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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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name First Congregational Church of Fairport
other names/site number First Congregational United Church of Christ
name of related multiple property listing N/A

Location

street & number 26 East Church St

N/A	not for publication
N/A	vicinity

city or town Fairport
state New York code NY county Monroe code 055 zip code 14450

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Ron David Mealy 6/29/18
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

DRM
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

Alexis Arentz
Signature of the Keeper

8/28/2018
Date of Action

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5. Classification

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

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

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

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

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/religious facility

RELIGION/religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Mid-19th century Romanesque Revival

foundation: stone, brick, concrete
walls: brick, concrete

roof: asphalt shingle, metal
other: _____

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The First Congregational Church of Fairport is one of three churches near the center of the village (the intersection of Church and Main Streets) in Fairport, Monroe County, New York. The building is located on the south side of East Church Street, sited facing north, and is the only building on the property. It is surrounded by an asphalt-paved parking lot and playground area. The 1868 American Round Arch/Romanesque Revival building was expanded three times: two brick wings were added in 1900 and 1924, and a two-story southwest office addition was built in 1951, which incorporated two removed-and-reinstalled c. 1900 stained glass windows. A final non-historic two-story education addition was built in 1971 in the southeast end of the building. The 1951 and 1971 additions are constructed of concrete, painted to match the brick and stone shades of the older portions of the building and are slightly recessed on the east and west sides. The 1868 building and early nineteenth century additions are generally characterized by rounded windows, brick corbeled cornices, and decorative voussoirs over the doors and façade windows. The round arch designs are repeated in the wood double entrance doors. The building also has a three-stage entrance tower surmounted by a steeple in the northwest corner that has a pointed arched cornice at the base of the six-sided steeple cap, which is clad with bands of red and gray slate shingles. The steeple mostly reflects the same Romanesque Revival features of rounded and ocular windows and decorative voussoirs. The foundation of the brick portion of the building is Medina sandstone and the 1951 and 1971 foundations are concrete block. The sanctuary interior was remodeled in 1944, but retains its original plaster ceiling with decorative moldings, rear upper balcony with decorative wood paneling, doors, stained glass windows and some of the Gothic chancel furniture. The interior of the bell tower has its original stair, doors, wood wainscoting, and stained-glass windows. The large fellowship hall to the south was remodeled at the same time with a new tiled floor and wood stair to added upper classrooms, but it kept the round arched doors and moldings into an adjacent meeting room and nursery (east side). Parts of the 1900 exterior addition walls are visible in some of the upper rooms of the 1971 addition (brick wall, corbeling, arches).

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Narrative Description

LOCATION & SETTING

Fairport is a village in the southeast section of Monroe County in the Finger Lakes region of New York State, located along a portion of the Erie Canal (now the Erie Barge Canal—NHL listed 2016) that continues south to Bushnell's Basin and west to Pittsford in its approach to Rochester. Rochester is the largest city nearest to Fairport, approximately fifteen miles to the northwest. The next largest city is Canandaigua in Ontario County, roughly twenty miles to the southeast. Fairport developed in the early nineteenth century as a canal village with farms on the outskirts and is now primarily a residential community within easy commuting distance of Rochester. State Route 31F is one of the main roads running east-to-west through the village, which becomes Church Street. The First Congregational of Fairport (now the First Congregational United Church of Christ) is located east of the intersection of Church and Main Streets at 26 East Church Street, directly across from the Fairport Fire Department and next to the Fairport Community Baptist Church, a late nineteenth century Gothic Revival stone building. The character of the street east of the church is largely residential (single family residences) with the majority representing the early to mid-twentieth century suburban growth of the village. Directly in front of the church is a small lawn with a walkway of concrete and slate that leads to the main entrance. A non-historic wood sign to the east of the main entrance walkway has the name of the church set into a rounded wood arch. Smaller directional signs are at the edges of the lawn for directing vehicle traffic into the parking lot. A bluestone walkway is along the west side of the church leading to the west entrance and the 1900 addition. Brick restoration work in 1982 purposely retained and preserved the original building, which included new front bluestone steps (2012) and protective glass over the stained-glass windows. The church received local landmark designation from the Fairport Historical Preservation Commission (FHPC) in 2009.

EXTERIOR

Sited facing East Church Street, the main body of the church is rectangular, three-bays wide by six-bays deep surmounted by a broad gabled roof. It has a stone foundation and a narrow stone watertable. The roof is asphalt. The façade is three-bays wide with a center entrance. The bay to the right features a double arched window with a single arched window above; the wall terminates in a square pier with a recessed round arched panel that rises just above the roofline. The bay to the left is an engaged square, four stage entrance tower that ends in a tall

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hexagonal steeple surmounted by a cross. The façade is distinguished by rows of corbelling outlining the gable and by brick and stone arches. Each of the side elevations features brick pilasters dividing it into bays and each bay contains a tall, round arched window with a rounded brick lintel and stone sill. The pilasters end in a row of corbels that extend across the entire elevation.

This historic church was originally L-shaped, with a one-story, one-bay wide and two-bay deep rear chapel and a northwest entrance set into a large rounded opening. Two more additions to the rear of the church give the building a T-shape. The east side has a two-bay, one-story addition (1924) with a secondary entrance modified for accessibility and a wooden ramp. The addition has similar brick corbeling and rounded windows as seen in the main body of the church. The west side has a two-bay, one-story 1900 addition attached to the rear of the former chapel. Hidden behind the 1900 addition is the 1951 portion on of the building that is two stories with a newer entrance and two c. 1900 stained glass windows reinstalled in the west elevation. A 1971 addition projects from the 1951 and 1924 sections and features a covered rear entrance, even fenestration, poured concrete sills and non-historic casement style, single pane windows. The walls of both the 1951 and 1971 addition are concrete block, painted in shades of buff and gray to be compatible with the older portions of the church. Dimensions of the church are 165 feet extending back from the front façade with the back half extending roughly 30 feet to the east. The original 1868, 1900 and 1924 portions were built in the American Round Arch/Romanesque Revival style of monochromatic fired square-cut brick set in regular courses with flush mortar. The foundation is of rough-hewn large square-cut blocks of red Medina sandstone beneath a wide limestone watertable.

