

12 Asbury Methodist Church

532 Route 63, Chesterfield, New Hampshire

Beginning in the early 19th century, New England saw a revival of Grecian-style architecture. Prior to this time most churches resembled the European gothic style of arches and elaborate windows. The Grecian Revival favored a more plain and simple design with the use of brick, wood and small, clear windows.

Asbury Methodist Church, located in Chesterfield, New Hampshire is a wonderfully preserved example of this new architectural trend. Built in 1844 by Oscar C. Coolidge, the wooden church was originally constructed on a foundation of fieldstone and consists of one and a half stories. The white two-stage tower can be seen above the tree line, creating a quaint and picturesque New England sight.



Methodism was brought to New England in 1789 by Jesse Lee who began preaching at the Asbury Methodist Church in 1793. The church became known as the “mother church of Methodism in New Hampshire.” The 200th anniversary of the beginning of the Methodist movement in America was celebrated on May 11, 1966. In honor of this date, the church was issued a document “to recognize, honor, and declare the church to be the oldest continuing congregation in the New Hampshire Annual Conference.”

Renovations to the church, such as a new concrete foundation, had to be made over the years due to age and poor weather conditions. However, this did not change the appearance, and the Asbury Methodist Church remains in its original condition. Asbury Church is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is recognized for its historic Puritan design.

Sources:

Historic Register Project, Spofford (1983, May 10) *National Registration Nomination Information*, accessed September 25, 2013 from <http://www.cric.org/heritage/N02-2.htm>

Chesterfield, New Hampshire. (2013, September 22). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Accessed September 25, 2013, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chesterfield,_New_Hampshire

