

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. Matthew's Lutheran Church
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 307 W. Court Street N/A not for publication
city, town Marion N/A vicinity
state North Carolina code NC county McDowell code 111 zip code 28752

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Historic and Architectural Resources in
Downtown Marion, North Carolina

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0

4. 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. See continuation sheet.

William S. Paris
Signature of certifying official

2-4-91
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. 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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion: religious structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion: religious structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: vernacular late Gothic Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls stone

asbestos

roof asphalt shingle

other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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Historic and Architectural Resources in Downtown Marion, NC: St. Matthew's
Lutheran Church
Section number 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

Located on a grassy site which slopes slightly south away from West Court Street, St. Matthew's Lutheran Church is an excellent example of a late Gothic Revival-inspired vernacular structure. While employing many of the features of the Gothic Revival such as lancet windows and buttresses, the building, in its simple form and design, is also a fine representation of local craftsmanship, particularly in terms of its masonry. The front or north side of the building is three bays wide with one lancet window on either side of the doorway. The roofline here is a very simple gabled parapet which is slightly taller and more flat at the apex. There are three lancet windows just below the apex of the parapet above the centrally located doorway. Completed in 1935, the entire building is constructed of river rock, smooth and yellow in color, brought from the nearby Catawba River. The east and west sides of the building have shallow stepped buttresses, another element of the Gothic Revival style. Windows on these sides are one-over-one double hung with a muntin pattern of a single lancet arch in each upper sash. Lintels on these windows are demarcated through the use of stones placed vertically. The rear of the building is wood construction covered with asbestos siding which appears to be original. There is a half-lancet window on this facade with a rectangular vent above. A tall chimney, also of river rock, rises up at the southwest corner of the building.

Inside, the simplicity of the rectangularly shaped building continues. Upon entering the church, the eye is drawn down the central aisle to the altar which contains the only stained glass in the building as a backdrop. The pews are simple oak fixtures, with gothic arches as a motif on the sides. To either side of the altar are the choir rooms. Rear stairs lead down from the southeast corner of the building to the basement which contains a concrete slab floor, some classrooms, and mechanical equipment. Stairs here are simpler than the ones at the front of the building, with square caps on the newel posts, and 1 x 1 balusters. In contrast, the front stairs, located to the left upon entering the building, and which also go to the basement, are somewhat more elaborate in detail. Newel posts are turned, capped by round knobs. Balusters are also 1 x 1, and the banister is raised and grooved to fit the palm of the hand. All woodwork, including the wood floors and five-panel doors, is stained dark. Overall, the building represents fine local craftsmanship and materials, and retains its architectural integrity.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1935

Significant Dates
1935

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Williams, Pink builder
Herman, Q. E. architect

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

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Historic and Architectural Resources in Downtown Marion, NC: St. Matthew's
Lutheran Church

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SUMMARY

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as an example of a vernacular building, executed with local materials and craftsmanship. It is significant in the area of architecture as being the only intact example of this type of vernacular architecture based on the Late Gothic Revival style in Marion.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Architecture

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church is a significant example of a Gothic Revival-inspired vernacular church building. Utilizing river rock from the nearby Catawba River, it was designed by Q. E. Herman and executed in 1935 primarily by a local craftsman, Pink Williams. It remains today as an excellent example in Marion of a vernacular church, in stark contrast to the more high style designs of First Baptist and First Presbyterian. Details such as lancet windows and flying buttresses are well crafted. Important, too, is the fact that this church was built by a small congregation with minimal resources, yet the result is a small, yet finely crafted example of a truly local building style, utilizing indigenous materials, the smooth river rock stones from the nearby Catawba River.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Traveling south to North Carolina from Pennsylvania, there were Lutherans in New Bern, North Carolina by 1710.¹ By ca. 1750, the southward movement began in earnest, continuing on into the next century. As early as the mid-1800s, Lutherans began settling in western North Carolina, in Boone.² More definitive movement into other parts of western North Carolina began in the early 20th century, including churches established at Lenoir (1908), Hendersonville (1914), Blowing Rock (1922), and Asheville (1923).³ So there were indeed Lutherans in the western part of the state and in Marion at the time the congregation there formed and decided to build a church.

