NPS Form 10-900-b
(Revised March 1992)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

XX New Submission, ___ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historically and Architecturally Significant Churches and Church-Related Cemeteries in Lincolnton, North Carolina

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

I. The Old White Church and the Establishment of Organized Religious Congregations in Lincolnton, ca. 1787-1893
II. The Late-Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth Centuries: A Period of Renewal and Rebuilding by the town's Churches, 1894-1922
III. Expansion and Improvement of Church Facilities in the Interwar and Post-World War II Period, 1923-1944
IV. The Architecture of Religious Buildings in Lincolnton, ca. 1787-1944

C. Form Prepared by

name/title Davyd Foard Hood

organization _____ date 28 June 1994

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city or town Vale state North Carolina zip code 28168

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William S. Price, Jr. SHPO 10-21-94

Signature and title of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Historically and Architecturally Significant Churches and Church-Related Cemeteries in Lincolnton, North Carolina

Name of Multiple Property Listing

North Carolina

State

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Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

_____

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 120 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Section E

I. THE OLD WHITE CHURCH AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ORGANIZED CONGREGATIONS IN LINCOLNTON, 1787-1893

Introduction

On 23 December 1893 the Old White Church, the oldest surviving church building in Lincoln County, burned to the ground. An account of the fire and a history of the building prepared by Lincoln County's first historian Alfred Nixon (1856-1924), was published on 12 January 1894 in the Lincoln Courier under the headline, "The Old White Church."

> The destruction of the Old White Church by fire 8 p.m. December 23, 1893, removed one of the original and perhaps the oldest landmark in the town of Lincolnton. All the early religious history of the town and vicinity is associated with this church and strange to say, some of the political. All the different denominations of Christians worshipped in its walls and its galleries have resounded with the oratory of Reid and Manly, Dockery the elder and Bragg and other gubernatorial aspirants.

Nixon went on to describe the history of the Old White Church: its role in the religious life of Lincolnton was indeed unique. Erected about 1787 as a union church (a shared house of worship) by the town's young Lutheran and Reformed congregations, the church was the site of services for those two predominantly German denominations for over one hundred years. During that period it was also the place at which itinerant and missionary preachers spoke to assemblies of citizens who would organize Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopal, and Baptist congregations in Lincolnton.

Whether each of these four named congregations actually held their organizational meetings in the Old White Church is not known; however, each of the four groups held services in the church until they were strong enough to build their own churches. According to tradition, the Methodist congregation built first, about 1822; however, that remains to be confirmed. The Lincolnton Presbyterian congregation completed and worshipped in their first, new church in 1839. Four years later, on 30 July 1843, Bishop Levi Silliam Ives consecrated St. Luke's Episcopal Church. In 1856 construction began on a brick church for the town's Methodist congregation: it was completed in 1862. A Baptist congregation, organized in 1859 under the Rev. L. M. Berry appears to have faltered in the 1860s. In 1872-1873, the Lincolnton Baptists reorganized and bought a lot on East Water Street where they completed a brick church in 1884.

For a period of just under one hundred years, from 1787 to 1884, the Old White Church was the scene of religious services held by six denominations which went

on to build a succession of church buildings through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Five of these historic church buildings remain the home of their congregations and are the site of weekly services. There are cemeteries associated with three of these churches. The burying ground adjoining the Old White Church is the oldest established public cemetery in the town of Lincolnton. The Methodist congregation likewise had ordained that the yard around their church, at the corner of Aspen and Congress Streets, should be used as a burying ground for members of their church. One of its first pastors, the Reverend James Hill, was interred there in March 1828. After 1842, the Episcopalians interred their dead in the adjoining churchyard at St. Luke's. These three church cemeteries remained the principal burying grounds in Lincolnton until 1905 when the town of Lincolnton established Hollybrook Cemetery, a public cemetery on the northeast side of town. In addition to these three cemeteries used by both White and African American residents of Lincolnton, the grounds of Second Presbyterian Church became a church burying ground for African Americans in the 1880s and continues in use. It is the fourth significant church-related cemetery developed in Lincolnton during the period of historical significance.

(NOTE: For the sake of clarity, the term "Old White Church" will be used throughout this document to refer to the union church erected ca. 1787 by the German-speaking congregations of Dutch Lutherans (Lutherans) and Dutch Presbyterians (Reformed). The term "Dutch" refers to the German ancestry of these congregations. Likewise, the church and congregation of the Dutch Lutherans will be called "Lutheran" in this report and the term "Reformed" will be used in reference to the Dutch Presbyterians. The two congregations were organized ca. 1787. For most of their history the Lutheran church in Lincolnton spelled Emmanuel with two "m"s, and the name Emmanuel Lutheran Church will be used throughout this document. The Lincolnton Reformed congregation, sharing the same name, uses Emanuel with one "m": it will hereinafter be referred to as Emanuel Reformed Church. Following the merger of the Reformed Church with the Congregational Church to form the United Church of Christ, all churches of those parent groups thereafter used the new denominational name, hence Emanuel United Church of Christ.)

The Traditional Union Church

Whether the construction of a union church, as exemplified in Lincolnton by the Lutheran and Reformed congregations, was a tradition which the German-speaking settlers of Lincoln County and other parts of piedmont North Carolina brought with them from Germany and the Palatinate is not known. However, once they had occupied land in colonial North Carolina, having come to the state in the 1740s through 1760s, mostly from Pennsylvania, they quickly proceeded to build churches. In the German settlements, the pioneers would erect one church to be used by both the Lutheran and the Reformed congregations. While the term

"Lutheran" was used consistently to denote that denomination, the Reformed congregations in Lincoln County were often described as "Calvinist" or "Dutch Presbyterian" in early deeds and records. The first church erected in present-day Lincoln County by German-speaking peoples was the Schoolhouse Church. A schoolhouse was standing on the tract acquired for the church site and conveyed by grant in 1767 to Matthew Floyd. In 1768, Floyd conveyed the acreage to six men who, in 1774, transferred title to the "two united congregations of Lutherans and Calvinist." In 1767 when Floyd received his grant, the property was located in Mecklenburg County; however, in 1768, the year he deeded the fifty acres to the six trustees, Tryon County was formed and named for royal governor William Tryon. The Schoolhouse Church was a union church, located in the fertile farmlands of western Lincoln County, and in 1830 came to be called Daniel's Church, named for pioneer John Daniel Warlick who established a mill on Howard's Creek.

The county named for the last royal governor of North Carolina was short-lived. In 1779 it was divided into two new counties: Rutherford, named for Griffith Rutherford; and Lincoln, named for Benjamin Lincoln (1733-1810), the commanding general of the southern department of the Continental Army. In 1784 the General Assembly passed an act to create a county seat for Lincoln County and named Joseph Dixon (Dickson), John Crooth (Caruth), John Wilson, Joseph Steel, and Nicholas Friday as commissioners for that purpose. In 1785 they obtained a grant for 300 acres in the near center of the county near by the South Fork of the Catawba River, lying on both sides of the road which carried from the Tuckaseegee Ford to Ramsour's Mill. Ramsour's Mill, erected by Derrick Ramsour prior to 1771, was probably the second major mill erected in present-day Lincoln County and stood to the near northwest of the new court house town.

The five men appointed in 1784 to locate the county seat were again appointed as commissioners to lay out a town of fifty acres: they also obtained oversight for the remaining 250 acres. The town was chartered in 1786 and laid off in lots. Present-day Main Street was the principal east/west street with Aspen Street the major north/south artery. The square at the junction of the two streets was set aside for the court house and it remains the site of the county's fifth court house to the present.

Early Religious Leaders

During 1785/1786 and the two years following the chartering of the town, important events occurred which had a lasting impact on the character of religious life in Lincolnton, Lincoln County, and the Piedmont. Chronologically the first was the arrival of the important Lutheran minister John Godfrey Arends (1740-1807). The Reverend Mr. Arends departed Hanover with Reverend Adolph Nussmann (1739-1794), at the request of the Piedmont Lutherans and settled in Rowan County in 1773. Arends was a schoolmaster; however, in 1775, following

Nussmann's relocation to Cabarrus County and St. John's Church in 1774, he became the first man ordained a Lutheran minister in North Carolina. His Rowan County farm near Organ Church, was the base for an itinerant ministry which occupied Arends for some ten years. In 1785 he relocated to a farm near Lincolnton where he would live until his death. Arends became the minister of Lincolnton's young Lutheran congregation and he ministered to the Lutheran congregations throughout Lincoln County and the region. In the late 1790s Arends emerged as the leader of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina, and in 1803 he led the effort to organize the North Carolina Synod. Arends was elected the first president of the Synod. As a result of Arends's residency in the Lincolnton community, Emmanuel Lutheran Church and Lincolnton figured prominently in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century history of Lutheranism in North Carolina.

In 1787/1788 Lincoln County also became the home of the Reverend Andrew Loretz (1762-1812), one of the most prominent members of the Reformed clergy in North Carolina in the later-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century. Born in Switzerland and the only son of Rev. Andrew Loretz, the young minister came to America in 1786 and made his way to Lincoln County and the Schoolhouse Church community. There he acquired substantial land holdings and built an impressive two-story brick house in 1793. Loretz also ministered to the Emanuel Reformed congregation in Lincolnton and to Reformed congregations throughout the region.

That these two great leaders of the German churches should both come to Lincolnton and Lincoln County in the space of a few years and remain here until their deaths is a sure indication of the existence of organized religion in Lincolnton by 1787 and the larger significance of the community in the history of the Lutheran and Reformed churches in the Piedmont.

The Lutheran and Reformed Congregations Acquire Property and Erect a Union Church (the Old White Church)

On 10 January 1788, Joseph Dickson, trustee for the commissioners appointed to lay off the town of Lincolnton, granted a tract comprising two acres and sixteen square poles adjoining the south end of Lots 13, 14, 15, and 16 in the southeast square to ". . . Christian Reinhardt & Andrew Heddick of the same county Trustees for the Societies of Dutch Presbyterians & Dutch Lutherans of the said Town." The tract was conveyed ". . . for the intent and purpose of building thereon a Meeting House for Public Worship, School House both Dutch and English and for a place for the Burial of the Dead, . . ." The language of the deed continued, stating that ". . . the said Societies have at their joint expense already built an House for Public Worship on the premises. . . ." This meeting house was probably built in 1787: both congregations date their organization to that year. Christian Reinhardt was the agent for the Dutch Presbyterians,

afterward known as the Reformed Church and now as the United Church of Christ. Andrew Heddick was the agent for the Dutch Lutherans, a congregation which continues to be known as Lutheran to this day.

From at least 1787 until about 1822, the Old White Church in Lincolnton was the only church building in the county seat. On 17 October 1803 it was the site of the second session of the organizational meeting which established the North Carolina Synod of the Lutheran Church and elected the Reverend Mr. Arends as its first president. Less than four years later, when Arends died on 9 July 1807, he was buried in a vault beneath the floor of the church. In 1810, a handsome marker was erected to his memory at the east end of the church.

During the thirty-five year period spanning the turn of the nineteenth century, the Old White Church was also the scene of preaching and services held by itinerant ministers of the Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Methodist denominations. Two of these ministers also lived in Lincoln County. In 1794, the Rev. Robert Johnstone Miller, an Episcopalian, was ordained a minister in St. John 's Lutheran Church, Cabarrus County, and thereafter he held Episcopal services throughout the western Piedmont. His base was the White Haven Church in eastern Lincoln County until about 1820 when he relocated to Burke County. His services at the Old White Church marked the beginning of the Episcopal church in Lincolnton. The Reverend Humphrey Hunter (d. 1827), one of the founders of the Concord Presbytery on 24 December 1795, became pastor of Goshen and Unity churches in eastern Lincoln County about 1796, and he is said to have held services for Presbyterians at the Old White Church. The Lincolnton Presbyterian Church traces its origins to the ministrations of Hunter. The beginning of Methodism in Lincolnton can be traced indirectly to the formation of the large Lincoln Circuit in 1789 and services in the Old White Church. The Reverend Daniel Asbury (1762-1825), the principal minister of this circuit, organized Rehobeth Methodist Church in 1789 in Lincoln (now Catawba) County: it is said to be the first Methodist church west of the Catawba River in North Carolina.

