

**NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT**  
**PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)  
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

**1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE** *(must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)*

Street address: **5209-13 Germantown Avenue**

Postal code: **19144**

**2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Name: **St. Stephen's Methodist Episcopal Church**

Current Name: **Servants of Christ United Methodist Church**

**3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Building       Structure       Site       Object

**4. PROPERTY INFORMATION**

Condition:     excellent     good       fair       poor       ruins

Occupancy:    occupied    vacant     under construction     unknown

Current use: Religious

**5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

*Please attach a narrative description and site/plot plan of the resource's boundaries.*

**6. DESCRIPTION**

*Please attach a narrative description and photographs of the resource's physical appearance, site, setting, and surroundings.*

**7. SIGNIFICANCE**

*Please attach a narrative Statement of Significance citing the Criteria for Designation the resource satisfies.*

Period of Significance (from year to year): **1856 - 1968**

Date(s) of construction: **Church: 1866-67; Sunday School Addition: 1916**

Architects: **Lachman & Murphy, Architects (1916 Addition)**

Builders: **Samuel H. Collom (1866-67) and F. B. Davis (1916 Addition)**

Original owner: **St. Stephen's Methodist Episcopal Church**

**CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:**

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

**8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

*Please attach a bibliography.*

**9. NOMINATOR**

Organization: **Keeping Society of Philadelphia**

Author: **Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian**

Date: **7 February 2024**

Email: **Keeper@KeepingPhiladelphia.org**

Nominator  is  is not the property owner.

**PHC USE ONLY**

Date of Receipt: 2/7/2024

Correct-Complete  Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 4/21/2024

Date of Notice Issuance: 4/22/2024

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: St. Stephens Church of Germantown

Address: 5209-13 Germantown Ave

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19144

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: 7/17/2024

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: 8/9/2024

Date of Final Action: 8/9/2024

Designated  Rejected

**NOMINATION**  
**FOR THE**  
**PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**



Figure 1. Left: St. Stephen's M.E. Church, 5209-13 Germantown Avenue, Primary (Southwest) Elevation, ca.1900. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS. Figure 2. Right: St. Stephen's M.E. Church, 5209- 13 Germantown Avenue, Primary (Southwest) Elevation. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2022.

**ST. STEPHEN'S METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

**ERECTED CA. 1866-67**  
**ENLARGED 1916**

**5209-13 GERMANTOWN AVENUE**  
**GERMANTOWN**  
**PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA**

## 5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the proposed designation is as follows:

Beginning at a point on the northeasterly side of Germantown Avenue, approximately 50 feet from the intersection with E. Ashmead Street, thence extending approximately 86 feet northwestwardly along Germantown Avenue to a point; thence extending northeastwardly approximately 755 feet to a point; thence extending southeastwardly approximately 79 feet to a point; thence extending southwestwardly, following the small jogs in the property line, approximately 750 feet to the place of beginning.



Figure 3. The boundary for the proposed designation is delineated in blue. Source: Atlas, City of Philadelphia.

## 6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The property at 5209-13 Germantown Avenue includes two structures (the former St. Stephen's M.E. Church and Parsonage buildings, the latter of which was designated and listed on the Philadelphia Register in 1957) and a large open space at the rear that was historically used as a cemetery. This nomination focuses on the significance of the church building and associated cemetery.



Figure 4: The property at 5209-13 Germantown Avenue includes two buildings, the Fraley House (aka the Parsonage, left) and St. Stephen's Church building (right of center).



Figure 5. St. Stephen's M.E. Church, 5209-13 Germantown Avenue, Primary (Southwest) Elevation. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023.

St. Stephen's Methodist Episcopal Church (now Servants of Christ Methodist Episcopal Church) faces Germantown Avenue from a back lot, the rear portion of which includes a churchyard not visible from the street. The building's cruciform plan is the result of two major building campaigns, undertaken in 1866-67 and 1916. The first created the main sanctuary, which rests on a high basement and extends six bays to the northeast. The tower and slender steeple at the church's south corner are also part of the original fabric. Like the main sanctuary, they are clad in polygonal schist that gives way to ashlar granite around major openings and buttresses. Designed to accommodate a social hall and Sunday school (functions initially housed in the church basement), the rear addition extends one bay to either side of the main sanctuary and is three bays deep. The southwestern, street-facing parts of the addition's façade are clad in roughly coursed schist that yields to granite quoins at the corners and limestone trim at key points (buttress capstones, datestone, windowsills, gable and label moldings). The remainder of the addition is built of exposed, pressed brick. While its northeastern end is rectilinear in massing, its counterpart on the other side of the sanctuary turns a canted wall to the southwest.

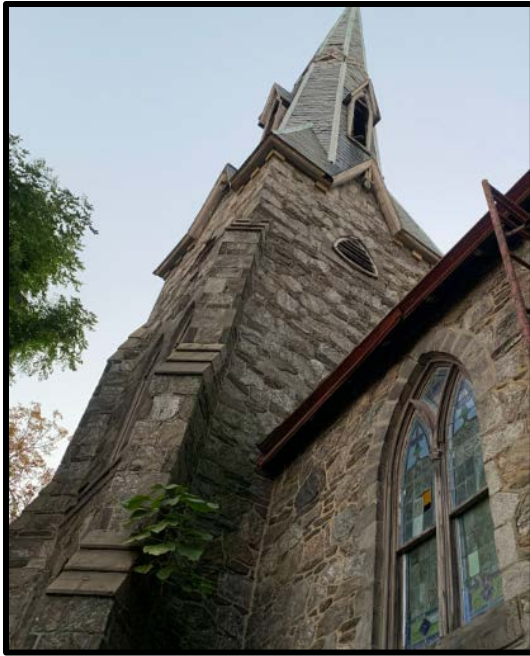


Figure 6. Top: The side (northwest) and primary (southwest) elevations of St. Stephen's M. E. Church. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023. Figure 7. Bottom left: The rear (northeast) elevation of the tower of St. Stephen's M. E. Church. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2022. Figure 8. Bottom right: The side (southeast) elevation of St. Stephen's M. E. Church. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2022.

The church complex is replete with doorways. Two portals pierce the principal façade: the righthand one serving the main sanctuary and the lefthand one opening onto a stairway that leads

to the basement. Other doorways flank the original building, providing direct basement access from the northwest and southeast sides; (the southeast entrance is a portal proper, standing proud of the sanctuary wall and descending into low buttresses). The addition is served by street-facing portals on both its southeastern and northwestern ends. Most doors are of heavy wood construction. Those in the original façade are made of oak and feature elaborate iron strap hinges in a foliate design. The addition's deeply recessed south door has more restrained hinges while its northern counterpart has been replaced with modern stamped-metal door with two lights at the top.



Figure 9. Left: The Gothic Revival gate posts at the street frontage along Germantown Avenue of St. Stephen's M. E. Church. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023. Figure 10. Right: A typical pointed-arch opening within the original volume of St. Stephen's M. E. Church, featuring stained glass. Source: Aaron Wunsch, 2024.

Like the doorways, major windows throughout the church fill pointed-arch openings. The principal exceptions are at the complex's basement level and the first story of the rear addition, where rectangular sashes are employed. The large, tripartite window that illuminates the main sanctuary and smaller pointed-arch windows along the side walls are filled with leaded milk glass that appears to date from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Basement windows are clear, as are all windows on the rear wall. Those in the original building feature rectangular, six-over-six wood sash despite having low pointed-arch openings. Their counterparts in the addition's rear wall are filled with modern glass block, presumably for enhanced security.

Exterior ornamentation throughout the complex is spare, generally taking the form of varied patterns in the stonework. The most high-style elements are reserved for the original façade, where a large foliate finial caps the sanctuary's gable and a cruciform one crowns the steeple. Small, three-sided window openings adorn the walls of the porch that contains the façade's lefthand portal, while the main gable is punctuated near the top by a cruciform arrowlit. The tower features paired Gothic windows on the second story and a circular window above while the steeple features attenuated dormer vents in the fourth story. The large southwestern window that lights the sanctuary is crowned by a Gothic drip molding while the verges of the gable are adorned with a drooping sandstone molding that gives this elevation a gingerbread effect.





Figure 11. Top: The primary (southwest) elevation of the 1916 Addition to St. Stephen's M. E. Church. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023. Figure 12. Bottom: The rear (northeast) elevation of the 1916 Addition to St. Stephen's M. E. Church. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023.



Figure 13. Top: Interior of St. Stephen's M. E. Church, ca.1900. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS. Figure 14. Bottom: Interior of St. Stephen's M. E. Church. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2022.



Figure 15. Top: The primary (southwest) elevation of the Fraley House, aka the Parsonage of St. Stephen's M. E. Church. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023. Figure 16. Bottom: The primary (southwest) and side (southeast) elevations of the Fraley House, aka the Parsonage of St. Stephen's M. E. Church. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023.

The site also contains the Fraley House, which is already listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. It is a building that adheres to the Germantown Vernacular tradition with Federal period details.



Figure 17. Top: A Pictometry image of the subject property showing the former burial ground of St. Stephen's M.E. Church, which features vegetation. Source: Pictometry, Atlas, City of Philadelphia. Figure 18. Bottom: Looking east at the former burial ground of St. Stephen's M. E. Church. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2022.

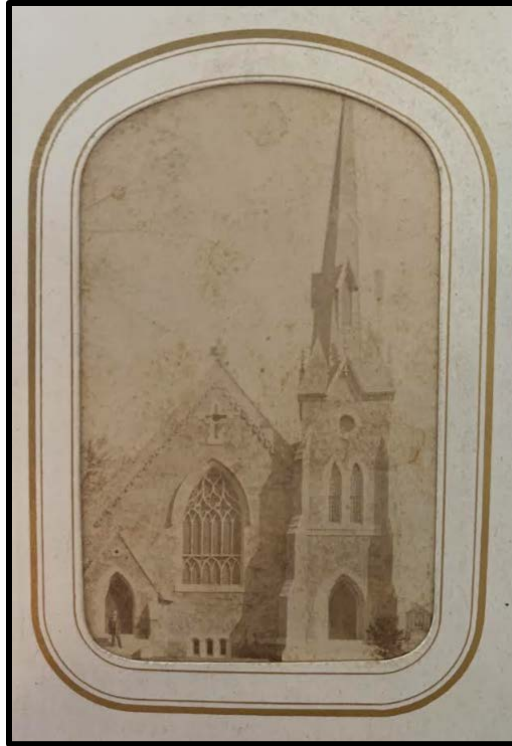


Figure 19. The earliest known photograph of St. Stephen's M. E. Church, showing the primary (southwest) elevation, ca.1870. Source: GHS.

## **7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

St. Stephen's M.E. Church at 5209-13 Germantown Avenue in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The building satisfies the following Criteria for Designation as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

- a) *Has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, or Nation or is associated with a person significant in the past;*
- c) *Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;*
- i) *Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; and*
- j) *Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.*

The period of significance for the subject property dates to the time of purchase in ca. 1856 through 1968, when the church was racially integrated, just after its 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.



Figure 20. St. Stephen's M. E. Church, 5209-13 Germantown Ave, Primary (Southwest) Elevation, ca.1880. Source: GHS.



Figure 21. The Fraley House, aka the Parsonage of St. Stephen's M. E. Church, and St. Stephen's M. E. Church, ca. 1880-90. Source: GHS.

### **CRITERIA A, C, I, AND J**

Satisfying Criterion A, St. Stephen's M.E. Church has significant character, interest, and value as part of the architectural and physical development of Germantown, representing an ongoing building and planning tradition, wherein institutional and religious edifices were set back from Germantown Avenue on lots that essentially formed court-like spaces, though of a more rural character, allowing for density on the main street and larger buildings towards the rear. St. Stephen's possesses distinguishing characteristics of the Gothic Revival style, satisfying Criterion C. St. Stephen's is also an important old Methodist Episcopal congregation in Germantown, beginning on the site in the 1850s, when Germantown was undergoing suburbanization, and greatly expanding with the construction of the subject building in 1866-67, representing the continual growth and formation of a religious and social community. By the late nineteenth century, the congregation continued to grow, as Lower Germantown underwent dense urban development while retaining some suburban and even rural aspects. As the neighborhood became more economically diverse, the congregation served a wide range of citizens, culminating in a large addition and substantial renovations in 1916. Associated with the site from 1856 until 2024, St. Stephen's represents the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the community, satisfying Criterion J. Finally, St. Stephen's is a site that includes multiple historic resources, including an early house on Germantown Avenue; the 1866-67 church; the 1916 addition; and the former burial ground at the rear of the property that extends to Wakefield Street. Operating as a burial ground for many decades, the ground of St. Stephen's may contain human remains and other artifacts that are important to history, satisfying Criterion I.

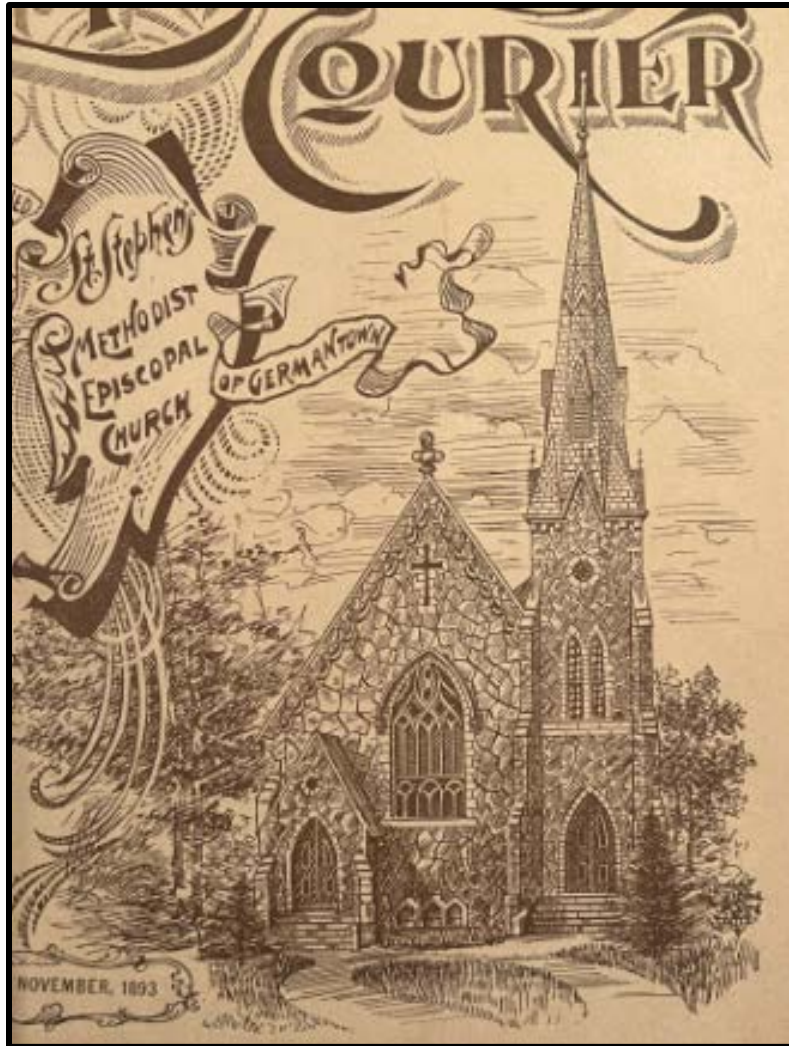


Figure 22. An illustration of St. Stephen's M. E. Church as shown on the cover of the *Epworth Courier* in November 1893. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

### **CRITERION A AND J**

Roughly two years after the consolidation of the City of Philadelphia in 1854, St. Stephen's M.E. Church was established in April 1856 by the Haines Street Methodist Episcopal Church. Robert Thomas describes the process and justification in his book, *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*:

After a full and free discussion, it was, by an almost unanimous vote, determined that the time had arrived when it was the duty of the Church to furnish the people of Germantown, desiring to enjoy the privileges and blessings of Methodism, with greater church accommodations; and it was the opinion of those present that a new Church should be established in the southern part of the town, where, for a number years, there had been, in successful operation, a Sunday-school under the care of



Haines Street Church, on Spring Alley, near Manheim street; and subsequently at other places in the lower end of the town, under the care of Brother James Tatlow.<sup>1</sup>

The decision to expand Methodism to Lower Germantown represents a moment in local history, when the neighborhood was undergoing intense change, including its development as one of Philadelphia's premier suburbs. The establishment of both the railroad and trolley lines in the second quarter of the nineteenth century made suburbanization a possibility for more than the very rich, and, as a result, Germantown's population grew significantly. In fact, when the Philadelphia, Germantown and Norristown Railroad (PG&N) was established in 1832, making it one of the oldest commuter lines in North America, the *Germantown Telegraph* reported that the Borough of Germantown had approximately 1,024 taxable inhabitants and 731 dwelling houses.<sup>2</sup>

Germantown would see these numbers rise significantly in the late 1840s and early 1850s. Roughly 228 new houses were built in 1848 and about 173 more in 1849, resulting in a 50 percent rise based on the 1832 statistic. By 1850, the *Germantown Telegraph* reported approximately 1,328 taxable inhabitants, including both male and female citizens. That same year, it was reported that the Borough saw 150 new houses.<sup>3</sup> The next year, in 1851, the number increased again to 1,479 "male taxables." An additional 123 dwellings were also constructed.<sup>4</sup> By 1854, there were roughly 3,044 taxables, more than doubling the number from just three years earlier.<sup>5</sup> By the time St. Stephen's M.E. Church was founded, Germantown boasted 3,897 taxable citizens in 1856.<sup>6</sup> The rising population no doubt correlates with the increasing number of Methodists in Germantown, spurring the development of a second congregation.

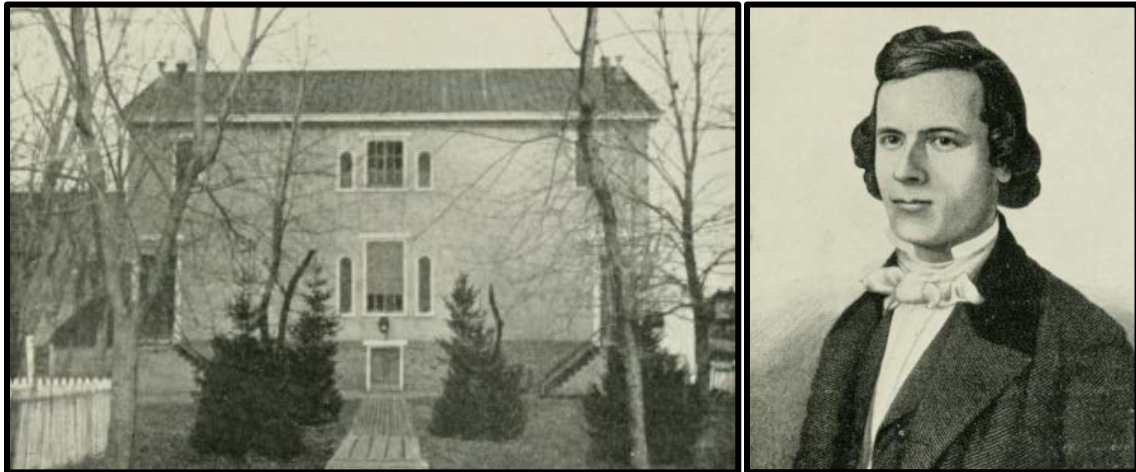


Figure 23. Left: The original 1856 building of St. Stephen's. Source: GHS. Figure 24. Right: Rev. Newton Heston. Source: *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*, 51.

Roughly two months after its establishment, St. Stephen's M.E. Church, via Joseph Barrett, purchased the subject property, fronting Germantown Avenue approximately 85.4 feet, from

<sup>1</sup> Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895), 54.

<sup>2</sup> *Germantown Telegraph*, January 1832.

<sup>3</sup> *Germantown Telegraph*, December 1850.

<sup>4</sup> *Germantown Telegraph*, December 1851.

<sup>5</sup> *Germantown Telegraph*, October 1854.

<sup>6</sup> *Germantown Telegraph*, December 1856.

Michael Trumbower on June 4, 1856.<sup>7</sup> The property then included the present two-and-one-half-story dwelling, known as the Dr. Henry Fraley House, which stood on the site by the time of Dr. Fraley's ownership in 1777.<sup>8</sup> Set upon a large lot, the congregation did not demolish the old house, rather they commissioned proposals for a "chapel in accordance with the plans and specifications prepared by Edward Heston (father of the pastor, Rev. Newton Heston), the dimensions to be forty-six by seventy (46x70) feet; to be set crosswise on the lot, with the view of building at some future date the main edifice in front of the same, thus forming a "T."<sup>9</sup> The cornerstone of the first building was laid in the afternoon of Saturday, September 6, 1856. The subject property was deeded to St. Stephen's M.E. Church by Joseph Barrett on October 24, 1856.<sup>10</sup>



Figure 25. St. Stephen's M. E. Church is at the center of two houses on Germantown Avenue. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023.

Set back from the street, access to the rear was gained, as it is today, by a gateway to the southeast of the Fraley House and to the northwest of the dwelling at 5203-05 Germantown Avenue. Nevertheless, it was dedicated on December 21, 1856, by Bishop Levi Scott. The first pastor was Rev. Newton Heston, who served briefly until March 1857. Upon his departure, he reported 100 members and 68 probationers at the Annual Conference in Wilmington, Delaware.<sup>11</sup> Rev. Heston was replaced by Rev. William H. Elliot, who recalled the following on first seeing the "exceedingly plain" edifice of his new congregation:

When Brother Elliott first brought his family to Germantown, his young daughter, catching a view of the church, exclaimed, " Oh, papa, what factory is that?"

"That, my daughter," he replied, "is the factory that I am going to work in." <sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Deed: Micheal Trumbower to Joseph Barrett, 4 June 1856, Philadelphia Deed Book R.D.W., No. 81, p.393.

<sup>8</sup> Harry M. Tinkcom, Margaret B. Tinkcom, and Grant Miles Simon. *Historic Germantown*. (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1955).

<sup>9</sup> Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895), 54.

<sup>10</sup> Reg. Plan No. 54-N-2-A, City of Philadelphia.

<sup>11</sup> "A Bit Of History," *St. Stephen's Message*, July 1905, 1.

<sup>12</sup> Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895), 50.

Nevertheless, Rev. Elliot persevered. It wasn't until after the Civil War had ended, that the congregation, then under the leadership of Rev. John Thompson, "determined to erect a new church building." In planning the subject structure, the congregation did not demolish the Fraley House, located immediately upon Germantown Avenue, nor did they elect to wedge a new house of worship into the dense Germantown Avenue streetscape. Instead, the congregation followed the age-old tradition in Germantown, locating their new house of worship in the open L-shaped portion of the lot. Recessed roughly 120 feet from the main street, the building would be partly obscured by the Fraley House on Germantown Avenue. The new building would be a Gothic Revival-style structure with a picturesque quality. Set back from the street with ample ground for burials in the rear, the church and its setting recalled a rural aspect of the community that was gradually disappearing in Lower Germantown throughout the congregation's history.

As a Strassendorf settlement, a linear Germanic town, Germantown Avenue was always the main street with very few cross streets in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The town plan and division of lots led to the creation of long, narrow lots with frontage on Germantown Avenue. Most of the houses were built immediately upon the main street for both residential and commercial reasons.<sup>13</sup> Easements often led to the interior of the meandering lots. The siting of churches and institutional buildings within the interior of these parcels is the product of history, as well as a planning tradition that dates to the foundational period of the community. It likely began purely out of happenstance and, ultimately, conservatism. The Society of Friends appears to be the earliest version of this tradition when they sited their original burial ground immediately upon Germantown Avenue with a log meeting house in the rear. This would be known today as 5406-16 Germantown Avenue. Long before Coulter Street was introduced, the original meeting house was replaced by a larger, stone structure, which was accessed by a carriageway along the southeast side of the burial ground from Germantown Avenue to the interior of the lot. This building would have been visible from Germantown Avenue, though it was a modest structure of the Germantown Vernacular tradition. It stood on the site of the Germantown Friends School's main building.



Figure 26. Left: The alley from Germantown Avenue to St. Luke's Episcopal Church at 5409-11 and 5419 Germantown Avenue. Source: GHS. Figure 27. Right: St. Luke's Episcopal Church, as shown on the 1889

<sup>13</sup> Harry M. Tinkcom, Margaret B. Tinkcom, and Grant Miles Simon. *Historic Germantown*. (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1955).

Philadelphia Atlas. Source: Atlas of the City of Philadelphia. Volume 7, 1889, Plate 6, Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

Across from the Quakers, St. Luke's Episcopal Church at 5409-11 and 5419 Germantown Avenue is the nineteenth-century version of this tradition. While today it may appear as though St. Luke's is a typical old church with a large front lawn, it began as a house of worship located within the interior of the block, largely obscured by buildings on Germantown Avenue, on a parcel that was donated to the congregation by Thomas Armat in 1818. As shown above in Figures 25 and 26, the house of worship was set in an open churchyard with a narrow carriageway from Germantown Avenue to the interior of the parcel. Set behind a dense main street, this site too retained a rural aspect, especially before the introduction of E. Coulter Street. In time, the houses on Germantown Avenue that formed this court in the town-like, suburban setting were acquired by the church and demolished to expand the complex and create a more idyllic vista of the ecclesiastical structures from the main street.

