Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church
2501 Columbus Avenue South
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Designation Study Purpose and Background ............................................................ page 5

Part 1: Physical Description of Property ............................................................... page 7
  • Parcel location, shape, and size
  • Description of building(s) on the property
  • Description of interior features
  • Description of landscape and landscape features

Part 2: Historic Significance ..................................................................................... page 14

Part 3: Rationale for Local Historic Designation .................................................... page 23
  • Designation Criteria
  • Integrity of historic resource
  • Other Considerations

Part 4: Registration and Classification Information ............................................... page 30

Part 5: Notes ............................................................................................................. page 34
  • Bibliography

Illustrations and Photos ............................................................................................ page 36
  • Cover photo, Minnesota Historical Society Collection, MH5.9 MPS.1 p.1
  • Figure 1. Map showing church’s location, Hennepin County Interactive Map
  • Figure 2. Harry Wild Jones’ drawing of church’s exterior and main floor from
    Harry Wild Jones Papers, Minnesota Historical Society Manuscript Collection
    (P1979)
  • Figure 3. North façade view of rooftop, bell tower, east-end gable, and exterior
    of main floor windows, February 2017, photo by Nancy Luther Powell.
  • Figure 4. North façade view primary entrance and bell tower, February 2017,
    photo by Nancy Luther Powell.
  • Figure 5. West façade parapet gable wall, February 2017, photo by Susan Hunter
    Weir
  • Figure 6. East facade, February 2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
  • Figure 7. South facade, February 2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
  • Figure 8. South façade east-end gable, February 2017, photo by Susan Hunter
    Weir
  • Figure 9. Gabled entrance on south façade’s east end gable, February 2017,
    photo by Susan Hunter Weir
  • Figure 10. Entrance to pastor’s study on south façade’s west end gable, February
    2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
  • February 11. Door and stairs on northwest corner of south façade, February
    2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
  • Figure 12. Central aisle in sanctuary, February 2017, photo by Nancy Luther
    Powell
- Figure 13. Sliding oak panels separating sanctuary and library, February 2017, photo by Nancy Luther Powell.
- Figure 14. View of sanctuary from library through panel opening, February 2017, photo by Nancy Luther Powell
- Figure 15. Stairwell
- Figure 16. Interior arches and trusses, February 2017, photo by Nancy Luther Powell
- Figure 17. Stained glass window, February 2017, photo by Nancy Luther Powell.
- Figure 18. Art glass windows, hymn board and door to robing robe, February 2017, photo by Nancy Luther Powell
- Figure 19. Altar, communion rail and choirs viewed from loft, February 2017, photo by Nancy Luther Powell
- Figure 20. Dormer window and trusses, February 2017, photo by Nancy Luther Powell
- Figure 21. View of trusses from the choir loft, February 2017, photo by Nancy Luther Powell
- Figure 22. Oak pews, trusses, doors, panels and tracery. February 2017, photo by Nancy Luther Powell
- Figure 23. Pulpit, February 2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
- Figure 24. Library on north side of main floor, February 2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
- Figure 25. Nursery at the west end of the library, February 2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
- Figure 26. Sunday School classroom at the east end of the library, February 2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
- Figure 27. Entrance to restrooms on main floor
- Figure 28. Second floor hallway, January 2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
- Figure 29. Pastor’s office, January 2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
- Figure 30. Sunday School classroom on second floor, January 2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
- Figure 31. Basement fellowship hall, February 2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
- Figure 32. Basement performance platform, February 2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
- Figure 33. Entrance to kitchen, February 2017, photo by Susan Hunter Weir
- Figure 34. Messiah’s interior, ca. 1950

Appendices

- Appendix A: First Board of Administrators
- Appendix B: Current Status of Harry Wild Jones Churches
- Appendix C: Harry Wild Jones’ marketing material
- Appendix D: Harry Wild Jones’ marketing materials--
DESIGNATION STUDY PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND:

On June 21, 2016, the Heritage Preservation Commission approved Commissioner Hunter Weir’s nomination of Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church located at 2501 Columbus Avenue South as a Landmark, established interim protection, and directed the Planning Director to prepare or cause to be prepared a designation study.

This report is the designation study as defined in Section 599 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances. Included in this report is a description of the significance of the property, both individually and within the context of Minneapolis planning and heritage preservation goals. The report is based on a review of resources including historic building permits, unpublished church histories and documents, and archival materials from the Minneapolis Collection of the Hennepin County Library and Minnesota Historical Society.
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PART 1: PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

This section provides a description of the physical characteristics of the property, including both the parcel and features on the parcel, such as structures and landscaping.

Parcel location, shape, and size

The subject property is one building located on the southeast corner at the intersection of East 25th Street and Columbus Avenue South. It is located in the West Phillips neighborhood, which is located to the southeast of the core of Minneapolis. The parcel is rectangular in shape, measuring 100 by 129 feet, for a total of .27 acres or 11,765 s.f (Figure 1). Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church sits on the northwest corner of a block that consists of newer contemporary construction. The church is adjacent to a brick parking structure and to the rear is a vacant lot. Across East 25th Street there is a mix of original and new neighborhood residential structures. Across Columbus Avenue is Messiah’s Parish Hall which was built in modernist style.

Description of building(s) on the property

Description of the primary structure

Date(s) of construction: Harry Wild Jones, one of Minneapolis’ leading architects, was commissioned by Messiah’s congregation to design a new church for them. The building permit was issued on August 18, 1916. The cost of construction was $34,300. The groundbreaking ceremony took place on August 10, 1916, the cornerstone was laid on November 26, 1916, and the church’s formal dedication took place on June 24, 1917.

Size and massing: The subject property is two-story, red brick Gothic Revival church. The church is built in a T-shape (cruciform). It measures 116'-11" along its east-west axis and is divided into three parts: classroom (42’), nave (58’) and altar (15’ 6”). The width of the church varies from 62'6" in the classroom to 44’ in the nave, and 46’5” at the altar (Figure 2).

The ridgeline of the roof is 44'-9" high and the bell tower rises approximately 15’ above the roofline (Figure 3). The gabled roofline of the church runs east to west, and its surface is covered with dark red asphalt shingles. Two smaller gabled rooflines intersect the building at the east and west ends. There is a red brick chimney, capped with stone, located on the southeast corner of the church.

Placement on the site: The church building is located on an oversized lot that measures 100’ by 129.’ The building sits closer to the north end of the lot nearest 25th Street and closer to the west end of the lot nearest Columbus Avenue.

Architectural style: Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church is a two-story red brick Gothic Revival church.
North Elevation: The church’s primary entrance is located on the north façade of the building, facing East 25th Street, under a bell tower that rises above a set of double-wooden doors. The doors are stained dark brown and have brass hardware (Figure 4). The west elevation of the tower includes a single decorative wood entrance with arched transom. Two art glass windows sit below the wood louvers on the north elevation. Below the windows is a limestone angled ledge and new signage. The east elevation of the tower includes one first floor casement window covered with a metal grill.

Three large pointed arches are located on the east, north and west elevations of the bell tower. There is carved wooden tracery directly beneath the arches with an arched transom, and the lower portion of the tower’s large openings is filled in with wood louvers. The exterior corners of the tower include stepped pilasters where each of the three steps are marked by a triangular limestone. The top of the tower is called out with a continuous limestone band and a parapet with crenulated edges and gray limestone capstones. The tower is capped by a four-sided pyramid roof covered with asphalt shingles. A metal cross at the top of the pyramid is the highest point of the church (Figure 4).

Six sets of art glass windows are located on the western two-thirds of the first floor level of the north facade. These windows are set in the spaces created by the interior truss system. Each set is composed of three identical panels set side by side with an operable window housed in the center fenestration. Below each of the six sets of widows is a rectangular basement window with a metal grill over. Spaced evenly above the six sets of windows are three triangular diminutive dormers with three divided art-glass lights. The exterior of all of the church’s decorative windows, with the exception of the hopper windows, have been covered with protective plastic (Figure 3). Between each set of six windows are brick pilasters that step-in with a limestone triangular block at the window sill.

