



HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT
for the
VALLEY GROVE CHURCHES
Nerstrand, Minnesota

prepared for the
VALLEY GROVE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

prepared by
MacDonald & Mack Architects, LTD.
400 South Fourth Street, Suite 712
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415

September 30, 2013

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400 South Fourth Street, Suite 712

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415

Telephone 612.341.4051

Facsimile 612.337.5843

E-mail info@mmarchld.com

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Robert Mack, Rita Goodrich, and Katie Kangas of MacDonald & Mack conducted the on-site investigation and evaluation of the buildings, with Mr. Mack serving as Principal-in-Charge. Ms. Goodrich prepared the technical sections of this report, and Douglas Mack of MacDonald & Mack wrote the historical overview.

Members of the Valley Grove Preservation Society (VGPS) were instrumental in providing research and translation. Special thanks to Kenneth Sahlin, who helped coordinate the efforts and provided invaluable support throughout the project. The authors also wish to thank the following VGPS volunteers:

- Dagfinn Moe
- John Quam
- Julie Klassen
- Mary Jones
- Jens Eldal
- Ken Vesledahl
- Gary Wagenbach
- Linda Wagenbach

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PROJECT ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Location: The Valley Grove Churches are located northwest of Nerstrand, Minnesota, at the north edge of Big Woods State Park.

*National Register
of Historic Places
Status:* Listed on April 6, 1982.

Methodology: Field survey investigations were conducted during Fall 2012 and May of 2013 to inventory, record and analyze the provenance and physical condition of architectural and structural features of the churches.

Documentary investigations were also conducted by volunteers of the Valley Grove Preservation Society, whose work included extensive research (and translation) of documents held at the Norwegian American Heritage Association archives at Saint Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota.

Project Participants: MacDonald and Mack Architects, Ltd. located in Minneapolis, Minnesota led the project. Robert Mack served as Principal Architect-in-Charge. Staff members Rita Goodrich, Douglas Mack and Katie Kangas had major roles in on-site investigations, documentary research, building analysis, report preparation, and drawing production.

Project volunteers from the Valley Grove Preservation Society included Kenneth Sahlin, Dagfinn Moe, John Quam, Julie Klassen, Mary Jones, Jens Eldal, Ken Vesledahl, Gary Wagenbach, and Linda Wagenbach.

PART 1: DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

(Partially adapted from the 1981 National Register of Historic Places nomination.)

Valley Grove consists of two church buildings and a small cemetery situated on a hilltop in southeastern Minnesota, on the northern edge of Big Woods State Park. The structures are located approximately seventy-five feet apart and face each other, with access through a metal gate bearing the name "Valley Grove." The cemetery lies directly to the south of the two churches. The site and its surroundings make for a particularly picturesque and pastoral setting: two historic churches standing sentry over a rolling landscape of prairie and oak savannah.

The churches served as the nexus of the community of Norwegian immigrants who came to eastern Rice County beginning around 1850-1860. These homesteaders initially worshipped in homes, and later held open-air services on the site where they would later construct the church buildings.

The first church to house the Valley Grove congregation (then called Tyske Grove) was the so-called "stone church," constructed in 1862 for a cost of \$1,200. By 1894, the Valley Grove congregation had outgrown the small church, and members who lived in nearby Nerstrand also desired a church in town. So, in 1894, identical wood-frame Gothic churches were constructed at Valley Grove and in Nerstrand (the latter is also extant, as Grace Lutheran Church, but has been altered substantially). The churches copied the Gothic design of a previously-built church in the nearby Norwegian immigrant settlement of Christiana, several miles to the north, which shared a parish and a pastor, the Reverend Nils Quammen, with Valley Grove.¹ The new church cost \$3,100 to build. The 1862 stone building was retained as a guild hall, with substantial interior remodeling, including dropping the ceiling and adding a kitchen space.

The churches in Valley Grove and Nerstrand remained one congregation until they reorganized in 1949. In April 1972, the Valley Grove congregation voted to disband due to declining membership, ending regular worship services at the site. The congregation transferred ownership of the 1894 church to the Society for the Preservation of the Valley Grove Church Building, and the 1862 church and the surrounding grounds to the Valley Grove–Grace Cemetery Association.

In 1973, Survey and Planning staff from the Minnesota Historical Society visited the site to document the Valley Grove Churches, and subsequently placed them on the Inventory of Historic Sites, with a recommendation for "further research and investigation as this site exhibit[s] strong National Register potential."² These findings

¹ Noted in email from Jens Eldal to Ken Sahlin, 27 November 2012. Subject line: "SV: Valley Grove churches."

² Letter from Russell W. Fridley (Director of MHS) to Kay Hope (Secretary for the Society of the Preservation of the Valley Grove Church), 29 August 1974.

became critical information the following year, 1974, when site's two stewardship organizations engaged in a contentious legal and public battle over ownership, upkeep, and the very fate of the churches, with the Cemetery Association discussing the possibility of moving or demolishing the 1894 church. The Society for the Preservation of the Valley Grove Church filed a lawsuit, asserting its ownership of the building, but in February 1975, Rice County Judge Urban J. Steimann ruled that the land legally belonged to the Valley Grove-Grace Cemetery Association.³ Judge Steimann added,

The court is somewhat distressed by the fact that this matter must be settled by judicial proceedings. In making its decision, the court can only view the law and not the sentimental value respective of each party's decision. ... If all parties can abandon their passions and prejudices, some type of agreement can be worked out whereby the newer church could be preserved for its historic value ...⁴

And, indeed, the two sides did come together. Today, both buildings are maintained by the Valley Grove Preservation Society (the new name for the Society for the Preservation of the Valley Grove Church) The churches are used for weddings, concerts, and two annual events, an autumn country social, and a Christmas Eve concert and celebration.

In 2000, the owner of the 110-acre property surrounding Valley Grove sought to sell the land, raising the possibility that a developer might buy it, and potentially presenting a threat to the bucolic, open setting. News coverage and public outreach helped the Valley Grove Preservation Society raise enough funds to purchase the land. The fundraising effort was so successful that it was included in The Minnesota Project's 2001 *Case Studies of Sustainability in Rural Minnesota Communities*:

More than 400 people from around the country donated money to help purchase the land, and many became repeat donors. People who had been married in the church, who had ancestors buried in the cemetery, even one who had been arrested there nearly 30 years earlier, wrote moving letters along with their donations.⁵

The Valley Grove Preservation Society has also made great strides in repairing and restoring the two structures. Recent work has included installing new cedar shake roofs on both building; putting a new steeple on the 1862 church, to match the one in the earliest extant photo, c. 1890; and renovating or repairing floor joists and footings in the 1862 building. Further repairs and alterations are detailed in the chronology in the following pages.

³ Hest, David. "Nerstrand church ownership is determined in court ruling." *Faribault Daily News*, 6 February 1975. Page unknown. Found in the archives of the Valley Grove Preservation Society.

⁴ Quoted in "Cemetery group wins court case," *Northfield News*, 6 February 1975 (no byline) Found in Valley Grove Preservation Society archives.

⁵ Page 67.

CHRONOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT AND USE

The following is an overview of key dates and events in the buildings' development and use. A more extensive chronology, compiled by volunteers from the Valley Grove Preservation Society, is included in Appendix C.

- 1862 Stone church constructed using locally-quarried limestone.
- 1868 Stone church dedicated on October 18.
- 1870 Congregation changes its name from Tyske Grove to Valley Grove.
- 1874 Church members purchase and install first church bell.
- 1894 Wood-frame church constructed.
- 1894 Bell moved from stone church to frame church.
- 1895 Stone building given to the Ladies Aid. Ceiling dropped and kitchen space added on the east side of the building.
- 1895 Small organ in stone church moved to frame church.
- 1897 Unspecified repair to tower of 1862 building.⁶
- 1901 Unspecified repair to tower of 1862 building.⁷
- 1905 Spire of 1862 building removed⁸ (*presumably this is when it was replaced with the cupola*).
- 1911 Pipe organ installed in 1894 building.
- 1931 Motion passes to keep cupola of 1862 building.⁹
- 1935 Stove purchased for 1862 building.¹⁰
- 1939 Church meeting minutes include "motions to shingle 1862 building, repair steps." (Unknown if this work was completed at this time.)¹¹
- 1939 Electricity added to 1894 church.¹²
- 1948 Coal furnace added to 1862 building¹³
- 1949 Electricity added to 1862 building.¹⁴
- 1949 Furnace added to 1894 church.¹⁵
- 1950 New oil heater added to 1862 building.¹⁶
- 1951 Pulpit lowered in 1894 church.¹⁷
- 1954 Motor installed in pipe organ in 1894 church (previously hand-pumped with bellows).¹⁸

⁶ Church minutes at NAHA.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ladies Aid Ledger.

¹¹ Church minutes at NAHA.

¹² Ladies Aid Ledger

¹³ Church minutes at NAHA.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ladies Aid Ledger.

¹⁷ Per Donald Hanson. See note in timeline in Appendix C. Unverified in official documents.

1964	Acoustic tile installed in ceiling of 1894 church. ¹⁹
1973	Church decommissioned (in April) after membership declines and congregation disbands.
1973	Society for the Preservation of the Valley Grove Church Building incorporated on June 21.
1973	Minnesota Historical Society places both buildings on the Inventory of Historic Sites.
1982	Valley Grove listed on National Register of Historic Places.
1991	Roof of 1894 church replaced. ²⁰
1991	Steeple repairs to 1894, including installation of copper cone to replace finial (new finial installed in 2005). ²¹
1993	Unspecified foundation repair work to 1894 church. ²²
1995	Electrical service to 1894 church moved underground. Also, ceilings and walls in nave repaired or replaced. ²³
1997	New furnace and duct work, along with a new security system, installed in the 1894 church. ²⁴
1997	Entry doors of 1894 church replaced and refinished. ²⁵
1999	Two new precast concrete steps installed at back doors of 1894 church. ²⁶
1999	Valley Grove Preservation Society gains 501(c)3 nonprofit status.
2003	Cedar shake roof installed at 1894 church. ²⁷
2005	New rubber roof installed below bell in steeple of 1894 church. ²⁸
2007	Cedar shake roof installed at 1862 building. ²⁹
2007	Steeple of 1862 building replaced to match 1890s photo. ³⁰
2008	Range of renovations in 1862 building, including: renovated footings, replaced floor joists, replaced old kitchen, added stairway, added new wiring, and removed dropped ceiling. ³¹
2010	Front steps and railings at 1894 church replaced.
2013	New maple hardwood floor installed in 1862 building.
2013	New liquid propane (LP) furnace installed.

¹⁸ Church minutes at NAHA.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Valley Grove Books, as noted in timeline in Appendix C.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The 1862 building faces west and is located east of the frame church. Limestone for the building was quarried locally. The church is a simple rectangular building capped by a gable roof with a square tower with a pyramidal roof at the top (west) and a brick chimney near the rear. The simplicity and massing of the design are reminiscent of the Greek Revival style, and are also characteristic of an early generation of church structures constructed by rural immigrant populations.

