

Tindley Temple United Methodist Church
Name of Property

Philadelphia, PA
County and State

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		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)
African American Churches of Philadelphia, 1787-1949

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: religious facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Beaux Arts / Art Deco

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick

Limestone

roof: Asphalt

other: _____

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Tindley Temple United Methodist Church is a rectangular plan, masonry building located on the west side of Broad Street, the principal north-south thoroughfare of central Philadelphia. The building occupies a lot that stretches through to Rosewood Street on the west. Its context is that of an urban area first built out around the Civil War on the southern perimeter of the present commercial core of Philadelphia's Center City. The building reflects two campaigns of construction united by a common palette of flat roofs with parapets, brick, and limestone trim: the larger original Beaux Arts Romanesque/Art Deco style church, 1923-8, and a 1962-3 school and office addition to its south. The main elevation of the building, clad in patterned tan brick and characterized by Romanesque round-arch grouped windows in the original church, faces Broad Street; the secondary elevations on the north and west are treated more simply in red brick. The interior of the church building is dominated by the vast open space of the sanctuary constructed to accommodate 3,200 worshippers and completed in a sparse style that gives the space a sense of raw emotional religious power. The sanctuary is organized in two levels with a large, reinforced concrete balcony. The large scale of such details as the balcony and stair rail and the enormous Möller organ, which takes up most of the south wall, reinforce this feeling. The south wall opens up theatrically at the lower level to an unusually large baptismal pool. Throughout the sanctuary, the vast majority of all of the original materials and furniture survive, including oak pews, stained glass windows (including one that depicts a black Madonna), and massive concrete columns supporting the balcony and the roof truss. These columns retain their abstracted Beaux Arts Romanesque detailing. Original decorative details also survive in the corner stair towers. Relatively minor alterations conducted at the time of the construction of the school addition include the replacement of light fixtures and the insertion or alteration of a partition at the rear (north) of the lower level. The hyphen to the south of the sanctuary, also part of the original construction campaign, houses a small chapel with finishes from the 1960s alteration, the baptismal pool, and two robing rooms. A back stair on the east side gives access to the organ loft and the east side of the balcony. The basement level of the original church retains its original structural mushroom columns, and the partitions, trim, and institutional kitchen space of its original use for parish outreach and gatherings. The two-story, early 1960s addition is relatively utilitarian in treatment on the interior. The first and second floors, which house offices and classroom spaces, are organized on a single-loaded corridor plan. The basement level is open in plan and houses a community meeting room.

Overall, the Tindley Temple building is in generally good condition. It retains a high degree of integrity throughout, retaining integrity of location, and, while its setting has changed over the years, the fundamental character of its setting survives. The integrity of the 1920s Ballinger design, materials, and workmanship survive throughout the original building with only minor changes. The church is substantially as Reverend Tindley would have known it; its minor changes have not affected the powerful character of the sanctuary and secondary spaces, including the key baptismal pool. The property therefore also retains integrity of feeling and association.

Narrative Description

(See continuation sheets)

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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.

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 (justification)

The period of significance spans from the beginning of construction of the building to the death of Reverend Charles Albert Tindley, thus corresponding the time when the property was associated with Dr. Tindley.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

While Tindley Temple United Methodist Church is owned by a religious institution and used for religious purposes, its significance derives from its place within the historic context of the African American community in Philadelphia, from its association with the nationally significant individual of C. Albert Tindley, and as a work of architectural distinction by architects Ballinger & Company.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Ethnic Heritage

Social History

Performing Arts

Religion

Architecture

Period of Significance

1924-1933

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Charles Albert Tindley (1851-1933)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Ballinger Company (fl. 1920 ff.)

Ballinger, Walter F. (1867-1924)

Robert E. Lamb Company, contractor

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Tindley Temple United Methodist Church meets the registration requirements established in the African American Churches of Philadelphia Multiple Property Documentation Form for properties significant under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage and Social History as one of the most important congregations in the history of the African-American associated churches in Philadelphia in the Historic Context period "A Changing Role" of the early twentieth century. Tindley Temple is also significant under Criterion B under the same context for its association with the Reverend Charles Albert Tindley (1851-1933) -- the pastor for whom the church is named -- a leader in the Philadelphia African-American religious community during this period (see Section E, MPDF, pp. 30, 35). As the material manifestation of the achievements and interests of Tindley's productive life, Tindley Temple is the property that best illustrates his significance.

In addition, the Tindley Temple is nationally significant under Criterion B in the areas of Performing Arts, Religion, Ethnic Heritage, and Social History for its association with Reverend Tindley and his national role in the development of gospel music, a uniquely American religious musical art form, and for his recognized leadership within the national African-American religious and broader communities. Finally, Tindley Temple is regionally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a powerful and evocative design by Ballinger Company, one of the dominant architectural firms of the Philadelphia area.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

(see Continuation Sheets)

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Historical Summary

The congregation that would become the Tindley Temple United Methodist Church was founded by members of "Mother" Zoar Methodist Episcopal Church in the late 1830s (see African-American Churches in Philadelphia MPDF, Section E, p. 7), and began as a group worshipping in private houses. In 1837, the John Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church was established by this group. After occupying another property further on Bainbridge Street as the Bainbridge Street Methodist Church, the congregation purchased the former Westminster Presbyterian Church Building on the west side of South Broad Street south of Fitzwater Street in the first years of the twentieth century. Pastor Charles Albert Tindley was born to slave parents in Berlin, Maryland in 1851, and had first come to Philadelphia as a laborer at the age of 17, serving as janitor at the Bainbridge Street Methodist Church. After preparing for the ministry (largely through correspondence courses) Tindley served congregations in New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland before being named Presiding Elder of the Delaware conference of the Methodist Episcopal church (an all African-American conference) in 1896. In 1902, Tindley returned as pastor to his former Philadelphia congregation, known after 1914 as the East Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church. In the first quarter of the twentieth century, Reverend Tindley composed the ground-breaking gospel hymns for which he has become known. His charismatic leadership of his congregation (and of the Philadelphia African-American community more generally) resulted in the growth of its size from a purported 130 members to 10,000 by the 1920s, reported as the largest Methodist congregation in the United States, black or white. Because of this strength, the East Calvary congregation took the unusual step of commissioning its own building. The firm of Ballinger & Company was contracted in 1923 to design a new church; in 1924, the lot adjacent to the former Westminster Presbyterian building on its south was purchased for construction. The name of the congregation was legally changed in 1927 to Tindley Temple, and the new house of worship was dedicated in 1928. Charles A. Tindley died in Philadelphia as a result of gangrene in 1933 following a foot injury. Since Tindley's death, the main change to the church property occurred with the construction of a 1962-3 addition on the south side of the original church designed by architect A. Hensel Fink, with John S. McQuade Company serving as contractors.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

(See Continuation Sheets)

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: Philadelphia Historical Commission

