

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

359

# 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.

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Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: All Souls Church  
Other names/site number: All Souls' Church, All Souls Church Unitarian Universalist  
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 196 Elm Street  
City or town: Braintree State: MA County: Norfolk  
Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 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 ✓ 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  
Applicable National Register Criteria:  
  x   A     B   x   C     D

Brona Simon May 5, 2015  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Brona Simon, SHPO Date  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

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**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:)

*for Edson H. Beall*      *7-7-15*  
Signature of the Keeper      Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: Religious facility

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: Religious facility

EDUCATION: School

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Late Gothic Revival

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Tudor Revival

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: STONE, WOOD, STUCCO

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### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### **Summary Paragraph**

All Souls Church is a large (70'x138') 1½-story Late Gothic/Tudor Revival church building in Braintree, Massachusetts, with walls of uncut, uncoursed fieldstone, Indiana limestone trim, and a slate roof. All Souls Church occupies a prominent corner lot of less than an acre on the heavily traveled east-west Elm Street in northern Braintree, a block from where Elm Street crosses a major railway corridor and MA Route 3 (which run north/south between Boston and Plymouth). The building has picturesque sequential massing, beginning on the southern end (near Elm Street) with the low formal vestibule and the long nave of the sanctuary, which is bracketed by a short transept and three-story battlemented tower at its chancel end. Continuing to the north is an intermediate central cross hall, which opens along its north side into a large parish hall running the width of the building, its gabled roofline parallel to the transept, and finally the kitchen and pantry in an ell at the northwest corner. Gothic Revival details include stepped stone buttresses with limestone caps, small hipped-roof dormers high in the roof plane, lancet gable windows with stone tracery, and half-timbered gable ends. The sanctuary and parish hall have open rafter ceilings paneled in Carolina pine and dominated by king-post trusses. Built in 1905, the church has remained relatively unchanged on the exterior. The previously unfinished basement was turned into Sunday school rooms in 1958, and the interior circulation somewhat modified after damage by a 1970 fire led to a restoration. Following recent (2011) repairs to its slate roof, the building is in good condition and retains integrity.

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### **Narrative Description**

NOTE ON DIRECTIONS: All Souls Church faces directly toward Elm Street, which travels from west-southwest to east-northeast. Thus the front vestibule and the façade of the building is on the southeast end, and the chancel faces to the northwest. To simplify descriptions and clarify directions, in this nomination Elm Street will be considered as running east-west, and the main roof ridge of the building, which parallels Charles Street, as north-south.

All Souls Church (BRA.234) is located in the northern part of Braintree, near MA Route 3 and a quarter mile from its southbound Exit 18 and the tangled highways of the Braintree split, where Route 3 emerges from Route 128/Interstate 93. The church faces southward onto busy Elm Street, an important east-west arterial that connects MA Route 53, along the coast, with Washington Street, Braintree's main civic and business corridor. All Souls Church stands three blocks east of historic Storrs Square (today known as Braintree Square), the intersection of Elm Street and Washington Street, which is the site of five successive meeting house/Congregational church buildings (currently Braintree First Congregational Church, 18 Elm Street, BRA.8) This intersection was the town's civic hub in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, before the rise of South Braintree, further down Washington Street. Between Braintree Square and All Souls Church, Elm Street becomes an overpass, crossing the limited-access divided-highway Route 3 and the MBTA train tracks. In the late 1950s, Elm Street was split in front of All Souls Church near the



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intersection with Church Street, with the new northerly branch crossing the overpass towards Braintree Square. Elm's original branch, to the south, is now cut off from Elm Street, and considered part of the Service Road under the Elm Street overpass that connects with Elm Terrace. Just south of this overpass, at a site that used to be a train station, the MBTA tracks split, with the main branch (Red Line subway and commuter rail) going south toward Braintree Station, and a side branch going eastward as part of the newly reopened (2007) Greenbush Commuter Rail line.

Despite these transportation pressures on the neighborhood, it still generally maintains a suburban residential character, primarily a mix of larger 19<sup>th</sup>-century houses and smaller early 20<sup>th</sup>-century bungalows and revival-style houses. The Church and Elm Streets Area (BRA.R) is a residential neighborhood bounded by the Service Road/former Elm Street and the curving railroad right-of-way for the South Shore Railroad/Greenbush Commuter Rail line. This pocket neighborhood includes two larger Victorian houses—the Thomas B. Vinton House (163 Elm Street, ca. 1875, BRA.519) and the Charles E. French House (173 Elm Street, ca. 1880, BRA.383)—as well as a dozen or more smaller houses (primarily 1880 to 1920) and a couple of one-story commercial buildings. On the north side of Elm, westward across Church Street from All Souls Church, is a condominium complex, four blocks of eight units each, dating from 1969 (addressed as 150 & 160 Elm Street; 20 & 30 Church Street).

All Souls Church and the areas to its north and east were at one time part of the Thayer estate; Thomas Thayer had settled on that site in 1640. East of All Souls Church, across Charles Street, is the Thayer family's imposing Greek Revival mansion, built by Thomas Thayer's descendants two centuries later, the Jaconias Thayer House (216 Elm Street, ca. 1835, BRA.3). Behind (north of) the Thayer House is the Leonard Norris-Arthur Davenport House (19 Charles Street, ca. 1870, BRA.330), once reportedly an outbuilding on the Thayer estate moved to this site and renovated. The rest of the single-family houses in this neighborhood date from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, primarily in the decades directly after real estate agent Leonard Norris bought the old Thayer estate, and when Charles and Lowell streets were laid out and put through in the 1890s. This new suburban neighborhood, drawn from the Thayer estate, was further defined by two institutional buildings erected on its southwestern corner, the Cochato Club (235 Elm Street, 1900, BRA.235), an independent civic club (now an Elks Lodge), and All Souls Church. Together these buildings provided a gateway and transition, from the early commercial setting of Braintree Square to the west, to the later suburban development to the east.

Bounded on the west by Church Street, on the south by Elm Street, on the east by Charles Street, and on the north by two single-family homes on medium-sized lots, All Souls Church commands a slight rise, its long building set atop wide grass lawns (**Photograph 1 & Figure 7.1 Site Map**). Measuring 70' wide and 138' long, the All Souls Church building covers two parcels (originally subdivided into three conventional lots facing Charles Street; now considered a single lot). The church acquired a second lot directly to its west in 1937, next to Church Street, which has remained undeveloped lawn. This lot is slightly lower in elevation than the original All Souls Church building lot. The only properties directly contiguous to this combined All Souls Church lot are two houses: a single-story 1953 ranch house with attached garage directly to the northwest at 29 Church Street, and a 2½-story Dutch Colonial house with a gambrel roof, to the north of the church, at 28 Charles Street. The latter was built in 1910 and served as the All Souls Church parsonage from 1922 to 1971.

All Souls Church is picturesquely massed, in effect a long nave with double transepts and a battlemented tower. The length and complexity of the massing make it difficult to capture the building's side elevations in single photographs. This 1½-story, Gothic Revival church building has masonry walls composed from uncut, uncoursed fieldstones, glacial erratics reportedly pulled from the walls of two nearby Braintree estates. Set within these walls are sills, lintels, buttress caps, and window tracery carved from white

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Indiana limestone. Above these masonry walls are slate roofs on wooden rafters. The lintels above the basement windows are a contrasting rust-colored granite. On its southern end (near Elm Street), the building begins with a low formal vestibule and porch that lead into the long nave of the sanctuary. At the sanctuary's northern (chancel) end, it is bracketed by a short transept and a three-story battlemented tower. Adjacent to that is an intermediate central cross hall, which opens along its north side into a large parish hall running the width of the building, its gabled roofline parallel to the transept, and finally an ell containing the kitchen and pantry at the northwest corner. The complex massing is somewhat unified by a single ridge that runs continuously from the south wall gable to a very small northern wall gable that rises slightly above the level of the parish hall transept ridgeline. From the air these intersecting ridges give the building's roof a modified T shape.

On the three street sides, All Souls Church is surrounded by an open lawn, its edges defined by a wide sidewalk that wraps the property and is directly contiguous with the curb. Almost the entire extent of both lots to the north of the church building is an asphalt-covered parking lot with entries off of Charles Street. A panhandle extends all the way to Church Street, although the property currently does not have vehicular access from Church Street. This western panhandle doubles as a paved playground during the week and as overflow parking on Sundays. It is not known when the parking lot was first paved. Mature deciduous trees dot the lawn to the south and west, screening the ranch house at 29 Church Street. Younger trees have been planted along Charles Street and as a screen between the parking lot and 28 Charles Street. Scattered bushes screen the church on its southern and eastern sides. A small modular **Utility Shed** (2000s) is parked atop the asphalt close to the northeastern corner of the church building. To the east of the church, on the separate lot that has been a part of the church property since 1937, is a complex of grassed and graveled areas that hold the **Playground Equipment** for the nursery school and are defined by a network of waist-high chain-link **Fences**. These all date from the tenancy of the nursery school, roughly 1981-2010; chain-link fences also line the three other sides of the parking lot's northwestern panhandle. The playground equipment is nearly all made of heavy plastic and is moveable. Two signs announce the church to the passing community. An **Advertising Sign** (ca. 2005), a wooden signboard between two wooden posts, reading "All Souls Church/Unitarian Universalist/A Welcoming Congregation," faces toward the corner of Elm and Church. A traditional **Memorial Signbox** (1989), two metal posts holding a signbox with a locking glass cover, stands next to the front walk. The signbox has a triangular pedimented top, announces the church's name, and contains a glass-fronted message signboard for mounting plastic letters. The signboard was a memorial gift "Given In Memory of Everett Hale Miller 1900-1988 By His Family" according to a small brass plaque attached to its side. It was dedicated in September of 1989. At least three square granite posts are embedded in the lawn (one partially in the sidewalk), flush to the ground, close to Elm Street. A church history says that they mark the boundaries of a previous lot subdivision, but the two alterations to the Elm Street boundary, the unclear organization of the posts, and the chance that they may have been relocated, make that supposition problematic. All of the bold-faced items in this paragraph date after the period of significance and therefore, for the purposes of this nomination, are noncontributing elements.

All Souls Church has seven entries. The church's formal entry is to the south, through the front vestibule in the south façade. It is accessed by a wide sidewalk that goes straight south to the curb. An emergency exit from the basement classrooms is fitted into the southwest front corner between the façade and vestibule. Toward the northern end of the western elevation, a grade-level entry leads from the basement nursery school to the playground, with a blacktopped sidewalk leading back uphill to the parking lot. Three smaller doors open from the north elevation onto the parking lot. Finally, the side vestibule is located just north of the churchtower. It opens onto a broad handicap platform, with a wheelchair ramp leading north to the north parking lot, and a stairs and sidewalk leading directly east to the Charles Street sidewalk. The handicap platform and ramps were added in 1995, according to Braintree building permits.

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Finally, an informal **Memorial Garden** was created in 1984, in the corner of the church lawn between the sanctuary and the tower. It consists of a circle of small granite paving blocks, a trellis arbor, and a metal bench with wooden slats. The landscaping is somewhat overgrown around the garden and no ashes have ever actually been interred here. The Memorial Garden dates after the period of significance and therefore, for the purposes of this nomination, is a non-contributing object.

The façade of All Souls Church faces south toward Elm Street, and almost no changes have occurred to it since its construction, as shown by the blueprints and early photographs (**Figure 7.2**, 1905 Photograph). The end-gabled roof has a steeper upper plane and a slightly shallower lower plane, indicating the aisled nature of the sanctuary inside (**Photograph 2**; **Figure 7.3**, south elevation blueprint). A large Late Gothic window dominates the wall gable, its quoined limestone surround slightly pointed and hooded with a drip lintel terminating in cubic stops. The stonework tracery defines three tall lancet windows with lobed tops, with four shorter lancets (also with lobed tops) above. The windows are fitted with small diamond-shaped panes of clear or amber-colored glass in leaded frames; none of the church windows have stained glass. The front vestibule is flanked by two small rectangular windows with quoined limestone surrounds. The vestibule itself is end gabled and set in the center of the façade. Its stone walls have corner buttresses with angled limestone caps. Its end gable is half-timbered with flaring eaves ending in copper gutters; its roof planes mimic the sanctuary, with a steeper upper and shallower lower plane. The half-timbered gable wall is slightly convex and topped with a dentiled board that casts toothed shadows. The vestibule itself is two-part in nature: a small open porch fronting a larger, almost square enclosed room. The side openings of the porch have simple limestone block sills and lintels. The paneled front double doors are set in a quoined limestone surround. Paired rectangular windows in quoined limestone frames light the interior on both sides. The front platform steps have five risers, and are fitted with contemporary iron stair railings. In 1958, an emergency exit from the basement classroom hall was fitted into the southwest front corner between the façade and vestibule, accessed by an open poured-concrete stairwell, with contemporary metal stair railings. The façade wall and roof plane both extend beyond the building on its ends, terminating in a stepped buttress with limestone caps.

The eastern elevation of the sanctuary has four ground-floor window bays defined by stone wall stepped buttresses with limestone caps (**Photographs 3 & 4**). In each bay, the sanctuary windows are three tall rectangular windows, fitted with amber-colored diamond panes of glass in leading, framed by broad limestone sills and lintels. In a pattern repeated in these triple-window banks throughout the ground floor, the wooden window sashes have an arched top with the slightest suggestion of a center point. The basement windows have wide reddish-brown granite lintels. The basement window openings were enlarged (downward) considerably during the 1957-1958 basement renovation and fronted with deep window wells, now covered with grates. Three small jerkinhead (hipped) roof dormers are set high in the roof to provide clerestory light to the interior. Like the rest of the roof, their sides are covered with slate. The dormers align with the window bays below, except that the first (southernmost) bay has no dormer. This pattern of triple roof dormers is repeated on the northern and western elevations.

The three-story stone corner tower sits directly adjacent to the northeastern sanctuary wall and is connected to the sanctuary by a transept cross gable. This square tower has multi-level, limestone-capped stone buttresses at each corner. The southeast buttress is angled diagonally from the side walls, while the northeast buttress is in line with the north wall of the tower (**Photograph 5**). The tower is topped by a battlemented parapet with angle-topped limestone capstones. The base of the parapet is marked on the outer wall by a thin limestone dripcourse with limestone drains projecting a foot from each corner. The western wall of the tower has no windows. On the other three sides, the third story of the tower holds Gothic windows similar to the façade sanctuary window, their quoined limestone surrounds slightly pointed and hooded with a drip lintel terminating in cubic stops. Their stonework tracery consists of two

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short lancets with lobed tops, with two trefoils above. The windows are fitted with louvers below and plexiglass coverings above, likely after the 1970 fire which burned out the tower interior. The second story on three sides is marked by a small slit window in a quoined frame. The quoining pattern for these windows resembles a Christian cross. The ground floor on the south and east sides has a row of triple sash windows, set in quoined limestone frames. These triple windows have arched sash tops identical to the sanctuary windows. However, unlike the diamonds of amber and colored glass in the sanctuary sashes, the windows of the tower and parish hall are lit with small rectangles of clear glass set in leading.

Nearly hidden under the widely overhanging eastern side roof is the eastern entry to All Souls Church, which sits between the tower and the parish hall to the north. The double doorway is deeply inset into the thick stone wall, topped by granite lintel. Next to it is the small window for the former library (now a coat closet), which has a granite sill and lintel. The top third of the paneled doors have rectangles of clear glass in leaded frames, although here the leading itself is arched at the top (within the standard rectangular panel-door frame). This doorway detail shows on the 1904-1905 blueprints. The handicap ramp platform is set flush with the threshold of the door. The tower wall is blank here, while two small rectangular windows (with granite sills and lintels) light the southern side of the eastern end of the parish hall.

The northern end of the eastern elevation is taken up with the tall gable of the parish hall (**Photograph 6**). The sills and lintels for the parish hall and kitchen ell extension are all granite; white limestone is used on this end of the church only for capstones on corner buttresses, such as the one that extends north from the eastern elevation of the parish hall. Two triple-sash windows light the parish hall on the ground-floor level. Above their lintels, the rest of the gable is filled with half-timbering in a crown-post pattern. In the center of this half-timbering is a tall rectangular double window, fitted with small rectangles of glass in leaded sashes.

The northern elevation of the building is six bays wide (**Photograph 7**). The three bays to the east light the parish hall, each bay consisting of a triple window at the parish hall level topped by a hipped-roof dormer. The three western bays light the serving room/kitchen cross-gabled ell extension, with small paired sash windows. Above and behind the extension, the ridgeline of the sanctuary ends at the parish house ridgeline, as a small gable end with a vent. The gable of the cross-gable ell extension, a gable-on-hip roof, also terminates in a similar vent. A large stone chimney stack rises above the western slope of this extension. A close look at the chimney stack reveals that a second stone stack was married to the first in 1958 when the boiler room was relocated under this extension. A shed roof covers an outside staircase that leads down into a double-door entry into the basement, both added in 1958 for external access to the new Sunday School rooms; both of these changes are confirmed in the blueprints. The kitchen doorway stairs are flanked by short boulder walls and an older pipe railing. The basement bulkhead is under the northwest kitchen window.

