

**From Kansas City's Beginnings Until Now:
A History of Methodism in Kansas City
and
the 16th & McGee Building Site**

A report presented to

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A New Building for a New Hope

On Wednesday, September 6, 2017, the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection Downtown Campus (RezDT) poured the concrete for their new building located on the Southeast corner of 16th and Grand Avenue in Kansas City, Missouri. RezDT's new construction is the [first church to be built in downtown Kansas City in the past 80 years](#).

As far back as accessible historical records exist, this new location has changed over time from stables to car lots to, most recently, a parking lot. This report provides documentation regarding the history of the plot of land between 17th and 16th, Grand Avenue and McGee Street.

Kansas City History

The City of Kansas City, Missouri, has a rich history. Originally inhabited by the indigenous Native American Kaw or Kansa tribe,¹ the area which would become Kansas City was first scouted by the Western explorers Capt. Meriwether Lewis and Lt. William Clark in June 1804.²

Since the start of the 18th century, many people made [the town of Kansas their home](#). Kansas City, Missouri, was incorporated in 1850. The City's incorporation was several years before the Territory of Kansas was established in 1864. Through the years, Kansas City, being an [important rail city](#), ballooned to its current size.

Some significant developments during this time were the building of Union Station in 1914, [Liberty Memorial in the mid-1920s](#), and the [Power & Light Building in 1936](#).

Methodism. In 1936, William Miles Chick founded the first Methodist church in Kansas City in 1836. Rev. Chick originally moved from Virginia area to the Kansas City area in 1936.³ Rev. Chick and his wife, [Anne Eliza Chick](#), helped grow this Methodist society into a church: the Fifth Street Methodist Church. William and [Anne Chick's](#) Fifth Street Methodist church was located at Fifth and Walnut, close to what is now the Opera House Coffee & Food Emporium.

In 1852, [Dr. Nathan Scarritt with his wife, Martha Matilda Chick Scarritt](#), became the first regular pastor at the Fifth Street Church. [Dr. Nathan Scarritt](#) was born in Illinois in 1921.⁴ He married William and Anne Chick's daughter, Martha, in the spring of 1950. Dr. Scarritt conduct missionary work to the [Native America tribes](#) in the area, including

¹ The Kaw (variants Kanza or Kansa), Kansas Historical Society, <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/kaws-or-kanzas-kansas/17371>

² History of Lewis and Clark Point, Kaw Point Park, <http://www.lewisandclarkwyco.org/lewis-clark>

³ <https://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/78001660.pdf>

⁴ <https://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/78001660.pdf>

the Shawnee, Delaware, and Wyandotte tribes. He and his family of six children lived in an L-shaped house in Westport at 4038 Central Street, which is now on the National Registry of Historical Places. Dr. Scarritt died in 1890, having made a considerable impact to Methodism in the area.

Among the other historical Methodist churches were the [Walnut Street Methodist Church](#) and the [Country Club church](#). The Walnut Street church was established because of an outgrowth in the Fifth Street Church. The Country Club church, located at 57th and Wornell, help bring Methodism further south in Kansas City.

New RezDT Location. As the city continued to expand, the land between 16th and 17th street, McGee street and Grand avenue, has always been associated with Kansas City's history. Around the turn of the 19th century, the plot of land was home to saddleries, harness makers, and horse shoers.

After Henry Ford and 1908, cars became increasingly more commonplace. Henry Hunt Horse shoer transitioned to Stevenson Motor Company and [United States Tire Company](#). By 1917, the land was a potpourri of various businesses. Joseph S. Lerner, a Russian immigrant, opened one of his Vogue ladies clothes shop at 1617 Grand Ave, the approximate location of the alter.

Over the subsequent years following World War II, the land continued to be used by automotive shops and, increasingly, parking lots. In the mid-1950s, [Sullivan Chevrolet](#) sold new and used vehicles at 1600 McGee, even giving [away tokens](#). Places like [Whitaker Battery](#) became mainstays in the neighborhood.

