

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church Cemetery

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

South side of State Route 670; east, of intersection of State Routes
670 and 669.

CITY, TOWN

Speedwell

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

X VICINITY OF

Ninth (William C. Wampler)

STATE

Virginia

CODE

51

COUNTY

Wythe

CODE

197

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBJECTS	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Cemetery

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church c/o The Reverend John Hougen

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Rural Retreat

VICINITY OF

STATE

Virginia 24368

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC Wythe County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Wytheville

STATE

Virginia 24382

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey

DATE

August 1978

FEDERAL X STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street

CITY, TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Virginia 23219

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church Cemetery is located on a steep hillside among the farmlands of southwestern Wythe County. Its principal interest is its 42 gravestones set in the northwest corner of the cemetery. Among the 250 to 300 total stones, there are a few later 19th-century ones of interest, and about 50 markers date from the years following 1900.

Like the other Germanic stones found in Southwest Virginia, the Zion group is comprised of thick sandstone markers carved on both sides and often decorated on the edges as well. The monuments at Zion bear the stylistic marks of the carver who produced the stones at Kimberling Church in Wythe County, at Sharon Church in Bland County, and at Central Church, Burke's Garden, in Tazewell County. They show a greater variety of shapes than the stones at any of the latter cemeteries, but the idiosyncratic shapes belong mostly to footstones, suggesting that these were omitted or have not survived at the other cemeteries. Also unlike the other cemeteries, Zion Church's cemetery contains a sizable minority of Germanic stones with surviving inscriptions. From these it is evident that, although the stones have dates ranging from the 1790s to 1840, they all were carved ca. 1835 to 1840. It is likely that a skilled carver moved to the area in the mid-1830s and provided stones for many graves, which formerly had been marked with improvised stone or wooden markers, then completed his work by 1840.

Most of the headstones consist of square-shouldered rectangular bodies with central rounded elements at the top; the latter are either semicircular and plain or are three-quarter circles with reeded edges. On the faces these central elements contain a central decoration, usually a six- or eight-petaled flower, surrounded by a stylized scroll. Sometimes the inscription, which is normally done in cursive script, is flanked by spiral pilasters topped by pinwheels. More often, however, it is enframed in heavy moldings. The reverses of the stones also employ sunflowers and six- and eight-petaled flowers in their tympanums and commonly have a vine, flanked by the pilasters and pinwheels, carved on their rectangular bodies. Of the unreeded stones, the one erected for Peter Huddle (d. 1828) is a well-preserved example. Matilda Groseclose's (d. 1837) stone is a good example of the reeded variety, and the granite-like monument of Emiline Jemima Groseclose (d. 1840) is a strikingly well-preserved specimen of typical back decoration.

Most of the fancifully shaped footstones have undulating tops and reeded edges. These too have vegetative motifs and pinwheels and pilasters; many of them have hearts as well.

A few examples of homemade stones survive. These range from the unshaped and unlettered rocks which are found in every German cemetery to the plain hand-lettered rectangular slab erected for Beulah Miller (d. 1920).

The present church at Zion, the third on the site, is a plain rectangular brick building with a corner tower topped by an open belfry. It was built in 1940.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The register bounds coincide with the bounds of the cemetery as delineated on the U.S.G.S. 7.5' quadrangle for Speedwell, Virginia (1968).

B 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1835-1840

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Set among the rolling farmlands of southwestern Wythe County, Zion Lutheran Cemetery contains 42 excellently preserved examples of Germanic gravestones similar to those found in lesser numbers and in poorer condition in several other outlying Lutheran cemeteries around Wytheville. These rare stones are among the few visible reminders that the area was heavily settled by Germans in the late 18th century and remains populated by persons of German descent.

Land for the first church on the site was given by John Stanger in 1794. The congregation had been formed in 1791 with Stanger serving as its pastor from 1791 to 1824. Although the 18th-century log church was replaced by a frame building in 1856, it stood at least until the late 1870s. The present brick structure dates from 1940.

The Germanic gravestones at Zion Church are graphic evidence of the strength of Continental culture in that area of Wythe County. Later than in any other area of Virginia, persons of German descent there retained elements of their ancestral material culture traditions. In furniture-making and in carpentry, as in gravestones, European forms survived there until the end of the 19th century.

