



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Old Pickens Presbyterian Church

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

2. Location

street & number off S.C. Hwy. 183, 1/4 mi. W of Oconee/Pickens Co. Line not for publication  
city or town Seneca vicinity X  
state South Carolina code SC county Oconee code 073  
zip code 29678

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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    nationally    statewide X locally.  
(   See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds 2/16/96  
Signature of certifying official Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, S.C. Department of Archives & History, Columbia, S.C.  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria.  
(   See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

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

Edson F. Beall 4/4/96  
Entered in the  
National Register

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

### 5. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

#### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

#### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>    </u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>    </u>	sites
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	structures
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

N/A

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RELIGION  
FUNERARY

Sub: Religious Facility  
Cemetery

#### Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: VACANT/NOT IN USE  
FUNERARY

Sub: Cemetery

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th Century

#### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick  
roof Asphalt  
walls Brick  
other Wood

#### Narrative Description

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

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important 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 a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Religion
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

ca. 1850  
1919

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Period of Significance**

ca. 1849-1851

**Architect/Builder**

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS)**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Location of Additional Data**

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

Name of repository: The Presbyterian Study Center, Montreat, N.C.

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** Approximately 6.7 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>17</u>	<u>327400</u>	<u>3851340</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	<u>See continuation sheet.</u>					

**Verbal Boundary Description**

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

**Boundary Justification**

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

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Mrs. S.F. Sherard, Jr., with assistance from J. Tracy Power, Staff Historian, SHPO  
organization Old Pickens Presbyterian Church date 2 December 1994  
street & number P.O. Box 605 telephone (803) 447-8778  
city or town Calhoun Falls state SC zip code 29628

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### Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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### Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Foothills Presbytery, South Carolina Synod, Presbyterian Church (USA)  
street & number Koger Executive Center telephone (803) 288-5774  
city or town Greenville state SC zip code 29615

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 5

Old Pickens Presbyterian Church  
name of property  
Oconee County, South Carolina  
county and State

Old Pickens Presbyterian Church, constructed in 1849-51, is a one-story, rectangular, brick building with a gable roof, and is located off S.C. Highway 183 approximately one-quarter-mile west of the boundary line separating Oconee and Pickens Counties. It was built in the style of a typical mid-nineteenth century meeting house. The building has had only minor alterations since its construction and retains a high level of architectural integrity.

The brick walls of the church rest on a solid brick foundation pierced by regularly spaced openings for ventilation. The roof has a boxed cornice with returns; a small brick flue is located near the north end of the northwest roof slope. The church was wired for electricity in the 1940s, but there is no running water or modern plumbing in the building and the electricity has since been disconnected. The wood shingle roof was replaced in the early 1960s with wood sheathing, sawed from timber cut from the property, and covered with asphalt shingles. A new shingle roof was installed in 1989. Through the years necessary painting has been done, for the most part, by local citizens interested in the preservation of the building.

The facade (southeast elevation) has a central double-door entrance with sidelights and transom. A paired window above the door provides light to the interior gallery. Simple brick pilasters frame the entrance and extend from the foundation to a brick belt course above the gallery window. Similar pilasters are located at each end of the facade.

Each side elevation contains three sixteen-over-sixteen windows. The northwest elevation also has a single door entrance at its western end, providing access to the gallery. The rear (northeast) elevation has two sixteen-over-sixteen windows. All windows and the side door are intact but have been boarded up to protect the building from vandalism. Each door and window is surmounted by a simple wood lintel.

The interior of the church is well-preserved. The walls are finished in plaster applied over the brick. The original pine floor is intact, as are the original unpainted pews constructed of poplar and pine. A small platform at the southeast end of the building leads to a built-in pulpit. A gallery extends across the southwest end of the building and is supported by large columns. A Celotex ceiling was installed in the 1940s over the original wood ceiling. Though the wood stove has been stolen, the flue is still intact. The church's original collection plates--actually cloth pockets attached to long wooden handles--are stored off-site for protection; though the cloth has long since been replaced, the handles are original.

The church was probably constructed by volunteer labor and with donated materials. Oral history holds that the bricks were fired of riverbank clay in the bottoms of the Keowee River across the road from the church.

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A cemetery containing over 200 marked graves is also located to the rear and sides of the church. In the original section, the earliest marked gravestone, that of American Revolution veteran Lieutenant Joseph Reed, dates from ca. 1825. The newer section of the cemetery dates from 1967, when graves were relocated here from cemeteries in locations flooded by the construction of a dam on the Keowee River. Records indicate 217 internments, some marked with elaborate gravestones and others with simple fieldstones.

The setting around the church has become increasingly rural and isolated since the old town of Pickens was abandoned, and nothing but the church remains to mark the site of Old Pickens.

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Old Pickens Presbyterian Church  
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Old Pickens Presbyterian Church, built 1849-51, is significant as an excellent intact example of a mid-nineteenth century church built in the meeting house style and constructed of brick rather than the more common frame construction. It is also significant for its association with the mid-nineteenth century town of Pickens Court House (now often called Old Pickens) and as the only extant building surviving from the old town site.

Pickens Court House was established in 1828 to serve as the seat for Pickens District, a new judicial district created from Pendleton District. Pickens Court House was never a large town, and only had a little over one hundred inhabitants by 1860, when it boasted the courthouse, several shops and stores, an academy, a newspaper (the Keowee Courier), a hotel, a stable, a school, a jail, a Masonic lodge, and a church--Old Pickens Presbyterian Church, which was the only church ever active in the town and where worship was open to Christians of all denominations.

