



Grace Episcopal Church  
Name of Property

Caroline County, VA  
County and State

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**4. 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**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

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/religious facility

FUNERARY/cemetery

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/religious facility

FUNERARY/cemetery

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY/Greek Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

FOUNDATION: BRICK

WALLS: BRICK

ROOF: STONE/Slate

OTHER:

STOOP AND WALKWAY: CONCRETE

LINTELS, CORNICES, DECORATIVE ELEMENTS: WOOD

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Grace Episcopal Church was built in 1833/1834 on .62 acre at the intersection of State Routes 2 and 610 in Caroline County, Virginia. The site is triangular, fronting the west side of State Route 2 and bounded by Route 610 to the north and Fort A.P. Hill to the south. Set back approximately 50' from Route 2, the church measures 40' long x 26' wide. It has a traditional Anglican rectangular-apse floor plan with symmetrical sides. In 1853/1854 it was elongated and embellished with an 8' deep addition spanning the front of the church in the Greek Revival style and a 14' x 12' central addition on the back. The exterior common-bond brick and original sixteen-over-sixteen windows are unchanged, while the original cedar-shingle roof has been covered with slate. The church has been maintained in good condition and has retained its historic integrity, with no structural alterations since the 1853 addition. The design, materials,

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and workmanship are excellent examples of early Greek Revival architecture for a church in Caroline County. Important features include the wooden, pedimented gable front with a rectangular, glazed transom and lunette set above in the tympanum. Also of interest is the original graffiti penciled on the plaster walls in the rear addition by Civil War soldiers quartered at the church. The north and west churchyard includes a copse of cedar trees between the church and Route 610 and a typical small, rural church cemetery dating from 1854. Other landscaping includes several old trees and shrubbery planted adjacent to some gravestones. With the church as a contributing building and the cemetery as a contributing site, the property as a whole has good integrity of feeling and association.

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## **Narrative Description**

### Exterior

Completed in 1834, Grace Episcopal Church is a one-story building with a rectangular-apse plan, symmetrical sides, and gabled roof. The exterior is brick laid in predominantly 3:1 running bond and measures 40' long x 26' wide. In 1853, the church was elongated and embellished with an 8' x 26' addition to the front in the Greek Revival style and a 14' x 12' central addition on the back. Both additions are of brick laid in 5:1 common bond. The date 1854 is chiseled into a brick on the rear addition, indicating that work might have been completed that year. Ventilation is provided by five small openings in both the northern and southern brick walls, permitting air to circulate beneath the floor.

The front entrance to Grace Church has a wood, raised-panel, double door with a brass knob. The door is recessed in the wall with side recessed, wood panels in the architrave. A rectangular, glazed transom features a cross-and-diamond pattern. The entrance is accessed by a concrete, rectangular front stoop and concrete walkway that were added in 1911. The main decorative feature of the façade is a pedimented, wood gable end with a wide entablature of boards and eaves that encircle the church just under the roofline. Fixed, blind-shuttered windows flank the entrance door on either side. Centered above the transom is a large, tri-part window with a six-over-six, double-hung sash in the center and two-over-two, double-hung sash on each side. A lunette window is set in the flush-board tympanum of the pediment.

Each side of the original church contains three sixteen-over-sixteen, double-hung sash windows with 8" x 10" panes, a single jack arch, 2" beaded board frames along the sides and top, and original, louvered shutters. An identical window is on the south side of the front addition, and a blind-shuttered, false window is on the north side, although both are lacking a jack arch. The four windows on the south elevation and three on the north are functioning windows with original sashes that are not roped with original shutter hardware that features hand-wrought strap hinges and pintles and hand-wrought scroll tiebacks. Most of the windowpanes are original glass. Aquia sandstone, 5" window sills still show the original chisel marks.

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There is a smaller, board-and-batten, blind shutter over a window on each side of the rear gable-roofed projection. The brickwork indicates these originally were larger windows matching the side windows of the core church, and the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century, acme-style hardware is evidence of their alteration. Broken plaster around a twelve-pane, semi-circular arch window on the back indicates it is not original to the addition, suggesting that it could have been added to backlight a painting installed in 1875 in the recessed sanctuary.

### Interior

The front addition includes a small vestry to the south and an enclosed, steep staircase to the north leading to a balcony spanning the width of the church. There is a low wall across the balcony, behind which the original backless benches are set on an upward-slanted floor. Beyond the anteroom, the original building is characterized by its traditional Anglican church plan with a one-story, open space. It is accessed through a 4' central doorway set inside the original exterior wall of the church. The doorway surround features raised-panel jambs on each side and the top. Greek Revival molding is present around the interior doorway and door reveal. Flooring is original tongue-and-groove, 6"-8" random-width, heart pine. Interior walls are original plaster. Eighteen original detached pews are set in a central-aisle plan and extend to the exterior walls.

At the east end of the core church, a pulpit is located on the north side and a small choir box is on the south; both are raised one step above the original floor. The 1853 addition on the east end is another step up and comprises the altar area. A small storage area with dirt floor is on the other side of the altar wall and is only accessed by a four-panel, oak exterior door on the south side. The recessed altar has a large arch and a wooden gated railing. The altar sets against the back wall, flanked by a small, boarded window on each side wall. The ceiling of the recessed area is barrel vaulted.

There are few decorations in the core church interior other than simple wall sconces for oil lamps. In the altar addition, however, simple pilasters form the sides of the arch, and there is some crown and base molding around the area. The arched window on the back wall of the storage area illuminates a painted, transparent fabric held between two sheets of glass. The painting, added in 1875, is a religious scene that has the appearance of stained glass.

An attic extends from the front- to the rear-end gable walls. The framing lumber of the front addition is a combination of circular sawn and sash sawn, while the roof framing of the original church is a combination of pit sawn and hand hewn. Cypress roof shingles and skip sheathing on their underside are visible from the attic and the storage area in the rear addition. These original shingles were overlaid with slate shingles in 1936. It appears the 16' ceiling also was replaced either during construction of the addition or later because the boards, laid in a three-bead: single-bead pattern, extend from above the 1853 balcony addition across the 1834 core church with no line of demarcation.

