

952

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

=====

1. Name of Property

historic name: BOZRAH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE

other name/site number: N/A

=====

2. Location

street & number: 17 and 23 Bozrah Street

city/town: Bozrah not for publication: N/A
vicinity: N/A

state: CT county: New London code: 011 zip code: 06334

=====

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: buildings

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. See cont. sheet.

John W. Starnes 6/21/91
Signature of certifying official Date
Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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):

Entered in the National Register

Michael Byers 7/26/91

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: RELIGION Sub: religious structure
DOMESTIC single dwelling
Current: RELIGION Sub: religious structure
DOMESTIC single dwelling

7. Description

=====
Architectural Classification:

Greek Revival
Italianate

Other Description: N/A_____

Materials: foundation Granite roof ASPHALT
walls WOOD other BRICK

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

=====
8. Statement of Significance

=====
Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: local.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A,C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : A

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE
RELIGION

Period(s) of Significance: 1843-1872 _____

Significant Dates: 1843, 1872

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A_____

Architect/Builder: Lloyd E. Baldwin, builder
Nathaniel Rudd, stonework contractor

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

=====
9. Major Bibliographical References
=====

X See continuation sheet.

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 -- Specify Repository: _____

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property: approx. 3

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>18</u>	<u>736380</u>	<u>4604220</u>	B	<u>18</u>	<u>736320</u>	<u>4604140</u>
C	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	D	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

 See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.

The nominated property includes the parcel known as 17 Bozrah Street and 23 Bozrah Street, shown as Lot 21 on Bozrah Assessor Map 6.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

The boundary includes the historic lot associated with the church as enlarged by the parsonage lot in 1872.

=====
11. Form Prepared By Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator
=====

Name/Title: Bruce Clouette and Matthew Roth

Organization: Historic Resource Consultants Date: January 21, 1991

Street & Number: 55 Van Dyke Avenue Telephone: 203-547-0268

City or Town: Hartford State: CT ZIP: 06106

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description	Bozrah Congregational Church and Parsonage Bozrah, New London County, CT	7-1
-------------	--	-----

The Bozrah Congregational Church (Photographs 1 and 2) is a white-painted Greek Revival-style meetinghouse situated on a knoll overlooking Bozrah Street (Connecticut Route 163) and Fitchville Pond. The setting is a rural, wooded area of widely scattered buildings. Completed in 1843, the church presents a narrow side to the road, where the gable is treated as a pediment. The building's corners are finished with paneled pilasters, above which runs a simple entablature unembellished except for bold cornice moldings and a band of dentils separating the architrave and frieze. Similar pilasters divide the facade or east elevation into three bays, with two entrances flanking a center window. Each entry has a modern raised-panel door enframed by a crosset-shaped surround made up of a series of moldings, some of which are reproductions of the original. The building's side and rear elevations are clapboarded, with flush boards covering the entire facade. Side elevations have two tiers of five windows. Windows have plain-board frames, old if not original six-over-six sash, and modern metal storm windows.

A small tower located on the front or east end of the gable roof is made up of three stages: a base with a molded cornice similar to that on the main part of the building; a belfry stage in which plain paired pilasters flank a large rectangular louvered opening, above which is a reduced-scale version of the building's cornice; and a dome surmounted by a wrought-iron weathervane in the form of a large arrow. Although the weathervane is original, the copper-colored dome is a fiberglass replacement. Inside the belfry is large bronze bell.

At the rear of the building two small brick chimneys emerge from the roof. The exterior chimney on the north side represents a 20th-century addition.

The church rests on a granite ashlar foundation built with its exposed courses alternately laid flat and on end (Photograph 3). The stonework is visible for almost the entire basement story on the south side of the church, which like the north yard is paved for parking. Granite steps lead up to the entrances in the front of the church.

