

OLD NORTH CHURCH AND CAMPUS

193 Salem Street, Boston (North End)



BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION STUDY REPORT

Petition # 265.19
Boston Landmarks Commission | Office of Historic Preservation
City of Boston

Approved by:



Elizabeth Sherva, Executive Director

April 1, 2025

Date

Approved by:



Bradford C. Walker, Chair

April 1, 2025

Date

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# 1. DESIGNATION

The Boston Landmarks Commission was established by Ch. 772 of the Acts of 1975 as amended to identify and safeguard the public's interest in preserving historic sites that represent distinctive features of the political, economic, social, cultural or architectural history of the city. As part of the process of designating a new Landmark or District, a Study Report is prepared to locate and describe the site; to provide a record of the rationale for creating the designation; to identify the character-defining features; and to list Standards and Criteria that will guide the Boston Landmarks Commission in evaluating proposed changes in the future.

The designation of the Old North Church was initiated in 2019 after a petition was submitted to the Boston Landmarks Commission by 10 registered voters – led by petitioner spokesperson Rev. Stephen T. Ayres, then-Vicar at the Old North Church and Executive Director of the Old North Foundation (now retired) – asking that the Commission designate the property under the provisions of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended (hereinafter “Chapter 772”). The purpose of such a designation is to recognize and protect a physical feature or improvement that in whole or part has historical, cultural, social, architectural, or aesthetic significance.

The Christ Church in the City of Boston, familiarly known as "Old North," is one of the most historically significant churches in America. Built between 1723-1740 on Salem Street in Boston's North End, Old North is famous for the two lanterns that were placed in its steeple on the night of April 18, 1775 to signal to the Sons of Liberty in Charlestown that British troops were marching to Lexington and Concord by the shortest route across the Charles River. The Old North Church and Campus became an internationally recognized symbol of freedom thanks to the poem, "Paul Revere's Ride" written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in 1860, on the eve of the Civil War. It is also one of the most visited sites on Boston's Freedom Trail.

In addition to its significance as a symbol of American patriotism, Old North also has strong ties to English traditions. It is the oldest standing church building in Boston, and a rare example of Georgian architecture built in the style of Sir Christopher Wren.

Today, researchers are working to uncover additional facets of Old North's significance by illuminating the stories of those who have been previously excluded from the broader historical narrative of the church, including its Black and Indigenous members.

The significance of the Old North Church and Campus, formally known as Christ Church in the City of Boston, is recognized by its listing as a Massachusetts Historic Landmark (04/01/1966), in the National Register of Historic Places (10/15/1966), as a National Historic Landmark (10/15/1966), and within the Boston National Historical Park (1974). However, these honorary federal and state designations come with limited legal protections. While the building has been excellently preserved and maintained under the stewardship of the Corporation of Christ Church in the City of Boston and Old North Illuminated (formerly known as the Old North Foundation), designation of the Church and campus as a Boston Landmark would provide binding legal protection in perpetuity against demolition or inappropriate alterations.

The Old North Church and Campus meets the following criteria for designation as a Boston Landmark as established in Section 4 of Chapter 772:

- A. Inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places as provided in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.**



The Old North Church Campus, 193 Salem Street, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as both an individual property and a contributing building within the Boston National Historic Park district with significance at the national level.

- B. Structures, sites, objects, man-made or natural, at which events occurred that have made an outstanding contribution to, and are identified prominently with, or which best represent some important aspect of the cultural, political, economic, military, or social history of the city, the commonwealth, the New England region or the nation.**

The Old North Church and Campus played a key role at the beginning of the Revolutionary War on the evening of April 18, 1775, when church members, at the behest of Paul Revere, hung two lanterns in the steeple to signal to Sons of Liberty in Charlestown that British troops were marching to Lexington and Concord by the shortest route across the Charles River.

- C. Structures, sites, objects, man-made or natural, associated significantly with the lives of outstanding historical personages**

The Old North Church and Campus is most famous for its connection to Paul Revere's ride to Lexington, Massachusetts, with the news that regular troops were about to march into the countryside northwest of Boston. On the evening of April 18, 1775, church sexton Robert Newman and vestryman Capt. John Pulling, Jr. climbed to the spire and hung two lanterns as a signal that a British expeditionary force was moving up the Charles River to Cambridge on its way to seize a cache of Colonial military supplies at Concord. The signal had been arranged for by Paul Revere, who at that moment was being rowed virtually under the guns of the British frigate Somerset to Charlestown. Revere had reasoned that if he were captured, other patriots would carry warning of the British advance to Concord and the intervening towns of Middlesex County,

- D. Structures, sites, objects, man-made or natural, representative of elements of architectural or landscape design or craftsmanship which embody distinctive characteristics of a type inherently valuable for study of a period, style or method of construction or development, or a notable work of an architect, landscape architect, designer, or building whose work influenced the development of the city, the commonwealth, the New England region, or the nation.**

Old North Church, built in 1723, is the oldest standing church building in Boston, and a rare example of Georgian architecture built in the style of Sir Christopher Wren.

Therefore, Boston Landmarks Commission staff recommends that the Commission designate the Old North Church and Campus as a Landmark under Chapter 772; and further recommends that the boundaries shown in Map 2 (corresponding to the parcels listed in Section 2) be adopted without modification. The effect of this designation shall be that review by the Boston Landmarks Commission and/or Commission staff shall be required for any proposed alterations to the following elements:

- The exterior envelopes of the buildings, including affixed signage.
- All hardscape and topographical elements, including paving, walls, stairs, birdbaths, and fixed seating.
- Trees.
- EXCLUDED: Garden vegetation, bushes and shrubs, movable furniture.

If designated, the Standards and Criteria in section 6 of this report will serve as guidelines for the Commission's review of proposed changes to the property, with the goal of protecting the historic integrity of the landmark and its setting. The designation would not regulate use or interior space.

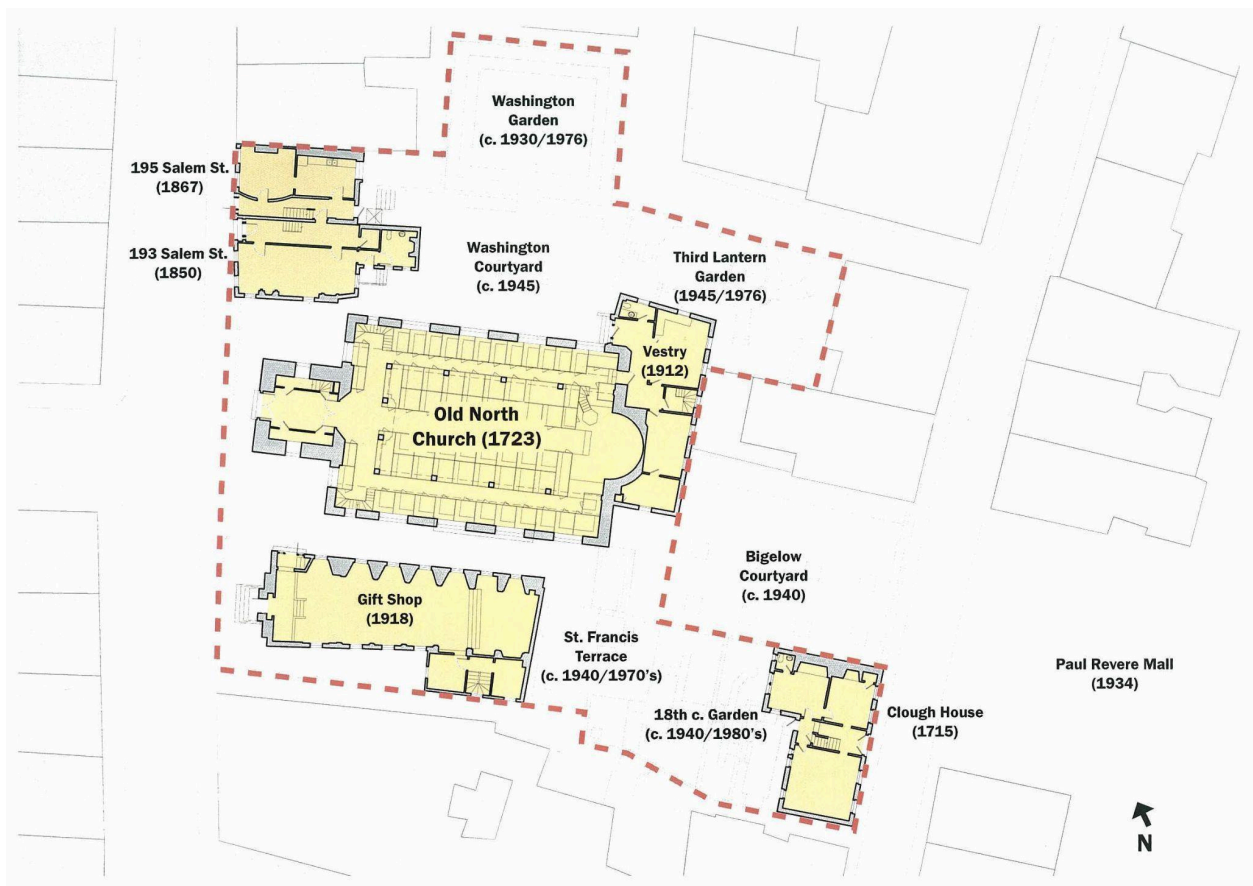
## 2. LOCATION AND ZONING

The Old North Church and Campus, formally known as Christ Church, is located at a general address of 193 Salem Street, Boston, MA 02113. The campus occupies several parcels, measuring 16,062 square feet in area, situated on Salem Street between Tileston Street and Charter Street in the North End neighborhood of Boston. The Old North Church Campus includes five buildings and several gardens, each of which has historic significance. The entire campus is a National Historic Landmark, in total occupying 183 to 193 Salem Street, 6, 12, 14, 16, and 18 Unity Court, 21 Unity Street, and 6 and 8 Salem Court.

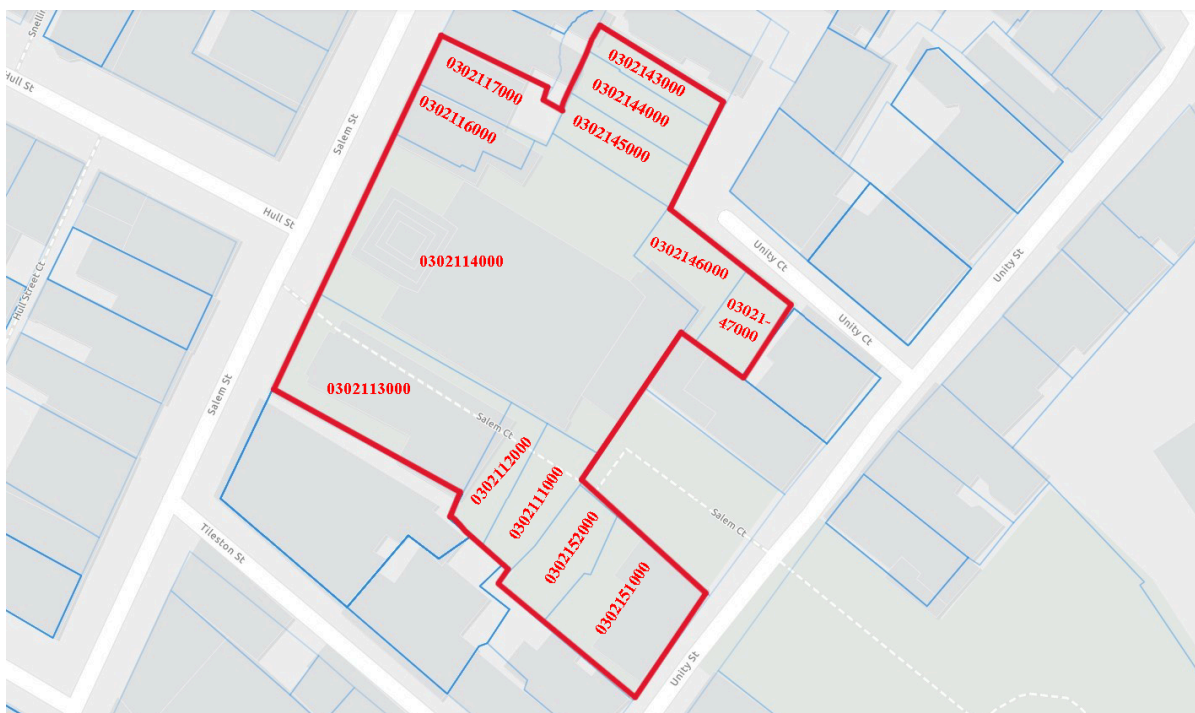
According to the City of Boston's Assessing Department, the parcel numbers for all parcels associated with the proposed Landmark are listed below.

| <b>Parcel Number</b> | <b>Address (if applicable)</b> | <b>Parcel Name (if applicable)</b>                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0302114000           | 191 Salem Street               | Church                                                      |
| 0302116000           | 193 Salem Street               | Church House                                                |
| 0302117000           | 195 Salem Street               | The Old North Church Parish Office and Old North Foundation |
| 0302113000           | Salem Street                   | Gift Shop                                                   |
| 0302145000           | Unity Court                    | Washington Courtyard                                        |
| 0302144000           | Unity Court                    | Washington Garden                                           |
| 0302143000           | Unity Court                    | Washington Garden                                           |
| 0302146000           | Unity Court                    | Unity Court Stairs to Third Lantern Garden                  |
| 0302147000           | 6 Unity Court                  | Third Lantern Garden                                        |
| 0302112000           | Salem Court                    | St. Francis Terrace                                         |
| 0302111000           | Salem Court                    | St. Francis Terrace                                         |
| 0302152000           | Unity Street                   | 18th Century Garden                                         |
| 0302151000           | 21 Unity Street                | Clough House                                                |

All Old North Church Campus parcels are located in the North End Neighborhood zoning district, and within a multifamily residential zoning subdistrict. The subdistrict type is Medium Residential, and the following zoning overlays apply: Neighborhood Design Overlay District (except parcel 0302143000), and Restricted Parking District.



**Map 1.** Map showing the boundaries of the proposed Landmark.  
 Old North Church Creating New “Longfellow Garden” Courtyard. North End Waterfront [Online]  
<https://northendwaterfront.com/2016/03/old-north-church-creating-new-garden-courtyard/>  
 [Accessed 08/24/2021].



**Map 2.** Map showing the boundaries of the proposed Landmark with parcel numbers.

### 3. OWNERSHIP AND OCCUPANCY

According to the City of Boston's Assessor's records, the parcels belonging to the Old North Church complex identified in the previous section are owned by the Corporation of Christ Church in the City of Boston.

Built between 1723-1740 on Salem Street in Boston's North End, Old North Church served as the second Church of England parish in the city, established after King's Chapel proved inadequate for the growing number of Anglicans in the former Puritan stronghold. The church was restored in 1912 and has been well maintained since that time. Under the ownership of the Corporation of Christ Church in the City of Boston and the stewardship of Old North Illuminated (a secular nonprofit working to preserve and interpret the historic site), Old North continues to serve parishioners and visitors today as it has for more than two centuries.

According to the City of Boston's Assessor's Records, the property at 193 Salem Street where the Old North Church Campus is located has the following assessed values for fiscal year 2025, organized according to parcel number:

| <b>Parcel Number</b> | <b>Address</b>   | <b>Parcel Name (if applicable)</b>                          | <b>Total Value</b> | <b>Land Value</b> | <b>Building Value</b> |
|----------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 0302114000           | 191 Salem Street | Church                                                      | \$3,760,100        | \$1,929,800       | \$1,830,300           |
| 0302116000           | 193 Salem Street | Church House                                                | \$800,000          | \$290,900         | \$509,100             |
| 0302117000           | 195 Salem Street | The Old North Church Parish Office and Old North Foundation | \$1,621,100        | \$509,600         | \$1,111,500           |
| 0302113000           | Salem Court      | Gift Shop                                                   | \$1,777,700        | \$1,017,700       | \$760,000             |
| 0302145000           | Unity Court      | Washington Courtyard                                        | \$68,400           | \$68,100          | \$300                 |
| 0302144000           | Unity Court      | Washington Garden                                           | \$66,300           | \$66,000          | \$300                 |
| 0302143000           | Unity Court      | Washington Garden                                           | \$53,300           | \$46,300          | \$7,000               |
| 0302146000           | Unity Court      | Unity Court Stairs to Third Lantern Garden                  | \$79,900           | \$72,200          | \$7,700               |
| 0302147000           | 6 Unity Court    | Third Lantern Garden                                        | \$71,100           | \$64,200          | \$6,900               |
| 0302112000           | Salem Court      | St. Francis Terrace                                         | \$135,500          | \$128,500         | \$7,000               |
| 0302111000           | Salem Court      | St. Francis Terrace                                         | \$383,400          | \$370,200         | \$13,200              |
| 0302152000           | Unity Street     | 18th Century Garden                                         | \$182,200          | \$174,800         | \$7,400               |
| 0302151000           | 21 Unity Street  | Clough House                                                | \$922,300          | \$330,100         | \$592,200             |

## 4. IMAGES

### 4.1 Contemporary Images



Figure 1: "Steeple from Salem St." 2019. Photograph. Boston Landmarks Commission Petition 265.19.





Figure 2: "Steeple from Hull St." 2019. Photograph. Boston Landmarks Commission Petition 265.19.





Figure 3: “Walkway between Gift Shop and Church.” 2019. Photograph. Boston Landmarks Commission Petition 265.19.





Figure 4: "Gift Shop from Salem Ct." 2019. Photograph. Boston Landmarks Commission Petition 265.19.





Figure 5: "Gift Shop Main Entrance." 2019. Photograph. Boston Landmarks Commission Petition 265.19.



Figure 6: "Parish House." 2019. Photograph. Boston Landmarks Commission Petition 265.19.





Figure 7: "Clough House Front." 2019. Photograph. Boston Landmarks Commission Petition 265.19.





Figure 8: "Clough House Rear." 2019. Photograph. Boston Landmarks Commission Petition 265.19.





Figure 9: "Third Lantern Garden." 2019. Photograph. Boston Landmarks Commission Petition 265.19.





