

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received JUL 21 1983

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Holy Trinity Church (Church of the Blessed Trinity)

and/or common Bendon Church

2. Location

street & number off I-90 NA not for publication

city, town south of Kimball Vic. NA vicinity of

state South Dakota code 046 county Brule code 015

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Brule County Historical Society

street & number c/o Lucille Houda, Third and Elm Streets

city, town Kimball NA vicinity of state South Dakota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Brule County Courthouse

city, town Chamberlain state South Dakota

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		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>December 17, 1982</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	<input type="checkbox"/> very slightly		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Holy Trinity Church is located on slight rise on the open prairie south of the town of Kimball. Originally located in the town of Bendon, alongside a cemetery, the building has stood alone in the last years as the community vanished. A Catholic cemetery is located to the northwest of the church's present location.

The building is a simple nave plan structure. Constructed of wood frame, the church consists of a rectangular nave, narthex with steeple, square apse and sacristy. Recently a side door and porch have been added to the sacristy to allow for access to the basement which will be a museum display area. The building was relocated onto a cement foundation with full basement beneath the church.

The church has Gothic lancet windows and entrance, and an odd, pyramidal roof over the steeple. A simple wooden cross surmounts the steeple. The entire building is painted white.

On the interior, the church is richly decorated in a 19th century manner. Pastel colored stencil work in a flower and vine motif covers the apse ceiling. A striped yellow and pink paint decorates the wainscot, while the upper wall is pink. The rear pilars supporting the balcony are painted grey and yellow. The ornate altar is dark grained wood with saints standing free of the carved surface. Gold gilt and dark blue highlight the sunburst and arches. The Stations of the Cross and the saints are also historic. One saint is St. Joseph; the other, St. Promisene. In the rear, northeast corner are the stairs to the balcony and a confessional standing free of the walls.

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 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
			Bohemian/Czech settlement history	
Specific dates	1893, 1895	Builder/Architect	Fred Shereda, Chief Carpenter	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) the Western Bohemia Catholic Union

Holy Trinity Church is an important example of Bohemian vernacular religious architecture in South Dakota as well as a visual survivor of Czech settlement history and the town of Bendon. It is significant in the areas of architecture and Czech settlement history.

In 1893 the community of Bendon was established and named in honor of Czech settler, J. L. Benda. In time, the town consisted of the church, rectory, stable, general and hardware stores, saloon and dance hall. On Sundays Bendon came to life, for after services, the farm women shopped and the men visited with one another in the saloon.

Czechs first migrated to Brule County in 1879, the year the county was established. Families came both directly from Bohemia, a province of what is now Czechoslovakia, and areas of earlier settlement, such as Yankton and Bon Homme Counties. Three churches were established in Brule County: the Church of St. Procopius, 1883, rebuilt in 1900; the Church of the Blessed Trinity, also called Holy Trinity, 1893 or 1895; and St. Margaret's in Kimball, 1885. One source establishes the creation of Holy Trinity in 1893 and another states 1895. In either case, the church gave shape to the community of Bendon. By the mid-1970s the town had disappeared and in 1977 services were ended.

The building was erected under the direction of Fred Shereda, who was assisted by members of the Bohemia Catholic Union, including John F. Konecny and Joseph Kott. John Frenk and Vaclav Rybak donated the land. A local painter and stenciler decorated the interior. Alois Krepela, which may be the Czech version of August, is listed as the painter. Other places he is referred to as Charley, who may have been a son, and Louis. All sources agree that Mr. Krepela succumbed to lead poisoning from holding the paint brushes in his mouth. Towards the end, he had to be carried to the scaffold due to his increasing illness.

