

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 Property

Historic name: Plymouth Congregational Church

Other names/site number: Plymouth-Union Congregational Church

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1014 Broad Street

City or town: Providence State: Rhode Island County: Providence

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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 x 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 x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___ A ___ B X C ___ D

	Deputy SHPO	4 February 2021
Signature of certifying official/Title:		Date
<u>Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission</u>		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<hr/>	<hr/>
Signature of commenting official:	Date
<hr/>	<hr/>
Title:	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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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
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/religious facility

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

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

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, stone, slate, concrete, glass

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

Plymouth Congregational Church (currently Iglesia Visión Evangélica), built in 1915–1919, is an English Gothic Revival-style, two-and-one-half-story, buff brick building with limestone trim and a slate-shingled, cross-gable roof. The building has a rectangular footprint and a cruciform plan, and an imposing entrance and bell tower marks its northwest corner. It was designed by Boston-based architect George F. Newton. The church occupies a corner lot at 1014 Broad Street, on the east side of Broad Street and the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island. The building, which faces west, is set back about 40 feet from Broad Street and about 10 feet from Pennsylvania Avenue. Plymouth Congregational Church retains a high level of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Narrative Description

Setting

Plymouth Congregational Church is located at 1014 Broad Street in South Providence, on a busy road that connects the center of Providence with the city of Cranston to the south. The surrounding neighborhood has a mix of residential and commercial buildings, with single-family houses built primarily in the nineteenth through mid-twentieth centuries standing alongside stores and restaurants. The nominated property is generally bounded by Pennsylvania Avenue on the north, a residential property on the east, a commercial property in a former dwelling on the south, and Broad Street on the west. A simple wrought iron fence, approximately 36 inches tall and set atop a granite curb, runs along most of the west (front) and

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north property boundaries. Concrete walks lead to the principal entrance in the west side of the tower and to secondary entrances on the north elevation of the building. The remainder of the lot is grassed.

Exterior

The church is rectangular in shape, approximately 64 feet wide by 98 feet deep, and faces west onto Broad Street. The building has a modified cruciform plan. The two-and-one-half-story, front-gable nave, which contains worship and classroom space, terminates at the chancel, which contains the pulpit, in the eastern end of the building. A two-and-one-half-story, square-plan organ room projects from the center of the east elevation, behind the pulpit. A cross-gable, two-and-one-half-story transept crosses the nave towards its east end. A cross-gable, two-and-one-half-story ell extends off the nave near the southwest corner of the building. A four-story, square tower containing the main entrance and belfry is located at the northwest corner of the church. Architectural drawings for the church specify that the east end of the nave and the transept comprised the auditorium, that the ell near the southwest corner comprised the church parlor, and that the Sunday school was located in the west end of the nave.¹ The building rests upon a concrete foundation, has a raised basement level,² and walls are clad in various tones of buff brick laid in running bond with every eighth course laid in Flemish bond. Trim is limestone, set flush with the brick wall, and molded. The gable roofs are clad in green slate shingles with copper flashing and detailing; two gabled dormers pierce the north and south slopes. A small, louvered, metal and wood cupola rises from the ridgeline of the organ chamber. Large, two-story, pointed-arch window groupings dominate the west, north and south elevations of the church; on the west and north elevations, these are filled with leaded, diamond-shaped, stained glass in a simple yellow and white pattern while those on the south elevation contain decorative stained-glass depicting religious scenes and symbols. Otherwise, fenestration consists largely of rectangular window openings filled with one-over-one, double-hung, wood sash with leaded, diamond-pane, yellow and white glass.

The west façade is composed of three sections: the bell tower (north), the front-gable nave (center), and the cross-gable ell (south). The four-story, castellated bell tower has corner buttresses that step back and terminate at the flat roof. The main entrance is located in the west elevation of the tower and consists of paired wood doors with ornate wrought iron strap hinges. The entrance is set within a wide, limestone Gothic-arch surround with quoins, a molded double-architrave, and a two-light, arched transom. Semi-circular, concrete stairs with wrought iron handrails lead to the main entrance. The bell tower contains a pair of square, fixed, vinyl-sash windows at the second story and a slender trefoil-arch window opening at the third story. The fourth story, which is stepped back from the lower part of the tower, has a large pointed-arch window opening with limestone quoins, which contains paired pointed-arch openings filled with wood louvers. The openings on the second and fourth stories feature limestone crowns with eared architraves, as does the first-floor entry. On the northwest corner of the tower, the cornerstone (inscribed "1878" and "1915")³ is placed directly above a limestone water table, which wraps around the bell tower. The tower is accented with several limestone bands: four between the first and second stories, one at the bottom of the third-story window opening, and two at the fourth story. The tower is identical on all four sides on the third and fourth stories. There are no windows at the second story on the south and east elevations of the tower. The first and second stories of the north elevation of the tower are described below.

¹ The functions of the rooms dictate the architecture of the church; the functions are included in the description for clarity.

² Because the basement is raised, it is included when counting the stories of the different components of the building.

³ Plymouth Congregational Church was founded in 1878 and construction of this building began in 1915.

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The large central nave section of the west elevation is slightly set back from the tower and is two-and-one-half stories tall and three-bays wide within a broad front gable. Brick buttresses divide the wide center bay from the narrower side bays and terminate at a limestone capped parapet. A limestone cross sits atop the gable's peak. The center bay is dominated by a grouping of windows set within a two-story, pointed-arch opening framed by corbeled soldier bricks with a limestone keystone and limestone sills. The upper window sash feature simple wood tracery. Brick pilasters that simulate buttresses separate the two center windows from those to either side. At the ground level, the center bay contains four windows with simple limestone lintels and sills: a central pair with brick mullions and a single window to either side. The outer bays contain a single window at the first and second stories, also with simple limestone lintels and sills. The cross-gabled ell at the southwest corner of the building is two stories tall and is set back slightly from the nave section. A single window is at the ground level, and two windows are in the first and second stories. The windows have simple limestone lintels and sills. A brick buttress marks the southwest corner of the building.

The church's north elevation, which faces Pennsylvania Avenue, is composed, from west to east, of the bell tower; a two-story lobby; the north end of the transept; a two-story vestibule; and the organ room, which is set back considerably from the main elevation plane. The detailing on the north elevation of the bell tower matches that of the west elevation, with the exception of the first story, which has a pointed-arch window opening with a limestone window cap. The lobby section has three bays divided by brick buttresses. The east bay contains a one-story, one-bay-by-one-bay, enclosed entry porch with buff brick knee walls, ornamental trefoil windows, and wood columns and brackets that support a slightly flared, front-gable roof. The entrance consists of a pair of modern metal doors with cross-shaped lights. The first floor of the center bay contains a single window, while the west bay has a single window as well as an entrance consisting of a metal door topped by a transom with three, cross-shaped lights. At the second story, each bay has two windows, located directly below the roofline. The window and door openings all have limestone lintels and sills. A gabled dormer with paired windows pierces the roof of this section. The dormer is clad in green slate shingles. The transept is three bays wide and has a front facing cross-gable with a brick parapet capped with limestone. The outer bays each contain a window at the ground level. The center bay is flanked by brick buttresses and contains a grouping of windows set within a two-story, pointed-arch opening, detailed to match the large window grouping on the west elevation of the nave. The ground level contains four windows with simple limestone lintels and sills: a central pair with brick mullions and a single window to either side. A vestibule containing stairs to the basement level is east of the transept. This one-bay-wide section contains an entrance, consisting of a flush metal door, a single window in the second story at the cornice line, and a gabled roof dormer with a single window. The north elevation of the organ room contains no openings.

The church's three-bays-wide east (rear) elevation, which faces the driveway, is dominated by the front-gable organ chamber, which projects east from the center bay and has corner buttresses. The east elevation walls are mostly blank, with the exception of the basement windows in all bays and one second-story window in each of the side bays. Windows have flat limestone lintels and rectangular limestone sills. Molded copper wraps around the roofline and simulates a fascia or rake-board.

The south elevation of the church is composed, from west to east, of the cross-gable ell; a two-story stair hall; the south end of the transept; and a two-story stair hall. The cross-gable ell contains three windows in the ground and first stories and four in the second story. Windows have flat limestone lintels and limestone sills. The west stair hall has an entrance in the first story and a basement level window to the east; three windows are located below the roofline in the second story. The entrance consists of a flush metal door with a single light and a metal panel. The transept is three bays wide and has the same architectural detailing as the transept in the north elevation, except that the window sash in the two-story, pointed-arch opening are filled with highly decorative stained glass (described below). The east stairwell is one bay wide and

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contains a former entrance opening at the first floor that has been infilled with concrete block. A single gabled dormer pierces the roof's slope. It is sided in green slate shingles and has a wide wood rake-board supported by wood brackets. Molded copper wraps around the roofline of the entire south elevation, simulating a fascia or rake-board.

Interior

The church was designed to accommodate worshipping, teaching, and social gatherings, which is reflected in the floor plan and finishes. Architectural plans for the first floor of the church (Figure 1), prepared by George F. Newton, depict a modified cruciform plan, with an entry vestibule in the northwest tower, leading to a lobby to its east; the Sunday school, including individual classrooms, located in the west end of the nave; the church parlor occupying the ell; and a secondary stair hall and vestibule to the east of the parlor. The remainder of the nave and the transept contain the auditorium, while the pulpit and choir occupy the chancel, at the east end of the nave, with an organ chamber to their east. Additional stairwells, as well as a choir room and pastor's room, are at the northeast and southeast corners of the building. A floor plate in the west end and southwestern corner of the church creates a second floor in those parts of the building. The basement consists primarily of a secondary auditorium, which was used for social gatherings, performances, and Sunday school.

The main entrance doors lead to a shallow vestibule at the ground level, with steps leading up to the lobby at the first floor. The vestibule has a high ceiling, plastered walls, and modern stone tile floors. A Gothic Revival-style pendant lamp lights the space. Wood stairs with tiled risers lead to the lobby, accessed through a pair of full-light, wood doors. On either side of these doors are openings with four-panel wood doors. The north opening leads to the bell tower stairwell; the south opening leads to a coat closet. The lobby has a low ceiling, laminate wood flooring and plaster walls with stained wood baseboards, chair rail, and picture rail. An enclosed staircase to the basement is along the north wall. The lobby has Gothic Revival-style, semi-flush ceiling light fixtures. Several doors – two single doors, two pairs of doors – lead from the lobby to the former Sunday school and the auditorium. Doors are set within molded wood surrounds and are either stained six-panel wood doors or painted four-panel wood doors.

The former Sunday school is located in the west end of the nave and was originally organized in a modified Akron Plan, a scheme that gained favor among Protestant churches in the late 19th century and which allowed students to hear the beginning of worship and then attend Sunday school in separate classrooms, typically located on two levels (White 1964:126–127). At Plymouth Congregational Church, the Sunday school originally consisted of a large gathering space that opened to the auditorium to its east via a series of glazed pocket doors. Five classrooms, each measuring seven feet by nine feet, were located along the west wall; though not shown on the plan, they likely could be closed off from the main space with curtains or possibly doors. Architectural investigation indicates that there was a similar layout of rooms above the first-floor classrooms; this space is now an open balcony. The original pocket doors that separated the Sunday school from the auditorium have been removed and a drywall wall with wood wainscot has been installed in their place. A pair of full-light doors is centered on the wall and a grouping of twelve, two-light, wood windows with frosted glass is located just below the roof braces and collar-tie. The first-floor classrooms have been removed and the space built out to accommodate bathrooms and a conference room. These rooms have vinyl flooring, drywall walls with stained wood wainscot and windows with molded wood surrounds.

The two-story gathering space in the Sunday school retains a large amount of original material, including wood floors, plaster walls with stained wood wainscot, and an exposed wood ceiling. The hammer-beam ceiling consists of exposed rafters, purlins, trusses, and paneled decking. Hammer-beams and hammer-

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braces extend from the north and south walls and support collar ties. The ceiling is constructed of pine and stained in a "Flemish oak tint" (*Providence Journal* 1919). Paired windows in the dormers on the north and south roof slopes flood the room with light and Gothic Revival-style chandeliers hang from the collar ties. Open stairs against the north and south walls lead to the balcony over the former first-floor classrooms. The paired staircases are wood with square wood balustrades and square newel posts. The balcony railing matches the stair balustrade. The balcony is currently open except for a closet in the southwest corner.

The former church parlor, now an office, is located in the southwest ell. It measures 24 feet by 15 feet and has wood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, wood baseboards, picture rail, and chair rail. A small closet with a paneled wood door is in the southeast corner of the room. The door to the church parlor consists of a stained, six-panel, wood door with a small light. The second floor of the church parlor has the same features as the first floor, with the exception of the door, which is constructed of dark stained wood with three lower panels, and three vertical, glazed upper panels, the middle of which contains yellow and white stained glass.

The south stairwell, which leads to the basement, is located immediately to the east of the former parlor. It is accessible from the church parlor, the Sunday school, and the auditorium, via six-panel wood doors. The enclosed double-L wood stair has a square wood balustrade with square newel posts and carpeted stairs. The stairwell walls are either plaster or partially exposed masonry.

Plymouth Congregational Church's worship space, or auditorium, occupies the transept and may be accessed via the Sunday school, lobby, and stairwells. The two-story auditorium has wood flooring, plaster walls, and a vaulted ceiling with exposed rafters, purlins, trusses and paneled decking. Four, two-story, fluted, Doric, engaged columns are located at the corners of the stairwells and lobby; each supports three hammer-beams and hammer-braces, which support collar ties. One set of trusses extends from each column and converge at the center of the roof. Like in the former Sunday school, the ceiling is constructed of pine and stained to resemble oak. The walls are painted in light blue and cream, with gold and brick red accents. Moveable, curved pews are laid out in three sections, in a theater-style arrangement that creates a semi-circular seating area. The ends of the pews, which are dark-stained oak, are decoratively carved in the Gothic Revival style. Dormers with single windows light the chancel on the north and south sides and Gothic Revival-style wrought-iron chandeliers hang from the collar ties.

The auditorium contains two large, pointed-arch window groupings in the north and south walls of the transept. The windows on the north wall feature stained glass in a diamond pattern in clear and yellow glass. The windows on the south wall are filled with striking, representational stained-glass. The two central windows, which are divided by a wood mullion, depict Mary Magdalene witnessing Jesus Christ's resurrection. Above this scene are four windows, each of which contains an angel holding a Greek symbol; these include: alpha, chi rho, "ihs," and omega. Below are two windows that contain a dedication, reading "In Loving Memory of Frank Eugene Farnham." The windows to either side of the central grouping depict flora, scrollwork, and symbols such as an anchor, wheat, a pomegranate, grapes, a fleur-de-lis, and a phoenix. The window was added in 1944 and designed by Hiemer & Company of New Jersey.⁴ It most likely replaced a simple yellow and white leaded glass window, as seen throughout the rest of the church.

The chancel is located at the east end of the church and is separated from the nave by four wood steps with stone tile risers and, to either side of the steps, wood balustrades with molded handrails and trefoil arch balusters. The chancel has plaster walls and wood flooring. The pulpit was originally located at the front center, but has been moved to the north side; a modern lectern stands in its place. The wood pulpit is shaped

⁴ RIHPHC, "Survey of Stained-Glass Windows: Providence, Holy Cross Church of God in Christ, 1014 Broad Street," 1996.

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as a half-decagon with paneled sides and buttresses at the corners. Behind the pulpit is the organ, which is set within a two-story Gothic arch opening with pilasters and molded trim. The organ is a 2-manual, 11-stop pipe organ (Opus #769) manufactured by the Austin Organ Company of Hartford, Connecticut. It has a paneled wood case with trefoil arch molding. Brass organ pipes rise above the case to the second floor.

To the south of the chancel is an enclosed stairwell that leads to the basement and a small area that was designated on the architectural drawings as the "choir room." To the north of the chancel, a few steps down, is a small room that was designated as the "pastor's room." This leads to a vestibule with exterior access and a stairwell that leads to the basement.

The basement contains a large, open, secondary auditorium in the center of the building, with raised platforms at the north and south ends. The room has a mix of wood floors and linoleum flooring, ceilings are low and coffered, and metal posts support the floor above. The walls are plaster with wood wainscot. The central room is flanked by the stairwells and several small rooms, some outfitted for classroom use. These contain stained wood floors or laminate wood floors, plaster walls with wood wainscot capped by a wood chair rail, and plaster ceilings that are covered by acoustic tile drop ceilings. Windows, located just below the ceiling, have wood sills and molded aprons and doors are typically wood with four panels.

Statement of Integrity

Plymouth Congregational Church retains overall integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The property's setting on Broad Street remains intact, and the building clearly conveys its original English Gothic Revival-style design by George F. Newton. The Church retains its exterior of buff brick rising to a cross-gable, green slate roof, along with the bell tower. The interior spatial arrangement, finishes, and decorative features such as the pews, organ and light fixtures are essentially unaltered. Original stained-glass windows are intact, with the exception of the windows on the south elevation of the transept, where a representative stained-glass grouping was added in 1944 (within the period of significance). Minor changes to the building that have occurred since that time do not materially detract from the overall integrity of the building and landscape.

