

South District Board of Church Location & Building
Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, The United Methodist Church
Gail Armstrong and Mary Jane Kirby, co-chairs

At its meeting on May 7, 2024, the South District Board of Church Location & Building unanimously affirmed its position that the University City Historical Society nomination is opposed by this body. The Board of Church Location & Building has responsibility within our District of the Eastern Pa. Annual Conference to support local churches in their strategies for continuing the service of the United Methodist Church in changing neighborhoods. Our Board has had an ongoing supportive conversation with the pastor and leadership of Calvary UMC regarding their vital ministry in their community and their cooperation with the Community Center that operates out of their building.

While we, too, are thankful for the beautiful architecture of this visually prominent building in the Cedar Park neighborhood of Philadelphia, our Board of Church Location and Building is interested in it's being recognized for the witness of faith, inclusivity, and community as it stands as a beacon to those in its community; not only visually but spiritually prominent. Calvary has invested care and commitment into a community arrangement with the Calvary Center for Culture and Community with the understanding that this connection will provide the needed resources to keep the church building in good condition.

If designated as an historical site, an economic hardship would be imposed upon the church and this would compromise the fulfillment of their ministry. In following directed repair of the structure as mandated by the Historical Society, funds would be diverted from ministry that stands in contradiction to the purpose and calling of the church. The church family at Calvary must be free and not restricted in making these decisions themselves in light of their response to the Gospel call to make disciples. Thank you for your understanding and consideration.