NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018 (Expires 5/31/2012)

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Pilgrim Congregational Church

other names/site number Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church (preferred); Pilgrim Church

2. Location

street & number 540-544 Columbia Road ☐ not for publication

city or town Boston (Dorchester) ☐ vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Suffolk code 025 zip code 02125

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ **national** ___ **statewide** ✓ **local**

Brona Simon 10/2/13

Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon, SHPO, MHC Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

for Edson K. Beall 12.18.13

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- [X] private
- [ ] public - Local
- [ ] public - State
- [ ] public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

- [X] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	1	structures
0	0	objects
2	1	**Total**

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/church

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/church
OTHER/homeless shelter

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque Revival
LATE VICTORIAN/Victorian Eclectic

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: stone
walls: brick
brownstone
roof: slate
other: asphalt

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church, 540-544 Columbia Road, Boston (1888-1893, MHC #BOS.5796), also known as Pilgrim Church or Pilgrim Congregational Church, is located at Upham's Corner, a mixed-use urban area in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston, about four miles south of Boston City Hall. The church property occupies a parcel of just under one-half acre, bordered by Columbia Road on the southeast, Arion Street on the northeast and northwest, and Davern Avenue on the southwest. Stone and concrete retaining walls extend from the building's northwest (right rear) and southwest (left rear) corners, responding to the descending grade of the site from west to east. Surviving on the lawn at the Columbia Road frontage is a segment of iron fence (ca. 1930), a remnant of the more substantial fence that once defined the property's street frontages. Most of the original fence has been removed in recent decades and replaced with a noncontributing chain-link fence (ca. 1980). The lawn at the southern end of the parcel has been paved for parking. Abutting the church property on the west are four multifamily dwellings on adjacent lots fronting Arion Street. The 1½-story church building with multigable roof is constructed principally of red brick and brownstone, and incorporates both Romanesque Revival and Victorian Eclectic detailing. Designed by Stephen C. Earle of Worcester, Massachusetts, and built by Woodbury & Leighton of Boston, the church was constructed in three building campaigns over five years: ashlar foundation (built 1888), chapel superstructure at the northern end of the building (built 1890), and auditorium-sanctuary superstructure at the southern end of the building (built 1893). The organ, built in 1896 at the southwest corner of the auditorium-sanctuary, is *Opus 404* of the firm of George S. Hutchings of Boston. Research in period sources has not yielded the firm or firms that produced the stained-glass windows. A fire in the attic over the auditorium-sanctuary in October 1970 destroyed a cupola on the roof and certain stained-glass windows at the southern end of the building, and led to the subsequent renovation of that interior space for use as a multipurpose fellowship hall. Since the 1970s, worship services have been held in the chapel.

Narrative Description

Pilgrim Church is a 1½-story building on a largely rectangular footprint, with a raised basement and a multigable roof. The foundation, constructed in 1888, consists of rough-faced ashlar laid in irregular courses, now patched with concrete. Exterior walls are pressed brick, with mortar colored to match. Decorative brick corbelling survives at the eaves, and buttresses throughout are executed in brick, some with brownstone caps. Stylized crosses of brownstone survive as finials on most gabled end walls. The original roof cladding—slate with copper flashing—has been replaced in some sections of the building with grey asphalt shingles.

The building consists of two parts, each incorporating cross-gable massing, a tower or cupola (or remnants thereof), and an entrance fronting Columbia Road. The northern end (right in photo 1), completed in 1890, features a double-height chapel and maintains its original function as a worship space. This section of the building retains the greatest number of stained-glass windows. The southern end (left in photos 1 and 2), built in 1893, houses a double-height auditorium (sanctuary) with a gallery on two sides and retains its 1896 organ, built as *Opus 404* by George S. Hutchings of Boston. Following a fire in 1970, the congregation rebuilt the auditorium interior for use as a multipurpose fellowship hall. Most stained-glass windows here were damaged and have been removed.

The exteriors of the 1890 chapel and 1893 auditorium-sanctuary are described separately below. For greater clarity, the building's southeastern, northeastern, northwestern, and southwestern exterior elevations are described here as the façade, right side, rear, and left side elevations, respectively.

Chapel (1890) – Exterior

The earliest part of the building, at the northern end (photos 1 and 2, right), features prominent gabled end walls on the façade, right side, and rear of the block, and a three-story tower incorporating the principal entry at the south corner, fronting Columbia Road. Two bays across and one bay deep, the tower displays brick buttresses and rectangular windows trimmed with brownstone. The low profile of the pyramidal roof capping the tower is original; a spire intended to complete the steeple was never built. Balancing the tower at the opposite corner of the asymmetrical façade is a tall façade chimney with brick corbelled cap. A second chimney, projecting from the rear elevation, displays an ornamental cap of brick and brownstone and incorporates arched openings.

The principal entry (photo 3), set in a slightly projecting gabled portico at the base of the tower, incorporates compound round arches of rusticated brownstone springing from engaged brownstone columns with foliated capitals. Images of a bird and a cat are carved in the capital of one column immediately left of the entry. A pair of vertical-board doors with elaborate wrought-iron strap hinges survives beneath the round-arched transom. Brownstone ornament in the gable end of the entry portico is Victorian Eclectic in inspiration, including ornamental corbels that mimic exposed purlins. Similar brownstone corbelling is present in the gabled end walls, and brick corbelling survives at the eaves.

This section of the building displays great variety in its fenestration, incorporating clusters of narrow round-arched openings in the gable ends, and rectangular or square windows elsewhere. All window openings have brownstone sills. Round-arched openings have brick surrounds; remaining windows have brownstone lintels. Sash is wood, either 1/1 or fixed. Some windows retain stained glass, others have patterned sashes with clear or colored glass, and still others incorporate unornamented sash with clear glass only. Most stained glass is located on the right side and rear elevations. Plywood fills some window openings on each exterior elevation.

A historic secondary entry on the right side, at grade and toward the rear of the building, retains a paneled wood door with glazing in the upper panel, beneath a square transom and brownstone lintel. Emergency egresses with metal doors and stairs appear on the right side toward the front of the building, and on the rear elevation. Also on the right side elevation are two wood-frame, shed-roofed enclosures (ca. 1970s) with entry doors at grade, built over short flights of granite steps leading to the basement. These enclosures are small in scale and do not compromise the historic integrity of the 1890 construction.

Auditorium-Sanctuary (1893) – Exterior

Construction of the auditorium-sanctuary (photos 1 and 2, left) extended the building to the south, toward Davern Avenue. Like the chapel, this section of the building features prominent gabled end walls on the front, side, and rear, and a main entry at the south corner, fronting Columbia Road. The gabled entry portico is similar in its materials and ornamental detailing to the other façade entry to the north, but incorporates a narrower round-arched opening, as well as an exterior brick wall on the left side. The cornerstone at the front left corner of this entry portico reads ***PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH*** on its face and ***A. D. 1862 + 1893*** on the left side, referring to the date of the congregation's establishment along with the date of construction. Above the portico, the base of a cupola projects from the valley in the cross-gable roof. A Shingle-style, hipped-roof cupola originally at this location was damaged in the 1970 fire and subsequently removed; asphalt roof shingles cap the cupola base. A companion cupola survives in the corresponding valley on the rear elevation.

Ornamental detailing on the auditorium-sanctuary is comparable to that on the earlier chapel, including stylized Victorian Eclectic ornament executed in brownstone on the entry portico. Brownstone corbels that mimic exposed purlins are present in the gabled end wall on the façade, and brick corbelling appears in the gabled ends on the left side and rear elevations. Brick buttresses are capped with brownstone. Vinyl letters mounted on the façade wall above the first-floor windows read ***PILGRIM CHURCH***.

Round openings for stained-glass rose windows dominate the gabled end walls on the façade and left side elevation. The facade opening is trimmed in rusticated brownstone. Both rose windows were destroyed in the 1970 fire, and the openings are infilled with plywood. Most of the remaining windows on the auditorium-sanctuary are narrow round-arched windows arranged in clusters. Most contain 1/1 wood sash and have brownstone stills; the windows on the façade also have rusticated brownstone heads. While the 1893 construction has few surviving stained-glass windows due to the fire, some stained glass survives in the center window on the first-floor facade, as well as the windows on the left side elevation. Other windows not currently infilled with plywood incorporate clear glass in unornamented sashes.

