

AUGUST 23, 2017

SUBJECT PROPERTY:
FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
507 PACIFIC AVENUE
LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA 90802

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION:
DOCUMENTATION AND EVALUATION TO DETERMINE WHETHER PROPOSED DEMOLITION WILL
ADVERSELY AFFECT A HISTORIC RESOURCE

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INTRODUCTION

This evaluation has been completed to determine whether proposed demolition of the First Methodist Church building at 507 Pacific Avenue in Long Beach, California will adversely affect a historic resource.

THIS EVALUATION:

- Provides a Historic Context Statement
- Provides Documentation of the property under evaluation
- Evaluates the building against City of Long Beach Historic Landmark designation criteria
- Reaches a conclusion of whether the subject property can be considered a historic resource

This determination offers a finding as a result of in-depth research into the First Methodist Church at 507 Pacific Avenue, its associated individuals, and its design. This research has not yielded any evidence supporting the conclusion that the subject property can be classified as a historic resource, and as such it is believed that the current proposal to demolish the subject building would not pose harm to a historic resource.

HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT

The First Methodist Church campus presently located at 507 Pacific Avenue was designed by Kenneth S. Wing, FAIA, an architect who practiced regionally and whose offices were located in the city of Long Beach. The campus was constructed in portions over a ten-year period at its present location.

The First Methodist Church in Early Long Beach (1884 - 1939)

The First Methodist Church (FMC) is a long-standing organization which has maintained a continuous presence in the city of Long Beach since at least 1884.¹ Reverend George W. Elwood established the church's presence in the Long Beach area at this time, expanding its presence from the Compton meetings, which had become popular.² During this time period, the FMC grew its presence in the community, and as Long Beach was incorporated and the city experienced a sizable population boom, the church matured.

The first building formally constructed as part of the FMC in Long Beach was built in 1887 "on ground held by 'the Methodist Resort Association' comprising an entire block between Third and Fourth Streets and Locust and American Avenues..."³ This building was short-lived, as the FMC relocated to the Northwest corner of 5th Street and Pacific Avenue in 1889.⁴ Since this date, the FMC has maintained ownership over the land now addressed as 507 Pacific Avenue.

The first formal ecclesiastical building constructed at 507 Pacific Avenue was built in 1908.⁵ The building was designed in the Towered Stick Style, "a transitional style that links the preceding Gothic Revival with the subsequent Queen Anne."⁶ The stylistic elements of the building could be seen in its gabled roofline and corner towers adorned with pinnacles, wood siding, and pointed arch

windows. From the time of its completion, this church housed a First Methodist Church which became widely-regarded in the Long Beach community for its public services. In addition to philanthropic outreach, the church hosted a variety of community programs, including a series of “Sacred Chautauqua” gatherings, which were a “combination of entertainment and educational lectures...popular during the early 1900s.”⁷ On an unknown date in this era of the church’s operation, it was decided that a new building should be constructed. Between 1916 and 1933, FMC constructed a new church. The replacement building bore a similar footprint to its predecessor, continuing the tradition of a large tower on the corner of 5th Street and Pacific Avenue. Traits in the replacement building were, however, more exaggerated towards the Gothic Revival style. Ornate pinnacles atop the towers, castellated tower rooflines, lancet windows, and granite cladding exemplify an attempt to mimic Medieval ecclesiastical buildings.⁸ During this time period, the city of Long Beach also experienced dramatic changes. Between 1916 and 1933, the city’s population grew by over 450 percent.⁹



The first building constructed by the First Methodist Church on the northwest corner of 5th Street and Pacific Avenue, built in 1908 (Left) ; Second First Methodist Church building constructed on the present site between 1916 and 1933 (right)

In 1933, the Long Beach Earthquake devastated the region, resulting in greater than \$12.1 Million in material damages.¹⁰ The earthquake damaged the stone-clad FMC building and the church, led by Farmers & Merchants Bank founder C. J. Walker, undertook renovations of the building within weeks of the disaster.¹¹ \$20,000.00 was allocated to reconstruct the building’s exterior, with special attention paid to reinforcement.¹² As a result, the church’s stone cladding was removed and replaced with smooth stucco.¹³ Some stones removed during this renovation were retained, and today remain on display in the lobby of the main building at the present FMC campus.

Long Beach and Kenneth S. Wing in the Mid-Twentieth Century (1940 - 1969)

Between 1940 and 1965, Long Beach and neighboring Lakewood experienced dramatic growth. This growth can be largely attributed to the presence of the United States Navy and the Aerospace industry, which created jobs for upper and upper-middle class families in Long Beach. Long Beach’s Roosevelt Naval Base was dedicated on September 1, 1941, and became a fixture in the

region with the United States' entry into World War II. It was said that "Long Beach eclipsed all other West Coast Navy towns in size and prominence."¹⁴ Due to the enactment of the National Housing Act of 1934, housing developers were given ample opportunity to construct federally-sanctioned Minimal Traditional Style housing with affordable loans available to working-class and middle-class families, and low-cost loans available to veterans and military personnel.¹⁵



Typical Minimal-Traditional Style residence in Long Beach

These loans enabled the dramatic growth in housing stock in Long Beach as the region grew with the new Naval Base in the early 1940s. With the construction of neighboring Lakewood in 1950, an entire city developed around the convenience of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). Long Beach and its surrounding communities became increasingly suburban and domestic as a result.¹⁶ This culture, which permeated Long Beach for decades following, led to the high number of elementary schools, parks, and churches constructed in the city between the 1940s and 1960s.

