

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in the National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Utah State Penitentiary Chapel by the Wayside

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: Off Bitterbrush Lane

City or town: Draper State: Utah County: Salt Lake County

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national X statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

/Deputy SHPO	
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Utah Division of State History/Office of Historic Preservation</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

Utah State Penitentiary Chapel by the Wayside
Name of Property

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In my opinion, the property __meets __does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title : State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

__entered in the National Register

X determined eligible for the National Register

__determined not eligible for the National Register

__removed from the National Register

__other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☐

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☒

Public – Federal

☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☒

District

☐

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Object

☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious Facility/Church

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

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Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: CONCRETE, Walls: STONE/Sandstone, CONCRETE, Roof: OTHER

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Utah State Penitentiary Chapel by the Wayside (hereafter, Chapel) is in Draper City on 710 acres of now-vacant land where Salt Lake and Utah Counties meet at the “Point of the Mountain.” The Chapel is the only building that remains from the former Utah State Penitentiary complex.¹ Completed in 1961, the Chapel is a simple building exhibiting Modernist style. The chapel has a steeply pitched gable roof and walls constructed of sandstone paver veneer, concrete block, and concrete pebbledash panels. The central sanctuary is flanked by two classroom wings, extending out of the building’s north and south elevations, that are original to the structure. (Photos 1-7). The Chapel exhibits four of the seven aspects of integrity. The building retains its original location, design, and nearly all its materials and workmanship. However, the building’s setting, feeling, and association were compromised by the demolition of the Utah State Penitentiary complex in 2022. At the present time, the Chapel is surrounded by acres of cleared land. In the foreseeable future, the former prison grounds will be redeveloped into a dense urban neighborhood. Despite the many changes that will most likely occur to the Chapel’s physical context, the building’s intact period features and its significance as a singular remnant of the once-vast Utah State Penitentiary complex qualify it for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

¹ A National Register nomination written by Utah historian Korral Broschinsky for the Utah State Penitentiary complex prior to its demolition states the Utah State Penitentiary property was:

...not far from the Traverse Mountains, an east-west mountain range that separates Salt Lake County from Utah County. An opening between the mountains at the southern end of the Salt Lake Valley is the main transportation corridor between the two counties and the route of today’s Interstate-15. This location is colloquially known as the Point of the Mountain. The prison property is located between two historic communities, Draper to the east and Bluffdale to the west. The historic center of Draper is located at the base of the mountains in the southeast corner of the valley. Bluffdale was settled along the bluffs above the Jordan River, which runs north to south just west of the prison boundaries. In the past 40 years, both communities have experienced rapid residential development, and the prison property was included in annexations to Draper City on the west side of Interstate-15. The prison has been unofficially known as the Draper Prison, the Bluffdale Prison, and the Point of the Mountain Prison.

For more information, see Korral Broschinsky, *Utah State Penitentiary National Register Nomination (Draft)*, Prepared for the Draper Historic Preservation Commission, Utah SHPO, July 14, 2020.

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Narrative Description

Exterior

The Chapel is an understated example of Modernist architecture. The Chapel's distinguishing features and materials include concrete blocks, sandstone pavers (on the primary façade), pebbledash panels, and molded concrete window bars covering some windows, and bent steel bars covering others. These materials are primarily functional but accentuate the building's clean lines and spare detailing. The Chapel building holds the sanctuary, which is a rectangular space with a steeply pitched gable roof covered in asphalt shingles, and two broad, flat-roofed classroom wings that extend out from the Chapel's northeast and southwest elevations. These wings are built of thick concrete pebbledash panels and feature TPO membrane roof cladding. Air conditioning and other visible mechanical units feature on the wings' flat roofs. The building's role as a prison chapel limited the number of external openings (doors and windows) to a minimum (Photos 1-5).

Southeast Elevation

The building's main gable-end (street-facing) façade / southeast elevation is covered with sandstone pavers, reportedly taken from Sandy's Little Willow Canyon, arranged in an irregular or "crazy" pattern. These pavers were added as part of a building beautification effort undertaken at some point during the 1970s under the direction of Utah Governor Calvin Rampton (Utah governor from 1965-1977).² Beyond these sandstone pavers, the façade features a single metal door on the façade's left-hand side, exposed rafter tails along the gable roofline, and a rectangular six-foot-wide central shaft that projects out two feet from the wall and rises approximately five feet beyond the pitched roof line. This shaft terminates in a belfry that holds a historic bronze bell which, per accounts, came from the first Utah State Penitentiary located on the outskirts of Salt Lake City.³ The Chapel's classroom wings, which extend out slightly more than 15 feet north and south from the facade, are featureless aside from the pebbledash concrete panels of which these wings are constructed (Photos 1, 2, 6, 7).

² Mark P. Helms, *The History of the Wasatch Chapel at the Utah State Penitentiary*, Draper: Wasatch Prison Chaplain's Office, 2007, pg. 17.

One 1958 article entitled "Groundwork Starts on Prison Chapel" suggested that the chapel's east elevation was to be covered with sandstone taken from the old Sugar House Prison. The "crazy" pattern in which the sandstone was adhered to the building, however, indicates it was applied to the building in the 1970s as opposed to the late 1950s / early 1960s. See "Groundwork Starts on Prison Chapel," *Deseret News*, January 21, 1958, pg. 36.

³ The bell on the Chapel was reportedly used at the Sugar House prison to call inmates back from prison farm fields and to acknowledge executions. See Mark P. Helms, *The History of the Wasatch Chapel at the Utah State Penitentiary*, Draper: Wasatch Prison Chaplain's Office, 2007, pg. 17.

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Northeast Elevation

The northeast elevation's classroom wing extends out from the building approximately 15 feet. This wing's roof is flat, save for various pieces of mechanical equipment placed on top of it. The projecting wing walls are constructed of concrete pebbledash panels and are pierced by nine rectangular steel frame windows at regular intervals. These windows are, in turn, overset with thick concrete bars that secure the building and limit the light that enters its interior (Photo 5). All these windows are currently boarded. The top four feet, seven inches of the Chapel's concrete block wall is visible above the projecting wings. Six rectangular clerestory steel frame windows clustered in pairs pierce this wall just beneath the Chapel's roofline. Currently, each of these windows is boarded (Photo 5).

Northwest Elevation

The building's rear gable-end or northwest elevation includes the unadorned and windowless concrete block wall of the Chapel and the unadorned and windowless pebbledash wall of the northeast and southwest classroom wings that protrude out from either side of this elevation. Exposed rafter tails appear along the pitched roofline. The building's primary entryway, formerly accessed via a short passageway that linked the Chapel to the larger prison complex, was demolished in 2022 with the rest of the prison. The hole left in the building from the passageway's demolition is now covered with plywood boards. Note that this demolished passageway included the Chapel's restrooms. Remnants of these restrooms' tile floors remain adhered to the concrete pad that still runs along this elevation's foundation line. (Photo 4).

Southwest Elevation

This elevation is identical to the northeast elevation. The top four feet seven inches of the Chapel's concrete block wall is visible on the building's southwest elevation above the wing. Six rectangular, now boarded, clerestory windows clustered in pairs pierce this wall beneath the roofline. These windows are currently boarded. The building's north classroom wing extends out from the building approximately 15 feet. This wing's roof is flat, save for various pieces of mechanical equipment placed on top of it. The walls of this wing are constructed of concrete pebbledash panels and are interspersed with nine, now boarded, rectangular steel frame windows placed at regular intervals. These rectangular windows are inset with thick concrete bars that secure the building and greatly limit the light that enters the classrooms (Photo 2).

Interior

Like its exterior, the Chapel's interior is simple, reflecting its use as a prison sanctuary. The sanctuary's interior is primarily divided into four spaces: the lobby, the sanctuary or chapel proper, and a choir loft which was transformed, likely in the late 1960s or early 1970s, into the prison library, and classrooms found in the wings that line the Chapel on its northern and southern sides.

Lobby

When the Utah State Penitentiary was still standing, one entered the Chapel via a short corridor that connected the prison to the west end of the building. This corridor was demolished in 2022

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with the rest of the prison complex. When it still existed, the corridor held two yellow-tiled restrooms. The corridor opened into the building lobby which was located on the Chapel's western end.⁴ In turn, the lobby opened into the Chapel and into a small hall space leading to classrooms. On its left-hand side, the lobby provided access to two storage areas and a narrow staircase leading to the choir loft / library. The lobby is carpeted and features painted concrete block walls (Photo 14). Originally, a mural above the Chapel's entrance door included the image of a quaint chapel with a path running along its side. The building's name, "Chapel by the Wayside" was hand-lettered in Old English script forming an arch above the mural. At some point, this mural was painted over.

Sanctuary

The sanctuary occupies most of the Chapel's interior space. The sanctuary's interior is distinguished by an ogee-arched ceiling lined with varnished wood tongue-and-groove planks. These ceiling planks are supported by a set of beams that run horizontally down the length of the building at regular intervals and a set of larger laminated wood (glulam) beams that extend vertically from the ceiling's crown at regular intervals. The larger beams curve to hug the Chapel's white concrete block walls and then reach down to the floor.⁵ Six cylindrical white glass pendant chandeliers arranged regularly in two rows drop down from the wood ceiling's midpoint. A row of four ceiling fan / light fixtures extends from the ceiling's peak.

