

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 89000154 Date Listed: 3/2/89
Stewart Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church South Fulton GA
Property Name County State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Amy Federman
Signature of the Keeper

5/23/90
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

The closing date for the period of significance should read 1921, reflecting the historic construction date.

Discussed and concurred in by the Georgia SHPO.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

0154

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FEB 02 1989

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Stewart Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church South
other names/site number Stewart Avenue United Methodist Church

2. Location

street & number 867 Stewart Avenue, SW N/A not for publication
city, town Atlanta N/A vicinity
state Georgia code GA county Fulton code GA 121 zip code 30310

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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. N/A See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Elizabeth A. Lyon Date 1/26/89

Elizabeth A. Lyon, Deputy SHPO
Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Shelores Byer

Entered in the
National Register

2/2/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURYREVIVALS/Beaux Arts

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brickwalls brick

roof unknownother

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Stewart Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church South (now the Stewart Avenue United Methodist Church) is a two-story, asymmetrical, Beaux Arts-style church. It is located in Atlanta, several miles south of the central business district along Stewart Avenue, a major north-south thoroughfare. It is within a middle class residential neighborhood. The church was built in 1921 of cream-colored brick veneer on three sides, with red brick on the fourth side, and a flat roof.

The exterior of the church is distinctive in that it is veneered in cream-colored brick and contains no steeple or any symbols identifying it as a church. There is a pressed metal cornice with a parapet above. The front entrance is framed by a pair of monumental, painted-wood Corinthian columns. The front steps are poured concrete. The front entrance contains a massive, double pair of front doors, with wrought iron hinges.

On the interior, the church is constructed on the double cruciform plan, with the nave axis perpendicular to the entrance and thus the main street it faces. The chancel and choir are on the south end of the sanctuary. The sanctuary has indented corners used for storage, teaching rooms for Sunday school, a reception room, and the choir. On the lower, or basement level, there is a large fellowship hall, surrounded on two sides by a kitchen, nursery, mechanical rooms, restrooms and a teaching room.

The interior has several important decorative details. The sanctuary has a pressed-metal ceiling with a deeply coved pressed-metal cornice, numerous rectilinear opalescent glass windows, two colored stained glass windows in the chancel bearing religious figures, v-notched wooden wainscoting on all walls, and oak floors with carpet runners. The two choir rooms, on either side of the chancel and choir, also have stained glass or opalescent glass windows. On the lower, or basement level, there are plaster walls, a concrete floor, and a plaster ceiling. Special details among the above-mentioned interior details include the Greek key design within the sanctuary's pressed metal ceiling, the urn motif within the coved cornice, the original wooden pews, and natural white marble on the partition between the choir and chancel.

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The church building rests on brick piers, with load bearing basement walls. The heating system has been converted from the original coal-fired, steam heat system to a new one which uses natural gas. There is no air conditioning.

The building sits twenty-five feet back from Stewart Avenue and the lot slopes from north to south. There is no significant landscaping or trees. At the rear of the property is a small, non-contributing one-story brick building used for the men's Bible class built in the late 1940s. The house just north of the church itself, now owned and used by the church, is not on the nominated parcel because it was not purchased by the church until 1951. The church is within a middle class residential neighborhood that is bisected by a major thoroughfare. Behind the church to the west are houses.

There have been very few changes to the property since it was constructed in 1921.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
architecture

Period of Significance
1921-1938

Significant Dates
1921

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
unknown -- attributed to
Rev. Charles M. Lipham

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Stewart Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church South is significant in architecture because it is an important local example of the use of the Beaux Arts style in the design of a church, although rather late in the advent of that style. While most churches being built in Atlanta and other urban areas in Georgia in the 1920s had either a steeple or a dome to identify their purpose, this one had neither. Its style confers its status in the community as a community building, but it resembles a library more than a church. Its interior plan is unusual, in that when one enters the front door, one enters the sanctuary from the side, rather than directly into the central aisle. While the architect for the church is not yet fully proven, it is attributed to Rev. Charles M. Lipham (1880-1964), a Methodist minister who designed churches and parsonages along with his regular duties as a minister. At least two other buildings built under his supervision and tenure are nearly identical to this one. This church is obviously the work of a skilled designer who gave his clients something different in an era when most churches looked very similar. It also contains important interior details, including the pressed metal sanctuary ceiling with a Greek key motif, the coved cornice with an urn motif, and numerous opalescent glass windows.

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NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA:

This area of significance supports the property's eligibility under National Register Criterion C.

Criterion C is supported because this church embodies workmanship, stylistic details, and overall siting and massing that are the work of a master craftsman and architect. The building's Beaux Arts design identifies it as a community building, a meeting space, but not necessarily as a church. Within a small, residential lot, the church was designed along a north-south axis, which was perpendicular to the main street entrance. No doubt this design reflects the architect's skills in dealing with the parameters of his commission, creating a church on a small, residential lot. The church's interior details reflect some of the finest craftsmanship of the day- pressed metal ceiling and cornice, and opalescent and stained glass windows. It also reflects the connection between religion and architecture, since the attributed architect was also a minister who had experience with numerous sanctuaries and knew what worked best in a church of this size. The design is attributed to Rev. Charles M. Lipham, a Methodist minister who was also an architect who supervised the building of many new churches and parsonages during his career. Since this is one of at least four Methodist facilities in Georgia that are nearly identical, two of which he is known to have supervised, it is felt that he may have been involved in the design as well.

CRITERIA CONSIDERATION A:

This property is considered eligible for the National Register, even though it is a church, because it is a religious property which derives its primary significance from its architectural distinction and its attribution to a Methodist minister-architect. It is significant under this exception because of its link to a minister-architect who was often assigned to a church in need of a new facility. Further study of church-sponsored building programs may lead to other linkages between the church hierarchy and standard or similar designs used by more than one church.

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HISTORICAL NARRATIVE/CONTEXT STATEMENT

The Stewart Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church South, now the Stewart Avenue United Methodist Church, began life as the Bonnie Brae Mission, a small congregation that was formed early in the 20th century. The establishment of the mission followed Methodist traditions over a century old. Methodists used the mission church pattern when new churches were in their formative stages. The Bonnie Brae community began after Methodists petitioned the nearby Park Street Methodist Church for a mission church. The Park Street Church organized a tent revival in 1908 at the corner of Lillian Avenue and Tift in the Adair Park neighborhood, a small, rapidly developing neighborhood on Atlanta's south side. The Park Street Bonnie Brae Mission developed from this revival in the summer of 1908.

After meeting for about a year, the mission secured funds with which to build a permanent structure. In the Spring of 1909, on a corner lot donated by B. F. Pim, Sr., a member of Park Street Methodist, the building was commenced and completed by mid-summer. The construction work was done by the congregation's members, and they created a simple, one-story, clapboard structure. In the fall of 1909 the mission officially became the Bonnie Brae Methodist Episcopal Church South.

In 1919, the church began assembling the land parcel on which a new church would be built. In three separate purchases, a lot was created which ran 171 feet along Lillian Avenue and 74 feet along Stewart Avenue. The portion where the current church was later built was previously occupied by the Immanuel Congregational Church who had owned it since 1884. They sold their lot for \$800.

By 1920, the newly formed church had outgrown its original structure, a new site had been purchased, and plans were underway for a new structure on the newly purchased lot, at the corner of Stewart Avenue and Lillian Avenue, a block and a half from the original location. Already on the site was the small Immanuel Congregational Church and the grave of a child of the founding couple. After the grave was moved to Westview Cemetery, and the original building removed, work began on the new church.

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The architect of the new church is not known for certain by any of the usual means: the building permit is blank, the Manufacturer's Record is silent, and the church minutes also yield no clues. The building is attributed to Rev. Charles Merrill Lipham (1880-1964) due to several reasons.

Lipham was a Georgia-born, Methodist minister, a graduate of Emory College, who began his career in Fairburn, Georgia in 1905. By 1919, when the Bonnie Brae church was obviously thinking about a new building and was purchasing land for the same, Lipham had already preached at several churches in the North Georgia Conference and had taken five years off from preaching to run a building trade business. He was identified with Stewart Avenue Methodist due to the fact that two of his known church buildings have extreme visual design similarities with this church. One is the First Methodist Church of Calhoun, Georgia, designed and built in 1916. The only difference is that the sanctuary is two stories. It contains the same entrance, window designs, parapet, etc.