Transitions in the Religious Life of Lincolnton and the Organization of a Presbyterian Church in the County Seat

Although Arends and Loretz lived until 1807 and 1812, respectively, the last years of their ministry and the first decades of the nineteenth century were marked by ferment in their churches, associated in part with the efforts of the Great Revival, and a division of opinion that, in the Lutheran Church, led to the breakup of the North Carolina Synod and the formation of the Tennessee Synod in 1820. Members of the Henkel family, which produced numerous Lutheran clergymen, were important players in this heady period of religious debate. In 1803/1804 Arends' health failed and Reverend Paul Henkel (1754-1825) served Arends's Emmanuel Lutheran Church as assistant minister until about 1805. In

that year he was succeeded by his son Philip Henkel who became resident pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church upon Arends's death and until 1814. In 1815, Philip Henkel was succeeded by Rev. Daniel Moser who, in 1820, was succeeded at Emmanuel Church by Rev. David Henkel (1795-1831). David Henkel remained as pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church until 1830. After 1830, Emmanuel Church went into decline and was served by supply ministers until the early 1890s when Emmanuel Lutheran Church was revived, its congregation renewed, and a brick church was erected on the site of the Old White Church in 1895.

Critical events were occurring in the Lincolnton Reformed church as well. After the death of Andrew Loretz, the Emanuel Reformed congregation had no regular minister for over fifteen years. This period of lapsed energy, which can best be described as a decline, occurred at the same time that steady forward movement was occurring among the town's Presbyterian citizens who were meeting in the Old White Church. The critical figure in these efforts was Dr. Humphrey Hunter who functioned as a missionary minister to Lincolnton Presbyterians in the 1810s. In 1815, he presented to the Presbytery, meeting in Salisbury on 5 September, a petition for recognition of Emanuel's Presbyterian Church in Lincolnton. It was accepted. Dr. Hunter served as supply pastor of Emanuel's Presbyterian Church until 1821 when Rev. Joseph E. Bell began ministering to the congregation and served until 1827.

During the years that Hunter and Bell held Presbyterian services in the Old White Church in Lincolnton, many if not most of the former members of the Emanuel Reformed congregation attended and joined the Presbyterian Church. This defection was an event from which the Reformed congregation in Lincolnton never fully recovered. However, a renewal of their fortunes began in the 1830s while Rev. John G. Fritchey (b. 1802) was minister. Fritchey, a graduate of Lancaster Theological Seminary, came to Lincolnton in 1828 and remained there until 1839, drawing former members of Emanuel Reformed Church away from the Emanuel's Presbyterian Church and back into the fold of the Reformed congregation. After 1839 the Reformed congregation was served by three resident ministers; however, in 1859 the church ceased to have regular services and did not again for the remainder of the nineteenth century.

Bethel Methodist Church is Organized in Lincolnton

In these alternating periods of early-nineteenth century lapse and renewal which marked the fortunes of the Lutheran and Reformed congregations which jointly built the Old White Church, the Presbyterian congregation experienced generally continuous growth as did the young Methodist congregation. During this period the Old White Church continued to be the site of Lutheran and Reformed services as well as those of the Presbyterian and Methodist congregations until they each built their own church. The cornerstone of the present First United Methodist Church bears the dates "1816" and "1919." Construction on the present church

began in 1919. A church historian has suggested that 1816 might have been the year the Methodist congregation was organized; however, there is presently no known documented authority for that date.

The family of textile pioneer Michael Schenck (1771-1849) is known to have been among the early supporters of the Methodist Church in Lincolnton. In a genealogical work, Michael Schenck's grandson, Judge David Schenck (1835-1902), wrote a few sentences on the origins of the Methodist church in Lincolnton.

> Dr. James Bivings and my maternal grandmother, Mrs. Eliza Bevens and Mrs. Cobb, grandmother of John L. Cobb (who is now my son-in-law) and Joseph Morris and wife, were about the first Methodists in Lincoln. Elizabeth McDaniel and my mother, then Susan Rebecca Bevens, joined that church together August the 1st, 1824. Michael Schenck joined in 1826. Rev. Josiah Freeman was the preacher in charge in 1824. Michael Schenck and Dr. Bivings each gave fifty dollars to erect the first Methodist church in Lincolnton in 1822-3, which stood where the present brick church is now located.

It is not clear when the Methodist congregation acquired title to the property on which two successive churches were built. According to Methodist church tradition and Schenck's memoir, the young Lincolnton congregation, then known as "Bethel at Lincolnton," erected a frame church on the lot bound on three sides by South Aspen, West Congress, and Government Streets in 1822. One of the church's first ministers is said to have been the Rev. James Hill (d. 1828) who lies buried in the cemetery which continues to mark the church site. His burial here in 1828 is perhaps the most convincing proof of the existence of a Methodist church on that property in the 1820s. Whatever the date of its construction, the first church served the congregation until a (second) brick church, begun in 1856, was completed and occupied in 1862.

The log union church built about 1787 by the Emmanuel Lutheran and Reformed congregations appears to have remained unchanged until 1819. In that year a second story was added and the entire building was covered with weatherboards. That expansion required the construction of a new pulpit and other interior improvements. In 1827 a bell was put into place. In 1830, the entire building was covered with a coat of white paint and thereafter the church was known as the White Church. As the nineteenth century neared its end, the enlarged union church would become the "Old White Church," and that term has remained in use to the present.

The Lincolnton Presbyterian Congregation Erects a Church

The Methodist congregation had been the first of Lincolnton's churches to remove their services from the Old White Church to their own building and the town's

Presbyterians followed suit in 1839. The movement to erect a Presbyterian church began in the mid-1830s during the ministry of the Rev. Albertus Leander Watts (d. 1855). On 11 April 1838, church trustees acquired a part of Lot 19 in the southwest square from Paul Kistler and set about to build a brick church. In March 1839 the name of the church was changed from Emanuel's Presbyterian Church to Lincolnton Presbyterian Church. Three months later, on the last Sunday in June, the congregation held their first services in the handsome building. Thereafter, the Old White Church was home to the original Lutheran and Reformed congregations and was the site of Episcopal services.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church is Organized

Although the Episcopal ministry of the Rev. Robert Johnstone Miller in Lincoln County in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries resulted in the organization of three Episcopal congregations--White Haven, Smyrna, and St. Peter's--in 1822 and 1823 and their acceptance into the Diocese of North Carolina, all three churches appear to have failed or seriously weakened by the late 1820s. In the mid-1830s, the Diocese of North Carolina renewed its missionary efforts in Lincoln County and the Piedmont and it sent a series of ministers out in service. The two best known of these clergymen were the Rev. Moses Ashby Curtis and the Rev. E. M. Forbes. Under the leadership of Mr. Forbes, a group of thirteen citizens of Lincolnton gathered in the Pleasant Retreat Academy on 29 November 1841 and organized St. Luke's Church. In March 1842 the congregation acquired property at the corner of Pine and Academy Streets, where they built a church and continue to worship to the present.

Antebellum Religious Life

From the 1840s until the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 there was little marked change in the religious life of Lincolnton. During this period the Old White Church was the scene of Lutheran and Reformed services which grew increasingly less regular; this phenomenon had been in process for some time. The Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal congregations whose genesis occurred in the Old White Church were worshipping in their own churches. During this period, the size of the Methodist congregation grew to the point that it determined to erect a new church to replace the one it is said was built in 1822. In 1856, three years after a handsome new Greek Revival style court house was built on court square in 1853, the Methodist congregation undertook the building of the town's second brick church building.

The new Methodist Church was a rectangular building. Whether the Gothic Revival exterior finish on the building, visible in turn-of-the-century documentary photographs, is original or added when the three-stage Gothic Revival style tower was added in the mid 1890s is unknown. The division of the side elevations into bays marked by shallow pilasters or faux buttresses was a

feature common to many churches in the antebellum Piedmont including Back Creek Presbyterian Church in western Rowan County. Whatever the style and nature of its finish, the church and the newly-built court house must have imparted a progressive, affluent air in the county seat.

The final chapter in the history of Lincolnton's antebellum religious life concerns efforts to organize a Baptist church in Lincolnton. On 28 May 1859, the Reverend L. M. Berry presided over a meeting in the Old White Church at which a group of nine citizens of Lincolnton became charter members of the Lincolnton Baptist Church. Berry's wife Martha was one of seven female charter members: John Killian and E. M. Shuford, along with the minister, were the male members of the church. John A. Parker and John Killian were elected deacons on 25 March 1860 and ordained in July 1860. It appears that this small band continued to worship together as Baptists through the Civil War; however, the departure of the Rev. Mr. Berry from Lincolnton about 1867 effectively ended the life of the fledgling church.

Postbellum Growth

During the two hundred-plus years since the construction of the Old White Church in 1787, the six major Protestant congregations in Lincolnton witnessed periods of increase and decline in their fortunes. These episodes were associated with matters of theology, politics, and the character of the men who stood at the head of the churches whether as pastors or lay leaders. Although Lincolnton and Lincoln County would never again see the likes of John Godfrey Arends and Andrew Loretz as leaders of their religious life, there was one man whose pastorate of a local church holds a close parallel. In 1862, the Rev. William Robards Wetmore (1834-1904) came to Lincolnton as the rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church: he remained in the service of that church for over forty years until his death. Those four decades marked an era of remarkable growth and prominence for St. Luke's Church and its status as a religious society in the town of Lincolnton. Midway in his tenure, in 1886, the congregation erected a handsome Victorian Gothic Revival-style frame church whose interior fabric remains preserved and the site of religious services to the present. Wetmore's efforts were not confined to the Episcopal church but spread to the community at large where he organized mission churches and engaged himself in efforts for the religious, educational, and civic betterment of Lincolnton. Two other major figures in Lincolnton religious life in the second half of the nineteenth century are the Reverend Robert Newton Davis (1818-1871), who served as pastor of the Lincolnton Presbyterian Church from 1850 until his death, and the Reverend Robert Zenas Johnston (1834-1908), who succeeded Davis at the Presbyterian church in 1872 and ministered to the congregation until 1906.

For the remainder of the nineteenth century, until the 1890s that is, the religious life of the small court house town remained otherwise little changed

except for the organization of a Baptist church and its growth as a congregation. In 1872, Needham B. Cobb reorganized the Baptist citizens in Lincolnton and began holding regular services at the Old White Church. A year later the church had progressed to the point that it could obtain land for its own church building. On 1 January 1873, Beverly C. Cobb deeded title to Lot #14 in the southeast square of Lincolnton to ". . . John Killian, H. Pinkney Crawford, & Robert W. Cauble, Trustees for the Missionary Baptist, . . ." for the sum of $250. This lot was immediately north of the Old White Church and adjoined, on the west, the "residence of John Butts Decd, now owned by C. C. Cobb." For reasons that are now unclear, the congregation did not immediately build upon the lot. In June 1879 revival services were held by the Baptists in the Old White Church, led by Rev. F. M. Jordan and Dr. Whitefield of Charlotte. These services galvanized the local congregation into action, and plans moved forward in July to erect a church under the stewardship of a building committee which included James L. Wilkie, Thomas L. Wilkie, and E. Childs. According to church tradition, the new church was completed in 1884. It was the third brick church erected in Lincolnton. Its pedimented gable front and arch-headed window openings suggested the influence of classicism, and it presaged the Classical Revival-style churches of the twentieth century. The Baptist church on Water Street would remain the site of Baptist worship services until 1921.

