Form No. 10-300 REV. (9/77)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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SEE	INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TYPE ALL ENTRIES			лS [.]
NAME				
HISTORIC F	irst Congregational	Church of East H	lartford and Parso	nage
AND/OR COMMON	rst Congregational Ch	unch of Fact Hart	ford and Parconago	
			toru anu rarsonage	
LOCATIO				
STREET & NUMBER	829-837 Main Street		NA NOT FOR SUBJECT	
CITY, TOWN			NA_NOT FOR PUBLICATIO	وي الإيد الما باليوم بين الأمرين بالمالي من مراكز الماليون المالية ويستخدون المواد التي ومستقد المدارا ال
	East Hartford		lst	
STATE	Connecticut	CODE 09	COUNTY Hartford	CODE 003
		09		005
CLASSIFIC	JAHUN			
CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRÉ	SENT USE
DISTRICT		X_OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	
X_BUILDING(S)			COMMERCIAL	PARK
STRUCTURE	ВОТН	WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL	PRIVATE RESIDEN
SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION			
OBJECT	IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
	BEING CONSIDERED	YES: UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL	TRANSPORTATION
	N/A	NO	MILITARY	OTHER:
OWNER O	F PROPERTY First Congregation	al Church of Eas	at Hartford, Conne	ecticut
	TINC CONGLEGATION			
STREET & NUMBER	831 Main Street		-	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
CITY, TOWN			STATE	
	East Hartford N/		CT	
LOCATION	N OF LEGAL DESC	RIPTION		
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS	S,ETC. East Hartford T	own Clerk		
STREET & NUMBER	740 Main Street	- Town Hall		
CITY, TOWN	East Hartford		STATE CT	
REPRESEN	NTATION IN EXIST	TING SURVEYS	5	
TÎTLE				
	State Register	of Historic Plac		
DATE		FEDERAL		• • •
1975			X_STATECOUNTYLOC	AL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS	Connecticut His	torical Commissi		
CITY, TOWN	Hartford		STATE CT	

7' DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT	DETERIORATED	UNALTERED	X_ORIGINAL S	SITE
XGOOD	RUINS	X_ALTERED	MOVED	DATE
-FAIR	UNEXPOSED			

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE THE First Congregational Church of East Hartford is a large frame Greek Revival Church built in 1835. It sits close to the street on a busy corner, the intersection of Main Street and Connecticut Boulevard, a major route across the river to Hartford. Most of the nearby buildings are low 20th-century commercial blocks, but sharing the large lot with the church is the parsonage, built sometime in the 1850's.

The main part of the church is rectangular in plan 60 x 76', the equivalent of $2\frac{1}{2}$ stories high, with the ridge of the roof perpendicular to Main Street. The east gable end is brought forward to form the pediment of a portico, supported by six fluted Ionic columns on stone bases. The columns rest on a platform which is constructed of large granite blocks, as are several steps leading up to the portico. The rest of the foundation is brick. The main facade within the portico is five bays wide, with three entranceways flanked by a window at either end and five corresponding windows on the second level. The side facades show two tiers of four windows, and the rear or west gable has two quarterround windows. Above the asphalt-shingled roof rises a square two-stage tower, positioned just behind the portico. The first stage is a belfry with corner pilasters and two plain columns in antis within a louvered opening on each side. The second stage is similar but smaller, and has four clock faces. Both stages terminate with wooden Greek parapets. The entire exterior of the church, including part of the tower, has been covered with aluminum siding, completely obscuring the clapboards. window and door moldings, plain corner pilasters, and flush boarding which appear in old photographs. The seriousness of this alteration is lessened somewhat by the application of the siding over the details, rather than removing them altogether. Other exterior modifications include aluminum shutters on the sides, and a round ocular window in the front gable, where old prints show a plain tympanum.

The church has several additions to the rear. These are all smaller and lower than the main building and are not obtrusive. The first of these is the 1888 chapel, now used for offices. Herein is a stained-glass rose window in memory of Samuel Pitkin, a deacon and first superintendent of the Sunday School. Immediately west, and also used for offices, is an earlier 1867 chapel, moved back when the later one was built, and lastly is the present modern chapel.

In 1876 the interior was severely damaged by fire and completely redone, so that everything inside, with the possible exception of the gallery seats, dates from that year or later. There is a gallery on three sides supported on fluted Ionic columns (1937), and a pilastered and pedimented backdrop (dating from 1910) to the sanctuary. The church originally had box pews, but these were replaced by curved-arm seats with dark wood trim, some of which remain in the gallery. The interior of the attic shows heavy king-post trusses carrying the roof (reinforced by later diagonal planking), and separate framing for the support of the tower.

The parsonage just south of the church is a two-story frame house, cubical in form with a nearly flat roof. The main facade is three bays wide with a central entrance lighted by sidelights and transom. There is a flat-roofed entrance porch carried on square columns, with panelled FHR-8-300A (11/78) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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First Congregational Church of East Hartford East Hartford, CT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER ⁷ PAGE

bases and large capitals. The roof has a wide overhang at the eaves. Apparently, the house was in the Tuscan Villa style, but it, too, has been completely aluminum-sided, so that other than the entrance porch, there are no stylistic details visible. It is now used as the sexton's residence and for other parish purposes.