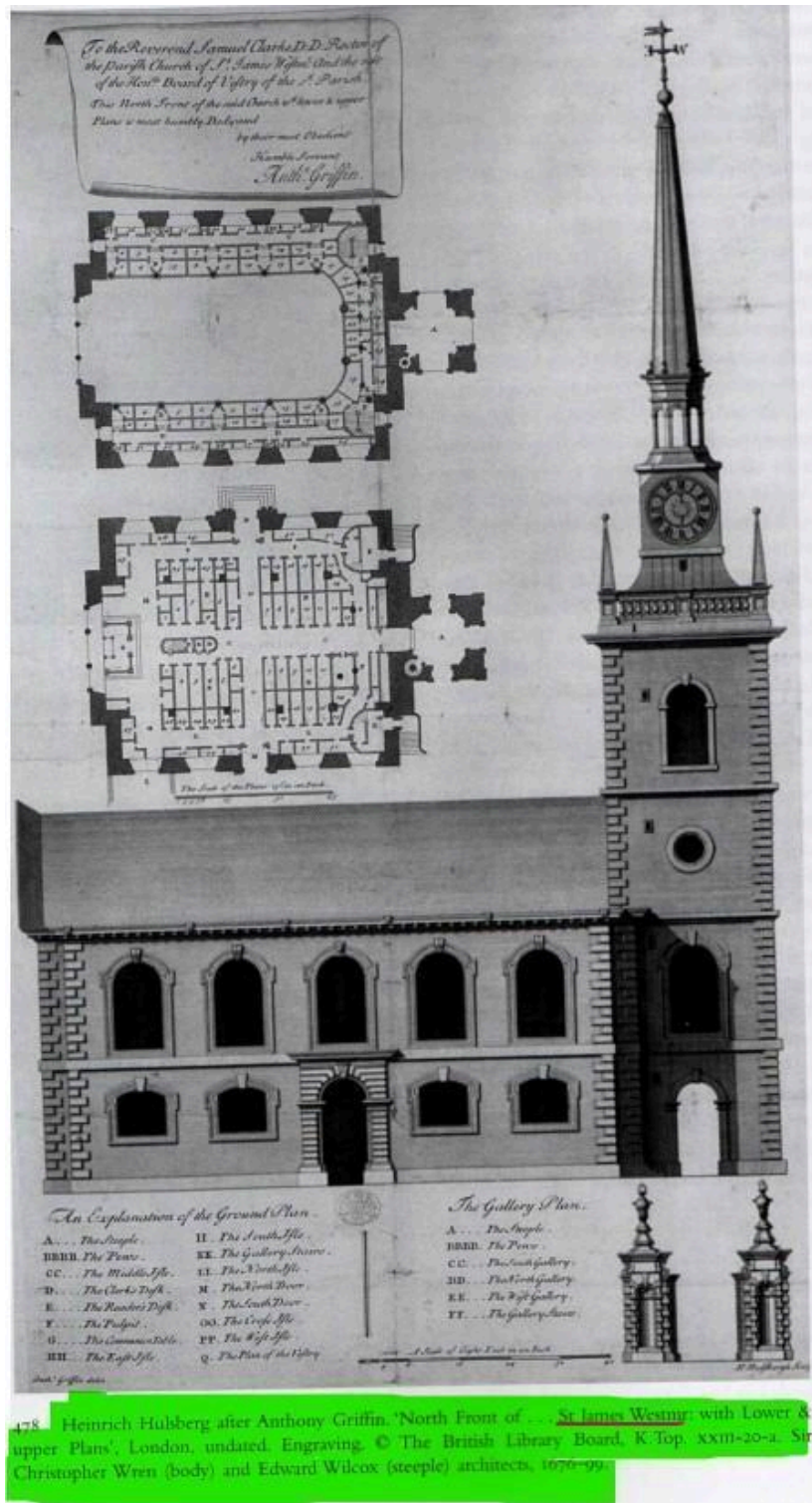
Figure 10: "18th Century Garden." 2019. Photograph. Boston Landmarks Commission Petition 265.19.





Figure 11: "Washington Memorial Garden." Photograph provided by Old North Illuminated, 2025.

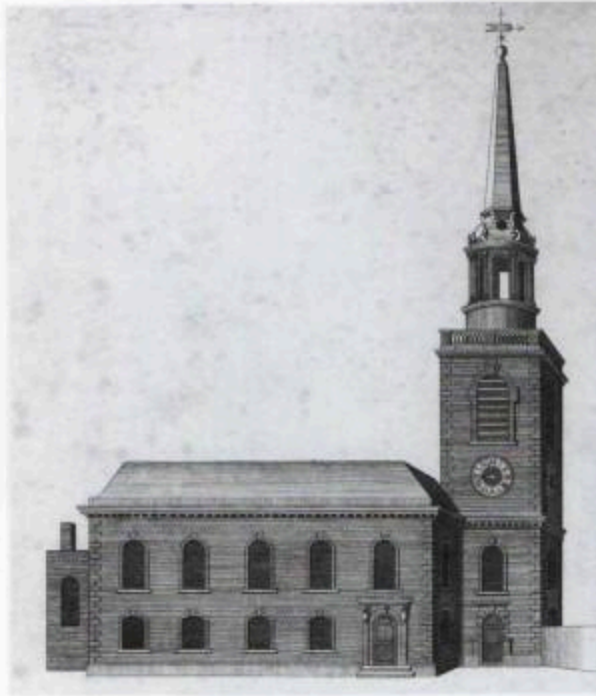
## 4.2 Historic Maps and Images



178 Heinrich Hulsberg after Anthony Griffin, 'North Front of . . . St James Westminster; with Lower & upper Plans', London, undated engraving. © The British Library Board, K.Top. XXIII-20-a. Sir Christopher Wren (body) and Edward Wilcox (steeple) architects, 1670-99.

Figure 12: Image of St. James Church, Westminster (Christopher Wren, dedicated 1684). The builders of the Old North Church had a print of an engraving of St. James Church. Plate 478, Terry Friedman, *The Eighteenth-Century Church in Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 444.





lature; the vault is subdivided by simple mouldings. In 1746, a month after James's death, the Vestry agreed to erect a new west tower, a 'very elegantly . . . constructed' Piccadilly-like structure crowned by a tempietto designed by Lancelot Dowbiggin, the architect of a St Andrew Holborn 'gentleman'.<sup>29</sup>

The public sale in 1749 of more than two hundred Wren drawings for churches,<sup>30</sup> followed by a Catalogue, short Description, and general Dimensions of Fifty-one parochial Churches of the City of London, erected according to the Designs, and under the Direction and Conduct of Sir Christopher Wren's public Parentalia (1750), alongside his recommendation in 1712, prompted a reawakening of critical interest in the firming again the crucial importance of the H

487 (left) Benjamin Cole. North-west view, 'The Parish of St. Mary at Rotherhithe', London, in Maitland 1798 p. 1383. Engraving. Author's collection. John James, E. Glanville and Lancelot Dowbiggin architects, 1714-48.

488 (below) Gideon Yates. View of interior towards the west end of St. Mary, Rotherhithe, London, 1826. Watercolour. See Local Studies Library, Gardner Collection 18304. John James, architect, 1714-15.



Figure 13: Plates 487 and 488, Friedman, *The Eighteenth-Century Church in Britain*, 450. St. Mary, Rotherhithe, London, John James, architect, 1714-1716. Tower completed 1748. Interior view of the high, three-tier pulpit resembles a 19th c. description of the original pulpit in Christ Church and the interior floor plans in the historic structures report. The color scheme of the galleries corresponds to the paint study and rendering in the historic structures report. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century and well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were two services on Sundays.

The pulpit of **Christ's church**, Salem st, Boston, is but a fragment of the original. About 85 years ago the old pulpit was given away, an act which cannot be too deeply deplored. It was in the form of an hour glass, and was so high that the top of the minister's head was on a level with the balcony. The lower part of this pulpit, representing the prince of Wales' feathered symbol, is very curious of design, and is a part of the original pulpit.

Originally on the left of the middle aisle (as the congregation faced the chancel) it was moved into the center, probably in front of the chancel, when the pews were changed. In 1812 it was moved, with its sounding board, back to the north side, where it remained until 1830, when the new pulpit, with the reading desk, was placed in the chancel. In 1860 it was again moved outside the chancel and placed on the south side.

The **church** was erected in 1723. and was, for its day, a magnificent building.

Figure 14: Boston Globe, Sep. 13, 1908. Description of original pulpit.



Figure 15: The Reverend Timothy Cutler, first rector of Christ Church, and the most influential Church of England clergyman in New England during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, shown wearing Geneva bands or “preaching tabs.” 1750. Mezzotint by Peter Pelham. Gift of Harvard College Library. Standard Reference: Sm. 12, St. 2465, © President and Fellows of Harvard College. Accessed May 2024. <https://digitalcollections.library.harvard.edu/catalog/HUAM248925> URN-3:HUAM:INV046308 DY NMC Cutler is interred inside the church.

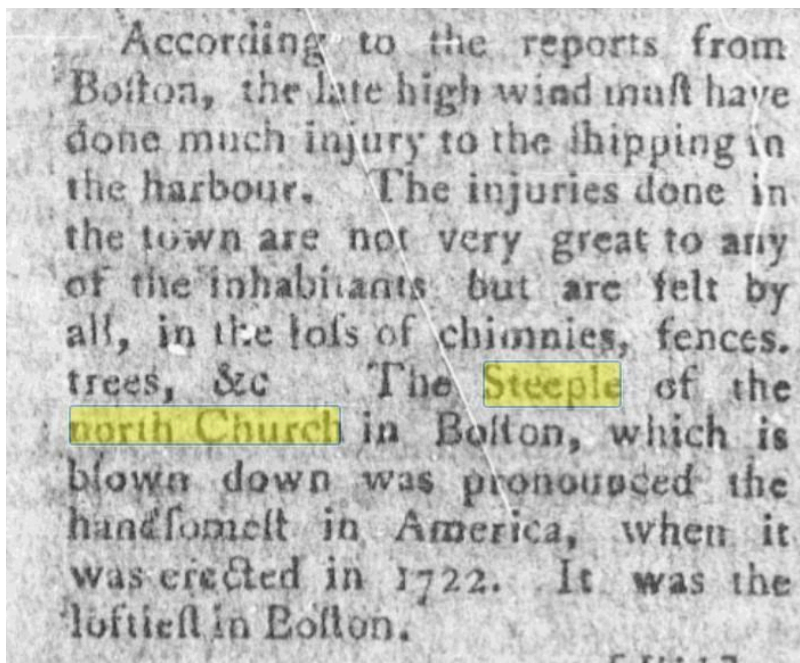


Figure 16: Shubael Bell (1766-1819), housewright, interred in crypt 9 beneath Christ Church. <https://boston1775.blogspot.com/2009/04/john-shubael-bell-housewright-under.html>. Estate sale to auction his seven pews is an early reference to Christ Church as the “North Church” (Boston Daily Advertiser, Jun 07, 1820). Bell donated a bust of George Washington to the church.





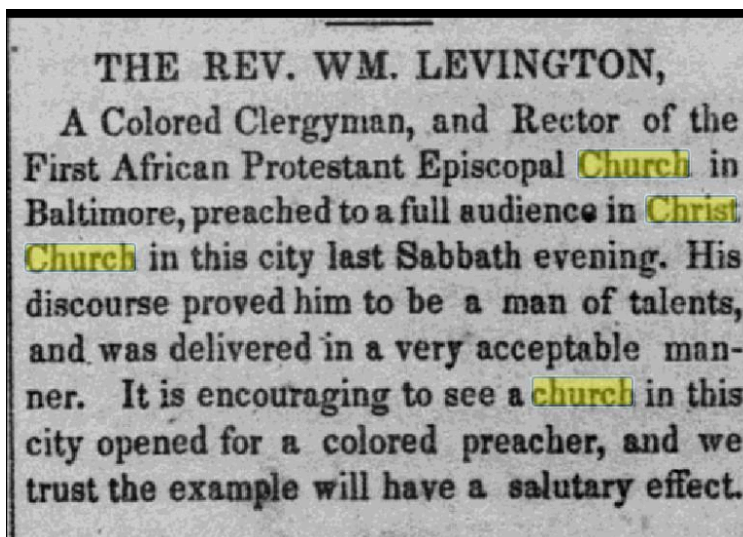
Figure 17: The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Print Collection, The New York Public Library. "Paul Revere's ride, April 19, 1775." Thomas Addis Emmett (1828-1919), New York Public Library Digital Collections. Accessed May 27, 2024. <https://digitalcollections.ny>.



According to the reports from Boston, the late high wind must have done much injury to the shipping in the harbour. The injuries done in the town are not very great to any of the inhabitants but are felt by all, in the loss of chimnies, fences, trees, &c. The Steeple of the north Church in Boston, which is blown down was pronounced the handsomest in America, when it was erected in 1722. It was the loftiest in Boston.

Figure 18: Alexandria (VA) Expositor, Oct. 18, 1804. The “Great Snow Hurricane of 1804,” the “first time in recorded history a tropical storm produced snowfall,”

<https://newenglandhistoricalsociety.com/great-snow-hurricane-1804/>. This account incorrectly dates the steeple (completed in 1740) to 1722. It is noteworthy for using “North Church” when referring to Christ Church. Paul Revere, in his 1798 letter to Jeremy Belknap about April 18 and 19, 1775, also described Christ Church as the North Church, specifically “the North Church steeple.” Periodically, since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, some journalists and historians have argued that the North Church to Revere was the “New North Church,” or Second Church, in North Square, not Christ Church. After demolition of the New North meetinghouse in 1776, the name North Church apparently transferred within two decades—or sooner—to Christ Church, while the new Congregational Church of 1804 on Hanover Street became “New North.”



**THE REV. WM. LEVINGTON,**  
A Colored Clergyman, and Rector of the  
First African Protestant Episcopal Church in  
Baltimore, preached to a full audience in Christ  
Church in this city last Sabbath evening. His  
discourse proved him to be a man of talents,  
and was delivered in a very acceptable man-  
ner. It is encouraging to see a church in this  
city opened for a colored preacher, and we  
trust the example will have a salutary effect.

Figure 19: *The Liberator*, Aug. 3, 1808. Levington received an invitation from the rector to preach in Christ Church.

## *Sunday Schools.*

A Sunday School has been established in *Boston*, in *Salem-street Academy*, and is open every Sunday morning, from 8 to 10 o'clock.

"Youth of all denominations are admitted and instructed out of the Church Catechism and the Holy Scriptures in the principles and fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

"It is confidently expected, that the beneficial effects of this, and similar institutions, will be experienced not only by the *rising* but by many *succeeding* generations. The religious education of children is a positive command of Heaven; and is of vast importance to the welfare of society at large, as well as to the individuals who are the subjects of it. "Train up a child in the way he should go," said the wise man, "and when he is old he will not depart from it."

"Let the fundamental principles of our Holy Religion be well established in the minds of our youth, and they will not be easily eradicated; especially if they are early instructed in the evidences of Christianity, which is certainly a very important branch of education; but has hitherto been less attended to than its importance requires."

Figure 20: *Hampshire Gazette*, Aug. 30, 1815. Notice about opening of Sunday School, or Sabbath School, at Christ Church, open to young people of "all denominations." This Sunday School was among the earliest in the country. (A Sunday School had opened in Beverly in 1810.) The Sunday School at Christ Church admitted African American students. In its first 14 years, the schools reported 1,300 students of European descent and 14 of African descent. (Boston Recorder, Jul. 9, 1829). The Salem Street Academy was a private school on property owned by Christ Church. It included an "intermediate school for misses." (Boston Daily Advertiser, May 17, 1815). Sunday School was also in vestry annex.





Figure 21: "Christ Church, Salem Street." *Topographical and Historical Description of Boston, From the First Settlement of the Town to the Present Period; with some Account of Its Environs, 1817.*

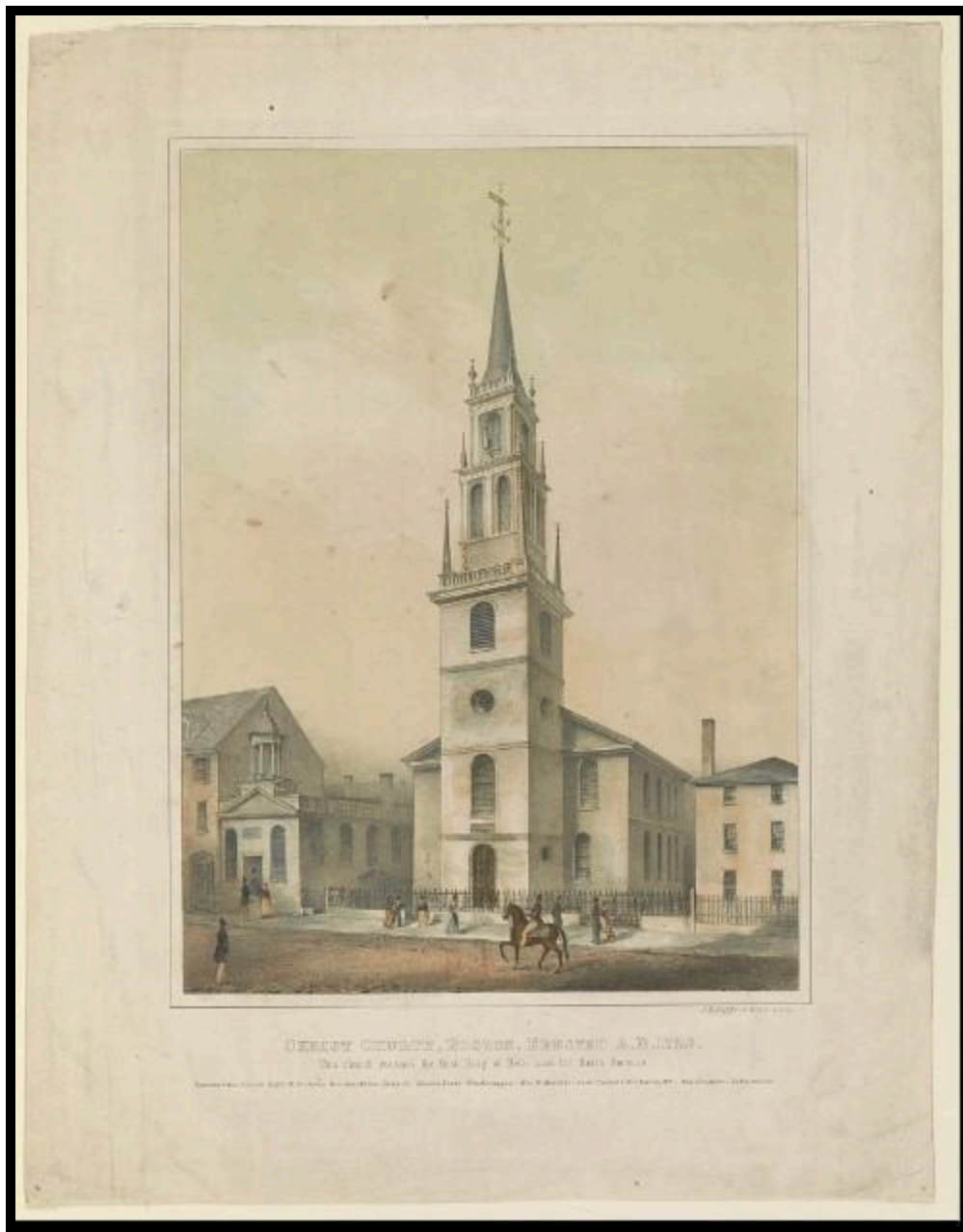


Figure 22: “Christ Church, Boston. Erected A.D. 1723.” J.H. Bufford & Co., lithographer, ca. 1844–1851. Boston Public Library, Boston Pictorial Archive. Digital Commonwealth. <https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:r781zz277>. The adjacent one-story building is the Salem-Street Academy.





Figure 23: Old Brick Church, New York City, 1757 (demolished). Lithograph c. 1850. Yale University Art Gallery. One of many churches with architectural references to Christ Church, Boston, and to London city churches of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Red brick, wooden white steeple, two-story round-arched windows, and beltcourse are features shared with Christ Church.

