District # 5
Congressman Thomas S. Gettys

Theme: 1) America at Work
2) The Contemplative Society

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
## INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

*(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)*

| STATE: South Carolina |
|---|
| COUNTY: Union |

| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
|---|---|
| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |
| AUG 3 0 1974 | |

## 1. NAME

COMMON:

The Episcopal Church of the Nativity

AND/OR HISTORIC:


## 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

Church & Pinckney Streets

CITY OR TOWN:

Union

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
|---|---|---|---|
| South Carolina | 045 | Union | 087 |

## 3. CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY (Check One) | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ District  ☒ Building<br>☐ Site  ☐ Structure<br>☐ Object | ☐ Public<br>☒ Private<br>☐ Both<br><br>Public Acquisition:<br>☐ In Process<br>☐ Being Considered | ☒ Occupied<br>☐ Unoccupied<br>☐ Preservation work in progress | Yes:<br>☐ Restricted<br>☒ Unrestricted<br>☐ No |

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural   ☐ Government   ☐ Park   ☐ Transportation   ☐ Comments
☐ Commercial   ☐ Industrial   ☐ Private Residence   ☐ Other (Specify)
☐ Educational   ☐ Military   ☒ Religious
☐ Entertainment   ☐ Museum   ☐ Scientific

*[stamp: RECEIVED MAR 1 3 1974 NATIONAL REGISTER]*

## 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:

The Vestry (of the Church of the Nativity)

STREET AND NUMBER:

Church & Pinckney Streets

| CITY OR TOWN: | STATE: | CODE |
|---|---|---|
| Union | South Carolina | 045 |

## 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Union County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

East Main Street

| CITY OR TOWN: | STATE | CODE |
|---|---|---|
| Union | South Carolina | 045 |

## 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

Inventory of Historic Places In South Carolina

| DATE OF SURVEY: 1973 | ☐ Federal | ☒ State | ☐ County | ☐ Local |
|---|---|---|---|---|

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

South Carolina Department of Archives & History

STREET AND NUMBER:

1430 Senate Street

| CITY OR TOWN: | STATE: | CODE |
|---|---|---|
| Columbia | South Carolina | 045 |

*[left margin vertical text: SEE INSTRUCTIONS]*
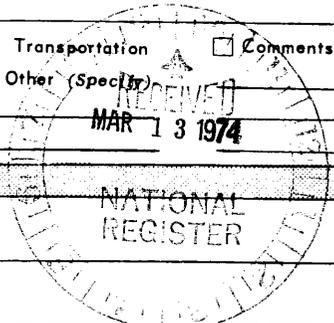
*[right margin vertical text: STATE: COUNTY: ENTRY NUMBER FOR NPS USE ONLY DATE]*

*[right margin vertical text: AUG 3 0 1974]*

| CONDITION | (Check One) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ☒ Excellent | ☐ Good | ☐ Fair | ☐ Deteriorated | ☐ Ruins | ☐ Unexposed |
| | (Check One) | | | (Check One) | | |
| | ☒ Altered | | ☐ Unaltered | ☐ Moved | | ☒ Original Site |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Exterior:

The plan of this one-story rusticated granite Gothic revival structure with 24" walls is derived from the early English two-celled plan which consists of a nave (21' X 54') and a chancel (14' X 17'). Two porches project from the south elevation; the southwesterly one serves as an entrance and the southeastern porch as a sacristy or vestry. All four sections are topped by steep gabled roofs which are trimmed with wide overlapping smooth stone at the edges. A Latin cross is mounted at the apex of the central gable, while triple cylindrical motifs are used as the finishing trim on the remaining gables.

The west facade, which does not contain a doorway or porch, is flat except for the indented windows of the aisles and the open arches containing the church bell. Arranged symmetrically and graduated toward the center, the stained glass windows here, and elsewhere, are tall, narrow lancets. The arches in the stepped bell tower are also pointed, but trimmed in rusticated stone in contrast to the smooth stone trim used in the window surrounds. Rusticated false buttresses, also trimmed in smooth granite are set diagonally into the corners of the building. The east elevation has a triple window, while the side elevations have evenly-spaced single windows which reach to within a few feet of the eaves.

