

<b>Historic Name:</b> First Congregational Church of Zumbrota		<b>County:</b> Goodhue
<b>Common Name:</b> First Congregational Church of Zumbrota		<b>Community:</b> Zumbrota City
<b>Owner's Name and Address:</b> Congregational Church 455 East Avenue Zumbrota, MN 55992		<b>Address/<del>Legal Desc.</del>:</b> 455 East Avenue
<b>Classification:</b>		<b>Acreage:</b>
Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure _____ Object _____ District _____		Less than one acre
<b>Condition:</b>		<b>Verbal Boundary Desc.:</b> The south $\frac{1}{2}$ of lot 2 and all of lot 3, block 68, original plat in the city of Zumbrota.
Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good _____ Fair _____ Deteriorated _____		
<b>Open to the Public:</b>	<b>Visible from the road:</b>	
Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No _____	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No _____	
<b>Occupied:</b>	<b>Present Use:</b>	
Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No _____	Religious	
<b>History:</b>		<b>UTM Reference:</b>
<b>Date Constructed:</b> 1862	<b>Original Owner:</b> Congregational Church	15/526560/4904140
<b>Architect/Builder:</b> Unknown	<b>Original Use:</b> Religious	Zumbrota Quadrangle
<b>Description:</b>		<b>Level of Significance:</b>
<p>The First Congregational Church of Zumbrota is located on the east side of East Ave., between Fourth and Fifth Streets, in the city of Zumbrota.</p> <p>The First Congregational Church of Zumbrota is a one-story, wood-frame structure, measuring 37 by 76 feet. Modeled after New England meeting houses, it follows the classic Greek Revival plan of having a gable roof, with a pedimented gable end oriented to the street. Its facade is divided into three bays by four pilasters with doric capitals. Each of the outside bays has a tall, narrow, flat-topped window completely covered by a louvered, green-painted shutter that hangs as a single unit from the top. A flight of steps leads to a set of double doors in the central bay, which is surmounted by a round-arched window, also covered by green louvered shutters. A green- (see continuation sheet)</p>		<b>Local</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>State</b> _____ <b>Nation</b> _____
<b>Significance:</b>		<b>Status:</b>
<p>The First Congregational Church is significant both for being one of the oldest standing churches in southeastern Minnesota and for representing the important New England contribution to the settlement of the region.</p> <p>By the end of the 19th century, a settlement pattern had emerged in the southeast whereby the rural areas were largely populated by foreign immigrants while the cities and towns were largely made up of native Americans. Many of these latter moved to Minnesota from New England, bringing with them the religious beliefs and building traditions of that area.</p> <p>No community in southeastern Minnesota was more solidly New England in its origins than Zumbrota. The town was established in 1856 by the Stafford Western Emigration Company, a group set up with the sole purpose of helping New Englanders move west. As early as 1857, there were enough settlers in the new community to organize a church in their traditional faith, that of Congregationalism. And by 1861, the settlers were sufficiently numerous and prosperous to begin construction of the present First Congregational Church. (see continuation sheet)</p>		<b>Survey</b> _____ <b>Date</b> _____ <b>Local</b> _____ <b>State</b> _____ <b>Nat'l. Reg.</b> _____ <b>Nat'l. Land.</b> _____ <b>HABS/HAER</b> _____
		<b>Theme/s:</b>
		<b>Primary</b> <u>Religion</u>
		<b>Secondary</b> <u>Ethnic</u>
		<b>Other</b> _____
		<b>Local Contact/Org.:</b> Goodhue County Historical Society, Red Wing
		<b>Prepared by and date:</b> B. Michael Zuckerman August 1978

**Description:**

shuttered oculus commands the center of the pediment. Above the roof ridge of the gable end sits a paneled socle which supports a square belfry, with doric-topped pilasters at each corner and louvered, rectangular openings in each face, while the whole is topped by a tall spire.

**Significance:**

tional Church. As in so many other matters, the townspeople followed a strict New England model, making their church one of the most exact replicas of a New England meeting house to be found in the region.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF  
A CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

This story starts with the Puritans who, like the Pilgrims, carried their guns to the fields and to church as protection against the Indians, those people who at times may have been narrow and superstitious but who broadened and helped establish such schools as Harvard and Yale.

While mostly they and their decendents stuck closely to the rock bound coast or the stony fields of New England there were adventurous souls with some of the impulses of their fore-fathers who saw the approaching growth of our nation and succumbed to the western fever. My father was one of them.

And so this is a story of a church, a Congregational church, transplanted, firm convictions, architecture and all to a place known on the maps at the time only as "The Land of the Sioux Indians".

Scouts sent out in 1855 discovered the rich and beautiful Zumbro Valley in southeastern Minnesota. The following year these hardy bearded pioneers, honest and religious, braved the Indians and the other uncertainties and built a New England village in the west. They named it Zumbrota and it is the only Zumbrota in the world. The village was laid out in an orderly manner with a block reserved for the church, another for a park and a suitable sight for a school.

Their first winter resembled the first winters of the Puritans. It was hard and bleak and cold and they snuggled close to the fireplaces where the meals were cooked. They slept on straw mattresses on the floor or placed on "rope bedsteads" where cris-crossed rope took the place of springs but they were laying plans for the church.

They built the church, colonial architecture so beautiful that nearly a century later Sinclair Lewis, passing by, stopped to inquire and ask how the poor people of that time could have the funds for such a building.

They were poor people. There was little wheat to sell for several years and in 1860, with an average yield of about one hundred and fifty bushels for each farm, the price was 45¢ a bushel at the nearest market twenty miles away.

They were however persistent and courageous and with great faith they sent one of their members back east to solicit funds and as proof of Congregational fellowship he returned with enough for a good start.

The lumber was hauled from the nearest saw-mill by teams of oxen and each trip took two days. There were no bridges and the roads were little more than trails.

One member of the church had a stone quarry and donated the stone for the foundation. Others became carpenters, stone masons or mechanics. A Detroit firm donated the stovepipe and a donation of fifty hymn books came from John Willard of New York. Ten books were reserved for the choir and the others were distributed to those who made a twenty five cent donation.

The ladies, not so much heard of in those days, played a large part and in a few years they had earned enough to purchase a bell with a beautiful tone. The cost was \$640.00 and weighing 1,202 pounds it was hauled overland by three teams of oxen. Oxen were also on hand to hoist the bell to it's resting place but the men felt that human hands should do the job so they grabbed the rope and performed the ceremonial task. To this day from the belfry it calls the people to worship.

The first musical instrument was a melodeon; after that a reed organ was used until the pipe organ was installed in 1885 at a cost of \$700.00. This organ which we still use was purchased from the Winona Congregational Church