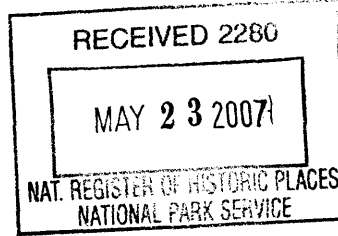


(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



6601

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name First Methodist Church, Gatlinburg

other names/site number First United Methodist Church, Gatlinburg

2. Location

street & number 742 Parkway N/A not for publication

city or town Gatlinburg N/A vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Sevier code 155 zip code 37738

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 for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Richard H. ...
Signature of certifying official/Title

5/21/07
Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation officer, Tennessee Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
 - entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet
 - determined eligible for the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet
 - determined not eligible for the National Register.
 - removed from the National Register.
 - other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

7.3.07
Date of Action

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 count.)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	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 Gothic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
walls STONE/crab orchard

roof SLATE; ASPHALT
other GLASS

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheets.

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- ARCHITECTURE, RELIGION, SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1945-1957

Significant Dates

1945-1950

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Barber, Charles I. of Barber and McMurry - Knoxville, TN

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- Checkboxes for documentation status: preliminary determination, previously listed, etc.

Primary location of additional data:

- Checkboxes for data location: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State Agency, etc.

Name of repository:

Center for Historic Preservation, Middle Tennessee State University

First Methodist Church, Gatlinburg
Name of Property

Sevier County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Approx. one acre Gatlinburg, TN 157 NE

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>272288</u>	<u>3954665</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Scarlett C. Miles
organization Center for Historic Preservation, MTSU date 01/31/2007
street & number P.O. Box 80 telephone 615-898-2497
city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37132

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

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

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

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

name First United Methodist Church Gatlinburg – contact: Rev. Eric Reiger
street & number 742 Parkway telephone 865-436-4691
city or town Gatlinburg state TN zip code 37738

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 listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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Sevier County, Tennessee

7. Narrative Description

The First United Methodist Church of Gatlinburg is located at 742 Parkway in Gatlinburg, Sevier County, Tennessee. Construction of the two-story main church building began in 1945 and the final interior features of the sanctuary were installed on January 1, 1950. The first service held in the building occurred on Easter Sunday in 1947. The building was not yet finished and the service was open-air. The present-day church complex consists of two separate buildings joined together in an L-shape. Although the buildings do not connect internally, they are connected visually by a large stone porch covered with a wood and asphalt roof. These buildings were constructed at different times; the main church/sanctuary building was completed in 1950 and the education building was completed in 1961. The porch was completed around 1961 as well. Both church structures were designed in the Late Gothic Revival style and feature architectural elements associated with the Cotswold region of southern England including sloping roofs, stone siding, casement windows, small dormer windows, asymmetrical design, and arched doors.

1. First United Methodist Church (1945-1950, contributing building)

The First United Methodist Church was designed by Charles I. Barber into a small hillside above the commercial and tourist activity of the town of Gatlinburg. The church property includes a large parking lot and a driveway that wraps around the entire building complex. Materials used for the construction of the church include Crab Orchard stone from Bluff Mountain (outside walls and foundation), Indiana limestone (surrounding the windows and doors) and Illinois slate shingles (roofs).

The sanctuary structure consists of a north-northeast-facing, front-gable, multi-height roof with an office wing projecting from the rear toward the southwest. The north façade faces Parkway and is composed of the gable end of the sanctuary with a decorative tower at the peak of the roof, the gable end of the narthex, and the office projection visible to the west. The steep pitch of the roof is clear as is the lower height of the roof of the office projection. A lancet stained-glass window is found in the center of the north façade on the narthex. Located on the north end of the roof of the sanctuary is a short gabled tower with a pointed arch opening. The north wall of the two-story (plus basement) office projection extends west from the south half of the sanctuary. This wall of the projection features a wood door with twelve small window panes. The door is recessed into a stone doorway framed with a corbel-arch design. A metal-and-glass light fixture hangs above the doorway. To the west of the door is located a casement window with six lights. Above this window, but slightly to the west, is another six-light casement window that provides light to the stairwell within the building. To the east of this window, and directly above the doorway, there is a pair of six-light casement windows. All of the windows are original. They are metal and are framed with carved stone molding. Above the uppermost window, a narrow, vertical stone piece is found.

The west elevation of the sanctuary building is irregular in shape and is composed of three sections: the one-bay narthex, the three bays of the sanctuary, and the two bays of the office projection. On the north end of the elevation is the one-bay, one-story narthex. This section projects west from the main portion of the sanctuary. One small, rectangular stained-glass window surrounded by stone molding is located in the south half of the narthex. The center portion of the elevation is two stories tall. It has three bays of windows. Windows on the lower level are paired casement windows with eight lights and the second story

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windows are paired single-pane casements. All windows are metal and feature stone framing. A short stairway of four shallow, stone stairs leading from the driveway stretches across the central bay of windows, and a stone patio surrounded by a short stone wall stretches across the entire central section of the building. A stone ramp leads from the driveway near the north end of the central section across to a doorway on the north wall of the west office projection. Also, a doorway is located on the south wall of the narthex. Though it faces south, it is not visible from the south elevation. This doorway contains a vertical board door with a small diamond-pane window and metal strap hinges. It is located on the lower level of the building. On the south end of the west elevation, an office wing projects out. This portion of the elevation features two small rectangular six-light casement windows and a wood door on the basement level. Made of metal, these windows do not have carved stone molding, but rather have stone lintels that blend into the rest of the stonework of the building. Two bays of four eight-light metal casement windows framed with carved stone molding are located on the first level of the building. Two large gable dormers are present at the roofline. The dormers are surfaced in slate shingles and also have slate roofs. Each dormer has a group of three eight-light casement windows with simple wood frames. Set back from this section of the building, to the south, is the large stone porch that connects to the education building. The porch is covered with a large wood and asphalt roof with a low pitch.

