NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM ON CD (MS WORD FORMAT)

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1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE (must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)

Street address: **2345 E Susquehanna Avenue**

Postal code: **19125** Councilmanic District: 1

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2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: **The Fifth Reformed Dutch Church**

Common Name: **The Church of the Living Word**

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3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

X Building ☐ Structure ☐ Site ☐ Object

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4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: ☐ excellent ☒ good ☐ fair ☐ poor ☐ ruins

Occupancy: ☒ occupied ☐ vacant ☐ under construction ☐ unknown

Current use: **House of Worship**

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5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach a plot plan and written description of the boundary. **SEE ATTACHED SHEET**.

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6. DESCRIPTION **SEE ATTACHED SHEET.**

Please attach a description of the historic resource and supplement with current photographs.

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7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach the Statement of Significance. [See Attached Sheet]

Period of Significance (from year to year): from **1863** to **1968**

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: **1863 and 1886**

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: **Unknown**

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: **Unknown**

Original owner: **Fifth Reformed Dutch Church, Kensington**

Other significant persons: **Gustavus E. Gramm**

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

X **(a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,**

(b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or

X (**c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,**

(d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,

(e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,

(f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,

(g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,

(h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,

(i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or

X **(j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.**

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8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach a bibliography. **SEE ATTACHED SHEET.**

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9. NOMINATOR: KEEPING SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA

Name with Title: **Oscar Beisert, Ken Milano, Aaron Wunsch, Etc.**

Email: **Keeper@KeepingPhiladelphia.org** Date: **9 July 2016.**

Street Address: **1315 Walnut Street, Suite 320** Telephone: **(717) 602-5002**

City, State, and Postal Code: **Philadelphia, PA 19107** Nominators are not the property owners.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt:___7/11/2016_____

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date:___8/23/2016_____

Date of Notice Issuance:__8/30/2016_____

Property Owner at Time of Notice

Name:___Church of the Living Word, LLC_____

Address:__2345-49 E Susquehanna Ave_____

_____

City:_Philadelphia_____ State:_PA_ Postal Code:__19125__

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation:_____

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission:_____

Date of Final Action:_____

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

Proposed for Historic Designation
in the
Philadelphia Register of Historic Places

Looking Northeast. Courtesy Dana Fedeli.

Reformed Protestant Dutch Church
Philadelphia, 5th (Kensington)
2345-49 East Susquehanna Avenue
Fishtown, Kensington, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The parcel and building portion subject to this nomination is limited to the following boundaries:

ALL THAT CERTAIN lot or piece of ground Situate in the Thirty-first Ward of the City of Philadelphia, aforesaid on the Northwardly side of Otis Street (now Susquehanna Avenue) at the distance of One Hundred Eleven feet Westward from Cedar Street. **Containing** front or breath on said Otis Street (now Susquehanna Avenue) Sixty feet Six and One-quarter inches and of that width extending Northward between lines parallel at right angles with the said Otis Street (now Susquehanna Avenue) in length or depth Ninety-five feet. **Bounded** Northward by ground granted unto James Goodfellow on ground rent; Eastward by ground of John D. Upperman; Westward by ground now or late of Adam Lindsey; and Southward by Otis Street (now Susquehanna Avenue) aforesaid. **Being** the same premises which George Dickel and Magdalene, his wife, by Indenture dated August 1, 1863 and recorded October 9, 1863 in the Office for Recording of Deeds in and for the County of Philadelphia (now the Department of Records of the City of Philadelphia) in Deed Book ACH No. 108, Page 480 &c., granted and conveyed unto The Fifth Reformed Church of Philadelphia under the name of The Fifth Reformed Dutch Church in fee.

Deed Registry No. 048N04-0155.

Proposed boundary of the subject designation (in red). Courtesy Philadelphia Water.

6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Situated between brick row houses in the Fishtown section Philadelphia's Kensington neighborhood, the former Fifth Reformed Dutch Church may be described as consisting of two parts: a brownstone westwork that constitutes the building's public face and gabled brick preaching hall that extends behind it. Erected ca. 1868, the preaching hall was initially a freestanding structure on a lot large enough to have accommodated three of surrounding row houses. However, as the congregation prospered, it was able to erect a handsome frontal addition that extended to the street and between adjacent houses.

Main Block. The original portion of the building is extant at the northwest, northeast and southeast elevations. However, these elevations are difficult to photograph without access to the rear lot. The northwest elevation retains its red brick façade, which is pierced by five vertical apertures that tall and narrow. These apertures appear to retain original and/or early multi-colored leaded glass. Below this row of windows is a basement story, which features aligned apertures. The southeast elevation is similar, but the red brick is concealed by stucco. The northeast elevation features a projecting one-story shed addition. Rising above is the gable-end with a projecting bay window that most likely served as a nave feature.

