

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic North Presbyterian Church (DO 09: 0140-013)

and or common Calvin Memorial Presbyterian Church

2. Location

street & number 3105 North 24th Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Omaha

N/A vicinity of

state

Nebraska

code

031

county

Douglas

code

055

3. Classification**Category**☐ district☒ building(s)☐ structure☐ site☐ object**Ownership**☐ public☒ private☐ both**Public Acquisition**☐ in process

N/A being considered

Status☒ occupied☐ unoccupied☐ work in progress**Accessible**☒ yes: restricted☐ yes: unrestricted☐ no**Present Use**☐ agriculture☐ commercial☐ educational☐ entertainment☐ government☐ industrial☐ military☐ museum☐ park☐ private residence☒ religious☐ scientific☐ transportation☐ other:**4. Owner of Property**

name Calvin Memorial Presbyterian Church

street & number 3105 North 24th Street

city, town Omaha

N/A vicinity of

state Nebraska 68110

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Omaha/Douglas County Civic Center

street & number 1819 Farnam Street

city, town Omaha

state Nebraska

6. Representation in Existing Surveys1984 Omaha/Douglas County
title Historic Building Surveyhas this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date On Going

☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☒ local

depository for survey records Omaha City Planning Department

city, town Omaha

state Nebraska

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>NA</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The North Presbyterian Church and classroom, built in 1910 is a masonry bearing wall structure with wood floor joists and roof trusses; formally the building is a 2½ story rectangular main auditorium with projecting pavillions and a classroom wing designed in the Neo-Classical Revival style of architecture. Structural and historical integrity has been preserved except for the replacement of the original clay tile roof with asphalt and shingles and minor interior remodellings.

The North Pres. Church is a 2½ story building, approximately 89' X 105', of external load bearing masonry construction. The typical floor structure is of simple spans of wood floor joists carried at midpoints and third-points by built-up wood beams with dressed wood columns and independent concrete footings. The balconies at the main sanctuary and classroom wing are also structured of wood framing, supported at the exterior by bearing walls and at the interior by a series of wood beams and dressed wood columns. The basement floor is entirely of concrete placed on grade. Simple wood trusses spanning from bearing wall to bearing wall form the basic roof structure. The central domed roof assembly consists of a masonry drum supported by a series of arched steel trusses each in turn bearing on four masonry pendentives at the corners of the sanctuary. The dome itself is of curved wood truss-like members, plastered on the interior and covered by sheet metal roofing.

Functionally the building is divided into two distinct parts, the domed main sanctuary space to the south and the classroom wing to the north. Major circulation is provided to the sanctuary via a monumental stair from the west. Directly inside, the vestibule contains stairs allowing vertical circulation to either the balcony or the basement. Another entry just north of the main entrance provides access to the first floor level of the classroom with vertical circulation via stairs to the classroom balcony or basement. A secondary entrance to the classroom wing is located at the buildings east side. Another small entrance at the southeast corner of the building services the pastor's study.

The domed main sanctuary is an open 2 story space with the balcony at the west and pulpit at the east. A columned opening at the north wall of the sanctuary, since remodeled and walled up, allowed the classroom wing to be opened directly into the sanctuary by means of a rolling shutter. Spacially the classroom wing consists of an open main level surrounded on the east, north and west by a balcony. The balcony, as well as the first floor classroom space, has since been walled up into individual classrooms and offices.

The building formally consists of a domed, central 2½ story rectangular auditorium space with a series of pavillions extending from each side of the auditorium. Projecting westward from this central space is a two-story pedimented entry portico complete with four colossal limestone Ionic columns. The pavillions projecting from the south, east and north are somewhat smaller than the west, but all display pediments that echo the main entry pediment. A flat-roofed two & one-half story rectangular classroom extends from the northern pavillion.

The Neo-Classical Revival masonry building is composed of a dark brick base separated from the buff brick main walls by a limestone water table. The main entrance is given focus by the use of a two story Ionic portico atop a flight of monumental limestone stairs. A stone sign containing the words "Calvin Memorial Presbyterian Church" is located at the frieze of the entry portico. This entablature wraps the pavillions, with a corresponding stone architrave that encircles the classroom wing. All the pediments are embellished with dentilled pressed-metal cornices, while an enriched modillioned

Continued

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Description

Item number 7

Page 2

cornice top the four corners of the raised central block. Double-hung wood windows with divided lights in a Roman Grill pattern are used at prominent locations on the western facade (portico and grills of the entrance doors) and in the four sets of three clerestory windows in the dome of the drum. At the south facade, three large round-arched windows of stained glass light the sanctuary. The classroom wing contains less elaborate six-over-six double-hung windows regularly spaced and aligned vertically.

