

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0668982 DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED MAY 17 1978  
DATE ENTERED OCT 19 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Methodist Episcopal Church

AND/OR COMMON

Linden Methodist Church (preferred name)

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Corner Main and Church Streets

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Linden

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second

STATE

Wisconsin 53553

CODE

55

COUNTY

Iowa

CODE

049

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- \_\_\_ DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- \_\_\_ STRUCTURE
- \_\_\_ SITE
- \_\_\_ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- \_\_\_ PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- \_\_\_ BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- \_\_\_ IN PROCESS
- \_\_\_ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- \_\_\_ UNOCCUPIED
- \_\_\_ WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- \_\_\_ YES: RESTRICTED
- \_\_\_ YES: UNRESTRICTED
- \_\_\_ NO

**PRESENT USE**

- \_\_\_ AGRICULTURE
- \_\_\_ COMMERCIAL
- \_\_\_ EDUCATIONAL
- \_\_\_ ENTERTAINMENT
- \_\_\_ GOVERNMENT
- \_\_\_ INDUSTRIAL
- \_\_\_ MILITARY
- \_\_\_ MUSEUM
- \_\_\_ PARK
- \_\_\_ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- \_\_\_ SCIENTIFIC
- \_\_\_ TRANSPORTATION
- \_\_\_ OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Linden Methodist Episcopal Church Society

STREET & NUMBER

Corner of Main and Church Streets

CITY, TOWN

Linden

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 53553

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Iowa County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Iowa and Chapel Streets

CITY, TOWN

Dodgeville

STATE

Wisconsin 53533

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1976

\_\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Linden Methodist Church is a small, 40 x 50 foot structure centrally located within the business district of the rural community of Linden. It is constructed of roughly-surfaced quarried limestone blocks with smooth stone lintels, sills, quoins, and voussoirs. Each side of the gabled-roof building has four rectangular windows, furnished with stained glass at a later date. Four of the east and west windows have been dedicated to the memory of early pioneers of the area, and another to a prominent couple, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hicks. The remaining windows are not dedicated.

The main facade features two round-arched lancet windows decorated with a "bullseye" and an English "bee-skep." These windows flank a central doorway which is sheltered by a semicircular hood built prior to 1930. A small half-circular inset in the gable reads "M. E. Church, 1851." To the south is a one-story, frame gable-roofed vestry built before 1894 which serves as a meeting room.

A frame Victorian steeple was added ca. 1877-1878. Each side features two round-arched louvered lancets surmounted by a clock face inset among decorative shingles. Corner brackets embellished with pendants support the bell-cast roof which is finished off by a wooden finial and a weather vane. Funds solicited from the community enabled the purchase of a town clock and a church bell for the belfry. The clock is an 1875 Seth Thomas weight clock and has tolled on the hour with few interruptions since its installation in 1882.

Stepping inside the church, one enters a small vestibule added sometime after 1900 from which the worshipper may enter the hall through swinging doors. The main feature of the hall is a three-sided gallery designed ca. 1870 by Thomas Blake, a carpenter who, according to local tradition, had had previous experience in church and gallery building in London, England.<sup>1</sup> Two long staircases along the east and west walls give access to the gallery, which is constructed of panelled and hand-grained pine with walnut trim and is supported by fluted Doric columns. An antique pedal organ is stationed on a platform in the gallery. The pews in the gallery are the original boxes with hinged doors; the box pews in the hall have been replaced by curved rows of seats.

The original pulpit rostrum extended the width of the church. Probably when the gallery was added, it was raised and shortened. The original altar rail remains as does one oak lamp stand.

The church is in good condition but parts of the floor need repair and leakage around the steeple will necessitate a new roof soon.

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<sup>1</sup>The Church Messenger, Marceline, Missouri: Walsworth Brothers, 1951.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
—PREHISTORIC	—ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	—COMMUNITY PLANNING	—LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
—1400-1499	—ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	—CONSERVATION	—LAW	—SCIENCE
—1500-1599	—AGRICULTURE	—ECONOMICS	—LITERATURE	—SCULPTURE
—1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	—EDUCATION	—MILITARY	—SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
—1700-1799	—ART	—ENGINEERING	—MUSIC	—THEATER
—1800-1899	—COMMERCE	—EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	—PHILOSOPHY	—TRANSPORTATION
—1900-	—COMMUNICATIONS	—INDUSTRY	—POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Ethnic history
		—INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1851-1851; 1870; 1878<sup>1</sup> BUILDER/ARCHITECT Thomas Blake<sup>2</sup>

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The major landmark in the tiny old community of Linden, the Linden Methodist Church is a representation of the building techniques, religion and culture of the early Cornish settlers in southwestern Wisconsin.