The Lincolnton Baptist church was the last of the four major Protestant congregations which had grown in strength while holding services in the Old White Church. After about 1884, the Old White Church was the site of irregularly-held worship services by the pioneering Emmanuel Lutheran congregation: the Emanuel Reformed congregation had virtually ceased to exist.

African American Churches in Lincolnton

There were two significant African American congregations organized in Lincolnton in the second half of the nineteenth century, but whether they ever held services in the Old White Church is unknown. It should be acknowledged, at this point, that relatively little is known about the religious life of African Americans in Lincoln County in the antebellum and immediate postbellum periods. The first known African American religious congregation in Lincolnton is said to have been organized in 1863. In the later 1860s, the group was enlarged through the missionary activities of John Jamison Moore who would later become a bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church in North Carolina. A frame church was built for the congregation which became Moore's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church about 1870 and it is said to have been enlarged in 1879. According to tradition it was remodeled again in the early 1890s and yet again in the late 1890s. Any visible elements of the early building were subsumed in the final expansion and remodeling effort of 1941.

The second African American church organized in the later nineteenth century was the Second Presbyterian Church. According to church and local tradition, the congregation was organized in 1880 by Reverend David Baker (1837-1925) and held early meetings in St. Luke's Episcopal Church. A few years later, a one-acre lot was acquired on East Pine Street. In 1885, a modest but well-finished Gothic Revival-style frame church was erected for the fledgling congregation. Expanded by a frame addition to the rear and fitted with replacement six-over-six sash, it remains the congregation's sanctuary to the present.

The rear portion of the church lot was used as a burying ground for church members, probably beginning in the 1880s, and continues in use as a church cemetery to the present.

Section E

II. THE LATE-NINETEENTH AND EARLY-TWENTIETH CENTURIES: A PERIOD OF RENEWAL AND REBUILDING OF THE TOWN'S CHURCHES, 1894-1922

The Church Cemeteries

The loss of the Old White Church to fire in the evening of 23 December 1893 was surely the most devastating blow to the community since the Civil War when many of its sons, including Major General Stephen Dodson Ramseur (1837-1864), fell in battle. In his account of the fire published in the Lincoln Courier, Alfred Nixon noted that the building ". . . has been used continuously as a place of worship until a few months since it was condemned as unsafe for use." The extent to which the building had come to be merged in the corporate life of the community is indicated by later sentences in his article.

> It is an unsettled question to whom the property now belongs. The Methodist(s), Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Baptists left the old church and erected their own houses of worship and the last to occupy it were the German Reformed and Lutherans and it is probable they are the rightful owners of the property.

As events confirmed, the Reformed and Lutheran congregations did own the site of the Old White Church; however, there was scarcely a family in Lincolnton which did not have family members or friends buried in the cemetery which flanked the old church to the east and south. From 1788 until at least the 1820s, the cemetery was the major public burying ground in the town of Lincolnton. As a consequence, many of the town founders and early leaders in the social, political, economic life of both Lincolnton and Lincoln County were buried here. The John Hoke Family Tomb, one of the very few known family vaults dating from the antebellum period in piedmont North Carolina, reflects the status and wealth of the Hoke family in the history of Lincolnton. There are also important groups of gravestones marking the graves of other members of the Hoke family as well as members of the Henderson, Summey, Ramsour, Kistler, Hoyle, Cathey, Houser, Reinhardt, Shuford, and Hauss families among others. The cemetery remained in active use until early in the twentieth century.

The yard surrounding the Methodist Church, a block southwest of the Old White Church burying ground, was used for burials by members of its congregation as early as 1828 when the church minister, Rev. James Hill, was interred there at his death on 20 March 1828. Hill was one of a group of Methodist ministers buried here who served in Lincolnton and piedmont North Carolina (and South Carolina) and who were important in the establishment of the Methodist denomination in the region. Their number includes: James Richardson

(1805-1833); William I. Langdon (1814-1859); and Samuel Lander (1792-1864). The cemetery also includes the individual graves and plots of families who were important in the nineteenth century life of Lincolnton. Among those noteworthy families are: Sherrill, McLean, Motz, Jetton, Schenck, Caldwell, Cobb, and Quickel.

The grounds of St. Luke's Episcopal Church were the third of the four important church-related cemeteries to be established in Lincolnton and the earliest marked interments in its yard date from the 1850s. While the burying round at the Old White Church contained the graves of the most prominent citizens and leaders of Lincolnton who died in the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century, the yard at St. Luke's Church became the resting place of a majority of the town's leading citizens who died in the post Civil War period through the opening decade of the twentieth century. As early as 1882 the church vestry realized that the churchyard was becoming crowded and passed a resolution:

> Whereas the liberal use of the grave yard at St. Luke's Church allowed for many years to the general public has resulted in a limited space being left in the more desireable portion of the grounds for the vaults of our congregation. Resolved that hereafter no person outside of our Church shall be buried in any unoccupied part of said St. Luke's burying ground.

Among townspeople of note buried at St. Luke's are Major General Stephen Dodson Ramseur (1837-1864), the Rev. William Robards Wetmore (1834-1904), other important members of the Episcopal clergy, and members of the Guion, Shipp, Phifer, Ramseur, and McBee families.

The concern which prompted the St. Luke's vestry to pass their resolution reflected a situation which was specific to their burying round and problems of crowding and neglect which characterized many long established town and church-related cemeteries in the region. With the lapsed fortunes of the Lutheran and Reformed congregations and the removal of the Baptist congregation from the Old White Church about 1884, it seems likely that the cemetery adjoining the Old White Church had become neglected, ill-tended, and an undesirable place to be buried. That fact is reflected in the small number of interments there in the final decades of the nineteenth century. As will be seen, the stewardship of the property probably somewhat improved after 1895; however, by then the wide-spread movement for the creation of public cemeteries had gained acceptance and implementation throughout the state. In 1905, the town of Lincolnton established a large public cemetery to the northeast of town and most burials of townspeople would thereafter occur in Hollybrook Cemetery. In the first decades of the twentieth century, some graves and gravestones from the Methodist cemetery and other private interments were relocated to Hollybrook Cemetery.

For over a century, from the establishment of a cemetery at the Old White Church until the 1880s, deceased members of Lincolnton's African American population were buried in the lower grounds or back portions of the cemeteries adjoining the Old White Church, the Methodist church, and St. Luke's Church. The first known church-related cemetery used exclusively by African Americans was established in the mid-1880s in the rear of the lot on which the Second Presbyterian Church erected its frame church building, fronting on Pine Street, in 1885. While the Old White Church and Methodist Church cemeteries have virtually ceased to be used for interments, the churchyards of St. Luke's Church and the Second Presbyterian Church continue to be used for the interments of members. The earliest burials on the Second Presbyterian Church property were made in the very back of the church lot, at the corner of what is now McBee and Hollybrook Streets. That area of the cemetery has been allowed to become overgrown with vegetation and small volunteer trees; however, traditional turn-of-the-century gravestones can be glimpsed through the growth. It is unclear at present (summer 1994) how many marked or unmarked graves are located in that area and who is buried there. The survival of the gravestone of Green Fox (1833-1898), produced and signed by "Cooper Bros, Raleigh, N.C.," at the edge of this section suggests that the area contains graves of leading members of the African American community in the later-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The cemetery also includes the grave of the Reverend David S. Baker (1837-1925), the founder of the church, and his wife. His grave and others of recent date are located in a well-maintained area south of the area of earliest burials.

New Church Construction in the 1890s

Ironically, the destruction of the Old White Church might also have been the critical factor in the fostering renewal of the Emmanuel Lutheran congregation. This loss of a critical part of the community's material heritage probably encouraged an introspection on the part of the town's Lutherans which resulted in the construction of a new Gothic Revival style brick church in 1895. The leader of this effort was Rev. J. F. Moser, the grandson of Rev. Daniel Moser who was pastor of the congregation in the early nineteenth century. The younger Moser reorganized the congregation, held Lutheran services in the Methodist church, and oversaw the erection of the stylish new brick church. Like others of the period, it was a squarish building with a dominant corner tower containing the entrance and belfry which here anchored the junction of Church and South Aspen Streets: decorative gable-front elevations flanked the tower and faced onto the two streets.

The Lutheran congregation had taken their cue, in the matter of the church's design, from the new brick church which the Lincolnton Presbyterians had erected in 1891-1892. In May 1890, the Presbyterian congregation had obtained title to

Lot #3 in the north square of Lincolnton. This lot was a part of the property of Col. John F. Phifer (d. 1886), long-time elder of the Presbyterian church, who lived in the brick mansion standing on Lot #2, to the east. The church's lot at the corner of West Main and Government Streets fronted on West Main Street and was one block west of the Lincoln County Court House. The Presbyterian Church was the first of the town's major Protestant denominations to make the move from secondary streets onto the county seat's principal avenue which was then lined with handsome and stylish residences and business houses. The new Presbyterian church had a corner tower marking the crossing of West Main and Government Streets and richly ornamented gable-front elevations facing onto the two streets.

In a turn of fate, the Lincolnton Methodist church had found itself the host church to services held by the reorganized Lutheran congregation in the period 1893-1895. Challenged by the handsome buildings housing the Presbyterian and Lutheran churches, the congregation of the Methodist church determined in 1896 to remodel their antebellum building. A Gothic Revival-style three-stage tower was added onto the front east gable end of the church and a Sunday school room was also added, but it is unclear whether it occupied the second story of the tower or was located in an expansion of the ground story. The third level belfry was surmounted by a crenelated parapet.

The construction of the new Baptist, Episcopal, and Second Presbyterian churches in the mid-1880s and new Presbyterian and Lutheran Churches, in the 1890s, together with the remodeling of the Methodist church in 1896, were important local examples of a program of church building which occurred across North Carolina at the end of the nineteenth century. It came as a result of the economic growth occurring in the towns and cities of the state where investments in textile mills and other manufacturing facilities began to produce substantial returns. At the same time, the movement of goods and citizens on the state's growing network of railroads broadened trade and perspectives, respectively. Lumber planing mills were producing planks, doors, window sash, turned posts and railings, and a wide range of decorative millwork with which to construct and embellish houses, stores, and churches. Brick yards in nearly every town of any real size were producing brick for factories, homes, churches, and for the building and rebuilding of stores in towns large and small. Lincolnton, like many other county seats in the Piedmont and elsewhere in North Carolina enjoyed these evidences of prosperity.

A review of religious architecture in North Carolina reflects at least two key facts. Visually the most arresting characteristic is the fact that most churches erected in the state from the antebellum period into the 1930s were designed in one of two styles: they were either Gothic Revival style or classical in their appearance and finish. The Greek Revival character of the mid-nineteenth century was succeeded by the Classical Revival of the early

twentieth century. The other sure conclusion is that churches tended to be built and rebuilt in cycles reflecting larger social, economic, and politic conditions. The building program of the later-nineteenth century was one phase and it would be succeeded by another in the 1910s and 1920s. That statewide trend would be repeated in Lincolnton where five of the six major Protestant congregations--all except St. Luke's Episcopal Church-- would build new churches between 1913 and 1922 and the sixth church, St. Luke's, would be covered with a brick veneer.

