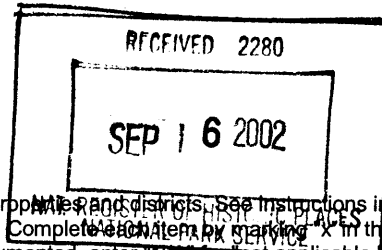


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for not applicable. For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name First Congregational Church

other name/site number 5EP631

2. Location

street & town 20 E. St. Vrain St. N/A not for publication

city or town Colorado Springs N/A vicinity

state Colorado code CO county El Paso code 041 zip code 80903

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Georgina Cortez August 27, 2002  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

Don A. Beall 10/31/02  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**  
(check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

**Current Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls STONE

roof METAL

other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Description**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

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

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE \_\_\_\_\_

SOCIAL HISTORY \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1889-1910 \_\_\_\_\_

1889 \_\_\_\_\_

1903 \_\_\_\_\_

1910 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Date**

1889 \_\_\_\_\_

1903 \_\_\_\_\_

1910 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Persons**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A \_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Marshall, Henry Rutgers (architect) \_\_\_\_\_

Dozier, Joseph (builder) \_\_\_\_\_

Finegan, Frank (stone contractor) \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

First Congregational Church archives \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than 1 acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/3 5/1/5/3/7/0 4/2/9/8/9/6/0  
Zone Easting Northing

3 / / / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

2 / / / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

4 / / / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title R. Laurie Simmons and Thomas H. Simmons, historians

organization Front Range Research Associates, Inc. date 3 May 2002 (revised)

street & number 3635 West 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue telephone 303-477-7597

city or town Denver state CO zip code 80211

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs:** Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

name/title First Congregational Church

street & number 20 East St. Vrain Street telephone 719-635-3549

city or town Colorado Springs state CO zip code 80903

**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. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 1

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

### Narrative Description

The First Congregational Church is a monumental stone building located at the northwest corner of East St. Vrain and North Tejon streets, two blocks north of downtown Colorado Springs and three blocks south of the campus of Colorado College, in the Near North End neighborhood. The building's rock-faced stone walls, central shingled lantern tower with splayed octagonal roof and pointed spire, projecting gables with large stained glass windows, and wrap-around portico make it a dominating visual landmark. The Richardsonian Romanesque style building is constructed of Colorado Wall Mountain Tuff (rhyolite) laid in random ashlar stonework set in red mortar. The roof is clad with pressed metal shingles and the foundation is battered and topped by a slightly projecting stone water table. The building consists of an 1889 church of Greek cross plan on the east and a gabled wing of the same style and materials added to the west in 1903. A 1996 glazed atrium stepped back on the west wall of the 1903 addition connects it to a 1959 concrete block education building (See Sketch Map). The stone church is in excellent condition and displays a high degree of historic physical integrity, while the nonhistoric connecting atrium on the west wall is clearly differentiated from the historic building in scale, materials, and design.

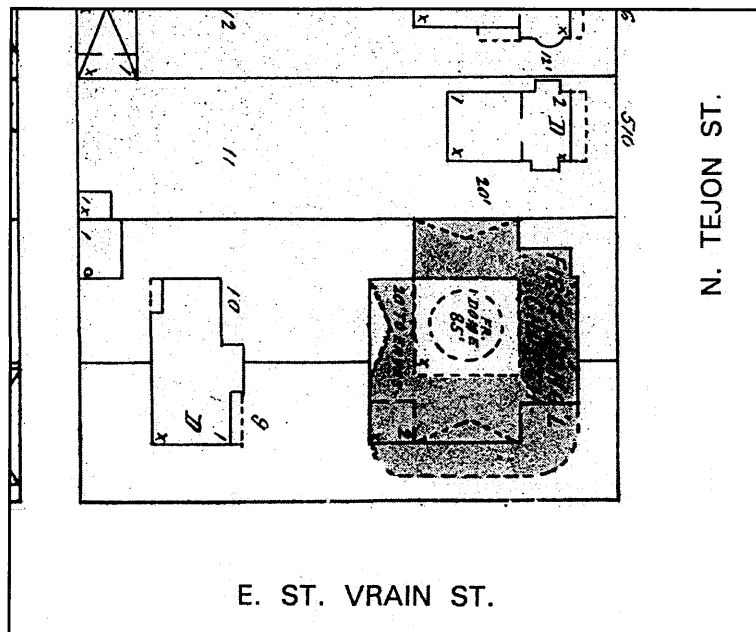


Figure 1. The original 1889 portion of the church is shown on this fire insurance map. SOURCE: Sanborn-Perris, "Colorado Springs, Colo.," 1895.

### Original Church Building (1889)

The original 1889 church is a cross plan pyramidal mass terminating in a central lantern-tower intersected by lower projecting gables on the south, east, and north, with a bell-tower at the southwest corner adjacent to the south gable (Photograph 1) (See Figure 1). The spire of the lantern-tower is octagonal and is topped by a pointed finial. The tower roof is splayed at the bottom, where it

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 2

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

flares outward into an overhang with exposed shaped rafters that shelters the square shingled base topped by a ribbon of windows illuminating the interior dome. The trefoil arch windows have a continuous molded sill. The window bands are divided into three sections on each wall, with the central section having five windows with stained glass lights and the flanking sections each having three windows with clear glass.

The façade of the church (south wall) is dominated by a massive projecting gable abutted on the west by a stone bell-tower (Photograph 2). The gable has tooled stone coping and a projecting carved stone Celtic cross finial at the apex. The gable end features a central stained glass rose window of unusual tracery with a center roundel surrounded by lozenge-shaped lights. Radiating voussoirs bordered by a narrow band of stone molding form the arch at the top of the window. Centered above the rose window on the upper gable face are three small blind trefoil arches with tooled stone insets. Flanking the rose window are narrow vertical stained glass windows with trefoil arches: the outer windows are two-part and the inner windows are tripartite.

The rectangular bell tower at the west end of the façade rises from the face of the wall, which is divided by a corbelled course of stone. The hipped roof of the tower is steeply-pitched, almost pyramidal. The four corners of the tower have round stone columns with projecting rounded tops. The columns are composed of wide and narrow blocks of stone displaying picked<sup>1</sup> masonry. Between the columns are tapered picked stone columns atop a solid balustrade supporting a rock-faced stone frieze. Molding extends along the top of the frieze and encircles the columns. There are half-columns on the interior adjacent to the corner columns. A projecting band of masonry at the bottom of the tower balustrade differentiates the tower from the wall below.

Extending across the full-width of the façade and wrapping around to the east is a projecting portico with low hipped roof with molded metal fascia and curved corners. Seven immense stone columns support a heavy rock-faced frieze. The extraordinary stonemasonry of the columns is unduplicated in Colorado.<sup>2</sup> The elongated ovoid shafts of the columns are composed of two huge blocks of stone and have a picked finish. The bases and capitals are rock-faced stone. The capitals have roughly rounded corners and the bases are rectangular, with concave corners. The deck of the porch is concrete, the ceiling is varnished wood, and the porch steps are tooled stone. There is an area of plantings in front of the porch with sandstone borders.

Facing the west end of the portico is an arched entrance with paneled double doors surmounted by an arched transom with stained glass light. West of the doors is a tripartite window with trefoil arch. East of the doors are two window openings with triple trefoil arch stained glass windows surmounted by a stained glass transom. At the southeast corner of the porch is an inset area illuminated by a hanging lantern. Facing south into the inset space are paneled double doors with a stained glass

---

<sup>1</sup> A picked finish in stone masonry is a surface covered with small pits produced by a pick or chisel point striking the face perpendicularly. Cyril M. Harris, editor, *Dictionary of Architecture and Construction* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1975), 359.

<sup>2</sup> Architectural Historian Rodd Wheaton reports that a building with similar masonry is the Governor John Tanner Mausoleum in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield, Illinois.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 3

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

transom. Facing east onto the porch is a pointed arch door. There are rounded tooled stone steps at the southeast corner.

The porch extends across the east wall, where it is terminated by an engaged column of rock-faced stone. One of the components of the column is a carved cornerstone ornamented with a cross and inscribed "Nil Sine Numine" (Nothing Without Providence, also the state motto). The east end of the porch is enclosed and has three narrow trefoil arch stained glass windows with a shared sill. A concrete ramp with metal railing descends at the east end of the porch adjacent to the enclosed bay.