The interior is quite plain; finishes are primarily plaster at walls and ceilings. Hardwood is used for floors, doors and moldings.

Generally, the architectural integrity of the building is excellent. The exterior has been well maintained and is essentially intact (except for the replacement of the original clay tile roofing with asphalt shingles). The interior has had some remodeling in the recent past. The installation of permanent walls has damaged the original spacial link between the classroom and sanctuary and the visual integrity of the dome has been compromised by the application of acoustical tiles and a suspended ring of fluorescent uplights.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1910 **Builder/Architect** F.A. Henninger (Arch.)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The North Omaha Presbyterian Church is architecturally significant to Omaha as a fine example of the Neo-Classical Revival Style of architecture, taking formal inspiration from several buildings of the adjacent 1898 Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition. The Church also reflects the change of North Omaha from an affluent white suburb to a Black inner-city neighborhood, and illustrates the way churches are established, buildings change ownership and congregations merge.

Omaha expanded to the north during the late 1870's and the building boom of the 1880s. This growth was further stimulated by the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition of 1898, held on the northern end of town. As more and more families moved into the new neighborhoods, churches of all denominations proliferated to meet the existing and anticipated needs of these people.

Two congregations which were formed during this period of growth later merged to become North Presbyterian Church. Second Presbyterian Church (originally known as North Presbyterian) was established in 1881 at 24th and Nicholas Street with an initial membership of 45. In 1887 the Omaha Presbytery founded Knox Presbyterian Church, located at 19th and Ohio Street, in response to a petition from Presbyterians who had joined the fashionable movement to the North. Both churches grew and prospered. On July 5, 1908 the Omaha Presbytery formally announced the unification of Second and Knox Churches as North Presbyterian Church. A building committee was appointed and proceeded to buy two lots at 24th and Wirt Street in Kountze Place, an affluent subdivision.

It was then common for church buildings to change hands between congregations, denominations, or faiths as the members increased in number or moved to new areas. Accordingly, the committee sold Second Presbyterian to a Jewish congregation, B'nai Jacob Anshe Sholem. The North Presbyterian community in 1910 began construction of a church costing \$45,000. Dedication festivities lasting three weeks began on February 4, 1912. The Omaha World Herald Observed, "from a standpoint of beauty and architectural design the new North Church ranks among the foremost of Omaha's finest church buildings." The church continued to thrive, as did the neighborhood around it.

With time however, the character of North Omaha changed. As a result of the Depression and the war years many residents found themselves unable to maintain the large houses in the area. The original occupants moved to the northwest and many large homes were converted to apartments. Simultaneously, Blacks began to move into North Omaha until the area gradually became predominantly Black. The exchange of church properties continued, and now took on a racial as well as religious quality.

H.J. Pinkett, a Black lawyer working for the NAACP, had approached the Omaha Presbytery Extension Committee in 1918 to request that it organize a church in the Black community. In response, a Black mission was established in 1919, and organized as a church in the following year. This congregation struggled through some difficult years, coping with destruction of the church by fire, temporary quarters, a small membership, and frequent turnover of pastors. The situation became so dire that the Presbytery prepared to close the church in 1946. However, the determination of the small congregation to keep the church open persuaded the authorities to allow it another chance. The members rallied and found a new pastor willing to come and serve them even after their church, now named Hillside Presbyterian, again burned down in 1947.

Continued

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Reverend Charles E. Tyler brought youth and energy to Hillside Presbyterian, and with his help new growth occurred in all areas of the church life. Membership rose from 37 to 100 during the first two years of his leadership. Support from other Presbyterian churches was marshalled from 1950 to 1952 to build a home for the Hillside congregation at 28th and Miami Street. From 1952 to 1954, however, the congregation doubled in size, outgrowing its new church.

By this time North Presbyterian Church had relocated, following its white congregation to the northwest, and leaving vacant the structure at 24th and Wirt. The Omaha Presbytery wished to retain the building as a Presbyterian church, and decided at the same time to attempt to create an integrated congregation. Bethany, Omaha's First German Presbyterian church, founded in 1881, was located at 20th and Willis Streets in a building in need of extensive repair. In contrast to Hillside, membership at Bethany had dwindled in recent years. On April 18, 1954 the Presbytery merged Hillside and Bethany into one congregation. They moved into the vacant North Church, which was renamed Calvin Memorial Presbyterian Church. Reverend Tyler became pastor of the combined congregations and served until 1964.