The building is remarkably intact and in generally good condition for its age, considering it has been vacant since religious services ended in 1941/1942. There have been no major renovations

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since the front and rear additions in 1853/1854, though historically-accurate maintenance has been performed as needed. In 1866, the Rev. Mr. William Friend wrote that efforts were being made to restore the church to its condition before the Civil War.<sup>1</sup> In September 1872, Arthur Pierson, a relative of one of the church founders, visited from England and wrote in a letter to his mother that the church had not recovered from damage caused during the Civil War. He said, "Grace Church is a queer looking brick Church, it has been made into barracks during the war. The walls are covered with names of soldiers written in lead pencil by the individuals themselves." In December he wrote his sister that "The ladies have just held a meeting for the raising of funds for the repainting of the Church. I think they each do work and sell it to different friends during the year and then hold a meeting to compare results"<sup>2</sup> In 1911, thirty-two masonry pillars were built under the ends of the floor joists; the exterior brick foundation was repointed; concrete steps were constructed; thirty glass window panes were replaced; and side windows (now boarded) were placed in the chancel. In 1936, a new slate roof was installed.<sup>3</sup> More recently, exterior bricks again were repointed, some slate shingles replaced, some hand-wrought iron shutter brackets fabricated and replaced, and the front doors were replaced in-kind due to severe damage by a vandal (the original, broken doors remain on site). The walls appear to be solid and the ceiling is dry, with no leaks. General maintenance currently needed includes the painting of exterior wood trim and interior plaster walls, woodwork, and pews. Structurally, there is evidence of termite damage under the floors that is currently being assessed. There is no electricity, well, or septic system.

The cemetery in the Grace Episcopal Church yard is a contributing site. The earliest grave is dated 1854 and the most recent dated 1988. Contributing to the significance of Grace Church is the first headstone. While it features a three-dimensional design of a weeping willow, otherwise it is typical of the rectilinear, plain tombstones that represent the antebellum era compared to colonial sepulture that often is imposing or massive with elaborate moldings.<sup>4</sup> The inscription reads:

SACRED  
TO THE MEMORY OF JANE  
THE BELOVED WIFE OF THE REV. HENRY WALL  
RECTOR OF THIS CHURCH  
SHE DIED FEBRUARY 19, 1854  
IN THE 35, YEAR OF HER AGE  
LEAVING HER BEREAVED HUSBAND  
AND TWO HELPLESS CHILDREN  
TO MOURN HER UNTIMELY LOSS  
"Even so Father  
for so it seemed good in thy sight

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the Seventy-first Annual Council of the Protestant Church in Virginia*, 65.

<sup>2</sup> Welsh, *The Merging of The Dickenson's/Dickinson's Of Chestnut Valley, Caroline County, Va*, 397.

<sup>3</sup> Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, Survey Form 16-11, 1972.

<sup>4</sup> Davis and Rawlings, *Virginia's Ante-bellum Churches*, 46.

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Both the church and cemetery contribute to the property's historic integrity. The original 1833/1834 building and the 1853/1854 addition reflect the design, workmanship, and materials of the mid-nineteenth century. These physical characteristics have been preserved, and where time-worn elements have required maintenance, the work has been performed to replicate the church's historic appearance to protect the authenticity of its historic integrity



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## 8. Statement of Significance

### 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 grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

MILITARY

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1833-1875

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1833/1834

1853/1854

1861-1865

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Grace Episcopal Church is locally significant under Criterion C (Architecture) for its architectural design and under Criterion A (Military History) for its association with the Confederate Army as both a hospital and winter headquarters. The period of significance begins in 1833/1834 when the church was built by neighboring planters in Caroline County for religious use, extends through the Civil War when it was used as a Confederate Army hospital for wounded soldiers and as headquarters for General Robert Rodes, CSA, and ends in 1875 with repairs undertaken following the war. Of secondary importance, the church also served a funerary purpose beginning in 1854. The front addition to the church, constructed in 1853, is an excellent example of early Greek Revival architecture for a church in Caroline County, Virginia. While the Greek Revival elements are simplified for the rural setting, at least two of its design components deserve individual note. The rear addition for a recessed chancel is reflective of the cultural evolution of the Anglican Church in the United States during the post-American Revolution era when there was a resurgence of Episcopal Church activity. The painting added in 1875 exemplifies the move toward more decorative religious elements in the postbellum era. The property meets Criteria Consideration A for religious properties because its significance rests with the building's architectural significance and the property's military use during the Civil War.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

## History

Lawrence Battaile III (1766-1847), an Episcopal minister, donated a parcel of his family's 1663 land grant at *Flintshire Farm* to his son for the express purpose of constructing a chapel to pursue his interest in missionary work. His son ultimately became pastor of a Baptist church instead, but in 1833 there was local interest in building an Episcopal church. Subscriptions were sold to neighboring plantation owners in the vicinity, who privately constructed Grace Episcopal Church on the Battaile land: James Parke Corbin of *Moss Neck*, William I. Dickenson of *Chestnut Valley*, Samuel Gordon of *Santee*, and William Penn Taylor of *Hayfield*. Interestingly, two nearby houses (now National Register properties) were built during the same period by two of these families. *Prospect Hill*, completed circa 1842 by Basil Gordon, brother of Samuel Gordon of *Santee*, reflects a conservative taste in design with concessions to the prevailing Greek Revival style; and *Moss Neck Manor*, completed circa 1856 by James Parke Corbin, manifests antebellum Virginia's Greek Revival architecture with a combination of high-style elements and basic colonial composition.<sup>5</sup> Grace Church incorporates similar influences of conservatism, original colonial design, and early Greek Revival elements. It is conceivable that bricks used in the additions to Grace Church came from Moss Neck. Situated on good roads, the

<sup>5</sup> National Register of Historic Places Inventory (December 12, 1976); Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey Form 16-18. Prospect Hill was listed in the National Register in 1976 and Moss Neck Manor was listed in 1999.

