

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Carver's Creek Methodist Church

Council, Bladen County, BL0153, Listed 4/30/2008
Nomination by Ed Turberg and Janet Seapker
Photographs by Ed Turberg, April 2007



Front and side view



Rear and side view

**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 any 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 **Carver's Creek Methodist Church**

other names/site number **Carver's Creek United Methodist Church**

2. Location

street & number **16904 NC Highway 87 East**

not for publication **N/A**

city or town **Council**

vicinity **X**

state **North Carolina** code **NC**

county **Bladen**

code **017**

zip code **28434**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

State or 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 commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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): _____

Carver's Creek Methodist Church

Bladen County, NC

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)
count)

- 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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1 </u>	buildings
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	objects
<u> 2 </u>	<u> 1 </u>	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

 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

 RELIGION/religious facility
 FUNERARY/cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

 RELIGION/religious facility
 FUNERARY/cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

 MID-19TH CENTURY/Greek Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation **BRICK**
roof **OTHER: composition**
walls **WOOD: weatherboard**
other

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.)

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a 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

1859

Significant dates

1859

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Carter, Levy, Builder

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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.4 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing
1 17 738083 3815487

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Edward F. Turberg
organization Architectural Historian date May 22, 2007
street & number 307 North 15th Street telephone 910-762-6301
city or town Wilmington state North Carolina zip code 28401

12. Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Pastor B. J. Champion
street & number 14343 NC Highway 87 East telephone 910-645-4168
city or town Council state North Carolina zip code 27434

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 18.1 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.

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Carver's Creek Methodist Church
Bladen County, North Carolina

SECTION 7

Narrative Description

A. The Church: 1859, 1952, contributing

Carver's Creek Methodist Church, built in 1859, located at 16904 NC Highway East, is situated on 3.4 acres of land on the west side of the highway, three-tenths of a mile south of its junction with SR 1730 in the Carver's Creek community near Council, Bladen County, North Carolina. Two historical markers along the roadside explain the importance of the early Quaker and later Methodist occupancy of the area. To the north, a sign board stating "Carver's Creek United Methodist Church" is surmounted by a #4 bell from the C. S. Bell Company foundry in Hillsboro, Ohio.

The frame church, measuring forty feet across and sixty feet deep, is two bays wide and five bays deep, with a pedimented front portico, and a two-story rear addition sharing a common roof line. The adjacent, one-story brick educational building, thirty feet by sixty feet in size, and the surrounding graveyard occupy a grassy clearing encompassed by dense woods of mature pine and oak trees. Both buildings are oriented east toward the road; the church is set back ninety feet from the edge of the highway and the educational building is forty feet farther back. To the southwest, Red Hill Branch feeds into Carver's Creek, located to the south just outside the nominated boundary. The creek courses eastwardly through hollows opening to a broad marsh bordering the Cape Fear River between Kelly's Cove and Lock's Point.

Exterior: The Greek Revival form of the church is dominated by a raised, pedimented portico supported by four non-classical octagonal columns with molded capitals that frame the twin front entrances. Plain-edge weatherboards encompass the building and converge in squared corner boards surmounted by molded caps duplicating those on the columns. Broad skirt boards form the lower walls which rise above piers of handmade brick. Open spaces between the piers were filled with modern bricks and foundation vents in the 1950s. The paired front entrances incorporate double-leaf doors with elongated, octagonal panels and five-pane transoms framed by angular moldings. The upper portion of the façade incorporates two, twenty-light windows flanked by louvered blinds. Each side elevation contains four tall, twenty-over-twenty sash windows covered by five-section louvered blinds and triangular, Greek Revival-style back-band moldings. A simply-molded frieze extends above the window frames and terminates in boxed cornices. The front pediment is faced with plain-edge weatherboards duplicating those in the lower walls. The south elevation incorporates a handicapped access door that enters the narthex beneath the south staircase, which caused the lower sash of the window to be removed. A flight of stairs and a door added to the west end of the building opens into the rear addition containing a library and nursery. Similar steps and a door are at the west end of the north elevation and a covered walkway extends north to the adjacent fellowship hall. The rear elevation of the church originally contained entrances to the upper slave galleries, but they were removed when the current addition was built in 1952. The west wall of the addition contains four, eight-over-eight sash windows at the first level and paired, six-over-six sash

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windows in the second story. The addition is covered with vinyl siding over the original pine weatherboarding. The roof is covered with modern, asphalt shingles.

