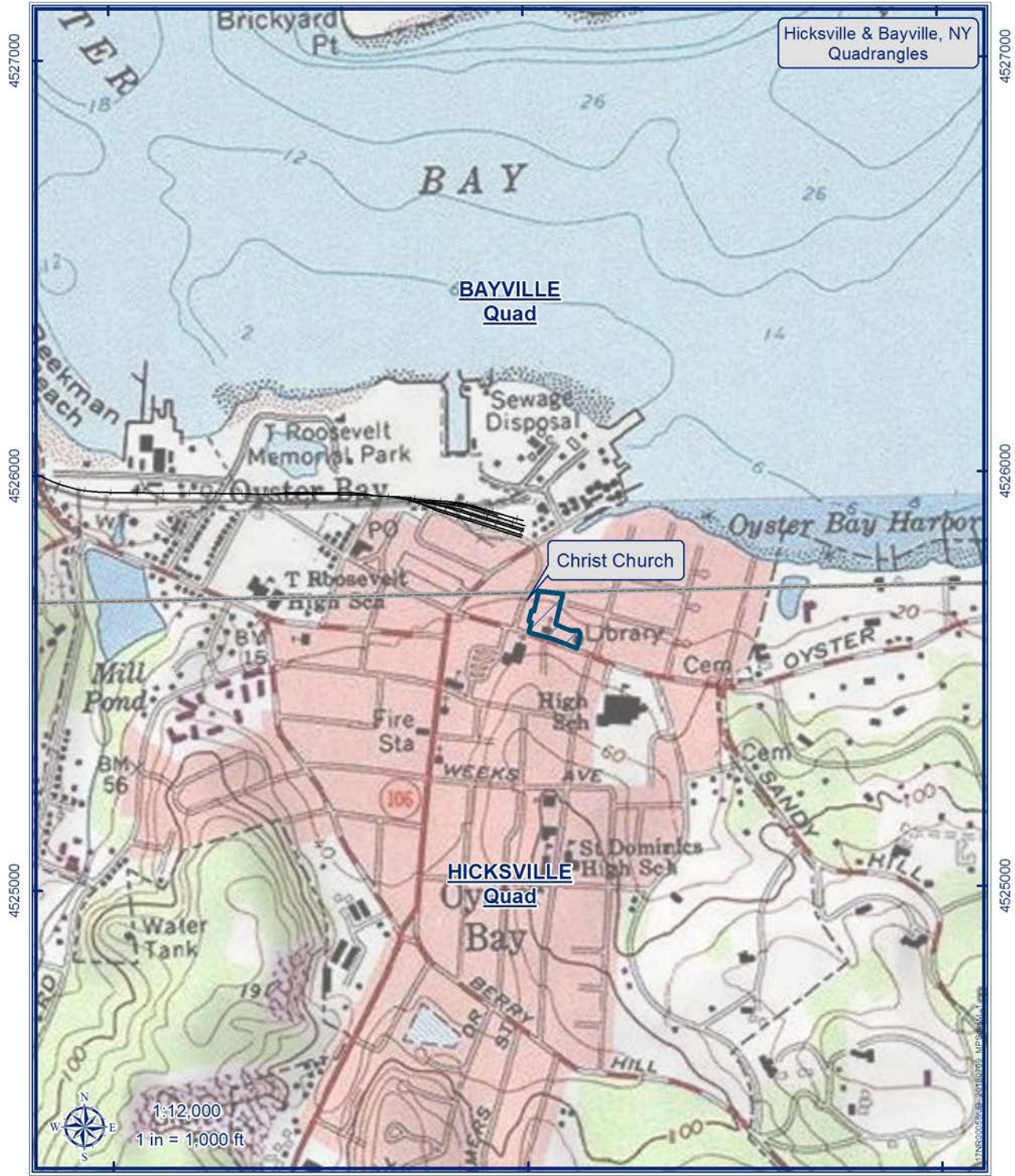
The nomination boundary includes the lot historically associated with Christ Church.

