

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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Scott A.M.E. Zion Church

Other names/site number: Scott Methodist Episcopal Church, DE CRS # N00669

Name of related multiple property listing:

 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 629 E. 7th Street

City or town: Wilmington State: DE County: New Castle County

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

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 X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:</p> <p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
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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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site

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Structure

Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious Facility/Church

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious Facility/Church

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque/Romanesque Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, stucco

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Scott African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Zion Church is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of East 7th and North Spruce Streets, in Wilmington, New Castle County, Delaware. Built between 1868-1872, the tall, two-story, three-bay, parged brick church was built in the Romanesque Revival style and exhibits a covered entry vestibule, a tripartite, Palladian-influenced window feature, arched stained glass windows with arched wooden window hoods, engaged brick pilasters and buttresses, and a brick corbel table. Attached to the east of the church by a two-story, one-bay, brick hyphen (c. 1910) is a three-story, three-bay, brick Community House (c. 1926). Both the Community House and hyphen are parged and feature a similar brick corbel table to the church. The site has been in continuous use as a religious facility since 1852, and the current church building has been in continuous use since 1872, when it was largely rebuilt. Previously known as Scott Methodist Episcopal (M.E.) Church, in 1959, congregants of nearby Grace A.M.E. Zion Church purchased and occupied the building, becoming Scott A.M.E. Zion Church. Scott A.M.E. Zion Church has undergone several adaptations over the years but retains a large degree of integrity of materials, design, workmanship, setting, location, feeling, and association.

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Narrative Description

Built between 1868-1872 in the Romanesque Revival style, Scott African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Zion Church is located at 629 East 7th Street, in the urban, East Side neighborhood of Wilmington, New Castle County, Delaware. Comprised of three distinct sections—the church, the hyphen, and the Community House—the Scott A.M.E. Zion Church building is a tall, two-story, three-bay, brick church, with a front-gable roof. The exterior finish on three (southwest, northeast, southeast) elevations is stucco-ed—the second story of the northwest elevation is exposed brick. The church sits on a brick foundation. The roof is sheathed in asphalt shingles, and underneath the eaves is a decorative, stair-stepped, brick corbel table on all elevations except the rear (northeast). The church’s overall shape is rectangular—with a small, one-story, one-bay, front entry vestibule on the front (southwest) elevation.

Attached to the rectangular church on its northwest elevation is a two-story, one-bay, brick hyphen. The hyphen was first constructed between 1901 and 1916.¹ Stylistically, the hyphen matches the church and Community House. The façade of the hyphen is stucco-ed, the windows are stained-glass, and underneath the eave is a stair-stepped, brick corbel table. The c. 1910 size and footprint of the hyphen was originally smaller. It was initially constructed as a one-story addition to the church, which was one or two rooms in size on the interior. Between 1926 and 1927, a second story was added to the hyphen, which was likely completed when the adjacent Community House was constructed in 1926. Prior to 1959, the hyphen was extended to run the length of the church building.

To the northwest of the hyphen is an attached rectangular, three-story, three-bay, brick Community House. This portion of the building was constructed in 1926 as a purpose-built Community House for the Scott M.E. congregation, and the construction of the building was financed by William H. Todd, who named it in honor of his parents.² Todd, a former Wilmingtonian turned wealthy Brooklyn ship-builder, hired contractor Joseph S. Hamilton to construct the Community House.³ Like the hyphen, the Community House also shares stylistic elements with the church—namely that it is stucco-ed and features the stair-stepped, brick corbel table. While the original shape of the rear ell is unclear, a 1951 Sanborn map (Figure 7) depicts it in the same configuration as today.

¹ This date range is derived from a 1901 historic map of Wilmington, in which no hyphen is extant. In 1916, a newspaper article shows the front elevation of the church, and a one-story addition is present to the northwest of the church building. See Figures 4 and 8 for reproductions of the map and photo.

² “Scott M.E. Church House Dedication Set for Tonight,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 27, 1926.

³ “Scott M.E. Church House Dedication Set for Tonight,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 27, 1926.

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Neighborhood & Surroundings: East Side Neighborhood

The East Side neighborhood in which Scott A.M.E. Zion Church is located is east of Wilmington's central business district, in the southeast section of the city and in a low-lying area near the confluence of the Brandywine and Christina Rivers. Developed as a working-class residential district during the latter part of the nineteenth century, serving workers employed in nearby mills and factories, the East Side was built up with dense blocks of two- and three-story, brick rowhouses, interspersed with churches, corner stores, and various social and educational institutions, including the Peoples Settlement Association and Howard High School, the first secondary school in the state for Black students. From the turn of the twentieth century, Wilmington's Black population concentrated in the East Side, as had some groups of European immigrants and first-generation residents such as Polish immigrants, who established a small enclave in the neighborhood.⁴

However, by the 1920s, the East Side was reportedly the most overcrowded city neighborhood and came to be considered a "slum," with many of its rowhouses owned by former white occupants who had relocated to other parts of the city and rented their properties to mostly Black tenants—who were severely restricted in where they could live in a city that was still highly segregated in its housing. In the early 1950s, Wilmington Housing Authority, as part of the city's urban renewal efforts, targeted a large swath of the East Side, mainly along its western reaches closest to downtown, for a redevelopment project dubbed "Poplar Street Project A"—which ultimately resulted in 1961 with the demolition of nearly all of the many hundreds of buildings within that zone.⁵

While the land within the Poplar Street Project A area remained mostly vacant for years, portions were later developed into what is now Compton Park as well as several large apartment and townhome communities—though the eastern section of the East Side and most of the blocks surrounding Scott A.M.E. Zion Church remain largely intact, featuring many late-nineteenth century rowhouses. However, an entire block of rowhouses directly south of the church property was razed as part of the Poplar Street Project A demolitions. A new school is presently under construction there, replacing a parking lot and playground. As of 2023, the Bancroft School, built in the 1920s, is also situated one block northwest of the church.

Southwest Elevation (Front)

The southwest (front) elevation of Scott A.M.E. Zion Church faces East 7th Street. Visible on the front elevation are the three distinct sections of the building—the church, the hyphen, and the Community House. The church, which is located closest to the intersection of East 7th and North Spruce Streets, is two-stories, three-bays, and is a parged brick church built in the Romanesque

⁴ Carol E. Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital: Wilmington in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), Chapter 3: Mourning for an Old American City.

⁵ Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, Chapter 3.

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Revival style. The main stylistic features on this front elevation are, a covered entry vestibule, a tripartite, Palladian-influenced window feature, arched stained glass windows with arched wooden window hoods, engaged brick pilasters and buttresses, and a brick corbel table.

In the center bay of the church is a one-story, front-gable, brick vestibule that projects from the front plane of the building. Both corners of the front vestibule feature brick buttresses on the southwest elevation, as well as at the corner of the elevations that face northwest and southeast. The southwest elevation of the vestibule contains a pair of double metal, full-glaze doors (replacements), topped by an arched, fixed-glass window (replacement). This arched window is topped by a projecting, arched, wood window hood. The northwest and southeast elevations of the church's vestibule each contain a single arched, stained-glass window. The roof of the vestibule is clad in a flat, metal roof. Flanking the vestibule on each side is a single, narrow, arched-stained glass window, with wood trim. The second (sanctuary) floor is also three bays in width. Each of the three windows is recessed from the main plane of the front elevation, situated between or flanking two pilasters that are flush with the first-floor plane. The center bay contains a tripartite, Palladian-influenced, arched, stained-glass window feature. Each window was topped by an arched, wood window hood. Some of these hoods are missing, and the brick underneath has been painted black, giving a similar appearance to the windows that retain their hoods. Directly above the central-most window is an oval datestone, painted black. It reads, "1855 / SCOTT M.E. CHURCH / 1868." Directly above the datestone is a circular window opening, with an arched, wood window hood. The window itself has been replaced with a metal vent set into plywood. Historic photos show that this opening was historically a small, circular rose window. Flanking either side of the tripartite window feature (and a pilaster) is a single, narrow, arched, stained-glass window, with arched, wood window hoods. All stained-glass windows on the front façade are set into wood frames with wood windowsills.

Set into the southeast buttress are a series of datestones and commemorative plaques. From top to bottom, the plaques / datestones read:

1. CELEBRATING 141 YEARS
APRIL 24, 2016
SCOTT A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
Moving from Vision to Victory with Jesus's Joy

2. SCOTT A.M.E. ZION
CHURCH
REDEDICATED NOV. 5, 1995

3. SCOTT A.M.E.
ZION CHURCH
1959

4. GRACE-A.M.E.
ZION CHURCH
1929

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To the northwest of the church section of the building is a two-story, one-bay, brick hyphen, which is recessed slightly from the main plane of the church. The hyphen was constructed between 1901 and 1916 and was originally one story in height but later expanded to two stories between 1926 and 1927. This section of the building is stylistically harmonious with the other two—it is stucco-ed and features the same brick corbel table found on the church and Community House. There is a single bay in the hyphen—an arched, stained-glass window is located at both floor levels. The windows are placed in wood frames with projecting wood windowsills.

To the northwest of the hyphen section is the three-bay, three-story, brick Community House, built in 1926. The Community House projects farther to the southwest than either the hyphen or the church building. However, this portion of the building is in-line with the row of attached brick rowhomes that continue to the northwest along East 7th Street. This section of the building is stylistically harmonious with the other two—it is stucco-ed and features the same brick corbel table found on the church and the hyphen. The front façade of the Community House is regular and symmetrical. On the first floor, one-over-one, double-hung sash metal windows flank a central doorway. The entire door feature is slightly recessed from the plane of the building and topped by a stepped, wood drip moulding. Centered in the recess is a pair of full-glaze metal doors, topped by a narrow, single-light metal transom. Above the transom, in a niche created by the drip moulding, is a bronze metal plaque that reads “MEMORIUM / TO / JAMES & SARAH E. TODD/ BY THEIR SON / WILLIAM H. TODD / 1926.” Both the second and third stories of the Community House feature three symmetrically placed one-over-one, double-hung sash metal windows. The height of each row of windows decreases from the first floor to the second, and then from the second to the third, creating a visual hierarchy of space. All windows are set into wood frames, with projecting wood windowsills.

Southeast

The southeast elevation of the church faces North Spruce Street. The only portion of the building visible on this elevation is the church. This elevation is two stories in height, five bays in width, and is completely stucco-ed. The southeast elevation features seven projecting stucco-ed buttresses. From southwest to northeast, the first buttress (1) is located at the southeast corner of the building, and another buttress (2) is located close to the first one with no bays between these two buttresses. The remaining five buttresses are symmetrically placed. Windows are located between buttresses 2 and 3, buttresses 3 and 4, buttresses 4 and 5, buttresses 5 and 6, and buttresses 6 and 7. The last buttress (7) to the northeast is located at the corner of the building. The five window bays feature 12-over-12, double-hung sash wood windows on the first floor, and tall, arched, stained-glass windows on the second (sanctuary) floor. The stained-glass windows were installed in 1899. All windows have plain wood trim, with projecting plain wood windowsills. Located underneath the eaves, running the spans between the buttresses, is a brick corbel table. Here, the building’s designer apparently mimicked arched or “arcaded” corbel tables by creating a “stepped” effect that (at first glance) appears to be repeating arches, but in actuality resembles stepped, repeating “V” shapes. This corbel table is different than the one on the front elevation but matches the one found on the northwest elevation. Also visible on this

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elevation are two interior, stucco-ed brick chimneys. The tops of these chimneys can be seen directly above buttresses 3 and 4.

Northeast Elevation (Rear)

The rear (northeast) elevation features all three portions of the building, all of which are constructed of brick—the exterior of the church and the Community House are stucco-ed, while the hyphen is painted white. The church is two stories in height, while the hyphen and Community House are both only one story. The entire northeast elevation is four bays in width, with two bays located on the church, one bay on the hyphen, and the last bay on the Community House. The two bays on the church are both one-over-one wood windows that flank a gable-front, jettied, brick bump-out associated with the interior altar and pulpit space. This bump out is located on the exterior, half-way up the first floor, and ends just above the tops of the second story stained-glass windows. On both the southeast and northwest elevations of the bump out are narrow, arched, stained-glass windows, located on the second floor. There are no openings on the northeast elevation of the bump out. On the second (sanctuary) floor of the church, also flanking the bump-out, are arched, stained-glass windows, installed in 1899. Located just above the peak of the bump-out's roof is a small, semi-circular opening. This likely once had a window but is now boarded up.

Located (and attached) to the northwest of the church is the hyphen. The hyphen features only one bay—a four-light over two-panel wood door, with a metal screen door surmounting it. The door is located in a recessed door well, located below grade. The roof of the hyphen is flat. This rear portion of the hyphen was constructed between 1951 and 1959, when it was enlarged to run the full length of the church building.

Located (and attached) to the northwest of the hyphen is the Community House. This portion of the building also only features one bay, containing a triple window. The two windows located to the east in this triple window bay are one-over-one, double-hung sash wood windows. The window to the west has been removed and replaced with a circular metal cooking vent, set into a plywood board. The entire window feature is slightly recessed. The window trim is flat wood, and the wood windowsill is flush with the exterior wall. The roof of the Community House is single pitch and slants downwards to the west. Located at the northwest corner of the Community House is an exterior, stucco-ed brick chimney.

Northwest Elevation

The church, hyphen, and social hall are all connected on the northwest elevation. The only portion visible of this elevation is the second story of the church, which can be seen from the interior of the second floor of the hyphen. This is the only portion of the brick church building not stucco-ed; the bricks are laid in a 1:7 common bond, except the buttresses which are all laid in a stretcher bond. The corbel table is also exposed and features random laid bricks. From northeast to southwest, stained-glass windows are symmetrically placed in between five buttresses, with a total of four stained-glass windows visible on the exterior. The wood windowsills sit on top of the flat roof of the hyphen and social hall. The arched wood window

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frames are all topped by rounded brick arches, laid in a stretcher pattern. This elevation also features a brick corbel table that runs between each buttress. This corbel table matches the one on the southeast elevation, with stepped corbels forming repeated “V” shapes.

Interior

Church Building, First Floor

The main church building is organized with the main sanctuary on the second floor, while the ground floor features a large “chapel,” as well as offices, meeting rooms, and restrooms. Entering from the primary doorway on the Seventh Street side, a long, central hallway with a barrel-vaulted ceiling leads straight into the large chapel at the rear of the building, while smaller rooms flank the right and left sides of the hallway. Just inside the doorway, immediately to the right and left, straight-run stairways lead to the upper lobby and sanctuary. These stairways (newels, balusters, rails, etc.) date to the c. 1899 renovation campaign.

The floor of the ground-level hallway is covered in square, asbestos tile in red, black, and white, arranged to create a decorative, Christian cross symbol and plus-sign (+) motifs. The walls and barrel-vaulted ceiling of the hallway are coated in a smooth plaster finish. Chandeliers and a ceiling fan hang from the ceiling and appear to date to the late-twentieth century. Doors on the left side of the wall, framed in late-twentieth century wood trim, lead to two separate hallways. The first hallway (located to the southwest), which is accessed through a tall, oversized, six-panel wood door, serves as a waiting / reception area outside of the pastor’s office. This hallway room has carpeted floors, with a pressed metal ceiling dating to 1909. Three of the walls, except for the southwest wall, which the room shares with the stairs, exhibit a composite board material. The southwest wall is painted pressed metal (1909). The door into the interior office, located on the northwest wall, is solid wood. The floors are hardwood, the ceiling is also pressed metal (1909), and some of the walls are composite partition walls, while the southwest wall is covered in pressed metal. A small, four-panel door, located on the southeast wall, provides entry under the stair box. A doorway on the northwest wall leads into the first floor of the hyphen—this space is discussed below. The second hallway to the left of the main interior first floor hallway leads to the attached Community House. The doorway is open and coffin shaped. The floor of this space is carpeted, the walls are all composite partition walls, and the ceiling is exposed pressed metal (1909). The doors on the northwest wall that lead into the Community House are double wood doors, with a single-light transom. Situated between these two hallways, is an L-shaped meeting room. This space can be accessed from wood double doors from the pastor’s office, or from the first floor of the hyphen. The floor is carpeted, the walls are composite partition walls, and the ceiling is exposed pressed metal (c. 1909).

