NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

173-0000-0001

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. Mark Church

other names/site number Same

2. Location

street & number 19230 W. 29th Street, North ☐ not for publication

city, town Colwich ☒ vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Sedgwick code 173 zip code 67030

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
☒ private	☒ building(s)	1	buildings
☐ public-local	☐ district		sites
☐ public-State	☐ site		structures
☐ public-Federal	☐ structure		objects
	☐ object	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. ☐ See continuation sheet.

State Historic Preservation Officer — November 17, 1990

Signature of certifying official — Date

Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion: Religious structure: Church

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion: Religious structure: Church

7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals; Romanesque Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: limestone
walls Stone: limestone
roof Other: composition
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

St. Mark Church (c. 1903-1906) is located on 19230 W. 29th Street in St. Mark, Union Township, Sedgwick County, Kansas. St. Mark is an unincoporated community some fourteen miles northwest of Wichita. The church is the core of a religious complex that includes a school (c. 1940), a rectory (c. 1951), a convent (c. 1953), and a cemetery. The church retains a high degree of architectural and structural integrity.

The Romanesque Revivial church is built of rusticated limestone blocks and roofed with copper. The building has a southern facade orientation, its overall measurements are fifty-seven feet from east to west and one hundred and twenty-one feet from north to south. It is composed of a one-and-a-half-story gabled nave; a three-story bell tower which projects centrally from the gable's southern facade; and a one-story apse which projects centrally from the gable's northern elevation. The building's interior is composed of a colonnaded nave with a barrel vaulted center aisle ceiling flanked by two rib vaulted side aisle ceilings, with a northern apse and southern entrance. The walls are plaster.

The Catholic Advance describes the interior of the church in the following manner: "There are in the church three commodious ailses with pews to seat 800 people. The main altar is a work of art built in the style of the church. The two side altars also with their statues of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph complete a picture that has a very devotional effect upon the visitor. The artistic stained glass windows catching the sunlight and spreading it about in a beautiful blending of colors add to the imposing impression." (Catholic Advance, 3 March 1906, p.5) The stained glass windows were ordered from Mainz, Germany. The altars, pulpit, communion railing, and pews were purchased from the Dubuque Altar Manufacturing Company.

In 1911 the interior of the church was elaborately painted by W. Klaer. Klaer employed an earth tone for the body of the church and applied stencilled, multi-colored geometric decorations to the intradoses, the apse walls, the interior window surrounds, the barrel vaulted ceiling, and the rib vaults. Additionally, Klaer painted the apse ceiling with the Trinity and painted canvas medallions of various saints to hang from the spandrel walls. A period photograph reveals a very ornate space recalling the Romanesque basilicas of Byzantium.

XX See continuation sheet

In 1945 the church's interior was redecorated by Hays, Kansas artist Alex Lindenberger at a cost of $8,200. A period newspaper calls the 1911 interior "dark and grimy", the new color scheme for the walls and ceiling was buff. (The Catholic Advance, 11 May 1945) The redecorating included washing the walls and ceiling, perhaps painting over some of the ornate decoration from the 1911 period, and painting new pictures of saints and other religious scenes on the walls and ceiling of the church. It appears that the stencilled, multi-colored geometric decorations on the intradoses, the apse walls, the interior window surrounds, and the wainscotting were retained in the redecorating. The eight hand painted medallions, the angel paintings above the side altars, and the Trinity painting in the apse were washed. The wooden main and side altars and the wooden communion railing were sandpapered and gold leafed. The statues were redecorated. The sanctuary floor was covered with asphalt tile, the choir floor was carpetted. The confessionals and the ambry were replaced. Eight large, artistic plastic lanterns were installed. New front doors were installed.
It appears that the interior of the church was substantially repainted in 1983, as most of the ornate stencilling is nolonger visible. The apse Trinity painting and the spandrel wall medallions appear to be the only decoration that remains from the 1911 period. The statuary and the altars were refinished and the pews were replaced. Additionally, in 1983 the roof's slate was replaced with copper. The exterior of the church may have been surfaced with a sealer at this time.

