United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. **Name of Property**
   Historic name: _First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City______________
   Other names/site number: _N/A____________________________________
   Name of related multiple property listing: _N/A_______________________
   (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. **Location**
   Street & number: _600 Northwest 13th Street________________________
   City or town: _Oklahoma City_ State: _Oklahoma_ County: _Oklahoma__
   Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. **State/Federal Agency Certification**
   As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
   I hereby certify that this _X_ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets
   the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic
   Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
   In my opinion, the property _X_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I
   recommend that this property be considered significant at the following
   level(s) of significance:
   ___national                  ___statewide           _X_local
   Applicable National Register Criteria:
   ___A             ___B           _X_C           ___D

   ____________________________
   Signature of certifying official/Title: Date
   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
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

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 ☐
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Name of Property: First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
County and State: Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

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

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- RELIGION/ religious facility
- RELIGION/ church school
- RELIGION/ church-related residence

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- RELIGION/ religious facility
- RELIGION/ church school
7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

[LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/ Colonial Revival]

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: [BRICK]

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Constructed in 1928-29, with additions completed in 1958 and 1974, First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City is an excellent local example of twentieth-century Colonial Revival-style architecture. Sometimes characterized as a “New England [style] church” in the Bible Belt, First Unitarian Church is notable for its prominent copper-clad spire, red brick exterior, and cast stone ornamental features. Original building sections were designed in the Colonial Revival style by the firm Smith and Walker of Boston, Massachusetts. These sections retain much of their original layout and historic features and finishes, including wood-framed, multi-light arched windows and stained wood floors. Subsequent additions reflect midcentury interpretations of the Colonial Revival style and completed the building’s unique, U-shaped footprint around an elevated, open courtyard. The overall design and construction of First Unitarian Church reflects the evolution of its community outreach and education programs. A congregation has been at this historic location since 1929, and the property is a community landmark that symbolizes the original development of this section of central Oklahoma City.
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

Name of Property

Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

County and State

Narrative Description

Site and Setting

First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City is set on the southwest corner at the intersection of Northwest 13th Street, which has an east-to-west orientation, and North Dewey Avenue, which runs north-to-south, on Lots 1-2 in Block 2 of Classen’s Marquette Addition to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma. It is oriented to the corner at a 45-degree angle to the adjacent streets and is set back approximately 150 feet from the curb of the intersection. The site is set at a slightly higher elevation than the neighboring streets and the grade slopes down gradually from northwest to southeast, so that the Sanctuary is at a slightly higher elevation than the adjacent additions when viewed from street level. Concrete sidewalks extend parallel and adjacent to both Northwest 13th Street and North Dewey Avenue.

A one-way, U-shaped asphalt driveway defines the southeast, southwest, and northwest site boundaries. This driveway is wide enough for one vehicle and can be accessed via North Dewey Avenue approximately 145 feet south of the intersection with Northwest 13th Street. The driveway extends the full length of the southeast property line before widening along the southwest (back) property line to provide a limited number of parking spaces. The driveway extends the full length of the northwest property line before terminating at Northwest 13th Street, approximately 130 feet west of the intersection with North Dewey Avenue.

The northeast site boundary is demarcated by a concrete sidewalk that extends at a curve along the northwest boundary of Lots 1-2 and between each end of the U-shaped driveway. A painted wood sign that reads “First Unitarian Church” is northeast of this sidewalk and approximately 115 feet in front of the buildings. A large grass lawn with several trees is southwest of the sidewalk. Two sidewalks, each of which is set two steps above grade, extend southwest from the curved sidewalk. The northwest sidewalk (approximately eight feet wide) provides direct access to the Sanctuary. The southeast sidewalk (approximately six feet wide) leads to the church courtyard.

First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City is set at the north boundary of a mixed residential and commercial area known informally as Midtown. The downtown core of Oklahoma City is approximately one mile to the south. Residential neighborhoods that contain single-family dwellings, most notably the Heritage Hills Historic and Architectural District (NRIS #79002006) and Mesta Park Historic District (NRIS #83002102), are north of Northwest 13th Street. The Edge at Midtown apartment building, completed in 2016, is across North Dewey Avenue to the east.

1 Midtown is locally defined as the area bounded by Northwest 4th Street to the south, North Classen Boulevard to the west, Northwest 13th Street to the north, and North Broadway Avenue to the east.
Block 2 of Classen’s Marquette Addition contains among the largest lots in the vicinity, which were utilized historically for the construction of large houses for wealthy residents. Villa Teresa Historic District (NRIS #SG100005559) retains the only remaining historic residences on the block and is directly southwest of First Unitarian Church on Lots 7-11. Commons Apartments, a three-story apartment building completed in 2018, is west of the church on Lots 5-6. Maney Historic District (NRIS #79002008), which contains three historic houses, is one-tenth-of-one-mile southwest, at the intersection of North Shartel Avenue and Northwest 11th Street. Plaza Court (NRIS #89003290), a historic shopping center, is less than one-quarter-of-one-mile southeast, at the intersection of Classen Drive and North Walker Avenue.

**General Building Description**

First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City has a generally U-shaped footprint arranged around an elevated courtyard (Photograph #0001). The westernmost building section, herein termed the Sanctuary, was completed in 1929. It has a cross-gabled roof and is one story equal to the height of two stories (30 feet). The centermost building section, herein termed Daniel Hall, was also completed in 1929 and is one story tall (plus a basement). Along with the courtyard, Daniel Hall is set back from and situated at a higher grade than the rest of the building (Photograph #0007). It has a side-gabled roof that extends northwest-to-southeast between the south ends of the Sanctuary and the easternmost building section, herein termed Channing House. Built in 1974, Channing House is three stories tall with a side-gabled roof that extends northeast-to-southwest at an angle parallel to the Sanctuary. The fourth building section, herein termed Eliot House, was constructed in 1958. It is set at a lower grade than the rest of the building, and the back (southwest) elevation is attached to the gabled (northeast) end of Channing House (Photograph #0002). Eliot House is three stories tall with a side-gabled roof that extends northwest-to-southeast at an angle perpendicular to Channing House. The first story is set partially below grade, leaving approximately three-and-one-half feet visible above grade.

All building sections are clad in a tri-color blend of red/dark red/black brick laid up in a running bond. All roofs are steeply pitched and clad in composition shingles.

The following is a narrative description of each building section that, together, make up First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City. It begins with the Sanctuary and continues with descriptions of Daniel Hall, Channing House, and Eliot House. This section concludes with a description of the elevated courtyard, which is a contributing site.


**a. Sanctuary**

Date of Construction: 1928-1929
Northeast-facing Façade

There is a steeple at the front gabled end of the Sanctuary (Photograph #0008). It is fifty feet in height and emerges from the roof of the Sanctuary with a square base clad in red brick. The square base is capped by a wood entablature and wood balustrade. Each corner of the balustrade is topped with an urn-shaped finial. The uppermost portions of the steeple are centered atop the base and are divided into three distinct sections. The base of each section is slightly smaller than the section below it. The bottommost section is square shaped with an arched, wood louver on each side. Each louver is framed within a portico. The next (middle) section is octagon-shaped with a wood-framed roundel located on four sides. The topmost section is also octagon-shaped with an arched opening on four sides. Each of the openings on the middle and topmost sections are aligned vertically with a louver opening on the bottommost section. All three sections are clad in horizontal, factory-painted aluminum shingles. A spire rises from the topmost section. It is thirty feet in height, wood-framed, and clad in a copper or bronze sheathing. The sheathing has oxidized over time, providing a distinct patina finish.

