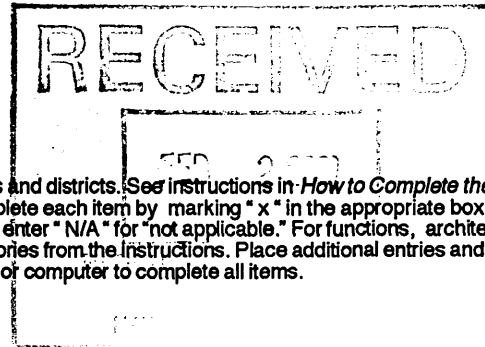


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

200



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name The First Congregational Church of Swanton

other names/site number Old Brick Meetinghouse; New Wine Christian Fellowship

2. Location

street & number 42 Academy Street a not for publication

city or town Swanton vicinity

state Vermont code 51 county Franklin code 011 zip code 05488

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Elsa Milbrantz National Register Specialist 1/29/2001
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other, (explain): _____

Edson A. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

3/2/01
Date of Action

Name of Property

County and State

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)

- private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

- building(s), district, site, structure, object

Contributing Noncontributing buildings sites structures objects 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

"Religious Buildings, Sites and Structures" in Vermont 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)

Italianate

foundation stone, walls brick, vinyl, roofslate, other wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheet.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 7 Page 1

Building Description

The First Congregational Church of Swanton, Vermont, is located in the center of Swanton Village at the head of the town park. The well preserved 1823 church, remodelled in the Italianate style in 1869, fronts Academy Street and is situated between the Academy building (now the Town Clerk's Office) and the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. A lawn sprawls on the east, west and south sides. Around the park are various residences, churches and public buildings, including the Swanton Public Library. The church is constructed of load bearing red brick masonry and is embellished with Italianate detailing. Among its distinctive features are a heavy bracketed cornice, a series of segmentally arched windows with stained glass of varying artistic patterns, and a pedimented front-facing gable. The clock tower, belfry and spire punctuate the center bay above the main entrance and are constructed of painted white wood with Italianate detailing. The interior has been renovated on several occasions in the building's history, changing woodwork, finishes, and pew configuration. The 1913 Estey pipe organ still stands in the choir loft on the southern end of the church. The building is in good condition having received regular maintenance and it retains its integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Built in 1823 and renovated extensively in 1869, the First Congregational Church of Swanton is a north-facing, three-by-five bay building with a pedimented gable-front facade, and a central wooden tower and spire rising up from the central bay. The church's decorative embellishments are Italianate in style. Located in the center of the village of Swanton, Vermont, the church is situated at the southern end of a rectangular park and is flanked by a Greek Revival structure housing the town's offices and the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. The commercial center of Swanton is located at the northern end of the park, and residential structures and other churches line the eastern and western sides. Academy Street, a through-street, runs directly in front of the church and a lawn spreads out around each of the other facades. To the east of (and visible from) the church is U.S. Route 7, a heavily traveled road running the length of Vermont.

The building is of brick masonry (load bearing) executed in Flemish bond and is constructed on top of a stone foundation (which has been painted green). Attached to the southern (back) facade of the building is a brick addition constructed c. 1900 and renovated in 1989. The central portion of this new addition rises to a height the same as the main block but with lower, one-story spaces on either side of it. On the southern end of the addition, the cladding is blue vinyl (a change effected by the 1989 renovations). Roofing on the main block consists of multi-colored slate shingles while on the addition, dark gray asphalt has been applied. A slender chimney shaft made of brick is visible on the eastern side of the main block near the roof/wall junction.

Features common to all facades of the building include segmentally arched, stained glass windows, wooden window and pediment trim, and Italianate brackets. The stained glass windows on all facades of the church are known as the "Memorial Windows." They were installed at the turn-of-the century and in 1913 the congregation repaired the leading on many of them. The

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 7 Page 2

Description (continued)

design of the stained glass varies from window to window; many are characterized by small odd-shaped panes of different colors, both jewel tones and opalescent pastels.

The front facade is dominated by a central entry bay, which projects from the plane of the building approximately three feet. This central bay is pedimented with the pitch matching that of the main gable; the pediment on top of the central bay is slightly lower than the height of the main gable. The tower and spire extend upward from the main gable in this central bay. Running along the raking cornice of the gable on the main structure, as well as along the lines of the pediment on the protruding central bay, are jig-sawn Italianate brackets. The cornice, pediment, brackets and tympanum are all constructed of wood and have been painted white.

