

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 Emmanuel Lutheran Church

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 216 South Aspen Street N/A not for publication

city or town Lincolnton N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Lincoln code 109 zip code 28092

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. Price, Jr. SHPO 10-21-94  
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 \_\_\_\_\_ 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 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Emmanuel Lutheran Church  
Name of Property

Lincoln County, North Carolina  
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register

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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

RELIGION/religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Gothic Revival

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Terra Cotta

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.

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1919-1920

1941-1942

Significant Dates

1919

1941

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Kistler, Henry A., contractor

Marsh & Hawkins, architects

Beam, M. S., contractor

J. M. Beam & Bro., contractor

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  
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Lincolnton, Lincoln County, North CarolinaEmmanuel Lutheran Church  
Architectural Description

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, a religious facility comprising two main brick blocks connected by an exterior metal staircase, is located one block south of the Lincoln County Court House in the small town of Lincolnton. The church and its attendant educational building, occupy a partial-block tract of land in the northwest corner of the junction of South Aspen Street and Church Street. The facade of the church faces northeast. The church is built close to the street with only a shallow lawn on the Aspen Street front of the lot. There is a wider grassy lawn on the northwest side of the church while on the southeast side, the foundation abuts the sidewalk. The educational building--attached to the church by an open metal platform stair--stands otherwise separate and to the southwest of the church. Portions of the lot surface here, between the buildings, are covered in grass while other parts are covered with walks and poured cement walkways. There are modest foundation plantings at the front and northwest side elevations of the church and at various points around the perimeter of the educational building.

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, the finest late Gothic Revival style building in Lincolnton and Lincoln County--and, arguably, one of the finest in the Piedmont--is a building of bold, imaginative design. The common bond elevations of the church are laid up in tapestry brick of red, brown, and olive hues in tinted mortar. Pale beige terra cotta, cast stone, granite, and poured cement are used lavishly to articulate and enhance lancet-arch door and window openings, the tops of stepped buttresses, the pinnacles of the steeple, the parapets of the roof, and at any other point where the design, massing, and form of the building could be emphasized by a contrast of materials. The church is built on a cross plan with shallow arms projecting on the northwest, southwest, and southeast elevations. Those arms together with the steeple and the narrow arms projecting from the front elevation are heavily buttressed in a stepped fashion which gives the building a strong, frankly muscular character. The building is set on a high basement, having the appearance of a podium, which is marked by a projecting cast stone water table.

The front (northeast) elevation of the church is dominated by the heavy squat brick steeple which rises in four stages to a conical steeple crowned by a cross. The principal entrance into the church is set in the base of the steeple and is enframed with a terra cotta surround holding a five-petal flower on which a cross on a red heart is superimposed. It is fitted with double-leaf board-and-batten doors with wrought iron hardware. The center entrance is at the back of a flight of steps banked by step-ends. The flanking side entrances to the church are set at a lower grade and contain single doors of like character. The bays above these doors are fitted with paired windows of varying heights. The fourth stage of the steeple structure contains paired openings fitted with louvers indicating the belfry.

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The side elevations of the church are six asymmetrical bays deep, and the bays are marked by stepped buttresses. The easternmost bays are set in the shallow gable-front arms which are crowned by parapets. The windows here illuminate the side vestibules at the front of the church. The next three bays, immediately west of these arms, illuminate the nave. The westernmost of these three bays is engaged in the bold gable-face composition which rises up to terminate the side arms of the cross. The tall, broad windows in the arms of the cross, as well as those illuminating the nave, are fitted with multi-part stained glass windows. A copper steeple rises on the ridge of the roof to mark the crossing of the nave with the side arms. On the northwest side of the nave there is a deep well carrying along the elevation which allows light to enter the basement windows. On the lower-grade southeast elevation there is a long ramp in this position which provides handicapped access to the social hall in the basement: the entrance is through a door positioned in the base of the cross arm.

The rear elevation of the church, like the front elevation, is three bays wide. Here the gable end of the nave--the top arm of the cross--holds the window over the altar. In the bay to the north is an entrance into the scaristry. It is fitted with a replacement metal door which opens onto the platform forming a part of the metal staircase connecting the church with the educational building. Below it is an entrance into the basement.

