

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Grace Episcopal Church

Other names/site number: #249-5007

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 303 South Main Street

City or town: Kilmarnock State: VA County: Lancaster

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 A B x C D

<p>Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>Date</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>Date</p>
<p>Title :</p>	<p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the 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

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19TH CENTURY: Gothic Revival

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

FOUNDATION:BRICK

WALLS:BRICK, SYNTHETICS: vinyl

ROOF: ASBESTOS

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Grace Episcopal Church is on the west side of South Main Street (Virginia State Route 3,) south of the downtown commercial area, in the town of Kilmarnock, Lancaster County. The campus has along its east side a Colonial Revival brick church (1958) and two brick parish house buildings known as former Grace House and the current Grace House, dating from 1949 and 1988 respectively. To the west is: an 1852 frame, gable-roofed Gothic Revival chapel which was the original church building; a churchyard with cemetery; and a parking lot. The east lawn, between the church and South Main Street has several mature trees including a large *magnolia grandiflora*. The western side of the property has trees and shrubs dotted throughout. Brick paved paths provide circulation among the buildings and connect them to both the parking lot at the west and the sidewalk to the east. The chapel building has been partially restored recently with the recovery of two original windows in the apse and is scheduled to have its aluminum siding removed. The current Grace House has been little changed since its 1988 construction.

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Grace Church has had some minor interior changes and a small exterior sacristy addition. The original Grace House has had a minor bathroom addition, sensitively handled. The complex as a whole has strong integrity.

Narrative Description

Grace Chapel

The chapel was the original Grace Church, built in 1852 and sited where the present church stands. It was saved and moved west from South Main Street in 1958 to make way for the new church building. The chapel is a one-story, frame, gable-fronted building, three bays deep in the nave with a telescoping, gabled, one bay apse at the west end. Each of the three bays in the principal portion of the building has a lancet window created by six-over-six double hung sash windows topped by a fixed triangular light with tracery.

The façade of the chapel has a one bay, central, front-gabled porch supported by turned columns with brackets and cast iron balustrade railings on either side. The porch is flanked by the same windows found on the north and south elevations of the nave. These eight windows have split louvered shutters that have arched portions at the head to match the window opening.

The façade has a pedimented gable with a louvered fan light in the tympanum. There is a small cross on the façade at the peak of the gable. Exterior siding has been enclosed in vinyl though trim remains exposed. Roofing material on the principal portion of the chapel is asbestos shingle and the apse has composite shingles.

The apse's windows at the north and south elevations are six-over-six double hung sash. There are two doors on the west elevation of the apse that lead to a platform containing a covered entrance to the crawlspace and wooden steps to grade level at the south end. There is a three-part cased opening between the doors that was until recently enclosed. It has a central fixed light window flanked by Victorian multi-colored sash. The sash windows had been encased in the siding as had a similar central window. The deteriorated central window has been replaced with the single fixed light until funds are available for its restoration. There is an interior brick chimney on the north elevation.

Entrance to the chapel is by double leaf paneled doors. The nave has a central aisle and pews that extend to the exterior walls. A balcony spans the interior at the east of the chapel accessed by a two run stair that rises from the center of the church, south to a landing and then west to the balcony level. The balcony is supported by two Doric columns that flank the aisle at the nave. The balcony rail contains cast iron balusters identical to those on the exterior porch. The railing has been extended by an additional rail above the original, likely to meet building codes. Iron tie rods are exposed beneath the shaped ceiling.

At the chancel there are additional pews at the north (facing south) forming in essence a transept balanced by a small organ at the south all on a platform which is elevated one step. Placed between them is a marble baptismal font inscribed "Christ Church" on a turned wooden base.

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A communion rail with the same cast iron balusters used at the porch and the balcony separates this portion of the church from the altar area in the apse. Within a pointed arched opening is a vaulted apse. In contrast to the nave which is plastered, the apse has wooden paneling with beadboard in the vault and below, overlaid panels and flat beadboard panels with ogee molding. A small altar originally attached to the north wall is now a freestanding altar on axis with the central aisle. The credence table, hymn board and clergy seating are original to the building. Within the apse are doors at the north and south to auxiliary spaces-storage to the north and a modest sacristy to the south.

Original Grace House

The original Grace House was designed by Courtenay Welton and built in 1949. It predates the current church and is to the north and immediately adjacent to it.

