HISTORIC DESIGNATION STUDY REPORT

FOURTH CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST
(Written July, 1996)

I. NAME

Historic: Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist

Common: Same

II. LOCATION

2519 E. Kenwood Boulevard
(aka 3069 North Downer Avenue)

Tax Key No.: 316-1609-000-6

Legal Description: SECOND CONTINUATIOON OF E A CUMMINGS BLVD ADDITION IN THE NW ¼ SEC 15-7-22, BLOCK 13 LOTS 14 THROUGH 19.

Third Aldermanic District

III. CLASSIFICATION

Structure

IV. OWNER

Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist
3069 North Downer Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53211

V. YEAR BUILT

1929

VI. ARCHITECT

Charles Draper Faulkner
Chicago, Illinois

VII. DESCRIPTION

The Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist is located about three miles northeast of the central business district on a 120 by 260-foot lot that extends across the full block face on East Kenwood Boulevard between North Downer and North Stowell Avenues. The church building occupies most of its site but is set back from N. Stowell and N. Downer Avenues to allow for a parking lot on the west ad a small lawn and landscaping on the east. The surrounding neighborhood consists of architect-designed, early twentieth century, middleclass residences

to the east and south with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee campus to the north across Kenwood Boulevard. To the west, on the adjacent blocks along the south side of Kenwood Boulevard, is a synagogue followed by two other Christian churches. The result is a continuous four-block long assemblage of major ecclesiastical structures, of which the Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist is the easternmost element.

Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist is a large Georgian Revival style edifice consisting of a tall central section housing the church auditorium flanked by lower wings to the east and west. The concrete structure is clad with red handmade Virginia brick and trimmed with Bedford limestone, wood and cooper. The building is oriented longitudinally on its site with the main entrance located at the center facing Kenwood Boulevard. The church is set back from Kenwood Boulevard behind a narrow raised terrace that is reached from the street by two broad flights of stairs.

The church is composed of a grouping of simple geometric forms that culminate in a steep, needlelike spire. The stark, windowless Kenwood boulevard elevation is focused upon the stone columned elliptical portico. The attenuatd steeple rises above the portico and consists of a rectangular base with wood framed occuli on each of its faces surmounted by a smaller rectangular stage above which is positioned a slender, polygonal, drum out of which rises a slender, needle-like copper spire. Sparsely applied details enrich the otherwise start edifice including the paneled entry doors under the portico; an inscription in the entablature of the portico which reads Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist; a Chippendale-inspired balustrade atop the first stage of the steeple; and divided light, round headed Georgian style windows placed at the east and west ends of the church auditorium. Other multipaned windows, both round headed and rectangular, are positioned on the east and west walls of the foyer.

To either side of the central auditorium block are low hyphens fenestrated with six-over-six and nine-over-nine sash with keystones. The hyphens connect the church to the outlying ancillary wings and enclose open courtyards that are only visible and accessible from inside the building. Since Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist is built on a site that slopes to the west; the west wing is two stories high while the east wing adjacent to Downer Avenue is only a single story. The flanking wings consist of rectangular structures, sited perpendicular to Kenwood Boulevard, with slate-clad gabled roofs, copper gutters, and Bedford limestone cornices. The west wing features a ground level entrance on Kenwood Boulevard as well as a second story entrance approached by a split stair that rises in two flights. The west wing's Stowell Avenue elevation features nine-over-nine sash with keystones on the lower story with six-over-six sash on the upper story. The west wing was designed to house the Sunday School auditorium as well as an usher's room and committee rooms. The east wing has an entrance on Kenwood Boulevard that is approached by a single flight of stairs. A public entrance in a projecting pavilion fronted by a small, concrete terrace marks the center of the east wing's Downer Avenue façade. It provides access to the Christian Science Reading Room. The east wing also houses the congregation's administrative offices.

The rear elevation is utilitarian in character and built up to the lot line that borders a public alley that runs behind the building. A variety of doors and windows are placed along this façade to conform with floor plan requirements. There is a covered porch with a double door entry with stairs and a ramp behind the east wing. No major alterations have been made to the fabric of the building since its construction. The spire was hit by lightning and removed around 1977, but a new one was fabricated to match the original and reinstalled a few years later.

