

814

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport
other names/site number First United Methodist Church

2. Location

street & number 1406 Cornell Street

N/A	not for publication
N/A	vicinity

city or town McKeesport City
state Pennsylvania code PA county Allegheny code 003 zip code 15132-4799

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Andrea McDonald August 11, 2014
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

PA Historical and Museum Commission
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Joe Elson H. Beall 9.30.14
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport
Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Religion / Religious Facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Religion / Religious Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals / Late Gothic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete
walls: Stone / Sandstone

roof: Stone / Slate
other: _____

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph The First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport is a three/four story sandstone building located at 1406 Cornell Street in the city of McKeesport, Allegheny County, PA.¹ It sits on a sloping 2.0 acre parcel of land defined by three streets – the east-west Versailles Avenue, the north-south Cornell Street, and the east-west Spring Street and another property to its west. The nominated property consists of one contributing building, the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport, whose east elevation fronts on Cornell Avenue.² To its north, facing Versailles Avenue, is a paved parking lot; to the west, a chain link fence and to the south, facing Spring Street, is a roughly triangular grassy area. Hedges mark the east and south boundaries and street trees mark the north and south boundaries of the parcel. Concrete sidewalks connect the different areas of the church with each other and the street; ornamental plantings are also present. The surrounding area is mostly residential. The U-shaped church, consisting of the Chapel to the west (the base of the U), the Nave to the north and the Community Building to the south (the legs of the U), partially encloses a grassy courtyard containing concrete sidewalks, as well as ornamental plantings. The Late Gothic Revival church is built into a bank and rests on a concrete foundation. It is 170 ft wide and 129 ft deep. Designed by Architect Charles Bolton & Sons and built by Edward A. Wehr in 1926, the church has seen few changes (See site and floor plans). Overall, the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport has retained its integrity and serves as an excellent example of the Late Gothic Revival style and is a community landmark.

Narrative Description

Setting and Grounds of the Property (Figure 1 and Site Plan)

The city of McKeesport in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, is located 19 miles southeast of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The First Methodist Episcopal Church, located at 1406 Cornell Street, lies at the intersection of Cornell Street and Versailles Avenue on a 2 acre parcel of land sloping approximately ½ story on the high side at the northeast to the low side on the southwest. The building is defined by three streets – the east-west Versailles Avenue, the north-south Cornell Street and the east-west Spring Street and another property to its west. The nominated property consists of one contributing U shaped building.

The main façade of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport fronts on Cornell Street (Photos 1 and 21). Concrete steps leading up to the main entrance are accessed from the paved sidewalk leading from Cornell Street. To the north of these steps is another set of concrete steps leading down to the paved parking lot on the north side facing Versailles Avenue. Vehicular access to the parking lot is from Versailles Avenue. Between the parking lot and Versailles Avenue is a paved sidewalk lined with mature Sycamore trees. The parking lot has a hedge-lined grassy area to the east between the sidewalk and Cornell Street. The rear façade of the building (Photos 3 and 4) has a paved access road 20 feet wide running north to south from Versailles Avenue to Spring Street. This access is bounded on the west with a chain link fence separating the church property from the adjoining privately owned property. The Community Building's south façade (Photo 5) fronts Spring Street. Between the building and Spring Street is a triangular grassy area. A tree and hedge lined paved sidewalk separates the grassy area and Spring Street. The front façade of the Community Building (Photo 25) fronts Cornell Street. A hedge lined grassy area separates the building from Cornell Street with a paved sidewalk extending the entire length of Cornell Street between Versailles Avenue on the

¹ Allegheny County, PA ID:0307-P-00097 (Figure 1)

² For ease of description, facades are referred to in the narrative by the closest approximate compass direction, with the front facade facing Cornell Street being designated as the east facade. All other references to directions are compass-based (see site and floor plans for north arrows).

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

north and Spring Street on the south. The Community Building (Photo 24), the Chapel (Photo 23) and the Nave (Photo 22) form the three sides of the U shaped building. The three sides of the building and the sidewalk along Cornell Street frame a grassy courtyard. Access is gained to the Community Building and the ground floor from Cornell Street via paved sidewalks located at the north and south edge of the courtyard.

Grouped as they are around a courtyard open on one side to Cornell Street, the parts of the church recall the Abbey Churches of England with their various dependencies, such as Romsey Abbey and the Mottisfont Abbey in Hampshire, England.³ The surrounding area of the church is mostly residential. To the south across Spring Street is a public elementary school. A few blocks to the east is the McKeesport Carnegie Public Library, a small convenience store and other churches. To the northeast on the opposite corner is a public cemetery and to the west, Versailles Avenue leads to the downtown area of McKeesport.

Exterior Description

Built in 1926 in the Late Gothic Revival style, the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport is composed of three main sections forming a U-shaped building set on a 2 acre parcel of land sloping approximately ½ story on the high side at the northeast to the low side on the southwest. Viewed from above, the Nave has a North Transept, a South Transept and a Chancel area at the end of the Nave to the west. Passing under the stone arch of the South Transept is the entrance to the Chapel (Photo 14). This arrangement represents the shape of the cross. The bell tower, the tallest feature of the church, is located at the center of the cross. The church is constructed of Neshannock Valley Sandstone from Pennsylvania furnished by the Martin Brick Company of Pittsburgh, PA.⁴ The church is designed in the Late Gothic Revival style and sits on a solid steel reinforced concrete foundation. The entire roof of the Church Nave and the Community Building are covered with 9" x 18" Peach Bottom slate manufactured by the Peach Bottom Slate Co., Delta, York County, Pennsylvania, laid over No. 2, 7/8" tongue and groove boards. The roof over the Nave is supported on iron trusses with 8" x 10" chamfered purlins with transept and chancel having 10" x 10" chamfered purlins upon which are placed 4" x 6" rafters. Flashings, valleys, gutters and downspouts are 16 oz. copper. Through the years some of the copper downspouts and gutters have been replaced with aluminum material. The Chapel roof is lower and slightly pitched, covered with flat roofing material. The steps and doorsills to the front entrance and courtyard side of the church are hard blue limestone set over the foundation walls. All windows—including jambs, arches, mullions and sills—and doorjambs are cast stone. The windows in the Nave and Chapel are stained glass grisaille design with figure subjects formed in rich colors of blues, greens, reds and purples, representing stories in glass from the life of Christ (e.g. Photo 33). Clear glass window panels are in all other areas of the building. The stained glass windows, which were painted by hand and then fired, were designed and furnished by P.J. Reeves and Co., 6136-38 Cedar Ave., Philadelphia, PA. The Pittsburgh Stained Glass Studios, 160 Warden Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15220-5419, furnished the clear glass panels in all other sections of the building. All exterior doors are painted red.

Main (East) Facade (Photos 1 and 2)

Viewed from the front, looking west from Cornell Street, the Church Nave's east elevation is 49 feet wide. The Community Building is on the left, connected to the Nave by the Chapel that forms the third side of the open courtyard. The entrance to the Nave is through double doors in the center of massive buttresses 40" wide, extending 66" out from the face of the building and including gablets and pinnacles framing the doorway. The beautifully decorated tracery stained glass window is located above this entrance. On either side of the main entrance is a pointed arch window. The symbolic cast stone figures at each side of the entrance hold shields on which are a cross and monogram. Above the arch inscribed in stone is the name of the church "First Methodist Episcopal Church" (Photo 21).

³ "The Heritage Trail," Website, <http://www.theheritagetrail.co.uk/>, accessed 1/30/2014.

⁴ All building material information for the First Methodist Episcopal Church, McKeesport, PA, is recorded in the specifications and drawings of architect Charles W. Bolton and minutes of the Church Building Committee 1924-1928 on file in the church records.

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

South Facade of Nave (Photos 7 and 22)

The south elevation is about 80 feet long. A set of double doors leads from the courtyard into the spacious Narthex of the church; the Narthex extends across the entire front of the inside of the church. To the left (or west) of this door at ground floor level are four frosted windows that light the Community Hall directly below the Nave. Above these windows are four arched stained glass tracery windows lighting the Nave. Directly above these windows and above the entrance door, are smaller side by side arched stained glass windows adding additional lighting from the clerestory of the Nave. Between the windows are four buttresses 26" wide and extending 30" out from the face of the building.

East Facade of Chapel (Photo 23)

The east elevation is 74 feet long. Connecting the church Nave and the Community Building and forming the base or third side of the Courtyard is the Chapel. At ground floor level at the end of the sidewalk on the right of the courtyard, is a double door leading to the hallway of the ground floor level. To the left of this door are three frosted windows lighting the restrooms off the ground floor level hallway. Above these windows and the door are five arched stained glass tracery windows lighting the Chapel on the main floor level. Shrubbery has been planted at ground level at the end of the courtyard along the Chapel. To the left (or south) of the Chapel is a picturesque entrance to the Community Building, with the concrete cast figure of the boy Christ in the niche over the double door entrance. Time and weather have taken its toll on the cast boy figure resulting in some visible chips and cracks.

North Facade of Community Building (Photo 24)

The north elevation of the Community Building is about 61 feet long forming the third side of the courtyard. At sidewalk level are four frosted windows lighting the classrooms on the ground floor level. These windows are protected with open mesh wire screens. Directly above these windows are four tracery windows lighting the Ladies Parlor (now referred to as the Parlor) on the main floor level. Above these windows are three windows lighting the Girl Scout Room on the second floor level; this room is now referred to as the Upper Room since Girl Scouts no longer meet in the church. These three windows each sit beneath a gable wood-trimmed roof extending out from the main slate covered roof.

East Facade of Community Building (Photo 25)

The east elevation of the Community Building is 35 feet wide. At ground level is one narrow frosted window lighting the classroom on the ground floor level. Above this window are four tightly grouped tracery windows lighting the Parlor on the main floor level. Directly above these windows are three arched tracery windows lighting the Upper Room on the second floor level.

South Facade of Community Building (Photo 05)

The south elevation of the Community Building is 110 feet long. Viewing the Community Building from the corner of Spring Street and Cornell Street looking northwest, the building forms a picturesque group of gables, roofs, chimneys and dormers in the foreground, while across the courtyard, the massive bell tower rises above the Nave forming a great dominant feature for the whole community. The south side of the Community Building consists of a series of clear windows starting at ground level. The ground slopes from the high side at the east corner to the low side at the west corner. Near the east corner is a towering stone chimney for the fireplaces of the Parlor and Upper Room. Three narrow windows at the bottom left (southwest) corner at ground level (Photo 4) light the bowling alley and game room on the basement level (See basement floor plan). Above these windows are eight windows of various sizes lighting the classrooms on the ground floor level. Directly above these windows are ten windows lighting the Parlor, offices and classroom on the main floor level. Above these windows are seven windows, three large and four small, lighting the Upper Room and the apartment area. The four small windows sit beneath a gable wood trimmed roof extending out from the main slate covered roof.

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Allegheny County, Pa

Name of Property

County and State

West Facade (Photos 3 and 4)

The west elevation of the church is 170 feet long and includes a series of various size clear glass windows lighting the ground floor, the main floor and the second floor levels. Near the right (southwest) corner separating the Community Building and the Chapel section is a tall polygonal stone chimney venting the heating system of the building. Two doors are at this ground floor level. A center door provides access to the ground floor, basement floor and Community Hall. A door on the far left (northwest) corner provides access to the kitchen located in the Community Hall. A small wood frame structure, 8 feet x 20 feet, with wooden face shingles and a wood shingle roof was added in 1975. This enclosure was added to have better access to the kitchen for the Meals-On-Wheels program and to protect trash from the outside elements until weekly trash pick-up. This is the only addition to the outside of the building.

