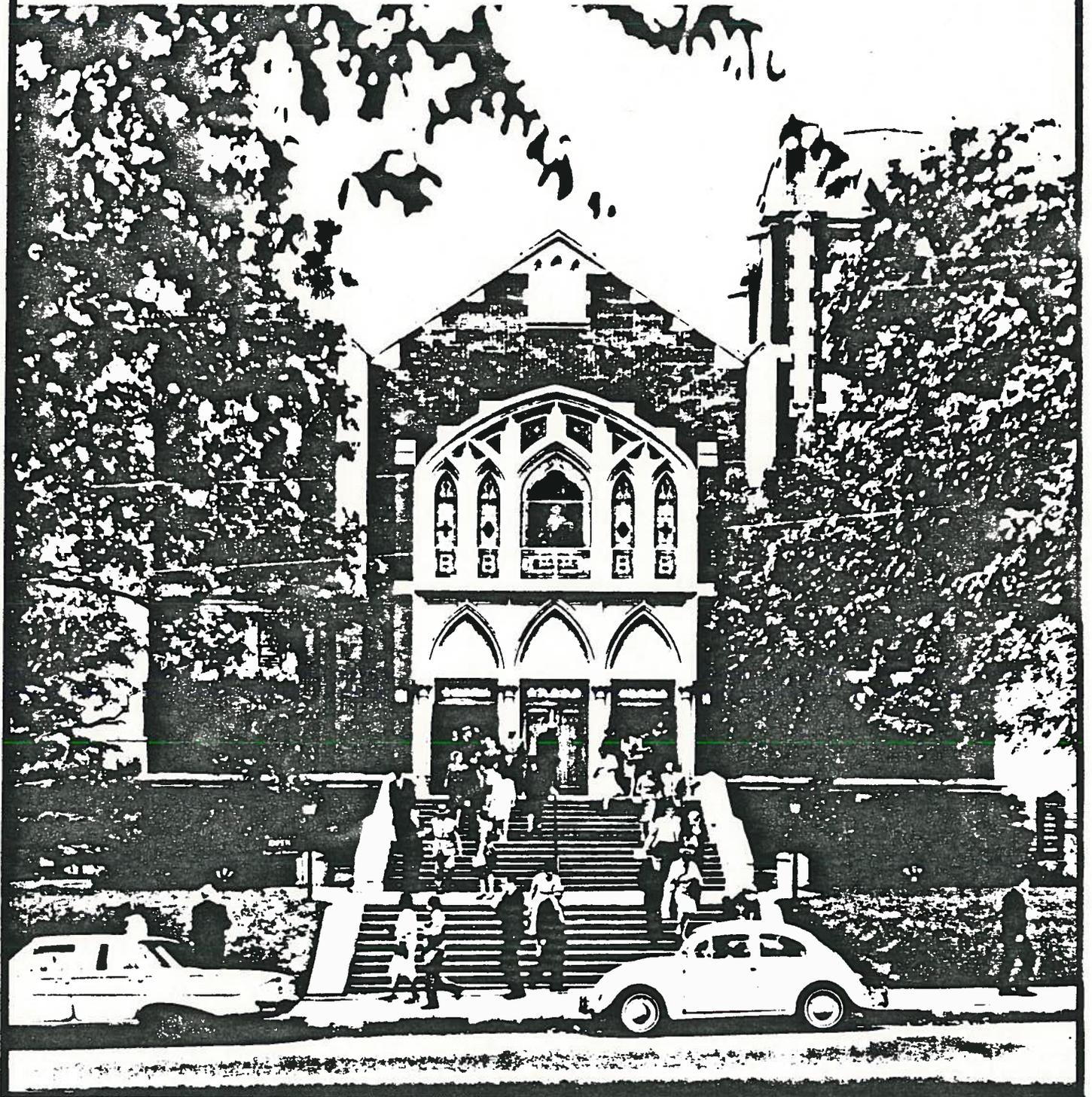


# OAK LAWN METHODIST DESIGNATION REPORT CITY OF DALLAS



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## Cultural Significance

In the early 1870's several families from Tennessee settled in a little community two miles north of the city of Dallas, on the road to the community of Cedar Springs. The rustic area bordered Turtle Creek and abounded in oak trees. It was quite appropriate to call it "Oak Lawn." By 1874 the community was thriving, but as yet no schools, churches or even stores existed in the area. Worship services were held under the trees with the Rev. Marcus Hiram Cullum doing the preaching. Many of his congregation were his relatives. One of his former parishioners in Tennessee, John S. Dickason, visited at Oak Lawn and learned of the community's need for a church and a school. He returned to Tennessee and obtained power-of-attorney from relatives who owned a 640-acre track in Oak Lawn, to donate from that tract a small parcel of land for a school and a church.

He Arrived back in Dallas on September 2, 1874 and the next night went with his brother-in-law, Henry T. Sale, to Rev. Cullum's home to announce the gift of land with the accompanying agreement that building could begin immediately, without waiting for the deed to be drawn up and recorded.

John S. Dickason recorded in his diary that the new schoolhouse-church was completed by September 20, 1874 and on that Sunday he heard Brother Cullum preach the first sermon in the new building, his text being "They were all in one place with one accord." That little building, bare wood benches, old-fashioned school desks, pot bellied stove and all, was erected in a record 15 days; and was the community meeting place, church and schoolhouse for the next fifteen years. Horses and buggies were hitched to nearby trees and muddy overshoes were left at the door.

On October 3, 1874 a deed was filed at Dallas by Mr. and Mrs. Sale and Dickason representing Tennessee relatives, deeding to the Trustees of the "Methodist Episcopal Church South, at Oak Lawn near Dallas, Texas" a two-and-one-third-acre tract "for the purpose of establishing a seminary for the education of either or both sexes."

The original church trustees were John D. Andrews, Rev. M.H. Cullum, John S. Dickason, George S. Gatewood, Gabriel A. Knight, Henry T. Sale, and John M. Wright. Other listed charter members of the church were Mrs. Mary L. Dickason, Mrs. Catherine Gatewood, Mr. and Mrs. James W. Hampton, Mrs. Hannah Knight, Mrs. Mary A. May, Mrs. Martha T. Sale, and Mrs. Elizabeth Jane Cullum and her daughter Emma Cullum, her mother, Mrs. Martha W. Davis, her sister, Mrs. Martha A. Grace and her niece, Nanny Grace.

Rev. Samuel Armstrong, a pioneer Methodist preacher then assigned to the Dallas City Mission, came to Oak Lawn on an unknown date to officially accept the charter members into the new church; Rev. Cullum not having been officially transferred from the Memphis Conference in Tennessee to the North Texas Conference.

Upon his admission to the North Texas Conference, in November, 1874, Rev. Cullum became the first pastor of Oak Lawn Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Cochran's Chapel and Caruth Chapel were also on his circuit, which he served for four years. In the ensuing years he served at McKinney and Van Alstyne, too, and was a Trustee of the Dallas Female College and served on various committees of the North Texas Conference. He retired in 1882 and died three years later at his home on Cedar Springs Road.

The little church grew slowly, the community changing, people coming and going, even as today. Rev. Cullum's daughters, Fannie and Lora, joined in 1876, having attended from the beginning. Mr. and Mrs. Alfred K. Lucas came in 1877. Mr. and Mrs. Will H. Cullum moved to Oak Lawn in 1880 but left in 1886, when Jacob D. Cullum moved here following the death of his wife. In the meantime, the Hamptons left in 1876, and the Sales in 1878; Mrs. Davis died in 1879. George S. Gatewood and Mrs. May left in 1886. However, Charles B. Gillespie joined in 1885 upon his marriage to Emma Cullum; Mr. and Mrs. W.E. Hawkins came in 1888 followed by Mr. and Mrs. G.D. Moffett and Epps G. Knight in 1889.

In 1889 the Board of Trustees was composed of J.D. Cullum, Gillespie, E.G. Knight, Lucas, Andrews, Dickason, Wright, G.A. Knight; Hawkins and Moffett being added later. The same group also made up the Board of Stewards.

During its first fifteen years, Oak Lawn had nine pastors, all going by buggy and/or horse to Cochran's Chapel, too. The 1889 Dallas City Directory listed services at Oak Lawn as "every third Sunday at 11:00 A.M." But by then the community was beginning to make a few improvements. Streets were laid out and named, (but not paved), and Oak Lawn Church was at the corner of Cedar Springs Road and Washington Street. It still is - except Washington Street is now Oak Lawn Avenue. The population was increasing and the church fathers realized they should prepare for the future. They should have a full-time pastor and a larger church building. The appointment of Rev. Lee A. Hanson took care of the first need. Then a Building Committee was appointed: Jake D. Cullum, Charles B. Gillespie and W. E. Hawkins. Also a Finance Committee: John D. Andrews, John S. Dickason, Epps G. Knight, Alfred K. Lucas and John M. Wright. Despite their efforts it became necessary to sell several lots from the original block of land to accumulate enough money to erect the new building.