The western elevation repeats many of the elements already described, although the lower level of the surrounding ground means that more of the wall is exposed and the basement classroom windows receive more direct light. Triple windows with granite sills and lintels light the rear kitchen extension, and three of them light the former Ladies' Parlor/Stage (now offices) in the western end of the parish hall. The half-timbering on the upper level here is very simple; the lower two thirds are blank stucco, while a small, rectangular sash window is surrounded by half-timbering at the top of the gable, probably to better control light coming into the former stage area (**Photographs 8 & 9**). The current ground-level entry into the basement was added in 1958 for the new Sunday School rooms. The blueprints confirm that the open gabled passageway, raised on stone pillars, was built over the entrance at this time as well.

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On the western elevation, the four southern bays of the sanctuary are identical to the eastern elevation. In place of the eastern tower, this western elevation has a full-height wall-gable transept (**Photograph 10**). The transept shares many similarities with the southern façade gable, particularly the capped end buttresses and central, large sanctuary window (which even has the same tracery pattern of lancet windows). However, the limestone surround is simpler, without the hood molding. The two basement windows here are full length, exposed without window wells. Throughout the complex, some of the fixed sashes have been covered on the outside by clear-glass panels in dark gray metal frames; these are a fairly recent addition and have been designed to be as unobtrusive as possible. Most of the movable sashes remain unobstructed.

The interior of the sanctuary is one large open space, dominated by the six-foot- by-twelve-foot king-post trusses that span from one side to the other (**Photograph 11; Figure 7.4** Ground Floor Plan). These are supported by thick curved braces over the side aisles, which correspond to the exterior wall buttresses. Together these two ceiling elements account for the two-slope angle of the sanctuary roof. The ceiling and the upper walls are covered in Carolina pine boarding, stained to appear like “antique oak,” according to an early newspaper account. The walls are white plaster. A waist-high dado of dark-stained boards circles the sanctuary, this wainscoting patterned by slightly chamfering its joining edges to make a recurring open seam. A railing caps the wainscoting. The windows are set flush, with their openings in the thick outer walls; therefore, on the interior, each window is recessed within a deep, wooden box frame whose inner edges splay open (so that, for example, the sills slope downward). Dark brown, metal-boxed dado radiators, placed below the windows in the sanctuary and vestibule (in 1958), blend in well with the wainscoting. The vestibule ceiling has simple bridging beams rather than full trusses, but otherwise is decorated similarly to the sanctuary (**Photograph 12**). The sanctuary has a wide central aisle and two narrower side aisles.

The southern wall of the sanctuary has a low, flat-topped opening into the vestibule; the doorway is fitted with double doors (**Photograph 13**). The white plastered southern wall is undecorated except for two large plaques, centered in the wall between the windows and the vestibule opening. To the east of the doorway is a white marble tablet (undated but ca. 1920), set in an eared frame of creamy brown marble, with an enlarged marble keystone above. In block and cursive writing, it reads, “In memory of/Alva Morrison/born 1806 died 1879/An ardent disciple of the Unitarian faith/who established with others/and financially supported/the first Unitarian Society in Braintree/*Erected by his daughter/E Adalaide Bass/Who provided an annuity/of three hundred dollars/for this church.*” To the west of the door hangs a second plaque, a large bronze with a simple frame, which reads, “Enrolled here are the names of the members of this church who served their country in the World War 1917 1919, in memory of Harold M. Morrison [who died] December 12, 1919.” This plaque was a 1921 memorial by Mrs. Edith Morrison in memory of her son and the other soldiers of 1917-1919. Of the thirty names listed, Alton F. Wood also has a gold star beside his name, indicating that he had died as well.

The front of the sanctuary features a series of tall, dramatic, pointed-arch openings in the plaster walls, including the central chancel, which is flanked by the organ loft to the west, as well as matching side-wall openings into the transepts: the choir (in the western transept) and the blank high wall of the tower transept. All four of these arches are backed with shallow openings or rooms, and are walled off from the sanctuary by the arches. Both the chancel and the choir have high, wood-paneled back walls. The front platform of the sanctuary and the choir loft were expanded considerably southward when the chancel had to be rebuilt after the 1970 fire. However, the 1970 blueprints confirm that the original railings were restored and reused as much as possible. In the high, recessed space in the upper east transept, which had been almost completely destroyed in the fire, banks of downlights brighten up the otherwise blind archway. Besides the yellowish light flowing into the sanctuary from the gable and transept windows, low



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side windows, and a half-dozen roof dormers, ten large wheel-like iron electroliers studded with electric light bulbs provide illumination. They are suspended in each side of each bay in the sanctuary, and appear to be the original light fixtures. The original set of fifteen pairs of wide pews on each side of the sanctuary's central aisle has been reduced to thirteen pairs. One set appears to have been removed from the rear, possibly when the staircase was added (in the southwestern corner) for the basement Sunday School rooms in 1958. Another set was removed from the front when the front platforms were enlarged after the 1970 fire. The pews are of quarter-sawed oak and have distinctive linenfold-design panels carved in their ends. Two recent plaques are set in the wall under the east transept arch, one recounting the damage from the 1970 fire and one listing recent memorials. The formerly built-in chancel furniture, damaged in the fire, was repaired, altered, and made movable to accommodate the more dynamic worship styles of 1970. To the east of the chancel is the main doorway from the sanctuary into the hallway, a dramatic pointed-arch oak door set in a pointed-arch frame. This entry shows in the 1904-1905 blueprints. Although not depicted in those blueprints, a second doorway (added later?) appears in this corner in the 1958 blueprints, which detailed the ground-floor plan to show the placement of the new dado heaters. This doorway was in the northern corner of the eastern wall of the sanctuary and opened into the tower hallway. It was damaged in the 1970 fire and removed when that wall was rebuilt.

The tower, as reconfigured after being burned out by the 1970 fire, consists of the tower hallway, an office with a fireplace in its western wall, and a two-story loft storage space accessed by a pull-down, folding attic-staircase ladder in the office ceiling (**Photographs 14-16**). It is not entirely clear exactly how the tower was configured before the fire. Edwin J. Lewis' blueprints and a construction account indicate that Lewis thought of it as a four-story volume, with an unfinished basement level, the minister's study on the ground floor, possibly a vestry meeting room on the intermediate second floor, and a bell chamber at the top (See **Figure 7.3** south elevation blueprint). Interior blueprints include a "bell decking" plan for the tower. However, no later accounts of a tower vestry room or tower bell are known, so those elements were likely cut out of the final building budget. According to the after-fire, existing-condition floor plans, a door opened from the tower hall into the church and a staircase rose behind the chimney to the second level of the tower; however, both were removed when the tower interior was rebuilt. Accounts of the opening of the building record that the office had wainscoting, like the sanctuary, and green tile around the fireplace; neither has survived. Since 1992, this tower space has functioned as a meeting room known as the Elliott Room, or more recently as rental office space.

The central hallway has wainscoting in the same manner as the sanctuary, and a ceiling that rises almost to the height of the sanctuary ridge. The ceiling also is paneled like the sanctuary, although most of the current paneling dates to the 1970 fire repairs. Just north of the entrance vestibule is a small coat closet. Until 1958, it was the "library" for storing Sunday School materials. After the 1970 fire, its shelving was removed, according to the blueprints. A long narrow hallway extends westward from the eastern entrance, between the chancel/organ loft and the parish hall. The south half of that hall goes up three steps to a long hallway with a restroom at the end (formerly part of the women's dressing room). The north half of that hallway is the original 1905 flight of stairs from the first floor to the basement level.

Along the northern side of the hallway is the large parish hall (**Photograph 17**). Originally built as a multipurpose Sunday School assembly room, this space gradually became the parish hall, particularly after the basement Sunday School rooms were completed in 1958. The open hall space is dominated by three scissor trusses, with wood paneling on the ceiling above. Its walls are lined by the same wainscoting, with a top rail that is found in the sanctuary and central hall, as well as the dado heaters. At the western end of the hall is a raised stage area, which doubled as the "ladies' parlor" when the building was first built. In 1992 the northwestern two thirds of the stage was partitioned off into the church office and the minister's office (**Photograph 18**). Each office is lit by one of the three banks of triple windows

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on the outside. The northernmost minister's office incorporates the large fireplace that was the centerpiece of the ladies' parlor (**Photograph 19**). The fireplace may have been altered after the 1970 fire. These stage-level offices were made accessible in 1992 by building a ramp along the southern wall of the parish hall, from the doorway to the hallway beside the stage. The former women's dressing room, behind the organ loft, was converted into the only disabled-accessible restroom on this floor of the building. A back hall, part of the original 1904-1905 plan, still runs along the western wall from the stage area southward to the choir area in the western transept.

The northwestern cross-gable extension from the parish hall has two rooms. The serving area in the eastern third has a glass-fronted cupboard and a number of other built-ins that appear to date from the original 1905 construction. The kitchen in the western two thirds of the extension has pine kitchen cabinets that appear to date from a 1950s renovation.

Finally, the basement layout dates generally to 1958, when the former dirt-floored, unfinished basement with two coal furnaces was converted into a complex of finished classrooms. At that time, the old furnaces were removed and the three additional basement entries were added, as well as the new boiler room, with a fire door, in the northwest corner of the building under the kitchen and serving room ell. Concrete floors were poured and the walls were constructed primarily out of four-inch cinderblock. Whatever finishes were applied to these rooms were destroyed by water in the 1970 fire and its aftermath, and were rebuilt then fairly simply. The exterior stone foundation walls and the brick-encased interior support columns are still visible, although painted over (**Photograph 20**). The basement rooms under the sanctuary are arranged around a double-loaded central corridor so all rooms have access to one or more windows. The wider basement volume under the chancel and parish hall had classrooms located around the exterior walls, and a rectangular storage area in the windowless center of the space, an area that is now subdivided into nursery school offices. In the 1958 renovation, four new entryways were added to the basement: a plain, covered stairway to the north, with double doors, off the rear parking lot; a formal, covered, grade-level entrance to west, which also connected with the center staircase hall from the floor above; a straight staircase up to the sanctuary in the southwest corner; and, directly south of the straight staircase, an emergency exit leading to an open, concrete exterior staircase alongside the western side of the front vestibule.

Following recent (2011) repairs to its slate roof, All Souls Church is in excellent condition and retains historic integrity in terms of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Despite rebuilding of some of the interior after damage from the 1970 fire and some subsequent renovations (primarily to correct accessibility issues and insert offices), the property clearly reflects its condition and character in the period of significance, which culminates in the 1958 renovation of the building to convert the basement into classrooms.

### **Archaeological Description**

While no ancient Native American sites are known on the All Souls Church property, sites may be present. Three ancient sites are known in the general area (within one mile). Environmental characteristics of the nominated property represent some locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of Native sites. The church property is located on a level to moderately sloping landform in close proximity to wetlands. The Monaquot River flows northerly within 1,000 feet to the west of the church. The River eventually flows into the Weymouth/Fore River drainage. Soil characteristics of the property are difficult to ascertain because of the presence of urban land in this area. (Urban land soils have either been excavated, filled, or both.) Regional soil distributions, however, and the identification of adjacent soil types indicate the soils are likely well-drained, coarse, loamy soils.

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Given the above information, the small size of the parcel (one acre), construction impacts related to the building of the church in 1905, and our current knowledge of Native American subsistence and settlement patterns for the town of Braintree, the potential for locating significant ancient Native American resources on the All Souls Church property is low.

There is also a low potential for locating significant historic archaeological resources on the All Souls Church property. No information is present to indicate the type of historic land use on the property prior to construction of the church in 1905. Little information is present that indicates what types of potential archaeological features and/or artifacts may be present associated with the occupancy of the site by the existing church. Structural evidence of barns, stables, and sheds associated with the operation and maintenance of the church may survive in the lawn areas that surround the church and lie beneath the paved parking area. Occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) may also survive in the area surrounding the church.

#### Data Sheet, All Souls Church

All Souls Church, 196 Elm Street	BRA.234	Gothic Revival	1905	C	B
Utility Shed			ca. 2000	NC	B
Playground				NC	St
Fence				NC	St
Signs (Advertising, Memorial Signbox)			ca. 2005, 1989	2NC	2O
Memorial Garden			1984	NC	O

Total: one contributing building; one noncontributing building, two noncontributing structures, three noncontributing objects.

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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.)

- 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

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

RELIGION

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1905-1965

**Significant Dates**

1905

1958 (substantial renovations to basement)

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Lewis, Edwin James, Jr. (1905 architect)

Conners Brothers Construction Company (1905 builder)

Irving and Casson (1905 furniture/interior woodwork)

W. Chester Browne and Associates (1958 renovation architect)

Eco-Tecture International, Inc. (1970 architect)

HEW Construction (1970 builder)



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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

All Souls Church is locally significant under Criteria A and C for its important contributions to community planning and development, religion, and architecture in Braintree, Massachusetts. Its significance to Community Planning and Development comes from its linkage with, and influence on, the evolution of Braintree from a manufacturing town to a suburban community. Its period of significance begins with the completion of the church in 1905, when local businessmen fully funded its construction at a location within sight of a commuter rail station and along a heavily traveled street with streetcar connections to surrounding towns. This significance continued in its role as a prominent building in a developing civic hub, as the railway corridor transformed to accommodate the Southeast Expressway/Route 3 in the late 1950s. The significance of All Souls Church to Religion stems from the congregation's co-founding by separate Unitarian and Universalist groups, and the congregation's continuing efforts to recognize both traditions, until the merger of the national denominations in 1961. All Souls Church is significant to the architecture of Braintree as a prominently placed example of Late Gothic/Tudor Revival ecclesiastical architecture, built with stones from the property walls of its parishioners and designed by prominent Unitarian architect Edwin J. Lewis to give its suburban setting the feel of a rural English parish village. Because the building is owned by a religious organization and used for religious purposes, Criteria Consideration A applies; however, the importance of its role in community history and, particularly, the quality of its architecture, demonstrate its significance. In 1958, the church converted its mostly unfinished basement into a suite of Sunday School rooms, in response to the pressures to serve the young families of returning soldiers and the Baby Boom; since 1981 these classrooms have been leased to a nursery school. Throughout its period of significance (1905-1965) and to the present, the building has served the needs of its congregation and the wider community through its social outreach and public meeting spaces.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

**A Note on the Name "All Souls Church":** The historical name of this congregation and its building is "All Souls Church" without an apostrophe. Additionally, its official papers of incorporation from 1922 designate it "All Souls Church of Braintree." The omission of the apostrophe was deliberate: the phrase "all souls" is an important tenet in Universalist theology, indicating its principle that all souls will be saved. However, many outside sources—and even official church publications during certain periods—mistakenly "correct" the grammar and add an apostrophe. This nomination will refer to the church using its historical and current name: without an apostrophe. When the possessive form occurs in quotations in the text or bibliographical references, the apostrophe will be retained. But since those usages of the apostrophe are also grammatically correct, they will not be marked "[sic]."

**Braintree:** Named after an English city, Braintree is one of the oldest towns in Massachusetts, settled in 1634 and incorporated in 1640. As with many early towns, "Old Braintree" was further divided, with sections later becoming Holbrook, Randolph, and Quincy, as well as parts of Milton and Weymouth. Two presidents were born in the "North Precinct" (now Quincy) section of Old Braintree—John Adams (1735-1826) and his son John Quincy Adams (1767-1848)—as well as statesman John Hancock (1737-1793), the president of the Second Continental Congress, first Governor of Massachusetts, and prominent signer of the Declaration of Independence. The towns of Randolph and Holbrook were long known as the

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“South Precinct” of Braintree. Once known as the “Middle Precinct,” modern-day Braintree has boundaries that encompass 14.52 square miles, with Quincy to its north, Randolph to its west, Holbrook to its south, and Weymouth to its east. Twelve miles south of the center of Boston, Braintree has access to Boston Harbor by the Weymouth Fore River channel, where the neighborhood of East Braintree once served as a shipbuilding center. During the period of significance, the neighborhood of South Braintree was the site of the 1919 armed robbery and murder of two guards which led to the arrest, trial, and 1927 execution of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti.

Though still officially a town, in 2008 Braintree adopted a municipal charter and the mayor-council form of government of a city. Braintree is a center of transportation connections to the south of Boston, including the Southeast Expressway interchange between Interstate 93/Route 128 and Route 3. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) operates numerous daily trains through Braintree that stop at two interconnected terminals in Braintree (at Union and Ivory streets): two branches of the MBTA Commuter Rail, and the southernmost stop of the Red Line subway. In addition, the newly reactivated Greenbush Line travels through Braintree, although it does not stop there. Braintree’s estimated population on July 1, 2013, was 36,727, a 2.8% increase over 2010.

**Community Planning and Development and All Souls Church:** All Souls Church is located on Elm Street, only three blocks east of the start of Elm at Washington Street, and directly north of the spot where the Monaquot River turns eastward to its final emptying into Boston Harbor. The Elm Street/Commercial Street corridor, running from Washington Street eastward to the shipbuilding village of East Braintree, occupies the high ground to the north of the Monaquot River.

