

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Listed 4/17/2023

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Cleveland Jewish Center-Cory United Methodist Church

Other names/site number: Anshe Emeth Beth Tefilo Synagogue

Name of related multiple property listing:

Twentieth-Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio

## 2. Location

Street & number: 1117 E. 105<sup>th</sup> St.

City or town: Cleveland State: OH County: Cuyahoga

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

<p><u>Barbara Lower</u> DSHPO/Dept. Head, Inventory &amp; Registration <b>March 2, 2023</b></p>	
<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<u>State Historic Preservation Office, Ohio History Connection</u>	
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	
<p>In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Religion: church  
Recreation and Culture: sports facility  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Religion: church  
Recreation and Culture: sports facility  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> & EARLY 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Neo-Classical Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Terra Cotta

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Constructed between 1920 and 1922, the Cleveland Jewish Center/Cory United Methodist Church is an imposing Neoclassical Revival building designed by architect Albert F. Janowitz. The building occupies a full block along E. 105<sup>th</sup> Street in Cleveland's Glenville neighborhood, an area home to the city's largest Jewish population at the time of construction. The exterior of the building is brick with decorative terracotta elements. The main façade is asymmetrical, with the primary entrance to the sanctuary located on the north end of the building. This entrance is flanked by four fluted terracotta capitals that support a pediment with entablature, signature elements of the Neoclassical Revival style. Behind the entrance bay, a circular bay with stained glass windows and a copper clad dome holds the sanctuary. To the south, a long section stretches down the remainder of the block, featuring paired, six-over-one windows on each floor. The second floor windows boast a fanlight transom at the top, another hallmark of the Neoclassical Revival style. On the interior, the sanctuary retains many original elements including the pews, lighting, woodwork, and decorative plaster motifs with Judaic imagery. The portion of the building historically used for recreation remains intact and in use as a recreation facility, including the original indoor pool. The building retains its historical integrity as it remains at its original location, features its original design, and contains the majority of original materials on



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both the exterior and interior. The feeling of the original design remains, due to the many original design elements that are present from the time of construction. The building retains its association with both the original Jewish congregation and architect, as well as the historic events that occurred within the space during the civil rights era. Built outside the period of significance, a freestanding canopy over a secondary entrance on the north elevation is a noncontributing structure.

**A note about the historic name:** Throughout this document the historic name of the building will be the Cleveland Jewish Center/Cory UMC. When the concept of this building was first developed by the Anshe Emeth leadership, the idea was to construct a place that provided traditional worship space and recreational space which would be the first of its kind in the Glenville neighborhood. Because the concept of the “Cleveland Jewish Center” was so powerful and so important to the congregation and the neighborhood and is the name that they used in the campaign to fund the building (Figure 09), that is the name that has been selected to describe the cultural connection to the Jewish congregation that first used this building. Due to the enormously important civil rights era events that occurred after Cory United Methodist Church (Cory UMC) purchased the building, their name has been selected to describe the cultural connection to the African American congregation.

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## Narrative Description

### Setting

Incorporated as a village in 1870, Glenville was annexed by the City of Cleveland in 1905. By the time the Cleveland Jewish Center was constructed, the immediate neighborhood had been fully developed into a middle class, residential community. The area around the Cleveland Jewish Center was comprised of large, single-family homes primarily constructed at the turn of the century, though Glenville also offered a variety of housing types including multi-family and apartments. The Cleveland Jewish Center is the dominant building in the neighborhood. It occupies a full block along E. 105<sup>th</sup> Street between Drexel Avenue and Grantwood Avenue, the two premier housing developments in Glenville. A substantial commercial corridor ran along E. 105<sup>th</sup> Street, which was home to many kinds of goods and services including restaurants, department stores, and theatres.

Today, disinvestment and systemic racism have left their mark on Glenville, with parts of the commercial corridor demolished and others vacant and empty, though several historic buildings remain extant. The block directly across from the Cleveland Jewish Center (now Cory United Methodist Church) retains one historic building centrally located on the street, with vacant lots on either side. Cory United Methodist Church and the Cleveland Cory Recreation Center have fought to remain vibrant, keeping the building in continued use and in good repair. The church is surrounded by the local historic district, Grantwood Allotments, which is comprised of Grantwood Avenue to the south, and the Drexel Avenue and Pasadena Avenue blocks to the north. While the district has been altered due to vacancies and demolition, it remains mostly intact, with some homes undergoing renovation each year. The Cleveland Jewish Center building retains its original setback from E. 105<sup>th</sup> Street, which includes a small landscaped lawn on the

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west, south, and north sides. A parking lot is present at the east side of the building. Cory United Methodist Church expanded this parking lot in 1976. Sometime between 1953 and 1959 the house that had been formally located on the lot and which fronted Grantwood Avenue was removed. The home, which had been used as the Hebrew Teachers Institute at the time the Cleveland Jewish Center was constructed, also housed Rev. Sumpter Riley of Cory United Methodist Church. There was once a walkway from the second floor of the home to the second floor of the church on the east elevation. The entrance has since been bricked in.

### **Exterior**

The Cleveland Jewish Center/Cory UMC is a two-story, F-Shaped building constructed of brick, with terracotta decorative elements on the west, north, and south elevations. The terracotta frieze with dentil moldings runs around the three public facing sides of the building and contains the names of Jewish Prophets, sages, and scholars. The frieze is capped with a decorative cornice and brick parapet wall (Photo 3). The front façade is west facing. The entrance to the sanctuary is at the north end with the sanctuary extending behind it to the east, offices and classrooms comprise the remaining portion of the west elevation and the recreation center is located in the wing south of the sanctuary and east of the office/classroom wing. The main roof area is a flat roof, currently composed of an FIP (Foam in Place) system that is coated with an elastomeric or acrylic coating. The sanctuary dome is roofed in standing seam copper panels. The dome is constructed of brick and holds 12 arched openings with stained glass windows. A large, brick chimney is present at the juncture of the sanctuary and office/classroom wing. An elaborate entablature runs on the west, north, and south elevations. The brickwork uses a complex combination of patterns. The majority of the building employs Flemish bond, but there are also numerous soldier courses (around windows and entrances) and sections of triple basket-weave.

### **West Façade**

The façade of the Cleveland Jewish Center faces E 105th Street (Photo 1). The dominant bay and entrance to the sanctuary is located at the north corner, with a foundation clad in terracotta. This entrance is set beneath a large, pedimented portico. Four fluted columns with a Doric capital, clad in terracotta, support the terracotta pediment with entablature that projects off the wall, forming the porch. Within the porch are three entrance doors each in a single bay (Photo 2). The double doors are wood with a geometric pattern, set within a Greek Revival style terracotta frame, and each offer a pair of stained glass transoms above. The entrance doors are accessed by a wide stone staircase, with a set of stairs that lead to each door and which are interrupted by the stone base of the porch columns. Each bay has a stained glass window with decorative terracotta pediments above the second story, and decorative ironwork at the base that is supported by a terracotta sill atop a scrolled bracket. The porch roof has Hebrew script running along the terracotta frieze. The script comes from Pslam 29:2 and reads "Ascribe unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of his Holiness."<sup>1</sup> In the apex of the pediment, there is a high-relief terracotta sculpture of two, upright lions of Judah holding stone tablets with the Ten Commandments inscribed in Hebrew script. On either side of the portico, there is a symmetrical bay with rectangular stained glass windows that have Greek Revival style terracotta

<sup>1</sup> Walter Leedy, *Eric Mendelsohn's Park Synagogue* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press) 26

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surrounds on the first story; above these, there are circular windows with a stepped terracotta surround on the second story (Photo 2).

The southern portion of the 105th street façade is recessed from the main entrance and transitions into a series of eleven bays framed by shallow pilasters that are crowned by terracotta capitals. The first eight bays are identical: wood windows with fanlight transoms and keystones in the brick arch surround over paired 9/1 double hung windows in the second story and paired 9/1 wood windows with soldier course lintels and sills on the first story. In the ninth bay, there is a protruding, single-story enclosed entrance at the ground level with the words “Cleveland Jewish Center” inscribed in the frieze of a small terracotta entablature (Photo 3). Engaged Tuscan terracotta pillars flank this double-door entrance, which is topped by a fanlight transom window. The doors are replacements from the late 1900s. There are arched multi-light windows on the side walls of the small, enclosed entrance as well. The final two bays facing 105th St. are identical to the remainder of the façade: fanlight windows with a thick muntin over paired 6/1 windows that are topped by a soldier course in the second story (these two windows are c.2000 replacements) and paired 9/1 windows topped by a soldier course on the first story. All the bays have windows at the basement level, a combination of glass block and original 6/1/ double hung wood windows, within a brick foundation.

### **North Façade**

The north façade fronts Drexel Avenue and is comprised of four bays (Photo 4). The northwest corner is a rectangular bay on a terracotta foundation. A paired stained glass window, set within a terracotta frame, is present in a central location at both the first and second floors. The remaining three bays on the north elevation house the sanctuary. The central sanctuary bay is semi-circular and protrudes from the recessed bays on either side. The semi-circular bay has three arch top, tripartite stained glass windows with tracery, resting on terracotta sills. The central window rises above those on either side. The bay to the west contains a single arch top tripartite stained glass window that matches the height of the tallest window in the adjacent bay. The bay at the northeast corner has a single circular window with a stepped terracotta surround on the second story, and a recessed entrance at ground level. This single door is set within a pedimented terracotta surround. This door is used as the entrance to the Cory Recreation Center. A modern, c.2000, gable front portico constructed of metal and with columns resting on CMU piers has been constructed to cover the entrance, but it is not anchored to the building. Built outside the period of significance, the non-historic freestanding canopy is a noncontributing structure. All bays are framed by shallow embedded pilasters that are crowned by terracotta capitals. All the bays have windows into a basement level, two have brick infill and three have glass block. The decorative terracotta frieze and brick parapet continues onto the north elevation from the façade.

### **East Façade**

The east façade faces the parking lot and is the rear of the building (Photo 5). The northern section houses the sanctuary and continues the semicircular shape within flanking bays. A shallow embedded pilaster crowned by terracotta capital marks the northeast corner of the building. There are three window openings in the first bay: 1/1 double hung replacement window

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at the first floor, a 6/1 original wood window on the second floor, and a smaller 1/1 stairwell replacement window between the floors. Within the protruding curved bay are three arch top, tripartite glass windows with tracery at the second floor. (Note, these windows are not visible from the sanctuary, but provide light to interior stained glass windows found within a partial dome that is contained within the altar space). The third bay repeats the first, except all windows are 6/1. All bays have glass block basement windows from the late 1970s. The foundation is brick. The semi-circular south wall of the sanctuary is brick and returns back to the to the west elevation.

Moving south along the east facade, there is a small alley between the sanctuary and the wing that houses the Cory Recreation Center, originally the athletic wing of the Cleveland Jewish Center. This wing is rectangular. On the north side facing the south sanctuary wall, there are three sets of paired 6/1 double hung windows along the first floor. The second floor features a fanlight clerestory window. The east elevation of this wing faces the parking lot. Here, there is a fire escape that leads to an access door on the third floor and other mechanical equipment attached to the building. There are two openings that match the window patterns of the north elevation at the first and second floors. The south elevation has three openings at the first and second floors, mirroring the north side (Photo 6). A door accessed by a metal fire escape has been added to the central pair of windows on this elevation. Two basement window openings with glass block are underneath the two easternmost bays.

Continuing south, the building returns to the wing that houses classrooms, offices and the second floor auditorium (Photo 7). The east facing elevation has seven bays with windows that are similar to those on the front façade: fanlight windows with a thick muntin over paired 6/1 windows in the second story and paired 6/1 windows on the first story. At the basement level, there are paired 6/1 wood windows, most of which have the bottom sash boarded-over. A basement entrance is slightly below grade near the ell of the recreation wing, and the stairwell is enclosed with a simple metal railing.

### **South Façade**

The south façade of the building faces Grantwood Avenue (Photos 7, 8). This elevation is comprised of three bays, each bordered with embedded pilasters that are crowned by terracotta capitals. The windows in each bay match those on the facade: fanlight windows with a thick muntin over paired 6/1 windows that are topped by a soldier course in the second story and paired 9/1 windows topped by a soldier course on the first story. All the bays have windows into a basement level, one opening is glass block and the remaining are original 6/1 double hung wood windows, set within a brick foundation. The decorative terracotta frieze inscribed with names and brick parapet continues onto the south elevation from the façade.

### **Interior Description**

The interior of the Cleveland Jewish Center is comprised of three sections. The sanctuary is in the north; a wing with offices, classrooms, and an auditorium is to its south; and the recreation center is located in the southeast wing, positioned behind both the sanctuary and the office wing.