The building is a two story, front gabled brick building, three bays across and five bays deep, set perpendicularly to the axis of the church. It has twinned exterior end chimneys on the east and west elevations that are flush with the wall plane. The corners are quoined and the building has a brick stringcourse separating the two stories. The rear elevation has two exterior fire escape stairs, one from a door centered in the attic in the gable extending north and the second from a door centered on the second floor extending south. Windows are generally six-over-six double hung sash.

The east elevation of the original Grace House has a modest one story addition resting within the quoins by John Paul Hanbury accommodating an expansion of the women's restrooms. The addition has a flat roof and the cornice line lies at the height of the string course.

It is connected to Grace Church on the east by a one-story three-bay hyphen with three arched openings. The central opening has French doors with a fan light. It is flanked by openings with multi-light fixed light windows with fan lights above and wooden panels below. This was originally an open arcade but has been enclosed to provide interior circulation. It wraps to the west creating an enclosed narthex for the church that terminates on the west elevation with a one story three bay frame hyphen with a flat-roofed porch on Doric columns extending over a brick terrace. Entrance is in the south bay with six-over-six double hung sash with wooden panels below in the other two bays.

The interior spaces were largely re configured in the 1990s after the new Grace House was constructed. At that point the original Grace House was converted from a traditional parish house into a series of staff offices and smaller common rooms. The large assembly space and kitchen that were on the first floor have been replaced by offices, a conference room, and the choir room. The second story houses meeting rooms, offices and storage. Trim is modest and offices have commercial grade carpet and suspended acoustical tile ceiling.

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Grace Church was built in 1958 and designed by Milton L. Grigg, FAIA. The church is oriented on a slightly canted north/south axis, parallel to South Main Street. The core of the church is cruciform in plan with an engaged bell tower and steeple to the north east, and hyphens to the earlier (1949) original Grace House. A 1996 one story octagonal frame “Williamsburg” style sacristy addition to the south west is attached by a modest frame hyphen. It is modeled after an addition to the parish house at Bruton Parish in Williamsburg

The core of the church is laid in Flemish bond brick with a molded water table. The predominant windows are compass-headed eighteen-over-twelve light double-hung sash. There is a fixed 12 light round window in the gable of the east transept. The window surrounds have arched brick work and the primary windows have monumental paired paneled shutters, which are rounded to match the window profiles. The roof is cross-gabled with the transept wings having a slightly lower ridge line. It is clad in asbestos shingles and has a modillioned cornice at the flared eaves.

The bell tower/steeple is square in plan and is located at the northeast of the church building. It is laid in Flemish bond to match the church. It contains the primary entrance to the church by double leaf glazed and paneled doors in an arched opening with fixed panels above on its east elevation. The tower has windows on each elevation that match those on the church though they do not have shutters. At a point above the roof line of the church the tower has a modillioned cornice below a coved standing seam metal roof that leads to an octagonal frame drum (with unequal sides and louvered panels on the larger sides), supporting a telescoping octagonal metal clad steeple (with a bell cast flared eave that extends beyond the profile of the supporting drum) which terminates with a metal Celtic cross.

The interior of the church is cruciform in plan. It is dominated by a large scale coved plaster molding that rests on a wooden cornice base that runs the entire perimeter of the principal space. There is a small balcony across the north end of the church supported by two small columns on square bases flanking the center aisle. Originally paneled, it now has a balustrade that matches that at the chancel. The rear of the church has four doors-a central entrance door flanked by two closet doors and an eastern entrance door. There are two rows of pews and three aisles on the main floor. Pews are thought to be original and have raised paneled ends. A raised paneled wainscot lines the interior and runs to the level of the window stools. Brass sconces and chandeliers throughout are reproduction “Williamsburg” style fixtures.

The altar is detached from the south wall of the church. The south interior wall is dominated by a tripartite reredo with fluted pilasters on bases with raised panels supporting a cornice and central pediment. The chancel is set off by a low balustraded communion rail which extends from the east and west walls of the church to and then curves toward the north. A semicircular set of three stairs descend from the altar rail to the nave.

A paneled octagonal pulpit on an engaged wineglass base is fixed at the east of the chancel and a more modest engaged paneled lectern with a pendant below is at the west. At the end of the west transept is an organ (moved from the east transept). When the organ was moved it displaced the

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sacristy, now housed in a frame addition. An organ cabinet which echoes Grigg's design for the reredo was designed by Williamsburg architect G. Alan Morledge, AIA-E.