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church was completed in 1935, but the presence of the Lutheran religion had made itself felt in Marion as early as 1905.⁴ For many years, services were

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held in the old Methodist Church. Several attempts were made to organize a Lutheran congregation in Marion, once by Reverend S. Keisler of Catawba County, and about twenty years later, in 1925 or so, by Reverend W. D. Peters of Asheville. Finally, in 1931, Reverend Leslie Frerking, who was also serving Rutherfordton at the time, saw a need for establishing a mission in Marion. Reverend Paul A. Boriack took over this prospect in the fall of 1931, and met with several Lutheran families in Marion to see about organizing a church. Lutheran services were held soon after this, on February 14, 1932,⁵ in St. John's Episcopal Church in Marion. Fifty-seven attended. On April 11, 1932, a group of Lutherans met at the home of T. H. L. Miller in Pleasant Garden in McDowell County to organize St. Matthew's.

Until a church could be built, services were held in the county courthouse. The church applied for \$5,000.00 from the Church Extension Fund to go towards building a church. Money was scarce at the time, though, and it wasn't until two years later that a loan of \$3,000.00 was granted to the Lutherans in Marion by the Synodical Board in St. Louis. On April 23, 1934, St. Matthew's Church bought a lot on West Court Street from C. E. and Edna R. Bolick.⁶ Purchase price was \$100.00. The cornerstone for the present building was laid on January 13, 1935, and the first services were held on May 19, 26, and June 2, 1935. A thousand people attended the special services held on the church grounds on June 2.

The design of the building is attributed to O. E. Herman of Hickory,⁷ and Pink Williams was the builder.⁸ Although not fully documented at this time, Mr. Williams, a local stone mason, probably built many other structures in Marion and McDowell County of the same river rock as St. Matthew's, including numerous retaining walls. These can be seen around First Presbyterian Church, along W. Court Street, in front of the Blanton House on W. Henderson Street, and along numerous other residential streets all over town.

In 1939, additional property was bought by the Church. To the east of the church building, a lot with a house, already built on it before the church was built,⁹ was purchased as the parsonage. To the rear of the church, a small board and batten hut (fellowship hall) was built in 1939-40. In 1941, the church bought the lot between the church and the parsonage, and in 1977, additional land behind the parsonage was purchased.¹⁰

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Historic and Architectural Resources in Downtown Marion, NC: St. Matthew's
Lutheran Church

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FOOTNOTES

¹Morgan, Jacob L., ed. History of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina 1803-1953. United Evangelical Synod of NC: 1953.

²Interview with Reverend Marion Starr, Asheville, NC, 13th of September, 1988.

³History of the Lutheran Church.

⁴"Fifty Years of Grace", Anniversary Bulletin, St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, 1985.

⁵Ibid.

⁶McDowell County Deed Book 81, Page 64.

⁷McDowell County Reconnaissance Survey, St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, 1985.

⁸"Fifty Years of Grace".

⁹Interview with Reverend Eldor Kuehnert, 11th of November, 1987.

¹⁰"Fifty Years of Grace".

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:
Western Office, Archives & History
Asheville, North Carolina

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre (approximately .10 acre)

UTM References

A

1	7
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4	0	8	3	2	0
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3	9	4	9	0	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is indicated by the bold line defining the area labeled St. Matthew's Lutheran Church as shown on the accompanying sketch map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary was drawn to include the church and sufficient setting within the lot which has been historically associated with the church. It excludes two Non-Contributing properties on the same lot.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sybil Argintar Bowers, Preservation Planning Consultant
organization Bowers Southeastern Preservation date August 31, 1990
street & number P O Box 15722 telephone (704) 253-1392
city or town Asheville state NC zip code 28813

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Historic and Architectural Resources in Downtown Marion, NC: St. Matthew's
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Section number 9 Page 1

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Alexander, Ted. "Reconnaissance Survey of McDowell County".
1985.