This Elm Street corridor has been significant to Braintree’s development since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, serving as a link between the established north-south coastal and inland trade routes and the local area of earliest European settlement. Before then, Braintree likely had a significant early Native American population, since it was near the coast and had “the necessary diversity” for Late Woodland settlements: “good agricultur[al] land, access to coastal food resources, uplands for hunting and winter camps, [and] quarries for lithic materials” (*MHC Reconnaissance 2*). Europeans first encountered Braintree as part of the overland route between Boston and Plymouth, with trails likely passing along the west bank of the Monaquot River (the forerunner of Washington Street). The earliest European inhabitants of today’s Braintree came primarily from North Braintree (now Quincy) in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and settled along the north side of the Monaquot River, initially near the intersection of what is now Elm and Middle streets. They hunted, fished, grew corn and barley, and cut lumber for sale. Just a short distance down the Monaquot was built the Braintree Iron Forge (1646; demolished). Relying on bog iron, the forge was Braintree’s first important industry (and one of the earliest iron forges in the Colony). Elm Street, which “provid[ed] access to the foundry, was one of the first roads in the town” (*MHC BRA.R: Church and Elm streets*). Other small-scale mills were soon built along the Monaquot. The first homesteader in the immediate neighborhood was Thomas Thayer, who took up residence by 1640 on a farm that included the site of All Souls Church.

During the Colonial Period (1675-1775), further development occurred along Elm Street, beginning with the first meetinghouse (1706; demolished) and burying ground (Elm Street Cemetery, *MHC# BRA.805, 1714*), both established near the intersection of Washington and Elm Street, which became known as Storrs Square. When the north precinct of Braintree officially became the independent town of Quincy in 1708, this meetinghouse village became the official center of the redrawn Braintree, which now consisted of 71 families, or about 450 people (*MHC Reconnaissance 3*). The First Congregational Church of Braintree (12 Elm Street, *BRA.8*) remains at this intersection in its fifth building, a neo-Gothic Revival cut-stone church built in 1912 after its fourth building (and the Lyceum Hall next door) burned. The Rev.

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Richard Salter Storrs (1787-1873) was minister at the First Congregational Church at that intersection from 1811 until his death in 1873; Elm Street west of Washington Street is named Storrs Avenue. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Storrs Square became known more generically as Braintree Square. Mills gradually replaced other activities as the main commercial enterprise in Braintree, with the greatest concentration along the Monatiquot: sawmills, gristmills, and fulling mills. Secondary industries that developed during this time included granite quarrying and shipbuilding in East Braintree, and shoemaking throughout the town. As the main thoroughfare along the north bank of the Monatiquot and the road between the new Braintree Center and developing East Braintree, Elm Street continued to be a vital link in Braintree.

Washington and Elm streets remained the desirable center of the community during the Federal period, although other east-west transportation corridors and settlement centers began to develop, particularly farther south in the area known as South Braintree (*MHC Reconnaissance* 3-4). Mills, especially along the Monatiquot, diversified, with the Blake & Revere Copper Foundry and Ames Shovel shops joined by the makers of chocolate and cotton gins (none of these buildings appear to survive today). Elm Street east of Washington Street developed during this time into a succession of large estates for successful businessmen along its north side, and water-powered mills along its south side, on the Monatiquot (Marion Sophia Arnold, *A Brief History*, 54). Perhaps the grandest of these houses was the early Greek Revival-style Jaconias Thayer House (216 Elm Street, BRA.3, ca. 1835), built by the descendants of Thomas Thayer on the family homestead site. Its temple front still commands the neighborhood today, sitting directly across Charles Street from All Souls Church; both Charles Street and the main church lot were still part of the Thayer farm at this time.

The most important neighborhood development during the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the introduction of the railroad in the 1840s, and once again the neighborhood of Washington and Elm streets remained a major crossroads. The main north-south Old Colony Railroad line between Boston and Plymouth (completed 1845) paralleled Washington Street and stayed on the western bank of the Monatiquot. In 1849, Caleb Stetson (1801-1885) and other Braintree businessmen founded another railroad line, the South Shore Railroad, which began at Elm Street, crossed the Monatiquot, and passed along its south bank, before continuing eastward through Weymouth to Hingham and Cohasset. By 1871, the South Shore Railroad extended along the coast to Duxbury and Kingston ("South Shore Railroad"). In 1877, the original Braintree branch of the South Shore Railroad became part of the Old Colony Railroad network. (Eventually a branch of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad, the South Shore Line was active until 1959. After decades without scheduled train traffic, it became part of the MBTA Greenbush Commuter Rail line, which opened in 2007.)

The neighborhood near the junction of the two rail lines developed rapidly in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The 1856 Walling map of Braintree shows the Y-shaped split in the south- and east-bound railroad lines at Elm Street. Seven houses are scattered along the north side of Elm eastward between the railway and Cedar Street, while no houses are shown south of Elm Street along the Monatiquot. In the more detailed 1876 Norfolk County atlas (**Figure 8.1**), a double-tracked South Shore Line joins the main branch of the Old Colony railroad at Elm Street, while a spur of the South Shore Railroad to the south (no longer extant) defines a triangular railyard. A large railroad station (demolished), built between 1856 and 1876, stood at Elm Street at the northern point of that triangle, a block west of the lot where the church would be built. The southern side of the triangle was initially a spur to a freight depot (by 1876, demolished) and other later structures (all demolished). In 1876 the All Souls Church site was still part of the Jaconias Thayer lot, which was then owned by Edwin Reed. The area behind the buildings, extending to School Street, was reportedly an apple orchard (Diana Althouse, *All Souls History*, 14). South of Elm Street, the present-day Elm Terrace was a direct private road to a Monatiquot River landing, and Reed also owned all the land along the Monatiquot as far east as Middle Street. The area to the west (bounded by this

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private road, the Monatiquot River, the South Shore railroad, and Elm Street), was a single lot with a large Victorian Vernacular house and barn owned by T.B. Vinton (house 167 Elm Street, BRA.519; barn demolished). A second Italianate house, owned by C.E. French, appears in this area by 1888 (173 Elm Street, BRA.383). Between that date and 1920, an additional dozen or more Victorian Queen Anne, Bungalow, and Dutch Colonial-style smaller houses, most of which still stand, were built on the Vinton lot, along Elm Street, Elm Terrace, and Vinton Avenue. A recent Section 106 survey of this mostly residential neighborhood, triggered by the reactivation of the Greenbush line, found that most of these buildings have been altered, and that the neighborhood is not eligible for National Register inclusion (BRA.R: Church and Elm streets).

The 1888 map of the neighborhood shows further growth around the station, which by this point was fully part of the Old Colony Railroad line, now doubly linked to the former South Shore Railroad with northbound and southbound wyes (**Figure 8.2**). Small factories for producing cigars and shoes stood just west of the Old Colony Rail, while the northern side of Elm Street west of the railway line had more houses and a general store/post office owned by N.R. Proctor. A Federal-era mansion from 1807, the Fogg (later the Hayward) House, stood on the lot that later became Church Street and the east lawn of All Souls Church. This growing suburban setting and the Elm Street railway station were a natural link for the alternate local street railway system or streetcar system developed in the 1890s. Cars would leave the main line on Washington Street and pass the railroad station on Elm Street, then continue on eastward to Weymouth (*MHC Reconnaissance 6*).

An 1898 street map shows that the large Jaconias Thayer-Edwin Reed estate, site of the future All Souls Church, had been subdivided, with two new streets running north of Elm: Lowell and Charles. The house's owner—since at least 1896—was a Brockton realtor, Leonard F. Norris (MHC Survey Form BRA.3). Deed research—described in detail below—confirms that the land was subdivided into lots in 1896. The Norris family occupied the Thayer-Reed house for several decades. Another large house (now directly across Charles Street and facing All Souls Church and its rear parking lot) is the Norris-Davenport House (19 Charles St., BRA.330, 1858-1876+). Reportedly originally an outbuilding on the Thayer-Reed estate, the house was remodeled to its present Colonial Revival form in 1909-1911, when its lot was subdivided from the Norris property and it became the home of Arthur C. Davenport, a prominent local journalist and later publisher. These two houses best illustrate the character of development along this stretch of Charles Street at the time of the founding of All Souls Church.

The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the consolidation and centralization of the town's industries, particularly in South Braintree, and the closing of many of the older Monatiquot mills further north. By 1906 small businesses were well enough established near the Old Colony Railroad station in Storrs Square that the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company produced two maps for the neighborhood, documenting construction north and south of Elm Street from just east of the main tracks westward to include both sides of Washington Street. The maps show that a new passenger rail station (demolished) had replaced the earlier station built at Elm Street, with long covered train shelters along both the mainline and the curving South Shore Railroad tracks. The most desirable area for residential development along Elm Street expanded considerably during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (*MHC Reconnaissance 8*), although some of the older estates were also subdivided. This series of changes culminated in the suburbanization of the area along Elm Street east of the tracks.

In the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, local businessmen founded two institutional buildings on Elm Street that further confirmed its suburban status: the Cochato Club and All Souls Church (**Figure 8.3**). The founders were primarily neighborhood residents who worked in Boston businesses, and were likely interested in developing a more suburban character to the neighborhood east of the transportation hub,

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rather than the commercial areas directly to the west along Elm Street. The train station was advertised as a selling point for the neighborhood—and eventually the church. An April 1900 handbill in the All Souls Church Archives, printed before the forming or naming of the congregation, advertised that “Unitarian Services will be held in Cochato Club Hall, Braintree (Two minutes from Braintree Station).” A national publication covered the opening of the new church as if its readers were commuting there from Boston: “This church, which was dedicated April 18, is situated on the left of the railroad—the Plymouth Division of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford—going from Boston, and can be seen from passing trains” (“All Souls’ Church, Braintree,” *The Christian Register*). One of the earliest groups formed at All Souls Church was the All Souls Men’s Club (1906); the first minister, the Rev. Frederick R. Griffin (served 1901-1909), designed the group to cater to the men he saw walking home from the commuter railroad station every evening (John Dennehy 62).

The Cochato Club (205 Elm Street, BRA.235, 1900) was an institution unique to Braintree, an independent civic club founded for “the promotion of good fellowship, social intercourse, temperance and morality in said town and the encouragement of athletic exercise” (unnamed source quoted in BRA.235). It opened in 1900 (“New Era for Cochato Club, Braintree,” *Boston Daily Globe* March 17, 1900). Its name presumably came from the Cochato River, a tributary of the Monaquot. This large Shingle-style clubhouse was equipped with an auditorium, ballroom, library, game, and social rooms, a bowling alley, and a tennis court on the riverbank beyond. The clubhouse was designed by John Calvin Spofford (1854-1936) while in a brief (1898-1900) partnership with R. M. Bailey known as Bailey and Spofford (Bacon 241). The Cochato Club disbanded in 1987, and the building became the home of the Braintree Elks Lodge. Unfortunately, a ca. 1999 renovation of the building, which included vinyl siding, a new asphalt roof, and other changes to the exterior historic fabric, rendered the Cochato Club ineligible for National Register listing.

One figure essential to the establishment of both the Cochato Club and All Souls Church was George Oliver Wales (1848-1913). Wales was born and died in Braintree, on a family estate that stood several blocks to the east at 396 Elm Street (1913 *Braintree Directory*; demolished). Wales made his fortune, though, commuting to Boston to work. At nineteen he became a clerk at Sleeper, Fisk, and Company in Boston, rising rapidly in business until 1870, when he founded George O. Wales & Company in Boston, a wholesale dealership in iron goods. A biographical note praised him as “at the time of his death, and for many years previously, the first citizen of Braintree. He was the first president and virtually founder of the Cochato Club. He served as president of this club from its establishment until his death. . . . Mr. Wales was a charter member of All Souls’ Church, and from its inception served as its treasurer and member of the parish committee (“Memorial Service”). In addition to founding these two institutions, George O. Wales served as an officer of numerous corporate boards, Braintree civic institutions, and Boston clubs and societies. An undated obituary reported that Wales had attended the Cochato Club nearly every evening, but his service to All Souls Church was even more extensive, including attending nearly every service, ushering, and teaching Sunday School: “His greatest activity in Braintree was in All Souls’ Church, Unitarian-Universalist, and he has served most efficiently as the church treasurer and collector. It was by his effort that the pretty stone church, which is free from debt, was erected on Elm Street opposite the Cochato [C]lub. The church organ he gave in memory of his first wife” (Wales, George O.). Another prominent Braintree family who helped found the congregation was that of Col. Albion C. Drinkwater. The Drinkwater family had houses in several places in Braintree, and had operated the A.C. Drinkwater Tannery (demolished) along the Monaquot east of All Souls Church. Other obituaries in the church histories point to a class of wealthy Braintree families—both old money and new money—as the founders and sustainers of All Souls Church, although the congregation itself was more diverse.



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**Religion and the Founding of the All Souls Congregation:** All Souls Church is presently affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association, a denomination formed in 1961 by a merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America. Before that, All Souls was institutionally affiliated with the Unitarian denomination, which had more structural presence in New England. But All Souls formed as the merger between groups of Unitarians and Universalists in Braintree, and it actively sought to maintain this dual character until the 1961 merger. While it is difficult to evaluate the significance of this dual identity beyond the local level, clearly All Souls was unusual—and possibly unique statewide or even nationwide—in this duality. This defining characteristic of All Souls Church arose long before the construction of its present building.

Unitarianism and Universalism were both liberal reactions to the perceived conservative excesses of Calvinism and evangelicalism. They “emerged in New England in reaction to the Calvinist theology of the New England Puritans” (David M. Robinson, “Unitarian Universalist Association,” 1330). Unitarians rejected the theological concept of a Trinity, and believed that humans were not innately sinful and predestined, but that anyone was capable of achieving salvation from a benevolent God. Unitarians also rejected the emotional appeal of evangelical conversion, preferring instead reason and rationalism (James Emmett Ryan, “Unitarianism,” 1228-1229). Unitarian theology emerged in Boston within the Puritan church, and led to the formation of the American Unitarian Association in 1825, with many old Puritan churches breaking away from what eventually came to be known as the Congregationalists. Unitarianism was a driving force in the transformation of Harvard Divinity School and Harvard College from Congregationalism to more liberal and nonsectarian approaches. Both New England Transcendentalism and the many reform movements that began in the region were driven by Unitarian thought. American Universalists believed in universal salvation: that the soul is immortal and that all souls would eventually be reconciled to a benevolent God; most rejected the concept of hell. Universalists came from a wide variety of religious backgrounds, including Anabaptists, Lutherans, Methodists, Moravians, and Quakers, and were concentrated in the Middle Atlantic states. Universalism in New England was established primarily by the Rev. John Murray (1741-1815), first in Gloucester in 1774 and then in the Boston Universalist Church. The Universalists held their first General Society in 1778 and reached their greatest extent in the 1830s. Denominational power rested primarily in independent Universalist state federations. Merger talks between the two denominations began as early as 1865, but were not completed until nearly a century later in 1961 (“Timeline”). All Souls Church is important as a prominent church connected to both denominations.

Town histories record that the first Unitarian society in Braintree was formed in 1833, and met briefly in the rooms of the Weymouth and Braintree Academy in East Braintree, at least through 1835, before disbanding (Committee on Braintree 47; H. Hobart Holly 112). But All Souls Church traced its roots to several subsequent Braintree congregations, beginning with the Braintree Free Church. In 1859 George A. Thayer (a layman who later became a Unitarian minister) called together “a group of liberals who were at that time attending Unitarian and Universalist churches in neighboring towns” for a series of meetings, held at Braintree’s town hall (Pennington, *Brief Historical Sketches*). With the assistance of many prominent Unitarian speakers, they formed a congregation and employed a minister. While the disruptions caused by the Civil War forced its disbanding in 1865, a number of the families came together two decades later to form the First Universalist Parish of Braintree. Meetings began in 1886, with preaching services the following year and incorporation in 1888. The group employed ministers and held services in the Armory Hall, Town Hall, and finally the Pythian Hall (all demolished), but never built their own building. Then in 1900, reacting against the preaching of a visiting revivalist, Braintree resident Fred O. Ellis determined to start an inclusive church. Gaining the support of George O. Wales and other prominent Braintree citizens, Ellis suggested forming a Unitarian church. Ellis’ group began meeting at the Cochato Club, and they appointed a committee to form a church. But fearing that the community

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could not support two liberal churches, the group began talks with the Universalists. A 1932 recollection of these talks concludes, "It was agreed on both sides that one strong church was better than two weak churches[,] but it was felt that the new church should be wholly unfettered and begin upon an entirely fresh foundation. Hence, it was decided that the new church should have a name and by-laws, denominational affiliations and parish activities agreeable to both Unitarians, and Universalists" (Pennington).

The Braintree groups hoped they could provide a national model of cooperation. At a parish meeting on July 24, 1900, the members of the First Universalist Parish of Braintree unanimously supported a resolution that read, in part, "Resolved, That by locally applying these principles of cooperation we shall render an everlasting service to the Universalist General Convention, the American Unitarian Association, and to the cause of Liberalism generally" ("Parish Meeting," *Braintree Observer* July 28, 1900). The groups began worshipping as one in 1900, although the Universalists conducted separate business meetings until 1904. In March of 1904, the Universalists sold a lot they had bought on River Street in Braintree, presumably for a church, for \$600 (*Records of the First Universalist Parish of Braintree*). In October of that year, the Universalists voted to donate all their assets to the All Souls Church building fund and disband.

