

PH0015954

72000135

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	
Massachusetts	
COUNTY:	
Hampden	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
FEB 1	1972

1. NAME

COMMON:

First Church of Christ, Congregational

AND/OR HISTORIC:

(Fourth) First Church Congregational

2. LOCATION

Congressional District 2

STREET AND NUMBER:

50 Elm Street (Corner of Elm Street and Court Square Avenue)

CITY OR TOWN:

Springfield

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

025

COUNTY:

Hampden

CODE

013

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS		ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC	
District ☐	Building ☒	Public ☐	Public Acquisition: ☐	Occupied ☒	Yes: ☐	Yes: ☐	Yes: ☐
Site ☐	Structure ☐	Private ☒	In Process ☐	Unoccupied ☐	Restricted ☒	Restricted ☒	Restricted ☒
Object ☐		Both ☐	Being Considered ☐	Preservation work in progress ☐	Unrestricted ☐	Unrestricted ☐	Unrestricted ☐
					No: ☐	No: ☐	No: ☐

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Agricultural ☐	Government ☐	Park ☐	Transportation ☐	Comments ☐
Commercial ☐	Industrial ☐	Private Residence ☐	Other (Specify) ☐	
Educational ☐	Military ☐	Religious ☒		
Entertainment ☐	Museum ☐	Scientific ☐		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:

First Church of Christ, Congregational in Springfield

STREET AND NUMBER:

same as above

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:

Registry of Deeds, Hampden County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Springfield

STATE

Massachusetts

CODE

025

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: approximately one half acre

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Mass. Historical Commission Inventory- Plymouth

DATE OF SURVEY: 1968

Federal ☐State ☒County ☐Local ☐

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

Massachusetts Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:

Office of the Secretary, State House,

CITY OR TOWN:

Boston

STATE:

Mass. 02133

CODE

STATE: Massachusetts
COUNTY: HampdenENTRY NUMBER
FEB 1 1972
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS



7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)				
	Excellent ☒	Good ☐	Fair ☐	Deteriorated ☐	Ruins ☐ Unexposed ☐
INTEGRITY	(Check One)		(Check One)		
	Altered ☒	Unaltered ☐	Moved ☐	Original Site ☒	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The fourth building of the First Church of Christ, Congregational, in Springfield was built in 1819 by Isaac Damon. The main façade faces east and overlooks a common. Flanking and facing this wooden church, yet separated from it by narrow streets are some of the most imposing public structures in the city. These are the Hampden County Courthouse, designed by Henry Hobson Richardson and erected in 1872-3, and a civic complex built in the classical style in the early 20th century.

The design of the Church is simpler and more classic than the English Baroque style used by Damon in his earlier Northampton church (destroyed 1878). The style is a country builder's interpretation of the transition between the late Federal and early Greek Revival styles. The building contains the same components as the numerous New England meetinghouses built during this period. A rectangular mass with pitched roof houses the auditorium. The giant Doric portico, carrying the same roof pitch as the auditorium, serves as a focal point for the entrance. The tower, which partially projects from the auditorium, rises from the platform of the portico through its roof. It is supported, in part, by the roof of the auditorium and terminates in a three-stage spire.

Although alterations to the auditorium have been made a various times, the basic proportions of the room have not been disturbed and little change has been made in the components most important to the character of the church. The gallery, which is supported by graceful Ionic columns, still runs along three sides of the chamber. The original coved ceiling remains in place, though its curves have been shortened and decorative detail (Adamesque) added in the twentieth century.

In the 1870s a brick Parish House was added to the rear of the Church. This Venetian Gothic structure was altered in the mid-twentieth century, but fortunately a few original architectural details remain.



8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian ☐16th Century ☐18th Century ☐20th Century ☐15th Century ☐17th Century ☐19th Century ☒

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

1819

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal

Education ☐Political ☐Urban Planning ☐Prehistoric ☐Engineering ☐

Religion/Phi-

Other (Specify) ☒Historic ☐Industry ☐losophy ☒ArchitectureAgriculture ☐Invention ☐Science ☐Art ☐Landscape ☐Sculpture ☐Commerce ☐Architecture ☐

Social/Human-

Communications ☐Literature ☐itarian ☐Conservation ☐Military ☐Theater ☐Music ☐Transportation ☐

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

The First Church of Christ, Congregational, completed in Springfield in 1819, is the earliest extant church by Isaac Damon and is probably his second church design. The first design, possibly done in cooperation with Asher Benjamin, was that for the "Old Church" in Northampton, built in 1812 and destroyed by fire in 1878.