"Fifty Years of Grace", Anniversary Bulletin, St. Matthew's
Lutheran Church, 1985.

Kuehnert, Reverend Eldor. Marion, NC. Interview, 11th of
November, 1987.

"Lutheran Church Formed at Meeting Last Week". Marion
Progress. 21st of April, 1932.

McDowell County Deed Book 81, Page 64.

Morgan, Jacob L., ed., and Bachman, S. Brow, and Hall, John.
History of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina, 1803-
1953. United Evangelical Synod of NC: 1953.

Starr, Reverend Marion. Asheville, NC. Interview, 13th of
September, 1988.

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Section number Photos Page 1

PHOTO LIST: ST. MATTHEW'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

The following information pertains to all photographs:

Name of Property.....	St. Matthew's Lutheran Church
City and State.....	Marion, North Carolina.
Photographer.....	Ted Alexander, 1985 photos Sybil A. Bowers, 1987-88, 1990 photos
Date taken.....	1985, except where noted otherwise All 1985 and 1987-88 photos have been field verified in 1990.
Location of original.....	Western Office, Archives & History negative Asheville, North Carolina

Photo A

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church; 307 West Court Street
Looking southwest at front of church.

Photo B

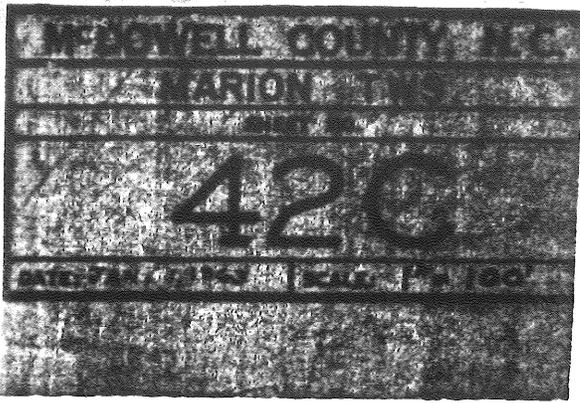
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church; 307 West Court Street
Looking northwest at rear of church.

Photo C

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church; 307 West Court Street
Exterior window detail.

Photo D

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church; 307 West Court Street
Interior sanctuary, looking south.



SKETCH MAP

SCALE: 1" = 100'

