

**CITY OF CHICAGO
COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS**

April 4, 2024

**RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHICAGO THAT
CHICAGO LANDMARK DESIGNATION BE ADOPTED FOR**

**HYDE PARK UNION CHURCH
5600 South Woodlawn Avenue**

Docket No. 2024-04

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago:

Pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code of the City of Chicago (the “Municipal Code”), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the “Commission”) has determined that Hyde Park Union Church (the “Building”) is worthy of Chicago Landmark designation. On the basis of careful consideration of the history and architecture of the Building, the Commission has found that it satisfies the following three (3) criteria set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Municipal Code:

1. *Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*
4. *Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*
5. *Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.*

I. BACKGROUND

The formal landmark designation process for the Building began on February 8, 2024, when the Commission approved a preliminary landmark recommendation (the “Preliminary Recommendation”) for the Building as a Chicago Landmark. The Commission found that the Building meets three (3) of the seven (7) criteria for designation, as well as the integrity criterion, identified in the *Chicago Landmarks Ordinance* (Municipal Code, Section 2-120-580 *et seq.*). The Preliminary Recommendation, incorporated herein and attached hereto as **Exhibit 1**, initiated the process for further study and analysis of the proposed designation of the Building as a Chicago Landmark. As part of the Preliminary Recommendation, the Commission identified the “significant historical and architectural features” of the Building as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Building.

Also, as part of the Preliminary Recommendation, the Commission adopted a Designation Report, dated February 2024, the most current iteration of which is dated April 4, 2024, incorporated herein and attached hereto as **Exhibit 2** (the “Designation Report”). At the February 8, 2024, meeting, Commission staff indicated that they were in discussion with the owners to assess the interior for possible inclusion in the proposed designation.

At its regular meeting of March 7, 2024, Ciere Boatright, Commissioner of the Department of Planning and Development (DPD), noted that she did not have a formal report, but that she recommended approval of the proposed landmark designation of the Building.

On March 26, 2024, the Commission officially requested consent to the proposed landmark designation from the owner of the Building, Hyde Park Union Church, a religious corporation, to include exterior and, tentatively, interior “historical and architectural features,” said interior features to be taken under final consideration by the Commission at a future meeting. On March 28, 2024, the Commission received a form signed by Mary Rogel, Church Moderator, consenting to the proposed landmark designation with both exterior and interior features.

At the Commission’s April 4, 2024, meeting, upon review of additional information in the Designation Report, the Commission voted to identify the “significant historical and architectural features” of the Building as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building; and
- The interior of the entrance vestibules and sanctuary, including but not limited to the overall historic spatial volume and historic decorative finishes and features. Specifically excluded as significant features of the interior are the pews, the organ, and any non-historic elements including but not limited to the recreated hanging light fixtures.

II. FINDINGS OF THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code, the Commission has reviewed the entire record of proceedings on the proposed Chicago Landmark designation, including the Designation Report and all of the information on the proposed landmark designation of the Building; and

WHEREAS, the Building meets the three (3) criteria for landmark designation set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (4), and (5) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the Building reflects the history of the growth and development of the Hyde Park neighborhood, particularly the influence that the University of Chicago had on the area. The establishment of the nearby university resulted in an influx of students and faculty to the neighborhood, which greatly bolstered the church’s membership as many joined the congregation; and

WHEREAS, the Building was originally founded as the First Baptist Church of Hyde Park in 1874. The church experienced tandem growth with the University of Chicago, founded in 1890, due in large part to their shared Baptist origins. The secular university was organized by the

American Baptist Education Society. As a result, many of the early faculty, including the first University President William Rainey Harper, were of the Baptist faith and became active members of the church; and

WHEREAS, construction of the Building in 1906 was funded in part by business magnate John D. Rockefeller, a founder and major benefactor of the University of Chicago. Rockefeller, a member of the American Baptist Education Society, was deeply devoted to spreading Baptist ideals through education. He attributed his donation to his view that, as the nearest Baptist church to the University of Chicago, Hyde Park Union Church served an essential role by providing students and staff with moral and spiritual guidance; and

WHEREAS, the Building's 1906 sanctuary exemplifies the Richardsonian Romanesque architecture style. Its use of the style's distinctive characteristics, including heavy, rusticated stone walls, round-arched fenestration, a steep gable roof, and corner towers, imparted a sense of majesty and permanence, an appealing choice for church construction. The Richardsonian Romanesque style has had a significant influence on the history and visual character of Chicago's built environment, not only with churches but with many buildings constructed in this style in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including several current Chicago Landmarks such as the Auditorium Building and the Former Chicago Historical Society Building; and

WHEREAS, the Building's 1926 Education Wing addition was designed to blend harmoniously with the existing Richardsonian Romanesque 1906 sanctuary, while also incorporating subtly distinctive elements that display the influence of the Classical Revival style. This style was more common at the time of the Education Wing's construction and is reflected in the addition's smooth brick walls in place of rough-textured rusticated stone, rectangular windows, and flat roofline with a dentiled, red-brick cornice; and

WHEREAS, the stained-glass windows at the Building are finely crafted works by the Tiffany, Charles J. Connick, and F. X. Zettler studios, internationally recognized creators of stained glass, each with distinctive construction techniques, use of materials, and design philosophies; and


WHEREAS, the Building's 1906 sanctuary was designed by James Gamble Rogers, a nationally renowned architect who is most well-known for his Collegiate Gothic buildings at universities such as Yale, Columbia, and Northwestern. His designs contributed to a distinct and cohesive architectural identity for these campuses that embodied tradition and gravitas; and

WHEREAS, James Gamble Rogers designed a complex of buildings for the University of Chicago's School of Education including Blaine Hall (1903; now the location of the University of Chicago Laboratory School). The selection of James Gambles Rogers as architect for the Building's 1906 sanctuary, an architect whose work was so closely associated with high-prestige academic institutional buildings, further reflected and reinforced the link between Hyde Park Union Church and the University of Chicago; now, therefore,

THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS HEREBY:

1. Adopts the recitals, findings, and statements of fact set forth in the preamble and Sections I and II hereof as the findings of the Commission; and
2. Adopts the Final Designation Report, as revised, and dated this 4th day of April 2024, and
3. Finds, based on the Designation Report and the entire record before the Commission, that the Building meets the three (3) criteria for landmark designation set forth in Sections 2-120-620 (1), (4), and (5) of the Municipal Code; and
4. Finds that the Building satisfies the "integrity" requirement set forth in Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code; and
5. Finds that the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are identified as follows:
 - All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building; and
 - The interior of the entrance vestibules and sanctuary, including but not limited to the overall historic spatial volume and historic decorative finishes and features. Specifically excluded as significant features of the interior are the pews, the organ, and any non-historic elements including but not limited to the recreated hanging light fixtures.
6. Recommends that the Building be designated a Chicago Landmark.

This recommendation was adopted unanimously (8-0).


