

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR _____ THEMATIC NOMINATION

1 NAME

HISTORIC Duke Memorial United Methodist Church

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 504 West Chapel Hill Street

____ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Durham

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 2nd

STATE North Carolina

____ VICINITY OF
CODE 037

COUNTY Durham

CODE 063

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Church Trustees

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

____ VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, Register of Deeds
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC Durham County Judicial Building

STREET & NUMBER 201 E. Main St.

CITY, TOWN

Durham

STATE North Carolina

6 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Patricia S. Dickinson
Consultant to the City of Durham

ORGANIZATION

DATE

June 1984

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1711 Umstead Rd.

919/383-1316

CITY OR TOWN

Durham

STATE North Carolina

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Duke Memorial United Methodist Church is a massive, gable-front building of cream-colored brick and granite, constructed between 1907 and 1912 in the Gothic and Romanesque Revival styles. The church faces south onto West Chapel Hill Street, a busy four-lane thoroughfare. The Gothic Revival style Youth Building (1931) and Education Building (1964) adjoin the church at the west. The church campus, crisscrossed by concrete paths and shaded by large deciduous trees, occupies a three-acre city block bounded on the west by South Gregson Street, on the north by Memorial Street and on the east by South Duke Street. Sited on a moderate rise overlooking the tobacco factory district and downtown Durham located a short distance to the east, the monumental church is a conspicuous feature of the city skyline, visible from several approaches to the downtown area.

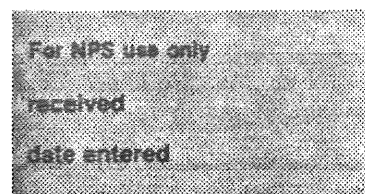
Resting on a high battered rock-faced, coursed granite foundation, the building consists of a cruciform two-story sanctuary with two four-story bell towers flanking the gable front. A gable- and hip-roofed wing that extends across the rear houses offices and Sunday School classrooms. The brick elevations are laid in a running bond, broken by rock-faced granite string courses and large expanses of fine stained glass windows. The church is roofed with red terra cotta tiles; the pyramidal roofs of the twin bell towers, and the lantern which marks the junction of the nave and transept, are sheathed in standing seam copper. Accenting the eaves are brick dentils and corbel tables. While the dominant style of the building is Gothic Revival as seen in its lancet arches and tracery windows, the towers with corbelled brick work are characteristic of the Romanesque Revival style.

The busy, eclectic main elevation is dominated by the prominent four-story, square bell towers which flank the gable front. The variety of arch and window types occurring on the towers are representative of those appearing on the church's other elevations. These types include: flat arch rectangular windows with granite lintels and sills; large, stained glass stone tracery windows set in Tudoresque segmental pointed arches; lancet arch windows; and bullseye windows. Stained glass is used profusely, and diamond shaped panes of opaque, colored, cathedral glass fill many of the smaller windows.

Between the towers, a bank of entrances and stained glass windows distinguish the gable front elevation. The slightly projecting entrance, approached by a broad flight of seven granite steps, is composed of a trio of double-leaf recessed panel oak doors set in Tudor arches surmounted by triangular gables. Brick laid in a basketweave pattern accents the areas between the triangular peaks. Above the granite string course which marks the first story, is a large stained glass tracery window set in a compound Tudor arch. A granite string course extends from the window's label

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stops; another granite string course extends from the window's label stops; another granite string course underlines a trio of slender lancet arch windows located near the peak of the gable front. A small stone Greek cross extends above the stone coping of the gable eave.

The east elevation is composed of the nave and two gabled units, each characterized by two tiers of stained glass tracery windows. The southern unit is the east end of the transept marked by a large tracery stained glass window. The northern gable-end of the rear wing features two double-leaf oak doors topped by stained glass quatrefoils. Before the main sanctuary was completed in 1912, the congregation met in this large gable- and hip-roofed rear wing. This portion of the church was then used for Sunday School classrooms.

Dominant elements of the rear or north elevation are bands of stained glass rectangular windows, a large two-story tracery window with stepped base which conforms to light an interior staircase, and a large shallow projection that recalls an apse due to its ploygonal form and position at the rear of the church.