The facade is divided into three bays or sections when viewed from East Church Street and is separated by full-height plain brick pilasters with a connecting a brick and stone corbel that is parallel to the roof line. The center section has a small, circular stained glass window below the corbeling and three rounded stained glass windows below with the central window taller than the two flanking windows, unified by a continuous limestone sill. On the first-story, a pair of wood entrance doors have wooden panels created by raised circular and cross hatched moldings. A rounded transom is over the doors, containing a stained-glass window. The entrance has a concrete stoop at the level of the limestone watertable and consists of bluestone steps and risers and black wrought iron railings. The door and windows have voussoirs of stone and brick with raised keystones and stone banding at the bases that extend to the brick pilasters. The entrance has two metal and glass lanterns on either side of the arch just above the band.

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Similar designs are in the west bay as seen in the center bay. The top has brick and stone corbeling with a single rounded stained glass window below and two more windows on the first level, all with the stone and brick lintels with raised keystones, stone sills and banding. A raking cornice with wood, scalloped vergeboard unifies the center and west bays. The west corner of the façade has a square, full-height brick pillar with recessed brick creating a long narrow arch on the front and west sides. Historic photographs prior to 1924 show a pinnacle on the pillar that matches the top of the bell tower. There is no specific mention in church records of its removal, but is estimated to be between 1924 and 1950. A metal plaque is near the base of the pillar with brief history of the church.

The third section of the façade is the east bell tower. It projects out roughly three-feet from the other façade sections and features compound brick pillars at the corners that are evocative of buttresses and have stone caps at different heights. In the center of the bell tower, a smaller front entrance is a slightly smaller version of the center section main entrance. It also has a small cement stoop and stairs; the risers are soldier course brick. The second level of the bell tower has a pair of stained glass windows on the front and east side. The third section has paired wooden louvers set into stone arches resting on full-width white sandstone sills. The top has a raised arch and chamfered corner edges with carved stone caps and bases, circular windows in a recessed brick portion and voussoirs of brick and white sandstone with raised keystones. The windows originally held a wooden clock face and now have stained glass. The top level contains a bell made in 1868 by the Jones & Company Foundry of Troy, New York that is still used every Sunday to call to worship.

On each side of the tower, a Gothic arched parapet with a wide wooden cornice is surmounted by a hexagonal nine-foot spire extending the tower height to 70-feet from the ground. After years of leaks and repairs, the spire was stripped to its wooden frame and restored in 2001. It is covered with new hexagonal gray and red slate pieces arranged in five bands with a metal cap and copper clad wood Latin cross on top. The slate is the same size and shape as the original, as is the color pattern.

Both the east and west sides of the 1868 portion are nearly identical, consisting of six recessed brick bays with a centered tall window. The entire east elevation is set back slightly from the bell tower and has a wood accessibility ramp that partly obscures the foundation near the end (south) bay. Each bay is separated by plain brick pilasters that extend from the stone watertable to the wood roof cornice. Each section is also topped with

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brick corbeling. The windows are tall (twelve-feet high), round topped with soldier brick lintels and have narrow stone sills. The bays and windows are the same for the west elevation 1868 section. Wood window frames are painted gray to match the stone sills.

A portion of the 1868 back (south) gable section of the original building is barely visible with much of the elevation obscured by additions. The west addition is brick, one-story with a single bay that extends eleven-feet from the 1868 building to include an entrance that faces East Church Street. The doorway consists of double recessed paneled doors with a stained-glass window set into a transom with a soldier course lintel. The door is centered between two pilasters with corbels under the wood cornice. The door sill is a continuation of the stone watertable and Medina sandstone foundation. Three concrete steps provide access to the door, and plain, wrought iron railings are on either side of the steps.

The west wall of the rear ell has a gable end with raking wood cornice, a continuation of the brick corbeling and pilasters framing the door, two evenly spaced rounded stained glass windows and a centered ocular window in the gable end below the corbeling. To the south is a two-bay portion added in 1900 with a continuation of the corbeling under a wood cornice and two more rounded stained-glass windows framed by plain pilasters. The watertable and foundation are the same materials as in the older portion of the building, but the foundation blocks have tooling marks indicating the end of the 1868 portion and the beginning of the 1900 section. From a distance, this section of brick looks the same as the rest of the building; however, a closer inspection of the corner joint reveals that the brick is raised about one-half inch higher in the 1900 part. The 1900 addition was built by E. B. Rowell (1840-1906), a local builder; no plans exist in the church archives for the addition.

Extending thirty and one-half feet from the east side of the 1868 building is an addition containing a meeting room, known as the Snow Room (a memorial dedication), added in 1924. The north facing brick wall of the addition has a fire door set into a rounded arch that opens onto a wood deck ramp. Next (west) to this door is a small rounded stained glass window marking the location of an interior bathroom. The wall over this window has brick corbeling and a brick parapet with a wood cornice that creates a return over the fire door. The north wall of the addition has two large rounded multi-lite windows that have brick lintels and stone sills that match the rest of the building. The wall also has a wood cornice in the eave with corbeling below and plain brick pilasters separating the windows. The addition's east wall has three more of these windows (the center window is larger) and a raking cornice in the gable end. The watertable and foundation in the wing appear to be limestone. The roof of the 1924 and 1900 additions is metal.

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Two final additions are at the south end of the church, one built in 1951 by A. W. Hopeman & Sons Co. of Rochester, (builders) to house the office and the other in 1971 for educational functions. Concrete block is material used in the foundation and walls both additions. The 1951 addition extends for thirty-three feet along the west side of the building, added as part of the renovation of the interior fellowship hall. Three concrete steps lead to a new metal door under a shed roof that enters a small vestibule leading to the kitchen and main office. The stained-glass windows on this wall were moved here from the south wall of the 1900 addition.

Extending 42 feet along the south side is a non-historic 1971 split level two-story Sunday school, designed by Victor Mellen and built by Neil Hirsch. Both additions are painted to match the brick. All the additions were given an Atlas standing seam metal roof, colored gray; seams are narrow and one- inch high. This involved creating a gable roof over the rear with a hip roof over the west side of the 1900 section. The roof of the 1868 building was repaired in 2017, stripped to the rafters and new asphalt shingle roof installed over new plywood.

INTERIOR

The primary interior space is the sanctuary, which can be accessed from East Church street through the narthex on the north and from the additions and fellowship hall in the south end. Two c.1925 photographs of the sanctuary indicate that was arranged facing south following the auditorium plan with natural dark wood wainscoting and a dark walnut pulpit in the center of a long, raised platform. Four ornate Victorian chairs with cushioned seats sat behind the pulpit backing to the wall. These chairs are still used. The organ was set within a large round arch to the left of the pulpit and a tall arched door was on the right. None of those features are extant today.

The sanctuary of the church is 63-feet and six-inches long by 43-feet, laid out with a wide center aisle with two narrow side aisles; all three aisles can be accessed from doors in the narthex. The sanctuary has plaster walls with five rounded stained glass windows in both the east and west walls. The windows have twelve-inch deep wood frames and have sills that extend to the wainscot chair rail molding. The top molding covers the three and one-quarter inch wide original wainscoting that along the east, north and west sanctuary walls.

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A sixteen-inch plaster molding is at the base of a five-foot curve at the top of the walls, with a crown molding that encloses the flat plaster ceiling, giving the appearance of a large, dramatic cove ceiling molding. Ceilings are 24-feet and ten-inches high. An eight-foot diameter medallion of concentric circles of acanthus leaves is in the center of the ceiling. In January 2018, the plaster ceiling and molding was restored to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the 1868 building.

In 1944, architect Walter A. Taylor designed a sanctuary renovation and that was done by A. W. Hopeman & Co., completed despite wartime concerns about a labor shortages and availability of materials. According to minutes and letters pertaining to the renovation, several consultants recommended light paint and more lighting to brighten the interior. The entire sanctuary was painted with shades of cream and it is still painted in light colors at present. The renovation also included a divided pulpit platform with the communion table in the center and the rear wall covered with an oak retable extending to the ceiling, containing a projecting hood with lighting at the top. A large wooden cross with a trefoil at each end (*botonnee* cross) was mounted high in the middle of the retable.

Two complementary floor to ceiling oak paneled sections flank the retable for the organ. Paneling to the right has an oak grille of 120 openings above the paneling that are covered with a deep rose fabric. The 1944 configuration of the chancel remain with the grill concealing the speaker for the organ pipes in the space behind. To the left of the retable are the pipes for the Schleicher organ that were arranged in a pattern similar to the configuration of organ pipes seen in the c.1924 photograph. The organ console is in front the chancel by the choir and lectern. A low wall of oak panels is at the edge of the chancel floor by the choir. A similar panel wall is behind the pulpit. The oak paneling, lectern and pulpit were part of the 1944 remodeling. A white marble baptismal font, a memorial gift in 1905, stands on the floor of the sanctuary in front of the pulpit.

Two rows of original pews were retained in the 1944 remodeling. Pews are made from single pieces of chestnut with a rolled top edge and end boards of walnut. The wood floor is completely covered with a deep rose colored carpet. Between 1898 and 1902, the church was electrified. On the side walls, two arm sconces with flower shaped globes replaced kerosene gas lights. The 1944 building renovation replaced these with five pairs of two-foot high hexagonal wrought iron and glass hanging cathedral style lanterns.

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The north end of the sanctuary features the original balcony, paired doors to the narthex and end stairs to the balcony and bell tower. The balcony curves out four feet beyond the wall, is flat at the ends and is decorated with recessed panels of circles, shields and squares. On the east side of the balcony, a door opens to a small finished room on the second floor of the bell tower. There is a hole in the ceiling for a metal ladder and bell rope extending to the third level of the tower and steeple. A large, tripartite rounded stained glass window is visible centered in the north wall of the balcony. A curved stair rises to the balcony on the east end. It is enclosed with original wainscoting, which has a walnut stair rail ending in a heavy, octagonal newel post with turned top.

Below the balcony is the narthex that runs the width of the church. The wall between the narthex and the sanctuary features six large windows each with a grid pattern of rippled glass set into wooden moldings. The sill is the molded chair railing. The centered paired doors have similar windows over a lower wood section of six recessed panels. Two arches are at the ends of the narthex hall, one accessing the stair for the bell tower and the other the columbarium installed in the east end in 2009 that flanks a stained-glass window. The narthex also features wide baseboard moldings, plaster walls and ceiling, and large curved door moldings.

Originally, the south end of the 1868 section had a chapel that was incorporated into the 1900 addition, making one space. It had Sunday school rooms on the west wall and was two stories high with a skylight at the north end. The 1868 west side door enters to a small vestibule covered with mostly original wainscoting and plaster walls and a stained-glass window. One door goes to the basement stairs. Two other doors are rounded, ten-foot high with similar molding and panels as seen in the rest of the building. One door enters a room on the west wall that was originally a minister's study. One paneled ten-foot rounded door is on the east with a hall to the restrooms, installed in 1917. The 1900 section added approximately twenty-five feet to the south to contain a new kitchen, and kept the Sunday School rooms along the west wall while opening the middle space for church functions.

East of the 1900 addition is another addition, that includes the Kathleen Snow Memorial meeting room. It remains much as it was when built with a large open 23-foot by 30-foot space with high coffered ceiling, wood chair railing and plaster walls. It has seven leaded glass stained glass windows made by Pike Stained Glass Studios, Inc. of Rochester (1924) and two high rectangular doors, all with similar wide, rounded trim. The ceiling is a fifteen-panel coffered ceiling with four brass cathedral style lights.

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In 1951, the fellowship hall was enlarged to accommodate more children in Sunday School with an addition that extended the fellowship hall about 33 feet to the south. The skylight was replaced with a suspended ceiling and the kitchen was moved into the west side main floor Sunday School rooms. A new floor was installed in 2017, with polished square cement tiles. Sunday School rooms were expanded to five second floor rooms above the new kitchen with one more on the main floor. The classrooms have one wooden stairway in the north end of the west wall and a second in the center of the south wall. The old kitchen was remodeled into a nursery, which retains the early wainscoting and molding. Two memorial stained glass windows were moved from the south wall of the 1900 section to the new west wall of the 1951 addition. The south stairway provides access to the 1971 addition. The interior of the 1971 addition included classrooms for a daycare in the lower level and a large upper multipurpose room, accessed by an open metal and stone stair.

The basement can be accessed by a stair from the west side door and another in the west end of the narthex. The space under the 1868 portion of the building includes a finished basement with rough cut stone walls painted white. Under the bell tower, the walls are 30-inches thick. Supports are visible with two-inch by twelve-inch joists with twelve-inch centers. North-south running center beams are ten-inches by twelve inches. The beams are supported by 24-inch square stone piers in what appears to be a random placement throughout the basement. The basement floor under the sanctuary is cement. The Boy Scouts use two large paneled rooms and five smaller patrol rooms. When a new gas heating system was installed in 1995, the east side of the basement was reconfigured into a 500-square foot storage area for the church and a smaller furnace room. Under the 1900 addition, the floor is dirt. Short thick stone walls create spaces where the dirt is 30-40 inches deep. A straight aisle between these spaces is rough dirt. A small dirt crawl space is under the "new" part of the 1951 section.

STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS

Eleven historic *grisaille* windows are in the sanctuary and narthex. Each is twelve-feet high and two-feet, three-inches wide with centered, diamond shaped panes with painted medallions that give an overall effect of grayness, hence the French term “grisaille.”¹ Rectangular colored glass sections frame the windows with a narrow boarder of small triangles of red, blue or green stained glass and designs of wheat, grapes, and lilies. The top section of each window features a “resurrection” window of eight circles superimposed on lilies, leaves and

¹ Letter describing the GRISAILLE WINDOWS at the First Congregational Church. Valerie O'Hara, Pike Stained Glass Studios, Inc., May 26,2009.

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smaller flowers in gold, red, brown and white glass with blue ring separating it from a round arched and floral border.

Three balcony windows form the tripartite window seen from the exterior and have similar borders seen in the sanctuary windows, but different depictions of religious symbols. Each has a number of diamond shaped panes, each with gold-toned four-petal Messianic Rose depicting a verse from Isaiah ("the desert shall blossom as a rose at the coming of the glory of God"), but the center of the outer windows contains a large stained glass inset of the Lamb of God with the Banner of Victory in the west window and a descending Holy Spirit dove is in the east window, both being symbols of Christ. The center window also has Christ symbolism with the Alpha and Omega depicted below an open Bible, representing the Word of God. An anchor symbolizing hope is in the west window and a Resurrection Crown is in the east window, both set into a red background.

Unfortunately, the maker of the sanctuary grisaille windows is unknown, unrecorded in the church records. Pike Studios of Rochester, New York made the windows in the Snow Memorial Meeting Room (ca. 1924). These windows are geometric leaded glass panes, some clear rippled glass and some pale yellow rippled glass with small blue squares and clear rectangles as a boarder. An arch within the boarder glass has leaded arches to emphasize the semi-circle. Pike Studios also manufactured the four, stained-glass ocular bell tower windows that were designed by Jake Patla and installed in 1982, replacing the original clock faces.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1868-1951

Significant Dates

1868, 1900, 1924, 1944, 1951

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

John Rochester Thomas (architect)

Hiram Kingsbury (builder)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period covers the initial construction of the building in 1868 and its historic additions (1900, 1924, 1951) when the church achieved its historic appearance.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

The building is significant under Criterion Consideration A as deriving its primary significance from architectural distinction as an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival/American Round Arched style and an early example of the work of architect John Rochester Thomas.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The First Congregational Church of Fairport is architecturally significant as an excellent example of the mid-nineteenth century picturesque Romanesque Revival style in Fairport. The church is associated with the oldest established congregation in Fairport (1824) and is one of three historic churches located on Church Street in the village of Fairport. The congregation was officially incorporated in 1832 and a house of worship was built, only to be replaced by another structure two years later. This happened at the time when Fairport developed as a port along the Erie Canal with a steady growth in population, commerce and industry. When the canal reached Fairport (1823), it had a population of less than 100 and by 1867, it formally incorporated as a village with a population of roughly 1000. This was reflected in the growth of the First Congregational Church membership, requiring a new, larger building. Constructed in 1868, the church was the work of architect John Rochester Thomas, who designed it early in his career. The First Congregational Church and another church Thomas designed in nearby Victor both serve as excellent examples in portraying the *Rundbogenstil* or picturesque American Round (Romanesque Revival) style and were a contrast to the then popular Gothic Revival style, often used in churches. The style was introduced in the mid-1840s by James Renwick and Richard Upjohn and was used mostly for non-Episcopal churches and public buildings. Fairport's First Congregational Church featured many of the characteristics of the style, particularly in its use of rounded arches, corbel tables, asymmetrical massing and the use of multi-colored stone and brick arches. Subsequent additions in 1900 and 1924 copied or mimicked elements of the style to remain compatible with the main body of the church, adding to the high degree of integrity.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Glover Perrin and his brother, Jesse Perrin, purchased land in what was known as the Phelps and Gorham Purchase, a section of Western New York between Seneca Lake, the Genesee River, Lake Ontario and the Pennsylvania border, consisting of 1.6 million acres of land that was being sold off for settlement after the American Revolution. The town of Perinton, incorporated in 1812, was named in their honor and Fairport was one of the villages that was later established in the town. Early settlements were Town Centre, Egypt, and

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Bushnell's Basin, and once the Erie Canal was constructed through the region, settlements established along the completed canal saw dramatic increases in population. One village along the canal was a "fair port" described in 1822 as consisting of "seven log houses, one block and one frame house."² Fairport's pioneer history era ended around that time with the arrival of the Erie Canal as it entered its canal era phase.³ In 1848, Fairport's population was roughly 200 and by 1867, Fairport was incorporated as a village with a population of 1,000.⁴

In December 1824, nine people met at the home of Jesse Perrin to form a worshipping congregation that became the Congregational Society of Perinton. The group were six members of the Pittsford Congregational Church and three from the Congregational Church in Penfield: Lucy Chaffee Eaton; her sister, Lettice Chaffee Norton; Leah Beal Packard (second wife of Cyrus Packard, Perinton's first supervisor); Huldah and Lemuel Wight (brother-in-law to the Perrins, a farmer and church deacon 1825-31); Lucy and Simeon Bristol (Perinton town manager), Nancy Perrin Blackmon (daughter of Jesse and Abigail Perrin) and William Stebbins, who became the first clerk of the Congregational Society. After the meeting in his house, Jesse Perrin elected to continue his membership in the Pittsford Church.

