

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

JAN 20 2001

224

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 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 Congregational Church

other names/site number Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church (preferred name)

2. Location

street & number 12 Hyde Road  not for publication

city or town Grand Isle  vicinity

state Vermont code VT county Grand Isle code 013 zip code 05458

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.)

Elsa Melbert NR Specialist 1/24/2001  
Signature of certifying official/Title / Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Specialist  
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 certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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
- removed from the National Register
- other, (explain:)

Wilson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper 3/2/01 Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1 _____	1 _____	buildings
0 _____	0 _____	sites
0 _____	0 _____	structures
0 _____	0 _____	objects
1 _____	1 _____	Total

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

Houses of Worship in Vermont (TBD) \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0 \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter Categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter Categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter Categories from instructions)

Greek Revival \_\_\_\_\_

Gothic Revival \_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter Categories from instructions)

foundation marble \_\_\_\_\_

walls brick \_\_\_\_\_

roof slate \_\_\_\_\_

other wood \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

See Continuation Sheet.

**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.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**Areas of Significance**

( Enter categories from instructions )

SOCIAL HISTORY \_\_\_\_\_

ARCHITECTURE \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1853 - 1947 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1853 - 1854 \_\_\_\_\_

1902 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

( Complete If Criterion B is marked above )

N/A \_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Hollister, Aschel \_\_\_\_\_

Chamberlain, John \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- 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:

\_\_\_\_\_

Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church  
Name of Property

Grand Isle County, Vermont  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** approx. 1/2 acre

**UTM references**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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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 Carol J. DiNinno

organization University of Vermont, H.P. Program date April 14, 1997

street & number 442 Main Street, Wheeler House telephone (802)656-3180

city or town Burlington state Vermont zip code 05405

**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 Patricia Dix, Treasurer c/o Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church

street & number 8 U.S. Route 2 telephone (802)372-4467

city or town Grand Isle state Vermont zip code 05458

**Paper 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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Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church  
Grand Isle County, Vermont

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### Description

The Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church stands as a prominent feature in the town center of Grand Isle. It is located on the north side of Hyde Road, approximately .10 miles west of U.S. Route 2. This Greek Revival style church, built between 1853-1854 by the Congregationalists, is a good example of the traditional New England gable-front brick church form with a central bell tower and spire. Among its distinctive original features are the monumental portico, exterior brick and gray marble stone work (locally made and quarried respectively), and interior wainscoting and trim. Some surviving features of the turn-of-the-century renovation include: Gothic-inspired colored-glass "memorial windows", a decorative pressed-metal paneled ceiling, and curved wooden pews with quatrefoil carved detailing. The church is centered on its long, rectangular lot with farmland to the west and north, and a small town library to the east. South of the church, across the street, one finds the town clerk's office, the fire station, and the town garage. The Church retains its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church is a gable-front, 3 x 3 bay, brick structure laid in seven-course American bond with white beaded grapevine joints. The church has a monumental wooden entrance portico and central front two-stage bell tower and spire that rises from the portico peak. The roof, sheathed with dark gray slate shingles, has a moderate slope. The portico is the same height as the main structure and simply an extension of the roof line. The main body is 30 feet wide by 48 feet long and rests on a short watertable of gray marble from Isle LaMotte and cut stone foundation. At each corner of the main brick body are brick pilasters capped by a narrow wooden capital above the marble watertable and cut marble foundation.

The monumental, projecting, pedimented gable is trimmed with a full entablature and has a louvered triangular vent in the center of its clapboard-sided tympanum—all entirely made of wood. It is supported by four fluted, wooden Doric columns with square marble bases. The portico's concrete slab floor and short, cut marble foundation are only half the height of the foundation along the sides and rear of the building. The portico's horizontal entablature section continues along both sides of the main brick structure and then trims out the rear gable end, adding returns at the eaves.