The disgraceful **Christ Church** quarrel yet rages. An attempt was made, on Saturday, to prevent Rev. Mr. Smithett from preaching any longer, by affixing locks to the doors, and stationing constables there, but the reverend gentleman, who is of the fighting class of parsons, headed a party which forced open the doors, and held possession of the house all night. Yesterday he preached there three times, with much unction. The other party brought up a police force to prevent the forcible entrance, but it did nothing. This quarrel is an old one, and, like gout, it breaks out vehemently at times. It will get into the stomach soon.

Figure 24: New York Evening Post, May 29, 1855. The “Smithett Controversy generated national news stories in the mid-1850s.



Figure 25: c. 1855-1895, North End street (Hull Street), Old North Church (Christ Church) in the distance. Boston Public Library, Boston Pictorial Archive. Digital Commonwealth.  
<https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:6h440z20g>



Figure 26: "Old North Church." Boston Public Library, Boston Pictorial Archive, 1865.

CHAP. XIII.

**Christ Church.**

The corner stone of this church, situated in **Salem** street, was laid April 22, 1723, and was opened on the 29th of the following December. It has a lofty tower, supporting one of the handsomest steeples in the United States. It also has a chime of eight bells, the only one in **Boston**, put up in 1744. When we were in our childhood nothing seemed sweeter to us than their merry peals during the season of Christmas, and especially in the night season, when we could lie awake and listen to their music. On the Sabbath, the noon time, between the first and second bells of church hours, was employed in playing some of the old melodies, as York, Arlington, Archdale, Duke Street, &c., which seem as fresh to our memory now, as though it were but a Sabbath ago, instead of upwards of a half century.

The church has a large and fine toned organ, built by Thomas Johnson, in the year 1752, and the choir, some sixty years ago or more, was led by Billings, one of the ancient authors of Psalmody, now known as the Billings and Holden music. The old clock, with its black face, is still to be seen and still to be heard, beating the onward course of time. The paintings containing the Lord's Prayer, select texts of Scripture, and the Last Supper, are much admired. There are two pilasters supporting an entablature and cornice over the chancel, on the frieze of which is inscribed, "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven." Above this is a painting, the Descent of the Holy Spirit. At the east end of the church, on the side of the chancel, is a monument to the memory of Washington, (the first ever erected to his memory in this country), with a bust well executed by an Italian artist.

Figure 27: *Waltham Free Press*, Dec. 14, 1866. Only source identifying William Billings (1746-1800), the first American composer of choral music, as a choral master in Christ Church. A Congregationalist, Billings composed the music for the New England Psalm Singer. He also wrote the tune "Chester." He was buried in an unmarked grave in the Central Buying Ground on the Common.



# THE OLD NORTH CHURCH.

---

The Ancient Building to be  
Renovated and Restored.

---

Reminiscences of Paul Revere and Robert  
Newman and the Days of '75.

---

Discovery of the Signal Lanterns  
Which Heralded the Revolution.

---

There is nothing which adds so greatly to the fame of Boston and the interest which attaches itself to the city as the existence upon the streets and squares of so many ancient historic buildings. Of these none is of greater interest, though its fame was won in a single night, than Christ Church, on Salem street, known in former days as the Old North Church. It is brought especially into notice, at the present time, by the announcement that extensive repairs are about to be made upon the structure.

It will be remembered that it was from the steeple of the Old North Church that Sexton Robert Newman displayed the signal lanterns which told to Paul Revere that the British troops were about to march on Concord and Lexington. Not long ago, the present sexton of the church, while making a search of the space above the tombs, which lie beneath the building, discovered a pair of antique lanterns, which it is by no means improbable are the identical lamps which were used upon that memorable night. It is not a little remarkable

Figure 28: Boston Globe, Jul. 30, 1884.

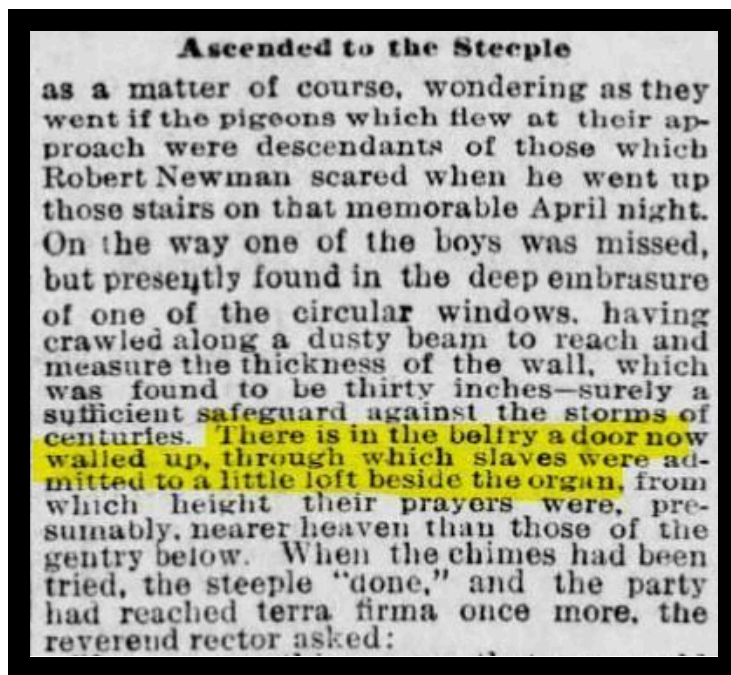


Figure 29: Boston Globe, Feb. 21, 1886.



Figure 30: Boston Globe, Oct. 7, 1895. Born in England, Downer (1832-1919) was sexton from 1870 to 1895. He and his wife Elizabeth lived in the sexton's house at the rear of 193 Salem Street. An 1816 record from a church in central London specified that duties of a sexton (custodian) were: “To sweep and keep clean the church; to ring the bells and open the pews on Service Days and other necessary occasions; to sweep the leads and gutters and the belfry stairs; to blow the organ bellows, and dig the graves or cause them to be dug; to attend Vestry Meetings; to light the church and vestry fires whenever they are wanted; and to attend the rector or minister on all church duties and whatever assistance he may need.” “Duties of parish officials,” *The Records of St. Bartholomew's Priory and St. Bartholomew the Great, West Smithfield: Volume 2*, originally published by Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1921, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/st-barts-records/vol2/pp562-564>.





Figure 31: 1867, <https://www.atlascope.org/>. Both the sexton's house and the church house appear on this map.



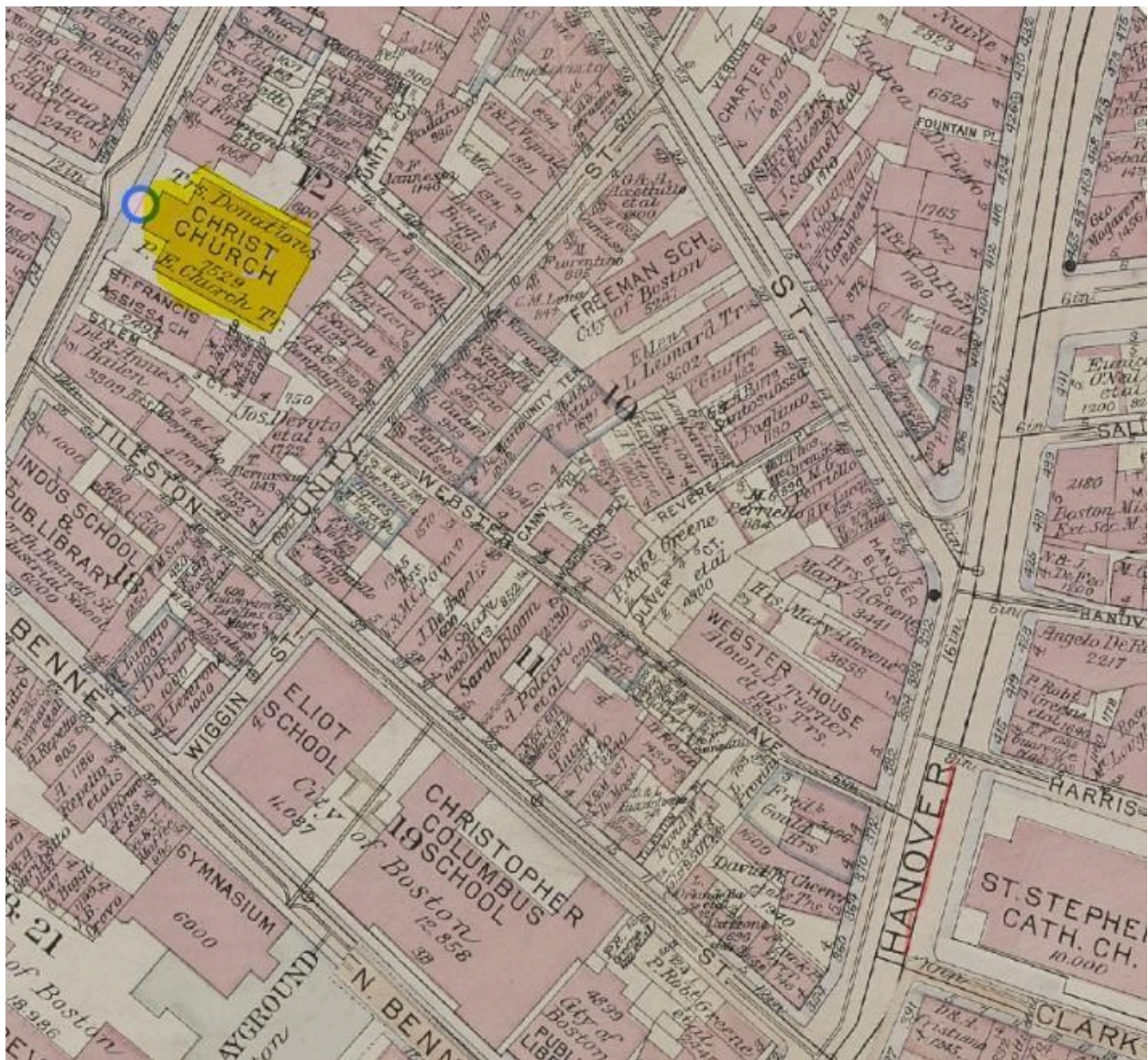


Figure 32: 1922, <https://www.atlascope.org/>. By 1922, following property acquisitions and demolitions, and an effort led by Bishop William Lawrence, wooden tenement houses are no longer next to Christ Church.



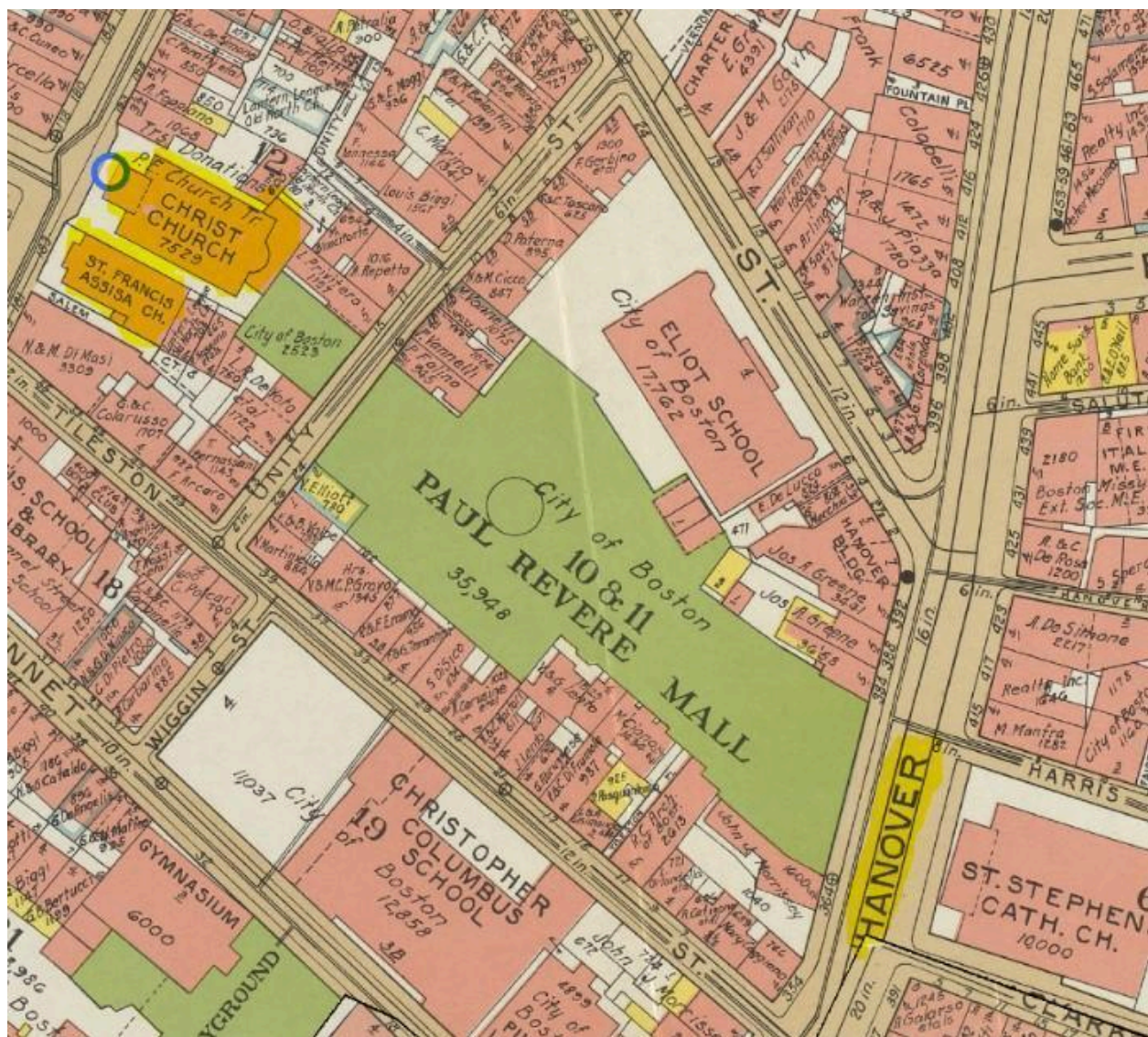


Figure 33: 1938, <https://www.atlascope.org/>. Mall was constructed in 1934.



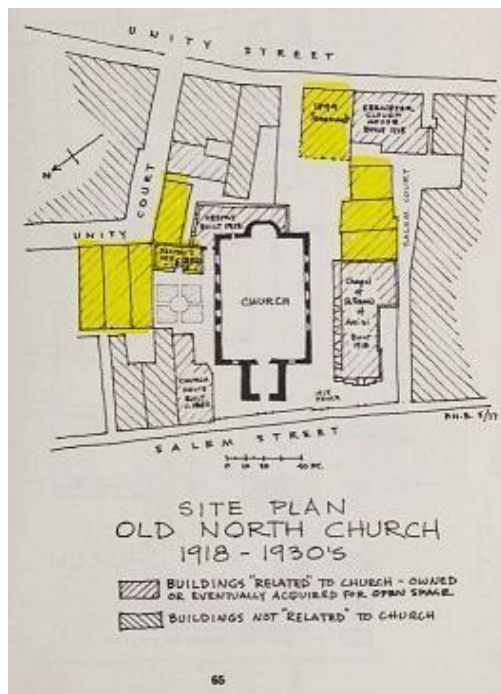


Figure 34: Site plans from historic structure report. The Sunday School, founded in 1815, was in the Salem Street Academy building to the north of the church on Salem Street. The vestry on the north end was rebuilt in brick. The 1918-1930s plan illustrates the number of properties acquired by the church over time, many of which were demolished to remove fire hazards, to create open space, or for “urban renewal” during construction of the Paul Revere Mall in the mid-1930s. Yellow highlights in the lower image identify demolished buildings. (Batcheler, *Historic Structures Report, Old North Church*, 64, 65.)



Figure 35: Group portrait of four women, members of Boston League of Women Voters, celebrating passage of 19th amendment by ringing bells of Christ Church, Boston, Aug. 26, 1920. Edna Lamprey Stantial Papers. Carrie Chapman Catt and Other Suffrage-Related Material, 1860-1956. Photographs, 1860-1936. MC 733, folder PD.9. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. Accessed May 2024.  
<https://digitalcollections.library.harvard.edu/catalog/sch01403c00381>

At this time, the bells were not rung as a peal (change ringing).

**NORTH END PRADO TO BE TURNED OVER TO CITY  
WITHIN 10 DAYS BY WHITE FUND TRUSTEES**



VIEW THROUGH PRADO FROM OLD NORTH CHURCH TOWARD ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH

Figure 36: Paul Revere Mall, originally named the Prado, *The Boston Globe*, Aug. 29, 1934. A major objective of the design was to create a vista between St. Stephen's Church (New North Meetinghouse, 1802-1804, Charles Bulfinch) on Hanover Street and Christ Church. Mature trees occlude this view today.





Figure 37: North Church and Prado, Boston Public Library, Boston Pictorial Archive, June 1937.  
<https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:n5841j901>.

