

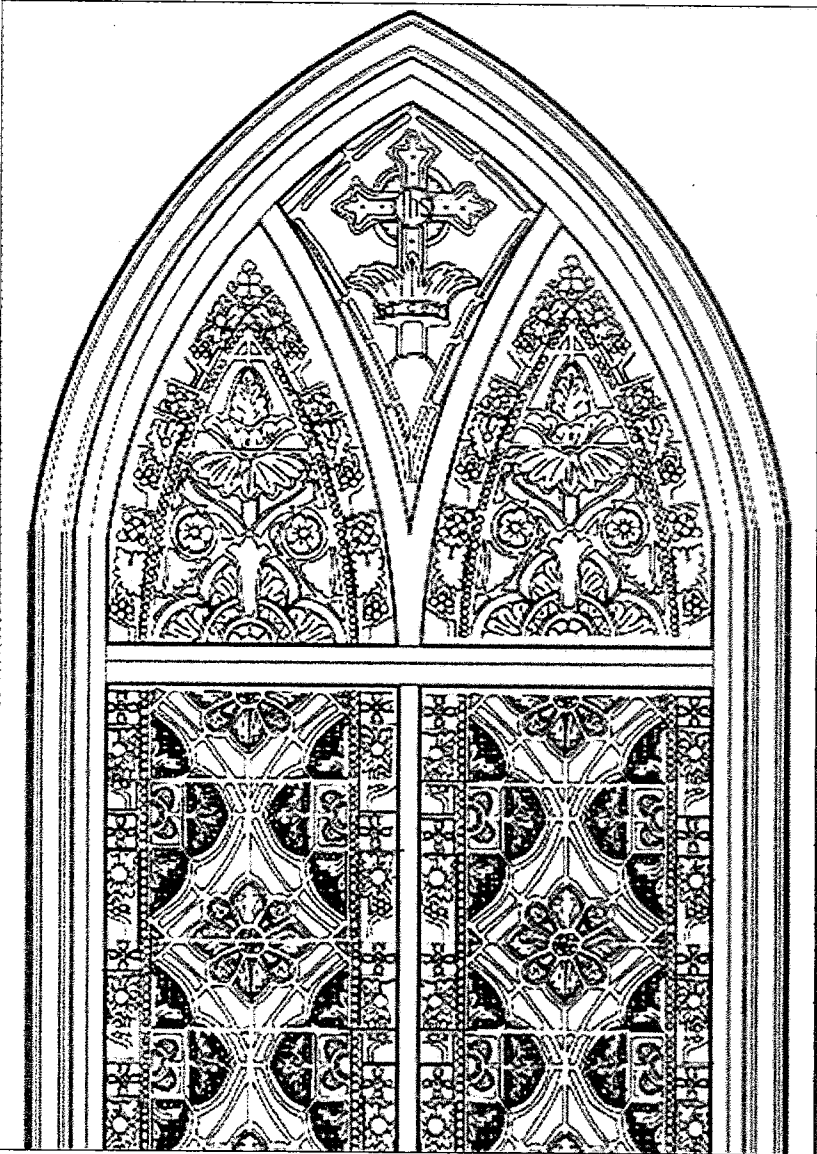
# St. John's Reformed Episcopal Church



Sketch By: Carson Cone

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# Acknowledgements

The Clemson University MSHP Class of 2026 and our three certificate students acknowledge and extend our sincerest gratitude to everyone who helped make this project possible, to include:

- Dr. Patrice Capers, the Right Reverend Bishop Willie Hill, and the entire congregation of St. John's Reformed Episcopal Church
- Rosemary Brown, Susan Vandross Coaxum, and Vera Singleton
- The staff and archives of: the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston, the South Caroliniana Library at the University of South Carolina, the Historic Charleston Foundation and in particular its archivist Shannon Duffy, the Avery Research Center, and the Charleston County Deeds Office

# Clemson MSHP Class of 2026 + Certificates

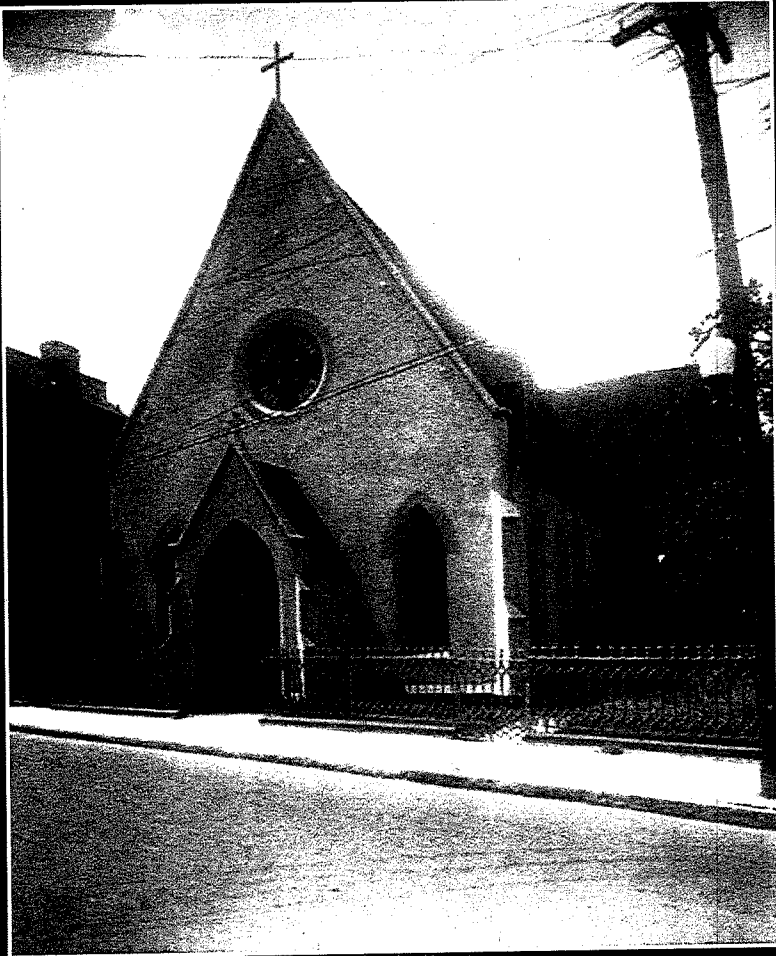


Fourth row: Summer Henry, Thomas "Tad" Darrah, Jackson Dent, Carson Cone (Certificate)

Third row: Thompson Teasdale, Belle Ziethen, Zenic Rice, Alexandra Ullman

Second row: Amanda Nicks (Certificate), Ashton "Florence" Steele, Jessica Stech, Samantha Threlkeld, Ellie Rhinehart (Certificate)

First row: Lorena Garrod, Hamzah Jule



# INTRODUCTION

**History** Newspapers, deeds, old photos, Building Committee records, oral histories with Rosemary Brown, Susan Vandross Coaxum, and Vera Singleton

**Investigation** Assessed the conditions of various components of the building. Compiled a comprehensive structural conditions report with recommendations for the buildings continued health.

**Documentation** Measured Drawings using AutoCAD to HABS standards.

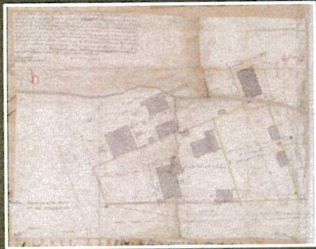
**Conservation** Paint samples and analysis to determine historic paint layers and relationships

A photograph of a stone wall, likely part of a church building. The wall is made of large, light-colored stone blocks. In the upper left, there is a rectangular plaque with engraved text. The word "History" is overlaid in large white letters on the left side of the image. The bottom right corner contains the text "St. John's Reformed Episcopal Church".

# History

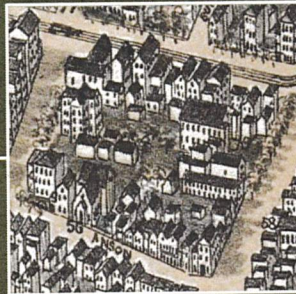
St. John's Reformed  
Episcopal Church

# Construction History



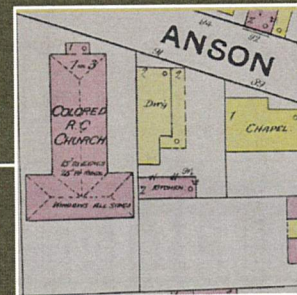
1850

91 Anson Street is constructed from plans by Edward C. Jones & dedicated on May 26, 1850. It is known as the Anson Street Mission/Church.



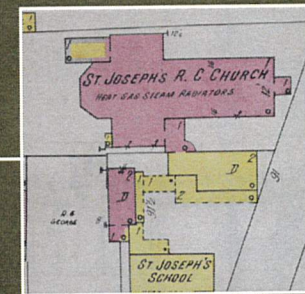
1861-65

The church is damaged during the American Civil War.



1883

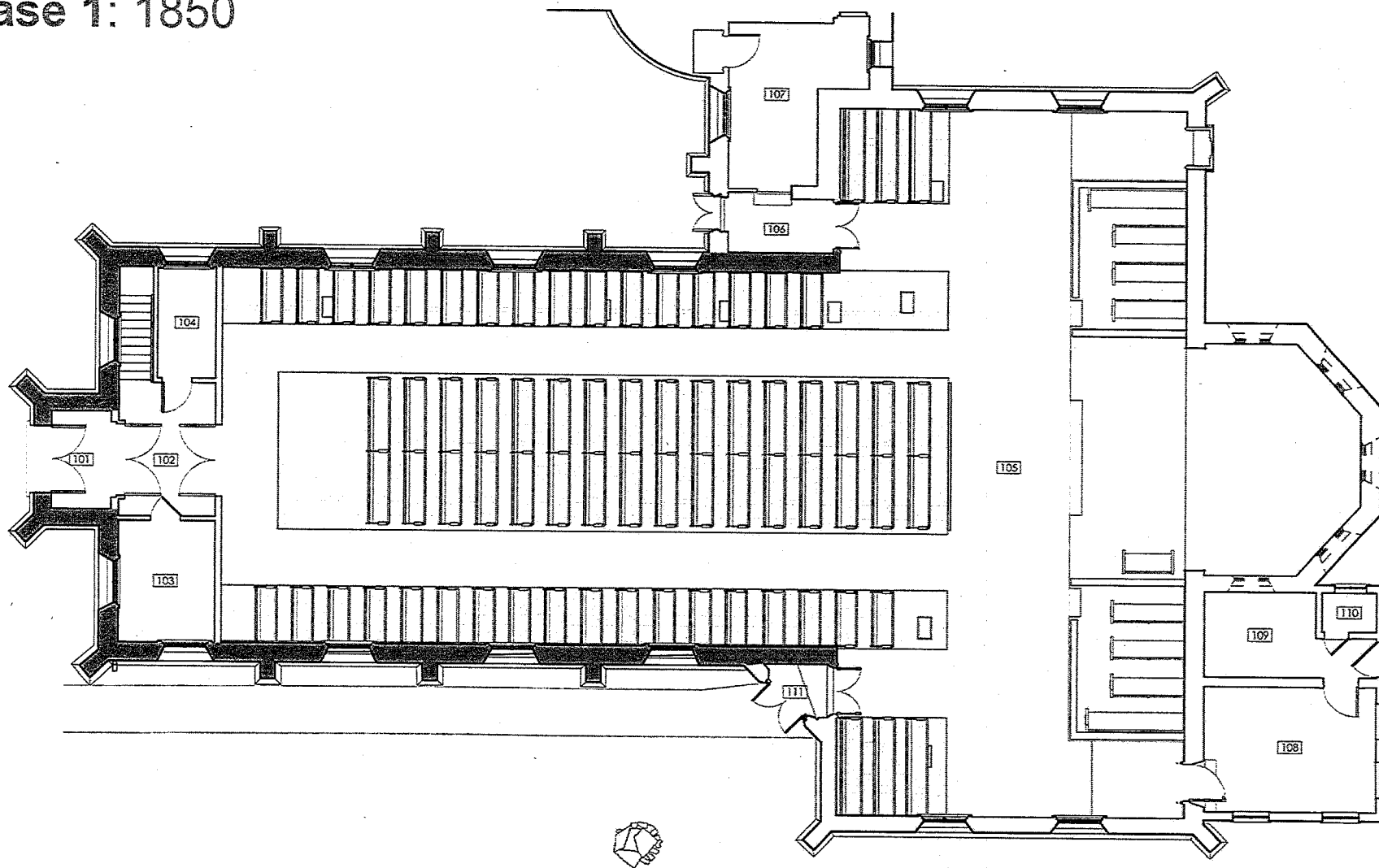
The building undergoes remodeling by architect F.G. Himpler & builder J.W. Sawner, with addition of transepts & an altar area that are added to the back of original structure.



