

**United States Department of Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property


historic name Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage
other names/site number Zion Lutheran Church

2. Location

street & number 236 and 254 West Mill Street
city or town Columbus
state Wisconsin **code** WI **county** Columbia **code** 021 **zip code** 53925
not for publication
vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination _ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _ nationally _ statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature of certifying official/Title
Date 5/15/09

State Historic Preservation Officer - Wisconsin

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _ meets _ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage

Columbia

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall

7-8-09

Jan

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- structure
- site
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
2	1 buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
2	1 total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources is previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

RELIGION/church-related residence

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

RELIGION/church-related residence

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Gothic

Italianate

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Limestone

walls Brick

Limestone

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1878-1907

Significant Dates

1878
1885
1887

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Mix, Edward Townsend
Vanaken, Richard D.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage
Name of Property

Columbia
County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State Agency
 - Federal Agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Zion Evangelical Church
_ Archives

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 336650 4800400
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Timothy F. Hegglund	date	August 27, 2008
organization		telephone	608-795-2650
street & number	6391 Hillsandwood Rd.	zip code	53560
city or town	Mazomanie	state	WI

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage

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Wisconsin

Name of Property

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	Zion Lutheran Church Board of Trustees	date	August 27, 2008
organization		telephone	920-623-5180
street & number	236 W. Mill Street	zip code	53925
city or town	Columbus	state	WI

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage
Columbus, Columbia County, WI

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Description

The Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage property contains three buildings: the excellent, highly intact High Victorian Gothic Style church itself, its associated, equally intact Italianate Style parsonage, which is located next door, and a later and non-contributing automobile garage that is located behind the parsonage. The church property is located on the northeastern edge of the historic commercial core of the city of Columbus and its buildings sit on a three-lot parcel that forms the western corner of the city block that is bounded on the southwest by W. Mill St., on the northwest by N. Spring St., on the northeast by W. Church St., and on the southeast by N. Dickason Blvd.¹ This flat parcel was purchased by the Zion Lutheran congregation in 1868, and the congregation's original clapboard-clad church was moved from its previous site to this new parcel in the same year. In 1878, the rapidly expanding congregation decided to replace the original church building a new cream and red brick-clad High Victorian Gothic Style church designed by Edward Townsend Mix, a very prominent architect practicing in Milwaukee. The original portion of this new church measured 40-foot-wide by 70-foot-deep and it had a rectilinear plan, tall limestone foundation walls that enclosed a full basement story, beautifully crafted exterior walls that were clad in cream brick accented with red brick, a nave that was sheltered by a gable roof, and a main façade facing onto W. Mill St. that was bisected by a superb 125-foot-tall steeple. In 1885, a clapboard-clad house that had been located on the parcel when the church bought the land and which had served as the church's parsonage up to that time was moved off the site and a new cream brick-clad two-story T-plan Italianate Style parsonage was built next door to the church as a replacement. Two years later, a 40-foot-deep by 50-foot-wide cross-gabled one-story addition was built across the rear elevation of the church using the same materials and design elements. The resulting L-plan church is believed to be locally significant and eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion C (Architecture) for its architectural significance as a fine, highly intact example of the ecclesiastical designs of Edward Townsend Mix and as a very fine example of the High Victorian Gothic Style. Its associated parsonage is believed to a contributing resource because it is a fine example of the Italianate style and also is a fine example of a resource type that is typically associated with churches, but which is not always found on an adjoining lot.

As is noted above, the block that the Church's parcel is situated on is located at the edge of the historic downtown commercial core of Columbus. As a result, the buildings on the blocks that surround the Church block differ considerably. The land to the northeast of this block abuts the city's railroad corridor and the buildings on the blocks fronting on W. Church St. are mostly industrial in character.

¹ The population of Columbus in 2000 was 4093.

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The land to the northwest, however, is primarily residential and the blocks fronting on N. Spring St. are mostly lined with single-family houses. Meanwhile, the land to the southwest and southeast of the church block consist of a mixture of both residential and commercial properties. Some modern buildings have intruded into this area and some historic buildings have been removed, but by and large, the area surrounding the Church and Parsonage still retains much of its historic character.² The N. Dickason Blvd. and W. Mill St. sides of the Church's own block are edged by concrete curbs and gutters and by wide mown grass terraces, and that portion of the N. Spring St. side that adjoins the church building was originally identical, but the terrace portion here has been black-topped to provide parking for the church and the curbing has been removed. The church building itself is located close to the sidewalks on its northwest (N. Spring St.) and southwest (W. Mill St.) sides and there is just a narrow strip of mown grass located between the northwest-facing side elevation of the church and the sidewalk. The parsonage, however, is set back further than the church and it is surrounded by a mown lawn that fills the space between it and the church. This lawn is ornamented with shrubs and flowers. A black-topped driveway that is accessed from N. Spring St. is located behind the church and it provides access to the garage located behind the parsonage.

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1878, 1887 (C)

The original 1878 church building forms the principal part of the L-plan church we see today and its exterior is still almost completely intact. Its original rear elevation was altered with the construction of an addition across the rear of the church in 1887. The original building was built at a cost of \$5000.00 and it is an excellent example of High Victorian Gothic Style design, the salient characteristics of which are the polychromatic treatment of its surfaces using either materials of different colors or textures, the use of the pointed arch, and a certain heaviness in the massing of its elements. As originally built, the church consisted of a 40-foot-wide by 70-foot-long rectilinear plan one-story nave that rested on a raised basement story fashioned from coursed ashlar limestone blocks that have raised mortar joints, the stone portion being crowned by a projecting water table that is comprised of three courses of cream brick. The exterior walls of the nave above the basement story are sided for the most part in a cream brick veneer over a wood frame. These walls are sheltered by a steeply pitched asphalt shingle-covered gable roof whose ridgeline runs northeast-southwest. The principal facade of the church faces southwest and fronts on W. Mills Street and it is bisected by a large, multi-part steeple. The southeast and northwest-facing side elevations of the nave were originally identical in design and were each five-bays-wide. The rear or northeast-facing elevation was originally hidden by a clapboard-

² In addition, the NRHP-listed Columbus Downtown Historic District (NRHP 3-5-1992) is located one block to the southwest and one block to the southeast of the Church and Parsonage site.

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clad addition that had been added to the original 1859 church when it was moved to this site, the appearance of which is unknown.

The 40-foot-wide southwest-facing main W. Mills St. facade of the 1878 design is still almost totally intact and it is symmetrical in design and three-bays-wide. The projecting twenty-foot-square steeple forms the oversized center bay while the two side bays are each 10-feet-wide and were originally mirror images of each other. Each of these side bays originally contained a simple single flat-topped door opening in its basement story; the original door opening in the right-hand (southeast) bay is still intact and it has a date stone set into the wall surface to its right that bears the inscription "Evang. Luth. Zion Kirche, A. D. 1878." The original door opening in the left-hand bay, however, as well as the rest of this bay's basement story, has now been covered over by a shed-roofed vestibule that historic photos show was constructed between 1958 and 1978.³ Placed on the main wall surface above each of these entrances is a single tall, thin, pointed arch window opening that, like all the other window openings that light the interior of the church, is filled with its elaborate original art glass. The sills of both of these window openings are of dressed stone and a belt course composed of a double course of red brick extends around the entire nave of the church at the level of these sills. A second belt course composed of a double course of red brick that is outlined by corbelled courses of cream brick is placed just below the impost level of these windows' pointed arch heads and it extends around the entire nave of the church. In addition, the pointed arch heads of both windows are encircled by alternating red and cream-colored brick, the upper portions of each bay is filled with corbelled cream brick ornamentation, and the upper portion of each bay is angled sharply upward and reflects the steep pitch of the main roof.

The 125-foot-tall steeple projects forward from the center of this facade. Its base measures 10-feet-deep by 20-feet-wide and it rests on a raised limestone basement story that is a continuation of the coursed ashlar limestone basement story that supports the walls of the nave. The steeple is divided into three sections: tower, lantern, and spire. The tower section is two-stories in height, it is sided in cream brick, and each of its three visible exterior walls is one-bay-wide. The principal entrance to the church is via a large, pseudo four-centered arch that is centered on the southwest-facing facade of the tower. This entrance is reached by ascending a flight of concrete steps that span the entire width of the tower. Double wooden doors that replaced the originals fill the opening, which is crowned with a transom filled with art glass, and these doors open into a vestibule inside. Sheltering this entrance is a superb, original,

³ Fortunately, care was exercised in the design of this vestibule, which was given limestone foundation walls that are identical to the ones on the church itself, the walls above are clad in cream brick, and the pitch of its roof is almost the same as that of the main roof far above it. As a result, the vestibule blends in very well with the original building.

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multi-gable-roofed wooden canopy that is supported by two pairs of large paneled and pierced wood brackets whose bases are supported by engaged, corbelled cream brick pedestals.

Centered in the second story of the tower above the entrance is a pair of segmental-arched windows that are filled with art glass; these windows help light the balcony that runs across the southwest end of the interior of the nave. A belt course comprised of a double course of red brick encircles three sides of the tower at the level of the window heads. Placed just above these windows is a blind, semi-circular-arch whose brick-clad surface is outlined with groups of alternating red and cream bricks. Positioned above this spandrel is a circular opening filled with wooden louvers, and this opening is also enframed with groups of alternating red and cream bricks. The tower is then terminated by corbelled brick decoration that is placed just below the jerkinhead gabled roof that shelters the tower's walls.

The lantern section of the steeple is slightly smaller in dimension than the tower section below it and it is one-story in height and is square in plan. The lantern is of wood and it is open and serves as the steeple's bell chamber.⁴ Each of the four elevations of the lantern is identical and they consist of three-pointed trefoil openings that are further ornamented with jig sawn decoration. A single inset panel is placed below each of the openings and each of these panels is enframed with horizontal and vertical boards that are part of the framing system of the lantern. Terminating the lantern section is a wooden cornice that is supported visually by denticulated elements.

The steeple is crowned by a tall octagonal broached spire that is itself crowned with a tall stainless steel cross. Broaches are half-pyramid shaped elements placed at the corners of a square tower that enable the transition to the octagonal spire above. Four triangular wooden pediments that stand out from the roof surface at the base of the spire provide ornamentation. The spire is enlivened further by small spire lights that are placed on four of its eight surfaces near the top of the spire.

Both of the original southeast and northwest-facing 70-foot-long side elevations of the 1878 church have survived intact, but they were extended when the 1887 rear addition to the church was built. Originally, both elevations were identical in design and five-bays-wide and each of these ten bays contained a single tall pointed arch window opening that lit the nave, all of which were and are filled with art glass that depicts biblical scenes. Like the identical windows that are found in the two bays on the main façade that flank the church's steeple, the sills of these ten windows are visually connected by the two-course red brick belt course that encircles the church, and the window heads are connected in

⁴ Although the structural members of the lantern are all original and are made of wood, they have now been clad in painted metal sheeting for protection. This metal sheeting is essentially invisible from the ground.

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the same way by the belt course that is made up of a triple course of red brick. Also identical are the alternating red and cream-colored bricks that encircle the pointed arch heads of all ten windows, and corbelled cream brick ornamentation is also placed along the tops of both elevations just below the eaves of the main roof. In addition, either single or paired segmental-arched window openings are placed in the raised basement story below each of the first story windows on both side elevations.

The construction of the equally tall 40-foot-deep by 50-foot-wide one-story addition across the rear of the church in 1887 extended the length of the church by an additional 40 feet. It also altered both of the original side elevations of the church. The 50-foot-wide addition is ten-feet-wider than the original church, and since the northwest-facing side elevation of the original church was already positioned very close to N. Spring St., it was not possible to increase the width of the church on the Spring St. side. Thus, the only way to get the desired interior space was to push the southeast-facing side elevation of the addition out by ten feet instead. To make this possible, the addition was given a side-gable roof and gable ends that faced northwest and southeast, while the church's original northeast-facing rear elevation was moved an additional forty feet further to the northeast and became the rear elevation of the addition. The result was that the three-bay-wide northwest-facing side elevation of the addition lies flush with the original northwest-facing side elevation of the 1878 building, while the identical three-bay-wide southeast-facing side elevation of the addition is pushed out 10 feet from the wall surface of the original southeast-facing elevation of the church. The construction of the addition also made it possible to give the church a new and larger sacristy and this windowless, hip-roofed, rectilinear plan, one-story element spans most of the width of the church's rear elevation.

Fortunately, the builders of the 1887 addition were completely faithful to the original design of the 1878 church and the materials they used were identical.⁵ The new addition has the same limestone-walled basement story as the original and this story is the same height. In addition, the cream and red brick wall cladding above and the pointed arched windows on the side elevations of the addition are of the same size and are of the same design as those on the original church, they are spaced the same distance apart, and their heads are also identically ornamented with red and cream brick.