Current Grace House

The present Grace House was built in 1988 to house the activities of a growing parish. Designed by William Henry Harris, AIA of Richmond, it is slightly larger than the original Grace House. It is a two story brick building—three bays wide and six bays deep. It also has twinned chimneys flush with the wall plane on the east and west elevations, quoins and a brick stringcourse between the first and second stories. However, while the string course is at roughly the same height as on the original Grace house, it belies the actual floor separation. The present Grace House has higher first floor ceilings to accommodate assembly spaces and has wall dormers to serve the second floor windows on the north and south elevations. The north elevation has an arched opening with an inset porch and double leaf entrance in the eastern most bay. A one-story shed-roofed extension between the Grace Houses contains the kitchen.

The interior of the first floor is a large open parish hall with adjoining kitchen and the second floor is classrooms off a central interior east-west hall. It is attached to the original Grace house by a one-story, three-bay gabled brick hyphen with three arched openings at the east elevation and a series of one-story shed roofed additions from both buildings at the west.

The interiors are utilitarian with vinyl tile and commercial grade carpeting on the floors, exposed concrete block in the stairwell and vinyl wall base. The second story houses a nursery and Sunday School rooms. The basement has been recently renovated with a small kitchen, casual meeting and audio-visual screening areas, to be a youth center.

Church yard, cemetery

The church yard has a large magnolia east of the original Grace House along with a dominating sycamore tree. The front elevation of the Church, and the Grace Houses have boxwoods as does the Chapel-- flanking the porch. There is paved parking at the north and west of the current Grace House, screened by shrubs. There are some shrubs and trees in the portion of the grounds that constitute the graveyard. Marked graves are to the west of the church and original Grace House and proceed a distance beyond the chapel. While no markers appear to be particularly old or artistic it is believed that there are earlier unmarked graves on site.

Inventory

Grace Church 1958 contributing building
Grace Chapel 1852 contributing building
Original Grace House 1949 contributing building
Current Grace House 1988 noncontributing building
Church Yard/Cemetery 1852 contributing site
Parking Lot Non-contributing site

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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 in 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 grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1852-1958

Significant Dates

1852
1949
1958

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Welton, Courtenay
Higgins, Kenneth
Grigg, Milton
Dawson, Stanley
Harris, William Henry
Morledge, G. Alan
Hanbury, John Paul C.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Grace Episcopal Church is significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The complex illustrates a century of Episcopal church architecture in Virginia through its two primary worship spaces: the Gothic Revival chapel, the original Grace Church; and the current Grace Church in the Colonial Revival Style by architect Milton Grigg. The juxtaposition of the two buildings demonstrates not only the growth of the congregation but changes in architectural expression of this parish which has its roots in the Georgian Christ Church (1732-35). The period of significance begins in 1852 when the original Grace Church was built and ends in 1958 when the current church was built. The chapel was moved on the property in 1958, within the period of significance, and its preservation through relocation contributes to its significance of the complex as a whole, thereby allowing the property to meet Criteria Consideration B. The property meets Criteria Consideration A because its significance is based on its architectural design.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

History of the church buildings

Christ Church parish was established in 1752 by the Virginia General Assembly creating a district on the north side of the Rappahannock River containing Christ Church (1732-35) and St Mary's White Chapel (1699, 1740-41).

As Christ Church was privately built by Robert Carter it did not suffer as much as other parishes with seizure of church property in the early nineteenth century. Nonetheless both the congregation and building declined as did many Episcopal churches after the disestablishment. . In the 1849 report of the parish to the state's annual convention, it was noted that the parish was without a rector and had infrequent services.¹ Christ Church was in a rural location and parishioners sought a location for a church that was closer to population centers and that was serviced by good roads.

In 1851, Addison Hall, a Baptist minister, donated a parcel in the Town of Kilmarnock to the trustees of Christ Church parish for the express purpose of constructing an Episcopal house of worship. The motivation for the gift is unknown and curious given the conflict between denominations in the early 1800s. The deed requires that a church be built within two years and that should the church be destroyed, a new one must be built within seven years or the land will revert to Hall's heirs.

¹ *Journal of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia*, 1849 p. 56.