The educational building, standing at the rear of the church, is a U-shaped brick building which was erected in two stages in 1941-1942 and in 1954. The brick colors of the two blocks are sympathetic with the original brick of the church. The 1942 addition is laid up in common bond. The 1954 block is laid up in a one (header)-to-five (stretcher) bond. The oldest part of the educational building is the rectangular block at the rear of the building. It has a three-bay wide elevation, rebuilt in 1954, fronting on Church Street, with an entrance in the first-story easternmost bay. The long southwest rear elevation--spanning nearly the width of the church lot--has a generally symmetrically seven-bay arrangement with single, paired, and trios of six-over-six double-hung sash windows set in recessed surrounds. These illuminate the many classrooms and offices in this block. The northwest side elevation of the original block is continuous with the 1954 addition. There are trios of windows on each level of the older building near a clearly visible seam in the brickwork which marks the connection of the 1954 block with the 1942 building. In the 1954 block, there is a generally symmetrical arrangement of seven windows on the first story and six on the second level.

The northeast elevation of the education building, facing the rear of the church, dates entirely from 1954. The projecting north end of the block, visible from Aspen Street, has a three-part stained glass window on the first

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story with an inset cast stone cross above. The center and south end of the elevation has an asymmetrical arrangement of windows on both stories as well as single doors which open onto halls on the first and second stories of the educational building. The southeast elevation of the 1954 addition, facing on Church Street and offset from the earlier block, has a projecting two-story gable front bay. On the first story it contains a vestibule which opens into the chapel. This gable-front form, with a superimposed cross flanked by doors on the first story and a quartet of windows on the second level, repeats the larger, bolder gable-front cross arms of the 1920 church. Visually it serves as a transition from the elaborate elevation of the church to the relatively plain (1942) rear block of the building.

The interior of the church recalls something of the exuberance of the exterior; however, it is generally more subdued in its finishes and ornament. The front door of the church and its flanking doors open, respectively, into the three chambers of the vestibule which carry across the front of the church. The center chamber has a pair of doors, ornamented with glasswork crosses, which open into the nave and its center-aisle plan. The north chamber contains a staircase which descends to the simply finished social hall below the nave and a secondary, partially glazed door into the nave. The south chamber contains a staircase which rises to the balcony and a door into the nave. The balcony, in plan, repeats the three-space arrangement of the vestibule.

The sanctuary of Emmanuel Church is finished with a program of late Gothic Revival style interior decoration which features the repetition of a lancet arch motive on the fixed architectural features of the space and its movable furnishings. The sanctuary follows a center aisle plan with a raised chancel in the southwest arm of the cross-plan--opposite the entrance--and choirs in the northwest and southeast side arms. The choirs are fronted by blind wainscot-like railings featuring lancet arches which continue as a wainscot in the chancel. The double ranks of pews and the chancel furnishings are original to the church and are stained dark and ornamented with lancet arches and other motives of the Gothic Revival style. The altar, at the back of the chancel, incorporates the communion table with a three-part tabernacle which, in turn, forms the base of the stained glass window at the top of the composition. It appears likely that the beams spanning the ceiling were originally dark; however, their presence in the sanctuary is lessened by the white paint which effectively diminishes their character and importance to the decorative program of the sanctuary. The worship space is illuminated by hanging Gothic Revival style light fixtures and by the stained glass windows which impart hues of ochre, green, blue, and lavender into the worship hall. In the chancel there is a door into the sacristy which is located on the north side of the chancel and behind the northwest arm of the cross. The pendant space on the southeast side of the chancel is occupied by the pipes and mechanical equipment of the organ.

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Emmanuel Lutheran Church  
Lincolnton, Lincoln County, North Carolina

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The two blocks of the educational building contain the church's Sunday school rooms, offices for the pastor, assistant pastor, and church staff, restrooms, storage rooms, the church parlor, a small kitchen, and related spaces. The chapel, located in the first story of the 1954 block, is fitted up with late Gothic Revival style furnishings. The strongest decorative feature of the chapel is the series of seven stained glass windows which were salvaged from the 1895 church and reinstalled here. The choir rehearsal room is located in the large room above the chapel. The finish of the rooms and hallways in the educational building is generally consistent with the 1942 and 1954 periods of construction. The floors are either wood or covered with tile or carpet. The walls are plaster or plaster board. The door and window surrounds are simple enframements.