The south elevation consists of the gables of the sanctuary building and features asymmetrical windows and the porch that visually connects the sanctuary building with the education building. The two gables of the steeply pitched roofs of the sanctuary building (the sanctuary and the office area) are clearly visible, as well as a cross gable that connects them near the center of the building. The west gable end has asymmetrically placed metal casement windows, including one small, rectangular six-light window and a group of three eight-light windows on the first story. A group of four eight-light casement windows is located in the center on the second story and a large vent is located above this group near the ridge of the roof. The gable to the east has a narrow, decorative stone piece imbedded in the center near the top of the roof. A chimney is located on the west half of this gable. The south elevation also looks upon the gable end of the porch roof that connects both buildings. This roof has a low pitch and exposed rafters. It is supported by wood posts and is covered with rolled asphalt. Underneath the porch, a small stone ledge juts out slightly from the south-facing wall of the sanctuary. Windows are located here as well, one is a single, square pane casement and the other is a pair of four-light casement windows. Above the roof is a 1:1 double-hung sash window. This window is not visible from ground level. The education building is located off the southeast portion of the porch.

The southernmost section of the east elevation is the solid wall of the second story of the office projection. The remainder of the elevation contains the sanctuary that is one-story and consists of five bays and the entry into the narthex. The elevation has five bays of paired, rectangular, single-paned metal casement windows. The doorway to the narthex is located on the northernmost end of this elevation. The doorway consists of paired arched wood doors within a compound arch. A small, square, clear, diamond-pane window is inset into each door.

The interior of the sanctuary building of the church includes a small vestibule/narthex that leads to the sanctuary, which seats approximately 200 worshippers. The narthex includes one tall lancet stained-glass window designed by local artist Louis E. Cole. This stained glass window is in honor of Louis E. and Emma

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E. Jones who gifted the land for the church in 1945. The stairway inside the vestibule, which leads to the lower level and an outside entrance to the building, also contains a small, square stained-glass window. It is located at the northwestern corner of the building, directly across from the outside door, and turns at an angle to run alongside the sanctuary. Two vertical plank wood doors in the south wall, each with a square diamond-paned light, separate the sanctuary from the narthex. The sanctuary includes simple, wood pews and an elevated level for the minister and the choir. The pews are the only remaining pieces of original furniture in the sanctuary.¹ There are two sections of pews with a center aisle in between them. J. C. Cole and Eunice Cole, married Gatlinburg wood workers, built the pews and furniture from natural oak. Hand-hewn and pegged native mountain red oak beams top the nave. The ceiling of the sanctuary is exposed to show the roof structure of rafters and beams. The ends of the rafters, where they meet the walls, are decorated with large stone blocks. This makes for a striking visual effect as the walls are plastered white. Hand-wrought iron lanterns featuring pure mica shades were designed with supervision by Louis E. Jones. The casement windows on the east and west walls are clear glass. The floor beams are of red oak and were processed in Wears Valley (located in the Great Smoky Mountains between Pigeon Forge and Townsend, Sevier County, Tennessee). Three arches are present on the north wall, one on either side of the doorway leading to the narthex and one over the door. From a distance, they appear to pass through the wall. This effect was achieved by painting the interior wall of each arch with a mixture of blue and white. This same painting technique is present on the south wall of the sanctuary behind the altar, as well, and covers the expanse of the wall. These paintings were completed in the 1990s. The original dossal, once located behind the altar, now hangs above the door in the north end of the sanctuary. The tapestry was designed and hand-woven by a weaving instructor, Tina I. McMorran, from the Pi Beta Phi School.

In addition to the sanctuary and narthex, the main floor of the church (the second story) contains within the western projection a carpeted hallway, which connects to a second stairway, as well as a lounge/storage room, a restroom, and an office. The lounge/storage area connects to the restroom and features wood paneling, shallow bench seating in the window, and a closet. The floor is carpeted and the restroom floor is covered with vinyl, not original to the construction. The choir room is located in the southwestern corner and from this room a storage space opens into the southeastern portion of the building. The flooring in this area is hardwood and appears original. The staircase connecting all three floors is carpeted. The railings are wood. The casement windows on this level (present in the choir room and the stairwell) are splayed.

The first story of the main church building contains a multi-purpose fellowship hall, kitchen, restrooms, office, sitting room, and three separate entryways. The central hallway appears recently tiled. The tile continues into the fellowship hall and runs along the west wall of the room. The fellowship hall is a large open space located below the sanctuary. Windows stretch along the west wall and the floor is covered with carpet. Beams extend across the ceiling and are supported by three pairs of square columns. Closets with bi-fold, louvered doors are located along the north wall. The kitchen is located along the south wall of the fellowship hall. The two rooms are connected by a swinging door as well as two "pass-through," shuttered windows. The kitchen and pantry walls are paneled with wood. The floor is covered with linoleum tiles. The sitting room, located across the hallway from the kitchen and by the main staircase, has windows on

¹ The original altar, pulpit, lectern, and communion rails were built by J.C. and Eunice Cole. The furniture items are now in storage. The altar was built from white oak and walnut.

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the west wall and hardwood flooring. The church office is located to the south of the sitting room. Windows are located on the west wall of the office, as well. Windows on this level are placed in splayed openings.

The basement of the main building is primarily used for storage as well as for some recreational activities for youth. The two rooms and storage space appear to have been finished in recent years.

The main building of the church, which houses the sanctuary, church offices, fellowship hall, and some small meeting rooms, is extremely intact. With the exception of some sanctuary furniture, the church congregation has retained all of the original building and decorative materials of the church. The church maintains integrity of material, design, location, and setting.

2. Education Building (1961, non-contributing due to date)

The education building was constructed in 1961 and is non-contributing at this time due to its date of construction. Although this building is non-contributing, it does not detract from the character of the church complex. Barber and McMurry, the architectural firm for the main building, designed this addition. The firm incorporated the same architectural elements and materials of the main building into the new building in order to create a church complex of two complementary buildings.

The primary entry into this building is through a pair of doors located in the porch on the west façade. The west façade is composed of the gable end of the educational building and has one bay of windows. Groupings of three, four-light metal casement windows are framed in stone molding with one set of windows for each of the two stories. A small vent is located near the ridge of the roof. A doorway and vent, located partially below ground level, are also visible. The north half of this west façade of the education building has a stone chimney.

The south elevation of this building has six bays of windows. Windows for the first and second story are clearly visible. Windows for the basement area are partially visible above ground. All bays feature groups of three four-light metal casement windows fixed into carved stone moldings.

