

VLR-6/16/81

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Zion Lutheran Cemetery and Church (Preferred) (DHL File #31-24)

and or common Zion Church

2. Location

street & number VA 693 n/a not for publication

city, town Floyd X vicinity of

state Virginia code 51 county Floyd code 063

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Congregation, Zion Lutheran Church, c/o Marquerite Tise

street & number Box 343

city, town Floyd n/a vicinity of state Virginia 24091

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Floyd County Courthouse

street & number n/a

city, town Floyd state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

DIVISION OF HISTORIC LANDMARKS

title Survey has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date 1980 ___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records DIVISION OF HISTORIC LANDMARKS 221 Governor Street

city, town Richmond state Virginia 23219

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Zion Lutheran Church is located on the west side of Route 693 just south of its junction with Route 615, in the rolling farmland of Floyd County. The church, built in 1898, is the fourth structure erected in this vicinity by its congregation. The frame building rests on a low foundation of random-course soapstone and is covered by a steep bracketed gable roof of standing-seam tin. A large cemetery containing a rich collection of 19-century funerary art is located to the rear (west) of the church.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The entrance front, located on the east elevation, has two doorways with plain trim and cornices, each reached by a single step. Centered in the attic story is an inverted shield-type vent framed by a pediment. The corners of the facade are decorated with pilasters that support the flush rake board. Identical in appearance, the north and south sides consist of three bays with 9/9 double-hung sash windows framed by a cornice and flanked by louvred shutters.

A single-story addition of a later date wraps around the rear of the building. Only the diamond-shaped vent in the attic story and the upper half of the pedimented chancel remain visible on the rear elevation.

The interior of the church consists of an auditorium with a central aisle formed by the placement of the simple wood pews, which were removed from the preceding 1861 church. The ceiling is finished with stained-wood panels. The focal point of the interior is the Classical-style aedicule consisting of three tiers of pilasters supporting molded cornices. A fan-shaped, art nouveau-type, stained-glass window lights the chancel space. The main altar is defined by a molded rail carried by heavy turned posts. Its octagonal-shaped pulpit is embellished with double-recessed pointed arches on each face.

The cemetery is sited on a hillside surrounded by woods. The distinctive shapes and ornamentation of the stones make them a singular example of local artistic expression. The majority of stones date from the mid- to late 19th century and have rectangular-shouldered bodies with rounded or pointed heads. In addition there are some unusual conical-shaped stones from the late 19th century. The decoration of the stones is limited to inscriptions, the earlier ones having very handsome incised lettering typical of German-style markers.

MPM

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The Zion Lutheran Cemetery and Church nomination consists of seven acres. The nominated property includes the church, its immediate grounds, and the cemetery to the west.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1898 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Zion Lutheran Cemetery and Church in Floyd County are significant as landmarks to the enduring cultural traditions of German pioneers who moved into the region at the end of the 18th century. The large cemetery contains a rich collection of 19th-century funerary art, including a number of distinctively German-style markers expressive of the talent of local artisans. Formed in 1813 to serve the spiritual needs of settlers north of the town of Floyd, the Zion congregation occupied three successive buildings before the present structure was erected in 1898. The modest frame church evokes the liturgical simplicity of the congregation's pioneer founders and incorporates materials from Zion's third meetinghouse, built in 1861.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Zion Lutheran congregation traces its origins to 1791, when the first group of German pioneers moved into the area and acquired land in the vicinity of the present church. Formal organization of the congregation took place in 1813. Traveling preachers often came to baptize and to preach at services held in private homes or out-of-doors. The congregation's original German Register, listing communicants, confirmations, and baptisms, is extant and represents the only written record of the pioneer German settlers in Floyd County.

The diary of one of the preachers who aided in Zion's formal organization refers to it as the "Little River Church" in (then) Montgomery County. The date of the first church building is uncertain, although it may have been as early as 1809, when the congregation was formally registered with the Virginia Conference of the Pennsylvania Ministerium. The oldest inscribed stone in the cemetery is 1817. Land for the church and the cemetery was given by George Phlegar and George Sowers in a deed recorded formally in 1830.

The first church building, which also served as a schoolhouse, was replaced by a larger log building near the same site in 1838. The Zion Lutheran Church, as it was known by then was the site of the first meeting of the Synod of Southwestern Virginia when it separated from the Synod of North Carolina in 1842. In 1861 a brick and stone church was erected near the site of the present building by the master builder, Henry Dillon. By 1898 the congregation had outgrown that building, and the present and fourth church was built.