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Emmanuel Lutheran Church  
Lincolnton, Lincoln County, North Carolina

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Narrative Statement of Significance

SUMMARY

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, erected in 1919-1920, is an unusually impressive late Gothic Revival Style church distinguished by a bold vigor in its design. Emmanuel Church is the finest Late Gothic Revival style church in Lincolnton and Lincoln County and, arguably, one of the most handsome churches of the style and period in the Piedmont. The well-preserved and richly detailed building, laid up in dark red brick and enlivened with terra cotta ornament, is the third church erected by its congregation and the first at this location. Having continued to serve its congregation as a house of worship since 1920, the building is remarkably intact, and it retains its original complement of interior furnishings and stained glass windows. Standing to the rear (southwest) is an educational building erected in two efforts in 1941-1942 and 1954 which houses the Sunday school program and the church offices. Emmanuel Lutheran Church is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in the area of architecture as defined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historically and Architecturally Significant Churches and Church-Related Cemeteries in Lincolnton, North Carolina." The church is discussed in the Multiple Property Documentation Form as Property Type II.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Emmanuel Lutheran Church was one of two congregations organized in the 1780s in Lincolnton by the predominantly German-speaking peoples who settled the area in the mid-eighteenth century. Lincoln County was formed in 1779 out of Tryon County by the North Carolina General Assembly and named for Major-General Benjamin Lincoln (1733-1810), a distinguished leader in the Revolutionary Army. Lincolnton, the county seat of Lincoln County, was laid off in 1786 on a fifty-acre portion of a tract of 300 acres acquired for the town. Simultaneously, the residents of the town established Lutheran and Reformed congregations. In 1788, the two congregations jointly acquired a tract of over two acres on the south edge of the new town, two blocks south of the town square marked by the crossing of its two main streets (Main Street and Aspen Street). The language of that deed, dated 10 January 1788, made it clear that the two congregations had already jointly erected a union meeting house. The exact date for the construction of the union church is now unknown. Also unknown is the exact date on which the congregation was formally established; however, it probably coincides with the relocation of the Reverend John Godfrey Arends (1740-1807) to Lincoln County in 1785.<sup>1</sup>

Arends became the most prominent Lutheran minister in North Carolina in the later eighteenth century and he served as the pastor of many churches established by the German-speaking settlers in the Piedmont. He was resident

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minister of Emmanuel Church until his health failed in 1803 and his role as leader of the church was taken up by Rev. Paul Henkel. Henkel was one of several members of the Henkel family who rose to prominence in North Carolina and Virginia as Lutheran ministers. Paul Henkel was succeeded at Emmanuel Church by his kinsman Philip Henkel who served as Arends's assistant from 1805 until 1807 and thereafter became the regular minister to the congregation. Philip Henkel was pastor of Emmanuel Church until 1814 when he was succeeded by Rev. Daniel Moser who served until 1820. Moser, in turn, was succeeded as pastor of the church by David Henkel whose tenure lasted until 1830.

During this important formative period from ca. 1787 until 1830, Emmanuel Church was probably the most important religious congregation in Lincolnton and it was one of the most important Lutheran churches in North Carolina. The log church erected ca. 1787 was the site of meetings which led to the organization of the North Carolina Synod and the Tennessee Synod, in 1802 and 1820, respectively. In 1819, the two congregations added a second story to their log church and covered it with weatherboards. In 1830 the church was painted white. Thereafter, it was known as the White Church and still later in the nineteenth century as the Old White Church. The cemetery adjoining the union church (hereinafter cited as the Old White Church) became a public burying ground and the principal cemetery in Lincolnton from ca. 1787 until the 1820s.

In an ironic turn of fate, Emmanuel Church would never again be as important in the nineteenth century as it was in the opening decades of the century. Conversely, the church erected in ca. 1787, expanded in 1819, and painted in 1830, became the central religious building in the town and the nursery from which Lincolnton's Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Baptist congregations emerged. From 1830 until 1892, the fortunes of the Lutheran congregation waxed and waned, services were held on an irregular, infrequent basis, and the congregation was served by a series of supply ministers.

In the early 1890s, a movement began to reorganize and rejuvenate the Lutheran congregation. After sixty years of being served by supply ministers, Emmanuel Church came under the pastorate of Rev. J. F. Moser in 1892. Moser set about to renew and enlarge the lapsed congregation and held regular services in the Old White Church. His efforts were little more than a year in progress when, on 23 December 1893, the Old White Church burned to the ground. As it turned out, the loss of the building, co-erected by the Lutheran and Reformed congregations in ca. 1787, proved to be an encouragement to the reorganization efforts. Plans were laid to erect a new brick church on the site. In the meantime, the Emmanuel Lutheran congregation held regular services in the Methodist church a block to the south. The brick Gothic Revival Style church was completed in 1895 and served as the congregation's house of worship until 1920. Meanwhile interments in the adjoining cemetery had become increasingly less frequent at the turn of the century and even less so, after 1905, when a public cemetery was established in Lincolnton.

