

# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Other names/site number: DHR No. 005-0016

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

## 2. Location

Street & number: 3788 Buffalo Springs Turnpike

City or town: Monroe State: VA County: Amherst

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  X

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide   X   local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

    A     B   X   C     D

<p><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b></p> <p><u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u></p> <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property <u>   </u> meets <u>   </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>
<p><b>Title :</b></p>	<p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 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

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**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

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY: Greek Revival

LATE VICTORIAN: Gothic Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; STONE; WOOD; METAL;  
CONCRETE

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

St. Luke's Episcopal Church is located in the remote, rural, southwestern area of Amherst County known as Pedlar Mills. The church is one of the few remaining historic buildings in Pedlar Mills, a once-thriving industrial milling community of the nineteenth century. St. Luke's stands on a hillside west of and facing the Pedlar River and Buffalo Springs Turnpike (State Route 635). The circa 1837, one-story, Greek Revival style church is one of the oldest extant religious buildings in the county. It has a random stone foundation, brick walls, a standing-seam gable roof and a wooden portico supported by four Tuscan order columns. The interior plan has a nave separated from the chancel by a wood, pedimented arch. The nave has a double-aisle arrangement and the original wooden pews. The interior walls are decorated with marble memorial markers. Immediately north of the church and covering the hillside is the cemetery (contributing site) consisting of more than 85 burials. The earliest burials are marked by fieldstones; the remaining burials have etched, mostly granite, upright and lawn-level markers dating from 1901 to 2016. The cemetery has decorative iron fencing with decorative iron gate at the entry; the remaining three sides are enclosed by chain-link fencing. Both the church and cemetery remain in use and are well-preserved and maintained. The property has two other

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contributing sites, that of a former town hall and a former rectory, both of which were demolished but the foundations and below-ground features were not disturbed.

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## Narrative Description

### Setting

St Luke's Episcopal Church is located in rural Amherst County on the west side of Buffalo Springs Turnpike (State Route 635). It is one of the oldest remaining buildings on the outskirts of Pedlar Mills, a once-thriving industrial milling community of the nineteenth century. The church and associated cemetery are on a 14-acre, sloping parcel dotted with large trees. The heavily rolling topography in this vicinity is characteristic of Virginia's western Piedmont region, which to its west gives way to the Blue Ridge Mountains. The church has a deep setback from the road and is accessed via an unpaved driveway that leads up the slope to the building's west side. The drive curves left toward the site of the former rectory, a contributing site located at the property's eastern edge. The site of a town hall is east of the church and is largely covered with vegetation.

### Primary Building (contributing)

The one-story, front-gabled building measures 28 by 30 feet. It has a random stone foundation, 4:1 common bond brick walls and a standing-seam metal gable roof. Two brick chimney flues rise from the roof (one on the east slope and one on the west). The building was constructed in the Greek Revival style and features tall, rectangular window and door bays with wooden lintels with simple square corner blocks. The main mass of the building was constructed around 1837. A rear brick extension, measuring 15 by 12 feet, was added around 1871. In 1926, a 9-by-20-foot portico was built onto the south (primary) facade, possibly replacing an earlier example (however, no designs of a previous portico are known). The interior of the church underwent renovations between 1871 and 1874, in the Gothic Revival style.<sup>1</sup>

The principal elevation of the church faces south. A 1926 concrete stair leads to the portico's concrete deck with brick floor. The wooden pediment is supported by four symmetrically placed wooden columns of the Tuscan order. The two symmetrically placed front entries have double-leaf wooden doors with each leaf having three recessed panels.

The east and west side elevations both have two symmetrically placed stained-glass windows. A wooden handicap ramp along the southwest side of the building leads to the front portico.

The rear (north) elevation features gable-end returns on the main block of the building. The circa 1871-1874 rear addition is centered on the main block and has a random stone foundation, not tied to the earlier building. The brick walls are laid in 4:1 common bond and the east and west elevations have three-course corbels at the eaves. On each of the addition's two

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<sup>1</sup> Episcopal Church. Diocese of Virginia, Journal of the...annual convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia, 1831-1839, Richmond, VA., available online from [babel.hathitrust.org](http://babel.hathitrust.org); Telephone interview with Sr. Warden of St. Luke's, Tom Wallace (February 2017); and History Tech and Landmark Preservation Associates n.d.