A historic secondary entry on the left side elevation, now infilled with plywood, is set in a round-arched brick surround, and another entry, on the rear elevation and also filled with plywood, has a brownstone lintel. An emergency egress on the left side elevation, toward the rear of the building, contains a pair of historic vertical-board doors set in an unornamented brick surround. White paint conceals the original strap hinges on these doors, and historic door handles have been replaced with contemporary pulls. These doors appear to have been reused from another door opening elsewhere in the church.

Chapel (1890) – Interior

The northern end of the building (main entrance and chapel, 1890) retains the greatest integrity in terms of historic interior finishes, though water infiltration of the brickwork has damaged wall plaster, stained-glass windows, and other surfaces. The entry vestibule and stairhall to the second floor (photo 4), located just inside the principal façade entry, display wood-paneled doors, paneled wainscoting with a chair rail, and plastered upper walls and ceiling. The stair retains its original turned balustrade, as well as incised ornament on the balusters and newel post. A pair of swinging doors—wood paneled with glazed upper panels—opens from the entry vestibule into the adjacent 1893 construction to the south. This doorway has a molded wood surround and decorative carved bosses at the upper corners. Opposite the swinging doors, on the north side of the entry vestibule and stairhall, is the entrance to a church office, occupying the northeast corner of the chapel building and finished in the same manner as the hall. Some interior wood doors in the northern end of the building incorporate diamond-pane leaded glass instead of clear glass in the upper panels.

The interior focus of the chapel was shifted in the 1960s, from its original northerly orientation (toward the right side elevation of the building) to the present easterly orientation (toward the Columbia Road façade). Wood matchboard cladding survives on the barrel-vaulted ceiling, and the original wood floor is exposed. The chapel illustrates a version of the Akron Plan, in which spaces adjoining three sides of the chapel on the upper and lower levels of the building were designed to open onto the chapel interior for overflow seating, with interior windows that could be closed to create separate classrooms for Sunday school activities. (For further information on the Akron Plan, see **Developmental History** below.)

Despite the shift in the chapel's interior orientation, as well as enclosure of the original upper-level gallery on the south side with a solid wall in the 1960s, the character-defining features of the Akron Plan are easily discerned. At both the east and west (front and rear) ends of the chapel (photo 5 and photo 6, respectively), adjoining upper-level spaces feature triple-arched openings with wood-paneled balustrades, wood sash with rectangular panes at viewing height, and diamond-pane wood sash in the transoms above. On the south wall of the chapel (photo 5, right), the paneled balustrade of the upper-level gallery is visible in the wall constructed in the 1960s. In a room beneath the original gallery, adjoining the south side of the chapel and now used for conferences, oversized triangular knee braces at the juncture of wall and ceiling support the gallery above. Separating this lower-level space from the chapel interior are rectangular windows containing diamond-pane leaded glass.

In addition to moveable oak furniture with carved detailing, chapel furnishings on the altar (photo 7) include a cast-concrete baptismal font (1920). Both the basin and supporting pedestal of the font are octagonal in footprint. The baptismal font features bas-relief ornament as well as an incised inscription noting its dedication to the memory of Corp. Gordon E. Denton. Painted wood pews came from a funeral home and were installed after 1970.

Four stained-glass windows survive on the north wall of the chapel: a group of three round-arched windows (photo 8) above the original location of the altar, and a single round-arched window toward the rear of the building, next to a secondary rear entry hall. A gift to the Rev. William Allbright, pastor of Pilgrim Church, from the Rev. Dr. Hallowell and others from Mr. Allbright's hometown in England, the center window in the group of three depicts Ruth and Naomi, with an inscription at the bottom that reads ***CHRISTIAN GREETING FROM SUNDAY SCHOOL WORKERS. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, ENGLAND***. Flanking windows, as well as the single window toward the rear of the building, incorporate ornamental stained-glass panels. Research has not identified the studio that produced the stained-glass windows.

Auditorium-Sanctuary (1893) – Interior

The interior of the auditorium-sanctuary, at the southern end of the building, has been somewhat modified since a fire in the attic in October 1970. While the historic interior space reportedly was not burned, smoke and water damage compromised some historic fabric. Post-fire renovations to convert the auditorium-sanctuary to a multipurpose fellowship hall involved removal of original seating, construction of a level floor over the original pitched floor (which survives beneath), installation of a suspended tile (dropped) ceiling, and minor partitioning of the historic space. Most of the stained-glass windows in this section were damaged in the fire and subsequently removed.

The original worship space in the auditorium-sanctuary maintains its westerly orientation toward the rear of the building; a high podium runs the length of the rear wall (photo 9). Historic photographs show exposed trusses supporting a full-height cross-barrel ceiling over a center aisle, with lower vaulted ceilings over the side aisles. Much of the original ceiling configuration is obscured by the present suspended tile ceiling, though some full-height compound columns survive, as do portions of the vaulted ceiling with original wood matchboard cladding at the corners of the room. Also retained beneath the dropped ceiling is the upper-level projecting gallery lining the north and east sides of the space (photo 10), featuring a turned balustrade and handrail, and oversized triangular knee braces supporting the gallery from below. Interior walls are plastered. Partitioning of the historic interior space entailed construction of a drywall-enclosed emergency egress near the building's southwest corner, in front of the organ (photo 11), and installation of a kitchenette in 1972 along a portion of the back of the auditorium, inside the Columbia Road façade (photo 10, right). This partitioning is reversible, and the character-defining features of the historic space are largely maintained.

A small number of stained-glass windows in the auditorium-sanctuary survived the 1970 fire, though two late 19th-century rose windows were destroyed, along with four memorial windows installed in 1930. On the Columbia Road façade (visible in the present kitchenette on the back wall of the auditorium-sanctuary), a single round-arched memorial window depicting Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane (photo 12) was installed in 1930 as a memorial for Linwood G. Wilson (1906-1930). Also visible on the south wall (left side elevation) on the interior are three round-arched windows filled mostly with colored glass panes (photo 11, at left). Research has not identified the studio that produced the stained glass.

Two bronze memorial tablets also survive on the back wall of the auditorium-sanctuary, inside the Columbia Road facade. One tablet commemorates the service of the Rev. Dr. William Hervey Allbright (1849-1907), pastor of Pilgrim Church from 1890 to 1907. The other tablet records members of Pilgrim Church who served in the First World War. Both tablets date to ca. 1920.

Small office spaces—originally intended for the use of the pastor—line the rear wall of the 1893 construction, in the connector between the 1890 chapel and 1893 auditorium-sanctuary. This area also includes a stairhall to the gallery overlooking the auditorium-sanctuary. Historic finishes here are similar to those in the main entry hall to the church, described above. These spaces are not used currently. In the basement of the 1893 construction is a kitchen, installed after 1970.

Organ

The George S. Hutchings *Opus 404* organ (1896, photo 11) is a remarkable survival in the auditorium-sanctuary and a very early example of electro-pneumatic playing action, according to an evaluation conducted for Pilgrim Church by the Organ Advisory Committee of the American Guild of Organists, Boston chapter. This organ is located in side chambers at the front of the room (southwest corner of building), with visible façade pipes. The case front, console, and keyboards are largely obscured by the drywall enclosure of the emergency egress at this location, which is positioned very close to, but not touching, the organ. Largely unaltered from the time of its installation, the organ has been described as "for the most part unplayable," though most of the pipe work is considered to be in good condition. The organ has three divisions (great, swell, and pedal), a manual compass (keyboard) of 61 notes, a pedal compass of 32 notes, and a crescendo pedal. A stop list in the possession of the Pilgrim Church merits further study.

Recent Repairs

Some windows on all four elevations of Pilgrim Church are infilled with plywood. Portions of the brick walls on the side and rear elevations have been repointed with bright white mortar that does not match the original mortar in color, joint width, or joint profile. Additional repointing work is planned. Water infiltration, especially in the 1890 chapel and adjoining entry hall, has led to the deterioration of interior plaster walls, exposing the brick beneath.

Today, the chapel is the principal worship space. The auditorium-sanctuary, as renovated after the 1970 fire, provides space for a number of important community service activities, among them an overnight homeless shelter.