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site was centrally located among their properties for a church to serve their families and enslaved workers. The houses, descendants, and oral histories of four of the original founders still reside in the area: Holloway (nee Battaile) of *Flintshire Farm* and (nee Gordon) of *Santee*; Corbin of *Moss Neck Manor*; and Pierson and Welsh (nee Dickenson) of *Chestnut Valley*. Members of the first Grace Church Vestry include other historically prominent Caroline County families, such as Fitzhugh, Taliaferro, and Thornton.<sup>6</sup>

Grace Church became the parish church of St. Mary's Parish, which had been established by the Colonial Council of Virginia in 1692 in the area between the Mattaponi-Rappahannock watershed and the Rappahannock River. The first meeting of the Vestry of Grace Church was Easter Monday, March 31, 1834, when the Rev. Mr. William Friend was named the first Rector.<sup>7</sup> On April 27, 1834, the Right Reverend Richard Channing Moore, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Edward McGuire of St. George's Episcopal Church in Fredericksburg, consecrated what Moore described as "a handsome new church," confirmed a number of adults, preached to a "large and attentive congregation," and administered communion. In May 1835, the Rev. Mr. Friend reported to the annual convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia that the congregation "exhibited much apparent interest in the concerns of religion."<sup>8</sup>

Grace Church is notable due to its association with the Reverend Mr. William Friend (1806-1870), who was instrumental in the founding, erection, reconstruction, or consecration of eleven Episcopal churches, four of which were in Caroline County, where he resided for thirty-eight years.<sup>9</sup> An 1832 graduate of the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, he later became the head of Saint Mary's Parish in Caroline County. Mr. Friend served as the first minister to Grace Church from 1834 to 1851, and his service resumed in 1855, continuing until his death in 1870. When St. Peter's Episcopal Church was completed in Port Royal, Virginia, in 1835, the Rev. Mr. Friend commuted between the two churches by horseback or horse and buggy, often staying overnight with one of the neighboring plantation families rather than returning to his home in King George County.

While many churches closed in Virginia during the Civil War and many clergymen fled for safety, the Rev. Mr. Friend continued his charge of three congregations at Port Royal, Bowling Green, and Corbin. Services at Grace Church were held on alternate Sundays throughout the war. In a journal entry on January 5, 1863, Confederate General Stonewall Jackson mentioned that he had "heard a good sermon at Grace Church by an Episcopal minister, Mr. Friend."<sup>10</sup> The Rev. Mr. Friend, however, noted that attendance at his churches was diminished by "removals, and the enlistment of 50 or more of our young men in the army of the State, engaged in active duty."<sup>11</sup> In May 1863, he filed his report to the Sixty-eighth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia, stating:

<sup>6</sup> Fall, *People, Post offices and Communities in Caroline County, Virginia 1727-1969*, 106.

<sup>7</sup> Fall, *Hidden Village: Port Royal, Virginia 1744-1981*, 248.

<sup>8</sup> Hawks, *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of the United States of America, Vol. 1.*, 300, 326.

<sup>9</sup> Fall, *Hidden Village: Port Royal, Virginia 1744-1981*, 249.

<sup>10</sup> Round Oak Baptist Church History Team, *A History of Round Oak Baptist Church 1840-2005*, 31.

<sup>11</sup> Fall, *Hidden Village: Port Royal, Virginia 1744-1981*, 301.

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The Rector of these churches [Grace, Trinity, and St. Peter's] is unable to report the statistics of the several parishes, as the Register was carried away during one of the raids of the enemy [Union troops}.... Since the Fredericksburg battle, the greater part of Gen. Lee's forces have occupied that portion of the county embraced in my parochial care – Grace church has been occupied as the headquarters of Gen. Rodes. I have, however, held service and preached there on alternate Sundays during the winter and spring. The congregation of soldiers have been so large that few of my people have been able to attend – on the other alternate Sundays I have officiated at the Bowling Green, chiefly to the artillery of the late Gen. Jackson's corps. I have held but one service at Port Royal since December 1861, as the village is nearly deserted. Most of my time has been employed in doing missionary duty in the several brigades of Gen. Rodes' division. I trust that my ministrations among the soldiers have not been without effect.<sup>12</sup>

The reason the Rector experienced a large attendance from soldiers may be in part to General Jackson's very deliberate attempt to instill a religious revival in his Corps during the winter encampment at Moss Neck. An outbreak of religious revivals followed Jackson's securing of the Reverend B. Tucker Lacy as the unofficial chaplain of the Second Corps. Lacy organized daily prayer meetings and services, and Jackson himself modeled a fervent faith and religious practice for his admiring troops.<sup>13</sup> In May 1864, the Rev. Mr. Friend reported only forty-three communicants among his three churches, noting

that a large proportion of his congregation has removed to different portions of the State in consequence of the exposed situation of their homes. The Parish has been completely devastated. The destitution of the people has been such that many families once wealthy can now hardly procure their daily bread – of course it has been impossible for them to contribute anything for church purposes.<sup>14</sup>

His report, he added, "is defective in many respects – the records of the church having been carried off by the Yankee spoilers."

In 1866, he remarked:

The temporal condition of the Parish is improving, but it is still in a depressed condition. Efforts are now making to restore Grace Church to the condition it was in before the war. The families of the congregations who had been scattered over the State, have nearly all returned to their desolated homes. The attendance upon the services of the church is now nearly as large as ever. There has been no marked change in the spiritual state of the Church, save that of an increased and earnest attendance upon her service.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Journal of the Sixty-Eighth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia*, 65.

<sup>13</sup> Roberston, *Stonewall Jackson: The Man, The Soldier, The Legend*, pp 683-685

<sup>14</sup> *Journal of the Sixty-ninth Annual Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia*, 59.

<sup>15</sup> *Journal of the Seventy-first Annual Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia*, 65.

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On Sunday, May 15, 1870, the Rev. Mr. Friend was seized by “apoplexy” and paralysis while delivering his sermon in Grace Church. He was taken to the nearby home of a doctor, where he had several convulsions and died the following morning at age sixty-three. From the *Journals* of the Diocese of Virginia, it appears that throughout his service to three churches, including Grace, the Rev. Mr. Friend officiated 246 baptisms, 106 marriages, and 226 funerals for white and African American persons, and prepared 103 (one of whom was African American) for confirmation by bishops. He was highly esteemed by his parish, as commemorated by the St. Peter’s Church Vestry Resolution on May 23, 1870, stating “In the death of William Friend, the Church has lost one of its best and most guileless members...”<sup>16</sup> A marble baptismal font was donated to Grace Church by the Rev. Mr. Friend’s wife as a memorial to her husband, the church’s first rector, inscribed, “In Memoriam—Wm Friend, Rector of this Church for 38 years.”

