

CHURCH OF ST. JOSEPH OF THE HOLY FAMILY, 401-403 West 125th Street (aka 401-403 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard; 140-148 Morningside Avenue), c. 1860, architect not determined; enlarged 1871, Henry Engelbert; rear addition 1889-90, Herter Brothers

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1966, Lot 67 in part, beginning at the southeast corner of the property line of lot 67, northerly along the eastern property line of lot 67 to the northern property line of lot 67, westerly along the northern property line of lot 67 to a point on a line extending northerly from the western building line of the ell between the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family and its rectory, southerly along said line and partially through a party wall to the southern building line of the ell between the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family and its rectory, easterly along the southern building line of the ell to a point on a line extending from the western retaining wall of the west areaway of the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family and southerly along said line and wall to the southern property line of lot 67, then easterly to the place of beginning, as shown on the attached map.

On June 14, 1966, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of St. Joseph's Church (Item No. 35). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provision of law. No one spoke in opposition. A representative of the American Institute of Architects spoke in favor of designation.

On November 12, 2015, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a special public hearing on Backlog Initiative items in the Borough of Manhattan, including St. Joseph's Church and the related landmark site (Manhattan B Group 2 Item B). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provision of law. A representative from the Catholic Community Relations Council, on behalf of the owner the Archdiocese of New York, spoke in opposition to the proposed designation. Seven people spoke in favor of the designation including representatives of Manhattan Borough President Gail Brewer, the Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Victorian Society New York, Explore New York, and Save Harlem Now!. The Commission also received written testimony in support of designation from Manhattan Community Board 9, Morningside Heights Historic District Committee, and the Municipal Art Society.

Summary

Founded as a "national" parish by and for the German residents of Manhattanville, the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family was dedicated in 1860 and is the oldest church building in continuous use north of 44th Street.¹ St. Joseph's *Rundbogenstil* design reflects both the ethnic makeup of its original congregation and the rural nature of its surroundings in the 19th century. The *Rundbogenstil* was developed in the early 19th century as an authentic German style and is characterized by round-arched openings, broad, smooth expanses of wall surface and



simple ornament typically concentrated at the cornice and around windows and doors. The simple design of the c. 1860 church features a single square bell tower and round-arched openings set within a framework of brick piers and bands. The 1889-90 addition by Peter and William Francis Herter retains the piers, bands and arched openings of the original in a more elaborate design that adds greater dimensionality through irregular massing.

The church remains largely unchanged. Prior to 1935 the stained-glass windows were replaced and the niche created above the entrance for a statue of St. Joseph, more recently the side entrance was altered to accommodate an accessibility ramp. Today St. Joseph of the Holy Family, on the cusp of Manhattanville and Central Harlem, serves a largely African-American and Latino congregation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Description

Located on the northwest corner of Morningside Avenue and West 125th Street, the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family is a brick church in the *Rundbogenstil* (or round-arched style) with a tripartite façade with a single square bell tower. Seven bays of round-arched windows set between piers extend down the east side and six down the west side. A cross-gabled extension with irregular roofline designed by the Herter Brothers was added to the north of the church in 1889-90, and likely replaced an 1871 addition. The areaway fence and stone curb on Morningside Avenue and gate across the west areaway are historic to at least 1906. Early alterations to the church including the creation of entrances in the side bays, the niche with statue of St. Joseph, the replacement of the stained-glass windows and the removal of decorative finials on the gables and piers of the extension were done prior to the church's Diamond Jubilee in 1935.²

Church

South (main) façade: tripartite façade articulated with brick stringcourses and paneling; corner piers; projecting central bay supporting a square bell tower with pyramidal roof topped by a cross; stoops; recessed round-arched center entrance with stained-glass transom; possibly historic lantern; round-arched side entrances with stained-glass windows; round-arched openings with simple brick enframements and louvered grilles in tower; niche with statue of St. Joseph³ and decorative light fixture **East and West facades:** brick piers and frieze; brownstone water table; round-arched stained-glass windows with simple brick enframements (end bays narrower than center bays); vents *Alterations:* **South façade:** stoops and handrails replaced; water table resurfaced; protective glass or Plexiglas over stained-glass transom and windows; doors replaced; roundels in the tower covered with sheet metal (c. 1960); light fixtures and conduits; metal mesh in niche above door; roofs replaced **East façade:** alarm box; handrail, signs, conduits and lights at basement; opening in basement of fourth bay infilled; basement parged; basement windows replaced; grilles at basement; protective glass or Plexiglas over stained-glass windows **West Façade:** basement parged; handrail; grilles and metal door at basement; conduit with lights; protective glass or Plexiglas over stained-glass windows

