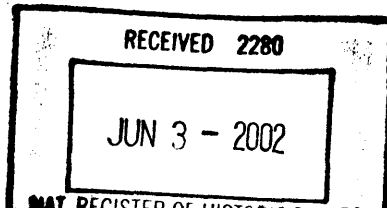


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



788

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions on how to complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 10A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by 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 Jonesboro Union Church

other names/site number Jonesboro Union Aid Society, Jonesboro Congregational Church

2. Location

street & number Looks Point Road, at the junction with US Route 1 N/A not for publication

city or town Jonesboro N/A vicinity

state Maine code ME county Washington code 029 zip code 04648

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.)

Ernest S. Fetherston Signature of certifying official/Title Date 5/30/02

Maine Historic Preservation Commission 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 this 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): _____

for Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall Date of Action 7/16/02

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Late Gothic Revival

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Tudor Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Granite, Concrete

walls Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other _____

Narrative Description

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

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

JONESBORO UNION CHURCH

WASHINGTON CO., MAINE

Section number 7 Page 2

DESCRIPTION

The Jonesboro Union Church is a small, clapboarded building that combines a mixture of Gothic, Tudor and classical motifs to create a eclectic religious building. Facing west, the structure is comprised of three interlocking masses: the gable fronted sanctuary on the south, the wing which is centered on the north side of the sanctuary, and the entry tower, positioned just north of center, at the intersection of the sanctuary and the wing. The entire building is clad in clapboards, and roofed in asphalt. The foundation is granite and cinder block.

The entry tower and sanctuary are set on the same facial plane, and are conceptually held together by a pair of buttress that brace the north side of the tower and the south side of the sanctuary. In addition to this unifying element, there is another design concept that draws the building together and unifies the diverse features. This is the use of a motif that centers a peaked or arched element on a horizontal element. Although each of these features is different in detail, the pattern at once grounds the building and gives it a sense of verticality that belies its single story. Examples of this motif are found over the front entry (a pediment rests on an overside lintel that extends for almost a foot beyond the pilaster doorway), the large sanctuary windows (four adjoining leaded-glass casement windows surmounted by another oversized lintel which is broken by a full arch in the middle), the roof of the sanctuary (which through the use of the buttress and a false front suggests a wide cross gable set on eaves), and the entry tower belfry roof (an octagonal central cone intersected on the corners by four battlements with upswept peaked roofs.) All of the roof and horizontal trim is thick and heavy, which emphasizes the horizontal elements, creates a pronounced base for the vertical elements and projects the design features forward of the building's plane.

The northern wing is set back from the facade, again adding dimensionality to the building. In addition, the wing contains battlement-style pillars at each of its corners. These Gothic elements break the strong horizontal roof line of the wing with vertical elements. Three connected casement windows span the western face of the wing; they are repeated above the entry way as three attached louvered windows positioned just below the belfry railing. On either side of the main sanctuary windows are positioned a tall, thin, leaded glass window, and another louvered window is centered in the gable above the louvered arch.

The south side of the building exposes the edges of the buttresses on the east and west ends, and a square, hip-roofed bump-out is situated in the middle of the wall. A pair of leaded glass casement windows flank the projection. Three connected, rectangular stained glass windows are centered on the wall of this central feature, and its corners are articulated by battlement pillars that again project above the eave line of the hip roof. This small projection encloses the sanctuary pulpit, and was added at the time of the 1911 remodeling. There is no foundation under this sub-structure, rather it is supported on posts.

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JONESBORO UNION CHURCH

WASHINGTON CO., MAINE

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On the north side of the building three leaded glass casement window are centered on the wing wall. The roof of the wing is hipped, and as with the bump-out on the opposite side, battlement pillars project above the eaves. A small and lower pitched hipped-roof addition has been built on the east side of the wing in recent decades to provide for an internal staircase to the basement and modern rest rooms. The east end of the sanctuary is the same as the facade, except that the windows in the central block, under the arch, are of opalescent stained glass.

