United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>historic name</th>
<th>First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>other names/site number</td>
<td>Cornerstone Community Church of Lansingburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>name of related multiple property listing</td>
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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this _X_ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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

___ national ___ statewide _X_ local

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<th>Signature of certifying official/Title</th>
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State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

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Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

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

___ other (explain:) _____________________________

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<th>Signature of the Keeper</th>
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## 5. Classification

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<th>Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)</th>
<th>Category of Property (Check only one box.)</th>
<th>Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)</th>
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### Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

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

0

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- RELIGION/religious facility

### Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- RELIGION/religious facility

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque Revival

### Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- **foundation:** Stone, Concrete
- **walls:** Brick, Stucco
- **roof:** Asphalt, Synthetic
- **other:** Metal, Glass
The First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh (Cornerstone Community Church of Lansingburgh variously) is an interconnected religious complex located in the city of Troy, Rensselaer County, New York. As it exists today, the church facility is a composite of multiple building campaigns undertaken between 1823 and 1958; all of these are interconnected with internal communication and thus constitute a single building. The façade of the Romanesque Revival-style church, completed in 1870 to the plans of Troy architect Marcus Cummings, is oriented westward, towards Third Avenue, and it and the additions that extend south of it form a tight U-shaped footprint with the open side facing west. The interior remains largely intact to the cited period of significance, 1823-1958, which encompasses all of the building’s architectural features; two of the building campaigns, both initiated in the 1860s, followed designs prepared by Cummings. The complex contrasts the nineteenth-century sections with a distinctly Modern addition, 1958, which brought the historic physical evolution of the complex to a close.
building from the front (west elevation), the main block of the church is on the north, with an offset belltower located adjacent to the southwest corner. A courtyard opens south of the tower, and the 1958 addition is south of this courtyard. The older portions of the building, those constructed in the nineteenth century, consisting of load-bearing brick construction over stone foundations, with gabled and flat roofs that are currently covered with asphalt and rubberized roofing. The 1958 Genung Memorial addition, rendered in a modern architectural idiom, is steel-framed with brick and stucco-clad walls and a flat roof. Windows in the older portions consist of wood-sash with clear glass along with fixed wood sash with stained glass. Windows in the newest addition are steel or vinyl sash.

Exterior
The facade of the church, facing west towards Third Avenue, was added to the existing mid-1840s meetinghouse and completed in 1870 in the Romanesque Revival style; it was designed by Marcus Cummings, Troy’s leading architectural practitioner in the post-Civil War period. It consists of the gable-fronted main block of the church and the offset belltower. The gabled portion is three bays wide and symmetrically composed, with two outer recessed bays with rounded heads flanking a larger central recessed bay that is terminated by corbelling. The walls are formed of brown-hued brick while the recessed bays are framed with lighter, red-hued brick, thus providing a subtle polychrome contrast. The window occupying the central bay is round-arched, its arch corresponding with those that frame the outer bays. The upper portion consists of a large rose window, below which, nearer to grade, is an elliptically arched window that is framed by two smaller round-arched windows, thus forming a tripartite stained-glass window group; below this group is a stone sill with brick panels below. The rose window has a molded architrave with a keystone motif, above which is the corbelling that terminates this bay. As for the windows in the flanking outer bays, they are narrow and consist of single Gothic windows at the base, above which are spandrel panels with incised foliate decoration. The upper portion of the windows are divided into paired narrow windows with rounded heads, above which are circular windows mimicking the larger rose window. All window openings are fitted with stained glass and have dressed limestone sills and watertable; the latter is positioned directly above the concrete-parged stone foundation wall.

There are two points of access to the interior from this elevation; the principal one is located at the base of the tower, while a second is located on the north side of the elevation. The north entrance has double-leaf paneled wood doors set within a round-arched opening, these being reached by concrete steps from sidewalk grade with a gable-roofed hood above. The tower entrance, which by comparison is broader, has double-leaf paneled wood doors set within a round-arched opening and, as with the other door, is reached by concrete steps shielded by a
gabled hood. When built, these two entrances were at the level of the sidewalk; however, they were raised to the first-story level during a 1913 renovation. The gabled hoods are later additions, probably built during the 1913 remodeling. Much of this part of the foundation wall has been parged.

