

PH035097X

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED SEP 13 1976

DATE ENTERED DEC 12 1976

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 Lutheran Church

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
212 North Main Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
St. Ansgar

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Third

STATE
Iowa

CODE

COUNTY
Mitchell

CODE

131

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

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

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

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

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

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
First Lutheran Church

STREET & NUMBER
212 North Main Street

CITY, TOWN
St. Ansgar

VICINITY OF

STATE
Iowa

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Mitchell County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Osage

STATE
Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT

GOOD

FAIR

DETERIORATED

RUINS

UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED

ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE

MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The early settlers conducted worship services in an 1856 log schoolhouse until 1868 when they moved into their completed stone church. Its construction began in 1864.

The exterior walls are two feet thick and of cut limestone laid in coursed rubble masonry. The overall dimensions of the original church measure approximately 36 by 60 feet. The nave is 36 X 45 feet and the chancel area 15 X 25 feet, all within a ceiling height of 21 feet. A steeple 92 feet high rises over the church at the east end in which a bell was placed in 1868.

The floor system consists of two huge timbers laid lengthwise between the two walls with log joists placed perpendicular to them on top. Between the log joists, sawed lumber joists span the width on top of the beams. Nailed to the log and sawed joists are floor boards.

Certain modifications have been made to the structure. The main addition has been a stone narthex 14 X 28 feet at the east end in 1941. A wooden addition in the back houses the pastor's study and library. In the interior, the walls were lathed and plastered in 1898. A furnace was installed in 1891, followed by electric lights in 1904.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" 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 1868

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the First Lutheran Church rests on both historical and architectural grounds. It is historically important for its association with an outstanding pioneer leader of Norwegian immigrants in the Midwest, who founded St. Ansgar, Pastor C.L. Clausen (1820-1892). Carlton Qualey writes of Danish-born Clausen in his Norwegian Settlement in the United States:

Clausen was popular and active in the pioneer Norwegian settlements, and through his missionary activities and his writings he became widely known. He was one of the founders of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and was one of the storm centers of early church factional controversy. [On the controversial Civil War issue of slavery, Clausen led the opposition to the view of Norwegian Synod pastors that it was not in itself a sin to keep slaves.] In addition to his religious work, Clausen engaged in considerable journalistic activity. He was the first editor of the influential Norwegian-American newspaper, Emigranten, and was also associated for a time in the publication of a monthly Lutheran church paper, the Luthersk maanedstidende.

As an important colonizer on behalf of Norwegian immigrants unacquainted with the new country, he extensively investigated and publicized possible areas for settlement. To one such area, St. Ansgar, Iowa, he personally led in 1853 a forty wagon caravan of seventy-five settlers. Clausen staked out 120 acres for the townsite and called it St. Ansgar after the saint who brought Christianity to the "Far North of Europe." For the next twenty years he served there as pastor, counsellor and civic and political leader and, according to Theodore Blegen, he "took a leading part in the business affairs of the colony."

Architecturally, the 1868 limestone building is a good example of vernacular Gothic Revival style. Two of its most distinguishing features are the lancet windows on the side of the church that are set in recessed panels, and the bottom edge of the cornice that contains a Gothic arch motif repeated on the spire. No single architect guided the building's design or construction. Reverend Clausen supplied what information he had concerning building churches, and the chief stone masons, the Rauk Bros. and the Sveidengard Bros., together with the two head carpenters, designed and improvised as the building progressed. The resulting building, completed in 1868, is of simple beauty and durability and is the oldest church in Mitchell County.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Swanson, H. Fred. The Founder of St. Ansgar (Blair, Neb.; 1949).
 Jorgensen, A. Margareth, "Claus L. Clausen, Pioneer Pastor and Settlement Promoter, 1843-1868." (M.A. thesis, University of Minnesota, 1930).
 Qualey, Carlton C. Norwegian Element in the United States (Northfield, Minn., 1938), pp. 86-92.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A

15	506040	4802810
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All of lots 5 and 6, Block 16, Town of St. Ansgar, Iowa.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

W.H. Biedermann, County Liaison Officer for Historic Preservation

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

R 4

TELEPHONE

732 3082

CITY OR TOWN

Osage, Iowa

STATE

Iowa 50461

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

Adrian D. Anderson

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 18 August 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12/12/96

DATE

12/6/76

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Blegen, Theodore C. Norwegian Migration to America, 1825-1860
(Northfield, Minn., 1931), pp. 365-368.

Nelson, Clifford E. and Eugene L. Fevold. The Lutheran Church
Among Norwegian-Americans, Volume I, 1825-1890. (Minneapolis,
Minn., 1960), pp. 82-95.

"Claus L. Clausen: Pioneer Pastor and Settlement Promoter,"
tr. and ed. by Carlton C. Qualey, Norwegian-American Studies
and Records, VI, 12-29.

History of Mitchell and Worth Counties, pp. 201-202, 100-101.

Bergmann, Leola Nelson, "The Norwegians In Iowa," The Palimpsest XL:8
(August, 1959), 298-299.

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Addendum to #7 (ref. Para. 4, sentence 3)

The "wooden addition in the back" is a very small, one-story frame structure. It has a brick foundation, gable roof, and is covered with wide vertical siding painted white. Its date of construction is unknown, but it appears in a photo dated 1875 so must have been built before then. It contains a pastor's study and small meeting room.

Only the church building with its frame extension is included in this nomination. There is a small modern garage/storage room toward the rear of the property, which does not qualify for inclusion. The parish hall (b. 1960) is across the street from the church on another lot.