

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

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received **DEC 12 1983**

date entered

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

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

1. Name

historic Tumwater Methodist Church

and/or common Unitarian Church

2. Location

street & number 219 West B Street not for publication

city, town Tumwater vicinity of

state Washington code 053 county Thurston code 067

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Olympia

street & number 219 West B Street

city, town Tumwater vicinity of Washington 98502

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Thurston County Courthouse

street & number 2000 Lakeridge Drive S.W.

city, town Olympia vicinity of Washington 98502

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Washington State Inventory of
Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date December 1974 federal state county local

depository for survey records Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town Olympia vicinity of Washington 98504

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Tumwater Methodist Church is a small wood frame building located on a hill overlooking the original site of the Tumwater settlement. The building is rectangular with clapboard siding and a small belfry sits atop the east side of the structure's gable roof. The church has been altered several times, the most significant being an addition at the rear of the building that was constructed in 1930. Despite these alterations, the building maintains much of its original appearance and continues to be an important community landmark.

The Tumwater church was one of the earliest churches built by American settlers in Washington Territory. The building is located at the corner of Second Avenue and West B Street and faces east over the Deschutes River, the Olympia Brewery, and the Tumwater Historic District (National Register, 1978). Interstate Highway No. 5 now separates the church from the historic district and these other notable features, but the small church still visually dominates the hillside. Surrounding the church on its north, west, and south elevations is a largely residential neighborhood with homes dating from the 1900's through the present time. The building's original foundation was constructed of thick cedar sills resting on a bed of sand. The posts for the building were mortise and tenoned into the sills and secured with pegs. The main entrance to the church is on the east gable end of the building. Newer concrete steps lead to a doorway that has a plain surround topped by an unusual pediment. This thickly molded pediment is tapered at its peak rather than triangular and has a flat wooden star in the tympanum. The original double doors to the church have been replaced, and the transom light between the doors and pediment has been reglazed. Near the peak of the gable on this east elevation is a circular window with spoke-like muntins. The glass in the window has been replaced with a wood panel. Four tall evenly-spaced windows are located on the north elevation of the church and three are located on the south elevation. These four over four, double-hung wood sash windows have plain surrounds and simple molded lintels. The roofline of the church is distinguished by a molded cornice with sloping soffit and frieze board. The roof itself is clad in asphalt shingles.

The most ornamental feature of the building is the belfry which is located above the main entrance at the peak of the roof. The belfry has a square base and on each of its four sides is a louvered round-arch opening. Flanking these openings are small pilasters which support a decorative scroll sawn frieze and molded cornice. Topping the belfry is a polygonal spire clad in sheet metal. Originally, this spire was taller and covered in squared and fishscale shingles arranged in a decorative pattern. It was destroyed by a storm in 1962 and replaced in its present configuration. Also lost are small paired brackets once located beneath the belfry's cornice. The original bell in the church was removed when the Methodist congregation moved to a new church in 1968.

An annex was added to the west side of the building 1930. The gable roof of this rectangular structure was placed at a cross-axis to the gable of the original church. This annex houses a meeting room and kitchen and is clad in novelty siding and wide lapped boards. Other details include exposed rafter tails, paired six over one, double-hung windows and a new sliding glass door and wood deck on the west side. A small bathroom ell was also added to the southwest corner of the original building, obscuring one of the original windows. A concrete block basement was added under the annex in 1946.

In 1960, the interior of the church was completely changed. New paneling was added, the windows were shortened (not visible from the exterior) and the ceiling was lowered. Originally, the ceiling of the church was high and flat, but a new arched ceiling was

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Continuation sheet

Item number

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constructed at a level considerably lower than the original. The old ceiling is still visible from a door in the annex.

In 1976, the sagging foundation of the church was shored up with a concrete block footing. Recently, wheel chair access was provided by cutting a new door between the windows on the north side and building a wooden ramp on the exterior.

To the south of the church is the original parsonage, also built in 1872. Unfortunately, this building has been completely altered with new siding, fenestration, porches, and eaves. The historic form and fabric of the building has been totally lost. The building is presently under separate ownership.

While the aforementioned changes to the old church have impacted the integrity of the original structure, the building maintains most of its original exterior detailing and the annex imitates the scale and materials of the old church. When viewed from the east, the church continues to present the same peaceful image that it has for the past 111 years.