Interior: The interior of the church consists of a narthex across the east end of the building, entered through two double-doors, each leaf containing two vertical, molded panels with chamfered corners, and a single, six-panel handicapped entrance in the south wall. Paired, six-panel doors open to twin aisles in the sanctuary where three sections of seating are arranged down the center and along the north and south sides of the room. The pews along the side walls are tucked beneath galleries which extend across the north, east and south walls. The center section of the room is open to a flat ceiling illuminated by modern, brass, Colonial-style chandeliers. A modern communion table and covered baptismal font, added during the 1969 restoration of the church, and an original 1859 lectern and pulpit, at the west end of the room, are raised above the main floor and are enclosed by railings featuring wide, scalloped and pierced balusters. A circular stained glass window depicting Christ praying in the garden, installed in 1952, commemorates the Maulsby and Nicholson families. It occupies the upper west wall above the pulpit and is illuminated by a halo of lights accessible from the upper rear hallway. Curved end walls flanking the dais on the north and south sides contain six-panel doors opening to the ante-rooms leading to the library, nursery and exterior entrances in the rear addition. The galleries are accessed by twin, open-string, dog-leg stairs on the north and south sides of the narthex, adjacent to the front doors, and feature turned newel posts and balustrades. Within the sanctuary, the galleries are supported by square posts with Greek Revival-style capitals. Chamfered and molded panels fronting the galleries replicate the panels in the front doors, with the addition of decorative center rondels.

B. Fellowship Hall: 1969, noncontributing

Forty feet to the north of the church and set at right angles to the older structure is a one-story, brick veneer building, dating to 1969, designed by Wilmington architects Ballard, McKim and Sawyer. The building is three bays wide and ten bays deep, and is surmounted by a front-gable roof. The entrance in the south gable end, protected by a steel and concrete covered walkway, which connects to the church, opens into a long, tile-floored corridor with painted, concrete block walls giving access to five classrooms, two rest rooms, kitchen, dining hall and a furnace room. Windows in the north, east and west elevations contain six-over-six sash in molded frames. A double-leaf secondary entrance in the north wall of the dining hall, and a door from the kitchen to a small porch on the west side of the building, open into the service areas. The roof of the building is covered with asphalt shingles matching those on the church.

C. Graveyard: 1740 and later, contributing

The open, grassy area extending south and west of the church and encompassed by a semicircular line of trees bordering the site contains numerous sandstone, marble and granite headstones marking the graves of more than eight generations of communicants of the church plus a group of thirty-odd unmarked burials from the congregation of the former Quaker meeting house that occupied the site in the mid-eighteenth century. The Quaker burials are located near the center of the graveyard and originally had small field stones or wooden markers

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on the plots. These have all disappeared over time. The stones in the southern section of the grounds are laid out in a roughly semicircular pattern opening out towards the highway, while those farther into the site form rows parallel to the church. Several burials, dating back two centuries, feature a variety of artistic carvings as well as several simple cement markers with incised lettering. Among notable stones dating from the late-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries are those of Major General Thomas Brown (1747-1814) and his wife, Sarah Bartram Brown (d. 1779), residents of nearby Oakland Plantation; Lucy Ann Brown Owens (1793-1853), a handsome carved marble bed marker inscribed by the sculptor, T. Hargrave of Philadelphia; Colonel Samuel P. Andres (1796-1840); Thomas Maultsby (1760-1812); Euphemia Dewey (1740-1797); and Abigail Gregory (1730-1790). The two last burials, with sandstone markers, are the earliest surviving in the graveyard. In two rows nearby are eight small stones marking the burials of five Confederate soldiers and three Federal soldiers.

