

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Amherst Baptist Church

Other names/site number: Second Stage Amherst; DHR # 163-0022

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 190-194 Second St

City or town: Amherst State: VA County: Amherst

Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___X___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___A ___B ___X___C ___D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Virginia Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ Title : State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

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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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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>3</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>3</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
RELIGION/church-related residence

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/business
COMMERCE/TRADE/professional
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant
COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
RECREATION&CULTURE/auditorium
RECREATION&CULTURE/theater
RECREATION&CULTURE/music facility
RECREATION&CULTURE/museum

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/ Italianate

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/ Late Gothic Revival

LATE VICTORIAN/ Romanesque

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/ Colonial Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; STONE/slate; 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.)

Summary Paragraph

The evolved building historically known as Amherst Baptist Church stands in the Town of Amherst on the southwest corner at the intersection of Second and Washington Streets. The Town of Amherst is the county seat of Amherst County and the intersection is east of the county courthouse complex. Amherst County is in the Piedmont area of the state and is north of the City of Lynchburg. The former church building stands on a knoll which is a 1.14-acre lot. It is separated from Second Street by a sidewalk and small lawn on the north; there is a lawn separating the church from the paved parking lot on the west. On the south is a larger lawn containing two contributing buildings: a 1949 brick, two-story, Colonial Revival style parsonage and a 1949 brick, single-car garage. To the east, there is a gravel parking area on Washington Street. In 2006, the entire lot was sold to Amherst County. In 2015, Second Stage Amherst, a non-profit organization, requested to use the building for community service as an event site and a place for small businesses to operate. The parsonage serves as additional county office space and the garage is used by Second Stage for storage. Significant features of the church building include tall, segmental-arch windows with Gothic tracery, Romanesque Revival brick corbelling in the front gable, the 1908 tower containing both Romanesque Revival and Italianate elements, the Colonial Revival style entry with fan light, and the 1925 Gothic Revival addition with polygonal facade. The property has no non-contributing resources. The property has very good integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association as a small church first erected in 1882 and added on to as the

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congregation grew during the early to mid-twentieth century. Although modest in size and architectural detailing, the parsonage and garage are in keeping with the former church's design, scale, and materials.

Narrative Description

Former Church, contributing building, 1882 with later additions

Exterior Description

The brick building historically known as Amherst Baptist Church stands on the northern edge of the southwest corner of Second and Washington streets in the Town of Amherst. This building is today a multi-purpose community building known as Second Stage Amherst. The building is oriented toward the parking lot located north of the building, rather than toward the adjacent Second Street. The west side of the building is the main elevation. It is separated from a paved parking area by a lawn. A sidewalk from Second Street intersects the sidewalk from the parking lot; in the parking lot there is a mature oak tree. The sidewalk runs to the entry on the south side of the building. There is a small garden south of the building's corner polygonal bay containing small boxwoods. Mature boxwoods are planted along the west and south sides of the 1925 addition between the building and the sidewalk. In the south yard there is a mature Magnolia. The parsonage and garage stand to the south and southwest of the church building. There are mature shrubs at the eastern side of the building.

The church building was constructed in four phases between 1882 and 1955. The main block was constructed in 1882, the Romanesque Revival entry tower on the west facade in 1908, the Gothic Revival south addition in 1925, and the east (rear) addition in 1955. The original block's west facade is laid in running bond and its north elevation (parallel to Second Street) was constructed in 4:1 common bond, except for the single-bay extension on the eastern end, seen as the fifth (easternmost) bay on the north elevation, with slightly different brickwork laid in five-course rather than four-course common bond. The 1925 and 1955 sections were constructed in 5:1 common bond. The main block of the building has an east-west axis with a gable end on the western side of the building which is where the main entry is located. The exposed foundation of the main block is stuccoed to about a foot above the ground. The gable roof and pyramid roof of the tower are sheathed in slate. The remaining additions have flat roofs. There are a total of four brick chimney flues on the south side of the building. Italianate eave brackets remain on the tower, but the decorative eave brackets of the building, as seen in 1979 survey photos, were removed when the church put vinyl around the exposed wooden details of the building sometime during the 1980s.

