

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUL 10 1984

date entered AUG 16 1984

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

1. Name

historic TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 1108 N. ADAMS STREET not for publication

city, town WILMINGTON vicinity of

state DE. code 10 county NEW CASTLE code 003

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name REV. ROBERT MAC LEOD SMITH, TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

street & number 1108 N. ADAMS ST.

city, town WILMINGTON vicinity of state Delaware

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. RECORDER OF DEEDS

street & number 800 N. FRENCH ST., CITY/COUNTY BLDG., 4th Flr.

city, town WILMINGTON, state DE

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Survey CRS # N-9573
title Wilmington Cultural Resource has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records Wilm. Office of Planning/Bureau of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

city, town WILMINGTON AND DOVER state DELAWARE

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Trinity Episcopal Church and rectory are examples of a late 19th century Gothic Revival church style based on prototypes of old English Gothic parish churches. Briefly, the elements which characterize the church as Gothic Revival include, in the exterior, the pointed arch windows and doors, the high spire, the additional pinnacles on the side of the building, and the buttresses. On the interior, the style is expressed by the wooden roof with its king post truss system, the wood and stone carving, and the stained glass windows. The main body of the church is cruciform in shape with the nave of the church being oriented toward the north. A rectangular chapel has been added at the south end of the nave.

The church is built from grayish white "Avondale" limestone laid in random coursed rock-faced shlar blocks. The gable roof is covered with blue-gray Pennsylvania slate. The body of the church is one story in height with a three-story tower on the west side of the nave. The tower is square, surmounted by a single tail pointed spire surrounded by four finials. (The original tower for the church designed by Theophilus Chandler was higher than the present one but was not completed). The tower we see today was added in 1925. The Gothic doors and windows are framed by decorative stone carving. The massive wooden doors have elaborate iron hinges and locks. The walls are supported by strip buttresses capped with finials.

On the interior, the walls are stone. The ceiling is wooden with an exposed king post truss support system. The truss rest on hammer beams carved to resemble angels. This type of roof is modeled directly on smaller English Gothic parish churches where a stone vaulted roof would have been considered too expensive. The details of the interior can be broken down into material categories. There is much fine wood carving, such as the quatrefoil ceiling molding, the wainscotting, the pews, the presiders' chairs, and the aforementioned hammer beams. The stonework includes the elaborate Gothic tracery reredos and pulpit added in 1911, carved of Caen stone. The baptismal font carved in 1872 was moved from the old church at Fifth and King Streets. The art metalwork in the church includes two brass lamps hanging above the lectern and pulpit, which were given as gifts in the 1890's. The brass lectern in the shape of an eagle was given in memoriam by Samuel Biddle. He and his wife were the first couple married in the church, but she and an infant son died in childbirth a year later.

The stained glass windows are perhaps the most striking aspect of the church interior. The church originally had amber-colored leaded glass windows, but over the years, many stained glass windows were added. The greatest of these are the six windows designed by Tiffany Studios of New York between 1890 and 1900. These windows include the altar window, illustrating Matthew 11:28; the east transept window, illustrating

8. Significance

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

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Theophilus P. Chandler

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Trinity Episcopal Church is significant: 1) for its role in Wilmington's social history; 2) as a good example of the work of Theophilus P. Chandler; and 3) as a fine example of the Gothic Revival style. Trinity Episcopal Church is eligible for the National Register based on Criterion A association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; Criterion B association with the lives of persons significant in our past; and Criterion C embodying the distinctive characteristics of the type, period, or method of construction.