Ernest C. Wong, Chairman
Commission on Chicago Landmarks

Dated: April 4, 2023

EXHIBIT 1

Resolution
by the
Commission on Chicago Landmarks
on the
Preliminary Landmark Recommendation
for

HYDE PARK UNION CHURCH

5600 South Woodlawn Avenue

February 8, 2024

Whereas, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the “Commission”) preliminarily finds that:

- Hyde Park Union Church (the “Building”), located at 5600 South Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, meets the three (3) criteria for landmark designation set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1), (4), and (5) of the Municipal Code of Chicago (the “Municipal Code”), as specifically described in the Preliminary Summary of Information (the “Preliminary Summary”) submitted to the Commission on this 8th day of February, 2024, by the Department of Planning and Development (“DPD”); and
- The Building satisfies the historic integrity requirement set forth in Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code as described in the Preliminary Summary; now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks:

Section 1. The above recitals are expressly incorporated in and made part of this resolution as though fully set forth herein.


Section 2. The Commission hereby adopts the Preliminary Summary and makes a preliminary landmark recommendation concerning the Building in accordance with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code.

Section 3. For purposes of Section 2-120-740 of the Municipal Code governing permit review, the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are preliminarily identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of Hyde Park Union Church (the “Building”).

Section 4. The Commission hereby requests a report or statement from the Commissioner of DPD, which evaluates the relationship of the proposed designation to the City’s governing plans and policies and the effect of the proposed designation on the surrounding neighborhood in accordance with Section 2-120-640 of the Municipal Code.

This recommendation was adopted unanimously (7-0).


Ernest C. Wong, Chairman
Commission on Chicago Landmarks

Dated: February 8, 2024

EXHIBIT 2

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



HYDE PARK UNION CHURCH

5600 SOUTH WOODLAWN AVENUE

Final Landmark Recommendation adopted by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, April 4, 2024



CITY OF CHICAGO
Brandon Johnson, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
Ciere Boatright, Commissioner

Cover photo by Patrick Pyszka.

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HYDE PARK UNION CHURCH

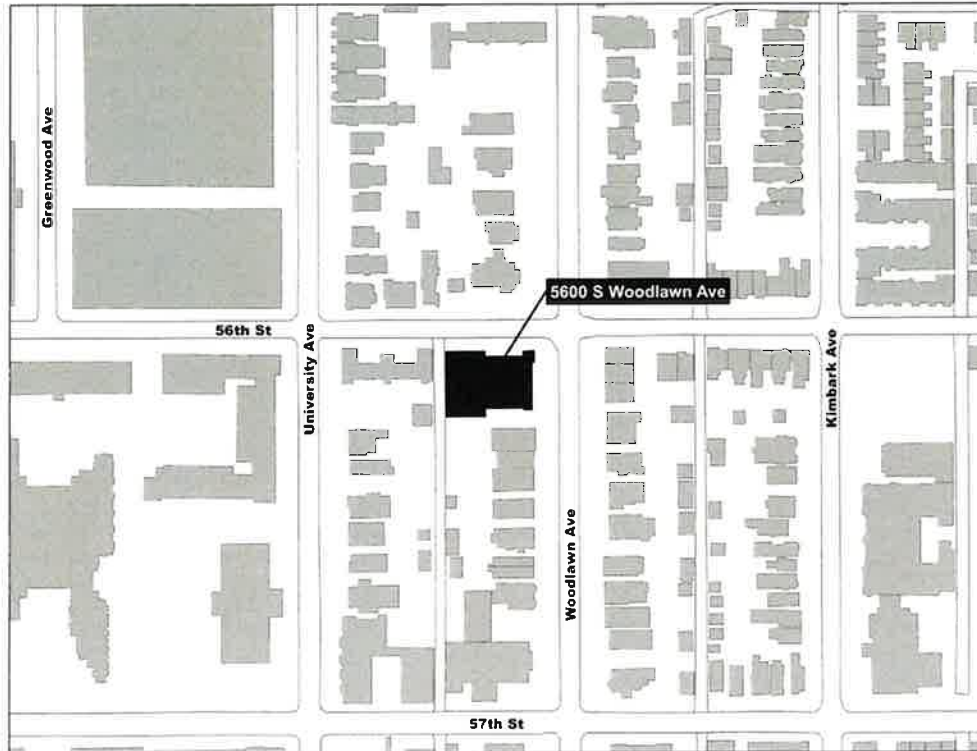
**(FORMERLY KNOWN AS FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF HYDE PARK, AND
HYDE PARK BAPTIST CHURCH)**

5600 SOUTH WOODLAWN AVENUE

**CONSTRUCTED: 1906 (CHURCH BUILDING)
1926 (EDUCATION WING)**

**ARCHITECTS: JAMES GAMBLE ROGERS (CHURCH BUILDING)
MORISON & WALLACE (EDUCATION WING)**

Hyde Park Union Church stands as a monument of both architectural splendor and historical significance in the heart of Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood. Designed by James Gamble Rogers, a prominent architect whose work left an indelible mark on the early twentieth-century American landscape, the church is a distinct example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style. The building's proximity to the University of Chicago has made it a sanctuary for academics for over a century, starting with William Rainey Harper, the university's first president.



Above: Map of Hyde Park Union Church, located at South Woodlawn Avenue and East 56th Street in the Hyde Park Community Area on Chicago's South Side.

Below: East elevation. (Photo by Patrick Pyszka)



HISTORY OF THE CHURCH CONGREGATION AND BUILDINGS

The roots of Hyde Park Union Church trace back to 1874, when the First Baptist Church of Hyde Park was founded. That same year, the burgeoning congregation funded the construction of a small, wood-frame church at 54th Street and Dorchester Avenue in what was then the suburban township of Hyde Park. This church served as the cornerstone of a rapidly evolving community, undergoing expansion and remodeling in 1887 to accommodate a growing congregation. Just two years later, Hyde Park Township was annexed to become part of the growing City of Chicago, a move that symbolized the area's growing importance.

The late nineteenth century brought further change to the area with the founding of the University of Chicago in 1890. The Baptist community played a pivotal role in the university's origins. At the time, the American Baptist Education Society (ABES) was heavily involved in the establishment and support of higher education institutions as part of a broader interest in promoting education as a means of societal moral betterment. Prominent business magnate John D. Rockefeller, a devout Baptist and member of the ABES, provided substantial funding for the school and helped recruit Yale professor of religion William Rainey Harper as its first president.

The University of Chicago began holding classes in 1892, and Hyde Park quickly became a thriving academic community. Although the university was secular, its early association with the ABES drew in many Baptist students and faculty, and the First Baptist Church of Hyde Park was well-situated as the closest Baptist house of worship to the campus. The congregation grew rapidly, doubling in number between 1890 and 1895, and this influx included many intellectuals and prominent university figures who brought with them a significant shift in means and social status. In church records from 1893, cited in John Boyer's occasional paper on William Rainey Harper, church clerk George E. Robertson wrote:

All branches of our church have grown and prospered and our numbers have increased. We have felt the responsibility of our position in being located as...the natural center of the population connected with the University of Chicago. We have felt the touch of the influence of the University and receive great help from many connected with it.