Extension

East (main) façade: tripartite gabled brick façade with brownstone detailing offset by piers with metal-clad pyramidal roofs; porch with stone stoop, metal railings and newels, arched openings, buttresses and cross; arched brick enframements with blind oculi at first story; round-arched openings with paired, cusped-arch stained-glass windows topped by roundels and blind oculi at second story offset by piers articulated with brick stringcourses; oculus at third story with louvered vent; brick cornice with sawtooth course; fourth bay with round-arched opening with paired, cusped-arch stained-glass window topped by roundel and peaked dormer with oculus; louvered lantern at crossing **North façade:** round stained-glass windows with trefoil tracery; projecting bay with buttresses, corbeled brick frieze and gabled dormer with oculus; chimney; one-story brick ell with clay coping on northwest **West façade (partially visible):** similar articulation to east façade **South façade:** unfinished with louvered oculus above sanctuary roof; south façade of ell brick with narrow arched windows *Alterations:* **East façade:** Porch altered, entrance moved to north, historic east entrance infilled with arched stained-glass window⁴ and brick; security grilles and gate; some repointing; roofs replaced, roof of lantern simplified; lights, conduits; signage; fence altered

Site

Areaways on east and west; historic metal fence and gates; concrete paving *Non-historic materials:* concrete steps, metal railings, cellar entrance with railings and steps on east; signage; handicapped accessibility ramp with metal railings

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

Manhattanville

Manhattanville, part of western Harlem, lies in the valley between Morningside Heights and Harlem Heights. First discovered in 1609 by Henry Hudson who briefly anchored in the cove near today's West 125th Street and the Hudson River, it was used by the Dutch settlers as pasture land for their animals.⁵

The broad plain of eastern and central Harlem and the forested heights to the west attracted Dutch settlers in the mid-17th century who received patents for large tracts of land previously farmed by the native Lenape.⁶ By the 18th century, many of New York's well-to-do built country estates in Harlem including Roger Morris a British officer and his American-born wife Mary Philipse who built Mount Morris at present-day West 160th Street and Edgecombe Avenue.⁷ During the American Revolution and the War of 1812, the area's topography was of strategic importance to the American forces.⁸

In 1795, Jacob Schieffelin began purchasing land in upper Manhattan around what was known as Harlem Cove part of which he used for his own estate. The son of a merchant, Philadelphia-born Schieffelin was raised in Montreal and served with the British during the American Revolution. He was taken prisoner but escaped and arrived in New York in 1780 where he was billeted with the Lawrence family. He met and married their daughter Hannah and they moved to Montreal where he went into business. They returned to New York in 1794 and Schieffelin and his brother-in-law took over the family drug business. Slavery existed in New York until 1827 and although his in-laws appear not to have had slaves, Schieffelin did.⁹

In 1806, he and his brothers-in-law John B. Lawrence and Thomas Buckley established the village of Manhattanville. Intended as an industrial village, the street grid was laid out centered on

Manhattan Street, which ran from Harlem Cove on the Hudson to the boundary of the land of William Molenar.¹⁰ The Common Council connected the village to the East River by a wide road and by 1807 the village boasted a wharf, school, public buildings and private homes and the following year ferry service was established to New Jersey.¹¹ Connected to the city by water, stage and, by mid-century, the Hudson River Rail Road, Manhattanville continued to grow. By 1851, houses lined the Bloomingdale Road and were dotted along Lawrence Street (today's West 126th Street), the community boasted two schools, St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church (established 1823), and among the businesses Daniel G. Tiemann's paint and color works (founded 1839), a stable and a chemical wax factory.¹² By 1867 there was a brewery that in 1875 was purchased and enlarged by D. G. Yeungling, and continued under various names to 1920.¹³

The population of Manhattan changed in the 1840s as Irish and German immigrants fleeing poverty, famine and war arrived in New York. In addition to settling in lower Manhattan members of both groups also moved to Manhattanville where the Germans in particular settled around Lawrence Street and worked largely as laborers or artisans.

To meet the educational and religious needs of these two largely Roman Catholic populations, new schools and churches were established in Manhattanville and its environs: the Academy and Convent of the Sacred Heart (1846), Manhattan College (1853), the Church of the Annunciation (1854) for the Irish and the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family (1860) for the Germans.

Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family

On August 28, 1859, a group of German Catholics from the Manhattanville area met and agreed to purchase four parcels of land totaling 100 feet by 99 feet 10 inches at the corner of Ninth (Morningside) Avenue and 125th Street that had originally been part of the land of William Molenar, who had been a slave owner.¹⁴ In the following months a building committee was established and officers were elected for the newly created parish. The first priest to minister to the German-speaking Roman Catholic residents of Manhattanville, the Rev. D. F. Hartmann, was assigned by the archdiocese in 1859 and services were held in the chapel on the grounds of the Academy and Convent of the Sacred Heart. The cornerstone was laid on May 18, 1860 and the new Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family was dedicated on September 5, 1860 by the Very Rev. William Starrs, Vicar General of the diocese. The brick church, which cost roughly \$15,000 to construct, was large enough to accommodate 600 parishioners at a time.¹⁵

