1. Name of Property

**Historic name** Graysontown Methodist Church

Other names/site number: 60-109

2. Location

Street & number: South of VA Rt. 613
City, town: Graysontown
State: Virginia
Code: VA
County: Montgomery
Code: 121
Zip code: 24141

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private
Category of Property: Building(s)
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1 Noncontributing 0
Total 1

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official:

**Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

Date

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official:

Date

5. 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):

Signature of the Keeper: ____________________________ Date of Action: ____________________________
6. Function or Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)</th>
<th>Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELIGION: religious structure</td>
<td>RELIGION: religious structure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

| OTHER: nave plan |

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>foundation STONE: limestone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>walls WOOD: weatherboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other METAL: tin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Graysontown Methodist Church is situated on a ridge with sloping land on three sides, in a bend of the Little River above the village of Graysontown. Although it is located on a lot in the platted town of Graysontown, its setting appears rural. From the bluff at the rear (southeast) of the church is a dramatic view across the Little River to the town of Snowville in Pulaski County (Snowville Historic District, nominated to the National Register in 1986).

The frame, weatherboarded, nave-plan church has a projecting vestibule with a central, transomed double door surmounted by a bracketed shelf. The vestibule is capped by a two-stage tower with bracketed friezes. Alternating courses of straight and offset wood shingles are used to side the tower. The pyramidal tower roof has a kicked eave, while the structure features cornerboards with caps and pointed-arch windows. A two-story, modern addition has been added to the southeast. A cornerstone at the northwest corner bears the date July 4, 1895. The interior has been altered very little in the years since the church was built, and features late nineteenth-century detailing.
### Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

- [ ] nationally  
- [ ] statewide  
- [x] locally

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

- [ ] ARCHITECTURE

#### Period of Significance

- **1895**

#### Significant Dates

- **1895**

#### Cultural Affiliation

- **N/A**

#### Significant Person

- **N/A**

#### Architect/Builder

- **Brother Cook, builder**

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The church is significant under criterion C as an important elaborate example of a nave-plan church. There are fourteen nave-plan churches from the late nineteenth century in Montgomery County. Graysontown Methodist Church is one of only a few equipped with a tower, and in this feature it reflects the earlier Greek Revival Snowville Christian Church across the river.

The church trustees acquired the lot, which was identified as lot #41 on Second Street, from W.R. Hundley in May 1895. It is now owned by local citizens and operated as an inter-denominational church. It has always stood more or less alone on its hilltop site. The addition is inconspicuously placed to the rear of the church and does not impair the significant features of form and decorative material.

In 1894, a one-room school in Graysontown was used for worship purposes by a group of Methodists. A minister known as Brother Cook was sent to serve a group of local churches by the Methodist Conference. The church was built by Brother Cook and some of the members of the church soon after, using largely donated materials. The first Sunday school, the superintendent of which was Ed Winston, had an average attendance of about 200, and the church grew. At least 500 attended the first service. The church was called "truly a light house and soul saving station for all that attended" (Howell).

A newspaper story in 1977 detailed the church's history. In the late 1880s, local residents began discussing the establishment of a church. Officially named St. John's Methodist Church, the group organized in 1888 with twenty-four members. The building was dedicated in 1896. The church membership, while reaching around 100 at times, declined through the century, and the church was closed by the Methodist Conference in 1976. The members purchased the building from the Methodists and now use it as a nondenominational church (Shelburne, Anita). The group was headed by former Sunday School Superintendent Raymond Weeks. Weeks and the group leased the building to a religious group headed by Lee Simpkins and Max Meredith.

- [ ] See continuation sheet
9. Major Bibliographical References

- Howell, E.E. typescript, no date.

10. Geographical Data

- Acreage of property: Less than one acre.

- UTM References
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Easting</th>
<th>Northing</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

- Verbal Boundary Description
  Beginning at point A located 20 feet west and 15 feet south of the southwest corner of the church, proceeding north 137.5 feet to point B, thence east 102.5 feet to point C, thence south 137.5 feet to point D, thence west 102.5 feet to point of origin.

- Boundary Justification
  The boundaries were chosen to include the church and yard as defined by apparent (visual) boundary of churchyard.

11. Form Prepared By

- Name/Title: Gibson Worsham
- Organization: Gibson Worsham, Architect
- Date: January 1988
- Street & Number: Yellow Sulphur Springs, Route 2
- City or Town: Christiansburg
- State: Virginia
- Zip Code: 24073
- Telephone: (703) 552-4730