About 10-15% of the congregation was white; this number gradually decreased as members moved away or died. By 1963 total membership had risen to more than 350, of which approximately 6% was white. Calvin Church remained predominantly Black, but was a significant early attempt at racial integration. From 1965 to 1969 the church was served by its first white minister, Reverend James D. Harglersad, a civil rights activist who had worked in voter registration drives. Under his progressive leadership the church expanded its service to the community with programs promoting youth employment, providing child care and adult education, and supporting a Planned Parenthood Clinic.

Architecturally, the North Presbyterian Church, designed by Omaha architect Frederick A. Henninger, is the finest Neo-Classical Revival style building in North Omaha. The structure is a prominent visual landmark - second only to the nearby Sacred Heart Church in a neighborhood that consists primarily of late nineteenth and early twentieth Century houses and small scale commercial buildings. The church is located only four blocks from the site of the 1898 Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition. Patterned after the successful World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893, the classical and Renaissance architecture of the Trans-Mississippi Exposition had a tremendous influence on local architecture after the turn of the century. Henninger played only a minor role in the Exposition, designing a half-timber and plaster building for the display of dairy products. However, the resemblance of his 1910 North Presbyterian Church to several of the Exposition buildings, particularly the Fine Arts Building and the Illinois State Building, is obvious. They each share similar massing - the Fine Arts Building being actually two like buildings connected by a colonnaded court - and all feature two-story pedimented entry porticos leading to domed central blocks.

F.A. Henninger first worked in Omaha as an architect in 1895 in the office of F.C. Ledebink, whose business he purchased in 1896. Henninger practiced for 40 years until his retirement in 1937, at which time his firm was taken over by his son, F.A. Henninger, Jr. In addition to the North Presbyterian Church, Henninger's work includes the Securities Building (16th and Farnam), the U.S. National Bank Building (16th and Farnam), the Grain Exchange Building (19th & Harney), the Farm Credit Building (19th & Douglas),

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance **ITEM NUMBER** 8 **PAGE** 3

The Strehlow Terrace Apartments (2024 North 16th Street), the West Farnam Apartments (3817 Dewey Avenue), and the residences of Edgar Morsman (38th & Jackson), Casper Yost Offutt (109 North 54th Street), E.L. Stone (3722 Pacific), and O.H. Barmettler (622 North 38th Street).

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Omaha North, Nebr.-Iowa

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	5
---	---

2	5	3	2	7	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	5	7	4	6	2	5
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone

Easting

Northing

B

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone

Easting

Northing

C

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is described as lots 9, 10, Block 18, Kountze Place Addition, City of Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska, including all historically associated real estate.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	NA	code	county	code
-------	----	------	--------	------

state	NA	code	county	code
-------	----	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michele Miller, City Planner
Dan Worth, City Planner/Architect

organization Omaha City Planning Department

date September 1984

street & number 1819 Farnam Street

telephone (402) 444-4927

city or town Omaha

state Nebraska

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

James A. Hanson

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

date February 4, 1986

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

Blumenson, John J. - G. Identifying American Architecture. Nashville; American Association for State and Local History, 1977.

Harris, Cyril M. Historic Architecture Sourcebook. New York; McGraw-Hill, 1977.

Haynes, James B. History of the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition of 1898. Omaha: Committee on History, 1910.

Moeller, Ruth History of North Presbyterian Church. Omaha, Nebraska: Unpublished, 1938.

Newspaper clipping file on Calvin Memorial Presbyterian Church, W. Dale Clark Library, Omaha, Nebraska.

Savage, James W. & Bell, John T. History of the City of Omaha Nebraska and South Omaha. New York: Munsell & Company, 1894. Reproduced by Unigraphic, Inc., Evansville, Indiana, 1976.

Schwarz, Rev. Julius F., D.D. History of the Presbyterian Church in Nebraska. Golden Anniversary Edition, 1924.

Thomas, Rev. James A., Sr. History of Calvin Memorial Presbyterian Church. Omaha, Nebraska: Unpublished, 1978.

Wakeley, Arthur C., ED. Omaha: The Gate City and Douglas County Nebraska. A Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement. Vol. 1 Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1917.

Whiffen, Marcus American Architecture Since 1780, A Guide to the Styles. Cambridge; The M.I.T. Press, 1969.



Photo 1 of 2 — view looking northeast at principal (west) façade. Photo by Lynn Meyer, 1982, Omaha City Planning Department.



Photo 2 of 2 — interior view of sanctuary. Photo by Lynn Meyer, 1982, Omaha City Planning Department.