1971

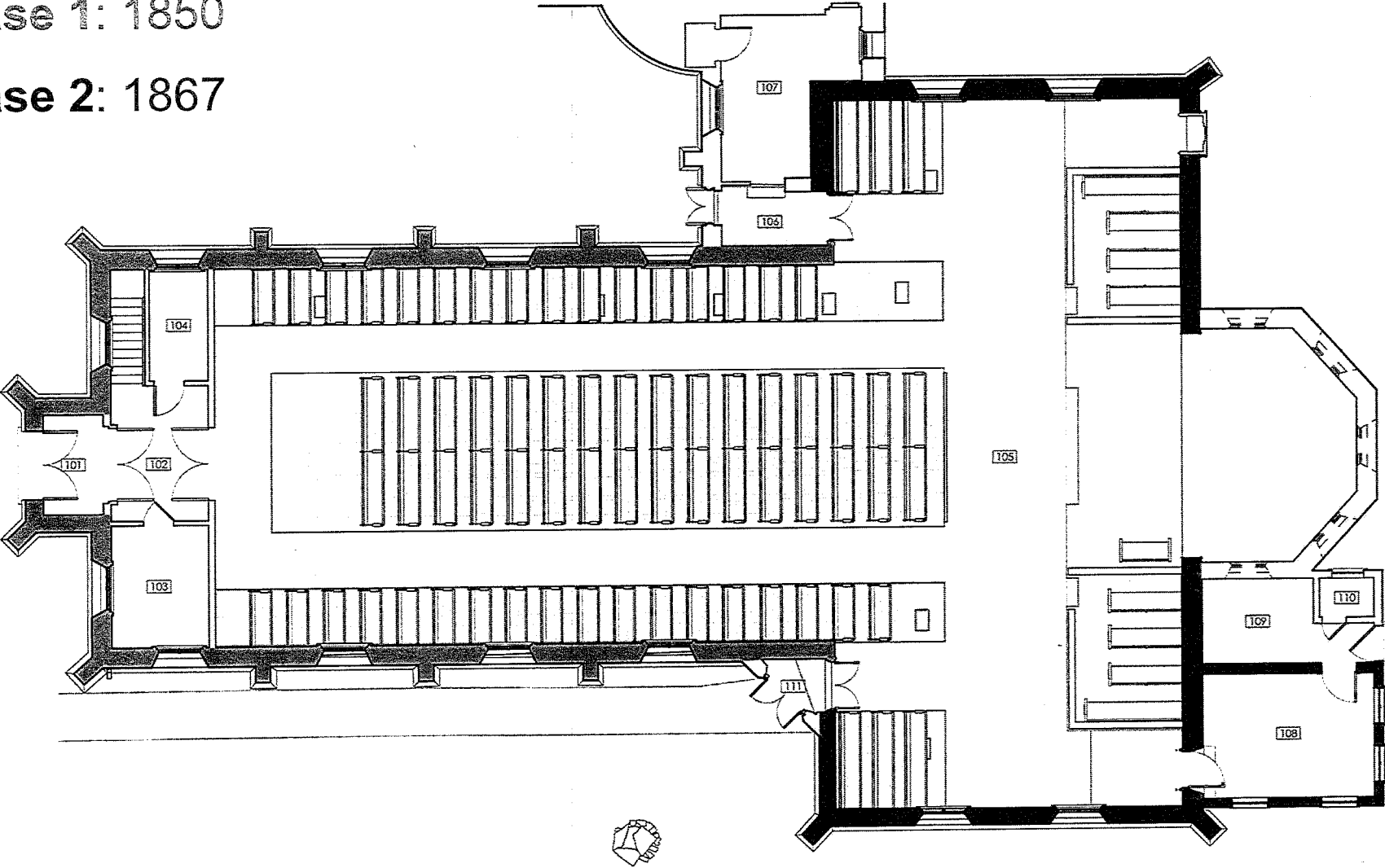
St John's Reformed Episcopal Church congregation acquires the structure from St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church. Restoration work carried out on structure by new church owners.

