

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED JAN 29 1980
DATE ENTERED MAR 27 1980

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist

HISTORIC

First Church of Christ, Scientist

AND/OR COMMON

Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist (preferred)

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1036 N. Van Buren Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Milwaukee

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

__ VICINITY OF

5th

STATE

Wisconsin

CODE

55

COUNTY

Milwaukee

CODE

079

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

__DISTRICT

__PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

__AGRICULTURE

__MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

__UNOCCUPIED

__COMMERCIAL

__PARK

__STRUCTURE

__BOTH

__WORK IN PROGRESS

__EDUCATIONAL

__PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

__ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

__OBJECT

__IN PROCESS

__YES: RESTRICTED

__GOVERNMENT

__SCIENTIFIC

__BEING CONSIDERED

__YES: UNRESTRICTED

__INDUSTRIAL

__TRANSPORTATION

__NO

__MILITARY

__OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. Norman Roska, Chairman of the

Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist/Board of Trustees

STREET & NUMBER

1036 North Van Buren Street

CITY, TOWN

Milwaukee

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 53202

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Milwaukee County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

901 North 9th Street

CITY, TOWN

Milwaukee

STATE

Wisconsin 53233

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1976

__FEDERAL STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Architecturally, the building now called Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist, is not typical of the denomination's contemporary churches, most of which were neo-classic in style.¹ Designed by Elmer Grey, a Milwaukee born architect, and built in 1902 by J. G. Jones and the masonry firm of Ellis & Coogan, the edifice is composed of simple medieval forms and has both Romanesque and Gothic features.

A small, well-proportioned building, Sixth Church is a 53' x 112' rectangle in plan. The central portion, consisting of the nave and the vestibule, above which is located a balcony, has a steep gabled roof supported by heavy-timber trusses. The gabled roof slopes into flanking shed roofs that cover the side aisles and the rooms on either side of the vestibule, including the Reading Room on the right, and the men's and women's cloak rooms on the left. Three dormers that protrude from either side of the gabled roof provide clerestory windows that light the nave. The church has no spire, but has a prominent chimney, its unusual height necessitated by its location at the base of the gable.

The building's red brick exterior is trimmed with red sandstone. The construction is a combination of iron columns and brick-bearing and wood-framing elements. The structure is articulated by buttresses along the side elevations and by two buttresses restraining the main facade. The roof is framed with heavy-timber trusses, rafters, and purlins and is covered with shingles. The foundation is of brick.

The fenestration of Sixth Church varies in size and shape. The dormer windows and the windows in the side walls are tri-part and rectangular, with the exception of those in the foremost bay, which have flat arches. The lower windows in the main facade have flat arches also, while the upper ones have Gothic arches, as do the windows on the rear facade. Throughout the building, the windows contain diamond-shaped panes of amber-colored leaded glass.

Sixth Church, which faces west, has an unusual facade of a planar nature. The principal plane extends slightly above the roofline, suggesting but not exactly following its contour. This plane is broken by four small windows and, in the center, by a large, Gothic-arched opening which frames a recessed plane containing three lancet windows. A third plane, centrally located in the foreground, stands in front of this recess and is a much smaller version of the principal plane. It is broken by a raised, Romanesque-arched entry and two small rectangular windows on either side.

The entry is reached via an "imperial" stair arrangement, which was installed in 1967 and is an abbreviated version of the original stairway, which had to be removed to accommodate the widening of North Van Buren Street. Except for this alteration, the exterior appearance of the church has not been changed.

The interior of the church is also well-maintained and unaltered with the exception of the replacement of some furnishings and the removal of two rows of pews. The vestibule is characterized by dark woodwork and Gothic motives. Its green and white tiled floor has been carpeted.

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The right side is open to the Reading Room, which contains a green-tiled fireplace, original furniture and woodwork. On the left side of the vestibule are three Gothic-arched doorways leading to the coat rooms and to the stairway to the balcony and the basement.

The wall of the vestibule opposite the entry is also broken by three Gothic arches. The left and right arches contain double doors, with lancet windows, that lead to the nave of the church proper. A center aisle divides the rows of pews in the nave, and ends in the raised rostrum, housed in a large, arched recess and provided with lecterns and chairs and a background of Gothic windows. To the right of the platform is the Readers Room, containing original furniture, and to the left is the organ loft, containing the now-rare Hutchings & Votey tracker-action organ.

Arcades separate the nave from its side aisles and support the exposed wooden trusses. From the columns of the arcades extend wrought iron brackets from which are suspended large wrought iron lanterns. The nave is supplied with amber-colored clerestory lighting by the dormer windows in every other bay. The side aisles are also lit with daylight, and contiguous pews line their outside walls.

