

# LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



## GREATER TABERNACLE CATHEDRAL

(FORMER HOLY ROSARY CATHOLIC CHURCH)

11300 SOUTH DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DRIVE

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Final Landmark Recommendation Adopted by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, on June 8, 2023



CITY OF CHICAGO

Brandon Johnson, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development  
Maurice D. Cox, Commissioner

*The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects, or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The landmark designation process begins with a staff study and a preliminary summary of information related to the potential designation criteria. The next step is a preliminary vote by the landmarks commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. This vote not only initiates the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until a final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council. This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within a designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.*

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## **GREATER TABERNACLE CATHEDRAL**

**11300 S. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DRIVE**

**Date of Construction:** 1890 (Church); ca 1897-1911 (Rectory)

**Architect:** Solon S. Beman (Church)

McCarthy, Smith & Epping (Post-1937 Fire Repairs)

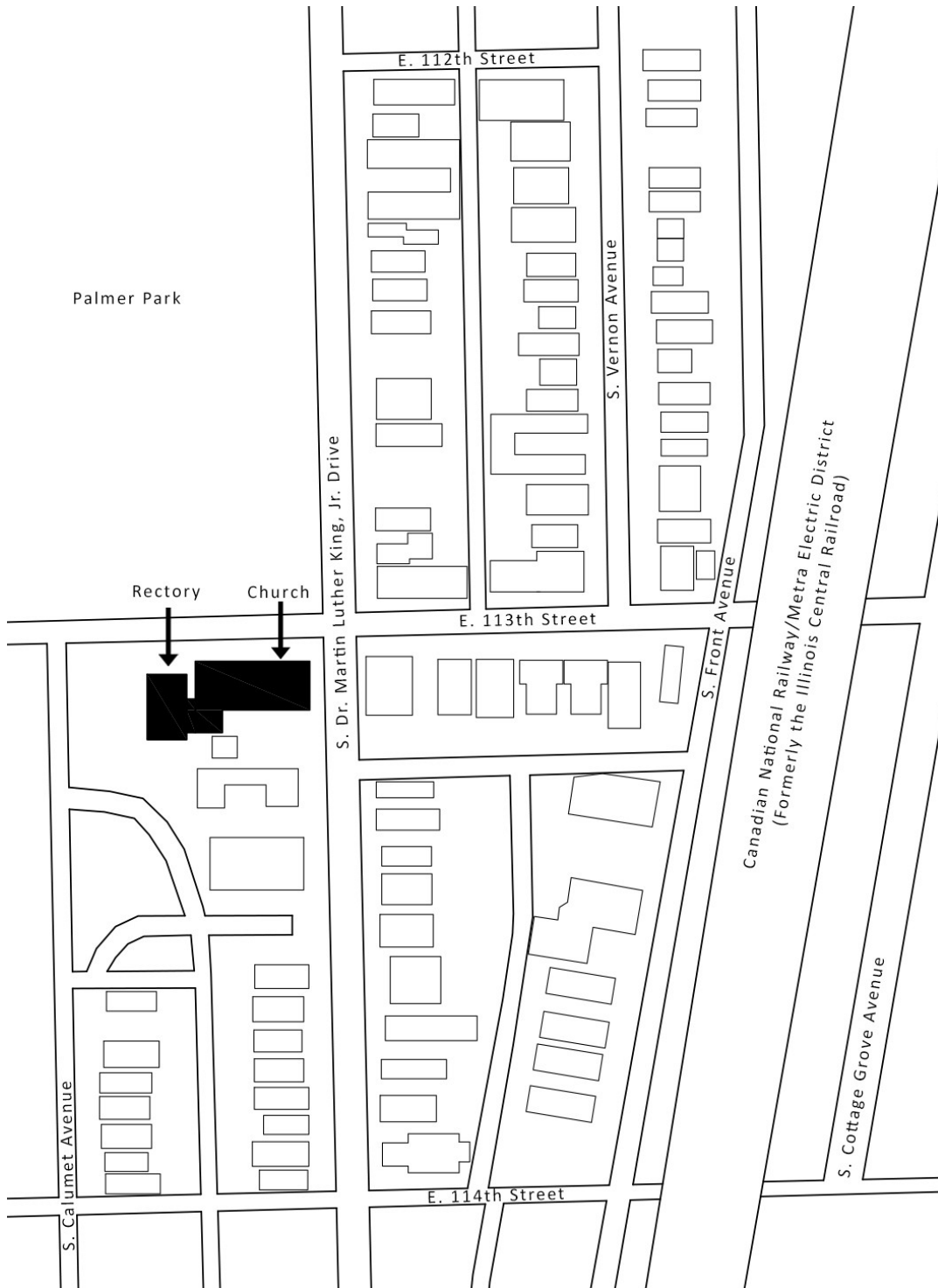
**Builder:** Unknown; Van Etten Bros. (Post-1937 Fire Repairs)

**Architectural Style:** Romanesque Revival

**Period of Significance:** 1890 (Church); ca 1897-1911 (Rectory)

Dedicated in 1890, the Greater Tabernacle Cathedral Complex (the “Complex”) consists of the former church and rectory of Holy Rosary Parish, which was built Roseland’s first English-speaking Catholic parish. The church building was designed by the renowned and prolific Chicago architect Solon S. Beman and completed in 1890. An imposing and striking place of worship, the church building imparted a sense of monumentality on the native prairie that remained undeveloped and only dotted with farmsteads and frame cottages at the time of construction.