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Christ Church
Oyster Bay, Nassau Co., NY

61 East Main Street
Oyster Bay, NY 11771



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



Christ Church
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County and State

Christ Church
Oyster Bay, Nassau Co., NY

61 East Main Street
Oyster Bay, NY 11771



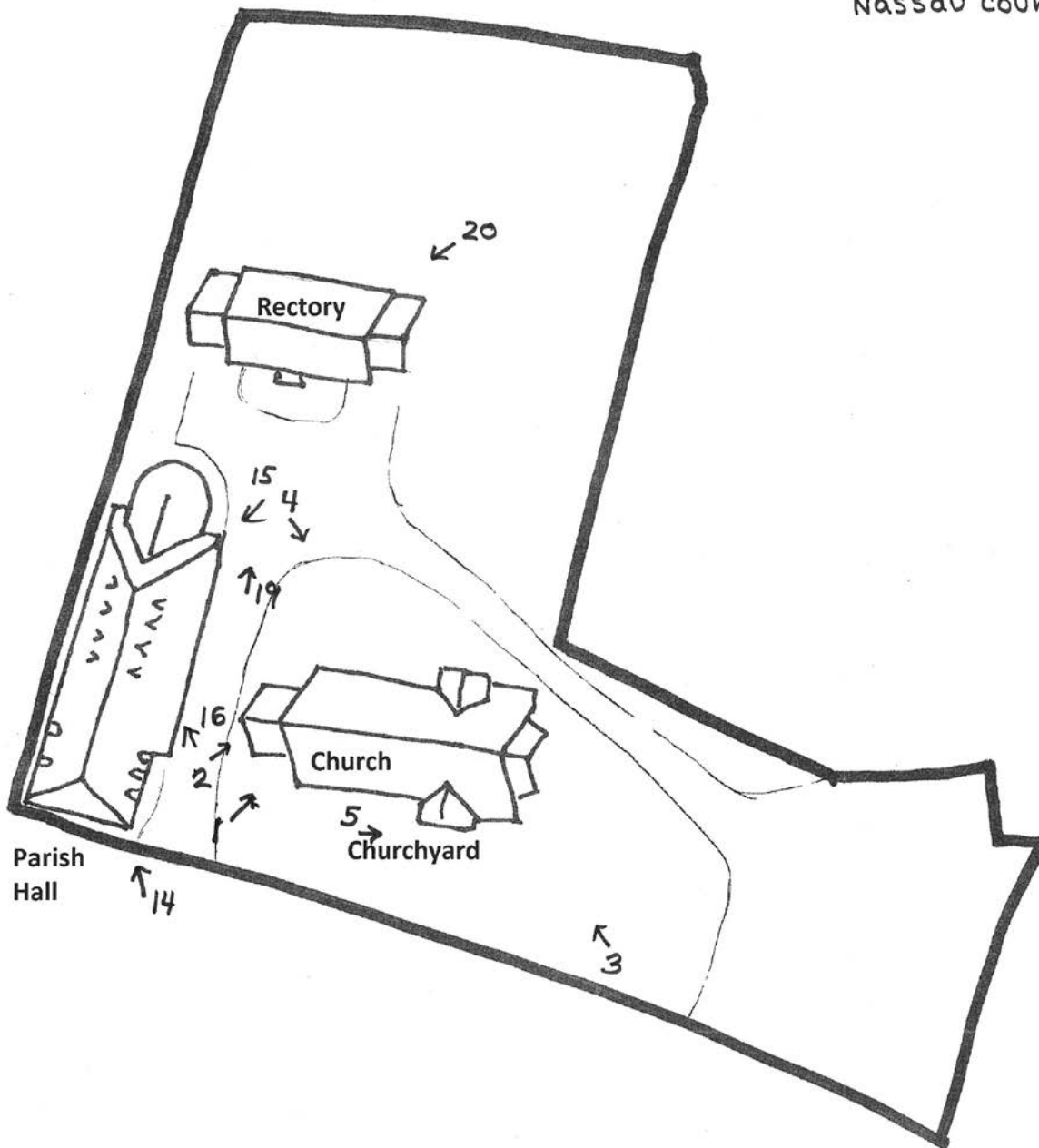
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



