

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCPS use only

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Missouri United Methodist Church

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 204 South 9th Street _____ not for publication

city, town Columbia _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district #8 - Hon. Richard Ichord

state Missouri code 29 county Boone code 019

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Missouri United Methodist Church

street & number 204 South 9th Street

city, town Columbia _____ vicinity of _____ state Missouri 65201

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Boone County Courthouse

street & number 701 East Broadway

city, town Columbia _____ state Missouri 65201

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Missouri State Historic Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1980 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program, P.O. Box 176

city, town Jefferson City _____ state Missouri 65102

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Missouri United Methodist Church, built from 1925 to 1930, is in a neo-gothic revival style. The builder was John A. Epple's Construction Company of Columbia, Missouri. The architectural plans were provided by the Architectural Department of the Methodist Board of Church Extension. H.N. Haines of this Board supervised the construction. The Church's finances dictated the order of construction. The main floor, which is partially subterranean, was built in 1925 and completed in 1926. Initially, the church selected a brick facade, but this was changed to Indiana Bedford limestone when the superstructure was started in 1928. Until 1928, this main floor, with a temporary roof, served as the Church.

The primary facade faces west and the secondary facade faces north. The overall plan of this building is irregular. The entire building is faced with smooth-faced random coursed ashlar of Indiana Bedford limestone. The main sanctuary has a clerestory, and there is a four-story-plus attic southeast wing which houses a large chapel, offices and classrooms.

Facing west, the front facade is dominated by a bell tower, three tangential compound, pointed arched portals, and a tracery window. On the northwest corner, the bell tower extends beyond the church's hip roof and is one bay wide. Wall buttresses rise on each corner to meet the crenelated battlement. The front entrance is approached by a broad flight of stone steps. Entry is gained through the three previously mentioned portals. Wall buttresses flank the entry portals. Arched over the three portals, a tracery window provides continuity and transition from the ground floor to the hip roofline. The west gable end features an encircled stone cross at its apex.

The exterior does not give a clear picture of what one encounters on the interior; for example, the entry vestibule is dominated by a second broad flight of steps leading to the sanctuary above. The sanctuary is, thus, almost two-stories above street level and its interior space is correspondingly diminished from what the exterior would seem to indicate. The sanctuary is designed in a consistent 1925 version of Gothic revival architecture and features a large archway over the altar. There is a rear balcony, under the tracery window, and two frontal, side balconies. Heavy wooden beams articulate the pitch of the ceiling. The chancel, at the head of the sanctuary, contains the pulpit, choir loft and organ. The three platforms in front of the choir screen have successive elevations above the sanctuary floor. The first platform is at the level of the step upon which communicants kneel, the second forms the rostrum and the third is a sort of dais for the support of the Communion table. An altar rail separates the nave from the chancel. The interior woodwork is of oak, walnut, and walnut stain. In the sanctuary, much of the woodwork is carved and the front, primary arch is stencilled with religious symbols. The woodwork and the furniture are products of the American Seating Company of St. Louis, Mo. The Jacoby Art Glass Company, also of St. Louis, designed and executed the stained glass windows found in the church. The clerestory windows on the north side carry the Old Testament. The large west window depicts the Founders of Methodism, in England, in America and in the Midwest. The Skinner Organ Company of Boston, Massachusetts designed and built the organ for the church. The sanctuary seats 1,500 people.

The chapel, in the southeast wing, is the secondary interior space. It also has a gothic revival treatment and will seat 300 people. Offices, classrooms, recreation halls, and the Wesley Foundation occupy the remainder of the building. Many offices and classrooms are modernized with ceilings lowered and panelling on the walls.

8. Significance

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1925–1930 **Builder/Architect** John A. Epple, Builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Missouri United Methodist Church possesses historical significance in that its construction represents the first and only instance in Missouri of joint action by the three annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South to build a church.¹ First conceived in 1911 and finally constructed in 1930, the building reflects both the expansionistic spirit of the Methodist Church in post World War I society, the financial retrenchment the church confronted in the depression of the 1930's, and the neo-gothic revival style of architecture.

In 1820, Columbia received its first Methodist circuit rider. Church meetings were held in members' homes, the courthouse and in groves until 1837 when the Baptist and Methodists of the community built a shared meeting house called Union Church. In 1849, this building was replaced by a new one-story brick church at 6th and Broadway streets and served only the Methodist congregation; this was replaced in 1852 by an even larger structure.² The construction of the new church reflected Methodism's growing influence in the community, but the church's optimism was somewhat diminished by a previous argument within the church-at-large between 1844-45.

The argument focused on slavery, abolitionism and whether or not the church had the authority to legislate civil institutions. When the Methodist Church ordered Bishop James Andrew of Georgia to be rid of his slaves, the issue split the church into Methodist Episcopal, North and Methodist Episcopal, South. The Columbia church aligned itself with the South.³ This move was consistent with the predominant southern influence within central Missouri. Other Missouri Methodist congregations would stay with the North, but from 1845 to 1939, Columbia remained with the South church. This division later played a role in the construction of the Missouri United Methodist Church.

