

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Massachusetts	
COUNTY: Suffolk	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
New Old South Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Third Church Old South Church, United Church of Christ, Congregational

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
645 Boylston Street, at Dartmouth Street.

CITY OR TOWN:  
Boston

STATE: Massachusetts      CODE:      COUNTY: Suffolk      CODE:

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) _____ _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Dr. Frederick M. Meek, Old South Church, United Church of Christ, Congregational

STREET AND NUMBER:  
645 Boylston Street

CITY OR TOWN: Boston      STATE: Massachusetts      CODE:

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Registry of Deeds, Suffolk County

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Pemberton Square

CITY OR TOWN: Boston      STATE: Massachusetts      CODE:

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:      STATE:      CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

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## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

 Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed

(Check One)

 Altered     Unaltered

(Check One)

 Moved     Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

New Old South Church is a two-story masonry structure with polychrome walls, a cruciform plan, square dome located over the crossing, and a tall square corner tower. The walls, constructed of Roxbury stone, brown Connecticut sandstone, and light Ohio freestone, form a vivid polychrome composition. The east-west and north-south arms of the cruciform church are nearly equal in length and the west arm is crossed at the end at right angles by a rectangular arm that contains the tall tower at its southern end, and the entrance hall behind the tower. The south (Boylston Street), north, and east gable ends of the transepts have elaborate two-story high Gothic tracery windows and the corners are decorated by pinnacles. The spaces between the arms of the transepts, - at the northeast and southeast corners and between the south transept arm and the corner tower to the west, are filled in by one-story arcaded entranceways.

The main entrance, located in the base of the corner tower, is deeply recessed and arched and leads into the hall that extends through the building. To the right, or east, of this hall three doors open into the elaborately decorated cruciform auditorium of the church proper. The north and south arms of the transepts are occupied by great galleries and a third gallery is located in the west arm, above the three entrance doors. The east arm is occupied by a wooden pulpit enclosed on three sides by a wooden screen, and flanked by doorways opening into the two corner vestibules. The elaborate work of the pulpit and screen is executed in cherry, as is all the rest of the interior wood finish. The carving was done by Ellis and Company of New York. The cove of the cornice of the screen and that on the face of the pulpit was decorated in color by McPherson and Company of Boston. The arches of the two flanking doors are filled with Venetian mosaic by Salviati and Company of London, who also provided the large panel for the tympanum of the main porch on Boylston Street. In the main sanctuary the stained glass in the tall windows were designed by Clayton and Bell of London after the style of 15th Century English windows, and installed in 1875.

Except for a 10-foot reduction in height of the corner tower, the church has been little-altered. New Old South Church is in excellent condition, still used for religious service, and is open to visitors.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1874-75**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                      |   |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | osophy                                  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Science        | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | Architecture                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | itarian                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Designed by Charles A. Cummings and Willard T. Sears and built 1874-75, New Old South Church is one of the finest examples of High Victorian Gothic ecclesiastical architecture in New England. Except for a reduction in the height of the tower, this superb church is little-altered.

History

Designed by the Boston architectural firm of Cummings and Sears and constructed in 1874-75, squarish New Old South Church is modeled after the style of a north Italian Gothic church. Built on filled ground and constructed entirely of massive masonry work, the 245-foot high Italian campanile-type tower of the church sank out of plumb and was for many years known as "the leaning tower of Copley Square." In 1932, when the tower was in danger of toppling, it was removed, each stone catalogued and stored away. A steel skeleton anchored in deep-sunk piles was erected in 1937 and the masonry portion, once more erect, was rebuilt, following its original plan except that the tower was reduced in height by 10 feet.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Architecture, Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Baltimore, 1963), 194.  
 Thomas E. Tallmadge, The Story of Architecture in America (London, 1928), 159.  
 Massachusetts, A Guide to Its Places and People (American Guide Series) (Boston, 1937), 148.  
 Walter H. Kilham, Boston After Bulfinch, An Account of Its Architecture, 1800-1900 (Cambridge, 1948), 77.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0' 0" 0"	0' 0" 0"		42° 21' 01"	71° 04' 43"	
NE	0' 0" 0"	0' 0" 0"				
SE	0' 0" 0"	0' 0" 0"				
SW	0' 0" 0"	0' 0" 0"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/3 acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian**

ORGANIZATION **Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service** DATE **7/9/70**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**801 19th Street, N. W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE **D. C.** CODE

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION** **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

<p>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:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____  <i>Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</i></p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____  <i>Keeper of The National Register</i></p> <p>Date _____</p>
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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*(Continuation Sheet)*

STATE	
Massachusetts	
COUNTY	
Suffolk	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

*(Number all entries)*

9. Major Bibliographical References Continued page 1

John Burchard and Albert Bush-Brown, The Architecture of American, A Social and Cultural History (Boston and Toronto, 1961), 176.

Marjorie Drake Ross, The Book of Boston, Victorian Period (New York, 1964), 128.

American Architect and Building News, February 5, 1876, 45-46, February 8, 1876.