

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received AUG 11 1986

date entered SEP 24 1986

Continuation sheet

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Property No. 5

Historic Resources of Stamford

Stamford Historic Structures Survey Identification number, STA-015

Name of property- St. John's Methodist Church

Address of property- S. Ferguson Street

Owner of property- St. John's Methodist Church

Owner's Address- S. Ferguson Street  
Stamford, TX 79553

Acreage- Less than one acre

Verbal Boundary Description- (Legal Description) Original Town;  
Block 31, Lots 1, 2, 3

UTM Coordinates- 14/425240/3645160

Description (unaltered, good condition)

The imposing St. John's Methodist Church is a fine example of the Prairie Style as interpreted on a large building. Many architects across the country, including Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright, preferred this style. James E. Flanders, a noted Dallas architect, utilized this mode on several Texas churches, including St. John's in Stamford. St. John's uses the geometrical plan and appearance of the Prairie Style, but emphasizes the vertical rather than the horizontal to achieve a contrast with the surrounding environment.

St. John's is a large, buff-brick, gable-roofed church built on a cruciform plan. The largest and tallest roof is on a north-south axis, with slightly lower gables pushing out to the east and west from the center of the building to form the basic cross plan. A small, square cupola with a pavilion roof is located on the ridge of the main north-south roof, marking the center of the plan.

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Square towers rise from the empty space on each corner of the building, somewhat obscuring the basic plan and making the structure appear to be square and monolithic. Three of the towers are no taller than the main roof line, but the northwest tower, over the main entry, is much taller. The three lesser towers are capped by pavilion roofs, while terra-cotta freizes are found on all four sides of each tower. The taller tower is also capped by a pavilion roof, but it resides over an open belfry with two small wooden columns set in each opening. Verticality is stressed by the long, narrow louvers on each side of this tower.

A bell hip-roofed portico at the base of the taller northwest tower covers the main entrance to the church, while lesser entrances are found on the other three towers as well. The roofs of the main structure, the towers, and all porches were originally covered with metal shingles which are currently being replaced with composition units.

The verticality of the structure is relieved somewhat by string courses which enrich the building. Gothic-style stained-glass windows are set in the ends of the main gables on the north and south sides of the building, while lesser one-over-one or fixed-pane stained-glass units are used elsewhere.

Significance: state level, architecture, 1910 J.E. Flanders, architect

St. John's Methodist Church is one of the most significant structures in Stamford for both architectural and historic reasons. Historically, it has served for generations as the religious home for one of Stamford's largest denominations and architecturally it is a fine example of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century, Prairie Style church architecture designed by a nationally known architect.

The Methodist congregation in Stamford emerged as soon as town building began. After using temporary quarters for several months, a lot was purchased in December of 1900, and a small frame building erected. In 1907 Stamford College was established in the south-eastern edge of town as a Methodist institution of higher learning. By early 1909 the growing congregation decided to build a new and impressive structure between downtown and the new college campus in order to serve both communities better.

After arranging initial financing (and later borrowing \$15,000 from the Southern Union Life Insurance Co. of Waco), the church hired two contracting firms (E.J. Holderness Co. and C.S. Oates & Co.) and began the magnificent structure designed by James E. Flanders of Dallas. While construction began in 1910, it took two years of start-and-stop work to

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complete the exterior of the building. Construction was interrupted by both funding problems and a direct hit by a tornado which severely damaged the unfinished building in 1910. The Methodist congregation chose Flanders to design their church because of his proven track record of impressive churches and courthouses in many Texas cities. Flanders produced an impressive design which uses the Prairie Style with some Gothic features to create a truly unusual structure.

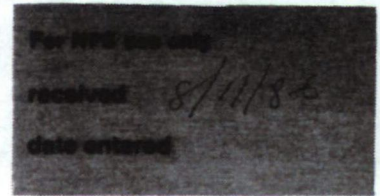
Once the exterior was completed, funds dried up and work on the building slowed. The congregation moved into the building in February of 1912 but struggled for ten more years, until 1922, to complete the interior.

