

**Development Activities Meeting (DAM)
Monday, September 14, 2026, Zoom**

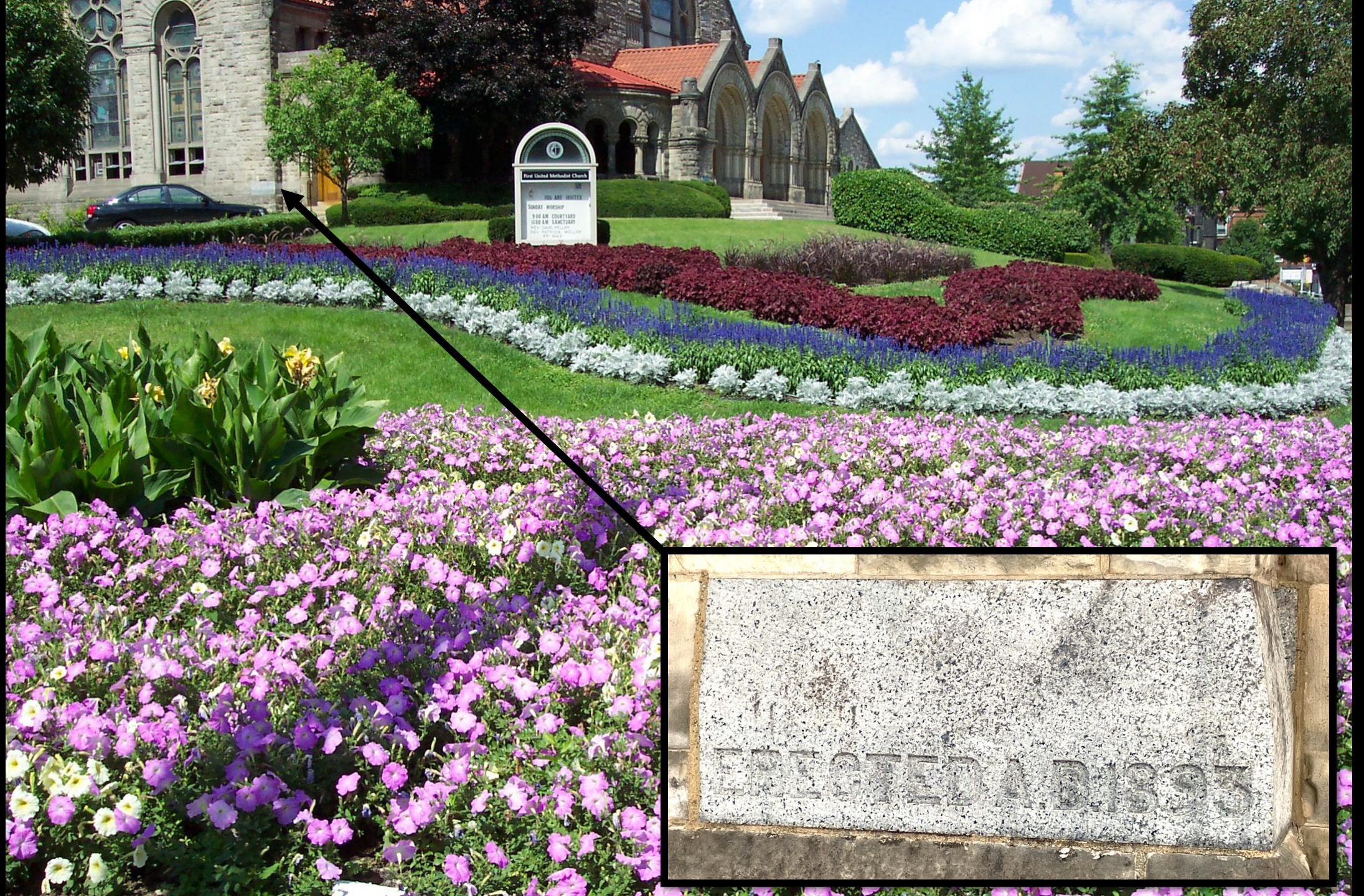
**First United Methodist Church of Pittsburgh
5401 Centre Avenue, 15232**



Congregation Established in Bloomfield in 1892



- Introduction of FUMC Attendees—David H.
- History of FUMC & Its Signs—David H.
- Technical Aspects of Proposed Electronic Sign Inserts—Jeffrey Friedl
- FUMC and East End Communities—Pastor Tracy & Rev. Keller (ret.)
- Theory of Our Case with the ZBA—Peggy Hooker, Member/Attorney
- Supplemental Comments (If Any)--Other FUMC Attendees
- Q&A—Shoshana Davidson



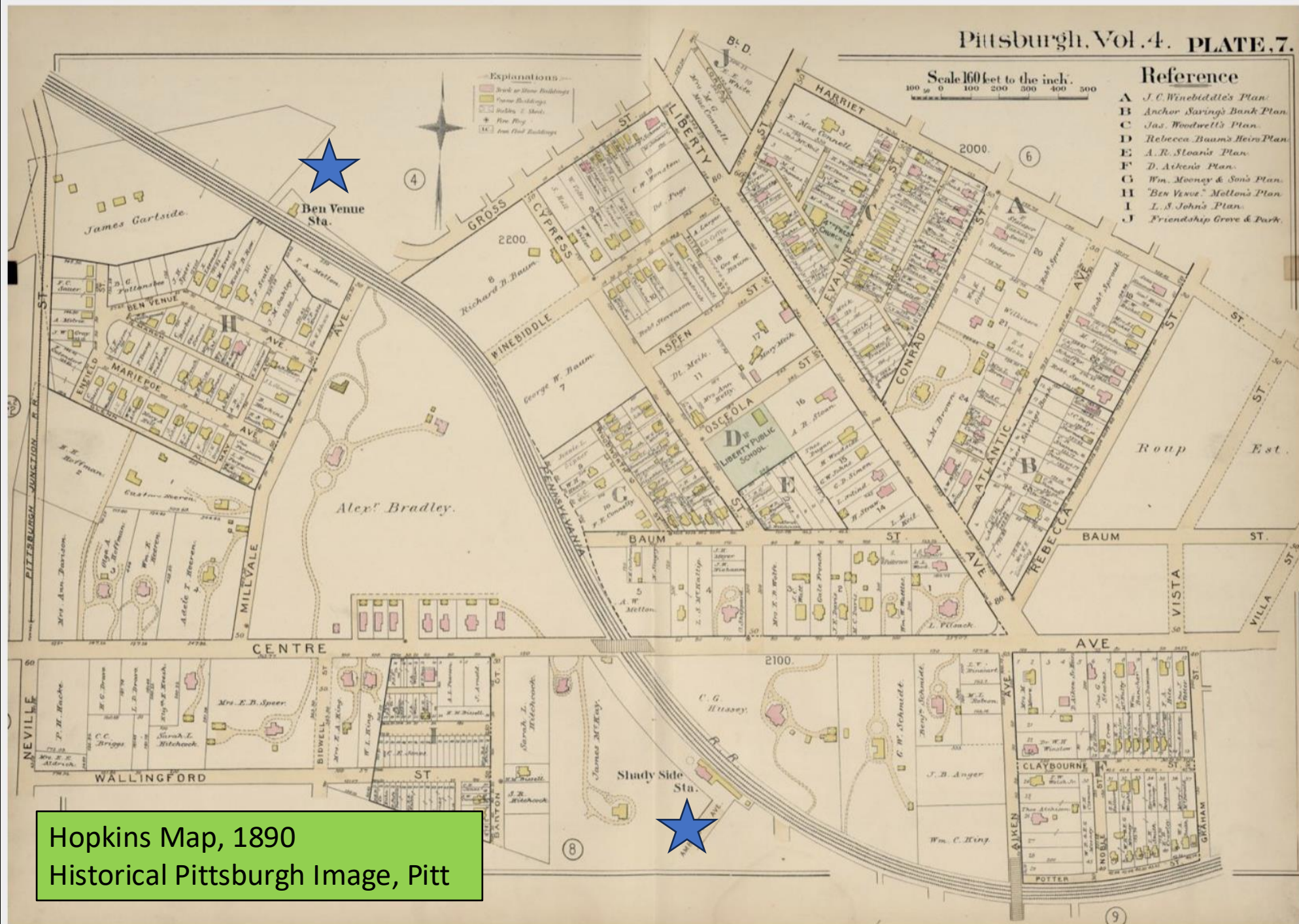


CHRIST M. E. CHURCH ABLAZE.

RAZED BY FIRE

Half a Square of Buildings
Burned Down Last Night

Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette,
Wednesday, May 06, 1891

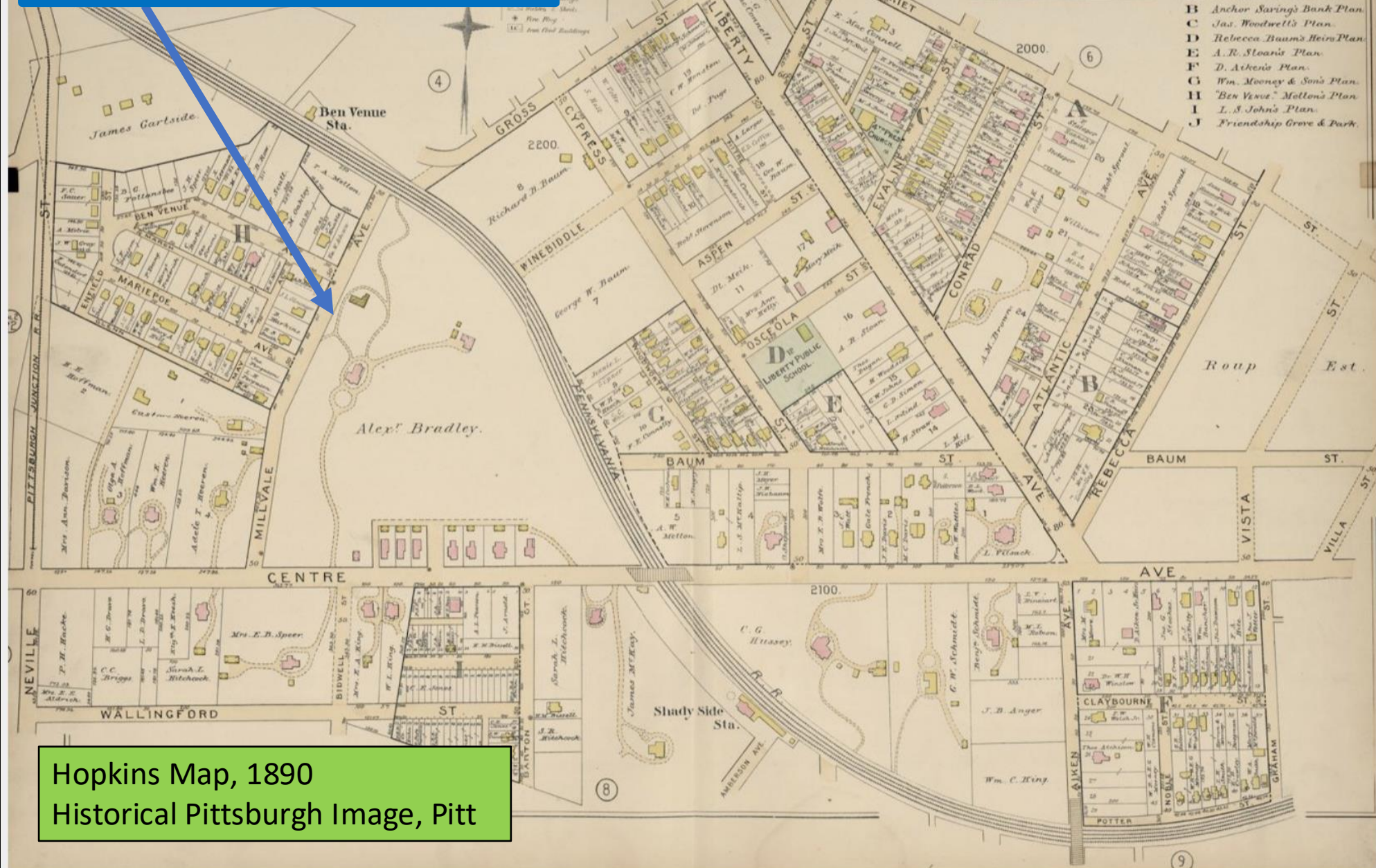


Scale 160 feet to the inch.

Reference

- A J. C. Winebiddle's Plan
- B Anchor Savings Bank Plan
- C Jas. Woodwell's Plan
- D Rebecca Baum's Heirs Plan
- E A. R. Sloan's Plan
- F D. Atkins' Plan
- G Wm. Mooney & Son's Plan
- H "Ben Venue" Mallon's Plan
- I L. S. John's Plan
- J Friendship Grove & Park

East End Estate of Alexander Bradley



Hopkins Map, 1890
Historical Pittsburgh Image, Pitt

East End Estate of Alexander Bradley

Parcel Owned
by John G.
Holmes

IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF
ALEXANDER BRADLEY
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THIS CHURCH FOR THIRTY-FIVE YEARS
BORN OCT. 31. 1812.
DIED AUG. 21. 1899.

IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF
JOHN GRIER HOLMES
PRESIDENT AND TREASURER OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THIS CHURCH
FOR TWENTY ONE YEARS.
BORN JULY 22, 1847.
DIED SEPT. 5, 1904.

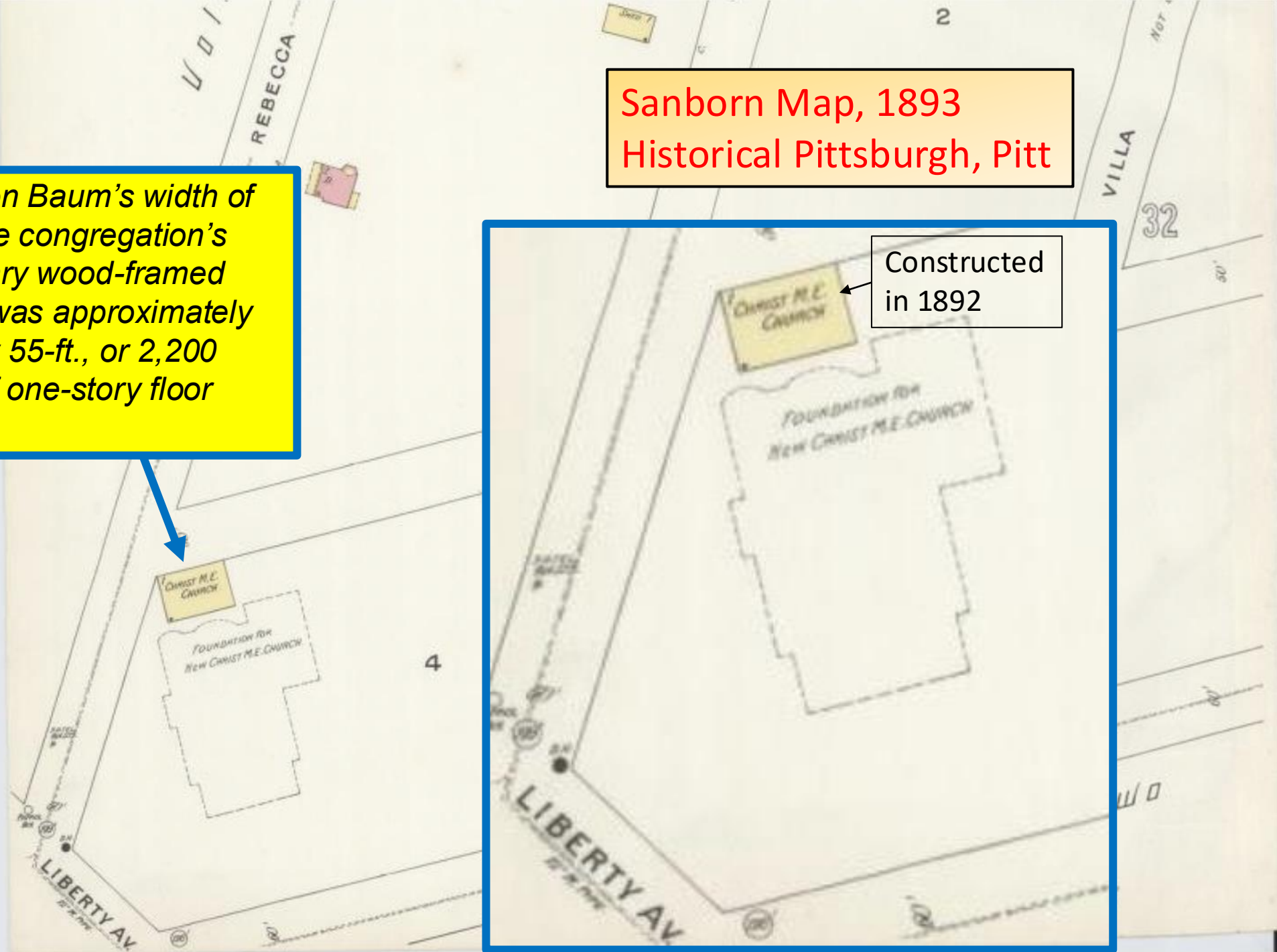
Hopkins Map, 1890
Historical Pittsburgh Image, Pitt

