

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Ernesto Memorial Chapel
other names/site number Iglesia de Piedra / Iglesia Metodista de Piedra

2. Location

street & number Intersection State Roads 486 and 488, Abra Honda Ward not for publication
city or town Camuy vicinity
state Puerto Rico code PR county Camuy code 027 zip code 00627

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national x statewide local

Carlos A. Rubio Cancela
Signature of certifying official

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer
Title

Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register
 ___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register
 ___ other (explain:) _____

Mr. Edison H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

7.8.10
Date of Action

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 | 0 | buildings |
| 0 | 0 | district |
| 0 | 0 | site |
| 0 | 0 | structure |
| 0 | 0 | object |
| 1 | 0 | Total |

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/ religious facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/ religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Craftsman

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: concrete

walls: Limestone rocks

roof: Wood, cardboard shingles

other:

Narrative Description

Summary paragraph

The **Ernesto Memorial Chapel (Iglesia Metodista de Piedra) (Fig. 1)**, built in 1912, is located in the intersection of State Roads 486 and 488 in the rural ward of Abra Honda, in the municipality of Camuy, Puerto Rico. The eighty-square-meter, square plan hipped roofed building is entirely made-out of carefully and manually placed limestones rocks, with mortar used as an almost invisible adhesive element, giving the church a unique craftsmanship, texture and gravity-defiant appearance. The method of construction exemplifies the most intrinsic values of the Arts & Craft movement and its architectural derivation, the Craftsman style.

Narrative Description

The property, designed in the Craftsman style, is a unique construction of pure craftsmanship artistry. Built under the guidance of Architect Albert Munson, the building interior’s layout follows the historic floor plan: a square plan, with a single nave facing the chancel in the ‘east wall’. The chancel’s concrete floor is one step higher than the concrete floor of the nave. The chancel or sanctuary area, almost three-foot wide, has the usual components: a wooden pulpit used by the clergy for gospel readings; a communion table (the altar); and a lectern for the Bible. Besides the difference in elevation between the chancel and the nave, which emphasizes the liturgical importance of the chancel, a set of communion or chancel wooden railing serve as boundaries between the nave and the sanctuary (**Fig. 2**)

The church hipped roof is composed of wooden planks supported by six principal wooden rafters and several secondary rafters diagonally arranged. The main rafters connect on the collar-beam at the ceiling vortex (**Fig. 3**) The roof’s weight rests evenly on the buildings walls to which is anchored. The present roof dates from the late 1990s, as the roof was heavily damaged by hurricane Georges and was replaced in kind.ⁱ

The most significant architectural feature of the church is the walls composition and method of construction. As the church’s name implies, the building was constructed by way of a complicated and delicate

ⁱ Hurricane Georges was the second major hurricane of the 1998 Atlantic hurricane season. The tropical cyclone landfalls on its long track through the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico during September, becoming the second most destructive storm of the season. Georges caused nearly \$6 billion in damages, mostly in Puerto Rico and Hispaniola.

process of bonding limestone pieces of different sizes, with mortar as the bonding element. The stone pieces were marvelously interlocked, giving the building a unique texture and appearance. The mortar used for stone-bonding is practically invisible along most parts of the building, which creates the impression that the stones are sustained purely by the hand-crafted-stone network. Although not officially documented, it is likely that the arrangement of the stones was accomplished through the use of removable wooden molds, where the stones were carefully selected and laboriously hand-placed. Larger stones were used in the exterior and smaller ones were selected for the inside, specially in the altar-wall section. The walls' thickness ranges from two to two-and-a-half- feet.

The interior of the temple is reached through only one entrance at the Northern main-façade. Following a four-steps-high concrete slab stair, the entrance is formed by an impressive arched-prostyle-portico with a wooden low-pitched gable above. The portico is most definitely the center-piece of the temple's façade (Fig. 4). The extreme thickness of the portico is justified as it supports the weight of the stone bell-tower. The bell tower has also a wooden low-pitched gable that covers the original 1912 bell. Both the portico's and the bell tower's wooden gable roofs were rebuilt after the 1998 hurricane. Also of new construction is the surrounding fence, added during the late 1990s.

