

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAY 27 1975
DATE ENTERED AUG 28 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Imiola Church

AND/OR COMMON

Imiola Congregational Church

2 LOCATION NE of Waimea on HI 19

STREET & NUMBER

Route #19

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Waimea

VICINITY OF

2nd

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Hawaii

15

Hawaii

001

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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Hawaii Conference of the United Church of Christ

STREET & NUMBER

2103 Nuuanu Avenue

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Honolulu

— VICINITY OF

Hawaii

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Bureau of Conveyances

STREET & NUMBER

403 Queen Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Honolulu

Hawaii

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Hawaii Register of Historic Places

DATE

June 1973

— FEDERAL STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Historic Preservation Office

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Honolulu

Hawaii

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Imiola Congregational Church at Waimea is a rectangular wooden gabled structure which makes use of indigenous construction materials. The church is built of koa (Acacia koa), a native hardwood. The church measures approximately 40 by 60 feet and is set on stone footings and a dry fieldstone wall. It is sheathed with bevel siding. Shingles cover the solid NE end and located on the opposite end is a small gabled entrance way with a curved lintel piece. A rectangular tower with crenellations and a cross crown the high-pitched gable.

The applied decoration of the church's facade is limited to the window areas. On the exterior these areas are arched and articulated by two strips of curved wood to simulate intersecting tracery windows. On the interior these forms are simplified and consist of a wooden triangle. The exterior window motif continues on the sides of the tower.

The floor plan of Imiola Church is unusual in that the altar and entrance both are located at the southwest end of the building. A wooden reredos screens the entrance and separates the altar from the entrance. An ogee-like Koa molding with velvet cloth in the center comprises the center portion of the reredos which is set against a rectangular Koa plank backdrop. There is a small pulpit area in front of the reredos raised approximately two feet above the floor. Plain baluster strips enclose the sides and terminate at the front of the altar in two molded posts with pyramidal heads. All are made out of Koa. The interior finish consists of hand-rubbed Koa planks with the only decorative feature being the band of dentils along the architrave and on the ceiling. The ceiling is divided into rectangular sections by 3 inch boxed Koa beams. Two inch dentils articulate two sides of the beams. Molded wainscoting appears at the 36 inch level.

Surrounding the present church structure are remnants of a rough wall composed of fieldstone and coral-lime mortar. These walls which measure approximately 40 feet wide on the east and 120 feet long on the west end are approximately three feet thick and five feet high. The height as well as the water table varies along the wall. Some evidence of openings, possibly for windows, can be seen.

Architectural Interest and Merit:

Imiola Church combines the architectural style of Hawaii's New England missionary heritage and the use of local materials. The beautiful interior of the church with its hand-rubbed surfaces reflects the unpretentious purpose for which it was built. Especially notable is the koa wood finish of the entire interior walls, ceiling, and floor, all wide, hand-cut, beaded planks. It is believed to be the only church in the state to use koa extensively for both structural and decorative purposes. The interior of the church has been restored to its natural koa finish. The rich quality of the wood gives the church an intimate feeling.

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" 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 1855-57: Construction BUILDER/ARCHITECT Lorenzo Lyons

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Imiola Church is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places based on a combination of its architectural and historical significance. Architecturally, the church is the only known example of the extensive use of koa both for structural as well as decorative members. Historically, the church's association with Rev. Lorenzo Lyons, Congregational missionary and builder of 14 churches in the Waimea area, is ~~of~~ ^{of} historical importance.

During the mid-nineteenth century, Imiola Congregational Church at Waimea, Hawaii became the main base for Congregational missionary activities in the Hamakua and South Kohala Districts of Hawaii. It was built by Reverend Lorenzo Lyons who came to Hawaii from New Bedford, Massachusetts in May, 1832, and stayed in the Waimea area until his death in 1886.

The first Imiola Church was a grass hut built by order of the local chiefs for traveling missionaries. No construction date has been found for the first church, although it had been built and dedicated by King Kamehameha III before 1832. It contained a rough pulpit and a crude window. Congregations sat on mats on the ground and often were so large that the tiny structure could barely accommodate them. Reverend Lyons wrote in his journal that at least one hundred little grass schoolhouses were scattered around his church in the immediate Waimea area at this time.

After a tidal wave disaster in 1837 devastated homes and killed many natives, many Hawaiians were encouraged to join Rev. Lyons' church. (Lyons privately was attracted to the teachings of William Miller, a U.S. preacher who taught that the Second Advent of Christ and the beginning of the millenium were to occur in 1843; hence, it was important to get as many Hawaiians as possible into the church.) Imiola Church's membership, combined with that of Reverend Titus Coan's church in Hilo, accounted for three out of every four church members on all islands in May, 1838. Lyons' triumph was short-lived, however. Of the nearly 5,000 natives who became members during the peak period of religious revival, only 1,197 were in good standing by 1841. Many were ejected for a variety of reasons including adultery, neglect of meetings, and "stupidity". Some of these backsliders were later allowed back into the church with apparently no ill effects.