The projecting gable on the east has tooled stone coping and a trefoil finial at the apex of the gable (Photograph 4). The upper gable face includes a central stone plaque inscribed "First Congregational Church 1888." A large, central, round arched stained glass window with flowing tracery and panels dominates the gable end. The window lintel has radiating stone voussoirs bordered by narrow stone molding and there is a projecting stone sill. The bottom panels of the window have trefoil arch lights. Flanking the large window are three small trefoil arch windows with shared stone sills. Below the large window is a basement light well covered with a metal grate.

Toward the north end of the east wall is a flat roof entrance bay with heavy stone lintel supported by engaged columns. The capitals of the columns have rounded corners, creating a corbel that turns inward flush with the wall. The entrance has a door with panels and trefoil arch glazing, a transom with cusped corners, and paneled and glazed sidelights with pointed arch lights.

The east wall of the north projecting gable has a round arch stained glass window on the upper wall above a filled in entrance with pointed arch transom with stained glass. The north wall of the north projecting gable has a full-height, center, gable end chimney that projects above the roof (Photograph 5). Narrow stained glass windows flank the chimney on the upper gable face. There are no windows on the lower wall. The west wall of the north gable has two round arch stained glass windows on the upper wall.

### West Addition (1903)

The façade of the 1903 addition to the church (known today as the Founders' Room) has a gabled roof with tooled stone coping topped by a stone Celtic cross finial at the apex of the south wall (Photograph 1) (See Figure 2). Centered under the cross on the gable face are three small blind arches with tooled stone insets. A large round arch stained glass window with flowing tracery and panels dominates the gable end. West of the large window is a flat arch opening with a triple stained glass window. The corbels of the flat arch turn inward flush with the wall. East of the large window is an entrance with double doors with four rectangular lights and a stained glass transom. There is a hanging lantern above the entrance which faces tooled stone steps with rock-faced stone sidewalls and metal railings. At the basement level, there is a large, flat arch, deeply inset basement window and a light well covered by a metal grate. Below the round arch window at the basement level is an entrance accessed by concrete steps with side walls topped by metal railings. The entrance has a flush panel door and a rectangular transom, and there is a large basement window.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 4

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

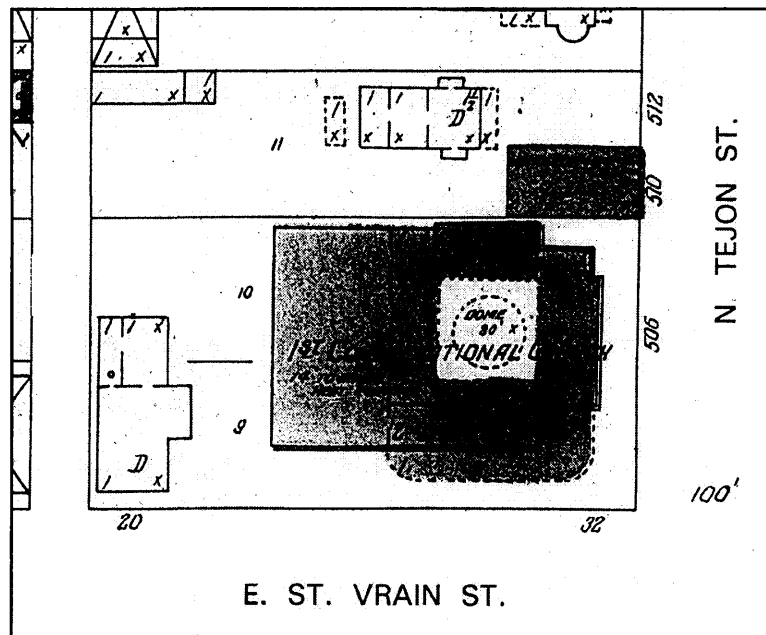


Figure 2. The west addition to the original church appears on this map. SOURCE: Sanborn-Perris, "Colorado Springs, Colo." 1907.

The west wall of the addition has a cross gable topped by a stone chimney with metal pipe top. There are shingled shed roof dormers with louvered vents flanking the gable. The west wall is now principally inside the atrium added to the church in 1996 (Photograph 6). At the center of the wall is a large round arch stained glass window with flowing tracery and panels similar to that of the south wall. Flanking the window are large paneled wood doors with paneled wood overdoors facing steps into the atrium with paneled sidewalls. North of the north door is a shorter paneled door, while south of the south door is a ramp.

The gabled north wall of the 1903 addition has stone coping (Photograph 5). The gable face has a stained glass half-round window with flowing tracery. Lower on the wall are three windows with newer single-light casement windows with clear glass. There is a connecting bay between the two rear gables with two two-over-two-light double-hung sash windows with stone sills. Basement windows are filled in with concrete blocks.

## Atrium Connector (1996)

The gabled atrium connector (known as the Anderson Atrium) on the west wall of the 1903 addition is set back from the south wall of the church and wraps around the rear of the Education Building to the west. The atrium is composed of black metal framing with dark tinted plates of glass (Photographs 6 and 7) (See Sketch Map). The flat roof entrance area has glazed double doors and the main part of the atrium has a gabled roof. The stuccoed north wall has a stairwell to a basement entrance on the east, a flush panel door, a second basement stairwell, and another flush panel door on the west end.



## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 5

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

### Education Building (1959)

The atrium connects on the west to a rectangular painted concrete block building with flat roof with coping consisting of two rows of pressed metal roofing shingles (See Figure 3). The east wall of this building outside the atrium has a polished granite cornerstone inscribed "1959." There are three windows on both the first story and raised basement level. The upper windows are one-over-one-light double-hung sash and the lower windows are single-light. There are stuccoed panels between the windows.

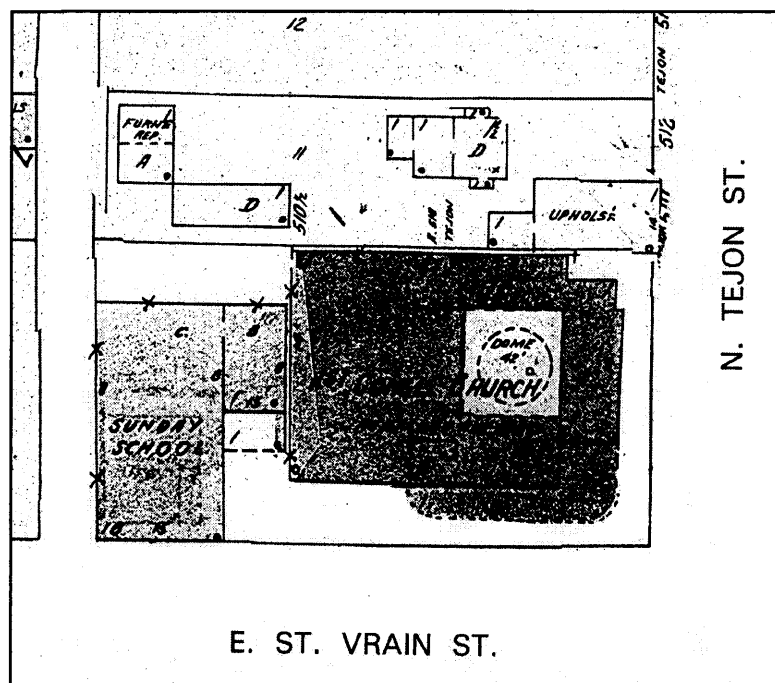


Figure 3. The Education Building was completed in 1959 and connected to the 1903 addition. SOURCE: Sanborn-Perris, "Colorado Springs, Colo.," 1962.

The south wall of the concrete block building is ornamented with a cross composed of ornamental concrete block and plaster (Photograph 7). The west wall features seven vertically aligned ranks of windows with two-part windows above panels of rippled glass above single-light windows (Photograph 8).

### Interior of the Church

Among the significant interior features of the building are the 1889 nave and chancel, known as the Sanctuary by members of the church, and accessed by entrances on the southeast and southwest (Photograph 9). The nave is a broad rectangular space oriented toward the north, where the north projecting gable forms a recessed chancel. The wood floor of the nave is sloped toward the chancel, and oak pews are arranged in curved rows divided by carpeted aisles. There are two side aisles flanking a center bank of pews leading to the chancel. Paneled oak wainscot is found on the lower

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 6

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

walls, while the upper walls are clad with smooth plaster. At the rear (south) of the nave is a rock-faced rhyolite fireplace with molded mantel and metal fire screen. Brass sconces flank the fireplace, and brass candelabra-like lighting fixtures with candles and globes illuminate the nave. Light from stained glass windows executed in shades of gold, rose, and blue-green illuminates and provides color within the serene space.

