

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

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

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

For HCRS use only

received MAR 24 1982

date entered

APR 27 1982

**1. Name**

historic St. John's Episcopal Church

and/or common St. John's Episcopal Church

**2. Location**

street & number 92 Main Street n/a not for publication

city, town East Windsor n/a vicinity of congressional district 6th

state Connecticut code 09 county Hartford code 003

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> 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 Wardens and Vestry of St. John's Episcopal Church

street & number 92 Main Street

city, town East Windsor n/a vicinity of state Connecticut

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of Town Records, E. Windsor Town Hall

street & number 11 Rye Street

city, town Broad Brook state Connecticut

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title State Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission

city, town Hartford state Connecticut

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date 1844

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

St. John's Episcopal Church is situated at the center of Warehouse Point, a village which is a part of the town of East Windsor, approximately ten miles north of Hartford along the Connecticut River. Constructed on the village green in 1809, it was moved off the green in 1844, approximately two-hundred feet east to its present site near the intersection of Main Street and Highway 140. Buildings flanking the green along its south, west and north sides are comprised mainly of two-story Greek Revival and late-Federal frame residences in fair condition; incompatible commercial development on a large parcel northeast of the green greatly detracts from the visual integrity and historical character of the green and adjacent buildings. The church is flanked along its south elevation by the Rectory (1885), a two-and-a-half-story flanking-gable frame structure with paired, extended-gable fronts; and along its rear (east) elevation by the parish house (1897), a single-story hip-roof frame structure (photograph nos.1,4). The Rectory and parish house are included as a part of the nominated property.

The rectangular gable-front frame church is clapboarded and supported by a coursed-ashlar sandstone foundation. The facade (west elevation) consists of a pedimented central vestibule section which is let out from the main wall of the church and surmounted by a two-stage tower (the cupola of which was removed before the structure was relocated in 1844). The extended front is accentuated by paired Roman Doric pilasters flanking a circular-arch entrance and a Palladian gallery window (photograph no. 2). The entrance is articulated by archivolt trim and two free-standing Ionic columns. Double-leaf vertical-paneled doors which matched the size of the entrance were removed in 1959; oak infill was placed in the circular section and rectangular battened oak doors installed. The pediment of the central section and gable ends of the main wall feature a fine modillioned raking cornice which also extends along the roofline of the side elevations.

The side (north and south) elevations have elongated circular-arch fixed-sash windows filled with yellow opalescent leaded glass (photograph no. 3). The gable-end chancel, constructed in 1855, extends out from the rear (east) elevation, and features a tripartite leaded glass Gothic window with circular tracery in the central section.

Entrance into the vestibule provides access to side stairways to the upper choir gallery; three entry doors open into the sanctuary (photograph nos. 5,6). The central nave and side aisles are defined by four chamfered, oak-paneled columns along both sides of the room. The flush-boarded pitched-angle ceiling over the nave and duplicated over the side aisles, dates from 1890, and sheaths a barrel-vaulted plastered ceiling over the nave and side aisles. The arched and paneled chancel, constructed in 1855 and remodeled in 1910, features a bracketed rood beam across its arched front. The pine seat bottoms from the original boxed pews are the only interior finish dating from the original construction of the church.

As built in 1809, the side elevations had two tiers of rectangular sash

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7. DESCRIPTION

windows, the rear wall had a Palladian pulpit window, and the extended central section of the facade was balanced by three entrance doors. The interior plan consisted of a larger vestibule opening into the sanctuary and facing a raised pulpit. Galleries ran the full length of the side walls and above the vestibule. The ceiling was flat, and supported by round attenuated columns (now paneled). The extensive remodeling of the church in 1855 caused the elimination of the pulpit window and side galleries, reconstruction of the choir gallery, addition of the chancel, new fenestration along the side walls, barrel-vaulted ceilings, new interior finish and floor plan, and a new entry. The exterior was painted in earthen colors to imitate a masonry finish.

## 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1809, 1855 **Builder/Architect** Samuel Belcher, architect  
 Norcott, Parsons and Bates, builders  
 Austin and Brown, architects

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

St. John's Episcopal Church is an interesting representation of changing architectural tastes during the nineteenth century as expressed by the overlay of Gothic elements on a transitional New England meetinghouse type (criteria C). Its formation in 1802 was an important milestone in the historical development and economic growth of Warehouse Point, and the prosperity of the Episcopal Church in north central Connecticut (criteria A, B, D, and exception A).

In September 1802, seventy persons signed a petition to establish a Protestant Episcopal church in East Windsor (Warehouse Point), to serve the four town area of East Windsor, Windsor, Enfield and Ellington. Two of its prominent founders were Capt. James Chamberlain and Gen. Charles Jencks. Chamberlain was instrumental in the economic development of Warehouse Point. He opened a road from Warehouse Point to the Connecticut River, and operated a ferry under the name of James Chamberlain and Son (Henry R. Stiles, The History of Ancient Windsor, CT [New York: C.B. Norton, 1859], vol. 2, p. 5). Jencks was the owner of a local gin distillery. In 1802 he was elected a delegate to the Episcopal Diocese Convention at New Haven. In October 1802, a fire destroyed the First Congregational Church of East Windsor (founded 1752). Its large membership included several Warehouse Point residents who wanted a new church to be built. These individuals were accused of arson, tried in Hartford court and acquitted (Michael C. De Vito, Historical Sketch of St. John's Episcopal Church [Warehouse Point: Wadsworth Press, 1979], p. 5). They subsequently left the Congregational Church of East Windsor and joined with the founders of St. John's.

In 1808 funds were raised through public subscription for the erection of a church. Fifty-three members agreed to give over \$2600 and twenty-seven days of labor for its construction "Agreeable to the Contract Mr. Belcher made to complete said House and to Lay the lower floor" (Contract document, St. John's Episcopal Church Records, Connecticut State library, Hartford). Local contractors for the work were Abner Norcott, William Parsons and John Bates. Samuel Belcher, a builder-architect who resided in Hartford, also designed and supervised the construction of the Congregational Meetinghouse at Old Lyme (1817), and at Ellington (1806). Neither church is extant.

In 1844, a new Rector, Rev. H. H. Bates, expanded church services to Broad Brook, Thompsonville, Suffield and Windsor Locks. Rev. Bates was apparently instrumental in the relocation of the church off the green. Ten years later, plans for construction of a new church were changed in favor of renovation. The architectural firm of (Henry) Austin & Brown of New Haven was hired to remodel and gothecize the church; the project was completed in 1855 at a cost of \$6000.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

DeVito, Michael. Historical Sketch of St. John's Episcopal Church.  
Warehouse Point, Connecticut, 1979.

Gold, Jack A., research consultant. Inspection of St. John's Episcopal Church, 15 November 1980.

# 10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT PRINTED

Acreeage of nominated property 2.4

Quadrangle name Broad Brook

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 

1	8	6	9	7	4	7	0	4	6	4	1	3	7	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

n/a														
Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

n/a														
Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

n/a														
Zone				Easting				Northing						

E 

n/a														
Zone				Easting				Northing						

F 

n/a														
Zone				Easting				Northing						

G 

n/a														
Zone				Easting				Northing						

H 

n/a														
Zone				Easting				Northing						

**Verbal boundary description and justification** As mapped by Close, Jensen, and Miller, Civil Engineers, 49 Pearl St., Hartford, February, 1968, as follows:  
west boundary: 163.85 feet on Main St.; north boundary: 263.14 feet by property owned by Northern CT Bank, further 264.17 feet by property owned by town of

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

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jack A. Gold

organization Historic Preservation Consultant

date February, 1981

street & number 862 Orange Street

telephone 203/776-2420

city or town New Haven

state Connecticut 06511

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

date February 16, 1982

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

Entered in the  
National Register

date 4/27/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

The architectural significance of St. John's is derived from the overlay of Gothic elements such as the arched fenestration, vaulted ceilings and chancel on a transitional New England meetinghouse type. Belcher's original design of 1809 expressed both the rigidity of the rectangular eighteenth-century meetinghouse, and the finely scaled proportions, classical details and symmetry of the Federal style. Belcher increased the focus and visual impact of the front of the church by extending the vestibule out from the main building and applying classical detail including pilasters and the Palladian window. The extended vestibule plan was typical of late-eighteenth and early nineteenth-century church designs in Connecticut, duplicated by Belcher three years earlier in the Congregational Meetinghouse at Ellington (Edmund W. Sinnott, Meetinghouse and Church in Early New England New York: McGraw Hill, 1963, p. 25). Belcher's work also reveals the influence in Connecticut of Asher Benjamin, and the inspiration of Christopher Wren and James Gibbs, architects of the English Renaissance.

By removing much of the classical exterior detail of the church, and eliminating its eighteenth-century meetinghouse interior plan, Austin's mid-nineteenth-century renovation attempted to create the appearance of an English parish church. Later nineteenth-century interior alterations such as the application of the arched chancel ceiling and rood beam increased the English Gothic appearance, and today provides a striking contrast to the early-nineteenth-century form of the exterior.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hartford. Connecticut State Library. Records of St. John's Episcopal Church.

Kelly, J. Frederick. Early Connecticut Meetinghouses. New York: Columbia University Press, 1949.

Pierson, William H. American Buildings and Their Architects. Garden City: Anchor Press, 1976.

Sinnott, Edmund W. Meetinghouse and Church in Early New England. New York: McGraw Hill, 1963.

Stiles, Henry R. The History of Ancient Windsor, Connecticut. New York: C.B. Norton, 1859.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

E. Windsor; east boundary: 203.80 feet by property of John F. and Adelaide L. Mockalis; south boundary: 193.89 feet by property of Marie L. Rego, also 333.28 feet by property of Robert K. and Gail M. Saxton. Property recorded in land records as follows: v. 29: 175, and v. 32: 639.