

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NOV 13 2015

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Elk Rapids First Methodist Episcopal Church

other names/site number Elk Rapids Area Historical Museum

Elk Rapids United Methodist Church

2. Location

street & number 301 Traverse St.

not for publication

city or town Elk Rapids

Vicinity

state Michigan code MI county Antrim code 009 zip code 49629

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x does does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide x local

Brian D. Murray 11/4/15
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

MI SHPO
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

 other (explain:)

Edson H. Beall 12-29-15
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
 (Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		Sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious Facility=Church

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Gothic-inspired Auditorium Church

foundation: Fieldstone
 walls: Brick
 Wood shingle
 roof: Asphalt shingle
 other: Stained glass windows

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The former First Methodist Episcopal/United Methodist church building, renovated in recent years to house the Elk Rapids Area Historical Society's museum, is a brick and wooden auditorium church with Gothic-inspired features. The cross-gable-roof building has a main story plus a lower level, half below and half above ground. A square-plan bell tower, with a spire-topped belfry, is tucked into the northeast corner between the gabled wings facing the front and side streets edging the property. The exterior walls are faced in locally produced pale yellow brick and stand on a foundation of rock-faced fieldstone. The two street-facing foundation walls are in coursed ashlar with the rest in rubble masonry. The brick runs up to the gable ends which are clad in round and square-butt wood shingles. There are four entrances into the building including a double-door main entry through the tower.

Narrative Description

The former church building stands at the southwest corner of Pine Street (to the east) and Traverse Street (to the north). Traverse Street is one of the two major east-west streets of the grid-plan Village of Elk Rapids and runs parallel to River Street, Elk Rapids' main street, located one block north. An alley borders the property to the south and a private residence to the west. Traverse Street is mostly residential and displays a mix of styles from Italianate, Queen Anne and Folk Victorian to American Foursquare and Post-War Ranch houses. The associated property is a lot approximately 102' east-west x 132' north-south and encompasses Lots 82 and 83; excluding the west 29.30 feet of Lot 83 Plat of the Village. The site is open lawn with several trees and shrubs surrounding the single structure and slopes downward to the south. Sidewalks run along the edge of the property parallel with the streets and from the sidewalk on Traverse to the bottom of the stairway leading into the building. The street frontage along Pine contains a paved parking strip outside of the sidewalk.

The basic footprint of the structure is square with short extensions on the south end of the east side and the north end of the west side. The building has a cross-gable roof form with steep, nearly forty-five-degree slopes. The square-plan tower projects nearly full depth from the front walls and stands in the northeast corner between the wings. It contains the main entrance, facing north toward Traverse Street. Atop the tower sits an open square-plan belfry, topped with gables on all faces, and above is a tall pyramid-roof spire. Each street façade of the tower below the belfry has a small wheel window with nine pie-slice-shaped lights around a round central one. The belfry still houses the original bell and has a buttressed pinnacle at each corner and a triangle-head opening in each face, open except for light Gothic-inspired tracery. A weathervane, rather than a cross, tops the shingle-roofed steeple. The metal weathervane, topped with a ball finial, features a horizontal scroll with a long double-ended arrow through the center.

The foundation is constructed of fieldstone. Its most visible sides facing the two streets are finished in regular coursed rock-face fieldstone with rope profile mortar joints. In the less visible foundation areas the walls are of rubble fieldstone with a "parged" mortar coat between. The fieldstone rises to the level of the basement door and window heads, above which rise the brick walls of the upper

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structure. The building has a slightly projecting smooth concrete beltcourse located six brick courses up from the top of the foundation's stonework. The basement door and window openings are topped by brick segmental arches built of rowlocks. Above the foundation the exterior walls use load-bearing multi-wythe yellow brick laid in a stretcher bond pattern. Typically a softer mortar was used to allow for expansion. The gabled areas above the lower eaves level, and also the upper tower below the belfry, are finished with wood shingles in alternating bands of round and square-butt shingling painted yellow to match the brick below.