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### **Vestibule and Narthex**

Upon entry from the exterior, there is a long, narrow, rectangular vestibule hall with three sets of wood paneled double doors that lead to the narthex. The vestibule has marble and plaster walls, marble flooring, and marble trim. Decorative plaster elements are present along the ceiling with pendant lights that hang from ceiling medallions, evenly spaced across three bays. The narthex is shallow and rectilinear in form (Photo 9). Doors at the north and south each lead to restrooms. Marble stairs are also located at each end of the narthex and ascend to balcony seating in the sanctuary. Decorative plaster work is employed along the narthex ceiling, along with plaster and marble walls, marble flooring and marble trim. Original stained glass flush mount lights are positioned within decorative plaster, evenly spaced across three bays. Another three sets of wood panel doors on the narthex's east wall leads into the sanctuary.

### **Sanctuary**

The sanctuary inside the Cleveland Jewish Center remains much the same as when it was constructed for the Anshe Emeth congregation. The sanctuary was designed as a large, central plan with three sides facing the former bimah (Photo 10). On the first floor, four sections of light-colored wood bench seating radiate in a semi-circle from what is now the altar. The raised chancel is trimmed in decorative wood paneling with a central feature that once held the Ark, which has a wood pediment and is lined with curtains. Round pillars support a second story of balcony seating. The balcony is decorated with Judaic symbols in plaster relief. Interestingly, author Walter C. Leedy notes that "Apparently, the trustees insisted on the balcony to increase capacity, whereas the architect felt it destroyed his design by running across the windows."<sup>2</sup> Set within painted decorative frames, sconces in the shape of a menorah are throughout the sanctuary (Photo 11). All of the windows are stained glass with Judaic imagery. Wide arches rise from massive pendentives, transitioning the area from a square space to a round space that meets beneath the large circular dome. The dome features 12 stained glass windows interspersed with 12 different biblical symbols done in plaster relief (Photo 12). All of the surfaces are heavily decorated with plaster designs and painted in a light multi-color scheme. A pendant chandelier hangs from the center of the dome. The sanctuary floor is terrazzo.

#### *West*

The west wall of the sanctuary contains three sets of wood paneled double doors that lead to the narthex. The second story holds two sets of wood seating in the balcony, which are framed behind the western arch. There are no windows on this elevation (Photo 13).

#### *North*

The north wall of the sanctuary features four stained glass windows, each of which are arch top and tripartite in design. A single window is located to the west, separated by a pendentive. The remaining three windows are centered within the curved wall and northern arch (Photo 14).

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<sup>2</sup> Walter Leedy, *Eric Mendelsohn's Park Synagogue* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press) 27

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### *South*

The curved south wall contains three tripartite, arch top stained glass windows beneath the southern arch. Instead of a fourth window at the southwest corner, there is a wood panel door that leads to the office/educational wing (Photo 15).

### *East*

The east wall features the former bimah, which is now an altar. A carved wood rail separates the pews from the altar. This space is semicircular, and set back behind the eastern arch. An elaborately carved wood wall rises above the second story, with a central element that once held the Ark and now features a lit cross. Above the wood, the curvilinear wall culminates in a semicircular dome. This partial dome is constructed within the sanctuary, in front of the east façade and beneath the flat roof. There are three convex stained glass windows set between decorative plaster panels. The windows are lit from the set of three windows found in the central bay of the east façade, seen in photo #5. Above the windows, a decorative plaster frieze runs beneath a central gold medallion that terminates at the arch (Photo 16, Photo 17).

### **Office/Classroom South Wing**

The first floor of the south wing contains a series of classrooms and offices separated by a central hall. Plaster walls are throughout. Some spaces are carpeted and others retain terrazzo floors. Original double hung windows are present. Classrooms are accessed through original multi-lite wood doors, most of which have a large transom above (Photo 18). The majority of the classroom spaces retain original wood trim and baseboard molding. All retain their original ceiling height. There is a mix of flooring material, including original wood floors, carpet, and laminate. At the north end of the central hall is an entrance to the south end of the narthex, and to the east is a service stairway that ascends to the auditorium.

Office spaces are also located off the central hall of the south wing. The largest office is located at the south elevation and is divided into three spaces. A pair of multi-lite wood doors with transom serves as the entrance. This office is carpeted and has a non-original drop ceiling. Other office spaces are accessed through original multi-lite wood doors, with overhead transom windows. All offices have plaster walls and original wood windows. The majority of the office spaces retain original wood trim and baseboard molding. Some spaces are carpeted or have laminate flooring, and others retain terrazzo or original wood floors (Photo 19). One of the office spaces is a credit union (Photo 20), located close to the south entrance landing.

The auditorium is located on the second floor of the office and classroom wing. It is accessed through the south entrance, which features a marble vestibule with interior double doors with divided-lites, and fanlight transom. A dramatic gray marble staircase with decorative iron rail ascends to the auditorium level and descends to the basement. (Photo 21).

On the second floor, off the hall landing to the south is access to a restroom and a commercial kitchen. To the north is the large auditorium that boasts hardwood flooring and a vaulted ceiling with decorative plaster (Photo 22). Original light fixtures can be found throughout the space. Built-in wooden bench seating surrounds the room (Photo 23), and a large stage is along the

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north wall. Arched openings along the interior hallway wall provide a view of the auditorium from the third floor corridor (Photo 24). The third floor space is accessed via the marble staircase. There is a restroom to the south, and the hallway offers space for seating with a view into the auditorium. The design of the balcony space here, and in the sanctuary, harken back to the separation of men and women found within the Orthodox tradition. The new laws of Conservatism were still emerging at the time the Cleveland Jewish Center was being constructed, and so the design allowed for the traditional separation of the sexes.

### **Recreation Center**

The recreation center is housed in the two-story wing that extends east of the south wing into the parking lot and in basement space beneath the sanctuary. An indoor swimming pool is located in the basement level of the recreation center (Photo 25). This pool is original to the Cleveland Jewish Center and remains in use today. A recently refurbished basketball court is located on the first floor, with ceiling height that reaches to the second floor (Photo 26). An indoor track runs around the perimeter of the court at the second floor level. To the north of the court, additional classrooms and smaller gym spaces are located on the third floor. These spaces are used as dance studios, racquetball court, weight room, and classrooms for activities like chess. There is also a full ceramics studio with kiln, computer lab, and offices in the basement level below the sanctuary.

### **Basement**

The basement area beneath the main central hall of classrooms and offices is configured much the same as the space above, but lacks some of the historic finishes. A more utilitarian space, the classrooms are finished plaster and painted walls with linoleum flooring, however some terrazzo remains in the central hall and in one of the larger spaces that had been used as a dining hall (Photo 27). In addition to classroom space, there are rooms that house the mechanicals and HVAC systems.

### **Alterations**

There have been no additions and very few alterations made to the Cleveland Jewish Center since it was constructed. On the exterior, most of the original building material remains. Some of the basement windows on the north, south, and east elevations have been changed to glass block, and a few windows in the recreation center have been replaced. At some point, the chimney seems to have lost a decorative cornice, but appears to retain most of its height. On the interior, the major change that has occurred in the sanctuary is the loss of a chandelier that was created in the Star of David. The c.2000 freestanding canopy on the north elevation abuts the synagogue, but is not connected to it. Situated on a secondary elevation and near the rear corner, the canopy does not obscure the architectural features of the building, and it is easily removable. None of these minor alterations impact the historic integrity of the building, which continues to reflect its significance for architecture, ethnic heritage, and the Civil Rights movement.

### **Historic Integrity**

The Cleveland Jewish Center retains all seven aspects of integrity. The building remains in the same location as when it was first constructed. While the neighborhood setting has experienced

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change that has resulted in the loss of some historic structures, many homes, businesses, and synagogues around the Cleveland Jewish Center remain extant. The building continues to dominate the block of E. 105<sup>th</sup> Street between Drexel Avenue and Grantwood Avenue as it did when it was first constructed. The Neo-Classical Revival design of the building is intact, retaining typical features of the style, such as the sanctuary entrance with two-story Doric columns that support a classical pediment with decorative dentil and egg and dart elements; Greek Revival style terra cotta door and window surrounds at the sanctuary entrance; and paired 9/1 divided lite windows (some with arch top fan lights). The repetitive, orderly presentation of the paired windows set between brick and terracotta pilasters reinforces the Neo-Classical Revival design.

Original exterior building materials of brick and terracotta, stained glass windows, and double hung wood windows also remain intact and speak to the time period during which they were created and demonstrate the workmanship of skilled crafts persons who worked to construct the building. The feeling of the property is retained and reinforced by many of the decorative elements that speak to the Jewish congregation that first worshipped in the space. This includes the frieze of names running across the entablature, the Hebrew text over the portico, and the Star of David symbols that are present in the lighting, and the Judaic symbols in the stained glass. The Cleveland Jewish Center has association with the congregation that constructed it, as evidenced by these architectural features, the sheer size of the building, and the recreation center. All of this speaks to the wealth and prosperity of the Jewish congregation at the time of construction. Additionally, the use of its interior spaces is much the same as when the building was constructed.

Under ownership of the Cory United Methodist Church, the building also retains its association with the civil rights events that transpired within the sanctuary, ballroom, and credit union office through the continued use of the space since 1946. Pictures that were taken showing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X proclaiming from the pulpit show the sanctuary much the same as it is today, with the same pulpit and same lit cross behind the speakers.



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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture  
Ethnic Heritage/Jewish  
Ethnic Heritage/Black  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1921-1976  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1921, 1946, 1950, 1963, 1964  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Janowitz, Albert F.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Cleveland Jewish Center/Cory United Methodist Church is locally significant and being nominated under Criteria A and C. It meets Criterion Consideration A: *Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes* because it is being nominated for its association with broad patterns of events and architectural significance. The church is nominated under Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage for its role as the preeminent cultural center for the Jewish population in the Glenville neighborhood. It is also nominated under Criterion A in the area of African American Ethnic Heritage because of its role as a center of civil rights activities, hosting nationally known leaders of the civil rights movement, and as a site of organizing and activism in Cleveland while under the ownership of the congregation, Cory United Methodist Church, that purchased the synagogue in 1946. The period of significance is extended through 1976 as civil rights activities regularly took place at the church through the Modern Civil Rights Movement (1954-1964) and the Second Revolution (1965-1976) as defined by the National Park Service publication *Civil Rights in America: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites*. The property was identified in the Multiple Property Document (MPD): *Twentieth-Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio (MC100004231)* as a significant church. The building is also significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture. Designed by architect Albert F. Janowitz (1867-1937), the Neoclassical Revival building was constructed between 1920 and 1922 in Cleveland's Glenville neighborhood.<sup>3</sup> It served as the Cleveland Jewish Center and synagogue for the Anshe Emeth Beth Tefilo congregation, the largest Conservative congregation in Cleveland<sup>4</sup> from 1922 to 1945. The Cleveland Jewish Center was the largest and most architecturally significant synagogue in the Glenville neighborhood and remains an outstanding example of the Neoclassical Revival style.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **Criterion C: Architecture**

Designed by architect Albert F. Janowitz and constructed from 1920-1922, the Cleveland Jewish Center was the center of Jewish life in Cleveland's Glenville neighborhood. From 1900-1930, the Glenville neighborhood was known as the "Gold Coast" and home to many of Cleveland's second-generation Eastern European Jewish families. The imposing synagogue with the athletic wing housing a basketball court, handball court, and swimming pool became known simply as

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<sup>3</sup> Lloyd H. Ellis Jr. *A Guide to Greater Cleveland's Sacred Landmarks*. (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 2012) 97-98

<sup>4</sup> "Anshe Emeth (Park Synagogue)" *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History* <https://case.edu/ech/articles/a/anshe-emeth-park-synagogue> (accessed 11/22/21)

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the Cleveland Jewish Center, a name that speaks to the social anchor that the synagogue and recreational center provided in the neighborhood (Figure 01).<sup>5</sup>

As the Glenville neighborhood was rapidly becoming home to many Jewish congregations, a number of synagogues were being constructed throughout the community. The Cleveland Jewish Center stands out architecturally for several reasons. The imposing Neo-Classical façade is unlike any other synagogue in the area. Other synagogues in Glenville were smaller and less ornate. Extant former synagogues include the neighboring Greater Abyssinia Church, constructed in 1906 first as the Trinity United Brethren Church and then sold to the Beth Hamedrosh Hagodel Beth Israel Congregation in 1919,<sup>6</sup> and incorporates simplified Romanesque Revival features with a Colonial Revival style front porch; the Romanesque Revival style Nu Vision Missionary Baptist Church (formerly Tetiever Ahavath Achim Anshe Sfarad); and the Romanesque Revival Integrated Faith Assembly (1922) (formerly Parkwood Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and Oheb Zedek Congregation).<sup>7</sup> All of these institutions are smaller in size when compared to the Cleveland Jewish Center/Cory UMC. Additionally, the other major religious structures in the neighborhood such as St. Aloysius Roman Catholic Church (1922) and Bethany Baptist Church (1922), both of which were constructed in the Romanesque Revival style and Greater Friendship Baptist Church (1926) designed with both Romanesque and Gothic Revival elements.