The sanctuary's northeastern and southwestern white painted concrete block walls feature a row of steel framed clearstory windows. These windows are currently boarded on the exterior and covered on the interior by metal bars arranged in an angled teardrop pattern. Beneath these windows are a series of metal doors which provide access to the various classrooms (three on the right-hand side of the chapel, four on the left-hand side of the Chapel) that line the Chapel's walls. Aside from these doors and windows, the Chapel's walls are painted white and left undecorated save for a centrally positioned gold-framed print of Jesus by Warner Sallman entitled "In His Presence" at the front or southeast end of the sanctuary, and a wood hymn board that hangs to the Sallman print's left side.⁶

⁴ Ostensibly, the lobby / west elevation of the Chapel will continue to be the front of the building and serve as the building's primary entryway in the future, even though the chapel's east elevation, with its sandstone facade, is more visually prominent than its unadorned west elevation.

⁵ A special dance held on Thursday October 2, 1958, in Murray City's Utah National Guard Armory by the Fraternal Order of the Eagles' statewide aeries attempted to raise the \$7,000 needed to purchase the laminated beams that held up the chapel roof. See "Eagles to Boost Prison Funds," *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 1, 1958, pg. 27. Other articles suggest the Catholic Church raised the needed funds to buy the beams. See "Catholics Aid Utah Prison Chapel Fund," *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 20, 1959, pg. 50.

⁶ The print shows Jesus lit from behind with arms uplifted and outstretched. Warner Sallman was an advertisement turned religious artist who aimed, with his portraits of Jesus, to attract a young demographic to (Protestant) Christianity. See David Morgan, ed., *Icons of American Protestantism*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996, pgs. 78-80.

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The sanctuary's floor is covered with industrial carpeting but originally featured green and white checkered linoleum tile. An aisle extends across the center of the room and by now-untidy rows (nine benches on the left, 10 on the right) of varnished oak wood benches with hymnal holders affixed to their backs. All the benches face a dais fronted by a central rostrum / podium located near the Chapel's east end. The podium comprises a stand ornamented on its front with vertical stripes of rounded wood pieces arranged in a Modernist design. Enclosed knotty pine plank rails run out from this podium, extend towards the Chapel's sides, then bend at their ends to designate the raised dais / choir box at the Chapel's front (Photos 8-11, 17). This podium and rails, which date to the 1970s, replaced the portable podium and open rails that originally distinguished the Chapel's front.⁷

Classrooms/Offices/Confessionals

The Chapel featured classrooms of various sizes, four of which are located on the building's right side and three of which are located on its left side. These rooms were designated for use by various chaplains and were identified with "LDS," "Episcopal," and "Catholic" titles on the doors. The chaplains could use these rooms for instruction and counseling. The classroom at the southeast front of the building on the left side features walls partitioning off two smaller office spaces, one of which was plumbed for a sink. The classroom at the front or southeast side of the building on the right side features a mural depicting a buffalo skull, eagle, drum, and various other Native American symbols centered around a yellow, black, red, and white medicine wheel. All the other classrooms are nondescript and only feature painted concrete walls, carpeted floors (originally, the floors were covered with linoleum tiles), and windows secured by thick concrete bars. Each of the classrooms on the right-hand side connect with the Chapel through metal framed doorways and to each other through doorless openings. On the left-hand side, the classrooms connect with the Chapel through metal framed doorways but do not open into each other (Photos 12, 13, 18).

Beneath the choir loft on the Chapel's northwestern wall are two small spaces designed to serve as Catholic confessionals. A third space on this same wall served as a closet.

Choir Loft / Library

The choir loft fills the upper level of the sanctuary's northwest end and is accessed via a narrow stairway that rises from the Chapel's lobby. This loft once opened to the larger sanctuary, but at some point, likely in the late 1960s or early 1970s, it was filled in to create a library for prisoners to use. Two walls divide the choir loft into three different book stacks / reading rooms that are lined with wood and wall-mounted metal shelves. Four wood-trimmed aluminum sliding

This print of Jesus was hung in the prison chapel in 1961 by Mormon chaplain Crozier K. Fitzgerald and by Catholic chaplain the Reverend Mark O. Benvegno. See "Prison Chapel Opens Sunday," *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 1, 1961, pg. 10.

⁷ There is some indication that a marble altarpiece for Catholic services once existed at the front of the church. This altarpiece was likely removed at some point in the 1970s or 1980s. See Mark P. Helms, *The History of the Wasatch Chapel at the Utah State Penitentiary*, Draper: Wasatch Prison Chaplain's Office, 2007, pg. 21.

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windows provide a view from this library into the sanctuary. This space does not feature windows that look out towards the building's exterior (Photos 9, 15, 16).

Summary of Integrity

The Chapel retains its original location as the building has never been moved. The Chapel's original design is intact as the building has never been expanded or reduced. The Chapel has experienced very minor alterations to its materials and workmanship. On the exterior, these alterations include the addition of sandstone pavers and a bell tower to the Chapel's concrete block facade. On the interior, these alterations include the enclosing of the Chapel choir loft and its transformation into a library (a change which is easily reversible).

The Chapel's setting has greatly changed due to the demolition of the Utah State Penitentiary complex, of which the Chapel was an integrated part. This demolition has also altered the Chapel's feeling and association. The Chapel is no longer located behind defensive fencing and will no longer be exclusively used by Utah's imprisoned population but will face a public park and be integrated into a large community. When the Chapel is fully transformed into a public building, it will be highlighted as a historic remnant of the Utah State Penitentiary. Through interpretation efforts, the Chapel's original feeling and association will be recalled for public education and benefit.

Setting

The Chapel was formerly part of the Utah State Penitentiary, the core of which was constructed between 1941 and 1954 with additions made to the complex up through the 1990s.⁸ The Chapel itself was built between 1957 and 1961 on the south side of the prison complex. Immediately to the north of the Chapel stood an exercise yard and a three-story concrete cell block wing known as "Dog Block B." Beyond the exercise yard and the Dog Block, the prison's administrative building and additional cell blocks stretched north and south of the Chapel. Throughout its history, the Chapel remained visible from the adjacent Interstate 15 freeway corridor (east

⁸ Per Korral Broschinsky, the core of the historic Draper Utah State Penitentiary prison blocks were: "...arranged perpendicular from a central corridor. There were four inmate housing blocks (built 1941-1951), an administration/receiving block (1951), a kitchen (1951), a gymnasium (1951), an industrial building (1951-1954), a non-denominational chapel (1959-1960), and a manufacturing plant (1967). All the historic sections were approximately two to three stories tall. The complex featured two non-historic additions on either side of the administration block (1975). A separate octagonal guard tower (1951) and a one-story visiting room addition to the tower were approximately one-hundred feet from the main entrance (1980)."

See Korral Broschinsky, *Utah State Penitentiary National Register Nomination (Draft)*, Prepared for the Draper Historic Preservation Commission, Utah SHPO, July 14, 2020.

The Chapel's general dedication service was held on September 10, 1961. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints representative Hugh B. Brown dedicated the Chapel on September 17, 1961, various Protestant Churches dedicated the Chapel on September 24, 1961, and Utah's Catholic bishop dedicated it on October 8, 1961. See "All Faith Rites at Prison Open 'Wayside Chapel,'" *The Salt Lake Tribune*, September 11, 1961, pg. 20 and "Prison Chapel Opens Friday," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, July 1, 1961, pg. 10.

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looking west) and was a notable element of the Utah Penitentiary Complex. The building's pitched roof, red sandstone facade, and bell tower (features the building acquired in the 1970s), distinguished it from the flat-roofed, grey concrete prison buildings that surrounded it (Photo 1 & Figures 1 & 2).

The Chapel featured a yard which extended several feet to the building's east. The yard featured a small garden of roses and other bushes, mature pine and elm trees, and a patch of lawn (Figure 3). In 1989, a Native American sweat lodge was constructed in this area after a multi-year lawsuit brought by prisoners determined this type of facility must be permitted.⁹ The sweat lodge was dismantled and scraped along with the rest of the garden after the prison complex was decommissioned in 2022.¹⁰

As previously noted, the Chapel's context was radically transformed when the surrounding prison complex was demolished in 2023. After years of advocacy by local preservation organizations, Utah state officials decided to preserve the Chapel "as a nod to prison history and the legacy of faith in founding the state of Utah."¹¹ The Chapel now stands in hundreds of acres of open fields of cheatgrass, thistles, and sunflowers. Per current plans, the Chapel will feature in a development called "The Point" which will be constructed on the site of the former state penitentiary. The Chapel will face a public park called the "Chapel Green," which will be one of many parks scattered throughout The Point development.

