

VLR-10/17/72 NRHP-4/24/73

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Virginia	
COUNTY: King William	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: **St. John's Church'**

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
.1 mile South of Rt. 30, .1 mile Southeast of intersection with Rt. 630.

CITY OR TOWN:
Sweet Hall Vicinity (William Lloyd Scott.. Eighth District Congressman)

STATE Virginia	CODE 51	COUNTY: King William	CODE 101
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Being restored
<input type="checkbox"/> Comments			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
(The Reverend Allan Green)

STREET AND NUMBER:
The Vestry of St. John's Church.

CITY OR TOWN:
West Point

STATE: Virginia	CODE 51
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
King William County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
King William

STATE: Virginia	CODE 51
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: **1934 1938** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE: D. C.	CODE 11
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. John's Church stands in a clearing in a wooded area just south of Route 30 about 10 miles west of West Point. The main body of the T-shaped building has a steeply pitched gable roof and measures 50'3" x 30'2"; the wing, an early addition, is 24' wide and 28'9" long. The walls are laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers above the bevelled water table with English bond below. Rubbed brick suggests quoins at the salient corners, and marks the arches and jambs of all windows and the north and west doorways. A row of rubbed brick and a row of glazed headers are used along the rake of all three gables. Queen closers occur at the salient corners and irregularly at the openings of doors and windows. There are three large windows with rounded arches on the south wall, two in the east end, one in each side of the wing, and one in the western part of the north wall. All of these windows have been extended at the bottom by about six courses. There are two small windows with segmental arches in the north gable, one with a flat arch of gauged brick in the west gable and a circular window in the east gable. There is a door in both ^{the} west and the north ends. The western doorway has a segmental arched pediment, including a raked cornice of molded brick, and a horizontal cornice of molded brick over a rounded arch and raised jambs with pedestals. The north doorway has a triangular pediment in which both cornices consist of molded brick, and which surmounts a flat arch of gauged brick, raised jambs and rudimentary pedestals. A brick with "1734" and another with "IH" in the horizontal cornice are said to derive from the original south doorway. There has been extensive repainting and repair on the exterior of the building.

The interior of the structure reflects its T shape. The main body of the building has a segmentally arched ceiling. The gallery in the west is colonial, has turned balusters, and a shallow front with simple mouldings; the stair to this gallery is collapsed. The north gallery is also colonial and has a stair and a front of horizontal raised panels. Both galleries are supported by a pair of slender fluted Tuscan columns, although the south column of the west gallery is not in place.

A striking feature of the interior is a large reredos with pediments, fluted pilasters, pedestals, panels and spaces for the panels containing the decalogue and creed located on the south wall projecting into the east and middle windows. This reredos is not original to St. John's, and it may possibly have been moved from Acquinton Church (1734) or New Church, Stratton Major Parish (1768). There are plans to remove the reredos from the church.

The church is currently undergoing a long-term renovation.

G. H.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

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) **1734**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | osophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. John's Church is a fine example of the T-shaped form of Virginia's colonial churches. It exhibits quality brickwork in its wall surfaces and doorways, and it also retains a large amount of colonial woodwork in its interior galleries. The large reredos, although not original to the church, is regarded as a magnificent example of colonial wood working. St. John's is the only surviving colonial church in King William County to remain in the Episcopal charge. This church is also important in that it is associated with Carter Braxton, Signer of the Declaration of Independence, who regularly attended worship there.

St. John's Parish was formed in 1680 from St. Stephen's and Stratton Major Parishes, and was enlarged in 1691 by incorporating the portion of St. Peter's Parish north of the Pamunkey. In 1729, the vestry of the parish expressed concern over the decay of the existing churches and agreed to replace them. In 1731, there was considerable debate over the possibility of replacing the two churches or constructing one new one. After several conflicting orders, it was at last agreed upon to build two churches "...in the most convenient places in the s^d parish for the general Ease of the Inhabitants." The present church was completed in 1734. The wing is thought to have been added between 1755 and 1765. It was during this period that the eloquent and popular Henry Skyren drew large crowds to his services at St. John's.

The church seems to have been nearly abandoned after the Disestablishment, but was used occasionally by Methodists, Baptists and others. In 1877, two Episcopalians, Capt. Robert E. Lee, Jr. and Dr. Buchan Richards purchased the property to keep other denominations from taking over the old church. In 1913, the property was deeded to the vestry of the new St. John's in nearby West Point. Since that time, the inter-denominational St. John's Restoration Association, advised by architect Milton Grigg, has worked to preserve and restore the old building, which has not been used by an active congregation since the Disestablishment.

G. H.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mason, George Carrington, Colonial Churches of Tidewater Virginia.
Richmond: Whittet and Shepperson, 1945.

Rawlings, James Scott, Virginia's Colonial Churches. Richmond: Garrett
and Massie, 1963.