Four regularly spaced windows are located on the north and south facades. The windows are rectilinear and double-hung, nine over nine lights with stone sills; markings over the windows suggest that they were originally arched. Fenestration on the front (west) façade consists of a central doorway surmounted by a window with six over nine lights; a small, octagonal window is centered in the gable end. A single entry is located off-center on the rear (east) façade. A church bell was installed in 1874, and was later moved to the new church. In 1895, after the new church opened, the stone church was given to the Ladies Aid for use as a guild hall, with alterations including a dropped ceiling and a new kitchen space. The original spire was removed in 1905, according to church records; presumably this is when it was replaced with the cupola that remained in place until restoration of the spire in 2007.

The 1894 church, with its white frame Gothic design, offers a striking contrast to the stark simplicity of the original church and is more typical of what has become considered to be traditional ecclesiastical architecture in rural Minnesota. The frame church, which faces east, is basilican in plan with entry through the projecting bell tower. The pointed arches, pinnacles, and high steeple are characteristic features of the Gothic style. The four evenly-spaced pointed arched windows on the north and south sides are double hung with four over four lights. The muntins in the upper sash form twin arches within the arch of the window, giving the impression of tracery. The tower features double doors with a transom light set in a triangular pediment surmounted by a pointed arched window. An open belfry sheltering a bell rises above the roofline and terminates in a steeply pitched octagonal roof capped by a metal spire and cross. Shingled pent roofs separate the entry, tower window, and belfry. The roof of the building is sheathed with wooden shingles. The interior retains excellent integrity.

DESCRIPTION OF SIGNIFICANCE

Valley Grove is primarily significant for its dramatic historic and pastoral tableau, which also represents two phases of rural ecclesiastical architecture. In addition, the buildings are significant for their role as the focus of the dispersed community of Norwegian farmers who settled and farmed parts of eastern Rice County beginning around 1850-1860. As with many rural churches, Valley Grove served as a de facto community and cultural center, integral to social cohesiveness, a place where Norwegian immigrants could feel at ease surrounded by familiar faces, traditions, and practices. (Many church meeting minutes and other records were kept in Norwegian through 1920.)

Valley Grove is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a locally-significant site, under the following criteria:

- Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master; or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant concentration of resources whose individual components are united historically by function or plan.

CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

The narrative below details our recommendations for building modifications, repairs, and restoration work. Some repairs are more critical than others, as the area of concern is contributing to or causing, accelerated deterioration. These specific repairs are noted as high or medium priority.

1862 CHURCH (See Figure 1 & 2)

Please see Appendix A for figures referenced in the conditions assessment.

Exterior

FOUNDATIONS AND FOOTINGS

Assessment: Although no footings and foundations are visible at this time, photographs from the 2007 interior rehabilitation show that the foundation is constructed from rubble limestone, as are the walls, with the foundation being a continuation of the masonry wall system. Church records indicate that work was completed on the footings in 2007. The footings and foundations appear to be in good condition. (See Figure 20)

Recommendations: There are no indications that there are any problems, so no recommendations are made at this time.

Priority: N/A.

MASONRY

Assessment: The walls are constructed of rubble limestone which has been coated with a cementitious covering or plastering, inscribed with "mortar joints," creating the appearance of dressed stone units. It is unknown if this inscribed coating dates to the original construction of the church, but based on photographic evidence, it was clearly in place by the 1890s.³² There have been "repairs" made that are not sensitive to the existing wall and a poor match. There are areas that are deteriorating and should be repaired. Much of this deterioration has been caused by water infiltration, poor site drainage and age. (See Figure 21, 22, 23, & 24)

The front stone stair, below the double doors, is cracked and deteriorated, and has been patched with concrete. There is enough missing material to allow water to sit, and the freeze-thaw cycle will continue to deteriorate the stone. There is a concrete sidewalk below the stone stair that is in fair condition.

Many of the limestone window sills are deteriorating; cracking and missing material is common. There are some areas that have been repaired with concrete, a patch that does not match in color, texture, or material.

³² Researcher Jens Eldal notes that "plaster imitating stone blocks was quite common in both Germany and Norway during all the 19th century," although the work at Valley Grove was "more like a sketch done by an amateur" rather than a craftsman skilled in the technique. A historic church in Bonnet Prairie, Wisconsin has plastered joints that may have used a similar technique. (Noted in email from Jens Eldal to Ken Sahlin, 30 January 2012. Subject line: "SV: Valley Grove churches.")

Recommendations: Repoint underlining mortar joints and repair coating, returning mortar joints to the face of the wall. Care should be taken to provide a good match in terms of composition, aggregate, color, texture, and tooling. If possible, turn the stone stair upside down to see if the underside is in better condition. If not, replace stone stair, considering ADA accessibility and any changes that might be made in the future.

Repair limestone window sills with masonry epoxies at the cracks and masonry patch materials that match the existing stone. It is desirable to maintain the existing material rather than replace the stone sills.

Priority: Medium. It is recommended that this work be completed to avoid additional loss of historic fabric.

CONCRETE

Assessment: The stoop and stair at the rear of the building are concrete. The stoop at the rear of the building is in poor condition. The concrete is deteriorated and cracked. The unit is pulling away from the structure, causing further damage, as the railing is connected to the wall. (See Figure 21)

Recommendations: Provide a new concrete stoop and stair, with adequate footings and detailing to address the issue of frost heave and movement. Provide a landing at the bottom of the stair to terminate the handrail or provide a different detail.

Priority: Medium.

SIDING

Assessment: There is painted lap siding at the walls of the steeple. It appears that the wood is in good condition and church records indicate that the steeple was built off-site in 2007, based on historic photographs.

Recommendations: There are no recommendations at this time. Periodically inspect to ensure good paint coverage to preserve wood siding.

Priority: N/A.

EXTERIOR TRIM

Assessment: The existing wood trim consists of painted soffit/eave ensemble at the roof edge and painted wood trim at the windows and doors. There are several areas that the wood is deteriorating and pulling apart at the joints, which allows for water infiltration. The paint is also deteriorating at these locations. (See Figure 25)

Recommendations: Repair wood trim, seal joints and repaint.

Priority: Medium.

ROOFING

Assessment: There was a new cedar shingle roof installed in 2007. The roof clads the main gable portion of the structure and the conical steeple roof. It appears that the roof is in good condition. No flashing is visible. There is a membrane rubber roof at the steeple, installed in 2005. (See Figure 28) There are a few areas where shingles have come loose or are pulling apart, such as at the roof ridge. (See Figure 26) Also, some of the shingles are starting to cup.

Recommendations: Periodically inspect the roof to monitor condition. Replace damaged shingles.

Priority: Medium

GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS

Assessment: There are gutters or downspouts installed on the north façade of the building. The gutter appears to be in good condition, but the downspouts are too short. In one location, the gutter does not even reach the ground level. (See Figure 27) Historic photographs do not indicate that gutters had previously been installed.

Recommendations: Care needs to be taken to maintain downspouts, either with a rain barrel or in conjunction with lawn mowing. Downspouts need to be in place to drain water away from the grade. Care should be taken to reattach after mowing and not to run over them with equipment. Remove any plant materials that are close to the foundation and that hold water against the building. Slope grade away from the building.

Priority: High

STEEPLE

Assessment: Historic photographs from in the Valley Grove Preservation Society archives show that the steeple was been modified over time. In 2007, the current steeple was installed, based on historic photographs; it remains in good condition. (See Figure 36)

Recommendations: There are no recommendations at this time.

Priority: N/A.

EXTERIOR DOORS

Assessment: There is a set of double screen doors and a pair of three panel doors at the front of the church. In front of the screen doors is an iron gate. The wood doors are painted and in fair condition, although there is some deterioration at the bottom of the screen doors. There is also deterioration at the bottom of the door jamb. The finish on the metal gate is in poor condition and there is some rusting. The existing hardware may be original. The rear of the building has a painted wood door.

Recommendations: Replace the screen at the front screen doors. Repair the bottoms of the screen doors and door jamb with wood epoxy. Repaint metal gates.

Priority: Medium.

WINDOWS

Assessment: There are painted nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows at the north and south façades of the church. There is a single painted nine-over-nine double hung sash window above the front door, above this window is a small hexagonal divided light window at the attic level. (See Figure 24) Careful examination of the windows indicates that some windows are of an earlier age than others, based on muntin width, which varies among windows. The windows are in poor to good condition. (See Figure 29 & 30) The joint between the window and the masonry wall is undefined at many locations, the “plastering” covers the wood trim.

Recommendations: Care should be taken to repair the window, including frames, trim, and sash. Maintain as much of the historic material as possible; the use of wood epoxies is recommended. Windows should be re-glazed using new putty and the existing glass lights. Any replacement should match the species of wood, as well as the profiles and sizes of the existing windows. When work is performed, care should be taken in re-establishing a clean joint between the wood and masonry.

Priority: High.

FINISHES

Assessment: The majority of the exterior finish is the “plaster” that is addressed in the masonry section. There is paint on the wood at the windows, doors, roof edge, and cupola. The paint is in poor to good condition, depending on location.

Recommendations: Paint areas of deteriorated finish.

Priority: Medium.

Interior

STAIRS

Assessment: There is a wood ship ladder to access the second level of the building. The ladder is sound construction and in good condition but does not meet building code requirements for public access to the second floor balcony. The ladder was installed in 2008, according to church records. (See Figure 31)

Recommendations: It is not known if the ladder is based on historic precedent, but if it is, maintaining the existing ladder and limiting public access is recommended. If the use requirements of the space change, careful consideration should be given to alterations.

Priority: N/A.

INTERIOR DOORS

Assessment: There are no interior doors in the space other than access doors to the roof and steeple. The access door is in good condition.

Recommendations: There are no recommendations for work.

Priority: N/A.

FLOORING

Assessment: There is a new maple floor that was installed and subsequently repaired in 2013. The new floor is in good condition. (See Figure 31)

Recommendations: No work is recommended.

Priority: N/A.

WALLS

Assessment: The interior walls are the exterior stone wall and are in good condition. Church records indicate that interior wall tuckpointing, plastering, and painting were completed in 2008. (See Figure 32) The interior wall is wood-framed, clad with painted bead-board, and provides a separation between the main space and kitchen area. (See Figure 35)

Recommendations: Periodically inspect wall surfaces. Clean rather than paint to maintain appearance.

Priority: Low.

CEILING

Assessment: The ceiling is painted wood. The underside of the balcony is also wood, but with a transparent finish. It is in good condition.

Recommendations: There are no recommendations at this time.

Priority: Low.

WOODWORK AND TRIM

Assessment: The existing wood work and trim in the interior is the balcony system, which has painted wood columns supporting the floor level, with a wood balustrade surrounding the edge of the loft. The windows have painted wood trim, which is in good condition. (See Figures 33 & 34)

Recommendations: Maintain finishes protecting wood. Base any changes on historic evidence.

Priority: Low

STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS

Assessment: The structural systems consist of a wood framed roof structure on masonry stone walls. The floor system is also wood framing over an open crawl space. There are no indications that there are structural problems, even though the whole system is not visible. Church records indicate that the floor joists were replaced in 2008; the new floor joists are located with twelve-inch centers. Construction photographs indicate that the condition was verified and deterioration addressed.

