

VLR 6/17/1990
NRHP 6/3/08

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
other names/site number Gomer's Church, Comber's Church, Hoxbiehl Church, Hawksbill Church,
DHR File #069-0038

2. Location

street & number 279 Somers Road not for publication N/A
city or town Luray vicinity N/A
state Virginia code VA county Page code 139 zip code 22835

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mattie Sasser April 18, 2008
Signature of certifying official Date
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet. Signature of the Keeper _____
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register Date of Action _____
 other (explain): _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: _____ Sub: _____

<u>Religion</u>	<u>Religious Facility</u>
<u>Funerary</u>	<u>Cemetery</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: _____ Sub: _____

<u>Vacant</u>	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Early Republic; Federal

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>Brick</u>
roof	<u>Metal</u>
walls	<u>Brick</u>
other	_____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church

Page County, Virginia

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8. Statement of Significance
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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- 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.
- 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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance 1848 - 1912

Significant Dates 1848

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church

Page County, Virginia

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property approximately 4 acres

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

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	724300	2		
		4278600			

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Thomas Tyler Potterfield, Jr. Architectural Historian; updated by Jean McRae
organization Virginia Department of Historic Resources date 5/1998; 4/2008
street & number 2801 Kensington Avenue telephone 804-367-2323
city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23221

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Additional Documentation
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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

name Mount Calvary Lutheran Church Trustees
street & number 10 Lewis Street telephone _____
city or town Luray state VA zip code 22835

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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. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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**Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia**

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7. Summary Description

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church is located in the Stony Man area of Page County, Virginia. The Church is situated on a knoll at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains, at the end of a long dirt access road. The building is a well-preserved and pristine mid-nineteenth-century church building. It has had no additions and virtually no interior or exterior alterations since it was constructed in 1848.

At the southwestern portion of the church property is a small cemetery. Some of the graves have modest stones and there are also unmarked graves. The cemetery has no fencing or formal boundaries. There is also a non-contributing privy on the property.

Detailed Description

The Mount Calvary building is situated on the eastern portion of the church property. The building is a slightly rectangular two-story structure with a gable roof. The building footprint dimensions are roughly thirty-four by forty feet. The ridge of the roof follows the length of the building from east to west. The building has a standing-seam metal roof, with decorative snow birds. The building roof has slightly overhanging eaves with hung half-round gutters. The building is constructed of brick laid in American bond, with a row of headers for every five rows of stretchers. The brickwork is of high quality and the bricks appear to have been locally kilned. A brick water table surrounds the building. Nine-over-six windows are used on the first-floor and six-over-six windows on the second floor. Original wooden shutters cover the first-floor windows.

The southern elevation of the building is the primary facade. It consists of three symmetrical bays. The first floor has a central window flanked by two double doors. Three windows are on the second floor above. The northern elevation of the building is largely devoid of openings, with only two windows on the first floor. The east and west elevations each have two symmetrical bays, with two windows on each floor. In the gable of the western elevation is a small datestone with the date 1848. The use of the datestone is consistent with a nearby church building from the same era, Grace Lutheran Church, which was built as a German Reformed Church in 1835.

The interior arrangement has the unusual feature of being oriented on the interior to the long side of the rectangle, instead of the shorter ends. This arrangement is similar to the early meetinghouses in the Shenandoah Valley and northern Virginia of dissenting denominations. In this case the building type is adapted to the needs of liturgical worship with an altar platform on the northern side of the interior. The two entrances may have served as men's, and women's entrances. More probably they simply provided access to the two side aisles.

On the first floor there are seven main rows of pews, and three rows of pews placed at a right angle to those. A raised platform against the north wall supports the pulpit. A communion table is placed in front of the platform. Two Champion model # 134 stoves are situated at the terminus of each of the aisles. It is speculated by Gaylon Waters of Luray, that originally the building had two stoves of local manufacture where the Champion stoves are now situated.

A circa 1890 pump organ is located to the left hand side of the platform. Throughout the structure are flared window cases that enhance the admittance of natural light into the interior.