The bell tower consists of two distinctive sections: a multi-story base and a terminal bell stage. The southeast and southwest corners of the tower, which rises to a height of roughly 62 feet, have stepped buttressing. The tower is embellished with corbelled brick arches, molded wood cornices, and tall round-headed openings corresponding with the bell stage, the openings being fitted with wood louvers; tower windows include those that are circular or have arched heads and are fitted with stained glass. The tower culminates in a high-pitched hipped roof, which is covered with what appears to be terne roofing surmounted by a gold-gilded cross. Originally, the tower was terminated by a tall spire, approximately 60 feet in height, with an ornate finial at the top; that feature was removed in 1959, for structural and maintenance reasons. However, the replacement roof remains in keeping with the original design, though truncated, presumably since it is the remnant of the now-removed spire’s base. The bell stage contains one large bell, manufactured by the Meneely company of Watervliet, New York in 1870. The bell is 42 inches wide and 21 inches high.

The north elevation consists of the small gabled projection that accommodates the façade’s north entrance, beyond which, extending to the east, is the flank elevation of the church. Apparent on this elevation are treatments that relate to the building’s ca. 1845 construction, and before the addition of the Romanesque Revival façade. The windows are tall and are spanned by smooth, rectangular-shaped lintels and have limestone sills. The deep cornice was rendered in brick and is bisected by a single architrave molding; above is a boxed wood cornice and cornice gutters. These design features are mature Greek Revival-style elements that reflect the original mid-1840s building campaign and are repeated on the south flank elevation. Further to the east is the west wall of the 1867 section (fellowship hall; architect Marcus Cummings), which projects beyond the north wall of the church itself. The west elevation is one bay wide with an entrance spanned by a segmental arch at first-story level, above which is a window also spanned by a segmental arch; both are set within a recessed panel with brick corbelling above. These features are also employed on the gabled north elevation, which has two windows centered on the wall, one each at first and second-story level, separated by a wood spandrel panel. The rear (east) elevation of this section originally had six window groups, two windows in each group, of the same design as the window group on the north wall. Four of these windows have been replaced with smaller first-floor windows and the upper portions are now closed off with brick. This elevation has a brick watertable and corbelled brick frieze at the eaves.
Extending southwards from the south elevation of the church, towards its rear, or east side, is the fellowship hall. This section of the building was called the session house, lecture hall, or chapel in prior years; it was constructed in 1823 but partially collapsed during a subsequent building episode, and as such it survives only as a fragment that was subsumed by later construction. The west wall is three bays wide, with the southernmost bay projecting forward from the remainder of the elevation; it has a cut-stone foundation, brick walls, square-headed window openings, two-over-two wood sash windows, and a simple brick frieze and molded wood cornice. This is the only portion of the building constructed with brownstone dressings and a flat roof.

A narrow, one-bay hyphen that accommodates double-leaf metal entrance doors with glazed panels serves to connect the former session house portion of the building with the 1958 Christian education building, or Genung Memorial Building, designed by Evans & Davis, Architects and Engineers, of Troy. The upper story of this hyphen is punctuated by two square-shaped windows and finished with stucco panels divided by wood gridwork. The west wall of this steel-framed section is blind and formed of brick laid in common bond, and affixed to it is a cross, below which is lettering that reads “THE GENUNG MEMORIAL”; there is additionally lettering that reads “THE CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY” and “CHURCH OF LANSINGBURGH.” The north elevation, facing the courtyard, is four bays deep. Three bays are occupied by windows at the basement, first, and second-story level, the first and second-story bays are fitted with one-over-one sash; the fourth bay, the westernmost one, consists of a tall, deeply recessed entrance bay. The south elevation fronts on 115th Street and is characterized by stucco panels formed by wood gridwork with 21 square-shaped windows at the first and second-story level, and a continuous ribbon window of structural glass block at the basement level. This section has a flat roof with a parapet and rubberized membrane roofing.