During the years between the construction of the Northampton and the Springfield churches, Damon was responsible for the erection of a number of secular structures in the western Connecticut River Valley. According to his obituary (Hampshire Gazette, August 4, 1904), Damon built a courthouse and town hall in Northampton, a courthouse and jail in Lenox, factories in Athol and various bridges across the Connecticut River.

The Northampton church was very much in the ornate English Baroque style. By comparison, Damon's Springfield church is much simpler and seems to set the pattern of church design he was to follow throughout most of his career. Elements used in the First Church continue to appear in Damon's later church buildings. For example, he uses spire stages derived from the Wren-Gibbs idiom. He employs the rusticated tower and arch in the Congregational Church in Blandford (1822) and the Old East Congregational Meetinghouse in Ware (built in 1826; burned to the foundations in 1925).

The First Church of Christ is the fourth meetinghouse built by the First Parish. Organized in 1637, the First Parish is thought to be the oldest continuing body of worship in Western Massachusetts. This Church has been certified a Massachusetts Historic Landmark.



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hampshire Gazette, August 4, 1904.

Sinnott, Edmund W., Meetinghouse and Church in Early New England, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1963.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		42° 06' 03"	72° 35' 23"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Anne R. Wardwell, Survey Director

ORGANIZATION: Massachusetts Historical Commission DATE: July 27, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:
Office of the Secretary, State House

CITY OR TOWN: Boston STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State- ☒ Local ☐

Name John F. K. [Signature]

Secretary of the Commonwealth and
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical
Commission