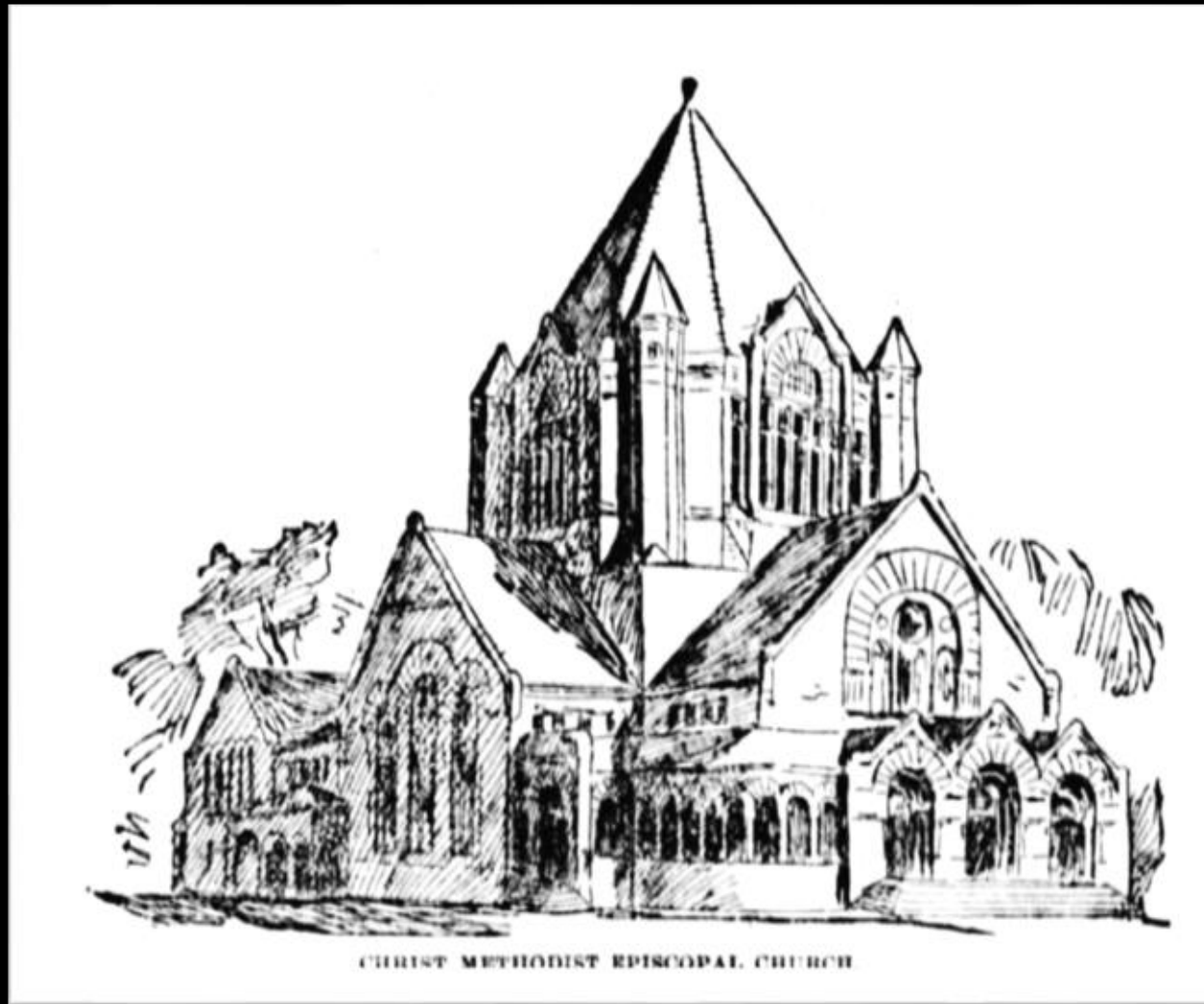
Sanborn Map, 1893
Historical Pittsburgh, Pitt



Sanborn Map, 1893
Historical Pittsburgh, Pitt

Based on Baum's width of 50-ft, the congregation's temporary wood-framed chapel was approximately 40-ft. by 55-ft., or 2,200 sq. ft. of one-story floor area.





Earliest-Know Published Image or Drawing of George Washington Kramer's 1893 Pittsburgh Church. From Anonymous, "City Architecture . . . The New Christ M. E. Church – It Will be One of the Finest Edifices in the Country - Some of the Salient Features," *The Pittsburgh Press*, Sunday, January 21, 1894, p. 15. One can speculate whether Kramer furnished the reporter with his own sketch of the church or the reporter made his own sketch of the building, which was still under construction after its corner stone was laid on May 18, 1893. Kramer's masterpiece was

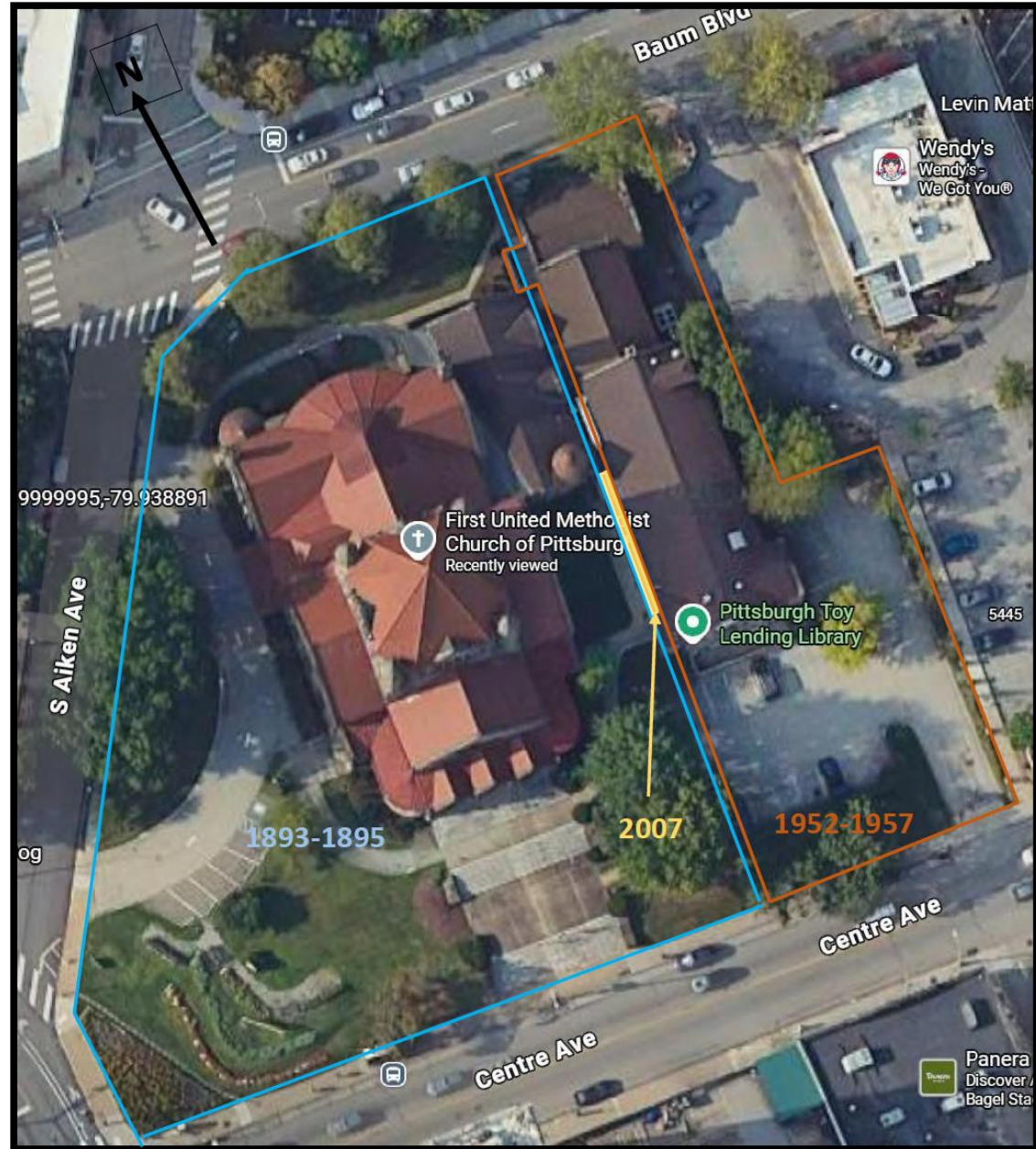
HISTORIC LANDMARK

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
WEARY AND KRAMER, H. WAGONER, ARCHITECTS
1893-95, 1952

PITTSBURGH HISTORY &
LANDMARKS FOUNDATION



FOOTPRINT OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN 2026



Footprint of First United Methodist Church of Pittsburgh with Construction Date Outlines. Source: Google Maps, 2026.