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side elevations is a small, rectangular, stained-glass window placed abruptly into the junction between the addition and main block. On the addition's east elevation, there is also a single-leaf entry with a five-panel door. The addition's north wall has a single 6/6 double-hung sash window with a simple brick lintel.

### Interior

The interior plan is composed of the nave with a small chancel area to the rear. The flooring is heart pine. The nave has a double-aisle arrangement with three sets of painted oak pews. These pews likely date to the church's original construction based on their simple construction. The pews of the outside aisles are about six feet long and the center rows are twelve feet long. The pulpit area is raised from the main floor and the chancel is raised from the pulpit area. Separating the nave from the chancel is a Greek Revival pediment, likely dating to the church's original construction. The interior was renovated during a period from 1871-1874. The renovations feature Gothic Revival elements such as the stained-glass exterior windows that feature lancets with trefoils and crosses and the lancet doors in the chancel.<sup>2</sup> Other late nineteenth-century elements include the bead-board wainscot in the nave and bead-board walls in the chancel. Three marble memorial plaques are displayed in the nave, one on the wall between the entry doors and one on each of the side walls.<sup>3</sup>

About 1923, a lancet-arched chancel window was installed between the lancet doors of the rear chancel wall. It is a tripartite window featuring the image of Christ in prayer. It bears the maker's mark of Milwaukee Mirror and Art Glass Works of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which was established in 1887.<sup>4</sup> Both the doors and window in the chancel are hidden on the exterior by the small gable-roofed addition, which has a room with simple decoration and an exterior entry. It was used as the place for the minister to prepare and dress for the service. It also served as a storage area.

### Cemetery (contributing site)

The cemetery is north of and adjacent to the church. Spanning the hillside above the church, the cemetery contains at least 85 burials. On its south side, at the front of the cemetery, is a decorative iron fence with decorative gate; the remaining sides of the cemetery have typical chain-link fencing. The earliest two marked burials, at the gate, have simple fieldstones. The earliest burial with an etched stone is dated 1901. The headstones are mostly granite upright tablets or lawn-level stones and some graves have granite footstones. The headstone of Louisa Ray (1831-1903) is unusual because it is made of metal to appear as stone. There are possibly some unknown burials in the cemetery. Senior Warden Tom Wallace mentioned that once a burial was unearthed when digging a new grave, before the cemetery was mapped.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>No maker's marks were found on the windows.

<sup>3</sup> Episcopal Church. Diocese of Virginia, Journal of the...annual convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia, vol. 76-79, 1871-1834, Richmond, VA., available online from [babel.hathitrust.org](http://babel.hathitrust.org)

<sup>4</sup> Milwaukee Mirror and Art Glass Works, available online from Corning Museum of Glass at [cmog.org](http://cmog.org); and Polk's Wisconsin State Gazetteer & Business Directory 1921, p. 1811.

<sup>5</sup> Tom Wallace, Senior Warden, mentioned the cemetery in a conversation, October 2016.

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### Additional Contributing Sites

Two late-nineteenth-century buildings once shared the church grounds and their respective sites are contributing to the property. The first, which stood close to the church's east side, was a frame two-story building known as the Town Hall, according to Senior Warden Tom Wallace.<sup>6</sup> It was razed during the 1970s but fragments of the stone foundation remain in the yard. The second building, the rectory, was constructed around 1878. It was a two-story, front-gabled house with a one-story porch. It stood about 50-75 yards from the church along the church's west boundary. After being abandoned for many years, in April 2017, the rectory was razed due to safety concerns and its poor condition.

Both sites were left relatively undisturbed after demolition of the buildings. As a result, it is likely that each has intact subsurface cultural deposits related to their historic use. Future investigations may yield additional information about each building's history and, in the case of the Town Hall, the history of Pedlar Mill. Having the location of each site documented contributes to understanding the historic development and evolution of both the community and St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

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<sup>6</sup> Senior Warden, Tom Wallace stated, in a telephone interview (February 2017), that he never remembered the building ever being used.