The 1882 building and 1925 south addition exhibit multiple elements of various architectural styles, including Italianate, Gothic Revival, Romanesque Revival, and Colonial Revival styles. This building is one of four churches in Amherst County that contain similar elements and were built around the same period. They are the Amherst Baptist Church, differentiated by its tower, the

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nearby Amherst Presbyterian Church (1881, DHR# 163-5008), the original Central Baptist Church (1885, DHR# 005-5179), and Ivy Hill Methodist Church (1885).¹

The original 1882 rectangular building has the aforementioned extension on the eastern end, the fifth (easternmost) bay. The five-bay north exterior wall has buttresses, and most of the windows are tall nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows with a fixed-sash segmented arch and gothic tracery atop each window. The windows have yellow tint glass. Every window is decorated with Italianate brick segmental arches and brick corbeling over each window. The vinyl-clad frieze extends beneath the eaves. The west or main elevation has decorative Romanesque Revival corbeling in the gable end and gable end returns.²

In 1909, the church erected an Italianate-style brick tower in running bond at the west entry. This tower has a pyramid roof with brackets at the eaves. The main entry on the front (west elevation) of the tower has narrow, paneled double-leaf doors with a fanlight transom above the doors. The north and south sides of the lower portion of the tower both have a single one-over-one double-hung sash window. The central section of the tower has a fixed pane single-light sash on all three exposed sides. All of the tower windows are spanned by splayed jack arches. The upper portion of the tower has brick corbeling on three sides, and below the eaves are double arched, louvered vents.³

The third phase of construction was the 1925 Gothic Revival-style wing onto the entire south side of the 1882 building. The two-story wing has a flat roof and three brick chimney flues. There is a decorative cast concrete band around the top portion of the wall. The western façade has a polygonal bay with decorative brickwork, and the bricks are laid in running bond, like the original portion of the church. The center windows of the bay are 8/8 double-hung sash windows. On the outer sides there are three 6/6 double-hung sash windows. There is a single-leaf entry having a large single light located in the lower north side of the bay. The south elevation of this addition is

¹ Ivy Hill Methodist Church is located at 1143 Indian Creek Road (Tax Map Parcel 28 A 18). The current brick edifice replaced the 1832 frame church built by William Waller (1789-1849) of Forest Hill (DHR #005-0108). This was built by two local men: Charles H. Tucker (1838-1910), a brick mason and Samuel C. Kirkpatrick (1839-1901), carpenter. In 1890, the roof was blown off and soon replaced. In 1933, the north wall collapsed due to a storm and was rebuilt. Today, the building is privately owned and used for special events. Holly Mills, "Scrapbooks reveal rich Amherst County history," *News and Advance* (Lynchburg), March 23, 2011, updated July 2, 2020, accessed September 19, 2020, https://newsadvance.com/new_era_progress/news/local/scrapbooks-reveal-rich-amherst-county-history/article_c445ba17-540c-5884-a98d-19e39bflae38.html?mode=jqm; "Highlights of 2006 Home Tour," accessed September 19, 2020, amherstcountymuseum.org/tour2006.html.

² The original church appears in an aerial photo of the Town of Amherst taken prior to 1925 that is part of the Jones Memorial Library collection. The original wall decoration is preserved behind the tower. The men who constructed the building are unknown but they could be the same men who are mentioned in an 1885 newspaper article about the construction of Central Baptist Church. One of them, S.C. Kirkpatrick, was also the contractor responsible for the 1873 Amherst Courthouse. *Valley Virginian*, February 19, 1885, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com.

³ Bernice L. Hunt, and Roy E. Hunt, *History of the Amherst Baptist Church: 1882-1982*, 1982, 6.

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laid in 5:1 common bond. There are five bays on each story. The lower windows are 6/6 double-hung sashes, and the upper story has 1/1 double-hung sash windows.⁴

The last addition to the building was the large three-story c. 1955 addition built across the entire rear (west) elevations of both the 1882 and 1925 additions. Largely devoid of ornamentation, the walls are laid in 5:1 common bond. This addition resulted in renovations to both the exterior and interior of the building. The windows on the first and second stories are all 6/6 double-hung sashes topped with flat arches of soldier bricks. The basement level has 3/3 double-hung sashes. This section has a flat roof that adjoins the 1925 addition except where a gable was created and sheathed in slate to match the original building. This addition caused the church to enlarge the area where the apse existed, creating the fifth (easternmost) bay with slightly different brickwork. On the north and south elevations are two stacked single-leaf entries allowing access to the main floor and the basement. These doors have nine lights in the upper portion of the door. There is a brick exterior staircase with concrete risers leading to the main story and another set of concrete risers to the basement. The south elevation has an asymmetrical arrangement of bays. A cast concrete stringcourse extends above the second-story windows, similar to the string course on the 1925 addition's south wall. The west (rear) elevation has four bays at each story. The north elevation exhibits the extension to the original building with different colored bricks from the original wall. This extension creates a fifth bay along the original north elevation of the church. The 1955 addition section has engaged buttresses like the 1882 building and has three bays across both stories. The current building with all additions measures 50 x 100 feet.