Among the 525 marked burials in the graveyard are several noteworthy examples dating from 1790 through 2003. The Abigail Gregory and Euphemia Dewey markers, dated 1790 and 1797 respectively, are of pink sandstone which terminate in arched center sections flanked by smaller arches. The Thomas Brown (died 1839) and John Bright Brown (died 1847) markers are of white marble crowned by incised, foliated carvings. The Marianna Andres marble stone (died 1819) is enhanced by a bas relief of a covered urn placed beneath the branches of a willow tree. The Lucy Ann Brown burial, the most elaborate in the graveyard, consists of a tall, cello-shaped marble headstone inscribed with raised letters framed by acorns, oak leaves and a basket of flowers. The accompanying curvilinear footstone incorporates a fanciful shield containing the initials L. A. O. (Lucy Ann Owen). Shaped marble side rails enclose the burial plot. The E. W. Bordeaux marker (1917), of concrete with hand lettered inscription, has a segmentally-arched top above clasped hands. The Wiley Parker stone (1881) incorporates an uplifted hand pointing heavenwards. The Brisson marble marker (1922) has two, square columns with molded capitals supporting an arch inscribed "Father*Mother," and crowned by an urn. The truncated obelisk marking the Lloyd plot (1881) features Eastlake-style foliage surrounding the inscriptions, and a covered urn. Two diminutive stones, dating to 1905, mark the plots of the Council children, a recumbent lamb for the brother and a dove for his sister. The former has the inscription, "A sunbeam from the world has vanished," and are typical examples of stones in popular use for children's burials from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. The most recent stone, a granite marker dating to 2003, has a depiction of a fisherman in his boat reeling in his catch, and the inscription, "It's a good day for fishing."

Integrity Statement

Carver's Creek Methodist Church preserves its historic exterior and much of its original interior character and has continued to be used for religious services and family gatherings since its dedication in 1859. A distinctive feature of the exterior of the structure is the portico across the front, east elevation, where four, octagonal columns terminating in molded capitals support a steep pediment. Paired front entrances with double-leaf doors contain molded panels with chamfered corners that echo the angular form of the columns. Four, twenty-over-twenty-light sash windows occupy the north and the south elevations and are framed by five-tier louvered blinds. In the 1990s the eastern window on the south side of the church was altered by the removal of the lower sash to accommodate a handicapped entrance to the narthex. Other

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alterations to the building include bricking and venting the interstices between the brick foundation piers, construction of a two-story Sunday school addition at the west end of the church in 1952, and installation of new windows and covering of the original weatherboarding on the west side of the addition with vinyl siding. Changes to the interior include opening the stairs in the narthex from their original enclosed state, and the installation of new, Colonial-style pews and brass chandeliers and sconces in the sanctuary. As originally planned, Sunday school classes were held in the balcony of the church, but in 1952, the two-story rear wing was erected to contain classrooms, a library and a nursery. In 1969, the current brick veneer Fellowship Hall containing the pastor's study and various function rooms was built.

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SECTION 8

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

Carver's Creek Methodist Church exemplifies the high level of craftsmanship and architectural style that prevailed in the Cape Fear region of North Carolina during the mid-nineteenth century. The Greek Revival temple form of the building is highlighted by four massive, octagonal columns defining the entrance façade; wide cornerboards and skirtboards; angular moldings surrounding windows and doors and elongated, octagonal panels in the doors and interior gallery aprons. The building thus preserves its historic architectural distinction as well as its historic continuity, being used for religious and community activities since its dedication in 1859.