The doorways on the right side of the main first floor hallway (that runs directly under the front-gabled roof) lead to a hallway connected to an interior restroom and a “ladies lounge” leading into a restroom. These rooms are mostly finished in late-twentieth century finishes, with some of the room divisions and finishes dating to the mid-1970s renovations. The rooms located on the perimeter of the building (located on an exterior wall) still retain the 1909 pressed metal walls (some are covered in later materials). Additionally, all of the church’s first floor rooms retain the

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pressed metal ceilings (Figure 21), some of which are covered in later materials (drop-ceilings), while others are still exposed.

A double doorway at the end of the hall, which leads to the large lower chapel, features a large, rectangular transom and diamond-shaped windows in the upper half of each door. The large chapel room, which occupies almost the entire rear half of the original church building, features a platformed pulpit and choir area in the rear (northeast) end of the room surrounded by a chancel rail. Inserted into the platformed pulpit is a baptismal pool, which was added c. 1975. The chapel is otherwise open, with the exception of four original, narrow, cast-iron support columns that are cast into a fluted design that widens into a capital at the top, each with a decorative ring just below the capital. These cast iron columns are echoed on the rear (northeast) wall, where decorative fluted wood pilasters visually frame the pulpit and choir area. One of the most striking features of the room is the ceiling and northwest wall (directly behind the platformed pulpit) with its decorative, pressed metal finish (Figure 21). The pressed metal ceilings and wall were added in 1909. Located at the corner of the northeast and southeast walls is an enclosed (drywalled) straight-run stairway that connects the lower chapel to the sanctuary space, which was added c. 1975.

Church Building, Second Floor

The second floor of the main church building is accessed by the two straight-run stairs (set opposite each other). Besides the stairways and a small hallway that runs perpendicular to the stairways, the second floor is almost entirely comprised of the sanctuary space. In the hallway (located on the southeast wall), the straight-run stairs continue up to the choir loft area. These balusters, newels, and rails of the stairways were installed c. 1899. The narrow hallway that runs perpendicular to the stairs and sanctuary is relatively unadorned—the floor is carpeted, and the partition wall (between the hallway and sanctuary) is plastered, as is the ceiling. Four single four-panel wood doors are set into this partition wall. The interior of the sanctuary is a large, undivided space that features a platformed pulpit and choir area in the rear (northeast) end of the room surrounded by a chancel rail. The southwest wall features a choir loft on the half-floor above, shaped like a reverse ogee and supported by two structural cast-iron columns, which match in style and shape the structural cast-iron columns in the lower chapel. The two longitudinal walls each feature five (5) stained “art glass” windows that were installed in 1899. The vibrantly colored art glass windows are paired on the northwest and southeast walls—meaning that they match each other in color, design, and motif. The most ornate of the art glass windows are set into the northeast wall, behind the pulpit. Again, these two windows are paired in their design, colors, and motif. The seating area is divided into 14 curved rows of pews. The 14 rows are subdivided by two aisles that lead to the pulpit area, with three curved wooden pews (Figure 22) in each row. These pews were also added during the 1899 renovation of the church in which the staircases and art glass windows were upgraded or added. The walls of the sanctuary are lathe and plaster, with a later c. 1975 faux wood wainscotting.

The main sanctuary features a striking pressed metal treatment at the ceiling level, with a generally Gothic Revival design, consisting of the main ceiling, wide cornice mouldings, and decorative ventilator panels (Figures 19, 20, and 21). This was added to the sanctuary in 1915.

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The ceiling's primary field is created with large, square panels featuring a Gothic quatrefoil within a circle in the center, from which pointed lancet arches radiate to each corner, creating a motif that resembles a four-petal flower. The ceiling is punctuated with three large, decorative ventilation grilles (Figure 20) along the longitudinal axis of the sanctuary. These rounded ventilation grilles are bold, sculptural, and elaborate, dropping at least a foot from the ceiling's surface and painted white to match the painted pressed metal (Figure 21). The center ventilation grille is situated within a large, square, rough-textured panel (the width of four of the ceiling's field panels) with a heavy decorative frame. The other two ventilation grilles are framed by smaller panels (the width of two of the ceiling's field panels) with thinner frames and feature a Gothic web motif in the four corners not filled by the circular grille. The entire ceiling field is framed near the exterior walls by a two foot wide band that features a repeating Gothic lancet (pointed arch) motif with implied tracery. The junctions between the ceiling and walls around the entire sanctuary also feature bold pressed metal cornices, over one foot in height, with a primary motif of repeating pointed arches, bordered above by crown moulding and below by thinner, rounded mouldings. Six drop light fixtures were added c. 1975, which replaced previous drop lighting fixtures.

The platformed pulpit and choir area, surrounded by a chancel rail, spans the entire width of the northeast wall. There are five rows of platform seating, on either side of the center altar space. Behind the altar is a large pipe-organ, which was added to the sanctuary in the early 20th-century. The entirety of the pulpit area, except for the pipe organ, was renovated c. 1975.

Choir Loft

The choir loft is accessed by the two mirrored staircases that lead up from the second-floor sanctuary hallway. A single wood door is located at the top of each stairway that leads into the choir loft. The loft itself, which is shaped like a reverse ogee, features a terraced, carpeted floor, providing a stadium-style seating effect for the choir loft pews. The wooden pews are of three different types, likely reflecting different eras. The choir loft was redone in 1899, when the stained "art glass" windows were added to the sanctuary. This wooden choir loft was constructed by the workmen of the Jackson & Sharp Company, a nearby Wilmington shipbuilder and manufacturer of railroad cars.⁶ In the sanctuary, the choir loft is supported by two structural cast-iron columns, matching the style and shape of the structural cast-iron columns in the lower chapel.

Hyphen, First Floor

The first floor of the hyphen (constructed between 1901 and 1916) is connected to the main church building on its southwestern wall. The hyphen is presently comprised of three rooms that extend from the front (southwest) wall back in a line. The first two rooms are connected to the

⁶ "Scott M.E. Church—Four Thousand Dollars Subscribed to Pay for the Improvements," *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 27, 1899; "Piano for a Church," *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 20, 1899.

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pastor's office in the main church building via a single solid wood door. Directly off the pastor's office is a changing room, with a connected bathroom to the southwest. These two rooms were added c. 1975 and reflect mainly modern materials—the walls are drywall, the floor is a linoleum covering, and the ceiling exhibits drop-ceiling tiles; however, the pressed metal tin ceiling (1909) is still in place above the drop-ceiling. The third room in the hyphen cannot be accessed from the changing room or bathroom. The space is connected to both the front room in the Community House and the rear social hall room, also in the Community House. The floors in this room are exposed hardwood, and the walls are modern drywall with composite faux wood paneling covering the walls. The ceiling is a drop-ceiling; however, the pressed metal ceiling (1909) is still in place above it. This space was likely subdivided c. 1975 when the hyphen was overhauled.

Hyphen, Second Floor

The second floor of the hyphen (constructed between 1926 and 1927) is connected to the hallway of the second floor of the church. The second floor of the hyphen is located slightly above that of the church hallway floor, with a short stair up into the hyphen. The hyphen consists of two small, back-to-back rooms that serve as hallways connecting the church and the second floor of the Community House. A four-panel wood door leads from the church into the hyphen and likely dates from the late 1920s. The first hallway room (located on the southwest exterior wall) features a small, stained-glass window, carpeted floors, and lathe and plaster walls and ceilings. Again, the materials found in this space all likely date to when this portion of the hyphen was constructed. Directly across from the sanctuary door is another four-panel wood door that leads into the second-floor meeting room in the Community House. There is a step down from the hyphen into this space. Located to the northwest of the second-floor hyphen hallway is another hallway, with an open doorway connecting these two rooms. On the northwest wall is a six-over-six wood window (likely original) that looks out over the social hall room. On the northwest wall, another open doorway leads to the back stairway in the Community House, which provides access between the second and third floors. This small hallway room is carpeted and features 1970s faux wood composite paneling.

Community House, First Floor

The Community House, built in 1926, is connected to the hyphen on the southwest wall as well as to the church building, also on the southwest wall. Extending from the southwest wall (front elevation) towards the northeast are three main rooms arranged in a line. The first room is the main entry of the Community House. This space is a large, open area with a straight-run staircase located on the northwest wall. Materially, the staircase appears to date to when the Community House was built and exhibits a square newel with square balusters. The rest of the main entry room appears to have been renovated c. 1975 and features a tile floor (over wood floors), faux-wood panel walls, and drop-ceiling tiles (covering a slightly higher lathe and plaster ceiling). Located in the same plane as the stairway wall is a 1920s four-panel wood door. This doorway provides access to both the basement stairs (to the southwest) and a 1920s "men's room" to the northeast. Located on the northeast wall of the main entry are two sets of five-leaf, five-panel, folding wood doors that lead into the social hall. The social hall was enlarged in several

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campaigns during the twentieth century and today is one large undivided space. The floor has been re-tiled, with a cross-motif inlaid in the tiles, perhaps completed in the 1970s. The walls and ceilings are lathe and plaster. The ceiling features two skylights, which were added between 1936 and 1951. There are two doors (and an enclosed window) located on the southeast wall that connect the social hall to the lower chapel and a hallway in the main church building. At the rear of the social hall are two solid wood doors that flank a large pass-thru window on the northeast wall and lead to the kitchen. The kitchen is also a large undivided space, with tile floors and lathe and plaster walls and ceilings. There is an exterior door on the northeast wall.

Community House, Second Floor

The second floor of the Community House is located above the main entry room on the first floor. The second floor is divided into four primary spaces, with a meeting room located at the front (southwest) of the building, a hallway that runs perpendicular to the exterior wall, a small bathroom to the northwest, and a rear stairway and hall to the northeast. The front meeting room spans the entire width of the Community House. The floor of the room is covered in carpet, the walls are covered in a faux-wood paneling, and the ceiling is a textured material over the lathe and plaster ceiling. There is a four-panel door on the southeast wall that leads to the hyphen and a matching door on the northeast wall that leads into the hallway of the Community House. The hallway of the Community House is also full-width and extends from the stairway from the first floor to the doorway to the hyphen on the southeast wall. Materially, this room matches the front meeting room. Located in the north corner is a small bathroom. The floor of the room is covered in a linoleum-like material, the walls are covered in faux-wood paneling, and the ceiling is a textured material over the lathe and plaster ceiling. Located in the east corner is a hallway and straight-run stair that goes to the third floor. This space features the same materials as the rest of the second floor. The newel and baluster match the staircase on the first floor and likely date to the 1920s. The entire second floor was likely renovated in the 1970s.

Community House, Third Floor

The third floor, which is only located over the main front block of the building, is divided into two large rooms and one hallway. At the front (southwest) of the building is another full-width meeting room. Like the second-floor rooms, this space was likely renovated in the 1970s and features carpeted floors, faux-wood paneled walls, and lathe and plaster ceilings. On the northeast wall are four single four-panel wood doors. Three of these doors lead to interior closets, while one leads to the hallway. The interior hallway is narrow and situated around the back room, which has a curved wall. The hallway leads from the top of the stairs to the front room. Situated to the east in the hallway is a small closet. The back room materially matches the front room and also has one closet.

Community House, Cellar

Underneath the main entry room of the Community House is an excavated, continuous cellar. The walls of the cellar, which likely pre-date the Community House (there was a c. 1875 house previously located on this site) are uncoursed, rubble stone walls. Set inside the stone walls is

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another thick wall (half-height) comprised of plastered brick. This is the only portion of the entire three-part building (church, hyphen, Community House) that contains an excavated cellar—the rest of the building exhibits only crawl spaces.

Integrity

Scott A.M.E. Zion Church possesses high levels of historic integrity for location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Changes in the building's materials, notably the insertion of the stained-glass windows and the application of pressed tin on the interior, took place during the period of significance. Despite some alterations to the plan of the first floor of the church after the period of significance, it features much of its original layout as well as materials and design. Overall, most of the alterations to the building undertaken within the period of significance represent the denominational shift from Methodist Episcopal to African Methodist Episcopal Zion; maintenance and repair decisions; changes in tastes, styles, and modern conveniences; and parishioners' responses to changing circumstances within their communities. Most of these changes enhance rather than detract from the building's historic integrity.

Location: The Scott A.M.E. Zion Church building retains its original location as constructed in 1868-1872. The parcel of land was enlarged in 1926, when the Scott M.E. congregation purchased the adjoining property (627 East 7th Street) for the construction of a new Community House. Since 1926, the parcel of land associated with the church has not changed in size.

Setting: Scott A.M.E. Zion Church maintains medium integrity with respect to its setting. The surrounding neighborhood still features blocks of late-nineteenth century brick rowhomes, providing a sense of the historic neighborhood setting in which the church was constructed. Directly across the street from the church, a new school (comprising an entire city block) is being constructed. As of 2023, a current school building is located one block northwest of Scott A.M.E. Zion Church. A school has been present in this neighborhood since the 1920s, and while the new school impacts the viewshed of Scott A.M.E. Zion Church, this function had been present for almost a century. The new school replaces a parking lot and playground—historically, the block contained rowhomes, but those were demolished several decades ago.

Design: Scott A.M.E. Zion Church retains high integrity of design as a strong example of a Romanesque Revival church, built during the end of the revival's first phase in the United States. It also exhibits features like other local Romanesque Revival buildings in northern Delaware, suggesting local vernacular trends (or the same designers) for some of the Romanesque Revival church buildings in the area. Characteristics of the Romanesque Revival style includes the church's vertical orientation, rounded arched windows, arched moulded window crowns that further emphasize the arch shape, tripartite Palladian windows, and a brick corbel table.

Materials: Much of the original or early fabric of the Scott A.M.E. Zion Church is intact. While the exterior brick work has been parged, it happened in 1909 during the period of significance. The church retains its 1899 stained-glass windows. On the interior, much early fabric is also retained, including the pressed tin, which was added to the first floor in 1909 and the second-

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floor sanctuary in 1915. The staircases (newels, balustrades, etc.) and the pews were added during the 1899 renovation. The pipe organ, installed in the early-twentieth century, is also still extant. Later renovations on the first floor, namely the insertion of some small rooms (offices and bathrooms), covered earlier materials through the use of drop-ceilings and drywall but did not remove said earlier materials.

Workmanship: The workmanship at Scott A.M.E. Zion Church can be found in the ornate stained-glass windows and the construction of the pews, balcony, and balustrades, as well as in the application of the pressed tin. While the exterior brick walls have been “cemented,” evidence of the skilled masonry work is visible in the corbel tables, as well as the still exposed (not cemented) northwest elevation.

Feeling: Although the denomination of its congregation has changed, the church retains much of its original fabric installed by the previous congregation. Additionally, the use and function of the building has remained the same since 1872, and as such, Scott A.M.E. Zion Church retains its feeling as a late-nineteenth century church.

Association: The building has been in almost continuous use as a Christian house of worship since its construction in 1868-1872 and remains easily identifiable as such.

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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.)