The character of the building is largely defined by its Gothic-arch windows in a variety of shapes and sizes. The windows include thirteen filled with stained glass, of which all but five were put in during the original construction in 1902. All of the art glass windows have pointed arch tops with wood molding on the interior. The north and east gabled facades that face the streets each have a broad three-part central Gothic window flanked by a single narrow Gothic window on each side. The west elevation in the auditorium contains a three-part Gothic window with two single, separate, narrow Gothic windows side-by-side to the south of it. There are three single narrow Gothic windows on the southern elevation: one near the southeast corner, one facing Pine Street, and another near the southwest corner. The tower base houses one stained glass window. The windows are of opalescent glass with lead comes, and some feature jewel or cast glass, a few use vitreous paint and one etching or sandblasting, according to 1998 Michigan Stained Glass Census records. The eight windows installed in 1902, including the three large windows in the centers of the auditorium walls, depict dove, fleur-de-lys, water lily and other flower designs, crowns, crosses, bibles, oil lamps and other Christian symbols outlined by curvilinear vine forms. The five windows installed later (1948, 1949, 1952, 1977, and 1980) contain more religious depictions, with two having been modeled after paintings done by a well-known German artist, Johann Heinrich Hofmann (1824-1911). A window patterned after his "The Ascension" is set in the south wall and one after his "Christ in the Garden" set in the southwest wall. The 1948, 1949, and 1952 windows were made by the Grand Rapids Art Glass & Mirror Works of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and the 1977 and 1980 windows made by James Pfeiffer, an Elk Rapids native, according to a 1993 statement from an "Our Church History" scrapbook.

The secondary main level and the small lower level windows are single-glazed, mostly double-hung windows. The primary windows on the main level all have gray masonry slab sills and, except for the broad central windows on three sides of the auditorium, are topped by raised brick heads.

The main north-facing entrance on the northeast corner and a second on the north side at the northwest corner originally had large wide stairways leading up to them. The former staircase remains in its original configuration but the latter today has a two part dogleg staircase with the top part coming north from the door and then an eastern lower set of stairs joining at a landing midway down that leads to the front yard. The northeast entry has a large wood double door, each panel with a single light window in the center at eye level. The northwest solid wood door entry leads into an office area. A third entrance is a ramped ADA barrier free entry through the west elevation onto a landing with interior staircases, with track-mounted folding-seat stair lifts, leading down and up to the floor levels. The fourth entry is a solid wooden door located at the bottom of three-four steps leading down from grade level to the basement. All entries have shingle covered shed roof porches.

The northeast corner raised entrance leads into the main level which is half a story in height above grade. The entry through the bell tower and steeple has an art glass window on the east wall and contains the bell pull and tower attic access panel along with two closed door entrances into the

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rectangular auditorium filling most of the main floor. The auditorium's floor inclines gently downward from the northeast entrance to a platform/stage area that, against the south wall, once contained the pulpit and altar, and aisles divided the oak pews into three sections. Today only one section of pews has been retained. The pews are curving and set in concentric arcs outward from the stage area, so all pews faced the central platform. The stage area today houses exhibits. Three steps lead up to the platform in the southwest corner and the platform's front edge is demarcated by an open curved wood kneeling rail. The interior walls are of painted plaster applied directly to the exterior masonry. The three-part ceiling has a section on either side (north and south) sloping upward toward the flat central area. The ceiling is finished in white-painted decorative pressed metal paneling and has gold-color decorative pressed metal moldings along the north and south edges capping the walls. A broad square-head opening in the auditorium's north side wall west of the entrance leads into a low gabled-ceiling space that occupies the front section, presently a welcoming/meeting area surrounded by exhibits. In auditorium churches, this space typically could be closed off from the auditorium with folding or sliding doors and serve as a separate meeting or "lecture" room but also combined with the auditorium when the extra space was needed for seating. Plush blue carpeting covers the floor throughout the auditorium and front room. The front room has a load bearing wall on its west side separating it from an office space in the building's northwest corner. This part of the building also includes an area leading to a staircase down to a west-side entry, and another staircase leading down to the lower level.

The lower level houses a large area, today used for exhibit space. To the right of the stairway from the main floor is a separate room that was a kitchen but is currently the archival room, and on the south wall of this room is a smaller enclosed room housing the building mechanicals, including furnace, plumbing and electrical. Straight through the large exhibit room heading east is a smaller, open-entry separate room which leads to two bathrooms and an exit in the southeast corner. Off this room through a door is a smaller room containing an 1883 jail exhibit and shelving for tool and supply storage.

The building today serves as the home of the Elk Rapids Area Historical Society and houses its museum, archives and office.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Art

Period of Significance

1901-02

Significant Dates

October 29, 1901, Cornerstone of Elk Rapids

Methodist Episcopal Church laid

August 10, 1902, Building completed and dedicated at a cost of \$8,250 for building and property

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Benjamin D. and Max Charles Price (pattern book design)

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance

The period of significance under the national register criteria is 1901-02, corresponding to the dates of construction of the building and installation of the original stained glass windows.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

This building served as the home for over 100 years of the Elk Rapids First M. E. Church. The church was the pioneer religious organization at Elk Rapids, beginning with the Rev. David R. Latham's first visit to Elk Rapids as a circuit preacher in July 1857. The church's 1901-02 building meets national register criterion C as a primary example of a Protestant auditorium church building of the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century period when these buildings were at their height of popularity as a building type. It retains not only the basic form and character but also the Gothic-inspired exterior finish often used for such buildings as well as important interior features such as the original pews, pressed metal ceiling, and stained glass. The church is also important in architectural terms as an example that was modeled after, and follows closely, a published church design by then New Jersey-based church plan specialists Benjamin D. and Max Charles Price. The Prices' church plans, offered through the Methodist Episcopal Church's Board of Church Extension and published in a series of plan books over several decades in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, served as a key design source for small-town Protestant churches built across the nation. The building is also significant in the local context for its construction using the locally produced pale yellow brick; it is one of a few remaining primary buildings constructed of that material. The building retains eight stained glass windows that, installed in 1902 when the church was built, are fine representative examples of the type of stained glass windows commonly used in evangelical Protestant churches in the later nineteenth and early twentieth characterized by religious imagery and naturalistic forms rather than figural representations of Jesus and the saints.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Elk Rapids

Dense forests inhabited by Native American Anishinabek people characterized the Elk Rapids area before 1846. The abundant pine and hardwood, and the Elk River, which served as the outlet to Grand Traverse Bay and Lake Michigan for Elk and Torch Lakes and a series of rivers running back into the timberlands made the site a prime location for sawmills and a town. Abram S. Wadsworth, a Connecticut native who had lived in Rochester, NY, and Monroe and Portland, MI, previously, came to Old Mission, across Grand Traverse Bay's East Arm from the Elk Rapids site, in 1846. Wadsworth soon recognized the site's potential. Settling there in 1848 or 49 – he is thought to have been Antrim County's first white settler – Wadsworth soon built a house and in the spring of 1851 put into operation a mill that produced pickets and laths. The following winter he rebuilt it as a sawmill. The mill brought the first settlers to the area during 1852 and more in 1853. Wadsworth platted a village of Elk Rapids in 1852 (Leach, 74) or 1853 (Page, 253), naming it "because of a pair of elk horns which he found in the sand at the mouth of the river" (Page, 251). The settlement's first store opened in 1853, and a second sawmill went into operation in 1854 (summarized from Leach, 72-75; Page, 251-52).

Antrim County had been established as a geographical unit in 1840. It was first attached to Mackinac County, and then in 1853 to the recently established Grand Traverse County. In 1863 the state legislature authorized the establishment of county government in Antrim. Meegetee Township, which had once encompassed the entire county, was renamed Elk Rapids Township at the same time. Elk

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Rapids became the first county seat (the county seat was moved to Bellaire in 1879), and a courthouse was built there in 1866 (Leach, 150-51, 153; Page, 254, 256-57).

Elk Rapids developed rapidly in the next few decades because of its wood products industries. Prime mover in its development was the firm of Dexter & Noble, founded in 1856 by Wirt Dexter and Henry H. Noble (Noble's brother E. S. Noble also joined the company in 1869). By 1861 the firm operated a sawmill with a 10 million board feet per year capacity. In 1864 the firm's enterprises included a store and gristmill as well as the sawmill and they were building a large dock. Two company ships ran regularly between Elk Rapids and Chicago, carrying local products – "lumber, lath, shingles, wood, bark, cedar-posts, etc." (Page, 260). The firm built a large flour mill in 1872 and in 1872-73, in partnership with F. H. Head of Chicago, a charcoal blast furnace (the furnace company was reorganized as a stock corporation in 1882 with the Dexter & Noble principals as major investors; the same investors in 1880-81 established a chemical plant to utilize waste products from the mills). In 1878 Dexter & Noble bought and rebuilt the main local hotel, the Lake View House. Leach in his 1883 history summarized Dexter & Noble's importance for nineteenth-century Elk Rapids (76): to them "the prosperity of Elk Rapids and the surrounding country is largely due" (summarized from Leach, 76; Page, 259-61).