The history of Trinity Parish begins much before the erection of the present church back to the building of Holy Trinity (Old Swedes Church) in 1699. That church was built by a colony of Swedes who had settled on the Christina in the 17th century. During the 18th century, a large English colony grew up in Wilmington and the Swedes assimilated into the more predominate English culture. In 1791, the jurisdiction of the church was transferred to the English Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the Episcopal Church. In 1830, the congregation moved to a new church building at the corner of Fifth and King Streets to be closer to the center of town. Within 50 years, that location had been encroached upon by numerous stores and factories, and the congregation decided to move again. In 1882, they chose to move to the present location at Adams Street and Delaware Avenue. The location they chose was well suited to the congregation as Wilmington's middle and upper class neighborhoods were expanding westward along the Delaware Avenue trolley line. The congregation of Trinity Episcopal Church included some of the most affluent people in Wilmington and the new location was close to the mansions of Delaware Avenue. At first, a small stone chapel was built while the plans were made for a new church. Theophilus P. Chandler, a Philadelphia architect, was commissioned to design the new church. In May of 1890, the cornerstone of the present building was laid. The benediction service for the new church was held January 29, 1891. A measure of the importance that the opening of the church had for the Episcopalian community can be gleaned from the fact that the proceedings included some 800 people, three bishops, and 40 clergy. The church has continued to serve for nearly 100 years as a focal point of the Episcopalian community in Wilmington,

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Thesis, Theophilus P. Chandler, Theodore Sande, University of Pa.
2. A History of American Architecture 1607-1976, M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, MA 1976

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1 acre

Quadrangle name Wilmington, South

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	8	4	52	4	0	0	4	3	99	9	20
Zone	Easting		Northing								

B

Zone	Easting		Northing								

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE ATTACHED CONTINUATION SHEET

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title RANDAL BARON, WILMINGTON OFFICE OF PLANNING

organization

date February 1984

800 N. FRENCH ST., CITY/COUNTY BLDG.

street & number

telephone (302) 571-4126

city or town WILMINGTON,

state DELAWARE

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

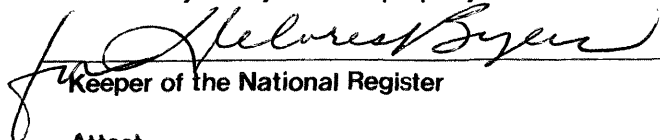


title

date June 29, 1984

For NPS use only

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



Keeper of the National Register

date 8-16-84

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Luke 2:8-14; the west transept window, illustrating Matthew 25:40; and two lancet windows on the south wall of the west transept illustrating Sts. Ann and Agnes. Two lancet windows forward on the west aisle near the west transept are the work of Charles J. Connick of Boston and were installed in 1928. The six medallions depict "the ideals of Christian service." The large window on the south wall of the narthex over the doors to the parish house was installed in 1911. It was the design of Wickham and Stone and was executed by the American Decorative Glass Company. It illustrates Luke 2:29-32. The brilliantly colored window on the south wall of the narthex to the right of the doors to the parish house was installed in 1929. It was designed by James H. Hogan and executed by John Powell and Sons of London in the White Friars' Glass Works.

In 1911, the parish house and rectory were added to the church. The addition was designed by Frank Miles Day and Company of Philadelphia and used the same material as the main body of the church. The Gothic Revival style was used again so as to blend the addition with the church. The Gothic style of the rectory is expressed in the casement windows with dripstone moldings and finials at the peak of the gable ends.

The chapel was designed in 1949 by Victorine and Samuel Homsey of Wilmington using the same Avondale limestone. It has a simple rectangular plan. It is adorned with five stained glass windows designed by Wilbur H. Burnham of Boston depicting events in the life of Christ.

1104 Adams Street is a brick three story rowhouse attached to the Trinity Episcopal Church complex by a second story walkway between the buildings. It is Italianate in style, three bays wide, with a heavy pressed metal cornice, double front doors and an arched transom. It is 20' wide and 110' long. Its position on the streets recalls a time when Adams Street ran directly along side the church and when Trinity was completely surrounded by a residential neighborhood.