The bonding-mortar is mostly visible at the the window-seals. The mixture was used to create squarely-smooth openings to place each of the fifteen wooden double-sided louvered windows (Fig. 5). The present windows were installed during the early 1960s.

Astonishingly, the entire building stone-crafted-wall-system has no supporting columns or excavated-ground foundations, relying on its own perfectly distributed weight to stand.

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Social History

Period of Significance

1912-1960

Significant Dates

1912

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Munson, Albert

Period of Significance (justification)

1912 (Construction date)

Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)

The Ernesto Memorial Chapel meets Criteria Consideration A, since it is significant for its architectural and artistic value.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The **Ernesto Memorial Chapel**, built in 1912, is of statewide significance under Criterion C in the area of architecture. The property is a unique construction of pure artisanal artistry. It embodies the philosophical proposals of the *Arts & Craft* movement and its architectural expression, the Craftsman style. The property is also statewide significant under Criterion A in the area of social history as it represents the establishment of the Protestants ideals, concepts and values within the local social network during the early 20th century and the religious openness promoted by the change of regime in the island after the Spanish-Cuban- American War of 1898.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The **Ernesto Memorial Chapel** is located in the rural ward of Abra Honda, in the municipality of Camuy. Officially founded in 1807, Camuy, as many other towns in the island, remained a small town during most of the nineteenth century.ⁱⁱ By 1878, it had the usual institutional buildings around the town square: a rubblework City Hall, a rubblework Catholic Church building, a wooden slaughter house and a wooden building used by the *Guardia Civil*. The urban core consisted of one hundred and eleven (111) families in sixty-one (61) houses and forty-six (46) huts.ⁱⁱⁱ The rest of the population, 1,710 families, was spread throughout the countryside surviving in a subsistence farming system.

Just when Camuy was increasing its economic importance by means of its crops and cattle industry, the history of Puerto Rico took an unsuspected turn. The Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898 transformed the island from a Spanish colony into a United States' territory. Boat loads of land speculators, adventurers, social researchers, photographers with their new Kodak cameras and teachers came to the new acquisition in the Caribbean.

Another group whose arrival was extremely significant was the religious representatives. The Protestants missionaries followed the footprints on the United States soldiers, right after the Treaty of Paris was ratified. Their arrival was not accidental. Just prior to the military occupation of Puerto Rico, the Protestants factions had divided the island among themselves. Anticipating the United States' victory over Spain, on June 20, 1898, the Foreign Missions Board of the Presbyterian Church called for a meeting among the main Protestant sections to unify the efforts and to properly divide the work load in the new territories of Cuba, Philippines and Puerto Rico.^{iv}

By March 1899, eight months after the occupation, representatives from the Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationals, Disciples of Christ, among others, convened in New York to establish the procedures, boundaries and rules in the "Protestant colonization" of Puerto Rico. Showing their numerical and organizational strength, the Baptists and Methodists claimed the major urban centers. Camuy was claimed by the Methodist. **(Fig.6)**

ⁱⁱ Fray Iñigo Abbad y Lasierra. *Historia Geográfica, Civil y Natural de la Isla de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico*. Madrid, 1788. Anotada en la parte histórica y continuada en la estadística y económica por José Julián Acosta, 1866. Ediciones Doce Calles e Historiador Oficial de Puerto Rico, 2002.

ⁱⁱⁱ Manuel Ubeda y Delgado, *Isla de Puerto Rico. Estudio histórico, geográfico y estadístico de la misma*. 1878.

^{iv} The Missionary Review of the World, XII (January, 1899): 53; XII: pp. 377-78. "Plans for Cuba and Puerto Rico".

were used to spearheaded the penetration of the rural areas. The **Ernesto Memorial Chapel** represents this complex context.