An octagonal domed lantern rises above the north end of the nave. The dome has a ribbed vault bounded by an encircling ribbon of trefoil arch stained glass lights (Photograph 10). A wood truss extends from the molded sill course of the windows into the ceiling of the nave, where points of the truss rest on consoles incorporated into molding along the top of the walls. Members of the truss forming the interior triangles of the web have decoratively scalloped interior edges. Perpendicular members of the truss have rounded ends. Outside of the dome, the ceiling is plastered, and has faux oak grained wood beams with chamfered edges running north-south and east-west.

The chancel has a raised wood platform that is paneled along the base. At the back of the chancel is a wood screen ornamented with interlocking arches. The pipes of the massive pipe organ rise behind the screen. The pipe organ was designed by Hook and Hastings of Boston, one of the preeminent organ manufacturers of nineteenth century America. The organ is a three-manual (positive, great, and swell keyboards), fifty-rank, 2,544-pipe organ with a slider chest and tracker system. The pipes range in height from sixteen feet to one-fourth inch and are composed of wood, zinc, and alloys of lead and tin. The organ is the oldest one in continuous use in Colorado Springs.<sup>3</sup> At the northeast corner of the building is a small study with a brick and plaster fireplace with wood mantle, a paneled and glazed door with stained glass transom and sidelights, and a stained glass window

The west wall of the sanctuary has a large arched overdoor with stained glass and tracery above an opening with large double sliding doors with panels and stained glass (Photograph 11). On the other side of the doors is the Founders' Room, part of the 1903 addition to the church. The Founders' Room is elevated above the sanctuary, and there is a low spindled balustrade in front of the entrance. The ceiling of the Founders' Room displays a system of trusses similar to those of the Sanctuary. At the north and south ends of the room are gabled lofts with trusses elaborating the slope of the ceiling. Spindled balustrades enclose the lofts (Photograph 12). The Founders' Room has oak wainscot and the walls above the wainscot are plastered. The large open room has a wood floor. The west wall of the room has a large round arch stained glass window similar to the east wall of the Sanctuary, and hanging brass chandeliers also provide light. Flanking the arched window are tall paneled doors.

---

<sup>3</sup> The bellows were originally pumped by a water-powered water wheel system. Six churches in the city used an estimated 800,000 gallons of water each week to run organs. A water shortage in 1925 led the city to cut off the supply to church organs, and a kinetic motor and blower were installed to run the instrument. "The Organ, First Congregational United Church of Christ, Colorado Springs, Colorado," in the archives of the First Congregational Church, Colorado Springs, and *Gazette-Telegraph*, 28 July 1973, 9A.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 7

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

### Summary of Nonhistoric Alterations

A glazed atrium connecting the 1903 addition to the 1959 Education Building was completed in 1996. At the same time, the chancel was rebuilt and new carpeting was added in the nave. New entrances from the atrium were added on the west wall of the Founders' Room. An entrance at the north end of the east wall has been filled in, and basement windows on the north have also been filled in.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 8

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

### Statement of Significance

The First Congregational Church of Colorado Springs is significant under Criterion A, in the area of social history. The establishment and early history of the church were closely associated with the creation and development of Colorado College, a small church-sponsored liberal arts institution that contributed to the realization of city founder William Jackson Palmer's vision of attracting a refined and educated populace. Reverend Jonathan Edwards was charged with establishing both the school and the church in 1874. The College Association of Colorado College determined that the church should organize, and faculty and student members secured leadership roles in the congregation. When the college experienced difficulties during its early years the Congregational Church provided support, and the school's ties to the church were employed to solicit funds and recruit students.

The First Congregational Church is significant under Criterion C, in the area of architecture. The church is one of the foremost representatives of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture in Colorado Springs, reflecting quintessential features of the style in its monumental massing, projecting towers, rock-faced ashlar walls, dominant gables, and low-sprung portico. The church is one of many throughout the country influenced by Richardson's Trinity Church in Boston. High artistic qualities and skilled craftsmanship are reflected in features such as a variety of stained glass windows, immense stone columns with picked finish, and the interior trussed ceiling. The interior of the church is significant for its retention of historic features such as a fireplace at the rear of the sanctuary, original lighting fixtures, oak pews, paneled sliding doors with stained glass dividing the Sanctuary and Founders' Room, a Hook and Hastings pipe organ (the oldest working pipe organ in Colorado), and an octagonal lantern illuminated with trefoil arch stained glass windows. Colorado Springs architect Charles Benson judges the church to be one of the three most important buildings in the city.

The church is significant as representative of the work of architect Henry Rutgers Marshall. The First Congregational Church is one of only two known churches designed by Marshall, the only documented example of his work still standing in Colorado, and one of the few remaining representatives of Marshall's work in the country. Marshall was a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and served as president of the New York branch. The church is considered one of the most significant of Marshall's designs, and was listed as one of nine "more notable examples" of his work in 1909. Only one other representative of Marshall's work, the Rudyard Kipling House in Brattleboro, Vermont, is listed in the National Register. The church is also significant as an important representative of the work of local builder Joseph Dozier and local stonemason Frank Finegan.

Criteria Consideration A applies to this resource which continues to be used as a house of worship, but is being nominated for its historical associations and architecture. Three specific years of significance are associated with the church: 1889, when the original building was completed; 1903, when the Founder's Room was built; and, 1910, when the roof of the tower was remodeled. In addition, the social history of the church was significant during the period 1889-1907, the era of the church's strongest ties to Colorado College, extending from the year of the completion of the church to the year in which the Colorado College charter was amended to remove the clause requiring a

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 9

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

majority of the members of the board of trustees to be members of the Congregational church.

The First Congregational Church is significant on a statewide level as one of the finest examples of the Richardsonian Romanesque style in Colorado. The style's strength, mass, and solidity complemented the monumental landscape of the West and exerted a widespread impact, especially on institutional architecture. However, as Richard Brettell analyzes in *Historic Denver: The Architects and The Architecture, 1858-1893*, few of these buildings can be clearly traced to a single source of influence. Sarah Pearce and Merrill Wilson concur with this judgment in *A Guide to Colorado Architecture*: "Most of the Richardsonian Romanesque structures are variations of the style, employing selected Richardsonian elements." Among the most noted examples of Richardsonian Romanesque style buildings in the state are the Pueblo Union Depot (1889), the Fairmount Cemetery Entrance Gate in Denver (1890), and several educational buildings, including the Iliff School of Theology in Denver (1892), Treat Hall in Denver (1889), and Belleview College (1892) in Westminster. Asbury Methodist Church (1890) has been described by Brettell as "Denver's only really close Richardsonian building." The First Congregational Church is clearly derived from Richardson's Trinity Church in Boston, as noted in contemporary accounts, and is one of the purest and earliest representatives of the style in Colorado.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 10

