

FINAL

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Tyson United Methodist Church

other names/site number Versailles United Methodist Church, 137-647-37010

2. Location

street & number 324 West Tyson Street  N/A not for publication

city or town Versailles  N/A  vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Ripley code 137 zip code 47042

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Patrick R. Pitz* 8/5/94  
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
 State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Tyson United Methodist Church  
Name of Property

Ripley County, IN  
County J State

**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

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	Total

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility  
RELIGION: church related residence

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility  
RELIGION: church related residence

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Art Deco  
Moderne

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation TERRA COTTA  
walls BRICK  
TERRA COTTA  
roof METAL: copper  
other METAL: aluminum  
STONE: granite

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1937

Significant Dates

1937

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Tyson, James Henry

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

McGuire, William and Shook, Wilbur

Miles & Elliot (contractors)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Archive of Olde McGuire Shook Corp., records of Tyson Trustees

Tyson United Methodist Church  
Name of Property

Ripley County, IN  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	6	6	5	1	0	6	0	4	3	2	5	9	9	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

3 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

4 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

See continuation sheet

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Novack / Paul Diebold

organization Odle McGuire Shook / DHPA date November 19, 1993

street & number 8275 Allison Pointe Trail telephone 317-842-0000

city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46250

#### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

#### Property Owner

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

name Board of Trustees, Tyson United Methodist Church

street & number 324 West Tyson Street telephone 812/689-6976

city or town Versailles state IN zip code 47042

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

---

Tyson United Methodist Church is a two story masonry structure located one block from the Ripley County Courthouse and Square in Versailles, Indiana. The church shares a rectangular corner site with a gabled frame parsonage structure (non-contributing) and is sited at a 45 degree diagonal to the street intersection. Completed in 1937, this unusual building contrasts with its setting by virtue of its glossy white masonry, height, and eclectic Art Deco detailing.

The main entry faces southeast and is connected to the street corner by granite edged concrete walks. Sidewalks paralleling the south and east sides of the site have street frontages of 142 feet and 115 feet respectively. The non-contributing parsonage occupies an area of 32 X 54 feet in the southwest corner of the site, which slopes approximately 3 feet from southeast to northwest.

The main elevation (southeast) consists of the entry bay flanked by one-quarter cylindrical bays, each rising to a full two stories in height. As on all elevations, building materials are white glazed brick and white glazed terra-cotta. A granite veneer marks the foundation. The projecting main entry bay measures 19 feet, 4 inches wide and rises 35 feet, 4 inches. A stylized Corinthian portico shelters the tall, stilted round arch entry. The entry surround archivolt has stylized wave incising and a keystone. Infilling the arch are impressive bronze doors with raised vertical banding and meeting stiles. The transom has lozenge patterned art glass held in aluminum framing. Fluted banding and stylized Corinthian capitals on the terra cotta columns show both Egyptian and Classical influences. The entablature includes a simplified Doric frieze, with lozenges marking the column locations. Surmounting this is broken segmental arched pediment, the tympanum of which is infilled with wave ornamentation. Centered in the tympanum is a sun disk roundel which reads "GLORY TO GOD". A lozenge-like three-dimensional diaper work motif is centered over the projecting pediment. A narrow band with running wave decoration caps the entry projection, and is carried around to the complete the stair towers.

Flanking the entry bay are two set back quarter-round bays which internally house spiral stairs. Four levels of ribbon windows mark

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

---

Tyson United Methodist Church  
Ripley County, Indiana

the curved bays, which are built along a 6 foot 6 inch radius. Currently, anodized aluminum framed, dark tinted windows are fitted into the ribbon openings. Originally, 6 inch square glass brick provided light to the stairs. Spandrel areas between each level of ribbon window are decorated with incised wave moldings. At the approximate level of the entablature of the central pediment, a stylized anthemion pattern lines each curved bay. Completing this tripartite masonry composition is the tall open lattice work spire of cast aluminum.

The stair towers serve as transition to the main bulk of the building, a large rectangular mass which houses the assembly room and sanctuary. The main portion of the building is slightly wider than the front section, and all corners are rounded at a 3 foot 4 inch radius. The northeast and southwest elevations are mirror images of one another, each being 24 feet tall and 74 feet long with five aluminum framed rectangular windows at the basement level and five large round arched windows centered above these at the main sanctuary level. The basement level has a terra cotta veneer, creating a water table edge transitional to the glazed brick walls. The sanctuary windows are German art glass with aluminum framing, exhibiting a diamond and round arch pattern. Protective sheet plastic glazing has been added to the large windows. Lead coated copper cornice/gutters terminate the face of each elevation, where the convex curved mansard roof sweeps up and over the sanctuary. The flat seamed roof is also of lead coated copper.

