

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 St. Wenceslaus Church Complex

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number East Main Street N/A not for publication

city, town New Prague N/A vicinity of congressional district Second

state Minnesota code 22 county Scott code 139

**3. Classification**

| Category  | Ownership                                   | Status  | Present Use                                   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <input type="checkbox"/> public             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied        | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied                 | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both               | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress           | <input type="checkbox"/> educational          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                   | <b>Accessible</b>                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | N/A in process                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government           |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered   | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted          | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial           |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> no                         | <input type="checkbox"/> military             |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> museum               |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> park                 |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence    |
|   |   |   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific           |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation       |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other:               |

**4. Owner of Property**

name St. Wenceslaus Church

street & number 215 East Main Street

city, town New Prague N/A vicinity of state Minnesota

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Scott County Courthouse - Recorder's Office

street & number 428 South Holmes

city, town Shakopee state Minnesota

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Statewide Survey of Historic Resources has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Minnesota Historical Society -- 240 Summit Avenue-Hill House

city, town St. Paul state Minnesota

## 7. Description

|  |                                       |   |   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Condition</b>                         |                                       | <b>Check one</b>                            | <b>Check one</b>                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent       | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair            | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |   |   |

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The St. Wenceslaus Church Complex is situated on the north side of Main Street on the eastern edge of New Prague. The downtown area is located to the west and the city hospital to the north; most of the surrounding area is residential. The scale and masonry construction of the buildings on their spacious landscaped setting make them locally distinctive.

The St. Wenceslaus parish dates back to the 1850s when New Prague was settled as a Catholic hamlet. Land was donated for church buildings in 1857, and a log church and log rectory were the first buildings constructed (1858-61 and 1862 respectively). The first church burned and a new church was constructed in 1868; a brick rectory replaced the log one in 1873. A school and convent were added to the church complex in 1878 and c. 1880. The parish outgrew these buildings and they, in turn, were replaced by the present structures. Of pivotal significance are the church (1907), school (1914), and rectory (1908). The convent's recent construction date (1949) but compatible materials and scale and unobtrusive location make it a non-contributing but non-intrusive structure. Basically, the appearance of the church complex has changed little since the construction of the school in 1914. The buildings are described below.

#### St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church

The St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church is the focal building of the complex, being the largest and displaying the greatest architectural ostentation. It is located at the center of the complex facing Main Street. Tall arborvitae line the sidewalk leading to the church steps.

The 1907 Church includes elements of the Romanesque Revival and Georgian styles. The large red brick structure sits on a rusticated stone foundation. Smooth Kasota stone is utilized in decorative banding and keystones to create a polychrome effect. The building is symmetrical and features a central gabled section flanked by a pair of matching towers. The front facade of the central section features a gabled central entry portico sheltering three transomed double doors, a statue of St. Wenceslaus located in an arched niche above the portico, a group of three semi-circular arched windows in the gable end, and a corbel course beneath a wooden cornice. A cross caps the peak of the roof. The corner towers are each comprised of a two story brick section featuring grouped arched windows (the original stained glass has been replaced by glass block) surmounted by a louvered octagonal belfry with a flared domical roof capped by a cross. A clock is located in one side of each belfry. Dentillated wooden cornices are located at the belfry rooflines, separating the brick and wooden sections of the tower, and at a midway point of the towers continuing across the central section and following the arch of the niche. The east and west facades feature brick and stone buttresses separating the stained glass tracery windows occupying each of the seven bays. A small lantern capped by a cross is located on the roofline at the rear of the church near where the apse joins the main structure.

The integrity of the church is good. Exterior alterations are limited to the removal of three gabled dormers on the east and west facades and the removal of the stained glass windows in the towers. The brick was tuck pointed in 1977. The interior was partially remodeled in 1972, but most of the original features, including the extensive wood carving in the sanctuary, tin ceiling, and stained glass, remain.