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**Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
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A large gallery extends around three sides of the interior. The gallery structure is supported by simple columns of the Tuscan order. Above the columns there is a system of panels and balusters. The second and third rows of gallery pews are raised on platforms one behind the other. Two small stairs at the east and west ends of the building provide access to the gallery. Throughout the building a high degree of craftsmanship is shown in the joinery.

Nearly all of the interior woodwork is finished with red mahogany stain. According to Mary Jane Goode, who grew up as a member of Mount Calvary Church, the plaster walls have been painted white as long as she can remember. However, an inspection of the plaster walls indicates evidence of an earlier light blue paint. Several of the gallery pews were also painted this same blue color. This would have been a paint scheme typical of local and cultural tradition and can also be seen in the pink and green paint of the nearby Grace Lutheran Church.

Secondary resources include a cemetery whose earliest date is unknown at this time, though there are two recorded stones from 1882 and 1911-12. Both stones have the last name of Printz, a common German name. There is also a non-contributing wood frame privy.

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**Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia**

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8. Summary Statement

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church is eligible as locally significant for listing in the National Register under Criterion C. The current building is a pristine example of religious architecture built in 1848, with important examples of craftsmanship, decorative treatments, and other characteristics associated with meetinghouse architecture of the period. The Period of Significance (1848 – 1912) runs from the date of construction until the date of last documented cemetery stone.

The building is a virtual time capsule that appears almost exactly as it did when it opened. Mount Calvary Church is an important landmark of German architecture and local craftsmanship in Page County. The building is an important example of a meetinghouse floor plan successfully adapted to the needs of liturgical worship. The mahogany finishes are important intact interior finishes, as well as an example of local craft practices. The building interior, with its use of the Tuscan order, exhibits a high degree of architectural craftsmanship and finish. The building came during an era of impressive brick construction in Page County that included: large farm complexes, Luray townhouses, and churches. This architectural era followed construction of the Page County Courthouse, an important architectural model completed in 1831.

Historical Background

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church can trace its origins back to the first German settlers in the Page Valley area. In 1726 Adam Mueller led a group of families to the vicinity of present-day Luray. This early group of Germans from Pennsylvania was of the Mennonite, Lutheran, and Reformed denominations. It was known as the Massanutten settlement and is considered to be the first group of German settlers to locate in the Shenandoah Valley area.

It appears that the Massanutten Lutherans managed with difficulty to retain their denominational identity. A group of Moravians in the 1740s visited the community and noted the presence of Lutherans and German Reformed in the area. The Moravians found them disorganized and noted that "nearly all religious earnestness and zeal is extinguished among them." No record is known of any formal Lutheran organization during this period. The early Lutherans in Page County were simply referred to in early records as the Lutherans living in the Massanutten Settlement.

John Caspar Stoeber, George Samuel Klug, and Johannes Schwarbach, three early pastors of Hebron Church in present-day Madison County, are credited with being the first pastors to serve the Massanutten Lutherans. At the time the Hebron pastors were virtually the only Lutheran clergy in the Virginia colony and ministered to the needs of a number of Shenandoah Valley congregations. These ministers came to the Massanutten Lutherans only a few times a year to conduct baptisms, and perform marriages. A communion chalice from Mount Calvary Church dated 1727 suggests that communion was provided by the Hebron pastors as well. No documentation has been found of a house of worship or a particular location for services.

Over time the Massanutten Lutherans were able to organize on a more secure footing. The earliest indication of a formal Lutheran organization is a deed from 1765 from Pastor Johannes Schwarbach to Peter Panter and Jacob Schafer, who were apparently trustees of the Lutheran Church. The land was specifically deeded for the use of a

"congregation". How Rev. Schwarbach came to control the land is unclear.

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**Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
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A church building was formally constructed on the site shortly thereafter. No information has come to light as to the appearance or materials of this structure. It may be assumed that it was log structure. Like many churches in the Shenandoah Valley it was a union church shared by German Reformed and Lutheran congregations. The church appears to have been known interchangeably during this period as Comer's (also spelled Comer, or Comber in the 1765 deed) after the family that owned the adjoining farm, or Hawksbill (originally Hoxbiehl) after nearby Hawksbill Creek.