That help came in many forms. Among the new congregants was University President Harper, who, along with other academics, naturally took an active role in the teaching functions of the church. In 1893, Harper began encouraging leadership to build a new church more befitting of the increased size and prosperity of its membership. The following year, the original church building was demolished and the land was sold. The congregation temporarily held their services at the university's Rosalie and Cobb Halls while they envisioned their future home. In 1895, the church purchased two empty lots from Marshall Field (founder of the eponymous Chicago department store) at the southwest corner of East 56th Street and South Woodlawn Avenue. This location was selected for its proximity to the University of Chicago campus and with an eye toward the surrounding area, which was being developed as a residential neighborhood of grand homes intended for university professors. A two-story, red-stone church, designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style by local architects Normand Patton and

Reynolds Fisher, was completed on the site in 1896. This building was intentionally situated on the western half of the property, so the church could expand eastward as the congregation grew.

The turn of the century saw a continuation of prosperity and growth for the church. Membership more than doubled, from 265 in 1896 to 601 in 1901, bolstered by the increase in numbers of the nearby university staff and students, and this financial stability allowed for more ambitious plans. In 1901, planning and fundraising efforts to construct another, larger church building began. Gifts totaling \$40,000 were committed by congregants, many of them university staff of considerable means. This impressive sum was augmented by a generous \$15,000 donation from John D. Rockefeller, whose intentions were listed in a notice written by his son and published in the *Chicago Tribune*:

April 8, 1901 – Memorandum by J.D. Rockefeller, Jr.: In making the pledge of \$15,000 to the Hyde Park Baptist Church of Chicago...it is understood by us that this does not establish a precedent for aiding individual churches directly. The Hyde Park Church is regarded as a special case in view of the facts that –

The university does not at present provide a church in which the professors and students can take up Christian work.

The Hyde Park Church, being the nearest to the university campus, seems to be the best adapted to fill this need.

Already a larger number of professors and students are attending this church because of the advantages which it offers over any other church.

Because of the opportunity which it affords for the working out of valuable ideas in connection with Sunday school work by Dr. Harper, Professor Burton, and other professors.

This pledge to the Hyde Park Baptist Church Mr. Rockefeller views in the light of a gift, practically, to the University of Chicago, and not as a gift to an individual.

This memo also reflects the mutually beneficial nature of the relationship between the church and the University of Chicago, as exemplified by the multiple members of the congregation who were also key figures at the university. Ernest DeWitt Burton, a distinguished biblical scholar who later served as president of the university, played a crucial role in the development of the university's Divinity School as well as the Hyde Park Baptist Church School, where he was the Director of Instruction for nearly a decade. The first secretary of the University of Chicago, Thomas Wakefield Goodspeed, was a gifted fundraiser who was instrumental in raising money and support for the initial founding of the university and, later, the construction of the Hyde Park Baptist Church's 1906 sanctuary building. As the appointed historian of both the university and the church, he crafted comprehensive histories of each institution. Charles Gilkey, pastor at the church from 1910-1928, served as a University of Chicago Trustee and was appointed Dean of the university's new Rockefeller Memorial Chapel upon its completion



Above: Glass plate photograph of the church façade during construction, circa 1904-05.
(Source: Hyde Park Union Church archives)

Below: Photograph of the church circa 1906. The 1896 building is still present at the rear.
(Source: Hyde Park Union Church archives)





Above: The sanctuary interior circa 1906, facing east. (Source: Hyde Park Union Church archives)

Below: The sanctuary interior circa 1906, facing west. (Source: Hyde Park Union Church archives)



in 1928, and was also a professor and Associate Dean at the university's Divinity School. These are just some of the individuals that highlight the strong relationship and influence between both institutions.

In 1901, architect James Gamble Rogers was commissioned to bring the church's vision for a new edifice to life. Per the planning committee's request, his early plans were for an ornate, Gothic Revival-style church with a nearly 200-foot-tall tower, which would retain and connect with the 1896 Patton & Fisher church building to the west. However, construction bids for this design turned out to be double the amount raised by the congregation. Rogers worked with church officials to develop a more cost-efficient, yet still impressive, Richardsonian Romanesque design, which would complement the existing church building.

The new church building for the Hyde Park Baptist Church (the congregation had changed their name in 1904) was completed at a cost of approximately \$80,000 as planned. Dedication ceremonies and events began on January 7, 1906, with addresses given by multiple University of Chicago professors. The celebrations were dampened by the death of university president William Rainey Harper, a congregant who had been a key figure in the planning of the new church building, just three days after its dedication.

In the ensuing years, the church's interior saw continuous enhancements, reflective of its growing stature and wealth. To save on construction costs, the church had been built with standard glass windows. As funds became available, they were gradually replaced with intricate stained-glass windows, including pieces by the renowned Tiffany, Connick, and Zettler studios. Many of these windows were donated in memoriam of prominent congregants, with one of the first dedicated to Harper.

Church membership continued to grow through the early twentieth century, mirroring the prosperity and expansion of the surrounding neighborhood. The increase in congregation size brought about a pressing need for additional space for educational and community uses. Responding to this, the church embarked on a project to construct a significant addition. The plan was to demolish the original 1896 chapel, and replace it with a larger structure that would integrate with the adjacent 1906 church building.

The design of the new addition was entrusted to the architectural firm of Morison and Wallace, of which James Morison was not only an architect but also a member of the Hyde Park Baptist Church. The firm set out to create an addition that would not only meet the functional needs of the church, but also complement and enhance the existing structure. The resulting design was the four-story Education Wing, along with a fifth-floor tower addition. These maintained the Richardsonian Romanesque style that defined the church's aesthetic. The use of similar stone materials, arch motifs, and robust construction echoed the original design, ensuring a seamless visual continuity.

As anticipated, construction necessitated the demolition of the old chapel, allowing the new Education Wing, completed in 1926, to provide much-needed space for Sunday school classes, church meetings, and community events. The additional rooms and facilities enabled the church



Above: During construction of the 1926 Education Wing addition, looking southeast.
(Source: Hyde Park Union Church archives)

Below: Photograph of the church sometime after the 1926 Education Wing addition. (Source: Hyde Park Union Church archives)



to enhance its educational programs and community outreach efforts, further cementing its role as a vital center of both spiritual and social life in Hyde Park. Indeed, the ensuing years would mark the height of the congregation's numbers, which reached their peak in 1934 with a total of 1,483 members.

While the early to mid-twentieth century witnessed the church's expansion of its physical presence and influence, as the 1960s dawned, the church found itself needing to adapt to a period marked by social and cultural shifts across the United States. In this era of transformation, the church leadership and congregation reassessed their religious mission and community role. This introspection led to a significant decision in 1963: the church formally affiliated with the United Church of Christ (UCC), a denomination known for its progressive stance on social issues and its commitment to ecumenical and interfaith engagement. This affiliation was not just a change in denominational ties; it was a profound statement of the church's commitment to inclusivity and a broader, more ecumenical approach to faith. Along with this affiliation came a change in name. The church, previously known as the Hyde Park Baptist Church, was renamed Hyde Park Union Church. This new name reflected the church's commitment to a spirit of unity and collaboration, acknowledging the diverse backgrounds and beliefs of its congregation.