Primary Elevation. Built of rough brownstone blocks – some squared, others polygonal – the westwork's façade consists of a gabled, two-and-one-half-story central section flanked by two-story towers with truncated pyramidal roofs. The towers advance slightly from the central section's wall plane and are pierced by pointed-arch doorways. Aside from this nod to the Gothic, however, the façade employs the round-arched openings widely favored in nineteenth century German church architecture, giving the whole austere composition a Rundbogenstil effect that is accentuated by the circular window in the gable.

Looking northeast. Courtesy Dana Fedeli.

Looking northeast. Courtesy Dana Fedeli.

Looking northwest. Courtesy Dana Fedeli.

Looking northeast. Courtesy Ken Milano.

Looking southeast. Courtesy a kind neighbor.

Looking northwest. Courtesy Bing Maps.

Looking southeast. Courtesy Bing Maps.

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The former Fifth Reformed Dutch Church at 2345 Susquehanna Avenue is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The building satisfies the following Criteria for Designation according to Section 14–1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

(a) *Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;*

(c) *Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; and*

(j) *Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.*

The Period of Significance for aforementioned Criteria as related to this building is ca. 1868 to 1968.

CRITERION A and CRITERION J

The Fifth Reformed Dutch Church, Kensington represents the development of the Kensington section of Philadelphia as an important working class, neighborhood and industrial neighborhood center for the German immigrants and their descendants. The seed of the congregation was planted by the work of the earlier congregations that were once located in the neighborhood of Spring Garden Street, then a neighborhood of mixed social classes. As Philadelphia established her industrial primacy in the mid-nineteenth century, the District of Kensington became home to a decidedly working class population of industrial laborers. Within this population was a solid German community, which included various German-speaking denominations. Among these denominations was the Dutch Reformed Church. The Fifth Dutch Reformed Church was established in 1863 and survived in the same location until its dissolution in 1968. The Fifth Dutch Reformed Church in Susquehanna Avenue represents a longtime German stronghold in Kensington, exemplifying the economic and cultural characteristics of that section of Philadelphia.

Historic Context: the Fifth Reformed Dutch Church, Kensington (1863-1968)

The subject, Kensington congregation was the fifth of its denomination in Philadelphia. The first two churches were in the German sections of the Northern Liberties neighborhood. The third church was opened in downtown Philadelphia and the fourth church was opened up in the mill district of Manayunk.

In 1863, a youthful congregation of the Dutch Reformed Church formed in the Kensington section of Philadelphia, becoming the Fifth Reformed Dutch Church, Kensington. On August 1, 1863, the subject premises in Susquehanna Avenue was

purchased for $100.00 by the new congregation. Susquehanna Avenue was then known as Otis Street, which had evolved from its earlier name, Wood Street , in the old 19th Ward (now the 31st Ward) of Philadelphia. The subject lot was located 111 feet west of Cedar Street, measuring about 66 by 95 feet. The lot was purchased by the congregation from George and Magdalene Dickel. Dickel had purchased the property only a short time before from the trustees of the Norris family's great Fairhill and Sepviva Plantation estates. The Fairhill Estate was incorporated into the District of Kensington in 1848 along with the Sepviva Plantation. However, this was held up in the courts over legal wrangling, eventually settled and lots carved out sold by the Civil War Era.[1] This church property was one such lot from the Sepviva Plantation. With no improvements made by Dickel, it would appear to have been a simple real estate investment for him.

According to an article published in the *Press,* a nineteenth century Philadelphia newspaper, the laying of the cornerstone of the Fifth Reformed Dutch Church at Kensington (Fifth Reformed) was held on September 7, 1863. The article published on the following day states:

> *Laying of the corner-stone of the Fifth Reformed Protestant Dutch Church came off yesterday afternoon at three o'clock. The weather, although not as auspicious as it might have been, was favorable enough to warrant the ceremony being proceeded with. Quite a large concourse was gathered, the congregation of the church being very numerously represented. The lot is situated on Otis (late Wood) street, near Memphis, below Frankford road. The exercises consisted in an opening hymn by the choir; an invocation by Rev. G. E. Gramm; hymn by the congregation; reading of the Scriptures with prayer by Rev. George Lotker; address by Rev. G. E. Gramm; address by Rev. F. H. Suydam; an address and the laying of the corner-stone by Rev. T. De Witt Talmage; address and regulating of the box by Rev. G.E. Gramm; hymn by the choir; hymn by the Sabbath school; prayer by Rev. Wm. Fulton; hymn by the congregation; and finally the benediction, by Rev. Wm. Fulton.*
>
> *These exercises were all gone through with in the spirit of heartiness and enthusiasm, and the addresses of the several gentlemen were most appropriate and well delivered. Rev. Mr. De Witt Talmage dwelt earnestly upon the success of the Church's future, and the dependence of that future on the exertions of her people. The solemn and affecting scene was participated in by each and all present, and not a single member could have left the ground without feeling there was cause for self-gratulation for the future of his Church.*[2]

Several pastors of the Reformed Dutch Church celebrated the laying of the corner-stone. The Rev. Dr. Gustavus E. Gramm (DATE-DATE) was instrumental as the founding

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[1] Deed: George Dickel and Magdalene his wife, to Fifth Reformed Dutch Church,1 August 1863, ACH107_480.

[2] *The Press* (Philadelphia: 8 September 1863), p. 4.

pastor of Fifth Reformed. As a result, he gave the invocation and the first address, as well as a second address and the "regulating of the box". The Rev. John Howard Suydam (1832-1908), who served from 1863 to 1869 of the First Reformed Dutch Church located at 7th & Spring Garden Streets was a guest of honor.[3]Representing the Second Reformed Dutch Church, the Rev. Thomas De Witt Talmage (1832-1902) also gave an address and lead the laying of the corner-stone.[4] The Rev. William Fulton, pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church at Manayunk between 1855 and 1869 leadi the prayer and the closing benediction.[5]

Rev. Dr. Gramm saw the congregation through to the completion of its house of worship and then moved on. Between 1868 and 1886, the congregation underwent leadership changes and the adoption of a more permanent pastor, resulting in an enlargement of the membership. Longtime pastor, Rev. Charles F. C. Suckow (1840- aft 1922) was called to serve the congregation in 1879, a post he would hold until the time of his death in 1922.

With a growing membership, the fashion of religious architecture likely soon influenced the congregation and an "aesthetic improvement" was made with the addition to the primary elevation. The new façade appears to have been dedicated on October 24, 1886, as per a mention in the 1887 Philadelphia Public Ledger Almanac, as well the date stone on this new façade has the years "1863" & "1886," being carved into it. The year 1863 is the year of the original laying of the corner-stone and 1886 the year of the erection and dedication of the new brownstone façade.[6] The church served a German population of the area for nearly a century before it closed, representing the working to middle class population of the neighborhood of that particular religious group.

Proceedings in the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas held in the November Term 1967, No. 572, upon petition and decree dated 19 Dec 1967, shows the Corporation of The Fifth Reformed Church of Philadelphia was dissolved and the real and personal property of church became vested in the Classis of Philadelphia, of the Reformed Church in America (RCA), as the supervisory and controlling organization of which The Fifth Reformed Church of Philadelphia was a member. The church property was sold by the Classis of Philadelphia of the RCA to a local Philadelphia church called The Church of the Living Word on February 15,1968 for $15,000.00. It is this church, The Church of the Living Word of Philadelphia, which appears to be the current owner, or at least, the last owner of record.[7]

