

City of Madison Landmarks Commission
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (1)

Name of Building or Site

Common Name *Historic Name (if applicable)*
Luther Memorial Church Luther Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church of Madison,
Wisconsin

Location

Street Address *Aldermanic District*
1021 University Avenue, Madison, WI 53715-1091 Eight

Classification

Type of Property (building, monument, park, etc.)
Building

Zoning District *Present Use*
PUDSIP R6 Church, school, community spaces, administrative offices

Current Owner of Property (available at City Assessor's Office)

Name(s)
Luther Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church of Madison, Wisconsin

Street Address *Telephone Number*
1021 University Avenue, Madison, WI 53715-1091 (608) 258-3160

Legal Description (available at City Assessor's Office)

Parcel Number
070923206035

Legal Description

UNIVERSITY ADDN TO MADISON, 2 AND THE W 71.02 FT OF LOT 3, BLOCK 1 AND LOT 1, BLOCK 1 EXCEPT THAT PART DESC AS FLWS: COM AT THE SW COR OF SD LOT 1; TH N E, 6.11 FT TO THE POB; TH CONT N E, 44.35 FT; TH S 88 DEG 23 MIN 54 SEC E, 85.89 FT; TH S 01 DEG 36 MIN 06 SEC W, 44.33 FT; TH N 88 DEG 23 MIN 54 SEC W, 84.6T FT TO THE POB.

Condition of Property

Physical Condition (excellent, good, fair, deteriorated, ruins)
Excellent

Altered or Unaltered? *Moved or Original Site?*
1959, 1992, 1993, 1997, 2011 Original

Wall Construction

Masonry with exterior limestone facing.

City of Madison

LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (2)

Historical Data

Original Owner

Luther Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church, of Madison, Wisconsin

Original Use

Architect or Builder

Claude & Starck, Architects.

Reginald Stehr, architect.

Architectural Style

Church: Gothic Revival

Education Building: Mid-Century Gothic Revival

Date of Construction

1921-1923, 1957-1958

Indigenous Materials Used

Largely unspecified

List of Bibliographical References Used

Form Prepared By

Name and Title

Gary Tipler

Organization Represented (if any)

Address

807 Jenifer Street

Telephone Number

(608) 286-1844

Date Nomination Form Was Prepared

May, 2011

Landmarks Commission

LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (3)

Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and Appearance.

The Luther Memorial Church is located at 1021 University Avenue, on a block of religious buildings originally built facing the University of Wisconsin campus and now prominently set among the University of Wisconsin buildings, just a block from Bascom Hall, the heart of the original campus. It consists of a large church building, and an adjoining Education Building set back from the avenue right-of-way to the east. It is bordered to the east by the one and two story St. Francis House, which is set on a large lot. And to the west, a two-story Campus Lutheran Center, organizationally unrelated to Luther Memorial, and built in the 1990s. To the south and rear is a twelve story nearly two year old apartment building and to the southeast rear a three-story campus W.M.C.A. dormitory building dating to the 1960s with a 1990s addition.

The Church

The church building was designed patterned after the European cathedral in the Gothic Revival style by the Madison firm of Claude & Starck, Architects. It was built beginning in May, 1921, and completed, occupied during the fall of 1923 and dedicated on October 28, 1923. The general contractor was Wisconsin Construction Company. It was built of buff-colored limestone from Colfax, Wisconsin, and laid in a random ashlar bond. The trims are of Bedford limestone from Bedford, Indiana.

The church building's main floor and entrance is raised above the street sidewalk grade by a half story of steps adjoining the University Avenue. Its façade rises about one hundred feet from the front entrance level – its gable facing the street. The lot falls away toward the rear of the lot, and reveals the lower level at grade on a rear alley, Conklin Court.

The church building's façade facing University Avenue is symmetrical and is buttressed with large rectilinear columns flanking the entrance and framing the tall stained glass window assemblage set in within Gothic tracery stone trims. The entrance doors each have three tall Gothic windows. The entrance is deeply set within a Gothic arch with a sculptural panel above the doors featuring a bas relief of Christ. The Greek lettering at the top of the panel in which the entranceway is set, has the meaning "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." Gothic stone trims ornament the tall gable facing the street.