North Facade (Photos 3 and 26)

The north elevation is 129 feet long. At the right (northwest) corner are frosted windows lighting the Meals-On-Wheels office, formerly the Boy Scout room, and the kitchen. Boy Scouts no longer use this room. To the left are four double doors accessing the Community Hall. These doors are equipped with inside panic bars. Above the window of the kitchen is a large arched stained glass tracery window lighting the North Transept of the Nave. To the left of this north wing are five stained glass tracery windows lighting the Nave. Between the doors and windows are buttresses 26" wide and extending 30" out from the face of the building. Above these windows are five smaller side-by-side arched stained glass windows adding additional lighting from the clerestory above the Nave.

The four sided flat-topped bell tower is the tallest part of the building sitting above the Nave at the center of the North Transept, South Transept and the west end of the Nave. Each side of the tower is identical having two tall narrow pointed arch openings. The top edges of the tower are a step design capped with stone. The two thousand pound cast bronze bell that hung in the bell tower was relocated to the present church from the former Methodist Episcopal Church on the corner of Market Street and Penny Street in McKeesport, which was destroyed by fire in 1924 (Photo 35). On May 11, 1932, a crack was discovered in the bell and it was removed from the bell tower on April 15, 1942, and sold for \$383.00 as scrap to buy war bonds.⁵ The bell was never replaced and in September 1946, chimes and an amplification system were added to the bell tower.

Through the years work has been done to protect the stonework pointing and, in 1960, replacement in kind to the stone facets began. Repair of the stained glass windows was started in 1956 and continued at various times through the years. The stained glass windows of the Nave courtyard side (South elevation) were covered with protective Plexiglas in 1976 and windows on the parking lot side (North elevation) were covered with protective Plexiglas in 1985. A decorative cement band projecting about 6" from the face of the stone work runs completely around the building separating the ground level from the main floor level.

Interior Description

All of the floors in the Narthex and in all aisles and hallways of the Church and Chapel and Communion Table Platform and corridors on the ground floor and main floor, as well as in all restrooms and hearths in the fireplaces in the Parlor and Upper Room (formerly the Girl Scout room) are tile. The tile is 7/8" x 9" x 9" vitrified red, clay tile, set in 1" Portland cement mortar with 5/8" wide joints grouted full with Portland cement. The tile in the small toilet rooms and hearths is 6" x 6". All interior piers, columns and arches are cast stone. All classrooms, offices, social rooms and restrooms feature wood baseboards stained and varnished. All door frames are stained and varnished, as well. All interior doors are 1 3/4" thick plain oak with solid veneered panels stained and varnished.

⁵ "Old Church Bell Removed To Aid U.S. War Effort" *The Daily News*, McKeesport, PA, April 25, 1942.

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

Main Floor (See floor plan)

The Nave

The spacious Narthex extending across the entire front of the church (Photo 8) is accessed through the main entrance to the Church Nave from Cornell Street (Photo 1) or from the courtyard (Photos 7 and 22) thru 3 ½" thick doors with glass panels. The floor of the Narthex is covered with tile. The ceiling above is lined with a series of 3" x 10" solid plain oak beams spaced 18" apart, running east to west and supporting the balcony directly above. On top of the beams are oak tongue and groove boards. All wood is stained and varnished. The walls of the Narthex are coated with plaster and painted a soft light green color. The balcony is accessed by sets of concrete steps in each corner of the front wall of the Narthex. The floor of the balcony or gallery is tongue and grooved No.1 long leaf yellow pine slightly sloped with shellac finish. Seating is for 110 people on wooden seats that fold up for clear access in the aisles. From the balcony is a beautiful, unobstructed view of the entire Nave. In 1947 an echo organ was installed in the balcony loft against the south wall.

A tracery screen separates the Narthex from the main body of the church Nave and is glazed with clear glass so that the whole length of the interior of the Nave is visible. A wide double door at the center of the screen with clear glass panels opens to the main center aisle of the Nave (Photo 9). To the right and left against the outside north and south walls are wide doors, with clear glass panels, allowing access to the side aisles along the outer walls of the Nave, which are separated from the main space by a row of columns above which are clerestory windows adding additional light to the Nave. On each side of the main center aisle of the Nave are solid wood pews for seating 474 people. All wooden pews in the Nave and Chapel were manufactured and furnished by Huntington Seating Co., Huntington, West Virginia. The seats of the pews were covered with red cushion material in 1987. The floor of the seating area has a concrete base over which is laid 2" of Nalecode manufactured by Paul Mende, 132 E. 44th Street, New York City, over which is laid 7/8" thick x 2 ½" wide plain oak tongue and groove flooring coated with a shellac finish. Flooring of the aisles along the outside walls consists of tile, the same as the Narthex. Along the outside edge of the pews is a solemn range of cast stone columns supporting the cast stone arches with carved figures high above, which are placed at the base of the arches that support the walls leading up to the open timbered roof.

Colorful decorated stained glass windows line each side of the entire length of the Nave. Each window of the Nave illustrates an event in the life of Christ (Photo11 and Photo12). Photo 33 shows a close-up of a typical window. Looking east from the crossing at the end of the main aisle is the Narthex tracery screen with the gallery and a large arched tracery stained glass window known as the Good Shepherd Window above (Photo 10). At the west end of the Nave the main arch frames the Chancel where the Nave widens at the crossing under the tower (Photo 9). To the right facing north, is the North Transept with seating for 70 people and with a large stained glass Resurrection Window on the north wall (Photo 13). Looking west from under the crossing at the end of the main center aisle is a one-step high raised Communion Table Platform with a wood railing and kneeling pad. A wood lattice screen is beyond the platform and is the air return for the heating system.

Above the screen is the four-foot high raised Pulpit Platform with red carpet covering the floor. The original design of the platform allowed access from both the north corner and the south corner. Sitting on the raised pulpit platform is the Lectern to the right and the Main Pulpit to the left. Behind the Lectern and Pulpit to the right, is the Skinner Organ. The original console of the Skinner Organ was replaced in 1974 with a new Moller Co. console installed by the Kennedy Organ Co. The original works of the Skinner organ including pipes, air chambers, sound louvers, etc. are located in the organ loft and are still in use. Above the organ on the north wall are two narrow stained glass windows displaying the two symbols of sacred music: the lyre and the harp. In the center against the west wall is the altar above which are three colorful painted panels and three tall narrow stained glass windows depicting the Christmas story. To the left is the main choir seating area (Photo 32). The organ chamber is located directly above and to the left of the choir seating. The original design had the choir seating in the center against the west wall with the altar and communion table at the center in front of

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

the raised platform. Entrance to the raised platform is now located at the center using five steps covered with red carpet. The change to the Chancel area, creating the raised platform, was made in 1966 to allow a more modern worship service. To the left at the end of the main center aisle facing south is the South Transept with seating for 70 people and a center isle leading south to the entrance of the Chapel (Photo 14).

The Chapel is separated from the Nave by a tracery screen forming a folding four-section door with clear glass panels. The doors can be opened as required. Above these doors is a large sweeping arch above which is the Echo Choir Gallery. Above the Echo Choir Gallery on the south wall is a large stained glass window depicting Christ in Gethsemane (Photo 14). The walls surrounding the Nave and Chancel are plastered, finished with light green/gray paint. All the original pillars, arches, figures and ornamental tracery of the windows are of Artstone and have been painted gray over a period of time in the mid 1970's. The ceiling above the Nave is No. 2, 7/8" thick tongue and groove wood planking under the exterior slate roofing. Wooden gables support the roof and are located between each arch along the side aisles. Cast stone figures are at the base of each gable. The gables supporting the roof of the Nave resemble a ship turned upside down. The word Nave is derived from the Latin word "navis" which means "ship". Foam insulation sections were added to the ceiling of the Nave under the original wood plank roof between the wood gables in 1968. The insulation is a dark brown color closely matching the appearance of the original ceiling. A series of eighteen equally spaced chandeliers, hanging on chains from the ceiling, light the entire Nave. The cylindrical chandeliers, framed in satin finish and made of hammered antique bronze with amber tone glass with the symbol of the cross at the top, are approximately fifteen inches in diameter and thirty inches long. These are the original chandeliers furnished by Beardslee Chandelier Mfg. Co., South Jefferson Street, Chicago, Illinois. Six ceiling fans were installed in the Nave in 1985.

The Chapel

The Chapel has a flat, slightly pitched at the center, roof. The exterior of the roof is covered with flat roofing material. The interior ceiling is yellow pine planks supported with large oak beams stained with dark tones. The east wall has five tracery windows with clear and stained glass looking out onto the courtyard (Photo 15 and 16). The Chapel has a plain oak, 7/8" thick x 2-1/2" wide, tongue and groove wood floor. In 1984, work was begun to redesign the Chapel to make it a multi-function room. The original thirty solid wood pews, which provided seating for up to 220 people and which were separated by a center aisle, were removed and green carpeting was laid over the original wood floor. Removable folding chairs replaced the wood pews. Two of the original wood pews were retained and were placed against the west wall. Additional lighting was added to enhance the lighting of the original hanging chandeliers of the same design, only smaller, as the ones in the Nave. The walls are plaster, painted light green. The center of the south wall of the Chapel provides access to the Community Building through double doors with clear glass tracery window panels.

To the west of the chapel is a hallway (Photo 30) that connects the Community Building to the Nave and that separates the Chapel from classrooms along the west wall. Two classrooms along the west wall were originally four rooms. In 1963 two walls were removed creating two larger rooms. To the north of these rooms and hallway are stairs leading down to the ground floor level and Mezzanine floor. To the north of these stairs is a large study room with storage areas and a small restroom. To the north of this room are stairs leading up to the organ chamber and Chancel area. A doorway opposite these stairs leads to the west entrance of the Nave. The hallway is tile laid over a concrete base. The walls and ceilings are plastered and painted with a light beige color. The floors of all the rooms are tongue and groove wood laid over a concrete base. The wood floors are covered with square tile, with carpeting covering some of the floors in the rooms.

The Community Building

The Community Building on the main floor level is arranged into classrooms, multi-use rooms and offices. Directly to the left of the door exiting the Chapel are stairs leading up to the second floor level where the Upper Room and apartment area are located. The east-west hallway of the Community Building outside this door

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

leads to classrooms on the right or west and to offices and the Parlor to the left or east (Photo 31). Midway on the north side of this hallway are six steps leading down to a platform leading to the outside door to the courtyard. Opposite this doorway looking west are stairs leading down to the ground floor level.

An attractive Parlor in the east end of the hall has an open fireplace and tracery clear glass windows on three sides (Photo17) with a separate kitchenette and small restroom. The tongue and groove hardwood floor is covered with red carpeting. Upholstered sofas and chairs line the walls and draw drapes hang at the windows. Hanging chandeliers and decorative wall fixtures light the room. Walls and ceiling are plaster coated with light off-white paint. A large classroom is located in the west end of the hallway in the southwest corner of the building (Photo 29). Separating this classroom and the Parlor are the kitchenette, the main office and the Pastor's office located on the south wall. The hallway is tile laid over a concrete base. The walls and ceilings are plastered and painted with a light beige color. The floors of all the rooms are tongue and groove wood laid over a concrete base. The wood floors are covered with square tile, with carpeting covering some of the floors in the rooms.