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SIGNIFICANCE

Item number

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Trinity Episcopal Church is significant for its architecture. The church is a fine example of the Gothic Revival style. The design of the church is based on prototypes of English Gothic parish churches. The Gothic style was reintroduced in England in the first half of the 19th century and was seen symbolically as a return to a more innocent natural time before the onset of the Industrial Revolution. The style was promoted particularly for new churches, social service, and charitable institutions. Theorists of the Romantic period, such as Pugin in England, and Andrew Jackson Downing in the United States promoted the Gothic style as a return to nature. They likened the asymmetry and the craggy spires of Gothic churches to nature's outcroppings of trees and mountains. The Cambridge Camden Society, the major force behind the Ecclesiological Movement in England, further adopted the English Gothic of country parish churches as the height of the Gothic style. They promoted the style for Episcopal churches to separate them from the Roman churches of the time which preferred the Romanesque style. In 1849, the American Ecclesiological Society was formed and promoted the Gothic style in this country for Episcopal churches. Such noted architects as Richard Upjohn, John Notman, and Theophilus Chandler were hired to design churches in the Gothic style for the Episcopal Church.

Theophilus P. Chandler, the architect of Trinity Episcopal Church, is an important architect both in relation to the Gothic Revival style and to architecture in the mid-Atlantic region in general. Born in 1845 in Boston to a family that literally stepped off the Mayflower, he was educated at Harvard and at the Atelier Vaudremer in Paris. In 1872, he came to Philadelphia to work. He received many commissions from the duPonts of Wilmington almost immediately, due to the fact that his mother's family, the Schlatters, had strong financial ties with the duPonts. Chandler eventually married into the duPont family. Chandler became a specialist in Ecclesiastical architecture, due to his preference for working in stone, his frequent travels to England and during which he became a proponent of the English Gothic, and his intellectual learnings towards the Romantic Movement. He designed such important Gothic Revival churches as the Church of New Jerusalem in Philadelphia, Calvary Presbyterian Church in Washington, and First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh. Chandler was the founder and first chairman of the Department of Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, and the founder of the Philadelphia Chapter of A.I.A. He was hired as the staff architect for Godey's Ladies Book, and produced a number of architectural patterns. Although he was not revolutionary in his work like his rival, Frank Furness, he produced finely detailed buildings, and added greatly to the architectural profession.

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Chandler's connections with Wilmington are strong due to his ties to the duPonts and his proximity to the area. He designed the additions to Winterthur and the Old (now demolished) courthouse that stood on Rodney Square, among other buildings.

The architecture of Trinity Episcopal Church is significant because it is an example of Victorian Romantic taste, of the dictates of the English Ecclesiological Movement, and because it is a typical and fine example of Theophilus P. Chandler's work.

Harris House (attached to Church)

1104 Adams Street, called the Harris house was built about 1890. At that time it was owned by Sarah Sayers. John J. Harris bought the house in 1917 for \$6,500. In 1948, Trinity Church bought the building to house its Sunday School and social services in which function it continues to this day. Its original and historic use however was residential. Its significance lies in the fact that it is part of the architectural frame of Trinity Episcopal Church for nearly 100 years.

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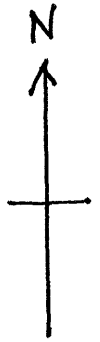
date entered

Continuation sheet Geographical Data Item number 10 Page 1

The nomination includes the church, parish house, rectory, and church school (Harris House), and lands.

beginning at a point on the easterly side of Adams St., 80' north of its intersection with the northerly side of 11th St.; thence South 40° 30' East 125' to a point; thence North 49° 30' East 90' to a point; thence North 40° 30' West 40' to a point; thence North 49° 30' East 165' to a point on the southerly side of Delaware Ave.; thence westwardly along said side of Delaware Avenue to its intersection with the easterly side of Adams Street; thence southwardly along said side of Adams Street to a point 80' north of its intersection with the northerly side of 11th Street, said point of BEGINNING.

