

HERITAGE RECOGNITION PROGRAM

To Identify and Honor Great Neck's Most Notable Homes & Buildings



KOREAN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, GREAT NECK, NY

When the Great Neck Methodist Episcopal Church was dedicated on October 6, 1872, the only church on the peninsula was the Union Chapel, in the north on Middle Neck Road. Joseph Spinney, who worshipped there and in Little Neck, believed that the community needed a Methodist church. He purchased four acres of the



Parish Hall, Built 1881 • Restored 2012

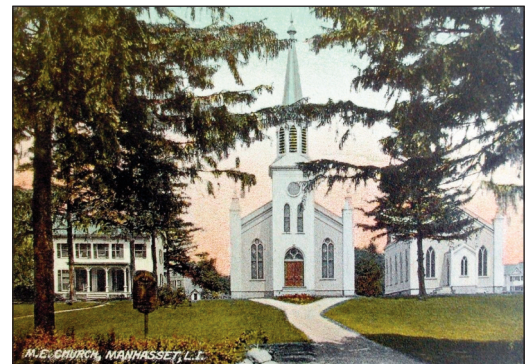
former Ben Wood property at the crest of the hill on the North Hempstead Turnpike, and the firm of Mundell & Teckritz of Brooklyn was chosen as architects. The beautiful church erected on the site was constructed by J. S. Carpenter of Great Neck.

Nine years later, in 1881, the congregation needed a Sunday school building. A parish hall was built in a style similar to the church, and today it is a rare remaining example of the Victorian Gothic revival style, with board and batten siding and graceful arched windows. A history of the church noted extraordinary interest in the Sunday school: "All observers agree it would be difficult to find in any other Sabbath school such lifelike and beautiful representations of the scripture scenes...as are prepared by D.E. Skidmore and S.E. Warren."

At the laying of the corner stone for the parish hall, Great Neck poet Bloodgood Cutter wrote a poem for the occasion, On the Laying of the Corner Stone for Spinney's Sunday School. The first of many verses began: In laying this corner stone / We little know what will be done / For this is indeed a great event / Whereon much labor will be spent.

Membership in the Sunday school reached 175 the first year and continued to grow. Spinney remained a generous benefactor; each Christmas he gave presents to the Sunday school students and paid for an annual Sabbath School picnic in a grove in Kings Point. In addition, he left \$3,000 for the Sunday school in his will.

Sadly, the church building burned in 1948 and was replaced by the present brick structure. The 1881 Sunday school was unharmed and remained unchanged, continuing to serve the community throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. In 2012, after steady deterioration threatened its existence, the new Korean United Methodist Church congregation was inspired to begin a restoration of the old parish hall building. Today, thanks to the careful, sensitive restoration by the Korean congregation, the historic parish hall building has been restored to excellent condition, with all updates reflecting the exquisite original design.



Methodist Episcopal Church 1907-1915 ????