**Interior**

The central feature of the interior is the church’s worship space. It is a large, rectangular space with a high ceiling, laid out on a center-aisle plan design with two outer side aisles. The present interior appearance results from an extensive remodeling campaign undertaken in 1913. The liturgical center is located on the east side of the plan, opposite the Third Avenue entrances, and consists of a raised, rounded-front dais behind which rise decorative gilded organ pipes and associated wood framework, deeply stained, which employs Baroque design features including columns, broken pediments, and other such classically derived decorative devices. Walls consist of plaster above nine-foot high, deeply stained and paneled wainscotting, and the ceiling, which is coved, is also finished with plaster; from it are suspended historic-period lighting fixtures along with later fans.
Seating consists of 17 rows of slip pews, also darkly stained, and is curved in plan. The tall windows along with side walls are fitted with memorial stained glass, and have carved Gothic-inspired tracery with dropped pendants at their heads; the windows include both later-nineteenth and early twentieth century installations. Opposite the liturgical center, on the west side of the plan, the worship space is separated from the narthex by a wood and glass partition. Above this partition is a raised balcony. Both the gallery and narthex are lighted by stained glass windows, including the large rose window dedicated to Abraham Lansing, which brings light into the gallery.

The fellowship hall has a high plaster ceiling, with plaster walls above four-foot high painted wood wainscot. The wood flooring has a natural finish. Double-leaf paneled-and-glazed wood doors with an arched top provide communication from the fellowship hall into an adjacent corridor; these may have been the original exterior doors from the 1867 building campaign. There are two upper-floor balconies, one at the south end and the other at the north end of the main space. The balcony rooms are separated from the main space by paneled-and-glazed wood doors, with four sets of doors per room; these were previously classrooms, and the configuration has precedents in the Akron plan. Wrought-iron railings align the balconies and serve as protection when the doors are opened. Under the north balcony is a commercial kitchen, with stainless steel countertops and double sinks. There are also older painted wood base and wall cabinets, which date from when the kitchen was moved there from the basement after a flood in 1936.

The Sunday school (Christian education) section’s entry lobby marks the beginning of the 1958 Sunday school addition. The lobby has carpeting over a flagstone floor, gypsum board walls, and a suspended acoustical tile ceiling. There are several sets of stairs in this part of the building, which have flagstone treads and handrails made of wood and aluminum, these being original to the building. The lobby has painted steel and glass double doors with sidelights to the west, and large wood and glass windows on the east. The basement level of the entire building is entered from the Christian education building lobby. There is a wood door leading from this area into the basement under the older portions of the building (1823 and 1867 buildings). The first two rooms, which previously were the kitchen and pantry, have tin-covered ceilings and plaster walls with wood wainscot below. These finishes are original and indicate former kitchen spaces.
First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh
Rensselaer Co, New York

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark “x” in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

Period of Significance

Period of Significance (justification)

The cited period of significance, ca. 1844-1958, corresponds with the physical development of the church facility from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century period. This time frame encompasses all of the complex’s built infrastructure except the 1823 session house; that section partially collapsed during construction, leaving only a portion of it to be subsumed within the current iteration.
Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)
The nominated property is a religious property; as such, Criteria Consideration A has been cited.

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

The First Presbyterian Church in Lansingburgh, now the Cornerstone Community Church of Lansingburgh, meets NRHP Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a distinctive and intact example of a nineteenth-century religious facility—highlighted by the ca. 1870 remodeled façade of the church proper, designed in the Romanesque Revival style by noted Troy architect Marcus F. Cummings (1836-1905)—to which was added, in the 1950s, a stylistically Modern addition to accommodate church-related activities. The first portion of the building, a session house, was erected in 1823; it partially collapsed during an expansion campaign but a portion of it was subsumed by the new build and is thus incorporated into the present edifice. The original gable-fronted, Greek Revival-style meetinghouse was constructed 1844-45 by mason John Blair; it was remodeled in 1866-67 and again in 1869-70 with distinctive Romanesque Revival elements, with both campaigns guided by Cummings’ designs. The interior of the church worship space was remodeled in 1913, and it currently largely portrays that period of renovation. The church, which retains substantial integrity to the cited period of significance, represents the reinvention of an earlier Greek Revival building with an updated Romanesque façade, along with a renovated 1913 interior. Such changes are characteristic of religious buildings as they evolved in response to new fashions and the need for more, and increasingly specialized, space.