Date July 27, 1971

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

Robert A. Connolly
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

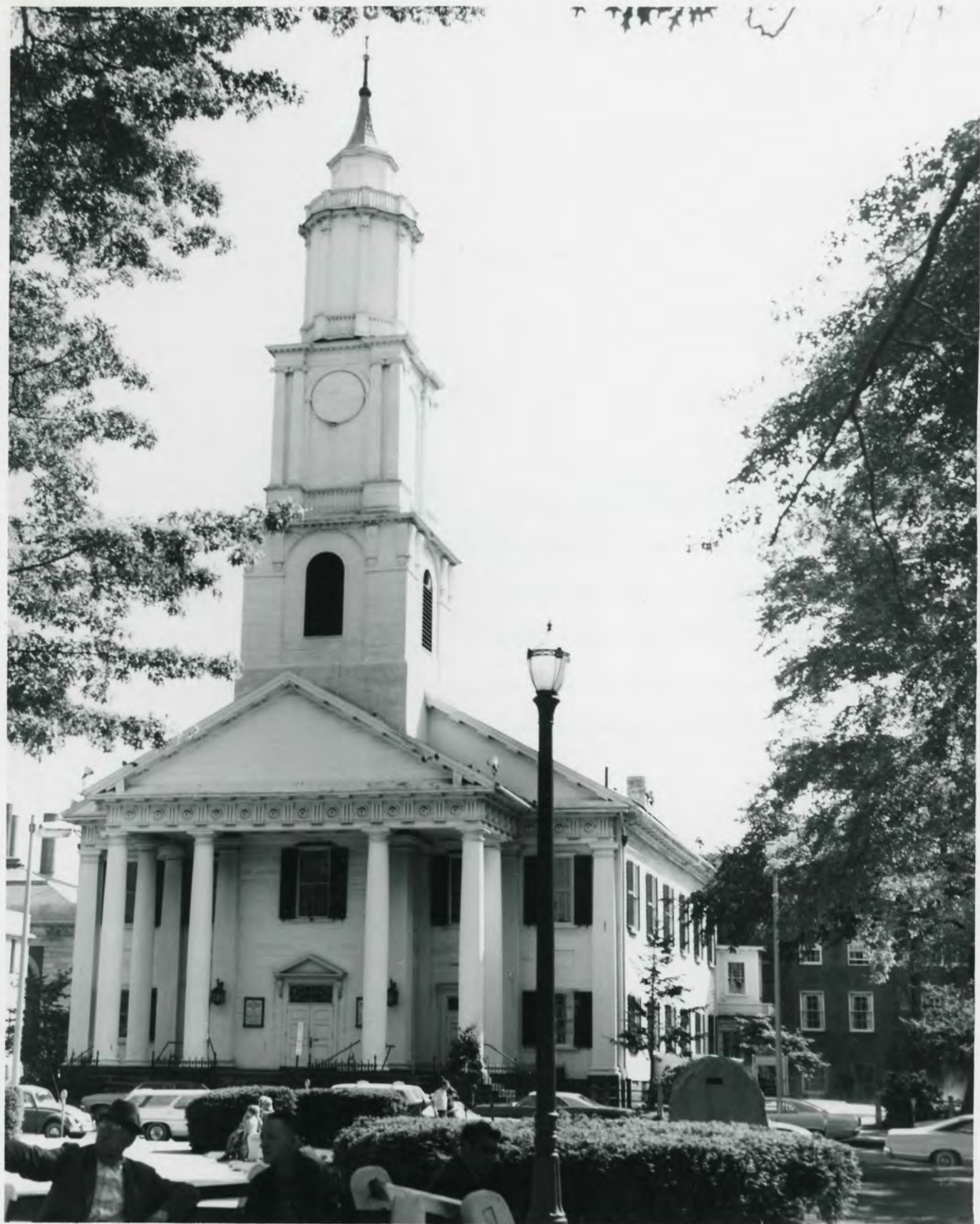
Date FEB 1 1972

ATTEST:

William [Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date JAN 28 1972

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



B2364-2
5-29-1970

Springfield
50 Elm St.
First church of Christ, Congregational
May, 1970

submitted by Neil M. Day (1)

NPS Number

Feb 1, 1972

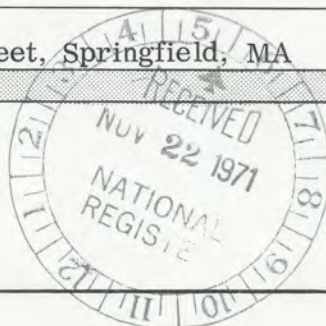
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