Centre & S. Aiken Sign

Baum Blvd. Sign

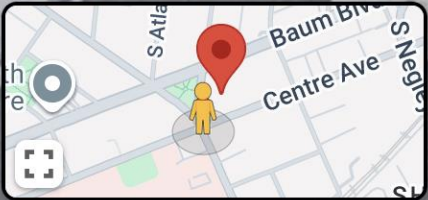


5400 Centre Ave
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

 Google Street View

Nov 2024 [See more dates](#)

 Share 

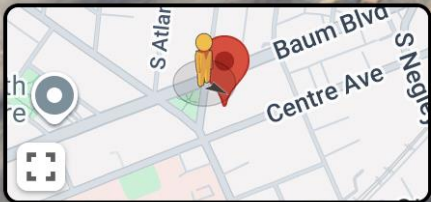


5399 Lincoln Hwy
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Google Street View

Nov 2024 See more dates

Share



Google Maps





Church Sign

Centre Avenue Approaching Liberty Avenue, 1920
City Photographer Collection, Pitt Archives

Church , pre-1920



Sign



Sign Detail, Facing Centre Ave.



Both Signs

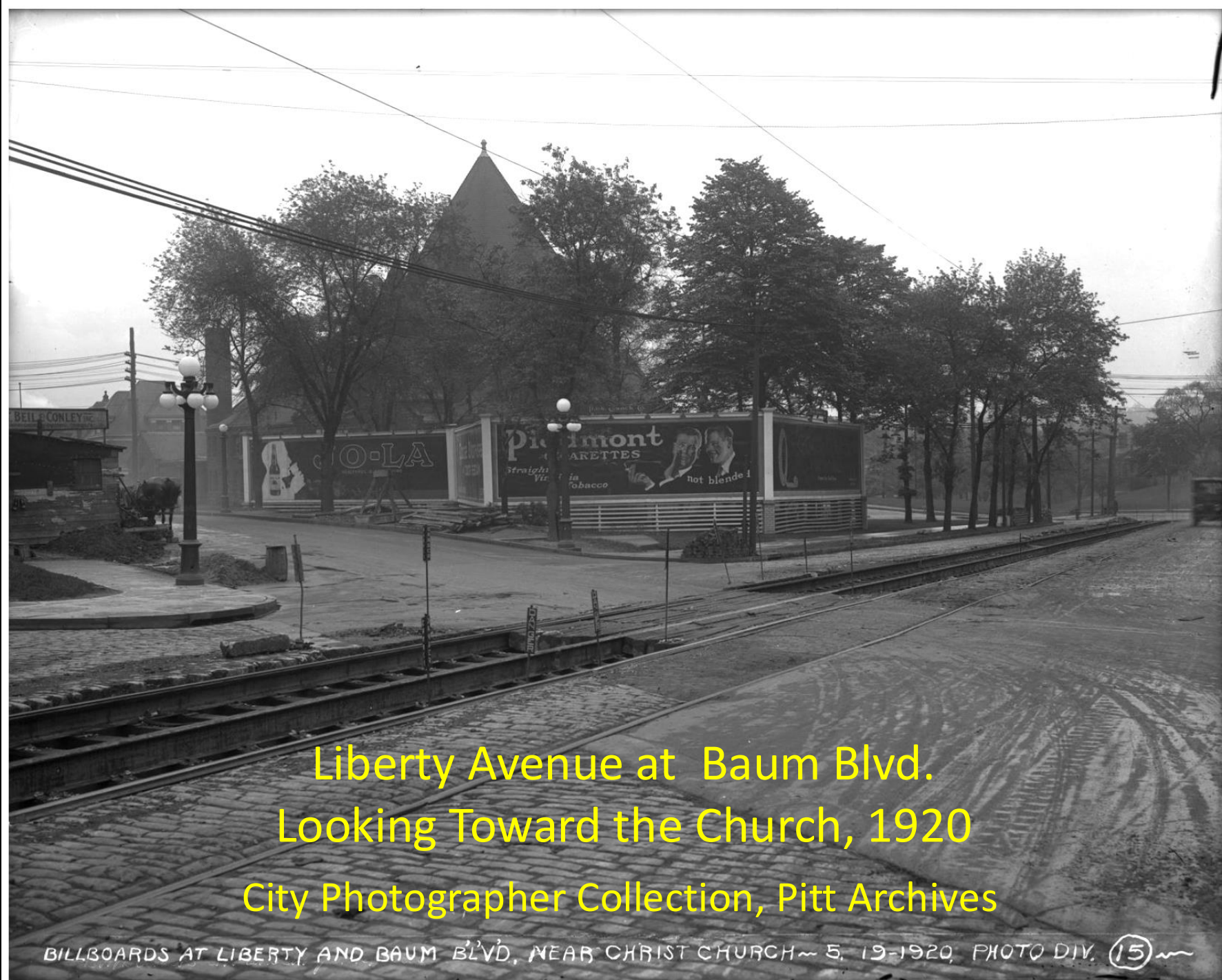
Centre Ave. at S. Aiken & Liberty, Looking East, 1920
City Photographer Collection, Pitt Archives



Both Signs

Detail

Centre Ave. at S. Aiken & Liberty, Looking East, 1920
City Photographer Collection, Pitt Archives



Liberty Avenue at Baum Blvd.
Looking Toward the Church, 1920
City Photographer Collection, Pitt Archives

BILLBOARDS AT LIBERTY AND BAUM BLVD, NEAR CHRIST CHURCH ~ 5. 19-1920, PHOTO DIV. (15) ~



BEIL CONLEY INC.

CO-OLA

Piedmont
CIGARETTES
Straight Virginia Tobacco
not blended

Your

Education Wing Dedication Booklet

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

1956



The FIRST METHODIST CHURCH of PITTSBURGH

Centre and South Aiken Aves. • Pittsburgh 32, Pa.