On the eastern one-third of the north elevation, the first and second floors have three, six-light storm windows over multi-divided leaded glass. The basement level has two windows covered with a metal grill beginning at grade. An embrasure or thin rectangular key is centered above the second floor windows.

On the westernmost portion of the north elevation there is a secondary wood door with gothic wood decoration. There is a solid wood transom above that forms a shallow arch. All the wood is painted brown. An embrasure or thin rectangular key is centered on the door above. The roof-line has been slightly altered in this location. The original gabled roof appears to have been more of a gull-winged roof, with two pitches on either side of the ridge, where the bulk of the gable is a steeper pitch that terminates in a shallower edge. This area is currently filled in, or rounded, potentially due to leaks or they may have abandoned a box gutter system housed in the shallow edge.

West Elevation: The west façade of the church is a parapet gable end wall made of red brick with gray limestone coping. Recessed bricks form a cross above the large stained glass window. The three-part stained glass window is framed with wood tracery and
two exterior stepped pilasters marked with triangular limestone at each step. A non-original storm window obscures the wood tracery. To the right are two casement windows. Three thin rectangular basement windows are centered below the large stained-glass and are positioned at grade. Two additional pilasters mark the corners of the gabled form and a metal door that starts slightly below grade is on the north end of the west elevation.

A cast stone retaining wall encases this elevation and leads to the metal door. The choir entrance projects from the gabled form and has one rectangular window at the first floor. The pastor’s study entrance projects towards the south and includes one rectangular window (Figure 5).

**East Elevation:** The east façade is relatively plain with a row of five double six-light storm windows over leaded window the first floor and five sets of a mix of four-light storms covering leaded glass, one light windows, and double hung windows. There are two single windows on the north end of the rows that allow light into the northeast corner stairwell, the first floor window is leaded and the second floor window is a two light storm. Each of the windows has rectangular panels of cream-colored opalescent glass set in a pattern four across by four down and bordered by green variegated glass. At ground level clear glass windows allow light into the basement (Figure 6). There are three stepped pilasters on this elevation.

**South Elevation:** The south façade mirrors the design of the north façade except that the large gable end has three rows of six-light storm double windows located on the first and second floors. A tall red brick chimney separates the gable from the two story entrance and stairwell. There are two smaller double windows that allow light into the interior stairwell (Figures 7 and 8). There is a wood gabled entrance with flat panel door leading into the church from the parking lot (Figure 9).

On the west end of the South elevation there is a two story brick gabled entrance with seven stairs that lead to an door into the pastor’s study. The door is a flat panel with a decorative arched transom above. An embrasure or thin rectangular key is centered on the door above (Figure 10). The roof-line has been slightly altered in this location. The original gabled roof appears to have original been more of a gull-winged roof, with two pitches on either side of the ridge, where the bulk of the gable is a steeper pitch that terminates in a shallower edge. This area is currently filled in, or rounded, potentially due to leaks or they may have abandoned a box gutter system housed in the shallow edge (Figure 11).

Six sets of art glass windows located on the west 2/3 of the south façade of the first floor level are set in the spaces created by each structural bay. Each set is composed of three identical panels set side by side. The exterior of all of the church’s decorative windows, with the exception of the hopper windows, have been covered with protective plastic (Figure 3).

**Known Original Elements That Are Deteriorated or Missing:** Two entrances to the church underwent minor alterations when a retaining wall was added along the west side of the church. Two small decorative brick walls that lined the walkway to an entrance on
west side of the building were removed and replaced with a cast-stone retaining wall. That door is extant, but it is no longer operable (Figure 5). Brick walls on either side of a secondary entrance on the northwest corner of the church were removed and the stairway redirected from north facing to east facing. The door on the north side is operable but rarely used (Figure 11). Some original storm windows have been replaced and the doors on the south and west elevation have been replaced with flat panel doors.

The building permit for the property does not indicate that any major original elements of the church have been removed or altered. The original stained and art glass windows have been covered with protective plastic panels. Two of the original doors on the north and west sides of the church are no longer operable but clearly visible. Iron grates have been added to secure the lower level windows. The wooden gable hood over the entrance on the southeast corner of the church provides shelter from the weather and is fully removable. It is unclear when this entry hood was added.

**Description of the secondary structure**

*Date(s) of construction:* The congregation also owns the property at 2504 Columbus Avenue South (directly across the street from the west elevation). This building was built in 1952 and was described as a “parish house and school” on the building permit. It is not included in the current study of the church because it us not of the same period or architect.

*Location, placement, and orientation of building on the site:* Not applicable.

*Size and massing:* Not applicable.

*Architectural style:* Not applicable.

*Known original elements that are deteriorated or missing:* Not applicable

**Description of interior features**

*First Floor:* The church’s first floor interior auditorium has two rows of pews on either side of a central aisle; there are aisles on the outside of the rows as well (Figure 12). At the back of the sanctuary there is a wide aisle that runs perpendicular to the central aisle. Four sliding oak wall panels, that can be raised to create overflow seating, form a divider between the nave and the area on the east end of the building that has been used as a library and classrooms (Figures 13 and 14). Staircases located at the north and south ends of this aisle lead to the choir loft and offices on the second floor and to the fellowship room, kitchen, storage space and mechanical room in the basement (Figure 15).

The walls of the sanctuary are plaster and there are three plaster arches. The largest arch is over the altar and frames the church’s 14-foot tall stained glass windows. Two smaller arches on each side of the altar encase the organ pipes and conceal doorways into the pastor’s study and robing rooms. The plaster walls are painted white but
natural light shining through the art glass windows causes them to appear as cream-colored or golden at certain times of the day (Figure 16).

The three-paneled, fourteen-foot stained glass window is located above the altar, six and a-half feet above the floor. The central painted panel depicts Christ kneeling in prayer and the two panels on either side of it are made up of pieced glass in a variety of brilliant colors (Figure 17).

There are six decorative leaded art glass windows on each of the north and south sides of the church. Framed in oak tracery, each of the twelve windows is composed of 24 rectangular opalescent cream-colored glass panes arranged in a pattern four across by six down; each pane measures 5 x 7”. Each panel has a border composed of narrow green-gold variegated glass pieces and is topped by a pointed arch. In the middle panel of each set of windows there is a 20” x 12” hopper window to allow for air circulation. The windows sills, like the tracery, are oak (Figure 18).

There are two choirs at the front of the church, one on each side of the altar. They are separated from the nave by low carved wooden panels; the carving on the panels as well as the pulpit repeats the design above the colored-glass windows. The church’s organ is housed in the right-side (facing) choir. One set of 15 of the organ’s pipes are located under each plaster arch. The panels below the pipe organs conceal two doors. The one on the left leads to the pastor’s study and the one in the right choir leads to the choir’s robing room (Figure 19).

Three small triangular dormer windows spaced evenly along the north and south sides of the roof admit additional light into the sanctuary. These windows can be opened for ventilation but, given their location, they are not easily accessible (Figure 20).

Other than the windows, the most striking feature of the church’s interior is its elaborate truss system. Six trusses are spaced approximately ten feet apart and form one of the major decorative elements of the church. The trusses are known as hammer beam brackets, a style popular in 14th century England. A survey of the physical condition of the church conducted in 2000 included this description of the trusses:

“Each frame is comprised of a pair of hammer beams supported by straight bracket members. These bracket members extend upward on a diagonal from a wall post. Hammer posts meet the ends of the hammer beams and extend to join a bracket. The hammer beams and brackets are made of straight members measuring 8” x 12”. Carved wooden newels extend downward from the ends of the hammer beams” (Figures 16 and 19-21).

Oak is used extensively throughout the church. The flat surfaces of the ceiling, the pews, altar rail, panels, floors, doors, windowsills, doorframe, molding and pulpit are all made of oak (Figures 22 and 23).

The east end of the building consists of a library (Figure 24) and two smaller classrooms. The small room on the west end of the library is used as a nursery (Figure
25) and the small room on the east end of the library is used as a Sunday School classroom. All of these rooms have rectangular art glass windows arranged in a pattern four across by six down. They were made with the same cream-colored and variegated, green glass as the windows in the sanctuary.

