

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

FINAL

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name First Presbyterian Church
other names/site number 071-581-34074

2. Location

street & number 301 N. Walnut Street N/A not for publication
city, town Seymour N/A vicinity
state Indiana code IN county Jackson code 071 zip code 47274

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Patrick R. Rabala 10-28-91
Signature of certifying official Date
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
 RELIGION: religious structure,
 church school

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
 RELIGION: religious structure,
 church school

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (enter categories from instructions)

Late Gothic Revival
 Modern Movement

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: limestone
 walls BRICK
 STONE: limestone
 roof ASPHALT
 other WOOD: shingle
 WOOD

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

First Presbyterian Church is located on the northwest corner of Walnut and Third Streets between Seymour's commercial district and a proposed downtown residential historic district. The church, which was completed in 1884, is an outstanding example of Gothic Revival style architecture of the late 19th century.

The building is an imposing one-story structure, based on a cross-axial plan. The three rectangular sections of the building come together under a cross-gable roof, with a tall bell tower addressing the corner as the main entrance. A shield-shaped plaque above the entrance reads:

First Presbyterian Church
 Erected 1855
 Rebuilt Sept. 1882

First Presbyterian Church has a foundation of rusticated stone, surmounted by red brick walls, which are accented at the corners by stone quoins. The north, south, and east elevations feature large, art glass windows which are 18 feet wide and 22 feet high. Wood mullions divide the lower sections of the windows, while

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

ART

Period of Significance

1884-1926

Significant Dates

1884

1900

1918

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown/ Cook, Lee (Jacoby Art Glass Company)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

First Presbyterian Church meets Criterion C in the areas of architecture and art. The church is a locally outstanding example of Victorian Gothic design replete with all the elements of that style: picturesque massing, steeply pitched roofs, pointed arches, and various gothic-based ornamentation. Its fine stained glass windows are unequalled in Seymour and are, in general, good examples of religious art glass of that period. Although it received a large addition in 1962, the addition obscures a small portion of the original church and does not detract from its architectural significance.

The origins of the church date from 1855, just a few years after the founding of Seymour in 1852. First Presbyterian's congregation took advantage of an offer by the town's founder, Meedy Shields, of a lot and \$100 to the first congregation to establish a church in the community. The resulting structure was a simple, white frame building located near the present location.

After using the original church for twenty-seven years, the

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Jackson County Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory, Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana (July), 1988, pp. xiv, xv, 50.
2. Interview, August 20, 1990, Tom King, Chairman of House Committee, First Presbyterian Church.
3. Interview, August 20, 1990, Charles Roeger, Elder, First Presbyterian Church.
4. Interview, September 4, 1990, Fred Oppliger Jr., 6255 Delor Street, St. Louis, MO 63109, (314) 351-1644. Grandson of founder of Jacoby Art Glass Co.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository:

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

A 16 595990 4312670
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The building is approximately 160' X 142'. The property includes lots 4, 5, and 6 of City Block 14 of Charlton's addition to Seymour, Indiana.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This is the historic boundary including the attached 1962 addition.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mrs. Paul E. Schneck
 organization Seymour Heritage Foundation date April 15, 1991
 street & number 628 N. Poplar Street telephone 812/522-4018
 city or town Seymour state Indiana zip code 47274

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1

First Presbyterian Church

quatrefoil tracery made of wood embellishes the upper sections of the arched windows. Smooth, finished stone outlines the three art glass windows, as well as the arch above the main entrance. Keystones are also featured as part of this limestone detailing. The soffits and eaves feature ornamental wood trim.

The bell tower, much like the rest of the church, is a combination of brick, stone, and wood materials. Narrow, one-over-one double hung sash windows with stone lintels and sills relieve the brick section of the bell tower. A bracketed cornice divides the brick portion of the tower from a wood-shingled section which sits on top of it, in which the bell is hung. A tall steeple rests on top of the bell tower. The emphasis on verticality, which is demonstrated by the pointed-arched windows, main entrance, bell tower, and peaked gables, is a main feature of Gothic Revival style architecture. (See Photo 1.)