The interior of the structure is much more straight forward than the moderately ornate exterior, but again the three masses are apparent. The entry tower provides a vestibule, with doors opening directly into the sanctuary and the wing. The sanctuary is longitudinal in orientation, that is, it is wider than it is long. The pulpit platform is in the niche created by the bump-out on the south wall. The long rows of wooden auditorium seats stretch to the right and left of a center aisle. The north wing is centered on the sanctuary in the middle of the latter's north wall; when the connecting double doors are open the wing, or vestry, can accommodate additional worship seating. In plan, the combination of the vestry, sanctuary and pulpit niche resemble a traditional cruciform cathedral, however on a much smaller scale. Both the sanctuary and the vestry are floored with two inch maple, and on the walls are varnished tongue-and-groove bead board paneling below plaster. The windows and doors are trimmed with flat stock and corner blocks. Although the decoration in the sanctuary is simple, the room is given a warmth and brilliance by the stained glass panels behind the pulpit and in the west wall.

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.

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 a 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)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1911

Significant Dates

1911

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Higgins, Edward Leander, (1879 -1936), architect.

Jones, Calvin, builder.

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:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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JONESBORO UNION CHURCH

WASHINGTON CO., MAINE

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Situated on a hill overlooking the US Route 1, the main coastal highway between Ellsworth Maine and Canada, the Jonesboro Union Church overlooks the comings and goings of residents and tourists to this small, fishing town on the Down East Coast. As with so many small town churches this one has been at the center of community life since its construction in 1840, but this church differs from the stereotypical gable-fronted, classically biased sanctuary on the green due to a radical remodeling in 1911. The Jonesboro Union Church is eligible for nomination to the National Register under Criteria C as an example of an early, and rural, Gothic style church by noted architect Edward Leander Higgins.

After growing up in Bar Harbor, Maine and graduating from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1905, Higgins worked as a draftsman for a Boston firm, on the Cumberland County Courthouse in Portland Maine. This project led to his association with the Portland architect George Burnham, whose firm he joined in 1909, and became a partner in 1912. During the next six years Burnham and Higgins worked on mostly residential and commercial designs, but, it was thought, that only after Burnham's retirement in 1918, did Higgins receive the first of many commissions for religious structures. The *Biographic Dictionary of Architects in Maine* entry for Higgins states that "Edward Leander Higgins, a prominent figure among Maine architects during the 1920s and 1930s, made his mark through very traditional designs. His expertise in church architecture made him eminently suited to serve as architect for the Episcopal Diocese of Maine. Three finely crafted Gothic churches in Portland and Camden can be considered his outstanding achievements." (Reed, 1985)" Higgins religious works were heavily inspired by "America's leading exponent of Gothic architecture, Ralph Adams Cram. Cram's philosophy, as expressed both in his book *Church Building* and in his designs, included the admonition to, "build a little now, and build it right, instead of trying to build a great deal and as a result building it meanly." (Cram, 1901, quoted in Reed, 1985). Although it is not known at what point Higgins became familiar with Cram, it is certainly appropriate to consider the Jonesboro Union Church in the context of Cram's advise.

The following, from the *History of the Jonesboro Church, 1840-2000*, describes the original Meeting House, the structure which Higgins remodeled.

The first meeting house was built in 1841 on property donated by John Tupper. A deed was registered in the Machias Register of Deeds in 1844 and signed by Josiah Weston and eighteen other men of Jonesboro.

The main structure when first built, consisted of a 26'x35' rectangular sanctuary, a steeple and a bell tower. Questions still remain on the origin of the church bell as there is no reference to it in the records. Since there was a steeple on the original structure, we could

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assume that it was moved to the remodeled building in 1911. An inscription on the bell is too rusted to determine its age or the manufacturer.