The side walls are buttressed between the windows, and are stepped out at the ground level on the west side. The side windows are tall Gothic arches, detailed with stone tracery. The transepts are defined on the exterior by the full height stone walls with details similar to the rest of the building, though its roof is shorter. The chimes tower, is located at the rear southwest corner of the building. It was said in at least one more recently written article to have been located there to avoid offsetting balanced symmetry of the front façade, though it may have been based, in part, on the needs for the interior floor area use. The tower's iconic stone Gothic tracery and spires are an architectural highlight of the building and an oft-used symbol of the church.

The rear of the building fronting on Conklin Court is simple and unadorned.

The steep roof is covered with green ceramic flat ribbed roofing tiles.

The Education Building

The Education Building addition is a flat-roofed, three-story limestone-faced masonry building that was built on the northeast side of the church in 1957.¹ It was designed by Madison architect Reginald Stehr in a modern flat-roofed form. The addition was intended attach to the church building below the windows of the nave to avoid reducing the morning light required to light the space for morning services. Due to the setting and topography, the Education Building is two stories on the University Avenue side and three full stories on the Conklin Court, or alley, side. Its fenestration pattern consists of evenly set window panels set between simple flat limestone columns. The stone spandrels in the window bays vertically between the windows feature traditional gothic tracery.

The Education Building held the church administration offices, and rooms for Sunday school, choir, youth, Boy Scouts and nurseries on all three levels.

The Layout

Historically, the church refers to the Christian church buildings, which were developed with deference to the varied needs of denominations, sects and practices that were associated with the rise and development of the Christian organizations.

The Christian church plan required a large meeting space, thus the Christian basilica was derived from the Roman basilica or large, long meeting space with a large vaulted ceiling overhead, sometimes flanked by arcades and other smaller spaces along the sides. The Luther Memorial Church floor plan was originally, and is still largely based on this floor plan.

In the 16th Century Martin Luther instigated the reformation of the church and its practices. Some of these were embodied church architecture, evident in the Luther Memorial church.

To further describe the layout, in the historic floor plan, the front part of the space from which the service is conducted is the chancel, on the raised platform, with the pulpit and lectern, respectively located on the left and the right, as viewed by the congregation. The pulpit and lectern locations were reversed in the 1990s renovations, and the chancel and altar were brought forward toward and the communion rail relocated. The sections where the walls extend on either side nearest the chancel are the east and west transepts, which were originally intended for the supporting the service, visiting clergy, and choirs. The congregation is seated in the nave, which is flanked by arcades on both sides and has a center aisle among the rows of pews. Near the entrance is the baptismal font, a symbolic position dating to the time of fountains or wells located near an entrance in Roman era houses and churches.

Between the streetfront building entrance and the entrance to the nave is the narthex, a gathering area. Access to the balcony is from the narthex, including the original stair along the wall flanking the street entrance and a newer stair nearer the nave.

The choir balcony is located above the narthex. The seating is arranged in a semi-circular arrangement around the organ and the pipes flank the enormous window facing the street.

¹ Construction drawings dated June 10, 1957 by Reginald Stehr, architect. Luther Memorial Archives.

The Interior

The nave is 150 feet long, 47 feet wide between the arches and 82 feet high to the top of the roof support arches. The church was originally designed to seat 1650 people, though due to programming and the demand for other uses, the spaces have been reconfigured that reduce the seating areas, but don't diminish the environment of the sanctuary, and enhance the utility and experience of the congregants.

The high altar and surrounding stonework, or reredos, ornamenting the apse was a gift of John Petersen, builder of the church, and was carved by Walter Sutton of the Bayview Stone Company of Madison. The center carved panel has a large replica of Thorvaldsens "Come unto Me" figure of Christ, rendered from Colfax stone.² The open Gothic arches in the stone tracery of the apse frame tapestries, changed each season, which were painted by Gaytee Stained Glass Company of Minneapolis.

The pulpit, lectern and original baptismal font are carved of Colfax stone. The baptismal pool of red granite with a limestone base was added in 1995. The freestanding altar, is of cherry.

The painted, stained and leaded glass of the sanctuary are extraordinary in detail. The large window above the entrance and choir loft has three Trinity symbols, 24 full figures of the twelve disciples, figures of Christ, and many other symbols. The side windows of the nave are largely designed of colorful geometric designs. These were designed and manufactured by the Gaytee Stained Glass Company of Minneapolis.

