

# COLORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES NOMINATION FORM

### SECTION I

#### Name of Property

Historic Name University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

Other Names University Park United Methodist Church

#### Address of Property

[ ] address not for publication

Street Address 2180 S. University Blvd.

City Denver County Denver Zip 80210-4712

#### Present Owner of Property

(for multiple ownership, list the names and addresses of each owner on one or more continuation sheets)

Name University Park United Methodist Church (attn: Reverend Paul Kottke)

Address 2180 S. University Blvd. Phone (303) 722-5736

City Denver State CO Zip 80210-4712

#### Owner Consent for Nomination

(attach signed consent from each owner of property)

#### Preparer of Nomination

Name Donna Kirk Date November 22, 2006

Organization Messner & Reeves, LLC

Address 1430 Wynkoop, Suite 400 Phone 303-605-1578

City Denver State CO Zip 80202

#### FOR OFFICIAL USE:

11/22/2006 Nomination Received

2/16/2007 Review Board Recommendation  
 Approval  Denial

Site Number 5DV10354

Senate # \_\_\_\_\_ House # \_\_\_\_\_

2/22/2007 CHS Board State Register Listing  
 Approved  Denied

Listing Criteria  A  B  C  D  E

Certification of Listing: President, Colorado Historical Society

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

Property Name University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

**SECTION II**

**Local Historic Designation**

Has the property received local historic designation?

no

yes ---  individually designated  designated as part of a historic district

Date designated \_\_\_\_\_

Designated by \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of municipality or county)

**Use of Property**

Historic Church

Current Church

**Original Owner** University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

Source of Information Reverend Paul Kottke and archives of University Park United Methodist Church; Deed Records of Denver County

**Year of Construction** 1927-28; 1953; 1963; 2000

Source of Information Original blueprints prepared by Walter Simon dated 1928 for the Original Church; blueprints prepared by Ralph Peterson dated 1951 for the Classroom Addition; University Park United Methodist Church archives, and Reverend Paul Kottke

**Architect, Builder, Engineer, Artist or Designer** Original Church – Architect was Walter Simon; Contractor not known; Classroom Addition – Architect was Ralph Peterson; Contractor was Frohlick

Source of Information Original blueprints prepared by Walter Simon dated 1928 for the Original Church; blueprints prepared by Ralph Peterson dated 1951 for the Classroom Addition; University Park United Methodist Church archives, and Reverend Paul Kottke

**Locational Status**

Original location of structure(s)

Structure(s) moved to current location

Date of move \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION III**

**Description and Alterations**

(describe the current and original appearance of the property and any alterations on one or more continuation sheets)

**COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

Property Name University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

**SECTION IV**

**Significance of Property**

**Nomination Criteria**

- A** - property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to history
- B** - property is connected with persons significant in history
- C** - property has distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or artisan
- D** - property is of geographic importance
- E** - property contains the possibility of important discoveries related to prehistory or history

**Areas of Significance**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Economics                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture            | <input type="checkbox"/> Education                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology – prehistoric          | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Law                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology – historic             | <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/ Recreation     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Heritage               | <input type="checkbox"/> Military             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Exploration/ Settlement       | <input type="checkbox"/> Performing Arts      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Geography/ Community Identity | <input type="checkbox"/> Politics/ Government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Planning and Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Medicine               | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Social History       |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       |

**Significance Statement**

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

**Bibliography**

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

**SECTION V**

**Locational Information**

Lot(s) 17 to 28 and Vacated adjacent alley Block 36

Addition University Park Amended Map (originally filed 1892)

USGS Topographic Quad Map Englewood

**Verbal Boundary Description of Nominated Property**

(describe the boundaries of the nominated property on a continuation sheet)

**COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

Property Name University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

**SECTION VI**

**Photograph Log for Black and White Photographs**

(prepare a photograph log on one or more continuation sheets)

**SECTION VII**

**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS TO ACCOMPANY NOMINATION**

**Owner Consent Form**

**Black and White Photographs**

**Color Prints or Digital Images**

**Sketch Map(s)**

**Photocopy of USGS Map Section**

**Optional Materials**

**Use of Nomination Materials**

Upon submission to the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, all nomination forms and supporting materials become public records pursuant to CRS Title 24, and may be accessed, copied, and used for personal or commercial purposes in accordance with state law unless otherwise specifically exempted. The Colorado Historical Society may reproduce, publish, display, perform, prepare derivative works or otherwise use the nomination materials for Society and/or State Register purposes.

