NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 8-86)	OMB No. 1024-0018
United States Department of the Interior National Park Service	
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM	and Salayan Salayan
1. Name of Property	
historic name: WARREN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH	
other name/site number: <u>N/A</u>	
2. Location street & number: <u>4 Sackett Hill Road</u>	
	for publication: <u>N/A</u> hity: <u>N/A</u>
state: <u>CT</u> county: <u>Litchfield</u> code: <u>005</u>	zip code: <u>06754</u>
3. Classification Ownership of Property: <u>private</u>	
Category of Property: <u>building</u>	
Number of Resources within Property:	
Contributing Noncontributing	
buildings sites structures objects objects Total Number of contributing resources previously listed in Register:	the National

1743

Name of related multiple property listing: <u>N/A</u>

4. State/F	ederal Agency Certification			
As the des of 1986, a request for standards Historic F set forth does	signated authority under the as amended, I hereby certify or determination of eligibili for registering properties i places and meets the procedur in 36 CFR Part 60. In my op not meet the National Regist	Nation that t ty mee n the al and oinion,	al Historic Preser his <u>x</u> nominatio ts the documentati National Register professional requ the property <u>x</u>	vation Act n on of irements meets nt. sheet.
Signature	or certifying orrierar		Date	
State or F	ederal agency and bureau	····		
	ion, the property meets riteria See continuati			National
Signature	of commenting or other offic	ial	Date	
State or F	ederal agency and bureau			
5. Nationa I, hereby enter deter Nati deter Nati remov	I Park Service Certification certify that this property i ed in the National Register See continuation sheet. mined eligible for the onal Register See continuation sheet. mined not eligible for the onal Register ed from the National Registe (explain):	s: 	Velores Syus	<u>11/29/9</u>
<pre>====================================</pre>	n or Use			======
	RELIGION			
Current:	RELIGION	Sub:	religious structu:	re

7. Descript				
	cal Classifi			
Federal	an an an tha an			
Other Desci	ription: <u>N/</u>	Α		
Materials:				ASPHALT
Describe p sheet.	resent and h	istoric physical	appearance	e. <u>X</u> See continuation
8. Statemer ===================================	nt of Signif official ha	icance	significa	nce of this property in
Applicable	National Re	gister Criteria:	<u>A,C</u>	
Criteria Co	onsideration	s (Exceptions) :	A	
Areas of S	ignificance:	ARCHITECTURE RELIGION		
Period(s) o	of Significa	nce: <u>1818</u>		
Significant	Dates: _	1818		
Significant	: Person(s):	<u>N/A</u>		_
Cultural Af	Efiliation:	N/A		
Architect/H	Builder: <u>Un</u>	known		

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. \underline{X} See continuation sheet.

5======================================
9. Major Bibliographical References
X See continuation sheet.
Previous documentation on file (NPS):
<pre>_ 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 #</pre>
Primary Location of Additional Data:
<pre>_ State historic preservation office _ Other state agency _ Federal agency _ Local government _ University _ Other Specify Repository:</pre>
10. Geographical Data
Acreage of Property: <u>approx. 2</u>
UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing
A <u>18</u> <u>637240</u> <u>4622420</u> B C D D
See continuation sheet.
Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet. The nominated property includes that portion of the lot at 4 Sackett Hill Road (Map 49 Lot 17, Warren Assessor records) which is east of a line 50' west of and parallel to the rear wall of the church.
Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet. The boundary includes the historic lot associated with the church, but not the 1946 parsonage.
11. Form Prepared By Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator
Name/Title: Bruce Clouette and Matthew Roth
Organization: <u>Historic Resource Consultants</u> Date: <u>March 27, 1991</u>
Street & Number: <u>55 Van Dyke Avenue</u> Telephone: <u>203-547-0268</u>
City or Town: <u>Hartford</u> State: <u>CT</u> ZIP: <u>06106</u>

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description

Warren Congregational Church 7-1 Warren, Litchfield County, CT

Warren Congregational Church (Photographs 1 and 2), a Federal-style meetinghouse completed in 1820, faces east atop a high knoll overlooking the intersection of Sackett Hill Road and Route 341 in the center of Warren, Connecticut. The land surrounding the church, and much of the town center, is open, with scattered buildings such as a row of houses along Route 341 and the Town Hall and elementary school across the street from the church. The nominated property includes only the church building itself; utility buildings south of the church's small parking lot and at the rear of the church are town-owned and are not on the church parcel. The church's parsonage, a ranch-type house built in 1946 that fronts on Route 341, is also excluded.