One elderly member remembered that the entrance was on the west side of the building, with the lectern at the rear next to the river. There were 24 pews arranged in two rows with a center aisle. (Fallon et al., p. 12).

Although three churches had been organized in Jonesboro in 1840, by the turn of the 20th century the Baptist and Universalist churches were no longer active. When the only remaining church in town needed substantial repairs it became a community effort, spearheaded by the Jonesboro Union Church Aid Society. Additional land was donated, and after two years of fund raising and community support the new building was completed in 1911. The following account chronicles the dedication of the Jonesboro Union Church.

This is the story of how a little handful of people strove to reach an almost unattainable goal and how in the end they succeeded. These many years Jonesboro has had a little white church, but, as everyone knows, buildings are constantly getting out of repair and churches are no exception. The snows of winter and the rains of summer beat upon the church at Jonesboro and tho it fell not, the roof grew leaky and the ceiling was frescoed in a design far to bold and conventional to be appreciated by many microbes, who found the place was much to their liking....

As the years passed the seats in the church seemed to grow harder, the grimness, discomfort and dissatisfaction increased, and it became a strain on one's piety to go to church with such conditions. When the Sunday school reported 100 in attendance, with a registration of about 150, the crowded, uncomfortable quarters seemed unbearable.

July 5, 1909, repairing the old church was begun. It was decided to raise the building three feet, set it back 20 feet, lay a stone foundation, add a vestry and vestibule and seat the audience across instead of lengthwise of the building, making greater seating capacity. The work went steadily on that summer and the next and the church is just completed after three years striving.

Leander Higgins of Portland was the architect and appreciative thanks are given him for his able services. Calvin Whitney of Jonesboro was the head carpenter and his carefulness in the smallest details is shown in the attractive little church now dedicated.

(Fallon et al., p. 25)

It is not known how the church chose Higgins as the architect. According to the list of Higgins's known commissions, he was not previously credited with work on any religious structures prior to the

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Bishop Codman Memorial Chapel (St. Peter's Episcopal Church) in Portland in 1918. However, the remodeling of the Jonesboro church was extensive, and featured many of the design elements that would later characterize his oeuvre: the use of some elements of the Gothic Perpendicular style, careful proportions, and the ability to impart a sense of grandeur even in a small space. Yet at the same time, this structure does not approach the full expression of the Gothic that Higgins later developed in his work for the Episcopal Diocese of Maine, rather it is an example of his first forays into church architecture. He was able to transform the small, rectangular church into a modest, but impressive Gothic church that blended into this fishing village through the use of traditional clapboard siding and restrained proportions. Indeed, Higgins and the people of Jonesboro certainly built a little, and they built it right.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Fallon, Rev. George, Theone F. Look-Bagley, Michele Lenfestey et al. "History of Jonesboro Church, 1840 - 2000" (Jonesboro: private printing, Jonesboro Union Church History Committee), 2000. On file at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine.

"Jonesboro's Union Church Dedicated" July 7, 1911. (Attribution unknown: copy on file at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine.)

Reed, Roger G. "Edward Leander Higgins", in *A Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Maine*, Volume II, Number 12, (Portland, Maine: Maine Historic Preservation Commission), 1985.

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BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is fully described by Town of Jonesboro Tax Map # 15, Lot 46.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of this property represent the lot of land upon which the original Jonesboro Congregational Church was placed in 1840, and the additional lot donated to the church in conjunction with its remodeling in 1911.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1 of 4
Jonesboro Union Church
March 4, 2002
Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
Interior, sanctuary; facing northwest.

Photograph 2 of 4
Jonesboro Union Church
March 4, 2002
Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
Interior, sanctuary; facing east.

Photograph 3 of 4
Jonesboro Union Church
March 4, 2002
Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
Exterior, south facade, facing north.

Photograph 4 of 4
Jonesboro Union Church
March 4, 2002
Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
Exterior, south facade and west elevation, facing northeast.