The rear elevation faces northwest and features a projecting masonry mass with the semispherical domed apse centered on the wall. The same roofing material is used on the apse as seen on the main portion of the building. An exterior concrete ramp serves the service/emergency exit door.

Exterior integrity is good, however, one inappropriate treatment does mar the building. The exterior was painted in order to attempt to remedy a water problem. Besides obscuring the fine masonry craftsmanship of the structure, painting has led to

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

---

**Tyson United Methodist Church  
Ripley County, Indiana**

moisture problems within the walls. Restoration plans are currently under way to solve this problem.

The interior of Tyson United Methodist Church continues the strong Art Moderne/Art Deco theme of the exterior. The structure has two primary floors, the auditorium (sanctuary) is on the main level and the raised basement houses an assembly room. Due the use of masonry, concrete, and steel framing, no wood or nails were used on the interior.

Upon entering the main doors, an intermediate level entrance hall is found. This approximately 6 by 10 foot area with marble floors, marble wainscoting, terra cotta walls, and acoustical ceiling tiles is about 16 feet tall. Originally, Calicel ceiling tiles were applied over the bare concrete structure, but these deteriorated due to water penetration, and were replaced with the current tiles. The terra cotta newel posts are especially noteworthy. Handrails were molded directly into the two newels, from which knee walls to the outside walls begin, creating a landing at the sanctuary level. Curved metal handrails lead from the intermediate entrance hall to the basement. A curved marble base is found at the bottom of the basement stairs and is capped with a white metal bar of similar design to the intermediate rails. Another feature of the entrance hall which is unusual are the bowed, pilaster-like features flanking the front door and vertical strips at inside corners. These were to have vertical light strips, but were either covered with decorative plaster, or, perhaps lights were never installed due to cost considerations. Undoubtedly, the entrance hall space would be dramatically different if the lighting were in place.

From the entrance hall, the auditorium is entered through two narrow doors, each 4 feet wide. The openings originally had no doors; they were added for noise control. The sanctuary or auditorium space is a dramatic 48 by 37 foot space with 22 foot tall ceiling. The original rubber tile floor is now carpeted. Walls consist of terra cotta wainscoting and window archivolt, with both flat and fluted Calicel acoustical tiles applied over

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 4

---

**Tyson United Methodist Church  
Ripley County, Indiana**

the masonry walls. The 10 foot tall art glass windows feature a variety of aluminum fabrications. Individual glass pieces are held in zinc coming arranged in a basketweave pattern. Small operable vents are located at the lower corners of each window.

The ceiling is a suspended plaster segmental barrel vault, painted with gold stars, reproducing the night sky and constellations as they would appear over Versailles. The stars are placed in commemoration of Elizabeth Tyson's death.

The chancel is raised one step above the seating area and is framed by two white terra cotta columns with metal ringed capitals. The apse end wall presents a triumphal arch composition, with the semispherical gold painted apse arch rising above two lower flanking arches. The smaller arches form short barrel vaults with metal grilles in the form of shafts of wheat (?). The wooden altar and furnishings of the chancel are not original. Walls of the apse are covered in fluted Calicel tiles. The chancel arch is highlighted with an archivolt of decorative painted plaster work. Within the apse are two small art glass windows.

The basement includes a 39 foot by 37 foot assembly room with 10 foot tall ceilings, stair hall, storage room, heater room, and restrooms. The plan echoes that of the main level above, with the assembly room located under the sanctuary, and the stair hall is placed under the entrance hall.

The assembly room features terrazzo floors and baseboards; glazed block and plaster walls; and acoustical tile ceilings. Exposed concrete framing includes the six structural columns and beamed ceiling. Aluminum framed windows, five along each side of the room, provide light.

The stair hall leads to the curved marble stairs to the upper level and provides access to the storage room and restrooms. Finishes replicate those of the assembly room, except for the bare concrete floor of the storage room. The heater room is located beneath the chancel. It contains mechanical and electrical



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 & 8 Page 5

---

**Tyson United Methodist Church  
Ripley County, Indiana**

equipment. Walls and floors are bare concrete or masonry. A concrete tunnel, 3 feet 6 inches wide by 7 feet tall, connects the basement to the parsonage.