Interior Description

Ante-room and Sanctuary/ Main Hall

Inside the entry tower on the west façade is an anteroom. The floor consists of slate tile. The wall has wooden raised panel wainscot with a chair rail and wooden walls above the chair rail to the ceiling and a narrow crown molding at the junction of the ceiling and wall. The paneling and tile were later installations, possibly around 1950. On the east wall there is a double-leaf swinging door into the sanctuary/main hall. Each leaf has a single light in the top third of the door and a raised wooden panel in the bottom. The molding around the doors contain turned corner blocks.

The sanctuary, now the main hall, has undergone periodic renovations beginning in 1885 to 1955. The earliest layout of the nave and apse area is unknown. There are two photos of the interior in the 1940s featured in a book on the Town of Amherst. The interior in the 1940s had a center aisle down the nave with rows of wooden pews on each side. The north end of the nave, at the apse wall, had risers and pews and was used as the choir loft. The apse wall had a rounded arch opening, and the apse area was accessed by three risers from the nave floor. The rear wall of the apse featured a tripartite stained-glass window. The window opened; it was used to hide the

⁴ Hunt, 9; and *Times Dispatch*, August 1, 1924, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com; *Times Dispatch*, November 17, 1924, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com; and *Times Dispatch*, June 6, 1925, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com.

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baptistery when it was not in use. The pulpit was set in the archway. The 1908 pressed tin ceiling was present as were c. 1930 pendant lights. The wooden pews featured a trefoil cutout and a carved top.⁵

1925 Addition

This addition to the south wall of the nave is two stories high. The purpose was to increase the nave when necessary and to add classrooms along the rear of the church. Access to the second story is provided by a stair added to the west wall, attached to a balcony that ran along the south wall. The intact banister and railing have square posts with square balusters and newel post. The pastor's office was located in the southwest corner at the top of the stairs. There were wooden folding panels that divided the rooms on both floors. The panels were replaced with a solid wall, probably in 1950, on the second floor. At the same time, the wooden dividers on the first floor were replaced with cloth-covered accordion doors. The last wood panel divider, centered in the first-floor room, was removed when the coffee shop was installed. The first floor retains its early-period pressed-tin ceiling.

1955 Addition and Later Renovations

In 1955, renovations took place in the main room of the original building and in the 1925 wing. Black and white checked linoleum was placed over the wooden floors of the nave and the ground floor of the 1925 wing. The apse area was enlarged and redecorated in the Neo-Classical Revival style, which was a popular style used for Baptist Churches of that era. The floor was raised and extended into the nave from the apse wall. This created a stage-like area and contained the pulpit, and three tiered rows of risers for the choir loft. The apse wall was opened and framed by fluted pilasters with composite capitals supporting an entablature. A new, copper-lined baptistery pool was installed behind the rear wall of the apse and the pool area is part of the rear apse wall. It is framed by pilasters and engaged columns like those of the apse wall supporting an entablature. In the 1960s, much of the sanctuary and 1925 addition were carpeted including the apse area, stairs and balcony. New, simple, wooden pews replaced those of the 1940s photographs. There were twelve pews placed on each side of the center aisle. The c. 1930 interior pendant lights were replaced with the existing pendant lights.

1955 Classroom Addition

This addition has three stories. The basement is an open room with exterior access. It has a linoleum tile floor, exposed concrete block walls, and a dropped ceiling. There are two small bathrooms with original fixtures on the west wall. In the southwest corner there is a kitchen. This kitchen was renovated as part of a Boy Scout Eagle project around 2017. The main stair hall for this area is in the southwest corner. The upper floors have a hall running west from the stair and a hall running north from the stair. On both stories of the west hall, there are two classrooms on each floor. These rooms are on the south side of the hall and have partial glass walls. The north hall has

⁵ Robert C. Wimer, Leah Settle Gibbs, Patty Walton Turpin, Thurman B. Davis, and James D. Settle, *Amherst: from Tavern to a Town* (Lynchburg, VA: Blackwell Press, 2010), 61 and 103.

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three rooms on the east side, on both floors. The main floor has two large restrooms and access to the baptistery on the west side of the wall. This area retains its original fixtures. There is another hall running west along the north wall that leads to the apse. The second floor had one small restroom on the west wall with original fixtures and another classroom which was used for a church library.