Recommendations: None.

Priority: N/A

MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL, AND PLUMBING SYSTEMS

Assessment: There is electrical service but no heating/cooling or plumbing within the building. The existing electrical service was updated in 2008. Church records indicate that there was once a heating system but there is no record of when it was removed. There is a portable toilet located on the site. If it is determined that the needs of the facility necessitate that a restroom be added, the location needs to be considered so it is sensitive to the building and the site.

Recommendations: Considerations of changes to the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems should be informed by the requirements of the current and future use. Any new installations should be sensitive to the existing materials and be guided by preservation standards.

Priority: N/A.

SITE WORK

Assessment: Grade should slope away from the building to move water from the roof away from the foundation. There is a gutter/downspout system installed at the north façade, but grading should still slope away. Plantings can also cause water to pool, not allowing the ground to dry out, as evidenced by the growth of moss.

Recommendations: Grade can build up over time, so it's important to periodically review grading and adjust as required. Consideration of plant materials is important in the drainage. Remove any volunteer plants that can cause damage to the foundation.

Priority: Medium.

SECURITY

Assessment: It does not appear that there is a security system at the building.

Recommendations: Monitor buildings on a regular basis and re-assess if problems arise.

Priority: N/A.

ACCESSIBILITY

Assessment: Currently the building is not accessible. Both the front door and the rear doors are located above grade, although the front door is quite close. Historic photographs indicate that the grade has not changed much.

Recommendations: If it is determined that the church is to be ADA compliant, a temporary ramp could be placed at the front entry (and left in place for all users). A more permanent solution would be to raise the grade to offset the seven-to-eight-inch step, so entry would be direct.

Priority: N/A

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Assessment: The investigations for this report did not include a survey of hazardous materials such as asbestos and lead paint.

Recommendations: If such an assessment has not been completed, it is recommended that this information be determined, as it will inform future work.

Priority: Project specific.

1894 CHURCH (See Figure 1 & 2)

Please see Appendix A for figures referenced in the conditions assessment.

Exterior

FOUNDATIONS AND FOOTINGS

Assessment: The church has a rubble limestone foundation that is almost totally covered at the exterior with a cementitious parging. It is assumed that the parging is part of the repairs referenced below. The existing parging is mostly in good condition, although there are several areas where it is failing and the underlying limestone is exposed, (See Figure 3) At the west façade, there is deterioration of the stone.

Church records identify repairs to the foundation made in 1994 at a cost of \$1,366.00

The footings are not visible at this time but it is assumed that they are also similar limestone. There are no indications that there are concerns with the footings

Recommendations: Repair the areas of damaged parging by applying new parging that matches the existing, and address water control issues that may be contributing to the deterioration. If there are areas of exposed deteriorated mortar, it would be good to repoint the mortar before parging over it. There are no recommendations for the footings.

Priority: High.

MASONRY

Assessment: Other than the limestone foundation, the basement has had some reinforcement work over the years with the addition of a concrete masonry unit wall, running the length of the structure and also the addition of a structural tile and brick wall. These walls provide additional support for the existing wood floor structure above. (See Figure 4)

There is also a brick chimney that vents the furnace. The chimney is located at the rear of the building and has a broader base, which corbels to a straight simple form, topped with a metal cap. The interior of the chimney was lined in 2013 to accommodate the new LP furnace. There is damage at the plaster on the chimney, located in the corner of the Sanctuary. When this damage occurred is not known, but it could have been from condensation that moved through the wall before the chimney was lined. (See Figure 17)

Recommendations: The assorted walls in the basement appear to be in fair to good condition and no additional work is recommended. The chimney should be inspected when a lift is on-site. The walls should be selectively repointed when masons are on-site for masonry repairs to the 1862 building. Monitor the plaster at the chimney location in the Sanctuary for additional deterioration. If no additional problems arise, repair plaster.

Priority: Medium.

CONCRETE

Assessment: There is a cast-in-place concrete stoop and stairs at the front entry and a pre-cast concrete stair at the rear entry. The front stair was replaced in 2010 and is in good condition. The precast stairs at the rear have both moved away from the building several inches since being installed in 1999. Each stair itself is in fair condition. (See Figure 5)

Recommendations: No recommendations for the front stair. The rear stair should be set back in place.

Priority: Low.

SIDING

Assessment: The exterior walls are clad with four-inch horizontal lap wood siding. The cupola is also clad with the same siding. The siding is in fair to good condition. Church records indicate new siding work was completed in 2001.

Recommendations: At this time no work is recommended, although it is important to monitor the condition of the paint, as the paint on the trim is failing.

Priority: Low.

EXTERIOR TRIM

Assessment: Flat wood trim is used as corner board as well at the window sills and casing. The tops of the pointed arch windows have additional pieces of trim, which become quite elaborate at the apex of the openings at the top of the steeple. Each of the four corners of the roof is anchored with a single pointed finial. The soffits and cornice are also wood. The wood is generally in good condition (from what could be observed), although the paint is in poor to good condition. The bottoms of some of the corner boards are deteriorated. It appears that the majority of deteriorated paint is located in select areas: at the cupola, the steeple windows, the window sill, and the bottom ends of corner boards. (See Figure 6 and 7)

Recommendations: Before painting, inspect wood to be sure it is in sound condition. Use of wood epoxies is recommended to repair the wood rather than replacement. It is important to keep sound paint on these surfaces to protect and ensure the preservation of the wood. Horizontal surfaces, where snow or water can sit, are especially vulnerable to deterioration of paint and wood. When painting, it is important to seal any joints that may allow water infiltration as well. When there is access to the steeple, inspect the wood to be sure it is sound before painting.

Priority: High.

ROOFING

Assessment: The gable roof, clad in wood shingles, covers the main body of the church, the steeple, and the rear addition. The existing roof was installed in 2003, and a new rubber membrane was placed below the bell in 2005 (this was not inspected as part of this report). The existing roof appears to be in good condition. There are a few loose shingles at the ridge, near the chimney, along a rake edge, and within the roof field. (See Figure 8) The roof flashing was not visible.

Recommendations: Replace the missing shingles. Periodically inspect the roof to monitor condition. It is assumed that the water damage that is observed at the ceilings was from past water infiltration since the roof was put on in 2003 and there has been no subsequent interior painting indicated in church records.

Priority: Low.

GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS

Assessment: The church has a gutter downspout system located only at the south facade. The gutters appear to be in good condition. There is a downspout that is disconnected and deposits water down the siding; the other downspouts are not long enough and deposit the water too close to the foundation. (See Figure 5 & 9) Historic photographs do not show gutters and downspouts; church records indicate that seamless gutters were installed in 1994. It is not known if there was a gutter at the north façade that has been removed.

Recommendations: Verify connections of all downspouts and extend the length of the downspouts to drain water away from the building. Care should be taken during lawn maintenance so as to not damage downspouts. Gutters and downspouts need to be cleaned to maintain clear water drainage from the building.

Priority: High. Gutters should be cleaned twice a year to remove debris.

STEEPLE

Assessment: The steeple was rehabilitated in 2002, and new siding, trim, roofing, and wood finials were put into place at the corners. Records show that a new finial for the steeple top was built and installed in 2005. The finial was completed by Lockerby, from Fairbault, Minnesota. The overall condition looks pretty good, as seen from the other building's cupola, although the paint is deteriorating at the belfry openings and at the corner boards. Closer investigations may uncover additional areas.

Recommendations: New paint should be applied to the open belfry openings.

Priority: High.

EXTERIOR DOORS

Assessment: The front of the church has a pair of vertical-board out-swinging doors without any glazing. (See Figure 10) The doors are painted. When the building is in use, they are held in an open position. The wood threshold has no paint and the bottom of the door leaves and trim have some deterioration. It appears that the doors have been repaired and the hinges replaced since the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) photographs in 1990.

At the rear of the church, on the northwest and southwest corners, there are identical that are protective doors over the doors. These doors are recessed historic stile-and-rail five-panel doors at the interior and single leaf, painted vertical-board doors at the exterior.

The door at the northwest corner of the rear of the church is It is in fair condition, some paint deterioration at the base. There is also a single leaf, painted recessed vertical board door at the northwest corner of the back façade. This door is in good condition except for some deterioration at the bottom.

There is a set of double cellar doors to the basement, located at the north façade. These painted doors are also vulnerable to deterioration due to snow accumulation.

Recommendations: The age of the existing doors is not known, and church records do not indicated any door replacement. Historic photographs show doors that have a similar appearance. Because the deterioration is just at the bottom of the door leaf, repair the bottom edge of the doors as required. Where possible, repair wood materials with epoxy rather than replacing them, to maintain the existing material. Paint doors.

Priority: Medium.

WINDOWS

Assessment: There are matching-pointed arch windows at the north and south façades of the church, four large wood double-hung windows at the Sanctuary, and one small window within each of the back rooms. The steeple has a large pointed-arch transom window with wood tracery above the front entry doors, and at the balcony level another double-hung pointed-arch window, similar to the windows at the side facades. The windows are five over four divided lights, and the top center light has red colored glass. The glazing is held in place with putty, and the interior and exterior of the sash are painted. The windows are in poor to fair condition. There is much deteriorated paint, some broken members, and deterioration at the rails. The glazing putty is very deteriorated, cracked, or missing. No weather-stripping was visible.

There is a small cellar window that has been in-filled with a wood panel and a metal vent. The paint finish is deteriorating. There are other masonry openings along the foundation that have been in-filled with metal mesh; the frame is no longer visible and parging wraps the opening. (See Figure 11 &12)

Recommendations: Windows should be repaired, treated with linseed oil, and repainted. Reglaze all sashes. Again, epoxy repairs are recommended over replacement of wood members, if possible. Paint the metal mesh at the basement windows will maintain the mesh and is simpler than replacing it.

Priority: High.

FINISHES

Assessment: The exterior of the building is primarily painted wood. The paint finish varies in condition, from poor to good. The areas of deterioration are primarily areas that are exposed to snow and extended moisture.

Recommendations: Since the building is not used in the winter on a regular basis, it is recommended that the paint finishes be kept in good condition to prevent deterioration of the wood surfaces.

Priority: High.

Interior

STAIRS

Assessment: The existing stair provides access to the choir loft and bell tower rope. The stairs are unpainted, with a similar finish as the rest of the interior wood. At the top of the stairs there is a turned balustrade, similar to the one at the altar. The wood stair is in good condition. (See Figure 13)

Recommendations: There are no recommendations at this time.

Priority: None

INTERIOR DOORS

Assessment: There is a pair of five recessed panel doors inside the entry vestibule. They have an applied wood graining finish and are in good condition. Above the doors is a divide light transom that has a transparent finish. There is a matching set of doors (minus transom) across from these doors that access the sanctuary. They are also in good condition. There are single leaf raised five-panel doors to the choir loft and to each of the back rooms. Church records do not indicate any specific work done to the doors over the years.