Architect Kenneth S. Wing, FAIA played a substantial role in this development, as he is credited with designing or assisting in designing many of these civic and ecclesiastical buildings during the time.¹⁷

Wing moved to Long Beach as a child with his family, and graduated from Long Beach Polytechnic High School in 1920.¹⁸ He immediately pursued a career in architecture, earning his Bachelor's of Science degree from the University of Southern California (USC) School of Architecture

in 1925.¹⁹ In his early career, Wing worked as a draftsman for various firms, and went on to receive his first commissions in the late 1920s.²⁰ After receiving a commission to restore portions of the historic Rancho Los Cerritos adobe, and modernize some of its affiliated buildings, Wing formally established his own firm (Kenneth S. Wing & Associates) in 1930.²¹

In the first ten years of his practice, Wing completed projects in Long Beach and other nearby cities, including several residential projects in Rancho Palos Verdes Estates and Palm Springs ranch houses for prominent businessmen in the local area such as Lem Hancock of the Hancock Oil Company.²² In 1945, Wing became President of the American Institute of Architects, Southern California Chapter, and begun venturing away from residential design.

In 1950, Wing completed his first ecclesiastical commissions for the First Baptist Church (1000 North Pine Avenue) and Grace Methodist Church (2325 East 3rd Street), both of which remain today.²³ These two buildings demonstrate Wing's love of geometric forms, and by integrating these forms along with mosaic murals and stained glass art works, these two works toe the line between Mid-Century Modern Style and Googie Style.



The First Baptist Church designed by Kenneth S. Wing, FAIA, built in 1950 (Left) ; Grace Methodist Church designed by Kenneth S. Wing, FAIA, built in 1950 (right)

Later, the First Baptist Church was referred to as “the most advanced architectural work ever sponsored by this particular denomination” by Graham Latta, a fellow Architect, in 1953.²⁴ Wing himself declared the First Baptist Church one of his greatest accomplishments to-date in his 1953 application for status as a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects (FAIA) submitted to the organization.²⁵ At the time, he self-described his practice as “general, rather than specialized.”²⁶

Though it was not endorsed by the FHA, Modern Style Architecture grew to its height in this period due to exposure through programs such as the Case Study House Program. The Case Study Houses were “a series of twenty designs (thirteen built) commissioned by publisher John Entenza for *Arts + Architecture* magazine between 1945 and 1962.”²⁷ Three of the twenty Case Study designs were done by Killingsworth, Brady & Smith (KBS), an architecture firm based in Long Beach of local reputation.²⁸ Located at 3827 Long Beach Boulevard, the firm partnered with other neighboring

architects designing in the city, including Kenneth S. Wing & Associates.

In the early 1950s, Wing began his relationship with the City of Long Beach as a Planning Commissioner.²⁹ This relationship led to broader recognition, and an emphasis on civil service in architect's practice for the duration of his career following.³⁰ Wing's municipal commissions began with a new building for the California Department of Employment at 1313 Pine Avenue, and continued as he designed a series of schools for the Artesia and Long Beach Unified School Districts, many of which remain today.³¹ At this time, he continued his ecclesiastical work, designing a new building for the California Heights Community Methodist Church and the University Baptist Church in 1952.³² Wing took additional steps to express his commitment to ecclesiastical commissions by joining the Church Architectural Guild of America in 1953.³³

When Wing was honored with FAIA status in 1953, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) displayed a model of the First Baptist Church in Long Beach as an example of his capabilities and achievements.³⁴ With this recognition and focus on civil service, Wing leveraged his position as a Planning Commissioner to revive a stagnant movement in favor of a new Long Beach Civic Center.³⁵

In this period, Wing was commissioned to design an addition to the 1933 FMC building. He designed an Education Building, which filled the then-courtyard of the existing building along Pacific Avenue when it was completed in 1959.³⁶ The remainder of the campus was built in 1969, and was designed to co-exist with the then-decade-old education building.

In the decade between construction, the City of Long Beach began a sizeable development boom under the leadership of city officials and commissioners, including Wing. Several of Wing's notable municipal commissions occurred in this period - Long Beach Memorial Hospital (1960,) the Long Beach Safety and County Buildings (1960,) the Southern California Edison Headquarters (1961,) and the Long Beach Arena and Convention Center (1962.)³⁷ In addition, Wing expanded his educational buildings to universities in this period, designing new buildings at both Long Beach State College (now California State University, Long Beach) and the University of California, Irvine.³⁸ All of these buildings, including the remainder of the FMC campus, were designed in collaboration with Wing's son, Kenneth S. Wing, Jr., who joined his father's firm in 1955 after graduating from the USC School of Architecture two years prior.³⁹ After this period, Kenneth S. Wing & Associates primarily functioned under the leadership of Kenneth S. Wing, Jr. with the elder Wing assisting.

Downtown Long Beach in the Late Twentieth Century (1970 - 1999)

The 1970s brought Long Beach's period of investment to its height with the nation's concern over environmental health and energy consumption. The Energy Crisis faced by the country under the leadership of Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter allowed new architectural styles to develop and come to fruition, including the Brutalist Style of the early 1970s. Brutalist architecture was widely-recognized for its lack of energy consumption through cold, thick materials such as concrete and a distancing from the open, glass curtain-walls of Mid-Century Modern building, which were seen as economically disadvantageous. Following this trend, the City of Long Beach approved the construction of a new Civic Center, a project Wing had been pushing for over twenty years. Several of the city's greatest local architects banded together to form the Allied Architects, and designed the

Brutalist complex. Kenneth S. Wing & Associates worked as one of the lead agencies of the project, alongside Killingsworth, Brady & Smith, and Gibbs & Gibbs.⁴⁰



The Long Beach Civic Center, designed by the Allied Architects and constructed in 1976.