The other visual connection is to a parsonage he designed and built in 1924 in Dalton, Georgia. He was never a permanent pastor at Bonnie Brae, but during 1919, when the congregation was purchasing the land, he was assigned to the Calvary Methodist Church in West End, Atlanta. Presumably he designed it during that period of time, or presented the congregation with plans that he had already drawn and perhaps used elsewhere. Since he was already out of town on another assignment when the construction got underway, that might be the reason his name does not appear on any of the official documents. The Lawrenceville Methodist Church, built in the early 20th century, is also of identical design.

In his obituary it was stated that he devoted his career to "improving property in every place he lived...few, if any men, have compiled such a record for building churches and parsonages..." His daughter indicated that he was assigned by the Bishop of the North Georgia Conference to churches which specifically needed a new church or parsonage.

The ground breaking took place on March 14, 1921 according to the Atlanta Constitution of March 16th. The seating capacity was to be 500, Sunday school 400, and the cost to be \$20,000.

Plans for the new church building were announced in the Manufacturer's Record of March 24, 1921, again stating that the cost would be \$20,000.

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The building permit filed with the city of Atlanta on March 22, 1921 did not reveal the name of the architect and stated that the builder was to be "day work". The permit was signed by Arthur R. Cleveland, who lived nearby and was a contractor, and it is assumed that he supervised the building.

The records on the building permit file indicate that work began by April, 1921 and was completed in October, 1921. The congregation changed its name to "Stewart Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church South" at the time they moved into the structure. In 1968, the name was changed to Stewart Avenue United Methodist Church when both Georgia conferences joined in a national movement of unification.

Over the years the congregation felt a need to add to their holdings. In 1951, they bought the two-story, frame house and lot just north of the church on Stewart Avenue and modified it to serve as a Sunday School building and church office. While officially part of the church property, it is not included within this nomination due to being added after the end of the historic period. In the late 1940s, a small brick building was built at the rear of the original lot, facing Lillian Avenue, to be used as a Men's Bible Class building.

Over the years, the congregation has grown and then declined in membership. Some ministers have gone on to higher callings in the Methodist church, others have taught at Emory University's Candler School of Theology while also preaching here.

Stewart Avenue United Methodist Church remains a place of worship and fellowship. It is still very active, and now the fourth generation of children from the original founding families are members.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Mills, Jeanne. "Bonnie Brae...Stewart Avenue...Methodist Church." Historic Property Information Form, June 1, 1986. On file at the Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

"Buildings Proposed," Manufacturer's Record, March 24, 1921, p. 109.

Atlanta Constitution, March 16, 1921, p. 8. (about the groundbreaking)

N/A See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):N/A

- 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 # _____

- Primary location of additional data:
- State historic preservation office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A 1,6 74012,0 3,73518,0
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

N/A See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is the historic portion of the property owned by the church on Parcel 23, in City Tax District 10, on the enclosed tax map. 14-0107-0010-051

N/A See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is the historic core of the land that is owned by the church today. It is the parcel which has been associated with the historic church since its construction in 1921.

N/A See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian
 organization Historic Preservation Section date January 23, 1989
Georgia Department of Natural Resources telephone 404/656-2840
 street & number 205 Butler Street, SE Suite 1462 state Georgia zip code 30334
 city or town Atlanta,

United States Department of the Interior
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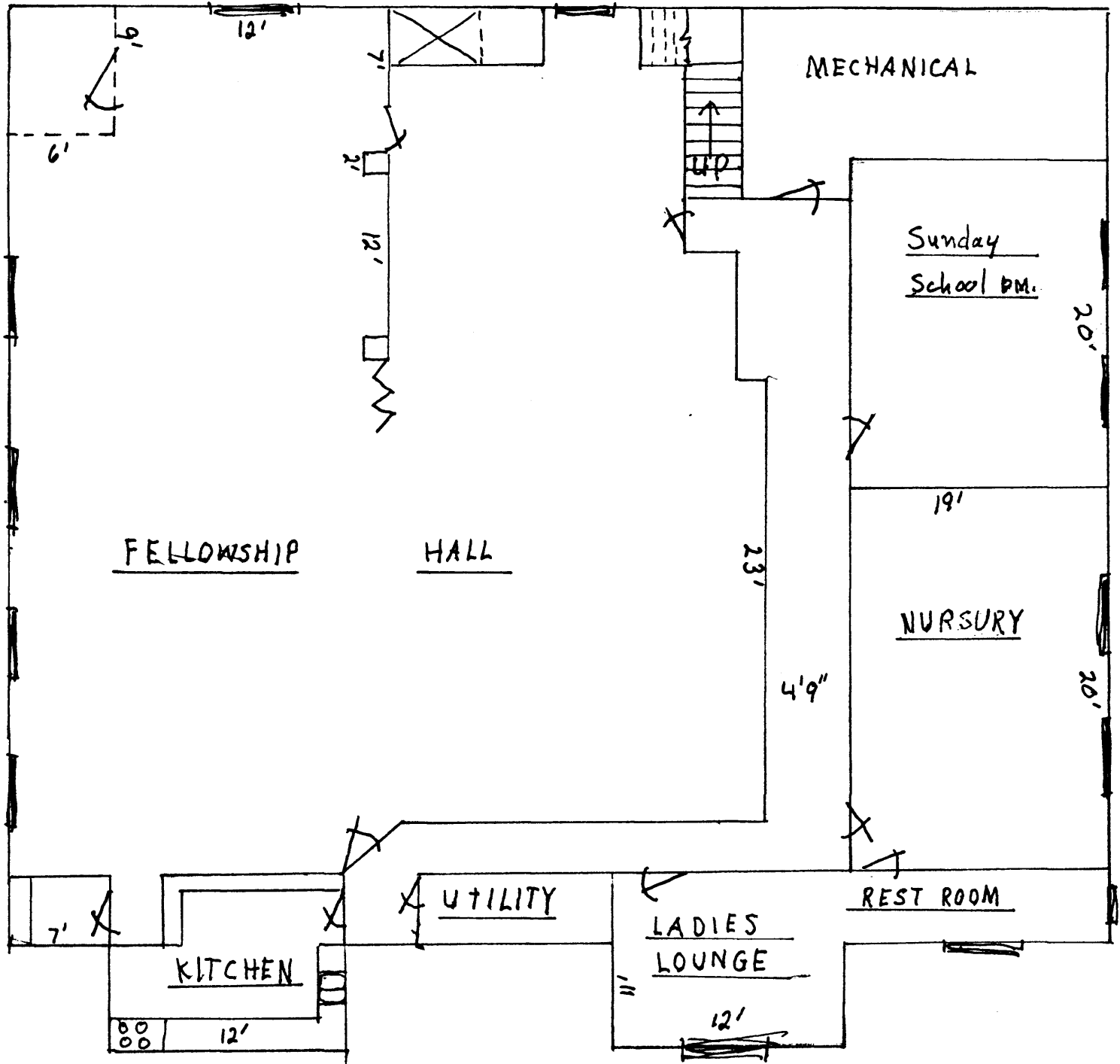
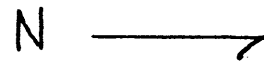
PHOTOGRAPHS
Section number _____ Page 1

Stewart Avenue Methodist Church
Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative: Filed at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: May, 1988

Description:

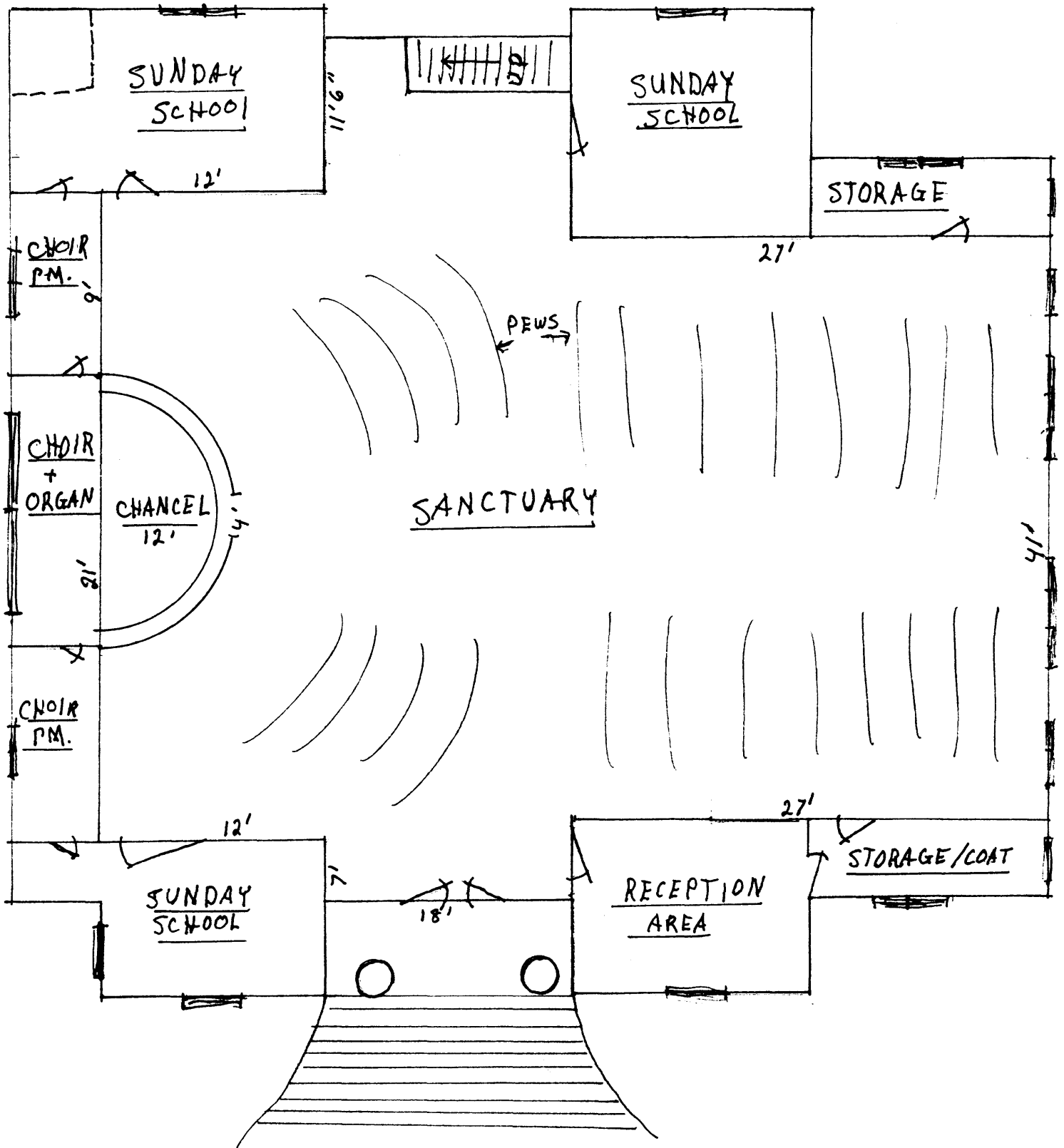
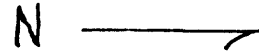
- 1 of 7: Front facade; photographer facing west.
- 2 of 7: Front facade; photographer facing northwest.
- 3 of 7: Northeast perspective; photographer facing southwest.
- 4 of 7: Southwest perspective (rear facade); photographer facing northeast.
- 5 of 7: Sanctuary, altar; photographer facing south.
- 6 of 7: Sanctuary, altar; photographer facing southwest.
- 7 of 7: Rear of sanctuary; photographer facing north.

Floor Plan
 Stewart Avenue Methodist Episcopal
 Church South
 Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia
 Scale: not to scale
 Source: Drawn by Meanne Mills
 Date: ~~1986~~ 1986
 Key: Basement, with room usages
 marked on the plan.



STEWART AVE.