Ernesto Memorial Chapel

The Ernesto Memorial Chapel, built in 1912, is located in the rural ward of Abra Honda, in the municipality of Camuy and it represents the Protestant penetration of the Puerto Rican countryside early in the twentieth century. Camuy was claimed by the Methodist (**Fig. 6**) as part of the arrangement conducted among the ecumenical churches in 1899. A Methodist congregation was formed in 1904. By 1905, breaking with the Catholic Church practice of staying within the urban core, the Methodist established a foothold in the rural ward of Abra Honda. At the time, the ward had one the largest population in the municipality, mostly dedicated to agricultural and cattle industry. The ward became very important as the advance point for the Methodist penetration of Camuy's countryside. In 1913, Abra Honda was described as "*the spiritual Jerusalem of the entire district*".^{xi}

After using a meeting-house for the services, in 1906 the Methodist Church acquired the lot to build the temple. However, due to lack of funds, the construction was delayed. The congregation received some financial aid from the Methodist's headquarters in the US, but it was a local US family who provided the initial funds. The Kiplingers, a Methodist missionary couple, contributed with five-hundred (500) dollars.^{xii} They were saving the money to pay for their son's, Ernesto Kiplinger, ministerial education in the US, but the young man passed-away and his parents decided to donate the savings to the temple's construction. The Kiplingers were present when the church was inaugurated in 1912. Above the portico there is an original 1912 concrete plaque with the words *Ernesto Memorial, 1912* on relief.

The construction of the Church, conducted under the supervision of architect Albert Munson, took five years, from 1907 until 1912. Local residents and members of the congregation provided free-labor to accomplished the difficult task. Oral tradition relates that local farmers brought the stones from their farms and from the Camuy river's banks and that children deposited stones at the construction site every morning on their way to the rural school. The specific reasons to built the church in such a peculiar way are unknown; other Methodist churches were built using reinforced concrete at the time. Nonetheless, the architectural style and the method of construction used in the **Ernesto Memorial** gave the building, from the very start, a unique design and personality that made it stand-out, not only from its immediate surroundings, but islandwide as well. The uniqueness of the building was recognized during the early years after its construction, as expressed below:

"The chapel was finished sometime in May, and its architecture is about the most unique I have ever seen. It is far in the interior and only the people who pass through those farming communities can see and appreciate it. I am sure if it were in some place near the Capital the tourists would go to see it if they had a seen a picture of it. It is made of rough river stone, only joined together with a line of mortar. All the wall is rough inside and out, and it is gem of beauty."^{xiii}

The style also served the purpose of breaking with the architectural pattern associated with Catholic churches, creating a new image for a new ideological discourse. The interior spatial arrangement, a small rectangular nave with a low and simple chancel, served to create a more intimate, accessible and democratic relationship between the clergy and the congregation, in contrast with the hierarchical space distribution within the Catholic temples.

The ***Iglesia Metodista de Piedra***, is an architectural jewel with a unique design and method of construction. It is also historically significant as it represents the early and successful establishment of the

^{xi} Porto Rico Mission Conference. Methodist Episcopal Church. Year Book 1913, 33.

^{xii} Oficina Central de las Iglesias Metodistas Unidas de Puerto Rico. Archivo Histórico. Expediente de la Iglesia Metodista de Piedra de Camuy.

^{xiii} Porto Rico Mission Conference...44

Protestants factions in Puerto Rico’s countryside, the new social conditions created during that process, and is a great example of the new religious architectural language brought into the island.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

Primary Sources

Abbad y Lasierra, Fray Iñigo. *Historia Geográfica, Civil y Natural de la Isla de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico*. Madrid, 1788. Anotada en la parte histórica y continuada en la estadística y económica por José Julián Acosta, 1866. Ediciones Doce Calles e Historiador Oficial de Puerto Rico, 2002.

Oficina Central de las Iglesias Metodistas Unidas de Puerto Rico. Archivo Histórico. Expediente de la Iglesia Metodista de Piedra de Camuy.

Porto Rico Mission Conference. Methodist Episcopal Church. Year Book 1913

Register of American Protestant Missionaries Laboring in Puerto Rico., Together with statistics of the Protestant Work. Conference of the Evangelical Churches which Convened in Ponce, May 24, 1905.