The primary entrance is centered on the elevation, directly below a painted, wood-framed, 8/8 hung window on the second story. This window is flanked by painted, wood-framed, four-light (1x4) sidelights to each side. Vertical wood mullions separate the window from the sidelights. The window and sidelights share a continuous cast stone subsill. The entrance is slightly recessed and contains a pair of painted, six-panel wood doors. A wood-framed, eight-light transom is directly above the doors. The doors and transom are topped by a wood entablature and cornice with dentils that extend to an engaged, painted wood column to each side of the entrance. A metal plaque that reads “First Unitarian Church” is centered on the entablature.

There are two wood-framed, 6/6 hung windows to each side of the entrance; one on each story. The windows are vertically aligned. Each window has a cast stone subsill. The windows on the first story have a soldier course lintel. All windows on this elevation are protected by plexiglass storm windows.

The primary entrance and windows are framed by a large portico with four painted, cast stone Doric columns of equal width and spacing. A square engaged column is directly behind each outermost column. The columns are set atop a wide porch with a red brick foundation, cast stone edges, and a concrete floor. A set of six concrete steps flanked by wrought iron railings lead to the porch. Wrought iron railings are also inset between each column of the portico. A concrete, wheelchair-accessible ramp with a red brick foundation, cast stone edges, and wrought iron railings is to the right (northwest) of the portico. This ramp wraps around the northwest corner of the Sanctuary before it descends parallel and adjacent to the northwest side elevation.
Southeast Side Elevation

Two window openings of equal size (one on each story) are at the north end of the elevation, near the intersection with the side gabled end (Photograph #0008). Each opening contains a wood-framed, 6/6 hung unit. The openings are vertically aligned and have soldier course lintels and cast stone subsills. To the left (south) of these windows are four arched window openings of equal width and spacing. Each opening is equivalent to the height of one-and-one-half stories and contains a wood-framed, multi-light hung unit with a cast stone subsill. Each arched opening is topped by a soldier course with a cast stone keystone and springers. Most window openings on this elevation are protected by plexiglass storm windows. The remainder of the elevation is adjoined with Daniel Hall.

Southwest (Back) Elevation

A one-story, painted concrete block extension with a flat roof associated with Daniel Hall obscures approximately two-thirds of the back elevation of the Sanctuary, leaving only the back gable and the left (west) portion of the elevation visible (Photograph #0005). There are no openings on the back gable. A concrete ramp with a painted wrought iron railing is at the west end of the elevation. This ramp leads to a painted, slab metal door providing direct access to the back of the Sanctuary. A flat metal awning projects over the entrance and much of the ramp.

Northwest Side Elevation

There are two window openings of equal size centered on the first story of the side gabled end, which is at the southernmost end of the elevation (Photograph #0005). Each opening contains a vinyl-framed, twelve-light fixed unit. Each opening has a soldier course lintel and a cast stone subsill. An entrance to the right (southwest) of the windows was infilled with a lighter colored red brick at an unknown date. The top of the original door opening is marked by a soldier course.

To the left (north) of the side gabled end are five arched window openings of equal width and spacing (Photograph #0006). Each opening is equivalent to the height of one-and-one-half stories and contains a wood-framed, multi-light hung unit with a cast stone subsill. Each arched opening is topped by a soldier course with a cast stone keystone and springers. Two window openings of equal size are at the north end of the elevation; one on each story. The openings are vertically aligned, and each contains a wood-framed, 6/6 hung unit with a soldier course lintel and a cast stone subsill.

Most window openings on this elevation are protected by plexiglass storm windows.
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

Interior

The interior of the Sanctuary retains a high degree of integrity and its original layout remains intact (Photograph #0012). Much of the interior space is open to the height of two stories. The chancel is set at the south end of the Sanctuary. Access to the chancel is framed by two Doric columns and two square engaged columns. A multi-light Palladian window is set above the south end of the chancel. Fixed wood pews are arranged in rows on each side of a central aisle in the worship space. Identical pews are also set in a balcony that takes up much of the north end of the Sanctuary. The balcony pews potentially date to the late 1950s.²

The Sanctuary retains most of its historic finishes, including painted ceilings, painted plaster walls with painted wood picture frame trim, casing and wainscot, and stained wood floors.

Modifications/Alterations

The wheelchair-accessible ramp that wraps around the northwest corner and adjacent to the northwest side elevation of the Sanctuary was dedicated in 2001. The Palladian window set above the south end of the chancel was enclosed upon construction of the southeast (back) addition to Daniel Hall in 1958.

b. Daniel Hall

Date of Construction: 1928-1929
Date of Alterations: 1958

Northeast-facing Façade

An octagonal cupola with a metal domical roof is centered atop the side-gabled roof (Photograph #0009). The cupola is clad in horizontal wood siding with a small, arched louver on each side.

A pair of painted, five-panel wood doors (each with a single vertical light) is centered on the first story. Metal-framed sidelights with tinted glass flank each side of the doors. The entrance is situated within an arched bay topped by a double rowlock course with a cast stone key and protected by a green canvas awning with an aluminum frame. A set of four concrete steps with painted metal railings lead up from the Courtyard to the doors. A half-height brick wall extends from each side of the steps for approximately 12 feet. These walls help retain an elevated memorial garden (see Courtyard description below).

There are two arched bays to each side of the doors. To the left (east), the bay closest to the doors contains a metal-framed fixed window with tinted glass and the outermost bay is obscured by an elevator addition to Channing House (see Channing House description below).

² Robert C. Hardy, One Hundred Years of Upstart Unitarianism in the Bible Belt (Oklahoma City: First Unitarian Church, 1991), 97.
below). To the right (west), the bay closest to the doors contains a metal-framed fixed window with tinted glass, while the outermost bay is infilled with brick and contains a vinyl-framed, 12-light fixed window with a soldier course lintel and a cast stone subsill. Beyond this bay, at the intersection of Daniel Hall and the Sanctuary, is a painted metal slab door. Each arched bay is topped by a double rowlock course with a cast stone key.

**Southeast Side Elevation**

The southeast side elevation of Daniel Hall is adjoined with Channing House (Photograph #0010).

**Southwest (back) Elevation**

The back elevation of Daniel Hall is simple and utilitarian in character (Photograph #0004). A one-story, painted concrete block addition with a flat roof spans nearly the full width of the elevation as well as approximately two-thirds the width of the back elevation of the Sanctuary. Completed in 1958, this addition contains four window openings of various sizes and shapes arranged in no apparent pattern. The westernmost opening, set approximately six-and-one-half feet above grade, is a horizontal rectangle that contains a set of three metal-framed fixed windows. The two centermost openings, each of which is set approximately seven feet above grade level, each contain a vinyl-framed, nine-light fixed unit. The easternmost opening contains a vinyl-framed, 12/9 hung unit. A covered porch with a flat roof is to the right (east) of this opening and extends from the southeast side of the addition. A painted wood fence extends approximately fifteen feet from the porch to the northwest side of Channing House.