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## 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 grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years



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**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**  
ca. 1837-ca.1926

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**  
ca. 1837-ca.1839  
ca. 1871-ca.1874  
ca.1926

**Significant Person**  
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**  
N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**  
Unknown

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

St. Luke's Episcopal Church is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture and meets Criteria Consideration A because its significance is based on its architectural significance. The property's period of significance spans from construction of the church, circa 1837, to its last significant exterior alteration, the portico, circa 1926. The church is a well-preserved example of a Greek Revival temple-form building featuring an imposing 1926 portico with a simple, pedimented gable supported by Tuscan order columns and symmetrically placed, tall window and door bays with wooden lintels and corner blocks. Today St. Luke's Episcopal Church is one of two remaining Greek Revival style churches in Amherst County; and is one of only six churches built before 1850 that remain in the county. The interior of St. Luke's shows a combination of the Greek Revival and Gothic Revival ornamentation that illustrates the building's evolution from construction through a renovation that took place between 1871 and 1874. Significant interior features include the Greek Revival, pedimented arch that separates the nave from the 1870s chancel, which has Gothic Revival lancet doors and stained-glass windows, as well as original simple wooden pews, bead-board wainscot, and, along both side walls, the 1870s stained-glass windows that feature lancets with trefoils and crosses and are set within the building's original tall, rectangular window openings. The property's historical development mirrors the life of the Pedlar Mills community. In addition to now being one of the few remaining historic buildings in the village, St. Luke's was the only church built in Pedlar Mills.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

St. Luke's Episcopal Church is significant to Amherst County as one of the county's six remaining churches built before 1850 and one of the few remaining historic buildings associated with the Pedlar Mills village. It is one of two brick, Greek Revival style churches built in the county during the 1830s and is the second-oldest extant church of the Episcopal faith in Amherst. The early nineteenth-century churches of Amherst included three Episcopal churches, two Methodist, and one Baptist.

The Episcopal churches active in Amherst County during the early to mid-nineteenth century were Bent Chapel, which burned and was never replaced; Elon, which was disbanded at an unknown time; and St. Matthew's or Rucker's Chapel, which was torn down around 1860 and the congregation moved to Ascension.<sup>7</sup>

Mt. Tabor United Methodist Church (circa 1836, DHR # 005-5080) is now the only other Greek Revival church in Amherst County. It, unlike St. Luke's, is a simple building with little

<sup>7</sup> Episcopal Church. Diocese of Virginia, 1841-1871, Richmond, VA., available online from [babel.hathitrust.org](http://babel.hathitrust.org); W. Scott Smith, Research Brief on Rucker's Chapel: Amherst County, Virginia, 16 July 2008 (unpublished); Smith, PIF of Pedlar Mills (DHR # 005-5025), 2009.

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decoration. Both are of brick construction and have the temple form and tall, narrow window and door bays; only St. Luke's has a portico, decorative lintels, and double entry.

In addition to Mt. Tabor United Methodist Church, the six documented historic churches in Amherst County still extant today are St. Mark's Episcopal Church (ca.1814, DHR #005-0017, built of brick), St. Luke's Episcopal Church (ca. 1837, DHR # 005-0016, built of brick), Mt. Horeb Methodist Church (1844, DHR# 005-5255, frame construction), Ascension Episcopal Church (1847, DHR# 163-0006, built of brick), and New Prospect Baptist Church (1847, DHR# 005-5273, frame construction). Most have been expanded or remodeled over time.

The construction date of St. Luke's was determined by field investigation, the use of Diocesan records, and an unpublished church history written by former church minister Rev. Paul A Walker.<sup>8</sup> The original church records were burned in a house fire around the 1960s. The Diocesan records for the church show that, in 1837, they spent \$1,500 to construct a new brick building, which agrees with basic information in the Walker history and on-site observation.<sup>9</sup>

A discrepancy between church lore, the Diocesan records, and on-site observation occurs in the history between 1871 and 1874, at which time the church lore states the entire 1837 building was torn down and reconstructed using the same materials.<sup>10</sup> The Diocesan records, however, in 1871 noted the church had raised \$500 towards building repair; and meanwhile, in 1873, a visiting minister from another parish noted a new building on the site of old St. Luke's in "Pedlar Valley." Two records in 1874 involve the church. The first, from the Bishop's notes, states a "substantial new brick building, occupying the place where, on my last visit, stood the old"; and secondly, the Diocesan records showed they had completed a new church with building costs of \$1,200.<sup>11</sup> Another indication of major changes to the building is that the church was known as St. Luke's and Pedlar Church until 1876, when, after renovations, it was officially consecrated on 11 May 1876 as St. Luke's Episcopal Church

It does not make sense that a building originally constructed in 1837 at a cost of \$1,500 could be totally rebuilt at a cost of \$1,200 in 1874, even considering the effects of inflation or deflation and the poor economy across most of Virginia after the Civil War. Newer building materials were not observed in the earliest section of the building, which would be expected if they had actually torn the earlier building down and rebuilt; there would naturally be a loss of original material. However, the rear addition on the building appears to be from a later era as it is not tied into the original building either at the walls or foundation. The darker color of the brick also is different from that of the earlier building. If the 1837 building had been rebuilt, then

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<sup>8</sup> Rev. Paul A Walker was the parish minister from 1955-1966 and he wrote the multi-page paper as part of the 1957 Jamestown House Tour of Amherst County.

<sup>9</sup> Episcopal Church. Diocese of Virginia, 1831-1839, Richmond, VA., available online from [babel.hathitrust.org](http://babel.hathitrust.org); Telephone interview with Sr. Warden of St. Luke's, Tom Wallace (October 2016 and February 2017).

<sup>10</sup> Rev. Paul A. Walker, History of St. Luke's Church at Pedlar Mills, Virginia, (unpublished) 1957, and Telephone interview with Sr. Warden of St. Luke's, Tom Wallace (October 2016 and February 2017).

<sup>11</sup> Episcopal Church. Diocese of Virginia, vol. 76-79 (1871-1874), Richmond, VA., available online from [babel.hathitrust.org](http://babel.hathitrust.org),

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logically the rear section would have been included as part of the 1870s reconstruction and tied into the front section. Also not all of the original building's bricks likely would have survived the rebuilding process and the darker 1870s bricks would have been used as needed to reconstruct the building. Another detail suggesting the rear addition dates to the late nineteenth century is the rear, exterior, five-panel door, a style that was commonly used during the late nineteenth-century. Thus it appears that the rear addition postdates the main building. It is not known if an earlier chancel once occupied this space but, given the elaborate Greek Revival arch at the chancel opening, it is possible that such a space was replaced or extensively remodeled and enlarged to create the current chancel. A late nineteenth-century element that ties together the two sections aesthetically is the bead-board wainscot in the nave and bead-board walls in the chancel.

The stained-glass windows along the side walls are significant features of the church. Every exterior window has the same pattern with a lancet containing a draped trefoil at its peak, elongated crosses on the sides and a stylized floral decoration at the bottom. No maker's marks were found on the windows. Three marble memorial plaques are displayed in the nave, one on the wall between the entry doors and one on each of the side walls. The memorials were soldered in place at an unknown date.

Another significant feature is the memorial window in the chancel's north (rear) wall, which is obscured from exterior view by the rear addition's storage room. This window, with the image of Christ praying, was created sometime around 1923, based on the dates within the window. The maker's mark on the glass identifies "Milwaukee M & Glass Works" as the manufacturer.<sup>12</sup>

In 1926, the congregation built a wooden portico on the front of the building. A description of the earliest appearance of the main elevation has not yet been found. However, the portico's unadorned portico and Doric columns echo the original building's Greek Revival style. The portico also has a central concrete stair from the ground to the concrete deck, with the date 1926 etched into the concrete. This was the last significant exterior modification to the building. Later updates to the building include electrification in the 1930s-1940s and the installation of baseboard heat along with the removal of coal stoves in 1976.

