



Photo by Vince Ramirez

Built in 1911, Eugene's First Christian Church stands as a city landmark.

Historic church is landmark Still serving community after 80 years

By Pat Malach
Emerald Reporter

When describing the First Christian Church in Eugene, most people will inevitably use the word distinctive.

Mixed in with business offices, parking garages and stores in downtown Eugene stands the stately building that would look perfectly in place on a hillside in Rome or on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

"If you talked to Eugene residents and asked them to list three historical sites, they would most likely list the church as one of those three," said Teresa Bishow of the Eugene Planning Commission.

"I think the reasons for that are the distinctive architectural style, its prominent location on Oak Street, a busy thoroughfare, and because it is the oldest remaining church in the downtown area," she said.

However, the church, which is located at 1166 Oak St., is not an official historical site.

A movement to place the building on the local historic landmark list was begun in August 1977 but the church requested that the building not be placed on this list, Bishow said.

Church member Maureen Russell said the church board was afraid that historic site restrictions might prevent them from altering the building, and would make it more difficult if they wanted to sell the property.

The building was constructed in 1911 from a set of standardized plans drawn by a New York architect.

"It represents the neo-classical revival movement of architecture," Bishow said.

Neo-classical style is a return to the ancient Greek and Roman designs. Six thick white columns greet people as they walk up the steps to the front door. The building was built in the rotunda style that was used for the U.S. Capitol



Photo by Vince Ramirez

The classic pipe organ is one of the unique features of the church.

Building.

"The church was designed around the acron plan which includes a dome and a circular seating pattern," Russell said. "The dome is made of a series of overlapping tin plates. There are some interesting acoustical things that happen because of the dome."

She cited areas in the rotunda where a person

Turn to Church, Page 6

Soviets invite director to translate newsletters

At the invitation of the Soviet Children's Fund, Mary Widoff, education director for Planned Parenthood, will travel to Eugene's sister city of Irkutsk to help the Soviet's develop sexuality education programs for parents and their children.

The invitation came after an official Soviet delegation discovered Widoff's nationally-distributed news letter "There's No Place Like Home ... for Sex Education," at the 41 school district office.

The Soviets later sent Widoff a letter requesting permission to translate the newsletters into Russian, and invited her to Irkutsk to attend an official ceremony presenting the Rus-

Turn to Widoff, Page 6

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