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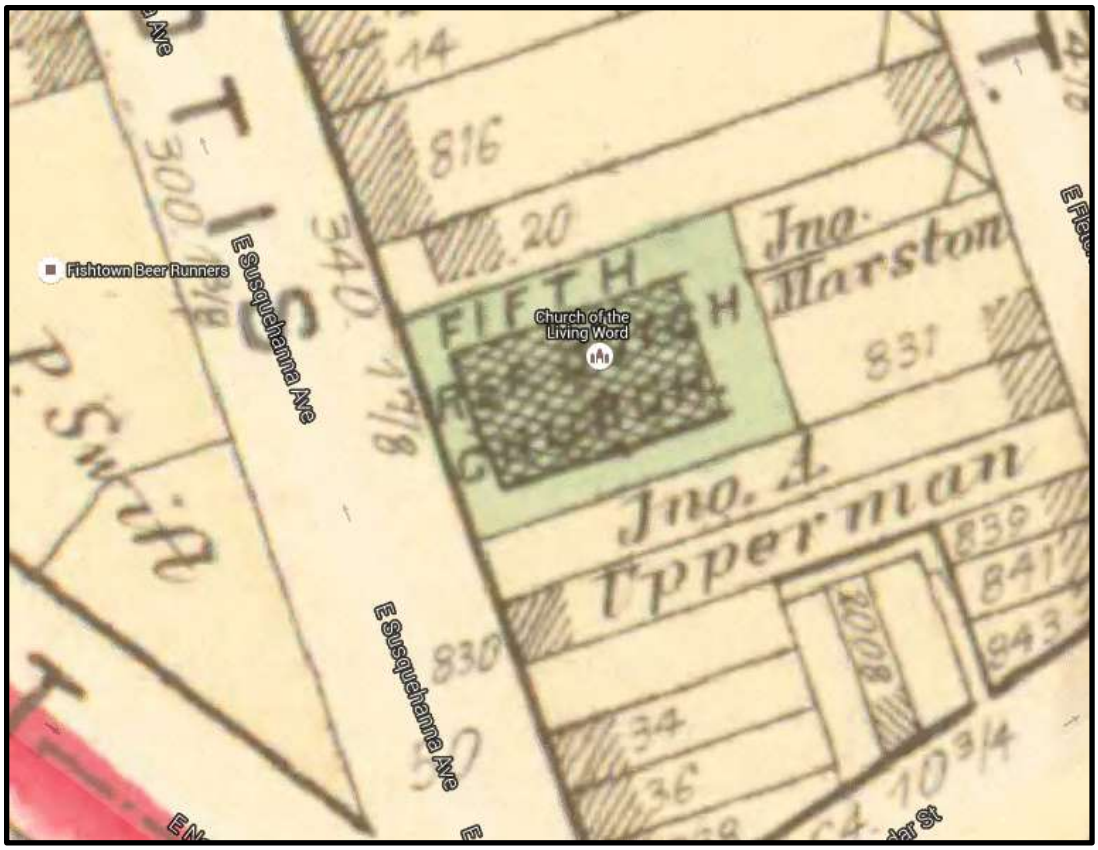
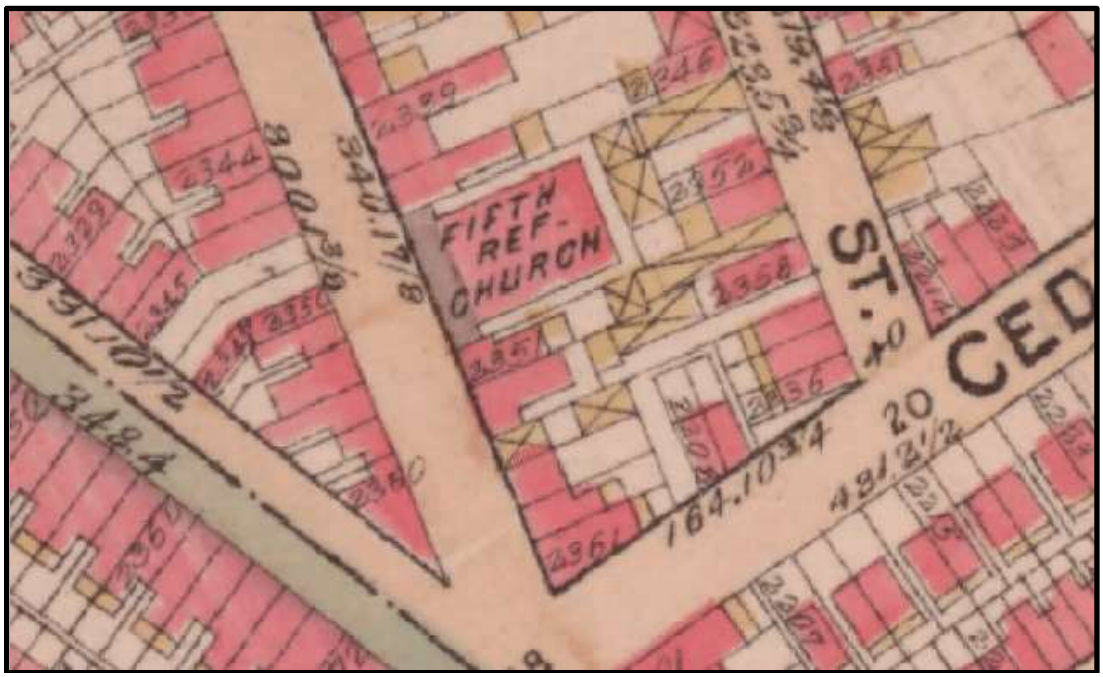
[3] A Manual of the Reformed Church in America (Formerly Reformed Protestant Dutch Church) 1628-1922 by Charles E. Corwin. Fifth Edition Revised. New York: Board of Publication and Bible School Work of the Reformed Church in America, 1922. Page 514.
[4] Ibid. Page 517.
[5] Ibid. Page 341.
[6] Philadelphia Public Ledger Almanac, editor and publisher George W. Childs Drexel. Philadelphia: 1887.
[7] Deed: The Classis of Philadelphia of the Reformed Church of America, to The Church of the Living Word, 15 February 1968, No. JRS059_472.



The Fifth Reformed Dutch Church as shown on the 1875 Philadelphia Atlas by G.M. Hopkins. Courtesy Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.



