

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: St. George's Episcopal Memorial ChurchOther names/site number: 32BL00318Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

2. LocationStreet & number: 601 N 4th StreetCity or town: Bismarck State: North Dakota County: BurleighNot For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national x statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___ A ___ B x C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:**Date**

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church
Name of Property

Burleigh, ND
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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s) ☒
- District ☐
- Site ☐

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LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS: Late Gothic Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: concrete; Walls: reinforced steel and pumice concrete; Roof: timber frame and asphalt shingles

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church is a Gothic Revival style church located at 601 N 4th Street in Bismarck, North Dakota. It is situated at the northeast corner of the intersection of N 4th Street and E Avenue B. The church has a cruciform plan-shape oriented on an east-west axis; the primary façade faces west. Its overall dimensions are approximately 130 feet east-west by 50 feet north-south, including the front vestibule, narthex, nave, transepts, chancel, and sanctuary. The church has a full crypt/basement which serves as a fellowship hall. The roof is a steeply-pitched, cross-gabled roof, with a bell tower and spire at the southwest corner. The church was completed in 1949 with a structural system of reinforced steel and concrete with exterior pumice-concrete walls finished in a uniform umber tone. This is the first building in the northern United States to employ pumice concrete. The interior is timber-framed with white oak furnishings and finishes. St. George's 45 stained-glass windows were produced by the firm of Barton, Kinder, & Alderson of Brighton, England. Forty of these windows contain glass salvaged from Anglican churches damaged or destroyed by bombing in WWII. These windows were custom-made and are the only known examples of the firm's work in this country.

The church is owned by the Episcopal Church and is only the second structure to house the Bismarck congregation which was founded in 1879. In 1986 and 1996, the church was remodeled: the chancel was enlarged, affecting openings in two interior walls and the location of two external windows, and an addition was built on the west façade. A rear parking lot was added on an adjacent lot in 2003. St. George's continues to serve the Episcopal congregation. The period of significance is simply defined as its date of construction, 1949, marking the culmination of the unique design elements that convey its historic significance under Criterion C.

Narrative Description

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LOCATION AND SETTING

The historic St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church is located at 601 N 4th Street in Bismarck, North Dakota (Lot 5 and the south 25 feet of Lot 6, Block 12, Northern Pacific Addition). It is situated at the northeast corner of the intersection of N 4th Street and E Avenue B, in the central part of the city. Historically, this setting was residential, with a state-owned Governor's Mansion across the street to the west and a Baptist Church to the south. Originally, this property consisted of three separate residential sites along E Ave B that were purchased and razed in preparation for the construction of St. George's. Presently, the surrounding properties are mixed-use, with residences to the north, historic houses-converted-to-businesses to the south, east, and southwest, and the Former Governors' Mansion to the west now serving as a State Historic Site and house museum.

The church property is fairly level with a slight slope to the south. Burr Oak trees planted in the early 2000s line the boulevards along N 4th St and E Ave B. In 2003, a fourth residence along Ave B, immediately east of St. George's and formerly owned by the church, was sold and moved and a parking lot was constructed in its place.¹

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church is a reinforced pumice-concrete structure. It is a single-story building with a full basement and poured-concrete foundation. The church has a cruciform plan-shape, oriented on an east-west axis, approximately 130 feet east-west by 50 feet north-south. The roof is a steeply-pitched cross-gable roof clad in asphalt shingles. At the southwest corner of the church is an attached polygonal bell tower which stands 70 feet tall and terminates in a steeply-pitched octagonal hipped roof/spire capped with a ringed cross. A polygonal hipped-roof at the base of the tower on the west facade covers a four-sided projecting bay and is clad in standing-seam steel sheets.

The church's primary façade faces west onto N 4th St. The main entry is centered on the gable end and consists of a pair of aluminum-framed, side-hung glass doors at-grade with a very narrow side-lite along the north edge and fixed transom lites above. The doorway is set beneath a wood-framed, gable-roofed open-air porch. The porch roof matches the pitch of the main gable above and is supported by four reinforced-concrete pillars. Two of the pillars are free-standing, the other two are engaged. All four pillars are wider at their base, with an angled shoulder that mimics the shape of the buttresses located along the church's north and south elevations. To the south of the gabled porch entry is a bronze building plaque affixed to the façade. It reads:

This shrine is dedicated to the greater glory of God and in grateful memory of all pioneers of the Dakota's [sic]. The first protestant service held in this community was Episcopalian, the date being May 8th 1873. On the seventy fifth anniversary of this event, May 8th 1948 over thirty pioneers, of all religious faiths, participated in a groundbreaking ceremony for this

¹ City of Bismarck, Building Inspections Division. Permit Number 2002-00658, Building Permits file for 414 E Ave B, Bismarck, ND.

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pioneer memorial. The Right Reverend Douglass H. Atwill, D.D. Bishop of North Dakota 1937/The Reverend A.E. Smith, B.A. Rector of St. George's 1943/H.M. Leonhard Architect/John W. Larson Contractor

This plaque was originally placed on the building's southwest corner at a special cornerstone marking ceremony held October 24, 1948.² Following the addition in 1996, it was re-located to this current position, still at the southwest corner of the structure.

Above the main entry to the church is a diamond-shaped four-lite fixed window tucked within the peak of the gable front. Set back from the apex of the gable end, but along the west end of the church's roofline, rises a ringed cross similar to that capping the bell tower. At the south end of the façade is the bell tower, set back from the façade. The four-sided bay that projects west from the base of the bell tower contains four rectangular leaded stained-glass windows. The tower itself has a four-sided base. Above the bay's polygonal hipped roof, the west, south, and east sides of the tower have a centered rectangular stained-glass window. Rising from the four-sided base of the tower is an octagonal turret with a lancet-arched louvered vent on each side. The north-, south-, east-, and west-facing planes of the octagonal hipped roof each have a small gabled dormer containing a lancet-arched louvered vent.

The present façade of St. George's is the result of an architect-designed remodel completed in 1996, when a nearly full-width addition was made to accommodate an alcove, vestibule, and elevator west of the narthex. While the addition does not appear to be pumice concrete, it does maintain a smooth form concrete finish that blends visually with the historic portion of the building. The addition is clearly set apart from the original building's volume by a slight change in the elevation of the gabled roof, clearly visible from oblique views of the church. The original façade did have a shorter gable-roofed porch entry, which was enclosed with fixed windows on all three sides. Above the entry porch was an oculus window in the gable-front. That window remains intact, visible on what is now an interior wall, upon entering the addition.

The south elevation of the church presents a secondary façade, readily visible along E Ave B. At the west end of the elevation is the bell tower. The south elevation of the tower has two rectangular leaded stained-glass windows at its base. To the east, along the side-gable, lancet-arched leaded stained-glass windows appear in pairs within three bays separated by buttresses. Farther east is the gable-end of the transept, which projects from the south elevation and contains three tall, narrow, rounded-arch leaded stained-glass windows at center. At the extreme east end of the elevation is a secondary entrance which is flush with the transept. The entry is a paneled wood door with a rounded-arch lite and a rectangular stained-glass window to the west.

On the church's east gable end is a reinforced-concrete chimney, which rises above the roofline just north of center. A decorative arched recess appears at the top of the chimney on all four sides. The north and south ends of the east-facing gable contain a lancet-arched window opening, containing tinted plexiglass; the original stained-glass windows have been relocated to the interior

² "Episcopalians Place Bronze Cornerstone Marker Sunday," *Bismarck Tribune*, October 23, 1948.

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walls of the transepts. No other fenestration is present on this elevation. However, there is lettering affixed to the building that reads: "St. George's Episcopal Church."

The north elevation of St. George's faces an adjacent private residential property and is not readily visible. The west end is divided into six bays by reinforced-concrete buttresses identical to those on the south elevation. Each bay contains a pair of lancet-arched leaded stained-glass windows—with the exception of the west-most bay which is part of the 1990s addition corresponding to the interior elevator shaft. On the exterior, this bay contains an arched louvered vent. The gabled transept projects from the elevation at the east end, mirroring the south transept with three rounded-arch windows. A rectangular window is on the far east side, within a small slightly-set back hip-roofed volume in the reentrant corner.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

St. George's conforms to a standard cruciform plan, typical of 19th and 20th-Century Christian Churches designed in the Gothic Revival style. It has a vestibule and narthex at the west end, a nave which leads to the crossing of north and south transepts, a chancel and a sanctuary at the east (apse) end.

Upon entering the church on the west side, a visitor finds him or herself in a naturally well-lit vaulted vestibule where the original west façade and ocular window have become an interior decorative element of the entryway. This space contains an elevator to one side and an alcove/coat room to the other side. The original paired side-hung wood paneled arched doors centered on the interior wall open into the narthex. To the north (left) is a metal-railed flat-turn stairway leading down to the basement level. Overlooking the stairwell on the west wall is a leaded stained-glass window on what was once an exterior wall. The addition of the elevator shaft on the opposite side of the wall has compromised its ability to illuminate the stairwell as it once did. To the south, across the narthex, is an administrative office located in the base of the bell tower. This space is referred to as the Chapel of the Angels, named for the seven angels featured in the Chapel's stained-glass windows.

From the narthex, a visitor enters the nave of the church through a pair of side-hung paneled wood doors in an arched surround. The two doors each contain a leaded stained-glass window depicting the dates of the first Episcopal service in Bismarck (1873) and the consecration of St. George's (1949) along with lettering below which reads: "A Memorial to all pioneers of the Dakotas." The glass used in this window came from 12th-Century windows of the St. Nicholas church in North Stoneham, Hampshire, England.³

The nave is 28 feet wide and seats approximately 300, and the transepts seat 25 or more each. From the front of the narthex, the distance to the Altar is 130 feet. The width across each transept, at the east end of the Nave is 28 feet, and each transept extends 11 feet from the side of the nave. The steeply-pitched roof over the interior nave and transepts is supported by exposed,

³ Tom Tudor, *St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church: The Stained Glass Windows* (Bismarck, North Dakota: Image Printing, 2019).