The interior of the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church has undergone several major renovations over the years, most notably in 1907, 1927, and again in 1957, and many of the fittings it contains are not original. Never-the-less, in its essentials, the interior of the 1878 church as expanded in 1887 is still largely extant today. The nave of the church originally consisted of a single large rectilinear space that was accessed from a flight of stairs that descended down to the main entrance located in a vestibule at

⁵ It is not known if Edward T. Mix also designed the church's addition.

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the southwest end of the nave. The nave was illuminated by ten windows on the side elevations, by the two windows placed in the southwest wall of the nave, and by a row of chandeliers that hung from the center of the ceiling. This ceiling consisted of a flattened arch that had coved sides and a flat center surface, the ceiling and the walls were both plastered, and the floor was of wood boards. Three banks of pews faced the altar, which was placed in the center of a large apse-like space that was centered on the northeast wall of the nave and this space was defined by a large pointed arch opening that was let into this wall. An elevated choir loft spanned the width of the southwest end of the nave and the nave was heated by two massive wood-fired stoves that were located in the nave itself.

When the 1887 addition was added to the rear of the church, the northeast wall of the nave was moved back and so was the pointed arch apse that contained the altar. Seating for the choir was placed in new space located to the right of the altar, and six more windows located on the side walls of the addition provided additional light to the nave. In addition, the floor of the nave was carpeted and the confirmation class of that year donated a marble baptismal font to the church that is still in use today.

Since that time, a number of changes have been made. In 1901, electric lights were installed and in 1904, the two wood furnaces were replaced by two new forced air furnaces in the basement, which also freed up space in the nave for an additional fifty parishioners. In 1907, the interior of the church was essentially completed, finishing out the decorating. In this year, the original windows in the nave were all replaced with the excellent art glass windows that are still in place today, and two large angel murals were painted on the walls of the new addition by a Milwaukee artist. In 1919, the original chandeliers in the nave were replaced by the bronze and glass chandeliers that are still in place today. In 1927, the angel murals were relocated from the front of the church to the side walls of the 1887 addition and they too are still in place today.

Other changes that have been made over the years have included the installation of new floor coverings, the installation of new pews (there are now two wider banks of modern wood pews rather than the original three), the replacement of the original altar, and other such fixtures with modern equivalents. Another change has been the replacement of the original beaded board wainscoting that ran around the walls of the nave just below the level of the window sills with wainscot that consists of modern veneered paneling. In addition, the nave's walls and ceiling have been repainted several times and this has covered over much of the various stenciled work that was added at different times during the church's history.

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Despite these evolutionary changes, the interior of the church still retains much of its historic character and this feeling is enhanced by the high level of maintenance that both the exterior and interior of the church have received over the years.

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church Parsonage, 1885, 1903 (C)

As originally built in 1885, the church's fine Italianate Style parsonage had a main block that was two-stories-tall, it measured 37 by 37-feet, and it was of wood frame construction and the exterior walls were veneered in cream brick and rested on ashlar limestone block foundation walls. These walls were sheltered by a shallow-pitched hip roof that had wide overhanging boxed eaves, and the home's windows were four-over-four-light double hung wood sash placed in segmental-arched openings. In addition to the main block, the parsonage originally had a cream brick-clad one-story rear wing that had a similar hip roof and identical windows.

The main block of the parsonage today is almost exactly as built, but the original rear wing was considerably expanded in 1903 by the addition of a second story and its footprint was expanded as well. Fortunately, the materials and the design of the expanded rear wing were the same as those used on the original block and the resulting expanded irregular plan building retains its 1903 appearance today.

The symmetrically designed 37-foot-wide main façade of the main block of the parsonage faces southwest onto W. Mill St., it is three-bays-wide, and the entire width of its first story is sheltered by the parsonage's original open front porch, whose nearly flat roof is upheld by four Tuscan Order wood columns. The first story's center bay contains the main entrance to the house and it has a semi-circular-arched opening whose upper portion contains a blind semi-circular-arched transom that is outlined with corbelled bricks. Placed in the right and left-hand bays on either side of the entrance is a pair of segmental-arched window openings and there is a second pair in the second story of each of these two bays. In addition, a single window of the same design is located in the second story above the entrance. All of these openings have corbelled brick heads that have brick keystone-like features. The windows themselves are modern four-over-four-light double hung sash. These windows replaced the building's original four-over-four-light double hung wood sash, which historic photos show were still in place as late as 1958 and whose upper sash originally had segmental-arched heads.

The 37-foot-wide northwest-facing side elevation of the main block is three-bays-wide and each bay contains a single segmental-arched window opening in both its first and second stories. The 37-foot-wide southeast-facing side elevation of the main block is two-bays-wide. It has identical window

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openings in both stories of its right-hand bay and a single one in the second story of its left-hand bay. The sole exception is the first story of this left-hand bay, which contains a rectilinear plan hip-roofed bay window that has an ashlar limestone foundation, single flat-topped window openings on its two shorter sides, and a pair of identical window openings on its longer southeast-facing side. All of the openings contain modern four-over-four-light windows.

The parsonage's two-story rear wing projects out several feet to the northwest past the wall surface of the main block and it has a second door located in the first story of its southwest-facing elevation. This side entrance is sheltered by a shed-roofed porch whose roof is upheld by massive wood brackets, and a single segmental-arched window opening is located in the story above. The longer northwest-facing side elevation of the wing is asymmetrical in design and two-bays-wide. Each bay contains a single segmental-arched window opening in both its first and second stories and the southeast-facing side elevation of the wing is identical, while the two-bay-wide northeast-facing rear elevation of the wing has a segmental-arched rear door opening in the first story of its right-hand bay and a single segmental-arched window opening in each story of its left-hand bay.

The interior of the parsonage church was not visited but the general layout of its original floor plan is still largely intact. Much else has been modified over the years, however, and the kitchen and bathrooms have both been modernized.

Automobile Garage, circa 1927-1941 (NC)

A square plan, hip-roofed, one-story-tall, clapboard-clad two-car automobile garage is located a short distance behind the parsonage. The garage doors of this building face northwest towards N. Spring St. and it is accessed by a driveway from that street. This building is in excellent condition and it was just repainted in 2008. However, this building was built after the period of significance and it is considered to be a non-contributing resource for the purposes of this nomination.

Integrity

While the church and former parsonage have had some remodeling and updates over the years, both buildings retain a high degree of integrity to their period of construction with their important architectural features intact.