A small addition to the church's south facade was constructed in 1900, served by a Third Street entrance. (See attached floor plan sketch.) Also built of red brick, it was only the size of one room, and originally served as the pastor's study. (It is used today for storage space.) It has two large one-over-one double hung windows, both with stone lintels and sills. This

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2 First Presbyterian Church

addition's foundation is of rusticated limestone, just like that of the original structure. The addition also features a steeply pitched roof, a concave cornice, and a tall chimney. (See Photos 2 and 3.)

First Presbyterian added a west wing to the church in 1917-18 (also shown on the attached floor plan), which originally housed classroom space for the Sunday school. (Today it serves as an "all-purpose" room.) It was also constructed of red brick, but without the stone foundation. Its fenestration is comprised of several banks of two windows each, with one bank of three windows on the west elevation. All windows are one-over-one double hung sash, above which are transoms, two of which retain original diamond-paned leaded glass design. Others have since been changed to plain glass. Simple brick headers and sills outline the fenestration of this addition. The addition also features a steeply pitched gable roof, which helps it blend in with the original church structure. (See Photos 3 and 4.)

The church decided to build a third addition to the north of the original structure, which was completed in 1962. Modern in style, it is a flat-roofed, one-story structure which serves as an education wing. It is constructed in an L-shape, and faced

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3 First Presbyterian Church

with red brick to match the original building. (See Photo 5.)

When passing through the large wooden doors at the main entrance, one steps into a spacious vestibule. The room is enhanced by two fixed-sash slag-glass windows. (See Photos 6 and 7.) One set of doors in the vestibule's north wall opens into the room at the rear of the main sanctuary, while a second set on the west wall opens directly into the sanctuary. The main sanctuary (Photo 8), with its high vaulted ceiling and exposed wooden beams, is dominated by the three magnificent art glass windows. These were produced by the studios of the Jacoby Art Glass Company of St. Louis, Missouri. The windows on the south and north facades are named "The Risen Christ" and "The Good Shepherd," respectively. (See Photos 9 and 10.) These were installed in 1919. The window on the east facade, "Christ Blessing the Children," was installed in 1922. (See Photos 11 and 12.) These three splendid windows are the primary decorative feature of the sanctuary, illuminating it with multi-color patterns of light. The wooden pews are arranged to each side of a center aisle, which leads to the chancel. Walls and simple woodwork are painted off-white, in contrast to the dark wood of the pews and exposed beams. Five ornate hanging light fixtures complete the decor.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 4 First Presbyterian Church

Two doors flank the chancel area. The door which is on the south side, or the left of the chancel, leads to what was formerly the pastor's study (1900 addition). The former study is a charming room with tall windows, crown molding, and a fireplace. The mantel features a swag pattern and egg and dart molding surrounding the tile hearth. The door on the north side (Photo 13), or the right of the chancel, opens into the 1917-18 addition of what was originally space for Sunday school classes. Today it is an all-purpose room. Its vaulted ceiling is similar to the one in the sanctuary minus the exposed beams. The room features a wooden chair rail and baseboards.

The interior of the 1962 addition, utilitarian in use and decor, is divided into classrooms, library, nursery, and current pastor's study.

Rated "Outstanding" in the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory for Jackson County, the First Presbyterian Church retains much of its original architectural integrity. It is a fine example of late Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture, both in its interior and exterior elements.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1 First Presbyterian Church

congregation decided to purchase a new (present) lot, and erected the current existing structure.⁶ Mrs. Meedy Shields selected the site. Many prominent community leaders were members of First Presbyterian, including three mayors of Seymour.¹⁴ The original church building was completed in 1884 at a cost of \$14,000. The architect and builder are unknown. Built in the late Gothic Revival style, the church is constructed primarily of wood, brick, and stone. Major features include the stone foundation, quoins along the edges of brick walls, a tall bell tower and steeple, cross-gable roof, and elaborate art glass windows. The verticality of the building's massing and details is a major design element in the philosophy of gothic Revival style architecture. (See Photo 1.)

