

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 14 1980

DATE ENTERED

MAR 12 1980

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC First Presbyterian Church

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

Locust and 1st St. East

STREET & NUMBER Northeast corner of Locust Street and First Street East

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Lapwai

VICINITY OF

First

STATE

Idaho

CODE

16

COUNTY

Nez Perce

CODE

069

CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ MUSEUM☐ COMMERCIAL☐ PARK☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ PRIVATE RESIDEN☐ ENTERTAINMENT☒ RELIGIOUS☐ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ MILITARY☐ OTHER:**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Valley Presbyterian Church

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Lapwai

VICINITY OF

STATE

Idaho

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Nez Perce County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Lewiston

STATE

Idaho

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Idaho State Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

1972

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Idaho State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Boise

STATE

Idaho

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

___EXCELLENT

XGOOD

___FAIR

___DETERIORATED

___RUINS

___UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

XUNALTERED

___ALTERED

CHECK ONE

XORIGINAL SITE

___MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Lapwai First Presbyterian Church, designed by Lewiston architect J. H. Nave and built in 1909, is a one-and-a-half story frame structure with shingled roof. It stands, facing south, on the northeast corner of Locust Street and First Street East in this Nez Perce Reservation town. It remains, except for a low, gabled addition to the rear, virtually in its original form and is in quite good condition. All wall surfaces of the church, including those of the addition, are covered in horizontal lap siding, except for a band from the foundation to the line of the window sills which is rendered in board-and-batten "wainscoting."

The plan of the church approximates an L-shape. The main body of the building consists of two parts. On the right is the rectangular nave block, with front-facing gable of uneven sides. At the left is a smaller gabled ell projecting west from the nave and set slightly back from the main line of the facade. In the front intersection of these crossed forms is the square outset tower, with open, balustraded belfry and pyramidal roof; it contains the front entrance. The rear intersection is filled with a one-story section, covered with a shed-like extension of the nave gable, and originally penetrated by a transomed door. The single chimney rises from this section. The final component of the massing is an outset front entry porch. It now exhibits a simple gable roof, but, according to an early photograph, it originally featured a mission-style gable ornament. The ends of this element formed square "capitals" crowning the porch piers above the roofline. These four piers, which are now completely sided, were then half-cylindrical. All eaves are overhanging and the tower has a flared cornice area rendered in thin slats.

In its present form, the exterior decoration is restrained. The simple detail is primarily wooden molding strips at window openings and corners, and suggests gentle leanings towards a classical vocabulary. However, the use of ornament is distinctly idiosyncratic. As such, it relates well to the modest but almost whimsical qualities of the overall structure. For example, there are hints at corner "pilasters" in flat molding on the tower, nave and ell. But in the gables, the molding continues without break, above the "capitals", parallel to the eaves. The strips on the tower are without capitals, but are joined by a horizontal "bed molding" below the slight overhang of the belfry. There are allusions to capitals on top of the belfry piers; these are formed in two sizes of flat molding and are flared at the bottom.

Most of the ornament appears around the clear-glass fenestration, which is ample in this church. On the east exterior nave wall are four evenly-spaced double-hung sash windows, with transoms, which are outlined in flat molding. On the nave facade are four such windows, closely-spaced in pairs. Above them is a large triangular form delineated in flat and rounded molding which alludes to a pediment. Centered within this form is a longitudinally-oval window, divided into quadrants and accented by thick curved molding and

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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"keystones-with capitals" on the axes. There is a similar triangular form on the west wall of the ell, but this one is stilted above three double-hung sash windows without transoms and contains four windows: two triangular, one pentagonal and one rectangular. The lower windows are framed in molding, including a crowning piece which suggest an entablature. On the south and west faces of the tower, and the south faces of the ell, are rectangular windows with four triangular lights formed by diagonally-crossed mullions. These windows have the entablature-like molding above and narrow sills below. In the place of the rear entrance is a single newer window, and there is a side entrance and several aluminum windows on the rear addition.

Additional bits of ornament include the metal "melon and lance" finial atop the tower and wooden knobs at the peak of each gable, including that of the addition. In the upper part of the belfry and porch openings and wooden screens with very shallow linear pointed arches, which are, in the belfry, the same width as the pier capitals. Finally, an iron bell which appears in an early photograph survives in the belfry.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE
1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☒ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1909

BUILDER/ARCHITECT J. H. Nave

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Lapwai First Presbyterian Church is architecturally and historically significant as a design of the well-known Lewiston architect J. H. Nave and as an important architectural symbol of organized Christianity in this Nez Perce Indian town. It is perhaps the best early building extant in present-day Lapwai. It is certainly the only early building in the town to substantially retain not only its original form but its original use, as Presbyterian services are still held there. It is a fine example of the efforts of a small congregation to house itself in a modest but stylish structure.