The use of Neo-Classical architectural details incorporated into the design of the Cleveland Jewish Center that are derived from Greek and Roman architecture speaks to the belief that Judaism was an ancient and integral part of Western civilization.<sup>8</sup> The building has the appearance of a public building rather than a place of worship. The Lions of Judah holding the Ten Commandments with Hebrew script that are nestled in the portico over the sanctuary door give a clue to the building's use. Other Judaica on the building that points to it being a synagogue includes the names of the Jewish prophets and sages running across the cornice. According to architectural historian and author, Walter C. Leedy, "It is very unusual, if not exceptional, to have such names inscribed on a synagogue. Their inclusion grows out of an architectural tradition that placed the names of important contributors to history and culture on libraries and school buildings"<sup>9</sup> The Cleveland Jewish Center stands as the largest and only high style Neo-Classical Revival example of more than twenty-five synagogues once found in Glenville between 1905-1940.

Additionally, it is the only one with a recreation center of its size. The recreational facility provided space for many of the activities associated with the Young Men's Hebrew Association (YMHA). Modeled on the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the YMHA was

<sup>5</sup> Lloyd H. Ellis Jr. *A Guide to Greater Cleveland's Sacred Landmarks*. (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 2012) 98.

<sup>6</sup> Jeffrey S. Morris, "Haymarket to the Heights" <https://www.jewishhistorycleveland.com/the-haymarket-to-the-heights.html> (accessed 11/7/22)

<sup>7</sup> "Cleveland's Old Still-Standing Synagogues" Cleveland Jewish History <https://www.clevelandjewishhistory.net/syn/old-synagogues.htm> (accessed 6/15/22)

<sup>8</sup> Walter Leedy, *Eric Mendelsohn's Park Synagogue* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press) 26

<sup>9</sup> Ibid 26

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founded in 1854 in Baltimore, Maryland to promote moral recreation, sociability, literature, physical fitness, and spiritual values among Jewish men. By the mid-1870s there were several dozen YMHAs in major cities, often serving as an alternative for Jewish men excluded from men's clubs. By 1900 about 100 YMHAs existed serving an estimated 20,000 members, including German and Eastern European Jewish immigrants. In 1902 the first Young Women's Hebrew Association was formed in New York City. Later in the twentieth century the facilities associated with YMHAs and YWHAs merged into Jewish Community Centers. The Cleveland Jewish Center-Cory UMC building reflects this important urban Jewish religious, recreation, and social building type.<sup>10</sup>

While not much is known about architect Albert F. Janowitz (1867-1936) what is documented is that he was born in England and immigrated to the United States with his family in 1868. Janowitz was a draftsman at the Cleveland firms of Coburn and Barnum (1888) and B.F. Van Develde (1889). By 1894, Janowitz worked for the Peoria, IL, based office of Wechselberger, Janowitz. Beginning in 1900, Janowitz returned to Cleveland and continued to design buildings through 1930. Janowitz specialized in apartment buildings with over 100 constructed and which comprise the majority of his body of work. The architect has a few theaters and residential homes credited to his name as well.<sup>11</sup> The most notable buildings in his portfolio are the following three synagogues: Anshe Emeth's first temple at 2541 East 37<sup>th</sup> St.(demolished); Oheb Zedek Hungarian Orthodox on E. 38<sup>th</sup> St. (now Triedstone Baptist Church, 3782 Community College Ave.); and his masterpiece, the Cleveland Jewish Center (Figures 02-04).

The first worship space designed for the Anshe Emeth congregation on E. 37<sup>th</sup> St. was completed in 1904 and designed by Janowitz in the Romanesque Revival style, as was the 1905 synagogue built for the Oheb Zedek congregation on E. 38<sup>th</sup> St. (Figures 05-06) The Cleveland Jewish Center/Cory UMC building stands alone as the only Neoclassical synagogue designed by Janowitz and completes the story of his architectural portfolio and his significant contributions to Cleveland's built environment during the early twentieth century.

In his book, *Eric Mendelsohn's Park Synagogue*, Walter Leedy surmises that Albert Janowitz made connections within the congregation of Anshe Emeth as a result of his first synagogue commission for the congregation. Using information gathered from deeds, permits and synagogue records, Leedy notes that Janowitz was commissioned to design apartments and storefronts for a number of members within the Anshe Emeth congregation, making him a natural choice for receiving the commission of the Cleveland Jewish Center.<sup>12</sup> At the time the Cleveland Jewish Center was constructed "It was an anomaly among the smaller buildings around it."<sup>13</sup> It became the most important building to the Glenville community which was at its peak population when it opened. In the 1920s, the Jewish population in northeast Ohio reached a

<sup>10</sup> George B. Kirsch, Orthello Harris, Claire Elaine Nolte, *Encyclopedia of Ethnicity and Sports in the United States*, Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 2000, pp. 501-502.

<sup>11</sup> Cleveland Landmarks Commission, "Cleveland Architects Database" (Cleveland, OH: City of Cleveland, 2008, 2015) 423-429

<sup>12</sup> Leedy, 14-23

<sup>13</sup> Ibid 26

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high at 86, 540.<sup>14</sup> Sources estimate that over half the population lived in the Glenville neighborhood.

### **Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage/Jewish**

#### **The Anshe Emeth Beth Tefilo Congregation and the Cleveland Jewish Center**

Anshe Emeth, which means “People of Truth”, was founded in Cleveland in 1869 by a Polish Orthodox Congregation.<sup>15</sup> The congregation first worshipped in a rented space before purchasing a small brick church in 1879 from the First Universalist Parish Church located on Erie Street near Woodland Ave., in what is now downtown Cleveland. At this time, the Jewish population of Cleveland was approximately 3,500, while the total population of Cleveland was 160,146.<sup>16</sup> As more immigrants came to Cleveland, Anshe Emeth grew and in 1903, contracted with Albert Janowitz to construct its first synagogue at 2541 East 37<sup>th</sup> Street in Cleveland’s Central neighborhood (Figure 07). From 1903 until 1917, membership swelled dramatically under the leadership of Rabbi Samuel Margolies, with the merger of Anshe Emeth and Beth Tefilo, a congregation founded in 1912 to serve the growing population of Orthodox Jews in the Glenville neighborhood. It was at this time that Margolies began laying the foundation for the concept of a Cleveland Jewish Center to be built in Glenville.

Glenville was quickly becoming home to Cleveland’s second generation of Jewish families, thus necessitating the founding of Beth Tefilo in 1912. The Jewish population in Cleveland had grown from 30,000 in 1905 to 60,000 in 1912.<sup>17</sup> The Glenville neighborhood started as a summer retreat for Cleveland’s wealthy families beginning in the 1870s, and by 1900 was being fully developed into a middle-class residential neighborhood. The proximity to streetcar transit, large single-family homes, the main commercial thoroughfare down E. 105<sup>th</sup> street, and access to excellent public schools proved to be attractive to the Jewish population moving out of the Central neighborhood.

The premiere development in Glenville was established in 1905 by Grant W. Deming, with five residential streets: Drexel, Grantwood, Pasadena, Tacoma, and Massie. However, not all of the streets were equal with Drexel being the most exclusive, complete with zoning restrictions limiting the street to single-family residences and fencing setbacks. Grantwood had an elaborate entrance along E. 105<sup>th</sup> with stone walls and overhead signage (Figure 08). It was between these two blocks that Anshe Emeth acquired the property for which to build the new synagogue.

Although Margolies died before the Cleveland Jewish Center was a reality, the mantle was picked up by his successor, Rabbi Samuel Benjamin. When Benjamin arrived in 1919, he launched a massive fundraising campaign, which employed a wide range of tactics from

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<sup>14</sup> Encyclopedia of Cleveland History “Jews and Judaism”

<sup>15</sup> Ibid 1

<sup>16</sup> Ibid 4-5

<sup>17</sup> Judah Rubinstein with Jane Aver, *Merging Traditions: Jewish Life in Cleveland* (Cleveland: The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland and The Western Reserve Historical Society, 2004) 29

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passionate speeches, to bazaars and raffles, and even engaging children to go door-to-door selling pictures of bricks that were to go into the building at the cost of \$1.00 (Figure 09). A large billboard was erected, displaying donor names and the amount they gave to the campaign, increasing the social pressure to support the dream of the Cleveland Jewish Center.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to fundraising, Rabbi Benjamin established a building committee to put together the site, which it eventually managed in the block along E. 105<sup>th</sup> between Drexel and Grantwood. However, this was not done without controversy. With the exclusive nature of the residential streets, and the corresponding deed restrictions, many residents opposed the construction of the synagogue as it would impact the residential quality of the streets and involve the loss of two lots on Drexel. In 1921, coming before the board of zoning appeals a second time, Anshe Emeth was finally granted a variance with permission to build. This variance resulted in influencing the overall design of the synagogue. The variance allowed for the construction of the circular sanctuary bay, allowable at 25 feet from Drexel Avenue, while the remainder of the building was required to adhere to the previously established setback of 31 feet. The setback at the rear of the lot was also defined, and there was a stipulation that no entrance or exit be placed on the Drexel Avenue side, except for one to be used as emergency egress only. The court felt that this preserved the residential character of Drexel Avenue.<sup>19</sup>

While securing the parcel, the committee was also charged with hiring the architect. There is no primary source that tells why the committee chose Albert F. Janowitz, but it was a logical choice in that he had designed the E. 37<sup>th</sup> street synagogue and is documented to have completed projects for several members of the congregation.

In March 1920, while the court proceedings for the lots along Drexel Avenue continued, construction began on the recreational center portion of the complex. The cornerstone was laid on June 20 of the same year. Author Walter Leedy hypothesizes that the construction of the social center was essential to attract enough new members to fund the construction of the synagogue and that the court case may have been a convenient delay.<sup>20</sup>

As all of the events in Glenville were unfolding, changes to the essential religious beliefs of American Jews were also changing. This led to the creation of a national form of American Judaism, Conservatism. Though Rabbi Benjamin had been passionate about the establishment of the Cleveland Jewish Center, he was unwilling to part with the views of the Orthodox contingent and was eventually fired in 1922, with the building still incomplete, the congregation unable to secure a mortgage, and in debt for the construction in the range of \$125,000.

It was at this shaky time that leadership then fell to Rabbi Solomon Goldman who was considered controversial, having resigned just five years earlier from a different Orthodox temple. Many of Anshe Emeth's most active families left along with Rabbi Benjamin, and the congregation was seen in a poor light due to the debt and stalled construction. Goldman took the

<sup>18</sup> Walter Leedy, *Eric Mendelsohn's Park Synagogue* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press) 22

<sup>19</sup> Walter Leedy, *Eric Mendelsohn's Park Synagogue* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press) 22-23

<sup>20</sup> Ibid 23

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lead in securing a loan from the Union Trust Company to press forward and complete the building later that same year with the promise it would be ready for the High Holy Days in the fall of 1922.

With a dedication in October 1922, the Cleveland Jewish Center opened to the community, providing services and opportunities that were found nowhere else in Cleveland. The beautiful new building drew substantial new membership, with 1,000 people attending the High Holy Days Services and an average attendance of 1,500 worshippers at Saturday services. The fact that the building offered a gymnasium, auditorium, classrooms, and one of the largest indoor pools in the city – earning it the nickname “the shul with the pool” - made the Center even more attractive (Figure 10).<sup>21</sup> The Jewish population in the city had grown to some 90,000<sup>22</sup> by this time, and the Cleveland Jewish Center stood as a neighborhood anchor ready to welcome many new members.