The aerial image shows a geometric pattern of bluestone and other accent paving in the paving as well as the axial view between the two historic churches. The photograph also shows the second tower (1806) of Christ Church. Use of the name “North Church,” instead of “Old North Church,” is unusual for 1937, by which time nearly all references to the church were either Christ Church or Old North Church. Christ Church was also known as “North Church” during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

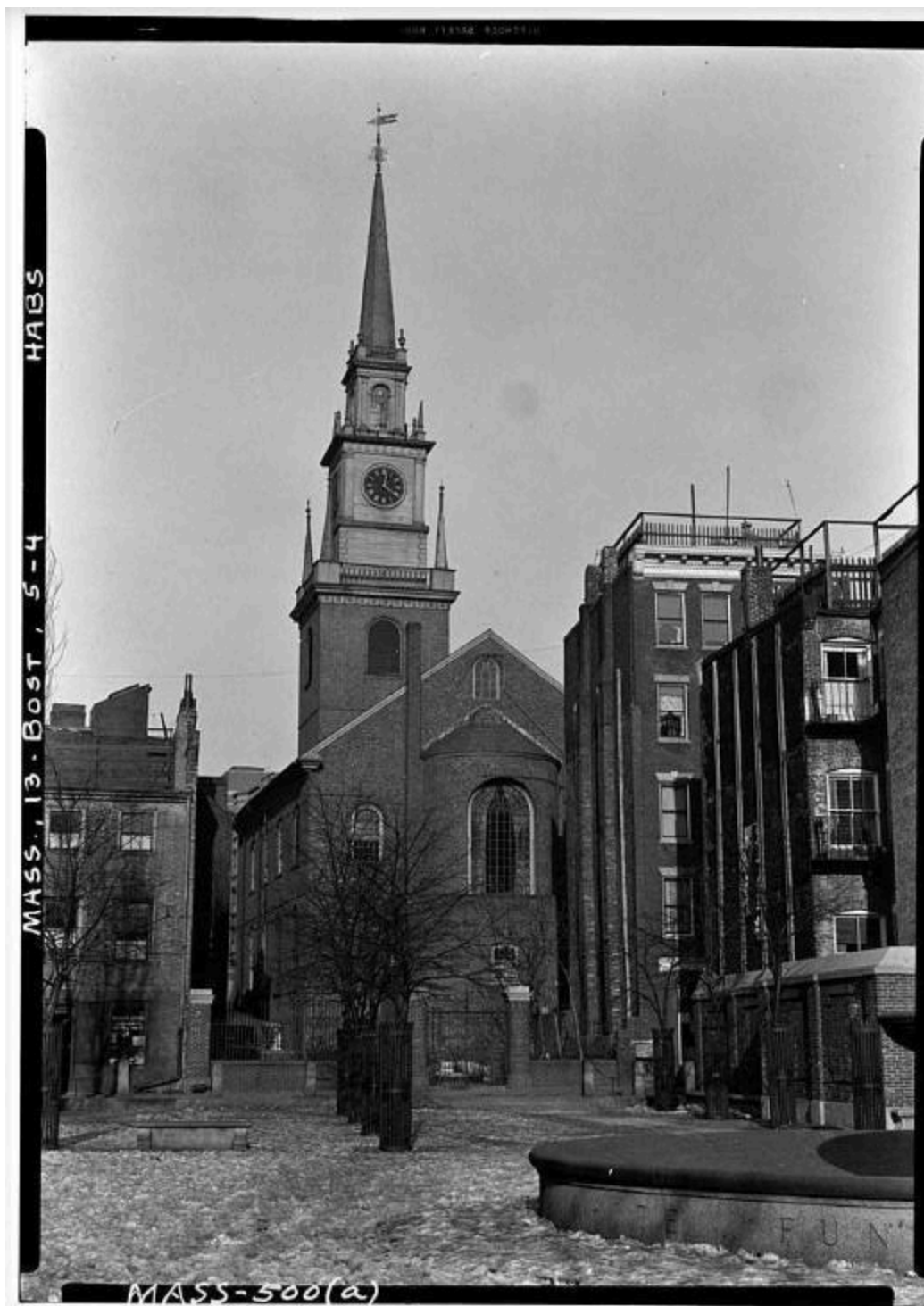


Figure 38: 1941 Historic American Buildings Survey, Old North Church, Boston: <https://picryl.com/media/1941-oldnorth-boston-habs-ma500-4724b0>. Second steeple, 1806-1954, presumably in what may have been a color similar to the “stone colour” used in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. (Batcheler, *Historic Structures Report, Old North Church*, 105, 196).





Figure 39: Old North Church, Boston, photo taken March 2024.



Figure 40: Forest Lawn Memorial-Park Old North Church, Hollywood Hills, Los Angeles, California (1965). Commonly known as Forest Lawn Chapel.  
<https://foursquare.com/v/forest-lawn-old-north-church/4ba55559f964a520defb38e3>.

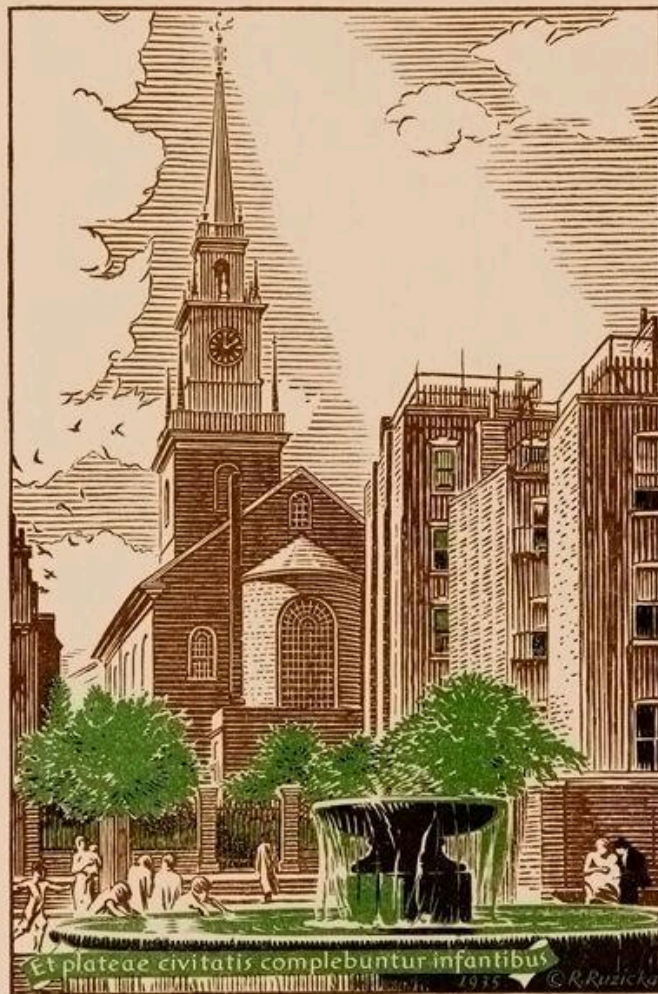


Figure 41: Christ Church, Salem St., Boston. Rudolf Ruzicka (1883-1978), woodcut. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Gift of Paul J. Sachs. Accessed May 2024.  
<https://digitalcollections.library.harvard.edu/catalog/HUAM262412> URN-3:HUAM:INV159212  
\_DYNMC\_ Mid-to-late 1930s. The inscription reads: and the streets of the city are filled with children.



## 5. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Old North Church Campus (Christ Church in the City of Boston) is located on an irregularly-shaped campus of 16,062 square feet of land, situated between Salem Street and Unity Street in the North End of Boston.<sup>1</sup> The campus contains several buildings of various eras (described below) that are linked together by brick walkways, courtyards, and small gardens into a single complex. Behind the Old North Church, the Paul Revere Mall (not included in the proposed designation) links Unity Street to Hanover Street.

### Old North Church

Construction of the Old North Church and Campus was begun in 1723. The building was clearly inspired by the style of Christopher Wren's London churches (see **Figure 12**). In contrast to the traditional "four-square" meeting houses (with side entrances and no towers) that were built throughout the New England colonies in the 1600s, the Old North Church was the first building in the English colonies to "assume the fully developed character of the Wren or Georgian type church, with a front tower topped by a lofty spire, a main entrance at one end of an oblong auditorium, and longitudinal aisles separating box pews."<sup>2</sup>

The National Register nomination form for the Boston National Historical Park describes Old North Church as follows:

*The body of Old North is a simple rectangular mass, 51 feet wide and 70 feet long. Its brick walls, over two feet thick and 42 feet high, are laid in English bond and are broken by two tiers of round-arched windows. A projecting square brick tower, nearly 100 feet high and with walls 3 feet thick, was added to the front (west) end of the main structure in 1724-37. The tower was topped by a wooden spire 191 feet high. Completed in 1740, the three setback stages, classical decorative detail, and fragile lines of the wooden spire were also strongly reminiscent of Wren's churches. The bells, the first peal of eight to be brought to America, were cast by Abel Rudhall of Gloucester, England in 1745. The original spire was blown down in 1804 and replaced in 1807 by one 175 feet high and generally attributed to Charles Bulfinch. This second tower was toppled by a hurricane on August 31, 1954, and the next year was replaced by a 191-foot spire that is a copy of the original. Each of the three spires has carried the original weathervane - a waving banner surmounted by a five-pointed star designed by Deacon Shem Drowne.<sup>3</sup>*

*A full scale restoration of Old North was carried out in 1912-14 [sic] under the direction of architects R. Clipson Sturgis and Henry G. Ross. ... On the exterior, wooden sheathing was removed from the north side of the building and all of the brickwork, which had been painted gray, was sandblasted and returned to its original red. Finally, a one-story brick addition, intended as a museum area but now containing parish offices was constructed at the rear of the church.<sup>4</sup>*

The Old North Church sits upon a rubble stone foundation. Projecting belt courses delineate floor levels at the tower and at the north and south elevations. The roof is slate.

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<sup>1</sup> City of Boston. "Assessing Online." City of Boston Assessing. Accessed August 20, 2021. <https://www.cityofboston.gov/assessing/search/>.

<sup>2</sup> "Boston National Historical Park." National Register of Historic Places nomination file, 1972. State Historic Preservation Office, Boston, accessed March 2024, <https://mhc-macris.net/Documents/NR/15000195.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> "Boston National Historical Park." National Register of Historic Places nomination file.

<sup>4</sup> "Boston National Historical Park." National Register of Historic Places nomination file. The restoration was actually finished in 1912; see "Two Interesting Restorations of Old New England Churches," *Bulletin of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities* III, no. 3 (February 1913), 2-8. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.32044093611093&seq=96>

The windows of the main block of the church are multi-pane hung sash with wood muntins and semicircular arched fanlights at the top. On the north and south faces of the tower, there are circular ox-eye windows with radiating muntins at the first and third stories. At the fourth story of the tower, there are arched openings inset with louvers on all four sides of the tower.

The front (west) face of the tower contains two plaques. One, set into the brick wall just above the belt course that divides the first and second stories, says "Christ Church 1723" and is inset into the brick wall. The second plaque, made of solid carved granite, is vertically centered on the third story and mounted proud of the brick; it commemorates Paul Revere's display of signal lanterns in the steeple to warn that the British were coming.<sup>5</sup>

### **Church House, 193 Salem Street**

The Church House is a well-preserved brick rowhouse dating back to the early to mid- 19th century. It consists of a 3 ½-story, gable-roofed main block with a 2-story, gable-roofed rear ell. The windows are six-over-six and are capped by simple stone lintels, as is the front entrance. The front entry door has rectangular sidelights and a rectangular transom window. Two brick chimneys rise from the end wall, and the ell also has a chimney. The foundations and stoop are granite.

### **Parish Office, 195 Salem Street**

Adjacent to the Church House is another three-and-a-half story rowhouse whose architectural detailing suggests an approximate construction date of between 1840-1850. Similar to the Church House, the windows are capped by simple stone lintels, but here they contain replacement one-over-one sash. The front door is a double leaf arched paneled door sitting below a simple brick arch. The cornice is slightly more ornamental than the one at 193 Salem, with brick dentils providing texture and visual interest. Two gabled dormers project out of the roof – one on the front (street) facing slope and one on the rear slope.

### **St. Francis of Assisi Chapel, 183 Salem Street**

This freestanding chapel located just south of the church was completed in 1918 as the Chapel of St. Francis of Assisi, and is today used as a gift shop. It is a one-story, gable-roofed building detailed in the Romanesque style. The brick pattern alternates rows of headers and rows of stretchers. The front of the chapel has a projecting pavilion with an open pediment above a round ox-eye window outlined with stone molding. At the front entrance, marble columns with Corinthian capitals stand atop carved stone lions. Atop the capitals, there are religious figures in niches carved out of stone which meet the closed triangular pediment above the recessed, arched entrance. The entry door is paneled wood with the upper half containing four glazed lites. Above the door is a semicircular fanlight with radiating muntins. The building is asymmetrical to either side of the pavilion, with a full bay on the left (surmounted by a scrolled bracket) and a half bay on the right. The north facade of the chapel has a door with an elliptical fanlight and five bays of semicircular arched double-hung sash windows set a few feet above windows to the basement. The south side of the chapel contains one semicircular arched window and three arched fanlights.

### **Ebenezer Clough House, 21 Unity Street**

The Ebenezer Clough house, to the southeast of the church, was constructed between 1711 and 1715 as a two-story dwelling with a gambrel roof. The third story was added in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The facade is symmetrical with a central entrance and five bays. The bricks are roughly textured and laid in Flemish bond. Unusual for the time were the decorative panels shaped by bricks protruding below the second-story windows. The first and second story windows are 12-over-12 hung sash with brick jack arch lintels with projecting keystones, while the third floor windows are 8-over-8 with no lintels. Above the double-leaf paneled front door there is a rectangular multi-light transom window

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<sup>5</sup> See <https://www.oldnorth.com/blog/set-in-stone-the-making-of-a-memorial/> for an interesting discussion of the making of this plaque.



surmounted by a brick jack arch, the bottom of which is cut in a curving swag pattern. The house has a large brick end chimney.

### **Gardens, Terraces, and Walkways Bordering the Church**

The remaining terraces, walkways, and gardens of the campus mostly date to the 1930s. Thematically, with red-brick walls, wall tablets, seating, and mature shade trees, they relate to the Colonial Revival design of the Paul Revere Mall and create a harmonious setting for the church. The landscape architects selected bricks similar in color to the church for the adjoining walkways, gardens, and terraces and for the mall. A small extension of the Paul Revere Mall connects Unity Street to the walkways and terraces on the south side of the church.

There are also several gardens throughout the Old North Church Campus: the 18th Century Garden, the St. Francis of Assisi Garden, the Washington Memorial Garden, the Third Lantern Garden, and the Memorial Garden.

Located toward the back of the church campus, the 18th Century Garden contains 750 square feet of plants and shrubs that were used in the late 18th century.<sup>6</sup>

On the north side of the church, behind 193 and 195 Salem Street, the Washington Memorial Garden provides a space for many of the people who walk The Freedom Trail to rest and contemplate.<sup>7</sup> This garden, which sits on Unity Court, occupies 1,950 square feet on the Old North Church Campus.<sup>8</sup> Its walls and commemorative tablets are similar in design to those in the Paul Revere Mall.

The St. Francis Garden was created in the 1970s to commemorate the original function of the Chapel of St. Francis, which was converted into the Old North Church Gift Shop after the dispersal of the community of Italian immigrants that used the Chapel.<sup>9</sup> Residing on Salem Court, the garden occupies 1,369 square feet on the Old North Church Campus.<sup>10</sup>

The Third Lantern Garden, located outside the crypt on the north side of the Church walls, commemorates the lighting of the “Third Lantern” on April 18, 1975 by President Gerald Ford to mark the beginning of the nation’s bicentennial celebrations. The garden was recently renovated, providing a brand new brick wall and sturdier stairs.<sup>11</sup> Standing at 6 Unity Court, the Third Lantern Garden occupies 1,474 square feet on the Old North Church Campus.<sup>12</sup>

In 2006, The Memorial Garden was created by Old North Church and its neighbors as the nation’s first public memorial honoring American lives lost in the conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the greater war on terror. The Old North Memorial Garden was officially dedicated on Memorial Day in 2007. In November 2018, a bronze plaque was added as well as a bronze poppy wreath to remember fallen British and Commonwealth soldiers. Today, whenever an American serviceperson is killed in these conflicts, a dog-tag is hung by an Old North volunteer.<sup>13</sup> This parcel is not included within the proposed designation.

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<sup>6</sup> The Freedom Trail Foundation. “Old North Church & Historic Site: Boston, MA.” The Old North Church & Historic Site. Accessed August 20, 2021. <https://www.oldnorth.com/>.

<sup>7</sup> Old North Church Website

<sup>8</sup> City of Boston. “Assessing Online.” City of Boston Assessing. Accessed August 20, 2021. <https://www.cityofboston.gov/assessing/search/>.

<sup>9</sup> Old North Church Website

<sup>10</sup> City of Boston. “Assessing Online.”

<sup>11</sup> Old North Church Website

<sup>12</sup> City of Boston. “Assessing Online.”

<sup>13</sup> The Freedom Trail Foundation. “Old North Church & Historic Site: Boston, MA.” The Old North Church & Historic Site. Accessed August 20, 2021. <https://www.oldnorth.com/>.

## 6. HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

### 6.1 Historic Significance

The North End of Boston is part of the traditional homelands of the Massachusett. They lived in the place we now call Boston for at least 12,000 years and are still here today. Archaeological investigations throughout Boston document surviving evidence of Native presence throughout the city, even in developed areas. See the Archaeological Sensitivity statement below for specific information about the known and potential ancient Native uses of this property.

A National Historic Landmark since 1961, Christ Church in Boston is significant to the City of Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and to the nation for its association with important events and persons associated with the opening of the American Revolution. It possesses additional significance as the oldest surviving house of worship in Boston, as a notable and influential example of English Baroque ecclesiastical architecture in colonial-era Massachusetts, and for its role in the religious history of colonial New England. The church is also noteworthy as one of three surviving church buildings in Boston with extensive connections to enslaved and free Black people during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and for its early and prominent role in heritage tourism and heritage conservation. Long emblematic of Boston's stature as a historic city, the church is one of the city's most-visited historic sites.<sup>14</sup>

Christ Church was founded in 1723 after the original 1689 building for King's Chapel, the first Church of England congregation in Boston, and the first Church of England building in New England, had become overcrowded and Anglicans were increasingly numerous in the Puritan town.<sup>15</sup> A committee of King's Chapel solicited subscribers for a new church and acquired land on Salem Street. The site, originally on land of the Massachusett people of the Shawmut Peninsula, was on the east slope of Copp's Hill. It was also at the highest elevation of any church in colonial Boston.<sup>16</sup>

The committee received "generous gifts" from subscribers, including planters in Antigua and Barbados and Francis Nicholson (1655-1728), governor of South Carolina and former lieutenant governor of the Dominion of New England.<sup>17</sup> It raised additional funds by selling pews to wealthy merchants. The committee received substantial support from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) in England. Founded in 1701 with royal patronage, the SPG was a missionary society dedicated to aggressively promoting the Church of England in the American colonies. To support new churches, it sent missionaries, prayer books, tracts, sermons, Decalogue panels, vestments, and, above all, financial support with a special emphasis on the Puritan citadels of Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut.<sup>18</sup> A print of St. James's Church, Westminster, built 1687-1689 and

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<sup>14</sup> "Old North Church, Our History," Old North Church, accessed March 2024, <https://www.oldnorth.com/our-history/>.

<sup>15</sup> Henry Burroughs, *A Historical Account of Christ Church, Boston Delivered on the Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Opening of the Church* (Boston: A. Williams & Company, 1874); Jeremy Gregory, "Refashioning Puritan New England: The Church of England in British North America, c. 1680-c. 1770," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 20 (2010): 99. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41432387>; Jeremy Gregory, "Refashioning Puritan New England," 15; Sidney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 223.

<sup>16</sup> "Old North Steeple," *The Boston Globe*, Mon, Jan 25, 1886.

<sup>17</sup> "Boston's Churches, Old Christ Church, Sketch of the Ancient Parish," *Boston Daily Globe*, July 9, 1877.

<sup>18</sup> David L. Holmes, *A Brief History of the Episcopal Church* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993), 45; Gregory, "Refashioning Puritan New England," 87; Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, 219, 223-234.



designed by Christopher Wren, may have been a source of the design for the new church.<sup>19</sup> Anthony Blount, a tallow chandler and a junior warden who was instrumental in the formation of the church, possessed this print while acting as an “architectural advisory” to the masons and carpenters. Blount died in 1727. William Price, a book and print dealer and cabinetmaker, succeeded.<sup>20</sup>

The Reverend Timothy Cutler (1683-1765), the first rector of the church, also may have sent engravings or illustrations from England while there in late-1722 and early-1723 for his Episcopal ordination.<sup>21</sup> In 1722, Cutler, a native of Charlestown, had led a sensational defection, the “Yale Apostasy,” from Calvinist orthodoxy to the Church of England while rector (president) of Yale College. Calling Cutler, the leader of the apostasy, to Boston was a bold statement by the proprietors of the new church in North Boston and contributed to its opprobrium “by those who call themselves Puritans.”<sup>22</sup> Cutler was rector for 42 years.