Second Floor (See floor plan)

Community Building

The Community Building is the only part of the church that features a full second floor. On this second floor, above the Parlor, is the Upper Room with an open-timbered yellow pine roof stained with dark tones, a stone front fireplace with a tile hearth and a small kitchenette. The kitchenette was added to the Upper Room in 1962. The floor is a concrete base covered with square tiles with red carpeting covering the center section of the tiles. Walls are varnished natural vertical wood wainscoting. Decorative chandeliers hang from the ceiling. Yellow pine roof gables support wood planks forming the ceiling, above which are the exterior roof slate shingles (Photo 18). Tracery windows light the Upper Room on the three outside walls. The Upper Room was formerly the Girl Scout Room and is now used as a multi-use social room accessed by stairs leading up from the Main floor. To the west of the Upper Room is a fully functional six room apartment with a kitchen and bathroom; it was intended as the living quarters of the custodian and is now used for various community functions. The floors are concrete base covered with square tile over which carpeting has been laid. Walls and ceilings are coated with plaster painted with neutral colors.

Ground Floor (See floor plan)

Below The Nave

The ground floor beneath the Nave is composed of the spacious Community Hall, which features a full kitchen and serving facilities with a stage area at the east end (Photo19) and offices, storage areas and restrooms at the west end (Photo 28). The north side has the kitchen area and four double doors leading to the parking lot. The raised stage at the east end is constructed with #1 long leaf yellow pine with a varnish finish. Draw curtains can be used as necessary. Stairs located on the north and south walls lead up to the stage. The south stairs also lead up to the Narthex on the Main Floor. Along the south wall are four tracery frosted glass windows and stairs leading up to the hallway at ground floor level under the Chapel. At the west end is the locker room now used as a storage room and the Boy Scout room, which now serves as the Meals on Wheels office. Through the years the Community Hall has undergone some changes to satisfy changing requirements. The original design was a gymnasium with a full basketball court and locker rooms at the west end. Due to deterioration of the wood floor and declining interest in basketball, the basketball equipment and wood floor were removed. Two inches of concrete was added over the original base floor then covered with square flooring tile. These changes were made in 1959. The original ceiling is formed concrete and formed concrete reinforced beams support the Nave directly above. In 1960 work began to lower the ceiling 4.5 feet by installing a drop-ceiling system with acoustic ceiling tiles supported by a hanging grid system. Fluorescent ceiling lights were also installed. In 1983, a 10 foot x 33 foot room with a drop-ceiling was installed in the west end of the Community Hall. It was constructed with 2 x 4 wood studs covered with plasterboard. Two doors allow access to the room and to the office directly behind. This room serves as a packing room for the Meals

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Allegheny County, Pa

Name of Property

County and State

on Wheels service. The walls of the Community Hall, restrooms and passage behind the stage are brick. The columns are concrete. All walls and columns are painted light green.

Below the Chapel and Community Building

Directly below the Chapel is the north/south hallway accessed by stairs from the Community Hall and from stairs leading down from the Main floor. On the east side are the main men's and women's restrooms. On the west side are large classrooms with tile floors, plastered walls and ceilings painted with light tones. At the north end of the hall are steps leading down to the Community Hall; to the right or east, steps lead up to an exit door to the Courtyard and steps to the left or west lead down to an exit door to the roadway at the rear or west of the church. These stairs also lead down to the basement floor level. The south end of the hallway leads to eight classrooms with tile floors, plastered walls and ceilings and tracery clear glass windows on all outside walls. Two walls between four of the smaller rooms located along the north wall were removed creating two larger rooms and one wall between two smaller rooms located along the south wall was removed forming one larger room in 1963. These classrooms are in the Community Building. Stairs to the right or east lead up to the Main floor (Photo 27).

Mezzanine Floor (See floor plan)

The Mezzanine is located directly below the Pulpit chancel area of the Nave and directly above the former Boy Scout room. A locker room, now a storage room; the choir-ready room and a motion picture room are located on this level. The motion picture room is now used as the record room for all church files. The motion picture room was used to project movies into the Community Hall. Nine tracery windows are located along the north and west outside walls.

Basement Floor (See Floor Plan)

The Basement lies beneath the chapel and west end of the Community Building. Located on the Basement floor are the bowling alley (which runs north/south), game room, blower room and boiler room (Photo 20). The west outside wall of the game room has four frosted glass windows facing the roadway at the rear or west of the building. At the south end of the game room are stairs leading down to the boiler room. Heating for the building was originally controlled with two coal-fired boilers that were replaced in 1960 with eight new Slant/Fin Corporation gas-fired boilers.

ASSESSMENT OF INTEGRITY

The First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport retains integrity for its 1926 period of significance. The building is an excellent example of the Late Gothic Revival style, retains its principal qualities of design and workmanship and continues to convey its past identity as a church and local landmark.

Location: The building retains integrity in regard to location. Its location is unchanged since construction began in 1924 and was completed in 1926.

Design: The building retains integrity in regard to design. It retains its form, balanced proportions, fenestration patterns, general plan, method of construction, materials and elaborate Late Gothic Revival design and ornamentation. The exterior remains unchanged from the time of construction and the ornate interior continues to convey the original grandiose design, particularly in the Nave. In 1963 five walls were removed to form five larger classrooms and in 1966 changes were made to the Pulpit Platform in the Nave to allow access from the center rather than the north side and the south side. These were the only changes made to the architect's original design. The 1975 addition of a small wood frame storage shed was added to the outside northwest corner at the parking lot level.

Materials: The building retains integrity in regard to materials. Significant exterior materials are virtually unchanged. All of the windows are original. Protective Plexiglass was added to the outside of the stained glass

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

windows of the Nave in 1976 and 1985. All doors are original. The exterior doors have been painted red over the original wood varnish finish. On the interior, original materials such as the clay tile floors, wood wainscoting, oak trim and ornate cast stone symbolic figures in the Nave have been retained.

Workmanship: The building retains integrity in regard to workmanship. The elaborate ornamentation, designed as a balanced whole, remains today. On the exterior this ornamentation includes the massive bell tower, tracery and stained glass arched windows, carved stone symbolic figures, stonework for the body of all exterior walls with cement mortar and "First Methodist Episcopal Church" inscribed in stone above the main ornate arched door leading into the Nave. On the interior this ornamentation includes the tile flooring, wood doors, wood baseboard and door moldings, wood wainscoting, cast stone columns and carved stone symbolic figures throughout the Nave.

Feeling: The building retains integrity in regard to feeling. It continues to exhibit the feeling of a grand Late Gothic Revival church of the early 20th century.

Setting: The building retains integrity in regard to setting. The lot retains its original proportions, topography and location. The roads on the three sides of the building (Versailles Avenue, Cornell Street and Spring Street) remain in the same location, as they were when the building was completed in 1926. In addition, the area surrounding the church remains residential.

Association: The building retains integrity in regard to association. The First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport retains its association as a Late Gothic Revival church in McKeesport.

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport
Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1926

Significant Dates

1926

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Charles Bolton & Sons
Wehr, Edward A.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is 1926, the date construction was completed.

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

The First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport meets Criteria Consideration A as a religious building that derives its primary significance from its architecture.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Constructed by Charles Bolton and Son in 1926, the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport meets National Register Criterion C for Architecture as a significant example of Late Gothic Revival style ecclesiastical architecture in McKeesport. The church also meets Criteria Consideration A as a religious building that derives its primary significance from Architecture. Its scale, grandeur and craftsmanship make it a significant resource in the community. The period of significance is 1926, the date the church was completed.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Summary History

City of McKeesport

The city of McKeesport is located in the southeast corner of Allegheny County at the confluence of the Monongahela and Youghioghny Rivers: an area known as the "Forks of the Youghioghny" consisting of three thousand plus acres with an elevation ranging from 720 feet at river's edge to 1,100 feet at the highest point. Twenty-seven percent of the City's total land area is over twenty-five percent slope. Approximately forty-five percent of the community is in residential use and three percent is commercial.

Queen Alliquippa, a Seneca, was one of the first people to settle near the mouth of the Youghioghny River in 1748. The first long-term white settler to occupy this area was David McKee some time after Colonel Bouquet's defeat of the French and their Native American allies in 1763. David McKee purchased three hundred six acres on April 3, 1769, the day the Proprietor's Land Office opened in Philadelphia.⁶ Shortly after, his sons, Robert and Thomas, each purchased two hundred adjoining acres. The family settled into farming and David McKee reserved the ferry rights over both rivers and the town was called McKee's Ferry. The town of McKee's Ferry, as it was known, became McKee's Port in 1795.

About 1830, the discovery of bituminous coal in nearby areas precipitated the new industry of coal floating and the related support services connected to the work. The population of McKee's Port in 1840 was estimated to be 500.⁷ McKee's Port continued to grow between the years 1851 and 1880 with establishment of the McKeesport Iron Works (later called the American Sheet and Tin Plate Company) and the entry of the Baltimore & Ohio and the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie railroads. The National Tube Works (later part of U.S. Steel Corporation) built their first McKeesport plant in 1873. The population of McKeesport in 1880 was 8,212⁸ and in 1890 it was named a third-class city with a population of over 20,000 people.

The population peaked in 1940 at 55,355,⁹ but, starting with the demise of the steel industry and the rise of suburban development in the 1960s, the population started to decline. New local shopping centers replaced the traditional "hometown" way of life. Many of the original stores and businesses are no longer located in

⁶ Yount, Bruce A., Ed., *Old Home Week McKeesport, PA 1795 – 1960*, Wivagg Printing, 8.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 46

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Allegheny County, Pa

Name of Property

County and State

McKeesport and their storefronts are now vacant and boarded up. Today's population is approximately 34,000 people.

The First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport

Circuit riders began their mission into the Valley of the Ohio in 1787 preaching in barns and cabins in the town of McKee's Ferry, later called McKee's Port, the area purchased by David McKee in 1769. The first church building was a small frame single-story structure, erected in 1819¹⁰ on lots donated by John McKee, at Market and Sixth Streets. It was used by Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists as a union church. The building was never fully completed. Some time in 1840, members of Miller Methodist Episcopal Church (located along the Turnpike Road, now State Route 30) organized the Methodist Episcopal Church in McKee's Port. This congregation became McKeesport's First Methodist Episcopal Church and received recognition as a corporate body from the Pittsburgh Conference in 1841. In 1842, the union church was razed and in its place a new house of worship was built. In 1846, growth pushed the congregation out of this building into a larger two-story brick structure on the corner of Market Street and Fifth Avenue. In 1876, the third church building was erected at the corner of Walnut Street and Penny Avenue.