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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.
- 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

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Period of Significance

1915–1944

Significant Dates

1915 – Cornerstone of Plymouth Congregational Church laid
1919 – Dedication of building
1944 – Stained-glass windows added to south elevation

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

George F. Newton, Architect
Hiemer & Company, Stained Glass Designers

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.)

Plymouth Congregational Church in Providence, Rhode Island is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a fine example of a late English Gothic Revival-style church. The building, designed by prominent Boston architect George F. Newton (1857–1947) and constructed in 1915–1919, was built for a congregation that dated back to 1878. Newton had a productive career that spanned over 40 years in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He designed many religious buildings, as well as public buildings and private residences across New England and the Mid-Atlantic states. The congregation expanded in the late nineteenth century and set about to build a new church, though it took almost 25 years for construction to commence. The growth of the congregation and the paradigm shifts within the Protestant faith in the late nineteenth and early

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twentieth centuries are evident in the design of this church. The congregation's commitment to religious education is also expressed in the church design, which employed a variation of the Akron Plan for Sunday school instruction. Over the course of the twentieth century, the membership of the congregation expanded and declined partly in response to changes in city and neighborhood demographic trends. The period of significance for Plymouth Congregational Church begins in 1915 with the beginning of construction and ends in 1944, when a large, decorative stained-glass window was installed in the south elevation of the transept, the last major architectural change to the building.

Criteria Consideration A

Criteria Consideration A applies to the Plymouth Congregational Church property, which is owned by a religious organization and used for religious purposes. However, the property derives its primary significance from its architectural qualities; it is a handsome example of the English Gothic Revival style designed by George F. Newton, a prominent architect noted for his ecclesiastical designs.

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

The Plymouth Congregational Church lies on the eastern boundary of the Elmwood neighborhood. Elmwood was originally an agricultural subsection of Providence centered around Broad Street, Elmwood Avenue, Cranston Street, and Potters Avenue. The Elmwood neighborhood mostly consists of residential buildings constructed between about 1865 and 1930 during the city's greatest period of population, economic, and physical growth. The main thoroughfares, including Broad Street, were residential but became more commercial in nature in the mid-twentieth century (Christensen 1980).

The Formation and Early Years of the Plymouth Congregation

On March 6, 1878, the Plymouth Congregational Society formed with 30 members under the leadership of Reverend Henry B. Roberts. The congregation originally worshipped at a small wood-frame dwelling on Prairie Avenue, which they converted to a chapel (Figure 2) (Plymouth Union Congregational Church 1953; *Providence Journal* 1919; Greene 1886:149; Bayles 1891:489). In 1880-81, the congregation constructed its own church building on Richardson Street (now Pennsylvania Avenue), near Broad Street (Figures 3 and 4) (Plymouth Union Congregational Church 1953; Greene 1886:149).⁵ While the surrounding land had been subdivided, much of it remained undeveloped; for example, the City of Providence owned the entire empty block bound by Broad Street, Pennsylvania Avenue (then Richardson Street), Elma Avenue (then Kelley Street), and Prairie Avenue (Hopkins 1882).

By 1886, the Plymouth Congregational Society membership included approximately 188 people (Greene 1886) and by 1891 membership had increased to 250 with an average of 250 students attending Sunday school (Bayles 1891). With a growing congregation and Sunday school, the Plymouth Congregational Society began to plan for the construction of a new building (*Providence Journal* 1919). Under the leadership of Reverend Thornton A. Mills, the congregation purchased the lot at the corner of Broad Street and Pennsylvania Avenue in 1891 and planned to work with a Mr. Jennings⁶ to design a new building. In

⁵ This building was diagonally across from the Plymouth Congregational Church to the northeast. It was a wood-frame building with a cruciform-plan and an 80-foot tower at the center of its facade (Sanborn 1920). It was demolished by 1956 (Sanborn 1956).

⁶ Church records do not provide Mr. Jennings' full name. It is possible this was Arthur Bates Jennings (1849-1927), a New York City-based architect who designed the Cranston Street Baptist Church (now Ebenezer Baptist Church) in Providence, built in 1892-93.

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1897, a building committee was established. The following year, the Plymouth Congregational Society changed its name to the Plymouth Congregational Church.

In 1899, the congregation passed a motion instructing the Board to negotiate with Mr. Jennings to finalize plans for the new church (RIHS MSS 139, Book 49); later that same year, however, planning stalled and the congregation explored the possibility of moving the existing church building to the corner lot on Broad Street. This suggestion was problematic, however, as existing laws restricted the height and size of buildings to be moved and the idea was abandoned in 1900. In 1902, discussions about a new building resumed but the building committee reported unfavorably due to financial stress. Then-pastor Reverend McCord sought out donations; despite receiving some assistance – including \$500 from Senator Nelson W. Aldrich, a prominent Republican politician – the fundraising overall was inconsistent (RIHS MSS 139, Book 49).

Construction of a New Church Building

In 1907, Reverend E.L. Marsh became the pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church and started an ambitious fundraising campaign for a new church building. According to a 1909 article in the *Providence Journal*, the new church was to be laid out in a Greek Cross plan in the Lombardian Gothic Revival style and was to be constructed of brick. It included seating for 750 people with extensions for up to 1,200 people. This plan was designed by architects Hill and Fairbrother of New York City⁷ and was estimated to cost \$75,000. The congregation hoped to break ground in the spring of 1910 (*Providence Journal* 1909).

The 1909 design was never constructed, however, due to the congregation's financial difficulties. Between 1909 and 1915, Hill and Fairbrother's design was abandoned, and the congregation adopted a new, more modest plan. The new design was produced by George F. Newton of Boston and featured a "huge square tower on the outermost corner of Broad street and Pennsylvania avenue" (*Providence Journal*, 4 May 1915). The new design was estimated to cost much less than the former; the projected cost of the building decreased by \$30,000 from \$75,000 to \$45,000.

The two designs differed substantially, in their exterior appearance and internal layout. The 1909 plan featured a central dome full of windows, which was to light the entire church (*Providence Journal* 1909). This concept was abandoned, and a gable-roof plan with a vaulted ceiling was adopted. Still, the new design incorporated some of the ideas from the 1909 plan. Carry-over elements included a Sunday school and church parlor next to an auditorium and a social hall in the basement. Even though the chosen plan was simpler and less expensive, the congregation did not have the funds needed to complete the building in one phase. A contract for the construction of the outside shell of the building was awarded in 1915, and ground was broken on May 4 of that year (RIHS MSS 139, Box 4; *Providence Journal*, 5 May 1915). As of June 21, 1915, however, the congregation had secured pledges for just \$21,000 of the required \$45,000 (*Providence Journal*, 21 June 1915). The shell of the church was completed that year, but construction on the interior was delayed until 1918 because of a shortage of building materials and labor, presumably due to World War I, but also financial difficulties (*Providence Journal* 1919). The congregation borrowed money from the Congregational Church Building Society and the Rhode Island Congregational Church Conference, and took out a \$10,000 mortgage to fund the construction (RIHS MSS 139, Book 45). On

⁷ The architect Frederic Arthur Fairbrother was born in Providence, Rhode Island in 1878 and was educated at the Rhode Island School of Design. Church records show his family were active members of Plymouth Congregational Church. His father, for whom he was named, served on the Building Committee in 1909 and the Board of Trustees in 1912. The Fairbrothers lived at 61 Ocean Street, less than a mile from the church. (AIA, *American Architects Directory*, 1956; RIHS MSS 139, Book 45, Book 48, Box 4)

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March 1, 1918, the congregation voted to sell their old church building on Pennsylvania Avenue⁸ for \$5,000 to the Norwegian and Danish Methodist Episcopal Church, holding their last service there on Christmas Day (*Providence Journal* 1918).

The new Plymouth Congregational Church building was dedicated on March 2, 1919 (Figures 5, 6 and 7). It was described in a newspaper article as follows: “The auditorium is severely plain, but rich in its simplicity, the ceiling being sealed with pine, which, like the rafters, is stained in Flemish oak tint. The pews, built on circular lines, and the finish of the wainscoting [sic] are in stained oak. Sliding doors make the senior Sunday school department a part of the main room” (*Providence Journal* 1919). Some of these design choices were probably made in an effort to save money, given the congregation’s financial situation. While oak was used for woodwork that could be viewed closely, such as wainscoting and the pews, the large vaulted ceiling was constructed of pine and stained to resemble oak. The large, pointed-arch windows do not feature stone tracery but, rather, wood that mimics stone. Perhaps most significant was the decision to construct the building out of brick rather than stone (a typical material for Late Gothic Revival-style buildings), which most likely reduced construction costs. Despite the relative simplicity of the building, the final cost, at \$70,000, far exceeded the initial budget. At this time, the membership included 450 people and 300 students attended the Sunday school.

In 1922, Reverend Marsh resigned after 15 years of service with the Plymouth Congregational Church, the congregation’s longest serving pastor up to that time. During his tenure, he raised the capital necessary to construct the church and he increased church membership by 280 people. He was prominent within the community, serving as president of the Rhode Island State Conference of Congregational Churches from 1919–1920 and as a member of the executive committee of the Rhode Island State Sunday School Association. He left to serve as pastor for the Federated Church in Sandwich, Massachusetts. Reverend Hugh Penney became the new pastor in 1923 and served until 1928 (*Providence Journal* 1922).

Merger with the Union Congregational Church

The Plymouth Congregational Church and the Union Congregational Church merged in February 1927 and became the Plymouth-Union Congregational Church (P-UCC). Union Congregational Church, established in 1871, worshipped at a building on Broad Street near Stewart Street in addition to running a Sunday school and a chapel at the corner of Prairie Avenue and Ocean Street (formerly Colwell Street); its original church building is no longer extant. The merger created a congregation of nearly 1,200 members who would worship at the recently constructed building at 1014 Broad Street. An article observed that the merger was “in line with recent trends away from small churches to the idea of cathedral building” (*Providence Journal* 1927). The neighborhood in South Providence was also mentioned as an “important residential section of the city” (*Providence Journal* 1927). In January 1928, Reverend Penney and Reverend Theodore Bachelor (formerly of the Union Congregational Church) both resigned (*Providence Journal*, 8 January 1928). In September of that year, Reverend Dr. Samuel Clifton became the pastor of P-UCC.

The united congregation continued to worship at 1014 Broad Street under the leadership of Reverend Clifton until 1941, when he resigned due to ill health. During an interview, Clifton stated that one of his goals at P-UCC was to unite the two congregations. He found that in recent years, “the shifting population in the South Providence area created special problems for him” (*Providence Journal* 1941). Clifton may have been referring to the changing demographics of the neighborhood, which had been home to a largely Irish-American and Jewish population for decades. In the mid-20th century, as members of those communities departed for the suburbs, South Providence developed into a largely working-class

⁸ This building is no longer extant, having been razed sometime before 1956 (Sanborn 1956).

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neighborhood with a large African American population, many of whom had migrated from the American south (RIHPHC 1978:37-45).

A significant alteration to the church occurred during this period: the 1944 addition of the large, representational stained-glass window grouping in the south wall of the transept. The window, which depicts the resurrection of Christ, was designed by Hiemer & Co. of New Jersey and was donated by Nellie Florence Bunker Farnham (1870–1947) in memory of her husband, Frank E. Farnham (1869–1943) (Rhode Island Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics 1943). Frank Farnham, the president and treasurer of Jewelry Supply Co., who patented at least two designs relating to pins,⁹ had been chairman of the Plymouth Congregational Church Building Committee. He, Nellie, and their two children, Ethel and Gladys, resided on Ontario Street approximately one-half mile from the church (U.S. Census 1930, 1940).

Decline of the Plymouth-Union Congregation

Membership in the Plymouth-Union Congregational Church decreased in the mid-twentieth century, and two new congregations began to use the building for worship: the Central Christian Church from Warwick and the South Baptist Church of Providence, the latter of which contemplated merging with the P-UCC in 1968 (*Providence Journal* 1966; *Providence Journal* 1968). In 1969, Reverend J. Wesley Prince, who had been with the church since 1946, resigned, writing in his resignation letter that when he took the position in 1946 he “was told by brother officers of the Rhode Island Congregational Conference and the Rhode Island Council of Churches” that the P-UCC “was expected to go out of existence.” He cited the following statistics that demonstrate the challenges that faced the P-UCC in 1969: the average age of the members was 64; the composition of the neighborhood had changed, meaning few people who grew up in the church still resided there; and fewer than 6 of the 182 couples who married in the church in the last 10 years lived in the city (*Providence Journal* 1969). The congregation had dwindled to 190 people in 1968, with 140 active members (*Providence Journal* 1968).

In 1971, by which time membership had declined to approximately 110 people, the P-UCC transferred the building at 1014 Broad Street to the Rhode Island Conference of the United Church of Christ. Title was then transferred to the Holy Cross Church of God in Christ, a 260-member “black congregation, which has been firebombed and otherwise harassed at 93 Knight St., where it was located in 1966” (*Providence Journal* 1971). Leaders of the P-UCC, the Central Christian Church, and the Holy Cross Church commemorated the transfer on December 26, 1971:

The transfer took place at a joint service of the Plymouth-Union Congregational Church and the black Holy Cross Church of God in Christ in the Plymouth-Union building at 1014 Broad St....

The church, which seats 275 to 300 persons, was a little more than half filled for the service, with the congregation nearly divided between blacks and whites.

One or two Plymouth-Union members expressed surprise that there was not a larger congregation.

A noticeable difference in the two congregations was in the age of the two groups. There were few white youngsters present, the white half of the congregation generally being in their 60s or older.

⁹ The jewelry industry became prominent in Providence in the late nineteenth century, and by 1880 it was the leading location for the industry (Woodward and Sanderson 1986:19).

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The black half of the congregation was much younger and included two dozen or more children (*Providence Journal* 1971).

The newspaper article also suggested that the P-UCC Church would be a safer place for the black congregation to worship because their former church was in an “all-white neighborhood,” whereas “the Broad Street church is adjacent to South Providence.” These observations summarize the demographic changes that occurred within the congregation and the larger neighborhood in the mid-twentieth century. The congregation of the P-UCC was aging and had not be able to attract new, younger members. Additionally, the members of the P-UCC had relocated out of the neighborhood and into the suburbs. Meanwhile, the population of much of South Providence had become predominantly black (RIHPC 1978:42–45).

In 2015, after 44 years on Broad Street, the Holy Cross Church of God in Christ closed. In 2016, Iglesia Visión Evangélica, a Latinx congregation, took title to the property, reflecting the continued evolution of South Providence.

Architectural Significance of Plymouth Congregational Church

Plymouth Congregational Church represents an excellent example of the English Gothic Revival style with its square bell tower, cruciform plan, pointed-arch door and window openings, and intact stained-glass windows. Designed by George F. Newton, the interior of the church contains a large nave that occupies the center (east-west) of the building. The nave was divided into two spaces: the auditorium and the Sunday school. Sliding glazed doors separated these spaces and allowed for Sunday school classes to participate in the worship. Both the auditorium and the placement of the Sunday school reflect changing attitudes of the Protestant church towards worshiping and religious education.

The Auditorium and the Sunday School

The Congregational Church in America traces its origins to the Puritan settlers of New England. Well into the nineteenth century, Congregational churches featured a prominent pulpit as the primary focal point, reflecting the primacy of the sermon:

The Puritan liturgical centers included a tall pulpit with the congregation gathered about it on the main floor and in an encircling gallery. Directly in front of the pulpit was usually a pew occupied by the elders or deacons. Before this stood the altar table upon which a baptismal basin could be placed. And that was all. It was the simplest and most direct arrangement possible for Puritan worship (White 1964:106).

Congregational church ideals shifted in the mid-nineteenth century, with the introduction of choirs and organs as well as a new style of preaching (White 1964:110, 120, 125). Church architecture followed suit. Congregational churches began to include chancels, which held the minister, choir, organist, and organ and were typically on a raised stage that created separation between the congregation and the leaders of worship. The space holding the congregation “was designed as an audience chamber much like that of a theater,” and came to be called the auditorium (White 1964:125-126). Plymouth Congregational Church, with its auditorium, raised chancel, choir area and organ chamber, embodies these changes. In fact, the dedication services for the church included an evening service and organ recital by Edwin E. Wilde, the organist of the Saint Stephen’s Episcopal Church in Providence. The program included music by Bach and Handel among others. The choir also participated in the service (Plymouth Congregational Church 1919).

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Similarly, Protestant perceptions of Sunday schools changed in the late nineteenth century, with implications for church architecture. Once seen as secondary institutions that provided a place for children during mass, they came to be seen as primary institutions crucial to the congregation's future success:

When it was finally learned that congregations drew their main support in point of converts and additions – eighty per cent or more, I believe – directly from the ranks of the Sunday School, while only twenty-five per cent of the budget appropriations were granted for its support, the realization of the true scope of this phase of church work prompted a close study of the conditions of the problem in hand (Bach 1916:223).

Churches began to understand that the success of congregations depended on cultivating young members and converting school attendees, and ecclesiastical architecture was increasingly designed to accommodate minors and programs directed at younger audiences. This was achieved through the construction of classrooms and social halls, often designed by professional architects. One challenge that arose was the desire for the children to have a “spiritual and physical connection with the main body of the congregation, its audience hall and pulpit,” while also providing a space for learning (Bach 1916:223).