It is believed that the original stenciled patterning that covered the walls of the church were by Gaytee as well. The patterning was recreated in part on the vaulted walls semi-octagonal apse. The original simple stencils surrounding the window of the choir balcony remain.

The roof support structure was built of steel beams, though they're at least partly clad in Gothic detailed ornamental plaster to appear as wood beams. The ceiling is plank. These finishes are stained and varnishes a dark wood color. An ornamental plaster cornice and piers attached to the walls appear to support the ceiling beams. Gothic detailing is integral to all the sculptural components of the nave interior.

The original oak pew seating and the choir balcony seating was provided by the American Seating Company.

The original pipe organ was built by M.P. Moller Company of Hagerstown, Maryland. The bellows were placed in the unheated tower. Though the organ and mechanical parts were removed, the pipes remain.

The undercroft lower level's large central room originally served as a gymnasium, an auditorium, and for plays with a raised stage built in the 1930s, later removed. It had adjoining rooms surrounding it for Sunday school use, and a pastor's office -- later a chapel, the maintenance man's apartment, the restrooms, and men's smoking lounge.

² Stonework and sculpture notes. Luther Memorial Church, a firm foundation, a faithful future. Edited by Bonnie Gruber. Luther Memorial Church Foundation, 1997, p.6.

The original chimes were manufactured by the Deagan Chimes Company of Chicago.

Alterations

In the late 1980s, the church and education buildings were given a new entryway just east of the formal church front entrance. It tied the two together and provided elevator service for the main and lower levels of both buildings. Its design borrowed from the materials and details of the church. Its entrance is a large trimmed Gothic arch set in a wall set at an angle toward the street. The addition is finished with Bedford stone.

In the sanctuary, the communion table was moved forward and the chancel railing moved to the sides of the transept.

In 1966, the choir balcony and the narthex were almost doubled in an expansion into the nave. The choir seating was set in a semicircular arrangement to accommodate a new organ installation and a new choir layout. Reginald Stehr was the architect of the balcony and narthex alteration.

At that time, the original pipe organ and bellows were removed and sold to Alex Jordan, Jr., for installation in Organ Room at the House on The Rock, between Spring Green and Dodgeville. The pipes remained as ornament in their original locations above the transepts.

The west side window of the nave adjoining the west transept was badly damaged and rebuilt as a result of the Sterling Hall bombing across the street on August 24, 1970. The repairs are almost imperceptible.

In 1992, the narthex was further enlarged and new trims and flooring added.

Beginning in 1993, several projects were undertaken. As part of that phase of renovations, the undercroft or lower level was remodeled to update its electrical, HVAC and finishes, and to add two smaller reading rooms nearer the street entrance area, a new enclosed entryway, update the heating and ventilation, electrical and lighting, and finishes. A section of the entryway from the street-front of the building was enclosed for two meeting rooms. The men's lounge in the northeast corner remains though was refurbished, as well in the recent work. A meeting room, originally the pastor's office adjoining the southwest side of the central room, was refurbished as a chapel in the 1930s. In recent years it was refurbished as a kitchen, and opens to the large meeting room with a pass-through counter. An original exterior door remains that once served the earlier uses, though is closed off from the inside, and is seen on the west exterior side only. Also, in the lower level, renovations reconfigured the former live-in maintenance man's small apartment at the southern corner of the building, near the boiler room, to create an archives room, and the former chapel was refurbished to create a kitchen to serve the lower level meeting space.

A small part of the west transept was enclosed as a columbarium for the remains of 84 people. New lighting and sound systems were also installed. The 1893 tracker action organ was acquired and installed in the east transept. In 1997, the balconies in the transepts were removed in the renovations due to lack of second exits and their use was barred. In their places, small aria balconies were installed for musical performers.

In the winter of 2011, the side walls columns and details of the nave were covered with a

fiberglass mesh and painted to prevent plaster from falling to the floor, due to the damage of the street reconstruction years earlier. The original paint colors and stencil patterns were documented for future restoration by Tony Kartsonas of Historic Surfaces of Chicago.

The Education Building floor plan is largely original except for the renovation to the entrance area. The finishes were updated in the 1990s renovations on the ground floor and lower level for the nurseries. The upper floor retains most of its original finishes and lighting.