9. Major Bibliographical References

The German Register. Zion Lutheran and Reformed Church, 1793-1855, Floyd County, Virginia. Virginia State Library Archives.
Montgomery County Deed Book K (1830), p. 416.
Tise, Marguerite. "History of Zion Lutheran Church." MS in Division of Historic Landmarks Archives, 1979.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 7 acres

Quadrangle name Floyd, Virginia

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	7	5	6	1	2	5	0	4	0	8	6	6	8	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

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D

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at a point on W side of VA 693 about 200' SW of intersection with VA 615; thence about 150' south along W side of VA 693; thence about 1,150' NW, following along S side of drive for first 600' and continuing 550' along S cemetery limit, to E side of tree line and W cemetery limit;

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries (See Continuation # 1)

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
	N/A			N/A	

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
	N/A			N/A	

11. Form Prepared By

name/title DIVISION OF HISTORIC LANDMARKS STAFF

organization DIVISION OF HISTORIC LANDMARKS

date June 1981

street & number 221 Governor Street

telephone (804) 786-3143

city or town Richmond

state Virginia 23219

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

H. Bryan Mitchell, Director
title DIVISION OF HISTORIC LANDMARKS

date June 25, 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

ZION LUTHERAN CEMETERY AND CHURCH, FLOYD COUNTY, VA

Continuation sheet 1

Item number 10

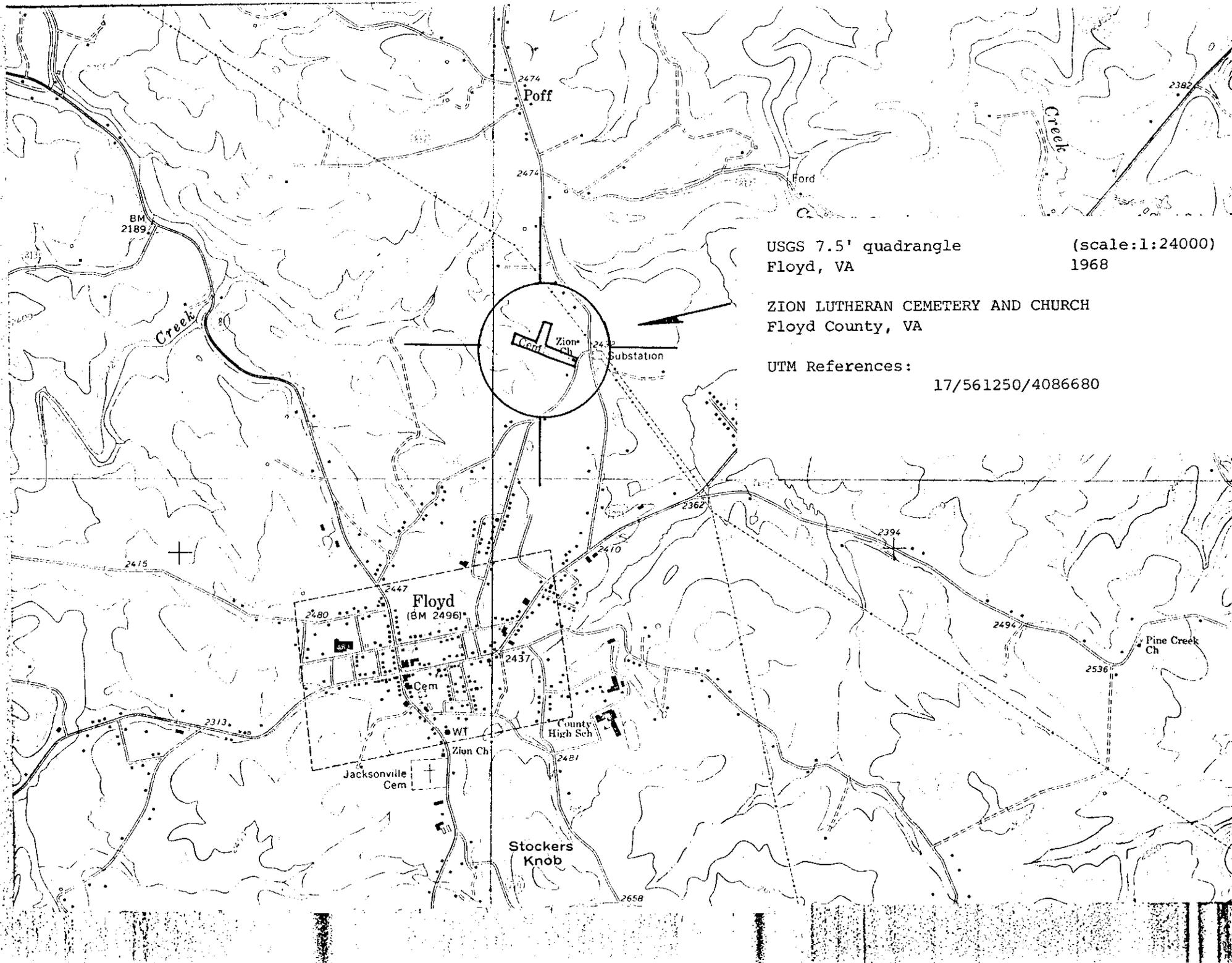
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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification (continued)

thence about 200' NNE along said tree line and limit; thence about 400' SE, thence about 400' NE, then about 125' ESE, then about 400' SSW, all following along cemetery limits; thence about 600' SE, paralleling the drive, to point of origin.



USGS 7.5' quadrangle
Floyd, VA

(scale:1:24000)
1968

ZION LUTHERAN CEMETERY AND CHURCH
Floyd County, VA

UTM References:
17/561250/4086680