

Union Church of Port Royal  
Property Name

Beaufort County, South Carolina  
County and State

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 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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Union Church of Port Royal

other names/site number Port Royal White Union Church, 11<sup>th</sup> Street Tabernacle, Free Church of Port Royal

### 2. Location

street & number 1004 11<sup>th</sup> Street

☐ not for publication

city or town Port Royal

☐ vicinity

state South Carolina code SC county Beaufort code 013

### 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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Union Church of Port Royal  
Property Name

Beaufort County, South Carolina  
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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:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- |                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | private          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | public - Local   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - State   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - Federal |

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box)

- |                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | district    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | site        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | structure   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | object      |

##### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	<b>Total</b>

##### Name of related multiple property listing

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

##### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

#### 6. Function or Use

##### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION—Religious Facility

##### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE—Museum

RELIGION—Religious Facility

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN

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### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: BRICK

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walls: WOOD: Weatherboard

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roof: METAL

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other: WOOD

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## Narrative Description

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(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

### Summary Paragraph

The Union Church of Port Royal, completed in 1878, is a fine example of rural, vernacular church architecture with occasional Italianate details, consisting of a one-story, wood frame, brick-piered building with a central entry and portico, as well as a cupola containing the church's belfry with a vented lantern and fluted metal roof. The building retains its original nine-over-six, single-hung, weighted sash windows with stilted arch surrounds and keystones on both the interior and exterior, as well as what appears to be its original painted standing-seam metal roof and its heart pine interior floors. The church is located on 11<sup>th</sup> Street in a residential neighborhood in Old Port Royal and is flanked on the east by a late Victorian home and on the west by a more recent modular-style home, and on the northwest by a 1950s concrete block building.

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## Narrative Description

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The Union Church of Port Royal, which was built with donated lumber by local citizens in 1877-78 to provide the Port Royal community its only white house of worship at that time, is a remarkable example of vernacular architecture influenced by the prevailing architectural trends of its period and of the surrounding buildings in the community. The one-story, front-gabled church stands on a series of common bond brick piers (seven along its sides, four at its ends) and is three bays wide by five bays deep. Its white clapboard exterior is most noteworthy, perhaps, for its fourteen stilted arch, nine-over-six, single-hung, weighted sash windows (two each at the front and rear, five on each side), each of which bears a stilted arch, keystoned surround that adds a hint of Italianate influence to an otherwise spare façade. These arched windows, in fact, are a recurring theme in the Port Royal residential architecture of this period, and their presence here on an otherwise simple structure is indicative of their popularity among the residents who built this church.

The entrance to the Union Church of Port Royal is a simple, hip-roofed portico surmounted by an unadorned architrave and cornice, as well as a standing-seam metal roof that matches the standing-seam metal found on the rest of the building's gabled roof and cupola. Two squared columns, each with a one-piece square capital, support this portico. The main entrance consists of double wooden doors highlighted by six unadorned inset panels on each door. Seven wooden steps descend from

the portico to a brick pathway that leads to the sidewalk, and these steps are framed by a wooden balustrade whose cornice-capped newel posts betray the fact that these stairs were a late addition (the concrete block piers supporting the portico itself are another giveaway). This marks one of the few structural changes made to the church in its 133-year history. Surviving historical images of the church suggest that as late as 1980, the front portico was reached via concrete steps surrounded by low concrete cheek walls.<sup>1</sup> Several of the concrete pillars found scattered in the church's courtyard are purported to be remnants of these original steps, although at least one of these posts is evident in 1970s-era images showing the concrete steps still in place. A gently sloping handicap ramp (installation date unknown, but post-1980) runs along the east side of the building to the church's only other exterior door located in the northeast corner of the building's east side. This door repeats the building's arch motif with an intriguing molded design of two elongated arch panels over two rectangular panels.

The roofline consists of unadorned, closed-raftered, projecting eaves on all sides. At the apex of the front gable of the church rises a cupola containing the church's belfry (with its still-working bell), and it is here that we find a second hint of Italianate influence in the church's architectural details. Mimicking the tower detail of some Italianate buildings of the period, the base of the cupola ends in a double tier of standing-seam metal flashing, then is surmounted by a lantern with vents on all four sides and an ornate, fluted, standing seam metal roof.

The interior is noteworthy for its shallow and narrow narthex, which opens directly into the sanctuary. Flanking the narthex are two separate rooms accessible only from doorways at the rear of the sanctuary. The room in the southeast corner is a divided space that includes a bathroom with outer vestibule, both installed in 2004, and in the southwest corner is an equivalent space (without the vestibule division) presently used for storage. Church tradition holds that these spaces were used at one time as Sunday school classrooms, although how this was accomplished—given the tight quarters—is not clear.<sup>2</sup>

The entire sanctuary (as well as the narthex and the two side rooms) is surrounded by slatted wainscot stained to match the door and window frames and the pews, most of which are reputed to be original to the church and hand-hewn by the church founders. The eastern and western walls of the sanctuary each feature four nine-over-six, single-hung, weighted-sash, single-pane windows surrounded by stilted arches with unadorned wooden capitals and keystones. Walls are of plaster and are separated from the sanctuary's imposing coved-end barrel vault plaster ceiling by an unadorned cornice stained to match other wood treatments. Door openings have an unadorned, double-tier surround molding. Floors appear to be heart pine and original. A small moveable pulpit, a tribune, and two chancel chairs occupy the north wall of the sanctuary, all purported to be original to the church. These are flanked in the northeast and northwest corners by two portable pianos, the northwest one of which was donated by a church deacon in 1941. The northeast piano was a more recent gift of the Historic Port Royal Foundation. Wall sconces, ceiling fans, and hanging light fixtures were special ordered as part of the recent restoration of the church, and are not original, but they do appear appropriate to the period.

Two doors at the rear of the chancel lead to a sacristy now used as a museum space. These doors are solid core wood and repeat the elongated arch panel design found on the exterior of the door at the northeast corner of the building. The sacristy repeats many of the design elements from the

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Town of Port Royal, SC, *Port Royal's Bicentennial*, promotional brochure, 1976, vertical file, Beaufort District Collection.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Leila Stevens, Docent, Historic Port Royal Foundation, Oct. 15, 2009.

sanctuary, including the wainscot, plaster walls, and arched windows (including one on the west wall, two on the north wall, and one on the east wall), but without the vaulted ceiling, employing a traditional rectangular plaster ceiling instead. A built-in cabinet occupies the northwest corner of the west wall, while the northeast corner of the eastern wall contains an exterior wooden door with two elongated rectangular panels over two smaller rectangular panels. Porcelain doorknobs throughout the church appear to be original.

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- ☒ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

SOCIAL HISTORY

### Period of Significance

1877-1878

1878-1960

### Significant Dates

1877-78

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

### Cultural Affiliation

### Architect/Builder

Unknown

### Period of Significance (justification)

The Union Church of Port Royal was organized in 1877 as the Free Church of Port Royal, and construction began in late 1877, with a completion date in early 1878. Erected as a white alternative to the Zion Baptist Church, a local church used by slaves beginning in 1804, and then by black freepersons after the Civil War, the Union Church of Port Royal remained an exclusively white house of worship through the 1950s.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

The Union Church of Port Royal is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria Consideration A both for its significance in vernacular church architecture as an rare and intact example from the Reconstruction era, and for its significance in social history as an institution that illustrates the changing social landscape of Port Royal, Beaufort District, and the South Carolina lowcountry in the period.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

The Union Church of Port Royal is significant under Criterion C for its contributions to local history as a stunning example of rural, vernacular church architecture with Italianate influences during the late nineteenth century, and under Criterion A for its significance as an emblem of the social tensions of the Port Royal Experiment and the social complications that followed during Reconstruction, as well as an example of the de facto religious segregation common in South Carolina and the South during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Aside from the replacement of the original concrete front steps with wooden ones, as well as the installation of various modernization infrastructure (HVAC, electricity, plumbing, and handicap ramp), the church remains virtually unchanged from its original appearance. Conceived of in 1877 as the Free Church of Port Royal by local white residents desperate for a house of worship, and completed in 1878 following a subscription fundraising scheme that was interrupted by a devastating outbreak of yellow fever, the Free Church of Port Royal represented the collective efforts of the rural Port Royal community to erect a church that could be shared by all white denominations in the village. Built with donated lumber and erected by local residents, the church's design reflects the simplicity of local craftsmanship, the recurring architectural details of other local buildings from the period, and an awareness of national architectural styles. It maintained its de facto status as a white church through the 1950s.

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

The Union Church of Port Royal is located in the small coastal town of Port Royal, South Carolina, which had its roots in the explorations of Captain Jean Ribaut, a French explorer who found and named the area in 1562. By the 1720s, the British established a fort in the vicinity (Fort Frederick), and this land was later incorporated into Old Fort Plantation, the property of John Joyner Smith. Following its capture by Union forces in 1861, the area's remaining slaves learned self-sufficiency under Union guidance through an arrangement called the "Port Royal Experiment." By 1863, for example, many local black residents were owners of land that had formerly comprised the Port Royal Island plantation of Edgerly and were working the land without white supervision.<sup>3</sup>

As a direct result of the social upheaval created by the Port Royal Experiment, many planters in Beaufort District saw their old lands either turned over to the Federal government or sold directly to

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<sup>3</sup> For more on the social complexities and consequences of the Port Royal Experiment, including the tensions created during Reconstruction, see Willie Lee Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction: The Port Royal Experiment*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1964. Material on Edgerly comes from Rose, 315.

their former slaves. Even after the Civil War ended, many slaveholders returned home with hopes of reclaiming their old property, only to find that it had been sold to various speculators, many of them northern transplants. While these new investors helped found the Town of Port Royal to further their commercial interests, the sociological result was a longstanding tension among the new northerners, the old southern plantation owners, and the new freedmen, in which many southern whites felt they had been “supplanted in their relations to the black race.”<sup>4</sup> Resentments were not restricted only to the old white southerners, however. One witness to the backlash following the Port Royal Experiment noted that “the hatred of some white people for the colored race” was not limited “to the old Southerners, but was largely shared by Northern adventurers, a host of whom had followed the army.” This same observer noted that no one spoke “more contemptuously of the ‘the nigger and his school-ma’am’” than transplanted northern speculators. Freedmen’s distrust of whites, both northern and southern, was equally high.<sup>5</sup>

Even many of the clergy and teachers who had once trumpeted the promise of the Port Royal Experiment began to change their minds about the freedmen, highlighting the “untrustworthiness” of the freedmen as a class, prompting one such individual from nearby St. Helena to note that the freedmen, “in spite of all the nonsense which has been written about them, are a very low and degraded class of beings.”<sup>6</sup> By 1873, when Edward King visited from the North to assess the effect of Reconstruction upon the old Port Royal Experiment territory, he concluded, “[I]n a decade and a-half one of the most remarkable revolutions ever recorded in history had occurred. A wealthy and highly prosperous community has been reduced to beggary; its vassals have become its lords, and dispose of the present and pledge the future resources of the State.” A Massachusetts reporter was equally scathing in his 1875 observations about reconstructed Port Royal, dismissing what was supposed to be a bustling port as “a railway station and warehouse, with a dozen or so rude, unpainted houses, a preponderant population of the laziest blacks, and a hundred or more of the most scrawny breed of pigs.”<sup>7</sup>

It was in the midst of this social anxiety and its complicated tensions that whites and blacks alike began to turn Port Royal into a commercial center. The Massachusetts reporter’s account notwithstanding, by 1874, the Port Royal Railroad Company had completed its lines across Port Royal Island, and the town was officially incorporated.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, social tensions highlighted the voids in the Port Royal community. The Free Church of Port Royal was first formed in 1877, when the white townsfolk of Port Royal, South Carolina, lamented that “Port Royal...cannot claim to be a city unless she boasts of at least one place of worship.”<sup>9</sup> Frustrated by the fact that Port Royal’s “different denominations are represented by so small numbers,” parishioners pooled their efforts and funds in order to “club together and erect a church which shall be free to all.”<sup>10</sup> Such efforts, of course, ignored the presence of Zion Baptist Church, a nearby facility used exclusively by black parishioners since 1804, as well as the longstanding pattern of joint black and northern white attendance at St. Helena Brick (Baptist) Church a few miles away, although white attendance there began to diminish amidst

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<sup>4</sup> Qtd. in *ibid*, 361.

<sup>5</sup> See *ibid*, 362.

<sup>6</sup> Qtd. in *ibid*, 362-64.

<sup>7</sup> Both sources qtd. In *ibid*, 379 and 380.