Sign

Church from Corner of Centre & Liberty at S. Aiken Ave., 1960

Pitt Library's Historic Pittsburgh Digital Archive



Ca. 1965

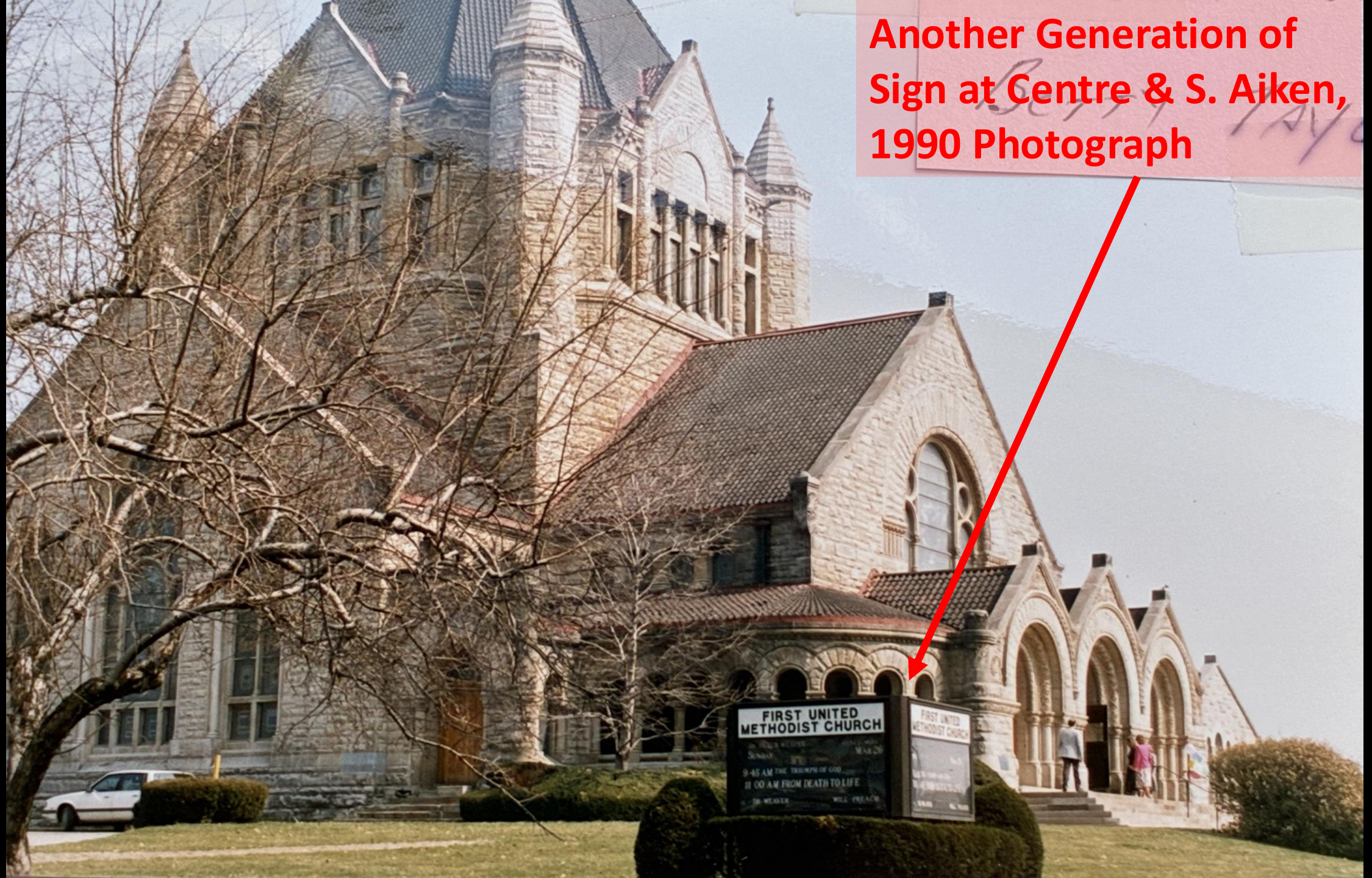


Baum Blvd. Sign



"April 1970"

Another Generation of
Sign at Centre & S. Aiken,
1990 Photograph



FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

WILL PREACH
9-11 AM THE TRIUMPH OF GOD
11-12 PM FROM DEATH TO LIFE
12-1 PM WILL PREACH

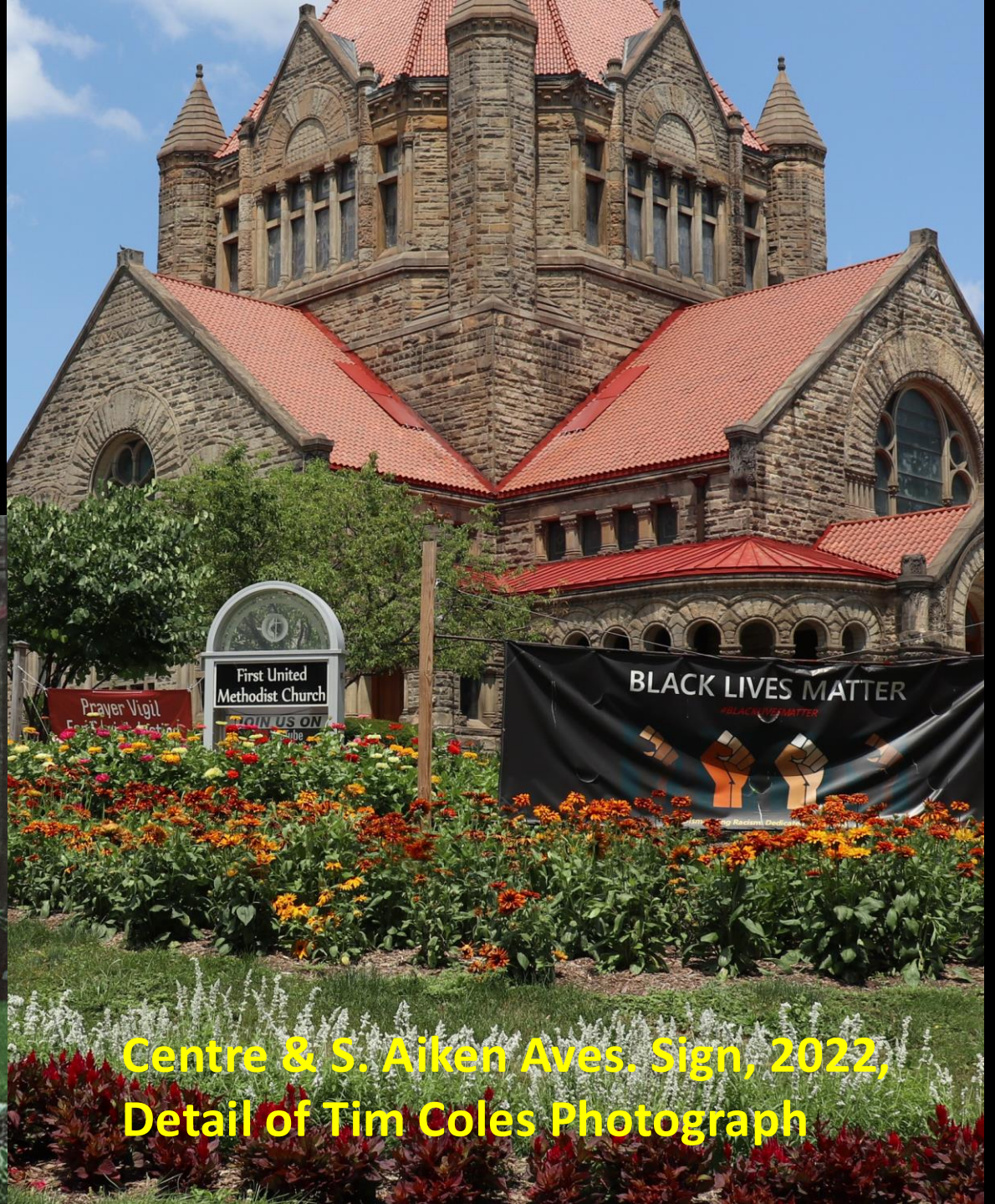
FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

WILL PREACH
9-11 AM THE TRIUMPH OF GOD
11-12 PM FROM DEATH TO LIFE
12-1 PM WILL PREACH

The **Signs in Question**, Installed in Late 1999, Illuminated Messaging Openings (4-ft. x 4-ft.) with Flat Panels of Text Inserted at the Backs of the Signs. Church's Name Appears on a Plexiglass Front Panels.