- 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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE
ETHNIC HERITAGE/Black
RELIGION

Period of Significance

1868-1926
1959-1975

Significant Dates

1959

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Scott Methodist Episcopal Church (now Scott A.M.E. Zion Church), constructed between 1868 and 1872, is historically significant at the local level under Criterion A, for reflecting a surge in Methodist church construction in the City of Wilmington during the second half of the nineteenth century—often born of neighborhood “mission” efforts that led to permanent churches that served as focal points in their respective Wilmington neighborhoods.⁷ The church is also historically significant under Criterion A, at the local level, due to its acquisition and use by the neighboring Grace African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church—which then became Scott A.M.E. Zion Church—for reflecting major social transitions on Wilmington’s East Side, significant disruptions caused by urban renewal projects in the mid-twentieth century (in this case, with Wilmington’s “Poplar Street Project A”), and the adaptability and resiliency of Wilmington’s East Side congregations during this period. Lastly, the church building is also significant under Criterion C as a local example of Romanesque Revival church architecture, which enjoyed a surge in popularity both nationally and locally between 1850 and 1880. The first period of significance for the Scott church begins in 1868, when the church’s construction began, to 1926, when the last major renovation by the Scott M.E. congregation was carried out at the church building. The second period of significance spans 1959 to 1975, representing the purchase and adoption of the church building by Grace A.M.E. Zion Church (which became Scott A.M.E. Zion Church) and its modest renovations in 1974-1975 to better adapt the church to the congregation’s needs.

This property meets Criteria Consideration A for religious properties because of its significance under Criterion A, in demonstrating important social and cultural trends, and under Criterion C, for its significance as a strong example of local Romanesque Revival church architecture in Wilmington.

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

Building Chronology / Background History

Origins: 1851 to 1867

Like several other mid-nineteenth century churches in Wilmington, Scott Methodist Episcopal Church grew out of a mission school—founded in 1851 at 7th and Walnut Streets—and then moved in 1852 to “the basement of the public school at Sixth and French streets” until a larger

⁷ Patricia J. Bensinger, “Kingswood Methodist Episcopal Church, New Castle County, Delaware,” National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, (Wilmington, DE), 1988, Section 8-4; Frank R. Zebley, *The Churches of Delaware* (Wilmington, DE, 1947).

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facility could be built.⁸ The donation of a building lot by Samuel McCaulley, “a prominent and liberal Methodist,” determined the site of the new school building.⁹ That larger school building—“a chapel on the site of the present church”—was constructed late in 1852 and called the Seventh Street Sabbath School.¹⁰ Various newspaper reports over the years characterized this first structure as a “chapel,” “a church building,” and “church house,” suggesting that it may have been constructed as a house of worship from the beginning.¹¹ However, an 1852 newspaper article, published just before the building was constructed, reported that the organization planned to build “a room” that could be later “converted into a church,” suggesting that the original building may not have been viewed as a church initially:

The Seventh Street Sabbath-School having been denied the privilege of meeting in the Seventh Street Church, in consequence of the building being for sale, are making efforts to raise money to erect a room for themselves. Samuel McCaulley has kindly given them a lot, at the N.E. [sic] corner of Seventh and Spruce Sts., fifty feet front by eighty feet deep. The design is to erect a building one story in height, and arrange it in such a manner that it can be converted into a church at any future time, without much additional expense. . . It is estimated that the expense of building will not be over \$1200, which it is thought can be easily raised, the collecting committees thus far having met with very good encouragement.”¹²

No matter the characterization at the time, the resulting building was, notably, constructed of brick, one story in height, with a squarish footprint measuring 40 feet by 40 feet (another account says 40’ x 45’).¹³ It was dedicated “as a union Sunday school” on the last Sunday in December 1852, and the “first regular meeting” in the new building was held on January 6, 1853—presided over by Reverend Andrew Manship, a Methodist Episcopal, but including a mixed congregation “composed of Presbyterians, Methodists, and members of other denominations.”¹⁴ Indeed, several congregations were involved in the Sabbath School during its first couple of years, until the Methodist Episcopal church members officially formed a church associated with the school and fully took over its administration.¹⁵

The impetus to establish a Methodist church here, according to later recollections, was the clear “need of church accommodations for this eastern section of the city”—a demand that would only rise as “the population was increasing and the probabilities of building over the unoccupied space extending to the Brandywine and Christiana creeks did not require much imagination.”¹⁶ With this in mind, a new church was officially organized in the spring of 1854, when 15

⁸ “The Churches,” *Wilmington Daily Commercial*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 27, 1872.

⁹ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

¹⁰ “The Churches,” *Wilmington Daily Commercial*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 27, 1872.

¹¹ See, for example, “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887; “Scott M.E. Church, Oak from an Acorn,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 1, 1916.

¹² “Seventh Street Sabbath-School,” *Blue Hen’s Chicken*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 23, 1852.

¹³ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

¹⁴ “Scott M.E. Church, Oak from an Acorn,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 1, 1916.

¹⁵ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

¹⁶ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

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members of Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church (3rd and Walnut Streets) and Union Methodist Episcopal Church applied for and received a pastor—Reverend Hobbs—to hold regular church services at the Seventh Street Sabbath School’s “chapel.” The formation of this new church was reportedly “not from any factious opposition to the [home] churches” of its members, but due to convenience and the anticipated need for a Methodist church in this part of Wilmington.¹⁷

By 1855, there was already a need to enlarge the chapel. The Reverend Charlton Lewis was appointed to the church that year, and “his preaching drew large congregations and the demand for increased accommodations.”¹⁸ As such, “the work of extending the church in length began in the summer” of 1855. Even before this enlargement, “a room was built in the rear of the church for class meeting and infant school purposes,” but it is unclear if the enlargement replaced or extended that previous addition. No other descriptions are known to report the physical appearance of the church after this extension, but 61 years later, a newspaper reported that this building campaign “enlarged [it] to nearly twice its size in order to accommodate the fast-growing congregation.”¹⁹ However, it was almost certainly still just a one-story church at this time. The construction work was disruptive enough that the congregation met elsewhere during construction—at a church on the corner of Fifth and Walnut Streets. At this time, it is worth noting that there was still no dedicated parsonage for the church, and Reverend Lewis reportedly boarded in the home of Rev. J.B. Maddux, the pastor of the Union Church. This arrangement of leasing off-site parsonages seems to have continued for quite some time.²⁰

Also in 1855, the name of Scott Methodist Episcopal Sunday School was used for the first time. The name was apparently officially changed during a meeting of the association on October 12, 1855.²¹ The name of the church, itself, was also presumably changed to Scott Methodist Episcopal Church around this time—with the “Scott” name honoring the Reverend Levi Scott, A.M., D.D., who was born near Odessa, Delaware, and who had three years earlier become the senior Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.²²

The 1860s were a tumultuous and transformative decade for Scott Methodist Episcopal Church. The late 1850s had been “unusually prosperous,” and by the end of the decade, in 1859, Scott Methodist Episcopal Church could boast of 152 members and 47 probationers—for a congregation of about 200 persons.²³ However, with the onset of the U.S. Civil War and the resulting call for volunteers, “so many of its members answered the call that it well-nigh wrecked the organization.”²⁴ The ensuing few years of disruption caused “besetments and trials” that were

¹⁷ The founding members included Jacob S. Weldin, John Lonsdale, Joseph Spurway, George Mortimer, William H. Riley, Thomas Orpwood, Gilbert Holmes, William Bicking, John Dick, William Heisler, William Griffenberg, John B. Kindal, W. H. Foulk, S. Carlisle. See “The Churches,” *Wilmington Daily Commercial*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 27, 1872; “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

¹⁸ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

¹⁹ “Scott M.E. Church, Oak from an Acorn,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 1, 1916.

²⁰ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

²¹ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

²² “How Churches Were Named,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 19, 1921.

²³ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

²⁴ “The Churches,” *Wilmington Daily Commercial*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 27, 1872.

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“sore and disheartening,” though period accounts do not expand on the problems suffered during these years. Nonetheless, due to the church’s persistence and the “precious fruitage of constancy,” the congregation apparently turned things around quite quickly after the Civil War, rallying to again enlarge the church building within just two years of the war’s end.²⁵

“Enlargement and Construction: A Two-Story Building, 1868 to 1872

The overall size and form of the main church building as it exists today is the result of a major building campaign that spanned nearly a half decade between 1868 and 1872. Described as an “enlargement and construction,” the rebuilding project apparently retained portions of the one-story brick chapel that had been constructed in 1852 (and lengthened in 1855). Perhaps the best evidence that this was a major expansion, rather than an entire rebuild, comes from an 1872 newspaper article after its reopening, which reported, “Since October 1867, worship has been held in the basement, but it will hereafter be held in the [new] auditorium.”²⁶ Clearly, if the congregation was still able to meet in the building even as major construction commenced, then the original structure must have remained. However, on the other hand, 15 years later, an 1887 newspaper article reported that, during the “enlargement” of the church building,” the congregation worshipped a part of the time in Institute Hall and for some time in the City Hall,” while “the Sunday school during the time was sheltered in the public school building across the street from the church.” Such detailed description of the accommodations during the construction casts doubt on the previous account of the congregation remaining “in the basement” of their own church.²⁷ Whatever the case may be—whether the 1868-1872 construction was a total rebuild or just a major expansion, there can be no doubt that the “enlargement” project was a large-scale, dramatic renovation that totally reshaped the size and architecture of the church building.

The reason for the long timeline for the construction project, which took about five years to complete, is not clear. However, the length of the building work might be partially explained by a report that Scott Episcopal Methodist Church lost its minister in the middle of construction. Their reverend, Andrew Cather, was unexpectedly reappointed as a missionary in the West, leaving the congregation “greatly surprised and somewhat discouraged . . . as they awoke to the fact that they had neither church building nor pastor.” Yet, “in the face of great difficulties,” the congregation “succeeded in enclosing the building and completing the lecture room.”²⁸ As much as anything, this may have been due to the resourcefulness of the congregants. A newspaper article late in 1871 noted that the church was “being finished by W.H. Foulk, carpenter,” and was “expected to be ready for service about the middle of December.”²⁹ Foulk, who was listed as an original member of the church when it formed in 1854, had been previously hired to do other carpentry work in the church, such as adding doorways between school rooms, and had

²⁵ “The Churches,” *Wilmington Daily Commercial*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 27, 1872.

²⁶ “The Churches,” *Wilmington Daily Commercial*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 27, 1872.

²⁷ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

²⁸ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

²⁹ “Building Improvements,” *Delaware State Journal*, November 3, 1871.

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volunteered to wait two years for payment for that work.³⁰ It seems likely that Foulk had a substantial hand in the carpentry work during the church's various expansions.

The new church building, dedicated on Sunday, May 26, 1872, was widely considered a "wonderful transformation"—a "milestone in the history of Methodism in the city" that "was an astonishment to those who had gone through the early battles to maintain [the church's] existence."³¹ A lengthy newspaper article about the dedication of the church provides a valuable snapshot of the church's architecture and spatial arrangement at that time:

It is built of brick, with Sabbath School on ground floor and auditorium above. The Sabbath School room is 45x60 feet, with 10 feet ceiling. Two small class rooms and an infant school room are also on this floor. The auditorium is 45x83 feet, with 24 ft. ceiling, and is reached by two broad stairways which lead from the lower hall to the vestibule above. The furniture is of walnut and stained ash, and the wall from the floor to the windows, about four feet, is paneled, being grained to represent maple. The windows, fifteen in number, are of the most beautiful richly-stained glass, making a pleasant contrast with the dark furniture and the richly carpeted floor. The frescoing is executed in delicate neutral tints, and the whole appearance of the room is very gratifying to the vision. The seating capacity of the church is about 600.³²

With a few exceptions, especially regarding finishes, the church building as described in 1872 reflects the present architecture and layout of the church. Also of note is that there were 15 stained-glass windows present by 1872, which helped make the room "very gratifying to the vision." Overall, the building was described as a "neat and cozy edifice" with a "comfortable" and "commodious" interior.³³

With this expensive new building complete, the church leadership turned almost immediately to fundraising to settle the debt. The dedication sermon conveyed to the gathered listeners that "as God loves us and has surrounded us with so many temporal blessings, and that as he loves the church more, we should contribute of our means and influence to its sustentation, and help in the liquidation of the debt which had been incurred in the erection of the [new] edifice." A debt of "about \$4,000 was resting upon the church" that morning, but church leaders were encouraged that "\$1600 was raised at the first service, \$200 in the afternoon, and \$1600 in the evening, leaving [only] \$600 still unprovided for."³⁴ Yet, years later, one account would make clear that this initial optimism was tempered when "many subscriptions made in good faith were not paid" due to a lack of follow up and financial struggles of some subscribers, and with other

³⁰ "A Church's Growth," *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

³¹ "The Churches," *Wilmington Daily Commercial*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 27, 1872; "A Church's Growth," *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

³² "The Churches," *Wilmington Daily Commercial*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 27, 1872.

³³ "The Churches," *Wilmington Daily Commercial*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 27, 1872; "A Church's Growth," *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

³⁴ "The Churches," *Wilmington Daily Commercial*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 27, 1872.

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accumulating expenses, the debt soon again ballooned to \$2,000.³⁵ It was not until Sunday, December 11, 1887—about 15 years after the dedication of the new building—that the whole debt against the property had been extinguished and “the mortgages were burned in the presence of the congregation.”³⁶

Other Renovations, Repairs, & Beautification Efforts, 1882 to 1926

Substantial beautification campaigns that left their mark on the architecture of Scott Methodist Episcopal Church occurred in 1899, 1909, and 1915—as well as a few other reported efforts to refresh, maintain, and enhance the church. For example, in the early 1880s, during the tenure of the Reverend T.R. Creamer, “the lecture room was reseated, painted, and generally repaired at a cost of \$1,700.”³⁷ In October 1890, a “reopening” of the church was “celebrated” after the building had “been undergoing repairs both in the Sunday school room and in the auditorium,” which had “been beautified and made much more comfortable by the improvements.”³⁸ Another expense for the church continued to be an off-site parsonage, as it was reported in 1897 that a newly-arriving reverend and his wife would be greeted at the church and then “escorted” to the parsonage for a supper, almost certainly implying it was off-site and not adjacent to the church.³⁹

A major beautification campaign for Scott Methodist Episcopal Church occurred in 1899, when a celebration was held (and “taxed the seating to capacity”) in the newly “bright and cheery” edifice, which had just received “new fittings,” tinted walls, new carpets, new pews, new “art windows,” a new “pulpit set,” and—the following month—a new piano.⁴⁰ The new “art windows” were likely replacements for the 15 tall windows at the sanctuary or “auditorium” level, including a “Bishop Levi Scott memorial window” in the front of the church, as well as a memorial window from Mrs. May Valentine’s class in memory of J.R. Elliott Curlett, a “little boy” who was a member but who had passed away just a few days before the dedication. During the celebration, Pastor Harris also gave “his sincere thanks to the workmen of the Jackson & Sharp Company,” a Wilmington shipbuilder and manufacturer of railroad cars, who had “assisted in enlarging the balcony.”⁴¹

Ten years later, in 1909, another round of renovations left their distinguishing mark on the building—especially its lower levels. A cellar was excavated and “thoroughly walled and cemented,” providing enough room for a steam heating plant “of the most modern type,” including a new boiler and space for the coal supply. This new heating system provided warmth for the entire church building. More visibly, and still leaving its strong aesthetic mark today, was

³⁵ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

³⁶ “Last Evening,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 12, 1887.

³⁷ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887, continuation page.

³⁸ “Scott Church,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, October 20, 1890.

³⁹ “New Pastor of Scott Church,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, September 8, 1897.

⁴⁰ “Scott M.E. Church—Four Thousand Dollars Subscribed to Pay for the Improvements,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 27, 1899; “Piano for a Church,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 20, 1899.

⁴¹ “Scott M.E. Church—Four Thousand Dollars Subscribed to Pay for the Improvements,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 27, 1899; “Piano for a Church,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 20, 1899.

