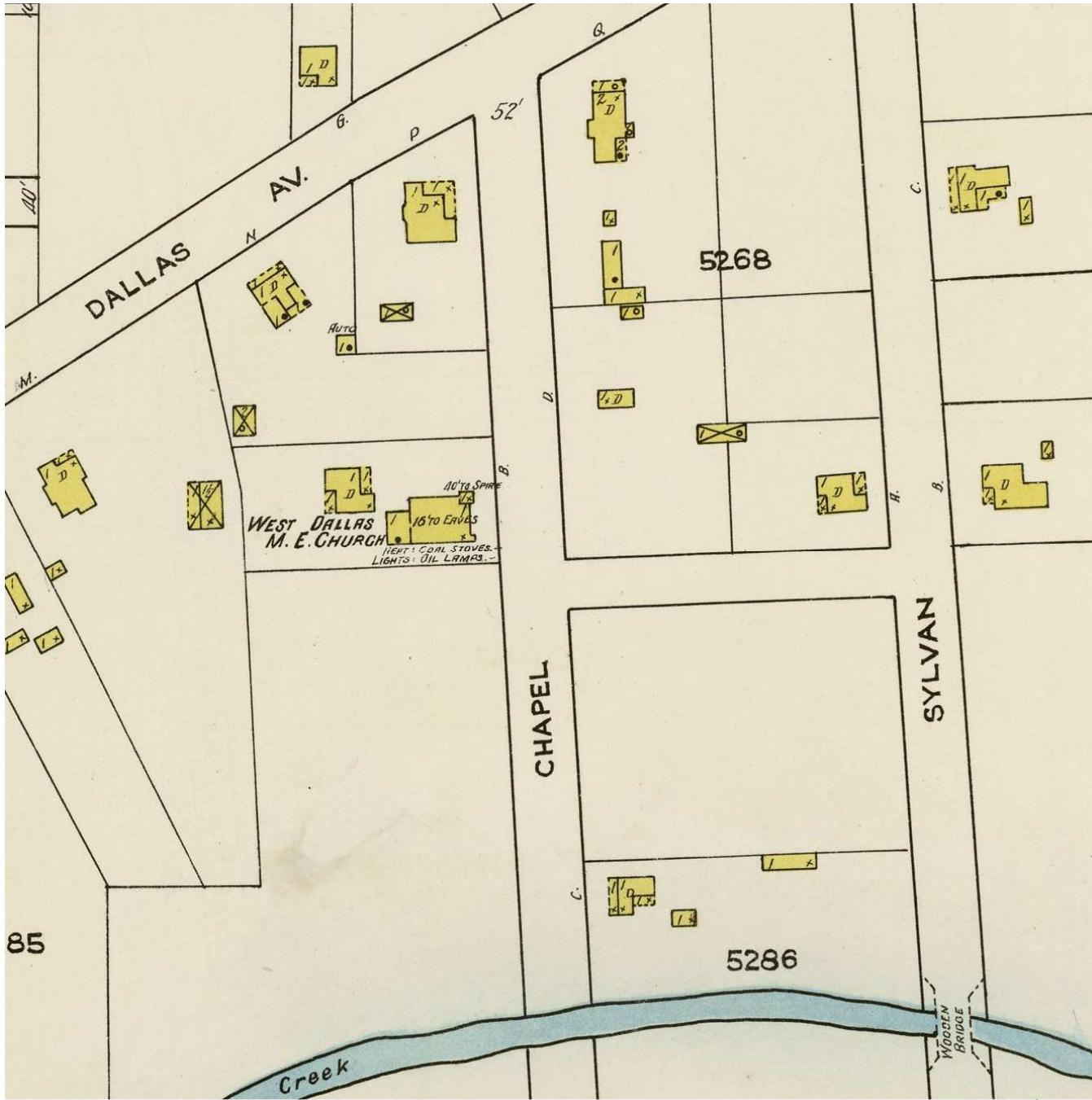


West Dallas Methodist Episcopal Church

1888 - 1948

James D. Barnes, 9th January 2026 – last revised 16th January 2026



*Detail from the 1922 Sanborn map showing the West Dallas Methodist-Episcopal Church¹
located on Chappell Street south of Fort Worth Avenue, labeled "Dallas Avenue" -- approx: 32.7685°N; 96.8370°W*