The first pastor assigned to the church was the Rev. P. F. Karel (1860-64) who was followed by the Rev. Francis A. Gerber (1864-65). By 1865, the church was in financial difficulty and on September 5, 1865, the fifth anniversary of the church's dedication, Cardinal McCloskey, Archbishop of New York, appointed the recently ordained Rev. Anthony Kessler as its pastor. Father Kessler is the priest most widely associated with the early history of the parish serving it from 1865 to his untimely death at sea in 1898. He was responsible for the 1871 and 1889-90 enlargements of the church and the construction in 1873-4 of the rectory.¹⁶ Father Kessler was born in 1840 in the Rhenish province in Germany, immigrating to the United States in 1851. He received his general and religious education in various Catholic institutions and was ordained by Cardinal McCloskey on April 22, 1865.¹⁷

In 1871 Father Kessler hired architect Henry Engelbert to increase the length of the church by 15 feet.¹⁸ In 1888, Father Kessler purchased the four lots and the former Methodist church building at the southwest corner of West 126th Street and Ninth Avenue.¹⁹ The following year it was announced that the church had hired Herter Brothers to design a new St. Joseph's on the same site. Having received approval

from the Buildings Department, the architects sent a supplementary application indicating that the plans had been altered and that only a new addition measuring 44 feet in width by 48 feet in depth would be constructed at this time. The new structure was completed in 1890.²⁰

History of the German Catholic Church in New York²¹

Many Catholic immigrants settled in New York City during the first half of the 19th century, creating the city's largest Christian denomination. Under John Hughes (1797-1864), the city's fourth Catholic bishop and first archbishop, 61 parishes were established, including Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family.²²

In 1808, when the Diocese of New York was established under the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the German Catholics petitioned Archbishop Carroll to send a priest "who is capable of undertaking the Spiritual Care of our souls in the German language, which is our Mother Tongue."²³ The petition was not answered at the time, and the immigrants of different nationalities continued to practice in common churches, where mass was said in Latin, but sermons and confessions were conducted in English. Catholic immigration during the first half of the 19th century largely came from Ireland and Germany, and by 1830s the Irish community was well established in New York with its own papers, fraternal societies, lawyers, priests, physicians, teachers and political leaders,²⁴ and also a controlling interest in the Catholic Church.

Part of the 19th-century German immigrant experience was maintaining their native language, traditions, and customs. German immigrants settled together in certain neighborhoods, including Kleindeutschland on the Lower East Side, Manhattanville and Melrose, establishing stores with German signs, beer gardens, breweries and social clubs, creating distinctive areas of New York. Having a parish where services would be conducted in German and their children could be educated in German was part of that desired experience: "their traditional religious observances and customs could be carried out, where they could hear sermons in their mother tongue, go to confession as they had learned to confess from early childhood, and take an active part in parish life through their beloved societies."²⁵

Although the Irish dominated the Catholic population, in 1833 Bishop DuBois established the first German parish in New York City. Early services were conducted on Delancey Street, east of the Bowery, where a German-speaking immigrant community had been established. The following year property was purchased for the construction of a new church on East 2nd Street, between First Avenue and Avenue A, and on April 20, 1835, the cornerstone of the new church, dedicated to St. Nicholas of Myra, was laid. At the time that parish was established, the German Catholic population of New York was estimated at about 3,000. Within ten years, the same population had grown to 15,000-18,000, and following the Civil War, German Catholics numbered 40,000-50,000.²⁶

Design of the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family

The Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family is an example of the *Rundbogenstil* (round-arched style).²⁷ The style was developed in Germany between the late 1820s and the 1840s by architect-theorists, notably Heinrich Hübsch (1795-1863), who were seeking a "progressive and authentically German way for architects to build."²⁸ Aiming for a middle ground between the then popular Classical and Gothic Revival styles *Rundbogenstil* architects turned to Early Christian, Byzantine, Romanesque and early Renaissance models. They found in them a noble simplicity, solidity, economy and "optical comprehensibility" worthy of emulation. By synthesizing and purifying elements from these historic styles, *Rundbogenstil* architects hoped to create modern buildings suitable to their times. Hallmarks of the

style include round-arched openings, broad smooth expanses of wall surface, and simple ornament, notably arcuated corbel tables, pilaster strips and bands, concentrated at the crowning of the building and around structural elements such as windows and doors. It was first used in the United States in the mid-1840s for Protestant churches beginning with Richard Upjohn's Congregational Church of the Pilgrims (now Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Rite Roman Catholic Cathedral) of 1844-46 in the Brooklyn Heights Historic District, James Renwick's Church of the Puritan's on Union Square (1846-47, demolished) and Blesch & Eidlitz's St. George (Episcopal) Church at Rutherford Place and East 16th Street (1846-56, a designated New York City Landmark). As was the rule with *Rundbogenstil* architecture, the design for St. Joseph's was not a revival of Romanesque architecture but a new design based on abstracted and simplified interpretation of the Romanesque. The original c.1860 section of St. Joseph's is elegantly simple; its single, central tower and the round-arched openings at the front and sides are set within a framework of brick piers and bands. The Herter Brother's addition of 1889-90 retains the piers, bands and arched openings of the original in a more elaborate design that adds greater dimensionality through irregular massing, a gabled porch, projecting piers, decorative stringcourses and sawtooth banding at the gable, in lieu of the traditional arcuated corbel table, that compliments the original structure.

Herter Brothers

Peter (1847-?) and Francis William Herter (1853-1933) arrived in America from Germany between 1880 and 1884 and it is assumed that they received their architectural training in Europe before immigrating to the United States. Their earliest commissions, to design tenements in Yorkville and the Lower East Side, came from German clients. It was while working on two tenements on Eldridge Street in 1886 that they received the commission to design the Eldridge Street Synagogue (1886-87, Congregation Khal Adath Jeshurun with Anshe Lubz, a designated New York City Landmark). Between 1887 and 1893 the Herter Brothers had an intense period of activity designing more than 100 buildings of various types in Manhattan, fifty of them in the Lower East Side alone. The tenements designed by the Herter Brothers were well known for being more spacious and offering better amenities (stoves and baths) than most tenements built during this same period. Among the brothers' projects was a row of Neo-Grec style row houses (1886-88) on East 93rd Street located within the expanded Carnegie Hill Historic District and a Romanesque Revival style store-and-factory building (1889-90) in the NoHo Historic District Extension co-incident with the addition to the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family. In 1893 the firm was sued by creditors for nearly \$30,000 against their own local developments. With few projects after 1893, the partnership dissolved and by 1895 the brothers established independent practices. Peter and his son Peter John formed a new firm, P. Herter & Son in 1899. He later found Herter Realty Company in 1902 and was important in New York real estate market. Francis, who was individually responsible for the design of a neo-Renaissance style apartment house in the Upper East Side Historic District, practiced as an architect until the age of 72 and died seven years later in 1933.²⁹

Subsequent History

By 1890, Manhattanville was largely Irish and German although there were at least 1,000 African-Americans in the village.³⁰ The Interborough Rapid Transit line was opened along Broadway in 1904 encouraging a new building boom in Manhattanville, largely apartment houses. Businesses in the area included distributors, processing plants, garages, gas storage facilities, railway services and coal

barges. By 1925 four to five thousand attended mass at St. Joseph's on a Sunday and 1300 to 1400 children were enrolled in the school.³¹

In the 1940's, the population of Manhattanville changed as African-Americans from the South and Puerto Ricans moved into the area replacing many of the old families who were leaving for the suburbs or other areas of Manhattan. Additional changes came in the 1950s, as Robert Moses' City Slum Clearance Commission forced the relocation of tenants for the creation of the Morningside Gardens cooperative apartments and the Manhattanville and Grant Houses.³² Although its membership ebbed with the loss of the old parish families, St. Joseph's located on the cusp of Manhattanville and Central Harlem welcomed new parishioners reaching out to both the African-American and Hispanic communities, offering masses in English and Spanish. Today, the parish Gospel Choir sings at Sunday mass and St. Joseph's sponsors a weekly food pantry and clothing bank for the community.

The westernmost edge of Manhattanville, once its industrial heart, is currently the site of a major expansion of the Columbia University Campus. The master plan, developed by Renzo Piano and Skidmore, Owings Merrill, encompasses the area between West 125th and West 133rd Streets west of Broadway and mixes new structures with existing buildings repurposed for academic use.³³

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NOTES

¹ David Dunlap, *From Abyssinian to Zion: A Guide to Manhattan's Houses of Worship* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 220. Two other Manhattanville parishes Church of the Annunciation (Roman Catholic) and St. Mary's Protestant Episcopal Church predate St. Joseph of the Holy Family but both parishes have replaced their original churches.

² An early engraving of the church shows a single entrance with stained-glass windows in the side bays. By 1906 the windows were altered and the sills lowered to allow for the installation of doors; new stoops were constructed. The stained-glass windows throughout the church were replaced by 1935, possibly as early as the 1920s when the pastor, Father Gerard H. Huntman, wrote to Archbishop Hayes that the wood was rotting and they needed to be repaired. The niche with the statue of St. Joseph was opened between 1906 and 1935. John Gilmary Shea, ed. *The Catholic Churches of New York City* (New York: Lawrence G. Goulding & Co., 1878), plate opp. 462; Irving Underhill, "St. Joseph's Church, 125th and Morningside Avenue" 1906 (collection Museum of the City of New York, M2Y9000); Letter to Most Rev. Patrick J. Hayes from Gerard H. Huntman, July 14, 1922; *Diamond Jubilee, 1860-1935: Parish of St. Joseph of the Holy Family* (New York: The Church, 1935).

³ The statue of St. Joseph was replaced c. 1960. *One Hundredth Anniversary: Parish of Saint Joseph of the Holy Family, 1860-1960* ([New York: The Church, 1960]), 39.