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The report of Christ Church parish to the state's 1851 annual convention states "about \$100 have been subscribed in the parish and immediate vicinity, towards the erection of a church edifice now in progress of construction, and estimated to cost about \$1,200 or \$1,400."² The 1853 parish report includes Assistant Bishop John Johns' annual report noting he had consecrated Grace Church, Kilmarnock on November 18. The parochial report to the convention was given by the rector Rev. Edmund Withers. "I took charge of this parish in June last. It is, and will be for some time continue to be, suffering from the effects of frequent ministerial changes during the last fifteen years, and for the occasionally entire absence of any pastor. There are still left in it some genuine church people, who are truly pious Christians, who love God, and are very kind to their pastor. Within the past year, Grace Church, a new one, has been completed, presented to the Bishop, and consecrated through the active exertions of some of the parish laymen, and it is already filled with hearers."³

Vestry books from the period have no mention of the new church. Vestry books from the first half of the twentieth century are not complete however there are notes in the records referring to maintenance of Grace Church including estimates for shingles and for repainting.

Another gift prompted the construction of the original Grace House. Fannie Beeler Chase Staton (1874-1956), was a native of Lancaster County, Virginia. She moved to Williamston, North Carolina when she married her first husband and remained there when widowed. She survived a second husband as well. She was active in the Episcopal church and was a philanthropist. She donated funds for the construction of the Church of the Advent in Williamston constructed in 1916. She maintained her ties to friends and family in Lancaster County and donated monies for the construction of the original Grace House.

A September 30, 1949 article in the *Rappahannock Record* notes that Grace Church was to build a parish house. It was to be 30 by 60 feet and made of brick and cinderblock. The article describes the use and program of the building. "The members of Grace Church hope that this building will be an asset to the community at large, and, at the same time, serve the needs of its congregation. The parish house will remain detached from the church building so that all groups will feel free to use the building for social and educational purposes."⁴

L.A. Jones was the contractor and the architect Courtney Weldon (sic) was "an established church architect, of Richmond."⁵ Likely the article was referring to either Courtenay S. Welton, or his son Courtenay C. Welton, both architects in Richmond who had experience designing churches. The elder Welton, noted for his work on the Hamden-Sydney campus, designed an addition to the First Presbyterian Church in Richmond and the sanctuary for White Memorial Church in Raleigh. The younger Welton designed Calvary Methodist Church, Hatcher Memorial

² *Journal of the Fifty-Sixth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia*, p. 60.

³ *Journal of the Fifty-Eighth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia*, p. 51.

⁴ "Parish House Being Built." *Rappahannock Record*, September 8, 1949, p.1.

⁵ IBID

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Baptist Church, and Overbrook Presbyterian Church, all of Richmond.⁶ The Weltons were descendants of Robert "King" Carter who built Christ Church.

The article describes the parish house as the "first permanent unit of Grace Church" and continues, "Although the present plans are only for the construction of the parish house, the architect kept in mind that Grace Church would probably build a new church before so very many years have passed."⁷ Clearly the church was anticipating expansion.

That expansion got an unexpected boost in 1956. Fannie Staton, who had funded the construction of Grace House, passed away that summer while visiting family near Kilmarnock. Vestry minutes for the meeting September 4, 1956 reflect a bequest to the church from her estate of \$60,000 for the construction of a new church.⁸

In January 1957 a building committee was formed. At the annual meeting of the church the following month the building committee referenced a letter from a Richmond architect Alan McCullough suggesting a colonial church be built and suggesting models in Richmond. The committee also suggested hiring a landscape architect for the project. By March, McCullough had sent the building committee a proposed fee schedule for the new church.

By April of that year the building committee had come to consensus on the size of the new church with seating capacity of 250 (plus choir). They were also receiving proposals from "architect Brooks" and "architect from Charlottesville." Interestingly there is no mention of Courtney C. Welton being considered for the job (his father died in 1951).

The vestry reviewed the suggestions of landscape architect Kenneth Higgins who recommended "the long axis of the new church be parallel to the street with a memorial garden around the present large holly tree. This would necessitate moving old Church."⁹ The committee recommended hiring Milton Grigg as the architect, and would explore further the disposition of the frame church building.

An open vestry/congregational meeting later that month affirmed the location and orientation of the new building. It was noted that the cost of moving the old church would be \$1500-1600 not including repairs to plaster etc incurred from the move making the total expense closer to \$4,300-4,500. The group assembled voted 16 to 9 to demolish the frame church. In May the vestry moved to send a letter to the congregation discussing the disposition of the frame church. They also discussed the timing of the new church and there was a sentiment that delaying a new church would impede the growth of the congregation. Grigg had advised he could design a church that would cost \$70,000 (excluding the organ). It was moved that a contract with Grigg be signed and that the church's property be surveyed.

⁶ John E. Wells and Robert E. Dalton, The Virginia Architects 1835-1955, p. 467.