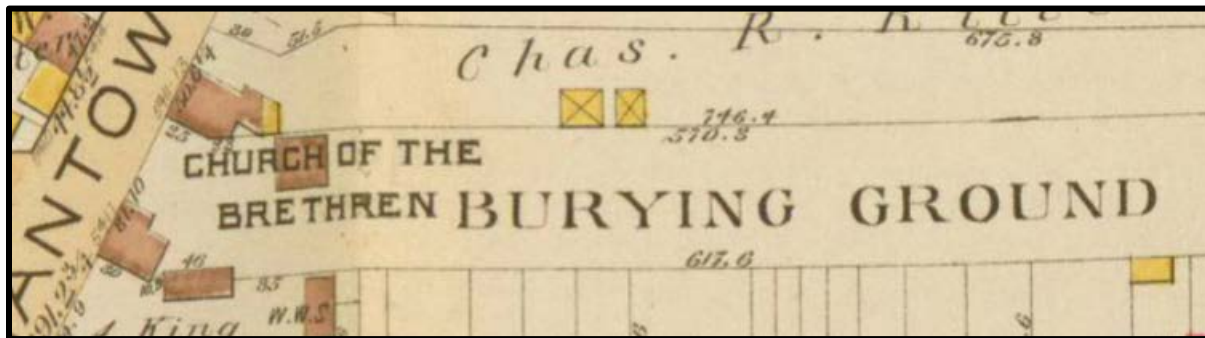


Figure 28. Church of the Brethren, as shown on the 1889 Philadelphia Atlas. Source: Atlas of the City of Philadelphia. Volume 7, 1889, Plate 6, Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

There are certainly several other examples of this motif. The Church of the Brethren in Mt. Airy is set back from Germantown Avenue much like St. Stephens, historically with an old dwelling occupying additional frontage along the main street and a burial ground in the rear of the property. Nineteenth-century photographs of the property show the meeting house set back from the street, and again a rural aspect is present. In recent history, the buildings to the northwest of the original parcel have been demolished, creating a false sense of history, with an open vista of the church, as though the Germantown Avenue frontage was always a spacious front yard. Built in the mid-nineteenth century, Trinity Lutheran Church also follows this tradition, being set back from Germantown Avenue, partly obscured by the Saur/Sower House—the congregation's parsonage and set within a churchyard. This example also delineates the delicate line between the dense main street and the open space that is retained in a churchyard. Town Hall, built in 1854-55, at 5928-30 Germantown Avenue. was also recessed from the street, where a mansion once stood, though it always reflected a more traditional front lawn ideal on an L-shaped lot, unlike its later replacement, which was constructed immediately upon Germantown Avenue. Naturally, some of the old mansions of Germantown Avenue reflected this same tradition. While set in a large open park today, Vernon at 5710-18 Germantown Avenue was set in an L-shaped lot, the interior of which was enclosed by buildings constructed immediately upon Germantown Avenue. The effect of this built environment was also distorted in the late nineteenth century when the city demolished many of the main street buildings to create a large open park with substantial frontage. Opposite Town Hall, the site of Germantown High School once contained the Butler Mansion, which was set back

from the street on a narrow, but still spacious lot. This ultimately led to the construction of Germantown High School on the site, which, rather than facing Germantown Avenue, faced High Street, making the best of the constrained space.

While many examples of this building and planning tradition have been lost to demolition and/or other modern improvements, St. Stephen's M.E. Church is one important example that survives to tell the story of Germantown's physical development, satisfying Criterion A.

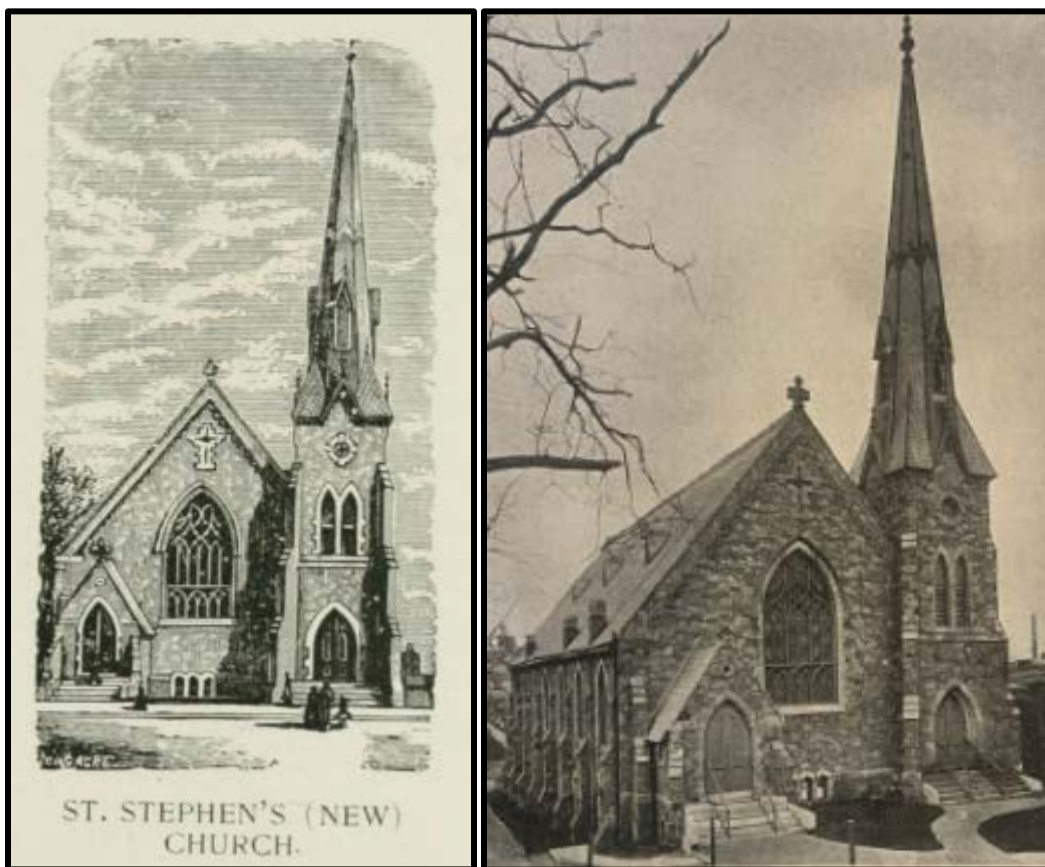


Figure 29. Left: An illustration of St. Stephen's M. E. Church at Germantown. Source: Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895), 54. Figure 30. Right: A postcard of St. Stephen's M. E. Church, ca.1900. Source: GHS.

### **CRITERION J**

St. Stephen's M. E. Church represents the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the Germantown community, as the neighborhood expanded from a Germanic village to a prosperous suburb to an urban neighborhood. The congregation served as a community center in Lower Germantown from the time of its founding through the third quarter of the twentieth century, satisfying Criterion J. Additionally, St. Stephen's M. E. Church is the oldest Methodist Episcopal church edifice in Germantown.

After nearly ten years on the subject site, in August 1866, William A. Church “brought to the notice of the trustees a photograph of a church in Ireland that had attracted attention.”<sup>14</sup> Given that the original building was in need of both repairs and upgrades, it was determined more economically advantageous to construct an entirely new house of worship. With the Irish specimen as their inspiration, the congregation commissioned Samuel H. Collom (1822-1911), a Germantown mason, to begin work on their new Gothic Revival style church.<sup>15</sup> Specifically, Collom was “awarded the contract for the digging of the foundation and doing all the masonry, and to furnish materials therefor, for the price or sum of seven thousand six hundred and fifty (\$7,650) dollars,” a price that included the material from the original building. Brothers William Hodson, Smith E. Hughes, and Edwin Markley formed the committee charged with overseeing the project.<sup>16</sup>

During construction, the congregation worshiped in the Bull’s Head Market House (later the Manheim Laundry, now demolished) on Germantown Avenue below Coulter Street, a tenure that extended from August 1866 to November 1867. While meeting in the market house, a successful revival led to “many new members.” The cornerstone of the subject building was laid on October 17, 1866, with Bishop Matthew Simpson officiating.<sup>17</sup>

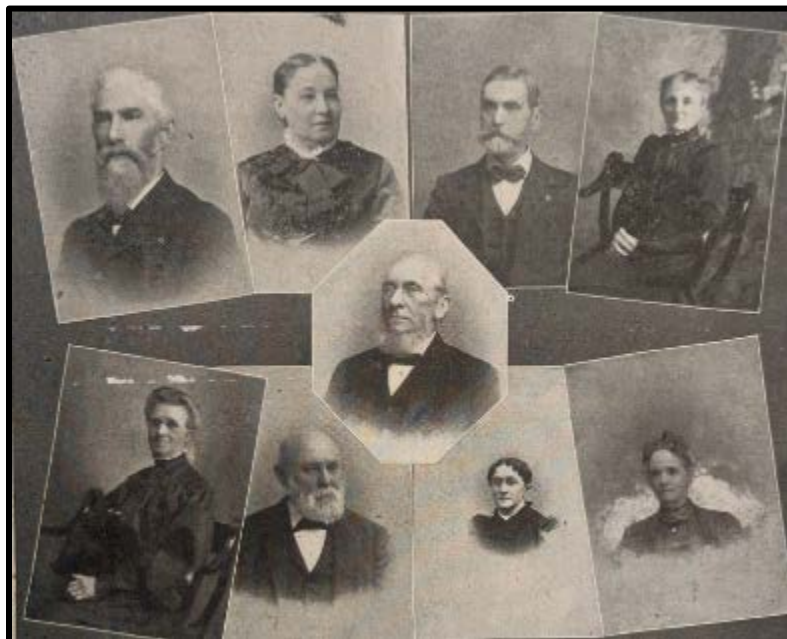


Figure 31. Charter members of the congregation at the time of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, including (top, middle, and bottom, left to right) John D. Caldwell, Mrs. John D. Caldwell, Edward Campion, Mrs. Edward Campion, Robert

<sup>14</sup> “A Century of History,” *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen’s M. E. Church*. (Philadelphia: St. Stephen’s M. E. Church, 1955), 1-2. Source: St. Stephen’s M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895), 54.

