

INVENTORY SHEET FOR GROUP NOMINATIONS: IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, BOISE, IDAHO

NOMINATION: (TOURTELLOTTE AND HUMMEL ARCHITECTURE ~~IN IDAHO~~ TR)

✓ SITE NAME: New Plymouth Congregational Church ✓ SITE NUMBER: 103

✓ LOCATION: Southwest Avenue between West Park and Plymouth, New Plymouth,
Payette County ~~(075), Idaho~~

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS:

Congregational Church
c/o Blanche Sorenson
Route 2, Box 2178
New Plymouth, ID 83655

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: New Plymouth, Idaho, 7.5 minute ACREAGE: less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the New Plymouth Congregational Church and the property on which it stands, tax 1, less tax 4, block 37, New Plymouth Original Townsite. Legal description on file at the Payette County Court-house, Payette, Idaho.

UTM(S): 11/5,14,470/48,68,300

DATE OR PERIOD: 1920

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local

CONDITION: good unaltered original site

DESCRIPTION:

The New Plymouth Congregational Church is a one-and-a-half-story structure--one tall story on an elevated basement--in a formal neo-classical revival style. The massive, stuccoed concrete structure is rectangular. A monumental outset portico has a low-pitched, pedimentally-treated gable outset on two-story Tuscan columns. Cross gables are centered on the side elevations.

The front gable pediment is lined with bed molding and filled with stucco of a paler tint than that of the dark stucco walls. It is dominated by an ox-eye window now filled with louver strips. The window was probably originally filled with segmented glass, as are those in the matching side gables. A plain entablature between the front and the capitals of the portico columns continues frieze-like around the building. Behind the portico is a facade three bays wide, demarcated by two-story Tuscan pilasters with prominent bases. The tabernacle entrance in the central bay has a mannerist air: the pediment normally found flush with the top of the door floats upward to intersect with the sill of the shortened round-arched

sash above it. In each flanking bay is a blind niche, rectangular in form, with shouldered upper moldings matching those of the entrance. There are full-length round-arched sashes on narrow outset sills at auditorium level in each of the flanking bays of the facade. Three such windows at this level are set into the very shallowly outset, tripartite, pilaster-demarcated bays under the side gables. On either side of these broad central bays are narrow corner ones, each containing two rectangular six-over-one-light sash windows at auditorium level. Eleven such windows run along the base of the side elevations at basement levels, doubled between the pilastes of the central bays.

The church is identified and dated by an overhead plaque at right front. Aside from superficial changes such as the front ox-eye louvers, a modern light fixture mounted on the entablature, and wrought-iron rails and a carpet strip on the low concrete porch, the building is unaltered.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The New Plymouth Congregational Church is architecturally significant as a full-scale, monumentally porticoed and pedimented neo-classical revival church which is the outstanding structure in New Plymouth, and which is related to that town's unusual history. In the Thematic Group it also represents with self-confidence and purity the more formal neo-classical revivalism in contemporary sites 99, 102, and 104.

As designed, with a full two-story, two-bay Sunday School section extending to the right of the portico, the church would have been less formal, or at least less symmetrical, than it now appears, though it would have been even more imposing on this small-town streetscape with a nearly square, seventy-four-by-sixty-four-foot plan. As built, it is perhaps even more satisfying visually and is easily without peer in architecturally modest New Plymouth.

New Plymouth has one of the most interesting town plans in Idaho. It was settled in the 1890s by a pragmatic Utopian group which hoped to demonstrate the advantages of both cooperation and irrigation. It was laid out in a horseshoe-shaped plan, with a central common and ranges of residential streets for villager/farmers. Though the common has filled in, the farmers have moved nearer their fields, and the town is reduced to a more ordinary service center for them, the plan is intact. The Congregational church, which stands on one of the curving streets near the base of the U, is related to the Utopian history of the town in an interesting way: the original settlers voted to have only one church in town, and agreed on Congregationalism because no members of that denomination were present. It was no longer the only church in town by 1920, when the new building was designed by Tourtellotte and Hummel, but it apparently still commanded the largest congregation.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Boise, Idaho. Hummel Jones Miller Hunsucker P.A. File 245D. Collection book references 1920. Tracings and drawings signed Tourtellotte and Hummel.