TRINITY CHURCH STAINED GLASS WINDOWS



A seated Christ with
arms outstretched to
children

ALTAR

Angel with
chalice and
women with children

Shepherds with flock
on hillside & angel,
Star of Bethlehem

Sts. Anne &
Agnes

Faith

Christian
Service

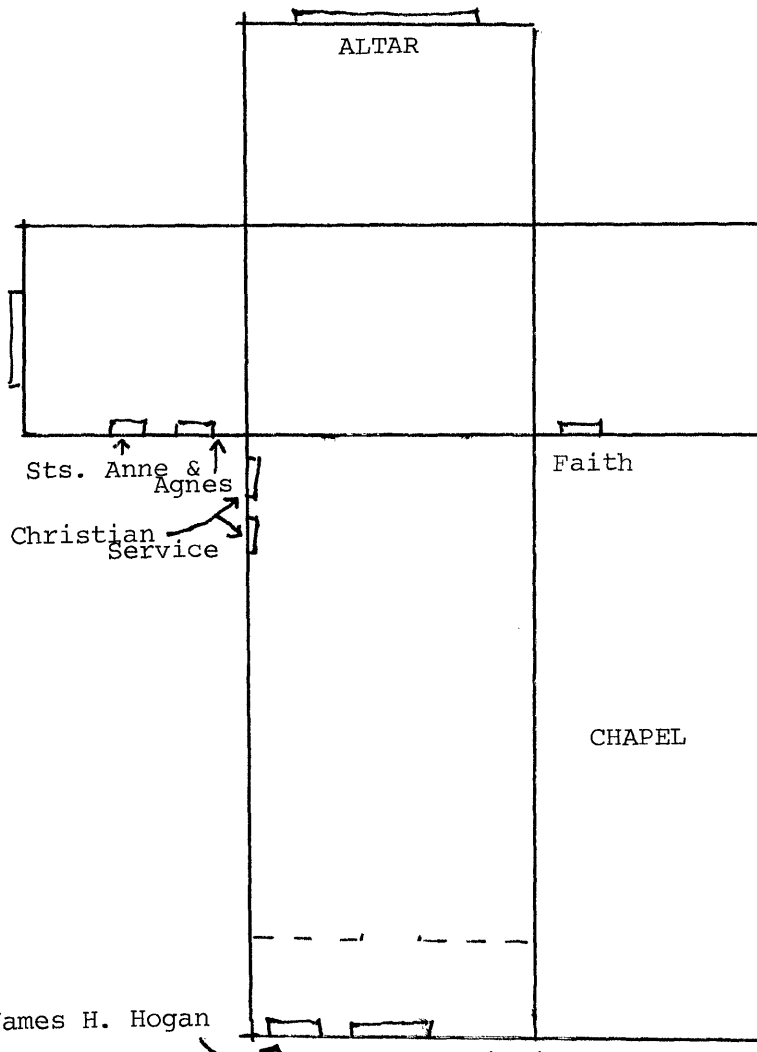
Beatitudes

CHAPEL

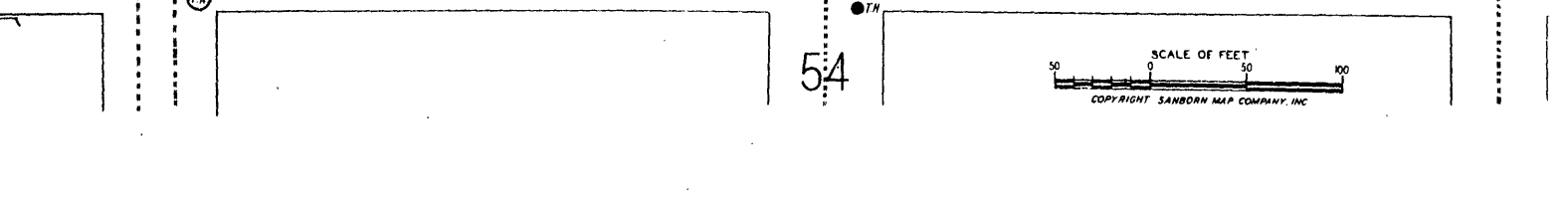
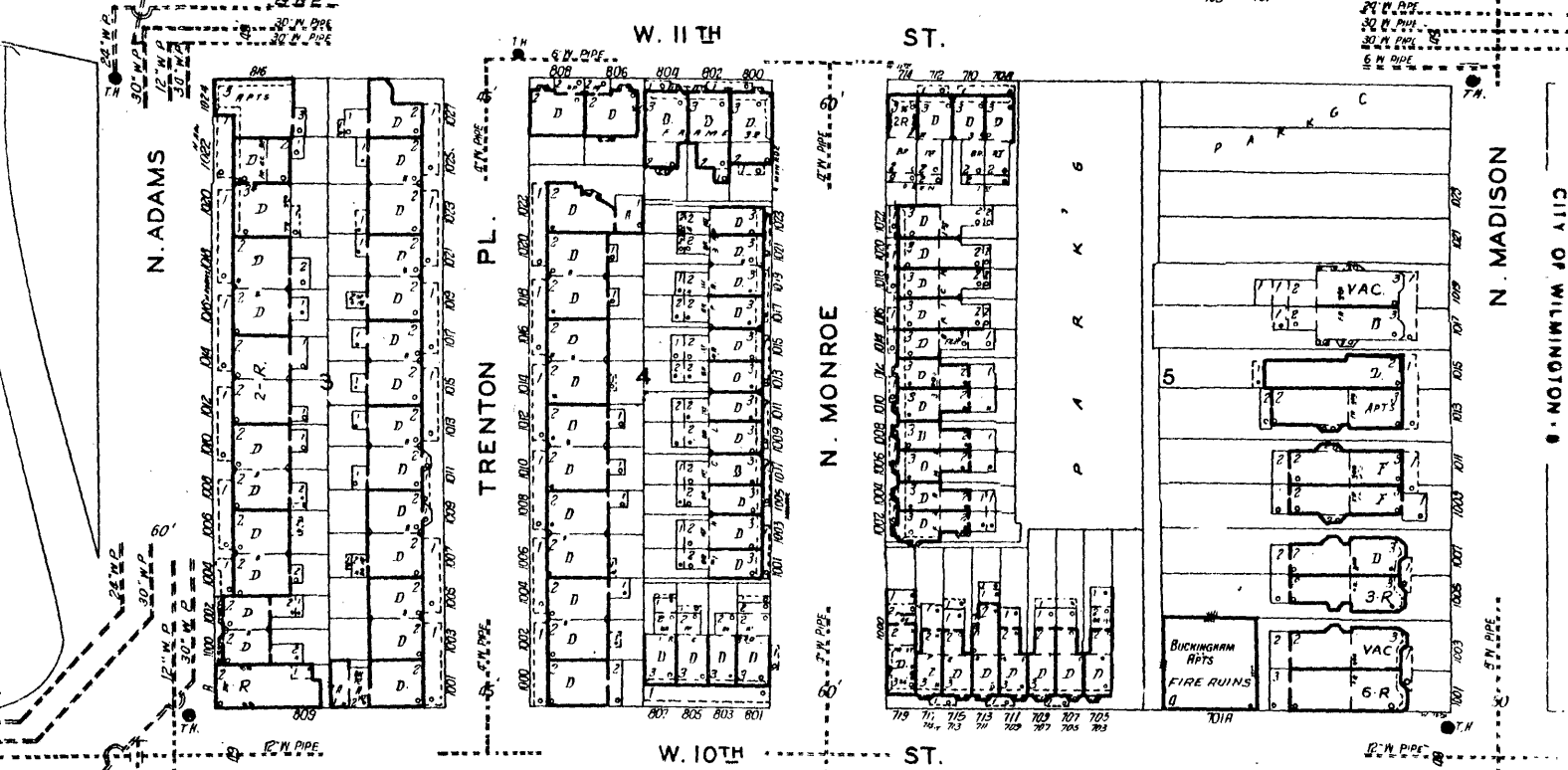