# Phase 1: 1850



Phase 1: 1850

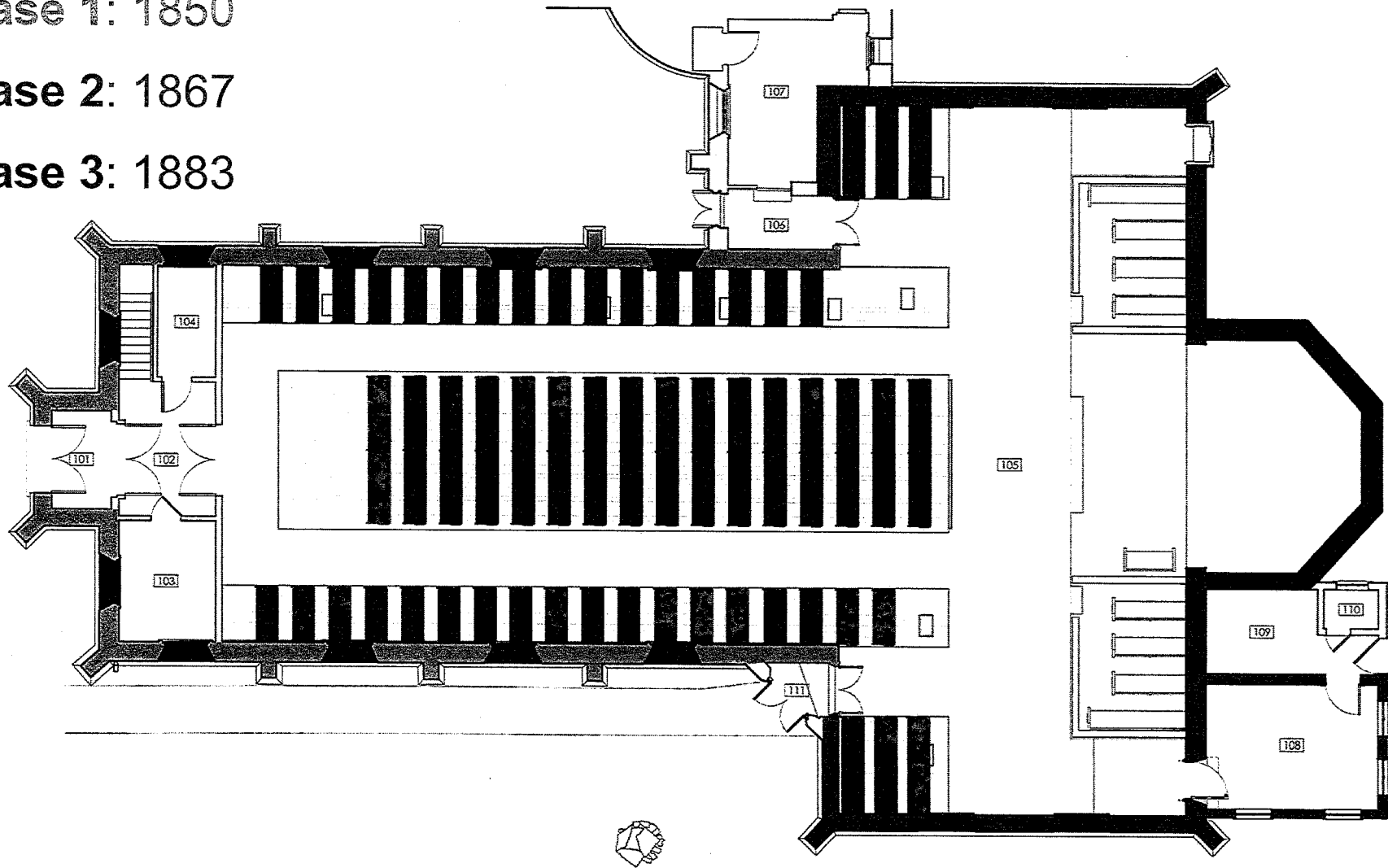
Phase 2: 1867



Phase 1: 1850

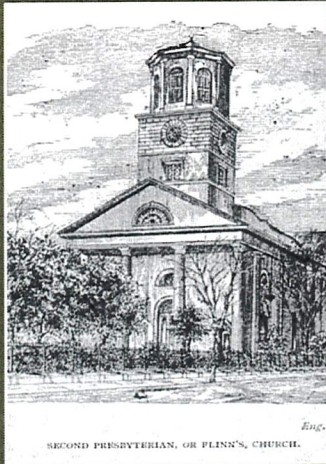
Phase 2: 1867

Phase 3: 1883



# Congregation History

1850



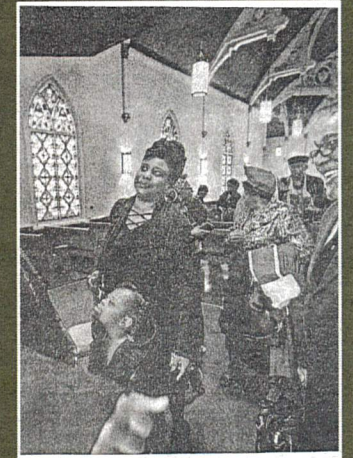
1860-61



1965

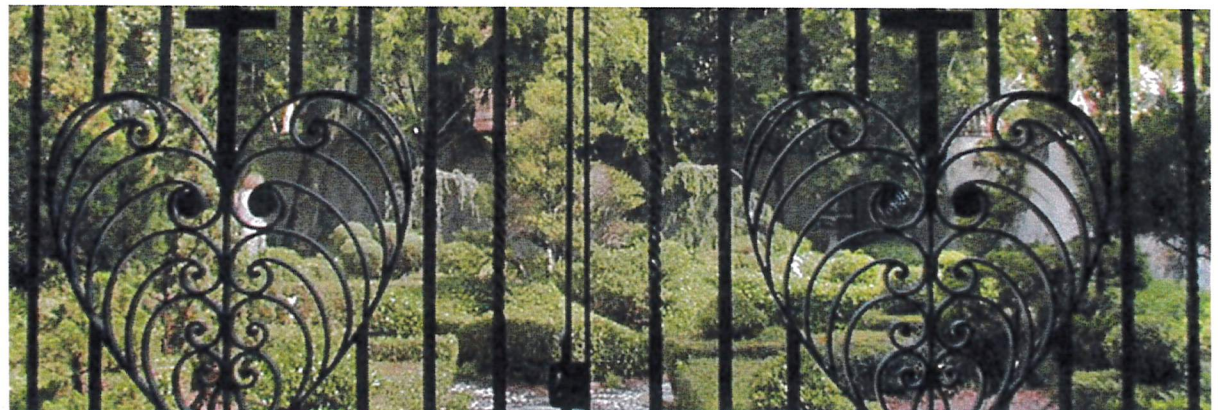


1971-Present

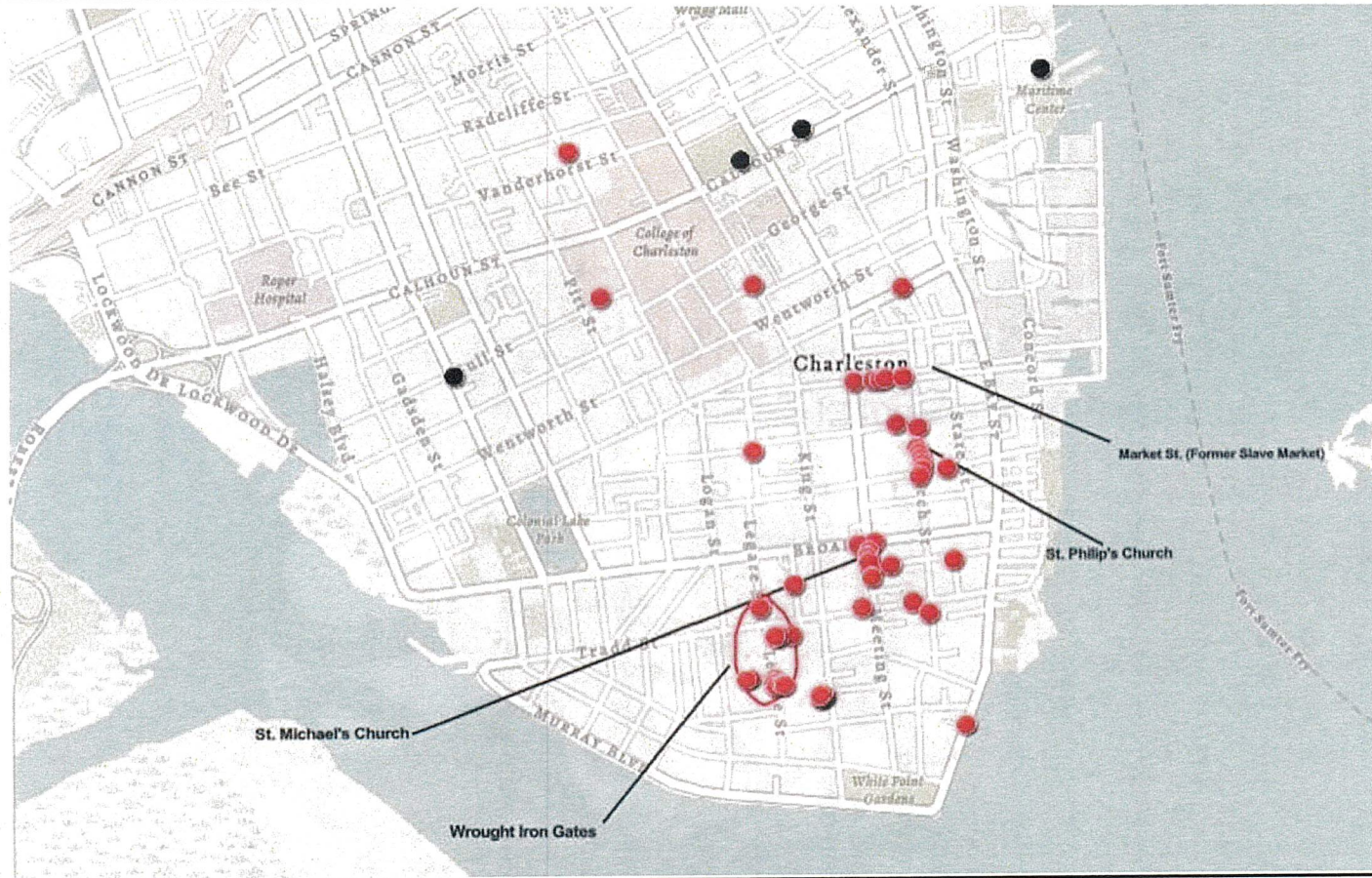


# Philip Simmons

“I always look at nature; that will never change. Even up until the day they come with the shovel, I try to branch out and do things I haven’t seen, . . .” -Philip Simmons; Charleston, SC Blacksmith



# Prominent Works of Philip Simmons on the Peninsula



# The Work of Philip Simmons *'Keeper of the Gates'*



# National Register: Criteria for Evaluation

A. “Associated with one or more events important in the defined historic context”

- “A pattern of events or a historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a State, or the nation.”

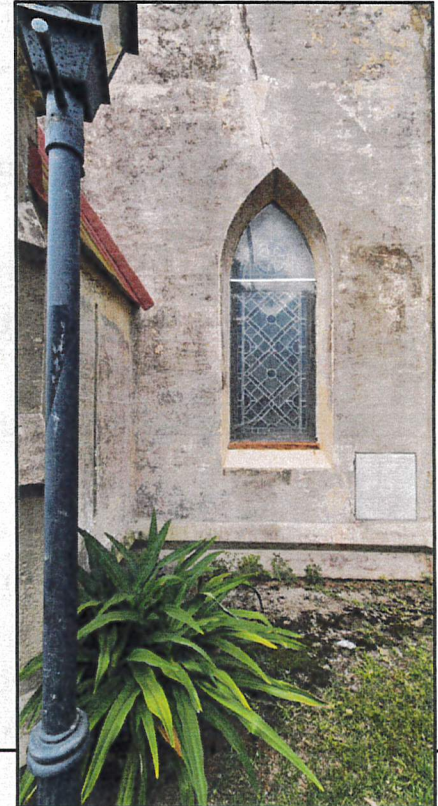
B. “Associated with individuals whose specific contributions to history can be identified and documented.”

C. Significant “physical design or construction, including such elements as architecture, landscape architecture, engineering, and artwork.”

D. “Properties that have the potential to answer, in whole or in part, ... important research questions about human history [that] can only be answered by the actual physical material of cultural resources.”

