

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lake Toxaway Methodist Church

other names/site number Methodist Episcopal Church South

2. Location

street & number N. side of Cold Mountain Road,
1/10 mile NW jct with NC 281 N/A not for publication

city or town Lake Toxaway N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Transylvania code 175 zip code 28747

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William S. Rain 12-14-93
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

Lake Toxaway Methodist Church
Name of Property

Transylvania, North Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion/religious facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion/religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Gothic

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Wood

roof Metal

other Concrete

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1912

Significant Dates

1912

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1 Lake Toxaway Methodist Church
Transylvania County, NCDescription

Lake Toxaway Methodist Church overlooks Lake Toxaway, located in southwest Transylvania County in the Blue Ridge Mountains of southwestern North Carolina, adjacent to the South Carolina border.

Driving north along Cold Mountain Road in the un-incorporated community of Lake Toxaway, North Carolina, and rounding a sharp curve to the west, a motorist comes upon a quaint little country church sitting atop a knoll of about 12-foot elevation. The sharp curve occurs at the southeast tip of a 0.44-acre triangular tract on which the church was built. The original plat of the property shows that it was bordered on the south by a road leading up to Cold Mountain, on the northeast by an old rail-road grade, and on the northwest by unimproved wooded land. The southeast tip is 1/10 mile northwest of the junction with NC 281 and 2/10 mile north of the shoreline of Lake Toxaway.

The Lake Toxaway Methodist Church is a small frame Gothic Revival building with a six-sided louvered belfry and a tin roof. It was built in 1912 with donated materials and volunteer labor of the men of a 140-year-old farming community known as Toxaway (after Cherokee Chief Toxawah) that had just been introduced to a newcomer, the developer Edward H. Jennings from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Except for recent cinderblock underpinning, the building retains its original appearance. It is shown to advantage by the superb landscaping of members of the Toxaway Falls Garden Club, who designed a setting that features a closely cropped lawn, low Canadian hemlocks and boxwood surrounding the building, abelia grandiflora, pink dogwoods and an embankment of flowering bulbs and perennials.

The building faces southeast. Its entrance is gained by way of stone steps leading up the knoll at the southeast tip of the triangle where, until 1980, automobiles, and earlier, buggies and wagons were left on the roadside during services. In 1980 the Lake Toxaway Company deeded the church 0.78 of an adjoining acre on the northwest for construction of a¹ fellowship hall, parking area and driveway, accessed from Cold Mountain Road.

The church building has a gable-front form, one bay wide and four bays deep. The central tower projects from the center of the main facade, with a wooden double door and a two-pane rectangular transom above it. By 1980, the original doors had warped and were replaced that year. At the top of the tower is a six-sided louvered belfry. This is a careful replacement of the original belfry. Original

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Lake Toxaway Methodist Church
Transylvania County, NC

Description (continued)

weatherboards, wide plain cornerboards and window and door surrounds trim the exterior of the building. The gabled roof is covered with metal. At the eaves, a plain cornice and decoratively carved rafter ends complete the simple Gothic Revival treatment.

The main structure measures 40'5" x 30'6"; the vestibule, 12'4½" x 5½'. The foundation consists of ten stone piers. From an open space at the base of the building the two by eight-inch floor joists are visible, as are the six by eight-inch rough, hand-chisled plates along the perimeter of the foundation, and the one-inch random width sheathing planks. The shiplap siding has a rough surface and varies in width between four and five inches; it is butted together on the outside corners with one by five-inch boards. Although the surrounding forests abounded in chestnut, hemlock and poplar, the entire church building is constructed of pine. This may have been because pine was the least expensive of the locally-obtainable woods and was easily worked into floor boards, doors and framing members.

There are four double one-over-one sash windows on each side of the building with segmental-arched three-pane transoms. The windows have kerf cut jambs and vertical panes of clear glass, 85% of which are original.

Paired rafters and collar beams form the roof structure. The roof has an 8/12 pitch, is sheathed with one by six-inch pine planks, and retains its original metal shingles, each measuring eight inches by one foot, with an embossed geometric motif.

The rafters are two by six inches, with a decorative cut on the tails, and vary in thickness by as much as one inch. The bandboard above the siding underneath the eaves was notched out to accommodate the exposed decorative rafters.

In 1980 the belfry and lower sashes of the windows were replaced because of rotting, and the leaking roof was covered over with galvanized tin.