The wainscoting, the pews, the trusses, and other interior woodwork are made of cypress.² The plastered walls, painted a pale honey color at present, were once "cream stippled...in what we would now describe as a soft coral."³ The cushions on the pews, which retain their original coverings, are upholstered in rust-colored velvet. The carpeting was also rust-colored before it was replaced with yellow and brown.

The site of Sixth Church fronts on North Van Buren Street, a major north-south artery in Milwaukee. To the right of the church is a parking lot, to the left an apartment building. Across the street is a shopping center. Originally, the church was located in a residential neighborhood.

1/ Elmer Grey, "Christian Science Church Edifices and What They Stand For," Fine Arts Journal, (October 1907).

2/ Richard W. E. Perrin, F.A.I.A., Milwaukee Landmarks, Milwaukee, 1968, p. 22.

3/ Marie Roska, member of Sixth Church, in a letter quoting Richard Perrin, dated August 8, 1978, and placed on file with the Milwaukee Landmarks Commission.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1902¹

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Elmer Grey²

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist is significant as an early structure associated with the Christian Science religion. It is also a rare example of Elmer Grey's work in Milwaukee, demonstrating both sensitivity and innovation in the design.

Architecture

In Milwaukee Landmarks, Richard Perrin described Sixth Church as "a fairly small but exceptionally well designed church" and states: "Of all the smaller churches in the city having landmark potential, Sixth Church is one of the most significant."³

The building is an unusual combination of traditional and contemporary elements: Romanesque and Gothic symbols were incorporated in a strikingly simple planar massing that demonstrates originality. The architect, Elmer Grey, also demonstrated individuality in electing not to design a neo-classic building (neo-classicism was the preferred style of the period and also the style associated with Christian Science Churches). That Elmer Grey's design was based on thoughtfulness and careful consideration is evident in an article he wrote for the Fine Arts Journal in 1907. Entitled "Christian Science Churches and What They Stand For," the article discusses meaning in architectural design and indicates many of Grey's concerns, including his reluctance to accept neo-classicism as the only architectural expression appropriate for Christian Science Churches.⁴

Sixth Church is the only known example of Elmer Grey's architecture remaining in Milwaukee. However, since Grey worked for the well-known firm of Ferry & Clas prior to establishing his own office,⁵ he worked on the Milwaukee Public Library and other major buildings designed by Ferry and Clas during the 1890's.

Shortly after drawing the plans for Sixth Church, Elmer Grey was advised by his doctor to move to the Southwest.⁶ There he became a prominent architect in Southern California. In partnership with Myron Hunt, he shared responsibility for public buildings in Pasadena such as the Polytechnic School (1907), the Huntington Gallery & Library (1910), and the Wentworth Hotel (1913), as well as many private houses. However, most of Grey's work was done independently. His best-known buildings in Los Angeles include the Beverly Hills Hotel (Mission Style, 1911), First Church of Christ Scientist (Italian Romanesque, 1912), and Second Church of Christ, Scientist (Beaux Arts Classical, 1916). His Pasadena Community Playhouse (Pueblo Revival, 1924-25) was the first landmark to be declared by the Cultural Heritage Committee of Pasadena.⁷

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet.

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.4

UTM REFERENCES Quadrangle name: Milwaukee, Wis. Scale: 1:24000

A 16 426320 47661000
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 C

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Plat of lot no. 1 in NW 1/4 Section 28-7-22 Block 92 lot 15 & lot 15 of block 92 in plat of NW 1/4 of NW 1/4 of Section 28 adjoining.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Diane Turner, Researcher

ORGANIZATION

Milwaukee Landmarks Commission

DATE

March 1979

STREET & NUMBER

734 N. 9th Street

TELEPHONE

414/278-2687

CITY OR TOWN

Milwaukee

STATE

Wisconsin

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL XX

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Richard Marney

TITLE Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE 11/12/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. Ray Luce
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST: *Kristin J. O'Connell*
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 3/27/80
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 DATE 3/17/80

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Architecture (continued)

In addition to historical and architectural significance, Sixth Church possesses a rare pipe organ. A tracker-action originally equipped with a water pump to power the bellows, it is one of two organs built by Hutchings & Votey that still exist in Wisconsin, and the only one that has not been altered.⁸ The handles now visible on the organ indicate that the congregation switched from water power to hand-pumping before electric power was provided for the organ.

History

The building that is now called Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist, was originally called First Church of Christ, Scientist, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The fact that this edifice was the first Christian Science Church built in Milwaukee assumes additional significance because Milwaukee played an important part in the history of this religious movement. In Milwaukee: The History of a City Bayrd Still writes, "The first Christian Science Association in the West was organized in Milwaukee in October 1884; the first [Milwaukee] church was organized in 1889...."⁹ Research indicates that Milwaukee was the second city in which a Christian Science Association was organized,¹⁰ the first being Boston, Massachusetts, where Mary Baker Eddy discovered the religion in 1866 and founded the church in 1879.