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the installation of “a metallic covering” on the walls of the first floor, as the “Sunday school room” and “class rooms” underwent “extensive repairs.” The pressed metal coverings, installed by Penn Metal Company of Philadelphia, were described in one newspaper as a “covering of the walls . . . with metal and beautiful decoration of the same.” The floors in the Sunday school room were also covered with “a handsome Brussels carpet.”⁴²

In 1915, the modernization and beautification campaign continued under the Reverend William A. Wise, who closed the church’s upper auditorium for about two months for some additional upgrades. The work, which totaled \$1,500 and involved at least “a dozen artisans,” was characterized as “a general overhauling of the church,” and included work on both the exterior and interior. Significantly, the renovations included “cementing the stone sides and walls,” which may mark the first time the exterior walls were parged. The project also included a new roof (or, according to one account, “a new roof in some places”). The “audience room” (main auditorium) underwent “a general overhauling” that included a new pressed metal ceiling, the installation of new electric lights, and repairs to the stained-glass windows. Furniture was also painted, and in the cellar, “the heating apparatus” was also “overhauled.” During all this work, services were held “in the basement of the church.”⁴³ This flurry of physical renewal may reflect and coincide with a peak moment for the Scott Methodist Episcopal Church, since the following year it was characterized as an “energetic East Side congregation” that included 485 full members, 90 probationers, and 650 Sunday school scholars—totaling a congregation of 1,225. A newspaper noted that, under the leadership of several preachers and pastors, “Scott forged to the front and has figured as one of the most prominent and successful churches in the city.”⁴⁴

In January 1926, Scott M.E. Church purchased the neighboring property (627 E. 7th Street) from the executor of Mary A. McCormick’s estate for \$3,500.⁴⁵ After the purchase of the property by the church, construction of a new three-story, three-bay, brick Community House was financed by former Wilmingtonian William H. Todd in honor of his parents. (See Figures 10 and 11 for view of church, hyphen, and Community House.) Todd (1864-1932) was a Wilmington native, who rose from apprentice at the local Wilmington Pusey and Jones Shipyard to founder of the world-renown Todd Shipyard in Brooklyn, New York. Todd’s philanthropy benefited many other Wilmington causes, and in 1925, he erected the Todd Memorial in Brandywine Park to honor his parents as well as World War I participants. Todd Shipyard contributed significantly to the WWII emergency fleet efforts, though Todd himself did not live to see it.

A November 1926 newspaper article covering the dedication of the new building reported, “Work began on the building which is at 627 East Seventh street in June of this year. The new structure is three stories and the white stucco front is in keeping with the architectural

⁴² “To Improve Scott Church,” *The Evening Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, August 19, 1909; “Reopening of Scott Church,” *The Evening Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 13, 1909.

⁴³ “Many Improvements for Scott M.E. Church,” *The Evening Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, July 21, 1915; “Scott M.E. Church is Being Improved,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, July 21, 1915.

⁴⁴ “Scott M.E. Church, Oak from an Acorn,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 1, 1916.

⁴⁵ New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Henry R. Isaacs, executor of the estate of Mary A. McCormick, to the Scott Methodist Episcopal Church, January 6, 1926, Deed Book S-33, Page 308.

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appearance of the church.”⁴⁶ Todd also had placed over the door a bronze plaque dedicated to his parents. On the first floor, the building contained an entrance room and an auditorium, “which will seat about 150 persons.”⁴⁷ To the rear of the auditorium was a kitchen “equipped with modern conveniences.”⁴⁸ Located on the second floor were church parlors and ladies’ rest rooms, and the third floor contained two “spacious” meeting rooms. Joseph S. Hamilton was the hired contractor for the construction of the building.⁴⁹

There were no newspaper articles indicating a decline of the Scott Methodist Episcopal Church’s congregation, though it clearly had been all but abandoned by the late 1950s, when it was sold to a different congregation. In June 1945, the congregation was still investing in the building, hiring J.A. Barthomay and Company of Philadelphia to “recondition the pipe organ in the main auditorium room” at a cost of around \$550.⁵⁰ Still, there may have been hints of the downturn in an article just a few months later, in October 1945, surrounding the annual homecoming celebration for the church. While it described the building as “one of the best equipped Methodist churches in the city,” it also noted nostalgically, “For more than 90 years Scott Methodist Church has contributed to the spiritual life of the city,” and that “many of its members have assisted in establishing places of worship in other places.”⁵¹ Whether this establishing of other churches elsewhere meant mission work, or perhaps moving to new suburban locations, is unclear. Yet within 14 years, shortly after Reverend Roy T. Thawley delivered his last service to “his diminished congregation” (he had, in fact, officially retired two years earlier), the church organization would sell the old building to a neighboring congregation that was seeking a new home.

The Scott A.M.E. Zion Era: A New Congregation Makes Scott Its Home, 1959- 1975

In 1959, a Black congregation—Grace A.M.E. Zion Church, also located on East Seventh Street—purchased the Scott Methodist Episcopal Church building from the Peninsula Annual Conference for \$35,000 (Figure 15). Grace A.M.E. Zion Church (Figure 14) was located in Wilmington’s major urban renewal zone, known as Poplar Street Project A, and with the demolition of their home church looming, they found the Scott building—just a few blocks southeast on Seventh Street and just outside of the project zone—to be a suitable new home for their congregation. During the transition, the Grace church renamed itself Scott A.M.E. Zion Church—a stipulation required by the previous congregation—and held its first service in the

⁴⁶ “Scott M.E. Church House Dedication Set for Tonight,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 27, 1926.

⁴⁷ “Scott M.E. Church House Dedication Set for Tonight,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 27, 1926.

⁴⁸ “Scott M.E. Church House Dedication Set for Tonight,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 27, 1926.

⁴⁹ “Scott M.E. Church House Dedication Set for Tonight,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 27, 1926.

⁵⁰ “Contract to Recondition Pipe Organ is Awarded,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, June 12, 1945.

⁵¹ “Scott Methodist to Conduct Annual Homecoming Sunday,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, October 20, 1945.

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new building in May 1959.⁵² The Reverend L.A. Lawson, pastor of the A.M.E. Zion congregation, reported at the time that the Scott Church was “in excellent condition,” as was the attached Community House that had been “presented to” the church in 1926.⁵³ A newspaper reported that, beyond the building itself, “all memorials, books, and equipment, including the communion service, were left in the church to provide for a continuity of Methodist worship in the old building.”⁵⁴ Early the following year, in January 1960, an outdoor “cornerstone” laying exercise (which involved no actual cornerstone) served as a rededication ceremony for the building, marking its new life, new congregation, and promising future as a new community took over its stewardship. There was also a formal service inside the church, conducted by the host pastor, the Reverend L.A. Lawson, who was joined by the Reverend Dr. James A. Clement. For the evening service, “The Rt. Rev. Raymond Luther Jones of Salisbury, N.C., bishop of the Fourth Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Zion Church, preached the sermon.”⁵⁵

By April 1970, a newspaper article noted that Scott A.M.E. Zion Church was believed to be “the fastest-growing neighborhood church in the city,” with a membership of “about 450” at that time.⁵⁶ That year, the church was selected to host the annual meeting of the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference of the A.M.E. Church. The vitality of the congregation was evident—they had recently “dedicated a parsonage for their pastor” on Ruskin Road in Brandywine Hills, had recently paid off mortgages on its church property, had purchased three other properties near the church with plans to expand parking options for the congregation, and was discussing developing some apartments for elderly members of the congregation.⁵⁷ By 1975, the congregation roster included “about 580 names,” with the leadership further “encouraged” by the presence of a “young group of about 91.”⁵⁸

During the 1960s and 1970s, Scott’s active and robust congregation made additional updates to adapt the building to their needs—especially to the interior of the attached Community House and to supporting spaces on the lower level of the church, such as offices, meeting rooms, and fellowship spaces.⁵⁹ These new rooms were created out of larger spaces and involved the installation of new drywall partition walls and drop-ceilings. It is important to note that the early historic fabric (walls and ceiling finishes) survive underneath these 1970s treatments. Though exact dates are unknown for much of this work, there was at least one burst of updates during the

⁵² “Grace A.M.E. Zion Church Buys Old Scott Methodist,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 28, 1959; Patricia A. Lawson, Joyce Lawson, Armelia Lawson Puckham, and Julia E. Nelson, interviewed by Michael J. Emmons, Jr., and Catherine Morrissey. Wilmington, Delaware. April 12, 2023.

⁵³ “Grace A.M.E. Zion Church Buys Old Scott Methodist,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 28, 1959; “‘Old’ Scott Zion Still Growing,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 18, 1970.

⁵⁴ “Grace A.M.E. Zion Church Buys Old Scott Methodist,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 28, 1959.

⁵⁵ “‘Cornerstone’ Laid by Church,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, January 18, 1960.

⁵⁶ “‘Old’ Scott Zion Still Growing,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 18, 1970.

⁵⁷ “‘Old’ Scott Zion Still Growing,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 18, 1970.

⁵⁸ “Scott AME Pastor, Associate Help Congregation Celebrate 100 Years,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, June 21, 1975.

⁵⁹ Patricia A. Lawson, Joyce Lawson, Armelia Lawson Puckham, and Julia E. Nelson, interviewed by Michael J. Emmons, Jr., and Catherine Morrissey. Wilmington, Delaware. April 12, 2023.

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period between 1974 and 1975, under the supervision of Reverend Madison J. McRae, who took over the congregation after the departure of Reverend Lawson in 1974. McRae, who formerly worked as a contractor (and for whom “building [was] his hobby”), was behind “much of the renovation” work inspired by the congregation’s anniversary celebration in 1975—and a newspaper article that year noted that McRae’s pastorate had been “marked by church renovation programs.” For example, the preparation for the 1975 anniversary celebration included a new baptismal tank in the lower chapel, an update to McRae’s own office in the church’s lower level, which had been “newly paneled,” and new paint for the fellowship hall.⁶⁰ Additionally, McRae added the narrow and boxed in staircase between the lower chapel and the second-floor sanctuary during this period.⁶¹ In the sanctuary, McRae added a new altar and pulpit furniture, in the choir area added new benches, and broke up the chancel rail into two pieces.⁶² Brother Louis Jervey designed and installed the large lighted cross that hangs on the pipe organ on the altar.⁶³ McRae and Jervey, along with a few other unnamed congregants, undertook these aforementioned renovations themselves.

Since the 1975 renovation campaign, Scott A.M.E. Zion Church has undergone a few other minor material changes. Between 1985 and 1990, Reverend Charles H. Wilson, Jr. added a lavatory and shower inside the Pastor’s study room.⁶⁴ Under the next pastor, Reverend Kevin W. McGill, Sr. (1990-1993), the dining hall that was originally named for William H. Todd was renamed Crawford Hall in honor of Mr. Garfield and Mrs. Lillian Crawford.⁶⁵ Lastly, in 1995, new light fixtures were installed throughout the church, the lower sanctuary received new windows, and new carpeting was installed in the lower sanctuary, ladies lounge, and secretary’s office. These spaces also received new paint. A new cornerstone was laid to mark this event.⁶⁶ Since the mid-1990s, very little change has occurred to the building—currently, the congregation is raising money to replace the roof.

CRITERION A

Criterion A: Delaware Methodism & Scott Methodist Episcopal Church, 1852-1926

The formation of a mission school and chapel on the east side of Wilmington in 1851, and the construction of the permanent Scott Methodist Episcopal Church between 1868 and 1872, is historically significant for reflecting a surge in Methodist church construction in the City of

⁶⁰ “Scott AME Pastor, Associate Help Congregation Celebrate 100 Years,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, June 21, 1975.

⁶¹ Patricia A. Lawson, Joyce Lawson, Armelia Lawson Puckham, and Julia E. Nelson, interviewed by Michael J. Emmons, Jr., and Catherine Morrissey. Wilmington, Delaware. April 12, 2023.

⁶² “The History from 1875 to 2000,” *Scott A.M.E. Zion Church (Wilmington, Delaware): 125th Anniversary* (Wilmington, DE: Scott AME Zion Church, October 2000); Patricia A. Lawson, Joyce Lawson, Armelia Lawson Puckham, and Julia E. Nelson, interviewed by Michael J. Emmons, Jr., and Catherine Morrissey. Wilmington, Delaware. April 12, 2023.

⁶³ “The History from 1875 to 2000.”

⁶⁴ “The History from 1875 to 2000.”

⁶⁵ “The History from 1875 to 2000.”

⁶⁶ “The History from 1875 to 2000.”

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Wilmington during the mid-nineteenth century. Scott Methodist Episcopal Church was one of 20 Methodist Episcopal churches constructed in Wilmington between 1845 and 1915, many of which were born of neighborhood “mission” efforts and served a similar role in their respective neighborhoods.⁶⁷

Establishment of American Methodism in Delaware

Delaware played a central role in the formation of American Methodism. Henry Boehm, one of the early founders of the Methodist movement in America, stated “the Peninsula that lies between the Delaware and Chesapeake Bays . . . was the garden of Methodism in America.”⁶⁸ Methodism in America, in fact, began in Delaware with the preaching of George Whitefield on the Delmarva peninsula during the mid-eighteenth century. His preaching led to the development of small congregations that practiced some of the tenets of Methodism, and these early churches were the direct ancestors of the Methodist churches that later grew out of Francis Asbury’s mission.⁶⁹ Asbury was sent to America in 1771 by John Wesley, and a few years later, when Americans gained political independence from England after the Revolutionary War, American Methodists also separated from the Anglican church during the same era. In 1784, at a meeting in Barratt’s Chapel in Kent County, Delaware, Asbury and Thomas Coke officially established a Methodist church that was independent from the rules and strictures of the Anglican church in America. This newly independent church urged changes in individual lives, including an active participation in the church and with God.⁷⁰ Yet between 1828 and 1830, a major schism occurred within Methodism in response to questions of the organization and governance, with two primary branches emerging: the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Protestant Church. The Methodist Episcopal Church continued as the direct descendent of the Anglican church in America, while the Methodist Protestant branch separated due to a concern that the episcopal hierarchy placed too much power in bishops and from a desire by the laity to be represented at the Annual Conference.⁷¹

Urban Methodist Mission Churches in Nineteenth Century Wilmington, Delaware

Scott A.M.E. Zion Church reflects the city-wide establishment of Methodist mission churches in Wilmington—meetings or schools established in growing and/or underserved neighborhoods in urban, industrial neighborhoods during the mid-nineteenth century—eventually leading to a system of permanent neighborhood churches that were often the focal points of their communities. Delaware historian Carol Hoffecker has pointed out that “the importance of religious institutions as culture carriers in the lives of mid-nineteenth-century Wilmingtonians can hardly be exaggerated.”⁷² She has argued that the development of Methodist churches, in

⁶⁷ Bensinger, Section 8-4; Zebley, *The Churches of Delaware*.

⁶⁸ William Henry Williams, *The Garden of American Methodism: The Delmarva Peninsula, 1769-1820* (Wilmington, DE: Peninsula Conference of the United Methodist Church, 1984), xiii.

⁶⁹ Martha L. Daniel, Susan L. Taylor, and Rebecca J. Sheppard, “Mount Pleasant Methodist Episcopal Church and Parsonage, New Castle County, Delaware,” National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, (Newark, DE), 1998.

⁷⁰ Daniel, Taylor, and Sheppard.

⁷¹ Daniel, Taylor, and Sheppard.

⁷² Carol E. Hoffecker, *Wilmington, Delaware: Portrait of an Industrial City, 1830-1910* (Univ. Press of Virginia, 1974), 72-74.