Recommendations: There is no work indicated for the doors at this time.

Priority: N/A.

Interior Finishes

FLOORING

Assessment: The floors are wood with a transparent finish. They are generally in good condition, with a couple of areas with deteriorated finish. There is a central aisle carpet runner down the main aisle. There are some areas of the floor that have had "cut-out" that has been in-filled.

Recommendations: Refinish flooring in areas with deteriorated finish to provide protection of the existing wood. It appears that the damage corresponds to water damage to the ceiling, which was roof-related.

Priority: Low

WALLS

Assessment: The existing sanctuary walls are painted plaster with a varnished bead-board wainscot. The entry vestibule has painted bead-board walls. Church records indicate that the chancel was "re-rocked" in 1992. The two small back rooms have wallpaper over plaster. Generally the walls are in fairly good condition with some areas of wear. (See Figure 14)

The back rooms have wallpaper that is in poor condition due to water damage.

Recommendations: Periodic inspections, clean rather frequent painting is recommended.

Priority: Low.

CEILING

Assessment: The ceilings are primarily painted square acoustical tile. The tile is a later addition dating to 1964, according to church records. The ceiling is damaged near the bell tower. The condition of the tile varies; there are areas of water damage that correspond to past water infiltration at the roof. There are also some missing tiles. (See Figure 16)

Recommendations: The damaged areas at the ceiling are not a concern for further deterioration, but only as an aesthetic matter. A quick fix would be to apply a stain-blocking paint and repaint the ceilings as is.

Priority: Low

WOODWORK AND TRIM

Assessment: The existing wood trim is located primarily at the chancel, organ and balcony. The wood has a transparent finish and is in good condition. There is also painted wood trim at the windows and the pulpit. Some of the window trim has a deteriorated paint finish. (See Figure 15)

Recommendations: Maintain the wood trim, periodically cleaning with a gentle cleaner. Paint the window trim when restoring the windows.

Priority: Low.

Structural Systems

Assessment: The structural system consists of wood framing on a stone foundation. Although much of the wood-frame system is not visible, there are no indications that there are problems, so it is assumed that the structural system is in good condition. In the basement, due to cantilevered joist ends at the brick wall, there is a slight sag with a magnified uplift at the floor surface.

Recommendations: None.

Priority: N/A.

Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Systems

Assessment: The church currently contains a mechanical system which heats the building; there is no cooling component. The heat is provided by a liquid propane fueled forced air furnace, installed fall of 2013. Records indicate that the previous oil fueled furnace and ductwork were installed in 1996. It is our understanding the church is primarily unheated but that the furnace is fired up several days before the Christmas Eve service or other winter events.

There is no plumbing system at the building. There is a portable toilet located on the site. If it is determined that the needs of the facility have changed and a restroom is to be added, the location needs to be considered so it is a sensitive addition, either to the site or the building.

The church was first electrified in 1939, with unspecified wiring noted in 1958 church minutes. The existing electrical service was located underground in 1995. It appears to be adequate for the current use of the building. If the programming of the building changes, re-evaluation of the existing system may be necessary.

Recommendations: Consideration of changes to the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems should be informed by the requirements of the current and future use. Any new installations need to be sensitive to the existing materials and be guided by preservation standards. Periodic maintenance of the furnace is recommended.

Priority: N/A.

Site Work

Assessment: The church is located atop a hill, across from the 1862 church building and in front of the cemetery. Although the church is located at the high elevation, it is important that the grade near the building is sloped away from the building walls so any water that runs from the roof flows away from the foundation. Foundation damage can also be caused from tree

roots that are too close to the foundation. Roots are opportunistic and will expand any cracks or gaps in the foundation walls and cause damage to the foundation.

Recommendations: Inspect the grade at the perimeter of the building and adjust grade to slope away from the foundation. Remove any trees and other volunteer plants from the foundation.

Priority: Medium. This should be addressed before any repairs are made to the paving of the foundation.

Security

Assessment: The records indicate that a security system was installed in 1996.

Recommendations: Monitor buildings on a regular basis and re-assess if problems arise.

Priority: N/A.

Accessibility

Assessment: Currently the church is not ADA accessible. Both the front and the rear entries are located several feet above grade. Historic photographs indicate that the grade has not changed much.

Recommendations: If it is determined that the church is to be ADA compliant, a temporary lift or permanent ramp could be installed to the side of an expanded front stoop. Landscaping can be adjusted to screen the added element.

Priority: N/A.

Hazardous Materials

Assessment: The investigations did not include a survey of hazardous materials such as asbestos and lead paint.

Recommendations: If such an assessment has not been completed, it is recommended that this information be determined as it will inform future work.

Priority: Project specific.

Site

The site consists of the two churches, a cemetery, and an additional 52 acres of easement-protected land. This easement will protect the historic view-shed and maintain the visual experience of the two facing countryside churches without encroaching development. This was made possible by an effort in 2000, when funds were raised that allowed for the purchase of surrounding land.

A letter from the Minnesota Historical Society in 1974 states, "For your information the Survey and Planning Staff of the Minnesota Historical Society visited and recorded the two Valley Grove Churches in August 1973. Because the entire site was found to show merit with regard to architecture, landscape architecture, and the history of local immigration, the staff placed both Churches and the surrounding area on the Inventory of Historic Sites this past year."

The Valley Grove Preservation Society has enhanced the site with newly planted replacement trees and prairie seeding, along with required prairie burns as part of the Forest Legacy Program. A well was installed in 2002.

Continued maintenance of the site is important and special consideration should be given to any changes to the site, including such elements as roads, parking, lighting and additional structures.

The metal fence and gate with "Valley Grove" overhead at the front of the entry to the site is in fair condition. Painting should be part of regular maintenance, to protect the metal from corrosion.

PART 2: TREATMENT AND WORK RECOMMENDATIONS



HISTORIC PRESERVATION OBJECTIVES

RESTORATION AND REHABILITATION RATIONALE

We recommend restoration of the exterior and interior configuration and character-defining features of both churches, in keeping with the guidelines set forth in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation*. A significant portion of each original building structure has survived while some missing or modified features have been replaced. It appears that this previous work was typically based on sound research and accurate documentary and physical evidence. Any additional work that is undertaken should be guided by these same principals. Elements for which no evidence remains should be replaced using a period-appropriate appearance based on the analysis of existing local buildings of a similar date, construction, and style.

We recommend that building features facilitate the continued use of the building—structures must evolve and adapt for ongoing use. These features include the integration of modern building conveniences, such as heating and cooling, and rehabilitation of interior spaces for continued use. While preservation is encouraged, wherever practicable, modifications sympathetic to the style and time period are permissible. Preservation goals need to be in concert with reuse requirements and, of necessity, will be tempered by building code, life safety, accessibility, and other legally mandated constraints. Again, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards* should provide guidance.

Work defined as restoration is recommended for the 1894 church, as there have been few changes and modifications to the structure. The roof has been replaced, along with portions of the bell tower, stairs, and siding. Because the current and proposed use of the building will not change, it is recommended that as much historic fabric as possible remain in place. This means that when there are areas of deterioration, repair is recommended over replacement.

As for the 1862 church, many more changes have been made to this structure over time. The current and proposed uses have evolved. Thus, there are fewer original materials remaining, especially within the interior of the building. Much of the floor structure, flooring, roofing, and steeple have been replaced. It is still important to maintain the existing building fabric, especially the exterior unusual exterior "plastering" and windows. New work should be guided by historic photographs or existing physical evidence—for example, in the case of returning previously-removed historic elements such as lighting, the elaborate wood arch or wood graining.

WORK RECOMMENDATIONS

Below is a recap and overview of the recommendations for the specific work necessary to accomplish the historic preservation and reuse objectives. Presented previously in this report.

All recommendations meet the guidelines of The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation and are intended to prescribe material conservation, keeping as much historic, existing material in place through repairs, rather than replacement. Professional fees for design work related in these recommendations are not included in the estimated costs. Costs may be reduced with the use of volunteer labor.

1862 CHURCH

1862 CHURCH, HIGH PRIORITY

Our assessment concludes that these items are of high priority and should be immediately be considered by the Valley Grove Preservation Society.

At the windows, scrape loose paint and use a wood consolidant and epoxy filler to repair the areas of deterioration, such as bottom of trim and sash. Install new glazing putty and repaint. Replace any broken glazing.
Cost: \$4,000.

Clean all downspouts and gutters. Extend the length of the downspouts in all locations to drain water away from the foundations. Remove plant materials near foundation. Provide additional soil to slope grade from building foundation.
Cost: \$2,000.

1862 CHURCH, MEDIUM PRIORITY

Repair exposed mortar joints, remove new "plastering" patches. Install new plastering" To match existing "plastering" in material, texture, color and application.
Cost: \$50,000.

Provide new concrete stoop, stair, and handrail at the rear entry.
Cost: \$3,000.

Where paint is peeling, carefully scrape the deteriorated paint from trim and repaint with a durable exterior paint to match existing colors.
Cost: \$3,000.

At the doors, scrape loose paint and use a wood consolidant and epoxy filler to repair the areas of deterioration, such as the bottom of the door leaf and frame. Provide new metal screen.
Cost: \$2,000.

1862 CHURCH, LOW PRIORITY

Paint metal gates located at the front door. Use a rust-inhibiting paint product.

Cost: \$500.

If a lift is on-site for other work, replace wood damaged or missing wood shingles.

Cost: \$1,000.

1894 CHURCH

1894 CHURCH, HIGH PRIORITY

Our assessment concludes that these items are of high priority and should be immediately be considered by the Valley Grove Preservation Society.

Where paint is peeling, carefully scrape the deteriorated paint from trim and use a wood consolidant and epoxy filler to repair the areas of deterioration, such as at the ends of the corner boards. Repaint with a durable exterior paint to match existing colors.

Cost: \$4,000. (Due to location at bell tower)

At the windows, scrape loose paint and use a wood consolidant and epoxy filler to repair the areas of deterioration, such as bottom of trim and sash. Install new glazing putty and repaint. Replace any broken glazing. Replace any broken or missing window components.

Cost: \$5,000.

Re-attach downspout at the south façade. Clean all downspouts and gutters. Extend the length of the downspouts in all locations to drain water away from the foundations. Provide additional soil to slope grade from building foundation.

Cost: \$3,000.

1894 CHURCH, MEDIUM PRIORITY

Repair parging at foundation. This work should be completed after the downspouts and grading have been addressed. Remove loose parging and apply new parging to match existing color, texture and surface application.

Cost: \$5,000.

At the doors, scrape loose paint, and use a wood consolidant and epoxy filler to repair the areas of deterioration, such as the bottom of the door leaf and frame.

Cost: \$2,000.

Clean wood trim. Repaint wood trim at interior windows.

Cost: \$1,000.

1894 CHURCH, LOW PRIORITY

Repair plaster on chimney at the corner of the sanctuary and paint.

Cost: \$1,000.

Remove failing wall paper at the ceilings of the back rooms, repair plaster as required, and repaper or if evidence exists, paint.

Cost: \$5,000.

If a lift is on-site for other work, replace damaged or missing wood shingles.

