

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# 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 10-900-a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Trinity Parish Church  
other names/site number Same

### 2. Location

street & number 609 Eighth Avenue (at James Street)  not for publication  
city, town Seattle  vicinity  
state Washington code WA county King code 033 zip code 98104-1997

### 3. Classification

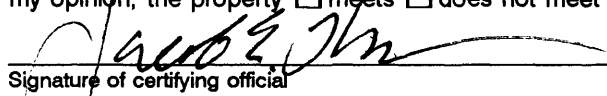
Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	—	— sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	—	— structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> objects
			Total
			<u>0</u>

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.  See continuation sheet.



8/6/91  
Date

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.

Signature of commenting or other official

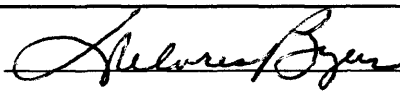
Date


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): \_\_\_\_\_

 entered in the National Register 9/26/91

 Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion: religious structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion: religious structure

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)Gothic Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone  
walls stone: sandstone  
  
roof wood: shingle  
other wood: shingle

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Setting: Trinity Parish Church is a masonry structure originally built in 1891, enlarged in 1902 after a devastating fire, and distinguished by its Early English Gothic Revival architecture. The church is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Eighth Avenue and James Street on the lower west slope of First Hill, a residential and institutional district located immediately east of Seattle's central business district. Although once the neighborhood was mostly a residential area within walking distance of downtown, significant land-use changes in the 20th century altered the historic character of First Hill and impacted the setting of the church.

The most dramatic physical alteration to the neighborhood resulted from construction of the Seattle Freeway (Interstate 5), a limited access highway that runs north-south parallel to Seventh Avenue, just one block west of the church. This multi-lane elevated structure effectively separates First Hill from downtown Seattle.

Another significant change to the neighborhood has been the dramatic development of high-rise institutional facilities on First Hill, especially hospitals, after World War II. This development has led to the destruction of houses and smaller apartment buildings as land values have escalated.

A more recent change to the immediate setting of the church has been the construction of a new multi-story apartment building on the lot immediately west of the church. The new building blocks views of the church from the west.

Exterior: Despite changes in the surrounding area, the church itself remains well preserved and has been altered very little since it was rebuilt at the turn of the century. At that time, the original structure was enlarged to its present size. The building, reflecting the idiom of the English Gothic Revival style favored by the Episcopal church, is built on a cruciform plan with the gabled nave and chancel on an east-west axis (parallel to James) intersected by transept wings which project to the north and south. A tower with belfry and spire is located at the southeast corner of the church just south of the nave's east facade and features the main entry to the church. An adjacent parish house, built in 1930, is located north of the church, and is connected at the rear by a breezeway. Together the buildings enclose a square garden courtyard along Eighth Avenue.

The present configuration of the church represents an expansion in 1902. During the rebuilding that year, the sanctuary was "squared" to accommodate the altar and reredos, the transepts were enlarged, and the tower was built at the southeast corner. At the same time, the original arched entry was moved from the east gable end of the nave to the base of the tower.

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The exterior walls of the church are constructed of rubble masonry. The walls measure 21 inches thick and are built of Wilkenson sandstone laid in irregular courses. Stone buttresses, made of regularly coursed ashlar, reinforce the corners of the building and are located between the windows along the lower nave walls. The center aisle of the nave rises above the flanking side aisles to a steeply pitched gable roof, surfaced in shingles. The crossing is crowned by a cupola and iron fleche (replaced in kind during re-roofing in 1974). The crosses that originally crowned the gable peaks have been removed.

The solidity of the stone walls is relieved by Gothic arched openings, trimmed with stone, which punctuate the exterior. Each opening is ornamented with stained glass and tracery. The east gable end of the nave is lighted by an arched opening with a rose window above four lancet windows. Beneath this arch is an arcade of three arched windows. The west gable end of the sanctuary is illuminated by three pointed arched windows. The upper walls of the nave are lighted by lancet windows, banded in groups of four, in the clerestory. The walls of the lower side aisles are lighted by arched openings (with paired lancet windows) between the buttresses. The transept gable ends are lighted by arched openings with wheel windows above lancet windows.

The corner bell tower is supported by buttresses and rises in several stages to a battlemented parapet. The tower is entered through a double leaf panelled door set within an arched opening sheltered by a gabled portal. The tower is lighted by lancet windows, with louvered arches at the belfry. The tall steeple spires upward and culminates in a finial.

Interior: The interior plan of the church features a narthex in the base of the tower which serves as an anteroom to the nave. The floor of the narthex is surfaced in tile. Double doors lead from the narthex to the nave, and a staircase leads to the upper stages of the tower. The narthex is lighted by a painted glass arched window, designed and fabricated by Anton Rez of Whidbey Island.