Floor Plan
Stewart Avenue Methodist Episcopal
Church South
Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia
Scale: not to scale
Source: Drawn by Jeanne Mills
Date: c. 1986
Key: Main floor, with room usage
marked on the plan.



STEWART AVENUE

741

MEN'S BIBLE
CLASS BLDG.

PARKING

STEWART AVENUE
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH

Ground plan
67' x 64'

CHURCH
ANNEX

Sketch Map
Stewart Avenue Methodist Episcopal
Church South
Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia
Scale: marked on the map
Source: Drawn by Jeanne Mills, based
on the tax map
Date: c. 1986
Key: The nominated property is marked
with a heavy black line. The
usages of the buildings are
marked directly on the map.

Lillian Avenue

Sidewalks

167.9'

167.9'

167.9'

← boundary of
nominated
property,
w/ dimensions

74'

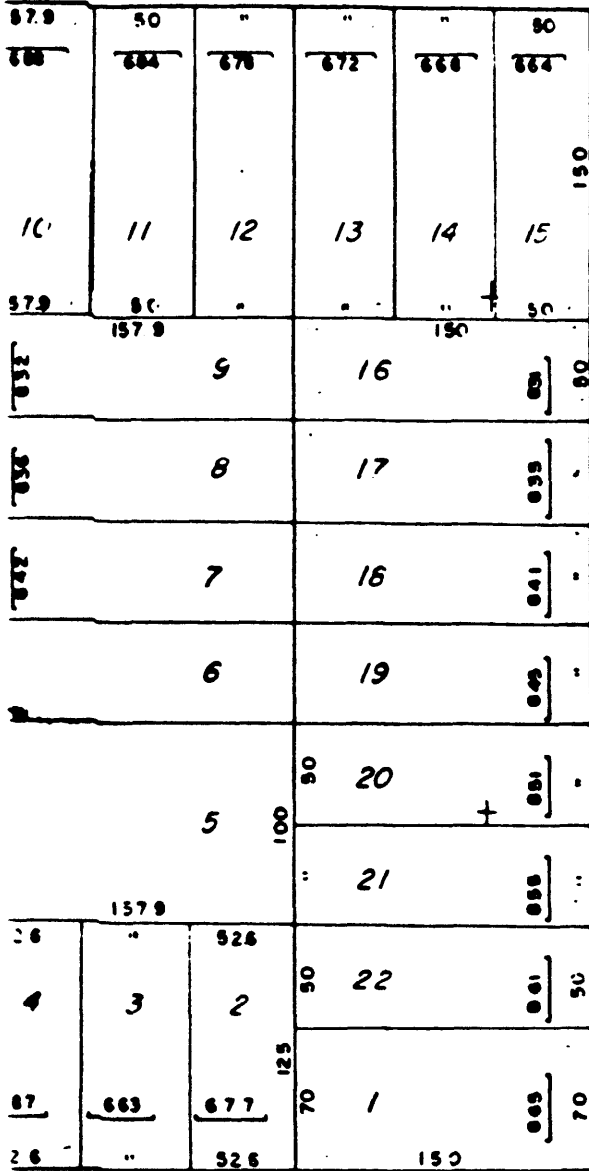
N

Stewart Avenue

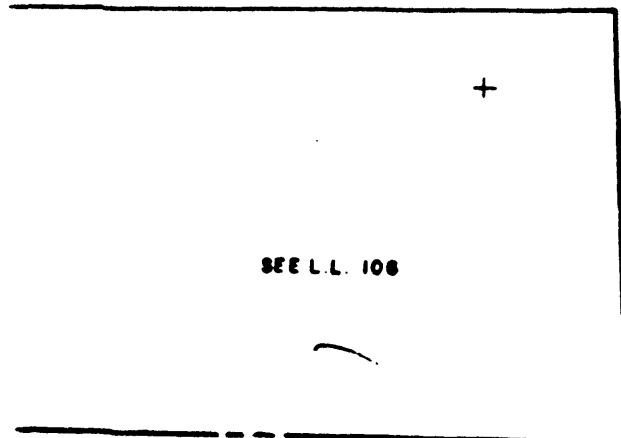
Tax Map
 Stewart Avenue Methodist Episcopal
 Church South
 Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia
 Scale: marked on the map
 Source: Fulton County, Georgia Tax
 Assessors Office, Tax Map
 Number 14-0107-0010

Date: c. 1986
 Key: The nominated Property is that
 part of parcel 23 marked with a
 heavy black line.