Cost: \$1,000.

Valley Grove Churches Cost Estimate

1862 Church

High Priority

1	Remove vegetation	1,000
2	Repair windows	4,500
3	Extend downspouts, slope grade	3,000
	Total	\$8,500

Medium Priority

1	Repair "plastering" at exterior	50,000
2	Provide new concrete stair at rear	3,000
3	Paint exterior	8,000
4	Repair doors	3,000
	Total	\$64,000

Low Priority

1	Paint metal gates at front door	500
2	Replace damaged shingles	1,000
	Total	1,500
	Total	\$74,000

1894 Church

High Priority

1	Remove vegetation	1,000
2	Repair windows	7,700
3	Extend downspouts	3,000
4	Paint partial exterior	4,000
	Total	\$15,700

Medium Priority

1	Repair parging at foundation	5,000
2	Repair doors	2,000
3	Repaint interior windows	1,000
	Total	\$8,000

Low Priority

1	Repair plaster at chimney	1,000
2	Remove wallpaper, paper or paint	5,000
3	Replace damaged shingles	1,000
	Total	7,000
	Total	\$30,700

Buildings Together

High Priority Items for 1862 and 1894 Churches	24,200
20% Contingencies	4,840
Total Construction Cost	29,040
Architectural Fees	5,808
Total Project Cost	\$34,848

Medium Priority Items for 1862 and 1894 Churches	58,000
20% Contingencies	11,600
Total Construction Cost	69,600
	13,920
Total Project Cost	\$83,520

Low Priority Items for 1862 and 1894 Churches	8,500
	1,700
Total Construction Cost	10,200
	2,040
Total Project Cost	\$12,240

Grand Total Project Cost	\$130,608
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

MacDonald & Mack Architects, along with Valley Grove Preservation Society volunteers, consulted a variety of sources in the preparation of this report.

REPOSITORIES REFERENCED

During the course of this study, researchers utilized files and archives found at the following repositories:

The Minnesota Historical Society

The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office

The Norwegian-American Heritage Association (NAHA) at Saint Olaf College

Valley Grove Preservation Society archives.

PRIMARY SOURCES

The following documentary sources were most helpful in determining the history and physical provenance of the Valley Grove Churches near Nerstrand, Minnesota:

Valley Grove Ladies Aid ledger, held at NAHA.

Valley Grove Church minutes, held at NAHA.

Correspondence between Lucius Smith and Osmund Ause, attorneys at law in the court proceedings regarding the ownership and fate of the two churches immediately after the congregation disbanded in 1974. Found in the Valley Grove Preservation Society archives.

OTHER SOURCES CONSULTED

Historic articles from the *Nerstrand Herald*, the *Northfield News*, and the *Northfield Times*, as noted in the text. Many are undated clippings held in the archives of the Valley Grove Preservation Society.

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Bruce, G. M. *A Brief History of Valley Grove Lutheran Church*. Nerstrand, Minnesota: Valley Grove Church, 1953. Available online at <http://valleygrovemn.com/historyBrief.cfm> (link current as of 17 October 2013)

Weintraub, Elizabeth, Lola Schoenrich, and Katie Davidson. "Wheeling Township and Nerstarand: Landmark of the Past, Symbol of the Future." Pages 65-70 in *Case Studies of Sustainability in Rural Minnesota Communities*. Saint Paul: The Minnesota Project, 2001.

APPENDIX A

IMAGES



Figure 1: 1894 Church; Contemporary View



Figure 2: 1894 Church Historic View



Figure 3: Example of damaged parging at foundation wall. Note the deteriorated mortar joints behind the parging that should also be repaired.



Figure 4: Basement of Church showing masonry walls and floor structure.



Figure 5: This photograph shows the precast concrete stair that is pulling away from the structure and the downspout that needs to be extended to move water away from the foundation.



Figure 6: This photograph shows the deteriorated paint at the corner boards and window trim.



Figure 7: This image of the corner shows the trim pulling apart, at a location that is vulnerable to water infiltration.



Figure 8: This photograph show a missing wood shingle at the roofs edge, and the masonry chimney.



Figure 9: This photograph show the upper downspout that is not connected, allowing water to run down the siding.



Figure 10: These are the front entry doors; there is damage at the bottom edge of each door leaf.



Figure 11: This photograph shows an broken muntin at one of the windows.



Figure 12: This photograph shows deteriorated paint and wood at an interior window.



Figure 13: This photograph shows the front entry and the stairs to the balcony. Note the bead-board wainscot, and the five paneled wood door and wood floor.



Figure 14: This photograph shows the chancel area of the sanctuary.



Figure 15: This photograph is looking back to the front entry, showing the balcony above.



Figure 16: This photograph shows the ceiling condition in the balcony; missing ceiling tile and water damage.



Figure 17: This photograph show the corner of the Sanctuary, near the organ, where the chimney comes through the space. There is damage on the plaster, due to condensation from the furnace.



Figure 18: 1864 Church Contemporary View



Figure 19: 1864 Church Historic View



Figure 20: This photograph shows an area of floor structure repair. This gives a view of the inside of the foundation and the historic floor structure.



Figure 21: This photograph of the rear of the Church shows the areas of masonry repairs that have been completed in the past. Note the concrete stair and stoop that are deteriorated.



Figure 22: This photograph shows a close up view of an area that was patched, that is failing and the rubble stone wall beneath. Note the missing mortar at the mortar joints.



Figure 23: This photograph shows an opening at the foundation to the crawl space below. The grating that is in-place is not adequate to keep critters from occupying the space. Provide new grating within the opening to vent the crawl space but prevent entry.



Figure 24: This photograph shows the upper windows at the front entry; historic photographs show that the brick portion above the windows would have been "plastered" as the walls.



Figure 25: This photograph shows the corner intersection of the roof where the gutter ends. The wood trim is very deteriorated and the paint is failing.



Figure 26: This photograph shows a portion of the roof ridge where the shingles are pulling apart. It appears that a repair had been previously attempted.



Figure 27: This photograph shows the gutter and one downspout on the north façade. Note the short length of downspout that allows water to drain down the side of the wall and not away from the building.



Figure 28: This photograph show the membrane roof and access hatch at the cupola level.



Figure 29: This photograph show typical window condition: cracked and deteriorated stone sill, deteriorated frame and sash, cracked or missing glazing putty, and deteriorated paint.



Figure 30: This is a close up view of the corner of a window frame and sash.



Figure 31: This photographs show the interior of the 1864 Church, near the front entry. The ships ladder at the back leads to the balcony level.



Figure 32: This photograph shows interior of the wall with a portion of the plaster removed, the masonry was repointed and the wall re-plastered. This gives some indication of what the exterior walls may look like without the "exterior plastering".



Figure 33: This photograph shows the balcony level before the ceiling between the railing was removed.



Figure 34: This historic view of the interior shows the balcony open to the ceiling above.



Figure 35: This photograph shows the “kitchen” area, located behind the screen wall to the right.

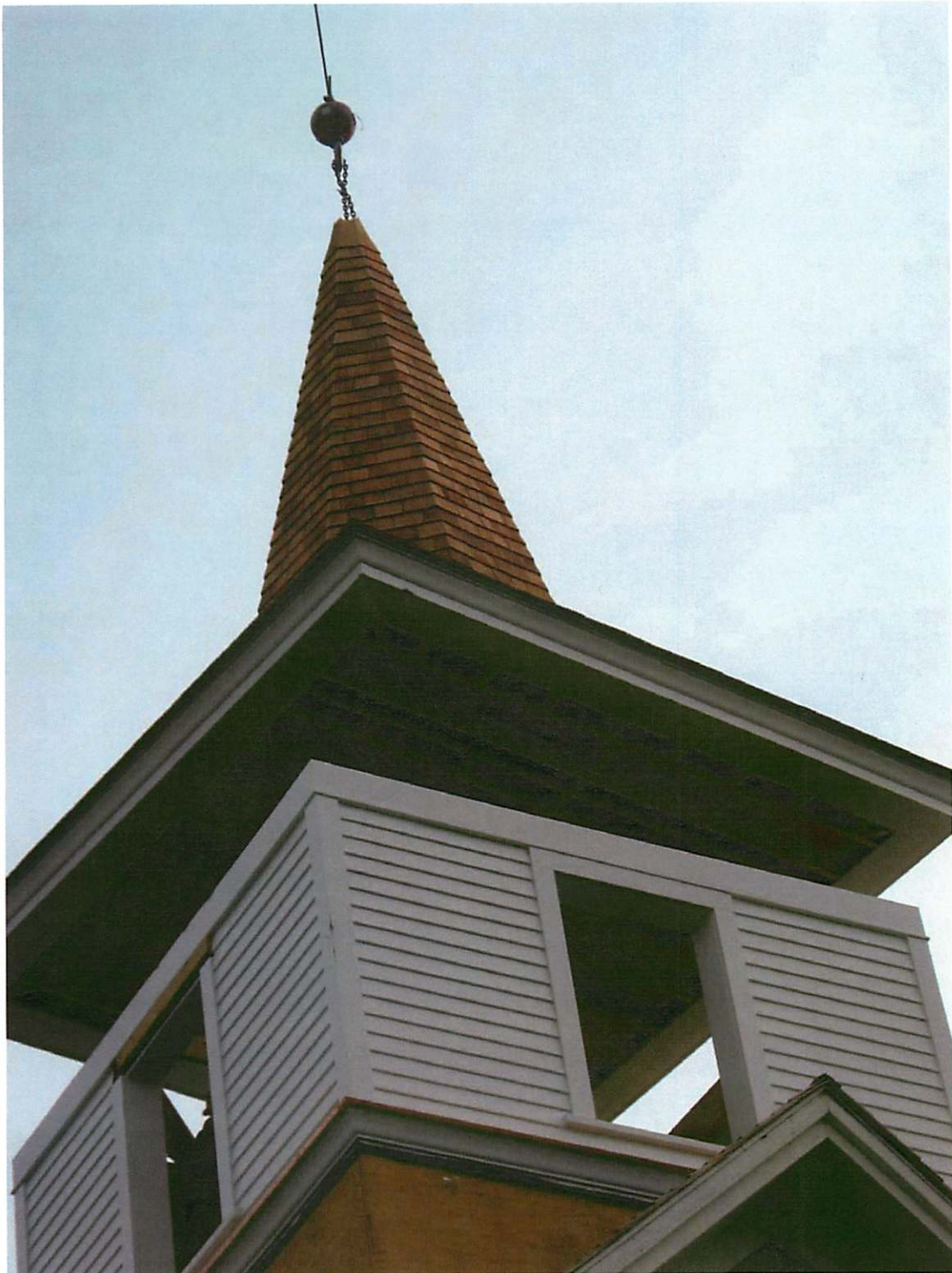
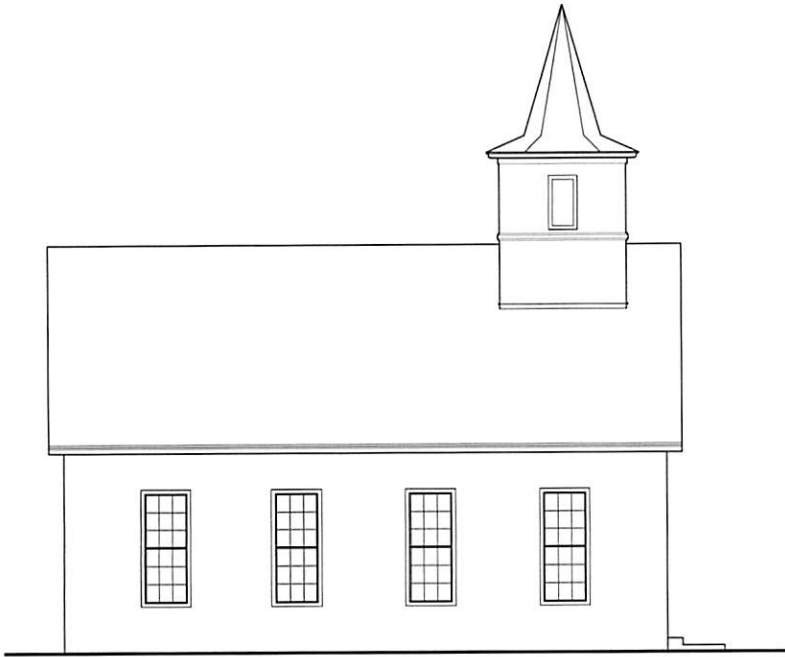


Figure 36: This photograph shows the new cupola structure being installed. The cupola is all new material.