In 1867, Lewis Miller, a Sunday school instructor in Akron, Ohio, worked with architects Jacob Snyder and Walter Blythe to address this challenge in the design of the First Methodist Sunday School of Akron (Evans 1914:155). Their design solution would come to be known as the Akron Plan, and was implemented at churches across the country. The goal of the Akron Plan was to provide a space where students could be brought together to partake in worship with the adults and later be separated in order to attend lessons. To that end, the plan incorporated a semi-circular auditorium with a balcony. Wedge-shaped classrooms were located in the balcony as well as beneath it; they could either be open to or separated from the auditorium through the use of movable screens or walls.

The Plymouth Congregational Church utilized a modified Akron Plan, with rectangular classrooms located in and below a balcony that could be open to or closed off from the auditorium, with its semi-circular seating. The design and use of the building also reflected more current thinking about Sunday school teaching. In 1908, the International Sunday School Association authorized the “preparation of graded lesson outlines” for different age groups, or departments (Evans 1914:158). Many Sunday schools adopted the graded system and found the Akron Plan “to be unsuited to the new lessons...” which require space for departments to assemble as well as separate rooms for grades within each department (Evans 1914:158). The Plymouth Congregational Church had three departments: senior, junior, and kindergarten.

In a 1914 article in *The Biblical World*, entitled “The Sunday-School Building and its Equipment,” Herbert Francis Evans, a professor at Grinnell College, provided recommendations for the organization of architectural spaces for religious education. He stated that the kindergarten room should be located on the ground floor with plenty of light, and that it should take inspiration from kindergarten classrooms in public schools (Evans 1914:167). Evans believed the junior department required its own room that could be divided into smaller rooms by removable partitions. The ground floor of the Plymouth Congregational Church housed the kindergarten Sunday-school class, as well as a large assembly room for the junior department; accordion doors set off the kindergarten department from the junior department. The ground floor had a stage, which could be used for entertainment, as well as a kitchen, banquet hall, space for the Secretary of the Sunday school and a Sunday school library (*Providence Journal* 1919). Evans recommended “the use of the church auditorium for the worship of the Intermediate, Senior, and Adult departments...where the school is not too large” (Evans 1914:171). At the Plymouth Congregational Church, the senior department had an assembly space on the first floor so that they could listen to the mass, lined with classrooms on the first floor and on the balcony for smaller group lessons. Partitions or curtains

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likely separated the classrooms from the assembly space, which in turn could be separated from the auditorium with sliding doors.

The design for Plymouth Congregational Church was consistent with ecclesiastical building trends of the time. The inclusion of an auditorium with a raised chancel, choir area and organ chamber reflected the movement away from the Puritan pulpit. The design of the Sunday school spaces on the first floor showed the enduring influence of the Akron Plan, while the separation of Sunday school departments, with young students on the ground floor, reflected more contemporary approaches to religious education.

English Gothic Revival Style Church Architecture

The Plymouth Congregational Church is an excellent and intact example of an English Gothic Revival-style church designed by prominent Boston architect, George F. Newton. The Gothic Revival movement began as a literary movement in Europe and was realized architecturally in Europe in the mid-eighteenth century as the Medieval style by Sir Horace Walpole (McAlester 2015:270). It featured steeply pitched gables, pointed arches, battlements, buttresses, and stone or masonry construction. This picturesque romantic style became popular in ecclesiastical construction from the latter half of the nineteenth century until World War II (White 1964:138). One of the first Gothic Revival-style churches in America was the Trinity Episcopal Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania built in 1823 by Rector John Henry Hopkins. The church was well received and led Hopkins to publish his *Essay on Gothic Architecture* in 1836 in which he traces the history of Gothic architecture, provides drawings, and gives advice to other clergy members. He found the Gothic style more suitable for ecclesiastical structures than the Grecian style because “The Gothic, breaking the horizontal line, and leading the eye upwards till its pinnacles vanish in the sky, seems adapted, by an easy correspondence, to the offices of that blessed religion, which takes the heart from the contemplation of earth, and directs it to its heavenly inheritance” (Hopkins 1836). According to Hopkins, tall and long lines of the Gothic style evoked visions of heaven and God’s kingdom.

The Gothic style was further extolled a decade later by the Cambridge Camden Society, a group of male undergraduate students at Cambridge University in England, who studied ecclesiastical architecture, restored medieval churches, and promoted the Gothic style and the form of medieval churches (Drummond 1934: 67; White 1964). The group published pamphlets and a periodical, the *Ecclesiologist*. The medieval form stressed the separation of the chancel and nave. They also organized the style into three periods, including the Decorated Gothic Style, which was characterized by wider arches and tracery work in the windows (Hoffecker 1973:221).

In the United States, beginning in the 1890s, the “second gothic revival” was led in part by architect Ralph Adams Cram (1863–1942) of Cram, Goodhue, & Ferguson. Cram believed that the Gothic style best expressed the Christian, albeit the Catholic, religion. He also believed in the sanctity of the medieval arrangement of the separation of the nave and chancel. Cram’s designs sought to heighten spiritual emotions through architecture and art. One of his well-known buildings is the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City, which was in the process of being constructed when he took over and redesigned the building in 1907. Due in part to Cram, the English Gothic Revival style became accepted as a style for all ecclesiastical religious groups, not just those of the High Church Anglicans or Catholic faiths (White 1964:138).

Plymouth Congregational Church embodies the English Gothic Revival style, with its cruciform plan; steeply pitched, cross-gable roof; castellated corner tower; pointed-arch door and window openings; as well as interior details, such as the organ case. Plymouth Congregational Church retains a high degree of integrity, with exterior alterations limited to the replacement of secondary doors and only modest interior changes, such as new flooring in some spaces and the removal of the Sunday school classroom partitions.

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George F. Newton

Plymouth Congregational Church was designed by the Boston-based architect George F. Newton (1857–1947). Newton began studying architecture in 1880 and completed his training at the Atelier Daumet, École des Beaux Arts, Paris after winning the Rotch Traveling Scholarship (AIA Archives 1900; Withey & Withey 1956). Newton was the third to win the award, which aimed to advance the interest of the profession by providing scholarships for study abroad (Walkowski 2010). Upon the completion of his studies, Newton secured a position as a draftsman at the highly regarded firm of Peabody and Stearns in Boston and was later promoted to a head designer position (Withey & Withey 1956). Newton stayed with the firm until he opened his own practice in 1893 (AIA Archives 1900). Newton was a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) from 1900–1947 (Withey & Withey 1956).

Newton's tenure with Peabody and Stearns came at a critical moment for the firm, when "they found themselves vacillating in the vanguard of an influential stylistic swing from Queen Anne to the Colonial and the Renaissance" (Holden 1973:115). The firm began to gain more attention in the greater Boston area and for a few years rivaled McKim, Mead and White from New York City (Holden 1973:115). Peabody and Stearns designed museums, religious buildings, public institutional buildings, and residences. At least 17 churches have been attributed to the firm (Holden 1973). Peabody is credited with the dissemination of a "more archaeological-type church" constructed in the English Gothic Revival Style and based upon medieval churches that he encountered during his visit to England in 1882 (Holden 1973: 119). This building style featured rectangular forms with towers, and some had Tudor-style decorative half-timbering.

Newton left the firm of Peabody and Stearns in 1893 to start his own practice, but just one year later partnered with Clarence Howard Blackall (1853–1942) to establish the firm Blackall and Newton. That same year, Newton became the chief assistant to Mr. H. Langford Warren, the head of the newly incorporated architecture department at Harvard University. Based upon a recommendation from Peabody, Newton also taught design and drawing classes for the department, which he did for ten years (Harvard University 1895:62).

Blackall and Newton was dissolved in 1896, and George Newton established his own firm. He undertook a wide variety of projects, including public buildings, campuses, and hospitals during his prolific career. However, ecclesiastical structures appear to have been his most prevalent commissions. In 1900, he submitted three church designs as part of the requirements for an AIA application: the Unitarian Church in Winchester, Massachusetts, which was a stone Gothic Revival-style church; the Congregational Church in Weymouth, Massachusetts, which was a wood Gothic Revival-style church; and the interior design for Tremont Temple in Boston, which he designed while at Blackall and Newton (AIA Archives).

Newton was comfortable with the English Gothic Revival style and designed many buildings in Massachusetts and in the Northeast in this style. An obituary written by Emil Lorch and published in the *National Architect* stated, "New England is dotted with charming churches of his design in the English, rural tradition while the Tremont Temple in Boston involved a bold use of color on the exterior." His designs were largely "marked by restraint and refinement" (Lorch 1947). Three of his designs were featured in *The Architectural Review* in 1905: the Congregational Church in Newton Highlands, Massachusetts (1905) (Shea 1981); the North Presbyterian Church in Buffalo, New York (ca. 1907); and the First Congregational Church in Wellesley, Massachusetts (1901) (Fitzpatrick and Price 1987). The latter church, built 14 years before the Plymouth Congregational Church, has many nearly identical features including the floor plan, arrangement of pews, and wood hammer beams and hammer braces (Figure 8) (*The Architectural Review* 1905). In 1902, Newton designed the Second Congregational Church in Attleboro,

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Massachusetts, a red brick English Gothic Revival-style church with a Sunday school in a side ell. He designed the Congregational Church in Newton Highlands, Massachusetts, which is a granite English Gothic-style church with a Sunday school ell, in 1905–1906 (NRIS#16001747). In 1907, he was the architect for the Melrose First Baptist Church in Melrose, Massachusetts. This building was also a granite English Gothic-style church with a side ell. Outside of Massachusetts, Newton was the architect for the Buffalo Homeopathic Hospital in Buffalo, New York in 1911 and the Buffalo Seminary in 1909.

Hiemer & Company

The large, figurative stained-glass window grouping in the south wall of the nave at Plymouth Congregational Church was designed, manufactured and installed by Hiemer & Co. in 1944. The company was founded in 1931 by Georg Hiemer and his son Edward. Georg was born in Germany and apprenticed in Munich until 1890. Edward Hiemer studied with his father in Munich and in Paris and Dresden. He later settled in Columbus, Ohio, where he worked as a designer for Von Gerichten Art Glass Company from 1925–1930. Georg left Europe in 1929 and joined Edward in Columbus; two years later, the father and son founded Hiemer & Company Stained Glass Studio. Edward Hiemer moved the company to Paterson, New Jersey in 1933, and then to Clifton, New Jersey, in 1949. During the height of its production between the 1930s and 1950s, the company employed 25 people. Edward apprenticed his son, Gerhard Hiemer, in the art of stained glass. Gerhard's daughter Judith Hiemer Van Wie and her husband James Van Wie currently operate the company. During an interview in 2018, Judith stated that the family-owned company had created stained glass windows for 1,131 churches. Their current work focuses on stained glass restoration (Hiemer & Company Stained Glass Studio 2020; Maag 2018).

Austin Organs, Inc.

The pipe organ in the Plymouth Congregational Church is a 2-manual, 11-stop pipe organ (Opus #769) manufactured by the Austin Organ Company of Hartford, Connecticut. John T. and Basil G. Austin incorporated the Austin Organ Company in 1898. John Austin emigrated from England to the United States in 1889. He had learned organ building from his father and became employed by Farrand and Votey Organ Company in Detroit, Michigan. John Austin developed the Universal Air Chest system, which was patented in 1893. The Universal Air Chest gives “absolute and uniform pressure to each and every pipe under all conditions of use.” He sold the idea to the Clough & Warren Company in Detroit. The first machine based upon his patent was built in 1893 (Austin Organs 2020b). Basil G. Austin, John's brother, immigrated to the United States in 1893. When Basil and John Austin incorporated their new company in 1898, they first rented space in Boston, then moved to Hartford in 1899 and leased a space at the Watson H. Bliss mills. The Universal Air Chest system became famous as Austin Organ Company sponsored the tour of English organist and composer Edwin H. Lemare in 1902. Lemare's success brought increased business and awareness to the company. The company prospered between 1915 and 1931 and produced 1,200 pipe organs during those years, among them the organ at Plymouth Congregational Church.¹⁰ The Austin Organ Company disbanded in 1935 and was incorporated under Austin Organs Inc., which was operated by John Austin's nephews, Frederic B. and Basil F. Austin. The company is still in operation today (Austin Organs 2020b).

¹⁰ At least 37 organs were manufactured by Austin Organs for use in Rhode Island, including at the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Providence (Austin Organs 2020a).

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1928 "3 Congregational Clergymen to Quit," January 8, p. 5.
1928 "Church Will Let Both Pastors Go," January 18, pp. 1, 2.
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1936 "Old Church Used as Mill Has Fire," September 15, p. 2.
1941 "Rev. Samuel T. Clifton to Leave Church Oct. 1," September 15, p. 6.
1966 "Central Church Moves to Prov.," December 10, p. 17.
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1969 "Plymouth-Union Church Chooses Merger Group," January 20, p. 6.
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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

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Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence RI; Congregational Library & Archives, Boston MA

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): # _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 0.3 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 41.797447 | Longitude: -71.413490 |
| 2. Latitude: 41.797571 | Longitude: -71.412861 |
| 3. Latitude: 41.797342 | Longitude: -71.412786 |
| 4. Latitude: 41.797260 | Longitude: -71.413277 |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |

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

The boundary of the nominated property conforms to the City of Providence Assessor's plat 53, lot 17, now owned by the Iglesia Visión Evangélica.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the nominated property includes the entire parcel that was historically associated with the Plymouth Congregational Church, as purchased by the Plymouth Congregational Society in 1891.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Virginia H. Adams, Senior Architectural Historian; Elizabeth Totten, Preservation Planner; Tracy Jonsson, Assistant Architectural Historian
organization: The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. (PAL)
street & number: 26 Main Street
city or town: Pawtucket state: Rhode Island zip code: 02860
e-mail: vadams@palinc.com
telephone: (401) 728-8780
date: February 2021

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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.

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Photo Log

Name of Property: Plymouth Congregational Church
City or Vicinity: Providence
County: Providence County
State: Rhode Island
Name of Photographers: Elizabeth Totten and Tracy Jonsson
Date of Photographs: March 9, 2020
Location of Original Digital Files: Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage
Commission, 150 Benefit Street, Providence, RI 02903
Number of Photographs: 17

- Photo #1: Plymouth Congregational Church exterior, view southeast
Photo #2: Plymouth Congregational Church west elevation, view east
Photo #3: Plymouth Congregational Church west elevation, entrance, view east
Photo #4: Plymouth Congregational Church exterior, view southwest
Photo #5: Plymouth Congregational Church south elevation, view northeast
Photo #6: Plymouth Congregational Church south elevation, view northwest
Photo #7: Plymouth Congregational Church vestibule and lobby, view east
Photo #8: Plymouth Congregational Church Sunday school, view southwest
Photo #9: Plymouth Congregational Church Sunday school, view north
Photo #10: Plymouth Congregational Church Sunday school, view northeast
Photo #11: Plymouth Congregational Church parlor, view southwest
Photo #12: Plymouth Congregational Church auditorium, view east
Photo #13: Plymouth Congregational Church auditorium, view south
Photo #14: Plymouth Congregational Church auditorium, stained glass window, view southeast
Photo #15: Plymouth Congregational Church pulpit, view southeast
Photo #16: Plymouth Congregational Church ground floor, view east
Photo #17: Plymouth Congregational Church ground floor, classroom, view west

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1. First Floor Plan, Plymouth Congregational Church, ca. 1915 drawing by George F. Newton. Plymouth Union Congregational Church Records, Rhode Island Historical Society Library, Providence, RI
2. Union Congregational Chapel on Prairie Avenue (date unknown). *Plymouth Union Congregational Church: Seventy-fifth Anniversary: 1953*. Plymouth Union Congregational Church Collection, Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA

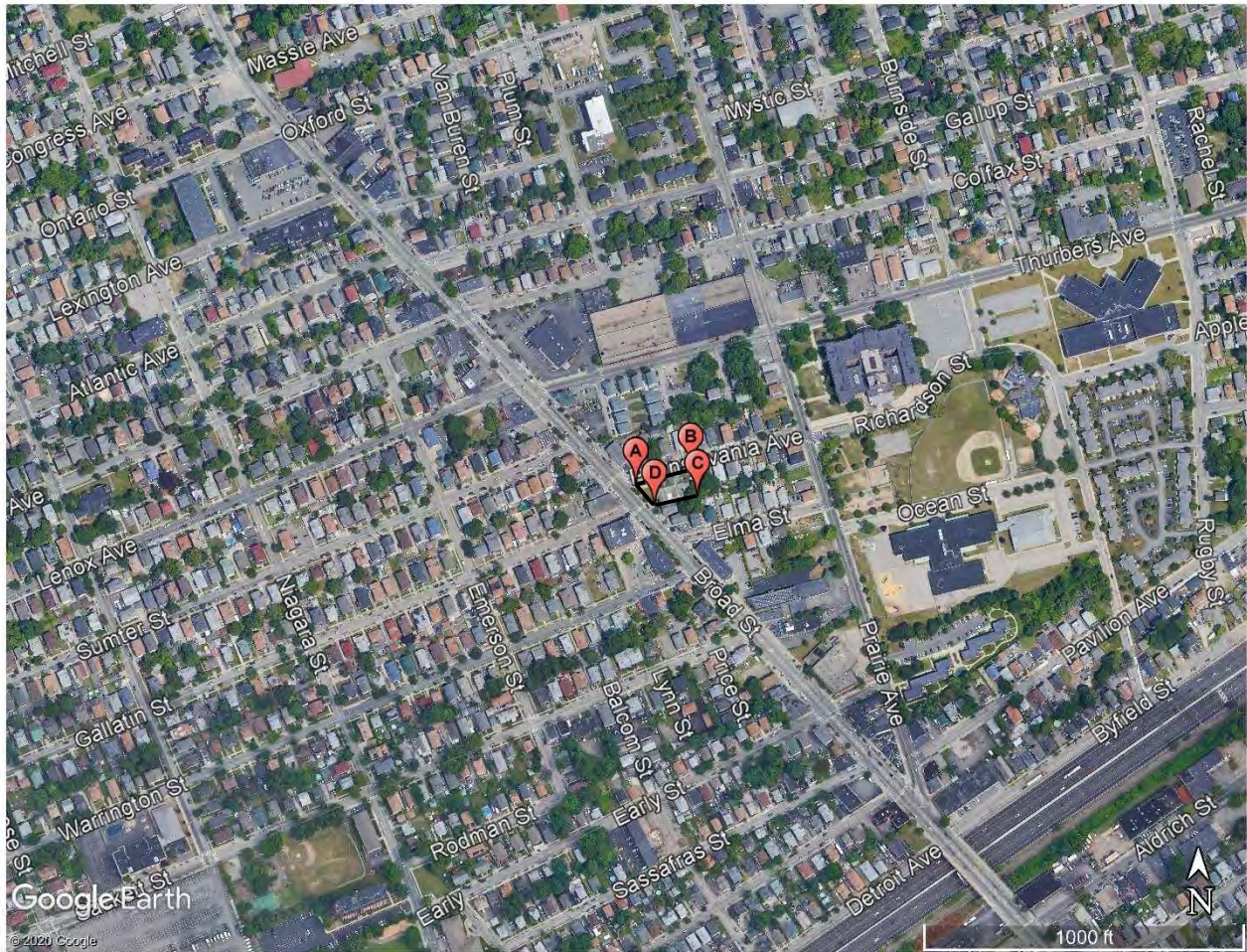
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3. Plymouth Congregational Church on Pennsylvania Avenue (date unknown).
Plymouth Union Congregational Church: Seventy-fifth Anniversary: 1953. Plymouth Union Congregational Church Collection, Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA
4. Plymouth Congregational Church on Pennsylvania Avenue
G.M. Hopkins & Co., *Atlas of the City of Providence and Environs*, 1882
5. Plymouth Congregational Church
G.M. Hopkins & Co., *Atlas of the City of Providence and Environs*, 1918
6. Plymouth Congregational Church, ca. 1953.
Plymouth Union Congregational Church: Seventy-fifth Anniversary: 1953. Plymouth Union Congregational Church Collection, Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA
7. Plymouth Congregational Church, ca. 1925-1965.
John Hutchins Cady Research Scrapbooks Collection, Rhode Island Collection
Providence Public Library, Providence, RI
8. First Congregational Church, Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, 1905.
The Architectural Review, Volume XII, January to December (digitized by Google).

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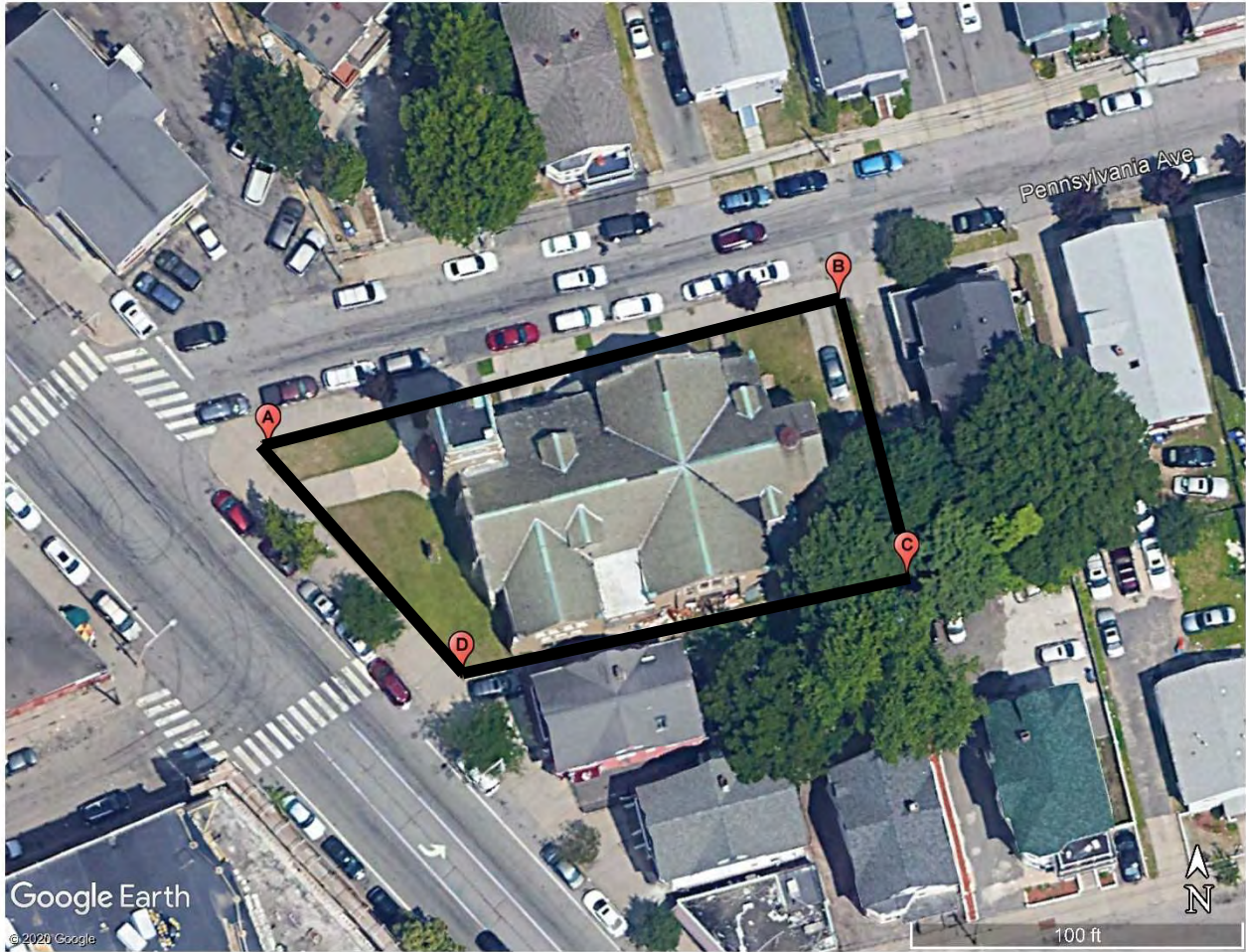


Plymouth Congregational Church Location Map

	Coordinates	
	Latitude	Longitude
A	41.797447	-71.413490
B	41.797571	-71.412861
C	41.797342	-71.412786
D	41.797260	-71.413277

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Plymouth Congregational Church Location Map

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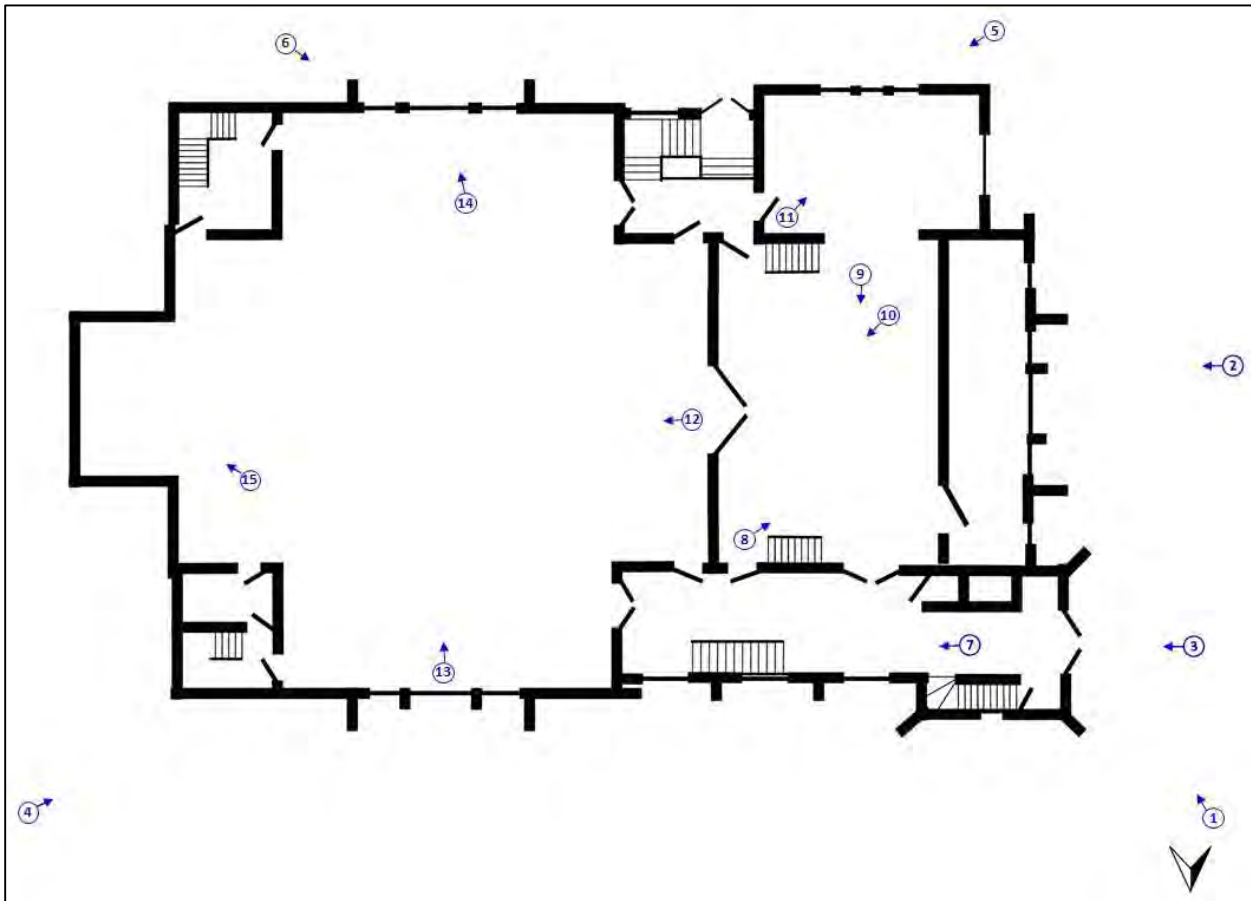
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Plymouth Congregational Church, shown on City of Providence Assessor's Map 53, Lot 17

Plymouth Congregational Church
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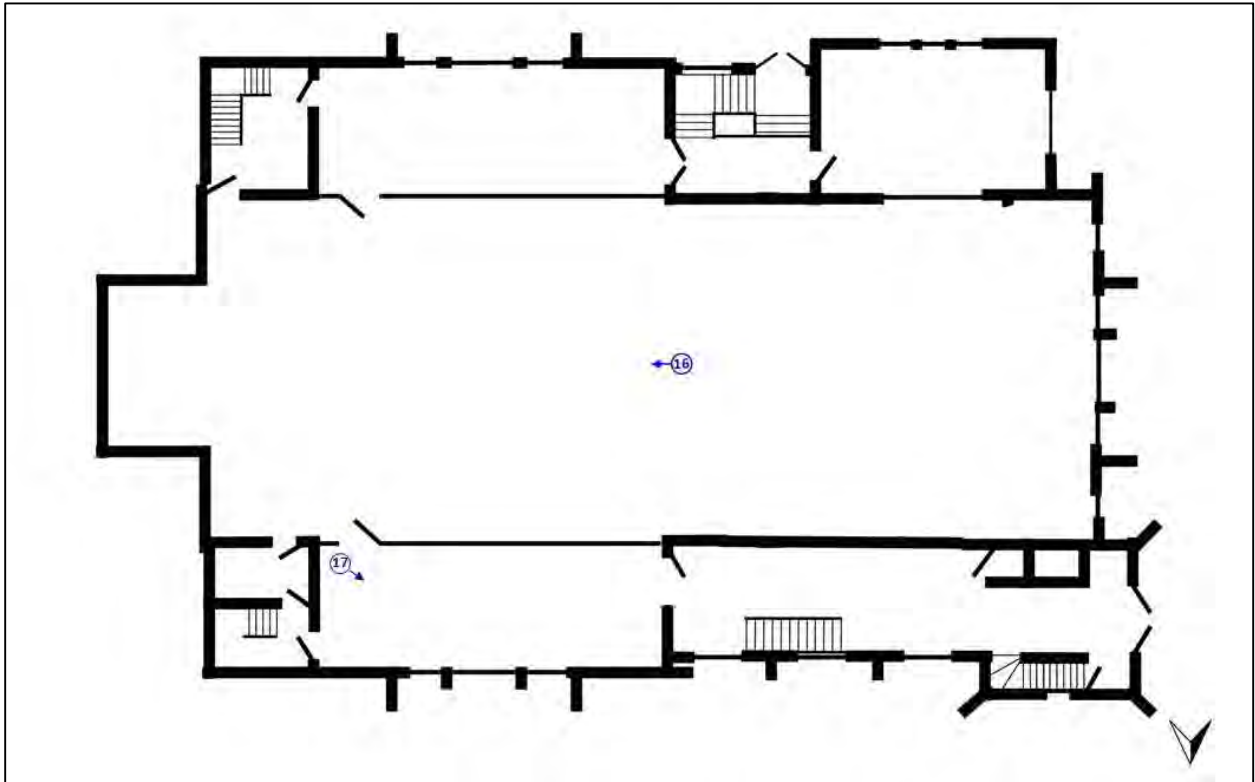
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Plymouth Congregational Church, Photo Key, Exterior and First Floor. Sketch shows approximate locations of existing partitions and stairs (PAL 2020, not to scale).

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Plymouth Congregational Church, Photo Key, Basement. Sketch shows approximate locations of existing partitions and stairs (PAL 2020, not to scale).

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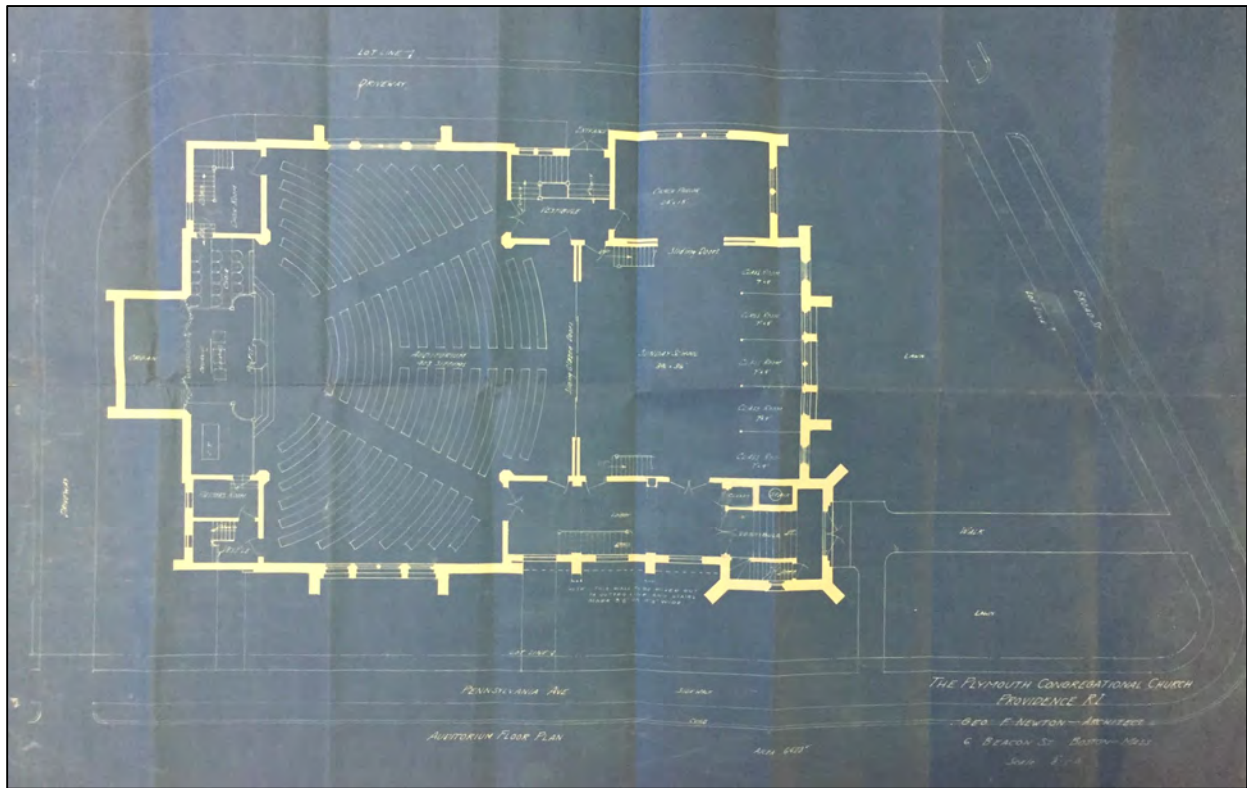


Figure 1 First Floor Plan, Plymouth Congregational Church, ca. 1915 drawing by George F. Newton
Plymouth Union Congregational Church Records, Rhode Island Historical Society Library, Providence, RI

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Figure 2

Union Congregational Chapel on Prairie Avenue (date unknown).

