

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Wyoming
COUNTY: Laramie
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE FEB 25 1975

1. NAME

COMMON:
First United Methodist Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:
First Methodist Church

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
NE corner 18th and Central Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Cheyenne

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
First

STATE: **Wyoming** CODE: COUNTY: **Laramie** CODE: **021**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
First United Methodist Church

STREET AND NUMBER:
108 East 18th Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Cheyenne

STATE:
Wyoming

CODE:
56

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Laramie County Courthouse, City and County Building

STREET AND NUMBER:
308 West 19th Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Cheyenne

STATE:
Wyoming

CODE:
56

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Wyoming Recreation Comm., Survey of Historic Markers, Sites & Monuments

DATE OF SURVEY: **1967 (1973 revised)** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Wyoming Recreation Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
604 East 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Cheyenne

STATE:
Wyoming

CODE:
56

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:	
COUNTY:	
ENTRY NUMBER:	108 25 1975
DATE:	

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The First United Methodist Church, located on the northeast corner of Eighteenth Street and Central Avenue, was begun in 1890 and completed in 1894. Previously on that same location a small, white frame church was used by the parishioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church. That building was erected in 1870 and used until the 1890's. During the construction of the present, native sandstone edifice the older church was moved into the street and there used for worship.

The church building was designed by Architect J. P. Julien, whose name appears on the cornerstone, and was constructed by Moses Patrick Keefe. The original structure measured approximately 91 feet in length by 55 feet in width; however, the church building did not form a true rectangle because the entrance created an indentation. Later, in 1928, the rear of the building was extended to bring the total length of the church to 126 feet, and, in 1950, to the east an extension was made to bring the total width to 60.4 feet. East of the main church building a parsonage was built in 1879, to be replaced by another in 1912. Today neither of these parsonages remain. In 1959 the quarter block east of the parsonage was bought and on this site in 1967 an educational complex was built.

The construction cost of the present church was \$25,000 with another \$5,000 spent for furnishings. It is a two-story, semi-Gothic structure capped by a steeply-pitched roof and owns a three-story tower with a pyramidal roof topped by a decorative finial. Also on top of the tower are four small turrets originally capped with stone and complementing the decorative design of the roof finials; however, the stone has been replaced by metal coverings. When completed the church did not have stained glass windows, but around the turn of the century twenty-seven were installed. The most impressive one is a rose window fronting on Eighteenth Street. However, its impressiveness is hidden from worshipers attending service because on the interior it faces only a second floor assembly room.

Not only is the exterior of the church striking, but the interior is equally beautiful. The Cheyenne Daily Leader of March 25, 1894 describes the church as:

...built entirely of Wyoming red sandstone and has a seating capacity of 450 in the main auditorium and 750 in all. The church is carpeted with all-wool ingrain carpet that harmonizes well with the stained oak seats and other furnishings. The choir loft has a seating capacity for fifty. The auditorium slopes from every direction to the pulpit, so that from no part of the church is the view impeded.

An article in the September 17, 1897 issue of the Methodist weekly paper, Rocky Mountain Advocate reports:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The First United Methodist Church is one of the oldest established religious organizations in Cheyenne. This fact might not be readily apparent in that the nomenclature to denote the denominations has changed several times, although the parishioners have remained the same. The original designation was Methodist Episcopal. Then in 1939 the Methodist Episcopal Church merged with the Methodist Protestant Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South to form the Methodist Church. The latter organization in 1968 merged with the Evangelical United Brethern Church to create the United Methodist Church.

The development of this church on the local level is as fascinating as its development on the national level. On Sunday September 20, 1867 in the city hall Reverend Baldwin of Burlington, Colorado Territory preached the first sermon in Cheyenne by a Methodist clergyman. After the sermon a Methodist Society was formed by Dr. D. W. Scott, a practicing physician, who was authorized to become a local preacher by W. M. Smith, the presiding elder of the Denver district. On October 6, 1867, a Sunday school was organized and for a time the Methodists were able to secure the public school to hold Sunday school and worship services. Church members held their first quarterly conference on June 9, 1868.

In that same year Bishop Simpson of the Philadelphia conference sent Reverend A. Cather to take charge of the religious work in Cheyenne and Wyoming Territory. Two lots were soon secured on Eighteenth Street for the erection of a church; however, it was not until the February 21, 1870 quarterly conference that the building program began to take a definite form when Reverend J. Anderson, Reverend Cather's successor, asked for permission to begin construction of a church. After some debate over funding the building, the board of trustees for the Cheyenne congregation authorized Reverend Anderson to commence a campaign for soliciting funds and negotiating for building materials. In the spring of 1870 lumber was purchased in Chicago and shipped to Cheyenne. Henry Watson and Reverend Anderson dug the trench for the stone foundation, and Reverend Anderson with a party of five men quarried the foundation stone two miles east of town. All this work was done without pay by members of the church. In July of 1870, the small, white frame building was ready for plastering and on September 23 Bishop Ames dedicated the church which at that time had nineteen members and three probationers. Probationers were those parishioners, who had not yet received full membership in the church.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Addendum

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		41° 08' 07"	104° 48' 53"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

12/515560
4553580
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: *less than 1*

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: John Paige, Historian (revised by Mark Junge, Historian)

ORGANIZATION: Wyoming Recreation Commission DATE: June 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: 604 East 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Cheyenne STATE: Wyoming CODE: 56

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name <u>Paul H. Westedt</u> Paul H. Westedt</p> <p>Title <u>Wyoming SHPO</u></p> <p>Date <u>January 7, 1975</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p><u>Al B. Wooten</u> Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date <u>3/25/75</u></p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p><u>Charles D. King</u> Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date <u>2.24.75</u></p>
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First United Methodist Church *(Continuation Sheet)*

(Number all entries)

Physical Appearance - 2

The interior of the church is well designed and presents an impressive appearance. The ceilings are lofty. The furnishings are tasty and in harmony with the general design. A lofty archway connects the auditorium with the lecture or Sunday school room which are separated when necessary by a heavy chenille curtain.

On the first floor various, minor alterations have taken place over the years. Major changes have also occurred including the installation of a \$3,000 organ in 1903, and a \$10,000 replacement organ in 1946. The latter, called the Keener Memorial Organ and built by the M. P. Moller Company of Hagerstown, Maryland, was presented to the church by Samuel Floyd Keener as a memorial to his mother, Jennie Voss Keener McQuown. In 1946 the organ, carillon bells, and a tower sound system were installed in the church. In 1957 the chancel was enlarged, the choir loft improved and panelling installed in the chancel to match that of the organ.

The church still has the original, pressed-tin ceiling, and the auditorium remains basically the same except for the lecture, or Sunday School, room which has been converted into a seating area for parishioners. A pull down, wooden partition can be used to separate this room from the main auditorium.

The building was originally heated by three round oak stoves, but later a furnace was placed in the basement. In 1928 a ladies parlor was added to the main church along with Sunday school rooms, choir room and remodeled youth assembly room. The exterior was done in red sandstone to match the original building. In the basement under the parlor a kitchen was built and a dining room in the main basement area was installed later.

The second floor contains a balcony, Sunday school rooms, assembly rooms, and a storage room. Plans for the enlargement of the second floor were drawn up in 1947 by the office of Architect Frederic Hutchinson Porter, along with plans for the addition of an educational unit and a fellowship hall. This two-story red brick east complex was not built until 1950 and was the last addition to the church.



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First United Methodist Church (Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

Statement of Significance - 2

During this early period of church history the Methodist minister from Cheyenne performed missionary work, traveling west to Laramie to preach and stopping on the way at various other small communities.

In 1874 Reverend W. F. Warren was placed in charge of the church in Cheyenne. During the winter a severe windstorm blew the roof off the church and caused over \$1,000 damages to the building. The event appears prophetic in that the church membership was split asunder the following year when the Black members of the congregation organized the African Methodist Episcopal Church. One of the record books for the Methodist Episcopal Church describes the event in the following way: "In October the Colored People withdrew and organized a church of their own with Mr. Whitlock (col) as pastor (A. M. E. Ch.)..." They soon erected a small, red brick church four blocks west at Eighteenth Street and Thomas Avenue. The two church memberships have remained separate to the present day.