Despite a shift in demographics and religious affiliation in the Roseland community during the last fifty years, the Complex has remained a constant, serving as a center of religion, community, and culture for 133 years. The Holy Rosary Church occupied the building until its final closing mass on Saturday, June 28, 2008, ending the 126-year history of that parish. From 2008 to 2016, the Complex was leased by the Catholic Bishop of Chicago to New Day Ministries International. In 2016 the Complex was purchased by Greater Tabernacle Cathedral which maintains it to this day as a place of worship and community center under Greater Tabernacle Cathedral.



**The Greater Tabernacle Cathedral Complex, shaded in the above map, is located at the southwest corner of E. 113th Street and S. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive in the Roseland Community Area. The complex consists of the church and rectory joined by a connecting wing.**



The former Holy Rosary Church was designed by the renown Chicago architect Solon S. Beman in circa 1886-1887 and completed in 1890. Pictured here is the striking church building constructed of red brick and rough hewn Joliet limestone located at the southwest corner of E. 113th Street and S. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive.



**For the design of the rectory located at the western end of the complex, pictured above, the architectural detailing at the exterior is modest and restrained. Each elevation is accentuated by deviations from the main floor plan including the semi-enclosed front porch and gabled wall dormers which break through the roofline at the wide eaves of the hipped roof.**

## **THE ROSELAND COMMUNITY AREA AND NEIGHBORING PULLMAN**

Greater Tabernacle Cathedral is situated within Chicago's Roseland Community Area and is historically associated with the company town of Pullman, two blocks east of the church.

Roseland was founded by Dutch immigrants who came to the United States in waves as early as 1839, driven by the desire for agricultural pursuits and to maintain social structures and religious freedom. In Chicago, the first Dutch immigrants purchased land along the Calumet River in 1846. They referred to the land as the "Low Prairie," and it is the site of present-day South Holland, Illinois. A second wave of Dutch immigrants arrived in Chicago in 1849 and headed south along a Native American trail known as the "The Vincennes Trail" to present-day Roseland, a location they called "High Prairie." The settlement took root around a Reformed Church, family-owned truck farms that cultivated produce for delivery by wagons to local markets.

In 1874, the early settlers of High Prairie surveyed and subdivided four hundred acres of land for redevelopment as the village of Roseland. Three years later in 1880, the Pullman Land Association purchased 4,000 acres for the Pullman Car Works and company town to the east of Roseland. Additional information on the general history and development of Pullman is provided in the City of Chicago Landmark Designation Report for the Pullman District.

By the last decade of the nineteenth century, all of Roseland was annexed to the City of Chicago, and the community had become ethnically and religiously diverse and surrounded by expanding industries, as European immigrants came to work in the shops of the Pullman Company and settled in the surrounding communities of Roseland, West Pullman, and Kensington. African Americans, began settling in these communities during the Great Migration, despite racially-restrictive covenants and resistance.

As racial divisions grew and production at Pullman and other industries slowed, followed by the inflation of the 1970s and the collapse of the steel and automotive industries in the 1980s, manufacturing jobs, and other employment opportunities disappeared. Those workers who could leave, followed their jobs into the suburbs. Following them were also residents who feared racial integration. Despite efforts to create a well-integrated neighborhood from commitments by several existing neighborhood groups and communities, the racial profile of the area changed dramatically between 1965-1975, as by 1970, fifty-five percent of the population was Black, with a rapid increase to ninety-eight percent by 1980.

The outright turnover of the population in Roseland between 1960 to 1990, from white and first-generation or immigrant Italians, Swedes, and Lithuanians to a ninety-nine percent Black community, meant that community institutions that had helped residents earlier in the twentieth century followed their clientele to the suburbs. Institutions that remained, like Holy Rosary Catholic Church that is the subject of this report, had to adapt. At Holy Rosary, the response was hosting the Developing Communities Project, founded in 1984 and discussed in the next section.





**View of the First Reformed Church of Roseland looking southwest toward 107th Street and Michigan Avenue, undated. (Credit: Pullman History Museum)**



**The Dutch communities of Chicago formed around small truck farms that sold their products to Chicago further north. Pictured here is John Santefoort, of South Holland, driving his wagon, brimming with cabbage, to a Chicago produce market. (Credit: Calvin University)**

## **HISTORY OF THE GREATER TABERNACLE CATHEDRAL COMPLEX**

Over the course of its 133-year history, the Complex has fostered Catholic and Protestant congregations, including Holy Rosary Catholic Church (1890-2011), New Day Ministries International (2011-2016), and Greater Tabernacle Cathedral (2016-present). It has remained a constant in the Roseland community, as a place of worship and a center for community, education, and culture.