⁴ This is likely one of the memorial windows installed in the vestibule by Monsignor Emil N. Komora around 1960 to honor his predecessors Father Francis X. E. Albert and Monsignor George A. Kreidel. *One Hundredth Anniversary*, 39.

⁵ The settlers of Harlem had been granted patents for their land by the Dutch; these were confirmed by the English under the Nicholls Patent of October 11, 1667. Harlem included all the land east of a line that ran due north from roughly 75th Street and the East River to 130th Street and the Hudson River. James Riker, *Revised History of Harlem: Its Origins and Early Annals* (New York: New Harlem Publishing Co., 1904), 113, 243-245, map [832]; Jonathan Gill, *Harlem: The Four Hundred Year History from Dutch Village to Capital of Black America* (New York: Grove Press, 2011), 2.

⁶ Three of the Dutch tracts of 1637 coincide with the three Native sites, Konykast, Muscoota, and Schorrakin. Gill, 6, 15, 16, 19.

⁷ Slavery was legal in New York until 1827. It is unclear whether the Morrises, who moved to England at the outset of the American Revolution, were slave owners. Their house (1765; remodeled c. 1810), which was used as his headquarters by George Washington during the battle of Harlem Heights, is a designated New York City Landmark. *Guide to New York City Landmarks*, 4th ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 210.

⁸ The valley and the heights to either side contributed to the American defeat of the British at the Battle of Harlem Heights in 1776. In the War of 1812, block houses and fortifications were built in the vicinity to guard against a British assault from the north. R. S. Guernsey, *New York City and Vicinity during the War of 1812-'15* (New York: Charles L. Woodward, 1895).

⁹ The wholesale drug business, which was later expanded into wine and liquor, was established by Effingham Lawrence in 1781 and remained in the Schieffelin family until 1981. Susan S. Lukesh, "Jacob Schieffelin," *Immigrant Entrepreneurship* (<http://immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=124>, accessed January 22, 2016); Frank J. Priol, "William Jay Schieffelin Jr., 94, Importer of Wines and Spirits," *New York Times (NYT)*, May 3, 1985, D23; U.S. Census records, 1790-1820.

¹⁰ Manhattan Street and its neighbor Lawrence Street were laid out by a city contractor and considered by the Common Council to be city streets. In 1836 an act was passed that changed the city grid pattern to incorporate the diagonal routes of Manhattan and Lawrence Streets, they are now the western ends of West 125th and 126th Streets respectively. I. N. Phelps Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909* (New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1915-28), 5, 1740; Gill, 74; Eric K. Washington, *Manhattanville: Old Heart of West Harlem* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2002), 29; William Jay Schieffelin, Jr. obituary; Gerard Koepfel, *City on a Grid: How New York Became New York* (Boston: Da Capo Press, 2015), 185-186.

¹¹ Stokes, 5, 1448, 1454, 1461 and 6, 665; Gill, 74.

¹² Mathew Dripps, *Map of that Part of the City and County of New-York North of Fiftieth Street* (New York: M. Dripps, 1851); Gill, 87.

¹³ Mathew Dripps, *Plan of New York City from the Battery to Spuyten Duyvil Creek* (New York: M. Dripps, 1867), sheet 17.

¹⁴ The four lots were part of the farm of Charles Duryea which was acquired by William Molenoar in 1790. New York County, Office of the Register, "Section 7 Block 1966 General Statement of Early Title," *Block Index of Reindexed Conveyances*; Last will and testament, William Molenoar, probated 12 April 1812, Ancestry.com, *New York, Wills and Probate Records, 1659-1999* [database on-line] Provo: Ancestry.com Operations, 2015.

¹⁵ St. Joseph's was established as a national parish for Germans; however, by the 1870s it was offering services with English as well as German sermons and the roll of honor in the 1870s includes Irish as well as German names. Although the church was dedicated in 1860 (either September 2nd or 5th depending on source), it may not have been fully completed and operational until 1863. Shea, 462-466; *The Catholic Church in the United States of America* (New York: The Catholic Editing Company, 1914), 342-3; New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 796, p. 311 (October 1, 1859), Liber 794, p. 322 (October 12, 1859); *Diamond Jubilee, 1860-1935*.

¹⁶ The rectory (NB 535-1873, Henry Engelbert, architect) is not part of this designation.

¹⁷ There is some discrepancy in his date of birth; one source gives it as 1840, and other 1835. Shea, 465-6; *Catholic Church*, 342-3.

¹⁸ New York City Department of Building Dockets note the dimensions of the original church as 35 feet high, 40 feet wide and 85 feet deep with a peak roof, the addition was described as 35 feet high 40 feet wide and 15 feet deep. New York City, Department of Buildings, New Building and Alteration applications (ALT 1002-1871).