**For Office Use Only**

Property Type:  building(s)  district  site  structure  object  area

Architectural Style/Engineering Type: Gothic Revival

Period of Significance: 1928

Level of Significance:  Local  State  National

Multiple Property Submission: N/A

Acreage less than one

P.M. 6th Township 4S Range 68W Section 25 Quarter Sections SW NW SW NW

UTM Reference: Zone 13 Easting 503600 Northing 4391688 NAD27



Property Name University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

---

### DESCRIPTION and ALTERATIONS

The 1928 University Park Methodist Episcopal Church (now the University Park United Methodist Church) is located at 2180 South University Boulevard at the northeast corner of South University Boulevard and E. Warren Avenue, immediately across from the Chancellor Ritchie Drive (renamed from Circle Drive), the main entrance to the University of Denver. The original church building was erected in 1927, occupied in 1928, and is now part of an expanded facility that has been added onto three times. A classroom addition was added onto the east side of the original church building in 1953. In 1963, a larger sanctuary was added to the east of the original church structure. The original church was, at that time, renamed Wasser Chapel. In 2000, an addition of an elevator lobby was made to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The original building's walls are each 4 wythe structural masonry construction with a face brick external veneer. Lime mortar was used, and a concealed gutter system is employed on the west elevation. The brick veneers are a standard running bond. The thin lime mortar joints make the brick the predominant external material. The walls are in excellent condition. The church buildings reflect a brick detail with clarifying articulation of the walls on all sides, with contrasting architectural features in terra-cotta.

The original church building is of two stories with an attic and basement and is approximately 49-feet high to the top of the gabled roof. The original building is approximately 106-feet long and 34-feet wide.



West elevation of the University Park Methodist Episcopal Church about 1928  
Photographer: Unknown. Source: Western History/Genealogy Department, Denver Public Library

**Property Name** University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

---

**WEST ELEVATION – ORIGINAL BUILDING**  
(Photograph )

The original entrance to the University Park Methodist Episcopal Church is located on the west elevation of the original building and establishes the presence of the church building along the South University Boulevard corridor. The façade faces the main entrance to the University of Denver and the Iliff School of Theology. The main entranceway has a gabled roof, pointed arched windows and a single buttress on each side of the entranceway indicative of Gothic Revival architecture, as it leads into the narthex of the church structure. The original entrance steps leading up to the entranceway are made of stone. The balance of the west elevation contains pointed arched leaded stain glass windows between stepped buttresses. The original wood frames of the stained glass windows are intact. The façade materials consist of red brick and contrasting terra-cotta water table, sill course, belt above the window keystones, and as coping on the parapet above the eave, also typical of the Gothic Revival style. The roof of the original church is gabled and covered with slate tiles.

**SOUTH ELEVATION – ORIGINAL BUILDING**  
(Photograph )

The south elevation of the church faces E. Warren Avenue, but is visible as one approaches the church building from the south on University. The south elevation contains detailed brickwork with blind arches and other Gothic Revival features highlighted in terra-cotta. Additional terra-cotta detailing highlights the roofline. This wall serves as the back of the choir loft and chancel of the former sanctuary.

**EAST ELEVATION – ORIGINAL BUILDING**  
(Photographs )

The east elevation faces towards the courtyard between the church buildings and Josephine Street at the easternmost side of the church property. This side repeats the buttressing, pointed arched windows and terra-cotta trim of the west elevation. There is a small tower in the corner of the original church building that now forms the connection to the education building. The tower element encloses the boiler flue, a mundane construction detail that was made into an elegant architectural feature. The two-toned amber stained glass in the leaded windows is original.

**NORTH ELEVATION – ORIGINAL BUILDING**  
(Photograph )

The north elevation faces towards a neighboring apartment building and further on the north, Evans Avenue. This elevation is also of brick veneer with the addition of terra-cotta trimmed metal casement windows that open out from the church parlor and the caretaker's apartment located on the second floor.