The Fifth Reformed Dutch Church as shown on the 1895 Philadelphia Atlas by G.W. Bromley. Courtesy Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

Pastors of the Fifth Reformed Dutch Church, Kensington, Philadelphia

As previously mentioned, the Rev. Dr. Gustavus E. Gramm (1823-1901) is stated to have been instrumental in the founding of Fifth Reformed. While he is listed as the pastor at the Fourth Reformed Dutch Church, Philadelphia from 1862 to 1867, this would seem to be either a mistake, or he was the pastor at 4th Church and also helped in the organizing and starting up of Fifth Reformed.[8]

Rev. Dr. Gramm was born in Halle, Germany in 1823, where he received a classical education, working as a tutor for noble families of Germany and Austria. In 1856, he emigrated to America. Upon immigrating to America he was induced by friends to study for the ministry, which he did and was ordained in Maryland. His first calling was the Fifth German Reform at Baltimore, which he served between 1856 to 1859. Rev. Dr. Gramm was called to Philadelphia where he served as pastor at Bethlehem's Church of Philadelphia from 1859to 1861, later being called to be pastor of "4th Philadelphia" from 1862 to 1867. He soon left the ministry and studied medicine.[9] While the Reformed Dutch Church manual states Gramm was pastor of the Fourth Reformed, it would appear that he simultaneously organized and helped to found the Fifth Reformed and acted as its pastor until another qualified candidate could be found. The person was found in the presence of the Rev. Otto Meerwin.

The Rev. Meerwin was born in Berlin, Germany in 1840 and immigrated to Philadelphia in 1868 where he took charge of 5th Church Kensington in the year when the Rev. Dr. Gramm was giving up the ministry to study medicine. Meerwin arrived to a new built house of worship, the 1868 Block of the subject building. However, his tenure was brief, being only part of 1870. Rev. Meerwin went on to found St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Kensington, Trenton Avenue and Cumberland Street.[10]

It is unclear whether Meerwin left, or continued on running both Fifth Reform and St. Michael's, but a replacement came in the name of the Rev. Stoll several years later in 1874.[11] The Rev. A. Stoll came from the Reformed German Church. He was pastor of Fifth Reformed briefly from 1874 to1879. He served only five years before the church found a permanent replacement.[12]

The Rev. Charles F. C. Suckow (1840- aft 1922) was a long time pastor of Fifth Reformed, serving for over forty years (from at least 1879 to after 1922). He was born in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Germany in 1840 and served in New York before coming to

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[8] A Manual of the Reformed Church in America (Formerly Reformed Protestant Dutch Church) 1628-1922 by Charles E. Corwin. Fifth Edition Revised. New York: Board of Publication and Bible School Work of the Reformed Church in America, 1922. Page 350.

[9] Ibid. Page 350.

[10] Philadelphia Inquirer (Philadelphia, PA) Sunday May 31, 1891, Page 6.

[11] A Manual of the Reformed Church in America (Formerly Reformed Protestant Dutch Church) 1628-1922 by Charles E. Corwin. Fifth Edition Revised. New York: Board of Publication and Bible School Work of the Reformed Church in America, 1922. Page 418

[12] Ibid. Page 509.

Philadelphia.[13] The Rev. Suckow established himself at 2223 East Susquehanna Avenue, becoming a longtime fixture of the Kensington community.[14]

The church was a originally a free standing brick gabled preaching hall that sat in the center of the property lot.[15] About 1886, under the leadership of the Rev. Suckow, the "westwork" was completed, giving the house of worship its current appearance..[16]

The Rev. Suckow remained at Fifth Reformed until the time of his death in 1922. Like many of the Germanic Protestant churches in Philadelphia, Kensington in particular, German immigrants acculturated in some ways, Anglicizing and became Americans, they moved on to other areas of the city and/or the suburbs and with a decline in its membership, many of these churches were dissolved, merged, or became defunct. The Fifth Church was no different and was forced to dissolve itself by the mid 1960s.

[13] Ibid. Page 514.
[14] Philadelphia Public Ledger Almanac, editor and publisher George W. Childs Drexel. Philadelphia: 1898. Page 31.
[15] Hopkins, G. M. 1875 Atlas of Philadelphia. Vol. 6, Wards 2 through 20, 29 and 31 Plate O.
[16] Philadelphia Public Ledger Almanac, editor and publisher George W. Childs Drexel. Philadelphia: 1887.

Perth, Fulton Co., N.Y., 1827. See Daley Hist. of Montgomery Classis, 126.
Perth Amboy, N.J., 1907. (St. Paul's). Ganss, J. J. 1910——
Peters Valley, see Walpack, Upper.
Philadelphia, Pa., churches in:

1. [Philadelphia, (Ger.), 1726. Weiss, 1726-9, Boehm, J. 1729-47, Schlatter, 1746-55, (Rubel, 1751-5), Kalls, 1756-7, Steiner, 1757-62, Rothenbergler, 1763-5, Weyberg, 1763-90, Winckhaus, 1790-3, Hendel, 1794-8, Helffenstein; S. 1800-31, Sprole, 1832-7, Berg, J.