At first, the Congregational Society met in homes and schools with ministers from other towns officiating at worship services. After struggling to increase membership, the group decided in 1828 to continue rather than dissolve. Another momentous decision took place on November 12, 1831, when the congregation approved a resolution "That the female members of this church have the right to vote on all matters that come before this church."⁵ By 1832, the congregation began associating the church with the Fairport community, and in June 1833, John Peters, one of the original land owners in the village, conveyed a one-quarter-acre lot to the First Congregational Church "to build and keep upon the same a meeting house." In 1836, John Peters and his wife, Polly, conveyed additional land to the Congregational trustees, one of them being Lewis Northrup, who built the first church building on the site in 1833. A second building was built in 1844 by Hiram Hayes to accommodate a larger membership. In 1867, the 1844 building was moved to West Avenue and became Shaw's Hall (no longer extant), to make way for a third, larger church building constructed on the site. The society underwent a series of short-term ministers for spiritual support until the Rev. Nathan Bosworth arrived in 1857. Bosworth

²W. H. McIntosh, *History of Monroe County, NY* (Philadelphia, PA: Ensign & Everts, 1877), 277.

³ William F. Peck, *Landmarks of Monroe County, New York* (Boston, MA: The Boston History Company Publishers, 1895), 364.

⁴ McIntosh, *History of Monroe County*, 288.

⁵ Manual of the First Congregational Church of Fairport. Fairport, NY: The Mail Press. 1884.

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was the first minister to serve the church for longer than two years (1857-1864), with the membership increasing to 50 members under his tenure.

The Rev. Jeremiah Butler (1812-1880) was the next long term minister, taking over after the Rev. Bosworth and serving until 1878. It was during his leadership that the membership increased to nearly 200, requiring a larger building. Funds were raised by subscription with costs estimated at \$15,000. The First Congregational Society of Fairport gathered 133 donors' signatures, which included the names of non-church members showing community support for the new building, resulting in a total pledge of \$14,255. The *Rochester Express* newspaper reported in January 1868 that the contract for the building of the church was given to Hiram Kingsbury of Rochester for a brick structure with a tower, lecture room and trim of "white Medina stone. There will be two front entrances, with vestibule and singers' gallery above. The inside walls are to be colored, and the seats will be of chestnut with black walnut trimmings."⁶ The article also reported that the plans were drawn up by John R. Thomas (1845-1901), also from Rochester. After Butler's death, he was eulogized as a self-made man "in the truest and best sense of that much abused phrase" and that the "handsome church edifice which the Congregational Church of Fairport occupies was built under his pastorate, and is his best external monument."⁷

Little is known about builder Hiram Kingsbury; however, federal and state census records from the 1850s list him as boarding with the Adamson and Kenney families in Pittsford, New York, and in the 1860s with the Rose family in Rochester. The records list his birthplace as Massachusetts around 1829 and his occupation as a carpenter and joiner. An 1868 Rochester Business Directory has a quarter page advertisement for Hiram Kingsbury, listing him as a joiner and builder with a shop at 8 Temple Street. Kingsbury was known to have built at least two more churches in the area: The First Congregational Church in Henrietta, Monroe County, also in 1868, and the Victor Methodist Church (Ontario County) in 1869. John R. Thomas was also the architect for the Victor Methodist Church.⁸

John Rochester Thomas

⁶ "New Congregational Church in Fairport," *The Rochester Express*, 24 January 1868, 3.

⁷ "Appendix—Necrology [5], October 1880." *Minutes of the Forty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the General Association of the General Association of New York (October 1878)* (Syracuse, NY: Master & Stone Printers & Book Binders, 1878/1883), 51.

⁸ "Methodists to Observe 150th Birthday with Varied Program." *Shortsville Enterprise*, 26 September, 1956, 5.

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According to his obituary (*Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, August 29, 1901), John Rochester Thomas was born in Rochester in 1845. Following the failure of his father's business in 1862, Thomas needed employment and entered the practice of Merwin Austin, a prominent architect in Rochester, with the intent of entering the profession. He also enrolled in courses at the University of Rochester and continued his studies in Europe. After his return, he opened his own practice, with the First Congregational Church in Fairport as one of his first commissions. His long career included the design of the Willard Asylum in Ovid in 1869 (NR listed 1975) with the main buildings having rounded windows and masonry walls topped with decorative brackets and Mansard roofs clad in multi-colored slate. Another major early commission was for the State Reformatory in Elmira (1874), an elaborate two story building with large center and corner sections with turrets, hipped roofs and cupolas and tall, rounded windows evoking the appearance of a school rather than a prison.

In 1882, Thomas moved to New York City, where he continued his practice, which included designing a combined armory for the Seventy-First Regiment and Second New York Battery on Park Avenue (1893), a large Richardsonian Romanesque style fortress-like building that was destroyed by fire in 1905. He was also credited with rebuilding the New York Stock Exchange as an elaborate, Second Empire building that was demolished in 1901 for a larger building. Thomas was credited with designing over 150 churches throughout his career. Two of his New York City churches were the Second Reformed Church on Lenox Avenue, a large Gothic Revival style building constructed in sandstone and Calvary Baptist Church (1883) on West 57th Street, also in the Gothic Revival style. He died of heart failure in 1901 and was buried in section A in Mount Hope Cemetery in Rochester.

CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE

The medieval Romanesque was introduced as a revival style in the United States in the 1840s by architects Richard Upjohn and James Renwick, with Upjohn's Church of the Pilgrims in Brooklyn, New York and Renwick's Smithsonian Institution building ("The Castle"), both in 1846. Renwick and Upjohn were also practitioners of the Gothic Revival style, but Upjohn reserved the style for commissions of Episcopal churches, stating that the Romanesque Revival or American Round-arch style was more appropriate for other denominations or non-ecclesiastical commissions. Romanesque, or to use another term, Round-arch style (a literal translation of the German word *Rundbogenstil*) was perceived as less ostentatious than the Gothic

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Revival, making it more attractive to other protestant denominations, especially those with Puritan New England roots.⁹

Originating in southern Germany, the Round style or Rundbogenstil was presumed to have been introduced to Richard Upjohn around 1843 by his new employee, Leopold Eidlitz (1823-1908) who was originally from Bohemia.¹⁰ Eidlitz trained at the Vienna Polytechnic and was an admirer of German architect Friedrich von Gärtner (1791-1847), who favored classical Romanesque design and used it to transform Munich into a major European capital in the early to mid-nineteenth century. The prevalent feature of the style was a repeated use of the rounded arch, often accented with voisoirs, keystones and columns. Other features were the use of geometric massing, a preference for brick, and clearly defined openings.¹¹ Like Upjohn, Eidlitz designed in a number of revival styles throughout his career; however, excellent examples of his work with rounded arches appear in his interior designs for the New York State Capitol Building in Albany, New York. Eidlitz designed the richly detailed Assembly Chambers and Assembly Staircase.

Apparently the “round-style” appealed to both the First Congregational Church in Fairport and its architect, John R. Thomas, as evidenced in his design for the church as well as another nearby church, the Methodist Church of Victor. Both were brick buildings with a tall bell tower in an end bay and a tall pinnacle (also brick) with a cap that matched the base of the steeple at the other end of the façade. Windows were rounded with lintels of stone or brick or a combination of both with keystones. Stone accents were of limestone, used for sills, the watertable and caps to the edges of portions of the bell tower. Thomas added stone corbel ends to the brick corbeled façade of the church in Fairport, while he used all brick for the Victor church. Both had wood raking cornices with brackets in the Methodist church and a wave-like design in the Fairport church. Bays were slightly recessed between brick pilasters and a secondary entrance was located in an arched opening in a short extension off to one side at the rear of the building. Thomas’s use of round arches, ocular windows, horizontal belt courses and corbeled arcades were all Romanesque features and often repeated in his design for both churches.

As for the interior, the First Congregational Church reflected the shift in focus from the pulpit (emphasized in the New England meetinghouse) to the pulpit platform, which one scholar attributes to the influence of the

⁹ William H. Pierson, Jr., “Richard Upjohn and the American Rundbogenstil,” *Winterthur Portfolio*, vol. 21, no. 4 (Winter 1986), 223.

¹⁰ At present, Bohemia is part of the Czech Republic that was previously a province of the Hapsburg Austro-Hungarian empire, bounded on the east by Silesia and Moravia and by the German states of Bavaria to the west, Saxony to the north.

¹¹ Pierson, “The American Rundbogenstil” (1986), 228-230.

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revivalism of the Second Great Awakening and its emphasis on conversion.¹² A platform allowed the preacher to be more dramatic (striding to and from the pulpit, kneeling at the edge of the platform to pray, etc.). Music and singing were staples of revivals and the platform allowed sufficient room for choirs and organs. By the time the church was built, protestant congregations were more aware that the building had the ability to create a worshipful atmosphere.¹³ Congregational churches accepted the use of service music and singing with choirs either on the pulpit platform or in a gallery. Pulpit platforms generally held a smaller pulpit, a reading desk and three chairs for those assisting with worship, “which had a much more practical use than representing the Trinity.” Furthermore:

Pictorial stained glass windows blossomed in every building; painted organ pipes and brass fixtures added to the religious atmosphere. In a way it was an interesting reversal of the Puritan fear of art and music as dangerous distractions from hearing the Word of God... The congregation was increasingly a passive audience for whom worship was something done for them and to them by experts. The mood setting beauties of the building and the music conditioned the congregation for worship but they did less and less as active participants. It is no accident that the part of the building occupied by the congregation was designed as an audience chamber much like that of a theater, and the pulpit platform and choir stalls resembled a stage.¹⁴

The interior of the First Congregational Church of Fairport featured the platform with pews oriented toward it. A news account of the church plans stated that a “vestibule and singers gallery” were to be above the entrance opposite the platform.¹⁵ A circa 1925 photograph of the sanctuary revealed that the singers moved to the platform at some period with the choir seated in front of the organ on the east side. Pews were aligned in two rows, facing the platform. Clearly visible were the obligatory three chairs (plus one more) and pulpit dating from the mid-nineteenth century in the center of the platform and an altar table on the floor in front of the pulpit platform.

When the church interior was updated in 1944, the pulpit platform was dramatically altered, removing the formal separation between worship leaders, musicians and the congregation. The altar table was moved onto the platform and placed in the center in front of a tall, plain wood wall panel with a large cross and light hidden by a plain, projecting cornice. Organ pipes continued to occupy the wall east of the altar with the choir seated on two risers. The choir and organ console were shielded by a paneled wall that incorporated a reading desk or lectern.

¹² James F. White, *Protestant Worship and Church Architecture* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1964), 124.

¹³ *Ibid*, 125.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 125-126.

¹⁵ “New Congregational Church in Fairport,” *Rochester Express*, 24 January 1868, 3.

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Another paneled wall to the east incorporated the pulpit that extended to the floor of the sanctuary. Behind the wall were the historic chairs and a side stair leading to the entrance to the fellowship hall. The wall east of the altar was paneled with wood with an upper geometric screened section. Other new changes were to add more lighting, new carpeting and to move the baptismal font in front of the pulpit. All other historic features by Thomas and Kingsbury remained intact, including the wainscoting, moldings, balcony, plaster ceiling with center medallion and pews.



Looking toward pulpit platform, ca. 1925.

As a church congregation that has roots to 1824, it is committed to the continued success of the First Congregational Church, now known as the First Congregational United Church of Christ, and to the stewardship of its historic building. With subsequent additions, the conscience effort was made to maintain all the Romanesque characteristics that were present in 1868 or duplicate them when possible. When the 1951 and

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1971 additions were constructed, they were purposely placed in the rear of the building to be less visible and were painted with colors that would blend with the larger building. The congregation preserves its history through the extant historic structure and its archives. The church stands today as representing its role in the development of the village of Fairport and in memory of all the past members who contributed to the life of Fairport and the town of Perinton and feels that the town and village are fortunate to have this building as a reminder of its past.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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"Appendix—Necrology [5], October 1880." *Minutes of the Forty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the General Association of the General Association of New York (October 1878)* (Syracuse, NY: Master & Stone Printers & Book Binders, 1878/1883).

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“New Congregational Church in Fairport.” *The Rochester Express*, 24 January 1868, 3.

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White, James F. *Protestant Worship and Church Architecture*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1964.

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Monroe County, NY
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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 # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: First Congregational United Church of Christ

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.11 Acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18N</u> Zone	<u>301432</u> Easting	<u>4774578</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Boundary is the same as for the period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jean Whitney (member) (edited by Virginia L. Bartos, Ph.D., NYS OPRHP)
organization First Congregational United Church of Christ date 6 June 2018
street & number 26 E Church St telephone 585-223-0224
city or town Fairport state NY zip code 14450
e-mail Virginia.Bartos@parks.ny.gov

First Congregational Church of Fairport
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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: First Congregational Church of Fairport

City or Vicinity: Fairport

County: Monroe State: New York

Photographer: Virginia L. Bartos

Date Photographed: 6 March 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 0001 of 0016: North and west elevations of church, view looking south east from East Church St.
- 0002 of 0016: Detail view of bell tower, view looking south.
- 0003 of 0016: Partial view of east elevation, east and south sides of bell tower, view looking northwest.
- 0004 of 0016: 1924 addition with partial view of east elevation, looking southwest. 1971 addition just visible on extreme left.
- 0005 of 0016: West elevation of 1868 part of church, view looking northeast.
- 0006 of 0016: View of 1868 ell, 1900 and 1951 additions, looking southeast.
- 0007 of 0016: Enclosed stair from basement to sanctuary.
- 0008 of 0016: Sanctuary looking toward pulpit platform (view looking south).
- 0009 of 0016: Sanctuary looking toward narthex and balcony (view looking north).
- 0010 of 0016: Detail view of sanctuary ceiling.
- 0011 of 0016: Detail view of sanctuary balcony.
- 0012 of 0016: Partial view of tripartite window in balcony.
- 0013 of 0016: East side of sanctuary showing grisaille windows.
- 0014 of 0016: Narthex, looking west with stair to balcony and Newell post visible at end.
- 0015 of 0016: Fellowship room (remodeled chapel & 1900 portion), looking southeast toward 1951 offices.
- 0016 of 0016: Snow meeting room, (1924 addition).

Paperwork 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.460 et seq.).

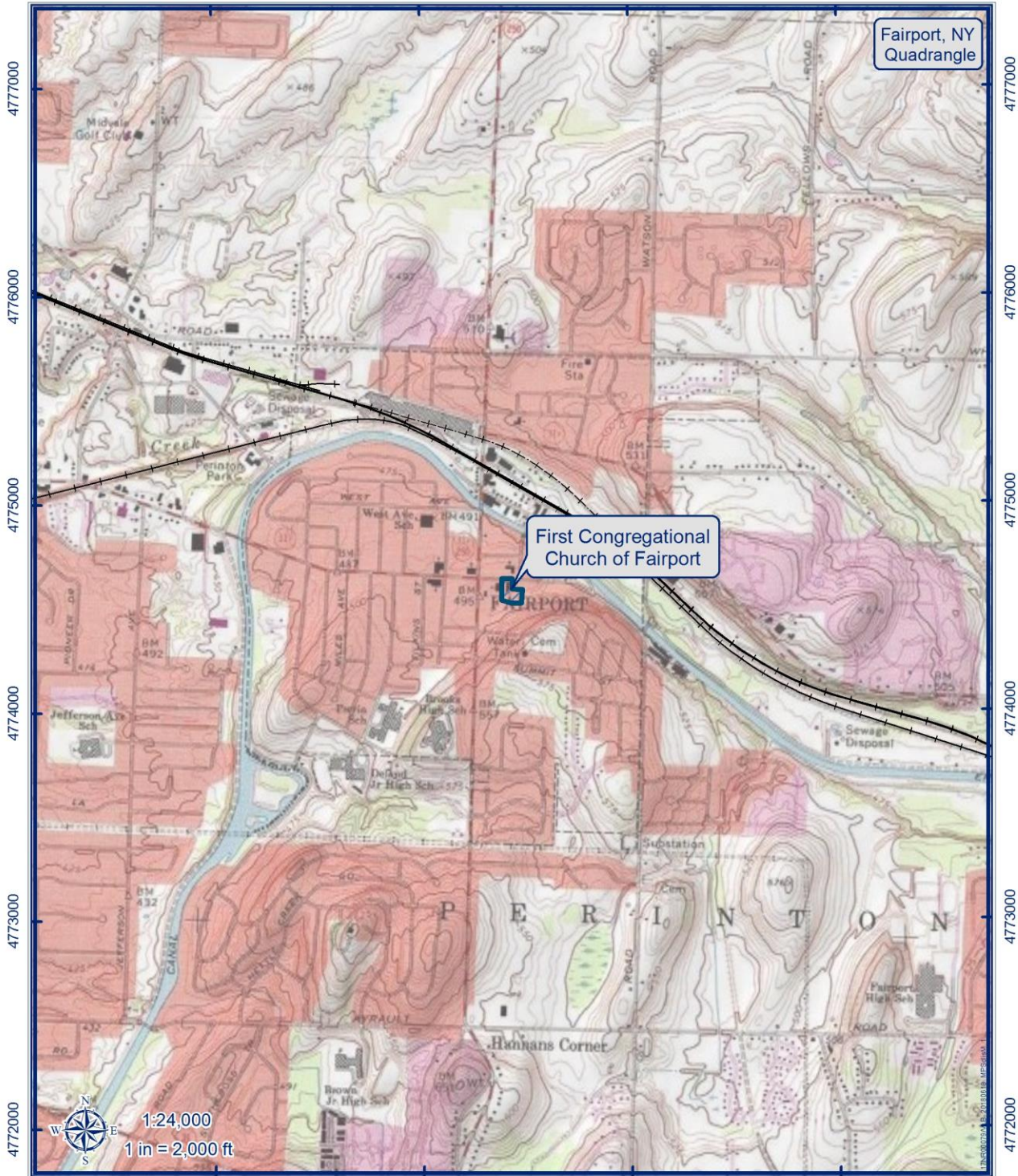
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

First Congregational Church of Fairport
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
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First Congregational Church of Fairport
Fairport, Monroe Co., NY

26 East Church Street
Fairport, NY 14450



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



First
Congregational
Church of
Fairport



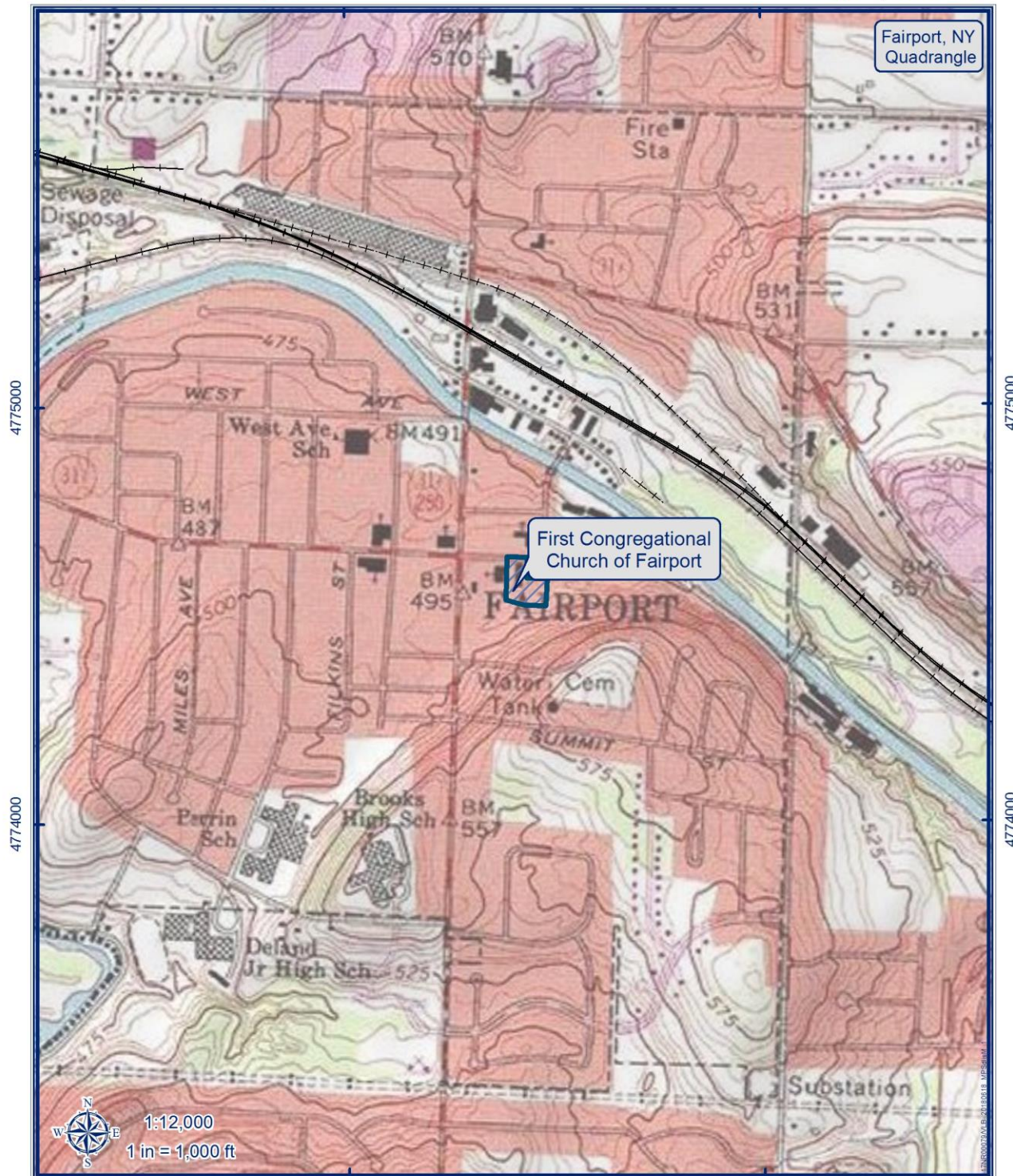
Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

First Congregational Church of Fairport
Name of Property

Monroe County, NY
County and State

First Congregational Church of Fairport
Fairport, Monroe Co., NY

26 East Church Street
Fairport, NY 14450



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



First
Congregational
Church of
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Parks, Recreation
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Datum: North American 1983
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First
Congregational
Church of
Fairport



Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation



30





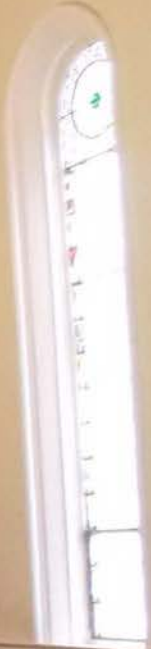










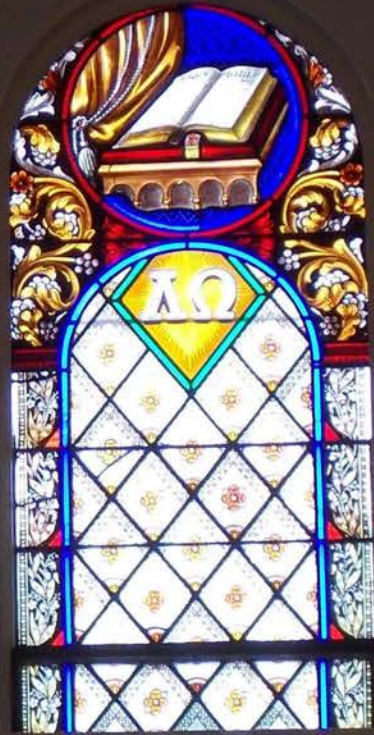




Jesus loves me! ^②
This I know, for the Bible
tells me so
Taking children on his knee,
saying, "Let them come to me,"
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so







EXIT



Jesus loves me
This I know, for the Bible
tells me so.
Taking children on his knee,
saying, "Let them come to me,"
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so.







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 7/11/2018 Date of Pending List: 8/13/2018 Date of 16th Day: 8/28/2018 Date of 45th Day: 8/27/2018 Date of Weekly List: 8/31/2018

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 8/28/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria

Reviewer Alexis Abernathy Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2236 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



"Unity in Christ"

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

April 26, 2017

As officers of the church, we support a listing in the State and National Registers of Historic Places for the First Congregational United Church of Christ, located at 26 East Church Street, Fairport, New York.

We look forward to working with the New York State Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation Department during this application process.

Thank you for your consideration.

James Franzen
Church Moderator

Nanette Notar
Chair, Board of Trustees



June 13, 2018

Dear Ms. Bartos,

This message was sent initially as an email, but we wanted to be sure you received it, hence this copy being sent through the US mail.

We feel compelled to write to you in support of having the First Congregational Church in Fairport listed on the National Register of Historic Places for several reasons:

- Its' been our church home since our family moved to Fairport in 1971 and where our two sons received their Christian Education and were part of the youth groups.
- Learning about the history of our church during this process, thanks to JeanWhitney, has been wonderful - to all of us in the congregation.
- and
- The designation would be such a perfect way to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the construction of this beautiful building!

Thanks so much for your help in this journey to be recognized on the National Register.

Most sincerely,

Pat and Bill May
27 Wincanton Drive
Fairport, NY 14450



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner



5 July 2018

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places

Mail Stop 7228

1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following four nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Taylor Flatts, Jefferson County
First Congregational Church of Fairport, Monroe County
Camillus Cutlery Company Headquarters, Onondaga County
Colored Musicians Club, Erie County

Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office