Archaeological Statement

While no ancient Native American sites are known to exist on the property, sites may have been present. The property is located near the peak of a minor glacial hill northwest of the more prominent Jones Hill. Soils slope to the southeast, and the area is heavily developed in this prominent urban square. There are two Native American sites located within one mile of the property. The site 19-SU-46, 650 feet southwest of the property, was discovered in 1904 at the corner of Bird and Columbia streets during road construction. Artifacts found included stone tools of indeterminate are. While this site has been destroyed by road development, it is indicative of Native American use of the surrounding area in close proximity to the Pilgrim Church property. Additionally, the Great Pond site, a shell-midden deposit on the edge of now-filled pond, is located 3,000 feet to the northeast in Richardson Park (Cottage, Pond, and Columbia streets). While the nearest water sources are likely obliterated by urban development, an 1874 shows a stream at the corner of Humphreys and Dudley streets, 1,300 feet to the north. A more prominent freshwater resource is the former Great Pond to the northeast.

While the likelihood that Native American sites once existed on the property is good, disturbances from the footprint of the building, the grading, landscaping, and paving of the southern portion of the property, and development in the northern lawn, means there is low potential for intact Native American archaeological resources.

A moderate potential exists for locating historic archaeological resources on the Pilgrim church property. Immediately adjacent to and surrounding the property are several historically and potentially archaeologically significant properties including the former Clapp-Dyer mansion (now the Strand Theater), Upham's general store and outbuildings, Wheelock stables, Pierce house, and Davenport mansion, all of which contribute to and increase the historical significance of this mostly undeveloped lot. An 1831 map does not indicate the presence of a structure within the property, though the property was once part of the Oliver Davenport estate. An 1874 atlas shows the property divided into seven smaller lots, with a large outbuilding located in the northernmost lot and a much small house (possibly the shop indicated on the 1854 Walling map) located in the lot adjacent to the south, both owned by the heirs of Oliver Davenport. The footprint of the Pilgrim Church has obliterated the footprint of the small house/shop and surrounding land; however, the northern lawn may contain intact cultural deposits relating to the large outbuilding. No other structures are known to have existed on the

property prior to the construction of the Pilgrim Church. Previously mentioned grading, landscaping, and paving have destroyed any potential archaeological deposits in the southern, open area of the property.

(end)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- [x] 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.
- [x] 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:

- [x] 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture
Community Development and Planning
Religion

Period of Significance

1888-1963

Significant Dates

1888 construction of foundation
1890 construction of chapel
1893 construction of auditorium-sanctuary

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Earle, Stephen C. (architect)
Woodbury & Leighton (builder)
Hutchings, George S. (organ-builder)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance ranges from the period in which construction began to 50 years from the present.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

A well detailed Romanesque Revival and Victorian Eclectic church, Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church, 540-544 Columbia Road, Dorchester/Boston (1888-1893, MHC #BOS.5796), also known as Pilgrim Congregational Church or Pilgrim Church, has been an important presence in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston for more than a century. The red-brick and brownstone church is the congregation's third location in north Dorchester since its establishment as a nondenominational church in 1862, and its reception into the Congregational fellowship in 1867. The church occupies a prominent location at Upham's Corner, contributing to the area's transformation from a burial ground location for the town of Dorchester in the mid 17th century, to a primary commercial center by the late 19th century. Dorchester was annexed to the city of Boston in 1870. Though a 1970 fire in part of the building necessitated some modifications to the interior, Pilgrim Church retains architectural significance for its design by Stephen C. Earle of Worcester, and for the remarkable survival of its 1896 organ, *Opus 404* of the Boston firm of George S. Hutchings. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, the Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church meets Criteria A and C, and Criteria Consideration A, of the National Register of Historic Places at the local level.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Architecture – Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church is architecturally significant for its integration of Romanesque Revival and Victorian Eclectic detailing, in a church design that allowed for phased construction from 1888 to 1893. In size, scale, and materials, the 1½-story, multigable church, constructed of pressed red-brick and brownstone, is typical of late 19th-century churches in Boston. With a chapel at the northern end (completed in 1890), and the auditorium-main sanctuary at the southern end (built in 1893), Pilgrim Church derives much of its architectural significance from the phased plan developed by architect Stephen C. Earle and is one of few identified Earle buildings in the city. Earle's design for Pilgrim incorporates elements of the Akron Plan of Sunday School design, first used in Ohio after the Civil War. Akron Plan features at Pilgrim Church include upper- and lower-level rooms adjoining the chapel that provided overflow seating for large worship services, and separate grade-level classrooms for Sunday School instruction once interior windows and doors overlooking the chapel were closed. A 1970 fire in the attic over the auditorium-sanctuary led to the conversion of the auditorium-sanctuary to a multipurpose fellowship hall, retaining, in a side chamber of the room, the Hutchings *Opus 404* organ (1896), a very early example of the electro-pneumatic playing action developed by Ernest M. Skinner. Surviving stained-glass windows in the chapel and auditorium-sanctuary contribute greatly to the building's historic integrity and merit additional study.

Community Development and Planning – Among the oldest buildings extant in the business district at Upham's Corner, Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church is an important example of 19th-century institutional development in north Dorchester. Occupying its third site, Pilgrim Church is associated with shifting centers of institutional construction in north Dorchester, from the Edward Everett Square vicinity to Stoughton Street and finally to Columbia Road, the principal avenue through Upham's Corner by the turn of the 20th century. The church is a prominent element in the urban streetscape, its detached construction and landscaped parcel maintaining an early pattern of development at Upham's Corner, which was supplanted in the second decade of the 20th century by new construction of largely attached buildings defining a continuous street wall lining the public way. With a congregation formed in 1862, Pilgrim Church has historic associations with the town of Dorchester before its citizens voted in 1869 in favor of annexation to the city of Boston, which took effect in 1870.

Religion – Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church maintains its historic associations with the Orthodox (Trinitarian) Congregational Church, associations that were established in 1867 and affirmed in 1929 when the congregation adopted its current name. The oldest Congregational church in north Dorchester, Pilgrim Church represents the community activity typical of the Congregational Church and other Protestant denominations present in the wider area, which encompassed Sunday School instruction, youth ministry, fellowship and benevolent organizations, and fundraising

efforts. The congregation's association since 1961 with the United Church of Christ (UCC) denomination reflects historical developments in the organization of the Congregational Church and is part of Pilgrim Church's history during the period of significance.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Established as a Massachusetts Bay Colony town in 1630, Dorchester encompassed approximately 9.7 square miles along Dorchester Bay and the lower Neponset River, occupying a relatively level plain interrupted by about fifteen drumlins of somewhat higher elevation. Formal English settlement on Dorchester Bay was in the vicinity of Edward Everett Square in Dorchester's northern end, including a meetinghouse at Allens Plain (Pond and Pleasant Streets). The First Burying Ground in Dorchester (Dorchester North Burying Ground, 1633, MHC # BOS.809, NRIND 1974, LL 1981, PR 2002) was established to the southwest, at what later became the intersection of Stoughton Street and Columbia Road. The burying ground is two blocks north of the present Pilgrim Church. In 1679, the town center shifted south to Meeting House Hill (Bowdoin, Hancock, and Adams Streets) as the new meetinghouse location. Agriculture dominated the local economy through the Colonial period, with industrial activity concentrated along the Neponset River at Lower Mills at the southern end of Dorchester.

Known in the 18th century as Cemetery Corner, the burying ground vicinity acquired a commercial focus beginning in 1804, when merchant Amos Upham (1788-1879) opened a dry goods store diagonally across the street, on the site of the present Columbia Square Building, 578-588 Columbia Road (1895, MHC # BOS.5802), at the corner of Dudley Street. Three generations of the Upham family kept the store in operation into the mid-1890s, and the intersection of Stoughton Street, Columbia Road, and Dudley Street came to be known as Upham's Corner. While serving as Dorchester's primary commercial center by the late 19th century, the Upham's Corner Area (MHC # BOS.DH) also emerged as a municipal and institutional focus for the northern end of Dorchester, which took shape following the city of Boston's annexation of Dorchester Neck in 1804 and the Andrew Square vicinity (now South Boston) in 1855 [MHC Recon. Report; Gordon].