Other ministers at Grace Church during its period of significance include the Rev. Mr. Alexander Shiras (1851-1853), the Rev. Mr. Henry Wall (1853-1855), and the Rev. Mr. James Poindexter (1870-1888). Services continued to be held with little change in the size of the congregation until families were dislocated, just a few months before the U.S. entered World War II, with the June 11, 1941, establishment of Fort A.P. Hill, a U.S. Army installation, on 77,332 acres adjacent to the church. Grace Church then closed as members moved and transferred to other churches, though it was used by the military for services during World War II.

### **Criterion A: Military Significance**

The vital location of Grace Church on a primary transportation corridor between Richmond and Fredericksburg made it a convenient hospital site for wounded Confederate soldiers during the Civil War as well as the headquarters for troop meetings. Many of the wounded were buried at Grace Church, but after the war their graves were removed elsewhere. On August 6, 1861, a “Soldiers’ Aid Society” was formed by the ladies of Grace Church to “aid and comfort the S[o]ldiers now fighting the battles of our Country.” They met every Tuesday at 9 a.m. and sewed items for the soldiers. Meals were provided to soldiers by the Dickenson family at *Chestnut Valley*, which also served as headquarters for other Confederate troops.<sup>17</sup>

Following his December 1862 victory at the battle of Fredericksburg, Confederate General Robert E. Lee directed his troops to build winter quarters. General Jackson’s division took a southern position, building a camp at *Moss Neck* in Caroline County, from which he issued instructions for each day to his division commanders. General Daniel Hill, Jackson’s brother-in-law, settled his division in the nearby vicinity of Grace Church, which he used as his headquarters until his nearly immediate reassignment to North Carolina. The division headquarters at Grace Church then was presided over by General Robert Rodes, who

<sup>16</sup> Fall, *Hidden Village: Port Royal, Virginia 1744-1981*, 249-250.

<sup>17</sup> Farmer, *Works Progress Administration of Virginia Historical Inventory*, 1936 “Grace Episcopal Church.” “Grace Episcopal Church,” *The Spur: Life in Virginia Past and Present* Vol. 5, No. IX, 3. Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, Survey Form 16-11, 1972. *Caroline County Historical Guide Book, Commonwealth of Virginia*, 63.

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commanded five brigades comprising 22 regiments and four artillery batteries. The men from three of the regiments in “Rodes’s Brigade” took up a collection for the benefit of the people of war-torn Fredericksburg. The second week of January, Rodes sent Major Eugene Blackford into town to present the mayor with funds totaling 1,950 in Confederate dollars.<sup>18</sup>

Letters written by soldiers camped at Grace Church depict a brutal winter in 1863, as well as a wet and dreary spring. Working in the cold without tents and ranging increasingly farther from Grace Church to find firewood, they were constantly hungry and presented a haggard appearance. In mid-January, Thomas Coffey of the Third Alabama in Rodes’s Brigade wrote to his wife, “I am leaner than I have been in a long time, and if you ever read Cervantes’ description of Don Quixote, you have my photograph.” On February 16 he wrote, “A fellow sometimes don’t get a chance to change his rags more than once per month, and when such is the case the lice get so numerous that they tote a fellow clean away.” The following day his letter stated “An intensely cold day. All suffered, as clothing is not heavy, and many have none or very poor shoes.”<sup>19</sup>

In spite of the difficult conditions, Rodes continued to train his division camped at and around Grace Church. He took advantage of the winter lull to create a battalion of volunteer sharpshooters for emergencies, comprising four of the best shots from each company in the brigade. He also drilled the soldiers daily on quick maneuvers using an updated government-subsidized version of the standard U.S. infantry manual titled *Tactics*, by William Hardee, an instructor at West Point. Published in 1855, it considered the range and accuracy of the rifled musket when ordering increased speeds of march and deployment. Coffey wrote his wife that “old Rodes would die if he could not have the men double-quicking five hours a day,” though the diligent leader did excuse the men from drilling on the Sabbath and on “wash day,” which usually fell on a Saturday.<sup>20</sup>

There were some diversions from the monotony of the daily drills and stress of frigid conditions, including occasional games such as “cat,” “Bull Pen,” and “town-ball,” as well as leave time spent in Richmond. In mid- or late January, Rodes’s wife joined him in living quarters that proved amenable for the conception of their first child. During a one-foot-deep snow in early February, two of the brigades marched out from camp, formed up, and battled each other in a two-hour snowball fight.<sup>21</sup>

As the division headquarters, Grace Church served as the locale for both staff meetings and sacred worship. On one occasion, an angry regimental quartermaster seeking intervention rode his horse straight to Rodes’s headquarters, strode down the aisle to the altar, and interrupted the meeting; Rodes handled the intrusion diplomatically. After attending the Sunday service there on March 15, 1863, one of the soldiers wrote in his diary, “I shook hands with Genl Rodes who

<sup>18</sup> *Journal of the Sixty-eighth Annual Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia*, 65.  
Collins, *Major General Robert E. Rodes of the Army of Northern Virginia*, 183, 184, 189.

<sup>19</sup> Collins, 190.

<sup>20</sup> IBID, 183, 190, 191.

<sup>21</sup> IBID, 191.