Since its exterior completion in 1912, St. John's Methodist has served as the spiritual home of the large Methodist congregation in Stamford. It has been the religious focal point for one of the town's largest congregations, as well as a local landmark for all its citizens. The church dominates the entire downtown area, towering over the lesser one- and two-story structures in the area. Architecturally it is an exquisite structure perfectly preserved since its original construction, and still serving its congregation faithfully after seven decades of use.

St. John's Methodist Church bears strong similarities with Flanders' Trinity Methodist Church in Dallas (National Register 1975, burned and removed 1983). The Stamford church is located between the central business district and an older residential neighborhood.

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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Stamford Multiple Resource Area  
State Jones County, TEXAS

| Nomination/Type of Review             |   | Date/Signature              |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 11. House at 815 East Campbell        | Entered in the National Register for Keeper | Melona Byrum 9/24/86        |
|                                       | Attest                                      |                             |
| 12. Jackson, A.J., House              | Substantive Review for Keeper               | Patrick Andrews 9/24/86     |
|                                       | Attest                                      | Bruce J. Noble, Jr. 9/24/86 |
| 13. Old Bryant--Link Building         | Entered in the National Register for Keeper | Melona Byrum 9/24/86        |
|                                       | Attest                                      |                             |
| 14. Old Penick--Hughes Company        | Substantive Review for Keeper               | Patrick Andrews 9/24/86     |
|                                       | Attest                                      | Bruce J. Noble, Jr. 9/24/86 |
| 15. Old West Texas Utilities Company  | Entered in the National Register for Keeper | Melona Byrum 9/24/86        |
|                                       | Attest                                      |                             |
| 16. Old Wooten, H.O., Grocery Company | Substantive Review for Keeper               | Patrick Andrews 9/24/86     |
|                                       | Attest                                      | Bruce J. Noble, Jr. 9/24/86 |
| 17. SMS Building                      | Entered in the National Register for Keeper | Melona Byrum 9/24/86        |
|                                       | Attest                                      |                             |
| 18. St. John's Methodist Church       | Substantive Review for Keeper               | Patrick Andrews 9/24/86     |
|                                       | Attest                                      | Bruce J. Noble, Jr. 9/24/86 |
| 19. Stamford City Hall                | Entered in the National Register for Keeper | Melona Byrum 9/24/86        |
|                                       | Attest                                      |                             |
| 20. Swenson, A.J., House              | Substantive Review for Keeper               | Patrick Andrews 9/24/86     |
|                                       | Attest                                      | Bruce J. Noble, Jr. 9/24/86 |

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

St. John's Methodist Church (Stamford MRA)  
Jones County  
TEXAS

Substantive Review

Working No. AUG 11 1986  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87  
Date Due: 9/11/86 - 9/25/86  
Action:  ACCEPT 9-24-86  
 RETURN  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments: *Designed by a prominent architect, J. E. Flanders, St. John's Methodist Church is a fine example of a Prairie Style church. Their attempt to claim religious significance is not well argued and can not be accepted.*

Recom./Criteria Accept, C  
Reviewer Bruce J. Noble, Jr.  
Discipline Historian  
Date 9/24/86  
\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category \_\_\_\_\_ Ownership \_\_\_\_\_ Status \_\_\_\_\_ Present Use \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Acquisition Accessible

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

Check one

- unaltered
- altered

Check one

- original site
- moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

**8. Significance**

Period \_\_\_\_\_ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates \_\_\_\_\_ Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

