

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

February 25, 1936.

Hon. Carl Hayden,

United States Senate.

Dear Senator Hayden:

We have given very thorough consideration to your letter of February 13, in which you quote from a letter from Bishop Walter Mitchell of Phoenix, Arizona, in which he discusses the possibility of a union chapel at the Grand Canyon and the desire of the church authorities to secure a site on which to construct this proposed chapel.

Superintendent Tillotson of the Grand Canyon National Park happened to be in the Washington office at the time your letter came in and he sat in on the conference on this matter. We frankly do not feel that there is necessity for such a project at this time. It is true that there is quite a large church element at Grand Canyon whose needs should be given consideration. However, the recently completed community building should, we believe, serve this purpose, and, in fact, the need for a place in which to hold religious services was one item that was included in the justification for such a building. If this community building is to continue to serve to its fullest possibilities in the future, as it has in the past, it must be used for church services, Sunday school, Bible classes, and the like. It has actually been used for such purposes and the Superintendent has made it a point, in case of conflict in applications, to give preference to those asking for it for such religious purposes.

The community building is not the only place where church services are held. In the music room at El Tovar a Catholic priest holds early mass at irregular intervals. In the same room there is held nearly every Sunday night an Episcopal service by the rector from Flagstaff. Under these circumstances, which doubtless Bishop Mitchell was not fully acquainted with, it appears to us that the present needs, at least, are fully taken care of. Should at any time the conveniences not be sufficient for the purposes then a special chapel, absolutely nonsectarian in character, freely available to any or all denominations or sects, and so located, designed and operated under the control of the Superintendent of the park, could be considered.

We have a special church building in the Yellowstone that is available to all creeds and this is working out very well. Doubtless at some future time when an actual need therefor arises some location can be secured but this would have to receive considerable study. Incidentally, the CCC boys could provide unskilled labor only and the cost of skilled labor would have to be met otherwise.

Sincerely yours,

(SGD.) ARNO B. CAMMERER

Arno B. Cammerer
Director.

Enc. 465579.

ABC-EG
CC Grand Canyon.