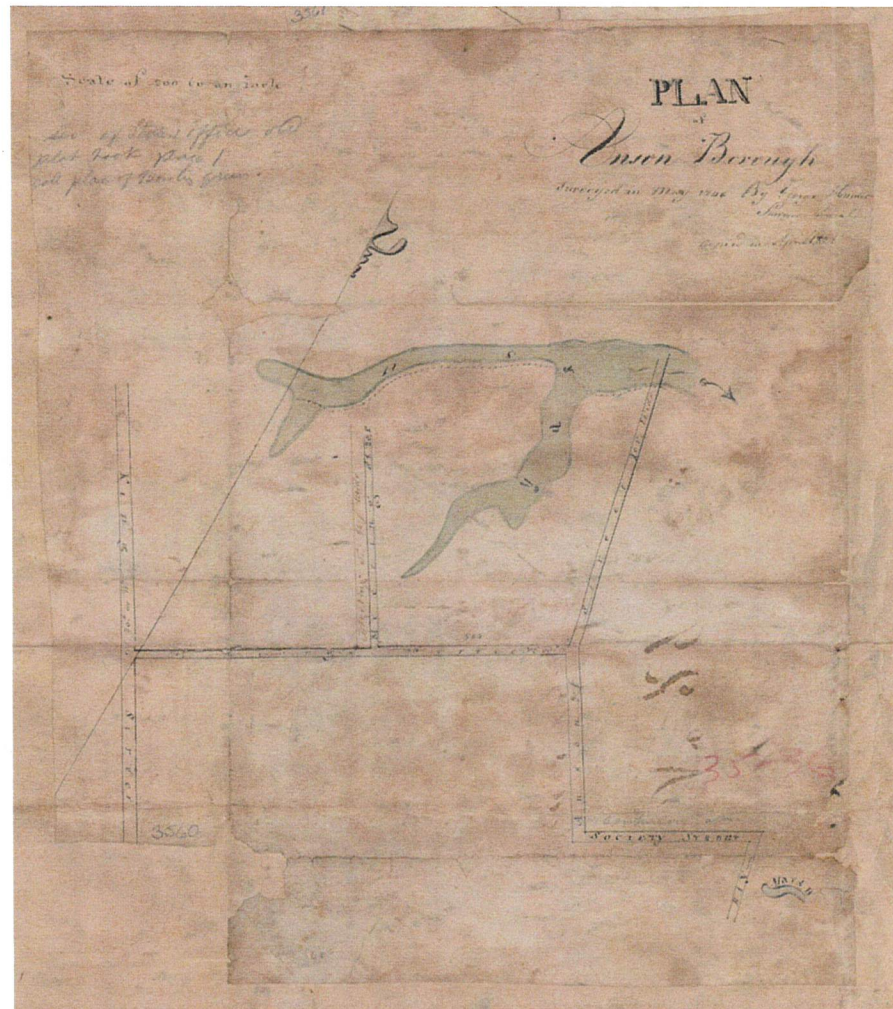
# Architectural Description

St. John's Reformed Episcopal Church

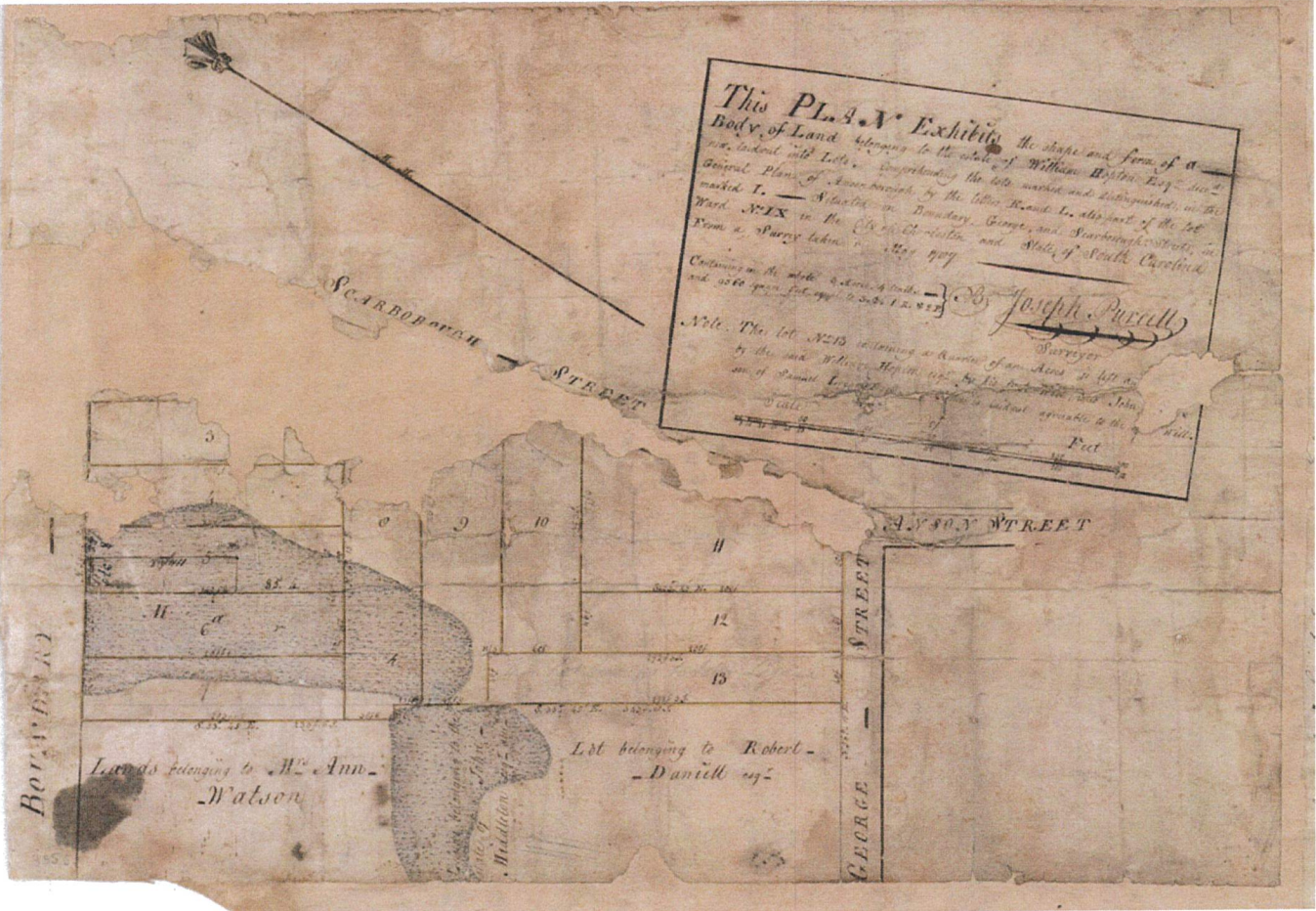




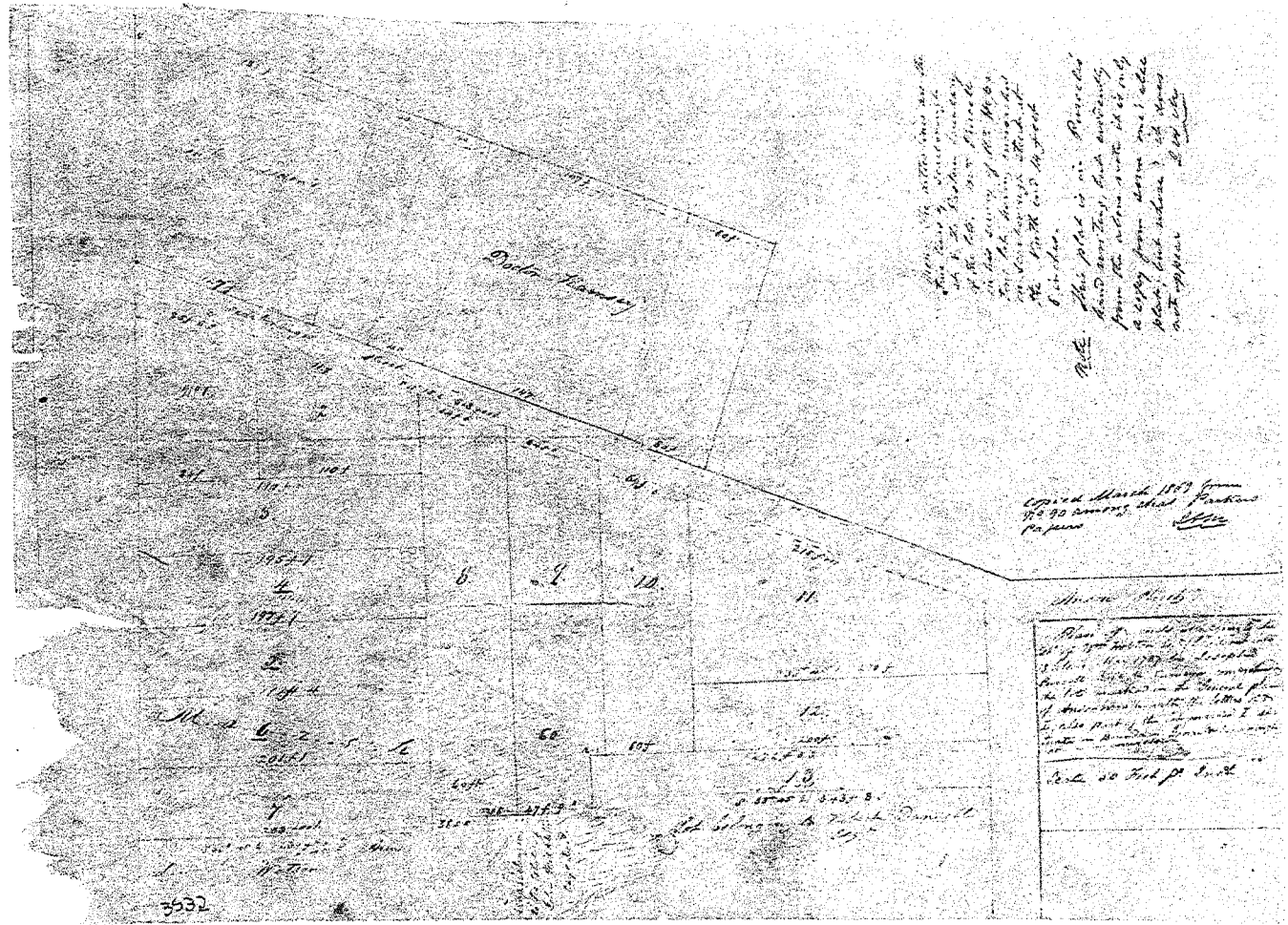
George Hunt, 1746

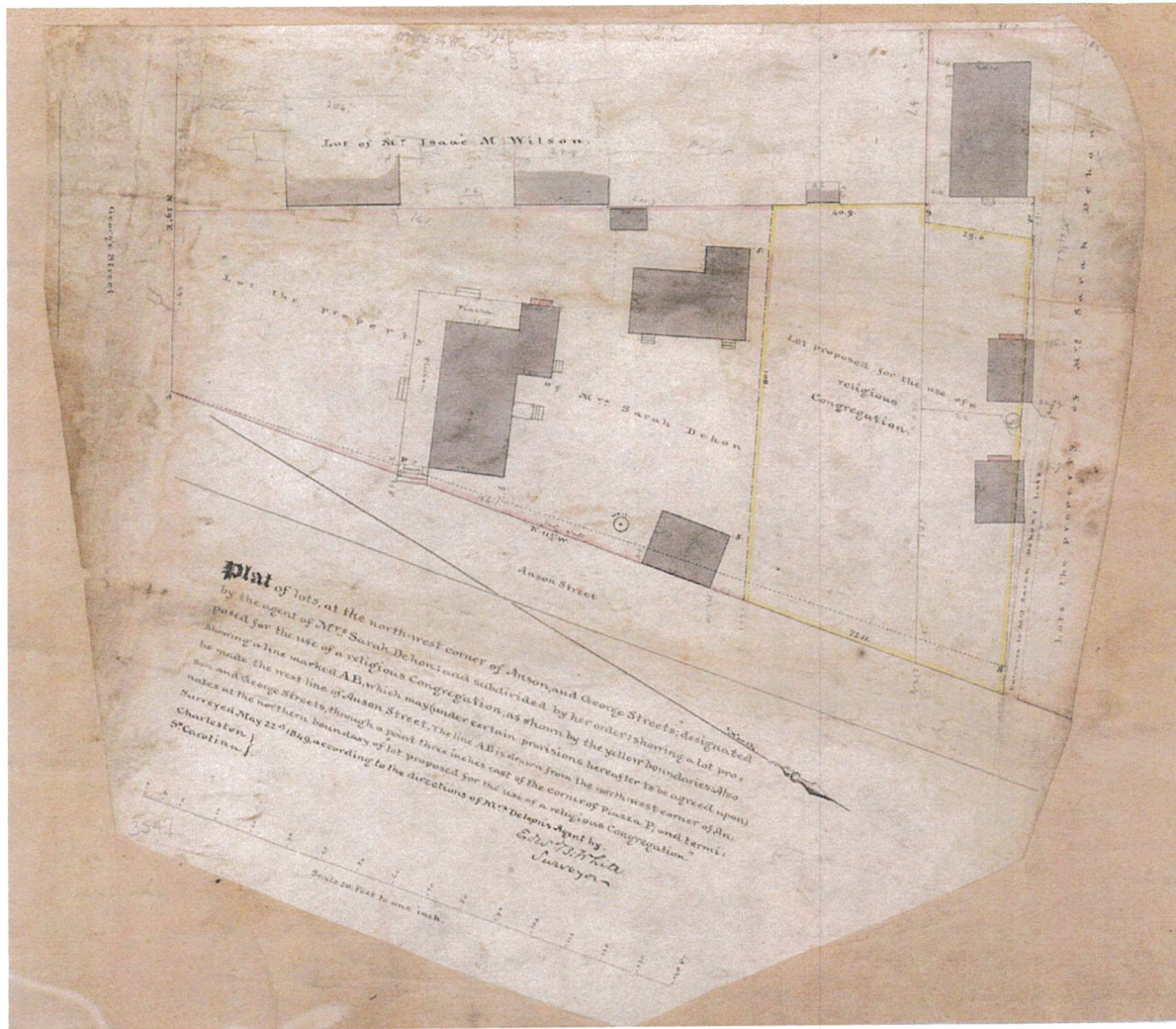


Joseph Purcell, 1787



Joseph Purcell, 1787  
(copied 1869)





