

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
1660 SHERMAN STREET  
DENVER  
DENVER COUNTY  
COLORADO

HABS No. CO-41

HABS  
COLO,  
16-DENV,  
9-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
NATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL and ENGINEERING RECORD  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20243

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM (page 1)

HABS  
COLO  
16-DEN  
9-

STATE COLORADO	COUNTY DENVER	TOWN OR VICINITY DENVER
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH		HABS NO. CO-41
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 1660 Sherman Street, Denver, Colorado		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) Begun 1891, finished 1892.	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) F. E. Edbrooke (National Register Nomination)	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) See section 8 of National Register Nomination.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) not known		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Colorado sandstone		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) not known		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE See section 7 of National Register Nomination.		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) See section 7 of National Register Nomination.		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES Christian education and youth building added in 1957.		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Good, community services.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDE LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) National Register Nomination.		
CDMPILER, AFFILIATION Duane Holmes, National Park Service; Rocky Mountain Region	DATE April 15, 1982	

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	COLORADO
COUNTY:	DENVER
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	NOV 21 1974

1. NAME		T-35 R-68 W-534
COMMON:	Central Presbyterian Church	5DV112
AND/OR HISTORIC:	Central Presbyterian Church	13/501399/439020

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: 1660 Sherman Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Denver		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 1	
STATE Colorado	CODE 08	COUNTY: Denver	CODE 031

3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure 	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Community Services Senior Edition (Newspaper)	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: Central Presbyterian Church			
STREET AND NUMBER: 1660 Sherman Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Denver		STATE: Colorado	CODE: 80202

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Denver Assessment Division, City and County of Denver			
STREET AND NUMBER: 1445 Cleveland Place			
CITY OR TOWN: Denver		STATE: Colorado	CODE: 80202

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey - Inventory			
DATE OF SURVEY: May 1969		<input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: State Historical Society			
STREET AND NUMBER: State Museum Bldg., 200 14th Avenue			
CITY OR TOWN: Denver		STATE: Colorado	CODE:

9-5 except Sat.  
Sat. 'til noon

STATE

COUNTY

ENTRY NUMBER  
MON 21 1974

DATE

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CONDITION	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
7.	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The church is enormous, it is a nearly perfect square and is basically a four-tower type with crossing gables of equal height and length.

The feeling of massiveness is derived from its great size and large windows and from the use of Colorado sandstone laid in horizontal bands like Richardson's later work.

In the words of Richard Brettell, the church is spare, simple and coloristically unified. The walls are sheer and relatively unadorned, rising with a thin and expansive grace. The thin stretched quality is almost exaggerated in the tower where there are long, thin lantern openings topped by ogee arches.<sup>1</sup>

In 1957 a Christian education and youth building was added at a cost of one half million dollars. It is a three story building tied into the original church. Including the basement, the addition contains 24,000 square feet of nurseries, classrooms, offices, kitchens, lounge and fellowship hall. This second building in no way detracts from the great building it serves.

The iron lantern, centered over the intersection of the gables is an homage to Franklin Kidder's tower at the Asbury Methodist Church, the second of Denver's two great churches of this period.

The interior of Central's sanctuary is basically formed by two groined vaults approximately 65 feet high, giving the interior a conventional cruciform shape. However, the apse or half-round end of the church is used not for the altar, but is the narthex, or entrance, to the sanctuary. The Rose window has become the backdrop for the altar, pulpit and choir loft. To enhance this window structure, three arches have been introduced and an array of colorfully designed, hand-painted (false) organ pipes form a facade around the actual pipes. During the time that the church was designed and built, the congregation was meeting in the old Broadway Theater. Hence, at the request of the congregation, the floor of the sanctuary slopes down to the pulpit, and boxes were installed on the main floor under the balconies in each of the transepts and the rows of pews are even curved to focus attention on the pulpit,

<sup>1</sup>Brettell, Richard M., Historic Denver: The Architects and The Architecture, 1858-1893, Historic Denver, Denver, 1973., p. 165

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

COUNTY	
Denver	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	NOV 21 1974

(Number all entries)

7. Description

thus giving the seating of the sanctuary more of a theater atmosphere than that of a medieval church.

A variety of embellishments are to be found throughout the sanctuary. Two false fireplaces extend out of the corners to lend a medieval atmosphere. Leaf patterns carved in the woodwork of the sanctuary even suggest "art nouveau", a style that was in full bloom at the time this church was built.

The brilliance with which Edbrooke combined the massiveness of Richardsonian design and his own tendency toward light and height makes this one of Denver's most impressive buildings. Its hilltop position makes it a glorious reminder to all Denverites of the period of this city's life which gave Denver its character and its most beautiful buildings.



18. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |                                       |  |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian! | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century   | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1892

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian            | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |   | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Central Presbyterian Church is an outgrowth of the First Presbyterian Church of Denver, organized in 1860 by Reverend A. T. Rankin acting under a commission from the Board of Domestic Missions, Old School. The first Board of Trustees of the church included such names as William Larimer, George W. Clayton and Captain Richard Sopris. The original church divided into new and old school factions in 1869, and in 1874 the name of the new school church was changed from First to Central Presbyterian.

The rented house used for services was replaced by a church at 18th and Champa. Later this site became undesirable as the congregation expanded and the location became largely an area for business. The next move was to the present address at 17th and Sherman. Eight lots were purchased for \$40,000. Plans for the new church were prepared by the partnership F. E. Edbrooke & W. A. Marean. Credit is given to Edbrooke for the design of the building and there has been no determination of how much, if any, of the work was done by Marean. The construction contract went to William Simpson and R. C. Greenlee & Sons for an estimated \$165,000, completed and furnished. The corner stone was laid in 1891 and the building was completed in 1892.

The Central Presbyterian was built during a period of important early growth in Denver when the city had matured enough to require substantial and attractive buildings. This building was designed late in Edbrooke's career and is considered one of his three most impressive institutional buildings.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brettell, Richard R., Historic Denver: The Architects and the Architecture, 1858-1893, Historic Denver, Denver, 1973

Vroom, John B. and Robert D. Thompson Compilers, "Historical Sketch of Central Presbyterian Church Denver", 1911

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1 Acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Rebecca Pritchard

ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: 8/13/74

STREET AND NUMBER: 6284 South Oneida Way

CITY OR TOWN: Englewood STATE: Colorado CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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

National  State  Local

Name [Signature]

Title Colorado State Liaison Officer

Date 9/9/74

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 11/21/74

ATTEST:

[Signature]  
Keeper of The National Register

Date 11-20-74