Tyson United Methodist Church remains essentially in its original form. It is experiencing maintenance related problems that affect many ornate masonry buildings. These problems have been identified, however, and the congregation has embarked upon an improvement program with the guidance of Olde McGuire & Shook Corporation, the descendent firm of the original architects of the building, McGuire & Shook. The restoration is to comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

*Section 8-Statement of Significance*

Tyson United Methodist Church meets National Register criteria B and C. Completed in May 1937, Tyson Church is an exuberant Art Deco masterpiece designed by the prominent Indianapolis firm of McGuire & Shook. The church is a significant example of the philanthropic efforts of Versailles native James Henry Tyson, who not only funded the church in memory of his mother, but contributed to its unique design. The church meets criteria consideration A because of its unusual Art Deco architecture and association with Tyson.

Tyson United Methodist Church is dedicated to Elizabeth Adams Tyson, James' mother and an 1834 charter member of that congregation. James Henry Tyson (1856-1941) was born in Versailles. He worked as a printer for a local paper. In the 1890s, Tyson settled in Chicago and became friends with Charles Walgreen, who lived in the same boarding house. The two became partners and friends. Tyson agreed to invest \$1,500 in Walgreen's venture to open a second drug store. Eventually, Tyson's investment was repaid many fold as Walgreen's became a nationwide chain.

Having been successful in business, Tyson wanted to give something back to his community. In 1929, he established a trust fund, the

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 6

---

**Tyson United Methodist Church  
Ripley County, Indiana**

Tyson Fund, with 18,000 shares of Walgreen stock and determined that the trustees of the Versailles United Methodist Church would administer the trust. The trust agreement required that a new church be constructed "to the glory of God" and in memory of his mother. The trust was to be used for "promoting religious, educational, literary, and social advancement among residents of the Versailles community. Particularly, for the purpose of building and maintaining therein a church, library, waterworks, or other public institutions." The Tyson Fund financed the church and the Tyson Library. Substantial contributions were made toward the waterworks, Versailles School, and local government needs. Construction on the library and school started in 1941, and both were completed in 1942, after Tyson's death.

The Tyson United Methodist Church is perhaps the most visible of James Tyson's contributions to the community. His involvement in the project was paramount. Within the role of patron, Tyson contributed his art and architectural experiences to the design process as well as paying for the construction of the church. The United Methodist Church incorporated the latest trends in design and construction technology of the 1930s as well as its patron's spirit.

Certainly, the selection of a non-traditional style-Art Deco-was influenced by Tyson as well. No other precedents existed in Ripley County; the school and the library were only examples to follow. The experience of the architectural firm McGuire and Shook also may have influenced the decision to use this ultra modern style. William McGuire and Wilbur Shook founded their architectural practice in 1916 in Indianapolis. During the 1920s, the firm designed homes on the northside of Indianapolis. The 1930s saw the firm receive with several large commissions, including the I.U. School of Education (Bloomington), Howe High School (Indianapolis, 1938), and a large addition to the Federal Building (Indianapolis, 1936). The Federal Building project in particular successfully combined Art Deco detailing with classical themes. The Tyson United Methodist Church is among the firm's finest work of the period. The fact that Wilbur Shook was a native of Versailles may

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8, 9, 10 Page 7

---

Tyson United Methodist Church  
Ripley County, Indiana

explain why the Indianapolis architects were selected.

The Tyson United Methodist Church is an outstanding landmark of Art Deco design, and retains much of its original details. The congregation hopes to preserve this important structure for future generations to enjoy.

*Section 9-Bibliography*

Architecture and Design. Vol. V, No. 1, January, 1941.  
(Promotional magazine published by McGuire & Shook)

Dollase, Mark. "Hometown boy constructed Art Deco masterpiece,"  
Indiana Preservationist, Vol. 5, Sept./Oct. 1991, p. 4.

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. Ripley County Interim Report, June, 1986.

McGuire and Shook, architects. Original construction document drawings, 12 sheets, dated April 2, 1936. Collection of Olde McGuire Shook Corporation, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Patterson, Oliver S. History of Versailles United Methodist Church. 1984.

Ripley County Court Records. Tyson Trust Disposition. February 11, 1938.

Toph, Violet. Peoples History of Ripley County, Indiana. Versailles, IN, April 1932.

