

TOURS . EVENTS . MODERNISM



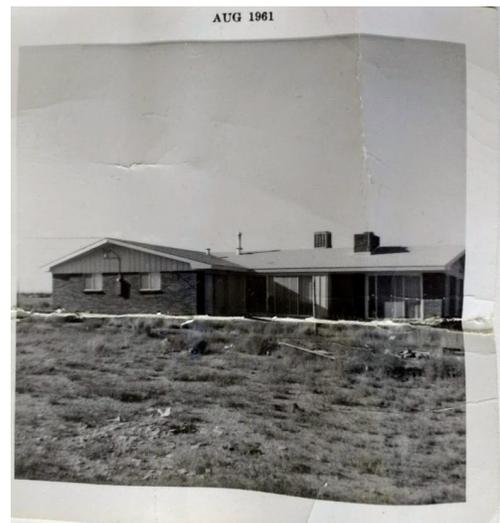
A short drive from the intersection of the I-25 freeway and Montgomery Boulevard, tucked behind sight lines on a small stretch of **Bryn Mawr**, is a church rarely noticed by those outside its congregation.

Constructed for the Church of the Nazarene by the man who would go on to serve as its first pastor, it has escaped time, and so far, proximity to the modern thoroughfares.

We too may have missed it in our surveying of the city, as the authors of the Albuquerque mid-century modern architectural resources report did in 2013. Were it not for seeing photos of Albuquerque on his personal Flickr account, we'd never have had the occasion to ask **modspell** designer Greg McKinney about his connection to the city, a conversation that would lead us down roads past and present.

In 1959, Greg's father, Charles McKinney, moved his family to Albuquerque to accept a job rehabilitating a small Nazarene church on Coal Avenue. While McKinney had no formal architectural training, he had served as an assistant to a church-building in-law, a mentorship that developed his skill and ability to read plans and construct simple churches made of concrete block. The Nazarenes, who trace their church's beginnings back to 1908, lacked the financial resources of more established Christian denominations to engineer extravagant edifices. Following his work downtown, construction of a new church on a parcel near the city's then northern-edge commenced. McKinney was to serve as its pastor once completed.

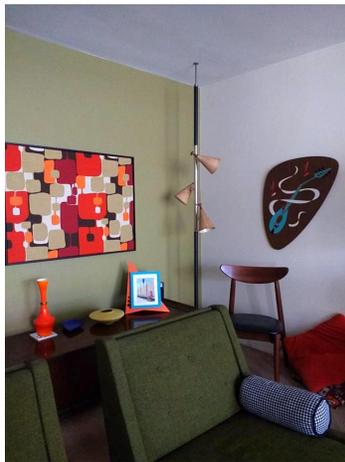
Before the church could be constructed, McKinney had to house his family. While shopping, his wife spotted an advertisement for plans to a small, ranch-style home tacked up in a supermarket and fell in love with it. McKinney purchased the plans and constructed the home himself. Greg recalls that the house's best feature was its three-sided dressed stone fireplace dividing the living and dining room. His mother furnished the home in Lane's Danish-modern decor and chose cherry paneling for the kitchen, which shared a counter with the family room. That cherry paneling was a source of pride for Mrs. McKinney; she would later select the three-



globe pendant lamp still hanging in the church's stained-glass vestibule.

Above: The parsonage in 1961. Photo courtesy Greg McKinney. Used with permission.

McKinney's partner, a California-based architect named George Schreiber kept McKinney's church designs within code. Schreiber was a modernist, but for McKinney, his son says "functional design came from the heart." He built what the church could afford with his heart and soul poured into the mortar. The gym was the first to go up and served as a staging area for work and materials. Frequently, McKinney worked alone, stacking brick and block. As the complex took shape, offices and classrooms connected the gym to the auditorium.



For Greg McKinney, who was two when his parents moved into the parsonage and began work on the church, mid-century modern design represents much more than a style. It summons a time and a place, an era ruled by design and quality. Greg picked up his dad's drafting tools at an early age and today employs mid-century modern design cues in all his interiors. His business's tagline is *inspired design by 1959*. The McKinneys lived in the parsonage until 1963 and returned in 1978 for another two years. Today the church is operated by the Salvation Army; the Nazarenes relocated in 1987 after expanding the building in the 1970s. Still standing to the south of the church is the brick parsonage, though window bars and a wall have been added to the property as the city has closed in around it. It still beckons to

Greg McKinney, as the first home he remembers, the birthplace of his architectural appreciation and his own modern inspiration. Thanks to him we were able to bring its story to light.

Home interior design photo courtesy Greg McKinney. Used with permission.



Photographing the church exterior from this angle, it's difficult to observe that the auditorium roof rises higher than the vestibule. This can be better viewed from the **side of the structure**.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Winter Walking Tours

The winter chill doesn't freeze our modern architecture tour! Walking tours are currently scheduled through January with February dates soon to be added. Tickets are still available for the day after Christmas, New Years Eve, and New Years Day! Here's what some of our first guests have to say about our tours:

"If you're interested in Albuquerque's recent history and modern architecture, this tour will blow you away. You'll hear about businessmen, architects and dreamers who have made Albuquerque the place it is today. Best ninety-minutes you'll spend walking the streets of Albuquerque."

"This tour has truly been one of the highlights of our trip! We learned about both mid-century modern architecture and the history of Albuquerque. The guides are engaging, being passionate and very knowledgeable. We loved it!"

Book Your Tour Today!

'Researching Your Atomic Age Home' Workshop

Hosted at the National Museum of Nuclear Science & History and tentatively scheduled for Saturday, February 23rd, we look forward to releasing tickets and additional details about this workshop in January. A design session by a local interior designer is also in the works!



THANK YOU!

In this season of thanksgiving, Thea and I would like to thank all of you for helping to make our first film screening a success. It was snowing when we left the theater, but our hearts were warmed by such a turnout!

Our thanks also go out to each and every one of you, our newsletter subscribers, and all who've engaged with us through our walking tours, must-see modernism map, and social media posts in our first five months. We're grateful to be able to share modern Albuquerque with you. Thank you for your support and have a happy holiday season!

Ethan Aronson, Director of Guest Experience



FOLLOW US