VIII. HISTORY

Milwaukee's contributions to establishing the Christian Science Church as a national denomination are recorded in the archives of the Mother Church in Boston. The records state that Milwaukee was the first city after the original organizations were founded in Lynn and Boston, Massachusetts to establish a Christian Scientist Association. The origins of the Christian Science movement can be traced to 1866 when its founder, Mary Baker Eddy, experienced a miraculous physical healing.

Mrs. Eddy had had a long history of physical problems dating to her childhood. To obtain some relief she initially studied the philosophy of Phineas Quimby who promoted the healing powers of the mind by techniques that involved a form of hypnosis and mental suggestion. While Mrs. Eddy experienced some benefit from his teachings, the efforts wore off with time and all of her complaints returned.

Shortly after Quimby's death in January of 1866, Mary Baker Eddy fell on the ice, sustaining a severe injury considered by her attending doctor to be fatal. Her miraculous recovery was credited to hear reading of and pondering a healing performed by Jesus. She saw behind his healing the operation of Divine Law and realized that if God worked by Law, the healing work of Jesus could be duplicated on the basis of understanding and practicing the rules of His Law.

This incident was actually Mrs. Eddy's point of departure from Quimbyism rather than a confirmation of it. For a time Mrs. Eddy still employed some of the techniques used by Quimby, but slowly she dropped them. Her conviction was growing that the answer to healing physical disease must be a purely spiritual and Christian one. She spent three years investigating the healings in the Bible and especially those of Jesus Christ. The result of her research and writing has her book *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, published in 1875.

Mrs. Eddy had been raised a staunch Christian and remained one to the end of her days. She felt, however, that Christianity had lost an important element when Christian disciples stopped healing around 300 A.D. Her conclusion about Jesus' healing work was that it was not an example of the control of one powerful human mind over another or over itself, but an example of the supreme power of God, Spirit, whom she referred to as the divine Mind - - the creative, governing intelligence of the universe - - over both the human body and mind.

She learned that it was a correct under standing of the nature of God, which produced healings in Biblical times and that with the same understanding this healing work could be repeated throughout time. What Christ Jesus, the Son of God, so naturally understood of his Father, Mrs. Eddy discovered as a disciple of Christ, and it became her life work to establish the scientific or practical, provable nature of Christianity in modern times.

As part of her discovery, she learned that the use of mental manipulation, human will or mental suggestion, which was the essence of Quimby's practice, was the opposite of Christian Science. She wrote an entire chapter in her book, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, on the dangers of relying on the human mind to manipulate and control matter.

News of Mrs. Eddy's healing powers spread quickly resulting in a following eager to learn from her. In response to this, Mrs. Eddy established, in her home, the first school of instruction for metaphysical healers in 1870. In 1879 the school was chartered by the State of Massachusetts as the first such institution of its kind anywhere.

She also established the first Christian Scientist Association in Lynn, Massachusetts in1876. Although the original concept of her doctrine did not include an organized church, she was prompted by her growing number of followers and practitioners to establish the Mother Church in Boston in1879.

In 1883 Dr. Silas J. Sawyer, a Milwaukee dentist, and his wife, Jenny, were trained under Mrs. Eddy as metaphysical healers and instructors of the religion. The Sawyers returned to Milwaukee in 1884 and started the Wisconsin Metaphysical Institute under a charter granted by the State. Sessions were held in Dr. Sawyer's office on East Wisconsin Avenue. In October of 1884 the Sawyers established the Christian Scientists Association of Wisconsin. It was the only association of its kind in the United States other than the original ones in Lynn and Boston. The Association, which met in a rented hall, was reorganized as the Church of Christ, Scientist in 1889. Subsequently, the name was changed to Students Christian Scientists Association, No. 11. In 1901-1902 a church edifice was constructed as the first permanent home of the congregation at 1036 North Van Buren Street. That building now houses the Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist.

Today's Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist is not the first Christian Science association to be called Fourth Church. Several earlier congregations had taken that name, only disband or merge with other Christian Science congregations. An early Fourth Church formed on the south side in 1903, but soon merged with Third Church (1901), which then merged with First Church in January 1906.

A new Second Church was organized in1906 and held services on the east side at Century Hall, 2324 North Farwell Avenue. After relinquishing its title as a branch of the Mother Church in early 1910, the group was revived by an influx of members who had left the rapidly growing First Church. The Christian Science Board of Directors renamed this group Fourth Church, and the congregation met at various rented halls until late 1918 when it acquired a 130 by 120-foot parcel at the southeast corner of North Stowell Avenue and East Kenwood Boulevard. The group renamed itself Third Church only to dissolve its organization and surrender its charter on January 21, 1919. Yet another Fourth Church was formed on the northwest side in May of 1917, but renamed itself Third Church on March 15,1920.

The present Fourth Church was organized by twenty-nine Christian Scientists on November 20, 1920 and was recognized as an authorized branch by the Mother Church on March 17, 1921. After holding services in temporary quarters, the group was gifted with the old Fourth Church property at Stowell and Kenwood on April 13, 1921. On May 17, 1921 the new group took out a building permit to erect a small, frame, "bungalow" church to cost $14,500, which was designed by the local firm of Leenhouts and Guthrie. The new church was completed in August of that year. By 1923 the congregation had acquired the three adjacent lots to the east at a cost of $10,000.

Fourth Church's rapid growth necessitated holding Sunday School classes at a nearby theater, and a decision was made to erect a larger facility. The old church was razed in April of 1929 and the cornerstone for the new structure was laid on June 20, 1929. The completed building, which occupied the entire Kenwood Boulevard frontage between Stowell and Downer Avenues, was formally opened on June 29, 1930.

The new church was described as "Early Colonial" at the time of its construction and is a concrete structure faced with handmade Virginia brick trimmed with Bedford limestone. The somewhat secular looking arrangement of geometric forms that comprise the building is

characteristic of the architecture of Christian Science denominations, which generally avoided both traditional church forms and decorative motifs that were derived from the Gothic or Romanesque revivals. Fourth Church was designed by Chicago architect Charles Draper Faulkner, a noted church architect, who made a specialty of designing Christian Science churches. The church was built and furnished at a cost of $250,000 with an auditorium that could accommodate from 950 to 1,000 persons. Wings to the east and west of the church proper were built around enclosed courtyards not visible from the street. The west wing contains a Sunday School auditorium for 600 persons with committee rooms above it. The east wing was designed to house the congregation's executive offices and a public Christian Science Reading Room with an entrance on Downer Avenue. As is typical of Christian Science churches, the church building is regarded as a purely spiritual place. It was not designed as a place to hold ritual or social functions such as weddings, baptisms, potluck dinners, or secular activities. As a result, it was not equipped with a kitchen or recreational spaces and the sanctuary has not altar, only a reader's platform. The interior is simply finished with plain walls accented with pilasters. The ranks of organ pipes sitting in an alcove behind the reader's platform serve as the focal point of the auditorium. An article about Fourth Church and several other churches, published in the September, 1931 issue of *Architectural Record*, makes it clear that, while Faulkner designed in a variety of styles, certain elements of his Georgian or Colonial Revival buildings are repeated from building to building. For example, the design of the central entrance door at Fourth Church is repeated at First Church of Christ, Scientist in Valparaiso, Indiana, while Fourth Church's attenuated spire reappears at the First Church of Christ, Scientist in Montclair, New Jersey.

The only alteration to Fourth Church's building has been the replacement of its spire, which was struck by lightning in 1977. The new spire exactly replicates the original.

Fourth Church continues to occupy its building at 2519 East Kenwood Boulevard; its Reading Room in the east wing addressed at 3069 North Downer Avenue, remains open to the public. Like all Christian Science churches, Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist does not publish or compile membership figures, thus it cannot be determined how large its membership was at its peak. Reportedly, the large edifices built in the early decades of this century did not so much reflect the size of the membership as much as the need to accommodate the large numbers of visitors who attended services and lectures, many of whom were not regular practicing Christian Scientists. Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist today finds the upkeep of such a large facility costly and unnecessary and has put the building up for sale so that it can continue its religious mission in more manageable quarters.