The first services for the organization that would become All Souls Church, held at the Cochato Club and advertised with handbills, took place on April 22, 1900. A handwritten note in the All Souls Church Archives, dated 1923, notes that "notwithstanding an easterly storm, there was an attendance of 127 persons." The first official parish meeting for All Souls Church was held on September 11, 1900, and the first service on September 13, 1900, both at Cochato Hall. When Unitarian periodicals in New England began mentioning the All Souls Church congregation in 1900, they often stressed its interdenominational character: "After a series of services under the direction of the Association, a church society has been organized, in conjunction with the Universalist society, under the name of All Souls' Church" (*Unitarian Word and Work* December 20, 1900, 37). A month later the editors characterized All Souls as "a vigorous enterprise in a growing suburb of Boston. It unites the Unitarian and Universalist elements of the town in a vigorous and harmonious church. It is wisely led, and is able to be financially independent in its first year. It is to be hoped that the church will soon find and settle a good minister" (*Unitarian Word and Work* January 20, 1901, 49). On January 28, 1901, the combined membership voted that its ministers be required to affiliate with both national denominations. Within a couple of months, All Souls called its first minister: "Mr. F.R. Griffin has been called to All Souls' Church, Braintree" (*Unitarian Word and Work* March 1, 1901, 64). The Rev. Frederick R. Griffin was a graduate of Harvard Divinity School and a Unitarian minister, but he gained credentials with the Universalist association as well (*Unitarian Year Book* 1907). Among the well-known speakers at Griffin's installation was the Unitarian minister and author Edward Everett Hale (1822-1909).

Universalist publications also proudly claimed the church. The *Universalist Leader* pointed out that the Braintree Unitarians had greater numbers and better funding than the pre-existing Universalist society, but it proclaimed that "Church and minister are associated in a strong and cordial way with two denominations. There has been from the first great unanimity. The Universalists have shown themselves to be broad, generous and unselfish and the Unitarians have not been slow to appreciate this" (May 6, 1905; quoted in Althouse 22). The organizers invited speakers and ministers from the leading Unitarian and Universalist churches in the state to deliver a series of lectures in 1903 ("Evening Services at All Souls' Church, Cochato Hall, Braintree," *Braintree Observer* May 9, 1903). Percy Metcalfe Leavitt featured a photograph of the completed building in his 1906 *Souvenir Portfolio of Universalist Churches in Massachusetts* (Figure 8.4) and wrote:

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All Souls' Church was organized in November, 1900. For some years previous Universalists had sustained a small parish, but when the Unitarians were about to organize a church, it was suggested that a union of forces might result in greater good for liberal religious truth. All Souls' Church was therefore made non-sectarian but affiliated with the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist convention. The church has shown remarkable strength, and has grown to double its original size. . . . The parish membership is about 200. The Sunday school membership about 180: superintendent, Mr. John West. (36-37)

The continued growth and support of the congregation made it possible to build a new church.

Even a standard account in the *Boston Evening Transcript*, announcing the dedication of the new church building, stressed in its headline that the "New Church at Braintree [was] Built by a Union of Unitarians and Universalists." The text of the article argued at length the case for its exceptionality:

On Tuesday evening, April 18, All Souls' Church, Braintree will dedicate its new building. This is an event of more than local interest owing to the somewhat unique character of the church and to the strong growth of this young parish. . . . The Universalists gave up their organization and the larger part of them came in with the Unitarians. Thus All Souls' Church was founded.

At one of the first meetings it was unanimously voted to affiliate with the American Unitarian Association and with the Universalist Convention. In the choice for a minister a Unitarian, Rev. Frederick R. Griffin, was unanimously elected. He came a short time after the organization and, in keeping with the spirit of the Union, affiliated with the Universalist ministry. So church and minister are associated with two denominations. The plan has met with the greatest success. The relations with both denominations are cordial and strong. The missionary work of each is supported without friction or embarrassment. The church has been fortunate in receiving the support of a large part of the most prominent and most influential people of the town. Its growth has been strong and vigorous, so that today it is second to none in the community in influence and in numerical and financial strength. . . .

It is reasonable to suppose that the period of experiment is past, and that the church has established itself with its broad, generous and positive character. The time must come when other people facing similar conditions will band themselves together for the larger purposes of a church irrespective of denominational lines. In this church nothing has been lost by this course, and if the years fulfill the promises of today, All Souls' Church, Braintree will not be unique, except as to the time of its foundation. ("New Church at Braintree")

In 1906, All Souls Church hosted a joint gathering of the Plymouth and Bay Conference of Unitarian churches and the Old Colony Association of Universalists ("Church Conference," *Boston Daily Globe* November 8, 1906). But it took nearly half a century before the national denominations could follow the lead of All Souls Church.

**Building All Souls Church:** Pledging for a building campaign began in January of 1904 and progressed rapidly. Construction began July 19, 1904, the cornerstone was laid September 23, 1904, and the completed church building dedicated on April 18, 1905 ("Dedicatory Service"; see **Figures 8.5, 8.6**). George O. Wales donated both the lot for the new church and \$22,355 towards the final cost of \$37,745.63 (Pennington). In April 2015, All Souls Church celebrated the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building's opening.

Deed research confirms that All Souls Church was built on land purchased for the church by George O. Wales in 1903, and transferred to the church in 1904. In December of 1895, C.E. Merrill had employed

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civil engineers White & Wetherbee to draw up a plan of house lots along Elm Street and the newly laid-out Charles Street, presumably the western part of the old Thayer-Reed estate. In 1903, Wales purchased two parcels: the lot at the corner of Elm and Charles, and the two lots directly north of the corner lot on Charles Street. Wales purchased them from later, possibly speculative, buyers, Charles E. Flint and Willard T. Sears (who may or may not have been the architect Willard T. Sears [1837-1920] of the Boston firm Cummings and Sears and architect of name for the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. No other connection between architect Sears and Braintree is known.) The deeds for the neighborhood were covenanted to specify that any dwellings built there would have a minimum setback from the street and cost more than \$2,500 to build. Wales also secured deed permission from all the other lot holders to alter the usage of the land from dwelling to church and/or parish house (Norfolk County Deeds Book 977, pages 604-610).

John W. West, secretary of the All Souls Church congregation, issued a circular in January of 1904, which announced the campaign, and linked it to the suburban growth goals of the town:

All Souls is going to erect a church edifice. We want to begin work as soon as the frost is out of the ground. In order to have a building which shall be at once an addition to the beauty of this historic town and be adapted to our needs, twenty-five thousand dollars is necessary. Of this sum fifteen thousand is already pledged. . . . The present plan is for a stone building,—cheerful, dignified, and churchly,—to be erected on Elm Street, at the corner of Charles Street. Braintree is constantly growing in favor as a suburban town. Such a church will greatly enhance its attractiveness and beauty. (All Souls Church Archives)

Nine months later the church had broken ground. George O. Wales, acting as chair of the building committee, conducted the cornerstone laying ceremony, using a silver trowel with a black ivory handle, a gift of the building committee (“Cornerstone Laid,” *Braintree Observer* September 24, 1904). A sealed box containing papers relating to the founding of the congregation was placed under the cornerstone. It is unclear if the cornerstone was ever inscribed; no trace of it can be found today.

*The Christian Register* published an extensive account of the new building, which clearly summarizes most of its important characteristics:

Its architecture is early English rural Gothic, and the material used in its main construction is field stones, which have been accumulating in stone walls ever since the settlers of Braintree commenced to clear the land more than two centuries ago. Toned by time and enriched by lichens and weather discolorations, they give to the edifice a soft, harmonious effect that could have been obtained with no other building material. The mullioned windows and all the other trimmings are of Indiana limestone. The buttressed walls and battlemented tower, so characteristic of churches of this type, have been used here with pronounced effectiveness. About the building are spacious lawns which slope gently away from the walls on all sides,—several ancient elms and hedges. The interior has excellent arrangement, and is in every part artistic and dignified.

The color scheme of the auditorium is pitched on rather a low, but by no means somber key, the walls being a soft, mellow green, and the woodwork a hue of antique oak. The pulpit and its furnishings are of quartered oak, as are the pews. The windows here and throughout the building are of leaded glass. The organ, built by the Hutchings-Votey Company of Boston, was given in memory of Abbie Frances Paine Wales. The seating capacity is 320. The Sunday-school room is at right angles to the church and is entirely separated from it. The finish is the same here except that the walls are a soft terra cotta. This room seats 225. There is also a large assembly room used

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by the primary classes of the Sunday-school and also by the Ladies' Aid Society. There is also a minister's study, a room 15 feet square with a large fireplace and six windows, a library room, coat rooms, lavatories, kitchen and serving room. Everything is on the ground floor.

The pews, pulpit, and other furnishings for the auditorium, the seats for the Sunday school and assembly rooms, the kitchen furnishings and the silver were given by the Ladies' Aid Society, which raised for this purpose \$2,000. The Chickering piano in the Sunday-school was given by the members of the school. The minister's study is being furnished by the men of the parish. The building cost, with equipment, \$40,000 and is free of debt. The architect was Mr. Edwin J. Lewis, Jr., of the First Parish in Dorchester. The building committee was Mr. George O. Wales, chairman, Mr. George E. Williams, Mr. George H. Arnold, Mr. Edwin L. Emerson, and Rev. Frederick R. Griffin, the minister. Such is the result of the five-years' work of All Souls' Church in Braintree. ("All Souls' Church, Braintree")

The fieldstones for the walls of the church reportedly came from old stone walls on the Wales and Drinkwater estates on Elm and Cedar streets (Diana Althouse 4, 9). A *Boston Globe* article explained that the interior walls were in fact covered with "natural Carolina pine . . . with the weathered oak effect," while "the church is lighted throughout by electricity. Handsome iron electroliers have been placed in both the auditorium and Sunday school room" ("New Church Dedicated, Debt Free." *Boston Daily Globe* April 19, 1905). See **Figure 8.7**. Another newspaper account praised the faint yellow tint of the leaded glass in the sanctuary: "There is just enough of a bronze tint to the leaded glass windows to soften the direct light without suffusing the auditorium with a pronounced color" ("New Church at Braintree").

Edwin James Lewis, Jr., the architect for All Souls Church, lived nearby in Dorchester and was well known for designing Unitarian church buildings. The builder was Conners Brothers Construction Company, who signed the blueprints, and church building records show multiple payments to both Lewis and Conners Bros. Payment records and a ledger in the All Souls Church archives further identify that Hutchings-Votey received \$3,000 for the organ, Magee Furnace Co., \$990, and Irving & Casson, \$483.03, presumably for the interior wooden furnishings. The St. Albans Furniture Co. received \$600, presumably for the movable furniture.

George Oliver Wales and his second wife, Lucy, continued their generosity in service and support to All Souls Church to the end of their lives and even beyond. In 1909 the Waleses and the Women's Alliance held a lawn party at their house on Elm Street to raise money for All Souls Church ("To Aid Braintree Church," *Boston Daily Globe*, July 4, 1909). At his death in 1913, George O. Wales left \$20,000 to the American Unitarian Association to support All Souls Church (*The Christian Register*, January 23, 1913: 91). "In no small measure the beautiful church edifice is a monument to his interest, generosity, and devotion," noted a retrospective article on the church (*The Christian Register* January 26, 1922: 22). George's second wife Lucy Cary Morse was the daughter of a New York family prominent in the arts (she was a cousin of Samuel F.B. Morse), and she continued to give generously to All Souls Church until her death in 1927 ("Mrs. George O. Wales," *Braintree Observer* January 14, 1927).

**All Souls Church during the Period of Significance:** A subscription was raised in 1908 to buy a lot of land on Cedar Street for a parsonage, but it was not built, and the lot was sold in 1922. That same year, All Souls Church bought for a parsonage the Everett D. Barker house, the gambrel-roofed Dutch Colonial that still stands directly northeast of the church parking lot at 28 Charles Street (by 1919; no MHC survey #). This building served as the church parsonage until 1971, when it was sold and another parsonage purchased.



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In 1910, the church capitalized on its new auditorium and location to sponsor a high-profile lecture series. A "Speakers' Forum" series kicked off with Franklin A. Wentworth of Salem speaking on "Socialism and Trade Unionism," with his remarks repeated in the Boston papers ("Ballot Labor's Great Weapon," *Boston Daily Globe* November 14, 1910). The following week, even "standing room was at a premium" as crowds packed the church to hear Boston Mayor John F. Fitzgerald speak on "The Unearned Increment of Real Estate," a plea to restructure the tax system. His remarks focused on the stake that Braintree and other suburbs had in Boston governance: "Mayor Fitzgerald began with a reference to the town of Braintree as part of the metropolitan city of Boston that is destined to be, and the necessity for the people of Braintree to be interested in the money which Boston now spends annually to support itself" ("Mayor Talks about Realty: Boylston St. Freight Yards Hindrance," *Boston Daily Globe* November 21, 1910). Most of these speaker series were directly organized by the Men's Club at All Souls Church. At its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration in 1936, the club released a list of the names of more than 200 speakers that it had hosted—judges and politicians, academics and university presidents, businessmen and scientists, missionaries and editors—including statesman Henry Cabot Lodge, sculptor Cyrus Dallin, and Massachusetts governors (or future governors) Curtis Guild, Leverett Saltonstall, and James Michael Curley (All Souls Archives). All Souls Church also continued to host regional gatherings, such as the Old Colony District of the Universalists in 1915 and the South Shore Federation of the Young People's Religious Societies in 1923 ("Universalists Gather," *Boston Daily Globe* May 1, 1915; "Braintree," *Boston Daily Globe* April 9, 1923).

The 1920s were a time of growth and celebrations at All Souls Church, after a tough transition the decade before. With the passing of George O. Wales in 1913, the parish had experienced financial challenges and had instituted a weekly offering for the first time to pay its bills. But by the 1920s it was on a solid footing, and the church additionally received several large bequests. They added numerous memorials to the church building, including portraits of founders George O. Wales and Fred O. Ellis, and national and state flags. Several stationary memorials remain visibly part of the church interior almost a century later. The family of H. Louise Abercrombie donated the Louise Memorial Chimes to the organ assembly in 1921. That same year, Mrs. Edith Morrison donated the bronze wall tablet in memory of her son, Harold M. Morrison, who had died in 1919, and the other soldiers of 1917-1919. Mr. and Mrs. George M. Young donated the oak christening font in 1926, in memory of their daughter Elizabeth Young Clark. In 1922, due to a change in state law, All Souls Church legally incorporated.

Other events in the 1920s including creative programming such as a Leap Year Bazar [*sic*] in 1924 ("Leap Year Bazar Held in Braintree," *Boston Daily Globe*, November 22, 1924). All Souls Church made the society pages when it hosted the wedding of Elizabeth Drinkwater to William Ball Rice, Harvard '22 and Norfolk Hunt Club ("One of Braintree's Prominent Brides" *Boston Daily Globe* February 25, 1923). The biggest celebrations, though, were in 1925, when All Souls Church celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the laying of its cornerstone, and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding ("Corner Stone Was Laid 20 Years Ago," *Boston Daily Globe* April 17, 1925; "All Souls' Parish, Braintree, Observes 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary," *Boston Daily Globe* December 2, 1925). A photograph of the church by Thomsen and Thomsen (**Figure 8.8**) illustrated the latter article.

The 1930s saw challenges to All Souls Church and many other institutions during the Great Depression. The ASC Women's Alliance paid off the parsonage mortgage in 1932. The church replaced its coal-fired heating system with an oil burner in 1934. The biggest fundraiser, to stem its "acute financial troubles," was a June 1934 lawn party hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Horace Drinkwater "on their three-acre lawn" (Diana Althouse 45). This Community Carnival netted nearly \$1,000 for All Souls. The church hosted a Boy Scout troop and a Free Baby medical clinic. The Rev. Lon Ray Call canvassed Braintree for ideas for community improvement in 1934, and found that people supported opening the schools for adult

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education and merging all the Protestant churches in town into one large efficient federated church (“Sermon Suggests Ideas for Braintree,” *Boston Daily Globe* December 3, 1934).

The frontage of All Souls Church on Elm Street, originally only at the corner of Charles Street, did not extend all the way to Church Street until 1937. The railroad had purchased the neighboring lot on Elm Street by 1904, the site of the former Fogg-Hayward House (1807, demolished by 1919). According to the Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. maps, Church Street was laid out through the Fogg-Hayward open lot sometime between 1919 and 1926 (**Figure 8.9**; see also **Fig. 8.3**). The resulting narrow lot north of Elm Street between All Souls Church and Church Street remained undeveloped. In 1937, All Souls Church purchased the southern half of this lot from the Old Colony Railroad Company/New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company, then under bankruptcy (Norfolk County Deeds 2179: 433-436, the lot known presently as Map 2025, Block 0, Lot 49). This lot, which runs from Church Street eastward almost to the building line, has remained undeveloped; the northern half of it is currently the preschool playground. According to church records, the church first approached the railroad in 1936 with a request that the land be gifted to the church. Eventually the parties settled on a price of about \$.10 a foot or \$1,250. All Souls Church held a September Fair on its front lawn to raise money for the purchase. It tried to interest other Braintree stakeholders in supporting the purchase: “The property concerns All Souls Church, the Cochato Club, the nearby residents, and the town itself. This land has a deep enough frontage to permit the erection of several one-story buildings which would give a shabby and unsightly appearance to the street front. . . . This is a community enterprise for civic betterment and should have the support of all the citizens of the town” (“Important Street Fair to Be Undertaken as Community Enterprise,” *Braintree Observer*, September 3, 1937). The final price was \$1,291.60.