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Significance

The Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church was identified by the City of Columbus Intensive Survey in 1997 as being potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for its local significance under National Register (NR) Criterion C (Architecture).⁶ Research designed to assess the church's potential for eligibility was undertaken using the NR significance area of Architecture, a theme that is also identified in the State of Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP). This research centered on evaluating the church by utilizing the High Victorian Gothic Style and Italianate Style subsections of the Architectural Styles study unit of the CRMP.⁷ The results of this research are detailed below and demonstrate that the cream and red brick-clad Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church is locally significant under NR Criterion C as an excellent, highly intact example of High Victorian Gothic Style ecclesiastical design. The original portion of the church was built in 1878 to a design furnished by Milwaukee architect Edward Townsend Mix, who was one of Wisconsin's most prominent nineteenth century architects. Richard D. Vanaken was the carpenter contractor for the church; he was also the carpentry contractor for the church's Italianate Style parsonage, which is located next door to the church and was built in 1885.

The period of significance is 1878-1907. It begins with the construction of the new church and ends with the installation of two decorative murals and of the stained glass windows in the church building. Between these years, the church was enlarged and the contributing parsonage was built and expanded.

The Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church is one of Columbus's most important historic nineteenth century buildings and its 125-foot-tall steeple has been a prominent visual landmark in the city for 130 years. The church fronts on to W. Mill St. and it is located on the northeast edge of the historic commercial core of Columbus, most of which is already listed in the NRHP as the Columbus Downtown Historic District (NRHP 3-5-1992). The church was built on the site of the Zion Lutheran congregation's first church, which had been built in 1859 and moved to this site in 1868. By 1878, the growth of the congregation necessitated the construction of a new church, so the old one was sold and moved off the site and the current one was built in its place. In 1885, the original frame construction parsonage that was located next to the church was also sold and moved off the site and it was replaced by a new Italianate Style two-story cream brick-clad parsonage that is still the home of the congregation's pastor today. Two years later, the church was enlarged by the addition of a new

⁶ Heggland, Timothy F. *City of Columbus, Columbia County, Wisconsin : Intensive Survey Report*. Columbus: City of Columbus Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission, 1997, p. 82.

⁷ Wyatt, Barbara (ed.). *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Division of Historic Preservation, 1986, Vol. 2, p. 2-10 (Architecture).

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chancel and sacristy that were added to the rear end of the 1878 building. Since then, the appearance of both has remained largely unchanged. Both the church and its parsonage have been meticulously maintained by the Zion Lutheran congregation, they are in excellent condition, and they still continue to fulfill their original functions today.

History

The 821-page collected local newspaper columns of Frederic A. Stare⁸ provide an excellent general history of the city of Columbus up to World War II. A detailed history of the city and its built resources is also contained in the City of Columbus Intensive Survey Report, printed in 1997. Consequently, the history that follows deals primarily with the history of the Zion Evangelical Church complex itself and also with the evolution of the city during the time of its construction.

Today, Columbus is located in Columbia County. In 1839, though, when Major Elbert Dickason, the first settler of the land that was to become the city of Columbus arrived, all this land was included within the boundaries of the larger and as yet undivided Portage County and was then without formal governmental organization. Dickason, a veteran of the Blackhawk wars, had contracted with Lewis Ludington (1786-1857), the non-resident purchaser of a 1300-acre tract of land straddling the Crawfish River in that county, to manage and improve the property for their mutual benefit. Arriving at the site in the spring of 1839, Dickason's first act was to build himself a log cabin (non-extant) on the banks of the Crawfish at a spot close to where the railroad depots are located today. Dickason, like so many other town founders of that time, settled along a river because it provided both a reliable source of water and the only readily available means of generating power for industrial purposes. This power source was put to good use the following year when Dickason constructed a saw and grist mill (non-extant) on the river bank with additional financial assistance from Ludington. Building such a mill was usually the first step in building up a town in the days before the coming of the railroads because the locale surrounding a mill was a natural gathering place for area farmers and was thus a logical place around which to build a trading center. This held true in this place as well. With Dickason's mill in place, which was among the first in this section of the state, the rich gently rolling prairie that surrounded it became especially attractive to settlers wishing to engage in agricultural pursuits. They did not arrive in sufficient numbers to save Dickason, however, who was unable to generate enough income to meet his financial obligations to Ludington and to the other owners of the land. Consequently, Ludington replaced him with Col. Jeremiah Drake (1784-1868), who arrived at the site in 1842 and promptly set about enlarging the mill and building the first frame dwelling in the place for himself.

⁸ These clippings are available at the Columbus Public Library and on microfilm at the Wisconsin Historical Society.

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By 1843, farmers were coming from as far as Madison and Stevens Point to have their grain milled at the place that Dickason had christened Columbus and the farms of these new arrivals were beginning to dot the countryside surrounding the mill. In the same year, Henry A. Whitney (1819-1880) built the first store (and tavern) in Columbus and the long lines of farmers waiting their turn at the mill persuaded him to build the first hotel in the new community in the following year at the corner of James and Ludington streets, where its 1857 replacement now stands (101 S. Ludington St.). Also in 1844, Lewis Ludington, the town proprietor, recorded the first plat of the future city, which was known as Ludington's Plat (or the Original Plat) and comprised a nine-block area (blocks 1-9) bounded by Mill, Spring, Prairie, and Water streets. In 1845, the second store in the community was constructed for Josiah E. Arnold and Daniel E. Bassett, and the first doctor, James C. Axtell, and the first lawyer (future Wisconsin Civil War governor James T. Lewis) set up offices.

By 1846, population in the region had grown to a point where it made sense to set Columbia County off from Portage County. Most of Columbia County's earliest settlers were transplanted Yankees and persons of English descent, but by 1848, the first of what would prove to be a large number of immigrants from Germany began to arrive. Not coincidentally, 1848 also saw the construction of the first brewery (non-extant) in Columbus on the banks of the Crawfish at its intersection with N. Ludington St. In 1849, Ludington platted a four-block addition (Ludington's Addition) to his original plat (blocks 10-13) bounded by Water, Prairie, Spring, and School streets and a year later platted a second six-block addition (blocks 14-19) bounded by Mill, Spring, Newcomb, and Water streets (the First Addition to the Original Plat).⁹ These nineteen blocks now comprise the historic commercial core of Columbus, which quickly spread outward from the Ludington Street/James Street intersection and Whitney's first hotel to encompass the area now listed in the NRHP as the Columbus Historic Commercial District (NRHP 3-5-1992).