The sanctuary is an enormous auditorium featuring Gothic style carved and sawn oak woodwork decorating smooth plastered white walls and ceiling. Wood piers and ornamental bracing simulate a true Gothic support system with oak ribs outlining the ceiling to suggest a vaulted ceiling. Sawn quatrefoils accent the pierced ceiling braces and Ionic pilaster capitals and cornices feature handsome foliate carvings. The oak pews are arranged in five sections which slope toward the altar rail at a slight angle: the simplicity of their curved and rounded arm rests contrasts with the Gothic styling of the other sanctuary woodwork. An oak balcony extends across the south end of the nave. Opposite, a robust molded semi-circular oak altar rail carried by short heavy Tuscan columns extends the width of the chancel. A cushioned kneeling bench follows the curve of the rail.

In the chancel, raised platforms hold the altar, pulpit and choir areas. Panelling of blind Gothic arches across the rear of the chancel forms a backdrop for the altar and pulpit. The pulpit is set on a raised oak platform decorated with recessed gothic arch panels. Similar panels ornament the broad pulpit. To the rear of the pulpit, an oak bench divided into four seats is topped by a Gothic style oak canopy with drop pendants. The choir loft, with individual chairs, is located on a high raised platform extending along the top of the panelled wall. The organ pipes are mounted on the plaster wall above the choir loft. Gothic style oak doors surmounted by carved quatrefoils bracket the chancel and give access to Sunday School classrooms beyond and to a small parlor.

Handsome stained glass windows in brilliant yellow and blue hues are the predominant decorative elements of the church. The transept elevations are largely

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composed of tracery and rectangular bands of stained glass windows. Small paired tracery and rectangular stained glass windows are located in each bay of the nave. With one exception, the windows depict Jesus or men and women of the Bible. The south window depicts John Wesley preaching. The windows were designed and executed by Joseph V. Llorens, Sr. of DeKalb County, Georgia and were installed in 1911.

In 1931 the church plant was expanded with the construction of the two-story (with basement) Youth Building, similar to the earlier building in the cream-colored brick elevations and red metal tiles in imitation of terra cotta sheathing the hip roof. This building is connected to the church's west elevation of a brick arcade with gothic arch openings. Limestone string courses mark the building's divisions. Limestone is used for the crosssetted entrance surround which is highlighted by stone colonettes. Metal casement windows light the interior. The Youth Building houses offices and Sunday School classrooms.

The third adjoining unit of the church complex, the Education Building, was constructed in 1964. This two-story (with basement) building shares in common with the others Gothic Revival styling, cream-colored brick elevations, and hip roof with red metal tiles. The building has crosssetted window surrounds and a recessed Gothic arch entrance outlined by limestone colonettes. An oriel window is centered on the main elevation; paired nine-over-nine sash windows light the interior. This building houses several large Sunday School rooms, church parlor, large kitchen and Fellowship Hall/dining room seating 500. The church-operated kindergarten is housed in the basement. A fenced playground is located at the rear.

The structure, of course, is closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probably that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

_____ NATIONAL _____ STATE X LOCAL

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1907-12, 1931, 1964

BUILDER/ARCHITECT George W. Kramer, architect
Norman Underwood, builder

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Duke Memorial United Methodist Church is significant both architecturally and for its historical associations. The church is a massive, unaltered, brick and granite building designed by New York architect George W. Kramer in an eclectic combination of the Gothic and Romanesque Revival styles and constructed between 1907 and 1912. Kramer (1847-1938) specialized in church design, authored a book on the subject, and designed a number of churches primarily located in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. With its prominent four-story bell towers, the monumental Duke Memorial Church is a conspicuous feature of the Durham skyline. Historically the church is associated with the rapid growth of western Durham's earliest Methodist congregation, established in 1886 to serve the factory workers at W. Duke & Sons Tobacco Company. The development of Duke Memorial Church is closely associated with the Duke family and is named to honor patriarch Washington Duke and his family, the church's principal benefactors.