Interior:

Sand-finished plaster walls contrast with the stone-pointed arch which divides the nave from the chancel. The original walnut wainscoting along the north and south sides of the nave was replaced with plaster to blend with the existing plaster walls; at the same time, the original wooden floor was covered with quarry tile. The altar is a solid piece of granite which was carved by a local stonecutter.

Behind the altar is placed a triple window designed by Louis C. Tiffany in shades of crimson, blue, gold, green, and purple. The central bay of the window depicts the Good Shepherd. St. John and St. Peter are depicted in the right and left windows, flanking the Good Shepherd. The five windows at the opposite end of the church are polychrome and of geometric design, while the memorial windows at the aisles depict events in the life of Christ.

The white Carrara marble font carved by Hiram Powers is divided into three design units -- the base, the column shaft, and the font itself; all are octagonal. A triple stepped base leads to the shaft where each octagonal plane is carved into tall pointed arches. Resting on the column is the octagonal font with carved exterior. Each section is filled with carved sacred motifs.

The font was ordered by Mrs. Wade Hampton I for Trinity Church in Columbia, South Carolina, but proved to be too small. The font was then given to Nativity and a larger, but identical, one was commissioned for Trinity.

Church furnishings include the retable, credence table, bishop's and rector's chairs, altar railing and pews; all were carved from native black walnut by an early rector of the church, the Rev. J.D. McCollough (1858-1869).

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ Pre-Columbian | ☐ 16th Century | ☐ 18th Century | ☐ 20th Century |
| ☐ 15th Century | ☐ 17th Century | ☒ 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)*    1855

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

| Aboriginal | ☐ Education | ☐ Political | ☐ Urban Planning |
|---|---|---|---|
| ☐ Prehistoric | ☐ Engineering | ☐ Religion/Phi- | ☐ Other *(Specify)* |
| ☐ Historic | ☐ Industry | losophy | |
| ☐ Agriculture | ☐ Invention | ☐ Science | |
| ☒ Architecture | ☐ Landscape | ☒ Sculpture | |
| ☒ Art | Architecture | ☐ Social/Human- | |
| ☐ Commerce | ☐ Literature | itarian | |
| ☐ Communications | ☐ Military | ☐ Theater | |
| ☐ Conservation | ☐ Music | ☐ Transportation | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Introduction:

The Church of the Nativity in Union is a notable example of ecclesiastical architecture. Delicately articulated exterior details, high quality crafts- manship in stone, and the Tiffany stained glass chancel triplet window com- bine to make this one of the finest Episcopal parish churches in the South- east.

Architecture:

Dating from 1855, the Church of the Nativity belongs to a stylistic group of churches to which St. James the Less, Philadelphia (1846-49), St. Anne's Chapel, Fredericton, Canada, by Frank Wills (1846) and St. Mary's, Emmerton, Maryland (1851), also belong. The prominent features of these unpretentious parish churches include    small size, diagonal buttresses, a feeling for stone, and an intimate relationship between the building and surrounding landscape. These characteristics derive from English parish-church architec- ture of the 14th-Century, the model for small churches recommended by the New York Ecclesiologist in the late 1840s and early 1850s.

Two of the major forces behind the construction of the Church of the Nativity, Miss Charlotte Poulton, and her sister, Mrs. Mary Poulton Dawkins, were Englishwomen, newly arrived from their family home "The Shrubs", just outside of London. They, along with Rev. John D. McCollough, who had already designed a number of Episcopal churches in South Carolina were knowledgeable about the leading currents in ecclesiastical architecture.