Reformed Dutch Congregations in Philadelphia (No. 1) published in A Manual of the Reformed church in America (formerly Reformed Protestant Dutch Church), 1628-1922 by Charles E. Corwin. Published in 1922. Courtesy Hathi trust.

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F. 1837-52, Reed, S. H. ——, Bomberger, ——, Nevin, E. H. ——]. See "Van Horn's Hist. of," 1876; "Berg's Hist. of."

2. Philadelphia 1st, (Evang. Ref.; first in Crown St., afterward cor. Spring Garden and Seventh, 15th and Dauplin St.), 1813. See "Mints. Cl. N.B.," Vol. ii. p. 51, Ap. 21, 1813. This church consisted of the English-speaking portion of the old Ger. Ref. They first separated in 1806, and united with the R.D.C. in 1813. (Eastburn, Jos. 1806-8, Burch, Jas. K. (S.S.) 1809-13), Brodhead, 13-26, Livingston, G. R. 26-34, Bethune, 34-6, Hardenbergh, J. B. 36-40, Van Arsdale, C. C. 41-9, Willetts, A. A. 49-60, Suydam, 63-9, Orr, Thos. 69-83, Taylor, W. R. 84-8, Milliken, P. H. 1888-1909, Murphy, J. H. 1909-1911, Hicks, J. D. 1912-1917, Freer, H. A. 1918——. See "Evang. Quarterly," ii. 151. Also ii. 229, 320; iii. 230, for judicial decision concerning the property. Full text also in "Ch. Int.," Feb. 14, 1861.
3. Philadelphia 2d, (Eighth St.), 1817, Hoff, 1818-24, Sears, 1825-33, Babbit, 1834-5, Gosman, 1835-6. (See No. 8).
4. Philadelphia 2d, (in Ranstead Court), 1818. Now the Seventh Presbyterian. In 1817 the old Ger. element was driven out of the original Ger. Ch. and they organized a new Ger. Ch. (the 2d), in John St., and the original Ger. Ch. became English.—"Berg's sermon," p. 21, 22. Parker, D. 1818-20.
5. Philadelphia, (Manayunk), now known as the 4th, 1827. Pechin St. Van Cleef, C., Miss. to, 26-8, Robertson, Miss. to, 28, Kirkwood, Miss. to, 28-9, Bumstead, 30-41, Quinn, 42-7, Little, 48-50, Gates, 51-4, Fulton, 55-March., 65; again, Nov., 65-9, Talmage, P. S. 69-74, McDermond, 3 months, 75, Cook, W. W. 76-81, Schenck, C. 82-7, Welles, T. W. 87-9, Knox, T. 89-94, Kain, 1895-1909, Walter, A. J. 1910-1912, Ward, I. 1913-1916, Putnam, J. H. S. 1916-1917, Fry, Frank S. 1918——. See Schenck's "Hist. Dis.," 1885.

Reformed Dutch Congregations in Philadelphia (Nos. 2-5) published in A Manual of the Reformed church in America (formerly Reformed Protestant Dutch Church), 1628-1922 by Charles E. Corwin. Published in 1922. Courtesy Hathi trust.

Dis., 1885.

6. Philadelphia, (Roxborough), 1836. Bumstead, 1838-54, (Presbyt.).
7. Philadelphia 3d, 1837. (Tenth and Filbert St.). Bethune, 37-49, Livingston, H. G. 49-54, Taylor, W. J. R. 54-62, Wortman, 63-5, Schenck, J. W. 66-8, Wadsworth, Chas. 69-74, Van Nest, A. R. 78-83, Stephens, G. H. (S.S.) 87, name of ch. dropped, 1889.

