Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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RECEIV	ED APR	8 1975	
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HISTORIC	First	t Congregationa	1 Church		•	•	
AND/OR COM	MMON SAME						
LOCA	rion						
STREET & NU	JMBER	1126 S.W. Park		.5	NOT FOR	PUBLICATION	
CITY, TOWN		Portland		2nd		SIONAL DISTR	ICT
STATE		FOICIAII	VICINITY OF CODE	Ziid,	COUNTY		CODE
		Oregon	41		Multnomah	97201	051
CLASS	IFIC.	ATION					
CATEG	ORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS			PRES	ENT USE
DISTRICT		PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED		AG	RICULTURE	MUSEUM
X <sub>BUILDING</sub>	G(S)	XPRIVATE	UNOCCUPIE	D	co	MMERCIAL	PARK
STRUCTU	JRE	ВОТН	WORK IN PE	ROGRESS	ED	JCATIONAL	PRIVATE RESIDENCE
SITE		PUBLIC ACQUIS			EN	TERTAINMENT	X RELIGIOUS
OBJECT		IN PROCESS	XYES: RESTR	ICTED	G0	VERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
		BEING CONSIDERED	YES: UNRES	TRICTED	INC	DUSTRIAL	TRANSPORTATION
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OWNE	R OF	PROPERTY					
NAME	<b></b> .		1 01 1				
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CITY, TOWN						STATE	
		Portland				cegon 972	201
REPRE	SEN	TATION IN E	XISTING SUR	VEY	5		
TITLE	Stat	ewide Inventory	of Historic Si	tes a	nd Buildings	5	
DATE	1974			FEDERAL	X_STATECOU	NTY _LOCAL	
DEPOSITORY SURVEY REC		Parks and Recre	ation Branch, S	<del></del>	<del>*************************************</del>	<del></del>	
CITY, TOWN						STATE	
		Salem			. (	regon 97	<b>'310</b>

## CONDITION

**CHECK ONE** 

**CHECK ONE** 

\_EXCELLENT

\_\_FAIR

\_\_DETERIORATED

\_\_UNEXPOSED

\_\_RUINS

\_UNALTERED

XORIGINAL SITE

MOVED DATE

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The First Congregational Church of Portland was constructed over a period of six years, 1889-95. Henry J. Hefty of Switzerland, architect for the building, designed the building in the period style of the "Venetian" manner, using the tradition of John Ruskin, the persuasive 19th century critic and aesthete. Ruskin admired Italian Gothic styles with their rich mixtures of Arabic, Byzantine, and Venetian elements. Some of these features, notably the smaller towers at the northwest and southeast corners of the building, have been removed. The towers were removed in 1940. Although minor changes have been made, the structure is still in excellent condition and it maintains the "Venetian" style,

The church measures  $94 \times 98$  feet. Its exterior is constructed of basaltic rock, with some broken ashlar, and a Tenino sandstone trim. The auditorium is  $92 \times 92$  feet in the shape of a Greek Cross faced with polished redwood and stucco. The ceiling is 35 feet high. The floor slopes down toward the pulpit with the pews in a half-circle facing the pulpit. With the gallery above, the auditorium accommodates 1100 members. The interior is relatively plain, and the design is basically that of other 19th century Oregon preaching churches. The minister and pulpit are emphasized rather than the medieval cruciform plan with a focus on the altar.

The remaining central tower suffered substantial damage during the October 12, 1962 Columbis Day storm. The damage to the tower and several interior changes, including the installment of an elevator in the tower, amounted to \$86,000. Even with the changes, the general treatment, the carved and textual effects, the memorial windows, the arches, lintels, and roof coverings still reveal a strong Victorian desire for richly manifested forms. This structure would comfortably fit in either the east or west coast.

Current plans call for the restoration of the deteriorating sandstone and other items in need of repair. The reconstruction of the two towers removed in 1940 is also contemplated but costs for the work may be prohibitive.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

SPECIFIC DAT	ES 1889-1895	BUILDER/ARCH	Henry Hefty	
		_INVENTION	FOLITIOS/ GOVERNMENT	OTHER (SPECIFY)
X1800-1899	COMMERCECOMMUNICATIONS	EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENTINDUSTRY	PHILOSOPHYPOLITICS/GOVERNMENT	TRANSPORTATION
1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER
1600-1699	XARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	SOCIAL/HUMÁNITARIAN
_1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE
1400-1499	ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE
PREHISTORIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	X RELIGION
PERIOD	At At	REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CF	IECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Portland First Congregational Church is significant both for its historical and its architectural attributes; its importance is further enhanced by its location in the South Park Blocks of Portland. The First Congregational Church was founded in 1851 - making it the oldest Congregational Church in the Pacific Northwest. The 185-foot high Italian Gothic Tower is the primary feature of the structure. The tower is one of the more impressive architectural attractions in Portland.

The church enhances and is enhanced by its location in the South Park Blocks, which extend along the west edge of the downtown core area. Its style of architecture is the only such example on the twelve South Park Blocks. It adds to other important structures on the "blocks" - notably the Portland Art Museum Center (on the National Register) and the Paramount Theater and St. James Lutheran Church (both nominated to the National Register).

The present building is the third house of worship for the First Congregational Church. Organized in 1851, the church's second minister, Dr. George Atkinson (1854-55, 1863-73), was the founder of Congregationalism in the Pacific Northwest and founder of the public school system in Oregon. It took six years to construct the church. A delay of two years (1893-95) was necessary because of the Panic of 1893. The building was dedicated in July, 1895, with a total cost of \$110,000.

The tower is ornately designed and constructed of stonework and sheet metal. It suggests Gothic prototypes. The exterior of the church is accented by three magnificent stained glass windows.

Although portions of the building have been altered (notably the removal of the NW and SE towers), it maintains its original dignity. The center tower acts as a focal point for Portlanders and the many visitors. The First Congregational Church is structurally sound and is an important contribution to Portland and Oregon architecture

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NAME / TITLE					
NAME / TITLE	Paul B. Hartwig,			rt K. Sutton, A	Asst. Park Historia
	Paul B. Hartwig, ON Oregon State High			DATE	Asst. Park Historia
ORGANIZATIO	Paul B. Hartwig, ON Oregon State High MBER Highway Building			DATE  TELEPHONE  (503) 378-	
ORGANIZATIO	Paul B. Hartwig, ON Oregon State High MBER Highway Building			DATE	
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