### *Holy Rosary Catholic Church*

The origins of the Complex's first congregation, Holy Rosary Catholic Church, trace back to 1882, when the Archdiocese of Chicago formed the first English-speaking Catholic parish to minister to the residents of Pullman. Services were first convened in Pullman's two-story Market Hall. At the beginning, the establishment of the parish was difficult as George Pullman refused to sell any land for the construction of the building, as he sought to force all denominations into one building, the Greenstone Church, which would cost \$2,500 (approximately \$73,000 in 2022 dollars) a year to rent.

Under the leadership of Fr. Waldron, the congregation of Holy Rosary identified a site for a new church building at the southwest corner of E. 110<sup>th</sup> Street and S. Indiana Avenue, in Roseland, just west of Pullman, and in 1883, the congregation built a wood frame church there (since demolished). In the first year, there were 102 families in the congregation, within two years, the congregation more than tripled to 320 families, and by 1886, the congregation had grown to 1,500 souls, mostly Irish immigrants.

Within a few short years, the congregation had outgrown its small frame church, and Fr. Waldron began negotiating with George Pullman to build a Catholic Church at the southwest corner of E. 113<sup>th</sup> Street and S. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive (formerly South Park Avenue). The agreement between Waldron and Pullman stipulated that Solon S. Beman be commissioned as the architect so that the church would be in harmony with the red brick buildings of Pullman, which had also been designed by Beman. Ground was broken for the new edifice, and the basement walls had been completed before Pullman reneged on his agreement and decided to no longer grant the congregation a deed to the property. Without anything in writing and Pullman refusing to negotiate, Father Waldron halted construction of the church and resigned from his post with the parish.

Following Waldron's departure, Reverend Patrick J. Tinan, was named pastor. Under his leadership, the deed to the church was at last obtained, and George Pullman donated and sold additional land to the parish. The new church building was dedicated at a cornerstone laying ceremony led by Archbishop Feehan on June 1, 1890, though the congregation had held services in the partially-finished basement since December 4, 1887.

At the time of dedication, the congregation was comprised of 275 families, predominately of



**Greater Tabernacle Cathedral, formerly Holy Rosary Parish, was the first Catholic parish established to serve the Roseland-Pullman Community. Its significance as the center of Catholic life in the community is illustrated by the monumental architecture of the extant church building. When the church was first completed it was an imposing edifice on the vast rolling prairie previously dotted with Dutch farmhouses and homesteads. Pictured above is a photograph of Greater Tabernacle Cathedral shortly after its completion in 1890. (Credit: Archdiocese of Chicago Archives)**

Irish descent, and thirty-five Polish families. An announcement of the cornerstone ceremony in *The Arcade Journal* on May 31, 1890 read:

*On Sunday, June 1, at 3:30 p.m. the corner-stone of the new Catholic Church under the title of "Our Lady of the Holy Rosary," will be laid with imposing and solemn ceremonies. The ceremony of blessing and laying the stone will be performed by Most Rev. Archbishop Feehan, Metropolitan of the Catholic Church in Illinois, and Archbishop of the diocese of Chicago. The sermon will be preached by Rt. Rev. Bishop Moore, of St. Augustine, Florida, whose Cathedral is the oldest church in America. The congregation of Holy Rosary Church are enthusiastic over this great event, which marks an epoch in religious circles in the beautiful village of Pullman, to the many attractions of which this handsome edifice will add another, and they have invited their brethren from the neighboring parishes to join with them in its celebration. It is anticipated that this demonstration will be the largest ever seen in this part of Cook County.*

Under the leadership of Holy Rosary's third pastor, Fr. Keough, who pastored from 1907 to 1947, the parish flourished. In 1916, the *Calumet Index* reported that "on March 28, the Holy Rosary church, school houses and grounds were freed from debt and the event was celebrated in Market Hall."

In 1926 the interior of the church was redecorated by noteworthy liturgical artist John Anton Mallin, a Czech immigrant based in Chicago. This was done in preparation for the Eucharistic Congress being held in Chicago that year. Mallin completed murals and frescoes in over one hundred churches across the country. At Holy Rosary, he painted the ceiling to reflect the sky, and walls were adorned with paintings of saints and Romanesque ornament and images of saints.

Unfortunately, nine years later, on March 4, 1937, a fire devastated the interior of the church, destroying everything except the bell tower and exterior walls of the structure. Many of the stained glass windows located at the north and south façades were also lost. Following the fire, plans for rebuilding were immediately underway within the year. The exterior walls and the steeple were reinforced, and a new roof was put in place. The first mass in the restored church was Easter Sunday, April 17, 1938.

The parish marked its seventy-fifth anniversary in 1957. The following decade was an era of change for the parish and Roseland as most of the area's white population moved to the suburbs, while Holy Rosary Church remained interracial.

By 1978, there were 350 families in the church, and 238 students enrolled in the Holy Rosary School. Yet in 1984, the school closed due to declining enrollment. In 1989, Holy Rosary received parishioners from All Saints Catholic Church, located at 10809 S. State Street, which had closed in June of that year. As part of the union of the two parishes, flags representing the



**On March 4, 1937, a fire devastated the church as it swept through the interior, destroying everything except the bell tower and exterior walls of the structure (top right). All of the artwork completed by John Anton Mallin (left) was destroyed and the interior was reconstructed over the following year (bottom right). During the reconstruction the congregation held services in the Palmer Park Fieldhouse located immediately north of the church on E. 111th Street. (Credit: Archdiocese of Chicago Archives)**

heritage of the new members, Lithuanian, Czech, Slovak, French, German, and African American, were hung next to flags representing the ethnic origins of the existing members. Despite the merger, membership of the congregation dwindled to less than 200 active members by the early twenty-first century, and the parish was not able to survive. The closing mass at Holy Rosary was held on June 28, 2008, ending the 126-year history of this parish.

