June 26, 1974

Dr. William Murtagh  
Keeper of the National Register  
National Park Service  
Washington, D.C.  20240

Dear Dr. Murtagh:

As the State Historic Preservation Officer, I am forwarding the enclosed nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Grace Church and Dependencies, New York City, New York, New York County

The above nomination has been reviewed and approved by the Committee on the Registers in accordance with the criteria outlined in Section 2.2 of the Grants Guide. I would appreciate your assistance in expediting review of this site by your office. The Church has delayed demolition of several of the dependencies for a limited period in order to allow preservationists to explore the financial feasibility of rehabilitation as an alternative. This office has received an application for a matching grant and shall incorporate it in the Apportionment Warrant for Fiscal Year 1975.

The staff of the New York State Division for Historic Preservation, the officially designated Preservation Agency, would welcome the opportunity to discuss this submission with your office.

Sincerely,

ALFAXANDER ALDRICH  
State Historic Preservation Officer

By:  
F. L. Rath, Jr.  
Deputy Commissioner
1. NAME
Grace Church and Dependencies

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER:
Broadway, Tenth Street, and Fourth Avenue
CITY OR TOWN:
New York
STATE:
New York

3. CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY (Check One)
[ ] District [ ] Building [ ] Object
[ ] Site [ ] Structure [ ] Public
[ ] Object [ ] Both

OWNERSHIP
[ ] Public Acquisition:
[ ] In Process
[ ] Being Considered

STATUS
[ ] Occupied
[ ] Unoccupied

ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
[ ] Yes:
[ ] X Restricted
[ ] Unrestricted
[ ] No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
[ ] Agricultural
[ ] X Commercial
[ ] Educational
[ ] Entertainmement
[ ] Government
[ ] Industrial
[ ] Military
[ ] Museum
[ ] Religious
[ ] Scientific
[ ] Transportation
[ ] Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
OWNER'S NAME:
Grace Church
STREET AND NUMBER:
800 Broadway
CITY OR TOWN:
New York
STATE:
New York

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
New York County Hall of Records
STREET AND NUMBER:
31 Chambers Street
CITY OR TOWN:
New York
STATE:
New York

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
SWELL OF SURVEY:
[ ] X AIA Guide to New York City (Published)
DATE OF SURVEY:
[ ] Federal [ ] State [ ] County [ ] Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
New York Chapter, American Institute of Architects
STREET AND NUMBER:
441 Lexington Avenue
CITY OR TOWN:
New York
STATE:
New York
CODE:
36
6. Representation in Existing Surveys

New York City Landmarks
1966, 1974
Local
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
305 Broadway
New York

New York 36
Grace Church and its complex of associated structures occupy the southern half of a long, narrow, trapezoidal block bounded by 10th and 12th Streets, Fourth Avenue and Broadway, where Broadway turns and commences its westward slant across Manhattan. With its dramatic spire the church effectively dominates the northward vista at this turn in Broadway, while the dependencies fronting upon 4th Avenue terminate the westward vista along 11th Street to its junction with the Avenue.

**Constructed of marble, Grace Church (600 Broadway), is rectangular in plan, arranged behind a square tower set on the longitudinal axis. The main entrance, located at the base of the tower is surmounted by a gable and a rose-window followed, above the roof level, by the high traceryed openings of the belfry. Rising above the belfry, the tower, embellished by corner pinnacles, makes a transition from square to octagonal, terminating ultimately in a slender spire. The marble side walls of the nave consist of a rhythm of pointed-arch windows interspersed by buttresses surmounted by pinnacles. Behind the tower, a crenellated parapet forms the top of the church's bearing walls. The dramatically vertical, vaulted, interior space is adorned by 46 English stained glass windows of which the exceptionally large ones in the transepts and over the altar are particularly striking.**

Located immediately north of the church but recessed further on the lot, the essentially square Rectory (804 Broadway), despite the symmetry of its basic shape and its gables, owes its asymmetrical appearance to the differentiating treatment of bay windows. The ecclesiastical character of the church has been carried over into this residence in the use of pinnacled corner buttresses, gables ornamented by crockets and finials, pointed arch windows and fine tracery. Projecting forward to form a vestibule, the main entrance, located in the central bay of the west (front) elevation, is crowned by a richly decorated gable and flanked by pinnacled, miniature, corner buttresses.

