

The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

400 Yesler Building Seattle, Washington 98104 • (206)625-4501

LPB-405/80

REPORT ON DESIGNATION

First African Methodist Episcopal Church
1522 Fourteenth Avenue
Anderson's Supp., Block 9, Lots 3,4,5.

On Wednesday, August 20, 1980, the Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve nomination of the subject property and held a public hearing on Wednesday, October 1, 1980, at which Landmark Designation was approved based upon satisfaction of the following criteria of Ordinance 106348:

Section 3.01 (3) It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, city, state or nation.

While this edifice possesses no unusual architectural significance (other than a remarkably large choir), it stands as the preeminent physical symbol of the black church in Seattle. The congregation was organized in the first generation of Seattle history and built on the present site in 1904. The present structure, erected in 1912, symbolizes, in its architectural similarity to many churches of the same era serving white congregations, the long-standing economic and social aspirations of blacks in Seattle.

Features identified for preservation include the entire exterior of the church and major site elements.

Issued at
Seattle, Washington,
October 10, 1980

Earl D. Layman
City Historic Preservation Officer

by: *J.M. Neil/gaj*

J.M. Neil
City Conservator

EDL:JMN:gaj



City of Seattle
Department of Community Development/Office of Urban Conservation

Landmark Nomination Form

Name First African Methodist Episcopal Church Year Built 1912
(Common, present or historic)

Street and Number 1522 Fourteenth Avenue ~~East~~

Assessor's File No. 022200-0010

Legal Description Plat Name Anderson's Supplemental Block 9 Lot 3,4,5

Present Owner First A.M.E. Church Present Use religious

Address 1522 Fourteenth Avenue East

Original Owner First A.M.E. Church Original Use religious

Architect A. Dudley Builder R.M. Spinck

Description: Present and original (if known) physical appearance and characteristics

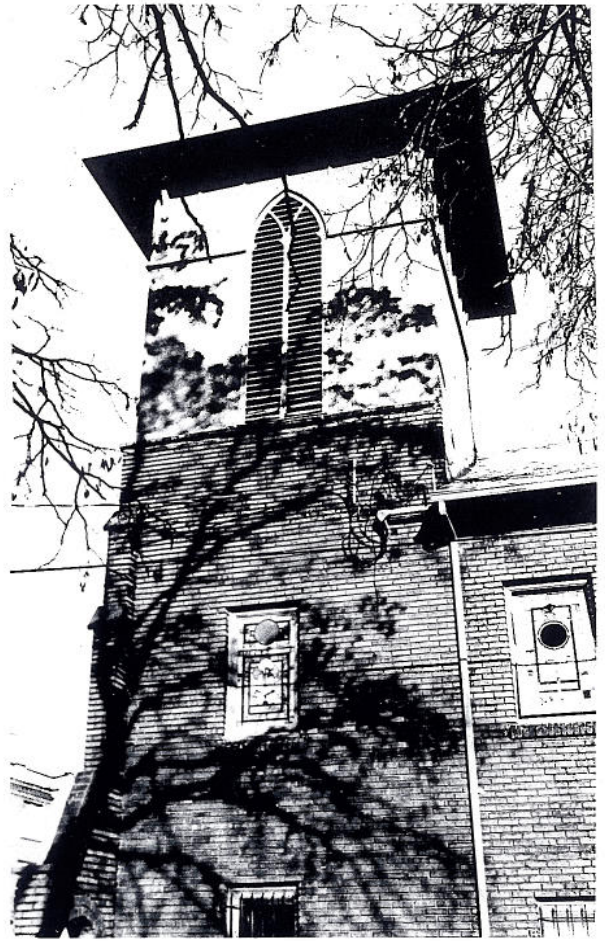
First A.M.E. Church was designed by A. Dudley and built in 1912 in a combination of brick and frame construction on a concrete foundation. The original portion of the church consists simply of a two story high rectangular mass with a pitched roof and a square based tower incorporated at the southwest corner. In the mid 1950's, a two story wing was added at the north side of the church well behind the entrance facade.

For the most part, the church is non-stylistic, with the exception of the louvred gothic lancets in the tower, and allusions to the mission style in the form and detailing of the tower roof. The entrance facade is framed by small buttresses and is surmounted by a parapet gable and a celtic cross. Two small windows with shallow gothic arches flank either side of the central portal, and a small, round-arched doorway providing direct access to the lower level is located at the far left side. The central portal has been altered but still incorporates a shallow gothic arch transom window with the original stained glass. A round-arched passageway penetrates the buttress adjacent to the tower at the right of the main facade. The side elevations are simple, each side consisting of seven rectangular windows at both the sanctuary level, and the lower level. All windows in the sanctuary are filled with memorial stained glass, with several panels remaining to be dedicated.

Statement of significance

Seattle's First A.M.E. Church is of important historical and sociological significance as the first black mission to have been established in the city. The congregation was established between 1885 and 1886, and according to church records was incorporated in 1890. The present edifice replaces an earlier frame structure which had been moved to the present site from a lot immediately to the north in 1904. Dating from 1912, the present structure is architecturally similar to many other churches built in Seattle during the first decades of the twentieth century for "establishment" protestant denominations. Although it possesses no unusual architectural significance, it is significant as one of Seattle's oldest and most substantial church structures originally built for and continuing to serve a black congregation. The church represents a most important element of the black community's heritage and continues to play an important social role.

Photographs:



Submitted by: Office of Urban Conservation Staff
 Address 400 Yesler Building; Seattle, WA 98104 Phone 625-4501
 Date 4-10-80

Reviewed _____ Date _____
 Historic Preservation Officer