As explained in the *Classic Commonwealth: Virginia Architecture from the Colonial Era to 1940* style guide, St. Luke's Episcopal Church displays character-defining aspects of Greek Revival style, such as its temple form, balanced, symmetrical façade, entrance portico with pedimented gable and Doric columns, and symmetrical fenestration. Even its relatively austere ornamentation is in keeping with Greek Revival, which was seen as a reaction against the more exuberant Rococo that earlier had prevailed in Europe. The building's 1837 construction date coincides with the style's height of popularity in the United States. The style was inspired by archaeological discoveries occurring in Greece and other parts of the ancient world during the

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<sup>12</sup> Milwaukee Mirror and Art Glass Works, available online from Corning Museum of Glass at [cmog.org](http://cmog.org); and Polk's Wisconsin State Gazetteer & Business Directory 1921, p. 1811. The Wisconsin firm opened in 1887 and operated into the early twentieth-century.

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eighteenth and early nineteenth century. British architects James Stuart and Nicholas Revett published *Antiquities of Athens* in 1762, which remained influential for decades thereafter. Later pattern books that included examples of Greek Revival elements, such as moldings, doors, windows, and columns, also contributed to the style's pervasive use on numerous types of buildings, from churches and houses to schools, hospitals, and government buildings.<sup>13</sup>

Similarly, the 1870s renovations to St. Luke's in the Gothic Revival style matched that era's national tastes in architecture. Various iterations of the Gothic Revival styles proliferated in Virginia between the 1830s and 1940s.<sup>14</sup> Whereas Greek Revival often demonstrates horizontal massing, Gothic Revival emphasized verticality; hence, St. Luke's has the interesting juxtaposition of its original rectangular windows holding stained glass windows designed to mimic the appearance of lancet arches. On the interior, the 1870s lancet doors from the chancel to the storage area and the 1923 memorial stained glass window in the chancel are juxtaposed with the Gothic Revival arch separating the nave and chancel and the original front doors.

Today St. Luke's is a well-preserved example of a nineteenth-century Greek Revival temple-form Protestant church with later Gothic Revival elements. Since 1926, the building has not been significantly altered or enlarged, although its electrical and heating systems have been modernized. The building currently stands as one of the oldest remaining buildings of Pedlar Mills and one of the oldest churches in Amherst County.

### Historic Background

The congregation of St. Luke's was organized around 1790. The minister of this post-American Revolution Episcopalian church was Rev. Charles Crawford (1765-1815). He was native to Amherst County and one of the first ordained ministers after the war; he served the Lexington parish until his retirement in 1815.<sup>15</sup> From its beginnings, St. Luke's was supported by the Ellis family, major land holders of the area. The earliest services are known to have been held in a tobacco barn, which was likely on Ellis land. The church was built on a site below the Ellis home place, known as Red Hill.<sup>16</sup>

The Ellis family was a founding family of Pedlar Mills. A commercial mill was built sometime around 1800 and was soon followed by a mercantile store and a post office. The commercial mill, which milled flour for overseas sale, was owned by Charles Ellis (1772-1840) who partnered with John Allan in the import/export firm of Ellis and Allan of Richmond, Virginia. Ellis also held farmland in Amherst County, on which was grown wheat and tobacco. Tobacco, in particular, was the county's primary cash crop at this time, and was also shipped

<sup>13</sup> Chris Novelli, Melina Bezirdjian, Calder Loth, and Lena Sweeten McDonald, *Classic Commonwealth: Virginia Architecture from the Colonial Era to 1940* (Richmond, VA: Department of Historic Resources, 2015), 45-46.

<sup>14</sup> Novelli et al. 49.

<sup>15</sup> Rev. Paul A. Walker, *History of St. Luke's Church at Pedlar Mills, Virginia*, (unpublished) 1957. Lexington was the name given to the parish by the Diocese in memory of the battle during the Revolutionary War.

