NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name: Unity Presbyterian Church Complex

other names/site number: Old Unity Cemetery; Unity/Municipal Cemetery; Unity Manse

2. Location

street & number: 303 Tom Hall Street ☐ not for publication

city, town: Fort Mill ☐ vicinity

state: South Carolina code: SC county: York code: 091 zip code: 29715

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property: Contributing	Noncontributing	
[X] private	[X] building(s)	2		buildings
[X] public-local	☐ district	2		sites
☐ public-State	[X] site			structures
☐ public-Federal	☐ structure			objects
	☐ object	4	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Properties of Fort Mill

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [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. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Mary W. Edmonds — 4/21/92

Signature of certifying official — Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, S.C. Dept. of Archives & History

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

[✓] entered in the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Patrick Andrus — 6/11/92

for Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Religion: religious structure	Religion: religious structure
church-related residence	Funerary: cemetery
Funerary: cemetery	

7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)	
Romanesque Revival Inf. (Sanctuary)	foundation	Brick
Colonial Revival Inf. (Manse)	walls	Brick
		Wood - shingles
	roof	Asphalt, metal
	other	

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Unity Presbyterian Church Complex consists of two buildings and two sites: Unity Presbyterian Church, 303 Tom Hall Street; the Unity Church Manse, 301 Tom Hall Street; Unity/Municipal Cemetery, Unity Street; and the Old Unity Cemetery, Unity Street at Summersby Street. These four resources are so closely related that they form a complex which can be considered as a unit. The Old Unity Cemetery is non-contiguous with the other three elements, and is historically non-contiguous. Unity is the oldest church congregation in Fort Mill having been founded in 1788.

Unity Presbyterian Church occupies its fourth house of worship, built in 1881. The sanctuary is rectangular in shape, with the facade on the south end, facing Tom Hall Street. The roof is a simple gable intersected by a central tower on the Tom Hall Street facade. The walls and tower are constructed of brick. The projecting central bell tower dominates the facade. The tower has false buttresses on the corners and houses the main entrance, which consists of double doors topped with a fanlight and arched brick surround with keystone. Above the door is a tall arched window with traceried stained glass and brick arch above. In the bell tower are paired louvered openings with arched brick surrounds. Brickwork includes corbels under the masonry sill of the central window, under the louvered openings of the tower, and under the bracketed base of the tower roof. These corbels become progressively more pronounced at each level. The tower is topped by a central shed roof with four steeply-pitched standing-seam sheet-metal covered corner spires. The projecting tower is flanked on the facade by tall rectangular windows with traceried stained glass and arched fanlights above. These windows are capped by arched brick hood molds. The side elevations have six bays divided by brick pilasters. Each bay has a rectangular traceried stained glass window with arched brick hood molds. The first bay on either side has an entrance door with a smaller window of the same type above. The windows each have an arched fanlight above and masonry sills. To the rear and attached to the sanctuary are an Educational/Fellowship Hall building (1938) and a modern office building (1957) connected by a hyphen to the 1938 addition. These elements have little impact on the appearance of the sanctuary. A brick ramp for handicapped access has been added to the front on the right side, and a brick landing and steps have been constructed in the front.

[X] See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

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

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Religion	1779 - 1940	1881
Architecture		

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Zeb Bradford, Construction Sup.

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

The Unity Presbyterian Church Complex is significant because of the architectural values of the church sanctuary, built in 1881. The building, with elements of the Queen Anne style and the Romanesque Revival style, represents a high degree of architectural merit and design. The detail involved in the brickwork and the traceried windows are unusual for a church in a small town and with a relatively small congregation in the period. The overall complex also has significance for its role in the development of the town of Fort Mill and in the religious life of the community. The church was the first religious organization in the Fort Mill area, having been created when the area was still part of the Catawba Indian Nation. The church has occupied four different sites since 1788, reflecting the gradual shift of the population. It is uniquely associated with the events which have been significant with the development of Fort Mill, and is the only organization which has been in existence throughout the history of the town.

Additional Information

Unity Presbyterian Church was organized at a community known as "Little York" in 1788, about two miles north of present-day Fort Mill.[1] After a fire destroyed the first log structure in 1804, the church relocated about a mile away to the second site, as the population density was moving in that direction. This site was donated to the church by John Springs, a successful planter who owned large land parcels in the area.[2] A log church was built at this site, and the cemetery grew in the churchyard, today known as Old Unity Cemetery. It is likely that the church was located at the site of an existing cemetery, as it contains approximately 115 graves, dating from 1779 to 1782.[3] Among the graves are those of eight veterans of the Revolutionary War.[4] A stone wall surrounds the cemetery, which covers about one acre.[5] A number of stones have been lost to vandals over the years, and the wall and some stones were damaged by Hurricane Hugo in September 1990.

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See full list of bibliographical references in the Multiple Porperty submission, Historic Properties of Fort Mill. The following references pertain to this individual nomination:

Ardrey, Mrs. W. B., Sr. "Fort Mill Presbyterian (Unity) Church History." Fort Mill, S. C., 1939. (Typewritten.)

