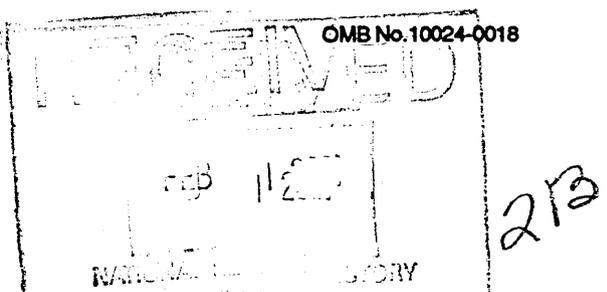


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Georgia Plain Baptist Church

other names/site number n/a

2. Location

street & number Stonebridge Road and Georgia Plain Road not for publication

city or town Georgia vicinity

state Vermont code VT county Franklin code 011 zip code 05468

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Elson Hulbertson National Register Specialist 1/29/2001
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other, (explain:) _____

Elson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper 3/2/01 Date of Action

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

- private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

- building(s), district, site, structure, object

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Religious Bldgs., Sites and Structures in VT

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter Categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter Categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

RELIGION/religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter Categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Gothic

foundation stone, walls brick, roof slate, other wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

see continuation sheet.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Georgia Plain Baptist Church
Georgia, Franklin County, Vermont

The Georgia Plain Baptist Church, built in 1877, is located in the southwestern portion of the town of Georgia in Franklin County, Vermont, and is a well-preserved example of the High Victorian Gothic style. Located at the intersection of Stonebridge Road and the Georgia Plain Road, the church is set back from the street by approximately twelve feet, and is surrounded by fields to its rear, the road to its front, the 1796 Elza Wood House to one side, and several barns dating from the late 1800s to its other side. Across the road is the Georgia Plains Cemetery. The church is constructed of English-bond brick with a slate roof. The majority of the brick is red in color, with sandy-colored brick accents. The slate on the roof is patterned, in both gray and red slate. The windows of the church are pointed Gothic arches, as are the wooden doorways. Stained glass decorates the edges of each window panes and belt courses in contrasting brick run across the front facade of the building. The steeple is very steeply-pitched and is covered in slate identical to the roof. Key interior features include a pressed tin ceiling, historic wood and glass lanterns, and a large, elaborate historic stained glass Gothic arch window dedicated to Alvah Sabin, longtime pastor of the Georgia Plain Baptist Church as well as U.S. Congressional Representative from Vermont in the mid-1800s. The property retains its integrity of location, design, workmanship, materials, setting, feeling and association.

The Georgia Plain Baptist Church is located in Georgia Plains, a small village in the southwestern portion of the town of Georgia, Vermont. This late Victorian Gothic Revival-style church was constructed in 1877, and is located at the intersection of Stonebridge and Georgia Plain Road. The area is rural with newer suburban tract-style housing developments mixed in with original farms and buildings.

EXTERIOR

The church building is L-shaped and consists of two sections: the main gable-front brick section, and an ell attached at its gable end to the main structure's north facade. The building is constructed of English-bond brick on a stone foundation, with a slate roof and several details done in wood. All the wood detailing is painted forest green, while the slate is a mix of gray and red and the brick work is a mix of red and sandy-colored brick. The windows throughout the entire building have decorative brickwork around them: splayed bricks follow the shape of the arch and alternate red and sandy-colored brick in a regular pattern. The regular brick cladding of the church is red, while the belt courses were laid in the sandy color.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Georgia Plain Baptist Church
Georgia, Franklin County, Vermont

The front facade consists of a main portion, a small attached vestry to the left of the main roof peak, a chimney-like tower with a mansard cap between that vestry and the main roof peak. To the right of the main peak, a larger vestibule, which is the main entrance to the church, rises up to become the belfry and steeple.