Pickens Presbyterian Church, with fourteen members and two ruling elders, was accepted into the Presbytery of South Carolina in 1847, and construction began on this sanctuary soon afterwards. An 1858 deed states that the building belonged "to the denomination of Christians known as Presbyterians and when not in use by said denomination to be used by such other orthodox denominations of Christians as may choose to worship therein."

In 1868 the town of Pickens Court House was abandoned when Pickens District was divided into Oconee and Pickens Counties and a new town--present-day Pickens--was established approximately fifteen miles northeast to serve as the seat of the new Pickens County. Most of the buildings in the old town of Pickens were torn down or dismantled and moved to the new town of Pickens or to Walhalla. By 1875 one newspaper account stated that the only buildings still standing in Old Pickens were a few houses, the academy, and Pickens Presbyterian Church.

After the abandonment of Pickens Court House, activity at Old Pickens Presbyterian Church--renamed in 1883 to avoid confusion with the Presbyterian congregation in the new town of Pickens--declined, though the church continued to serve not only its own congregation but also area Methodist and Baptist congregations as well at various times. The Presbyterians ceased holding regular services here after 1919, but periodic homecomings, reunions, and special services were held here from the 1920s to the 1960s. The congregation of Pickens Presbyterian Church, consisting of only two members--Furber Lawrence Whitmire and Hettie Guntharp Whitmire, who had settled nearby along the Keowee River after World War I and farmed there--was officially dissolved by the Presbytery of the Piedmont (now

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Foothills Presbytery) in 1968. The Old Pickens Presbyterian Church Perpetual Care Committee, a group of area Presbyterians interested in the preservation of the church, organized in 1984 and maintains the sanctuary and cemetery with help from the Foothills Presbytery.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Some Facts of History of Old Pickens," The Keowee Courier (Walhalla, S.C.), n.d. but ca. 1930; Frederick C. Holder, Historic Sites of Oconee County, S.C.: Part of the History of Oconee County Told Through Historic Preservation, 2nd ed. (Walhalla: Oconee County Historical Society, 1991), pp. 17-18; George Howe, History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina, 2 vols. (Charleston: W.J. Duffie, 1883), 2:743; Records of the South Carolina Presbytery, Manuscript Volume, 1830-1855, p. 306, The Presbyterian Study Center, Montreat, N.C.; Deed Book H-1, Pickens County Register of Mesne Conveyances, Pickens, S.C.; D.H. Brown, "History of Old Pickens Presbyterian Church," unpublished typescript, 1989; Presbytery of the Piedmont, Synod of South Carolina, "Old Pickens Presbyterian Church Inventory of Interments," unpublished typescript, 1983; Jerry Alexander, "A Town That Lived for 40 Years ... And Died That We Might Prosper," Pickens Sentinel (Pickens, S.C.), 26 May 1982; and Dot Robertson, "Memories of Another Time," The Greenville News and Piedmont (Greenville, S.C.), 14 March 1985.



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BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alexander, Jerry. "A Town That Lived For 40 Years ... And Died That We Might Prosper." Pickens Sentinel (Pickens, S.C.), 26 May 1982.
- Brown, D.H. "History of Old Pickens Presbyterian Church." Unpublished Typescript, 1989.
- Deed Book H-1, Pickens County Register of Mesne Conveyances, Pickens, S.C.
- Holder, Frederick C. Historic Sites of Oconee County, S.C.: Part of the History of Oconee County Told Through Historic Preservation. Walhalla, S.C.: Oconee County Historical Society, 1991.
- Howe, George. History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina. 2 Vols. Charleston: W.J. Duffie, 1883.
- Robertson, Dot. "Memories of Another Time." Greenville News and Piedmont (Greenville, S.C.), 17 March 1985.
- "Some Facts of History of Old Pickens," The Keowee Courier (Walhalla, S.C.), ca. 1930.
- Records of the South Carolina Presbytery, Manuscript Volume, 1830-1855, The Presbyterian Study Center, Montreat, N.C.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is shown as the line marked "Exempt-Pickens Presbyterian Church," on Oconee County Tax Map 138-00, Parcel 1, Lot 4, drawn at a scale of 1"=.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The nominated property is restricted to the parcel historically associated with Old Pickens Presbyterian Church and includes the historic church and cemetery.

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Section PHOTOGRAPHS Page 11

Old Pickens Presbyterian Church  
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county and State

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The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Name of Property: Old Pickens Presbyterian Church  
Location of Property: Off S.C. Hwy. 183, west of Oconee-Pickens  
County lines, Oconee County, South Carolina  
Name of Photographer: Dorothy Whitmire Sherard  
Location of Negatives: S.C. Department of Archives and History  
Columbia, S.C.  
Date of Photographs: 30 October 1994

1. Southwest (principal) facade
2. Southwest (principal) facade
3. West end facade and gallery door
4. Southeast facade
5. Northeast elevation
6. Northeast elevation
7. Northeast elevation
8. Northeast elevation (rear)
9. Sanctuary (Northeast)
10. Sixteen-over-sixteen window
11. Gallery (Southwest)
12. Pulpit (Northeast)
13. Plaster over brick walls (Northeast)
14. Sanctuary and pews-left side
15. Sanctuary and pews-right side
16. Celotex over wood ceiling