

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only received date entered

1. Name

historic St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number State Route 663 not for publication

city, town Forest 24551 X vicinity of congressional district

state Virginia code county Bedford code

3. Classification

Table with 4 columns: Category, Ownership, Status, Present Use. Includes options like district, building(s), structure, site, object, public, private, both, Public Acquisition, In process, being considered, occupied, unoccupied, work in progress, Accessible, yes: restricted, yes: unrestricted, no, agriculture, commercial, educational, entertainment, government, industrial, military, museum, park, private residence, religious, scientific, transportation, other.

4. Owner of Property

Trustees of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church name c/o duVal Radford

street & number 112 South Bridge Street

city, town Bedford vicinity of state Virginia 24523

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Circuit Court Clerk's Office, Bedford County Courthouse

street & number East Main Street

city, town Bedford state Virginia 24523

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title VHLC Bedford County Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal X state county local

depository for survey records VHLC

city, town Richmond state Virginia

## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Set amidst the rolling Western Piedmont hills of Bedford County's Forest area, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church is a small temple-form structure measuring approximately 36 feet by 61 feet. This handsome brick church, with one story over a cellar, is laid with Flemish bond on the front, common bond with five rows of stretchers alternating with one row of headers on the side and rear walls, and with common bond foundations. Its stubby bricks measure approximately  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " by  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " and are about 3" thick. The wooden cornice, albeit far from bold, is nicely molded. A continuation of the cornice outlines the low-pitched pediment of the facade which is capped by a wooden cross at its apex. In 1898, a violent storm blew in the entrance gable and threatened thereby to close the church. Rallying their forces, the congregation and friends managed to make the necessary repairs. It was probably then that the present vertical, narrow-board sheathing of the pediment's interior took place. The roof is now of seamed tin.

The entrance of the three-bay facade is flanked by two triple-hung windows with eight lights in each sash. Most of the glazing seems to be original. The windows have functioning, louvered shutters fastened by reverse-S catches. The two windows on each of the side bays are similar to those of the front. Each leaf of the double-door entrance has five panels above the lock rail and two panels below it. The rim locks on the front and side doors have folding keys. Above the front door is a transom with rectilinear tracery and glazing that is now painted white. Above the door and window openings are wooden lintels with flanking paterae.

The interior provides a fine setting for Low Church worship. The original Classical Revival box pews, with their one-panel end pieces, are painted white except for the dark wooden top rails. A small pew on the southeastern side of the entrance wall (at the rear of the congregation's seating) was once a choir pew but now serves as a perch for latecomers. The church's organ is to the left side of the chancel and behind the one choir pew that remains on that side. Facing this pew are three choir pews on the other side of the chancel. Wooden Doric pilasters support a segmental arch which frames the recessed chancel that, along with a robing room, was added c.1898. At about that time, new chancel furnishings were acquired (to which further additions were made in 1941), a wooden ceiling was added, and the old slave gallery was removed. The small door, on the southeastern wall, which had been serving as entrance to the gallery then became a side entrance to the church.

As the congregation and its activities increased in the second half of the twentieth century, two new but harmonious brick additions were made to the church. In 1954-55, a new two-story Parish House designed by Lynchburg architect Stanhope S. Johnson was constructed east of the church and is now connected to it by a one-story frame structure. In 1980-81, a one-story adjunct Parish House was designed and built by the Lynchburg firm of Fauber and Carbee, Inc. The adjunct Parish House and the church flank the recessed Parish House and thereby form a pleasing open courtyard. A serpentine brick wall, reminiscent of the land's former owner Thomas Jefferson, separates the grounds from the road. Built in the late 1940's, the wall was extended in 1980-81. Behind the church is a graveyard with a rich variety of tombstones dating from the 1840's to the present. Funerary art of different eras is represented by tabular stones, fieldstone markers, obelisks, urns, squared balusters supporting horizontal tablets, crosses, many different carvings, and a representative display of iron fence designs. All serve as monuments to past members of the St. Stephens Community.

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		_____ n/a _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church is located on Bedford County's scenic Old Forest Road in the rolling hills of Virginia's Western Piedmont. Erected c.1844, it is a small, temple-form structure measuring approximately 36 feet by 61 feet. The one-story church, with a cellar, is of brick and has wooden, Greek-Revival trim. The simple, rectangular interior has retained its original box pews. With the harmonious addition of a twentieth-century Parish House and adjunct Parish House, the church complex now forms an open courtyard bounded at the rear by its picturesque graveyard which is a repository of nineteenth- and twentieth-century funerary forms. The nominated acreage includes one contributing building.

### ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The church is of brick laid in Flemish bond on the front, common bond with five rows of stretchers alternating with one row of headers on the side and rear walls, and with common bond foundations. Its stubby bricks measure approximately 6 1/2" by 2 1/2" and are about 3" thick. The simple wooden cornice has a continuation that outlines the low-pitched pediment of the facade. A wooden cross now caps the apex of the pediment. The present vertical, narrow-board sheathing of the pediment's interior was probably installed in 1898 when a storm blew in the entrance gable. The roof is now sheathed in seamed tin.

The entrance of the three-bay facade is flanked by two triple-hung windows with eight lights in each sash. Most of the glazing seems to be original. The windows have functioning, louvered shutters fastened by reverse-S catches. The two windows on each of the side bays are similar to those of the front. Each leaf of the double-door front entrance has five panels above the lock rail and two panels below it. The rim locks on the front and side doors have folding keys. Above the front door is a transom with rectilinear tracery and glazing that is now painted white. Above the door and window openings are wooden lintels with flanking paterae.

(See Continuation Sheet # 1)

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1844-45

Builder/Architect

## Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The importance of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church lies in three realms: architectural, cultural, and religious. It was from St. Stephen's, where he served as minister and resided in the Old Rectory,\* that the Reverend Nicholas Hamner Cobbs exerted a major force in the reorganization of Virginia's old Anglican Church into a thriving Episcopal community. In 1824-25, he established St. Stephen's on the site of today's church which is located on the westernmost part of the historic Poplar Forest tract that once belonged to Thomas Jefferson. Here a small brick church was built and stood until it was demolished c.1844 to make way for the present structure. While serving as rector at St. Stephen's from 1824 until 1839, Mr. Cobbs also established Boonsboro's Trinity Church and served as its minister, was head of the New London Academy\* and the Church at the Academy, founded St. John's in Bedford and St. Thomas at Sedalia, was active in Big Lick (now Roanoke), Fincastle, and Wytheville, and served as first Chaplain of the University of Virginia. He, along with two other of the church's first four ministers, was later made an Episcopal Bishop. From this busy religious center, there continues to radiate a cultural adhesion that binds together the genteel way of life in the lovely St. Stephen's Road-Forest-Goode area. It is at St. Stephen's that many of the local landowners meet, bonds are formed, local events are shaped, and a style of life is maintained in a handsome setting replete with tradition and meaning for its communicants. Indeed, St. Stephen's Church, as part of Virginia's architectural storehouse of small Classical-Revival churches, has significance beyond the immediate bounds of its geographic and cultural environs. These churches, away from the centers of urban life, are variations on one of the most harmonious themes in country architecture.

\*A National Register Property.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Patterson, Helen Strange (compiler). St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.  
Lynchburg, Va.: Eubank Printing Company, 1983.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nomlnated property 3.821

Quadrangle name Boonsboro 7.5'

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	7	6	4	9	7	8	1	5	4	1	3	7	9	4	5
Zone			Easting					Northing							

B 

Zone			Easting					Northing							

C 

Zone			Easting					Northing							

D 

Zone			Easting					Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting					Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting					Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting					Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting					Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

(see attached)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title duVal Radford and Anne Carter Lee

organization Attorney at Law

date October 9, 1983

street & number P.O. Box 223

telephone 703-586-3151

city or town Bedford

state Virginia 24523

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

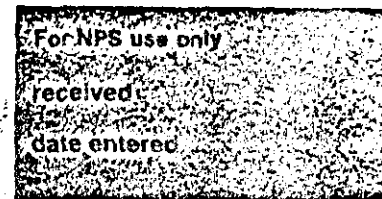
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