**Baum Blvd. Sign, 2001
Directory Photograph**

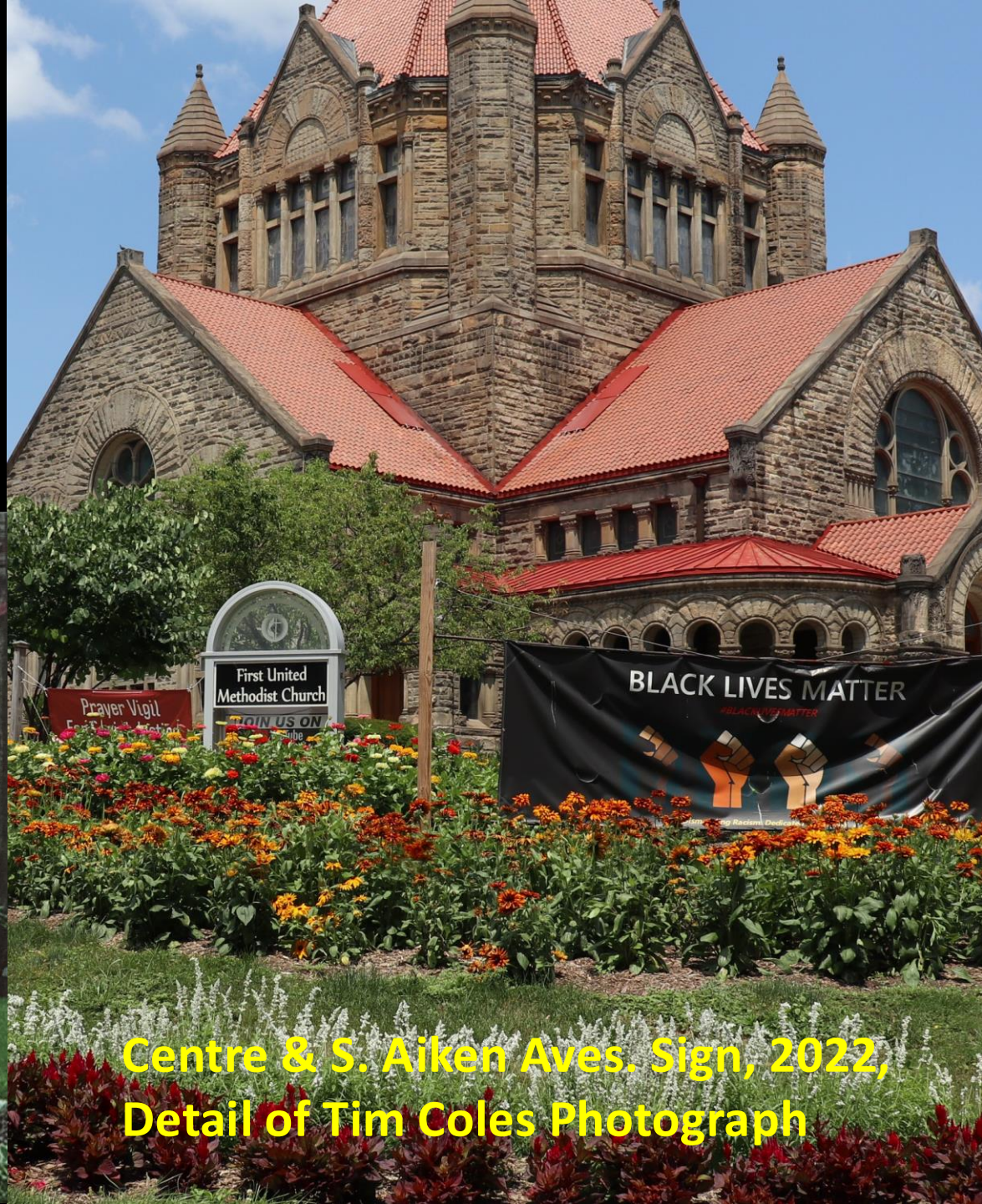


**Centre & S. Aiken Aves. Sign, 2022,
Detail of Tim Coles Photograph**

The **Signs in Question**, Installed in Late 1999,
Illuminated Messaging Opening (4-ft. x 4-ft.) with Flat
Panels of Text Inserted against the Backs of the Sign.
Church's Name Appears on a Plexiglass Front Panel.



**Baum Blvd. Sign, 2001
Directory Photograph**



**Centre & S. Aiken Aves. Sign, 2022,
Detail of Tim Coles Photograph**



**Before and After Snapshots of Baum Blvd Sign's Refinishing,
Summer 2026**



Changing-the-Message Demonstration on Refinished Centre & S. Aiken Sign, September 2026 by Manually Flipping an Aluminum Poster Inside the Sign (Normally by Unlocking the Back Door, Opening It, and Sliding It Out, Flipping It, and Re-inserting It, etc.)



Changing-the-Message Del
2026 by Manually Flipping
the Back Door, Opening It,



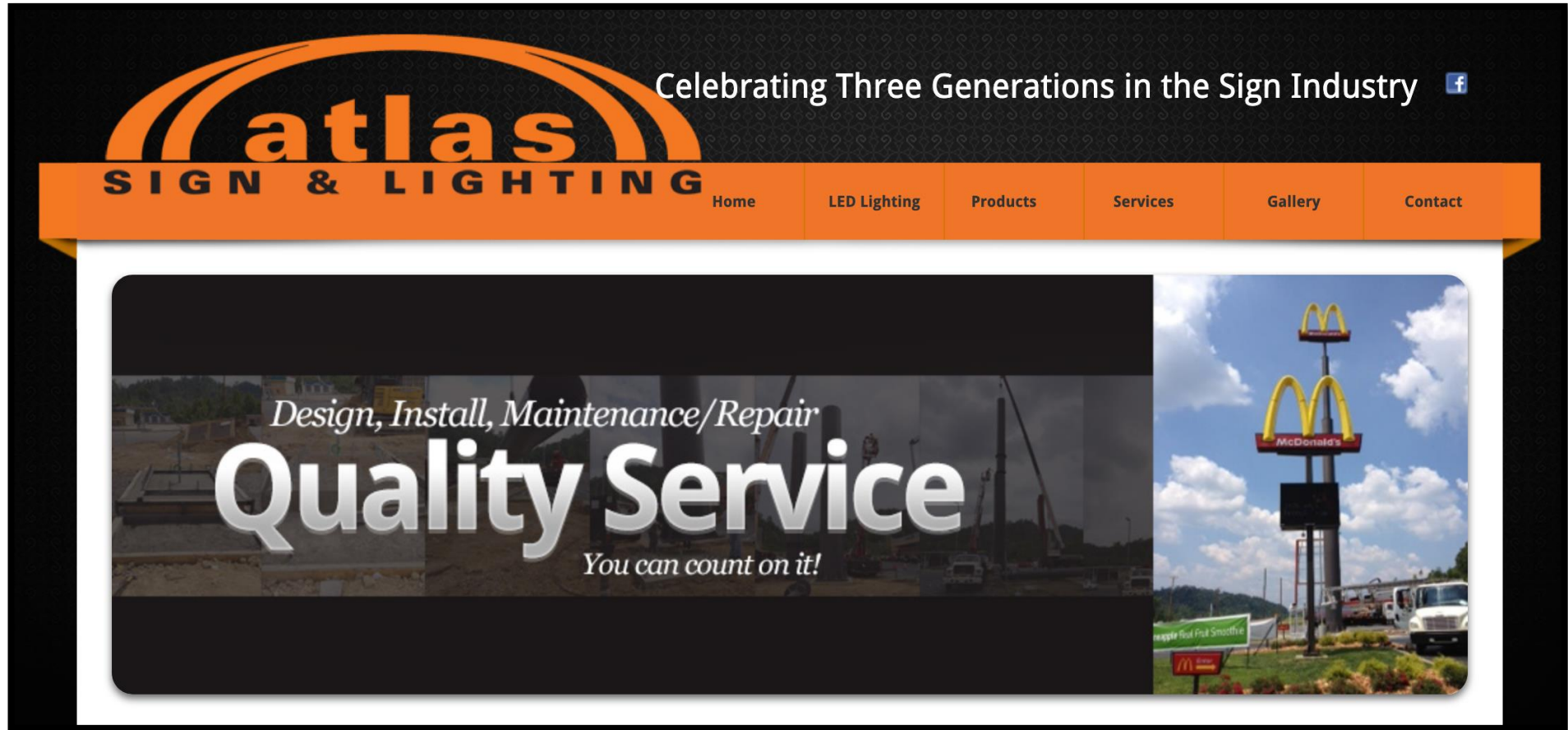
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Sign (Normally by Unlocking
and Re-inserting It, etc.)

