

## **St. Philip's Protestant Episcopal Church**

Individual Landmark

210–216 West 134th Street

Designation Date: July 13, 1993



*Left: St. Philip's Protestant Episcopal Church. Photo: Lorraine Colbert*

*Right: The plaque of St. Philip's Episcopal Church.*

St. Philip's Protestant Episcopal Church, built in 1910–1911, is the fourth home of New York City's first African American congregation of Protestant Episcopalians. From its beginnings as the African Episcopal Catechetical Institution in the City of New York, shortly after the American Revolution, St. Philip's was established as its own parish in 1818 under the leadership of Bishop John Henry Hobart and the Reverend Peter Williams Jr.

St. Philip's long and inspiring chronicle of religious and social activism adds a depth to our national history not generally acknowledged. The movement of the St. Philip's congregation northward, beginning in lower Manhattan, to the present location in Harlem, reflects the residential patterns of New York City's African American population. When the Reverend Hutchens Chew Bishop purchased residential property in Harlem in 1908 on behalf of St. Philip's, and the church building was constructed at its present location, St. Philip's became one of the first institutions to attract African Americans to Harlem.

The St. Philip's Church building was designed in the neo-Gothic style by the firm of Tandy & Foster. The design of the facade, a response to certain liturgical requirements, incorporates fourteenth-century English, or Perpendicular, Gothic elements in contrasting orange Roman brick and cast-stone aggregate. Vertner W. Tandy was the first African American architect to be registered in the State of New York, and George Washington Foster Jr., was among the first African Americans to practice the architectural profession in the United States. St. Philip's has continued its nearly 200-year tradition of service to its congregation and community, addressing the spiritual needs of its members, and providing a variety of social programs.

[Read the full NYC LPC designation report here.](#)