In the years since, Hyde Park Union Church has continued to play a vital role in the Hyde Park neighborhood and beyond, engaging in both religious and broader social initiatives, reinforcing its reputation as a progressive, inclusive, and intellectually vibrant place of worship. Today, the church building and education wing gracing the corner of Woodlawn Avenue and 56th Street stand as a testament to a harmonious blend of faith, community, and architectural elegance – a story woven into the fabric of Chicago's history.

THE RICHARDSONIAN ROMANESQUE ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

The Richardsonian Romanesque architectural style, used for the Hyde Park Union Church, derives from the work of noteworthy American architect Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1866), one of the country's finest nineteenth-century architects. A variation on the broader Romanesque Revival style, which was widely popular in the United States from the 1840s through the early twentieth century, Richardsonian Romanesque is based on the eleventh- and twelfth-century architecture of Western Europe, especially church buildings in southern France and northern Spain. These medieval buildings were, in turn, inspired by ancient Roman and Byzantine architectural forms and ornamentation. Richardsonian Romanesque buildings are characterized by their massive, articulated wall structures built of stone or brick, round arches, rusticated stone walls, squat columns, and medieval-influenced foliate ornament.

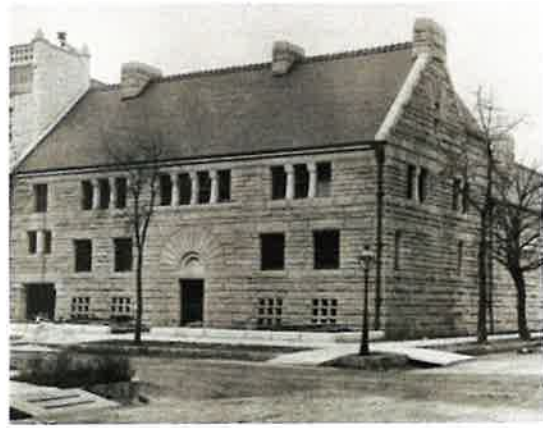
The revival of the Romanesque architectural style, which began in England and Germany in the 1830s, occurred simultaneously with the revival of the Gothic style, and similarly drew upon medieval architectural precedents. Many Protestant denominations favored Romanesque Revival-style architecture because of its perceived links to the Early Christian, or "primitive,"



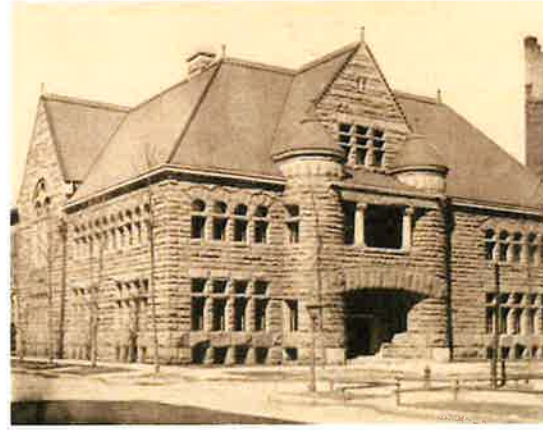
Above: Nazareth Church in Berlin, built in 1831. (Source: *Karl Friedrich Schinkel als Künstler* by Andreas Haus)



Above: Trinity Church in Boston, designed by Henry Hobson Richardson. (Source: Ryerson and Burnham Archives)



Early examples of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture in Chicago. Clockwise from above left: Auditorium Building, Glessner House, Former Chicago Historical Society, and Church of the Epiphany. (Source: Ryerson and Burnham Archives)



church, in contrast to Gothic Revival-style architecture which was tied to Catholic and “High-Church” Anglican churches. One fine, early, European example of the Romanesque Revival architectural style is Karl Friedrich Schinkel’s Old Nazareth Church in Berlin. Begun in 1831, its strong massing, round arches, and simple ornament made it seem less visually ostentatious than Gothic Revival-style churches of the period. The earliest-known American religious structure in the Romanesque Revival style was the Church of the Pilgrims, a Congregational church in Brooklyn Heights, New York, completed in 1846 by English-born architect Richard Upjohn. Other architects that produced Romanesque Revival-style churches in the mid-nineteenth century include John Notman and James Renwick. Renwick also used Romanesque Revival for the original Smithsonian Institution “castle,” built from 1846 to 1855 and located on the Mall in Washington, D.C.

The Richardsonian Romanesque Style in Chicago

After falling somewhat out of favor during the 1860s and 1870s, a period when classically based architectural styles such as the Italianate and Second Empire were fashionable, the Romanesque Revival style enjoyed a resurgence in the 1880s due to the work of architect Henry Hobson Richardson. Richardson’s Trinity Church, located in Boston’s Back Bay neighborhood and completed in 1877, was a Romanesque Revival masterpiece and encouraged many religious congregations to seek similar designs for their own church buildings. Other buildings designed by Richardson over the next decade, including Albany City Hall in New York and the Allegheny County Courthouse in Pittsburgh, encouraged the spreading popularity of Richardson’s variation of the Romanesque Revival style, which later became known as Richardsonian Romanesque.

The Richardsonian Romanesque architectural style made a significant impact on architecture in the Midwest and Chicago during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. From roughly 1885 to 1900, in Chicago alone, hundreds of public and private buildings were built in this style. These included three Chicago structures designed by Richardson himself, while he was based in Brookline, Massachusetts: the Marshall Field Wholesale Store (1885-87, demolished), the Franklin MacVeagh House (1885-86, demolished), and the John J. Glessner House (1886-87), a Chicago Landmark and a National Historic Landmark. Chicago architects knew Richardson’s work well through architectural publications as well as this handful of Chicago commissions.

In Chicago, the Richardsonian Romanesque style was used for a number of public buildings such as schools and cultural institutions as well as for monuments. Among the best known are the Auditorium Building (1886-90), the former Chicago Historical Society Building (1890-95), and the Armour Institute Main Building (1891-93), all Chicago Landmarks; and the base of the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial in Lincoln Park (1886-91, extant). The style was also seen in hundreds of private residences, both free-standing and row houses. Its influence extended to Chicago’s distinctive Greystone two- and three-flats, many of which utilize rough-textured limestone walls and squat porch columns, vernacular expressions of forms and details used for earlier, more high-style Richardsonian Romanesque buildings.



Above: The north elevation of Hyde Park Union Church. The Education Wing begins at the middle tower and extends westward to the alley.