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prefabricated timber frame King Post trusses that distribute the weight of the roof to crucks at the side walls and directly into the foundation. The entire ceiling is finished in tongue-and-groove siding, underlying the structural members. Interior walls are finished with the same white-washed concrete finish as the exterior of the building. The floors are asphalt tile.

The altar and the pulpit, and the other furnishings in the chancel and the sanctuary at the east end of the church, including the Bishop's chair and other chairs and prayer desks, are made of matched white oak, with a natural finish. These furnishings include the reredos behind the altar against the east wall of the chancel, which rises 17 feet from the floor and in front of the organ pipes, and a carved oak cross suspended in the center of the reredos. Approximately 1,700 pieces of matched white oak were used to construct the altar and the reredos. The pulpit and altar were designed and built by the Manitowac Church Furniture Co. of Waukessa, Wisconsin.⁴

The chancel contains the sanctuary, seating for clergy and acolytes, the electric organ, and pews for the choir, with the St. Cecilia Room opening on the north side. This room was formerly the organ room but has since been converted to use as a columbarium, ca. 2004, which is a memorial to Dr. Robert and June Tudor.

The lighting fixtures harmonize with the architectural design in that they are an old English lantern type in antique bronze finish, hung by chains from the beams in the ceiling.

The church's basement contains a lobby, restroom, and storage space in the west end, beneath the vestibule. Beneath the nave is Rita Murphy Hall, a large open fellowship room which opens onto auxiliary meeting spaces at the east end, beneath the transepts and apse. A secondary stairwell is located in the southeast corner of the basement, leading up to the doorway located on the church's south elevation.

RENOVATIONS AND ALTERATIONS

St. George's is a modest-sized church building and has seen very few structural modifications over the years. Two notable alterations to the 1949 church occurred in the 1980s and 90s.⁵ The first was a primarily interior remodeling of the sanctuary at the east end of the church. In 1986, the congregation had purchased a custom-built Möller Organ Company electro-pneumatic organ. However, the east wall was the only space large enough for the impressive instrument—which consists of 12 speaking stops, 16 ranks, and 1,074 pipes in a surround built of carved oak, poplar, maple, walnut, and mahogany. The installation necessitated relocating the two stained-glass lancet-arched windows originally on the east-facing gable end of the church. The windows were retained and were placed on the east interior walls of the north and south transepts, flanking the sanctuary. At the same time, a rectangular opening on the interior wall of the St. Cecilia room (now the Columbarium) was enclosed and the old organ removed. The chancel was enlarged and

⁴ "Altar of New St. George's Church to Be of White Oak," *Bismarck Tribune*, April 28, 1949.

⁵ "Church Celebrates 50th Anniversary," *Bismarck Tribune*, September 9, 1999.

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the altar brought forward into the nave, allowing for the choir pews to be placed at the east end of the chancel in front of the reredos and new organ pipes.⁶

The second major alteration was the addition to the west façade, built in 1996 by AWBW Architects of Bismarck.⁷ The addition spans the front (west) façade and serves as a vestibule for the main entrance. Inside, it contains a coatroom to the south and an elevator to the north. The basement below was expanded to include an ADA-accessible restroom. The high ceiling in the addition is timber-framed like the interior of the nave; the round window in the apex of what was originally the gable front of the building is visible and continues to allow light through to the narthex. The addition is reinforced concrete and mimics the appearance of the original building's structure and finish. The exterior contains a diamond-shaped fixed, four-lite window in the very peak of the gabled roof. The window is contemporary in its style and not in-keeping with the original design aesthetics. However, in its own way, this window, along with the slightly lowered roofline of the vestibule, provide visual cues to a keen observer that this is a later addition that has not undermined the condition or structural integrity of the original building.

In a statement Rector Father Dennis A. Tippet wrote for dedication of the new organ in 1986, he reflected on the history of the church, focusing on the physical evolution, from the consecration of the parish's first church building—the Bread of Life—to the erection of the new St. George's and subtle but impactful changes in the functional and liturgical aspects of its design and furnishings over the years. Spiritually, he concluded that each change is "only one more step towards a perpetually new beginning. The life of the church is not to be contained by walls."⁸ In a historic sense, however, despite the two construction projects that have occurred in the recent past, the walls of St. George's do contain and retain the character defining features of its unique construction method and style, from which it derives its architectural significance.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☐

A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐

B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒

⁶ Fr. Dennis A. Tippet, "A History of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church," in an unpublished pamphlet created for the organ dedication event, December 5, 1986.

⁷ "Building Permits," *Bismarck Tribune*, June 21, 1992.

⁸ Fr. Dennis A. Tippet, "A History of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church," in an unpublished pamphlet created for the organ dedication event, December 5, 1986.

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C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐

D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

☒

A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes

☐

B. Removed from its original location

☐

C. A birthplace or grave

☐

D. A cemetery

☐

E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure

☒

F. A commemorative property

☐

G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture: Gothic Revival

Period of Significance

1949

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Significant Dates

1949 – Initial Construction

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Herman M. Leonhard, architect

John Larson, builder

Barton, Kinder, & Alderson, stained glass

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

St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church is a Gothic Revival church completed in 1949 by local architect and congregant Herman M. Leonhard, with unique stained-glass windows commissioned by Barton, Kinder, and Alderson of Brighton, UK. The church was initially patterned after the St. John the Divine church in Moorhead, MN (NRHP# 80002020), designed by nationally renowned architect Cass Gilbert in 1898. However, the design for St. George's evolved over the course of several years of planning (1938 to 1949), to better meet the needs of the congregation and satisfy the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The result is a blended Revival and contemporary design with a distinctive reinforced pumice concrete exterior and more traditional form and timber-framed interior. This was the first building in the northern U.S. to employ pumice-concrete.⁹ The stained-glass windows—made from glass salvaged from the wreckage of churches bombed in England during WWII—are the only known examples of their kind in the country.¹⁰ The memorials contained within the church are to the pioneers of Dakota, regardless of their faith, and to community members who served in both World Wars. These memorials are indicative of the period in which St. George's was designed and built and reflect the broader interest of the community in erecting a symbol of peace and perseverance.

St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church is eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, at the state level, for its architectural design. Its physical characteristics—its style, its innovative use of materials, and unique artistic details—distinguish it from contemporaneous religious buildings in the state. The ways in which H.M. Leonhard and clergy involved in its design blended traditional religious architecture with conservative but contemporary design were both practical and progressive. The result is a highly evocative religious memorial building acutely suited to the postwar era, and to the interests of the congregation and community at-large. St. George's satisfies Criterion Consideration A for religious properties as its historic significance is not in its capacity as a spiritual center, but rather as an example of the ways in which architectural design can embody the cultural climate of an era. St. George's also satisfies Criterion Consideration F for commemorative properties. St. George's is a memorial church. However, its historical significance is not derived from associations with those commemorated in its appurtenances. Rather, the clergy's decision to imbue the church with this secondary function contributed to the success of their capital campaign and broadened the building's relevance in a modern and compelling way. Since 2004, St. George's has housed the remains of congregants in the St. Cecilia room, now a Columbarium. However, the basis of this nomination is not an association with any individual, including those for whom St. George's is a final resting place. Therefore, Criterion Considerations C (birthplaces and grave sites) and D (cemeteries) do not apply.

⁹ "Hand-Carved Wood Furnishings Make Interior Unique," *Bismarck Tribune*, September 9, 1949.

¹⁰ The author has attempted to locate any other examples of Barton, Kinder, and Alderson windows in the United States and has made contact with State Historic Preservation Offices in adjacent states (Montana, Minnesota, and South Dakota); the Stained Glass Association of America in Buffalo, New York; the Corning Museum of Glass and Rakow Archive in Corning, New York; and the Brighton Hippodrome CIC (also brightonhistory.org); none of which has knowledge of any later works by the firm or its partners in the United States.

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

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The first Episcopal Service in Bismarck was held on March 8, 1873, at the Capitol Hotel on Main Street in downtown Bismarck. In 1878, the Northern Pacific Railway donated six lots for the construction of an Episcopal Church in Bismarck. When plans for their first church building, the Church of the Bread of Life, were accepted in August 1879, the Episcopal congregation's building committee contracted to spend \$2,500. The funds for construction of the Church, raised by benefit suppers and entertainments, proved insufficient at first and the interior walls remained unfinished when consecration ceremonies were held.¹¹ Five years later, that omission was corrected and the Bismarck Weekly Tribune declared that, "it was, indeed, a transformation which was presented to the admiring gaze of the congregation."¹²

First located at Mandan Street and Avenue A, the Church of the Bread of Life—a wood-framed Gothic Revival style shingle and lap-sided structure—was renamed St. George's Episcopal Church in 1887. It was moved to N 3rd Street and Rosser Avenue in about 1900. There, a small parish house was built and later joined to the rear of the Church. When the St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church was constructed at N 4th Street and E Avenue B, the former building was sold to the Presbyterian Church.¹³ The Bread of Life Church was donated to the state and moved to Camp Hancock in 1965 where it remains today.¹⁴

St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church was completed in 1949, designed by Bismarck architect Herman M. Leonhard and built by local contractor John Larson. Planning for the new building began in the mid-1930s and was spurred by a rapidly growing congregation. In just the five years leading up to its completion, St. George's congregation jumped from 150 to 260.¹⁵ While construction was delayed for the duration of WWII, church records document the thoughtfulness with which the groundwork was laid. The project would ultimately land in the hands of Reverend A.E. "Ted" Smith, who arrived at St. George's from Grafton, North Dakota in 1943, and who solicited the advice and insight of more experienced clergymen across the country.¹⁶ Funds for the construction were largely raised by church members; donations and memorial gifts came from congregants and community members alike. The total cost was reported as \$150,000, financed by

¹¹ There are two available dates provided for the consecration of the Bread of Life Church. According to the State Historical Society of North Dakota's interpretive content for the Camp Hancock State Historic Site, the Church was consecrated by Bishop Clarkson of Omaha and Reverend Dr. Patterson of Philadelphia in June 1880. However, Robert P. and Wynona H. Wilkins, in their history of the Episcopal Church in North Dakota, *God Giveth the Increase*, list the consecration as occurring on Whitsunday in June 1881.

