

1970

HANSON PLACE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH, 88 Hanson Place, Borough of Brooklyn.  
Built 1857-60; architect unknown.

Landmark Site: Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 2004, Lot 33.

On March 3, 1970, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Hanson Place Seventh Day Adventist Church and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 14). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Two speakers, representing the Church, testified in favor of the proposed designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

This handsome building, erected in 1857-60, occupies a conspicuous corner site fronting on Hanson Place. Its location and monumental scale give distinction to a neighborhood which still retains much of its mid-19th century atmosphere. Many brownstone houses, of approximately the same period as the church, line the side streets.

The church is constructed of brick above a brownstone base and is trimmed with wood. It is designed largely in the Italianate style. A flight of stone steps leads up to a dignified entrance portico, which is crowned by a steeply pitched pediment supported on four tall columns with boldly carved Corinthian capitals. The pediment and upper section of the entablature are enriched with carved moldings and dentils. At the center of the portico, the main entrance has an "eared" enframingent which surrounds a tall and handsome pair of paneled doors; flanking it are smaller doorways of similar design. The details of the door enframingents are distinctly reminiscent of the Greek Revival style. Above each doorway is an "eared" rectangular frame; those at the left and right are filled with stained glass, while the blind center panel, above the main doorway, bears the legend: "Hanson Place S.D.A. Church. This Edifice Erected 1860." The slightly projecting corner pavilions, flanking the entrance portico, lend strength and character to the composition.

The classical entablature is carried around the long sides of the church, one facing South Portland Avenue, the other facing a fenced playground. There are eleven tall, arched windows on South Portland Avenue. The five windows that adjoin the Hanson Place corner pavilion are separated by brick pilasters crowned by Corinthian capitals. The round-headed section of these windows is enframed by brick archivolt, carried on a band-course which marks the springing of the arches. These stained glass windows are divided by a central vertical mullion into two long, slender glazed sections with arches at the top, crowned by a central rondelle. This was a favorite motif of Italianate architecture in New York and was derived from such Italian Renaissance palaces as the Palazzo Vendramini in Venice.

A projecting section, facing South Portland Avenue, was originally built as a lecture hall and is now used for classes. Its four tall segmental-arched windows are crowned by similar segmental arches in the architrave. The windows are separated by fluted, wood pilasters with Corinthian capitals. Above them is a pediment similar to the one at the front of the church.

A simple iron railing separates the church from the street. It retains several handsome Italianate urns above the cast iron posts and decorative finials at the bracing points. The interior of the Church is notable for its beautiful organ loft above a gracefully curved balcony.

This church was originally erected as the Hanson Place Baptist Church. This was an outgrowth of the Atlantic Street Baptist Church, organized in 1854. The cornerstone of the present edifice was laid on October 27, 1857, and the church was opened in September 1860.

Since 1963, the church has been owned by the Hanson Street Seventh Day Adventists. They have carried out extensive interior alterations in connection with their school program which has an interdenominational enrollment of 400 pupils. The exterior is well maintained.

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HANSON PLACE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Hanson Place Seventh Day Adventist Church has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Hanson Place Seventh Day Adventist Church is an exceptionally handsome example of New York City's ecclesiastical architecture of the immediate pre-Civil War period, essentially Italianate in design with certain Greek Revival details and that the Church continues to serve the neighborhood, after over a century, as both a religious and an educational center.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 63 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Hanson Place Seventh Day Adventist Church, 88 Hanson Place, Borough of Brooklyn and designates Tax Map Block 2004, Lot 33, Borough of Brooklyn, as its Landmark Site.