Edward Brickell, 1849

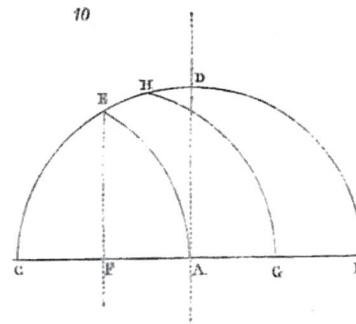
Charleston County GIS,  
2023



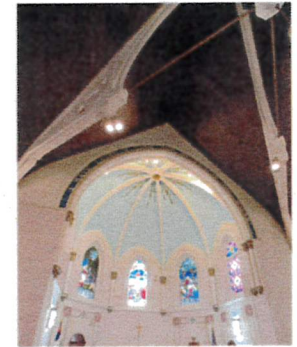
# Gothic Revival – Distinctives



## Pointed Arches



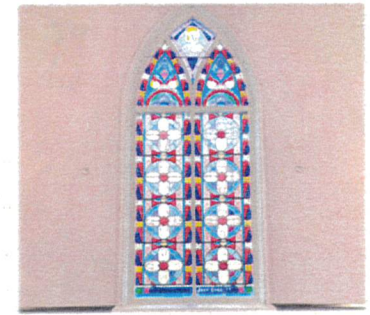
## “Ribbed Vaults”



## Buttresses



## Stained Glass



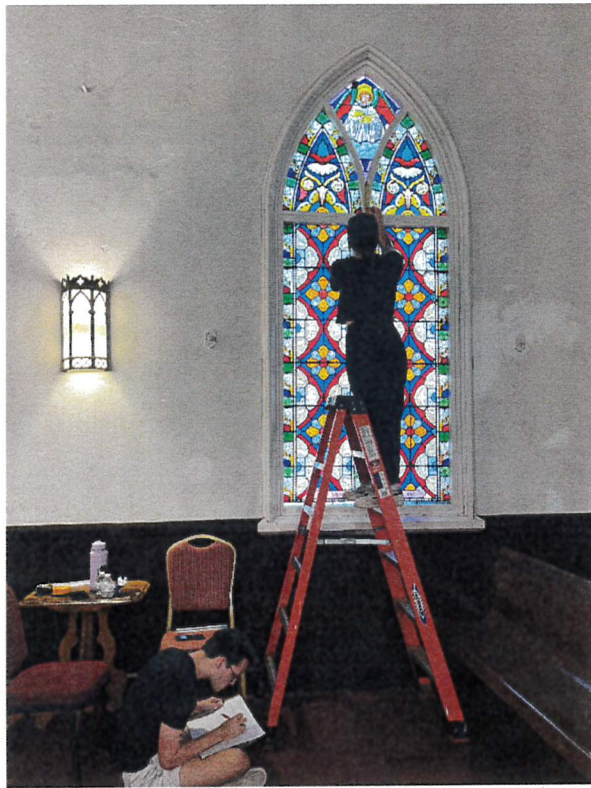
*“The commodious edifice is in the Gothic style – a model of neatness and simplicity. Its shape being that of a capital T, the transepts or wings are appropriated to the use of white persons, and are entered by separate doors...” (1850)*