The 1940s saw All Souls Church taking part in the war effort. The Canteen Committee of the Red Cross used the kitchen, and the Braintree Defense Committee held meetings there. The Women’s Branch Alliance sewed for the Red Cross. The perpetual concerns about whether the Cochato Club should serve liquor, an active question almost since the end of Prohibition, threatened to split the congregation and may have hastened the 1946 retirement of the Rev. G. H. Leining, whose ten-year pastorate had been the longest in church history. He was followed by an Air Force chaplain home from the war, the Rev. William Richardson Reid, who served until 1953.

The 1950s were a time of prosperity for All Souls Church, as they were for many American churches, as the returning soldiers started families and the children of the Baby Boom filled Sunday School rooms. A number of long-delayed repairs were made to the church building, including replacing the old copper valleys and gutters with new ones, adding snowrails to the roof, repointing the stonework, and installing screens in the tower to deter pigeons. The removal of carpeting in the sanctuary revealed that the floor joints in the west wall had failed and the floor was sagging, and they had to be jacked up into place and repaired. The supporting beams in the roof had also begun to separate and had to be rejoined and bolted. The repairs cost a total of \$2,489.80 (“Annual Report of the Building and Grounds Committee,” 1951, All Souls Archives). Hurricane Carol caused \$400 of damage to the roof of All Souls Church in 1954.

All Souls Church hired the Rev. Francis C. Anderson, Jr. in 1953, and he served a record 28 years; one of his earliest challenges was accommodating the demand for Sunday School rooms. Although the church building had a full basement, it had retained its mostly dirt floor and was little used, except for a dressing room and the heating apparatus. In 1957 All Souls Church launched a Building Fund Canvass to develop the basement into a chapel and meeting rooms, replace the heating system, and rewire the church. A letter by E. Curtis Mower, the campaign chairman, made the case for continued growth: “The physical needs are more or less self-evident. In less than five years, the church attendance has increased 30%, the Church School has been forced into two sessions and has experienced an increase of 80%. . . . Membership is at

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an all-time high. . . . No church can stand still; it has to move ahead or slide back” (November 8, 1957, All Souls Church Archives). Less than a year later, the work was completed, and the church held a Service of Rededication on November 2, 1958.

The architect for the basement conversion was W. Chester Browne and Associates, according to the surviving set of blueprints; the builder is not known. A comparison of the 1904-1905 and 1958 blueprints (both at the Massachusetts State Archives) shows that the original basement design, by Edwin J. Lewis, had two furnaces, one under the auditorium and one under the Sunday School room, with spokes of piping reaching out to large floor grates; all of this was removed. Two small basement rooms had finished floors and walls—a stairway hall and a men’s dressing room (with bathroom)—and these were altered. A gridwork of interior basement columns, encased in squares of brick, held up the floor joists and walls; these were retained and remain unchanged today. In 1905 the basement had one outside exit, under the north wall in the northwest corner of the kitchen, its exterior stairway covered by the bulkhead. The 1958 designs by Browne’s firm made a new boiler room, with a fire door, in the northwest corner of the building, under the kitchen and serving room ell, with piping leading to new dado wall heaters in all the ground-floor rooms—usually located under the windows. Apparently at this time they also took down and capped the old center chimney, which stood next to the chancel and behind the pulpit; the blueprints verify that they also expanded the existing kitchen chimney for the boiler. The basement rooms under the sanctuary were arranged around a double-loaded central corridor so all rooms had access to one or more windows. The wider basement under the chancel and parish hall had classrooms located around the exterior walls and a rectangular storage area in the windowless center of the space, surrounded on all sides by hallway. The largest of the rooms was called “the chapel,” but no special interior fittings were recorded originally or are evident. The new basement partitions were all four-inch-thick cinderblock, and the new concrete floors were covered with asphalt linoleum tile. The ceilings were insulated and covered with lath and plaster. Four new entryways were added to the basement: a plain stairway to the north, with double doors, off of the rear parking lot; a formal covered entrance to the west, which also connected with the center staircase hall from the floor above; a straight staircase to the sanctuary in the southwest corner; and directly next to this corner staircase an emergency exit leading to an open concrete exterior staircase alongside the western side of the front vestibule. The elevations in the blueprints show that these latter exits were originally planned as part of an enlarged front vestibule extending to the east, but that those plans were scrapped. The basement window openings were nearly all part of the original Lewis design in 1905. But in 1958, the openings were all reworked and extended down several feet, resulting in larger windows opening into enlarged window wells.

Changes to the Elm Street roadbed have brought changes to the parts of the lot closest to Elm Street. Between 1954 and 1959, Massachusetts and the federal government partnered on a joint effort to redesign and radically improve highway access from downtown Boston to the South Shore and to Cape Cod beyond. This limited-access state highway project was known as the Southeast Expressway, and included significant rebuilding of not just today’s Southeast Expressway, but also the roadway further south, known today as Route 3. Much of this new roadway was built over the former railroad corridor. In the words of local historian Abigail Franklin, “The highway replaced the Monatiquot River and the railroad as Braintree’s major business artery.” In December of 1956, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts issued a taking order, designated as part of the Southeast Expressway project, for 2,665 square feet of property from All Souls Church. Elm Street, an important arterial street, was rebuilt as an overpass across the Expressway, slightly to the north of its old roadbed. According to documents in the All Souls Church Archives, Massachusetts paid the church \$2,935 in 1958 to settle its claims in the roadway relocation (Layout #4500, Parcel 4-22-T). The state also agreed to shift the sidewalks, rework lot slopes, and reseed the lawns at the church. A second minor taking occurred in a subsequent reconfiguration of the Elm Street roadbed in 1998 (described below).

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The 1960s brought great changes to American society, and All Souls Church was at the forefront of some of those changes, particularly in ecumenism and community activism. A Jewish group founded in 1959 began worshipping alongside their Christian counterparts at All Souls Church in 1960, and stayed there four years until 1964, when they opened their new synagogue, Temple B’Nai Shalom, nearby on Storrs Avenue in Braintree. In 1961, the national union of Unitarians and Universalists—modeled for six decades at Braintree—became a reality, with the formation of the Unitarian Universalist national denomination. Closer to home, the Rev. Anderson and members of All Souls Church helped start and staff the Braintree Fair Housing Committee and other community service organizations.

The Rev. Francis Anderson and All Souls Church also became known regionally for their outspoken support for the African-American civil rights movement. Fifty years ago, on March 9, 1965, Anderson joined a group of Unitarian-Universalist ministers for supper at Walker’s Café, an integrated restaurant in Selma, Alabama, to plan a protest; local law enforcement had used violence against non-violent voting rights demonstrators in Selma two days before (Mark D. Morrison-Reed, *Selma Awakening*, 105-106). After supper, when three of the ministers left Anderson and the main group behind to take a shortcut, the trio were attacked by a group of whites. One of the ministers, the Rev. James Reeb, died two days later from his injuries. His death spurred on national efforts to secure African-American civil rights.

**All Souls Church since the Period of Significance:** As the 1960s continued, the Rev. Francis Anderson and parishioners also participated in antiwar protests against the Vietnam War. The Rev. Anderson conducted prayer vigils at the Braintree Town Hall. The *Quincy Patriot Ledger* covered the vigils in a prominent article published on June 13, 1970. At 1 a.m. in the morning of Sunday, June 14, 1970, a suspicious fire broke out in the rear of All Souls Church and did significant damage to much of the building. The Rev. Anderson collapsed at the scene of the fire and was taken to South Shore Hospital, but recovered enough to lead a prayer service on the front lawn of the church on Sunday morning. Assistance in clean-up, recovery, and rebuilding came immediately from many sources in Braintree and beyond, and the Unitarian Universalists of All Souls congregation resumed worship the next week beside their old friends at Temple B’Nai Shalom. “I knew we had enemies, but I never knew we had so many friends,” Anderson told a reporter (“Parishioners Rally to Aid Destroyed Braintree Church,” *Boston Globe*, June 16, 1970). No one was ever charged in connection with the fire. Numerous church and community fundraising events were held to pay for repairs, and eventually the church’s insurance company paid \$212,897 toward repairs.

While the fire, smoke, and water damage to the interior of All Souls Church was extensive, the repairs were conservatively carried out and well documented with text and photographs. An evaluation of the damage noted that the fire “caus[ed] considerable damage to the Chancel, Organ and Choir Loft, Pastor’s Office and Tower above. The roofs over these various areas plus over the rear Parish Hall were badly damaged” (Albee, Harrold & Hirth). The hallway between the sanctuary and parish house, where the fire began, was also badly damaged. Apart from the wooden roof, which was breached by flames, the exterior was little affected by the fire. The roof trusses and their slate covering were repaired or replaced as necessary. The blueprints for this renovation are at the Massachusetts State Archives, and the All Souls Church Archives contains reports and correspondence with the architect and builder. A request for proposal process led the Building Committee to choose Eco-Tecture International, Inc., as the architect. The winning low bidder for the restoration was HEW Construction Company.

An examination of the blueprints and reports reinforces the conservative nature of the interior work as well, which was primarily repair, restoration, cleaning, and painting. In the sanctuary, for example, 30% of the roof and 15% of the wall framing had to be replaced. Some changes were necessary to conform with the Massachusetts State Building Code changes from 1961, such as replacing hollow-core doors in

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the basement with solid doors and updating wiring, particularly in the fire-detection system. Since the pews, lectern, bench, and parts of the organ survived the fire, they were covered or carefully removed and stored until they could be restored and reinstalled. William F. Laws of Wenham, MA, repaired and restored the organ. Two interior layout changes were made, including removing the doorway from the sanctuary to the tower. Because fire damage was particularly severe in the chancel at the front of the church, significant rebuilding was necessary in this area. At the same time, the congregation took this opportunity to pursue a second layout change and reconfigure the chancel plan. They enlarged the front platform under the altar, pulpit, and choir loft; raised the pulpit a foot; and relocated the choir rail and altar rails to the new edge of the platform. The altar had to be rebuilt entirely.

In 1971 All Souls Church sold its former parsonage, next door to the rear parking lot on Charles Street, and bought a house on a large acreage on Liberty Street, known as Meadow Ridge, which allowed for day camps and other creative programming for the disadvantaged and disabled. This property was sold in 1983; the church did not buy another parsonage as a replacement. In 1981 Magic Years Nursery School began leasing the basement level of the church, an arrangement that continues into 2015. In 1984, a committee created a memorial garden next to the church sanctuary, in the corner near the tower. They built a circular granite-block pad and added a trellis arbor and a metal bench with wooden slats. The formal signbox in front of the church was a 1989 memorial given in memory of Everett Hale Miller by his family; the advertising sign on the southwest lawn is newer, possibly ca. 2005. In 1998, the Town of Braintree declared a taking of All Souls Church property along busy Elm Street and shaved off the southern corners of the church lots, possibly to provide current dedicated right-turn lane from Elm Street onto Church Street. The Town acquired 1,076 square feet of land for the Elm Street Roadway Improvement Project, and paid the church an appraised value of \$1,450 for the property (Letter from John F. Fehan, Town Engineer, to All Souls Church, January 22, 1998, All Souls Church Archives).

Building permits at Braintree Town Hall document several other significant recent changes. In 1992, All Souls converted part of the ladies' parlor/parish hall stage into additional office space. A wall was placed across two thirds of the stage, leaving the front apron and several feet of stage on the south end open for use. The northwest, rear part of the stage was divided into two offices: an outer secretary's office and an inner minister's office. The inner office preserves the formal fireplace from the former ladies' parlor. A small wheelchair ramp was added along the south wall of the parish hall to make these stage-level offices accessible. In 1995, All Souls Church added a deck and handicap ramp leading from the rear (north) parking lot to the Charles Street vestibule. In 2011, All Souls Church was awarded \$82,511 from Braintree's Community Preservation Fund for repair of its copper gutters.

Throughout its history, All Souls Church has continued its community outreach, which has taken many forms at different times, and has consistently addressed difficult social issues and progressive causes. In the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it raised support and funding for the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown and African-American education in the American South, as well as Braintree antipoverty programs such as the Lend-A-Hand Committee and the Braintree Friendly Aid Association (Robert Bloomberg). A few of the dozens of other programs are documented above, although detailing them properly is beyond the scope of this history of its property. After the end of the Vietnam War, All Souls Church continued programs for nondiscrimination in housing and education in Braintree. In the 1980s and 1990s, All Souls Church supported programs for preventing child abuse and caring for those living with AIDS. Since 1995 it has been a "Welcoming Congregation" with several different groups for support of the LGBT community and advocacy for same-sex marriage. One of its most recent social initiatives does connect directly with its physical building: the Unitarian Universalist "Green Sanctuary" designation it was awarded in 2006 for its programs on energy conservation and sustainable practices.

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### The Architectural Significance of All Souls Church

**Late Gothic/Tudor Revival:** All Souls Church in Braintree is designed in a Gothic Revival style, which had been popular in residential and especially ecclesiastical designs in America since the 1830s and 1840s. Over a half century later, American architects were proficient in Gothic design, and were able to faithfully reproduce the characteristics of Gothic designs from different countries and eras, or even to mix them in interesting ways. Late Gothic Revival elements at All Souls Church include the pointed arches, stone trim, buttresses, battlemented tower, and the large windows filled with stone tracery in lancet designs. Boston architects particularly preferred a Tudor Revival style of Gothic architecture, an adaptation of Late Medieval English architecture that arose in the United States in the 1890s and became most popular in the 1920s and the 1930s. Closely allied with, and using a number of elements from, Late Gothic English Architecture, Tudor Revival also used early Renaissance motifs. Tudor Revival elements at All Souls Church include the steep roof, stepped buttress caps, stone and stucco wall claddings, slate roofing, cast-stone trim, and leaded-glass casements.

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a group of Boston Gothicists arose who promulgated these designs nationwide. In *Built in Boston*, Douglass Shand-Tucci notes the importance that the Boston Public Library—which was a collaborative effort between architects, artists, and craftsmen—had had in reinvigorating and popularizing Beaux Arts-influenced Classical Revival architecture nationwide. But during these same years, he argues in his following chapter—“Ralph Adams Cram and the Boston Gothic”—many of these same artists and craftsmen worked with other architects to pursue a Gothic Revival of almost equal importance. “Right through to the 1930s,” Shand-Tucci notes, “this Gothic Revival would parallel the Classical Revival in extent and importance and its leader, Cram, would become the Boston architect of his generation who most importantly shaped architecture not just in Boston but throughout the country” (*Built in Boston*, 155).

Braintree has several prominent churches in the Gothic Revival style, including the granite-faced Braintree First Congregational Church (1912, BRA.8), the stuccoed Emmanuel Episcopal Church (1924, BRA.239), and St. Thomas More Roman Catholic Church (1940; BRA.371), which is brick with limestone trim. All Souls Church predates these other churches, and is the only one of them built with walls of local glacial erratic boulders. The other churches in Braintree that have been documented are all in other revival styles: the Italianate-style South Congregational Church (ca. 1850; BRA.98), Victorian Eclectic-style East Braintree Methodist Church (ca. 1889, BRA.541), Colonial Revival-style Braintree Union Congregational Church (1898, BRA.381), Spanish Baroque-style St. Francis of Assisi Roman Catholic Church (1911, BRA.221), and the wooden Colonial Revival-style Braintree First Church of Christ Scientist (1941, BRA.237).

**Edwin James Lewis, Jr.** (1859-1937) was an accomplished Boston architect who designed All Souls Church; it is his only known commission in Braintree (see **Figure 7.3**, blueprint south elevation). Lewis concentrated on Gothic ecclesiastical designs, and is counted among this group of Boston Gothic architects. In his survey of Boston-area churches, Douglass Shand-Tucci writes that Lewis “developed a highly personal and mobile ‘Modern Gothic’ that proved most successful for Unitarian clients. His first such exercise was his 1892 Christ Church [Unitarian], Dorchester” (*Church Building in Boston*, 35; BOS.5907). Because Lewis’s work was centered around Boston and he was never the polemicist that Cram was, his work has not gained national attention. Yet the number of MHC survey entries for Lewis’ work in the Massachusetts Historical Commission’s database indicates his prolific career and the consistently high quality of his designs.

Edwin J. Lewis, Jr. was a native of Roxbury (now Boston), Massachusetts. His father, Edwin James Lewis, Sr., was an English immigrant who became “a successful manufacturer of pickles in Boston and . .