The Twentieth-Century Church Building Boom in Lincolnton

One key influence on the local church building boom of the 1910s and 1920s, was an event which had occurred in 1890. In that year, the Presbyterian congregation obtained title to a lot on West Main Street where they would build their second brick church. The construction of the Lincolnton Presbyterian Church in 1891-1892, was the first step in a movement which brought four of the town's six major congregations onto Lincolnton's downtown Main Street. The Presbyterian Church was located at the end of the 100 block of West Main Street; the three later Protestant churches would be erected on East Main Street. Moore's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church stood further east at 1009 East Main Street.

Emanuel Reformed Church is Built

The town's Baptist congregation was the first to make a move toward relocating on East Main Street; however, it would not be the first to build. That honor fell to the newly-reorganized Emanuel Reformed Church which first took the name "Heidelberg." On 19 February 1907, the trustees of the Lincolnton Baptist Church acquired Lot #11 in the northeast Square of the town, presumably with the idea of removing the congregation from East Water Street onto Main Street. Four years later, on 4 December 1911, the trustees of the Baptist church conveyed the lot to "D. A. Seagle, E. D. Fox, J. A. Shuford, and K. M. Ramsour Officers and Trustees and their successors in Office of the Heidelberg Reformed Congregation of Lincolnton North Carolina, of the Classis of North Carolina, . . ."

The "Heidelberg Reformed Congregation" was the spiritual descendant of the "Dutch Presbyterians" who has co-erected the union (Old White) church in Lincolnton about 1787. Through generations of lapsed congregational activity, the Reformed church in Lincolnton had nearly ceased to exist. Ministers from Reformed churches in the area had traveled to Lincolnton and preached to small gatherings there; however, regular services had ceased in 1859. In 1900 the responsible parties in the congregation signed over their interest in the site of the Old White Church. From 1900 until 1911, the Lincolnton Reformed congregation had no permanent home and held no real estate. One of the ministers who preached in Lincolnton in the 1900s was the Rev. J. M. L. Lyerly (1862-1923) who also served as editor of the denominational newspaper, "The

Reformed Church Standard." Lyerly was cognizant of the roles of the Lincolnton congregation and the Reverend Andrew Loretz, its first pastor, in the history of the Reformed Church in North Carolina. On 1 May 1909 he issued a call for the renewal of the Lincolnton church in "The Reformed Church Standard." His effort was successful and in 1911, Emanuel Reformed Church in Lincolnton became a mission under the care of the Dr. William H. McNairy who officially reorganized the church with twenty-six charter members on 8 October 1911. Less than two months later, they acquired the lot from the Baptist church.

Dr. William H. McNairy (1886-1941) not only reactivated the Lincolnton Reformed congregation which briefly took the name Heidelberg Reformed Church, but during his pastorate from 1911 until 1921, he oversaw the building of the congregation's first church erected in Lincolnton solely for the use of the Reformed church. A building committee composed of Rev. Mr. McNairy, James A. Shuford (1886-1977), E. C. Shuford, and Frank Ramsour was appointed in January 1913 to obtain plans for a new church and to erect it. The plans for the church were drawn by Henry Emil Bonitz, a Wilmington architect, and the building was erected under the auspices of the Board of Home Missions of the Reformed Church of the United States. The small brick building was rectangular in plan with a tower containing the entrance and belfry at its south corner. The southeast gable, facing East Main Street, held a large stained glass window and was finished with a pointed-top cast-stone parapet. The church was completed and first used on Christmas Day 1913.

Trinity Methodist Church Becomes First Methodist Church and Erects a New Building

Not surprisingly it was the Lincolnton Methodist Church, then worshipping in its remodeled antbellum building, which next moved forward with plans to erect a new church. In 1915 a committee was formed to acquire property for the congregation's next church and on 4 November 1915, the church trustees acquired lots #14, #15, and #16 in the northeast square of Lincolnton. This property, approximately four blocks north/northeast of the antebellum church, comprised the residence and homeplace of Vardry Alexander McBee (1818-1904), a founding member and long-time benefactor of St. Luke's Episcopal Church. To meet the purchase price of $9,000 for the three lots and to raise money to erect a new building, the church on 20 October 1916 sold the east part of the property, retaining an L-shaped lot at the corner of East Main and North Academy Streets as the site of the new church.

Although the East Water Street Church of the Lincolnton Baptists had featured arch-headed windows and a symmetrical, vaguely classical appearance, the new First Methodist Church of Lincolnton was a fully realized Classical Revival-style church building. Situated at the junction of East Main and Academy Streets, and with a domed portico addressing that intersection, the church

appeared to have been designed for just that location. That impression is misleading and incorrect. The church was actually built from plans which had been drawn about 1916 by C. W. Carlton for the Methodist congregation of Lenoir. The Lenoir church, situated at the junction of two streets, was built of red brick in 1917-1918 under the pastorate of the Rev. D. M. Litaker. In 1918/1919 the Rev. Mr. Litaker was transferred by the Western North Carolina Conference to the First Methodist Church in Lincolnton whose congregation was also planning to build. Apparently, the Rev. Mr. Litaker secured a copy of the plans for the newly-built Lenoir Methodist Church and they were adopted by the building committee of the Lincolnton church.

The two churches are virtually identical except on two points. The focus of both churches is a multi-level main block crowned by a handsome dome. This central element is flanked by three-bay, three-story pedimented wings which on the Lincolnton church enframe a portico, supported by composite columns and engaged pilasters, rising from a tall flight of steps and overlooking the intersection of East Main and North Academy Streets. The Methodist church in Lenoir lacks this very useful porch and has a trio of entrances inset between two-story composite pilasters. The other major difference is that the Lenoir church is laid up in red brick while the Lincolnton church is built of yellow brick on a cast stone basement foundation.

The Lincolnton Presbyterian Church Renames Itself the First Presbyterian Church and Erects a New Church

The Gothic Revival-style Reformed church and the Classical Revival-style Methodist church each established a pattern which would be followed by the town's Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Baptist congregations. These three last-named congregations generally proceeded toward the erection of new churches. In the five-year period from 1915 to 1920 during which the Methodist congregation both acquired the new site for their church and completed it. The Lincolnton Presbyterian Church, which gave itself the new name of First Presbyterian Church while building the present building, was the first to act. The leader in this effort was the Rev. Willis Sherrard Wilson (1867-1941), who came to Lincolnton in September 1915 to preach in the Victorian Gothic Revival style church which seated about 100 persons. The church needed a larger sanctuary and Sunday school rooms and in 1916 a committee of church members was appointed to consider the matter. A proposal to expand the existing church was defeated at a congregational meeting in June 1916 and a new committee was appointed to raise funds for a new building. That committee comprised Dr. Wilson, Robert M. Roseman (1846-1935), J. W Mullen, R. S. Abernathy, P. M. Keever, Edgar Love, and Robert S. Reinhardt (1858-1925). Reinhardt was the owner of the Elm Grove Cotton Mill and the builder of the three-story Classical Revival style Reinhardt Building which had been completed in 1909 on West Court Square. Although Robert M. Roseman was chairman of the committee it

was Edgar Love (d. 1920), a textilist, whose critical financial contributions enabled the committee to meet the $20,000 reserve with which to proceed toward construction of a new church facility.

With the necessary funds in hand, the session appointed a building committee comprised of Dr. Wilson, R. F. Beal, James Alonzo Abernathy, Robert S. Reinhardt, J. W Mullen, D. H. Shields, and Robert M. Roseman, chairman. The architect of the Gothic Revival style brick church is unknown; however, the use of twin towers to flank an arcaded gable-front facade occurs well within the parameters of conservative religious architectural practice in the early twentieth century. Henry A. Kistler (1864-1928) the contractor who erected the church was Lincolnton's most prominent builder in the early twentieth century. He had already constructed the Reinhardt Building on Court Square for Robert S. Reinhardt. Kistler's ability as a builder was well-appreciated by James Alonzo Abernathy (1851-1936), another member of the building committee, who occupied the antebellum mansion of Colonel John F. Phifer which stood in the 100 block of West Main Street midway between the Reinhardt Building and the Presbyterian church.

The church, under its committee, determined to rebuild on their existing site and, consequently, demolition of the Victorian-era church began on 9 July 1917. Henry A. Kistler undertook construction on the new building in August; however, the cornerstone was not laid until 16 September 1917. Work proceeded smoothly and the First Presbyterian Church was completed at the cost of $25,000 and first occupied for services on the last Sunday of March 1918.

Emmanuel Lutheran Church is Built in 1919-1920

While the First Presbyterian Church was being built, the congregation of Emmanuel Lutheran Church advanced their discussions for a new building under the leadership of Rev. Enoch Hite. Having made one expansion of their second (1895) church, they resolved to build a new facility at a new, larger site. On 17 April 1918 the trustees--T. H. Cansler, P. C. Rhyne, D. C. Leonard, and B. P. Costner--acquired two adjoining tracts of land. These parcels were diagonally opposite the site of their existing church and across the intersection of South Aspen and Church Streets.

The identity of the architect of Emmanuel Lutheran Church is also unknown. The robust, muscular proportions of its brickwork and cast stone dressings is similar to some few other Lutheran churches of the early twentieth century. Contractor Henry A. Kistler is said to have begun building the church in April 1919 and to have finished it in August 1920. It was dedicated on Sunday evening, 10 October 1920. The Reverend B. D. Wessinger (d. 1951), president of the Tennessee Synod, preached the dedicatory sermon assisted by Rev. W. J. Roof, pastor (1918-1923) of Emmanuel Lutheran Church. Two days later at the

centennial meeting of the Tennessee Synod steps were taken to merge the Tennessee Synod with its parent North Carolina Synod.

The First Baptist Church is Built

The last built of Lincolnton's major Protestant churches was the First Baptist Church: it was built and occupied during the pastorate (1917-1924) of the Rev. James Abner Snow. Having sold their earlier Main Street property to the Reformed congregation, the trustees acquired a new lot at the corner of East Main Street and Cedar Street on 8 May 1919: it was described in the deed as lot #26 in the northeast square of the town. The trustees purchased the lot from C. L. and Ida Goodson for $6,000. Interestingly enough, Goodson was one of the seven trustees who acquired the property on behalf of the congregation. Four months later, on 9 September 1919, the trustees acquired a tract immediately behind the Goodson property: it was located on the corner of Cedar and Sycamore Streets. The Lincolnton Baptist congregation now owned the entire Cedar Street frontage between Main and Sycamore Streets.

On 9 November 1919, the plans for the new Baptist church were approved at a congregational meeting. The new church was designed by Charlotte architect J. M. McMichael who had a distinguished career in church design and produced many notable Classical Revival style buildings. At the Methodist church the dome had crowned the entrance pavilion; however, here the dome was placed atop the principal sanctuary and a tetrastyle portico was situated to face East Main Street. A fifteen-member building committee, including the pastor, was appointed to oversee construction of the handsome new building which was completed in 1922. In a curious turn of events, the Baptist congregation had sold and given up ownership of their Water Street Church in 1921, prior to the completion of their new church. For a period of months, the Baptist congregation held services in the former Emmanuel Lutheran Church which had been built on the site of the Old White Church and was recently vacated by the Lutheran congregation.

Section E

III. EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT OF CHURCH FACILITIES IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD, 1923-1944

The Baptist Church had been completed and occupied for less than a decade when the town's churches began to add educational facilities to their church plants. This series of construction projects began in 1931 and concluded in 1956-1957. Having erected a parsonage adjoining their church on the east in 1919-1920, the Reformed congregation in 1931 erected a block of Sunday school rooms across the rear of the church: this work was completed under the pastorate of the Rev. Hoy Lee Fesperman. This modest addition reflected the fact that the congregation, numbering ninety-two on roll in 1932, was the smallest of the town's major churches.