The predominance of German immigrants and the relative isolation of Page County allowed German culture to thrive in the area. German was the first language and in many cases the only language of the community until the early nineteenth century. This cultural environment also allowed the retention of traditional German crafts including painted interiors, painted furniture, and fraktur. In addition, German was the language of worship and music in the community until the mid-nineteenth century. At Mount Calvary, the records of the congregation were kept in German until the 1860s. The oldest English-language hymnals discovered in the sanctuary bear the date 1860.

Starting in the late eighteenth century pastors from Woodstock and New Market began to serve the Hawksbill Lutherans. Notable among these were Peter Muhlenberg and members of the Henkel family. The closer proximity of these pastors implies that worship was held on a more regular basis during this era.

In the early nineteenth century a number of notable changes occurred in the Hawksbill Lutheran community. By 1817 the congregation had named itself Mount Calvary, an appropriate reference to its setting. By 1822 the property had come into the exclusive use of the Lutherans. It was at this time that the congregation constructed a second church building on the site. After being affiliated for much of its history with the Pennsylvania Ministerium, the short-lived Virginia District of the Pennsylvania Ministerium, and the North Carolina Synod, the congregation joined the Virginia District of the Tennessee Synod in 1820. The meeting of the Virginia District was held at Mount Calvary in May, 1860. The congregation did not become a part of the Virginia Synod until 1918.

Over the course of the nineteenth century the Hawksbill settlement slowly started to prosper. Large barns and farmhouses started to appear across Page Valley. The town of Luray was established in 1812, and it became the seat of newly created Page County in 1831. The descendants of the Massanutten settlers over time became successful farmers. The construction of a number of substantial farm complexes in the middle and later decades of the century reflected this. By the early nineteenth century iron foundries and the related charcoal industries also became an important part of the local economy. The Shenandoah River and later the Sperryville Turnpike provided a means of transporting the commodities of the area to market. During this period of prosperity, the congregation constructed the present building. The third church building on the site was completed in 1848.

Page County continued to grow and prosper after the Civil War. In 1885 the Shenandoah Valley railroad came to the community, providing growth to the town of Luray and a ready market to the farmers of the community. During this era Mount Calvary Church launched an expansion program under the direction of Rev. J.N. Stirewalt.

Stirewalt was apparently the first full-time pastor in the history of the congregation. This expansion movement reflected the growth of Mount Calvary (which had been the only Lutheran church in the area) and the need for

churches that would better serve the widespread Page Valley Lutherans. Starting with Morning Star on Dry Run near Stony Man in 1873, the new churches included: St. Mark's in Luray (1875), Grace in Ida (1878), St. James north of Luray (1882), and Beth Eden east of Luray (1896). Rev. Stirewalt served most of these churches until his death in 1906. Over time most became large successful congregations.

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The group of congregations (less St. James, and St. Mark's) would become known as Stony Man Parish in reference to the general neighborhood. Stony Man Parish built a large parsonage in Luray in 1911. The success of the daughter congregations would prove to be the end of Mount Calvary as an active congregation. After the size of the congregation dwindled, regular services ceased to be held in 1959. Since that time the use of the building has been restricted to occasional homecoming services. At the bequest of the Trust of Mr. Claude E. Dofflemeyer of Luray, an effort was initiated to nominate the building to the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register. The owners of the buildings, the Mount Calvary Lutheran Trustees, are considering how to best use the building.

The Mount Calvary Lutheran Church property was listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register in 1998. With restoration underway, in an effort to use the building again, Reverend Dr. Alice Davis has provided current photographs in an effort to finally list the resource in the National Register of Historic Places.

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**Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
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9. Bibliography

Bauserman, Gary. "The History of Page County" in Page County Bicentennial Commission. Page the County of Plenty. Luray: 1976.

Casell, C.W.; Finck, W.J.; and Henkel; Elon. History of the Lutheran Church in Virginia and East Tennessee. Strasburg: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1930.