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Christ Church
Oyster Bay
Nassau County



Christ Church
Name of Property

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title William R. Denslow and Rev. Michael Piret (edited by Jennifer Betsworth NY SHPO)
organization Christ Church date July 2018
street & number 61 East Main Street telephone _____
city or town Oyster Bay state NY zip code 11771
e-mail _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Christ Church
City or Vicinity: Oyster Bay
County: Nassau State: NY
Photographer: William Denslow
Date Photographed: 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0001
Christ Church, south and west elevations, facing northeast

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0002
Christ Church, west elevation, facing northeast

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0003
Christ Church, south and east elevations, facing northwest

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0004
Christ Church, north elevation, facing south

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0005
Churchyard, facing west

Christ Church

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NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0006

Christ Church, interior, rear vestibule, facing southwest

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0007

Christ Church, interior, rear vestibule, facing south

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0008

Christ Church, sanctuary, facing west

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0009

Christ Church, sanctuary, facing east

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0010

Christ Church, sanctuary, Roosevelt pew, facing west

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0011

Christ Church, sanctuary, chancel and organ, facing east

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0012

Christ Church, north transept window, facing west

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0013

Christ Church, south transept window, facing east

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0014

Parish Hall, south and east elevations, facing northwest

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0015

Parish Hall, east elevation, facing southwest

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0016

Parish Hall, east elevation, facing northwest

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0017

Parish Hall, Interior, St. Hilda's Room, facing north

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0018

Parish Hall, Interior, Auditorium, facing south

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0019

Rectory (south elevation) and Parish Hall (east elevation), facing north

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0020

Rectory, north and east elevations, facing southwest

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0021

Rectory, student graffiti, facing east

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0022

Rectory, interior, central hall, facing north

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0023

Rectory, interior, facing southwest

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NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0024

Rectory, interior, facing northeast

NY_Nassau Co_Christ Church_0025

Rectory, interior, rear door, facing north

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Appendix: Listing of Stained-glass Window installations by Oliver Smith & Son
Created by Richard Smith (1980)

St. Johns Evang. Lutheran Church	Fogelsville, PA
Christ Church (Episcopal)	West Haven, CT
Christ Lutheran Church	Freeport, NY
St. James Lutheran Church	Ozone Park, NY
St Paul's (Episcopal)	Dayton, OH
St. Paul's Lutheran Church	Valley Stream, NY
St. Joseph's Church (105 Glenwood Ave.)	Binghamton, NY
St. Rita's Church (Catholic)	Dundalk, MD
Ewing Cemetery Assn. (Chapel)	Ewing, NJ
Pigeon Cove Chapel	Pigeon Cove, MA
All Saints (Episcopal)	Scotch Plains, NJ
Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church	Baltimore, MD
Nazareth Hospital Chapel	Philadelphia, PA
St. Mary's Episcopal Church	Rockport, MA
Church of the Brethren	Hershey, PA
Wharton St. Baptist Church	Philadelphia, PA
Convent of St. Joseph	Brentwood, NY
Epiphany Church (Episcopal) (10)	Providence, RI
First Congregational Church	Columbus, OH
Princeton University Chapel (5)	Princeton, NJ
East Liberty Presbyterian Church	Pittsburgh, PA
Northminster Community Church	Washington, DC
Congregational Church	Rockville Centre, NY
Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church (15)	Plainfield, NJ
Temple Emanuel	New York, NY
Congregation B'nai B'rith	Los Angeles, CA
Congregational Church (8)	Oakland, CA
Church of the Blessed Sacrament	Trenton, NJ
Christ Church Oyster Bay (18)	Oyster Bay, NY
Temple Israel	Lawrence, NY
Trinity Church	Swarthmore, PA
Corgas Dane Community Church	Philadelphia, PA
Grace Methodist Church	Washington, DC
Unitarian Church	Plainfield, NJ
First Presbyterian Church (10)	Camden, NJ
Lutheran Church of the Reformation (6)	Washington, DC
Carpatho-Russian Greek Cathedral (50)	Bridgeport, CT
Albright Memorial Church	Washington, DC
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church	Manoa, PA
Congregation Rodeph Sholom	Bridgeport, CT
First Baptist Church	Los Angeles, CA
Immanuel Lutheran Church	Philadelphia, PA

