

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1** NAME

HISTORIC

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

AND/OR COMMON

First Church of Christ, Scientist, University City

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

6900 Delmar Boulevard

CITY, TOWN

University City

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

VICINITY OF

#1 - Hon. William Clay
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Missouri

CODE
29

COUNTY

St. Louis

CODE
189**3** CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

 DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

 IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

 OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

 YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO

PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**4** OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

STREET & NUMBER

6900 Delmar Boulevard

CITY, TOWN

University City

VICINITY OF

Missouri STATE 63130

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder of Deeds, St. Louis County Government Center

STREET & NUMBER

7900 Forsyth Blvd.

CITY, TOWN

Clayton

Missouri STATE 63105

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

1. Missouri's Contribution to American Architecture, by John Albury Bryan

DATE

1928

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

published: St. Louis Architectural Club

CITY, TOWN

St. Louis

STATE Missouri

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

ASSUMPTION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

For the Department of the Interior
received
date received

Continuation sheet 1

Item number 6

Page 1

2. Missouri State Historical Survey
1977
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church, at 6900 Delmar Boulevard, is located at the southwest corner of Delmar and Trinity Avenue. The limestone ashlar building has a saucer dome and, while not exactly square in elevation, suggests that the curve of the dome could be the visible portion of a sphere contained within the building. The carefully coordinated five-bay main elevations of the building are identical on east, west and south sides, while the north elevation is enriched by a colonnade in antis. The corners of these elevations are angled to create four minor wall surfaces in addition to the four main ones, thus giving the building the shape of a non-equilateral octagon.

The ground floor is rusticated. On the north, it centers on three double doors under large half-round fanlights, flanked by marble urns on carved pedestals. To the east, the ground falls away to meet a narrow semicircular drive, putting the central door on this side of the building about a half story lower than the matching front doors. The keystone above this door supports a large console in the shape of a volute. On the west side, three pairs of french doors at the level of the east door open onto a sunken area.

At the piano nobile level, the side and rear elevations all have six very plain (Tuscan?) pilasters framing five windows. Over each window is a dishlike roundel of acanthus leaves surrounding a rosette. Above the pilasters is a frieze of square coffers. The north front has four composite columns set in a porch or umbrage above the main doors. Through a daring but logical shift, the frieze which has run above the pilasters on the other elevations finds itself below the level of the architrave here and running across the wall behind the columns. The beautifully carved capitals incorporate an eagle on the abacus in place of the more usual rosette. Bronze crosses decorate the blank end bays of this elevation. The date AD 1924 is inscribed on the cornerstone at the northeast corner. An egg-and-dart molding lies just under the modillioned cornice, above which rises a low parapet.

Inside, the half-story adjustment apparent on the exterior is followed through in the narthex, which is a half story above the ground floor social and utility rooms. Curved flights of stairs ascend from the ends of the narthex to the sanctuary, which fills the whole volume of the building. It has a sloped floor and long curving pews. The underside of the dome is decorated with five concentric rings of coffers, each with a rosette. The iconostasis is also neoclassical, based on a framework of Corinthian columns. Murals dated 1962 in the narthex and sanctuary depict Eastern saints in traditional Byzantine garb. Many of these include Greek inscriptions, including the four evangelists in the pendentives of the dome. A fire in storage rooms on the ground floor in January, 1980, caused relatively minor damage but distributed much soot throughout the interior.

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1924-25

BUILDER/ARCHITECT T. P. Barnett Co.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church was built in 1924 by T. P. Barnett Co. for the First Church of Christ, Scientist, University City. It is a fine example of the work of its architect Tom Barnett, and it plays a crucial role in the overall civic composition of the City Hall Plaza of University City. With its companion building, the former Anchor Masonic Temple at 6901 Delmar, it should have been included in the University City Plaza historic district, which was entered in the National Register of Historic Places on March 7, 1975. Now that the Anchor Temple has been included in the University Heights Subdivision Number One district, which was recently nominated to the National Register, this building is the only part of the group not to be so protected. Together, these buildings form one of the most outstanding City Beautiful civic complexes in the country in a city of this size.