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. built a mansion on Adams Street in Dorchester” (Sammarco, *Milton*, 27). Edwin J. Lewis, Jr. attended English High School in Boston and graduated from the architecture program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.) in 1881, part of the first generation of university-trained architects in the United States. M.I.T. published what may have been his thesis project, *Design for a Country Opera House*, that same year. Lewis worked as a draftsman for the prominent Boston firm of Peabody and Stearns before establishing his own practice in 1887. His offices were at 9 Park Street for several decades, an address well known for its concentration of architects (Withey and Withey). Lewis became a member of the American Institute of Architects and a fellow in 1891. He served as Secretary of the Boston Society of Architects.

While Edwin Lewis designed both residential and ecclesiastical buildings, it is clear that his own Unitarian tradition and churches for the Unitarian denomination were a priority. He was lead author of an important 1902 publication by the American Unitarian Association, *Plans for Churches*. In 1920, he wrote a more general tract on Unitarian principles, *Fourteen Points and a Vigorous Church*. Lewis designed 35 or more churches in the United States and Canada, including several well-known Unitarian buildings. Many, such as Draper Memorial Church (1898, HOP.11) in Hopedale, Massachusetts, were Gothic Revival structures with allusions to English parish church design. In addition to the Hopedale church, Lewis designed a half-dozen other elements in the National Register of Historic Places-listed Hopedale Village Historic District, including the Hopedale Community House (1923, HOP.5) and several double houses. Other Edwin Lewis designs already on the National Register as individual properties include the Second Unitarian Church, Brookline (1916; BKL.612); the Wollaston Unitarian Church, Quincy (1890, QUI.579); and Dearborn Grammar School in Boston (1905; BOS.11134).

Lewis designed many impressive residential works in the Ashmont neighborhood of Dorchester (in Boston), where he lived, including the Peabody apartment house at 195-197 Ashmont Street (1896-97, NRHP). The Peabody was considered elegant enough to be listed in *Clark's Blue Book*, and its design was chosen by Col. Oliver Peabody to be complementary to the adjacent All Saints Episcopal Church (1891-1894, NRHP), by Cram and Goodhue, and to set the character of Peabody Square (“The Peabody”). Douglass Shand-Tucci has suggested that All Souls Church in Braintree was influenced by the Cram and Goodhue-designed All Saints Church in Ashmont (*Built in Boston*, 177). Lewis later designed the rectory (1912, BOS.5654) for All Saints Church, Ashmont (Shand-Tucci, *Church Building in Boston*, 128). Edwin J. Lewis’ Shingle-style suburban houses on Ashmont Hill in Dorchester include 60 Ocean Street (BOS.6671) and 12 Alban Street (No MHC#) (Morgan, *Buildings of Massachusetts*, 262-263). In total, Lewis designed “approximately fifty properties in the neighborhood dating between 1887 and 1912” (“The Peabody”).

In 2015 the Massachusetts Historical Commission’s MACRIS database lists 53 entries for Edwin Lewis. According to Anthony M. Sammarco, Lewis designed at least five notable houses in Milton, Massachusetts, where he and his two sisters moved in 1923. Lewis designed Shingle-style summer cottages as well, including Cairncroft (1892) in Tamworth, New Hampshire, a contributing building to the Chocorua Lake Basin NRHP District. Among Lewis’ public buildings, the Romanesque-style Dedham Historical Society (1886-87, DED.399), 612 High Street in Dedham, Massachusetts, is best known, with its distinctive mixture of red brick and brownstone. The Archives and Library at Historic New England holds an album of views of Lewis designs compiled by the architect himself, as well as several individual plans and elevations.

Architect Edwin J. Lewis’s pride in the design of All Souls Church is evident, given that he hired noted architectural illustrator D.A. Gregg to prepare two views of the building. Lewis commissioned a line view for reproduction in church programs and newspaper articles (see **Figure 8.5**). A second, more detailed ink

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wash was published in a double page illustration in *American Architect and Building News* (see **Figure 8.6**). Gregg's work first gained notice in the illustrations he completed for Edmund M. Wheelwright, Boston's City Architect, in the early 1890s; by a decade later, he was giving classes in architectural illustration and counted noted church architect Charles D. Maginniss as one of his protégés (Pratt 11).

At least one other design by Edwin J. Lewis, Jr. utilized glacial erratics from nearby stone walls. The Danielson-Lincoln Memorial Library in Brimfield (BRI.10; NRHP District), dominated by its half-timbered Tudor Revival gables, was built in 1903 in the middle of an apple orchard on the estate of its owner. Decades later, talking to journalist Isabel Loughlin, Lewis recalled, "'After looking over the ancestral home of the Lincoln family on the main street, I suggested placing [the library] in the apple orchard.' And so Mr. Lewis planned the memorial library and supervised its construction of field stone from the old wall that enclosed the ancestral home of the old gentleman's mother" ("Library in Apple Orchard Center of Brimfield's Community Life," *Boston Daily Globe*, June 7, 1926). Lewis clearly attached symbolic value to building with glacial-erratic fieldstones from the surrounding landscape.

**Other Makers:** The other makers involved with All Souls Church are not well known, with one exception. The interior woodwork for the 1905 church—presumably the pulpit and other chancel work—is by the legendary Cambridge furniture firm of **Irving & Casson**. Irving and Casson received \$483.03 for their work, according to the All Souls Church building ledger. Charles Irving and Robert Casson became partners in 1874, and in 1894 moved to Cambridge's furniture district. They were known for their fine architectural trim and cabinet work, such as that produced for the Lady's Chapel at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, in collaboration with Ralph Adams Cram. Albert H. Davenport started working in the furniture industry in 1866 and bought the former E.H. Brabrook Furniture Company in 1880, moving it to Cambridge soon after. In 1914, Irving and Casson merged with the A.H. Davenport company, known for its popular sofa but also for finely crafted furnishings for national architectural landmarks such as the 'Iolani Palace (1882) in Hawaii, Glessner House (1887) in Chicago (for H.H. Richardson), and McKim, Mead, and White's redecoration of the White House in 1903. Together these two Cambridge companies continued producing distinctive woodwork and furniture, such as that for the United Nations Building in New York in the 1950s. The firm closed in 1972.

The contractor for the 1905 construction of All Souls Church was **Connors Brothers Construction Company** of Lowell, Massachusetts. Dennis E. Connors was the president. Little is known of the firm; they are not listed in the MACRIS database. Scattered references to them online, primarily in court records, indicate that they were active at least from 1903 to 1915 in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York. Connors Bros. served as general contractor for the construction of the Oneida County Courthouse in Utica, New York (1908). In testimony related to a breach of contract lawsuit with a subcontractor that arose from that project, Dennis Connors testified that the contracting firm Connors Brothers Construction Co. formed in 1903, but that he had been undertaking construction contracting work since about 1895 (*Squires and Staley v. Connors Brothers Construction Co.*, Appellate Division, Fourth Department, Supreme Court, State of New York, 1911). The Connors Brothers foreman for the Utica Courthouse, Henry L. Riggs, noted that Dennis Connors frequently worked with architect Olin Cutter, including building the large Renaissance Revival-style addition to Ammi B. Young's 1850 Romanesque-style Middlesex County Courthouse in Lowell (360 Gorham Street, addition 1897, LOW.393, NRHP).

**W. Chester Browne and Associates** designed the 1956-1958 renovation of All Souls Church; the builder is not known. The job was one of the first undertaken by the new firm, formed when W. Chester Browne (1919-1996) formed a partnership with his father, Boston architect Ambrose Amarie Browne. The elder Browne had, for decades previously, been a partner in the noted Boston firm Krokyn and Browne, which formed in about 1921 and dissolved in 1957. Partner J. Frederick Krokyn formed a new firm,



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Krokyn and Krokyn, with his son William Krokyn. Ambrose Browne then joined his son's firm ("Krokyn and Browne," *Back Bay Houses*, accessed December 20, 2014). W. Chester Browne worked with the Boston Redevelopment Authority to develop several feasibility studies for redevelopment in Boston's South End in the 1960s. W. Chester Browne and Associates is listed as the architects for Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Church in Stoughton (1957, STG.85) and Saint Anselm Roman Catholic Church and Rectory in Sudbury (1961, SUD.317 & 318). W. Chester Browne lived in Cohasset, and is listed as the sole designer for St. Anthony's Roman Catholic Church there in 1964 (COH.1755).

The architect for the 1970 post-fire renovation of All Souls Church was **Eco-Tecture International, Inc.** Little is known about this firm, apart from a brief brochure in the All Souls Church Archives; MACRIS lists no other commissions. The brochure proclaims that the firm "started in 1970 to initiate services and professional associations in order to solve the problems confronting man and his environment." The partners were Dennis John Becker, John G. Crowe, James B. Fitzgerald, David L. Pavelka, Charles R. Rolando, and Gregory D. Villanueva, with associate G. Allen Perry. All of the partners had worked for Earl R. Flansburgh and Associates in 1969 or 1970. The contractor for the 1970 post-fire renovation was **HEW Construction Company**. It was headquartered in Boston at 684 Washington Street and active as early as the 1930s, through the 1950s. The firm was named after its president Henry E. Weiss; other officers were Sami Suskin, Secretary, and M. Murray Weiss, Treasurer. The MACRIS database lists three other commissions for the firm, all in Boston: a store, the I.J. Fox Building (1934, BOS.2134); a commercial block, 468-472 Boylston Street (1947, BOS.2617, demolished); and the CVS at 56 Summer Street (1955, BOS.2028), designed by Sumner Schein.

### Archaeological Significance

Potential historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important social, cultural, and economic information related to the parishioners of All Souls Church and the operation and maintenance of the church structure. Structural evidence from barns, stables, carriage houses, outbuildings, and occupational-related features may contribute information about the architectural details of these structures and the lives of the parishioners who lived in the general area and attended the church functions. Various outbuildings may have been used for tool storage, plantings, and other activities.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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### Blueprints

Three sets of historic blueprints for All Souls Church are located at the Massachusetts State Archives in Boston. They are, in chronological order:

1904-1905. Edwin J. Lewis.

1958. W. Chester Browne & Assoc. Inc. The Lewis and Browne sets are rolled together and located in Case B, Rack 2, Apart. 9, #4508.

1971. Eco-tecture International, Inc. Case B, Rack 12, Apart. 6, #82848.

### Historic Maps

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1919. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. *Braintree, Norfolk County, Massachusetts.*

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1998. Coler & Colantonio Inc. *Town of Braintree Proposed Land Taking: Church and Elm Streets.* Norfolk Register of Deeds Plan Book 457: 443.

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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 # \_\_\_\_\_

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**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: All Souls Church Archives

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** BRA.234

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** Less than 1

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 42.22312 Longitude: -71.00076

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: 19 Easting: 334879 Northing: 4676487

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting: Northing:

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

The National Register of Historic Places boundary for this property corresponds to the legal boundary as defined by the Braintree Assessor's Office: Map 2025, Block 0, Lots 34 and 49.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property includes two parcels (originally three lots) transferred to All Souls Church on April 13, 1904 (Norfolk County Deeds 977: 604-610, corner of Elm Street and Charles Street, known collectively presently as Map 2025, Block 0, Lot 34). The property also includes a second parcel transferred to All Souls Church by the Old Colony Railroad Company/New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company, under bankruptcy, on October 27, 1937 (Norfolk County Deeds 2179: 433-436, corner of Elm Street and Church Street, known presently as Map 2025, Block 0, Lot 49). The nominated property includes the entire parcel associated with All Souls Church in Braintree since 1937, within the period of significance, when the current property lines were established.

However, this original property has twice been slightly reduced, along its southern boundary, by state and municipal eminent-domain takings of undeveloped open land for roadway work. The first of these changes was during the period of significance. In 1956, 2,665 square feet of land along the southern edge of the lot was taken for roadway realignment for the new Southeast Expressway. In 1998, the town of Braintree acquired 1,076 square feet of additional land along the entire Elm Street frontage, especially at the southeast and southwest corners, for the Church and Elm Street Roadway Improvement Project.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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organization: Massachusetts Historical Commission  
street & number: 220 Morrissey Boulevard  
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date: April 2015

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: All Souls Church

City or Vicinity: Braintree

County: Norfolk

State: Massachusetts

Photographer: Timothy T. Orwig

Date Photographed: July 21, 2014 (except for #7, which was photographed July 24, 2014)

Camera: Olympus SP-800UZ 14 megapixel

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

**NOTE ON DIRECTIONS:** All Souls Church faces directly toward Elm Street, which travels from west-southwest to east-northeast. Thus the front vestibule and the façade of the building is on the southeast end, and the chancel faces to the northwest. To simplify descriptions and clarify directions, in this nomination Elm Street is considered as running east-west, while the main roof ridge of the building, which parallels Charles Street, runs north-south.

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1. All Souls Church lot, showing the south façade and eastern elevation, looking northwest.
2. All Souls Church, showing the south façade, looking north. Note also the Memorial Signbox.
3. All Souls Church, showing the south façade and eastern elevation, the tower and hipped dormers, looking northwest.
4. All Souls Church, showing a detail view of the eastern elevation of the sanctuary. Note the stone buttresses with their angled caps and typical wall bay. Looking northwest.
5. All Souls Church, showing the eastern elevation of the tower and parish hall, looking west.
6. All Souls Church, showing the eastern elevation of the parish hall and the northern elevation, looking southwest.
7. All Souls Church, showing the northern elevation, looking south. Note also the Utility Shed.
8. All Souls Church, showing the northern and western elevations, looking southeast.
9. All Souls Church, showing the northern end of the western elevations, looking east. From left to right, note the kitchen extension, the parish hall stage, and the access into the western basement entryway. The three sets of triple windows to the parish hall stage now light three separate rooms (l. to r. the minister's study, church office, and stage hallway).
10. All Souls Church, showing the southern end of the western elevations, looking northeast. From left to right, note the parish hall, west transept, sanctuary, and the front vestibule.
11. All Souls Church, showing the sanctuary from the vestibule doorway, looking north. Note the king-post trusses, organ loft, and chancel arches.
12. All Souls Church, showing the vestibule from the sanctuary doorway, looking southwest. Note the ceiling trusses and paneling, wainscoting, and dado heaters.
13. All Souls Church, showing the rear of the sanctuary from the western choir loft, looking southeast. Note the king-post trusses, roof dormers, and the wall plaques on either side of the vestibule doorway.
14. All Souls Church, showing the Elliott Room/former minister's office in the tower. From the tower hall doorway looking east.
15. All Souls Church, showing the Elliott Room/former minister's office in the tower. Looking west. Note the interior features rebuilt after the 1970 fire: closet door, fireplace, and tower hall doorway.



All Souls Church

Norfolk Co., MA

16. All Souls Church, showing the whitewashed tower interior. Taken from the floor of the storage space above the Elliott Room/former minister's office, looking up and to the southeast.

17. All Souls Church, showing the parish hall from the central hall doorway, looking northwest. Note the narrow stage, scissor trusses, and the door into the serving room.

18. All Souls Church, showing the parish hall from its northeast corner, looking southwest. Note (l. to r.) the wheelchair ramp and the doorway to the stage/office, and the stage/ladies' parlor. The southern third of the stage and the narrow stage apron remain open, with the blank wall of the office enclosure behind.

19. All Souls Church, showing the former ladies' parlor/current minister's office fireplace, looking north.

20. All Souls Church, showing the largest basement classroom, in the southwest corner, from its northern end looking south. Note the original 1905 boulder walls and brick foundation piers, now painted yellow; the 1958 hallway walls are cinderblock.

21. All Souls Church, Meeting Room.

22. All Souls Church, Kitchen.

### **Sketch Map and Additional Documentation**

Figure 7.1. Site Map for All Souls Church, adapted from the 2014 Braintree Assessors Map #2025.

Figure 7.2. All Souls Church, Braintree, Massachusetts, in 1905. From the *Universalist Leader* May 6, 1905; originally published in the *Braintree Observer*. All Souls Church Archives.

Figure 7.3. South Elevation of All Souls Church, Braintree, Massachusetts, 1905, showing stonework details. Blueprints by Edwin J. Lewis, Jr., Massachusetts State Archives.

Figure 7.4. Current Ground Floor Plan for All Souls Church, adapted from the 1970 after-fire Existing Floor Plan by Albee, Harrold, and Hirth, Inc.

Figure 8.1. Braintree Detail Map from 1876. From W.A. Sherman's *Atlas of Norfolk County Mass.* (New York: Comstock & Cline, 1876). All Souls Church was later built on the property owned by E. Reed north of Elm Street.

Figure 8.2. Braintree Detail Map from 1888. From E. Robinson, *Town of Braintree*.

All Souls Church

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Figure 8.3. Braintree Detail from the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1919, showing All Souls Church and the Cochato Club. Charles Street was established in 1896, but Church Street does not appear on the map until 1926.

Figure 8.4. All Souls Church, Braintree, 1906. From Percy Metcalfe Leavitt, *Souvenir Portfolio of Universalist Churches in Massachusetts*.

Figure 8.5. All Souls Church Design. Rendering by D. A. Gregg for the Dedication brochure, 1905.

Figure 8.6. All Souls Church Design. Rendering by D. A. Gregg for the *American Architect and Building News* 87 (April 8, 1905), p. 116, pl. 1528.

Figure 8.7. Early photograph of the interior of the auditorium/sanctuary of All Souls Church, possibly on its completion in 1905. All Souls Church Archives.