Architecturally, the St. Mark Church is a striking example of early twentieth century Romanesque Revival ecclesiastical design. On the exterior its rusticated limestone tower, nave, and apse, combined with a gently bowed steeple roof, arched windows, rose windows, buttresses, and tower colonnade work together to make the St. Mark Church a pleasing derivative of the Romanesque. The interior displays a colonnaded nave with a barrel vaulted center aisle ceiling flanked by two rib vaulted side aisle ceilings, with a northern apse and southern entrance, again characteristic of the Romanesque. The restrained stylistic interpretation of the Romanesque Revival makes the St. Mark Church an excellent example of a high style building whose clean lines and direct approach clearly recall it antecedants.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Architecture	1903-1906	1906
Social History	1903-1940	

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Drath, Rev. Father Bernard
Dumont, Mr.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

St. Mark Church (c. 1903-1906) is being nominated to the National Register under criteria A and C for its historical association with the St. Mark community and for its architectural significance as a Romanesque Revival style church. The parish is located fourteen miles northwest of Wichita and is the oldest parish in Sedgwick County. St. Mark was the mission church for the surrounding German communities of Andale, Colwich, Schulte, Aleppo, Ost, and Garden Plain.

The town of St. Mark was described in 1882 by John P. Edwards as sitting "in the midst of the German settlement. It has a large Catholic church, school buildings, a post office, a stock of general merchandise, drug store, hotel, blacksmith, shoemaker, tinsmith, and carpenter shops." (Edwards, 1882, p. 11) In 1881 St. Mark had one hundred and forty inhabitants and received mail four times a week. The area's crops consisted of grain and livestock, with very little hay.

In 1906, St. Mark's population was listed at one hundred families, by 1910 that number had dropped to sixty families. Orsemus H. Bentley writes of St. Mark in 1910: "There are four German townships in Sedgwick County. There are Union, Sherman, Garden Plain and Attica Township. The Germans farm in these townships, and they are among the best farms of the state of Kansas, are largely Catholic. Near the center of the territory embraced in these townships is located the town or hamlet of St. Mark. This point is the seat of a magnificent Catholic church and school. The parish is a large one and a most prosperous one. Some of the wealthy German farmers of this section reside here. They are the great wheat raisers and their farms are in a fine state of cultivation. This town has no railway, but that does not matter, for there are fine railway facilities all around them and they are growing richer and more prosperous each year." (Bentley, 1910, pp. 642-643)

The first recorded mass in the St. Mark community was offered in 1874 and the parish was established in 1875. The parish's first frame church was built in 1875 on an eight acre tract donated by the August Wilkus family to the Bishop of Leavenworth. A larger frame church was built on this site in 1885; fifty-nine pews stood in the body of the church and thirteen pews stood in the gallery.

☒ See continuation sheet

In 1903 the construction of the present stone cathedral began.

The construction of the church occurred during the second residency of Rt. Rev. Father Bernard Schmiehausen, 1881-1884, 1889-1912. Schmiehausen was born in Freckenhorst, Westphalia, Germany in 1856. He was educated in classical studies in the Prussian Gymnasium of Warrendorf; studied philosophy and theology at the Royal Academy of Munster, and the American College of Louvain, Belgium. He was ordained at Roermond, Holland in 1881 for the Leavenworth, Kansas Diocese. Schmiehausen came to the United States in the fall of 1881 and located immediately at St. Mark.

The new church was designed by Rev. Father Bernard C. Drath from the McCracken parish in Rush County, Kansas. Father Drath based the design of the St. Mark Church on Romanesque European precedents. The projected overall dimensions were 137 feet long by 56 feet wide, the side walls were 24 feet high, the nave was 30 feet long, and the tower was 120 feet high. In 1903, the estimated construction cost for the church was between $25,000 and $30,000.

Mr. Dumont served as the project architect, J. Walter served as the contractor. "The work on the new church...(was)...superintended by an experienced constructor in the person of John Pilkington of Hoisington. Mr. Pilkington has contracts for building several other churches in the state." (Catholic Advance, 20 June 1903, p. 8) Baptist Bogner served as the carpenter foreman and made the window and door frames for the church, and J. Kreutzer headed a group of German-Russian stonemasons from Liebenthal. Fred Jecke, a resident of Germania, placed the slate shingles on the roof.

Much of the material for the new church came from the Peabody Watch Factory in Wichita that was purchased by the Wichita diocese in March, 1900 for $4,516.50. The Peabody Watch Factory was constructed in 1887 of limestone rock probably quarried near El Dorado. The factory stood on West Douglas Avenue near Meridian, and would have employed four hundred people, but the depression occurred and the watch factory never became operational. The factory was torn down in 1901 and all useable material was hauled to St. Mark by the parishioners. The three clock faces in the church's tower may have been salvaged from the factory.

In addition to the stone from the Peabody Watch Factory, thirty railroad carloads of stone were needed to finish the church. Most of the stone was quarried near El Dorado, some of the stone was quarried near Augusta. The stone was shipped by train to Colwich and Goddard and then loaded into wagons for transport to St. Mark. Eight to ten wagon loads of rock were obtained from one railroad carload of stone.

The sale of iron, lumber, and other materials from the watch factory, offertory collections, and pew rentals financed the construction of the St. Mark Church.

Parishioners were still paying assessments on the church in 1908. Families were assessed by Father Schmiehausen and allowed four years to complete their payment which would be used for building the church. The final construction cost equaled $40,000.

The "prosperous little village of St. Mark" dedicated its new cathedral on Sunday, February 25, 1906. The new church was dedicated by Bishop John Hennessy. Between two thousand and three thousand people attended the dedication, including a "large number of sympathetic non-Catholics." The Catholic Advance wrote that St. Mark now possessed "one of the finest churches in this part of Kansas....a marvelous piece of enterprise for the little congregation. Now St. Marks has a complete plant, of church, school and house, all built of solid materials and destined to be of service for years to come, and what is of greater estimation St. Marks has a congregation as thrifty and independent in material things as it is staunch and loyal in the Catholic faith.... Again St. Marks is recognized as the mother church of Sedgwick County. Wichita may be a larger city than St. Marks, but its progress in its Catholic population fails by comparison with its country neighbor." (Catholic Advance, 3 March 1903, p. 5)

In 1933 sermons were still delivered in German. By 1940 all sermons were delivered in English although confessions were still heard in German. Little German is spoken in the community today but the church continues to serve an active congregation.

St. Mark's Church retains a high degree of architectural and structural integrity. The Catholic Advance describes the interior in the following manner: "There are in the church three commodious ailses with pews to seat 800 people. The main altar is a work of art built in the style of the church. The two side altars also with their statues of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph complete a picture that has a very devotional effect upon the visitor. The artistic stained glass windows catching the sunlight and spreading it about in a beautiful blending of colors add to the imposing impression." (Catholic Advance, 3 March 1906, p.5) The stained glass windows were ordered from Mainz, Germany. The altars, pulpit, communion railing, and pews were purchased from the Dubuque Altar Manufacturing Company.

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In 1926 a hand-pumped pipe organ was purchased from Hinners Organ Company in Pekin, Illinois. It replaced the old foot-pumped organ. The choir loft was remodeled to accomodate it. In 1985 the original 1926 organ was rebuilt by James Harms of Hesston, Kansas. Many of the original parts were modified by Harms.

The church furnace was fired by coal until 1931 when it was converted to oil. The parish was provided with electricity in 1933.

In 1945 the church's interior was redecorated by Hays, Kansas artist Alex Lindenberger at a cost of $8,200. A period newspaper calls the 1911 interior "dark and grimy", the new color scheme for the walls and ceiling was buff. (The Catholic Advance, 11 May 1945) The redecorating included washing the walls and ceiling, perhaps painting over some of the ornate decoration from the 1911 period, and painting new pictures of saints and other religious scenes on the walls and ceiling of the church. It appears that the stencilled, multi-colored geometric decorations on the intradoses, the apse walls, the interior window surrounds, and the wainscotting were retained in the redecorating. The eight hand painted medallions, the angel paintings above the side altars, and the Trinity painting in the apse were washed. The wooden main and side altars and the wooden communion railing were sandpapered and gold leafed. The statues were redecorated. The sanctuary floor was covered with asphalt tile, the choir floor was carpetted. The confessionals and the ambry were replaced. Eight large, artistic plastic lanterns were installed. New front doors were installed.
In 1960 a tornado damaged several stained glass windows and the roof of the church, as well as the rectory and the cemetery. The windows and the roof were repaired.

It appears that the interior of the church was substantially repainted in 1983, as most of the ornate stencilling is nolonger visible. The apse Trinity painting and the spandrel wall medallions appear to be the only decoration that remains from the 1911 period. The statuary and the altars were refinished and the pews were replaced. Additionally, in 1983 the roof's slate was replaced with copper. The exterior of the church may have been surfaced with a sealer at this time.

The building has no additions although the complex has seen a new school (c. 1940), rectory (c. 1951), and convent (c. 1953) constructed since 1940.

Architecturally, the St. Mark Church is a striking example of early twentieth century Romanesque Revival ecclesiastical design. The exterior rusticated limestone tower, nave, and apse, combined with a gently bowed steeple roof, arched windows, rose windows, buttresses, and tower colonnade work together to make the St. Mark Church a pleasing derivative of the Romanesque. The building's interior is composed of a colonnaded nave with a barrel vaulted center aisle ceiling flanked by two rib vaulted side aisle ceilings, with a northern apse and southern entrance, again characteristic of the Romanesque. The restrained

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bentley, Orsemus H. The History of Wichita and Sedgwick County, Kansas. (C.F. Cooper, Chicago). 1910.

Catholic Advance (Wichita), 20 June 1903 (p.8), 3 March 1906 (p. 5), 15 April 1933.

Martin, Mary Kathyrn and Rebecca Martin. Homesteaders of the Prairie: St. Mark, 1875-1975. (Mennonite Press, North Newton, KS.) 1977.

Moeder, The Rev. John P., Jcd. History of the Diocese of Wichita. (Diocesan Chencery Office, Wichita). 1917.

Tonn, Ann. "St. Mark's: The Town and Its Church." 1966.

Edwards, John P. Historical Atlas of Sedgwick County, Kansas. (John P. Edwards, Philadelphia). 1882.

☐ See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository: Kansas State Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	14	626310	4177480
B			
C			
D			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description The nominated property is located in the SW¼, SE¼, SE¼, ~~SE¼~~ SW, S32-T26-R2W in St. Mark, Sedgwick County, Kansas on a tract measuring 77' x 141' whose northeast corner is 14' directly northeast of the northeast corner of the church's foundation. Beginning at the northeast corner of the parcel the boundary proceeds 141' south, 77' west, 141' north, and 77' east to the point of beginning.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification The nominated property is located in the center of the St. Mark community as the core of a religious complex that includes a school, a rectory, a nunnery, and a cemetery. The boundary includes a 77' x 141' parcel which contains the church. A larger area is historically associated with the church, but the original school, rectory, and nunnery have been demolished and the extant buildings are not eligible for the register.

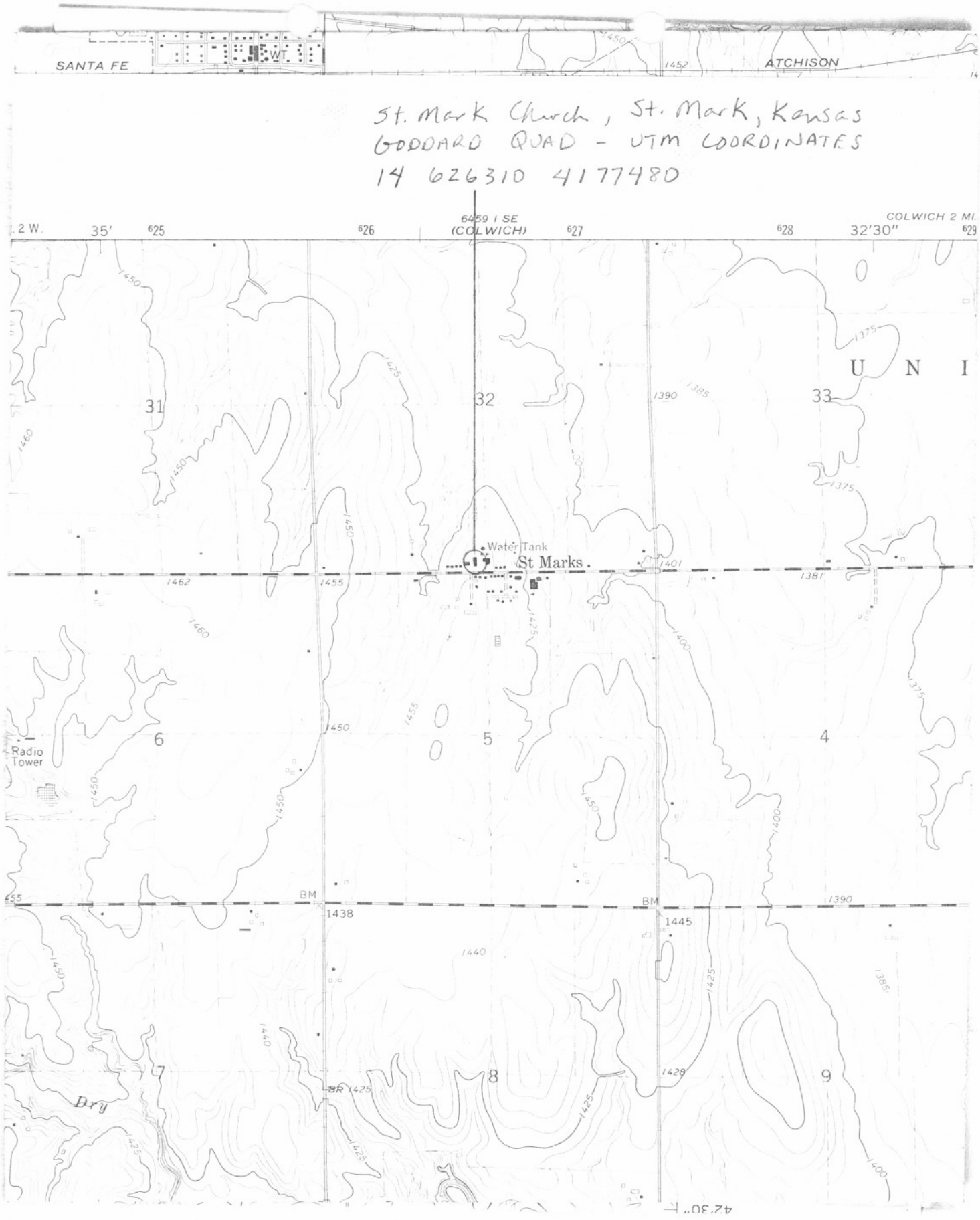
☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martha Hagedorn-Krass, Architectural Historian

organization Kansas State Historical Society date January 10, 1991

street & number 120 W. Tenth telephone 913-296-5264

city or town Topeka state Kansas zip code 66612

St. Mark Church, St. Mark, Kansas
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