Stylistically, the building is quite similar to the churches that were built throughout the west during the period of its early settlement. Most were simple rectangular frame structures with a steeple over the gabled entrance. Often they employed gothic detailing and have become commonly known as "Carpenter Gothic" churches. However, it was not unusual for these churches to employ other styles and the classically derived details of this church imply a debt to the popular Italianate Style. Of course, these elements were necessarily simplified by the conditions of pioneer life in this early Puget Sound community.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Dedicated June 21, 1872 **Builder/Architect** Built by members of the congregation under the direction of Reverend A.C. Fairchild

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Tumwater Methodist Church is one of the oldest surviving churches in Washington State. The building is a good example of a basic church design that was adopted with minor variations by congregations throughout the Northwest. The building is also closely associated with the settlement of Tumwater and was utilized by prominent members of the pioneer community. The building stands as a reminder of the importance of religion in the lives of the settlers and is a testimonial to the generous spirit of the community which allowed various denominations to hold services there.

As noted earlier in the nomination, the building displays a number of features common to the pioneer churches of the Northwest. Derivative of the gable-fronted meeting houses of the Eastern United States, these buildings were usually simple frame structures with a prominent steeple or belfry. Indeed, the Tumwater Church played an important visual role in this small town not unlike that of a New England church on its town green. It was the tallest building in the town and from its hillside location it was Tumwater's most prominent landmark. This is evident from a "birds-eye" map drawn of the area in 1879. While the town itself was founded twenty-seven years before in 1845 (the first American settlement on Puget Sound), the building remains one of the handful of buildings in the community from this earliest period of settlement.

The building enjoys close historical ties with the founders of Tumwater such as Captain Clanrick Crosby, Nelson Barnes, T.F. Berney, John Dickinson, and James Biles. Under the inspiration of Reverend A.C. Fairchild, Pastor of Olympia, \$1,300 was raised in one day to build the church. The actual construction of the church was a community effort spurred by Captain Crosby, who challenged a friend, Nelson Barnes, to give as much money as he did toward a church. Barnes responded with funds and deeded the property on which to build the church. Labor was donated, and on June 21, 1872, the church was dedicated, debt free. A parsonage adjacent to the church, which still stands, was completed in October 1872 to house Reverend Herbert Patterson, the first pastor of the new church. The cost of the parsonage was recorded at \$374.82. The Methodist congregation has been part of Tumwater since its earliest days. The area was part of the "Ground Mound Circuit" of the Methodist Church, including the neighboring communities of Bucoda, Bush Prairie, Black River, Ford's Prairie, and Mound's Prairie.

When completed, the church was also used by Presbyterians, Unitarians, and Episcopalians as a union facility, but because the Methodists were more abundant, the church was identified with them. The ministers who served the church were mostly "circuit riders," traveling 20 miles or more from Tumwater.

The building is thus an important reflection of the ecumenical spirit of the early town that allowed various congregations to worship in the church. It is also a reminder of the system of pioneer settlement that necessitated "circuit riding" ministers.

The Methodists obtained complete control of the church and continued to occupy it until 1968. Continuing the tradition of a "union" church, the Unitarian congregation today shares the building with community church groups.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Burns, Bartlett, Interview, January 1977.

Glover, E.S., "Birds-eye View of East Olympia and Tumwater," Bancroft & Co. Lithographers, San Francisco, 1879.

Hopkins, Reverend Ebenezer, "History of Tumwater Methodist Church"

Mills, Ruth, "History of the Tumwater Methodist-Episcopal Church" (cont.)

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Tumwater

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	0	5	0	7	1	6	0	5	2	0	6	5	4	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification The north 60 feet of the east half of Block 2 of Supplemental Plat of Barnes Addition to Tumwater as recorded in Volume 6 of Plats, page 4; excepting therefrom the west 5 feet for alley.

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
N/A			

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Shanna Stevenson	Edited by Mark L. Brack
organization	Tumwater Historical Society	Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
street & number	3032 South Lybarger	date August 1983
city or town	Olympia	telephone (206) 943-4212
		state Washington 98501

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date December 9, 1983

For NPS use only

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

entered in the
National Register

date 1/12/84

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