Plymouth Union Congregational Church: Seventy-fifth Anniversary: 1953. Plymouth Union Congregational Church Collection, Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA



Figure 3

Plymouth Congregational Church on Pennsylvania Avenue (date unknown).

Plymouth Union Congregational Church: Seventy-fifth Anniversary: 1953. Plymouth Union Congregational Church Collection, Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA

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Figure 4
Plymouth Congregational Church on Pennsylvania Avenue (formerly Richardson Street), 1882

G.M. Hopkins & Co., *Atlas of the City of Providence and Environs*, 1882



Figure 5
Plymouth Congregational Church, 1918

G.M. Hopkins & Co., *Atlas of the City of Providence and Environs*, 1918

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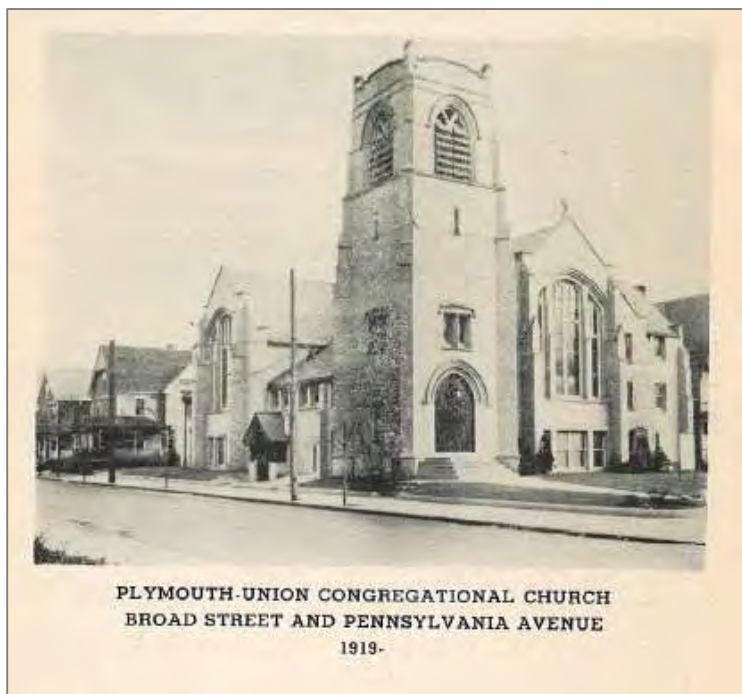


Figure 6
Plymouth Congregational Church,
ca. 1953

*Plymouth Union Congregational Church:
Seventy-fifth Anniversary: 1953.* Plymouth Union
Congregational Church Collection,
Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA



Figure 7 Plymouth Congregational Church, ca. 1925–1965

John Hutchins Cady Research Scrapbooks Collection, Rhode Island Collection, Providence Public
Library, Providence, RI

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THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

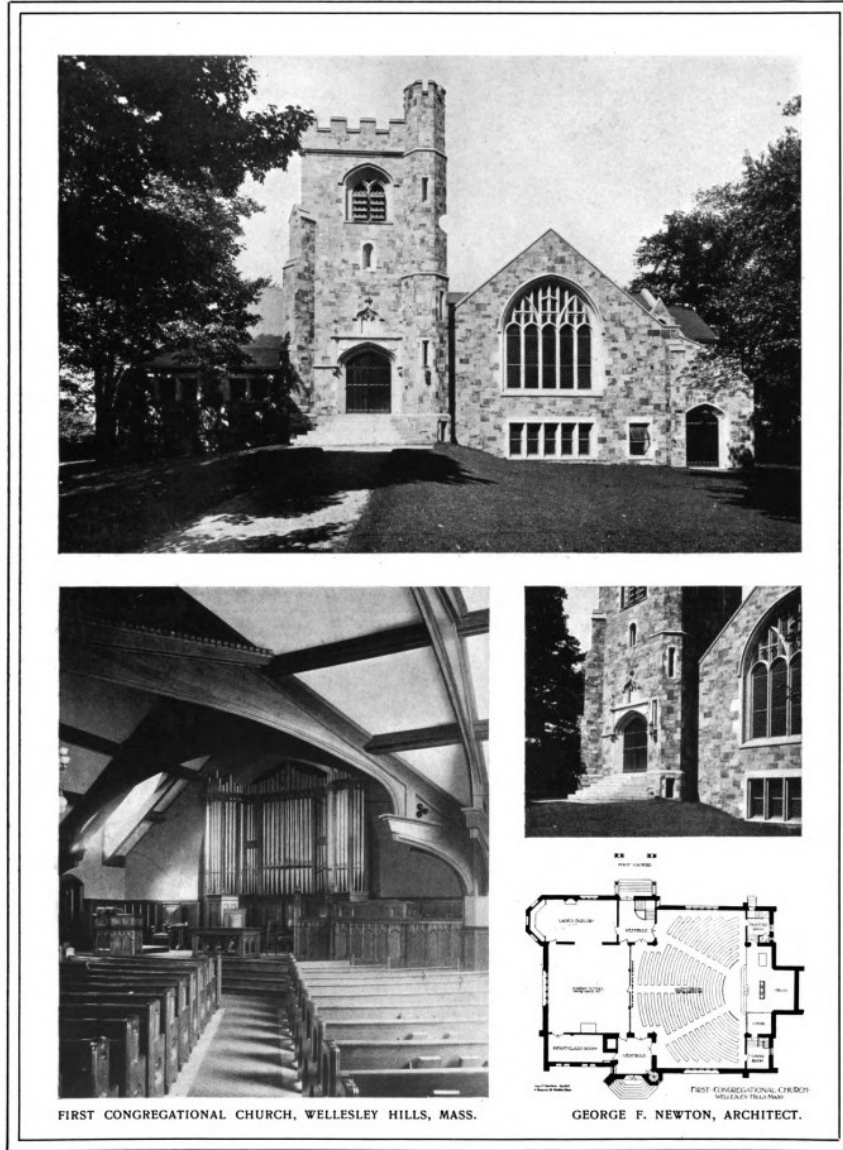


Figure 8 First Congregational Church, Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, 1905
The Architectural Review, Volume XII (digitized by Google)

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Additional Information

Note: The former Plymouth Congregational Church has been home to Iglesia Visión Evangélica, a Spanish-speaking congregation, since 2016. Sections 7 and 8 of this National Register of Historic Places Registration Form are provided in Spanish, below. The text was translated into Spanish by Darlow Duarte of the City of Providence and edited by Virginia H. Adams of the Public Archaeology Laboratory.

SECCIÓN 7

Párrafo de Resumen

La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth (actualmente Iglesia Visión Evangélica), construida entre 1915–1919, es un edificio de ladrillo de color beige, de dos pisos y medio, de estilo neogótico inglés con molduras de piedra caliza y un techo a dos aguas cruzado con tejas de pizarra. El edificio tiene planta rectangular y forma cruciforme, y una imponente entrada y campanario marca su esquina noroeste. Fue diseñado por el arquitecto con sede en Boston George F. Newton. La iglesia ocupa un lote de esquina en 1014 Broad Street, en el lado este de mira hacia el oeste, está a unos 40 pies de Broad Street y a unos 10 pies de Pennsylvania Avenue en Providence, Rhode Island. La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth conserva un alto nivel de integridad de ubicación, entorno, diseño, materiales, mano de obra, sentimiento y asociación.

Descripción Narrativa

Colocación

La Iglesia Congregacional Plymouth está ubicada en el 1014 Broad Street en el Sur de Providence, en una calle concurrida que conecta el centro de Providence con la ciudad de Cranston hacia el sur. El vecindario circundante tiene una mezcla de edificios residenciales y comerciales, con casas unifamiliares construidas principalmente en el siglo XIX junto a tiendas y restaurantes. La propiedad nominada generalmente está delimitada por Pennsylvania Avenue en el norte, una propiedad residencial en el este, una propiedad comercial en una antigua vivienda en el sur, y Broad Street en el oeste. Una simple valla de hierro forjado, de aproximadamente 36 pulgadas de alto y colocada sobre una cerca de granito, corre a lo largo de la mayor parte de los límites de la propiedad oeste (frente) y norte. Los caminos de concreto conducen a la entrada principal en el lado oeste de la torre y a las entradas secundarias en la elevación norte del edificio. El resto del lote tiene césped.

Exterior

La iglesia es de forma rectangular, aproximadamente 64 pies de ancho por 98 pies de largo, y mira hacia el oeste en la Broad Street. El edificio tiene planta cruciforme modificada. La nave frontal de dos pisos y medio que contiene espacio el culto y el salón de clases, termina en el presbiterio, que contiene el púlpito, en el extremo este del edificio. Una sala de órganos de planta cuadrada de dos pisos y medio se proyecta desde el centro de la elevación este, detrás del púlpito. Un crucero de dos pisos y medio a dos aguas cruza la nave hacia su extremo este. Un codo de dos pisos y medio se extiende desde la nave cerca de la esquina suroeste del edificio. Una torre cuadrada de cuatro pisos que contiene la entrada principal y el campanario se encuentra en la esquina noroeste de la iglesia. Los dibujos arquitectónicos de la iglesia especifican que

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el extremo este de la nave y el transepto comprendían el auditorio, cerca de la esquina suroeste comprendía el salón de la iglesia y que la escuela dominical estaba ubicada en el extremo oeste de la nave.¹¹ El edificio descansa sobre una base de concreto, tiene un nivel de sótano elevado¹² y las paredes están revestidas en varios tonos de ladrillos de ante colocados en unión corriente con cada octava hilera colocada en unión flamenca. La moldura es de piedra caliza, colocada al ras con la pared de ladrillo y moldeada. Los techos a dos aguas cruzado están revestidos con tejas de pizarra verde con tapajuntas y detalles de cobre; dos buhardillas a dos aguas atraviesan las laderas norte y sur. Una pequeña cúpula de madera y metal con pesianas se eleva desde la línea de la cámara del órgano. Grandes grupos de ventanas de dos pisos con arco apuntado dominan las elevaciones oeste, norte y sur de la iglesia; en las elevaciones oeste y norte, estos están llenos de vidrieras emplomadas, en forma de diamante, en un patrón simple de amarillo y blanco, mientras que las de elevación sur contienen vidrieras decorativas que representan escenas y símbolos religiosos. De lo contrario, la fenestración consiste principalmente en aberturas de ventanas rectangulares rellenas con una hoja de madera de doble guillotina, uno sobre uno, con emplomado, de diamante, amarillo y blanco.

La fachada oeste se compone de tres tramos: el campanario (norte), la nave a dos aguas (centro), y el codo a dos aguas (sur). El campanario almenado de cuatro pisos tiene contrafuertes en las esquinas que dan un paso atrás y terminan en el techo plano. La entrada principal se encuentra en la elevación oeste de la torre y consta de puertas de madera emparejadas con bisagras de correa de hierro forjado ornamentadas. La entrada se encuentra dentro de un amplio marco de arco gótico de piedra caliza con uñas, un doble arquitrabe moldeado y un travesaño arqueado de dos luces. Escaleras semicirculares de hormigón con pasamanos de hierro forjado conducen a la entrada principal. El campanario contiene un par de ventanas cuadradas, fijas y con guillotina de vinilo en el segundo piso y una esbelta ventana de arco de trébol que se abre en el tercer piso. El cuarto piso, que se aleja de la parte inferior de la torre, tiene una gran apertura de ventana de arco apuntado con quoin de piedra caliza, que contiene aberturas de arco apuntado emparejadas. Las aberturas en los pisos segundo y cuarto cuentan con coronas de piedra caliza con arquitrabes con orejas, al igual que la entrada del primer piso. En la esquina noroeste de la torre, la piedra angular (inscrita “1878” and “1915”)¹³ se coloca directamente sobre un nivel freático de piedra caliza, que envuelve el campanario. La torre está acentuada con varias bandas de piedra caliza: cuatro entre el primer y segundo piso, una en la parte inferior de la abertura de la ventana del tercer piso y dos en el cuarto piso. La torre es idéntica en los cuatro lados del tercer y cuarto piso. No hay ventanas en el segundo piso en las elevaciones sur y este de la torre. Los pisos primero y segundo de la elevación norte de la torre se describen a continuación.

La gran sección de la nave central de la elevación oeste está ligeramente apartada de la torre y tiene dos pisos y medio de altura y tres tramos de ancho dentro de un amplio frontón. Los contrafuertes de ladrillo dividen la amplia bahía central de las bahías laterales más estrechas y terminan en un parapeto coronado de piedra caliza. Una cruz de piedra caliza se asienta sobre el pico del hastial. La bahía central está dominada por una agrupación de ventanas colocadas dentro de una abertura de arco apuntado de dos pisos enmarcada por ladrillos soldados con rótulos con una piedra caliza y umbrales de piedra caliza. La hoja de la ventana superior presenta una tracería de madera simple. Pilastras de ladrillo que simulan contrafuertes separan las dos ventanas centrales de las de ambos lados. A nivel del suelo, la bahía central contiene cuatro ventanas con dinteles y umbrales de piedra caliza simples: un par central con parteluces de ladrillo y una sola ventana a cada lado. Las bahías exteriores contienen una sola ventana en el primer y segundo piso, también con dinteles y umbrales de piedra caliza simples. El codo a dos aguas en la esquina suroeste del edificio tiene dos pisos de altura y está ligeramente alejado de la sección de la nave. Una sola ventana está en el nivel del

¹¹ Las funciones de las salas dictan la arquitectura de la iglesia; las funciones se incluyen en la descripción para mayor claridad.

¹² Debido a que el sótano está elevado, se incluye al contar los pisos de los diferentes componentes del edificio.

¹³ La Iglesia Congregacional Plymouth fue fundada en 1878 y la construcción de este edificio comenzó en 1915.

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suelo y dos ventanas están en el primer y segundo piso. Las ventanas tienen dinteles y antepechos sencillos de piedra caliza. Un contrafuerte de ladrillo marca la esquina suroeste del edificio.

La elevación norte de la iglesia, que da a la avenida Pennsylvania, está compuesta, de oeste a este, por el campanario; un vestíbulo de dos pisos; el extremo norte del crucero; un vestíbulo de dos pisos; y la sala de órgano, que está considerablemente alejada del plano de elevación principal. Los detalles de la elevación norte del campanario coinciden con los de elevación oeste, con la excepción del primer piso, que tiene una ventana de arco apuntado con una tapa de piedra caliza. La sección del vestíbulo tiene tres tramos divididos por contrafuertes de ladrillo. La bahía este contiene un porche de entrada cerrado de un piso, una bahía por una bahía, con paredes de ladrillo pulido, ventanas de trébol ornamentales y columnas y soportes de madera que sostienen un techo a dos aguas delantero ligeramente ensanchado. La entrada consta de un par de modernas puertas metálicas con luces en forma de cruz. El primer piso de la bahía central contiene una sola ventana, mientras que la bahía oeste tiene una sola ventana y una entrada que consiste en una puerta de metal coronada por un travesaño con tres luces en forma de cruz. En el segundo piso, cada bahía tiene dos ventanas, ubicadas directamente debajo de la línea del techo. Las aberturas de puertas y ventanas tienen dinteles y umbrales de piedra caliza. Una buhardilla a dos aguas con ventanas emparejadas perfora el techo de esta sección. La buhardilla está revestida con tejas de pizarra verde. El crucero tiene tres metros cuadrados de ancho y un frontón a dos aguas con parapeto de ladrillo rematado con piedra caliza. Las bahías exteriores cada una contienen una ventana a nivel del suelo. La bahía central está flanqueada por contrafuertes de ladrillo y contiene una agrupación de ventanas dentro de una abertura de arco apuntado de dos pisos, detallada para coincidir con la agrupación de ventanas grandes en la elevación oeste de la nave. El nivel del suelo contiene cuatro ventanas con dinteles y alféizares de piedra caliza simples: un par central con parteluces de ladrillo y una sola ventana a cada lado. Un vestíbulo que contiene escaleras al nivel del sótano está al este del crucero. Esta sección de un ancho de bahía contiene una entrada, que consta de una puerta metálica al ras, una sola ventana en el segundo piso en la línea de la cornisa y una buhardilla de techo a dos aguas con una sola ventana. La elevación norte de la sala de órganos no tiene aberturas.