Early Years of Pilgrim Church (1862 to ca. 1882)

The congregation now known as Pilgrim Church was described as "unsectarian," or not affiliated with any denomination, in its early years. On 2 November 1862, sixteen individuals met at the Dorchester home of the Rev. Edmund Squire to organize the Church of Christ. The Rev. Squire (1815-1889) was a native of Taunton, England, and studied theology with the Rev. James Murch of Bath, England. Upon arriving in the United States, he was installed in 1853 as pastor of the Second Hawes Congregational Society in South Boston, later serving as minister of a Unitarian congregation at Washington Village in South Boston from 1856 to 1862.[1] His Dorchester pastorate continued, with some gaps, from 1862 to 1867 [*Congregational Year-Book* (1890), 37]. During this period, the congregation considered associating with either the Methodist or Congregational denominations. In May 1867, church members voted to move into closer relation with the Orthodox Congregationalists. The church was received into the Congregational fellowship as an Orthodox (Trinitarian) church on 21 July 1867 ["Our Pilgrimage," PTCC web site; *Manual*, 7-8].

Always associated with north Dorchester, the congregation occupied two sites during its early years, before construction of the present building on Columbia Road began in 1888. A wood-frame church was built on a parcel at the northwest corner of the (East) Cottage Street intersection with Pond Street and Pleasant Streets. Though the date of construction is unclear, this seems to have occurred by 1865, when the church was known as Cottage Street Union Church. The congregation then became known as the Cottage Street Congregational Church, after a society of that name formed on 17 November 1871 [1874 atlas; *100th Anniversary*, n.p.; *Public Records* (1898), 27].

[1] Washington Village is now known as the Andrew Square area in South Boston.

The Cottage Street congregation moved its church building to another site, on Stoughton Street near Columbia Road at Upham's Corner, by 10 November 1877, at which time the congregation voted to change its name to Pilgrim [Congregational] Church. As the location of the Dorchester North Burying Ground (see above), Stoughton Street was a longtime institutional focus at Upham's Corner. Other churches present in the immediate area included Stoughton Street Baptist Church [Second Baptist Church], Stoughton Street at Sumner Street (ca. 1866, MHC #BOS.6272), and the first building of St. Mary's Episcopal Church (1849, burned 1887, new church at 14-16 Cushing Avenue, 1888, MHC #BOS.5840, NRIND 1998). Pilgrim Church's building on Stoughton Street was demolished by 1904 and replaced with a post office [1874, 1889, and 1904 atlases; *100th Anniversary*, n.p.; Taylor, 93; Dorchester Athenaeum; MACRIS database].

Pilgrim Church is the oldest Congregational church in north Dorchester. Three other Congregational churches operated in Dorchester in 1867, when the congregation later known as Pilgrim was received into the Congregational fellowship. Located about two miles southwest of Upham's Corner at Codman Square was Second Church of Dorchester, 600 Washington Street (1806, MHC #BOS.6359, NRDIS 1983), which had separated from Dorchester's First Parish when the latter associated with the Unitarian church. Three miles south of Upham's Corner at Lower Mills (Mattapan), the Village Church was organized in 1829 on River Street near Temple Street (building no longer extant). At Neponset, approximately 2½ miles southeast of Upham's Corner, was Trinity Church, 51 Walnut Street (ca. 1860, MHC # BOS.6354), organized in 1859 [MACRIS database; *Dorchester Old and New*, 63-67].

Growth of Pilgrim Church (ca. 1882 to ca. 1915)

Growth in the membership of Pilgrim Church and its associated activities by the early 1880s revealed the "serious disadvantages of an over-crowded church edifice, [with] no chapel or Sunday-school room in which to carry on the steadily enlarging work." Due to space constraints at the Stoughton Street building, Sunday School classes were held nearby at Winthrop Hall, a brick block later replaced by Dorchester Savings Bank, 570-572 Columbia Road (1929, MHC # BOS.5801). The congregation also operated its own chapter of the nondenominational Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, organized on October 18, 1885, and devoted to youth ministry activities. On April 6, 1886, Pilgrim Church had its first social and supper, with about 80 in attendance. This event was held down the street in the vestry of the Stoughton Street Baptist Church (Second Baptist Church), a building reportedly designed by Stephen C. Earle, who would design the building constructed by Pilgrim Church in the years immediately following. Pilgrim Church held its first church fair in 1888 [*Manual*, 12; 100th Anniversary, n.p.; *Historical Resume*, 7; "Our Pilgrimage," PTCC website].

Under the direction of the Rev. John Winthrop Ballantine, pastor of Pilgrim Church from 1882 to 1888, the congregation voted on March 14, 1884, to build a new church. Twenty persons were named to the building committee, moderated by Deacon A. J. Castle. The congregation selected the present site on Columbia Road, and paid for the property in installments from the autumn of 1884 through the autumn of 1887. The building site was largely undeveloped in 1874, with only a small building of undetermined nature adjacent to an outbuilding at the northern end of the site, where Arion Street meets Columbia Road [*Dorchester Beacon* (May 6, 1893), 1:6-7; *Historical Resume*, 3; 1874 and 1889 atlases].

Born in Norwalk, Ohio, the Rev. Ballantine (1851-1932) was a graduate of Amherst College and Union Theological Seminary. He was ordained in 1879 at the Congregational Council held in Taunton, Massachusetts. After a brief pastorate in Taunton, he was called to Dorchester, where he supervised the early activity associated with the planning and construction of a new church. Stone foundations were built and paid for in the summer of 1888. Membership in Pilgrim Church had grown to 154 individuals by the time the Rev. Ballantine submitted his resignation in November 1888. He went on to pastorates at churches in Connecticut and western Massachusetts [*Year Book of the Congregational and Christian Churches* (1932), 45; *Manual*, 12; *Historical Resume*, 3].

The building committee engaged architect Stephen C. Earle of Worcester to design the new church. Though constructed in phases during a period of just over five years, Pilgrim Church was designed by 1888, when an architectural rendering

of the building exterior was published in the congregation's manual and catalogue of members. Incorporating a chapel at the northern end, an auditorium (main sanctuary) at the southern end, and smaller spaces for church administration, the church was constructed largely as designed, with the exception of the spire on the tower, which was planned but not built. The chapel reflects the Akron Plan of Sunday school design, named for the Ohio city where the plan was first seen in a Methodist Episcopal church built in 1866-1870. Thousands of Akron Plan Sunday schools were built in the United States between 1870 and the First World War. The principal feature of the Akron Plan is a worship space with adjoining smaller classrooms on one or two levels. Separated from the main chapel by interior windows, the classroom spaces on three sides of the chapel at Pilgrim Church opened onto the chapel interior for overflow seating, and were easily closed off to create separate classrooms for Sunday school activities [*Manual*; Odams interview; Jenks, "The Akron Plan"].

Stephen Carpenter Earle, FAIA (1839-1913), was born in Leicester, Massachusetts, and apparently moved to Worcester while still attending high school. After taking a short course in architectural design at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), he was employed as a bookkeeper for five years, and also served eleven months in the Union army during the Civil War. Earle returned to the study of architecture by working in offices in New York and Worcester, and travelling on a seven-month tour through Europe that concluded early in 1866. He opened an architecture office in Worcester in February 1866, and the following month established a partnership with James E. Fuller that continued for ten years. Earle worked independently from 1876 through 1891, during which time he designed Pilgrim Church in Dorchester. From 1872 to 1885, he maintained a Boston office in addition to his Worcester location. Earle worked in partnership with Clellan W. Fisher of Worcester from 1891 onward [Withey, 186-187; *Men of Progress*, 196-297; MACRIS database].

Earle designed a large number of revival-style, public and private institutional buildings in Massachusetts, among them churches, schools, libraries, town and other meeting halls, and buildings on the campuses of the Westborough State Hospital, the Lyman School in Westborough, the Massachusetts Agricultural College (later University of Massachusetts) in Amherst, Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, and Clark University in Worcester. His body of work also included residences and commercial buildings. At least four dozen Earle buildings have been identified in Worcester alone, among them ten churches built from 1877 to 1908. In addition to Pilgrim Church in Dorchester, Earle designed Central Congregational Church, Salisbury Street, Worcester (1884, MHC #WOR.371); Pilgrim Congregational Church, 909 Main Street, Worcester (1887, MHC #WOR.1318, NRIND/MRA 1980); and the First Congregational Church, 1 Washburn Square, Leicester (1901, MHC #LEI.115), along with churches for Episcopal, Lutheran, Universalist, Swedish Baptist, Roman Catholic, Armenian Apostolic, and Friends congregations and parishes [MACRIS database].