On July 11, 1924, at 3:30 am this church was destroyed by fire. Before daylight, arrangements had been made for the coming Sunday's services to be held in the First Baptist Church located a few blocks away on Olive Street in McKeesport. The following Sunday, the services were all moved to the Y.M.C.A., where they were held continuously until the opening of the new church. Within twenty-four hours, the leaders of the church started to make plans to rebuild. Property was purchased on July 28 from the McKeesport Y.M.C.A. along Cornell Street between Versailles Avenue and Spring Street. Charles W. Bolton & Sons was secured as architects and Edward Wehr of Pittsburgh as builder. Bishop McConnell laid the cornerstone on October 5, 1925, and the new church was opened September 12, 1926. From November 21 to November 28, 1926, dedication services were celebrated. The original white marble stone inscribed with "1843 First Methodist Episcopal Church 1876" that was located on the outside of the bell tower of the building that burned down was salvaged (Photo 35). The marble stone is now located on the west wall of the present church's Nave (Photo 34). A stone containing the name "First Methodist Episcopal Church" was also salvaged from the former church and is now located on the west wall of the lower hallway of the present church (Photo 27).

The church has remained open since its dedication for religious worship services and community gatherings. Meals on Wheels currently operates from the church, serving approximately 130 persons. Recently the Community Hall has been used as the local voting poll location for McKeesport's Seventh Ward. McKeesport experienced the St. Patrick's Day flood in 1936, during which the church provided temporary housing and care for over 100 refugees from the downtown area from March 17 to 25.¹¹ On December 11, 1968, the name of the church was officially changed to "The First United Methodist Church."

History of the Property

The church property is located within the original tract of land that David McKee applied for at the Proprietor's Land Office in Philadelphia on April 4, 1769. This application was for 306 acres of land at the junction of the Monongehela and Youghiogheny Rivers. This area was subdivided over the years with ownership passing to early settlers and farmers moving into this new area of Pennsylvania. The church property is in the area of the "Oliver Evans Estate" that originally consisted of approximately 18 acres. This farmland was purchased by

¹⁰ Yount, 23

¹¹ "Scenes From Stricken Areas In Flood Belt," *The Daily News*, McKeesport, PA, March 23, 1936.

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

Oliver Evans Sr. from Charles Hardisty as stated in the 1885 last will and testament of Oliver Evans Sr.¹² Section 3 of the will states, in part, "I give and devise unto my son Oliver the farm which I bought from Charles Hardisty situated in Versailles Township, Allegheny Co. for and during his natural life; and I give and devise the said farm after his death to his children and their heirs; but if he leave no children, then I give and devise the said farm to my two sons James and Cadwalader." The property became known as the "Oliver Evans Estate." On October 2, 1912, work began on the Evans Estate at the corner of Versailles Avenue and Fourteenth Street in the space occupied by the Versailles Avenue lawn tennis courts for building the tabernacle for Rev. W. A. (Billy) Sunday's evangelistic campaign.¹³ The tabernacle was used only for the campaign ending December 20, 1912, and was then torn down and the materials removed.

In 1919, a portion of the Evans Estate was subdivided and a portion consisting of 3.8 acres sold by Cadwalader Evans (Executor) to the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) of McKeesport, PA.¹⁴ On July 11, 1924, fire destroyed the First Methodist Episcopal Church located on Penny Street in McKeesport. Needing a location for a new church, the Trustees of the First Methodist Episcopal Church purchased a tract of land consisting of 3.8 acres from the Young Men's Christian Association of McKeesport, PA,¹⁵ this was the same tract of land the YMCA had bought from the Evans Estate in July 24, 1919. Ground was broken for the new church on Sunday, June 14, 1925, and the church was completed and dedicated on Sunday, November 21, 1926. On June 29, 1927, the Board of Trustees of the First Methodist Episcopal Church recommended to accept an offer from Sam Beck of McKeesport to purchase 1.8 acres of the church property starting 200 feet to the west from the corner of Cornell Street (formerly Fourteenth Avenue) and Versailles Avenue.¹⁶ Payment of the sale was made on September 6, 1927, and it was promptly applied to the mortgage of the new church.

The Architect

Charles Webber Bolton (1855-1942) was born in Zelienople, PA, and was one of the leading ecclesiastical architects in Philadelphia during the early 20th century. He was enrolled at Lafayette College in Easton, PA, as part of the class of 1880, but he did not graduate. By 1881 he was employed in Pocahontas, VA, as an architect with the Southwestern Virginia Mining and Development Company. By 1884, Bolton was established as an architect in Philadelphia where he continued his practice until his death in that city. In 1906, his son joined the firm and it became Charles W. Bolton and Son.¹⁷ Bolton designed numerous Presbyterian, Methodist Episcopal, Lutheran and Baptist Churches across the country, including Tioga Lutheran Church of the Nativity (17th Street and West Tioga Street, Philadelphia), Tioga Methodist Episcopal Church (18th Street and West Tioga Street, Philadelphia) and Hamline Methodist Episcopal Church (4501 16th Street, NW, Washington D.C.).

¹² Will 154, Volume 34, page 279, Department of Wills/Orphans Court, Pittsburgh, PA.

¹³"Crew That Helped on First Day to Build Billy Sunday's Tabernacle," *The Daily News*, McKeesport, PA, October 9, and November 2, 1912.

¹⁴ Deed Book Volume 1959, Page 314, Department of Real Estate, County Office Building, 542 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA, 15219

¹⁵ Deed Book Volume 2245, Page 183, Department of Real Estate, County Office Building, 542 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA, 15219

¹⁶ Minutes of the Trustees of the First Methodist Episcopal Church dated June 29, 1927.

¹⁷ "Bolton, Charles Webber (1855-1942)," *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings*, website, <http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/>. Accessed 1/30/2014.

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

Architectural Significance

The Late Gothic Revival Style

The Gothic Revival Style consists of several phases, including the Early Gothic Revival from roughly 1830 to 1860, the High Victorian Gothic from roughly 1860-1890 and the Late Victorian Gothic from roughly 1890-1930.¹⁸

The Early Gothic Revival style is described by noted Architectural historian Cyril M. Harris as:

"A movement originating in the 18th century and culminating in the 19th century, flourishing throughout Europe and the United States, aimed at reviving the spirit and forms of Gothic forms; applied to country cottages, churches, some public buildings, and castle-like structures. Gothic Revival buildings are usually characterized by ashlar masonry, ...brick work, or wood walls, often extending into the gables without interruption; Gothic motifs such as battlements, decorative brackets, finials, foils, foliated ornaments, hood moldings, label moldings, pinnacles, pointed arches, towers, a symmetrical facade; steeply pitched gables often decorated with ornate gingerbread bargeboards; projecting eaves; decorative slate or shingle patterns on the roof; occasionally, a flat roof with crenelated and castellated parapets; ornamental chimney stacks and chimney pots; windows extending into the gables; often, an elaborately paneled front door set into a lancet arch; occasionally bordered with side lights."¹⁹

The High Victorian Gothic, on the other hand, is generally "...polychrome, or at least bichrome,²⁰" an effect that can be created by the use of different types of stone within the walls or window arches, alternating stone and brickwork or use of columns of a different stone than the rest of the building. In addition, "...the details—moldings, tracery, carved ornament—are heavier and fatter...,"²¹ giving a coarser appearance than the Early Gothic Revival style. Woodwork generally takes the form of framing, not decoration and the rooflines tend to be more complex than those of the Early Gothic Revival. Finally, where the Early Gothic Revival tended to emulate English Gothic forms, the High Victorian Gothic looked to other parts of Europe.²² The style is most often seen on religious and educational buildings.²³

The Late Gothic Revival style strived to more accurately reflect its Medieval precedents²⁴ and can be seen as a reaction to the High Victorian Gothic:

"Late Gothic Revival Buildings are quieter and 'smoother' in design than those of the High Victorian Gothic. Silhouettes are simpler, polychromy is rare..., and top-heavy effects and calculated clashes of scale are no longer employed. ...Although there may be some mixing of English and French Gothic motifs, the character of any single building is generally quite definitely either English or French. Late Gothic Revival churches are substantially built of masonry—stone when it was practicable—...; tracery is of stone, and many churches are vaulted...; the craftsmanship is generally superior, and the detail is more varied...."²⁵

¹⁸ Vater, David J., "Calvary Episcopal Church," *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, 8/7; Blumenson, John J.G., *Identifying American Architecture: a Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945*, pages 31-33; Whiffen, Marcus, *American Architecture Since 1780: a Guide to the Styles*, page 53.

¹⁹ Harris, Cyril M., *Dictionary of Architecture & Construction*, Third Edition, page 432.

²⁰ Whiffen, page 89.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Gordon, Stephen C., *How to Complete the Ohio Historic Inventory*, 88.

²⁴ Ibid., 105.

²⁵ Whiffen, page 173.

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

This style was most often applied to religious buildings, educational buildings (as the Collegiate Gothic on college campuses) and commercial buildings.²⁶ In sum, the style is characterized by a more accurate reflection of Medieval precedents, particularly English and French; by masonry, generally stone, construction; by less “over-the-top” decoration and by generally higher craftsmanship.

The First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport

Based on the above, the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport is clearly a significant example of the Late Gothic Revival Style, embodying the distinctive characteristics of that style. It is solidly constructed of stone and accurately reflects English Gothic architecture of the fourteenth century. In fact, with its Nave and various dependencies, it recalls English abbeys of the Medieval period. In addition, its ornamentation, including its exterior stonework, buttresses, massive bell tower, tracery and stained glass arched windows and symbolic figures and its interior tile flooring; woodwork, which includes doors, baseboards, molding and wainscoting; cast stone columns and carved symbolic figures, while elaborate, present a balanced whole that is not extravagant and that reflects a high degree of craftsmanship.

McKeesport's Late 19th and Early 20th Century Architecture

In general, the years from 1900 to 1920 were a period of major building in McKeesport including the McKeesport Hospital, Carnegie Library, Post Office, movie theaters and several public schools and churches. Elaborate Victorian homes were built for prominent people. The prevalent housing type was 2-2 ½ story gable roofed frame designs with a mix of some brick or stone dwellings. In terms of ecclesiastical architecture, there are several comparable Late Gothic Revival style churches in McKeesport, including the former Park Baptist Church at 2100 Versailles Avenue, the former Central Presbyterian Church at 1501 Versailles Avenue, the former First Baptist Church at 409 Olive Street, the former Shoemaker Memorial United Brethren Church at 1911 Beaver Street and the former First Reformed Church at 1500 Union Avenue.

Former Park Baptist Church

Constructed in 1921, the former Park Baptist Church is a red brick rectangular structure with a stone foundation. The roof consists of pitched sections, one running north/south and one running east/west. These sections meet in the center and are covered with shingles; there are wood gables at their gable ends. The main (north) façade features the main entrance, consisting of 2 double doors in the center. Above this entrance is a large pointed arched stained glass window. To the left of this entrance is a low tower with a single entrance door on the ground floor level. To the right is a tall tower forming the northwest corner. It features four narrow rectangular double hung windows, two on the first level and two on the second level. Above these windows is located a lancet window near the top of the tower. The west façade mostly mimics the north façade, but without the low tower and the entrance doors. Protective frosted Plexiglas covers all windows.

While the building does exhibit some Late Gothic Revival features, notably the two square towers, it lacks the elaborate ornamentation seen on the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport, such as the quality stone work, the massive main tower and the decorative elements that include buttresses and symbolic figures.

²⁶ Gordon, page 105.

