

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD**  
**APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK OR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION**

New Designation   X  

Amendment of a previous designation       

Please summarize any amendment(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Property name Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ

*If any part of the interior is being nominated, it must be specifically identified and described in the narrative statements.*

Address 1435-37 Park Road, N.W.

Square and lot number(s) Square 2676 / Lot 0813

Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission ANC 1A

Date of construction 1921 Date of major alteration(s) 1939

Architect(s) Maurice Russel Rhoads

Architectural style(s) Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals / Classical Revival

Original use RELIGION/Religious Facility

Property owner Temple Church of God in Christ

Legal address of property owner 1435 Park Road, NW

NAME OF APPLICANT(S) DC Preservation League

*If the applicant is an organization, it must submit evidence that among its purposes is the promotion of historic preservation in the District of Columbia. A copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, or by-laws, setting forth such purpose, will satisfy this requirement.*

Address/Telephone of applicant(s) 1221 Connecticut Ave., NW, DC 20036, 202.783.5144

Name and title of authorized representative Rebecca Miller, Executive Director

Signature of representative \_\_\_\_\_

Date 1/26/2015

Name and telephone of author of application Peter Sefton (202)783.5144

Date received 2/26/15  
H.P.O. staff TID

#15.05

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ  
 other names/site number Temple Church of God In Christ (1958-1993) and Columbia Heights Christian Church (1921-1958)

## 2. Location

street & number 1435-37 Park Road, N.W.  not for publication  
 city or town Washington  Vicinity  
 state DC code DC county N/A code 001 zip code 20010

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
 I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
 In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:  
 \_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of certifying official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of commenting official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register                       determined eligible for the National Register  
 determined not eligible for the National Register                       removed from the National Register  
 other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- Private
- public – Local
- public – State
- public – Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		Sites
		structures
		Objects
1		<b>Total</b>

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

\_\_\_\_\_

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Religious Facility

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Religious Facility

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals /  
Classical Revival

foundation: Concrete  
walls: Brick  
roof: Tin  
other:

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

**Description Summary:** The Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ is a more-or-less rectangular, two and one-half story building with a neo-classical front façade. Constructed in 1921, It retains a high degree of integrity. Images 1 through 6 show the building’s current appearance, while images 7 through 9 depict its historic appearance.

**General Description:**

**Site:** The Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ at 1435-37 Park Road NW occupies original lot 813 in Square 2676, The site, which is on the north side of the street, is bordered by an alley to its west and by the parking lot of the Bishop Samuel Kelsey apartment complex to its east. A small parking lot surrounded by a wire security fence occupies the rear of the lot.

**Exterior Description:** According to its permit, the church is 79 feet wide by 90 feet deep.<sup>1</sup> Its upper story, which is one-and-one-half stories tall, includes the main vestibule, nave and sanctuary, a chapel, and smaller rooms used for office space. Its lower story, which is partially below street level, includes an assembly room, kitchen, and classrooms, as well as a furnace room.

The church’s north (rear), east, and west side walls are of plain red brick. The nave and sanctuary are contained in a rear block which is slightly wider than the front block, which contains the vestibule and choir loft. The difference in width is not sufficient to suggest a cruciform building, and the church remains a basic rectangle in shape. The nave and sanctuary section can be read from the three tall, arched apertures on the east and west walls, which are filled by vividly-colored stain glass windows. These keystone apertures have the concrete sills common to all the windows in the building. The lower story is illuminated by three sets of double sash windows, with a single window marking a stairway from the lower story to the sanctuary level and two levels of double windows above.

On each sidewall of the vestibule block, two single windows illuminate the choir loft level, with a matching pair of apertures on the entry level. The rearmost of these apertures is filled by brick instead of a sash. The lower level is illuminated by a double and single window on the east wall. The west wall has a number of capped hatches, originally for coal delivery.

The reddish-brown brick front façade of the church has a symmetrical classical temple form with neo-classical embellishments. At its center is an extruded, gable-roofed portico topped by a triangular pediment, whose heavy concrete lower cornice rests atop six Tuscan columns. These columns are paired at either end of the

<sup>1</sup> DC Building Permit 1199, August 12, 1921.

pediment, while the two middle columns are more widely-separated and stand on rectangular platforms in the flight of steps that is as wide as the portico. These stairs rise more than twenty steps from the sidewalk to the porch beneath the pediment. Originally concrete, they have been reclad in brick.

Beneath the portico, the building's front wall is slightly inset. It is separated from the rest of the façade by concrete pilasters at each end of the portico and penetrated by three evenly-spaced arched entrances with concrete keystones and double doors. Above each door is a pair of small rectangular windows which illuminate the choir loft within.

A tall Palladian window aperture with a flanks each side of the portico. Its lower section is filled by a rectangular stained glass section. Above it is a tablet-like solid panel beneath a row of three two column-by-three row sashes, topped by a sunburst-shaped window that corresponds to the aperture's keystone upper arch. Like the rectangular windows under the portico, these window apertures have concrete sills. On the lower story, the portico staircase is flanked by entrances outlined in concrete and topped by a beltline cornice. Like the main entrance, these doorways have replacement glass and aluminum insets.

The portico's heavy lower cornice continues across the façade. Above the cornice is a brick pediment wall topped by a simpler cornice. The pediment wall which protrudes forward above the portico to communicate with the portico's gable roof.

**Integrity:** The Kelsey Temple Church retains an extraordinary degree of integrity for a building which is approaching the one hundredth anniversary of its dedication. When compared with historic photographs, perhaps the most conspicuous change is a reversible addition. Although the original vividly-colored stain glass windows remain in place, they are shielded and insulated by translucent plastic covers. The front staircase is now clad in brick, apparently affixed to the original concrete. These changes are scarcely enough to diminish the building's historic associations and feeling.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION

**Period of Significance**

1921-1989

**Significant Dates**

1921; 1958; 1989

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Bishop Samuel Kelsey

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Maurice Russel Rhoads

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance begins with the construction of the church in 1921 and continues through the retirement of Bishop Samuel Kelsey in 1989.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ was constructed in 1921 as the Columbia Heights Christian Church. Its construction is significant for its association with the peak period of development of the Columbia Heights neighborhood as well as the growth of the Disciples of Christ denomination in Washington, DC. Purchased in 1958, by the congregation now known as the Kelsey Temple Church, it is significant for its association with the growth of the Church of God in Christ in Washington, DC as well as its pastor's and congregation's noteworthy role in the civil rights movement in the District of Columbia. It is also significant for its association with church programs that addressed community needs in the economically-distressed period of de-urbanization and the aftermath of the civil disorders that followed the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King in April 1968. It therefore meets District of Columbia Criterion A, as "the site of events that contributed significantly to the heritage, culture or development of the District of Columbia or the nation," and B, as it is "associated with historical periods ... groups, institutions, [or] achievements... that contributed significantly to the... development of the District of Columbia or the nation." For the same reasons, it also meets the similar National Register of Historic Places Criterion A.

The church is also significant for its association with Bishop Samuel Kelsey, a locally and nationally influential civic and religious leader. It therefore meets District of Columbia Criterion C and similar National Register criterion B for its importance in "the lives of persons significant in our past."

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance)

**Summary Paragraph:**

From its construction as the Columbia Heights Christian Church, the Kelsey Temple Church of God In Christ has played a significant role in the development of the Columbia Heights community. The years immediately after World War I were a period of intense development of neighboring residential and commercial blocks, capped by the opening of the nearby Tivoli Theatre in 1924. The influx of residents was accompanied by a wave of church-building. Within five years of its construction, five other architecturally-distinguished churches were built within a few blocks of the Columbia Heights Christian Church. The church's construction for a recently-formed congregation was also a significant development in the growth of the Disciples of Christ denomination in Washington, DC.

In 1958, the church was purchased by the Temple Church of God in Christ, whose sanctuary at Sixth and H Street SW was demolished during the Southwest urban renewal project. The church is thus associated with a major theme in the development of the District of Columbia; the successful effort of a religious and cultural institution, involuntarily displaced from its historic home in a community destroyed by urban renewal, to maintain its identity, as well as to take root in and influence social life of a new part of the city. The church is also significant for its association with the influential support of the national Church of God in Christ (COGIC), its congregation, and pastor for the local and national civil rights movement. It also has significant association with congregation-sponsored programs that addressed the Columbia Heights neighborhood's social and spiritual needs in the economically-distressed period of de-urbanization and the aftermath of the civil disorders that followed the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King in April 1968. It is further associated with the growth of the Church of God in Christ both nationally and locally as the first of the city's 30 COGIC congregations.

For this reason, the Kelsey Temple Church meets District of Columbia Criterion A, as "the site of events that contributed significantly to the heritage, culture or development of the District of Columbia or the nation," and B, as it is "associated with historical periods ... groups, institutions, [or] achievements... that contributed significantly to the... development of the District of Columbia or the nation." For the same reasons, it also meets the similar National Register of Historic Places Criterion A.

The church is also associated with the life and career of Bishop Samuel Kelsey, long a highly-influential social and religious leader both in the District of Columbia and nationally. Beginning in the 1940s and continuing after the congregation moved to Park Road, Bishop Kelsey's radio ministry earned him both national and international accolades in the gospel music industry. Bishop Kelsey was the first pastor of what became the Kelsey Temple COGIC in the 1920s and the church was his pastorate when he oversaw all 30 COGIC congregations in the city. It is thus associated "with the lives of persons significant in our past" and meets District of Columbia Criterion C, as well as National Register Criterion B.

#### Resource history and Historic Context:

#### Narrative Description

### 1, The Christian Church

The Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ building was constructed in 1921-22 as the original sanctuary of the Columbia Heights Christian Church. This church was a congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a denomination which arose during the Second Great Awakening of the early 19th century. It grew out of two movements seeking Christian unity that sprang up almost simultaneously in western Pennsylvania and Kentucky as backlashes against the rigid denominationalism of the early 1800s.

Among the Christian Church's founders were Pennsylvania Presbyterians Thomas and Alexander Campbell, a father and son who rebelled against the dogmatic sectarianism that kept members of different denominations - and even factions within the same denomination - from partaking of the Lord's Supper together. A Kentucky Presbyterian, Barton W. Stone, also objected to the use of creeds as tests of "fellowship" within the church. Stone and his followers adopted the name "Christians" to substitute a scriptural and inclusive term for denominational labels. For similar reasons, Campbell called his followers "Disciples of Christ," as he felt the term "Disciples" less presumptuous than "Christians." In 1832, the Campbell and Stone movements united, with individual congregations calling themselves "Christian Church," "Church of Christ," or "Disciples of Christ."<sup>2</sup>

The Disciples were well-established in Washington by the end of the Civil War. Their most prominent local congregation was the Vermont Avenue Christian Church, which numbered President James Garfield among its parishioners. In 1882, the congregation replaced its original frame chapel with a large brick sanctuary as a memorial to the slain president. In 1891, Rev. Edward B. Bagby (1865-1921), a recent divinity school graduate and evangelist, founded the Ninth Street Christian Church near the intersection of Ninth and D Streets NE. Reverend Bagby was described as a "young man of great power of illustration and intense earnestness,"<sup>3</sup> and his church eventually attracted the largest Disciples of Christ congregation east of the Alleghenies.<sup>4</sup> Five times the Democratic nominee for Chaplain of the House of Representatives, he served in this role during the Fifty-third Congress. In 1906, he left Washington for a prominent Cleveland congregation, moving to a church in Fort Smith, Arkansas before becoming pastor of Baltimore's Harlem Avenue Christian Church in 1912.<sup>5</sup>

### 2. The Columbia Heights Christian Church

On July 9, 1916, Reverend Bagby accepted the call of the Columbia Heights Christian Church, which had been organized on February 28, 1916. Under his leadership, the congregation's charter membership of forty grew

<sup>2</sup> The founders of the Christian Church's hope of restoring Christian unity by returning to New Testament faith and practices ultimately proved grounds for division. Some congregations which opposed practices not authorized in the New Testament such as instrumental music in the church and organized missionary activity began to pull away during the 1880s. This group was listed separately in the 1906 federal *Census of Religious Bodies* as the "Churches of Christ." Other congregations began to separate in 1926 over disputes about baptism in the missionary field. More than 40 years later (1967-69) some 3,000 of those congregations formally withdrew from the Disciples of Christ. They now refer to themselves as the Christian Churches/Churches of Christ.

<sup>3</sup> "The Ninth Street Christian Church," *Washington Post*, Apr 17, 1893; pg. 7.

<sup>4</sup> "Church To Celebrate Anniversary Tomorrow," *Washington Post*, Feb 28, 1925; pg. 16

<sup>5</sup> "A Successful Minister: Rev. E. B. Bagby To Preach At New Charge On Sunday," *Baltimore Sun*, Aug 25, 1910; pg. 8



rapidly, meeting at first in private homes, then in a building on the north side of Park Road, just west of 14<sup>th</sup> Street. In 1918, the congregation purchased a plot at 1435-1437 Park Road NW, but its building plans were delayed by the demands of World War I. However, in November 1918, the District Commissioners gave the congregation permission to erect a temporary sanctuary because the hall where it worshipped was needed for a branch post office. Ground for the temporary chapel was broken on November 10, 1918, the day before the Armistice. The chapel was completed in less than a month, although it was not officially dedicated until January 4, 1919.<sup>6</sup>

By May 1920, the church had inaugurated a construction campaign to raise \$50,000 to supplement a \$25,000 contribution from the Christian Church extension board project and a like amount of matching pledges. The church plans showed a rectangular building covering more than 7,500 square feet, with a 75 foot wide by 54 foot deep auditorium on the main floor, church parlors, a pastor's room, choir loft, kitchen, pantry and sexton's room, a large Sunday school room and thirteen classrooms.<sup>7</sup>

Fundraising efforts and construction progressed rapidly. After Reverend Bagby suddenly became ill, Andrew Wilson presided over a cornerstone-laying ceremony attended by a 1,000 congregants and friends on August 26, 1921. Within the week, Reverend Bagby succumbed. He was succeeded by Reverend Dr. Benjamin H. Melton of Baltimore, who led the effort to complete the church.<sup>8</sup> On April 16, 1922, Easter Services included a dedication ceremony. At a special union service of all Washington's Disciples of Christ churches that afternoon, a window on the church's east wall depicting "The Good Shepherd" was unveiled in memory of Reverend Bagby.<sup>9</sup> The finished church represented a final expenditure of about \$140,000. Expressing the congregation's hopes for continued growth, the main sanctuary seated 900 persons, though the congregation numbered only 600 at the time.