Due to difficulties in the pastorate of Pilgrim Church following the departure of the Rev. Ballantine, construction of the church's superstructure did not proceed until 1890, when the Rev. William Hervey Allbright (1849-1907) accepted the call to be the next pastor. By that time, the church society had dissolved, and the church had reorganized as a corporate body, incorporating on 26 February 1890. The Rev. Allbright was born in Blisworth, Northamptonshire, England, and came to the United States about 1872. A graduate of Hamilton College and Auburn Theological Seminary in New York, he was ordained to the Presbyterian ministry in 1879 in Auburn, and earned a Doctorate in Divinity from Hamilton in 1895. While his early pastorates in Auburn and in Stillwater, Minnesota were with Presbyterian congregations, it was not uncommon for ministers to lead congregations of different denominations during their careers. The Rev. Allbright remained at Pilgrim Church until his death from appendicitis at age 58. He also served as president of the Boston Congregational Club, trustee of the Congregational Board of Pastoral Supply, director of the Boston City Missionary Society, secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, member of the Sabbath Protective League, and vice-president of the New England Federation of Men's Clubs [*Public Records* (1890), 27; *Congregational Year-Book* (1908), 10].

Both the chapel and auditorium-sanctuary were constructed during the pastorate of the Rev. Allbright (known as the Rev. Dr. Allbright from 1895 onward), beginning with the chapel, which was completed fewer than eight months after his arrival at Pilgrim Church in 1890. Deacon Edwin S. Woodbury was chairman of the building committee, reconstituted that year. The church's Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor (Y.P.S.C.E.) and Sunday School formally opened

the building on December 28, 1890, and the first worship service followed on January 1, 1891. Before the service, the Rev. Allbright led a procession from the old chapel on Stoughton Street to the new chapel on Columbia Road. The chapel had a seating capacity of about 300, which included the seating in adjacent Sunday School spaces [*Dorchester Beacon* (December 20, 1890), 5:1; *Historical Resume*, 4].

According to period newspaper accounts, Woodbury & Leighton of Boston was the contractor of Pilgrim Church. Whether there was a family connection between the chairman of Pilgrim's building committee and one of the principals in the contracting business has not been established. Isaac F. Woodbury and George E. Leighton established their firm in 1875. They were specialists in masonry construction, and also maintained a carpenter shop and yard on Malden Street in Boston's South End, where employees manufactured woodwork for the buildings under construction. Woodbury & Leighton built the second St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 14-16 Cushing Avenue, Dorchester (1888, MHC #BOS.5840, NRIND 1998), a short distance from Pilgrim Church. In addition to private residences and educational buildings, the firm's commissions included Allston Congregational Church, 41 Quint Avenue, Allston/Boston (1891, MHC #BOS.8297, NRIND 1997); and the First Church of Christ Scientist Mother Church, 250 Massachusetts Avenue, Fenway/Boston (1894, MHC #BOS.7520, LL 2011) ["Corner Stone Laid" (1893): *Commerce*, 175; MACRIS database].

One stained-glass window on the north wall of the chapel, depicting Ruth and Naomi, provides a connection to the Rev. Allbright's birthplace in England. The window reportedly was a gift to the Pilgrim pastor from the Rev. Dr. Hallowell and Sunday school workers in Northamptonshire, England [PTCC website]. Little information has been located about the nature of this gift, and it is not clear whether the window was sent from England or commissioned in the United States by English patrons. Further study of this and other stained-glass windows in the church is necessary to determine the makers.

On May 3, 1893, the congregation laid the cornerstone for the auditorium-sanctuary. The Rev. Dr. Arthur Little, pastor of the Second Church of Dorchester at Codman Square, gave the principal address, in which he outlined the history of Congregationalism and described the cornerstone of the Trinitarian Congregational Church (Pilgrim Church) as standing for "both Christian and secular education, of correct government and the highest form of liberty." The first service held in the new auditorium, on October 8, 1893, incorporated the baptism of two infants and ordination of two young men as deacons. The auditorium, with a seating capacity of about 700, served as the main sanctuary or principal worship space at Pilgrim Church until 1970 [*Boston Globe* (May 4, 1893), 5:4-5; *Dorchester Beacon* (May 6, 1893), 1:6-7; *Dorchester Beacon* (October 14, 1893), 1:6-7].

Perhaps due to its spacious new facilities, as well as the action and interest of Dr. Allbright and the congregation, Pilgrim Church was one of the two Protestant churches in Dorchester selected to host delegates of the Christian Endeavor Society convention on July 10-11, 1895. Fifty thousand delegates ("Endeavorers") from around the nation converged in Boston and attended simultaneous meetings at nineteen churches in Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville. The Second Church of Dorchester at Codman Square also participated in the event [*New York Times* (July 11, 1895)].

A significant intact feature of the auditorium-sanctuary space at Pilgrim Church is the organ, *Opus 404*, built by George S. Hutchings in 1896. Born in Salem, Massachusetts, George Sherburn Hutchings (1835-1913) was trained as a cabinetmaker, and in that connection came to the attention of Salem furniture maker William Hook, father of Elias and George G. Hook, then pre-eminent organ builders in Boston. Hutchings began working for the Hook organ company in 1857, quickly becoming foreman of the case makers and ultimately superintendent of the factory. In 1869, Hutchings joined with former Hook employees Dr. J. H. Willcox, M. H. Plaisted, and G. V. Nordstrom to form the Boston organ-building firm of J. H. Willcox & Company. Hutchings had acquired the interests of the other men by 1884, renaming the firm George S. Hutchings Company. About 1890, he hired Ernest M. Skinner (1866-1960), "a young man who was to exert a powerful and lasting influence on the American organ," and who "claimed credit for developing the electric [playing] action that appeared with increasing frequency in Hutchings's larger organs in the mid- and late 1890s." The organ at Pilgrim Church is an early example of the electro-pneumatic organ. A more widely known example of an

electro-pneumatic organ built by the Hutchings firm is *Opus 410* (1897) at the Basilica of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Mission Church), 1525 Tremont Street, Boston (church 1876, MHC #BOS.7984, LL 2004). Skinner worked successively as a tuner, voicer, draftsman, and factory superintendent for the Hutchings company, and was vice-president in 1901, when the firm merged with Votey Company. Skinner established his own firm in 1903 [Ochse, 233-240; PTCC website; OHS Pipe Organ Database].

Dedication exercises for Pilgrim Church were conducted over three days in early October 1903, after the congregation paid off its mortgage on the property. Expenses for the land, foundation work, combined chapel and auditorium, and fixtures, including the organ, totaled $85,175.42. By this time, church membership numbered 505 individuals, among them 168 families [*Annual Statement* (1900)].

More social and benevolent organizations were established at Pilgrim Church in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Pilgrim Fraternal Association held its first meeting in February 1893. A membership organization, the association organized both for social fellowship and to dispense sick and death benefits. By 1908, nearly three-quarters of the membership dues were paid into a fund to aid members, in case of sickness, or their families, in case of the member's death. The church's Women's Missionary Society and the Ways and Means Society joined in 1902 to form the Women's Union, and reorganized in 1906 as the Women's Society for Christian Work. The Young Ladies' Class, an auxiliary group, organized in June 1906, and reorganized in May 1912, after Dr. Allbright's death, as The Allbright Circle [*Historical Resume*, 7; Farwell, 547].

Continued growth of the Congregational ministry in north Dorchester by 1900 necessitated construction of a separate chapel to serve the Savin Hill neighborhood, located east of Upham's Corner. The congregation of Pilgrim Church established a fund for building the Romsey Chapel, later known as Romsey Congregational Church, at 33 Romsey Street (1898; Alfred L. Darrow, architect). Romsey Congregational Church organized here in 1903, but declining membership would cause the congregation to reunite with Pilgrim Church in 1930 (see below). The Romsey chapel subsequently served as an Odd Fellows Hall and, more recently, a local post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars [*Dorchester Old and New*, 65; building permit for Romsey Chapel].