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

Former Central Presbyterian Church

Constructed in 1916, the former Central Presbyterian Church is a three story brown cut stone building with a sharp-pitched roof that consists of several sections running in north/south and east/west directions. The main (east) façade features an entrance door at the southeast corner; the entrance door leads to the Nave and the lower level social area. To the right of this entrance is a recently added elevator (access to all levels) enclosed with gray stone with double doors framed under an arch window. Above these entrances is a centered large stained glass window with rectangular frame sections topped with a rounded arch. To either side of the elevator entrance is a rectangular window and to the right is a short (below the roofline), square tower. Stone design edges the top of the four sides of the bell tower. Three sides of the tower have narrow rectangular windows, one at each level with two side-by-side narrow rectangular louvered openings near the top. On the north façade, centered under the gable is one large pointed arch tracery stained glass window. Under this window are two side-by-side square windows lighting the lower level. On either side of the gable with its large tracery window is a set of two narrow side-by-side windows. The south façade features a centered large arched stained glass window composed of rectangular sections. On each side of this window are two large rectangular side-by-side stained glass windows. This church is attached to a plain three story rectangular buff brick, flat roof multi room building added in later years; it houses classrooms and offices.

The building does exhibit some Late Gothic Revival features, notably stone construction, the square tower, one large arched tracery stained glass window and buttresses; however, it lacks the obvious reference to medieval English Gothic architecture, the truly massive tower and the symbolic figures that characterize the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport.

The Former First Baptist Church

Constructed in 1925 of red cut stone, the former First Baptist Church is a three story rectangular building with various pitched roof sections covered with lap shingles. Its main (south) façade features a stone archway which rests upon a concrete platform and leads to the entrance doors. Above this archway is a large arched window opening. To the right of the entrance is a lower section with various size rectangular windows. To the left of the entrance is a square bell tower that features two rectangular windows on the lower level with an arched window above. The tower is topped with a tall steeple and louvered openings are located near the top of the tower on all four sides. The west façade features large arched windows, along with numerous rectangular windows. A rounded tower, which does not extend above the roofline forms the northwest corner of the building. It features narrow rectangular windows at each story and a round pointed roof. The north and east façades feature virtually no Late Gothic Revival style elements, consisting only of rectangular windows at each story. The glass of all windows is missing and some openings on the lower ground level have been boarded

The building exhibits some Late Gothic Revival features, notably the square tower, large arched tracery glass window openings and arched entranceways; however, it lacks the obvious reference to medieval English Gothic architecture, the symbolic figures and the buttresses that characterize the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport.

Former Shoemaker Memorial United Brethren Church

Constructed in 1911, the former Shoemaker Memorial United Brethren Church is a two story rectangular building constructed of gray brick with an east/west gable roof over the Nave. The main (east) façade features a tall square flat-topped bell tower at its southeast corner; the bell tower contains a single small arched window at each story. The top of the tower features 3 narrow, side-by-side arched openings on all 4 sides. Centered

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

on the gable end is the double door of the main entrance enclosed under an archway. Above this entrance arch is a large pointed arched window with rectangular framed sections; its glass has been removed. To the right of the main entrance is a lower two story section with a pitched roof running in an east/west direction. The south façade features the tower at its southwest corner, with four regular bays of arched stained glass windows and one bay with two smaller arched windows on the first floor level. The bays are separated by buttresses. On the ground floor, each bay features paired windows that have been boarded.

This church is most comparable to the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport due to its quality brickwork; decorative features, such as buttresses and large arched stained glass windows; however, it lacks the obvious reference to Medieval precedents seen in the First Methodist Episcopal Church's cruciform plan. In addition, it lacks the symbolic figures and chimneys seen on the First Methodist Episcopal Church.

Former First Reformed Church

Constructed in 1903, the former First Reformed Church is a rectangular red brick church with a stone foundation. The northwest corner consists of a large tower which houses the main entrance to the Church. The entrance is reached through an arched opening on both sides of the tower. Above these openings are paired arched windows that have been infilled with brick. To the right of this tower, on the west façade is a large pointed arch window centered under the gable end of the roof. To the right of this window is a small narrow pointed arch window near the southwest corner. The stones of the exposed lower level foundation have several square window openings. To the left of the tower, on the north façade is a large pointed arch window centered on the gable end of the roof. To the left of this window is a smaller pointed arch window. The stones of the exposed lower level foundation have several square window openings. The east side of the church has an attached two story red brick building with a north to south gable roof. The East facade has a stone framed pointed arch double door entrance centered under the gable end of the roof. On each side of and above this entrance is a narrow pointed arch window. All of the window openings are now boarded up, covering what may remain of the original glass design.

The church does exhibit some Gothic Revival features, notably the tall square bell tower, large pointed arched windows and the arched entranceway; however, it lacks the quality stonework, the obvious reference to Medieval precedents, the buttresses and the symbolic figures seen on the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport.

CONCLUSION

The First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport is a significant example of Late Gothic Revival style ecclesiastical architecture in McKeesport. Based on its stone construction, accurate reflection of English Gothic architecture of the fourteenth century and high-quality ornamentation which presents a balanced whole, it clearly embodies the character-defining features of Late Gothic Revival style architecture and, in comparison to the ecclesiastical architecture of McKeesport, it stands out.

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Boax, J. J., Secretary, Minutes of New Building Committee July 1924 thru September 1928, on file at the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport.

Bolton, Charles W. and Son, architect's specifications and drawings, June 1925.

"Bolton, Charles Webber (1855-1942)," *Philadelphia Architects and Buildings*, website, <http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/>, accessed 1/30/2014.

Blumenson, John J.G., *Identifying American Architecture: a Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945*, second edition, revised and enlarged, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1981.

Allegheny County Deed Books, Pittsburgh: Department of Real Estate.

First Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Year Book, 1924-1925*, on file at the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport.

The First Methodist Episcopal Church Dedication Services Program, November 21 to 28, 1926, McKeesport: Press of the Hutchison-Wivagg Co., 1926.

The First Methodist Church – Fortieth Anniversary Of The Dedication Of The Church 1926-1966, Pittsburgh: Lehigh Publishing Co., 1966.

Forrester, W. T. & J. L. Hammitt, *A History of Methodism In McKeesport*, 1941.

Gordon, Stephen C., *How to Complete the Ohio Historic Inventory*, Columbus, Ohio: Ohio Historic Preservation Office, 1992.

Harris, Cyril M., *Dictionary of Architecture and Construction*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006.

"The Heritage Trail," Website, <http://www.theheritagetrail.co.uk/>, accessed 1/30/2014.

McKeesport Daily News

"Crew That Helped on the First Day to Build Billy Sunday's Tabernacle," October 9, 1912.

"Scenes From Stricken Areas in Flood Belt," March 23, 1936.

"Old Church Bell Removed to Aid U.S. War Effort," April 25, 1942.

"First UM Church Dedicates Marker From Old Building," September 23, 2000.

Vater, David J., "Calvary Episcopal Church," *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, on file at the Bureau for Historic Preservation, Harrisburg, PA.

Whiffen, Marcus, *American Architecture Since 1780: a Guide to the Styles*, Cambridge, MA: The M.I.T. Press, 1969.

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport
Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa
County and State

Will 154, Volume 34, page 279, Department of Wills/Orphans Court, Pittsburgh, PA.

Yount, Bruce A. (Editor) *Old Home Week McKeesport, PA 1795 – 1960*, McKeesport: Wivagg Printing

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.0
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>596960</u>	<u>4466610</u>	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the nominated property corresponds to Allegheny County Parcel ID: 0307-P-00097-0000-00 available from <http://www2.county.Allegheny.pa.us/RealEstate/Search.aspx>.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes all resources historically associated with the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Eugene Ziegler – Church Council Member

organization First United Methodist Church date 1/31/2014

street & number 2120 Lewis Street telephone 412-751-2305

city or town McKeesport state PA zip code 15131-2910

e-mail areuz3@comcast.net

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property

Allegheny County, Pa

County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets:** NPS Form 10-900-a Section 7, Page 1 and Section 8 Pages 1 & 2
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport

City or Vicinity: McKeesport City

County: Allegheny State: Pennsylvania

Photographer: Eugene Ziegler

Date Photographed: March 2011 (1-9, 11-15, 18 and 20) and October 2013 (10, 16, 19, and 21-35)

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- Photo 01 - Main entrance to church from Cornell Street, east elevation, camera facing west.
Photo 02 - View of church from Cornell Street, east elevation, camera facing west.
Photo 03 - Rear view from parking lot, camera facing southeast.
Photo 04 - Rear view from Spring Street, camera facing northeast.
Photo 05 - Community Building from Spring Street, camera facing northwest.
Photo 06 - Community Building from Cornell Street, camera facing southwest.
Photo 07 - South side of church Nave from Cornell Street, camera facing northwest.
Photo 08 - Inside the Narthex from the courtyard entrance, camera facing north.
Photo 09 - The church Nave looking toward the arch framing the chancel with raised Pulpit Platform, camera facing west.
Photo 10 - Looking from the Pulpit toward the Narthex and Balcony, camera facing east.
Photo 11 - Arches and stained glass windows on the south wall of the Nave, camera facing southeast.
Photo 12 - Arches and stained glass windows on the north wall of the Nave, camera facing northeast.
Photo 13 - The Transept on the north wall from under the arch, camera facing north.
Photo 14 - Looking toward the entrance to the Chapel from under the arch, camera facing south.
Photo 15 - Looking south into the Chapel, camera facing south.
Photo 16 - Looking toward the entrance to the Nave from the Chapel, camera facing north.
Photo 17 - The Parlor, with fireplace (located in the Community Building), camera facing southeast.
Photo 18 - The Upper Room with timbered roof and fireplace (located in the Community Building above the Parlor), camera facing southeast.
Photo 19 - The Community Hall looking east toward the Stage (located under the Nave), camera facing east.
Photo 20 - The Bowling Alley looking east (Located under the Community Building), camera facing east.

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Allegheny County, Pa

Name of Property

County and State

- Photo 21 - Arch and stonework above Main entrance to church from Cornell Street, east elevation, camera facing west.
- Photo 22 - Looking toward the south elevation of the Nave, camera facing north.
- Photo 23 - Looking toward the east elevation of the Chapel, camera facing west.
- Photo 24 - Looking toward the north elevation of the Community Building, camera facing south.
- Photo 25 - Looking toward the east elevation of the Community Building, camera facing west.
- Photo 26 - View of church from corner of Cornell Street and Versailles Avenue, camera facing southwest.
- Photo 27 - Looking north in the lower level hallway leading to the Community Hall, camera facing north.
- Photo 28 - The Community Hall looking west (located under the Nave), camera facing west.
- Photo 29 - Large classroom on southwest corner of main floor in the Community Building, camera facing southwest.
- Photo 30 - Looking north on the main floor hallway leading to the Nave, camera facing north.
- Photo 31 - Looking east on the main floor hallway leading to the Parlor, camera facing east.
- Photo 32 - Looking down from the Echo Choir Gallery to the Pulpit Platform, camera facing northwest.
- Photo 33 - Close up of typical stained glass window in Nave, camera facing north.
- Photo 34 - Looking toward the Pulpit Platform and Organ Chamber, camera facing southwest.
- Photo 35 - Picture of old church burned to the ground on July 11, 1924.