The Czech language was used for many years beginning with Father Bobeck, which may be the distorted version of Reverend Emil Roubik. In 1904 he was replaced by Reverend M. Pekar, then Reverend Joseph Bartick served and was followed in 1906, by Reverend Frank Simonik. Eventually the church could not maintain its own priest and was served from the parish of St. Margaret's and from Tabor, and later with non-Czech priests from Sioux Falls. Among the Bohemian traditions maintained by the church for many years was the funeral march to the cemetery, preceded by a large cross, handmade in Austria. The cross and banner have been preserved.

In 1982 the Brule County Historical Society acquired the church and to save it from being sold for lumber, it was moved to the outskirts of Kimball. The Society carefully planned the move and resited the church in a manner nearly identical to the original location.

Mrs. Houda writes, "As you enter, the church gives you a feeling of stability, due to the fine craftsmanship, it is in excellent condition and is a monument to the faith and skill of the homesteaders who constructed it."

9. Major Bibliographical References

Diocese Records, Catholic Chancery Office, 423 N. Duluth Ave., Sioux Falls, SD.
 Josef A. Dvorak, History of the Czechs in the State of South Dakota, translated and reprinted
 by the Czech Heritage Society, Inc., Tabor, SD, 1920, 1980, pp. 83-85, 149-151.
 Brule County Historical Society, Brule County History, 1977.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 4 1/2 see state highway map
 Quadrangle name no USGS quad map available in this area Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UTM References Longitude 99° 20' 0"
 Latitude 43° 44' 0" 14-503390-4842095

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Verbal boundary description and justification The property is defined by the following: commencing at the interior quarter of Section 10, Township 103 North, Range 68 West of the Fiftieth Principal Meridian; thence North 89° 36' East a distance of 545 feet along the East-West Quarter line of Section 10, thence South 0° 05' East a distance of

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
NA			

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lucille Houda, Director of Restoration technical editing: Carolyn Torma
 organization Brule County Historical Society date 24 May 83
 street & number Third and Elm telephone 605-778-6490
 city or town Kimball state South Dakota

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

M. F. ...

title Director, Office of Cultural Preservation

date 7/12/83

For NPS use only

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

Beth ...
 Keeper of the National Register

date 4/15/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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Continuation sheet Blessed Trinity Church Item number 8 Page 1

#8

Architecture associated with the Czech settlers in South Dakota can be grouped into three categories: elite, popular and folk. In the elite category are structures such as St. Wenceslaus Church in Tabor, a Catholic Church with a basilica plan designed by an architect. In the popular category are the halls built for church fellowship, reading societies and fraternal organizations. Other sites include commercial buildings and the homes of Czech settlers, which, while revealing Czech settlement, are really common Anglo-American architectural forms. The third category, folk, includes the limited, although fascinating body of farm dwellings and out buildings. The survey has revealed log dwellings and house-barns, puddled clay and masonry structures, chalk rock masonry houses and even balloon-frame structures built in a traditional Czech folk form.

The simple, frame nave plan church most likely spans the folk and popular categories and therefore the more encompassing term, vernacular, is applied to it. This form and method of construction are not unique to the Czechs. However, the method of interior decoration is.

Evidence from survey reveals that an interior decoration tradition of painting, stenciling and polychromatic use of colors existed among three culture groups in South Dakota: the Czechs, Germans and German-Russians. This largely non-representational "art" is purely decorative and was used in dwellings and churches. Alois Kreplla's work in Blessed Trinity is also characteristic of late 19th Century Catholic church decoration. The colors are light pastels and incorporate vegetation motifs. What is unique to Kreplla and perhaps the Czechs is the bold interplay of color. While St. Anthony's-St. Bernard's in Hoven, which is a Bohemian German congregation, uses dark mustards, organic greens and green-browns, and the German-Russians use brilliant blues, yellows, ochre and brick red, Blessed Trinity employs vibrant and contrasting pastels.

In addition, Blessed Trinity ceased active use prior to Vatican II, and therefore survived as an intact example of not only a late 19th century rural Catholic church, but as an ethnic church. The church reform of the 1960s not only altered church furnishings, but references to specific ethnic traditions were also strongly discouraged. Blessed Trinity has survived with its original altar, special feast day banners and cross, as well as Czech statues.