Ardrey, Mary Mack, "Fort Mill and Its Churches For The Past Two Centuries." Fort Mill, S.C., undated. (Typewritten.)

Bradford, William R., Jr. Legacy: A History of Unity Presbyterian Church. Fort Mill, S.C.: Unity Presbyterian Church, 1988.

Fort Mill Times (Fort Mill, S.C.), 3 March 1920; 1 April 1920; 8 April 1920; 1 November 1923.

The Herald (Rock Hill, S.C.), 28 July 1909.

The Journal (Rock Hill, S. C.), 26 March 1902.

☐ See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository: S. C. Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S. C.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 19 acres

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	17	505880	3873870
B	17	505780	3873650
C	17	505470	3873650
D	17	505670	3874000

☒ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The complex includes the following parcels as recorded in the York County tax records, represented on the accompanying map, scaled at 1"=200':

1. Unity Presbyterian Church and Manse - 20-04-25-01
2. Unity Municipal Cemetery - 20-04-25-31
3. Old Unity Cemetery - 20-04-29-02

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include the entire parcels which have historically been associated with the properties.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul M. Gettys

organization Paul M. Gettys Associates — date 28 September 1990

street & number 4180 Cureton Ferry Road — telephone (803) 329-3567

city or town Catawba — state S. C. — zip code 29704

★U.S.GPO:1988-0-223-918

SEP 1 1992

8. Statement of Significance

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

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Religion	1779 - 1940	1881
Architecture		

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Significant Person: N/A

Architect/Builder: Zeb Bradford, Construction Sup.

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

The Unity Presbyterian Church Complex is significant because of the architectural values of the church sanctuary, built in 1881. The building, with elements of the Queen Anne Style and the Romanesque Revival Style, represents a high degree of architectural merit and design. The detail involved in the brickwork and the traceried windows are unusual for a church in a small town and with a relatively small congregation in the period. The overall complex also has significance for its role in the development of the town of Fort Mill and in the religious life of the community. The church was the first religious organization in the Fort Mill area, having been created when the area was still part of the Catawba Indian Nation. The church has occupied four different sites since 1788, reflecting the gradual shift of the population. It is uniquely associated with the events which have been significant with the development of Fort Mill, and is the only organization which has been in existence throughout the history of the town.

Additional Information

Unity Presbyterian Church was organized at a community known as "Little York" in 1788, about two miles north of present-day Fort Mill.[1] After a fire destroyed the first log structure in 1804, the church relocated about a mile away to the second site, as the population density was moving in that direction. This site was donated to the church by John Springs, a successful planter who owned large land parcels in the area.[2] A log church was built at this site, and the cemetery grew in the churchyard, today known as Old Unity Cemetery. It is likely that the church was located at the site of an existing cemetery, as it contains approximately 115 graves, dating from 1779 to 1872.[3] Among the graves are those of eight veterans of the Revolutionary War.[4] A stone wall surrounds the cemetery, which covers about one acre.[5] A number of stones have been lost to vandals over the years, and the wall and some stones were damaged by Hurricane Hugo in September 1990.

☒ See continuation sheet

The Unity Manse was built in 1920 adjacent to the sanctuary. The two-story house has a main rectangular section with flanking one-story wings on either end. The simple gable roofs have exposed rafters. There are three chimneys, two of which are exposed on either end of the main block. The first floor has brick veneer siding, while the second floor is covered with variable-width wood shingles. The second floor overhangs slightly, with a flared bottom to the overhang. The facade has five bays with windows having nine lights over one and a central doorway with twelve lights in each of the double doors. The entrance is within a small gabled porch supported by solid brick piers, with engaged brick piers at the wall. The one-story flanking sections are symmetrical in form, although the left (west) wing appears to have been a porch which has been enclosed. The rear (north) of the house has an extension with gable roof and two windows on each floor. There is a modern metal staircase for emergency exit at the rear. The building is currently used as meeting space for the church.

The Unity/Municipal Cemetery began as a burying ground for the church in the 1880s, but has served as the municipal cemetery since the 1920s. It is located to the rear of the church (north and east). Prominent family names in the cemetery include Banks, Belk, Culp, Harris, Jones, Kimbrell, Mack, Massey, Meachum, Mills, Parks, Patterson, Spratt, Springs, White, Withers, and Young. The cemetery is currently surrounded by residential, commercial, and public land uses.

The Old Unity Cemetery is located on Unity Street in the block between Summersby Street and Marshall Street, approximately five blocks north of the present site of the church. It is at the location of the second building of Unity Church. It is enclosed by a dry laid stone wall and contains approximately 115 graves. Many of the gravestones are missing or damaged. The wall and some stones were damaged by Hurricane Hugo in September 1989. There is no above-ground evidence of the church building which once stood adjacent to the cemetery. The area around the cemetery is now developed as a subdivision of single-family houses.

Additional information is provided concerning the Unity/Municipal Cemetery and the Old Unity Cemetery.

The Unity/Municipal Cemetery consists of approximately 14 acres and is located to the rear of the existing Unity Presbyterian Church on Tom Hall Street in Fort Mill.