<sup>16</sup> Red Hill (DHR # 005-0016); and Amherst County Deed Books AA/336, BB/ 366; and Amherst County Will Book 12/420;

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overseas. Charles Ellis's lands were managed by John Ellis (1767-1826) and Richard Ellis (1774-1846), his brothers. John and Richard Ellis jointly operated a mercantile store in Pedlar Mills. They bought and sold merchandise to Charles Ellis and John Allan. John Ellis also was the village Postmaster from 1807 to 1814. Ellis and Allen of Richmond was a family business and included another brother, Josiah Ellis, Jr. (1777-1836), who traveled for the firm in Europe. Two additional brothers were Joshua (1787-1825) and Powhatan (1790-1863) Ellis. Joshua Ellis handled the family holdings which were still part of their father, Josiah's (1746-1810), estate and Powhatan Ellis, later in life, became a Mississippi Supreme Court Justice and U. S. Senator from Mississippi.<sup>17</sup>

Pedlar Mills, as a community and milling center, grew rapidly from its population of 56 in 1835 to 600 in the 1890s. The village was located on the major travel route between Lynchburg and Lexington (known today as the Buffalo Springs Turnpike) and included, at its height, four grain mills, three sawmills, a hotel, several doctors, a dentist, general and specialty stores, a tannery, blacksmith, undertaker, and a private school. Toward the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, the village began to lose its mills due to economic changes that reduced demand for the village's products and to natural phenomenon. Three major floods affected the area in 1884, 1942, and 1969; with the last effectively killing the milling industry in this area. Today, the area, once known as Pedlar Mills, is rural and many farms surround the old village center. Few of the historic buildings remain; these include several houses, the tavern (005-0019), St. Luke's Episcopal church, and several neglected store buildings. Additionally, mill ruins remain undisturbed in the village.<sup>18</sup>

St. Luke's Episcopal Church was an integral part of Pedlar Mills and the community's population growth corresponded to an increasing church membership. Church history and Diocesan records note this growth and regular services held by the minister of the Parish, who traveled a circuit of churches until the Civil War. The St. Luke's congregation allowed the local Baptist and Presbyterian congregations, who did not have their own meetinghouses, to hold services in their building. The Diocesan records between 1865 and 1870 show the congregation grew despite a lack of regular church services. One record notes the congregants were unable to travel to other Parish churches due to their distance from Pedlar Mills and it further states their building was going "to ruin."<sup>19</sup> By 1871, the congregation became financially able to support their own minister and they began renovations to the church. After renovations, the church was

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<sup>17</sup> Rev. Paul A. Walker, History of St. Luke's Church at Pedlar Mills, Virginia, (unpublished) 1957; Smith, PIF of Pedlar Mills (DHR # 005-5025), 2009; and Sandra Esposito, Edgar Allan Poe: His Connections to Amherst County, 15 September 2015, (unpublished presentation). In Smith's work he mentions Charles Ellis (1719-1759) the patriarch of the family in Amherst County as the man in partnership with John Allan (1779-1834), however it was his grandson Charles. The Ellis and Allan company (founded in 1800) was funded in part by William Galt (1735-1825) one of the wealthiest men in Virginia at the time. Galt was also the uncle of John Allan and both Allan and Ellis worked as clerks for Galt before starting their own firm. John Allan is also of note as the foster father of Edgar Allan Poe.

<sup>18</sup> Smith, PIF of Pedlar Mills (DHR # 005-5025), 2009

<sup>19</sup> Episcopal Church. Diocese of Virginia, (1839-1876), Richmond, VA., available online from [babel.hathitrust.org](http://babel.hathitrust.org); The nearest parish church was Elon 6-10 miles away with St. Marks in Clifford being 23 miles from Pedlar Mills.

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officially consecrated on 11 May 1876 as St. Luke's Episcopal Church. Before this, the church had been known as St. Luke's and Pedlar Church.<sup>20</sup>

Originally the church property included just one acre but in 1878, the congregation acquired an additional thirteen acres that allowed space for a cemetery and a rectory. By 1879, the two-story, frame, gable-front rectory stood about 50-75 yards west of the church, near a creek that flowed into the Pedlar River. Unfortunately, the village began to die and with it the church finances. They were no longer able to support a full-time minister and the rectory was abandoned. The church razed the rectory in April 2017.<sup>21</sup>

The church interior contains memorials to several former congregants, consisting of the stained-glass windows and three marble plaques. The plaques and several windows are dedicated to various members of several generations of the Ellis family. The remaining windows honor the Minor, Turner, Woods, and Pleasants families. The most recent of the dedications is a memorial to George T. and Mary Pleasants, both of whom died in a house fire in 1963.<sup>22</sup>

Today, St. Luke's continues to hold regular services despite a severely reduced membership. The small congregation actively works to maintain the building and cemetery and to keep the church alive.