⁷ "Parish House Being Built." p. 1.

⁸ Grace Church Vestry Minute Books

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In June of 1957 it was noted that the church had a variance for the new building to encroach partially beyond the building line. In August the vestry reviewed two sketches for the church and approved one with a tower and also made other suggestions to the architect. They also began to consider where they might worship during construction. By November the architect and church were thinking about possible contractors and by December the church was sending drawings to a selected group of contractors.

In the beginning of 1958 the church received five bids with costs ranging from \$92,000-102,000 with a construction duration of 5-12 months. All were given alternatives for new bids. In February the vestry recommended the church contract with Stanley Dawson given his revised bid. Also at this time it is suggested that the frame church be moved temporarily with no extensive repairs post its move, to house the congregation during the construction of the new church.

A congregational meeting in February allowed the parish to see sketches and plans. The budget was an item of discussion. The cost of construction exceeded the amount of Mrs. Staton's bequest. It was decided that the parish should not rely solely on Mrs. Staton's generosity, but also make its own contributions toward building the church. A fundraising brochure was suggested. The vestry that month reviewed and signed the contract with the builder, made provisions for elements not in the bid, such as pews, reviewed the fundraising brochure, and requested a more definite accounting of funds dedicated to the building. The disposition of the old church was again a subject of discussion. Previous meeting minutes were reviewed and it was noted that the building had to be moved or demolished by mid-March. It was noted that demolition would require the church to find storage room for the pews and other articles and that there was an expense in using the Grace House for services in setting up and breaking down seating etc for services. It was decided that the building would be moved off the construction site and for as little money as possible. The minutes reflect discord about the ultimate disposition of the building.

The fundraising brochure for the new church was produced featuring a sketch by the architect of a building that looks very much like the one that was built. It notes the \$60,000 bequest and anticipates the church will cost an additional \$30,000. The new building would be "of brick construction, simulating early Colonial architecture, and thoroughly Episcopal in character. It will be connected to Grace House by a graceful arcade, and new offices in the arcade will release present office rooms in the Parish House for the use of the Sunday School." ¹⁰ The church would also have "seating capacity for 250, exclusive of seating in the transepts; a working sacristy...a robing and assembly room for the choir; a perfect three-zone heating system...a narthex...Altar, pulpit, lectern, Communion rail, and all woodwork made especially to conform to style of new construction; an edifice planned for usefulness, attractiveness and comfort." ¹¹

By April the old church had been moved at a cost of \$3500 plus \$50 for plaster repair and some additional sum to reconnect the heating system. Vestry minutes report three ladies had offered to pay for the rehabilitation of the old church which would require new sills, some new joists, and

¹⁰ "Here in His Name We Build--Building Plans for a New Grace Episcopal Church," nd.

¹¹ IBID

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fresh plaster. Another anonymous donor pledged to contribute the amount required above the bequest for the new church if the old one was saved. A decision on this was tabled but the vestry decided it would not accept donations to restore the old church and until the funds had been raised to pay for the new one.

The preservation of the earlier church continued to be an issue. Vestry minutes from July note "...earlier the Building Committee, Vestry and the congregation had all voted not to retain old Grace Church. However, it has developed that giving to the new church was somewhat dependent upon retaining old Grace Church. This matter was brought up before the Ladies' Auxiliary who appointed a committee to consider the matter. The church architect furnished an opinion and estimate."¹² It was believed that \$2094.58 would be needed to put the old church on a proper foundation but would not including painting or a new porch roof. "Mrs. Bullock of National Trust for Historic Preservation (Mellon sponsored) considered old Grace Church of historic value."¹³ The minutes continue to state that Mrs. Turner of the Ladies' Auxiliary "stated she had pledges in hand to cover the rehabilitation of old Grace church."¹⁴ After some discussion, "the ladies withdrew." and conversation continues and it was suggested there be yet another congregational meeting.

On August 19, 1958 a special congregational meeting was held. The previous meetings and votes were reviewed. Mrs. Turner advised she had pledges in hand to rehabilitate the old church. Mrs. Dawe "remarked that previous votes to give up old Grace Church were based on finances and need to concentrate on new church, but it has developed that harmony would be improved if old Grace Church were retained."¹⁵ Other participants noted it would provide additional space, that the recently established Foundation for Historic Christ Church would be assuming the maintenance for Christ Church (relieving the parish of that expense), and that the building could house services during construction. "In answer to a question by Mrs. Pheris, Mr., Keane stated that the proponents of retaining old Grace Church have contributed to new Grace Church out of proportion to the rest of the congregation."¹⁶ A new vote was taken and thirty six voted to retain the old building and four opposed. On August 19, 1958 the future of the old church was assured.