**INTERIOR – ORIGINAL BUILDING**

The interior is comprised of four distinct areas, each constructed at different times; each of the four areas is briefly described below.

The entryway on the west side divides the interior into two unequal areas, with the sanctuary in the south and a parlor (the Osborne Parlor) in the north. The two-story building contains four separate levels consisting of the basement, main floor, second floor, and finished attic. The basement is a multi-

Property Name University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

---

purpose room, used weekly for an active Boy Scout Troop 5 – the oldest continually chartered currently troop west of the Mississippi – and occasionally for drama productions. The main level consists of the original sanctuary and the Osborne Parlor (inclusive of the recently rebuilt adjacent kitchen). A classroom and office are located on the second floor of the northern portion of the building. The caretaker's apartment is located on the second floor and attic. The roof attic (above the caretaker's apartment) houses the furnaces that serve the caretaker's apartment and Wasser Chapel. It should be noted that the caretaker's apartment was not part of the original construction; it was added in 1965. Ray Mills, a church member, was the general contractor. This renovation incorporated a portion of the second level and the then-existent attic. The caretaker's apartment is typical residential construction. The addition was a nonstructural renovation that employed wood framing with plaster and/or gypsum board finishes. The unit contains a living-dining room with adjacent kitchen on the lower of two levels. Upstairs are two bedrooms, a bathroom, a laundry, and storage. All doors are painted wood doors in wood frames with clamshell wood trim.

The interior of the former sanctuary is an elegant example of Gothic Revival architecture. Below the ceiling are original open wood trusses. An enclosed wood balcony spans the north end of the space. Gentle meditative light shines through the two-tone amber stained glass in the pointed arch window opening.

#### ALTERATIONS TO CHURCH BUILDING

- ♦ **Education Building** – Built in 1953, this two-story, gable-roofed addition contains a full basement. The basement includes classrooms, storage rooms, and restrooms, as well as utility and mechanical equipment spaces. The main level contains a library/conference room, church offices, restrooms, and the mail room. The second level consists of classrooms, storage rooms, and restrooms.

The education wing faces south and joins the original building on its east side. This wing carries through the ridge heights of the roofline of the original building and ties the two together with matching brick and contrasting terra-cotta detailing around the roof lines and with additional fascia details. In particular, the education wing contains similar window types as found in the upper and basement levels of the original building. The south elevation contains evenly-spaced triple, metal, multi-light windows with terra-cotta surrounds. The north elevation contains evenly-spaced metal casement windows with rowlock sills. At the interior corner between the two buildings, the education wing connects into the tower element of the original building.

- **New Sanctuary** – Built in 1963, the red brick Sanctuary contains two levels and a mezzanine. The basement consists of a kitchen, the choir room, janitor's room, restrooms, the main electrical distribution room, and a large, open room that serves as the Fellowship Hall, meeting room, or dining room, as needed. The main level contains the sanctuary itself, a bride's room, and restrooms. The mezzanine houses additional seating. A cloistered walkway containing Gothic Revival pointed arch features was added with the construction of the new Sanctuary to partially enclose the courtyard and continue the architectural style of the existing structures as well as bring unity to the old and new buildings.
- ♦ **North Entrance and Lobby** – In 2000, a three and one-half-level North Entrance and Lobby were added to the church's north side. This addition provides another entry to and exit from the church's administration offices and provides ADA-accessible entry to the parking lots on the north side of the building. The inclusion of an elevator also makes all of the public levels of the

**Property Name** University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

---

original building and the Education Building accessible to people with disabilities. The single exception to this is the basement of the original building which is accessed via steps.

The additions to the original University Park Methodist Episcopal Church, though of considerable size, are joined and spatially organized in such a way as to minimally impact the architectural integrity of the original building. It remains fully capable of conveying its architectural significance through its retention of original design, materials, and workmanship.

**Property Name** University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

**SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT**

The University Park Methodist Episcopal Church (now the University Park United Methodist Church) is eligible for the State Register under Criterion C in the area of *architecture*. The original 1928 portion of the church building is a significant local example of the Gothic Revival architectural style. The church is also an important building in the body of work designed by Walter H. Simon, a Denver architect who achieved recognition for his contribution to the 20<sup>th</sup>-century commercial and residential architecture of the city and the surrounding area.