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name First United Methodist Church

street & number 1406 Cornell Street telephone 412-664-9349

city or town McKeesport state PA zip code 15132-4799

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property
Allegheny County, PA

County and State
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 1

ALLEGHENY COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA

A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK & PLAY
& HOME OF AMERICA'S MOST LIVABLE CITY

11/20/2013 5:46:23 PM

[New Search](#) [Help](#) [Subscription Login](#)

General Information	Building Information	Tax Information eBill / ePay	Owner History	Image	Comparables	Appeal Status	Maps
---------------------	----------------------	------------------------------	---------------	-------	-------------	---------------	------

Maps

Parcel ID : 0307-P-00097-0000-00 Municipality : 407 MCKEESPORT - 7TH WARD

Property Address : 1406 CORNELL ST
MC KEESPORT, PA 15132 Owner Name : FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF MCKEESPORT



Figure 1: Tax parcel map showing First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport
Name of Property
Allegheny County, PA
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 2

Figure 2: Comparable churches in McKeesport.

EXAMPLE #1 Guy Miller Ministries Inc., 2100 Versailles Avenue, McKeesport, PA



Camera facing southeast



Camera facing southeast

EXAMPLE #2 McKeesport Presbyterian Church, 1501 Versailles Avenue, McKeesport, PA



Camera facing south



Camera facing northwest

EXAMPLE #3 First Baptist Church, 409 Olive Street, McKeesport, PA



Camera facing northeast



Camera facing southeast

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

First Methodist Episcopal Church of
McKeesport

Name of Property
Allegheny County, PA

County and State
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 3

EXAMPLE #4 Agape Fellowship Christian Community Center, 1911 Beaver St., McKeesport, PA

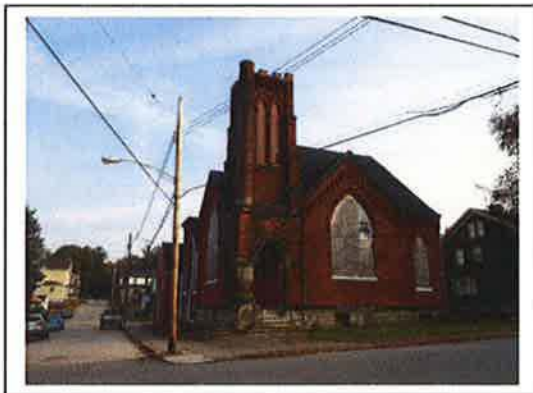


Camera facing northwest



Camera facing northwest

EXAMPLE #5 First United Church Of Christ, 1500 Union Street, McKeesport, PA

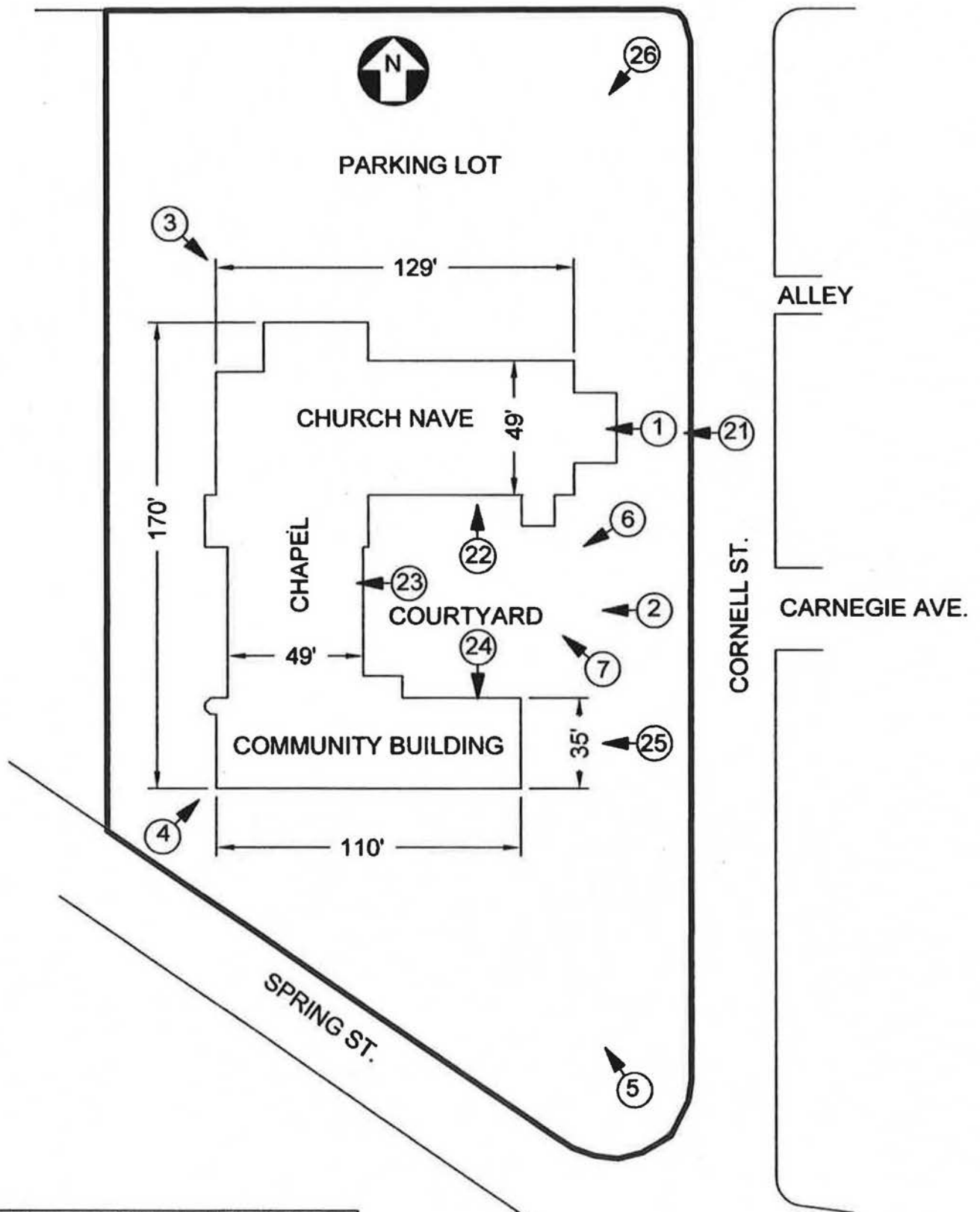


Camera facing southeast



Camera facing southwest

← (To Downtown McKeesport) VERSAILLES AVE.



First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport
Allegheny County, PA.

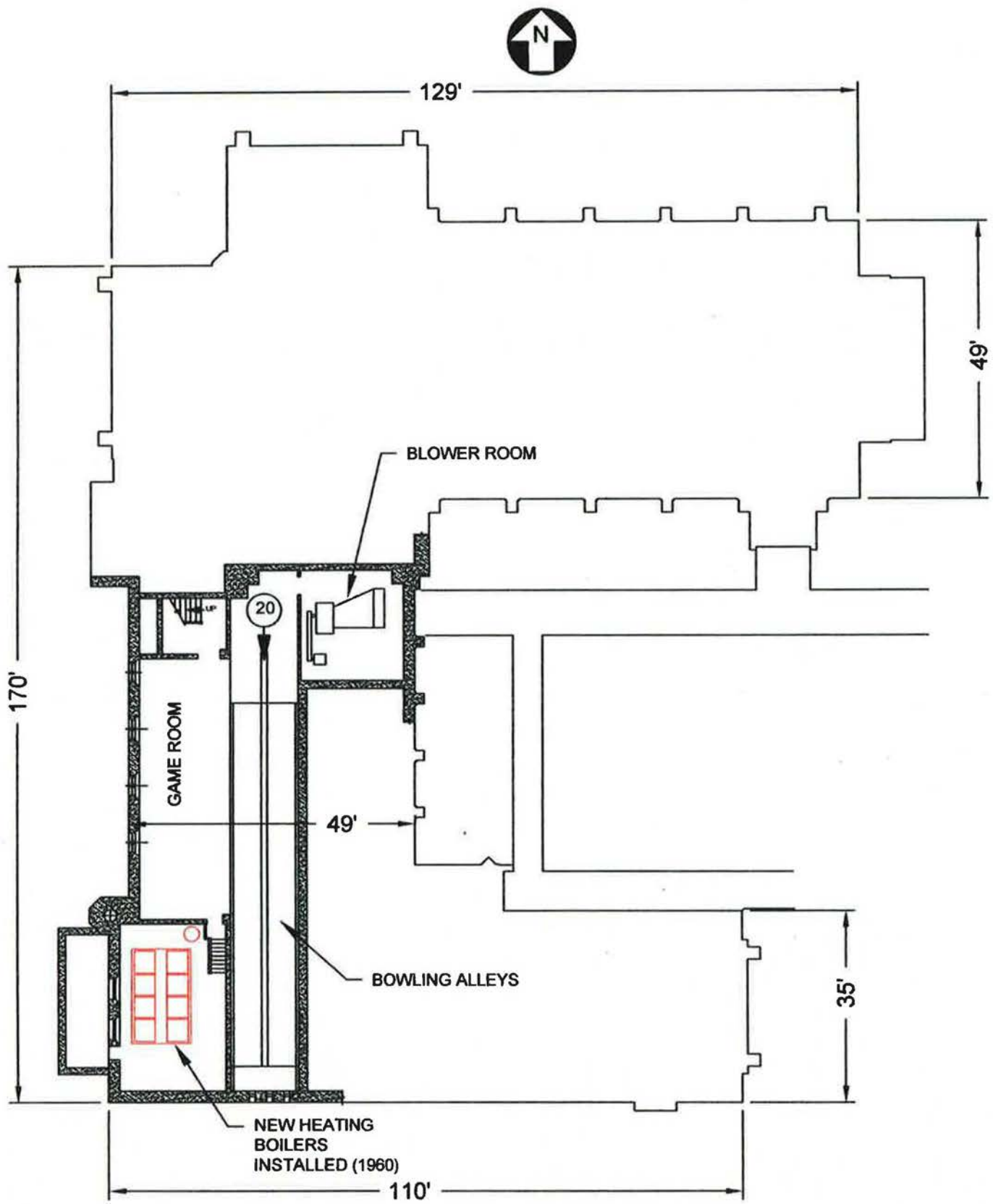
NOT TO SCALE

— NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY

Prepared by E. Ziegler

Site Plan

← ○ PHOTO LOCATION



First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport
Allegheny County, PA.

 INDICATES CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO ORIGINAL DESIGN

Prepared by E. Ziegler

 PHOTO LOCATION

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

(NOT TO SCALE)



TRASH SHED
ADDED (1975)

129'

KITCHEN

M.O.W.
OFFICE

COMMUNITY HALL

19

28

ROOM ADDED
FOR M.O.W. (1983)

49'

STORAGE

170'

49'

CLASS
ROOM

27

CLASS
ROOMS

CLASS
ROOM

35'

110'

WALLS REMOVED
(1963)

First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport
Allegheny County, PA.