Although the first service was held in December 1723, the building, without the steeple, was not fully completed until 1726. A building of this size—with an auditorium 71 feet long by 50.5 feet in width, with brick walls 42 feet high and the 23 foot-by-26-foot base for the tower—and at a scale comparable to high-style city churches in London, was an immense undertaking in colonial America during the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Few buildings of a comparable size existed in the two largest colonies of Massachusetts or Virginia.<sup>23</sup> The construction also preceded the widespread introduction of English architectural pattern books across the Atlantic world, and few masons and master builders were trained to work at such a scale. The project also required transporting enormous quantities of timber from York, Maine, and brick from brickyards in Medford.<sup>24</sup>

From 1727 to 1737, artist and congregation member John Gibbs made significant contributions to the interior design of the church. He painted murals of cherubs in the spandrels of the arches above the galleries which were whitewashed in 1912 but are currently being uncovered and restored at the time of this study report. Gibbs also applied decorative faux-bois paint to the galleries, painted the pillars so they appeared to be carved, and later painted faux marble on the pillars at the west gallery.

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<sup>19</sup>Suzanne Foley, “Christ Church,” *Old-Time New England* LI, no. 3 (January-March 1961): 12-14, 16; Penelope Hartshorn Batcheler, *Historic Structures Report, Old North Church, Boston* (Denver: United States Department of the Interior, 1981), 80-81.

[https://archive.org/details/historicstructur00unit\\_0](https://archive.org/details/historicstructur00unit_0).

The SPG “was in a position to offer its colonial builders material aid in the selection of their new church plans.” Antoinette Downing and Vincent J. Scully Jr., *The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: American Legacy Press, 1967), 55. Similarly, a historian of Christ Church, Philadelphia (1744), the largest and most elaborate Church of England building in British North America during the colonial era, also speculates that its “designs were imported from England.” Deborah Mathias Gough, *Christ Church, Philadelphia: The National’s Church in a Changing City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 18.

<sup>20</sup> Foley, “Christ Church,” 16. In many sources, Price is incorrectly cited as architect of the church. See Foley, 16-17 and Batcheler, 85.

<sup>21</sup> Batcheler, *Historic Structures Report, Old North Church*, 81-84.

<sup>22</sup>“much hated and eyed.” Ross A. Newton, “Logwood Cutters, Merchants, Privateers... Religious Gents?” *Commonplace the Journal of Early American Life*, [commonplaceonline.com](https://commonplaceonline.com) (Winter, 2018), <https://commonplaceonline.com/article/logwood-cutters-merchants-privateers>.

<sup>23</sup> Similar-sized buildings in the 1720s included the New Brick Meeting House (1713) in Boston, Massachusetts Hall (1720) at Harvard, and in Virginia the Capitol (1705) and Main Building at College of William and Mary (1705 reconstruction).

<sup>24</sup> Hugh Morrison, *Early American Architecture from the First Colonial Settlements to the National Period* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952), 288-289; Batcheler, *Historic Structures Report, Old North Church*, 14.

He decorated the chandelier ropes (and later iron cables), the organ case, and the apse as well.<sup>25</sup> As explained by the current staff of Old North Illuminated to the authors of this report:

*Gibbs's work is and was particularly significant because it asserted the church's identity as a Church of England congregation. Christ Church stood in stark contrast to the meetinghouses of the majority Puritan or Congregationalist community. While the Puritan or Congregational approach to life and worship was characterized by restraint and even austerity, members of the Church of England embraced rich color, ornate decor, and religious iconography such as Gibbs's cherubs. This congregation believed that God spoke to them through the arts and music and that, in fact, the arts and music enhanced worship.*<sup>26</sup>

Work on the interior of the church continued into the 1740s. Notable among the interior fittings was a towering, three-tiered pulpit installed in 1729. An organ, the second in Boston, was first installed in the rear gallery in 1736. A crypt for burials, the first in colonial Boston, dates to the 1730s.<sup>27</sup> In English churches, crypts were popular among the affluent in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century in Boston, the custom of interring deceased members under the church floor or in a crypt appealed to wealthy merchants capable of paying for a family tomb.<sup>28</sup> The crypt was also a source of revenue for the church.<sup>29</sup> An estimated 1,100 burials in 37 crypts occurred between 1732 and 1872. Previously, it was believed that burials ended in 1860, but archaeological work in 2023-2024 revealed a burial plate dated 1872.

A multi-stage steeple with a bell turret, balustrades, obelisks, urns, compass windows, quoins, pilasters, blinds, keystones, and a slender tapering spire surmounted by a weathervane,<sup>30</sup> was constructed in 1740. At 191 feet, this steeple—the first of three for Christ Church--was the tallest spire not only in Boston but also in British North America until surpassed in 1754 by the steeple for Christ Church, Philadelphia.<sup>31</sup> In 1740, the immense steeple would also have been among the tallest church spires in London. The steeple of Christ Church, even in its later iterations, remained a prominent feature of the Boston skyline into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>32</sup>

Christ Church acquired further distinction in 1745 with the installation of eight monumental bells—a “peal of eight” --weighing more than 5,000 pounds. Cast in 1744 in England by the Rudhall family bell foundry in Gloucestershire, they were the first change-ringing bells (rotating bells mounted on wheels) in the British American colonies. The transport of the bells to Boston and their subsequent installation in the belfry were exceptional feats at a time when few churches in England had peal

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<sup>25</sup> Batcheler, *Historic Structures Report, Old North Church*.

<sup>26</sup> Correspondence from Old North Illuminated to Boston Landmarks Commission staff, March 23, 2025.

<sup>27</sup> The second (current) building for King's Chapel (1754) also has a crypt.  
<https://www.kings-chapel.org/tombstructure.html>

<sup>28</sup> Paul Jeffery, *The City Churches of Sir Christopher Wren* (London: Continuum UK, 2007), 163.

<sup>29</sup> In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, English churches received about 7% of income from burial crypts; some London churches received much more. Malcolm Johnson, “A Brief History of London Crypts,” March 30, 2014, accessed March 2024,  
<https://spitalfieldslife.com/2014/03/30/a-brief-history-of-london-crypts/>; Foley, “Christ Church,” 20; Batcheler, *Historic Structures Report, Old North Church*, 14.

<sup>30</sup> Shem Drowne (1683 –1774) coppersmith and tinsmith worker also produced weathervanes for Province House (1715), Faneuil Hall (1742) and New Brick Church (1720), now in possession of First Church, Cambridge.

<sup>31</sup> The steeple for Christ Church, Philadelphia was five feet higher. The spire for Christ Church remained the tallest structure in Boston until Park Street Church (1809).

<sup>32</sup> “Boston From the 18<sup>th</sup> Floor,” *Boston Globe*, March 29, 1914. The City's zoning code protects views of the steeple from City Hall plaza.

bells.<sup>33</sup> Subscribers who contributed to the cost of the bells included British naval officers, nobility in England, and wealthy planters in the Caribbean.<sup>34</sup> “Everyone [in Boston and surrounding towns] knew Christ’s ‘royal peal,’” which could be heard at Harvard College in Cambridge. The bells “...opened and closed the markets, and twice on Sabbath called all to church.”<sup>35</sup>

Completion of the steeple with the peal bells concluded the initial 24-year construction of Christ Church. By its size and its visual prominence, the church asserted imperial authority in Puritan Boston, then the largest urban center and the largest port in British North America (though surpassed in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century by Philadelphia and, later, New York).<sup>36</sup> With 600 attendees during the 1730s, the church also signified the steady growth of the Church of England in New England and the evanescence of Congregationalist dominion.<sup>37</sup> Architecturally, the church was the first full realization of a church in colonial America modeled on the late 17<sup>th</sup>-century ecclesiastical work of Christopher Wren: two-storied, three-quarter galleried basilicas with an east-west axial plan, plain exteriors, round-headed multi-light windows, and towering steeples enriched with portals, classical ornament, and thin spires with weathervanes.<sup>38</sup> As a Baroque “steeple house,”<sup>39</sup> Christ Church influenced ecclesiastical designs elsewhere in New England, most notably in 1724, Trinity Church in Newport, Rhode Island, whose spire completed in 1742 closely resembles that of Christ Church. It was also a prototype for the West Roxbury Meetinghouse (1773, demolished 1913) and The First Church Congregational (1761) in Wethersfield, Connecticut. The “colonial” imagery of Christ Church lingered into the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in aspects of the Park Street Church (Peter Banner, 1809) and, at a grander scale, the tower of Memorial Church at Harvard (Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch and Abbott, 1932).<sup>40</sup> Forest Lawn Cemetery in the Hollywood Hills of Los Angeles has a “replica” of the Old North Church built in 1965 (**Figure 40**).

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as with most churches in New England, Black and Indigenous people often attended services at Christ Church and were frequently baptized and admitted as members. In Boston, free and enslaved Black people constituted roughly 7 to 15 percent of the population. Timothy Cutler, who held one person as property, had longstanding ties to the SPG and actively

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<sup>33</sup> Paul Jeffery, *City Churches*, 128.

<sup>34</sup> Gregory, “Refashioning Puritan New England,” 88.

<sup>35</sup> Esther Forbes, *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942), 31, 50. Church of the Advent (John Hubbard Sturgis, completed 1888) on Brimmer Street also has eight peal bells, installed in 1900: <https://theadventboston.org/change-ringing/>. St. Michael’s in Charleston (completed 1756) has only other peal of bells (1764) from the colonial era, but these bells have been recast and were missing from the church for many years. Christ Church, Philadelphia has the third peal of bells (1754) from the colonial era. For over a century, these bells have not been used for change ringing: <http://www.phillyringers.com/christchurch>. MIT’s Guild of Bellringers currently help with change ringing at Old North: <https://bellringers.scripts.mit.edu/www/> and <https://alum.mit.edu/slice/mit-guild-bellringers-keeps-americas-oldest-bells-going>.

<sup>36</sup> The 1760 populations were Philadelphia (24,000), New York (18,000), Boston (16,000), and Bridgetown, Barbados and Kingston, Jamaica (each at 12,000). In 1723, with 12,000, Boston was the largest town in the Atlantic colonies. Graham UH ‘Municipal’ Table1.pdf, accessed April 2024, [https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10065246/12/Graham\\_UH%20'Municipal'%20Table1.pdf](https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10065246/12/Graham_UH%20'Municipal'%20Table1.pdf).

<sup>37</sup> Jeremy Gregory, “Refashioning Puritan New England,” 15. 30 years earlier, in 1702, an estimated 1,000 Anglicans were in New England.

<sup>38</sup> Boston National Historical Park. National Register of Historic Places nomination file, 1972. State Historic Preservation Office, Boston, 27, accessed March 2024, <https://mhc-macris.net/Documents/NR/15000195.pdf>.

<sup>39</sup> Paul Jefferey, *City Churches*, 128, 225. Peter Benes and Phillip D. Zimmerman, *The New England Meetinghouse and Church: 1630-1858* (Boston: Boston University and Currier Gallery of Art for the Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife, 1979), 16.

<sup>40</sup> The 265-foot steeple of Memorial Church is the tallest in New England: <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2000/10/working-their-way-to-top/>.



promoted religious instruction and baptism of enslaved Black people. During his tenure, he baptized more Black people than any minister in Boston.<sup>41</sup>

Researchers at Old North have been undertaking work to uncover stories of specific Black and Indigenous congregants who were part of Christ Church since its earliest days. Research Fellow Jaimie Crumley has traced details of the lives of Beulah Speene (1743-1802) and Elizabeth (last name unknown, birth ca. 1717-1718). Beulah Speene was a free mixed-race woman who was married at Christ Church to Saul Rogers, an enslaved Black man, in 1767. She was born in Natick and is believed to be the daughter of John Speen, a leader of the Nipmuc people. She was not recorded as a person of color at her birth, but was described as a “free mulatto” in Christ Church’s marriage records; her story encourages us to think about race as a social construct.<sup>42</sup> Fewer records exist for Elizabeth, an indigenous woman for whom no last name was recorded at the time of her Baptism at Christ Church in 1733. Based on her listed age, she was born around 1717 or 1718 and was most likely a member of the Massachusett. Sufficient information has not yet been discovered to determine how or why she came to Old North, but further research may uncover more information about her life.<sup>43</sup>

Education Manager and researcher T.J. Todd has also written about the lives of the Humphries family and Jerusha Will. The Humphries were a free Black family who lived in the North End and baptized 8 of their children at Christ Church in the 1740s and 50s. Records show that the family occasionally received alms and some of the children were “indentured out”, meaning that the authorities placed the children into wealthy homes to learn a trade for no pay. Despite this evidence of financial precarity, the Humphries briefly and charitably shared their house with an Indigenous woman named Jerusha Will who was baptized at Christ Church in 1743 just days before she died while living in their home.<sup>44</sup> These stories begin to illuminate the supportive communities that formed at Christ Church between people of color.

Segregated seating at Christ Church persisted well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1812, there is record of the church proprietors expressing their gratitude to Shubael Bell for alterations he made to the gallery for the accommodation of Black worshippers.<sup>45</sup> The Reverend William Levington (1793-1836), a Black ordained Episcopal priest and rector of St. James African Episcopal Church in Baltimore, Maryland, received an invitation to speak at a service in 1833. On that occasion, the seating remained segregated despite the presence of congregants from Trinity Church and King’s Chapel.<sup>46</sup> In 1900,

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<sup>41</sup> “The People in the Pews: The Rev. Dr. Timothy Cutler,” Old North Church, accessed March 2024, <https://www.oldnorth.com/blog/this-old-pew-27-rev-timothy-cutler/>; Richard J. Boles, *Dividing the Faith: The Rise of Segregated Churches in the Early American North* (New York: New York University Press, 2020), 35, 37. “The Church of England was among the most popular of denominations for urban black people because they offered free education and relatively easy access to sacraments” (Boles, 112). Also see Jared Ross Hardesty, *Unfreedom: Slavery and Dependence in Eighteenth-Century Boston* (New York: New York University Press, 2016), 151-153.

<sup>42</sup> Jaimie Crumley, “The Social Construction of Race in Early Massachusetts History,” The Old North Church & Historic Site, October 20, 2022, <https://www.oldnorth.com/blog/social-construction-of-race/>.

<sup>43</sup> Jaimie Crumley, “Indigenous Women at Old North During the British Colonial Period,” The Old North Church & Historic Site, September 12, 2022, <https://www.oldnorth.com/blog/indigenous-women/>.

<sup>44</sup> T.J. Todd, “99% Sure | Ep. 9: The Humphries Family,” The Old North Church & Historic Site, March 24, 2022, <https://www.oldnorth.com/blog/the-humphries-family/>.

<sup>45</sup> Jaimie D. Crumley, “Where African and Indigenous Stories Meet: The Story of the Old North Church, Boston, 1723–1812,” *Anglican and Episcopal History* 92, no. 3 (2023): 462–463.

<sup>46</sup> *The Liberator*, July 27, 1833 and Aug. 3, 1833. Levington was on a fund-raising campaign for his church and for educating Black youth in Baltimore, who could not attend public schools. Black attendance at Episcopal Churches declined during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century with the rise of independent Black congregations. In the 1830s, some Boston congregations, with varying success,

Black people still sat in the galleries even though one observer reported an exception seated among the congregation.<sup>47</sup> The Sunday School, which operated in attached structures at the east end of the church and was open to other denominations, admitted a small number of Black students during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>48</sup>

For much of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Christ Church, like King's Chapel and Trinity Church, was entwined with slavery and slave trade. Today it is one of several active or former church buildings in Boston exploring their tangible connections to slavery and to enslaved people who attended services in them. The missionary organization, SPG, so integral to the founding of Christ Church and whose proselytizing supported slavery, relied on income of 400 enslaved people from a plantation to fund its operations.<sup>49</sup> Unlike the Congregational churches, which functioned as quasi-established churches and received tax revenues from the Province, the three Church of England congregations in Boston had to raise funds independently, mostly from the sale of pews to prosperous merchants and traders.<sup>50</sup> Among the original subscribers and benefactors to the English churches, as they were known, were wealthy traders and merchants, like the Jamaican planter Leonard Vassal, who acquired their fortunes through trade with the West Indies or from owning sugar plantations in the Caribbean.<sup>51</sup> One of the subscribers for the peal of bells was the Salem-born slave trader Gedway Clarke, Sr. Clarke owned more than 14 plantations in Barbados, Demerara (present-day Guyana), and the Essequibo region, and was a broker in the slave trade.<sup>52</sup> The "Baymen of Honduras," English merchants and loggers in present-day Belize, donated 107 tons of logwood in 1727 to support construction of the church, and in 1736 they donated an additional 21 tons, which was used to pay for construction of the steeple. These donations were expressions of religious piety and support for the national church.<sup>53</sup>

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abandoned segregated seating notably the West Church and Tremont Temple, see Boles, *Dividing the Faith*, 220-222 and "Tremont Temple Study Report," Boston Landmarks Commission, 2022, 15, accessed April 2024, <https://www.boston.gov/news/tremont-temple-study-report>.

<sup>47</sup> Crumley, "Where African and Indigenous Stories Meet: The Story of the Old North Church, Boston, 1723-1812," 458, 463. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27241158>; For a general discussion about segregated seating, Ant Emilie, "Down From the Balcony: African Americans and Episcopal Congregations in Washington County, Maryland, 1800-1864," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 86, no. 1 (2017): 1-42. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26335896>. Abram English Brown, "Old Slavery Days in Massachusetts," *The Boston Globe*, September 12, 1900.

<sup>48</sup> *Boston Recorder*, Jul. 9, 1829.

<sup>49</sup> Boles, *Dividing the Faith*, 160; Craig Steven Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2013), 83

<sup>50</sup> Gregory, "Refashioning Puritan New England," 88. Congregational churches also sold or rented pews to members.

<sup>51</sup> Crumley, "Where African and Indigenous Stories Meet," 461. Broader discussion in Arthur Herman, *To Rule the Waves: How the British Navy Shaped the Modern World* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2004), 236-238.

<sup>52</sup> S. D. Smith, "Gedney Clarke of Salem and Barbados: Transatlantic Super-Merchant," *The New England Quarterly* 76, no. 4 (2003): 499-549. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1559842>.

<sup>53</sup> Logwood was valued for its reddish heartwood, which was a source of a dyes for wool and fabric. Gregory N. Flemming, "The People in the Pews: The Bay Pew, *Old North Church*, Oct. 21, 2020. <https://www.oldnorth.com/blog/the-bay-pew/>. Ross A. Newton, "Logwood Cutters, Merchants, Privateers... Religious Gents?" *Commonplace online.com* (Winter, 2018), <https://commonplace.online/article/logwood-cutters-merchants-privateers>. Michael A. Camille and Rafael Espejo-Saavedra, "Historical Geography of the Belizean Logwood Trade," *Yearbook. Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers* 22 (1996): 79, 88, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25765830>. English settlers of the Bay of Honduras harvested logwood themselves and gradually in the 1720s began to import enslaved people from Africa to harvest the wood. Based on this information, the logwood sent to Christ Church may have been harvested by the Baymen, the English settlers, or by enslaved laborers from Africa.