Figure 8.8. All Souls Church ca. 1925 (with automobile added in). Original photograph by Thomson and Thomson. Courtesy of the Library and Archives, Historic New England. A cropped version was published in the *Boston Daily Globe*, December 2, 1925.

Figure 8.9. Braintree Detail from the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1926, showing the empty lot between All Souls Church and Church Street, which became church property in 1937.

**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.).

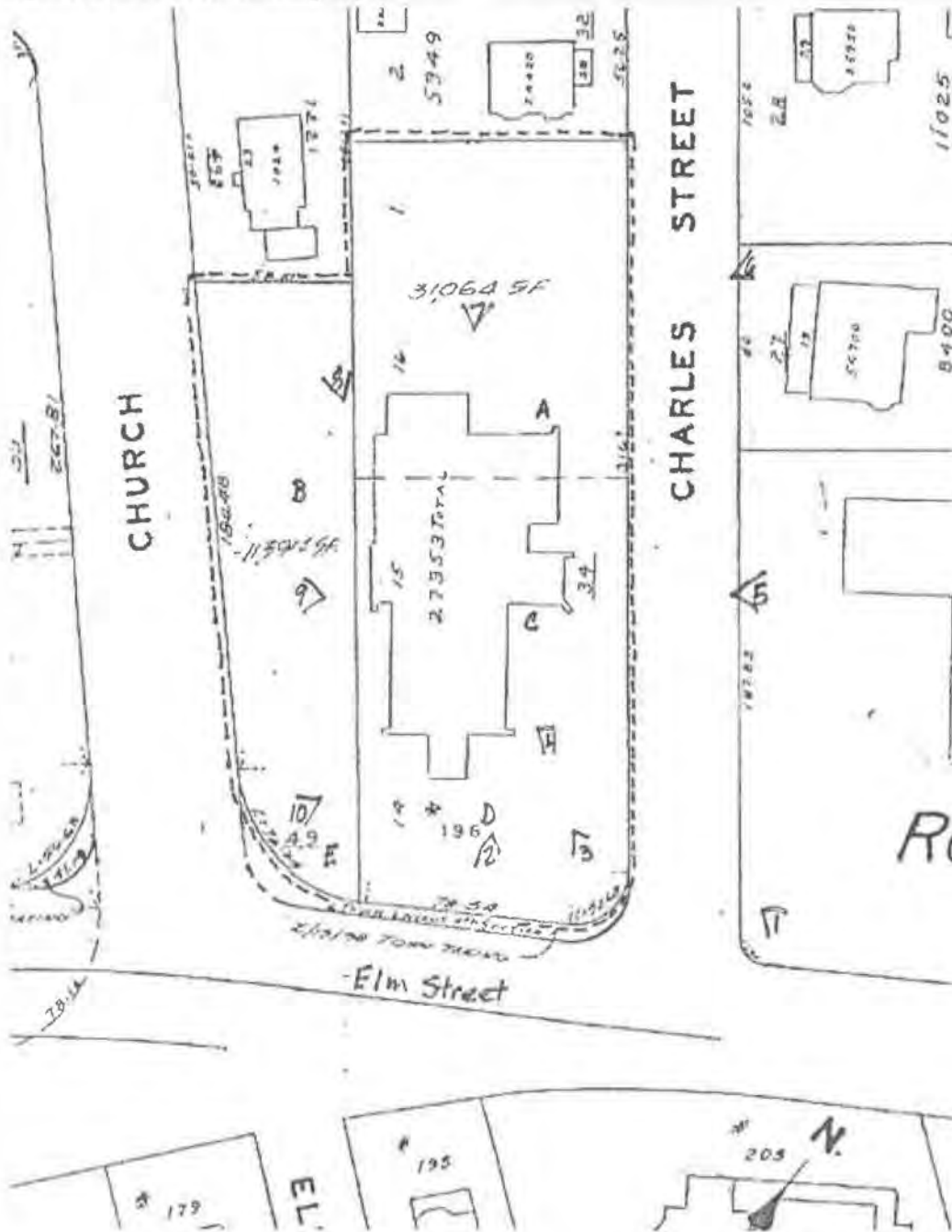
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

All Souls Church

Norfolk Co., MA

Figures

**Figure 7.1.** Site Map for All Souls Church, adapted from the 2014 Braintree Assessors Map #2025. Dotted lines indicate the property boundaries. Numbers with triangles indicate Photographs and direction taken. Capital letters indicate the items listed on the Site Data sheet: A: Utility Shed, B. Playground Equipment and Fences, C. Memorial Garden, D. Memorial Signbox, and E. Advertising Sign.



All Souls Church

Norfolk Co., MA

**Figure 7.2.** All Souls Church, Braintree, Massachusetts, in 1905. From the *Universalist Leader* 6 May 1905; originally published in the *Braintree Observer*. All Souls Church Archives.



**NEW CHURCH AT BRAINTREE, MASS.**

*From Universal Leader, May 6, 1905*

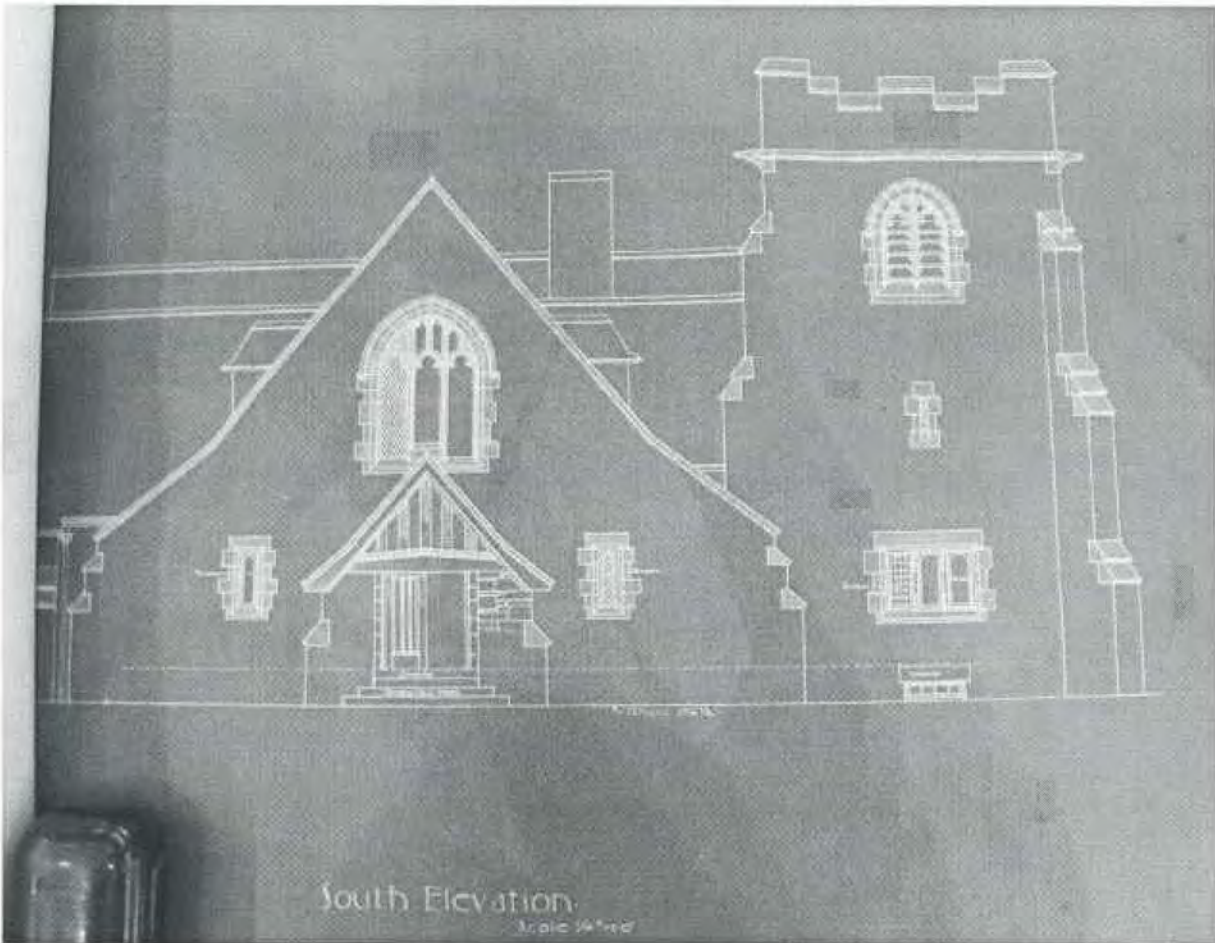
*Courtesy of The Braintree Observer*



All Souls Church

Norfolk Co., MA

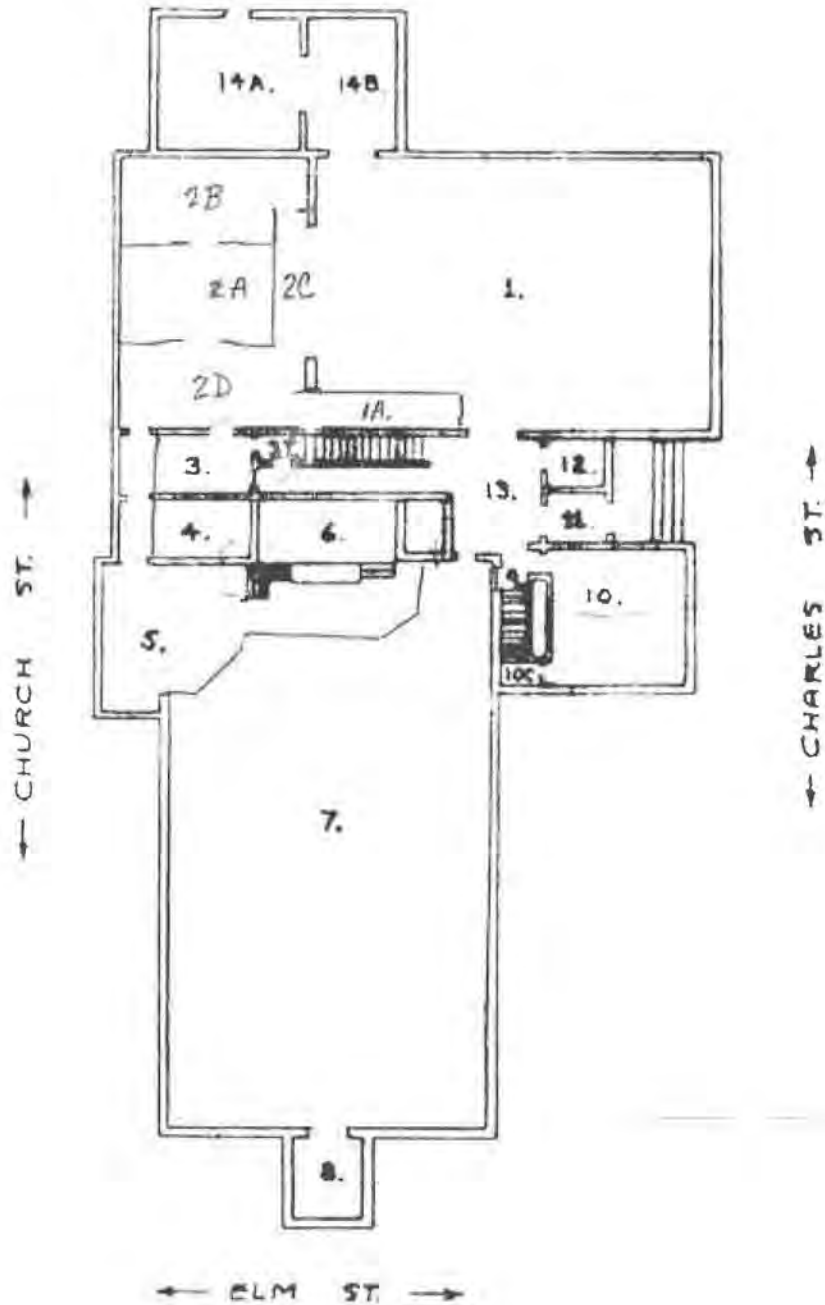
**Figure 7.3.** South Elevation of All Souls Church, Braintree, Massachusetts, 1904-1905, showing stonework details. Blueprints by Edwin J. Lewis, Jr., Massachusetts State Archives.



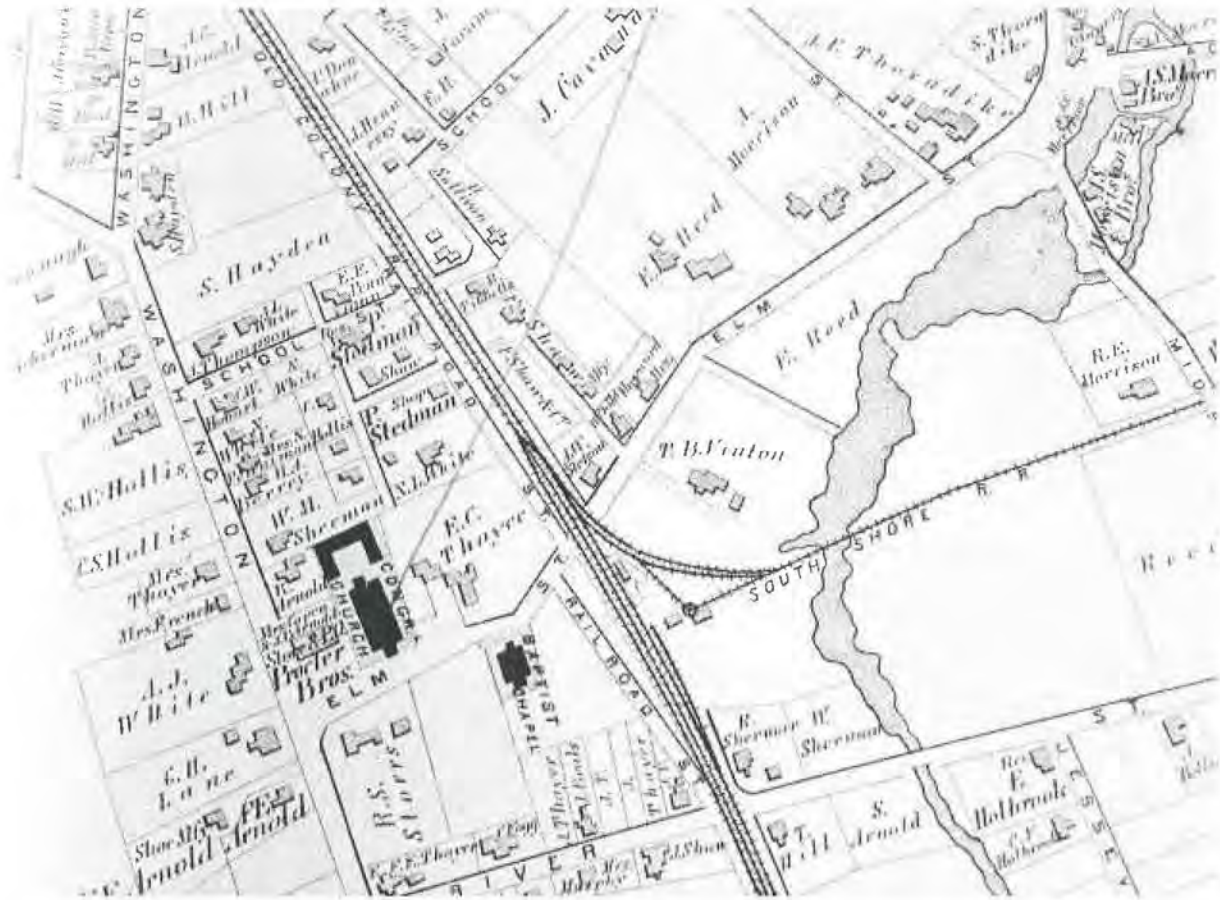
**Figure 7.4.** Current Ground Floor Plan for All Souls Church, adapted from the 1970 post-fire Existing Floor Plan by Albee, Harrold, and Hirth, Inc.

Room # Key:

- 1. Parish Hall.
- 1A. Wheelchair Ramp.
- 2A. Secretary's Office.
- 2B. Minister's Office.
- 2C. Stage Apron.
- 2D. Stage/Hallway.
- 3. Wheelchair-accessible Restroom.
- 3A. Restroom.
- 4. Organ Room.
- 5. Choir Loft.
- 6. Chancel.
- 7. Sanctuary.
- 8. Front Vestibule.
- 9. Tower Hallway.
- 10. Tower Office.
- 10C. Closet.
- 11. East Vestibule.
- 12. Hall Closet.
- 13. Central Hall.
- 14A. Kitchen.
- 14B. Serving Area.