⁹ In 1985 a group of six inmates in a Utah correctional facility sued the State of Utah to provide a sweat lodge for their use. They claimed that "they couldn't practice an integral part of their religion--the sweat lodge ceremony--without such a structure." The state opposed the construction of a sweat lodge based on security concerns. In accordance with the guidance of the court, Utah authorities spoke with prison officials in the state of Nebraska, where a sweat lodge had been sponsored and constructed on prison grounds. The Nebraska authorities pointed out the positive aspects of the lodge and noted that the security concerns they had with the construction of the lodge were resolved. In 1989 court orders finally determined the state of Utah must permit construction of a sweat lodge on prison grounds and bear the cost for the facility as they would for any other religious structure, such as a chapel, built on prison property. See Elizabeth S. Grobsmith, *Indians in Prison: Incarcerated Native Americans in Nebraska*, University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln, 1994. pp. 162. Also see Jacob Stroub and Matt Hooley, "Sweat Lodges in American Prisons," *Prison Legal News*, September 19, 2005 (<https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2010/jan/15/sweat-lodges-in-american-prisons-2005>) / Accessed June 1, 2024.

¹⁰ The most visible portion of the sweat lodge was a clay and soil-covered dome roof, but much of the sweat lodge itself extended into the ground. The interior of the lodge was accessed through an opening framed with wood. No records exist that specifically describe the lodge's interior but one assumes this interior centered around a pile of heated rocks or another device designed to produce steam.

¹¹ Tony Semerand, "Here's who got the first deal at The Point in Draper. For \$2.3 billion," *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 28, 2023, (<https://www.sltrib.com/news/2023/11/28/nothing-up-utah-oks-first-phase>) / Accessed June 1, 2024.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. ☒ Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. ☐ Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. ☐ Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. ☐ Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. ☒ Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purpose
- B. ☐ Removed from its original location.
- C. ☐ A birthplace or grave
- D. ☐ A cemetery
- E. ☐ A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. ☐ A commemorative property
- G. ☐ Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION
POLITICS / GOVERNMENT

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Period of Significance

1961-1975

Significant Dates

June-July 1961 (Utah Prison Chapel Dedications by Numerous Religious Officials)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Lowell G. Davidson (Designer)

Rev. Mark O. Benvegna, Ray D. Smith (Designers)

Bruce Folsom McCown and McConn E. Hunt / George Brown (Architects)

Unnamed Prison Inmates (Builders)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Chapel by the Wayside at the former Utah State Penitentiary site located at the Point of the Mountain in Draper, Salt Lake County, was built between 1958 and 1961 and used as a prison sanctuary until 2022. The Chapel has statewide significance under Criterion A in the areas of Religion and Politics/Government. It also qualifies under Criteria Consideration A, as a religious building that has significance in areas besides religion. In the area of Religion, the Chapel is significant as its construction involved the coordinated efforts of Utah-based representatives and leaders of the Catholic, Protestant, and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS or Mormon) faiths. Following its construction, the Chapel hosted 60 years' worth of religious as well as cultural programming that enriched, if not transformed the lives of many Utah State Penitentiary prisoners. The Chapel is significant in the area of Politics/Government as its construction was a response to the infamous Utah Penitentiary Riots of 1957 and was championed by key Utah political leaders, most notably George Dewey Clyde who served as Utah's governor at that time. The period of significance for the Chapel spans 1961-1975. This time span includes the building's construction and its initial years of use through to 1975 when interior alterations made to the Chapel's choir loft/library and exterior stone facade were finished.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A Significance: Religion and Politics / Government

The Utah State Penitentiary Chapel by the Wayside is significant under Criterion A in the area of Religion as a project that united prisoners, politicians, faith leaders, and citizens in an effort to provide inmates with a place “where the turmoil and strife of prison life may be set aside, momentarily at least, and thoughts be directed towards the spiritual verities.”¹² From 1961 until 2022 when the Utah State Penitentiary was moved to a new location, the chapel offered prisoners a venue for religious services, cultural activities, service projects, research projects, and a number of other activities. In the words of William Lawson, one of the prisoners held at the Utah State Penitentiary, the Chapel was a sanctuary where he encountered prison volunteers, organized activities, and events that “absolutely changed my life, and most probably saved it.”¹³ Because it is a building that was used for religious purposes, it also qualifies under Criteria Consideration A. However, the Chapel is also significant in an area other than just Religion.

The Utah State Penitentiary Chapel also has statewide significance under Criterion A in the area of Politics / Government. Prisoners at the Utah State Penitentiary rioted in the winter of 1957. Featured on the list of 43 demands they submitted to Utah Governor George Dewey Clyde and other officials during the riot was the request for a proper prison chapel (request no. 20). After the riot was quelled, prisoners worked together with penitentiary officials and Utah’s Governor George Dewey Clyde to construct the building. Governor Clyde personally championed the project, declaring June 22 – July 22, 1958, the official “Prison Chapel Month” in Utah. During this month, Governor Clyde joined the Utah Board of Corrections and other official bodies in asking that “all churches and denominations donate toward construction of a prison chapel.”¹⁴ Donations of money and materials given over three years made the prison Chapel’s construction possible. This fundraising model was later used to construct a subsequent chapel at the Utah State Penitentiary (now demolished) and a chapel at the Utah State Hospital in Provo.

From its initial proposal during the 1957 penitentiary riots, through its construction championed by inmates, Utah’s political leaders, and Utah institutions, businesses, and citizens, and through its subsequent decades of use, tightly joined religious and political interests run through the Chapel’s history. Consequently, the Chapel’s history will not be broken into separate religious and political sections but will be presented in one unified narrative.

¹² “To Free Prison’s Souls,” *Deseret News*, December 9, 1957, pg. 24.

¹³

Tony Semerad, “This Utah chapel saved souls — now souls are working to save this chapel,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 13, 2022, pg. 1.

¹⁴ “Prison to Open Drive for Chapel,” *Deseret News*, June 16, 1958, pg. 34.

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Religion and Politics / Government: Draper Utah State Penitentiary / Chapel History

The Utah State Penitentiary in Draper was the second state penitentiary and the first “modern” state penitentiary constructed in Utah. The core of this penitentiary complex was designed by Raymond J. Ashton (1887-1973), a principal in the Salt Lake Firm of Ashton-Evans. Before designing the Utah Penitentiary, Ashton researched numerous prisons around the country and interviewed experts in prison design. The core of the complex was laid out in the late 1930s and early 1940s but redesigned to some extent in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Ultimately, Ashton’s prison comprised five cell blocks, an administration building, and a utility building, all of which ran perpendicular to a highly secured main corridor (Figure 1).¹⁵

The Draper Utah State Penitentiary’s development began in 1941 but was ultimately delayed by World War II and by a protracted “pay-as-you-go” prison funding approach adopted by the Utah State Legislature. Money for the Draper complex ebbed and flowed depending on political sentiments and pressures that were influenced by prison staff morale, inmate work requirements, rehabilitation programs, tax revenues, prison riots, and various other situations and circumstances. When prisoners were transferred to the Draper Utah State Penitentiary on March 12, 1951, the Draper Point of the Mountain prison complex lacked several key elements. Per the prison’s warden, Alvin O. Stevenson, “finishing details [at the new penitentiary] will have to be completed after the inmates are received in their new home.”¹⁶

News coverage that followed a massive Point of the Mountain prison riot that occurred on May 22, and a smaller riot that occurred on August 14, 1951 made the general public aware that some of the Draper prison’s “finishing details,” to which Warden Stevenson had referred, included completed prison cells, adequate security, reliable plumbing, working toilets, dependable electricity, a fully developed prison farm, and an industrial building where prisoners could keep busy manufacturing license plates and other items. Most importantly, the public was informed by local papers that Utah’s new prison lacked an adequate maintenance / sustaining budget. Shortly after the May riot occurred, several key prison administrators quit their positions at the prison in protest of the institution’s chronic lack of funding.¹⁷

Local newspapers continued to highlight the prison and inmate life at the Point of the Mountain penitentiary in the years following the 1951 riot, documenting the significant changes and even

¹⁵ See “Governor Blood Picks Allen Site for New State Prison,” *The Salt Lake Tribune*, June 30, 1939, pg. 30. Also see “Governor Names Committee to Study Prison Methods,” *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, July 28, 1949, pg. 4 and “Funds Asked for Prison: Legislative Group Seeks Better Security at ‘The Point,’” *Deseret News*, August 18, 1951, pg. 5.

¹⁶ “Utah Prison Move Due in September,” *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, January 12, 1950, pg. 2.

¹⁷ See “Funds Asked for Prison: Legislative Group Seeks Better Security at ‘The Point,’” *The Deseret News*, August 18, 1951, pg. 5. Also see “Budget Officer Quits in Protest to Utah Prison Policy,” *Salt Lake Telegram*, August 7, 1951, pg. 13.