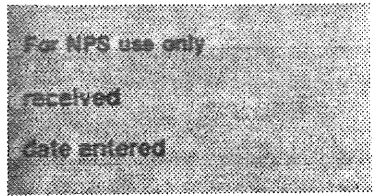
CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. Duke Memorial United Methodist Church is associated with the rapid growth of western Durham's earliest Methodist congregation, established in 1886 as Bethany Sunday School. From 1886 to 1907 the congregation, composed largely of tobacco factory workers, worshipped at Main Street Methodist Church whose construction was funded by the Duke family. In 1907 the Dukes funded construction of Duke Memorial Methodist Church to meet the needs of the expanding congregation.
- B. Duke Memorial Church and its earlier predecessors, Bethany Sunday School and Main Street Methodist Church, are closely associated with the lives of the Duke family. Patriarch Washington Duke and his sons Brodie Leonidas, Benjamin Newton and James Buchanan, the church's principal benefactors, maintained both a strong personal and financial commitment to the church.

(Continued on separate sheet)

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- C. The monumental, unaltered church, designed by noted New York church architect George W. Kramer, embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Gothic and Romanesque Revival styles and has been a Durham architectural landmark since its construction.

Durham's tremendous growth during the 1880s led to the expansion of the city's churches to serve the town's booming population of factory workers. Durham's early historian William K. Boyd wrote:

{The established church's} members were mainly property owners, business and professional men and permanent residents. By 1880 there was an increasing number of another class of people, the factory workers, few of whom were property owners, many engaged in occupations that made them migratory, none with exactly the same interest in the locality as the members of the churches already established. It therefore seemed wise to found churches that would appeal especially to this class of people. Hence a distinct policy of church expansion was adopted to meet the needs of the factory districts. . .In this work the Methodists led the way.¹

Many who came seeking employment in the tobacco factories settled in western Durham near the W. Duke & Sons Tobacco Company plant. Washington Duke and his sons Brodie Leonidas, Benjamin Newton and James Buchanan were then members of Durham Methodist Church (renamed Trinity Methodist Church in 1880) Durham's first Methodist congregation established in 1832 as Orange Grove Methodist Church.² A lifelong staunch Methodist layman who expressed concern about his workers' spiritual welfare, Washington Duke was to have an important role in the expansion of the Methodist Church in Durham.

In 1884 Trinity Methodist Church's pastor T.A. Boone proposed a new Methodist church be built near the tobacco factories in western Durham. The consensus of the July, 1885, District Conference members was that "there should be a junior preacher in Durham to minister to the factory hands. There is a disposition growing to have a Mission Chapel in the western part of town. This would be well because there are many people in Durham who do not go to church who would be reached in this way."³

Thus Duke Memorial Methodist Church's earliest predecessor came into being on May 2, 1886, when Bethany Sunday School was established in the stemmery of Washington Duke's tobacco factory. Wooden benches for the congregation were brought into the large second floor room and removed in time for the start of the work week. Reverend

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dixon, Wyatt T., et. al. Ninety Years of Duke Memorial Church, 1886-1976. Privately printed, 1977.

Durden, Robert F. The Dukes of Durham, 1865-1929. Durham: Duke University Press, 1975.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres

UTM REFERENCES

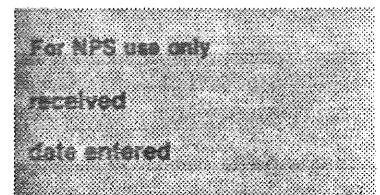
A	1,7	6,8,8,4,5,0	3,9,8,5,5,0,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Durham County Tax Map 38, Block 3

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Amos Gregson was appointed pastor to the new Methodist congregation. (Durham's Gregson Street is named in his honor.) Washington Duke transferred his church membership to Bethany as did several family members including Mr. and Mrs. Brodie L. Duke and Benjamin N. Duke, who served as the Sunday School's secretary-treasurer. (James B. Duke resided in New York after 1884.) Within two weeks the membership, composed primarily of Duke's factory workers, had increased from 33 to 150; construction of a church building became a necessity.

Maude Dunn, longtime member of Duke Memorial Methodist Church, recalled in a 1977 interview a story her mother had told her:

Washington Duke was at our house one day and he said 'We've got to build another church.' The factory was just beginning to go and people were moving in here. From just a mere nothing but a store or two beside the road, it was beginning to become quite a town. So Papa said, 'We have Trinity Church.' Mr. Duke said 'Yes, but we've got to have one for the masses.' So they began and Main Street Church was built.