Integrity

The Luther Memorial Church and Education Building retain a very high level of integrity due to their continued use, repair and maintenance. Additions and alterations do not significantly detract from the architectural and designed features of the buildings and in fact have made them more useful for the congregants and staff of the church.

Landmarks Nomination - Significance. Luther Memorial Church

Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria.

Significance – Architecture

Luther Memorial Church is significant for its architecture, as an excellent example of early Twentieth Century Gothic Revival architecture. The design was a departure from the earlier Gothic Revival styles of churches in Madison, and is more closely patterned and inspired by European church and cathedral designs and traditions. It was one of the crowning achievements in the body of work by architects Claude & Starck of Madison. The 1957 Education Building addition is a good example of Mid-Century Gothic Revival, adeptly designed by Madison architect, Reginald Stehr. Together, they represent good examples of Twentieth Century church and school buildings, built out of growth and necessity, and formed by changes in programming and social and educational development of the church.

Historical overview of Luther Memorial Church

(Additional paragraphs to be inserted)

Luther Memorial's Association with Claude & Starck, Architects

Claude & Starck, Architects, were commissioned by the Luther Memorial Church to design the church at 1021 University Avenue, but they had other commissions for the congregation, too. In 1914, they had designed the first building for the church, the Chapel at 636 University Avenue, when the organization was named the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity.³

Around the time the chapel was designed and under construction, Claude & Starck drew up a preliminary sketch of the proposed church building to be built on the lot adjoining the Chapel on the University Avenue. Due to problems in land area and an ownership dispute, it was never built there and instead the church acquired the present site in 1920, the Harper house and lot.

The design for the present church building at 1021 University Avenue was begun by May 22, 1920, when Claude & Starck had been engaged informally by the church council to submit another concept for a new church on the new and larger lot at 1021 University Avenue.⁴ On June 5, 1920, Louis Claude presented the concept drawings for the new church at the new site to the church council. At that meeting a Building Committee was also established and its membership established. The process took a year and in May, 1921 the drawings were completed, bids let and the groundbreaking took place. The old Harper house was removed to the Conklin lot on Johnson Street. The cornerstone was laid on the last Sunday of October that fall. The construction took the better part of two years and the building was dedicated in October, 1923.

Their last commission for the church was the parsonage at 1025 University Avenue. During the time that the church was nearing completion, in June of 1923, Claude & Starck also designed the

³ Drawings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, 1914, Northwest Architectural Archives, Manuscripts Division, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

⁴ Church council and building committee minutes. Luther Memorial Archives.

parsonage that was built just west of the church and completed that winter.

It is not known how the church council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, settled on the firm of Claude & Starck for the first project, the design of the Chapel at 636 University Avenue. However, the church committee's membership suggests the connections and recommendations that likely lead to the commission. The selection of Claude & Starck was likely based on the recommendation of members of the church's council, Rudolph and Emil Hokanson, whose business partner in the Hokanson Automobile Company had commissioned the architects for his residence in 1907. The Hokanson Automobile Company had been founded in 1904 by Rudolph Hokanson who served as general manager. Charles F. Spooner was President, Rudolph's younger brother Emil Hokanson was vice president, and George P. Miller was Secretary of the company. In 1907, Claude & Starck completed drawings for George Miller for a house at 1125 Rutledge on the lake side of Orton Park. It was a Tudor-styled residence with Arts-and-Crafts-styled cabinetry, windows and details. Following the chapel commission for Luther Memorial in 1916, Claude and Starck were commissioned by Emil Hokanson to design a house at 1043 Sherman Avenue, across Sherman Avenue from his brother Rudolph's house at 1054 Sherman Avenue. The house was one of the finest Prairie-School- styled residences in the state. Emil Hokanson lived in the house only a year or so before moving to Milwaukee to work on the company's business in their Milwaukee office. Rudolph continued as an officer of the Church council, until the planning of the construction of the new church in 1921, when he, too, moved to Milwaukee.

The Firm, Claude & Starck, Architects

Claude & Starck designed scores of residences, 40 libraries, many schools, banks, commercial and industrial buildings throughout Wisconsin from the beginning of their partnership in 1896 and until 1929, when they dissolved their partnership. During that time, they built over 150 buildings in Madison alone in the Craftsman, Prairie School, Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, and Spanish Colonial styles.