In 1936, the First Methodist Church faced the need for additional Sunday school rooms; in that year it undertook and completed construction of the Sunday School Annex. The yellow brick elevations and classical design of the addition replicated the materials and finish of the earlier church. This building was physically connected to the earlier building and featured a large meeting room for the Men's Bible Class on the first story with an entrance onto Academy Street. The Reverend A. L. Stanford was the pastor while this work was done.

In 1941 two building projects were undertaken at Lincolnton churches. The most substantial of the two was the remodeling of Moore's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church. The frame church, said to date to 1870 and expanded several times thereafter, was sheathed in a common-bond brick veneer in 1941. In late 1941, contractor M. S Beam of Lincolnton began work on an educational building for Emmanual Lutheran Church. The building was largely completed on Sunday, 29 March 1942, when the cornerstone was laid. The next day the LINCOLN COUNTY NEWS published an account of the ceremony:

> Attending were the two architects, Mr. Paul C. Rhyne Jr., and Mr. Sangford from Charlotte. This is the first of a proposed three-unit building. This section will accommodate the Primary, Senior, and Young People's departments, also the Men's Bible Class, the church office and other offices for the Sunday School.

A Postscript--Major Religious Building Construction After 1944

After the completion of the Lutheran congregation's educational building, there was no construction activity associated with the town's principal churches until 1950. On 20 August 1950, construction was begun, under the supervision of W. E. Garrison, on a large three-story educational building for the First Baptist Church. Following the model of the Methodist congregation, the Baptists

erected this substantial addition in the image of their 1920s building and sheathed its elevations in buff brick similar to their original building. It would appear that the Baptist congregation must have been the largest in Lincolnton at that time since the facilities housed in the new building were more extensive than those noted in the earlier expansions by the other churches. In fact, the Educational Building added to the Baptist Church was of a different type than those of the earlier interwar period and reflected broadened programs and offices for the minister and staff as well as a handsome chapel which was described as "the highlight of the building" and of the "colonial type." At the same time the social hall in the basement of the church was renovated and a new kitchen installed. The work was completed and the building dedicated on Sunday, 6 May 1951.

Changes to the Old White Church Property

The congregation of Emmanuel Lutheran Church was engaged simultaneously in improvements and changes to its properties. In 1938, the church had sold their late-nineteenth century brick church to S. R. Warlick (Warlick Funeral Home) which subsequently erected a new (the present) brick building on the site. It appears that for many years the church had poorly maintained their old burying ground and in the summer of 1950 the church considered the possibility of selling a portion of the cemetery. Under the date of 18 October 1950, the Church Council sent a letter to members advising them of the subject and announced that a congregational meeting would be held on 22 October to consider the general question of a possible sale. The potential buyer of the property was unnamed in the letter. The part of the cemetery under discussion was the section south of a driveway which ran from Aspen Street toward the back (east) of the burying ground. This section had traditionally been used as a cemetery by black citizens of Lincolnton and had few conventional grave markers: most of the graves apparently were marked by field stones. The congregation agreed in principal to the idea of selling the south "half" of the cemetery at the November meeting.

On 26 February 1951 a second letter, conveying three proposals, was sent to members of the congregation by the church council: the council recommended sale of the south portion of the cemetery to the Lincoln Lodge Number 137, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons; it announced a congregational meeting for 4 March to consider the sale; and it recommended that proceeds from the sale be invested in a trust fund for the maintenance of the cemetery. It is unclear at present whether the proposal to sell the property to the fraternal lodge was voted upon or whether the lodge withdrew their interest in the property for politically-sensitive or other reasons. On 11 June 1951, the property was offered for sale to Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company which, in fact, did acquire the property in November 1951 and erected a building upon it.

The sale of the property was conditional upon the relocation of the graves and gravestones into the north section of the cemetery. A total of 201 graves were relocated by the Warlick Funeral Home of Lincolnton in the summer of 1951 at a cost of $2,400.00. Prior to the relocation, a plat was prepared showing the original location of the (numbered) marked and unmarked graves. When the removal was made the graves were placed in that same arrangement and a new chart was prepared showing their relocation in the eastern section of the north half of the cemetery.

It appears that this activity in the old burying ground sparked a new interest in the history of the churchyard. In the summer of 1953 the church proceeded with a project to commemorate its association with the great Lutheran minister John Godfred Arends. On 31 August 1953, the church contracted with the Salisbury Marble and Granite Company to mount the gravestones of Arends and his wife Hannah together in a substantial granite stone. This was conceived as a means of preserving the stones and they have survived to the present inset in the granite enframement. Simultaneously, efforts moved forward for the installation of a North Carolina Highway Historical Marker honoring the Rev. Mr. Arends.

Improvements to Church Plants in the 1950s

Concurrent with the sale of the former cemetery property and the Arends commemoration, the church discussed an enlargement of its educational building facility. A congregational building on the subject was held on 27 January 1952. The end result was the construction of an addition to the existing building, located between it and the church, which housed a chapel and offices on the first story and classrooms and restrooms on the second story. The stained glass commemorative windows, salvaged when the 1895 church was pulled down, were installed in the chapel.

The final significant construction projects undertaken by the Lincolnton churches in the 1950s occurred in 1956-1957 when the First Presbyterian and First Methodist churches erected substantial educational buildings in the manner of the Baptist educational building. The design of the Presbyterian education building was prepared in 1955 by Harold E. Wagoner of Philadelphia. Surviving blueprints and drawings from the period and the project indicate that the congregation (or perhaps only the building committee) was considering a remodeling of the sanctuary of the church. Fortunately, that project was not undertaken. The educational building, stylistically similar to the earlier church was built of dark red brick and detailed with spare Gothic Revival style ornament. It housed a large social hall with adjoining kitchen, classrooms, and related spaces. It is a one-story building on a basement.

The First Methodist Church of Lincolnton, like the First Baptist Church, was a growing church in the 1950s and in 1954 it had a membership of 808 persons. In 1954 church members began conversations concerning the enlargement of their educational facilities. Discussion on the project advanced and Marsh & Hawkins, a Charlotte-based architectural and engineering firm, was hired to prepare the plans. The firm produced a building which continued the traditional classical revival character of the earlier buildings and was of a like-colored buff-yellow brick. The contract for the two-story-on-basement building was signed on 19 June 1956. It was completed and occupied on 4 August 1957.

Section E

IV. THE ARCHITECTURE OF RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS IN LINCOLNTON, CA. 1787-1944

The Old White Church and Early Church Architecture in Lincolnton

The architecture of religious buildings in Lincolnton, as in many other towns and county seats in the Piedmont, reflects the general patterns of architectural development for the region. The earliest known church buildings were simple structures of either log or frame construction and of a relatively modest finish. Gradually, and in the second and third generations after settlement, buildings took on a more accomplished appearance and refined finish. While there are a few surviving late-eighteenth century or early-nineteenth century buildings in the region, such as Zion Lutheran Church (1792-1795) in Rowan County and St. Paul's Lutheran Church (1818) in Catawba County which reflect the Georgian and Federal styles, respectively, churches were generally conservative in their appearance and workmanlike in their craftsmanship. The oldest surviving intact church building in Lincoln County, Machpelah Presbyterian Church, said to have been erected in 1848 in eastern Lincoln County, reflects the conservatism and traditional character. Its plain, but workmanlike fabric is not dissimilar to that of the brick Third Creek Presbyterian Church (1835) and the frame St. Andrew's Episcopal Church (1840) both in Rowan County.

Style and its refinements, likewise, came slowly to Lincolnton church architecture. The county seat's oldest known religious building, the Old White Church, erected ca. 1787--about sixty years before Machpelah Church--was a simple log building. In 1819, it was raised to two stories and covered with weatherboards. It apparently remained unpainted until 1830--a date etched in the public mind--which suggests that even that degree of refinement was somewhat uncommon. Perhaps, in fact, it was: St. Andrew's Church, cited above, built in 1840 for a not-insubstantial congregation, has never been painted in its 154 years. Clearly, the fact that the Old White Church was painted and painted white, was the basis for the appellation by which it remains known to this day--the Old White Church. Its single decorative feature appears to have been the belfry added in 1827.

The important role played by the Old White Church in the religious life of Lincolnton is demonstrated by the fact that between ca. 1787 and 1856 there were but three church buildings erected in the county seat. There are no surviving images of these buildings and scant reference to their appearance. The first of the trio was a small frame church which is believed to have been erected for the town's Bethel Methodist congregation in the mid 1820s: it stood on the property which is still held by the town's Methodist church as a burying ground. The

Lincolnton Presbyterian Church, completed in 1839 on West Water Street, was the town's first brick church: it was likely similar in appearance to Machpelah Presbyterian Church. Four years later, on 30 July 1843, St. Luke's Episcopal Church consecrated its newly-completed frame church on the site where the congregation continues to worship to the present. With the completion of the Episcopal church, the county seat boasted four church edifices in which its citizens worshipped.

In the years after 1843, and particularly in the 1850s, the character of life in antebellum Lincolnton changed dramatically as it did elsewhere in the North Carolina piedmont. The construction of the Western North Carolina Railroad was the key factor in the series of events which saw crops, produce, and industrial products carried away to market and stylish goods and higher revenues in return. Lincolnton's public buildings, houses, and even the gravestones marking the burial places of its citizens of the era, showed a new stylishness and ambition. In the way of church architecture, the most imposing building to be erected in this era--and the only building--was the new brick church for the town's Methodist congregation which gave up the name Bethel and adopted the new name of Trinity. The exact original appearance of Trinity Methodist Church is uncertain, despite the fact that there are photographs of it from the turn of the century and that it stood until being demolished in 1963. The key question and uncertainty is the extent to which the Gothic Revival-style tower addition of 1896 was a new decorative element, added to the building, or whether it was in harmony with certain Gothic Revival-style detailing from the 1856-1862 original construction.

In the decade following the end of the Civil War, there was but one additional church erected in Lincolnton. Virtually nothing is known of the appearance of the original building erected in 1870 by the Moore's Chapel A.M.E. Zion congregation except the fact that it was a frame building. That building, said to have been enlarged in 1879 and remodeled in 1892 and 1898, is also said to be subsumed within the walls of the present brick veneer church of 1941.

As described above, the erection of churches in Lincolnton during the first century or so of the town's existence largely coincided with the organization of congregations. The town's Methodist congregation was the only body to erect two churches in the period: a fact that can be attributed to both the town's growing prosperity and the congregation's increase in size.

Church Buildings in the County Seat in the Later Nineteenth Century

In the forty-year period from 1884 until 1924, however, there were two major periods of church building activity in Lincolnton. Each reflected the general trends in church construction seen elsewhere in the Piedmont and, indeed, across the breadth of North Carolina. For the most part, these buildings were erected

in one of two styles which were favored for church buildings of all denominations in North Carolina: the Classical Revival style, or the Gothic Revival style. In Lincolnton, in each of these periods of major church construction, the larger number of churches was erected in one mode or another of the Gothic Revival style. It should be noted that handsome churches in the Romanesque Revival style were erected in the state during this period; however, they were built mostly in larger towns and cities.

The first of these two eras of church building occurred during the period from 1884 until 1895: during these years there were five substantial churches erected by Lincolnton congregations. Three were of brick construction; the other two, the Second Presbyterian Church and St. Luke's Church, were frame. Ironically, it is the frame buildings which survive to the present. The Second Presbyterian Church, with an addition and some modifications, is largely intact while the remarkably handsome Gothic Revival-style interior of St. Luke's Church survives inside its brick veneer shell of 1922. Within this quintet of buildings, only one church was designed and constructed in a classical style. In fact, the brick church completed in 1884 by the Lincolnton Baptist Church on East Water Street introduced the Classical Revival style to church architecture in Lincolnton. The use of arch-headed door and window openings, pilasters to demarcate bays, a pedimented gable front with a circular window, all imparted an impressive classical appearance to an otherwise modest church building.