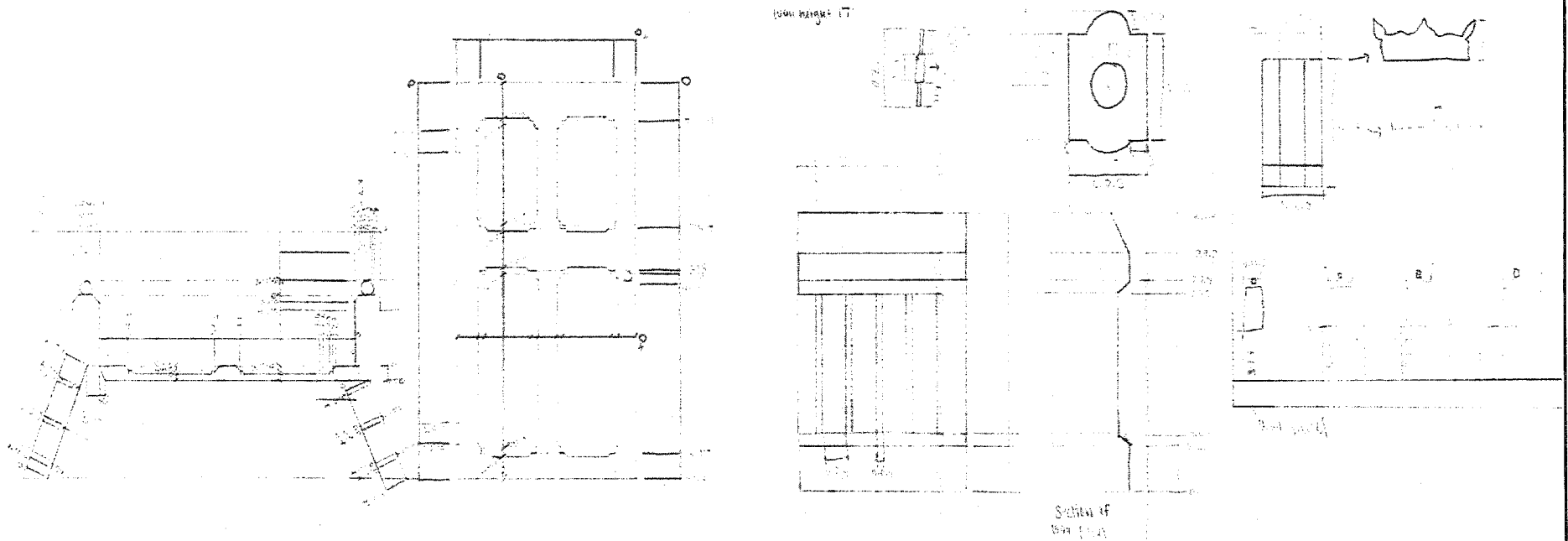


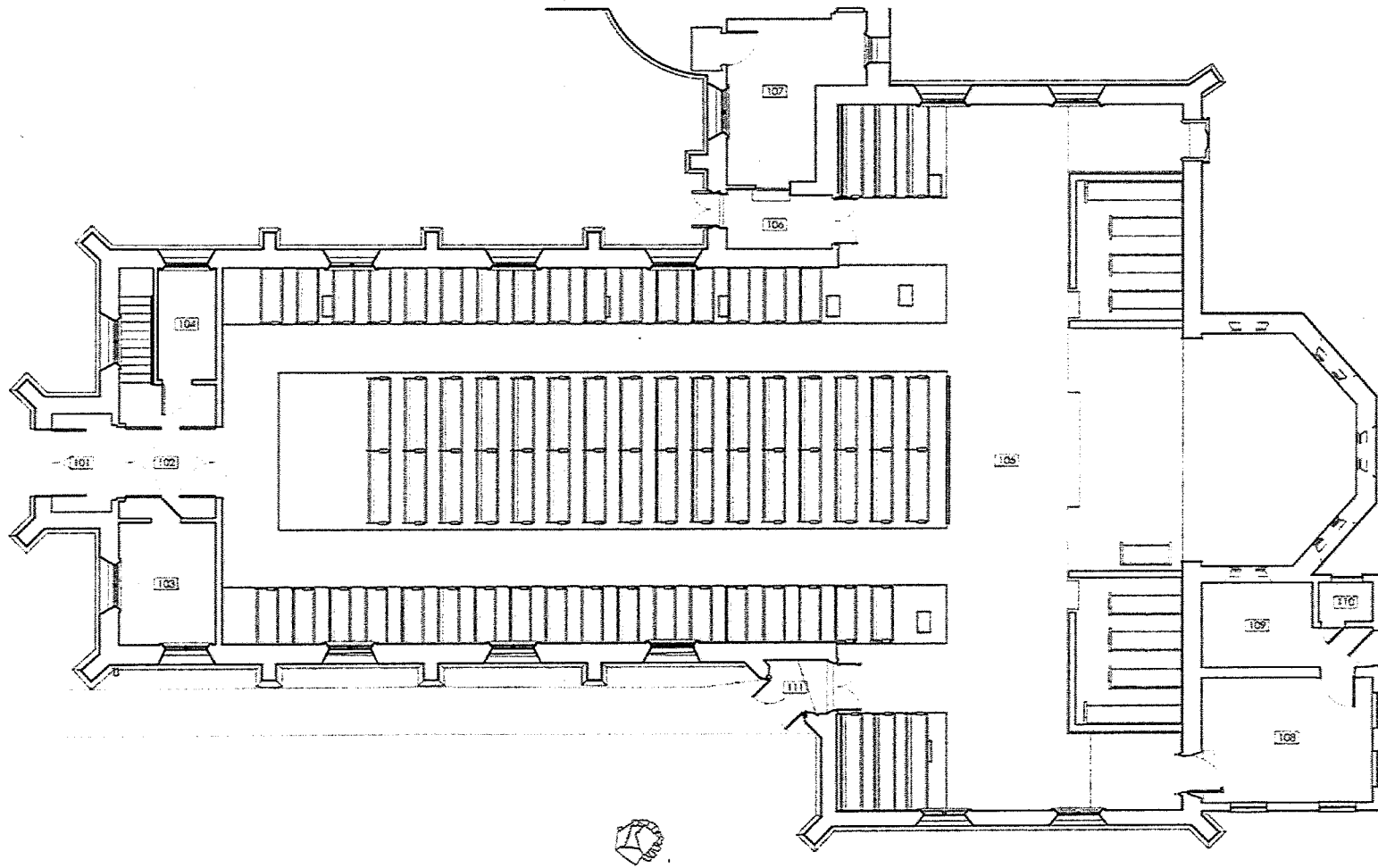


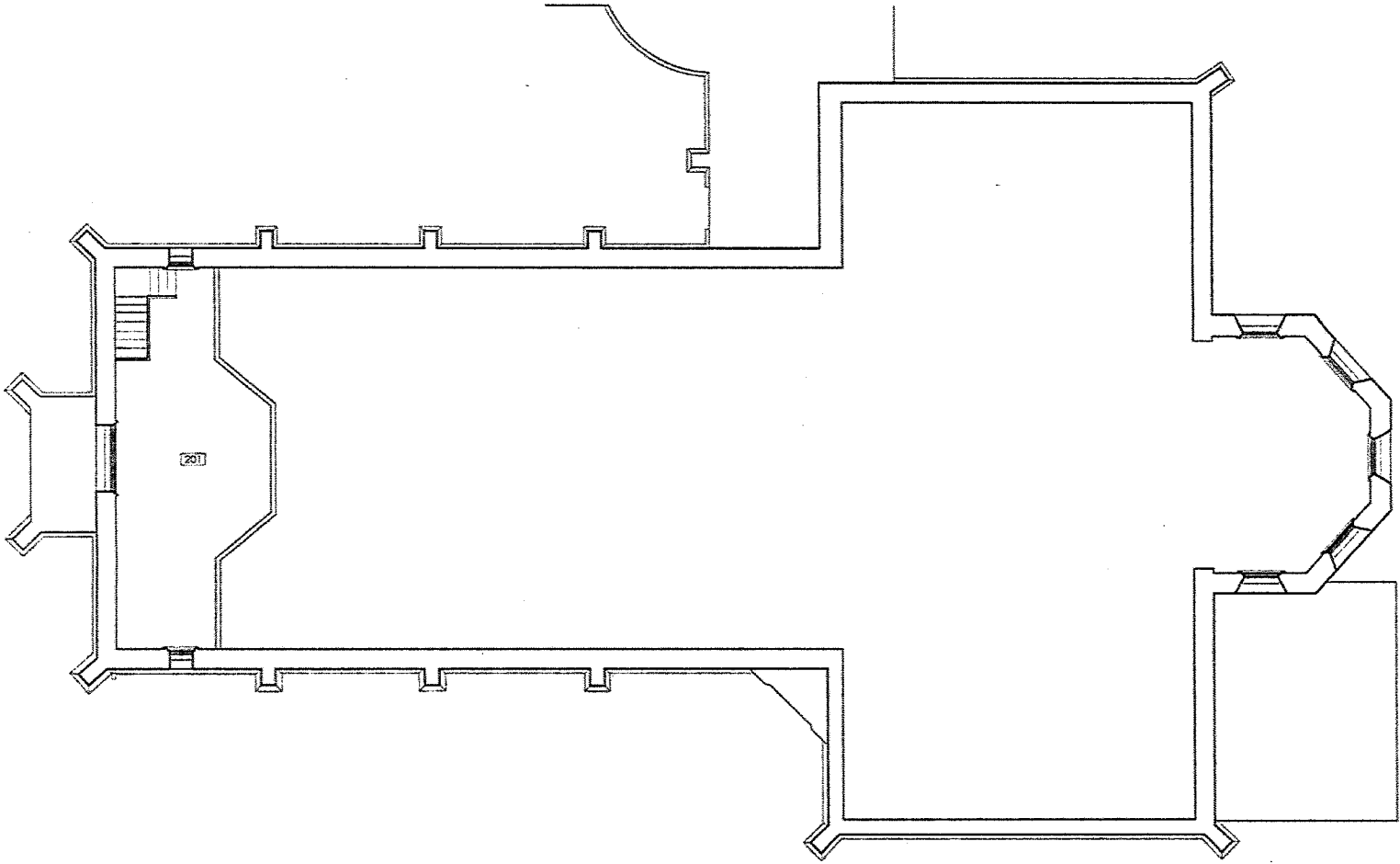
# Measured Drawings

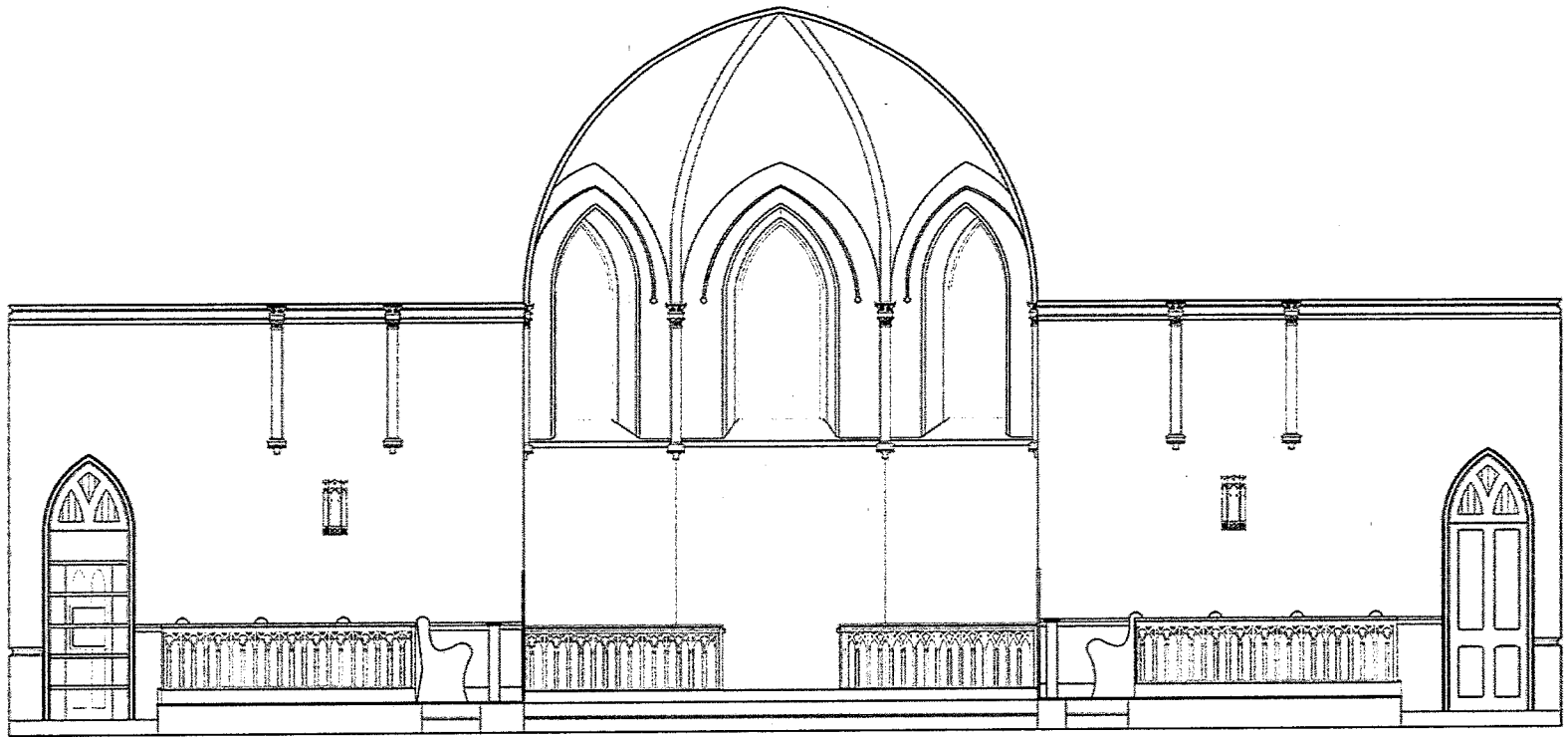


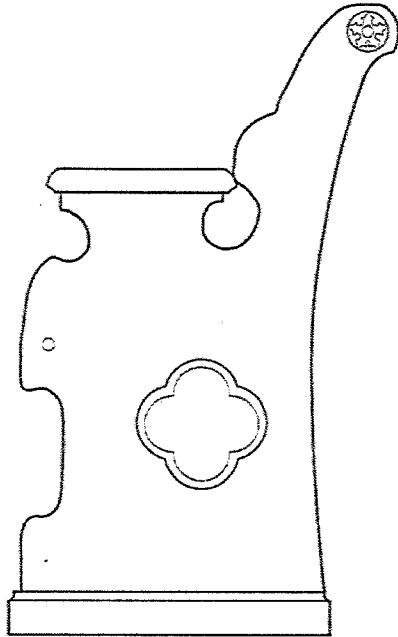
# Measured Drawings



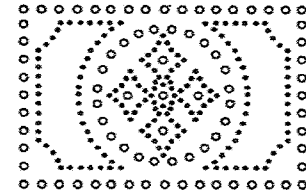




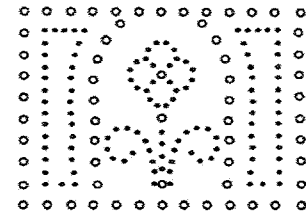




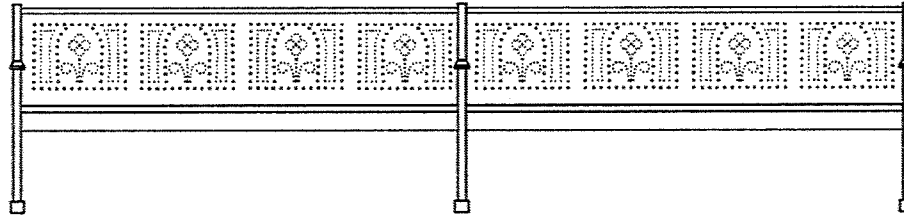
ROOM 105 - CONGREGATIONAL PEW PANEL DETAIL  
 1 1/2"=1'-0" 1:8



ROOM 105 - CONGREGATIONAL PEW SEAT DETAIL  
 1 1/2"=1'-0" 1:8



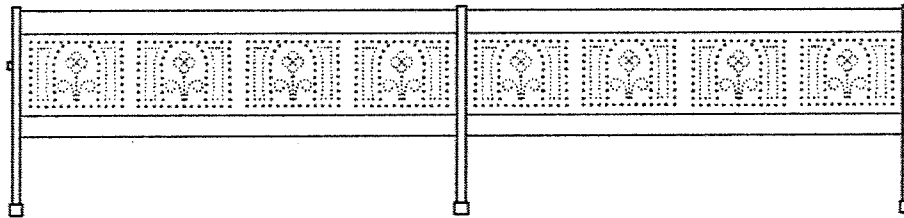
ROOM 105 - CONGREGATIONAL PEW BACK DETAIL  
 1 1/2"=1'-0" 1:8



ROOM 105 - CONGREGATIONAL PEW FRONT ELEVATION

1/2"=1'-0"

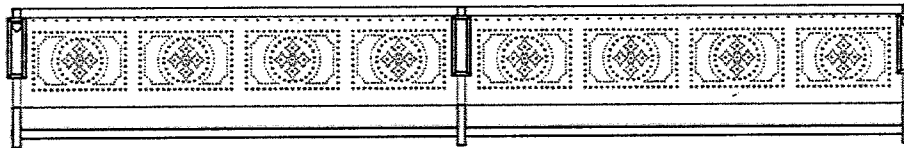
1:24



ROOM 105 - CONGREGATIONAL PEW BACK ELEVATION

1/2"=1'-0"