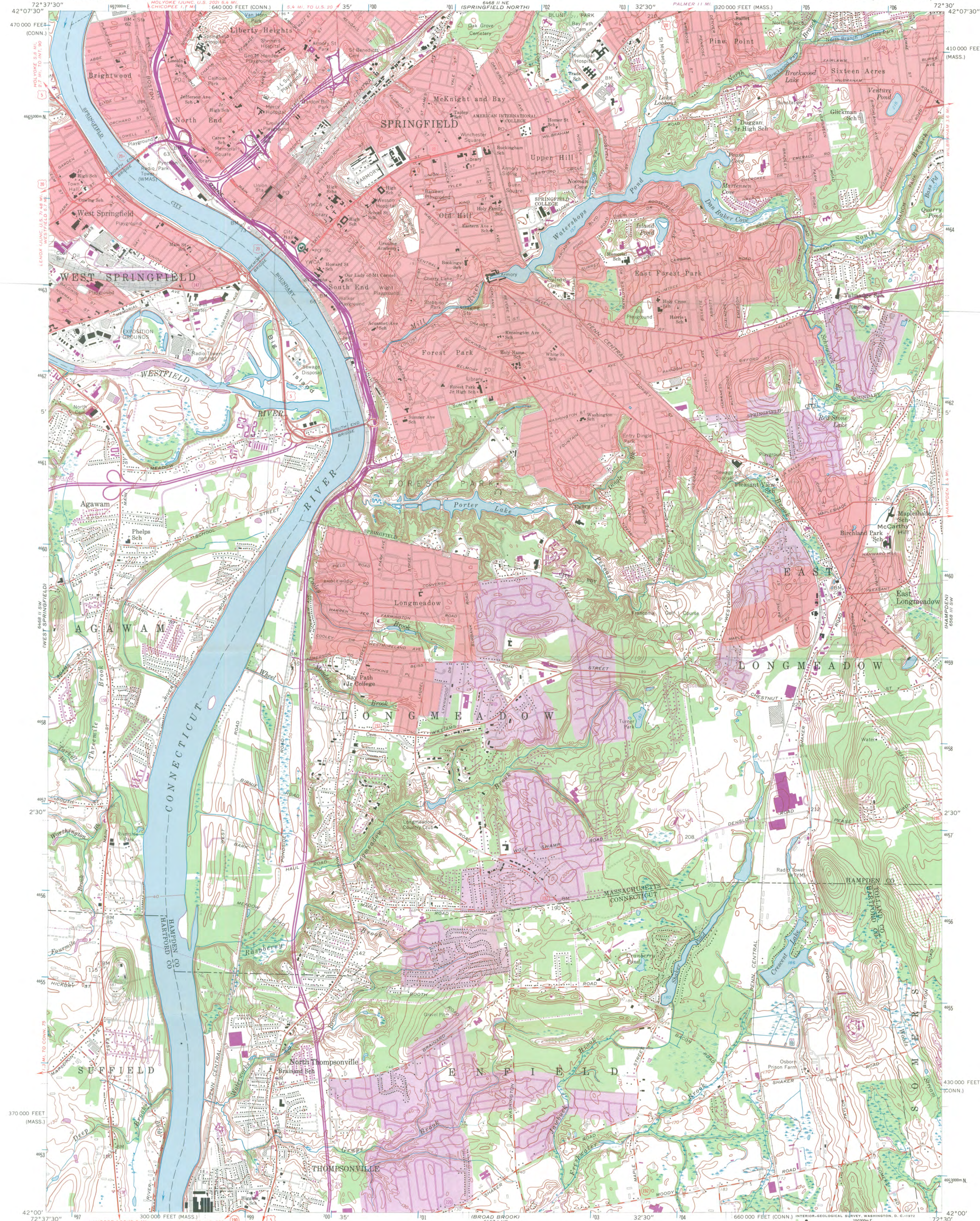
(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	
Massachusetts	
COUNTY	
Hampden	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	FEB 1 1972

1. NAME			
COMMON: First Church of Christ, Congregational			
AND/OR HISTORIC: (Fourth) First Church Congregational			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
50 Elm Street (corner of Elm Street and Court Square Avenue)			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Springfield			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Massachusetts	025	Hampden	013
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT: Percy E. Bassett Studios			
DATE OF PHOTO: May, 1970			
NEGATIVE FILED AT:			
Percy E. Bassett Studios, 144 White Street, Springfield, MA			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			
exterior-main façade			



SEE INSTRUCTIONS



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, Massachusetts Geodetic Survey,
and Connecticut Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1933 and 1942
Culture revised from aerial photographs by photogrammetric
methods. Aerial photographs taken 1957. Field check 1958
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone, and Connecticut coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 18, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only
landmark buildings are shown

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with
Connecticut Highway Department from aerial photographs
taken 1970. This information not field checked
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
U.S. Route ——— State Route ———

SPRINGFIELD SOUTH, MASS.-CONN.
N4200 - W7230/7.5

1958
PHOTOREVISED 1970
AMS 6468 II SE-SERIES Y814

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Massachusetts	
COUNTY Hampden	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	FEB 1 1972

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: First Church of Christ, Congregational
AND/OR HISTORIC: (Fourth) First Church Congregational

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
50 Elm Street (corner of Elm Street and Court Square Avenue)
CITY OR TOWN:
Springfield
STATE: Massachusetts CODE 025 COUNTY: Hampden CODE 013