Elk Rapids First Methodist Episcopal Church

Methodism was the first religious denomination to assert itself in the young Elk Rapids settlement and the first to own and use a building for religious purposes in town. The church began with the first visit to Elk Rapids of the Rev. David R. Latham on June 21, 1857. The Rev. Latham was the pioneer Methodist preacher in the Grand Traverse region. Then a recently licensed Methodist preacher from upstate New York, Latham visited Old Mission in the spring of 1857 on his way west, as he planned, to Kansas. He was persuaded to stay and serve this region. Following up on the first visit to Elk Rapids, Latham organized a class, the first step in a Methodist church organization, in Elk Rapids in July 1857. Leach states that this Elk Rapids class formed the "first church organization for white people on Grand Traverse bay" (59), the only previous church organization in the large area having been the Rev. Peter Dougherty's mission directed primarily at the local Indians.

Following up on Latham's activity in the region, in 1857 the Michigan Conference established two preaching circuits on Grand Traverse Bay, Old Mission/Elk Rapids and Northport/Traverse City. With some reorganizing of these circuits, the Rev. Latham was soon serving Old Mission, Elk Rapids, and Traverse City. In response to the difficulties Latham frequently encountered in crossing the bay between Elk Rapids and Old Mission, in the fall of 1858 he was appointed to a new Whitewater preaching circuit that included locations all on the east side of the bay, including Elk Rapids (Leach, 58-60, 77). The Rev. Latham soon left to become a teacher to the Indians and was followed by the Rev. J. W. Miller.

During the 1871-74 period a church was formally organized under the name the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Elk Rapids. The Elk Rapids Methodists purchased a former schoolhouse in 1876, becoming the first religious organization in town to have their own church building. A dedication service was held May 18, 1876, and the congregation used the building until 1882. They then purchased the former courthouse, vacated by the county with the move of the county seat to Bellaire in 1879, and made it their church, using the second-floor courtroom for services and the ground-floor former office spaces as the parsonage (Hoare, [2]; Page, 259).

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As Elk Rapids reached an economic height during the early 1900s, with lumbering, iron smelting and cement manufacturing providing job opportunities, the town's population peaked at around 1700 people. The Methodist congregation outgrew its quarters in the former courthouse. The church purchased the present site in August 1901 and on October 29, 1901, under the pastorate of the Rev. John W. Hart, the cornerstone for a new church building was put in place in a formal ceremony. The dedication ceremony for the completed building was held August 10, 1902. The pastor reported the cost of the building to be about \$8500.

The building served Elk Rapids' Methodist church, retitled the First United Methodist Church following the 1971 nationwide merger of the Methodist and United Brethren denominations into the United Methodist denomination, until 2011, when the church organization was discontinued and the church building donated to the Elk Rapids Area Historical Society for preservation as a historical landmark and future use as the society's local history museum and archives.

C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

Auditorium Churches

The 1901-02 church building is a remarkably intact example of the auditorium church type commonly built for some Protestant denominations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Architect George W. Kramer, who practiced in Akron, Ohio, and then in New York, was one of the leading American designers of auditorium churches. His *The What How and Why of Church Building* (1897) became one of the most influential books on church design for non-liturgical Protestant congregations. In it Kramer set forth the guiding principles for planning churches for the non-liturgical Protestant denominations:

In an Ideal Church an ideal auditorium is essential, in which the minister should be able to see each member of the congregation, and of such shape that the audience is as compact as possible and, so to speak, within the angle of vision. The speaker should be so located as to be within the closest personal sympathy with those he would instruct and lead (51).

The congregation enjoy the service and are benefited thereby in direct proportion as they can hear and see the same to advantage. ... In man's physical organization nature has indicated that what we see and hear to best advantage should be in front and not at the back or side; hence to avoid twisting and turning, the seats should squarely face all exercises of the speaker or choir (52-53).

In a church designed to provide all members of the congregation with direct sightlines to the pulpit and choir, "the seats should rise as they recede from the platform and will form concentric curves, every one facing the pulpit squarely" (51). A central aisle was to be avoided because that space was the best location in the church for seating directly facing the pulpit and choir. The Elk Rapids church embodies Kramer's recommendations.

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Benjamin D. and Max C. Price Church Designs

The Elk Rapids M. E. Church building is also significant in architectural terms as a highly intact example of a church built from one of the many church designs of Philadelphia and, later, New Jersey architect Benjamin D. Price and his son Max Charles Price. The church is the embodiment of the Prices' Design No. 232. This design appears in their 1907 edition of *Church Plans* (65) but, like many of the designs, likely first appeared in editions ten or more years earlier (to which we don't have access). Benjamin D. Price (1845-1922) practiced architecture in Philadelphia beginning around 1868. If not from the first, he soon came to specialize in churches. In 1876 he entered into an arrangement with the Methodist Episcopal Church's Board of Church Extension (BCE), which offered assistance for church-building to smaller congregations, to provide the BCE with plans and specs for a series of church designs affordable for smaller congregations. By 1885 Price had reportedly prepared sixty-seven church designs for the BCE, and the board had sold 1975 sets of these plans by mail. In 1889 Price made a new arrangement with the BCE by which the BCE could sell his plans on commission but he would also offer them for sale directly. In an 1892 booklet Price claimed to have sold 600 of his plans during 1891 and a total of 5350 sets of plans through December 31, 1891. Price published his own church plan books, *Church Plans*, in several editions from at least 1885 to 1907 ("Benjamin Price & the Board of Church Extension," 2, 5). The BCE apparently continued to offer the Price plans for years thereafter. While Methodist congregations were clearly the greatest users of the Prices' plans, many of their plans were also used by other Protestant denominations, including Presbyterians, Baptists, and Congregationalists.

The Prices' church designs translated the up-to-date auditorium church design of the time embodied in large and costly Protestant city churches into smaller sizes and affordable costs suitable for less-well-off rural and small town congregations. While some plans were intended for brick or stone, most were suitable for entirely wooden construction. The Prices' plans provided at least a modicum of Gothic-inspired stylishness – pointed-arch windows and doorway and usually a pyramid-roof or spired belfry – for all but the most basic 16-20 X 27-37-foot building. Price did not invent but certainly frequently employed the simple triangle head for windows as a means of signifying Gothic while simplifying construction and thereby reducing costs.

For rural and small-town congregations these readily available designs complete with specs must have been a godsend. The prices of the plans and specs varied from as low as \$3.50 up to \$50 (with plans for a few designs for larger buildings at \$150 and \$200) in the 1907 edition, but the average cost for a set of plans and specs was in the \$10-30 range. The 1907 edition of *Church Plans* lists a price of \$30 for the plans and specs for the design used at Elk Rapids.

The impact of the Price church plans on the nationwide Protestant churchscape in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was enormous. Examples of churches built directly from plans ordered from the architect – or indirectly, modeled on specific Price designs seen in the books – are legion across the nation from coast to coast. A survey of one post card collection that includes early twentieth-century views of churches netted numerous examples from New England and the Northeast to Florida and west to Idaho and California, and review of a sampling of published sources helps confirm the wide distribution – for example, Heller's *The Indiana Conference of the Methodist Church 1832-1956* illustrates at least seven examples; Miller's *Souvenir History of the New England Southern Conference* (1897) shows examples in Berkeley, RI, and South Carver, MA (Vol. I, 183; Vol. III, 14-16); Jones, *The Historic Architecture of Sevier County, Tennessee*, an example (258,

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262); and an architectural history of Maryland's Somerset County illustrates no fewer than six examples of these churches in that one county (Touart, 328, 330-33). The many books about ghost towns in the West illustrate a number of churches built from or modeled on Price designs – for example, the 1882 Methodist Episcopal church in Bodie, CA; 1897 Methodist Episcopal church in Antelope, OR; and 1892 Baptist church in Oysterville, WA (McDonald, 23; Varney, 91, 111).