The Chantry, adjoining the south elevation of the church, and Grace House, connecting the church with the Rectory on the north, are both irregularly shaped additions skillfully designed at a later date in the same style. The narrow front (west) elevation of Grace House, dominated by a spired 3-story projecting bay, blends so subtly into the asymmetrical pattern established in the Rectory that it appears to be inherently part of the residence.

The remaining structures of the complex, situated directly behind the Church and its earlier Gothic dependencies, form a row facing out upon 4th Avenue. Built between 1882 and 1911, according to designs from three different sources, this row of structures is a further extension of the Gothic idiom initiated by Renwick.
in 1846. Constructed for the most part of brick bearing walls faced with marble, the 4th Avenue structures form two groups separated by a one-story Choir vestry behind which may be seen the rose window in the (rear) east wall of the Church and rising above, Renwick's dramatic spire. The southernmost portion of the row, housing the Grace Church School, consists of two relatively simpler six-story buildings whose walls terminate in a parapet (84, 86 4th Avenue) and one four-and-a-half-story building covered by a hipped roof (88 4th Avenue) and distinguished by the Gothic motives in the fenestration and its enframement. The northernmost portion of the row contains four four-and-a-half-story structures, all earlier brick row houses remodelled and faced with marble in the Gothic idiom. The first three (Nos. 92, 94-96) give the appearance of one building, symmetrically grouped with No. 94 surmounted by a high gable and flanked by the symmetrical facades of Nos. 92 and 96. Moldings used as horizontal bandcourses serve to unite the composition of the three buildings as one. The Gothic character of this ensemble derives from the use of pointed arch windows, tracery, label moldings over the windows, trefoil railings above the bay windows, and the finial and crockets of the central gable distinguished by a statue set in a canopied niche. Adjoining these three structures on the north, Neighborhood House (No. 98 4th Avenue) repeats the proportions as well as several of the motives employed in Nos. 92, 94-96, but like the two southernmost structures in the 4th Avenue row, employs square-headed windows with stone Mullions and transom bars.
6. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian
☐ 16th Century
☐ 18th Century
☐ 19th Century
☐ 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATES (If Applicable and Known)

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian
☐ 16th Century
☐ 18th Century
☐ 19th Century
☐ 20th Century

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal
☐ Prehistoric
☐ Pre-Columbian
☐ Education
☐ Political
☐ Urban Planning
☐ Prehistory
☐ Industry
☐ Religion/Phil.
☐ Other (Specify)
☐ Agriculture
☐ Invention
☐ Science
☐ Literature
☐ Social/Human-
☐ Architecture
☐ Landscape
☐ Sculpture
☐ Architecture
☐ Musical
☐ Theater
☐ Conservation
☐ Music
☐ Transportation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

An ecclesiastical urban clustering of buildings, the Grace Church complex is a striking visual amenity of significance both in terms of architectural and social history. Designed in the 1840's by James Renwick Jr., Grace Church and its contemporary, UpJohn's Trinity Church, were leaders in introducing to America the historically accurate Gothic Revival occurring in England during the 1st half of the 19th century, and subsequently emulated across America. As the church undertook a variety of social responsibilities, Renwick and his successors accommodated the needs of this prominent parish in an expansion of the original Gothic idiom, spanning the balance of the 19th century.