¹² State Historical Society of North Dakota. Church of the Bread of Life. Interpretive sign. Camp Hancock State Historic Site, Bismarck, ND. Viewed August 26, 2020.

¹³ "City Votes to Allow State to Move Historic Church," *Bismarck Tribune*, April 7, 1965.

¹⁴ "Gone, but not Forgotten," *Bismarck Tribune*, June 9, 1965.

¹⁵ Letter from Rev. A.E. Smith to Charles Wikel, Johns Manville Co. Waukegan, Illinois, May 1st, 1948.

¹⁶ "St. George's Church Traces History Back to 1873," *Bismarck Tribune*, September 9, 1949.

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individual contributions along with a \$40,000 mortgage.¹⁷

HERMAN M. LEONHARD

The decision to hire H.M. Leonhard, one of St. George's own congregation, came with some hesitancy as he did not possess prior experience specifically in designing religious buildings. He was, however, a capable architect and he was willing to accept the challenge.

Herman Max Leonhard was born in 1894 in New Salem, North Dakota to German immigrant parents Agnes and Fred Leonhard. His father was a skilled carpenter and builder, responsible for many of the area's early structures. Herman learned the trade and obtained a degree in architectural engineering from the newly-established architectural program through the school for mechanical arts at the North Dakota Agricultural College (now NDSU).¹⁸ Upon completing the program, he worked for a short period of time as a draftsman for Thompson's Lumber Yard in Minneapolis, Minnesota.¹⁹

Leonhard served in the US Army Intelligence during the first World War, possibly on account of his heritage—he was a fluent German speaker. He had described his occupation as a self-employed contractor and builder on his draft registration card. He also wrote on his draft card, "I do not believe in war."²⁰ Regardless, when drafted, he served. Military records show that he belonged to the Signal Corps and was stationed overseas in France from June 10, 1918 to April 21, 1919. He was a Private 1st Class at the time of his discharge and had been in several major offensives at Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel, and Meuse-Argonne.²¹

Following military service, Leonhard returned to North Dakota. In 1921, he married Claire Hoisveen in Grafton.²² The couple settled in Mandan after Leonhard found work with area architect—also an NDAC graduate—Nick Ressler.²³

Leonhard took a number of residential, commercial, and even public commissions in the years leading up to his work on St. George's. He practiced in various styles—often at the forefront of modern design trends. A number of modest residences in central Bismarck reflect his particular talent for the whimsical take on Tudor Revival architecture, popular in the early mid-20th Century—especially what is affectionately referred to as the Storybook bungalow. The *Bismarck Tribune* characterized a model house completed in this style by Leonhard and Robert Aune of the

¹⁷ Rev. Douglass H. Atwill and Rev. A.E. Smith. *St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church: A Memorial to the Pioneers of the Dakotas, 1873-1949*: 7-8. Conrad Publishing Co., Bismarck, ND.

¹⁸ "North Dakota," SAH Archipedia, Society of Architectural Historians online. Sah-archipedia.org accessed 3/6/2021.

¹⁹ "H. Leonhard, Architect, Rites Saturday," *Bismarck Tribune*, January 25, 1974.

²⁰ "Herman Max Leonhard." Registration State: *North Dakota*; Registration County: *Morton County* Electronic document, www.ancestry.com accessed 3/6/2021.

²¹ *U.S., Adjutant General Military Records, 1631-1976*. Roster from the State of North Dakota (3):71-72. Electronic document, www.ancestry.com accessed 3/6/2021.

²² "H. Leonhard, Architect, Rites Saturday," *Bismarck Tribune*, January 25, 1974.

²³ "Nick Ressler, 84, Long-Time Mandan Resident, Succumbs," *Bismarck Tribune*, March 3, 1967.

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Aune Carpenter Shop in 1935 as “ultra-modern.”²⁴ The house, at 903 N 9th St. has “rustic” elements including beamed ceilings with birch trim, a native-stone fireplace, and an iron stairway. Its exterior has all the charms of an English fairytale cottage such as the steeply-pitched side-gabled roof with exposed rafter tails and an asymmetrical façade with a catslide and wide stone chimney with stout pots. The “ultra-modern” components were really its practical features and conveniences such as a fully finished basement, clothes chutes and built-ins, modern built-in laundry fixtures, and an attached garage.

His own home, which he designed in 1937, stands at 719 N Mandan St. (within the Cathedral Area Historic District NRHP #80002908) and is perhaps the most unique local example of the Tudor Revival. It has a broad gable-front, clad in stucco with ornamental faux half-timbering and cartoonish faux bricks rendered in painted concrete. The windows and door openings on the façade are rounded and there are steeply-pitched shed-roofed dormers on the side elevations which contain divided-lite hung windows.

Throughout the Depression Era, Leonhard had worked for the Works Progress Administration as an architect and building project supervisor.²⁵ During this time, he appears to have truly adopted the guiding principles of the WPA architectural program, one of which is to provide opportunities for individual craftsman to participate and practice skills. Another is helping promote and advance the creative and/or new use of building technologies.

Aesthetically, his public works such as the stone-faced Robinson Hall community center in Robinson, North Dakota (NRHP # 100002253), were in the typical stream-lined Moderne or Art Deco style. According to Martens *Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota, 1931-1943*, this style “provided substantial opportunity for handcraft and field labor, often involving site cast concrete.” It was also considered “a modernizing, progressive, ‘scientific’ approach to building.”²⁶

His work on a small utilitarian warehouse building on Bismarck’s Front Street illustrates that he was easily adopting not only the WPA style—but also the mode. The building was built in 1938-1939 with sufficient funding from the WPA for labor, but “little money to spend on materials.”²⁷ Leonhard’s solution was to use cottonwood logs from the nearby river bottom. The logs were cut and split on site, then stacked and laid in concrete “as if they were bricks and mortar.” The warehouse was featured in *Popular Science* magazine, who referred to the construction method as a “novel type of insulated wall.”²⁸ Seventy-five years later, the building still stands in usable condition, a testament to Leonhard’s unique experimental approach.

When the U.S. entered World War II, plans for St. George’s were underway but would inevitably

²⁴ “Ground Will Be Broken for City’s Model Home Saturday,” *Bismarck Tribune*, June 10, 1935.

²⁵ R.L. Polk & Co. *Bismarck, North Dakota, City Directory 1938*:119.

²⁶ Steve Martens, *Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota, 1931-1943*, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 2010).

²⁷ “Veterans Group Studies Garage in Hope of Cutting Costs by Using Home-Grown Material,” *Bismarck Tribune*, March 27, 1946.

²⁸ “Cottonwood Blocks in Concrete Insulate Wall,” *Popular Science Magazine*, November (1941):124.

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stall until the war was over. Leonhard was 47 years old at the time and, while he registered for the draft, he was not selected for active service.²⁹ Instead, he dedicated himself to works on the home front. He headed the War Production Board in Bismarck and was actively involved in the American Legion along with his wife, and had even served as commander of the Disabled American Veterans organization in 1934.³⁰

Leonhard was presented the opportunity to design a new Episcopal church building in Bismarck as early as 1941.³¹ As the church would also serve as a memorial to the Pioneers of the community and, ultimately, the victims of another World War, perhaps Leonhard's own personal spiritual beliefs and life experiences compelled him to sign onto the project. His professional experiences, though doubted at first by the clergy, struck the ideal balance between traditional practice and craftsmanship and functional innovation. The resulting design did not achieve the clergy's initial vision of a Cass Gilbert replica. But what Leonhard contributed to the process of building a new home for a congregation expanding in the modern age would, in the end, be widely celebrated.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Leonhard's design for St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church is rooted in the Gothic Revival style. The revival of medieval Gothic architecture came to prominence in England in the 19th Century as a newfound interest in historicism and romanticism was inspiring the arts and literature. In direct contrast to popular Neoclassicism, advocates for a return to Gothic architecture, most famously John Ruskin, extolled the virtues of medieval craftsmanship for a modern, moral, and Christian society.³² The Gothic Revival flourished in both the UK and the United States through the 1870s, by which time it began to fall out of vogue. Religious and public buildings, especially schools, however, continued to be rendered in the Gothic Revival style well into the 20th Century. In the U.S., its perpetuation was championed by American architect Ralph Adams Cram who, "saw the Gothic idiom not as a dead style but one interrupted in its development by the interjection of Renaissance classicism...an embodiment of principles of truth in responding to function and structural integrity."³³

Hallmarks of the Gothic Revival style in 20th Century ecclesiastical architecture include steeply-pitched gabled or cross-gabled roofs, dormers, pointed-arch or "lancet-arched" windows and door openings, stained-glass, buttresses, spires and other emphasis on verticality, vaulted ceilings, delicate detailing, and cross bracing. This architecture was favored within the Episcopal church and these characteristics translated even to the small-scale late-19th and early 20th Century churches

²⁹ "Herman Max Leonhard" U.S., *World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942* Electronic document, www.ancestry.com, accessed 3/8/2021.

³⁰ Keli Berglund, Disabled American Veterans Commander 2019-2020, North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, conversation with author, March 8, 2021.