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

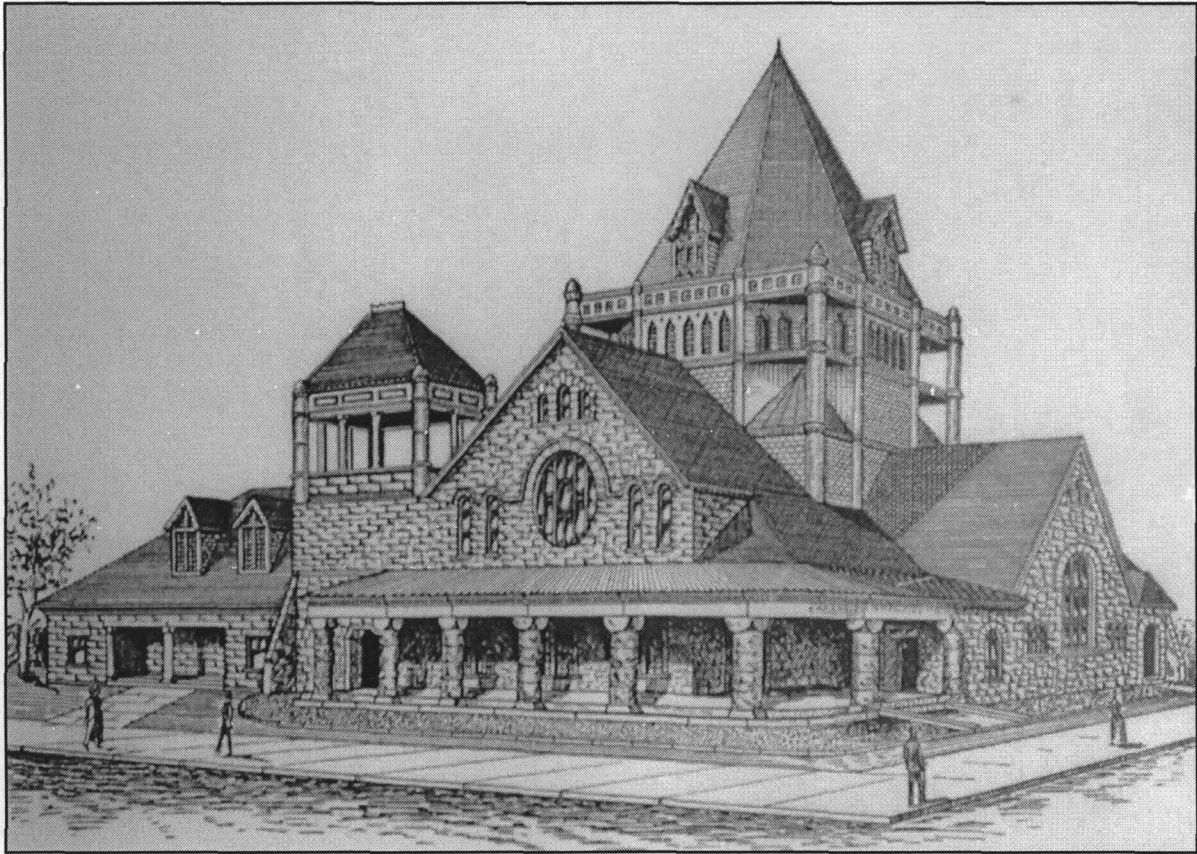


Figure 4. This architectural rendering by Henry Rutgers Marshall depicts his 1887 plan for the church. The lower Sunday School section to the left was not built. SOURCE: First Congregational Church archives.

### Founding of the Congregation

Efforts to establish a Congregational church in Colorado Springs began in 1874, only three years after the founding of the city. The church was a logical outgrowth of the creation of Colorado College. In 1873 Congregational minister and educator Thomas N. Haskell had moved his family to Denver in hopes that the climate would prove beneficial to his ailing elder daughter. Following her death, Haskell persuaded the Conference of Congregational Churches of Colorado Territory to study the feasibility of founding a college in his daughter's memory. After examining several possible sites, the committee headed by Haskell recommended an area a short distance north of downtown Colorado Springs, where the town company had offered twenty acres of land and financial incentives to persuade the college to locate. The Congregational Conference approved the committee's recommendation in January 1874. The following month, a charter for "The Colorado College" was adopted with a stated goal "to locate and maintain at Colorado Springs under Christian auspices an Institution of Learning on the college or university plan." The original charter required that a majority of the college's Board of Trustees be members of the Congregational Church.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> J. Juan Reid, *Colorado College: The First Century, 1874-1974* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: The Colorado College, 1979), 8-9.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 11

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

Calls for organizing a local Congregational church were made as early as February 1874, but planning did not proceed until a few months later, when Rev. Jonathan Edwards arrived, "charged with organizing a Congregational church in connection with the college." Reverend Edwards also had responsibility for organizing the instructional program at the preparatory school connected with the college and recruiting a teaching staff for both schools. Congregational services were conducted by Reverend Edwards beginning in May 1874 in the lower floor of the Wanless Block. In addition, a College Association had organized when the school opened to "support religious services in connection with the college enterprise." By September 1874, the College Association determined that the time had come to found a Congregational church. On 25 October 1874, at a meeting chaired by Reverend Edwards, the church formally organized, with eleven men and twelve women subscribing as members.<sup>5</sup>

Institutions within the church rapidly formed, including the Ladies Aid Society and a Sunday School in 1874, and the Woman's Missionary Society in 1875. Between 1874 and 1877, the Home Missionary Society of the national Congregational Church contributed \$1,650 to support the Colorado Springs church. Until the congregation could afford to construct its own building, services were held in the Presbyterian Church on Sunday evenings. The Congregationalists utilized a variety of other buildings for their services over the next several years.<sup>6</sup>

During the ministry of Rev. R.T. Cross (1876-82) the First Congregational Church secured its first permanent home. When Reverend Cross was offered the opportunity to lead the church, he consulted an atlas to locate Colorado Springs. He approached the move from the East with some trepidation: "But I was still young—thirty-two; someone must go to the front and I had an ambition... to organize new work and have a hand in laying the foundation of Christian institutions in a new country." By 1878 the church membership had expanded, and a frame building was erected on Bijou Street facing Acacia Square in 1879.<sup>7</sup>

Rev. James B. Gregg, who guided the church through an important period of growth and development, became pastor in 1882 and served until 1909. By 1883, the congregation had outgrown its Bijou Street facility, and a one-year lease of the Opera Block was undertaken. This move "caused a rousing controversy because of the lurid play-bills which greeted the devout on their way to Sunday services." A donation of \$1,000 from Colorado Springs grocer Graham Odle to be applied to the construction of a new church led Reverend Gregg to initiate discussion of erecting a building.<sup>8</sup> In April 1887 committees were appointed to find a building site and begin planning for a new church, contingent upon \$10,000 being pledged for its construction. The congregation promised more than the required amount, and the project moved forward. In May, the northwest corner of North Tejon and East St. Vrain streets was selected as the site for the new building; the two-lot parcel

<sup>5</sup> Rev. Edwards was the brother-in-law of Rev. Haskell. Reid, 11 and Mary Elizabeth Burgess and Wanetta Draper, "The First Hundred Years, 1874-1974," in *The History of the First Congregational United Church of Christ, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1874-1999* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: First Congregational United Church of Christ, 1999), 2-3.

<sup>6</sup> Burgess and Draper, 3, 4, and 25.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. Cross also hoped that his wife's health would improve in Colorado. Burgess and Draper, 10.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Murray, "Twenty East St. Vrain," 2002, manuscript in the files of Front Range Research Associates, 1.



## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 12

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

cost \$8,000. Colorado College was only a short distance away, and the *Gazette* commented that “the location of the church is admirably adapted to display the beauty of the architecture and the fact that the street railway runs by its doors makes it most convenient of access.”<sup>9</sup>

### Plans for the Original Building

In early August 1887, the church appointed a five-member Building Committee consisting of W.F. Wilder, Professor William Strieby, F.L. Martin, F.E. Dow, and Professor James H. Kerr. In early October, the congregation authorized the Building Committee to obtain “sketches and plans” for a new building. On 31 October 1887 a design by New York architect Henry Rutgers Marshall was presented to the congregation. Reverend Gregg and Professor Strieby explained the plans, which were projected onto a screen using a stereopticon. Marshall’s design was for a stone building with a Greek cross plan. In many respects, the design showed the influence of the work of Boston architect Henry Hobson Richardson, who had died the year before. Richardson’s Trinity Church in Boston, completed in 1877, was his most acclaimed achievement and its lantern-tower inspired the design of churches across the country. In Marshall’s interpretation, the tower featured an octagonal roof with pointed spire, gabled dormers on four sides, and a projecting enclosed walkway with cantilevered corners. Colorado stone would be used to convey the Richardsonian concepts of monumentality, timelessness, and strength. Seven immense columns, a variety of stained glass windows, and a corner bell tower were included in the design.

The congregation voted to adopt the plans with the tower and portico as shown, but to defer construction of the Sunday school rooms to the west. The latter was dropped to avoid incurring too large an indebtedness (See Figure 4). In July 1889, the *Gazette* reported that the plans “follow very closely those of a well-known house of worship in that city [New York],” while historian Frank Hall wrote that the “the plans were reduced and modified from those of Trinity Church, Boston.”<sup>10</sup>

### Architect and Builders

Architect Henry Rutgers Marshall was born in 1852 in New York City. He graduated from Columbia College in 1873 and received a Master’s degree there in 1875. Marshall studied architecture after engaging in business for a year and began an architectural practice in 1878. According to a 1909 biographical sketch, Marshall “acquired a large and varied practice, spread over a wide area of the United States.” Most of his known designs, however, appear to have been concentrated along the Eastern Seaboard between Maryland and Vermont. Marshall’s wife, Julia Robbins Gilman Marshall, moved from their home in New York City to Colorado Springs for her health.<sup>11</sup> Although his business prevented him from living in Colorado with his family, the architect visited them frequently. The

<sup>9</sup> First Congregational Church, “Clerk’s Book C, 1885 to 1896,” in the archives of the First Congregational Church Colorado Springs; Burgess and Draper, 25; *Weekly Gazette*, 15 September 1888.