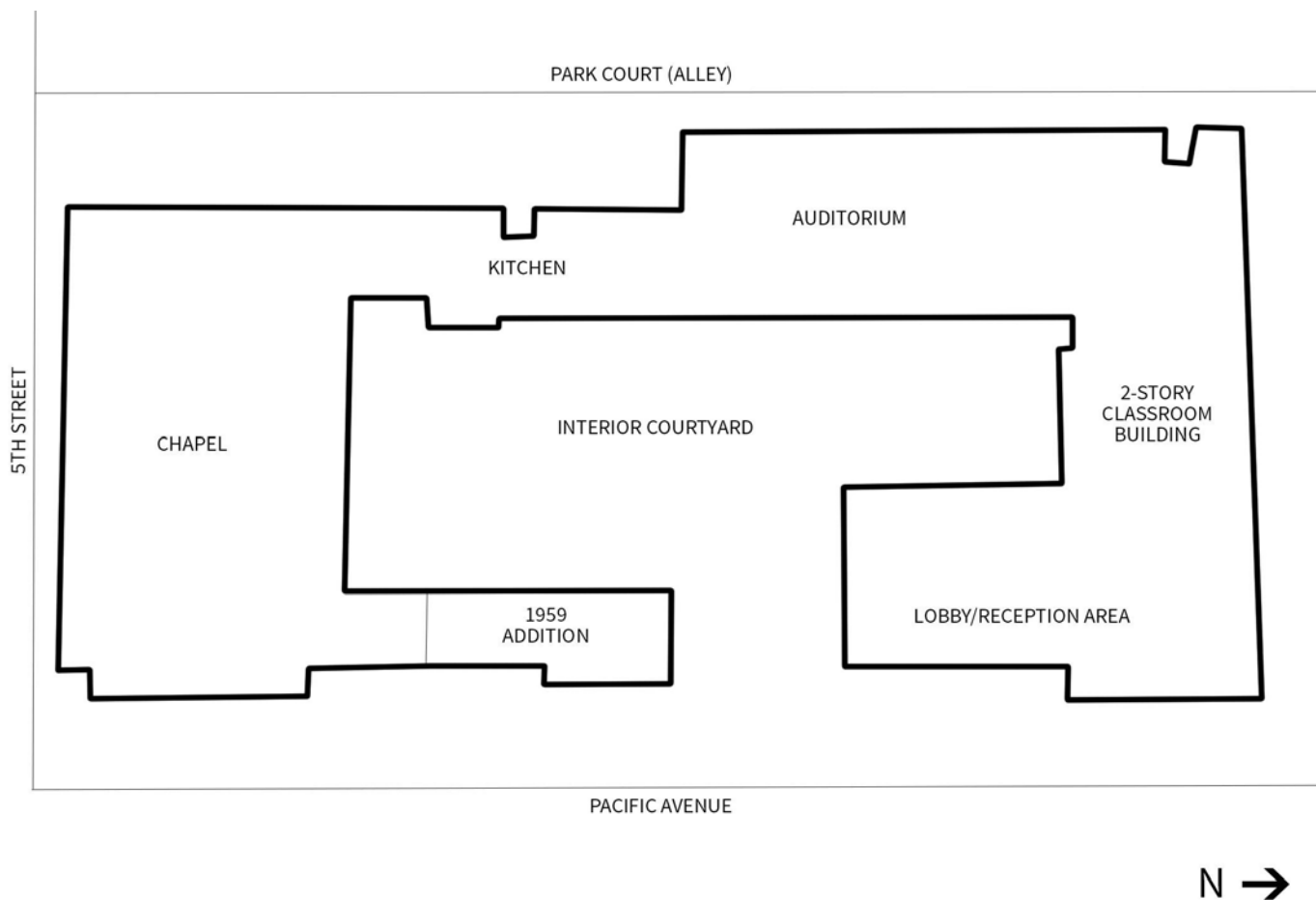
Leading into the 1980s and 1990s, Long Beach struggled with crime. Downtown Long Beach in particular became recognized for its dangerous streets, and investment declined greatly.⁴¹ As a result, the area surrounding the FMC campus experienced a decline in attendance, and the church itself experienced a decline in its congregation.⁴² By 2000, the church's congregation was comprised of just 227 members.⁴³ Following the death of the church's primary financial supporters in the early 2000s, the decision was made to close Long Beach First United Methodist Church at the 2006 California-Pacific Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.⁴⁴

DOCUMENTATION

Documentation provided for the purposes of this evaluation addresses:

- The floor plan of the subject property
- Each elevation of the buildings on the subject property
- An overview of the interior courtyard of the subject property
- Interior spaces, including the chapel and auditorium, of the subject property
- Typologies of classrooms and other uniform spaces throughout the subject property
- Character-Defining Features identified throughout the property, which indicate that the property is designed in the Modern Style, to depict the general character of the subject building.

Floor Plan



Building Elevations



South Elevation (View Northwest)



East Elevation (View Northwest)



East Elevation (*View West*)



East Elevation (*View Southwest*)



East Elevation (View Northwest)



East Elevation (View Southwest)

Interior Courtyard



Interior Courtyard (View North)



Interior Courtyard (View Northwest)



Interior Courtyard (View West)



Interior Courtyard (View Southwest)



Interior Courtyard (View Southeast)