The east elevation is composed of the gable end of the structure and contains entries into all three levels of the building. The basement is entered through a pair of wood and glass double doors. A staircase runs across the elevation from the south end to the north end of the building, from the lowest level to the uppermost level. A single door is located above the double doors. A group of three four-light metal casement windows is located in the center of the elevation on the second story. A door is located to the north of these windows. The roof is flat above this doorway. The church driveway also crosses across the east elevation.

The north elevation of the educational building is irregular and consists of asymmetrically placed windows and a doorway. Although it is the third story of the building, because it is built into the hillside, the north elevation appears as one story. The east portion of the north façade, which is set back from the west part, contains three bays of tripartite metal casement windows with four lights in each part. The west portion of

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the north façade features two separate windows with three lights, a door, and a grouping of three four-light casement windows. The educational building has an asphalt roof and this is clearly visible from the north elevation. The educational building has three stories. The third story consists of storage areas, restrooms, and meeting rooms. The second story contains meeting rooms, classrooms, and restrooms. The first story contains storage space, a stage/theater area, restrooms, kitchen, and an open dining area.

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8. Statement of Significance

The First United Methodist Church, Gatlinburg is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A because of its local significance in social history and religion as a community landmark building symbolizing the growth and development of the Methodist community near the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The building is also eligible under National Register Criterion C for its significance in architecture. The church is a good and intact example of a community landmark building designed by Charles I. Barber of Barber and McMurry during the 1940s and early 1950s in the late Gothic Revival style and featuring the influence of the Cotswold Cottage style of southern England. Begun in 1945 and completed in 1950, this building with its intact materials, detailing, and plan, retains a high level of integrity. The period of significance ranges from the construction of the church beginning in 1945 to 1957.

Formation of the First Methodist Church of Gatlinburg:

The building that currently stands on 742 Parkway was built in the late 1940s; however, the congregation was founded in 1938 in response to the need for a permanent church to serve the growing community of Methodists in and around the town of Gatlinburg, particularly with the influx of visitors, or "outlanders," to the area. Prior to the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in 1934, Gatlinburg was an isolated mountain community.² Like many communities of the area, Gatlinburg was not able to support a permanent Methodist church building or host a full-time Methodist minister. Therefore, Methodists in the area relied upon circuit-riding clergy for their formal religious practices. Although the Methodist Episcopal Church established the settlement community of Pittman Center just a few miles from the town of Gatlinburg in 1921, there does not appear to be a specific relationship between Methodist worshippers in the two communities.

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park brought new arrivals to Gatlinburg, including tourists, business developers eager to capitalize on new opportunities, and employees for the tourist industry, the National Park Service, and Bureau of Roads. Retirees also comprised a large portion of the new inhabitants. Some of those who were new to the area were Methodists. Many of them settled on the grounds of the former 1920s Methodist Episcopal summer camp called the Holston Assembly Grounds.³ One of the new

² "Great Smoky Mountains National Park: People," *National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior*, <<http://www.nps.gov/grsm/historyculture/people.htm>> (5 December 2006).

³ Also known as the Methodist Assembly Grounds, the Holston Assembly Grounds was developed by the Holston Methodist Conference in the 1920s as a location for camp revival meetings and summer youth camps. In the 1930s, however, the church moved these activities to Lake Junaluska near Asheville, North Carolina. Beginning in 1933, the Methodists leased the area for operation as a private, non-sectarian youth camp. "Camp Robinhood" was renamed in 1934 as "Camp Chewasee" – after a Native American village in Upper East Tennessee. Clara Jean Beaman of Knoxville founded the camp and directed it for about fourteen years. The spelling of the name of the camp was later changed to "Chewassee" to make it easier to pronounce. A 1938 issue of the local paper noted the titles of some of the Camp's offerings: Friends, What Prayer May Mean to Boys and Girls, How to Make Christian Use of Our Leisure Time, and How Intermediaries May Help Do Away with War. The camp gradually grew to serve about 100 campers and thirty staff members hailing from twelve states, including Tennessee. Throughout the years, Camp Chewasee drew many tourists to the area, with some former campers even making several return trips. Over time, the acreage of the grounds has diminished. Some of the land is now part of Gatlinburg's southeastern residential area and is now known

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residents was the retired Reverend L. B. Clark. About Reverend Clark, it was said, "Like most retired ministers, he found it difficult to stop preaching, so he began to conduct services on the camp grounds for local Methodists and summer residents and visitors."⁴ By the summer of 1938, Reverend Clark and nearby clergy moved the meetings to the Pi Beta Phi Settlement School. Holding services in the school auditorium in the town center helped to accommodate the growing number of worshippers and eased access for visitors.⁵ By the end of the summer, residents and the Holston Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church felt it was time to establish a permanent church for year-round worship.

The Gatlinburg congregation organized in 1938 in the home of Mrs. E. N. Clabo. Nine people were in attendance, including the District Superintendent of the Knoxville District of the Methodist Episcopal Church Dr. E. H. Ogle. The beginnings of the Gatlinburg church were historic among the Methodist church. In a letter to church historian Ethel Siera dated February 6, 1960, Dr. Ogle described the important meeting:

The meeting that night was an historic occasion. That Quarterly Conference formed and officially organized NOT a Methodist Episcopal Church, NOT a Methodist Episcopal Church South, NOT a Methodist Protestant Church, but simply a METHODIST CHURCH. It was the first METHODIST CHURCH formed in the Holston territory after Unification – therefore was a significant occasion. This baby was born even before the marriage of the Conferences in Knoxville on October 6, 1939, but with honor and respectability to all who were involved or related.⁶

Although unification would not occur until April 1939, when the three Methodist churches – the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Protestant Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South – officially voted to join together to become The Methodist Church, it was in the foreseeable future.⁷ Thus, the church was organized as a purely Methodist Church in October 1938, and is assumed to be the first such church formed in the Holston Conference.⁸

as Mynatt Park. Street names in this area honor the Methodist heritage: Asbury, Chewase, Holston, Wesley. Gene Aiken, *Mountain Ways*, (Gatlinburg: Buckhorn Press, 1983), 35; "Gatlinburg TN Arts and Crafts," Jackson *Mountain Homes, Inc.*, <<http://www.jacksonmountain.com/gatlinburg/history.htm>> (historical information "courtesy of Gatlinburg Chamber of Commerce") (5 December 2006).