The 1859 Carver's Creek Methodist Church is significant as a prominent and distinguishing feature of Bladen County's architectural heritage, exhibiting the national stylistic trend of the era towards Greek Revival-style architecture. In composition and execution it is more sophisticated than any other structure in the region because of its pedimented portico and prostyle arrangement of octagonal columns rather than round or square posts. Because of its high level of architectural design, the structure meets National Register Criterion C, for architecture.

Architectural Context

Greek Revival architecture in America developed during the first half of the nineteenth century as a movement influenced by a renewed interest in the cultural ideals of the ancient Greeks as well as by the rapid growth in economic prosperity which raised the level of refinement on a national scale. The inspiration was the idealization of the classical world, of democratic city-states, translated into an evolution of architecture from Roman to Greek. The final years of the eighteenth century brought about an increasing interest in classical buildings to Europe and the United States. First based on Roman models, archaeological investigation in the early nineteenth century emphasized Greek architecture as the precursor of Roman styles, and shifted interest to Grecian models. Two additional factors enhanced Greek influence in this country: Greece's involvement in a war for independence (1821-30) aroused much sympathy in the newly independent United States, and the War of 1812 diminished American affection for British-Roman influence. Carpenter's guides and pattern books by Asher Benjamin and Minard Lafever, and a growth in the number of trained architects: Benjamin Latrobe, Robert Mills, William Strickland, Thomas U. Walter, Ithiel Town and Alexander Jackson Davis, stressed that geometry, proportion and detail were essential features of classical architecture.

Characteristics of Greek Revival-style architecture include a symmetrical arrangement of plans and elevations; central or paired entrances with single or double, two- or four-panel doors flanked by paneled sidelights and surmounted by wide transoms; sliding sash windows with six-over-six or more panes; low-pitched or pedimented roofs with wide eaves and projecting gables; one- and two-story entrance porches, full-width front porches or two-story porticoes; and full-height corner pilasters, often paneled. In 1840, the 115-year-old Orton Plantation (NR 1973), along NC Highway 133, in Brunswick County, twenty miles south of Wilmington, was given a

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new river façade with Doric columns, classical frieze and pediment. In 1841, the DeRosset family had their residence (NR 1974), at the northeast corner of South Second and Dock streets, in Wilmington, built on a stepped terrace with a colonnade of Doric columns and a frieze identical to that at Orton.

Thirty miles upriver, Thomas Brown added double-story porches in the 1840s to his 1790 Oakland Plantation (NR 1972,) on the north side SR-1730, midway between the crossroads of Carvers and the Cape Fear River, in Bladen County. Public architecture also embraced the Greek Revival-style as exemplified by the 1833-40 State Capitol, on Capitol Square, in Raleigh (designed by New York architects Town and Davis); Wilmington's 1844 Custom House on the east side of North Water Street, between Market and Princess streets (designed by New York architect John Norris); and in the same year, a new Methodist Church in Wilmington's industrial and railroad north end, at the intersection of North Front and Walnut streets, a temple form of the highest order with Doric portico and stuccoed walls simulating stone, designed by the Wood Brothers of Wilmington. In 1850, James Robeson of Bladen County followed the fashion of the time by erecting Walnut Grove (NR 1975), on the east side of NC Highway 87 in the Tar Heel community. Both the Thomas Brown and James Robeson families were members of Carver's Creek Methodist Church and may have indirectly influenced the design of the 1859 church through the architecture of their homes.