Below: Looking NW at the east elevation of Hyde Park Union Church. At left is the recessed portion of the building which gives a clear view of the Education Wing. (Photos by Patrick Pyszka)



The visual grandeur and sense of permanence of the Richardsonian Romanesque style was especially attractive to church congregations undertaking new construction during the 1880s and 1890s. Chicago religious buildings in this style include the Metropolitan Apostolic Community Church at 4100 South Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive (1891; a Chicago Landmark) and the Church of the Epiphany (1885; located within the Jackson Boulevard Chicago Landmark District), both of which are visually similar to Hyde Park Union Church.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN OF THE BUILDING

Site Plan and Overall Appearance

The structure sits on a roughly 180' x 120' lot on the southwest corner of East 56th Street and South Woodlawn Avenue, with main entrances in corner towers facing both streets. The building's eastern half, encompassing the sanctuary (understood in this report to reference the room for religious worship where congregants gather as opposed to its narrower definition as that part of the chancel where the high altar is located) and constructed in 1906, is set back from the lot lines and nearly square in shape. It fits like a puzzle piece into the narrower, rectangular 1926 Education Wing to the west which has no setbacks.

The original church building exhibits hallmark characteristics of the Richardsonian Romanesque style, including its rusticated stone walls, round-arched entrances and windows, and corner towers. The rough-faced Jacobsville sandstone blocks that make up the bulk of the exterior give the church a robust and sturdy appearance, with their distinctive warm, red hue providing a striking contrast with the light-colored Indiana limestone used for accents and trim. The walls of the later, western addition are clad with a similarly rich-toned red brick, and its five-story tower, located at the intersection of the older and newer portions of the building, incorporates stepped, sandstone buttresses similar to those of the original building as a kind of visual transition. Red clay barrel-tile roof cladding is visible on the steep gables of the 1906 sanctuary building, while the taller 1926 addition has a flat roof.

East (Primary) Elevation

The east façade, which serves as the building's primary elevation, is organized into three distinct parts. The central focal point is a massive, steeply pitched gable wall with a prominent rose window situated in the center. The gable's peak is adorned with a stone finial, adding a vertical counterpoint to the horizontal spread of the building. The rose window, an iconic element of Romanesque and Gothic architecture, is composed of intricate tracery and stained glass that form a striking focal point. On the ground floor, beneath the rose window, there are five arched windows. Each has a central mullion that splits to form a circle over two arches. A limestone belt course above denotes the transition to the second story, where two small, singular clerestory windows flank the rose window. These small lancet windows are simpler in design but echo the arched motif seen throughout the building.



Far Left: The rose window at the east elevation.

Left: Looking westward along the north elevation with the Education Wing's five-story tower in the distance.

Below: The recessed portion of the north elevation. (Photos by Patrick Pyszka)



The central, gable-front section is flanked on either side by lower, square, corner towers which are delineated by stepped buttresses. Each has an identical double-door entrance, recessed within a larger compound arch and framed by pairs of partial-height columns that support an archivolt. The north tower has raking limestone trim above its entryway and two arched windows at the second floor, and is topped with a substantial limestone parapet featuring decorative pilasters and brackets.

The north tower is noticeably wider than the south tower and projects out further from the building. The south tower is barely wider than the entryway and has one small window at the second story and a side-gable, tiled roof. Directly south of this entryway, there is a walk that leads to an identical entryway on a recessed section of the building which provides access to the ground floor of the 1926 addition. This narrow section's east elevation features paired, rectangular windows at the second and third floors, with paired, arched windows at the fourth floor, and a flat roofline with a dentiled cornice.

North Elevation

The façade of the aforementioned north tower is repeated on its north elevation. To the west of this tower, the façade is recessed with a row of five arched windows at the ground floor with the same mullion configuration as those along the east elevation. The second story is set further back and lined with a row of repeating, small, arched, clerestory windows separated by limestone pilasters. Above these windows is the steep side gable of the main, clay-tiled roof.

A particularly striking feature of this elevation is the five-story, flat-roofed tower that rises above the main roofline. The diamond pattern of its window glazing gives it a medieval look and, at the second floor, narrow windows are framed by limestone arcades. The tower marks the beginning of the 1926 building addition known as the Education Wing. Except for the east face of the tower's first floor and the stepped buttresses at the corners of the tower, this portion of the building is clad in red brick with limestone accents. Many design elements from the earlier portion of the building are used in the addition including the entry at the base of the tower, the red-stone buttresses at the corners of the tower, and arched windows with variations of circular elements. However, there are also elements that are more indicative of the Classical Revival style that had become more popular in Chicago at the time of the addition's construction. These elements include the smooth brick walls in place of rusticated stone, rectangular windows; and the dentiled, red-brick cornice just below the flat roofline.

West Elevation

This elevation faces an alleyway. Despite this, it is clad in the same finished red-brick masonry as the north elevation. At this elevation, you can see that the central third of the Education Wing is half the height of its northern and southern arms. There are somewhat irregular rows of simple windows with limestone sills, but the first-floor windows are arched with one rectangular window of three narrow casements toward the south end. There are two metal fire escapes on this elevation.



Above: Photograph of the sanctuary interior circa 1906, showing the original, relatively unadorned area under the chancel arch. (Source: Hyde Park Union Church archives)

Below: Illustration showing the completed sanctuary renovations from the October 25, 1914, *Chicago Tribune*. The Rev. Charles W. Gilkey is pictured in the inset. (Source: Newspapers.com)



South Elevation

The finished red brick continues across the Education Wing portion of this elevation despite limited views due to the church's position directly adjacent to the neighboring lot on which there is a multi-story house. There are rectangular windows trimmed with limestone and an oriel window at the ground floor near the alley. To the east, the elevation of the original 1906 sanctuary building is nearly identical to that of the north side.

Interior

The interior sanctuary of Hyde Park Union Church is a grand, expansive space. It is almost square in plan, with a wide nave flanked by two narrower aisles. Its central focal point is the chancel at the west interior wall, which features a soaring stone archway framing a decorative grille and organ screen above three round arches with shallow vaulting. The vaults and the spandrels between them are adorned with mosaic-style painting of religious imagery: central crosses flanked by IHS and XP symbols in the side vaults, a central cross flanked by alpha and omega symbols in the center vault, and angels at each spandrel whose banners together proclaim "Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth." The arches frame carved wooden panels, the central one containing a Celtic cross.

Along the length of the nave is a distinctive wooden herringbone ceiling, with six arched, heavy timber trusses from which simple wheel-shaped chandeliers hang via chains. The wall opposite the chancel features the fifteen-foot-diameter, stained-glass rose window of the front façade. On each side of the sanctuary, a row of clerestory stained-glass windows are positioned in groups of three above the large, stone arches that open to the side aisles. The arches provide a visual frame for the large, arched stained-glass windows that line both aisles.

At the time of its initial construction in 1906, the church's interior was more austere than it is today. It had clear glazed windows, a small organ at the front of the northernmost pews, and very little detailing above the chancel. This helped to keep construction costs down, and the church planned to embellish the space gradually, in tandem with the financial capacity of the congregation. The stained-glass windows were added over the course of multiple decades, beginning soon after construction of the church, and include works by three acclaimed studios (detailed in the following section). In 1914, the sanctuary underwent significant renovations that included the installation of a new, much larger organ, the reconfiguration and decorative screening of the area above the chancel to accommodate it, and the addition of ornamental details including carved wooden panels within the chancel arches and mosaic-style painting above them.