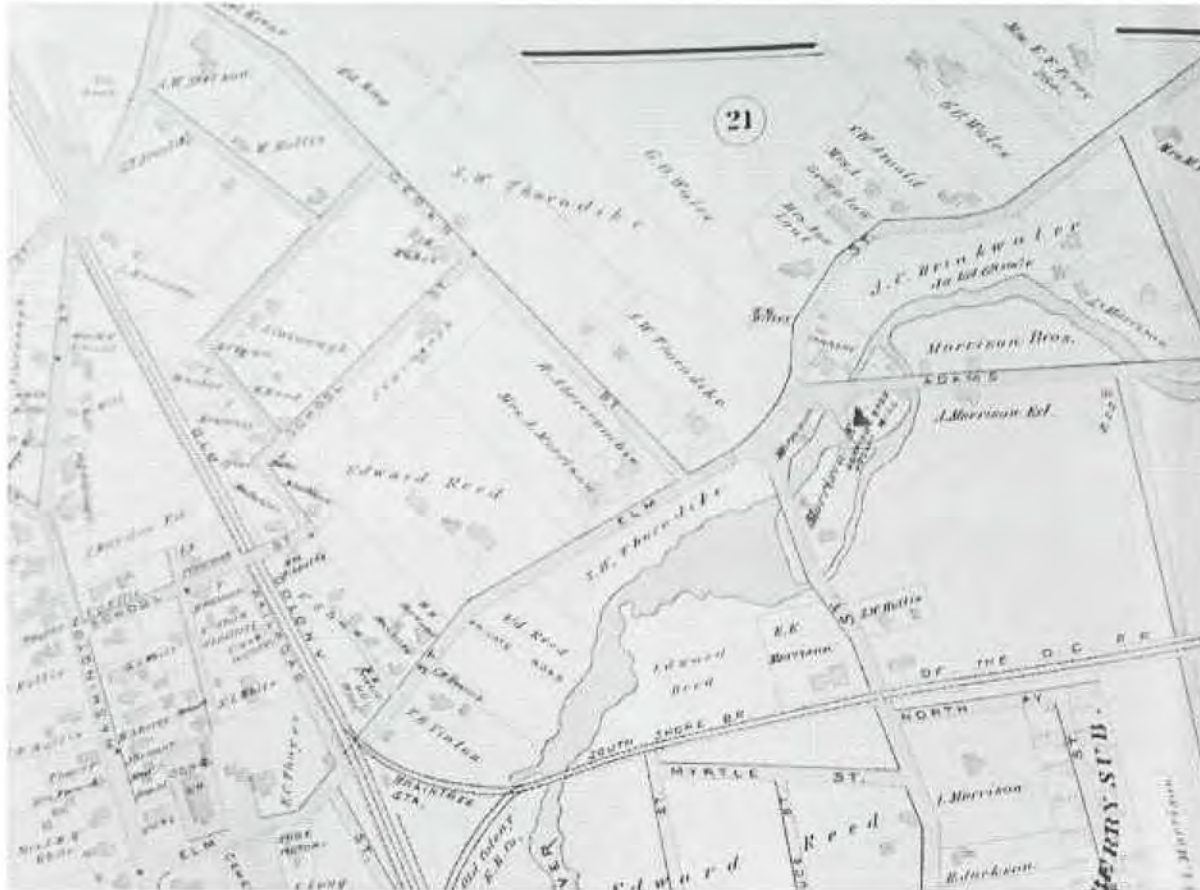


**Figure 8.1.** Braintree Detail Map from 1876. From W.A. Sherman's *Atlas of Norfolk County Mass.* (New York: Comstock & Cline, 1876). All Souls Church was later built on the property owned by E. Reed north of Elm Street.





**Figure 8.2.** Braintree Detail Map from 1888. From E. Robinson, *Town of Braintree*. Edward Reed owned the property that would become All Souls Church until 1896.

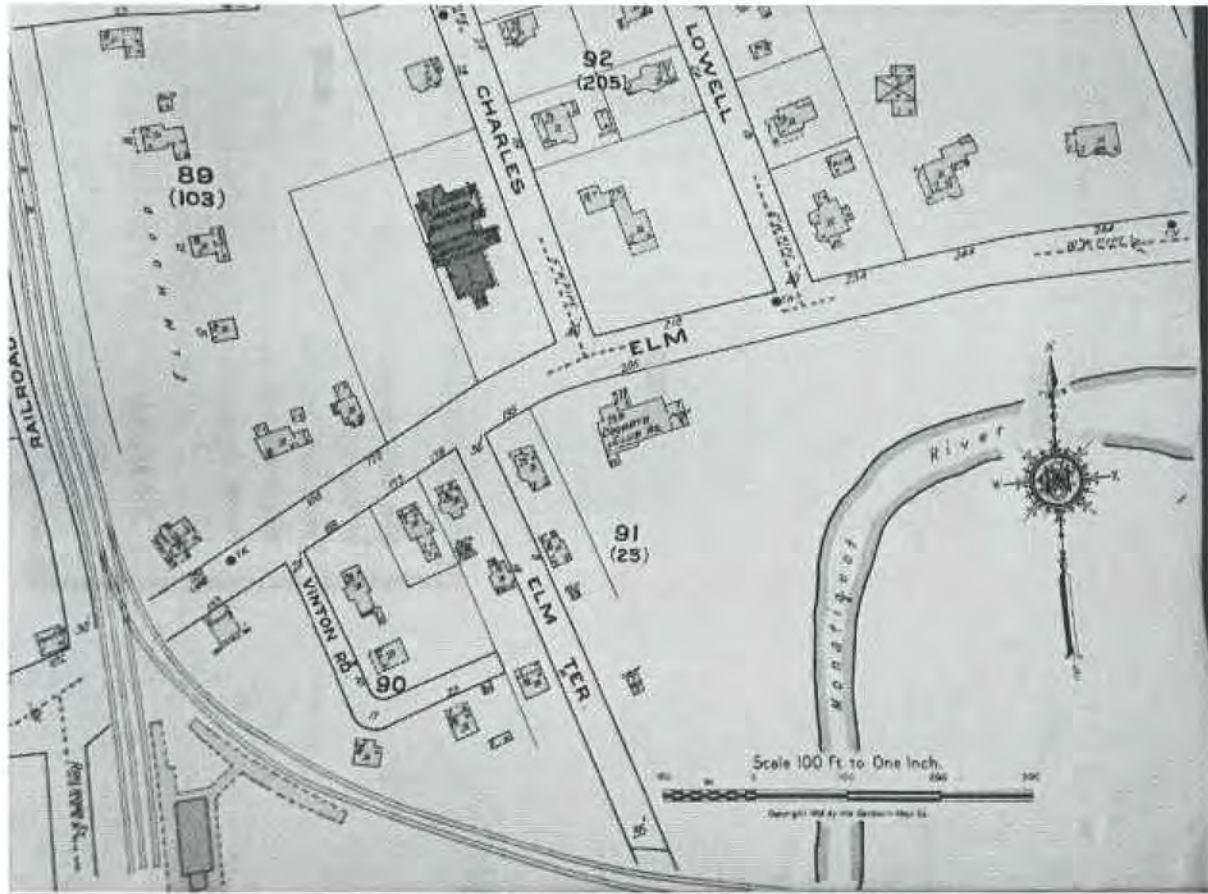




All Souls Church

Norfolk Co., MA

**Figure 8.3.** Braintree Detail from the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1919, showing All Souls Church and the Cochato Club. Charles Street was established in 1896, but Church Street does not appear on the map until 1926. Note the large train station in the lower left corner.



All Souls Church

Norfolk Co., MA

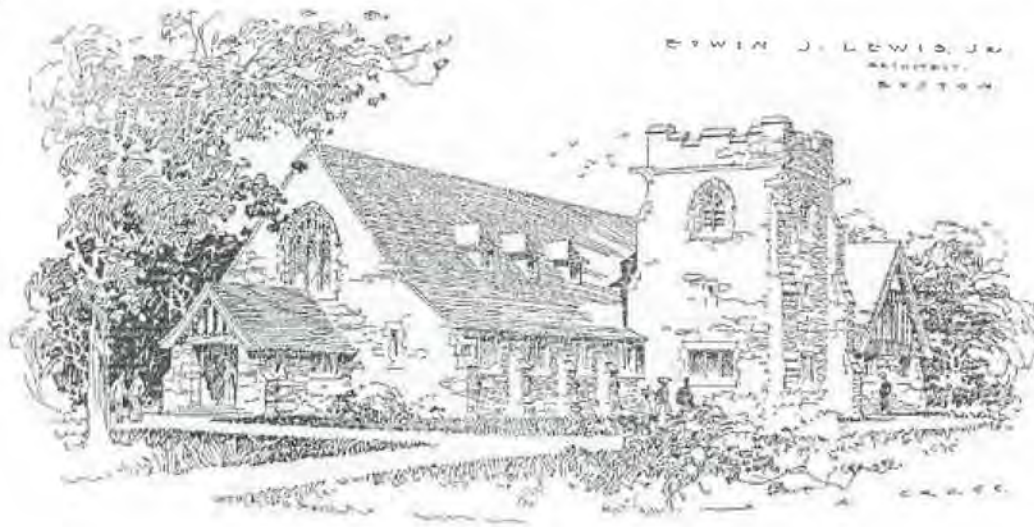
**Figure 8.4.** All Souls Church, Braintree, 1906. From Percy Metcalfe Leavitt, *Souvenir Portfolio of Universalist Churches in Massachusetts*.



All Souls Church

Norfolk Co., MA

**Figure 8.5.** All Souls Church Design. Rendering by D. A. Gregg for the Dedication brochure, 1905.



**All Souls Church**  
**Braintree, Massachusetts**



All Souls Church

Norfolk Co., MA

**Figure 8.6.** All Souls Church Design. Rendering by D. A. Gregg for the *American Architect and Building News* 87 (8 April 1905), p. 116, pl. 1528.



All Souls Church

Norfolk Co., MA

**Figure 8.7.** Early photograph of the interior of the auditorium/sanctuary of All Souls Church, possibly on its completion in 1905. All Souls Church Archives.



All Souls Church

Norfolk Co., MA

**Figure 8.8.** All Souls Church ca. 1925 (with automobile added in). Original photograph by Thomson and Thomson. Courtesy of the Library and Archives, Historic New England. A cropped version was published in the *Boston Daily Globe* 2 December 1925.

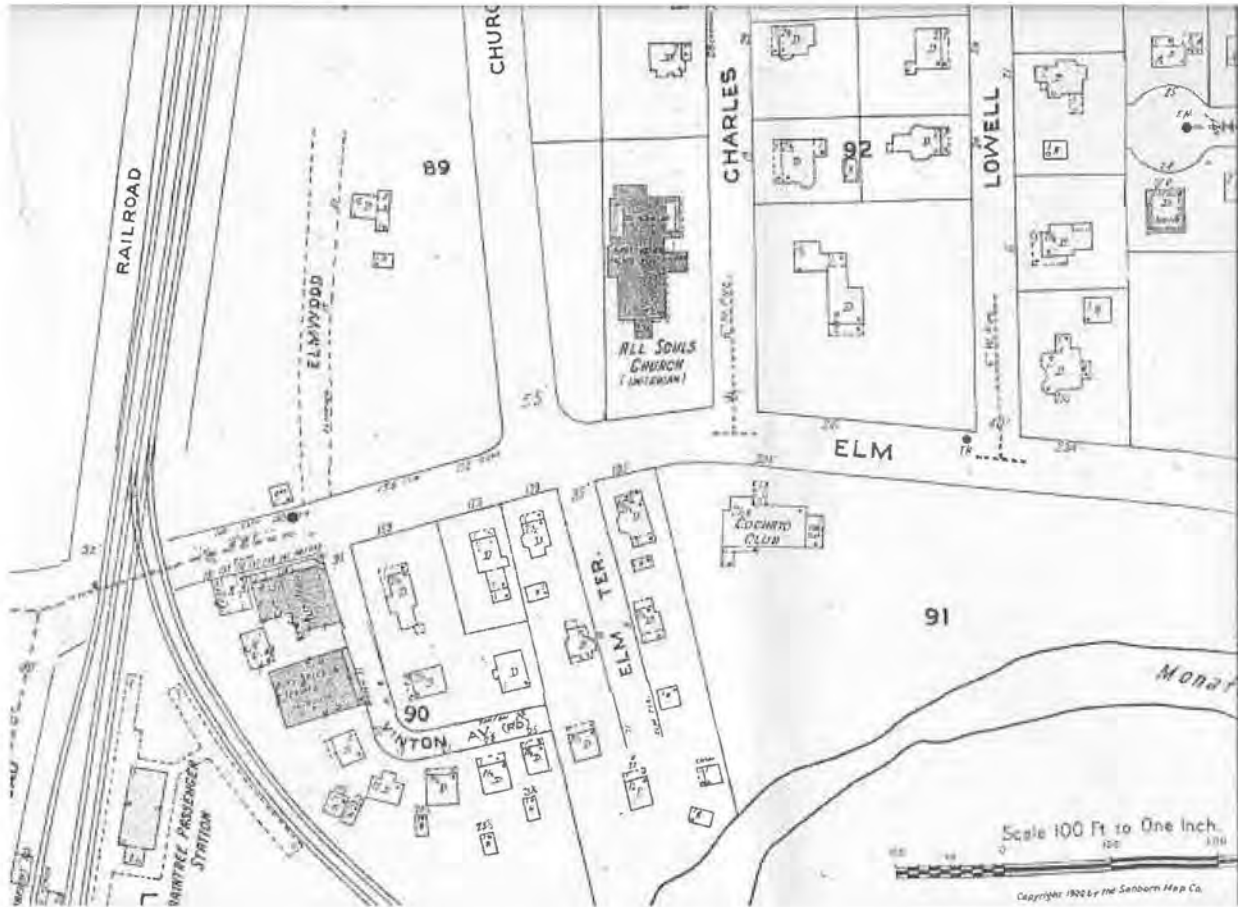




All Souls Church

Norfolk Co., MA

**Figure 8.9.** Braintree Detail from the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1926, showing the empty lot between All Souls Church and the newly laid-out Church Street, which became church property in 1937.



## Site Data Sheet

### All Souls Church, Braintree, Norfolk County, Massachusetts

Building/Landscape/Feature Letters key to site map	Date of Construction	Type of Resource	Contributing or Noncontributing (NC)	Direction from All Souls Church	Architect or Designer (if known)
All Souls Church Jr.	1905	Building	C		Edwin James Lewis,
A. Utility Shed	2000s	Building	NC	N	Unknown
B. Playground Equipment & Fences	1981-2010	Structure	NC	W	Unknown
C. Memorial Garden	1984	Site	NC	E	Unknown
D. Memorial Signbox	1989	Object	NC	S	Unknown
E. Advertising Sign	ca. 2005	Object	NC	SW	Unknown

Total: 6 resources: 1 contributing building, 1 noncontributing building, 1 noncontributing structure, 1 noncontributing site, and 2 noncontributing objects.



1926

2

ST.

CAPEN RD.

4

RAILROAD

BRAINTREE PASSENGER STATION

SCHOOL ST WEST (SCHOOL)

A-53 SCHOOL

CHURCH

89

ELMWOOD

ALL SOULS CHURCH (UNITARIAN)

CHARLES

PARK

LOWELL

HAVEN RD.

ELM

364

TER. ELM

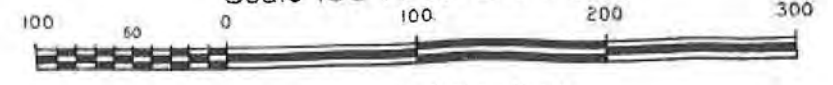
91

COCHATO CLUB

VINTON AV. (RD.)

Monatiquot River

Scale 100 Ft to One Inch.



Copyright 1926 by the Sanborn Map Co.

H.D.P. 1-26



CHARLES ST

STOP







ATLANTA BAPTIST CHURCH  
WHAT IS MISSING FROM  
CHURCH  
REV STEVE WILSON  
SUNDAY SERVICE 9:30





























ALL SOULS CHURCH  
UNITARIAN - UNIVERSALIST

























Two More  
Dinner  
at other  
meeting  
I think you





















Around Learning













UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY All Souls Church  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Norfolk

DATE RECEIVED: 5/22/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/12/15  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/27/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/07/15  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000389

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 7.2.15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

ALL SOULS CHURCH OF BRAINTREE

Unitarian Universalist  
Elm and Church Streets  
P.O. Box 850219  
Braintree, MA 02185-0219  
(781) 843-1388



June 7, 2011

Ms. Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Blvd.  
Boston MA 02125

Dear Ms. Friedberg,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of All Souls Church of Braintree, I am writing to express our wholehearted support of the application for listing our church on the National Register of Historic Places. For over 100 years All Souls has been a leader in advocating and working for social justice and equality for everyone. We proudly continue that tradition today.

We appreciate your consideration of our application; we are available to answer any questions you may have, or to provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Mitchell".

Mary Mitchell, Chair  
Board of Trustees

cc: Elizabeth Mees, Chairperson, Braintree Historical Commission



RECEIVED 2280

MAY 22 2015

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

May 5, 2015

Mr. J. Paul Loether  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, NW 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

All Souls Church, 196 Elm Street, Braintree (Norfolk), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the properties in the district were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

One letter of support has been received.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Elizabeth Mees, Braintree Historical Commission  
Joseph Sullivan, Mayor  
Rev. Steve Wilson, Mary Mitchell, All Souls Church  
Timothy Orwig, consultant  
Robert P. Bloomberg  
Robert Harnais, Braintree Planning Board