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attended preaching.”<sup>22</sup> According to a neighbor at *Chestnut Valley*, General Jackson “attended the Old Grace Church at every service. When he entered and when he left, everyone stood until he had seated himself or had gone out of the church.”<sup>23</sup> Yet it does not appear that it was the presence of such dignitaries that filled the church with worshippers. On March 27, Frank Meadows of Rodes’s Brigade wrote his sister

Some of the boys says there is preaching at Grace Church. I will stop writing for a while and go. Maybe when I return I can tell you something about the sermon. I didn’t get to the church. I met several on the road who told me there was no chance to hear anything, that church and church yard is crowded with young soldiers, the professors of religion and worldly minded. All are assembled there for the same purpose. No part of them there simply to see and be seen; but I believe all are there to acknowledge the Lord as their God and that with him rests the destinies of nations.”<sup>24</sup>

On April 29, 1863, Rodes received news that General Joseph Hooker, commander of the Army of the Potomac, was crossing the Rappahannock River at Fredericksburg. In predawn darkness, Rodes ordered his division to prepare for departure. The men immediately began packing equipment, loading wagons, cooking rations, dismantling tents, distributing ammunition, inspecting weapons, and marching north, arriving at 10 a.m. at Hamilton’s Crossing, a depot on the Richmond & Fredericksburg Railroad three miles southeast of Fredericksburg. Two days later, they led the march to Chancellorsville.<sup>25</sup> General Rodes was later killed at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battle of Winchester on September 19, 1864. While Rodes’s division did not return to Grace Church, it appears that the building continued to provide a haven for Confederate soldiers. On the interior walls of the church storage room, names penciled by Confederate soldiers and the date 1865 remain visible.

Grace Church is significant for its association with General Rodes’s winter headquarters between the battles at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. The building reflects its important historical association in a tangible way as it stands unchanged, including the pews and altar referenced in soldiers’ journals and the physical evidence of their graffiti.

### **Criterion C: Architecture**

Grace Church is the oldest Episcopal church in Caroline County. It is historically significant for its architectural design, which reflects the spiritual and cultural evolution of the Anglican/Episcopal denomination. The Anglican Church was brought to Virginia by the first permanent settlers in Jamestown and became the established church of the colony. In 1619 an act of the House of Burgesses declared all residents of Virginia members of the Church of England. Following the Revolutionary War, however, the Anglican church was disestablished as the state church, thereby losing its reliable source of income through taxation, and Acts of the General

<sup>22</sup> IBID, 192.

<sup>23</sup> Anonymous, “The Reminiscences of Carrie Morton.”

<sup>24</sup> Meadows, “Camp Near Fredericksburg.”

<sup>25</sup> Collins, 195-198.



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Assembly in 1799 and 1802 permitted the state's seizure and sale of glebe lands given prior to 1777. In St. Mary's Parish, which comprised Caroline County as of 1728, the two colonial churches – Joy Creek Church and Old Mount Church – perished.<sup>26</sup>

Following the disestablishment of the Anglican church, there was a long period of decline, particularly in Virginia. Very few churches were built during the interval from 1776 to 1830, but in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the Protestant Episcopal denomination was revitalized. "The Diocese of Virginia arose phoenix-like from the ashes of near extinction."<sup>27</sup> This resurgence is credited largely to the strong leadership and evangelistic efforts first of the Right Reverend William Meade, then the Rev. Mr. Richard Channing Moore, who consecrated Grace Episcopal Church in Caroline County in 1834 and was made Bishop of Virginia in 1841.

With the revival of the Episcopal church in Virginia, two churches were built in St. Mary's Parish: Grace Church in Corbin (1833-1834) and St. Peter's Church in Port Royal (1833-1836). Construction of both churches commenced in 1833, but Grace Church was the first completed, presumably why it was considered the superior, "parent" church of the parish.<sup>28</sup>

The architecture of the 1834 building typifies the austerity of rural churches in the area as well as the conservatism of many of the area's wealthier residents. The interior is reminiscent of the rectangular style of colonial Anglican churches, which generally were plain – almost severe, lacking in ornamentation and primarily emphasizing the pulpit. More than other Protestant services, Anglican worship emphasized liturgy, and interior architectural arrangements reflected the priority of preaching over sacraments. The most prominent single feature inside was the high pulpit, placed in a location that would permit congregants to see the minister and hear the lessons and sermon. At Grace Church, the pulpit's placement a step higher than the pews exemplifies this early, auditory focus. Its location on the north side of the church rather than the center also is typical of most, if not all, Episcopal churches in the antebellum period until well after the Civil War. Ordered by the 1789 Prayer Book, this north-side placement was revised in 1835 from "north" to "right side," meaning right as seen from the clergyman's position on the rostrum.<sup>29</sup>

While Bishops Meade and Moore revived preaching in Virginia and stubbornly resisted evolving new trends in liturgy and worship, theological innovations gradually were being introduced into architectural design during the antebellum period commencing circa 1830. With British cultural influence waning considerably following the American Revolution and War of 1812, American designers looked to Greece, birthplace of democracy, for inspiration rather than their colonial roots in England. By introducing just a few Greek classical architectural elements, American

<sup>26</sup> Clark and Long, *A Guide to Church Records in the Library of Virginia*, 45.

Hayes, *A New Parish Register*, 11.

Episcopal Church, Diocese of Virginia. *Papers, 1709-1972, Caroline County, Grace Church*.

McAllister, "Architecture and Change in the Diocese of Virginia," 299.

<sup>27</sup> McAllister, 297.

<sup>28</sup> Hayes, *A New Parish Register*, 11.

Episcopal Church, Diocese of Virginia, *Papers, 1709-1972, Caroline County, Grace Church*.

<sup>29</sup> Davis and Rawlings, 30. Freeman, *Up from Independence, The Episcopal Church in Virginia*, 12.

McAllister, 299.