The hardwood floor is covered with bright green shag carpeting that is not original. A new ceiling appears to have been added when modern light fixtures were put in place. The classroom on the east end of the building appears to have been divided to create restrooms on the main floor (Figure 27).

The aisles of the church are covered with red carpeting which appears to have been added fairly recently in order to protect the oak flooring and buffer sound. The color of the carpet matches removable pew cushions which also appear to have been added fairly recently. The only other recent additions to the church's nave appear to be ceiling fans, a sound system, and spotlights in the area of the altar. The classroom on the east end of the library appears to have been divided to create restrooms that are accessible from the main floor. All of these changes and additions are reversible and, those in the nave are, because of its size, relatively unobtrusive.

Second Floor: The second floor is open over the nave and altar and serves as a choir loft containing three rows of pews that extend out over the north-south aisle below (Figure 13 and 22).

There are five small rooms located off of the second-floor hallway (Figure 28). Those on the north side of the church's second floor, above the library, function as offices for the pastor and administrative staff and Sunday School classrooms. These offices are in a location that is different from what is shown on the original building plans, (Figures 29 and 30). The windows are similar to the art-glass windows in the library and there is wood molding and trim in the hallways but the rooms are essentially utilitarian.

Basement: The storage space and mechanical room underneath the altar, and the industrial kitchen beneath the library appear to have been part of the church's original design. In the 1950s the area below the sanctuary was excavated to create a fellowship hall. The newer addition, the fellowship hall, has vinyl tile and acoustical tile ceilings (Figure 31). There is a low platform located at the west end of the fellowship room that is used for performances (Figure 32). The kitchen equipment is not new but is not original. There are original wooden doors and a cabinet on the left side of the entryway into the kitchen but they are in relatively poor condition (Figure 33).

**Description of landscape and landscape features**

There is a minimal amount of landscaping on the site. There are small shrubs along the foundation of the church but they are not particularly noteworthy. There is no evidence of a formal landscape plan being followed.
Topography: The church is situated on a lot that measures 100 by 129 feet; it is bordered by public sidewalks on the north and west sides. From the sidewalk the lawn slopes upward about thirty inches and then plateaus into a flat yard.

Vegetation: As previously mentioned, there are small ornamental shrubs along the foundation of the church. There are small shrubs on top of the stone retaining wall on the church’s north and west sides. The vegetation is not original and, although pleasant, is not remarkable (Figure 5).

Driveways, Walkways, Patios, and Garden Paths: There is a small blacktopped parking lot near the southeast corner of the church. Access to the parking area is down a short alleyway located between the church and Minneapolis Children’s Hospital’s parking ramp. The lot has approximately eight parking spaces (three of them designated as handicapped spaces). It is unlikely that the lot was originally part of the plan for the church grounds.

Walkways provide access to one of the six doors and then into the church from the public sidewalk or parking lot (not all the doors are currently operable).

Other Landscape Features: The church has a non-original cast-stone retaining wall along the western edge of the church’s lot. The wall curves toward the east and runs about 20 feet along the church’s north side. Originally the church had low brick retaining walls, but the grading around the church must have changed overtime and required new retaining walls. A row of small shrubs lines the top of the wall. The wall is not original, and according to photographic evidence, was added after 1950 (Figures 3, 5 and 10).
PART 2: HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church is historically significant for its architect Harry Wild Jones, its physical expression of the Swedish immigrant experience in south Minneapolis, and the evolution of Swedish-American Lutheran religious celebrations. Harry Wild Jones is one of Minneapolis’ leading architects, designing such landmarks as the Lakewood Cemetery Chapel. Messiah is one of the few churches that he designed in Minneapolis that has neither been altered nor razed. This Gothic Revival church, with its elaborate system of trusses, beautiful stained and colored glass windows, and generous use of oak throughout, is an excellent example of Jones’ ecclesiastical work. Messiah is also associated with patterns of Swedish-immigrant settlement in South Minneapolis. The church is one of the first Swedish Lutheran churches to use English exclusively in its worship services and conducting its business, was a leader in defining what it meant to be Swedish-American (or as one author, described it “Swedish-Minnesotan”). It served as a bridge between “Old Country” Swedish traditions and life in 20th-Century America.

Swedish-Immigrant Community in Minneapolis:

The history and significance of Messiah is linked to the larger story of Swedish immigration and settlement in Minneapolis from the middle of the 19th century to approximately 1930. Swedish immigrants began arriving in what was to become Minneapolis in the late 1860s and 1870s. Their numbers increased dramatically after 1880 and peaked in 1910. By 1930 the number declined and the era of mass migration was over.

More than 1,250,000 people left Sweden to settle in the United States, many of them in Minnesota. There was no single cause for this migration but as is often the case, it was a combination of “push” and “pull” factors. The migration began in the middle of the 19th century on the heels of the Religious Awakening, a “low church” revival movement in Sweden. Those who held beliefs that differed from the state-sponsored church (i.e., religious nonconformists and non-believers) often believed that they were being persecuted; many set out to establish new communities with like-minded people in new places, including America. Around that time there were significant crop failures in Sweden that served as an additional incentive for some families to leave, and the Homestead Act of 1862, with its promise of free farmland in the American Midwest, created a significant pull factor.

Although many of the early arrivals came to Minnesota to farm, a small number settled in what would later become Minneapolis, and in 1866 the first Augustana Church was organized to meet the religious needs of the city’s Norwegian and Swedish populations. Language and theological differences made that arrangement unworkable and in 1868 the Norwegians left and formed their own congregation.

Between 1880 and 1890 Minnesota became the state with the largest Swedish population. Settlement patterns began to shift from rural areas to urban centers where jobs, both skilled and unskilled, in the manufacturing and milling industries were plentiful. Young, single men and women began arriving in increasing numbers. By 1883 Augustana’s Swedish-speaking congregation had grown to the point where they needed a larger church. They built one at Seventh Street and Eleventh Avenue on the southern edge of downtown. A quarter of a
century later, in 1908, Augustana became the “mother” church of Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church.\(^5\)

In 1890 there were 60,000 Swedish immigrants in the state, over 45 percent of them settled in the Twin Cities. By 1905 there were 126,000 Swedish-born immigrants living in Minnesota, 38,000 of them in the Twin Cities; the percentage of Swedish-born immigrants in the Twin Cities was 7.5%, the highest of any state in the country.\(^6\)

Initially new arrivals lived in boardinghouses and rental properties near the river and close to the milling district, but by 1900 the Swedish community was fanning out both northward and southward from the milling district. An increasing number of men were employed as skilled tradesmen and there was a growing entrepreneurial class which created a foundation for a significant and quickly growing middle class within the Swedish community. In addition, a greater number of professionals—lawyers, doctors, dentists, etc.—were emigrating from Sweden and settling in the Twin Cities.\(^7\) Their ability to speak English was one factor in their success, and questions about whether, and to what extent, to use English became central to defining what it meant to be Swedish-American. Churches tended to favor a more conservative approach and “made the greatest effort to preserve Swedish as the language of the home and local community.”\(^8\)

Turn-of-the-century streetcar lines connected residential neighborhoods with workplaces but “walking distance” was still an important consideration when it came to the location of neighborhood schools, shops, and churches. Neighborhoods grew up along major transportation routes and ethnicity played a role in shaping the character of neighborhoods throughout the city. As David Lanegran pointed out, “The large number and high proportion of Swedes made it possible for them to create their own neighborhoods.\(^9\) In the first decade of the twentieth century, thirty-two percent of those living in the Seventh Ward, where Messiah is located, were born in Sweden. That percentage did not include their children and grandchildren who were born in the United States.\(^10\)

**Swedish American Experience and Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church:**

Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church was built during a critical time. Its congregation was among the earliest to commit to using English exclusively in its worship services and in conducting church business, which placed them in the forefront of redefining what it meant to be a Swedish-American or “more precisely, a Swedish-Minnesotan, a culture that borrowed from both the old and new countries.”\(^11\) The church served as a cultural bridge that connected the dreams and ambitions that members had for themselves to the dreams and ambitions that they had for their American-born children.