The Churches of Claude & Starck

Claude & Starck's first church was designed and built during the first year or so of their partnership in 1897. It was the East Koshkonong Norwegian Lutheran Church, which still stands at 454 East Church Road, southwest of Cambridge, Wisconsin. Its late Victorian Gothic styling was a departure from the earlier Victorian era Gothic churches, and patterned, in part, on the two separate and distinctly differing towers at the front façade, flanking the gable, and featured a large rose window and front entryway.

In 1905, Claude & Starck designed St. John's Lutheran Church, or Saint Johannes at the time of the drawings, built at 322 East Washington Avenue in Madison. It was largely patterned after the East Koshkonong Norwegian Lutheran Church that Claude & Starck had designed several years earlier.

Among Claude & Starck's other work for churches were the construction of the parish house for the Unitarian Society in Madison in 1910; the Sacred Heart Jesus & Mary Church auditorium, 221 Columbus Street, Sun Prairie; alterations and an addition to Saint Paul's Episcopal Church, 1922, Watertown, a parish house and alterations for the First Methodist Episcopal Church, 1924; and an addition to the Unitarian Society's education building on E. Dayton Street, Madison.

Luther Memorial stands as a monument among their works, particularly among their church designs. It was among their most expensive building projects, as well. Their work was significant in its design and execution. Though built with economy in mind, the effect was an edifice of inspiring and breath-taking proportions, enhanced by skillful detail and craftsmanship.

Louis W. Claude

Louis W. Claude was born in 1868 to Louis J. Claude, who emigrated from England, and Elvira Ward Claude, who was from New York State.

Claude was educated in the public schools in Baraboo. He attended the University of Wisconsin as a special student in Civil Engineering under Professor Allan Durst Conover, from 1887 through 1889.⁵ It was a program in building engineering, architecture and construction. Concurrently, he worked in the firm of Conover & Porter, architects and left their employ in December 1889.⁶

In 1890, Louis W. Claude went to work in the Chicago architectural firm of Burnham & Root, which was in the early stages of planning and supervising the construction of the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. After a short time there, he joined friend Will McFetridge in apprenticing in the architectural office of Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan in Chicago, under the direction of Sullivan's chief draftsman, Frank Lloyd Wright, another veteran of Conover's engineering instruction and Conover & Porter's architectural firm.⁷ Claude noted that he "laid out the first plans the first Transportation Building" for the World's Columbian Exposition.⁸

Claude remained at Adler & Sullivan's office until November 1891 and then went on to work with Schlacks & Ottenheimer, architects, both of whom had been associates of Claude's and apprentices at Adler & Sullivan.⁹ The firm specialized in church design and had many commissions throughout the Midwest.

In 1895, Claude opened an architectural practice in Madison, and had at least one semester of lecturing at the University of Wisconsin. In 1896, he following year partnered with Edward F. Starck, in Claude & Starck, Architects. It is not known how they knew each other before then, though they both had worked for prominent Chicago architectural firms. According to a Claude & Starck biographer, Gordon Orr, Claude was "reputed to have been most responsible for the design and direction of the firm."¹⁰ Claude was the member of the firm who almost always was reported in newspapers and interviews as representing the firm.

Edward Starck

⁵ Catalogue of the University of Wisconsin, 1888-1889, Cramer, Aikens & Cramer: Milwaukee and Madison, Wisconsin. 1889. p. 25. Catalogue of the University of Wisconsin, 1889-1890, Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Cramer, Aikens & Cramer, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. 1890. p.21.

⁶ Cass, Betty. Madison Day-by-Day. Wisconsin State Journal. Madison, Wisconsin: January 14, 1942. p. 13.

⁷ Cass, Betty. Madison Day-by-Day. Wisconsin State Journal. Madison, Wisconsin: January 14, 1942. p. 13.

⁸ Wisconsin State Journal, August 18, 1899.

⁹ Rankin, p.22-26, 43.

¹⁰ Orr, Gordon Jr., FAIA. "Louis W. Claude: Madison Architect of the Prairie School", The Prairie School Review. Vol. XIV Chicago: Prairie Avenue Bookshop, 1981. p. 6.

