

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received NOV 6 1986  
date entered DEC 4 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Holland Congregational Church

and/or common West Holland Church

**2. Location**

street & number West Holland Rd. (State Aid Hwy. 2) N/A not for publication

city, town Holland N/A vicinity of

state Vermont code 50 county Orleans code 019

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Holland Historical Society, Inc.

street & number RFD 1, Box 37

city, town Derby Line N/A vicinity of state Vermont 05830

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Holland Town Clerk's Office

street & number RFD 1, Box 37

city, town Derby Line state Vermont 05830

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

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## 7. Description

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

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

The West Holland Church is a white, Greek Revival, gable-front structure located on an open knoll in the small rural community of Holland. The two-story, rectangular wood building of post and beam construction is 3 bays wide on the west side by 4 bays deep and is characterized by its simple classical details and a square three stage inset steeple rising from the ridge over the entrance. The church is set back about 105 feet from the center of a quiet dirt road and stands alone with no other buildings nearby except a small shed to the south. Although the building has undergone a few alterations since its construction between 1844 and 1854, it retains its original form and continues to project its original defining architectural elements.

Resting on a loose fieldstone foundation, the church is sheathed in wood clapboards on the three main facades and vinyl siding on the rear, east facade which was applied in 1981. The clapboards on the west and south elevations were recently replaced with duplicates of the original. The roof is covered with black asphalt shingles which replace the slate shingles that originally sheathed it. At the corners of the building, Doric pilasters without bases support a wide entablature on the north and south facades. The rear of the church is completely unadorned, however, without pilasters or an entablature. The entablature also stops below cornice returns on the main facade with only a simple frieze board and boxed raking cornice defining the eaves at the gable end.

The church's main facade has a slightly recessed central entrance with painted double-leaf doors, representative of the Italianate style. Each door has two long vertical panels in the top half with a horizontal panel below and two shorter vertical panels on the bottom. A classically inspired door surround including an architrave, frieze and cornice frames the double doors. The entrance is reached by way of four concrete steps.

The entrance is flanked by a 2/2 window on each side with matching windows of the same dimensions aligned above them on the second floor. A molded cornice cap accents the head of the simple surrounds on these windows as well as on all the others in the building.

The north and south facades are identical except for one additional 2/2 window on the north side first floor. Each facade has three, large windows which are centrally divided by a wooden mullion. Narrow, 4/4 windows flank each side of the mullion to make up the entire window opening. The panes of glass in the windows are stained various colors including blue, green, amber, pink and lilac. These window panes were probably added in the late nineteenth century to replace the original clear lights. A small, 2/2 window directly under the entablature near the west end also occurs on both facades. Below this window on the north facade is another larger 2/2 window which is the same size as those on the front of the building.

The back of the church is devoid of openings or embellishment of any kind. Only a narrow fascia board defines the line of the raking eaves which are flush with the wall.

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A substantial, central inset steeple rises in three stages from the roof ridge above the main facade. All three stages are square in plan and sheathed in clapboard with asphalt roof shingles. The base, or first stage, is simply defined by corner boards and a plain fascia board around the top under the eaves of the short sloping roof.

The second stage is slightly set back from the base but rises about three times higher. Simple pilasters on the corners support a smaller, duplicate version of the entablature found on the main block of the church.

The third stage, or bell tower, is set back farther from the stage below but is about the same height. The tower is defined by corner pilasters supporting a frieze and boxed cornice. Blind, rectangular louvred openings set in a segmental arched frame embellish each side but the east which is plain. The steeple is capped by a pyramidal hipped roof sheathed in asphalt shingles. A weathervane depicting a rooster and hen surmounts a short pole on top of the roof. There is no record of what was there originally. In the fall of 1985, all rotten clapboards on the tower were replaced and the tower was painted.

#### Interior

The interior of the church has received few alterations through the years and retains its original floor plan. A small vestibule is located just inside the entrance to the building. The vestibule is panelled with painted horizontal beaded pine walls, a panelled ceiling and has painted random pine floors. Double doors located in the east wall of the vestibule lead to the sanctuary while a small kitchen is located behind a door on the north side. An enclosed dog-leg stair leading to the balcony is accessible behind a door on the south wall. These doors are all two-panel, varnished wood and reflect the Italianate style which was popular when the church was completed. The kitchen has probably always been used for food preparation as it has an old metal sink, c. 1880 located in one corner with a waste pipe that still runs directly outside onto the ground.

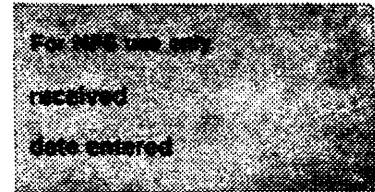
The balcony has been somewhat altered over the years and was blocked off in 1916 to function as a dining room. The walls and ceiling are sheathed in varnished narrow pine boards, probably added at that time. The balcony was recently reopened and a new railing installed. A rope attached to the bell in the tower hangs from the ceiling. The bell was given to the church by Austin Foster in 1893.

In the main part of the church or sanctuary, the original lecturne and Gothic style minister's chair are located at the east end on a platform which is raised up one step above the main floor. The platform has a metal pipe railing across the front. There are six rows of pine, velvet upholstered pews facing the lecturne. The double width central row is flanked by an aisle on either side and a row against the outside walls. Originally two wood stoves were located behind the pews with chimneys which extended up through the balcony and the roof. These were removed in the twentieth century and the church no longer has any heat.

The plaster walls of the sanctuary are decorated by a simple pine wainscoting

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composed of three horizontal boards with a molding on top. A stenciled border of stylized tulips encircles the room at the top of the walls. This border appears to be very old and is probably original. Perhaps the tulip motif is a play on the name of the town, "Holland." The ceiling is covered with new particle board and strapping while the early electric chandeliers, installed in 1933, still dangle below. The door and window moldings are composed of a broad piece of wood surmounted by two flat strips on each side, leaving a recessed slot in between.

Although the church has undergone a series of minor alterations, the basic architectural integrity of the building remains. It is interesting that some of the doors are fashioned in the Italianate style which was just becoming popular when the building was finished. These were probably readily available at the local mill. Despite the door styles and the few alterations which took place through the building's history, the West Holland Church endures as a fine example of the Greek Revival style.

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1844–1854 **Builder/Architect** William Hall, Martin Ferrin

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The West Holland Church is an historic landmark and important visual focal point in the community. Being the only remaining 19th century public building in town, the church survives as a testament to the earlier prosperity of Holland and is an excellent example of the type of typical Greek Revival church found throughout the state. Classically inspired churches such as this one embody the democratic spirit of nineteenth-century Vermont and continue to be a beloved symbol of identity and pride for the state's residents. Certainly many of Holland's residents feel a special pride in what was their community church and have organized a noteworthy effort to preserve the building in the 1970's and 80's.

The framework for the West Holland Church was erected in 1844 with donated lumber and money, but due to insufficient funds the building was not finished until 1852–54 when carpenters William Hall and Martin Ferrin completed the structure. The land on which the church stands was deeded to the original congregation of forty-seven members in 1858. This Congregational church was very active throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century but by 1954 the membership had dwindled and the last regular Sunday services were held. The decline in the church membership paralleled the loss of population in town due to the closing of a sawmill and children leaving their parents' farms to move away. Although Holland is still a farming community, there are many less farms than in the early part of the century and the remaining farms are much larger. While the population of Holland was approximately 900 in 1919, now it is only about 300. The town is no longer an organized village - it does not have a post office and is not even indicated on most state maps, although it does have a school and town office.

The importance of the church to the town's residents as the only remaining symbol of the community's earlier size and prosperity is apparent by their successful preservation effort which began in 1972. For ten years the church had stood vacant and had fallen into disrepair. There were only five living individuals remaining on the books as members of the congregation and it was clear that the church did not have a bright future. When the town refused an offer to take over the building for a town hall, a few local residents decided to form the Holland Historical Society and try to rehabilitate it. The living members of the congregation gave the church and what funds remained in the treasury to the Society in 1973. Since that time, the Society has raised money from within the community as well as through a preservation grant to rehabilitate the building. The exterior has been almost completed and the structure has been stabilized. The Society uses the building as a meeting place as well as a place to display local artifacts relating to the town's history.

In Vermont, the Greek Revival style was immensely popular for all types of buildings from around 1830–c.1880 but it was a particularly appropriate and enduringly popular form for churches and other public buildings because of its unique suitability to represent the democratic ideals of freedom of choice and religion. Variations of the Greek Revival elements found on this church such as the gable front, pilasters, entablature and steeple, can be found on hundreds of other buildings throughout Vermont. Today,

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Farrow, Ella, Holland Highlights, Burlington, VT, Queen City Printers, 1979.

Hemenway, Abby Maria ed., The Vermont Historical Gazetteer: Vol. III, Orleans and Rutland Counties, Claremont, NH, The Claremont Manufacturing Co., 1877

"History of the West Holland Church," Unpublished two page typewritten notes, author unknown.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .62 Acre

Quadrangle name Memphremagog

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is a rectangular lot approximately 185' running north-south by 145' running east-west. This is the original shape and approximate dimensions of the lot as evident by the fence lines, but the property has never been surveyed and the deed does

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Frances Brawley Foster, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization Self-employed date April 14, 1986

street & number Lake Road telephone (802) 425-3510

city or town Charlotte state Vermont 05445

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Eric G. Gilbert*

title Director/Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date November 4, 1986

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

*John A. McManey* 12-4-86  
Keeper of the National Register date

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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after a series of minor alterations, the West Holland Church retains its nineteenth century appearance and beautifully exemplifies the style which had such extraordinary appeal throughout the state. The church is significant not only for its architectural integrity but also for its local importance as a prominent and symbolic landmark in the community and as a visual testament to the era in which it was built.

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not provide a legal boundary description of the property. The nominated property is sufficient to convey the original context of the church and to protect it. The deed is found in Book 20, Page 36 of the Holland Town Records.