Prior to the Civil War, the Methodist Church primarily concerned itself with the issues of slavery and temperance. After the war and with the entrenchment of industrialization and a modern order, the Church expanded its concerns to sabbath observance, tobacco and gambling. Still, issues such as poverty, slums, the plight of laborers and working conditions, and the centralization of wealth and power were not concerns the Church desired to address.⁴ The failure to confront these issues created by a new urban, industrial order resulted in a decline of church membership and high religion.⁵ It was in response to the lingering consequences of this neglect, that the Missouri Annual Conference in 1911 appointed a commission to investigate the needs of an ever-growing body of University students in Columbia. The commission reported that a new physical plant was needed to provide space for student activities and educational programs in Columbia.⁶ The plan was put aside as WWI drew the attention and energy of the church to the war effort. As WWI ended, the church was confronted with a world it did not readily recognize: "The post war world had little physical and spiritual resemblance to the world the war had destroyed. Unhappily this was not immediately recognized. The

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MISSOURI UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Methodist Church....supposing it was dealing with its old, familiar but badly beaten and battered world, plunged with great confidence into the endeavor to reconstruct its broken and shattered home in which it had lived. 'Reconstruction and Rebuilding' were the catch words of the time."⁷ The challenge became to speed construction of new institutions, to create new instruments for new ideas.

Thus, the idea for a new church in Columbia to serve the needs of all Methodist students who came to the University regained attention. The commission informed the Annual Conference that Methodists, state-wide, must help in the building for Columbia was basically a state parish.⁸ At the St. Louis Conference in 1921, the Missouri Methodist Episcopal Church, South suggested that money left from the church's war campaign might be used to build the new facility in Columbia. Columbia would have to provide at least \$100,000 of the \$400,000 needed.⁹ Columbia Methodists pledged support for the project.

The most divisive issue centered on the location of the church.¹⁰ Some members wanted the church built on the site of the existing church; others desired it placed closer to the University and the center of town. The location near the University was selected. A continuing argument that a remodeling of the old church would suffice surfaced once again. Bishop William McMurry, who the Board had placed in general supervision of the project, sealed the fate of the project when he announced that if the Methodist Church, South did not hurry and build a facility then, the Methodist Church, North would and that would mean the demise of the Church, South in Columbia.¹¹ There was no further argument and construction of the main floor began in 1925.

By 1926, the Phillips Construction Company of Columbia had completed the first story with a temporary roof. This structure served as the church until 1928 when Bishop McMurry, urging the completion of the church, secured a loan from Bitting and Company of St. Louis. The three annual conferences agreed to pledge credit for repayment.¹²

By 1930, the new structure, as built by the John A. Epple firm, was completed. Its imposing facade dominated its downtown neighborhood and exuded the impression of high religion and its aura of authority. The high arches, crenelated battlements and massive stone reflected the church's attempt to personify strength and stability while reaching heavenward.¹³

This reflection was very much needed, and at the same time ironical, when the stock market crashed in October of 1929. Those who had made pledges to finance the construction were now unable to meet the obligation. Even the Board of Church Extension requested that its pledge be reduced by \$5,000.¹⁴ From 1928 to 1947, the Missouri United Methodist Church struggled with law suits, creditors, and threatened dissolution. By 1947, the debts had been renegotiated and the mortgage paid.¹⁵

The church is also important as a typical example of neo-gothic revival architecture, patterned after English gothic precedents. It has not been remodeled or enlarged and appears today as it did when erected half a century ago.

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FOOTNOTES

1. Frank C. Tucker, The Methodist Church in Missouri, 1798-1939 (Nashville, 1966), 278.
2. Frank F. Stephens, History of the Missouri Methodist Church (Nashville, 1965), 29, 31-32, 44-45.
3. Ibid., 39.
4. "St. Louis Christian Advocate," St. Louis, Mo., February 13, 1889.
5. Ibid., 271-272.
6. Stephens, History, 131.
7. Tucker, The Methodist Church, 271.
8. "Missouri Methodist Church," a pamphlet published by church, no further data, 2.
9. Stephens, History, 149-151.
10. Ibid., 153.
11. Ibid., 154.
12. Ibid., 162.
13. Pamphlet, "Mo. Methodist," 4.
14. Stephens, History, 161.
15. Ibid., 185.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. The Missouri Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South Minutes: 1928 (Shelbina); 1924 (Richmond); 1929 (Salisbury); 1933 (Hannibal); 1934 (Moberly), no publication data given. Location: Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri. Folders 1013-1020.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name "Columbia, Mo."

