

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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

First Congregational Church of Minnesota

AND/OR COMMON

First Congregational Society of Saint Anthony

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

500 Eighth Avenue Southeast

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Minneapolis VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fifth

STATE

Minnesota

CODE 22

COUNTY Hennepin

CODE 053

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

X OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

X BUILDING(S)

X PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

X RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

X YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

First Congregational Society of Saint Anthony

STREET & NUMBER

500 Eighth Avenue Southeast

CITY, TOWN

Minneapolis VICINITY OF

STATE

Minnesota

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds -- Hennepin County Government Center

STREET & NUMBER

Third Avenue at Fourth Street South

CITY, TOWN

Minneapolis

STATE

Minnesota

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Significant Architecture in the History of Minneapolis

DATE

1969

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY X LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Minneapolis Planning Department

CITY, TOWN

Minneapolis

STATE

Minnesota

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The First Congregational Church of Minnesota, 500 8th Avenue Southeast, was designed by architect W.H. Hayes. The cornerstone was laid in 1886. The building, constructed of rock-faced rose sandstone and featuring large round arch windows, reflects the influence of the Romanesque Revival as popularized by architect H.H. Richardson. The 168-foot spire and main entrance tower however, exhibits the earlier characteristics of the English Gothic types. In 1967 the original spire was destroyed by wind and in 1972 it was replaced. The architect's intention to re-establish the overall effect of the old spire resulted in the proportions of the new spire closely following those of the original. In contrast to the earlier wooden-framed spire the new spire is all metal. The visual impact of the spire, however, remains unchanged.

The plan of First Congregational is distinctive since it is based on the "Akron Plan" first used in 1868 in Ohio. The plan sought to produce a setting in which the Sunday School and the congregation proper would celebrate opening services together and later separate into their various groups. The church is composed of two main areas - the Sunday School and the main auditorium. The Sunday School consists of a large room, Pilgrim Hall with a horseshoe type gallery on the second story. Both the ground and second stories are divided into classrooms. The Sunday School can be combined with the main auditorium of the church by opening the large partition walls which slide into floor slots. The same type of disappearing partition separates the main room of the Sunday School from an adjoining lounge.

In place of the traditional long nave and aisles arrangement. The main auditorium of the church is short and almost square. The floor is sharply bowled and the seating accommodations are arranged in a semi-circle. The raised platform, holding the pulpit, organ and choir, occupies one corner of the auditorium. The prominent organ pipes form a backdrop for the altar. Six stained glass windows donated by prominent church members before 1900 have been preserved in the main auditorium of the First Congregational Church, and five additional stained glass windows were donated later.

The second story of the Sunday School is devoted to classrooms and storage space. During the week a large portion of the classroom space is used for pre-school nursery schools; on Sunday, this space is used for religious education. The basement of the church is equipped with a kitchen and ample dining space. At one time living accommodations for the church's sexton were also located in the basement, however, these rooms have since been converted into classrooms.

Remodelling of Pilgrim Hall, the main auditorium and sanctuary has taken place over the years. The addition of a new choir rail and screen, new carpeting and other furnishings has enhanced the church's appearance. Pilgrim Hall has also undergone remodelling since the balcony was removed and a kitchenette was installed adjacent to the hall.

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 checked="" 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 1886

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Warren H. Hayes

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

First Congregational Church of Minnesota, founded in 1851 in St. Anthony, was the first Congregational Church in the whole of the Minnesota Territory. The present structure at 500 8th Avenue Southeast represents its third building.

Located on its present site in the University Community since 1886, the church has become a community landmark and activity center. Throughout its history it has served as the meeting place for various citizen groups as well as its parishioners. As recently as 1969, First Congregational's interest and involvement in the surrounding community was demonstrated by a program which provided for the raising of equal amounts of money for the replacement of the church's damaged steeple and for community service projects.

In addition to First Congregational's strong community associations, the church building itself is architecturally significant. The exterior design and detailing attests to Warren H. Hayes' command of the Richardsonian Romanesque mode. In subsequent years, Hayes gained a notable reputation as a designer of churches. The majority of these churches were executed in variants on the Richardsonian Romanesque, although First Congregational is considered to be one of the finest extant examples. Further, Hayes was a pioneer in the use of the Akron Plan. First Congregational is the earliest documented Akron Plan church in Minnesota. The success of this plan marked a significant development in the historical evolution of American religious architecture.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Torbert, Donald R., Significant Architecture in the History of Minneapolis, Minneapolis, 1969.
- "The Chimes", First Congregational Church Newsletter, Sept. 1968.
- "People in Search of a Steeple", by Peter Norum, May 1973.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 5	4 8 0 8 6 0	4 9 8 1 ¹²⁰ 2 4 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Northeast corner of intersection of Fifth Street and Eighth Avenue Southeast, Minneapolis.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Gail Bronner/Charles W. Nelson, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION
Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission/Minnesota Historical Society DATE 31 July 1978

STREET & NUMBER
210 City Hall/Building 25, Fort Snelling TELEPHONE 612-348-6538/726-1171

CITY OR TOWN
Minneapolis/St. Paul STATE Minnesota

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

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 Russell W. Fridley

TITLE Russell W. Fridley DATE 11/9/78
State Historic Preservation Officer

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE 1-15-79

ATTEST: Lucy B. Franklin DATE 11-8-79
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER