

UTEC – St. Paul’s Church  
1839

Building History

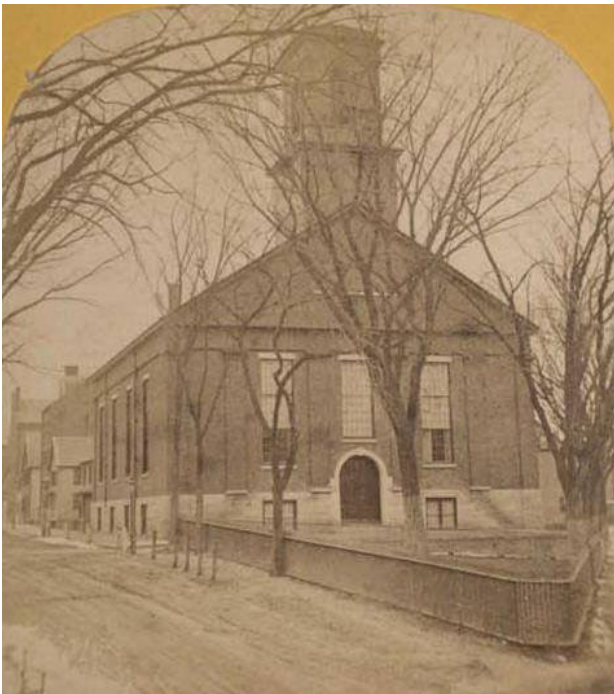
This Greek Revival building housed a Methodist congregation from its construction in 1839 until the 1980s. The architecture of the building consists of a high granite foundation, red brick walls, wood and granite trim, stained glass windows, and a wooden steeple.

Its plan is typical of early New England Protestant meetinghouses, with an open rectangular plan and an interior balcony running along three sides. The church interior was remodeled in 1897, but a 1907 fire caused extensive damage and led to its present appearance.

Saint Paul’s went through several name changes, first dropping “Episcopal” from its title in 1939 and then merging with the United Evangelical Brethren in 1968 to become Saint Paul’s United Methodist Church. In 1979 the Highland United Methodist Church merged with St. Paul’s.

UTEC bought the former church in 2006 and proceeded to undertake a renovation and expansion of the historic church to create a new youth center with a gym and performance space. The oldest LEED Certified Platinum green building in the world, the design included renovation to the existing building as well as an addition resulting in 20,000 square-foot space to include a large multi-use performance space, fitness center, classroom space, computer room, video production suite, sound recording lab, dance studio with sprung wood flooring, lounge area, mediation room, café, kitchen, and staff office space. Part of the new addition includes a three story stair/courtyard that unifies the building and functions.

Sustainable and "green" features of the project included recycled materials from the original structure, soy-based insulation, a 97%-efficient boiler, photovoltaic roof system, a thermal chimney developed from the old church steeple (terrace doors as windows act as air conditioning with no mechanical AC and a floor plan designed to maximize air flow), LED light fixtures, sustainable building materials, and energy efficient appliances and controls.



*St. Paul’s United Methodist Church as seen in the 1870s-1880s. (Photo – UMass Lowell Center for Lowell History)*