Work on the new building continued. Vestry minutes in October noted that carpet had been selected and that the architect had addressed the contractor (who was working on six houses) complaining about lack of progress and the need to have the building envelope completed before the winter weather. In November the vestry agreed the reredos would be ponderosa pine; there was a change order for a niche to hold the Book of Remembrance. The cornerstone was described and its purchase authorized. By December part of the finished floor had been poured, the roof and steeple were anticipated to be completed shortly, the windows and sash were expected shortly and the heating system was to be operational in a matter of weeks. The cornerstone was laid on December 15, 1958.

¹² Grace Church Vestry Minute Books

¹³ IBID

¹⁴ IBID

¹⁵ IBID

¹⁶ IBID

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The new church was consecrated on the evening of September 23, 1959. The instrument of donation in service leaflet requests the bishop to "consecrate the same by the name of Grace Episcopal Church."¹⁷ The Rector and Vestry "relinquish all claim to any right of disposing of the said building, or allowing of the use of it, in any way inconsistent ...(and) certify that the said building and the ground upon which it is erected have been fully paid for, and are free from lien and other encumbrance..."¹⁸

The new Grace House was built in 1988 to meet the increasing needs of a growing parish. It would house a large assembly space and kitchen allowing the original Grace House to be repurposed for offices. In 2010 a small addition was added on the east side of the original Grace House to expand the women's restrooms

Trends and Architecture in the Episcopal Church in Virginia in relation to Grace Church

According to Dell Upton, Virginia had 95 Anglican parishes in 1774 and 166 churches were built in these parishes between 1700 and the Revolutionary War.¹⁹ Christ Church, of the eponymous Christ Church parish, was built 1732-1735. It and St Mary's White Chapel (1699, 1740-41) were the original churches in the parish as established in 1752, built during the period that the Church of England was the established church in the American colonies.

Colonial Anglican churches were generally simple buildings. Historian David Holmes describes them as having little exterior decoration signifying a church and they could easily be confused with other civic buildings.²⁰ Canon law required that the entrance was at the west of the building and parishioners entered to face an altar at the east end of the space. The interiors included three primary elements, an altar, baptismal font, and pulpit. Holmes adds that in this period, the pulpit was the main focus of the churches, inspired by Christopher Wren's "auditory churches" with an emphasis on placing the pulpit in a location that would allow congregants to hear the lessons and sermon.²¹ Christ Church is a good example of a typical church in terms of orientation and the focus on the pulpit. Indeed the box pews at Christ Church are so high it generally is not possible to see the altar. The three tiered pulpit however is quite visible.

In the post-revolutionary period, what is now the Episcopal Church was forced to reinvent itself independent from, but in relationship with, a mother church in Britain while adapting to the new conditions and laws of America. In Virginia, laws against dissenters were repealed and taxation to support the established church was ended. After the first of January 1777 there would no longer be a reliable source of revenue for Anglican/Episcopal churches derived from the government through taxes. These changes led to a period of decline in the Episcopal Church.

¹⁷ "Consecration of Grace Episcopal Church," Service leaflet, September 23, 1959.

¹⁸ IBID

¹⁹ Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997.p. xiv.

²⁰ David L. Holmes, *A Brief History of the Episcopal Church*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993. p. 96.

²¹ IBID

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In Virginia this decline was pronounced. The statewide annual convention of the Episcopal church in Virginia had declining numbers and in many years into the early 19th century did not achieve a quorum. The General Assembly passed legislation that forced the gradual repossession and sale of glebe lands and other church real estate that had been purchased with tax revenue. Many congregations dissolved and church buildings were left abandoned or were absorbed by churches of other denominations. In 1811 the national General Convention of the church had no representation from Virginia²² and it reported that "the church in Virginia is, from various causes, so depressed, that there is danger of her total ruin, unless great exertions, favored by the blessing of Providence, are employed to raise her."²³

Strong leadership and an evangelical movement began to rebuild the Episcopal Church in Virginia "Ordained during the period when the General Convention feared for the future of the Episcopal Church of Virginia, the ascetic, single-minded (William) Meade quickly attracted fellow evangelicals to Virginia."²⁴ Bishop Meade celebrated the history of the church in Americana and hoped to inspire Episcopalians with an understanding of the role the church and prominent churchmen played in history. Meade also had a respect for the early church buildings in Virginia. "Meade was fond of the old buildings for didactic and spiritual reasons. He valued them, as he valued the old gentry, for the lessons they could give to nineteenth-century Virginians. He revered them as consecrated places.While he saved many colonial churches from destruction, he was ready to alter them to suit his purposes, and to demolish them where they seemed to hinder spiritual progress."²⁵ Richard Channing Moore who was made bishop of Virginia in 1841 continued to build on Meade's progress and the two are credited with saving the church through their evangelism.