<sup>8</sup> See Wendy Nilsen Pollitzer, *Images of America: Port Royal* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 7. For additional information on the Port Royal Experiment, see Akiko Ochiai, “The Port Royal Experiment Revisited: Northern Visions of Reconstruction and the Land Question,” *New England Quarterly* (Mar. 2001): 94-117.

<sup>9</sup> “Port Royal News,” *The Beaufort Tribune and Port Royal Commercial*, Jan. 25, 1877.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*. “All” apparently meant all white people, as was the common practice in a de facto segregated southern society. For a study of this trend in New Orleans, see James B. Bennett, *Religion and the Rise of Jim Crow in New Orleans*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.

social tensions as early as 1867.<sup>11</sup> After the formation of a committee of residents chaired by O.F. Duke, committee members began a vigorous campaign to raise funds for the new church via subscription and a series of suppers and “calico balls.”<sup>12</sup> On April 16, 1877, the committee formally organized the Free Church of Port Royal.<sup>13</sup> The following month, Daniel F. Appleton, a member of the locally prestigious Appleton family, donated the 11<sup>th</sup> Street parcel on which the church would be built, transferring the property for the sum of \$1.00, with the provision that this property must always be used “for purposes of religious worship by the aforesaid religious society.”<sup>14</sup> Following a devastating epidemic of yellow fever in Port Royal that summer that delayed construction, residents recommitted themselves to building the church, raising a total of \$900 and securing donated lumber from local mills by December 1877.<sup>15</sup> By early 1878, the church opened for its first services.<sup>16</sup> At the time of its construction, the church appears to have been the only house of worship in Port Royal open to white residents.

Over the next several decades, the Free Church of Port Royal continued to serve as a nondenominational house of worship for the Port Royal community, changing its name in the 1920s to “Union Church.”<sup>17</sup> Racial divisions, however, appear to have continued to limit the access of non-whites to this facility through much of the twentieth century. In 1957, for example, a title transaction between Royal Gardens, Inc. (a subdivision development scheme) and the church—which was purchasing the two lots at the rear of the church facing 12<sup>th</sup> Street in order to erect a fellowship hall/school (a noncontributing building no longer associated with the church)—listed the church as the Port Royal White Union Church, with Lemuel Ritter, Port Royal’s mayor from 1936-42 and 1946-66, and operations manager at the Parris Island Laundry, as its trustee.<sup>18</sup> During this era, the church hosted a well-attended Vacation Bible School during the summer, with perhaps as many as seven teachers and sixty students in attendance.<sup>19</sup> All of the individuals depicted in a 1955 image of the Vacation Bible School participants appear to have been white. In this sense, the Union Church of Port Royal seems to have played its own part in the de facto segregation of both the Port Royal community and the South during this period.

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<sup>11</sup> Zion Baptist Church, built in 1804 on 15<sup>th</sup> Street, originally served slaves on Smith’s Plantation. It continued to serve black worshippers, off and on, following the Civil War. See Pollitzer, 13. Neither Zion Baptist nor Port Royal Union was included in the 1936 WPA Inventory of Churches in South Carolina, as the Port Royal area appears not to have been surveyed. Zion Baptist Church, then the oldest building in Port Royal, was demolished by the Town of Port Royal in 1987. Regarding the St. Helena Brick (Baptist) Church attendance patterns, see Rose, 315 and 398-99. Rose reports that northern whites began to go to “the White church” as early as 1867, a social shift that one contemporary observer regarded as an attempt at “conciliation” with “native” whites. Local black residents, meanwhile, had long been nervous about northern white attendance at the Brick Church.

<sup>12</sup> For more on this fundraising process, see various local news items in *The Beaufort Tribune and Port Royal Commercial*, Feb. 1, 1877, Feb. 15, 1877, March 8, 1877, April 12, 1877, and April 26, 1877.

<sup>13</sup> See Deed for the Trustees of the Free Church of Port Royal dated May 10, 1877, Book 12, Pages 272-73, available through the Beaufort County Register of Deeds.

<sup>14</sup> See *ibid* and Warranty Deed for the Town of Port Royal dated March 3, 1994, Book 693, Page 35, available at [http://rodweb.bcgov.net/nvtest/or\\_sch\\_1.asp](http://rodweb.bcgov.net/nvtest/or_sch_1.asp). This second deed references the original deed as being transferred by David F. Appleton. The original deed, however, clearly lists Daniel F. Appleton as the original donor. Daniel F. Appleton, a Boston capitalist, was part owner of the Port Royal Railroad Company. See Wendy Nilsen Pollitzer, 15.