In a history of Messiah written on the occasion of its Diamond Jubilee in 1958, Pastor Marbury Anderson described the primary motivation of Messiah’s founding members:

“To my knowledge, there was only one reason for starting. It was for children that Messiah Lutheran Church was born. Even though there was no ecclesiastical encouragement, even though the numbers were small, even though there were financial difficulties, Messiah Lutheran Church needed to be started for the sake of the children.”\(^12\)
While the need to use English during church services and to conduct church business appeared to have been inevitable and to some, at least, as desirable, change proceeded slowly. At its 1892 national conference representatives of the Augustana Synod discussed the “language question,” and opposition ran high. Nonetheless, the Synod dispatched a missionary from Illinois to Minnesota to establish English-speaking churches but he encountered resistance from established congregations who believed that he was attempting to “lure” their members into English-speaking congregations. The Synod abandoned the effort.13

Despite the fact that there was a great deal of cultural and doctrinal diversity within the Twin Cities’ churches, the eighteen Twin Cities churches of the Augustana Synod (twelve in Minneapolis, eight in St. Paul) had 13,000 members represented the largest Swedish religious group.14

Still, the Synod was concerned about what they believed was low enrollment in their urban churches. The percentage of Swedish-Americans who attended Augustana-affiliated churches was lower in the Twin Cities than in rural areas (15% vs. 30%). The Synod attributed that gap in part to the fact that those who lived in the cities had a greater number and variety of churches to choose from including many English-speaking churches.15 As competition for members increased, congregations built churches that expressed their “growing desire for refinement, education and taste”16 (and to deliberate about whether or not to conduct some or all of their work in English).

Nils Hasselmo, former president of the University of Minnesota and professor emeritus of Scandinavian languages and literature, pointed out that the “language question” was one of the most challenging issues that congregations faced:

“The language of their religious upbringing was for many so intimately intertwined with religion itself that it was very difficult for them to separate the two. The churches were also the most important of the Swedish American institutions, and the ones that were in the most direct sense transplantation from the ‘Old Country’.”17

Fifteen years later, in 1907, there were 496 member churches in the Augustana Synod but only five of them used English exclusively.18 The following year, in 1908, advocates for establishing English-speaking congregations formed an association to further their cause, and it was that year that 44 founding members, mostly from Augustana Church, organized Messiah English Evangelical Church.

According to census records, many of the men who founded Messiah were born in Sweden and had emigrated in the 1880s when they were in their teens or early twenties. They represented a variety of occupations—business owners, laborers, a lawyer and a police sergeant. They had one skill in common: their ability to speak English fluently. Several of them identified English as their “mother tongue” on the census. (Appendix A)

Although Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, an English-only church, located in the Seven Corners neighborhood of South Minneapolis, was organized in 1904, four years before Messiah, its focus on the Swedish-immigrant community was short-lived. As early as the 1890s
Scandinavian families had begun moving away from Seven Corners to neighborhoods south of Franklin Avenue. By 1904 the exodus was well under way and Grace shifted its focus from the Swedish-immigrant community to meeting the needs of students, staff, and residents of the fast-growing University community. In 1914, Grace merged with Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Saron Church and moved across the river onto the East Bank of the University Campus.

Messiah and the few other English-speaking congregations remained in the Augustana Synod but were a distinct minority. In 1910, the majority (85%) of worship services in the synod’s churches were conducted in Swedish and it was “not until 1920 that the Synod began publishing its minutes in English as well as Swedish.” The shift from Swedish to English for conducting Synod business occurred in the 1930s.

Messiah’s members purchased a church located at Thirteenth Avenue and Tenth Street from a Methodist congregation and worshipped there from 1908 until 1916. In late January 1916, the church burned, and the congregation, which by then had grown to 400 members, commissioned Harry Wild Jones to design a new church on a lot that they had purchased at the intersection of 25th Street and Columbus Avenue.

Jones’ proposed design was one of five that the congregation received. The Reverend Samuel M. Miller, Messiah’s pastor in 1916, described features that made Jones’ plan so appealing to Messiah’s members:

“A beautiful church—harmonious, churchly and home-like in design…to seat 500 with 100 more in the balcony…a dressing room and door from the street for the choir…chapel and Sunday School room in rear of the sanctuary with seating for 200 or 300 more for large services)…a finished basement only under the Sunday School room (our present annex) with dumb waiter up from kitchen for large dinners…Bible class room and parlors upstairs behind the balcony…all within the $35,000 mark.”

In short, Jones offered the congregation a beautiful church at a price that they could afford.

While Messiah’s parishioners chose to conduct all of their services and church-related business in English, opportunities to continue using or to learn Swedish were readily available. The population of the surrounding South Minneapolis neighborhood remained largely Scandinavian until well into the middle of the 20th century. The church is located within two blocks of Swan Turnblad’s mansion, currently the American Swedish Institute, and it was within walking distance of the Franklin Avenue Library, home to the city’s entire collection of 6,000 Scandinavian-language books. In 1910 South High School, located at 24th Street and Cedar Avenue, became the first high school in Minneapolis to offer Swedish as an elective course and continued to offer it until 1973.

Minneapolis’ population peaked in 1950 with more than 521,718 people, 98.4% of whom were white. The Swedish community, whether immigrant or American-born, continued to move farther south in the city and eventually many moved to the suburbs.
In 2010, the population of Minneapolis was 372,378, 63.8% of whom were white. The demographics of the Phillips community where Messiah is located, like the rest of the city, have changed. It is still home to a large number of immigrant families but many of its residents now come from East African countries and Latin or South America.

Messiah’s congregation continued to worship in the church at 2504 Columbus until 2008 when they entered into a partnership with Lutheran Social Services and began to hold worship services in the Center for Changing Lives on Park Avenue. The congregation still owns the church designed by Harry Wild Jones. Currently, Emmanuel Mennonite Church and Centro Nueva Vida Iglesia Apostolica hold services there.

**Notable Members of Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church:**

Up until the middle of the twentieth century, Messiah and the surrounding community retained much of its Scandinavian character, and many of the congregation’s members and their children achieved the financial and social success that they had envisioned. Members of one of the church’s most prominent families, the Youngdahls, became famous not only locally, but nationally as well.

John Carl Youngdahl was one of Messiah’s founding members and served on its first Board of Administration. He was born in Sweden in 1861 and emigrated in 1880. He settled in Minneapolis where he owned and operated a grocery store. He married twice and had ten children. All of his sons were successful: Peter, the oldest son, became a lawyer; Carl, the second son, was choir director at Augustana Lutheran Children in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Oscar represented Minnesota’s Fifth Congressional District in the U. S. House of Representatives, and Benjamin was a professor of social work at George Washington University in St. Louis.

His two most well-known sons were Reuben and Luther Youngdahl. Reuben served as the fifth pastor of Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, for 30 years. When Reverend Youngdahl began his work at Mount Olivet in 1938, the congregation numbered 331 members. When he died in 1968, his congregation had grown to more than 10,000 members making it the largest and best-known Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA) in America.

Luther Youngdahl was elected Governor of Minnesota three times and served between 1947 and 1951. He resigned as governor when Harry Truman appointed him to a federal judgeship in Washington D.C. While serving on the court he gained national attention for ruling against the government in the case of Owen Lattimore, who Senator Joseph McCarthy had accused of being a Communist. It was one of the most highly publicized cases of the McCarthy era and the one that Youngdahl considered his proudest accomplishment. When Luther Youngdahl died in 1978, the *Star Tribune* credited him with being “the most prominent member of one of Minnesota’s most prominent families.”

Frank Brooberg, another member of Messiah, was president of the Scandia National Bank. His home, located at 727 East 24th Street, one block north of Messiah, has been designated a landmark by the City of Minneapolis. Brooberg’s house, which is described as “a remnant of a turn-of-the-century South Minneapolis Community created by the influx of Swedish
immigrants in the last decade of the nineteenth century,” was designated for its association with the social history of South Minneapolis. The house was designed to “reflect [the] good fortune” of someone who “represented a generation of immigrants who had moved out of old settlement neighborhoods to achieve success in Minneapolis.”