By 1855, Columbus had a population of approximately 800 and a well-established business core centered on the intersection of Ludington and James streets was surrounded by residential plats to the northwest and northeast. All this development was concentrated for the most part to the northwest of Water Street. As its name suggests, Water Street was bordered to the southeast by the Crawfish River and by the mill pond created by the dam of the mill (which was located where today's Udey Street intersects with the river). Since land to the northwest of Water Street was higher than the river and since it increased in elevation as one traveled northwest, it was therefore safe from flooding, which circumstance naturally favored

⁹ This is the plat associated with the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church site.

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development in that area of the city. In February of 1855, the first issue of the *Republican Journal* stated that at that time the village:

Had already seven stores with two or three more to be opened in the spring. There was a drugstore, a good flouring-mill, a saw-mill, two wagon-shops, one of which had made a hundred wagons, and the other fifty, during the year previous; three groceries and provision stores, two hotels, four blacksmith shops, three boot and shoe stores, three tailor shops, one jewelry store and one harness shop. The Congregational Church was building, and it was thought the coming spring would lay the foundations of Methodist and Universalist houses of worship.

To these were added the first bank in Columbus, which was established the following year by William L. Lewis. But the most momentous news of 1856 was the eagerly anticipated arrival of the Milwaukee & Watertown Railroad, the first railroad to reach Columbus. This all-important event would all but guarantee that Columbus would be able to hold on to its existing trading advantage in the area. Well before the railroad reached Columbus, the April 17, 1856 issue of the *Republican Journal* was busy making sure that everyone understood its importance. Under the headline "The Prospects of Columbus" were the following comments.

Never before have the prospects of our village been as bright as at present. The certain completion of the Milwaukee & Watertown railroad to this place early next fall and also that of the Wisconsin Central road within one year from next fall, has put an impetus into the business of this place that surpasses that of any previous year. We were surprised last year to see so many buildings going up. Some thought the village was growing too fast, that it would be a long while before those buildings that were being erected would find occupants, but here we are, at the commencement of another spring and not a building to rent. If there were fifty buildings now ready for occupants, they could all be rented before the end of another week.

By March of the following year, the difference that the railroad (which would finally arrive on May 25, 1857) was going to make to the community was obvious. Within a year the population of the village more than doubled and even when one allows for a large degree of boosterism on the part of the *Republican Journal*, just the bare bones of the description of Columbus that it reprinted from another Wisconsin paper in its March 24, 1857 issue represented a record of quite extraordinary community growth for one year.

Columbus contains about 2000 inhabitants. Its places of business include four hotels, 12 dry goods stores; 4 saloons; 2 drugstores; 7 grocery stores; 3 hardware stores; two bookstores.

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A year later, yet another and more complete tally of Columbus business interests in the April 14, 1858 issue of the *Republican Journal* showed that growth was continuing unabated, a situation that was the more impressive because the nationwide financial panic of 1857 had put a damper on growth in many places that would last up until the beginning of the Civil War.

Perhaps there is not a village in the State with a better prospect of becoming a rich business place than Columbus. The growth of the village, to be sure, has not been as rapid as some others, but it has been steady and healthy, no mushroom concern. We venture to say that there were fewer failures here than in any other place doing the same amount of business in the west, or perhaps the east either, and the crisis being now passed no more are apprehended. The population of the village is now between two and three thousand and steadily increasing.

There are six dry goods stores, two clothing stores, two grocery, fruit and provisions stores, three hardware stores, two drug stores, one book store, seven warehouses, and four lumber yards in the village. There is also one of the best grist mills in the country running day and night; also a sawmill.

Of manufactories and workshops there are two wagon factory, one plow factory, one door and sash factory, three cabinet shops, two upholsterers, four blacksmith shops, two saddle and harness shops, two tailor shops, two jewelers and watchmakers, four boot and shoe makers, two milliners shops, one brick yard, one brewery, and one barber shop. There are three doctor's offices, three lawyer's offices, four insurance agencies, two banking and exchange offices, one land agency, one dentist, one express agency, one printing office, post office, and railroad office. There are six hotels, two of which are large first class houses, also a livery stable with first rate horses and all the vehicles and accouterments belonging to such an establishment. There are two eating saloons, one billiard and one bowling saloon, besides a number of lager beer saloons and groceries.

There are six religious societies, two of which have churches completed and three more are commenced. The Methodists have their church nearly completed. There are lodges of the Free masons, Odd Fellows and Good Templars, and a Division of the Sons of Temperance here, all in flourishing condition.

Columbus is the present terminus of the Milwaukee and Watertown railroad and also of the Land Grant Road, which [when completed] leads to Lake Superior and will connect with roads running into Minnesota hundreds of miles.

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Just a month after this was written, a group of German-American Columbus citizens organized the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in the village, which was Columbus's first Lutheran congregation.

Having emigrated from Germany in the early 1850s, these mid-western pioneers were united not only by a common language and a common faith but also by a common desire "not to forsake the assembling of themselves together" about the Means of Grace. At first a public school building served as their temporary church. Later, services were conducted in a rented hall in town. Having no pastor of their own, they were served by Pastor Christian Sans of St. Mark's Congregation in Watertown, later by a certain Pastor Oswald. Towards the end of 1855 the Wisconsin Synod assigned the first resident pastor to the little flock in Columbus in the person of Pastor A. Reuter. It was under his leadership that Zion Lutheran Church was organized and incorporated in May of 1858.

Soon after its organization the new congregation received its first church site as a gift from Mr. A. P. Birdsey of Columbus. He donated Lot 1, Block 13 of Birdsey's Addition, located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Newcomb and Birdsey Streets. Pastor Hans Duborg succeeded Pastor Reuter before the end of 1858. Early in 1859 the congregation resolved to build its first house of worship. God blessed the undertaking and in the fall of that year the new church building was dedicated to his glory.¹⁰

Spurred on by the arrival of the railroad, Columbus experienced sufficient population growth in the late 1850s and early 1860s to justify its being officially incorporated as the Village of Columbus in 1864. The newly minted village was even big enough now to be divided into three wards and to have areas located across the Crawfish River from the main portion that were known locally as "Mexico" and "Lowville." This growth could not be sustained indefinitely. Part of the growth that the community had experienced up until then had been based on the fact that for a short time Columbus was the actual terminus of the Milwaukee & Watertown road. This was just a momentary advantage, however, and in reality many of the persons who gave the city a short term population in the mid 2000 range actually intended to locate there for just a short time before moving into the surrounding countryside or to points beyond Columbus. Also, other communities in the area, like Portage which was also located on the Wisconsin River, were already well established, or had access to more than one railroad, like Watertown, eventually outstripped Columbus because of these and other natural advantages.

