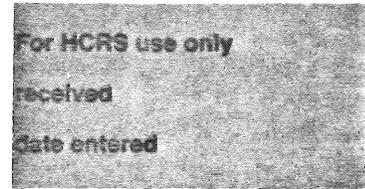


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic First Congregational Church

and/or common

2. Location

street & number N.W. corner jct. of Wade and C Streets not for publication

city, town Mount Pleasant vicinity of congressional district

state North Carolina code 037 county Cabarrus code 025

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<u> </u> district	<u> </u> public	<u>X</u> occupied	<u> </u> agriculture	<u> </u> museum
<u>X</u> building(s)	<u>X</u> private	<u> </u> unoccupied	<u> </u> commercial	<u> </u> park
<u> </u> structure	<u> </u> both	<u> </u> work in progress	<u> </u> educational	<u> </u> private residence
<u> </u> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<u> </u> entertainment	<u>X</u> religious
<u> </u> object	<u> </u> in process	<u>X</u> yes: restricted	<u> </u> government	<u> </u> scientific
	<u> </u> being considered	<u> </u> yes: unrestricted	<u> </u> industrial	<u> </u> transportation
	<u> </u> N/A	<u> </u> no	<u> </u> military	<u> </u> other:

4. Owner of Property

name First Congregational Church, c/o Mr. Manley R. Heilig

street & number P.O. Box 173

city, town Mount Pleasant vicinity of state N.C. 28124

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cabarrus County Courthouse

street & number N. Union St.

city, town Concord state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title The Historic Architecture of Cabarrus Co., N.C. by Peter R. Kaplan has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date 1980 federal state X county local

depository for survey records Survey & Planning Branch, N. C. Div. of Archives & History

city, town Raleigh state N. C.

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The First Congregational Church is located on a 1.3 acre lot on the northwest corner of Wade and "C" Streets in the small rural town of Mount Pleasant, North Carolina. The church has a setback of approximately 50 feet. A cemetery is located on the far northeast corner of the lot. The grounds as well as the surrounding area are well-kept. The church is the second house of worship for a congregation that was formally organized in 1900 under the leadership of J.C. McClean and the auspices of the New England based Congregational Church.

The church replaced the original 1906 frame structure that burned in 1918. The present house of worship was erected between 1918 and 1921 by a local stonemason and church deacon, Robert Franklin Lynn. He was assisted by Calvin Bost. The church has a stone foundation and is comprised of the one-story nave with a side gable roof; a two-stage tower that encloses the entrance and the belfry; a small, gabled-roof wing that is commonly referred to as the "serving room;" and two concrete additions consisting of bathroom facilities and a fellowship hall.

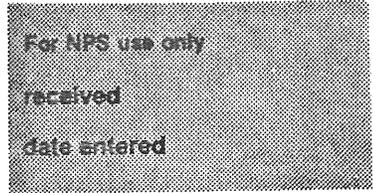
The gable ends of the church and top of the tower are sheathed in plain weatherboard. The remaining structure displays the stonework of Robert Franklin Lynn. Sheathed in irregular-shaped, mortared, random-coursed stone, the exterior of the church exhibits Gothic details in the simple, raised stone buttresses that separate and delineate three lancet-arched windows located on both sides of the gabled nave. The one-story nave is one-bay wide and three-bays deep, and it is of balloon frame and stone veneer construction. Each window is a simple two-over-two sash topped with a pointed wooden arch. Two rear windows are placed parallel to one another and display a diamond-shaped panel in the top pane. The principal entrance is comprised of a six-panel door.

Concrete-over-rock steps lead into the two-stage tower. The main entrance of the church is topped with a two-paned glass arch. The tower includes an upper stage that features four, large, square ventilator. The belfry is crowned with a pyramidal roof that slopes upward from stone bases. Another entrance is located at the rear of the church and leads into the "service room." Both the main and rear entrances feature a plain white paneled door.

The interior of the church is one room deep and does not include the "service room" that is located directly behind the altar. The decor of the church is almost austere, but the beauty of the sanctuary lies in the simplicity of design and the maintenance of its original features. The church retains its original plaster finish and vertical, tongue-and-groove wainscoting. The pews are also original and each pew displays a S-scroll arm rest at either end. The end of each pew is ornamented with a simple molded lozenge. The ceiling is particularly distinctive and features a square-block design set in handsome pressed tin. A table that supports the offering plates is located in the central aisle. The pulpit is sixty years old and it is located at the front of the altar. The rear of the altar is recessed and exhibits pictures

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Continuation sheet	Item number	Page
<u>Description - The First Congregational Church</u>	#7	1

of various religious scenes, a simple cross. The only interior alteration is the modern carpet that covers the stone floor.