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builders set their own, more provincial standards. Antebellum churches became easily discernable from the unmistakably English colonial churches, thus forming an important part of the spiritual and cultural heritage of Virginia.<sup>30</sup>

Grace Church is a product of its time. Its 1833/1834 core is typical of colonial-influenced architecture, and the 1853/1854 addition represents the pared-down simplicity of the Greek Revival style found throughout Virginia in religious, political, and residential buildings between 1830 and 1860. The façade and moldings on the front addition exemplify the simple Greek Revival aesthetic. Wooden ornamentation replaces the stone or brick ornaments of the colonial period. Typical elements used at Grace Church include the gables with wooden pediments and wooden tympanum on the main gable, all painted white. In addition, Grace Church is a fine example of the extension of the lintel into the masonry at both ends, a distinctive feature of antebellum openings. Its rectangular transom over the front door is a popular Greek Revival feature, ingeniously incorporating lighting into the upper-floor gallery. Tall first-floor windows and shutter tiebacks, windows set in the entablature, side lights, and a fanlight with tracery set in the tympanum as a separate, unsupported lunette also are common classical features found at Grace Church. The windows in the gable and transom of the façade on Grace Church are among the surviving antebellum windows in which the muntins, which are thinner than colonial muntins, create an ornamental design.<sup>31</sup>

Additional exterior elements of the antebellum, Greek Revival style found at Grace Church include the plain, stone windowsills and surrounds that are less elaborate than doorways; molded panels on the doors; the original cedar-shingled roof; and the American brick bonding. Entire courses of stretchers or headers are common, or running, without the queen closers found on Flemish-bond colonial churches. Moreover, the bricks are red in color, rather than pink or orange, uniform in size, and smoother in texture than their earlier counterparts. Mortar joints are quite thin, and there is no rubbed-brick ornamentation at the sides of openings nor at the corners.<sup>32</sup>

An emphasis on ritual and ceremony during the service began to take hold in Episcopal worship during the antebellum period. Word-centered buildings were remodeled into Eucharist-centered ones. A centrally placed altar became the focus as the worship service emphasized the ritual of communion sacrament over the preaching at the pulpit that had dominated services during the colonial period. This theological trend was reflected in Episcopal architectural design in general, and in the 1853/1854 addition to Grace Church in particular with its recessed chancel and altar at the far end in the new, centrally placed projection behind the pulpit. Vestibules also were introduced into Virginia churches, as seen by the small foyer and ante-room included in the front addition to Grace Church. While doorways on exterior side walls marked almost every colonial

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<sup>30</sup> Davis and Rawlings, 1.

<sup>31</sup> Hayes, 8-10, 65.

Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945*, 27.

<sup>32</sup> Davis and Rawlings, 8.

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church in Virginia, entrances now were placed on the western or principal façade.<sup>33</sup> At Grace Church, the entrance always was on the western side.

Exterior and interior woodwork and stone fonts in churches built during the antebellum period all display moldings and other ornamentations that are not present in colonial churches. While Grace Church exhibits only the plainest Classical Revival, its *cyma-cum-bevel* is an excellent example of classical moldings and ornaments. Paneling is extraordinarily varied among antebellum churches, but rarely elegant, found principally on bench ends and sometimes on reveals of openings. The simple moldings on the interior doorway and door reveal and the recessed altar area at Grace Church exemplify this trend. Additional distinctions found at Grace Church that differ from earlier, colonial-era design include the uncomfortable, white-painted pews with slanted backs standing around 37" high and lack of evidence of kneeling shelves. Nor was there any other color, as antebellum churches were a study in natural and white finishes both inside and out. The generous use of paint on pews and interior woodwork brightened and lightened the rooms, serving to attract new members or retain more cultivated worshippers. While most antebellum chancels have square pickets, some are arcaded and in rare cases turned, as are those at Grace Church. The baptismal font at Grace Church typifies the antebellum font, which generally was narrower, deeper, and made of more ordinary stone than the colonial-era design.<sup>34</sup>

Ecclesiastical decorations at Grace Church were added later. Lucy F. Dickenson, daughter of one of the church's founders, William Dickenson of *Chestnut Valley*, married Charles Herbert Pierson of England. His siblings followed to Caroline County, and *Chestnut Valley* became the Pierson home in Virginia. They had been members of the Church of England, Herbert an ordained minister, and all became active members of Grace Church. Brother Arthur B. Pierson studied art in England, and while visiting his Virginia family in 1872 became interested in the restoration of the church following the Civil War. Before returning to England in 1875, at age 21 he painted *The Ascension of Christ* using a transparent cloth for his canvas. He placed it between two sheets of glass and hung it in front of a window behind the altar to appear like then-popular stained glass. In 1910, Charles Herbert Pierson cut a walnut tree at *Chestnut Valley* to construct an altar table, missal stand, and cross for the church. Sister Ann Pierson, also an artist who had run a woodworking shop and studio in Leeds, England, added decorative carvings to the altar table. Brother Thomas Pierson played a Mason & Hamlin reed pump organ at Grace Church for twenty years.<sup>35</sup> These additions to the church indicate the reorientation of Virginia Episcopalians toward more elaborate display.

Another important architectural addition at Grace Church is the gallery built for enslaved African Americans. While most Virginia Episcopalians were at ease with slavery, the church encouraged

<sup>33</sup> Davis and Rawlings, 13-15. McAllister, 304.

<sup>34</sup> Davis and Rawlings, 7, 15-16, 20, 25, 27, 38, 72, 108.

Lounsbury, Carl. "God is in the Details: The Transformation of Ecclesiastical Architecture in Early Nineteenth-Century America," 18.

<sup>35</sup> Welsh, 397-399.

Anderson. "Historic Church Resurrected for Tour."  
*The Spur, Life in Virginia, Past and Present.*

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outreach to the enslaved as well as to free African Americans. Indeed, in May 1834, the Rev. Mr. Friend reported to the annual convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia that “systematic efforts are now being made for the religious instruction of the slaves.”<sup>36</sup> Services initially were held at Grace Church for white planters in the morning, and classes were held in the afternoon for the religious instruction of African Americans.<sup>37</sup> The second-floor gallery added in 1853 allowed both races to attend the same service, albeit still segregated, with African Americans relegated to the gallery.

Grace Episcopal Church is a significant part of the architectural, social, and cultural history of Caroline County, and the history and values of the local Episcopal community. Its architecture reflects the introduction of the Greek Revival style during the antebellum era, albeit simplified for the rural area, and the segregated services that began in 1853 and reflect the social and political order of the time. As a historical and architectural landmark, Grace Church is locally significant for quality craftsmanship and artistry, and features a textbook example of two Greek Revival elements: the cyma-cum-bevel molding and ornamental muntin design. It has remained intact and in good condition since its construction, retaining its historic appearance, physical materials, design features, and aspects of its original construction.

