



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 017-5287

1. General Property Information

Property name: Leonard Memorial Church and Cemetery

Property address: 207 Leonard Church Road

City or Town: Galax

Zip code: 24333

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Carroll County

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):

Building X Site _____ Structure _____ Object _____

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: Approximately 1.3 acres

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban _____ Suburban _____ Town _____ Village _____ Hamlet _____ Rural X

Briefly describe the property's overall location and setting, including any notable landscape features:

Leonard Memorial Methodist Church and Cemetery are in rural Galax, Carroll County in Southwest Virginia. The property includes a well-maintained church built in 1906, an outhouse, and a cemetery. The property is hemmed in by pastures and overlooking Chestnut Creek, wooded mountains, and The New River bike trail. To get to the church, you turn off Fries Road onto Leonard Church Road (a rough gravel road) and drive nearly a quarter mile back until it dead-ends at the church. There's a wide, gravel parking area in front of the church. The property itself is near the top of a steep hillside. Descendants of the Leonard family – original members of the church who deeded the land for the building – reside in neighboring residences.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Symmetrical, plain

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: _____

If the builder is known, please list here: Likely built by hand by the congregation

Date of construction (can be approximate): 1906

Narrative Description (Please do not exceed one page in describing the property):

Briefly describe the property's general characteristics, such as its current use (and historic use if different), as well as the primary building or structure on the property (such as a house, store, mill, factory, depot, bridge, etc.). Include the materials and method(s) of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions or other major alterations.

This is the original structure and it's always served as a church. Today, it's a small Methodist congregation. The structure is very well maintained. There are approximately 15 surviving members who are elderly and who are descendants from the original settlers to this area. The original structure consists of the church sanctuary and, when it was built in 1906, it had two distinct entrances on the front: one for men and one for women. It is a stick-built structure built with trees milled from the property. The foundation and walls are original and improved across the generations.

During the life of this congregation, a small kitchen and dining area were added on the back and an enclosed vestibule with indoor bathrooms was added on the front. The original, gendered entrances are now enclosed in the vestibule and so there is only one single front door now. The stain glass windows were designed and installed by the Laws Glass Company in Statesville, NC in 1956. It is believed that asphalt shingles were replaced by a tin roof sometime in the 1980's. The church is clad in white vinyl siding with the original lap board siding underneath.

In the attached views of the cemetery, note the section where there are bald spots in the grass - this is the collection of unmarked graves. At some point, the church put cement blocks at each unmarked resting place here. These are the graves that oral tradition says are Native American burials.

There's an outhouse made of cinder block with wooden seats still there near the pasture.

Outbuildings - secondary resources and their estimated construction dates:

- Outhouse – 1940's?
- Gravel parking lot
- A foundation for an old schoolhouse that pre-dates 1940 is likely still there
- Cemetery

4. Property's History and Significance (Please do not exceed one page)

Briefly explain the property's historic importance, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property.

If the property is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

The story of this congregation has origins with the earliest European settlers coming to this region. Most of the European-descent Americans arriving here shortly after the close of the Revolutionary War are poor. Many have German ancestry having migrated originally to Pennsylvania and making their way down the [Great Wagon Road](#). Other Europeans in the area were English and Scottish. People with African ancestry were often brought here as slaves for wealthier English settlers. But many African-descent people were also Free in this region and worked as tradespeople.

Racism and white-supremacy* kept this area segregated by skin color. Some areas nearer to slaving families had higher settlements of African-descent people. Areas where landowners didn't own slaves had higher concentrations of poor, European-descent people. The Leonard Memorial parish was a settlement of European people, many of whom were poor. The Leonard family had secured land of around 200 acres and helped this section establish a school and a church congregation.

A unique origin story of this congregation is that it is one among a few settlements here that worshiped outdoors for generations. Before churches and schools were built, people gathered in pastures or woods near wagon trails. A circuit minister would serve the parishes and preach on his way passing through. On a day that a parish knew the preacher was coming, mothers would pack hampers of food and get the kids dressed for church. Families walked or hitched wagons to oxen and crossed the fields to the parish meeting place. They would listen to the minister, sing hymns, and pray outdoors. Then they'd pull out their hampers of food and have a picnic.

These early pioneers were a mixture of Quaker, Church of Christ, Episcopal, and Methodist; they often worshiped together at these outdoor services. From these outdoor worship experiences arose the [Brush Arbor tradition](#). In this parish, they called their church community "Brush Arbor". The Brush Arbor site consisted of a crude lean-to structure where the preacher could stand and worshipers gathered outdoors in the woods to listen. As the region became more populous and resources were secured, the parish divided itself and aligned with religious ideology – Quakers went with Quakers, Baptists with Baptists, etc.

Around 1904, the Leonard family deeded a parcel for the construction of a church and a school. Trees from the parcel were used to construct a stick-built, symmetrical structure with two entrances: one for men and one for women. The original deed of this parcel is made out to the Episcopal Methodist Church.

*The term "white-supremacy" is used here to define the overall structure of political and economic systems which are used to favor people who have economic privilege and who are classified "white".

Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property, such as deeds, census and tax records, and/or published articles and books. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

- Journalism
- Oral tradition
- Church records
- Original deed for church property

5. Property Ownership (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: X Public\Local Public\State Public\Federal

Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Trustees John Paul Weatherman and Norma Haynes

organization: Leonard Memorial Church

street & number: 207 Leonard Church Road

city or town: Galax state: VA zip code: 24333

e-mail: frieshill@gmail.com or sonnyincarolinas@gmail.com

telephone: 276-233-5398

Legal Owner's Signature: See attached "signature page"

Date:

•• Signature required for processing all applications. ••

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person:

Daytime Telephone:

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)

name/title:

organization:

street & number:

city or town: state: zip code:

e-mail: telephone:

Date:

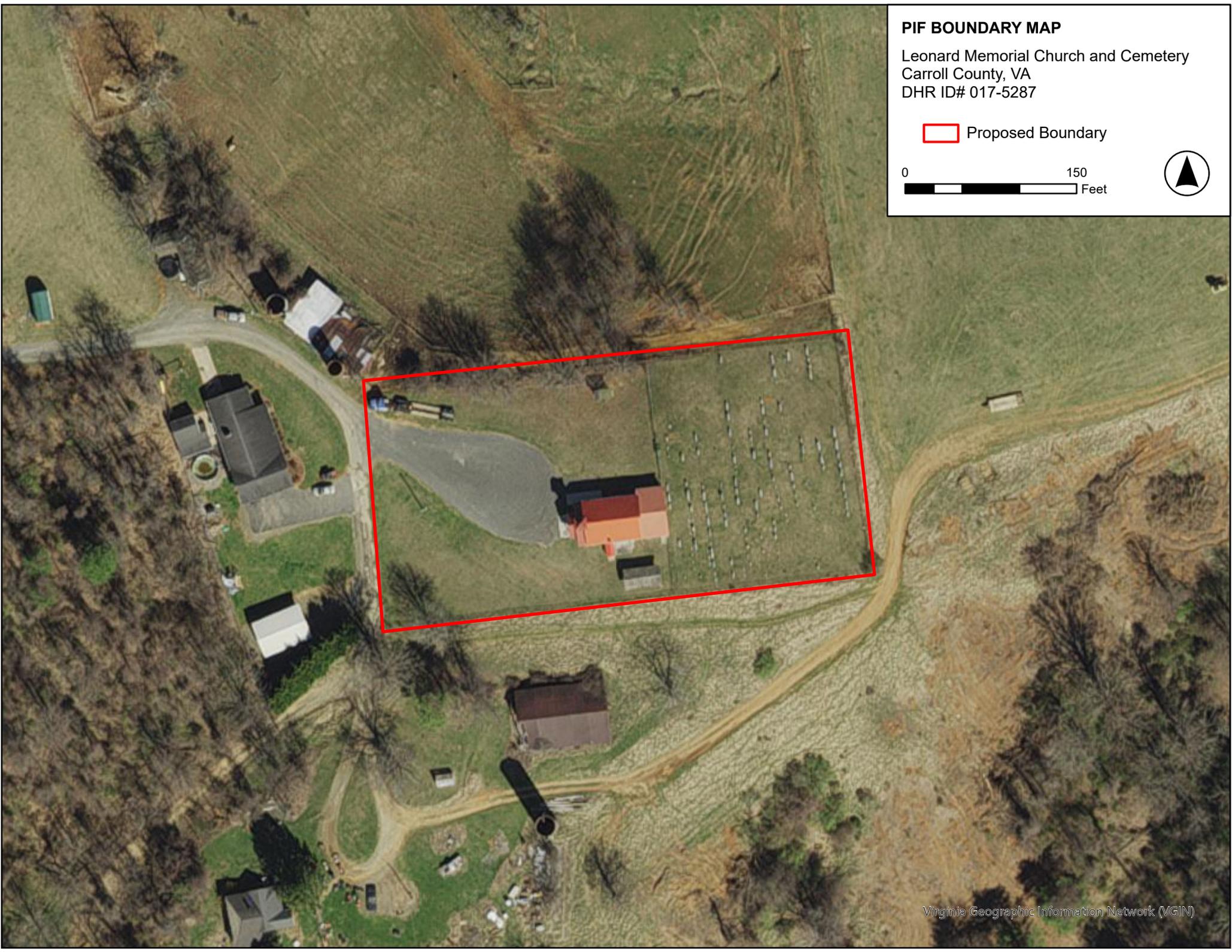
PLEASE DO NOT ATTACH CONTINUATION SHEETS TO THIS FORM. THANK YOU!

PIF BOUNDARY MAP

Leonard Memorial Church and Cemetery
Carroll County, VA
DHR ID# 017-5287

 Proposed Boundary

0  150 Feet





JANET SUE
HAWKS
FEB. 17, 1950
MAY 8, 2020

HAPPY
Mother's
DAY in
Heaven

WHEN WE ALL GET TO HEAVEN

TERRY LEE
FENDER
SEPT. 3, 1954
JAN. 29, 2021

SPENCER

LUCAS B.
JAN. 2, 1911
AUG. 21, 1981

LOUISE
MAY 12, 1911
AUG. 2, 1981

HUTCHENS

HALE

FENDER

MARRIED JUNE 19...













MEMBERSHIP	17
ENROLLMENT	16
WEDNESDAY	8
WEDNESDAY	32000
WEDNESDAY	22500