The wooden Gothic arch doorways on the front facade include the main double door on the bell tower vestry and another single door on the smaller vestry to the left of the main roof peak. Above each door is a Gothic arch-shaped window. In the center of the front facade, directly under the main roof peak, there is a large Gothic arch stained glass window. A brick belt course runs across the front facade, over the doorways and below the small Gothic arch windows; it bifurcates the large stained glass window. A second brick belt course runs above the first one on the main portion of the front facade, and a very small Gothic arch-shaped window sits above the second belt course directly under the point of the main roof peak.

The main vestibule is buttressed on its sides. As it rises above the main roof line of the building to become the belfry and eventually the steeple, it becomes clad in red and gray slate. The buttresses are constructed of brick, with stone slabs laid at a slant as the buttresses continue up the vestry's sides and gradually narrow to become flush with the main structure. As the entrance portion continues upwards, a green painted wood belt course forms the next level above the slate tiles, followed by the belfry level, which has a Gothic arch filled with horizontal wooden louvers and wooden shingles. The shaft of the steeple is clad in slate with metal flashing.

The smaller vestibule to the left side of the main facade is buttressed on its sides identically to the main vestry, and has a hipped roof, which joins it to the main section. The mansard-capped tower to its right begins as a buttress, then rises above the main roof line to a level below the height of the main steeple. The mansard cap is metal, with wrought iron cresting around its top.

All of the windows on the main portion of the church except for the large stained glass window on the front facade are Gothic arch, one over one sash with clear glass in the center of the top pane and frosted glass in the center of the lower pane; both panes are then surrounded by narrow rectangles of colored glass with squares of a contrasting color in each corner. While every window bears this pattern, the colors vary from window to window.

The southern facade has six bays, all of which feature the Gothic arch-shaped window with panes of a combination of clear and stained glass. Attached to the main building at the second to left most bay is a wooden shed-like structure, which is a cellar hatchway.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3Georgia Plain Baptist Church
Georgia, Franklin County, Vermont

The north facade consists of the north side of the main building with the ell section protruding on the right side as one faces the wall. The main building's north facade features five bays of the same type of windows found on the south facade. The north facade of the ell features three bays: a single wooden door with concrete steps coming from the parking lot on the left, and two windows to the right of the door. There is also what looks to be a small second story window, although the ell in actuality has only one story. The windows on the ell portion vary slightly from those on the main building. They are round arch windows with clear glass panes, one over one sash, and feature the decorative splayed brick surrounds. The east and west facades of the ell each feature five bays. The back of the ell (west facade) is flush with the back side of the main section of the building.

The rear (west) facade features a very small Gothic arch window under the gable peak of the roof of the main structure, with five bays across the attached ell's side gable facade, which attaches to the main building on the left side of the main building as one faces the rear facade. The back portion of the main section is without bays except for the small window under the roof peak.

INTERIOR

One enters the church through the vestibule underneath the belfry and steeple, whose interior is clad in boardwork painted white. A lantern of glass and wood hangs from the plain plastered ceiling. There is a small area for notices and hanging coats, then one turns to the left and enters the sanctuary through double doors. The walls in the sanctuary are painted white, while the wood floor is painted slate blue. A dado of vertical wainscoting made of three-inch-wide wooden planks painted slate blue rises to the level of a chair rail all around the sanctuary walls. There are plain, exposed wooden beams in natural finish across the flat ceiling at regular intervals that divide the ceiling into three sections. The ceiling, visible between the beams, is covered with pressed tin painted white. Each section between beams has two hanging modern ceiling fans and two hanging lanterns made of frosted glass with delicate wood frames.

The varnished wooden pews face west. While there is a main aisle leading to the altar, there are two sections of pews on each side of the main aisle which are connected to each other, forming two big pew sections on either side of the main aisle. On the outside edge of the rows immediately adjacent to the main aisle, they are joined to a wooden wall of the same height as the back of the pew, with another set of pews joined to the other side of this wall, which is at an approximately 45 degree angle to the pews on the main aisle. One accesses

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Section number 7 Page 4

Georgia Plain Baptist Church
Georgia, Franklin County, Vermont

these second section of pews from the secondary aisles on either side of the sanctuary. The pews are made of wood in two tones, with a darker wood as the main bench and decorative lighter wooden raised circles on the seat sides at the end of each pew.