Historical Context: Lansingburgh

Abraham Jacobse Lansing (1720-1791), born in the Albany area to Jacob G. and Helena Glen Lansing, is credited with the established of “New City,” or what became known as Lansingburgh. He purchased the patent of Stone Arabia—not to be confused with the eponymously named patent in the Mohawk Valley, settled largely by Palatine German families—a level and fertile parcel of land situated along the east side of the Hudson River, north of Albany, and settled there on 5,000 acres in 1763. Lansing, who had been involved with the river trade, thought it would be an ideal location for commercial ventures since it fronted the Hudson River, across from its confluence with the Mohawk River. Based on these circumstances, Lansing believed his lands would soon form the site of a thriving village. In 1771 he had it surveyed and laid out into lots; it was for a time known as “New City” by its residents, to distinguish it from the “Old City” of Albany. On April 17, 1775, 46 Lansingburgh residents signed a proclamation opposing Britain’s rule. After the Revolution, many New Englanders moved to the area, joining the established population and in doing so diversifying its cultural and ethnic character.
Lansingburgh prospered due to its location on the Hudson River and its status as the perceived gateway to the west, via the Mohawk River. The number of settlers increased rapidly after the Revolution and Lansingburgh was the seat of many small manufacturing establishments and mercantile and commercial houses. After the death of Abraham Lansing in 1791, the village name was formalized as Lansingburgh.¹

Before the year 1800, there were four or five shipyards in town, where sailing vessels for navigation on the Hudson River were built and repaired. By the dawn of the new century, the village enjoyed an immense trade with Vermont and Northern New York in grain, beef, pork, butter, cheese, and other produce. At this date, the village served as the terminal point for farm products from adjacent areas of Rensselaer and Washington counties as well as Vermont, with period newspaper advertisements suggesting its thriving commercial interests. There were at least a dozen warehouses on River Street for storing grain, as Lansingburgh was then a regional center of grain trade, buying from the area farmers and selling at Albany and other cities. Soon, there was an expansion of industries, due to the use of waterpower from nearby creeks that powered factory machines with water and steam. There were several leather tanneries and slaughter and packing houses, among them those of Ives & Sam Wilson (known as “Uncle Sam”). The oilcloth industry was a prominent industry for many years, as well as industries that centered on the manufacture of rifles, brushes, carriages, sleighs, plumbing valves, grist and lumber mills, nails, thread, malt and ale breweries, cotton, and shirts and collars. Between 1860 and 1910, Lansingburgh became the home of many businessmen who commuted to their factories located to the south, in Troy. Wealthy businessmen built many of the village’s mansions on the Hudson River and elsewhere, and their philanthropy and civic-mindedness helped in the expansion of the First Presbyterian church. Lansingburgh was ultimately subsumed into the borders of the city of Troy in 1901.

*Congregation History*

In 1784, Lansingburgh’s first religious society, a Protestant Reformed Dutch Church, was established. However, soon after its formation its membership steeply declined. In 1792 the Lansing family helped form the First Presbyterian Church in Lansingburgh, with the provision that all members of the previous Protestant Reformed Dutch Church be accepted into its membership. In 1804, the Rev. Samuel Blatchford, D.D. became the First Presbyterian Church’s second pastor, as well as the pastor of the Waterford Presbyterian Church (in 1811). He was also hired to be the Lansingburgh Academy’s principal and later served as the president of the

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¹ Stefan Bielinski, Abraham Jacobse Lansing, CAP biography number 3692, [https://exhibitions.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/l/ablansing3692.html](https://exhibitions.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/l/ablansing3692.html); accessed 20 May 2022.
academy’s board of trustees. Two notable Lansingburgh Academy students were Herman Melville—author of *Typee*, *Omoo*, and *Moby Dick*—and a future American president, Chester A. Arthur. In 1813, Dr. Blatchford was the moderator, or chairman, of the Presbyterian General Assembly, which is the national church association now known as Presbyterian USA. In 1816 Blatchford started a Sunday school at the church and, in 1824, he was hired as the first president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI). During his pastorate, Blatchford was responsible for building the first edifice on the present site, the session house, and Sunday school, in 1823. He passed away in 1828, having served his church and the Lansingburgh community for 24 years.

Between 1844 and 1845, the nominated church, in its original Greek Revival iteration, was built by mason John Blair, and two years later the old brick church on the village green that the group formerly occupied was sold; it was later demolished. In 1860, First Presbyterian offered the use of its building for worship services to the nearby Methodist Episcopal Church (later called St. Marks Methodist), during the construction of an addition to that group’s building. In 1866, a statement in the church session minutes authorized plans and specifications for the building of a new session house, to be built at the rear of the church sanctuary; Marcus J. Cummings served as architect. Just a few years later, Cummings was engaged again, this time to design the new façade, which was completed in 1870, the same year a new pipe organ was purchased. In 1884, the church and chapel were renovated and improved and in 1889 the chapel was altered and enlarged. In 1907, a two-unit row house south of the building was purchased and demolished, the land cleared, and a wrought-iron fence placed around the entire property. In the spring of 1913, the Hudson River flooded 25 feet above normal levels, due to heavy rainfall and early spring thaw. The water crested to 29 feet above normal in Troy, causing much damage to the First Presbyterian church. The result was a raising of the front entrances four feet to be level with the first floor.

In 1953, members of St. Marks Methodist Church joined in worship with First Presbyterian while renovations were made to the Methodist building, due to fire. This was one of many times the two churches worshipped as one. In 1954, fundraising began for a new Sunday school building. In 1956, Olivet Presbyterian and Westminster Presbyterian churches also merged with the First Presbyterian Church. The following year, authorization was given to the trustees to begin the construction of the Sunday school building. That same year, the steeple of nearby St. Augustine Roman Catholic Church was removed, after it was damaged by lightning, which led First Presbyterian to remove its steeple in 1959, for fear that it might meet a similar fate. In 1962, the pipe organ was replaced and chimes were added. Finally, in 2006, the First Presbyterian Church of
Lansingburgh and the United Methodist Church of Lansingburgh joined as a union congregation, which was given its present name, Cornerstone Community Church of Lansingburgh.

**Building History & Architectural Context**

The first building erected for this church was built in 1794 on Lansingurgh’s village green, which is several blocks to the south, at 112th Street between Third and Fourth avenues. Images and physical descriptions indicate it was a building of Wren-Gibbs meetinghouse characteristics, consisting of a gabled block with an engaged tower and projecting entrance pavilion. In the beginning, several other religious faiths, such as Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal, and Roman Catholic, used the building until they could build separate structures. This building was later sold when the new church was erected in the mid-1840s, and it was subsequently demolished. Demolition debris remained on the site for a time, as complaints were lodged that “the rubbish left” from the building was “…a disgrace to that end of the village, and has lain there quite long enough, an unsightly mass…”