### *Holy Rosary Church and the Developing Communities Project*

In addition to housing the parish's house of worship, parochial school, and convent, Holy Rosary Church served as the first headquarters for the Developing Communities Project. Founded in 1984, the Developing Communities Project (DCP) was a faith-based organization established as a branch of the Calumet Community Religious Conference (CCRC) in response to an increase in unemployment due to the closure of manufacturing plants in Chicago during the 1970s and 1980s. To support the community and those individuals who had lost their jobs, DCP provided literacy, job training, and leadership development programs. In 1986, the young organization was incorporated as a not-for-profit under the leadership of its first executive director Barack Obama.

The origins of DCP date to the establishment of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) in 1969 when American Catholic bishops responded to a call for action by Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Populorum Progressio* ("The Progress of Peoples") to focus on antipoverty and social justice programs. CCHD was founded with the mission "to address the root causes of poverty in America through promotion and support of community-controlled self-help organizations and through transformative social justice, education, and solidarity between poor and non-poor."

In Chicago during the early 1980s, the CCHD was working to expand beyond Catholic parishes to Black Protestant churches, where much more of the community impacted by the closing of the city's industrial plants worshipped. To broaden their outreach, CCHD hired Barack Obama, a fledgling community organizer, for a new position with the recently established DCP in 1985. At the time, the mission of the program was to unify Chicago's South Side residents against unsafe streets, poor living conditions, and political neglect.

While with the DCP, Obama's office was on the first floor of the existing rectory of Holy Rosary Church. Here he became influenced by Catholic social teaching which he would later acknowledge played a role in his political formation, and devoted a third of his memoir, *A Promised Land*, to his time in Chicago as a community organizer.

From his office at Holy Rosary, Obama worked to expand the reach of CCHD's and DCP's programming from Catholic parishes to megachurches and Protestant congregations. He quickly became a familiar face in South Side Black churches attending peace and Black history services and conferring with pastors on topics ranging from unemployment, public safety, violence prevention and child welfare. He organized large meetings where residents could talk with

officials on topics such as water contamination to asbestos in schools. To support residents, he provided instruction, assigned roles, and gave encouragement. He provided the community with the tools to get involved and listened to what they felt could be done to address key issues. Obama also helped establish a job training program, a college prep tutoring program, and a tenants' rights organization in the Altgeld Gardens housing projects.

In 1988, Obama left DCP and his office at Holy Rosary to enter Harvard Law School. The DCP continued forward on the foundation built by a young Obama to become the largest faith-based community-organizing agency on Chicago's far South Side. DCP's mission remained focused on the organization of community leaders and residents in the Greater Roseland communities of Roseland, Pullman, West Pullman, Riverdale, and Morgan Park to be effective advocates in reclaiming their communities from the forces of social stagnation and economic decline that began in the 1980s.

### *Greater Tabernacle Cathedral*

Following the closing of the Holy Rosary Parish, the church was leased by the Catholic Bishop of Chicago to New Day Ministries International from 2011 to 2016 until the building was purchased by Greater Tabernacle Cathedral (formerly Tabernacle of God Church of God in Christ).

Greater Tabernacle Cathedral was organized in 1956 by Bishop Ocie Booker, who remains the pastor of the congregation today. The mission of the church is the holistic development of men, women, and children. The church has a rich history of providing services including educational opportunities, housing assistance, food assistance programs to low-income families, summer camps, and other assistance programs in the community. Greater Tabernacle Cathedral is a bible based church focused on combating societal, educational, and spiritual issues through its ministry work. One of the pinnacles of Greater Tabernacle Cathedral's work was the establishment of the Tabernacle Christian Academy in 1976, an independent co-educational, elementary, and secondary Christian school for students from pre-school through grade 12. The school began with eight students in the basement of Tabernacle of God Church in Harvey, Illinois (14838 Page Avenue, extant). The school grew from its initial eight students to become the largest private African American Christian School in the State of Illinois. In its nearly forty years of operation, TCA educated over 15,000 students with a graduation rate of one hundred percent. In 2014, economic uncertainty in the heavily tuition-dependent school forced TCA to discontinue its operations.

In September 2016, Greater Tabernacle Cathedral relocated to the former Holy Rosary church and rectory buildings. While located in the former Holy Rosary Church, Greater Tabernacle Cathedral has worked to connect with the residents of Roseland and Pullman through hosting community food programs, Back to School programs that provide free school supplies to children, Holiday Package Programs which give food, toys, and clothing to families in need, and a Community Outreach in the Park to reach individuals with physical and spiritual needs.

Today, Greater Tabernacle Cathedral is a cornerstone of the Roseland community and serves a place of resource and worship for all.