The early church records also contain an interesting footnote to history in that on March 5, 1876, Reverend Warren was called upon to perform a marriage ceremony between James Butler (Wild Bill) Hickok and Agnes Lake (Circus) Thatcher at the home of S. L. Moyer. The reverend wrote the following remark on the occasion: "Don't think the(y) meant it." In August of that year Hickok was slain in Number Ten Saloon in Deadwood, South Dakota by Jack McCall.

In May, 1888 the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church met in New York City and made Wyoming a separate conference from the Colorado conference. Two years later, in February of 1890 the trustees of the Cheyenne church decided to conduct a study on the feasibility of constructing a new building. It was estimated that \$12,250 could be raised and possibly \$14,000. Immediate plans called for the erection of the walls and roof of the building, while the interior was to be finished as funds became available.

The board of trustees of the Cheyenne church asked local Architect, J. P. Julien to design a new building. He agreed to draw plans and specifications at an established price, and then donate one-third of this fee to the church. Julien was a prolific architect; he designed the first Union Pacific Depot in Cheyenne and other similar structures between Cheyenne and Omaha, Nebraska. He was the architect of the old Cheyenne City Hall on West Eighteenth Street, the old Cheyenne City Fire Station, the Idleman home, the Albany Hotel, the Warren Block, and many other public and private buildings in Cheyenne. Julien also acted as consulting architect on the State Capitol Building. He gained a certain fame for designing the gallows used in hanging the notorious Tom Horn in 1903 and which was later used by the Wyoming Penitentiary. This unique gallows was so constructed that the condemned himself could spring the trap.

After accepting Julien's plans the board of trustees decided to use Wyoming red sandstone rather than Colorado stone or local brick for the building.

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First United Methodist Church *(Continuation Sheet)*

(Number all entries)

Statement of Significance - 3

Local contractor Moses Patrick Keefe was awarded the building contract. Originally from Mitchell Town, Ireland, he came to Wyoming in 1873 and was the builder of many early homes and offices in Cheyenne. His work includes Saint Mary's Catholic Cathedral, several structures at Fort D. A. Russell and the second phase of construction on the Wyoming State Capitol. Outside of Cheyenne he built structures at Fort Crook, Fort Omaha, and Fort Robinson — all in Nebraska. Following the Spanish-American War, the United States Government hired him to rebuild the Presidential Palace in Havana, Cuba. He was a member of the ninth Assembly of the Wyoming Territorial Legislature in 1886 and held the offices of Laramie County Commissioner and Cheyenne City Commissioner. In 1902 and 1903 he was mayor of Cheyenne.

The cornerstone of the First United Methodist Church building was laid on Thanksgiving Day 1890. However the project which started out so hopefully soon seemed near disaster. In 1893 the nation experienced one of its periodic economic panics and contributions expected to fund construction costs were not available. At this point the Church Extension Society came to the rescue with a donation of \$5,000 and a loan for the same amount, enabling the building to be completed. The week before Easter in 1894 the Wyoming countryside was wrapped in a late winter blizzard. But despite the weather on Easter morning March 25, the First Methodist Church was dedicated by Bishop Henry W. Warren with a host of dignitaries in attendance. At the various ceremonies held that day requests were made for donations and the congregation responded by pledging over \$3,000.

The semi-Gothic, First United Methodist Church is one of the oldest, most impressive buildings in Cheyenne and the state of Wyoming. Its pleasing red sandstone exterior and simple, but elegant interior represent a style of architecture which will not likely be copied. Changing tastes, the cost of materials, and possibly the lack of necessary craftsmanship to create another such structure are factors which prohibit continuation of such a style. Indeed, the 1950 east addition to the church was simply constructed, and the basic construction material was red brick.

Since 1894 the First United Methodist Church has used this impressive structure as a place of worship and since at least 1928 it has offered a private school education to the people of Cheyenne. To some 1,300 members it provides a place for worship and learning, and a place where church authorities may offer their ministrations to the congregation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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