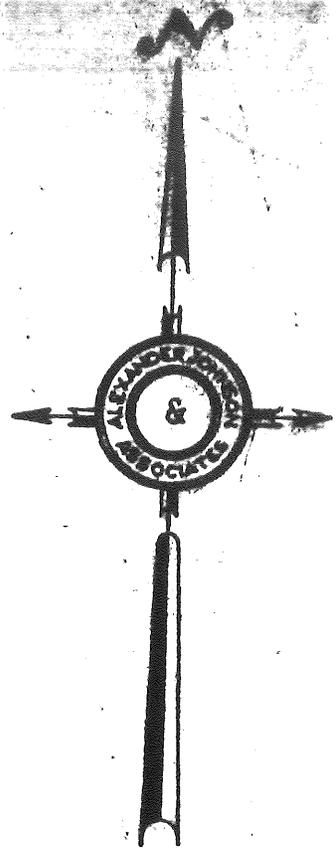
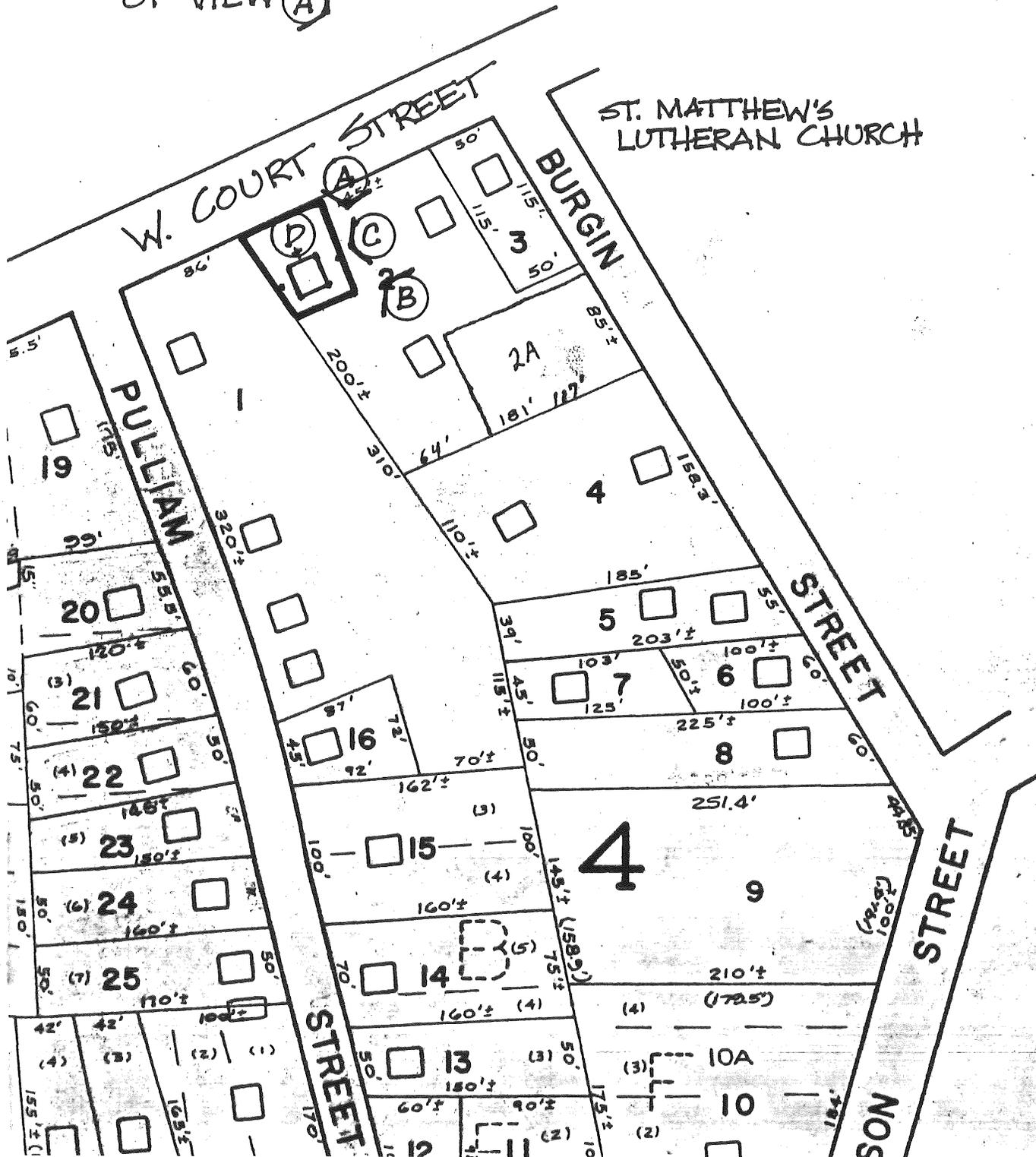


PHOTO AND DIRECTION OF VIEW (A)





3952
 42'30"

ALL PROPERTIES ARE LOCATED
 IN MARION, NC, McDOWELL CO
 MARION WEST QUAD
 ZONE 17

MAIN STREET HISTORIC
 3951 DISTRICT

A: N 3949430
 E 408420

B: N 3949570
 E 408590

C: N 3949010
 E 408910

D: N 3948920
 E 408740

E: N 3949140
 E 408440

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CH.
 N: 3949200
 E: 408350

MAIN ST. HISTORIC
 3949 DISTRICT

DEPOT HISTORIC DISTRICT

N: 3948850
 E: 408540

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
 N: 3949020
 E: 408320

ST. MATTHEW'S LUTHERAN
 CHURCH
 N: 3949020
 E: 408320
 40'

3947

3946

4.5 MI
 33 MI
 4655 IN NW
 (MARION EAST)
 4 MI
 23 MI
 RUTHERFORDTON