The completion of the Cleveland Jewish Center ushered in a new era of American Judaism, and it solidified Cleveland’s Jewish community in the Glenville neighborhood. It was Goldman who guided the congregation through a conversion from Orthodox to Conservative, setting Anshe Emeth on the path to eventually becoming the largest Conservative congregation in the United States, despite losing members in the transition. Goldman’s leadership came to an end in 1929. He was succeeded by Rabbi Harry Davidowitz, who resigned shortly thereafter in 1934. During this time, the finances of the Center were in shambles due to the Great Depression, and by 1937 the principal and interest owed on the building was \$383,000.<sup>23</sup>

Amidst the financial turmoil, Rabbi Armond Cohen was called to lead in 1934. Cohen, along with congregation president, Henry Rocker, was responsible for lowering the mortgage and raising the funds to pay off the overwhelming debt of the Jewish Center, and ultimately selling the building to Cory United Methodist Church in 1946. Cohen then moved the Anshe Emeth Beth Tefilo congregation east, as so many Cleveland Jewish congregations were doing, to the nearby suburb of Cleveland Heights. After the move, Cohen hired Eric Mendelsohn to construct the architectural masterpiece that is Park Synagogue for what was then the largest Conservative congregation in the country.<sup>24</sup>

### **Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage/African American**

#### **Cory United Methodist Church**

Cory United Methodist Church is recognized in the Multiple Property Document (MPD), *Twentieth Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* and has been evaluated

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid 25

<sup>22</sup> Judah Rubinstein with Jane Aver, *Merging Traditions: Jewish Life in Cleveland* (Cleveland: The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland and The Western Reserve Historical Society, 2004) 29

<sup>23</sup> Walter Leedy, *Eric Mendelsohn’s Park Synagogue* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press) 31

<sup>24</sup> Lloyd H. Ellis Jr. *A Guide to Greater Cleveland’s Sacred Landmarks*. (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 2012) 98



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within the contexts of “Public Accommodations, Education, Employment, and Housing” as a site “for civil rights meetings and as centers of social and black-empowerment programs.”

The MPD provides an appropriate context for evaluation of Cory United Methodist Church during the portion of the period of significance (1946-1976) in which Cory United Methodist Church had strong ties to the Civil Rights Movement in Cleveland. The MPD documents the history of African Americans in Ohio and addresses the issues of civil rights in areas of public accommodation, education, employment, housing, and police relations and police brutality. While the MPD does not focus in depth on the role of religious organizations in promoting civil rights movements in the 1900-1970 time period, there are areas of the document that help point to the significance of Cory United Methodist Church’s role as an important center for civil rights meetings for African Americans in Ohio during the nominated property’s period of significance. The MPD references Cory UMC in connection with the Black Nationalist movement and acknowledges that the United Freedom Movement and Cleveland chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) met within the church and brought nationally known speakers, such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, to speak from the Cory pulpit.

The Cory United Methodist Church fits the description of churches’ role in the Twentieth Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio as outlined in the MPD: “Churches are single-purpose buildings used for religious worship. Many African American churches are repurposed from other denominations and religions when whites left a neighborhood and African Americans purchased their church or temple.” The transition of the Cleveland Jewish Center to Cory United Methodist Church, and its subsequent use as a space used to organize civil rights activities, represents this identified pattern of events.

### **Cory United Methodist Church 1875-1947**

The congregation that was to become Cory United Methodist Church formed in Cleveland in 1875, with the group worshipping in homes belonging to its initial twelve members. Over the years, the congregation worshiped in residences and rented a hall until funds were raised to purchase a home, which was first named Union Chapel. Worship continued at Union Chapel for several years until the congregation lost the property and was forced to vacate. As recorded in church histories, it was at this time that Rev. John Bruce Cory, a white minister educated at Oberlin College, came to the rescue of the congregation.<sup>25</sup> While at Oberlin, Cory had “developed an enthusiasm for the cause of abolition” and enlisted in the Union Army.<sup>26</sup> In 1870, he was called to ministry and was ordained two years later. In 1881, Cory was appointed city missionary for the Methodist Church in Cleveland with a charge to found new and build up weak churches already started. Rev. Cory took this charge to heart and became responsible for eleven churches in the city. His presence and leadership were so powerful that the Union Chapel congregation took his name for their church. Over the years, the congregation continued to worship in churches located within a few blocks of the original house of worship in Cleveland’s

<sup>25</sup> Cory United Methodist Church, "Souvenir Program to Commemorate Cornerstone Laying and Dedication of Cory United Methodist Church" (Cleveland: Cory United Methodist Church, 1958) 5-8

<sup>26</sup> Ibid 4

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Central neighborhood. This neighborhood was home to the majority of Cleveland's African American population and had also been home to Cleveland's earliest Jewish immigrants.<sup>27</sup>

Between 1937 and 1943, some 600 new members had joined Cory UMC. Thousands of Black Americans were making their way to Cleveland as part of the Great Migration, and as a result, many African American churches in the city saw a rapid increase in membership. This increase drove Cory UMC to look for a larger facility. The congregation had been worshipping at a church constructed at the corner of E. 35<sup>th</sup> and Scovill Ave., one block west from the worship space previously occupied by Anshe Emeth (Figure 11).

Due to redlining and racist housing practices, minority communities of Jews and African Americans ended up living in the same or adjacent neighborhoods in Cleveland, mirroring what was happening in large cities across the country. After World War II, Jewish people began to have more opportunity for upward mobility and began moving out of the city in favor of nearby eastern suburbs, contributing to the pattern of "white flight." Demographics in the Glenville neighborhood rapidly changed in these years, with 27,000 Jews living in the neighborhood in 1944, dropping to 15,000 just one year later.<sup>28</sup> African Americans were following the eastward trajectory of the Jewish population and moving into the neighborhoods they were vacating. In 1940, African Americans comprised 2% of Glenville's population; ten years later, the African American population had increased to 40%.<sup>29</sup> With these transitions, Black Americans seized the opportunity to purchase property that had been formerly occupied by Jewish communities. The transition of Jewish synagogue to African American church was happening throughout Cleveland and in many other American cities. In fact, the other two synagogues designed by Janowitz, Anshe Emeth's former synagogue on E. 37<sup>th</sup> St. (demolished) and Oheb Zedek Hungarian Orthodox on E. 38<sup>th</sup> St. both became Black churches: Zion Hill Missionary Baptist Church and Triedstone Baptist Church, respectively.

Upon learning that the Cleveland Jewish Center was for sale, Cory UMC, under the leadership of Rev. Oliver B. Quick, set about acquiring the property, closing on the building in 1946 for \$135,000 (less than 1/10<sup>th</sup> its appraised value)<sup>30</sup> (Figure 12). The transaction was arranged by John W. Carmack, a member of the congregation and the most successful African American real estate agent in Cleveland.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> "Glenville" Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, <https://case.edu/ech/articles/a/anshe-emeth-park-synagogue> (Accessed November 22, 2021).

<sup>28</sup> Todd Michney, *Surrogate Suburbs: Black Upward Mobility and Neighborhood Change in Cleveland, 1900-1980*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017) 67

<sup>29</sup> Marilyn Miller, "Glenville's Racial Transition," *Cleveland Historical*, [https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/637?fbclid=IwAR0annaMu\\_hpLPIIWOYEKkKcNeULd-IH00amwz-C\\_Auhpbb6I8IkssA7-aBo](https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/637?fbclid=IwAR0annaMu_hpLPIIWOYEKkKcNeULd-IH00amwz-C_Auhpbb6I8IkssA7-aBo) (accessed 10 February 2022).

<sup>30</sup> Todd Michney, *Surrogate Suburbs: Black Upward Mobility and Neighborhood Change in Cleveland, 1900-1980*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017) 85

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid* 186

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The congregation then invested another \$35,000 into the building before holding their first worship service in the sanctuary in March of 1947. Ownership of a church of this size and stature was a huge achievement for an African American congregation at the time.

### **Cory United Methodist Church 1947-1976**

The newly acquired building offered room to grow, and Cory's congregation swelled to over 3,000 members by 1952, making them the largest Black church in Cleveland at the time, with ownership of one of the largest facilities by any Black church in the country<sup>32</sup> (Figure 13). Given its large membership and deep connection to the community through the many services it provided, the church became a key venue for grassroots organizing for civil rights and the most important platform for influential civil rights leaders to address Cleveland's Black residents.<sup>33</sup> The building provided ample room for meetings of all sizes, small to large public events.

Just as the building had been the community anchor for Cleveland's Jewish population, Cory UMC was the center for many Black families in the community. The church offered a variety of social clubs and organizations, hosting banquets and cultural events. (Figure 14)

The Glenville Area Community Council invited W. E. B. Du Bois to be a keynote speaker at a Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC) rally on February 5, 1950. Two thousand people of all races came to hear Du Bois and other speakers address problems of inequality and discrimination in the United States.<sup>34</sup> On September 24, 1951, the church hosted a membership drive for the Cleveland branch of the NAACP, featuring a keynote address by renowned civil rights lawyer Thurgood Marshall.<sup>35</sup> Cory UMC continued to host events in partnership with the Cleveland NAACP Chapter including numerous membership drives and workshops to train canvassers.<sup>36</sup>

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke at Cory UMC on numerous occasions, drawing enormous crowds. An estimated 5,000 people packed the streets surrounding the church during King's visit on May 14, 1963 (Figures 15-16). Prior to King's arrival, the traffic around the church was at a standstill for 20 blocks. Designed to hold 2,400 people, the sanctuary brimmed with 4,000 Clevelanders, eager to hear King's remarks about the power of non-violent protests against segregation.<sup>37</sup> King told a reporter from the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* that he had never seen a "more aroused response... than I've seen in Cleveland, Ohio tonight."<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Donna Tressler, "Cory United Methodist Church," *Cleveland Historical*, accessed 17 February 2021  
<https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/643>

<sup>33</sup> Ibid

<sup>34</sup> "2,000 Hear Du Bois at Cory Church; Hail F.E.P. Victory," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*; February 6, 1960, 22

<sup>35</sup> Charles Lucas. "Civil Rights Watch Dog," *Call and Post (1934-1962)*, Sept 15, 1951, 2\_B.

<sup>36</sup> "NAACP Holds Membership Teas," *Call and Post (1962-1982)*, Sept 26, 1964, 10\_B.

<sup>37</sup> Pat Garling and Norman Menick, "Seeking U.S. Dream, King Tells Throngs," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, Oh. May 15, 1963, 1

<sup>38</sup> Pat Garling and Norman Menick, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*; May 15, 1963, 8

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The Cleveland chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) brought both Malcom X and Black author Louis Lomax to speak in Cleveland on April 3, 1964. It was at this event that Malcom X delivered the first iteration of his famous “The Ballot or the Bullet” speech from the Cory pulpit (Figure 17).<sup>39</sup> The speech advocated Black nationalism and encouraged strategic voting (the ballot) to avoid the need to take up arms in self-defense (the bullet). Throughout the speech, Malcom X addressed numerous issues that affected African Americans living in Glenville—the use of gerrymandering to squelch Black votes, white flight, the violence facing African Americans at home and those in the military, and the injustice of living in a community that cannot control its own schools, safety, or economic well-being. This speech has been praised as one of the best American political speeches of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>40</sup> Malcom X delivered his “The Ballot or the Bullet” speech a second time on April 12, 1964 at King Solomon Baptist Church in Detroit, Michigan.

In addition to hosting the most famous speakers of the civil rights movement, Cory UMC was active on the grassroots level. When Carl Stokes ran for mayor of Cleveland in 1967—the first African American to hold that office in a major U.S. city—the church held campaign rallies for him. Grassroots activists took to the pulpit to advocate for Black voter registration and education.<sup>41</sup>

Cory UMC also played a central role as the host site for many of the United Freedom Movement (UFM) meetings. Established in Cleveland on June 3, 1963, the UFM fought for civil rights in the areas of education, employment, health, housing, and voting. The Reverend Sumpter Riley of Cory UMC played a significant role in the UFM, at one point serving as its president.<sup>42</sup>

The UFM was heavily involved in demonstrations against racist school policies set by the Cleveland Municipal School District, regularly organizing protests, rallies, and boycotts to promote integrated classes and halt the construction of new public schools that would lead to further segregation. One such effort involved a citywide boycott of schools by 68,000 Black students, fueled by the accidental killing on April 7, 1964, of Reverend Bruce Klunder by a bulldozer during a protest at the construction site for a new elementary school.<sup>43</sup> Local churches, including Cory, opened their doors to students for the citywide boycott. According to the April 25, 1964, issue of the *Call & Post*, Rev. Sumpter Riley was quoted as saying, “Let no one go home and say that churches are remaining silent or inactive, for we are doing our part.” It was noted that most of the “mammoth mass meetings” leading up to the boycott were held at Cory, and collections were taken from the congregants to help fund demonstrations and protests.<sup>44</sup> In the following decades, Cory’s relationship with the civil rights movement continued through its own community services to promote equity and education.

<sup>39</sup> Austin Scott, “Malcolm X Here Twice on Visits,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, Feb 22, 1965, 8.