Ancestry.com. *1870 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009. Images reproduced by FamilySearch.

<sup>16</sup> Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895), 53.

<sup>17</sup> “A Century of History,” *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen’s M. E. Church*. (Philadelphia: St. Stephen’s M. E. Church, 1955), 2. Source: St. Stephen’s M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

Thomas (center), Mrs. John W. Campion, Thomas Hobson, Mrs. William Stephens, and Mrs. J. M. Lord. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

Construction continued through the Fall of 1867, when eventually on Sunday, December 1, 1867, the building was in a state to allow for an official dedication. The celebration lasted most of the day with Rev. Jacob Todd officiating the morning service; Rev. James Neil the afternoon service; and Rev. John S. Inskip, of the New York Conference, the evening service.<sup>18</sup> It was announced that the building needed an additional \$5,000 to cover the costs related to completion. By the close of the day, it is said that \$5,264.69 had been pledged.<sup>19</sup> It was during the evening service that the congregation's pastor, Rev. John Thompson, formally dedicated the subject building, despite it being unfinished. Apparently, the congregation did not immediately complete their new houses of worship, given that the Board of Trustees wouldn't resolve to finish the church building until their meeting on April 11, 1871. Samuel E. Hughes was commissioned to complete the building on December 17, 1871, which included "an end gallery," improvements projected to cost approximately \$4,065. The pastor at that time was Rev. Cunningham.<sup>20</sup>

Completion of the new building officially launched the congregation as a primary place of worship in Germantown. While the Haines Street M. E. Church had erected a new brick building several years prior, at the northern end of Germantown, it did not have the same presence as the subject building, which was essentially the most important church edifice between Queen Lane and Neglee's Hill in Lower Germantown.

In 1881, during the pastorate of Rev. T. T. Everett, the basement was entirely renovated for the purposes of both lecture rooms and classrooms at a cost of \$4,000. In 1889, during the pastorate of Rev. A. L. Urban, the church underwent extensive renovations, at which time the interior was "frescoed, painted and refurnished." These improvements included removal of the "plaster partition between the vestibule and the auditorium" for the installation of the "beautiful new paneling and sashes built in, forming a new partition," which still survives in 2024. A bell was placed in the steeple during the course of this project. The church officially dedicated the improvements on Sunday, October 27, 1889.<sup>21</sup>

That same year, the congregation formed "a Mission" and "a Sunday-school" on the west side of Germantown, at the corner of Penn Street and Patton Avenue (later Priscilla Street), which was largely under the care of the young congregants of St. Stephen's M. E. Church.<sup>22</sup> In fact, in 1891, Ethel Shingle, a young girl, passed away, leaving the church twenty-three cents, which was the entire contents of her savings bank. A building fund, called the "Ethel Fund," was created at that

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<sup>18</sup> Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895), 54.

<sup>19</sup> "A Century of History," *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen's M. E. Church*. (Philadelphia: St. Stephen's M. E. Church, 1955), 2. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895), 54.

<sup>21</sup> "A Century of History," *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen's M. E. Church*. (Philadelphia: St. Stephen's M. E. Church, 1955), 12. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>22</sup> Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895), 54.

time.<sup>23</sup> The mission eventually procured a lot at the corner of Penn and Morris Streets, where a temporary building, known as the Ethel Memorial Chapel, was installed, being dedicated on Sunday, September 15, 1895. This seedling of a congregation and its frame building grew to become the Church of the Advocate, a congregation that constructed the impressive church edifice that still stands at the southwest corner of Wayne Avenue and Queen Lane.<sup>24</sup>

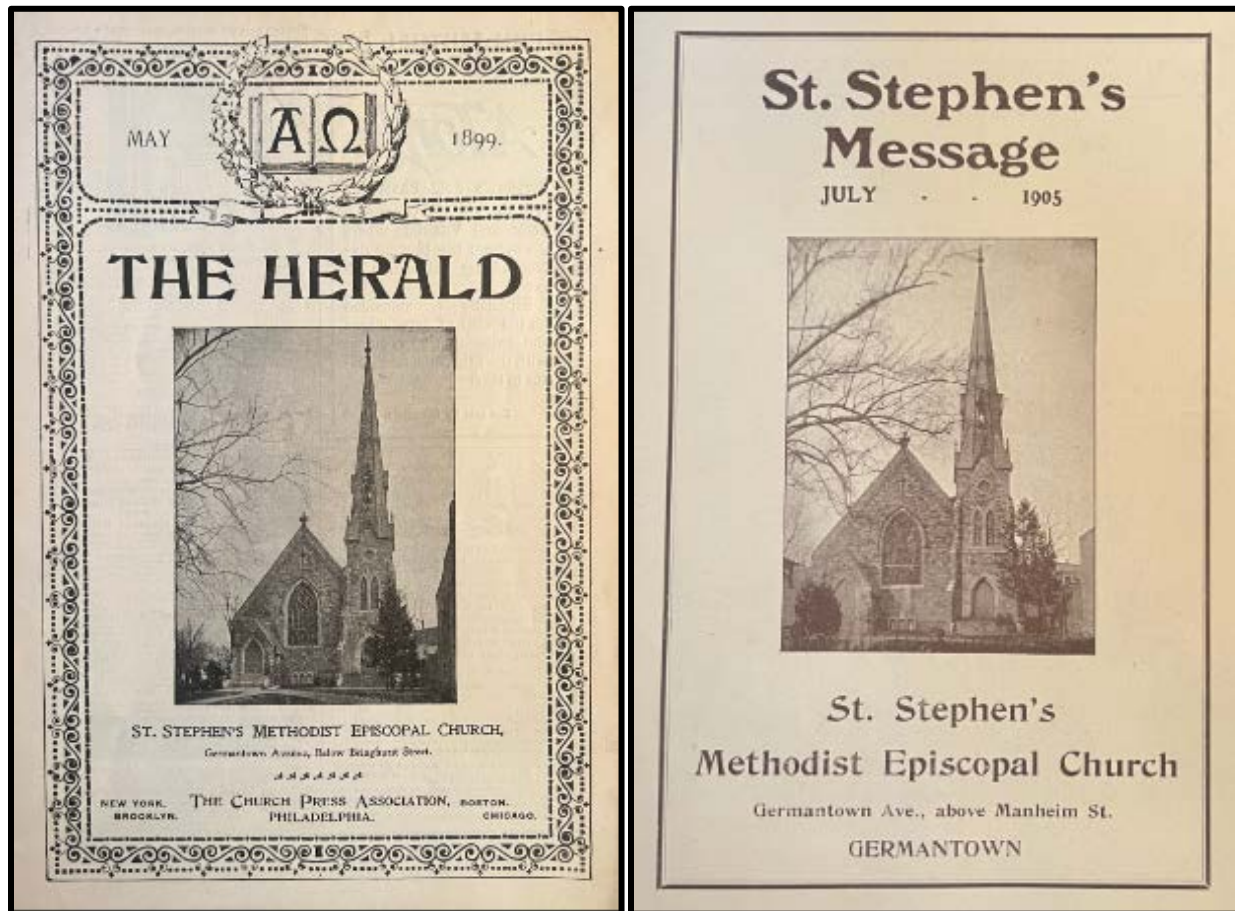


Figure 32. Left: *The Herald*, May 1899. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS. Figure 33. Right: *St. Stephen's Message*, July 1905. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

At the time of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held at the Green Street M. E. Church on March 9, 1893, Pastor Urban reported the following statistics about the congregation:

Number of Sunday-schools, 2; officers and teachers, 69; scholars, of all ages, 505; number of probationers, 6; full members, 430.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> "A Century of History," *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen's M. E. Church*. (Philadelphia: St. Stephen's M. E. Church, 1955), 12. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>24</sup> "A Century of History," *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen's M. E. Church*. (Philadelphia: St. Stephen's M. E. Church, 1955), 12. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>25</sup> Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895), 57.