The 2 1/2-story, gable-roofed, clapboarded church rests on a foundation of large granite slabs, with similar stone used for a series of three broad steps across the front of the church and for a mounting platform at the southeast corner. On the facade or east elevation three identical entrances are set within a projecting pedimented pavilion; the three bays are demarcated by slender two-story reeded Doric pilasters with sunken ellipses in the neckings (Photograph 3). Each entrance has similar pilasters forming the jambs and the uprights of the surround, a door of five sunken panels, and a semicircular transom. The transoms have arched molded frames with central keystones and reeded soffits. The transom leading (Photograph 4) is in a radial pattern with beaded festoons, sunbursts, and tiny pineapples near the center point. The cornice of the pavilion features a frieze of alternating diamonds and fluted panels, mutules, and a single large cyma molding. In the triangular space formed by the cornice return, lighting the attic space within, is a three-lobed window glazed as a wheel atop two half-wheels. The entire front of the pavilion is finished with flush horizontal boards.

A steeple of several stages rests partly on the pavilion and partly on the main roof. The large base of the steeple is square in plan and has a clock face on the front and radially-glazed elliptical false windows, with the long axis running vertically, on the side elevations. The cornice repeats that of the front pediment, and there is a simple balustrade. The belfry stage is octagonal, with bell-arch openings and pilasters at the corners. Next is a lantern stage, also octagonal but smaller, with the "muntins" in the blind openings arranged in a geometric pattern suggestive of hearts or bows. The lantern and belfry have mutules below the cornice and a frieze of reeded panels, and both stage have balustrades like that on the base. The final stage is an octagonal shingled spire; it terminates in a turned metal finial,

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Description

Warren Congregational Church 7-2 Warren, Litchfield County, CT

above which is a fish-shaped weathervane mounted on a tall mast. The steeple was heavily damaged by lightning in 1891 and was modified at that time; the present lantern cornice and balustrade and the spire represent a 1959 restoration of the original design.

Side elevations have two tiers of five windows. The windows, like those on the second story of the pavilion, have their original twelveover-twelve sash and board frames outlined by simple applied moldings; the movable-vane blinds are later additions. The rear elevation, which accommodates handicapped access, has in its center a Palladian window with interlaced muntins in the arch; this window is a 1939 restoration of the original pulpit window, which had been removed in 1877. Although there are no corner pilasters, the building's main cornice repeats that of the pavilion, with a full return across the front. A small modern exterior brick chimney rises at the southwest rear corner of the church.

The interior (Photograph 5) is divided into a front vestibule and a large auditorium. In the latter room, tall reeded columns support a central elliptical barrel vault in the plastered ceiling; the Ionic capitals (Photograph 7) are enriched with pearl, egg-and-dart, and flower-bud carvings. A gallery runs along three sides of the church. The rail of the gallery is treated as a cornice, with projecting moldings and a frieze of tiny applied festoons. The front of the gallery has long sunken panels, below which is a band of reeding (Photograph 8). The festoons and moldings of the room's main cornice are similar to those of the gallery's. Window and door frames have simple molded surrounds, and interior doors are constructed with five flat panels. The white-painted pews and gallery benches have stained maple arms and top rails and date from 1859.

Just below the level of the restored Palladian window, whose pilasters repeat the Ionic motif of the columns, is a high pulpit reached by a set of curving stairs on either side (Photograph 6). The platform, stairs, and spiral-carved railings, are restorations, but the pulpit itself and the fluted square support piers are original. The pulpit is constructed of butternut, stained in imitation of mahogany. In plan it has a projecting center section and curved corners. It is richly embellished with a series of moldings at the top, a frieze of applied circular segments, recessed panels, and fluting.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Significance	Warren Congregational Church	8-1
-	Warren, Litchfield County, CT	

Summary

The Warren Congregational Church is primarily significant as a wellpreserved example of a Federal-style meetinghouse (Criterion C). Its slender pilasters and columns, geometric glazing patterns, and finescale cornice detailing epitomize the style's key principle, which was the use of elegant Classically-inspired ornament in combination with delicate, curving shapes based upon arches and the ellipse. In the period 1800-1825, numerous Congregational meetinghouses were built in this style, which was popularized in America through books such as Asher Benjamin's American Builder's Companion, first published in 1803. Warren's church is typical of the genre, not only in its details but also in its form, which incorporates the triple entrances, pedimented pavilion, and multi-stage steeple favored by the period's The building also has historical significance for its longbuilders. time association with Congregationalism, which, for most of Warren's history, represented the religious affiliation of a large portion of the town's residents (Criterion A). Although the Congregational Church was disestablished as the state-supported religion in 1818, the year this building was begun, it remained an important community institution, especially in small rural towns such as Warren. Although properties used for religious purposes are ordinarily not considered eligible for the National Register, the architectural distinction of the Warren Congregational Church gualifies it for inclusion (Criteria Consideration A).

Architectural Significance

Federal-style churches such as Warren's represented a break in Connecticut ecclesiastical architecture from the plain-style meetinghouses of the previous century. Those earlier buildings were large, boxy structures with their main entrances centered on the long side, like the houses of the period. Architectural elaboration was limited, except for meetinghouses in more cosmopolitan areas, where Georgian interior woodwork and simple steeples began appearing about 1760. By 1800, however, even rural Connecticut embraced a form of meetinghouse that made use of extensive embellishment and whose elaborate steeple clearly identified it as a church. The example of urban builders such as Bulfinch and the proliferation of builders' guides spread this form of meetinghouse throughout New England. Distinguishing characteristics, all present in the Warren church, include a re-orientation of the building along the long axis, with its entrances (most commonly three) in the gable end facing the road; a complex steeple, incor-

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Significance	Warren Congregational Church	8-2
	Warren, Litchfield County, CT	

porating at a minimum a belfry and spire or cupola, with balustrades and cornices emulating the elegant steeples of earlier English churches, such as those designed by James Gibbs; and decorative motifs based upon the elegant, freely-interpreted Classicism first introduced into British architecture by the Adam brothers.

Adam or Federal-style ornament is characterized by the lightness of its details, compared with the heaviness of earlier Georgian Classicism or the bold proportions of the later Greek Revival; and by the use of complex geometric motifs, particularly those based upon the ellipse or arched forms. The Warren Congregational Church embodies both these principles: its pilasters and columns are tall and slender, its ornament is rich in detail but not ostentatious, and it makes extensive use of interlaced arches, ellipses, and other geometric designs.

Especially notable is the Federal-style high pulpit. As of 1948 it was one of only three pulpits of the period known to survive in Connecticut, all of which, like this one, had been removed to storage as a consequence of previous remodelings. Now restored to its original position, the pulpit stands as a significant architectural component that helps recreate the interior of an early 19th-century meetinghouse. Its height and elaborate detailing suggest the continued importance of the sermon and the authority of the minister within the denomination.

Although some components of the building represent restorations, nearly all of the exterior details and interior woodwork are original. Restoration work was based upon extensive photographic evidence and in most cases incorporated substantial original material as well.

The restoration of the Palladian window was carried out by J. Frederick Kelly (1888-1947), an influential architectural historian and restoration architect. Starting with the upper part of the arched center window, which is original and was in storage at the time of the restoration, Kelly drew upon other examples in nearby churches and the Ionic motif established elsewhere in this church to recreate its pulpit window.¹ As was typical of his scholarly approach to restoration, the result was restrained and in keeping with the level of sophistication of the rest of the church. Kelly wrote several books on early Connecticut architecture, two of which, <u>The Early Domestic Architecture of</u> <u>Connecticut</u> (New Haven, 1924) and <u>Early Connecticut Meetinghouses</u> (New York, 1948), remain in use as important sources even today.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Significance

