

**Historical Marker - L850A - First (Park) Congregational Church / First (Park) Congregational Church (Marker ID#:L850A)**



**Front - Title/Description**

**First (Park) Congregational Church**

On September 18, 1836, twenty-two persons, under the direction of the Reverend Silas Woodbury of Kalamazoo, founded one of the first Protestant congregations in Grand Rapids. Initially a Presbyterian parish, the church was reorganized under the Congregational polity in 1839, with the Reverend James Ballard as pastor. For the next two years, services were held in various structures around town. During 1842-69, the church occupied a wooden, former Roman Catholic chapel on the corner of Division and Monroe. The present church was completed in 1869. First (Park) Congregational Church was instrumental in founding a Reformed Protestant Dutch, a Presbyterian, and ten Congregational churches in the area.

**Significant Date:**

Statehood Era (1815-1860)

**Registry Year:** 1980    **Erected Date:** 1985

**Marker Location**

**Address:** 10 East Park Place NE

**City:** Grand Rapids

**State:** MI    **ZipCode:**

**County:** Kent

**Township:** Grand Rapids

**Lat:** 42.96395100 / **Long:** -85.66586200

**Web URL:**

**Back - Title/Description**

**First (Park) Congregational Church**

This handsome yellow brick Gothic-style structure is the second-oldest existing church building in Grand Rapids. Erected between 1867 and 1869, it was designed by A. Barrows of Adrian, Michigan, and Chicago. Among the church's notable features are its Tiffany stained glass windows and its stately corner tower. The unusual second-floor worship area is adorned with delicate art work and an ornately carved wood reredos designed by Alois Lang. The church complex now consists of the original 1867-1869 church, a 1916 fellowship hall, and a 1950 addition comprising a narthex, chapel, offices, and church school rooms. The church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.