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>485781</u> Easting	<u>4421268</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Beginning at a point approximately at the western edge of South Broad Street 100 feet south of the southwest corner of the intersection of South Broad Street and Fitzwater Street, continuing 140 feet southwest along the edge of South Broad Street to a point, then continuing approximately 150 feet at a right angle to the edge of South Broad Street to a point in the eastern edge of Rosewood Street, then continuing approximately 140 feet northeast along the eastern edge of Rosewood street to a point parallel with the beginning point, then continuing southeast in a line parallel approximately 150 feet to the point of beginning

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary corresponds to the limits of the Tindley Temple United Methodist Church property, including adjacent sidewalks and a walkway on the north side of the building

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Emily T. Cooperman, Ph.D.
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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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DESCRIPTION

Setting and Exterior

Tindley Temple (photograph 1) is a rectangular plan, masonry building located on the west side of Broad Street, the principal north-south thoroughfare of central Philadelphia. The building occupies a lot that stretches through to Rosewood Street on the west. Its context is that of an urban area first built out around the Civil War, now on the perimeter of the commercial core of Philadelphia's Center City. The physical fabric that surrounds the property reflects several periods of construction and redevelopment, and the mixed uses characteristic of Broad Street: that is, the combination of residential buildings of different scales and periods as well as institutional buildings and commercial properties. While the surrounding buildings are of differing scales, the height of the Tindley Temple represents the maximum average since the demolition of high-rise public house projects formerly located to the east of the property.

The building, which is set back from Broad Street by wide sidewalks typical of this portion of the street, reflects two campaigns of construction. In the first, the reinforced concrete structure, abstracted Beaux Arts Romanesque/Art Deco style church was designed and built between 1923 and 1928. In the second, a lower, a concrete block structure, two-story school and office addition in International Modern Style was placed on the southern end of the church in 1962-1963 and minor modifications were made to the original church. The original church and school addition are united by a common palette of tan brick and limestone trim and rectangular openings, while being clearly differentiated by style. Both the church and the addition have flat roofs with brick parapets rising above them giving the impression of greater height. Additionally, the church has large gabled clerestory rising from the roof and running north-south longitudinally (photograph 2).

On the main, or eastern elevation facing Broad Street, the main volume of the church (photographs 1 and 3) is faced in two-toned buff brick and organized in a symmetrical composition of five bays and two apparent stories corresponding to the lower and balcony levels in the main worship space on the interior of the church itself. The roofline (and thus the parapet) is marked by a discontinuous cornice line recessed behind pilasters between the bays. The level of the balcony is marked by a dentilated string course, and a limestone water table marks the lower portion of the lower level. The two main doors to the church, occupying the outer bays, feature gabled limestone surrounds with simplified Romanesque engaged columns and a round-arch opening above the door. The southern door (photograph 4) is accessed by a concrete ramp added after the original construction. On the lower level, the three central bays feature triplet, round-arch stained glass windows with slightly projecting, limestone impost blocks and limestone sills (photograph 5). On the upper level, above the door, single rectangular windows surmounted by round-arch, patterned brick, blind panels mark stairs on the interior in the outer bays (photographs 1, 3, and 5). These upper-level, outer bay openings also feature engaged columns with decorative imposts and nearly square marble panels below the window opening. The decorative details of the outer bays are continued in the central ones on the upper levels: here triplet window groups are

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surmounted by round windows. Recessed panels mark the parapet level above the discontinuous cornice. The corner tower bays are further elaborated at the parapet by limestone corner molding and a matching limestone string course.

A recessed hyphen on the south side of the church (photograph 6), containing a chapel, baptismal pool, and robing rooms, connects the main church volume to the addition on the south. The hyphen is lit by two windows with limestone imposts.

The school and administration addition, in a stream-lined Modern style (photographs 6 and 7), pays homage to the original church in its palette of materials: the buff brick and limestone trim already noted, and in the marble panels, here gray, featured in the window units. Overall, the main elevation of the addition is asymmetrically composed, reflecting the internal organization of spaces in a circulation bay on the north (right as one faces the elevation) and a larger bay which contains the office and classroom spaces on the south. The openings throughout are rectilinear. The addition is entered through a single door set within a limestone frame on the first floor of the circulation bay. A rectangular window lighting the stair with metal sash with a bottom awning unit is centered above the doorway. The twelve windows of the first and second floor in the office and classroom bay are visually organized as a single unit by connecting, slightly projecting limestone frames, and by recessed gray marble panels between the first and second floor units. The basement is lit by twelve windows in the limestone watertable vertically aligned with the windows of the upper stories. A date stone inscribed "1963" is located to the south of the door on this elevation.

There have been no major changes made to the east elevation of the building. In addition to the concrete ramp already noted, a cross mounted to the side of the building at the lower level replaced an earlier cross mounted at the upper level perpendicular to the building's main wall (in other words, facing passersby as they travel on Broad Street). Stylistic evidence indicates that the present cross dates to the period of the school and administration building construction.

The north elevation (photograph 2), facing Fitzwater Street, is mostly clad in red brick except at the eastern end where the cladding of the main elevation is continued around the corner of the building marking the stair connecting the main level to the balcony. The relatively unadorned appearance of this elevation reflects the fact that this side of the building was not visible until the demolition of the adjacent Westminster Presbyterian Church building, originally constructed in the mid-nineteenth century and acquired in 1905 by the congregation that later became Tindley Temple (the congregation used the Westminster building until the completion of Tindley Temple, and demolished it before the 1950s; the congregation no longer owns this lot). As noted, the gabled clerestory over the sanctuary is clearly visible on this elevation of the church. The main decorative feature of this side of the building consists of the arched corbelling that marks the slight projection of the central portion of the building below the gable. Two soldier courses of brick mark the lintel and sill level of the window openings, and the windows feature limestone sills. The lower level is penetrated by five evenly spaced, round-arched doorways with paneled, two-leaf wooden doors and leaded glass windows within the arch. The upper level is fenestrated by paired windows flanking the central, projecting section, and triplet windows

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under the gable. The only significant change to this elevation since construction is the closure of a former opening between these triplets in conjunction with changes to the organ on the interior.

The rear, or west elevation, facing Rosewood Street (photographs 8-10), is similarly utilitarian in detail and also clad in red brick. The original church on the north and the addition on the south can be differentiated by the slightly lighter brick of the addition. The fenestration pattern on the upper level of the church is the same as that on the east elevation, and the decorative details of the soldier courses and limestone sills of the north elevation are continued on this portion of the church. The opening pattern on the lower level also repeats the pattern of the north elevation, with five round-arch doorways. As on the east elevation, the hyphen is visible, with two windows as on the other elevation (photograph 10). Also evident on this elevation is the infill of the addition above the hyphen on this side of the building. The addition is fenestrated similarly to its east elevation, with a group of six windows with metal windows on each floor in the southern bay and single windows in the northern bay.