Walter H. Simon (1892-1986) established his own architectural firm in 1925, after working for the renowned firm of William E. Fisher and Arthur A. Fisher. The design for the University Park Methodist Episcopal Church, done in 1927-8, appears to be one of his earliest commissions. Simon's many projects included numerous apartment buildings, offices, and public buildings throughout Denver and across the state. He retired from active practice in 1976. The following is a partial list of buildings designed by Walter Simon:

**Buildings designed by Walter H. Simon (partial list)**

Building Name	Location	Date*	Status
Pencol Apartment Building	504-518 E. Colfax Ave., Denver	1925	Apartments/retail
University Park Methodist Episcopal (United Methodist) Church	2180 S. University Blvd., Denver	1928	Church
Aromor Apartments	1309 Grant St., Denver	1928	Apartments
Casa Grande Apartments	1009 Grant St., Denver	1928	Local Landmark District – offices
Leetonia Building	1515 Vine St., Denver	1931	Local Landmark District – retail and apartments
School, Grand Valley Dist. 29	5 miles south of Rocky Ford	Ca. 1933	Unknown
KOA Radio Station (remodel of 1924 building)	18500 E. Colfax Ave., Aurora	Ca. 1934	CDOT office
Residence	2128 E. 4 <sup>th</sup> Ave., Denver	Ca. 1934	Unknown
NBC studios and offices	Btwn. 16 <sup>th</sup> and 17 <sup>th</sup> on California St., Denver	Ca. 1934	Unknown
Apartment building	South Logan and Virginia, Denver	Ca. 1935	Unknown
Apartment building	485 S. Logan, Denver	Ca. 1935	Unknown
Ertel Funeral Home	42 N. Market, Cortez	1936	National Register
Fort Morgan Fire and Police Building	116 Main St., Fort Morgan	1937	Fire and Police Bldg.
Stanley Arms	1321 E. 10 <sup>th</sup> Ave., Denver	1937	National Register-apartments
Rio Grande County Courthouse	16 <sup>th</sup> and Cherry St., Del Norte	1939, completed 1954	County courthouse
Park Hill United Methodist Church (addition)	5209 Montview Blvd., Denver	1956	State Register

\*Completion date is used if known, building permit, or assessor date is used if completion date is unknown.

**Property Name** University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

---

In addition to the University Park Methodist Episcopal Church, a notable church project for Simon was the 1956 addition to the church that he attended, Park Hill United Methodist Church. Of the numerous buildings he designed, at least four bear a historic designation. The University Park Church constitutes the first known complete church structure designed by Walter Simon.

Simon's architectural genius is demonstrated in his effort to value engineer the church building, a concept not utilized in construction in the 1920s. He originally designed the building to be constructed of stone. The Church's budget constraints prevented the use of stone. Simon modified the plans to achieve a stunning masonry building with what he considered to be a better value—the current brick façade of the building.

In addition, Simon also designed some architectural features unusual for the 1920s: he created lower level window wells to introduce natural light and ventilation to the basement of the building and he designed a tower element to enclose the boiler flue to create an architectural feature out of a mechanical requirement.

The design of the original church building demonstrates the requisite definitive characteristics of the Gothic Revival architectural style. These characteristics include the arched pointed stained glass windows, buttresses, steeped pitched roof, contrasting brick and terra-cotta trimmed facades and exposed interior roof trusses. The original church building reflects and complements the Collegiate Gothic architecture of various buildings located on the University of Denver campus immediately across University Boulevard from the church building. The architectural features of the church are tightly woven it into the fabric of the surrounding neighborhood.

The significance of the University Park Methodist Episcopal Church lies in the fact that the original construction is an outstanding specimen of the architectural work of Walter H. Simon, one of Denver's renowned architects in the 1920s. In addition, the building demonstrates the Gothic Revival architectural style in use in Denver in the 1920s, with the characteristic of value engineering which was not in common use in such time period.

Property Name University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

---

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Breck, Allen D., *From the Rockies to the World (A Companion to the History of the University of Denver, 1864-1989)*. Denver: Hirschfeld Press, 1989.