The construction of Columbia Heights Christian Church occurred a key decade in the development of Columbia Heights. The construction of large tracts of row houses continued into the 1920s, when almost a dozen row and apartment houses were erected in the 1400 block of Park Road NW alone. In the meantime, a shopping district grew up around the intersection of 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Park Road NW, capped by the building of the Tivoli Theater in 1924. As the *Washington Post* noted in 1927, the city's churches "maintained their even way," "growing as oaks grow" and "keeping pace with the city's growth, reaching steadily outward and claiming a share of that growth." In particular, "churches have shown a disposition to forsake the center of the city and follow the real estate development which has carried residential boundaries beyond the District line."<sup>10</sup> The Columbia Heights Christian Church was part of a flurry of church building along the nearby stretch of Sixteenth Street NW, the city's "Avenue of Churches." Among the neighboring churches constructed with the same five year period were All Souls Unitarian (16<sup>th</sup> and Harvard Streets NW), Immanuel Baptist (16<sup>th</sup> Street and Columbia Road NW), Gunton-Temple Memorial Presbyterian (16<sup>th</sup> and Newton Streets NW), Central Presbyterian Church (15<sup>th</sup> and Irving Streets NW), and the Shrine of the Sacred Heart, in sight of the Columbia Heights Christian Church at the corner of Park Road and Sixteenth Street.

Almost as soon as the church was dedicated, the congregation began to enhance their building. During the observance of the ninth anniversary of Rev. Bagby's association with the Columbia Heights Christian Church in 1925, the congregation began a fund for the purchase and installation of "The E. B. Bagby Memorial Organ." The following year the church dedicated a new 500 seat hall in honor of Dr. Power, the former Vermont

<sup>6</sup> Ibid,16; "Will Erect Temporary Building for Worship." *The Evening Star*, Nov. 9, 1918: pg. 12.; "Dedication Tomorrow of Chapel is Planned." *Washington Evening Star*, Jan. 4, 1919: pg. 8.

<sup>7</sup> "Will Build \$100,000 Church." *Washington Post*, May 2, 1920: pg. 40.

<sup>8</sup> "Ceremony at Laying of Church Corner Stone." *Washington Evening Star*, Aug. 29, 1921: pg. 20; "Lay Cornerstone of \$100,000 Church." *Washington Post*, Aug. 29, 1921: pg. 2. A box placed within the cornerstone contained a New Testament, a sermon entitled "The Mastery of Jesus" by former Vermont Avenue Christian Church pastor Rev. Frederick I. Power, the current issue of "The World Call" (a missionary journal), the front pages of all the local newspapers, and a roster of the congregation's officers and members.

<sup>9</sup> "Columbia Heights Christian Church." *Washington Herald*, Apr. 15, 1922: pg. 12.

<sup>10</sup> "Houses Of Worship Multiply In Same Ratio As District," *Washington Post*, Dec 6, 1927; pg. F19.

Avenue Christian Church pastor. In 1939, under the leadership of Rev. Arthur P. Wilson, the church undertook a two-year improvement project which redecorated the church's auditorium and increased usable space by two-thirds.<sup>11</sup>

On January 5, 1958, Columbia Heights Christian Church, which had sold the building to the First Church of God in Christ, held its last service on Park Road and moved to Chevy Chase. During construction of its new sanctuary at 8814 Kensington Pkwy, Chevy Chase, Maryland, the congregation worshiped in the Chevy Chase Elementary School.<sup>12</sup>

### 3. The Church of God in Christ

The Church of God In Christ describes itself as "commonly known as being Holiness or Pentecostal in nature because of the importance ascribed to the events which occurred on the Day of Pentecost," when the Holy Spirit manifested itself to the followers of Jesus Christ through a sound from heaven, tongues of fire, and "the impartation of a new strange power to speak in languages they had never learned, as the Spirit gave them Utterance."<sup>13</sup> Its founder was Elder Charles Harrison Mason (1864-1961), born on the Prior Farm near Memphis, Tennessee. In 1878, Elder Mason was baptized by his brother, I.S. Nelson, pastor of a missionary Baptist Church near Plummersville, Arkansas. In 1893, he accepted a ministerial license from a Baptist Church in Preston, Arkansas and enrolled in the Arkansas Baptist College, but withdrew after three months because of dissatisfaction with its teaching and doctrine. He then returned to preaching on the streets and in "every pulpit that was opened to him, declaring Christ by the word, example, and precept."<sup>14</sup>

In 1895, Bishop Mason allied with Elder C.P. Jones of Jackson, Mississippi, Elder J.E Jeter of Little Rock, Arkansas; and Elder W.S. Pleasant of Hazelhurst, Mississippi, and the following year "these militant gospel preachers" conducted an extremely popular revival in Jackson, Mississippi.<sup>15</sup> However, doctrinal differences highlighted by this event caused "church doors within the Baptist association to become closed to all those that believed and supported his teachings."<sup>16</sup> When the quartet returned to Jackson in 1897, Bishop Mason was forced to preach from the south entrance of the courthouse. However, a follower provided his living room for the next night's meeting, and, on the following night, the revival moved to the cotton gin house at an abandoned warehouse on the bank of a little creek in Lexington, Mississippi. Elder Mason's revival remained controversial. In the words of the church history;

This miracle deliverance revival was such a success it stirred up the "Devil", causing someone to shoot five pistol shots and two double-barreled shotgun blasts into the midst of the saints while they were shouting and praying. Some persons were wounded but miraculously, none of the shots were fatal.<sup>17</sup>

This and other successful revivals inspired Elders Mason, Jones, and Pleasant to found the "Church of God," whose sixty-member congregation built a small sixty-by-forty foot frame church on Yazoo Street, just beyond the Memphis corporate limits. Later in 1897, the name "Church of God in Christ" was revealed to Elder Mason as he walked down a street in Little Rock, Arkansas. As the church grew, Elder C.P. Jones became General Overseer, Elder Mason overseer of Tennessee, and Elder J.A. Jeter overseer of Arkansas.

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<sup>11</sup> "Church to Celebrate Anniversary Tomorrow." *Washington Post*, Feb. 28, 1925: pg. 16; "Church to Dedicate New Hall Tomorrow." *Washington Post*, May 15, 1926: pg. 8; "Columbia Heights to Remodel Classrooms of Sunday School," *Washington Post*, Mar. 18, 1939: pg. 6.

<sup>12</sup> "Church Sets Last Rites at Old Site." *Washington Post*, Jan. 4, 1958: pg. B3.

<sup>13</sup> "The Church Of God In Christ – The Founder & Church History," at <http://www.cogic.org/our-foundation/the-founder-church-history/>, accessed April 10, 2014.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

In March, 1907, while attending the famed "Azusa Street Revival" in Los Angeles led by Reverend William J. Seymour (1870-1922), Elder Mason experienced a religious revelation:

There came a wave of Glory into me and all of my being was filled with the Glory of the Lord. So when He had gotten me straight on my feet, there came a light which enveloped my entire being above the brightness of the sun. When I opened my mouth to say Glory, a flame touched my tongue which ran down me. My language changed and no word could I speak in my own tongue. I was filled with the Glory of the Lord.<sup>18</sup>

However, after Elder Mason began preaching about his revelation, other church leaders, who "regarded the new Holy Ghost experience of speaking in tongues as a delusion," expelled him from the ministry.<sup>19</sup> Elder Mason then called a conference in Memphis which organized the first Pentecostal General Assembly of the Church of God in Christ and named him its General Overseer and Chief Apostle. The new church included ten congregations, which were so concentrated in farming areas of Mississippi, Tennessee and Arkansas that its national conferences were scheduled for after the fall harvest, when communicants would have sufficient provisions and financial resources to attend.

The Pentecostal Assembly of the Church of God in Christ continued to grow, and, during the World War I era, a time when many African-Americans migrated from the rural south to the industrial north. In the words of the National Register nomination for the Church of God in Christ Mason Temple in Memphis, Tennessee, "it was the established policy of the church and of C. H. Mason to send evangelists northward with members of the migration to establish new jurisdictions for the church in Detroit, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia and other urban areas."<sup>20</sup> In 1925, the first National Tabernacle opened in Memphis. In 1926, the Census of Religious Bodies noted that the COGIC included some 1,444 congregations and some 63,558 members<sup>21</sup>.

In 1945, the church dedicated the Mason Temple in Memphis, the largest convention hall owned by any African-American religious group in America, which is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. During the modern Civil Rights, it:

Played a major role through its individual congregations in various voter registration activities, desegregation boycotts and marches, though the specific contributions of congregations are not well-documented for COGIC or any African-American congregation. The fact that several COGIC churches were bombed during the desegregation movement in Mississippi stands as testimony enough to the contribution and sacrifice made by COGIC to the cause of racial equality.<sup>22</sup>

On the evening of April 3, 1968, the Mason Temple was the site for the Reverend Martin Luther King's "Mountaintop" speech.

The church estimates that it had about 3,000,000 members in 1973 and about 5,200,000 members in 1997. According to the National Council of Churches 2010 tabulation, the Church of God in Christ is the fifth largest Christian denomination and the largest Pentecostal denomination in the United States.<sup>23</sup> Churches under its parent body in Memphis, Tennessee, are now established throughout the United State and around the world.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> John Linn Hopkins..*National Register Nomination: Mason Temple, Church of God in Christ* (1992), Section 8, 3,

<sup>21</sup> Hopkins, Section 8,4.

<sup>22</sup> Hopkins, Section 8, 7.

<sup>23</sup> "Catholics, Mormons, Assemblies of God Growing; Mainline Churches Report a Continuing Decline," (NCC News Service, February 22, 2010), online at <http://www.nccusa.org/news/100204yearbook2010.html>, accessed April 10, 2014

#### 4. The Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ<sup>24</sup>

The Temple Church of God in Christ grew out of Wednesday night prayer meetings held by Sisters Nannie Tolles and Rebecca Allen, which began in January, 1923. Sister Allen had received the Holy Ghost under the guidance of Elders Joseph Durbin and Sister Jenny Armstrong of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. W. C. Thompson, the first Overseer for the denomination, and the Saints of the Holy Temple Church of God in Christ in Philadelphia, gave much help during the beginnings of the Washington congregation, while Elder Durbin served as its first pastor.

In May 1923, the church set up a gospel tent at Second and M streets SW. There, on July 4, 1923, Elder Thompson and Samuel Kelsey, a young minister who had come with him from Philadelphia, held the church's first Washington revival.<sup>25</sup> Towards the end of September, the tent was closed, and a small storefront at 331 C Street SW became the home of the new converts. In October, Elder Kelsey baptized the converts in the Potomac River near 7<sup>th</sup> & O Streets SW. Then, in November 1923, the Washington church was officially organized by Overseer Thompson with about 20 members and Elder Kelsey was appointed the pastor.

In 1924, the church moved to 407 4-1/2th Street SW, and, in the spring of 1925, to a storefront at 2030 Georgia Avenue NW across from Griffith Stadium. At this time, the church had approximately 35 members; although many more people participated in its revivals. Although the Georgia Avenue building was small, it hosted the 1925 MD-DE-DC Convocation, which Bishop Mason came from Memphis to officiate.

After being unable to obtain a permit for two years, Elder Kelsey purchased a new 40 x 90 foot tent in New York and, on July 12, 1926, began a revival campaign at Delaware Avenue and K Street SW. The church ran a tent revival every summer for the next 17 years. The growing congregation moved to 515 Fourth Street, SW, then to 451 Virginia Avenue, SW, before purchasing a former reception hall at 463 K Street SW in 1933. By this time, it had taken the name "Temple Church of God in Christ."

In 1940, Elder Kelsey was appointed Overseer of Church of God in Christ congregations in Washington and Delaware, while continuing to serve as pastor of the Temple Church. In January 1943, he inaugurated radio broadcasts of services so that the sick and shut in could share sermons, prayers, and stirring singing. The K Street building quickly became inadequate as hundreds flocked to the services. In 1944, the church purchased the 1914 Third Christian Church building at Sixth and H Streets SW for \$58,000 from a white Disciples of Christ congregation and sold its former home to a congregation of the Church of Christ Holiness, the denomination headed by C. P. Jones, who had split from Bishop Mason and the COGIC after rejecting speaking in tongues decades earlier. However, a trustee refused to sign the sale papers for the new building, so for a year Temple Church shared the sanctuary of a Baptist Church at 4<sup>th</sup> & L Streets SW, with the Baptist congregation holding services at 11 am and the COGIC at 2 pm. Finally, in June 1945, the sale was finalized, with the Third Christian Church moving to shared space at the Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church. (Images 10-12 show members of the congregation in the revival tent and at both Southwest church locations.)

The Temple Church continued to prosper in its new home.<sup>26</sup> Its weekly radio broadcasts continued, and its choir made a number of recordings that were issued on the RCA Victor label. By 1950, Overseer Kelsey had responsibility for the six COGIC congregations in the District of Columbia, and his title was changed to

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<sup>24</sup> The early history of the congregation is taken from *Souvenir Program Dedicatorial Services of the Temple Church of God in Christ* [Temple Church of God in Christ, 1958], unpublished.

<sup>25</sup> William R. MacKaye "Temple Church of God in Christ to Celebrate Golden Jubilee," *Washington Post*; Jul 20, 1973; pg. B18.

<sup>26</sup> The church history after 1958 is taken from "Our History," an unpublished document prepared by the church which carries forward the account begun in the 1958 Souvenir Booklet.

“Bishop.” However, during the latter half of the decade, the church confronted both the persistence of segregation and massive changes in the cityscape.

During the 1940s, well-paid federal jobs drew thousands of African Americans to Washington and helped support a large community of well-educated professional and skilled workers. During the decade, the city's number of black residents doubled to approximately 280,000, making up about 35 percent of its total population. However, the system of segregation remained strong, with racially-separate public facilities, shopping, schools, and housing. The new migration strained limited city services, schools, and housing in segregated African American neighborhoods.