## **THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE GREATER TABERNACLE CATHEDRAL COMPLEX**

The Greater Tabernacle Cathedral Complex is composed of the church building designed by Solon S. Beman in 1890, and the rectory for the parish located immediately west of the church and connected to the church via a two-story connection. The exact date of construction for the rectory is unknown. Based on available Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, it was constructed between 1897 and 1911.

The church is prominently sited at the southwest corner of the intersection of E. 113<sup>th</sup> Street and S. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. When the church was first constructed it was one of few structures in the vicinity and stood as an imposing structure on the vast, native prairie. The complex is an exemplary example of the Romanesque Revival architectural style. Romanesque Revival in America was inspired in part by the medieval European style known as Romanesque, which first appeared in Europe during the eleventh and twelfth centuries as a revival of earlier classical Roman forms. The Romanesque Revival in America occurred between the 1830s and 1890s.

The buildings in the Romanesque Revival style are heavy, massive masonry construction, usually with rough-faced stonework. Wide, rounded arches at window openings are an important identifying feature. Frequently, decorative floral and arabesque details appear in the stonework, and sometimes on column capitals. The style was immensely popular in Chicago during the late 1880s and 1890s, influencing the work of John Wellborn Root, Henry Ives Cobb, Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, and many other Chicago architects.

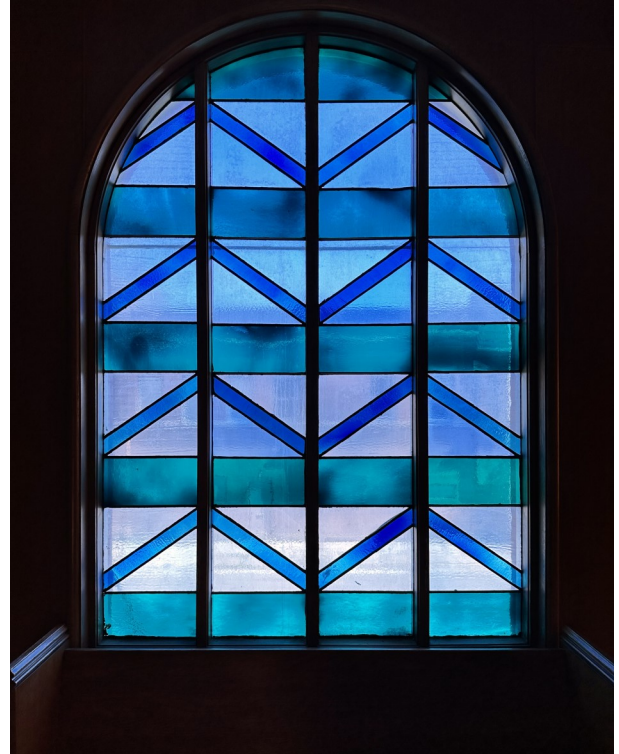
On the exterior, Beman's design is monumental yet restrained. The church sits on an impressive one-story base of rough-hewn Joliet limestone and terminates at a smooth base course of limestone. The exterior of the church is clad in contrasting bright red brick at the primary north, east and west façades and common brick at the majority of the south façade. With the exception of the west façade which lacks ornamentation, the façades are only accentuated by arcades of monumental windows trimmed with a continuous pressed brick label moulding and brick corbeling tables below the gabled roof line at the north and west façades.

The church is rectangular in plan and oriented on an east-west axis, with the apse located at the west end. The only deviation from the main floor plan is a two-story addition constructed at the southwest corner of the church in 1937. The gable roof of the sanctuary is on a north-south axis with five cross-gable roofs at the north and south façade which define each structural bay. The peak of the main gable roof is topped with a carved limestone cross. Additionally, a rose window is located at the center of the east façade the main gabled roof. Each cross gable is adorned with a raking cornice composed of a brick corbel table. The windows located in bays





**At the former Holy Rosary Church, Beman designed a magnificent and impressive exterior with a classical monumentality. Pictured here is the central bay of the east façade of the church which features a heavily rough hewn Joliet limestone base, a striking arcade trimmed in brick relief work, and a grand rose window. The bay is crowned by a prominent front facing gable adorned with brick corbeling at the face of the gable and a stone cross at the peak.**



Beman's design for the former Holy Rosary Church is monumental yet restrained. The Romanesque Revival edifice features limited architectural ornamentation and instead the exterior is dominated by projecting cross gable roof forms, monumental arched windows, the juxtaposition in color, texture, and materiality between the bright red brick exterior and heavily rough hewn limestone base, and a commanding eighty-five foot tall bell tower. Later alterations, such as the stained glass windows installed at the front façade to replace those lost after the fire (pictured top right) follow Beman's subdued use of decoration.



**Pictured above is the sanctuary for Greater Tabernacle Cathedral which shows the soaring groin vault ceiling, monumental arched windows, and historic finishes following the 1937 fire.**



**The cornerstone for the former Holy Rosary Church was formally laid on May 31, 1890 in a ceremony led by Archbishop Feehan, though services in the basement of the unfinished building began nearly three years earlier in December 1887.**

two through five at the north and south façades are arched-top multi-light steel-sash windows. At the easternmost bay on the south façade, there is a pair of stained-glass windows featuring foliated and geometric patterns. Above these windows is a fixed circular window with clear glass.