Edward Starck was a partner in the firm of Claude & Starck, Architects. He was sometimes the liaison with the building committee in the early planning of the church building.¹¹ His signed watercolor rendering of the first edition of the church façade was a rare document, suggesting two things -- that he was beginning to exert some degree of recognition for his contribution to the firm's work, and putting a name to the rendition artwork. Several renditions for various projects had been done previously, but had only been signed Claude & Starck, Architects. Perhaps it was Starck who had authored many of the previous renditions, formerly attributed to Claude.

Edward F. Starck was born in Milwaukee in 1868. When he was ten years old, his family moved to Madison and his father became a builder and operated a planing mill. That business was the predecessor to the Findorff Construction Company, which is today a large construction firm. Young Edward Starck had apprenticed with the prominent architects David R. Jones of Madison, Edward Townsend Mix of Milwaukee and Handy and Cady of Chicago before joining Claude in a partnership in Madison in 1896.¹² Starck's family and work connections likely led to several of the early commissions that their partnership attained in its earliest years. Starck was a silent partner, who avoided the press and didn't participate in the business correspondence, so his written record is lean.

Claude & Starck, Architects

Louis W. Claude (1868-1951) and Edward F. Starck (1868-1947)

Claude & Starck began their partnership in Madison in 1896 and, over the course of their 32 year partnership, designed hundreds of buildings, including nearly 40 libraries in Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota and Washington, many schools, public buildings, banks, factories and scores of residences. They became proficient in Tudor Revival, Gothic Revival, Neo-Classical Revival, Craftsman, Arts & Crafts, and Prairie School styles of architecture. Throughout most of their partnership, their office in Madison was in the Badger Block, on S. Carroll Street on the Capitol Square, an early commercial building of their own design. It was there that the plans were drawn for the chapel, the church and the parsonage for Luther Memorial Church. The firm's partnership lasted until September 1927, when Louis Claude left the firm and moved his office next door to the Badger Block Annex. Some projects in the name of the firm were completed during the following two years until the firm was dissolved in 1929. Claude's sole practice was very limited for several years and in early 1942, he moved it to his home at 851 E. Gorham Street, Madison. He closed his business just a few years later, and spent much of his time at the family home at Devil's Lake where he died at age 82, on August 10, 1951.

It is notable that Edward Starck was the active partner following initial discussions of the concept of the church and he became the principal contact in the firm for the Building Committee of the church. In 1927, following the end of the partnership, Edward Starck retained the office and partnered with his chief draftsman, Hubert A. Schneider.¹³

Education Building

The Education Building was designed in the spring of 1957 by Madison Architect Reginald

¹¹ Secretary's Minutes of the Church council, May 22, 1920. p.217.

¹² Rankin, p. 218.

¹³ Capital Times, Madison, Wisconsin, Dec. 04, 1929. p.12.

Stehr.14 It was dedicated in November, 1959. It held the administration offices, and rooms for Sunday school, choir, youth, Boy Scouts and nurseries. It cost \$280,000.

Reginald Stehr, Architect

Reginald Stehr was born in Madison in 1910, studied architecture at the University of Illinois, graduated there in 1932. Little is known of his apprenticeship and practice in Madison until he opened his own office in his home at 706 S. Orchard Street in late July, 1948. In 1950, Stehr was the architect for the social and educational building of St. Lukes Lutheran Church on Hubbard Avenue in Middleton. Stehr was sometimes philanthropic in his work and contributed his work on the planning and design of the aquarium for Henry Vilas Park Zoo in 1962. The following year, he was contracted to draw up preliminary plans for altering the Vilas park zoo lion house, was hired to design the mammal house at the zoo (1965), and an addition and alteration to primate house, Henry Vilas Zoo (1967). Stehr designed the city's firestation, No. 5 (1963) on Nichols Road, No. 7, on Harley Dr. and Raymond Road (1965), and an addition and remodeling of No. 8 (1965). He was known to have designed offices and residences.

Stehr was the architect of Luther Memorial's balcony and narthex alteration in 1966. He was a member of St. John's church in Madison, and following his design of the church's education building, became a member of Luther Memorial, and became the church's architect of record for several additions and alterations. He died in January, 1968. His daughter Kathleen Carol Stehr married Alan Martinson in the church in April, 1969.