The altar is quite plain, with a large wooden table and two chairs at the front of the sanctuary. There is no formal pulpit. Behind the altar, the west wall of the sanctuary is divided into three sections, with painted plaster pilasters leading up to arched beams delineating each section. The leftmost section is the choir area, which features blue painted wooden benches and a piano. The rightmost section has a door leading to the kitchen, which occupies the space behind the sanctuary in the main building, and also has a door which opens into the ell section.

The east wall of the main sanctuary, which is the rear of the sanctuary but the front facade of the exterior, is dominated by a large stained glass window, commemorating the Reverend Alvah Sabin, longtime pastor of Georgia Plain Baptist. Several feet in front of the rear wall, two ornate, round metal grill heating ducts are set into the floor; the metal is in a floral pattern.

The interior of the ell, which can be accessed either from a large double door in the north wall of the sanctuary up near the altar or from the kitchen, is one large open room. It is quite plain, and features the same white walls and blue dado as the main section, but with a false ceiling of suspended acoustic tiles. The floor is of wood painted slate blue. There is no furniture in this room, although there are low book shelves that run around the walls. At the front of the ell, there is a coat closet jutting out from the north wall on the left side and an enclosed entryway containing the door to the outside on the right side. Between these two box-like features, the floor of the ell is raised approximately six inches to create a small stage space for performances.

Georgia Plain Baptist Church
Name of Property

Franklin County, Vermont
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark " x " in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark " x " in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1877-1947

Significant Dates

1877

Significant Person

(Complete If Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Georgia Plain Baptist Church

Franklin County, Vermont

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM references

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>645150</u>	<u>4953350</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

see continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name / title Barb Shubinski

organization University of Vermont, H.P. Program date April 29, 1997

street & number 442 Main Street, Wheeler House telephone (802)656-3180

city or town Burlington state Vermont zip code 05405

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Georgia Plain Baptist Church

street & number RD3 Box 4637 telephone (802)524-5348

city or town Milton state Vermont zip code 05468

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Georgia Plain Baptist Church
Georgia, Franklin County, Vermont

The Georgia Plain Baptist Church in the town of Georgia, Franklin County, Vermont, possesses significance for embodying the distinctive characteristics of the High Victorian Gothic Revival style. Built of brick in 1877, this building replaced an earlier church building dating from 1848, which burned in 1876. The congregation itself was organized in 1793, but worshipped in the Georgia Town Meeting Hall for its first 65 years of existence. The outstanding features of this polychromed church are its Gothic arch stained glass windows and Gothic arch doorways, its decorative brickwork and its steeply pitched patterned slate roof. The community of Georgia reflected many larger trends in Vermont, including agriculture, sheep farming, and mill industries. The church retains its integrity to a high degree and is in excellent condition. It is being nominated under the Multiple Property Documentation Form Religious Buildings, Sites and Structures in Vermont and meets the registrations requirements for the church property type. It is eligible for nomination under criterion A for its role in the larger historic trends such as agricultural villages and mill towns, and under criterion C for its architectural merit as a strong example of High Victorian Gothic Revival architecture. For these reasons, it meets criteria consideration A.

The Georgia Plain Baptist Church is located in the region known as Georgia Plains, a village in the southwestern portion of the town of Georgia, in Franklin County, Vermont. The church was built in 1877, although the congregation was officially organized much earlier, in 1793. The congregation's original church building was destroyed by fire in 1876, so the current Georgia Plain Baptist Church is actually the second church building on the present site. It is constructed of brick, with a slate roof and some wooden decorative accents, and is an excellent example of the High Victorian Gothic style. It retains its original integrity and is in very good condition. It is eligible for the National Register under criterion C.