The east (front façade) is divided into three bays marked by the centered gabled bay flanked by a cross-gabled bay to the south and the belltower to the north. The main entrance to the church composes the central bay. The entrance consists of three pairs of doors flanked by engaged columns clad in granite panels. Each door is a wood flush door with an offset, narrow light. A historic flat metal canopy projects over the entrance. The existing features of the entrance date to the mid-twentieth century, though the overall configuration remains unchanged, including the location of the three entrance openings. Historically, the engaged columns were clad in limestone and each entrance was composed of a pair of paneled wood doors.

Rising above each pair of doors and the canopy is a monumental arcade at the second floor. The center arch is solid and clad in mosaic tiles in blue, green, and grey hues. Historically this opening contained a stained glass window, but it was removed as part of alterations during the mid-twentieth century. In each flanking arch is a stained glass window with a chevron design in shades of blue. The spandrel below each window is also granite. Originally, the spandrel panel at the base of each arched opening contained a blind arcade adorned with tracery. These were replaced or cladded with the existing granite panels as part of the mid-twentieth century alterations. Located above the arcade is the aforementioned rose window. The bay is crowned by a striking raking cornice composed of a brick corbel table.

The bay located to the south of the central bay at the east façade features a pair of arched windows each composed of a single stained glass window identical in design to the stained glass windows found at the south façade of this bay. The brick corbel table also located at the south façade of this bay returns to the east façade and spans the length of the eave of the cross-gable roof.

Rising eighty-five feet in height from the northeast corner of the limestone base is the prominent bell tower and spire located immediately north of the central entrance bay. At the primary east and north façades of the tower, there is an arcade of three windows set within compound round arch openings and spanning the second-fifth floors. At the second through fourth floors there is a narrow stained glass window within each opening. At the fifth floor there is a small arched top stained glass window in each opening. The stained glass windows at the second floor feature an elaborate and delicate foliated design, while the windows at the third-fifth floors are quarreled stained glass windows. A label moulding wraps the façade of the tower above the arcade and below a handsome brick corbel table. The tower is crowned by a steeply pitched, towering, hipped roof. At each face of the roof, is a dormer vent that mimics the design of the bell tower.

Once inside the building, sanctuary is comprised of the narthex, nave, and the apse. A balcony



**Pictured above is the former Holy Rosary Church rectory now used as church offices for Greater Tabernacle Cathedral. In contrast to Beman's church design, the design of the rectory is modest and absent of applied architectural detailing.**

is located at a mezzanine level above the narthex in the sanctuary.

To access the sanctuary there are two terrazzo staircases, at the north and south ends of the first floor lobby. The stairs are unadorned with the exception of full-height wood wall paneling. A simple wood stair provides access to the choral balcony and entrance into the bell tower from the southwest corner of the narthex. The existing configuration of the lobby and materials dates to the mid-twentieth century. The original design is unknown.

A groin vault ceiling features a set of three arched windows in each transverse vault that illuminate the sanctuary. The vaulted ceiling terminates at the west end of the sanctuary at an arched alcove behind the altar that houses the sacristy. Above each center window in the transverse vaults is a roundel painted with several variations of a Christogram, a monogram or combination of letters that forms an abbreviation for the name of Jesus Christ. Where the impost of the arch would meet the pier of the vault, plaster ornamentation adorned with bas-relief acanthus leaves has been placed on the wall. The finishes in the sanctuary today date to the remodeling immediately following the 1937 fire, including: marble and terrazzo flooring, wood wainscoting, marble baseboards, a marble railing and bronze gate that separates the nave from the chancel in the apse, carved wood pews, and bronze chandeliers with five cylindrical

opaque shades.

In contrast to the design of the church, the rectory at the western end of the complex is austere and absent of ornamentation. The building is rectangular in plan and two stories in height, crowned by a cascading hipped roof accentuated with prominent gabled dormers at the primary north and west façades and shed dormers at the south and east façades. The gabled dormers break the face of the hipped roof line at the center of each façade. The exterior is clad in dark brown brick. Ornamentation is limited to inset limestone blocks at the gabled ends and the peak of the gabled dormers, limestone coping at the gabled dormers, and simple brick relief work below the crown of the chimneys located at the west and south façades.

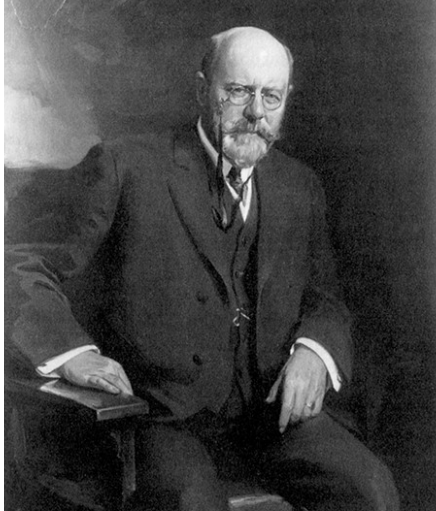
The main entrance to the rectory is located at the center of the north façade, protected by a covered porch that spans the full width of the façade. The porch features four square brick columns which support the low-pitched hipped roof. The only ornamentation on the porch is a series of carved wood brackets that flank either side of the columns. The entrance is composed of a modest full-light wood stile and rail door flanked by sidelights with transoms above.

