



NPS FORM 10-900 (Rev. 8-86) OMB No. 1024-0018 [SD-SHPO # ECA-OH-597-1/89]
[use paper with at least 25% cotton rag content, use NLQ or LQ printer]

United States Department of the Interior -- National Park Service
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES -- REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering "NA" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Florence Methodist Church
other name/ site number: CD-FU-FL-3

2. Location

street & number: Corner of 5th Street & Dolly Ave. /NA/ not for publication
city, town: Florence /NA/ vicinity
state: SOUTH DAKOTA code: SD county: Codington code: SD 029 zip code: 57235

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property (Contributing, Noncontributing). Rows include private, public-local, public-state, public-federal, building(s), district, site, structure, object.

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

11. Form Prepared by

name/title: Michael Koop, Preservation Consultant
organization: for Codington Co. Hist. Preservation Comm. date: January 10, 1991
street & number: 615 Jackson St. N.E. telephone: 612-623-8356
city or town: Minneapolis state: SOUTH DAKOTA zip code: 55413

page 4: Florence Methodist Church
property name

, Codington
county

, SOUTH DAKOTA
state

9. Major Bibliographical References /XX/ see continuation sheet

Previous documentation by 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:

- /XX/ State historic preservation office
- / / Other State agency
- / / Federal agency
- / / Local government
- / / University
- / / Other

Specify repository:

South Dakota Historical Preservation Center

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property: Less than one acre

UTM References:

A = /14/	/631-550/	/4990-260/	B = / /	/ /	/ /
C = / /	/ /	/ /	D = / /	/ /	/ /
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

Quad: Florence

Scale: 1:24000

/ / see continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the nominated property are contained within the legal description as recorded in the Codington County Register of Deeds Office: Lots 1 and 2, Block 10, Original Town of Florence, Codington County, South Dakota.

/ / see continuation sheet

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the nominated property include the parcel historically associated with the property.

/ / see continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

The Florence Methodist Church is a wood frame building located at the southwestern corner of 5th Street and Dolly Avenue in Florence, a hamlet in northwestern Codrington County. It is vernacular in style but based on the "Akron plan," a design popularized during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries throughout the country.

Constructed on a rock-faced concrete foundation, the original part of the church consists of a "T"-shaped plan with intersecting wood shingled gables and cornice returns. Tall, narrow pedimented windows with carved quatrefoils punctuate the clapboard walls. A steeple at the northeastern corner of the building has a square tower with a set of double doors surmounted by an open belfry that features turned balusters and decorative scrollwork.

Extending from the rear (west) wall is a low, shed roofed, "L"-shaped clapboard addition. It was attached in the 1950s when a basement was excavated and a kitchen and community room were added. Two windows on the north wall match those of the original edifice.

The interior of Florence Methodist Church has undergone a few minor changes. The nave and adjoining Sunday School room have false ceilings and modern light fixtures, and new accordion-like partitions separate the two spaces. Other original features, however, remain intact such as the wood floor, trim, and fifteen pews.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Under National Register Criterion C, the Florence Methodist Church is significant in the area of architecture because it is a good example of an Akron plan ecclesiastical building executed in a simple vernacular style for the local congregation. It is one of the best preserved small churches in the community. Under the South Dakota Historical Preservation Plan, the property relates to the following historic context: IV. Permanent Rural and Urban Pioneer Settlement, H. Religion.

Although Codington County in northeastern South Dakota was created in 1877, it remained essentially unsettled until the latter part of the Great Dakota Boom (1878-1887). During this ten-year period two railroads -- the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul and the Chicago and North Western -- built lines from Minnesota into the state and platted numerous towns, thereby encouraging development throughout the region. Another major impetus to populating the area occurred in 1892 when the Sisseton Indian Reservation was opened to settlement for white citizens. At that time approximately 900,000 acres of land in northeastern South Dakota, including parts of Dexter, Fuller, Germantown, Lake, and Rauville Townships in Codington County were made available for settlement.

The town of Florence, in northwestern Fuller Township, was founded on 19 June 1906. It was one of sixteen communities established by the Dakota Town Lot Company, a branch of the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad, which laid their tracks from the county seat of Watertown northwest to the Missouri River. Thomas Way, a townsite agent for the railroad, named Florence for the wife of a close friend.

Florence displayed early signs of stability and permanency. By mid-July the town had a weekly newspaper, The Florence Forum, five 30,000 bushel grain elevators, three lumber yards, two banks, two general stores, two grocery stores, two hardware stores, two drugstores, two blacksmiths, two restaurants, a livery and dray line, feed mill, pool hall, barber shop, doctor, photographer, contractor/ builder, and church.

Before any of these buildings were constructed however, the Reverend W.I. Graham had purchased land at the corner of 5th and Dolly for the Methodist Church. On 27 May 1907 a charter was secured and B.F. Mourey, Nick Nielson, and W.G. Putnam served as the board of trustees for the congregation. Within a year local contractors Painter and Sumner completed work on the church building.

The original design for the Methodist Church is based on a "T"-shaped plan that was commonly used in South Dakota around the turn of the century. Methodists were among several religious denominations to adopt this plan as

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

well as an "L"-shaped type of standardized design (see Oldham Methodist Church, 1913-14, NRHP). It may have been influenced by a book of ecclesiastical building plans prepared by the Philadelphia architect Benjamin Price and published by the Methodist Board of Church Extension, which was attempting to create uniformity among Methodist churches.

More specifically, the Florence Methodist Church was built according to the popular Akron plan, which was first used in 1868 for an Ohio Methodist church designed by Jacob Snyder and Lewis Miller. This plan was devised in response to a bishop's desire to have a flexible interior arrangement that permitted a large, single space to be quickly and easily converted into two distinct rooms. In this arrangement the entire congregation was able to participate in the opening services and other important parts of the sermon, and later a partition (usually sliding panels or large doors) was opened to separate the nave from the Sunday School room where younger members were educated. Larger churches feature a Sunday School quarters consisting of an open central space surrounded by one or two tiers of classrooms. Although modest in size, the Florence Methodist Church nevertheless retains the essential components of the Akron plan. Once inside the belfry two swinging doors open to the left into the nave. Another door opposite the entrance leads into the square-shaped Sunday School room. Centered between the nave and Sunday School room is a wooden post and two pairs of modern accordion-like partitions.

Although Florence Methodist Church has been altered slightly over time, the changes are unobtrusive and reversible. Important architectural features such as its simple vernacular design and Akron plan have been undisturbed.

The period of significance of the nominated property does not extend beyond its date of construction in 1907-08. The Florence Methodist Church derives its significance from its architectural merit and therefore qualifies for listing in the National Register under Criterion Consideration A.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Codington County History Book Committee. The First 100 Years in Codington County South Dakota. N.p., 1979.

Erpestad, David and David Wood. "Early Churches." Historical Preservation Center, Vermillion, S.D., n.d. Photocopy.

Florence Forum. 20 July 1906.

Kant, Joanita, Virginia Allen and Dr. Stanley W. Allen, Jr., eds. Pictorial History of Codington County, South Dakota. Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1987.

Schell, Herbert S. History of South Dakota. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1961; Bison Books, 1975.

"75th Anniversary Jubilee, Florence, South Dakota, 1906-1981." n.d. Photocopy.

Sneve, Virginia Driving Hawk, ed. South Dakota Geographic Names. Sioux Falls, S.D.: Brevet Press, 1973.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photos Page 1

1.
Florence Methodist Church
Florence, Codington County, South Dakota
by Mike Koop
September 1990
Neg.: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center
East facade, camera facing west
Photo No. 1

2.
Florence Methodist Church
Florence, Codington County, South Dakota
by Mike Koop
September 1990
Neg.: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center
South and west facades, camera facing northeast
Photo No. 2

3.
Florence Methodist Church
Florence, Codington County, South Dakota
by Mike Koop
September 1990
Neg.: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center
South facade, camera facing north
Photo No. 3

4.
Florence Methodist Church
Florence, Codington County, South Dakota
by Mike Koop
September 1990
Neg.: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center
Belfry detail
Photo No. 4

5.
Florence Methodist Church
Florence, Codington County, South Dakota
by Mike Koop
September 1990
Neg.: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center
Exterior window detail
Photo No. 5

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

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 2

6.
Florence Methodist Church
Florence, Codington County, South Dakota
by John Rau
July 1986
Neg.: South Dakota Historical Preservation Center
Interior, camera facing west
Photo No. 6