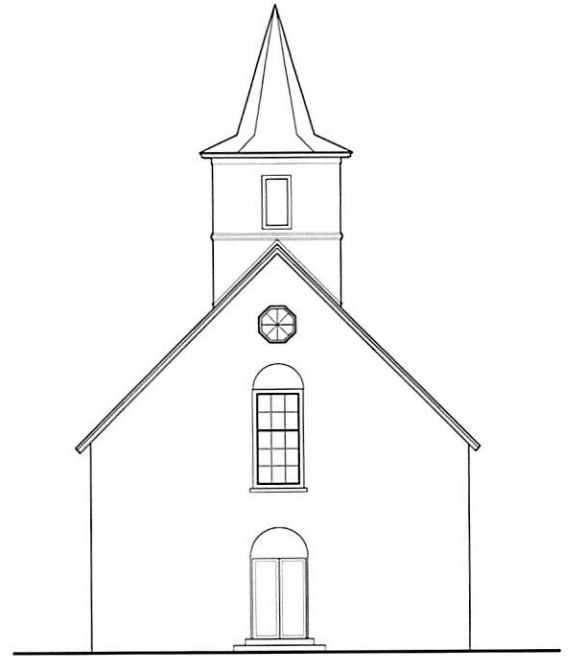
APPENDIX B

FLOOR PLANS AND ELEVATIONS



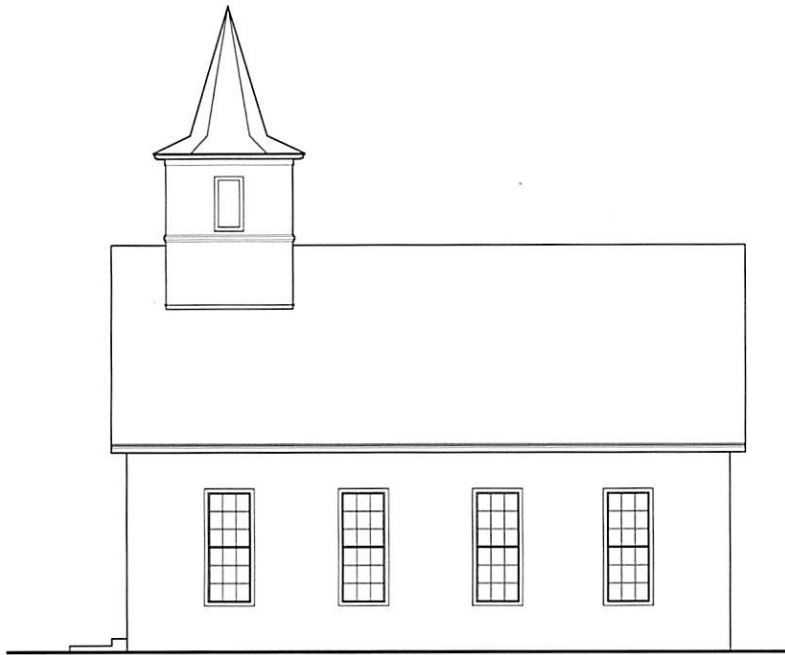
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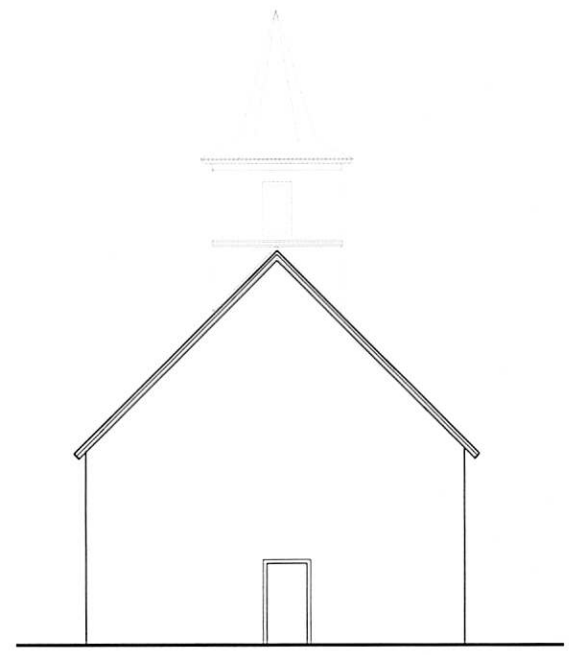
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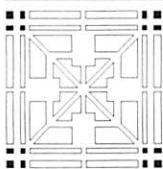
3 | South Elevation

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4 | East Elevation

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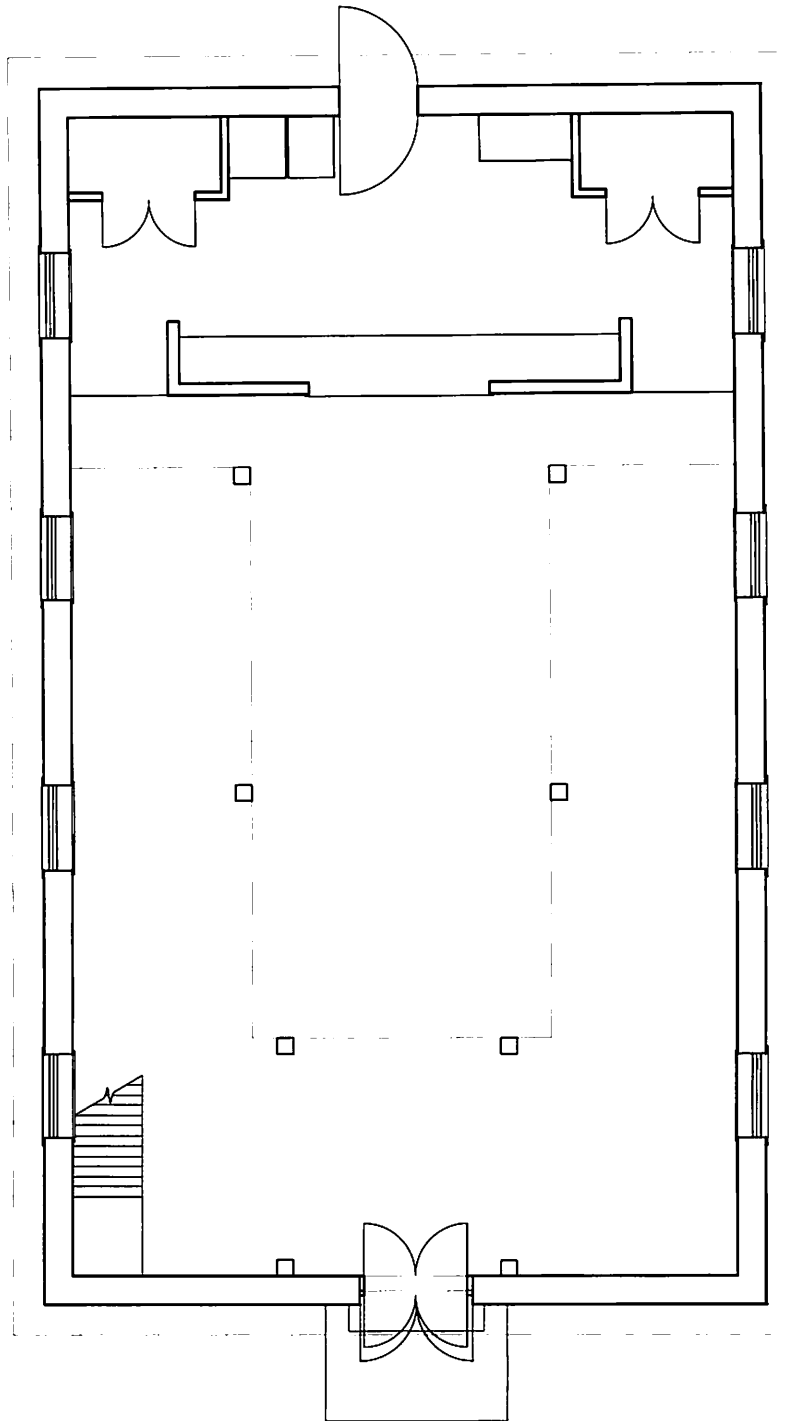
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ARCHITECTS

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Valley Grove Churches
1862 Building Exterior Elevations

DATE 11.01.2012
REVISED

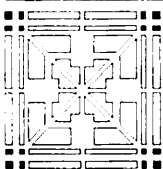
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1 First Floor Plan

1/8"=1'-0"



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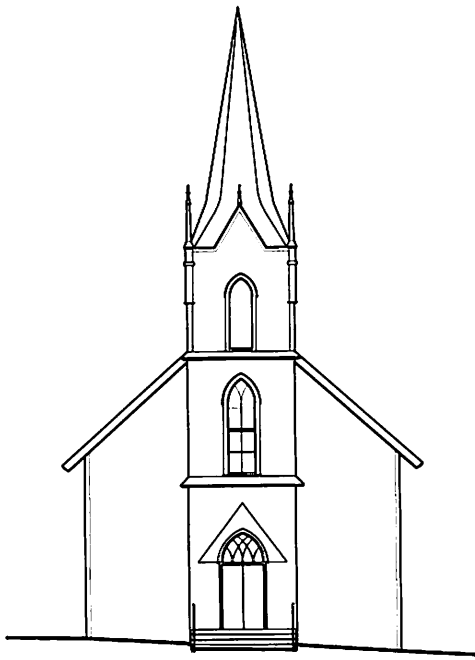
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Valley Grove Churches
1862 Building Plan