The earliest example of the Greek Revival style in Bladen County church architecture occurred in 1845 with the erection of Purdie Chapel, on the west side of NC Highway 87, three miles south of Tar Heel. The three-bay by four-bay, front-gable church contains a central entrance flanked by tall windows and is surmounted by a pediment. The side elevations feature similar windows and all incorporate louvered shutters. The 1845 Mount Horeb Presbyterian Church (NR 1987), nestled in the forks of NC Highway 87 and SR 1712, is three bays by four bays in size, also has a central entrance, and features a Tuscan columned portico added in 1932. The 1848-49 Trinity Methodist Church (NR 1989), on a hilltop at Broad and Lower streets, in Elizabethtown, is a two-story, gable-front meeting house, three bays wide and four bays deep, with a central transomed front entrance and access to the slave gallery in the left side elevation. The 1855 South River Presbyterian Church (NR 1996), on the east side of NC Highway 210, just south of its intersection with NC Highway 41, is similar in appearance to the pedimented Purdie church, with a door in the right elevation and enclosed stairs leading up to a slave gallery. Carver's Creek Methodist Church of 1859 continues the architectural trend with its stately pedimented façade, large windows and louvered blinds, and paneled doors and upper galleries.

Historical Background

Bladen County, located in the southeastern sector of North Carolina, is the third largest county in the state, comprising 879 square miles of land in the Cape Fear Coastal Plain. Formed in 1734 from New Hanover County, it is bounded by Sampson, Pender, Columbus, Robeson and Cumberland counties, the last three being outgrowths of Bladen. The name derives from British military and political leader, Martin Bladen (1680-1746), who held the title of Commissioner of Trade and Plantations from 1717 to 1746. The Carver's Creek community, situated fifteen miles southeast of the county seat of Elizabethtown, is named for early Quaker settler, John Carver (c.

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1720-1754), and for the waterway, also named for Carver, that rises to the west of the site and flows south and east into the Cape Fear River (*NC Gazetteer*, p. 52-53; 91; *Historical Sketch* by Minnie McIver Brown, 1949).

During the first third of the eighteenth century, settlers from England and Scotland, as well as groups migrating from northern territories, explored the Cape Fear region of North Carolina seeking agricultural and timber lands that were accessible by water and road. Among the settlers were Presbyterian Scots who progressed upriver to Cross Creek (Fayetteville) in Cumberland County; Pennsylvania Quakers who moved to the area south and west of the river, and Protestant English whose presence dominated the region.

Not all the newcomers were there for religious reasons, but a strong religious revival led by missionaries did have an effect on the populace, especially those in this eastern part of the state. Beginning in the 1730s and known as the "First Great Awakening", leaders of the movement were Anglican clergymen, John Wesley (1703-1791), and his younger brother, Charles Wesley (1707-1788), who joined groups of Methodists at Oxford University and London, and traveled as far abroad as Savannah, Georgia, where they preached to laborers, farmers and slaves. John Wesley moved to Georgia in the early part of 1736 and remained there for the next two years.

By 1760, Methodist lay preachers were in cities such as New York and Philadelphia, spreading from there through the North, West and South. Eleven years later, in 1771, Methodism's first great American evangelist, Francis Asbury (1745-1816), arrived in New York, moved to Baltimore and continued his religious revivals throughout the Revolutionary War—the only Methodist preacher remaining in the colonies, in 1776. In the closing years of the War, Asbury moved into the South. From 1784 to 1816, he traveled along the Atlantic Seaboard, from New York to Georgia. In 1787, he visited Bladen County, and established the Methodist movement in the Carver's Creek community by 1790. Between 1800 and 1830, a second "Great Awakening" spread through the country, emphasizing renewed personal salvation stimulated by wide-spread revival meetings. When Asbury arrived in America, in 1771, there were 1,000 members of the Methodist sect in the nation. Because of his zeal and fervency, at the time of his death, forty-five years later, in 1816, the sect had grown by 200 percent, to 200,000 members.

Although the early inhabitants of the Carver's Creek area were a small community of Quakers from Pennsylvania, most had moved away at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War because of their Quaker anti-war sentiments, leading to the acquisition of the log meeting house by the Methodists. By 1790, Carver's Creek Church was organized with 167 white and sixty-one black members. The church, the first in the Bladen County Circuit, came under the jurisdiction of the Wilmington District of the South Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The denomination grew rapidly during the early 1800s as circuit riders spread the Gospel across the region (W. D. Maulsby, *Bladen Journal*, April 19, 1934).