By February of 1843, the first church had been torn down and was replaced by a stone structure with thatched roof and windows. It presented, in the words of Reverend Lyons, "an imposing form and whose interior with the addition of a boarded floor, and with arranged seat and neat and simple pulpit, furnished new attractions to the native worshipper." (Lyons, p. 125.) Hundreds of natives helped in the collection of stones, often carrying them miles to the construction site. Lyons estimated that the buildings' cost was between \$3,000 and \$5,000.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See attached sheet.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.05

UTM REFERENCES

A 0.5 221130 2216060
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

From Kamuela Post Office, proceed West on Rt. 19 for 0.5 miles (noting "church row" N, left of road) turning N(left) at access by Mormon Church on corner.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

ORGANIZATION Gary T. Cummins for Hawaii Register of Historic Places DATE June, 1973

STREET & NUMBER Historic Preservation Office TELEPHONE 548-6408

CITY OR TOWN King and Punchbowl Streets STATE Hawaii
Honolulu

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE X 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 National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Edgar A. Hamann James L. Silverman
 TITLE DATE August 8, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION Ernest A. Connelly DATE AUG 28 1975
 ASST. Director, Professional Services
 ATTEST Charles [Signature] DATE 8-25-75
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Difficult as the raising of the second church, was, the structure lasted for only a little over twelve years. At the end of April, 1855, it was determined to be unsafe and was abandoned. On June 11 of that year, the roof collapsed and was described by Lyons as "a mass of ruins".

Entrepreneur T. H. Davies gave an account of the old building in his recollections of 1859. "The churchyard wall of the present building is the remains of the old church itself, an evidence of the lack of judgement of the original artificer. When the missionary work first commenced there, natives from all parts flocked to Waimea for the special services, and in the fulness (SIC) of their hearts, the good people commenced an immense edifice large enough to accomodate all these extra attendants. The church was filled at its opening and never half full after, and from the weight of its roof soon fell into decay."¹

On August 29, 1855, the cornerstone of the new church was laid. "Under the cornerstone (SW corner) was deposited a tin box wrapped in mamaki kapa*-- Hawaiian Bible, hymn books, newspapers, laws, etc."² By 1857, the church was completed and dedicated. The ceiling rafters, floor, and exterior clapboard were made of koa, a Hawaiian wood.

Lyons' recollections of the construction of the building list two important figures. Mr. Carr "was engaged to put up the new building" and Alani was responsible for planing the clapboard siding. The church was constructed by the help of church members who did most of the heavy work.

By 1882, the church required repairs and between the money donated and funds collected at a church fair, Imiola was reshingled, repainted and rematted.

Imiola Church never attained the following that it had during the revivalist period of the 1830's. In the last years of Reverend Lyons' life, only 50 members could be expected to attend his services. Competition with the Catholic Church, the drastic drop in the Hawaiian population, as well as the movement of many natives to coastal urban centers accounted for the dwindling congregation. However, Imiola Church and its minister were no less highly respected by the surrounding community. Two years before his death, a crowd which included Waimea's young, old, middle aged, Catholics, Mormons, Protestants, and non-believers all came to one of Lyons' services to honor him. He was known in the town as the man who carried out many functions. The Honolulu Directory of 1884 listed him as pastor of Imiola Church, postmaster, school agent and government physician. He was also well known as the composer of numerous popular Hawaiian hymns.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

In a letter written to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Congregational Church in 1885, Lyons referred to himself as a "broken down missionary". Deafness and age had stricken him and he asked the Board to find a new pastor to replace him.

In 1886, Lyons died at the age of 79. He was buried some distance from the church on the grounds of his old homestead. With the help of Parker Ranch management, his remains were removed to the grounds of Imiola Church in April, 1939.

Perhaps the most important renovation of the church took place in 1955 when the paint was removed from the building's interior woodwork and the natural koa wood finish was restored. The extensive use of koa in the church, including the structural members, is an unusual feature and believed to be the only church in the state with this structure.

The builder and the building of Imiola Church are significant to Hawaii's history. Rev. Lyons greatly influenced the religious, educational and social development of Hawaii and this church is a surviving example of his dedication.

- 1 Theo. H. Davies, Personal Recollections of Hawaii, p. 20.
- 2 Lorenzo Lyons, Makua Laiana, p. 160.
- * Native barkcloth.

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ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

Cooke, Mary. "Imiola Church Observes 100th Anniversary," Honolulu Advertiser,
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Daws, Gavan. Shoal of Time. New York: Macmillan, 1968.

Doyle, Emma Lyons. "The Story of Imiola Congregational Church," Hilo Tribune Herald,
Hilo, Hawaii, 1962.

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Lyons, Lorenzo. "Makua Laiana," Honolulu Star-Bulletin, Honolulu, 1945.