By the end of the Civil War, immigrants of German origin were the most numerous of the newcomers to the village. One of the most prominent of these was Henry Kurth, who established a second brewery in

¹⁰ *Zion Lutheran Church, Columbus, Wisconsin: 1858-1958.* Columbus: Zion Lutheran Church, 1958, n.p. (p. 1).

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Columbus on S. Ludington Street just west of the village boundaries. It would grow to become one of the community's largest business enterprises until a fire destroyed most of the brewery complex in 1916. Another important new institution was commenced in 1865, when the firm of Farnham & Allen built a grain storage elevator along the railroad tracks just north of their point of intersection with N. Dickason Boulevard. This was a significant event since it provided yet another service to the agricultural community surrounding Columbus.

By 1868, the growth that Columbus had experienced was reflected in the evolving needs of many of its institutions, among which was the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The growth of the congregation was steady and rapid, and an enlargement of the church became necessary. It was finally resolved at a meeting on the 28th of April 1868 that the board of trustees be empowered to purchase from A. C. Olds lots 6, 7 and the southwest half of lot 8, in block 16, Columbus, which are now the property of the society, and to sell its other real estate. On the 6th of July 1868 it was resolved to remove the church edifice to its present site, and on that plan the building should be enlarged. The sale of the other property was made to C. Zarr Sep. 30, 1868 and on the following day the deed for the new site was executed. ... On the 3rd of May 1869 the enlargement of the church was concluded upon, and Messrs. John Prien and Joachim Herman were appointed to a committee to procure the plan and engage an architect to take charge of the construction. The addition was completed in 1869 and forms the rear portion of the building in process of erection.¹¹

By 1874, the village had reached a point where another advance in its governmental status was deemed necessary, so in that year application was made and permission was given to reincorporate Columbus as a city, which it remains to this day. One year later, the newspapers were referring to Columbus as a "city of churches," a reference to the unusually large number of church buildings that the city seemed to have in relation to its population, which then stood at a total of 1903. Large or not, several of the city's church congregations had by this time grown to the point where their churches were in real need of enlargement, and this was especially true of the Zion Lutheran congregation, which by 1876 had 140 families on its membership rolls.

Again the church increased beyond the limits of the church, and in the first of July 1877 a new building was ordered; a committee consisting of Messrs. Julius Vogt, Chris. Bolte, Henry Bolte, Fred. Messow, and E. V. Briesen were appointed to make a first plan and estimate for another new

¹¹ "Laying the Cornerstone." *Columbus Democrat*, June 8, 1878, p. 1.

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edifice. The plan proposed a building 70 long, 40 feet wide with a belfry 125 feet high, and was accepted as to its general features Sept. 2 1877. The estimated cost was \$5,000. A few changes were ordered and E. T. Mix of Milwaukee was directed to perfect a plan, which he did. In the meantime a subscription showed \$4,800 to be in readiness, and on the 9th of December last the erection of the new church was voted; the plan of Mr. Mix being adopted. ... The following contracts were let: to Henry Bolte the stone, brick and plaster work for \$1,500, and to R. D. Vanaken the carpenter and joiner work and the painting for \$3,800.¹²

Once the cornerstone had been laid, the work continued at a steady pace and by November, the church was in readiness for its congregation.

The new Evangelical Lutheran Church is the most capacious in the city, and can easily and comfortably seat 600 worshippers. THE DEMOCRAT has heretofore described it in detail, and repetition is unnecessary. It is, however, a very handsome brick structure in what may perhaps be termed the modernized Gothic style, if anything definite remains in architectural distinctions. The porch is a fine piece of work and a fit entrance to the house of God. One fact connected with this church will always address itself strongly to the imagination. The metal in the clear sounding bell, which swings in the large, open tower, was a gift of Emperor William, and was melted from French cannon captured by the Germans in the last war.¹³

By 1885, the city's population had advanced to just 2050, which would seem to indicate that by that time Columbus had reached its natural place in the economic order of things as a prosperous rural trading center whose economy was and would remain dependent on the larger agricultural community that surrounded it. However, if population growth in Columbus was leveling off during this period, this was not reflected in the Zion Lutheran Church's membership rolls. By 1884, the congregation numbered 239 families and once again, the need for additional space began to be felt. The first to benefit was the pastor of the church. Up to this time, the pastor had had to make do with the small frame house that had been located on the site when the church purchased the property. In 1885, the board of trustees of the church decided that the time had come to provide the pastor and his family with a new parsonage.

The Lutheran society of this city has let the contracts for the building of a new parsonage, to be of veneered brick, the main building to be 37 by 37 feet, two stories high, with a one story wing in the rear. R. D. Vanaken has the contract for all except the masonry at \$1450, and Henry Bolte will do

¹² Ibid. The masonry contractor, Henry Bolte, was also a member of the Zion Lutheran Church.

¹³ "Zion Church and its Dedication." *Columbus Democrat*, Nov. 9, 1878, p. 3. "Emperor William" was Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany and the French cannons were captured during the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871).

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the masonry. The new house will occupy the site of the old one. Material is now being put on the ground.¹⁴

By October, the new Italianate Style parsonage was ready for occupancy.

The old Lutheran parsonage has been removed onto the vacant lot next to Mr. Deming's residence, the new building being ready for occupancy. The new parsonage is a handsome and commodious building.¹⁵

The next to benefit were the members of the congregation itself.

With the congregation's continued growth it became apparent that the new church built in 1878 was not large enough to accommodate all the worshippers. At a special meeting on May 1, 1887 it was therefore resolved to enlarge the church with a forty by fifty foot addition as well as a chancel and sacristy. ... With financial assistance from the young people of the church, the congregation was able to purchase a new pipe organ for \$1,000.00 from the firm of William Schuelke of Milwaukee, as well as a new altar and pulpit at a cost of \$300.00 from the firm of Joseph Voigt also of Milwaukee. The confirmands of 1887 also presented a new marble baptismal font. The font, altar and pulpit are still in use today [1958], although both altar and pulpit have undergone two remodeling. Inclusive of chancel furnishings and the new organ, the addition to the church was completed at a cost of \$4,620.14. This enlarged church, which constitutes our present house of worship, was dedicated to the glory of God on the 3rd Sunday in Advent in December, 1887.¹⁶

Future changes to the church complex came gradually and mostly affected the interiors of both buildings. In 1893, the interior and exterior of the church and the parsonage were repainted, and in 1901 both buildings got electric lights. In 1904, the parsonage got a new furnace.

A one-half lot strip of land north of the church was added to the church property in 1903 and an addition to the parsonage was built. The church records reveal a sign of the times when they state that the additional land was purchased "to provide more room to tie up the horses." In 1904 two furnaces were installed in the school and two in the church, replacing the stoves in use up to that

¹⁴ *Columbus Republican*. January 31, 1885, p. 1.