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improvements made at the penitentiary.¹⁸ A handful of these articles focused on prison's security, food quality, and other issues of this sort. A significant portion of 1950s prison-related press, however, highlighted concerns over the static nature of inmate life. Newspapers regularly printed headlines such as "Idle Hands Are . . ." and "Work Keeps Prisoners from Going Mad, Saves Taxpayers Money."¹⁹ An article published in the Salt Lake Tribune on January 18, 1953, entitled "Utah's Idle Prisoners" declared inmates to be "The forgotten man" and further asserted that:

...perhaps the Utah State Penitentiary inmate has reason to fear as he is the man without a hope as he passes his waking hours "the hard way" with nothing more to do than to eat three meals a day, get a little exercise, and to ponder his gloomy fate when the big front gate opens again.²⁰

The prisoners' frustrations with their stagnant lives and other resentments boiled over in a prison-wide riot on February 7, 1957. The riot began during a basketball game played in the prison gymnasium between inmates and members of the Mormon Granger Second Ward Young Men Mutual Improvement Program (YMMIA). During the game's third quarter, prisoners took the Granger players hostage and held them for nearly a day. During this hostage situation, many prison inmates drank, set fires, attacked guards, and otherwise ran amok, but a handful of others negotiated with Utah's Governor George Dewey Clyde and other state officials for improved prison conditions.²¹ These negotiations culminated in a list presented to state officials of 43 grievances which included requests for better food, a more sympathetic parole board, a "good behavior" award system, and segregation areas for difficult prisoners. Grievance number 20 on the prisoners' list was an appeal for a "real prison chapel."²²

¹⁸ The industrial building was completed in 1954. This was a steel frame warehouse-type building connected to the north elevation of the prison gymnasium. Although not part of the original plan, the industrial building offered a place to relocate the license plate machinery formerly utilized in the Sugar House Prison. In addition to the industrial building, several security upgrades took place at the prison in the early to mid-1950s, including the addition of gates and grilles in the corridor between cell blocks and improvements to the central gun turret. For more information see Korral Broschinsky, *Utah State Penitentiary National Register Nomination (Draft)*, Prepared for the Draper Historic Preservation Commission, Utah SHPO, July 14, 2020.

¹⁹ Mess Halls Are 'Hot Spots;' Utah Takes Precautions of Gun Turrets, Good Food," *The Daily Herald*, Dec 22, 1954, 7. Also see "Idle Hands Are . . ." *Deseret News*, January 3, 1956, pg. 10. Also see "Work Keeps Prisoners from Going Mad, Saves Taxpayers Money," *The Daily Herald*, December 21, 1954, pg. 6.

²⁰ "Rampaging Convicts Seize Utah Prison, Lock Up Hostages in Defiance of Guns," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, January 18, 1953, pg. 54.

²¹ See "Rampaging Convicts Seize Prison: Lock Up Hostages in Defiance of Guns," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, February 07, 1957, pg. 1 and "Prison Quiet Returns in Wake of Prison Riots," *Deseret News*, February 8, 1957, 1.

²² Specific complaints included, No.1: The creation of an Inmate Council; No. 4: Repeal the Indeterminate Sentence Law; No. 7: An inmate newspaper; No. 25: Reinstate the power of pardon with Gov. Clyde; No. 40: Mandate periodic inspections from health inspectors and physicians; No. 43: "Provide ample funds for education so that rehabilitation can be more than a word used to cover a multitude of odors." See Mark P. Helms, *The History of the Wasatch Chapel at the Utah State Penitentiary*, Draper: Wasatch Prison Chaplain's Office, 2007, pg. 8.

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A prison chapel did not feature high in prison officials' priorities following the riots.²³ Instead, prison security and defense rose to prominence. The prisoners themselves, however, pursued chapel construction with gusto. The prisoners certainly missed the chapel they had enjoyed at the earlier Sugar House Utah State Penitentiary and, in comparison with some of the other improvement suggestions made during the 1957 riot, probably deemed a prison chapel to be an attainable aim in religious-minded Utah. Officials came to accept the idea of a prison chapel through feedback received from a newly established 14-person elected prison inmate council established after the February riot "to air all grievances of the inmate population."²⁴ Public support for the building grew by leaps over the course of 1957. Letters to the editor published frequently in local papers, asserted that a prison chapel was a "'must' in any penal institution," and that if the "new chapel helps only a few felons to leave the prison each year as more honest, respectable and loyal American citizens, it will be an investment par excellence."²⁵

On May 19, 1957, a *Salt Lake Tribune* article informed the public that Point of the Mountain inmates would "Construct a Prison House of Worship" and that chapel plans had "been approved by Utah State Penitentiary officials." The article highlighted prison warden Walter D. Achuff's proviso that the chapel "will be strictly a prisoner project...the inmates will build it themselves at little, if any, cost to the state" and featured a rendering of the proposed chapel drawn by Lowell Davidson, an inmate imprisoned for check fraud.²⁶ Davidson's rendering of the prison chapel more or less expressed the form of the chapel that later arose at the prison, but it showed the chapel with several features that were ultimately never included in the building including a round (rose) window on the primary facade, a large cross mounted to the roof, stained-glass windows along the chapel's side, and a flat-roofed wing extending off of the chapel's back. Davidson's architectural rendering was later refined and professionalized by the Salt Lake City-based architectural firm of Folsom and Hunt who donated all the time they spent on the project (Figure 5).²⁷

²³ "Prison Warden Calls for Better, More Facilities," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, February 11, 1957, 19.

²⁴ "Inmate Advisory Council Elected at Utah Prison," *Deseret News*, Apr 17, 1957, pg. 13. Also see "Point Inmates to Construct Prison House of Worship," *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 19, 1957, pg. 50.

²⁵ "To Free Prison Souls," *Deseret News*, December 9, 1957, pg. 24.

²⁶ See "Point Inmates to Construct Prison House of Worship," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, May 19, 1957, pg. 50.

"Lowell G. Davidson, Pleasant Grove, who pleaded guilty to charges of issuing a fraudulent check for \$35, was sentenced to up to five years in the Utah State Penitentiary." See "Check Charge Brings Sentence," *The Daily Herald*, January 4, 1957, pg. 3.

²⁷ "Groundwork Starts on Utah Prison Chapel," *Deseret News*, January 21, 1958, pg. 36. Folsom and Hunt are best known today for their design of Judge Memorial High School and St. Ambrose Catholic Church, both located in Salt Lake City.

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With both inmates and politicians backing the project, the prison chapel fundraising effort officially launched. In 1957, the inmates made personal donations from their meager earnings and inmate relatives made contributions as well. Donations of concrete block, sand, and other materials came in from local businesses.²⁸ Groundbreaking for the Chapel occurred on August 15, 1957, during a formal ceremony attended by key figures including Governor George D. Clyde, Warden Walter D. Achuff, and members of both the Utah State Board of Corrections and the State Board of Pardons.²⁹ Over the course of the following year, a foundation was poured and several courses of concrete blocks were laid with all construction work undertaken by inmates. In the early summer of 1958, Governor Clyde visited the Chapel's construction site and gave the project a "shot in the arm" by proclaiming June 22nd - July 22nd, 1958 "Prison Chapel Month" in Utah. During this month, Governor Clyde asked all Utahns to give generously to the Chapel's construction (Figure 6-9).³⁰

In response to the governor's call for donations, individuals, civic, and religious organizations across Utah generously supported the Chapel's building effort, giving both money and materials over the course of 1958 and 1959. One of the first Chapel donations came in from "Mr. and Mrs. A.S. Arnold," a North Carolina couple who read about the prison Chapel while through Utah and were impressed enough to give \$25 towards the project.³¹ Another early donation came in through the Utah State Aerie of the Fraternal Order of the Eagles.³² This initial donation was followed by several other municipal Eagle Aerie donations raised primarily by holding dances and other community activities.³³ Students of the Mormon Bountiful High School Seminary undertook a 1958 Christmas prison Chapel project via a fundraising organization called Kris Kringle's Korporals (Figure 10 & 11).³⁴

²⁸ "Contributions of materials have poured in from many local building firms and contractors—block from Buehner Block Co., sand and gravel from Utah Valley Sand and Gravel, steel from various sources—all of which will total the equivalent of \$5,000 cash." See "Groundwork Starts on Utah Prison Chapel," *Deseret News*, January 21, 1958, pg. 36.

²⁹ "Ground Rites Arranged for New Prison Chapel," *Deseret News*, August 13, 1957, pg. 20.

³⁰ "Clyde Delivers Shot in the Arm by Prison Chapel Aid Call," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, June 19, 1958, pg. 22.

³¹ "Challenge to Utahns," *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 25, 1957, pg. 16.

³² Art Nelson, "Prison Receives Chapel Donation," *Murray Eagle*, July 3, 1958, pg. 2, "Eagles Boost Chapel at State Prison," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, July 6, 1958, pg. 19.

³³ "Set Dance in Murray," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, August 4, 1958, pg. 31.

³⁴ The seminary's fundraising involved a Christmas tree decorated with "reflectors," each bearing the name of an individual seminary class. Once each class's fundraising goal was met, a light in front of the reflector was illuminated. See "Funds for Prison Chapel Raised by Bountiful Seminary," *Deseret News*, December 27, 1958, 28.