By the early 1950s, many congregants spoke out strongly, against such unfair practices. Bishop Kelsey initially shied away from public activism and asked the congregation to “pray for change.” But change began after the 1956 bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama. At this time, the congregation was attracting more educated members, including young Howard University graduates like O.T. Jones, Jr., the son of the Bishop whose church Bishop Kelsey had belonged to in Philadelphia. Other agents for change included Attorney Samuel Jackson, who encouraged the members to purchase homes, and Mrs. Ella McCree, a realtor deeply involved in the NAACP. James Eady, Bill & Gwen Morrow, Fred D. Morris, Sr., who would succeed Bishop Kelsey as Pastor of the congregation, were among the enthusiastic young people who encouraged Bishop Kelsey and the congregation to become involved in the Civil Rights Movement.

During the same period, the Southwest quadrant became the focus of a largely federally-funded urban renewal program, which would evict virtually all of its residents and businesses; destroy many of its streets, and all of its buildings and landscapes. This drive's roots extended back to the citywide alley housing elimination movement of the 1930s.<sup>27</sup> During the postwar years, pressures for redevelopment of “blighted areas” citywide spurred such legislation as the DC Redevelopment Act of 1945 and Housing Act of 1949, which had created the federal District of Columbia Redevelopment Land Agency (RLA) and facilitated large-scale partnerships between government and private firms to carry out “urban renewal” projects. This last requirement was especially important because the mechanics of this strategy required government to acquire all privately-owned land in the area by purchase or eminent domain, clear existing buildings, and re-aggregate the individual lots acquired into new parcels which would be sold or leased to developers for vast projects which accomplished objectives of a master plan. Some property owners filed a legal challenge to the exercise of eminent domain on the grounds that their buildings were neither residential nor “blighted.” However, in the 1954 *Berman vs. Parker* case, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the federal government's police powers permitted the condemnation of such properties if it was deemed necessary to the success of a program to facilitate the public's well-being.

During the dark days of urban renewal, Bishop Kelsey called for Special Prayer for the safety of those who were participating in the bus boycott and also for direction for a new home for the church. In 1957, the RLA, under the threat of “eminent domain,” purchased the Temple Church building, which was only about forty years old and in very good condition, for \$160,000. Shortly afterward, the Temple Church acquired the much larger Columbia Heights Christian Church building for \$275,000. On Sunday, January 12, 1958, Bishop Kelsey led a motorcade from Southwest to Park Road NW, where more than 700 people attended the first morning worship.

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<sup>27</sup> National Park Service. *Southwest Washington, DC Urban Renewal Area* (Historic American Building Survey HABS-DC-856, 2004), 9-10.

In the words of a church history, "it was a glorious occasion, and the fulfillment of many years of toil and sacrifice."<sup>28</sup>

The area in which the church moved was the "Parkview Community" now known as Columbia Heights. It was in an established neighborhood on a major streetcar line in which the church occupied a prominent position, flanked on the left by Riggs National Bank and close to the Tivoli Theatre, shopping, and eating places. The historic neighborhoods of Shaw and Columbia Heights were considered centers of Black residential and commercial life in the city. As a church history notes, in addition to local residents who joined the church,

Many [congregants bought property] within a ten to twenty block radius of the church... The members lived westward to 17<sup>th</sup> & Klinge, southward to S; Eastward to Warder Street and northward to Farragut and were able to walk; although many others commuted still from NE and SE on street cars to and from the services.<sup>29</sup>

However, although its new sanctuary was in a more affluent neighborhood, the church continued its outreach to the poor and growing commitment to the Civil Rights movement. In the words of a church history:

Bishop Kelsey was a loving, giving, benevolent man whose heart felt the infirmities, the pain, suffering, inhumanity and inequality of man... He had a great heart for the "hurting man" because he always knew that God was the answer... He had left Georgia those many years before as a young man because he had seen first-hand, the mistreatment of Blacks. In 1957, Bishop Kelsey opened the doors of his Church so that 5 young children who lost their lives in a house fire could have a proper funeral.<sup>30</sup>

Bishop Kelsey became a member of the Opportunities Industrialization Center, a black self-help organization that trained young men and women as an alternative to standard public school in trades to assist them in finding employment. He supported other ministers and ministries, often crossing denominational and racial lines. He often hosted or preached revivals with his Caucasian counterparts at The Temple, the WUST Auditorium, the Howard, the Tivoli and other large venues throughout the region. He was a member of the One Hundred Ministers, a group of ministers influential in ministry and politics.

These developments paralleled those in the national Church of God in Christ. In 1961, when founder Bishop Charles Harrison Mason died, Bishop O. T. Jones, Sr. became the presiding bishop of the church. Bishop Jones had been Bishop Kelsey's "father in the gospel." Bishop Jones and the local church leadership in Memphis had become involved in the Civil Rights and had entertained conversations with Dr. Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. After hearing the young Dr. Martin Luther King, Bishop Kelsey began to share his pulpit with those with political aspirations and other agents of change. He became a lifetime member of the NAACP, the Urban League and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who later honored him for his ardent support and his pioneering events in the movement.

On April 3, 1968, Dr. King, who had come to Memphis in support of striking sanitation workers, spoke to a crowd in the Mason Temple, the COGIC headquarters. The following day, he was murdered. As word of King's murder spread on the evening of Thursday, April 4, crowds began to gather at 14th and U. Although polite at first, the crowd fell out of control and began breaking windows. By 11:00 pm, widespread looting had begun, as well as in over 30 other cities. That evening, the Temple held its regular Youth Night Service, and

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<sup>28</sup> "Our History"

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

Bishop Kelsey invited Caucasians, merchants and nonmembers into the church for safety, saying that the church was a "ship in every storm."

On Friday, April 5, the White House dispatched some 13,600 federal troops, including 1,750 federalized D.C. National Guard troops to assist the overwhelmed District police force. At one point, rioting reached within two blocks of the White House before rioters retreated. The occupation of Washington was the largest of any American city since the Civil War. Bishop Kelsey undaunted by the violence; continued holding services at the Temple, preaching his flagstone message, "follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."<sup>31</sup>

By the time the city was considered pacified on Sunday, April 8, twelve had been killed (mostly in burning homes), 1,097 injured, and over 6,100 arrested. During his visit to Lorton for service, Bishop Kelsey visited many of those who were involved in the looting and rioting and convinced them to be saved.

Although, the Columbia Heights neighborhood was devastated and lay in ruin for years. Bishop Kelsey was insistant that the church remain in the community. In addition to a full program of services. Including radio broadcasts, and religious education. Over the next several decades, the Outreach Ministries of the church launched the "We Care Program," which provides daily prayer and hot meals. This program soon expanded to include "the Pantry Ministry," a program that provides non-perishable items and surplus fruits and vegetables; and "the Clothes Closet," which provides free clothing twice a week to men, women and children. Bishop Kelsey began The Prison Ministry at the Lorton Campus of the DC Department of Correction which has since moved to the DC Jail and the Central Treatment Facility. The Outreach Ministry provided street ministry including but not limited to Back to School Giveaways, Community Day, Health and Job Fairs, Thanksgiving Dinner and the Christmas Party for the Homeless. The church also became a member of the Ward 1 Council and the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 103 and opens its doors for political and civic events and community conversations. It is also used each week by the PlayTime Kids, a local nonprofit organization, for a tutoring and mentoring program for community children.

At a time when developers sought to align themselves with churches to obtain city funding for development, Bishop Kelsey took advantage of this opportunity and in 1982, entered into a partner agreement with the developer for the building at 3322 14<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, which houses commercial establishments on the ground level and apartments for seniors and disabled citizens on the upper levels. The property was named the Samuel Kelsey Apartments and still bears that name today. In honor of Bishop Kelsey's contributions over his seventy year ministry, the church was renamed the Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ after his death in January 1993. The City Council passed legislation introduced by Councilman Frank Smith to rename the fourteen hundred block of Park Road to Bishop Samuel Kelsey Way.

Since the early 2000s, the Columbia Heights neighborhood has been undergoing a wave of gentrification propelled in part by the opening of the Columbia Heights Metro Station. In 2008, the church lost its parking lot to new development. Yet, the congregation remains committed to the community for which it has provided roots for more than fifty years. Excerpts from the Church's Sunday morning services continued to be aired, now on Radio Station WFAX and on line at [www.wfax.com](http://www.wfax.com).

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

## 5. Bishop Samuel Kelsey

Bishop Samuel Kelsey was the key figure in the establishment and development of the Church of God in Christ in Washington, DC and an influential official within the church nationally. He was also an important social leader and influence on the development of Columbia Heights after the Temple Church of God in Christ moved to Park Road NW in 1958. (Image 13 is a portrait photograph of Bishop Kelsey, circa 1958.)

Bishop Kelsey was born in 1897 in Sandersville, Georgia. An Army veteran of World War I, he came to Washington on an evangelistic crusade from Philadelphia, preaching his first tent revival session in Washington on July 4, 1923.<sup>32</sup>

Reverend Kelsey was named overseer of the Maryland, Washington and Virginia diocese in 1940 and bishop in 1950. From 1943 until the early 1980s, he broadcast weekly over Washington area radio stations that included WWDC, WOOK, WOL, and WYCB.<sup>33</sup> In 1964, he made an evangelistic tour of eight European countries.<sup>34</sup>

By 1973, this church of humble beginnings fifty years earlier had grown in Washington to include 23 congregations in every quadrant of the District except Southwest.<sup>35</sup> During the 1978 reelection campaign of Washington Mayor Walter E. Washington against 12 primary candidates, including D.C. Council Chairman Sterling Tucker and D.C. Council member Marion Barry, Bishop Kelsey's support of the mayor was described as a political coup, according to his *Washington Post* obituary.<sup>36</sup>

Bishop Kelsey was pastor to the Pentecostal Student Association of Howard University and a member of the Ministers of 100 and its Committee for Wholesome News Media, which urged the teaching of respectfulness to urban children. He retired in 1989 as pastor of Temple Church and head of a diocese that had grown to 30 churches at the time of his death on January 8, 1993.<sup>37</sup>

## 6. M. R. Rhoads - Architect

The designer of the Columbia Heights Christian Church was Maurice Russel Rhoads (1863-1926), a prolific architect-builder from Chambersburg, PA.<sup>38</sup> The grandson of a wagonmaker and the son of a railroad blacksmith, Rhoads left school at sixteen to apprentice in the building trades. At eighteen, he obtained his first contract to build a house, and during the next ten years, he put up 111 buildings in and around Chambersburg. According to a local biographical directory, Rhoads was "a natural-born mechanic" who learned architecture by "studying late at night to perfect himself in this art."<sup>39</sup> By his thirties, he was designing and erecting major buildings in the Chambersburg area, including the Methodist and United Brethren Churches (1896), the Mercersburg Academy (1900), the Chambersburg Trust Company Building (1903), and the Franklin County

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<sup>32</sup> Claudia Levy. "Bishop Samuel Kelsey, Broadcast Pastor, Dies." *Washington Post*, Jan. 15, 1993: pg. D4.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> "New Church Slates First Services: Leaves for Europe," *Washington Post*, Jan 9, 1965; pg. B10.

<sup>35</sup> MacKaye, *Washington Post*, July 20, 1973:

<sup>36</sup> Levy, *Washington Post*, Jan. 15, 1993

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Rhoads' biography is taken from *Biographical Annals of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* Volume 2 (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, reprint of 1905 original, 1998), pg. 554-555.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.



Courthouse addition (1903). By 1905, when his firm employed twenty carpenters, Rhoads was called "one of the most prosperous and public-spirited men of Chambersburg."<sup>40</sup>

Rhoads's success continued well into the twentieth century. He was the architect for the remodeling of buildings in Chambersburg's Townhouse Row (57--85 N. Main St.) which are now listed on the National Register of Historic Places<sup>41</sup>. He also remodeled the local opera house into the Rosedale Theater, one of Chambersburg's premier early movie theaters (1920, demolished 1961). It is unknown how he obtained the commission to build the Columbia Heights Christian Church, the only architectural credit he received in the District of Columbia.

Rhoads died in December 1926, just three years after the dedication of the Columbia Heights Christian Church, when a hunting companion accidentally fired his rifle and the bullet passed through a wall, striking him in the knees as he stood on the porch of their remote cabin.<sup>42</sup>

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
 Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

### ML King Library Washingtoniana Division

DC Building Permits  
Washington Evening Star; Washington Post

### Unpublished Sources

*Souvenir Program Dedicatorial Services of the Temple Church of God in Christ* [Temple Church of God in Christ, 1958].

### Newspaper Articles

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"Accepts Pulpit Call Here." *The Washington Post*, July 10, 1916: pg. 5.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> "Town House Row" in [http://www.livingplaces.com/PA/Franklin\\_County/Chambersburg\\_Borough/Townhouse\\_Row.html](http://www.livingplaces.com/PA/Franklin_County/Chambersburg_Borough/Townhouse_Row.html), accessed July 10, 2014.

<sup>42</sup> "Shot From Gun Of Camp Hill Man Kills Hunter," *Harrisburg Telegraph*, December 4, 1926, p. 1.

- "Ceremony at Laying of Church Corner Stone." *The Evening Star*, Aug. 29, 1921: pg. 20.
- "Christian Church to be Dedicated." *The Evening Star*, Apr. 15, 1922: pg. 11.
- "Church Sets Last Rites at Old Site." *The Washington Post*, Jan. 4, 1958: pg. B3.
- "Church to Celebrate Anniversary Tomorrow." *The Washington Post*, Feb. 28, 1925: pg. 16.
- "Church to Dedicate New Hall Tomorrow." *The Washington Post*, May 15, 1926: pg. 8.
- "Columbia Heights Christian Church." *The Washington Herald*, Apr. 15, 1922: pg. 12.
- "Columbia Heights to Remodel Classrooms of Sunday School." *The Washington Post*, Mar. 18, 1939: pg. 6.
- "Dedication of New Church." *The Washington Post*, Apr. 15, 1922: pg. 11.
- "Dedication Rites Slated on Sunday for Zion Baptist." *The Washington Post*, Sept. 22, 1962: pg. C8.
- "Dedication Tomorrow of Chapel is Planned." *The Evening Star*, Jan. 4, 1919: pg. 8.
- "Lay Cornerstone of \$100,000 Church." *The Washington Post*, Aug. 29, 1921: pg. 2.
- Levy, Claudia. "Bishop Samuel Kelsey, Broadcast Pastor, Dies." *The Washington Post*, Jan. 15, 1993: pg. D4.
- MacKaye, William R. "Temple Church of God in Christ to Celebrate Golden Jubilee." *The Washington Post*, July 20, 1973: pg. B18.
- "New Columbia Heights Church is Dedicated." *The Evening Star*, Apr. 17, 1922: pg. 28.
- "Plan Corner Stone Laying Tomorrow." *The Evening Star*, Aug. 27, 1921: Part I; pg. 6.
- "Rev. E.B. Bagby Dead." *The Washington Post*, Sept. 3, 1921: pg. 3.
- "Will Build \$100,000 Church." *The Washington Post*, May 2, 1920: pg. 40.
- "Will Erect Temporary Building for Worship." *The Evening Star*, Nov. 9, 1918: pg. 12.