The church retains much of its original exterior features. The 1923 brick flue has been replaced with a modern counterpart and it is located on the north side of the nave. The concrete buildings were added in 1974. They are located directly behind the church and are almost flush to the rear wall of the "service room."

The First Congregational Church has a long, local history and it is an established and respected institution in the black community. The church is located near the eastern boundary of the proposed Mount Pleasant Historic District. The nomination of the church to the National Register can only heighten the community's interest in preserving this structure. The First Congregational Church is a visible testament of the black population's history in Mount Pleasant, and the contribution of the New England-based Congregational Church as they expanded their missionary efforts to include and serve those members of the population that the church fought so hard to free.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1918–1921 **Builder/Architect** Robert Franklin Lynn assisted by Calvin Bost

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The First Congregational Church of Mount Pleasant consist of a one-story gabled nave; a two-stage tower containing the entrance and the belfry; a small gabled wing directly behind the chancel; and a fellowship wing that was built in 1974. A cemetery is located in the far southeastern corner of the lot. The entire building, except for the belfry and the gables, is sheathed in irregular-shaped, random-coursed stones that were laid by Robert Franklin Lynn with the help of Calvin Bost between 1918 and 1921. The belfry and the gables are sheathed in plain weatherboard. Gothic-like details are apparent in the simple raised buttresses separating the lancet-arched windows along both sides of the nave. The interior of the church is extremely well-preserved and retains its original pews, pressed-tin ceiling, and tongue-and-groove wainscotting. The fellowship hall is of concrete construction and it is located directly behind the small gabled wing that is used as a "serving room." The congregation was first established in 1900 under the leadership of a missionary, J.C. McClean. The church is associated with the evangelical efforts of the New England Congregational Church. The 1921 structure replaces the 1906 frame sanctuary that burnt in 1918. The congregation consists of 50 members and they have chosen to remain independent of the movement of most Congregational Churches to merge with either the Congregational Christian Church that was organized in 1923 or the United Church of Christ that emerged in 1963.

Criteria Assessment.

- A. The Mount Pleasant First Congregational Church is associated with the evangelical efforts of the New England-based Congregational Church during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is also linked with the American Missionary Association that was organized by various Congregational sects during the antebellum period to work against slavery and continued to operate during the Reconstruction Era to assist and educate newly-freed blacks.
- B. The First Congregational Church is associated with J.C. McClean, a missionary who was probably affiliated with the American Missionary Association. He moved to Mt. Pleasant from the High Point-Sedalia vicinity of Guilford County, North Carolina to help organize the church in 1900. It is also associated with the Reverend A.J. Tate, a High Point Minister, who served as the church's first pastor. The church is also associated with Robert Franklin Lynn, a deacon and local stonemason. Lynn, with the help of Calvin Bost, erected the 1921 Congregational Church after the 1906 building was destroyed by fire in 1918. Lynn's stonework can be seen in the proposed Mt. Pleasant Historic District as well as his home on Sumner Street in Mt. Pleasant.

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Criteria Assessment (cont.)

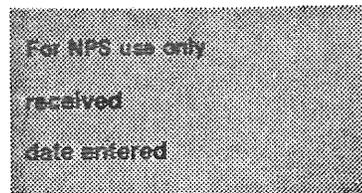
#8

1

- C. The First Congregational Church embodies distinctive, vernacular characteristics in its frame and rugged, mortared, random-coursed construction. In addition, the church displays traits that can be attributed to the Gothic Revival idiom. the latter was the most popular architectural form for churches in Cabarrus County before 1930.

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<u>The First Congregational Church</u>	#8	2

The structure was built between 1918 and 1921 for Mount Pleasant Congregational Church, a black church affiliated with a predominantly white, New England movement.¹ The American Congregationalist Church was the direct development of the Pilgrim and Puritan practice of an independent church system in New England. Lacking any but the most rudimentary, advisory association the movement nevertheless spread to some extent across the country. An agreement with the Presbyterian Church in 1801 led to joint efforts in evangelizing, but the better organized Presbyterians benefitted most from the arrangement. By 1865, when the first general congregational council since 1648 was called, the bulk of Congregationalist membership centered in the midwest and New England. That 1865 meeting led to the establishment in 1871 of a permanent Council to provide some church leadership.²