¹⁵ *Columbus Democrat*. October 2, 1885, p. 1.

¹⁶ *Zion Lutheran Church, Columbus, Wisconsin: 1858-1958*. Columbus: Zion Lutheran Church, 1958, n.p (p. 7).

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time. Church pews installed in the space formerly occupied by the stoves increased the seating capacity of the church by fifty people.¹⁷

Additional major alterations were made to the interior of the church in 1928 and again in 1957, but the exteriors of both buildings are still almost exactly as they were in 1887.¹⁸ The resulting buildings still serve the Zion Lutheran Church congregation's needs today, 130 years after the church was first built.

Architectural Significance

The Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church is believed to be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C (Architecture) because it is an excellent, highly intact example of the High Victorian Gothic style and because it is a very fine example of the ecclesiastical work of Milwaukee architect Edward Townsend Mix, who was one of the most important architects practicing in Wisconsin in the last half of the nineteenth century. The Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church was built in 1878 of cream and red brick and it was enlarged in 1887 utilizing the same materials and design elements. In addition, the church's cream brick-clad Italianate Style parsonage, which was built in 1885 and enlarged in 1903, is located next door. Both the church and its parsonage have served the Zion Evangelical Lutheran congregation continuously since they were first built and they still house the Zion Lutheran congregation and its pastor and are in excellent, highly intact condition.

The CRMP describes the High Victorian Gothic style as follows:

The High Victorian Gothic exhibits heavier detailing and more complex massing than the earlier Gothic Revival. The English critic John Ruskin was the philosopher of the movement, publishing his influential *Seven Lamps of Architecture* in 1848. High Victorian Gothic draws upon varied European medieval sources, all employing the pointed arch, although Ruskin promoted the Italian (Venetian) form as being superior to the English tradition. Polychromatic effects, a hallmark of the style, are achieved by the use of materials of differing color and texture.¹⁹

Like the Gothic Revival that preceded it, the High Victorian Gothic style was used on as wide a variety of building types and it was especially favored for churches and for institutional and commercial

¹⁷ Ibid. The addition to the parsonage expanded its footprint and added a second story to it.

¹⁸ Ibid, pp. 10, 25. See also: *Columbus Republican*. August 18, 1928, p. 1.

¹⁹ Wyatt, Barbara (ed.). *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Division of Historic Preservation, 1986, Vol. 2 (Architecture), p. 2-10.

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buildings. It was also a style that is closely associated with Edward Townsend Mix, who designed the National Soldiers Home in Milwaukee in 1867-68, which the CRMP calls "Wisconsin's preeminent example of the [High Victorian Gothic] style."²⁰ Finding even one example of the High Victorian Gothic Style in a Wisconsin community the size of Columbus, which has two examples, is unusual. Only 144 examples of the style are identified in Wisconsin's Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) and nearly half of these are in Milwaukee. Both of Columbus's examples are brick churches, of which the outstanding and highly intact Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church designed by Mix is the finest, being an almost prototypical example of the style complete with the polychromatic brickwork that is a stylistic hallmark.²¹

The phrase "High Victorian Gothic" would, of course, have been unknown to Mix, but he was apparently quite aware that his design for the Zion Lutheran congregation was not a typical Gothic Revival design. As the following quote shows, the term used in Columbus during the church's construction was "semi-Gothic," and this term may well have come from Mix himself.

The contract for the wood work of the new Lutheran church has been awarded to R. D. Vanaken, and that for the mason work to Henry Bolte. The edifice is to be finished by the first of next October, and its cost is to be about \$6,000. Twenty-six feet of the rear of the present building are to be remodeled according to the plans, and used in the new one. The tower will be twenty feet square, and, with the spire, 146 [sic] feet high; and will be at the front and center of the main building. The latter is to 40 x 70 feet and there will be a basement for the use of the Sunday school. The plans for the church were drawn by E. T. Mix, of Milwaukee, and it is to be **semi-gothic** in design and of wood veneered with brick. The audience room is intended to seat 500 persons comfortably, in addition to the accommodation of the gallery. The sand and stone are already drawn, and the lumber and brick are now arriving. The old church edifice is for sale.²²

By the time that Mix became involved in the design of Columbus's Zion Lutheran Church, he already had a number of other outstanding buildings in the city to his credit. His earliest identified Columbus project was the Gothic Revival style church that he designed in 1873 for the United Methodist congregation. This was followed two years later by his Italianate style Griswold Block, which is

²⁰ Wyatt, Barbara (ed.). Op. Cit., p. 2-10.

²¹ The other example, the Olivet Congregational Church designed by Milwaukee architect Henry C. Koch and built in 1877, is a monochromatic but more eclectic design that includes a Second Empire style Mansard roof atop its steeple as well as more usual Gothic Style elements, and it is a contributing resource in the NRHP listed Prairie Street Historic District.

²² *Columbus Democrat*. Feb. 9, 1878, p. 1.

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located in Columbus's downtown.²³ In addition, Mix designed residences in Columbus, one of which, the Stick Style Andrew O. Sexton house, was built in 1877, just prior to the construction of the Zion Lutheran Church, while another, the now non-extant Second Empire style house of Richard D. Vanaken, was built in the same year as the Zion Lutheran Church, for which Vanaken was the carpentry contractor.

Edward Townsend Mix

Edward Townsend Mix (1831-1890) was born in New Haven, Connecticut, but spent his early years on a farm his family purchased in Andover, Illinois. In 1846, the family moved back east to New York City. After several years as a clerk and office boy in that city, Mix, while on a visit to New Haven in 1848, chanced to walk into the architectural offices of a Major Stone in that city "at that time one of the leading architects in New England."²⁴ Liking what he saw of the work, Mix joined Stone as an assistant and remained in his office for seven years, at the end of which he declined an offer of partnership in order to return to the Midwest. In 1855, Mix worked as a foreman in the office of prominent Chicago architect William W. Boyington, with whom in the spring of 1856 he formed a partnership. In that same year, Mix moved to Milwaukee to superintend work there that they had designed, the firm then being known as Boyington & Mix. The financial depression of 1857 caused the two men to sever their ties by mutual consent, but Mix remained in Milwaukee, where he gradually became that city's pre-eminent architect.

