

# DATA SHEET

Form 10-300  
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b>
COUNTY: <b>Rock</b>
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE <b>JAN 23 1975</b>

### 1. NAME

COMMON:

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**First Congregational Church**

### 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**801 Bushnell Street**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Beloit**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
**First**

STATE  
**Wisconsin 53511**

CODE  
**55**

COUNTY:  
**Rock**

CODE  
**105**

### 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
**First Congregational Church of Beloit**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**801 Bushnell Street**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Beloit**

STATE:  
**Wisconsin 53511**

CODE  
**55**

### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
**Rock County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Janesville**

STATE:  
**Wisconsin 53545**

CODE  
**55**

### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Wisconsin Registered Landmark**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1965**     Federal     State     County     Local

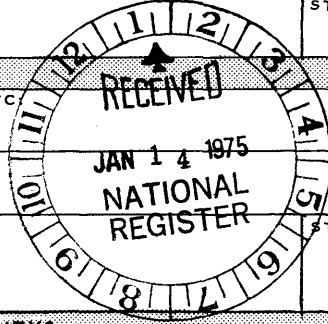
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**State Historical Society of Wisconsin**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**816 State Street**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Madison**

STATE:  
**Wisconsin 53706**

CODE  
**55**



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: <b>Wisconsin</b>
COUNTY: <b>Rock</b>
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE
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**7. DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The First Congregational Church in Beloit is a rectangular structure 100' in length and 70' in width constructed of Milwaukee brick. A steeple with a 20' square tower rises from the entrance facade. The expression of the exterior is a combination of Romanesque Revival and Greek Revival forms. The facades are divided into bays marked by semicircular arches within which large windows are set. The roof has a cornice ornamented with dentils.

There are three main entrances to the church. Two flank the tower and open directly into the auditorium and the stairs to the gallery. The center entrance opens into a vestibule within the tower which then opens into the auditorium. The auditorium is a rectangular space spanned by a plastered barrel vault. A gallery wraps around three sides of the hall. Supporting the gallery are twelve bronzed cast-iron Corinthian columns. Directly above these are identical columns which support the ceiling and a series of ribbed vaults which define each window bay. The windows rise unbroken behind the gallery. The bays are defined further by ribbing which crosses the barrel vault and terminates on either side with a console. The pulpit originally stood in a recess, but it was moved to its present position in the house when the organ was installed in the recess in 1869. Throughout the church's history the walls and ceiling of the auditorium have remained unornamented.

The foundations are of coursed stone rubble. Of the original six chimneys, only one remains. Two twentieth-century, curving balustrades frame the main entrance. The original spire was finished in 1871 and toppled by an 1883 tornado. In 1894 the wooden spire-work above the brick base was added.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1859-1862**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The First Congregational Church of Beloit is significant architecturally as a major work of the important mid-nineteenth-century Wisconsin architect, Lucas Bradley of Racine. Its cornerstone was laid in June, 1859, and it was dedicated in July, 1862.

Lucas Bradley was the first architect in Racine, settling there in 1844. Born in Cayuga County, New York, he first worked for fourteen years as a carpenter-architect in St. Louis. He designed the First Presbyterian Church (NRHP) in Racine, built in 1851-1852, the Greek Revival Kuehneman house (NRHP) in Racine, and the Second Presbyterian Church (demolished) of 1839-1840 in St. Louis. His Wisconsin buildings have proved to be among the most sensitive and accomplished pre-Civil-War designs in the state.

Bradley was a friend of Aaron Lucius Chapin, the first president of Beloit College and a member of the First Congregational Church, which undoubtedly resulted in his selection for this commission as well as his work for the college itself. Bradley was apparently influenced by contemporary Greek Revival pattern books, which can be seen in several of his designs and which explains the evident influence of the revivalism on this church. The original Bradley-designed spire, toppled by a tornado in 1883, was quite similar to Minard Lefever's spire on the now-destroyed Pearl Street Church in Hartford, Connecticut.

The First Congregational Church, therefore, is a significant work of a pioneer Wisconsin architect and is the finest extant nineteenth-century church remaining in the City of Beloit.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

"New Light Has Solved Mystery on the Architecture of Historic First Congregational Church of Beloit," Beloit Daily News, Feb. 1, 1965, and Feb. 2, 1965.

File, Beloit Congregational Church File, Division of Sites and Markers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Room 325.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

UTM Zone 16;  
4,707,260 N.  
333,390 E.

UTM  
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Jeffrey M. Dean, State Preservation Planner

ORGANIZATION: State Historical Society of Wisconsin DATE: Jan. 3, 1975

STREET AND NUMBER:  
816 State Street

CITY OR TOWN: Madison STATE: Wisconsin 53706 CODE: 55

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name James Morton Smith  
James Morton Smith

Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Date Oct. 23, 1974

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

[Signature]  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 1/23/75

ATTEST:  
[Signature]  
Keeper of The National Register

Date 1-22-75