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particular, both reflected and contributed greatly to the growth of Wilmington's neighborhoods during the mid-nineteenth century, asserting that "the progress of Methodism epitomizes the interrelation of a religious body with the total urban society." Hoffecker further notes that "it was the churches, especially the Methodist congregations, that made the first systematic efforts to improve neighborhood conditions in the east-side slums" and the growing working-class neighborhoods on Wilmington's outskirts. In these growing neighborhoods, "community pride manifested itself in building churches, which were the largest, most elegant edifices in the city."⁷³

Methodism was "the fastest-growing faith in nineteenth-century Wilmington," due to its "evangelical zeal"—and its growth was advanced in neighborhood after neighborhood, district after district, primarily through a system of urban mission schools and churches.⁷⁴ This system helped fuel the construction of twenty Methodist churches in the modest-sized city of Wilmington between 1845 and 1915.⁷⁵ As such, the "mission concept of this denomination" resulted in both "social and cultural impacts on several neighborhoods" in Wilmington.⁷⁶ The mission dynamic in Wilmington involved larger, "parent" churches—including Asbury Methodist Church, St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, and Grace Methodist Church—establishing outreach schools and chapels to establish congregations in other neighborhoods and then later (as Hoffecker characterizes it) "relinquish[ing] authority once their offspring had reached maturity" as self-supporting, independent churches.⁷⁷ Grace Methodist Church, in particular, established plans "to make the church a center for citywide Methodist missions."⁷⁸ In addition to the obvious evangelical motivations for such missions, Hoffecker argues that the promotion of new Methodist churches was often led by prominent citizens and businessmen who were quite "concerned about the potential for social disorder in the expanding community" (a chaplain at one of these missions noted that "the people were poor, illiterate, and desperately wicked"), and they sometimes personally funded the mission work. These community leaders felt that "the church was the institution best suited to condition potentially antisocial individuals" to "restrain behavior" and "maintain community tranquility."⁷⁹ For example, the mission movement at St. Paul's church was led by Job Jackson (president of Jackson & Sharp Car Works) and J. Taylor Gause (president of Harlan & Hollingsworth), who aimed to establish missions in the city's working-class neighborhoods. In 1863, Jackson himself led a group of Methodists into an east-side neighborhood to sing hymns in the street to attract a few "ragged and dirty urchins" to a new Sunday school there.⁸⁰

This social reform dynamic, with its attendant class anxieties, may have been a less important motivation for the establishment of the Scott mission during the early 1850s, since geographic

⁷³ Hoffecker, *Wilmington, Delaware*, 73.

⁷⁴ Hoffecker, *Wilmington, Delaware*, 76-78.

⁷⁵ Bensinger, Section 8-2.

⁷⁶ Bensinger, Section 8-3.

⁷⁷ Hoffecker, *Wilmington, Delaware*, 78.

⁷⁸ Hoffecker, *Wilmington, Delaware*, 78.

⁷⁹ Hoffecker, *Wilmington, Delaware*, 76.

⁸⁰ Hoffecker, *Wilmington, Delaware*, 76-77.

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need among existing congregants seemed to be at least an equal motivation. The impetus to establish a Methodist church here, according to later recollections, was the clear “need of church accommodations for this eastern section of the city”—a demand that would only rise as “the population was increasing and the probabilities of building over the unoccupied space extending to the Brandywine and Christiana creeks did not require much imagination.”⁸¹ With this in mind, a new church was officially organized in the spring of 1854, when 15 members of Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church and Union Methodist Episcopal Church applied for and received a pastor—Reverend Hobbs—to hold regular church services at the Seventh Street Sabbath School’s “chapel.” The formation of this new church was reportedly “not from any factious opposition to the [home] churches” of its members but due to convenience and the anticipated need for a Methodist church in this part of Wilmington.⁸² The construction between 1868 and 1872 of the permanent Scott church building was part of a related “wave of construction” for permanent Methodist churches that occurred in the late 1850s and 1880s.⁸³

When describing the life cycles of Wilmington’s nineteenth century Methodist churches, another National Register nomination notes, “These community anchors, during each phase, were developed to serve the community’s changing religious and social needs,” which were “created by shifting urban populations.”⁸⁴ It notes that the significance of these churches is based on their “role[s] as an anchor in the community and its continuous use throughout several decades of growth and change.”⁸⁵ After the construction of the permanent Scott M.E. church, the congregation continued to make improvements to the building over the half century. Substantial beautification campaigns occurred in 1899, 1909, 1915, and 1926, which are reflective of the growth of the East Side neighborhood during the late-nineteenth century and, as such, an influx of membership to the Scott congregation. At the time Scott M.E. was founded (in 1852), the section of the East Side neighborhood where the church is located contained “only scattered houses.”⁸⁶ In 1868 when construction began on the permanent church building, the city blocks surrounding Scott M.E. were largely vacant (especially to the north, east, and west)—residential settlement had largely infilled the blocks to the south of the church. Between 1868 and 1876, many two-story rowhouses were constructed in the vicinity of the church—these houses provided “cheap housing for the workers employed in the nearby brickyards, carriage factories, Morocco leather factories, and cotton mills.”⁸⁷ Records for the Scott M.E. Church have not been located at this time, but it is likely many of the congregants resided in the East Side and were likely working-class. The East Side continued to infill over the remainder of the nineteenth

⁸¹ “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

⁸² The founding members included Jacob S. Weldin, John Lonsdale, Joseph Spurway, George Mortimer, William H. Riley, Thomas Orpwood, Gilbert Holmes, William Bicking, John Dick, William Heisler, William Griffenberg, John B. Kindal, W. H. Foulk, S. Carlisle. See “The Churches,” *Wilmington Daily Commercial*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 27, 1872; “A Church’s Growth,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, December 13, 1887.

⁸³ Bensinger, Section 8-4.

⁸⁴ Bensinger, Section 8-1.

⁸⁵ Bensinger, Section 8-2.

⁸⁶ Carol Ann Scott, Donn Devine, and Patricia Maley, “Cultural Resources Survey of Wilmington, Delaware: Evaluation of Cultural Resources in the East Side,” (Wilmington, DE: Office of Planning, City of Wilmington), 1983, 6.

⁸⁷ Scott, Devine, and Maley, 6.

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century, and one historic preservationist said of the development of this Wilmington neighborhood, “By 1901, the East Side was fully developed.”⁸⁸ The 1901 date is derived from a 1901 Atlas Map of the City of Wilmington, which shows the East Side had fully developed between 1887-1901. This nearly coincides with the first major upgrade to the Scott church building, which occurred in 1899. This was when the congregation installed new carpets, new pews, and the new “art windows,” purchased a new piano, and enlarged the balcony.

The Scott M.E. congregation continued to grow and make changes to the building over the first three decades of the twentieth century. Two other notable beautification campaigns occurred in 1909 and 1915—when pressed metal work was added first to the lower level of the building (1909) and then to the second-floor sanctuary (1915). This 1915 renovation of the church came just one year before the known high point in membership of the congregation. A 1916 newspaper article noted of the church, “Scott forged to the front and has figured as one of the most prominent and successful churches in the city. The present numerical strength of the church is indicated by the following reports to the last quarterly conference: full membership, 485; probations, 90; Sunday school scholars, 650.”⁸⁹ However, after this point, membership declined at Scott M.E. Church. Despite the construction of a large new Community House in 1926, the last major upgrade to the building under Scott M.E. ownership, by 1927, membership of the church had shrunk to 350 members.⁹⁰ This decline in membership was not unique to the Scott congregation—in 1930, the Wilmington M.E. Conference noted a decline in total membership throughout the conference.⁹¹

The changes made to the Scott church building during the first three decades of the twentieth century reflects the continued importance of the church to the surrounding community. For this reason, the twentieth-century alterations to the church building contribute to the structure’s significance rather than detract from it.

Criterion A: Neighborhood Transitions & the Scott A.M.E. Zion Era, 1959 to 1975

The acquisition of the old Scott Methodist Episcopal Church by the neighboring Grace African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church—which then became Scott A.M.E. Zion Church—is historically significant for reflecting major social transitions on Wilmington’s East Side during the mid-twentieth century, as well as the significant disruptions caused by urban renewal projects of the same time—in this case, with Wilmington’s “Poplar Street Project A”—and the adaptability and resiliency of Wilmington’s East Side congregations during this period.

Wilmington’s East Side in the 1960s—Urban Renewal and Inner-City Displacement

The dwindling congregation of the Scott Methodist (Episcopal) Church, long comprised of solely white congregants, and the church building’s subsequent adoption by a local Black congregation, was the direct result of white flight and urban renewal planning in Wilmington during the

⁸⁸ Scott, Devine, and Maley, 6.

⁸⁹ “Scott M.E. Church, Oak from an Acorn,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 1, 1916.

⁹⁰ “Scott M.E. Church Grew from Sunday School Union,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 26, 1927.

⁹¹ “Methodists Report Membership Decline,” *The Evening Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, March 31, 1930.

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decades before and after World War II. During the 1950s and 60s, social and economic turmoil in Wilmington's core—resulting from pronounced white flight and failed urban renewal efforts—led to significant demographic shifts in many of the city's neighborhoods. Not only did much of Wilmington's white population—including fairly recent immigrant groups—seek a more modern and leafy lifestyle in the suburbs and city peripheries, but many Blacks were also displaced by “slum clearance” and forced to scatter to only a few places they might legally live in a segregated housing system. Even those Black residents who remained on the edges of demolished areas eventually elected to escape the decimated and deteriorating communities that remained. Grace A.M.E. Zion Church—the congregation that eventually purchased the Scott building and moved there in 1959—was located within the most notorious urban renewal project in Wilmington—called “Poplar Street Project A”—which demolished almost everything within 22 city blocks.

The Grace A.M.E. Zion Church was located near the northern edge of the doomed section of Poplar Street Project A, on Seventh Street east of Walnut Street (Figure 14). During its previous 84 years, the congregation had experienced a nomadic existence, moving several times as the modest congregation evolved and sought secure and satisfactory places to worship. The name of the congregation changed a couple of times, as well. The church was first organized as Plymouth A.M.E. Zion in 1875 and worshipped in “the old Union Church on the corner of Second and Washington Streets,” where the Reverend M.M. Bell was the pastor. However, the congregation also worshipped at 10th and Orange Streets and on Tatnall Street (just below Second Street). The church was reincorporated in 1896 as Grace A.M.E. Zion Church, a name it would keep for 65 years, and two years later, in 1898, Grace A.M.E. Zion purchased a church building at 11th and Dupont Streets. Yet just nine years later, in 1907, the congregation again relocated, this time to “the old Covenant Church at 224 West Street.” Finally, on May 20, 1929, about 22 years after the move to West Street, the Grace A.M.E. Zion congregation found its longtime and beloved home—the old First Methodist Protestant Church on Seventh Street—where it would serve as the congregation's house of worship and a nexus of the community for over 30 years, until urban renewal forced their relocation.⁹²

Poplar Street Project A, which led to Grace A.M.E. Zion's move, was an attempt to remedy deeply rooted problems that had accelerated after World War II—leaving many local leaders to fear that the very survival of Wilmington as a viable city was in jeopardy. During the 1950s, despite the population of Wilmington's broader metropolitan area surging by nearly 100,000, the population within the city actually declined by nearly 14,000.⁹³ This rapid disinvestment in the city led to rapid economic and social decline and to increased poverty and crime in core neighborhoods adjacent to the downtown.

A 1949 housing act in the U.S. Congress sought to upgrade housing in decaying urban areas by offering federal funding for up to two-thirds of the cost to acquire and demolish large tracts of blighted city neighborhoods, clearing the way for private redevelopment efforts—in hopes of

⁹² “The History from 1875 to 2000,” *Scott A.M.E. Zion Church (Wilmington, Delaware): 125th Anniversary* (Wilmington, DE: Scott AME Zion Church, October 2000).

⁹³ Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 154-155.

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creating vibrant, new buildings where slums had previously existed. Subsequent efforts resulting from these “slum clearance” programs, and related efforts toward “urban renewal,” often resulted in problematic situations for cities, even beyond the obvious racial and social injustices that often accompanied their execution. In Wilmington, this was especially the case, where historian Carol Hoffecker has pointed out that “slum clearance had a slow and painful history” and ultimately “highly unsatisfactory results.”

East Side ‘Slum Clearance’ and the Impetus for “Poplar Street Project A”

Wilmington’s slum clearance and urban renewal efforts focused on the long-troubled east side. Already identified as a blighted area in 1932 by a state housing commission, this large expanse of the city just a couple of blocks east of Wilmington’s core business district “had become an overcrowded slum,” with many of its rowhouses still owned by former white residents who had moved to better parts of the city and continued to rent their properties to mostly Black tenants—who were severely restricted in where they could live in a city that was still highly segregated in its housing.⁹⁴ By 1945, the “sad signs of blight” were seemingly everywhere in the East Side, including “broken windows, unhinged doorways, collapsing plaster ceilings, and dilapidated, overused wooden privies.”⁹⁵ In 1953, the Wilmington Housing Authority officially selected a 22-block area of the East Side for slum clearance and urban renewal—an area that would be designated “Poplar Street Project A.” This doomed 22-block zone (Figure 17), which included the Grace A.M.E. Zion Church property at 308-310 East Seventh Street (east of Walnut Street, see Figure 14), was reportedly comprised of 96 percent Black residents and contained 638 structures, mostly in the form of two- and three-story houses but peppered with a mix of 88 businesses of various kinds and a few community buildings (some of the latter would be retained). The rationale for renewal in this area seemed quite reasonable: it was located just a few blocks from Market Street, Wilmington’s vibrant business and shopping thoroughfare, and “it contained a number of good-quality community service structures” that could be retained during the redevelopment, including “a brand-new elementary school, a well-built junior high school from the 1920s, four churches, and a settlement house.”⁹⁶ Yet, besides these few bright spots, the neighborhood seemed hopelessly blighted and beyond repair to local leaders, who had determined that 97 percent of the houses were dilapidated and needed to be torn down. Student researchers in 1954 counted 364 outdoor toilets in the project area and discovered that 70 percent of houses had no central heating and 45 percent lacked even hot water.⁹⁷ Conversions of single-family homes into apartments had increased the total number of dwelling units to 970, though fewer than 200 houses in the area were owner occupied. Wilmington’s choice for the Project A site was validated in the spring of 1954, when James Follin, the director of slum clearance and redevelopment for the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency, toured the area and “proclaimed himself to be very pleased with Wilmington’s choice.”⁹⁸ In April 1958, after a Delaware Supreme Court decision upholding the right of eminent domain for Poplar Street Project A, the housing reformers predicted that within three years, “the dismal east side would be

⁹⁴ Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 126.

⁹⁵ Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 127.

⁹⁶ Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 131.

⁹⁷ Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 131.

⁹⁸ Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 131.

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transformed into a clean, healthy, modern residential environment,” and “Wilmington would turn the corner from slow decay toward vibrant resuscitation.” The project would benefit everyone, since residents were promised better housing, the city would generate more tax revenue, the construction trades would be stimulated, and “Wilmingtonians would no longer be embarrassed by a downtown slum.”⁹⁹

On the East Side, despite the demolitions that had dramatically eliminated most of 22 city blocks in 1961, Poplar Street Project A sat stagnant and mostly empty for many years. For the entire 1960s, “the sight of 22 acres of vacant, rubble-strewn land surrounding Poplar Street just two blocks from the downtown retail section” was “an embarrassing eyesore” for both Wilmington residents and downtown commuters, alike.¹⁰⁰ The failures and delays of Poplar Street Project A were most devastating, however, to the Black communities that were displaced—and for those who remained in the East Side to witness their communities being disrupted and given false hope—including Scott A.M.E. Zion Church’s leadership and remaining members. On the outskirts of Project A’s demolished blocks, a large number of Black residents—many of them middle-class, owner-occupants—stayed in their homes and remained attached to their businesses, social institutions, and community. These remaining East Side residents “were proud of their neighborhood and of their homes and were the leaders in their churches, lodges, schools, and in politics.” This was certainly the case for Reverend Lawson and his Scott A.M.E. Zion Church congregation, which was still growing in size during the 1960s.