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8 SIGNIFICANCE

1700-1799 ART ENGINEERING MUSIC THEATER ¥_1800-1899 COMMERCE EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT PHILOSOPHY TRANSPORTATION 1900- COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY POLITICS/GOVERNMENT OTHER (SPECIFY)				•	
1400-1499 ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC CONSERVATION LAW SCIENCE 1500-1599 AGRICULTURE ECONOMICS LITERATURE SCULPTURE 1600-1699 **ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION MILITARY SOCIAL/HUMANITA 1700-1799 ART ENGINEERING MUSIC THEATER **-1800-1899 COMMERCE EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT -PHILOSOPHY TRANSPORTATION 1900- COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY POLITICS/GOVERNMENT OTHER (SPECIFY)	PERIOD	AF	REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	IECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	
	PREHISTOHIC 1400-1499 1500-1599 1600-1699 1700-1799 ¥_1800-1899	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC AGRICULTURE *ARCHITECTURE ART COMMERCE	COMMUNITY PLANNING CONSERVATION ECONOMICS EDUCATION ENGINEERING EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE LAW LITERATURE MILITARY MUSIC PHILOSOPHY	SCIENCE SCULPTURE SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN THEATER TRANSPORTATION
					UTHER (SPECIFY)

SPECIFIC DATES 1833 - built BUILDER/ARCHITECT Chauncey Shepard, builder

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The East Hartford Congregational Church is important locally for its historical associations as a community institution (Criterion A) and also for its architectural merit. Although many of its features are hidden behind the aluminum siding, it nevertheless is typical of the many Greek Revival churches built throughout the state in the 1830's and 40's (Criterion C). Although larger than most, it has the key features: a full portico across the front (the Ionic order was common), and the multi-stage tower of blocks stacked one on another. The thin moldings, tall columns, and elaborate steeples which characterized the churches of the earlier Federal period are here replaced by the bold proportions and limited ornament of the Greek Revival.

The architectural value of the church is enhanced by the extensive archival material relating to the building. The church may be said to have been designed by the building committee, who chose all the materials, specified the form of the building including the number and order of the columns, and directed that the tower not be carried by the roof trusses. Their painting directions included the interior woodwork, which was to be grained in imitation of oak. Their model was the recently-completed Second Church of New London (destroyed 1868), and to ensure the similarity they hired Chauncey Shepard, a New London builder. His crew of joiners included three from that area, four from Suffield, Connecticut, three from Massachusetts, and but one from East Hartford. Shepard's East Hartford church itself became the model for the Somers (Connecticut) Congregational Church (1842). The church records show that the building committee was familiar with architectural developments outside of their own area. This interest, as well as the varied backgrounds of the workers, helps account for the essential similarity of churches in this period.

The East Hartford Church is closely connected with local history. Although the Congregationalists were no longer the established church, the town did contribute \$1,000 to the building, on the provision it could use the basement for town meetings. Thus, despite disestablishment, the church building was the scene of town business until 1880. Moreover, the Congregational minister was an influential person. The Reverend Samuel Spring (died 1877) was minister when the present church was built, served as the pastor until 1861, and was pastor emeritus until his death. Reverend Spring frequently preached his favorite cause, temperance, a major ante-bellum social issue. Spring was also for years the only school visitor, examining teachers and having the public schools under his sole supervision. The Parsonage was built for Reverend Spring by his congregation when his first house and all his belongings were consumed by fire. It continued as the parsonage until the 20th century and was included in the nominated property because of its close functional relation to the church, as well as its proximity.

The landmark status of the church must also be noted. For nearly 150 years,

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES First Congregational Church, East Hartford. Record	s, State Library, Hartford.
Goodwin, Joseph O. <u>East Hartford</u> : <u>Its History and T</u> Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1879.	raditions. Hartford: Case,
Tuthill, William B. <u>The First Congregational Churc</u> <u>1702-1902</u> . Hartford: Elihu Geer Sons, 1902. (continued)	
10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA	VONEWER WAT ATTAUT
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTYC. 1 ¹ / ₂	
QUADRANGLE NAME Hartford North	UADRANGLE SCALE 1:24 000
UTM REFERENCES A 1 8 6 9 5 7 7 0 4 6 2 6 6 0 0 8 1 ZONE EASTING NORTHING ZONE EASTING C I I I I I I	
GLILLILL HLILL	
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The nominated property includes both the church next to it, both on East Hartford Assessor's Map 13,	
LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STA	TE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES
STATE CODE COUNTY	CODE
N/A N/A N/A	N/A
STATE CODE COUNTY N/A N/A N/A	CODE N/A
II FORM PREPARED BY	
NAME/TITLE Bruce Clouette, Consultant	
ORGANIZATION	DATE
Connecticut Historical Commission STREET & NUMBER	June 25, 1979 TELEPHONE
59 South Prospect Street	(203) 566-3005
	STATE CT
Hartford	•
12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CE	
NATIONAL STATE	
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preserva	
hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that i criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.	
	it has been evaluated according to the
criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.	
criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE TITLE Director, Connecticut Historical Commission FOR NPS USE ONLY I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REG Entered in the	DATE February 5, 1982
criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE TITLE Director, Connecticut Historical Commission FDR NPS USE ONLY I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REG Entered in the National Register	DATE February 5, 1982
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CONTINUATION SHEET

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FEB 2 3 1982

ITEM NUMBER ⁸ PAGE ²

the "Old White Church," as it is sometimes called, has stood on this prominent site at one of the busiest intersections in the town. Barber in 1836 described it as "beautifully situated at the entrance of the principal avenue to Hartford,"¹ and it has been the symbol of the center of East Hartford since its construction.

¹John W. Barber, <u>Connecticut</u> <u>Historical</u> <u>Collections</u> (New Haven: 1836),

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		-	
CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	9	PAGE 3

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Williams, Mary L. The Story of the First Congregational Church, East Hartford, Connecticut, Covering the Century 1835-1935. East Hartford: First Congregational Church, 1935.