In 1883, Dr. Silas J. and Mrs. Jenny E. Sawyer of Milwaukee traveled to Boston to study with Mrs. Eddy. The dentist and his wife returned to Milwaukee and began to perform healing work in January, 1884. In March of the same year under the direction of Mrs. Eddy, the Sawyers began holding public meetings, on Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons, at Dr. Sawyer's dental parlor, 119 Wisconsin Street. These meetings were publicized in "The Christian Science Journal" of that year.¹¹

In 1884, an official charter was obtained from the State of Wisconsin for the "Wisconsin Metaphysical Institute," established for healing and educational purposes. On October 30, 1884, at a meeting of the Institute, Dr. and Mrs. Sawyer, in accordance with Mary Baker Eddy's instructions, organized the "Christian Scientists Association of Wisconsin," the second official Association of its kind in the world. Its first officers were: President, Dr. Silas J. Sawyer; Secretary, Miss Margaret Comstock; Treasurer, Mrs. Eliza Cunningham. The Association's name was subsequently changed to "Students Christian Scientists Association, No. 11" in 1886, when the religion was organized on a national level. The charter authorizing the Association to operate under the new name is currently displayed in what is now called Sixth Church of Christ Scientist, 1036 North Van Buren, along with the original charter granted to the Wisconsin Metaphysical Institute by the State of Wisconsin.¹²

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History (continued)

In 1904 another congregation, which was at that time called "Second Church of Christ, Scientist, Milwaukee," began to seek a merger with First Church. Eventually, the two organizations combined, taking the charter and name of "First Church of Christ, Scientist, Milwaukee." As a result, the congregation became too large for the edifice on Van Buren Street and, in 1907, it was offered for sale. The majority of the original congregation objected to the above proceedings. These dissenters, many of whom were pioneers of Milwaukee's Christian Science movement, incorporated as the "Christian Science Society of Milwaukee." They received recognition from The Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist in Boston, Massachusetts, which was finally officially established in 1892, and they purchased the church edifice on Van Buren. Much later, in 1937, the Society applied for and was granted, the title of "Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist, Milwaukee, Wisconsin,"¹³ which explains why the oldest Christian Science edifice in this City houses the most recently designated church.

1. Building Permit, no. 936, 7 January 1902.
2. Ibid.
3. Richard W. E. Perrin, F.A.I.A., Milwaukee Landmarks, Milwaukee, 1968, p. 22.
4. Elmer Grey, "Christian Science Church Edifices and What They Stand For," Fine Arts Journal (October 1907).
5. Elmer Grey, "This Is My Story," Historical Messenger of the Milwaukee County Historical Society (March 1962), pp. 4-5.
6. Grey, "This Is My Story," p. 6.
7. David Gebhard and Robert Winter, A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California, Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City, 1977, p. 342.
8. J. C. Taylor, of J. C. Taylor, Organ builder, New and Old Tracker Action Organs, 815 1/2 N. Clark Street, Appleton, Wisconsin 54911, in a letter to Marie Roska, member of Sixth Church, dated August 14, 1978, a copy of which is placed on file with the Milwaukee Landmarks Commission.
9. Bayrd Still, Milwaukee: The History of a City, Madison, 1948, p. 420.

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10. Board of Trustees, Sixth Church of Christ Scientist, Chairman: Adeline Theresa Richer, "Historical Sketch of Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist, Milwaukee, Wisconsin," a typewritten report submitted to the WPA Survey of State and Local Records, Wisconsin Historical Records Survey, November 8, 1940.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Building permits and records on file, General Office, Department of Building Inspection and Safety, Room 1010 Municipal Building, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The Christian Science Journal, 2 February 1884.

The Christian Science Journal, January 1898.

Gebhard, David, and Robert Winter, A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California, Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City, Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1977.

Grey, Elmer, "Christian Science Church Edifices and What They Stand For," Fine Arts Journal, October, 1907.

Grey, Elmer, "This Is My Story," Historical Messenger of the Milwaukee County Historical Society, March 1962, pp. 2-8.

Latus, Mark, and Mary Ellen Young, Downtown Milwaukee, Milwaukee, 1978, pp. 37-39.

Perrin, Richard W. E., Milwaukee Landmarks, Milwaukee Public Museum Publications in History, No. 9, 1968, p. 22.

Phelps, James, "Christian Science Churches of Wisconsin," The Midwestern, April 1901, pp. 20-31.

Still, Bayrd, Milwaukee: The History of A City, Madison, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1948, p. 420.

Taibl, Norene, and Mary Ellen Wietczykowski, "Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist," Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places Form, Milwaukee, 1971.

WPA Survey of State and Local Records, "Historical Sketch of Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist, Milwaukee, Wisconsin," mimeographed report submitted 8 November 1940 to the Bureau of History and Records, Madison, Wisconsin.