

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 Church of the Incarnation (Episcopal)

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 111 North Fifth Street

[N/A] not for publication

city or town Highlands

[N/A] vicinity

state North Carolina

code NC

county Macon

code 113

zip code 28741

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 state-wide locally.

(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey J. Crow SHPO
Signature of certifying official/Title

4/10/96
Date

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:

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

Church of the Incarnation
Name of property

Macon, NC
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	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously (En-
listed in the National Register

0

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)

Late Gothic Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

roof metal

walls weatherboard

other wood shingle

Narrative Description

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

Church of the Incarnation
Name of property

Macon, NC
County and State

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1896- 1946

Significant Dates

1896

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect / Builder

McGuire, W.B.

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 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.

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:
Church of the Incarnation files

Church of the Incarnation
Name of property

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .23 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 17 299740 3880820 3 _____
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

2 _____ 4 _____
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

[] See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

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

see continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martha Walker Fullington, consultant

organization _____ date January 29, 1996

street & number 21 Forest Ridge Drive telephone 704-684-2083

city or town Arden state NC zip code 28704

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 _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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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Church of the Incarnation
Macon County, NC

Section number 7 Page 1

Located on the corner of Main and Fifth streets in downtown Highlands, North Carolina, the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation stands on the lot which was purchased for it over 100 years ago. This location is geographically and visually commanding in its proximity to the heart of the commercial area; however, its feeling is quaintly pastoral due to the wedding of the building and landscaping to the lot. The church's two main facades hug the street with just enough room for pathways, trees, shrubbery, and a white picket fence which replaces the original wire one which kept neighboring cows away.

The foot print of the church today is a side-by-side abutment of two rectangles, one being the original 1896 church, and the other being the 1981 addition which houses the necessities for parish life. They do share a side wall and so are technically one building; however, they maintain very separate identities both inside and out.

The small, one-story, frame church measures only approximately twenty-four by sixty feet, with the long side of the rectangular shape running west to east along side Main Street. This south elevation has a small, projecting, square entrance bay tower while the east elevation features a projecting polygonal apse. The main roof of the church is a steeply pitched gable roof. Open eaves with simple fascia boards and partially exposed rounded rafter ends, and guttering complete the roofing system. Historic photographs reveal that the roof was originally sheathed in wooden shingles, but was resheathed with pressed metal shingles perhaps prior to the 1920s; this roof remains today. A complex hipped and gabled roof shelters the apse area. The original weatherboarded exterior remains intact. Decorative wooden fish scale shingles adorn the intermediate stage of the tower. The church stands on a foundation of fieldstone piers with stone infill.

The entrance facade (south elevation) features a square entrance tower on the western edge. Granite steps which replaced the original wooden ones were an early memorial gift and were made by Mr. Jeremiah Pierson who was one of the founding members. The elevated double leaf entrance doors feature gothic-arched applied moldings (in 1978 Fred Hooper made replacements due to weathering) and are topped by a gothic-arched blind transom. Pointed-arched windows are on each side elevation of the tower. The intermediate stage of the tower is sheathed in wooden shingles and forms a transition from a four-sided base to an octagonal open belfry. The belfry houses the original bell which was given as a memorial gift by Miss Alicia Trapier of Charleston shortly after the church was completed. A cross pinnacle tops the flared-conical roof of the belfry. The remainder of the entrance facade features four evenly spaced windows. The gothic-arched windows originally contained maized and colored panes; many have been replaced by memorial designs. The windows pivot horizontally for ventilation.

Both the west and east elevations have only one bay, large tripartite windows. The 1981 wood-paneled and weatherboarded addition is flush with the original church on the west elevation and features an entrance bay with handicap ramp and two reused original church windows. The gable-roofed addition gradually rises from one story to two stories as it goes just beyond the length of the church. On the rear or east elevation a wooden fire escape and a small room form a hyphen between the addition and the original church. The roof lines are entirely separate and there is no confusion as to what is original and what is new. Care was taken, however, to use sympathetic scale, materials, and design in the addition.

The interior of the church is accessed via the small vestibule room of the entrance tower. Double doors of pointed-arched panels lead into the nave. The entire interior is sheathed in narrow tongue-and-groove poplar. The walls have horizontal sheathing above vertical wainscot. Handsome baseboards, chairrails, and modest window surrounds are the only embellishments. The floors are narrow pine planks with carpeting down the

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center aisle and in the chancel; originally straw mats lined the aisle. The steep ceiling is also sheathed in narrow boards as are the walls. The exposed scissor truss system is the most imposing feature of the interior. Nave lighting is provided by antique brass chandeliers with globed lights which were purchased from a South Carolina church with funds donated by several Incarnation parishioners. They were installed in this church when it was constructed and were converted from kerosene to electricity in the 1930s. Some recent spot lighting has been added to enhance reading light.