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** 0.00034 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**0.35583 acres**

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Temple Church of God in Christ  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

Square 2676, Lot 0813 (originally Lot 289) in the District of Columbia.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

Original building lot in its entirety.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title The Congregation of the Kelsey Baptist Temple Landmark Committee (Tilmon Couser, Melinda Fallen, Fred D. Morris, Jr., Brenda White, Richard White, and, Delores Ruffin), Peter Sefton, and Kent Boese  
organization Sponsor: DC Preservation League date \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number Suite 5, 1221 Connecticut Avenue NW telephone 202-783-5144  
city or town Washington, DC state DC zip code 20036  
e-mail [info@dcpreservation.org](mailto:info@dcpreservation.org)

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Site Plan:**

Site Plan from DC Property Quest (<http://propertyquest.dc.gov/>) Accessed January 2015.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Site Plan:**

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Site Plan from DC Property Quest (<http://propertyquest.dc.gov/>) Accessed January 2015.



Site plan and photo key:



	Photo Description	Camera Facing	Photographer	Date
1	South (front) and east facades	NW	D.P. Sefton	10/6/14
2	South façade	NE	D.P. Sefton	10/6/14
3	West façade	N	D.P. Sefton	9/23/14
4	North (rear) façade	E	D.P. Sefton	9/23/14
5	Portico detail	N	D.P. Sefton	10/6/14
6	South façade, cornice detail	NW	D.P. Sefton	10/6/14
	Historic Image Description		Source	Date
7	"Drawing of Proposed Columbia Heights Christian Church"		<i>Washington Times</i>	5/22/20
8	Reverend B.H. Melton with the Columbia Heights Christian Church		<i>Washington Post</i>	5/13/22
9	Temple Church of God in Christ Dedication Program Cover		<i>Souvenir Program</i>	1/12/58
10	Temple Church Congregation Members in Revival Tent, Southwest Washington		<i>Souvenir Program</i>	7/23/44
11	Temple Church choirs, 1944 and 1957, with recordings		<i>Souvenir Program</i>	1944, 1957, unknown
12	Celebration at 463 K Street SW Church		<i>Souvenir Program</i>	Prior to 1945
13	Bishop Samuel Kelsey		<i>Souvenir Program</i>	Circa 1958

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ

other names/site number Temple Church of God In Christ (1958-1993) and Columbia Heights Christian Church (1921-1958)

## 2. Location

street & number 1435-37 Park Road, N.W.  not for publication

city or town Washington  Vicinity

state DC code DC county N/A code 001 zip code 20010

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:  
\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register                       determined eligible for the National Register  
 determined not eligible for the National Register                       removed from the National Register  
 other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- Private
- public – Local
- public – State
- public – Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		Sites
		structures
		Objects
1		<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Religious Facility  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Religious Facility  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals /

Classical Revival

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick

roof: Tin

other:

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

**Description Summary:** The Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ is a more-or-less rectangular, two and one-half story building with a neo-classical front façade. Constructed in 1921, It retains a high degree of integrity. Images 1 through 6 show the building's current appearance, while images 7 through 9 depict its historic appearance.

#### General Description:

**Site:** The Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ at 1435-37 Park Road NW occupies original lot 813 in Square 2676, The site, which is on the north side of the street, is bordered by an alley to its west and by the parking lot of the Bishop Samuel Kelsey apartment complex to its east. A small parking lot surrounded by a wire security fence occupies the rear of the lot.

**Exterior Description:** According to its permit, the church is 79 feet wide by 90 feet deep.<sup>1</sup> Its upper story, which is one-and-one-half stories tall, includes the main vestibule, nave and sanctuary, a chapel, and smaller rooms used for office space. Its lower story, which is partially below street level, includes an assembly room, kitchen, and classrooms, as well as a furnace room.

The church's north (rear), east, and west side walls are of plain red brick. The nave and sanctuary are contained in a rear block which is slightly wider than the front block, which contains the vestibule and choir loft. The difference in width is not sufficient to suggest a cruciform building, and the church remains a basic rectangle in shape. The nave and sanctuary section can be read from the three tall, arched apertures on the east and west walls, which are filled by vividly-colored stain glass windows. These keystone apertures have the concrete sills common to all the windows in the building. The lower story is illuminated by three sets of double sash windows, with a single window marking a stairway from the lower story to the sanctuary level and two levels of double windows above.

On each sidewall of the vestibule block, two single windows illuminate the choir loft level, with a matching pair of apertures on the entry level. The rearmost of these apertures is filled by brick instead of a sash. The lower level is illuminated by a double and single window on the east wall. The west wall has a number of capped hatches, originally for coal delivery.

The reddish-brown brick front façade of the church has a symmetrical classical temple form with neo-classical embellishments. At its center is an extruded, gable-roofed portico topped by a triangular pediment, whose heavy concrete lower cornice rests atop six Tuscan columns. These columns are paired at either end of the

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<sup>1</sup> DC Building Permit 1199, August 12, 1921.



pediment, while the two middle columns are more widely-separated and stand on rectangular platforms in the flight of steps that is as wide as the portico. These stairs rise more than twenty steps from the sidewalk to the porch beneath the pediment. Originally concrete, they have been reclad in brick.

Beneath the portico, the building's front wall is slightly inset. It is separated from the rest of the façade by concrete pilasters at each end of the portico and penetrated by three evenly-spaced arched entrances with concrete keystones and double doors. Above each door is a pair of small rectangular windows which illuminate the choir loft within.

A tall Palladian window aperture with a flanks each side of the portico. Its lower section is filled by a rectangular stained glass section. Above it is a tablet-like solid panel beneath a row of three two column-by-three row sashes, topped by a sunburst-shaped window that corresponds to the aperture's keystone upper arch. Like the rectangular windows under the portico, these window apertures have concrete sills. On the lower story, the portico staircase is flanked by entrances outlined in concrete and topped by a beltline cornice. Like the main entrance, these doorways have replacement glass and aluminum insets.

The portico's heavy lower cornice continues across the façade. Above the cornice is a brick pediment wall topped by a simpler cornice. The pediment wall which protrudes forward above the portico to communicate with the portico's gable roof.

**Integrity:** The Kelsey Temple Church retains an extraordinary degree of integrity for a building which is approaching the one hundredth anniversary of its dedication. When compared with historic photographs, perhaps the most conspicuous change is a reversible addition. Although the original vividly-colored stain glass windows remain in place, they are shielded and insulated by translucent plastic covers, The front staircase is now clad in brick, apparently affixed to the original concrete. These changes are scarcely enough to diminish the building's historic associations and feeling.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION

**Period of Significance**

1921-1989

**Significant Dates**

1921; 1958; 1989

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Bishop Samuel Kelsey

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Maurice Russel Rhoads

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance begins with the construction of the church in 1921 and continues through the retirement of Bishop Samuel Kelsey in 1989.

**Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)**

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ was constructed in 1921 as the Columbia Heights Christian Church. Its construction is significant for its association with the peak period of development of the Columbia Heights neighborhood as well as the growth of the Disciples of Christ denomination in Washington, DC. Purchased in 1958, by the congregation now known as the Kelsey Temple Church, it is significant for its association with the growth of the Church of God in Christ in Washington, DC as well as its pastor's and congregation's noteworthy role in the civil rights movement in the District of Columbia. It is also significant for its association with church programs that addressed community needs in the economically-distressed period of de-urbanization and the aftermath of the civil disorders that followed the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King in April 1968. It therefore meets District of Columbia Criterion A, as "the site of events that contributed significantly to the heritage, culture or development of the District of Columbia or the nation," and B, as it is "associated with historical periods ... groups, institutions, [or] achievements... that contributed significantly to the... development of the District of Columbia or the nation." For the same reasons, it also meets the similar National Register of Historic Places Criterion A.

The church is also significant for its association with Bishop Samuel Kelsey, a locally and nationally influential civic and religious leader. It therefore meets District of Columbia Criterion C and similar National Register criterion B for its importance in "the lives of persons significant in our past."

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

**Summary Paragraph:**

From its construction as the Columbia Heights Christian Church, the Kelsey Temple Church of God In Christ has played a significant role in the development of the Columbia Heights community. The years immediately after World War I were a period of intense development of neighboring residential and commercial blocks, capped by the opening of the nearby Tivoli Theatre in 1924. The influx of residents was accompanied by a wave of church-building. Within five years of its construction, five other architecturally-distinguished churches were built within a few blocks of the Columbia Heights Christian Church. The church's construction for a recently-formed congregation was also a significant development in the growth of the Disciples of Christ denomination in Washington, DC.

In 1958, the church was purchased by the Temple Church of God in Christ, whose sanctuary at Sixth and H Street SW was demolished during the Southwest urban renewal project. The church is thus associated with a major theme in the development of the District of Columbia; the successful effort of a religious and cultural institution, involuntarily displaced from its historic home in a community destroyed by urban renewal, to maintain its identity, as well as to take root in and influence social life of a new part of the city. The church is also significant for its association with the influential support of the national Church of God in Christ (COGIC), its congregation, and pastor for the local and national civil rights movement. It also has significant association with congregation-sponsored programs that addressed the Columbia Heights neighborhood's social and spiritual needs in the economically-distressed period of de-urbanization and the aftermath of the civil disorders that followed the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King in April 1968. It is further associated with the growth of the Church of God in Christ both nationally and locally as the first of the city's 30 COGIC congregations.

For this reason, the Kelsey Temple Church meets District of Columbia Criterion A, as "the site of events that contributed significantly to the heritage, culture or development of the District of Columbia or the nation," and B, as it is "associated with historical periods ... groups, institutions, [or] achievements... that contributed significantly to the... development of the District of Columbia or the nation." For the same reasons, it also meets the similar National Register of Historic Places Criterion A.

The church is also associated with the life and career of Bishop Samuel Kelsey, long a highly-influential social and religious leader both in the District of Columbia and nationally. Beginning in the 1940s and continuing after the congregation moved to Park Road, Bishop Kelsey's radio ministry earned him both national and international accolades in the gospel music industry. Bishop Kelsey was the first pastor of what became the Kelsey Temple COGIC in the 1920s and the church was his pastorate when he oversaw all 30 COGIC congregations in the city. It is thus associated "with the lives of persons significant in our past" and meets District of Columbia Criterion C, as well as National Register Criterion B.

#### Resource history and Historic Context:

#### Narrative Description

### 1, The Christian Church

The Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ building was constructed in 1921-22 as the original sanctuary of the Columbia Heights Christian Church. This church was a congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a denomination which arose during the Second Great Awakening of the early 19th century. It grew out of two movements seeking Christian unity that sprang up almost simultaneously in western Pennsylvania and Kentucky as backlashes against the rigid denominationalism of the early 1800s.

Among the Christian Church's founders were Pennsylvania Presbyterians Thomas and Alexander Campbell, a father and son who rebelled against the dogmatic sectarianism that kept members of different denominations - and even factions within the same denomination - from partaking of the Lord's Supper together. A Kentucky Presbyterian, Barton W. Stone, also objected to the use of creeds as tests of "fellowship" within the church. Stone and his followers adopted the name "Christians" to substitute a scriptural and inclusive term for denominational labels. For similar reasons, Campbell called his followers "Disciples of Christ," as he felt the term "Disciples" less presumptuous than "Christians." In 1832, the Campbell and Stone movements united, with individual congregations calling themselves "Christian Church," "Church of Christ," or "Disciples of Christ."<sup>2</sup>

The Disciples were well-established in Washington by the end of the Civil War. Their most prominent local congregation was the Vermont Avenue Christian Church, which numbered President James Garfield among its parishioners. In 1882, the congregation replaced its original frame chapel with a large brick sanctuary as a memorial to the slain president. In 1891, Rev. Edward B. Bagby (1865-1921), a recent divinity school graduate and evangelist, founded the Ninth Street Christian Church near the intersection of Ninth and D Streets NE. Reverend Bagby was described as a "young man of great power of illustration and intense earnestness,"<sup>3</sup> and his church eventually attracted the largest Disciples of Christ congregation east of the Alleghenies.<sup>4</sup> Five times the Democratic nominee for Chaplain of the House of Representatives, he served in this role during the Fifty-third Congress. In 1906, he left Washington for a prominent Cleveland congregation, moving to a church in Fort Smith, Arkansas before becoming pastor of Baltimore's Harlem Avenue Christian Church in 1912.<sup>5</sup>

### 2. The Columbia Heights Christian Church

On July 9, 1916, Reverend Bagby accepted the call of the Columbia Heights Christian Church, which had been organized on February 28, 1916. Under his leadership, the congregation's charter membership of forty grew

<sup>2</sup> The founders of the Christian Church's hope of restoring Christian unity by returning to New Testament faith and practices ultimately proved grounds for division. Some congregations which opposed practices not authorized in the New Testament such as instrumental music in the church and organized missionary activity began to pull away during the 1880s. This group was listed separately in the 1906 federal *Census of Religious Bodies* as the "Churches of Christ." Other congregations began to separate in 1926 over disputes about baptism in the missionary field. More than 40 years later (1967-69) some 3,000 of those congregations formally withdrew from the Disciples of Christ. They now refer to themselves as the Christian Churches/Churches of Christ.

<sup>3</sup> "The Ninth Street Christian Church," *Washington Post*, Apr 17, 1893; pg. 7.