Interior

The interior organization of the original church consists of the main sanctuary (photographs 11-16), which takes up the vast majority of the area of the building, and the hyphen on the south. As noted, the sanctuary is in two levels – a lower level and balcony – with stairs in all four corners (photographs 17-20). The two sets of stairs on the south are open (photographs 17, 18). The stairs on the north end of the space are enclosed in towers, which retain their original details including their oak doors and original cast metal and wood railing (photographs 19, 20). On the south side of the sanctuary, enclosed entry vestibules under the stairs give access from the exterior doors in those corners of the original building. In the southwest corner of the space, the former entry vestibule has been installed interpretively as the study of Reverend Charles A. Tindley (photograph 21), although it did not serve as such during his lifetime. The massive, multi-tiered, reinforced concrete balcony is located on all but the south side of the space, and the south, pulpit wall of the space is dominated by the M. P. Möller organ, whose pipes occupy most of the wall surface (photograph 13). A curtain at the rear of the pulpit dais covers the opening in the paneling that connects the sanctuary to the baptismal pool (photograph 22). Here, folding panels open into recesses in the wall behind and the portion of the floor immediately in front of the pool can be removed.

Although the balcony itself frames the lower space in a rectilinear fashion, the seating on both levels is centrally planned, radiating from the semi-circular pulpit dais fronting the south wall, which in turn is fronted by a semicircular oak communion rail supported on brass brackets (photograph 23). Overall, the sanctuary is characterized by the relative simplicity of its decorative detail and in general large scale emphasized by the height and open span of the space, the scale of individual elements, including the oversized brass balcony and stair rails (see photographs 12, 14, 17, 18) and the relative abstraction of its surfaces and materials.

The predominant materials are white plaster wall surfaces, dark-finished wood (predominantly oak), and

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brass details, including the muscular balcony and stair railings. Because of the relative simplicity of the surfaces, the sheer quantity of seating needed to accommodate the large congregation during Reverend Tindley's lifetime, and the scale of the organ, the overall impression of the space is of a direct, almost raw power, although the sparseness of the space is also reminiscent of an auditorium or theater space, thus appropriately foregrounding the liturgical importance of music at Tindley Temple, an impression reinforced by the prominent display of the organ on the south wall. Original seating, altar, and pulpit furniture survive throughout, with the exception of the replacement light fixtures and a partition inserted at the north end of the building to create a narthex/vestibule space. Visual evidence indicates this partition (photographs 24, 25) was altered, or more likely inserted, at the same time that the school and administration addition was constructed in the early 1960s, and at the same time that the light fixtures were replaced in the sanctuary and the current tile floor (photograph 26) was installed. Relatively minor alterations also include the insertion of a sound booth in the balcony and a replaced organ console also located on the balcony (photograph 12).

Although decorative ornament in the room is relatively sparse, it is not absent. Stained glass windows, primarily located on the east and west elevations, and which include a depiction of a black Madonna (photograph 27), constitute the most notably colorful features of the church space. Romanesque floral decoration can be found in the pew ends (photograph 28). Decoration can also be found in the massive reinforced concrete columns in the simplified Beaux Arts Romanesque/Art Deco style of those on the exterior that support the balcony and clerestory truss (photographs 16, 29).

To the south of the sanctuary in the hyphen of the original church are located the chapel on the east (photograph 30), a rear stair to the sanctuary and organ to the west of the chapel (photograph 31), and two robing rooms (photographs 32, 33, 36) flanking the centrally placed baptismal pool which is accessed by a corridor connecting the robing rooms and providing two entry stairs down into the pool (photographs 22, 32-35). The chapel's current wood paneled appearance dates to the early 1960s alterations. Both the robing rooms and the baptismal pool retain their original details and finishes, which include wood changing compartment doors in the robing rooms, white tile and brass railings in the baptismal pool, removable panels in the floor of the pulpit dais, and doors in the screen between the sanctuary and the baptismal pool that open to fold back into recesses in the wall (photograph 22).

The basement level of the original church houses a large institutional kitchen on the north side and eating/gathering space (photographs 37-39). Reinforced concrete mushroom columns indicate the substantial load of the building above. Although kitchen equipment has been replaced, as have the light fixtures, the configuration of partitions and trim throughout date to the original construction.

The interior of the 1960s addition is even more simply treated than the main church. The addition is entered through a double, multi-light wooden door which gives direct access to the main stair (photographs 40-42). The addition is organized on a single-loaded corridor plan by a concrete masonry unit partition on the first and second floors (photograph 43), with offices and classroom spaces on the south. Another community space occupies the basement level (photograph 44). Dropped ceilings are found throughout the addition.

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Overall, the Tindley Temple building is in generally good condition. It retains a high degree of integrity throughout, retaining integrity of location, and, while its setting has changed over the years, the fundamental character of its setting survives. The integrity of the 1920s Ballinger design, materials, and workmanship survive throughout the original building with only relatively minor changes as noted. The church is substantially as Reverend Tindley would have known it; its minor changes have not affected the powerful character of the sanctuary and secondary spaces, including the key baptismal pool. The property therefore also retains integrity of feeling and association.

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SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The Tindley Temple United Methodist Church meets the registration requirements established in the African American Churches of Philadelphia Multiple Property Documentation Form for properties significant under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage and Social History as one of the most important congregations in the history of the African-American associated churches in Philadelphia in the Historic Context period “A Changing Role” of the early twentieth century. Tindley Temple is also significant under Criterion B under the same context for its association with the Reverend Charles Albert Tindley (ca. 1851-1933)¹ the minister for whom the church is named, a leader in the Philadelphia African-American religious community during this period (see Section E, MPDF, pp. 30, 35). As the material manifestation of the achievements and interests of Tindley’s productive life, Tindley Temple is the property that best illustrates his significance.

In addition, the Tindley Temple is nationally significant under Criterion B in the areas of Performing Arts, Religion, Ethnic Heritage, and Social History for its association with Reverend Tindley and his national role in the development of gospel music, a uniquely American religious musical art form, and for his recognized leadership within the national African-American religious and broader communities. Finally, Tindley Temple is regionally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a powerful and evocative design by Ballinger Company, one of the dominant architectural firms of the Philadelphia area.

Historical Summary

The congregation that would become the Tindley Temple United Methodist Church arose from “Mother” Zoar Methodist Episcopal Church in the late 1830s (see African-American Churches in Philadelphia MPDF, Section E, p. 7), and began as a group worshipping in private houses. In 1837, the group acquired a property on Bainbridge Street near South 8th Street in Philadelphia and the John Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church was established. After occupying another property further west on Bainbridge Street as the Bainbridge Street Methodist Church, the congregation purchased the former Westminster Presbyterian Church Building on the west side of South Broad Street south of Fitzwater Street about 1905.²

¹ Sources differ on Tindley’s birth year. 1851 is recorded by his son, E. T. Tindley. E. T. Tindley, *The Prince of Colored Preachers: The Remarkable Story of Charles Albert Tindley of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania* (Privately printed, 1942), 7.

² “History of Tindley Temple United Methodist Church,” Service of Celebration and Dedication Program, 14 September 2002, Tindley Temple United Methodist Church Archives (hereafter Tindley Archives), n.p.