Published architectural history and survey reports have rarely recognized these buildings as built from a specific source, but Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern's series of North Carolina architectural guides make note of the Prices' church designs and identify examples in Wilmington and three other places (*Eastern North Carolina*, 52, 254, 339; *Piedmont*, 139, 145, 264). And Cawthon in *Lost Churches of Mississippi* states that "At least forty churches in Mississippi are believed to have been built either directly from Benjamin Price plans or from local builders' adaptations of his plans" (2). The book illustrates nine now demolished Mississippi examples. Many of the Mississippi churches and others across the South were built by congregations of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, denomination that existed from the 1840s to 1939 separate from the main ME Church. Cawthon states that the ME Church, South, also had its own Board of Church Extension, and that it, too, offered Price plans (28).

The total number of churches built from Price designs just in Michigan is certainly several dozen and perhaps many more. The above noted post card collection includes eighteen small-town examples of churches built from Price designs in Michigan, and the SHPO's statewide architectural survey data contains additional examples – though unfortunately not indexed for easy retrieval. Among the eighteen post card examples of Price churches, all but one were built for Methodist congregations. Only a few, such as the church in Kingston, MI, appeared to be perfect copies, presumably built from actual plans, while most exhibited modifications from the designs such as simplified details and changed proportions. In a few cases, the plan was reversed. Michigan examples (whether still standing or not), from this and other sources, identified in the course of this project, are (in addition to Elk Rapids):

Amble 1st ME: Design 281.

Ashley ME: Design 19A, brick, reverse plan.

Bessemer ME (1890): Design 1B, closely follows design.

Byron ME: Design 239, stone, changes in details.

Clarksville Congregational: Design 19A, reversed plan, altered proportions.

Clio ME (1888-89): Design 28, brick.

Coleman ME: Design 272, fieldstone, reversed plan, changes in details.

Delton ME: Design 19A, simplified details, including square-head windows.

Elsie ME: Design 6.

Fowlerville Baptist (1890-91): Design 6, brick rather than wood exterior.

Freeport ME: Design 248, belfry different, other changes in details.

Frontier ME: Design 19A, brick, simplified details, altered proportions.

Huron City ME: Design 19A, but later doubled in size.

Iron Mountain Central Baptist (1889): Design 28A, reversed plan (demolished).

Iron Mountain Swedish/Wesley ME (1907-08): Design 277, brick, simplified details.

Kingston ME: Design 265, closely follows design.

Leonidas ME: Design 109, altered gable treatment and proportions.

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Lennon ME: Design 202, plainer gable treatment.

McMillan ME: Design 19A, simplified details.

Nashville ME: Design 6B, brick.

Negaunee, Mitchell ME (1898): Design 217, brick, reverse plan.

Oak Grove Church (near Newaygo): Design 19A, different belfry design, simplified details.

Pellston ME: Design 257, additional narthex and wing, altered proportions.

Walloon Lake ME: Design 257, reversed, altered proportions.

The Elk Rapids 1st ME Church building stands out among these known Michigan examples for following closely (much more than nearly all the other Michigan examples listed above) the Prices' Design 232 as to exterior design and floor plan (as originally built) and for its high degree of integrity in maintaining the original design. The Elk Rapids Area Historical Society, while removing some of the pews to provide exhibit space, has been a fine steward in maintaining the building's historic character, including its stained glass windows and the auditorium with its gently sloping floor.

Elk Rapids Brick

The building also possesses significance for its use of the distinctive locally produced pale yellow brick, similar in hue to the "Cream City brick" produced in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, area. A personal history by Bess Wright Hoare, a member of the Elk Rapids church since she was thirteen years old in 1899, states the brick used in the church's walls was manufactured at a brickyard that was part of her parents' farm. Her husband "was one of the youth who contributed their labor helping the masons" working on the church (Hoare, 3rd page). The history of brick-making in the area is poorly documented, but the abundant clay deposits brought in several businessmen to run brickyards. Leading businessmen Wirt Dexter and Percy Noble started a brickyard in the early 1860s. Then, in June 1872, Captain Follet of Kalamazoo also started a brickyard; he had the contract for the school which the Methodists used for their services. On March 28, 1899, Messrs. Smith and Holmes opened a brickyard that produced more than 4,000,000 bricks before it closed in November of 1901.