<sup>15</sup> *The Beaufort Tribune and Port Royal Commercial*, Dec. 20, 1877.

<sup>16</sup> See notes from interview with Helen Foster, April 1990, in possession of the Historic Port Royal Foundation, which claim that the church may have opened under the name of the Port Royal Union Church. All other records suggest that its original name was the Free Church of Port Royal. See, for example, “Interesting Services,” *Palmetto Post*, October 4, 1894.

<sup>17</sup> The 1924 Sanborn Fire Insurance map (available on microfilm at the Beaufort District Collection) lists the property as Union Church, with its electrical supply powered by the generator at the nearby Port Royal Graded School. The 1942 Sanborn map also lists the church as Union Church, but by 1958, the church is listed in an updated map as the First Baptist Church, a name not found elsewhere in the record. Original Sanborn maps for 1942 and 1958 can be found in the Beaufort District Collection.

<sup>18</sup> See “Royal Gardens, Inc. to Lemuel Ritter, Trustee for Port Royal White Union Church,” title to real estate, July 3, 1957, copies in possession of the Historic Port Royal Foundation. The transaction appears to have originally occurred in June 1946 but was not recorded until 1957. Ritter’s occupation is mentioned in Pollitzer, 36 and 75.

<sup>19</sup> See Vacation Bible School photo, 1955, in Pollitzer, 49.



For these reasons, the Union Church of Port Royal is vitally significant under Criterion A for its connection to the landmark Port Royal Experiment and the resultant social upheaval that characterized this part of South Carolina from 1861 to 1877, as well as the ongoing de facto segregation that was so prevalent in the South from 1877 until the 1960s.

As for its significance under Criterion C for architecture, the Union Church of Port Royal is a rare surviving example of late nineteenth-century Low Country vernacular architecture with Italianate influences. The church also is representative of the prevailing architectural trends of this community during the late nineteenth century, in that it bears the recurring architectural details of many of the houses in the village that were built during this same period, only a few of which still survive unaltered. A 1980 study called it “similar in a number of respects to some of the residential architecture discussed earlier. The Church, steeple, and portico all have metal roofs. The Church has attractive front and side windows which are arched with a keystone effect. This is another example of the recurring theme of the rounded arch in older buildings in Port Royal.”<sup>20</sup> The use of locally hand-hewn benches donated by local residents/parishioners are additional testament to the importance of the Free Church of Port Royal as the symbolic embodiment of local ideals and customs. At present, there are no similar churches representing Beaufort County late nineteenth century vernacular religious architecture on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>21</sup>

In more recent years, the church continued to serve the community, although it was increasingly used not for non-denominational services but as a shared space among the town’s Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists, who apparently alternated Sundays.<sup>22</sup> Telephone directories from the 1960s through the 1980s seem to suggest an ever-changing cast of tenants in the structure: Port Royal Christian Church (1963), First Assembly of God (1967), and the Trinity Free Methodist Church (1986-91).<sup>23</sup> During the 1970s and 1980s, it bore yet another name—The 11<sup>th</sup> Street Tabernacle—with Evangelist services being held on Sundays and Fridays by two different ministers.<sup>24</sup> Then, in March 1994, the Town of Port Royal purchased the Union Church of Port Royal from its trustees for the sum of \$10.00.<sup>25</sup> During the late-1990s, the Town apparently rented the space to a local theater troupe, which used the church for productions, with only sporadic religious services held there.<sup>26</sup> It has served as a museum, community hall, and occasional religious facility since its 2004 restoration, and it remains a center of community life in the Town of Port Royal.

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<sup>20</sup> Wilbur Smith and Associates, *Port Royal Development Plan Update*, (Columbia, SC: Wilbur Smith, 1980), 20-21, available at South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

<sup>21</sup> A review of Preservation Society of Charleston, *The Churches of Charleston and the Low County*, Columbia: USC Press, 1994, also found no churches of similar architectural design or detail.

<sup>22</sup> Personal Interview with Leila Stevens, Docent, Historic Port Royal Foundation, 15. Oct. 2009.

<sup>23</sup> Available Port Royal/Beaufort telephone directories from 1963 to 2004 can be found at the South Caroliniana Library, Published Materials Division.