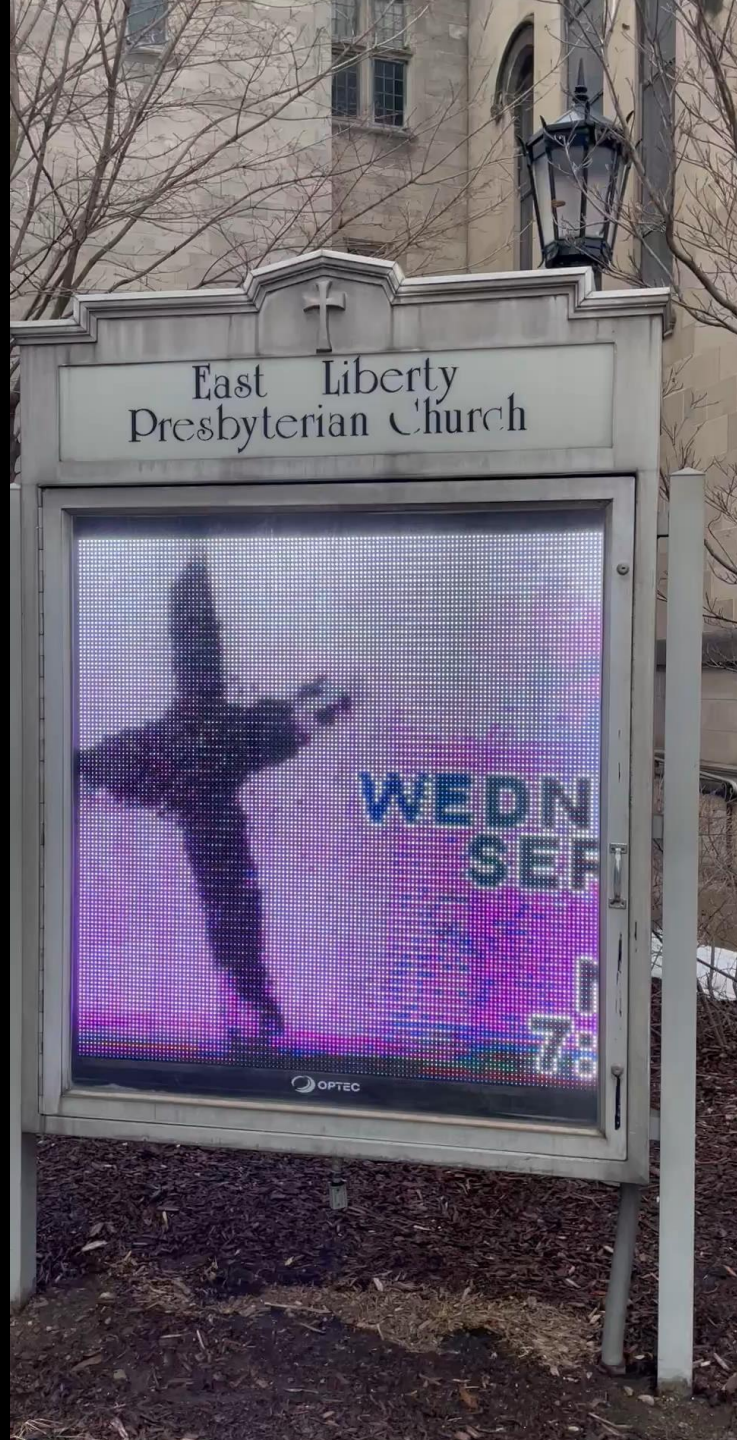


Will First United Methodist Church Be Allowed to Update Its Messaging Technology within Its Existing, Modest Signs?

All About the Proposed Electronic Sign Inserts

Jeffrey Friedl, Owner





Movie! Move your cursor across the image and then press the small start symbol near the bottom of the image.

FUMC AND EAST END COMMUNITIES

Pastor Tracy & Rev. Keller



SOME OF OUR USER GROUPS

- [First Food and Friends](#)—founded by FUMC in 1993
- [Pittsburgh Toy Lending Library](#)—since the early 1980s
- [International Women’s Association of Pittsburgh](#)--since 1997
- [Days for Girls International](#), Pittsburgh Chapter
- [Ikebana Pittsburgh](#)
- Polling site for City, County, State, and Federal Elections [Ward 7, District 3]
- Seven regular weekly *Meetings* of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anon.
- [Ecstatic Dance](#), Pittsburgh Chapter
- [Pittsburgh Equality Center](#)
- [Resonance Works](#)
- [Pittsburgh Recorder Society](#)
- [East End Song Studio Pittsburgh](#)
- [Center For Inclusion Health: Allegheny Health Network](#)—mobile clinics host site

Some Local Organizations That FUMC Supports

- [Casa San José Pittsburgh](#)
- [East End Cooperative Ministry](#)
- [CeaseFirePA](#)
- [Friends of Sabeel North America \(FOSNA\)](#), Pittsburgh

FUMC FALL FESTIVAL

September 20th 9am-3pm

Activities Include

9am

Sunday School

11am

Art Dedication
Worship Service

12noon

Ministry Fair
Food
Games

2pm

Concert with World Premier!

First United Methodist Church
of Pittsburgh

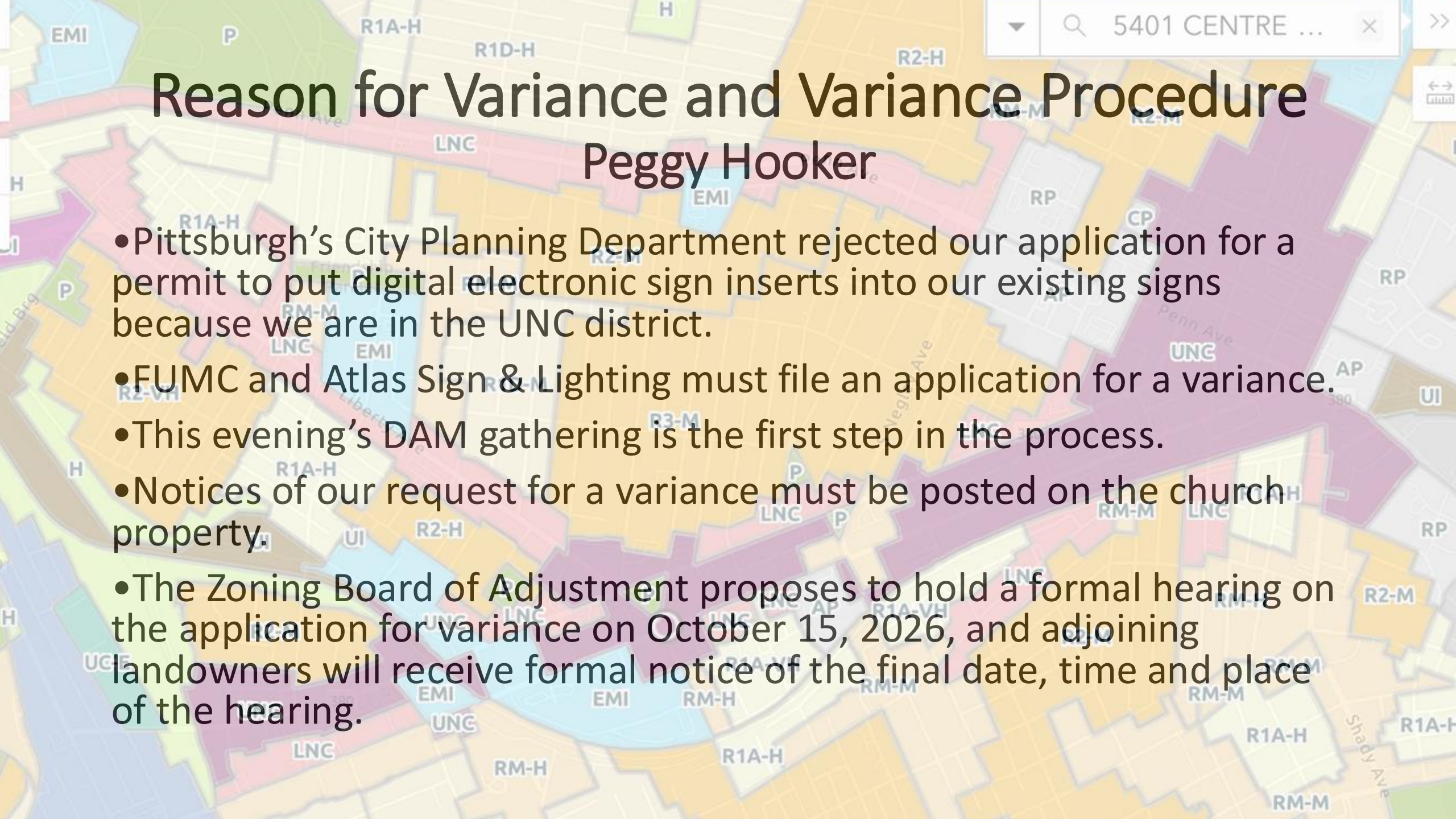
5401 Centre Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15232