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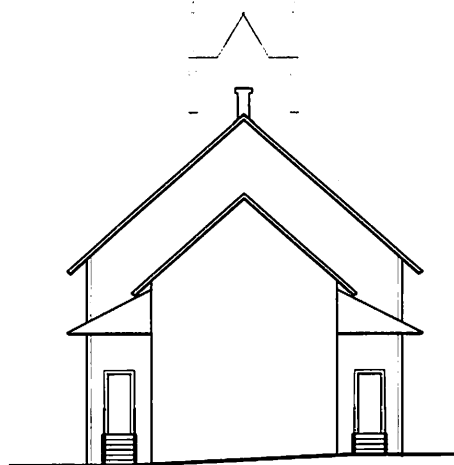
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2 North Elevation

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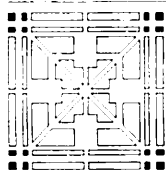
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4 South Elevation

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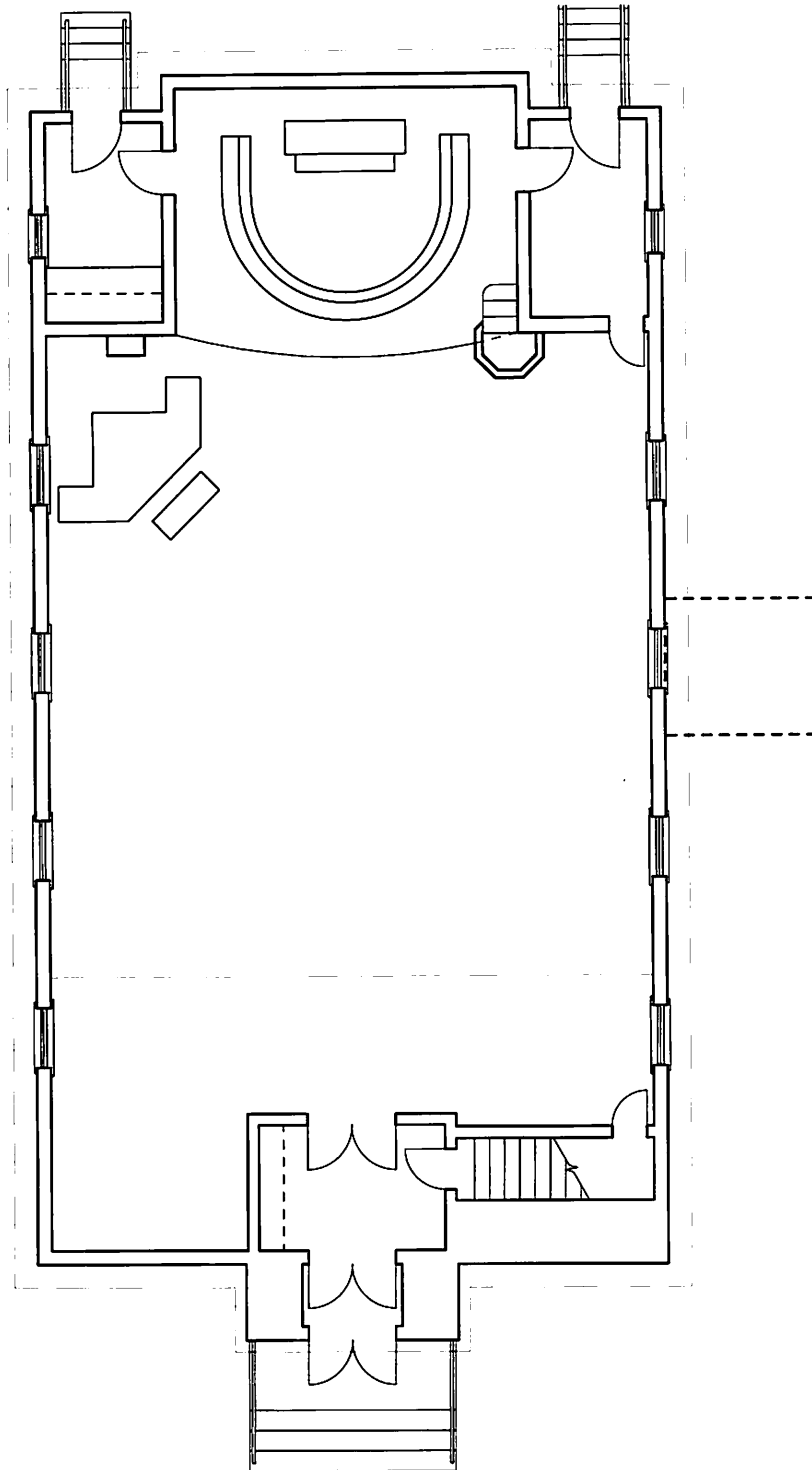
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Valley Grove Churches
1894 Building Exterior Elevations

DATE 11.01.2012
REVISED

DRAWN
APPROVED

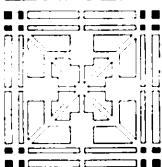
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2 ←

1 | First Floor Plan

3/32"=1'-0"



MACDONALD & MACK
ARCHITECTS

400 SOUTH FOURTH STREET STE 712 MINNEAPOLIS MINNESOTA 55415
P 612 341 4051 • F 612 337 5843 • WWW.MMARCHITD.COM

Valley Grove Churches
1894 Building Plan

DATE 11.01.2012
REVISED

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APPENDIX C

FULL CHRONOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT AND NOTABLE EVENTS
AS COMPILED BY THE VALLEY GROVE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Valley Grove Timeline

year	church	decription	cost	location	source
1858	1862	June 18th 1858 baptizes 33 under a tree near Valley Grove - After the			
1858	1862	congregation was organized they planned to build a church. This was to be			
1858		accomplished by each one bringing two timbers. However the hard times of the			
1858		Civil War intervned and these first plans were postponed. With a new pastor			
1858		the immediate need was for a parsonage. structure measuring 18 x 26 feet			
1858		was begun in 1859 Source Holden Lutheran Church History 1856 - 1981			
1862	1862	limestone for construction was available within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of the site			
1862	1862	white and red sand was available within less than a mile from church site			
1864	1862	Cost of Stone church was \$1,200. Norsk Lutherske Menigheter i Amerika 1843-1916, vol.	1200.00		
1864	1862	1, Samlet AV Pastor O.M. Norlie, p.471 Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, MN, 1918.			
1866	1862	The board we found in 2007 saying "Anton do it like this" with a drawing of a rooster finial			
1866		Only Anton we found was Anton Aastad whos death was in 1877 and buried in Vang cemetery			
1866		Vang is located about 6 miles from VG and was built during the same period -no census data			
1866		Anton could have been a metal worker due to the metal rooster			
1866	1862	In 2007 the orignal cupola was removed. The orignal colors of this cupola were found while			
1866		removing the some of white siding installed in the 1930s Color match using "Benjamin Moore"			
1866		pallet of historic paints, it was determined the cupola was "cottage red" and the			
1866		shutters were "essex green".			
1868	1862	Stone church was dedicated Oct 1868 from 1976 History of Nerstrand			
1870	1862	The church name was changed from Tyske Grove to Valley Grove			
1875	1862	Bell bought from The Jones & Co Troy Bell Foundry 1/21/1875 1433 lbs NY	568.38	NAHA	bill
1875		warranted not to break for one year "conical rotary yoke." before railroad to Nerstrand			
1894	1894	Original contract \$2,975 extras \$42 front vestibule, stairs & chimney graining			
1894	1894	moving pulpit - supplier Solberg & Veblen Blooming Prairie, MN			
1894	1894	Bell moved from 1862 church to the 1994 church via scaffold			
1895	1862	Remembrance from Donald Hope of 1862 church			
1895		Story goes that a farmer wanted to tear down the stone church to reclaim			
1895		the materials so he could build a barn. Managed to take off the rear wood			
1895		shed before he was stopped.			
1895	1862	Building given to the Ladies Aid they had the ceiling dropped and a area on the			
1895	1862	east was made into a kitchen "A History of Nerstrand 1976"			
1895	1894	small organ was moved from stone church to wood church		NAHA	church minutes
1895	1894	Alter Oil painting had changes made - minister was unhappy with orignal		NAHA	church minutes
1897	1862	repair on tower		NAHA	church minutes
1900	1894	repairs on small organ		NAHA	church minutes
1901	1862	repairs on tower		NAHA	church minutes

Valley Grove Timeline

year	church	decription	cost	location	source
1902	1894	exterior of clap board church was repainted		NAHA	church minutes
1905	1862	Spir was taken down		NAHA	church minutes
1905	1862	building was made ready for church school pews were cut down for desks		NAHA	church minutes
1905	1894	new fir floor was installed and oiled with dust less oil that lasted until 2008		NAHA	church minutes
1910	1894	Old pupit was to be sold to a church in Rochester - did not say they had a new		NAHA	church minutes
1911	1894	7/5/11 lightning struck church steeple		MNHS	Ners. Harald
1911	1894	Organ Manuals 1, Stops 8, Action mechanical, slider chests Geo Kilgen & Son			Ners. 1976 book
1911	1894	Pipe organ brought from St.Louis, MO approx \$1000.00 shipped to Nerstrand by			
1911	1894	train, crated in pieces, than trannsferred by horse & sleigh in the winter to the			
1911	1894	church where it was built in place. plumped by hand			
1911	1894	No account of the organ in church papers but bought by the ladies of the church			
1912	1894	got payment from insurance for lightning damage	90.00	NAHA	church minutes
1912	1894	varnish the floors and pews and also install carpet in the sacristy		NAHA	church minutes
1916	1894	were talking about the cost of digging a cellar for a furance		NAHA	church minutes
1927	1894	work on church-labor/material/curtains	199.20	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1927	1862	repair work on old church	34.15	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1928	1862	work on kitchen in old church-material, labor, kitchen range	36.25	NAHA	LA Ledger
1929	1862	paint for old church (kitchen floor-noted in "Composition" book)	6.95	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1931	1862	motion passed to keep cupola of the 1862 building (OC) 1/27/31		NAHA Box 4	church minutes
1931	1862	repair/ OC roof, windows, stove pipe, doors screens, paint, labor,	151.28	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1931	1894	nc chimney material;pipes, roofing, materials, labor	152.20	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1932	1894	new church book racks	19.00	NAHA 13c	LA F1
1935		buy land in line with west cemetary fence, due north to road 2/1/35		NAHA Box 4	Folder 5
1935	1862	stove for OC	60.00	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1936	1894	First approuched rural electric -- would need to buy \$3.00 in stock			
1937	1862	painting kitchen in OC (cf. LA 2); adding serving windows? (LA 2 1936)	11.50	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1937	1894	trouble with draft in chimney--need to investigate and remedy 1/19/37		NAHA Box 4	Folder 5
1939	1894	Motions to shingle NC, repair steps, level cemetary for mowing 1/12/39		NAHA Box 4	
1939	1894	electrification of church/Steele Waseca Electric Coop 8/24/39	80.75	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1939	1894	further work/materials (electric work?) 9/21/39	53.32	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1940	1894	Remembrance from Marilyn (Groff) Zielke & Donald Hope of 1894 church			
1940	1894	Large chandelier in center - remembers it could be pulled to adjust the flame			
1940		Knowing Norwegians this had to be from the 1862 church - Lamps hung on			
1940		window jambs - behind them were large circle light reflectors			
1940		Christmas Eve - large tree in front of the alter lite with candles - a man on each			
1940		with a bucket of water and wet rags on long polls			
1941		Motion to provide toilet facilites on VG church yard 1/9/41		NAHA Box 4	Folder 5