The walls of the sanctuary are covered with beaded tongue and groove wood sheathing which continues up the slant of the rafters about eight feet to meet the ceiling, of the same material, forming a canopy effect over the entire room. There are no ceiling joists; the ceiling is secured to the collar beams. Because there is no rigid roof support, the walls eventually began to buckle and in 1953 cables were extended across the room near the ceiling to correct the problem. When electricity was brought into the area in the 1940s, four ceiling fixtures replaced the kerosene lamps that had hung from brackets between the windows.

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Lake Toxaway Methodist Church
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Description (continued)

The altar platform is a half decagon placed against the northwest wall, and the floor boards are the original pine. Originally the only article of furniture on the platform was a pine lectern; it has since been replaced with a sturdier one. Today the platform is carpeted and is furnished with a communion table, an altar table, and a communion rack affixed to an altar rail. An organ and a piano flank the platform.

In 1980 a fellowship hall was built to accommodate the activities of the recently rejuvenated congregation. It is an unremarkable rectangular frame structure sheathed with weatherboard, with a gabled roof, and is attached to the main building by a wood-covered walkway. The land on which the hall sits was given to the church by the Lake Toxaway Company in 1980 and abuts the acreage given to the church by the Lake Toxaway Company in 1912.

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Lake Toxaway Methodist Church
Transylvania County, NC

Summary

Lake Toxaway Methodist Church, a simple Gothic Revival-style frame building dating from 1912, overlooks scenic Lake Toxaway in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Transylvania County. Originally called Methodist Episcopal Church South, the building was erected by volunteer Methodist farmers using donated pine lumber and building supplies. The church, with its original weatherboard, Gothic-arched windows and six-sided belfry, is one of the most stylish and best preserved of the small group of historic churches of traditional frame construction surviving in this mountainous county. At the same time that the area was developing as a luxurious resort for wealthy industrialists, local farmers built this church with donated materials and volunteer labor on a lot given to them by Edward H. Jennings, the Pittsburgh developer who owned Lake Toxaway. The architectural significance of Lake Toxaway Methodist Church is documented in "The Historic and Architectural Resources of Transylvania County and the Incorporated Towns of Brevard and Rosman, Type 7: Churches and Cemeteries." That document also supplies background for the establishment of the congregation under Historic Context 3, Early Industrialization, 1895-1916.

Historic Background and Significance

The year 1896 was a significant one for the people of the Toxaway district of Transylvania County, particularly the Methodist congregation who were descendants of German, Welsh and Irish settlers who had come from Virginia in the 1700s seeking land and relief from obligatory religious tithing.² The Cherokee had moved west and men and corporations moved into western North Carolina, bringing with them the railroad, tanneries, lumber companies and sawmills. In 1896 J.F. Hayes, of Newcastle, Pennsylvania, formed a group of stockholders whose purpose was "to build and develop fine resorts in Transylvania and Jackson counties, and the name title The Toxaway Company was granted."³ From then until the present time, the Toxaway Company has been the predominant factor in the development of this area of Transylvania County.

At that time there were no church buildings in the area. Spiritual needs were met by itinerant preachers who arrived from time to time to perform marriages, christenings and funerals and to conduct camp meetings at a site located about eight miles west of Rosman at the base of Toxaway and Cold mountains, encompassing the basin of the Toxaway River. The campsite was on the river bank about one-half mile south of the church's present location. In 1901 J.F. Hayes dammed the Toxaway River and flooded 540 acres of bottom land to create a resort lake. The Methodist camp meeting site disappeared beneath the waters of the new Lake Toxaway.⁴

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Lake Toxaway Methodist Church
Transylvania County, NC

Historic Background and Significance (continued)

It was into this isolated and technologically deprived environment that Hayes constructed his picturesque lake and fashioned a luxurious getaway for the rich and famous. The centerpiece of the retreat was a 250-room hotel, The Toxaway Inn, "with electric light, elevators, steam heat and a power launch to carry guests around the lake. A band, dancing, boating and study classes for children were provided."⁵ This extravagant undertaking was the focus for the development of the Toxaway area as a vacation retreat and year-round residential location. Among the patrons were Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Harvey Firestone, R.J. Reynolds, and the Duke and Nunnally families.

By 1912 ownership of the Lake Toxaway Company was in the hands of Edward H. Jennings of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and acreage surrounding the lake, now known as Lake Toxaway Estates, was being marketed as a summer resort with the slogan "The Switzerland of America."⁶ Meanwhile, the Methodists had been meeting at the Pea Ridge schoolhouse, on Blue Ridge Road about a mile north of the church's present location. On September 16, 1912, Mr. Jennings, by handwritten deed and for the sum of \$1.00, gave a lot on the edge of his holdings for construction of a church, a scant half mile from the fabulous Toxaway Inn on the southeast shore of the lake.⁷ (The Inn was demolished in 1941.) Trustees of the church were J.C. Wike, C.C. Hall and C.S. Kinsland.