The walls and columns of the sanctuary are adorned with over a dozen plaques. Many pay tribute to former congregants, while some serve as war memorials, and others acknowledge monetary contributions. Among these, a particularly notable memorial is dedicated to Charles Allen Marsh, a founding figure of the church's kindergarten and a dedicated member who served in various capacities for 35 years. Marsh, who owned a successful lumber business, is reported to have made substantial donations to the church, including three decorative golden



Above: Looking westward from the back of the sanctuary.

Below: The chancel at the front of the sanctuary. (Photos by Patrick Pyszka)

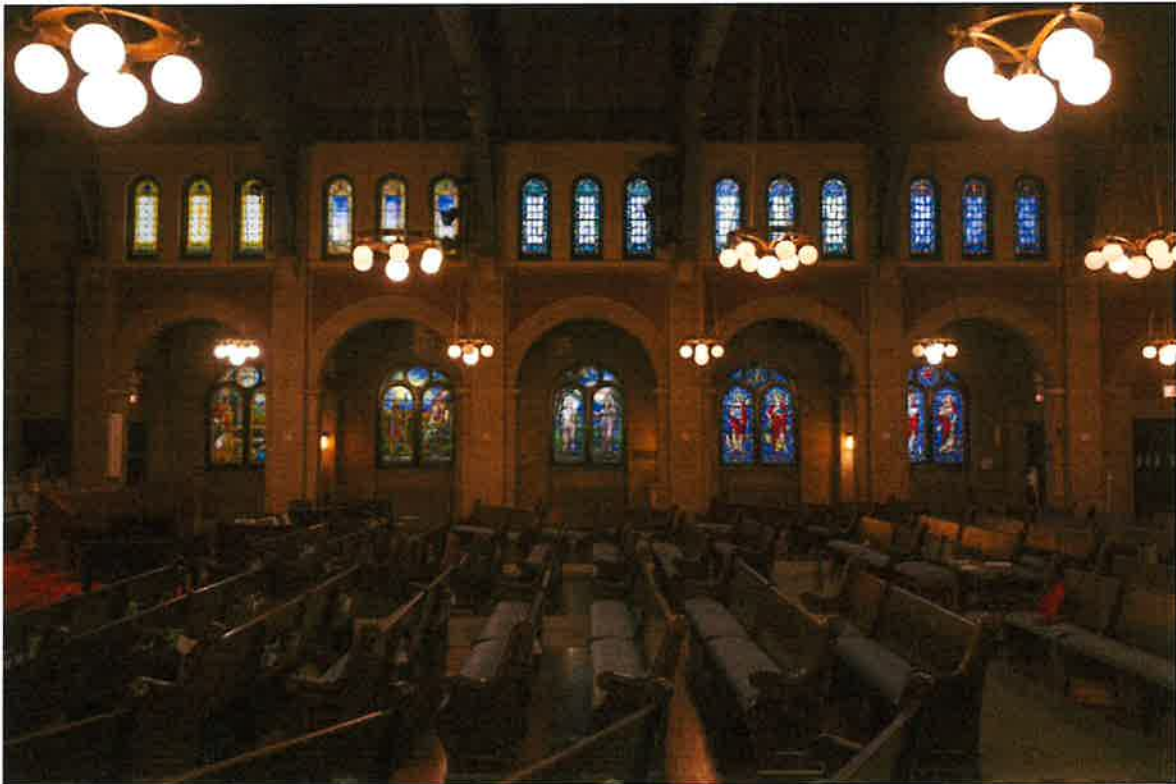




Above: Plaque memorializing a church member killed in action in World War I. (Photo by Anney Grish)

Left: Bas-relief tablet designed by sculptor Lorado Taft, depicting influential congregant Charles Allen Marsh. (Photo by Patrick Pyszka)

Below: The stained-glass windows by different studios provide contrast. (Photo by Patrick Pyszka)



stands that still grace the chancel. His memorial tablet features a bas-relief portrait crafted by the renowned local sculptor, Lorado Taft.

The sanctuary has seen various other alterations over the years. All original lighting fixtures have been replaced. The current hanging globe fixtures are replications of the 1906 originals. Sanctuary wall sconces and vestibule hanging fixtures are also later replacements, the latter perhaps part of a circa 1958 relighting effort. In 2004, the chancel was reconfigured to incorporate a ramp and modified layout of the stair risers, resulting in the removal of several pews. Pews have also been modified in size and placement over time.

The interior of the 1926 Education Wing is primarily made up of offices, recreation spaces, and classrooms, many of which have undergone alterations to suit the changing needs of the church. On the first floor, there is a large room (referred to on old plans as the Social & Dining Room) with a mezzanine-level aisle running along its eastern edge. At the south wall, this room opens to a wood-paneled parlor with a fireplace.

Stained Glass

The stained-glass windows of Hyde Park Union Church are a vivid tapestry of artistry and faith, encompassing works from the renowned studios of Tiffany, Charles J. Connick, and F. X. Zettler. Over the years, the stained-glass windows have served not only as artistic and spiritual inspirations, but also as memorials and historical records. Many of the windows were donated by members of the congregation in memory of loved ones, embedding personal stories and legacies within the church's walls.

Tiffany Studios, initially established as the Tiffany Glass Company in 1885, played a pivotal role in elevating stained glass to a form of fine art. Founder Louis Comfort Tiffany, initially a painter, developed a passion for artistic glasswork and began experimenting with the use of common materials with impurities that added depth and character to the glass. Shortly after establishing his own glassmaking firm in Queens, New York City, Tiffany opened his own factory in order to produce glass to his particular specifications. This set the stage for the creation of the studio's signature Favrite glass, known for its iridescent sheen and opalescent qualities.

Tiffany Studios was acclaimed for its unique approach to glassmaking, which often involved minimal use of paint, preferring to let the natural beauty of the glass shine through. The studio's fame grew as their stained-glass windows and iconic Tiffany lamps rose in popularity, some of the earliest examples having been displayed as part of Tiffany's extensive exhibits at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago. Despite its early success, the popularity of Tiffany's stained glass waned in the twentieth century, and the studio shuttered its doors in the 1930s. The closure marked the end of an era in decorative glass art, but the legacy of Tiffany Studios lives on, particularly in Chicago. Notable works like the Preston Bradley Hall Tiffany Dome at the Chicago Cultural Center (a Chicago Landmark) and the Hartwell Memorial Window at the Art Institute of Chicago (a Chicago Landmark) stand as testaments to the studio's artistic mastery and innovative techniques in stained-glass art.

Connick Studio was founded by Charles J. Connick, an artist who worked with stained glass for nearly a decade before establishing his own studio in Boston in 1913. He strove to emulate the techniques and style of medieval glass through use of clear, bold colors and strong linear elements and rejected the surface treatments of glass employed by contemporary firms like Tiffany Studios. This approach resonated with the era's medieval-inspired revival church architecture, and Connick won commissions across the United States, including work at some of the best-known churches in America such as New York's St. Patrick's and St. John the Divine's cathedrals and Boston's Trinity Church. The Heinz Chapel at the University of Pittsburgh features twenty-three windows from the Connick Studio, including some of the world's tallest transept windows at seventy-three feet. Local examples from his studio are installed at Chicago's Fourth Presbyterian Church and River Forest's Grace Lutheran Church.

During its operational years, the studio was prolific, producing approximately 15,000 windows for over 5,000 buildings. The studio operated under Connick's guidance until his death in 1945, after which it was transformed into a cooperative run by the craftsmen. It continued to produce stained-glass windows in the Connick tradition for another forty-one years, finally closing in 1986.

F. X. Zettler Studio was founded by Franz Xavier Zettler in Munich, Bavaria (now Germany) in 1870. Zettler got his start working in stained glass for his father-in-law Franz Mayer's studio before eventually setting out on his own. His new studio gained acclaim for its detailed designs, painting-like artistry, and pioneering use of a technique that became known as the "Munich style" of stained glass, which uses larger panes of glass and painted-on coloring to create more detailed images with realistic depth.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century in Chicago, German immigrants and their descendants constituted the largest ethnic group in the city and the F. X. Zettler Studios (as well as his father-in-law's studio, also utilizing the Munich Style) found a ready market for their artistry. Chicago also became a major center of Catholic culture in the United States during that time and, as church building paralleled the growth and increasing prosperity of the city's communities, demand for imported stained glass grew along with it. The city boasts numerous examples of Zettler's stained-glass work, including at Saint Mary of the Lake and Saint Adalbert churches. The F. X. Zettler Studio merged with the Mayer Studio in 1939, and, though the Munich style's popularity eventually waned, it remains appreciated for its artistic dynamism.

The Hyde Park Union Church sanctuary includes fifteen sets of stained-glass windows: five at the north aisle, five at the south aisle, and five on the east (primary façade) wall. Each has five lights, with two tall lancets, a top roundel, and smaller flanking panes. Additionally, the north and south walls have fifteen clerestory windows each, arranged in groups of three, and the east wall has the central rose window and two smaller, mid-level, single windows. The majority of windows are by the Tiffany and Connick studios with only one by the Zettler Studio:



Top left: Tiffany Studios' *Amos and Hosea* was installed as a memorial for William Rainey Harper, who published his own study of these prophets shortly before his death.

Top right: F. X. Zettler Studios' *Jesus Welcomes the Children*.

Bottom: Connick Studios is responsible for the greatest number of the stained-glass windows, including this group depicting various parables on the east façade. (Photos by Patrick Pyszka)



Tiffany Studios

- “The Good Shepherd” (John Mason Jackson Memorial Window) – south aisle, 1906
- “Paul on Mars Hill” (John B. Jackson Memorial Window) – north aisle, 1907
- “Amos and Hosea” (William Rainey Harper Memorial Window) – north aisle, 1908
- “Joshua and Moses” (Goodman Memorial Window) – north aisle, 1918
- 6 clerestory windows – north clerestory, date unknown

Connick Studio

- "Angels Michael and Gabriel” (Great War Memorial Window) – south aisle, 1920
- “Angels Raphael and Uriel” (World War II Veterans Window) – south aisle, 1950
- “David and Johnathan” (Donald J. Gallagher Memorial Window) – south aisle, 1954
- Burton Memorial Window – north aisle, 1954
- Parables (Schloerb Memorial Window) – east wall, 1959
- Parables (Gilkey Memorial Window) – east wall, 1956
- Parables (Arthur Crandall Green Memorial Window) – east wall, 1955
- Parables (Smith Memorial Window) – east wall, 1956
- Rolland Walter Schloerb and His Wife, Edith Grandsen Schloerb, Memorial Window – north aisle, 1959
- Parables (Goodspeed Memorial Window) – east wall, 1961
- Price Memorial Window – south tower vestibule, 1959
- 24 clerestory windows – north and south clerestory, 1953
- Rose Window – east wall, 1955
- Fuller Memorial Window – east clerestory, 1955
- Bowers Memorial Window – east clerestory, 1955

F. X. Zettler Studio

- “Jesus Welcomes the Children” (Parker Memorial Window) – south aisle, 1918

ARCHITECTS

James Gamble Rogers (1867-1947)

James Gamble Rogers was born in 1867 near Lexington, Kentucky. His family moved to Chicago when he was a child, and he grew up in the Buena Park neighborhood. After graduating from Yale University and traveling for an extended period through Europe, Rogers went to work in the Chicago architectural office of William LeBaron Jenney and William Bryce Mundie (a neighbor from Buena Park) in 1889. Two years later, he moved to the office of Burnham & Root, which was expanding in the boom years of the early 1890s. He left Chicago in 1892 to study at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, the leading architectural school in the world at the time.

Rogers returned to Chicago in 1898 and opened an architectural practice with his brother John Arthur. He spent the next seven years designing a variety of buildings in Chicago and its suburbs. In 1899, Rogers began work on a large mansion for Dr. George Isham at 1340 North State Parkway. This restrained Classical Revival-style house, built of red brick with gray limestone trim, is one of the largest houses remaining in Chicago's Gold Coast neighborhood, and it achieved local notoriety during the 1960s and 70s as "the Playboy mansion," owned by Playboy magazine publisher Hugh Hefner. Between 1901 and 1904, the University of Chicago commissioned Rogers to design a complex of buildings for its School of Education. He took visual cues from the Gothic Revival style used previously by Henry Ives Cobb for university buildings, but the School of Education's buildings have a degree of symmetry that may reflect Rogers's Beaux-Arts training.

After moving to New York in 1905, James Gamble Rogers designed buildings throughout the United States. Major government commissions include the Shelby County Courthouse in Memphis, Tennessee (1905-09); the New Orleans Central Post Office and Courthouse (1908-15); and the Central Post Office in New Haven, Connecticut (1912-16). His office buildings include headquarters for the Connecticut General Life Insurance Co. (1925-26) and the Aetna Life Insurance Co. (1923-30), both in Hartford, Connecticut.

However, he is best known for his collegiate buildings, having designed many for Yale University, including the Memorial Quadrangle residences, the Harkness Tower, the Sterling Memorial Library, the Sterling Law Building, and the Hall of Graduate Studies (all between 1916 and 1930). Rogers also designed Butler Library at Columbia University (1932-34); Norton and Mullins Halls for the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky (1925-26); and the Colgate-Rochester Theological Seminary in Rochester, New York (1930-32).

In the 1920s, Northwestern University became an important client for Rogers. For the university's McKinlock Campus in the Streeterville neighborhood of Chicago, Rogers designed the campus plan as well as the three buildings within it: the Wieboldt Hall of Commerce (1925-26), the Levy Mayer Hall (1925-26), and the Montgomery Ward Memorial Building (1925-26), all of which now form a Chicago Landmark district. On Northwestern's Evanston campus, the



Above left: James Gamble Rogers. (Source: Yale University Art Gallery)

Above right: Harkness Tower at Yale University (1917). It was the first building James Gamble Rogers erected on the New Haven campus. Its Gothic ornamentation increases towards the top and the truncated steeple ends in an octagonal shape with eight small spires reaching into the sky. (Source: Ryerson and Burnham Archives)



Above: Blaine Hall (1362 East 59th Street; extant) was built in 1903 for the University of Chicago's School of Education. Based on the Gothic Revival of Henry Ives Cobb's university buildings, its symmetry belies James Gambles Rogers's Beaux-Arts training. It is now the location of the University of Chicago's Laboratory School. (Source: Ryerson and Burnham Archives)

most significant building by Rogers is the Deering Library (1929-32), though he also designed Dyche Stadium and several campus residential buildings.

Morison and Wallace

The 1926 Education Wing addition was designed by the firm of Morison and Wallace (founded in 1915). Scottish-born James R.M. Morison (1883-1972) was a congregant of the church and is noted to have designed several decorative elements in the church sanctuary, including the organ screen and a bronze WWI memorial sculpture. His design partner, Robert Smith Wallace, was both an architect and engineer, but information on him is limited. Information on the partnership is also somewhat limited, likely due to the fact that some portion of their work was done for Home Builders of America, a development company which did mostly residential work, particularly in new suburban subdivisions.

Larger commissions of Morison & Wallace were reported in local newspapers. Many were for churches in surrounding communities such as the First Baptist Church in Joliet, Illinois (1924; demolished), and the Marion Avenue Baptist Church in Aurora, Illinois (1929; extant). Ecclesiastical work in Chicago included projects like the 1926 expansion of the west side's St. Timothy's Episcopal Church (extant; now Mt. Ebenezer Baptist Church) and construction of an adjacent apartment building

Church connections also led to related types of construction. In 1927, the firm undertook the design of the Margarita Club in Evanston (extant), a group home for working women named in honor of founder Father O'Leary's mother and sister, both named Margaret. A year later, the firm saw the completion of their design for what was likely one of their largest commissions, Providence High School near Garfield Park in Chicago. The parochial school was a five-story structure with a massive turreted tower, a 1200-seat auditorium, 30 classrooms, and a south wing that included a convent for 60 nuns. The building is now Providence-St. Mel School, a private Catholic school. The Morison and Wallace partnership was cut short when a stray police bullet killed Wallace in 1930, but Morison continued to work as an architect for the remainder of his life.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Section 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a recommendation of landmark designation for an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art, or other object within the City of Chicago if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated “criteria for designation” and that it possesses a sufficient degree of historic integrity to convey its significance. The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that Hyde Park Union Church be designated as a Chicago Landmark:

Criterion 1: Value as an Example of City, State, or National Heritage

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.

- Hyde Park Union Church reflects the history of the growth and development of the Hyde Park neighborhood, particularly the influence that the University of Chicago had on the area. The establishment of the nearby university resulted in an influx of students and faculty to the neighborhood, which greatly bolstered the church’s membership as many joined the congregation.
- Hyde Park Union Church was originally founded as the First Baptist Church of Hyde Park in 1874. The church experienced tandem growth with the University of Chicago, founded in 1890, due in large part to their shared Baptist origins. The secular university was organized by the American Baptist Education Society. As a result, many of the early faculty, including the first University President William Rainey Harper, were of the Baptist faith and became active members of the church.
- Construction of the Hyde Park Union Church in 1906 was funded in part by business magnate John D. Rockefeller, a founder and major benefactor of the University of Chicago. Rockefeller, a member of the American Baptist Education Society, was deeply devoted to spreading Baptist ideals through education. He attributed his donation to his view that, as the nearest Baptist church to the University of Chicago, Hyde Park Union Church served an essential role by providing students and staff with moral and spiritual guidance.

Criterion 4: Exemplary Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- Hyde Park Union Church’s 1906 sanctuary exemplifies the Richardsonian Romanesque architecture style. Its use of the style’s distinctive characteristics, including heavy, rusticated stone walls, round-arched fenestration, a steep gable roof, and corner towers, imparted a sense of majesty and permanence, an appealing choice for church construction. The Richardsonian Romanesque style has had a significant influence on the history and visual character of Chicago’s built environment, not only with churches but with many buildings constructed in this style in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,

including several current Chicago Landmarks such as the Auditorium Building and the Former Chicago Historical Society Building.

- Hyde Park Union Church's 1926 Education Wing addition was designed to blend harmoniously with the existing Richardsonian Romanesque 1906 sanctuary, while also incorporating subtly distinctive elements that display the influence of the Classical Revival style. This style was more common at the time of the Education Wing's construction and is reflected in the addition's smooth brick walls in place of rough-textured rusticated stone, rectangular windows, and flat roofline with a dentiled, red-brick cornice .
- The stained-glass windows at Hyde Park Union Church are finely crafted works by the Tiffany, Charles J. Connick, and F. X. Zettler studios, internationally recognized creators of stained glass, each with distinctive construction techniques, use of materials, and design philosophies.

Criterion 5: Work of Significant Architect

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.

- Hyde Park Union Church's 1906 sanctuary was designed by James Gamble Rogers, a nationally renowned architect who is most well-known for his Collegiate Gothic buildings at universities such as Yale, Columbia, and Northwestern. His designs contributed to a distinct and cohesive architectural identity for these campuses that embodied tradition and gravitas.
- James Gamble Rogers designed a complex of buildings for the University of Chicago's School of Education including Blaine Hall (1903; now the location of the University of Chicago Laboratory School). The selection of James Gambles Rogers as architect for Hyde Park Union Church's 1906 sanctuary, an architect whose work was so closely associated with high-prestige academic institutional buildings, further reflected and reinforced the link between Hyde Park Union Church and the University of Chicago.

INTEGRITY CRITERION

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express its historic community, architecture, or aesthetic interest or value.

Hyde Park Union Church possesses sufficient integrity to convey its historic architectural and cultural significance. The building remains in its original location, and its setting, a low-rise, residential neighborhood oriented around the University of Chicago, has stayed remarkably similar. Hyde Park Union Church has undergone only minor alterations and deterioration typical for buildings of its age, including the selective replacement of damaged clay roof tiles, replacement of copper downspouts with aluminum, and the infill of some basement windows

with glass block. Interior alterations have included the major sanctuary renovation completed circa 1914, replacement of all original light fixtures, and reconfiguration of the chancel and pews. The building, however, largely retains its original character-defining features, materials, and overall design and therefore sufficiently conveys its historic significance.

SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Whenever an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art, or other object is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the “significant historical and architectural features” of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based upon its evaluation of Hyde Park Union Church, the Commission recommends that the significant features be identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building; and
- The interior of the entrance vestibules and sanctuary, including but not limited to the overall historic spatial volume and historic decorative finishes and features. Specifically excluded as significant features of the interior are the pews, the organ, and any non-historic elements including but not limited to the recreated hanging light fixtures.



Hyde Park Union Church, circa 1960. (Source: Hyde Park Union Church archives)

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Hyde Park Union Church, circa 1940. (Source: Hyde Park Union Church archives)

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The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual building, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development; Bureau of Citywide Planning, Historic Preservation Division, City Hall, 121 North LaSalle Street, Room 1000, Chicago, IL 60602. Phone: 312-744-3200. Website: <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dcd/provdrs/hist.html>.

This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within a designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.

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