The Missionary Review of the World, XII (January, 1899): 53; XII: pp. 377-78. “Plans for Cuba and Puerto Rico”.

Ubeda y Delgado, Manuel. *Isla de Puerto Rico. Estudio histórico, geográfico y estadístico de la misma. 1878.*

Secondary Sources

Luque de Sánchez, María Dolores. *La ocupación norteamericana y la ley Foraker, 1898-1904*. Río Piedras: Editorial Universitaria, 1980.

Pantojas, Emilio. “La Iglesia Protestante y la americanización de Puerto Rico, 1898-1917”. Revista de Ciencias Sociales, Vol. XVIII, Num. 1-2, marzo-junio, 1974, p. 100-119.

Rosenberg, Emily S. *Spreading the American Dream: Economic and Cultural Expansion 1890-1945*. New York; Hill and Wang,1982.

Silva Gotay, Samuel. *Protestantismo y política en Puerto Rico, 1898 – 1930. Hacia una historia del protestantismo evangélico en Puerto Rico*. Río Piedras: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1997.

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: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | <u>19</u> | <u>726602</u> | <u>2039427</u> | 3 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | 4 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)
Rectangular lot recorded in the *Centro de Recaudaciones de Ingresos Municipales* (CRIM) under land registry number 050-004-117-01.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)
The nominated property includes the entire lot historically associated with the chapel.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Juan Llanes Santos / Historian

organization Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office date May 21, 2010

street & number PO Box 9066581 telephone 787-721-3737

city or town San Juan state PR

e-mail jllanes@prshpo.gobierno.pr

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Name of Property: Ernesto Memorial Chapel

City or Vicinity: vicinity

County: Camuy

State: Puerto Rico

Photographer: Juan Llanes Santos

Date Photographed: March 4, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Chapel's nave; Northwest; 0001

1 of 6.

Name of Property: Ernesto Memorial Chapel

City or Vicinity: vicinity

County: Camuy

State: Puerto Rico

Photographer: Juan Llanes Santos

Date Photographed: March 4, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Chancel; Southeast; 0002

2 of 6.

Name of Property: Ernesto Memorial Chapel

City or Vicinity: vicinity

County: Camuy

State: Puerto Rico

Photographer: Juan Llanes Santos

Date Photographed: March 4, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Chapel's main facade; South; 0003

3 of 6.

Name of Property: Ernesto Memorial Chapel

City or Vicinity: vicinity

County: Camuy

State: Puerto Rico

Photographer: Juan Llanes Santos

Date Photographed: March 4, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Portico; Southwest; 0004

4 of 6.

Name of Property: Ernesto Memorial Chapel

City or Vicinity: vicinity

County: Camuy

State: Puerto Rico

Photographer: Juan Llanes Santos

Date Photographed: March 4, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: East facade; South; 0005

5 of 6.

Name of Property: Ernesto Memorial Chapel

City or Vicinity: vicinity

County: Camuy

State: Puerto Rico

Photographer: Juan Llanes Santos

Date Photographed: March 4, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: South and East facades; Northwest; 0006

6 of 6.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Iglesia Metodista de Piedra

Camuy, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)
N/A

Section number 7

Page 1

Pictorial views, Iglesia Metodista de Piedra

Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



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

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Iglesia Metodista de Piedra

Camuy, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)
N/A

Section number 7

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Fig. 5



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Iglesia Metodista de Piedra

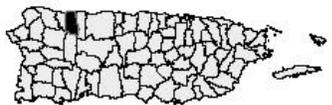
Camuy, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)
N/A

Section number 10 Page 3

Ernesto Memorial Chapel Site Map



| | | |
|--|--|--|
|  <p>Source: Government of Puerto Rico, 2002, Google Image. Source: USGS, 1982, Topographic Map of the Arecibo Quadrangle.</p> | <p>Site Map Ernesto Memorial Chapel Camuy, Puerto Rico</p> |   <p>1:800</p> |
|--|--|--|