La elevación este (trasera) de tres bahías de ancho de la iglesia, que mira hacia el camino de entrada, está dominada por la cámara del órgano frontal, que se proyecta hacia el este desde la bahía central y tiene contrafuertes en las esquinas. Los muros de elevación este están en su mayoría en blanco, con la excepción de las ventanas del sótano en todas las bahías y una ventana del segundo piso en cada una de las bahías laterales. Las ventanas tienen dinteles planos de piedra caliza y antepechos rectangulares de piedra caliza. El cobre moldeado envuelve la línea del techo y simula una imposta o una tala de inclinación.

La elevación sur de la iglesia está compuesta, de oeste a este, por el codo de dos aguas cruzadas; un pasillo de escalera de dos pisos; el extremo sur del crucero; y un pasillo de escalera de dos pisos. El codo a dos aguas cruzadas contiene tres ventanas en el suelo y el primer piso y cuatro en el segundo piso. Las ventanas tienen dinteles planos de piedra caliza y umbrales de piedra caliza. El pasillo de la escalera oeste tiene una entrada en el primer piso y una ventana a nivel del sótano hacia el este; tres ventanas están ubicadas debajo de la línea del techo en el segundo piso. La entrada consta de una puerta metálica enrasada con una sola luz y un panel metálico. El transepto tiene tres tramos de ancho y tienen los mismos detalles arquitectónicos que el transepto en la elevación norte, excepto que el marco de la ventana en la abertura del arco apuntado de dos pisos está lleno de vidrieras altamente decorativas (descritas a continuación). La escalera del este tienen una bahía de ancho y contiene una antigua entrada a la entrada en el primer piso que ha sido rellenada con bloques de hormigón. Una sola buhardilla a dos aguas perfora la pendiente del techo. Tiene paredes de tejas de pizarra verde y una tabla de rastrillo de madera ancha sostenida por soportes de madera. El cobre moldeado se envuelve alrededor de la línea del techo de toda la elevación sur, simulando una imposta o una tabla de inclinación.

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Interior

La iglesia fue diseñada para albergar reuniones de adoración, enseñanza y sociales, lo que se refleja en el plano y los acabados. Los planos arquitectónicos del primer piso de la iglesia (Figura 1), preparados por George F. Newton, representan un plano cruciforme modificado, con un vestíbulo de entrada en la torre noroeste, que conduce a un vestíbulo al este; la escuela dominical, incluidas las aulas individuales, ubicada en el extremo oeste de la nave; la sala de la iglesia que ocupa el ell; y una escalera secundaria y vestíbulo al este de la sala. El resto de la nave y el crucero contienen el auditorio, mientras que el púlpito y el coro ocupan el presbiterio, en el extremo este de la nave, con una cámara para órgano al este. Escaleras adicionales, así como una sala del coro y la sala del pastor, se encuentran en las esquinas noreste y sureste del edificio. Una placa de piso en el extremo oeste y la esquina suroeste de la iglesia crea un segundo piso en esas partes del edificio. El sótano consista principalmente de un auditorio secundario, que se utilizó para reuniones sociales, actuaciones y escuela dominical.

La puertas de entrada principal conducen a un vestíbulo poco profundo en el nivel del suelo, con escalones que conducen al vestíbulo en el primer piso. El vestíbulo tiene un techo alto, paredes enlucidas y modernos pisos de baldosas de piedra. Una lámpara colgante de estilo neogótico ilumina el espacio. Las escaleras de madera con contrahuellas de azulejos conducen al vestíbulo, al que se accede a través de un par de puertas de madera totalmente iluminadas. A ambos lados de estas puertas hay aberturas con puertas de madera de cuatro paneles. La abertura norte conduce a la escalera del campanario; la abertura sur conduce a un armario para abrigos. El vestíbulo tiene un techo bajo, pisos de madera laminada y paredes de yeso con zócalos de madera teñida, riel para sillas y riel para cuadros. Una escalera cerrada al sótano está a lo largo del muro norte. El vestíbulo tiene lámparas de techo semi empotradas de estilo neogótico. Varias puertas, dos puertas simples, dos pares de puertas, conducen desde el vestíbulo hasta la antigua escuela dominical y el auditorio. Las puertas se colocan dentro de marcos de madera moldeada y son puertas de madera de seis paneles teñidas o puertas de madera de cuatro paneles pintadas.

La antigua escuela dominical esta ubicada en el extremo oeste de la nave y originalmente se organizó en un Plan Akron modificado, un esquema que ganó el favor de las iglesias protestantes a fines del siglo XIX y que permitió a las estudiantes escuchar el comienzo del culto y luego asistir al domingo. La escuela en aulas separadas, generalmente ubicadas en dos niveles (White 1964:126-127). En la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth, la escuela dominical originalmente consistía en un gran espacio de reunión que se abría al auditorio hacia el este a través de una serie de puertas corredizas de vidrio. Cinco salones de clase, cada uno de dos partes metros, estaban ubicados a los lados del muro oeste; aunque no se muestra en el plano, es probable que se cierran del espacio principal con cortinas o posiblemente puertas. La investigación arquitectónica indica que había una distribución similar de los salones al primer piso; este espacio ahora es un balcón abierto. Se quitaron las puertas corredizas originales que separaban la escuela dominical del auditorio y en su lugar se instalaron una pared de yeso con revestimiento de madera. Un par de puertas totalmente iluminadas están centradas en la pared y un grupo de diez ventanas de madera de dos luces con vidrio esmerilado se encuentra justo debajo de las abrazaderas del techo y el collarín. Se eliminaron las aulas del primer piso y se construyó el espacio para acomodar vacíos y una sala de conferencias. Estas habitaciones tienen pisos de vinilo, paredes de yeso con revestimiento de madera teñida y ventanas más con marcos de madera moldeada.

El espacio de reunión de dos pisos en la escuela dominical conserva una gran cantidad de material original, incluidos pisos de madera, paredes de yeso con revestimiento de madera tejida y un techo de madera expuesta. El techo con vigas tipo martillo consta de vigas expuestas, correas, cerchas y terrazas con paneles. Las vigas de martillo y las tirantes de martillo se extienden desde las paredes norte y sur y sostienen los tirantes de los collarines. El techo está construido de pino y tejido con un “tinte de roble flamenco”

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(*Providence Journal* 1919). Las ventas más empajadas en las buhardillas en las laderas del techo norte y sur inundan la habitación con luces y candelabros de estilo renacentista gótico que cuelgan de las corbatas. Las escaleras abiertas contra las paredes norte y sur conducen al balcón sobre las antiguas aulas del primer piso. Las escaleras emparejadas son de madera con balaustradas de madera cuadradas y postes cuadrados de newel. La barandilla del balcón coincide con la balaustrada de la escalera. El balcón está abierto actualmente a excepción de un armario en la esquina suroeste.

La antigua sala de la iglesia, ahora una oficina, está ubicada en el el suroeste. Mide 24 pies por 15 pies y tiene pisos de madera, paredes y techos de yeso, zoca los de madera, riel para cuadros y riel para sillas. Un pequeño armario con una puerta de madera con paneles se encuentra en la esquina sureste de la habitación. La puerta del salón de la iglesia consiste en una puerta de madera de seis paneles tejida con una pequeña luz. El segundo piso de la sala de la iglesia tiene las mismas características que el primer piso, con la excepción de la puerta, que está construida de madera tinta oscura con tres paneles inferiores y tres paneles superiores vertical es vidriada, el medio de los cuales contiene amarillo y vidrieras blancas.

La escalera sur, que conduce al sótano, se encuentra inmediatamente al este del antiguo salón. Es accesible desde el salón de la iglesia, la escuela dominical y el auditorio, a través de puertas de madera de seis paneles. La escalera de madera de doble cerrada tiene una balaustrada de madera cuadrada con postes cuadrados y escaleras alfombradas. Las paredes de la escalera son de yeso o más posterga parcialmente expuesta.

El espacio de adoración o auditorio de la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth ocupa el crucero y se puede acceder a él a través de la escuela dominical, el vestíbulo y las escaleras. El auditorio de dos pisos tiene pisos de madera, paredes de yeso y un techo abovedado con vigas a la vista, correas, cerchas y terrazas con paneles. Cuatro columnas de dos pisos, acanaladas, dóricas, comprometidas están ubicadas en las esquinas de las escaleras y el túbulo; cada uno soporta tres vigas de martillo y tirantes de martillo, que sostienen las bridas de cuello. Un juego de cerchas se extiende desde cada columna y convergen en el centro del techo. Como en la antigua escuela dominical, el techo está construido de pino y tejido para parecerse al roble. Las paredes están pintadas en azul claro y crema, con detalles en oro y rojo ladrillo. Los bancos curvos y móviles están dispuestos en tres secciones, en una disposición de estilo teatro que crea una zona de asientos semicircular. Los extremos de los bancos, que son de roble tinto de oscuro, están tallados decorativamente en estilo neogótico. Buhardillas con ventanas individuales iluminan el presbiterio en los lados norte y sur y candelabros de hierro forjado estilo Renacimiento gatico cuelgan de las ataduras del cuello.

El auditorio contiene dos grandes grupos de ventanas de arco apuntado en las paredes norte y sur del crucero. Las ventanas de la pared norte cuentan con vidrieras en forma de diamante en vidrio transparente y amarillo. Las ventanas de la pared sur están llenas de llamativas vidrieras representativas. Las dos ventanas centrales, que están divididas per un parteluz de madera, representan Maria Magdalena come testigo de la resurrección de Jesucristo. Sobre esta escena hay cuatro ventanas, cada una de las cuales contiene un ángel con un símbolo griego; estos incluyen: alfa, chirhúo, “ihs” y omega. A continuación se muestran dos ventanas que contienen una dedicatoria que dice “En memoria cariciosa de Frank Eugene Farnham.” Las ventanas a ambos lados del grupo central representan flora, volutas y símbolos come un ancla, trigo, una granada, uvas, una flor de lis y un fénix. La ventana fue agregada en 1944 y desafiada per Hiemer & Company de Nueva Jersey¹⁴. Lo más probable es que haya reemplazado una simple ventana de vidrio emplomado de color amarillo y blanco, come se ve en el resto de la iglesia.

El presbiterio está ubicado en el extreme este de la iglesia y está separado de la nave per cuatro escalones

¹⁴ RIHPHC, “Estudio de vidrieras: Providencia, Iglesia de Dios de la Santa Cruz en Cristo, 1014 Broad Street,” 1996.

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de madera con contrahuellas de piedra y, a ambos lados de los escalones, balaustradas de madera con pasamanos moldeados y balaustres de arco de trébol. El presbiterio tiene paredes de yeso y piso de madera. El pulpito estaba originalmente ubicado en el centro del frente, pero se ha movido hacia el lado norte; un atril moderno se coloca en su lugar. El pulpito de madera tiene forma de mediodécagono con lados paneados y contrafuertes en las esquinas. Detrás del pulpito está ubicada el órgano, que se encuentra dentro de una abertura de área gatico de dos pisos con pilastras y molduras. El órgano es de tipo de tú vas de 11 pasos y 2 manuales (Opus # 769) fabricado por Austin Organ Company de Hartford, Connecticut. Tiene una caja de madera paneada con moldura de área de trébol. Las tubas de órgano de latón se elevan por encima de la caja hasta el segundo piso.

Al sur del presbiterio hay una escalera cerrada que conduce al sótano y una área pequeña que fue designada en los dibujos arquitectónicos como la “sala de coro.” Al norte del presbiterio, unos escalones más abajo, hay una pequeña habitación que fue designada como la “habitación del pastor.” Este conduce a un vestíbulo con acceso exterior y una escalera que conduce al sótano.

El sótano contiene un gran auditorio secundario abierto en el centro del edificio, con plataformas elevadas en las extremes norte y sur. La habitación tiene una mezcla de pisos de madera y linóleo, los techos son bajos y artesonados, y los pastes de metal sostienen el piso de arriba. Las paredes son de yeso con revestimiento de madera. La sala central está flanqueada por las escaleras y varias salas pequeñas, algunas acondicionadas para el uso en el aula. Estas contienen pisos de madera tejida o pisos de madera laminada, paredes de yeso con un revestimiento de madera cubierto por un riel de sila de madera y techos de yeso cubiertos por falsos techos de baldosas acústicas. Las ventanas, ubicadas justo debajo del techo, tienen umbrales de madera y delantales moldeados y las puertas son típicamente de madera con cuatro paneles.

Declaración de integridad

La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth conserva la integridad general de la ubicación, el diseño, el entorno, los materiales, la mano de obra, el sentimiento y la asociación. El entorno de la propiedad en Broad Street permanece intacto y el edificio transmite claramente su diseño original de estilo neogótico inglés de George F. Newton. La iglesia conserva su exterior de ladrillo de ante que se eleva hasta un techo de pizarra verde a dos aguas, junto con el campanario. La disposición espacial interior, los acabados y las características decorativas, como son los bancos, el órgano y las lámparas, permanecen esencialmente inalteradas. Las vidrieras originales están intactas, con la excepción de las ventanas en la elevación sur del crucero, donde se agregó una agrupación representativa de vidrieras en 1944 (dentro del pérfido de importancia). Los cambios menores en el edificio que han ocurrido desde ese momento no restan materialmente a la integridad general del edificio y el paisaje.

SECCIÓN 8

Párrafo de resumen de la declaración de importancia (proporcione un párrafo de resumen que incluya el nivel de importancia, los criterios aplicables, la justificación del pérfido de importancia y cualquier consideración de criterio aplicable).

La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth en Providence, Rhode Island es elegible para ser incluida en el Registro Nacional de Lugares Históricos a nivel local bajo el Criterio C en el área de Arquitectura como un buen ejemplo de una iglesia de estilo neogótico Inglés tardío. El edificio, diseñado por el destacado arquitecto de Boston George F. Newton (1857-1947) y construido en 1915-1919, fue construido para una

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congregación que se remonta a 1878. Newton tuvo una carrera productiva que abarcó más de 40 años a finales del siglo XIX y principios del siglo XX. Diseñó muchos edificios religiosos, así como edificios públicos y residencias privadas en Nueva Inglaterra y los estados del Atlántico Medio. La congregación se expandió a fines del siglo XIX y se dispuso a construir una nueva iglesia, aunque tomó casi 25 años para que comenzara la construcción. El crecimiento de la congregación y los cambios de paradigma dentro de la fe protestante a finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX son evidentes en el diseño de esta iglesia. El compromiso de la congregación con la educación religiosa también se expresa en el diseño de la iglesia, que empleó una variación del Plan Akron para la instrucción de la escuela dominical. A lo largo del siglo XX, la membresía de la congregación se expandió y disminuyó en parte en respuesta a los cambios en las tendencias demográficas de la ciudad y el vecindario. El pérdida de importancia para la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth comienza en 1915 con el comienzo de la construcción y termina en 1944, cuando se instaló una gran vidriera decorativa en la elevación sur del crucero, el último cambio arquitectónico importante en el edificio.

Consideración de criterios

La Consideración A de los criterios se aplica a la propiedad de la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth, que es propiedad de una organización religiosa y se utiliza con fines religiosos. Sin embargo, la propiedad deriva su importancia principal de sus cualidades arquitectónicas; es un hermoso ejemplo del estilo neogótico Inglés diseñado por George F. Newton, un destacado arquitecto conocido por sus diseños eclesiásticos.

Declaración narrativa de importancia (proporcione al menos un párrafo para cada área de importancia).

La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth se encuentra en el límite este del vecindario de Elmwood. Elmwood era originalmente una subsección agrícola de Providence centrada alrededor de Broad Street, Elmwood Avenue, Cranston Street y Potters Avenue. El vecindario de Elmwood consiste principalmente en edificios residenciales construidos entre 1865 y 1930 durante el período de mayor crecimiento demográfico, económico y físico de la ciudad. Las vías principales, incluida Broad Street, eran residenciales, pero se volvieron más comerciales por naturaleza a mediados del siglo XX (Christensen 1980).

La formación y los primeros años de la congregación de Plymouth

El 6 de marzo de 1878, se forma la Sociedad Congregacional de Plymouth con 30 miembros bajo el liderazgo del Reverendo Henry B. Roberts. La congregación originalmente adoraba en una pequeña vivienda con estructura de madera en Prairie Avenue, que convirtieron en una capilla (Figura 2) (Plymouth Union Congregational Church 1953; *Providence Journal* 1919; Greene 1886: 149; Bayles 1891: 489). En 1880-81, la congregación construyó su propia iglesia en Richardson Street (ahora Pennsylvania Avenue), cerca de Broad Street (Figuras 3 y 4) (Plymouth Union Congregational Church 1953; Greene 1886: 149)¹⁵. Si bien la tierra circundante se había subdividido, gran parte de ella permanecía sin urbanizar; por ejemplo, la ciudad de Providence era propietaria de todo el bloque vacío limitado por Broad Street, Pennsylvania Avenue (luego Richardson Street), Elma Avenue (luego Kelley Street) y Prairie Avenue (Hopkins 1882).