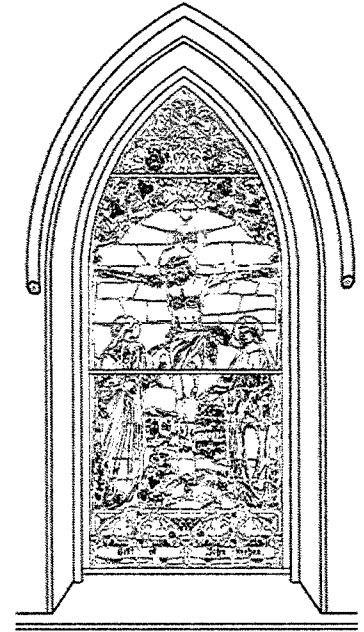
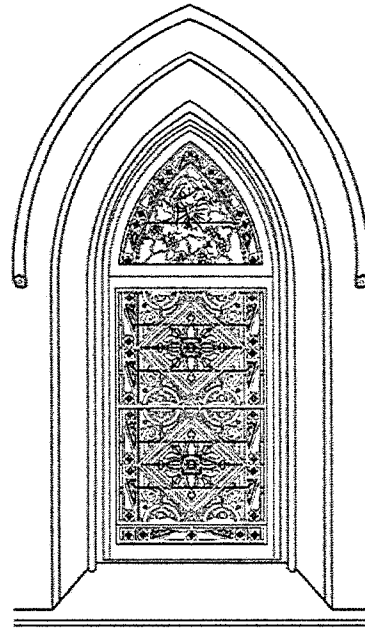
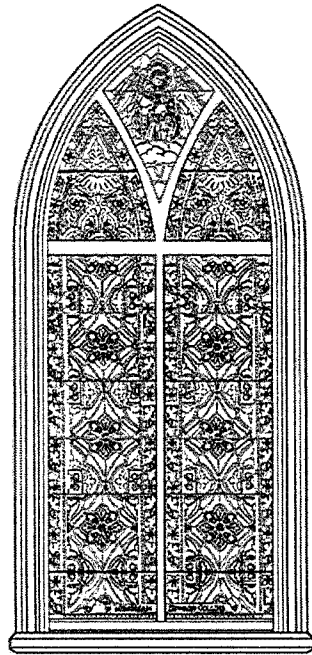
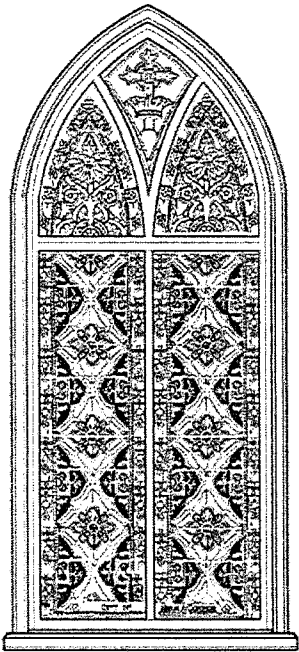
1:24



ROOM 105 - CONGREGATIONAL PEW PLAN

1/2"=1'-0"

1:24



# Conditions Assessment



Our investigation and documentation of the church includes a report of systems and architectural features observed to be in need of repair.

The congregation's love for the church is unquestionable, and by objectively presenting our compiled observations, it is the class's hope that this resource may serve them as a tool in securing funding and public support for the preservation of their church.

Systems and architectural elements included and expanded upon within the report are the church's walls, windows, doors, ceiling, roof, pews, dais furniture and exterior fencing.

## Conditions Assessments are Rated as:

Good	Element is stable and requires little to no repair beyond continued maintenance
Fair	Element would benefit from cosmetic maintenance and minor repairs to prevent deterioration
Poor	Element exhibits signs of significant deterioration, requiring comprehensive structural and/or cosmetic repair

## Walls - Finish & Structure



### Overall Exterior Finish

#### Condition: Poor

- Paint discoloration
- Stucco cracking
  - Some cracks penetrate to—possibly through—masonry
  - Concentration around & above window arches
  - Slight bowing outward of nave walls
- Masonry integrity
  - Over time, vegetation can cause damage to brick
  - Loss of exposed brick & mortar—water table & apse

### Overall Interior Finish

#### Condition: Fair

- Plaster cracks observed throughout church
- Unpainted plaster repairs
- Holes in plaster to substrate—balcony & apse

# Doors



## Transept Vestibule Doors

### Condition: Poor

- Paint delamination
- Damage to frames
  - Southern hole & leveling
  - Northern difficulty in operation
- Damage to bottoms of doors
  - Weatherstrips

## All Other Doors

### Condition: Fair

- Paint delamination
- Balcony half-landing door

# Windows



## Stained Glass

### Condition: Good

- >140 years old
  - Morgan Bros., New York, NY
- Glass secure within lead frame
- Compositions remain intact
  - Intricate hand-paintings in good condition
- Some protective panes are broken

## Window Frames

### Condition: Fair

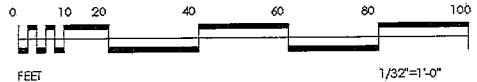
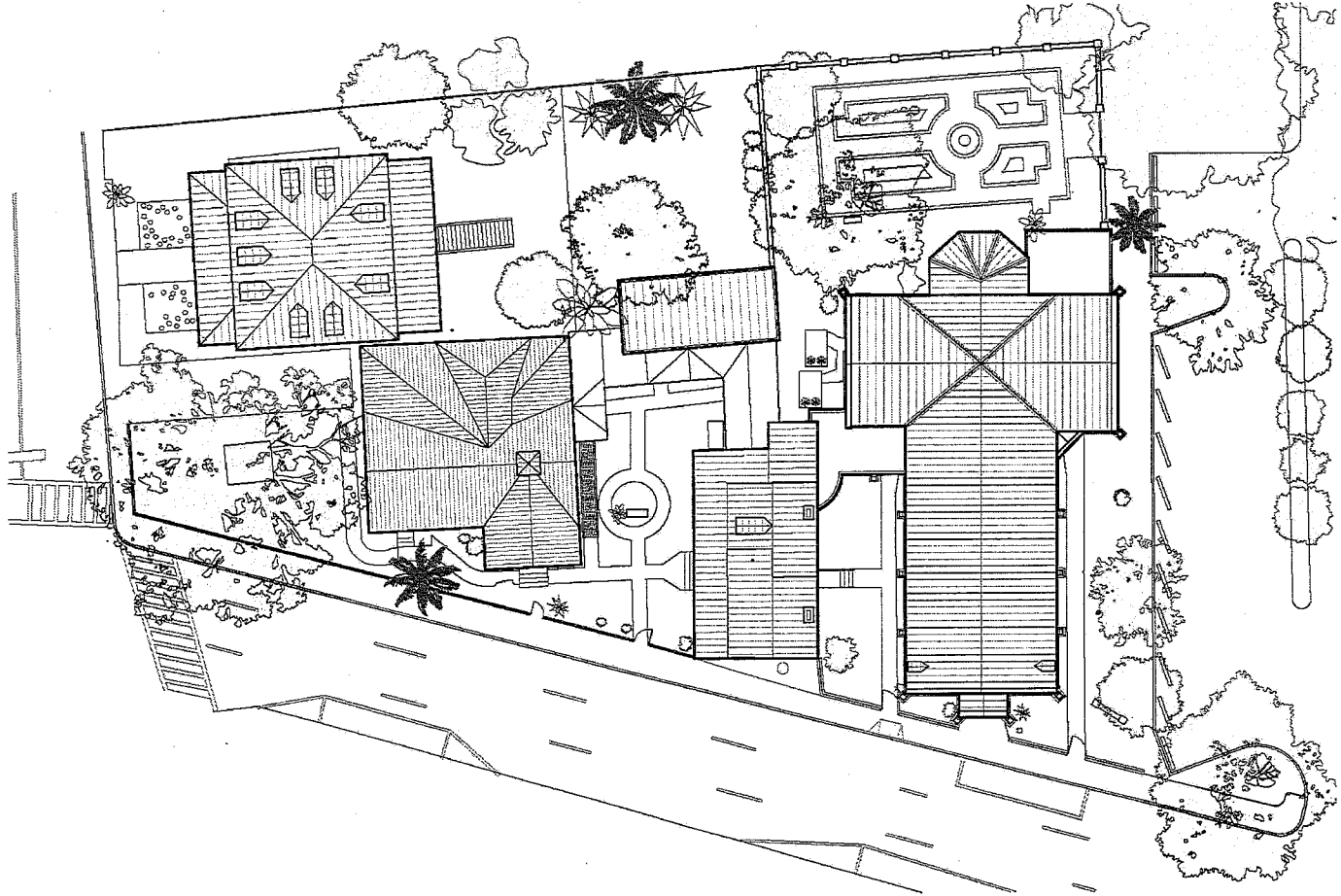
- Paint delamination
- Deterioration of exterior sills—metal & wood
- Primary facade rose window trim



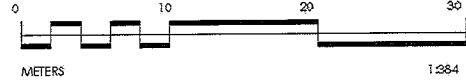
# Landscape

- Collaborative effort among all students
- Plant Identification
- Measured gates, entrances, fences, location of trees, shrubs





SITE PLAN  
1/32"=1'-0" 1:384



# Landscape: Philip Simmons Garden



## Plant List Philip Simmons Garden

Cabbage Palmetto  
Yaupon Holly  
Asparagus Fern  
Holly Fern  
Sasanqua Camellia  
Common Camellia  
Lily Turf  
Wax Leaf Privet  
Lantana  
Japanese Garden Juniper  
Hetz Blue Juniper  
Tea Rose  
English Ivy  
Deodar Cedar  
Crepe Myrtle  
Japanese Yew

# Paint Sampling Methodology

- 15 Sample Areas
  - Wall
  - Window Interior
  - Window Frame
  - Door
  - Door Frame
  - Baseboard
  - Chair rail
  - Paneling
  - Beadboard
  - Pilaster
  - Fixture
  - Crown molding
  - Exterior
  - Hardware
  - Annex



Sample photo example, SJ5BB1

- 15 students x 12 samples each = 180 samples
- Preliminary analysis conducted before setting samples in resin cubes
- Samples sanded and polished to cross section after being taken and marked on-site
- Analyzed under microscope to discern layers and potential campaigns over time