Warren Congregational Church 8-3 Warren, Litchfield County, CT

Historical Background

Warren's present Congregational meetinghouse was built as a replacement for one constructed in 1769, which by 1800 had become thoroughly deteriorated, with broken windows, a leaking roof, loose clapboards, and "breaches in the wall." According to local tradition, one worshipper commented that he had often heard of the Lord's house, but now knew of His barn as well. For a time, <u>ad hoc</u> repairs sufficed, but in 1815 Warren's Ecclesiastical Society voted to build a new meetinghouse. After three years of deciding on its location and raising funds, work began on the new building in 1818. The construction was undertaken by a committee of church members, who were authorized to purchase materials and contract out the various parts of the work. The name of the architect or chief builder, if any, has not survived. It is said that the church was modeled on the nearby Norfolk meetinghouse. The church was substantially finished by 1819, and in June 1820 the final report of the building committee was accepted by the Society, which congratulated the committee for completing "sd. house in a Superior Stile."

As an organization, the Congregational Church played an important role in the community life of Connecticut towns. In the case of Warren, the church society preceded the town itself. It was formed in 1750, when Warren was still a part of Kent, and was first known as the Society of East Greenwich. In 1786, the society's boundaries formed the basis for the newly incorporated town of Warren, and the society also became known by the name Warren, in honor of a Revolutionary War general killed at Bunker Hill. Even after disestablishment in 1818, Congregationalism remained the predominant religion in much of Connecticut, particularly in places like Warren, which were unaffected by industrialization and commercial growth. Many if not most inhabitants were at least formally affiliated, and the minister remained an influential figure, particularly regarding educational and moral issues. Most towns continued to hold their town meetings in their Congregational church buildings, which also served as centers for social events and town-wide undertakings such as wartime volunteer work.

In some ways, the present Congregational church building represents Warren at its height. The agricultural base of the economy had not yet lost its viability, and the wave of out-of-state migrations was just beginning. The population of Warren had increased since its incorporation, reaching a peak of 1,096 people in 1810. After that, however, the town underwent 120 years of demographic decline, from which it has yet to recover fully.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Significance	Warren Congregational Church	8-4
	Warren, Litchfield County, CT	

NOTES

1. Presumably all elements of the window, other than the one remnant of original sash, are creations by Kelly. The entire west end was boarded up in 1877, with the Palladian window and four regular window openings removed, so it is unlikely that much physical evidence of the window's appearance remained. Kelly implies that both exterior and interior details were completely new. See his <u>Early Connecticut Meetinghouses</u> (New York, 1948), 249, 253. It is not known if Kelly had other physical or documentary evidence for his design for the window.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Bibliography	Warren Congregational Church	9-1
	Warren, Litchfield County, CT	

Bassett, William E. <u>An Historical Discourse Preached at Warren,</u> <u>Conn., July 23, 1876</u>. Hartford, 1876.

Bickford, Christopher P., and J. Bard McNulty (eds.). John Warner Barber's Views of Connecticut Towns, 1834-36. Hartford, 1991.

History of Litchfield County. Philadelphia, 1881.

- Kelly, J. Frederick. <u>Early Connecticut Meetinghouses</u>. New York, 1948.
- Sinnott, Edmund W. <u>Meetinghouse and Church in Early New England</u>. New York, 1963.

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

NPS Form 10-900-a (8-86)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Photograph captions	Warren Congregational Church	Photos-1
	Warren, Litchfield County, CT	

All photographs:

 Warren Congregational Church
Warren, Litchfield County, CT
Photo Credit: HRC, Hartford, CT
March, 1991
Negative filed with Connecticut Historical Commission Hartford, CT

Captions:

East (facade) and south elevations, camera facing northwest Photograph 1 of 8

West (rear) and south elevations, camera facing northeast Photograph 2 of 8

Detail of cornice, east elevation, camera facing west Photograph 3 of 8

Detail of transom over center entry, east elevation, camera facing west Photograph 4 of 8

Interior, auditorium, view toward pulpit, camera facing west Photograph 5 of 8

Pulpit, camera facing south Photograph 6 of 8

Detail of column capital, camera facing southwest Photograph 7 of 8

Detail of gallery woodwork, camera facing southeast Photograph 8 of 8