For more information and to
see the schedule of events

www.fumcpittsburgh.org/post/fumc-fall-festival-2026

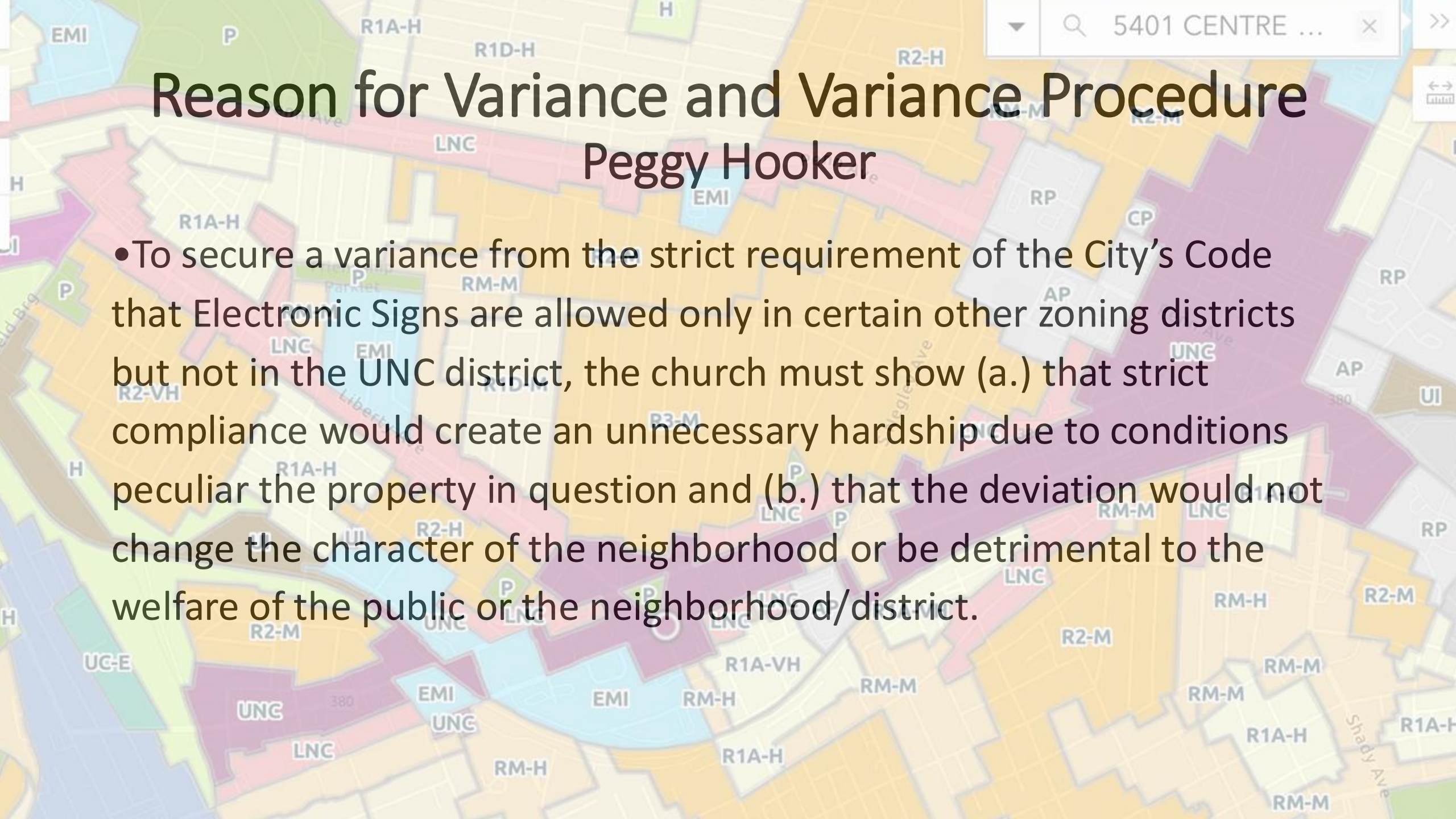




Reason for Variance and Variance Procedure

Peggy Hooker

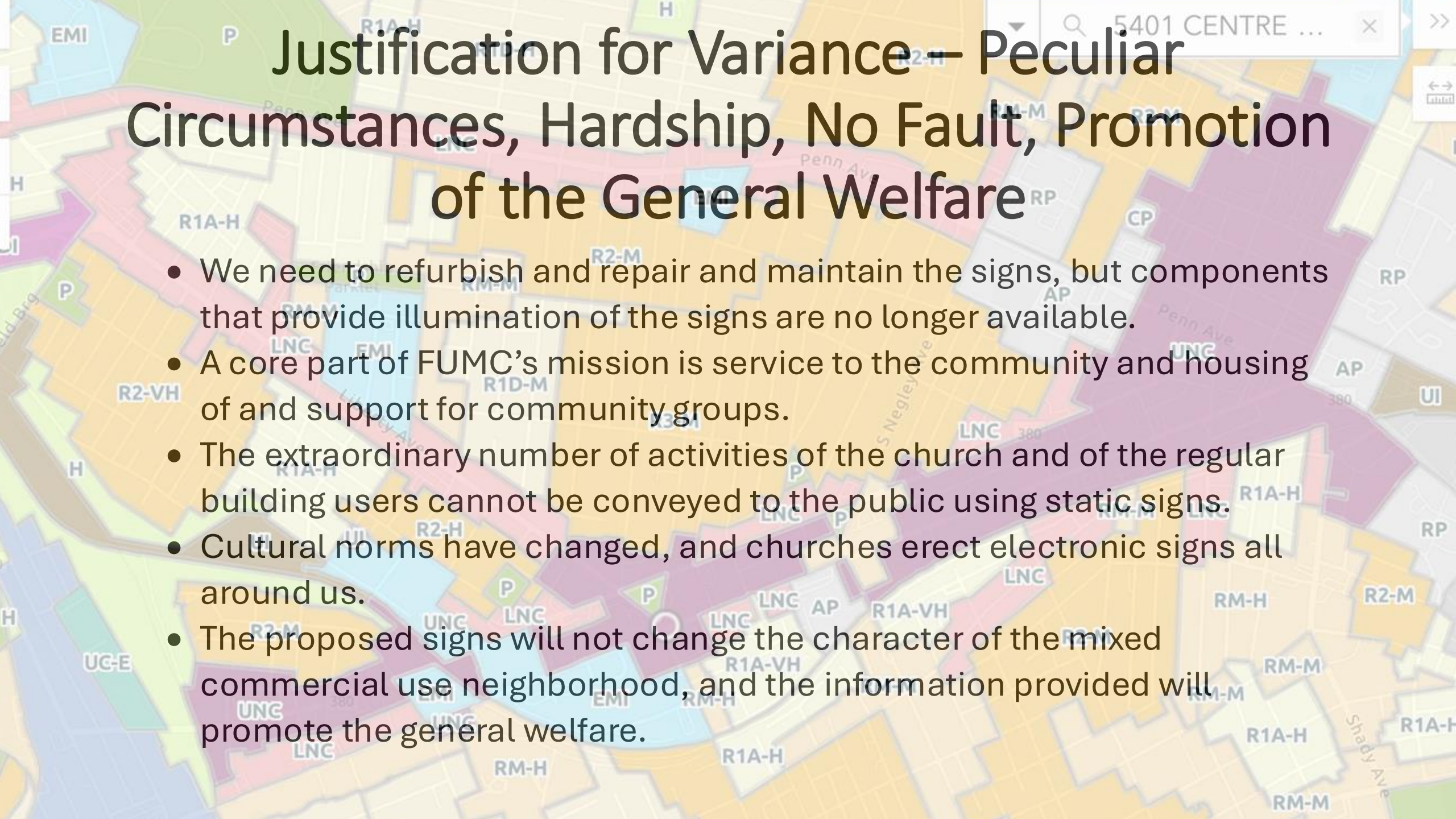
- Pittsburgh's City Planning Department rejected our application for a permit to put digital electronic sign inserts into our existing signs because we are in the UNC district.
- FUMC and Atlas Sign & Lighting must file an application for a variance.
- This evening's DAM gathering is the first step in the process.
- Notices of our request for a variance must be posted on the church property.
- The Zoning Board of Adjustment proposes to hold a formal hearing on the application for variance on October 15, 2026, and adjoining landowners will receive formal notice of the final date, time and place of the hearing.



Reason for Variance and Variance Procedure

Peggy Hooker

- To secure a variance from the strict requirement of the City's Code that Electronic Signs are allowed only in certain other zoning districts but not in the UNC district, the church must show (a.) that strict compliance would create an unnecessary hardship due to conditions peculiar the property in question and (b.) that the deviation would not change the character of the neighborhood or be detrimental to the welfare of the public or the neighborhood/district.



Justification for Variance – Peculiar Circumstances, Hardship, No Fault, Promotion of the General Welfare

- We need to refurbish and repair and maintain the signs, but components that provide illumination of the signs are no longer available.
- A core part of FUMC's mission is service to the community and housing of and support for community groups.
- The extraordinary number of activities of the church and of the regular building users cannot be conveyed to the public using static signs.
- Cultural norms have changed, and churches erect electronic signs all around us.
- The proposed signs will not change the character of the mixed commercial use neighborhood, and the information provided will promote the general welfare.

Do Any Members of FUMC's Team Want to
Add Anything to Our Presentation?



Questions & Answers

- For more information about First United Methodist Church of Pittsburgh, our history, our services, our ministries, and our commitments, please visit www.fumcpittsburgh.org.



HANDOFF TO SHOSHANA DAVIDSON, WITH THANKS