The first of the quartet of Gothic Revival churches erected between 1884 and 1895 is the Second Presbyterian Church, said to have been erected in 1885. Built for an African American Presbyterian congregation and standing on East Pine Street, some six blocks east of St. Luke's Church, the simple yet impressive Carpenter Gothic-style church is both the oldest largely intact church building in Lincolnton and an early landmark of African American history in the county seat. Its simple gable-front rectangular form and weatherboarded elevations are dominated by the steeple which rises, inset in the front (southeast) elevation, above the projecting vestibule. In this century a weatherboarded frame addition was built at the rear of the church and its window openings modified and fitted with six-over-six sash.

A year later, in 1886, the congregation of St. Luke's Episcopal Church erected a new frame Gothic Revival-style church on the site of their original building. On 4 January of that year, Silas McBee and J. C. Cobb were appointed as a building committee to oversee the construction of the church: the cornerstone of the church was laid a month later on 2 February, and on 12 August 1886 the newly completed church was consecrated by Bishop Lyman. The handsome Victorian Gothic program of interior decoration and wood carving was largely the work of Silas McBee (1853-1924).

In the early 1890s, there were two brick Gothic Revival-style churches erected in Lincolnton on generally similar plans. Both were cross-plan buildings with corner towers which contained vestibules on the lower, entrance level and belfrys above. The Lincolnton Presbyterian Church erected the first of the two in 1891-1892 at the corner of West Main and Government Streets: that building was the first church erected in the town center on Main Street, and in the second building program of 1913-1922 three additional congregations would erect churches in downtown Lincolnton on East Main Street. A second and like brick church was erected on the site of the Old White Church in 1895 by Emmanuel Lutheran Church. It, too, had a corner entrance tower which addressed the corner of South Aspen and Church Streets. At the turn of the century, the seven organized religious congregations in Lincolnton were worshipping in five churches recently erected between 1884-1895, and two older church buildings (Trinity Methodist Church and Moore's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church) which were both remodeled in the 1890s.

Lincolnton's Major Churches are Rebuilt

In the first quarter of the twentieth century, and more specifically between 1913 and 1922, Lincolnton's religious congregations would embark on another, more ambitious building program. During this period five major, costly churches would be erected in the county seat and a sixth church, St. Luke's, would be sheathed first (1917) in pebbledash and later (1922) in brick veneer. Except for the involvement of Silas McBee, a skilled artisan and architectural layman, in the design and building of St. Luke's Church, there are no known surviving references to the employment of architects in the design of the town's nineteenth century churches. In the building programs of the twentieth century, architects provided the designs of the five major churches erected in this era. The employment of architects reflected both the rise of the architectural profession in North Carolina and the scale of these major new buildings. The identity of the architects for three of the churches is known: the designer of First Presbyterian Church and Emmanuel Lutheran Church remains to be discovered.

Within this trio of architects, James M. McMichael (1870-1944), the architect of the First Baptist Church, was perhaps the best known: he had also gained a reputation in North Carolina and more particularly in the Piedmont as a fine designer of church buildings. He was an ardent proponent of the Classical Revival style and his churches and public buildings are distinguished by two-story porticos and handsome domes. Situated in Charlotte, he designed churches in that city and for the major towns and cities within a fifty to seventy-five mile radius of his office. His buildings bear marked similarities to each other, examples being the First Baptist churches in Forest City (1915) and Lincolnton (1919); however, they do not copy each other and, instead, they represent free, imaginative interpretations of the Classical Revival style.

Whereas McMichael's reputation was largely based on the handsome churches he

produced, the career of Henry Emil Bonitz (b. 1872) is based, for the most part, in Wilmington where he produced designs for a wide range of public, commercial, and residential buildings. Bonitz, a native of Goldsboro, was among the first students at the State College of Agriculture and Engineering (now North Carolina State University) and he graduated with a degree in engineering in 1893. After an apprenticeship with James F. Post in Wilmington, he established his own office in 1894. In addition to his wide practice in Wilmington, Bonitz acquired a reputation for his institutional work including schools and churches. Tony Wrenn, archivist of the American Institute of Architects and the author of Wilmington, North Carolina described Bonitz as "The best known and most prolific of the turn-of-the-century Wilmington designers." How he came to design the sanctuary for the Emanuel Reformed Church is unknown.

An element of mystery also surrounds the career of C. W. Carlton who produced the design and plans upon which the First Methodist Church in Lincolnton is built. It appears that the unusual plan, with a great dome-covered vestibule and classical porch, was originally prepared for the Methodist congregation in Lenoir which built a like--but red brick-church at the junction of two streets in 1917. The connection between the two buildings and the reuse of the plan in Lincolnton in 1919-1920 is the Reverend D. M. Litaker who was minister of the Lenoir congregation when its church was built and who, later, came to Lincolnton and was pastor while the First Methodist Church was built in that city. The repetition of the plan did not end with the construction of the Lincolnton church. In the 1920s, virtually identical Methodist churches in Cherryville (Gaston County), Avondale (Rutherford County), and Murphy (Cherokee County) also appear to have been built from the plans believed to have been originally prepared for the Lenoir church.

The five churches erected between 1913 and 1922 represent the persistence of the Gothic Revival and the Classical Revival as the two principal styles for church buildings. The three Gothic Revival-style churches (Emanual Reformed Church, First Presbyterian Church, Emmanuel Lutheran Church) represent different modes of the style of the early twentieth century; however, in each case the dominant tower(s), buttresses, and lancet-arch window openings are the dominant carriers of style and ornamentation. The two impressive Classical Revival-style churches (First Methodist and First Baptist churches) are both distinguished by two-story porticos, dome-covered spaces, the repetition of arch-headed window openings, and other classical features. In plan these buildings also represented the increasingly prominent role given to Sunday school by each of the congregations. All of the five churches included space for Sunday school classrooms in their main buildings. Both Emanuel Reformed Church and the First Presbyterian Church had ancillary spaces, opening into the main sanctuary in Akron-plan fashion, which could be closed off for Sunday school or small group meetings. In the 1930s, two churches would make additions to house an expanded Sunday school program. In 1931, Emanuel Reformed Church added a tier of classrooms behind its sanctuary. In 1936, First Methodist Church erected the Sunday School Annex.

The first of the Gothic Revival style churches erected in early-twentieth century Lincolnton was Emanuel Reformed Church (now Emanuel United Church of Christ). The use of the offset corner entrance tower/belfry beside the southeast front elevation recalls the earlier use of such towers on the town's 1890s Presbyterian and Lutheran churches. The unknown designer of the First Presbyterian Church decided to use a pair of entrance towers on the front elevation of the dark red brick church to enframe the southeast gable front: he added a further refinement in an arcade which linked the towers and served as a porch for worshippers. The Presbyterian church was occupied in the first Sunday of March 1918. In the spring of 1919, construction began on the boldly composed and detailed Emmanuel Lutheran Church. It was erected in 1919-1920 in the west corner of South Aspen and Church Streets, diagonally across the intersection from the site of the Old White Church and the congregation's second church of 1895. The imaginative use of cast stone, poured cement, and granite to enliven the multi-colored brick elevations of the Lutheran church sets it well above its somewhat more conventional Gothic Revival-style contemporaries.

Although the Methodist congregation's decision to reuse the plans prepared for the Lenoir church was perhaps a matter of convenience, the congregation erected a building that was superior in its finish to its prototype and secured for themselves the most beautiful surviving twentieth century public interior space in Lincolnton. At the same time, the church became the first of two Classical Revival-style churches erected in the interwar period of this century and the first of a series of later churches erected in the post-World War II period in Lincolnton and Lincoln County that were designed in a Classical Revival or free Colonial Revival style. Whether the Lincolnton Baptist congregation consciously sought to emulate the classical vocabulary of the First Methodist Church (now First United Methodist Church) in the design of their new church is not known. It is possible that they came to have an impressive Classical Revival-style church because many of the Piedmont Baptist congregations which built churches in this period chose to build in the classical tradition: the Gothic Revival style was never a favorite for Baptist churches in the Carolina Piedmont after World War I.

The final important construction project which occurred in this period of historic church building programs was carried out by the congregation of Moore's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church. In 1941, the church was both enlarged and encased in a dark red brick veneer. The use of corner towers to enframe the front (south) elevation of the church recalls the earlier placement of towers at the front corners of the First Presbyterian Church. Here, however, the entrance into the sanctuary is through a shallow enclosed vestibule in the center of the main gable-front block. As on the earlier Presbyterian church, the paired towers, lancet-arch window and door openings, and buttresses are the principal carriers of the late Gothic Revival style on this building which houses Lincolnton's oldest African American religious congregation.

F. Associated Property Types

I. LATER-NINETEENTH CENTURY CHURCHES

Description

Later-nineteenth century churches as a property type represent two surviving buildings in the town of Lincolnton. Both of these buildings are (were) of frame construction and both were erected in the mid-1880s. Of these two buildings only one, the Second Presbyterian Church, remains largely intact on the exterior. The exterior of St. Luke's Episcopal Church was covered in a brick veneer in 1922. During the addition of the brick veneer, the remarkably handsome Victorian interior of St. Luke's Church was preserved intact and it is the most architecturally sophisticated Victorian church interior in Lincoln County. St. Luke's Church and Cemetery are individually listed in the National Register (1992).

The other later-nineteenth century frame and brick churches known to have been erected within the town limits of Lincolnton were demolished in this century for replacement church buildings or other structures. The nineteenth century Baptist Church, the first church erected by the congregation, was sold by the congregation in 1921, subsequently demolished, and replaced by commercial buildings. The brick church erected by the Presbyterian congregation in 1891-1892 at the corner of West Main and Government Streets was pulled down in the summer of 1917 to make way for the erection of a new church which continues to serve the congregation. The brick church erected by Emmanuel Lutheran Church in 1895 to replace the Old White Church was sold by the congregation in 1938 to Warlick Funeral Home and subsequently demolished by the company which built a simple Colonial Revival-style commercial building on the site. The 1870s frame church erected by Moore's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church was remodeled or expanded twice in the 1890s. In 1941, the church was essentially rebuilt and covered by a brick veneer. Because that remodeling and rebuilding was so substantial and because it essentially obscured significant vestiges of the nineteenth-century building, it is considered a twentieth century building and is included in Property Type II.

The Second Presbyterian Church, erected for its small Black congregation, is a modest Gothic Revival style weatherboarded frame building covered with a gable-front roof. Like St. Luke's Church, the Second Presbyterian Church is rectangular in shape and follows a center-aisle plan in contrast to the Presbyterian and Lutheran churches which had corner entrance towers/steeples and asymmetrical interior plans. The Second Presbyterian Church has a three-bay wide front (southeast) front elevation marked by a two-stage tower which rises above and out of a gable front-vestibule. A pair of two-leaf doors in a bracketed arch-headed opening is set in the center of the vestibule. The first

stage of the tower is partially inset into the main body of the church: this level is sheathed with weatherboards like the church. The upper level of the tower, forming the belfry, is flush-sheathed, and has louvered ventilators on each face. The tower is covered with a towering hip roof and surmounted by a cross. The projecting vestibule is flanked by window openings holding six-over-six double-hung sash. The three-bay side elevations of the church contain window openings which were modified in this century and contain six-over-six sash. The construction or expansion of an ell-shaped addition at the rear probably occurred at the same time.