In England "the use of Gothic for new churches was common enough from the mid-eighteenth century. Down to about 1820, however, this was usually without any real archeological pretension. In the first two decades of the New Century the more thorough and general study of ancient Gothic monuments in England and the publications of John Britton (1771-1857) and of Nash's Gothic specialist, the elder [Augustus] Pugin, were gradually changing the situation." The turning point in the purging of "Gothick" detail and the substitution of archeological for Picturesque ideals was the publication in 1836 of Augustus N.W. Pugin's Contrasts. Pugin (1812-1852) believed that "the methods of building of the Middle Ages must be revived, architecture must again derive its character, in what he considered to be the true medieval way, from the direct expression of structure; and at the same time it must serve the complicated ritual-functional needs of revived medieval church practices." Shortly after 1840 "a new church architecture came into being," dependent upon English medieval Gothic of the 14th century.

As in England, "Gothic" Architecture in North America during the first four decades of the 19th century largely amounted to the use of applied ornament unrelated to structure, or as Henry Russell Cleveland put it in 1856 "Yankee meeting-houses with Gothic ornaments on them". According to Cleveland, "the Ecclesiastical architecture of our Country is in a very unsettled, ill-defined state... neither New York nor Philadelphia contains a church which

See continuation sheet.
has any claim to be called fine architecture ..." However, before 1840 and 1845 at least ten major churches were built in New York City, all but one in the Gothic or "Christian" style. Of the earliest instances of the English Gothic Revival in the U.S. Trinity Church and Grace Church (1843-1847) were "the largest and most elaborate expressions" of this style. 6

Writing in the North American Review in 1844, architect Arthur Gilman stated that Richard UpJohn's nearly completed Trinity Church "surpasses any church erected in England since the revival of the pointed style." 7 Grace Church, begun two years later on October 30, 1843, was under construction at the same time–in the opinion of contemporary Philip Hone destined to be "second only to the magnificent Trinity." 8 According to historian Phoebe Stanton,

Comparison of the two shows how rapidly competence in the Gothic style developed in the United States, for even if the difference between the tastes and personal styles of UpJohn and Renwick are acknowledged, Grace Church is more tightly knit, uniform, and less dry than Trinity...[The] major difference between the two lies in the way in which Renwick developed the ornamental possibilities of the style and reduced the amount of inert masonry in the elevation. It is tempting to link Renwick's design with the drawing in [Pugin's book] True Principles, but, though there are similarities between them they are not as obvious as in the case of Trinity...Grace Church is...too brilliant and too free to derive its character solely from the Pugin illustration. 9

In Stanton's opinion Grace Church is "less monumental than Trinity and more elegant in it wealth of decorative detail." 10

Renwick (1818-1895), trained as an engineer at Columbia College, had worked first on the engineering staff of the Erie Railroad, and subsequently as a superintendent of work on the distributing Reservoir of the Croton Aqueduct erected in New York at 5th Avenue and 42nd Street. While serving in this capacity, at the age of 25, he won the design competition for the new Grace Church to be erected upon a portion of the 17th century Brevoort Farm. His career launched conspicuously and successfully with Grace Church, Renwick would go on to design a variety of other distinguished structures including Calvary Church (New York City), St. Barthomew Church (New York...
8. Significance 3

(Continuation Sheet)

City), St. Patrick's Cathedral (New York City), the Smithsonian Institute (Washington, D.C.), Vassar College (Poughkeepsie), and the Corcoran Art Gallery (Washington, D.C.).

Grace Church, organized in 1808 and housed in an edifice at the corner of Broadway and Rector Street until 1845, moved into its new quarters the following year. A vestryman of Trinity, Philip Hone observed in his diary that

...the pews were sold last week, and brought extravagant prices, some $1200 to $1400, with a pew rent on the estimated value of eight per cent; so that the word of God, as it came down to us from fisherman and mechanics, will cost the quality who worship in this splendid temple about three dollars every Sunday. This may have a good effect; for many of them, though rich, know how to calculate, and if they do not go regularly to Church, will not get the worth of their money.