Improvements and Celebrations (ca. 1915 to ca. 1963)

Upham's Corner maintained a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional buildings into the 1910s, when the last historic single-family dwellings were redeveloped with masonry blocks. The Pierce Building, 592-598 Columbia Road (ca. 1910, MHC #BOS.6496) and Boston's "first movie palace," the Strand Theatre, 543-553 Columbia Road (1918, MHC #BOS.5800, Funk and Wilcox, archt.), replaced signature Federal-period dwellings, the Samuel Bowen Pierce House (1804) and the Clapp-Dyer House (1810), respectively. Construction of banks and other commercial buildings followed. Anchoring the southern end of the commercial and institutional streetscape, where the business district transitions to residential development near Hancock Street, the City of Boston had constructed the Municipal Building, 510 Columbia Road (1902, MHC #BOS.5799), which also housed a branch public library. At the northern end of the business district, the Cifrino brothers built the Upham's Corner Market, 600-610 Columbia Road (ca. 1919, MHC #BOS.6499, NRIND 1990, PR 2004), as a self-service grocery store, a prototype of the modern supermarket. Boulevard improvements made to Columbia Road in 1897, including construction of a park like median strip as part of the road's incorporation into a regional parkway system, were reversed in the 1950s, and additional traffic lanes replaced the turf-covered median [Gordon; MHC Reconnaissance Survey Report].

Membership at Pilgrim Church increased rapidly after the First World War, from 726 members in 1917 to 994 members in 1925. Gifts and improvements to the church often coincided with anniversary celebrations, or took the form of memorials for departed members. Pilgrim Church observed its 50th anniversary in 1917; at that time, the congregation counted its anniversary years from 1867, when the church was received into the Congregational fellowship. By the time

of the 75th anniversary, celebrated in 1937, the church counted anniversaries from 1862, the year the congregation first gathered in Dorchester [Odams interview].

During the tenure of the "war pastor," the Rev. Dr. Edward Dickinson Gaylord, from 1916 to 1923, Pilgrim Church received gifts of national flags, a church flag, and two bronze memorial tablets (ca. 1920) mounted on the wall at the back of the auditorium-sanctuary. One tablet was dedicated to the memory of the Rev. Dr. Allbright, and the other named the members of the congregation who served in the First World War. On October 31, 1920, a cast-concrete baptismal font was presented to the church and dedicated in memory of Corp. Gordon E. Denton, who was killed in action during the First World War. The bronze tablets survive in the auditorium-sanctuary, and the baptismal font survives in the chapel. Later in the 1920s, chimes in the belfry were donated by the Pilgrim Fellowship and dedicated in memory of seven men (William J. Ashmore, Alonzo Bickerton, Jr., Roy E. Brown, Robert Calderbank, William W. Cook, Jr., Robert E. Naylor, and Miner G. Robertson), all of whom lost their lives during the First World War. These chimes were replaced with a recorder system at an unknown date [*Historical Resume*, 5; *100th Anniversary*, n.p.; Odams interview].

Pilgrim Church established a Parsonage Fund by 1917, and in 1924 purchased a house at 46 Bellevue Street, located about eight blocks southeast of the church. The Rev. Dr. Clarence Wells Dunham, pastor from 1923 to 1945, was the first occupant, along with his family. The church still owns the parsonage property today [*Annual Statements* (1917-1925)].

The Rev. Dr. Dunham (1874-1946) was the longest-serving pastor of Pilgrim Church in the first half of the 20th century. Born in Newark, New Jersey, he was a graduate of Williams College and Auburn (New York) Theological Seminary, and undertook additional graduate studies at New York University. The Rev. Dr. Dunham was ordained as a Presbyterian minister in 1901, and his early pastorates were with Presbyterian churches in New York. He entered the Congregational fellowship in 1914, serving as pastor of Phillips Church in South Boston (1914-1920), and as dean and professor of Greek and the New Testament at Gordon College of Theology and Missions in Boston (1920-1923), before accepting the call to Pilgrim Church in Dorchester. During his tenure at Pilgrim Church, Dr. Dunham also served as a trustee of the Massachusetts Missionary Society, director and later vice president of the American Congregational Association, and president of the Boston City Missionary Society [CCC *Yearbook* (1946), 44].

Improvements were made to the building and grounds of Pilgrim Church from 1919 to ca. 1930. The chapel interior was renovated, and the gallery on the south wall was enlarged, with the balustrade moved forward (northerly) into the space from its original position. The present interior windows and doors on the south wall of the chapel, with oak surrounds and diamond-pane leaded glass, may have been installed during this renovation. Re-grading of the grounds and construction of an iron fence surrounding the church property were undertaken in the late 1920s and completed in 1930, using funds from an anonymous donor. A segment of this fence survives on the Columbia Road frontage and is counted as a contributing resource [*Historical Resume*, 5-6; *Annual Statement* (1931); *100th Anniversary*, n.p.; Odams interview].

Closure of the Romsey Congregational Church at Savin Hill in 1930 reunited the congregation with Pilgrim Church and also contributed to various improvements at Pilgrim. When the Congregational Church Union of Boston sold the Romsey chapel that year, three memorial stained-glass windows from the chapel were relocated to the back wall of the auditorium-sanctuary (Columbia Road side) at Pilgrim Church. These stained-glass windows were destroyed during the 1970 fire (see below), though the inscription panel from one was saved, reading ***MARY ELLEN CASTLE 1838-1915***.[2] This panel is stored in the pastor's office. Pilgrim Church also received proceeds from the sale of the Romsey Street property, which may have facilitated other improvements at Pilgrim during the Dunham pastorate. Two additional memorial windows on the back wall of the auditorium were dedicated in 1930. One, in memory of William D. Henderson, a member of both the Pilgrim and Romsey churches, did not survive the fire. The other, depicting Jesus in the garden at Gethsemane, was dedicated to the memory of Linford G. Wilson (1906-1930), a member of the church who died in a

[2] The Mary Ellen Castle Papers, dated 1904 to 1914, are in the collection of the Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

swimming accident. The Wilson window survives on the Columbia Road façade [*Annual Statement* (1931); Odams interview].

On the occasion of Pilgrim Church's 75th anniversary, celebrated in 1937, the anniversary committee commissioned a model of the building and coordinated construction of a miniature "symbolic church," encouraging members of the congregation to sponsor specific parts of the model, such as the tower, main entry, windows, a wall, or part of the roof. The committee issued participation certificates to sponsors, and the model church was assembled following a turkey supper on February 25, 1937. Arthur H. Merritt, a longtime superintendent of the Pilgrim Sunday school, chaired the anniversary committee, which raised more than $10,000 through almost 250 pledges. The model is not known to survive ["If Bricks Could Talk;" *75th Anniversary Committee Final Report*].

In May 1961, the congregation of Pilgrim Church voted to join the United Church of Christ (UCC). The United Church of Christ is a denomination formed in 1957 by the merger of the Congregational Christian Church and the Evangelical and Reformed Church. However, Pilgrim maintains the name formally adopted by the congregation on May 15, 1929: Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church. The name recalls Pilgrim's longtime associations with the Orthodox Congregational, or Trinitarian, Church [*100th Anniversary*, n.p.; "Pilgrim Welcomes You"; "Historical Overview"].

Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1962. A week of anniversary events included worship services, entertainment, and a "birthday party banquet," held at Whiton Hall on Centre Street in Dorchester [*100th Anniversary*, n.p.].

Pilgrim Church After the Period of Significance

A fire in the attic of the auditorium-sanctuary in October 1970 resulted in the loss of multiple stained-glass windows and a rooftop cupola, and caused water and smoke damage in that section of the building (see **Narrative Description**). In the aftermath of the fire, the interior of the auditorium-sanctuary was renovated for use as a multipurpose fellowship hall, and worship services at the church were returned to the chapel.

Since the end of the period of significance, Pilgrim Church has housed a number of important social services for the community, including a summer camp established in 1963, a day-care center in the 1970s and 1980s, and an overnight homeless shelter for men, established in 1990. The homeless shelter, with a capacity of 120 persons, continues to operate today, along with food pantries, free community lunch on Saturdays, a thrift shop, and the office of an organization that sends 300 inner-city children to summer camp. Approximately 1,400 people use the building weekly. The congregation, currently numbering about 25-30 persons, continues weekly worship services in the chapel, with a part-time pastor coordinating this urban ministry.

North Dorchester, including Upham's Corner, is a densely populated and ethnically diverse community today. From the 1960s through the 1980s, urban neighborhood commercial districts saw increasing vacancies as suburban shopping centers and malls were built to cater to consumers with automobiles. Lack of widespread investment in aging commercial buildings and housing stock, during a period when suburbs were flourishing, exacerbated urban decline. Dwindling congregations of long standing, in downtown Boston as well as in the outlying neighborhoods, struggled financially with declining attendance. Building on the congregation's origins as an "unsectarian" church, unaffiliated with any particular denomination, Pilgrim Church briefly blended a Sunday morning worship service with that of a Spanish-speaking Pentecostal congregation that has since disbanded [Pilgrim Church web site].