The interior of the nave is dominated by the soaring ceiling supported by a massive king post roof truss. The nave has a central aisle, lighted by stained glass clerestory lancet windows. The first unit of windows on the James Street side was fabricated by Karl Hackert of Chicago in 1949; others were fabricated by Wippell Mowbray of Exeter, England, in 1974.

The north and south side aisles are separated from the center aisle by nave arcades. Each arcade is composed of four Gothic arches supported by clustered columns. The side walls of the nave are lighted by arched windows with hood moldings, ornamented with stained glass and tracery. The windows on the nave walls were installed in 1906, 1908, 1911, and the 1920s, and all were designed and manufactured by the Franz Mayer family of Munich, Germany. The east wall of the nave, above the baptismal font, is lighted by rose and lancet windows placed in 1902, also designed and fabricated by the Mayer family. The smaller windows below were placed in 1907.

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Arches at the crossing, supported by clustered columns, separate the nave from the transepts. The James Street transept is lighted by a stained glass window designed and fabricated by the Mayer family in 1902. The garden court transept, which includes a side chapel, is lighted by windows placed in the early 1950s and designed and fabricated by the W. P. Fuller stain glass studio in Seattle. A chancel arch, surrounded by a carved spandrel, separates the nave and crossing from the chancel. The chancel is ornamented with an ornate railing and arcade. In the sanctuary, a massive altar of Carrera marble is ornamented with lancet arches and pinnacles. A cast-brass pulpit is ornamented with brass medallions, and the lectern opposite the pulpit features a brass eagle perched on a brass orb. Finishes throughout most of the interior of the church include hardwood floors, plaster walls, and wood wainscoting. The lanterns in the nave date to the 1920s. The church also includes a sacristy and choir room, and a basement with several rooms.

Noncontributing resources: Also located on the property is a parish house, constructed in 1930 and designed by C. A. Merriam in a Gothic vernacular idiom that was described at the time of construction as residential in character. The parish house is a gabled brick structure with a large Gothic arch in the east gable end, and smaller Gothic windows between brick buttresses along the side walls. At the rear of the parish house is a four story office wing, with a breezeway which connects to the church. The interior of the parish house includes a large auditorium, offices and lounges, a dining room and kitchen, and a basement gymnasium. The parish house is not considered a contributing feature of the nominated property. In the greensward of the garden courtyard, the cremated remains (ashes) of deceased parishioners have been interned since 1980. To the north of the parish house is the parsonage from 1911, a Four Square style residence faced in wood shingles and moved to its present location in 1930 to accommodate construction of the parish house. Because of this move, the parsonage is not considered a contributing element of the nominated property.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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

 nationally     statewide     locallyApplicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Religion  
Architecture1891-19411902

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

N/A  
Starbuck, Henry, Architect (1891);  
Alexander, Charles A., Superintendent of  
Construction (1891);  
Graham, John, Sr., Architect (1902-1903)

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

Built in 1891 and enlarged after a fire in 1902, Trinity Parish Church is historically significant for its association with Seattle's original Episcopal congregation. Trinity is the Mother Church of the city's parishes and missions, and has played an instrumental role in the growth of both Episcopal religious and social services in the region. In addition, Trinity Church is an architecturally significant example of the English Gothic Revival style favored by churchmen of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Rebuilt at the turn of the century by architect John Graham, the church retains excellent integrity from that period, and is distinguished by exterior stone work, elaborate arched fenestration, a corner belltower, and an interior dominated by a massive roof truss, stained glass windows, and a marble altar. It is the finest example of an English country parish church in the city. Because of the historical and architectural significance, the church meets the criteria considerations for religious properties.

**Historic Background:** Trinity Parish traces its history to the first recorded Episcopal service held in pioneer Seattle. On July 14, 1855, the Reverend John McCarty, the only Episcopal clergy in the Washington Territory, conducted services in Seattle's small frame Methodist church.

It was not until a decade later, however, that an Episcopal congregation was formally established. On August 13, 1865, the Reverend Peter Edward Hyland, rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Olympia, conducted services in Seattle. The following day a group of laymen met to establish the "unorganized mission" of Trinity Church. Hiram Burnett was chosen treasurer and layreader (although he was not confirmed until a year later when the first Bishop of the Northwest, Thomas Fielding Scott, visited Seattle). Trinity was the fourth Episcopal church in the territory (following St. Luke's in Vancouver; St. John's, Olympia; and St. Peter's, Port Townsend, all founded in the first years of the decade).

In 1868, the Reverend Itas F. Roberts assumed charge of the church, and in 1870 the congregation constructed a frame building at the corner of Third and James. The next year, the Reverend R. W. Summers arrived and by 1873, when Summers left, the status of the church had been upgraded to "organized mission." For the next two years, however, the parish was without clergy; instead, lay services were conducted by Burnett and Charles Prosch until mid-1875 when the Reverend Charles R. Bonnell arrived. Bonnell remained for three years.