<sup>4</sup> "Church To Celebrate Anniversary Tomorrow," *Washington Post*, Feb 28, 1925; pg. 16

<sup>5</sup> "A Successful Minister: Rev. E. B. Bagby To Preach At New Charge On Sunday," *Baltimore Sun*, Aug 25, 1910; pg. 8

rapidly, meeting at first in private homes, then in a building on the north side of Park Road, just west of 14<sup>th</sup> Street. In 1918, the congregation purchased a plot at 1435-1437 Park Road NW, but its building plans were delayed by the demands of World War I. However, in November 1918, the District Commissioners gave the congregation permission to erect a temporary sanctuary because the hall where it worshipped was needed for a branch post office. Ground for the temporary chapel was broken on November 10, 1918, the day before the Armistice. The chapel was completed in less than a month, although it was not officially dedicated until January 4, 1919.<sup>6</sup>

By May 1920, the church had inaugurated a construction campaign to raise \$50,000 to supplement a \$25,000 contribution from the Christian Church extension board project and a like amount of matching pledges. The church plans showed a rectangular building covering more than 7,500 square feet, with a 75 foot wide by 54 foot deep auditorium on the main floor, church parlors, a pastor's room, choir loft, kitchen, pantry and sexton's room, a large Sunday school room and thirteen classrooms.<sup>7</sup>

Fundraising efforts and construction progressed rapidly. After Reverend Bagby suddenly became ill, Andrew Wilson presided over a cornerstone-laying ceremony attended by a 1,000 congregants and friends on August 26, 1921. Within the week, Reverend Bagby succumbed. He was succeeded by Reverend Dr. Benjamin H. Melton of Baltimore, who led the effort to complete the church.<sup>8</sup> On April 16, 1922, Easter Services included a dedication ceremony. At a special union service of all Washington's Disciples of Christ churches that afternoon, a window on the church's east wall depicting "The Good Shepherd" was unveiled in memory of Reverend Bagby.<sup>9</sup> The finished church represented a final expenditure of about \$140,000. Expressing the congregation's hopes for continued growth, the main sanctuary seated 900 persons, though the congregation numbered only 600 at the time.

The construction of Columbia Heights Christian Church occurred a key decade in the development of Columbia Heights. The construction of large tracts of row houses continued into the 1920s, when almost a dozen row and apartment houses were erected in the 1400 block of Park Road NW alone. In the meantime, a shopping district grew up around the intersection of 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Park Road NW, capped by the building of the Tivoli Theater in 1924. As the *Washington Post* noted in 1927, the city's churches "maintained their even way," "growing as oaks grow" and "keeping pace with the city's growth, reaching steadily outward and claiming a share of that growth." In particular, "churches have shown a disposition to forsake the center of the city and follow the real estate development which has carried residential boundaries beyond the District line."<sup>10</sup> The Columbia Heights Christian Church was part of a flurry of church building along the nearby stretch of Sixteenth Street NW, the city's "Avenue of Churches." Among the neighboring churches constructed with the same five year period were All Souls Unitarian (16<sup>th</sup> and Harvard Streets NW), Immanuel Baptist (16<sup>th</sup> Street and Columbia Road NW), Gunton-Temple Memorial Presbyterian (16<sup>th</sup> and Newton Streets NW), Central Presbyterian Church (15<sup>th</sup> and Irving Streets NW), and the Shrine of the Sacred Heart, in sight of the Columbia Heights Christian Church at the corner of Park Road and Sixteenth Street.

Almost as soon as the church was dedicated, the congregation began to enhance their building. During the observance of the ninth anniversary of Rev. Bagby's association with the Columbia Heights Christian Church in 1925, the congregation began a fund for the purchase and installation of "The E. B. Bagby Memorial Organ." The following year the church dedicated a new 500 seat hall in honor of Dr. Power, the former Vermont

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 16; "Will Erect Temporary Building for Worship." *The Evening Star*, Nov. 9, 1918: pg. 12.; "Dedication Tomorrow of Chapel is Planned." *Washington Evening Star*, Jan. 4, 1919: pg. 8.

<sup>7</sup> "Will Build \$100,000 Church." *Washington Post*, May 2, 1920: pg. 40.

<sup>8</sup> "Ceremony at Laying of Church Corner Stone." *Washington Evening Star*, Aug. 29, 1921: pg. 20; "Lay Cornerstone of \$100,000 Church." *Washington Post*, Aug. 29, 1921: pg. 2. A box placed within the cornerstone contained a New Testament, a sermon entitled "The Mastery of Jesus" by former Vermont Avenue Christian Church pastor Rev. Frederick I. Power, the current issue of "The World Call" (a missionary journal), the front pages of all the local newspapers, and a roster of the congregation's officers and members.

<sup>9</sup> "Columbia Heights Christian Church." *Washington Herald*, Apr. 15, 1922: pg. 12.

<sup>10</sup> "Houses Of Worship Multiply In Same Ratio As District," *Washington Post*, Dec 6, 1927; pg. F19.

Avenue Christian Church pastor. In 1939, under the leadership of Rev. Arthur P. Wilson, the church undertook a two-year improvement project which redecorated the church's auditorium and increased usable space by two-thirds.<sup>11</sup>

On January 5, 1958, Columbia Heights Christian Church, which had sold the building to the First Church of God in Christ, held its last service on Park Road and moved to Chevy Chase. During construction of its new sanctuary at 8814 Kensington Pkwy, Chevy Chase, Maryland, the congregation worshiped in the Chevy Chase Elementary School.<sup>12</sup>

### 3. The Church of God in Christ

The Church of God In Christ describes itself as "commonly known as being Holiness or Pentecostal in nature because of the importance ascribed to the events which occurred on the Day of Pentecost," when the Holy Spirit manifested itself to the followers of Jesus Christ through a sound from heaven, tongues of fire, and "the impartation of a new strange power to speak in languages they had never learned, as the Spirit gave them Utterance."<sup>13</sup> Its founder was Elder Charles Harrison Mason (1864-1961), born on the Prior Farm near Memphis, Tennessee. In 1878, Elder Mason was baptized by his brother, I.S. Nelson, pastor of a missionary Baptist Church near Plummersville, Arkansas. In 1893, he accepted a ministerial license from a Baptist Church in Preston, Arkansas and enrolled in the Arkansas Baptist College, but withdrew after three months because of dissatisfaction with its teaching and doctrine. He then returned to preaching on the streets and in "every pulpit that was opened to him, declaring Christ by the word, example, and precept."<sup>14</sup>

In 1895, Bishop Mason allied with Elder C.P. Jones of Jackson, Mississippi, Elder J.E Jeter of Little Rock, Arkansas; and Elder W.S. Pleasant of Hazelhurst, Mississippi, and the following year "these militant gospel preachers" conducted an extremely popular revival in Jackson, Mississippi.<sup>15</sup> However, doctrinal differences highlighted by this event caused "church doors within the Baptist association to become closed to all those that believed and supported his teachings."<sup>16</sup> When the quartet returned to Jackson in 1897, Bishop Mason was forced to preach from the south entrance of the courthouse. However, a follower provided his living room for the next night's meeting, and, on the following night, the revival moved to the cotton gin house at an abandoned warehouse on the bank of a little creek in Lexington, Mississippi. Elder Mason's revival remained controversial. In the words of the church history;

This miracle deliverance revival was such a success it stirred up the "Devil", causing someone to shoot five pistol shots and two double-barreled shotgun blasts into the midst of the saints while they were shouting and praying. Some persons were wounded but miraculously, none of the shots were fatal.<sup>17</sup>

This and other successful revivals inspired Elders Mason, Jones, and Pleasant to found the "Church of God," whose sixty-member congregation built a small sixty-by-forty foot frame church on Yazoo Street, just beyond the Memphis corporate limits. Later in 1897, the name "Church of God in Christ" was revealed to Elder Mason as he walked down a street in Little Rock, Arkansas. As the church grew, Elder C.P. Jones became General Overseer, Elder Mason overseer of Tennessee, and Elder J.A. Jeter overseer of Arkansas.

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<sup>11</sup> "Church to Celebrate Anniversary Tomorrow." *Washington Post*, Feb. 28, 1925: pg. 16; "Church to Dedicate New Hall Tomorrow." *Washington Post*, May 15, 1926: pg. 8; "Columbia Heights to Remodel Classrooms of Sunday School," *Washington Post*, Mar. 18, 1939: pg. 6.

<sup>12</sup> "Church Sets Last Rites at Old Site." *Washington Post*, Jan. 4, 1958: pg. B3.

<sup>13</sup> "The Church Of God In Christ – The Founder & Church History," at <http://www.cogic.org/our-foundation/the-founder-church-history/>, accessed April 10, 2014.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

In March, 1907, while attending the famed "Azusa Street Revival" in Los Angeles led by Reverend William J. Seymour (1870-1922), Elder Mason experienced a religious revelation:

There came a wave of Glory into me and all of my being was filled with the Glory of the Lord. So when He had gotten me straight on my feet, there came a light which enveloped my entire being above the brightness of the sun. When I opened my mouth to say Glory, a flame touched my tongue which ran down me. My language changed and no word could I speak in my own tongue. I was filled with the Glory of the Lord.<sup>18</sup>

However, after Elder Mason began preaching about his revelation, other church leaders, who "regarded the new Holy Ghost experience of speaking in tongues as a delusion," expelled him from the ministry.<sup>19</sup> Elder Mason then called a conference in Memphis which organized the first Pentecostal General Assembly of the Church of God in Christ and named him its General Overseer and Chief Apostle. The new church included ten congregations, which were so concentrated in farming areas of Mississippi, Tennessee and Arkansas that its national conferences were scheduled for after the fall harvest, when communicants would have sufficient provisions and financial resources to attend.

The Pentecostal Assembly of the Church of God in Christ continued to grow, and, during the World War I era, a time when many African-Americans migrated from the rural south to the industrial north. In the words of the National Register nomination for the Church of God in Christ Mason Temple in Memphis, Tennessee, "it was the established policy of the church and of C. H. Mason to send evangelists northward with members of the migration to establish new jurisdictions for the church in Detroit, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia and other urban areas."<sup>20</sup> In 1925, the first National Tabernacle opened in Memphis. In 1926, the Census of Religious Bodies noted that the COGIC included some 1,444 congregations and some 63,558 members<sup>21</sup>.

In 1945, the church dedicated the Mason Temple in Memphis, the largest convention hall owned by any African-American religious group in America, which is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. During the modern Civil Rights, it:

Played a major role through its individual congregations in various voter registration activities, desegregation boycotts and marches, though the specific contributions of congregations are not well-documented for COGIC or any African-American congregation. The fact that several COGIC churches were bombed during the desegregation movement in Mississippi stands as testimony enough to the contribution and sacrifice made by COGIC to the cause of racial equality.<sup>22</sup>

On the evening of April 3, 1968, the Mason Temple was the site for the Reverend Martin Luther King's "Mountaintop" speech.

The church estimates that it had about 3,000,000 members in 1973 and about 5,200,000 members in 1997. According to the National Council of Churches 2010 tabulation, the Church of God in Christ is the fifth largest Christian denomination and the largest Pentecostal denomination in the United States.<sup>23</sup> Churches under its parent body in Memphis, Tennessee, are now established throughout the United State and around the world.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> John Linn Hopkins..*National Register Nomination: Mason Temple, Church of God in Christ* (1992), Section 8, 3,

<sup>21</sup> Hopkins, Section 8,4.

<sup>22</sup> Hopkins, Section 8, 7.

<sup>23</sup> "Catholics, Mormons, Assemblies of God Growing; Mainline Churches Report a Continuing Decline," (NCC News Service, February 22, 2010), online at <http://www.nccusa.org/news/100204yearbook2010.html>, accessed April 10, 2014

#### 4. The Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ<sup>24</sup>

The Temple Church of God in Christ grew out of Wednesday night prayer meetings held by Sisters Nannie Tolles and Rebecca Allen, which began in January, 1923. Sister Allen had received the Holy Ghost under the guidance of Elders Joseph Durbin and Sister Jenny Armstrong of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. W. C. Thompson, the first Overseer for the denomination, and the Saints of the Holy Temple Church of God in Christ in Philadelphia, gave much help during the beginnings of the Washington congregation, while Elder Durbin served as its first pastor.

In May 1923, the church set up a gospel tent at Second and M streets SW. There, on July 4, 1923, Elder Thompson and Samuel Kelsey, a young minister who had come with him from Philadelphia, held the church's first Washington revival.<sup>25</sup> Towards the end of September, the tent was closed, and a small storefront at 331 C Street SW became the home of the new converts. In October, Elder Kelsey baptized the converts in the Potomac River near 7<sup>th</sup> & O Streets SW. Then, in November 1923, the Washington church was officially organized by Overseer Thompson with about 20 members and Elder Kelsey was appointed the pastor.

In 1924, the church moved to 407 4-1/2th Street SW, and, in the spring of 1925, to a storefront at 2030 Georgia Avenue NW across from Griffith Stadium. At this time, the church had approximately 35 members; although many more people participated in its revivals. Although the Georgia Avenue building was small, it hosted the 1925 MD-DE-DC Convocation, which Bishop Mason came from Memphis to officiate.

After being unable to obtain a permit for two years, Elder Kelsey purchased a new 40 x 90 foot tent in New York and, on July 12, 1926, began a revival campaign at Delaware Avenue and K Street SW. The church ran a tent revival every summer for the next 17 years. The growing congregation moved to 515 Fourth Street, SW, then to 451 Virginia Avenue, SW, before purchasing a former reception hall at 463 K Street SW in 1933. By this time, it had taken the name "Temple Church of God in Christ."

In 1940, Elder Kelsey was appointed Overseer of Church of God in Christ congregations in Washington and Delaware, while continuing to serve as pastor of the Temple Church. In January 1943, he inaugurated radio broadcasts of services so that the sick and shut in could share sermons, prayers, and stirring singing. The K Street building quickly became inadequate as hundreds flocked to the services. In 1944, the church purchased the 1914 Third Christian Church building at Sixth and H Streets SW for \$58,000 from a white Disciples of Christ congregation and sold its former home to a congregation of the Church of Christ Holiness, the denomination headed by C. P. Jones, who had split from Bishop Mason and the COGIC after rejecting speaking in tongues decades earlier. However, a trustee refused to sign the sale papers for the new building, so for a year Temple Church shared the sanctuary of a Baptist Church at 4<sup>th</sup> & L Streets SW, with the Baptist congregation holding services at 11 am and the COGIC at 2 pm. Finally, in June 1945, the sale was finalized, with the Third Christian Church moving to shared space at the Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church. (Images 10-12 show members of the congregation in the revival tent and at both Southwest church locations.)