The Old Unity Cemetery is located on a parcel of approximately one acre on Unity Street in the block between Summersby Street and Marshall Street. The period of significance of the Unity Presbyterian Church Complex begins in 1779. This is the date of the first known grave in the Old Unity Cemetery. The document "Historical and Genealogical Material, Catawba Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution," which is footnoted in the nomination, contains a list of those known to be buried in Old Unity Cemetery. The list contains 115 graves, dating from 1779 to 1872. The earliest grave belongs to Eleanor Baxter, who died in 1779 at age 10. This list was compiled by Miss Zoe White of Fort Mill.

One of the most interesting inscriptions is found on the grave of Captain Joseph White, who died in 1804:

"He in the late American War did take
An active part when Freedom was at stake
With powder and ball he made the air to smoke
And help'd to free us all from britains Yoke."

In 1838, the church moved again to a site further south. This site, on the Camden Road (now Tom Hall Street), was more visible and represented another effort to remain close to the population center. A new cemetery was begun at this site. Ownership of the cemetery was assumed by the Town of Fort Mill in the 1920s, and it continues today as Unity/Municipal Cemetery. In 1880, the third building burned, and the fourth building was erected in 1881 some three hundred yards west on Tom Hall Street.[6] Brick for the new building was made by hand from local clay. The manse was constructed to house the minister and his family, and was occupied in March 1920.[7]

Properties within this complex fall within two Criteria Considerations. The church sanctuary is under Consideration A, as a religious property which derives its significance from its architectural distinction and from the historical importance of the congregation. The sanctuary is the oldest church building in Fort Mill, and the congregation has had a major influence on the development of the town. The Old Unity Cemetery and the Unity/Municipal Cemetery qualify under Consideration D, as cemeteries which contain the graves of persons of local importance and from association with the history and former locations of Unity Presbybyterian Church. The Old Unity Cemetery is significant as the second site of the church, and it contains the graves of some of the early leaders of the community. The Unity/Municipal Cemetery is related to the third and fourth sites of the church. Persons of importance to the history of the town who are buried here include: Samuel Elliott White, principal founder of the Fort Mill Manufacturing Company; Grace White Springs, first wife of Leroy Springs; Lena Jones Springs, second wife of Leroy Springs and the first woman whose name was placed in nomination at a national convention (Democratic convention of 1924) for Vice-President of the U. S.[8]; Elliott White Springs, World War I flying ace, author, and builder of Springs Industries; John McKee Spratt, local business leader and co-founder of the Fort Mill Manufacturing Company; William R. Bradford, Sr., editor of the Fort Mill Times and member of the S. C. House of Representatives (ten non-consecutive terms between 1914 and 1944); Alexander R. Banks, teacher and principal in a number of schools in the area; Rev. William Banks, pastor of Unity Presbyterian Church and denominational leader; and Rev. James H. Thornwell, pastor

of Unity Presbyterian Church.

FOOTNOTES:

[1]William R. Bradford, Jr., Out of the Past: A History of Fort Mill. (Fort Mill, S.C.: Bradford Publishing Co., 1980), p. 66.

[2]Mrs. W. B. Ardrey, Sr., "Fort Mill Presbyterian (Unity) Church History," Fort Mill, S. C., 1939. (Typewritten.), p. 10.

[3]Mrs. Harley Hamilton and Mrs. C. Fred Laurence, "Historical and Genealogical Material, Catawba Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution," Rock Hill, S.C., undated. (Typewritten.), Vol. II, p. 29.

[4]Ibid., p. 31.

[5]Fort Mill Times (Fort Mill, S.C.), 28 July 1909.

[6]Bradford, p. 66.

[7]Fort Mill Times (Fort Mill, S. C.), 1 April 1920.

[8]Burke Davis, War Bird: The Life and Times of Elliott White Springs, (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), p. 100.

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

Name of Property: Unity Presbyterain Church Complex
Historic Properties of Fort Mill (multiple property submission)
Location of Property: York County, South Carolina
Photographer: Paul M. Gettys
Location of negative: Paul M. Gettys Associates, 4180 Cureton Ferry Road, Catawba, S.C. 29704
Date: May 1990

Additional information for each photograph follows:

1. Unity Presbyterian Church - sanctuary (NE)
2. Unity Presbyterian Church - sanctuary (NE)
3. Unity Manse (NE)
4. Old Unity Cemetery (NE)

The UTM Reference points given in Section 10 provide data for the contiguous portions of the complex, Unity Presbyterian Church and Manse and the Unity Municipal Cemetery. The Old Unity Cemetery, which is non-contiguous, has the following UTM reference:

Zone - 17
Easting - 505 820
Northing - 3874 570

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 92000649 **Date Listed:** 6/11/92

Unity Presbyterian Church Complex — **Property Name**
York — **County**
SOUTH CAROLINA — **State**

Fort Mill MPS
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for **Signature of the Keeper** — **Date of Action** 9/4/92

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Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 3

This nomination is amended to show the category of property as building(s).

This change was confirmed by phone with the South Carolina SHPO (7/22/92).

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)