While most of the plot of land for the new location was not photographed with the exception of in 1940, there are still several photos around the location through the years:

- [The view from the corner of 17th and Grand looking Southeast in 1949, following a snowstorm;](#)
- [Grand from 18th, facing the North in April 1894;](#)
- [Grand at 17th, looking North in 1895;](#)
- [The Kansas City Star building in 1905;](#)
- [The Kansas City downtown in 1926;](#)
- [The corner of Grand and Pershing, looking North in 1927;](#)
- [The Kansas City Star building, circa 1928;](#)
- [The current McGee location of the church as viewed in 1940;](#) and,
- [Kansas City downtown in 1950.](#)

In 2006, the Kansas City Star opened up their publication center at the southeast corner of Truman and McGee. By this time, most of the block was already a parking lot.

The floor plan depicts a large industrial facility with the following features:

- Top Section (Rooms 298-300):** Includes a 'MACH. SHOP (298)', 'OFF. & GARAGE 1ST', and 'REPAIR SHOP 2ND'. Structural notes include 'FIRE PROOF CONCR.', 'REIN. CONC. BR & TILE', and 'WALLS WEATHER RE.'.
- Middle Section (Rooms 291-297):** Features an 'AUTO BODY REP.' and various smaller repair shops. A large 'X' is marked over one area, possibly indicating a structural issue or a specific project area.
- Bottom Section (Rooms 281-287):** Includes a 'DRY GOODS W.H.O.' and 'AUTO REP.'. Structural notes include 'FIRE PROOF CONCR.', 'REIN. CONC. BR & TILE', and 'WALLS WEATHER RE.'.
- Central Area:** A large 'AUTO PARKING' lot is situated between the main building sections.
- Dimensions and Room Numbers:** Various dimensions (e.g., 205'-0", 204'-0", 208'-0") and room numbers (e.g., 298, 297, 296, 295, 294, 293, 292, 291, 290, 289, 288, 287, 286, 285, 284, 283, 282, 281) are marked throughout the plan.
- Structural Details:** Numerous notes specify construction materials and methods, such as 'FIRE PROOF CONCR.', 'REIN. CONC. BR & TILE', 'WALLS WEATHER RE.', and 'WHOL. AUTO TIRES'.

Phone Directory Information

These are the directory listings for the addresses between 16th and 17th, and Grand and McGee Street. The years are followed by the directory information and links to photos, if available.

At 1601 Grand Ave

1906: Harness maker
1913: Electric Vehicle Battery Company
1917: Dumas-Milner Chevrolet co used cars
1920: Whitaker Battery & Supply Company
1921: Whitaker Battery & Supply Company
1927: C A Whitaker rest
1940: Not listed
1960: Electric Vehicle Battery Co

At 1603 Grand Ave

1904: Joseph W Busher, Mach.
1917: Not listed
1918: Mowatt Cox opened a magneto repair shop
1927: Vacant
1940: Not listed
1960: Hardman Tire Co

At 1605 Grand Ave

1904: H. Kaut. Sheet Metal Works
1912: Hall Brothers & Reeves — salesroom
1917: Not listed
1927: Scott Two-Stroke Motor Co
1940: Hopcroft-Pringle Glass Wks
1960: Nelson and Black auto supplies

At 1607 Grand Ave

1917: Not listed
1927: Vacant
1940: Hopcroft-Pringle Glass Wks
1960: Venetian Auto Clean Company; Whitney Mnfg Co auto cleaner

At 1609 Grand Ave

1917: Faeth Co The Parking Company
1927: Tire Co of America
1940: Strode Harry W reatr
1960: Kansas City Battery and Supply Co