³¹ Rev. A.E. Smith's correspondences refer to a local architect in the congregation however, H.M. Leonhard was named architect for the project officially in May 1946. Rev. Douglass H. Atwill and Rev. A.E. Smith, *St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church: A Memorial to the Pioneers of the Dakotas, 1873-1949* (Bismarck, North Dakota: Conrad Publishing Co., 1949): 7.

³² Marvin Trachtenberg and Isabelle Hyman, *Architecture: From Prehistory to Postmodernity*, 2nd ed. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 2003): 439-443.

³³ Leland Roth, *American Architecture* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2001).

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built in North Dakota in more modest expressions of the style based on applications found in rural English churches.³⁴

William David Walker, the first bishop of the North Dakota Episcopal Diocese, consecrated in December 1883, had considerable influence on local religious architecture—having assumed the mantle of early church building on the Plains and raising funds for church construction, appealing to a network of wealthy and influential easterners to support his mission. Examples of late-19th Century Gothic Revival Episcopal churches in the state include St. George's precedent the Bread of Life Church in Bismarck, the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd (NRHP # MP100001743) in Lakota, North Dakota, and St. Stephen's (NRHP # 92001609) in Casselton, both built in 1885. As architectural historian Steve Martens has argued, the churches built at this time, particularly the latter two stone churches, “convey a clearly understood, underlying design philosophy as well as the hopes and aspirations of their builders. These examples also reflect the builders' awareness of Ecclesiologically correct church design and their beliefs in the importance of these principles.”³⁵

It is unsurprising then, that when the vestry in Bismarck first started to envision a new building in the 1930s to meet the needs of their growing congregation, they looked to earlier iterations of a modest-sized Gothic Revival church. Even less surprising is that available advice, such as that from Rector John Patterson of Grace Church in Madison, Wisconsin recommended reference materials like Ralph Adams Cram's *Church Building* as “one of the best works of which I know.”³⁶ In 1941, under the leadership of Reverend N.E. Elsworth, the church reached out to congregant H.M. Leonhard, a local architect, to gage his interest in developing the plans. Leonhard's original drawings for St. George's illustrate how the initial design was steadfast in its Gothic Revival style.

The new church was to be based off an existing Episcopal church located in Moorhead, Minnesota. St. John the Divine Episcopal Church was built by architect Cass Gilbert and completed in 1889.³⁷ It has a cruciform plan and an asymmetrical façade, with a polygonal bell tower and spire at the southwest corner. Its west-facing, nested-gable entry has a Gothic arched window at center. The north- and south-facing gable-ended transepts contain tall, narrow stained-glass windows. Other windows throughout are paired divided-lite clear-glass windows. Eyebrow dormers adorn the sides of the apse end. The entire building stands on a granite-stone base with decorative wood shingles covering the exterior walls. An eight-sided brick chimney rises from the intersection of the nave and transepts.

As realized, Leonhard's final design for St. George's bears only some similarity to St. John's, primarily in its massing. Decisions to employ reinforced pumice concrete and commission custom stained-glass windows (at what would prove to be an exorbitant, albeit unanticipated, cost) have resulted in the church's two most unique and character-defining features from which it gains historic significance.

³⁴ Steve Martens, “Episcopal Churches” (presentation, Northern Great Plains History Conference in Grand Forks, North Dakota August 20, 2017).

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Letter from Rector John Patterson to Rev. A.E. Smith on May 17, 1944.

³⁷ Harvey, Tom. 1979 St. John the Divine Episcopal Church. Minnesota Historic Properties Inventory Form. Electronic document <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/80002020>, accessed 3/5/2021.

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St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church is the first documented example of the use of reinforced pumice concrete in the northern U.S.³⁸ As described to readers of the *Bismarck Tribune* in 1948, "The church is being built of a special pumice material which reduced heat loss and eliminates the need for sound and heat insulating materials. The material is formed of a mixture of pumice, sand, concrete and water, has a tensile strength equal to that of concrete and a water content 20 to 30 percent higher than concrete. Weight of the material is 90 pounds per cubic foot compared to 144 for concrete."³⁹

Pumice, a rough-textured, porous volcanic rock, has been in use as a construction material for thousands of years. Famously, the Romans employed pumice in its powdered form, "pumicite", mixed with lime cement and lightweight pumice aggregate in erecting the dome of the Pantheon.⁴⁰ Revisited by architects and engineers in the early mid-20th Century, pumice and pumicite mined in the southwestern U.S. found its way into popular use in the modern construction industry.⁴¹ The material was light-weight, reducing dead load on structural supports and, in turn, decreasing costs associated with the structural steel. It was also insulating, durable, and fire-resistant.⁴² The advantages, particularly the cost savings, are most likely the reason for its use at St. George's.

Early on, plans indicate that the church was to be faced in stone, which would look far more traditional for an Episcopal Gothic Revival structure. According to the *Bismarck Tribune*, it was intended to be finished with kasota stone, quarried in Kasota, Minnesota. However, "the cost was so high that it was built instead with walls of reinforced pumice concrete painted an umber tint."⁴³ The effect was a bright, clean, untextured finish acclaimed as "one of the most modern churches in Bismarck."⁴⁴ This more modern outward aesthetic, even applied to a readily recognizable form of a Gothic Revival church building, likely pleased certain members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy from whom Reverend A.E. Smith, who had assumed charge of the congregation here in 1943, had solicited input throughout the design process. At least the urgings of architect and Rector John Patterson of Grace Church would have been met half-way. He had said to Smith in a letter in 1946, with regards to the proposed church:

I have great admiration for the work of Mr. Cass Gilbert, but I cannot feel that the job at Moorhead is in any living sense an outward and visible sign of what the church ought to be in our day. I am not recommending the use of something that necessarily breaks completely with tradition, nor would I necessarily hold the fort for my particular 'style' of architecture. I do

³⁸ "Hand-Carved Wood Furnishings Make Interior Unique," *Bismarck Tribune*, September 9, 1949.

³⁹ "Local Contractors Report Building Progressing Here," *Bismarck Tribune*, September 29, 1948.

⁴⁰ Marvin Trachtenberg and Isabelle Hyman, *Architecture: From Prehistory to Postmodernity*, 2nd ed. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 2003): 124-125.

⁴¹ Clippinger, Donn M. and Walter E. Gay. New Mexico Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources Bulletin 28: Pumice Aggregate in New Mexico: Its Uses and Potentialities. Department of the New Mexico School of Mines. 1947.

⁴² "Pumice Roof," *Popular Mechanics Magazine* November (1950): 120-24.

⁴³ "Hand-Carved Wood Furnishings Make Interior Unique," *Bismarck Tribune*, September 9, 1949.

⁴⁴ "Completion of New St. George's Church is Expected Next Spring," *Bismarck Tribune*, November 23, 1948.

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feel, however, that in our generation our structures must be erected with careful regard for function.⁴⁵

Rector Patterson went on to direct Rector Smith to contemporaneous Episcopal churches for inspiration. These were St. Marks in St. Louis, Missouri, designed by Modernist architects Nagel and Dunn; Church of the Epiphany in New York, designed in a Norman Gothic style by Marion Sims Wyeth and Frederic Rhinelandt King; and a church in Alexandria, Virginia, possibly the Church of St. Clement.⁴⁶

In a small way, out of economical interest and the availability of innovative materials in the postwar era, St. George's, as designed by H.M. Leonhard and executed by builder John Larson, does reflect shifting attitudes toward religious architecture—what drove its design and what deviation from traditional reference was allowed. Modernist architecture had blossomed in Europe after WWI, even in church buildings where architects such as Rudolf Schwarz, in his 1930 Corpus Christi Catholic Church in Aachen, Germany had “demonstrated a new way of thinking about worship space, spatially and aesthetically” through use of “strong, simple forms, dramatic lighting, and clarity of liturgical purpose.”⁴⁷

That same movement struggled to gain momentum in the U.S. At the same time final decisions were being made regarding St. George's, Elbert Conover, the director of the Interdenominational Bureau of Architecture is quoted on religious architecture that it, “must be distinctively and easily recognizable as a place of divine worship”; must “look like a church.” Having reviewed hundreds of church plans in 1947-1948, he noted few more than a dozen were of a contemporary architectural style.⁴⁸ However, in the following decade, that would begin to change, even in North Dakota. Of the 323 churches built between 1945-1960 that are documented with the State Historic Preservation Office's North Dakota Cultural Resources Survey database, 69 are identified as either “Gothic Revival” or “Elizabethan/Tudor” (including St. George's), while 110 of them are described as having an architectural style that is “contemporary” or “modern.”⁴⁹

UNIQUE FEATURES

Stained Glass Windows

The “jewels” of St. George's are its forty-five stained glass windows, made by the firm of Barton, Kinder, & Alderson, Stained Glass Artists and Craftsmen, Brighton, England. All but five of these windows include borders of blue, green, and colored fragments of stained-glass windows salvaged from Anglican Churches damaged or destroyed during the bombing of southeast England which

⁴⁵ Letter from Rector John Patterson to Rector A.E. Smith dated November 15, 1946. Records, St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church, Bismarck, North Dakota.

⁴⁶ Letter from Rector John Patterson to Rector A.E. Smith dated November 15, 1946. Records, St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church, Bismarck, North Dakota.

⁴⁷ Gretchen Townsend Buggeln, *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015).