Second Stage Amherst

Second Stage Amherst took possession of the building in 2015, and there were alterations to renovate and rehabilitate the building for its new uses. Handicapped bathrooms were created from two classrooms on the first floor. In the sanctuary, the risers and choir loft dividers were removed to create a stage. The pews and carpeting were removed around 2016-2017, and the black and white linoleum was exposed in the nave and 1925 addition. In 2019, a coffee bar was installed in the eastern end of the 1925 addition. Many of the classrooms have been renovated and rehabilitated to fit the needs of those businesses using the rooms.⁶

Outbuildings

Parsonage, Contributing Building, 1949

The parsonage, built in 1949, is a running bond brick, two-story house with a basement, designed in the Colonial Revival style with minimal ornamentation. The house is located to the southwest of the church. Its position creates a courtyard at the front yard of the church property between the church and the parking lot. The exposed foundation of the house is stuccoed. It has a side-gable roof sheathed in asphalt shingles. The windows are varied sizes of six-over-six double-hung sash windows at all levels except the basement, where there are two-light louvered windows. There is an exterior brick chimney on the east gable end. The building is currently used for office space and has been altered to accommodate these offices.

The main elevation faces north. It has three symmetrical bays across the first and second stories. The single-leaf entry is centered between the windows of the first story. The entry is accessed by an open concrete stoop. The door surround has an arched molding with dentils over the door, spanning fluted pilasters flanking the door. The windows have attached decorative louvered shutters. The east elevation has a one story, two-bay, concrete, shed-roofed porch with access to the porch from the north by means of a concrete stair of four risers. There is a single-leaf entry on the northeast corner of the house. The rear or south elevation has asymmetrical fenestration. There is a single-bay stoop with a stair to the main floor and a single-leaf entry. The entry to the basement is beneath the stoop. The west elevation has a gable window.

Garage, Contributing Building, 1949

The single-car garage, built in 1949, is located to the southeast of the parsonage. An access road from the front parking lot to the rear parking lot separates the garage from the house and

⁶ A local artisan created the meeting table in the first floor meeting room. It was made from pews that were removed from the main hall.

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church yard. It is built of brick in the running bond pattern. It is built at grade without a foundation, and has a gable roof with asphalt shingles. The gable end entry faces east and has a solid double-leaf entry. The north and south elevations are devoid of fenestration. The west elevation has a single window with a two-light fixed sash.

Integrity Assessment

The Amherst Baptist Church possesses integrity of location and setting as all three contributing buildings are at their original locations and there are no non-contributing resources on the property. A historic-era residential neighborhood is west of the church, while newer commercial and government buildings are north of Second Street (behind plantings of mature trees) and east of Washington Street. The property's integrity of design, workmanship and materials are also very good. The original 1882 church building evolved over time as the congregation grew, but the additions were designed to harmonize with the original building, as exemplified by the buttresses with sloped weatherings on the north wall of the 1955 addition and the cast concrete string course on the 1955 addition's south wall, as well as consistent use of red brick walls and large windows with white wooden trim. The character-defining west entry tower is largely unaltered, retaining the original tall, paneled double-leaf doors topped with a fanlight, decorative brickwork, arched louvers, brackets, and pyramid roof clad with slate. Adaptive reuse of the former church building as a community theater space and venue for small businesses has not resulted in substantial alterations to character-defining exterior and interior features. The church building's historic floorplan has not been altered. Some secondary spaces, such as two classrooms that were converted to restrooms and a coffee shop in the 1925 addition, have new uses but these do not detract from the historic design as each was placed within an existing space. The 1955 addition now hosts several small businesses in former classrooms. Historic flooring, trim, and ceiling finishes have been retained. The former parsonage and garage, both contributing buildings, have had few alterations since their construction in 1949. Both buildings retain their original massing and exterior materials. Collectively, the three buildings create a small campus interspersed with modest plantings and flanked by parking lots to the north and south of the buildings. The property retains integrity of feeling as a church dating to the late 19th century with appropriately scaled and designed updates through the first half of the twentieth century. As an example of ecclesiastical design in the Town of Amherst, the property has integrity of association even though it no longer is used as a church.

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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

Period of Significance

1882-1955

Significant Dates

1882

1908

1925

1955

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.)