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In the subsequent years, a large \$2,734 donation for Chapel construction was given by the Catholic Church, a \$400 donation for Chapel construction came in from the Italian American Civic League and Ladies Auxiliary, an \$8,000 donation came in from the LDS Church, and Protestants donated upwards of \$4,000 following a designated Sunday christened “Prison Chapel Day”³⁵ (Figure 12). The Catholic Reverend Mark Benvegnu along with other members of an 11-person Prison Chapel Committee did much to promote and coordinate donations. The inmates themselves continued to raise funds for the Chapel project, holding rodeos during the summers and a series of performances called Fellon Follies in the winter months.³⁶ Advertisements promoting the Fellon Follies highlighted performances including:

The Pantomimers, the Rock’n Rollers, the Westernaires, the Music Makers, a variety of tumbling and specialty acts, several vaudeville skits, serious harmonizing by the Glee Club, the Barbershop Quartet and the Men’s Chorus. With this talent-studded cast, patrons are assured an evening of hilarious entertainment.³⁷

Except for instances where the prison Chapel’s construction required highly specialized skills, the Chapel was entirely built with prison labor. Period photographs show prisoners placing building mortar between concrete blocks, setting roof beams, and undertaking other construction-related activities. In keeping with tradition established at the Sugar House prison, inmates frequently used the Chapel and its surrounding construction site as an opportunity to escape the penitentiary. Inmates hid in building materials or even dug tunnels under the unfinished chapel’s foundations in efforts to flee the prison.³⁸ An article entitled “Prison Sees Chapel as Weak Link” noted that the easy-to-remove bars on Chapel windows and the lack of a

³⁵ “Catholics Aid Utah Prison Chapel Fund,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 20, 1959, pg. 50. Also see “Italian-American Groups Give Chapel Fund \$400,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 26, 1959, pg. 29 and “Donations Sought for Completion of Prison Chapel,” *Price Sun-Advocate*, September 15, 1960, pg. 19 and “Clergyman Plan Assist for Chapel Prison,” *Deseret News*, June 30, 1960, pg. 57.

³⁶ “Utah Prisoners to Stage Rodeo,” *Deseret News*, June 3, 1958, pg. 11. Also see “Prison Slates Rodeo for Aug. 8th and 9th as Chapel Benefit.” *Helper Journal*, July 31, 1958, pg. 1.

While Utah’s penitentiary inmates often hosted public plays in the Sugar House prison chapel (see, for example, “Boy Meets Girl, Prison Play Set” / *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 23, 1938, pg. 15), the tradition of the “Fellon Follies” variety show began at the Point of the Mountain Penitentiary during the first year the facility was open. See “Prison Inmates Prepare for Felon Follies of ‘51,” *Deseret News*, November 6, 1951, pg. 6. Often, the funds raised via the Felon Follies held prior to the chapel’s construction would be donated to the March of Dimes or other charitable causes. See “Groundwork Starts on Utah Prison Chapel,” *Deseret News*, January 21, 1958, pg. 36.

³⁷ “Fellon Follies Scheduled for April 3rd,” *Box Elder News*, March 26, 1958, pg. 8. Also see “Felons to Present Gigantic Revue,” *Lehi Free Press*, March 27, 1958, pg. 4.

³⁸ “Shakedown Reveals Prisoners’ Tunnel,” *The Salt Lake Tribune*, July 11, 1959, pg. 15. Also see “Utah Inmates Fail in Break: Beam of Car Lights Foils 2 Convicts’ Escape Try,” *Deseret News*, December 11, 1959, pg. 1.

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guard tower near the Chapel made prison security more complicated than when the Chapel had not fronted the prison complex.³⁹

By the summer of 1961 the prison Chapel was successfully constructed and furnished. The Chapel held its first services on July 2, 1961 but awaited formal dedication which, due to the ecumenical purposes for which it was built, occurred over a series of Sundays.⁴⁰ The first dedication held at the Utah State Penitentiary Chapel occurred on September 10, 1961 and was led by representatives of various faiths.⁴¹ Period newspaper articles noted that subsequent Chapel dedications were held over the subsequent weeks for Mormon, Protestant, and Catholic services.⁴² These dedication ceremonies symbolized the success of a collaborative effort between inmates, volunteers, and local religious organizations, and underscored the role of faith in rehabilitation. Indeed, the building's completion in 1961 marked the beginning of a new era of religious activity within the penitentiary (Figure 13).

Following the Chapel's dedication, local newspaper articles regularly documented the building's use by the inmates. The *Deseret News* particularly highlighted the various Mormon prison outreach efforts centered in the building.⁴³ The *Salt Lake Tribune* published articles on the chapel's worship schedule and information about the prison-community interaction the Chapel made possible. Catholic, Protestant, and Mormon meetings occurred weekly at the Chapel. The state chaplain for the Utah Jaycees (United States Junior Chamber) conducted services at the Chapel on the fourth Sunday of each month, an Episcopal pastor preached at the Chapel twice a

³⁹"Prison Sees Chapel as Weak Link," *Salt Lake Tribune*, August 21, 1959, pg. 55.

⁴⁰ "Dedication Set Sept. 10 for Prison Chapel," *Deseret News*, July 31, 1961, pg. 14.

⁴¹ "Pres. Brown Dedicates Utah Prison Chapel," *Deseret News*, September 16, 1961, pg. 26.

⁴² "All Faith Rites at Prison Open 'Wayside Chapel,'" *Salt Lake Tribune*, September 11, 1961, pg. 20. The Utah State Penitentiary Chapel by the Wayside's general dedication service was held on September 10, 1961 and featured speakers from various organizations and faiths:

Rabbi Sidney Strome, Temple B'Nai Israel; the Rev. Glenn E. Van Vactor, pastor, Holladay Community Church and president of Salt Lake City Ministerial Assn.; the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph P. Moreton, former Catholic prison chaplain, and Hugh B. Brown, counselor in the First Presidency, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Dr. Leslie D. Burbidge, chairman, Utah State Board of Corrections was master of ceremonies with Warden John W. Turner giving the welcoming address. Inmate speakers were Raynor Larson, who was superintendent of construction for the chapel, said to be one of the most beautiful prison chapels in the nation, and Bruce Van Wyck, who voiced the inmates' thanks. Warden Turner in his remarks pointed to the fact that the utility of the building's physical arrangement makes the chapel a 'very welcome addition to the physical plant of the institution from both the administrative standpoint and in the views of the men here at the Point.' The program's invocation was given by the Rev. Mark O. Benvegno, Catholic prison chaplain. Crozier K. Fitzgerald, LDS chaplain, gave the benediction. Musical numbers were furnished by the South Salt Lake LDS Stake Women's Choir, conducted by Ms. Reva Davenport. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints representative Hugh B. Brown dedicated the chapel during a separate ceremony on September 17, 1961, various Protestant Churches dedicated the chapel on September 24, 1961, and Utah's Catholic bishop dedicated it on October 8, 1961.

⁴³ "The Church Behind Bars," *Deseret News*, November 7, 1964, pg. 34.

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month, and an ecumenical chaplain frequently visited with prisoners. Families of inmates were able to attend services at the prison Chapel on Easter, Mother's Day, and Christmas. On a regular basis, special speakers were called to address, and local musicians were asked to perform for inmates.⁴⁴

Additional History: Draper Utah State Penitentiary / Chapel Leadership

Prison officials and local religious leaders were key to assisting inmates in constructing the Utah State Penitentiary Chapel by the Wayside, keeping the project in the public eye, securing donations for the building, and then activating the building after it was completed. Key leaders who championed the Chapel by the Wayside included Reverend Msgr. Mark O. Benvegnu, Ray Smith, Crozier Fitzgerald, and George Brown.

Born in Bingham Canyon in 1913, Father Mark O. Benvegnu began his service as a chaplain at the Utah State Penitentiary in 1958 and continued through 1962. Father Benvegnu also served as Pastor of St. Francis Xavier in Kearns from 1955 until 1962, and St. Vincent de Paul in Salt Lake City from 1962 until 1986. Father Benvegnu conducted groundbreaking services for the prison chapel in 1957 and continued to promote the project through to its completion. Benvegnu passed away on December 12, 1995.

Ray Smith was born in Murray, Utah and married Ethel Naylor in June 1923. Chaplain Smith worked as a postal employee but volunteered to be a chaplain at the Utah State Penitentiary in July 1955. Chaplain Smith was co-chairman of the building committee that launched building the Chapel by the Wayside. Chaplain Smith retired from his prison service in February 1959 and passed away ten months later. Ray and Ethel's house located at 1697 E. Vine Street in Murray is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NR #100004479).

Crozier Fitzgerald was born in Murray, Utah in 1932, and married Barbara Ann Boyce in 1957. His first job at the prison was that of a guard. Fitzgerald was asked to serve as Utah State Penitentiary chaplain in 1960. Chaplain Fitzgerald served at the prison until 1965 when he accepted a commission as a chaplain with the U. S. Air Force. Chaplin Fitzgerald passed away on May 23, 1989.

George Brown, born in 1924 in Durham England, joined the Utah State Penitentiary staff in the mid-1950s. Brown's job involved heading the penitentiary's departments of education, industrial maintenance, technical trade, and organizing the prisoner rodeo, Felon Follies, and Toastmaster Club. Brown also served as the chair of the Utah State Penitentiary's chapel construction committee, working with figures inside the prison and in the broader community to see the Chapel finished. Brown passed away on June 7, 2013.

⁴⁴ "'64 Utah Mother to Address Felons," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, May 7, 1966, pg. 18.