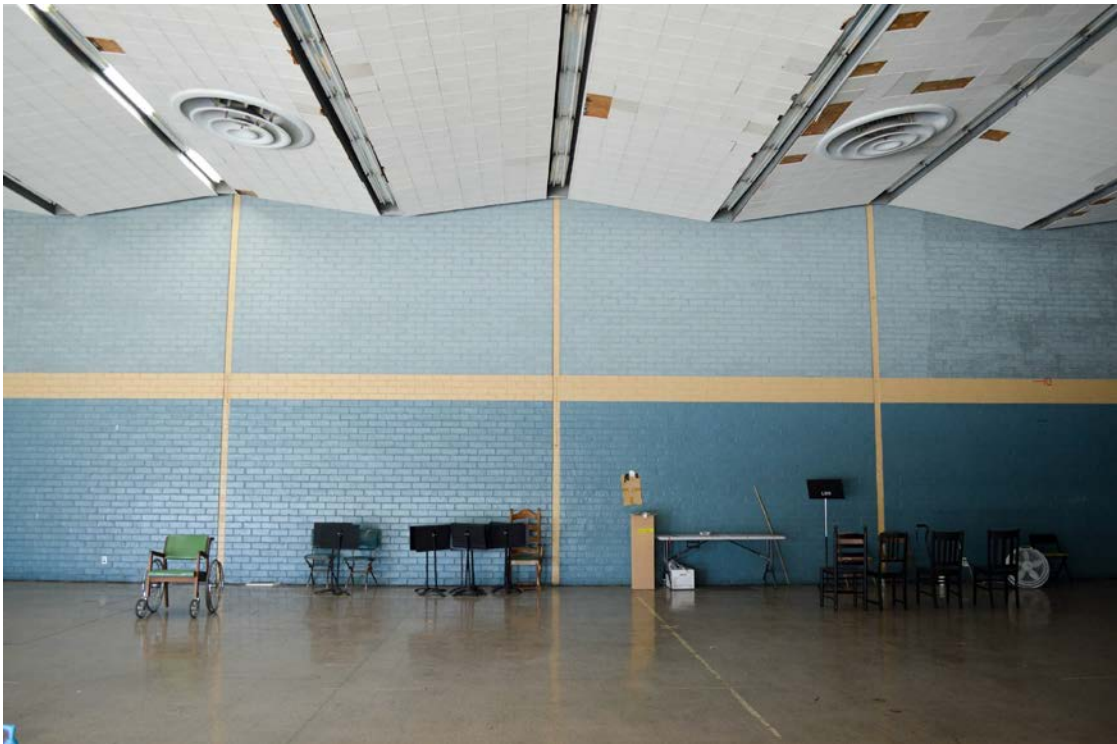
Interior Spaces



Entry Stairwell



Reception Area



Auditorium (View West)



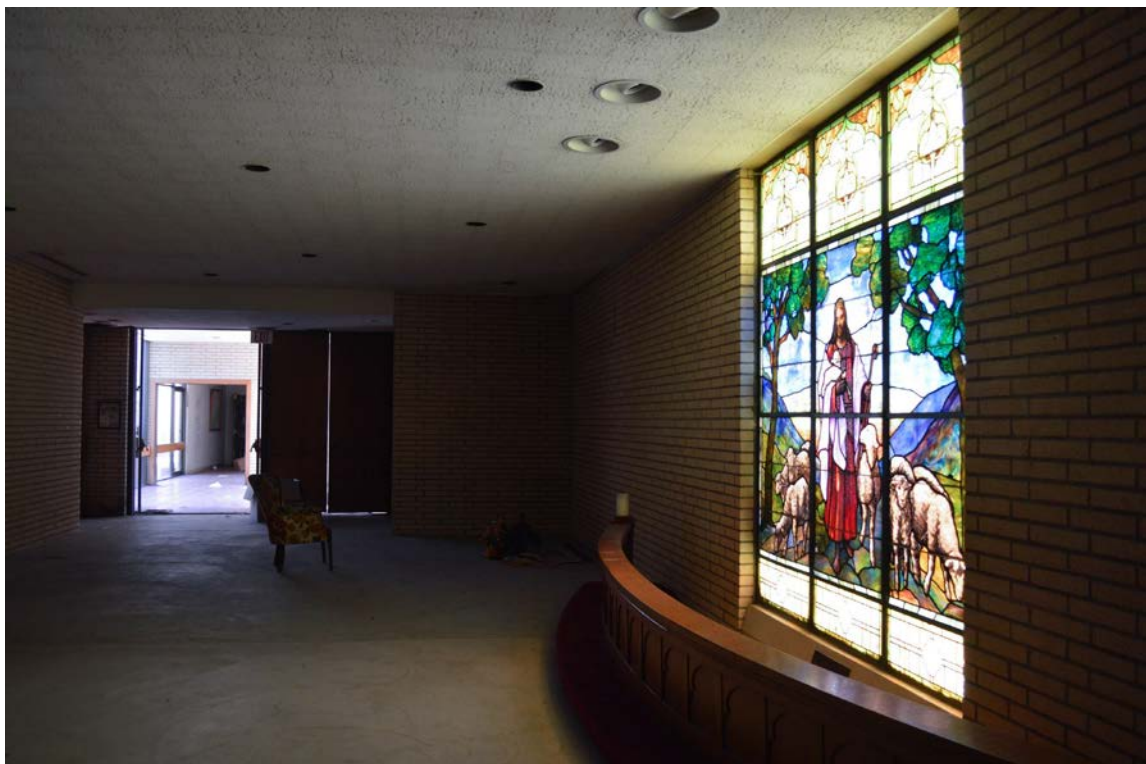
Auditorium (View North)



Chapel (View Southeast)



Chapel (View Southeast)



Chapel Lobby (View North)



Library (View Southeast)



Standard Classroom



Standard Classroom



Kitchen (View Southwest)