The new wooden building, completed in 1890, boasted two magnificent spires and two entry doors facing Cedar Springs Road, stained-glass windows and a beautifully toned bell that is still in use in the brick church tower. Church membership reached 50 by the time the new building was completed, and grew to 100 in the next three years. By 1896 there were 60 students in the Sunday School.

By 1911 it was time to build again, and the frame church was moved to the Dickason Avenue side of the block, to make way for a new brick church building. The new church basement was completed and occupied in 1913 and an impressive audience witnessed the laying of the cornerstone on May 9 of that year. The building was completed in 1915 and opened early in 1916. Of Gothic architecture with furnishings of mahogany-stained birch and the bell from the old tower, it stood at the corner of Cedar Springs and Oak Lawn, a landmark then as it is today. Of especial interest to Dallasites and visitors were the fifteen stained-glass windows selected for the Church by Rev. Claude M. Simpson, C.B. Gillespie, Mrs. B.M. Burgher and Mrs. A. B. Flanary (these windows have been carefully cleaned during this Centennial Year along with the refurbishing of the Sanctuary).

A group of young ladies of the church, the Organ Builders Club, presented the church an impressive pipe organ and spent eleven years paying for it. It has continued in use for nearly 60 years. The T.C. Forrest family gave the church a new organ console in 1969.

Oak Lawn Church in 1916 had reached 500 membership and seven years later welcomed its 1000th member into the church. It had gone through the World War I years, waving its sons off to the service. It felt the excitement of the new world of flying, for many young men in training at Love Field attended church at Oak Lawn. While the flu epidemic raged in 1918-19, the church discontinued services, respecting the orders of doctors and city officials. Oak Lawn Avenue was paved in 1918; fans were installed in the church in 1919, and in 1921, the \$90,000 mortgage on the new building was completely paid off and the dedication ceremony featured many people of prominence in Methodism.

And what of the old building? Well, in 1921 it was remodeled and renamed. As the "Junior Hall" it rang with childish voices reciting the books of the Bible under Mr. Jesse Smith's direction, and doubling as Boy Scout quarters, it rang with the Scout Oath, too. Finally in 1936, it was razed to make room for the new education building, and the square nails that had held it together all those years became treasured souvenirs among church members.

Through the years two more additions were built on to the education section: in 1928, the Building Committee hit upon the phenomenal figure of \$58,000 to be raised. That was all well and good, but if you recall, there was the matter of the Depression soon after, and that debt wasn't completely satisfied until 1944. Then after a four-year breather, the Building Committee became restless. Was it really hotter than it used to be in the sanctuary, or did they just want to keep up with the times? The sanctuary was air-conditioned in 1948. Besides that WWII was over, Oak Lawn was full of young families, and more room was needed for Sunday School classes. So another building campaign; and in 1950 the last addition to the church property extended the building the entire block along Oak Lawn Avenue.

The property inside and out, has gone through many changes, to meet the needs of the congregation and the community. Once a community church, Oak Lawn United Methodist Church is now considered an inner-city church, drawing its worshippers from the length and breadth of the city. It's a "generations" church and a new-comers church, an interim church and a permanent church. It is whatever it needs to be to all who worship there.

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## Architectural Significance

The Oak Lawn Methodist Church which stands at the southwest corner of Cedar Springs and Oak Lawn Avenue is the third building that the congregation has been housed in to date. An excellent example of Gothic architecture, the church serves as a landmark to the area on the same site as the original wooden church. The existing building was completed in 1915 and was designed by C.D. Hill, a prominent Dallas architect. Constructed at a cost of \$90,000, the Oak Lawn Methodist Church is composed of eight gray-brown brick and stone and concrete trim.

Architect C.D. Hill came to Texas in 1903 from Chicago where he had studied at the Chicago Art Institute. He worked in Ft Worth as a draftsman for the prominent firm of Sanguinet and Stoats until 1907. At this time Hill formed his own firm, C.D. Hill and Company, in Dallas. His firm quickly rose to a position of prominence in the city. His other works include such buildings as the Municipal Building, the First Presbyterian Church, the Second Dallas Country Club, the home of Edward Tennison, Edgar Flippen's Mt. Vernon, and Austin College, a Presbyterian school in Sherman, Texas.