The 1892 conference led to the appointment of Rev. A. G. Kynett as the new pastor, which was successful, as he increased the numbers previously reported in just a few years:

23 probationers and 528 full members; 2 Sunday-schools, 55 officers and teachers and 469 scholars of all ages.<sup>26</sup>

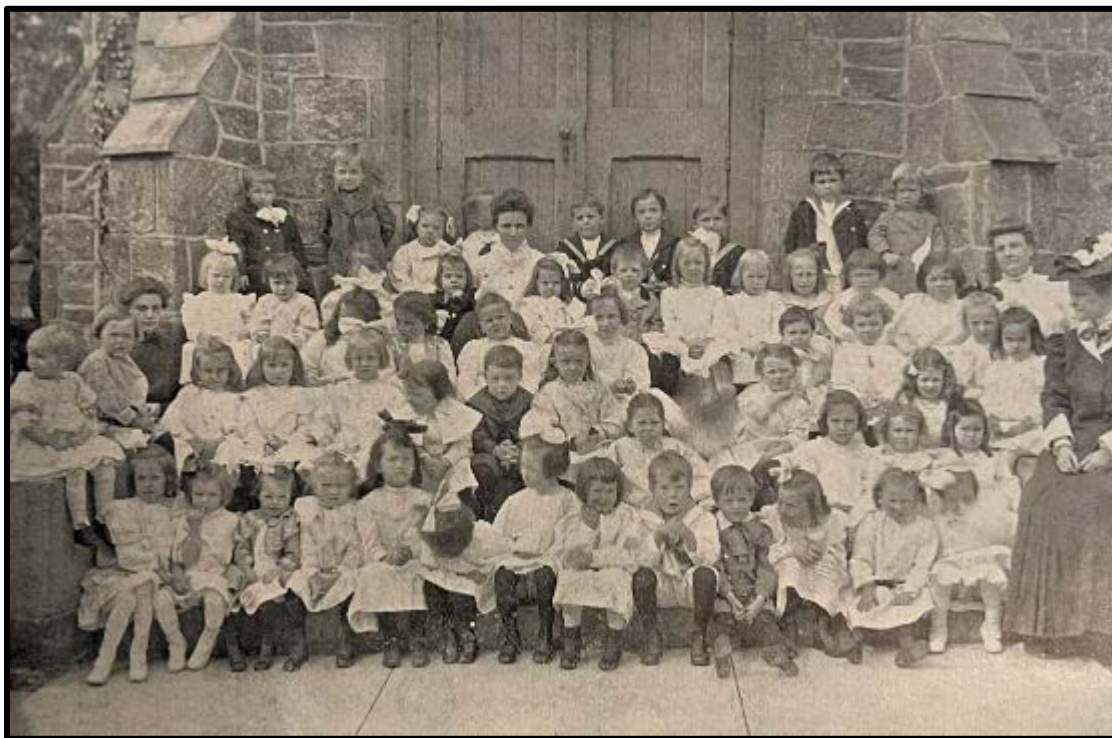


Figure 34. The children of St. Stephen's M. E. Church in ca.1890s. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

This substantial Germantown congregation was a very active community center by the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century, containing a diverse array of members. While the congregation had always had an impressive choir, their activities increased exponentially over time to include local and international mission work; fundraising for various charities; community service; education and entertainment involving religious subject matter; religious training; sports; excursions; social work; etc. The activities of the church were reported on in several different organs, published by the congregation, over the years: *The Epworth Courier, Published in the Interest of St. Stephen's Methodist Episcopal Church of Germantown*, published from ca. November 1893 through ca. March 1896; *The Herald*, published in ca.1899; and *St. Stephen's Message*, published from ca.1905 to ca. November 1915. The congregation also published an attractive "Manual and Directory" for many years.<sup>27</sup> Among the activities and clubs, the congregation had its own "Ushers Union Camping Club," which led to Annual Encampments at Camp Idyllwild in Maryland. Photographs depict fun excursions shared among working class

<sup>26</sup> Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895), 57.

<sup>27</sup> *Manual and Directory of St. Stephen's Methodist Episcopal Church, Germantown, Phila.* (1902).; and *Directory, St. Stephen's Methodist Episcopal Church*. (January 1915).

boys, which included at least one African American attendant. These efforts appear to have been led by Naaman Keyser, a prominent congregant and Germantown resident.<sup>28</sup>

In 1905, St. Stephen's M. E. Church amended the charter to allow all members, including both male and female, to vote in affairs of the church. One year later, in 1906, the congregation celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with eight charter members present: John D. Caldwell, Jacob M. West, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Campion; Thomas Hobson; Mrs. William Stephens; Mrs. Joseph M. Lord, and Robert Thomas.<sup>29</sup>

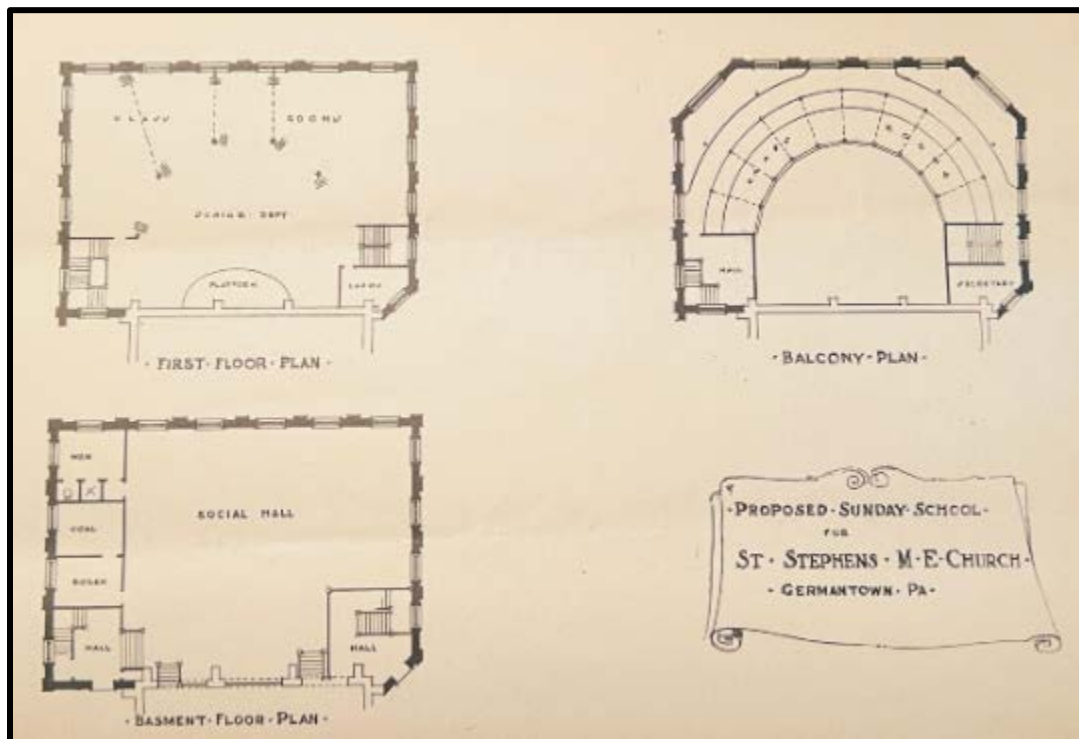


Figure 35. Plans for the “Proposed Sunday School” for St. Stephen’s M. E. Church. Source: St. Stephen’s M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

While the congregation had long desired a new Sunday School building, it finally came to fruition between 1915 and 1916, during the pastorate of Rev. Wayne Channell. According to one church history, a groundbreaking occurred on October 29, 1915.<sup>30</sup> The official plans for a “Sunday School Building” were first announced in *The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide* on November 10, 1915, when it was disclosed that Lachman & Murphy of the Witherspoon Building, were the architects.<sup>31</sup> F.B. Davis was awarded the construction contract by December 1, 1915.<sup>32</sup> The plans included “A social hall, opening out of the present prayer meeting room, a kitchen and

<sup>28</sup> *Log of the Second Annual Encampment of the St. Stephen’s Ushers’ Union Camping Club of Germantown, Philadelphia.* (1897). Source: St. Stephen’s M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>29</sup> “A Century of History,” *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen’s M. E. Church.* (Philadelphia: St. Stephen’s M. E. Church, 1955), 12. Source: St. Stephen’s M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>30</sup> “A Century of History,” *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen’s M. E. Church.* (Philadelphia: St. Stephen’s M. E. Church, 1955), 12. Source: St. Stephen’s M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>31</sup> *The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, 10 November 1915.

<sup>32</sup> *The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, 1 December 1915, 766.

enlarged rooms for the primary and beginners' departments; the main floor of the Sunday school on the level of the church auditorium..." The projected costs were \$23,000.<sup>33</sup> The cornerstone was laid by Bishop Joseph F. Berry on January 15, 1916.<sup>34</sup> In time, the plans changed to some degree and the cost escalated to \$26,000. The renovations took place throughout the entire complex, including the rear addition; renovation of the basement of the subject building's main volume; and renovations to the sanctuary.<sup>35</sup> The new basement of the addition even included a basketball court.<sup>36</sup> The building was dedicated by Bishop Berry on October 8, 1916.<sup>37</sup>

According to a church history, the pipe organ was rebuilt in 1922:

1922. The pipe organ was rebuilt, enlarged and entirely remodeled, so that the full volume of music could be obtained. The metal and wooden pipes had mellowed with age. Many more new pipes were added to them with chimes and electric pneumatic action of the latest improvement. The organ was re-arranged dividing the swell organ from the great organ with a new choir gallery between. Sunday, November 12th, the newly rebuilt pipe organ was dedicated to the worship of God. Organ experts tell us that the rebuilt organ with the mellowed tones of those older pipes, could not be duplicated with any new instrument today.