Blumenson, John J.-G., *Identifying American Architecture*, Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1981.

"Church will consecrate New Building." Rocky Mountain News 4 Jan. 1953.

"Consecration Rights for Church Stated." Rocky Mountain News 6 Dec. 1963:61.

"Cornerstone for Church Addition Laid." The Denver Post 31 Jan. 1952.

Hunt, William Dudley, Jr., FAIA, *Encyclopedia of American Architecture*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1980.

"Methodist Church Sets Diamond Year." Rocky Mountain News 11 Oct. 1969:63.

Morgan, James C., AIA, NCARB, Personal Interview. 21 Nov. 2006.

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, *A Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering*, Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 2003.

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society. *Colorado Architects, Biographical Sketch: Walter H. Simon*, 2004.

Poppeliers, John; Chambers, S. Allen, Schwartz, Nancy B., *What Style Is It?* Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1977.

Simon, Walter H. Original blueprints for University Park Methodist Episcopal Church. Dated 1928.

University Park United Methodist Church. *Centennial Year: History of the University Park United Methodist Church 1984-1994*. 1994 (Church Pamphlet)

University Park United Methodist Church. *University Park Methodist Church, Fiftieth Anniversary Sunday 1894-1944*, program from Sunday, November 19, 1944. (Church Pamphlet).

"University Park Methodists to Build." The Denver Post 16 Jan. 1960:4.

Property Name University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

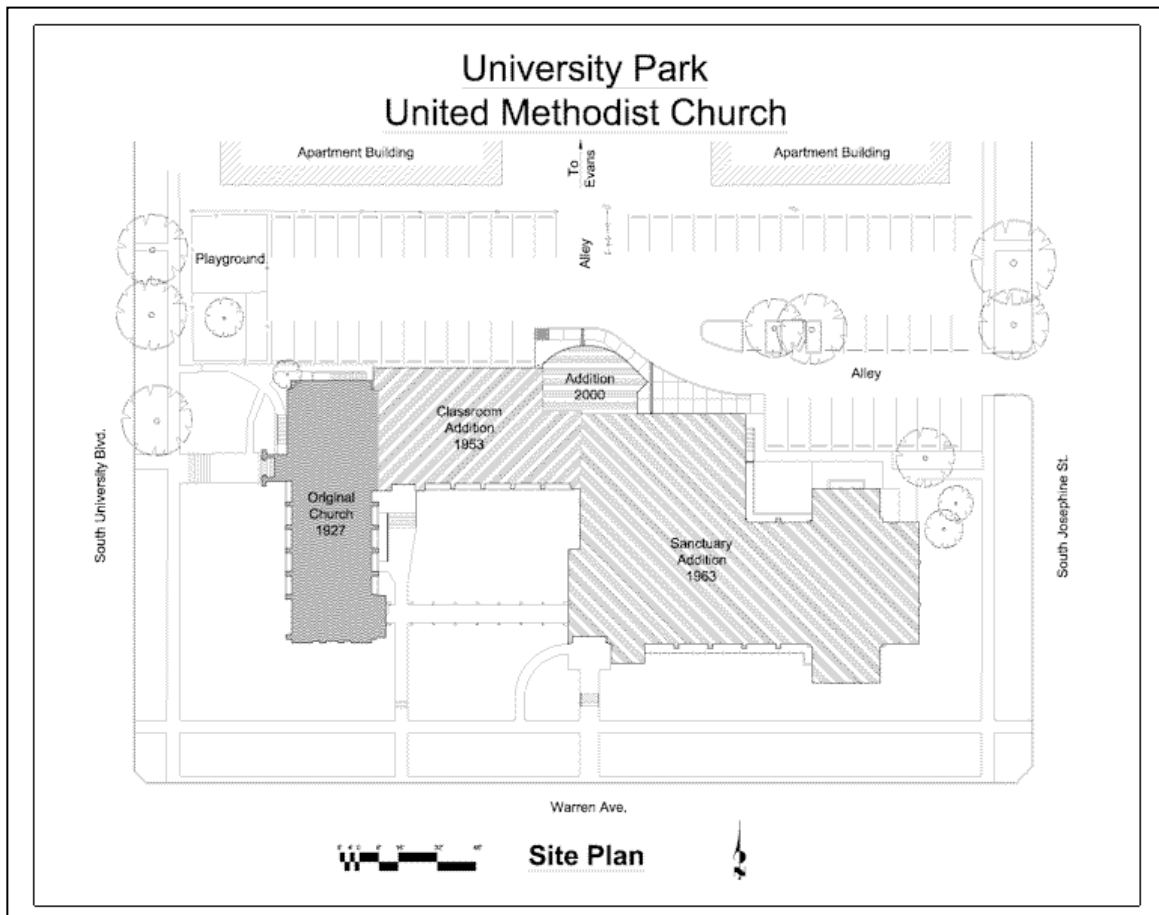
**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The nomination boundary includes only the 1928 portion of the church complex, more specifically described as follows:

Beginning at a point 15 feet due west of the farthest projecting element of the west side of the 1928 original portion of the building, the boundary extends south parallel to the building to a point 15 feet south of the farthest projection of the south side of the original portion of the building; thence east parallel to the building to a point directly south of the junction of the 1928 building and the 1963 arcade; thence north parallel to the east side of the building and through the junction to the point of intersection with the south wall of the 1953 classroom addition; thence following the junction of the 1928 building with the 1953 classroom addition to a point 15 feet north of the farthest projection of the north wall of the 1928 building; thence west parallel to the building to a point 15 feet due west of the farthest projecting element of the west side; and thence south to the point of beginning.

The approximate boundary is shown on the map below:





**Property Name** University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

The following information pertains to photograph numbers 1-13 except as noted:

Name of Property: University Park Methodist Episcopal Church  
(University Park United Methodist Church)

Location: 2180 S. University Blvd., Denver, CO

Negatives: Digital prints, disk submitted

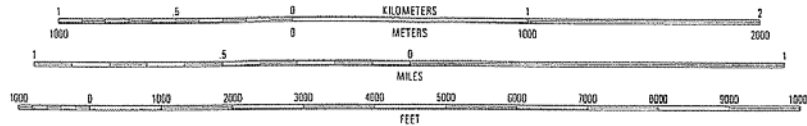
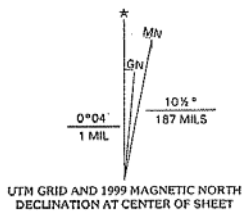
<u>Photo No.</u>	<u>Description of View and Direction of Camera</u>
1	West elevation of Original Church (Wasser Chapel), view to the East. Date: Between 1920 and 1930. Photographer: unknown
2	South elevation of Original Church (Wasser Chapel) and South elevation of Classroom Addition, View to the South. Date: Between 1952 and 1960.
3	West elevation of Original Church (Wasser Chapel), view to the East. Date: November 2006. Photographer: Reverend Paul Kottke.
4	West elevation of Original Church (Wasser Chapel), view to the East. November 2006. Photographer: Reverend Paul Kottke.
5	South elevation of Original Church (Wasser Chapel), view to the North. November 2006. Photographer: Reverend Paul Kottke.
6	South elevation of Classroom Addition, View to the North. November 2006. Photographer: Reverend Paul Kottke.
7	South elevation of Classroom Addition, View to the North. November 2006. Photographer: Reverend Paul Kottke.
8	East elevation of Original Church (Wasser Chapel), view to the West. November 2006. Photographer: Reverend Paul Kottke.
9	North elevation of Original Church (Wasser Chapel), View to the South. November 2006. Photographer: Reverend Paul Kottke.
10	North elevation of Classroom Addition, View to the South. November 2006. Photographer: Reverend Paul Kottke.
11	Interior of Original Church (Wasser Chapel), ceiling, view to the West. Photographer: Carol Fiekert. Date: November 21, 2006.
12	Interior of Original Church (Wasser Chapel), view to the West. Photographer: Carol Fiekert. Date: November 21, 2006.
13	Interior of Original Church (Wasser Chapel), view to the South. Photographer: Carol Fiekert. Date: November 21, 2006.

Property Name University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

**USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP**  
Englewood Quadrangle, Colorado  
7.5 Minute Series



SCALE 1:24 000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048



