A yearbook of Messiah’s members published in 1930 includes a number of ads from communicants listed in the directory that demonstrate the range and variety of professional and commercial success enjoyed by some of its members: Martin R. Henry, M.D.; Dr. Stewart Johnson, a dentist; Martha Hoogner, teacher of expression at the Northwestern College of Speech Arts; A. R. Morshare, co-owner of Cole’s Cafeteria; Oscar Gilquist, owner of Gilquist’s Grocery; and C. R. Settergren, manager of Selby-Lake Hardware. The Youngdahl and Brooberg families were among the families listed as members.

**Harry Wild Jones, Architect:**

Harry Wild Jones was born in Schoolcraft, Michigan in 1859. He was the only child of Reverend Howard Malcom and Mary White Smith Jones. Jones’ father was a Baptist minister and served congregations in many cities over the course of his career.

There were several clergymen on both his mother and father’s sides of the family and it was expected that Harry would follow in their footsteps. As Elizabeth Vandam, Jones’ biographer, noted: “Religious ministry was a family business, and, more important, a time-honored and respected occupation.” It turned out that architecture, not the church, was Jones’ calling but he remained deeply religious throughout his life and that had a profound influence on the types of commissions that he chose to pursue.

Jones studied for two years at Brown University before transferring to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to study architecture. He spent the year after he graduated working in the Boston office of Henry Hobson Richardson. In September 1883, he married Bertha Juliet Tucker and shortly afterward the couple moved to Minneapolis. He found work as a draftsman in the architectural firm owned by James C. Plant and William Channing Whitney but that was short-lived. The firm dissolved and Jones went to Europe to study and to get additional training.

The Jones’ returned to Minneapolis in 1885 and Jones once again went to work in William Channing Whitney’s firm. Within the year, Jones opened his own firm in the Lumber Exchange Building. He became a founding member of Calvary Baptist Church and joined a number of arts and commercial organizations where he met a number of his future clients. His interest in “outside” art inspired him to serve a twelve-year term (1892-1904) as a Park Board Commissioner.

In 1890 Jones was hired by the University of Minnesota to plan and implement a four-year architecture program that would make it “the equal of any Eastern technological institute in regard to architecture.” In 1893 he became one of the founding members of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

The range of Jones’ talents and interests was described well by architectural critic and historian Larry Millett:
“What seems most remarkable about Jones today is the breadth of his practice. Like his great St. Paul contemporaries, Cass Gilbert and Clarence Johnston, Jones was a highly versatile designer whose output included everything from industrial and office buildings to churches, apartments, private homes, and park structures. A master of many styles moving effortlessly from Richardsonian Romanesque to Gothic to Classical Revival as times—and tastes—changed, he was undaunted by the challenge of working at a variety of scales. For every big building like Butler Square Jones designed, he produced many smaller ones, such as the lovely little Bethesda Church (gone), A Shingle Style gem constructed in 1889 for a black congregation in downtown Minneapolis.”

Bethesda Baptist Church, the Shingle Style church, that Millett referred to was the first church in Minneapolis known to have been designed by Jones, and it appears to have been the only church that he designed before 1900. The church was described as a “visual pleasure to behold—unequalled by any neighboring churches.” The church was subsequently razed.

Between 1900 and 1906, Jones worked on three churches. In 1900 he designed the first Norwegian-Danish Baptist Church, his second Shingle Style church, which was located on 16th Avenue and Thirteenth Street. It, too, has been razed.

The two other churches that Jones worked on were projects begun by Warren H. Hayes. In 1902 Jones was in charge of renovating the sanctuary of Calvary Baptist Church. Hayes designed the Richardsonian Romanesque Church which was built in 1889. The building permit for the church and attached parish house is missing from the Special Collections Library but it appears that Jones’ work in 1902 focused on the church’s interior. The parsonage, which was designed by Jones and added in 1928, housed the Sunday School and a variety of church activities. It is constructed of similar materials and in a style compatible with, though not identical, to the original church. In 1995, the City of Minneapolis designated Calvary Baptist Church as a landmark because of its associations with two of the area’s leading architects and for its social history. According to the city’s website Calvary “exists as an architectural artifact symbolizing the growth and development of a Minneapolis Baptist congregation over a 125-year period.”

In 1906 Jones was commissioned to complete the work begun by Warren Hayes on Fowler Methodist Church in 1894. By the time that Hayes died in 1899, Fowler’s Chapel was completed. Plans to complete the church were put on hold until sufficient funds were raised to finish the work. The building permit for Fowler (currently the Scottish Rites Temple) is also missing from the Special Collections Library. The imposing Romanesque Revival church was designated as a local landmark in the City of Minneapolis in 1986 and is recognized as “the only combined architectural effort of Warren H. Hayes and Harry Wild Jones.”

In 1907 Jones suffered a serious head injury in an automobile accident and was in a coma for ten weeks. As part of his recovery he and his wife left on a four-month world tour. When he returned he showed no signs of slowing down. Private homes made up the largest portion of his portfolio, followed by commercial properties, but the number of churches that he designed increased significantly. For instance, between 1907 and 1915 Jones designed eleven churches in Minneapolis.
Although there were some who suggested that Jones’ interest in ecclesiastical architecture grew out of his near-death experience in 1907, Vandam pointed out that an equally strong case could be made that Jones had always been a deeply religious man and an active member of his church. His interest and talents nicely coincided with the city’s rapid expansion away from downtown and the milling district which created a demand for churches within walking distance from their members’ homes. With the exception of Advent Christian Church and 1st Church of Christ Science, the churches that Jones designed were “second-generation” (often called “mission” or “daughter”) churches of established congregations located in, or close to, the city’s downtown core.

By 1910 Jones’ marketing materials focused on his firm’s expertise in ecclesiastical architecture (Appendix B). He traveled the country giving lectures about church architecture and offering advice to congregations who were in the process of building new churches.

Jones relished the challenges that designing churches provided: “No building is so complicated in its requirement and construction of design, plan and detail as a church…inevitably involving more professional study of architecture than any of the commercial or domestic structures.” He thought that a church should “be a beacon light in the community, to which people may be attracted…in evidence six days of the week, and a reminder of religion and worship.”

Of particular importance, Jones prided himself on creating beautiful churches for congregations of modest means. His firm’s motto was “A New Church Dedicated Free of Debt.” Again, as Reverend Samuel M. Miller, Messiah’s pastor in 1916 stated regarding the Messiah design it is, “A beautiful church—harmonious, churchly and home-like in design… all within the $35,000 mark.” Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church is the embodiment of Jones’ design vision to create beautiful churches of modest means.

**Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church:**

Marilyn Chiat, a noted expert on religious architecture characterizes neighborhood churches as “enhancers of the built environment, cornerstones of many communities and evidence of this nation’s ethnic and religious diversity.” They are the “beacon light in the community” that Jones sought to create for his clients, and it is a description that fits Messiah well. Messiah was built and paid for by entrepreneurs, professionals and skilled laborers in the Swedish-American community in South Minneapolis, and stands as testament to their commitment to their religion and to their community.

As the photos illustrate, Messiah is an outstanding example of a modestly sized and designed Gothic Revival church. The exterior of the two-story red brick church with its bell tower, pointed-arch entryway, window tracery, and gabled roof remains largely unchanged since the church was built 100 years ago (cover photo and Figure 3).

An elaborate and unusual system of interior trusses is one of the most distinctive features of the church. Pointed arches, one of the most distinctive characteristics of Gothic Revival architecture, are repeated throughout the church. They appear in the panels of the art-glass windows, the carved wood paneling and plaster arches, the pulpit, and the church’s focal
point, its stained glass window. The main floor of the church and the second-floor loft also remain largely unchanged (Figures 21 and 34).