⁴ Robert L. Hilten, "The Little Cathedral in the Smokies," (Robert L. Hilten, 1983).

⁵ Ethel Siera, "Gatlinburg's Dual Ministry, c. 1955," TMs (photocopy), p. 1, First United Methodist Church, Gatlinburg.

⁶ Ibid.; "Marriage of the Conferences" refers to the unification of the three Holston Methodisms. Bishop Paul Kern presided over this meeting. He would be the first leader of the united Holston Conference. Robert L. Hilten, *Pillar of Fire: The Drama of Holston United Methodism in a Changing World*. (Johnson City, TN: Commission of Archives and History, Holston Conference of the United Methodist Church, 1994), 115-117.

⁷ Roy L. Howard, "Holston Conference," *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, 2002.

<<http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/imagegallery.php?EntryID=H060>> (30 November 2006).; The Methodist Protestant and Methodist Episcopal Churches agreed to the union as early as 1936, but the general conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South was not held until 1938. Some individual Southern conferences voted in favor of the union prior to the official conference, however. Hilten, *Pillar of Fire*, 112.

⁸ Siera, 2.

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Brief History of the Methodist Episcopal Church:

In 1824, the Methodist Episcopal Church created The Holston Conference from a portion of the original territory of the Western Annual Conference, taking its name from the three forks of the Holston River that flow between southwest Virginia and into the Tennessee River. Originally including a large part of western North Carolina (until 1890), the Holston Conference now consists of nearly one thousand churches in an area covering East Tennessee, southwest Virginia, and a small portion of northern Georgia.⁹ The Methodist Episcopal denomination has experienced several divisions throughout its long history. In 1816, Richard Allen (1760-1831), an emancipated slave and Methodist preacher, started The African Methodist Episcopal Church after enduring racial mistreatment. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church started in 1821 for similar reasons. In 1830, The Methodist Protestant Church separated due to issues concerning representation of the laity and disagreements regarding elections of elders. The remaining core of the Methodist Episcopal Church split in 1844, primarily over the issue of slavery. The new factions were the Methodist Episcopal Church (the "northern," anti-slavery church) and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. With the decline in African-American membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South during and after the Civil War, the Church's General Conference voted to form the Colored (now Christian) Methodist Episcopal Church for the remaining African-American members in 1870. As stated earlier, the three churches (Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal South, and Methodist Protestant) merged in 1939. In 1968, The Methodist Church merged with the Evangelical United Brethren Church to become The United Methodist Church. At this time, Methodist churches, including the church in Gatlinburg, added "United" to their official names.

Building the First Methodist Church of Gatlinburg:

Reverend Charles Palmer was appointed as the first minister to the First Methodist Church Gatlinburg. Reverend Palmer later separated from the church after disagreements with the parish, and members of the Assembly Grounds community replaced him for a time. Initially, the church met in a newly opened theater on Parkway, and continued a transient existence for the next several years. Depending on the season and availability of space, services were held in such places as a beer-jukebox joint, an abandoned lodge, empty store, and print shop.¹⁰ Land for establishing a permanent building was difficult to find for a variety of reasons, primarily the unwillingness of the local residents to release potentially profitable land for church grounds. Instead, Gatlinburg residents preferred to construct other buildings related to the tourist industry, such as shops, gas stations, restaurants, and motels.¹¹ Additional challenges included expense, anti-religious business interests (i.e. alcoholic beverage-related), and the lack of a strong Methodist constituency in the town of Gatlinburg. Despite the growing interest in the Methodist church, Gatlinburg was predominantly a Baptist town.¹²

⁹ "Holston Conference History," *Holston Conference Archives at the Kelly Library of Emory and Henry College*, <<http://library.ehc.edu/holstonhistory.htm>> (30 November 2006).

¹⁰ Siera, 3.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Siera, 1.

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Sevier County, Tennessee

Many tourists visiting the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and staying in Gatlinburg often remained in the area for extended periods of time. In addition to hiking in the mountains, exploring the local culture, and purchasing native crafts, they attended church. Tourists played a significant role in the formation of the First Methodist Church in Gatlinburg. They encouraged the small resident congregation to pursue its efforts to build its own church building and greatly assisted with funding.

During World War II, the congregation continued to seek land and plan for building, despite restrictions on building materials and the reduction in tourism. In 1945, Mr. and Mrs. Louis E. Jones of the Cliff Dwellers shop gifted the building site, just beyond their shop and home, to the church. Mr. and Mrs. Jones were part-time residents, as were many in the town. With serious effort, enough property was acquired to develop the footpath that led from Parkway to the site into a roadway. Church leadership advocated a larger building than the congregation originally planned, and one that required yet more land. The church approached its neighbor, Pearl Whaley, and requested that it be allowed to purchase a parcel on the hillcrest. Ms. Whaley donated the selected land.

Reportedly, the church was a "pet project" of the late Bishop Paul Kern.¹³ Keenly aware of Gatlinburg's growing attraction of people from all over the world, Bishop Kern recognized the importance of this church in the Smokies for representing Methodism in the area, and envisioned the church as serving the local community as well as visitors to the area.¹⁴ Bishop Kern charged the church with being a "Host to the Nation."¹⁵ The emphasis on developing larger and nicer facilities than needed by the local community reflected the Conference's understanding that the Methodist church in Gatlinburg would need to accommodate these tourists. The expense of the building required donations from the congregation, which was only forty-seven members at the time, and support from the conference. Bishop Kern reportedly collected special "silent" offerings on behalf of the new church during Conference meetings.¹⁶ The tourists and seasonal residents also contributed significantly to the building fund. Construction for the building began in 1945 under the supervision of Pete McCarter. A new minister, Reverend Albert Ashley, was appointed to the church a year later.

The Architecture of the First Methodist Church of Gatlinburg:

Charles I. Barber of the prominent Knoxville architectural firm Barber and McMurry designed the building. Barber and McMurry also designed the education building addition, which was completed in 1961. Louis E. Jones, who with his wife had donated the land, chaired the building committee. A local artist, Jones probably had some influence in the design of the church, which was planned to be "completely compatible with its location and its purpose...[with] the appearance of 'growing out of

¹³ Hilten, *Pillar of Fire*, 129.