The interior of the building (Photographs 4 and 5), which is still in use for religious services, is simply furnished and largely original. The area immediately inside the doors is a vestibule; enclosed stairs on either side lead to the gallery. The rest of the interior is devoted to the auditorium. The white-painted pews are arranged with

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description

Bozrah Congregational Church
and Parsonage
Bozrah, New London County, CT

7-2

side aisles creating a wide center section and narrower rows of side pews. The pews are original and have paneled sides and curving maple arms; the original paneled doors are currently stored in the gallery. The view to the front of the church is entirely unobstructed: the gallery, which extends around three sides, is supported by iron rods from large king-post roof trusses in the attic. The seating in the gallery consists of two rows of fixed wooden benches.

The church's interior woodwork and finishes are very simple and mostly original. There is a dado or wainscot of plain joined boards. Interior doors have four raised panels and, with few exceptions, their original iron latches with turned pulls (Photograph 6). The west or pulpit end of the church has been somewhat altered, with the area under the galleries partitioned into small rooms and a low raised platform which appears to extend somewhat further forward than did the original. A Victorian-period desk now serves as the pulpit.

Some 300 feet to the south of the church is the parsonage (Photographs 1 and 7), built in 1872. It is a 2 1/2-story frame building with short cross-gable wings; currently aluminum siding covers its clapboarded exterior. The parsonage's Victorian origins are evident in its round-arched stairway window, bracketed cornice, and entry porch on large scroll brackets. A small modern garage associated with the parsonage is counted as a noncontributing building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Significance	Bozrah Congregational Church and Parsonage Bozrah, New London County, CT	8-1
--------------	--	-----

Summary

Bozrah's Congregational meetinghouse is significant primarily as a well-preserved example of early 19th-century New England church architecture (Criterion C). Although properties used for religious purposes are ordinarily not considered eligible for the National Register, the architectural distinction of the Bozrah Congregational Church qualifies it for inclusion (Criteria Consideration A). Moreover, the property has significance for its role in accommodating important community institutions: not only was the church the house of worship for the town's Congregationalist majority, but also it served as the place where town meetings were held until 1947, when Bozrah built a separate town hall (Criterion A). As a longstanding, integral part of the historic church property, the Parsonage contributes to its significance.

Architectural Significance

Like most meetinghouses built in the 1830s and 1840s, the Bozrah church drew upon the Greek Revival style for its architectural embellishment. The Classical cornice and entablature, flush boarding in imitation of masonry, dentils, pilasters, and treatment of the gable as a pediment are all typical Greek Revival features found in both the institutional and domestic architecture of the period; they reflect an interest in the architecture and institutions of ancient Greece. The use of such features in this building had no particular religious significance other than to indicate that, like contemporary courthouses and academies, the meetinghouse was an important community building deserving of extra stylistic attention. In fact, the real significance of these Greek Revival-style meetinghouses is that they represent the final stage of plain-style church architecture, in which houses of worship had little to distinguish them from buildings built for secular purposes.¹ With its plain rectilinear form, Greek Revival details, and simply finished interior, the Bozrah Congregational Church epitomizes the antebellum New England church structure.

Historical Context

The formation of a Congregational society among families settled in present-day Bozrah preceded the incorporation of the town, which occurred in 1786. In 1737 the New Concord Ecclesiastical Society was formed as a separate parish within the Town of Norwich. As the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Significance	Bozrah Congregational Church and Parsonage Bozrah, New London County, CT	8-3
--------------	--	-----

NOTES

1. Many Federal-period meetinghouses included elaborate steeples, but most of their decorative treatment had no specifically religious meaning. In the 1850s, Connecticut Congregationalists started building distinctly church-like meetinghouses, usually in a Gothic Revival or Italianate style.
2. Windham County Business Directory (West Killingly, 1861).
3. Bozrah Congregational Church, Records, manuscript, vol. 2, Connecticut State Library.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Bibliography	Bozrah Congregational Church and Parsonage Bozrah, New London County, CT	9-1
--------------	--	-----

Bozrah Congregational Church. Records. Manuscript, Connecticut State Library.

Hurd, D. Hamilton. History of New London County, Connecticut. New York, 1882.

Two Hundredth Anniversary, Town of Bozrah, Connecticut's 86th Town. Bozrah, 1986.

U.S. Works Progress Administration. Census of Old Buildings. Connecticut. Manuscript and photograph, c.1935. Connecticut State Library.