Persistence on the East Side: The Vitality of Scott A.M.E. Zion Church

Scott A.M.E. Zion persisted—and even grew substantially—despite being removed from their beloved Grace A.M.E. Zion Church building, facing substantial challenges with displaced congregants, and enduring stalled renewal in the adjacent city blocks. The Grace congregation’s acquisition of the Scott building was part of a larger pattern, both in Wilmington and in U.S. cities more broadly, of urban white churches being purchased and adapted by Black congregations during the post-World War II era. A newspaper article reporting the sale of the Scott church building noted, “It is national Methodist policy to turn over abandoned inner-city churches to brother denominations whenever possible.”¹⁰¹ However, this transfer of ownership to

⁹⁹ Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 135.

¹⁰⁰ Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 129, 169, and 160. The Wilmington Housing Authority offered Project A for development bids in the fall of 1961. The winning proposal, submitted by Wilmington Renewal Associates and called the “Preston plan” (after the consortium’s architect, W. Ellis Preston), was mostly residential in character—consisting of 550 rental units and 190 rowhouses surrounding a public park. Preston had recently completed plans for the adjacent Civic Center project, and “his firm announced that their proposal had been conceived in unity with the Civic Center and hinged upon the city’s commitment to it” (Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 176). “By selecting the plan that depended most upon the Civic Center project, the Housing Authority was forcing the city to engage in a more extensive renewal program than had been originally contemplated. The Poplar Street-Civic Center plan was contingent on the cooperation of the Federal Housing Administration, the General Services Administration, the state general assembly, New Castle County, and the city government. Delays by any of these agencies and governmental bodies could—and did—hold up the project not merely for months, but for years. The old houses were torn down but nothing new was going up, because the developer was waiting for progress on the civic center” (Hoffecker, *Corporate Capital*, 177).

¹⁰¹ “Grace A.M.E. Zion Church Buys Old Scott Methodist,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 28, 1959.

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the Grace congregation came with a stipulation—the Black congregation would need to retain the “Scott” name in order to receive a reduced purchase price for the property.¹⁰² The same newspaper article noted that “the same price was adjusted down considerably from its book value,” a gesture that reportedly depended on the retention of the Scott name.¹⁰³ While Reverend Lawson recalled gracefully in 1970, “We didn’t find changing the name difficult” because “Grace as a name didn’t mean a great deal to the congregation,” some surviving congregants remember a deep sense of loss due to both the forced abandonment of the Grace building and the forced changing of the church’s name.¹⁰⁴ In fact, Reverend Lawson’s daughter, Patricia A. Lawson, recalls a melancholy “march” down Seventh Street from the old Grace church building to the new Scott building, characterizing it as a very solemn affair rather than a joyous or celebratory event.¹⁰⁵

Still, despite the neighborhood disruption and forced relocation, the Scott A.M.E. Zion congregation persisted, grew, and prospered for many years afterwards—especially under the leadership of Reverend L.A. Lawson. Within a decade, by April 1970, a newspaper article noted that Scott A.M.E. Zion Church was believed to be “the fastest-growing neighborhood church in the city,” with a membership of “about 450” at that time.¹⁰⁶ That year, the church was selected to host the annual meeting of the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference of the A.M.E. Church. By 1975, the congregation roster included “about 580 names,” with the leadership further “encouraged” by the presence of a “young group of about 91.”¹⁰⁷ Under Reverend Lawson’s 25-year tenure as church leader, Scott A.M.E. Zion Church “became the second [largest] church in membership in the Salisbury District, surpassed only by First Church in Baltimore.”¹⁰⁸ During this time, the church—under Reverend Lawson’s leadership—started several programs and initiatives for the congregation as well as the local East Side community. Daughter Patricia A. Lawson recalled that he started “at least 33 initiatives,” which included day cares and vacation bible studies, both of which were immensely popular with neighborhood children.¹⁰⁹ He also formed Boy Scout troops, as well as two choirs—a children’s choir of about 75 children and an older chorus named after Lawson himself, called the “Lawson Chorus.”¹¹⁰ The church building was also used for a number of community functions including events, like kindergarten

¹⁰² Patricia A. Lawson, Joyce Lawson, Armelia Lawson Puckham, and Julia E. Nelson, interviewed by Michael J. Emmons, Jr., and Catherine Morrissey. Wilmington, Delaware. April 12, 2023.

¹⁰³ “Grace A.M.E. Zion Church Buys Old Scott Methodist,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 28, 1959.

¹⁰⁴ “‘Old’ Scott Zion Still Growing,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 18, 1970.

¹⁰⁵ Patricia A. Lawson, Joyce Lawson, Armelia Lawson Puckham, and Julia E. Nelson, interviewed by Michael J. Emmons, Jr., and Catherine Morrissey. Wilmington, Delaware. April 12, 2023.

¹⁰⁶ “‘Old’ Scott Zion Still Growing,” *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, April 18, 1970.

¹⁰⁷ “Scott AME Pastor, Associate Help Congregation Celebrate 100 Years,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, June 21, 1975.

¹⁰⁸ “The Rev. L.A. Lawson Led Church for 25 Years,” *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, March 11, 1985.

¹⁰⁹ Patricia A. Lawson, Joyce Lawson, Armelia Lawson Puckham, and Julia E. Nelson, interviewed by Michael J. Emmons, Jr., and Catherine Morrissey. Wilmington, Delaware. April 12, 2023.

¹¹⁰ Patricia A. Lawson, Joyce Lawson, Armelia Lawson Puckham, and Julia E. Nelson, interviewed by Michael J. Emmons, Jr., and Catherine Morrissey. Wilmington, Delaware. April 12, 2023.

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graduation, hosted singing groups, and was the site of special programs and meetings.¹¹¹ After the Reverend L.A. Lawson was re-assigned from his duties at Scott A.M.E. Church in 1974, his successors—including Reverend Madison McRae—completed renovations in 1974 and 1975 to update the church as the congregation headed into the last quarter of the twentieth century.

CRITERION C

Criterion C: Romanesque Revival Church Architecture in the United States, 1840 to 1890

The Scott Methodist Episcopal Church (Scott A.M.E. Zion Church) is significant under Criterion C at the local level for its Romanesque Revival architecture, reflecting a national architectural movement that emerged during the 1840s, surged in popularity for church buildings during the 1850s, and then faded in use during the 1870s and 1880s (with the exception of an evolved version of the style, now called Richardsonian Romanesque). It is a strong neighborhood example of a larger architectural trend in Wilmington, where several district churches were built in the Romanesque Revival style between 1850 and 1900.

The Rise of Romanesque Revival in the United States

The Romanesque Revival in the United States began in the 1840s, mostly for new church buildings, and by the 1850s, the style overtook the Gothic Revival in popularity among church builders.¹¹² Perhaps most distinguishable by its rounded arch windows—in contrast to the Gothic Revival’s pointed arch (or lancet) windows—the Romanesque Revival style first emerged in German-speaking regions of Europe during the 1830s, where it was known as *Rundbogenstil*, or “round-arch style” (an 1853 American publication called it the “modernized Romanesque” or “Round style, so called from the arches of its openings being semi-circular”).¹¹³ In England and the United States, during the 1840s and 1850s, variations of the style were sometimes called the “Norman style” or “Lombard style,” in reference to the original Romanesque architecture built during the High Middle Ages by the Normans in England and Italians in Lombardy.¹¹⁴ It is important to note that the first stage of Romanesque Revival in America, which lasted from roughly 1845-1875, exhibits clear differences from the later “Richardsonian Romanesque” movement that emerged after 1870—which was a bolder, more dramatic, Victorian interpretation of the style, led by American architect Henry Hobson Richardson and popular for churches, civic buildings, and large homes during the last three decades of the 1800s. These various expressions of Romanesque Revival architecture continued to be popular in the United States well into the early-twentieth century.

¹¹¹ Patricia A. Lawson, Joyce Lawson, Armelia Lawson Puckham, and Julia E. Nelson, interviewed by Michael J. Emmons, Jr., and Catherine Morrissey. Wilmington, Delaware. April 12, 2023.

¹¹² Marcus Whiffen and Frederick Koeper, *American Architecture: Volume 1: 1607-1860*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987), 196.

¹¹³ *Book of Plans* (1853) quoted in Gwen W. Steege, “The ‘Book of Plans’ and the Early Romanesque Revival in the United States: A Study in Architectural Patronage,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (Sep. 1987), 227.

¹¹⁴ Whiffen and Koeper, 200.

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The original Romanesque style of building, which emerged in Europe during the medieval period (c. 1000), was a “fusion of Christian and Classical ideals” in architecture.¹¹⁵ It revived old architectural concepts from Roman basilicas—including round-headed arches, symmetry, and basic geometrical shapes like squares and circles—while adding a much more vertical orientation. This tendency has been described as a “stretching” of older, civic-oriented Roman designs upward in order to emphasize the spiritual, Christian orientation of medieval church buildings, with their designs reaching towards the sky to evoke a yearning for divine salvation.¹¹⁶ Romanesque architecture thus “abandoned the horizontal repose of the original Classical language” and created new forms that “emphatically pointed toward the heavens.”¹¹⁷ This movement would eventually evolve into the even more vertical and pointed Gothic style. The Gothic would be the first medieval architecture to be widely revived in the United States for church buildings during the nineteenth century, and it would have a more long-lasting tenure, but the Romanesque Revival emerged as strong competitor for several decades during the mid-1800s.

Scholars have pointed to several reasons the Romanesque Revival style emerged as a strong competitor to the Gothic Revival during the 1840s in the United States and then eclipsed it during the 1850s. First, many Americans viewed Germans as “the cultural leaders of Europe” at the time, and the novel Romanesque Revival originating in Germany after 1830 was thus stylistically appealing. Rhode Island architect Thomas Tefft, who graduated from Brown University in 1851, observed that same year, “The round arch school of Germany is employing much invention and originality in their designs,” and he predicted “a favorable result.”¹¹⁸ Secondly, Protestants who associated Gothic architecture with the Catholic Church felt that Romanesque architecture was, as one scholar put it, “less tainted with popery” (a sentiment that required some creative imagining, of course, since Romanesque churches were also built for Catholics).¹¹⁹ Third, the simpler forms and decorative system of the Romanesque Revival (in comparison to the Gothic Revival) offered a stylish architecture that was both more economical and simpler to build—appealing to the church leaders who had to fund construction and to the masons who had to perform it. An 1849 architectural book pointed out that Romanesque architecture (the “Norman” style) had “fewer members and less complication of details” than Gothic, while an 1853 book on church architecture noted the style was “remarkable for the simplicity of its moulding.”¹²⁰ Lastly, because of the Romanesque Revival’s less flamboyant detailing (again in comparison especially to the Gothic Revival), it may have appealed to many Americans’ more austere, republican sensibilities.¹²¹ To this point, Robert Dale Owen wrote in 1849, in his *Hints on Public Architecture*, that the Romanesque style’s “entire expression is less ostentatious, and if political character may be ascribed to Architecture, more republican.”¹²² The

¹¹⁵ Mark Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings and Their Cultural and Technological Context* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 17.

¹¹⁶ Gelernter, 151-152.

¹¹⁷ Gelernter, 17.

¹¹⁸ Quoted in Whiffen and Koeper, 196-197.

¹¹⁹ Gelernter, 152.

¹²⁰ Quoted in Whiffen and Koeper, 197.

¹²¹ Gelernter, 152.

¹²² Whiffen and Koeper, 197.

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emerging Romanesque style of architecture was thus viewed as fashionable, more affordable, and even more American than the competing Gothic Revival.

The first American example of the Romanesque Revival, according to some sources, was Richard Upjohn's Church of the Pilgrims in Brooklyn, New York, designed between 1844-1846. However, the most influential of the era, and the most highly recognized early Romanesque Revival building today, was James Renwick, Jr.'s design for the Smithsonian Institution Building on the National Mall in Washington D.C.—popularly known as the “Castle”—which was begun in 1846-1847. Leading examples such as these, designed by prominent architects, helped to quickly popularize the Romanesque Revival in the United States, with many examples emerging during the late 1840s—designed by Renwick, Upjohn, Leopold Eidlitz, Henry Austin, William Backus, Gervase Wheeler, and many other professional architects of national or regional distinction. The 1850s witnessed a surge in Romanesque Revival construction, as dozens of prominent church buildings were built in cities throughout the eastern United States.

The Methodists in the United States were one of the primary denominations that embraced the Romanesque Revival, and their leadership constructed a large number of church buildings across the country in the style. The Gothic Revival “posed problems for the less liturgical denominations” like the Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Unitarians, according to a leading scholar of the early Romanesque Revival in the U.S., Gwen Steege. She argues that “their traditional distrust of forms or images which seemed to them too much identified with what they called ‘popery’” inhibited their “urge to adopt romantic modes for their buildings,” and both “aesthetic tradition and theological doctrine favored the simplicity of the classical styles.”¹²³ The Romanesque Revival was thus an ideal mode of building for these American denominations—and the Methodists often led the charge in building in the style. Steege points out that by the mid-1800s, “the extraordinary growth of Methodism in the United States, both in numbers and in property, had brought an increase in church construction.” By 1856, a Methodist minister had published a book of church designs, endorsed by the Boston Conference of Methodist Ministers, that included five “Romanesque” designs.¹²⁴ These books created an “enthusiasm” for Romanesque architecture “which spread from community to community” throughout both “the settled East” and “on the western frontier.”¹²⁵ The construction of so many Methodist churches in Wilmington in the Romanesque Revival style was thus a strong local manifestation of a national movement.

Character-Defining Features of Romanesque Revival Churches (1840-1890)

Romanesque Revival church buildings varied significantly in their overall designs, especially depending on the scale and sophistication of the overall compositions. The Smithsonian Building's large, sprawling design (which inspired much ecclesiastical architecture) featured a highly *picturesque* form—with asymmetrical massing and much variation in the heights of its many towers, gables, and building sections. Many of the highest-style examples of Romanesque Revival churches also featured such picturesque irregularity, reminiscent of Gothic Revival

¹²³ Steege, 218.

¹²⁴ Steege, 222.

¹²⁵ Steege, 222.

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buildings, and often incorporated towers to emphasize verticality. However, many more church buildings of smaller scale and more humble budgets were far less extravagant in their designs—and far less picturesque—even evoking a symmetrical, more Classical, and even horizontal sensibility (these latter examples might actually better reflect the simpler, more Classical forms of the earliest Romanesque churches in Europe).¹²⁶ Gwen Steege points out that “many provincial buildings were frequently more classical than medieval, achieving their Romanesque character from the applied details of round-arched openings, recessed wall arches, hood moldings, and corbel tables.”¹²⁷

Indeed, no matter the size, budget, or massing, a few character-defining, signature architectural features served as common denominators for almost all Romanesque Revival churches built during the mid-1800s. First, most Romanesque Revival buildings were masonry structures, built of brick and/or stone (Steege points out that “the choice of building material varied, with brick being perhaps most common,” though stone was “the choice of the critics”).¹²⁸ Second, almost all Romanesque Revival churches featured many round-headed arches—especially at the tops of windows but also for other wall openings and ornamental wall recesses. Most also featured masonry corbel tables at the building’s roofline, slightly projecting at the top of the walls, and often arcaded in a repeating arch motif.¹²⁹ Many also exhibited design elements that emphasized verticality, with features such as engaged pilasters, tall, narrow windows, and, in some cases, wall buttresses (similar to Gothic Revival churches). Some Romanesque Revival churches feature similar architectural features to contemporaneous Italianate buildings, including tall, narrow openings, doors and windows with rounded tops, and heavy mouldings or hoods over those openings, as well as a “bracketed” effect under rooflines created by the ornamental corbel tables. As far as the interiors of Romanesque Revival churches, little scholarship has analyzed architectural patterns—though one architectural history tersely notes, “Romanesque Revival churches as a class had spacious but character-less preaching-hall interiors, often galleried.”¹³⁰ Steege more generously argues that Romanesque Revival church builders avoided “overdone” interiors to avoid architecture and décor that, as one period source claimed, would “distract the pious worshipper.” However, domestic comforts and modest finishes were often present, including carpeted floors, pews that were cushioned and/or upholstered, woodwork that was stained or varnished, and walls that were painted in soft, warm, neutral tones. The plastered walls also sometimes featured fresco paintings.¹³¹ Yet it is likely that denominational differences, as well as budgets, were as influential as any other factors in determining individual churches’ interior designs. Even the most vernacular or plain versions of Romanesque Revival churches are significant survivals, representing the “conscious expressions of the broadening vision, the

¹²⁶ Architectural historian Mark Gelernter notes that “sometimes the nineteenth-century Romanesque Revival architects stressed the horizontal to the point where it is difficult to distinguish their buildings from a straight Classical Revival.” See Gelernter, 151-152.