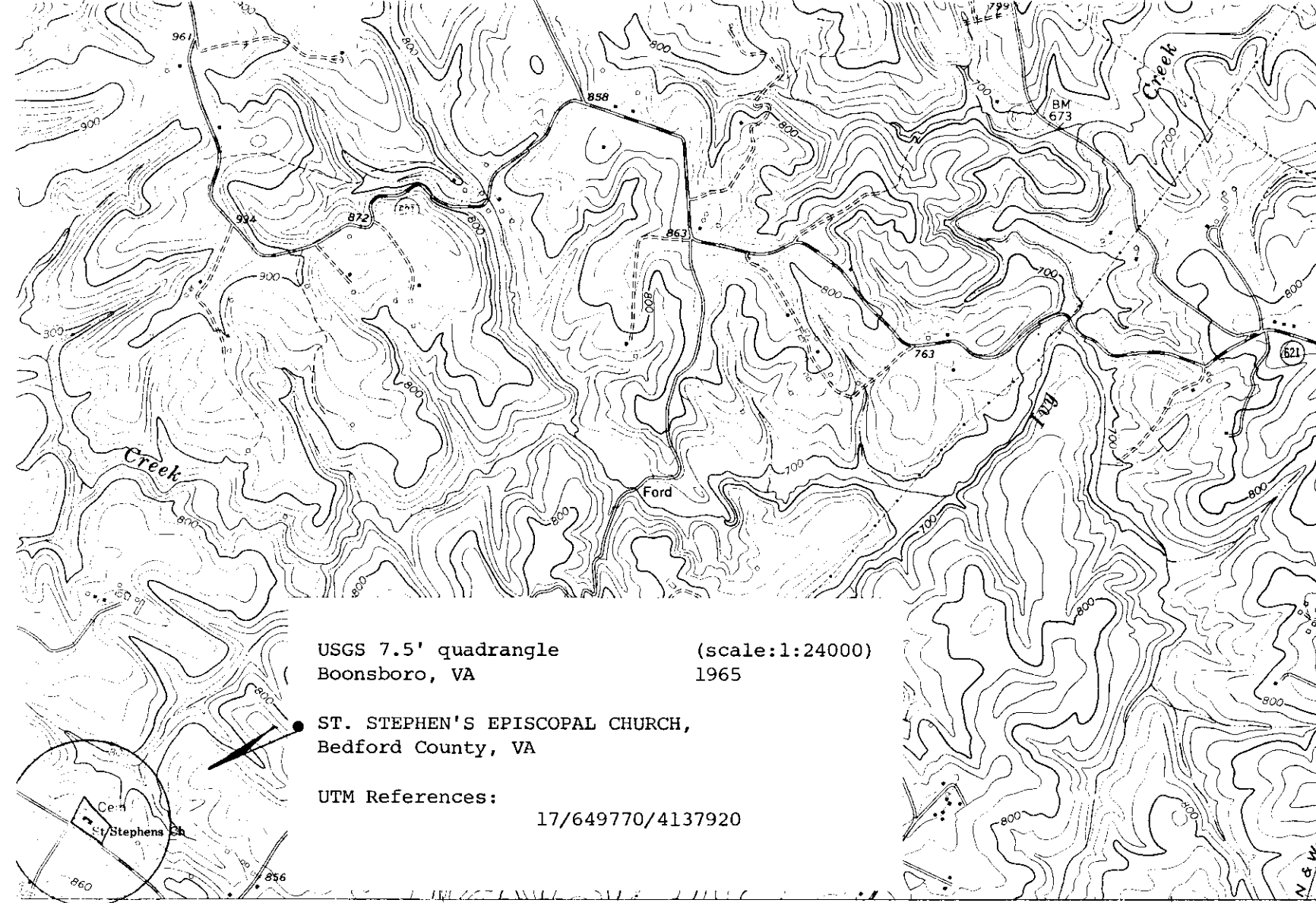
Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

10. Verbal Boundary Description.

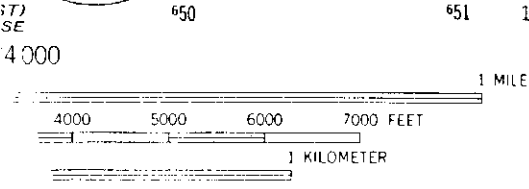
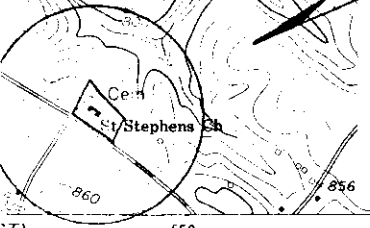
Beginning at an iron on the north side of State Highway #663, corner to St. Stephens Episcopal Church and John C. Lester, Jr. thence leaving said road N 44-35 E 389.58 feet to an iron, thence S 49-39 E 113.24 feet to an iron, thence S 43-42-30 E 342.90 feet passing an iron in the school lot, to an iron, thence S 42-50-35 W 331.57 feet to an iron in said highway, thence along said highway N 51-15 W 189.7 feet to an iron, N 53-02-30 W 165.17 feet to an iron, N 56-48-30 W 114.06 feet to the place of beginning and containing 3.821 acres.



USGS 7.5' quadrangle Boonsboro, VA (scale:1:24000) 1965

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, Bedford County, VA

UTM References: 17/649770/4137920



● INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY WASHINGTON, D. C. - 1967			
ROAD CLASSIFICATION			
Heavy-duty		Light-duty	
Medium-duty		Unimproved dirt	
U. S. Route		State Route	



**BOONSBORO, VA.**  
NE/4 GOODE 15' QUADRANGLE  
N3722.5—W7915/7.5

4141  
 4139  
 4138000m N.  
 37° 22' 30"  
 79° 15'  
 CITY FA 1581 SW