**Northwest Side Elevation**

A small section of the concrete block addition is visible to the right (southwest) of Daniel Hall’s side gabled end (Photograph #0005). Set directly behind the Sanctuary, the addition does not have any openings on this elevation. The side of the flat, metal awning above the back door to the Sanctuary is anchored to this elevation. An encased air-handling mechanical unit is set above the awning.

The remainder of the northwest side elevation to the left (north) of the addition is adjoined with the Sanctuary.

**Interior**

A corridor set adjacent to the main entrance to Daniel Hall extends northwest-to-southeast (Photograph #0013). This corridor provides interior access to the Sanctuary, located at the west end of the corridor, and to Channing House, which is at the east end of the corridor. The refectory is to the south of the corridor (Photograph #00011). A meeting room known as the
Jefferson Room is in the southwest corner of the building, directly behind the Sanctuary. A kitchen and additional meeting space are in the basement.

Typical finishes throughout Daniel Hall include suspended acoustic tile ceilings, painted gypsum board or plaster walls, and carpet floors. The refectory features walls with painted wood trim and stained wood floors.

**Modifications/Alterations**

Historic photographs indicate that the three centermost arched bays along the northeast-facing façade were open prior to the construction of Eliot House in 1958 (see Section 11, Historic Image #5). These bays were enclosed at an unknown date. The concrete block addition to the back elevation was constructed in 1958. There are no known significant alterations to the interior layout of Daniel Hall.

c. **Channing House**  
Date of Construction: 1974

**Southeast-facing Façade**

Channing House extends northeast-to-southwest at an angle parallel to the Sanctuary and is set one-half level above Eliot House to the north (Photograph #0003). It has a side gabled, southeast-facing façade characterized by five pairs of arched, metal-framed, fixed windows that extend the full three stories of the building. The windows have tinted glass. Horizontal metal mullions divide each window into four vertical sections. A soldier course with a fantailed cast stone key is above each window. An alternating soldier-sailor course extends along the full length of the elevation, demarcating the transition between the second and third stories. Four metal downspouts are located at regular intervals across the elevation.

An entrance is centered on the first story. It contains a single, metal-framed access door with a matching sidelight. A sconce is to each side of the entrance and a flat metal awning is situated above. A metal-framed transom window with an arched top is above the awning. The lower portion of the transom contains textured glass. A soldier course with a fantailed cast stone key is above the transom.

**Southwest Side Elevation**

Brick parapets capped with raked cast stone descend along the roofline of the southwest side gabled end (Photograph #0004). A square, metal louver is centered at the attic level. An alternating soldier-sailor course extends along the full width of the gabled end, demarcating the transition between the second and third stories. A painted, slab metal door is set at the west end of the first story. There are no other openings on the elevation.
Northwest (back) Elevation

The Courtyard obscures part of the first story of the northwest (back) elevation of Channing House, leaving only the second and third stories fully visible from the exterior (Photograph #0010). There are three arched, metal-framed fixed windows. Each window has the same tinted glass, shape, and configuration as the units on the façade, but they extend only from the Courtyard to the height of two stories, leaving the third story windowless. A painted, six-panel wood door is set at the north end of the elevation, just to the south (right) of the concrete staircase that abuts the back elevation of Eliot House.

A non-contributing elevator addition (built circa 1990) projects from the center of the elevation, just to the left (north) of the intersection with Daniel Hall. The addition is in two sections. The section that adjoins Channing House is equivalent to the height of three stories, while the section that projects into the Courtyard is approximately two stories in height. Each section has a flat roof and parapets capped in cast stone. There is an arched, metal-framed, fixed window with tinted glass on the first story of the section projecting into the Courtyard. Located on the northeast-facing elevation of the addition, there is a soldier course with a fantailed cast stone key above the window, and it has a cast stone subsill.

Much of the remainder of the elevation to the right (south) of the elevator addition is adjoined with Daniel Hall.

Northeast Side Elevation

Approximately two-thirds of the northeast, side gabled end of Channing House is obscured by Eliot House, leaving only the attic level and the left (southeast) portion visible from this elevation (Photograph #0002). Brick parapets capped with rake cast stone descend along the roofline and a square metal louver is centered at attic level, directly above the roofline of Eliot House. There are no openings on the building portion to the left (southeast) of Eliot House.

Interior

Administrative offices and meeting rooms are located throughout the first story of Channing House, while the second and third stories are dedicated to the church school (Photograph #0013). Both the second and third stories feature a primary corridor with classrooms adjacent to the southeast. Typical finishes include acoustic tile or painted gypsum board ceilings, painted gypsum board walls, and carpet floors.
Channing House was built in its current configuration in 1974, following a fire that destroyed the original building. The elevator addition, which accesses all levels of Channing House, was installed in circa 1990.

d. Eliot House

Date of Construction: 1958

Northeast-facing Façade

Eliot House has a symmetrical, side-gabled façade that is relatively even with that of the Sanctuary to the west (Photograph #0002). Five individual, equidistant vinyl-framed, twelve-light fixed windows extend across the width of the third story. Five individual, equidistant wood-framed, 6/6 hung windows extend across the width of the second story. The windows are vertically aligned. Each window has a soldier course lintel and a cast stone subsill. A small, rectangular-shaped metal louver is directly above the centermost window on the second story. A metal downspout is located at the east end of the elevation.

A shed roof clad in composition shingles defines the transition between the first and second stories (Photographs #0006-0007). This roof covers an arcade. A set of concrete steps is at each end of the arcade. Each set of steps has a wrought iron railing and leads to a walkway set below grade. Five brick arches of equal width and spacing extend the full width of the arcade. These arches are set atop a concrete retaining wall. Each arch is framed by a header course with cast stone keys in the center and at each end.

A painted wood door is centered on the first story underneath the arcade. Two individual, equidistant wood-framed, 6/6 hung windows are to each side of the door. The windows align vertically with those on the second and third stories. Each window has a soldier course lintel and a cast stone subsill.

Southeast Side Elevation

There are six window openings of equal size on the gabled end of Eliot House; two on each story (Photograph #0003). The openings are arranged symmetrically. Each opening on the third story contains a vinyl-framed, twelve-light fixed unit. Each opening on the first and second stories contains a wood-framed, 6/6 hung unit. Each opening has a soldier course lintel and a cast stone subsill. A metal downspout is to the left (southwest) of the windows.

To the left (southwest) of the gabled end, where Eliot House abuts Channing House, there is one window opening centered on each story. The opening on the third story contains a vinyl-framed, twelve-light fixed unit. Each opening on the first and second stories contains a wood-
framed, 6/6 hung unit. The openings are vertically aligned and have soldier course lintels and cast stone subsills.

**Southwest (back) Elevation**

A concrete staircase, accessed from the courtyard, abuts the southwest (back) elevation of Eliot House (Photograph #0010). This staircase is accompanied by a sloping, half-height brick wall with railing and cast stone caps. A painted metal slab door is at the top of the staircase, where the elevation abuts Channing House. This door provides access to the third story.