Sample photo example, SJ4WF1

# Paint Sampling Findings



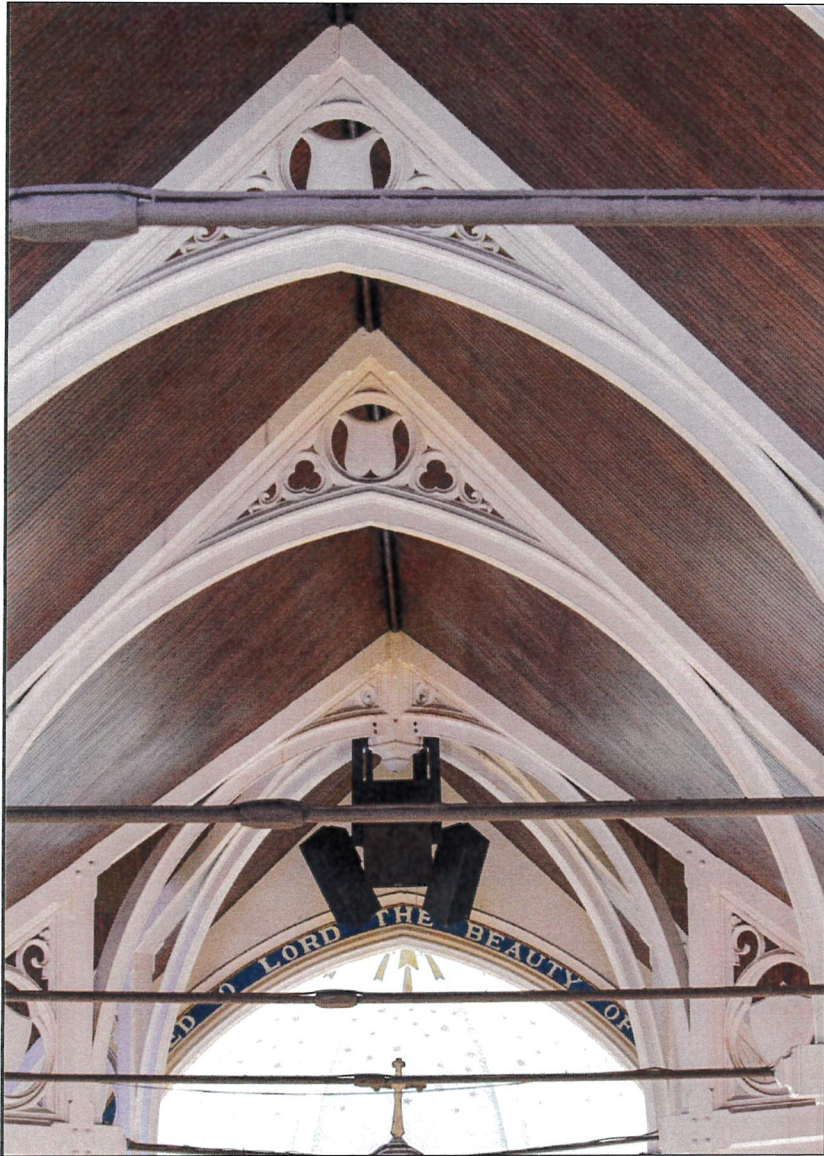
Further investigation by way of more exposure is highly recommended

## Patterns

- Use of darker colors and browns in earlier layers
  - heavy implication of graining in baseboards and paneling, but also seen in wall paintings with dark reds and browns in thin layers
- Shift to lighter colors, especially light yellows and blues
  - heavy use of turquoise is consistent with an earlier photo of the church
- Some samples match those of the ancillary buildings
- Multiple hints towards decorative painting

## Distinctions

- Some samples from the same areas display very different layering patterns
  - Two adjacent window frames had different color histories : brown and orange vs greens and teals
- Walls in the same general areas had different color histories : layers of browns vs layers of blues
- Some samples give insight to conditions assessments



## Recommendations

Placed into two categories:

- **High-Priority** - Urgent and should be addressed before proceeding.
- **Life Safety** - Measures to promote the safety and longevity of the church and congregation once urgent matters are addressed.

“The most important alteration and one which gave character to the entire church is the vaulted open-work ceiling, giving to the building, from the floor to the ridge of the of the ceiling, an elevation of 34 feet... boards of our own fine, varnished pine, thus preserving the grain and fiber of the wood and producing a most cheerful effect.”

- Rev. Francis Shadler

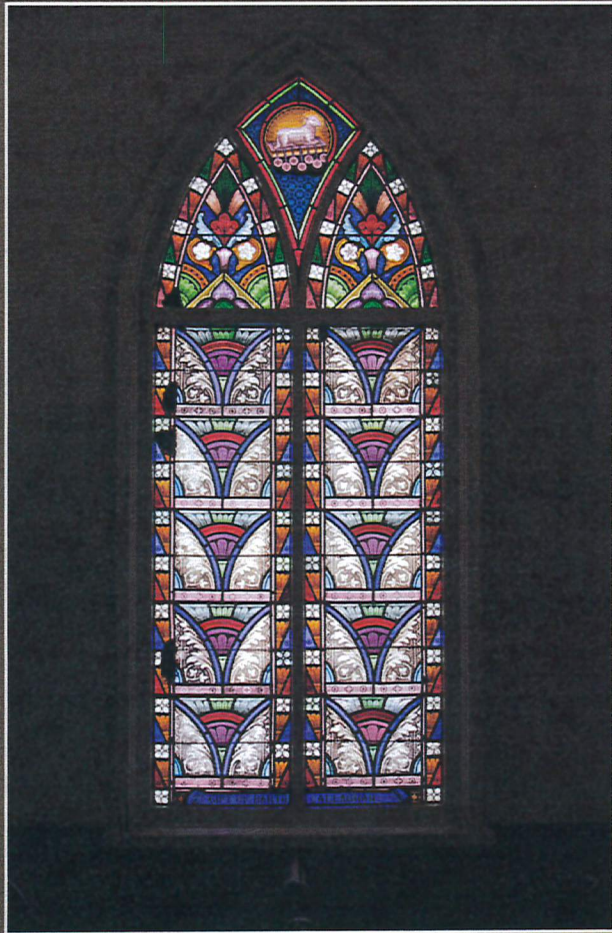
# High-Priority



It is highly recommended a **Structural Engineer with Historic Preservation experience** should conduct a full investigation of the building's systems.

- Full investigation of roof and structural systems.
- Stabilization of building.
- In-kind repairs or replacement of compromised areas.





## Life Safety

Once the roof and structural systems are addressed, recommendations will look to **life safety** concerns.

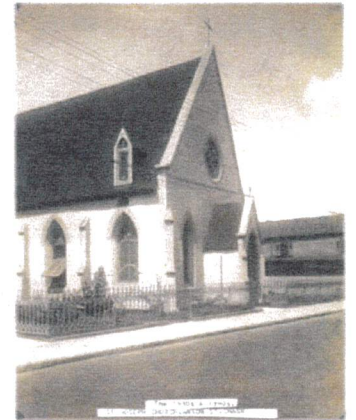
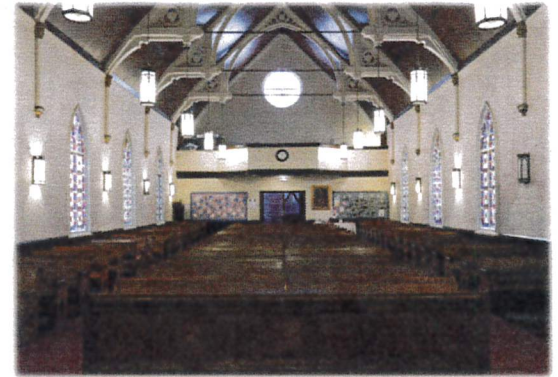
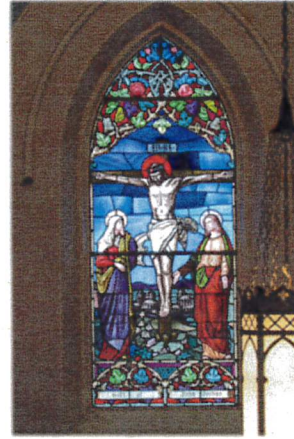
- Mold remediation and water damage mitigation of areas affected by water intrusion.
- Restoration of interior and exterior finishes (guided by historic paint stratigraphy).
- In-kind repair, replacement, or conservation of doors and windows throughout the building.
  - i.e. Transparent polycarbonate (aka Lanex) to protect stained-glass windows.

# Recommendations

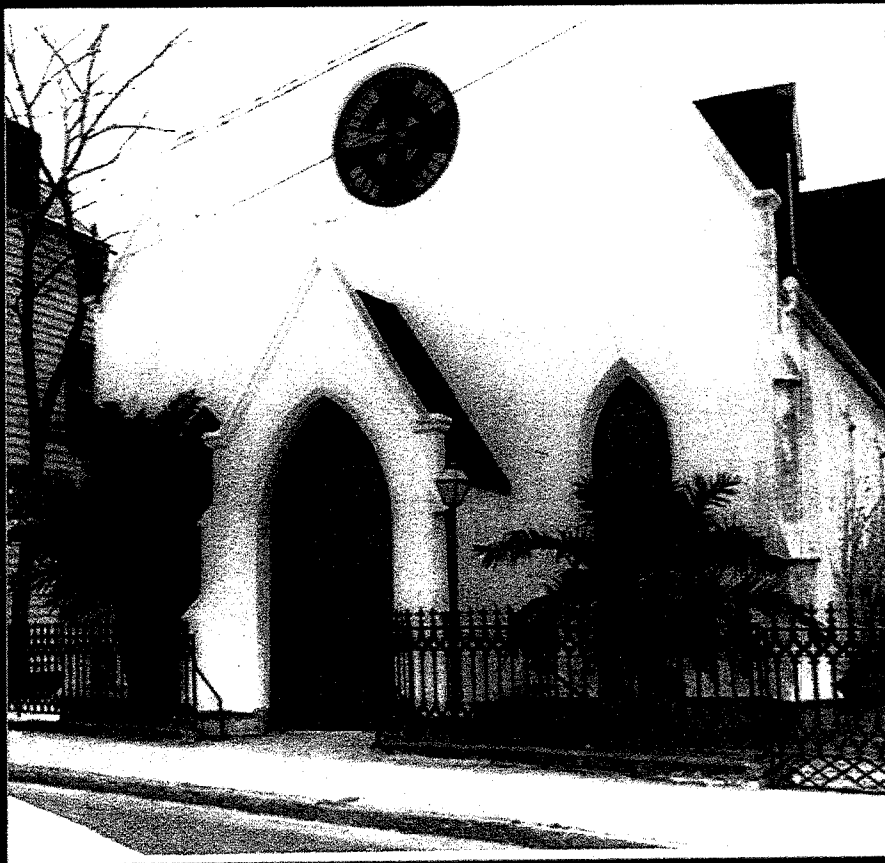
## What Next?

Saint John's is in an ideal location for growing communications throughout Charleston, which will be essential to ensuring it receives the best care.

- Structural Engineer with Historic Preservation experience.
- Collegiate collaboration with programs like the American College of the Buildings Arts (ACBA), who research innovative methods of preservation.
- Research potential regarding form and function of places of worship by various denominations.



# Conclusion



The church at 91 Anson Street has stood for 174 years and we hope can stand another 174. We've spent a semester investigating, documenting, and thinking on the future conservation of St. John's. Top on our list of recommendations: stabilizing the structure of the building, and then mitigating mold, damp, and water intrusion. We also encourage a reimagining of the interior to address concerns about lack of light, perhaps using some of the historic colors that once graced the church's walls. We hope this assessment will be a key tool for further conservation efforts. We are forever grateful to have the opportunity to conduct this assessment, and we hope that we have done this venerable structure and its congregants justice.



# THANK YOU

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MSHP Graduate students

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Clemson Design Center Charleston

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[www.clemson.edu](http://www.clemson.edu)

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

