

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Philadelphus Presbyterian Church

AND/OR COMMON

Same

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Northwest side S.R. 1318, 0.4 mi. sw. of junction with N.C. 72

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Philadelphus

VICINITY OF

7th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

North Carolina

37

Robeson

155

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Philadelphus Presbyterian Church Congregation

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Philadelphus

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Robeson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Lumberton

STATE

North Carolina

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED    DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Philadelphus Presbyterian Church is a temple-form Greek Revival style frame building with a distyle-in-antis portico and a steeple. The rectangular structure, five bays wide and five deep, rests on a low brick foundation, is covered with plain siding, and capped by a gable roof covered with composition shingles.

Particularly impressive is the simple, forceful treatment of the main (south) gable end facade. Heavy Doric pilasters flank the blind bays which flank the portico, and fluted Doric columns support the portico. A three-part entablature, with a wide frieze, molded box cornice and molded eave, rest on this Doric order. The cornice treatment continues into the pediment, which has a lapped sided tympanum. In each side bay of the south wall of the portico is a single door, each with four flat panels, set within a symmetrically molded architrave with paneled corner blocks. An identical door is located in the west portico wall. Above each entrance is a six-over-six sash window with an identical architrave. The portico walls and ceiling are covered with wide flush sheathing, and the soffit of the entablature is flat-paneled. Astride the roof apex just behind the main facade stands the steeple, consisting of a vertical flush sheathed base, an intermediate stage with a louvered ventilator flanked by a pair of Doric pilasters in each face, and a high spire that flares slightly to the base, with a box cornice identical to the main block cornice and a metal finial.

The side and rear elevations contain windows with two-over-two replacement sash at both the lower and upper levels. Each window has a wide plain surround with a molded lintel and louvered blinds. The side cornice treatment is identical to that of the main facade. At each rear corner is a plain corner post. In the southernmost bay of the east side elevation is a door with four flat panels, opening to the gallery stair, with a surround identical to the side window surrounds. The rear elevation is finished like the side elevations, but lacks windows at the upper level. The rear gable end is not pedimented. The eave forms short returns.

The interior of Philadelphus Presbyterian Church corresponds closely to the other Greek Revival Presbyterian churches in this region. The sanctuary is finished with wide wooden flooring, a replacement vertically sheathed dado, a molded chair rail which appears original, plastered walls and a wide flush sheathed ceiling. All of the interior openings have a simple surround with a shaped strip edging. A gallery, reached by two stairs in the enclosed bays flanking the portico, extends along the south, east and west sides of the sanctuary. Tapered solid wooden Doric columns support the gallery, which is enclosed by a flat-paneled railing terminated by a shaped cornice and flat shelf. A low horizontally flush-sheathed wainscot with a shaped chair rail occurs at the gallery level. The pews have plain backs and seats and curvilinear arm rests. Two side aisles divide the pews into three sections, and a solid pew partition bisects the center section. In the northwest and northeast corners, flanking the pulpit which rests on a low platform against the north wall, are choir pews. The pulpit platform and pulpit appear to be of recent vintage.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE one

The gallery stairs are nearly identical, each a wide spiral whose treads are mortised into a large polygonal newel. Each upper landing is protected by a railing with a polygonal handrail, rectangular balusters and a chamfered newel. The door opening into the gallery from each landing is a twentieth century replacement. The only difference between the stairs is that the west stairwell has a polygonal plastered wall, and that of the east stairwell follows the outline of the exterior wall surface.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHÉOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1858-1861

BUILDER/ARCHITECT      Gilbert P. Higley

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Philadelphus Presbyterian Church, one of the most handsome examples of Greek Revival religious architecture in North Carolina, was built between 1859 and 1863 and has recently been restored. The temple-form building with a distyle-in-antis Doric portico is the most academic of the distinctive group of southeastern North Carolina Greek Revival style Presbyterian churches erected during the mid-nineteenth century, by the descendants of the Scots immigrants who settled the area.

In the mid-eighteenth century, the Upper Cape Fear River valley was settled by Scots immigrants, who established Presbyterian congregations and later built modest churches; these were still later replaced by more ambitious Greek Revival style buildings.

Like the other Presbyterian churches in North Carolina founded in this period, Philadelphus Church began as occasional worship services held by itinerant ministers passing through the community. The congregation was apparently formally organized before 1795, for the Orange Presbytery records began in this year and do not note the church's beginning after that date. The 1854 church history, a part of the session minutes, states that the congregation's first communion service occurred in 1799 "in a tent created for the occasion." Daniel Brown, the first permanent pastor, began his ministry ca. 1803, and the first church building, located behind the Neil McNeill home on Richland Swamp, was probably erected at this time. The four-acre tract on which the church was built was donated by Hugh Brown, but was not deeded to the church until 1850, many years after Brown had moved to Tennessee.

By 1859 the church members decided to construct a new sanctuary, and tried to acquire additional land adjacent to the existing church building because they considered the four-acre tract too small. This was impossible, and in 1859 the church bought from John McArthur a nearby larger tract which bordered Richland Swamp and the road from Lumberton to Carthage like the original tract. The 1862-1863 financial report of Philadelphus Church, recorded in the session minutes of 1863, includes the item "Building church \$824.25." The 1863 session minutes also include a list of the 52 persons who contributed to the "building and furnishing of the new Philadelphus Church," the largest single contribution being \$160 given by Daniel McCallum. According to local tradition, Gilbert P. Higley, who moved from Hartford, Connecticut, to Robeson County, married, and remained, was the architect and contractor of the building. The 1850 census records for the nearby Lumberton District of Robeson County list a G. P. Haigley (sic), age 35, a carpenter, born in Connecticut. Below the listings of his wife and children are the names of three young carpenters, Thoma Massa, Rauson Pitman, and Wiggins Roberts, who apparently resided with Higley. Higley's Connecticut background may have influenced his use of the in-antis portico of the church--a rare in North Carolina but quite common in New England.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE one

An item culled from the October 29, 1865, session minutes is indicative of the post Civil War attitudes of the Philadelphus Church congregation:

Resolved that this session will encourage the colored people, who are now freed men, to attend worship here and receive religious instruction as usual; and when they give satisfactory evidence of a change of heart, and desire a communion with the church, they shall as formerly be admitted to the sealing ordinances of the church.