The former church building known historically as Amherst Baptist Church is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Criteria Consideration A for religious buildings does not apply because the property is no longer owned by a church or used for religious purposes. The edifice exhibits many details of the Italianate style as well as elements borrowed from other period styles including Late Gothic Revival and Romanesque Revival, and the early 20th century Colonial Revival. The picturesque qualities of these styles were popular for ecclesiastical properties throughout rural Virginia and elsewhere during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The late nineteenth century also was the height of Victorian-era architecture, which was characterized by extensive ornamentation, asymmetrical massing that included towers, polygonal bays, and multiple-gable roofs, and prominently featured primary entries. As its name suggests, the Colonial Revival referenced motifs of Virginia's late colonial and early republic periods, such as classically-inspired columns and pediments, symmetrical facades with centered entries, and molded door and window surrounds on exteriors and interiors. With additions to its original 1882 block spanning from 1909 to 1955, Amherst Baptist Church illustrates these architectural trends as applied to a religious building. The more modestly designed garage and parsonage, both dating to 1949, retain the Colonial Revival style but also exemplify the streamlining and minimal ornamentation that came to characterize post-World War II architecture in Virginia. Five other extant buildings in Amherst County are documented examples of the Italianate style: two are residential, Sweet Briar House (1825, 1851, DHR# 005-0018) and Fairview (1867, DHR# 005-0006), and three are churches, Amherst Presbyterian (1881, DHR# 163-5008), Central Baptist (1885, DHR# 005-5179), and Ivy Hill Methodist (1885). The houses are truer in their representation of the Italianate style, but Amherst Baptist Church and the other three churches, all constructed in the 1880s, feature the Italianate style with elements borrowed from other styles. These shared elements and design perhaps suggest construction by the same workers and craftsmen. The former Amherst Baptist Church's period of significance spans from 1882 to 1955, beginning with the original church's construction and ending with the 1955 rear addition. During its period of significance, the building was used as an auditorium for Amherst High School and for community gatherings in addition to its religious use. It is a town landmark and is easily identified by its tall entry tower.

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

Criterion C Justification

The former Amherst Baptist Church building is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. It is an excellent example of the vernacular Italianate style of architecture. It is one of six known buildings of the style in Amherst County. Two are residential: Sweet Briar House (1825, 1851, DHR# 005-0018) and Fairview (1867, DHR# 005-0006), and four are churches: Amherst Baptist (1882, DHR# 163-0022), Amherst Presbyterian (1881, DHR# 163-5008); Central Baptist (1885, DHR# 005-5179), and Ivy Hill Methodist (1885). The churches share

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similar traits between them, but are each distinctive in their combinations of stylistic features. Exceptionally popular at the national level beginning around 1835, the Italianate style became fairly popular in some parts of west-central Virginia beginning in the 1850s and waned during the 1880s as Late Victorian styles such as Queen Anne became more predominate. The most iconic hallmarks of the Italianate style were deep eaves with cornices supported by large, decorative brackets as seen on Amherst Baptist Church's entry tower.

The architects/builders of both the Amherst Presbyterian and Amherst Baptist churches remain unknown because both congregations have lost their early records for various reasons. Through observation it is possible to link these two buildings to Charles H. Tucker (1838–1910), a brick mason, and Samuel C. Kirkpatrick (1839–1901), a contractor and carpenter. They are documented as the builders for Central Baptist and Ivy Hill Methodist. Kirkpatrick was also the contractor for the construction of the 1873 Greek Revival-style Amherst Courthouse. Some of the shared traits between the various buildings include the brick corbelling on the primary elevations, segmental arches over the windows, buttresses on Amherst Presbyterian, Amherst Baptist, and Central Baptist, and the rounded arch windows with double-arched sashes of Amherst Presbyterian, Central Baptist, and Ivy Hill. All have the same stuccoed foundations. Ivy Hill is the least decorated building of the four designed in the Italianate style. It is not known whether or not all of the churches had brackets supporting the cornices. Amherst Baptist Church is the only building where brackets were documented. It also is the only building of the four to have a tower, which was typical of the style, and which retains its original cornice brackets; yet Amherst Baptist is the only one of the churches to have flat arch windows instead of round-arch windows. All four of the buildings have undergone changes and remodeling since their construction. For example, the Amherst Presbyterian church now has stained-glass windows instead of clear glass as a result of a renovation to the building in 1918. Amherst Baptist differs from the others by the use of the tall segmental arch windows with Gothic tracery in the upper portion of the windows above the double sash. This is the only building of the four with a slate roof and a tower. The 1908 tower is sympathetic to the original Italianate design of the 1882 building. The 1908 tower and its further additions also distinguish this building from the other churches.⁷

The church is a prominent landmark in the town and has been important as a community building. It was used by Amherst High School as an auditorium, because the church was conveniently located across Washington Street from the school. The church was the sponsor for a multi-day event on the courthouse green in 1906. It gained a new life in 2015, hence the name

⁷ Ivy Hill Methodist Church is located at 1143 Indian Creek Road (Tax Map Parcel 28 A 18). The current brick edifice replaced the 1832 frame church built by William Waller (1789-1849) of Forest Hill (DHR #005-0108). In 1890, the tin roof was blown off and was soon replaced. In 1933, the north wall collapsed due to a storm and was rebuilt. Today, the building is privately owned and used for special events. Holly Mills, https://newsadvance.com/new_era_progress/news/local/scrapbooks-reveal-rich-amherst-county-history/article_c445ba17-540c-5884-a98d-19e39bflae38.html?mode=jqm; "Highlights of 2006 Home Tour," accessed September 19, 2020, amherstcountymuseum.org/tour2006.html; and *Valley Virginian*, February 19, 1885, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com.