<sup>40</sup> Barbara Wolf, “‘I Have a Dream’ leads top 100 speeches of the century” *University of Wisconsin-Madison* (University of Wisconsin-Madison and Texas A & M University: 1999) accessed Mar 15, 2021 <https://news.wisc.edu/i-have-a-dream-leads-top-100-speeches-of-the-century/>

<sup>41</sup> “Clergy Announce Stokes “Preferred,” *Call and Post (1962-1982)*, October 30, 1965, 1\_A.

<sup>42</sup> “Three UFM Leaders Quit,” *Call and Post (1962-1982)*, August 28, 1965, 1A.

<sup>43</sup> Al Sweeney, “Halt School Construction, Boyd Pleads,” *Call and Post (1962-1982)*, April 11, 1964, 1A

<sup>44</sup> Bob Williams, “School Boycott Proves to be 92% Effective,” *Call and Post (1962-1982)*, April 25, 1964, 1A

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Cory United Methodist has long-standing community programming that has been in place for decades. These programs include the Cory Kitchen, a satellite program of the Cleveland Food Bank started in 1971, and the Eaton Family Credit Union (formerly Cory United Methodist Credit Union). The credit union was established by Cory United Methodist Church in 1958. This was a unique, and unheard of, service at the time. Due to systemic racism, African Americans often met with struggle when trying to obtain loans or conduct normal banking activities. Being located within, and operated by, the church allowed people to obtain loans at advantageous rates, and to access their money easily from the neighborhood and when they were in the building for church and other activities. Over the years, other community programs ranged from a day care and senior services; music programs and performances, including the Cleveland Orchestra's annual Martin Luther King, Jr. concert (1987-1997, 1999); a Head Start program; job fairs and computer classes; and the Council of Fathers, a non-profit organization established to support and educate fathers.

Since 1961, the City of Cleveland's Division of Recreation has leased a portion of the church for use as the Cleveland Cory Recreation Center. Making use of the former Jewish Recreation Center, the Rec Center offers an indoor basketball court, indoor swimming pool, and a variety of other spaces for art and athletic programs.<sup>45</sup>

Together with the notable architectural significance of the church, the role that Cory UMC played in Cleveland's history led the building to be designated as a local landmark in 2012 by the Cleveland Landmarks Commission.<sup>46</sup> Today, Cory United Methodist Church remains an iconic symbol of Cleveland's civil rights movement stretching from the inception of the Modern Civil Rights Movement (1954-1964) and the Second Revolution (1965-1976) as defined by the National Park Service publication *Civil Rights in America: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites*.

### **Conclusion:**

#### Criterion A:

The Cleveland Jewish Center/Cory UMC aligns with the description of the church in the Multiple Property Document *Twentieth Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio* and is nominated under Criterion A for its involvement in ethnic and black heritage. Since the purchase of the property by Cory United Methodist Church in 1946, the building has been host to ongoing civil rights programs including hosting some of the most prominent leaders in the movement. The MPD states "the location, material fabric, design, form and proportions of the church must be intact enough to convey a sense of historical association."<sup>47</sup> The Cleveland

<sup>45</sup> "Cory United Methodist Church," *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, (Cleveland, OH: Case Western Reserve University) Accessed 18 February 2021. <https://case.edu/ech/articles/c/cory-united-methodist-church>.

<sup>46</sup> City of Cleveland, City Record, *Ord. No. 1262-12 by Council Member J. Johnson. An Emergency ordinance designating Cory United Methodist Church (formerly Anshe Emeth Synagogue) as a Cleveland Landmark*, Nov. 2012

<sup>47</sup> Rory Krupp, Roy A. Hampton III, Charles Casey-Leininger, Cathy D. Nelson. *Twentieth-Century African American Civil Rights Movement in Ohio*. (National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, National Park Service: 2019), 131

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Jewish Center/Cory UMC meets these requirements as it remains in its original location, retains its form, design, and many historic materials on both the interior and the exterior. As stated in the MPD, the church meets the requirements given in the document for “Churches associated with civil rights but architecturally significant in their own right...”.

The property also retains its association with the Anshe Emeth Beth Tefilo congregation and is significant to the ethnic and Jewish heritage of the community that constructed the building. Many elements of the building reflect the Jewish heritage of the community, and its impact on the development of the Glenville neighborhood is evidenced today in its continued architectural presence along E. 105<sup>th</sup> Street.

Criterion C:

The Cleveland Jewish Center is architecturally significant under Criterion C. The building is the masterpiece of architect Alfred F. Janowitz, the largest synagogue constructed in the Glenville neighborhood, and the only one with recreational facilities including a pool. The Neoclassical design incorporates Judaica symbols and names in decorative terracotta elements throughout the façade, setting it apart from other synagogues in the Glenville neighborhood, which once had over twenty such places of worship. Original design and character defining features remain intact on both the exterior and throughout the interior of the building, which remains in its same location and functions much as it did when it was first constructed. Thanks to the continued stewardship of Cory United Methodist Church, the Cleveland Jewish Center continues to be as impressive today as when it first opened in 1922.

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Name of Property

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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[https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/637?fbclid=IwAR0annaMu\\_hpLPIIWOYEkKcNeULd-IH00amwz-C\\_Auhpbb6I8IkssA7-aBo](https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/637?fbclid=IwAR0annaMu_hpLPIIWOYEkKcNeULd-IH00amwz-C_Auhpbb6I8IkssA7-aBo) (accessed 10 February 2022).

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** CUY-00303-11



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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 1.051

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 41.526509 | Longitude: -81.615235 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 3. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 4. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Cleveland Jewish Center is bounded by streets on three sides, and a parking lot on one. To the north, the property is bounded by Drexel Avenue, and to the south by Grantwood Avenue. Both Drexel and Grantwood are residential streets that are contributing streets within the locally designated Grantwood Allotments Historic District. To the west, the property is bounded by E. 105<sup>th</sup> Street, a main thoroughfare. To the southeast, the property contains a parking lot that has entrances and exits along Drexel and Grantwood (Figure 18). This boundary coincides with parcels 109-16-001, 109-16-003, 109-16-035, 109-16-002, and 109-16-036 as recorded by the Cuyahoga County Auditor. Auditor site <https://myplace.cuyahogacounty.us/> accessed June 17, 2022.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundaries were selected because they encompass the entire property, and they are the original parcels that the Cleveland Jewish Center was first developed on in 1921-1922. Changes to this parcel include the removal of a residential home on Grantwood to make room for the expansion of the parking lot. The nominated boundary includes the property historically associated with the Cleveland Jewish Center and the Cory United Methodist Church, during the period of significance.

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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Margaret Lann/ Director of Preservation Services & Publications  
organization: Cleveland Restoration Society  
street & number: 3751 Prospect Avenue  
city or town: Cleveland state: OH zip code: 44115  
e-mail mlann@clevelandrestoration.org  
telephone: 216-426-3101  
date: 11/22/21

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## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

## Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

## Photo Log

Photographer: Anita Orenick

Date Photographed: 3/13/2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 27. View of west elevation, taken from E. 105<sup>th</sup> Street, camera facing southeast.

2 of 27. View of sanctuary entrance, taken from E. 105<sup>th</sup> Street, camera facing east.

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- 3 of 27. View of cornice with frieze, taken from E. 105<sup>th</sup> Street, camera facing east.
- 4 of 27. View of north elevation, taken from Drexel Avenue, camera facing south.
- 5 of 27. View of east elevation, taken from parking lot, camera facing southwest.
- 6 of 27. View of south elevation of recreation center wing, taken from parking lot, camera facing north.
- 7 of 27. View of southeast corner, taken from Grantwood Avenue, camera facing northwest.
- 8 of 27. View of south elevation, taken from Grantwood Avenue, camera facing northwest.
- 9 of 27. View of narthex, taken from narthex, camera facing north.
- 10 of 27. View of sanctuary east elevation, taken from balcony inside sanctuary, camera facing east.
- 11 of 27. View of historic light fixture, taken from inside sanctuary, camera facing north.
- 12 of 27. View of sanctuary dome, taken from inside sanctuary, camera facing southwest.
- 13 of 27. View of sanctuary west elevation, taken from inside sanctuary, camera facing west.
- 14 of 27. View of sanctuary north and west elevations, taken from inside sanctuary, camera facing northwest.
- 15 of 27. View of sanctuary southwest elevation, taken from inside sanctuary, camera facing southwest.
- 16 of 27. View of sanctuary east elevation, taken from inside sanctuary, camera facing east.
- 17 of 27. View of sanctuary partial dome from back, taken from second floor, camera facing north.
- 18 of 27. View of hallway, taken from hall, camera facing north.
- 19 of 27. View of office, taken from inside office, camera facing southwest.
- 20 of 27. View of credit union office, taken from inside office, camera facing northeast.
- 21 of 27. View of main staircase, taken from hall, camera facing west.
- 22 of 27. View of auditorium with stage, taken from auditorium, camera facing north.
- 23 of 27. View of auditorium entrance with balcony overhead, taken from auditorium, camera facing southeast.

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24 of 27. View from third floor balcony, taken from hall, camera facing north.

25 of 27. View of swimming pool, taken from hall, camera facing east.

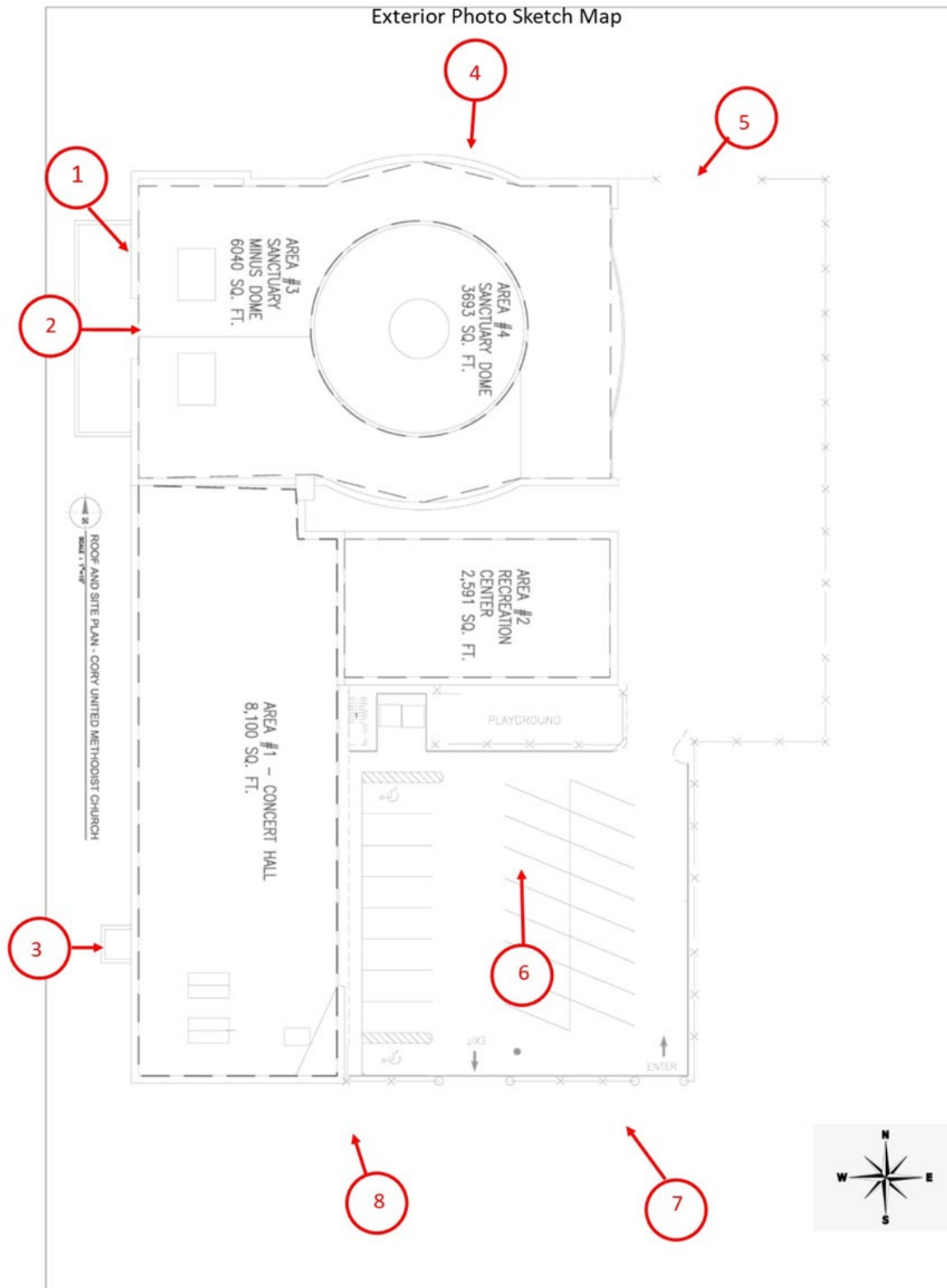
26 of 27. View of basketball court, taken from court, camera facing east.