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Pastor Charles Albert Tindley was born to slave parents in Berlin, Maryland in 1851, and had first come to Philadelphia as a laborer before 1880. He served as a sexton at the Bainbridge Street Methodist Church. After preparing for the ministry (mostly through correspondence courses) and being admitted to the Delaware Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (an African-American organization that had been founded in the Wesley Methodist Church) on trial in 1885, Tindley served congregations in New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland before being named Presiding Elder of the conference in 1896.³ In 1902, Tindley returned as pastor to his former Philadelphia congregation, which changed its name in 1907 to the Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church. Its name was changed again to the East Calvary Methodist Church in 1914 as a result of a claim by another Philadelphia congregation with the same name.⁴ In the first quarter of the twentieth century, Reverend Tindley composed the ground-breaking gospel hymns for which he has become known and which remain gospel standards, including "What are they doing in Heaven" (1901), "The Storm is Passing Over" (1905), and "Stand by Me" (1905).⁵ His charismatic leadership of the Philadelphia African-American community and of his congregation resulted in the growth of its size from a purported 130 members at the beginning of his pastorate to 10,000 by the 1920s. This figure was reported as one of the largest Methodist congregation in the United States, black or white.⁶ Because of this strength, the East Calvary congregation took the unusual step of commissioning its own building. The firm of Ballinger & Company was contracted in 1923 to design a new church and a building permit was issued in the fall of that year.⁷ The name of the congregation was legally changed in 1927 to Tindley Temple, and the new house of worship was dedicated in 1928.⁸ Charles A. Tindley died in Philadelphia as a result of gangrene following a foot injury in 1933.⁹ Since Tindley's death, the main change to the church property occurred with the construction of a 1962-3 addition on the south side of the original church designed by architect A. Hensel Fink, with John S. McQuade Company serving as contractors.¹⁰

Significance within the Historic Contexts of African-American Churches in Philadelphia

In regard to the registration requirements established in the African American Churches of Philadelphia Multiple Property Documentation Form for properties significant under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage and Social History, Tindley Temple is one of the most important congregations in the history of the African-American associated churches in Philadelphia in the Historic Context period "A

³ E. T. Tindley, *The Prince of Colored Preachers*, pp. 7-16.

⁴ "History of Tindley Temple."

⁵ Horace Clarence Boyer, "Charles Albert Tindley: Progenitor of Black-American Gospel Music," *The Black Perspective in Music* 11, No. 2 (Autumn, 1983): 110. See Boyer, Appendix (131-132) for a chronology of Tindley's published songs.

⁶ Rev. John W. Robinson, "'Race has Made Greatest Progress under Preacher Leadership,'" *Pittsburgh Courier* 6 August 1927, p. 5.

⁷ Tindley Temple file, Philadelphia Historical Commission, Philadelphia.

⁸ "History of Tindley Temple."

⁹ "Dr. Charles A. Tindley Succumbs to Gangrene," *The New York Amsterdam News* 2 August 1933, p. 3.

¹⁰ Tindley Temple file, Philadelphia Historical Commission, Philadelphia.

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Changing Role” of the early twentieth century. As noted above, under Reverend Tindley’s leadership, the congregation grew from a membership in the 100s to 10,000 by several accounts, making it the largest Methodist congregation in the country in the late 1920s.¹¹

Tindley Temple is also significant under Criterion B under the same context for its association with the Reverend Charles Albert Tindley (ca. 1858-1933) the minister for whom the church is named, a leader in the Philadelphia African-American religious community during this period (see Section E, MPDF, pp. 30, 35). An indication of Reverend Tindley’s leadership in these areas can be found on page 30, Section E, “in 1912 Rev. Charles Tindley of Calvary Methodist . . . founded the Second Emancipation League, a non-denominational organization for Christian Women that endorsed women’s suffrage and aimed to improve the lives of black women in the greater Philadelphia area.” Many other similar examples could be noted, including his pioneering of radio ministry (Section E, p. 35). As the material manifestation of the achievements and interests of Tindley’s productive life, it is the property that best illustrates his significance.

Additional Significance

In regard to Criterion B, Tindley Temple possesses national significance under Criterion B in the areas of Performing Arts, Religion, Ethnic Heritage, and Social History for its association with Reverend Tindley and his national role in the development of gospel music, a uniquely American religious musical art form, and for his recognized leadership within the national African-American religious and broader communities. As noted above, Tindley Temple, as the material manifestation of the achievements and interests of Tindley’s productive life, is the property that best illustrates his significance.

Reverend Tindley’s, and Tindley Temple’s, significance in the areas of Performing Arts, Religion, Ethnic Heritage, and Social History are due to the close relationship between African American gospel music, African American culture, and African American religion. The role of African American gospel music has been characterized by Joyce Jackson as “an important part of the community’s aesthetic expression and . . . a synthesis of music, dance, poetry, and drama distilled into a unified whole. Gospel music also represents a strong link to African roots in both subtle and sometimes obvious ways.”¹² Jackson goes on to assert that “While gospel music is strongly entrenched in the African ‘folk church’ tradition, it also attracts many who identify as much with its expression of African American values, aesthetics, and life experiences as with its expression of religion. Participants in the tradition, with varying degrees of expertise and from a wide range of ages, denominational affiliations, and geographic locales, readily articulate its significance in the African American community.”¹³

¹¹ Robinson, “Race has Made Greatest Progress under Preacher Leadership.”

¹² Joyce Marie Jackson, “The Changing Nature of Gospel Music: A Southern Case Study,” *African American Review* 29, no. 2 (Summer 1995): 185.

¹³ Ibid.

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Jackson and other commentators and scholars on the history of gospel music situate Reverend Tindley, whose first published music appeared in 1901, in a central and crucial role in the development of the African American gospel tradition. In documenting “gospel’s first period,” Jackson records that “Reverend Charles A. Tindley, renowned during his lifetime as an eloquent Methodist minister, is credited with being the first African American to compose (both music and words) and publish the new genre of African American religious song.”¹⁴ Horace Boyer asserts that gospel writers of the generation after Tindley paid homage to him “because he was the first black composer to recognize the validity and potential of sacred songs characterized by simple—almost predictable—melodies, harmonies, rhythms, and messages which dealt forthrightly with such subjects as the joys, trials, and tribulations of living a Christian life in the twentieth century as well as the rewards of heaven.” Boyer goes on to note that “Tindley’s songs used the musical and verbal language of the poor, struggling, often illiterate black Christian at the turn of [the twentieth] century.”¹⁵ Part of this ability to understand the situation of these people was certainly the circumstances of Tindley’s early life as the illiterate son of rural slaves who taught himself to read.¹⁶ Horace Boyer elaborates this point by noting that “Tindley not only was a good composer; he was unique. He knew his Bible and could translate its archaic language into the sort, picturesque, and sonorous language of his people, and ultimately of all people.” Boyer goes on to observe that “Tindley was an extraordinary story teller; he told his stories in simple and direct melodies, using harmonies that did not overpower the simplicity of his messages. Above all, he left the spaces necessary for gospel singers to become engrossed in their singing.”¹⁷

Not only did Tindley author music, he also published it. By 1916 he had formed the Paradise Publishing Company with two of his sons and three others.¹⁸ Eventually, Tindley published some 46 gospel songs, which have been catalogued by Boyer.¹⁹ Boyer identifies nearly one quarter of these as a “gospel standard.” Although not identified as among these, Tindley’s “I’ll Overcome Some Day,” published in 1901, has been credited by numerous commentators as the basis for the Civil Rights anthem “We Shall Overcome (Some Day).”²⁰

¹⁴ Jackson, “Changing Nature of Gospel Music”: 189.

¹⁵ Horace Clarence Boyer, “Charles Albert Tindley: Progenitor of Black-American Gospel Music,” *The Black Perspective in Music* 11, no. 2 (Autumn 1983): 104.

¹⁶ Virtually all biographical sources on Tindley justly dwell on the point of the contrast between his humble beginnings and his accomplishments, and also assert that he was an autodidact and taught himself to read by studying scraps of newspapers and later the bible, although one might hypothesize that he had at least been taught some rudiments of the alphabet in order to be able do this. Tindley eventually amassed a vast library consisting of books on a wide variety of subjects and learned a number of foreign languages.

¹⁷ Boyer, “Charles Albert Tindley”: 128.

¹⁸ Boyer, “Charles Albert Tindley”: 110.

¹⁹ Boyer, “Charles Albert Tindley”: 131.

²⁰ See, for example, Melinda E. Weekes, “This House, This Music: Exploring the Interdependent Interpretive Relationship between the Contemporary Black Church and Contemporary Gospel Music,” *Black Music Research Journal* 25, No. 1/2 (Spring - Fall, 2005): 48. The enduring importance of Tindley’s music can be gauged, for example, not only in the African American community but outside it, in the number of videos of choir performances of his songs on YouTube.com, particularly “the Storm is Passing Over.”

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It is clear upon reflection that the design and features of Tindley Temple are evocative reifications of many key ideas of gospel music. Thanks to its plain finishes, the dominance of the space of the main sanctuary by the massive Möller organ, the stage-like placement and size of the pulpit dais, and the theatrical nature of the scale of baptismal pool and its revelation from behind the closed partition on the south wall, the Tindley Temple feels as much like a theater or an auditorium as a space for Christian worship. It thus eloquently expresses gospel music's, and Reverend Tindley's, "synthesis of music, dance, poetry, and drama," and serves as a powerful illustration of Reverend Tindley's achievements not only as the leader of a significant Philadelphia congregation, but as a nationally significant figure in the history of African-American culture.

Reverend Tindley's "renown" as an "eloquent Methodist minister" was also national. This renown is particularly important because his leadership and significance was recognized not only within the African American community but in larger religious circles, particularly white Methodist ones. Not surprisingly, Tindley's significance as an extraordinarily important and gifted clergyman was most often noticed within the African American community, particularly as a model for African American cultural success. For example, in refuting H. L. Mencken's 1927 "slur," that the "colored pastor" has led the race since the Civil War . . . and has made a dreadful botch of it," the Reverend John W. Robinson dwelled on the success in leadership represented by Tindley's "largest membership enrollment of any Methodist Episcopal church in America."²¹ The broader national recognition of Tindley's leadership is documented more obliquely in the "white" press. In 1924, the Methodist general conference, both African American and white conferences (including the Delaware Conference of the former category of which Tindley was a leader) met in Springfield, Massachusetts to debate the question of re-unification of the Methodist Episcopal Church North and the Methodist Episcopal Church South. These bodies had split at the time of the Civil War over a slavery-related question, with respect to a bishop who retained the slaves left to his wife. It seems highly significant, although not commented upon, that Reverend Tindley was one of two African American clergymen who seconded the motion to re-unify the two bodies, which was passed to great acclaim.²² In the reporting on the integrated Methodist Camp Meeting of July, 1926, the recognition of Reverend Tindley's significance is again strongly suggested. In a series of articles in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, the Rev. W. B. Norton announced Tindley's sermons of July 18th afternoon and evening, and the performance by "colored singers" of "spirituals."²³ Following Tindley's sermons, Reverend Norton, describing Tindley as "a colored preacher who has come to the pastorate of the largest colored church in the denomination," recounted that Tindley "aroused intense enthusiasm. He stirred ministers and church members to hearty amens and frequent applause. At the close of the sermon the outburst was so long continued as to amount almost to an ovation."²⁴

²¹ Robinson, "Race has Made Greatest Progress under Preacher Leadership."

²² "Methodists Vote for Church Union," *New York Times*, 8 May 1924. The other was the Rev. W. A. Hughes.

²³ Rev. W. B. Norton, "Brennan Rapped at Methodist Camp Meeting," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 18 July 1926, p. 14.

²⁴ Norton, "Cheers Acclaim Colored Pastor at Des Plaines: Record Crowd Hears Old Time Sermon," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 19 July 1926, p. 17.

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In regard to Criterion A, Tindley Temple is also regionally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a powerful and evocative design by Ballinger Company, one of the dominant architectural and engineering firms of the Philadelphia area. The Ballinger Company, which remains in business to this day, was led at the time of the Tindley Temple commission by architect and engineer Walter F. Ballinger (1867-1924), who established the firm in 1920 when he bought out the interests of his then partner Emile G. Perrot in the firm of Ballinger & Perrot (fl. 1901-1920). Ballinger's partnership with Perrot had been preceded by one with Edward M. Hales, who had founded the successful firm of Geissinger & Hales, which had been established in 1887 as both an architectural and engineering firm. The work of the Ballinger firm ranged across a wide variety of building types at the time of the construction of what was called at the time of the commission the East Calvary Methodist Church. The Ballinger work included industrial, commercial, residential, and institutional projects; their largest contemporary project was probably the Atwater Kent factory near East Falls in Philadelphia. Ballinger himself had been trained in architecture and engineering at the Drexel Institute of Philadelphia (later Drexel University). Ballinger was an inventor of the "super-span saw tooth roof," which, in simple terms, consisted of a steel truss design that would allow for an uninterrupted open space in a factory building of a width up to 100 feet.²⁵

Although the East Calvary Church commission, first announced in the *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* on June 27, 1923 and permitted by the City of Philadelphia in October of that year,²⁶ was unusual for the firm, Ballinger's industrial credentials were essential for the needs of the project. The reinforced concrete structure of the building was key to the program of accommodating literally thousands of worshippers in the church for Reverend Tindley's services, as well as the massive organ and its weight. The roof trusses, based on the firm's experience in creating clear-span factory spaces, allowed for an uninterrupted, open auditorium, which served the purpose of the Reverend Tindley's music and the theatrical nature of worship within the church. The muscular strength of the building's details throughout further reinforce the feeling of the space as a powerful, moving house of worship.

²⁵ "Ballinger, Walter F.," in John William Leonard, *Who's Who in Engineering, 1922-1923* (New York: John William Leonard, 1922), 94 and Ballinger Company Advertisement, *System* 39, no. 2 (February 1922): 246.

²⁶ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* 38, no. 26, 27 June 1923; Tindley Temple files, Philadelphia Historical Commission.

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#	Photographer	Date	Description of view
1	Emily T Cooperman	3/16/2010	Tindley Temple, from Broad Street, looking northwest
2	Emily T. Cooperman	3/3/2010	Tindley Temple, from Fitzwater Street, looking south
3	Emily T. Cooperman	4/7/2010	Tindley Temple, original church building east elevation, from Broad Street, looking west
4	Emily T. Cooperman	3/3/2010	Tindley Temple original church building south door, east elevation, looking northwest
5	Emily T. Cooperman	4/7/2010	Tindley Temple, original church building east elevation, looking northwest
6	Emily T. Cooperman	3/3/2010	Tindley Temple school and administration addition, east elevation, looking southwest
7	Emily T. Cooperman	3/3/2010	Tindley Temple school and administration addition, east elevation, looking northwest
8	Emily T. Cooperman	3/16/2010	Tindley Temple rear (west) elevation, looking northeast from Rosewood Street
9	Emily T. Cooperman	4/7/2010	Tindley Temple rear (west) elevation, looking southeast from Rosewood Street
10	Emily T. Cooperman	3/16/2010	Tindley Temple rear (west) elevation, looking northeast from Rosewood Street, showing infill of addition above original church hyphen at center
11	Emily T. Cooperman	4/7/2010	Tindley Temple sanctuary, looking northeast from lower level
12	Emily T. Cooperman	4/7/2010	Tindley Temple sanctuary, looking southwest from balcony level, with added sound booth at upper left on balcony
13	Emily T. Cooperman	4/7/2010	Tindley Temple sanctuary, looking south from balcony level, showing M. P. Möller organ, with pulpit dais and opening for baptismal pool below
14	Emily T. Cooperman	4/7/2010	Tindley Temple sanctuary, west side of balcony, looking north, showing original chair seating
15	Emily T. Cooperman	4/7/2010	Tindley Temple sanctuary, north side of balcony, looking northeast, showing stadium seating detail
16	Emily T. Cooperman	4/7/2010	Tindley Temple sanctuary, east side of balcony, looking southeast, showing column detail
17	Emily T. Cooperman	4/7/2010	Tindley Temple sanctuary, lower level, showing open stair to balcony near southeast corner of sanctuary, looking southeast
18	Emily T. Cooperman	3/3/2010	Tindley Temple sanctuary, open stair between lower level and balcony, looking northeast
19	Emily T. Cooperman	4/7/2010	Tindley Temple sanctuary, east side of balcony, south doorway to enclosed stair tower on northeast corner of building, looking north

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| 20 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple sanctuary, east side of balcony, south doorway to enclosed stair tower on northeast corner of building, looking north |
| 21 | Emily T. Cooperman | 11/30/2009 | Tindley Temple sanctuary, lower level, showing entry vestibule in southwest corner installed as Rev. Charles A. Tindley's office |
| 22 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple sanctuary, lower level, showing opening in south wall and baptismal pool, looking southwest |
| 23 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple sanctuary, lower level, showing communion rail, looking northwest from southeast portion of room |
| 24 | Emily T. Cooperman | 3/3/2010 | Tindley Temple sanctuary, lower level, showing 1960s partition at north end of lower level and display cases, looking east |
| 25 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple sanctuary, lower level, showing 1960s partition at north end of lower level and display cases, looking west |
| 26 | Emily T. Cooperman | 3/3/2010 | Tindley Temple sanctuary, lower level, floor detail |
| 27 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple sanctuary, lower level, north portion, east wall, showing stained glass windows with figure of black Madonna at right |
| 28 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple sanctuary, lower level, typical pew end detail |
| 29 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple sanctuary, lower level, looking southeast toward entry vestibule at southeast corner, showing pew and column detail |
| 30 | Emily T. Cooperman | 3/3/2010 | Tindley Temple lower level, showing chapel in eastern portion of hyphen, looking southwest |
| 31 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple lower level, showing back stair in eastern portion of hyphen, looking southwest, with entry to eastern robing room at rear (right) |
| 32 | Emily T. Cooperman | 3/3/2010 | Tindley Temple lower level, looking southeast from western robing room to stair to corridor behind baptismal pool |
| 33 | Emily T. Cooperman | 3/3/2010 | Tindley Temple lower level, looking east from western robing room through corridor at the rear of baptismal pool, showing entry stairs to pool at left and eastern robing room at rear |
| 34 | Emily T. Cooperman | 3/3/2010 | Tindley Temple lower level, eastern stair into baptismal pool, looking southeast from pulpit dais. |
| 35 | Emily T. Cooperman | 3/3/2010 | Tindley Temple lower level, western stair into baptismal pool, looking southwest from pulpit dais. |
| 36 | Emily T. Cooperman | 3/3/2010 | Tindley Temple lower level, showing robing room changing areas detail |
| 37 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple basement level, looking northeast toward kitchen |
| 38 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple basement level, looking north toward kitchen |
| 39 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple basement level, looking west |
| 40 | Emily T. Cooperman | 3/3/2010 | Tindley Temple addition main stair and entrance, looking east from first floor level |

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| 41 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple addition main stair looking east from first floor level toward stair communicating with second floor |
| 42 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple addition, looking northwest from entry toward first floor corridor |
| 43 | Emily T. Cooperman | 3/3/2010 | Tindley Temple addition, looking west in first floor corridor |
| 44 | Emily T. Cooperman | 4/7/2010 | Tindley Temple addition, looking west in basement level community room |