"Copy of the Original Deed of Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, Page Co. Va." Transcription of original 1765 deed in the possession of Stony Man Lutheran Parish, Luray, Virginia.

Dovell, I.R. "The History of the Town of Luray" in Page County Bicentennial Commission. Page the County of m. Luray: 1976.

Eisenberg, William Edward. The Lutheran Church in Virginia 1717-1962 Including an Account of the Church in East Tennessee Roanoke: The Trustees of the Virginia Synod, Lutheran Church in America, 1967.

Finck; Rev. William J. Translator. "Early Records of Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Page County, Virginia." Transcription in the possession of Stony Man Lutheran Parish, Luray, Virginia.

Henkel, Socrates. The History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Tennessee Synod. New Market: Henkel Press, 1890.

Lambert, Darwin. The Undying Past of Shenandoah National Park. Boulder Colorado: Robinson Rinehart, 1989.

Morgan C.I. "Mount Calvary and Old Churches" Newspaper clipping c. 1910 in the possession of Stony Man Lutheran Parish, Luray, Virginia.

Mount Calvary History Committee (Bob Chrisman, Sherry Erb, Mary Jane Good, Jean Moyer, Ken Sours, Ruth Spitler, and Gaylon Waters), Stony Man Lutheran Parish, Interview by Tyler Potterfield, February 6, 1997, . Beth Eden Lutheran Church.

Potterfield, Tyler. Inspection of Mount Calvary Lutheran Church with Mr. Donald Moyer, April 3, 1997.

Waters, Gaylon. Letter to Mount Calvary History Committee, February 8, 1997.

Wust, Klaus. The Virginia Germans. Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1969.

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**Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Page County, Virginia**

Section 10, Photographic Data Page 7

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary includes all the property on tax parcel 53-A-44 as provided by the Page County Real Estate Office. This is the parcel that corresponds to the property as addressed at 279 Somers Road, and was recorded first in 1765 on Page 197 of Deed Book H; and then slightly enlarged in 1850. An attached sketch map shows the triangular property at a scale of 1/2" = 500'.