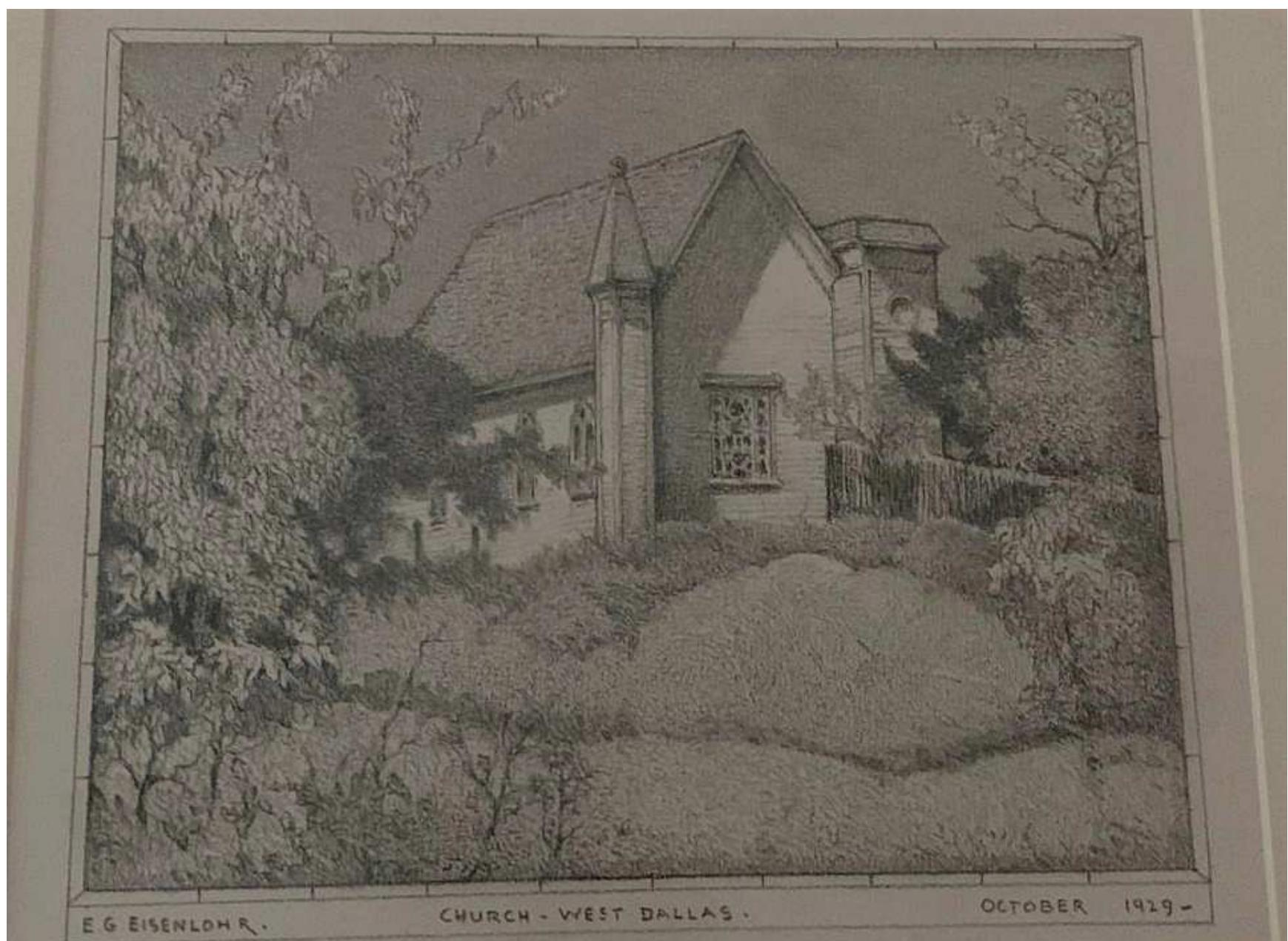
West Dallas Methodist-Episcopal Church existed from 1888 until 1948. It was occasionally called **Western Heights Methodist Church**. At other times it was called **St. Paul's Methodist Church**, which becomes confusing because there is another old **St. Paul's Methodist Church** in downtown Dallas (still standing at 1816 Routh Street, in the *Arts District*). Also, this West Dallas church was sometimes called **St. Mark's Methodist Church**, a name which is also confusing because there was a separate **St. Mark's Methodist** congregation forming in Oak Cliff then, and the denomination used the **St. Mark's** name elsewhere. It was originally part of the **Methodist-Episcopal Church South**, an American Protestant denomination until 1939, later consolidated as the **Methodist Church**.