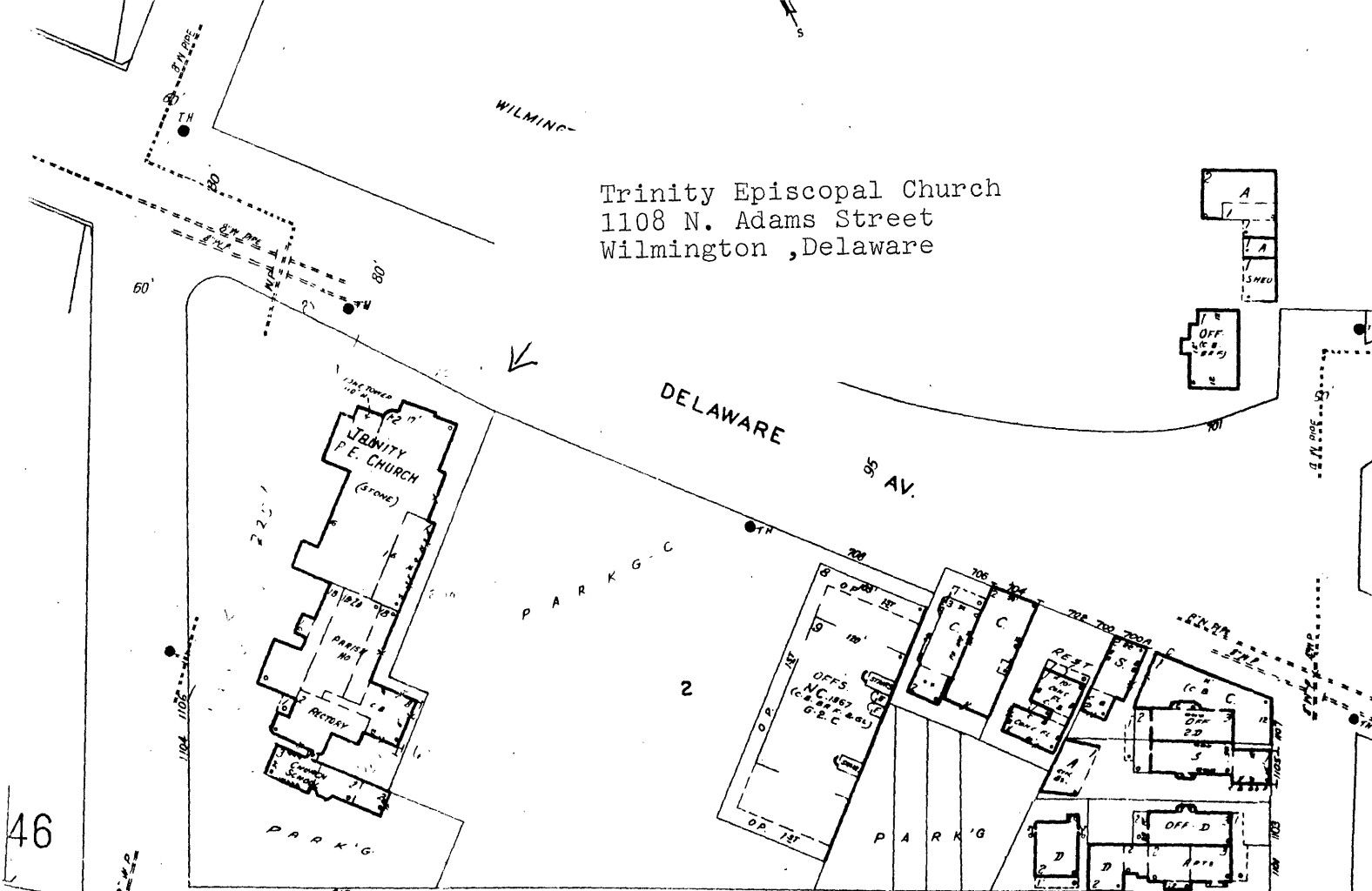
Transfiguration

James H. Hogan

Nunc dimittis



Trinity Episcopal Church
 1108 N. Adams Street
 Wilmington, Delaware



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