Significance

The Second Presbyterian Church is the chief building in the town of Lincolnton not previously listed in the National Register, which represents the character of religious worship in the county seat in the nineteenth century. The African American congregation of Second Presbyterian Church, organized in 1880 by the Rev. David S. Baker, is said to have held its first meetings in St. Luke's Church. About 1883, the congregation acquired a one-acre tract on East Pine Street, and in 1885 this church was erected on that property. The Second Presbyterian Church is the first and only church erected by the congregation and remains in use. The church is both the oldest African American church building in the town of Lincolnton and the oldest visually intact church building of any denomination in Lincolnton.

Registration Requirements

The Second Presbyterian Church, the primary example of this property type, and the only known nineteenth century church building in the town of Lincolnton with its exterior largely intact, retains the signal aspects of its integrity of setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and satisfies Criterion C for listing in the National Register. Located on its small lot that is also the site of some fifty or more marked graves of members and a handsome bronze bell cast in 1885 for the church by Henry McShane & Co. of Baltimore, the church is an extraordinary reminder of the African American presence in the town of Lincolnton and the county seat's major building that fully represents the character of religious life in Lincolnton in the nineteenth century. Because of the primary architectural significance, the single building in this property type--Second Presbyterian Church--satisfies Criteria Consideration A.

II. GOTHIC- AND CLASSICAL REVIVAL-STYLE CHURCHES OF THE 1910s TO THE 1940s

Description

As a property type, Gothic- and Classical Revival-style churches of the 1910s to the 1940s comprise six architecturally and historically significant brick and

brick-veneer church buildings and connected educational buildings. Excepting St. Luke's Church and Cemetery which are already listed in the National Register, these six buildings represent all of the known major church buildings erected in the twentieth century which are still standing within the town limits of Lincolnton: Emanuel United Church of Christ; First Presbyterian Church; First United Methodist Church; Emmanuel Lutheran Church; the (former) First Baptist Church; and Moore's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church. Except for Emmanuel Lutheran Church, located on South Aspen Street a block south of the Lincoln County Court House, the buildings comprising this property type are all located on East and West Main Street.

While all of the buildings are erected in either the Gothic or Classical Revival style, their setting varies. The First Methodist Church stands in the center of the commercial district and is built directly on the street: it has a rear off-street lawn and playground. Emanuel United Church of Christ, First Presbyterian Church, and Emmanuel Lutheran Church all have shallow lawns between the church building and the sidewalk and varied foundation plantings; only the Presbyterian church has any significant tree canopy. The site of the (former) First Baptist Church is probably the best developed setting of any of the six churches in this property type. Its elevated lot, at the corner of Cedar and East Main Street, is retained by a low wall and it is shaded by both street trees and trees standing on the lot. The building was erected on a high basement and retains portions of its foundation plantings which screened its podium-like foundation. The above five churches are either located downtown or within a few blocks of the main commercial district of Lincolnton. Moore's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church stands several blocks east of the downtown commercial district and in a mixed commercial neighborhood along the extension of East Main Street to Boger City. Its setting is a simple mowed grassy lawn with a few specimen shrub plantings.

As had been the case in the nineteenth century in North Carolina, the majority of churches erected in the state in the first half of the twentieth century were built in one of two styles: either Gothic Revival or Classical Revival. This, likewise, had occurred in Lincolnton in the later-nineteenth century when most church buildings were ornamented with Gothic Revival detailing. When the Methodist congregation remodeled their antebellum building in 1896, a handsome three-stage tower with a Gothic Revival style crenelated parapet was added to the front of the gable-front church in a boast of stylishness. The Second Presbyterian was typical of the most modest vernacular Gothic Revival churches where the Gothic character was carried in the tall spire-like roof of the belfry. Conversely, the surviving intact interior of St. Luke's Episcopal Church features a handsome and lavish program of Gothic Revival and Victorian carved decoration.

Within this group of six church buildings, two are remarkably similar examples of Classical Revival architecture, while the other four buildings represent the varied character in which religious buildings could be designed under the expansive umbrella of the twentieth century Gothic Revival movement. The earliest built of the six buildings is Emanuel United Church of Christ which was erected in 1913. The designs for the church were prepared in 1912 by Wilmington architect Henry Emil Bonitz and approved at a congregational meeting on 12 January 1913. At Emanuel Church, the Gothic Revival style is carried principally in the use of lancet-arch window and door openings, shallow buttresses with cement shoulders, and in the four-stage entrance/bell tower which anchors the front (south) corner of the church. The church is laid up in red brick with cast stone ornament: its elevations are enriched with stained glass windows. The lancet-arch window openings carry the Gothic Revival style into the interior where a beam ceiling further carries out the program of Gothic styled finish.

Emanuel Church had been completed little more than a year when serious discussion arose in the Presbyterian church concerning a new building. Plans to enlarge and remodel the existing brick church were scuttled in favor of a completely new building. The architect of the new church, constructed in 1917-1918, remains unknown. The design of the Presbyterian church lies within the conventions of Gothic Revival religious architecture of the first decades of the twentieth century. Here the lancet-arch door and window openings, and the shallow cement-capped buttresses seen at Emanual Church are repeated and used to good effect. The dominant feature of the design of First Presbyterian Church is the use of paired towers on the front elevation which flank the main gable-front bay and an arcaded porch which carries between the towers and across the front of the building. The use of twin towers--or towers of unequal heights--flanking a gable-front elevation was one of the principal conventions of Gothic Revival design in religious buildings in the opening decades of the twentieth century. Here, as at most other churches, the bases of the towers served as vestibules while the upper stages became belfries. Like Emanuel Church, the Presbyterian Church is built of a red brick--but of a deeper, richer color--and enlivened with cast stone ornament. Here, however, the Gothic character of the building is flavored with a hint of the Romanesque Revival through the use of broad arches forming the porch arcade and the belfry openings.

The Presbyterian Church had been constructed during World War I; however, the next-built of Lincolnton's significant Gothic Revival style churches would not be begun until the war's end. The architect of Emmanuel Lutheran Church is likewise unknown; however, it is clearly the product of a different hand and a different sensibility than that which produced the Presbyterian Church. Emmanuel Lutheran Church is a grand, robust, boldly-scaled and detailed church, also of red brick with cast stone and terra cotta trim. The lancet-arch window and door openings recur here, and are filled with stained glass. The dominant feature of the church is the lively use of projecting and receding planes and

the spires, crestings, and crenelations which crown the building. There is a bold, muscular vigor to the design of this building which, frankly, is unusual in Gothic Revival buildings in North Carolina and the South. That said, however, it is a character which recurs on Lutheran churches and buildings with German associations and can be seen on religious and educational buildings of the upper Middle-Atlantic region. Something of the same spirit informs the design of Bethpage Lutheran Church in Lincoln County, built in the mid 1920s; however, its appearance stops short of the feeling of power and visual strength which emanates from Emmanuel Lutheran Church.

While Emmanuel Church might be described as the epitome of one strain of Gothic Revival style design in the twentieth century, Moore's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church represents the spare, linear quality of modest buildings rendered in a later Gothic Revival manner. The design of the church features the use of square, squat twin towers at the corners of the south gable front elevation. Here, unlike the Presbyterian Church, the entrance is in a shallow projecting vestibule in the center of the facade. Simple buttresses mark the corners of the vestibule and the corner towers. Lancet-arch door and window openings occur on the main level of the building and a trio of rectangular louvered ventilators are symmetrically placed above these openings. The congregation of Moore's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church is probably the oldest African American religious body in Lincolnton. It was organized in the early 1860s and prospered after the Civil War under the leadership of Bishop John Jamison Moore. Although the church might have been named Moore's Chapel in honor of the Rev. Francis B. Moore, an early pastor, it is more likely named for Bishop Moore who subsequently relocated to Salisbury. There is a church of the same name standing at the edge of the Livingstone College campus and a rural church in northwest Rowan County which also shares this name. According to church tradition, the original frame building of the 1870s--expanded twice in the later nineteenth century--is contained within the walls of this building which reached its present size in 1941 when it was sheathed with a common bond brick veneer.

Lincolnton's two impressive Classical Revival-style churches are both the products of skilled architects who prepared designs for the town's two largest congregations. That said, however, the design of the First Methodist Church did not originate with the Lincolnton congregation but with the congregation of the principal Methodist church in the town of Lenoir. It appears that the original plan for this building was prepared by C. W. Carlton for the Lenoir congregation where its church was built in 1916-1917. When the Rev. D. M. Litaker arrived in Lincolnton in 1918/1919, having been transferred from the Lenoir church, he found a congregation considering the construction of a new church. The plan of the Lenoir church, designed with a domed entrance pavilion addressing the intersection of two streets, perfectly suited the Lincolnton site at the intersection of East Main and North Academy Streets. Whether the Lincolnton congregation was more affluent than the Lenoir congregation is a question

outside this discussion; however, the fact remains that the Lincolnton church has a much richer appearance than the Lenoir prototype. Perhaps, also, it is the felicitious combination of the buff yellow brick, the white painted and cast stone trim, and the handsome stained glass windows with predominant hues of ochre, green, and lavender which are so impressive. The organization of classical forms and motives here, the use of free-standing and engaged columns and pilasters, the repetition of arch-headed window openings, and the unifying three-part classical entablature linking the pedimented gable-front blocks with the entrance pavilion, all combine to produce a building which is arguably the most handsome church in Lincolnton and one of uncommon beauty.

In his design for the First Baptist Church in Lincolnton, Charlotte architect J. M. McMichael also used a dome to crown his composition but on the First Baptist Church the dome symbolically and physically rises above and illuminates the sanctuary. The Baptist church is built on a Greek-cross plan with one arm, preceded by a tetrastyle portico, extending toward East Main Street, while the side arms extending to the east and to the west (to Cedar Street) are enriched with pilasters: all have composite capitals. Like the Methodist church, the Baptist church is laid up in a yellow-hued brick with painted white wood and cast stone detailing. Both buildings are raised on high basements which contain social halls with outside entrances.

Of these six churches erected between 1913 and 1941, four were expanded between 1931 and 1957 by the construction of substantial educational buildings to house expanded programs and increased membership. At the First Methodist Church, the First Baptist Church, and the First Presbyterian Church, the design of these facilities replicates the style, materials, and workmanship of the original buildings and are positioned to the northwest (rear) of the main building. Facing onto the side streets which intersect with Main Street, these additions, respectively, are visually integrated expansions of the church plant and in no way compromise the significance of the earlier building. The two-stage construction of the educational buildings for Emmanuel Lutheran Church demonstrates a more vernacular character and appears somewhat pale and overshadowed by the majestic character of the Gothic Revival-style church.

Significance

The six churches comprising this property type are important in the history of Lincolnton and Lincoln County as handsome expressions of the growth and affluence of the county seat in the early twentieth century. Likewise, they reflect the relative stature of their congregations, one to another, and the important role of religion and religious worship in the lives of the town's citizens in the opening decades of this century. Each of the six buildings is also significant in the architectural history of Lincolnton as important and intact examples of the Gothic and Classical Revival styles. While the Lincoln

County Court House holds a dominate position in the town's landscape by virtue of its size and location at the crossing of Main and Aspen Streets, these six buildings join in it being the most impressive public buildings in the county seat.