The Temple Church continued to prosper in its new home.<sup>26</sup> Its weekly radio broadcasts continued, and its choir made a number of recordings that were issued on the RCA Victor label. By 1950, Overseer Kelsey had responsibility for the six COGIC congregations in the District of Columbia, and his title was changed to

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<sup>24</sup> The early history of the congregation is taken from *Souvenir Program Dedicatorial Services of the Temple Church of God in Christ* [Temple Church of God in Christ, 1958], unpublished.

<sup>25</sup> William R. MacKaye "Temple Church of God in Christ to Celebrate Golden Jubilee," *Washington Post*; Jul 20, 1973: pg. B18.

<sup>26</sup> The church history after 1958 is taken from "Our History," an unpublished document prepared by the church which carries forward the account begun in the 1958 Souvenir Booklet.



“Bishop.” However, during the latter half of the decade, the church confronted both the persistence of segregation and massive changes in the cityscape.

During the 1940s, well-paid federal jobs drew thousands of African Americans to Washington and helped support a large community of well-educated professional and skilled workers. During the decade, the city’s number of black residents doubled to approximately 280,000, making up about 35 percent of its total population. However, the system of segregation remained strong, with racially-separate public facilities, shopping, schools, and housing. The new migration strained limited city services, schools, and housing in segregated African American neighborhoods.

By the early 1950s, many congregants spoke out strongly, against such unfair practices. Bishop Kelsey initially shied away from public activism and asked the congregation to “pray for change.” But change began after the 1956 bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama. At this time, the congregation was attracting more educated members, including young Howard University graduates like O.T. Jones, Jr., the son of the Bishop whose church Bishop Kelsey had belonged to in Philadelphia. Other agents for change included Attorney Samuel Jackson, who encouraged the members to purchase homes, and Mrs. Ella McCree, a realtor deeply involved in the NAACP. James Eady, Bill & Gwen Morrow, Fred D. Morris, Sr., who would succeed Bishop Kelsey as Pastor of the congregation, were among the enthusiastic young people who encouraged Bishop Kelsey and the congregation to become involved in the Civil Rights Movement.

During the same period, the Southwest quadrant became the focus of a largely federally-funded urban renewal program, which would evict virtually all of its residents and businesses; destroy many of its streets, and all of its buildings and landscapes. This drive’s roots extended back to the citywide alley housing elimination movement of the 1930s.<sup>27</sup> During the postwar years, pressures for redevelopment of “blighted areas” citywide spurred such legislation as the DC Redevelopment Act of 1945 and Housing Act of 1949, which had created the federal District of Columbia Redevelopment Land Agency (RLA) and facilitated large-scale partnerships between government and private firms to carry out “urban renewal” projects. This last requirement was especially important because the mechanics of this strategy required government to acquire all privately-owned land in the area by purchase or eminent domain, clear existing buildings, and re-aggregate the individual lots acquired into new parcels which would be sold or leased to developers for vast projects which accomplished objectives of a master plan. Some property owners filed a legal challenge to the exercise of eminent domain on the grounds that their buildings were neither residential nor “blighted.” However, in the 1954 *Berman vs. Parker* case, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the federal government’s police powers permitted the condemnation of such properties if it was deemed necessary to the success of a program to facilitate the public’s well-being.

During the dark days of urban renewal, Bishop Kelsey called for Special Prayer for the safety of those who were participating in the bus boycott and also for direction for a new home for the church. In 1957, the RLA, under the threat of “eminent domain,” purchased the Temple Church building, which was only about forty years old and in very good condition, for \$160,000. Shortly afterward, the Temple Church acquired the much larger Columbia Heights Christian Church building for \$275,000. On Sunday, January 12, 1958, Bishop Kelsey led a motorcade from Southwest to Park Road NW, where more than 700 people attended the first morning worship.

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<sup>27</sup> National Park Service. *Southwest Washington, DC Urban Renewal Area* (Historic American Building Survey HABS-DC-856, 2004), 9-10.

In the words of a church history, "it was a glorious occasion, and the fulfillment of many years of toil and sacrifice."<sup>28</sup>

The area in which the church moved was the "Parkview Community" now known as Columbia Heights. It was in an established neighborhood on a major streetcar line in which the church occupied a prominent position, flanked on the left by Riggs National Bank and close to the Tivoli Theatre, shopping, and eating places. The historic neighborhoods of Shaw and Columbia Heights were considered centers of Black residential and commercial life in the city. As a church history notes, in addition to local residents who joined the church,

Many [congregants bought property] within a ten to twenty block radius of the church... The members lived westward to 17<sup>th</sup> & Klingle, southward to S; Eastward to Warder Street and northward to Farragut and were able to walk; although many others commuted still from NE and SE on street cars to and from the services.<sup>29</sup>

However, although its new sanctuary was in a more affluent neighborhood, the church continued its outreach to the poor and growing commitment to the Civil Rights movement. In the words of a church history:

Bishop Kelsey was a loving, giving, benevolent man whose heart felt the infirmities, the pain, suffering, inhumanity and inequality of man... He had a great heart for the "hurting man" because he always knew that God was the answer... He had left Georgia those many years before as a young man because he had seen first-hand, the mistreatment of Blacks. In 1957, Bishop Kelsey opened the doors of his Church so that 5 young children who lost their lives in a house fire could have a proper funeral.<sup>30</sup>

Bishop Kelsey became a member of the Opportunities Industrialization Center, a black self-help organization that trained young men and women as an alternative to standard public school in trades to assist them in finding employment. He supported other ministers and ministries, often crossing denominational and racial lines. He often hosted or preached revivals with his Caucasian counterparts at The Temple, the WUST Auditorium, the Howard, the Tivoli and other large venues throughout the region. He was a member of the One Hundred Ministers, a group of ministers influential in ministry and politics.

These developments paralleled those in the national Church of God in Christ. In 1961, when founder Bishop Charles Harrison Mason died, Bishop O. T. Jones, Sr. became the presiding bishop of the church. Bishop Jones had been Bishop Kelsey's "father in the gospel." Bishop Jones and the local church leadership in Memphis had become involved in the Civil Rights and had entertained conversations with Dr. Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. After hearing the young Dr. Martin Luther King, Bishop Kelsey began to share his pulpit with those with political aspirations and other agents of change. He became a lifetime member of the NAACP, the Urban League and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who later honored him for his ardent support and his pioneering events in the movement.

On April 3, 1968, Dr. King, who had come to Memphis in support of striking sanitation workers, spoke to a crowd in the Mason Temple, the COGIC headquarters. The following day, he was murdered. As word of King's murder spread on the evening of Thursday, April 4, crowds began to gather at 14th and U. Although polite at first, the crowd fell out of control and began breaking windows. By 11:00 pm, widespread looting had begun, as well as in over 30 other cities. That evening, the Temple held its regular Youth Night Service, and

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<sup>28</sup> "Our History"

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

Bishop Kelsey invited Caucasians, merchants and nonmembers into the church for safety, saying that the church was a "ship in every storm."

On Friday, April 5, the White House dispatched some 13,600 federal troops, including 1,750 federalized D.C. National Guard troops to assist the overwhelmed District police force. At one point, rioting reached within two blocks of the White House before rioters retreated. The occupation of Washington was the largest of any American city since the Civil War. Bishop Kelsey undaunted by the violence; continued holding services at the Temple, preaching his flagstone message, "follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."<sup>31</sup>

By the time the city was considered pacified on Sunday, April 8, twelve had been killed (mostly in burning homes), 1,097 injured, and over 6,100 arrested. During his visit to Lorton for service, Bishop Kelsey visited many of those who were involved in the looting and rioting and convinced them to be saved.

Although, the Columbia Heights neighborhood was devastated and lay in ruin for years. Bishop Kelsey was insistant that the church remain in the community. In addition to a full program of services. Including radio broadcasts, and religious education. Over the next several decades, the Outreach Ministries of the church launched the "We Care Program," which provides daily prayer and hot meals. This program soon expanded to include "the Pantry Ministry," a program that provides non-perishable items and surplus fruits and vegetables; and "the Clothes Closet," which provides free clothing twice a week to men, women and children. Bishop Kelsey began The Prison Ministry at the Lorton Campus of the DC Department of Correction which has since moved to the DC Jail and the Central Treatment Facility. The Outreach Ministry provided street ministry including but not limited to Back to School Giveaways, Community Day, Health and Job Fairs, Thanksgiving Dinner and the Christmas Party for the Homeless. The church also became a member of the Ward 1 Council and the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 103 and opens its doors for political and civic events and community conversations. It is also used each week by the PlayTime Kids, a local nonprofit organization, for a tutoring and mentoring program for community children.

At a time when developers sought to align themselves with churches to obtain city funding for development, Bishop Kelsey took advantage of this opportunity and in 1982, entered into a partner agreement with the developer for the building at 3322 14<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, which houses commercial establishments on the ground level and apartments for seniors and disabled citizens on the upper levels. The property was named the Samuel Kelsey Apartments and still bears that name today. In honor of Bishop Kelsey's contributions over his seventy year ministry, the church was renamed the Kelsey Temple Church of God in Christ after his death in January 1993. The City Council passed legislation introduced by Councilman Frank Smith to rename the fourteen hundred block of Park Road to Bishop Samuel Kelsey Way.

Since the early 2000s, the Columbia Heights neighborhood has been undergoing a wave of gentrification propelled in part by the opening of the Columbia Heights Metro Station. In 2008, the church lost its parking lot to new development. Yet, the congregation remains committed to the community for which it has provided roots for more than fifty years. Excerpts from the Church's Sunday morning services continued to be aired, now on Radio Station WFAX and on line at [www.wfax.com](http://www.wfax.com).

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

## 5. Bishop Samuel Kelsey

Bishop Samuel Kelsey was the key figure in the establishment and development of the Church of God in Christ in Washington, DC and an influential official within the church nationally. He was also an important social leader and influence on the development of Columbia Heights after the Temple Church of God in Christ moved to Park Road NW in 1958. (Image 13 is a portrait photograph of Bishop Kelsey, circa 1958.)

Bishop Kelsey was born in 1897 in Sandersville, Georgia. An Army veteran of World War I, he came to Washington on an evangelistic crusade from Philadelphia, preaching his first tent revival session in Washington on July 4, 1923.<sup>32</sup>

Reverend Kelsey was named overseer of the Maryland, Washington and Virginia diocese in 1940 and bishop in 1950. From 1943 until the early 1980s, he broadcast weekly over Washington area radio stations that included WWDC, WOOK, WOL, and WYCB.<sup>33</sup> In 1964, he made an evangelistic tour of eight European countries.<sup>34</sup>

By 1973, this church of humble beginnings fifty years earlier had grown in Washington to include 23 congregations in every quadrant of the District except Southwest.<sup>35</sup> During the 1978 reelection campaign of Washington Mayor Walter E. Washington against 12 primary candidates, including D.C. Council Chairman Sterling Tucker and D.C. Council member Marion Barry, Bishop Kelsey's support of the mayor was described as a political coup, according to his *Washington Post* obituary.<sup>36</sup>

Bishop Kelsey was pastor to the Pentecostal Student Association of Howard University and a member of the Ministers of 100 and its Committee for Wholesome News Media, which urged the teaching of respectfulness to urban children. He retired in 1989 as pastor of Temple Church and head of a diocese that had grown to 30 churches at the time of his death on January 8, 1993.<sup>37</sup>

## 6. M. R. Rhoads - Architect

The designer of the Columbia Heights Christian Church was Maurice Russel Rhoads (1863-1926), a prolific architect-builder from Chambersburg, PA.<sup>38</sup> The grandson of a wagonmaker and the son of a railroad blacksmith, Rhoads left school at sixteen to apprentice in the building trades. At eighteen, he obtained his first contract to build a house, and during the next ten years, he put up 111 buildings in and around Chambersburg. According to a local biographical directory, Rhoads was "a natural-born mechanic" who learned architecture by "studying late at night to perfect himself in this art."<sup>39</sup> By his thirties, he was designing and erecting major buildings in the Chambersburg area, including the Methodist and United Brethren Churches (1896), the Mercersburg Academy (1900), the Chambersburg Trust Company Building (1903), and the Franklin County

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<sup>32</sup> Claudia Levy. "Bishop Samuel Kelsey, Broadcast Pastor, Dies." *Washington Post*, Jan. 15, 1993: pg. D4.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> "New Church Slates First Services: Leaves for Europe," *Washington Post*, Jan 9, 1965; pg. B10.

<sup>35</sup> MacKaye, *Washington Post*, July 20, 1973:

<sup>36</sup> Levy, *Washington Post*, Jan. 15, 1993

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Rhoads' biography is taken from *Biographical Annals of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* Volume 2 (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, reprint of 1905 original, 1998), pg. 554-555.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

Courthouse addition (1903). By 1905, when his firm employed twenty carpenters, Rhoads was called "one of the most prosperous and public-spirited men of Chambersburg."<sup>40</sup>

Rhoads's success continued well into the twentieth century. He was the architect for the remodeling of buildings in Chambersburg's Townhouse Row (57--85 N. Main St.) which are now listed on the National Register of Historic Places<sup>41</sup>. He also remodeled the local opera house into the Rosedale Theater, one of Chambersburg's premier early movie theaters (1920, demolished 1961). It is unknown how he obtained the commission to build the Columbia Heights Christian Church, the only architectural credit he received in the District of Columbia.

Rhoads died in December 1926, just three years after the dedication of the Columbia Heights Christian Church, when a hunting companion accidentally fired his rifle and the bullet passed through a wall, striking him in the knees as he stood on the porch of their remote cabin.<sup>42</sup>

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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**ML King Library Washingtoniana Division**

DC Building Permits  
Washington Evening Star; Washington Post

**Unpublished Sources**

*Souvenir Program Dedicatorial Services of the Temple Church of God in Christ* [Temple Church of God in Christ, 1958].