This is to be the fashionable Church, and already its aisles are filled (especially on Sundays after morning services in other Churches) with gay parties of ladies in feathers and mousseline-de-laine dresses, and dandies with mustaches and high-heeled boots; the lofty arches resound with astute criticisms upon gothic architecture from fair ladies who have had the advantage of foreign travel, and scientific remarks upon acoustics from elderly millionaires who do not hear quite as well as formerly.

With the wealth accumulated during the height of the fashionable period predicted by Hone, Grace Church later in the century undertook an active role in providing social and cultural services to the community, undergoing a gradual shift to the working classes. The church's social outreach produced an extensive building program, beginning with Renwick's designs for a Chantry (1877-79) given by Catherine L. Wolfe to accommodate the Sunday School children, Grace House (1880) given by Catherine L. Wolfe as a neighborhood cultural and social center, and Grace Memorial House (1882-83, No. 94-96 4th Avenue) given by Vice President Levi P. Morton as a day-care center in memory of his wife. With Renwick's death in 1875, the building program fell to the firm of Heins and LaFarge, architects of St. John the Devine, who in 1902 designed the Clergy House (92 4th Avenue), and the Choir School (88 4th Avenue). Five years later, Renwick's firm, Renwick, Aspinwall and Tucker provided the designs for Neighborhood House (90 4th Avenue), and in 1911 84 and 86 4th Avenue were dedicated.

See continuation sheet
Serving the needs of its neighborhood actively since the inception of its community programs, Grace Church today is seeking the means to utilize its facilities as efficiently as possible while preserving the architectural integrity of its structures. Strategically sited where the street configuration deviates from the regular grid plan, the Renwick designed and inspired grouping of church and subsidiary structures make a significant contribution to the cityscape. The drama and eloquence of Grace Church itself is reinforced by the extension of its style and character into the variety of surrounding structures themselves indicative of the church's bond to the life of its neighborhood since the middle of the 19th century.


2Ibid., pp. 96-97.

3Ibid.


5Ibid.

6Ibid., p. 60.

7Ibid., p. 64.


9Stanton, pp. 65-68.

10Ibid., p. 60

11Hone, p. 269.
See continuation sheet

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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**APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:** 1/2 acre

**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

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**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

Lynn A. Beebe, Research Assistant

**ORGANIZATION**

New York State Division for Historic Preservation

**STREET AND NUMBER**

South Mall

**CITY OR TOWN**

Albany

**STATE**

New York

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [ ] State [x] Local [ ]

Name [signature]

**State Historic Preservation Officer**

**DATE**

6/28/74

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[signature]

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

**DATE**

[signature]

Keeper of The National Register

**DATE**

[signature]
9. Major Bibliographical References (Continuation Sheet)  

(Continuation of entries)


NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(TYPE ALL ENTRIES - ATTACH TO OR ENCLOSE WITH MAP)

STATE: New York
COUNTY: New York
ENTRY NUMBER: 36
DATE: 061

1. NAME
   Grace Church and Dependencies

2. LOCATION
   BROADWAY, TENTH STREET, AND 4TH AVENUE
   CITY OR TOWN: New York
   STATE: New York
   CODE: 36
   COUNTY: New York
   CODE: 061

3. MAP REFERENCE
   SOURCE: New York Landmarks Conservancy
   CATALOG: None
   DATE: 1974

4. REQUIREMENTS
   TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
   1. Property boundaries where required.
   2. North arrow.
   3. Latitude and longitude reference.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

1. NAME
COMMON: Grace Church and Dependencies
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER:
Broadway, Tenth Street, and Fourth Avenue
CITY OR TOWN:
New York
STATE:
New York
CODE: 36
COUNTY: New York
CODE: 061

3. MAP REFERENCE
SOURCE: U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey, 7.5 Minute Series
SCALE: 1:24,000
DATE: 1967

4. REQUIREMENTS
to be included on all maps:
1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.

Brooklyn Quadrangle