Rose, Harold Wickliffe, The Colonial Houses of Worship in America. New
York: Hastings House, 1963.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	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	37 ° 37 ' 05 "	76 ° 55 ' 25 "				
NE	37 ° 37 ' 05 "	76 ° 55 ' 11 "				
SE	37 ° 36 ' 53 "	76 ° 55 ' 11 "				
SW	37 ° 36 ' 53 "	76 ° 55 ' 25 "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **10 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION: **Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission** DATE: **August, 1972**

STREET AND NUMBER:
Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN: **Richmond** STATE: **Virginia** CODE: **51**

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 _____

J. R. Fishburne, Director

Title **Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission**

Date _____

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Virginia	
COUNTY King William	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

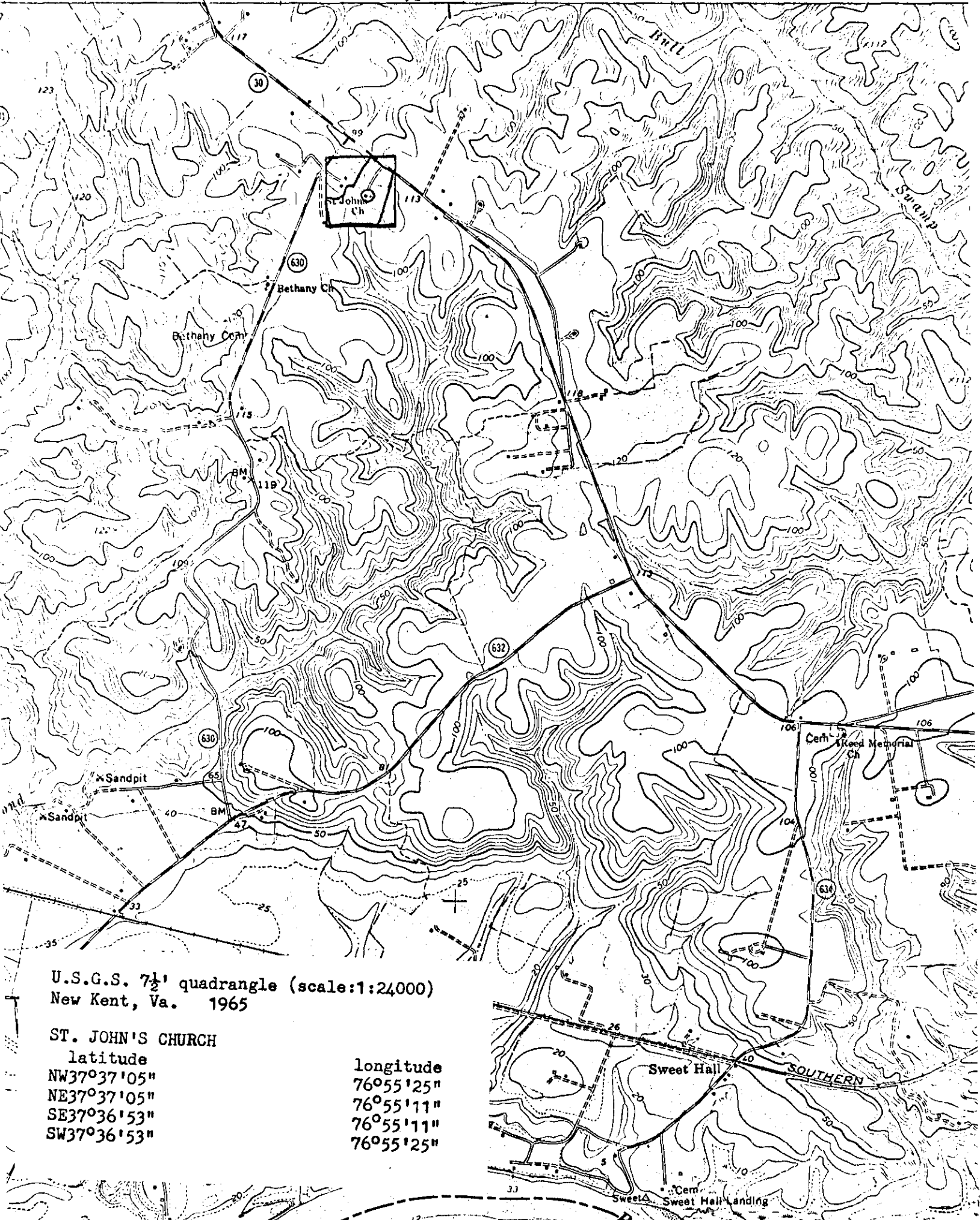
6. Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

1958 Federal

Library of Congress

Washington, D. C.

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U.S.G.S. 7½' quadrangle (scale:1:24,000)
New Kent, Va. 1965

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

latitude
 NW37°37'05"
 NE37°37'05"
 SE37°36'53"
 SW37°36'53"

longitude
 76°55'25"
 76°55'11"
 76°55'11"
 76°55'25"