

# Draft

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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 Sacred Heart Church  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 554 Fillmore Street  not for publication  
city or town San Francisco  vicinity  
state California code CA county San Francisco code 075 zip code 94117

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ 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 \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Title 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box)

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

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	<b>Total</b>

### Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: BRICK

roof: ASPHALT

other: TERRACOTTA

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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

Sacred Heart Church occupies a sloping hilltop site at the southeast corner of Fillmore and Fell streets, major north-south and east-west thoroughfares in the Western Addition district of San Francisco. The entire complex consists of four buildings: Sacred Heart Church, an adjacent rectory located on Fillmore Street, an adjoining school building located on Fell Street, and a convent located on Oak Street. The balance of the property is occupied by parking and an asphalt-topped play ground. This nomination includes only the church building. Because of its commanding location, the monumental Romanesque Revival-style church building, with its towering campanile, is visible from many areas of the neighborhood and surrounding parts of the city. Designed by well-known San Francisco architect Thomas John Welsh and constructed for the Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco in 1897, the church was built in two major phases over twelve years. It survived the 1906 Earthquake and Fire unharmed and in the aftermath ministered to the victims of the disaster by providing spiritual services and food and shelter. The 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake did not cause any structural damage to the building and a minimum of cosmetic damage including some minor cracking in the wall and ceiling surfaces, as well as some plaster spalling in the nave. Once dominated by a large Irish-Catholic community, the parish became heavily African American during the post-World War II period. Later influxes of Latinos, Filipinos, and gays contributed to Sacred Heart having one of the most diverse congregations in the city by the turn of the millenium. Nevertheless, the Archdiocese decided to close Sacred Heart in 2004, citing the high cost of seismic repairs. In 2005, the property was sold to a private owner who intended to reuse the buildings in the complex as a charter school. The school was never fully operational in this location and the complex, including the church, now stands vacant. Although unoccupied, the church remains in good condition and retains historic integrity in regard to location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Sacred Heart Church appears eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C (design/construction). The period of significance is 1897-1923, beginning with the initial construction of the front portion of the church. The period of significance, which spans 26 years, encompasses the construction of the transept and sanctuary (1905) at the rear of the building, the installation of the stained glass windows (1898 and 1909), construction of the marble alters (1910), the painting of the frescoes (1920), and the installation of the pipe organ (1923).

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## Narrative Description

### *Exterior - Site*

The primary (west) façade and secondary (north) façade of Sacred Heart Church are constructed to the property line and are bordered by wide concrete sidewalks. To the south of the church is a three-story rectory building, also facing Fillmore Street. The rear portion of the south façade of the church is bordered by a blacktop play yard. A three-story school building is located to the east of the church on Fell Street, and a three-story convent building is located to the south on Oak Street. As mentioned above, only the church building is the subject of this nomination. Sacred Heart Church has a cruciform plan with dimensions of approximately 66 by 170 feet. The church has a concrete foundation and water table with the walls above clad in golden-colored face brick and decorative terracotta details. The building has a partial basement at the east end following the slope of the lot. The nave of the church is two stories with the walls measuring approximately 50 feet. The nave is capped by a transverse gable roof. Transepts and one-story sacristies are located on the north and south façades and a projecting sanctuary is located at the rear of the building. An approximately 90-foot high tower/campanile stands at the northwest corner of the building.

### *West Façade*

The primary façade of the church faces west on Fillmore Street. At the center of the façade is a terracotta entry portico supported by granite Tuscan order columns with simple bases. The portico is surmounted by a modillioned architrave, paneled frieze, and a bracketed cornice. The portico is topped by a balustrade divided into sections of seven balusters separated by paneled consoles. The underside of the portico is clad in plain terracotta tiles with a decorative tile border. Beneath the portico are three recessed double paneled wood doors surmounted by transom windows. The door openings are clad in terracotta and surmounted by an entablature consisting of an acanthus leaf frieze surmounted by dentils and egg-and-dart molding. The modillioned cornice is supported by scrolled brackets. Four pilasters with Tuscan order capitals flank the entrance doors. The portico itself is flanked by large stained glass windows surrounded by terracotta surrounds and surmounted by pediments. The outer bays feature paired pilasters with Tuscan order capitals. The first and second stories of the church are separated by a beltcourse of terracotta and a terracotta intermediate cornice (continued on page 8).

## 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.

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### Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is 1897-1923. It begins with the date of construction of the nave of the church and includes the construction of the transept and sanctuary (1905) at the rear of the building to complete the architect's original plan. It also includes the installation of the stained glass windows (1898 and 1909), marble alters (1910), frescoes (1920), and pipe organ (1923).

### Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)

Sacred Heart Church is a religious property deriving significance from architectural distinction.

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

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

### Period of Significance

1897-1923

### Significant Dates

1897

1905

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

### Cultural Affiliation

### Architect/Builder

Welsh, Thomas John

Sacred Heart Church appears eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C (Design/Construction) as a building that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type (Roman Catholic church), period (pre-1906 Earthquake), and method of construction (iron-frame, brick and concrete construction). Within the context of San Francisco's Romanesque Revival-style religious buildings, Sacred Heart Church embodies the distinctive characteristics of this period and style. The building is also the work of an early master architect in San Francisco (Thomas J. Welsh) and possesses high artistic values in regard to its architecture (exterior and interior), as well as its extensive art program, consisting of stained glass windows, carved marble altars, and other elements donated by parishioners throughout the history of the church. As a former religious property, Sacred Heart Church derives its primary significance from its architecture and it is not being nominated under Criterion 1 (Events) in order to comply with Criterion Consideration A. As described in more detail later, Sacred Heart Church has undergone few alterations after the end of the period of significance and therefore retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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

As described above, Sacred Heart Church appears eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. The scarcely altered building embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Romanesque Revival style and is indeed one of the finest examples of the style in San Francisco. Its gabled nave and transept arms, towering campanile, eave-height arcaded corbel table (also known as Lombard bands), decorative stringcourses, as well as the westward facing, pedimented portico supported by Tuscan order columns, are all distinctive characteristics of the style. Derived from multiple sources, including late Classical and early Mediaeval Christian architecture of Tuscany and Lombardy, as well as the Holy Roman Empire and Spain and France, the Romanesque Revival style swept across the United States between 1840 and 1900, culminating with the distinctive and largely homegrown work of Henry H. Richardson, whose body of work led to the formation of a distinctive style called "Richardsonian Romanesque." Combining elements of early mediaeval Christian architecture in Europe, Classicism, as well as naturalistic ornamentation, the Romanesque Revival style appealed to the religious fervor and picturesque sensibilities of the United States during the Victorian era (Continued on page 13).

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

In December 1885, the first pastor of Sacred Heart Church, Reverend James Flood (not the same James Flood who made his fortune in the Comstock Lode silver mines), purchased a derelict, one-story Methodist church located on the corner of Linden and Buchanan streets in San Francisco's fast-growing Western Addition for use as a temporary church. In early 1886, Father Flood purchased the existing site of Sacred Heart, a parcel with 137'-6" of frontage on Fillmore Street and 171' on Fell Street. He then moved the one-story former Methodist church to the site. In 1887, Father Flood commissioned a larger temporary, wood-framed church that would accommodate 700 people. This church was designed by Thomas J. Welsh and constructed to face Fillmore Street. Meanwhile, the one-story former Methodist church was moved to the rear of the property to serve as the parochial residence. In 1889, the church acquired an additional 75'-wide lot along Fell Street, completing the configuration of the property as it is today: 137'-6" x 246' (continued on page 16).

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

See continuation sheet page 25.

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Geographical Data

### Acreage of Property

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

### Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

All of parcel 0828-022 located in the City and County of San Francisco, California.

### Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundaries were selected to include the parcel on which Sacred Heart Church is located.

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Shannon Ferguson and Christopher VerPlanck

organization Kelley & VerPlanck Historical Resources Consulting, LLC date September 15, 2009

street & number 2912 Diamond Street, #330 telephone (415) 337-5824

city or town San Francisco state CA zip code 94131

e-mail [chris@kvpconsulting.com](mailto:chris@kvpconsulting.com)

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## Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

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

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## 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:** Sacred Heart Church

**City or Vicinity:** San Francisco

**County:** San Francisco

**State:** California

**Photographer:** Christopher VerPlanck

**Date Photographed:** July 30, 2009

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** See Continuation Sheets

1 of \_\_\_\_.