Brodie Duke, owner of large tracts of land in western and northern Durham and one of the town's early real estate developers, donated a choice lot for the new church at the southeast corner of Main and Gregson streets, one and a half blocks from the Duke factory. Just a few weeks after Bethany Sunday School was started, construction on the new church was underway, funded by many small contributions from the Bethany congregation and several large ones from Duke family members. The new church was named Main Steet Methodist Episcopal Church, South and was popularly known as Main Street Church. The T-shaped 40' x 70' brick gable-front building with a tall central tower featuring corbelled brickwork was constructed by⁶ the local contracting firm of Bullert, (T. Sidney) Christian and (Benjamin) Houston. (This building continued in use as a church until May, 1967 when it was razed for a parking lot.) T.S. Christian was a locally prominent contractor of the era. In 1892 he worked on the new Trinity College campus constructing the Faculty Row houses (National Register, 1979). Benjamin Houston is listed in the 1889 City Directory as a carpenter, builder and contractor. Nothing more is known about Bullert.

Shortly after the church began its service in October, 1886, Washington Duke gave his personal check to liquidate the church's remaining indebtedness due to construction costs. When the congregation outgrew the building in 1888, Benjamin Duke funded construction of a 40' x 52' Sunday School addition. (A portion of this addition continued in use as an office building from 1967 until 1981 when it was razed to expand the parking lot.) Longtime church member Miss Margaret Martin remembered Main Street Church's principal benefactor and contributor: "I remember Mr. 'Wash' Duke --the old man. He used to sit over on the left hand side of the church and look out the window at his factory. He piped the heat from his factory down to the church."⁸

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Washington Duke was a zealous Methodist throughout his life and his sons followed his example. His youngest son James Buchanan once remarked:

My daddy always said that if he ever amounted to anything in life, it was due to the Methodist circuit riders who frequently visited in his home and whose preaching and counsel brought out the best in him. If I ever amount to anything in this world, I owe it to my daddy and the Methodist church.

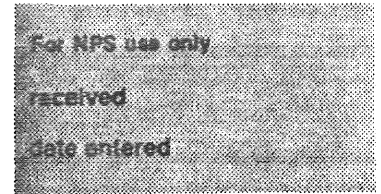
In addition to their involvement in Bethany Sunday School and Main Street Methodist Church the Duke family contributed financially to the construction of five other Methodist churches in Durham.¹⁰ In 1892 Washington Duke was instrumental in bringing to Durham from Randolph County Methodist-affiliated Trinity College. He and his sons Benjamin and James maintained a strong commitment to the college and were generous donors to the operating budget, building fund, and student aid program. In 1924 James B. Duke created the Duke Endowment, a perpetual philanthropic trust of which the primary beneficiaries were Trinity College (greatly expanded and renamed Duke University in 1925) and the Methodist Church. (For a fuller discussion of the Dukes and Trinity College/Duke University see the Duke University--West Campus and Trinity College/East Campus of Duke University National Register nominations.) Duke Endowment funds were allocated to construct Methodist churches in North Carolina's rural areas, to provide pensions for the church's retired preachers and to construct and support church affiliated orphanages. Duke biographer Robert F. Durden explained the motives behind the Duke family philanthropy:

Washington Duke came to philanthropy via the Methodist church. His children, and especially Benjamin N. Duke, followed the same route, and their multimillion-dollar giving in the 1920s followed lines that were clearly discernable as early as the 1890s, when both their wealth and their gifts were yet modest...pride in Durham and a desire to help enhance its respectability and progressive 'modernity' played a part in some of the family's early giving...the Dukes gave [primarily] because the Methodist church emphasizes the desirability, even the necessity, of giving on the part of those who were able...Those who possessed wealth had the dual responsibility, according to the teachings of the church, of both using and giving it wisely.¹¹

The Trinity College campus was located less than a mile from Main Street Methodist Church. During the scholastic year, faculty and students swelled the congregation. The church reached its capacity and by the turn of the century discussions were underway regarding the construction of a larger new church. Washington Duke died May 6, 1905 at the age of 84 and his funeral was one of the last major services conducted in the Main Street Church. Irving Allen, an elderly church member interviewed in 1977, remembered the funeral:

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When Washington Duke died--there had never been a funeral in Durham since then that the whole town closed up. Every store in Durham, everything closed up and the farmers came in from far and near. Farmers that the Dukes had bought tobacco from--they came in covered wagons with their families. They tied their horses to the back of the church--Main Street--and everybody in Durham went to that funeral and every carriage in Durham turned out.¹²