West Dallas Methodist-Episcopal Church was located on a large tract of land owned by Reverend Samuel Armstrong, an elderly retired Methodist-Episcopal minister who donated a small portion of his land for this new church. His real estate transfer deed, dated the 15th of June 1888; states that the land was granted "in consideration of the love we have for the cause of Christ and the sum of one Dollar". It was signed by widower Armstrong and also by his daughter, Mary (Armstrong) Stevens – widow of Dr. John H. Stevens. (John and Mary Stevens were later designated as the namesakes of the nearby *Stevens Park*.) Reverend Armstrong had previously helped establish congregations in Dallas, including Oak Lawn Methodist and Floyd Street Methodist, which eventually became Grace Methodist church. In 1888 Reverend Armstrong was living with his daughter Mary, in the Stevens' farmhouse located nearby, in what-is-now *Middlebrook Place*. As agents of the new church three names were listed as grantees in the 1888 deed: P.S. Browder, J.J. Harty, and J.W. Linderman.²

Nine days later the *Dallas Morning News* reported, "The lumber is on the ground for the new Methodist Church and the work of building will commence at once."³ Yellow color-coding on the 1922 Sanborn Insurance map indicates that the **West Dallas Methodist-Episcopal Church** building was wood frame construction. *The News* described it as being 30' x 60'. A one story building immediately west of the main sanctuary building, 20' x 30', was later added as a Sunday School building.⁴ Notes on the Sanborn map's drawing tell of "Heat: coal stoves" and "Lights: oil lamps". A "40' spire" rose from its northeast corner. From its elevated entry above Chappell Street, there would have been a lovely view of the lights and towers of Dallas across the floodplain a bit less than two miles east-northeast. Reverend C.G. Schutt, as first pastor, is crediting with organizing a new congregation for *West Dallas Methodist*.⁵ In 1928, the *Dallas Morning News* remarked that *West Dallas Methodist* was "perhaps the smallest church in Dallas". About twelve members attended regularly.⁶

The *West Dallas Methodist Church* remained open as other larger Methodist congregations organized across the Creek, notably the *Kessler Park Methodist Church* organized in 1925, and farther away, *Tyler Street Methodist Church*, in 1912.

Another new nearby Methodist congregation was initiated in June of 1948 for a new *Stevens Park Methodist Church*, housed in an old Army surplus chapel building trucked onto a site on the west side of Hampton Road, just north of Fort Worth Avenue. The two Methodist congregations of *Stevens Park* and *West Dallas* merged the following September⁷; and the former *West Dallas* church's site must have been sold and cleared shortly thereafter. The former building had disappeared from its Chappell Street site by the time the 1950 Sanborn Insurance map of the area was published.



1929 drawing by artist Edward G. Eisenlohr of the West Dallas Methodist-Episcopal Church.⁸

The view is looking northwest, up the hill from Chappell Street, south of Fort Worth Avenue.



1930 Fairchild aerial photo-survey of Dallas County, Texas – detail fragment -- with an orange arrow pointing at the West Dallas Methodist Church building⁹

(Note the shadow of the square tower at its northeast corner, similar to what is seen in Eisenlohr's drawing.

By then the spire mentioned in the 1922 Sanborn map might have been swept away by wind.)

(End)

FOOTNOTES:

1. 1922 edition of the *Sanborn Insurance* maps for Dallas, Texas; Volume 5, Sheet 582.
2. Dallas County Deed Records; Volume 95, pages 66-67; 1888-June-15th; Sam'l Armstrong et al. to P.S. Browder et al.
3. 1888-June-24th; *Dallas Morning News*, page 13: *The News in the Suburbs*.
4. 1928-February-6th; *Dallas Morning News*; page 9; *Childlike Faith and Suppliance Given as Pattern ...*
5. Same as Note 4.
6. Same as Note 4.
7. 1948-September-25th; *Dallas Morning News*; page 13; *Western Heights Linked to Stevens Park Church*.
8. Photograph of Eisenlohr drawing provided by friend Scott Chase
9. SMU Libraries website; *Dallas aerial photographs, 1930 Fairchild Survey*; image 41.

(End of Footnotes)