INDICATES CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO ORIGINAL DESIGN

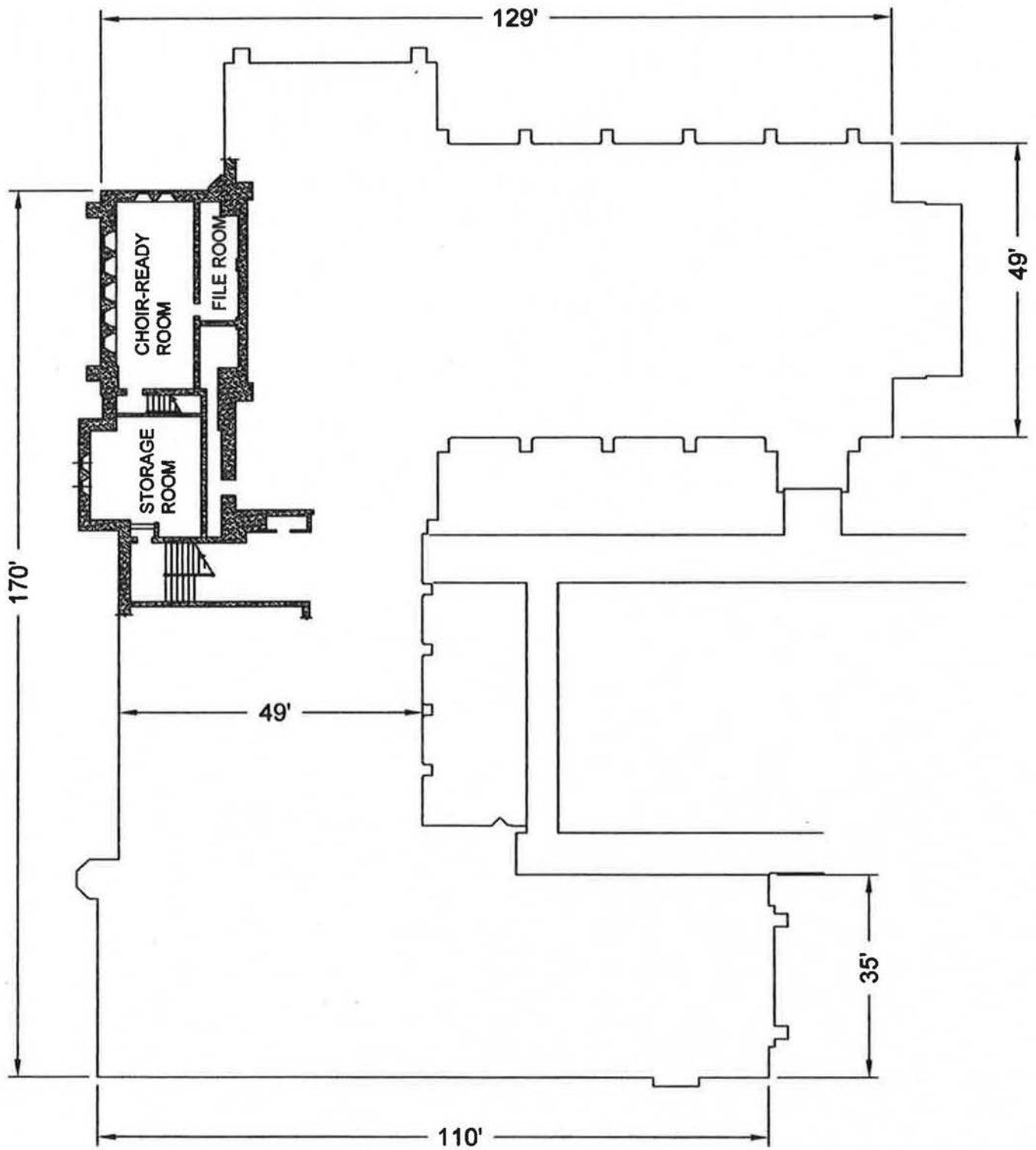
Prepared by E. Ziegler



PHOTO LOCATION

GROUND FLOOR PLAN

(NOT TO SCALE)



First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport
Allegheny County, PA.

INDICATES CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO ORIGINAL DESIGN

Prepared by E. Ziegler

PHOTO LOCATION

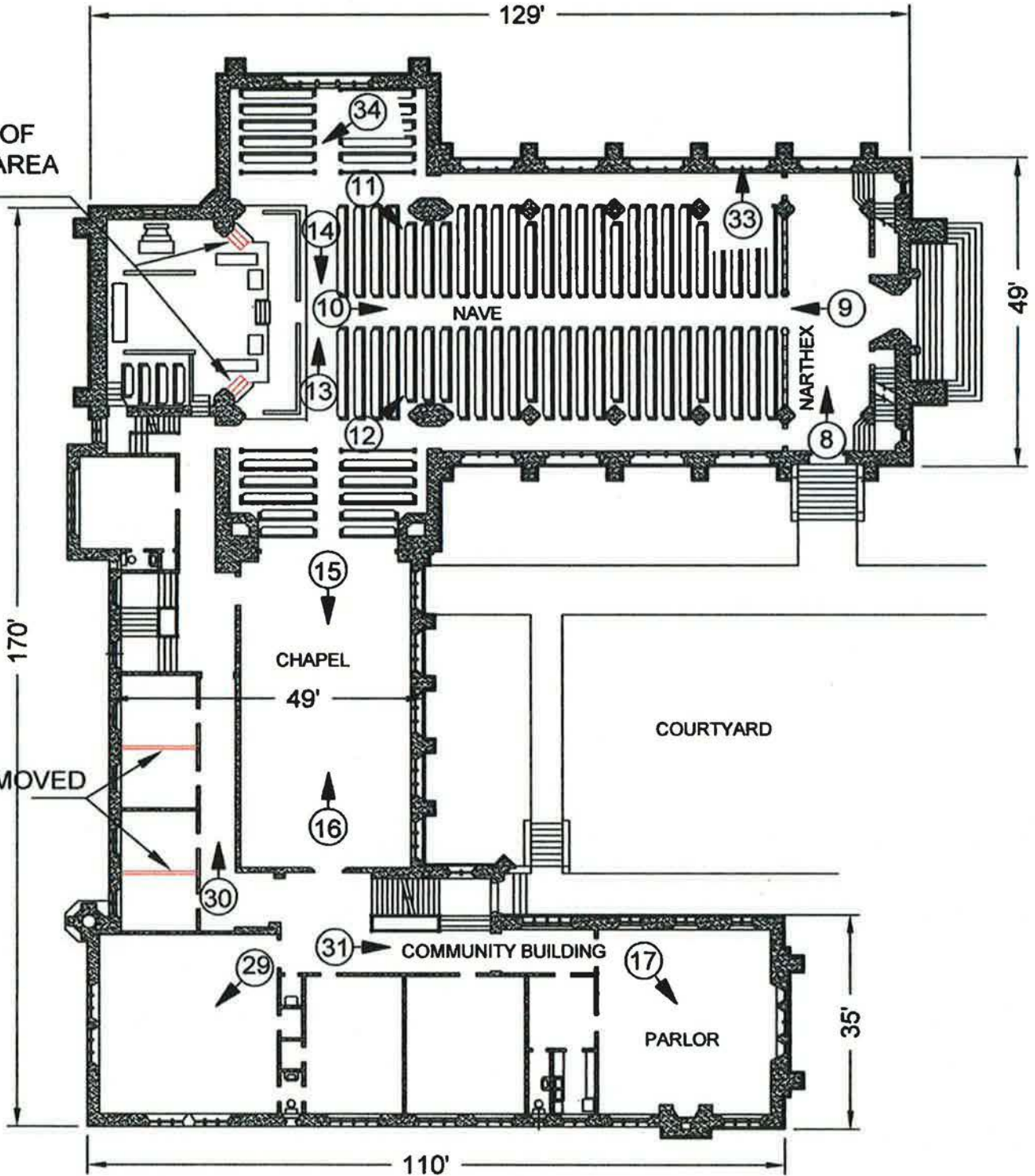
MEZZANINE FLOOR PLAN

(NOT TO SCALE)



REDESIGN OF
CHANCEL AREA
(1966)

WALLS REMOVED
(1963)



First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport
Allegheny County, PA.

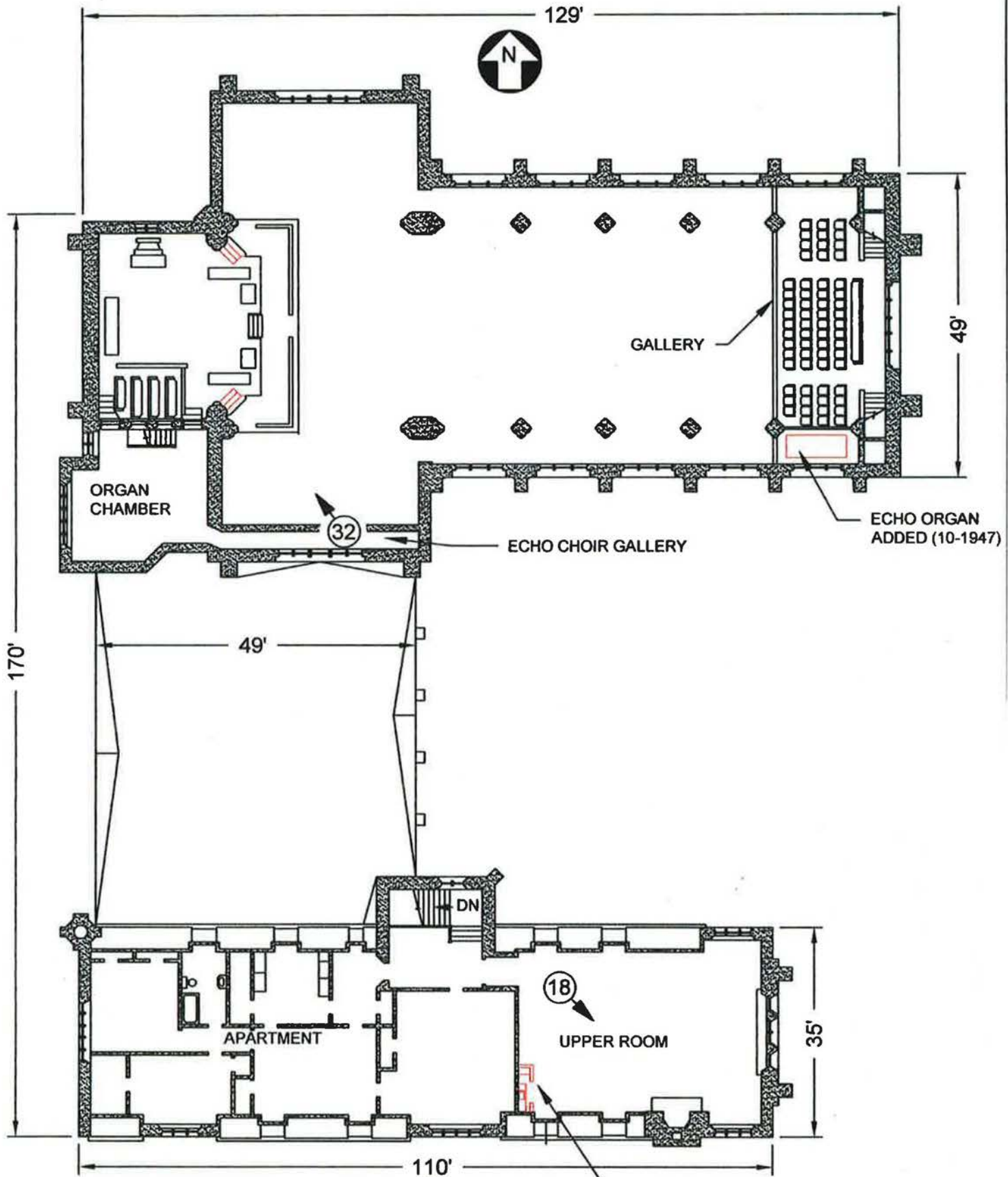
INDICATES CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO ORIGINAL DESIGN

Prepared by E. Ziegler

PHOTO LOCATION

MAIN FLOOR PLAN

(NOT TO SCALE)



First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport
Allegheny County, PA.