**Northwest Side Elevation**

There are three large window openings centered on the northwest side gabled end of Eliot House; one on each story (Photograph #0006). The third story opening is arched and contains a vinyl-framed, multi-light unit. The opening has a cast stone subsill and is topped by a soldier course with a cast stone keystone and springers. The second story opening contains a vinyl-framed, sixteen-light (4x4) fixed window unit with a soldier course lintel and cast stone subsill. The first story opening contains a vinyl-framed, eight-light (4x2) fixed window unit. This window has a soldier course lintel, and the sill is set near grade level.

**Interior**

The interior of Eliot House is dedicated primarily to a church school and youth outreach services. Classrooms are located on the first and second stories. The children’s chapel is on the third story (Photograph #0014). Typical finishes include painted gypsum board or acoustic tile ceilings, painted brick or concrete block walls, and carpet or vinyl composition tile floors.

**Alterations/Modifications**

There are no known significant alterations to the interior layout or finishes of Eliot House.

The southwest (back) elevation of Eliot House abutted the northeast side gabled end of Channing House historically. This abutment was modified to its present configurating in 1974 upon construction of Channing House to its current size and configuration.

**2. Courtyard**

**Date of Construction:** 1928-1929
**Date of Alterations:** 1958, 1974.

A defining site feature of First Unitarian Church, the Courtyard is framed on three sides by the collective U-shaped footprint provided by adjacent building sections, including the
Sanctuary to the west, Daniel Hall to the south, and Channing House to the east (Photograph #0007). It is open to the northeast and accessed by a set of six concrete steps going up and flanked by wrought iron railings. A gently rolling grass terrace is to the right (west) of the stairs. The terrace slopes downward from southwest-to-northeast. It is topped by a painted, wrought iron fence that extends west from the concrete steps to the southeast side elevation of the Sanctuary (Photograph #0009).

The east half of the Courtyard is paved in concrete, while the west half is an open grassy area (Photograph #0010). There is a cluster of trees adjacent to the Sanctuary. An unfinished, unpainted, contemporary wood pergola covers the easternmost portion of the Courtyard. The south edge of the Courtyard is defined by a concrete sidewalk extending east-to-west between the Sanctuary and Channing House and directly in front of the concrete steps that lead up to Daniel Hall’s entrance. Half-height brick walls are adjacent to the south side of the sidewalk, helping to retain an elevated memorial garden.
8. Statement of Significance

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

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

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

Name of Property                   County and State

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1927-1974

Significant Dates
1929
1958
1974

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
PHILIP HORTON SMITH AND EDGAR T. P. WALKER, ARCHITECTS
NORMAN BYRD AND RICHARD VAHLBERG, ARCHITECTS
FRITZLER, KNOBLOCK, AND FURRY, ARCHITECTS
BEVERIDGE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, BUILDER
J. W. SKAGGS CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, BUILDER
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C at the local level of significance for Architecture. Whereas the property is owned and operated by First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City and is used for religious purposes, Criteria Consideration A applies. Criteria Consideration G applies because Channing House was built in its current configuration in 1974 following a fire. The period of significance is from 1927, when the congregation first acquired the site, to 1974, when construction of the Channing House replacement was completed. Original building sections, which include the Sanctuary and Daniel Hall, were constructed in 1928-1929 and designed in the Colonial Revival architectural style by the firm Smith and Walker of Boston, Massachusetts. The exterior of the Sanctuary is nearly identical to that of Tabernacle Congregational Church in Salem, Massachusetts (NRIS #83000576), which Smith and Walker also designed. The design enables First Unitarian to stand out as a “New England [style] church” in the heart of Oklahoma City. The congregation continues to gather at this historic location for worship, teaching, and community outreach. In addition, the building provides an important landmark that symbolizes downtown Oklahoma City’s historic development.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Historic Context

Originally a tent village that appeared almost overnight following the Land Run of April 22, 1889, Oklahoma City grew quickly to become a vibrant commercial center on the southern Great Plains. The City of Oklahoma City was formally incorporated on July 15, 1890. At that time, the city had approximately 4,000 residents. By the end of the decade, an agricultural boom and the completion of five railroad lines to and from town limits transformed Oklahoma City into a commercial hub. Gaining the state capital in June 1910, along with its associated governmental functions, enabled the city to become the political center of Oklahoma. The discovery of oil in and around the city limits during the late 1920s and early 1930s further cemented Oklahoma City’s economic and political importance to the state.3

Such growth was accompanied by a variety of religious groups and denominations. C. H. Rogers, a Unitarian minister who arrived in Oklahoma City in late 1892, held church meetings until approximately 1897. The Unitarian church formally organized in Oklahoma City in 1906 when the American Unitarian Association, located in Boston, Massachusetts, sent Dr. Walter C. Pierce to lead the congregation. One year later, All Souls Unitarian Church was incorporated in

First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

Oklahoma City. The congregation changed its name to the First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City in 1913, after the arrival of Reverend Clarence J. Harris. The small congregation, which ranged between 12 and 40 regular members, met in a variety of temporary spaces throughout downtown Oklahoma City until 1916, when it purchased a small building previously owned by the United Presbyterian Church at the corner of Northwest 9th Street and North Broadway Avenue for $9,000.4

First Unitarian Church relocated to the Northwest 9th Street and North Broadway Avenue location after a “‘boom period’ in church construction” along nearby North Robinson Avenue.5 Such construction included First Baptist Church, First Christian Church (NRIS #84003383), First Lutheran Church, and the First Church of Christ, Scientist (NRIS #1000949). Temple B’nai Israel, located on Broadway Circle, was another prominent religious building in the vicinity. In 1913, the Daily Oklahoman commented that “eight of the finest churches of the city” were along North Robinson Avenue, which garnered the nickname “Church Row.”6 The design of these structures often utilized Classical, Gothic, or other subtypes associated with the early twentieth century Revival architectural style. In addition, the materials and finishes used in the construction of these buildings reflected the prosperity of their respective members, many of whom owned houses in nearby neighborhoods promoted by prominent developers such as Anton Classen and Gilbert A. Nichols.7

Criterion C: Architecture

Like other congregations, First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City comprised of many middle- and upper-class families and individuals by the late 1920s, including politicians, businessmen, and working professionals. Such affluence enabled the church to relocate and construct a larger building northwest of downtown. In November 1927, the Classen Corporation conveyed Lots 1-2 in Block 2 of Classen’s Marquette Addition to the American Unitarian Association for $17,000.8

Located at the intersection of Northwest 13th Street and North Dewey Avenue, Lots 1-2 were among the only lots in the area that remained undeveloped. Moreover, numerous lots and blocks in the vicinity contained extravagant homes and mansions, including those within Heritage Hills Historic and Architectural District (NRIS #79002006) and Mesta Park Historic District (NRIS #83002102) to the north, and Villa Teresa Historic District (NRIS #SG100005559) and Maney

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4 Prior meeting spaces included the Overholser Opera House on West Grand Avenue, the McCann Building on North Broadway Avenue, and the second floor of Westfall Drug Store on Main Street. See Robert C. Hardy, One Hundred Years of Upstart Unitarianism in the Bible Belt (Oklahoma City: First Unitarian Church, 1991), 15, 17-26.
5 National Register of Historic Places, “First Church of Christ, Scientist, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma,” NRIS #1000949, Section 8, Page 18. Available at http://nr2_shpo.okstate.edu/pdfs/1000949.pdf.
6 Quoted in Dobson-Brown et al., Intensive Level Survey of Downtown: Phase Two, 24.
Historic District (NRIS #79002008) to the southwest. Prior to the Unitarians’ acquisition of the property, newspaper advertisements promoted the value of houses in the neighborhood, commented on the availability of key amenities such as paved streets and streetcar stations, and proclaimed that there was “[n]o finer district in the city” than Classen’s Marquette Addition.\(^9\)