Near Messiah along a two-block stretch of Chicago Avenue, between 24th and 26th Streets, there were three Protestant churches—each church’s architecture reflected differences among various Protestant denominations, different ethnic groups, and distinct theologies. The congregation of Our Saviour’s, a Lutheran church founded by Norwegian immigrants, built a church at 24th Street and Chicago Avenue in 1912; it burned in 1995, and was rebuilt in 1999. Methodists, united by their shared belief in the teachings of John Wesley, built Olivet Methodist Church at 26th Street and Chicago Avenue in 1909; it was demolished in 2007 and a parking ramp now stands on its former site. Of the three churches, Messiah is the only that remains and it is one of the few of his surviving churches that remains as Jones and the church’s congregation originally envisioned it.
PART 3: RATIONALE FOR LOCAL HISTORIC DESIGNATION

Local historic designation is an official action that promotes the preservation of historic resources by recognizing specific people, places, and events that are deemed to be significant in relation to the history and heritage of Minneapolis. Through the requirements set out in the Heritage Preservation chapter of the City’s Code of Ordinances, the act of designation establishes a series of protections that are administered through the ordinance to ensure protection of significant places throughout the city against demolition or inappropriate alterations.

 Messiah Lutheran Church is significant because of its association with Harry Wild Jones, one of Minneapolis’ leading architects (criterion 6). During its one-hundred-year history this Gothic Revival church has remained largely unchanged and continues to serve as an excellent example of Jones’ ecclesiastical architecture (criterion 4). The church also played an important role in the religious and social history of the Swedish-immigrant community in Minneapolis (criterion 3).

Criteria #1: The property is associated with significant events or with periods that exemplify broad patterns of cultural, political, economic or social history.

Substantial evidence that Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church is significant in relation to broad patterns of cultural or social history was not uncovered within the scope of this study. The property is most closely associated with the city’s Swedish-American community in South Minneapolis and is more applicable to criteria #3.

Criteria #2: The property is associated with the lives of significant persons or groups.

Substantial evidence that Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church is significant in relation to persons or groups was not uncovered within the scope of this study. While a number of members of Messiah were prominent in the Minneapolis’ Swedish-American community none rose to prominent City wide significance.

Criteria #3: The property contains or is associated with distinctive elements of city or neighborhood identity.

Messiah Evangelical Church was built to meet the needs of the Swedish-immigrant community at a time when increasing numbers of Swedish immigrants and their American-born offspring were moving into neighborhoods north and south of the
river and milling district. In many cases, that migration led to the formation of neighborhoods where residents had a shared history and culture. Messiah is located in South Minneapolis in a neighborhood that had a large Swedish presence. The congregation was among the earliest to hold its services and conduct its business exclusively in English marking a turning point in thinking about what it meant to be Swedish-American and to assimilate into American culture. The neighborhood where the church is located retained its largely Scandinavian identity until the middle of the 20th century.

The Church speaks to the Swedish immigrant experience, patterns of settlement by Swedes in Minneapolis, and the assimilation of English into their lives and worship. While the buildings immediately adjacent to the church have changed, the character and integrity of the building is not dependent on its immediate context, but rather its place within the larger south Minneapolis neighborhood.

Criteria #4: The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural or engineering type or style, or method of construction.

Messiah Lutheran Church, with its elaborately carved trusses, generous use of wood throughout the building, and its beautiful colored glass is an excellent example of a modest Gothic Revival neighborhood church built in the early part of the 20th century. The interior wood trusses are an unusual and noteworthy feature of the church. Oak is used throughout the church with a pattern of pointed arches that repeats throughout the church from the double doors at the churches entrance, to the bell tower, to the tracery that frames the art glass and stained glass windows, and to the carving on wooden panels and the pulpit. The east and west facing walls are gable parapet walls and there smaller cross gables located at the east and west ends of the church. The major components of the church’s Gothic Revival style have remained unaltered for 100 years.

Criteria #5: The property exemplifies a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or quality of design or detail.

The subject property does not appear significant under criterion 5. The landscape, while attractive, is unexceptional.

Criteria #6: The property exemplifies works of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen or architects.

The subject property is significant because of its association with Harry Wild Jones, one of Minneapolis’ leading architects in the late-19th and early-20th centuries. A catalog of his work represents a variety of architectural and building types: commercial, residential, civic, and ecclesiastical. Residential properties made up the largest share of his portfolio. He designed fewer commercial properties but was commissioned to design four buildings for the Minneapolis Park Board.
Local and National Register designations: Based on previous locally and nationally designated works, Jones is recognized as one of Minneapolis’s master architects. To date, four of Jones’ works have been listed in the National Register:

- Harry Wild Jones House
- Lakewood Cemetery Chapel
- Scottish Rites Temple (Fowler Methodist Church)
- Washburn Water Tower.

Seven structures designed in whole or in partnership with Warren H. Hayes have been designated as local landmarks:

- Calvary Baptist Church
- Fowler Methodist Church (Scottish Rites Temple
- Lakewood Memorial Chapel
- Swinford Townhomes/Apartments
- Beard-Harrington House
- Washburn Water Tower
- Harry Wild Jones house.
- The Butler Building is a contributing structure with the historic Warehouse District.

Relevance of the Subject Property to the collection of Master works:
The Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church is one of the last remaining, and fairly intact, examples of H.W. Jones’ work with a modest budget on a neighborhood church.

In the appendix to her biography of Harry Wild Jones, Elizabeth Vandam identified twenty-one (21) neighborhood churches in Minneapolis that were designed by Jones’ firm.37 They span a time period from 1889 until 1934. Jones built a number of Gothic Revival churches using a variety of materials.

Overall, as a collection, his churches have not fared well. Eight of the twenty-one (21) churches Jones designed have been razed already. Of the thirteen (13) remaining churches, ten of them appear to have been significantly altered. In most cases, the alterations were carried out to meet the changing needs of growing congregations or to provide additional space for church activities. Additions and alterations vary greatly in terms of size and compatibility with Jones’ original design. Some of the churches have been maintained very well, others are in need of repair (Appendix E). Many of these appear to have lost their integrity and thus their significance may be undermined.

Of these thirteen remaining churches – those that have not been razed - only three (3) appear to remain intact and therefore retain their integrity:

- Windom Park Baptist
- First Church of Christ Science
- Messiah English Evangelical Church
Of particular importance, Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church is an excellent example of the type of modest church design that H.W. Jones focused a portion of his architectural practice on creating. As one of only three remaining intact examples of Jones’ design thinking about neighborhood churches, Messiah offers tangible and lasting insight on Jones’ design intentions for institutions intended and built for a population of common folks.

Criteria #7: The property has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The subject property has not yielded information important in prehistory.

Integrity of historic resource:

In addition to being historically significant, the subject property retains its ability to communicate its historical significance as evident in its retention of six of the seven aspects of integrity.

Location: The original Building Permit for this church shows that the building was constructed onsite, indicating that it maintains its integrity of location.

Design: The design of the church remains much as the congregation and architect intended. The only exterior alterations are minor and intended to protect important features of the church from vandalism. Plexiglass has been placed over the stained glass windows and metal grilles are at each of the ground-level windows. A brick stairway on the church’s northwest corner has been modified so that the exit is to the east rather than to the north. Two short brick walls that led to the ground-level door on the church’s west side have been removed. It appears that the stairway and decorative walls were modified to accommodate the limestone retaining wall. There is a wooden hood/shelter over the door leading into the church from the parking lot that provides protection from snow and rain.

The major features of the interior of the church remain essentially unchanged. The truss system, stained glass and art glass windows, and carved oak trim and detailing remain as Jones and Messiah’s congregation intended.

Setting: The property’s integrity of setting remains largely intact. Dating back to the turn of the 20th-century Chicago Avenue has been a mix of commercial and residential properties. The majority of residential properties in the immediate radius of the church were substantial duplexes; many of them are still standing today and look much as they did when they were built. Messiah is located on 25th Street midway between Chicago Avenue and Park Avenue. Within a three-block distance of the church there are six locally designated properties, each of them built as single-family homes at the turn of the 20th century. Changes along the Chicago Avenue between 24th and 28th Streets are largely the result of the expansion/addition of Minneapolis Children’s and Abbott-Northwestern Hospitals.
Materials: The property maintains the integrity of its materials. The minor changes that have been made to the exterior of the church are reversible.

Workmanship: The property was solidly built retains all of its major exterior elements. Both the interior and exterior offer outstanding examples of Harry Wild Jones’ ecclesiastical architecture and attention to detail.

Feeling: The subject property maintains its feeling as a church.