Amherst Baptist Church (DHR # 163-0022)
Name of Property

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Second Stage, when it became a multi-purpose community center for events, meetings, businesses, shops, studios, and a coffee shop.⁸

Church History

According to oral history and local lore, the Baptist congregation at Amherst Courthouse (the present Town of Amherst) formed about 1830. The early church records were lost. The small group of congregants likely met in homes, schools, or an available church building. An 1876 deed suggests that there was a frame meetinghouse near the brick house tavern. This tavern was on Main Street at the site of the Kearfott-Wood House (DHR #163-0018), currently the home for the Amherst County Museum.⁹

By 1875, the congregation was large enough and wealthy enough to support a permanent minister. The congregation called Amherst native Rev. William Allen Tyree (1824–1884). Tyree returned from Halifax County in the hopes that the mountain air would improve his health. He came to shepherd this group and also assisted the minister at Mount Moriah. Tyree purchased land just west of Amherst Court House village. His home was called Tyreanna (or Locust Grove, DHR #005-0124). He oversaw the construction of the existing brick church in 1882; it was completed not long before his death. His son, Rev. William C. Tyree (1860–1928), took over his duties at Amherst Baptist Church just before his death. Various newspapers described Tyree’s illness as dyspepsia, consumption, or some form of heart and lung disease.¹⁰

The site for the 1882 church was purchased in 1875 from John Thompson, Jr. (1789–1879), a local attorney and landowner. Church lore states the transaction took place in the memory of his wife, Caroline (1802–1853), who was a Baptist. They obtained a corner lot located to the east of the courthouse. This lot was part of an area that the Amherst Development Corporation planned to develop into a residential area. Amherst County built a school on the opposite corner from the church. The idea of a grand neighborhood development failed due to a bad economy in the early part of the twentieth century.¹¹

In 1885, another minister was called to the pulpit, and the newspaper reported that there were updates to the building in preparation for this event. The Amherst congregation was wealthy enough to support a full-time minister and hold weekly services. The membership of the church continued to grow. In 1925, a new two-story addition to the south side of the building was

⁸ *Times Dispatch*, June 6, 1925, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com; *Times Dispatch*, June 3, 1928, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com; *Amherst County Board of Supervisors Minutes*, Vol. 1, 602; and “Large Attendance at Association Meeting,” *Times Dispatch*, August 16, 1906, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com.

⁹ *Amherst County Deed Book* KK, 240; *Amherst County Deed Book* OO, 390; *Amherst County Deed Book* TT, 144; and Rose K. Bruner, ed., *A History of the Churches in the Piedmont Baptist Association of Virginia* (Lynchburg, VA: CRI-Mutual Press, 1976), 9-14.

¹⁰ *Amherst County Deed Book* KK, 137; Bruner, 9-14; Hunt, 5; George Braxton; Taylor, *Virginia Baptist Men, Third Series* (Richmond, VA: JP Bell Co., 1912), 379-380, accessed April 25, 2020, books.google.com; *Richmond Dispatch*, June 11, 1875, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com; “W. A. Tyree,” *Richmond Dispatch*, December 17, 1884, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com; and “W. A. Tyree,” *Richmond Dispatch*, December 9, 1884, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com.

¹¹ *Amherst County Deed Book* KK, 240; *Amherst County Deed Book* OO, 390; *Amherst County Deed Book* TT, 144 Bruner, 9-14; and *Amherst County Deed Book* TT, 930.

Amherst Baptist Church (DHR # 163-0022)

Name of Property

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constructed at the cost of \$4,500. This addition increased the size of the sanctuary and added classroom space. During the Great Depression, the church suffered financially and was no longer able to support a full-time minister. They would share a minister with several other Baptist churches in the county and only met for Sunday services once or twice a month. This shared arrangement lasted until the end of World War II.¹²

In 1949, the church constructed a new two-story parsonage and single-car garage on the church property. This house served as the pastor's home until 1982. At this time, the parsonage became an annex building and the church purchased the adjoining property and a c.1873 house for use as the new parsonage. Around 2000, the congregation had outgrown the existing church and there was no room available to expand either the building or the property. The church chose to move to a new site, ironically the property chosen once belonged to Rev. William A. Tyree and was part of the Tyreanna farm.¹³

In 2004, the church moved to the new building and put their old church on the market. It was empty for a several years, and in 2006 the county acquired the building. The original idea was to use the building as additional office space. In 2015, a nonprofit group, Second Stage Amherst, approached the county government requesting to use the building as a new community center. The building is in constant use for special events, gatherings, meetings and small businesses including a coffee shop. The former Amherst Baptist Church building serves the community and remains a landmark in the Town of Amherst.¹⁴

¹² Hunt, 6-11; *Times Dispatch*, August 1, 1924, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com; *Times Dispatch*, November 17, 1924, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com; *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, January 28, 1925, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com; and *Daily Press*, January 29, 1925, accessed April 25, 2020, newspapers.com.