<sup>10</sup> The latter assessment appears to be the prevailing view. First Congregational Church, “Clerk’s Book C, 1885 to 1896,” in the archives of the First Congregational Church Colorado Springs; Frank Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, vol. 3 (Chicago: Blakely Printing Co., 1889), 357; *Gazette*, 21 July 1889, 3.

<sup>11</sup> Like many people who came to Colorado in hopes of improving their health, Mrs. Marshall probably suffered from tuberculosis. Mrs. Betsey Webster, New York, New York, Correspondence to Thomas H. Simmons, 13 June 2002.



## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 13

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

climate improved his wife's condition, and Marshall designed a house built at 202 Cascade Avenue in 1886 (demolished). This was the family's home until Mrs. Marshall died on 1 January 1888.<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 5.** This undated, circa 1890s, view (northwest) shows the church with its ornate lantern-tower.  
**SOURCE:** Hook Photo, First Congregational Church archives.

The Congregational Church in Colorado Springs was listed as one of nine "more notable examples" of Marshall's designs in 1909 and was the only one of the group located west of the Appalachians. The Arlington Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, New York, is the only other known church designed by the architect. That church has been described as a "Neo-Gothic building of deep red brick and terra cotta."<sup>13</sup> Other identified works by Marshall include: the Bryn Mawr School for Girls, 1889, Baltimore, Maryland (demolished); the Eldridge Memorial Gymnasium, 1890-91, Norfolk, Connecticut; the Storm King club-house, Cornwall, New York (demolished); Voorhees Hall, Rutgers University, 1903, New Brunswick, New Jersey; the Brearly School, New York (demolished); the Tarrant Building, c.1894, New York; and the Ford-Kerrigan House, 1901, New York (altered). Marshall also designed country houses for Rudyard Kipling, 1892-93, Brattleboro, Vermont (listed in the National Register of

<sup>12</sup> *Weekly Gazette*, 7 January 1888.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew Dolkart, New York, New York, email to Thomas H. Simmons, 7 May 2002.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 14

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

Historic Places in 1979); H.R. Kunhardt, Bernardsville, New Jersey; and Helen M. Gould, University Heights, New York.<sup>14</sup>

Marshall became a member of the American Institute of Architects in 1882, a Fellow in 1889, and was president of the New York branch in 1902.<sup>15</sup> His interests appeared to turn from architecture to philosophy in later years, with an emphasis on aesthetics and the theory of art. He lectured on such matters at Columbia (1894), Yale (1906-07), and Princeton (1915-17) universities. Marshall produced many articles and a number of books on philosophical topics, including: *Pain, Pleasure and Aesthetics* (1894), *Aesthetic Principles* (1895), *Instinct and Reason* (1898); *Consciousness* (1909); *War and the Ideal of Peace* (1915), *Mind and Conduct* (1920), and *The Beautiful* (1924). In 1907, Marshall was elected the president of the American Psychological Association. He served as Executive Secretary of the New York Municipal Art Commission from 1919 until his death in 1927. In that capacity, he approved designs for buildings within the city and "set high standards for municipal architecture."<sup>16</sup>

L.A. Pease was the local representative of Henry Rutgers Marshall for the First Congregational Church project. Joseph Dozier was awarded a \$23,726.10 contract to erect the building in July 1888. Dozier was born in Currituck County, North Carolina, in 1842, and came to the fledgling city of Colorado Springs in 1873. He took over W.S. Stratton's carpentry and contracting business in 1874. His work in the city included Cutler and Hagerman halls on the Colorado College Campus and the 1878 El Paso County Courthouse. When he died in 1925, he was described as a "veteran contractor and closely identified with the growth of Colorado Springs."<sup>17</sup>

Frank Finegan received the commission for the stonework. Finegan was born in Loughrea, County Galway, Ireland, in 1835. At the age of sixteen he was apprenticed to the stonecutter and mason trade in Loughrea and Dublin. Finegan came to America in 1854 and pursued his craft in

---

<sup>14</sup> "Henry Rutgers Marshall," *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, vol. XI (New York: James T. White and Co., 1909), 328-29; *New York Times*, 4 May 1927, 25, and 22 February 1998; Withey and Withey, 393; *American Architect and Building News*, 30 March 1889, 1 February 1890, 2 July 1892, and 5 May 1894; "Naulakha (Kipling House)," National Register of Historic Places nomination, [www.valley.net](http://www.valley.net), 10 January 2002; "Eldridge Gymnasium: Town Hall," [www.norfolklibrary.org](http://www.norfolklibrary.org), 10 January 2002.

<sup>15</sup> "Henry Rutgers Marshall," *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, vol. XI (New York: James T. White and Co., 1909), 328-29; *New York Times*, 4 May 1927, 25; *American Art Annual*, 24(1927); Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)* (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970), 393.

<sup>16</sup> "Henry Rutgers Marshall," *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, vol. XI (New York: James T. White and Co., 1909), 328-29; *New York Times*, 4 May 1927, 25.

<sup>17</sup> Dozier's grandson, western author Frank Waters, wrote a novel about Colorado Springs that featured his grandfather as a character ("Rogier") and described this church as "a rambling building of gray stone with a semi-circle of seven pillars upholding a triangular gable with an inset round window of stained glass." Frank Waters, *Pike's Peak: A Mining Saga* (Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press, 1971), 125; First Congregational Church, "Clerk's Book C, 1885 to 1896," in the archives of the First Congregational Church Colorado Springs; *Gazette*, 12 May 1925, 12 and 17 March 1901, 13. Jean Messinger and Mary Jane Massey Rust, *Where Thy Glory Dwells: A Guide to Historical Churches of Colorado Springs* (Manitou Springs, Colo.: TextPros, 1998), 29; *Gazette*, 12 May 1925, 12; Timothy J. Scanlon, senior planner, City of Colorado Springs, to Mark Wolfe, director, Colorado State Historical Fund, letter, 26 September 2001.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 15

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

Connecticut. He mined in California, farmed in Australia, and served in the Union Army prior to resuming his construction trade in Colorado Springs after the Civil War.

### Church Construction

The cornerstone laying ceremonies for the church took place on 8 September 1888. The cornerstone was ornamented with a carved cross and the inscription "Nil Sine Numine" (Nothing Without Providence), which is also the Colorado state motto. Former pastor R.T. Cross predicted to the large gathering that in a few years the church would have the largest congregation in the state, pointing to the church's relationship to Colorado College and drawing comparisons to Oberlin, Grinnell, and Olivet colleges. During the ceremonies, clay jugs in which the children of the church had collected donations for the building fund were broken open, yielding \$78.26.<sup>18</sup>



Figure 6. The nave of the church and the massive Hook and Hastings pipe organ are shown in this undated (circa 1890s) photograph. SOURCE: First Congregational Church archives.

Rhyolite stone (Wall Mountain Tuff) from a quarry near Castle Rock, Colorado, was employed in the walls of the church. Jack A. Murphy of the Denver Museum of Natural History indicates that "rhyolite flows and thin layers of ash fall tuff originated from volcanic eruptions 35 million years ago in central Colorado." The stone has a light color (ranging from gray to salmon to beige based on its interaction with groundwater) and fine-grained texture, which made it a popular building material, and it was used

<sup>18</sup> *Gazette Weekly*, 15 September 1888.



## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 16

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

for some of the most important edifices in Colorado during the nineteenth century. As Murphy notes, the stone was commonly finished with a rough-hewn face that resulted in "a constant play of shadows across the walls of buildings."<sup>19</sup> According to Steve Getty, Colorado College Department of Geology, who examined the basement of the church, the foundation is composed of the Wall Mountain Tuff and sandstone resting on an apron of Pike's Peak granite.<sup>20</sup>

The construction of the church took longer than anticipated and costs exceeded the original estimate. At the time of the cornerstone laying ceremony in September 1888 the projected cost of the building was reported as about \$29,000, with April 1889 the anticipated completion date.<sup>21</sup> A July 1889 newspaper account stated that the cost was "not much less than \$50,000;" Frank Hall, writing in the same year, put the cost at "about \$40,000." Three women of the congregation, Lucy F. Wright, Harriet V. Berry, and Hannah W. Gould, provided loans to meet the additional amount needed for the construction.<sup>22</sup> By late June 1889, the new building was nearing completion, and the old church building on Bijou was offered for sale for \$10,000.