   The legal decision concerning the church property may be seen in "Ch. Int.," Nov. 16, 30, 1876. See also Wadsworth, Chs. in this work.
8. Philadelphia 2d, 1852 (Seventh St.). This was a reorganization of the Eighth St. Church, under the lead of Dr. J. F. Berg. Berg, J. F. 52-61, Talmage, T. D. W. 62-9, Hartley, 70-71, Masden, 71-9, Rubinkam, 80-5, Clark, W. H. 86-91, Tracy, 91-5, Greene, E. W. 97-8, Williamson, W. H. 1899-1905, Rearick, W. R. 1908-1909, Ritchie, F. C. (S.S.) 1913, McKinty, T. W. (S.S.) 1916-1918. Disbanded 1918.
9. Philadelphia 4th, 1862. Gramm, 1862-7.
10. Philadelphia, (Bethune Ch), 1868. Talmage, P. S. 1868.
11. Philadelphia 5th, (Kensington), East Susquehanna Av., 1868. Meerwein, 1868-9, Stoll, 74-9, Suckow, 1879——
12. Philadelphia, Bethlehem Mission. Stryker, P. S., Miss. at, 1869.
13. Talmage Memorial, Lyceum Av., Roxboro, 1891. Thompson, E. W. 92-4, Skillman, 94-6, Willoughby, 1896-1903, Schmitz, Wm. 1904-1907, Giebel, W. H. 1908-1909, Rearick, W. R. 1909-1922.
14. South, Lingo St., 1895. Duckworth, 96, Wyckoff, C. S. 97-8, Kip, I. L. 98-1900, Skillman, 1901-1903, Simpson, W. E. (S.S.) 1903, Pastor, 1904-1906. Dropped 1908.
15. Bethany, Roxboro, 1901. Medd, T. H. 1904-1905. Disbanded 1910. See "Rev. Dr. W. J. R. Taylor's Hist. of R.D. Churches in Philadelphia." Also "Suydam's Hist. Sermon."

Reformed Dutch Congregations in Philadelphia (Nos. 6-15) published in A Manual of the Reformed church in America (formerly Reformed Protestant Dutch Church), 1628-1922 by Charles E. Corwin. Published in 1922. Courtesy Hathi trust.

CRITERION A

Rev. Dr. Gustavus E. Gramm (1823-1901)

Rev. Dr. Gramm is a significant person of the past in the Kensington section of Philadelphia, being the founder of Fifth Reformed and a local pioneer of Homeopathy.

The early life of Rev. Dr. Gramm was described above in the historic context on the pastors of Fifth Reformed. As previously stated, Rev. Dr. Gramm founded Fifth Reformed in 1863 and served its congregation until after a permanent house of worship was completed in 1868.Rev. Dr. Gramm.[17]

In 1856 while on a travel visit to the United States and while in the city of Baltimore being entertained by a well-known minister of the Reformed Church, he was encouraged to stay in America and study for the ministry. After completing his studies he was licensed by the Maryland Classis, which was then meeting at Frederick, Maryland.

[17] The Hahnemannian Monthly. Volume Thirty-Six. January to December, 1901. Edited by Clarence Bartlett, M.D. Philadelphia: 1901, Page 166-168.

Gramm was ordained at the Third Reform Church in Baltimore and remained in that city doing ministerial work, helped by his wife Marian H. Heitman.[18]

Rev. Dr. Gramm soon received a call to come to Philadelphia and became very instrumental in founding the Fifth Reformed Dutch Church in the Kensington section of Philadelphia. Gramm spent some of his best years in ministry and philanthropy at Fifth Reformed, which began in BLANK when he began working to establish the congregation, which included roughly three hundred members.[19] Once established, Rev. Dr. Gramm ensured that Fifth Reformed had a permanent house of worship, which was completed in 1868. At the time of his removal that same year, the building was owned, "free and clear" by the congregation.[20]

Early Philadelphia City Directories show Rev. Dr. Gramm living at "1304 Howard Street," "Sepviva above Norris" in 1862, 1437 Frankford Avenue in 1863 and in later years at 2029 Frankford Avenue between 1865 and 1868. The 2029 Frankford Avenue address was near the intersection of Frankford and Susquehanna Avenues, just a few blocks from Fifth Reformed. All of the directories, excepting 1868, list him as either as "Reverend" or "Clergyman." The 1868 directory lists Rev. Dr. Gramm as both "Rev. & physician." From 1870 to 1885, Rev. Dr. Gramm resided at 1656 Vienna Street (now Berks), during which time he was listed as a physician.. In the 1880s his son Theodore Gramm appears in the directories as a physician.[21]

The arduous ministerial work resulted in a breakdown in Rev. Dr. Gramm's health. With the encouragement of his doctor and friend, Dr. Constantine Hering, Rev. Dr. Gramm undertook the study of medicine, from which he derived considerable enjoyment.. Rev. Dr. Gramm undertook his studies at the Homoeopathic College of Pennsylvania, form which he graduated in 1867. He essentially brought the homeopathic method of medical practice to the Kensington section of Philadelphia, serving primarily the purposes of the poor in his neighborhood. He soon acquired an extensive practice and became widely known as a successful physician. He practiced medicine in Kensington from 1867 until about 1884.[22]

He was for a time on the attending board for the medical department and the general dispensary of the Women's Homoeopathic Association of Pennsylvania, a 61-bed facility

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[18] Ibid, Page 166-168.

[19] Transactions of the Thirty-Ninth Session of the Homoeopathic Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania held at the Board of Trade Assembly Rooms, Scranton, September 22, 23, and 24, 1903. Lancaster, PA: The Examiner Printing House, 1902, page 34 "Report of Necrologist, Chandler Weaver, M.D."