Silversmith, coppersmith, engraver, political agitator, owner of a brass and bell foundry, and veteran of the French and Indian War and the Revolutionary War, Paul Revere (1735-1818) had two associations with Christ Church. He and his family were members of the nearby North Church (Congregational) in North Square. Later in his life, while Revere was a Congregationalist, his eldest son became an Anglican and owned a family pew at Old North.<sup>54</sup> In 1750, as an enterprising 15-year-old, he and six others petitioned the Reverend Dr. Cutler to work as a guild of change ringers for the newly installed bells.<sup>55</sup>

During the tense days before the American Revolution, both Patriots and Tories were members of the Old North parish. Robert Newman, sexton of the church and a patriot, sat in a pew at the eastern end of the left aisle, while General Thomas Gage, commander of the British occupation forces during the siege of Boston, had a pew at the western end of the same aisle. Subsequently, in 1775 during the British occupation of a rebellious Boston, Revere, as a leading member of the Sons of Liberty, arranged at great peril for Newman and John Pulling, Jr., a vestryman, to display lanterns from the upper level of the steeple, the tallest structure in Boston. These signals, posted in full view of the 64-gun British warship H.M.S. Somerset, alerted members of the Committee of Safety in Charlestown to dispatch express “midnight riders,” including Revere, William Dawes, Jr., and Samuel Prescott, to notify surrounding towns about the imminent departure of British troops to Lexington and Concord. This momentous event, though lasting “only a moment,” bestowed on Christ Church its legendary place in the chronicles of American history.<sup>56</sup>

Following the incident of the lanterns, Old North was closed for a period of three years from April 1775 to 1778 because of the open conflict between Patriot and Tory parishioners. The loyalist Rector, the Reverend Mather Byles, Jr., fled to Nova Scotia in the evacuation of Boston in 1776. When the church reopened after the Revolution there was an attempt by French Huguenots to take over the parish, but enough Patriot Anglicans returned to continue traditions of worship under the newly organized Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. Christ Church was in “a state of feebleness and depression,” but by the time of its centenary in 1823, it had a congregation of about five hundred. A decade later, the congregation of the “ancient edifice” had resources to fund extensive repairs and painting of the exterior brick walls.<sup>57</sup> Membership steadily declined, however, in the ensuing decades as the North End became a destination for newly arrived immigrants and the

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<sup>54</sup> Boston Landmarks Commission, “Landmark Petition Form #265.19, Old North Church.” 193 Salem Street, Boston, 2019.

<sup>55</sup> Forbes, *Paul Revere*, 31.

<sup>56</sup> George C. Daughan, *Lexington and Concord: The Battle Heard Round the World* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2018), 199-200; Forbes, *Paul Revere*, 248, 255, 475. For argument, primarily dating to 19<sup>th</sup> century, about whether the signals were in the steeple of Christ Church or the wooden North Church in North Square (demolished in 1776 by occupying British forces during the Siege of Boston), see Forbes, 474 and John Nicholls Booth, *The Story of the Second Church, Boston*, 1959, 65-88. <http://firstchurchbostonhistory.org/pdf/Booth's%202nd%20Ch%20Revere.pdf>. Significantly, an 1823 history of the Second Church omits the events of April 1775 as does the commemorative sermon preached at its closing in 1852. See caption for Figure 18.

<sup>57</sup> Asa Eaton, *A Historical Account of Christ Church, Boston. A discourse in said church, on Sunday, December 28, 1823. By the rector* (Boston: Printed by Joseph W. Ingraham, 1824), <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433081903068&seq=12>; “Christ Church, Boston,” *Boston Post*, August 30, 1834. The walls were first painted gray in 1784. In 1895, they white and covered with ivy. A report in 1912 described the bricks painted in “brilliant yellow,” as had been done to Faneuil Hall and the Massachusetts State House. *Boston Globe*, Oct. 7, 1895; “No Protest Over Church Cleaning,” *The Boston Journal*, Jul. 20, 1912; Foley, *Christ Church*, 85.



poorest area in Boston.<sup>58</sup> Despite these changes, in 1843 the church maintained an average Sunday attendance of 381 people.<sup>59</sup>

An oration in 1873 on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church cited instances when the church had nearly closed and discontinued services.<sup>60</sup> Nine years later, a newspaper writer described it as “...forgotten,” alleging “many residents of Boston who know very little about it.”<sup>61</sup> Yet, in 1884, the vestry, with support from other benefactors, rebounded sufficiently to fund exterior and interior repainting of the church. The distinguished architects Henry Van Brunt and Frank Howe (Van Brunt & Howe) supervised this work.<sup>62</sup>

During the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, well before Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s 1861 poem, Paul Revere’s Ride, the church had attracted considerable public interest and curiosity as a historic monument. President James Monroe attended a service in 1817. In 1824, Lafayette visited the church while in Boston to lay the cornerstone of the Bunker Hill Monument.<sup>63</sup> A newspaper account in 1847 cited “many pleasant revolutionary reminiscences” between the church and the beginnings of the War for Independence.<sup>64</sup> In 1875, during the centenary of the American Revolution, a “gathering of pilgrims from all parts of the country,” attended a lantern ceremony in the church on April 18<sup>th</sup>.<sup>65</sup> This annual ritual continued in the years after 1875. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, growing interest in promoting Boston as a historic city, as the “cradle of American Independence” with “ancient relics” also drew more public attention and hundreds of visitors each year to the church.

William Lawrence (1850–1941), Episcopal Bishop of Massachusetts, spent 18 years gaining control of the church from the proprietors and vestry. With support from a nationwide fundraising campaign, he then orchestrated an ambitious renovation of the interior, including reconstruction of boxed pews, to recreate the colonial appearance of the church before the alterations of 1806. When completed in 1912, the widely publicized project influenced later Colonial Revival restorations of early American churches by Norman Isham, J. Frederick Kelly, Perry, Shaw & Hepburn, and others.<sup>66</sup> Lawrence entrusted this work to the respected local architect R. Clipston Sturgis (1860–1951).<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> *Boston Recorder*, Aug. 4, 1830, reported Christ Church losing children to “Romish priests.”

<sup>59</sup> *The Boston Daily Advertiser*, Oct. 23, 1872, in a summary of church attendance in Boston in 1842. St. Paul’s Church (now cathedral) on Tremont Street reported 554 average attendees.

<sup>60</sup> Henry Burroughs, *A Historical Account of Christ Church Boston Delivered on the Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Opening of the Church* (Boston: A. Williams & Company, 1874), 40. Burroughs also reports 100 families were members of the church in 1873.

[https://books.google.com/books?id=6QkXAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=closed&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=6QkXAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=closed&f=false)

<sup>61</sup> “The Old North Church,” *Boston Evening Transcript*, April 22, 1882.

<sup>62</sup> *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Nov. 1, 1884. “The walls, ceiling, gallery front and pillars, and the wood finishing of the interior have been repainted or colored in hues that are bright and luminous.”

<sup>63</sup> “Historical Timeline,” Old North Church (Christ Church in the City of Boston) records, Massachusetts Historical Society, accessed April 2024, <https://www.masshist.org/collection-guides/view/fa0290>.

<sup>64</sup> *Boston Evening Transcript*, Mar. 29, 1847. This source is among the first in print to connect Christ Church to April 1775.

<sup>65</sup> “Hanging Out the Lanterns in the Old North Tower,” *Boston Globe*, April 19, 1875.

<sup>66</sup> “Already the restoration of the ‘simplicity, honesty, and purity’ of the famous Old North Church...is evoking a deep sense of gratitude from the American heart.” “Where Paul Revere’s Signals Flashed,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Apr 27, 1913.

<sup>67</sup> William Lawrence, *Memories of a Happy Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1926), 302–310.

Preceding this work by a few years was the extensive reconstruction and restoration of the Paul Revere house. A similar transformation of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century interior also took place in King’s Chapel, whose website has an informative summary of issues with early 20<sup>th</sup>-century interpretations of 18<sup>th</sup> century historic buildings:

Lawrence also promoted removal of wooden tenements and brick walk-up apartments in the immediate vicinity of Christ Church. He contended that the wooden buildings were a fire danger to the church and that their removal would open views of the church and create recreational open space for children of the North End.<sup>68</sup> Others characterized the demolitions as much-needed “slum clearance.”<sup>69</sup> These changes to the setting of the church culminated with the east-west park, the Prado, or Paul Revere Mall, completed in 1934, connecting Christ Church with Hanover Street and St. Stephen’s Church (originally the New North Meetinghouse, Charles Bulfinch, 1802-1804).<sup>70</sup> The mall also extended to an open area, on Unity Street, at the north end of the church and produced the red-brick setting for Christ Church that is so well known today. The mall, with the brick courtyards, gardens, and terraces adjoining the church, was the work of the distinguished Boston-born landscape architect, Arthur A. Shurcliff (1870-1957) and his son, Sidney N. Shurcliff (1906-1981).

National fund-raising campaigns resumed in 1954 to fund a replacement steeple, after the second tower (1807 and rebuilt in 1844) came down during a hurricane.<sup>71</sup> Major preservation work was carried out by the Corporation of Christ Church in 1966-69, due in part to beetle- and fungus-related damage, as well as age. Structural repairs included new footings under the church, new concrete slab, repairs to balcony framing and railings, reinforcement of ceiling framing, repair and reinforcement of roof trusses and framing, exterior repointing, and selective brick replacement.<sup>72</sup>

In 1974, the church and its surrounding buildings and open space were included in the Boston National Historical Park. The following year, the bicentenary of the American Revolution brought widespread interest and acclaim to the church<sup>73</sup> spurring additional investment including structural stabilization of the steeple and full restoration of the peal of bells. More recent preservation and restoration work includes the renovation of the Washington Garden in 2021-2022, a restoration of the crypt in 2022, and a mural restoration project in 2024-2025. The mural restoration work, overseen by Building Conservation Associates, Inc., is uncovering the cherubs painted by John Gibbs in 1727.<sup>74</sup>

Old North Illuminated, a secular nonprofit organization, and the congregation of Christ Church jointly steward the property. Old North Church & Historic Site continues to hold weekly services and receives about 500,000 visitors annually. With Independence Hall and Mount Vernon, Old North

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<https://www.kings-chapel.org/historyblog/nostalgia-and-nationalism-the-colonial-revival-from-the-late-19th-to-early-20th-century> . Henry C. Ross collaborated with Sturgis on the Christ Church project.

<sup>68</sup> Lawrence, *Memories*, 305.

<sup>69</sup> Mary Kent Davey Babcock, “Old Christ Church, Boston,” *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 8, no. 2 (1939): 168. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42971803>.

<sup>70</sup> Arthur Shurcliff, the landscape architect, based the design on the Paseo del Prado in Havana. Paul Revere Mall—The Cultural Landscape Foundation, accessed April 2024, <https://www.tclf.org/paul-revere-mall>. Fifteen tenement houses and one hotel were demolished for the Mall. In this era, the Shirley Eustis House Association also bought and demolished properties on Rockford and Shirley Streets to open views of Shirley Place and to reduce fire hazards. The Paul Revere Mall was preceded by one year the similar but much larger project in Rome, the Via de Conciliazione, which created an axial view of St. Peter’s. Similar demolitions to open views of historic monuments later occurred in Newport and Philadelphia.

<sup>71</sup> Charles Rutan Strickland, “Rebuilding the Old North Church Steeple,” *Antiques* 68 (July 1955): 54-56.

<sup>72</sup> Batcheler, *Historic Structures Report, Old North Church*, Section K: History of Structural Problems and Corrective Measures.

<sup>73</sup> Including visits by President Gerald Ford and by Queen Elizabeth II.

<sup>74</sup> “Preserving Old North,” Old North Church & Historic Site, <https://www.oldnorth.com/preservation/>.

Church is in the forefront of sites honored nationally for their associations with the American Revolution.

#### **A note on the name.**

Through its early history and into the late 19th century, the church was known as Christ Church (and at times the “eight-bell church”). To Bostonians in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the “North Church” was the Second Church, Congregational, a wooden meetinghouse in North Square. After the British demolished the North Church in 1776, the name “North Church” transferred to Christ Church, while the replacement building on Hanover Street for the Second Church became the “New North Church.”

In 1798, Paul Revere, in his recollections of April 18, 1775, wrote about lanterns in the “North Church steeple.” He was using the terminology of the time when writing about Christ Church.<sup>75</sup> In 1804, newspapers reported the loss of the “North Church steeple” during a hurricane. In 1820, seven pews from the “North Church” on Salem Street were auctioned at an estate sale.<sup>76</sup> In at least one case, the name “North Church” was still in use in 1937 (**Figure 37**).

The now-familiar name “Old North Church,” instead of “North Church,” appeared as early as 1838.<sup>77</sup> “Old North” came into common use after 1875. By 1900, nearly all references to Christ Church were “Old North Church,” the name most popularly used today. The official name in 2024 is Christ Church in the City of Boston.

An 1885 correspondent to the *Boston Evening Transcript* objected to the growing use of the name Old North Church for Christ Church: “As a boy living in close contiguity to the church, it was customary to allude to the Old North chimes while giving the edifice its proper title....Strictly speaking, it is the Old North Church, while in fact it is not the Old North Church of history.”<sup>78</sup>

#### **Steeples.**

Christ Church has had three steeples. Between 1723 and 1740, it had no west tower and no steeple. The original steeple designed by William Price was completed in 1740. It fell during the “Great Gale of 1804” and crushed a neighboring house.<sup>79</sup> The second steeple, 15 feet shorter in height than the original, was constructed in 1806; it was taken down and partially rebuilt in 1848.<sup>80</sup> This steeple toppled during a hurricane in 1954. The current steeple, completed in 1955 with funds raised from donors across the country, restores the 191-foot height of the original steeple and closely resembles it in design. In 1847, the church had considered removing the steeple because of structural defects and capping the brick tower. Ultimately, they rebuilt it. Like the Pharos of Alexandria, the spires of Christ Church were a “beacon to home-bound mariners” because they were the first point of sight to ships approaching Boston harbor.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Forbes, *Paul Revere*, 474; Letter from Paul Revere to Jeremy Belknap, circa 1798, Collections Online, Massachusetts Historical Society, Accessed May 2024, <https://www.masshist.org/database/99>.

<sup>76</sup> *Spooner's Vermont Journal*, Oct 16, 1804; *Virginia Argus*, Oct. 20, 1804; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Jun 07, 1820.

<sup>77</sup> *Boston Courier*, Oct. 1, 1838. The Second Church (Congregational) on Hanover Street was called the “New North” church.

<sup>78</sup> David Hackett Fischer, *Paul Revere's Ride* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 12; “The Old North Church a Misnomer,” *Boston Evening Transcript*, Feb. 12, 1885.

<sup>79</sup> *Virginia Argus*, Oct. 20, 1804.

<sup>80</sup> Batcheler, *Historic Structures Report, Old North Church*, 268.

<sup>81</sup> Batcheler, *Historic Structures Report, Old North Church*; *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Nov. 1, 1884.



## Other Properties on Campus of Christ Church

### 193 Salem Street, Church House

This rowhouse, built in 1849–1850 on land acquired by Christ Church in 1802 and 1803, is on the original site of the Salem Street Academy. George W. Pope (1821–1896), a mason and builder and a pew-holder in the church, built the rowhouse.<sup>82</sup> Over time it has served various uses, including clergy housing, a center of hospitality for visitors to Boston, and short-term residence for sailors, students, and others visiting the city. In 1957, the church invited refugees from the failed 1956 Hungarian Revolution to live in the building.<sup>83</sup> Church sextons previously lived in a detached, two-story brick house behind 193 Salem, but after that building was demolished in 1945, sextons were housed at 193 Salem Street, and later in the Clough House.<sup>84</sup>

Relatively unaltered with brick walls, multi-light windows, and pitched roof, it – along with the adjoining rowhouse at 195 Salem Street – visually enhances the historic setting of the church.

### Parish Office, 195 Salem Street

Adjacent to 193 is another three-and-a-half story rowhouse. Deed records document that it was constructed before 1867. Its architectural detailing suggests an approximate construction date of between 1840–1850. The building was in residential use (as a single-family house with boarders) until 1998, when Christ Church bought it for use as offices, classrooms, a parish hall, and a choir room.

### St. Francis of Assisi Chapel, 183 Salem Street

Bishop William Lawrence, who led the 1912 renovation of the church, was also instrumental in construction of the freestanding chapel. Completed in 1918 and designed by R. Clipston Sturgis, the chapel was for use by a small population of Italian Protestants (Waldensians) in the North End. The Episcopal City Mission, a social-service organization offering religious, social, and recreational programs for youth, operated the chapel independently of Christ Church. Old North formally acquired the chapel in 1955 for use as a gift shop and small museum.<sup>85</sup> A brick tenement house occupied the site before construction of the chapel.

### Ebenezer Clough House, 21 Unity Street

The Ebenezer Clough house, to the southeast of the church, was constructed between 1711 and 1715 as a two-story dwelling. The third story was added in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is one of the few surviving houses from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century in Boston and notable for the detailing of its exterior brickwork. Clough, a speculative builder and mason, worked on the construction of Christ Church. The Clough house was later used as a tenement occupied, over time, by more than one hundred families.

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<sup>82</sup> Pope had an agreement in which he could occupy the house, after its completion, for 12 years. City directories, however, document that he lived elsewhere. Boston Landmarks Commission, Building Information Form, BOS. 5424, 193 Salem Street, accessed May 2024, <https://mhc-macris.net/>. 193 Salem Street is contemporaneous with the cemetery sexton's cottage at Forest Hills Cemetery.

<sup>83</sup> "Episcopalians Welcome 14 Refugees Here," *Boston Globe*, Jan. 11, 1957.

<sup>84</sup> City of Boston Historical Building Permits, Inspectional Services Department, accessed May 2024, <https://www.boston.gov/departments/inspectional-services/how-find-historical-permit-records>. The sexton's house had an address of 193 rear Salem Street or 191 Salem Street.

<sup>85</sup> Lawrence, *Memories*, 309; "St. Francis of Assisi Chapel Dedicated," *Boston Globe*, November 29, 1918; "Chapel of St. Francis of Assisi Is Dedicated," *Boston Post*, Nov. 29, 1918. "The St. Francis Chapel and Italian Immigrants in the North End," Old North Church, accessed April 2024, <https://www.oldnorth.com/blog/st-francis-chapel-italian-immigrants/#:~:text=Francis%20of%20Assisi%20Chapel%2C%20an,living%20in%20Boston's%20North%20End>.

The church acquired the house in 1958. At that time, there were six apartments without central heating. The house is historically significant for its association with three centuries of working-class families and immigrants and for the archaeological study of the site. More than 40,000 artifacts, spanning 300 years, were uncovered during extensive archaeological work in 2016.<sup>86</sup> The church first attempted to acquire the building in 1933 but was unable to raise funds.<sup>87</sup> A rear portion of the house was demolished in 1944.