27 of 27. View of basement room, taken from hall, camera facing south.

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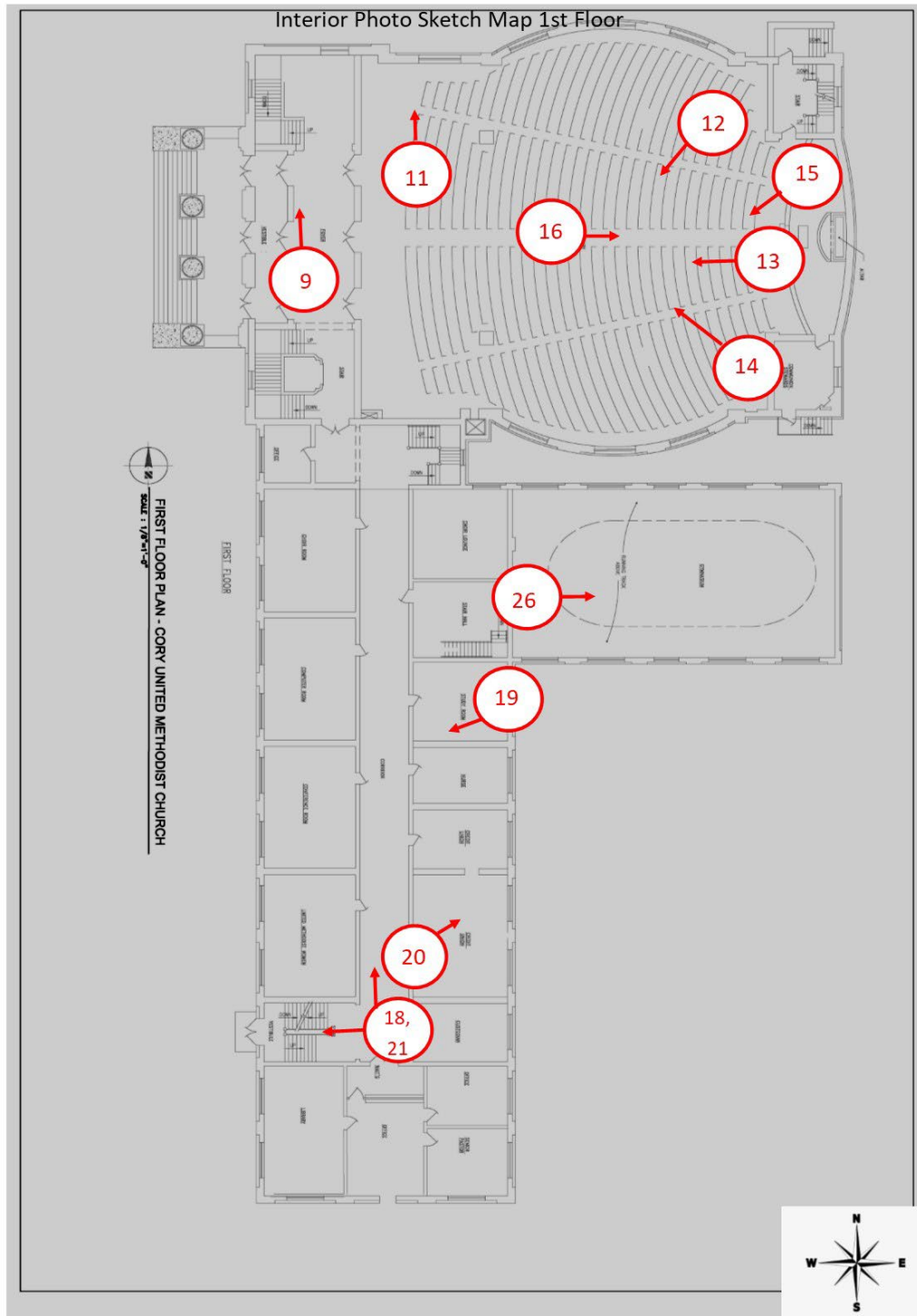
**Photo map 01: Exterior**



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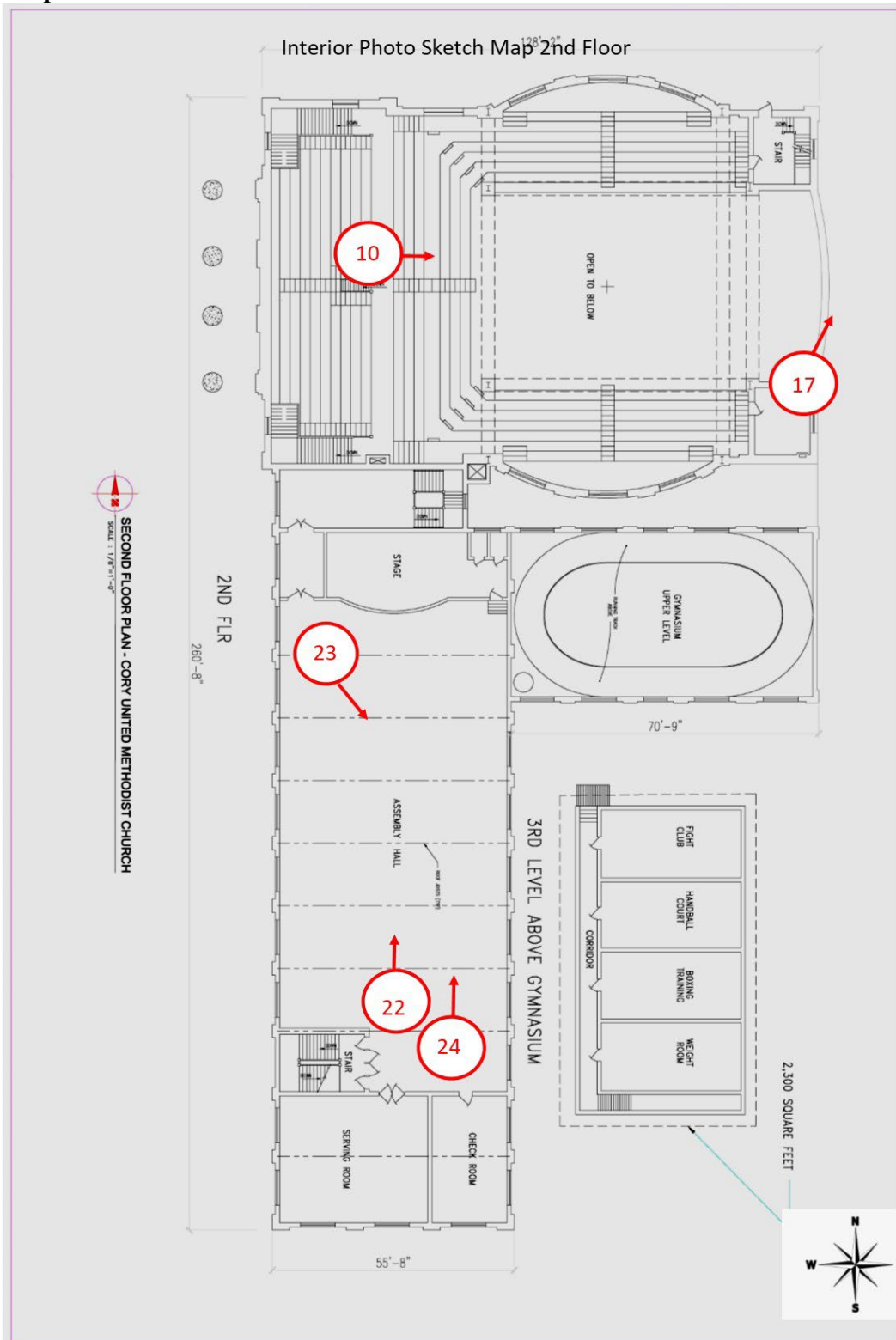
**Photo map 02: Interior 1<sup>st</sup> Floor**



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### Photo map 03: Interior 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

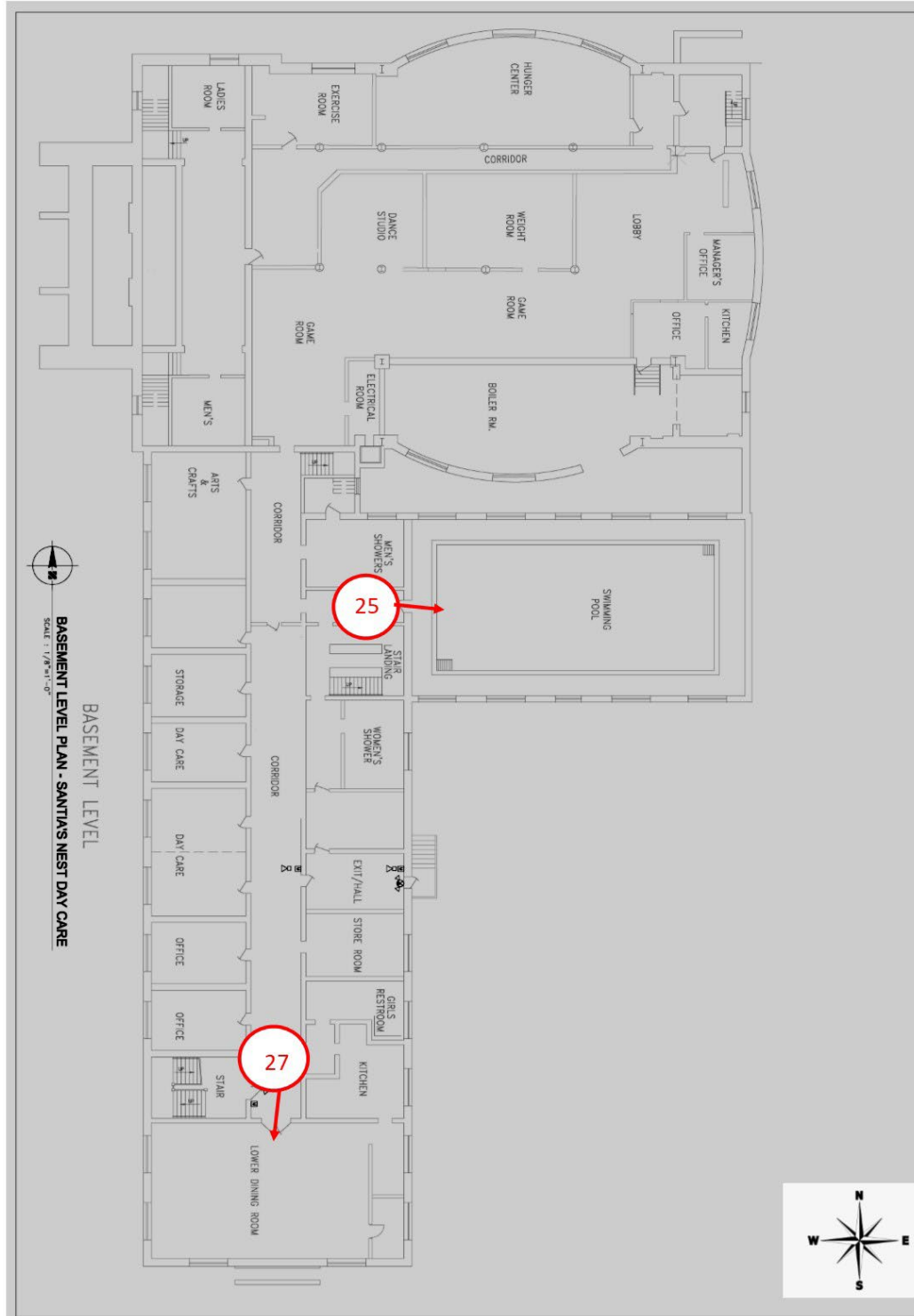


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### Photo map 04: Interior Basement