KITCHENETTE
ADDED (5-1962)

INDICATES CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO ORIGINAL DESIGN

Prepared by E. Ziegler

PHOTO LOCATION

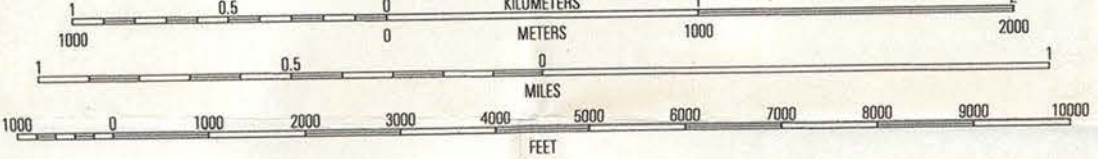
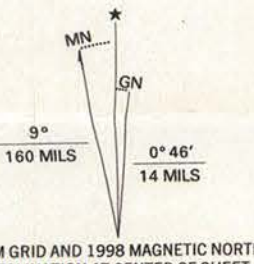
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

(NOT TO SCALE)



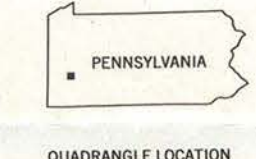
First Methodist Episcopal Church of Mc Keesport Allegheny County, PA
UTM Reference
17 596960 4466610
Zone Easting Northing

Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Topographic and Geologic Survey
Topography compiled 1952. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1977 and other sources. Photinspected using imagery dated 1994; no major culture or drainage changes observed. Survey control current as of 1953. Boundaries, other than corporate, verified 1998
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and 10 000-foot ticks: Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 17
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software
Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content standards and may conflict with previously mapped contours



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1	2	3	1 Pittsburgh East
			2 Bradock
			3 Murfreesville
			4 Glassport
4		5	5 Irwin
			6 Monongahela
			7 Donora
			8 Smithton
6	7	8	

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway hard surface Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway hard surface Unimproved road
Intestate Route U.S. Route State Route

MC KEESPORT, PA

1993

NIMA 5064 IV SE-SERIES V831

RECEIVED
DEC 31 1998
USGS/IND
HISTORICAL MAP ARCHIVES





FIRST UNITED METHODIST
WELCOME
WORSHIP WITH US
SUNDAY
EVERY SUNDAY

1843
1876
1918









FIRST UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH





1847
1876
1896

THE BELL METHODIST
CHURCH
KEEP THIS LE
1847
1876
1896

























10

10

10

10



FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH















FIRST METHODIST
EPISCOPAL CHURCH





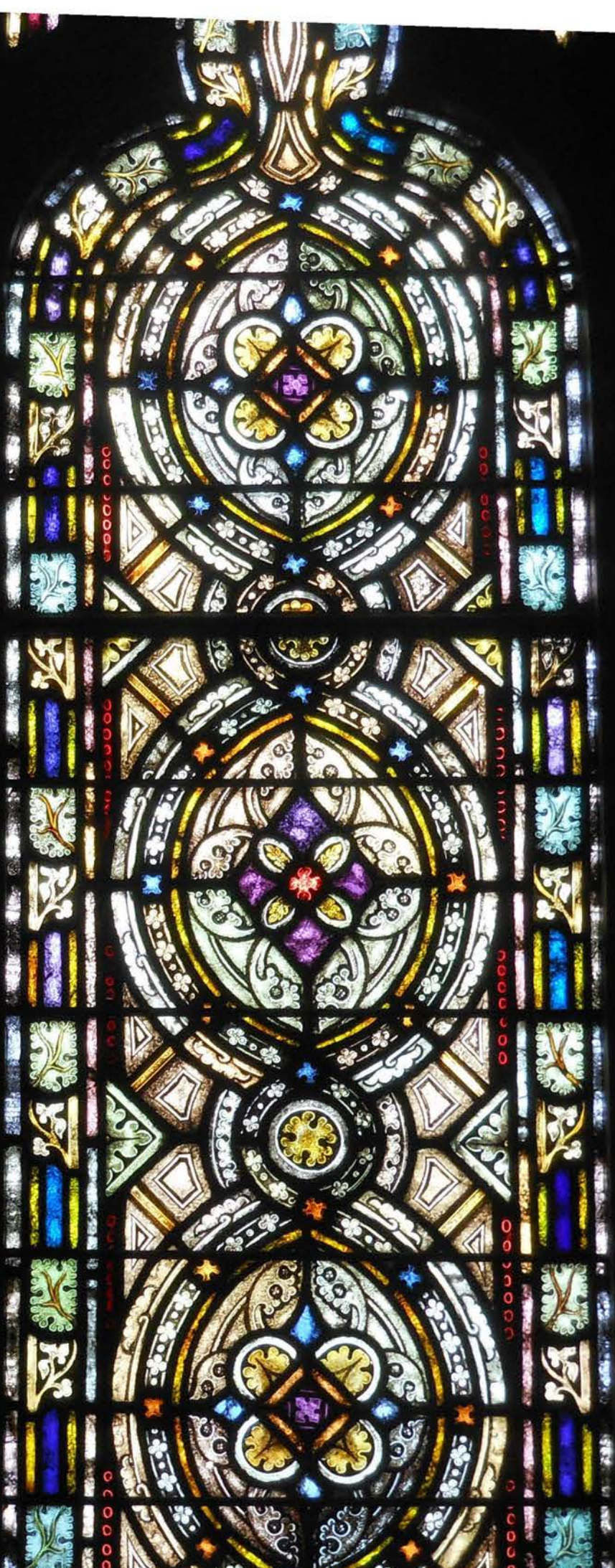




SUPPORT MCKEESPORT'S
RESPECT • HOPE
LOVE • DIGNITY
Working Together for a Better McKeesport







Suffer little children



1843.
FIRST
METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH.
1876.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Allegheny

DATE RECEIVED: 8/15/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 9/08/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/23/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/01/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000814

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 9.30.14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

45TH DISTRICT
JIM BREWSTER

SENATE BOX 203045
THE STATE CAPITOL
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3045
717-787-5580
FAX: 717-772-3588

ONE MONROEVILLE CENTER
3824 NORTHERN PIKE, SUITE 1015
MONROEVILLE, PA 15146
412-380-2242
FAX: 412-380-2249

201 LYSLE BOULEVARD, SUITE 100
MCKEESPORT, PA 15132
412-664-5200
FAX: 412-664-5202

NEW KENSINGTON CITY HALL
301 11TH STREET, SUITE L
NEW KENSINGTON, PA 15068
724-334-1143
FAX: 724-334-1152



Senate of Pennsylvania

COMMITTEES

URBAN AFFAIRS AND HOUSING, CHAIR
TRANSPORTATION
BANKING AND INSURANCE
COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND
RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
GAME AND FISHERIES
POLICY
JOINT LEGISLATIVE BUDGET
AND FINANCE COMMITTEE, VICE-CHAIR

COMMUNITY COLLEGE CAUCUS
FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES CAUCUS
LEGISLATIVE SPORTSMEN CAUCUS
LUPUS CAUCUS
SENATE AVIATION CAUCUS
THIRD CLASS CITY CAUCUS
UNIVERSITY OF PENN CAUCUS

June 4, 2014

Historic Preservation Services
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

To the members of the PA Historic Preservation Board,

This letter is in support of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport's application to be designated on the National Register of Historic Places.

The First Methodist Episcopal Church has been a part of McKeesport since 1926 when it was built by Edward A. Wehr. The architect was native Pennsylvanian Charles Bolton.

I believe the Church meets the required criteria, as stated in their application, due to it being a religious building that derives its primary significance from its architecture, which is of the Late Gothic Revival style. Also, the red, clay tile floors and stained glass windows compliment the beautiful architecture of this church.

I feel the First Methodist Episcopal Church of McKeesport should be recognized for its historic importance and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jim Brewster
45th Senatorial District

Cc; First Methodist Episcopal Church



Pennsylvania
Historical & Museum
Commission

August 11, 2014

Carol Shull, Acting Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
U.S. Department of Interior
National Park Service
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW, 8th floor
Washington D.C. 20005

Re: NR nomination forms

Dear Ms Shull:

The following nomination forms are being submitted for your review:

Concord School, Westmoreland County
First Methodist Episcopal Church, Allegheny County
Mt. Lebanon Historic District, Allegheny County

The proposed action is listing in the National Register.

The following nomination form is being submitted electronically per the "Guidance on How to Submit a Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places on Disk Summary (5/06/2013)":

Dennis Farm, Susquehanna County

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Dennis Farm to the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed action is listing in the National Register.

The following nomination form is being submitted for your review:

1922 Model T Ford, Mifflin County

Our office does not believe that this property meets the National Register Criteria, but we processed the technically correct nomination and submitted it to the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Board for their comment. The Board rejected the nomination. At the request of the preparer we are forwarding the nomination for final action by your office; we are requesting a substantive review by

Historic Preservation Services
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093
www.phmc.state.pa.us
The Commonwealth's Official History Agency

your office. The minutes from the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Board's meeting are enclosed.

Our opinion is as follows: we agree that the development and production of the Model T, as well as its affordability, were highly significant in the transportation history of the United States. As an affordable vehicle, the Model T made driving accessible to more people, which was one of the factors that led to campaigns to improve roads. In addition, the Model T can be seen as the starting point for America's "car culture," and it, and its successors, helped encourage the rapid suburbanization of America. The nomination makes those points clear. Obviously, as a Model T, this car clearly is associated with those trends. That fact, however, is problematic because such a standard would mean that every extant Model T is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. According to the National Register bulletin *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (page 12), "Mere association with historic events or trends is not enough, in and of itself, to qualify under Criterion A: the property's specific association must be considered important as well. For example, a building historically in commercial use must be shown to have been significant in commercial history." To make the case for the significant role of this particular Model T, the nomination seems to focus on the fact that it spent its entire existence (after it was assembled) in the Mifflin/Huntingdon County area and on the fact that Model Ts, while a big part of the early 20th century cultural landscape, are unrecognized by the National Register. The fact that this vehicle has remained for so long in one area and the fact that no Model T (or any other automobile) has been entered in the National Register are noteworthy, but they do not, in our opinion, make the vehicle historically significant in its own right. In essence, it seems that the significance of this Model T is for merely its association with the Model T as a production line; it seems its important role in transportation history as an individual resource cannot be established.

Our office also requests guidance from your office on evaluating historic automobiles for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, especially since the National Register bulletin *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (page 4) lists the automobile as an example of a structure, presumably meaning that it would be a structure that could be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If you have any questions regarding the nominations please contact Keith Heinrich at 717-783-9919.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Keith T. Heinrich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Keith T. Heinrich
National Register and Survey