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ State Historical Society of North Dakota, Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, North Dakota Cultural Resources Survey

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took place during World War II. The fragments depict faces, body parts, church features, and a variety of other symbols, and frame a church symbol in each window. A memorial plaque beneath or adjacent to each window names the individual or individuals memorialized, the name or names of the donors, and, where applicable, the name of the Anglican Church from which the border fragments were salvaged.⁵⁰

Twenty-four of the stained-glass windows are lancet windows: a pair over the stairway, on the north wall of the narthex; four sets on each of the north and south walls of the nave; and two sets of triple lancet windows on the north and south walls of the transepts. There is a large circular window in the gable above the porch; the windows in the Chapel of Angels (the office) are rectangular, as are the windows on either side of the entryway to the narthex from the porch. These windows originally were on the outside west wall of the Church before the addition of the porch in 1996. The two windows against the west wall of the nave, on either side of the entry doors are rectangular, as are the two windows on the north side of each transept. These two transept windows were originally on the outside east wall of the Church, but were moved to the transepts with the installation of the organ pipes against the east wall in 1986. The windows in the columbarium and the sacristy are also rectangular. The windows in the entry door to the nave and the back door to the outside from the sacristy are semi-circular.⁵¹

These windows are memorials, purchased and given to St. George's by parishioners and other members of the community and the state. The presence of these windows is due largely to the efforts of Reverend Smith who first contacted Barton, Kinder, & Alderson after unsuccessfully trying to locate an American firm to build the windows. The English firm was established by three glass artists Kenneth M. Barton, Claude Kinder, and Albert E. Alderson at the end of WWII. The three had formerly worked together at Cox and Barnard and were based out of Brighton, U.K. Examples of their work can be found primarily throughout southeast England.⁵²

These windows "made history for the English firm of Barton, Kinder, & Alderson," as the *Bismarck Tribune* surmised upon their installation in November of 1949.⁵³ Their windows for St. George's are part of a body of work made with glass salvaged from Anglican churches destroyed in WWII. In the post-war years, the firm advertised in various publications and, presumably, this is where their services came to the attention of Rev. Smith. Smith wrote to the company, doubtful that the church could afford a commission. However, the company responded positively that they were glad "to trade with the colonies" and quoted him \$4,500 for 45 windows. The cost was deemed affordable and the windows were ordered. The finished products were shipped to the U.S. on a Norwegian freighter, but once they arrived at the customs office in Minneapolis, the devaluation of the English pound in the intervening time, had affected their value and an unanticipated duty was placed on the windows to the sum of an additional \$1,706.40—beyond the

⁵⁰ Dates and names of churches from which the glass was salvaged have been researched and documented in Tom Tudor's 2019 *St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church: The Stained Glass Windows*.

⁵¹ Tom Tudor, 2019.

⁵² "Barton, Kinder and Alderson." Website of the Sussex Parish Churches. sussexparishchurches.org 2021, accessed 3/8/2021.

⁵³ "Church's Windows Combine Ancient, New," *Bismarck Tribune*, November 28, 1982.

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church's ability to pay.⁵⁴ In a charitable fashion, North Dakota Senator William Langer intervened and was able to get the assessed fee waived. The Senate Judiciary Committee voted favorably, concluding that "St. George's Church should not be penalized for a mistake made in good faith."⁵⁵

Claude Kinder died in 1949 and, while the surviving partners continued to produce stained glass under all three names, together, until 1967, there are no other examples of their work known in the U.S. It appears St. George's was their first and last transatlantic commission.

While the windows are unique in their craftsmanship, they are representative of a postwar revitalization of the stained-glass and other artisan industries and reflect a 20th Century trend in the design for religious spaces. Barton, Kinder, & Alderson belong to a generation of architects, craftsmen, and artists who assumed the mantle of restoration, rebuilding, and reconciliation in wake of WWII. Salvaged materials were often reused and resulted in new work inspired by the modern age.⁵⁶ Famously, Coventry Cathedral, which had been destroyed in the Coventry Blitz of 1940, was rebuilt in a modern style by Spence in Arup from 1956-1962, within the roofless ruins of the former structure. The ruins were purposefully preserved as a "constant reminder of conflict, the need for reconciliation, and the enduring search for peace."⁵⁷ Similarly, the windows of St. George's, composed of unrelated fragments of recycled stained glass, combine old and new—perhaps an intentional commentary on loss and renewal.

Tower Bell

Located in the bell tower at the southwest corner of St. George's Church is a unique relic of early Bismarck history. The bell had hung in the Bread of Life Church since 1882 and was relocated at the completion of the new building. Originally, it was used on the Missouri River steamboat "Red Cloud," which sank after hitting a snag in the Missouri River above Ft. Peck, Montana on July 11, 1882. The shipwreck was a dramatic and newsworthy event, as the Red Cloud—named for the Oglala Lakota leader—was a record-setting vessel and touted as the best on the upper Missouri.⁵⁸ It was one of five steamers operated by Thomas C. Power and Isaac G. Baker on the Missouri River. Their combined steamer lines constituted the largest mercantile enterprise in Montana and Dakota. The Red Cloud ran on the "Baker Line" between Bismarck and Fort Benton, carrying both passengers and freight.⁵⁹ Adding to public interest at the time, when the steamer wrecked, Baker and members of his family were among those stranded, eventually transferred to another steamer.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ U.S. Congress. Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Rev. A.E. Smit: Report (to Accompany S. 2373)*, 82nd Congress, 2d sess., 1952.

⁵⁶ "History of Stained Glass," Website of the Stained Glass Association of America. www.stainedglass.org, accessed 3/9/2021.

⁵⁷ "Coventry Cathedral" Website of the World Monuments Fund. www.wmf.org 2021, accessed 3/9/2021.

⁵⁸ "Death of Capt. Isaac P. Baker Recalls Part Missouri River Shipping Played in Early Days," *The Lethbridge Herald*, February 7, 1938.

⁵⁹ "Baker Line," *Benton Weekly Record*, September 8, 1881.

⁶⁰ Annalies Corbin, *The Life and Times of the Steamboat Red Cloud* (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 2006).

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Isaac G. Baker's nephew, Isaac Post Baker, had been hired on as the General Agent for the Benton Line in 1881 and moved from St. Louis, Missouri to Bismarck around that time. He became one of the city's most prominent residents and even served as mayor from 1895 to 1901.⁶¹ Following the wreck of the Red Cloud, I.G. Baker & Co was unable to recover the boat or her cargo. However, the bell was salvaged and I.P. Baker donated it to the newly established Bread of Life Episcopal church in Bismarck. The bell currently housed at the Bread of Life at the Camp Hancock State Historic Site took the place of the Red Cloud bell when the latter was moved to St. George's in 1949.⁶²

Memorials

St. George's is a Memorial Church, which imbues it with a secondary purpose that has public value and interest beyond that of its congregants. To date, it contains over 90 memorial plaques indicating gifts given in memory of members of the community, largely but not only Episcopalians. The church was dedicated at its consecration to the pioneers of the Dakotas, regardless of creed. Thirty-eight of the memorial plaques within St. George's correspond to its stained-glass windows. The remaining memorial plaques are associated with the furniture and other furnishings of St. George's. The following is a representative sample of some of those community members who are memorialized here, individuals whose names are prominent in the history of Bismarck.⁶³

George Francis Will - George Will studied anthropology, archaeology, and botany, graduating from Harvard in 1906. At Oscar H. Will and Co., the company founded by his father, he experimented with breeding plants to produce better agricultural strains. George Will became an acclaimed corn breeder. His avid interest in the history and prehistory of North Dakota led him to write a variety of books, speeches and articles on the folklore, agricultural-lore, languages and customs, and archaeological remains of Native American groups living along the Upper Missouri. In all, George Will wrote 117 published books, articles, and reviews on the topics of history, prehistory, and botany.⁶⁴

Will was active throughout his life in community affairs, serving on many boards and commissions. In 1940, he received an honorary doctorate from the North Dakota Agricultural College, in recognition of his many contributions to modern agriculture. He was president of the State Historical Society of North Dakota. He became treasurer of the Society for American

⁶¹ William E. Lass, "Isaac Baker and the Baker Papers, 1855-1938," *North Dakota History* 24, No. 4 (1957): 175-179.

⁶² "Old Bell to Peal in New Tower," *Bismarck Tribune*, April 22, 1949.

⁶³ The records of St. George's also contain a Book of Remembrance, which was begun at the time St. George's was dedicated and contains the names of these and numerous other pioneers of the Dakotas. These pioneers, especially those whose names are inscribed on the memorial plaques, are a relevant and significant part of the history of St. George's.

⁶⁴ State Historical Society of North Dakota *Will Family* [finding aid]. State Historical Society of North Dakota Archives Collections. <https://www.history.nd.gov/archives/manuscripts/inventory/10190.html>, accessed 3/10/2021.

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Archaeology in 1951. An undesignated memorial gift was made by Elvira and George Will in memory of the Bismarck Pioneers.⁶⁵

Edmond Alexander Hughes - E. A. Hughes and Edith A. Wakeman were married on June 13, 1900, in the former Episcopal Church building in Bismarck. Among E. A. Hughes' interests were lignite mining; telephone communications; construction of hotels, theaters, apartment buildings, and garages; state and local politics (he served in the state legislature from 1913 to 1915); and various causes such as the Missouri Valley Council of the Boy Scouts of America.⁶⁶ The Tower and the nave are the memorial gifts of Ed Hughes.