¹³ Hunt 11-13; *Amherst County Deed Book* 140, 73; *Amherst County Deed Book* 1016, 579; *Amherst County Deed Book* 846, 544; and *Amherst County Deed Book* 1064, 388.

¹⁴ *Amherst County Deed Book* 1088, 511.

Amherst Baptist Church (DHR # 163-0022)
Name of Property

Amherst County, Virginia
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Amherst Baptist Church (DHR # 163-0022)
Name of Property

Amherst County, Virginia
County and State

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“W. A. Tyree.” *Richmond Dispatch*, December 17, 1884. Accessed April 25, 2020. newspapers.com.

“W. A. Tyree.” *Richmond Dispatch*, December 9, 1884. Accessed April 25, 2020. newspapers.com.

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

Amherst Baptist Church (DHR # 163-0022)
Name of Property

Amherst County, Virginia
County and State

Name of repository: Amherst County Museum & Historical Society; Virginia
Department of Historic Resources, Richmond

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR #163-0022

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.14

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: 37.582956 N Longitude: 79.048556 W

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

The historic boundary coincides with the perimeter lines of the property recorded by Amherst County as Tax Map #96A4 A 125. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the attached Tax Parcel Map. This map is available from the Amherst County government and online at countyofamherst.com, and is the same parcel as described in Amherst County Deed Book KK, p. 137.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundary encompasses the three contributing buildings and the extent of the parcel that has been associated with the Amherst Baptist Church throughout its history. The historic setting also is included with the boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Sandra F. Esposito

organization: _____

street & number: 140 Cradon Hill Ln

city or town: Amherst state: VA zip code: 24521

e-mail: sandiesposito@icloud.com

telephone: 540-529-0205

date: January 2021

Additional Documentation

Amherst Baptist Church (DHR # 163-0022)
Name of Property

Amherst County, Virginia
County and State

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: Amherst Baptist Church

City or Vicinity: Amherst

County: Amherst County

State: VA

Photographer: Sandra F. Esposito

Date Photographed: May 2020

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

1 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0001

View: Site, facing SE

2 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0002

View: West/Main elevation, facing E

3 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0003

View: West elevation, window detail, facing E

4 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0004

View: West elevation, door detail, facing E

Amherst Baptist Church (DHR # 163-0022)
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5 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0005
View: West & South elevations, facing NE

6 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0006
View: South & East elevations, facing NW

7 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0007
View: East church elevation & Parsonage, facing W

8 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0008
View: East & North elevations, facing W

9 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0009
View: North elevation, facing SW

10 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0010
View: Interior, Main hall, facing W

11 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0011
View: Interior, Main hall, facing E

12 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0012
View: Interior, Main hall, facing W

13 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0013
View: Interior, Main hall, facing S

14 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0014
View: Interior, Main hall detail, facing SE

15 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0015
View: Interior, 1925 addition, facing SE

16 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0016
View: Interior, 1925 addition, facing NW

17 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0017
View: Interior, Stair, facing S

18 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0018
View: Interior, Fellowship hall/Community room, facing SW

19 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0019
View: Parsonage, North elevation, facing S

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20 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0020
View: Parsonage, East & North elevations, facing SW

21 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0021
View: Parsonage, South & East elevations, facing NW

22 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0022
View: Parsonage, West & South elevations, facing NE

23 of 23: VA_AmherstCounty_AmherstBaptistChurch_0023
View: Garage, East & North elevations, facing W

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.

