

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

For NPS use only

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

received **JAN 26 1984**
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Gloria Dei Evangelical Lutheran Church

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 15 Hayes Street- _____ not for publication

city, town Providence N.A. vicinity of congressional district #2
Hon. Claudine Schneider

state Rhode Island code 44 county Providence code 007

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Gloria Dei Evangelical Lutheran Church

street & number 15 Hayes Street

city, town Providence N.A. vicinity of state Rhode Island

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. City Hall

street & number 25 Dorrance Street

city, town Providence state Rhode Island 02903

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Smith Hill, Providence has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date June 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

150 Benefit Street
city, town Providence state Rhode Island 02903

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Gloria Dei Evangelical Lutheran Church is a monumental brick edifice unique in its marriage of vernacular Swedish forms to a traditional ecclesiastical format. The patterned-brick superstructure, on a high, one-story limestone basement, is simply and symmetrically massed save for the tall, stepped-gable bell tower near the front on the building's east side. The facade centers on a tall, rusticated, round-head arch: double-leaf entrance doors at basement level fill the lower part of the arch, and a window on the principal floor fills the upper section. Centered above this arch is a round window. The corners of the facade are turreted, but the spires atop these turrets are not identical: the western one is lantern like and culminates in a weathervane; the eastern one, a needle spire.

The interior parallels the exterior's juxtaposition of broad, simple, unarticulated areas and picturesque, highly inflected detail. The entrance opens to a series of low-ceiling passages and stairs that lead to the narthex on the principal floor. A handsome wrought-iron-and-glass screen separates this space from the nave. The nave has a broad, flattened-arch ceiling, and the windows are set in shallow curved bays. The walls are simply finished in stucco and painted grey; the ceiling is white, with a range of large, square panels over the center aisle. At the north end, the altar is set within an apse and below a mural depicting the Resurrection, by Newport artist Benny Collins. The pews, chancel rail, and octagonal, goblet-shape pulpit are all of limed oak. The chandeliers are inverted, elongated pyramids, embellished with projecting brass reflectors. The radiator covers beneath the stained-glass windows are crenellated and decorated with wave motifs.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1925-28

Builder/Architect Martin Hedmark, architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church is significant to the history of architecture as a unique, ethnocentric expression of early twentieth-century ecclesiastical architecture. Built for a primarily Scandinavian congregation, the church evokes forms from these emigrants' native land in a remarkable, early modern composition.

Swedes, who began to emigrate in the 1880s because of droughts in their homeland, settled in Providence on Smith Hill and formed this church in 1890. The first sanctuary was here on Hayes Street. The congregation expanded rapidly, and by the mid-1920s was able to begin construction on this edifice. Both the continuation well into this century of conducting the liturgy in the native tongue and the selection of Hedmark, a Swede, as architect suggest a strong and enduring ethnic consciousness, an attitude physically realized in this building.

In fact, the ethnic identification of this building is so strong that it is probably best understood as well within the mainstream of contemporary Scandinavian architecture. Like most buildings designed by European first-generation modernist architects, it is "modern"--or "European half-modern"¹--but drawing on traditional design sources in an elegant, stylized fashion; its stylistic parallel in this country is the classicizing phase of Art Deco. Hedmark designed several other churches in this country under similar circumstances, and each is, like this, a full-fledged statement of contemporary Scandinavian architecture of the 1920s.

¹Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Rhode Island Architecture (Cambridge, 1969, p. 64.) See also Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Hermondsworth, Middlesex, 1977), pp. 482-485.

9. Major Bibliographical References

"Smith Hill, Providence," Statewide Historical Preservation Report,
P-P-4. Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, June, 1980.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Providence, R.I.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

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| Zone | | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary for the Gloria Dei Evangelical Lutheran Church coincides with that of Providence Tax Assessor's Plat 4, Lot 196. This boundary represents the limit of land historically associated with the property.

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

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title William McKenzie Woodward, Principal Historic Preservation Planner

organization R.I. Historical Preservation Comm. date November 15, 1983

street & number 150 Benefit Street

telephone 401-277-2678

city or town Providence

state Rhode Island 02903

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Frederick C. Wilkinson

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date January 5, 1984

For NPS use only

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

entered in the
National Register

date

2/23/84

Alfred Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration