

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED AUG 29 1978

DATE ENTERED MAR 7 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

German Evangelical Reformed Church (Zoar Congregation)

AND/OR COMMON

Zoar Church

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Malaka Township

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Newton

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fourth

STATE

Iowa

CODE

COUNTY
Jasper

CODE

099

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Zoar Church Corporation

STREET & NUMBER

R. R. 1

CITY, TOWN

Newton

VICINITY OF

STATE

Iowa 50208

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Jasper County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Newton

STATE

Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This church is situated on rising ground above a county road in the north central part of the county. The church, with cemetery to the rear, is surrounded by rolling cropland. The churchyard and cemetery are set off by a frame of deciduous and evergreen trees, which, besides acting as an effective windbreak, give the property an intimate feeling in the middle of very open country.

Built in 1892, the Zoar church is a gable-roofed building of frame construction on a rock-faced stone foundation. It measures 36' x 59', with an 8' x 16' chancel at the south end. On the west side is a small vestibule, with board-and-batten exterior walls. This vestibule, added in 1961, is now the main entrance to the sanctuary.

At the northeast corner of the church is a belltower, with high-pitched roof, the bracketted cornice of which is broken on each side by gablets faced with scalloped shingling. This shingling is also found on the front gable end. Narrow clapboarding covers the exterior walls, except in the area between the foundation and sill level, which is faced with narrow, vertical siding.

Sash windows in the sanctuary and chancel have pointed arches, and are set in simple surrounds. The two doorways on the east side have shallow triangular arches and are sheltered by small gable rooflets. The doorway located at the base of the belltower was originally the main entrance, and is served by a flight of wooden steps. The belltower has openings at three levels. On the bottom level, paired sash are topped with a flat pediment which repeats the shape of the roof over the tower entrance. Paired sash windows are also found on the second level, on east and north sides of the tower. Openings in the bellchamber were originally rectangular, with louvres. The louvres have been removed, and the openings now have triangular tops.

As is the case with many of Iowa's rural churches, the exterior of the Zoar church has been quite well preserved. The original interior, however, has been "modernized". When first finished, the sanctuary featured wainscoting, and plastered walls with stencilling above the chair rail and below the cornice level. A tall panel, with pointed arch, was stencilled on the rear wall of the chancel, with John 14:6 written in German within the arch. In 1937, acoustic tile and "panelling" covered walls and ceiling (although the wainscoting was preserved) and the verse from John rewritten in English. Most of the present furnishings are of 20th century vintage.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1892

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (See continuation sheet for revision of Paragraph 1 of this section)

The principal significance of this church lies in its details and variety of surface textures, which add particular character to an otherwise potentially plain structure. When first erected, the church was painted in several colors, which brought out the various shapes and wall textures (pointed arches, window pediments, scalloped shingling, horizontal and vertical siding, and the "stickwork" on the tower and below the window sills). Painting the church a flat white has, unfortunately, somewhat obscured these features. Nonetheless, the attention given to detail on the church suggests quality craftsmanship and a certain creative imagination on the part of the immigrants who built it.

The Zoar Congregation of the German Evangelical Reformed Church was organized in 1876 by immigrants, many of whom lived in Freeport, Illinois, before coming to Jasper County in the late 1860's. One other church of this denomination, at Baxter (approximately 6 miles to the west), was founded in 1869. Unlike the Baxter church, the Zoar church served an exclusively rural constituency, since Malaka Township did not (and does not) have any villages or towns. The first Zoar church, erected shortly after the congregation was organized, was a small and simple frame building. The present church is located slightly south and west of the original building (long since dismantled) and was built, like the first, by members of the congregation.

The parsonage, located to the east of the church, was sold in 1957 and is now a private residence.

The cemetery, located directly behind the church, is included in this nomination as an integral part of the building's environment (see aerial photo). The first burials were in 1877.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Centennial Committee, Zoar Church. Zoar Reformed Church, Newton, Iowa. Privately printed, 1976.
 Zoar Reformed Church, Record Book 1876-1907. Property of Zoar Church

Weaver, James B. (ed.) Past and Present of Jasper County, Iowa. Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen and Co., 1912. Vol. 1, pp. 309, 185-186.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 1/2

QUADRANGLE NAME Des Moines, Iowa

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:250,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 49,8 4,0,0 4,6 2,9 3,0,0

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Part of the North half of the Northeast quarter of Section 23, Township 81 Range 19 commencing at the northeast corner of said section running thence west 35 rods, thence south 16 rods, thence east 35 rods, thence north 16 rods to the place.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marian Bowie

ORGANIZATION

Zoar Church Historical Committee

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

290 NE 80th St, Route #2

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Runnells

STATE

Iowa 50237

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Adrian H. Anderson

TITLE

Director, Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

8/24/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

3.7.79

ATTEST:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

3.2.79

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED	MAR 7 1979

German Evangelical Reformed Church, Newton vic., Jasper Co., Iowa

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

(revision of Paragraph 1, Statement of Significance)

This church is significant as an example of a type of frame church found frequently in rural areas of Iowa (and certainly also elsewhere in the Midwest), either in the the country or in small towns. This type, attributed for the most part to the last two decades of the 19th century, and erected mostly by Protestant denominations, is in plan generally either rectangular, with a simple front gable, or cross-shaped, with an intersecting gable roof. An off-center, full-length tower, often tucked into the re-entrant angle of a cross-plan church, is a ubiquitous feature. Decorative articulation consists generally of elements borrowed from the Stick Style and the Queen Anne -- variations in surface materials and textures (shingles, usually in gable ends and at the tops of towers, clapboards and beaded tongue-in-groove siding), a network of "sticks" dividing the wall surface into discrete areas and engaging the frames of openings, and touches of decoration in the Eastlake style. Windows vary in shape, but generally the major windows have pointed heads, either flat-sided or arched.

The Zoar church deserves recognition as a highly representative example of this type. It is, furthermore, extremely well-preserved, having lost on the exterior only its louvred shutters, the original stair railing, an early chimney on the east side of the building, and occasional pieces of decorative detail. An early shingle roof, it might be noted, is preserved on the tower. The articulation of the walls into different surface areas was originally emphasized by a multi-color paint scheme, but this building is now painted uniformly white.