The poplar pews were made by James T. Kennedy who was the deacon in charge of St. Cyprian's in Franklin. He later established a manual training school and ultimately became the Archdeacon of Colored Work for the Asheville District of the North Carolina Episcopal Diocese. He and his students built fine church furniture which appears in numerous Episcopal churches throughout western North Carolina. For the Church of the Incarnation, he made the very simple straight pews with carved recessed panels on the end pieces, and kneelers. Both the pews and kneelers now have cushions. Two equal ranks of pews march up each side of the center aisle. The Reverend Kennedy also made the original altar and lectern of black walnut which are now used in the parish hall, and his original altar rail is in storage at the church. The chancel area of the church has always been the most susceptible to change, primarily due to well-meaning memorial donations. Nationally significant artist Huger Elliott painted canvas murals of biblical figures on the apse wall which were later replaced by his murals of renaissance-style angels. These were replaced in the 1950s when walnut fielded paneling with a dentil cornice, custom-made by E.S. Purdom of Franklin, was given as a memorial and was installed over the narrow boarded apse wall. A slightly raised area was created for a new altar. Other matching pieces were made and donated at this time: pulpit, lectern, altar rail, and bishop's chair. A small unobtrusive door leads from the chancel to the sacristy provided in the new addition. A small sacristy existed here originally.

At the rear of the church is a 1970s organ which replaced the original. Although the parish life addition abuts the north wall of the original sanctuary, it affects the integrity of the interior very little. In the 1950s a portion of this north wall was removed and replaced by movable folding wooden panels to allow accessibility to additional seating in the 1950s wing. That wing was incorporated into the construction of the 1981 expansion, and the wall of the church was put back in place. The original windows were returned to that north wall and are back lit to appear as those on the south wall. A double door with enameled panels leads into the foyer of the addition.

The 1981 addition has an entrance foyer sheathed in narrow tongue-and-groove boards to resemble the church's interior. Beyond the foyer are the church office and the rector's office. Behind this area is an atrium stairwell which leads down to the Sunday School rooms, nursery, library, and sacristy; and up to the kitchen, storage, and parish hall. The parish hall is linked via closed circuit TV to the sanctuary to serve as overflow seating in the summer.

The integrity assessment of this property is very complex and yet very simple. Yes, there have been numerous changes to that small 1896 mission church, and yet from the exterior or the interior it still conveys its history as an 1896 mission church. Especially strong is that gothic revival mysticism still conveyed by the dimly lit interior of the church. The center aisle, the steeply pitched ceiling, the heavy scissor truss system, the angular apse, the tripartite windows all focus attention upward and stress the intended verticality of the Divine.

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Church of the Incarnation
Macon County, NC

Section number 8 Page 1

Summary

Established as a resort town in the 1870s, Highlands' settlement history and social history are one in the same. The Church of the Incarnation — a small, frame Episcopal church built in the heart of Highlands in 1896 — represents the town founders' desire to offer a wholesome, religious presence for those seeking rest, recreation, or health. Eligible under National Register criterion A, the Church of the Incarnation is important to the social history of this resort town, and to the surrounding resort area of western North Carolina as it was one of a handful of early Anglican mountain missions. It is also eligible for the National Register under criterion C as an example of late-nineteenth century Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture. Although the church has had additions to accommodate all facets of an active parish, they are in scale with the original church building that is easily discernible and conveys the integrity of original design, workmanship, materials, feeling and association of nineteenth century Gothic Revival Episcopal churches which dot western North Carolina's landscape. Answering the challenge of their mission statement, the Church of the Incarnation graciously takes on "...the responsibility to serve the spiritual and temporal needs of this unique congregation of summer and year-round residents, united in the body of Christ." Expanded facilities and services meet the needs of this parish which see Sunday attendance grow from 70 winter communicants to more than 270 summer communicants.

CONTEXTS AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Historical Background and Social History Context

The Church of the Incarnation contributes significantly to local social history in two ways: it played an important role in the establishment of Highlands as an early resort town, and it was the fruit of the earliest mission efforts of the Episcopal denomination in far western North Carolina.

Kansas natives Samuel Truman Kelsey (1832 - 1922) and Clinton Carter Hutchinson (1833 - 1909) had successfully started other towns in the second half of the nineteenth century such as Ottawa and Hutchinson, Kansas. In February of 1875 they arrived in the mountains of southeastern Macon county to establish a town on a broad plateau which had a spectacular elevation of some 4118 feet above sea level. In March of that year, they purchased 839 acres of this plateau grazing land from W.B. Dobson, and set out to develop the town which is now known as Highlands. Later in 1875, they published a pamphlet and ran advertisements which told of rich soil; not just for farming, but rich with gems and minerals. They also told of rich air; not only pure, but also healing. What Kelsey and Hutchinson had intended as a year-round town quickly established its attraction as a predominately seasonal resort destination offering health and relaxation. People were attracted from all over the United States, but the greatest response seemed to come from Atlanta, Charleston, and New Orleans (Cobb 1982).