In spite of the introduction of the stylish new Toxaway Inn into the community, the Methodist farmers relied on their experience in building their traditional houses and barns as they undertook to build their church and to deal with the fundamental issues of design, money, materials and labor. The word architect was not in their vocabulary. Laborers were plentiful and money for raw and manufactured materials was solicited. The completed church features the gable-front form and simply finished frame construction used in the oldest intact church building in Transylvania County, the McGaha Chapel built in 1883. But the belfry, arched windows and decorative eave brackets were consciously stylish additions to the minimal traditional form that may have been a nod to the fashionable resort architecture of the lake.

The church was closed in 1970 because of a dwindling congregation. When it reopened in 1979, its membership no longer represented a farming community. Today the church is affiliated with the Western North Carolina United Methodist Conference and is supported by a congregation composed almost entirely of residents of Lake Toxaway Estates.

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Lake Toxaway Methodist Church
Transylvania County, NC

Historic Background and Significance (continued)

Eighty Years after its construction, the church is still serving the community and a smaller and more conservative congregation that no longer finds it necessary to oil the floor to keep down the dust caused by stomping as the spirit manifests itself. The sanctuary is more comfortable now, with its cushioned pews that replaced the wooden benches and gas heat that replaced the pot-bellied stove. The present painted, box-like, wooden pews were a donation of the Methodist Church in Rosman when it installed new ones. Withal, its rustic charm is appealing and makes the church a sentimental choice for weddings of members and non-members alike.

Endnotes

1. Transylvania County Register of Deeds, Book 244, page 660
(Copy on file in the Survey and Planning Branch, State
Historic Preservation Office)
2. Winnie Owen Kropelnicki, a descendant of original settlers
3. Plemmons, Jan C., Treasures of Toxaway, Houston, 1984, page 5
4. Winnie Owen Kropelnicki
5. Van Noppen, Ina W. and John J., Western North Carolina Since the
Civil War, Appalachian Consortium Press, Boone, 1973, page 262
6. Deborah J. Thompson, Transylvania County Multiple
Property Documentation Form
7. Transylvania County Register of Deeds, Book 35, page 19
(Copy on file in the Survey and Planning Branch, State
Historic Preservation Office)

Bibliography

Van Noppen, Ina W. and John J., Western North Carolina Since
the Civil War, Appalachian Consortium Press, Boone, 1973

Plemmons, Jan C., Treasures of Toxaway, Houston, 1984

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Lake Toxaway Methodist Church
Transylvania County, NC

Verbal Boundary Description

Plat Ref. 6-249, Transylvania County Register of Deeds. There is a discrepancy between the surveyor's plat and the amount of acreage stated in the deed of 1912. It is assumed that Mr. Jennings' figure of one-third of an acre was estimated.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundaries include all of the property historically associated as well as the .78 acre acquired in 1980 for the fellowship hall, which is attached to the church by a covered walkway.

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photographs
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Lake Toxaway Methodist Church
Transylvania County, NC

PHOTOGRAPHS

All Photographs:

Lake Toxaway Methodist Church
Transylvania County, NC

Photographer: Kenneth Hay

Completed July 1993

Negatives on file at Hay Photography, One Waneil Court, Brevard, N.C. 28712-9291

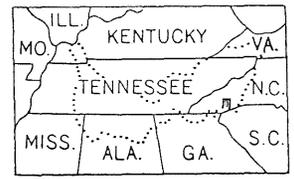
- A Main facade facing northwest
- B Northeast facade
- C Northwest facade and southwest elevation
- D Southwest facade
- E Detail of decorative rafters and transom
- F Row of decorative rafters
- G View of altar
- H Sanctuary facing front door
- I Fellowship Hall facing northeast
- J Entrance to parking lot



185-SW)
 III SW
 1:24 000
 0
 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET
 0 1 KILOMETER

INTERVAL 40 FEET
 MEAN SEA LEVEL

324 325 327 328
 CASHIERS (107) 13 MI.
 HIGHLANDS 23 MI.
 1 MILE



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. — 1970
 329000m. E. 82° 52' 30"
 (TVA 185-NW)

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty —————
- Medium-duty ————
- Light-duty - - - - -
- U. S. Route
- Poor motor road =====
- Wagon and jeep track - - - - -
- Foot trail - - - - -
- State Route

LAKE TOXAWAY, N.C.
 N3507.5-W8252.5/7.5