¹⁴ Hilten, *Pillar of Fire*, 129; Siera, 5.

¹⁵ Siera, 13.

¹⁶ Hilten, *Pillar of Fire*, 129.

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the side of the ridge', as one of our visitors so aptly put it."¹⁷ However, it is said that Barber nicknamed the church "Little Cathedral in the Smokies," and that the architecture was meant to echo the Church Street United Methodist Church in Knoxville, the "cathedral" to the Gatlinburg church and another Barber and McMurry design.¹⁸ The sanctuary design of First United Methodist in Gatlinburg is very simple, meant to encourage a restful experience without distraction. Additionally, the clear windows were used in the sanctuary to provide "a view of nearby hillsides and more distant mountains."¹⁹ The design of the church features elements of the Cotswold Cottage architecture of southern England, including sloping roofs, stone siding, casement windows (although the Cotswold designs feature small panes and the window panes in the Gatlinburg church are larger), small dormer windows, asymmetrical design, and arched doors. The Cotswold Cottage style became popular in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s.²⁰ Hubert Bebb, another influential architect with several designs constructed in Gatlinburg, traveled throughout Europe making drawings of interesting architecture in 1928. Several of his drawings were of the Cotswold architecture, and it is likely that Bebb's influence extended to the design of the First Methodist Church in Gatlinburg.

Charles I. Barber and Benjamin F. McMurry established the nationally known architectural firm of Barber and McMurry in 1915. Barber was born in DeKalb, Illinois in 1888 and his family moved to Knoxville, Tennessee later that year. The son of George F. Barber, renowned residential pattern book designer, Charles Barber worked in his father's office while in school and studied architecture in Italy and Greece. He received a certificate in architecture from the University of Pennsylvania in 1911 and subsequently returned to Knoxville to practice. Charles Barber joined with his cousin, D. West Barber, and Ben McMurry to form the Barber and McMurry architectural firm in 1915. West Barber and Ben McMurry both graduated from the same University of Pennsylvania program shortly after Charles Barber. Each partner had a distinct role within the firm. Charles Barber was the principal designer, West Barber led the production of working drawings, and Ben McMurry served as the business manager.²¹ When George Barber died in 1915, Barber and McMurry absorbed the elder Barber's successful firm. Now known as Barber McMurry, the firm is recognized as Knoxville's oldest architectural firm.

The firm of Barber and McMurry was noted for its ecclesiastical work as well as for its residential and institutional designs. The entire issue of *Southern Architecture and Building News* of June 1930 showcased the work of Barber and McMurry. In later years, the firm also became known for academic architecture, including its designs for the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and Maryville College. During the 1940s and 1950s, the firm became known as a specialist in religious

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Lisa Oakley, phone conversation with Scarlett C. Miles, 14 December 2006.

¹⁹ Siera, 6.

²⁰ "Cotswold Cottage: House Style Picture Dictionary," *About: Architecture*, <<http://architecture.about.com/od/periodsstyles/ig/House-Styles/Cotswold-Cottage.htm>> (13 December 2006).

²¹ Katherine Wheeler, "Barber and McMurry Architects," *Encyclopedia of Tennessee History and Culture*, <<http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/imagegallery.php?EntryID=B006>> (18 January 2007).

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design across the Southeast.²² Other buildings in Gatlinburg designed by the firm are Trinity Episcopal Church and several buildings of the Pi Beta Phi Settlement School, including the Arrowcraft Shop and the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. Barber and McMurry also served as the lead architectural firm for the design of the National Park Service's Sugarlands administrative office in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.²³

The First Methodist Church in Gatlinburg:

Though the building was incomplete, the first service held in the church occurred on Easter Sunday in 1947. The roof was not yet on and the sawhorses and planks used by the workmen were formed into makeshift pews.²⁴ With the assistance of Knoxville Methodists, the heating system for the church was installed in the fall of 1948, enabling the congregation to move into the building for services for the remainder of the church's construction. The congregation celebrated 1950 with the installation of the pews in the sanctuary, and by late spring the entire facility was in use.

The First United Methodist Church has played an important role for the Methodist community living and visiting in and around Gatlinburg and the entry to the Great Smoky Mountains. Many of these visitors, who truly came from around the world, including England, Canada, Japan, Korea, and Puerto Rico, traveled to the area for weeks or months at a time in the summer.²⁵ Additionally, many of the "local" families also traveled out of the area during the harsh winters. Thus, attendance for the church fluctuated with the seasons. During the summers, the sanctuary was full, while during the winters, seating in the sanctuary was ample, "One Easter Sunday thirty-two states and four foreign countries were reflected in the worship services. The fluid nature of the local church was reflected when it was noted that sixty families went [away] to Florida for the winter."²⁶ With the influx

²² "Barber and McMurry Architects: History," *BarberMcMurry, Inc.* <<http://www.bma1915.com/page.asp?pid=5&id=6>> (14 December 2006).

²³ Carroll Van West and Susan Knowles, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Pi Beta Phi Settlement School" Multiple Property Submission, 2006, On file at the Center for Historic Preservation, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, E9.

²⁴ Siera, 7.

²⁵ Siera, 10.

²⁶ Gatlinburg First United Methodist Church UMW, *Holidays & More at the Little Cathedral in the Smokies*. (Kearney: Cookbooks by Morris Press, 2000).

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of visitors during the summer months, attendance at church activities and Church School increased as did the need for multiple Sunday morning services. As the years passed, long-term tourists have given way to "overnighters" and short-term visitors. Nonetheless, the church has continued to serve the visiting and resident community.

The chimes are played each evening, and this has been a favorite with visitors. The church doors are open, and many come in to rest, pray, or simply to look. The pastor acts as a 'chamber of commerce,' helping with reservations, finding places to eat, telling of local attractions. He conducts 'tours of the church', answers many questions about the town and church, and greets the many church tourists. These things are daily during the summer season.²⁷

According to some, the District division of the church structure considers the main mission of the First United Methodist Church in Gatlinburg as service to the visitors to the area. Although those in attendance changes weekly, the local congregation has remained strong and active. With tourism as primary industry in Gatlinburg, the church has grown along with it, but has kept the integrity of the church property intact.