As one of the few antebellum period churches in Caroline County and Tidewater Virginia that have survived relatively unaltered – and the oldest and one of only two remaining Episcopal churches in St. Mary’s Parish – Grace Church is both interesting and instructive and should be preserved. While quaint rather than elegant, it represents an important historic survival. With original louvered shutters, pews, plaster walls, wood flooring, and woodwork, and without the addition of plumbing, heating, or electricity, Grace Church is a quite reliable historical guide.

Historic artifacts include a silver communion chalice and plate; a wooden collection plate; an original oil lamp and backing; a candelabra; two wooden lectionaries, one free-standing and the other table top for the pulpit; 1856 lectern Bible; 1870 baptismal font; 1875 painting by Arthur Pierson titled *The Ascension of Christ*; 1910 altar table, cross, and missal stand; and Mason & Hamlin reed pump organ.

In addition to its valuable architectural features, cultural representations, and the important contributions of its first minister, the strategic location of Grace Church is notable. Easily accessible, it facilitated community gatherings and military usage in the past and is projected for religious repurposing and community outreach by the Virginia Episcopal Diocese.

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<sup>36</sup> Hawks, 310.

<sup>37</sup> Farmer. IBID. Bond and Gendersen, “*The Episcopal Church in Virginia, 1607-2007*,” 228.

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**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, Richmond, VA

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** VDHR #016-0011

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 0.62 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38.198889 | Longitude: -77.388056 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 3. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |



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4. Latitude: Longitude:

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The true and correct historic boundaries are shown on the attached Location Map. The boundaries are drawn to conform to the perimeter of the parcel recorded as Tax Map No. 8 A 82 in Caroline County government records.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.).

The boundaries are drawn to include the church building and associated historic cemetery as well as the land that historically has been associated with Grace Episcopal Church and its historic setting between 1833/1834 and 1940/1941. All known historic resources are included within the boundaries. Areas associated with the lengthy military encampment at the property during the Civil War are now part of Fort A. P. Hill, a still-active U.S. Army installation, and are not included in this nomination.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Mary Randolph Nichols Corbin  
organization: N/A  
street & number: 3459 Fredericksburg Turnpike  
city or town: Woodford state: Virginia zip code: 22580  
e-mail: rannycorbin5@gmail.com  
telephone: Home: (540) 371-3608; Cell: (540) 809-4506  
date: March 7, 2018

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Grace Episcopal Church

City or Vicinity: Corbin

County: Caroline

State: Virginia

Photographer: Alexandra Cespiva Darron

Date Photographed: October 11, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 8. VA\_CarolineCounty\_GraceEpiscopalChurch\_0001  
View: Church, west elevation, camera facing east

2 of 8. VA\_CarolineCounty\_GraceEpiscopalChurch\_0002  
View: Church and Cemetery, east elevation, camera facing west

3 of 8. VA\_CarolineCounty\_GraceEpiscopalChurch\_0003  
View: Church and Cemetery, north elevation, camera facing south

4 of 8. VA\_CarolineCounty\_GraceEpiscopalChurch\_0004  
View: Church, south elevation, camera facing north

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- 5 of 8. VA\_CarolineCounty\_GraceEpiscopalChurch\_0005  
View: Church, interior altar, camera facing east
- 6 of 8. VA\_CarolineCounty\_GraceEpiscopalChurch\_0006  
View: Church, interior rear of church, camera facing west
- 7 of 8. VA\_CarolineCounty\_GraceEpiscopalChurch\_0007  
View: Graffiti in rear storage area, camera facing east
- 8 of 8. VA\_CarolineCounty\_Grace EpiscopalChurch\_0008  
View: Painting over altar, camera facing east