More effective was the Congregational sectional society. Nominally independent and concerned with African mission, it was in fact closely allied with the Congregationalists and worked against slavery.³ Work in North Carolina was undertaken at least as early as 1854 and included by 1863 a school in occupied New Bern. In 1865, six ministers and twenty-five teachers were assigned to North Carolina. A.M.A. continued throughout the nineteenth century.⁴

The organization of Mt. Pleasant Congregational Church was largely the work of missionary J.C. McLean, who moved to Mt. Pleasant from the High Point-Sedalia area in Guilford County. He recruited members and held the first meetings in his home.⁵

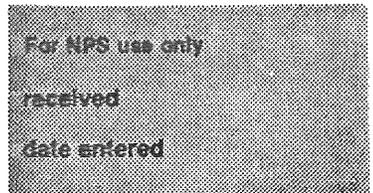
The church was formally organized on October 21, 1900 at a meeting in the Masonic Hall (probably the educational room). There McLean and his wife Mattie; Martha and Isaac Tate; and Frances Kent became the charter members. Reverend A.J. Tate of High Point, in attendance at that meeting, was called as pastor.⁶

The first mention of a church building was April 29, 1906, when a mortgage of \$337 was taken out. That transaction was the first to identify the body as First Congregational Church of Mt. Pleasant. The building was moved to a new site on the lot in September.⁷ There is no record of a deed for the property.

Reverend Tate remained until November 1904, and was succeeded by a Reverend Wyche, December 1904–October 1905; Reverend J.R. Mallard, December, 1905–1910; Reverend Walden, 1910–1916; and Reverend J.H. Hudgins arrived in October 1916. A list of later pastors is undated and incomplete.⁸

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Continuation sheet	Item number	Page
<u>The First Congregational Church</u>	#8	3

The 1906 building was destroyed in a fire January 12, 1918, and the congregation began meeting in a school pending the construction of a new building. In March, the congregation decided to build a new church at a cost of \$1100, of which they would raise \$500, realize \$300 from the sale of the remains of the old building, and borrow \$300 from the Congregational Church Building Society.⁹ Robert Franklin Lynn, a deacon, assisted by Calvin Bost, erected the sanctuary which was dedicated October 30, 1921.¹⁰ The brick flue was finished in 1923.¹¹

Records since the 1920s are vague and fragmentary for this congregation which today numbers about fifty active members. While the bulk of the Congregationalists joined the Congregational Christian Church in 1923 and the United Church of Christ in 1961, this congregation remains independent.¹²

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<u>Footnotes</u>	#8	4

¹Church Minute Book, First Congregational Church of Mount Pleasant, pp. 58-62.

²Marion L. Starkey, The Congregational Way. (Garden City, N.Y.; Doubleday, 1966) pp. 182-183, 227-240, 293.

³W.D. Weatherford, American Churches and the Negro (Boston; Christopher Printing House, 1957), pp. 199-200.

⁴Weatherford, pp. 205, 211, 214, 215-216.

⁵Interview with Manley Heilig, 1979, notes on file in survey and planning branch.

⁶Church Minute Book p. 13.

⁷Cabarrus County Deeds of Trust, Vol. 19, p. 280; Church Minute Book, pp. 17, 19.

⁸Church Minute book, p. 176.

⁹Church Minute Book, p. 58.

¹⁰Church Minute Book, pp. 60, 62. Peter Kaplan, The Historic Architecture of Cabarrus County, North Carolina (Charlotte; Craftsman Printing Press, 1981).

¹¹Church Minute Book, p. 17.

¹²Starkey, pp. 309, 316. Interview with Manley Heilig, 1982, notes on file in Survey and Planning Branch.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.3
Quadrangle name Mount Pleasant

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	7	5	5	1	9	6	0	3	9	1	7	2	6	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet for verbal boundary description. Sketch map of site is also enclosed.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Shelia A. Bumgarner Preservation Consultant
Additional Research David Brown

organization Survey and Planning Branch
N.C. Division of Archives & History date August 28, 1985

street & number 109 E. Jones Steet telephone (919) 733-6545

city or town Raleigh state North Carolina

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William S. Fink, Jr.

title State Historic Preservation Officer date Oct. 10, 1985

For HCRS use only I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	date
Keeper of the National Register	date
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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National Park Service

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received

date entered

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<u>Bibliography</u>	#9	1

Cabarrus County Deeds of Trust, Volume 19.

Church Minute Book. First Congregational Church of Mount Pleasant.

Heilig Manuley. Mount Pleasant, North Carolina. Interview 1982.