GILLETTE

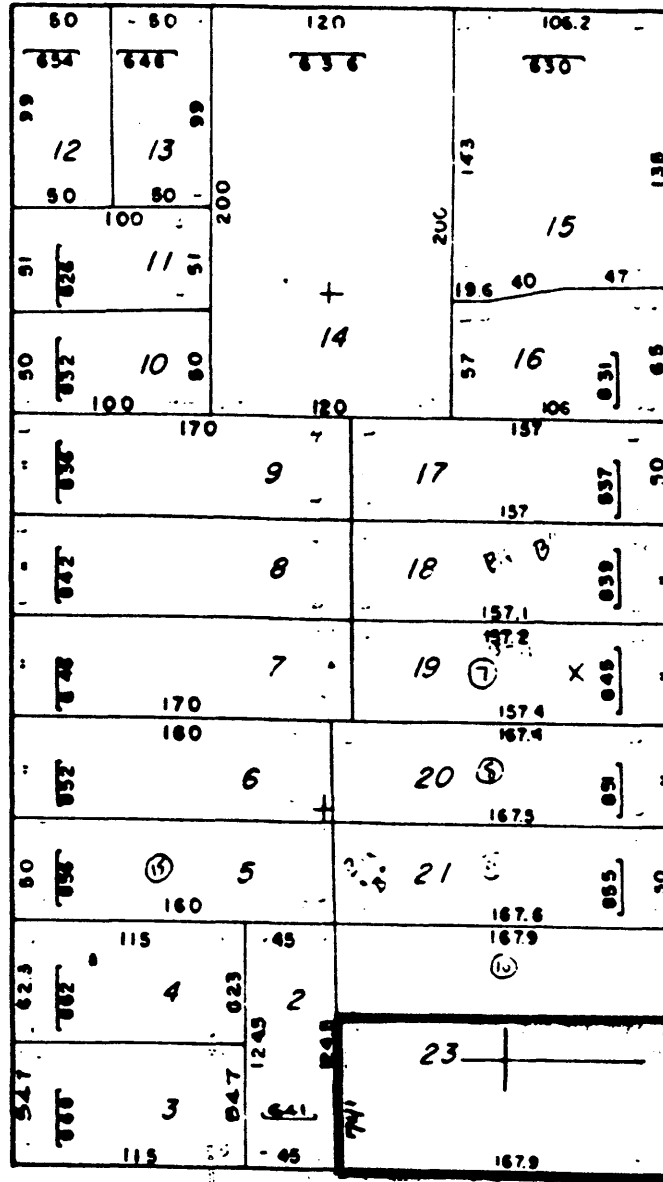


LILLIAN

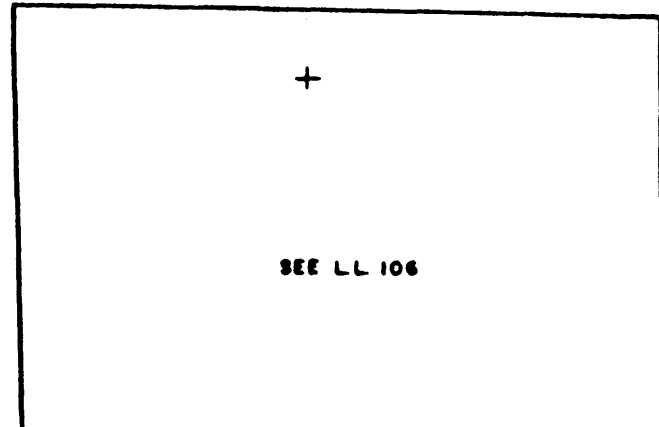


AVENUE

OAKHILL



AVENUE



AVENUE

CITY TAX DISTRICT 10
 CITY TAX DISTRICT 9

STEWART