¹²⁷ Steege, 227.

¹²⁸ Steege, 223.

¹²⁹ Gelernter, 152.

¹³⁰ Whiffen and Koeper, 198.

¹³¹ Steege 225-226.

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pragmatism, and the growing enthusiasm for the romantic which characterized the churchman-client of mid-nineteenth century America.”¹³²

The Romanesque Revival Architecture of Scott M.E. Church / Scott A.M.E. Zion Church

Scott Methodist Episcopal Church (now Scott A.M.E. Zion Church) in Wilmington—a brick masonry, stucco-clad building reconstructed between 1868 and 1872—is thus a strong example, and a late example, of a Romanesque Revival church built during the end of the revival’s first phase in the United States. It also exhibits features similar to other local Romanesque Revival buildings, suggesting local vernacular trends (or the same designers) for some of the Romanesque Revival church buildings in the area.

Scott Methodist Episcopal Church (built 1868-1872) was constructed in the final years that the Romanesque Revival was the architectural style preferred by denominational leadership. In the years leading up to Scott M.E. Church’s construction (as well as during its construction), the architectural program of the Methodist Episcopal Church is evident in annual reports and architectural plan books published in the decades after the U.S. Civil War—just as the Romanesque Revival was apparently being eclipsed in desirability again by the Gothic Revival, at least in the eyes of denominational leaders. In 1871, during Scott Methodist Church’s construction in Wilmington, the Methodist Episcopal Church’s “Extension Society” in Philadelphia published its first three illustrations of recommended church plans—and the first two were bold Romanesque Revival designs (Figure 18).¹³³ Yet this might have actually marked the end of the Romanesque Revival’s first phase of popularity, at least within the Methodist Episcopal Church, because by the following year, in 1872, the same organization’s annual report contained eight recommended church plans—and *all* were in the Gothic Revival style, with no Romanesque Revival designs published.¹³⁴ This apparent preference for the Gothic over Romanesque was even more pronounced eighteen years later, in 1889, when a more developed book of church architectural plans published by the same organization (now called the Extension Office) included designs almost solely in the Gothic Revival style. Out of 75 church designs, including both one- and two-story examples, only a single, solitary example of Romanesque or rounded-arch style was presented, while 74 examples exhibited pointed arches, lancet windows, and other signatures of Gothic Revival.¹³⁵ Based on this evidence, it seems the Romanesque Revival—so dominant for Methodist churches in the Mid-Atlantic for several decades—had apparently fallen almost entirely out of favor with denominational leadership by the time Scott Methodist Episcopal Church was finished.

¹³² Steege, 227.

¹³³ *Sixth Annual Report of the Church Extension Society* (Philadelphia: Methodist Episcopal Church, 1871), 100-108.

¹³⁴ *Seventh Annual Report of the Church Extension Society* (Philadelphia: Methodist Episcopal Church Board of Church Extension, 1872), 87.

¹³⁵ Reverend A. J. Kynett, *Catalogue of Architectural Plans for Churches and Parsonages* (Philadelphia: Board of Church Extension—Methodist Episcopal Church, 1889).

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Scott A.M.E. Zion Church—rectangular in its footprint and boxy in its overall shape—gains its visual interest from many vertical elements that collectively symbolize a skyward orientation—despite the absence of towers, pinnacles, or other vertical appendages (with the exception of three small chimneys and three short, rounded vents on the roof ridge). The vertical orientation and rhythm of the exterior walls is strongly established by wall buttresses that rise from the ground level and transition to pilasters that reach to the rooflines. Between each of these buttress/pilasters, rectangular sash windows at the ground level and much taller stained-glass windows at the upper-level sanctuary align visually to create dark, linear voids in the wall that also create strong vertical lines. All of these primary windows at the sanctuary level are very tall and narrow, lending the fenestration a “stretched” look, and they all feature rounded tops—a signature architectural feature of Romanesque Revival architecture. The upper-story windows on the façade also feature heavy, moulded crowns that wrap around their rounded tops, further emphasizing the rounded-arches so key to Romanesque styling. This includes a tripartite, Palladian-influenced window feature in the center of the symmetrical façade, also a common motif in Roman-inspired architecture in the United States and beyond. Below the roofline, at the top of the front-gabled façade and both side walls, a brick corbel table emphasizes the height of the roofline. This feature, present with most Romanesque Revival churches of the era, not only emphasizes verticality by drawing the eye skyward (and thus emphasizing the height of the building), but in the case of Scott AME Zion Church, the façade corbel table further creates vertical lines with narrow rectangular corbels (resembling bracketing), rather than arched, “arcade” corbeling. On the side walls, however, the building’s designer apparently mimicked arched or “arcaded” corbel tables by creating a “stepped” effect that (at first glance) appears to be repeating arches but in actuality resembles stepped, repeating “V” shapes.

The interior plan and architecture of the Scott A.M.E. Zion Church reflects some similarities with other local Methodist Episcopal churches in the Wilmington area. For example, though at a smaller scale, the Mt. Pleasant Methodist Episcopal Church on Philadelphia Pike also features a center aisle in the nave, with curved, semi-circular pews that wrap forward to face congregants toward the minister. A period description of the interior of the Scott church, published in a local newspaper just after it was finished, reveals features and finishes that were common for modest Romanesque Revival churches in the mid-1800s—including the use of a large sanctuary with balcony, dark woods, carpeted floors, light wall colors, and neutral and earth-tone frescoing:

It is built of brick, with Sabbath School on ground floor and auditorium above. The Sabbath School room is 45x60 feet, with 10 feet ceiling. Two small class rooms and an infant school room are also on this floor. The auditorium is 45x83 feet, with 24 ft. ceiling, and is reached by two broad stairways which lead from the lower hall to the vestibule above. The furniture is of walnut and stained ash, and the wall from the floor to the windows, about four feet, is paneled, being grained to represent maple. The windows, fifteen in number, are of the most beautiful richly-stained glass, making a pleasant contrast with the dark furniture and the richly carpeted floor. The frescoing is executed in

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delicate neutral tints, and the whole appearance of the room is very gratifying to the vision. The seating capacity of the church is about 600.¹³⁶

This description is in line with the characterization of other Romanesque Revival churches, as described by architectural historian Gwen Steege, who notes that, “Floors were usually carpeted,” while “interior woodwork was commonly stained and varnished,” and “walls were painted in soft, warm, neutral tones,” including “quite a few cases” where “walls were frescoed.”¹³⁷ The stained glass windows at Scott may have been atypical nationally, especially during the early Romanesque Revival but likely were more common during its later, more Victorian stages, when the Scott church was built.

It is worth noting that the later, attached Community House (built in 1926) also features muted Romanesque Revival styling and was likely finished to imitate the architecture of the original church building. Its façade echoes the brick corbel table of the main church building’s façade with its rectangular, “bracket”-type corbeling that extends substantially from the main wall surface. Notably, the front door of the Community House features a large drip moulding in a style that is often seen on Gothic Revival buildings but can sometimes be found on Romanesque Revival architecture and other Romantic Revival era buildings (see, for example, the First Congregational Church in Kent, Connecticut, built in 1849).

Criterion C: Decorative Pressed Metal Walls & Ceilings, 1909/1915

Pressed Tin Architecture in the U.S. and in Wilmington

Substantial beautification campaigns that left their mark on the architecture of Scott Methodist Episcopal Church occurred in 1909 and 1915—adding finishes that both reflect the vitality of the evolving congregation and enhance the architectural significance of the building. The renovations at the church in 1909 included elaborate, decorative, pressed-metal ceilings and walls (Figures 19 and 21) in both the upper-level sanctuary and the lower-level chapel—and the extent of this architectural feature, and its survival for over a century, makes the church a strong example of an important, imitative material trend at the turn of the twentieth century.

The use of pressed metal as a ceiling covering had its origins in the 1870s, with the use of corrugated metal sheets to form a fire barrier between floors, especially in industrial or utilitarian buildings.¹³⁸ By the 1880s, inventors were recognizing its decorative potential: in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, for example, Albert Northrop obtained a patent in 1884 for corrugated iron tiles that could be placed to produce a pattern, had molded seam covers, and could be decorated with embossed rosettes. Experimenting with German decorative iron and zinc ceilings in the 1880s, American producers eventually settled upon stamped steel sheets at the end of the decade.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ “The Churches,” *Wilmington Daily Commercial*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 27, 1872.

¹³⁷ Steege, 225-226.

¹³⁸ Pamela H. Simpson, *Cheap, Quick, & Easy: Imitative Architectural Materials, 1870-1930* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 55-56.

¹³⁹ Simpson, *Cheap, Quick, & Easy*, 56-57.

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The pressed metal ceiling industry experienced a surge in popularity in the final decade of the nineteenth century, which continued through the first decades of the twentieth century. While many American companies produced sheet metal ceilings as one of many products, some companies, including the Penn Metal Ceiling and Roofing Company—which was founded in 1889 in Philadelphia—focused most of their marketing efforts on pressed ceilings.¹⁴⁰ The metal ceiling industry fought against notions that its products were cheap and imitative while acknowledging the criticism. Companies marketed their materials as longer-lasting and fireproof alternatives to decorative ceilings in plaster or wood.¹⁴¹ The material undeniably offered an affordable way to produce an ornate, appealing decorative effect and was a popular choice for churches and public buildings in Wilmington and throughout the state. Several suppliers and contractors were involved in its sale and installation in Wilmington and, notably, period newspapers frequently reported on these projects—as several local organizations signed contracts for their metal ceilings with the Penn Metal Ceiling and Roofing Company.¹⁴² The pressed metal companies appealed directly to church organizations through advertising. For example, a large advertisement for “Northrop’s Patent Metal Ceilings” was placed in a catalogue of architectural plans published by the Methodist Episcopal Church Extension Office in Philadelphia published in 1889.¹⁴³ Based in Pittsburgh, the company touted the pressed metal coverings as “ornamental and attractive in appearance” and claimed that they would “not stain, crack, or fall off like plaster” or “shrink, warp, or burn like wood.” They could even be applied directly “over old broken plaster without mess or dirt” and were “easily put on by any good mechanic.”¹⁴⁴ The success of such marketing is apparent when inspecting the interiors of several Wilmington churches. Decorative pressed metal can still be seen today, for example, at the Old Asbury Methodist Church on Walnut Street, New Calvary Baptist Church in South Wilmington, and Scott A.M.E. Zion Church on Seventh Street.

Pressed Tin at Scott Methodist Church, 1909 & 1915

In 1909, the church leadership installed “a metallic covering” on the walls of the first floor, as the “Sunday school room” and “class rooms” underwent “extensive repairs.” The pressed metal coverings, installed by Penn Metal Company of Philadelphia, were described in one newspaper as a “covering of the walls . . . with metal and beautiful decoration of the same.”¹⁴⁵ In 1915, the beautification campaign continued under the Reverend William A. Wise, when the “audience room” (main auditorium) underwent “a general overhauling” that included a new pressed metal

¹⁴⁰ Simpson, *Cheap, Quick, & Easy*, 58-59.

¹⁴¹ Simpson, *Cheap, Quick, & Easy*, 72.

¹⁴² See, for example, “Improvements at Sacred Heart,” *Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, Jan. 10, 1906; “Elsmere Presbyterians,” *News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, Aug. 14, 1906; “Frankford Church Being Rebuilt,” *News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, Sep. 13, 1901; “Asbury Church,” *News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, Jul. 17, 1907; “School Board Get Bids for Repairs,” *Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, Jul. 20, 1909. For examples, see advertisements for contractor Samuel G. Williams here: *Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, June 8, 1910, and *Evening Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, May 31, 1910.

¹⁴³ Kynett, *Catalogue of Architectural Plans*, 101.

¹⁴⁴ Kynett, *Catalogue of Architectural Plans*, 101.

¹⁴⁵ “To Improve Scott Church,” *The Evening Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, August 19, 1909; “Reopening of Scott Church,” *The Evening Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, November 13, 1909.

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ceiling, the installation of new electric lights, and repairs to the stained-glass windows.¹⁴⁶ The pressed metal supplier for this second campaign is not known, though evidence suggests it may have again been the Penn Metal Company.

The main sanctuary features a striking pressed metal treatment at the ceiling level, with a generally Gothic Revival design, consisting of the main ceiling, wide cornice mouldings, and decorative ventilator panels. The ceiling's primary field is created with large, square panels featuring a Gothic quatrefoil within a circle in the center, from which pointed lancet arches radiate to each corner, creating a motif that resembles a four-petaled flower (Figure 21). The ceiling is punctuated with three large, decorative ventilation grilles down the longitudinal axis of the sanctuary (a report published in 1872 by the Methodist Episcopal Church's extension office in Philadelphia noted, "There should also be, in every case, an aperture in the ceiling, for the purposes of ventilation").¹⁴⁷ These rounded ventilation grilles are bold, sculptural, and elaborate, dropping at least a foot from the ceiling's surface, and painted white to match the painted pressed metal (Figure 20). The center ventilation grille is situated within a large, square, rough-textured panel (the width of four of the ceiling's field panels) with a heavy decorative frame. The other two ventilation grilles are framed by smaller panels (the width of two of the ceiling's field panels) with thinner frames and feature a Gothic web motif in the four corners not filled by the circular grille. The entire ceiling field is enframed near the exterior walls with a two-foot wide band that features a repeating Gothic lancet (pointed arch) motif with implied tracery. The junctions between the ceiling and walls around the entire sanctuary also feature bold pressed metal cornices, over one foot in height, with a primary motif of repeating pointed arches, bordered above by crown moulding and below by thinner, rounded mouldings.

The ceilings in the lower level are almost entirely clad in pressed metal coverings, though they are not visible in the central hallway (which features a barrel-vaulted ceiling) and in a couple of smaller meeting rooms and restrooms (where drop-ceilings now obscure them). The general design motif of the pressed metal ceilings at this level consists of a field of medium-sized, repeating, square, recessed panels (there are smaller square panel motifs in the front rooms). The ceilings at the perimeters of the building, and at carrying beams, are often bordered by a band of rough-textured framing, with cornices featuring an egg-and-dart motif, an entablature consisting of a Grecian key motif (a "meander" or "meandros"), and below that, smaller, square dentilations (Figure 19). The northeast and southeast walls of the lower (ground) level feature pressed metal coverings, as well, with a repeating motif that resembles a *fleur de lis* design, accented by thin vertical ridges and punctuated with clusters of raised circles.

The extensive and varied pressed-metal ceiling and wall treatments at Scott A.M.E. Zion Church, coupled with the original structural cast-iron support columns in the lower level, create a striking decorative effect that represents the emergence of architectural metals in the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century. The survival of so much of the pressed metal wall and ceiling coverings, more than a century after their installation, is significant and contributes to a

¹⁴⁶ "Many Improvements for Scott M.E. Church," *The Evening Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, July 21, 1915; "Scott M.E. Church is Being Improved," *The News Journal*, Wilmington, Delaware, July 21, 1915.

¹⁴⁷ "Church Architecture," *Report of Board of Church Extension* (Philadelphia: 1872), 87.