Thomas Barnett (1870-1929) was the younger son of George I. Barnett (1815-1898), the English immigrant who had led the architectural profession in St. Louis from the time of his arrival here in the 1850's and was responsible for many notable buildings, including the Governor's Mansion in Jefferson City. Tom Barnett worked in the family firm of Barnett, Haynes and Barnett from 1886 to 1911, and was credited with a large role in the design of the major commissions, which were crowned by the Catholic Cathedral of 1907-1914. After forming his own firm, he continued to produce designs which have become local landmarks, including the Arcade Building at Eighth and Olive, the gothic mausoleum of Adolphus Busch in Bellefontaine Cemetery, and the Italian Renaissance house of Edward Faust at 1 Portland Place, often thought of as the most palatial in the city.¹

In University City, Tom Barnett found himself in the position of revising the design concepts put forward two decades before by Edward Gardner Lewis, the founder of University City. Lewis, publisher and real estate promoter, a businessman whose methods were often controversial and sometimes of dubious legality,² had by stages from 1902 to 1906 developed a plan for a civic center that would include his publishing offices, municipal buildings, and a university for women. The surviving model for this district³ shows the Beaux-Arts buildings that are now included in the plaza historic district as well as others in more eclectic nodes. The site of Assumption Church is occupied in the model by a copy of the Parthenon, while across the street rises a miniature Taj Mahal. Lewis went bankrupt in 1912, and he left St. Louis. A designer of Barnett's talent and sophistication would

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ASSUMPTION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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have found the Lewis model naive, but Barnett was also able to see the soundness of its underlying concept: a group of buildings of strongly geometric shapes, each different but united by materials, scale and formality. That is exactly what he provided, first in this building and the following year in the step-pyramid shape of the Anchor Masonic Temple across the street.

The First Church of Christ, Scientist, University City, which commissioned the building, had been organized February 21, 1921, by members of the First and Fourth Churches in St. Louis. It had met in a commercial building at 6640 Delmar. The cornerstone of the permanent building was dedicated July 16, 1924, and the first services were held in the completed structure or "edifice" as it is called by Christian Scientists, on May 3, 1925. It cost \$212,000.

The building was sold on August 1, 1958, when the Christian Scientists moved to the Clayton Masonic Temple. The new owner, Assumption Greek Orthodox Church, had been founded in 1940 and had first been located at Academy and Vernon Streets in St. Louis. Now, after nearly a quarter of a century in University City, the church is planning to move farther west, which raises the question of the continued maintenance of the present building.

Footnotes

1. A brief biographical sketch of Tom Barnett is found in Carolyn Hewes Toft and Osmund Overby, The Saint Louis Old Post Office (St. Louis: Landmarks Association, 1979), p. 37.
2. The best general source on Lewis' career in University City is Susan Waugh McDonald, "Edward Gardner Lewis: Entrepreneur, Publisher, American of the Gilded Age," The Bulletin, Missouri Historical Society, Vol. XXXV, No. 3.
3. This model is now on display on the main floor of City Hall.
4. Information from a historical sketch in the files of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Creve Coeur.
5. The group was rechartered as the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Creve Coeur, on completion of the present building at 10939 Ladue Road in 1963.
6. Information courtest of the church office.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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ASSUMPTION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Continuation sheet