The congregation celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2012 with a fundraiser and dinner at Florian Hall on Hallett Street in Dorchester. Preservation needs include stabilization of the building's tower to combat prolonged water infiltration that has weakened the church's walls and foundation and damaged historic interior finishes. Repointing and waterproofing of the masonry also is needed. Further study and preservation is recommended for the remaining stained-glass windows and

Hutchings *Opus 404* organ. The church maintains a collection of scrapbooks containing significant primary source materials of archival merit.

Archaeological Significance

Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to provide detailed information about the late history of the Davenport estate. The barn, stable, or some other nondomestic structure that once existed on the northern edge of the property is located in close proximity to two Davenport heir-owned houses, and may have been used by the Davenports or leased to one of the other adjacent property owners including Ed McKechnie, A.P. Wheelock, the Dyer family, and Jeremiah Sanbourn. Archaeological deposits relating to this structure would provided information on this structure's function that would then aid in understanding the social, cultural, and economic patterns of this important center of commerce and development in Dorchester, as well as significant information on the use of the property by the Davenport family.

Many stained-glass windows were lost in the 1970s as a result of fire. While the exact design of these windows may not be reconstructed through archaeology, archaeological survey in close proximity to the building may provide samples of glass lost in the fire. These samples, coupled with surviving black-and-white photography of the windows, may provide color references that could aid in the accurate reconstruction of these significant archaeological features.

(end)

Pilgrim Congregational Church
Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church (preferred)

Assessors # - Parcel ID	*MHC #*	*Historic Name*	*Address*	*Date*	*Resource Type*	*Status*
1301323000	BOS.5796	Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church	540-544 Columbia Rd	1890, 1893	B	C
			iron fence (segment)	ca. 1930	St	C
			chain link fence	ca. 1980	St	NC

Total contributing resources: 2 (1 building, 1 structure)
Total noncontributing resources: 1 (1 structure)

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Pilgrim Congregational Church/Trinitarian Congregational Church (Dorchester, Boston, MA). Congregational Library and Congregational Christian Historical Society, Boston, MA. Archival box of various church documents (1888-1962), including:

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Historical Resume of Pilgrim Church. Read During the Sixtieth Anniversary Exercises. October 1927.
"If Bricks Could Talk." *Report of 75th Anniversary Committee of Pilgrim Congregational Church*. 1937.
Manual of the Pilgrim Church (Trinitarian Congregational). Situated at Upham's Corner. 1888.
Pilgrim Welcomes You. Undated brochure (ca. 1960s).
100th Anniversary. Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church. United Church of Christ. 1862-1962.

Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church web site. Including historical data, photographs, and information on stained glass windows and pipe organ. Via www.pilgrimchurch1862.org. Accessed May and June 2012.

Taylor, Earl. *Dorchester. Postcard History Series*. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2005.

Tenth Report of the Custody and Condition of the Public Records of Parishes, Towns, and Counties. Public Document 52. Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Co., 1898 [incorporation dates for Pilgrim Church].

Withey, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey. *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*. Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970. [Republished by Omnigraphics, Detroit, 1996.]

Wolf, Emily (Boston Landmarks Commission). Pilgrim Church, 540-544 Columbia Road, Dorchester/Boston (BOS.5796). June 2011. Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth. Massachusetts Historical Commission.

(end)

Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church
Name of Property

Suffolk, Massachusetts
County and State

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 #_____
___ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #_____

Primary location of additional data:

___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
X Other
Name of repository: Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): MHC #BOS.5796

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Lat/Lon 42.315965 -71.066592

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	19	329696	4686927	3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the nominated property is shown on the accompanying detail of the City of Boston assessors' map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the parcel continuously associated with the church since construction of the foundation began in 1888.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kathleen Kelly Broomer, Preservation Consultant, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC, for Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church
organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date October 2013
street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone (617) 727-8470
city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125
e-mail

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: **Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church**

City or Vicinity: **Dorchester (Boston)**

County: **Suffolk** **State:** **Massachusetts**

Photographer: **Kathleen Kelly Broomer, Preservation Consultant**

Date Photographed: **June 2012**

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 12 **Façade on Columbia Road (auditorium-sanctuary left, chapel right). View N.**
digital file name: MA_Boston (Suffolk County)_PilgrimChurch1

2 of 12 **Façade on Columbia Road (auditorium-sanctuary left, chapel right). View SW.**
digital file name: MA_Boston (Suffolk County)_PilgrimChurch2

3 of 12 **Detail, main entry, Columbia Road. View N.**
digital file name: MA_Boston (Suffolk County)_PilgrimChurch3

4 of 12 **Detail, stair in main entry hall. View S.**
digital file name: MA_Boston (Suffolk County)_PilgrimChurch4

5 of 12 **Chapel interior toward altar. View E toward Columbia Road.**
digital file name: MA_Boston (Suffolk County)_PilgrimChurch5

6 of 12 **Chapel interior, upper-level interior windows on back wall. View W.**
digital file name: MA_Boston (Suffolk County)_PilgrimChurch6

7 of 12 **Chapel interior, furnishings and baptismal font on altar. View NE.**
digital file name: MA_Boston (Suffolk County)_PilgrimChurch7

8 of 12 **Chapel interior, Ruth and Naomi window. View N toward Arion Street.**
digital file name: MA_Boston (Suffolk County)_PilgrimChurch8

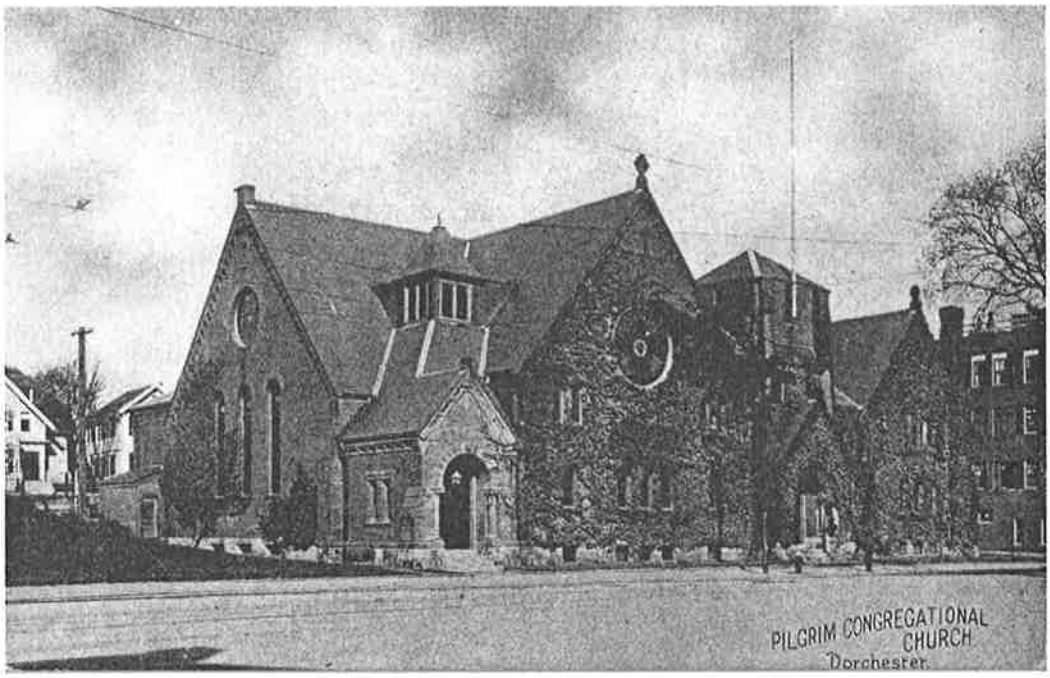
9 of 12 **Auditorium-sanctuary interior toward altar. View W.**
digital file name: MA_Boston (Suffolk County)_PilgrimChurch9

10 of 12 **Auditorium-sanctuary interior showing gallery on side and back walls. View NE/E.**
digital file name: MA_Boston (Suffolk County)_PilgrimChurch10

11 of 12 **Auditorium-sanctuary interior showing organ. View SW toward Davern Avenue.**
digital file name: MA_Boston (Suffolk County)_PilgrimChurch11