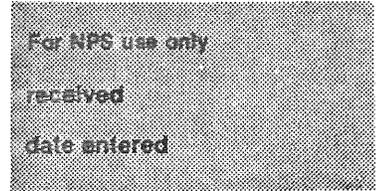
Kaplan, Peter R. The Historic Architecture of Cabarrus County, North Carolina.
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National Park Service**

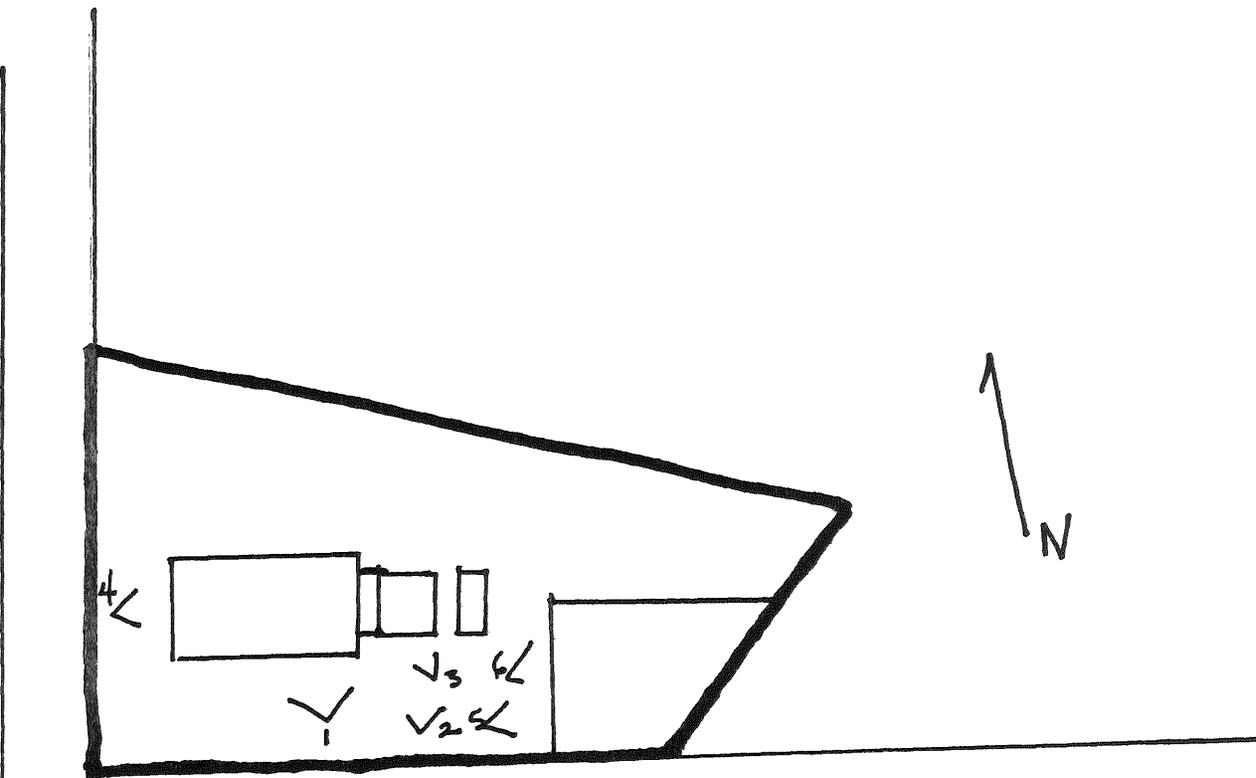
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Continuation sheet	Item number	Page
<u>Boundary Justification</u>	#10	1

The western boundary begins at the intersection of Wade and "C" Streets approximately 75 feet from the western wall of the Mount Pleasant Congregational Church and proceeds 222.75 feet north along the eastern side of "C" Street; from this point the boundary extends 404.25 feet ESE along a line running parallel to Wade Street; the boundary then extends 141.5 feet in a southern direction ending at the north side of Wade Street; from this point proceed 301.12 feet west along a line that is almost parallel to the ESE boundary.

The 1.3 acres included in the nomination have been associated with the Mount Pleasant Congregational Church since 1906. The congregation was formally organized in 1900.