(see continuation sheet)

# 8. Significance

| Period  | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below   |  |   |  |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric          | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning                | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic    | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation                      | <input type="checkbox"/> law                    | <input type="checkbox"/> science             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture            | <input type="checkbox"/> economics                         | <input type="checkbox"/> literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input type="checkbox"/> architecture           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education              | <input type="checkbox"/> military               | <input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> art                    | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering                       | <input type="checkbox"/> music                  | <input type="checkbox"/> theater             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy             | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-     | <input type="checkbox"/> communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> industry                          | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government    | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)     |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> invention                         |   |  |

| Specific dates | Various - see description | Builder/Architect | Unknown |
|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------|
|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------|

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The church complex of St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church is primarily significant for its association with the Czech population that settled portions of south central Minnesota in Scott, Le Sueur, and Rice Counties. The buildings of St. Wenceslaus provide a focus visually and functionally for New Prague and the surrounding Czech community. St. Wenceslaus was organized in 1856, shortly after Bohemian and Czech settlers had arrived in the area. A small settlement grew up around the Catholic church and became the primary center serving the surrounding rural community. These settlements, or "Catholic hamlets", were a common phenomena in Catholic dominated Scott and Le Sueur Counties. The city of New Prague grew out of the small community centered around St. Wenceslaus. The church has been the central parish for the surrounding Czech population and for the larger Catholic population of the area as well. Until a recent reorganization, New Prague was the Deanery for the surrounding parishes which reached as far south as Waterville and Elysian (Le Sueur County), west to Le Sueur (Le Sueur County), north to Jordan (Scott County), and east to Lonsdale and Shieldsville (Rice County). The area remains a thriving, viable, Czech dominated community in which the church plays a central role.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

UTM NOT VERIFIED  
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 3 acres

Quadrangle name New Prague Quad

Quadrangle scale 15 minute

### UMT References

A 

|      |   |         |   |   |   |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------|---|---------|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1    | 5 | 4       | 5 | 4 | 3 | 9        | 5 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 0 |
| Zone |   | Easting |   |   |   | Northing |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

B 

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C 

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| Zone |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

D 

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| Zone |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

E 

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F 

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| Zone |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

G 

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| Zone |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

H 

|      |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------|--|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|      |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Zone |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Verbal boundary description and justification** That part of Block 5, St. Wenceslaus Addition to New Prague described as follows: Begin at the SE corner of block 5; thence Wly 405.3 feet; thence Nly 242.5 feet; thence Ely 287.5 feet; thence Nly 280 feet; thence Ely 217.6 feet to east line of block 5; thence Sly 522.5 feet to point of beginning.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| N/A   |      |        |      |
| state | code | county | code |

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Britta Bloomberg, Research Historian/Survey

organization SHPO Minnesota Historical Society

date August 1980

street & number 240 Summit Avenue - Hill House

telephone 612/296-0101

city or town St. Paul

state Minnesota 55102

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Russell W. Fridley*

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 11/24/80

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*William H. Braasman*

date 2/19/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: *Jane McCallister*

date 2/18/82

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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DATE ENTERED

St. Wenceslaus Church Complex

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

St. Wenceslaus Catholic School

The St. Wenceslaus Catholic School is located immediately east of the church and also faces Main Street. The arborvitae lining the school's sidewalk are particularly thick and partially block the school from view.

The school was constructed in 1914, seven years after the church was built. The church's scale, masonry construction, and use of semi-circular arches and contrasting banding is repeated in the school's design. The school has a symmetrical facade featuring a central pavillion with a gabled parapet and a large flared truncated hip roof. The two story structure is constructed of buff colored brick and rests on a rusticated stone foundation. The central entry occupies the first floor of the pavillion with double doors flanked by small arched windows set in a group of three stone arches. Two rows of rectilinear windows are above the doorway, and a group of three arched windows occupy the gable end. A cross caps the parapet. The four bays which flank either side of the central pavillion consist of rectilinear windows in the stone basement and on the first floor and semi-circular arched windows on the second floor. The fenestration arrangement with arched windows on the upper floor and rectilinear below is repeated on the other facades of the structure. Continuous bands of contrasting brick circle the building at the tops of the windows and beneath the eaves. Two wide brick chimneys are located at the rear of the building on either side of the center bay.

Exterior alterations include the removal of a central octagonal bell tower and the removal of dormer windows on the east, west, and south facades. The interior has been remodeled, but the basic floorplan is intact. A two-story brick addition located at the rear of the building was constructed in 1954 to enlarge the school facilities. The new addition is not visible from Main Street and does not detract from the character of the church complex.

St. Wenceslaus Rectory

The church rectory is located west of the church and also faces Main Street. The two story brick building was constructed in 1908 and features a three-bay symmetrical facade. Paired windows flank a central three-part window on the second floor. All windows are rectilinear and feature stone sills; stone headers cap the second floor center window and all of the first floor windows. A one bay hipped entry porch of recent construction shelters the transomed doorway. Bay windows are located on the east and west facades. A brick course in relief circumvents the building beneath the hip roof.