²⁷ Siera, 13.

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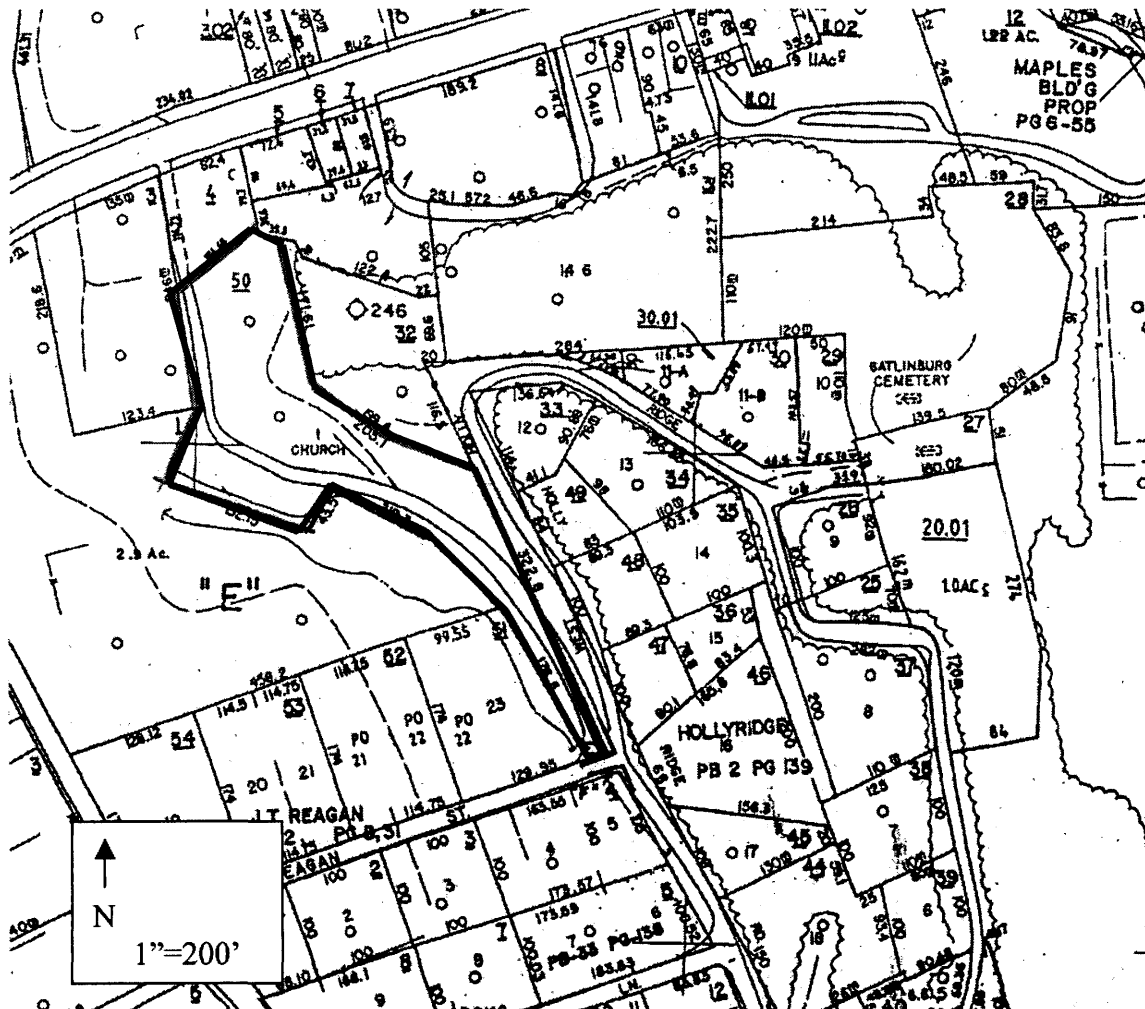
10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

First United Methodist Church Gatlinburg is located at 742 Parkway, Gatlinburg, Sevier County, Tennessee. The boundary includes approximately 1.00 acre owned by the First United Methodist Church Gatlinburg, parcel number 050.00 found on Tax Map number 126N, Group E.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundaries for the nominated property include the approximately 1 acre lot of the main building and education building located at 742 Parkway in Gatlinburg, Sevier County, Tennessee. This represents the current and historic legal boundaries associated with the church building at this location.



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PHOTOGRAPHS

First United Methodist Church, Gatlinburg
Sevier County, Tennessee

Photographs by: Scarlett C. Miles, Elizabeth H. Moore
MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

Date: November 14, 2006

Digital files: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

- 1 of 23 First United Methodist Church Gatlinburg, north façade and west elevation; photographer facing southeast
- 2 of 23 West elevation; photographer facing southeast
- 3 of 23 West elevation; photographer facing east
- 4 of 23 West elevation; photographer facing east
- 5 of 23 West elevation, detail of northwest entry; photographer facing southeast
- 6 of 23 West elevation; photographer facing east
- 7 of 23 West elevation; photographer facing northeast
- 8 of 23 Detail of tower; photographer facing northeast
- 9 of 23 South elevation; photographer facing north
- 10 of 23 South elevation, interior of porch; photographer facing north
- 11 of 23 West elevation of porch and education building elevation; photographer facing east
- 12 of 23 Detail of building corners, porch roof; photographer facing southwest
- 13 of 23 East elevation of sanctuary building; photographer facing west
- 14 of 23 East elevation of sanctuary building; photographer facing northwest