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visual understanding of the church building as an evolving artifact that was continuously maintained and beautified by an evolving neighborhood congregation over several historical periods.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register

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- 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: Center for Historic Architecture and Design—University of Delaware

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DE CRS # N00669

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.18

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 39.739913 | Longitude: -75.542447 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

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Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

The boundaries of this property are the boundaries for New Castle County Tax Parcel #2604410059. It is a rectangular 0.18-acre tract of land that sits on the northwest corner of the intersection of East 7th and North Spruce Streets in Wilmington, Delaware.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries coincide with the current tax parcel associated with Scott A.M.E. Zion Church. The current boundary configuration reflects the 1926 expansion of the property, when the previous Scott M.E. Church purchased the adjacent parcel for the social hall.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Michael J. Emmons, Jr. and Catherine Morrissey
organization: Center for Historic Architecture and Design, University of Delaware
street & number: 331 Alison Hall, University of Delaware
city or town: Newark state: DE zip code: 19716
e-mail: mjej@udel.edu ; cmorriss@udel.edu
telephone: (302) 831-8097
date: September 2023

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Delaware Cultural Resource Survey Information

Time Period: 1830-1880± Industrialization and Early Urbanization

Geographic Zone: Urban (City of Wilmington)

Historic Period Themes(s): Architecture, Engineering and Decorative Arts; Settlement Patterns and Demographic Changes; Religion

Correlation with State Historic Preservation Plan 2018-2022

Goal 1: Strengthen/Expand Delaware's Core Federal/State Historic Preservation Program

Strategy 7: Address gaps and biases in the state's inventory of historic properties

Actions 7a: Prioritize cultural resource survey and National Register nominations to address under-represent communities or property types [Black Cultural Resources]

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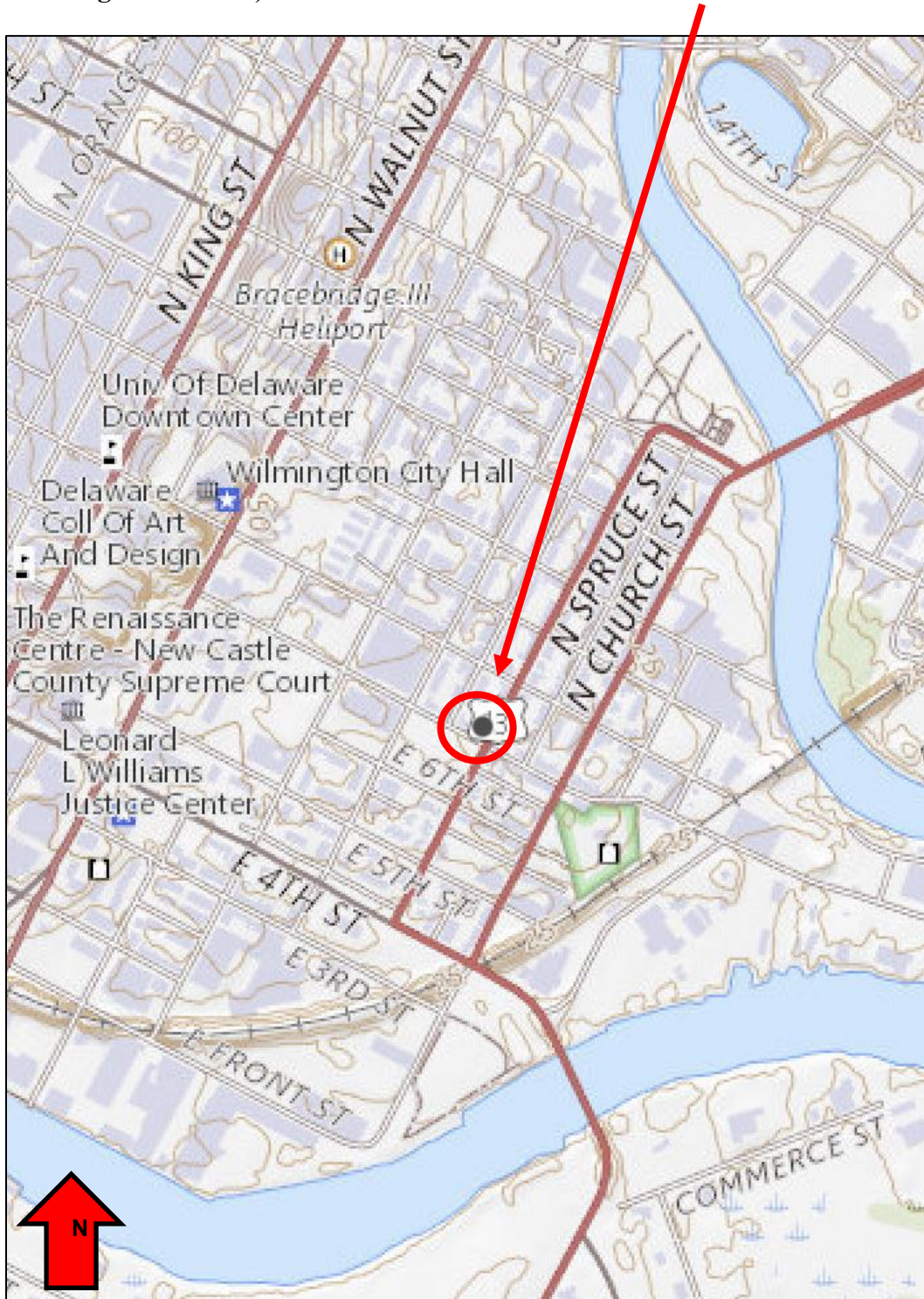
Scott A.M.E. Zion Church tax parcel (#2604410059) map outlined in red



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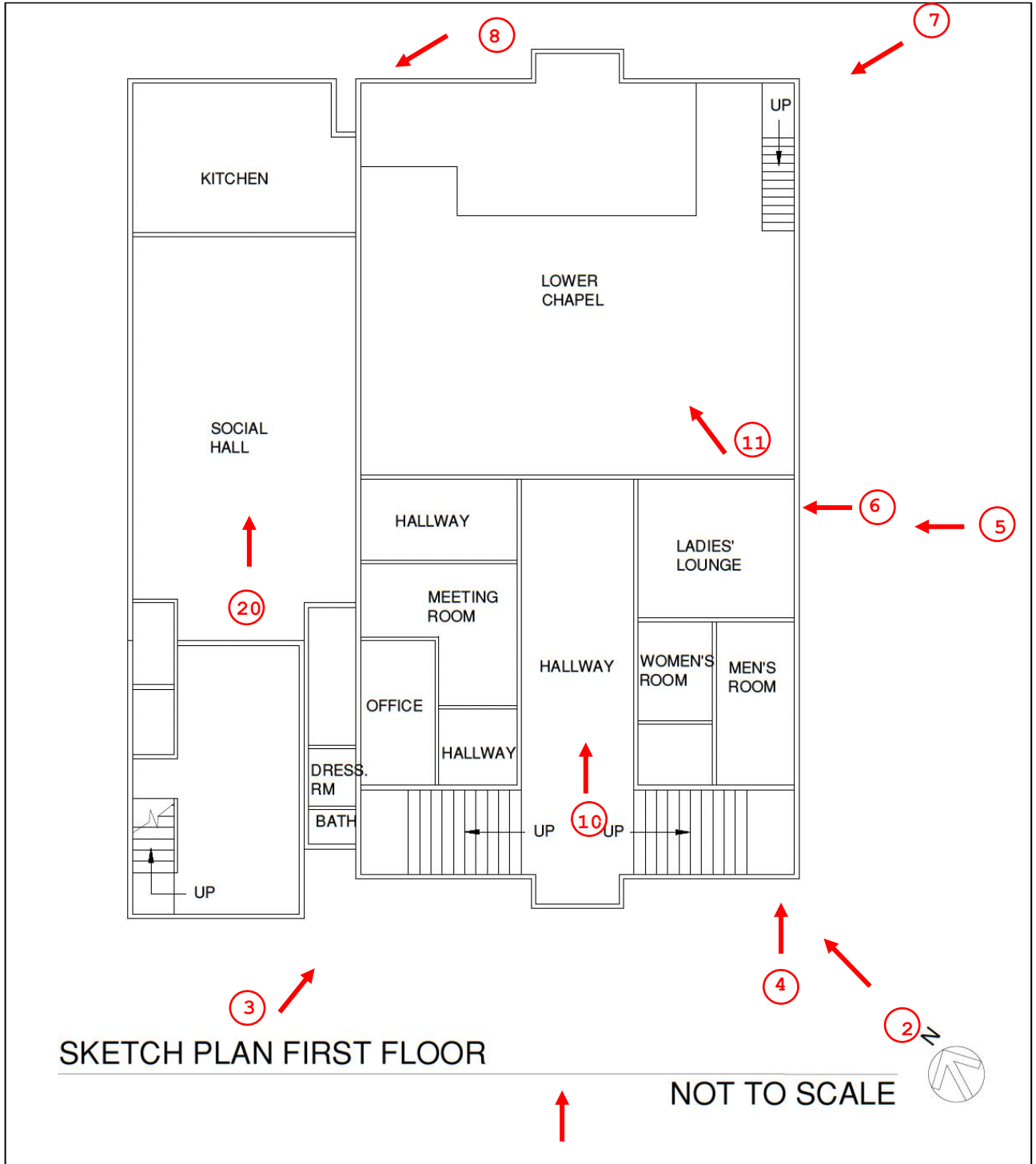
USGS Quad Map, 7.5-Minute Series, Wilmington South, 2023 ed. (Coordinates Lat: -
39.739913 Long: -75.542447)



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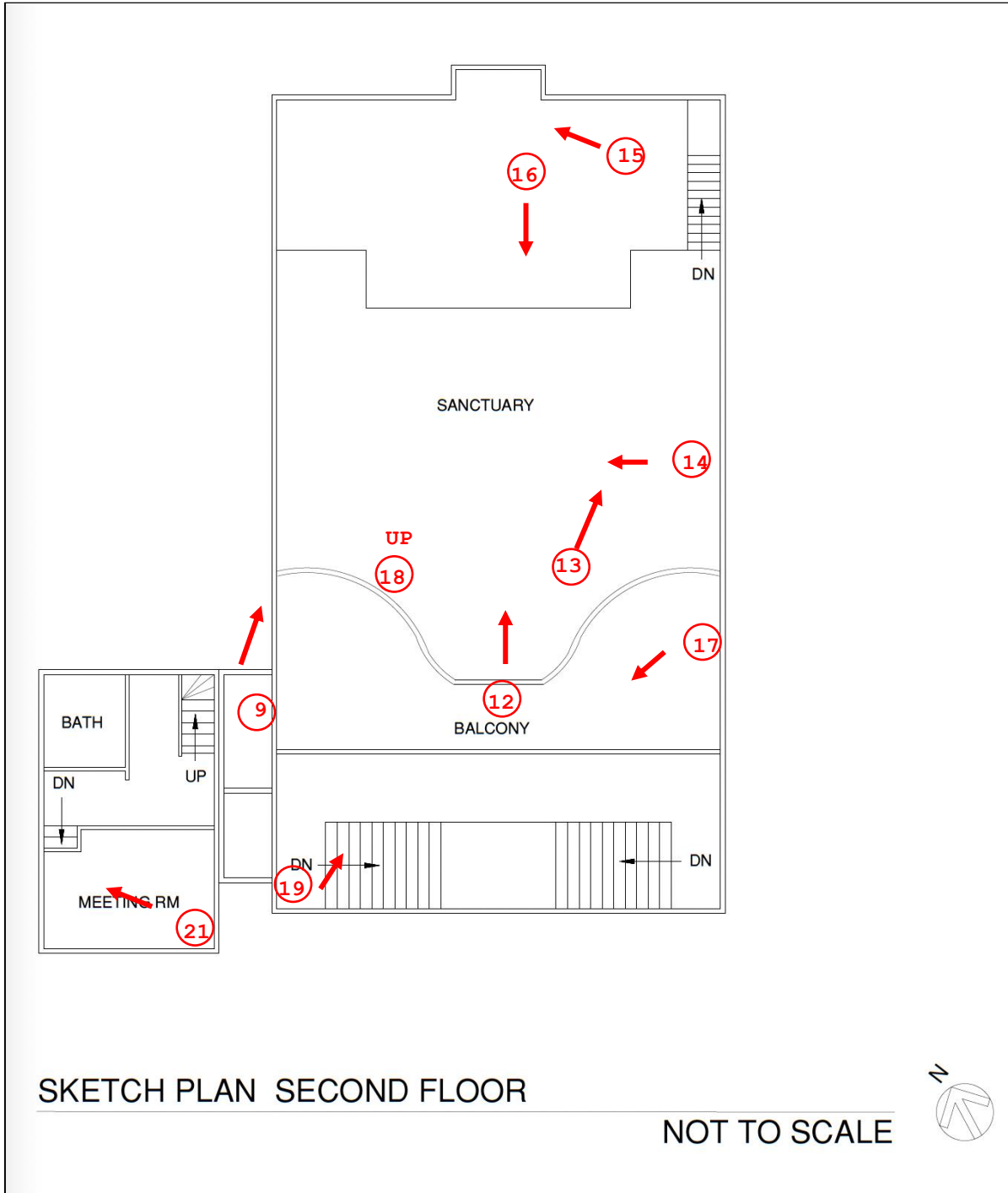
Scott A.M.E. Zion Church First Floor Photo Key



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Scott A.M.E. Zion Church Second Floor Photo Key



Scott A.M.E. Zion Church
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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Scott A.M.E. Zion Church

City or Vicinity: Wilmington

County: New Castle County

State: Delaware

Photographer: Michael J. Emmons, Jr.

Date Photographed: February 2023

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 1 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_001)

Aerial environmental view, showing Scott A.M.E. Zion Church and attached Community House, as well as the surrounding neighborhood, looking north.

Photo 2 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_002)

Perspective view of Scott A.M.E. Zion Church and attached Community House, looking north.

Photo 3 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_003)

View of southwest façade of Scott A.M.E. Zion Church and attached Community House, looking northeast.

Photo 4 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_004)

Detail view of southwest façade, showing commemorative datestones and plaques, looking northeast.

Photo 5 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_005)

View of southeast elevation, looking northwest.

Photo 6 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_006)

Detail view of southeast elevation, showing brick corbel table, looking northwest.

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Photo 7 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_007)
View of northeast (rear) elevation of church building, looking west.

Photo 8 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_008)
View of northeast (rear) elevation of Community House kitchen, looking west.

Photo 9 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_009)
Detail view of northwest elevation, showing unparged brick wall at upper story (above the Community House's social hall roof), looking northeast.

Photo 10 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_010)
Interior, view of central hallway leading to lower chapel, looking northeast.

Photo 11 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_011)
Interior, perspective view of lower chapel, looking north.

Photo 12 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_012)
Interior, view of main sanctuary from upper balcony, looking northeast.

Photo 13 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_013)
Interior, detail view of pews on southeast side of main sanctuary, looking northeast.

Photo 14 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_014)
Interior, detail view of northwest wall, showing stained glass windows, looking northwest.

Photo 15 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_015)
Interior, detail view of northwest wall, showing pipe organ, looking north-northwest.

Photo 16 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_016)
Interior, view of main sanctuary from pulpit and choir area, looking southwest.

Photo 17 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_017)
Interior, view of upper balcony on southwest end of main sanctuary, looking west.

Photo 18 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_018)
Interior, detail view of southwest decorative ventilation grille and pressed metal ceiling cladding, looking northeast.

Photo 19 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_019)
Interior, detail view of upper vestibule stairway, showing newel post, balustrade, and handrail, looking east.

Photo 20 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_020)
Interior, view of social hall in Community House and doorways to kitchen, looking northeast.

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Photo 21 of 21 (DE_New Castle County_Scott A.M.E. Zion Church_021)
Interior, Community House, 2nd floor, view of northeast wall of conference room, looking north.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.