In 1864, Governor Fairchild appointed Mix the State Architect; he had charge of all state building until he resigned in 1867. Mix designed many of his adopted city's largest and most important buildings during his career in Milwaukee, including such outstanding extant buildings as the Mitchell Building at 207 East Michigan Ave., built in 1876; the Grain Exchange Building at 225 East Michigan Street, built in 1879; the Milwaukee Club at 706 North Jefferson Street, built in 1883; the Alexander Mitchell mansion at 900 West Wisconsin Avenue, built in 1873; the Robert Patrick Fitzgerald house at 1119 North Marshall Street, built in 1875; All Saints Episcopal Cathedral at 800 East Juneau Avenue, built in 1869; Immanuel Presbyterian Church at 1100 North Astor Street, built in 1874; St. Paul's Episcopal Church at 904 East Knapp Street, built in 1890; and the National Soldier's Home, built in the late 1860s.²⁵

²³ While this church is still extant, it has now been substantially altered with several modern additions.

²⁴ *United States Biographical Dictionary*, Wisconsin Volume, 1877: pp. 653-655.

²⁵ Korom, Joseph. *Milwaukee Architecture: A Guide to Notable Buildings*. Madison: Prairie Oak Press, 1995, pp. 17-18, 33-35, 100-101, and 149-153.

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Although his best known work is located in Milwaukee, Mix was also active in designing buildings in other states and in other Wisconsin cities, including Columbus, where his ad ran in the *Columbus Democrat* from 1874 through much of the decade. At least five of his buildings are known to have been built in Columbus and it is likely that there were others. Those that have been identified are: the now altered Gothic Revival style United Methodist Church at 222 S. Dickason Blvd., built in 1873; the Italianate style Griswold Block at 100 S. Ludington Street, built in 1875 (Columbus Downtown Historic District, NRHP 3-5-1992); the now demolished Second Empire style Richard D. Vanaken house at 334 S. Ludington St., built in 1878; and the superb Stick Style Andrew O. Sexton house at 443 W. Prairie St. (Prairie Street Historic District, NRHP 1-7-1999), built in 1877-78.

An especially frustrating newspaper quote in the *Columbus Democrat* of May 23, 1873 suggests that there may be a number of other Mix designs in Columbus that were built prior to 1873.

In another column will be found the business card of Mr. E. T. Mix of Milwaukee. He is undoubtedly the best architect in Wisconsin. The new Methodist Church in this village was designed by him, and the best residences in Columbus were built after plans drawn by him. Persons desiring the services of a first-class architect can hardly do as well as to call on Mr. Mix.

Unfortunately, these residences have not yet been identified.

The carpentry contractor who built Mix's Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church was Richard D. Vanaken of Columbus, who subsequently was the carpenter contractor of the church's later Italianate Style parsonage and was probably its designer as well.

Richard D. Vanaken

Richard D. Vanaken, Sr. (1830-1918) was the best known and most prolific carpentry contractor in Columbus in the nineteenth century, so much so, in fact, that in his obituary it was stated with only slight exaggeration that: "It is said that nearly half of the buildings now [1918] in the city, both residences and business places, were built by him."²⁶ Vanaken was born in Ulster Co., New York, in 1830. He apprenticed as a carpenter in Kingston, New York, in 1845, and practiced there until moving to Columbus in 1856. Subsequently, Vanaken acted both as a builder and, as was the fashion of the times, occasionally as an architect when clients did not have plans from any other source. By 1880, a biographical entry in the *History of Columbia County* was calling him an architect and builder and

²⁶ Stare, Frederick Arthur. "The Story of Columbus." Columbus: Columbus Journal-Republican, 1951-1963. Installment no. 86, p. 132. This installment is devoted to Vanaken.

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Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage
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credited him with the construction of 260 buildings in and near Columbus. In all of these buildings Vanaken acted as the carpentry contractor and sometimes as the general contractor, but the extent of his role in their design is unknown. He was clearly conversant with the work of the architects of his day, since at least five of the buildings in Columbus for which he was the contractor were designed by Edward Townsend Mix of Milwaukee, including a house of his own (non-extant) that was located on S. Ludington St.

It is therefore believed that the Zion Evangelical Church and Parsonage are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance. The church building is an excellent, representative, highly intact example of the ecclesiastical designs of Edward Townsend Mix, who was one of Wisconsin's finest nineteenth century architects, and his design is also a very fine polychromatic example of the High Victorian Gothic Style. In addition, the property contains the Zion Lutheran Church's Italianate Style parsonage, which is an intact example of the style and is a building related by function to the church.

Criteria Consideration A

Ordinarily, buildings belonging to religious institutions are not eligible for listing in the NRHP unless the building falls within NRHP Criteria Consideration A, which states that such resources must be: "A religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction."²⁷ The Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church meets the requirements of Criterion A; this is a religious property deriving its primary significance from its architectural distinction as a fine example of the High Victorian Gothic style and as a fine example of the work of Edward Townsend Mix. In addition, the church's associated and adjoining parsonage derives its primary significance from being a fine, intact example of the Italianate Style, and the two buildings together are a fine example of the type of associated resources that typically comprise church complexes.

²⁷ National Register Bulletin 16A. *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991, p. 37.

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Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage
Columbus, Columbia County, WI

Boundary Description

Lots 6, 7, & 8: Block 16, Ludington's Second Extension

Boundary Justification

The boundaries enclose all the land that has historically been associated with the Church and Parsonage.

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Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage
Columbus, Columbia County, WI

Section photos Page 1

Items a - d are the same for photos 1 - 9.

Photo 1

- a) Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church and Parsonage
- b) Columbus, Columbia County, WI
- c) Timothy F. Heggland, March 2008
- d) Wisconsin Historical Society
- e) Main Façade of Church, View looking NE
- f) Photo 1 of 10

Photo 9

- e) Nave Interior, View looking SW
- f) Photo 9 of 10

Photo 10

- e) Noncontributing Garage
- f) Photo 10 of 10

Photo 2

- e) General View of Church, View looking S
- f) Photo 2 of 10

Photo 3

- e) General View of Church, View looking N
- f) Photo 3 of 10

Photo 4

- e) General View of Church and Parsonage, View looking N
- f) Photo 4 of 10

Photo 5

- e) Main Facade of Parsonage, View looking NE
- f) Photo 5 of 10

Photo 6

- e) General View of Parsonage, View looking E
- f) Photo 6 of 10

Photo 7


- e) Rear Elevation of Parsonage, View looking SW
- f) Photo 7 of 10

Photo 8

- e) Nave Interior, View looking NE
- f) Photo 8 of 10

FIGURE #1:
ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
AND PARSONAGE
COLUMBUS, COLUMBIA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

CONTRIBUTING
 NONCONTRIBUTING


 Not to Scale