Between 1844 and 1845, the first section of the nominated house of worship was built on its current site, under the auspices of mason John Blair. Although no images showing the façade have been located, what remains of the building allows for some understanding of its original character. It was of typical Greek Revival characteristics, being erected above a rectangular footprint with a self-contained, gable-front block with a classically pitched roof. The deep brick frieze and tall windows on the side elevations, with rectangular-shaped lintels and sills. The treatment of the façade is unknown, given the extensive additions made to it. The period ca. 1830-50 witnessed the construction of scores of new religious buildings in the Greek Revival idiom, from large temple-fronted examples to smaller and far simpler frame expressions. Examples and details of churches built in this style were published in period builder’s guides, such as those published by Asher Benjamin and Minard Lafever, and recall the widespread interest in Greek culture and architecture that was driven by an admiration for ancient Greece, its 1820s war for independence against the Ottoman Turks, and by an increasing body of published information regarding the appearance and nature of classical Greek architecture. During the second quarter of the century, it was the preeminent design mode for ecclesiastical buildings and was frequently employed by Protestant groups in the Troy and Albany region, though the Gothic Revival was rapidly increasing in popularity and would emerge as a dominant mode for religious buildings following the Civil War.
To this section was added a new fellowship hall in 1866-67, the first of two additions designed by Troy architect Marcus F. Cummings. It exhibited features of the Italianate style, which drew its inspiration from sixteenth-century Italian Renaissance architecture and the picturesque villas of the Italian countryside, though through the filter of contemporary English architecture such as the work of architect John Nash and books authored by John Claudius Loudon and S.H. Brooks. The Italianate was, at an early stage, an alternative to Greek classicism and subsequently the Gothic style. It was a long-running, popular, and versatile style with many sub-types, its popularity stemming in part from its suitability for a range of building materials and budgets, as well as the development of cast-iron technology that allowed for the cheaper and more efficient production of characteristic decorative elements such as brackets and cornices. This section of the building is now generally inconspicuous and is best viewed from the service alley at the rear of the property.

The Greek Revival meetinghouse built by Blair was radically transformed between 1869 and 1870 when it received a new façade rendered in the Romanesque Revival style and again designed by Cummings. The original façade was replaced by a far more exuberant expression, the restrained and typically trabeated 1840s treatments reimagined with a tripartite composition of tall rounded-arched bays, a large rose window and corbelled brickwork, along with an offset belltower and smaller entrance pavilion opposite. Thus the rigid symmetry of the gabled block is relieved by the asymmetry of the tower and entrance pavilion. Although the Romanesque in America in the nineteenth century came to its fullest expression in the style as interpreted by Henry H. Richardson in the 1870s, it was nevertheless employed earlier, around mid-century, with prominent examples such as the Smithsonian Institute by architect James Renwick, ca. 1863. This style was born of European precedents and the medieval architecture of the eleventh and twelfth centuries and was further inspired by the revival of this mode in Germany, where it was known as the Round-arched style, or Rundbogenstil. Cumming’s design relates to other early expressions of the Romanesque Revival style and German precedents.

Marcus Cummings established his architectural practice in Troy in the post-Civil War period and became well-known throughout the Capital Region and beyond, partly due to his authorship in 1868 of *Modern American Architecture*, co-authored with C.C. Miller, an architect based in Toledo, Ohio.³ This followed a volume published two years earlier by Smith and Cummings, *Architecture*, and was followed in 1873 by a new work by

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Cummings, *Cummings’ Architectural Details*, which was in large measure conceived for the mass fabrication of architectural components. The latter book’s stated intent was “to present a mass of architectural details, easy of construction, pleasing in form, and generally of inexpensive character, and so designed that a great variety of selections…when combined in a building will produce a harmonious whole.”

Cummings successful rise in the design field was in part sustained by his arrival in Troy following the great fire of 1862, which had destroyed much of the city’s downtown area. A contemporaneous design by Cummings, also in the Romanesque vein, was his design of Troy’s Congregation Berith Sholom Temple, also completed in 1870. The façade of the temple is similar in its division into three symmetrical bays but has elements that seem to relate more to Italianate than Romanesque design impulses. Late examples of his work include Troy’s Ilium building, 1904, in which the transition between Richardsonian Romanesque and Classical Revival motives is readily apparent.

The church’s worship space was remodeled in 1913, the work ascribed to “architect Cutler,” presumably James Goold Cutler (1848-1927) of Rochester, New York, an Albany native who practiced architecture there and for a time occupied the position of mayor.

The final building episode was the construction of the Christian education (Sunday school) building between 1957 and 1958. It is a representative and albeit restrained expression of mid-twentieth century Modern design, characterized by its clean lines, pronounced lack of ornamentation or reference to traditional styles, large windows, with an interior design based on function consideration with an open floor plan. This mode was used extensively in school buildings during that period throughout the Troy and Albany area, making it an appropriate choice for the church’s Sunday school. Instead of trying to duplicate the detailing of the older building, the addition pays homage to the older sections by drawing a clear distinction between old and new. The designers, Evans & Davis, designed the south elevation as a curtain wall, which faces toward 115th Street and cannot be seen from the older sections.