*Section 10-Geographical Data-Verbal Boundary Description*

Lot 103 and the south half of Lot 106 of the original plat of the town of Versailles, Ripley County, Indiana.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

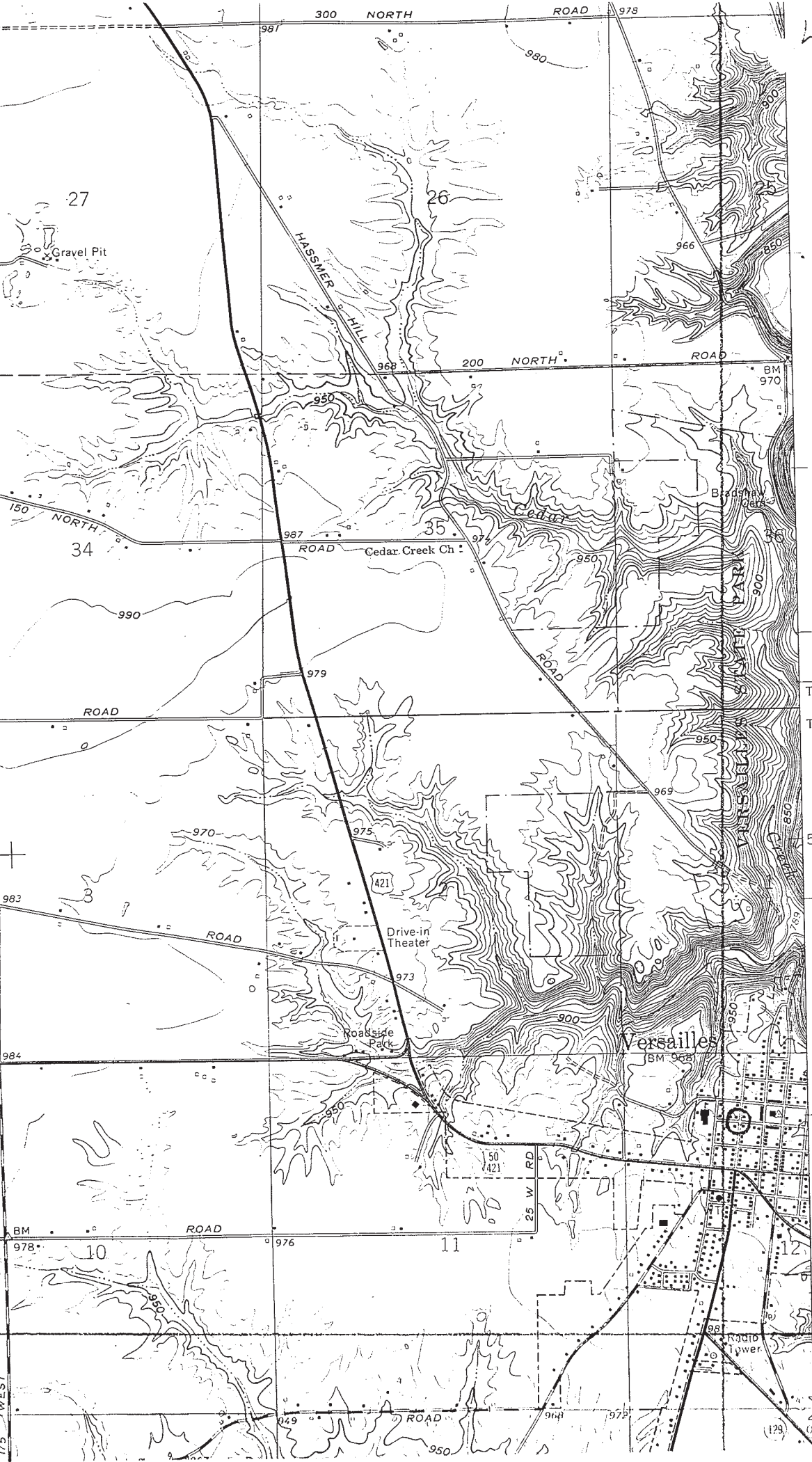
Section number 10 Page 8

---

**Tyson United Methodist Church  
Ripley County, Indiana**

*Boundary Justification*

This is the legal property description on file at the Ripley County Recorders Office. Refer also to the dimensions given on the original site plan (attached).



TYSON UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH  
RIPLEY CO., IN  
UTM:  
16 6510604325990

T. 8 N.  
T. 7 N.  
5  
ELROD 5 MI.  
AURORA 22 MI.  
(MILAN)