Association: The residence retains its association with the architectural firm that designed it. One hundred years after it was built, this unique property remains as its architect and the church’s congregation envisioned it.

Relationship to the body of locally-designated properties in Minneapolis

Messiah Lutheran church is located within three (or fewer) blocks of six designated landmarks: the American Swedish Institute, Charles Harrington House, Anson Brooks mansion, Bardwell-Ferrant house, Sumner T. McKnight Mansion and Frank Brooberg house located in the West Phillips Neighborhood. It is located one block west of Chicago Avenue which remains a mix of commercial and residential properties.

Seven structures designed in whole or part by Harry Wild Jones have been designated as local landmarks: Calvary Baptist Church, Fowler Methodist Church (Scottish Rites Temple), Lakewood Memorial Chapel, Swinford Townhomes/Apartments, Beard, Harrington House, Washburn Water Tower, and Harry Wild Jones house. Additionally, the Butler Building is a contributing structure with the historic Warehouse District. Messiah would be the first example of a modest neighborhood church.

Although the Gothic Revival style was popular in Minneapolis, only one church--Gethsemane Episcopal Church (Edward S. Stebbins, architect)--has been designated as a local landmark.

For additional information, see listings under section on Criteria 6, pages 24-26 above.

Relationship to the 1990 Minneapolis Preservation Plan

The proposed designation helps fulfill the goals outlined in the 1990 Preservation Plan for the City of Minneapolis by systematically studying a property for its potential for preservation.

Comprehensive and Long-Range Planning

Title 23, Chapter 599.260 of Minneapolis Code of Ordinances requires the planning director to submit all proposed designations to the Minneapolis City Planning Commission for review and comment on the proposed designation. In its review, the City Planning Commission shall consider but not be limited to the following factors:

1. The relationship of the proposed designation to the city’s comprehensive plan.
2. The effect of the proposed designation on the surrounding area.
(3) The consistency of the proposed designation with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the city council.

The relationship of the proposed designation to the city’s comprehensive plan:

The designation of the subject property meets relevant policies of *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*.

Policy 8.1 states, “Preserve, maintain, and designate districts, landmarks, and historic resources which serve as reminders of the city’s architecture history, and culture.” By designating the subject property as a landmark, the City will require the preservation and maintenance of a building significant to the neighborhood identity, which embodies the characteristics of the Gothic Revival style, and exemplifies the work of a master architect. Designation will preserve one of the last remaining intact examples of Harry Wild Jones’ church design that is an excellent (although modest) example of the Gothic Revival architectural style.

Policy 1.15 of the Comprehensive Plan states, “Support development of Growth Centers as locations for concentration of jobs and housing, and supporting services.” Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church is located within an area identified by the Comprehensive Plan as the Wells Fargo/Hospitals Growth Area. This area is described as follows:

“This area, located just south of Downtown, is home to several large institutional campuses including Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Abbott Northwestern Hospital, and Children’s Hospital. Although these are not contiguous, together they form a large concentration of employment and a cluster of supporting uses – such as various other medical clinics and offices. The surrounding area includes a mix of residential densities, typical of neighborhoods close to the Downtown core. The character and scale of the surrounding area should be factored into any planned expansions of the institutional campuses or other complementary high intensity development.”

Policy 1.15.4 provides additional guidance calling out a need to factor in the character and scale of the surrounding neighborhood when considering any expansions. Designating Messiah at this time is appropriate and will avoid potential future conflicts between character and expansion in the future. Such a designation will help guide future development to more ideal locations where conflicts are not as likely. This desire is further discussed in Policy 1.15.4 of the Comprehensive Plan, “Promote the integration of major public and private institutional campuses located in Growth Centers, including health care and educational services, with the function and character of surrounding areas.”

The effect of the proposed designation on the surrounding area:
The proposed designation of the subject property will protect one of the best remaining examples of Harry Wild Jones’ ecclesiastical architecture. Jones took great pride in being able to offer beautiful churches at prices affordable to middle-class congregations. The church is situated in the Phillips Neighborhood of South Minneapolis, an area that has historically been home to large numbers of immigrants and refugees. Messiah tells an important piece of the larger story about the challenges and successes of immigrants in Minneapolis. At one time there were three churches in this neighborhood situated near the stretch of Chicago Avenue between 24th and 26th Streets. Our Saviour’s Lutheran church which was founded by Norwegian immigrants and built at 24th Street and Chicago Avenue in 1912; it burned in 1995, and was rebuilt in 1999. Olivet Methodist Church which was located at 26th Street and Chicago Avenue was built in 1909; it was demolished in 2007 and a parking ramp now stands on its former site. Messiah English Evangelical Lutheran Church located at 2501 Columbus. Messiah Of the three neighborhood churches, Messiah is the only that remains. Additionally, Messiah is one of a few surviving Harry Wild Jones churches.

The property of the proposed designation with application development plans or development objectives adopted by the City Council:

Small Area Plans: The property lies within the boundary of the Chicago Avenue Corridor Plan (2012). The Future Land Use map identifies the parcel as Mixed-Use (Residential/Office), which are parcels that can be redeveloped into multifamily housing, and/or office uses. The plan states that there is community consensus that existing structures in good condition should be maintained or rehabilitated when feasible — especially those structures contribute to an “aesthetically pleasing corridor”. The plan does not make any recommendations as to which properties contribute to the corridor and which properties should be redeveloped or rehabilitated. The plan also calls out that some structures, particularly those closest to the hospitals, are good candidates for adaptive reuse into medical or other offices.

National Register Status:

This property is not currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

State Designation:

The property has not been designated by the state of Minnesota as a historic district, historic place, or historic site.

Period of Significance: 1916-2008
### PART 4: REGISTRATION AND CLASSIFICATION INFORMATION

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<td>Date of NRHP listing?</td>
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<th>USE AND FUNCTION</th>
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<td>Historic Use</td>
<td>Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Use</td>
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<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<td>Architectural classification/style</td>
<td>Gothic Revival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Foundation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Roof</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Walls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Not visible - brick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wood frame, asphalt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Exterior Brick and limestone</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- NA</td>
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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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<tr>
<th>Applicable local designation criteria</th>
<th>3, 4, &amp; 6</th>
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<td>Related local context (s)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant dates</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period(s) of significance</td>
<td>1916-2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural affiliation</td>
<td>Swedish Lutheranism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names of master builders, engineers, designers, artists, craftsmen, and/or architects</td>
<td>Harry Wild Jones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

See Sources on page #32

### GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

| Size of parcel                          | .27 acres, 11,765 s.f. |
| PIN number                              | 35-029-24-23-0016 |
| Legal Description                       | To be written upon designation by City Council. |


5 Ibid.

6 Lanegran, 39-40.

7 Lanegran, 52-53.


9 Lanegran, 39.

10 Lanegran, 52.

11 Lewis, 37.


13 Granquist, 280.

14 Granquist, 271.

15 Ibid.


18 Hasselmo, 244.

19 Ibid.


22 Lanegran, 54.

23 Ibid.


26 “Roll of Communicant Members,” by Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, MN, 1930.
28 Undated newspaper clipping (1890) in Harry Wild Jones Papers, Minnesota Historical Society.
29 Larry Millett in introduction to *Harry Wild Jones: American Architect* by Elizabeth A. Vandam, (Minneapolis, Minnesota, Nodin Press, 2008)
30 Vandam, 69.
31 “Calvary Baptist Church,”
   http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/hpc/landmarks/hpc_landmarks_blaisdell_ave_s_26
   08_calvary_baptist_church, accessed January 14, 2017,
32 “Scottish Rites Temple,”
   http://www.minneapolismn.gov/hpc/landmarks/hpc_landmarks_dupont_ave_s_2011
33 Vandam, 69.
34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 Rev. Samuel Miller, quoted in “Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church 50th Anniversary Book:
   1908-1958,” 17.
37 This number does not include Calvary Baptist Church or the Scottish Rites Temple because they are the shared work of Warren H. Hayes and Harry Wild Jones. It also does not include the Lakewood Chapel which is not associated with a congregation or theology.
Bibliography


Larry Millett, introduction to *Harry Wild Jones: American Architect* by Elizabeth A. Vandam, (Minneapolis, Minnesota, Nodin Press, 2008)


**Additional Resources**

“Roll of Communicant Members”, yearbook published by Messiah Lutheran Church, 1930, MHS BX 8076.M6 M 582


**Newspaper Articles**


Figure 1: Site Map

Hennepin County Property Map

Date: 3/4/2017

Parcel ID: 3502924230016

Owner Name: Messiah English Lutheran Church

Parcel Address: 2501 Columbus Ave S,
Minneapolis MN 55404

Parcel Area: 0.27 acres, 11,785 sq ft

A-T-B: Abstrat

Sale Price:

Sale Data:

Assessed 2016, Payable 2017

Property Type: Commercial-Preferred Homestead

Market Value: $0

Tax Total: $281.00

Assessed 2017, Payable 2018

Property Type: Unavailable

Homestead: Unavailable

Market Value: Unavailable

Comments:

Location of Messiah Lutheran Church, 2501 Columbus Avenue South

This data (the information provided) is not intended to be comprehensive or complete, or for any purpose other than as a result of its preparation.