DU/MTP

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cassell, C. W.; Finck, W. J.; and Henkel, E. O. History of the Lutheran Church in Virginia and East Tennessee. Strasburg, Va., 1930.
 Eisenberg, William E. The Lutheran Church in Virginia 1717-1962. Roanoke, Va., 1967.
 Finck, W. J., translator. Church and Baptism Book for Congregation on Crippled [sic] Creek. New Market, Va., 1934.
 Presgreaves, James S. editor, Wythe County Chapters. Wytheville, Va., 1972.
 Zion Church Records, Wythe County, 1791-1830. MS Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Speedwell

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 480150 4077070
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Beginning at a point 2000' E of State Route 669 and 2100' NE of the intersection of State Routes 669 and 670; thence extending SE following the S side of State Route 670 for approximately 450'; thence extending S 200'; thence extending W 300' to the eastern side of State Route 670; thence extending 400' NW following E side of State Route 670 to point of origin.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE

October 1978

STREET & NUMBER

221 Governor Street

TELEPHONE

(804) 786-3144

CITY OR TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Virginia 23219

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

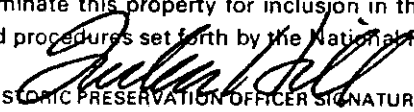
NATIONAL

STATE X

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



TITLE Tucker Hill, Executive Director
 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE NOV 21 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

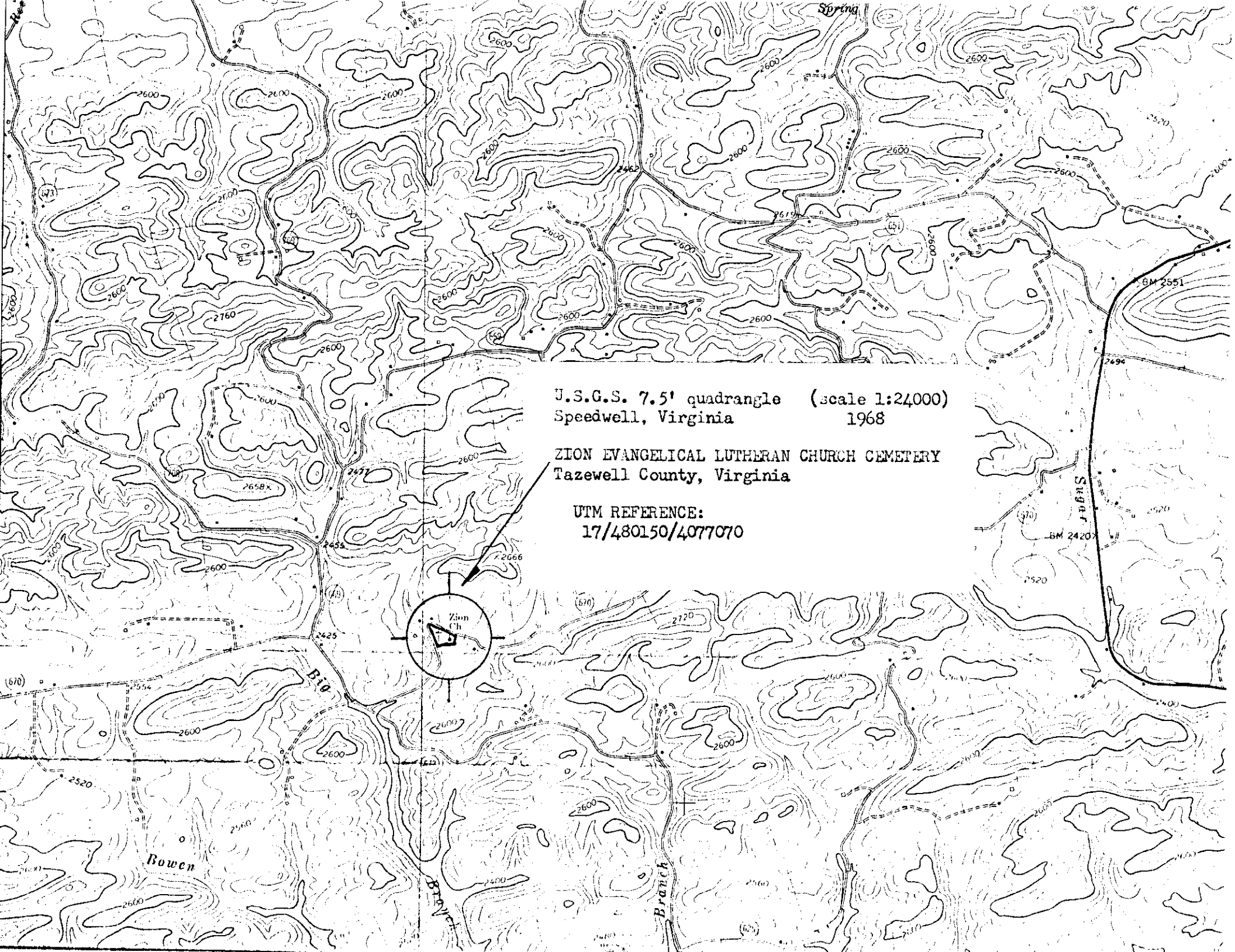
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION



U.S.G.S. 7.5' quadrangle (scale 1:24000)
Speedwell, Virginia 1968

ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH CEMETERY
Tazewell County, Virginia

UTM REFERENCE:
17/480150/4077070