

# NORTH HIGHLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2945 Julian Street, Denver, Colorado 80211



**Architect:** James H. Johnson & Associates  
**Year Built:** 1955

This red brick mid-century design stands out vividly from the historic single-family homes that surround it. The church, now called North Highland Presbyterian, is comprised of two buildings, one of which was built in 1897 and is situated at the corner of 29th & Julian Street. The mid-century building was designed by Denver architect James H. Johnson and was added in 1955 to serve a growing congregation. It is a unique addition to the Allen M. Ghost Historic District. The district is a West Highlands neighborhood that was developed by real estate agent Allen M. Ghost beginning in 1887 and quickly became a “streetcar suburb” full of Queen Anne, Bungalow, Classic Cottage, Foursquare and Tudor residences.

Highland Park Presbyterian was founded in 1887 as Boulevard Presbyterian and served the Highlands and Sloan's Lake neighborhoods, reaching 1,500 members in its heyday of the 1950s. After first meeting at city hall, and a tent on site, the original congregation built the corner structure in 1897 and two additions over time. North Presbyterian, located about a mile away on Federal Boulevard, began in 1925 as a society church closely related to the Free Masons, with 1,700 members in the 1950s. In 2010, North Presbyterian and Highland Park Presbyterian churches dissolved and formed North Highland Presbyterian Church.

The church was built in the Modernist style, which “rejected the ornament of earlier styles and embraced minimalism and structural expression. It recognized new construction technologies, particularly the use of glass, steel and reinforced concrete.” Some examples of the church’s Modernist design elements include: its boxy shape; the flat roof with horizontal eaves; the large panels of brick masonry framed by exposed steel; large windows with gridded and abstract patterned panes; the use of glass block; and the interior use of wood veneer.

The sanctuary, once filled with massive wooden pews, was a center of worship, music, society and culture. The downstairs assembly hall has always been purposefully empty to accommodate banquets, classes, dances and children's events.

## References

- City & County of Denver. (2016). *A.M. Ghost Historic District Character*. Retrieved from [https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/landmark/design\\_guidelines/Character\\_defining\\_features/Character\\_defining\\_features-AM\\_Ghost.pdf](https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/documents/landmark/design_guidelines/Character_defining_features/Character_defining_features-AM_Ghost.pdf)
- The Story of a Church on the Edge. Retrieved from [https://www.northdenverchurch.org/about/church\\_history.html](https://www.northdenverchurch.org/about/church_history.html)
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