1

Item number

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Page

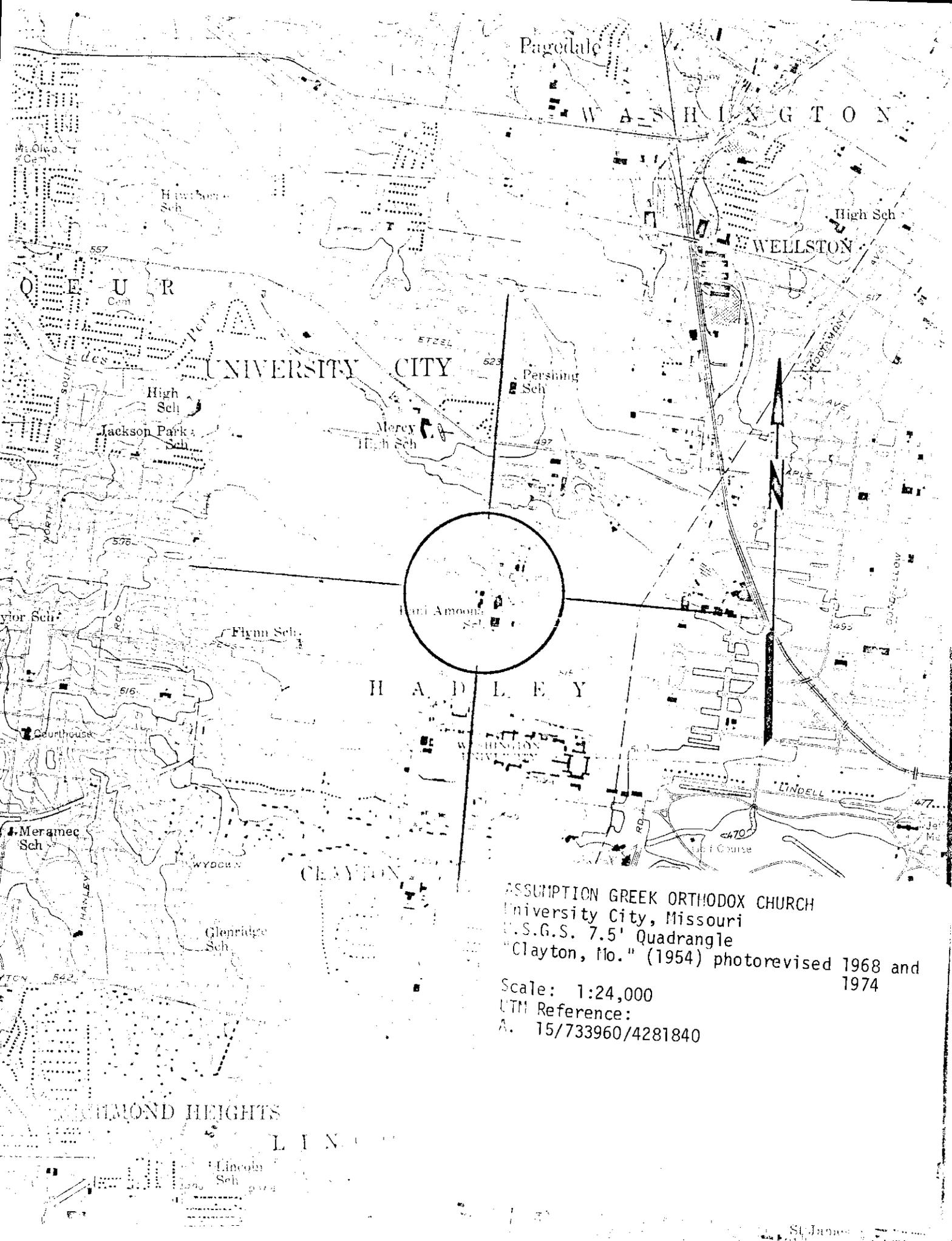
1

2. James M. Denny, Section Chief, Nominations-Survey
and State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Office of Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City

March 7, 1980

314/751/4096

Missouri 65101



Page Dale
W A S H I N G T O N

Ms. O'Leary
Camp
Hawthorn
Sch.
557
Q U E U R
Camp

High Sch
W E L L S T O N

des
UNIVERSITY CITY
High Sch
Jackson Park
Sch.
Mercy
High Sch

Pershing
Sch.



Assumption
Sch.

H A D L E Y

aylor Sch.
Firm Sch.
576
Courthouse
Meramec
Sch.
WYOSM
HANLEY

C L A Y T O N

495
470
L I N D E L L
477
Jer
Me

ASSUMPTION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
University City, Missouri
U.S.G.S. 7.5' Quadrangle
"Clayton, Mo." (1954) photorevised 1968 and 1974

Scale: 1:24,000
UTM Reference:
A. 15/733960/4281840

516
Meramec
Sch.
WYOSM
Glenridge
Sch.
542
RICHMOND HEIGHTS
L I N C O L N
Lincoln
Sch.

St. James

Photo Log:

Name of Property: Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

City or Vicinity: University City

County: St. Louis County State: MO

Photographer: Esley Hamilton

Date

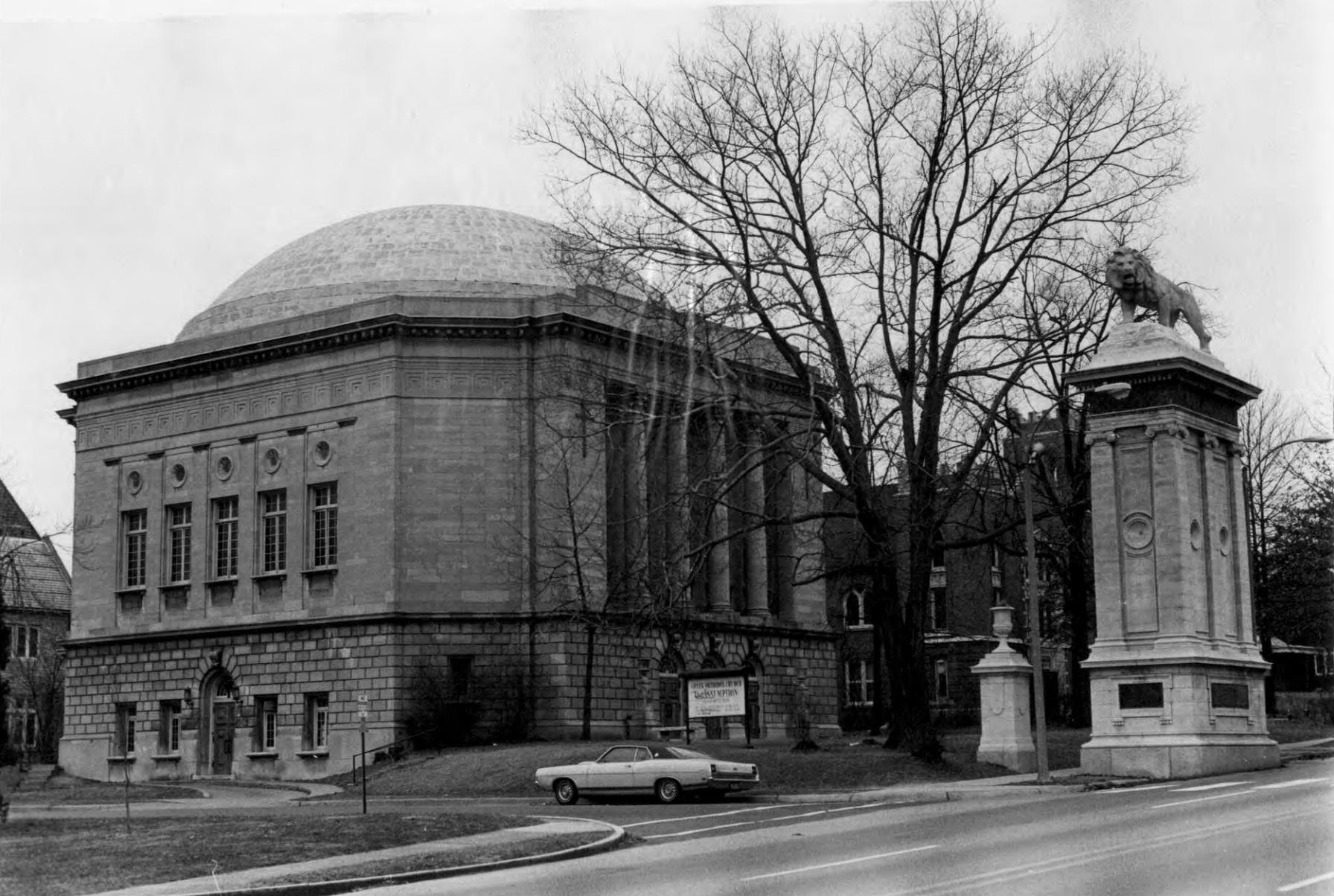
Photographed: 1980

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

1 of 2. View of church from N.

2 of 2. View of church from NE, showing S pylon of University City Hall Plaza Historic District.





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