At 1611 Grand Ave

1917: Not listed

1927: Loeffler Tire Co; Hotel Wayne

1940: Not listed

1960: Dugan John; Tire Supply Co

At 1613 Grand Ave

1917: Not listed

1927: N/A

1940: Art Sign Co

1960: Motor & Mechanics Supply Co service dept

At 1615 Grand Ave

1917: McGrew Henry Printing

1927: Vacant

1940: Not listed

1960: Taylor-Hathaway Motor Co

At 1617 Grand Ave

1917: Lerner's J S Vogue Shop

1927: Faeth Co motor sup; Motor & Machinists Supply Co

1940: Lerner's J S Vogue Shop

1960: Not listed

At 1619 Grand Ave

1904: Hunt Henry, horseshoer

1917: Not listed

1927: N/A

1940: Lerner's J S Vogue Shop

1960: Not listed

At 1621 Grand Ave

1917: McBrayer Advertising Services

1927: General Auto Parts Co

1940: Vacant

1960: Demby Kansas City Motor Truck Co

At 1623 Grand Ave

1917: Vacant

1927: General Auto Parts Co

1940: Vacant

1960: Hagstrom Model & Tool Wks

At 1625 Grand Ave

1917: Vacant

1927: Natl Top & Sup Co

1940: [Fafnir Bearings Inc](#)

1960: Federal Auto Top & Beat Coret Co

At 1627 Grand Ave

1917: Mogel Sls Co used cash registers

1927: N/A

1940: Vacant

1960: Not listed

At 1629 Grand Ave

1917: M&O Tap Room tavern

1927: N/A

1940: [Smith Bros Tap Room tavern](#)

1960: Paramount Restaurant

At 1600 McGee Street

1909: Holcker-Elberg Carriage & Rubber Co.

1917: Dorrell Emma dressmkr

1921: Peake Auto Supply Company

1927: Hemphill Motor Co

1940: [Sullivan Chevrolet Co used car depot](#)

At 1602 McGee Street

1917: Tolbert Francis

1921: N/A

1927: N/A

1940: N/A

At 1604 McGee Street

1917: Sampson Agnes

1921: N/A

1927: N/A

1940: N/A

At 1606 McGee Street

1917: Stevenson Motor Co

1921: Elwood Motors

1927: Vacant

1940: California Citrus Juice Co; Pruzan's Products Co

At 1608 McGee Street

1917: Nordyke & Marmon Co

1921: Elwood Motors

1927: Chandler-Cleveland Auto Sales Co

1940: [Holzer Tony Inc autos](#)

At 1610 McGee Street

1917: N/A

1921: Ellwood Motors

1927: Chandler-Cleveland Auto Sales Co

1940: [Holzer Tony Inc autos](#)

At 1612 McGee Street

1917: United States Tire Co

1921: United States Tire Co

1927: Chandler-Cleveland Auto Sales Co

1940: [Holzer Tony Inc autos](#)

At 1614 McGee Street

1917: N/A

1921: United States Tire Co

1927: Chandler-Cleveland Auto Sales Co

1940: [Holzer Tony Inc autos](#)

At 1616 McGee Street

1917: Gridley Motor Co

1921: Buxton-Wysong Motor

1927: N/A

1940: N/A

At 1618 McGee Street

1917: N/A

1921: Buxton-Wysong Motor

1927: Crosbie-Higgins Motor Co

1940: [Vacant](#)

At 1618 McGee Street

1917: N/A

1921: Buxton-Wysong Motor

1927: N/A

1940: N/A

At 1620 McGee Street

1917: N/A

1921: Buxton-Wysong Motor

1927: N/A

1940: [Atkins Harold Service auto repair](#)

At 1622 McGee Street

1917: Commercial Truckmobile Co; International Motor Truck Co; Jackels & Campbell Co auto supplies

1921: Jackels-Campbell Co autos; Commercial Motor Co; International Harvester Truck Co; Belt Automobile Indemnity Assn

1927: N/A

1940: N/A

At 1624 McGee Street

1917: N/A

1921: Jackels-Campbell Co autos

1927: N/A

1940: N/A

At 1626 McGee Street

1917: N/A

1921: N/A

1927: N/A

1940: [National School of Aeronautics Inc No 2](#)