Funds for the purchase came from a $30,000 contribution from Joseph L. Daniel, a prominent cotton trader and banker who had been active in the congregation since his arrival in Oklahoma City in 1911.\(^10\) In January 1928, the congregation sold the church building at Northwest 9th Street and North Broadway Avenue for $38,000. They then met at Temple B’nai Israel for the next year-and-a-half while the new church building was under construction.\(^11\)

The American Unitarian Association, based in Boston, Massachusetts, and First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City commissioned Boston architects Philip Horton Smith and Edgar T. P. Walker to design the new building.\(^12\) Their design for the Sanctuary was almost identical to that of Tabernacle Congregational Church in Salem, Massachusetts, which the firm had designed in 1923 (NRIS # 83000576). Both buildings are two stories in height, and each features a primary entrance and windows framed by a large portico and colonnade. Each also has a steeple located at their front gabled end. Each steeple emerges from the sanctuary roof with a square base, and the base of each of the three sections above is slightly smaller than that of the section below it. According to church historian Robert C. Hardy, the only difference between the two buildings is that First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City has a spire atop its three-tiered steeple instead of a belfry. Another notable difference is that First Unitarian Church is clad in brick, while Tabernacle Congregational Church is clad in granite.\(^13\)

Congregation members held a groundbreaking ceremony on Lots 1-2 on September 10, 1928.\(^14\) On October 25, they gathered to lay the cornerstone to the Sanctuary and hold a service in the building, which was still under construction. As the *Daily Oklahoman* noted, “Pews were made of planks laid across benches. The pulpit was a raised platform illuminated by a gas lamp. There


\(^11\) Ibid., 29.

\(^12\) Formed in 1921, much of the firm’s work was in Massachusetts and centered on residential development as well as schools, churches, and a combination of public and commercial buildings. “Biographical Sketch,” Philip Horton Smith Architectural Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, accessed May 29, 2020, [https://www.masshist.org/collection-guides/view/fa0366](https://www.masshist.org/collection-guides/view/fa0366). According to the index of Smith’s client files, the firm appears to have also worked with All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma.


\(^14\) “Ground Turned for Unitarian Church,” *The Daily Oklahoman*, September 11, 1928, 12.
was no roof, and no windows to keep out the wind.”15 Dr. George F. Patterson of the American Unitarian Association in Boston as well as Reverend Homer Lewis Sheffer and members of the board of trustees addressed the group.16

On Sunday, May 26, 1929, approximately 150 people attended the first service in the completed church, which was built by Beveridge Construction Company. Despite having set a limit at $55,000 for construction costs, the building ultimately cost over $89,000 to build.17 Nevertheless, it provided ample room for the congregation by arranging different spaces for various activities and services around a central elevated courtyard. In addition to the Sanctuary, which offered a large worship space, First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City featured a large parish house for the church school (presently Daniel Hall), and a parsonage for the clergy (presently Channing House). Contemporary observers noted First Unitarian’s architectural style by referring to it as “Georgian.” The spire atop the Sanctuary, meanwhile, stood out as a prominent local landmark (see Section 11, Historic Images #7-8).18

The architectural design of First Unitarian Church is unique among the religious buildings of Oklahoma City. Of nine church buildings in the city currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, six were designed in the Gothic Revival architectural style. Two other buildings, First Christian Church (built in 1910-11, NRIS #84003383) and First Church of Christ, Scientist (built in 1922, NRIS #1000949), are indicated as Neoclassical and Classical Revival, respectively. Lastly, First Christian Church Historic District (built between 1947 and 1964, NRIS #11000081) is associated with the Modern Movement architectural style. The design of each of these buildings took inspiration from a specific era in the history of American Christianity. Gothic Revival style buildings such as St. Paul’s Episcopal Cathedral/Church (NRIS #77001096) or Pilgrim Congregational Church (NRIS #84003389) recalled the medieval cathedrals of Europe with stained glass windows, pointed arches, and battlements—all of which provided “significant vertical character to a flat prairie urban residential setting.”19 In contrast, the Sanctuary associated with First Christian Church Historic District is prominent for its domed roof, which was promoted as “tradition-breaking” and celebrated for its association with Mid-Century Modernism.20

15 “Stone Placed For Unitarian Building Here,” The Daily Oklahoman, October 26, 1928, 3.
16 Ibid.
17 Hardy, Upstart Unitarianism, 29-34.
19 National Register of Historic Places, “Pilgrim Congregational Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma,” NRIS #84003389, Section 8, Page 3.
20 National Register of Historic Places, “First Christian Church Historic District, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma,” NRIS #11000081, Section 8, Page 9.
First Unitarian Church is the only Colonial Revival-styled religious building in downtown Oklahoma City that is both eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and associated with the city’s first generation of development.\(^{21}\) The building’s design is a callback to Unitarianism’s New England roots. This inspiration, combined with the denomination’s reputation as a “liberal religion” in a city defined largely by fundamentalist and evangelical Protestant denominations, ultimately prompted Reverend Bruce M. Clary to refer to First Unitarian as “a New England church which just doesn’t belong in Oklahoma City.”\(^{22}\)

The arrival of Reverend Frank O. Holmes in 1948 initiated a period of remarkable growth for First Unitarian Church. Prior to his ministry in Oklahoma City, Holmes had led Unitarian congregations in Cambridge and in Boston, Massachusetts, as well as in Concord, New Hampshire. According to Robert Hardy, several members recalled Holmes’s ministry in Oklahoma City as a “golden era” for First Unitarian Church because the congregation increased in size, church finances stabilized, and Holmes was active in the community. By the time Holmes retired in 1967, official church membership almost tripled and the annual church budget increased from $12,000 to $71,000. Holmes also spoke at civil rights rallies held at Calvary Baptist Church (NRIS #78002244) during the sit-in movements of the late 1950s and early 1960s and helped organize the Oklahoma chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union in 1964.\(^{23}\)

Under Holmes’s stewardship, First Unitarian Church underwent a significant building expansion program. The growth of the church school was the primary impetus behind this development. By 1952, children were meeting in practically any space available in the building, including in spaces originally reserved for the parsonage (Channing House). In addition, congregation leaders recommended electrical, insulation, and ventilation upgrades and requested other updates such as new pews for the Sanctuary’s balcony.\(^{24}\) Between 1956 and 1958, architects (and church members) Norman Byrd and Richard Vahlberg designed and J. W. Skaggs Construction

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\(^{21}\) Dobson-Brown, et al., *Intensive Level Survey* classifies First Unitarian Church in the Classical Revival architectural style. Table 4. See also Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory, “First Unitarian Church” [http://oli_shpo.okstate.edu/query_result.aspx?id=88657&pbc=P](http://oli_shpo.okstate.edu/query_result.aspx?id=88657&pbc=P). A Westminster Presbyterian Church, located at the intersection of Northwest 43rd Street and North Shartel Avenue, is a potential local comparison to First Unitarian Church. Westminster was designed in the Colonial Revival style. However, the building is located approximately three miles north of downtown, in suburban northwest Oklahoma City, and was built after 1945. See “History,” Westminster Presbyterian Church, accessed October 23, 2020, [https://www.wpcokc.com/history](https://www.wpcokc.com/history).