12 of 12 **Auditorium-sanctuary interior showing Wilson memorial window. View E toward Columbia Rd.**
digital file name: MA_Boston (Suffolk County)_PilgrimChurch12

Historic Photographs



Auditorium-sanctuary (1893) in ca. 1910 postcard view.
View north showing exterior with Shingle-style cupola present before 1970 fire.
Courtesy, Dorchester Historical Society (image no. 575)

Auditorium-sanctuary (1893) as depicted in 1903 dedication brochure.
View west-southwest showing interior finishes before 1970 fire.
Courtesy, Dorchester Historical Society (image no. 2226)

Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church
Name of Property

Suffolk, Massachusetts
County and State

Property Owner:

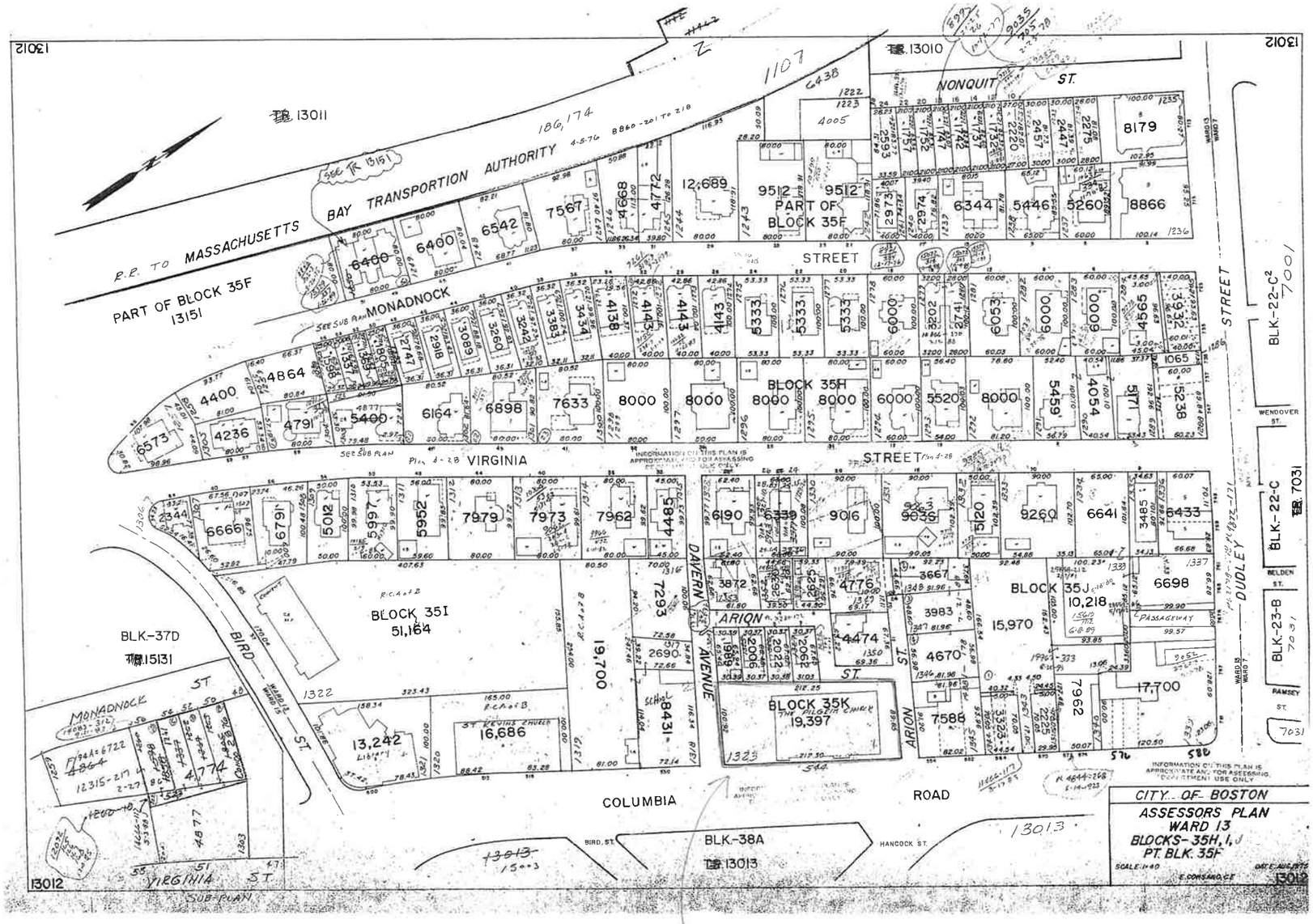
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Pilgrim Trinitarian Congregational Church

street & number 540-544 Columbia Road telephone (617) 282-0456

city or town Dorchester (Boston) state MA zip code 02125

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.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



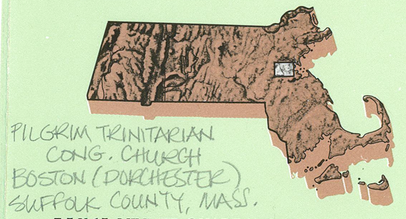
PILGRIM TRINITARIAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
540-544 COLUMBIA ROAD
DORCHESTER (BOSTON) SUFFOLK CO., MASS.
JUNE 2012

42071-C1-TM-025

Boston South

MASSACHUSETTS

1:25 000-scale *metric* topographic map



PILGRIM TRINITARIAN CONG. CHURCH
BOSTON (DORCHESTER)
SUFFOLK COUNTY, MASS.

7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

1987

PILGRIM TRINITARIAN CONG. CHURCH
5140-4 COLUMBIA RD. BOSTON (DORCHESTER)
SUFFOLK COUNTY, MASS.
19 329910 4686720 BOSTON SOUTH QUAD

Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Massachusetts Department of Public Works

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts agencies

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1978. Field checked 1979. Map edited 1987

Supersedes Newton and Boston South 1:25,000-scale maps dated 1970

Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS charts 13270 (1982) and 13272 (1982). This information is not intended for navigational purposes

Projection and 1000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 19

10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone

1927 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983, move the projection lines 6 meters south and 42 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.5 METER
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN METERS
DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 2.9 METERS

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

CONVERSION TABLE

Meters	Feet
1	3.2808
2	6.5617
3	9.8425
4	13.1234
5	16.4042
6	19.6851
7	22.9659
8	26.2468
9	29.5276
10	32.8084

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808

To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048

DECLINATION DIAGRAM

MN GN
16° 384 MILS
1°26' 26 MILS

UTM grid convergence (GN) and 1981 magnetic declination (MN) at center of map. Diagram is approximate

ADJOINING MAPS

1	2	3
4		5
6	7	8

1 Maynard
2 Boston North
3 Lynn
4 Framingham
5 Hull
6 Medfield
7 Norwood
8 Weymouth

ISBN 0-607-00135-6
9 780607 001358

Topographic Map Symbols

Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road; trail
Route marker: Interstate; U. S.; State
Railroad: standard gage; narrow gage
Bridge; drawbridge
Footbridge; overpass; underpass
Built-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown
House; barn; church; school; large structure
Boundary:
National, with monument
State
County, parish
Civil township, precinct, district
Incorporated city, village, town
National or State reservation; small park
Land grant with monument; found section corner
U. S. public lands survey: range, township; section
Range, township; section line: location approximate
Fence or field line
Power transmission line, located tower
Dam; dam with lock
Cemetery; grave
Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument
Windmill; water well; spring
Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave
Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation
Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression
Distorted surface: strip mine, lava; sand
Soundings: depth curve
Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream
Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small
Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp
Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland
Scrub; mangrove
Orchard; vineyard

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

BOSTON SOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS
42071-C1-TM-025

1987

1862 PILGRIM CHURCH DORCHESTER 2012
CELEBRATING 150 YEARS
PILGRIM CHURCH
NO TURN ON RED
CHURCH
Dorchester, Ma.

PILGRIM CHURCH
PILGRIM CHURCH

CHURCH
H OF CHRIST
WELCOME
PILGRIM CHURCH
United Church of Christ
540 Columbia Road
PILGRIM CHURCH
United Church of Christ
Worship Service
11:00am
Sunday
617-282-0438

SALE
EXIT

HYMNS
629
215
352
EXIT

EXIT

HYMNS
629
215
352
43

CHRISTIAN CREEK CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL WORKERS

DASANI

EXIT

1900 LINFORD G. WILSON 1980