The Oak Lawn Methodist Church is distinguished architecturally. It is a Gothic-styled building with Victorian influences popular at the time of its construction. Its picturesque and lively styles are similar to American church buildings of the mid nineteenth to early twentieth century era. The church's verticality is emphasized by its Gothic pointed-arch windows which are arranged in sets of two or four windows. The east facade exhibits two flat topped towers or turrets of different height and detailing, the tallest serving as the billtown. Neither is identical, yet both have parapets with an almost medieval detailing.

The three major facades of the church are almost symmetrical, with groupings of five Gothic arches being the dominant elements. These facades are further enlivened by gables and the stonework that accents the window and door openings. Sixteen large stained glass windows depict various events in the life of Christ; sets of four small stained glass windows flank the three major works that are exhibited on each facade. These windows are dedicated to former believers who "... established, built and maintained Oak Lawn Methodist Church...".

Constructed of gray-brown brick and accented by carved stonework, Oak Lawn Methodist Church was added to in 1928 and 1951. The additions are very compatible and reflect the earlier building materials.

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## Designation Merit

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| <p>A. Character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Dallas, State of Texas, or the United States. <u>  X  </u></p> | <p>H. Embodiments of elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation. <u>      </u></p>                             |
| <p>B. Location as the site of a significant historical event. <u>      </u></p>  | <p>I. Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites, or areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on historic, cultural, or architectural motif. <u>  X  </u></p> |
| <p>C. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city. <u>  X  </u></p>   | <p>J. Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city. <u>  X  </u></p>                   |
| <p>D. Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social, or historical heritage of the city. <u>  X  </u></p>  | <p>K. Archeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric value. <u>      </u></p>                                      |
| <p>E. Portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style. <u>      </u></p>                                 | <p>L. Value as an aspect of community sentiment or public pride. <u>  X  </u></p>  |
| <p>F. Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen. <u>  X  </u></p>  |  |
| <p>G. Identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city. <u>  X  </u></p>                              |  |

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## Recommendation

The Landmark Survey Task Force requests the Historic Landmark Preservation Committee to deem this proposed landmark meritorious of historic recognition as outlined in city ordinance 19-A.

Date: December 13, 1983

Further, this task force endorses the preservation criteria, policy recommendations, and landmark boundary as presented by the Dept. of Urban Planning staff.

Chairman, Landmark Survey Task Force

*Michael Stovens*

Program Manager, Historic Preservation Programs

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## Preservation Analysis

### STRUCTURE

- 1. Surface Materials
- 2. Fenestration and Portals
  - a. style, type
  - b. o/w ratio
  - c. rhythms
  - d. placement
- 3. Trim and Detailing
  - a. style
  - b. unique trim or detailing
  - c. structural members
- 4. Roof
  - a. style, form
  - b. slope
  - c. materials
- 5. Design Concepts
  - a. stylistic demands
  - b. functional concepts
- 6. Utilities
  - a. design
  - b. placement
- 7. Signs
  - a. style, design
  - b. placement
- 8. Exterior Connections
  - a. design
  - b. penetration points

### SITE

- 1. Prohibited Structure Areas
  - a. approach
  - b. view corridors
  - c. site feature protection
  - d. vertical additions
- 2. Access/Egress
- 3. Adjacent R.O.W.'s
  - a. existing treatment
  - b. proposed changes
- 4. Landscaping
  - a. existing plant removal
  - b. new plant selection
  - c. site design
- 5. Site Fixtures
  - a. furniture
  - b. sculpture, art
  - c. paths
  - d. utility units
  - e. signs
- 6. Lighting
  - a. exteriors
  - b. grounds

### COLOR

- 1. Surface Materials
- 2. Trim and Details
- 3. Roof
- 4. Utilities
- 5. Signs
- 6. Site Fixtures
- 7. Accent Color

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## Land Use Analysis

Proposed zoning change:

from: General Retail (GR)

to: No Change

Recommended use variances:

None

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18"x 28" Official Texas Historical Marker  
Dallas County (Order #4088)

Location: 3014 Oak Lawn Ave.  
Dallas

THE OAK LAWN UNITED\*  
METHODIST CHURCH\*

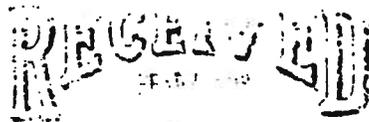
4088

AN OAK LAWN SETTLER, THE REV.  
MARCUS H. CULLUM (1822-85), PREACHED  
IN A GROVE ON TURTLE CREEK UNTIL  
CITIZENS BUILT A SCHOOL-CHURCH  
HOUSE HERE ON SITE GIVEN BY THE  
DICKASON-SALE FAMILY. AT OPENING  
OF THAT BUILDING, SEPT. 20, 1874, THE  
REV. M. H. CULLUM FOUNDED THE OAK  
LAWN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,  
SOUTH. A LARGER BUILDING WITH  
SPIRES WAS ERECTED IN 1889. THE  
PRESENT STRUCTURE WAS BUILT 1911-  
15, AND ENLARGED IN 1928 AND 1950.  
CHURCH NAME HAS BEEN ALTERED BY  
CHANGES IN NATIONAL ORGANIZATION.  
MEMBERSHIP HAS GROWN FROM 20  
IN 1874 TO MORE THAN 2,000.\*\*

FILE COPY - DO NOT REMOVE

(1974)\*\*\*

\*3/4" lettering  
\*\*1/2" lettering  
\*\*\*1/4" lettering



APR 10 1974

SOUTHWELL PAPER  
STATE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

APPROVED

Truett Latimer

by Beh Watson  
4-10-74



4088

The OAK LAWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH was founded in 1874 in the Oak Lawn community, then two miles north of Dallas, Texas. The name of the church derived from the community, which got its name because of an early residence with many oak trees in its yard. The church was originally the Oak Lawn Methodist Episcopal Church South. The "south" was dropped in 1939, and "United" added in 1968, both due to parent church mergers.

The church came into being September 20, 1874, when the first sermon was preached in the little new frame building located where the block-long church of today is standing. This is now part of the City of Dallas, at 3014 Oak Lawn Avenue. The original building was constructed by residents of the community to serve as a church on Sunday, a schoolhouse on weekdays, and a community center at all times.

Rev. Marcus Hiram Cullum (Sept. 24, 1822 to June 14, 1885) became a Methodist minister in services at Aberdeen, Miss. in Nov. 1860. He made his rounds through the storm and strife of Civil War and Reconstruction in Tennessee, and when nothing was left there, he moved his family to Texas. He bought ten acres on Cedar Springs Road, and held religious services for his neighbors each Sunday under a grove of trees overlooking Turtle Creek.

Here he suggested to the Dickason-Sale family that they donate land for a combination church and schoolhouse to serve the little community. This was done, and the neighbors gathered to erect the small frame building. When it was completed Rev. Cullum preached the first sermon there, on Sept. 20, 1874.

In February 1846 Anson Jones, President of the Republic of Texas, issued a grant for 640 acres of land in (then) Nacogdoches County, near the Elm Fork of the Trinity River. Franklin Owen Sale owned part of this tract when he died July 25, 1874. John Shelton Dickason, one of the heirs, had known Rev. Cullum in Tennessee as early as 1866. Now he visited Oak Lawn and learned of the need for a church and a school. He returned to Tennessee, obtained power-of-attorney from other heirs of Franklin Owen Sale, and returned to Oak Lawn to donate the land. This was made official Oct. 3, 1874 (after the building had been erected and was in use) when a deed was filed in Dallas County. It transferred two and one-third acres to trustees of "The Methodist Episcopal Church South, at Oak Lawn near Dallas, Texas". The church still owns this property, where it is located.

(2) The original small frame structure was moved in 1889 to make way for a larger new frame church building with "two magnificent spires". In 1911 (3) this building was moved, and a new brick edifice was erected (completed (4) in 1915). In 1928 and again in 1950 major additions were made; and thus the church reached its present block-long size.

This church served for many years as a community center in the Oak Lawn community, and was recognized for its leading role in the development of Oak Lawn. Its leaders met at this church to work toward becoming part of the growing city of Dallas, toward securing street-car service, electricity, a fire station, and gravel (and later paved) streets. Many of the leaders of Dallas lived in Oak Lawn, and the community and its earliest church played key roles in developing this great city.

This church is part of the world-wide United Methodist Church.

B. M. Burgher, former Dallas postmaster; C. B. Gillespie, former Dallas County Treasurer; Epps G. Knight, former Dallas Police Chief; J. W. Blanton, leading Methodist layman; T. M. and A. W. Cullum, prominent former Dallas businessmen; and George P. and Charles G. Cullum, current Dallas business and civic leaders, are among many who have served as Board Chairman of this church.

The church currently has more than 2000 members.

This church will celebrate its 100th Anniversary in September 1974. It appears appropriate that it should be granted an Official Texas Historical Marker to commemorate its founding on Sept. 20, 1874, and its Centennial Celebration in September 1974. It began with 20 charter members and now has more than 2000 members. The land donation by the Dickason-Sale family, and the devotion of Rev. M. H. Cullum, founder and first pastor, should be permanently recorded. The role of the church as a school and community center are also important; and the growth from the small frame building to today's block-long structure are important in the history of the church, the community, the city and the state.

The Oct. 3, 1874 deed and abstract records are on file in the Dallas County Courthouse.

The 50-year history of this church, written in 1924 by Charles Bell Gillespie (original is in possession of Earl O. Cullum) was summarized in the 1949 75-year history of the church.

The John S. Dickason Bible, located in possession of Mrs. Ezra Dickason at Brownsville, Texas provided activities leading up to and the "first sermon" on Sept. 20, 1874.

Family data on Rev. M. H. Cullum is in possession of Earl O. Cullum.

Plaques in the church building record construction and additions which form the present church structure.

This data has been prepared by Earl O. Cullum, Church Historian.

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## PRESERVATION CRITERIA

While the existing structure will continue to be used as a church facility and no other use is being considered, staff recommends that all existing elements should be preserved as is. No new construction or remodeling is anticipated at this time, but any repairs, renovations or replacements due to maintenance and or accidental damage shall meet the following guidelines:

### CRITERIA

#### 1. Surface Materials

Reconstruction, renovation or repair of the opaque elements of each facade shall employ only brick of equal texture, grain, color and module size of existing main structure as practicable. Reconstruction, renovation or repair of the stone elements of each facade and tower shall employ only carved stone or concrete of equal texture, grain, color and module size of the existing elements as practicable.

#### 2. Fenestrations and Openings

Existing openings in all facades shall remain intact and new openings shall not be permitted. The relationship existing between brick walls, carved stone, windows and door openings shall be maintained and preserved as is. All stained glass windows which are visible from the exterior of the building shall remain in place. No tinted or reflective glass shall be allowed in any window opening.

#### 3. Roof

The slope, configuration and surface pattern of the existing roof shall be maintained and preserved as is. No new vertical extensions shall be allowed and all existing extensions, gables and towers shall be preserved. All replacements or repairs to the church shall employ a roofing material comparable with the existing roof in texture, design and color.

#### 4. Embellishments and Detailing

All ornamental detailing enumerated below shall remain intact and be preserved as is. Any reconstruction, renovation or replacement of the listed items shall be identical in composition and texture as practicable.

A. Carved Stone: The carved stone used as trim and detailing around doors and windows, as well as on the primary facades.

B. Parapets: The parapets exhibited on the two towers.

C. Ornamental brick work.

#### 5. Color

The coloring of existing facade materials shall remain as is. Any painting or use of new materials due to additions, extensions, alterations, repairs and maintenance shall comply with the coloring of existing materials.

- A. Predominate facade material: The existing natural color of the brick shall be preserved and unpainted. There will be no alterations with the exception of maintenance cleaning as necessary. A clear sealant may be applied as necessary. The color of any additions or alterations to the church shall coincide as nearly as practicable to the existing color range.
- B. Trim colors: The existing natural color of the carved stone or concrete shall be preserved and remain unpainted. There will be no alterations with the exception of maintenance cleaning as necessary. A clear sealant may be applied as necessary.

6. Lighting and Landscaping

Exterior lighting and the placement and removal of trees and shrubs shall be approved by the Historic Landmark Preservation Committee prior to commencement of work.

7. Public Improvements

All proposed public improvements of streets and associated R.O.W. abutting the structure shall be approved by the Historic Landmark Preservation Committee prior to commencement of work.

8. Signs

Upon passage of the ordinance, all signs and their structural supports shall be removed from the existing building facade. All new signs shall be designed to be compatible with the architectural qualities of the existing main structure. All new signs shall be approved by the Historic Landmark Preservation Committee prior to the issuance of a sign permit.