### **Gardens, Terraces, and Walkways Bordering the Church**

The remaining terraces, walkways, and gardens of the campus mostly date to the 1930s and are significant as work of Arthur A. Shurcliff (1870–1957) and his son Sidney N. Shurcliff (1906–1981).

On the north side of the church, behind 193 and 195 Salem Street, the Washington Memorial Garden has been redesigned several times and maintained by the Beacon Hill Garden Club. The walls and commemorative tablets are similar in design to those in the Paul Revere Mall. The garden occupies the site of former tenement buildings.<sup>88</sup>

## **6.2 Architectural Significance**

Christ Church is significant as the first interpretation in British North America of an English Renaissance church. In plan, design, and scale, it recreated a London city church at a time when few buildings of its size existed in the American colonies and before the introduction of English architectural pattern books. The basilican plan of the church, with an orientation to the east, also departed from a century-long tradition in New England, following the precedent of the English Dissenters, to build square meetinghouses for houses of worship.<sup>89</sup>

Sited higher than any Congregational meetinghouse, the church was for decades the preeminent building in Boston. Its soaring steeple announced royal authority in what was the largest town and busiest port in British North America and served as a navigational guide for ships entering the harbor. When completed, the steeple was the tallest structure in the British Atlantic colonies and competed among the tallest in England.

Beginning in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the church became a model for the design of churches built throughout New England and eventually across the country. Among mainline Protestant denominations, the long Colonial Revival tradition of simple churches with red-brick walls, tall round-arched windows with clear-glass, a longitudinal plan, a white interior, an entry under a tall white steeple with belfry and weathervane has its origins in the English Renaissance work of James Gibbs, Christopher Wren, and others. This tradition is also connected to its American antecedent,

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<sup>86</sup> Keith N. Morgan, “Ebenezer Clough House,” *SAH Archipedia*, accessed April 2024, <https://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/MA-01-NE11>; Batcheler, *Historic Structures Report, Old North Church*, 107, 284; Clough House, City of Boston Archaeology, accessed April 2024, <https://www.boston.gov/departments/archaeology/clough-house>

<sup>87</sup> “Oldest Brick House in North End in Danger,” *Daily Boston Globe*, Sep. 24, 1933.

<sup>88</sup> The Old North Church website has a full description of the garden spaces: 18th Century Garden (1995), St. Francis of Assisi Garden (1970s), Washington Memorial Garden & Courtyard (last renovated in 2022), The Third Lantern Garden (after 1975), The Memorial Garden (2006). “Our Gardens,” Old North Church, accessed May 2024, <https://www.oldnorth.com/our-gardens/>.

<sup>89</sup> St. Paul’s Church (1707, Wickford, R.I.), also known as the Old Narragansett Church, founded like Christ Church with substantial help from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, has a meetinghouse plan. It is the oldest surviving Episcopal (originally Church of England) church in New England.

the Old North Church, whose red-brick walls and tall steeple have influenced American ecclesiastical architecture.<sup>90</sup>

There is no documentation identifying the architect of the church. William Price, a print dealer and member of the vestry, designed features such as the tower and the original pulpit.<sup>91</sup> Architects Henry Van Brunt and Frank Howe oversaw painting and other renovations, mostly interior, in 1884. Charles S. Strickland, a Boston architect, designed the third (1954) steeple. R. Clipston Sturgis and his associate Henry C. Ross were responsible for the Colonial-Revival recreation of the church in 1912. Landscape architects Arthur Shurcliff and his son Sidney N. Shurcliff designed the open spaces, walkways, and gardens surrounding the church.

In 1960, the church repaired the Ebenezer Clough House and restored the exterior to how it may have appeared in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is among the most thoroughly documented buildings in the City from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Architecturally, it is significant as a rare example of a brick rowhouse from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### **6.3 Archaeological Sensitivity**

The Christ Church in the City of Boston (Old North) and its associated campus is situated on the northernmost of several glacial hills that made up the former Shawmut peninsula, the original name for the area of land upon which Boston was founded. This hill formed the majority of what would become the North End neighborhood of Boston.

Until approximately 3,000 BP (years before present), rising seas from melting glaciers had not filled Boston Harbor, so the North End neighborhood would have been situated upon a hill just south of a bend in the Charles River. During this time, the surrounding area would have been a broad riverine landscape dominated by elongated hills orientated in the same Northeast/Southwest direction and an overall-glacially modified landscape. After 3,000 BP, the North End neighborhood landform was established as a coastal area at the transition from the Charles River estuary to the drowned drumlin island landscape of Boston Harbor.

To date, no intact Native sites have been located within the North End. However, the recorded presence of Native people in historic records and documented archaeological sites within the immediate surroundings indicates their presence within the neighborhood for thousands of years. The lack of archaeological evidence is due to a combination of development and overall lack of archaeological investigation in the neighborhood. A 2017 archaeological investigation of the concrete walkway within the church's basement crypt revealed the remains of a likely Native shell midden, which may have been disturbed and redeposited as fill during the construction of the church in 1723. Within a 1-mile radius of the campus, there are 19 recorded ancient Native archaeological sites ranging in date from ~3,000 BP to ~1600 CE. The Massachusetts tribe are considered the ancestral landholders of Boston today.

Following the arrival of European colonizers in the area, their settlement of the North End focused primarily on the shoreline near the town dock located south of the project area, and the northern end of the neighborhood. The First Church was built on North Street at the eastern part of the North End with the western uplands, including the Old North campus, serving primarily as land for pasturing, the grist windmill, and a burial ground for early European colonists.

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<sup>90</sup> Principally among Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist churches and only marginally in the Episcopal Church.

<sup>91</sup> In many sources, Price is incorrectly cited as architect of the church. See Foley, 16-17 and Batcheler, 85.



The church covered nearly the entire footprint of its original tract of land. Consequently, the only open space was the narrow passageway area, which still exists, along the south elevation and now connects Salem Street to Unity Street and the Paul Revere Mall. There is also a small setback area in the front flanking the protruding tower.

Over time, the church acquired more properties including the church house and chapel. Brick and wooden tenement houses occupied portions of the existing open spaces next to the church. In 2016 and 2017, the Old North Foundation and the City of Boston's Archaeology Program conducted several investigations in the Washington Memorial Garden & Courtyard on the north side of the church. This undertaking, concentrating on privies and a cistern, yielded many artifacts relating to the English, Irish, Jewish, and Italian presence in the North End from the period 1830-1870. The excavations were from tenement dwellings that once stood adjacent to the church.<sup>92</sup>

Two archaeological investigations, in 2014 and 2023, both led by osteoarchaeologist Jane Lyden Rousseau, have taken place in the crypts and tombs.

The Historic Structures Report, pp. 288-290, identifies objects and sites that are archaeologically sensitive during excavations or disturbances.<sup>93</sup>

The Clough house and its surroundings have been intensively studied. In 2013, the City's archaeological program did several excavations by the Clough House and recovered more than 40,000 artifacts.

For further information regarding archaeological excavations on the Old North campus, refer to "Christ Church in the City of Boston (Old North) Campus Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey" (2016) on file at the City of Boston's Mary C. Beaudry Community Archaeology Center.

All below-ground work on the campus of the Old North Church and associated buildings and landscapes shall be reviewed by the Boston Landmarks Commission and staff Archaeologists to determine if work may impact known or potential archaeological resources. An archaeological survey shall be conducted if impacts to known or potential archaeological resources cannot be mitigated after consultation with the City Archaeologist. All archaeological mitigation (monitoring, survey, excavation, etc.) shall be conducted by a professional archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology.

Refer to Section 7.4 for any additional Standards and Criteria that may apply.

## **6.4 Planning Context**

The Old North Church was designated a Massachusetts Historic Landmark and a National Historic Landmark in 1966. This designation is recognized by the Secretary of the Interior for sites of national significance. However, this designation provides little protection for the building. According to the National Park Service:

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<sup>92</sup> "Dignorth – the Bifurcated Cistern in Washington Garden," Old North Church, June 16, 2017, accessed May 2024,

<https://www.oldnorth.com/blog/dignorth-the-bifurcated-cistern-in-washington-garden/>.

<sup>93</sup> "City of Boston Archaeologist Discovers Trove of Artifacts at Old North Church," City of Boston, Sept. 16, 2016, accessed May, 2024,

<https://www.boston.gov/news/city-boston-archaeologist-discovers-trove-artifacts-old-north-church>.

*Listing of private property as a National Historic Landmark or in the National Register does not prohibit under Federal law or regulations any actions which may otherwise be taken by the property owner with respect to the property. The National Park Service may recommend to owners various preservation actions but owners are not obligated to carry out these recommendations. Property owners are free to make whatever changes they wish if Federal funding, licensing, or permits are not involved.*<sup>94</sup>

The Old North Church is also part of the Boston National Historical Park, established by Congress on October 1, 1974, to preserve resources associated with the opening campaigns of the Revolutionary War and the founding of America. The park consists of eight discontinuous areas: Old South Meeting House, Bunker Hill Monument, Charlestown Navy Yard, the Old North Church complex, the Paul Revere House complex, Faneuil Hall, the Old State House, and the Dorchester Heights Monument. With the exception of the Dorchester Heights Monument, all of the sites are connected by the Freedom Trail. This designation, although it encourages public recognition of the importance of these sites, again does not carry significant regulatory weight toward protecting the included properties.

Fortunately, Old North Illuminated has been working in collaboration with the National Parks of Boston, the Freedom Trail Foundation, the congregation of Old North Church, and other partners to proactively preserve and protect the iconic Old North Church and Campus. A number of preservation projects, many of which underwent voluntary advisory review by the Boston Landmarks Commission, are described at <https://www.oldnorth.com/preservation/>.

The petition to designate the Old North Church and Campus as a landmark was filed on April 16, 2019. The Commission voted to accept Old North for further study on May 14, 2021. Designation as a Boston Landmark would formalize a longstanding collaborative relationship between the Landmarks Commission and the church.

The Old North Church has also been designated a "Site of Conscience" by the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience (ICSC). With over 350 members in 65 countries, the ICSC is a global network helping historic sites, museums, and memory initiatives to build connections between past history and today's movements for human rights and social justice.<sup>95</sup>

The majority of parcels included in the Old North Church landmark petition are within the Freedom Trail Neighborhood Design Overlay District. Section 54-15 of the City of Boston Zoning Code describes the Overlay District as an:

*Overlay to residential and commercial subdistricts within the North End Neighborhood District. The Freedom Trail Neighborhood Design Overlay District is established to protect the existing scale of the area, the quality of the pedestrian environment, the character of the residential/commercial mixed-use neighborhoods, and the concentrations of historic buildings within the area. For applicability of the Design Component of Small Project Review to Proposed Projects in Neighborhood Design Overlay Districts, see Article 80. All use, dimensional, and other provisions applicable to the underlying subdistricts are applicable within the Freedom Trail Neighborhood Design Overlay District.*

In addition, the Old North Church is located in a proposed 40c Historic District. On October 25, 1983, City Councilor Frederick Charles Langone, then Chairman of the Committee on Urban Resources, proposed an interim report on the Committee on Urban Resources on Docket No. 0186 (Depression of Central Artery Environmental Notice). This report recommended and proposed an

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<sup>94</sup> <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/faqs.htm>, Feb. 18, 2025.

<sup>95</sup> National Park Service (2025) Old North Church, National Parks Service. <https://www.nps.gov/bost/learn/historyculture/onc.htm>, Feb. 24, 2025.

Ordinance creating the North End Historic District and North End Historic Commission to the City Council. The interim report was accepted by the City Council on October 26, 1983. Councilor Langone moved to refer the ordinance to the Landmarks Commission for review, which carried. A Study Committee was created in the summer of 1984, and a draft Study Report was generated on July 30, 1986. An updated Study Report draft was produced in February 1987. The proposed boundaries of the North End Historic District, if designated, would encompass Old North Church.



## 7. STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

### 7.1 Introduction

Per sections 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the enabling statute (Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as amended) Standards and Criteria must be adopted for each Designation that shall be applied by the Commission in evaluating proposed changes to the historic resource. The Standards and Criteria both identify and establish guidelines for those features that must be preserved and/or enhanced to maintain the viability of the Designation. The Standards and Criteria are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.<sup>96</sup> Before a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption can be issued for such changes, the changes must be reviewed by the Commission with regard to their conformance to the purpose of the statute.

The intent of these guidelines is to help local officials, designers and individual property owners to identify the characteristics that have led to designation, and thus to identify the limitation to the changes that can be made to them. It should be emphasized that conformance to the Standards and Criteria alone does not necessarily ensure approval, nor are they absolute, but any request for variance from them must demonstrate the reason for, and advantages gained by, such variance. The Commission's Certificate of Design Approval is only granted after careful review of each application and public hearing, in accordance with the statute.

Proposed alterations related to zoning, building code, accessibility, safety, or other regulatory requirements shall require the prior review and approval of the Commission.

In these standards and criteria, the verb **Should** indicates a recommended course of action; the verb **Shall** indicates those actions that are specifically required.

### 7.2 Levels of Review

The Commission has no desire to interfere with the normal maintenance procedures for the property. In order to provide some guidance for property owners, managers or developers, and the Commission, the activities that might be construed as causing an alteration to the physical character of the exterior have been categorized to indicate the level of review required, based on the potential impact of the proposed work.

- A. Routine activities that are not subject to review by the Commission:
  - 1. Activities associated with normal cleaning and routine maintenance.
    - a. For building maintenance, such activities might include the following: normal cleaning (no power washing above 700 PSI, no chemical or abrasive cleaning), non-invasive inspections, in-kind repair of caulking, in-kind repainting, staining or refinishing of wood or metal elements, lighting bulb replacements or in-kind glass repair/replacement, etc.

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<sup>96</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, et al. *THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES WITH GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING, REHABILITATING, RESTORING & RECONSTRUCTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*, Secretary of the Interior, 2017, [www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf).

- b. For landscape maintenance, such activities might include the following: normal cleaning of paths and sidewalks, etc. (no power washing above 700 PSI, no chemical or abrasive cleaning), non-invasive inspections, in-kind repair of caulking, in-kind spot replacement of cracked or broken paving materials, in-kind repainting or refinishing of site furnishings, site lighting bulb replacements or in-kind glass repair/replacement, normal plant material maintenance, such as pruning, fertilizing, mowing and mulching, and in-kind replacement of existing plant materials, etc.
    - 2. Routine activities associated with special events or seasonal decorations that do not disturb the ground surface, are to remain in place for less than six weeks, and do not result in any permanent alteration or attached fixtures.
- B. Activities that may be determined by the staff to be eligible for a Certificate of Exemption or Administrative Review, requiring an application to the Commission:
  - 1. Maintenance and repairs involving no change in design, material, color, ground surface or outward appearance.
  - 2. In-kind replacement or repair.
  - 3. Phased restoration programs will require an application to the Commission and may require full Commission review of the entire project plan and specifications; subsequent detailed review of individual construction phases may be eligible for Administrative Review by BLC staff.
  - 4. Repair projects of a repetitive nature will require an application to the Commission and may require full Commission review; subsequent review of these projects may be eligible for Administrative Review by BLC staff, where design, details, and specifications do not vary from those previously approved.
  - 5. Temporary installations or alterations that are to remain in place for longer than six weeks.
  - 6. Emergency repairs that require temporary tarps, board-ups, etc. may be eligible for Certificate of Exemption or Administrative Review. In the case of emergencies, BLC staff should be notified as soon as possible to assist in evaluating the damage and to help expedite repair permits as necessary.
- C. Activities requiring an application and full Commission review:
 

Reconstruction, restoration, replacement, demolition, or alteration involving change in design, material, color, location, or outward appearance, such as: New construction of any type, removal of existing features or elements, major planting or removal of trees or shrubs, or changes in landforms.
- D. Activities not explicitly listed above:
 

In the case of any activity not explicitly covered in these Standards and Criteria, the Landmarks staff shall determine whether an application is required and if so, whether it shall be an application for a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption.
- E. Concurrent Jurisdiction

In some cases, issues that fall under the jurisdiction of the Landmarks Commission may also fall under the jurisdiction of other city, state and federal boards and commissions such as the Boston Art Commission, the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the National Park Service and others. All efforts will be made to expedite the review process. Whenever possible and appropriate, a joint staff review or joint hearing will be arranged.

### **7.3 List of Character-defining Features**

Character-defining features are the significant observable and experiential aspects of a historic resource, whether a single building, landscape, or multi-property historic district, that define its architectural power and personality. These are the features that should be identified, retained, and preserved in any restoration or rehabilitation scheme in order to protect the resource's integrity.

Character-defining elements include, for example, the overall shape of a building and its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details and features, as well as the various aspects of its site and environment. They are critically important considerations whenever preservation work is contemplated. Inappropriate changes to historic features can undermine the historical and architectural significance of the resource, sometimes irreparably.

Below is a list that identifies the physical elements that contribute to the unique character of the historic resource. The items listed in this section should be considered important aspects of the historic resource and changes to them should be approved by commissioners only after careful consideration. The Commission acknowledges that some changes to the character-defining features may be necessary or beneficial; the standards and criteria established in this report are intended to make the changes sensitive to the historic and architectural character of the property.

The character-defining features for this historic resource include:

- A. Old North Church
  - English bond brick walls with projecting belt courses
  - Windows:
    - Multi-pane hung sash with wood muntins and semicircular arched fanlights
    - Arched openings inset with louvers on four faces of the tower
    - Circular ox-eye windows with radiating muntins
  - Rubble stone foundation
  - Slate roof
  - Two plaques on the face of the tower
  - Wooden spire and original weathervane
- B. Church House, 193 Salem Street
  - Gable roof
  - Six-over-six windows
  - Stone lintels
  - Front entry door with rectangular transom window and sidelights
  - Brick chimneys
  - Granite foundations and stoop
- C. Parish Office, 195 Salem Street
  - Gable roof
  - Stone lintels
  - Arched front entry door
  - Dentiled cornice
  - Gabled dormers



- D. St. Francis of Assisi Chapel, 183 Salem Street
  - English Bond brick walls
  - Projecting pavilion with open pediment
  - Round ox-eye window set into stone molding
  - Marble Corinthian columns atop carved stone lions
  - Religious figures set into niches atop the column capitals
  - Semicircular fanlight with radiating muntins above the paneled wood door
  - Semicircular arched sash windows and arched fanlights
  
- E. Ebenezer Clough House, 21 Unity Street
  - Symmetrical five-bay facade
  - Textured Flemish bond brick walls with decorative panels below the second-story windows
  - Multi-pane hung sash windows with brick jack arch lintels and projecting keystones
  - Paneled wood front door with rectangular multi-light transom window surmounted by a brick jack arch, the bottom of which is cut in a curving swag pattern
  - Brick end chimney
  
- F. Gardens, Terraces, and Walkways
  - Brick walls and paving similar in color to the church
  - Fixed seating
  - Wall plaques and commemorative tablets
  - Mature shade trees
  
- G. Archaeological features
  - Archaeological materials (both in ground and in collections)
  - Stratigraphy and relationship of vertical intra-site features

## 7.4 Standards and Criteria

The following Standards and Criteria are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.<sup>97</sup> These Standards and Criteria apply to all exterior building alterations that are visible from any existing or proposed street or way that is open to public travel.

### 7.4.1 General Standards

Subject to review and approval under the terms of this report, the following standards shall apply:

1. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property shall be avoided. See the list of Character-Defining Features in the previous section.
2. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, shall not be undertaken.

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<sup>97</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, et al. *THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES WITH GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVING, REHABILITATING, RESTORING & RECONSTRUCTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*, Secretary of the Interior, 2017, [www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf).

3. Changes and additions to the landmark that have taken place over time are evidence of the history of the property and its context. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right; if so, that significance should be recognized and respected. (The term “later contributing features” will be used to convey this concept.)
4. Distinctive or significant historic and architectural materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
5. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature should match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. If the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Replacement of missing features should be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
6. The use of synthetic replacement materials is discouraged, except when substituted for perishable features exposed to the weather or when necessary to accommodate the effects of climate change.
7. Chemical and/or physical treatments (such as sandblasting) shall not be used in a manner that damages historic materials. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible and the results should preserve the patina that characterizes the age of the structure. Applications of paint or masonry preservative solutions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis; painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some point in the history of the property.
8. Demolition of a designated structure can be allowed only as a last resort after all practicable measures have been taken to ensure preservation, or unless required to comply with requirements certified by a duly authorized public officer to be necessary for public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition.
9. Creating new openings in exterior walls should be avoided when possible. Where necessary to accommodate new uses or for achieving accessibility, new openings or changes to existing openings will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
10. No new exposed conduit should be allowed on the building unless approved on a case-by-case basis.
11. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize a property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of a property and its environment.
12. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
13. Original or later contributing signs, marquees, and canopies integral to the building ornamentation or architectural detailing shall be preserved, excluding references to building ownership, operations, tenants.
14. New signs, banners, marquees, canopies, and awnings shall be compatible in size, design, material, location, and number with the character of the building, allowing for

contemporary expression. New signs shall not detract from the essential form of the building nor obscure its architectural features.

15. Property owners shall take necessary precautions to prevent demolition by neglect of maintenance and repairs. Demolition of protected buildings in violation of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended, is subject to penalty as cited in Section 10 of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended.

#### **7.4.2 Masonry at exterior walls (including but not limited to stone, brick, terra-cotta, concrete, adobe, stucco, and mortar)**

1. All original or later contributing masonry materials shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing masonry materials, features, details, surfaces and ornamentation shall be repaired, if necessary, by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the masonry using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated masonry materials, features, details, surfaces, and ornamentation or missing components of masonry features shall be replaced with materials and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. If the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement of existing materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Sound original mortar shall be retained.
6. Deteriorated mortar shall be carefully removed by hand raking the joints.
7. Use of mechanical hammers shall not be allowed. Use of mechanical saws may be allowed on a case-by-case basis.
8. Repointing mortar shall duplicate the original mortar in strength, composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile, and method of application.
9. Sample panels of raking the joints and repointing shall be reviewed and approved by the staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission.
10. If the building is to be cleaned, the masonry shall be cleaned with the gentlest method possible.
11. A test patch of the cleaning method(s) shall be reviewed and approved on site by staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission to ensure that no damage has resulted. Test patches shall be carried out well in advance. Ideally, the test patch should be monitored over a sufficient period of time to allow long-range effects to be predicted (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
12. Sandblasting (wet or dry), wire brushing, or other similar abrasive cleaning methods shall not be permitted. Doing so can change the visual quality of the material and damage the surface of the masonry and mortar joints.
13. Waterproofing or water repellents are strongly discouraged. These treatments are generally not effective in preserving masonry and can cause permanent damage. The Commission does recognize that in extraordinary circumstances their use may be required to solve a specific problem. Samples of any proposed treatment shall be reviewed by the Commission before application.



14. In general, painting masonry surfaces shall not be allowed. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some significant point in the history of the property.
15. New penetrations for attachments through masonry are strongly discouraged. When necessary, attachment details shall be located in mortar joints, rather than through masonry material; stainless steel hardware is recommended to prevent rust jacking. New attachments to cast concrete are discouraged and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
16. Deteriorated stucco shall be repaired by removing the damaged material and patching with new stucco that duplicates the old in strength, composition, color, and texture.
17. Deteriorated adobe shall be repaired by using mud plaster or a compatible lime-plaster adobe render, when appropriate.
18. Deteriorated concrete shall be repaired by cutting damaged concrete back to remove the source of deterioration, such as corrosion on metal reinforcement bars. The new patch shall be applied carefully so that it will bond satisfactorily with and match the historic concrete.
19. Joints in concrete shall be sealed with appropriate flexible sealants and backer rods, when necessary.

#### **7.4.3 Wood at exterior walls**

1. All original or later contributing wood materials shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing wood surfaces, features, details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, piecing-in, consolidating, or reinforcing the wood using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated wood materials, features, details, surfaces, and ornamentation or missing components of wood features shall be replaced with materials and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. If the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement of materials is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Cleaning of wood elements shall use the gentlest method possible.
6. Paint removal should be considered only where there is paint surface deterioration or excessive layers of paint have coarsened profile details and as part of an overall maintenance program that involves repainting or applying other appropriate protective coatings. Coatings such as paint help protect the wood from moisture and ultraviolet light; stripping the wood bare will expose the surface to the effects of weathering.
7. Damaged or deteriorated paint should be removed to the next sound layer using the mildest method possible.
8. Propane or butane torches, sandblasting, water blasting, or other abrasive cleaning and/or paint removal methods shall not be permitted. Doing so changes the visual quality of the wood and accelerates deterioration.

9. Repainting should be based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist, repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building.

#### **7.4.4 Architectural metals at exterior walls (including but not limited to wrought and cast iron, steel, pressed metal, terneplate, copper, aluminum, and zinc)**

1. All original or later contributing architectural metals shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing metal materials, features, details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, or reinforcing the metal using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated metal materials, features, details, surfaces, and ornamentation or missing components of metal features shall be replaced with materials and elements which match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, and detail of installation. If the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Cleaning of metal elements either to remove corrosion or deteriorated paint shall use the gentlest method possible.
6. The type of metal shall be identified prior to any cleaning procedure because each metal has its own properties and may require a different treatment.
7. Non-corrosive chemical methods shall be used to clean soft metals (such as lead, tinplate, terneplate, copper, and zinc) whose finishes can be easily damaged by abrasive methods.
8. If gentler methods have proven ineffective, then abrasive cleaning methods, such as low pressure dry grit blasting, may be allowed for hard metals (such as cast iron, wrought iron, and steel) as long as it does not abrade or damage the surface.
9. A test patch of the cleaning method(s) shall be reviewed and approved on site by staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission to ensure that no damage has resulted. Test patches shall be carried out well in advance. Ideally, the test patch should be monitored over a sufficient period of time to allow long-range effects to be predicted (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
10. Cleaning to remove corrosion and paint removal should be considered only where there is deterioration and as part of an overall maintenance program that involves repainting or applying other appropriate protective coatings. Paint or other coatings help retard the corrosion rate of the metal. Leaving the metal bare will expose the surface to accelerated corrosion.
11. Repainting should be based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist, repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building.

#### **7.4.5 Windows (also refer to Masonry, Wood, and Architectural Metals)**

1. The original or later contributing arrangement of window openings shall be retained.

2. Enlarging or reducing window openings for the purpose of fitting stock (larger or smaller) window sash or air conditioners shall not be allowed.
3. Removal of window sash and the installation of permanent fixed panels to accommodate air conditioners shall not be allowed.
4. Original or later contributing window sash, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.
5. Deteriorated window sash, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation or missing components of window features should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
6. When replacement of sash, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, or ornamentation is necessary, it shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
7. Exterior combination storm windows shall have a narrow perimeter framing that does not obscure the glazing of the primary window. In addition, the meeting rail of the combination storm window shall align with that of the primary window.
8. Storm window sashes and frames shall have a painted finish that matches the primary window sash and frame color.
9. Repainting of window frames, sashes, and, if appropriate, shutters, should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist, repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building.

#### **7.4.6 Entrances/Doors (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Porches/Stoops)**

1. All original or later contributing entrance elements shall be preserved.
2. The original or later contributing entrance design and arrangement of the door openings shall be retained.
3. Creating new entrance openings should be avoided when possible. Where necessary to accommodate new uses or for achieving accessibility, new entrance openings will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
4. Enlarging or reducing original or later contributing entrance/door openings for the purpose of fitting stock (larger or smaller) doors shall not be allowed.
5. Original or later contributing entrance materials, elements, details and features (functional and decorative) shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.
6. Deteriorated entrance elements, materials, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation or missing components of entrance features should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation. If using the same material is not



technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

7. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
8. Original or later contributing entrance materials, elements, features (functional and decorative) and details shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
9. Storm doors (aluminum or wood-framed) shall not be allowed on the primary entrance unless evidence shows that they had been used. They may be allowed on secondary entrances. Where allowed, storm doors shall be painted to match the color of the primary door.
10. Unfinished aluminum storm doors shall not be allowed.
11. Replacement door hardware should replicate the original or be appropriate to the style and period of the building.
12. Buzzers, alarms and intercom panels, where allowed, shall be flush mounted and appropriately located.
13. Entrance elements should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist, repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building/entrance.

#### **7.4.7 Porches/Stoops (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, Entrances/Doors, Roofs, and Accessibility)**

1. All original or later contributing porch elements shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing porch and stoop materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall be retained if possible and, if necessary, repaired using recognized preservation methods.
3. Existing porch and stoop materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation that become deteriorated or missing should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Original or later contributing porch and stoop materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
6. Porch and stoop elements should be of a color based on paint seriation studies. If an adequate record does not exist repainting shall be done with colors that are appropriate to the style and period of the building/porch and stoop.

#### **7.4.8 Lighting**

1. There are several aspects of lighting related to the exterior of the building and landscape:

- a. Lighting fixtures as appurtenances to the building or elements of architectural ornamentation.
  - b. Quality of illumination on building exterior.
  - c. Security lighting.
2. Wherever integral to the building, original or later contributing lighting fixtures shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching, piercing in or reinforcing the lighting fixture using recognized preservation methods.
3. Deteriorated lighting fixture materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation or missing components of lighting fixtures should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration, and detail of installation. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Original or later contributing lighting fixture materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details, and ornamentation shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
6. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.
7. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches as appropriate to the building and to the current or projected use:
  - a. Reproductions of original or later contributing fixtures, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - b. Accurate representation of the original period, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - c. Retention or restoration of fixtures that date from an interim installation and that are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.
  - d. New lighting fixtures that are differentiated from the original or later contributing fixture in design and that illuminate the exterior of the building in a way that renders it visible at night and compatible with its environment.
8. The location of new exterior lighting shall fulfill the functional intent of the current use without obscuring the building form or architectural detailing.
9. Architectural night lighting is encouraged, provided the lighting installations minimize night sky light pollution. High efficiency fixtures, lamps and automatic timers are recommended.
10. On-site mock-ups of proposed architectural night lighting may be required.

#### **7.4.9 Roofs (also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Roof Projections)**

1. The original or later contributing roof shapes and original or later contributing roof elements (visible from public ways) of the existing building shall be preserved.
2. Original or later contributing roofing materials such as slate, wood trim, elements, features (decorative and functional), details and ornamentation, such as cresting, shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired by patching or reinforcing using recognized preservation methods.

3. Deteriorated roofing materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation or missing components of roof features should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation. If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. Original or later contributing roofing materials, elements, features (functional and decorative), details and ornamentation shall not be sheathed or otherwise obscured by other materials.
6. Unpainted mill-finished aluminum shall not be allowed for flashing, gutters and downspouts. All replacement flashing and gutters should be copper or match the original material and design (integral gutters shall not be replaced with surface-mounted).
7. External gutters and downspouts should not be allowed unless based on physical or documentary evidence.

**7.4.10 Roof Projections (includes satellite dishes, antennas and other communication devices, louvers, vents, chimneys, and chimney caps; also refer to Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Roofs)**

1. New roof projections shall not be visible from the public way.
2. New mechanical equipment should be reviewed to confirm that it is no more visible than the existing.

**7.4.11 Additions (also refer to General Standards above)**

1. Additions can significantly alter the historic appearance of the buildings. An exterior addition should only be considered after it has been determined that the existing building cannot meet the new space requirements.
2. New additions shall be designed so that the character-defining features of the building are not radically changed, obscured, damaged, or destroyed.
3. New additions should be designed so that they are compatible with the existing building, although they should not necessarily be imitative of an earlier style or period.
4. New additions shall not obscure the front of the building.
5. New additions shall be of a size, scale, and materials that are in harmony with the existing building.

**7.4.12 Accessibility**

1. Alterations to existing buildings for the purposes of providing accessibility shall provide persons with disabilities the level of physical access to historic properties that is required under applicable law, consistent with the preservation of each property's significant historical features, with the goal of providing the highest level of access with the lowest level of impact. Access modifications for persons with disabilities shall be designed and installed to least affect the character-defining features of the property; modifications should be reversible when possible and preserve as much of the original



materials as possible. Modifications to some features may be allowed in providing access, once a review of options for the highest level of access has been completed.

2. A three-step approach is recommended to identify and implement accessibility modifications that will protect the integrity and historic character of the property:
  - a. Review the historical significance of the property and identify character-defining features;
  - b. Assess the property's existing and proposed level of accessibility;
  - c. Evaluate accessibility options within a preservation context.
3. Because of the complex nature of accessibility, the Commission will review proposals on a case-by-case basis. The Commission recommends consulting with the following document, which is available from the Commission office: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, Preservation Assistance Division; Preservation Brief 32 "Making Historic Properties Accessible" by Thomas C. Jester and Sharon C. Park, AIA.

#### **7.4.13 Renewable Energy Sources**

1. Renewable energy sources, including but not limited to solar energy, are encouraged for the site.
2. Proposals for new renewable energy sources shall be reviewed by the Commission on a case-by-case basis for potential physical and visual impacts on the building and site.
3. Refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings for general guidelines.

#### **7.4.14 Building Site**

1. The general intent is to preserve the existing or later contributing site and landscape features that enhance the property.
2. It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has character, scale and street pattern quite different from what existed when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition between the historic property and its newer surroundings.
3. All original or later contributing features of the building site that are important in defining its overall historic character shall be retained and, if necessary, repaired using recognized preservation methods. This may include but is not limited to walls, fences, steps, walkways, paths, roads, vegetation, landforms, furnishings and fixtures, decorative elements, and water features. (See section 9.0 for subsurface features such as archaeological resources or burial grounds.)
4. Deteriorated or missing site features should be replaced with material and elements that match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile, configuration and detail of installation. Alternative materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
5. When replacement is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
6. The existing landforms of the site shall not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the designated property's structure or site.

7. If there are areas where the terrain is to be altered, these areas shall be surveyed and documented to determine the potential impact to important landscape features.
8. The historic relationship between buildings and the landscape shall be retained. Grade levels should not be changed if it would alter the historic appearance of the building and its relation to the site.
9. Buildings should not be relocated if it would diminish the historic character of the site.
10. When they are required by a new use, new site features (such as parking areas, driveways, or access ramps) should be as unobtrusive as possible, retain the historic relationship between the building or buildings and the landscape, and be compatible with the historic character of the property. Historic rock outcroppings like puddingstone should not be disturbed by the construction of new site features.
11. Original or later contributing layout and materials of the walks, steps, and paved areas shall be maintained. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that better site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will improve this without altering the integrity of the designated property.
12. When they are necessary for security, protective fencing, bollards, and stanchions should be as unobtrusive as possible.
13. Existing healthy plant materials that are in keeping with the historic character of the property shall be maintained. New plant materials should be appropriate to the character of the site.
14. Maintenance of, removal of, and additions to plant materials should consider restoration of views of the designated property.
15. The Boston Landmarks Commission encourages removal of non-historic fencing as documentary evidence indicates.
16. The Boston Landmarks Commission recognizes that the designated property must continue to meet city, state, and federal goals and requirements for resiliency and safety within an ever-changing coastal flood zone and environment.

#### **7.4.15 Additional Guidelines**

The following are additional Guidelines for the treatment of the historic property:

1. Should any major restoration or construction activity be considered for a property, the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the proponents prepare a historic building conservation study and/or consult a materials conservator early in the planning process.
  - a. The Boston Landmarks Commission specifically recommends that any work on masonry, wood, metals, or windows be executed with the guidance of a professional building materials conservator.
2. Should any major restoration or construction activity be considered for a property's landscape, the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the proponents prepare a historic landscape report and/or consult a landscape historian early in the planning process.
3. When reviewing an application for proposed alterations, the Commission will consider whether later addition(s) and/or alteration(s) to the features or elements proposed for

alteration can, or should, be removed on a case-by-case basis. Since it is not possible to provide one general guideline, the following factors will be considered in determining whether a later addition(s) and/or alteration(s) can, or should, be removed include:

- a. Compatibility with the existing property's integrity in scale, materials and character.
- b. Historic association with the property.
- c. Quality in the design and execution of the addition/alteration.
- d. Functional usefulness.

#### **7.4.16 Archaeology**

1. Staff archaeologists shall review proposed changes to a property that may impact known and potential archaeological sites. All below-ground work within the property shall be reviewed by the Boston Landmarks Commission and City Archaeologist to determine if work may impact known or potential archaeological resources. An archaeological survey may be required to determine if significant archaeological deposits are present within the area of impact of the proposed work. An archaeological survey shall be conducted if archaeological sensitivity exists and if impacts to known or potential archaeological resources cannot be mitigated after consultation with the City Archaeologist.
2. Significant archaeological resources shall be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be required before the proposed work can commence. All archaeological mitigation (monitoring, survey, excavation, etc.) shall be conducted by a professional archaeologist. The professional archaeologist should meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology.



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## **Additional Resources:**

Old North Church (Christ Church in the City of Boston) records, Massachusetts Historical Society.

Illuminating the Unseen is a video series produced by Old North Illuminated studying the histories of Black and Indigenous peoples, written by Jaimie D. Crumley: <https://www.oldnorth.com/itu/>.

“99% Sure”, a video series where we take a deeper dive into the legends, people, and events of Old North <https://www.oldnorth.com/blog/99-sure-ep-7-the-atlantic-logwood-trade-season-finale/>

History in Bricks and Bones: Recent Discoveries in the Crypts at Old North Church.  
<https://www.hubhistory.com/episodes/history-in-bricks-and-bones-recent-discoveries-in-the-crypts-at-old-north-church-episode-291/>

## **Archaeology Reports:**

*(Available to qualified researchers by appointment at the Massachusetts Historical Commission)*

898 Elia Ricardo J., and Nancy S. Seasholes 1988 Phase I Archaeological Report on the Central Artery/Third Harbor Tunnel Project in Boston, Massachusetts. 381 pages.

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