The painted white double doors of the main entrance contain six panels each, with three elongated rectangular panels on the top half separated by narrow rails and three shorter panels on the bottom half capped by a wide stile. Directly above the doors is an area containing six rectangular coffered panels, and still above this is a stained glass, segmentally arched transom. The transom is stained glass, embellished with a circular design in the center and with oblong and rounded geometric shapes in blues and yellows; the window was donated by the Young Peoples' Christian Endeavor in 1886. In the center of the arch of the window is a keystone bearing a *fleur-de-lis* design. The brickwork around the door and transom is recessed slightly. Four steps lead from the street-level into the vestibule through the main door. A wrought iron railing curves outward from the top step so that it runs along the plane of the facade as it descends. The steps, made from concrete except for the topmost one (which is made of granite), fan outward so that the shortest one is at the top and the wider ones extend out at the bottom.

In the two bays on each side of the entry are stained glass windows. The windows are segmentally arched and the stained glass is arranged in odd-shaped (both geometric and organic) panes. At the top of each window is a circle, inside of which is a star shape. Brick segmental arches crown both windows, and their height matches the segmental arch of the transom above the entrance; the length of the windows terminates at the middle of the double doors. Window frames on all facades are painted white wood.

The tower and steeple with spire, constructed and clad with wood and painted white, is the most complex facet of the front facade. The tower rises from directly above the pediment such that the roof line of the main block is disrupted by the square block of the tower. The tower is clad with rusticated wood and rises upward for approximately one-half a story before terminating with a flat roof and bracket-laden cornice. On all four sides of the tower are corner pilasters and flat, square spaces for the placement of clock faces. One clock face exists on the front facade, and the rest of the flat spaces are outlined with rounded arches, hood moldings and keystones, all made of wood. Projecting upward from the flat roof is an octagonal belfry, smaller in its radius than the square tower. Rounded arched openings on each of the eight sides are partially covered

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 7 Page 3

Description (continued)

with louvers; running around the bottom portion of this belfry is a balustrade. Each side of the octagon is crowned with a pediment. Above the octagon is a spire, extending upward approximately two stories.

The east facade is ornamented by a cornice, at which are placed at intervals thirteen Italianate brackets, and by a narrow frieze band just beneath it. Five stained glass, segmentally arched windows run the length of the main block. These windows are shorter in length than those on the front facade. Four small, six-over-six segmentally arched basement windows are embedded in the foundation, extending above the stone and into the brickwork of the facade. The glazing is a combination of clear and pink tinted panes. On the back extension, there is another stained glass, segmentally arched window. A smaller, segmentally arched window opening with clear glass panes in a six-over-six aluminum sash exists just above grade. The window itself is square, as the top portion of the segmental arch has been filled in with a painted red board.

The west side facade is almost identical to the east on the main block. The main difference is a modern aluminum door in the back extension leading into the basement. The stained glass window in the back extension is particularly elaborate with an iris and leaves in the central part and a book at the topmost portion.

Though the rear (south) facade was reconstructed in 1989, the two original stained glass windows remain, situated side by side. In the poured concrete foundation are two, fixed sash aluminum windows (single pane of glass). On the main block of the church is a white wooden raking, bracketed cornice with cornice returns.

Interior

The interior of the church was remodeled at the turn of the century. The vestibule is a recessed area from which stairs on the east and west sides lead through doorways onto landings. The doorways are surrounded by simple moldings, finished in a gray-brown stain; the doors themselves are half glass and date to the latter half of the twentieth century. From these landings are stairs leading to the gallery on the north side and another doorway leading into the auditorium is on the south side of the landing.

Straight ahead of the main doors, toward the south, is a set of stairs leading into the basement of the church. The original foundations of the church are cased in wood, serving as shelves along the edges of the room. The basement is used as a small gym and gathering area and is known as the Sunday School Room. The basement also contains a small office for the pastor, a rest room, and a kitchen. In 1951, the congregation installed a new floor in this kitchen, as well as

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 7 Page 4

Description (continued)

in the vestry and entrance. Other repairs to the basement that same year included re-paneling the side walls and installing cupboards for the use of the Sunday school.

The interior of the main block is a vaulted space with a gallery at the back (northernmost) end and an altar at the front (southernmost) end. Six bronze-type light fixtures, dating from the 1940s, hang from the ceiling at various points in the auditorium. Ceilings and walls are plastered and decorative gold painting adorns the outermost edges of the ceilings. The pattern is simple stripes approximately a foot in width, terminating at corners with an interlocking design. Walls are painted white except for the panels created by the application of molding. These large panels are painted in a light mauve color. Along the cornice are wood moldings, the most prominent being an ovolo type. The dado portion of the wall is covered in a wainscoting resembling board and batten; the color of the dado is the same as the pews, both of which appear to have been treated with a stain to look bleached. The pews have low backs and a scroll finishes the top of the seat back. The pews are now arranged in a slightly semi-circular pattern and the narrow floorboards are laid on the diagonal. Windows in the main block are deeply recessed in the thick brick walls.

The gallery is a narrow loft with minimal seating. Supported by fluted posts, the gallery is shaped so that there is a center portion which runs parallel to the rear wall. Additionally, there are two side portions set at a forty-five degree angle to the east and west walls of the church. Italianate brackets run the length of the gallery on the underside of the balcony. The woodwork on the balcony has received the same treatment as the woodwork on the dado and the pews.

Behind the altar is an alcove in which an Estey pipe organ (manufactured in Brattleboro, Vermont) was installed in 1913. A new, plain wooden door on the eastern side of the southern wall serves as an emergency exit from this area. A long stained glass window on both the west and east sides of this alcove illuminates the area, as does a window above the organ. Fluted wooden pilasters, painted white, cap the corners at the junction of the wall of the main block and those of the alcove. The alcove is separated from the altar by a wooden balustrade with square balusters. Four small, square brass and glass fixtures, which may date to the 1940s, provide lighting for the auditorium of the church.

First Congregational Church
Name of Property

Franklin County, Vermont
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark " x " in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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.

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance

1823-1947

Significant Dates

1823

1869

c. 1900

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Gallagher, Joseph A.

Barney, Elisha

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

New Wine Christian Fellowship

First Congregational Church

Name of Property

Franklin County, Vermont

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

UTM references

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 8 6 4 8 2 0 0	<u>4</u> <u>9</u> <u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>

3	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>

see continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name /title Ann M. Lattinville

organization University of Vermont, H.P. Program date 4/25/97

street & number Wheeler House, 442 Main Street telephone 802 656-3180

city or town Burlington state Vermont zip code 05405

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name New Wine Christian Fellowship, Board of Elders, c/o Rev. David Smith

street & number 10 Farrar Street telephone (802) 868-4326

city or town Swanton state Vermont zip code 05488

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. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**First Congregational Church of Swanto
Swanton, Franklin County, VermontSection number 8 Page 1**Statement of Significance**

The First Congregational Church of Swanton, a one and one half story, pedimented brick church built in 1823 and renovated extensively in 1869, is an excellent representative example of ecclesiastical Italianate architecture. Built originally by a union of denominations, the church's later renovations reflect fashionable architectural trends of the era. One of three churches on the perimeter of the town park in Swanton Village, known historically as Swanton Falls, the Congregational Church has been in continuous use for religious services since its construction. The building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its architectural significance as an important building type and is being nominated under the multiple property submission "Religious Buildings, Structures and Sites in Vermont." It clearly meets the registration requirements for the church property type; the property is eligible under Criteria Consideration A. The property is also significant because of its relation to patterns of town development; the church was built in 1823 as Swanton's economy had begun to diversify and renovated in 1869 as the economy continued steadily in its growth. As a result, the church is also eligible for nomination under Criterion A for its relation to these patterns of events that made a significant contribution to the development of the community of Swanton.

Swanton Village, in the town of Swanton, is located on Lake Champlain, just seven miles from the Canadian border, and its settlement developed on both sides of the Missisquoi River. Swanton's lands saw a period of dispute in the 1760s between New York and New Hampshire. New Hampshire claimed all the land east of Lake Champlain and had been chartering it for a number of years. In 1764, New York claimed all land west of the Connecticut River, a claim supported by King George. New York began parceling out land, ignoring New Hampshire's existing grants. The township of Swanton was first chartered in 1763 under New Hampshire grants, but ultimately incorporated in 1790 with the first record of a town meeting. The first white settler to the area was Simon Metcalfe, who arrived in 1767 and later lost his land to Ira and Ethan Allen after the Revolutionary War. The first permanent white settler was John Hilliker, who made his residence two miles below the Falls at Swanton. On May 3, 1803, Silas Hathaway deeded 5,000 acres (which included the township of Swanton) to Elijah and Jonathan Ferris. The two men laid out the village, including the park (or mall as it was then called).

Swanton's industries developed early, as the village is located just six miles from the mouth of the Missisquoi River, which empties into Lake Champlain. Fertile lands along the flood plain of the river encouraged the development of agriculture as well, and the population began to increase steadily. By 1800, Swanton's population had grown to 858. In 1801, a group of congregants met with Reverend David Huntington to sign the articles of covenant for the Congregational Society of Swanton. Huntington, however, never became the minister to the congregation and there is no evidence that he ever preached in Swanton. Until 1817, the Society met irregularly for services in school houses. This was not uncharacteristic of Vermont's

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 8 Page 2

Significance (continued)

religious history. In the latter portion of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth, settlements were often sparsely populated. Often church services were held in private homes and barns, as communities lacked funds or numbers of individuals to make construction of a meeting house feasible. Pastors were often sent from Connecticut to serve the sparsely settled Vermont frontier, assisting in the establishment of churches, oftener still at the request of the settlers themselves.

The Congregational Society of Swanton did not seem to have attempted to engage a settled pastor for the first 16 years of its history. By 1817, however, the congregants appointed a committee to call Reverend Benjamin Wooster to become the pastor at both Swanton and Highgate. Wooster, however, declined the call. In 1819, Reverend Phinneas Kingsley became the first regular pastor for the Congregationalists. In 1817, the Congregational Society, along with the Baptists, built a meeting house in the village at Swanton Center in which the Society played a role in maintaining until 1867.

By 1823 the Methodists and Episcopalians joined the Society of Friends and Congregational Society to build the edifice on Academy Street at Swanton Falls, as none of the denominations had enough members to support individual houses of worship. Most New England towns set aside land for the building of a church and parsonage and in Swanton, these "ministerial rights" were not settled until the early 1820s, though questions about the lands arose at town meetings as early as 1803. With the discussion of building a union meeting house underway, Swanton divided up the rights in equal parts to each of the denominations. Subscriptions for the new church building began on January 8, 1822, and the committee collected a sum of \$987. On February 25, 1823, the land on which the brick meeting house now stands was deeded to a committee chosen by the Society of Friends, Episcopalians, Congregationalists and Methodists to secure the execution of the project. The committee was comprised of prominent townspeople such as Henry Stinehour, Elisha Barney, Jonathan Ferris, and Anthony Hoffman who owned factories and businesses. The deed indicates that the land was to be used for the sole purpose of erecting a meeting house and "sheds and maintaining commons...", all to be owned by the members of the committee (and the successors to their offices) and the owners of the pews. According to the specifications of the deed, at the time of the land transfer the meeting house was partly erected and the construction undertaken by Elisha Barney. Each of the denominations possessed a portion of the ownership of the edifice until the Episcopalians sold their rights to the Congregationalists in 1827. Reverend Eben H. Dorman became the first settled pastor at the Brick Meeting House in 1825.

The growth of the congregation and the erecting of a church building coincides with the somewhat slow but steady growth of Swanton's industries. In 1812, Joseph Atkinson built the first marble mill and in 1814, Henry Stinehour the first tannery. A company formed by Julius Rice, Samuel Hoffman and Captain Thomas Clarke began building canal boats with the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 8 Page 3

Significance (continued)

capability of sailing on Lake Champlain. These boats were used to move lumber to the lake. By 1823, the opening of the Champlain Canal connected Swanton's economy more directly to the New York market, because the canal linked the lake with the Hudson River. Two prominent citizens, Underhill and Ferris built a mill specifically for manufacturing marble mantles and pieces for furniture for New York markets in the first two decades of the 19th century. By 1824, Swanton boasted a grist mill, five saw mills, two fulling mills, two woolen mills, four marble mills, a forge and seventy-five dwellings. In 1847, Charles W. Rich began to manufacture lime at Swanton Junction. By 1848, Elisha Barney invented a number of machines for the manufacture of marble, improving further the industry in Swanton. As a result, Swanton claims the first black marble tile manufactured in America. Despite some stagnation of the economy in the 1820s, the population grew from 1,657 in 1810 (which was a figure larger than that of the population of nearby St. Albans, the seat of Franklin County) to 2,312 in 1840. By 1849, the Vermont and Canada Railway began construction at Swanton and by the 1870s, both the Lamoille Valley Railroad and the Missisquoi Railroad ran through the town.

The building that Elisha Barney constructed contained typical components of a New England meeting house. Boxed pews and a high pulpit characterized the interior, while a plain, rectangular form characterized the exterior. The church originally had a high pulpit, a balcony and side galleries, and was embellished with wainscoting around the auditorium. A large chandelier lit the church along with lamp fixtures on the walls. The placement of the windows were the same as they are today, though later enlarged.

By 1867, the Congregationalists gained full ownership of the brick church. Though there is no record of their transfer of ownership, the Methodists had given up their portion by 1848 when they built a church that was eventually replaced by the current edifice on Grand Avenue. With the death of Jonathan C. Ferris in 1865, the Friends share of the building was willed to the Congregationalists. Lynde C. Ferris purchased the rights to the church from the Methodists and in turn sold the property to the Congregational Society for \$1 in 1867. That same year, the Society began to consider making renovations to the building.

Congregationalists J. Blake, H. Smith, R.S. Cushman and J.F. Blackman wrote a letter to the church clerk requesting that he call a meeting to add a new piece of information to the Articles drafted in 1823. This new piece would include the provisions of Chapter 90 of the statutes of Vermont, which allowed for the procuring, holding and keeping in repair a house of public worship and an accompanying parsonage. In response, C.H. Bullard, Society Clerk, called a meeting of the proprietors of the Old Meeting House at Swanton Falls and "all others interested" to discuss the idea of repairing the meeting house and putting it in "comfortable condition for use." Those attending the meeting settled on a committee who contracted and superintended the repairs of the meeting house.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton,
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 8 Page 4

Significance (continued)

The committee drew up a constitution framing the guidelines for the work. For example, the constitution stated that

no tax or assessment shall ever be levied on the Slips or Pews in said house, when purchased or erected, or on the owner, or owners, of the same, as such, for any other purpose than for making necessary repairs from time to time on said house, or in the case of the purchase of house, for the payment of the same.

Families also began purchasing subscriptions for pews in this same year. A draft of an agreement in the church records indicates that a group of individuals became stockholders in the brick meeting house as a way of financing the renovations.

In 1868, the Society began to concentrate on full ownership of the brick meeting house in Swanton Falls with the sale of the Swanton Center meeting house to Clark S. Jenison. The congregation entered into an agreement in 1869 with Joseph Gallagher, "architect and builder," to execute major renovations and repairs to the church. The meeting house committee, consisting of C.H. Bullard, O. Dorman, Francis Smith, and Hiram Lyon negotiated with Gallagher to make the repairs specified in the plans by a September 15, 1869, date. One of the most significant changes was specified in the plans as an addition to the south (rear) end of the church, fourteen feet long and fourteen feet wide. The space created was intended for the placement of sixteen new pews and two windows. Repairs included repointing the cracks on the brick and stone joints with a cement mortar. The agreement also indicated that the foundation under the church needed to be coated with cement (parged) and striped with paint to look like stone, a common practice of the era. The committee agreed to pay Gallagher \$8,000 for his work, to be paid in installments, a sum that included reimbursement for his furnishing the materials.

According to an existing copy of the Articles of Specification, the 1869 alterations were meant not only to attend to problems of deterioration and neglect, but to update fashionably the edifice. The main entrance of the 1823 building consisted of two separate doors and two windows. The Articles called for the existing configuration to be changed (to its present one), bricking up the old openings. To update the decorative detailing, the Articles called for the removal of the old cornice, replacing it with "a cornice and brackets put on like those shown on the plan." The articles also called for the updating of the wooden trim on the interior. Pews, pulpit and wainscoting were to be constructed of ash and trimmed with black walnut.

The church's tower predated the 1869 renovations, but it too saw both redecoration and renovation. Some of the timbers, the committee believed, were rotten and so the Articles recommended their removal and replacement with "good, sound timbers." In order to reinforce the tower's construction, the committee requested that Gallagher use also "timbers framed and put in where necessary to make the tower strong and substantial." The bell deck received

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 8 Page 5

Significance (continued)

updating as well. It was "to be covered with the best quality of tin locked [,] nailed and soldered in the best manner and painted with three coats of fireproof paint." Shingles for the tower were dipped in fireproof paint so as to update the church's security and to prevent catastrophe.

The renovations also resulted in the enlarging of the basement of the church, allowing for usable space. By 1870, renovations had progressed enough to allow the congregation to take a vote on whether or not to hold subsequent business meetings for the Congregational Society in the new basement of the church. On January 11, 1870, C.H. Bullard called a meeting to hold this vote, as well as to appoint a building superintendent to oversee the maintenance of the newly improved building.

The Italianate and Queen Anne architecture prevalent in the village are a material representation of the growth of Swanton's economy, which was at its most diversified stages from the 1850s onward. A study published in 1891 entitled *Industries and Wealth of the Principal Points in Vermont* characterized Swanton as having:

superior facilities for transportation, abundant water power, and all the raw materials at hand. Swanton is essentially a busy village... The magnitude of the manufacturing and mercantile interests of the village and the promise of the future are matters of general pride and gratification.

Elisha Barney's company continued to saw and finish marble until 1900 when the Vermont Marble Company of Proctor bought the controlling interest in it. Lorenzo Perry opened a new mill in 1852 for the manufacture of marble. In 1870, the red stone discovered in Swanton, classified as Swanton Marble, came into production. The limestone industry as well saw a tremendous amount of growth in the 1870s. A.B. Jewett, E.W. Jewett and C.W. Rich, operating under the name E.W. Jewett and Company, built a large plant in 1877. Within three years, the company added three new kilns to its operation. The tannery in Swanton also experienced many changes during the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1874, for instance, after a fire destroyed the building, a new tannery under new ownership opened for business, lasting until 1882.

After the Civil War, the Italianate style became popular in Vermont ; in Swanton, the popularity reflects the prosperity brought by the success of industry. The Italianate style first began to appear in the American architectural vocabulary in the mid nineteenth century. In Swanton Village, several of the commercial buildings were executed in the Italianate style and were heavily ornamented with brackets and corbels. Another church in the area that made use of this style is the Union Methodist Church in Highgate Center, built in 1868-1869. Like the First Congregational Church of Swanton, it is constructed of load bearing masonry and has a heavily bracketed cornice. Its fenestration is characterized by rounded arches with hood moldings.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 8 Page 6

Significance (continued)

Changes to the church over the next few decades were minor when compared to the 1869 work, but are significant because they are the direct result of efforts for continual improvement and embellishment by the congregation. In 1879, the bell was installed in the tower, having been purchased with funds raised by the Ladies Home Circle. In 1886, a group of younger congregants organized the Young People's Christian Endeavor and they provided the funds for the purchase of the stained glass window above the main door on the front facade. At the turn of the century, more changes to the church's character were executed. In 1890, the organ-choir loft and two small side rooms were added to the rear portion of the building and the "Memorial Windows" were installed. By 1913, the church allocated funds to repair many of these windows, and solicited contributions from the original sponsors of them.

The church also purchased the Estey Organ, manufactured in Brattleboro, in 1913. In April of that year, the congregation formed a committee to research various organ companies and to make the final purchase. In May, the committee instructed H.E.W. Chutter to negotiate with Estey Organ Company of Brattleboro, having narrowed their choices to this particular outfit; in July, two members of the church went to Brattleboro to make the final decision on the purchase and decided to place an order for an organ costing \$1,800. In November, the church held special afternoon and evening services to dedicate the organ; it was electrified years later. While the committee was deciding on the purchase of the organ, other business to which it attended was the repairing of the church. These repairs included repainting the base of the church a stone color. The base, the committee decided would be sanded and penciled as well. The brickwork received two coats of red paint with pencil lines in white. The trim, they stipulated, needed to be painted with three coats of white.

During the 1940s and 1950s, the congregation made other decorative changes to the church building. In 1946, a committee entered into a contract with Ramsden, Inc. of Burlington, Vermont, to create and execute new interior decorations which were completed the following year. As late as 1976, these changes to the decor were still intact and it is most likely that the finishes on the woodwork as well as the pew arrangement seen today in the auditorium date to this re-decoration. Correspondence with a Mr. Chadwick of the Ramsden firm reveals that the congregation issued specifications including that the vestibule had to be decorated to correspond with the body of the church, that all painted woodwork was to be re-painted, and that the church would furnish the staging for the work. In 1951, the vestry received a new ceiling as well as new wiring, lights, and hardwood floor. Hardwood floors were also installed in the kitchen and main entrance. According to an annual report, the floor in the basement had to "be leveled with furring strips and raised as much as three inches in some places" in order to fix the kitchen floor. The congregation also re-paneled the side walls in the basement and installed cupboards for the Sunday school. One of the major financial outlays was the funding for the new furnace, installed that same year.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 8 Page 7

Significance (continued)

In 1988, the church faced a maintenance crisis. Like the 1869 congregants, these members needed to make substantial repairs to the edifice. The church's back wall had begun to deteriorate and the congregation needed to take immediate action to stabilize it. With a loan from Chittenden County Savings Bank and the proceeds from the sale of bricks from the wall, the congregation renovated the south facade, adding aluminum siding. Today the church is in fairly good repair; it does, however, need to have work done on its roof to stop leaks from further damaging the interior plaster. This church has been in continuous use since its construction. The church's congregation recently made the decision to reorganize themselves as The New Wine Christian Fellowship, which has resulted in the restructuring of their governing body and the congregation is now ministered to by Reverend David Smith.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 9 Page 1

Bibliography

Church Records, 1801-1989, First Congregational Church of Swanton, Swanton, Vt.

Comstock, John M. *Vermont Congregational Churches 1762-1914*. St. Johnsbury, Vt.: The Caledonian Co., 1915.

Coolidge, A.J. and J.B. Mansfield. *History and Description of New England: Vermont*. Boston: Austin J. Coolidge, 1860.

Hemenway, Abby Maria, ed. *The Vermont Historical Gazetteer*. Volume 4. Montpelier, Vt.: Watchman and State Journal Press, 1882.

Herrin, Ralph G. *By-Gone Churches of Frankin County*. St. Albans, Vt.: Royal Art Press, 1979.

Industries of Wealth of the Principal Points in Vermont. New York: American Publishing and Engraving Company, 1891.

Ledoux, Rodney R., ed. *The History of Swanton, Vermont*. Barre, Vt.: Northlight Studio Press, 1988.

Meeks, Harold A. *Time and Change in Vermont*. Chester, Ct.: Globe Pequot Press, 1986.

One Hundred and Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of Swanton, Swanton, Vt.: 1936.

Prior, Dorothy Baxter. "History of the First Congregational Church, UCC. Swanton," unpublished manuscript, First Congregational Church of Swanton, Swanton, Vermont.

Town Records, Town of Swanton, Vermont.

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. "Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey, Swanton." Typescript. On file at VDHP Office, Montpelier, Vt.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 10 Page 1

Boundary Description

Begin at the corner of the fence on the western edge of the property (point A) and walk north to the edge of Academy Street (point B) at a distance of 137 feet. Turn east at point B and continue along the edge of Academy Street to point C (85 feet from point B). Turn south at point C and continue south for 137 feet to the fence at the edge of the property (point D). Turn west at point D and continue 85 feet to return to point A.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

First Congregational Church of Swanton
Swanton, Franklin County, Vermont

Section number 10 Page 2

Boundary Justification

The lot is the original one associated with the building, as specified on the town plan drawn by John Johnson in 1807. This plan is located in the town records, Volume 6 [N.pag.]. The lot as drawn on the Johnson plan extends from the corner of Church Street south to lot 162, along lot 162 to meet lot 118 (triangular shaped) and then north to the head of the park.

Reference to the lot is made in the Deed of Jonathan and Elijah Ferris to the Meeting House Committee in Volume 8, page 334 of the town records. The deed states that the land transferred for the purpose of building a church is a

certain tract or parcel of land lying and being in Missisque [sic] Village so called at Swanton Falls in the Town of Swanton aforesaid, and described as follows vis that certain lot laid out in said Missisque Village for the church or Meeting House lot or plot as laid down & certified in the plan by John Jenison [Johnson] Surveyor, as by a reference to said plan or the record thereof will more fully appear which said lot or piece of ground is hereby conveyed....

Another reference is the deed wherein the Methodist Episcopal Church conveyed their share in the property by quitclaim to Lynde C. Ferris. This deed refers to the property as the "House of Public Worship situate at the southerly end of the Mall or Public Park in the village of Swanton Falls, Vermont."