Oregon Historic Site Record

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address:	667 N Main	**historic name:**	Methodist Episcopal Church of Union
	Union, Union County	**current/other names:**	Union Community Hall; Union United Methodist Church; Catherine Creek Community Center
assoc addresses:	Main & Delta	**block/lot/tax lot:**	
location descr:		**twnshp/rng/sect/qtr sect:**	4S 40E 18

PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

resource type:	Building	**height (stories):**	2.0	**total elig resources:**	1	**total inelig resources:**	1
elig evaluation:	eligible/significant			**NR Status:**	Individually Listed		
prim constr date:	1905	**second date:**		**date indiv listed:**	09/23/2025		

primary orig use:	Religious Facility	**orig use comments:**	
second orig use:			
primary style:	Gothic Revival	**prim style comments:**	
secondary style:		**sec style comments:**	
primary siding:	Brick:Other/Undefined	**siding comments:**	
secondary siding:	Wood:Other/Undefined		
plan type:		**architect:**	
		builder:	

comments/notes:

GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

Not associated with any surveys or groupings.

SHPO INFORMATION FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed:	09/23/2025	**106 Project(s):**	None
ILS survey date:		**Special Assess Project(s):**	None
RLS survey date:		**Federal Tax Project(s):**	None

ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

(Includes expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings and alterations)

The Methodist Episcopal Church of Union, now the Catherine Creek Community Center, is an approximately 6,350 sq ft building located at 667 N Main Street in Union, Oregon, in a primarily residential setting.1 Constructed in 1905, the church exhibits a vernacular interpretation of the Late Gothic Revival style with minor Queen Anne style detailing.2 It is a two-and-one-half story building with a “Greek cross” plan consisting of a square central massing with four short, gabled wings extending off each side. It features a stone foundation, brick construction with wood framing in the gable ends, and an intersecting cross-gabled roof clad in architectural composition shingles. Exterior features include a prominent belltower at the northwest corner of the building, which contains the primary entrance; stainedglass, lancet wood windows with simple brick hood molding and stone lug sills; imbricated shingles in the gable ends and millwork in the belfry; and a thick wood cornice concealing a built-in trough style gutter along the eaves. A non-contributing sign with the name of the community center, installed in 2022, is located by the primary façade. Inside, the church building retains its original layout and many original materials, including a large congregation space (nave) with wood wainscoting, curved wood pews, a rounded chancel with turned wood balustrades, and two alcoves with balconies at the second story and tamboured wood rolling partitions enclosing the spaces below. The more than 100-year-old building has experienced several alterations over its lifetime, the most significant being the construction of the large, one-story Fellowship Hall addition off the east (rear) façade in 1955; alterations to the balcony walls in the 1980s; the enclosure of the belfry at some point between 1978 and 2008; and the removal of the brick chimney above the eaves in 2022.3 However, the church building maintains its historic integrity through its continuity of location, setting, overall design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

HISTORY

(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period - preferably to the present)

The Methodist Episcopal Church of Union is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an excellent, vernacular example of an Oregon church in the Late Gothic Revival style. The 1905 brick building exhibits the style’s defining characteristics through its relatively steep gable roofs, its lancet stained-glass windows, and decorative elements including the simple brick hood moldings and wood tracery on the large stained-glass windows.16 As is common to Oregon churches in this style, the building’s massing comprises multiple rectangular volumes arranged at right angles to create the appearance of separate wings. Finally, like other vernacular examples found across Oregon, the church incorporates minor but distinctive details of another contemporary style—in this case, the Queen Anne style—in its imbricated gable ends and the millwork and finials ornamenting the belfry.17 Other churches constructed in the Late Gothic Revival style in Union County and nearby Baker County tend to be smaller in size and simpler in design, lacking features such as the numerous lancet stained-glass windows, elaborate belltower, and decorative detailing seen in the Methodist Episcopal Church of Union. The property’s period of significance is 1905, the year of its construction, and it satisfies Criteria Consideration A as described above. Despite alterations including a major rear addition, the church retains nearly all of its character-defining features and continues to communicate its association with turn-of-the-century Late Gothic Revival style architecture in rural northeastern Oregon. It remains in use by the Catherine Creek Community Center, whose preservation efforts reflect its ongoing importance to the community.