There is no documentary information regarding the number of Methodist organizations in North Carolina in the period prior to 1773, but when the Methodist Conference met in Philadelphia in June of that year, Bladen County is mentioned. The Bladen Circuit encompassed a wide territory extending eastwardly from Lumberton on the Lumber River to the

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Atlantic Ocean and from the Cape Fear River south to the North-South Carolina state line. In 1787, there were fifty Methodists in the area. By 1790, membership had increased to 228, and by the January 1799, there were 650 church members. Bishop Asbury's attraction was especially successful with the residents of North and South Carolina and Georgia. He visited Carver's Creek in 1785, 1787 and 1790 and found local farmers and tradesmen embracing Methodism through his preaching skills.

The old log meeting house remained the place of worship until 1810, when a frame structure was erected on the site. This church, however, burned in 1858. The following year the current building rose on the site. The new church, erected by local builder Levy Carter and endowed by Andrew Jones, epitomizes the Greek Revival architectural style popular at the time. Measuring forty feet by sixty feet and thirty feet up to the eaves, the construction incorporates heart pine cut from the site used as foot-square sills, framing and finishes. At the dedication, on a summer day in 1859, the Reverend Doctor Charles Deems, presiding elder of the Wilmington District, which encompassed Bladen County, delivered the dedicatory address (*Historical Sketch* by Minnie McIver Brown, 1949).

In subsequent years, Carver's Creek sponsored the establishment of other Methodist movements: in Bladen Springs, in 1858; Council, in 1904; Bolton, in 1905; Freeman, in 1913; in Delco, in 1914; and in East Arcadia, in 1919.

Activities within the Carver's Creek Methodist Church community, in its two centuries of history, include Sunday school classes, held in the church balcony until 1952 when a new facility was built adjacent to the church (later replaced by a new Fellowship Hall in 1969); restoration of the church in 1969; presentation of an Easter Pageant held annually from 1942 to the present, except for the World War II years; and an annual gathering of families during the Thanksgiving season. As in the past, the church is a stalwart part of a prosperous region that counts agriculture, light industry and tourism as its livelihood (*Bladen County Heritage*, p. 5-6).

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SECTION 9

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

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Drummond, Albert Y., *Drummond's Pictorial Atlas of North Carolina* (Charlotte, NC: Albert Y. Drummond, 1924).

Carver's Creek United Methodist Church Bicentennial Historic Book, 1776-1976 (Introduction by Rev. Johnnie S. Huggins, August 29, 1976).

Maultsby, W. D., "The Methodists in Bladen County" *Bladen Journal*, Thursday, April 19, 1934.

Brown, Minnie McIver, "Carver's Creek Methodist Church" Historical sketch, 1949.

"Homecoming Day at Carver's Creek", *Bladen Journal*, August 4, 1932. *Bladen County Heritage*

SECTION 10

Verbal Boundary Description Bladen County, NC, Tax Map Parcel Number 3190.

Boundary Justification The boundary encompasses all of the property historically associated with Carver's Creek Methodist Church and Cemetery.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number Photos Page10

Carver's Creek Methodist Church
Bladen County, North Carolina

The following information applies to all photographs:

Carver's Creek Methodist Church
16904 NC Highway 87 East
Council, NC 28434
Bladen County, North Carolina
Photographer, Janet K. Seapker
Date: April 2007
Location of negatives: North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office

Individual photograph information is as follows:

Photo #1, Exterior view from the northeast
Photo #2, Exterior view from the southeast
Photo #3, Exterior view from the southwest
Photo #4, Fellowship Hall view from the southwest
Photo #5, Overall view of graveyard from the northwest
Photo #6, Sanctuary looking to the east front
Photo #7, Detail of communion rail, altar, lectern and pulpit
Photo #8, Rear wing view southwest into Library
Photo #9, Fellowship Hall view north along corridor