Captain John Middleton Belk - Captain John M. Belk was a pilot and captain on the Missouri and tributary rivers for fifty-seven years. He made his first trip into Dakota Territory in 1869 on the Steamer Amanda to bring supplies to old Fort Rice. In 1873, he married Miss Elizabeth Ann Hayes of Yankton and in 1881 they, with their first son, came to Bismarck on the Steamer Helena. The window in the outside door to the Sacristy is a memorial to Captain and Elizabeth Belk.⁶⁷

Rita A. Murphy - The lower level of St. George's was dedicated in November of 1973 as The Rita A. Murphy Memorial Hall. Rita was a member of St. George's for approximately fifty years. For many of those years she was a member of the choir and the Women's Auxiliary. Rita began her forty-one-year teaching career with the Bismarck Public School District in 1917. After receiving her BA degree from the University of North Dakota, she taught English and English Literature at Bismarck High School and Hughes Junior High School, where she taught until her retirement in 1965. In 1936, she became the first classroom teacher to serve as the President of the ND Education Association. She was selected as one of the ten outstanding teachers in the country in 1956. Rita Murphy Elementary School in Bismarck is named in her honor.⁶⁸

At the dedication of St. George's on September 10, 1949, Governor Fred Aandahl gave an address. In it, he described the church as both "beautiful and inspiring" and spoke of the suitability of the Episcopal Church to serve as stewards of the area's early history through the dedication of the new structure as a Pioneer Memorial. His words on that day are reflective on not only the settlement era, but of current conditions in a community—and nation—still reeling from the War:

The world today is not at rest; in fact it is much disturbed. Even within the United States which we pride and rightly place above all other lands, there is marked uneasiness. We need more of the spirit of the pioneers. How far could undaunted self-reliant determination mingled with our grandparents' frugality go to stem the tide of approaching economic reverses? How far could any unyielding determination to work hard at any task that needed to be done, as was mandatory of the pioneer if he was going to survive, go to solve the social unrest of today?

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ "State's No. 1 Builder E.A. Hughes Dies; Pioneer in Utilities," *Bismarck Tribune*, October 9, 1970.

⁶⁷ State Historical Society of North Dakota *Ben Belk* [finding aid]. State Historical Society of North Dakota Archives Collections. <https://www.history.nd.gov/archives/manuscripts/inventory/00124.html>, accessed 3/10/2021.

⁶⁸ "Rita A. Murphy, Noted Educator, Dies in Bismarck," *Bismarck Tribune*, November 30, 1968.

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How far could the humble gratitude of the homesteader who had just finished his sod house or his 10 by 12 claim shack go to give us all a fuller appreciation of the great riches that have grown up in this land of opportunity under the personal freedoms guaranteed by our form of government? As this grand new church is dedicated in memory of the early settlers let it rekindle in the people of today a revived spirit of the pioneers.⁶⁹

The donors of the gifts received in connection with the construction of St. George's, and those memorialized, were the pioneers and families of the pioneers spoken of in the dedication. But they are not the only group of people celebrated here. In the midst of WWII, Rev. Smith was faced with the challenge of running a vigorous capital campaign. On June 2nd, 1944, he wrote a letter appealing to those in the congregation who were able, to "sacrifice some of the lesser things in order to be able to give generously to the campaign." He included, "what better and more fitting memorial could we erect to honor those of our congregation and community who have answered the call of their country to the colors?"⁷⁰

This is the first documented proposal for military service memorials at the church, of which there are dozens. Smith's letter was perhaps what sparked or fueled a patriotic vision for St. George's which carried the fundraising through the war years and resulted in the following commemorations:

WW II Memorials – The Flag Pole was the gift of Henry and Mabel Jones. The first flag draped the casket of Lt. Dale W. Whitson when his body was brought home for reburial May 21, 1949. The United States Flag, the Episcopal Church Flag, and the North Dakota State Flag are the gifts of Mrs. Norman Hick, in memory of Capt. Lee Hicks, who lost his life with the army of occupation in Germany, 1948.⁷¹

The Processional Cross, the gift of Mr. and Mrs. B. E. Jones in memory of Lt. Ben Jones, who died December 3, 1944, of wounds received while leading his platoon into action in Holland the night of November 6-7, 1944.⁷²

The Sanctuary Pavement Lights (Candles), are the gift of Lois Shipley, Dudley and Barbara Whitson, and the parents of Lt. Dale W. Whitson, in memory of Lt. Dale W. Whitson, co-pilot on a bombing mission over Germany, August 16, 1944. The Altar Cross, the silver Wine Flagon, Water Cruets, a Bread Box, and a Lavabo, the gifts of his friends.⁷³

⁶⁹ Fred G. Aandahl, Governor, North Dakota, "Address – Dedication St. George's Episcopal Church" (Dedication speech, Bismarck, North Dakota, September 10, 1949). Records of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church, Bismarck.

⁷⁰ Letter from Rector A.E. Smith to congregation, June 2nd 1944. Records of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church.

⁷¹ Rev. A.E. Smith's correspondences refer to a local architect in the congregation however, H.M. Leonhard was named architect for the project officially in May 1946. Rev. Douglass H. Atwill and Rev. A.E. Smith, *St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church: A Memorial to the Pioneers of the Dakotas, 1873-1949* (Bismarck, North Dakota: Conrad Publishing Co., 1949): 16.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

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The Virgin and Child window in the south transept of St. George's is a memorial given by R. B., Bruce, and Rita A. Murphy in memory of Captain Lloyd G. Murphy, 31st Infantry, who survived 45 months of Japanese imprisonment following the fall of Bataan, but lost his life at sea near Formosa in the bombing of the prison ship transporting him to Japan on January 27, 1945. The Credence Table is also a memorial given in memory of Captain Murphy by Rita, Bruce, and R. B. Murphy.⁷⁴

WWI Memorials - St. George's also has a bronze memorial plaque dedicated to the memory of thirty-two of the members of its congregation who were among the 35,448 North Dakotans who served in the armed forces during World War I. The plaque predates the church building, but like the bell, was transferred to St. George's from the Bread of Life Church. It had been dedicated on Sunday, October 26, 1919. This memorial tablet is currently located just to the north as one enters the Nave from the Narthex.⁷⁵

The name of one of the men listed on this tablet, Addison B. Falconer (1890-1918), is marked with two stars to show that he lost his life while in the service of his country. Captain Falconer was one of more than 1,300 North Dakotans who died in the War, 642 of those, including Captain Falconer, dying from disease. The St. Mark window on the north side of the Nave is a memorial to Captain Addison Falconer.⁷⁶

Also named on the tablet is Lewis Wilford, who was the Rector serving St George's from 1911-1915. He was born in Sussex, England, and returned to England from St. George's in 1915. It seems likely that Rev. Wilford served in the British armed forces during World War I, however there is no record at St. George's concerning his military service.⁷⁷

These memorials to pioneers and patriots alike speak to certain values—strength, bravery, industry, self-reliance, good fellowship, integrity, democracy, and faith—cherished my many, particularly in the aftermath of WWII. That the community was able to erect a structure that could, in part, symbolize these things, is evidence that the memorial concept resonated with the people of Bismarck and of North Dakota.

CONCLUSION

St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church has historic significance beyond its religious function and the spiritual symbolism of its many beautiful elements such as the artful stained-glass windows, the hand-carved furnishings, or the special memorials. And while the history of the congregation itself is as old as the City of Bismarck, this particular Church building derives broader significance for the ways in which its architectural design embodies and expresses the artistic and cultural climate of the postwar period. Designed through a years-long collaboration between the church and local architect H.M. Leonhard, its innovative use of materials created an aesthetic distinct from the traditional Gothic Revival churches upon which it was modeled. The unique mode

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

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of manufacture behind its Barton, Kinder & Alderson stained-glass windows acutely addressed wide-felt feelings of loss and the promise of perseverance. The broad support for the construction of St. George's, as evidenced by community-wide donations and memorials, numerous news articles anticipating its completion and celebrating its beauty, and even a dedication speech by the governor himself, speak to the success of those integral to its design, in answering not just the immediate needs of a growing congregation, but the hopes of a proud community still healing from WWII and remembering its roots. For these reasons, St. George's has been and continues to be cherished by Bismarck citizens of all faiths.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Atwill, Rev. Douglass H. and Rev. A.E. Smith. *St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church: A Memorial to the Pioneers of the Dakotas, 1873-1949*. Bismarck, North Dakota: Conrad Publishing Co., 1949.

Buggeln, Gretchen Townsend. *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015.

Corbin, Annalies. *The Life and Times of the Steamboat Red Cloud*. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 2006

Martens, Steve. "Episcopal Churches." Presented at the Northern Great Plains History Conference, Grand Forks, North Dakota August 20, 2017.

Martens, Steve. *Federal Relief Construction in North Dakota, 1931-1943*. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 2010.

Roth, Leland. *American Architecture*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2001

Trachtenberg, Marvin and Isabelle Hyman. *Architecture: From Prehistory to Postmodernity*, 2nd ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. Publishers, 2003.

Tudor, Tom. *St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church: The Stained Glass Windows*. Bismarck, North Dakota: Image Printing, 2019.

Wilkins, Robert P. and Wynona H. *God Giveth the Increase: the History of the Episcopal Church in North Dakota*. Fargo, North Dakota: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, 1959.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

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- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☒ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: State Archives, State Historical Society of North Dakota

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property <1 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

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

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 14T Easting: 363773.2 Northing: 5185697.6

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2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

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

The boundary of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church at 601 N 4th Street, is County Parcel Number 0015-012-025 encompassing Lot 5 and the south 25 feet of Lot 6, Block 12, in the Northern Pacific Addition to the City of Bismarck, Burleigh County, North Dakota.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary for St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church includes the city lot retaining the historic church building. The associated modern parking lot to the east is located on Parcel Number 0015-012-020 and is excluded from the site boundary as it is non-historic and not directly associated with the historic period defined for St. George's. The boundary does not extend beyond the right-of-way. The sidewalks and boulevards that line the property's north and south edges along N 4th Street and E Avenue B are maintained by the property owner, but are owned and managed by the City of Bismarck.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Emily Sakariassen, Architectural Historian and Tom Tudor, Senior Warden

organization: Metcalf Archaeological Consultants Inc., with St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church

street & number: Metcalf Archaeological Consultants, Inc., P.O. Box 2154

city or town: Bismarck state: ND zip code: 58501

e-mail esakariassen@metcalfarchaeology.com

telephone: 701-258-1215

date: May 4, 2021

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church

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

Photographs

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

Photo Log

Name of Property: St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church

City or Vicinity: Bismarck

County: Burleigh

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Tom Tudor

Date Photographed: 2020

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

View: Oblique view of exterior elevations, facing northeast.

