

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

12-228-A	Boston North	G	BLM.731
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Town/City: Belmont

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Cushing Square

Address: 597 Belmont Street

Historic Name: Christ Lutheran Church

Uses: Present: church

Original: church

Date of Construction: 1949

Source: *Belmont Citizen*, October 12, 1949

Style/Form: Georgian Revival

Architect/Builder: Albert M. Kreider, architect
Bogart Co., builders

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete

Wall/Trim: brick, wood

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
none

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 11,388 SF

Setting: residential neighborhood

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Belmont Historic District Commission

Date (*month / year*): October 2014

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

597 BELMONT STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Christ Lutheran Church is a well-preserved and detailed example of the mid 20th century Georgian Revival style applied to a small church. The single-story brick building is oriented with its gable end to the street and rising from the front of the ridge there is a wooden steeple consisting of a quoined base supporting an octagon drum with arched, louvered openings that is in turn topped by a spire. The single-story building is faced in brick which is laid in a common bond with six courses of stretcher brick to a single course of headers and stretchers. Centered on the façade is a pedimented door surround with quoins and paneled recess. The wooden, paneled door has arched inset lights at the top. The flushboard front pediment has a round window with keystones and a two-part cornice. On either side of the entrance is a small 4/4 window while taller arched multi-light windows punctuate the side walls. Offset to the northwest corner is a small single-story wing.

The church is set on a small lot in a residential neighborhood with concrete sidewalks leading from the sidewalk along the street to the front steps and the west wing. A small signboard is located in the front yard near the sidewalk and east of the church.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

The Christ Lutheran Church was established in Belmont in 1937, one of a number of new churches which was founded during the period to accommodate the town's growing population. A young seminarian named Fred Feinsinger, supported by two large Lutheran congregations in Boston, led canvass and door knocking efforts in 1937. Initially services were held in the Masonic Apartments in Belmont Center. In 1938 services moved to Payson Hall where the congregation continued to meet until this church building was constructed. The congregation incorporated in 1941 and purchased property at 597 Belmont Street.

According to the plans filed with the State Department of Public Safety Records in 1948, the architect of the building was A.W. Barnard although an article concerning the dedication of the building in 1949 states that the architect was Albert M. Kreider. The land had been owned by the Barnard Family until the early 20th century. There is no known A.W. Barnard who was an architect suggesting Barnard had an influence on the design but was not actually an architect.

The church was dedicated on Sunday, October 16, 1949 with three services. For the morning service the congregation assembled at Payson Hall in Cushing Square, the church's previous place of worship, and walked in a procession to the new church. Leading the procession were the architect, Albert M. Kreider, and a representative of the Bogart Co. who built the church. An article in the *Belmont Citizen* on October 14, 1949 describes the church as follows:

The church, advantageously located atop a knoll overlooking several surrounding towns, is of Colonial Georgian Design with red brick exterior. The spire is 60 feet tall. The first floor houses the church auditorium seating 200, and a wing containing the pastor's study and church office. The lower floor contains facilities for the Sunday School, a larger meeting room, a modern kitchen, the heating unit and storage facilities".

The congregation began a Nursery School in 1950 which is still in operation today. The Church building is also home to other groups and denominations. Currently (2015) the Bulgarian Christian Orthodox Congregation of Sveta Pelka, the Korean Full Gospel Christian Fellowship, and the Bulgarian Christian Saturday School all use the building as well as the Lutheran Church.

The architect of the church, Albert M. Kreider (1890-1966), was a graduate of the Boston Architectural Center. He worked for many well-respected firms including Brainerd & Leeds, and Cram & Ferguson before establishing his own practice in Newtonville in 1935. Other designs by Kreider include the First Church of Christ Scientist at 199 Common Street in Belmont (1965), Franklin School in West Newton, the Day School in Newtonville, and the Post Office in Newton Upper Falls, banks, residences, etc.

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Christ Lutheran Church website. http://www.clcbelmont.org/clc_hst.php
Lucas, Nora. Area Form for Barnard Estate (BLM.G), 1982.
Massachusetts Historical Commission. MACRIS database
Middlesex County Registry of Deeds, Cambridge, MA
Newton Public Buildings Survey, Franklin Elementary School, 125 Derby Street, 1938
<http://www.newtonma.gov/civicax/filebank/documents/43544> (information on Albert Kreider)
Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1931, 1949.
State Department of Public Safety Records.