#### **ARCHITECT SOLON S. BEMAN (1854-1914)**

A native of New York, Beman began his architectural training in the office of renowned New York architect Richard Upjohn, where he helped design the Connecticut State Capitol. He served as apprentice and associate to Upjohn from 1870 until 1877, when he established his own office in New York City. Two years later, Beman relocated to Chicago in 1879 at the request of railroad car magnate George Pullman to design what would become the nation's first planned company town. Located on the city's Far South Side, the Pullman project included more than 1,300 houses, a factory, Pullman Administration Building, the Arcade Building, the Greenstone Church, Hotel Florence, Market Square, and schools. Beman's designs for Pullman reflected a picturesque Victorian eclecticism influenced by traditional revival styles such as Gothic, Flemish, and Romanesque, as well as the popular French Chateausque style of the time.

While best known for his work in Pullman, Beman was an accomplished architect who specialized in the design of residential, transportation, civic, educational, and most notably, ecclesiastical buildings across the country.

His other projects in Chicago include several buildings at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, the Grand Central Station and train shed at Harrison and Wells Streets (1891, demolished), the Griffiths-Burroughs Mansion (3806 South Michigan Avenue, 1892, designated Chicago Landmark), the William W. Kimball Mansion (1801 South Prairie Avenue, 1892, designated Chicago Landmark), and the Blackstone Memorial Library (4904 South Lake Park Avenue, 1902-04, designated Chicago Landmark). Beman also designed the Procter and



**Solon S. Beman, pictured above (Chicago History Museum), is best known for his work for American engineer and industrialist, George Pullman. For Pullman, Beman designed the 200-acre Town of Pullman, the ten-story Pullman Office Building (demolished), and the Pullman monument at Graceland Cemetery.**



**Though best known for his work at Pullman, Solon S. Beman also specialized in the design of civic, educational, residential, and transportation buildings, in addition to an extensive ecclesiastical portfolio through his work with the Christian Science Church. Pictured above is Beman's completed design for Chicago's Grand Central Station formerly located at Harrison and Wells Streets (left, The Portal of Texas History), Second Church of Christ, Chicago (top right, Second Church of Christ, Chicago), and the Merchant Tailors' Building, Columbian Exposition, Chicago (bottom right, *American Architect and Building News*).**

Gamble factories in Cincinnati, Ohio, the Studebaker plant in South Bend, Indiana, and the Pabst Building in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Beman's ecclesiastical designs in Chicago first date to his work on the Greenstone Church in Pullman. Constructed in 1882, as a union church for all denominations, the building stands out among its surroundings as the façade is clad in serpentine limestone quarried in Pennsylvania, while the remainder of the buildings in Pullman are of brick. Beman designed Greater Tabernacle Cathedral (formerly Holy Rosary Church) in 1890 to serve the Catholic congregation of Pullman. Beman then embarked on a nearly two-decade relationship with the Christian Science Church and designed at least a dozen of their churches across the country, including Grand Rapids, Michigan, Lincoln, Nebraska, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Portland, Oregon, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Cincinnati, Ohio.

Beman had a long involvement with the Christian Science Church, following the healing of his wife's invalidism, which he credited to the church. In Chicago, he designed the First Church of Christ, Scientist at 4017 South Drexel Boulevard in 1897 (now Grant Memorial AME Church) Second Church of Christ, Scientist at 2700 N. Pine Grove Avenue in 1899-1901, and the Fifth Church of Christ, Scientist at 4840 South Dorchester Avenue in 1904 (now The Anthiem Townhomes). For the design of these churches, Beman transitioned away from the revival styles of the Victorian Era to the Neoclassical style based on his Merchant Tailors building for the World's Columbian Exposition. His use of the Neoclassical style would have a profound influence on the architecture of the Christian Science Church for the next two-and-a-half decades.

Beman continued designing until his death on April 23, 1914. His architectural legacy continued with his son, Spencer S. Beman, who practiced architecture with his father and carried on his work with the Christian Science Church.

## **CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION**

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Section 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a preliminary recommendation of landmark designation for an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object within the City of Chicago if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for designation," as well as possess sufficient historic design integrity to convey its significance. The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that Greater Tabernacle Cathedral be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

### **Criterion 1: Value as an Example of City, State, or National Heritage**

*Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*



- Over the course of its 133-year history, the building has fostered congregations, including Holy Rosary (1890-2011), New Day Ministries International (2011-2016), and Greater Tabernacle Church (2016-present). It has remained a constant in the Roseland community, as a place of worship and a center for community, education, and culture.
- Holy Rosary Parish is significant as one of the first parishes to be established under the Archdiocese of Chicago following its elevation from a diocese in 1880.
- Holy Rosary Parish was the first Catholic parish established to serve the Roseland-Pullman Community. Its significance as the center of Catholic life in the community is illustrated by the monumental architecture of the extant church building.