Because the founders wanted to attract moral, upstanding residents and visitors to their new town, they set out to establish a very high quality of life. The newly established amenities were widely advertised: Highlands Literary Society, Highlands Improvement Association, Floral Society of Highlands, and a Highlands Temperance Union (Kelsey 1876). Levi Branson's business directory indicated that although there were Baptist and Methodist churches in other parts of the county, there were no churches in Highlands. So in March of

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1876, only one year after his arrival in this new town, S.T. Kelsey established the "Highlands Union Sunday School" in the Log Law House, a multi-use municipal building (Hudson Library vertical files). Kelsey himself established the church-focused community which he wanted for his newly founded town.

Some scholars have concluded that the strong Scotch-Irish presence in western North Carolina with their generations of dislike for anything smacking of "the crown" may account for the small following of the Anglican church (Van Noppen 1975). But just as the Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists had done, the Episcopalians were not far behind in establishing quite an active missionary district headquartered in Asheville. In May of 1876, Bishop Lyman of the Diocese of North Carolina assigned the Reverend John Alexander Deal (1844 - 1928) to missionary work in far western North Carolina. Deal's daughter, Anne Deal Toomer recorded her father's life remembrances shortly before he died and published them in 1953. Her book tells of Deal's missionary life from beginning to end. "I was the first missionary of the Episcopal Church ever sent to this part of the country," said Deal. Although he was sent to Murphy, he was to serve Cherokee, Jackson, and Macon counties. He established missions in Murphy, Franklin, Cartoogechaye, Cashiers, and ultimately in Highlands. His circuit-riding ministry mode set the standard for this Episcopalian mission venture for the next several decades.

There were a few Episcopalians in Highlands (Nortons, Halls, Piersons) who met at their homes, at the school house, or any other gathering place offered (Berry interview 1995). Deal began meeting with the Highlands group as early as 1879 (Duncan 1965). In 1884, Bishop Lyman preached at the school house and the Reverend Deal was also there; it was reported that there was a "crowded house" (*Blue Ridge Enterprise*, Macon County 1884). Throughout the 1880s many denominations were established in Highlands: Presbyterian, Unitarian, Baptist, Northern Methodist, Methodist Episcopal South; meanwhile the Episcopalians in Highlands continued their home and school house services.

Deal's work went well in the mountain communities. His work exemplified the trend in the Asheville Missionary District where more churches were constructed in the 1880s and 1890s than during any other period (London and Lemmon 1987). In the 1880s church buildings were constructed at Cartoogechaye: St. John's, 1880; Franklin: St. Agnes, 1886 and St. Cyprian's, 1887; and Cashiers: Good Shepherd, 1884. The 1890s were promising as well. In September 1894, the Episcopalians gathered in Highlands petitioned Bishop Cheshire to grant mission status to them, which he gladly did (Petition and Grant Records 1894). Within a month the Diocese purchased from James and Margaret Rideout a prime 100-foot square corner lot at Main and Fifth streets in Highlands (Macon County Deed Book 1894). Strong local tradition holds that Tudor T. Hall donated the \$100 to the diocese so the land could be purchased. A year and a half of fund raising and construction followed, and by the summer of 1896, the church building had been completed and was consecrated, "The Church of the Incarnation" (Petition and Consecration Documents 1896).

Throughout the period of significance, the parish was sustained by a small but loyal year-round congregation. Serving a resort town was not always easy as the summer expansion of the church goes called for more services and more seating. As early as 1899, Deal noted "that it would be of great benefit to keep the church open if possible all summer and to hold Sunday School regularly" (Church Records 1899). The Church of the Incarnation remained an active mission with the bleakest years just after the turn of the century when the year-round congregation dwindled to only six families, and eventually only summer services were held (Hoppen et al 1995). The Register of Communicants indicates that the greatest growth of the parish was in the 1930s and 1940s when travel was a bit more conducive. A year-round rector was called in 1931, and a rectory was constructed a block away in 1936. The last rector to serve during the period of significance was the Reverend A. Rufus Morgan who served several parishes including Incarnation. He was a Franklin native, and although he had contributed greatly to the Diocese of Western North Carolina in many areas and capacities, his heart seemed to be in these far western mountains, and many feel that he truly created a parish family in his fifteen years of service.

The Church of the Incarnation continues to fulfill the desire of Kelsey and Hutchinson by providing a

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Church of the Incarnation
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religious presence in the resort town of Highlands. In 1950, a parish hall was constructed to provide additional space for this parish family. A wall of the church was partially removed to provide additional seating (this was later put back).

