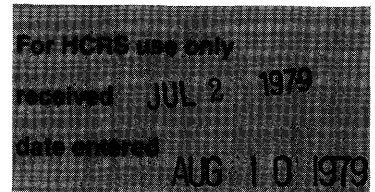


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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



## 1. Name

historic Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour

and/or common Same

## 2. Location

street & number 515 NW Second Avenue \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Faribault \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district First

state Minnesota code 22 county Rice code 131

## 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour

street & number 515 NW Second Avenue

city, town Faribault \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Minnesota

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds - Rice County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Faribault \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Minnesota

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Statewide Historic Sites  
title Survey has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

date 1978 \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Minnesota Historical Society - 240 Summit Avenue-Hill House

city, town St. Paul \_\_\_\_\_ state Minnesota

## 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**

Situated on a spacious site near the central business district of Faribault, the Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour is a dominant architectural landmark. Construction began on the Cathedral in August of 1862 in accordance with plans submitted by the architect James Renwick, Jr., of New York. The plans specified that the building be constructed in the Gothic Revival style and that the material used in the walls be of stone. The stone actually used in the building is a native blue limestone quarried from the Fall Creek Quarry east of Faribault.

The ground plan of the Cathedral is in the form of a Latin Cross, the nave and chancel forming the length of the cross and the tower room on one side and the organ room on the other forming the transept arms. The dimensions of the nave are forty-five feet by ninety feet; the chancel measures thirty-five by forty-five feet, the organ room twenty-two feet, and the tower twenty feet square. The chancel and altar are located at the east, and occupy a multigabled polygonal apse.

The Gothic Revival design is enhanced by a steeply soaring roof over the nave; the roof appears to spring from low, engaged buttresses positioned so as to divide the nave into seven longitudinal bays. Windows are narrow lancet-types with inset, stained glass panels. A trifoliot motif is incorporated into the wooden window casements. Polychromatic effects are developed through the use of a red-brown limestone in window and door surrounds.

The square tower at the northeast corner of the Cathedral is the most dominant architectural feature of the design. Although the base of the tower was completed at the time the Cathedral was made ready for service in 1868, the belfry was not finished until 1902. (The completion of the belfry was accomplished as a memorial to Bishop Henry Benjamin Whipple, first Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota, and the primary force behind the building of the Cathedral). The belfry was executed in a version of the English Perpendicular style. Openings are articulated with stone mullions; the parapets are crenelated and the corners boast tall finials adorned with crockets. Corners of the main tower mass are defined by engaged buttresses.

With the exception of minor modifications made in 1902 (at the time of the completion of the tower), the interior of the Cathedral remains essentially as it appeared at the time of construction. The roof of the nave and chancel is highlighted by exposed timber trusses. Small pendants mark the center joint of each truss. Much original detailing remains in the furnishings and accoutrements of the Cathedral. English Gothic motifs such as the lancet arch, trifolios and quatrefoils are evident on pews, pulpit, altar, and chairs for the bishop and vestry. The nave will seat 600 persons.

## 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** 1862-1869      **Builder/Architect** Renwick & Co. (New York)  
 Stephen Congdon/Supervising Architect  
 Robert C. Wiley (St. Paul) local  
 Supervising Architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour in Faribault is significant as the fountain-head of the Episcopal faith in Minnesota. Further, it remains as evidence of the far-reaching influence of the nationally acclaimed architect, James Renwick, Jr.

In 1858, at the age of thirty-seven, Bishop Henry Benjamin Whipple was appointed first Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota. In 1859 he arrived in Minnesota and, despite the instructions of his superiors to settle in St. Paul, he chose the town of Faribault as the site for the construction of a cathedral. In doing so, Whipple predicted that Faribault would develop into a nucleus of religious and state-operated institutions. These institutions are today noted for their progressive approaches in spreading the Christian doctrines throughout Minnesota and for innovations in the care of the deaf, blind, and destitute.

In 1860, Bishop Whipple announced the beginning of the Bishop Seabury Mission in Faribault. (Johnston Hall at the Seabury Divinity School is listed on the National Register of Historic Places). Two years later, on July 16, 1862, the cornerstone for the Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour was laid. With the exception of the belfry on the square tower, the building was completed and made ready for service in 1868. Since that time, the Cathedral has served as the See of the Episcopal Diocese in Minnesota. It was from this base that Whipple launched a statewide missionary movement which resulted in the construction of a large number of what have been commonly called "Whipple churches". Whipple worked tirelessly for the church until his death in 1901; shortly thereafter, the belfry on square tower was completed as a memorial to his efforts.

Architecturally, the Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour is noteworthy as an excellent example of the Gothic Revival style. The architect was James Renwick, Jr. of New York. Renwick had risen to fame as one of the leading architects of his time, having designed not only the important Grace Church (1843-46) and Saint Patrick's Cathedral (1858-79) in New York City, but also the Smithsonian Institution (1846-55) in Washington D.C. Although the extent of Whipple's association with Renwick is unknown, it is apparent that Whipple knew of the three aforementioned buildings, and that this knowledge may have influenced his choice to retain Renwick as architect for the Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour in 1862. The entire project was accomplished under the close supervision of Stephen Congdon of the Renwick firm. Local architects Robert C. Wiley of St. Paul and C.N. Daniels of Faribault were also chosen to collaborate with Congdon in regard to on-site design modifications and construction technology. Master-mason Edward Goodman, who had recently arrived from Yarmouth, England, was retained to direct the actual stone construction. Goodman later worked on the construction of the Church of the Cross (one of the "Whipple Churches"), in Dundas, a small milling center north of Faribault.

(see continuation sheet)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet - page 2

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 1

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

### UMT References

A 

1	5	4	7	8	3	8	0	4	9	0	4	6	6	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

### Verbal boundary description and justification

West 1/2 of Lot #2 and all of lots 3,4,5 of Block 18 of the Original Town of Faribault and south 15 feet of Lot 1 and south 15 feet of east 1/2 of Lot 2 in Block 18.

### 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 C.P. Bird, Vestryman/Charles W. Nelson, Architectural Historian

Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour/

organization Minnesota Historical Society

date April 1979

515 NW 2nd Avenue/

street & number 240 Summit Avenue-Hill House

telephone \_\_\_\_\_

/612-296-9073

city or town Faribault/St. Paul

state Minnesota

# 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 \_\_\_\_\_

*Russell W. Fridley*

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date

6/21/79

For HCRS use only

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

*Carol Shull*

date

8-10-79

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

*Shirley J. Brito*

date

10 9 '79

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 2 1979
DATE ENTERED	AUG 10 1979

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

Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour

CONTINUATION SHEET

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The construction of the Cathedral is important as evidence of the high respect that Bishop Whipple's enthusiasm and dedicated service had earned among the citizens of Faribault and the surrounding communities. This respect was not exclusive on the part of the white settlers, but was similarly shared by the Indians, many of whom became converts to the Episcopal faith. Both whites and Indians joined together to provide all of the manual labor necessary during the six years of work to construct the Cathedral.

The Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour survives today as a three-fold testament to the architectural talents of James Renwick, Jr., the enthusiasm and foresight of Bishop Henry B. Whipple, and the dedication and labors of the early residents of the Faribault area.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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DATE ENTERED	AUG 10 1979

Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour

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