¹⁹ Both the original property and part of the adjoining parcel measuring 39 feet by 100 feet were deeded to the church by 1890. Father Kessler retained ownership of the remainder of the northern parcel, deeding it to the church in his will. New York County, Office of the Register, Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 2141, p. 434 (July 12, 1888), Liber 2106, p. 55 (November 23, 1887), Liber 2302, p. 291 (April 15, 1890).

²⁰ New York City, Department of Buildings, New Building and Alteration applications (NB 614-1889, ALT 1623-1889).

²¹ Sources for this section include: Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977); Reverend J. R. Bayley, *A Brief Sketch of the Early History of the Catholic Church on the Island of New York* (New York: The Catholic Publication Society, 1870); "Archdiocese of New York," *Catholic Encyclopedia: New York* (<http://www.bewadvent.org/cathen/11020a.htm>, accessed November 23, 2015); "Catholic

Church in the Thirteen Colonies,” *Wikipedia*

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church_in_the_Thirteen_Colonies, accessed November 23, 2015); “St. Nicholas Kirche (New York City)” *Wikipedia*

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Nicholas_Kirche_\(New_York_City\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Nicholas_Kirche_(New_York_City)), accessed November 23, 2015); Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), *Church of St. Paul the Apostle Designation Report (LP-2260)*, prepared by Matthew A. Postal, (New York: City of New York, 2013).

²² John Hughes served as coadjutor, bishop and later archbishop of New York from 1837 until his death in 1864. Among his accomplishments were protecting the church from American nativist anti-Catholic attacks of the mid-19th century, promoting the rights of Catholics in the public school system, promoting the creation of parochial schools, and the commencement of the building of St. Patrick Cathedral (a designated New York City Landmark), which was completed after his death. Shea, 49-58.

²³ Dolan, 69. The Diocese of New York as originally established included all of New York State and seven counties in northeastern New Jersey. In 1847, Dioceses of Albany and Buffalo were separated from New York. And six years later, separate dioceses were created in Brooklyn and Newark.

²⁴ Dolan, 21.

²⁵ Coleman J. Barry, *The Catholic Church and German Americans* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1953), 10 as quoted in Dolan, 70.

²⁶ Dolan, 70. The 1865 German Catholic population was divided into eight German parishes in New York.

²⁷ This discussion of the Rundbogenstil is based on Kathleen Curran, “The German Rundbogenstil and Reflections on the American Round-Arched Style,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 47 (December 1988), 351-373; Kathleen Curran, *The Romanesque Revival* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003); Kathryn E. Holliday, *Leopold Eidlitz: Architecture and Idealism in the Gilded Age* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 2008); LPC, *St. Stephen’s Church (The Church of Our Lady of the Scapular & St. Stephen) Designation Report (LP-2259)* (New York: City of New York, 2008), prepared by Virginia Kurshan; “Rundbogenstil,” *Wikipedia*, (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rundbogenstil>, accessed May 13, 2014).

²⁸ Curran, “German Rundbogenstil,” 354.

²⁹ LPC, *Eldridge Street Synagogue (Congregation Kahal Adath Jeshurun with Anshe Lubz) Designation Report (LP-1107)* (New York: City of New York, 1980), prepared by Susan Upton Lawrence, 2-3; Dennis Steadman Francis, *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1840-1900* (New York: Committee for the Preservation for Architectural Records, 1979), 39.

³⁰ LPC, *St. Mary’s Protestant Episcopal Church (Manhattanville), Parish House, and Sunday School Designation Report (LP-1981)* (New York: City of New York, 1998), prepared by Eric K. Washington, Research Consultant, 3.

³¹ *One Hundredth Anniversary*, 35

³² *St. Mary’s*, 3.

³³ The existing buildings include the former Sheffield Farms Dairy Building, renamed Prentis Hall, Nash and Studebaker Buildings. “Campus Plan, Manhattanville” (<http://manhattanville.columbia.edu/campus-plan>, accessed January 21, 2016).

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family was founded as a national parish within the Archdiocese of New York to serve the needs of the German-speaking residents of Manhattanville; that it was constructed c. 1860 and has been in use since that time making it the oldest church in continuous use north of 44th Street; that it was designed in the *Rundbogenstil* (round-arched style); that the *Rundbogenstil* was developed between the late 1820s and 1840s as an authentic German style based on Early Christian, Byzantine, Romanesque and early Renaissance models and characterized by round-arched openings, broad, smooth expanses of wall surface and simple ornament typically concentrated at the cornice and around windows and doors; that the church was enlarged in 1889-90 by an addition designed by the Herter Brothers; that the Herter Brothers' design is an elaboration of the *Rundbogenstil* that compliments the original structure; that the Herter Brothers were German-immigrant architects also responsible for the design of the Eldridge Street Synagogue (a individually designated New York City Landmark).