### **Criterion 3: Significant Person**

*Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*

- The building is associated with the early career of significant national figure, former United States President Barack Obama, who has led the nation in community organizing, and personally attributes his political formation to his time at Holy Rosary Parish with the Developing Communities Project (DCP).
- From 1985 to 1988, Barack Obama led DCP from the organization's headquarters in the rectory of Holy Rosary Church as the first executive director of the organization. The DCP was a faith-based organization established in response to an increase in unemployment due to the closure of manufacturing plants in southeast Chicago. Under the leadership of Obama, the organization was incorporated as a non-profit in 1986, and established programming to support the community, including literacy, job training, and leadership development programs.
- Obama not only formally organized DCP, but expanded the organization's mission, outreach, and participants to unify Chicago's south side residents against unsafe streets, poor living conditions, and political neglect through community organizing and social justice and educational programming. Obama's greatest achievements while with DCP include the establishment of a job training program, the expansion of a city summer-job program for South Side teenagers, a college prep tutoring program, and a tenants' rights organization in the Altgeld Gardens which led to the removal of asbestos from the housing project.

### **Criterion 4: Exemplary Architecture**

*Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*

- The exterior of the former Holy Rosary Church exhibits fine architectural details and craftsmanship through its design and use of materials. Designed in the Romanesque Revival style, the exterior is an exceptional example of an early twentieth-century church. It features restrained yet elegant architectural detailing, including monumental arcade windows and striking brick relief work juxtaposed against delicate stained glass windows.
- The exterior of the church is one of two examples of Beman's ecclesiastical designs that were not completed for the Christian Science Church and also applied the Romanesque Revival style in lieu of the Neoclassical style, which he utilized for nearly two decades, following the construction of the former Holy Rosary Church.
- Though modest in its design, the exterior of the former Holy Rosary rectory illustrates the Romanesque Revival style through its form and expresses the congregation's focus on their faith and ministry with a clear absence on excess ornamentation and unnecessary embellishments.

#### **Criterion 5: Work of Significant Architect or Designer**

*Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.*

- Solon S. Beman is one of Chicago's most renowned late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century architects. With over 1,300 buildings in Pullman designed by Beman alone, he was a prolific architect, designing countless residential, commercial, and civic buildings with a specialty in ecclesiastical architecture.
- Beman is credited with some of the city's most noteworthy buildings, including the nation's first planned company town of Pullman, the Merchant Tailors Building at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, the Grand Central Station and train shed at Harrison and Wells Streets (1891, demolished), the Griffiths-Burroughs Mansion (3806 South Michigan Avenue, 1892, designated Chicago Landmark), the William W. Kimball Mansion (1801 South Prairie Avenue, 1892, designated Chicago Landmark), the Blackstone Memorial Library (4904 South Lake Park Avenue, 1902-04, designated Chicago Landmark), the First Church of Christ, Scientist (4017 South Drexel Boulevard, 1897), and the Fifth Church of Christ, Scientist (4840 South Dorchester Avenue, 1904).
- While Beman and his son designed over ninety churches for the Christian Science Church, Greater Tabernacle Cathedral is one of only two known examples of Beman's ecclesiastical work outside of the Christian Science Church.

#### **INTEGRITY CRITERION**

*The integrity of the proposed Landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design,*

*setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value.*

The Greater Tabernacle Cathedral complex retains its historic location, setting, exterior design, materials, and workmanship. The proposed landmark also retains a significant amount of historic material throughout the individual buildings which compose the complex. Home to three congregations, of different faiths over the last 133 years, the congregations that followed Holy Rosary Parish have preserved the original design and character-defining features of the site, church, and rectory.

Alterations from the original construction of the church include reconstruction of the interior and repairs following the 1937 fire. The age of these changes and their association with Holy Rosary Catholic Church are significant in their own right.

Other changes to the church appeared sometime during the mid-twentieth century: the narthex of the church was updated with new interior finishes, a stainless steel canopy was added over the front entrance of the church, and new stained glass windows were added at the front elevation of the church. No information is available to document the exact date of these changes nor who designed them, yet they are in a modern idiom and likely occurred after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) when many Catholic churches saw similar modernist updates. These changes do not appear to be significant or important for preserving as they are not consistent with the 19th century Romanesque qualities of the building as designed by Solon Beman, nor do they convey aspects of the building's social heritage with respect to Barack Obama's association with the building.

As the Greater Tabernacle Cathedral complex stands today, it clearly retains the historic, architectural, and aesthetic integrity as when the church was completed in 1890 and 1937, and the rectory in c. 1897-1911, for the Holy Rosary Parish. Alterations and maintenance over time have been sympathetic and have preserved the integrity of the complex over the last 133 years.

#### **SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES**

Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based upon its evaluation of the Greater Tabernacle Cathedral complex, the Commission staff recommends that the significant features be identified as follows:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the church and rectory buildings.

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- Greater Tabernacle Cathedral Archives
- Paul Petraitis Collection; Pullman State Historic Site
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
- United States Federal Census Records
- University of Illinois at Chicago: City of Chicago Building Permits

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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*The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual building, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, First Deputy Commissioner's Office, City Hall, 121 North LaSalle Street, Room 905, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200); [www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks](http://www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks)*

*This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within a designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.*

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*June 2023*