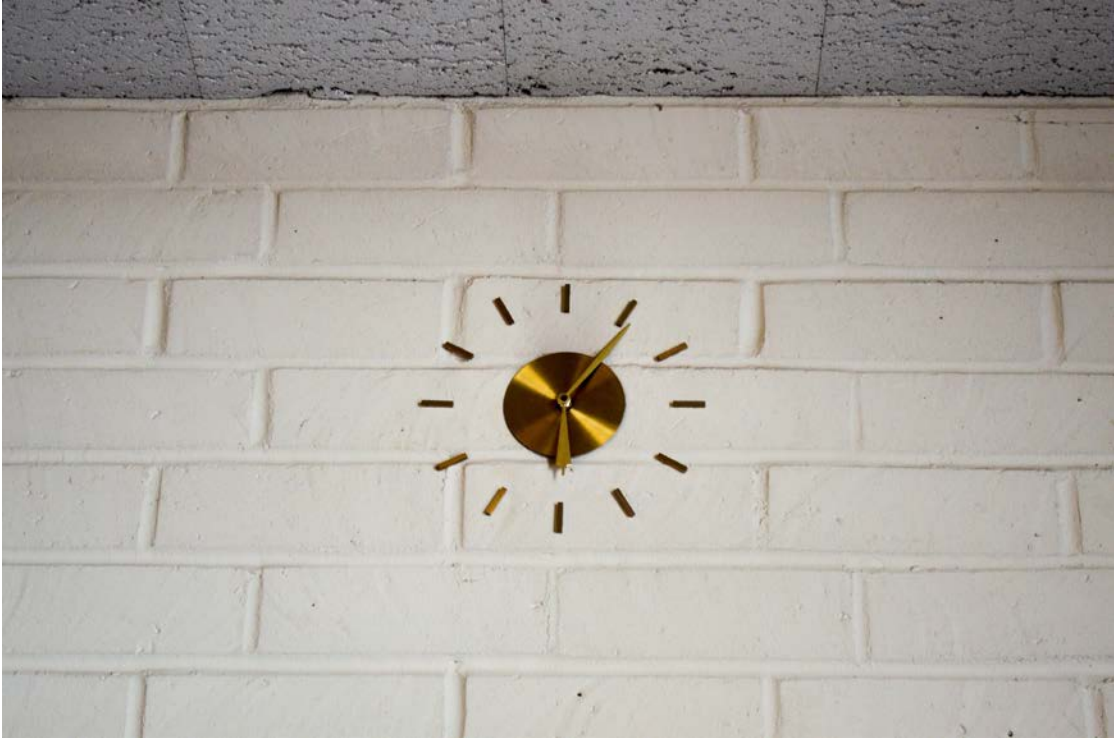
Character-Defining Features



Mid-Century Typeface Signage



Geometric Stained Glass



Minimalist Wall Clock



Modernist Light Fixture



Floating Stairwell

CITY OF LONG BEACH HISTORIC LANDMARK ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

To be considered eligible for designation as a City of Long Beach Historic Landmark, a property must hold historic significance under at least one of the following four criteria:

- A. The resource is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the City's history:

The Long Beach First Methodist Church (FMC) is an example of an ecclesiastical building constructed in the Mid-Twentieth century. These buildings were highly common in this era as part of an effort to accommodate the growing population of middle-class families relocating to Long Beach for naval and aerospace employment opportunities.

Though this period is crucial when examining the history of Long Beach as a city, research into the FMC has not yielded any information that the subject building, property, or SA as an entity played any substantial role in the period. As such, the subject property does not appear to be associated with events which have made a significant contribution in the broad patterns of the City's history, and there is no evidence to support a conclusion that the First Methodist Church qualifies for historic designation as a City of Long Beach Historic Landmark under Criterion A.

- B. The resource is associated with the lives of persons significant in the City's past:

Long Beach telephone directories and local news publications identify individuals associated with the church in leadership roles and notable members of the church's congregation. One individual associated with the FMC was C.J. Walker, founder of Farmers and Merchants Bank. C.J. Walker was associated with the church in the 1930s, a period in which he acted as a leader within the church's congregation. At this time, Walker led the renovations of the church building following the 1933 Long Beach earthquake. Though Walker's involvement in the church is notable, the building which stands on the site today is not the same building that existed in the era of Walker's leadership, and as a result his association with the FMC bears little connection to the subject building.

In addition to Walker, Kenneth S. Wing, the architect of the church, can be associated with the FMC. Wing's involvement is more direct as the architect of the existing building at 507 Pacific Avenue, and he is regarded as a substantial figure in the City's development over the course of the twentieth century.

Wing founded his firm, Kenneth S. Wing & Associates, in 1930 in the city of Long Beach and worked consistently throughout the region for over fifty years following. Wing worked avidly in the Long Beach community, and was revered for his contributions on the City of Long Beach Planning Commission and other local boards and commissions.



Former offices of Kenneth S. Wing & Associates at 40 Linden Avenue in Long Beach.

Though Wing was associated with the FMC as a client, research has not demonstrated that Wing participated in the church's operation, leadership, or community services in any additional manner. His work on the church consisted of the design of the Education Building along Pacific Avenue in 1959, and a heavy alteration of the additional buildings (which were pre-existing) between 1959 and 1974. This work was completed incrementally, while Wing was focusing on more substantial commissions such as the Long Beach Memorial Hospital, the Long Beach Safety and County Buildings, and the Long Beach Arena.

Though Kenneth S. Wing is credited with the design of the existing FMC building, the FMC is not a notable work by Wing and was not a substantial part of his career during the Mid-Century period. This association is arguably insufficient to claim that the subject property is meaningfully associated with his life or the body of his work.

Without a valid association with any significant individuals in Long Beach history, the subject property does not qualify for listing as a City of Long Beach Historic Landmark under Criterion B.

- C. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or it represents the work of a master or it possesses high artistic values:

The FMC was designed by Kenneth S. Wing, a notable local architect working in the Long Beach, California region between 1925 and 1985.

Description

The FMC is located on a single parcel bound by Park Court to the west, 5th Street to the south, Pacific Avenue to the east, and 6th Street to the north. The building occupies the majority of the parcel, with the remaining square footage allocated to parking along the west elevation of the building.