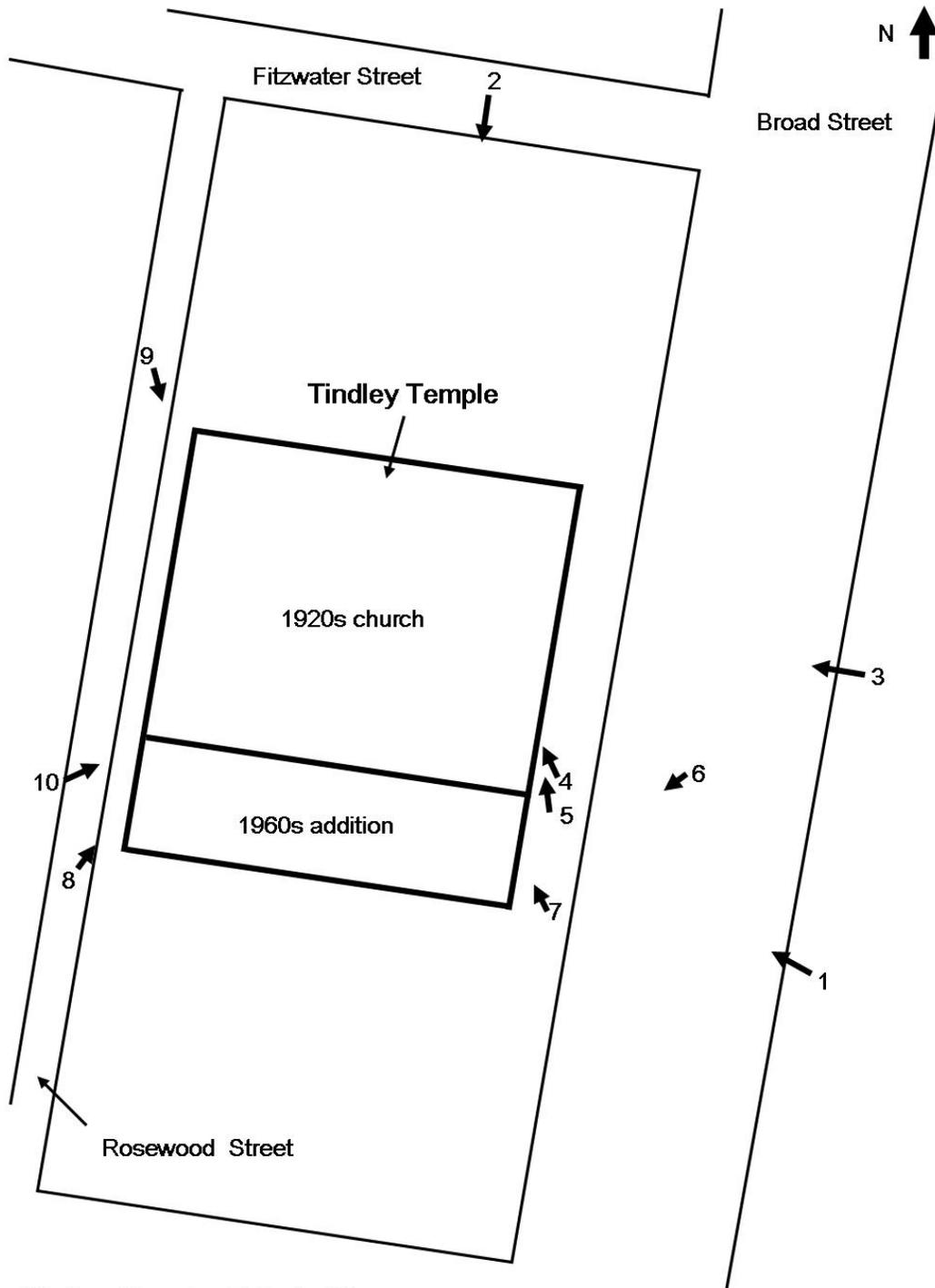
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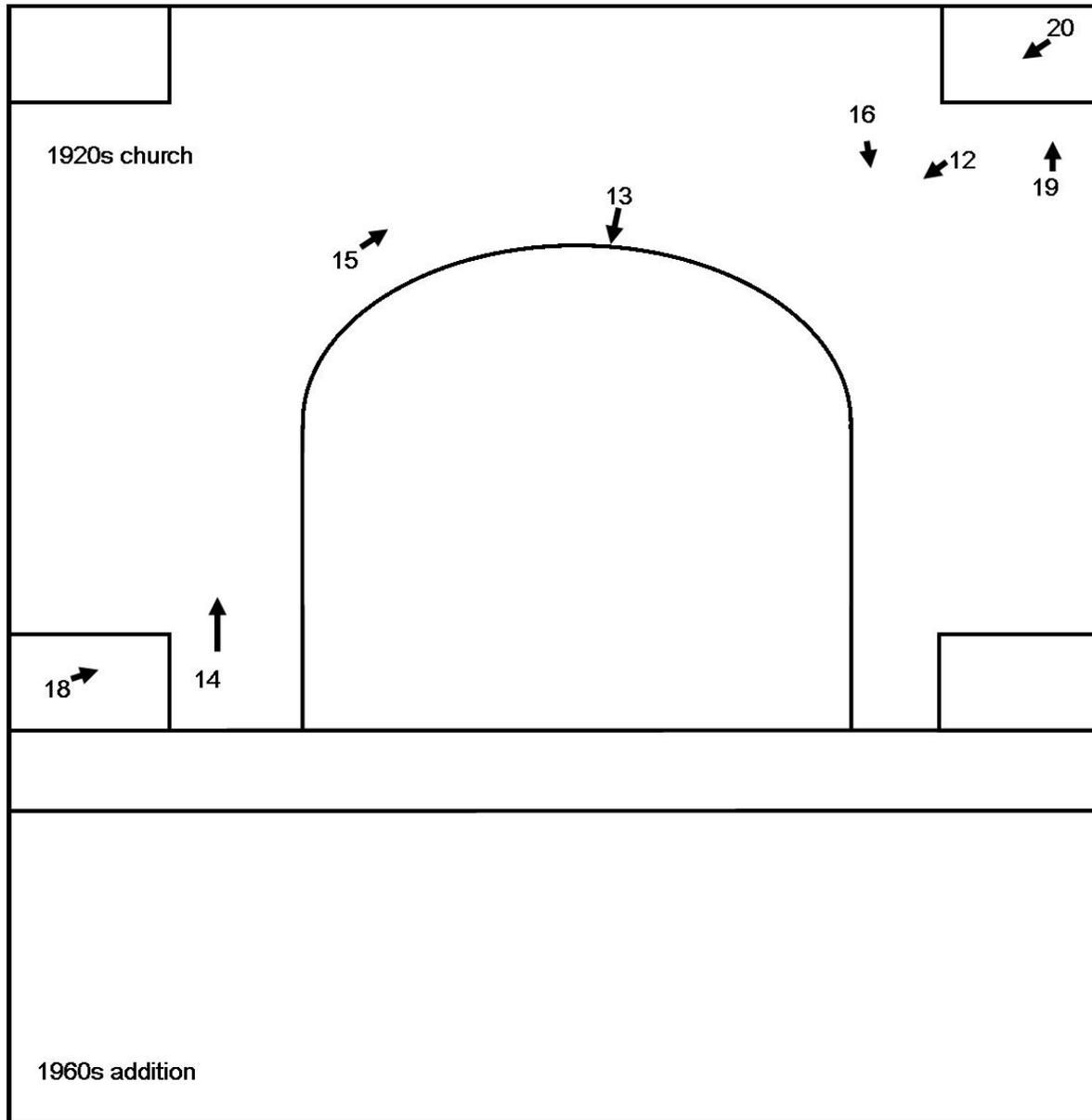
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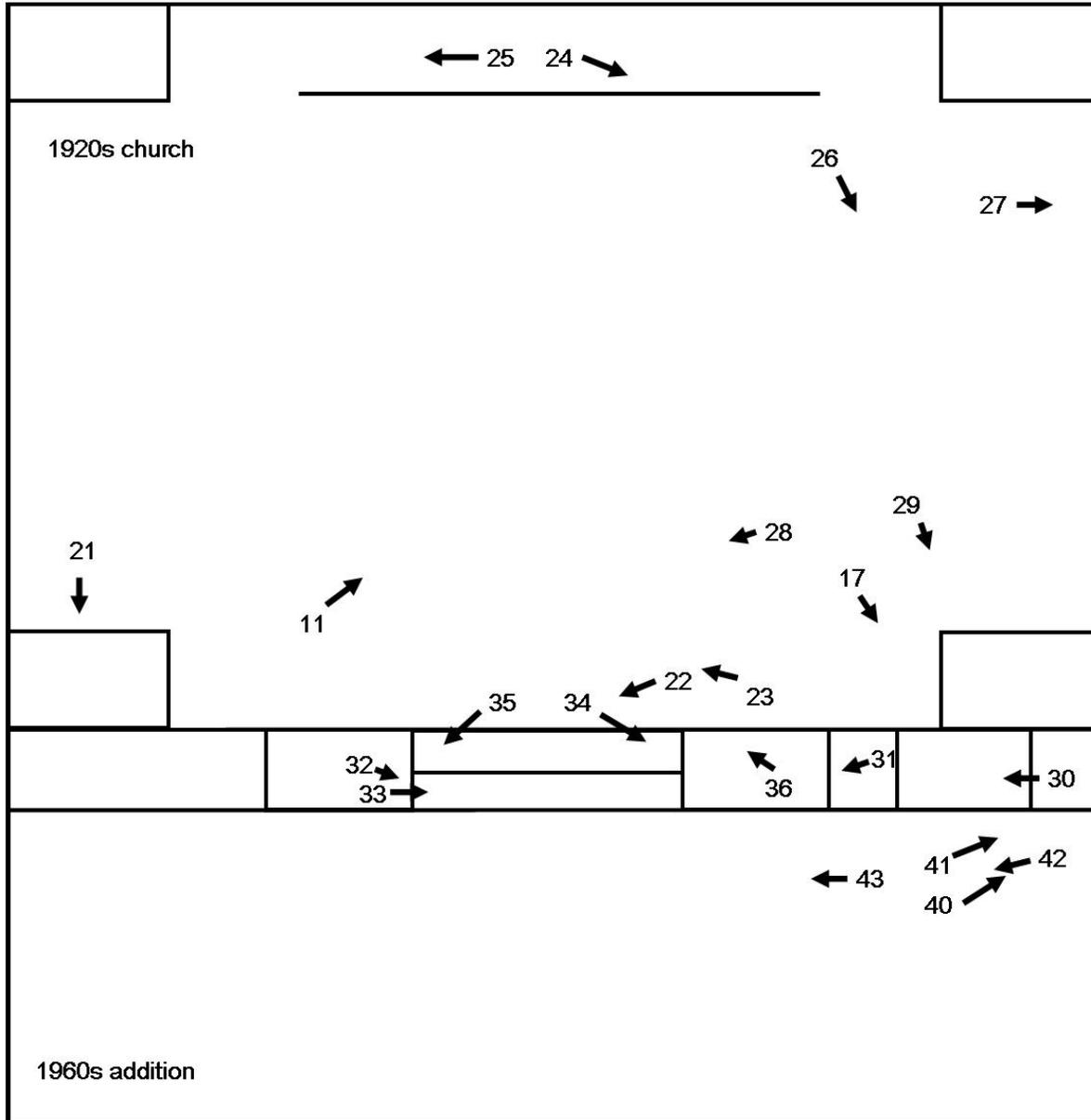


