

THE KIRK OF HIGHLAND

3011 Vallejo Street, Denver, Colorado 80211



Architect: Kidder & Humphries

Year Built: 1894

The Kirk was built as the Asbury United Methodist Episcopal Church, named in honor of Francis Asbury, the English-born Bishop who helped form the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. The former church is now privately owned and functions as an event venue.

The shape of the building is square, the roof is defined by steep, crossing gables of equal length and a tower sits in southeast corner. The hilltop site overlooks downtown Denver at the corner of 30th and Vallejo where the old church faces south towards 30th Street.

Sandstone from Manitou Springs and Rhyolite from Castle Rock are used in combination on the exterior. Decorative banding and ornate cornices with dentils provide emphasis on the horizontal while windows sit tall and thin and are often grouped in threes to reference the holy trinity. The largest windows reside in the four gables where they are again grouped in threes but are much larger with decorative stained glass, large Romanesque arches and a taller center window. Other windows on the first floor are grouped in fives to give reference to the five wounds of Christ.

Richardsonian Romanesque influences abound. Named after architect Henry Hobson Richardson, the popular stylistic movement swept America in the late 1800s and can be seen in many churches and mansions around Denver. The use of strong, simple massing, rusticated stone masonry construction, stone trimmed openings and the round-headed Romanesque arches are all excellent examples of this style and all provide the sense of heavy permanence the Kirk espouses.

The interior retains much of its original integrity. The balcony, balustrade and paneled wainscoting are all Texas pine with a high luster oil finish with floors of the same species but having a hard oil finish. Gilded plaster and columns with ornamental capitals lead to high, barrel vaulted ceilings. The large pipe organ was built by Anderson and Silsbee in 1875 in Denver and was originally part of the Jewish Temple Emanuel until purchased by the Asbury Methodist Church in 1911.

References

The Kirk of Highland [Fact Sheet]. Courtesy of The Kirk of Highland.