The Architect – Charles Draper Faulkner

Charles Draper Faulkner was born in San Francisco, California on March 11, 1890 and was a graduate of Calumet High School in Chicago, Illinois. He then attended the Armour Institute of Technology (A.I.T.), also in Chicago, from which he received a B.S. in Architecture in 1913. While at A.I.T., Faulkner received a traveling scholarship (1912-1913) and visited Canada, England, France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Holland and Belgium. He subsequently worked as the chief designer for noted Chicago architect Solon S. Beman through 1917 after which he opened his own architectural practice in Chicago in 1919. During the Great Depression, Faulkner supplemented his private practice by working as a principal architect for the Federal government from October 1935 to July 1937. Late in life he founded the firm of Faulkner-Faulkner & Associates in 1958 with his son, Charles D., Jr. By 1962 the firm was registered in27 states including Wisconsin. During his life Faulkner designed projects in New York, Tokyo, Japan, New Jersey, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Indiana,

Kentucky, Wisconsin and Williamsburg, Virginia. The firm designed commercial, industrial, educational, religious and mortuary structures as well as institutional buildings, such as the Oakhaven Old People's Home in Chicago (1925). He also provided interior design services. Faulkner was best known for his church designs, of which Good Shepard United Protestant Church in Park Forest, Illinois (1957), Trinity Episcopal Church, Wheaton, Illinois (1958), and Beverly Unitarian Church, Chicago, Illinois (1959) exemplified his late work. His most numerous church commissions, however, seem to have been for Christian Science congregations. By 1942 he reported that he had designed thirty-three churches for that denomination. His known Christian Science commissions include:

8th Church of Christ, Scientist	New York, New York
1st Church of Christ, Scientist	Tokyo, Japan
1st Church of Christ, Scientist	Williamsburg, Virginia
18th Church of Christ, Scientist	Chicago, Illinois
(now St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church)	
1st Church of Christ, Scientist	Montclair, New Jersey
4th Church of Christ, Scientist	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
1st Church of Christ, Scientist	Lakewood (Cleveland), Ohio
1st Church of Christ, Scientist	Valparaiso, Indiana

In 1946 Faulkner published the second edition of his book, *Christian Science Church Edifices*, which offered over 200 photos and plans of his churches for use by church building committees. The *Architectural Record* of March 1947 critiqued the books and reported that the "structures vary amazingly, both outside and in - - more, probably than do churches of other denominations; the plans themselves, however, are fundamentally the same." This review appears to have been the last time Faulkner's work was written up in the architectural periodicals. He had earlier appeared in *American Architect*, January, 1925 (Oakhaven Old People's Home) and December 31, 1924 (1st Church of Christ Scientist, Lakewood [Cleveland}, Ohio; *Architectural Record*, September, 1931 (8th Church of Christ, Scientist, Chicago, Illinois, 1st Church of Christ, Scientist, Montclair, New Jersey; 4th Church of Christ, Scientist, Milwaukee, Wisconsin); and October 1946 (1st Church of Christ, Scientist, Valparaiso, Indiana).

Faulkner was active in the Chicago Chapter of the A.I.A. and served as its secretary (1946-50), its director (1950-53), and its second vice-president (1954). He died on December 3, 1979.

IX. SIGNIFICANCE

Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist is architecturally significant as one of the city's finest interpretations of the late Georgian Revival style. The architecture of this stately Neo-Georgian style exhibits the elegant, restrained character that is a hallmark of most Christian Science church buildings. The sophisticated stripped Georgian architecture of the building exhibits the influence of the Art Deco style in its planar surfaces, attenuated proportions, and stark contrast between the sparse decorative features and the taught, handmade Virginia brick wall surfaces. The building illustrates the forward-looking modernism of the coming era in its general massing and character while exemplifying the 1930's approach to historic revival design by making reference to the eighteenth century Georgian period through the use of such features as handmade brick, keystones, and the classical portico. It is Milwaukee's only building by national known Chicago church architect, Charles Draper Faulkner. Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist is also significant as a prominent neighborhood landmark punctuating an important intersection on the Upper East Side.

X. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist, 2519 East Kenwood Boulevard (aka 3069 North Downer Avenue), be designated as a City of Milwaukee Historic Structure as a result of its fulfillment of criteria e-5 and e-9 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Section 308-81(2)(e), of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

XI. PRESERVATION GUIDELINES

The following preservation guidelines represent the principal concerns of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding this historic designation. However, the Commission reserves the right to make final decisions based upon particular design submissions. Nothing in these guidelines shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or the restoration and/or replacement of documented original elements.

A. Roof

Retain the roof shape and slate cladding. Skylights may be added to roof surfaces if they are not visible from the street. Avoid making changes to the roof shape that would alter the building height, roofline or pitch. If replacement of the slate roofing is necessary, duplicate the appearance of the original roofing as closely as possible.

B. Materials

1. Masonry

a. Unpainted brick, terra cotta or stone should not be painted or covered. This is historically incorrect and could cause irreversible damage if it was decided to remove the paint at a late date.

b. Repoint defective mortar by duplicating the original in color, style, texture and strength. Avoid using mortar colors and pointing styles that were unavailable or were not used when the building was constructed.

c. Clean masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration and with the gentlest method possible. Sandblasting limestone, terra cotta or brick surfaces is prohibited. This method of cleaning erodes the surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. Avoid the indiscriminate use of chemical products that could have an adverse reaction with the masonry materials, such as the use of acid on limestone.

d. Repair or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. Avoid using new material that is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed.

2. Wood/Metal

a. Retain original material, whenever possible. Avoid removing architectural features that are essential to maintaining the building's character and appearance.

b. Retain or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the appearance of the old as closely as possible. Avoid covering architectural features with new materials that do not duplicate the appearance of the original materials. Covering wood trim with aluminum or vinyl is not permitted.

C. Windows and Doors

1. Retain existing window and door openings. Retain the existing configuration of panes, sash, surrounds and sills, except as necessary to restore to the original condition. Avoid making additional openings or changes in existing fenestration by enlarging or reducing window or door openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door sizes. Avoid changing the size or configuration of windowpanes or sash. Use storm windows or protective glazing that have glazing configurations similar to the prime windows and that obscure the prime windows as little as possible.

2. Respect the building's stylistic period. If the replacement of doors or window sash is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the appearance and design of the original window sash or door. Avoid using inappropriate sash and door replacements. Avoid using modern style window units, such as horizontal sliding sash or casements, in place of double-hung sash or the substitution of units with glazing configurations not appropriate to the style of the building. Vinyl or metal clad prime window units are not permitted. Glass block basement windows are not permitted, except on the rear elevation, where they may be allowed in locations where they will not be readily visible from the street.

3. Exterior mounted steel bar security doors and window guards are generally not allowed. If permitted, the doors or grates shall be of the simplest design and installed so as to be as unobtrusive as possible.

D. Trim and Ornamentation

There should be no changes to the existing trim or ornamentation except as necessary to restore the building to its original condition. Replacement features shall match the original member in scale, design, color and appearance.

E. Additions

No additions will be permitted on the north or east elevations. Any other addition requires the approval of the Commission. Approval shall be based upon the addition's design compatibility with the building in terms of height, roof configuration, fenestration, scale, design, color and materials, and the degree to which it visually intrudes upon the principal elevations or is visible from the public right-of-way.

F. Signs/Exterior Lighting

The installation of any permanent exterior sign or light fixture shall require the approval of the Commission. Approval will be based on the compatibility of the proposed sign or light fixture with the historic and architectural character of the building.

G. Site Features

New plant materials, paving, fencing, or accessory structures shall be compatible with the historic architectural character of the building if visible from the public right of way.