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family, 401-403 West 125th Street, aka 401-403 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard; 140-148 Morningside Avenue), Borough of Manhattan and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1966, Lot 67, in part, beginning at the southeast corner of the property line of lot 67, northerly along the eastern property line of lot 67 to the northern property line of lot 67, westerly along the northern property line of lot 67 to a point on a line extending northerly from the western building line of the ell between the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family and its rectory, southerly along said line and partially through a party wall to the southern building line of the ell between the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family and its rectory, easterly along the southern building line of the ell to a point on a line extending from the western retaining wall of the west areaway of the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family and southerly along said line and wall to the southern property line of lot 67, then easterly to the place of beginning.

Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair

Frederick Bland, Wellington Chen, Michael Devonshire, Michael Goldblum, Jeanne Lutfy, and Adi Shamir-Baron, Commissioners



Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family
401-403 West 125th Street
(aka 401-403 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard; 140-148 Morningside Avenue)
Manhattan Block 1966, Lot 67 in part
Photo: Sarah Moses, 2016



Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family, east elevation
Photo: Sarah Moses, 2016



Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family, north elevation

Photo: Marianne S. Percival, 2016



Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family, west elevation
Photo: Sarah Moses, 2016

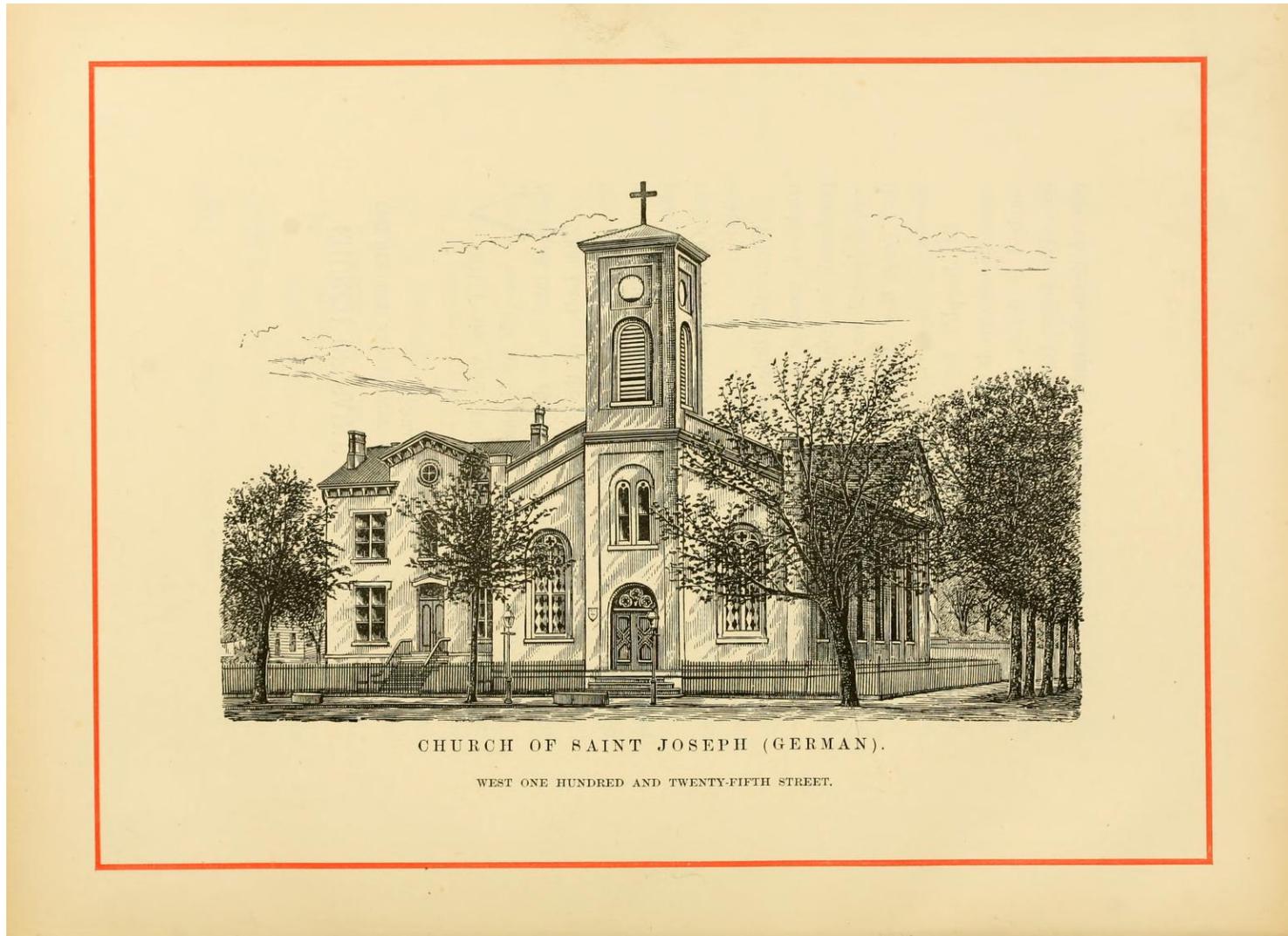


Main façade details
Photo: Marianne S. Percival, 2016



Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family, 1889-90 Herter Brothers addition

Photo: Sarah Moses, 2016



CHURCH OF SAINT JOSEPH (GERMAN).