Therefore, the church's significance is derived from its state of preservation as a rural, ethnic church, and from its representation of a tradition of decoration interpreted in a uniquely Czech fashion. The primary significance of the structure is the interior decorations and furnishings. While other Czech churches survive, none contain this degree of ornamentation nor level of preservation.

The church was moved thirteen miles north from Bendon to Kimball. Kimball was the third community of Czech settlement in Brule County. St. Margaret's built in 1885 serves this parish of Czech descendants.

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Continuation sheet

Item number 8 & 10

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Blessed Trinity Church was the last remaining building in Bendon. Bendon, as the nomination states, was a very small community comprised of seven buildings and by 1980, the church was the only standing structure. The Diocese planned to sell the building for scrap lumber. After a year of negotiation, Mrs. Howda and the Brule County Historical Society, finally convinced the Church to save the structure and allow the Society to buy it intact. For the past two years, Mrs. Howda has been successful in getting much of the original vestments and furnishings, such as chanel and incense burner, donated back to the church for display and interpretation. It was stipulated by the Church that the Society must move the structure off the land. A site was selected, which was comparable to the original. The church was and is now adjacent to a Czech Catholic cemetery and faces north. In addition the Society relandscaped the present site to create a rise on which to place the building as it originally was built on a slight hill.

#10 total acreage 1½

The boundary of the site is an imaginary line, which is parallel to the walls of the building and lies 50 meters from those walls in every direction. The boundary is located at the bottom of the small hill upon which the church is sited.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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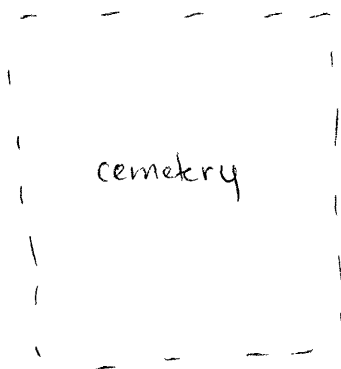
Holy Trinity Church
Kimball, SD

Sketch Map

CONTINUATION SHEET

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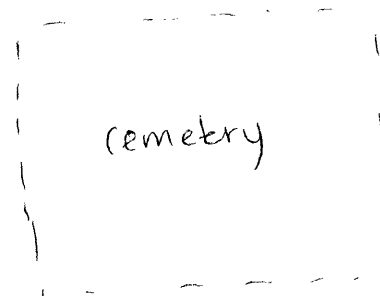
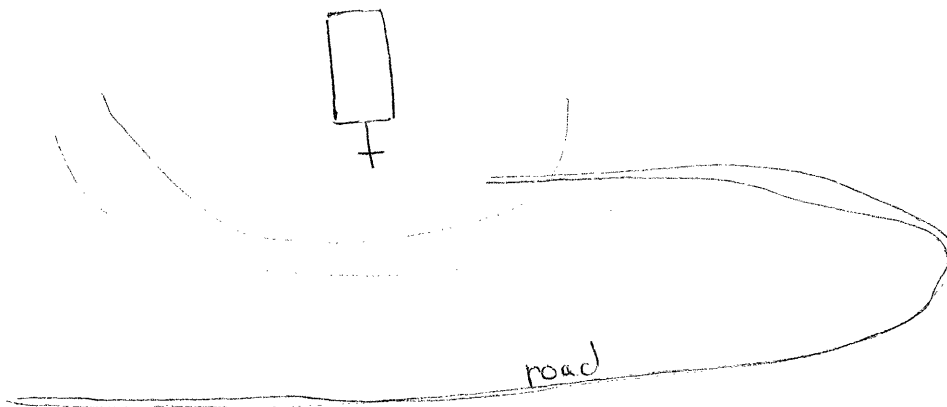


↓
N

Bendon

Kimball

↓
N



Freeway