Para 1886, la membresía de la Sociedad Congregacional de Plymouth incluía aproximadamente 188 personas (Greene 1886) y para 1891 la membresía había aumentado a 250 con un promedio de 250 estudiantes que asistan a la escuela dominical (Bayles 1891). Con una congregación y una escuela dominical en crecimiento, la Sociedad Congregacional de Plymouth comenzó a planificar la construcción

¹⁵ Este edificio estaba en diagonal frente a la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth al noreste. Era un edificio con estructura de madera con planta cruciforme y una torre de 80 pies en el centro de su fachada (Sanborn 1920). Fue demolido en 1956 (Sanborn 1956).

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de un nuevo edificio (*Providence Journal* 1919). Baja el liderazgo del Reverendo Thornton A. Mills, la congregación compra el lote en la esquina de Broad Street y Pennsylvania Avenue en 1891 y planeo trabajar con el Sr. Jennings¹⁶ para diseñar un nuevo edificio. En 1897, se estableció un comité de construcción. Al año siguiente, la Sociedad Congregacional de Plymouth cambio su nombre por el de Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth.

En 1899, la congregación aprobar una moción que ordenaba a la Junta que negociara con el Sr. Jennings para finalizar las planes para la nueva iglesia (RIHS MSS 139, Libro 49); más tarde ese mismo año, sin embargo, la planificación se estancó y la congregación explora la posibilidad de trasladar el edificio de la iglesia existente al lote de la esquina en Broad Street. Sin embargo, esta sugerencia fue problemática, ya que las leyes existentes restringían la altura y el tamaño de los edificios que se iban a mover y la idea se abandona en 1900. En 1902, se reanudaron las discusiones sobre un nuevo edificio, pero el comité de construcción informa desfavorablemente debido a la tensión financiera. El entonces pastor, el reverendo McCord, busca donaciones; a pesar de recibir algo de asistencia, incluidos \$500 del senador Nelson W. Aldrich, un destacado político republicano, la recaudación de fondos en general fue inconsistente (RIHS MSS 139, Libro 49).

Construcción de un nuevo edificio para la iglesia

En 1907, el reverendo E.L. Marsh se convirtió en pastor de la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth y comienza una ambiciosa campaña de recaudación de fondos para la construcción de una nueva iglesia. Según un artículo de 1909 en el *Providence Journal*, la nueva iglesia se trazaría en un plano de cruz griega en el estilo neogótico lombardo y se construiría de ladrillo. Incluía asientos para 750 personas con extensiones para hasta 1200 personas. Este plan fue desafiado por los arquitectos Hill y Fairbrother de la ciudad de Nueva York¹⁷ y se estimó en \$75,000. La congregación esperaba comenzar a construir en la primavera de 1910 (*Providence Journal* 1909).

Sin embargo, el desafío de 1909 nunca se construyó debido a las dificultades financieras de la congregación. Entre 1909 y 1915, el desafío de Hill y Fairbrother fue abandonado y la congregación adopto un plan nuevo y más modesto. El nuevo desafío fue producido por George F. Newton de Boston y presentaba una “enorme plaza torre en la esquina más externa de Broad Street y Pennsylvania Avenue” (*Providence Journal*, 4 de mayo de 1915). Se estimó que el nuevo desafío costaba mucho menos que el anterior; el costo proyectado del edificio disminuyó en \$30,000 de \$75,000 a \$45,000.

Los dos desafíos diferían sustancialmente en su apariencia exterior y distribución interna. El plan de 1909 presentaba una cúpula central llena de ventanas, que debía iluminar toda la iglesia (*Providence Journal* 1909). Este concepto se abandonó y se adoptó un plan de techo a dos aguas con techo abovedado. Aun así, el nuevo desafío incorporo algunas de las ideas del plan de 1909. Los elementos de transferencia incluyeron una escuela dominical y un salón de la iglesia al lado de un auditorio y un salón social en el sótano. Aunque el plan elegido era más simple y menos costoso, la congregación no tenía los fondos necesarios para completar el edificio en una fase. En 1915 se adjudicó un contrato para la construcción del almacén exterior

¹⁶ Los registros eclesiásticos no proporcionan el nombre completo del Sr. Jennings. Es posible que este fuera Arthur Bates Jennings (1849-1927), un arquitecto con sede en la ciudad de Nueva York que diseñó la Iglesia Bautista Cranston Street (ahora Iglesia Bautista Ebenezer) en Providence, construida en 1892-93.

¹⁷ El arquitecto Frederic Arthur Fairbrother nació en Providence, Rhode Island en 1878 y fue educado en la Escuela de Diseño de Rhode Island. Los registros eclesiásticos muestran que su familia eran miembros activos de la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth. Su padre, por quien fue nombrado, sirvió en el Comité de Construcción en 1909 y en la Junta de Fideicomisarios en 1912. Los Fairbrothers vivían en 61 Ocean Street, a menos de una milla de la iglesia. (AIA, *American Architects Directory*, 1956; RIHS MSS 139, Libro 45, Libro 48, Recuadro 4)

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del edificio, y el 4 de mayo de ese año se rompió la tierra (RIHS MSS 139, recuadro 4; *Providence Journal*, 5 de mayo de 1915). Sin embargo, al 21 de junio de 1915, la congregación había obtenido promesas de contribuciones por solo \$21,000 de los \$45,000 requeridos (*Providence Journal*, 21 de junio de 1915). El caparazón de la iglesia se completó ese año, pero la construcción en el interior se retrasó hasta 1918 debido a la escasez de materiales de construcción y mano de obra, presumiblemente debido a la Primera Guerra Mundial, pero también a dificultades financieras (*Providence Journal* 1919). La congregación pidió prestado dinero a la Congregational Church Building Society y la Rhode Island Congregational Church Conference, y obtuvo una hipoteca de \$10,000 para financiar la construcción (RIHS MSS 139, Libro 45). El 1 de marzo de 1918, la congregación vote para vender su antiguo edificio de la iglesia en Pennsylvania Avenue¹⁸ por \$5,000 a la Iglesia Episcopal Metodista Noruega y Danesa, celebrando su último servicio ale el día de Navidad (*Providence Journal* 1918).

El nuevo edificio de la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth se dedicó el 2 de marzo de 1919 (Figuras 5, 6 y 7). Se describió en un artículo de periódico de la siguiente manera: “El auditorio es muy sencillo, pero rico en su sencillez, el techo está sellado con pino, que, como las vigas, está tejido con tinte de roble flamenco. Los bancos, construidos en líneas circulares, y el acabado del revestimiento [sic] son de roble tejido. Las puertas corredizas hacen que el departamento de la escuela dominical superior sea parte del salón principal” (*Providence Journal* 1919). Algunas de estas elecciones de diseño probablemente se hicieron en un esfuerzo para ahorrar dinero, dada la situación financiera de la congregación. Mientras que el roble se usaba para trabajos en madera que se podían ver de cerca, como el revestimiento de madera y los bancos, el gran techo abovedado estaba construido de pino y tejido para parecerse al roble. Las grandes ventanas de área apuntada no tienen tracería de piedra, sino madera que imita la piedra. Quizás lo más significativo fue la decisión de construir el edificio con ladrillo en lugar de piedra (un material típico de los edificios de estilo neogótico tardío), lo que probablemente redujo los costos de construcción. A pesar de la relativa simplicidad del edificio, el costo final, \$70,000, superó con creces el presupuesto inicial. En este momento, la membresía incluía 450 personas y 300 estudiantes asistieron a la escuela dominical.

En 1922, el Reverendo Marsh renunció después de 15 años de servicio en la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth, el pastor de la congregación con más años de servicio hasta ese momento. Durante su mandato, reubicó el capital necesario para construir la iglesia y aumentó la membresía de la iglesia en 280 personas. Se destacó dentro de la comunidad, sirviendo como presidente de la Conferencia Estatal de Iglesias Congregacionales de Rhode Island de 1919 a 1920 y como miembro del comité ejecutivo de la Asociación de Escuela Dominical del Estado de Rhode Island. Se fue para servir como pastor de la Iglesia Federada en Sandwich, Massachusetts. El reverendo Hugh Penney se convirtió en el nuevo pastor en 1923 y sirvió hasta 1928 (*Providence Journal* 1922).

Fusión con la Unión Congregacional Iglesia

La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth y la Iglesia Congregacional Unión se fusionaron en febrero de 1927 y se convirtieron en la Iglesia Congregacional Plymouth-Unión (P-UCC). La Iglesia Congregacional Unión, establecida en 1871, adoraba en un edificio en Broad Street cerca de Stewart Street, además de tener una escuela dominical y una capilla en la esquina de Prairie Avenue y Ocean Street (antes Colwell Street); su edificio original de la iglesia ya no existe. La fusión creó una congregación de casi 1.200 miembros que adorarán en el edificio recientemente construido en 1014 Broad Street. Un artículo observó que la fusión estaba “en línea con las tendencias recientes de alejarse de las iglesias pequeñas a la idea de la construcción de una catedral” (*Providence Journal* 1927). El vecindario en South Providence también fue mencionado como una “importante sección residencial de la ciudad” (*Providence Journal* 1927). En enero de 1928, el

¹⁸ Este edificio ya no existe, ya que fue demolido en algún momento antes de 1956 (Sanborn 1956).

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Reverendo Penney y el Reverendo Theodore Bachelor (anteriormente miembro de la Iglesia Congregacional Unión) renunciaron (*Providence Journal*, 8 de enero de 1928). En septiembre de ese año, el reverendo Dr. Samuel Clifton se convirtió en pastor de P-UCC.

La congregación unida continuó adorando en 1014 Broad Street bajo el liderazgo del reverendo Clifton hasta 1941, cuando renunció debido a problemas de salud. Durante una entrevista, Clifton declaró que uno de sus objetivos en P-UCC era unir a las dos congregaciones. Descubrió que en las últimas años, “la población cambiante en el área de South Providence le creaba problemas especiales” (*Providence Journal* 1941). Clifton puede haberse estado refiriendo a los cambios demográficos del vecindario, que había sido el hogar de una población mayoritariamente irlandesa-estadounidense y judía durante décadas. A mediados del siglo XX, cuando los miembros de esas comunidades partieron hacia los suburbios, South Providence se convirtió en un vecindario mayoritariamente de clase trabajadora con una gran población afroamericana, muchos de los cuales habían emigrado del sur de Estados Unidos (RIHPHC 1978: 37-45).

Durante este período se produjo una alteración significativa en la iglesia: la adición en 1944 de la gran agrupación de vidrieras representativas en la pared sur del crucero. La ventana, que representa la resurrección de Cristo, fue diseñada por Hiemer & Co. de Nueva Jersey y fue donada por Nellie Florence Bunker Farnham (1870-1947) en memoria de su esposo, Frank E. Farnham (1869-1943) (Rhode Island Departamento de Salud Pública, División de Estadísticas Vitales 1943). Frank Farnham, presidente y tesorero de Jewelry Supply Co., que patenta al menos dos diseños relacionados con alfileres¹⁹, había sido presidente del Comité de Construcción de la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth. El, Nellie y sus dos hijos, Ethel y Gladys, residían en la calle Ontario aproximadamente a media milla de la iglesia (Censo de Estados Unidos 1930, 1940).

Decadencia de la Congregación Plymouth-Unión

La membresía en la Iglesia Congregacional Plymouth-Unión disminuyó a mediados del siglo XX, y dos nuevas congregaciones comenzaron a usar el edificio para el culto: la Iglesia Cristiana Central de Warwick y la Iglesia Bautista de Providence del Sur, la última de las cuales contemplaba fusionarse con la P-UCC en 1968 (*Providence Journal* 1966; *Providence Journal* 1968). En 1969, el reverendo J. Wesley Prince, quien había estado en la iglesia desde 1946, renunció, escribiendo en su carta de renuncia que cuando asumía el cargo en 1946, “los hermanos oficiales de la Conferencia Congregacional de Rhode Island y la Asociación de Rhode Island le dijeron Consejo de Iglesias” que se esperaba que el P-UCC “dejara de existir.” Cita las siguientes estadísticas que demuestran los cambios que enfrentó el P-UCC en 1969: la edad promedio de los miembros tenía 64 años; la composición del vecindario había cambiado, lo que significa que pocas personas que crecieron en la iglesia aún residían allí; y menos de 6 de las 182 parejas que se casaron por la iglesia en los últimos 10 años vivían en la ciudad (*Providence Journal* 1969). La congregación se había reducido a 190 personas en 1968, con 140 miembros activos (*Providence Journal* 1968).

En 1971, cuando la membresía había disminuido a aproximadamente 110 personas, el P-UCC transfirió el edificio en 1014 Broad Street a la Conferencia de Rhode Island de la Iglesia Unida de Cristo. El título fue luego transferido a la Iglesia Holy Cross de Dios en Cristo, una “congregación negra de 260 miembros, que ha sido bombardeada y hostigada en 93 Knight St., donde estaba ubicada en 1966” (*Providence Journal* 1971). Los líderes del P-UCC, la Iglesia Cristiana Central y la Iglesia de la Santa Cruz conmemoraron la transferencia el 26 de diciembre de 1971:

¹⁹ La industria de la joyería se hizo prominente en Providence a fines del siglo XIX, y en 1880 era el lugar principal para la industria (Woodward y Sanderson 1986: 19).

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La transferencia se lleva a cabo en un servicio conjunto de la Iglesia Congregacional Plymouth-Unión y la Iglesia Negra de la Santa Cruz de Dios en Cristo en el edificio Plymouth-Unión en 1014 Broad St....

La iglesia, que tiene capacidad para 275 a 300 personas, estaba llena un poco más de la mitad para el servicio, con la congregación casi dividida entre negros y blancos.

Uno o dos miembros de Plymouth-Unión expresaron su sorpresa de que no hubiera una congregación más grande.

Una diferencia notable en las dos congregaciones estaba en la edad de los dos grupos. Habla pocos jóvenes blancos presentes, la mitad blanca de la congregación por lo general tenga 60 años o más.

La mitad negra de la congregación era mucho más joven e incluía a dos docenas o más de niños (*Providence Journal* 1971).

El artículo del periódico también sugirió que la Iglesia P-UCC sería un lugar más seguro para que la congregación negra adorara porque su antigua iglesia estaba en un “vecindario de blancos,” mientras que “la iglesia de Broad Street esta adyacente a South Providence.” Estas observaciones resumen los cambios demográficos que ocurrieron dentro de la congregación y el vecindario más grande a mediados del siglo XX. La congregación de la P-UCC estaba envejeciendo y no había podido atraer nuevos miembros más jóvenes. Además, los miembros de la P-UCC se habían mudado fuera del vecindario y en los suburbios. Mientras tanto, la población de gran parte del sur de Providence se había vuelto predominantemente negra (RIHPC 1978: 42-45).

En 2015, después de 44 afijos en Broad Street, la Iglesia de Dios en Cristo de la Santa Cruz cerró. En 2016, la Iglesia Visión Evangélica, una congregación latinx, toma el título de la propiedad, lo que refleja la evolución continua de South Providence.

Importancia arquitectónica de la iglesia congregacional de Plymouth

La iglesia congregacional de Plymouth representa un excelente ejemplo del estilo del neogótico inglés con su campanario cuadrado, planta cruciforme, aberturas de puertas y ventanas de área apuntada y vidrieras intactas. Diseñado para George F. Newton, el interior de la iglesia contiene una gran nave que ocupa el centro (este-oeste) del edificio. La nave se dividía en dos espacios: el auditorio y la escuela dominical. Las puertas corredizas de vidrio separaban estos espacios y permitían que las clases de la escuela dominical participaran en la adoración. Tanto el auditorio como la ubicación de la escuela dominical reflejan las actitudes cambiantes de la iglesia protestante hacia la adoración y la educación religiosa.

El Auditorio y la Escuela Dominical

La Iglesia Congregacional en América tiene sus orígenes en los colonos puritanos de Nueva Inglaterra. Hasta bien entrado el siglo XIX, las iglesias congregacionales presentaban un pulpito prominente como el punto focal principal, lo que refleja la primacía del sermón:

Los centros litúrgicos puritanos incluían un pulpito alto con la congregación reunida a su alrededor en el piso principal y en una galería circundante. Directamente en frente del pulpito había generalmente un banco ocupado por los ancianos o diáconos. Delante de esto se encontraba la mesa del altar sobre la cual se podía colocar una pila bautismal. Y eso fue todo. Era el arreglo más simple y directo posible

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para el culto puritano (White 1964: 106).

Los ideales de la iglesia congregacional cambiaron a mediados del siglo XIX, con la introducción de coros y órganos, así como un nuevo estilo de predicación (White 1964: 110, 120, 125). La arquitectura de la iglesia siguió su ejemplo. Las iglesias congregacionales comenzaron a incluir presbiterios, que a liberaban al ministro, el coro, el organista y el órgano, y por lo general estaban en un escenario elevado que creaba una separación entre la congregación y los líderes de adoración. El espacio para la congregación “fue diseñado como una sala de audiencias muy parecida a la de un teatro” y pasó a llamarse auditorio (White 1964: 125-126). La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth, con su auditorio, presbiterio elevado, área de coro y cámara de órgano, encarna estos cambios. De hecho, los servicios de dedicación de la iglesia incluyeron un servicio vespertino y un recital de órgano a cargo de Edwin E. Wilde, el organista de la Iglesia Episcopal de San Esteban en Providence. El programa incluyó música de Bach y Handel entre otros. El coro también participó en el servicio (Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth 1919).

De manera similar, las percepciones protestantes de las escuelas dominicales cambiaron a fines del siglo XIX, con implicaciones para la arquitectura de la iglesia. Una vez vistas como instituciones secundarias que proporcionaban un lugar para los niños durante la misa, llegaron a ser vistas como instituciones primarias cruciales para el éxito futuro de la congregación:

Cuando finalmente se supo que las congregaciones obtenían su principal apoyo en el punto de conversos y adiciones - ochenta por ciento o más, creo - directamente de las filas de la Escuela Dominical, mientras que solo el veinticinco por ciento de las asignaciones presupuestarias se concedieron para su apoyo, la comprensión del verdadero alcance de esta fase del trabajo de la iglesia, impulsó un estudio detenido de las condiciones del problema en cuestión (Bach 1916: 223).

Las iglesias comenzaron a comprender que el éxito de las congregaciones dependía de cultivar miembros jóvenes y convertir a las asistentes a la escuela, y la arquitectura eclesiástica se desafió cada vez más para acomodar a las menores y programas dirigidos a un público más joven. Esto se logró mediante la construcción de aulas y salones sociales, a menudo desafiados por arquitectos profesionales. Un diseño que surgió fue el deseo de que los niños tuvieran una “conexión espiritual y física con el cuerpo principal de la congregación, su sala de audiencias y el pulpito,” al mismo tiempo que proporcionaban un espacio para el aprendizaje (Bach 1916: 223).

En 1867, Lewis Miller, un instructor de escuela dominical en Akron, Ohio, trabajó con los arquitectos Jacob Snyder y Walter Blythe para abordar este diseño en el diseño de la Primera Escuela Dominical Metodista de Akron (Evans 1914: 155). Su solución de diseño se conocería como el Plan Akron y se implementa en iglesias de todo el país. El objetivo del Plan Akron era proporcionar un espacio donde los estudiantes pudieran reunirse para participar en la adoración con los adultos y luego separarse para asistir a las lecciones. A ese fin, el plan incorpora un auditorio semicircular con un balcón. Las aulas en forma de cuña estaban ubicadas tanto en el balcón como debajo de él; Pueden abrirse o separarse del auditorio mediante el uso de pantallas o paredes móviles.

La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth utiliza un Plan Akron modificado, con aulas rectangulares ubicadas dentro y debajo de un balcón que podría estar abierto o cerrado al auditorio, con sus asientos semicirculares. El diseño y uso del edificio también refleja un pensamiento más actual sobre la enseñanza de la escuela dominical. En 1908, la Asociación Internacional de Escuela Dominical autoriza la “preparación de bosquejos de lecciones graduados” para diferentes grupos de edad o departamentos (Evans 1914: 158). Muchas escuelas dominicales adoptaron el sistema de grados y encontraron que el Plan Akron “no era adecuado para las nuevas lecciones...” que requieren espacio para que los departamentos se reúnan, así

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coma salones separados para las grades dentro de cada departamento (Evans 1914: 158). La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth tenía tres departamentos: senior, junior y kindergarten.

En un artículo de 1914 en *The Biblical World*, titulado “El edificio de la escuela dominical y su equipamiento,” Herbert Francis Evans, profesor de Grinnell College, proporciona recomendaciones para la organización de espacios arquitectónicos para la educación religiosa. Afirio que la sala de jardín de infantes debe estar ubicada en la planta baja con mucha luz y que debe inspirarse en las aulas de jardín de infancia de las escuelas públicas (Evans 1914: 167). Evans creía que el departamento junior necesitaba su propia habitación que pudiera dividirse en habitaciones más pequeñas mediante particiones extraíbles. La planta baja de la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth albergaba la clase de la escuela dominical del jardín de infancia, así como una gran sala de reuniones para el departamento de menores; Las puertas de acordeón separaban el departamento de jardín de infantes del departamento de menores. La planta baja contaba con un escenario, que podía ser utilizado para entretenimiento, además de una cocina, salón de banquetes, espacio para la Secretaria de la escuela dominical y una biblioteca de la escuela dominical (*Providence Journal* 1919).

Evans recomendó “el uso del auditorio de la iglesia para el culto de las departamentos de intermedio, Senior y Adultos... donde la escuela no es demasiado grande” (Evans 1914: 171). En la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth, el departamento para personas mayores tenía un espacio para reuniones en el primer piso para que pudieran escuchar la misa, alineado con aulas en el primer piso y en el balcón para lecciones en grupos más pequeños. Es probable que las particiones o cortinas separen las aulas del espacio de reunión, que a su vez podría separarse del auditorio con puertas corredizas.

El desafío de la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth fue consistente con las tendencias de construcción eclesiástica de la época. La inclusión de un auditorio con un presbiterio elevado, un área para el coro y una cámara para órganos refleja el alejamiento del pulpito puritano. El diseño de los espacios de la escuela dominical en el primer piso mostro la influencia duradera del Plan Akron, mientras que la separación de los departamentos de la escuela dominical, con estudiantes jóvenes en la planta baja, refleja enfoques más contemporáneos de la educación religiosa.

Arquitectura de la iglesia de estilo neogótico ingles

La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth es un ejemplo excelente e intacto de una iglesia de estilo neogótico ingles desafiada por el destacado arquitecto de Boston, George F. Newton. El movimiento del renacimiento gótico comenzó como un movimiento literario en Europa y se realiza arquitectónicamente en Europa a mediados del siglo XVIII como el estilo medieval par Sir Horace Walpole (McAlester 2015: 270). Presentaba frontones de pendiente pronunciada, áreas apuntados, almenas, contrafuertes y construcciones de piedra o mampostería. Este pintoresco estilo romántico se hizo popular en la construcción eclesiástica desde la segunda mitad del siglo XIX hasta la Segunda Guerra Mundial (White 1964: 138). Una de las primeras iglesias de estilo neogótico en Estados Unidos fue la Iglesia Episcopal Trinity en Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, construida en 1823 para el rector John Henry Hopkins. La iglesia fue bien recibida y lleva a Hopkins a publicar su *Ensayo Abre Arquitectura Gótica* en 1836 en el que traza la historia de la arquitectura gótica, ofrece dibujos y da consejos a otros miembros del clero. Encontrar el estilo gótico más adecuado para las estructuras eclesiásticas que el estilo griego porque “El gótico, rompiendo la línea horizontal y llevando la mirada hacia arriba hasta que sus pináculos se desvanecen en el cielo, parece adaptarse, para una correspondencia fácil, a las oficios de ese religión bendita, que toma el corazón de la contemplación de la tierra y lo dirige a su herencia celestial” (Hopkins 1836). Según Hopkins, las líneas altas y largas del estilo gótico evocaban visiones del cielo y el reino de Díos.

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El estilo gótico fue ensalzado aún más una década más tarde por la Cambridge Camden Society, un grupo de estudiantes universitarios varones de la Universidad de Cambridge en Inglaterra, que estudiaron arquitectura eclesiástica, restauraron iglesias medievales y promovieron el estilo gótico y la forma de iglesias medievales (Drummond 1934: 67; White 1964). El grupo publica folletos y un periódico, el *Ecclesiologist*. La forma medieval destaca la separación del presbiterio y la nave. También organizaron el estilo en tres pérfidos, incluido el estilo gótico decorado, que se caracterizó por áreas más anchos y trabajos de tracería en las ventanas (Hoffecker 1973: 221).

En los Estados Unidos, a partir de la década de 1890, el “segundo renacimiento gótico” fue dirigido en parte por el arquitecto Ralph Adams Cram (1863-1942) de Cram, Goodhue y Ferguson. Cram creía que el estilo gótico expresaba mejor la religión cristiana, aunque católica. También creía en la santidad de la disposición medieval de la separación de la nave y el presbiterio. Los diseños de Cram buscaban aumentar las emociones espirituales a través de la arquitectura y el arte. Uno de sus edificios más conocidos es la Catedral de San Juan el Divina en la ciudad de Nueva York, que estaba en proceso de construcción cuando se hizo cargo y rediseña el edificio en 1907. Debido en parte a Cram, el estilo neogótico inglés llega a ser aceptado como un estilo para todos los grupos religiosos eclesiásticos, no solo los de la Alta Iglesia Anglicana o la fe Católica (White 1964: 138).

La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth encarna el estilo del renacimiento gótico inglés, con su planta cruciforme; techo a dos aguas con pendiente pronunciada; torre de esquina almenada; aberturas de puertas y ventanas de área apuntado; así como detalles interiores, como la caja del órgano. La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth conserva un alto grado de integridad, con alteraciones exteriores limitadas al reemplazo de puertas secundarias y solo cambios modestos en el interior, como pisos nuevos en algunos espacios y la eliminación de las particiones de las aulas de la escuela dominical.

George F. Newton

La Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth fue diseñada por el arquitecto con sede en Boston George F. Newton (1857-1947). Newton comenzó a estudiar arquitectura en 1880 y completa su formación en el Atelier Daumet, École des Beaux Arts, París después de ganar la beca de viaje Rotch (AIA Archives 1900; Withey & Withey 1956). Newton fue el tercero en ganar el premio, cuyo objetivo era promover el interés de la profesión proporcionando becas para estudiar en el extranjero (Walkowski 2010). Al finalizar sus estudios, Newton consiguió un puesto como dibujante en la prestigiosa firma Peabody y Stearns en Boston y más tarde fue ascendido a un puesto de desafiador jefe (Withey & Withey 1956). Newton permanecía en la firma hasta que abrió su propia practica en 1893 (AIA Archives 1900). Newton fue miembro del Instituto Americana de Arquitectos (AIA) de 1900 a 1947 (Withey & Withey 1956).

La permanencia de Newton con Peabody y Stearns llegó en un momento crítico para la firma, cuando “se encontraron vacilando a la vanguardia de un influyente giro estilístico desde la reina Ana hasta lo colonial y el renacimiento” (Holden 1973: 115). La firma comenzó a ganar más atención en el área metropolitana de Boston y durante unos años rivalizó con McKim, Mead y White de la ciudad de Nueva York (Holden 1973: 115). Peabody y Stearns diseñó museos, edificios religiosos, edificios públicos institucionales y residencias. Se han atribuido al menos 17 iglesias a la firma (Holden 1973). A Peabody se le atribuye la diseminación de una “iglesia de tipo más arqueológico” construida en el estilo neogótico inglés y basada en iglesias medievales que en contra durante su visita a Inglaterra en 1882 (Holden 1973: 119). Este estilo de construcción presentaba formas rectangulares con torres, y algunas tenían entramados decorativos de estilo tudor.

Newton deja la firma de Peabody y Stearns en 1893 para comenzar su propia práctica, pero solo un año

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después se asoció con Clarence Howard Blackall (1853-1942) para establecer la firma Blackall y Newton. Ese mismo año, Newton se convirtió en el asistente principal del Sr. H. Langford Warren, el director del departamento de arquitectura recién incorporado en la Universidad de Harvard. Basado en una recomendación de Peabody, Newton también impartía clases de diseño y dibujo para el departamento, lo que hizo durante diez años (Universidad de Harvard 1895: 62).

Blackall y Newton se disolvió en 1896 y George Newton estableció su propia empresa. Llevo a cabo una amplia variedad de proyectos, incluidos edificios públicos, campus y hospitales durante su prolífica carrera. Sin embargo, las estructuras eclesióásticas parecen haber si de sus comisiones más frecuentes. En 1900, presenta tres diseños de iglesias como parte de los requisitos para una solicitud de AIA: la Iglesia Unitaria en Winchester, Massachusetts, que era una iglesia de piedra de estilo neogótico; la Iglesia Congregacional en Weymouth, Massachusetts, que era una iglesia de madera de estilo neogótico; y el diseño interior del Temple Tremont en Boston, que diseño mientras trabajaba en Blackall y Newton (AIA Archives).

Newton se sentía cómodo con el estilo del renacimiento gótico inglés y diseño muchos edificios en Massachusetts y en el Noreste con este estilo. Un obituario escrito por Emil Lorch y publicado en el *National Architect* declara: “Nueva Inglaterra está salpicada de encantadoras iglesias de su diseño en la tradición rural inglesa, mientras que el Temple Tremont en Boston implico un uso audaz del color en el exterior.” Sus diseños estaban en gran arte “marcados por la moderación y el refinamiento” (Lorch 1947). Tres de sus diseños aparecieron en *The Architectural Review* en 1905: la Iglesia Congregacional en Newton Highlands, Massachusetts (1905) (Shea 1981); la Iglesia Presbiteriana del Norte en Buffalo, Nueva York (ca. 1907); y la Primera Iglesia Congregacional en Wellesley, Massachusetts (1901) (Fitzpatrick y Price 1987). La última iglesia, construida 14 años antes que la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth, tiene muchas características casi idénticas, incluido el piano del piso, la disposición de los bancos y las vigas y tirantes de martillo de madera (Figura 8) (*The Architectural Review* 1905). En 1902, Newton diseño la Segunda Iglesia Congregacional en Attleboro, Massachusetts, una iglesia de ladrillo rojo estilo renacimiento gótico ingles con una escuela dominical en un cobertizo lateral. El diseño la Iglesia Congregacional en Newton Highlands, Massachusetts, que es una iglesia de granito de estilo gótico ingles con una escuela dominical, en 1905-1906 (NRIS # 16001747). En 1907, fue el arquitecto de la Primera Iglesia Bautista Melrose en Melrose, Massachusetts. Este edificio también fue una iglesia de granito de estilo gótico ingles con un ell lateral. Fuera de Massachusetts, Newton fue el arquitecto del Buffalo Homeopathic Hospital en Buffalo, Nueva York en 1911 y del Buffalo Seminary en 1909.

Hiemer & Company

La gran agrupación de vidrieras figurativas en la pared sur de la nave de la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth fue desafiada, fabricada e instalada por Hiemer & Co. en 1944. La empresa fue fundada en 1931 por Georg Hiemer y su hijo Edward. Georg nació en Alemania y fue aprendiz en Munich hasta 1890. Edward Hiemer estudio con su padre en Munich y en París y Dresden. Más tarde se estableció en Columbus, Ohio, donde trabajo coma desafiador para Von Gerichten Art Glass Company entre 1925 y 1930. Georg deja Europa en 1929 y se uno a Edward en Columbus; dos años después, el padre y el hijo fundo Hiemer & Company Stained Glass Studio. Edward Hiemer traslado la empresa a Paterson, Nueva Jersey en 1933, y luego a Clifton, Nueva Jersey, en 1949. Durante el apogeo de su producción entre las décadas de 1930 y 1950, la empresa empleaba a 25 personas. Edward aprendió a su hijo, Gerhard Hiemer, en el arte de las vidrieras. La hija de Gerhard, Judith Hiemer Van Wie, y su esposo James Van Wie actualmente operan la empresa. Durante una entrevista en 2018, Judith declare que la empresa familiar había creado vidrieras para 1.131 iglesias. Su trabajo actual se centra en la restauración de vidrieras (Hiemer & Company Stained Glass Studio 2020; Maag 2018).

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Austin Organs, Inc.

El órgano de tubos de la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth es un órgano de tubos de 2 manuales y 11 pasos (Opus # 769) fabricado por Austin Organ Company de Hartford, Connecticut. John T. y Basil G. Austin incorporaron Austin Organ Company en 1898. John Austin emigro de Inglaterra a los Estados Unidos en 1889. Había aprendido la construcción de órganos de su padre y fue empleado por Farrand y Votey Organ Company en Detroit, Michigan. John Austin desarrolla el sistema Universal Air Chest, que fue patentado en 1893. El Universal Air Chest proporciona “presión absoluta y uniforme a todas y cada una de las tuberías en todas las condiciones de uso.” Vendía la idea a Clough & Warren Company en Detroit. La primera máquina basada en su patente fue construida en 1893 (Austin Organs 2020b). Basil G. Austin, hermano de John, emigro a los Estados Unidos en 1893. Cuando Basil y John Austin incorporaron su nueva compañía en 1898, primero alquilaron un espacio en Boston, luego se mudaron a Hartford en 1899 y alquilaron un espacio en Watson H. Molinos de felicidad. El sistema Universal Air Chest se hizo famoso cuando Austin Organ Company patrocinó la gira del organista y compositor inglés Edwin H. Lemare en 1902. El éxito de Lemare generó un aumento de los negocios y la conciencia de la empresa. La compañía prosperó entre 1915 y 1931 y produjo 1.200 órganos de tubos durante esos años, entre ellos el órgano de la Iglesia Congregacional de Plymouth.²⁰ La Austin Organ Company se disolvió en 1935 y se incorpora a Austin Organs Inc. que era operada por los sobrinos de John Austin, Frederic B. y Basil F. Austin. La compañía todavía está en funcionamiento hoy (Austin Organs 2020b).

²⁰ Austin Organs fabricó al menos 37 órganos para su uso en Rhode Island, incluso en la Catedral de los Santos Pedro y Pablo en Providence (Austin Organs 2020a).

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