In 1906 the congregation decided to relocate and in April of that year the church paid W.T. Blackwell, Jr. \$28,000 for a three-acre lot at the corner of West Chapel Hill and South Duke streets, one block southeast of Main Street Methodist Church.¹³ Blackwell was given ninety days to move a two-story frame house built in the 1870s by his father.¹⁴ W.T. Blackwell, Sr. had been an owner of the Bull Durham Tobacco Company and a leader in the formation of Durham's public school system. Church members C.W. Toms, R.I. Cheatham, J.E. Stagg and W.H. McCabe took out personal notes to pay for the property. These notes were to be repaid when the Main Street church building was sold. In November, 1906 the Christian Church bought the Main Street Methodist Church building for \$6,500,¹⁵ but did not occupy the building until the removal of the Methodists in 1908.

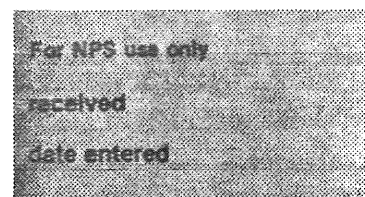
The Main Street Methodists appointed a building committee in October, 1906, and on January 1, 1907, ground was broken for their new church. The corner stone was laid that same year. New York architect George W. Kramer designed the new church which was named Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, South to honor the late Washington Duke.¹⁶

George Washington Kramer (1847-1938), an Ohio native, began his architectural practice in 1873. Between 1879 and 1885 he was associated with Jacob Snyder, a well-known church designer of the era. Later Kramer was a partner in the firm of Kramer and Weary in Akron, Ohio. In 1894 he opened a New York office on Madison Avenue and carried on an independent practice. During his career which spanned 50 years, Kramer specialized in church design. Some of the more significant of the more than 2,000 buildings he designed are the following: Baptist Temple Church, Brooklyn; Rockefeller Church, Lakewood, New Jersey; Union Methodist, New York; Methodist at Pittsburgh (considered his outstanding work); three churches in East Orange, New Jersey; and several buildings at Ohio State Agricultural College (later Ohio University) and Oberlin College. In 1901 Kramer authored a book on church design, The What, How and Why of Church Building. It is not known who commissioned Kramer's design for Duke Memorial Church. It is possible that James B. Duke, who maintained residences in New York and northern New Jersey, was familiar with Kramer's work and recommended him to his brother Benjamin in Durham.¹⁷

Norman Underwood, a prominent local contractor and member of the church's Board of Stewards, was the general contractor. The church was constructed in two stages:

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the Sunday School building was built first (occupied, 1908 with church services held there until the adjoining church sanctuary was completed in 1912). A letter from building committee member W.H. McCabe to Reverend Michael Bradshaw detailed the financial arrangement with the architect and builder:

On April 28, 1907 the contract entered into with Mr. N. Underwood for the erection of our new church building at a cost of \$66,344. This provides for the completion of the Sunday School Department, according to plans and specifications of the architect and closes in the church auditorium, which department is soon to be completed under a new contract. Under the contract with Mr. Underwood, he agrees to complete the basement under the Sunday school room as per plans and specifications of the architect for \$2,210 and the auditorium or church department for the additional sum of \$18,765. The architect is Mr. George W. Kramer of No. 1 Madison Ave., N.Y. and he has been paid 3% of \$95,000 or \$2,850 this being according to his contract, which further provides that in case it becomes necessary he will make visits to the church, his charge for this service being \$15 per day and expenses...

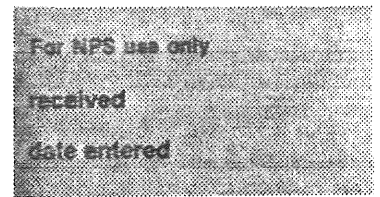
In May 1907 vacant lots surrounding the old Main Street church were sold and the \$9,800 proceeds added to the construction fund. Later that month James B. and Benjamin N. Duke pledged \$30,000 each toward construction costs. Mrs. J.E. Stagg, Washington Duke's granddaughter, donated \$6,000 for a pipe organ and her husband pledged \$4,000 for chimes.