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Additional History: Sugar House Utah State Penitentiary / Chapel History

The significance of the Utah State Penitentiary at the Point of the Mountain and its associated Chapel is, to some extent, rooted in the history and the traditions of the facility it replaced, namely the first Utah Territorial / State Penitentiary which stood six miles outside of Salt Lake City on land occupied by what is now Salt Lake's Sugar House Park. Through most of the 19th century, Sugar House remained a rural, primarily agricultural outpost on the southeastern fringe of Salt Lake City. This area's rural nature led Brigham Young to view Sugar House as a good site for Utah's first territorial / state penitentiary. Construction of the first Utah penitentiary began in 1854 and finished in 1855 after Utah's government secured "additional appropriations...by the legislature or by congress." The penitentiary complex consisted of an adobe warden house and "cells to the number of seventeen." There is no record suggesting that this first territorial / state penitentiary complex featured a chapel.⁴⁵

This rudimentary first penitentiary lasted longer than it should have; the facility repeatedly suffered prisoner escapes, intentional fires, and various other abuses. By 1865, one local newspaper determined the penitentiary to be "the saddest specimen of dilapidated adobes to be found in the Territory." Despite its condition, this first Utah Territorial / State Prison's adobe walls were repeatedly repaired and expanded until c. 1885-1888 when federal funding was secured to build a new \$95,000 prison complex per plans drawn by the Salt Lake City-based Carroll and Kern Architectural Firm and constructed by the Pauly Jail Building Company of St. Louis. According to a period newspaper article, the new prison facility was to be built with "a chapel, 40 x 60, which...seats 250 persons." Other accounts document that the penitentiary chapel was embedded into a prison block and furnished with rows of benches facing a stage upon which stood an altar and other objects of religious importance.

The Sugar House Utah Penitentiary Chapel became an integral part of prison life and provided inmates with crucial respite. Religious services of various persuasions were regularly held in the Chapel, as were numerous entertainments including plays, films, and holiday feasts. The Chapel provided a sanctuary for the prisoners during pivotal moments in their lives; notably, the Chapel was where prisoners condemned to death prepared themselves for their executions. The Chapel was also the locale that prisoners often chose to create chaos or mischief. Prisoners frequently hid in and tried to escape the prison through the chapel. In several instances, inmates lit the Chapel on fire with the aim of escaping prison by burning the entire penitentiary facility down.

Additional Information: Prison Reformation

Jails and prisons have existed since antiquity, but before the late 18th century, they were rarely considered to be places of punishment. Instead, these institutions served as holding pens for prisoners awaiting justice. This justice frequently involved exile, grueling labor, public exhibitions on stocks and pillories, whipping, branding, boiling, burning, stoning, or other forms

⁴⁵ Jules Remey and Julius Brenchly, *A Journey to Great Salt Lake City: Volume II*, Wolcott, NY: Scholars Choice, 2015, pg. 239.

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of capital punishment meted out in community spectacles. These spectacles aspired to purify the prisoners' souls through pain while simultaneously making the public aware of the consequences of breaking the law. The public approached these spectacles as curiosities, entertainments, or as collective moments of mourning and remorse, depending on the reputation and/or popularity of the condemned.⁴⁶

In 1790, Philadelphia's Walnut Street Jail was converted into the world's first "penitentiary house," or reformatory aimed at inducing penance, by Quaker reformers who determined that public violence had a coarsening impact on polite society and that the time prisoners spent in traditional jails hardened them into criminals. The Philadelphia Penitentiary System asserted that solitary confinement provided an alternative form of "humane" discipline as it afforded prisoners peace and quiet, allowing them to reflect on their lives free from corrupting influence. After it opened, the Walnut Street Penitentiary made additional efforts to transform inmate punishment from "an art of unbearable sensations to an economy of suspended rights" aimed at reformation.⁴⁷ These efforts introduced prison religious services, educational programs, pardon boards, and work programs designed to keep inmates busy and create monetary profits.⁴⁸ Although the Pennsylvania System enjoyed limited popularity, it introduced the idea of the penitentiary to the country and the world.

Over time, most prison reformers deemed solitary confinement inhumane, but the idea of reforming inmates through penitentiaries endured. In Utah, the state's first penitentiary in Sugar House, constructed in 1854-1855 and then reconstructed in c. 1888, sought to reform inmates by putting them to work on prison farms or by building roads and other public infrastructures. One of Utah's earliest prison wardens, Albert Perry Rockwood, insistently argued that hard work rehabilitated inmates, allowed repayment of social debts, and advanced community interests.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ M. B. Merback, *The Thief, The Cross and the Wheel: Pain and the Spectacle of Punishment in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

⁴⁷ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, New York: Vintage Books, 1995, pg. 11. Also see Charles Neal, "Were Early American Prisons Similar to Today's?," *JSTOR Daily*, January 19, 2022, (<https://daily.jstor.org/were-early-american-prisons-similar-to-todays/>) / Accessed June 1, 2024.

⁴⁸ Rex A. Skidmore, "Penological Pioneering in the Walnut Street Jail, 1789-1799," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Volume 39, Issue 2, Article 5, 1948, pg. 167.

⁴⁹ Early Utahns debated how best to reform prisoners held at the state's penitentiary. In an 1867 article published in the *Deseret News*, a reporter noted:

The present penitentiary building is insecure. A substantial stone building should be erected within its walls, provided with strong but commodious cells for the retention of prisoners; to which should be added a suitable library and bathing room. At present, too, the prisoners are usually chained and taken from the penitentiary to labor upon the highways, or upon agricultural improvements. The predominant aim of punishments for crime should be the reformation of the criminal. The course at present pursued, by exposing the prisoners in public, bearing on them the badges of their ignominious lot, can but tend to harden them against all effort for their improvement, and to extirpate from their bosoms those feelings of shame, sorrow, and remorse which should work in no small degree their reformation. It would be far more advantageous to the prisoners could they be engaged, within the walls of the penitentiary, in mechanical employments, learning, perhaps, some useful trade, were previously ignorant. In the discharge of our duties

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Under Rockwood's leadership, inmates worked hard farming and building local roads in addition to preparing food in kitchens and bake houses, manufacturing and laundering clothing, creating shoes, socks, and similar articles in a tailor shop and knitting-and-weaving room, making goods in a carpenter's shop, and participating in religious services.⁵⁰

The desire to reform inmates via work largely dictated the location for the second Utah State Penitentiary complex at the Point of the Mountain in Draper, Utah. As Salt Lake City's east benches developed from the 1910s-1930s, pressure grew to use large tracts of farmland surrounding the Sugar House Penitentiary for the larger public's benefit and/or economic development. Not wanting to discontinue the penitentiary farm, prison officials and politicians chose the 838.5 acre "Crystal Springs" in Draper over two other sites under consideration. Per Samuel W. Stewart, chair of the Utah Prison Removal Commission, the Crystal Springs site had "all the elements of a good prison site" because it featured soil that allowed "...the raising of hay and all varieties of fruits, grains, and vegetables" in addition to "a large acreage for pasturage."⁵¹

The prison farm and, by extension, the aim of prisoner reformation via toil was central to Utah's new Point of the Mountain Penitentiary. Utah's legislature, however, made cost cutting the top priority in developing the new facility which they funded with drib and drab appropriations. American culture transformed dramatically over the 20 years that lapsed between the selection and actual use of the prison site. World War II together with numerous other factors dramatically shifted America's economy from agricultural to industrial-centered production. Spotty funding and changes in priorities stunted the effectiveness of the prison farm as both a means of producing food for inmates and reforming the inmates themselves.⁵² Photographs

towards this class of our fellow citizens the golden rule—that we are to overcome evil by doing good—should never be forgotten.

See "Penitentiary," *The Deseret News*, January 2, 1867, pg. 8.

⁵⁰ Lynne Olson, "Sugar House Prison Farm," *Utah Stories*, June 18, 2015 (<https://utahstories.com/2015/06/sugar-house-prison-farm/>) / Accessed June 1, 2024.

⁵¹ "Board Favors Crystal Springs as Site for State Prison: \$84,929 Asked for Land, Water Rights," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, October 14, 1938, pg. 34.

⁵² Period news articles advertised that the new Utah State Penitentiary at the Point of the Mountain possessed "added values" thanks, in large part, to its location in a rich agricultural region. One article entitled "New Prison Operations to Have Added Values" published in April 1950 stated:

Most emphasis regarding the move of the state penitentiary to the Point of the Mountain has been placed on the advantages of the new location as a modern institution for incarceration of criminals and the removal of an eyesore, and what has at times been a menace, from the heavily populated Sugar House area. Another advantage was brought to attention recently following a survey of agricultural crop land at the new prison site by C.P. Starr, district conservationist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and his staff. The new prison area, after a program of leveling, grading, draining and soil rehabilitation through the application of natural and commercial fertilizer is completed, will be highly productive agriculturally. It is anticipated that when the entire area is put into cultivation it will make the prison self-sustaining as to foodstuffs and provide food for many other state institutions. Already much progress has been made at the Point of the Mountain location. A crop of at least 20,000 bushels of grain is expected this year, with 150 tons of hay and enough corn to make 1,000 tons of silage. All this agricultural operation has a dual value. It pays in reduced

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from 1951 depict the Point of the Mountain prison farm as an expanse of largely unimproved sagebrush pasture (Figure 4).⁵³

As the Point of the Mountain prison farm's reformation effort floundered in the early 1950s, officials cast about establishing ways to improve prisoners by keeping them mentally and physically occupied. These efforts particularly spiked after every prison riot, as was the case after the 1957 prison debacle. As noted previously, prisoners, officials, and the public came to embrace the idea of a prison chapel as an inexpensive and yet effective way to engage prisoners in their own reformation. One 1958 letter submitted to the *Deseret News* asked "Why is there no chapel at the Utah State Penitentiary?" and then asserted:

Prisons are no longer institutions of punishment only. Theoretically, at least, we, the people, are doing everything we can to rehabilitate those misguided, unfortunate, anti-social individuals called criminals. Are not the teachings of Christ a part of

cost of prison operation to the taxpayers and in the rehabilitation which will come from more useful, healthful work for prison inmates.