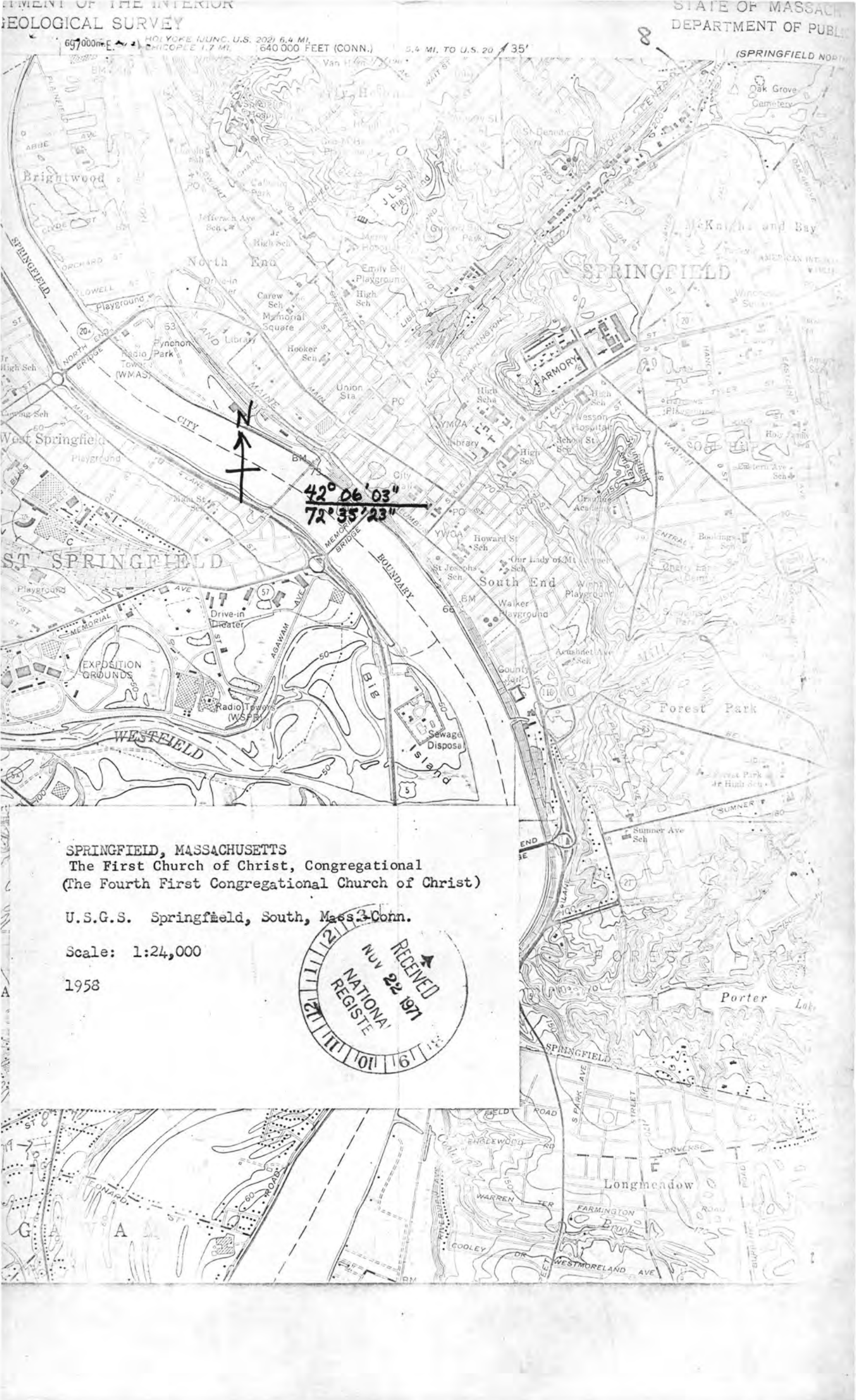
3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:
U. S. G. S. Springfield, South, Mass. - Conn.
SCALE: 1 : 24,000
DATE: 1958

4. REQUIREMENTS

- TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
1. Property boundaries where required.
 2. North arrow.
 3. Latitude and longitude reference.





667000m E. HOLYOKE JUNC. U.S. 2021 6.4 MI. 640 000 FEET (CONN.) 5.4 MI. TO U.S. 20 35'

(SPRINGFIELD NORTH)

SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
The First Church of Christ, Congregational
(The Fourth First Congregational Church of Christ)

U.S.G.S. Springfield, South, Mass. 3-Corn.