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



**LOCATION MAP**

**Grace Episcopal Church**

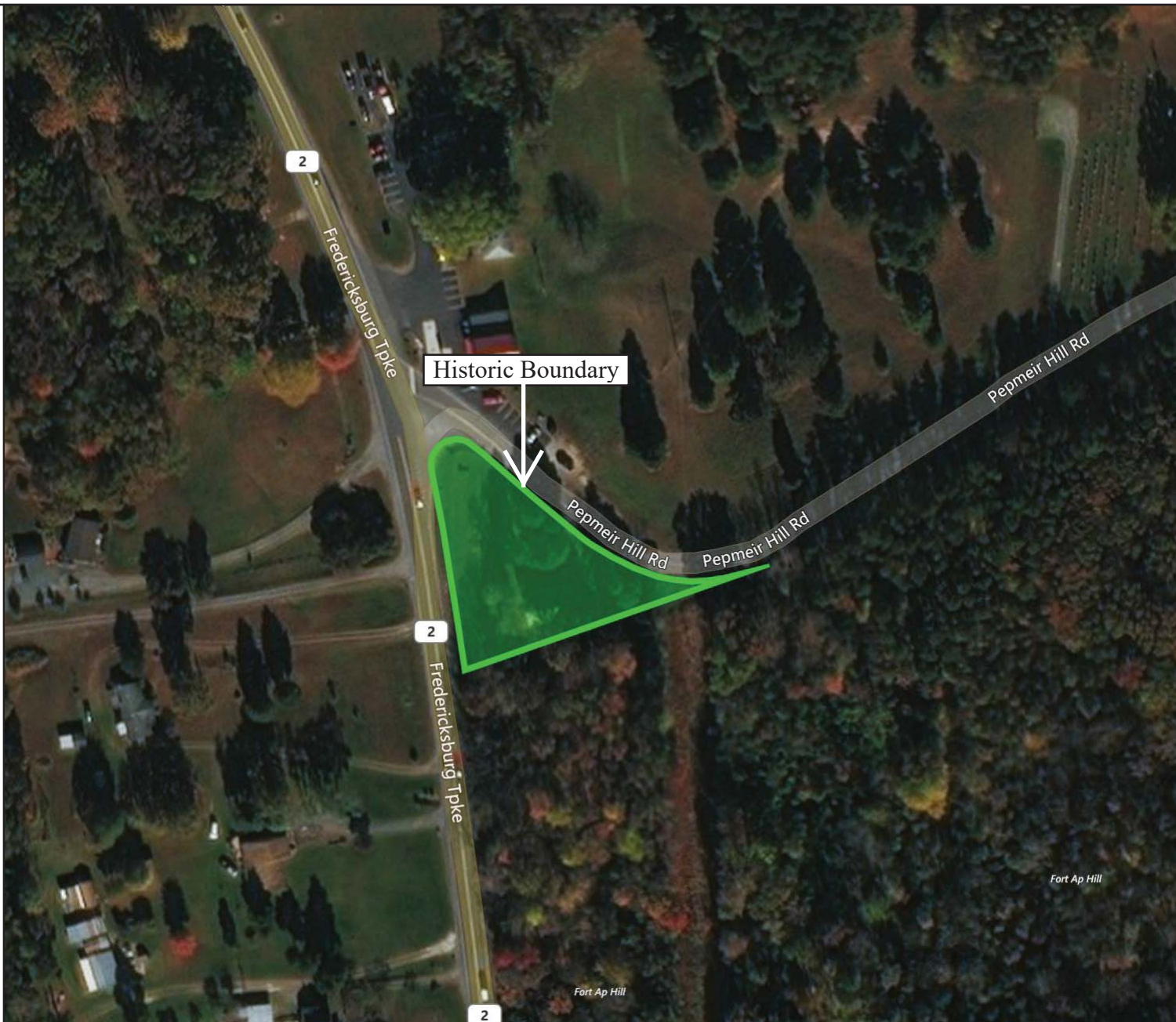
**Caroline County**

**DHR No. 016-0011**

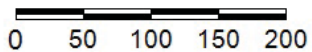
**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Latitude: 38.198889

Longitude: -77.388056



Feet



1:2,257 / 1"=188 Feet

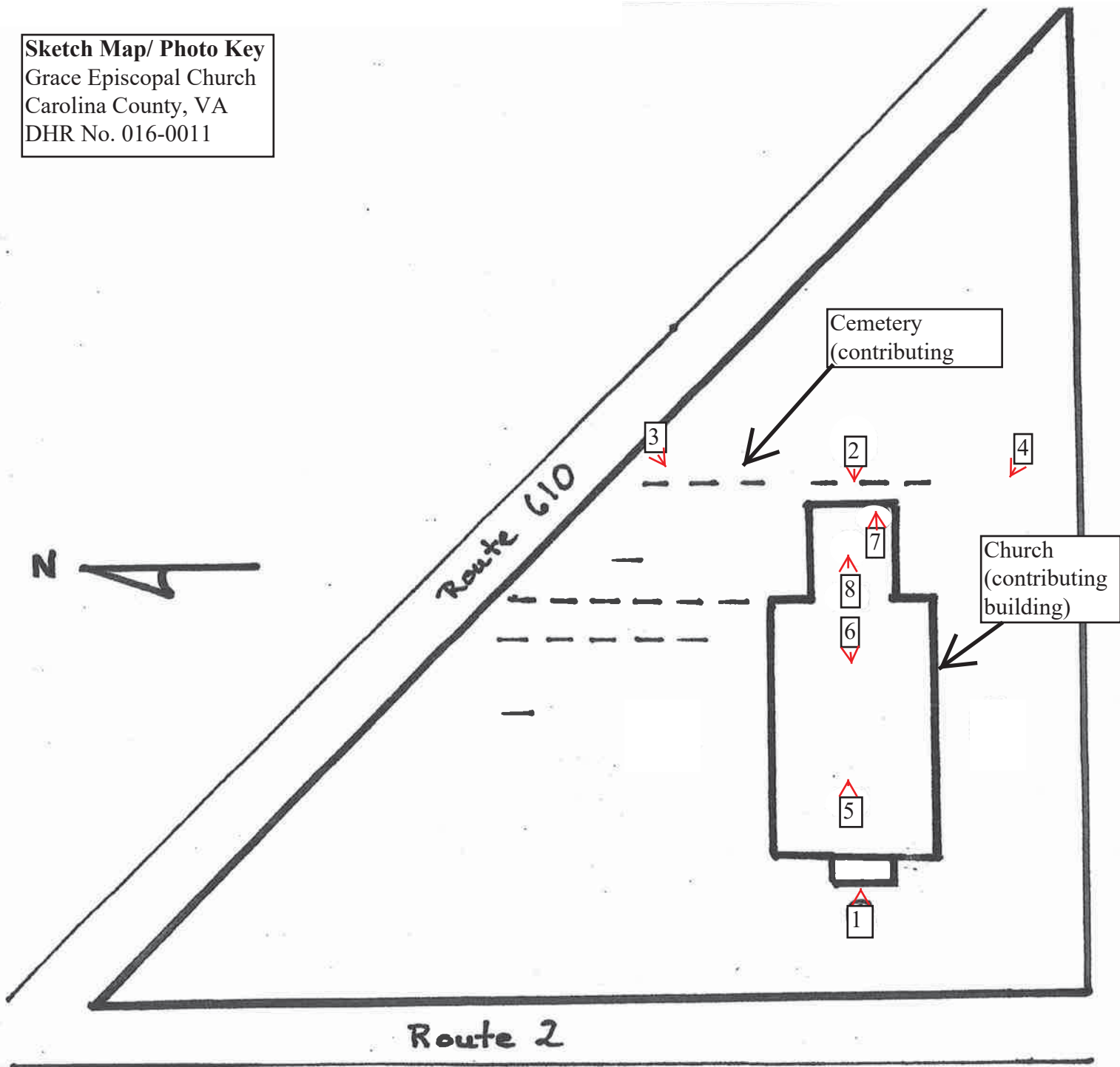
**Title: Digital Location Map**

**Date: 4/24/2018**

*DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.*

*Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.*

**Sketch Map/ Photo Key**  
 Grace Episcopal Church  
 Carolina County, VA  
 DHR No. 016-0011



**PHOTO KEY:**

- 1. Church, west elevation, camera facing east
- 2. Church and Cemetery, east elevation, camera facing west
- 3. Church and Cemetery, north elevation, camera facing south
- 4. Church, south elevation, camera facing north
- 5. Church, interior altar, camera facing east
- 6. Church, interior rear of church, camera facing west
- 7. Graffiti in rear storage area, camera facing east
- 8. Painting over altar, camera facing east

**Dashes indicate gravestones**

 Photo Locations