Summary

The nominated building represents multiple building campaigns and renovations over the course of the early nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth centuries, and as such it is typical in many ways of how religious facilities evolved in the face of changing styles and need. Two of the building campaigns were executed to the plans of Marcus F. Cummings, Troy’s leading architectural practitioner in the post-Civil War period to the end

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First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh, Rensselaer Co, New York

of the century. It remains an important legacy of Lansingburgh’s physical, cultural, and religious growth in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Bell, William (Clerk), Matthew Harrison, Ezra Hickok, Thomas Bassett, Samuel Hickok, Elias Parmalee, Pliny Corbin, *et al.* *First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh Session Minutes, 1792 to 1966.*


Walker, Charles. *The Old First Presbyterian Church, Lansingburgh, New York, Church Day of Troy Week.* Private Printing, September 6, 1908.


DRAFT  First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh                             Rensselaer Co, New York
Name of Property                   County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____ previously listed in the National Register
____ previously determined eligible by the National Register
____ designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey
Primary location of additional data:
____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other

Name of repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property  0.4 acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed Rensselaer County Tax map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Property historically associated with the church and unchanged during the Period of Significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title  Lawrence Moss
organization  Larry K Moss, architect
date  5/23/2022
street & number  262 Sixth Ave
telephone  518-271-0970
city or town  Troy
state  NY
zip code  12182

e-mail  LarryMoss46@hotmail.com

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:
Maps: A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property’s location.

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

**Continuation Sheets**

**Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)
First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh
City of Troy, Rensselaer County, New York
First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh
City of Troy, Rensselaer County, New York

570 3rd Avenue
Troy, NY 12182

Area: 0.42 ac

Coordinate System:
NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18
Coordinate Units, Meter
Orthoimagery Year: 2021

Nomination Boundary
First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh
City of Troy, Rensselaer County, New York

Area: 0.42 ac

570 3rd Avenue
Troy, NY 12182
DRAFT First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh  
Rensselaer Co, New York  
Name of Property  
County and State

Figure 1: Phases of Construction
Figure 2: Floor Plan – First Floor

Figure 3: Floor Plan – Second Floor
DRAFT First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh
Name of Property

Rensselaer Co, New York
County and State

Figure 4: First Presbyterian, 1942

Figure 5: First Presbyterian, 1908
First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh  
Rensselaer Co, New York

**Figure 6:** First Presbyterian – Interior, 1899

**Figure 7:** Chapel – Interior, 1906
DRAFT  First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh   Rensselaer Co, New York
Name of Property                   County and State

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

Name of Property:       First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh
City or Vicinity:       Troy
County:                 Rensselaer   State: New York
Photographers:          Lawrence Moss
Date Photographed:      June 10, 2021
Description of Photograph(s) and number:

NY_Rensselaer Co_First Presbyterian Church_0001
Church - Southwest Elevation

NY_Rensselaer Co_First Presbyterian Church_0002
Christian Education - Southwest Elevation

NY_Rensselaer Co_First Presbyterian Church_0003
Christian Education - West Elevation

NY_Rensselaer Co_First Presbyterian Church_0004
Session House - West Elevation

NY_Rensselaer Co_First Presbyterian Church_0005
Christian Education - South Elevation

NY_Rensselaer Co_First Presbyterian Church_0006
Fellowship Hall - East Elevation

NY_Rensselaer Co_First Presbyterian Church_0007
Church - North Elevation

NY_Rensselaer Co_First Presbyterian Church_0008
Church Sanctuary – Looking East

NY_Rensselaer Co_First Presbyterian Church_0009
Fellowship Hall/Chapel – Looking South

NY_Rensselaer Co_First Presbyterian Church_0010
Christian Education - Shoppe
DRAFT First Presbyterian Church of Lansingburgh
Name of Property
Rensselaer Co, New York
County and State

NY_Rensselaer Co_First Presbyterian Church_0011
Christian Education - Classroom

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

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