Source: "A Century of History," *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen's M. E. Church*. (Philadelphia: St. Stephen's M. E. Church, 1955), 12. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

In 1928, a children's choir was established by Dr. Luther H. Ketels, Pastor. In 1930, the church steeple underwent repairs, at which time the ornament at the top of the spire was removed and replaced by a modern cross.<sup>38</sup> The 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the congregation was celebrated on a Thursday evening in March 1936.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> "Sunday School's Home," Unknown Germantown Publication, 1915. Source: Clippings File on St. Stephen's M. E. Church, GHS.

<sup>34</sup> "A Century of History," *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen's M. E. Church*. (Philadelphia: St. Stephen's M. E. Church, 1955), 12. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>35</sup> "To Open Building For Sunday School," Unknown Publication, October 1916. Source: Clippings File on St. Stephen's M. E. Church, GHS.

<sup>36</sup> "Sunday School's Home," Unknown Germantown Publication, 1915. Source: Clippings File on St. Stephen's M. E. Church, GHS.

<sup>37</sup> "A Century of History," *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen's M. E. Church*. (Philadelphia: St. Stephen's M. E. Church, 1955), 12. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>38</sup> "A Century of History," *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen's M. E. Church*. (Philadelphia: St. Stephen's M. E. Church, 1955), 13. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>39</sup> "A Century of History," *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen's M. E. Church*. (Philadelphia: St. Stephen's M. E. Church, 1955), 15. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

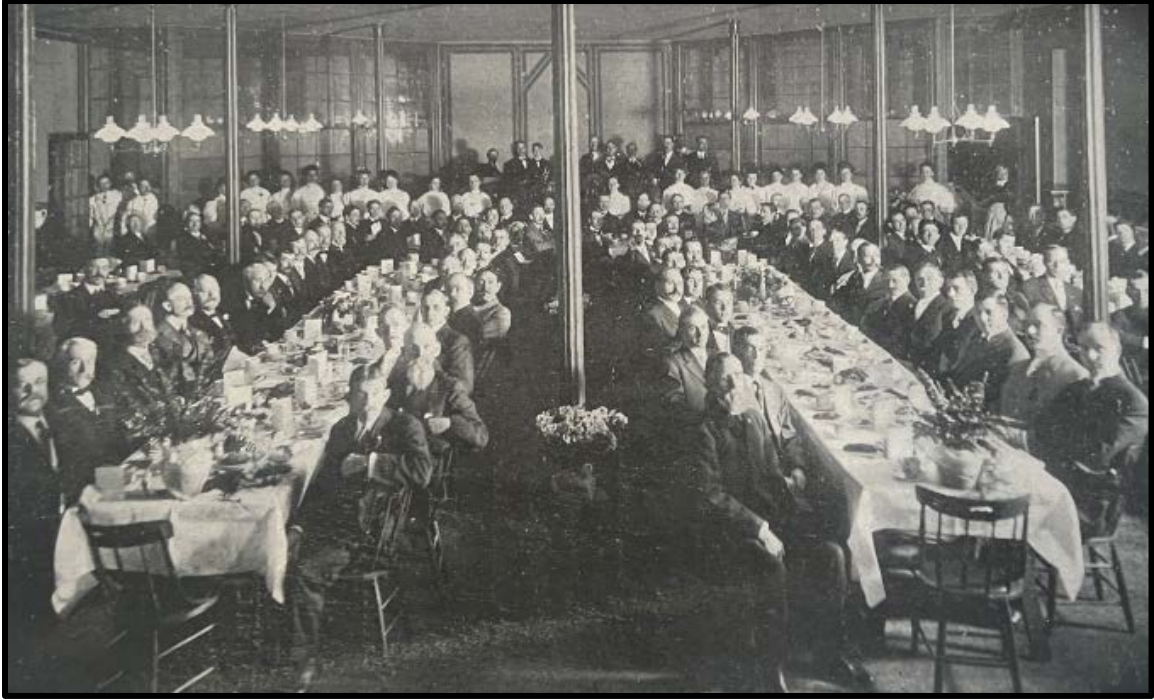


Figure 36. The Men's Association of St. Stephen's M. E. Church. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

In October 1953, a Young Adult Fellowship and a Youth Fellowship were organized. During this time, the parsonage was renovated, which included the installation of "automatic heat." An illuminated memorial cross, in memory of Mrs. Bessie Hazel, was dedicated on the evening of Sunday, October 10, 1954. A Loyalty Crusade began in 1955.<sup>40</sup>

The congregation celebrated its 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 1965.<sup>41</sup>

In 1968, Alice Cole and Annie Spellman, two African American women, who lived nearby, began attending St. Stephen's M. E. Church, at which time the congregation was primarily comprised of white members. While the congregation was initially surprised to see the two Black women in attendance, Cole and Spellman, and their respective families were ultimately welcomed as members of the church, essentially integrating the congregation.<sup>42</sup>

Serving as a community center for over 100 years, St. Stephen's M. E. Church represents the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of Germantown, satisfying Criterion J. Additionally, St. Stephen's M. E. Church is the oldest Methodist Episcopal church edifice in Germantown.

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<sup>40</sup> "A Century of History," *The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Stephen's M. E. Church*. (Philadelphia: St. Stephen's M. E. Church, 1955), 12. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>41</sup> Anne McCaughey. "St. Stephen's Methodist Episcopal Church Was Organized In Old Town Hall," Unknown Publication, 29 July 1965. Source: St. Stephen's M. E. Church Collection, GHS.

<sup>42</sup> Alice Cole. Interview. Conducted by Oscar Beisert. 19 June 2023.

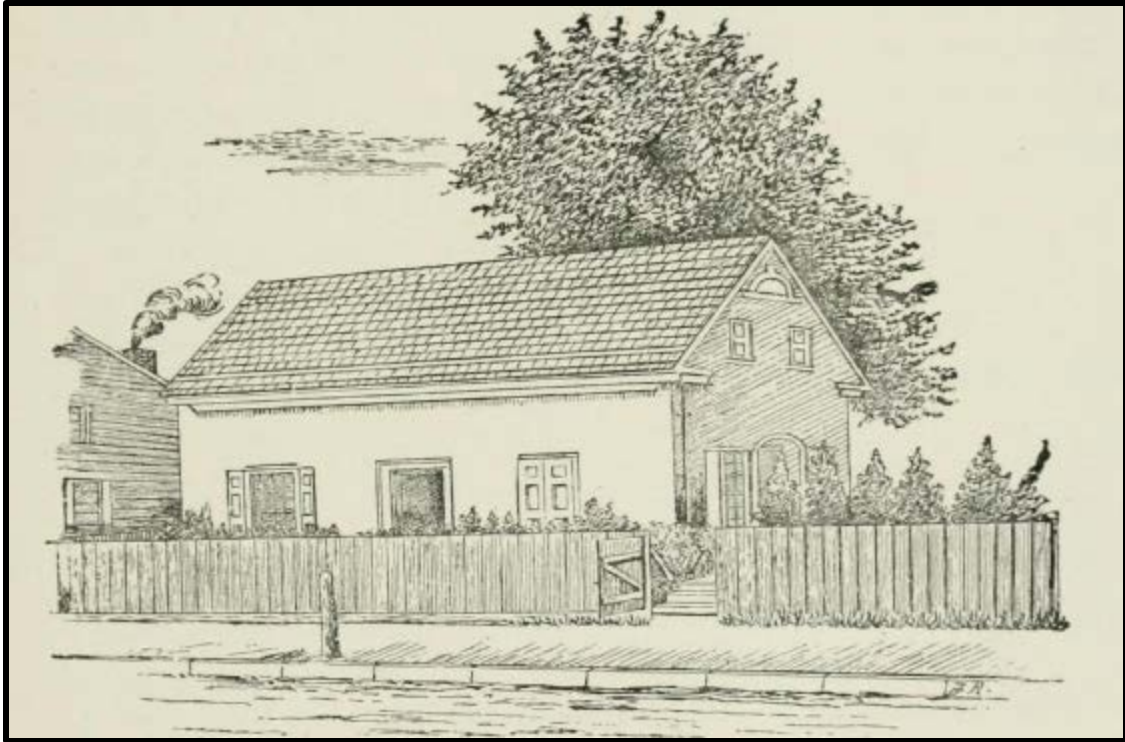


Figure 37. The First M. E. Church of Germantown, E. Haines Street. Source: Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895).

### **HISTORIC CONTEXT: METHODISM IN GERMANTOWN**

Germantown's first known sermon delivered "by an ordained minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church," the Rev. Francis Asbury, took place on Monday March 31, 1773, in the Market Square Presbyterian Church's original building, when it still served a Dutch Reformed Congregation. Beginning in 1794, a group of Methodists held meetings at the Germantown Academy, which led to a sermon by Ezekiel Cooper on at least two occasions in 1796. He then organized a class of eleven members, appointing Joseph Jacobs, a Wesleyan from England, as the leader. Subsequent mission work took place at Germantown intermittently through the end of the century. This type of worship would continue until the turn of the nineteenth century when betrothal further propelled the formation of the first Methodist congregation in Germantown.