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In 1878, Trinity achieved full parish status, and the first vestry called the Reverend George Herbert Watson of New Jersey to be rector. Watson served until his death nearly 20 years later, and under his leadership Trinity grew into a substantial church with an active program of ecclesiastical and social outreach.

Within a year of Watson's arrival, the parish established the Chapel of the Good Shepard in "North Seattle"; by the early 1890s, at the end of Watson's tenure, the parish had founded the mission churches of St. Mary's (Woodland Park), St. Clements, St. James (Kent), and St. John's (West Seattle). Watson also conducted occasional services in Renton and Auburn.

The parish was also actively engaged in other church work. In 1885, Trinity erected Grace Hospital in Seattle. Watson was also a leader statewide, and served as publisher of the Washington Churchman (known after 1896 as the Seattle Churchman), the official publication of the Episcopal church in the region, and an important forum for church news.

In 1889, the original frame church building was destroyed in the catastrophic Seattle fire of that year. The congregation had been planning for a new facility, and with money already raised the vestry purchased three lots at the corner of Eighth and James for a new building. In 1891, the church was begun, designed by Henry Starbuck of Chicago in the English Gothic Revival style favored by the Ecclesiastical movement. The new church was completed on June 5, 1892. A tower and spire, originally called for in the plans, were never built.

In 1896, Watson died, and the Reverend Herbert Gowen was called to be rector. Under Gowen (1897-1914), the parish continued to establish missions, including churches in Redmond, Georgetown, and Portage. But tragedy struck again on January 19, 1902, when a fire of undetermined origin swept through the building and destroyed the interior. Undeterred, the vestry immediately began a rebuilding campaign, retaining the architectural services of John Graham, Sr. to re-design a larger church.

Graham preserved much of the exterior stone walls but increased the dimensions of the transepts, "squared" the sanctuary and added the tower and spire omitted from the original. The new church was outfitted with stained glass windows made in Germany and an altar made of Italian marble donated by Eliza Ferry Leary. The church reopened in January, 1903. It remains an outstanding example of the English country parish Gothic Revival style.

John Graham, Sr. was one of the most prolific and talented architects in Seattle in the early 20th century. Born in Liverpool, England, in 1872, Graham was educated on the Isle of Man, apprenticed to an English architect, and came to Seattle at the turn of the century. In Seattle, he practiced both alone and briefly maintained a partnership with David Meyers. Many of the city's best commercial buildings of the teens

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and 1920s are his designs, as were several notable homes in Seattle including two built shortly after the church-- the John Leary House (now the Episcopal Diocesan office), built c. 1903, and the Pierre Ferry House, built c. 1905.

With the new church complete, the congregation continued to serve the city. In the early 20th century, the Reverend Gowen worked among the city's deaf-mutes, began work that led to the creation of St. Peter's Japanese Episcopal mission, and established mission work among the city's seamen.

Gowen was succeeded in 1914 by the Reverend William Bliss, who served until 1924. During his tenure, Bliss led the Episcopal Social Service Commission and was a national leader of the White Cross anti-narcotics movement. In the following decade (1924-1935), the Reverend Charles Stanley Mook served as rector during which time the church reaffirmed its commitment to the downtown area despite the deterioration of the neighborhood. Underscoring that commitment, the congregation built a new parish house complete with kitchen, classrooms, and gymnasium in 1930 in the midst of the Great Depression.

In 1935, the Reverend Lewis Bailey arrived, and served through the remainder of the Depression and subsequent war years. In response to the crises of the times, the parish had a full-fledged social service department by 1940, which provided meals and jobs, and during the war the church provided space for the Red Cross Surgical Dressing Unit.

The church continues to operate a full schedule of church services, and ministerial and social services from its downtown location. In recognition of its distinguished history, the church was designated a City of Seattle landmark in 1976. Today, Trinity Church is the oldest church building still in use by its original congregation in Seattle.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Mark, Gralia, Trinity Parish Church, Seattle: First 100 Years, (Seattle: Trinity Parish Church), 1984.  
Clarence, Bagley, History of King County, Vol. I (Chicago), 1929, p. 611-614.  
Thomas, E. Jessett, Pioneering God's Country: History of the Diocese of Olympia, 1853-1953 (Tacoma), 1953.

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

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

UTM References

A	<u>10</u>	<u>550720</u>	<u>5272440</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 2, 3, 6, and 7, Block 57, Terry's First Addition; City of Seattle

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with Trinity Parish Church.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/title	<u>L. Garfield, based on information prepared by Mr. Mark Gralia</u>		
organization	<u>Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation</u>		
street & number	<u>111 21st Avenue SW, MS: KL-11</u>	telephone	<u>(206) 586-2901</u>
city or town	<u>Olympia</u>	state	<u>WA</u> zip code <u>98504</u>