The first service in the new building was held on 21 July 1889, although the dedication was delayed until October when a \$4,643 water-powered pipe organ crafted by Hook and Hastings of Boston was installed. The *Gazette* noted the Greek cross plan of the church and published an excellent description of the interior of the building:

The main entrances are at the southwest and southeast corners in the angles formed by the extensions of the cross. After entering the large doors a person finds himself in the usual small ante room, where outer wraps may be removed. Stepping into the main body of the church the form of the cross is much more noticeable than from the exterior. Very striking is the dome, vaulted with heavy oak and falling through its many stained glass windows is a flood of mellowed light. The floor of the auditorium is a slight incline as is common in churches of the better class nowadays, the dip being toward the north. In the north projection of the cross is the pulpit and also the place for the organ and choir. To the east of the pulpit is a small room for the minister and choir to congregate in or retire into. Back of the pulpit is a stair leading to the basement, where the steam heater and water motor for the organ are located.

Through the centre of the building in the east and west projections of the cross are the pews. They are of a light oak to match the interior woodwork and are comfortably cushioned. As arranged now from 300 to 400 persons can be comfortably seated in the building, but there is sufficient room for a large number of pews that will be added later. The floor is nicely carpeted with a plain but dark carpeting that harmonizes with the

---

<sup>19</sup> Jack A. Murphy, *Geology Tour of Denver's Buildings and Monuments* (Denver: Historic Denver, 1995), 16.

<sup>20</sup> Steve Getty, Colorado College, Department of Geology, Colorado Springs, Telephone Interview by Thomas H. Simmons, 7 and 19 April 2002.

<sup>21</sup> *Gazette Weekly*, 15 September 1888; *Gazette*, 21 July 1889, 3; Hall, 357.

<sup>22</sup> Murray, 2.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 17

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

interior decorations. The frescoing is plain, but of a very good quality and suitable for such a building.

In the south projection of the cross there is a small gallery, which for the present will be occupied by the choir. It will seat about fifty persons. The space under this gallery can be enclosed by rolling wooden curtains, thus making a room suitable for prayer meetings or small gatherings.<sup>23</sup>

The church was built to accommodate expansion to the west in the future to complete the building according to Marshall's original plan. The western wall of the church was frame rather than stone, to permit construction of an addition. By the time of the dedication on 3 October 1889, the roof of the portico was still not finished.

The completed building became an immediate landmark that drew interested comment. The *Weekly Gazette* opined that "the design of the building is unique and has attracted much attention and admiration. The general effect aimed at is solidity and massiveness....The interior is universally greatly admired. It combines in an unusual and very pleasing way the sympathetic and social qualities of a popular audience room with the reverential tone and atmosphere, hallowed by tradition, which belong to a house of worship."<sup>24</sup>

Marshall's Richardsonian Romanesque design was not greeted without controversy. The appearance of the frame tower and walkway prompted some to refer to the building as "the church of the holy birdcage." Assessing the Colorado Springs architectural scene in 1901, local architect Thomas MacLaren (who would later be hired to alter the tower) mused on whether the style of the church should be characterized as "the quaint grotesque, or the grandly awful." MacLaren analyzed, "In plan this building is a Greek cross, with a central pyramidal feature, the popular idea being that in outline it is similar to but in frame and shingle, and otherwise a travesty on, the tower of Trinity Square Church in Boston, by the late H.H. Richardson."<sup>25</sup>

### Expansion in the Twentieth Century

In 1903, the church received a gabled addition to the west that matched the original construction in terms of materials and design, although deviating greatly from Marshall's original conception for the western wing. Oscar Roberts and Jacob Bishoff, local contractors, drafted plans for the addition. The contract for the work was let in September 1902 for \$12,799 to Ernest Waycott as the general contractor. Architect Frederic R. Hastings oversaw the construction, which was completed in

---

<sup>23</sup> *Gazette*, 21 July 1889, 3.

<sup>24</sup> A water shortage in 1925 led the city to cut off water that powered organs at six churches. A five horsepower kinetic motor and a blower was purchased for this organ. First Congregational Church, "History of the First Congregational Church of Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1874-1924," vol. 1, and "History of the First Congregational Church of Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1925-1967," vol. 2, scrapbooks, in the archives of the First Congregational Church Colorado Springs; *Weekly Gazette*, 5 October 1889, 1.

<sup>25</sup> Judith Reid Finley, *The Century Chest Letters of 1901: A Colorado Springs Legacy* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: Colorado College, 2001), 92-93.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 13

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

climate improved his wife's condition, and Marshall designed a house built at 202 Cascade Avenue in 1886 (demolished). This was the family's home until Mrs. Marshall died on 1 January 1888.<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 5. This undated, circa 1890s, view (northwest) shows the church with its ornate lantern-tower. SOURCE: Hook Photo, First Congregational Church archives.**

The Congregational Church in Colorado Springs was listed as one of nine "more notable examples" of Marshall's designs in 1909 and was the only one of the group located west of the Appalachians. The Arlington Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, New York, is the only other known church designed by the architect. That church has been described as a "Neo-Gothic building of deep red brick and terra cotta."<sup>13</sup> Other identified works by Marshall include: the Bryn Mawr School for Girls, 1889, Baltimore, Maryland (demolished); the Eldridge Memorial Gymnasium, 1890-91, Norfolk, Connecticut; the Storm King club-house, Cornwall, New York (demolished); Voorhees Hall, Rutgers University, 1903, New Brunswick, New Jersey; the Brearly School, New York (demolished); the Tarrant Building, c.1894, New York; and the Ford-Kerrigan House, 1901, New York (altered). Marshall also designed country houses for Rudyard Kipling, 1892-93, Brattleboro, Vermont (listed in the National Register of

<sup>12</sup> *Weekly Gazette*, 7 January 1888.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew Dolkart, New York, New York, email to Thomas H. Simmons, 7 May 2002.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 19

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

created. On the interior, the sanctuary ceiling beneath the tower was lowered. A gallery at the south end of the sanctuary was removed and the area below fitted with pews and incorporated into the sanctuary. The improvements cost \$6,372.93, which the church trustees carried privately and paid off in a few years.<sup>29</sup>

In 1935, the Gregg family acquired a small frame house immediately to the west and donated it to the church as the Gregg Memorial Library Building, in memory of Rev. James B. Gregg, who had served as pastor for twenty-seven years. The building housed church offices, a minister's study, and a small meeting space. In 1947-49, the interior of the 1903 wing was remodeled, creating new classroom space and moving a kitchen. A small chapel at the south end of the main floor was created, and dormer windows were added to the west roof slope. In addition, the wood shingles of the church roof were replaced with pressed metal shingles and the heating plant was converted to gas.<sup>30</sup>

In 1959, at a time when some churches opted to move from the heart of the city to larger suburban sites, the First Congregational Church determined to expand its original building in its historic location. The Colorado Springs architectural firm of Lusk and Wallace designed an \$85,000 one-story with garden level concrete block Education Building. The Gregg Memorial Library Building was removed to permit the new construction. George O. Teats and Sons served as general contractor for the building, which was ready for occupancy in September 1959. The Education Building provided the church with two floors of classrooms, offices, a library, a meeting room, storage, and restrooms. A chapel between the new building and the 1903 addition was also completed (removed in 1995-96).<sup>31</sup>

At the end of the century, the church initiated the most extensive construction project since the completion of the 1903 addition. Members of the congregation raised nearly \$1 million toward realization of the project, whose goal was to address future growth and safety concerns, provide more efficient utilization of space, and protect and maintain historical features.<sup>32</sup> In 1995-96, a new glazed atrium and entryway connecting the Education Building and the church was erected. Holger C. Christiansen Partners of Colorado Springs designed the structure utilizing dark tinted panels of glass in a metal framework. The project exposed the stone west wall of the church that had been obscured by the 1959 chapel construction. The construction also addressed electrical and fire protection issues, updated the heating system, rebuilt classroom and office space, rebuilt the sanctuary chancel, redesigned passageways to the Founders' Room, removed classrooms from the balconies, created a new chapel, and improved handicapped access.<sup>33</sup> At the dedication service following the completion of the project, the congregation celebrated its improved home and was reminded to "envision the past

---

<sup>29</sup> First Congregational Church, "History of the First Congregational Church of Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1874-1924," vol. 1, scrapbook, in the archives of the First Congregational Church Colorado Springs.

<sup>30</sup> First Congregational Church, "History of the First Congregational Church of Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1925-1967," vol. 2, scrapbook; "Parish House Renovations, Etc.," manuscript, in the archives of the First Congregational Church Colorado Springs, Colorado; *Free Press*, 5 September 1959; Murray, 10.

<sup>31</sup> *Free Press*, 5 September 1959; Murray, 11.

<sup>32</sup> Murray, 14.

<sup>33</sup> *Gazette-Telegraph*, 16 March 1996, F4.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 20

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

and remember the future.” The First Congregational Church is the oldest religious facility continuously used by the same congregation in Colorado Springs.

### Relationship to Colorado College and the Community

The origins of the First Congregational Church of Colorado Springs and those of Colorado College were intertwined. The first two ministers of the church (Rev. Jonathan Edwards and Rev. James Dougherty) held concurrent positions with the college, and Reverend Edwards was responsible for establishing both. When the prospects of the college appeared dim during the early years, Massachusetts Congregational minister Edward Payson Tenney was sent to reinvigorate the school by strengthening its ties to the church in the East. Tenney emphasized the college's Congregational foundation as a promotional strategy to seek contributions and recruit students. Substantial support came from local Congregationalists. Colorado College required its students to attend church on Sunday and many filled the spiritual requirement at the First Congregational Church. Throughout its history, the congregation included many faculty and students from the college, who often held leadership positions in the church. It was not until 1907 that the Colorado College charter was amended to remove the clause requiring a majority of the board of trustees be members of Congregational churches. Thereafter, members of the church continued to play leading roles in the history of the college; most notably, Reverend Gregg, who served on the board of trustees.<sup>34</sup>

Throughout its 128-year history, the church has charted a liberal and socially active course. In his farewell sermon on 6 June 1909, Rev. James Gregg exhorted the congregation to

Aim to keep this church ever representative, not of any particular interests in the community but broadly of the city as a whole, including sympathetically in your fellowship all classes and conditions of people, rich and poor, high and low, the learned and the unlearned. Do not allow this church ever to become in anywise an exclusive and therefore unchristian society, but keep it always as inclusive of all persons as is the grace of God made manifest in Jesus Christ.<sup>35</sup>

The long-held tradition of encouraging a diverse and active membership was reflected in the significant role women undertook in the church from the time of its founding. Maria Louisa Martin served as the first treasurer of the church in 1874-77, during a period when other denominations did not allow women to vote.<sup>36</sup> Women such as Lucy F. Wright loaned money for the land acquisition and

---

<sup>34</sup> Reid, 70 and Burgess and Draper, 65-66.

<sup>35</sup> Burgess and Draper, 28.

<sup>36</sup> Robert Murray, "Women and the Church, An Historical Note," in *First Congregational United Church of Christ Dedicates the Renovation of Spirit and Facility*, 17 May 1996.



## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 21

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

construction of the original building in 1888-89. The congregation continued to influence the larger community as it fought McCarthyism in the 1950s, supported the civil rights movement of the 1960s, and welcomed gays and lesbians at the end of the century.<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> *Gazette*, 23 October 1991, 1.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 9 Page 22

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

### Bibliography

*American Architect and Building News*. 30 March 1889, 1 February 1890, 2 July 1892, and 5 May 1894.

*American Art Annual*. 24 (1927).

Benson, Charles. Colorado Springs. Telephone Interview by Thomas H. Simmons. 30 March 2002.

Burgess, Mary Elizabeth Burgess and Wanetta Draper. "The First Hundred Years, 1874-1974," 1-51. In *The History of the First Congregational United Church of Christ, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1874-1999*. Colorado Springs, Colo.: First Congregational United Church of Christ, 1999.

Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. "Thomas MacLaren Biographical Sketch." 8 November 1999.

Finley, Judith Reid. *The Century Chest Letters of 1901: A Colorado Springs Legacy*. Colorado Springs, Colo.: Colorado College, 2001.

First Congregational Church. "Clerk's Book C, 1885 to 1896." In the archives of the First Congregational Church, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

\_\_\_\_\_. "History of the First Congregational Church of Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1874-1924." Vol. 1. Scrapbook. In the archives of the First Congregational Church Colorado Springs.

\_\_\_\_\_. "History of the First Congregational Church of Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1925-1967." Vol. 2. Scrapbook. In the archives of the First Congregational Church Colorado Springs.

*Free Press*. 1959.

*Gazette*. 1874-1925.

*Gazette-Telegraph*. 1991-96.

*Gazette Weekly*. 1888.

Getty, Steve. Colorado College, Geology Department. Colorado Springs, Colo. Telephone Interviews by Thomas H. Simmons, 7 and 19 April 2002.

Hall, Frank. *History of the State of Colorado*. 4 vols. Chicago: Blakely Printing Co., 1889.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 9 Page 23

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

"Henry Rutgers Marshall." *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*. Vol. XI. New York: James T. White and Co., 1909.

Messinger, Jean and Rust, Mary Jane Massey. *Where Thy Glory Dwells: A Guide to Historical Churches of Colorado Springs*. Manitou Springs, Colo.: TextPros, 1998.

Murphy, Jack A. *Geology Tour of Denver's Buildings and Monuments*. Denver: Historic Denver, 1995.

Murray, Robert. "Twenty East St. Vrain: View of the Past, Visions of the Future." 2002. Manuscript on file at Front Range Research Associates, Denver, Colorado.

*New York Times*. 4 May 1925 and 22 February 1998.

Reid, J. Juan. *Colorado College: The First Century, 1874-1974*. Colorado Springs, Colo.: The Colorado College, 1979.

Sanborn-Perris Map Co. "Colorado Springs, Colo." Fire insurance maps. Pelham, New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., 1895, 1900, 1907, and 1962.

Waters, Frank. *Pike's Peak*. Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press, 1971.

Wheaton, Rodd. National Park Service. Lakewood, Colorado. Telephone Interview by Thomas H. Simmons, April 2002.

Withey, Henry F. and Elsie R. *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, Deceased*. Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Co., 1956.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 10 Page 24

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

## Geographic Information

### Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated area includes lots 9 and 10, block 31, Original Townsite, City of Colorado Springs, El Paso County, Colorado.

### Boundary Justification

The nominated area includes all of the property historically associated with the building.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. PHOTOS Page 25

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

## Common Photographic Label Information:

1. First Congregational Church
2. Colorado Springs, El Paso County, Colorado
3. Photographer: Roger Whitacre
4. Date: March 2002
5. Negative on file at: First Congregational Church  
20 East St. Vrain Street  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

## Information Different for Each View:

6. Photograph Number, Description of View, and Camera Direction

Photograph Number	Description of View	Camera Direction
1	Front (south wall), showing original portion of church (right), 1903 addition (center), and 1959 Education Building addition (left)	Northwest
2	Front (south wall) of original portion of the church, showing bell tower, south gable, and portico	Northeast
3	Portico detail illustrating picked stonework on columns	West
4	East wall showing lantern tower and east gable	West
5	Rear (north wall), showing north walls of original part (left), 1903 addition (center), and 1996 atrium	Southeast
6	Interior of 1996 atrium showing west wall of 1903 addition	Northeast
7	South wall, showing (left to right): 1959 Education Building, 1996 atrium, 1903 addition, and 1889 original church	North
8	West wall of 1959 Education Building with portion of 1996 atrium construction to left	East
9	Nave showing ranks of pews, the chancel with the pipe organ, part of the truss system, and the stained glass window in the east gable	Northeast
10	Upper portion of the nave, showing trusses, light fixtures, the pipe organ, the ribbed vault of the tower dome, and the stained glass windows in the lantern tower.	North