Scale: 1:24,000

1958





The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Secretary

State House, Boston 02133

John F. X. Davoren

Secretary of the Commonwealth

November 11, 1971

The Office of Archeology and Historic
Preservation

National Park Service
801 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20006

Attention: ~~Msxxx Sallyx Maxxxx~~ Miss Mary Means

CERTIFIED
~~REGISTERED~~ MAIL

Dear Sirs,

Enclosed are National Register submissions for:

1. First Church of Christ, Congregational, Springfield, Massachusetts
2. First Universalist Church, Provincetown, Massachusetts

These have been declared eligible for submission by the ~~Massachusetts~~ Historical Commission, the State Review Board, and have been signed by Secretary of the Commonwealth, John F. X. Davoren, Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission and designated the State Liaison Officer.

Sincerely yours,

Richard W. Hale Jr

Richard W. Hale, Jr.
Acting Chairman
Massachusetts Historical Commission



Green
Y.P.

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered FEB 1 1972

Name

Location

First Church of Christ, Congregational

Springfield
Hampden County

Hampden County Courthouse

Springfield
Hampden County

Also Notified

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy
Hon. Edward W. Brooke
Hon. Edward P. Boland

Director, Northeast Region

HR NRowland:mm 1/31/72

State Liaison Officer
Hon. John F. X. Davoren
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical
Commission
Office of the Secretary
State House
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

NOTIFICATION OF GRANT-IN-AID ACTION

Do Not
Use
This
Space

1. STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER 74070490		2. (Reserved for use by State central information reception agency)	
3. GRANTOR: a. Federal agency Department of the Interior			
b. Organizational unit National Park Service			
c. Administering office—(1) Name Division of Grants			
(2) Address—Street or P.O. Box 18th and C Streets, NW.		City Washington	State D.C.
		Zip Code 20240	
4. FEDERAL AGENCY GRANT IDENTIFIER: a. Code 25-75-00299-00		b. Title First Church of Christ, Congregational (Court Square Historic District) Development	
c. Purpose Project work will involve reroofing of the structure.			
5. GRANTEE: a. Name Massachusetts Mrs. Elizabeth R. Amadon, Exec. Dir., MA Historical Commission			
b. Address—Street or P.O. Box 40 Beacon Street		City Boston	State Massachusetts
		Zip Code 02108	
6. GRANTEE TYPE (Check only the single most applicable box)			
a. State ☒	b. Inter-state ☐	c. County ☐	d. City ☐
e. School district ☐	f. Special unit ☐	g. Community action ☐	h. Sponsored organization ☐
i. Other ☐			
7. APPLICATION RECEIPT DATE Year Month Day 75 12 23		8. ACTION DATE Year Month Day 76 2 19	
9. EFFECTIVE STARTING DATE Year Month Day 76 2 19		10. ENDING DATE Year Month Day 79 2 18	
11. TYPE OF ACTION (Check as many boxes as apply to this action)			
a. New grant ☒	b. Continuation grant ☐	c. Supplemental grant ☐	d. Change in existing grant ☐
(identify agency in item 16)			
(1) Increase in duration ☐	(2) Decrease in duration ☐	(3) Cancellation ☐	(4) Increase(\$) ☐
(5) Decrease(\$) ☐			
12. AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTION: a. Federal—(1) basic \$ 1,200		b. State \$ 3,100*	
(2) Supplemental \$		c. Local \$	
d. Other \$			
13. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (if none, clarify in item 16)		a. Program Number 15.904	
		b. Supplemental Program Number	
14. AUTHORIZATION			
a. Federal Budget Accounts	10-58-1040-0-1-405		
b. Public Laws	PL Title Sec. 89 665	PL Title Sec.	PL Title Sec.
c. U.S. Code	16 U.S.C. 470		
15. FACILITY LOCATION: (For facility grant actions only)			
a. City 50 Elm Street, Springfield	b. County P Hampden	CD 2	
16. REMARKS *First Church of Christ, Congregational			