Architecture: The Linden Methodist Church was constructed in 1851 by skilled Cornish masons of the native quarried limestone used for many Cornish structures in Iowa County. Two small, one-story cottages are the only other stone buildings remaining in Linden itself. The simple gable-roofed design was echoed by many early churches in the area, popularly called "rock churches," but unfortunately few survive. The Rock Lutheran Church in the nearby Town of Dodgeville is a small rubble structure; tiny St. Paul's Mission Church is an early vernacular rubble building of 1842, long-since outgrown; and St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in Avoca is quite similar to Linden Methodist but was built much later by Norwegians in 1868-1869. Two others are of a later Gothic Revival style with pointed-arch windows and steeply-pitched roofs.

Linden Methodist Church duplicated the exterior design of the Primitive Methodist Church which was built at the same time by Cornish settlers in Mineral Point (this church was demolished in the nineteenth century).

The interior configuration echoes the arrangement of John Wesley's church in City Road, London, an arrangement which became the model for many early churches of the faith.<sup>3</sup> Both churches have a gallery supported on Doric columns, box seats, a raised rostrum, a vestry for classes, meetings, etc., and both are of the austere Classical styling of the Calvinistic faiths. Later in the 19th century, Methodist churches in Wisconsin became more traditionally Gothic inspired.

History: The Linden Methodist Church is without a doubt one of the oldest Methodist church structures in continuous service in the State of Wisconsin. The first permanent settlements in Wisconsin occurred in the 1820's in the southwest when lead was discovered. Commercial diggings began in Linden, then known as Peddler's Creek, in 1828. From 1834-1850 many Cornish immigrants settled in Linden. Although Mineral Point and Dodgeville are recognized as centers of Cornish settlement in the state, the smaller community of Linden had a stronger concentration of Cornishmen.<sup>4</sup> Although the Cornish surnames are less prevalent in the area now, residents are quick to point out that the majority of families have at least one Cornish ancestor.

The Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1834. In 1836 the congregation built a small log church, subsequently used as a schoolhouse. Four years later they built a rock church, but this building was also soon converted into a school when the congregation outgrew it in 1851. Now all that remains of the old church site is an iron fence

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

The Church Messenger, Marceline, Missouri: Walsworth Brothers, 1951.  
Daniels, Rev. W. H., A.M., The Illustrated History of Methodism, New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1879, pp. 305-308.  
History of Iowa County, Wisconsin, Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1881.  
 U. S. Census records for Iowa County, 1860 and 1870.  
 Wisconsin Historical Collections.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

42° 55' 04" N. Lat.  
 90° 16' 25.4" W. Long.  
 (UTM ticks not marked on map)

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.2 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Linden

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A            
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 C            
 E            
 G

B            
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 D            
 F            
 H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION  
 Lot #24 in the Village of Linden.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Donna M. Caygill, Secretary

DATE

April 7, 1977

ORGANIZATION

Linden Community Historical Society

TELEPHONE

608/623-2086

STREET & NUMBER

Box 261, 527 Franklin Street

STATE

Wisconsin 53553

CITY OR TOWN

Linden

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Richard Marney*

TITLE

Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

5/10/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

10/19/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

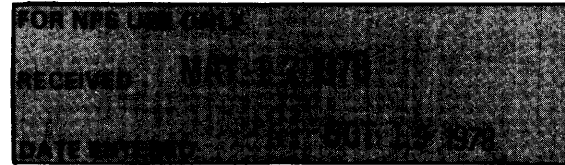
*Bill Helboich*  
 for CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

10/16/78

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around an overgrown cemetery. Historically, Linden has been a stronghold of Methodism. The Cornish miners who settled in Linden brought with them from Cornwall a strongly Calvinistic and conservative form of Methodism. The only other church in town was a Primitive Methodist church, now vacant. Churches of this denomination were usually formed by more conservative Methodists in reaction to the trends in the M. E. Church in Wisconsin towards a looser interpretation of Calvinist predestination, piety and church polity.

The once prosperous mining community has declined over the years with the mines being worked out, a drop in the lead market, and the high cost of operations. The declining mining industry precipitated a decline in population and church membership. Records indicate a village population in 1970 of 408 (the population in 1850 was 950), church membership of 80 and school population of about 100. Current efforts to close the village school and small post offices, if they succeed, will affect the survival of Linden. The Linden Community Historical Society, with the approval of the Linden Methodist Administrative Board, wishes to nominate this building to the register to add a measure of protection in the coming years of uncertainty.

<sup>1</sup>Plaque inset in gable-end of church and The Church Messenger, Marceline, Missouri: Walsworth Brothers, 1951.

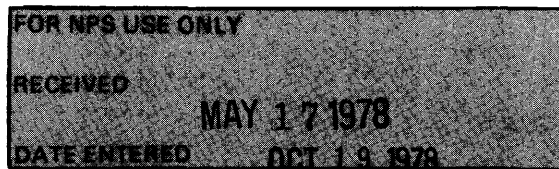
<sup>2</sup>The Church Messenger.

<sup>3</sup>Rev. W. W. Daniels, A.M., The Illustrated History of Methodism, New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1879, pp. 305-308.

<sup>4</sup>Wisconsin Historical Collections.

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Katherine E. Hundt, Architectural Historian

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

816 State Street

Madison

March 20, 1978

608/262-2970

Wisconsin 53706