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. PHOTOS Page 26

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

---

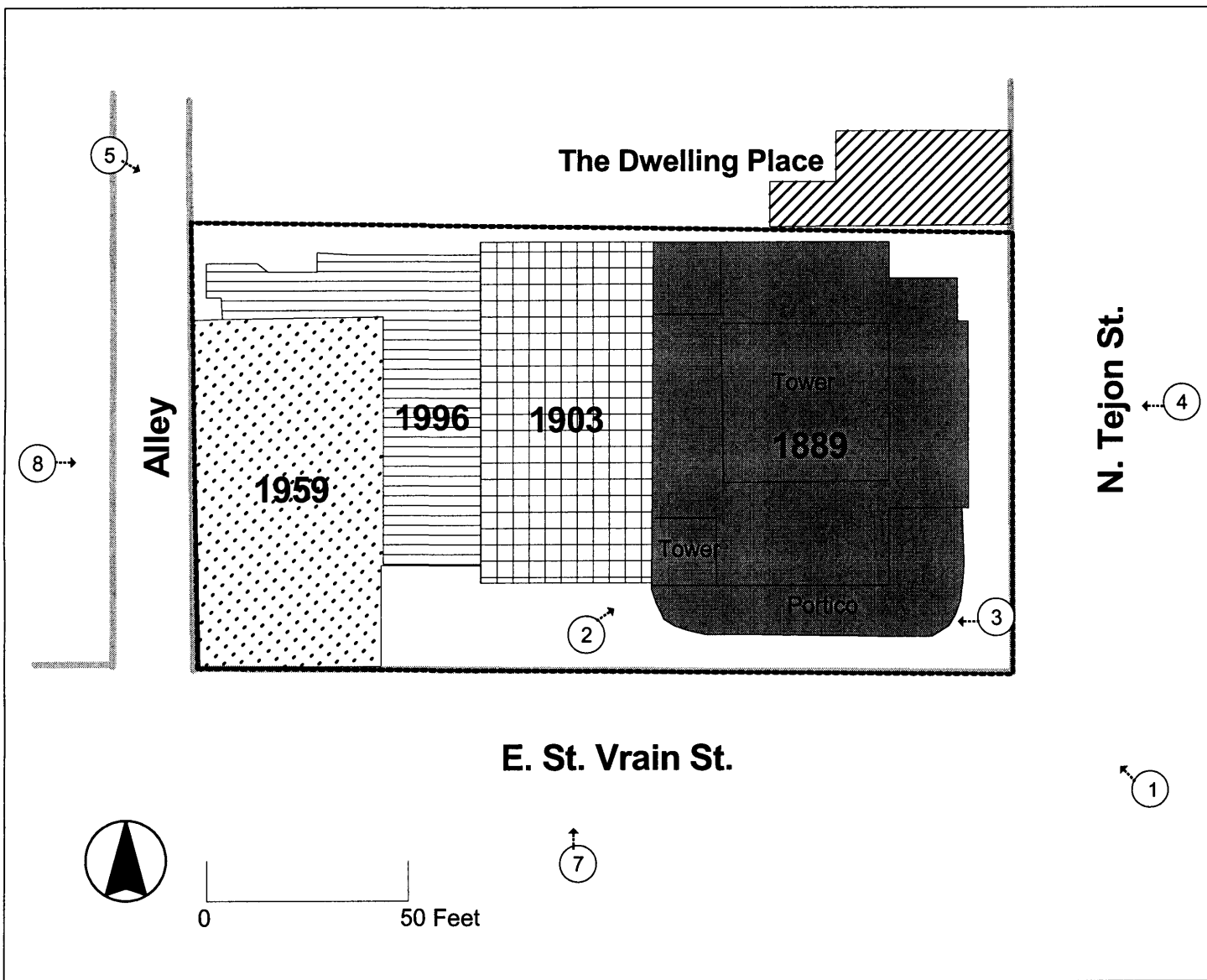
<b>Photograph Number</b>	<b>Description of View</b>	<b>Camera Direction</b>
11	View from 1903 addition into the Sanctuary; note sliding stained glass doors with stained glass overdoor	East
12	South loft in the 1903 addition, showing balustrade and trusses	Southeast

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. MAPS Page 27

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

## SKETCH MAP



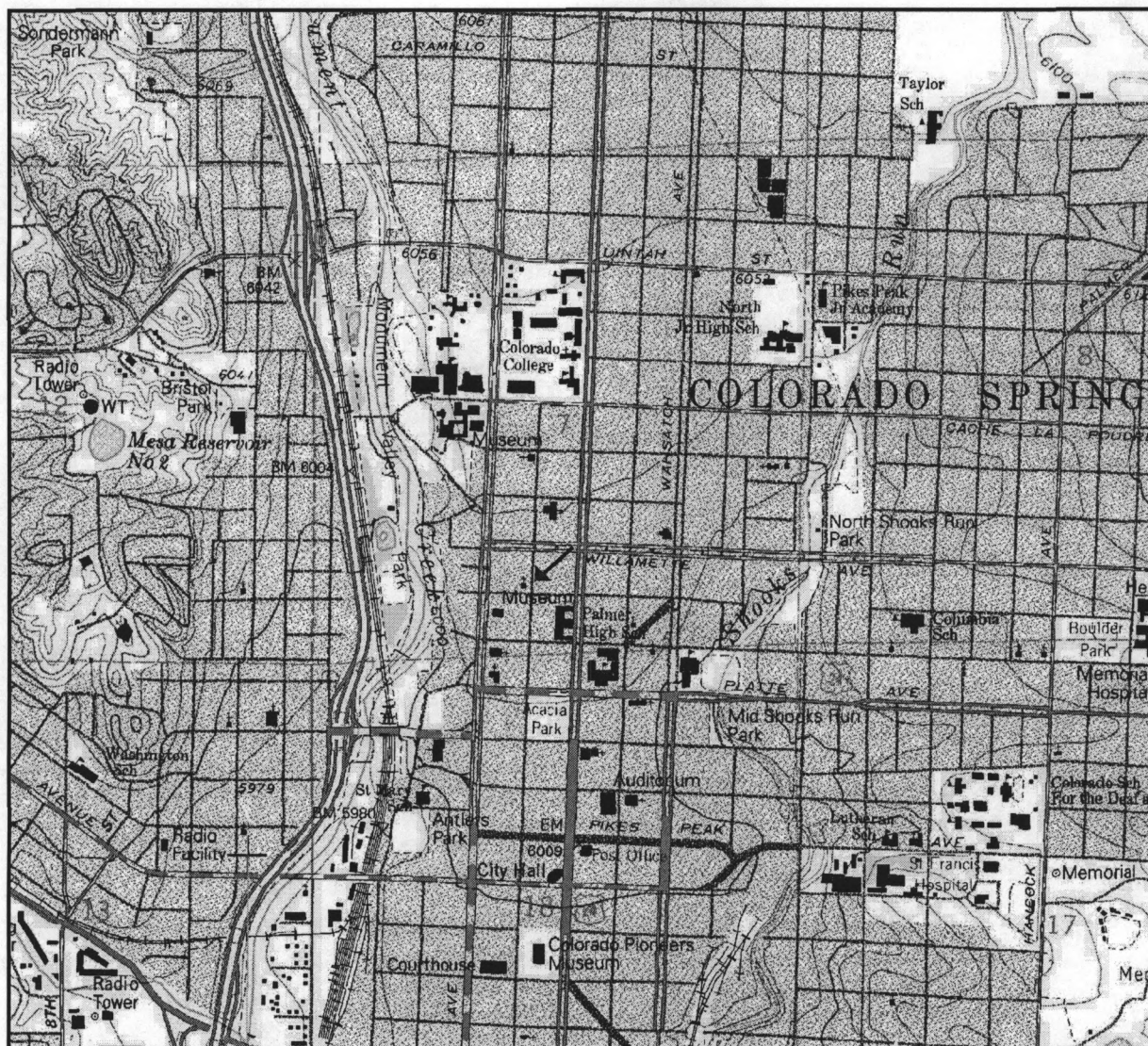
The dashed line indicates the boundary of nominated area. Shadings and dates delineate the various components of the church discussed in the narrative. The "Dwelling Place" is a building owned by the church and located on the lot to the north; it is used for youth group activities and is not included in the nominated area. Numbers in circles with arrows show exterior photograph locations and camera directions.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. MAPS Page 28

First Congregational Church, El Paso County, CO

## USGS MAP EXTRACT



SOURCE: Extract of U.S. Geological Survey, "Colorado Springs, Colo.," 7.5 minute topographic map (Reston, Virginia: U.S. Geological Survey, 1961, revised 1994). Arrow indicates location of nominated resource.