See "New Prison Operations to Have Added Values," *Salt Lake Telegram*, April 18, 1950, pg. 16.

⁵³ An illustration caption accompanying a 1951 *Deseret News* article entitled "Prison Farm Aids Budget," asserted that:

Prison Farm Still Short of Peak—The Utah State Penitentiary farm is considered a possible solution to many of the financial problems confronting the prison. It is being expanded and further developed but still has a long way to go to reach full production. The farm could stand land improvement as illustrated in the photo at left showing a barren alkaline strip that could be eliminated through drainage.

See "Prison Farm Aids Budget," *Deseret News*, August 13, 1951, pg. 4.

The Selective Reconnaissance Study of the Utah State Penitentiary dated May 13, 2020, written by Ben Pearson and Nancy Calkins, architectural historians for Horrocks Engineers suggests that, at least financially, the prison farm enjoyed a strong start:

The prison farm...had a goal of being self-sustaining, (without state government subsidies) by 1960. The farm produce of 1951 demonstrated the prison farm was on target to achieve that goal and with only 350 acres under cultivation. In addition to supplying all the milk, eggs, and meat for the prison, the farm made over \$23,000 in cash earnings from excess produce sold to local dairies and poultry producers. During 1951, the farm raised 5800 chickens in addition to corn, hay, and grain to feed the animals and a bumper crop of fruits and vegetables for use in the prison. Before 1960, however, outside pressure from local private industry brought about restrictions on the marketing of prison-made products preventing the goal of being self-sustaining. Instead, a cooperative effort was established with the Utah State Training School in American Fork, the Utah State Hospital in Provo, and the prison where produce grown at each institution was canned at the prison and then distributed to each institution. This effort cut costs for each of the three state institutions.

Ben Pearson and Nancy Calkins, *The Selective Reconnaissance Study of the Utah State Penitentiary*, Pleasant Grove: Horrocks Engineers, May 13, 2020, pgs. 3-4.

Several articles published in Utah papers after the Point of the Mountain Penitentiary opened registered prisoners' dissatisfaction with various aspects of the state's "model" prison. Perhaps ironically, the first prison riot that occurred at the Point of the Mountain Penitentiary revolved to some extent around prisoners' dissatisfaction with their food, which they apparently had a limited role in growing and processing. For an example, see "Get Tough Rule Ordered after Utah Prisoner Riot," *Salt Lake Telegram*, August 15, 1951, pg. 3.

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rehabilitation? Our country was founded by those who put belief in God and righteous living above all else. Our own state of Utah was founded by a people driven from their homes because of their religious convictions. In the old prison at Sugar House, built so many years ago for a few men, we may have had a reason for not erecting a separate building for a chapel; but when we build a multi-million dollar prison at the Point of the Mountain, we still failed to make any provision for a place to worship... We have thousands of chapels, churches, temples, and places of worship in every city, town, and community in Utah. This is as it should be and is necessary for our spiritual well-being. But the men in prison have practically nothing. They, themselves, asked that a chapel be built and are now attempting to build such a place with their own labor and with voluntary contributions of money and materials. If those who are out of prison and are obeying the law have need of a place to worship, how much greater is the need of these men confined behind prison walls? ⁵⁴

As previously noted, concern for prisoners' spiritual welfare and political pressures that built following the 1957 riots incentivized Utah's penitentiary leadership and elected leaders, particularly Governor George Dewey Clyde, to champion the construction of what came to be called the Chapel by the Wayside at the Point of the Mountain Utah State Penitentiary. Period publicity photographs show Governor Clyde at the site of the Chapel engaging with inmates, laying concrete blocks into the chapel walls, and signing the decrees that established June 22nd - July 22nd, 1958, as "Prison Chapel Month" in Utah (Figure 6-9).⁵⁵ The continued support this project received from Governor Clyde and other of Utah's political officials ensured that the building was eventually completed in the summer of 1961.

In broad terms, the Chapel speaks to the complexities of incarceration in America and longstanding political as well as societal and religious debates about appropriate incarceration methods (involving limited freedom, inflicted pain, solitary confinement, public labor, private labor, etc.), and the purpose of these methods (be it retribution, incapacitation, deterrence, and/or rehabilitation). Consequently, the Chapel is a charged building that has held multiple meanings and associations for the people who have spent time in it over the past several decades. Utah politicians have dictated that, moving forward, the Chapel will serve as a memorial to the "role of faith in Utah's development" and as a reminder that there is, in the words of Utah Governor Spencer Cox, "hope for even the most fallen among us."⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Wayne Smith, "Why No Chapel at State Prison: Prisoners Need This Place for Worship," *Deseret News*, May 05, 1958, pg. 18.

⁵⁵ "Clyde Delivers Shot in the Arm by Prison Chapel Aid Call," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, June 19, 1958, pg. 22.

⁵⁶ Tony Semerad, "Utah governor tours a now-empty prison. See what he saw before the wrecking ball comes," *Salt Lake Tribune*, August 16, 2022 (<https://www.sltrib.com/news/2022/08/16/utah-governor-tours-now-empty/>) / Accessed June 1, 2024.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 40.490001 Longitude: -111.901533

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is a portion of the original parcel with an area directly encompassing the building which extends out six feet from the building's foundation.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is part of a much larger parcel that will be developed for other uses and includes enough property for sufficient physical context.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: David Amott / Wendi Pettet
organization: N/A
street & number: 1548 North Locust Lane
city or town: Provo state: UT zip code: 84604
e-mail davidamott@gmail.com / wendimail1@gmail.com
telephone: 801-971-4808 / 801-859-2770
date: September 18, 2025

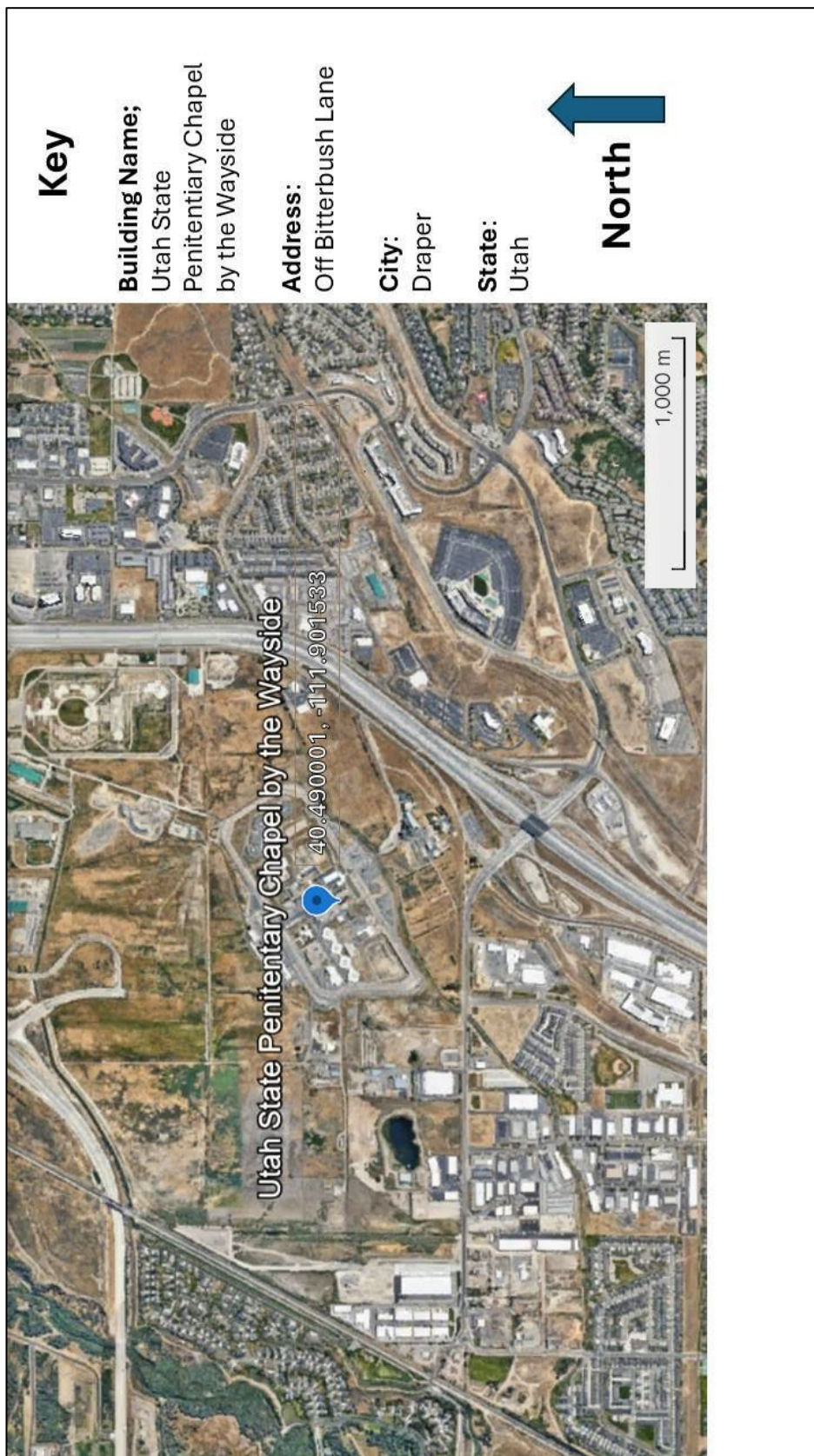
Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