Wade Street

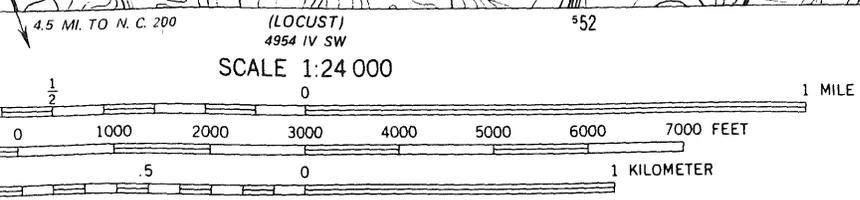
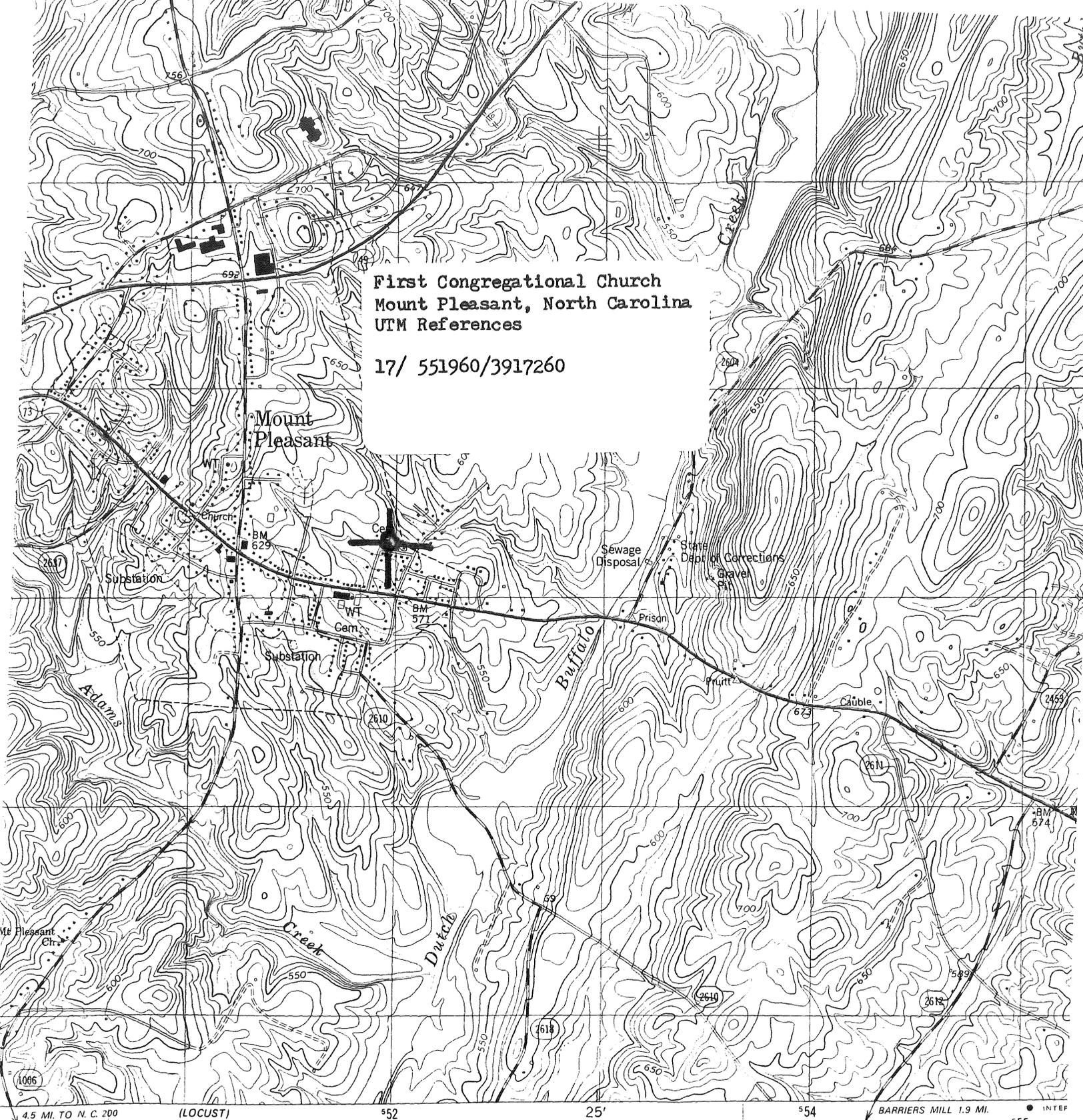
"C" Street

First Congregational Church of
Mount Pleasant, Cabarrus County

Scale: 1" = 100"

**First Congregational Church
Mount Pleasant, North Carolina
UTM References**

17/ 551960/3917260



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

Primary highway
hard surface
Secondary high
hard surface

○ Interstat



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