First Presbyterian Church was built at a time of unparalleled growth in the history of Seymour. Since its founding in the 1850's, Seymour had developed as a major transportation center. The town was at the junction of a major north-south rail line (Jeffersonville, Madison, and Indianapolis), and another major east-west railroad (Ohio and Mississippi, later B&O). The town's population grew rapidly, and Seymour developed as a regional center of commerce in Jackson county. The families of local merchants, business leaders, and working-class citizens mixed

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2 First Presbyterian Church

much of their social life with their religious one, and numerous congregations expanded in Seymour in the late 19th century.

Although numerous congregations are represented in historic buildings in Seymour, First Presbyterian Church is one of only four existing ecclesiastical structures from the late 19th century. Each of these four are rated "Outstanding" in the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory for Jackson County, recommending them for National Register listing.¹ St. Ambrose (1871), First Methodist (1884/1925), and St. Paul Church of Christ (1888) join First Presbyterian under this context. All four also happen to demonstrate elements of the late Gothic Revival style, although the others lack the large-scale art glass windows which are the trademark of First Presbyterian.

The art glass windows are the primary focus in the interior of the main sanctuary. Produced by the Jacoby Art Glass Company of St. Louis, Missouri,⁵ these particular windows were painted by Lee Cook. Mr. Cook, an American artist, was employed by the company for sixty years.⁴ The congregation purchased the first two, "The Risen Christ" (Photo 9) and "The Good Shepherd" (Photo 10), for the south and north elevations respectively in 1919. A third window, "Christ Blessing the Children" (Photos 11 and 12), was

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 3 First Presbyterian Church

purchased in 1922 for the main (east) facade. Although a purchase price is unknown for the windows the congregation bought in 1919, it is known that the one purchased in 1922 cost \$1,450. The slag-glass windows in the vestibule (Photos 6 and 7) were added in 1926.⁷ At the dedication service of the windows installed in 1919, it was said, "These windows are among the most beautiful of their kind in southern Indiana. The windows, expressive of the two cardinal truths of the Christian faith, will remain for generations beautiful sermons in color."⁵

The bell in the tower of First Presbyterian was forged in Cincinnati in 1856 for the original structure. The foundry management at the time said a sweeter tone would be produced if silver dollars were melted with the copper. These were donated by members; today, the bell has one of the most distinctive tones in Seymour.⁶