Valley Grove Timeline

year	church	decription	cost	location	source
1941		Motion to form cemetary assn. and adopt articles of incorporation 1/23/41		NAHA Box 4	Folder 5
1944	1894	piano / Mrs. Krauss	50.00	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1944	1894	church redecorated/ Thorwald Simonson		NAHA 13c	LA Folder 1
1944	1894	screens for doors		NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1947	1894	candle holders, golden cross (in memory of Pastor Rosenquist-LA F1)	108.00	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1947	1862	stove pipes OC?	6.65	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1947	1862	Shingles on south side replaced - old ones were falling off		NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1948	1862	stove (LA F2-11/12/47-Freeman Stoker coal furnace) gift		NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1949	1862	electric wiring for Old Church/ Halling	177.00	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1949	1862	materials from Lampert yards (OC wiring project?)		NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1949	1862	Motion carried to buy piano for Guild Hall		NAHA 13c	LA F3
1949	1894	7/1949-5/1950 Furnace + lumber for installation	502.88	NAHA Box 5	Folder 11
1949	1894	Church repairs and maintenance	66.45	NAHA Box 5	Folder 11
1950	1862	new oil heater for Guild Hall & committee on repair (OC)		NAHA 13c	LA F1
1950		painting church NC and steeple on old church 10/12/50		NAHA Box 4	File 5
1950		lumber and material 1/27/50		NAHA Box 4	Folder 5
1950	1862	repairs 7/50 through 7/51	33.00	NAHA Box 5	Folder 11
1951	1862	green walls & woodwork, dark green ceiling,gray/yellow kitchen OC		NAHA 13c	LA F1
1951	1862	blinds/ Montgomery Wards	39.19	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1951	1862	repairing and painting OC (same as #55?); already a dropped ceiling? 11/25/51	713.70	NAHA Box 5	Folder 11
1951	1894	redecorating in NC-painting, velvet altar ring, reupholstering (LA F1) 11/25/51	514.52	NAHA Box 5	Folder 11
1951	1894	Chancel was papered florial pattern ceiling was papered			
1951	1894	Pulpit was lowered here say new pastor did not like it so high			
1951	1894	source Donald Hope pastor was Hanson.			
1951	1894	Alter & pupit were painted white - They were a gray marble look as in			
1951	1894	Grace Lurthern Church Nerstrand source was Val Rosenqvist - wife of			
1951	1894	who was worried about the white paint after the death of Pastor Rosenqvist			
1953	1894	repairs (furnace etc) 6/53 - 6/54	52.43	NAHA Box 5	Folder 11
1954	1862	stove and supplies		NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1954		planting-foundation shrubbery around church-1st time		NAHA 13c	LA F1
1954	1894	motor for pipe organ placed under the building near the chimney		NAHA 13c	LA F1
1954	1894	Before the motor the organ was pumped by young boys of the church.			
1954	1894	In the winter, it was the warmest place in the church and many times the boy			
1954	1894	would fall asleep after doing morning chores There is a stop on the organ			
1954	1894	called bellows which was a knocker to alert the pumper			
1955		Annual meeting-purchase of land for road around cemetary	15.85	NAHA Box 4	
1957	1862	refrigerator for Guild Hall (OC)	70.00	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger

Valley Grove Timeline

year	church	decription	cost	location	source
1958	1894	wiring	48.65	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1959	1862	furnace Pipe and repairs/ Larson 8/59-10/59		NAHA Box 5	Folder 11
1959	1894	repair of organ		NAHA 13c	LA F1
1960	1894	furnace parts and repair / Larson		NAHA Box 5	Folder 11
1960	1862	screens		NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1961	1894	repair of pipe organ	250.00	NAHA 13c	LA F1
1961	1894	replace shrubbery 6/19/61	3.00	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1961	1894	furnace pipes/ Zanmiller 9/18/61		NAHA Box 5	Folder 11
1961	1894	interior church painting, material and labor 9/26/61	550.00	NAHA Box 5	Folder 11
1961	1894	ceiling material and labor /Kump Lumber 9/26/61	900.00	NAHA Box 5	Folder 11
1961	1894	cleaning/tuning organ 10/7/61	87.45	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1961	1894	church decorating project (Box 4-church decorating project) 10/9/61	1,997.15	NAHA Box 5	Folder 11
1961	1862	old lamp for Guild Hall	3.65	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1961	1894	accoustial tile installed in ceiling - church interior painted green		NAHA	
1961	1894	While work was being completed - services were held in the stone church			
1961	1894	extensive repairs & redecorating - white acoustical tile ceiling installed by Kump			
1961	1894	walls of the nave were painted a pastel shade of aqua and walls of the chancel			
1961	1894	were painted pink done by Thune decorators of Kenyon source RiceCoHS			
1962	1894	install carpet	65.25	NAHA 13c	LA Ledger
1973		6/21/73 Incorporated Society for the Preservation of the Valley Grove Church Building			
1973		MN Historical Society places both church on the Inventory of Historic Sites			
1975	1894	painting			VG Books
1975	1894	there were storm windows but were removed			
1975	1894	Findings 1/27/1975 from District Court, Third Judicial District, judge Urban J Steimann			Rice Co Courts
1975	1894	in favor of Dedendants Valley Grove - Grace Cemetery Association			
1975	1894	File No. 19461 3/3/75 Hearing on 2/27/75, pursuant tp plaintiff's motion in the alternative for			
1975	1894	amended findings of fact or a new trial. ORDER to settle differences on or before 4/13/75			
1975	1894	Received Perpetual unexclusive easement 5/1/75, Received Bill of Sale for building 5/29/75			
1976	1894	Painting & Attorney fees			VG Books
1980	1894	window glass replacement hail storm broke windows			VG Books
1981	1894	storm windows are missing			VG Books
1981		Feb 1981 Application to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places			
1982	1894	Organ repairs	1175.00		VG Books
1983	1894	Landscaping (trees in front and south side)	766.00		VG Books
1984	1894	repairs & small projects	915.00		VG Books
1985	1894	3/4 quartz rock	157.00		VG Books
1986	1894	Vandalism repairs	316.00		VG Books

Valley Grove Timeline

year	church	decription	cost	location	source
1990	1894	Lutheran Brotherhood	1520.00		VG Books
1991	1894	New roof	4280.00		VG Books
1991	1894	copper cone to replace finial	276.00		VG Books
1992	1894	Steeple repairs, reroof chancel & paint	4568.00		VG Books
1993	1894	Foundation work by Herb & Peter Swedin	1366.00		VG Books
1993	1862	Portland cement on exterior			VG Books
1993	1894	Window repairs	910.00		VG Books
1994	1894	Seamless gutters	430.00		VG Books
1995	1894	move electrical service underground & replace/repair ceiling and walls in nave	1040.00		VG Books
1995	1894	repainted church interior to off white - roof and chimney repairs			VG Books
1996	1862	Repaint steeple	1479.00		VG Books
1996	1894	New Oil furnace and duct work / Security system (1500.00)	4850.00		VG Books
1997	1894	Landscaping	909.00		VG Books
1997	1894	Replace organ blower in dirt basement with new blower in church	1000.00		VG Books
1997	1894	speaker system (353.00) - regrain front inside door & build cabinet for blower	2614.00		VG Books
1997	1894	replace and refinish entrance doors			VG books
1998	1894	fire extinguishers			VG Books
1999	1894	Organ major retune servo switches to large wood pipes	5923.00		VG Books
1999	1894	back concrete steps - precast steps leading out west side doors	1089.00		VG Books
1999		Feb 8, 1999 became a 501 (c) 3 non profit			
2000	1894	carpet covered - furnace grate in center aisle - total aisle carpeted in burgundy	1613.00		VG Books
2000	1894	tune organ	172.00		VG Books
2000		purchase agreement 6/14/2000 3000.00 down to buy 111.acres at \$414750.00			VG Books
2001		1/2/2001 Warranty Deed for land - First Forest Legacy Conservation			VG Books
2001		Easement in MN placed on total acres than sold 59.59 acres			VG Books
2001		52 acres remain VGPS - seeding cost for prairie	31445.00		VG Books
2001		name change Society for the Preservation of the Valley Grove Church Building			VG Books
2001		to Valley Grove Preservation Society			VG Books
2001	1894	Install fir siding & paint All paint was donated be Velspir	12500.00		VG Books
2002		Prairie costs 27 trees	10019.00		VG Books
2002	1894	Steeple renovations new wood finals, trim, siding, paint & cedar shakes	54682.00		VG Books
2002		First well for site 300 feet shakopee 206-300 Jacuzzi pump drop pipe 160'	11319.00		VG Books
2003	1894	Organ overhall 6000.00 donated by Rutz Organ - pitch A438 to A440	5685.00		VG Books
2003		Prairie costs 136 trees, mulch, planting & burn	11086.00		VG Books
2003	1894	Cedar shake roof	36474.00		VG Books
2004		Prairie costs	2806.00		VG Books
2005	1894	Finial built and installed by Lockerby Faribault MN 2/25/05	9852.00		VG Books

Valley Grove Timeline

year	church	description	cost	location	source
2005	1894	Installed new rubber roof below bell in steeple	4500.00		VG Books
2005	1894	renovations & repairs	5100.00		VG Books
2005	1862	Valley Grove - Grace Cemetery Association 50 year lease to VGPS 6/15/05	1.00		VG Books
2007	1862	Cedar shake roof	23340.00		VG Books
2007	1862	Replace steeple to match 1890s photo built off site then installed	95303.00		VG Books
2008	1862	Renovations footings, replace floor joists, 12" centers, remove old kitchen,	72090.00		VG Books
2008	1862	new wiring, remove dropped ceiling add new kitchen area, add stairway			VG Books
2008	1862	interior wall tuck pointing/plastering, paint			VG Books
2008	1862	Rooster Finial built and installed by Lockerby Faribault MN 3/20/2008			VG Books
2010	1894	Replace front steps and railings	2939.00		VG Books
2010		Prairie cost -- burn	2371.00		VG Books
2010	1894	Sound system was installed Pinewood Sound Co (cost)	1500.00		VG Books
2011		Prairie cost -- burn & 10 trees	3955.00		VG Books
2013		all trees around both buildings were removed - planted in mid 1980s			VG Books
2013	1862	Add #2 maple hardwood floor	18000.00		VG Books
2013	1894	Built screen door for back and repaired front screen door - painted doors			VG Books
2013	1894	Sept 2013 LP furnace was installed Lennox ML180UH135E60D-01	3678.00		VG Books
2013	1894	LP installation	378.75		VG Books
2013		Water pump shorted out during winter - new water pump was installed	1231.00		VG Books