The Georgia Plain Baptist Church is L-shaped, with a main sanctuary portion and an attached ell. There have been no later additions since construction but the digging out of the cellar to create more meeting space in the basement in 1955. It is a strong example of the Gothic architecture popular in the United States from approximately 1825-1870. With its polychroming, Gothic arch windows featuring stained glass borders around the panes and decorative brickwork around the window edges, a steeply pitched roof, and doorways and louvers on the steeple also in the classic Gothic arch shape, the church is quite striking. The only additions to the exterior have been concrete stairs and a wheelchair ramp added to the entryways, and a wooden shed covering stairs to the cellar on the side of the main portion of the building. The interior also retains remarkable integrity of design and workmanship. The original painted wooden floor is still visible, although some carpeting has been added in the

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Georgia Plain Baptist Church
Georgia, Franklin County, Vermont

main aisle, and the connected double-tier wooden pews are original. The interior also features a pressed metal ceiling and ornate carved wood and glass lanterns hanging from the ceiling.

In addition to its architectural quality, the Georgia Plain Baptist Church also has the distinction of ordaining the state's first female pastor, Reverend Grace Brooks, in 1919. Reverend Brooks was the first female pastor of any denomination in Vermont and, by the time of her retirement in 1947, she had held the longest pastorate for a woman pastor in the entire American Baptist Conference.

The Georgia Plain Baptist Church is part of several historic contexts, including agriculture in Vermont, railroads, and mill industries in Vermont. The town of Georgia had grown up around agriculture, with the surrounding fertile flatlands producing mostly grains, hence the location of the church in Georgia Plains is typical of the sorts of crossroads churches common to small towns in Vermont. The railroad came through Georgia in the mid-1800s, with a depot located on the east side of town, making it possible for the town to grow as a transportation center and a mill center. By the 1890s, shortly after the church was built, Georgia was the third largest mill center in the western central portion of the state, after Winooski and Vergennes. Georgia had seven grist mills, ten saw mills, and six carding and fulling mills. These latter mills also show the connection of the area to the booming sheep industry in Vermont in the mid-1800s. By 1891, Georgia also had an oil mill, a tile and brick factory, and a cheese factory, thus tying the area to the emerging dairy industries of the state, as well as the building trades.

The Georgia Plain Baptist Church was the second church congregation to organize in the Georgia area. Its congregation was founded in 1793, and the Baptists went on to become a significant social force in the town, particularly in regards to the Masons, which the church opposed. Georgia Plain Baptist provided the town's first alternative to the existing Congregationalist church. The congregation met at the well-known Georgia Town Hall until a permanent structure was built. The church's longest-serving pastor, Reverend Alvah Sabin, was an extremely influential community member who served a term as a United States Congressman from 1852-56.

Georgia Plain Baptist Church retains many of its significant features to this day. It still displays integrity of design and workmanship, as well as continuing to serve as one of the main churches in the area.

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Section number 9 Page 1

Georgia Plain Baptist Church
Georgia, Franklin County, Vermont

Bibliographical References.

Comstock, John Moore. The Congregational Churches of Vermont and Their Ministry 1762-1942. St. Johnsbury: Cowles Press, 1915, c 1942, pp. 7-19.

Georgia Plain Baptist Church. Church History. Self-published pamphlet. Stored at the Bailey-Howe Library, Special Collections, University of Vermont.

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. "Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey, Georgia, Vermont." Typescript. On file at the VDHP office, Montpelier, Vermont.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

Georgia Plain Baptist Church
Georgia, Franklin County, Vermont

Boundary Description and Justification

The boundaries of the nominated property are clearly delineated by landscaping. The boundary begins at the southeast corner of the intersection of Stonebridge Road and Georgia Plain Road and runs 80 yards south to the northeast corner of the fieldstone wall. It then continues westward for 30 yards along the windbreak row of pine trees. Proceeding north, the boundary runs for 75 yards between the landscaped grass lawn of the church and the open field to its east. The northwest corner of the property boundary is marked by a small tree. Proceeding east from the tree, the boundary extends 30 yards to the original point at the southeast corner of the intersection of Stonebridge and Georgia Plain Road.

This is the parcel historically associated with the Georgia Plain Baptist Church.