\(^{22}\) Quoted in Hardy, *Upstart Unitarianism*, 136. Reverend Clary served the congregation of First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City from 1968 to 1971. Reference to Unitarianism as a “liberal religion” is from an advertisement for First Unitarian Church in *The Daily Oklahoman*, September 7, 1929, 2. The reputation of Unitarianism as a liberal denomination in American Christianity stems largely from its insistence on free will and its rejection of the Trinity (God as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), arguing instead that Jesus Christ was human rather than a divine being. In addition, throughout its history, members of the Unitarian Church have been engaged in liberal or radical politics of the period, such as abolitionism. Other members, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, were and are notable figures in education, science, and the arts. See Daniel Walker Howe, “Unitarianism and Universalism,” in *The Oxford Companion to United States History*, ed. Paul S. Boyer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 792.


\(^{24}\) Hardy, *Upstart Unitarianism*, 97.
Company built two additions to First Unitarian Church. The project was a unique collaboration between Byrd and Vahlberg, as both men typically practiced independently. Byrd taught at the University of Oklahoma College of Architecture for thirty years, and both architects were known individually for their mid-twentieth century Modern designs of a variety of residential, public, and commercial buildings in Oklahoma City and in nearby municipalities such as Moore, Norman, and Warr Acres.25

Eliot House, the first of two additions to First Unitarian Church designed by Byrd and Vahlberg, is a midcentury interpretation of the Colonial Revival architectural style. Set perpendicular to the northeast end of Channing House, it completes the building’s distinct, U-shaped footprint by partially enclosing the elevated courtyard. The addition has a similarly pitched roof and a brick veneer exterior matching the rest of the building. The first and second stories provided much needed classroom space, while the third story features a dedicated area for the children’s chapel with an arched, multi-light window facing the Sanctuary and overlooking the elevated courtyard (see Section 11, Historic Images #11-12). The second addition involved construction of a one-story, concrete block extension along the southwest (back) elevations of Daniel Hall and the Sanctuary. This addition is more utilitarian in character and does not convey a definite architectural style. It provided space for public restrooms and a meeting room known today as the Jefferson Room. Altogether, the project cost an estimated $84,000, and the congregation volunteered time and labor to paint and furnish the new interior spaces.26

First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City underwent another period of expansion during the early 1970s, this time in response to tragedy. On the night of December 27, 1972, much of Channing House caught fire, causing approximately $225,000 in damage. Inspectors blamed the conflagration on “poor housekeeping,” specifically the storage of flammable materials too close to the basement furnace. Although firemen arrived on the scene shortly after the blaze broke out and were able save adjacent building sections, much of Channing House was in ruins. Church leaders hired the firm Fritzler, Knoblock, and Furry to design a new addition to replace Channing House and to refurbish other areas that experienced smoke damage. Robert Schoenthaler, a church member as well as a contractor, supervised construction of the new addition, which cost approximately $350,000. The congregation dedicated the Channing House replacement on November 10, 1974.27


26 Hardy, Upstart Unitarianism, 97-100.

27 For more on the destruction and reconstruction of Channing House, see ibid., 151-54; Bob Bledsoe, “Loss $50,000 In Two-Alarm Church Blaze,” The Daily Oklahoman, 1; and “Unitarians Honor Minister Emeritus,” The Daily Oklahoman, November 12, 1974, N1. While refurbishment of Channing House was underway, the church school was held at nearby Villa Teresa School. During the 1974 dedication ceremony, the congregation honored former minister Frank O. Holmes by announcing a $10,000 scholarship in his name.
According to church historian Robert C. Hardy, the congregation worked primarily with architect Loyal Furry for the design and construction of Channing House.28 Furry’s partners, Donald Lee Fritzler and Robert C. Knoblock, are known locally for designing numerous medical office towers and religious buildings throughout the Oklahoma City metro during the 1960s and 1970s.29 The firm applied a modest, Modern detail to the exterior of Channing House by installing arched windows with tinted glass that extend the full height of the southeast and northwest elevations. The architects also enlarged the footprint to accommodate the church’s growing membership and staff.

**Criteria Consideration G: Achieving Significance Within the Past 50 Years**

Channing House is the only major building project undertaken by First Unitarian Church within the past fifty years and reflects the evolution of the historic property throughout the mid-to-late twentieth century. Immediately after the fire, the congregation discussed designs of new, larger classrooms for the church school. Member John Boland went so far as to describe the tragedy as “cleansing” because it enabled the church to spend the money necessary to build a larger school and refurbish adjacent building sections that had been damaged.30 Rather than sell the property and move to a new building, members were committed to replacing the former parsonage-turned-classroom building with a new facility that met current and future needs for church administration, education, and outreach. Upon its dedication, Channing House symbolized that First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City had “successfully overcome” the fire and indicated that it “was again physically whole, bigger and brighter than ever.”31 For these reasons, the construction of Channing House in 1974 provides a fitting end date to the building’s period of significance.

**Conclusion**

Official membership of First Unitarian Church peaked in the early 1970s, with 695 official members listed in 1971. Active membership has declined somewhat since that time. Nevertheless, the congregation has remained at its historic location at 600 Northwest 13th Street while many Oklahoma City residents relocated to suburban neighborhoods and joined denominations with larger or more contemporary facilities.32 Of the religious buildings near

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30 Quoted in Hardy, *Upstart Unitarianism*, 153.
31 Ibid., 154.
downtown Oklahoma City that have been surveyed, First Unitarian Church is distinct for its Colonial Revival architectural style. The building’s red brick exterior, copper spire, and white portico enable the property to stand out as a “New England [style] church” among other local religious buildings largely defined by Classical Revival (namely, Late Gothic), Modern Movement, or Contemporary architectural styles. First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City is an attribute of the surrounding area, which includes historic residential neighborhoods, modern medical complexes (St. Anthony Hospital), and Midtown’s bustling mixed-use developments. As an example of the original, historic development of present-day Midtown, First Unitarian Church is a distinct and important landmark for surrounding historical neighborhoods.

33 Between 2009 and 2013, an intensive level survey of downtown Oklahoma City identified approximately eleven religious buildings near downtown that were potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, including First Unitarian Church. Of the resources identified, five were classified as Late Gothic Revival. The survey went on to conclude that Late Gothic Revival was the “predominant style” of historic religious buildings in Oklahoma City. See City of Oklahoma City, Planning Department, *Intensive Level Survey of Downtown: Executive Summary and Consolidation Report* (2013), 16.
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

**Articles**


**Books**


Hardy, Robert C. *One Hundred Years of Upstart Unitarianism in the Bible Belt*. Oklahoma City: First Unitarian Church, 1991.

**Government Records and Publications**


**Newspapers**

Reference Collections and Databases


National Park Service. *National Register Database and Research*. 


State Historic Preservation Office. *Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory*. 

State Historic Preservation Office. *Oklahoma’s National Register of Historic Places*. 

Websites and Blogs


First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City


Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

_X__ State Historic Preservation Office

____ Other State agency

____ Federal agency

____ Local government

____ University

____ Other

Name of repository: ____________________________________________

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _________________

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property  1.06 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: __________

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 35.481883  Longitude: -97.522755

2. Latitude: 35.481456  Longitude: -97.523267

3. Latitude: 35.481837  Longitude: -97.523725
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

4. Latitude: 35.482026  Longitude: -97.523494

5. Latitude: 35.482250  Longitude: -97.523302

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

All of Lots 1-2 and the northeast corner of Lot 3 (measuring 23.5’ x 113.7’) in Block 2 of Classen’s Marquette Addition to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This is the extent of the property historically associated with First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City based on information provided by the Oklahoma County Assessor, the Oklahoma County Clerk, and Sanborn maps.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Catherine Montgomery AIA, President; Matthew A. Pearce, Ph.D., Principal Historian
organization: Preservation and Design Studio, PLLC
street & number: 616 Northwest 21st Street
city or town: Oklahoma City state: Oklahoma zip code: 73103-1861
e-mail: cm@PandDStudio.com; mp@PandDStudio.com
telephone: 405-601-6804
date: August 30, 2021

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- Maps:  A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

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

- Additional items: (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs
Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn’t need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

**Name of Property:** First Unitarian Church  
**City or Vicinity:** Oklahoma City  
**County:** Oklahoma  
**State:** Oklahoma  
**Photographer:** M. Pearce, Preservation and Design Studio, PLLC  
**Date Photographed:** February 2019, September 2020

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Direction</th>
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<tr>
<td>0001</td>
<td>Northeast-facing façade. Northwest 13th Street in foreground.</td>
<td>Southwest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0002</td>
<td>Southeast side elevations, Channing House and Eliot House (left). Northeast-facing facades, Eliot House and Sanctuary (right)</td>
<td>West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0003</td>
<td>Southeast side elevation, Channing House (left). Southeast (gabled) side elevation, Eliot House (right)</td>
<td>Northwest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0004</td>
<td>Southwest (back) elevation. Concrete block extension (foreground).</td>
<td>East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0005</td>
<td>Northwest side elevation, Sanctuary (left). Southwest (back) elevation (right).</td>
<td>Northeast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0006</td>
<td>Northeast-facing façades (left) and northwest side elevations (right), Eliot House and Sanctuary.</td>
<td>Southeast</td>
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<td>0007</td>
<td>Northeast-facing façade. Elevated courtyard (center)</td>
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<td>0008</td>
<td>Sanctuary. Southeast side elevation (left). Northeast-facing façade (right).</td>
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<td>0009</td>
<td>Daniel Hall. Northeast-facing façade. Elevated courtyard (foreground)</td>
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<td>0010</td>
<td>Northwest side elevation, Channing House (left). Northeast-facing façade, Daniel Hall (right). Courtyard (foreground).</td>
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<td>0011</td>
<td>Refectory, Daniel Hall.</td>
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<td>0012</td>
<td>Auditorium and Chancel, Sanctuary.</td>
<td>Southwest</td>
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<td>0013</td>
<td>Foyer, Daniel Hall (left). Administrative office, Channing House (right).</td>
<td>Northwest</td>
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<tr>
<td>0014</td>
<td>Children’s chapel, Eliot House.</td>
<td>West</td>
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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
Name of Property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Location Map

All of Lots 1-2 and the northeast corner of Lot 3 (measuring 23.5' x 113.7') in Block 2 of Classen’s Marquette Addition to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma.
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

Name of Property: Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

County and State: N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable):
The Big Picture: Aerial
(Google Maps 2017)

First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City (in red) is in Classen’s Marquette Addition to Oklahoma City. Historically, Classen’s Marquette Addition contained a combination of single-family dwellings and apartment buildings. Entire blocks of the addition have been demolished and replaced with medical buildings and contemporary apartment buildings. Little original development remains. Classen’s Marquette Addition is currently mixed commercial and multi-unit residential. Residential neighborhoods that contain single-family dwellings, most notably Heritage Hills Historic and Architectural District (NRIS #79002006) and Mesta Park Historic District (NRIS #83002102), are north of Northwest 13th Street.
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City is in Lots 1-2 in Block 2 of Classen’s Marquette Addition to Oklahoma City. This early 20th century Revival style building represents a distinct historical presence within a contemporary commercial and residential area of Oklahoma City commonly referred to as Midtown. Miscellaneous office buildings are on the north side of Northwest 13th Street. Commons Apartments is to the west, at the intersection of Northwest 13th Street and Classen Drive. The Edge at Midtown apartment building is to the east, at the intersection of Northwest 13th Street and North Dewey Avenue. Villa Teresa Historic District (NRIS #SG100005559) is to the southwest, on Lots 7-11 in Block 2. Maney Historic District (NRIS #79002008), which includes The Grandison Inn Bed and Breakfast, is located further to the southwest, at the intersection of Northwest 11th Street and North Shartel Avenue.
The Big Picture: 1906, Maps #6-8  
(Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps)

The 1906 Sanborn Map is the earliest edition available in the public domain that documents Classen’s Marquette Addition to Oklahoma City (extent of plat shown above). Platted in 1902, the addition developed slowly. No buildings are in Block 2 and only one developed lot, containing a two-story single-family dwelling with a one-story garage in the rear, is in Block 8.
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
Name of Property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Close Up: 1906, Map #7
(Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps)

The 1906 Sanborn illustrates the lot lines and an alley that define the boundaries of First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City.
The 1922 Sanborn map indicates that Classen’s Marquette Addition is almost fully developed with single-family dwellings and apartment buildings. Some lots in Block 2 remain undeveloped, including Lots 1-2.
A closer view of the 1922 Sanborn indicates that the alley shown in the 1906 Sanborn has been absorbed by the adjacent properties. Lot 1 (1323 North Dewey Avenue) and Lot 2 (600 Northwest 13th Street) are undeveloped. Adjacent lots to the northwest and southeast contain single-family dwellings with detached autohouses.
The 1949 Sanborn map is the first edition available in the public domain that documents the construction of First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City, which was built in 1928-1929. Classen's Marquette Addition has been fully developed. The addition is primarily residential, containing single-family houses and apartment buildings. The spacious, irregularly-sized lots in Blocks 2 and 8 stand out from the smaller, congested, rectangular lots located throughout the rest of the addition.
Close Up: 1949, Vol. 2, Map #175
(Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps)

A closer view of the 1949 Sanborn shows the First Unitarian Church as one and two stories. The central block, labeled “Sunday School” (Daniel Hall), is one story (plus basement) and has a composition roof. A front (northeast) section is open to the northeast with a noncombustible roof (indicated as an arcade in historic photographs). The section to the northwest of the Sunday School (the Sanctuary) is one story (equal to two stories) with a two-story section to the northeast. The Sanctuary has a non-combustible roof supported by steel trusses. The steeple is 50 feet in height and has a composition roof. The metal spire atop the steeple is 30 feet in height. A one-story (plus basement) extension with a non-combustible roof is set behind (southwest) the Sanctuary and the Sunday School. A two-story (plus basement) dwelling is attached to the northeast corner of the Sunday School. It is brick veneered with a non-combustible roof. The entire building is indicated as having “hot air ducts & blower” for heat.
The 1950 edition of the Sanborn map shows the gradual encroachment of commercial and medical properties in Classen’s Marquette Addition. Several medical offices, including Oklahoma City General Hospital (501 Northwest 12th Street), are in the east portion of the addition (outlined in green.). Dwellings in the southeast quadrant of Block 13 (outlined in blue) have been demolished.
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
Name of Property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

A closer view of the 1950 Sanborn maps indicates no changes to First Unitarian Church.
(Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps)

The 1955 Sanborn map shows the continued transformation of Classen’s Marquette Addition from a suburban residential development to an urban mixed-use area. Several single-family dwellings and apartment buildings to the east, in Blocks 1 and 9, have been demolished (outlined in green). The Pasteur Medical Building, constructed in 1951, is in the southeast quadrant of Block 13 (outlined in blue).
A closer view of the 1955 Sanborn maps indicates no changes to First Unitarian Church.
The Big Picture: Aerial Photograph ca. 1967

By 1967, the architectural style of First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City (indicated by red arrow) was distinct from the modern, commercial architecture on neighboring lots and blocks. Oklahoma City General Hospital and affiliated medical buildings are to the east (upper right). Across Classen Drive, several original residences have been demolished and replaced by a sprawling motel (center). Further to the southwest, entire blocks that once contained original development such as single-family dwellings or apartment buildings have been replaced by medical offices and paved parking lots. (Oklahoma Historic Society, Barney Hillerman Collection)
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
Name of Property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
N/A
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Close Up: Aerial Photograph ca. 1967

A closer view of the ca. 1967 aerial photograph highlights the construction of Eliot House (indicated by red arrow), completed in 1958. Designed in the same architectural style as the rest of First Unitarian Church, Eliot House provided additional space for the church school and a dedicated children's chapel. The steeple atop the Sanctuary is a prominent landmark at the intersection of Northwest 13th Street and North Dewey Avenue. (Oklahoma Historic Society, Barney Hillerman Collection)
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
Name of Property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

On September 10, 1928, members of First Unitarian Church held a groundbreaking ceremony on Lots 1-2 in Block 2 of Classen’s Marquette Addition. Construction of First Unitarian Church was completed in 1929. (First Unitarian Church)

Historic Image #1: 1928

The chancel inside First Unitarian Church, 600 Northwest 13th Street. Photograph by A. Y. Owen (Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma Publishing Company Photography Collection)

Historic Image #2: 1941
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
Name of Property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Historic Image #3: 1942
First Unitarian Church stands out as a “New England church” in the heart of Oklahoma City. (Oklahoma Historical Society, Z.P. Meyers/Barney Hillerman Photographic Collection)

Historic Image #4: 1949
Photographed in the chancel, Reverend Frank O. Holmes (third from right) oversaw a period of growth and financial stability for First Unitarian Church. Photograph by Thomas F. Killian. (Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma Publishing Company Photography Collection)
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
Name of Property: Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
County and State: N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable):

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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First Unitarian Church prior to the construction of Eliot House. Note the arcade on Daniel Hall (center).
Photograph by Joe Miller. (Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma Publishing Company Photography Collection)

Reverend Holmes (right) stands at the main (northeast) entrance to the Sanctuary, greeting church members.
Photograph by Bob Albright. (Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma Publishing Company Photography Collection)

Historic Image #5: 1954

Historic Image #6: 1954
The steeple atop First Unitarian Church became a prominent local landmark documented by numerous newspaper photographers. Image #7 (left) was originally published in the Oklahoma Times. Image #8 (right) was taken by George Tapscott of the Daily Oklahoman. (Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma Publishing Company Photography Collection)
Carmelite Sisters affiliated with neighboring Villa Teresa School play basketball on a neighboring lot. The Sanctuary’s multi-light arched windows are in the background. Photograph by Bob Albright. (Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma Publishing Company Photography Collection)

First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City is distinct for its Colonial Revival architectural style. Photograph by Bob Albright. (Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma Publishing Company Photography Collection)
Historic Image #11: 1958
Designed by architects (and congregation members) Norman Byrd and Richard Vahlberg, Eliot House (left) provided much needed space for First Unitarian Church. Photograph by Cliff King. (Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma Publishing Company Photography Collection)

Historic Image #12: 1958
The third story of Eliot House provides a dedicated area for the children’s chapel. Photograph by Joe Miller. (Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma Publishing Company Photography Collection)
Historic Image #13: 1972

In December 1972, a fire damaged most of Channing House and prompted the replacement of that section of the building to its current size and configuration. Photograph by Jim Argo. (Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma Publishing Company Photography Collection)

Historic Image #14: 2002

Construction of Channing House (indicated by red arrow) was completed in 1974. (Oklahoma County Assessor)
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
Name of Property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Members of First Unitarian Church have met at 600 Northwest 13th Street for over ninety years. (Oklahoma County Assessor)
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
Name of Property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Direction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0001</td>
<td>Northeast-facing façade. Northwest 13th Street in foreground.</td>
<td>Southwest</td>
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First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
Name of Property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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<tr>
<td>0002</td>
<td>Southeast side elevations, Channing House and Eliot House (left). Northeast-facing facades, Eliot House and Sanctuary (right)</td>
<td>West</td>
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<td>Direction</td>
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<tr>
<td>0003</td>
<td>Southeast side elevation, Channing House (left).</td>
<td>Northwest</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Southeast (gabled) side elevation, Eliot House (right)</td>
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First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
Name of Property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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<td>0004</td>
<td>Southwest (back) elevation. Concrete block extension (foreground).</td>
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First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0005</td>
<td>Northwest side elevation, Sanctuary (left). Southwest (back) elevation (right).</td>
<td>Northeast</td>
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First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City
Name of Property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Number | Subject | Direction
--- | --- | ---
0006 | Northeast-facing façades (left) and northwest side elevations (right), Eliot House and Sanctuary. | Southeast
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<tr>
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<td>0007</td>
<td>Northeast-facing façade. Elevated courtyard (center)</td>
<td>Southwest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number</td>
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<tr>
<td>0008</td>
<td>Sanctuary. Southeast side elevation (left). Northeast-facing façade (right).</td>
<td>West</td>
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# National Register of Historic Places

## Continuation Sheet

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<tr>
<td>0009</td>
<td>Daniel Hall. Northeast-facing façade. Elevated courtyard (foreground)</td>
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<td>Number</td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Direction</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>0010</td>
<td>Northwest side elevation, Channing House (left). Northeast-facing façade, Daniel Hall (right). Courtyard (foreground).</td>
<td>South</td>
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First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City  
Name of Property  
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma  
County and State  
N/A  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)  

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<tr>
<td>0012</td>
<td>Auditorium and Chancel, Sanctuary.</td>
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</table>
First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

Name of Property
Oklahoma County, Oklahoma

County and State
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0013</td>
<td>Foyer, Daniel Hall (left). Administrative office, Channing House (right).</td>
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### First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City

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<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>0014</td>
<td>Children’s chapel, Eliot House.</td>
<td>West</td>
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