Interior Photo Sketch Map Basement





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**Figures List:**

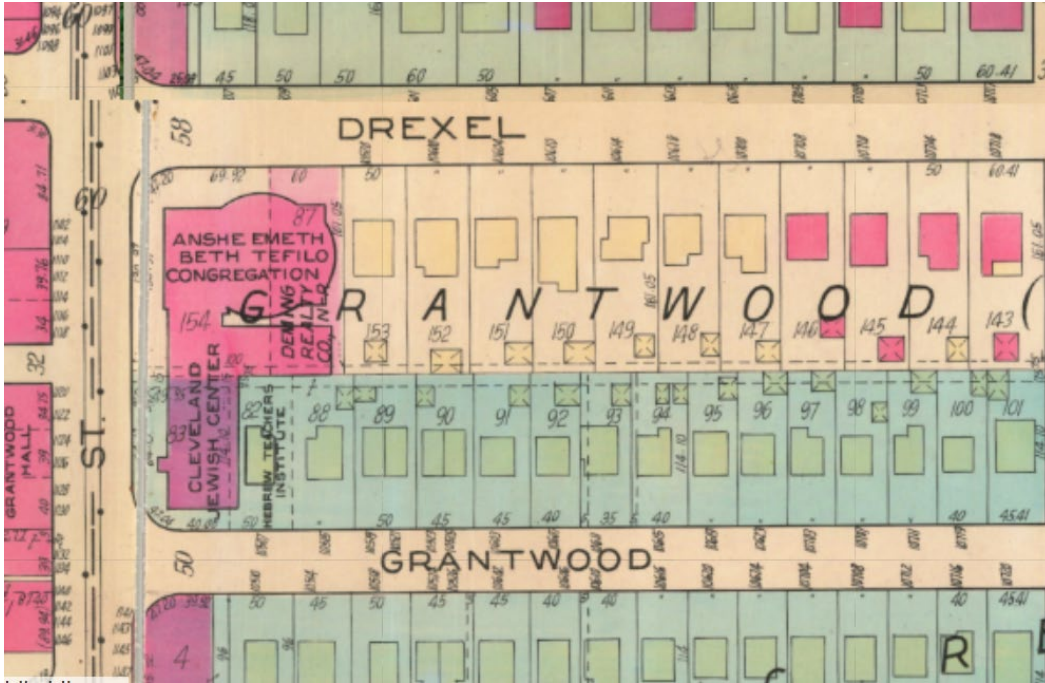


Figure 01. 1927 Plat Map showing Anshe Emeth Synagogue and Cleveland Jewish Center at 1117 E 105<sup>th</sup> St. Courtesy of Cleveland Public Library.

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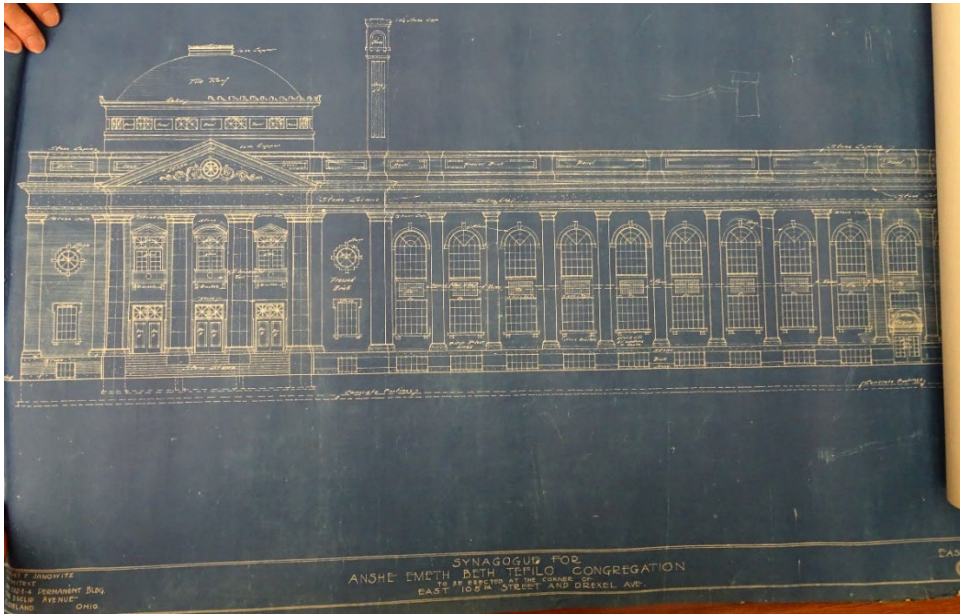


Figure 02. Architectural rendering of the Cleveland Jewish Center, east elevation, designed by Albert F. Janowitz. Image courtesy of Cleveland Landmarks Commission.

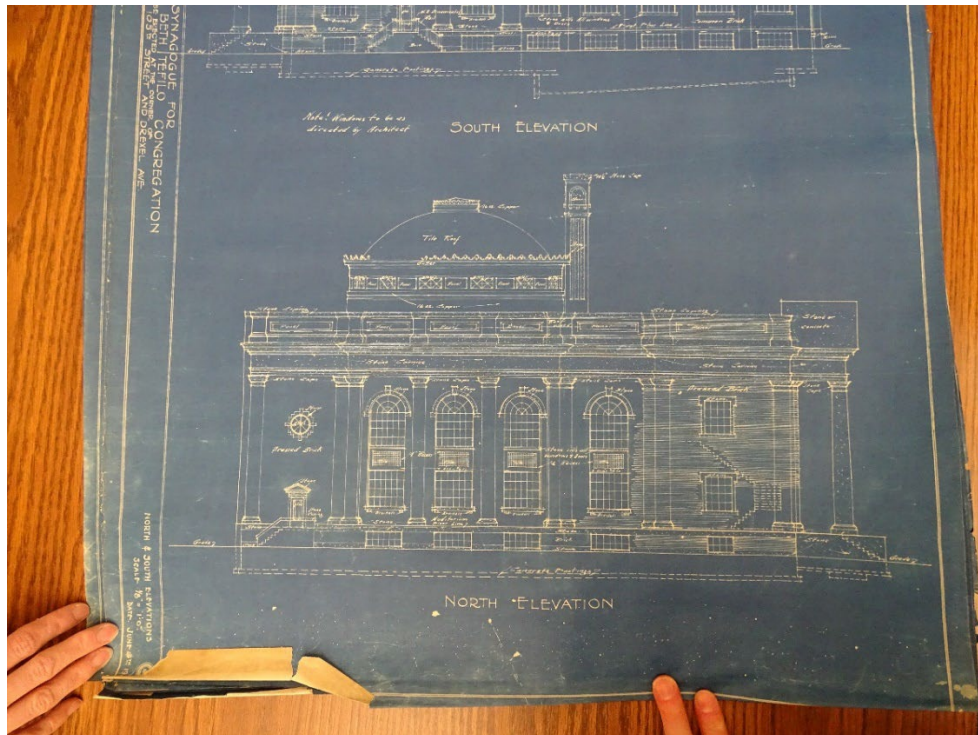


Figure 03. Architectural rendering of the Cleveland Jewish Center, north elevation, designed by Albert F. Janowitz. Image courtesy of Cleveland Landmarks Commission.



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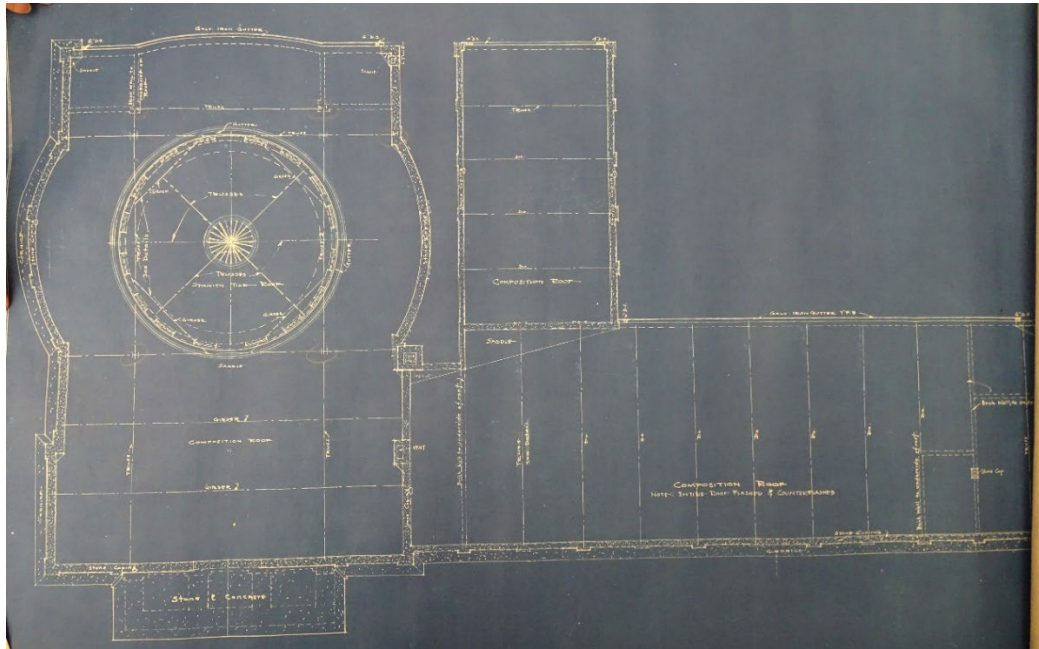


Figure 04. Architectural rendering of the Cleveland Jewish Center, floorplan, designed by Albert F. Janowitz. Image courtesy of Cleveland Landmarks Commission.



Figure 05. Photo, n.d., of the first Anshe Emeth temple (demolished) designed by Albert Janowitz in 1904 and once located at 2541 East 37<sup>th</sup> Street. Courtesy of Cleveland State University, Michael Schwartz Library Special Collections.

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Figure 06. Temple designed by Albert Janowitz in 1905 for the Oheb Zedek congregation (now Triedstone Missionary Baptist Church) located at 3782 Community College Ave. (formerly E. 38<sup>th</sup> street) Photo courtesy of Cleveland Restoration Society, 2022.

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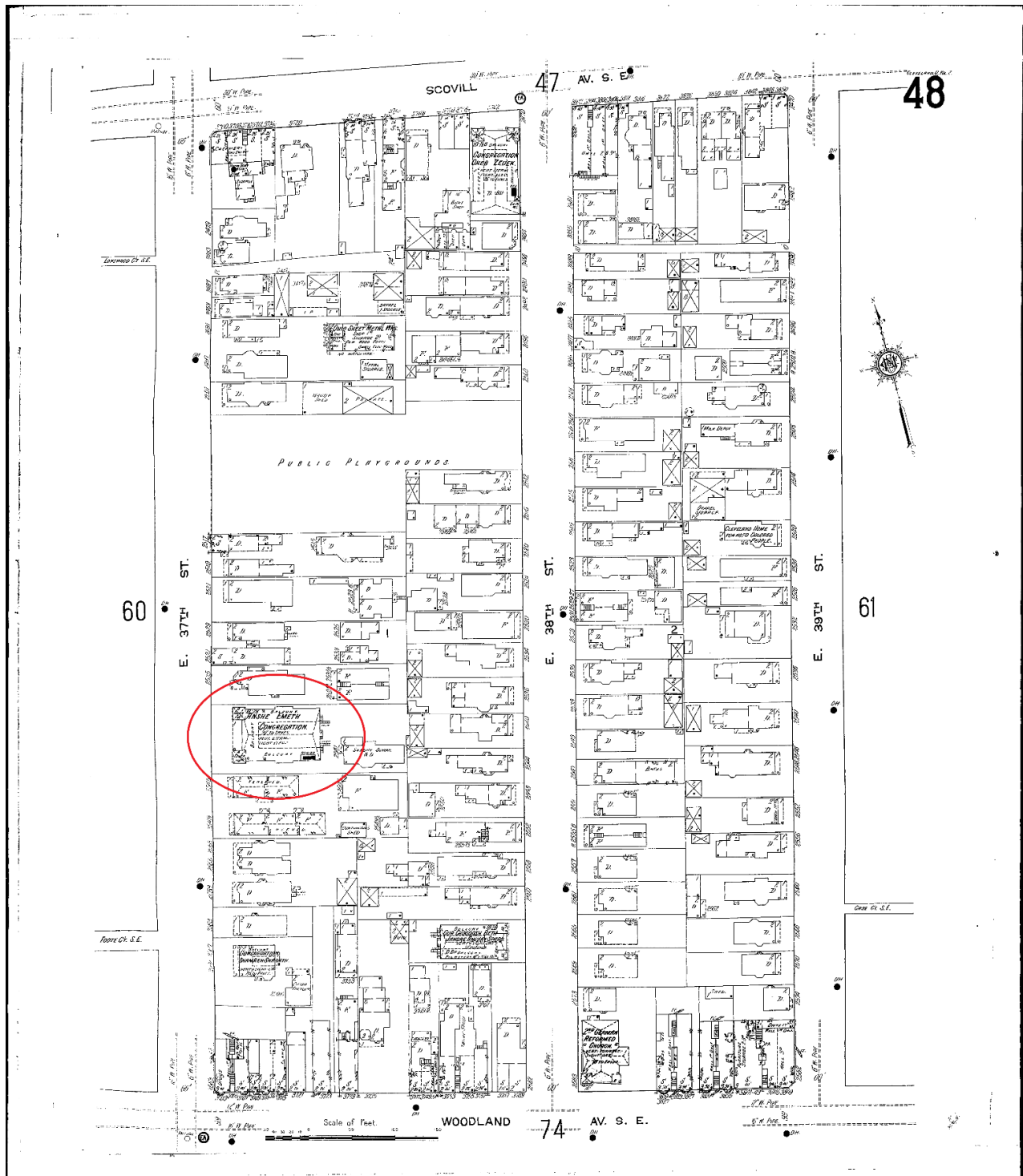


Figure 07. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing former Anshe Emeth synagogue on E. 37<sup>th</sup> Street. Courtesy of Cuyahoga County Public Library.