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Grand Isle County, Vermont

The first stage of the square, wooden bell tower is sheathed with clapboards and has wooden corner pilasters as well as a full entablature. The second smaller, wooden, square stage or belfry has corner boards framing louvered panels, and is topped by a cone-shaped octagonal wooden spire. The belfry houses a 30 inch diameter bell made at the Meneely foundry in Troy, New York in 1900; the bell was originally located at the South Hero Methodist Church and donated when the South Hero congregation disbanded around 1910. The bell tower and spire are proportioned such that the spire's height is roughly equal to the combined height of both stages of the tower or the pedimented gable of the portico. The bell tower and spire had been modified many times since its original Gothic appearance in 1853. They were both recently repaired, maintaining their c. 1960 appearance. Atop the spire is a weathervane with a delicate white scrollwork directional and large white ball.

The main entrance to the church on the front facade is a large paneled wooden door with two large vertical lights of glass in the upper half of the door. Under the two side-by-side glass lights is a short horizontal panel and then three vertical square panels. The rails and stiles are painted dark green while the panels are painted white. This current entrance door replaced a much larger door in 1903; there is a white-painted three-paneled section topped by a trabeated marble lintel above the existing door to make up for the gap. Resting on the concrete floor of the portico are redwood-stained wooden stairs leading to the front door rising from three directions to one large landing in front of the door. A redwood-stained wooden handicapped access ramp, added in 1991, extends from the landing toward the west, jogs to the south, and then returns downward to ground level toward the east.

There is also a west-facing, concrete block shed side entrance just below the southern most window on that side. On this west facade, between the southern most window and the brick corner pilaster is an obsolete three-paneled white-painted wooden door with no steps for access. This was once a side entrance into the choir room, to the west of the vestibule as well as the main entrance for people stepping out of horse-drawn carriages. The horse stalls were located up until c. 1920 along the west side. On the east side just under the center window, is a concrete block, wood frame gabled side entrance into the basement.

There are a total of nine colored-glass windows using opalescent glass in deep rich pastel shades with column borders, geometric shapes, ornate ribbon elements, and religious icons. Given to the church as memorial windows in 1910 by the surviving Congregationalists in memory of the founding members, these windows replaced what are believed to be the original sixteen-over-

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**Grand Isle County, Vermont**

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sixteen, double-hung windows. The two on the front facade (one on either side of the front door) as well as the three on both the west and east sides are tall, rectangular windows with wooden sash, one-over-one wooden storm panels, and trabeated marble lintels and sub-sills. There is a Gothic arch shape border design set within a rectangular border for each of these eight windows. Centered in the rear of the building is a smaller colored-glass window with a segmental arch wooden sash, wooden sill, and splayed brick lintel. The sash design is a semi-circular arch shape set within a rectangle. All of the sash and storms as well as all of the remaining exterior trim mentioned previously are painted white.

### INTERIOR:

Upon entering through the front door, one steps into the vestibule area. To the left is a small storage room that used to be the choir room and to the right is a stairway with one landing leading down to the basement. On both sides of the massive, central, interior six-paneled wooden doors are smaller six-paneled doors that are aligned with the front facade windows, with the west side door actually within the storage room. The bell rope drops from the ceiling and is tied to the basement stairway railing.

Going through the two interior wooden entry doors into the sanctuary of the church, one sees a main aisle with curved unpainted oak pews on either side, installed in 1903. A quatrefoil is carved into the end of each. In the sanctuary as well as the vestibule there is a wooden beadboard wainscoting coming up to chair rail height. All of the plaster walls are painted pale yellow while the wainscoting is painted beige. Dark green carpet covers a masonite-type flooring over the original narrow plank wood flooring. The altar area is open and stepped up two steps from the main floor level. On both sides of this section of steps (roughly the width of the main aisle) are wooden railings with turned posts and balustrades. Centered within the back wall is a colored glass window between two massive altar-to-ceiling wooden pilasters that are painted white. All interior door and window trim is wide and in the Greek Revival style: either a simple entablature or ear-style enframingent. This trim along with the altar railings are painted white.

The pulpit stands to the right of the right-hand pilaster and two newer electric organs sit to the left of the left-hand pilaster. Up until the 1930s there was a choir loft in the corner above the current organ space. The loft was enclosed by the same type of railing along the altar. Five

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Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church  
Grand Isle County, Vermont

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amber-colored opalescent glass and metal filigree light fixtures (c. 1950) hang from the ceiling: one in the very center of the room and two on each side. These fixtures replaced the original carbide fixtures that had been electrified at the turn of the century. Donated by Clara Tudhope, they were fashioned to match the existing memorial windows. As part of the 1903 renovation, a decorative pressed-metal paneled ceiling and arched cove molding were added to grace the ceiling and are painted white.

The basement has a concrete slab floor, exposed beam ceiling (floor joists that have been boxed in), newly-painted beige wide panel wainscoting up to plate rail height, and bare walls being prepared for a neutral fleck design wallpaper. Wooden trim and basement window sash are

painted off-white. The floor will be painted a darker beige. Currently it is being renovated to include an updated kitchen area for improved use of the space as their dining area for church suppers and the like.

**NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDING:**

Setting in the north east corner of the lot facing west is a c. 1977 storage shed. This 10' by 18' wooden shed has a gable roof with gray asphalt shingles, red-stained vertical boards, and a stained barn-like swinging front door. Its overall appearance is that of a tiny barn-like structure.



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Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church  
Grand Isle County, Vermont

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### Statement of Significance

The Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church, built between 1853-1854, is a good example of the traditional New England gable-front brick church form with a central bell tower and spire. Built in the Greek Revival style, so popular at that time, the church maintains some its original features such as the monumental portico and exterior brick and gray marble stone work (locally made and quarried) as well as those distinctive features added during a major renovation in the early part of the 20th century including: colored-glass "memorial windows" and curved wooden pews. Originally, this church was built by the Congregationalists in the town who wanted their own place of worship apart from the Methodists. Later, in 1902, both congregations consolidated to form the "Union Church" and worshipped together until 1919, when the Congregationalists left Grand Isle. Both congregations participated in the major renovation between 1902-1910 and the surviving architectural elements are evidence of their consolidation. The church is being nominated under the multiple property submission, Religious Buildings, Sites, and Structures in Vermont, and clearly meets the registration requirements for the church property type. The church retains its original function and siting with many significant original materials and later early-20th-century materials intact as well as all of the qualities of historic integrity. The architectural merit and long-standing civic associations assures its eligibility under Criteria Consideration A.

The Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church is architecturally significant as a good example of a traditional New England gable-front brick church form with central bell tower. Built between 1853-1854, using marble quarried at Isle LaMotte and bricks made locally at Wilcox's Point, in the Greek Revival style, it is the oldest, extant church in the Town of Grand Isle. In this small farm village known for its apples, peanuts, beans and corn, one farmer, Abel Brown, donated the farm land on which the church was built by local residents such as Asa Hollister, John Chamberlin, Jonathan and Seth Griffith, and Carpenter Griswold that was based on designs by Hollister and Chamberlin.

Today, the main body retains its original Greek Revival character. As with a number of the mid-nineteenth-century Greek Revival churches built in Vermont, the Grand Isle church also incorporated Gothic Revival elements for their ecclesiastical associations. While the original Gothic pinnacles were removed from the second stage of the bell tower in a major turn-of-the-century renovation between 1902-1910, Gothic elements appear in the curved wooden pews

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Grand Isle County, Vermont

with quatrefoil carved designs and colored-glass windows added as a part of the renovation. The decorative pressed-metal ceiling, installed in 1903, still remains and recalls the High Victorian Era. There are a total of nine colored-glass windows using opalescent glass in deep rich pastel shades with column borders, geometric shapes, ornate ribbon elements, and religious icons. Given to the church as memorial windows in 1910 by the surviving Congregationalists in memory of the founding members, these windows replaced what are believed to be the original sixteen-over-sixteen, double-hung windows. The renovation work was performed by carpenter Edson Gordon and his helpers under the direction of Deacon James W. Hoag. The bell and pulpit furniture were also given to the church in 1910 by the Methodist Society of South Hero when they disbanded.

With its prominent grand portico and tall spire, the structure is an important architectural feature of the village center near the library, town clerk's office, fire station, and town garage all located on Hyde Road. This varied cluster of town buildings are located west of and roughly .10 miles from the Grand Isle "Four Corners" intersection of Hyde Road and U.S. Route 2.

The church also serves as a symbol of evolving religious life for the townspeople of Grand Isle. Early 19th century was a time of religious rivalry. Often two Protestant denominations sent preachers to a community that could have adequately been cared for by one church. So, even though the Congregationalist Society was already established here in Grand Isle by 1802, it is said that a rumor was circulated at the Methodist Conference that year that the inhabitants of the islands were "highly uncivilized." The Conference at once sent William Anson as preacher and missionary to Grand Isle for the Methodist Church.

Instead of rivalry, though, there was acceptance and cooperation between the two denominations. In 1834, a wood frame meeting house was built on the south side of Hyde Road. Although it was dedicated as the Methodist Chapel, it was shared with the Congregationalists on alternate Sundays until their own church was built. Through the sale of pews to townspeople, the Congregationalist Church was built between 1853-1854—directly across the road from the existing Methodist Episcopal Church. This new church was designed and built by the very men who would worship there; the building of this new house of worship was truly a community affair.

In 1854, the Methodists followed suit and added a brick veneer and Greek Revival pedimented gable ends to their wood frame meeting house. For many years Grand Isle had a "North Church" and a "South Church" or the Congregational and Methodist Churches, respectively. After selling

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Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church  
Grand Isle County, Vermont

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the Methodist Episcopal Church building to the Town of Grand Isle in 1903 for the sum of \$500, both congregations consolidated forming the "Union Church". Still worshipping as separate denominations, together they shared the North Church each Sunday. When the Congregationalist minister preached it was "Congregationalist Sunday" and when the Methodist minister preached it was "Methodist Sunday".

To signify this merger and in keeping with their established equality, both denominations donated equal amounts, or a total of \$1000 to make needed repairs to as well as "update" the church through significant alterations including: modification of the bell tower, replacement of the large ground-level main entrance with a smaller elevated entrance and adjoining steps, removal of the gallery, replacement of the straight-backed pews with curved comfortable ones, and installation of a decorative pressed-metal ceiling. In 1919, the two denominations agreed together to give up the two-denominational system. Congregationalists left the Grand Isle field to the Methodists who have continued the work to present. The church is now formally called the Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church.

The church as it stands today maintains the vast majority of renovations made during the early years of this century as a part of the consolidation between the Methodists and the Congregationalists, thus reflecting an important time in the town's religious history. After being used as the Town Hall and then the fire station, the "South Church" building was demolished in

1975. Consequently, the fact that the Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church still remains makes it even more of a significant entity, both in architectural and cultural terms to the community. Recently, a major effort was mounted to repair and restore the bell tower and make significant structural repairs to the roof and flooring ensuring the continued use of the building. They see the church as a true focal point of the village center as well as their religious lives.

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Grand Isle County, Vermont

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### Bibliography

Arnold, Janice C., et al, and Jan Bender, ed. A History of the Town of Grand Isle as told by the People of the Town. Grand Isle: Landside Press, 1991.

Byers, Rev. Carl J. A History of the Grand Isle Union Church. Grand Isle: Grand Isle Union Church, 1953.

Chamberlain, Don. Personal interview. 1 Jan. and 12 April 1997.

Christie, Ross. Personal interview. 2 Feb. 1997.

Vantine, Frances. Telephone interview. 12 April 1997.

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Grand Isle Union United Methodist Church  
Grand Isle County, Vermont

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### Verbal Boundary Description and Boundary Justification

The nominated property is a rectangular lot 128 feet wide at the front and rear and 162 feet in depth, and is the original lot associated with the church. Town of Grand Isle Tax Maps, Map 13, Block 20, Lot 2, Grand Isle Town Clerk's Office.

Reference to this lot is made in the original Deed of Abel Brown to the Union Church Association found in Volume 4 of Deeds, page 301 (September 16, 1854), Town of Grand Isle Land Records. The deed states that the land transferred for the purpose of building a church is a

    certain piece or parcel of land lying and being in Grand Isle aforesaid and bounded as follows, begining [sic] at a stake and stones on the north side of the highway runing [sic] west from Abel Brown's store and thirteen and a half feet west of a range with the west side of the Town House, runing [sic] north one hundred sixty feet thence east one hundred fifty five feet thence south to the north line of the highway thence west to the place of begining [sic], to be occupied by said association...