**Newspaper Articles**

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"Accepts Pulpit Call Here." *The Washington Post*, July 10, 1916: pg. 5.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> "Town House Row" in [http://www.livingplaces.com/PA/Franklin\\_County/Chambersburg\\_Borough/Townhouse\\_Row.html](http://www.livingplaces.com/PA/Franklin_County/Chambersburg_Borough/Townhouse_Row.html), accessed July 10, 2014.

<sup>42</sup> "Shot From Gun Of Camp Hill Man Kills Hunter," *Harrisburg Telegraph*, December 4, 1926, p.1.

- "Ceremony at Laying of Church Corner Stone." *The Evening Star*, Aug. 29, 1921: pg. 20.
- "Christian Church to be Dedicated." *The Evening Star*, Apr. 15, 1922: pg. 11.
- "Church Sets Last Rites at Old Site." *The Washington Post*, Jan. 4, 1958: pg. B3.
- "Church to Celebrate Anniversary Tomorrow." *The Washington Post*, Feb. 28, 1925: pg. 16.
- "Church to Dedicate New Hall Tomorrow." *The Washington Post*, May 15, 1926: pg. 8.
- "Columbia Heights Christian Church." *The Washington Herald*, Apr. 15, 1922: pg. 12.
- "Columbia Heights to Remodel Classrooms of Sunday School." *The Washington Post*, Mar. 18, 1939: pg. 6.
- "Dedication of New Church." *The Washington Post*, Apr. 15, 1922: pg. 11.
- "Dedication Rites Slated on Sunday for Zion Baptist." *The Washington Post*, Sept. 22, 1962: pg. C8.
- "Dedication Tomorrow of Chapel is Planned." *The Evening Star*, Jan. 4, 1919: pg. 8.
- "Lay Cornerstone of \$100,000 Church." *The Washington Post*, Aug. 29, 1921: pg. 2.
- Levy, Claudia. "Bishop Samuel Kelsey, Broadcast Pastor, Dies." *The Washington Post*, Jan. 15, 1993: pg. D4.
- MacKaye, William R. "Temple Church of God in Christ to Celebrate Golden Jubilee." *The Washington Post*, July 20, 1973: pg. B18.
- "New Columbia Heights Church is Dedicated." *The Evening Star*, Apr. 17, 1922: pg. 28.
- "Plan Corner Stone Laying Tomorrow." *The Evening Star*, Aug. 27, 1921: Part I; pg. 6.
- "Rev. E.B. Bagby Dead." *The Washington Post*, Sept. 3, 1921: pg. 3.
- "Will Build \$100,000 Church." *The Washington Post*, May 2, 1920: pg. 40.
- "Will Erect Temporary Building for Worship." *The Evening Star*, Nov. 9, 1918: pg. 12.

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

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#### 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** 0.00034 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**0.35583 acres**

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Temple Church of God in Christ  
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.  
County and State

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

Square 2676, Lot 0813 (originally Lot 289) in the District of Columbia.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

Original building lot in its entirety.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title The Congregation of the Kelsey Baptist Temple Landmark Committee (Tilmon Couser, Melinda Fallen, Fred D. Morris, Jr., Brenda White, Richard White, and, Delores Ruffin), Peter Sefton, and Kent Boese

organization Sponsor: DC Preservation League date \_\_\_\_\_

street & number Suite 5, 1221 Connecticut Avenue NW telephone 202-783-5144

city or town Washington, DC state DC zip code 20036

e-mail [info@dcpreservation.org](mailto:info@dcpreservation.org)

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Site Plan:**

Site Plan from DC Property Quest (<http://propertyquest.dc.gov/>) Accessed January 2015.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

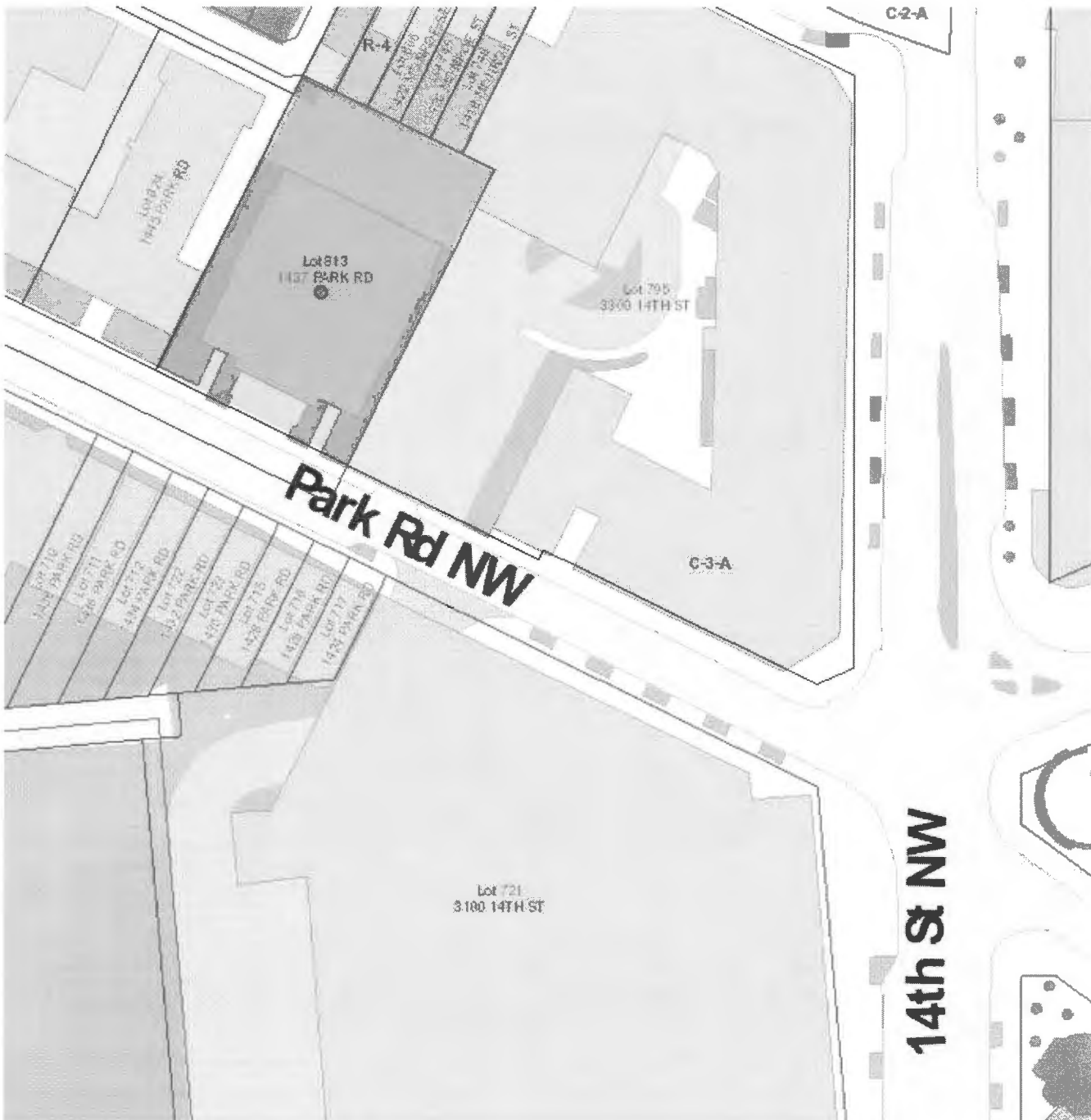
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Site Plan:**

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Site Plan from DC Property Quest (<http://propertyquest.dc.gov/>) Accessed January 2015.





Site plan and photo key:



	Photo Description	Camera Facing	Photographer	Date
1	South (front) and east facades	NW	D.P. Sefton	10/6/14
2	South façade	NE	D.P. Sefton	10/6/14
3	West façade	N	D.P. Sefton	9/23/14
4	North (rear) façade	E	D.P. Sefton	9/23/14
5	Portico detail	N	D.P. Sefton	10/6/14
6	South façade, cornice detail	NW	D.P. Sefton	10/6/14
	Historic Image Description		Source	Date
7	"Drawing of Proposed Columbia Heights Christian Church"		<i>Washington Times</i>	5/22/20
8	Reverend B.H. Melton with the Columbia Heights Christian Church		<i>Washington Post</i>	5/13/22
9	Temple Church of God in Christ Dedication Program Cover		<i>Souvenir Program</i>	1/12/58
10	Temple Church Congregation Members in Revival Tent, Southwest Washington		<i>Souvenir Program</i>	7/23/44
11	Temple Church choirs, 1944 and 1957, with recordings		<i>Souvenir Program</i>	1944, 1957, unknown
12	Celebration at 463 K Street SW Church		<i>Souvenir Program</i>	Prior to 1945
13	Bishop Samuel Kelsey		<i>Souvenir Program</i>	Circa 1958



**Kelsey Temple**  
A beautiful location for  
your wedding, anniversary or  
party.  
**IS THE BEST LIFE!**

247

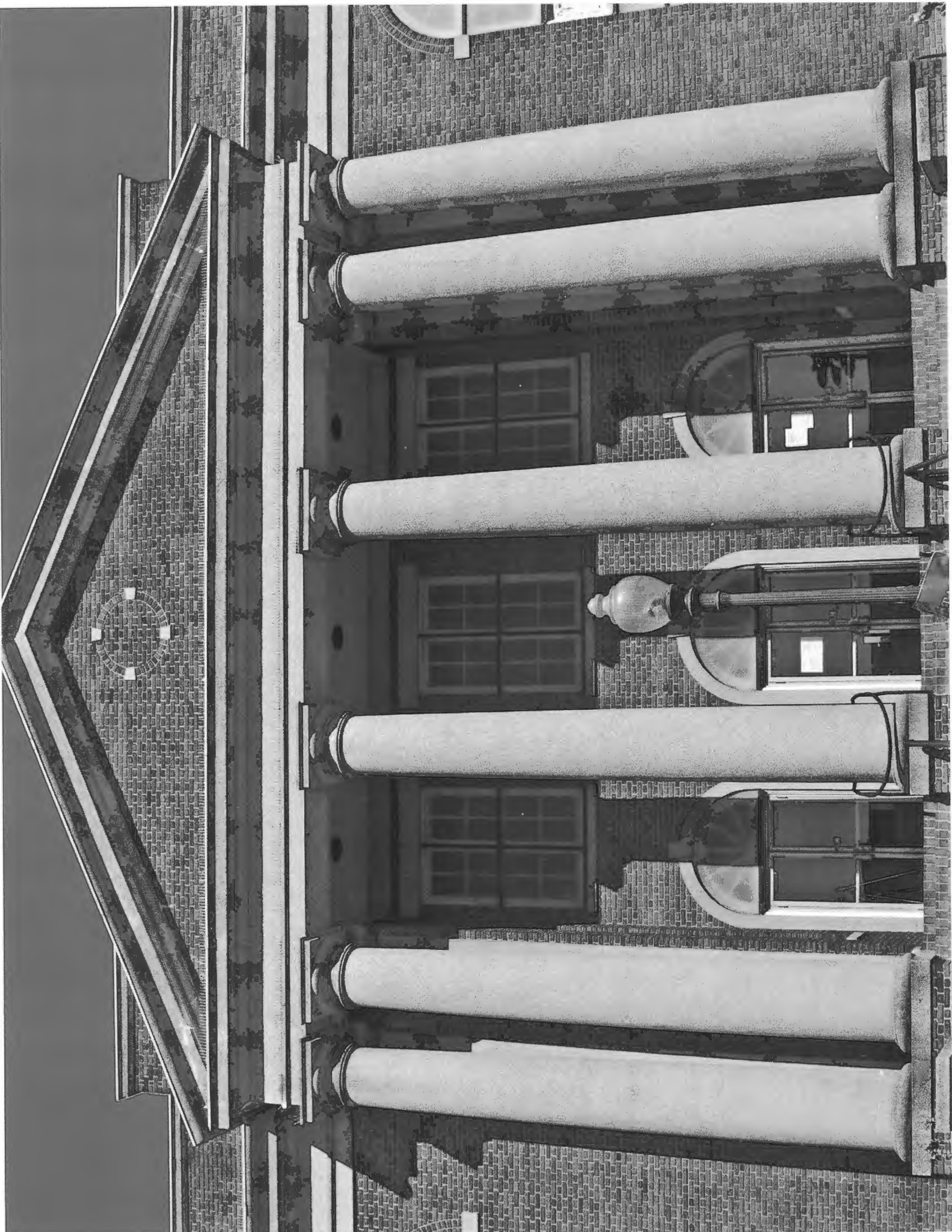
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247