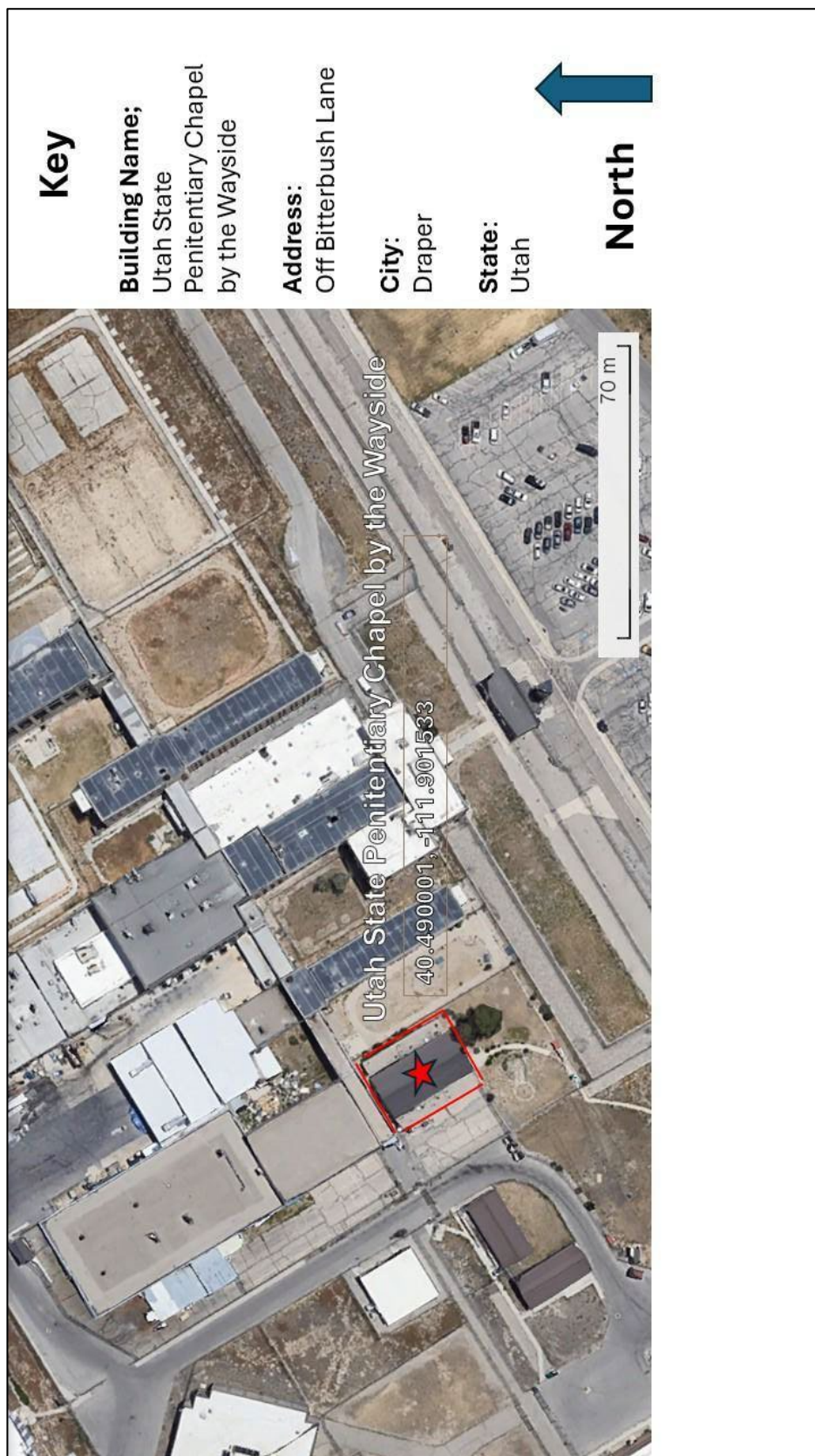
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Key to Exterior Photographs

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Utah State Penitentiary Chapel by the Wayside

City or Vicinity: Draper

County: Salt Lake County

State: UT

Photographers: David Amott, Rachel Quist

Date Photographed: June-November, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, including description of view indicating direction of camera:

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1 of 18, Façade/East Elevation, Facing West



2 of 18, Façade/East Elevation and South Elevation, Facing Northwest



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3 of 18, East Elevation and Rear/West Elevation, Facing Northeast



4 of 18, Rear/West Elevation, Facing East



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5 of 18, Façade/East Elevation and North Elevation, Facing Southwest



6 of 18, Facade/East Elevation, Bell Tower, and Stone Facing, Facing Northwest



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7 of 18, Penitentiary Bell, Facing West



8 of 18, Chapel Interior, Facing Southeast

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9 of 18, Chapel Interior, Facing Northwest



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10 of 18, Chapel Wood Roof, Facing East



11 of 18, Chapel Cabinets, Facing West



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12 of 18, Chapel Classrooms Adjoining Chapel on North Side, Facing Northwest



13 of 18, Chapel Window Concrete Bars, Facing North



14 of 18, Chapel Entryway/Lobby (Entering from Prison), Looking Southeast

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15 of 18, Former Choir Loft/Prison Library Lobby, Facing North

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16 of 18, Portion of Former Chapel Choir Loft/Sample Library Room, Facing East



17 of 18, Warner Sallman "In His Presence," Prison Chapel Image of Jesus, Facing East

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18 of 18, Native American Painting, Southeast Prison Chapel Classroom Wall, Facing West



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Figures:

1 of 13, Historic Photo of Utah State Penitentiary in Draper, c. 1951, Utah State History Collections



2 of 13, Utah State Penitentiary in Draper, 2022, *Salt Lake Tribune*



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3 of 13, Utah State Penitentiary Chapel Garden, 2021, Utah Department of Corrections



4 of 13, Utah State Penitentiary Farm, 1951, *Deseret News*



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5 of 13, Utah State Penitentiary Chapel by Lowell G. Davidson, 1957, *Salt Lake Tribune*



6 of 13, Utah Gov. Clyde with Inmate Laying Concrete Block in a Penitentiary Chapel Wall, June 18, 1968, Utah State History Collections



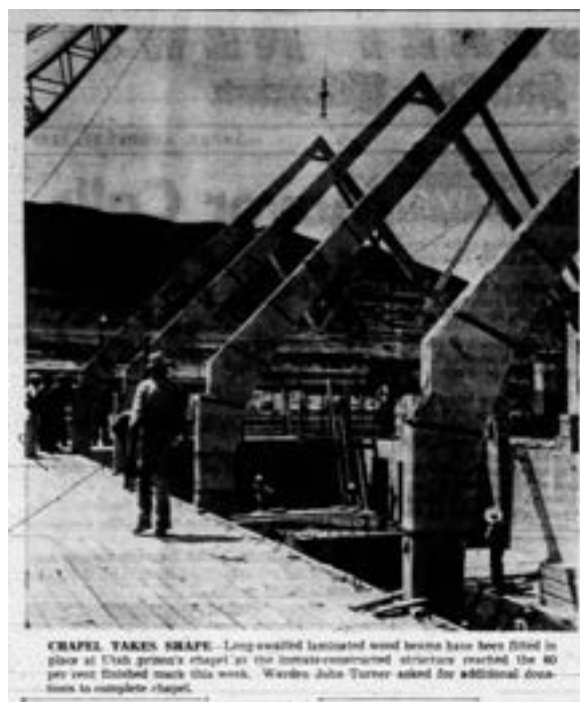
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7 of 13, Utah Gov. Clyde with Inmate Laying Concrete Block in Penitentiary Chapel Wall, June 18, 1968, Utah State History Collections



8 of 13, Placing Roof Beams in the Penitentiary Chapel, August 17, 1959, *Deseret News*



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9 of 13, Placing Roof Beams in the Penitentiary Chapel, August 13, 1959, Utah State History Collections



10 of 13, Fraternal Order of the Eagles Penitentiary Chapel Donation, July 1958, *Salt Lake Tribune*



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11 of 13, Bountiful Seminary Penitentiary Chapel Donation, December 1958, *Deseret News*



12 of 13, Italian-American Civic League Penitentiary Chapel Donation, January 1959, *Salt Lake Tribune*

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13 of 13, Penitentiary Chapel Dedication, July 1961, *Salt Lake Tribune*

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Property Owner information:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Utah State Penitentiary Chapel by the Wayside
Name of Property

Salt Lake County, Utah
County and State

Name Michael Ambre / Point of Mountain State Land Authority
Address 120 East Capitol Street / P.O. Box 142325
City or Town Salt Lake City State UT Zip code 84114
Telephone/email 801-209-9104 / info@thepointutah.org

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