

**Tenth Street Church of God
207 10th Street North
HPC #00-01, Designated July 2001**



Built circa 1898, the Tenth Street Church of God is significant for its association with Gothic Revival, particularly the development of "Carpenter Gothic," a peculiarly American variant of the style promoted by Andrew Jackson Downing and Alexander Davis which derives its name from the emphasis on wood construction and the use of the jigsaw to execute intricate wooden details. Built for \$3,000 circa 1898 as the first home of the First Presbyterian Church, the Church of God is the second-oldest wood frame church in St. Petersburg. The Church was moved to its present location from the southwest corner of 4th Avenue and 3rd Street North some time between September and December 1913 when the new presbyterian church was formally opened.

Frame churches predominated in St. Petersburg during its early years between 1890 and 1913. The city had a number of wooden Gothic Revival churches including the original First Baptist Church on Fourth Street North, the Congregational Church (on the site presently occupied by the Open Air Post Office), and St. Bartholomew Episcopal Church. As the twentieth century progressed, however, many congregations replaced their simpler frame structures with masonry buildings of higher style architecture, leaving only a small number of turn-of-the-century frame buildings. Of these structures, the Church of God stands as the most architecturally significant, surpassing even St. Bartholomew's, which is the oldest church in St. Petersburg but has been substantially altered and moved from its original location in the 1970s.

The essential ingredients of the Carpenter Gothic style still remain on the Tenth Street Church of God. These include the belltower and bell cote, decorative wooden siding, and lancet arched windows with tracery. Located on the southwest corner of the Church, the belltower is its most prominent and architecturally distinctive feature. The three-story tower is rectangular in shape with each story characterized by different finishing details. The first story is clad with novelty siding and is distinguished by a lancet shaped entry to the baptistry with a transom on the west elevation and a small chancel projecting off the south elevation. The second story of the bell tower is clad on all sides with lancet-shaped shingles, a theme echoing the fenestration pattern throughout the church found also on the gabled ends of the two transepts. In addition, the south and west elevations have two oculus windows. The tower is surmounted by a belfry framed with two pointed arches on each side. Ornamental woodwork in a quarter-moon and two-star motif decorate the spandrels between the arches. Capping the belfry is the bell cote.

The west elevation is the most significant on the Church. With three asymmetrical bays it serves as the main facade and provides ingress and egress to the building through two separate openings on the southern and northern bays. A narrow stained-glass lancet window is located in each of the two hyphens between the bays and illuminates the nave.