Image ID: P1010003

1 of 6.

Name of Property: St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church

City or Vicinity: Bismarck

County: Burleigh

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Emily Sakariassen

Date Photographed: 2021

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

View: West facade, view east.

Image ID: DSC_0157

2 of 6.

Name of Property: St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church

City or Vicinity: Bismarck

County: Burleigh

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Tom Tudor

St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church

Burleigh, ND

Name of Property

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Date Photographed: 2020

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

View: Oblique view of exterior elevations, facing southeast.

Image ID: P1010037

3 of 6.

Name of Property: St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church

City or Vicinity: Bismarck

County: Burleigh

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Tom Tudor

Date Photographed: 2020

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

View: View of exterior east elevation, facing west.

Image ID: P1010029

4 of 6.

Name of Property: St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church

City or Vicinity: Bismarck

County: Burleigh

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Emily Sakariassen

Date Photographed: 2021

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

View: South elevation, view north.

Image ID: DSC_0160

5 of 6.

Name of Property: St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church

City or Vicinity: Bismarck

County: Burleigh

State: North Dakota

Photographer: Tom Tudor

Date Photographed: 2020

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

View: Oblique view of exterior elevations, facing southwest.

Image ID: P1010032

6 of 6.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

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

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

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

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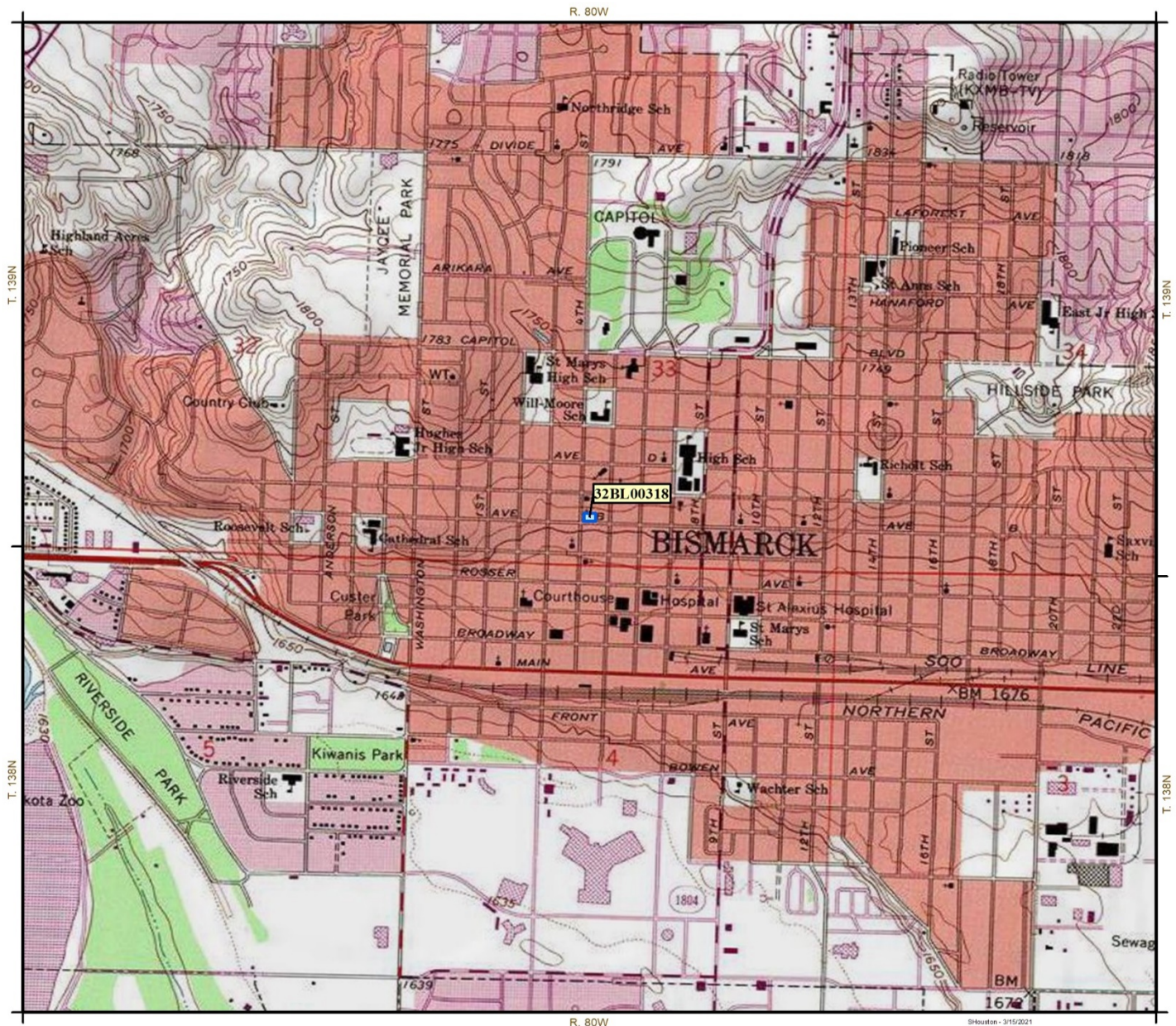
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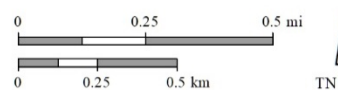
St. George's
Episcopal Memorial Church
Burleigh County, ND
32BL00318

Metcalf Archaeological
Consultants, Inc.
Est. 1980

7.5' Quad.
Overview



1:24000



NAD 1983 UTM Zone 14N

 Architectural Site

Figure 1: St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church depicted on the 7.5' USGS Bismarck (1962, photorevised 1976) quadrangle map.

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Figure 2: St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church depicted on aerial 2017 imagery.

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Figure 3: Photograph of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church, 601 N 4th St. Bismarck, view northeast. Photograph by Tom Tudor, 2020.

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Figure 4: Photograph of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church, view east, west facade. Photograph by Emily Sakariassen, 2021

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Figure 5: Photograph of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church, view southeast. Photograph by Tom Tudor, 2020.

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Figure 6: Photograph of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church, view southwest. Photograph by Tom Tudor, 2020.

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Figure 6: Photograph of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church, view north. Photograph by Emily Sakariassen, 2020.

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Figure 7: Photograph of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church, view west. Photograph by Tom Tudor, 2020.

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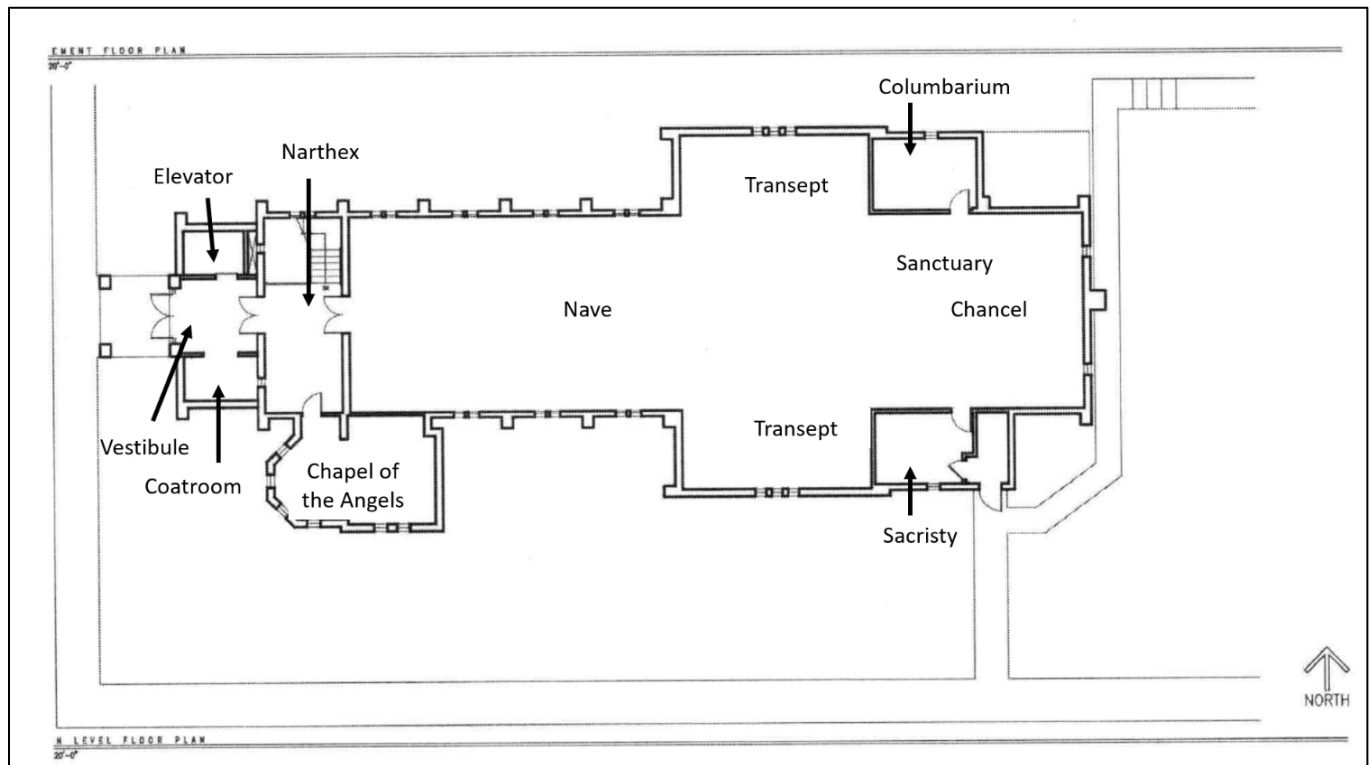


Figure 8: Plan and interior layout of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church, adjusted from the 1996 AWBW main level plans.