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Tindley Temple, Main/First floor level

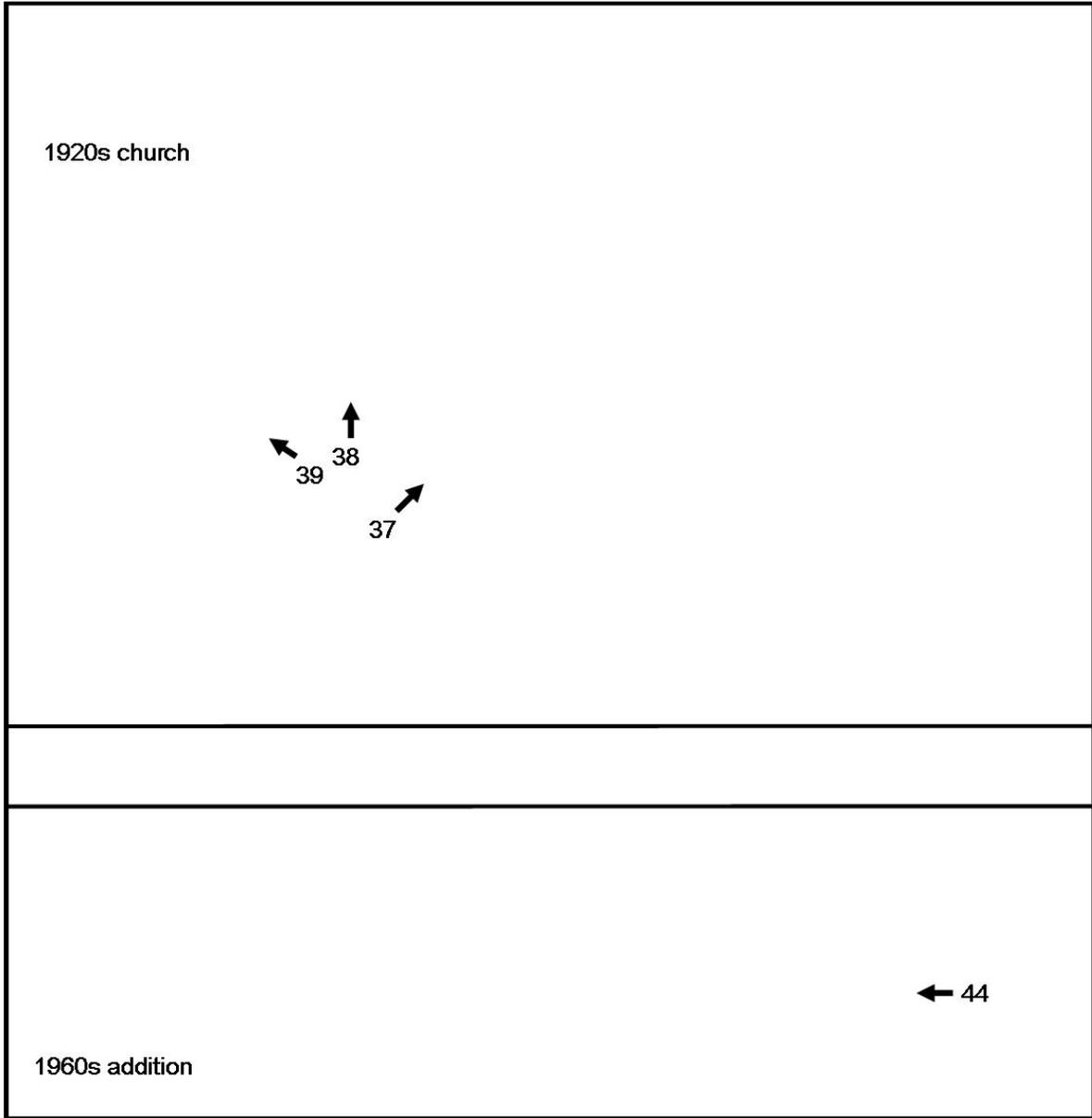


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Tindley Temple, Basement level