Figure 38. Left: Jacob Reger. Source: Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895). Figure 39. Right: Dorothy Shrader Reger. Source: Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895).

In 1799, Jacob Reger, a feisty German vinegar manufacturer of Germantown, desired to marry Dorothy Shrader of Philadelphia, the daughter of Hannah Shrader. A devoted Methodist, Mrs. Shrader objected to the marriage proposal, formally registering her complaints: her potential son-in-law was not a Methodist nor were there Methodist meetings held regularly at Germantown. To secure his desired bride, Mr. Reger promised the redoubtable Mrs. Rader to personally deliver both mother and daughter to St. George's Church in Philadelphia every Sunday until the time when weekly Methodist meetings would be established at Germantown. Ultimately, the dominant matriarch consented and the Reger-Shrader nuptials took place on November 12, 1799, at St. George's. After the marriage took place, the couple began hosting Methodist meetings at their home on East Haines Street.



Figure 40. First M. E. Church, Haines Street, Germantown, ca.1900 (Demolished). Source: Robert Thomas. *A Century of Methodism in Germantown*. (Philadelphia: Press of the *Germantown Independent*, 1895).

“Pickius Lane,” later known as Haines’ Street, became the center of Methodism in Germantown for much of the nineteenth century. Not only did Reger host the public for meetings in his dwelling, but he also sold the congregation a small lot, measuring 60 feet in front, on East Haines Street for a meeting house. Dated May 21, 1804, the lot was conveyed to Thomas Allibone, Thomas Hoskins, James Dougherty, Samuel Harvey, John Hewson, Jr., John Hood, Lambert Wilmer, William Budd, and Caleb North, trustees of Germantown’s first Methodist congregation. The first meeting house was a small, one-story stone edifice, measuring twenty feet in front by thirty feet in depth. This led to the establishment of the first Methodist congregation in Germantown, known today as the First United Methodist Church of Germantown. While known for its striking tower at Germantown Avenue and High Street, the congregation began in the aforementioned one-room building in East Haines Street, a church edifice that was later replaced by a larger red brick building in 1858. The new house of worship measured fifty-five feet front by eighty feet in depth, being constructed for \$12,000 by Messrs. J. A. & G. Binder.

By the end of the nineteenth century, this initial Methodist meeting led to the formation of numerous Methodist missions in the Upper Northwest: Blue Bell Mission; Eastside Mission; Chestnut Hill Methodist Episcopal Church; Mount Pleasant Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church; St. Stephen’s M. E. Church; etc.



Figure 41. A model of the subject building and the 1880 partition between the church and the lobby. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2022.



Figure 42. Top: A photograph of the front gables, illustrating the Gothic Revival details. Source: Aaron Wunsch, 2024. Figure 43. Bottom left: A photograph of the front gable, showing the Gothic Revival details. Source: Aaron Wunsch, 2024. Figure 44. Bottom right: A photograph of the tower of St. Stephen's M. E. Church, showing the Gothic Revival details. Source: Aaron Wunsch, 2024.

### **CRITERION C**

St. Stephen's falls at a stylistic and chronological midpoint among the nineteenth century's various Gothic Revivals. It eschews the archaeological fidelity of pre-Civil War churches like St. James the Less (1846), and while subtle variations in stone color are key to the overall effect, the exuberant polychromy of the High Victorian Gothic is entirely absent. Few churches in Philadelphia exemplify this intermediate moment so well (or are blessed with such sympathetic additions). St. Stephen's overall design and functional program would characterize Methodist churches in the area for another half-century; see for instance Bethel A.M.E. Church on East Rittenhouse Street (1893, with later additions). Even St. Stephen's muted pallet seems to anticipate that of stone churches built three or four decades later. However, the building's varied stonework, drooping gable ornament, and radically attenuated spire are hallmarks of an early date and an often-overlooked phase of Philadelphia's Gothic Revival.



## CRITERION I

The former burial ground of St. Stephen's M. E. Church, located in the rear of the subject building, is significant under Criterion I, as it appears that the subject property may be likely to yield information important to history, including the human remains and associated materials of burials that took place on the site between ca.1857 and ca.1908. The Find a Grave website includes 145 memorials associated with St. Stephen's M.E. Church at the subject property; however, this is not a complete nor entirely accurate list, as there may be many additional burials that are not recorded by volunteer contributors to the website and several of the entries are misattributed to St. Stephen's in Germantown.

While the congregation's records were not available for research, other sources, including municipal reports on internments, indicate the following: eleven internments in 1860; 105 internments in 1903; 33 internments in 1904; four internments in 1906; one burial in 1907; and four burials in 1908.<sup>43</sup> This is a total of 158 burials in the course of 1860, 1903, 1904, 1906, 1907, and 1908, leaving out all the other years between 1856 and 1908 or later. The internments during the aughts were reported on by the City of Philadelphia, during which time there were roughly thirty active cemeteries in the city associated with religious congregations, one of which was St. Stephen's. The Find a Grave website records no internments in 1860, 1904, 1907, and/or 1908, accounting, rather, for other years. Among all the records found, the oldest probable burial known occurred in 1857 with the internment of Catherine Call. The most recent burial took place in 1908. The date of removal is not known but may be available if and/or when the congregation's records become open for research.

The case for archaeological potential in Philadelphia's former burial grounds has been made in recent years in the wake of development activity in many of the city's old neighborhoods. Projects occurring upon the sites of former and forgotten burial grounds have unearthed hundreds of burials thought to have been carefully relocated. While St. Stephen's M. E. Church's Burial Ground never appears to have been a particularly large cemetery, there were potentially hundreds of burials during more than five decades of its use as a place of internment. Philadelphia has a long history of relocating human remains from older burial grounds to larger suburban and rural cemeteries. However, a major aspect of this history includes the omission of human remains and/or associated materials during the removal process. In 2013, an archaeological investigation at the former Bethel Burial Ground, later known as the Weccacoe Playground, confirmed that the burials, which began in 1810, still occupied the site.<sup>44</sup> Between 2016 and 2017, a residential development on the site of the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia's burial ground in Old City led to the discovery of more

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<sup>43</sup> Journal of the Common Council, of the City of Philadelphia, Beginning November 15, 1860, Ending June 27, 1861. (Philadelphia: King & Baird, Printers, 1861), 478.; Second Annual Message of John Weaver, Mayor of the City of Philadelphia with the Annual Reports of the Departments of Public Health and Charities, Supplies, Public Education, Law, City Controller, City Treasurer, Commisshioners of the Sinking Funds, Receiver of Taxes, and Board of Revisions of Taxes for the Year Ending December 31, 1904. (Philadelphia: Dunlap Printing Co., 1905), 204.; and Second Annual Message of John E. Reyburn, Mayor of the City of Philadelphia with the Annual Reports of the Departments of Public Health and Charities, Supplies, Public Education, Law, City Controller, City Treasurer, Commissioners of the Sinking Funds, Receiver of Taxes, and Board of Revisions of Taxes for the Year Ending December 31, 1907. (Philadelphia: Dunlap Printing Co., 1908), 58.

<sup>44</sup> Aaron Wunsch. "Bethel Burial Ground," Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (15 July 2015). <[https://www.dot7.state.pa.us/CRGISAttachments/SiteResource/PAPhiladelphia\\_BethelBurialGround\\_nomination.pdf](https://www.dot7.state.pa.us/CRGISAttachments/SiteResource/PAPhiladelphia_BethelBurialGround_nomination.pdf)> Accessed on 31 January 2024.

than 400 burials on the site that seem to have eluded an 1860 relocation to Mt. Moriah Cemetery.<sup>45</sup> In 2021, excavations for the development of a 13-story building at Fifth and Spring Garden Streets unearthed human remains at the site of the Fifth Street Methodist Episcopal Church's burial ground, which was reportedly removed from the site in the 1830s.<sup>46</sup>

Based on the information provided above, the burial ground of St. Stephen's M. E. Church may be likely to yield information on history, satisfying Criterion I.

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This nomination was completed by the Keeping Society of Philadelphia with the primary author as Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian and Historic Preservationist, with assistance from Aaron Wunsch, Ph.D., Architectural Historian and Historic Preservationist; J.M. Duffin, Archivist and Historian; and Amy Lambert, Architect and Historic Preservationist.

The following sites were used to create the nomination:

Germantown Historical Society  
Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network  
Historical Society of Pennsylvania  
Newspapers.com  
Proquest Historical Newspapers

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<sup>45</sup> Jennifer Pinkowski. "A Colonial-Era Cemetery Resurfaces in Philadelphia," *The New York Times*, 25 March 2019.

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