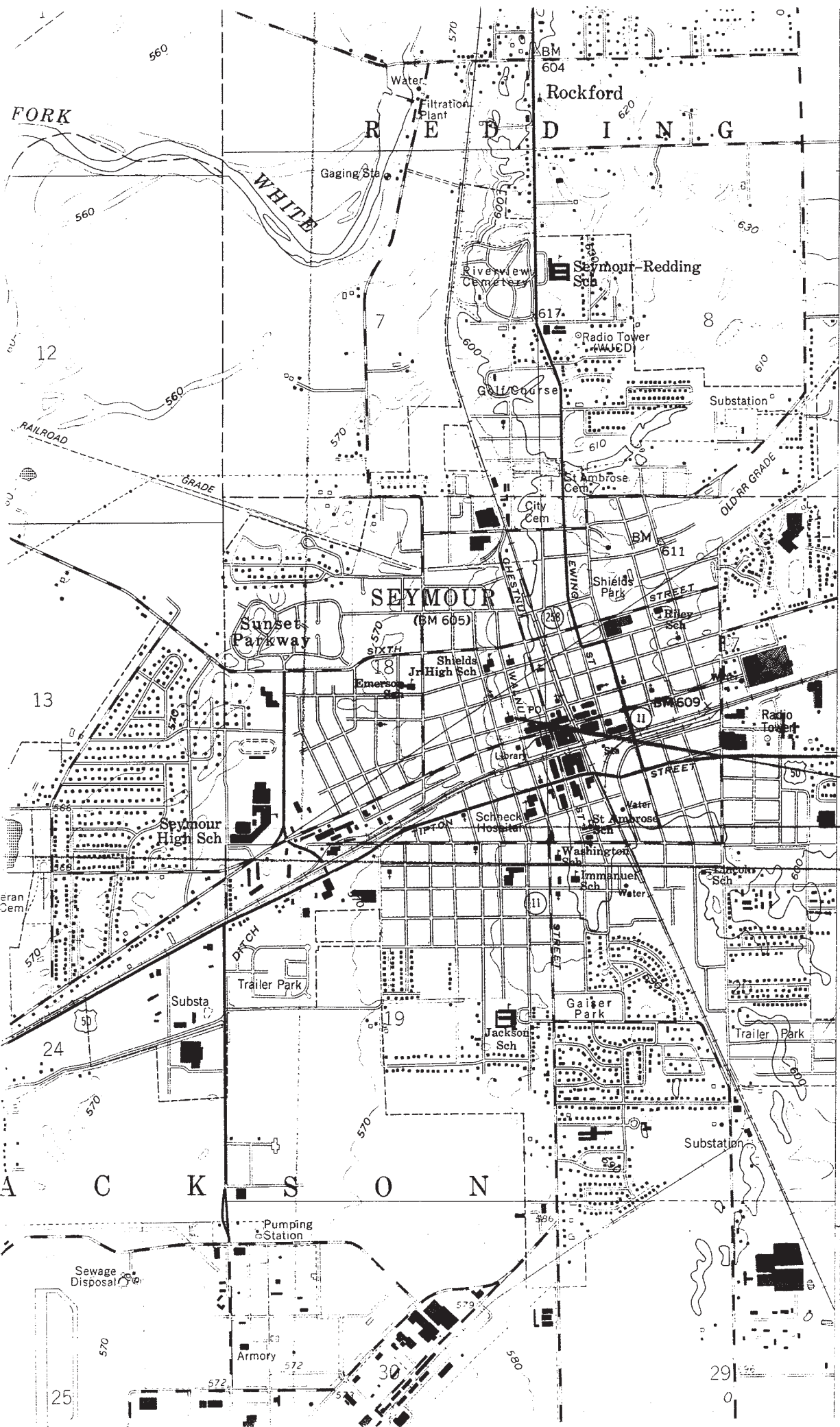
Despite several additions to the structure built in 1884, First Presbyterian Church retains much of its original architectural integrity. Due to its age, architecture, and significance in the community, First Presbyterian Church is hereby nominated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1 First Presbyterian Church

5. Seymour Republican (Nov. 22, 1919), pp. 1 & 4.
6. Centennial Book in commemoration of One Hundred Years of Worship and Service, The First Presbyterian Church, Seymour, Indiana (1955), pp. 5-7.
7. Session minutes, First Presbyterian Church (March 16, 1920) p. 26, (July 26, 1922) p. 46.
8. Whiffen, Marcus, American Architecture Since 1780, pp. 89 & 96.
9. Ewing, Nina, Handwritten history of First Presbyterian Church (April, 1930).
10. Rifkind, Carole, A Field Guide to American Architecture, The New American Library, Inc. (April, 1980), pp. 147, 148.
11. Blumenson, John J.-G., Identifying American Architecture, American Association for State and Local History (1977), pp. 31-33, 94 & 95.
12. Records of the Jackson County Register of Deeds Office.
13. Records of the Jackson County Tax Office.
14. Interview, March 1, 1991, Elizabeth Rebber, Jackson County Historian.



4316
540000
FEET
4315
4314
4313
4311
4310

First Presbyterian
Church
301 N. Walnut St.
Seymour, Ill.
57°30' 50" W
16 59 59 43 26 N

1.5 MI TO U.S. 31
NORTH VERNON IS 1/4 MI.

(CHESTNUT RIDGE)
3861 IV NE