St. John's Methodist Church (St. John's  
 County  
 District

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Form Prepared By**

**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



*Kinney*  
FUNERAL  
HOME

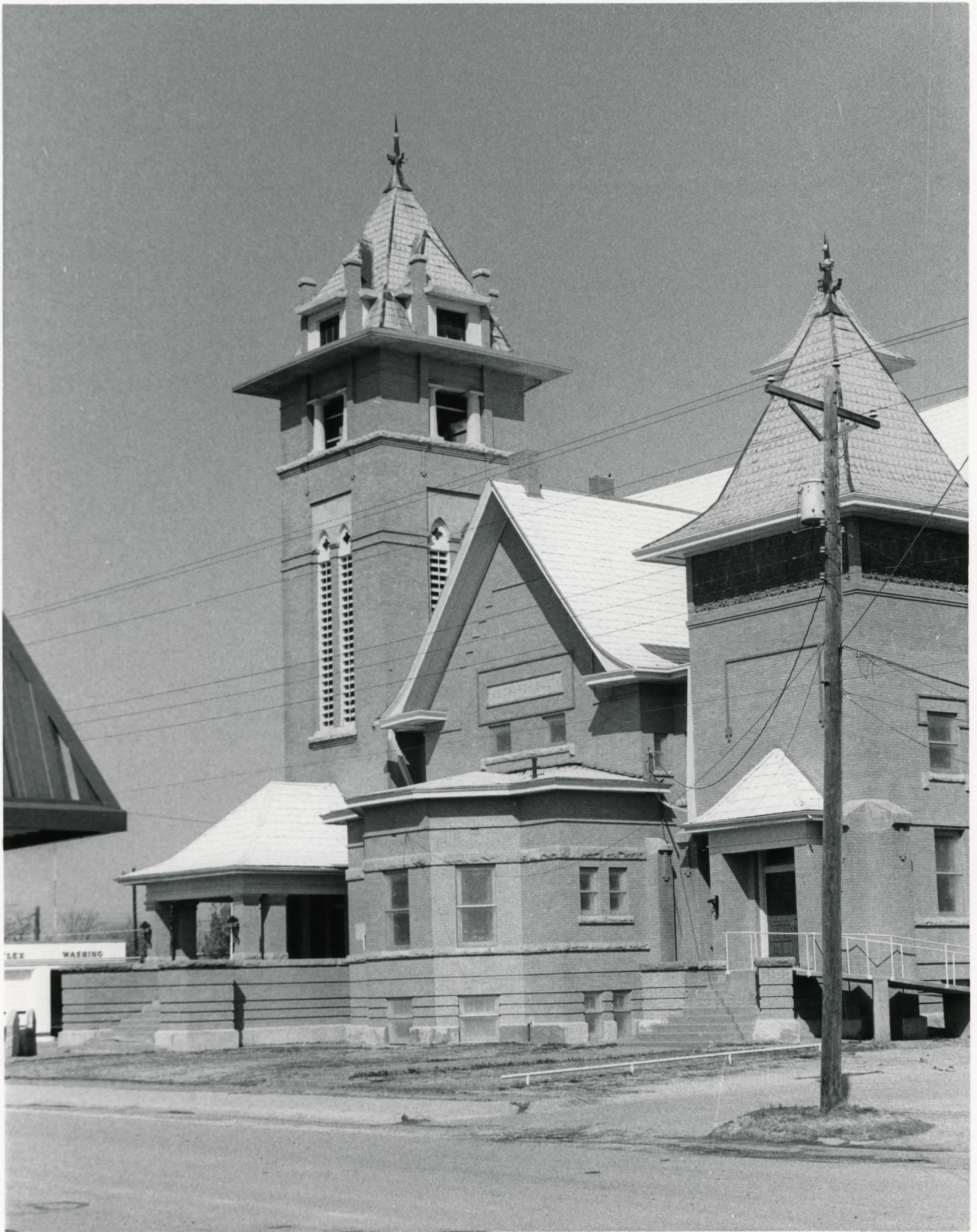
Historic Resources of Stamford, Texas  
Jones County, Texas  
Photo 1985 by Don Abbe, neg. with Texas  
Historical Commission, Austin

Property No. 5 (Sta-015), St. John's Methodist  
Church, St. John's Street, looking SE

Photo 12 of 41.

22  
-130  
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Historic Resources of Stamford, Texas  
Jones County, Texas

Photo 1985 by Don Abbe, neg. with Texas  
Historical Commission, Austin

Property No. 5 (Sta-015), St. John's Methodist  
Church, St. John's Street, looking NE

Photo 13 of 41.

Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000854