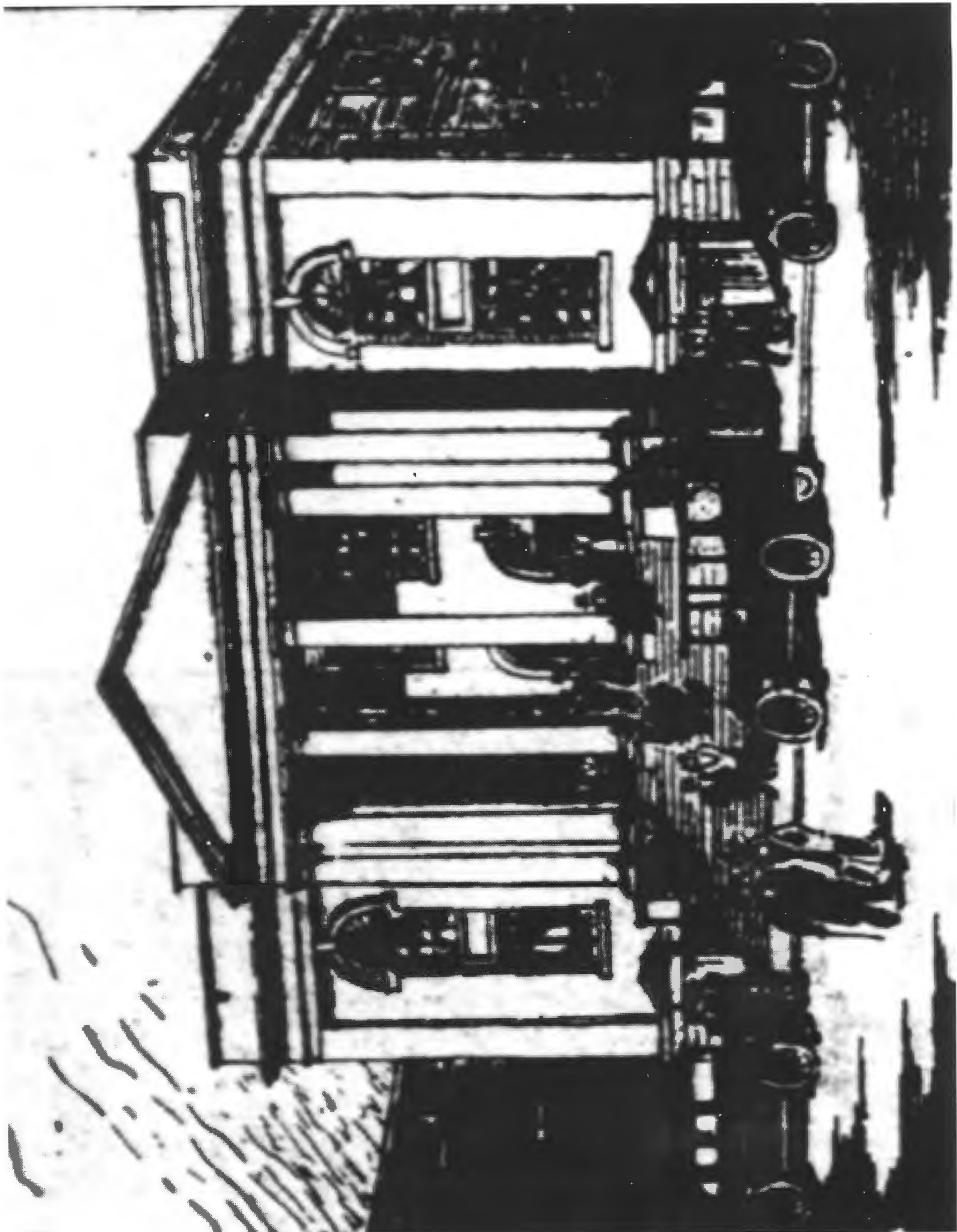






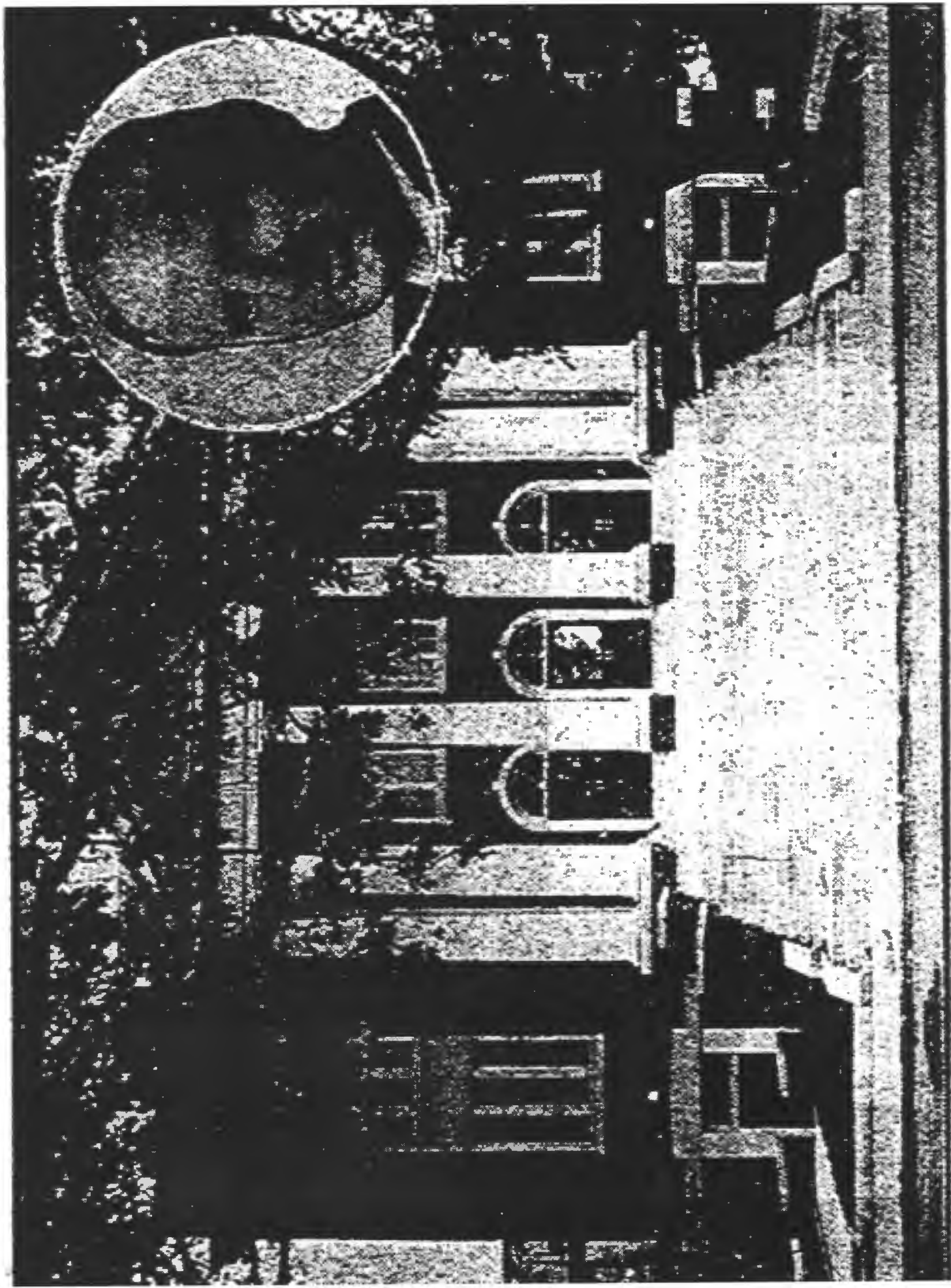








# FAST GROWING CONGREGATION IN THE NOKIHWESI



# Souvenir Program

## DEDICATORIAL SERVICES

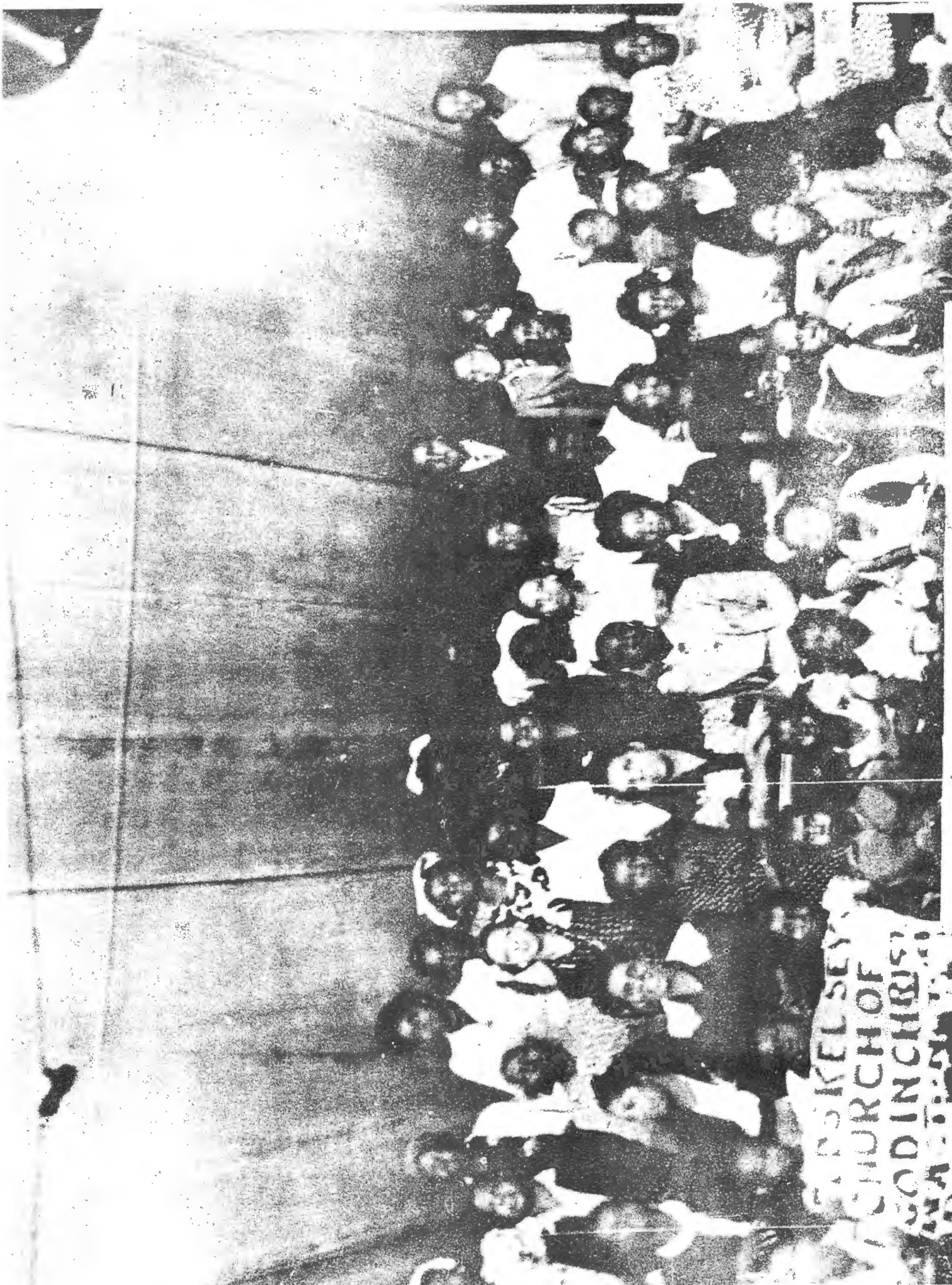
OF THE  
*Temple Church of God in Christ*



1435 PARK ROAD N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

**BISHOP SAMUEL KELSEY, Minister**

*"WELL DONE IS BETTER THAN WELL SAID".*



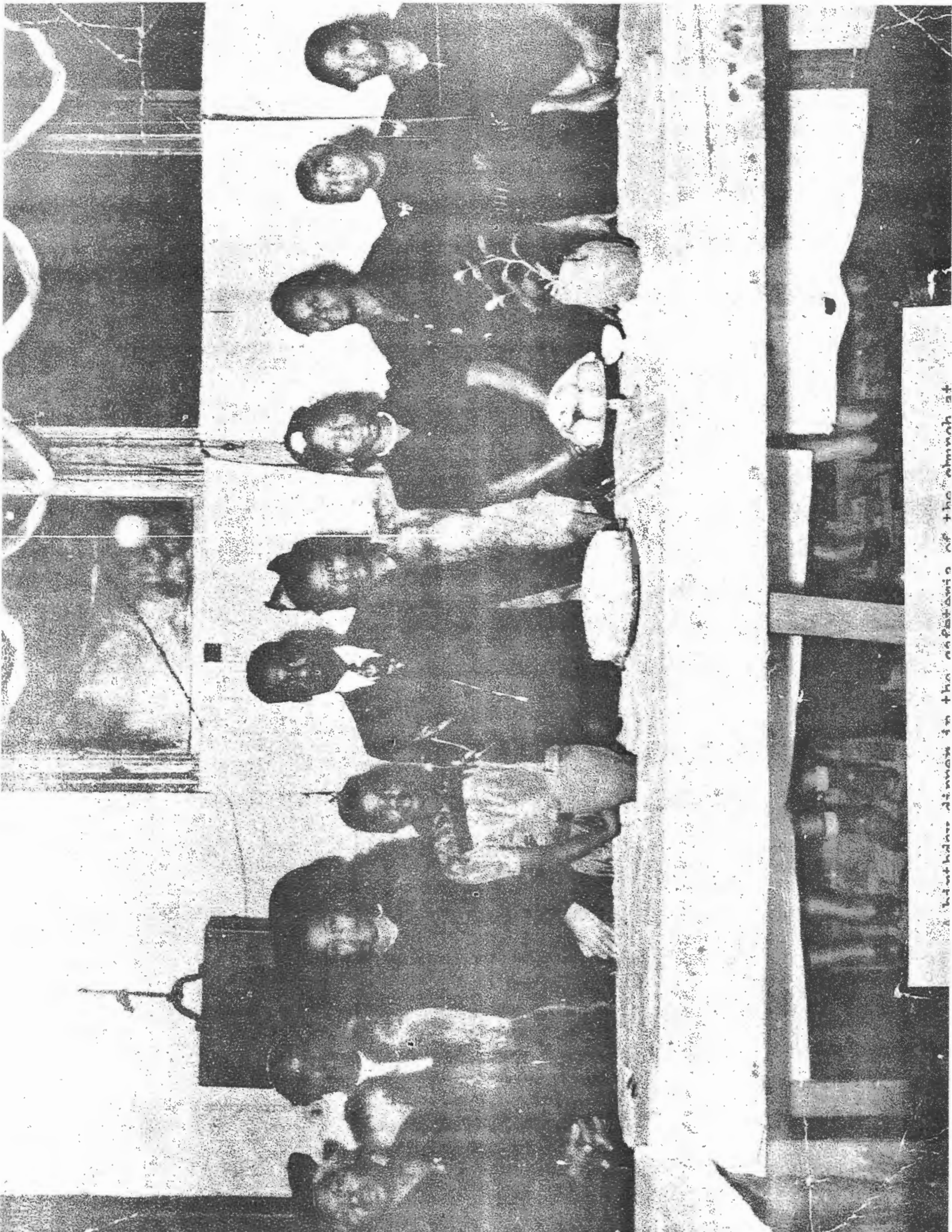
ST. JOSEPH'S  
CHURCH OF  
GOOD INCHURCH  
W. 11th St. N. W.

Tent services were annual summer events

The Senior Choir 1967

ELDS KELSEY  
CHURCH OF  
GOD IN CHRIST  
WASHINGTON  
D.C. JUL 23





... of the ... at ... the ... in ... the ... which ... the ...