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Figure 9: Photograph of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church, interior, oblique view from the nave toward the sanctuary. Note: exposed timber-framed roof, concrete wall finish, white-oak furnishings, organ on the east wall, and one of two windows flanking the sanctuary at left and right which were originally located on the apse end. Photograph by Emily Sakariassen, 2021.

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Figure 10: Photograph of the Cass Gilbert-designed 1898 St. John the Divine Church, Moorhead, Minnesota. Photograph by Thomas Harvey, 1979 (Minnesota Historical Society).

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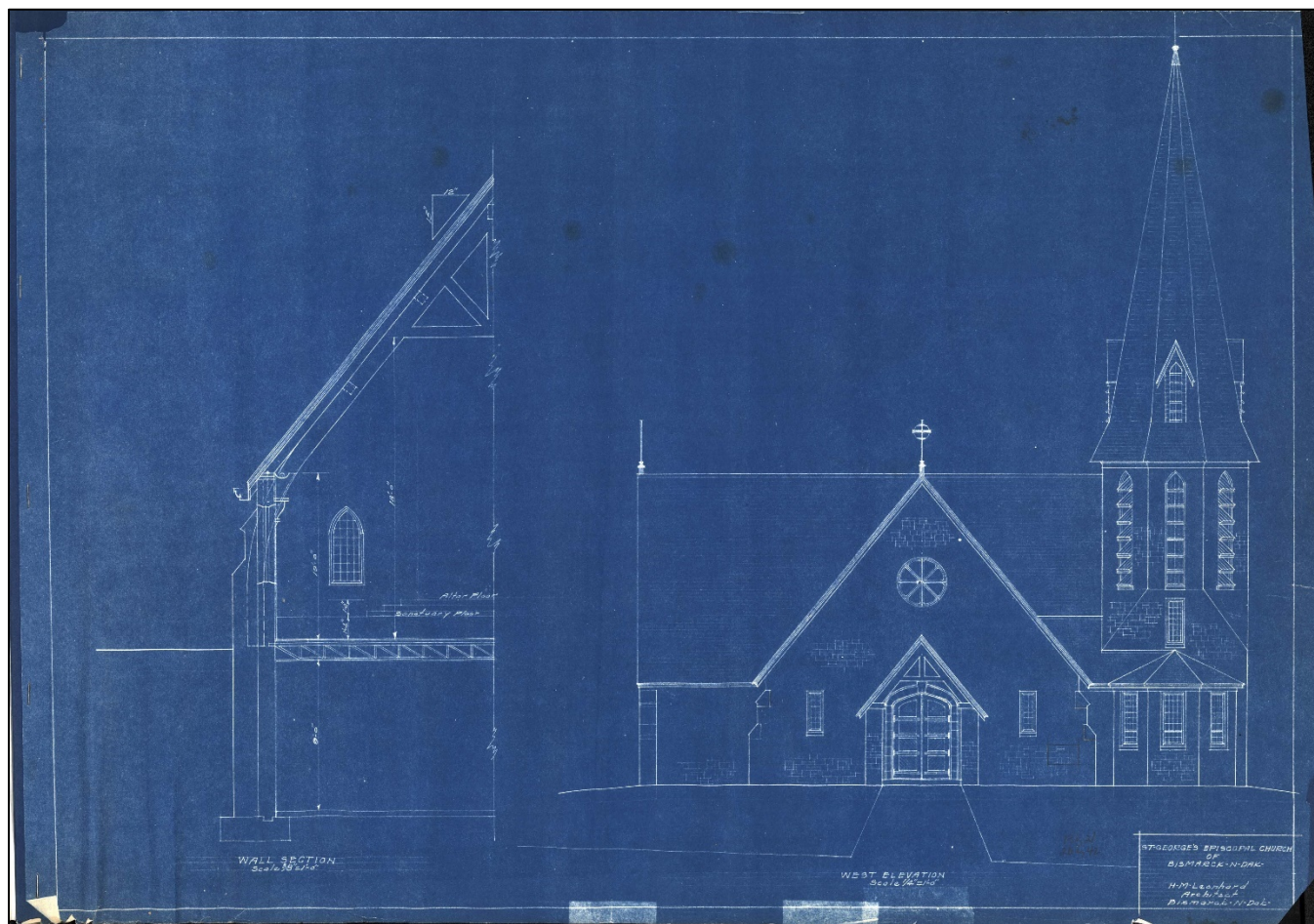


Figure 11: Original blueprints drawn by H.M. Leonhard depicting more traditional Gothic Revival style exterior with stone face (State Historical Society of North Dakota).

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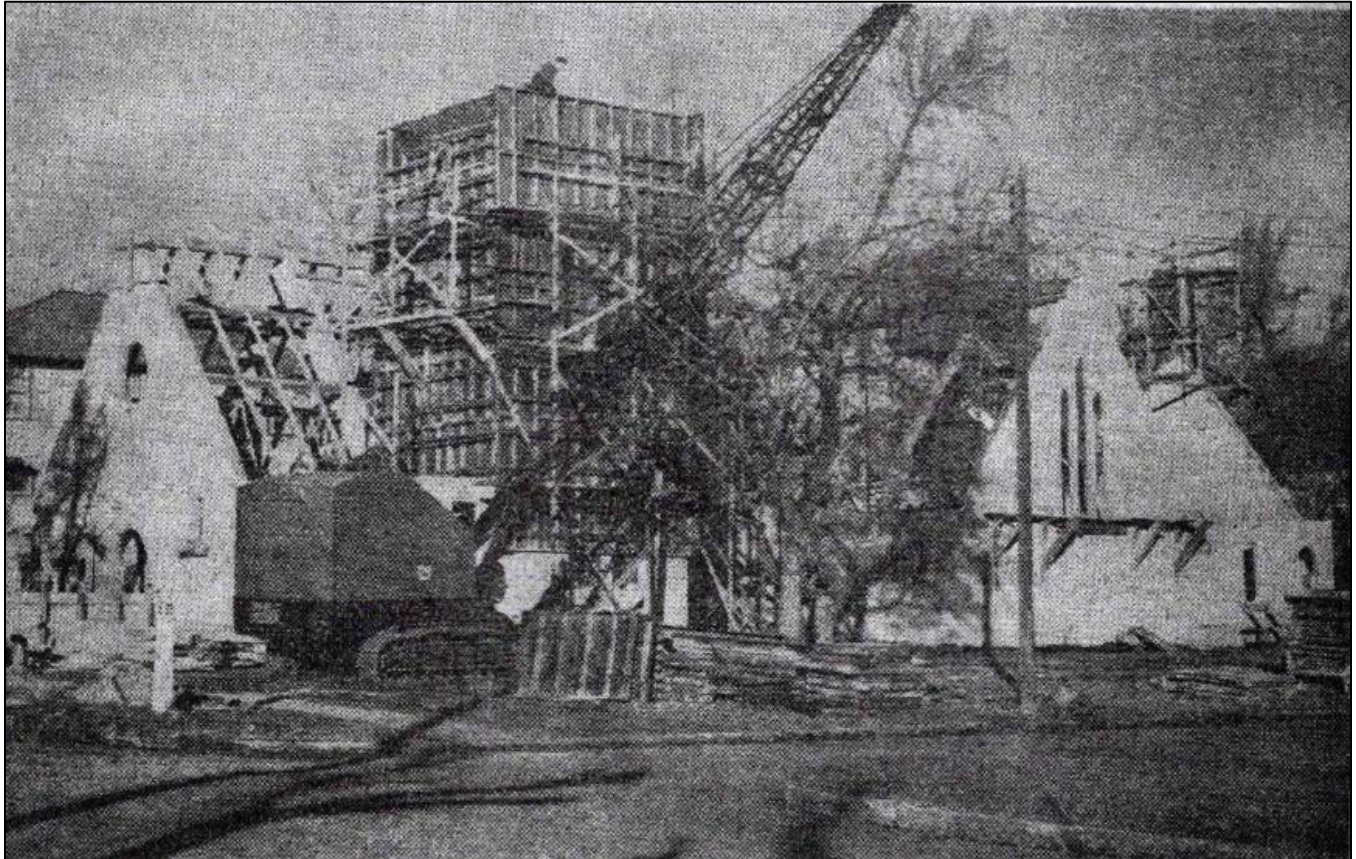


Figure 12: Photograph of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church under construction, 1948. Note: steel reinforced concrete structure with timber-framed roof. Clipping from the *Bismarck Tribune*, November 23, 1948.

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Figure 13: Historical photograph of St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church, 601 N 4th St., Bismarck, ND, ca. 1975, prior to the 1996 addition (Bismarck Veterans Memorial Public Library).

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Figure 14: Interior entrance to the narthex showing stained-glass windows by Barton, Kinder, & Alderson. Glass used is from 12th Century windows of St. Nicholas Church in North Stoneham, UK. Photograph by Tom Tudor, 2019.

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Figure 15: Gable-front window, originally the exterior west façade. Window depicts St. George and the Dragon by Barton, Kinder, & Alderson. Photograph by Tom Tudor, 2019.

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Figure 16: Window in narthex depicting the Great Seal of the State of North Dakota by Barton, Kinder & Alderson. Glass used is from 12th Century windows of St. Michael's Church in Southampton, UK.

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Figure 17: Composite of three photographs, each depicting close up sections of stained-glass windows from St. George's Episcopal Memorial Church. Each section illustrates the way in which Barton, Kinder & Alderson incorporated fragments of window glass in window borders, resulting in a collage of recycled imagery. Photographs by Tom Tudor, 2019.

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Figure 18: Photograph of the steeple bell salvaged from the Steamboat Red Cloud. Photograph by Tom Tudor, 2019.