Registration Requirements

With the exception of St. Luke's Church which is already listed in the National Register and the Second Presbyterian Church, included here as an example of property type #1, these six churches are the only architecturally and historically significant church buildings in the town of Lincolnton. To be eligible for listing in the National Register each church must retain distinctive qualities of integrity, setting, materials, workmanship, and associations with its history. Each of these churches satisfies those requirements and satisfies Criterion C for listing in the National Register. Likewise, the additions, expansions, or remodelings of the church must respect the original fabric of the main church and in nearly every instance that proves to be true with these buildings. The only significant exception is the plain utilitarian appearance of the brick-veneer fellowship hall erected behind Emanuel United Church of Christ. Despite its utilitarian plainness, it does not detract from the architectural significance of the church. Five of these churches continue in use by the congregations which erected them. The (former) First Baptist Church has been sympathetically renovated for use as the Lincoln County Cultural Center by CBSA Architects of Hickory. On 20 April 1991, Emmanuel United Church of Christ was struck by lightning and the sanctuary suffered substantial damage from fire. The interior of the church was sympathetically and very sensitively restored to its original appearance except for one slight modification, the replacement of paired arches in the chancel by one broad arch. Because of their primary architectural significance, buildings in this property type satisfy Criteria Consideration A for listing in the National Register.

III. CHURCH-RELATED CEMETERIES

Description

Church-related cemeteries as a property type comprises four burying grounds--present-day churchyards and former churchyards--that exist in Lincolnton in association with particular denominations. In Lincolnton, as was common throughout much of North Carolina, these burying grounds functioned as the first public cemeteries and continued to act in that role through much of the nineteenth century. With the creation of public or garden cemeteries in the second half of the nineteenth century, there were fewer and fewer burials on church grounds. In Lincolnton these four church-related cemeteries were the site of interments well into the twentieth century, and two remain in use. It was only in 1905 with the creation of Hollybrook Cemetery, that these cemeteries

ceased to be actively used as the primary burial grounds for the deceased citizens of Lincolnton. Two of the four, the cemeteries at St. Luke's Church and Second Presbyterian Church, continue to be active burying grounds. St. Luke's Church and Cemetery is listed in the National Register (1992). The other two church-related cemeteries are: Old White Church Cemetery; and the Methodist Church Cemetery.

In 1788 when the trustees of the congregations of Dutch Presbyterians (Reformed Church, now United Church of Christ) and Dutch Lutherans (Lutheran Church) acquired a tract of land on the south edge of the newly-laid out town of Lincolnton, they purchased the property for three purposes. These were listed in the deed: for the erection of "a Meeting House for Public Worship"; as the site of "School Houses both Dutch and English"; and "for a place for the Burial of the Dead." Of these three purposes, the property remains today, 200 years later, a place for the burial of the dead. Apparently, the Methodist congregation acquired its property in the 1820s; however, the original deed for the tract has not been located.

The Old White Church Cemetery and the Methodist Church Cemetery are both rectangular tracts of land which exist within two blocks of each other along South Aspen Street. Each is covered with grass which is mowed on a more or less regular basis. The Old White Church Cemetery occupies a near-acre-sized lot at the southeast corner of South Aspen and Church Streets, a block south of the Lincoln County Court House. The small building-size lot at the actual corner of the two streets, the site of the Old White Church until it burned in December 1893, is now occupied by a two-story brick building that was erected here after 1938 when Emmanuel Lutheran Church sold the property to Warlick Funeral Home. The Emmanuel Union Church Cemetery encircles the building on the northeast and southeast. It has frontage on both South Aspen and East Church Streets. From 1788 until 1951, the property acquired in 1788 by the two congregations was a tract of over two acres.

At some point, apparently in the nineteenth century, a drive or access road developed or was laid out in the cemetery, roughly dividing the tract into near-equal halves. The north "half" was used for interments by the white citizens of Lincolnton: the lower south "half" was apparently mainly used for interments of African American slaves, free men of color, and later emancipated slaves and their descendants. It is unclear, now, when the property ceased to be used for interments of African Americans. In 1951, the congregation of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, the owner of the property, relocated 201 graves from the south half of the property to positions, replicating their original arrangement, in the east end of the north half of the cemetery. In November 1951, the congregation sold the south half of the property which it had held jointly (with the Reformed congregation) or individually as a congregation for 163 years to Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company. The company erected

a fence along its north boundary, a property line shared with the cemetery, and erected a commercial building on their lot. The east boundary of the cemetery is a partially marked boundary shared by commercial and residential neighbors.

The Old White Church Cemetery, occupying a tract of under one acre, is an open unshaded parcel covered with grass and punctuated with approximately 265 gravestones. The gravestones in the cemetery are arranged informally, generally in short rows. Often stones marking the graves of members of a family occur in clusters or short rows which indicate a general understanding of areas of the cemetery being unmarked but acknowledged plots for certain families. Marked gravestones in the cemetery date from 1801 through the 1930s (and as recently as 1985). Granite and white marble are the predominant stone types found in the cemetery; however, there are other types of stone which could be local, regional, or imported from greater distance. The inscriptions and carving on the stones range from locally produced and simply inscribed stones to handsome elaborate stones produced by leading stonecutters and marble yards in Charleston, S.C., Baltimore, Maryland, and points in the Northeast. The memorial stones follow the usual forms for the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries and include tablets, ledgers, obelisks, box tombs, monoliths, and a single vault for the John Hoke Family.

The Methodist Church Cemetery, situated on the southwest side of South Aspen Street a block south of the Old White Church Cemetery, occupies a tract of 1.62 acres. In 1923, the frontage on South Aspen Street was sold and a Mediterranean Revival-style filling station was erected here. On the northwest the cemetery is bounded by West Congress Street, and on the southwest it is bounded by Government Street. These two boundaries and the property lines on the southeast and northeast are marked by a woven chain-link fence, erected in the 1970s, which completely encircles the property. The grassy lawn-like landscape of the Methodist Church Cemetery is partially shaded by a mixed central grove, clumps, and single trees, most of which appear to be volunteer, that include both deciduous and evergreen species. There are also some few shrub plantings as well as periwinkle and spring-blooming bulbs. The stones marking the graves date from 1828 into the first decades of this century; however, the majority of the stones are nineteenth century. They are predominantly of granite and white marble and reflect the gravestone forms common to the nineteenth century.

Beginning with the establishment of a burying ground adjoining the Old White Church and continuing at the Methodist Church and at St. Luke's Church, it became the practice to inter African Americans in the lower grounds or back portions of these predominantly white churchyards. Exactly when these interments began and their number cannot be determined from a visual survey since many, if perhaps not most of these burials, were originally marked by field stones and many of these have been lost. In Lincolnton, as in many other

small towns in western North Carolina, people "know" where these interments are even when there is neither a stone nor a depression to otherwise indicate a grave. During the Civil War and in the years afterward, as African Americans formed their own religious congregations, they, likewise, established their own burial grounds. It appears that, in most cases, these were established in association with churches. From research to date, the burying ground which evolved in the back portion of the lot acquired in the early 1880s by the Second Presbyterian Church was the first church-related burying grounds in Lincolnton used exclusively by African Americans. It seems likely that the practice of burials on this property probably coincided with the construction of the church in 1885. There are a dozen or more marked gravestones visible in a low-growing tangle of periwinkle, yucca, cedars, volunteer deciduous trees, and poison ivy. These stones are modest and similar to stones in the other three church-related cemeteries: the visible gravestone of Green Fox (1833-1898) is signed "Cooper Bros., Raleigh, N.C." and indicates the status of those buried here and the role of the churchyard in the African-American community. The grave of church founder, the Reverend David S. Baker (1837-1925), and other recent burials are located in a well-kept section of the cemetery closer to the church and the Pine Street front of the lot.

It should be noted that Hollybrook Street, which forms the east border of the church property and the cemetery, is the main entrance from East Main Street to Hollybrook Cemetery: the street is planted on either side with water oaks (Quercus nigra). Those towering trees planted in the early twentieth century along the street at the edge of the cemetery, partially shade the burying ground of Second Presbyterian Church while also shading the movement of those entering and leaving the town's public cemetery.

Significance

The church-related cemeteries in Lincolnton are important in the history of the county seat and satisfy Criteria A and C for listing in the National Register. The Old White Church Cemetery, is the earliest known public burying ground in the town and was the only public cemetery from ca. 1787 until the 1820s. It is the earliest surviving resource in Lincolnton which is associated with the settlement of Lincolnton as a county seat and it is the chief surviving reminder, through its gravestones, of the lives and contributions of many of its earliest citizens whose houses and other associated buildings have long since been lost. The cemetery is also important in the history of Lincolnton for its collection of important signed gravestones which reflect the craftmanship of well-known and lesser-known stone carvers and marble yards.

Both the Old White Church Cemetery and the Methodist Church Cemetery are important in the history of Lincolnton--together with the cemetery at St. Luke's Episcopal Church and Second Presbyterian Church--as reminders of the

responsibility, which church leaders felt was their's, to provide a suitable place for the interment of the deceased. This responsibility was clearly stated in the deed of 1788 by which the two German-speaking congregations acquired the tract on which they had built their union church and established a burying ground. These cemeteries are clear reminders of the close relationship which existed between places of worship and places, hallowed by that use, which were appropriate for the burial of the dead.

Registration Requirements

To qualify for listing in the National Register, examples of this property type must retain those signal resources, qualities, and characteristics which identify their historical function as a burying ground. The integrity of setting, location, design, feeling, and association are important features required for listing. Because both the Old White Church Cemetery and the Methodist Church Cemetery are important in the history of Lincolnton for their funerary art and its high artistic value, gravestones within those cemeteries which are cited as contributing objects must have survived intact or largely intact (suffering mostly deterioration from natural forces). Gravestones which have been vandalized and/or substantially repaired or restored will not be individually considered as contributing objects unless they are of overriding artistic significance. Both the Old White Church Cemetery and the Methodist Church Cemetery are owned by religious institutions, and because of the artistic distinction of their gravestones they satisfy Criteria Consideration A. Both the Old White Church Cemetery and the Methodist Church Cemetery satisfy Criterion A for listing in the National Register for their significance in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning and Development, respectively. The cemetery at Second Presbyterian Church is located on the church tract, and the grass cover of the newer part of the burying ground merges with the well-maintained church lawn. It can be nominated to the National Register, together with the church; Second Presbyterian Church and Cemetery satisfy Criteria A and C for listing in the National Register in the areas of Ethnic Heritage and Architecture and Criteria Consideration A.

G. Geographical Data

The corporate limits of the town of Lincolnton, Lincoln County, North Carolina.

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

The multiple property listing of historically and architecturally significant churches and church-related cemeteries in Lincolnton, North Carolina, is based upon initial research conducted in 1990 and 1991 by Davyd Foard Hood for the preparation of the National Register nomination for St. Luke's Church and Cemetery in Lincolnton, North Carolina. In order to develop the appropriate

contexts for the evaluation of St. Luke's Church, its cemetery, parish hall, and rectory, Hood evaluated the surviving churches, church-related cemeteries, and associated buildings in the town of Lincolnton. In 1992, five of the churches and the two cemeteries discussed in this multiple property listing were presented to the State National Register Advisory Committee for their review. The committee approved their addition to the Study List. These applications for addition to the Study List were supported by the Lincoln County Historic Properties Commission, which made the decision to limit the geographic boundaries to the town of Lincolnton. During the research phase preceding the preparation of this report, Second Presbyterian Church and Mooore's Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church were evaluated and determined by Hood to be probably eligible for listing in the National Register.

The historic and architectural contexts for this multiple property listing are based upon the history of the organization of the eight religious congregations represented by resources in this multiple property listing and the dates of the surviving resources. The significant property types were based on the function of the resources and their style and period of construction. The requirements for listing of the constituent resources cited in this multiple property listing are based upon the author's knowledge and field survey of these resources and like resources elsewhere in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. The integrity of each constituent resource was evaluated in relationship to like buildings and resources in Lincolnton and the Piedmont. The impact of later additions, principally educational buildings, and any remodeling, renovation, and restoration projects were also evaluated for their relationship to and impact upon the integrity of the resources.

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