On May 1, 1855, the cornerstone was laid but construction did not begin un- til the following year. Although detailed accounts of the construction, along with the plans, have been lost with other church records from this period, it is known that the church was consecrated by Bishop Thomas F. Davis on September 9th, 1859. Construction was interrupted by the War Between the States, but the church was completed shortly thereafter.

Built of rusticated native granite, the rough exterior walls of the church contrast with the smooth granite at the window surrounds, the quoins, and the roofline. A triangular rhythm is begun in the steep A-truss of the roof of the nave and is carried out in the roof of the chancel, the side entrances, and the triple bell-cote. The exterior masses express the form of the interior space and reflect the purpose for which each is used. This functional division of parts reflects current architectural theories of the 1850s which stressed a direct relationship between design and use.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Bilodeau, Francis W. and Mrs. Thomas J. Tobias, ed. Arts in South Carolina, 1670-1970. Charleston: S.C. Tricentennial Commission, 1970.

McClure, Harlan, and Vernon Hodges. South Carolina Architecture, 1670-1970. Columbia: S.C. Tricentennial Commission, 1970.

Marsh, Blanch. Plantation Heritage in Up Country South Carolina. Asheville, N.C.: Biltmore Press, 1965.

Thomas, Albert Sidney. A Historical Account of the Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820-1957. Columbia: R.L. Bryan Co., 1957.

Stanton, Phoebe B. The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

| | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY | | | | | | OR | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CORNER | LATITUDE | | | LONGITUDE | | | | LATITUDE | | | LONGITUDE | | |
| | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds | | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds |
| NW | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " | | 34° | 42' | 31" | 84° (81 c) | 37' | 14" |
| NE | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " | | | | | | | |
| SE | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " | | | | | | | |
| SW | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " | | | | | | | |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **2 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE: | | CODE | COUNTY | | CODE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| STATE: | | CODE | COUNTY: | MAR 13 1974 | CODE |
| STATE: | | CODE | COUNTY: | | CODE |
| STATE: | | CODE | COUNTY: | | CODE |

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:
Robert G. Fant (Chairman: Union County Hist. Comm.) & Betty Myers

ORGANIZATION    Historic Preservation Division
South Carolina Department of Archives and History

DATE    January 18, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
1430 Senate Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Columbia

STATE
South Carolina

CODE
045

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION** | **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☑    State ☐    Local ☒

Name _Charles S. Lee_

Charles E. Lee

Title    State Preservation Officer
South Carolina Department of Archives and History

Date _March 8, 1974_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

_signature_

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _8/30/74_

ATTEST:

_signature_

Keeper of The National Register

Date _8-29-74_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

*(Continuation Sheet)*

| STATE | |
|---|---|
| South Carolina | |
| COUNTY | |
| Union | |
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| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |
| **AUG 3 0** 1974 | |

*(Number all entries)*

The Episcopal Church of the Nativity

8. Significance (continued)

Art:
The triple stained glass window behind the altar was executed by Louis C. Tiffany (1848-1933) and portrays the Good Shepherd in the central bay, flanked by two saints in the side windows. Brilliantly colored and designed, they are fine examples of Tiffany's ecclesiastical windows. The son of a jeweler, Tiffany studied painting in Paris but began to experiment with stained glass upon his return to New York. Here he opened a glass-making plant in 1878, creating a new method of staining glass which intensified colors and was used to create intricately detailed patterns. Tiffany is the central figure in the United States associated with the Art Nouveau movement which reached its zenith at the end of the nineteenth century.

Sculpture:
Hiram Powers (1805-1873), noted American sculptor, carved the beautiful white marble font which stands in the nave of the Nativity church. Powers was a protege of Colonel John S. Preston of Columbia, South Carolina.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

*(Continuation Sheet)*

| STATE |
|---|
| South Carolina |
| COUNTY |
| Union |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |

| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |
|---|---|
| | AUG 30 1974 |

*(Number all entries)*

The Episcopal Church of the Nativity

9. Major Bibliographical References (continued)

The Southern Episcopalian, October 1859.