<sup>24</sup> See image of the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Tabernacle in Chapter 5 of Wilbur Smith and Associates, *Port Royal Development Plan Update*, unnumbered pages of photographs following 20-22.

<sup>25</sup> See 1994 Deed.

<sup>26</sup> Personal interview with Leila Stevens. See also Historic Port Royal Foundation, *Historic Port Royal Walking Tour*, promotional brochure, circa 1999, which lists the building as occupied by a theater company, and Brockington and Associates, Inc., *Beaufort County Above Ground Historic Resources Survey*, Beaufort County, South Carolina, 1998, South Carolina State Library, page V-6, which lists the “Union Church [Port Royal Playhouse]” as a property eligible for individual or multiple-property nomination to the National Register.

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

By nearly all accounts, the present "Union Church" appellation appears to be a relatively late one (1920s). There is no verifiable evidence to suggest that the church's name originally included the word "Union" during its earliest period of significance, but the "Union Church" name nevertheless remains its longest held (and current) name, and thus is chosen as its preferred historic name for the purposes of this nomination.

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**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: **Beaufort County Register of Deeds**

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 025-0539 (Brockington and Associates, 1998)

**Works Cited**

Archives of the Historic Port Royal Foundation, Port Royal, S.C.

Beaufort County Registry of Deeds, Beaufort, S.C.

*The Beaufort Tribune and Port Royal Commercial* (Beaufort, S.C.), 1877.

Bennett, James B. *Religion and the Rise of Jim Crow in New Orleans*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.

Brockington and Associates, Inc. *Beaufort County Above Ground Historic Resources Survey, Beaufort County, South Carolina*. 1998. South Carolina State Library.

Ochiai, Akiko. "The Port Royal Experiment Revisited: Northern Visions of Reconstruction and the Land Question." *New England Quarterly* (Mar. 2001): 94-117.

*Palmetto Post* (Port Royal, S.C.), 1894.

Pollitzer, Wendy Nilsen. *Images of America: Port Royal*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006.

Preservation Society of Charleston. *The Churches of Charleston and the Low Country*. Columbia: USC Press, 1994.

Rose, Willie Lee. *Rehearsal for Reconstruction: The Port Royal Experiment*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.

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Union Church of Port Royal  
Property Name

Beaufort County, South Carolina  
County and State

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Town of Port Royal, SC. *Port Royal's Bicentennial*. Promotional brochure, 1976. Vertical file. Beaufort District Collection.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Beaufort District Collection.

Leila Stevens. Personal Interview. Historic Port Royal Foundation. October 15, 2009.

Wilbur Smith and Associates. *Port Royal Development Plan Update*. Columbia, SC: Wilbur Smith, 1980.



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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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.  
Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Photographs:**

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Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Union Church of Port Royal  
Address: 1004 11th Street  
City or Vicinity: Port Royal  
County: Beaufort County  
State: South Carolina

Photographer: Eric Plaag

Date Photographed: October 15, 2009

Description of Photograph(s) and Number:

- 1 of 24: South Elevation with main entry
- 2 of 24: South Elevation, oblique view (from SW)
- 3 of 24: South Elevation, oblique view (from SE)
- 4 of 24: East Elevation, oblique view (from SE), with handicap ramp
- 5 of 24: East Elevation
- 6 of 24: North Elevation, oblique view (from NE)
- 7 of 24: North and West Elevations, oblique view (from NW)
- 8 of 24: Cupola from SW oblique view
- 9 of 24: West Elevation, oblique view (from SW)
- 10 of 24: South Elevation, portico detail
- 11 of 24: Purported former stone step, South courtyard
- 12 of 24: Window detail, South Elevation
- 13 of 24: Window detail, West Elevation
- 14 of 24: Interior of narthex and front doors
- 15 of 24: Pews and East wall of sanctuary
- 16 of 24: Sanctuary interior, looking North
- 17 of 24: West interior wall of sanctuary with pews
- 18 of 24: Sanctuary floor and pulpit detail
- 19 of 24: Sanctuary interior, looking South (slightly oblique)
- 20 of 24: Doorway from sanctuary to sacristy with North window
- 21 of 24: Sacristy interior, looking West
- 22 of 24: Sacristy interior, looking East
- 23 of 24: Fans and lights detail, sanctuary
- 24 of 24: Bathroom, SE corner of building

**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 18 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.