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Figure 08. Postcard depicting entrance to Grantwood Avenue, n.d. Courtesy of Cleveland State University, Michael Schwartz Library Special Collections.

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## SHALL WE LIFT THEM or DROP THEM?

Only one week more and the time limit for the Cleveland Jewish Center Campaign will expire. Only with prompt and earnest work can this institution be saved to fulfill its splendid purpose; and the Jewish Community saved from the stigma of neglecting the task it assumed.

Less than two hundred people in this vast city have so far pledged an aggregate sum of \$100,000.

"That's fine!" you say. "Bully for them!"

Just so! If it were not for the generous emotions of these blessed idealists, how long would this callous world be worth living in?

But, Friend—you of the majority who have given nothing—who is saying "Fine for YOU!" Your intentions are good—translate them into action and earn your share of thanks.

The Cleveland Jewish Center will fill the need for a Y. M. H. A. Talmud Torah and Synagogue in a community where there are over 100,000 Jews. Think what a monument to YOUR generosity it will be!

**\$100,000 Pledged—\$400,000 More Necessary**

**SEND WHAT YOU CAN—BUT DO IT AT ONCE!!!**

Mr. Louis Sands, 1212 E. 105th st., will receive and promptly acknowledge your gift.

This advertisement is donated by Bialosky Bros., business men acquainted with the needs of this community.

Figure 09. The Cleveland Jewish Center fundraising ad. Image courtesy of Cleveland Landmarks Commission.

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Figure 10. Pool at Cory United Methodist Church, 1959. Courtesy of Cleveland State University, Michael Schwartz Library Special Collections.



Figure 11. 1927 Plat Map showing Cory United Methodist Church at the corner of Scovill Avenue and E. 35<sup>th</sup> Street. Courtesy of Cleveland Public Library.



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Figure 12. Historic image of Cory United Methodist Church, n.d. Courtesy of Cleveland State University, Michael Schwartz Library Special Collections.



Figure 13. Lexington Conference, held inside the sanctuary at Cory United Methodist Church, 1948. Image courtesy of Cory United Methodist Church.

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Figure 14. Fellowship Banquet inside the auditorium at Cory United Methodist Church, 1947. Image courtesy of Cory United Methodist Church.



Figure 15. Figure 13. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speaking inside Cory United Methodist Church. Image courtesy of Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

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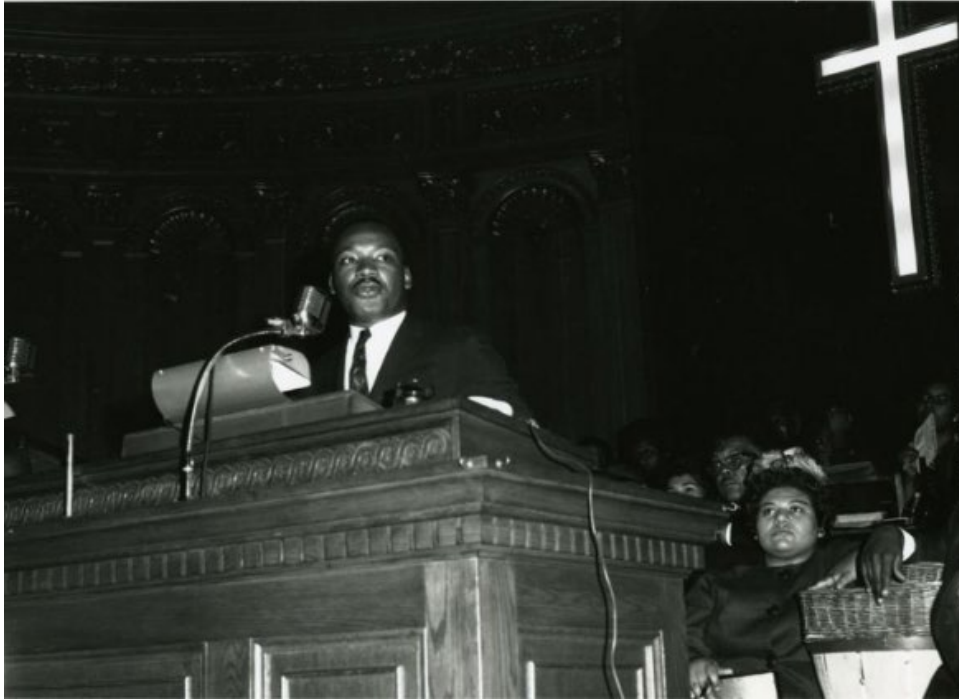


Figure 16. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speaking inside Cory United Methodist Church. Image courtesy of Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.



Figure 17. Malcolm X speaking inside Cory United Methodist Church. Image courtesy of Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.



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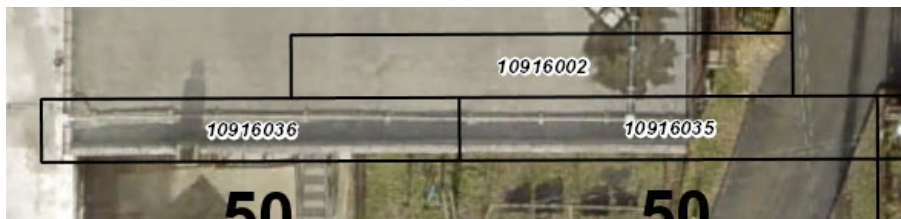
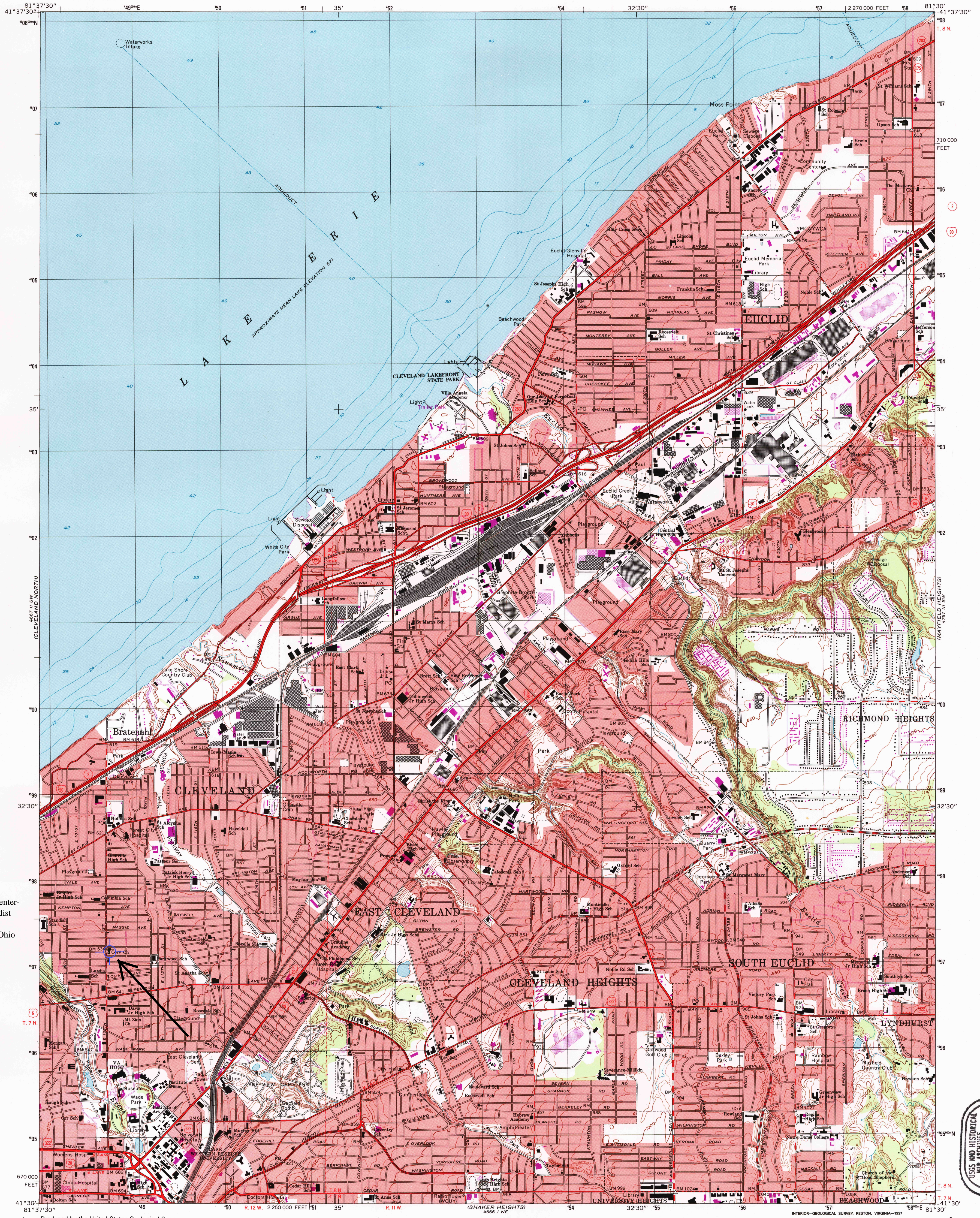


Figure 18. Cuyahoga County Auditor's parcel map, including the five nominated parcels (above) and a detail view of the small parcels (below).

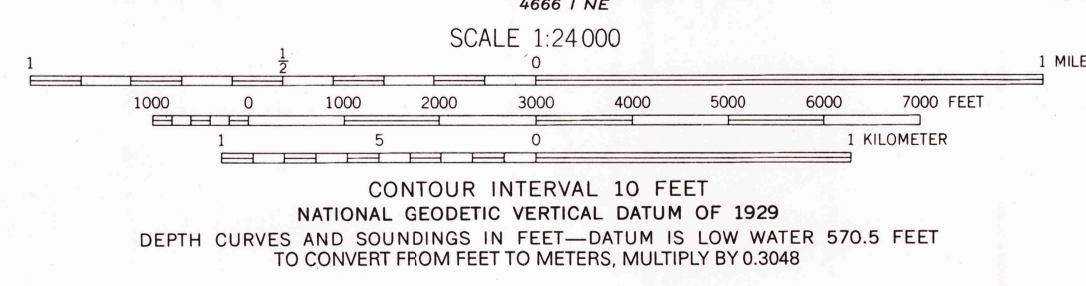
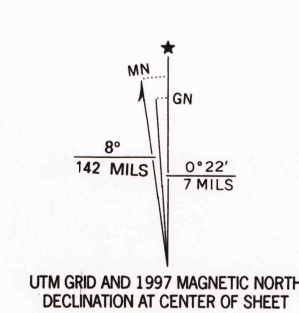




Cleveland Jewish Center-  
Cory United Methodist  
Church, Cleveland,  
Cuyahoga County, Ohio

Lat 41.526509  
Long -81.615235

Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
Topography compiled 1952-53. Planimetry derived from imagery taken  
1977. Photospicted using imagery dated 1994; no major culture  
or drainage changes observed. Survey control current as of 1953  
boundaries, other than corporate, revised 1997.  
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and  
10 000-foot ticks: Ohio coordinate system, north zone  
(Lambert conformal conic).  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 17  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed  
corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83  
for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic  
Survey NADCON software.  
Selected hydrographic data compiled from U.S. Lake Charts 35 (1959)  
and 354 (1962). This information is not intended for navigational purposes.  
Entire area lies within the Connecticut Western Reserve. Land lines  
established by private subdivision of the Connecticut Western Reserve  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of  
the National or State reservations shown on this map.  
Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content standards  
and may conflict with previously mapped contours.



SCALE 1:24 000  
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS LOW WATER 570.5 FEET  
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

EAST CLEVELAND, OHIO

1994

DMA 4667 II SE—SERIES V852

USGS AND HISTORICAL MAP ARCHIVES  
MAR 3 1 1990  
REC'D FILE COPY