Original plans called for the church to be constructed of "stone, gothic in style and to cost about \$90,000" but the plans were altered and it was instead constructed of pressed cream-colored brick trimmed with granite and the total building contract was \$217,005. The first worship service was held in the Sunday School auditorium July 10, 1908. The congregation of 709 occupied the sanctuary for the first time on June 2, 1912. Bishop John C. Kilgo, President of Trinity College from 1894-1910, preached the sermon. In 1915 Benjamin Duke offered to liquidate the remaining debt of \$19,000 if the congregation would raise \$7,000 needed to pay the interest and to finish the basement. This was done and Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, South was dedicated on June 7, 1914. In November, 1925 the name of the church was changed to Duke Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, South (popularly known as "Duke Memorial Church") as a continuing memorial to Washington Duke and to include his family whose sustained personal and financial commitment underwrote the success of the church.

While the building shares Gothic style elements common to many of Durham's churches dating from this period, Duke Memorial differs in its Romanesque Revival style influences, monumental size and use of cream-colored brick and granite. Opinions have varied as to the architectural critical success of this edifice. In

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1914 the congregation's minister wrote in a candid letter to Benjamin Duke, "I do not particularly admire the exterior but the auditorium atones for all. I know nothing in New York City to equal it for the sweep of its arches and for simplicity combined with beauty."²⁰ The minister in 1946, Reverend John C. Glenn, was more diplomatic when he wrote: "The sanctuary is one of the loveliest I have ever seen...I inherited what I would consider an ideal situation--a beautiful temple of worship, free from a single dollar of debt..."²¹ Historian Robert F. Durden wrote in 1975, "The church...one of Durham's increasingly scarce 'old' buildings, was and is remarkable for its architectural ungainliness."²² The grand church was a popular subject in the 1920s for picture postcards of Durham's "points of interest," and a large number of cards from this period survive.²³

During the 1920s the Dukes continued their traditional financial support of the church and the third generation of the family was represented on the church rolls by Benjamin Duke's children, Angier and Mary. Two memorial trust funds were established, both heavily subsidized by the Duke family: The Perpetual Memorial Fund, created in the early part of the decade to augment the church budget, received \$19,500 from Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Duke and \$10,000 from their son; Memorial Church Fund, Inc., created in 1926 for the maintenance and extension of the church property received \$100,000 from Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Duke, \$50,000 from Mary Duke Biddle and a \$5,000 bequest from Mary Washington Stagg, Washington Duke's granddaughter. The congregation continued to expand and a new Sunday School building was proposed. As a stop-gap measure, portions of the existing Sunday School were remodelled and, according to the February 21, 1926 church program, new rooms were created

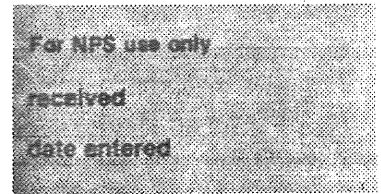
. . .using sheet rock partitions, put in new seats, etc. They are doing this because something must be done in order to take care of the children, but they are spending as little money as possible with the hope that sometime in the near future we will have a Sunday School building and will be able to take our little folks out of the basement. The committee will not bring the matter of getting the money before the congregation, but they will not turn you down if you care to help.

Between 1929 and 1931 a new two-story Elementary Departments Building (currently the Youth Building) was constructed from plans drawn by Raleigh architects G. Murray Nelson and C.M. Euler. This building, connected to the original church by a covered arcade, contained Sunday School classrooms, a nursery, parlor, Pastor's Study and a secretary's office.

A new Education Building was completed in 1964 and dedicated on August 23.²⁴ This building adjoined the 1931 Elementary Departments Building which was in turn renovated and renamed the Youth Building. In 1971 extensive renovations were made in the main sanctuary. These included the installation of a new Holtkamp organ,

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plastering the walls and ceiling, refurbishing the original pews, and installation of a new heating and air conditioning system, public address system, carpeting, and new lighting.²⁵ Today the congregation numbers approximately 1,700 members, including Mrs. Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans, Benjamin Duke's granddaughter, who represents the fourth generation of the Duke family in the congregation.

Twenty-nine men have served Duke Memorial as pastor since the church was established, of whom twenty-one were trained at Trinity College or Duke University. In addition to many Trinity College and Duke University faculty and administrators who have been members of Duke Memorial's congregation, the church has had among its membership several people prominent in Durham and Durham County public education, such as C.W. Toms, W.W. Flowers, Holland Holton and Charles Chewning, superintendents of public instruction. Flowers and Toms also helped organize Durham's first night school in 1896 "in behalf of the laboring classes."²⁶ The church sponsored several active traditional Methodist service organizations, as well as Durham's first Boy Scout troop, which was established in 1918 and began meeting at the church in 1920.²⁷

NOTES

¹ William K. Boyd, The Story of Durham (Durham: Duke University Press, 1925), p. 127.