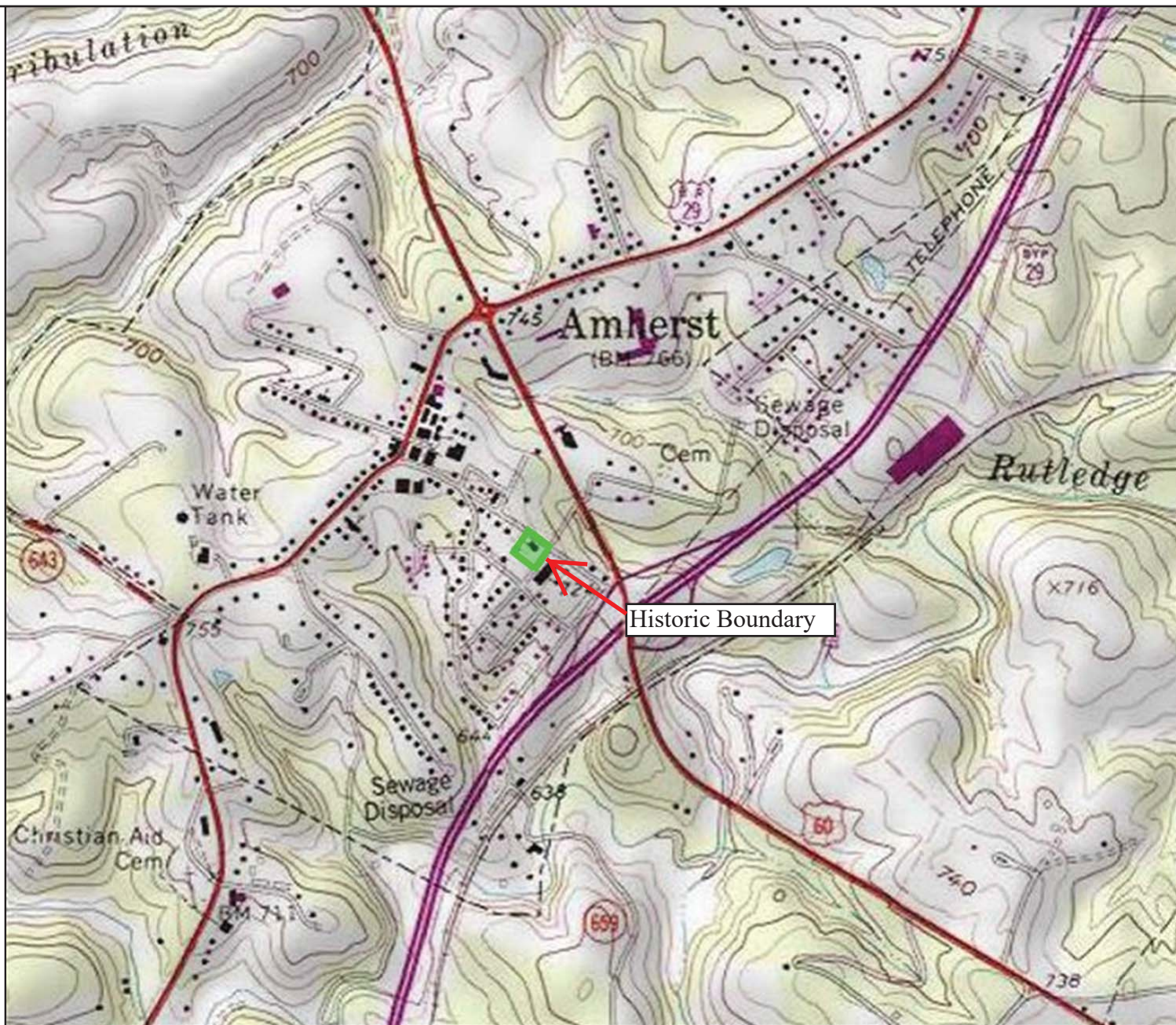
TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

Amherst Baptist Church

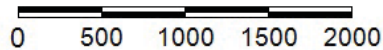
Town of Amherst

Amherst County, VA

DHR No. 163-0022



Feet



1:18,056 / 1"=1,505 Feet

Title:

Date: 2/12/2021

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.

Amherst Baptist Church



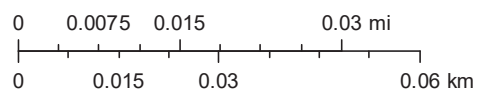
October 9, 2020

Amherst Baptist Church
Amherst County, VA
DHR# 163-0022

Location Map

Lat 37.582956N Long -79.048556W

1:1,129



The GIS data is proprietary to the County, and title to this information remains in the County. All applicable common law and statutory rights in the GIS data including, but not limited to, rights in copyright, shall and will remain the property of the County. Information shown on these maps are derived from public records that are constantly undergoing change and do not replace a site survey, and is not warranted for content or accuracy.

SKETCH MAP
KEYED TO PHOTO LOG

→ N
NOT TO SCALE



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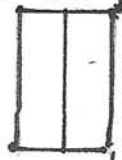
20 ↗



3 ↓



GARAGE



23 ↑

6 ↗

CHURCH

GRAVEL
PARKING
LOT

SECOND ST

9 ↙

7 ↑

8 ↑



1 ↗ = Photo Location

- Contributing Resources:
- Church
 - Parsonage
 - Garage

WASHINGTON ST

Amherst Baptist Church
 Town of Amherst, Amherst
 County, VA
 DHR File No. 163-0022