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## Property Owner:

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name Megan Furth Academy

street & number 2445 Pine Street

telephone (415) 346-9500

city or town San Francisco

state CA

zip code 94115

**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.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Sacred Heart Church

County and State San Francisco, California

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section number 7 Page 1

### Narrative Description (Continued)

The center of the second story features three recessed windows flanked by Ionic order pilasters that support an entablature and segmental arches capped by keystones. Four Ionic order pilasters flank the windows. The outer bays feature a paneled frieze with a Roman cross in the lower panel and corner pilasters with Ionic capitals. An entablature comprising a molded architrave, plain frieze, dentil molding, and egg-and-dart cornice support a bracketed pediment with brick paneled tympanum. The pediment contains an oculus window surrounded by garlands. The apex of the gable roof features a large copper-plated Roman cross.

#### *Campanile*

The brick-clad campanile is located at the northwest corner of the building. The base features a concrete water table and brick banding. The north and west façades each have an arched window at the ground floor level. Above the banding is an entablature of terracotta with a blank frieze and molded cornice. Oculus windows surrounded by terracotta moldings and surmounted by a garland are located just below the midpoint of the campanile on the north and east façades. Above this is a terracotta belt course molding. At the midpoint of the tower is a terracotta entablature with a dentiled architrave, egg-and-dart molding, and molded cornice. The top of the tower is composed of three tiers. The lower tier has two arched windows on the east, north, and west façades. The middle tier has three arcaded openings on all elevations. The top tier features similar openings on all elevations and is capped by a bracketed terracotta cornice and a pyramidal roof punctuated with a gilded Roman cross.

#### *Nave: North Façade*

The basement level of the north façade (nave section) is molded concrete and features a door and four double-hung, wood-sash windows. The concrete foundation increases in height as one moves east along Fell Street due to the street's steeply sloping grade. The first and second floor levels of the nave are clad in yellow face brick and punctuated by three large rectangular stained glass windows. Each window has a projecting terracotta sill supported by brackets and are surrounded by terracotta moldings surmounted by a simple entablature and dentiled pediment. Near the top of the nave is a course of brick Lombard bands (also known as an arcaded frieze) that extends the length of the nave. The nave terminates in a dentiled and bracketed cornice made of terracotta.

#### *Nave: South Façade*

The south façade of the nave mirrors the north façade. The only differences between the two is that the south façade does not increase in height as one moves east because unlike Fell Street, the interior of the lot is graded flat. In addition, the south façade features a flight of steel stairs that leads down to the basement level. The south façade also features a wood-frame and wood-clad bridge, punctuated by lunette windows, that connects the choir loft to the adjacent rectory at the second story level. Otherwise, the two nave façades are identical.

#### *Transepts*

Toward the east end of the north and south façades are the transepts. Added to the building in 1905, the transepts are defined by large corner pilasters and project outward from the nave by several feet. In addition, both feature large rose windows surrounded by segmental terracotta moldings. Near the top of each transept is a beltcourse of terracotta surmounted by a blank brick frieze, terracotta dentil molding, and bracketed terracotta cornice. Both transepts are capped by bracketed terracotta pediments that each enclose a simple brick paneled tympanum. Both transepts feature pedestrian entrances that access the interior on their west façades. Both contain wood paneled doors similar to those on the west or primary façade.



## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Sacred Heart Church

County and State San Francisco, California

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section number 7 Page 2

### Narrative Description (Continued)

#### *East Façade*

The east façade of the church adjoins and is partially obscured by the adjoining school building. It is articulated as a projecting sanctuary capped by a gabled roof that is several feet lower than the gable-roofed nave. The sanctuary is flanked by two one-story sacristies that each have a flat roof capped by terracotta balustrades. The south façade of the south sacristy has a pedestrian entrance containing a wood-paneled door and a large double-hung, wood-sash window. Both feature terracotta label moldings. The east façade of the south sacristy features a similar window. The north sacristy, following the steeply sloping street, is punctuated by three double-hung, wood-sash windows at the basement level and a large double-hung, wood-sash window at the first floor level. Otherwise, the east façade of the north sacristy is obscured by the neighboring school building. The east façade of the nave features brick Lombard bands. A terracotta entablature comprising a molded architrave, plain frieze, dentiled molding, and egg-and-dart molding supports a bracketed pediment enclosing a brick paneled tympanum. The pediment contains an oculus window surrounded by a segmented terracotta molding. Only the upper portion of the sanctuary is visible. It is similar to the nave, as described above, but lacks an oculus window and has a simple brick tympanum instead. The corners of the sanctuary features decorative brick quoins.

#### *Interior - Basement*

The basement of the church runs the full width and approximately half the length of the building. When used as a church, the basement was utilized as a social hall. The basement is accessed from outside by a flight of stairs on the south façade and a door on the north façade from Fell Street. The wood paneled doors on the south façade are surmounted by a transom window. Similar doors on the north wall are enclosed by a partial-height wood partition creating a vestibule inside the room. The floors of the basement are hardwood (probably fir) over a sub-floor resting on large wood joists. The joists, in turn, rest on large girders supported by concrete footings. The walls of the basement are clad in painted tongue-and-groove "bead board" wainscoting with plaster above. The ceiling is plaster as well. The basement is punctuated by a grid of four structural cast iron columns with round shafts and Corinthian capitals. These columns assist in supporting the marble altars above on the main floor. Double-hung, wood-sash windows line the north and south walls. At the west end of the room is a full-height, non-historic partition wall that may have been added in the 1970s to provide additional storage room. A second partial-height partition wall was installed in the southeast corner; this wall encloses a kitchen area with parquet wood laminate flooring, wood laminate cabinets, stainless steel sink, a stove and a commercial refrigerator. There is an additional partial-height partition wall at the north end of the room that encloses a secondary storage area. At the east end of the room is a stage accessed by risers. To the north of the stage is a toilet room with terrazzo flooring, beadboard wainscoting, and plaster walls and ceiling. Four porcelain wall-mounted sinks, two of which are smaller and mounted lower to serve a child, line the west wall. A child-sized toilet with wood partition and door is tucked in the southeast corner behind the entry door. An opening on the east wall leads to two additional adult toilets with metal partitions and doors. An opening in the north wall leads to a storage room with tile floor, bead board wainscoting, and plaster walls and ceiling. The north wall features a double-hung wood sash window and the east wall features a door leading to a large closet. At the west end of the storage room a flight of steps leads back to the basement behind the north partition wall. To the south of the stage is an office with a carpeted floor, bead board wainscoting, and plaster walls and ceiling. The south wall features a door leading to a small closet.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Sacred Heart Church

County and State San Francisco, California

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section number 7 Page 3

### Narrative Description (Continued)

#### *Narthex*

Access to the main floor of Sacred Heart Church is provided by the main entrance on Fillmore Street. Three paneled wood doors surmounted by transoms penetrate the west façade and open into the narthex, or vestibule, an intermediate area between the sidewalk and the nave. North of the entry doors is a deeply recessed stained glass window depicting the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for which the church is named. Directly opposite the entry doors on the east wall of the vestibule are three oak double doors with solid wood lower panels and glass upper panels, also surmounted by transoms. Etched into the glazing of the doors is a cross with a sunburst pattern and a border at the perimeter. Etched into the transom windows from south to north are depictions of Jesus on the Cross, the Resurrection, and the removal of Jesus from the cross by Joseph of Arimathea. These etched glass panels appear to have been added in the 1930s based on their Art Deco-influenced aesthetic. The door hardware consists of decorative brass pulls that feature a shell pattern at the top and bottom, similar to the shell pattern on the altars. The walls of the narthex are paneled in oak wainscoting surmounted by painted plaster. Fluted oak pilasters with a simple base and capital begin above the wainscoting and flank each door and are paired at the corners of the room. At the top of the wall is a wide band of oak paneling. The ceiling of the narthex features oak beams with narrow planked diagonal paneling in between the beams. The narthex is illuminated by square, brass, flush-mounted ceiling fixtures likely installed in the 1930s.

#### *Baptistry*

The south wall of the narthex has an opening that leads to the baptistry. The opening contains a plain oak door flanked by oak pilasters and surmounted by oak paneling. The interior of the baptistry features a carpeted floor and plaster walls with oak baseboards. The west wall has a deeply recessed opening that is paneled in oak. The opening contains a stained glass window depicting the Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. The south wall features a centered plain oak door with oak moldings that leads to a small closet. The top of the wall has a wide band of painted paneling. The ceiling features narrow planked diagonal paneling. The baptistry is illuminated by a hanging light fixture with a large frosted globe.

#### *Stair*

The north wall of the narthex features an opening similar to the baptistry that leads to a flight of stairs that access the choir/organ loft and the campanile. The stair itself is composed of oak treads and risers, with an oak handrail. The walls of the stair are plaster with oak baseboards. The west wall features an arched stained glass window at the first landing. The north wall has a similar stained glass window. At the choir/organ loft level, the walls of the stair feature oak bead board paneling with plaster above. Here, the stairs feature square oak newel posts and turned oak balusters. The stairs continue up to the campanile which has exposed brick walls penetrated by round stained glass windows on the north and south walls. The ceiling of the campanile is clad in narrow wooden planks.

#### *Choir/organ Loft*

The choir/organ loft is located above the west end of the nave. It is supported by four round wood-encased iron columns and the ceiling of the underside of the loft is clad in bead board paneling and has square flush-mounted light fixtures. There is a half ellipse projection at the center of the loft. The loft is bordered by a modillioned cornice and a railing composed of carved oak balusters. The floor of the loft is covered in oak planks and is configured as tiered levels on which pews are attached similar to those in the nave. At the center of the choir loft is the organ. The walls of the loft are clad in oak paneling with an arched pattern. The west wall contains three arched stained glass windows between which are brass organ pipes. Additional brass organ pipes flank the windows.

# Draft

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Sacred Heart Church

County and State San Francisco, California

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section number 7 Page 4

### Narrative Description (Continued)

#### *Nave*

Beneath the choir loft at the west end of the nave are the three double doors (described above) that lead from the narthex. Within the nave, each door is flanked by painted wood pilasters with a fluted shafts and simple base and capital. The center door is flanked by brass sconces with frosted glass shades. On either side of the doors are confessional booths. The non-historic booths are constructed of stained plywood and have three doors. The center booth features a wood cross and all three booths have a light mounted above them to indicate when they are occupied.

The nave measures approximately 152 by 62 feet. The choir/organ loft is located above the west end of the nave and the sanctuary is located at the east end. The floors of the nave are covered in non-historic resilient tile flooring. However closets at the rear of the nave indicate that the original floors are oak and protected beneath the tile flooring. A large raised and carpeted dais is located at the east end of the nave in front of the altar rail. Smaller daises are located at approximately the midpoint of the north and south walls of the nave. Covered in resilient tile flooring and oak molding, they appear to have once held smaller shrines. The floor of the nave is filled with twenty-four rows of oak pews with hinged kneelers. Each bank of pews has a carved pinnacle that faces the main aisle. At the east end of the nave, several rows of pews are positioned to face the dais, presumably seating for the choir.

The lower portion of the nave walls are clad in non-historic plywood paneling. Closets at the rear of the nave indicate that the historic beadboard wainscoting survives intact behind the plywood. Above the wainscoting, the walls are plaster. The north and south walls feature wood pilasters with unfluted, tapered shafts capped by Corinthian capitals. Gilded, rounded sconces are affixed to each pilaster, except for the westernmost two pilasters which feature brass sconces with frosted shades. In between the pilasters are large rectangular stained glass windows, three to each wall. The windows are deeply recessed with painted wood surrounds. Stained glass windows on the north wall depict St. Francis of Assisi and St. Patrick in the west window, SS Matthew and Catherine in the center window, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the east window. The stained glass windows along the south wall depict the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the east window, Saint Joseph in the center window, and unknown saints in the west window. Painted wood crosses and ghosted profiles on the north and south walls of the nave between the windows indicate the former location of the Stations of the Cross. These were removed with the Archdiocese sold the building to the present owners. At the top of the wall is an entablature consisting of a frescoed frieze of crosses with a sunburst pattern and foliage, a dentil molding, and an egg-and-dart molding capped by a modillioned cornice. The barrel vaulted sides of the ceiling contain frescoes of the Twelve Apostles and four angels. The flat portion of the ceiling has three additional frescoes. The center panel is of two angels amidst the Celestial Aureole, with silver sun rays bearing the Paschal Lamb. The panel nearest to the sanctuary depicts Abraham's sacrifice of his son Isaac and the angel sent by God to stop the sacrifice. The panel adjacent to the choir loft shows Cain slaying Abel. The frescoes are surrounded by a border decorated with emblems.

#### *Transepts*

The transepts on the north and south sides of the nave, near the east end of the building, are nearly identical. Both feature corner pilasters where they intersect the nave walls and both are penetrated by large circular stained glass rose windows. Each rose window features a center panel surrounded by eight panels in a radial manner. The north window depicts The Resurrection and the south window depicts The Nativity. Pulvinated foliate moldings surround each window. Just below the window is a string course sharing an identical profile. The transepts are illuminated by sconces that match those found in the nave. The east walls of both transepts feature a painted wood paneled door with hood molding that provide access to the sacristies behind the sanctuary. The west walls of the transepts have painted paneled wood double doors that lead to the exterior. The doors are surmounted by a transom and a pediment.

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### Narrative Description (Continued)

#### *Sanctuary*

The sanctuary is located at the east end of the nave. It is separated from the nave by an altar rail composed of oak balusters. Behind the altar rail are three oaks steps that lead up to a oak clad dais in front of the altars. The large main altar is located at the center of the sanctuary and is flanked by two smaller, similar altars. All three altars are carved from white marble quarried near the town of Carrara, Italy. The name of the studio is carved into the side of the main altar and reads "GIGHLI AND VANELLI, CARRARA, ITALY".

The north and south side altars are set within arched niches. The outside of the niche is highly decorated and is flanked by painted wood pilasters with fluted shafts and gilded Corinthian capitals. Brass sconces with brass shades perforated with a cross pattern are attached to the pilasters and illuminate the sanctuary. The arched niche is surmounted by painted and gilded wood paneling. The inside of the arched niche features fluted Doric pilasters with an entablature of acroteria, egg-and-dart moldings, and modillions.

The base of the altar projects outward slightly and features a diorama of the Birth of Jesus in a manger surrounded by Mary and Joseph and the Three Wise Men. The diorama is flanked by fluted Doric pilasters. Above the diorama the altar steps back and at the center is a pedimented tabernacle with a brass door featuring a cross and surmounted by the bust of an angel. Behind the tabernacle is a frieze with a Greek key pattern. The upper part of the altar narrows to surround a statue of the Virgin Mary which is set within a arched niche with a shell detail and keystone decorated with acanthus leaves at the top. The statue of the Virgin Mary rests on a lintel supported by brackets and decorated with acanthus leaves. The statue is flanked by Corinthian columns with a shield detail on the plinths. The entablature resting on the top of the columns features a frieze of angel busts and swags surmounted by dentil and egg-and-dart moldings. The altar terminates in an urn flanked by scrolled volutes. The south altar is similar to the north altar except it features a diorama of Jesus as a child along with Mary and Joseph and a statue of St. Joseph.

Three carpeted steps lead up to the high altar from the dais. The high altar is set within a similar arched niche as the two side altars, but with the addition of heralding angels at top corners of the arch. The projecting portions of the altar are supported by carved consoles. The tabernacle rests on this projection and features a brass door with the letters "S" and "H" intertwined with a cross. The door is flanked by Doric columns with fluted shafts of black and yellow Portoro marble, also from Carrara, and surmounted by an angel bust. The tabernacle is capped by an entablature featuring a cushion frieze and egg-and-dart molding, and finally by a rounded pediment. Behind the tabernacle is a frieze with a Greek key pattern. The top part of the altar narrows and features a painting of the Jesus revealing the mystery of the Sacred Heart to Margaret Mary. The painting is surrounded by pulvinated moldings and set within an arched niche decorated with modillions. The painting is flanked by Corinthian columns with shields on the plinths and statues of SS. Peter and Paul in niches similar to those found on the side altars. The painting and statues rest on a marble base of carved leaves and grapes. The outer corners of the altar are flanked by Corinthian columns with shafts decorated in an urn and acanthus leaf pattern. The statue niches are capped by an entablature consisting of a frieze carved in a grape, leaf, and angel bust pattern. The painting is capped by a pediment with cross and decorated with columns that have angel bust capitals and feathered volutes at the sides. At the center of the pediment is a small gilded dove and sunburst pattern.

#### *Sacristies*

The sacristies are located on the north and south sides of the altar and are accessed from each of the transepts by short flights of stairs. The floor of the north sacristy is covered in narrow wood plank flooring and has plaster walls and a plaster ceiling. The west wall contains a large bureau of drawers and the east wall features several closets with stained paneled wood doors. A sink is also located on the west wall in a small alcove adjacent to the closets. The north wall contains a large double-hung, wood-sash window with wire glass glazing. The south wall provides access behind the main altar to the south sacristy.

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### Narrative Description (Continued)

The floor of the south sacristy is covered in resilient tile flooring and the walls and ceiling are plaster. The south wall features a plain wood door to the exterior. To the east is a painted wood counter that features a sink and has wood cabinet doors and a ceramic tile countertop and back splash. Above the sink is a double-hung, wood-sash window with opaque textured glass. The east wall has a similar window flanked by closets with painted wood paneled doors. Additional similar closets are located on the west wall. The north wall provides access behind the main altar to the north sacristy.

### Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

Sacred Heart Church is primarily significant as an intact and distinctive example of the Romanesque Revival style in San Francisco. Romanesque Revival architecture originated in the early nineteenth century in Munich, Germany, where it was known as the *Rundbogenstil* or round arch style. It was based on the medieval and early Christian Romanesque cathedrals of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The original mediaeval-era Romanesque style developed across Western Europe as traditional late Roman forms, including Early Christian basilicas combined with influences from Byzantine and Islamic cultures, were fused with local traditions in the design and construction of Christian churches.<sup>1</sup> Strong regional variants of the Romanesque developed in other areas of Western Europe and were carried forth by colonists, missionaries, and craftsmen into Spain, Palestine, middle Europe, and Scandinavia.

The Romanesque style was known to nineteenth-century American architects through books, prints, photographs, and travels. Unlike the historic Romanesque style, however, Romanesque Revival buildings in the United States tended to feature simpler forms than their historic European counterparts. Common character-defining features of the Romanesque Revival style in the United States include the use of the molded semicircular arch for window and door openings, molded beltcourses that divide the exterior into horizontal bands, and particularly the arcaded corbel table (otherwise known as the Lombard band) which is a series of miniature arches located below the eaves. Column capitals and compound arches are often enriched with geometric Mediaeval or Byzantine-inspired ornament. Façades have gabled roofs flanked by square or polygonal towers of differing heights and capped with pyramidal roofs, often with concave slopes. For Romanesque Revival churches, the typical plan is basilican, with a long, narrow nave, vestibule, central tower or paired side towers, and self-contained massing. Broad, smooth wall surfaces of monochromatic brick or ashlar masonry laid with thin mortar joints were favored.

New churches, schools, and public buildings were increasingly designed in an imposing variant of the Romanesque Revival style in the nineteenth century in the United States. Diplomats, theologians, educational reformers, clergymen, and rulers supported Romanesque Revival architecture in large part because of the style's many associations with the staunch faith and communal solidarity of the early Christian era.<sup>2</sup>

There are two phases of Romanesque Revival in the United States. Early Romanesque Revival structures of the 1840s-1850s resembled their Gothic predecessors with accurate interpretations of early Mediaeval forms. The best-known example of early Romanesque Revival in the United States – based on the German *Rundbogenstil* – is the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., designed by Charles Renwick and built between 1846 and 1855.

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### Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

A later phase, the so-called Richardsonian Romanesque, originated in the 1870s in the work of the Boston-based architect Henry Hobson Richardson. Richardson attended Harvard, then L'Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris to study architecture. He was inspired by Romanesque architecture in Spain and the south of France and experimented with these and a variety of other sources to create his own unique style typically characterized as massive, weighty buildings clad in polychromed and rough-hewn stone and punctuated by Syrian arches and sculpted Byzantine capitals. The Richardsonian Romanesque style reached its zenith in the late 1880s and Richardson became the most prominent and influential American architect working in a free "Romanesque" manner. Among many other completed projects, Richardson is responsible for the design of Trinity Church in Boston (1877), the Allegheny County Courthouse and Jail in Pittsburgh (1888), and the Marshall Field Wholesale Store in Chicago (1887).

Arriving somewhat later than on the East Coast or in the Midwest, the Romanesque Revival style came to San Francisco in the late 1880s and early 1890s.<sup>3</sup> Although known by local architects, the style was not initially embraced due to its cost and its use of earthquake-prone masonry construction. Most early examples were designed by out-of-state architects, particularly Burnham & Root, who were early adopters of the style in their hometown of Chicago. Early examples of Romanesque Revival-style office buildings in San Francisco include the Chronicle Building at Kearny, Market, and Geary streets (1889) and the Mills Building at Montgomery and Bush streets (1891), both designed by Burnham & Root. A good example of a Romanesque Revival-style building in San Francisco designed by a local architect is the Sharon Building in Golden Gate Park (1888), a National Register-listed building designed by George W. Percy and Frederick F. Hamilton (Percy & Hamilton).

In San Francisco, the Romanesque Revival style became most popular for churches. One of the earliest examples is First Unitarian Church at 1187 Franklin Street (1889), designed by Percy & Hamilton. Constructed of rough-hewn granite, the building is reminiscent of Richardson's contemporary work on the East Coast. Similar examples built of stone in the Richardsonian mode include St. Brigid Church at 2151 Van Ness Avenue (1900) and St. Paul's Church at 1660 Church Street (1901). Both designed by the local firm of Shea & Shea, these churches, like Sacred Heart, were built for San Francisco's large Irish and Irish-American Catholic parishes. St. Brigid is listed in the National Register. Another National Register-listed Romanesque Revival-style church is St. Joseph's at 1401 Howard Street (1914). Designed by John J. Foley, this church is steel-framed brick with a stucco-finished exterior. An unusual example of a wood-framed church designed in the style is Trinity Presbyterian Church at 3261 23rd Street (1892) in the Mission District, another Romanesque Revival church designed by Percy & Hamilton. Probably the most comparable example to Sacred Heart, and one of the best examples of the Romanesque Revival style in San Francisco, is St. Mark's Lutheran Church at 1111 O'Farrell Street (1895). Designed by the San Francisco-based architect Henry Geilfuss, the locally designated landmark takes its cue from early German Romanesque churches. Similar in size to Sacred Heart, both were built in the fast-growing Western addition in the 1890s.

With its gable-roofed façade, its west-facing portico supported by Tuscan order columns; square campanile with arcaded openings and pyramidal roof; its arcaded corbel table below the eaves of the nave, its stringcourses on the nave and bell tower that mark the horizontal divisions between floors, and smooth-faced, monochromatic brick cladding, Sacred Heart Church expresses the individuality and variation of features that occur within Romanesque Revival-style churches in San Francisco.

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### Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

Sacred Heart Church also appears eligible for listing under Criterion C for its association with architect Thomas J. Welsh, a talented and productive pioneer San Francisco architect. Welsh was politically well-connected in both the City and County of San Francisco and the Archdiocese and he completed many commissions for both bodies, as well as for private clients. Although largely self-trained, his work is distinguished by its rationality and use of innovative planning techniques and advanced construction methods. Active primarily during the late nineteenth century, much of his work was destroyed during the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. According to available records, Sacred Heart is one of three surviving churches by Welsh. The other two include St. Agnes Church at Masonic and Page streets (1905) and Old St. Mary's Cathedral at California Street and Grant Avenue (reconstructed in 1909). St. Agnes, whose congregation hived off from Sacred Heart, is designed in a stripped-down version of the Gothic Revival style. Old St. Mary's Cathedral is a reconstruction of the first Catholic cathedral in San Francisco, which had been heavily damaged in the 1906 Earthquake. It is also designed in the Gothic Revival style. Therefore, Sacred Heart is Welsh's only extant church designed in the Romanesque Revival style, not to mention one of the most fully developed examples of the style in San Francisco by any architect.

Sacred Heart Church is a building that possesses high artistic values. In addition to its refined expression of Romanesque Revival values and detailing on both the exterior and interior, Welsh likely chose the style due to its prominent hilltop site. Perhaps referencing the dramatic siting of many mediaeval Romanesque churches in Italy, Welsh designed Sacred Heart to take full advantage of its perch high atop the crest of the Fillmore Street hill. From this vantage point, the church overlooks much of the surrounding Western Addition and the adjoining Civic Center to the east. When viewed from lower elevations, the soaring campanile of Sacred Heart recalls the towering campaniles of Tuscan and Lombard hill towns. Although it initially served a predominantly Irish and Irish-American congregation, the choice of the Romanesque Revival style and lack of overtly Irish details (unlike St. Brigid, St. Patrick's, St. Paul's, and many other Catholic churches in San Francisco) may have been a deliberate attempt on the part of the architect (and the Archdiocese) to appeal to the more multi-ethnic Catholic population of the Western Addition, which also included Germans, French, and Italians.

In regard to its orientation, Sacred Heart conforms with ancient planning strategies, with its primary entry façade facing west and its altar facing east. Not always possible in a constricted and gridded city plan, the traditional orientation and interior plan of Sacred Heart were fully realized due to the architect's understanding of the orientation and dimensions of the lot. Furthermore, the spaciousness of the site allows Sacred Heart to be an almost entirely free-standing building, abutting neighboring buildings only to the east. Similarly, the size of the parcel allowed the architect to design a building with appropriate proportions. In San Francisco, constricted building footprints often result in awkwardly proportioned churches. Not so with Sacred Heart.

In addition to fully articulating the Romanesque Revival aesthetic ideal, the interior of Sacred Heart Church contains one of the most ambitious artistic programs of any Catholic church in San Francisco. In contrast to other Catholic churches in the city that have been closed in recent years, Sacred Heart has not been thoroughly ransacked, largely due to the efforts of former parishioners. The end result of such diligence is that aside from the Stations of the Cross, the interior retains its entire original decorative and devotional program, including the three main altars, statuary, stained glass windows, paintings, and extensive mural program. The Carrara marble altars, carved in Italy, as well as the statues of the Virgin Mary and SS Peter and Paul are extremely well-executed, as is the painting of Jesus above the main altar. The stained glass windows, with their depictions of various saints, were donated by various parishioners and help to tell the story of the church's congregation and values, as do the murals on the ceiling of the nave.

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Sacred Heart Church retains the vast majority of its character-defining physical features, possessing all seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Sacred Heart Church has not been moved and remains in the same location on the southeast corner of Fillmore and Fell streets. Therefore the church retains integrity of location. Sacred Heart Church retains its basilican plan, consisting of a narthex, nave, transepts, and sanctuary and its massing with a central gabled nave and campanile, all reflecting the building's historic function and adherence to the Romanesque Revival style. Sacred Heart Church retains its structural system, reflecting the building technologies at the time of the church's construction, including the very early use of concrete for the foundation. The building was constructed with a minimum of steel; it was used only in the basement to support the nave, in the bell tower to obtain its three-story height, and in the nave to support the weight of the choir loft. Wooden trusses were used elsewhere to support the floors and the roof of the church. Sacred Heart Church retains its fenestration pattern of semi-circular, round arch and arcaded openings on the façade and campanile, respectively. The building retains its ornamental detailing of Lombard bands decorating the nave, decorative terracotta accents surrounding the windows, doors and cornice, west-facing portico supported by Tuscan order columns, and stringcourses marking the horizontal divisions between floors. Finally, the building retains its original smooth-faced, golden colored brick cladding and cream colored terracotta decorative details. Therefore Sacred Heart Church retains integrity of design.

Sacred Heart Church was constructed at the crest of the Fillmore Street hill, making it a highly visible building in the Western Addition and surrounding neighborhoods. Most of its neighbors date from the late Victorian and early Edwardian eras. Therefore Sacred Heart Church retains integrity of setting.

Sacred Heart Church retains the key exterior materials of smooth faced, monochromatic, golden colored brick paired with cream colored terracotta decorative details dating from its period of historic significance. Therefore Sacred Heart Church retains integrity of materials.

The configurations of the ornamental detailing found on Sacred Heart Church illustrates the aesthetic principals of the nineteenth century as embodied by the Romanesque Revival style. Therefore Sacred Heart Church retains integrity of workmanship.

Sacred Heart Church possesses the physical features that, taken together, convey the historic sense of nineteenth-century artistic and religious devotion. Therefore, Sacred Heart retains integrity of feeling.

Sacred Heart Church retains the essential physical features to represent its significance. As described above, these features are visible in its plan, form, massing, fenestration pattern, and decorative features. Based on the presence of these features, Sacred Heart Church retains aspects of integrity of location, design setting, materials, workmanship and feeling to convey its identity as a significant Romanesque Revival-style building design by master church architect Thomas J. Welsh.



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### Developmental history/additional historic context information (Continued)

In 1890, the temporary church was moved to the rear of the lot, on the new Fell Street property, to make room for a new permanent church building facing Fillmore Street. Thomas J. Welsh was hired again to draw up plans for a new permanent church building with 88' of frontage on Fillmore Street and 169' along Fell Street. The plans called for a concrete foundation and a brick superstructure. The exterior walls were to be finished in buff-colored pressed brick with the interior sections of wall constructed of conventional red brick. The brick and concrete work was contracted to P. Fitzsimmons, the carpentry and joinery to Thomas Powers, and Welsh served as superintendent of construction. Except for the steel columns in the bell tower and a steel girder to support the choir loft, there was to be no steel used in the main body of the church. Instead wooden trusses were to extend over the 67' nave. The church building was expected to cost \$60,000. A large and successful church bazaar held in Armory Hall on the corner of Page and Gough streets augmented the building fund for the new church.<sup>4</sup> The ladies in charge of the bazaar worked for months to construct a shooting gallery, flower stands, and a candy store all colorfully decorated and lit by electric lights.<sup>5</sup>

Construction of the church began with the excavation for the foundation in the summer of 1896. The cornerstone was laid on September 7, 1897. By August 1898, the church was rapidly advancing toward completion when a benefit performance was given by the Young Ladies Sodality of the Sacred Heart parish to raise additional funds for construction.<sup>6</sup> Because of a lack of funds, only 126' of the nave was constructed. A temporary wood-frame wall enclosed the east end of the church, where the juncture between the nave and transepts is now located.

In 1900, Sacred Heart Church was threatened by a plan, later defeated at the polls, for the area between Fell Street and Oak streets to become part of a landscaped boulevard (an extension of the Panhandle) extending from Golden Gate Park to Van Ness Avenue. If the plan had been approved by voters, Sacred Heart church would have been demolished or moved to make way for the project.

In 1905, work began on completing the church according to the original plans drawn by Thomas J. Welsh. George Goodman was hired to build the enlarged basement, transepts, sanctuary, and sacristies<sup>7</sup>. Local students put on a "high class vaudeville and a one-act play" at the Alhambra theater to raise money for the project. The addition to the church was described in a 1905 article as only "some improvements that the church is very much in need of."<sup>8</sup> An article in *The Monitor* more fully described the new portion of the church as having "one of the finest above-ground basements in the city; 100 feet long from end to end and averaging 70 feet wide and amply lighted on all sides."<sup>9</sup> The article went on to describe the basement as having a 3' raised stage or platform at one end that could be used for services as well as entertainment. The basement was accessed by two five-foot-wide entrances on either side and had plenty of windows near the ground to provide light and to serve as additional exits. The sanctuary was to be 32 feet wide and 20 feet deep with recessed niches for the side altars. A marble reredos was to be erected across the entire sanctuary to screen the passageway between the sacristies. The altar rail was to be of oak and supported by oak pilasters and filled with bronze panels. The sanctuary was to have windows below the level of the reredos to illuminate the "curved surface of the sanctuary and show the altar in strong relief."<sup>10</sup> These windows were never realized. The transepts on the north and south sides of the building were to be 28 feet in length and 10 feet in depth with exits to the outside. Both transepts were to have large rose windows 14 feet in diameter "giving a grand opportunity for memorial windows."<sup>11</sup>

After the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, while other churches held open air masses at the refugee camps around the city or on the sites of their destroyed buildings, "masses were said every half hour from 6 to 11 o'clock at Sacred Heart Church, which shows hardly any sign of injury. At each mass the spacious church was crowded"<sup>12</sup> The biggest impact of the earthquake and fire was the delayed completion of the sanctuary, the enlarged basement, and new transept, sanctuary, and sacristies. Construction was finally completed and the church rededicated in February 1909 by Archbishop Riordan<sup>13</sup>.

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### Developmental history/additional historic context information (continued)

In preparation for Sacred Heart's Silver Jubilee, San Francisco artist Attilio Moretti was commissioned to design three new marble altars carved from Carrara marble by the Italian firm of Gighli & Vanelli. Parishioner Mary Morrissey donated the \$15,000 needed to pay for the project. On September 30, 1909, Reverend Joseph P. McQuaide applied for a permit to install four 10-inch beams between three 1-inch beams already in place to strengthen the foundation for the new marble main altar to be erected in the newly constructed sanctuary. The weight of the altar was estimated to be about 55 tons and the seven beams were estimated to be able to support about 70 tons of dead load. The main altar was to have a 12" thick concrete foundation and measured 17'-3" wide. Two 10" beams were also placed at each side of the sanctuary to support the two 12'-wide marble side altars that were to have a 10" concrete foundations. The installation of the three altars was estimated to cost \$400.<sup>14</sup> The altars were installed by John Catto Monument Company under the supervision of Attilio Moretti. The high altar was described by the *Examiner* as "possibly the most beautiful specimen of modern sculpture of its kind in the United States. It is massive, being twenty-five feet long and thirty-seven feet high. In the center is a life-size painting of the Savior revealing the mystery of the Sacred Heart to Margaret Mary. The coloring of the painting is soft and the scene inspiring."<sup>15</sup> The painting was executed by the firm of Fritz Mayer & Co. of Munich, Germany. The side altars were described as "equally exquisite and the statues of St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin perfect in detail." The three new altars were blessed and unveiled during an elaborate service held on May 21, 1910.<sup>16</sup>

Although no longer extant, murals in the sanctuary painted by parishioner Michael O'Sullivan in 1910 provided an ornate backdrop to the altars. The background of the murals "was a pale blue with old-gold trimmings. The upper part blends to a warm aurora which surrounds a chalice with the Sacred Host. A large Latin cross in warm, delicate purple forms a background to this design, from the center of which a flood of golden rays is streaming."<sup>17</sup> The artwork also included groupings of cherubs amidst billowing clouds. Lighting for the murals was provided by two five foot tall angels holding electric glass globes. O'Sullivan also decorated the interior of St Ignatius Church on Fulton Street and St. Francis of Assisi in North Beach. The Irish government later commissioned him to help decorate its exhibit at the 1915 Pan Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco.

In 1920, San Francisco mural and landscape artist Achille G. Disi painted the ceiling art in the nave. Disi had been born in Rome and studied at the Art Academy there.<sup>18</sup> The Sacred Heart murals depict Cain slaying Abel and Abraham sacrificing his son, and smaller portraits of the Twelve Apostles and angels that frame the larger images. The cost of the murals was \$10, 945.<sup>19</sup>

In 1922, under the direction of Father John Cullen the church received many necessary repairs and improvements. A heating system was installed in the church and the ridge of the roof was repaired along with the windows. The church also received new pews, vestments, and altar furnishings.

Father Cullen also installed the Hook & Hastings pipe organ in 1923. In the early 1980s Kevin McGowen, a young man suffering from AIDS, spent nine months restoring the organ as a gift to Sacred Heart.<sup>20</sup>

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### Developmental history/additional historic context information (continued)

In 1975, a nine foot high partition was constructed in the basement at the south corner of the transept (the existing ceiling was 13-feet high) to form a kitchen with partial height walls. The walls were built of 2 x 4 wood studs with 5/8-inch sheetrock and two solid core doors. At that time, the gas line was also extended for a steam table.<sup>21</sup> A second partition wall was installed in the basement around this time.

#### *Stained Glass Windows*

The stained glass windows of the nave, vestibule, and choir loft were installed in 1898. The Costello family, natives of Rathkeale Ireland, donated three nave windows in honor of three family members (and brothers): Augustine, Joseph and Charles, who likely died in the Spanish-American War. The windows were produced in Cincinnati, Ohio by an art studio operated by Augustine's in-laws, called Riordan Art Glass Studios, now BeauVerre-Riordan Studios, who also manufactured stained glass windows for the Cincinnati Library (demolished) and police gymnasium. The windows depict the Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Joseph on the south side of the nave, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary on the north side.

Matthew Kavanagh, a house builder who constructed the famous "Postcard Row" on Steiner Street in Alamo Square, and his wife Catherine, donated a window on the nave's north wall that portrays their patron saints, SS. Matthew and Catherine.

The north wall of the nave also has a window donated by Annie Everett in memory of John Everett (d. 1885). The window depicts SS. Francis of Assisi and Patrick. The Swift family donated the third window on the south side of the nave that depicts two unidentified saints.

The organ/choir loft contains three stained glass windows. St. Cecilia, patroness of musicians, is pictured playing an organ in the southernmost window. This window was donated by the Shanahan family. The two other windows depict King David in the center and an unidentified saint in the northernmost window.

Other early windows in Sacred Heart Church include an image of the Sacred Heart, located in the narthex and the baptism of Jesus by St. John in the baptistery. Two other stained glass windows are located in the campanile and consist of a diamond panes depicting a floral pattern. The panes are surrounded by a geometric border.

The rose window in the north transept depicting The Nativity was donated by Mary Hartigan in memory of her husband Patrick. The other rose window in the south transept depicting The Resurrection was donated by Mary Adam Musto in memory of her father, Thomas. Both windows were produced in 1909 by Munich-based studio Fritz Mayer (now Mayer-Zettler). Both windows contain richly colored scenes bordered by architectural frames derived directly from medieval stained glass models.

Other gifts to Sacred Heart Church include 14 oil paintings of the Stations of the Cross (removed by the Archdiocese in 2004) painted by an unnamed French artist and donated by the Sullivan family and a 6,000 pound bell for the campanile that was donated by Mary Hartigan in 1904. After installation, the bell was blessed in an elaborate service that included laving the bell with water, marking it with crosses, anointing it with oil, sprinkling it with holy water, reciting prayers, and chanting Psalms, followed by ringing the bell for the first time.<sup>22</sup>

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### Developmental history/additional historic context information (continued)

#### *Sacred Heart Parish*

Sacred Heart Parish was founded in 1885 to serve Catholics in the western part of San Francisco from Buchanan Street west to the Pacific Ocean. At first the new parish was sparsely populated, but just two years later there were enough residents in the Richmond and Haight-Ashbury districts to form new parishes, thus reducing the size of Sacred Heart Parish. During the early years of Sacred Heart parish, the congregation was predominantly made up of Irish-born people or those of Irish decent. In the 1910s, Italian and Latin American immigrants joined the church. During World War II African-American who had moved to the city to work in the shipyards, joined the congregation. In the 1960s Filipino immigrants became members and in the 1990s a Nigerian Ibo community joined as well.

Over the past half-century the church has operated or been a partner in many social programs such as the Family School for single mothers, childcare services and programs for seniors and substance abusers.

Of Sacred Heart's clergymen, the most famous was its third pastor, the Reverend Joseph P. McQuaide who served as a chaplain in the Spanish American War, the California State Militia, and in the First World War. Reverend McQuaide served as pastor of Sacred Heart from 1905-1922. He raised the funds to complete the church in 1905 and to rebuild the rectory after it was heavily damaged by fire in October 1906. He even assisted in securing for San Francisco the Panama Pacific International Exposition through his acquaintance with President Taft, whom he met in the Philippines during the Spanish American War.<sup>23</sup> The most controversial pastor was the civil rights activist Father Eugene Boyle (pastor from 1968-1972) who allowed the Black Panthers to operate their breakfast program for children in the church basement. The twelfth pastor, Father Kenneth Westray, Jr. was the first African-American priest to be ordained in the San Francisco Archdiocese and he was pastor of Sacred Heart from 1985 to 2000. The last pastor of Sacred Heart was Father Paulinus Mangesho, a member of a missionary order from Tanzania.

In the 1950s, the about eleven square blocks of the parish were lost to construction of the now demolished Central Freeway. The construction of the freeway caused the number of parishioners to decline in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989 caused a minimum of cosmetic damage including some minor cracking in the wall and ceiling surfaces and spalling of the plaster ceiling ornamentation in the nave. A large section of black netting was installed over the ceiling to prevent any additional spalling plaster from falling on the congregation. Although the building did not suffer any structural damage, because Sacred Heart Church is an unreinforced masonry building, the City required it to be seismically upgraded. The basement structural columns have undergone trenching to expose the footings in preparation for seismic upgrade, however lack of funds has halted the work.

Due to the high cost of earthquake repairs and a reportedly dwindling congregation, the Archdiocese closed Sacred Heart Church in 2004. The property was purchased by a private owner in 2005 to be used as a charter school. In June 2009 the property is vacant and again for sale.

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### Developmental history/additional historic context information (continued)

#### *Architect Thomas J. Welsh*

Thomas J. Welsh, the architect of Sacred Heart Church, was born in Australia on May 1, 1845. His family moved to San Francisco when he was a child. After completing secondary school, he worked as an apprentice carpenter for five years. Afterward, he received his architectural training while working as a draftsman at the firms of George Boardwell and Kenitzer & Farquharson. He opened his own practice in 1872 and later partnered with architect John W. Carey. Welsh continued working with Carey until his death in 1918. For much of his career, Welsh held the position of chief architect for the San Francisco Board of Education. In this capacity he designed several school buildings, the only surviving example being the Irving M. Scott School (1895) at 1060 Tennessee Street in the Potrero District. He also served as the primary architect for the Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco. He designed a total of 16 catholic churches in San Francisco of which three remain: Sacred Heart Church (1898) at Fillmore and Fell streets, St. Agnes Church (1905) on Masonic and Page streets, and the reconstructed St. Mary's Cathedral at California Street and Grant Avenue.<sup>24</sup> He was also a prolific designer and builder of Victorian-era dwellings throughout San Francisco, including two City Landmarks, the Burr Residence (1878) at Vallejo and Franklin streets and the McMorry-Lagan House (1884) at Haight and Laguna Streets, both Italianate in design with mansard roofs. Welsh's surviving commercial work includes the wood-frame Pioneer Trunk Factory (1902) at 18<sup>th</sup> and Folsom streets and the Hotel Vendome (1907) on Columbus Avenue. In 1887, Welsh was hired to design a temporary wood-frame church for the Sacred Heart parish. This led to his 1896 commission to design the current church. Welsh was a member of the American Institute of Architects, the Mission Promotion Association, the Olympic Club, and the Knights of Columbus. He also served as the president of the Mutual Loan Association of San Francisco. Welsh suffered a stroke in about 1905 although he continued to work. He died on October 18, 1918. Throughout his long career, Welsh played a key role in mentoring up-and-coming architects, such as Julius Krafft who worked for Welsh for twelve years.<sup>25</sup>

#### *Artist Attilio Moretti*

Attilio Moretti (1852-1915) designed the three marble altars in Sacred Heart Church. Moretti was born in Milan and resided on Hermann Street in Sacred Heart's parish. He had a studio at 223 10<sup>th</sup> Street where he also painted and worked in stained glass. He produced the murals in King's Hall at Walden House (formerly the Holy Family Convent and built by Sacred Heart's Father Cullen) on Hayes and Fillmore streets. He is probably best known for his elaborate frescoes in the dome of Temple Sherith Israel in San Francisco.

#### *Historic Context - Western Addition*

Sacred Heart Church is located in the Western Addition, a large swath of the city bounded by San Francisco Bay to the north, Larkin Street to the east, Duboce Avenue to the south, and Divisadero Street to the west. Historically the term "Western Addition" referred to the entire section of San Francisco platted in 1856 as the first major westward expansion of the city grid after Jasper O'Farrell's 1847 survey. The Western Addition still technically encompasses a large section of the city, including neighborhoods as disparate as Hayes Valley, Alamo Square, Japantown, and Pacific Heights, but in popular usage the name is often (and mistakenly) understood today to refer only to the areas cleared and rebuilt by the Redevelopment Agency under the guise of "slum clearance" during the 1960s and 1970s.

The Western Addition began to develop not long after it was platted, although its distance from downtown initially impeded residential development. This began to change in 1857 after local landowner and speculator Thomas Hayes built a steam railroad along Market and Hayes streets to his recently completed Hayes Park Pavilion, an amusement ground and beer garden.<sup>26</sup> The railroad, completed in 1860, linked the Western Addition to downtown via rail and spurred on residential development during the 1860s<sup>27</sup>

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### Developmental history/additional historic context information (continued)

The completion of the Market Street Railway's Haight Street Cable Railroad in 1883 attracted a significant amount of mixed-use development along Haight Street, a mere three blocks south of Sacred Heart Church. Over the next decade, residential development expanded west along Haight Street and north and south along intersecting streets such as Fillmore and Steiner. Between 1880 and the 1906 Earthquake, much of the Western Addition was developed with rows of two and three-story, wood-frame flats and single-family residences, many members of clusters or entire blockfaces of nearly identical rowhouses designed in elaborate Victorian-era styles including the Italianate, Stick/Eastlake, and Queen Anne. In contrast to the predominantly working-class and heavily Irish South of Market Area and adjoining Mission District, the Western Addition became a middle-class district composed of dozens of ethnicities, including native-born whites, Jewish and Protestant German immigrants, Irish Catholics, English and Scandinavian protestants, and smaller communities of Japanese and African Americans. As with most of San Francisco, Irish-born residents and their native-born children comprised a large percentage of the Western Addition's population, and this population provided the bulk of Sacred Heart's parishioners throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Because it largely escaped the fires that ravaged downtown, the entire South of Market Area, and parts of the Mission District, the Western Addition was not as heavily damaged by the 1906 Earthquake as other closer-in Victorian-era residential districts. Because it remained largely intact, earthquake refugees took refuge in the district, taking up residence in several refugee camps sponsored by the San Francisco Red Cross Relief Corporation.<sup>28</sup> As conditions became more settled, some refugees began renting apartments in the Western Addition. The crush of new residents – many of whom were poor or working-class – prompted many local middle and upper-class local residents to move to new and more prestigious tracts being built to the north and west, such as the newly developed Haight-Ashbury district. As they departed, speculators converted the district's large stock of single-family dwellings into apartments and flats.

During the post-quake era the largely built-out Western Addition experienced little new residential redevelopment. Rather, single-family dwellings continued to be converted into multiple-family dwellings and nearly every available open space acquired infill construction. Some single-family dwellings were replaced with large apartment buildings or commercial or automotive buildings, particularly along Fillmore, Hermann, Laguna, and Oak streets.

As home to hundreds of major war industries, including munitions factories, optical equipment works, vehicle manufacturing plants, and shipyards, the Bay Area became known as the "Arsenal of Democracy" during the Second World War. In need of labor to staff these war plants, the federal government and private industries recruited thousands of workers from the rural south, many of whom were African American. Throughout the 1940s, thousands of African Americans crowded into the apartment houses and converted Victorians of the Western Addition, joining the nucleus of a small African American community that had developed during the 1920s and 1930s.

Gradually, during the late 1940s, the African-American population of the Western Addition expanded south along Fillmore and Webster streets into Hayes Valley.<sup>29</sup> After 1950, the transformation of the Western Addition from a largely white district into a heavily African-American neighborhood hastened as longtime residents moved away, many replaced by a postwar influx of African-Americans from Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana. Because African Americans were still restricted by law and custom from renting or buying in much of San Francisco, the Western Addition evolved into the center of African-American life in the city.