The FMC is comprised of a two-story classroom building, and a single-story lobby/reception area, education building, a chapel, kitchen, and auditorium constructed between 1958 and 1974 at 507 Pacific Avenue. The church was designed by Kenneth S. Wing & Associates, an architecture firm owned by architect Kenneth S. Wing, FAIA who worked primarily in the Long Beach region. The building is designed in the Modern Style. Distinctive features of this style can be seen in the building's roof styles, the addition of a metal, geometric spire on the chapel building, the use of curtain wall construction methods, and a general lack of ornamentation throughout the property.



Interior courtyard of Long Beach First Methodist Church, *View northwest*

The roof of the building is asphalt, and its structure is brick combined with wood-frame construction. Aside from metal curtain wall panels which support the building's structure and contain windows, the remainder of the building's exterior is clad in brick. Below the building is a concrete foundation. The building materials are in good condition.

The exterior of the building has been modified through the removal of original elements, including light fixtures and signage, however the structure and general footprint of the building have not changed since the Mid-Century era. This conclusion is supported by original architectural drawings, which are available for reference in the collection of the Art, Design, and Architecture Museum at the University of California, Santa Barbara and were referenced in preparation of this evaluation.



Rendering for the Long Beach First Methodist Church, Kenneth S. Wing & Associates. Image courtesy of the Art, Architecture, and Design archives at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

The property contains one building which is rectangular in plan, with an open interior courtyard. The building is comprised of six primary areas:

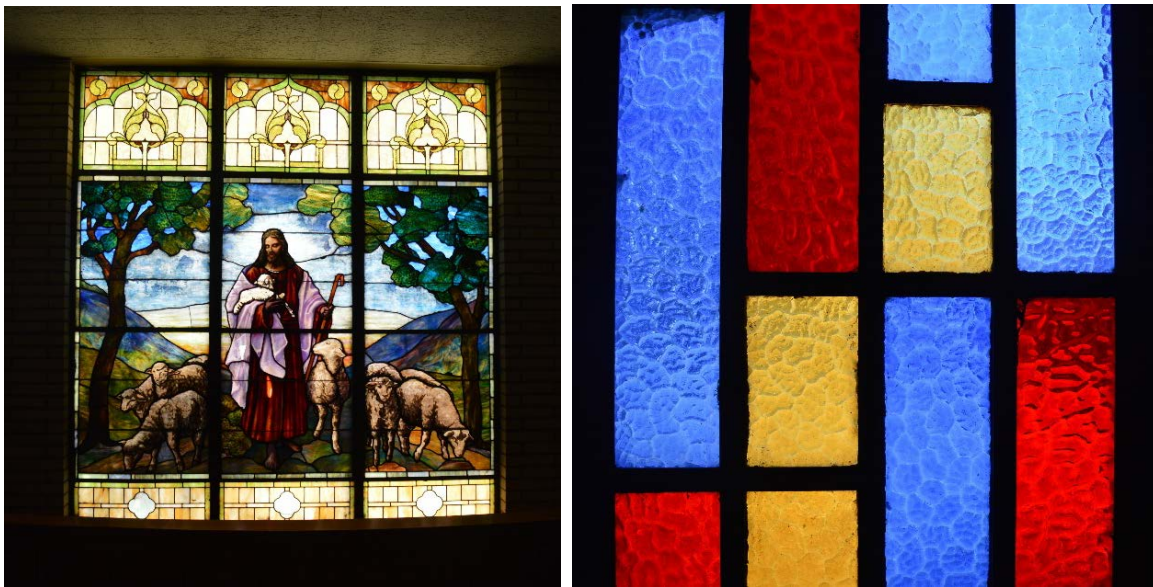
A. Education building

The Education building within the church is rectangular and projects north from the chapel on the northwest corner of 5th Street and Pacific Avenue. The building contains stained-glass windows, two of which are narrow and contain geometric patterns. The primary window features a biblical scene, and is located within the east most facade along Pacific Avenue. The building houses works of literature and additional reference materials.

B. Chapel

The chapel within the building is rectangular and is located at the northwest corner of 5th Street and Pacific Avenue. Within the chapel are rows of pews, which face west to a stage and speaking platform. The windows throughout the chapel are stained glass, and depict geometric forms in primary colors.

There is a lobby to the chapel at its east end which contains additional stained glass windows depicting biblical scenes.



Stained-glass work in chapel lobby depicting biblical scene (*left*) ; Geometric stained-glass work in chapel (*right*)

C. Auditorium

The auditorium within the building is large and rectangular, with an exposed brick wall on the west elevation and a glass curtain wall containing points of exit and entry on the east elevation. The auditorium has no permanent furnishings, with only a stage present on the north end. On the south end of the auditorium is access to a kitchen area. On the north end of the auditorium is storage space.

D. Classrooms

Classrooms are present throughout the two-story portion along the north elevation of the building. Classrooms have exposed brick walls in many cases, and contain original cabinetry as well as chalkboards. Classrooms have been adapted for various uses, and are outfitted with tables and chairs.

E. Lobby/Reception Area

A lobby and reception area exists on the ground level of the church, and is located at the primary entrance along Pacific Avenue. The lobby contains a staircase with a planter below and a hanging chandelier above in the Modern Style. The reception area contains a front desk with cabinetry, and individual offices. Along the south elevation of the lobby area are multiple rooms which serve as offices.

F. Interior Courtyard

In the center of the building is an interior courtyard. The courtyard is concrete

paved with a large planter at its center and smaller planters located at the north and south ends of the courtyard. Walkways along the periphery and through the center of the courtyard lead to the various portions of the building. At the center of the courtyard is an additional walkway which leads out of the courtyard and through a gap in the building's mass along Pacific Avenue.

Entrances to the building are generally consistent, typically taking the form of either a metal-frame double door, metal-frame single door with a pull handle, or a metal-frame sliding glass door.