² Boyd, pp. 188-191.

³ Methodist Episcopal Church South, North Carolina Conference, Durham District, Conference Minutes 1885-1895, July 29, 1885, pp. 83-84. Manuscript Department, Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

⁴ Wyatt T. Dixon and Members of the Church History Committee, Ninety Years of Duke Memorial Church 1886-1976 (privately published, 1977), pp. 22-23. Hereinafter cited as Dixon, Ninety Years.

⁵ Voices of the Distant Past, ed. Robert L. Wallace, Associate Pastor, Duke Memorial United Methodist Church, TS, located in the church library. Interview with Maude Dunn, May 30, 1977. This is a transcript of a series of taped oral interviews conducted by Reverend Wallace between 1974 and 1978 with several elderly, longtime church members. Many of those interviewed had vivid recollections of the Duke family members and the early years of both Main Street Methodist Church and Duke Memorial Methodist Church. Hereinafter cited as Voices of the Distant Past.

⁶ Dixon, Ninety Years, p. 25.

⁷ Directory: Duke Memorial Methodist Church, Founder's Week, 60th Anniversary, 1886-1946. Privately published under the direction of Mr. N.J. Boddie. Located

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Manuscript Department, Perkins Library, Duke University. This booklet relies on information taken from D.W. Newsom, "A Sketch of the Origin and Growth of Duke Memorial Church." This "Sketch" was presented as a talk given at the October 30, 1932 Homecoming Day Service and was subsequently published for the congregation as The History of Duke Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Hereinafter cited as Directory, Founder's Week.

⁸ Voices of the Distant Past, Interview with Margaret Martin, May 10, 1977.

⁹ Dixon, Ninety Years, p. 100.

¹⁰ Dixon, Ninety Years, p. 30. The churches included Pearl Mill Methodist Church (later Gregson Street Methodist Church, now disbanded), Mangum Street Church (now Calvary Methodist), West Durham Church (now Asbury Methodist), Branson Methodist Church and Lakewood Methodist. Reuben Hibberd, an active layman, Sunday School teacher and assistant pastor was instrumental in organizing each of these churches and in soliciting construction funds from the Duke family.

¹¹ Durden, pp. 82-83.

¹² Voices of the Distant Past, interview with Irving Allen, March 9, 1977; see also Raleigh Observer May 11, 1905 for description of the funeral. Train carloads of flowers arrived from New York where the tobacco company he founded was then headquartered, and from across the state, but only a simple floral cross was placed in the sanctuary where his pew stood draped in black.

¹³ Dixon, Ninety Years, p. 33.

¹⁴ Dixon, Ninety Years, p. 34.

¹⁵ Dixon, Ninety Years, pp. 31 and 34.

¹⁶ The name of the church was changed on three subsequent occasions: Duke Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1925; Duke Memorial Methodist Church, 1939; and Duke Memorial United Methodist Church, 1968.

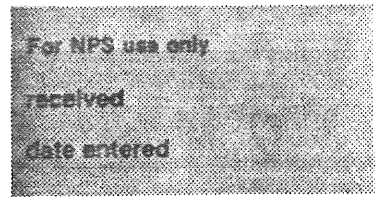
¹⁷ Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Company, 1956), pp. 354-355.

¹⁸ W.H. McCabe to Reverend M. Bradshaw, February 20, 1908 as quoted in Dixon, Ninety Years.

¹⁹ Dixon, Ninety Years, p.35.