RESEARCH INFORMATION

Title Records	Census Records	✔ Property Tax Records	Local Histories
Sanborn Maps	Biographical Sources	SHPO Files	Interviews
Obituaries	✔ Newspapers	State Archives	Historic Photographs
City Directories	Building Permits	State Library	

Local Library:		**University Library:**	
Historical Society:		**Other Respository:**	

Bibliography:

Almquist, Kathleen Edvalson, Cathi Morrison, K. Walter Brookshire et al. “Union Main Street Historic District.” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1997. An Illustrated History of Union and Wallowa Counties with a Brief Outline of the Early History of the State of Oregon. Spokane, WA: Western Historical Publishing Company, 1902. Balcomb, Raymond E., and Robert W. Burtner. “History of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference.” 1999 (updated 2005). https://www.umoi.org/files/websites/www/Chapter+15-2021.pdf. “Bids Wanted.” La Grande Evening Observer, April 4, 1904 “Biography of W.T. Wright.” Access Genealogy. Accessed March 20, 2025. https://accessgenealogy.com/oregon/biography-of-w-t-wright.htm#google_vignette. Beckham, Stephen Dow. State of Oregon Inventory Historic Sites and Buildings. “Methodist Church.” Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, August 9, 1976. Beckham, Stephen Dow. State of Oregon Inventory Historic Sites and Buildings. “Sacred Heart Catholic Church.” Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, August 9, 1976. Blumenson, John J.-G. Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company. Clark, Kenneth. The Gothic Revival: An Essay in the History of Taste. New York: Icon Editions, 1974. Clark, Rosalind. Oregon Style: Architecture from 1840 to the 1950s. Portland, OR: Professional Book Center, Inc., 1983. “Eaton Hall, Willamette University (Salem, Oregon).” Oregon Digital. Accessed March 20, 2025. https://www.oregondigital.org/concern/images/fx71bj19x. Google Street View. “699 OR-203.” September 2008. Accessed March 25, 2025. https://shorturl.at/lo8FQ. “Historical and Dedicatory.” La Grande Evening Observer, December 2, 1905. Historic Notes of the Union United Methodist Church. Catherine Creek Community Center Records. Notes composed in the 1980s from meeting notes. Hug, Bernal D. History of Union County, Oregon. La Grande, OR: Eastern Oregon Review, 1961. J.L. Inspections. “Home Inspection Report 22020-10-056.” October 23, 2020. “Local Items.” La Grande Evening Observer, April 4, 1904. National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1997. “Oregon Federal Women’s Clubs Hold District Convention Meet.” La Grande Evening Observer, April 10, 1959. Oregon Pictorial and Biographical De Luxe Supplement. Chicago, IL: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1912. Pederson, Nathan. “Union.” Oregon Encyclopedia. October 24, 2023. https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/union/. “Pioneer Couple Reduced to Want.” Sunday Oregonian (Portland, OR), July 22, 1906. “Price – Benjamin Detwiler Price (1845-1922) aka Benjamin D. Price.” Southwest Harbor Public Library Biography. Accessed April 3, 2025. https://swhpl.digitalarchive.us/files/original/3522/Price_-_Benjamin_Detwiler_Price_%5b1845-1922%5d.pdf. “Price, Benjamin Detwiler.” Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800-1950. Accessed April 2, 2025. http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/node/2775. Price, Benjamin D., and Rev. A.J. Kynett, D.D. Catalogue of Architectural Plans for Churches and Parsonages Furnished by the Board of Church Extension of the M. E. Church. Philadelphia, PA: Methodist Episcopal Church Extension Office, . Scottish Stained Glass. “Stained Glass Report and Assessment for Catherine Creek Community Center.” No date (ca. 2022). Tatman, Sandra L. “Price, Benjamin D. (fl. 1867-1907).” Philadelphia Architects and Buildings. Accessed April 2, 2025, https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/index.cfm. “Union Church.” La Grande Observer, December 1, 1905. “Union M.E. Church Dedicated Yesterday.” La Grande Evening Observer, December 4, 1905. Union County Assessor/Tax Collector. 04S4018CD-1000 Ref. No. 16776. Accessed March 25, 2025. https://unioncountyor. maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/media/index.html?appid=ce153b227b1646b38403c 5963702e4c2. Wasley, Katarina. “First Methodist Episcopal Church of Lake Preston.” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2022.