Copyright 2017 Hennepin County
Figure 2: Harry Wild Jones’ drawing of Messiah’s exterior and main floor plan.
Figure 3: Roofline viewed from north façade.
Figure 4: Primary entrance and bell tower.
Figure 5: West façade parapet gable wall
Figure 6: East façade
Figure 7: South facade
Figure 8: South façade east end gable.
Figure 9: Gabled entrance on south façade.
Figure 10: South side west-end gable, entrance to pastor’s study.
Figure 11: Entrance and stairs on northwest corner of north façade.
Figure 12: Central Aisle in sanctuary.

Figure 13: Sliding oak panels separating sanctuary and library.
Figure 14: View of sanctuary through open panel.
Figure 15: Stairwell and newel post
Figure 16: Interior Arches and Trusses

Figure 17: Stained Glass Window
Figure 18: Art glass windows, hymn board and door to robing room.
Figure 19: Altar, choirs and communion rail as viewed from the loft
Figure 20: Dormer Window and Trusses

Figure 21: View of trusses from choir loft
Figure 22: Oak pews, trusses, doors, panels and tracery.

Figure 23: Pulpit
Figure 24: Library, north side of main floor
Figure 25: Nursery, west end of library
Figure 26: Classroom on east end of library
Figure 27: Entrance to restrooms on east end of library

Figure 28: Second floor hallway
Figure 29: Pastor’s Office

Figure 30: Sunday School Classroom
Figure 31: Basement Fellowship Hall
**Figure 32:** Basement Performance Platform

**Figure 33:** Entrance to Kitchen
Figure 34: Church interior, ca. 1950
Appendices: Messiah Lutheran Church
### Appendix A: Messiah Lutheran Church First Board of Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Immigration Status</th>
<th>Language Spoken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Carl O Lundquist</td>
<td>Messiah's minister</td>
<td>Born in Sweden in 1874; emigrated in 1881</td>
<td>1910 census-English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John C Youngdahl</td>
<td>grocer</td>
<td>Born in Sweden 1861; emigrated in 1880</td>
<td>1920-mother tongue Swedish; spoke English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Strom</td>
<td>tile layer</td>
<td>Born in Sweden 1864; emigrated in 1888</td>
<td>1910 census-English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Nordin</td>
<td>lawyer</td>
<td>Born in Sweden 1873; emigrated in 1890</td>
<td>1920 census-Swedish; 1910 census-English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nels Olson</td>
<td>co-owner Johnson &amp; Olson-“receivers of hay, grain and mill stuffs”</td>
<td>Common name--cannot positively identify the correct one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John G Larson</td>
<td>police sergeant</td>
<td>Born in Sweden 1865; emigrated in 1888</td>
<td>1910 census-English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl Lindou</td>
<td>bricklayer</td>
<td>Born in Sweden 1860; emigrated in 1883</td>
<td>1900 census-English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byron A Lindgren</td>
<td>sec-treas H S Johnson Co-sash &amp; door mfg</td>
<td>Born in Minnesota in 1876</td>
<td>1910 census-English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Johnson</td>
<td>co-owner Johnson &amp; Olson-“receivers of hay, grain and mill stuffs”</td>
<td>Born in Sweden 1846; emigrated in 1883</td>
<td>1910 census-English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred A Lewis</td>
<td>clerk for Smith &amp; Wyman sash, door, blind mfg</td>
<td>Born in Minnesota in 1878</td>
<td>1910 census-English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Susan Hunter Weir
Appendix B: Advertising Materials for HWJones' architectural firm
Appendix C: The Firm’s motto, “A New Church Dedicated Free of Debt”
# Appendix D: Current Status of Harry Wild Jones' Churches in Minneapolis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Built</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st Church of Christ Science</strong></td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Extant-no permits issued for any major interior or exterior alterations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2314 Nicollet Avenue South</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st Norwegian-Danish Baptist</strong></td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Razed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th Avenue and 13th Street</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4th Baptist Church</strong></td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Razed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st Street North</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advent Christian Church</strong></td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Extant-Tawfiq Islamic Center--A permit was issued for the construction of Advent Christian Church was issued on January 4, 1916. Since that time permits have been issued for interior work (acoustical ceiling in the basement dining room, replacing a furnace, electrical and plumbing work) but no permits were issued for additions or major alterations to the exterior of the church. Website photos indicate a number of alterations to the interior to better reflect Islamic practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2900 Lyndale Avenue North</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bethesda Baptist</strong></td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Razed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1118 South 8th Street</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bethlehem Presbyterian</strong></td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Razed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2539 Pleasant Avenue South</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bethlehem Swedish Evangelical Lutheran</strong></td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Razed and replaced in 1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2206 Fremont Avenue North</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bishop Whipple Chapel</strong></td>
<td>1920s</td>
<td>Razed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39th Street and Grand Avenue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Year of Interest</td>
<td>Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calvary Baptist Church and Parsonage</td>
<td>1902/1928</td>
<td>Extant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2608 Blaisdell Avenue South</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ English Lutheran Church</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Razed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3201 Oliver Avenue North</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fowler Methodist</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Extant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Dupont Avenue South</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace Methodist Episcopal</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Extant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3254-56 Penn Avenue North</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judson Memorial Baptist Chapel</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>Moved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38th Street &amp; Harriet Avenue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judson Memorial Baptist Church</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>The permit for a 72 x 102’ brick, stucco &amp; terra cotta church was issued in 1914; Judson Chapel was moved and incorporated in 1915; in 1927 a 67 x 70' brick addition was built, in 1962 a wrecking permit for a 24x36x16' one-and-a-half-story dwelling on the side of the church was issued and a permit for a 66.67x69.67x24 addition was issued.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4101 Harriet Avenue South</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knox Presbyterian</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Extant</td>
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<tr>
<td>4747 Lyndale Avenue South</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lake Harriet Baptist</strong></td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Razed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
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<tr>
<td>4948 Upton Avenue South</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Lynnhurst Congregational</strong></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>Extant--in 1909, a 48.6 x 95.8 brick and plaster church was constructed; in 1924, a 65.6 x 75.10 attached brick and concrete Sunday School building was added more than doubling the size of the structure.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4501 Colfax Avenue South</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Messiah English Lutheran</strong></th>
<th>1916</th>
<th>Extant--minor, reversible, exterior alterations.</th>
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<tr>
<td>2501 Columbus</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Simpson Methodist Church</strong></th>
<th>1924</th>
<th>Extant-Vandam dates this church to 1924 but building permit shows that the church was built in 1907 and the basement and a stucco addition were added in 1924. Drawing of 1907 church is in HWJ's papers. The 1924 addition was 5,500 square feet which more than doubled the 1907 church which measured 4,392 square feet.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2741 1st Avenue South</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Temple Baptist Church</strong></th>
<th>1913</th>
<th>Extant-major alterations to exterior; stained glass windows removed and replaced; spire over front entrance and modern handrails added to north façade.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3100 Columbus Avenue</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Windom Park Baptist</strong></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>Extant-no permits have been issued for interior or exterior work.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1300 Lowry NE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Susan Hunter Weir