Boundary Justification

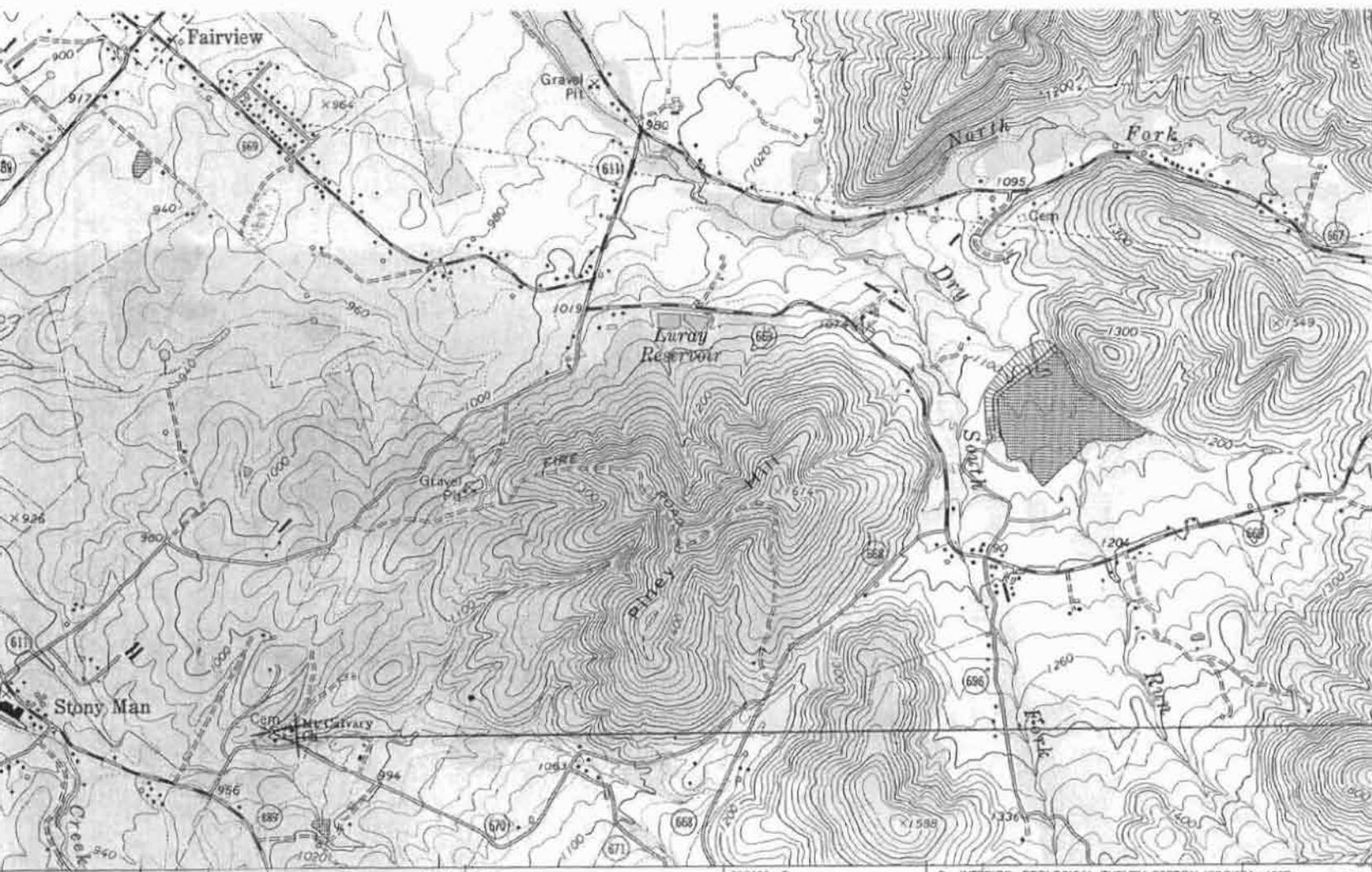
The boundaries include the original property deeded to the congregation in 1765 and slightly expanded in 1850. The boundaries include the church building, cemetery, privy, and the intact extent of the property during its period of significance. There have been no intrusions or modifications to the property that would warrant a change in boundary size.

Photographic Data

The following is the same for all digital photographs stored at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in Richmond, Virginia

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Page County #069-0038
Taken by Reverend Dr. Alice Davis in April 2008

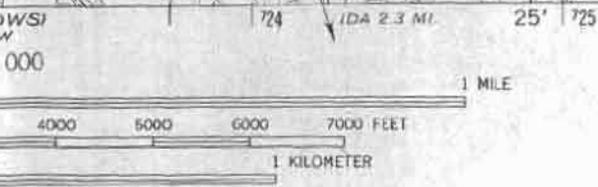
- Photo 1 of 8 main façade exterior, facing north
- Photo 2 of 8 exterior, facing northeast
- Photo 3 of 8 interior, facing alter on north wall
- Photo 4 of 8 interior, facing alter and pipe organ on north and west walls
- Photo 5 of 8 interior, balcony and painted pews
- Photo 6 of 8 interior, facing north and east walls showing balcony
- Photo 7 of 8 exterior, window and shutters
- Photo 8 of 8 cemetery stone for Isabella Printz dated 1882



4281
4280
4279000m N
38°37'30"
78°22'30"

#069-0030
MOUNT CALVARY
LUTHERAN CHURCH
PAGE CO, VA
UTM #17 724300E
4278600N

OLD BAG MTN
5361 III SE



VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
COLORADO 80225 OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092,
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903
SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with commonwealth of Virginia agencies from aerial photographs taken 1984 and other sources. This information not field checked. Map edited 1987

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
 Heavy-duty ————— Light-duty —————
 Medium-duty ————— Unimproved dirt - - - - -
 U.S. Route State Route

LURAY, VA.
38078-F4-TF-024

1965
PHOTOREVISED 1987
DMA 5361 III NW-SERIES V834

M