Windows throughout the property are rectangular, comprised of two fixed, sliding single light portions which move horizontally. Stained-glass windows are present in the chapel and education building. Stained-glass windows are geometric in nature, or else depict biblical scenes.

As is consistent with its architectural style, the building contains very few decorative features. Features that do remain include a Modernist wall clock in the auditorium, a decorative chandelier and staircase in the lobby, and features consistent with the use of the building such as chalkboards in classrooms.

Seven buildings designed by Kenneth S. Wing, FAIA presently remain within the City of Long Beach that are ecclesiastical in nature. Three of these - the Pine Avenue First Baptist Church (1950,) Grace Methodist Church (1950,) and the Arbor Road First Baptist Church (1966) - are examples of Wing's high ecclesiastical design. Each showcases Wing's dramatic use of geometry and roof forms. Though these elements are seen in the FMC, they are muted representations of his more elaborate commissions.



Roof form of Arbor Road First Baptist Church chapel (left) ; Roof form of Long Beach First Methodist Church chapel (right)

Similarly, the remaining four churches designed by Wing which stand today in the city bear this muted interpretation of his Modern aesthetic. These four buildings - the California

Heights Community Methodist Church (1952,) the Bible Presbyterian Church (1956,) the Immanuel Lutheran Church (1957,) and the University Baptist Church (1961) - all contain simplistic examples of Wing's use of geometry, curtain wall construction, and roof forms that can be seen in his high design examples.



Bible Presbyterian Church (left) ; Long Beach First Methodist Church chapel (right)

Through comparison, it can be clearly demonstrated that the FMC building is not a representation of high design in the career of Kenneth S. Wing, FAIA or in the Modern style as a whole. As such, it does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values.

Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction

The FMC is designed in the Modern Style, and as such it maintains characteristics of that style including a flat roof, curtain wall construction, and minimal decorative details throughout the campus. However, it does not embody distinctive characteristics of the style, period, or construction methods commonly seen in Modernist design such as overtly geometric forms, sweeping roof lines, and/or experimentation with materials new to the period. Its design is fairly simplistic in nature compared to other ecclesiastical buildings in Long Beach - even those which share its architect.



Pine Avenue First Baptist Church by Kenneth S. Wing, 1950 (left) ; Grace Methodist Church by Kenneth S. Wing, 1950 (right)

As a result, the FMC does not embody the distinctive characteristics of the Modern style as a type of architecture, the Mid-Century period, or methods of construction utilized in high Modern design.

Representation of the work of a master

Many firms contributed to Long Beach's mentality of modernism, the majority of which maintained offices near the intersection of 38th Street and Long Beach Boulevard. Wing diverted from this practice, housing his firm Kenneth S. Wing & Associates at 40 Linden Avenue in Downtown Long Beach.

Firms and practicing architects working in Long Beach at the time included Killingsworth, Brady & Smith, Powers, Daly & DeRosia, Gibbs & Gibbs, Francis J. Heusel, AIA, Kenneth S. Wing & Associates, FAIA, Power & Daniel, Paul Revere Williams, FAIA, and others.

Wing was one of the most senior of this cohort, having graduated from the University of Southern California School of Architecture in 1925 when notable contemporaries such as Edward A. Killingsworth, FAIA graduated from the same school in 1940. Wing founded Kenneth S. Wing & Associates in 1930, and was joined at the firm by his son, Kenneth S. Wing, Jr. in 1955.

Wing worked actively in Long Beach between 1930 and 1983. Over this period, he designed a large number of ecclesiastical, educational, and municipal buildings. Wing became well-regarded for this work, and in the 1950s and 1960s received numerous commissions from the City of Long Beach and Long Beach Unified School District.⁴⁵ Wing's ecclesiastical work began in 1949 with the construction of the First Baptist Church and became a less substantial part of his career by the end of the 1950s as his relationships with government agencies and educational institutions began to flourish. Wing did return to the specialty to design a final ecclesiastical building in Long Beach, his second First Baptist Church at 5336 Arbor Road, in 1966.

Wing's body of work is substantial, and today several buildings designed by Wing

remain which are frequently used and seen as representational of the Long Beach Mid-Century era. This can be seen in buildings such as the Long Beach Memorial Hospital (1960,) The Edison Building (1961,) and the Long Beach Arena and Convention Center (1962.) Several of Wing's most notable buildings have been substantially altered or demolished. For instance, the Long Beach Convention Center designed by Wing in 1962 was heavily altered in the 1990s.



Southern California Edison Building, Designed by Kenneth S. Wing, 1961.

The design of these buildings by Wing may be leveraged to make the case that he is a master architect among those who have practiced in the City of Long Beach. His partnership with notable others in the city including Don Gibbs, FAIA and Edward A. Killingsworth, FAIA certainly contribute to this consideration.

However, the FMC at 507 Pacific Avenue is not representative of Wing's body of work, as it not a notable example of his contributions to ecclesiastical design in the city. Though there is value in retaining vernacular examples of a style in addition to high examples, other vernacular examples of ecclesiastical architecture by Wing exist in four additional building still remaining in the city of Long Beach. As such, the FMC is not representative of the work of Kenneth S. Wing as a master architect in the city of Long Beach.

Possess high artistic values

The FMC is designed in the Modern Style, and as such it maintains characteristics of that style including a flat roof, curtain wall construction, and minimal decorative details throughout the campus. In addition, the design of the building is fairly simplistic and is not dramatic compared to other Modernist churches designed by Wing in a similar time period, such as the Grace Methodist Church.

As such, the FMC does not embody distinctive characteristics of the Modern Style, and cannot be seen as an exemplary ecclesiastical building in this regard.