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### Developmental history/additional historic context information (continued)

During the postwar era, many private capitalists and their allies in city government perceived the aging and admittedly overcrowded Western Addition as a “blighted” district in need of complete reconstruction. The Redevelopment Agency, founded in 1948 to combat “urban blight” in San Francisco, made the redevelopment of the Western Addition a centerpiece of its work.<sup>30</sup> Redevelopment Agency projects wiped out much of the old Western Addition, beginning with a large chunk bounded by Turk, Gough, Fulton, and Laguna streets (three blocks north of Sacred Heart Church). Redevelopment accelerated in the early 1960s. Section A-1 removed the heart of the African-American Fillmore District, replacing its rows of Victorians and commercial buildings with high-rise and mid-rise market rate housing and a Japanese-themed shopping center. Widespread opposition to the Redevelopment Agency’s work led to lawsuits, and work on Section A-2 – an area bounded by Webster, Turk, Gough, and Fulton streets – was pursued with more care. Nevertheless, most of this vast tract of Victorian-era housing was demolished and replaced with low-rise SFHA housing in the early 1970s.<sup>31</sup>

Freeway construction landed a second blow on the Western Addition. Seemingly valuing the convenience of suburban commuters over local residents, state highway engineers and local government gave little thought to the impacts of freeway construction on the tightly woven residential neighborhoods of San Francisco. Construction of San Francisco’s freeway system got underway in the early 1950s, beginning in 1953 with the opening of a large section of the Bayshore Freeway from Alemany Boulevard to 7<sup>th</sup> and Bryant streets.<sup>32</sup> By 1957, the Central Freeway and associated on and off ramps cut a swath through the eastern Western Addition, just blocks east of Sacred Heart Church.

By the early 1970s, gentrification of the Western Addition, particularly around Alamo Square, was underway.<sup>33</sup> Young whites, many of them gay men, began buying the rundown properties of the Western Addition and renovating them. About 1977, a federally sponsored, low interest loan program called Federally Assisted Code Enforcement, or FACE, began targeting absentee property owners to rehabilitate their properties.<sup>34</sup> By the 1980s, the Western Addition had become an increasingly desirable place to live, causing real estate prices to escalate. Increasingly, poor households were forced out of the neighborhood by the high rents that accompanied the rising real estate prices.<sup>35</sup>

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Western Addition underwent another wave of urban renewal in the form of a new complex called the Fillmore Center, which consisted of apartments, shops, and other uses in high and mid-rise buildings built on vacant land that had been cleared by the Redevelopment Agency almost two decades before. In 2000, in an attempt to revitalize the Fillmore Street corridor, the San Francisco Redevelopment agency created the Old Fillmore “Jazz Preservation District” with mostly upscale Jazz-themed restaurants and condominium construction.

In a neighborhood that has lost so much over the past half-century, Sacred Heart has continued to persevere, resisting earthquakes, urban renewal, freeway construction, and gentrification. Although the Archdiocese no longer owns the building, the church building continues to exert a powerful pull on former parishioners and even secular neighborhood residents who have never even set foot in the building. Perched atop the Fillmore Street hill, its soaring campanile exerts a Mediterranean presence on the local skyline, rising high above the wood-frame Victorian flats and single-family dwellings. Sacred Heart is certainly a landmark-quality building and appears eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C.

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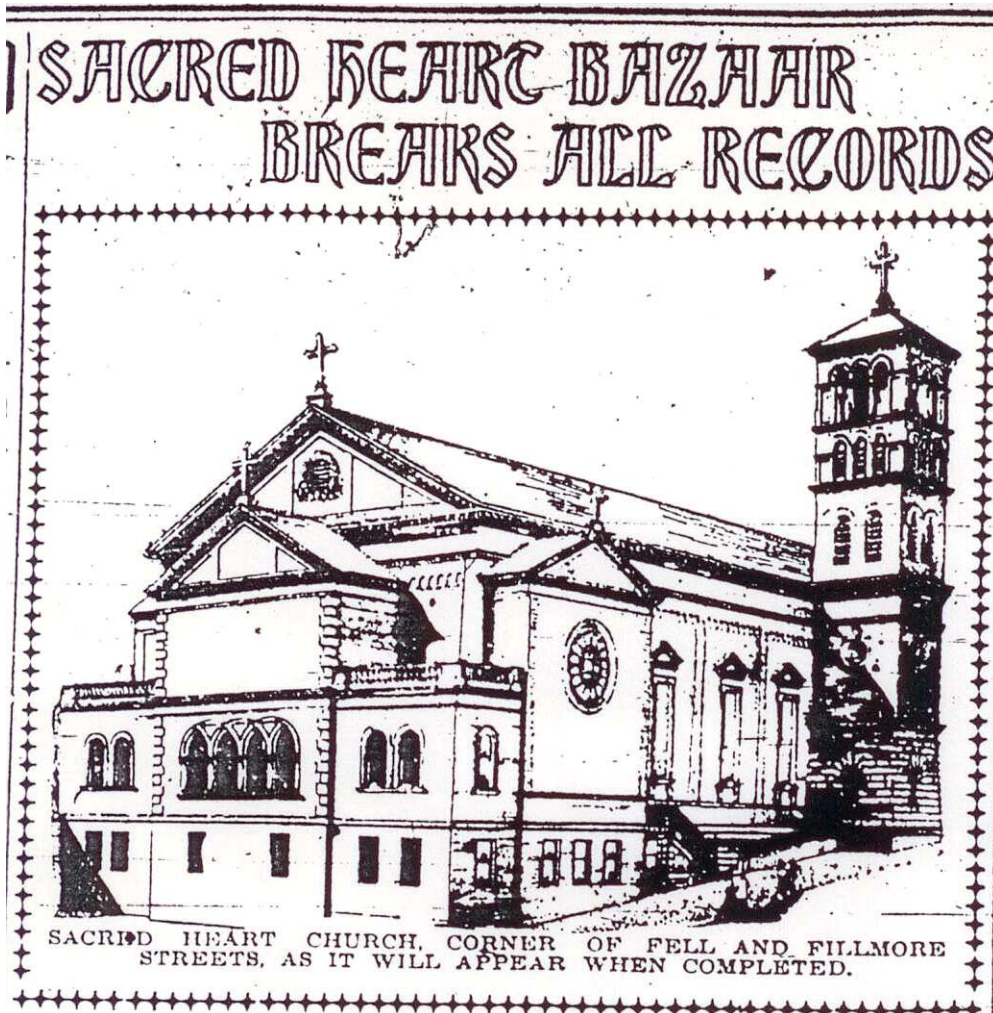
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Architect's drawing of Sacred Heart upon completion in 1905  
Source: San Francisco Examiner (December 13, 1905)

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### Photographs

All photographs were taken by Christopher VerPlanck on July 30, 2009. Negatives are stored at the offices of Kelley & VerPlanck.

1. North façade and west façade, view southeast.
2. West façade, view northeast
3. Detail of westward projecting potico, view east
4. North façade, view southwest.
5. Detail of top of campanile, view southwest.
6. Front porion of south façade, view east.
7. Rear portion of south façade, view northwest.
8. East façade, view northwest.
9. Detail of stained glass window, south façade, view north.
10. Basement, view west.
11. Vestibule, view southwest.
12. Detail of vestibule door, view east.
13. View of choir loft in the nave, view west.
14. Detail of rear of nave looking towards the vestibule, view west.
15. Nave, view southeast.
16. Nave, view northeast.
17. Nave, view east.
18. Sactuary with altars, view east.
19. Detail of north side alter, view east. South side altar is similar.
20. Detail of light fixture between altars, view west.
21. Main altar, view east.
22. Detail of statue of St. Peter located in main altar, view east.
23. Detail of statue of St. Paul located in main altar, view east.
24. Deatil of stained glass window in the north transept depicting the Nativity of Jesus, view north.
25. Deatil of stained glass window in the south transept depicting the Resurrection of Jesus, view south.
26. View east from choir loft.
27. Detail of organ pipes, view southwest.
28. Detail of ceiling, veiw east.

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- <sup>3</sup> Randolph Delehanty and Richard Sexton, *In the Victorian Style* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2006), 173.
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- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
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- <sup>12</sup> "Church Sevices in the Open Air," *San Francisco Chronicle* (30 April 1906).
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