Christ Church

Name of Property

Nassau County, NY

County and State

Christ Lutheran Church
St. Andrew's Church
Clothier Memorial Hall
Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church
St. Mary's Church
Trinity Episcopal Church
St. Paul's Church
Baptist Church
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Wittenberg College Chapel (50)
St. Ann's Church
Temple Sinai
University of Pennsylvania
St. Peter's Lutheran Church
All Saints Episcopal Church
Catholic Church (55)

Hazleton, PA
Drexel Hills, PA
Swarthmore, PA
Winston-Salem, NC
Redford, MI
Galveston, TX
Glenside, PA
Lansdowne, PA
Mount Holly, NJ
Springfield, OH
Wilmington, DE
Philadelphia, PA
Philadelphia, PA
Miami, FL
Tarpon Springs, FL
Binghamton, NY

55 Total Installations; 279 Windows

Christ Church
Name of Property

Nassau County, NY
County and State

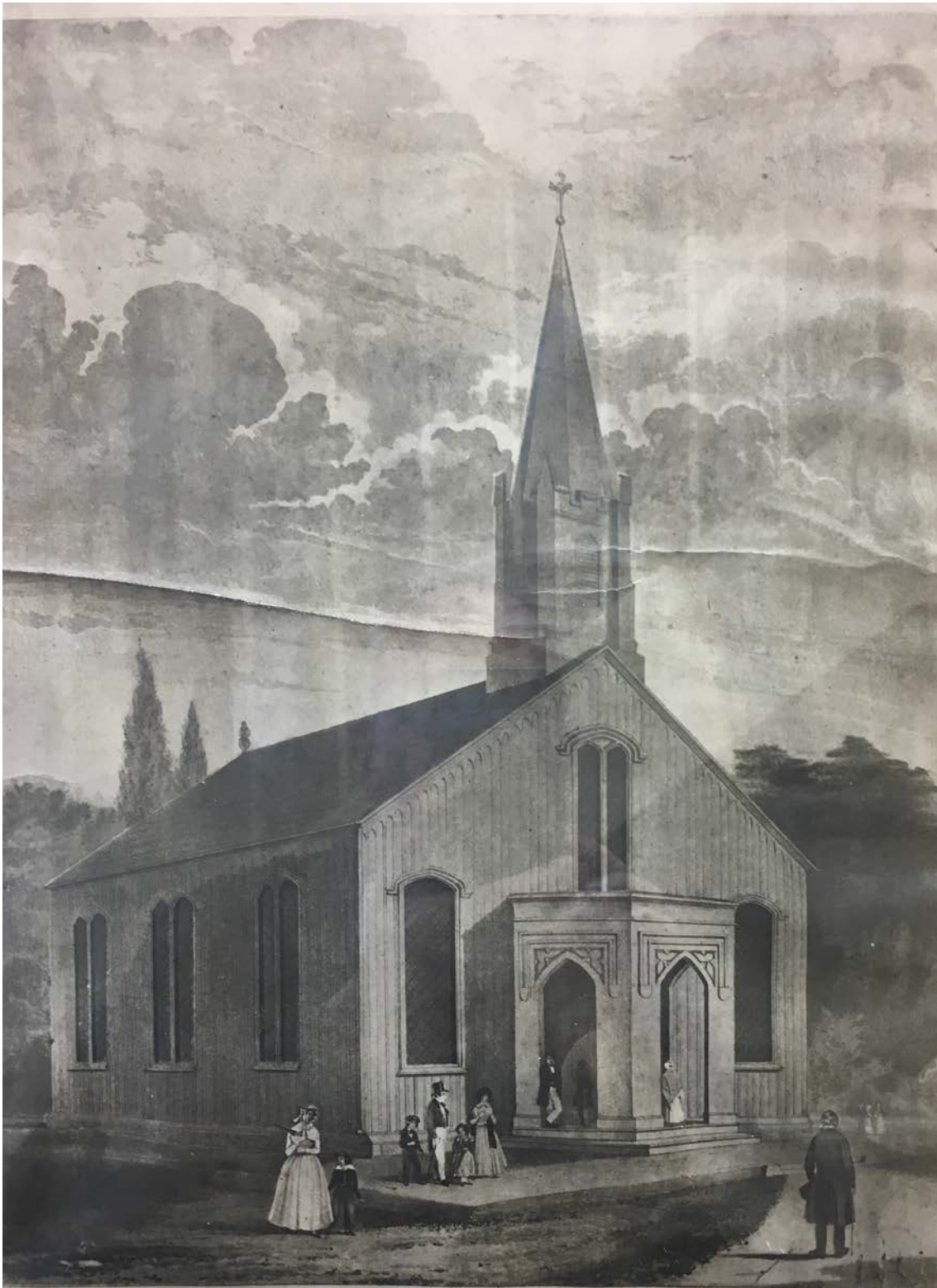


Figure 1. Christ Church, 1750. Christ Church archives.

Christ Church
Name of Property

Nassau County, NY
County and State



Figure 2. Christ Church, 1878. Christ Church archives.

Christ Church
Name of Property

Nassau County, NY
County and State



Figure 3. Parish Hall, ca. 1900. Christ Church archives.

Christ Church
Name of Property

Nassau County, NY
County and State



Figure 4. Theodore Roosevelt's funeral at Christ Church, 1919. AP Photo.



Christ Church
founded 1705

Episcopal
Church
of the
Holy Trinity









EXIT

AED
♥

RESTROOMS
LOCATED
IN THE
ADJOINING HALL





EXIT









TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND THE MEMORIAL OF
QUENTIN ROOSEVELT
BORN JULY 8, 1894
DIED JANUARY 11, 1918
AGE 23
MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE

TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND THE MEMORIAL OF
THEODORE ROOSEVELT
BORN OCTOBER 27, 1858
DIED SEPTEMBER 6, 1900
AGE 41
MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE

TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND THE MEMORIAL OF
THEODORE ROOSEVELT
BORN OCTOBER 27, 1858
DIED SEPTEMBER 6, 1900
AGE 41
MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE

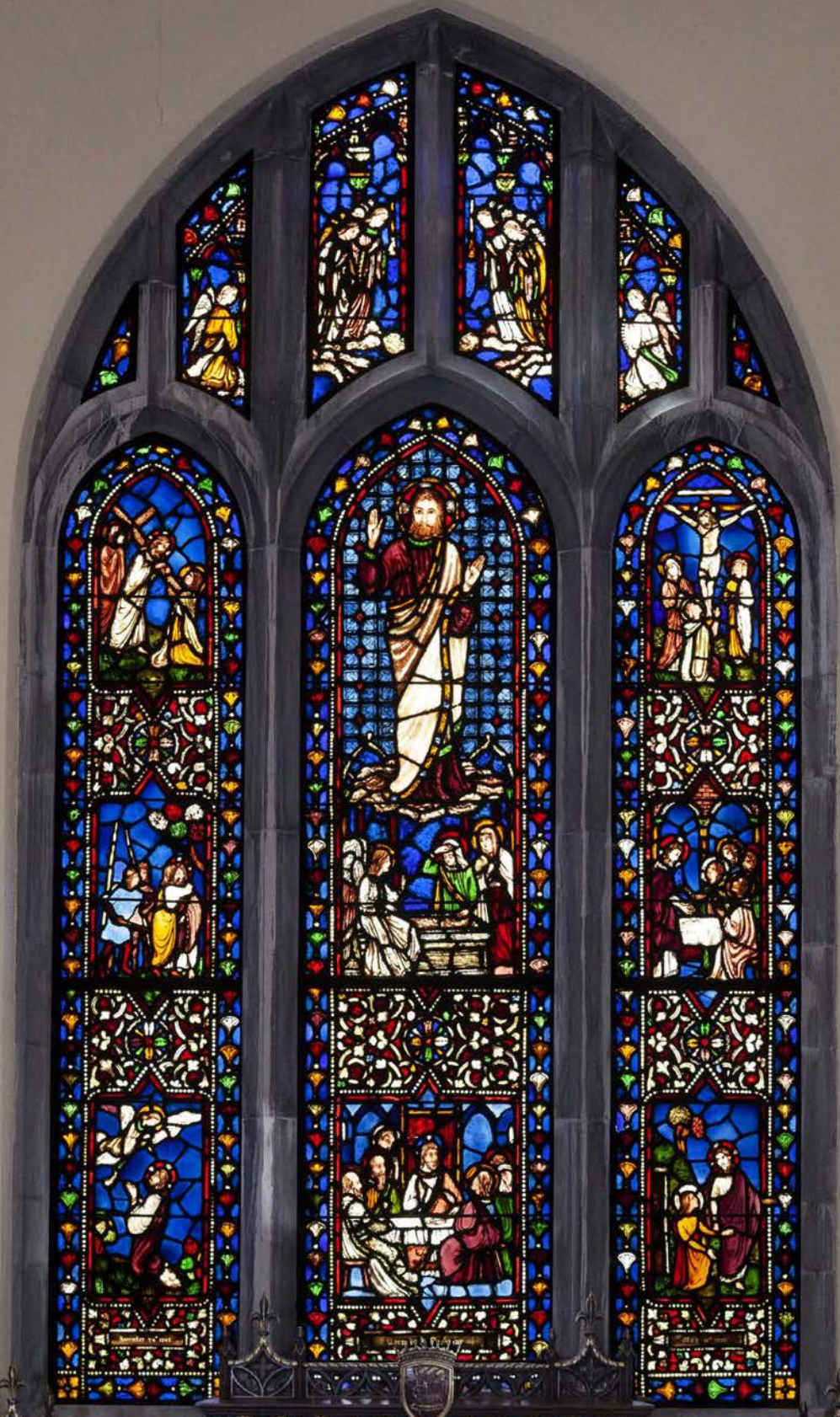
TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND THE MEMORIAL OF
QUENTIN ROOSEVELT
BORN JULY 8, 1894
DIED JANUARY 11, 1918
AGE 23
MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE

TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND THE MEMORIAL OF
ELEANOR B. ROOSEVELT
BORN MARCH 28, 1870
DIED JUNE 22, 1962
AGE 92
MAY HER SOUL REST IN PEACE

TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND THE MEMORIAL OF
THEODORE ROOSEVELT
BORN OCTOBER 27, 1858
DIED SEPTEMBER 6, 1900
AGE 41
MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE

TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND THE MEMORIAL OF
QUENTIN ROOSEVELT
BORN JULY 8, 1894
DIED JANUARY 11, 1918
AGE 23
MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE







September 1887

James W. Graham

June 1887



SUNSHINE

15 MINUTE PARKING

NO PARKING

CAUTION CHILDREN AT PLAY 3 MPH





PARISH
HALL



















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 10/2/2018 Date of Pending List: 10/25/2018 Date of 16th Day: 11/9/2018 Date of 45th Day: 11/16/2018 Date of Weekly List: 11/9/2018

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 11/9/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria

Reviewer Alexis Abernathy Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2236 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner



27 September 2018

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places

Mail Stop 7228

1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following eight nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Norwich Pharmacal Company Warehouse, Chenango County
Christ Church, Nassau County
First Reformed Church of College Point, Queens County
First African Methodist Episcopal Church: Bethel, New York County
North Park Branch Library, Erie County
Methodist Episcopal Church of Jacksonville, Tompkins County
Chandler Street Industrial Buildings, Erie County
Abingdon and New Abingdon Apartments, Jefferson County

Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office