The town of Lapwai was officially incorporated in 1911, but the village eleven miles east of Lewiston had been designated "Lapwai" since a U. S. Army fort was established there in 1862. The initial purpose of the post was to protect the Nez Perce from prospectors who were squatting on reservation land, but later the soldiers were instructed to watch over the white settlers.¹ The fort was closed in 1885 and the buildings given to the Indian Agency which still maintains a headquarters there. Parcels of land awarded to two Nez Perce women by the Allotment Act of 1887 formed the main portion of town, north of the fort. There is known to have been a store operating on the main street by 1895, and more businesses had moved in by the time the original plats were filed in 1907. Lapwai was by then a thriving center of Indian trade and a nearly self-sufficient community.

A Presbyterian Mission, begun by H. H. Spalding, had been active on the reservation for some time when the Lapwai congregation was formally founded in 1907. Indian Agent J. N. Alley gave contracts for the church building to architect Nave and contractor James Milton in March, 1909, shortly after the incorporation of the church. J. H. Nave had been practicing in Lewiston since 1903 and had many commissions to his credit there, including the Bollinger Hotel, St. Stanislaus' Catholic Church and several residences in the prominent Normal Hill area. His most notable project to date was probably the Bradford Building in Clarkston, Washington, a three-story steel and glass commercial structure.

The \$2600 church building was dedicated on January 17, 1910. In the previous week, thirty Nez Perce had converted, and the citizens of Lapwai and neighboring Sweetwater had raised the money to pay unexpected added costs. It is also significant that the Presbyterian Board of Building Erection in New York had reportedly donated \$800 to the building fund.²

(11/78)

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The finished church measured forty by forty-four feet. It had seating for 103 in the nave and additional space available in a gallery and classroom, all of which were accessible from the tower vestibule. The building was originally painted steel grey, with the classically-oriented trim accented in white and the "rustic wainscoted" base stained green. It was said to have "spendid proportions."³

In summary, the construction of this colorful "modern edifice " prompted Eastern attention, inspired local enthusiasm, and warranted the hiring of a prominent architect. The First Presbyterian Church no doubt represented, even more than commercial structures would, tangible evidence of the establishment of Lapwai as an entity independent of its military origins, and of the efforts to integrate Indian and emmigrant cultures in North Idaho.

¹Erwin Thompson, Historic Resource Study: Fort Lapwai (Denver, Co.: U. S. Department of the Interior, 1973), p. 1.

²Lewiston Morning Tribune, 18 January 1910, p. 7, c. 3.

³Lewiston Morning Tribune, 9 January 1910, p. 8, c. 3.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Federal Writers' Project The Idaho Encyclopedia. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1938.

Lewiston Morning Tribune. Lewiston, Idaho: 18 December 1903, 12 March 1909, 9 January 1910, 18 January 1910, 30 January 1971.

Thompson, Erwin N. Historic Resource Study: Fort Lapwai. Denver, Co.: U. S. Dept. of Interior, 1973.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre.

QUADRANGLE NAME Lapwai

QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,1 5,1,5,1,9,0 5,1,3,8,6,9,5

B

ZONE EASTING

NORTHING

ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

This nomination includes the First Presbyterian Church building on the northeast corner of Locust Street and First Street East in Lapwai and the property on which it stands: lots 12-14, block 4, Lapwai townsite.

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

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Lisa B. Reitzes, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Idaho State Historical Society

DATE

2 Jan 80

STREET & NUMBER

610 North Julia Davis Drive

TELEPHONE

384-2120

CITY OR TOWN

Boise

STATE

Idaho

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Mark Wells

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

2 Jan 80

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

3/12/80

ATTEST:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

3-11-80



First Presbyterian Church
Locust and First Street East
Lapwai, Idaho
Nez Perce County, Idaho

Photographer: Patricia Wright
August, 1979

Negative on file at:
Idaho State Historical Society
Boise, Idaho

JAN 14 1980

View from South
1 of 2



First Presbyterian Church
Locust and First Street East
Lapwai, Idaho
Nez Perce County, Idaho

Photographer: Unknown
Pre-1930

MAR 12 1980

Negative on file at:
Idaho State Historical Society
Boise, Idaho

JAN 14 1980

View from Southwest
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