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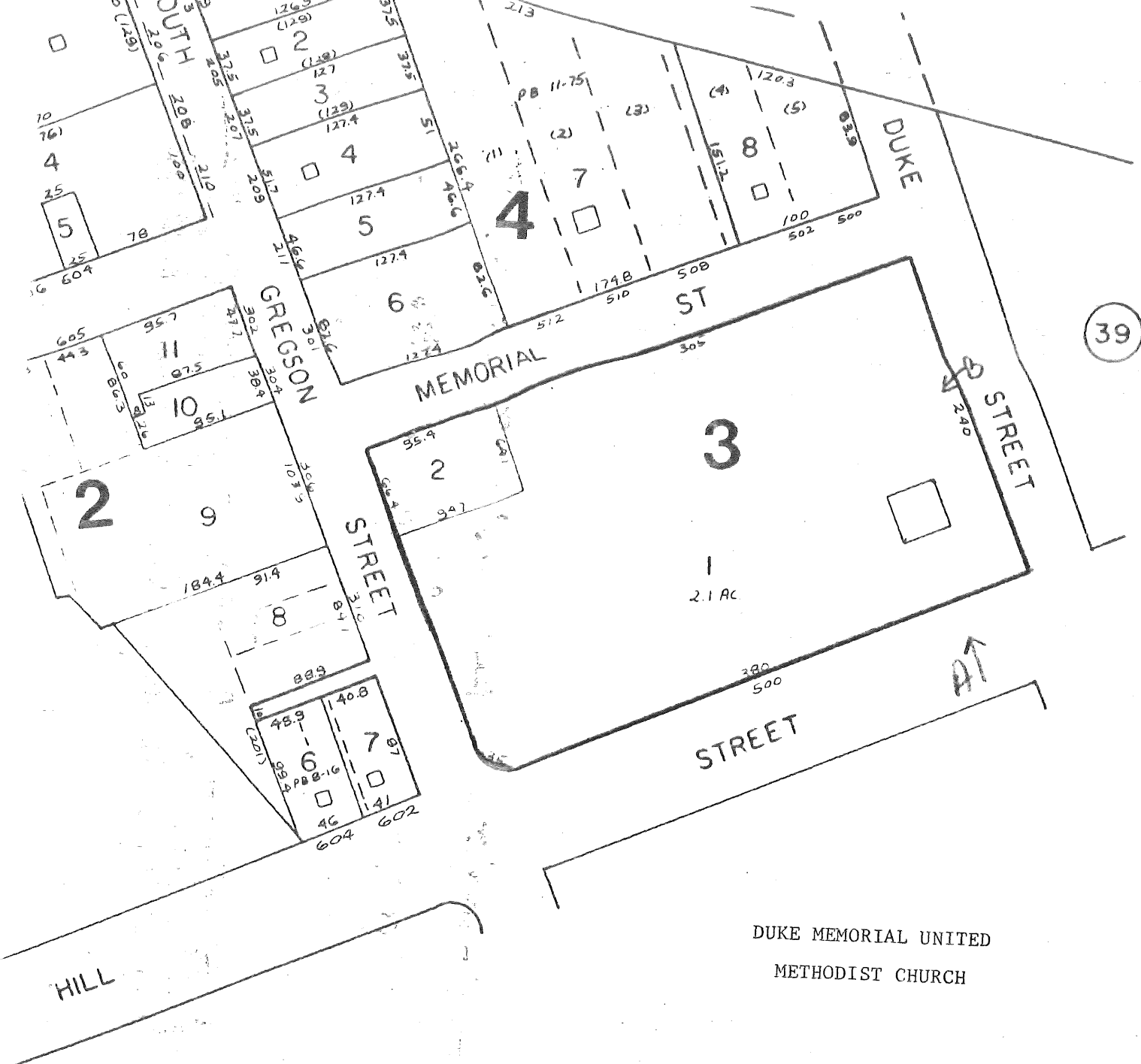
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- 20 L.P. Howard to B.N. Duke, February 16, 1914, as quoted in Durden, p. 163.
- 21 Directory, Founder's Week, Foreword.
- 22 Durden, p. 163.
- 23 Postcard collection, Manuscript Department, Perkins Library, Duke University.
- 24 Dedication Program of the Consecration and Formal Opening of a New Church School Building, August 23, 1964. Located church library.
- 25 Durham Morning Herald, September 25, 1971.
- 26 Dixon, Ninety Years, p. 116.
- 27 Dixon, Ninety Years, p. 78. The church also maintains a fine, small library containing approximately 1,600 volumes. The collection, which was begun at Main Street Church, was expanded and reorganized in the 1960s under the direction of Mrs. James Cannon III, for whom the library was named in 1966.



DUKE MEMORIAL UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

DURHAM COUNTY TAX

38

DURHAM TOWN

SCALE 1" = 100

REVISED 19