[20] The Acts and Proceedings of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, Volume 20, June 1902. New York: 1902. Page 203-205.

[21] Philadelphia City Directory for 1862, 1863, 1865, 1866, 1867, 1868, 1871, 1875, 1880, 1884, 1885. Various publishers. Philadelphia: 1862-1885.

[22] The Hahnemannian Monthly. Volume Thirty-Six. January to December, 1901. Edited by Clarence Bartlett, M.D. Philadelphia: 1901, Page 166-168.

located at 20th Street and Susquehanna Avenue in Philadelphia. There were no male resident physicians at this hospital, only females.[23]

By 1884, Rev. Dr. Gramm suffered a breakdown in health and, as a result, entered retirement. By the following year he appears to have moved to Ardmore, Pennsylvania, where after some time, he again took up the practice of medicine. It is said that he was "…ardently devoted to the study of the 'Materia Medica' and a thorough believer in the value of the homoeopathic system of practice.".[24]

Aside from his medical practice, Rev Gramm contributed to the medical literature of the day and produced a number of translations from German into English. He was also active in the field through this membership in several professional organizations, where he was a Senior of the American Institute of Homeopathy and of the Pennsylvania State Society. Rev. Dr. Gramm was also connected with the Philadelphia County Society and other local club, including the Freemasons of the Meridian Sun Lodge, No 158, F. and A.M., also of the Oriental Chapter, No. 183, R.A.M.9. Rev. Gramm's friends and associates for most of the years that he practiced homeopathy were an exclusive group of illustrious medical men whose names were so attached with the history of homoeopathy in America: Hering, Guernsey, Lippe, Raue, Felger, Kock, and others.[25]

The Rev. Dr. Gramm died on November 2nd, 1901 of heart failure, while dozing in his chair at the home of his son Dr. Theodore J. Gramm at 846 N. Broad Street in Philadelphia. He was buried on November 5th at West Laurel Hill Cemetery.[26] Rev. Dr. Gramm's wife predeceased him about a year earlier.[27]

CRITERION C

The Fifth Reformed Dutch Church reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style—and in this case not only style, but a form and trend in the architectural motifs of small congregations with specific, but proud congregations. Being originally constructed in 1863, Fifth Reform started life as a typical Philadelphia hall church that no doubt resembled Georgian and/or Greek Revival antecedents. After two decade or so Fifth Reform's congregation had grown and its congregants were more established in the neighborhood. As a result, the congregation added the westwork at the primary elevation in 1886. Aside from this nod to the Gothic,

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[23] The Medical Times and Register; a Weekly Journal of Medicine and Surgery, Volume 23, No. 19. Whole No. 687. November 7, 1891. Published by the Medical Press Co., Ltd., New York and Philadelphia: 1891. Page 397-398.

[24] Transactions of the Thirty-Ninth Session of the Homoeopathic Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania held at the Board of Trade Assembly Rooms, Scranton, September 22, 23, and 24, 1903. Lancaster, PA: The Examiner Printing House, 1902, page 34 "Report of Necrologist, Chandler Weaver, M.D."

[25] Ibid, page 34 "Report of Necrologist, Chandler Weaver, M.D."

[26] The Hahnemannian Monthly. Volume Thirty-Six. January to December, 1901. Edited by Clarence Bartlett, M.D. Philadelphia: 1901, Page 166-168.

[27] The Acts and Proceedings of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, Volume 20, June 1902. New York: 1902. Page 203-205.

however, the façade employs the round-arched openings widely favored in nineteenth century German church architecture, giving the whole austere composition a Rundbogenstil effect that is accentuated by the circular window in the gable.

Fifth Reformed Church's westwork was erected in 1886, as per sources and the date stone. Such additions were characteristic upgrades to churches in working-class neighborhoods in this period. Until recently, an almost identical sequence could be observed in the fabric of Pilgrim United Church of Christ at 1401 Marlborough Street, but it was unceremoniously destroyed in 2015. That church, too, began as basic brick hall church and received a round-arch stone westwork (likely a combination of brownstone and serpentine) several decades after its construction. In that case, too, the church's interior was remodeled, creating a sweeping, horseshoe-shaped gallery above curving pews. In addition to church members' growing prosperity, this adjustment was a nod to the rising popularity of the "auditorium plan" among American Protestant congregations. While there were once many examples of such preaching hall-plus-westwork churches, few remain in the neighborhood today.

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Contributors

The following individuals worked on this nomination as a pro bono service to the community: Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian and Historic Preservationist; J.M. Duffin, Archivist and Historian; Dana Fedeli, Historic Preservationist; Architectural Historian; Ken Milano, Historian; and Aaron Wunsch, Architectural Historian and Historic Preservationist.

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