The Church of the Incarnation's status changed from mission to parish in 1956, and by 1958 it became a self-supporting parish under the leadership of Dr. Herbert Koepp-Baker (Parish Profile 1994). This growing parish remodeled and expanded the existing parish hall in 1880-1981. One of the most important additions was that of a great hall which is sometimes used to accommodate overflow seating. Highlands' population grows from 2,000 in the winter to more than 20,000 in the summer. The church mirrors this seasonal swell from 70 communicants and one service offered in winter to 270 communicants and three services in summer (Parish Profile 1994). Perhaps the Reverend John Deal was right when he said, "Here in this land of clouds and evergreens I established one of my most promising missions..." (Toomer 1953).

Architectural Context

The Church of the Incarnation is one of western North Carolina's fine examples of the embodiment of the theology of the ecclesiastical late Gothic Revival style simplified in small, rural parish terms. The churches initiated by the Episcopalian ministry of the Reverend John A. Deal all seem to have this in common. Also, all of the churches were built with significant aid from northern congregations. In his memoirs, Deal recalls that he made many "journeys East preaching in the churches of New York, Philadelphia, and Washington where collections were taken for my work."

St. John's Church in Cartoogechaye was built in 1880 with funds from Baltimore and elsewhere. In 1886 funds were received from a New York family to construct St. Agnes. While the 1884 Church of the Good Shepherd in Cashiers had been built almost totally with funds from the South Carolina Hampton family, after a destructive fire a replacement was built on the same spot but with money from the North (Duncan 1965). The funding for the Church of the Incarnation was detailed in the church records of April 19, 1897:

Cost of building church	\$2032.81
Amount subscribed in Northern Cities	1720.64
Amount subscribed in Highlands	219.53
Amount subscribed in other parts of N.C.	59.96
Balance due paid by Mr. Deal	32.68

Popular belief is that New York's Church of the Incarnation may have been a major donor and hence the namesake; however, church records indicate that as early as 1894, even before there was a church building, the Highlands' group was known as the "Mission of the Incarnation."

The church records state that the Church of the Incarnation was built by W.B. McGuire of the Franklin Furniture Company. He was the only one to respond to the bid invitation offered in September of 1895. Although he was to have the church ready by Easter, 1896, it was summer before the church was completed. The western North Carolina Episcopal churches may have all had different builders, but all certainly had the same influence. Whether from John Deal or elsewhere it is not known, but it is strongly suggested by style that there

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was knowledge of Richard Upjohn's *Rural Architecture* book which translated the grandeur of Gothic Revival into manageable terms for the smaller parishes of his Anglican denomination. Alan Gowans explains that "Gothic Revival was easy to design and build with local skills from guidebooks. Many small Episcopal churches were built from models of the sort Richard Upjohn supplied free to Episcopal parishes as a contribution to that faith" (Gowan 1992). In his book *American Churches*, Roger Kennedy explains that "Upjohn provided a manual for unskilled builders which translated into wood the stone lineaments of the Gothic." While most of Upjohn's frame churches were sheathed in board-and-batten, perhaps the intense rainfall and learned building tradition of this area prescribed weatherboard sheathing instead.

Perhaps not only money, but also stylistic influences came from Deal's many trips north. The elements of Gothic Revival architecture all visually stressed the verticality of the Divine. All of this can be seen in the Church of the Incarnation: its attached entrance tower has an elevated entrance topped by a gothic-arched blind transom which points upward to a slender, octagonal, shingled stage which supports an open belfry topped by a flared conical roof. All of this ultimately leads the eye to the cross pinnacle which could be seen from all over Highlands. (This must have pleased the founders of Highlands who wanted an obvious religious presence in their new town!) The steeply pitched gable roof and pointed-arched windows continue this emphasis. Even the interior of the Church of the Incarnation continues this vertical and almost mystical emphasis. The open scissor truss system and the peaked polygonal apse lead the eye upward while the colored glass, dark stained poplar walls, and dark furnishings create the mystical atmosphere so preferred by Episcopalians.

The integrity of the Church of the Incarnation lies in the continued existence of the original church building as part of a growing parish complex. In the 1950s an addition was made which abutted the north wall and provided church offices and restrooms. In 1981 this addition was enlarged to provide a library, Sunday School rooms, and an upstairs parish hall used for meetings and for overflow sanctuary seating. The church's significance is found, not as an example of an unaltered church building, but as one which has an intact, documented history and architectural history and which clearly exemplifies a nineteenth century local interpretation of a popular academic style. It stands today as one of only two nineteenth century churches in Highlands.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property consists of all of tax parcel #7470 on the Macon County tax map #7530.01 and is indicated by a bold outline on that enclosed map.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property includes the 100-foot square lot originally associated with the Church of the Incarnation.

CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION
Macon County, NC

Macon County tax map #7530.01
scale 1" = 100'



Highlands Quad