A thorough examination of the property, research into the firm of Kenneth S. Wing & Associates and career of Kenneth S. Wing, FAIA, as well as comparison of the property to remaining examples of Modern ecclesiastical architecture from the same period has not yielded any evidence that the FMC embodies particularly distinctive characteristics of Modern architecture, nor that it is a work of high artistic value. As such, the subject building does not qualify for designation as a City of Long Beach Historic Landmark under Criterion C.

- D. The resource has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history:

This criterion is not applicable to the building in question.

FINDING

Long Beach is a city rich with Mid-Twentieth Century history. The city as a whole maintains a large inventory of architecture designed in the Modern Style. Kenneth S. Wing, FAIA was a substantial contributor to this period in Long Beach development. Regardless, in a comparison of the FMC at 507 Pacific Avenue alongside comparable existing buildings, and in consideration of Wing's career as a whole, the FMC does not yield substantial evidence that the subject property holds historic significance. As a result, this report finds that the building cannot be classified as a historic resource, and therefore the proposed project to demolish the subject building will not result in an adverse effect to a historic resource.

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ENDNOTES

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² “Historic 1st Methodist Church to ‘Build Again in Faith.’” ; “Business Topics,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 30 1887.

³ “Historic 1st Methodist Church to ‘Build Again in Faith.’”

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ “Historic 1st Methodist Church to ‘Build Again in Faith.’” ; Historical Society of Long Beach Archives, Historical Society of Long Beach. Reference materials provide conflicting dates for the completion of this structure. While an account described in a 1968 article in the *Independent Press-Telegram* states the building was completed in 1909, historic photographs in the collections of the Historical Society of Long Beach which document the referenced building are dated as early as 1902.

⁶ Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 336.

⁷ Barbara Lawrence, “A Word or Two About Beef,” *The Argus*, April 26, 1972. ; “Historic 1st Methodist Church to ‘Build Again in Faith.’”

⁸ *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 267-270. ; LBPL Digital Archive, Long Beach Public Library.

⁹ *Long Beach City Directory: 1916-17* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Directory Company, 1916-17), 11. ; *Polk’s Long Beach California City Directory: 1933* (Long Beach: R.L. Polk & Co. of California, 1933), 10. City telephone directories report a population of 53,000 persons in 1916, and an increased population of 165,195 in 1933.

¹⁰ *Polk’s Long Beach California City Directory: 1933*, 11.

¹¹ “Churches are Now Being Rebuilt,” *Long Beach Press-Telegram*, May 26, 1933.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Tina Griego, “Shipping Out Once the Biggest Business in Town, the Downsizing of the Navy Hits at the Very Heart-and Soul-of Long Beach,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 13, 1994.

¹⁵ Dolores Hayden, *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820-2000* (New York: Vintage Books: A Division of Random House, Inc., 2003), 123.

¹⁶ *Building Suburbia*, 138.

¹⁷ Kenneth S. Wing Membership File, AIA Historical Directory of American Architects, The American Institute of Architects.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Jennifer M. Volland and Cara Mullio, *Long Beach Architecture: The Unexpected Metropolis* (Santa Monica: Hennessey + Ingalls, 2004), 18.

²² “To Build 10-Unit Court Soon Near El Mirador Hotel,” *The Desert Sun of Palm Springs, California*, June 5, 1936.

²³ Kenneth S. Wing Membership File.

²⁴ Graham Latta, AIA in a letter dated February 26, 1953 to the American Institute of Architects, Kenneth S. Wing Membership File.

²⁵ Kenneth S. Wing Membership File.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Dell Upton, *Architecture in the United States*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 171.

²⁸ Jennifer M. Volland and Cara Mullio, *Edward A. Killingsworth: An Architect’s Life*, (Santa Monica: Hennessey + Ingalls, 2013), 38-43.

²⁹ Kenneth S. Wing Membership File.

³⁰ Hugh Gibbs, AIA in a letter dated February 24, 1953 to the American Institute of Architects, Kenneth S. Wing Membership File. This commitment to civil service can be seen in Wing’s budding relationship with educational institutions and governments, demonstrated through increased commissions of this nature in the early 1950s. Hugh Gibbs, AIA described Wing as “...one of our most civic minded citizens,” and stated that “He has participated in various commissions and has acted in special capacities on many [of the] Mayor’s civic committees.”

³¹ Kenneth S. Wing Membership File.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Edward A. Killingsworth, FAIA in a letter dated February 26, 1953 to the American Institute of Architects, Kenneth S. Wing Membership File. While employed as an Associate for Wing, Killingsworth wrote, “In civic affairs he has been one of the driving forces of the Citizens Committee on Capital Improvements for the City of Long Beach. This committee’s function is to

determine the permanent improvements to be made in the city through the expenditure of tideland oil funds. Through Mr. Wing's dynamic leadership as Chairman of the Long Beach City Planning Commission it will soon be possible to proceed with a comprehensive Civic Center, which project has been in a state of flux since 1918 where it would still remain without the force of Mr. Wing."

³⁶ Long Beach First Methodist Church, *New Building Plans* (Long Beach: Long Beach First Methodist Church, 1979).

³⁷ Kenneth S. Wing Membership File.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Kenneth S. Wing, Jr. Membership File, AIA Historical Directory of American Architects, The American Institute of Architects.

⁴⁰ "Council to See Plan of New Long Beach Civic Center," *Independent Press-Telegram*, May 18, 1971.

⁴¹ Chris Woodyard, "Voters in Long Beach View Crime, Drugs as City's Top 2 Problems," *Los Angeles Times*, May 15, 1988.

⁴² Attendance Records, United Methodist Church West District Office, 1990 – 2000. In 1990, the church's membership was 438 persons with 186 persons attending worship services. By 2000, the membership had fallen to 227 with 75 persons attending worship services.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Kenneth S. Wing Membership File.