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	5	5	8	3	2	0	4	3	1	1	1	5	0
Zone	Easting			Northing									

B

Zone	Easting			Northing									

C

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D

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 37, 38, and 39, in the Original Town (Now City) of Columbia, in the County of Boone, and the State of Missouri.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title J. Priscilla A. Evans

organization University of Missouri

date April 15, 1980

street & number 143 Arts and Science

telephone 314/882-3892

city or town Columbia

state Missouri 65201

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Director, Department of Natural Resources and
State Historic Preservation Officer

date

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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MISSOURI UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Continuation sheet

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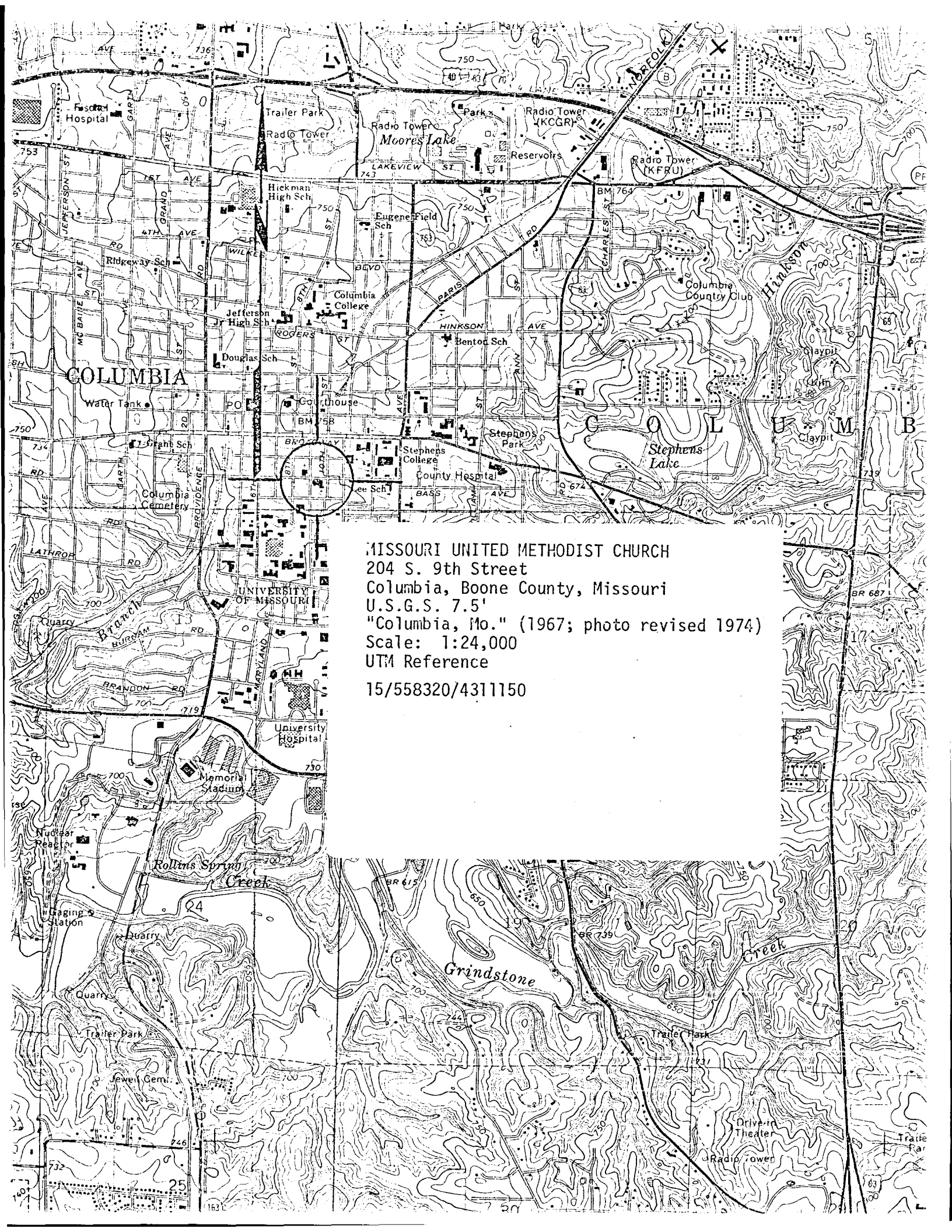
Page 1

2. Missouri East Conference, United Methodist Church Papers. Collection No. 3308. Western Historical Manuscripts Collection. University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri. Folders 1-14, 25, 113.
3. "Missouri Methodist Church" A pamphlet published by church, no data.
4. "St. Louis Christian Advocate", St. Louis, Missouri, 1887-1920.
5. Stanton, Phoebe B. The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture: An Episode in Taste, 1840-1856. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968.
6. Stephens, Frank F. History of the Missouri Methodist Church. Nashville, Parthenon, 1965.
7. Tucker, Frank C. The Methodist Church in Missouri, 1798-1939. Nashville, Parthenon, 1965.

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2. James M. Denny, Section Chief, Nominations-Survey
and State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City
April 23, 1980
314/751-4096
Missouri 65102



MISSOURI UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 204 S. 9th Street
 Columbia, Boone County, Missouri
 U.S.G.S. 7.5'
 "Columbia, Mo." (1967; photo revised 1974)
 Scale: 1:24,000
 UTM Reference
 15/558320/4311150