WEST ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH STREET.

Source: John Gilmarry Shea, ed. *The Catholic Churches of New York City* (New York: Lawrence G. Goulding & Co., 1878)



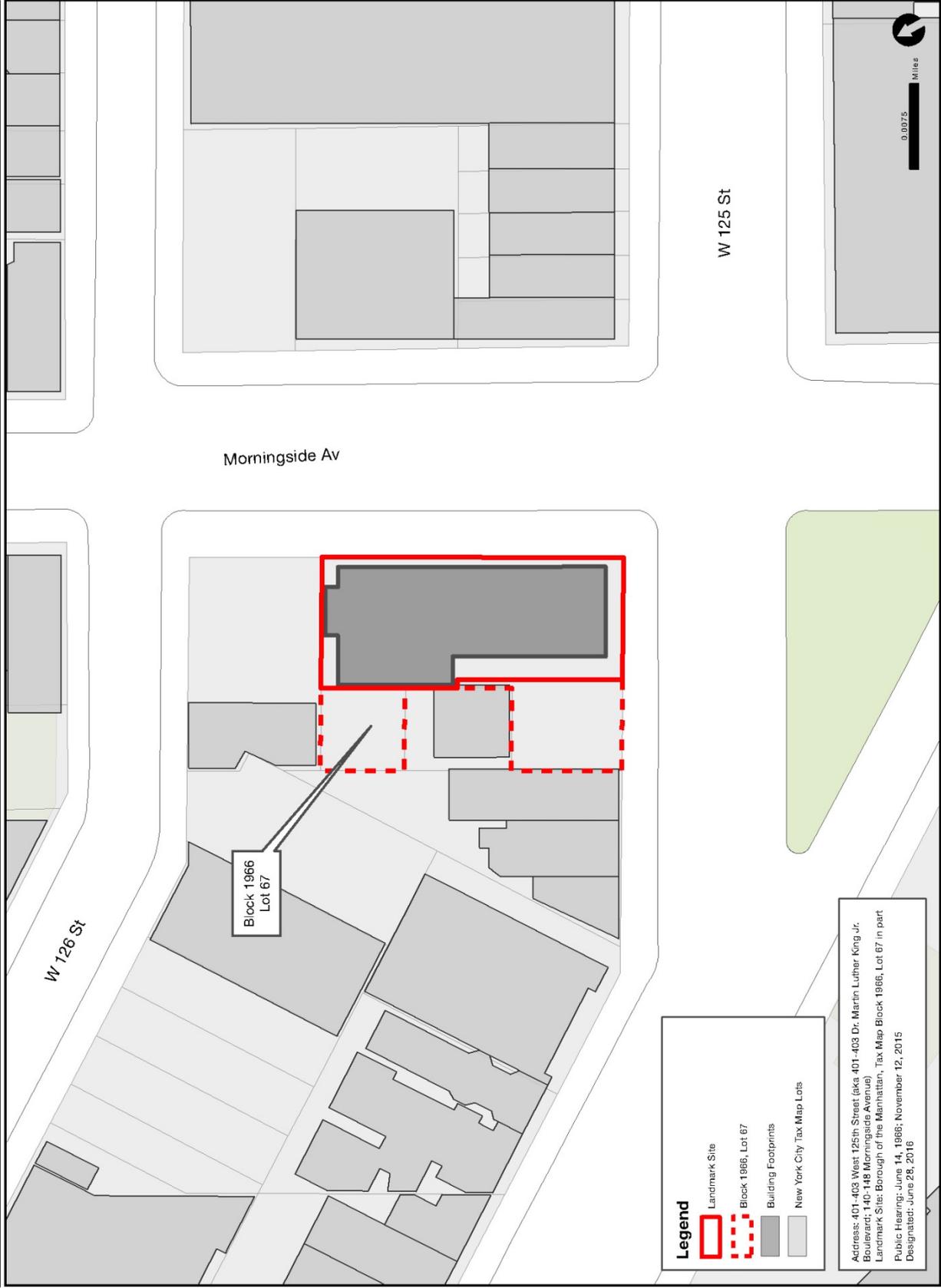
Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family
Photo: New York City Dept. of Taxes (c. 1940), Municipal Archives



Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family
Photo: New York City Dept. of Taxes (c. 1940), Municipal Archives

Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family | LP-0303

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission



Address: 401-403 West 125th Street (aka 401-403 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard; 140-148 Morningside Avenue)
Landmark Site: Borough of the Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1966, Lot 67 in part
Public Hearing: June 14, 1966; November 12, 2015
Designated: June 28, 2016

Graphic Source: MapPLUTO, Edition 15v1, Author: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, DHW, Date: 6.28.2016