Still standing buildings in Elk Rapids constructed with yellow brick from the local brickyards include:

- Elk Rapids Township Hall, 401 River St., listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the Michigan Register of Historic Places.
- Mitchell Building, built in 1901, at the corner of River Street and Cedar Streets.
- Two business buildings on the north side of River Street between Cedar and Dexter and three buildings across River Street on the south side.

Stained Glass

Also important features of the building are its 1902 stained glass windows. Eight of the church's thirteen stained glass windows date from the time of construction. The June 26, 1902, *Elk Rapids Progress* noted the arrival of the windows the previous week and stated that "The windows on the East were furnished by the Kensaller Glass Co. of Chicago and are a credit to the manufacturers." The brief article specifically lists the eight windows and gives the names of those who purchased them, or to whom they are memorials, so that it is clear not just the east side windows, but all eight of the nine 1902 windows arrived at the same time. The windows are all of very similar style and presumably all were by the same firm. No "Kensaller" Glass Co. has been identified, and it seems likely the windows were actually made by the John J. Kinsella Glass Co., a Chicago firm that was in business from 1872 to 1931. John J. Kinsella (1855-1915) was raised on a farm in Homer, Illinois,

Elk Rapids 1st Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property

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and moved to Chicago after working in Joliet for a time. His company produced both mirror/plate glass and stained glass lines. Information about the firm's history is scanty, but Frueh and Frueh, *Chicago Stained Glass*, lists and illustrates several of their important Chicago area commissions from the period shortly after John J. Kinsella's death – windows for St. James Lutheran and St. John Berchmans Catholic churches and for St. James Chapel of Quigley Preparatory Seminary North in Chicago and for the Seminary Chapel at St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois (Frueh, 70, 151).

These windows are all pictorial windows illustrating biblical figures and themes. The Elk Rapids windows are more akin to many nineteenth-century windows for evangelical Protestant churches such as Methodist in being almost entirely ornamental rather than pictorial. Frueh and Frueh describe the ornamental rather than pictorial type of windows commonly used in Protestant churches of the period from the 1860s to the early 1900s as employing in their designs "flattened conventionalized flower studies derived from the botanical drawings of mid-nineteenth century Englishman Owen Jones in his *Grammar of Ornament* and Christopher Dresser in his *Principles of Decorative Design*. These windows were made entirely of colored glass in which were set abstract designs of fleur-de-lis, tulips, or lilies surrounded by convoluting leaves and petals harmonizing with and growing out of the central theme" (Frueh, 43). Such windows with "simple geometric-floral patterns ... were less expensive than figural and landscape windows, an important consideration for congregations with limited budgets" (Frueh, 53). The Elk Rapids church's 1902 windows are fine examples of this ornamental rather than pictorial type with its long American heritage dating back to the mid-nineteenth century.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Name of repository: Elk Rapids Area Historical Museum

Elk Rapids 1st Methodist Episcopal Church

Antrim County, MI

Name of Property

County and State

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Elk Rapids First Methodist Episcopal Church

City or Vicinity: Elk Rapids

County: Antrim

State: MI

Photographer: Sally Weaver

Date Photographed: September 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 15: North façade
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0001
- 2 of 15: West façade
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0002
- 3 of 15: South façade
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0003
- 4 of 15: East façade
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0004
- 5 of 15: Interior looking toward north and west walls
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0005
- 6 of 15: Interior looking toward north and east walls
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0006
- 7 of 15: Interior looking southeast
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0007
- 8 of 15: Interior looking at south wall
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0008
- 9 of 15: Interior looking southwest
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0009
- 10 of 15: East wall stained glass windows
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0010
- 11 of 15: East wall large stained glass window
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0011
- 12 of 15: West wall stained glass windows
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0012
- 13 of 15: West wall large stained glass window
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0013
- 14 of 15: North wall stained glass windows
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0014
- 15 of 15: North wall large stained glass window
MI_Antrim_ElkRapids 1stMEChurch_0015

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

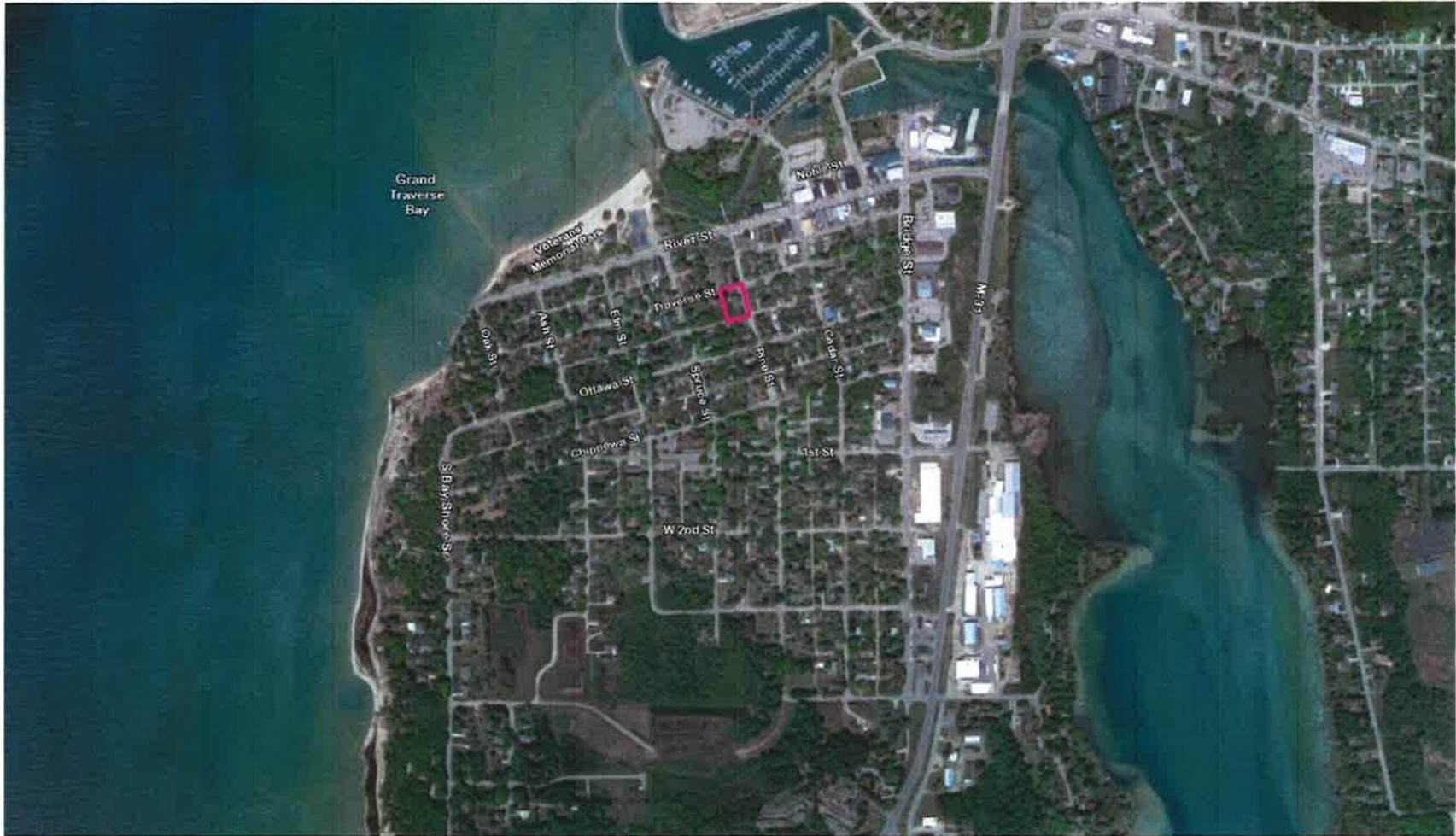
Elk Rapids 1st Methodist Episcopal Church
Name of Property

Antrim County, MI
County and State

street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

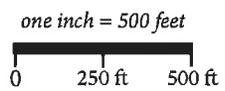
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Elk Rapids 1st Methodist Episcopal Church
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301

ELK RAPIDS AREA
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THEN & NOW
COME VISIT

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