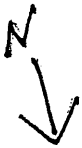
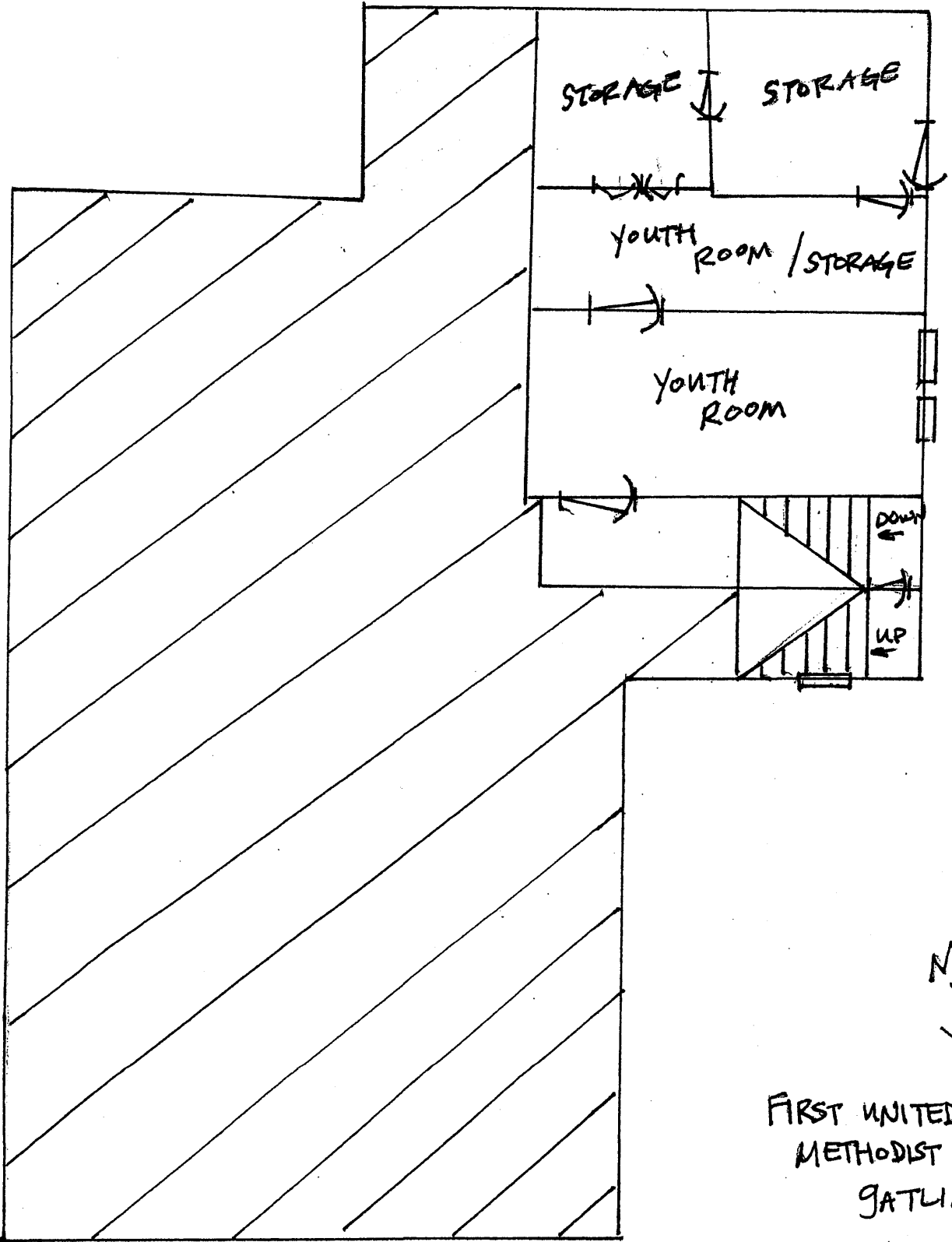
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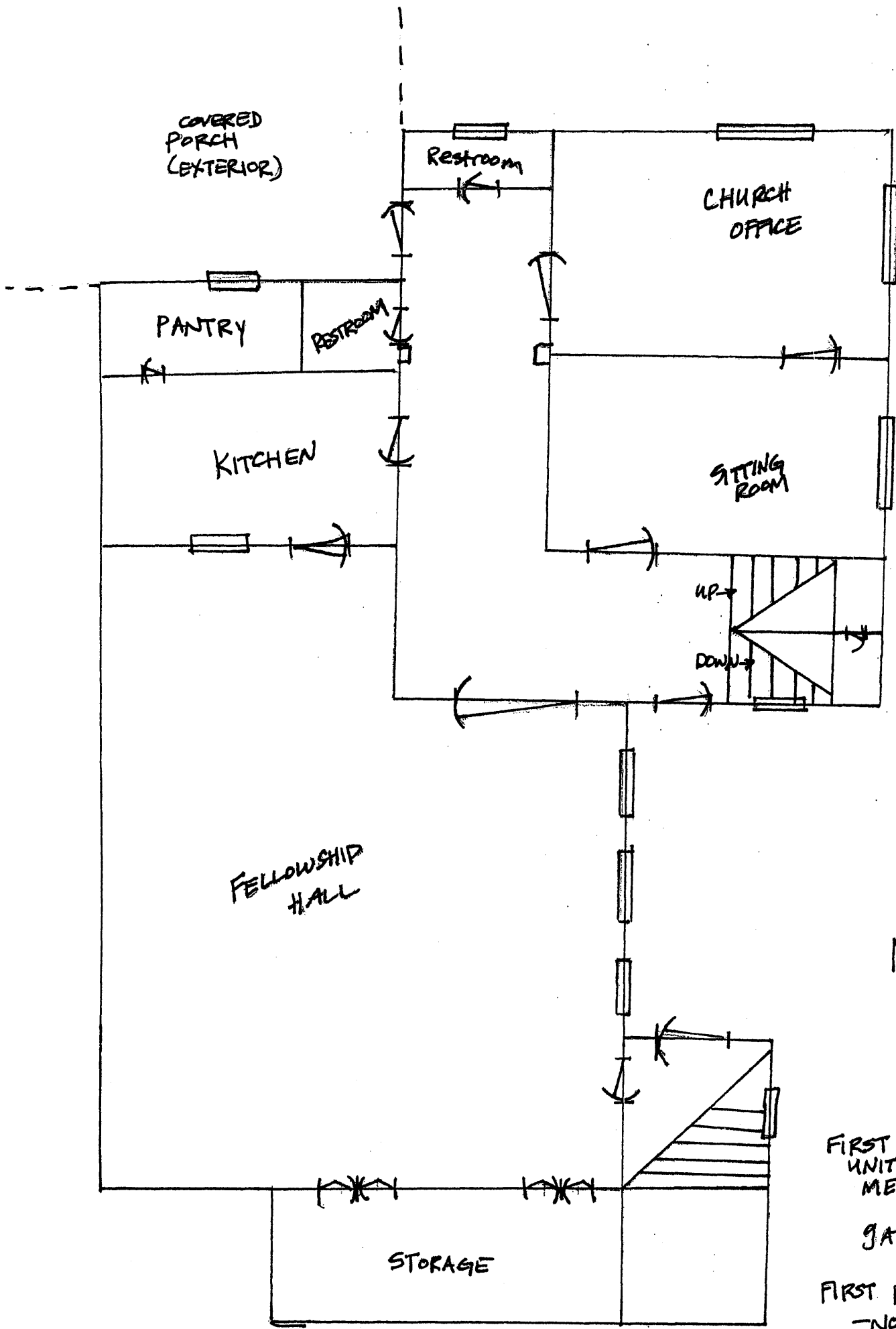
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- 15 of 23 East elevation, narthex entry; photographer facing southwest
- 16 of 23 Narthex, stained glass window, light fixture; photographer facing north
- 17 of 23 Sanctuary looking from narthex toward pulpit; photographer facing south
- 18 of 23 Sanctuary looking from pulpit toward narthex; photographer facing north
- 19 of 23 Interior of sanctuary building, entry into sanctuary; photographer facing southeast
- 20 of 23 Choir practice room, second floor of sanctuary building; photographer facing south
- 21 of 23 West elevation of education building; photographer facing east
- 22 of 23 South elevation of education building; photographer facing northeast
- 23 of 23 East elevation of education building; photographer facing west



FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
GATLINBURG
BASEMENT LEVEL
- NOT TO SCALE -



COVERED PORCH (EXTERIOR)

Restroom

CHURCH OFFICE

PANTRY

RESTROOM

KITCHEN

SITTING ROOM

FELLOWSHIP HALL

STORAGE

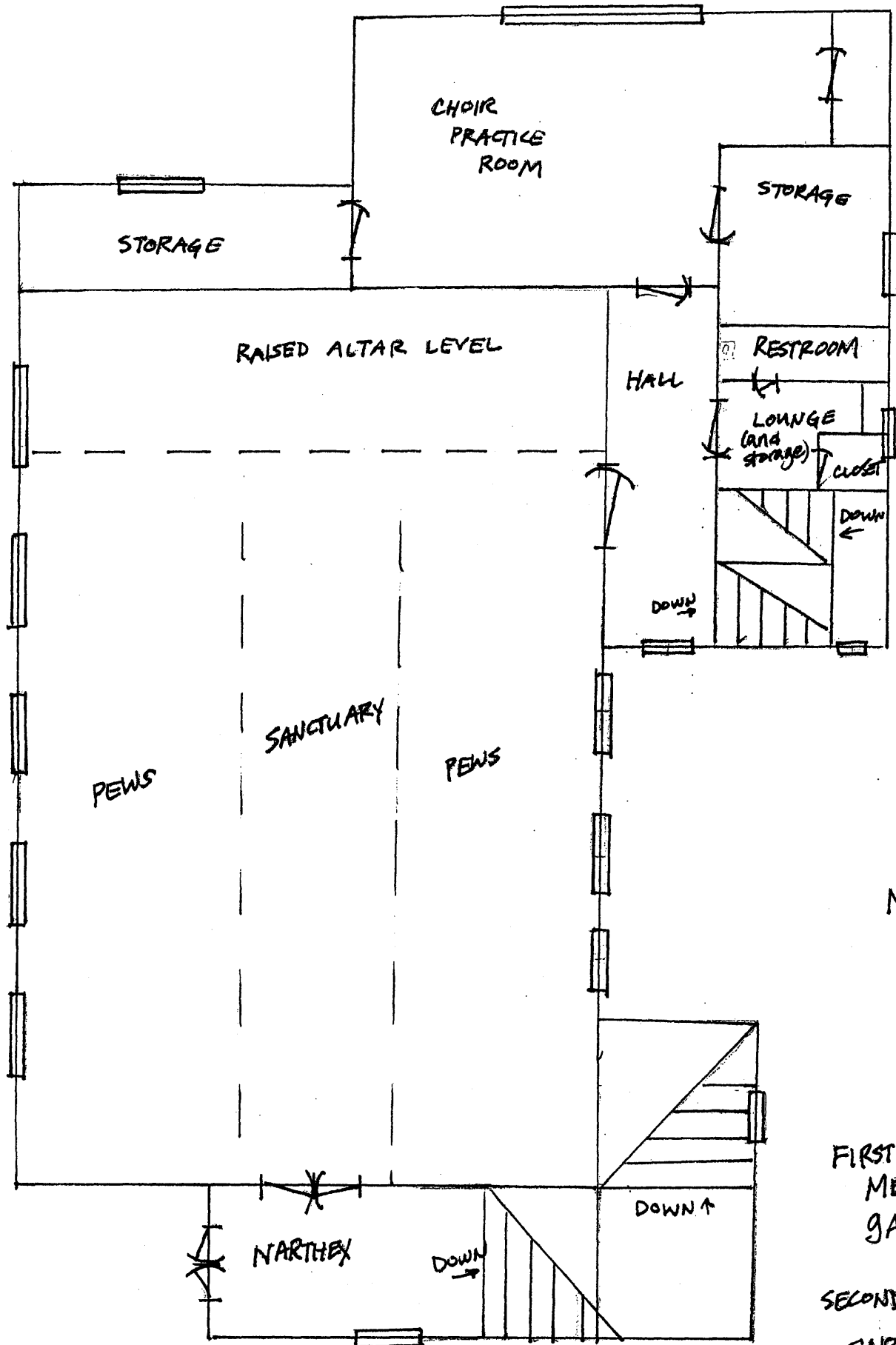
UP →

DOWN →



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH GATLINBURG

FIRST FLOOR NOT TO SCALE



FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
GATLINBURG

SECOND FLOOR

NOT TO SCALE

**First United Methodist Church, Gatlinburg
Sevier County, TN**

N



Not to Scale

**Sanctuary and Office Building
1945-1950**

Porch

**Education Building
1961**