(see continuation sheet)

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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St. Wenceslaus Church Complex

CONTINUATION SHEET

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PAGE 2

St. Wenceslaus Rectory - continued

Exterior alterations include removal of a south facade dormer, the removal of a full front columned porch, modification of the hip roof, and alteration of the second story center window on the front facade. The interior has been partially remodeled.

A detached garage of brick construction with a hip roof is located north and east of the house.

St. Wenceslaus Convent (non-contributing)

The St. Wenceslaus Convent is located north of the school and faces N. Columbus Avenue. The building is not visible from Main Street. The two-and-a-half story structure was built in 1949. It is constructed of red brick and features a low hip roof with a wide shed dormer on the west facade and small hipped dormers on the north and south facades. The central gabled parapet on the front (west) facade is reminiscent of the central gable ends of the church and school.

Heating Plant (non-contributing)

The one story square red brick heating plant located at the rear of the church and behind the convent was constructed in 1979. It is visible from neither Main Street nor Columbus Avenue and does not detract from the church complex.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

St. Wenceslaus Church Complex

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

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PAGE 3

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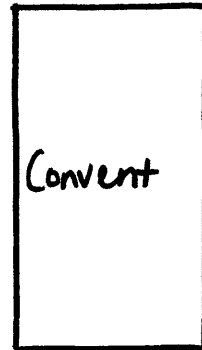
St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church, 1857-1976, New Prague: 1976.

# ST. WENCESLAUS CHURCH COMPLEX

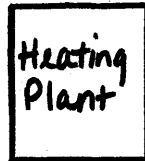
New Prague, MN. (Scott County)  
- sketchmap showing approximate locations of buildings



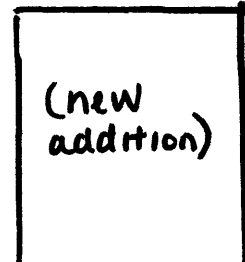
CHURCH AVE



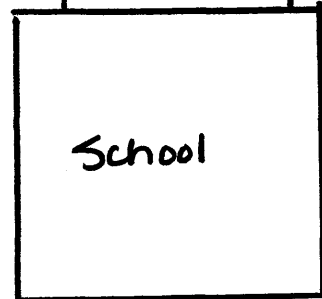
Convent



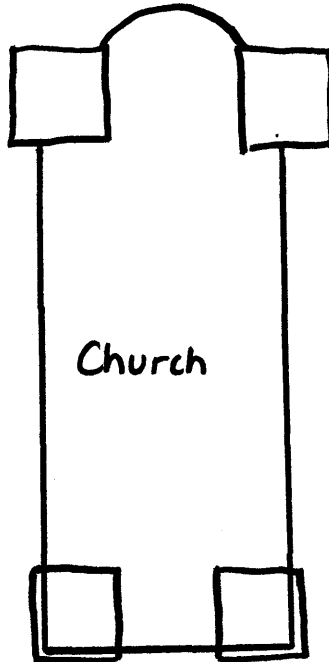
Heating Plant



(new addition)



School



Church

1ST ST. NE



garage

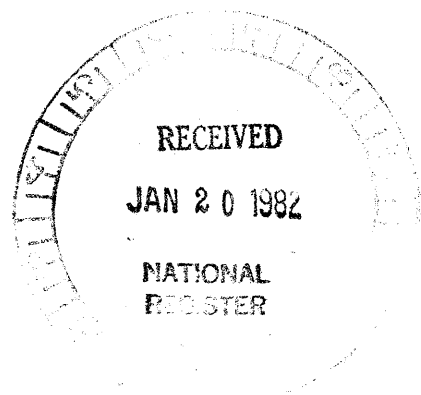


Rectory

N. COLUMBUS AVE.

MAIN ST.





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

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Note: These changes apply to  
St. Wenceslaus Church Complex in  
Scott County, Minnesota.

REFERENCE NUMBER: 82003035

STATE: MINNESOTA

COUNTY: Scott

RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC): Church of St. Wenceslaus (Catholic)

CITY:

VICINITY OF:

ADDRESS:

CERTIFICATION DATE:

REMOVED DATE:

COMMENTS:

*Nina M. Archabal*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nina M. Archabal  
State Historic Preservation Officer

JUN 17 1988  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date