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<sup>20</sup> Episcopal Church. Diocese of Virginia, (1839-1876), Richmond, VA., available online from [babel.hathitrust.org](http://babel.hathitrust.org)

<sup>21</sup> Amherst County Deed Book RR/167; Episcopal Church. Diocese of Virginia, 1879-1889, Richmond, VA., available online from [babel.hathitrust.org](http://babel.hathitrust.org); and Smith, PIF, 2009.

<sup>22</sup> This is probably the family who had possession of the early records which burned; Va. Death certificates for the Pleasants available on [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com).

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### **Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Amherst County Deed Book AA/336, BB/366 and RR/167.

Amherst County Will Book 12/420.

Amherst County Heritage Book Committee. *Amherst County Virginia Heritage 1761-1999*.  
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### **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



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designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA;  
Amherst County Museum and Historical Society, Amherst, VA

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** DHR# 005-0016

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 14 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 37.559390  | Longitude: -79.254962 |
| 2. Latitude: 37.559380  | Longitude: -79.254263 |
| 3. Latitude: 37.557421  | Longitude: -79.253384 |
| 4. Latitude: 37.556621  | Longitude: -79.257670 |
| 5.. Latitude: 37.557795 | Longitude -79.254704  |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The historic boundaries of the property are coterminous with the tax parcel lines recorded as Amherst County Tax Map 105 A 12, available at the Amherst County Government Building and online at countyofamherst.com. The true and correct historic boundaries are shown on the attached Tax Parcel Map and Sketch Map.

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**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundaries encompass the property's historic setting as well as all known historic resources. Further, these boundaries reflect the property's boundaries as they have been recorded since 1878.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Sandra F. Esposito  
organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number: 140 Cradon Hill Ln  
city or town: Amherst state: VA zip code: 24521  
e-mail: espositosf@earthlink.net  
telephone: 434-346-7496  
date: 6 June 2017

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: St. Luke's Episcopal Church  
City or Vicinity: Pedlar Mills  
County: Amherst County State: Virginia  
Photographer: Sandra F. Esposito  
Date Photographed: October 2016

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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 11: VA\_AmherstCounty\_St.LukesEpiscopalChurch\_0001

View: Primary building, south elevation, camera facing northeast

2 of 11: VA\_AmherstCounty\_St.LukesEpiscopalChurch\_0002

View: Primary building, west elevation, camera facing east

3 of 11: VA\_AmherstCounty\_St.LukesEpiscopalChurch\_0003

View: Primary building, north and west elevations, camera facing south

4 of 11: VA\_AmherstCounty\_St.LukesEpiscopalChurch\_0004

View: Primary building, east elevation, camera facing west

5 of 11: VA\_AmherstCounty\_St.LukesEpiscopalChurch\_0005

View: Primary building, south and east elevations, camera facing northwest

6 of 11: VA\_AmherstCounty\_St.LukesEpiscopalChurch\_0006

View: Cemetery, camera facing north

7 of 11: VA\_AmherstCounty\_St.LukesEpiscopalChurch\_0007

View: Cemetery, camera facing east

8 of 11: VA\_AmherstCounty\_St.LukesEpiscopalChurch\_0008

View: Cemetery, camera looking northeast

9 of 11: VA\_AmherstCounty\_St.LukesEpiscopalChurch\_0009

View: Interior, primary building, camera facing northwest

10 of 11: VA\_AmherstCounty\_St.LukesEpiscopalChurch\_0010

View: Interior, primary building, camera facing south

11 of 11: VA\_AmherstCounty\_St.LukesEpiscopalChurch\_0011

View: Interior, primary building, detail of chancel, camera facing north

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.