J. McCallum Clerk<sup>1</sup>

The church and cemetery to the rear, whose oldest inscribed marker is dated 1867, are in continuous use and are well-maintained.

<sup>1</sup>Philadelphus Church Records, Session Minutes, 1865., p. 175.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE one

"Sketches of Philadelphus Presbyterian Church" manuscript, written by church  
historian Fodie Buie and others in 1961.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Philadelphus Church Records. Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina:  
Session Minutes 1863-1879.  
Robeson County Records, Robeson County Courthouse, Lumberton, North Carolina  
(Subgroups: Deeds, 1850 Census Book).  
Robeson County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina  
(Subgroups: Deeds, 1850 Census Book).

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 7 L&L:  $34^{\circ} 45' 52''$   $79^{\circ} 10' 49''$   
UTM REFERENCES

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Research and architectural description by Ruth Little-Stokes, survey specialist

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Division of Archives and History

22 July 1975

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

109 East Jones Street

919/829-7862

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Raleigh

North Carolina

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

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

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 22 July 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

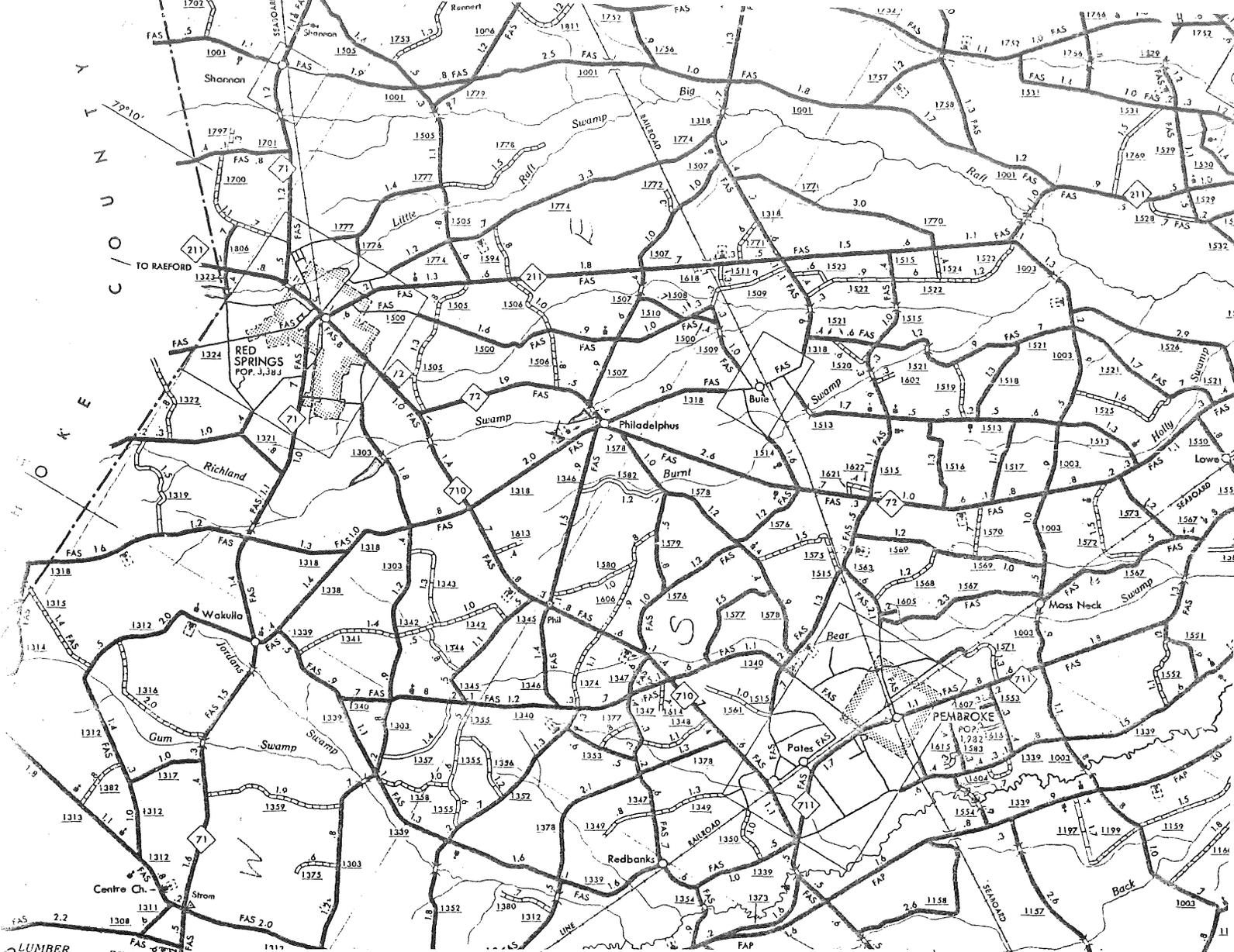
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Philadelphia Presbyterian Church  
 Philadelphia  
 North Carolina

N.C. Highway Commission map (no USGS map available)  
 scale: 1/2" : 1 mile  
 date: 1974

Latitude                      Longitude  
 degrees minutes seconds    degrees minutes seconds

34            45            52            79            10            49