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The work undertaken by Rev. J. F. Moser proved to be successful and he was followed, in turn, by a succession of ministers who led the growing church in the opening decades of the twentieth century. Three of these men were particularly important to the life of the church: Rev. R. A. Yoder, during whose pastorate (1905-1911) the 1895 church was enlarged; Rev. Enoch Hite, during whose ministry (1911-1918) discussions moved forward on the erection of this church; and Rev. W J. Roof who served as pastor of Emmanuel Church from 1918 until 1923. During Roof's pastorate at Emmanuel Church, a new site was acquired for a new church, plans for this building were obtained, and the church was erected and dedicated.

Ever mindful of its role in the religious life of Lincolnton, the congregation of Emmanuel Lutheran Church did not venture far from its original location. On 18 November 1918, the trustees of Emmanuel Church acquired two adjoining lots in the west corner of South Aspen and Church Streets: this property was diagonally across the intersection from the then existing church. Whether the congregation had plans for the new building in hand at that time is unknown: also unknown is the identity of the architect of the church. According to manuscript church histories, contractor Henry A. Kistler began building the church in April 1919 and he completed his work a year later in the late summer of 1920. The new church was dedicated on Sunday evening 10 October 1920 during the 100th annual convention of the Tennessee Synod at Emmanuel Lutheran Church.

With the handsome new building completed and free of debt, Emmanuel Church entered a period of growth which has continued to the present. During these seven decades, the congregation has had resident ministers who have remained as leaders of the church for extended periods of time. One of these men was Rev. L. A. Thomas who came to Emmanuel Church in 1936 and remained its pastor until 1945. During this period he oversaw the construction of the church's educational building by contractor M. S. Beam. It was completed in 1948. During his ministry, the church constructed an addition to its educational building. Including a chapel, the addition was designed by the Charlotte architectural firm of Marsh & Hawkins, erected by J. M. Beam & Bro., and dedicated on 17 October 1954.

### Footnote

1. The facts contained in this account of the history of Emmanuel Lutheran Church represent a consolidation of information which appears in a variety of published and unpublished sources. The most important of these are cited in the bibliography. Almost as useful were a series of accounts, typescript sketches, and other materials relating to the history of the church which survive in the Emmanuel Church office files. The records of the purchase of real estate by the congregation was found in the Lincoln County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Lincoln County Court House, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

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Lincolnton, Lincoln County, North Carolina

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## 9. Bibliography

Emmanuel Lutheran Church Office Files, Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

"History of Emmanuel Lutheran Church," unsigned and undated typescript manuscript. A copy exists in the collection of Peggy Costner Simmons.

Lincoln County News, 26 March 1942, 30 March 1942.

Lincoln County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Lincoln County Court House, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

Minutes of the One Hundredth Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Held in Emmanuel Church, Lincolnton, North Carolina. New Market, VA: Henkel & Company's Lutheran Publication Establishment, 1920.

Morgan, Jacob L. and Brown, Bachman S., Jr., and Hall, John, editors. History of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina. N. p.: United Evangelical Synod of North Carolina, 1953.

Nixon, Alfred, "The History of Lincoln County," The North Carolina Booklet, January 1910, 111-186.

Sherrill, William L. Annals of Lincoln County. Charlotte: Observer Printing House, 1937.

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## 10. Geographical Data

### Verbal Boundary Description

The property included in this nomination is parcel #0693 on Lincoln County Tax Map 3623-16-83.

### Boundary Justification

The boundaries enclosing this property comprise the acreage acquired in 1918 for the construction of this building: this property continues to serve as the site and setting of Emmanuel Lutheran Church.

LINCOLNTON WEST QUADRANGLE  
 NORTH CAROLINA  
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)  
 NE/4 LINCOLNTON 15' QUADRANGLE

35 11 54  
 (MAIDEN)

17'30" 474 1 320 000 FEET 475 476 477 81°15' 35'30"



Emmanuel Lutheran Church  
 Lincolnton, Lincoln Co., NC  
 Lincoln West Quad  
 E/17/476600  
 N/17/3924900

