

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

For HCRS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **OCT 30 1979**
date entered **JAN 4 1980**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic The Congregational Church

and/or common The United Church of Christ (Congregational)

2. Location

street & number 921 Main Street _____ not for publication

city, town Berlin _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 2

state New Hampshire code 33 county Coos code 007

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name United Church of Christ, Berlin

street & number 14 Brown Avenue

city, town Berlin _____ vicinity of _____ state New Hampshire 03570

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Coos County Registry of Deeds

street & number Coos County Courthouse
148 Main Street

city, town Lancaster _____ state New Hampshire 03584

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title NA has this property been determined eligible? yes no

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 Congregational Church is an extremely good example of the Stick Style form of Victorian architecture popular at the end of the nineteenth century. The Stick Style is characterized by decorative wood detailing, gothic archways and windows, and decoratively patterned shingling, all of which are well represented by the Congregational Church. The church was built by builders from the Brown Company from plans modeled after the Williston Congregational Church in Portland, Maine.

The church is woodframe and irregular in plan. The exterior finish is a combination of clapboarding, shingling and decorative stick work. The roof is constructed as a cross-gable, with the major gable roof covering the nave of the church. The roof is steeply pitched and covered with black asphalt shingles. There is a cupola atop the nave roof. The other major element of the church is the tall bell tower. Its double leaf door is sheltered by a peaked door hood supported by decorative sawn brackets. A trefoil window is situated above the gabled hood, and above that are two tall narrow pointed arched windows. The belfrey is open with wood railings topped by a steep pyramidal roof with flared eaves. There are brackets under the tower cornice and a cross atop the tower roof. The gable end of the nave, which forms a major portion of the facade, contains a triple stained glass window. A partially open porch, three bays wide, extends forward from the facade. A recent glass and steel frame double doorway has been cut into the facade and becomes the central entranceway. Each end of the porch is enclosed. There is a wooden door leading into the enclosed section adjacent to the Bell Tower. The other one of these enclosed sections is gabled to balance the gabled hood over the bell tower door. Each enclosed porch section contains a gothic pointed arched window. There is a cross on the ridge of the nave roof. The porch is decorated by three gothic-pointed arches, with spandrels containing sawn panels with trefoils.

The original entrance was graced by wooden stairs which spanned the entire width of the open porch. Entrance to the church was gained by the two side entrances on the open porch which led to the main interior. The stairs have been replaced with narrow concrete stairs spanning the central arch only. The windows on the north wing have been altered. Originally there were three tall narrow center windows flanked by two tall narrow windows, one on each side. On the most northern end was a door. Today the two flanking windows are gone, presumably boarded up underneath the clapboard and the three tall narrow center windows have been replaced by a smaller modern four part window. The original door has been replaced by a recent model. The rear exterior wall has also had some recent alterations. The remainder of the exterior is as it was when constructed in 1882. The exterior is in good condition with only cosmetic deficiencies such as peeling paint and normal weathering. The original wood roof shingles have been replaced with asphalt shingles. Although there have been a number of minor alterations, no major additions have occurred.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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

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There are two circular memorial stained glass windows, one on the south side of the church and one on the rear (west) wall of the church above the altar. They are of European design and execution. One commemorates Emily Hart Brown, an active and devout member of the congregation and a member of the Brown family, who owned the famous paper mill in town and contributed so importantly to the history of Berlin.

The interior of the church has been modernized recently to such an extent that it does not contribute to the architectural significance of the church.

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	1882	Builder/Architect	Unknown
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Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Where the significance of the Congregational Church is mainly architectural, the building is also of historic and religious significance to the town. The Congregational Church was the first church to be built in Berlin. Architecturally, the church is an excellent example of the Stick Style form of eclectic Victorian architecture. The major features of the style which were mentioned in the description of the church were imaginatively executed in the Congregational Church. One should note the elaborate stick work and decorative use of shingles. Also significant are the gothic windows and door shapes. Although the use of stained glass is simple, it reflects well the attitude of the simple but dignified church which is so typical in New England. In sum, the Congregational Church is an excellent example of the Stick Style form of architecture, well executed, and well preserved.

The Congregational Church also plays an important part in the religious history of the town. Considerable interest was shown in religion in the early days of Berlin. The first settlers in Berlin at the beginning of the nineteenth century brought with them two books - the Bible and the New England Primer. Before Churches of any denomination were organized, religious meetings were held at different houses and halls with limited regularity.

In June 1836, the first general Sunday school was opened. Later, prayer meetings were held each Sunday after school. In 1837, the first licensed preacher, Thomas Wheeler, moved to Berlin, later that same year he was joined by another, Elizah Griffeth. During the years 1852-54, H. Winslow and Company, made the upper part of its store into a hall, seating 250 people. This hall was used for religious purposes. Over the next 15-20 years, traveling religious men of all faiths held services at the hall. Eventually, the major faiths, including the Congregational Church, were able to move from periodic services at the hall to building their own churches and having regular services.

9. Major Bibliographical References

History of Coos County, New Hampshire, 1888, New Hampshire Publishing Company, Somersworth, New Hampshire, 1972.
Centennial Brochure-Berlin 1829-1929, Smith & Town Co., Berlin, New Hampshire, 1929, available at library.
~~Church History, written by parishioners, provided by Rev. Dale True, Pastor~~

10. Geographical Data

ITEM NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property 1/2 acre

Quadrangle name Berlin, NH

Quadrangle scale 7.5'

UMT References

A

1	9	3	2	7	2	9	0	4	9	2	7	0	2	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

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D

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

NOT APPLICABLE - LESS THAN 10 ACRES

City of Berlin Tax Records: Map #28
Lot #1

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 Sarah R. McDonald, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization Community Development Department date 1/10/77

street & number City Hall, Main Street telephone _____

city or town Berlin state New Hampshire 03570

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

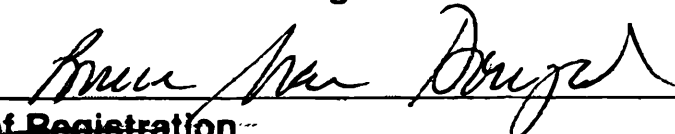
Commissioner, NH Dept. of Resources & Economic Development

title NH State Historic Preservation Officer date August 13, 1979

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

 date 1/4/80
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:  date 12/31/79
Chief of Registration

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In 1876, the Reverend A.J. Benedict, of Gorham, began to hold services in Berlin. In that year, he invited the citizens to meet with him to consider the organization of a congregational church. The new society had 23 charter members and through their zealous efforts it grew rapidly. On November 22, 1877, the Council of Congregational Churches in the North Country, voted to formally establish a colony in Berlin. The Congregational Church was the first organized church in Berlin. Construction of the present church began in 1882 and the dedication took place on July 22, 1882. The site was given by the Berlin Mills Company (today the Brown Company) and W.W. Brown, its owner, was one of its more generous contributors. His wife, Mrs. Emily Hart Brown, one of the most devote and active members of the church, was honored at the time of her death by the installation of the memorial stained glass window that is evident today above the altar. The church was built by parishioners and people from the Berlin Mills and it was modeled after the Williston Church in Portland, Maine. The bell was installed in 1885 and the organ in 1904.