During this renewal of the Episcopal denomination in Virginia, a number of theological and architectural trends began to influence its liturgy and architecture. Movements such as the Oxford Movement and the Ecclesiologist Movement began to turn away from the emphasis on evangelism and preaching towards ritual and ceremony.

The Oxford Movement with its emphasis high church emphasis on ritual and ceremony also marked a trend in Episcopal architecture with a turn from Georgian and classical styles to the Gothic Revival and stained glass, apses, ecclesiastical decoration such as crosses and the central placement of the altar. In the 1840s, The New York Ecclesiologist Society began the periodical, *New York Ecclesiologist* which "intended to disseminate Ecclesiologist precepts and educate the Episcopal clergy in church architecture, history, and liturgical tradition."²⁶ They even developed and distributed church plans. Other books such as Episcopal Bishop John Henry Hopkins' Essay on Gothic Architecture: Designed Chiefly for the Use of Clergy (1836) and

²² George J. Cleaveland, et al Up From Independence-The Episcopal Church in Virginia. Orange, Virginia: Green Publishers, Inc. 1976, p. 60.

²³ IBID p. 56.

²⁴ Holmes, p. 62.

²⁵ Upton, p. xix.

²⁶ Calder Loth and Julius Trousdale Sadler Jr The Only Proper Style: Gothic Architecture in America. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975, p. 62.

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Richard Upjohn's, Upjohn's Rural Architecture (1852)²⁷ promoted Gothic revival architecture for church buildings.

The architect, if there was one, for the original Grace Church is unknown. By 1852 the trend of Gothic revival Architecture for churches, particularly Episcopal churches was established. The stylistic departure from Christ Church marks a change in attitude towards worship. The orientation of the nave towards an apse with the altar as a central focus, with pews that afford a view of the altar and the absence of a dramatic pulpit indicate a worship service no longer dominated by preaching and, instead, one that has a strong emphasis on the ritual of the sacrament of communion. Documentation of the interior of the church from its original construction has not been found. It may be that the church had a more prominent pulpit and was later changed as many of the churches noted in James MacAllister's article "Architecture and Change in the Diocese of Virginia." Ultimately however it adopted the plan of the Gothic Revival churches, reflecting a shift in liturgy and worship from the practices exemplified in its mother church, colonial Christ Church.

After World War II, the congregation had grown, mirroring national trends. " World War II was followed by a nationwide religious revival...the Episcopal Church Benefitted greatly for it in terms of sheer numbers."²⁸ The 1949 article about the construction of Grace House anticipates a new building to accommodate its congregation. The vestry and building committee seemed to enter the process in choosing an architect and a design with few preconceptions. The driving consideration was size.

The architect chosen to design the church, Milton Grigg, FAIA adopted a style that looked back to colonial antecedents. Grigg worked for the firm of Perry, Shaw and Hepburn in Colonial Williamsburg from 1929 to 1933 and his knowledge of colonial architecture and interest in preservation were grounded in that experience.

Grigg was involved in residential commissions and in preservation projects, but he is most noted for his religious buildings. His professional affiliations related to religious architecture were numerous and included Guild for Religious Architecture; Episcopal Diocese of Virginia Commission on Church Architecture; American Institute of Architects Committee on Religious Buildings; American Council on Religious Art; Department of Church Building and Architecture, National Council of Churches; Architects Advisory Panel of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; and the Interfaith Research Center on Religious Architecture.²⁹

Grigg's thoughts about worship spaces evolved during his career and it is reflected in his designs. Architectural historian Joseph Michael Lasala posits that his association with the Church Architectural Guild of America helped shape his ideas that included an informality of the interior

²⁷ IBID, p. 65.

²⁸ Homes, p. 157.

²⁹ Grigg, Wood and Browne, Architects, marketing brochure, nd.

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space with less separation between congregants and clergy.³⁰ That would mirror the liturgical movement which had a great influence in the Episcopal Church worship and architecture in the mid to late twentieth century.³¹ Indeed a less formal and more "modern" church was considered at Grace. In a typescript of notes concerning the work of the building committee, parishioner Louis Dawe writes that the committee considered how the style and plan of the church would impact its function. A modern church with a free standing altar encircled by a communion rail was considered.³²

However the traditional style of the existing Parish House (Grace House) dictated a traditional style for the church to make a harmonious whole. In this regard Grace Church is typical of Grigg's early career when his church commission tended to lean to the traditional both in terms of style and plan. As such he drew on his knowledge of traditional architecture gained through his preservation work in Williamsburg and closer to the Northern Neck including restoration and preservation work at Christ Church, Middlesex County; Old St John's Church, King William County; and St Mary's Whitechapel, Lancaster County.

Some of his churches with traditional designs such as Kilmarnock Methodist Church, and St. James the Lesser Church in Ashland reference historic Christ Church on the exterior. First Church of Christ Scientist, Alexandria references a typical colonial church as described by Holmes as having little exterior decoration signifying a church and easily confused with other civic buildings. Clearly Griggs had great capacity to design in a colonial style.

Grace Church's exterior may have some influence from Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg with its oversized compass-headed windows, cruciform shape and square tower with compass-headed windows supporting a wooden drum and steeple. Grigg's second wife Ella Repass was the niece of W. A. R. Goodwin, the rector of Bruton Parish and she lived with him as a child after the death of her father. She worked briefly as a researcher at Colonial Williamsburg while Grigg was employed with Perry Shaw Hepburn.³³

Interestingly the orientation of the church on a north/south axis was the result of a suggestion prior to Grigg's employ by landscape architect Kenneth Higgins. Higgins hoped to retain a large holly tree and incorporate it into a memorial garden, though there is no mention in the vestry books of any further design by Higgins beyond his suggestion for the siting of the church. Thus the nontraditional altar in the south end of the church was not purely a result of Grigg's design intent.

Grigg's later church work is strikingly modern and a radical departure from his designs with clear historical antecedents. Thus it is a good example of his early church work that used a historic

³⁰ Joseph Michael Lasala, "The Curriculum Vitae of a Classicist" *Magazine of Albemarle County History* vol 67 2009, p. 35.

³¹ Holmes, p. 112.

³² Lousie Dawe. "Some notes on the building of Grace Church, Kilmarnock, Virginia 1958-1959" Typescript April 29, 1960, p. 3.

³³ Lasala p. 30.

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design vocabulary, hearkening to 18th century antecedents and not yet fully embracing trends in worship and design that would mark his later work.

The two churches on the Grace Church campus reflect trends in design, liturgy and worship in the Episcopal church in Virginia from a movement away from the antecedents of Christ Church and a return to colonial forms on the cusp of a modern movement that would depart from traditional forms and plans toward new concepts of worship in the mid to late twentieth century.

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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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 249-5007; 249-5028-0018

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 1.71

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 37.707043° Longitude: -76.379199°

2. Latitude: 37.706203° Longitude: -76.378927°

Grace Episcopal Church
Name of Property

Lancaster, Virginia
County and State

3. Latitude: 37.706042° Longitude: -76.379677°
4. Latitude: 37.706928° Longitude: -76.379964°

Or
UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

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|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.) The boundary of the nominated property consists of the boundaries of two contiguous parcels in Lancaster County Virginia tax records, 23A 11 31 and 21A 11 30, as indicated in the map entitled Grace Episcopal Church Boundary Map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.) These two parcels contain the contributing resources of the nominated property. Additional parcels owned by the church were added after the period of significance; and/or contain no relevant or significant resources.

11. Form Prepared By

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organization: Hanbury Preservation Consulting
street & number: PO Box 6049
city or town: Raleigh state: NC zip code: 27628
e-mail maryruffin@hanburypreservation.com
telephone: (919) 828-1905S
date: November 2, 2016

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Name of Property

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photo Log

The following information is common to all photographs:

Name of Property: Grace Episcopal Church

City or Vicinity: Kilmarnock

County: Lancaster

State: Virginia

Photographer: Mary Ruffin Hanbury

Date Photographed: July 2016

Grace Chapel, porch, view to NW

1 of 26

Grace Chapel, view to NW

2 of 26

Grace Chapel, view to NE

3 of 26

Grace Chapel, view to SE

4 of 26

Grace Chapel, interior, gallery, view to E

5 of 26

Grace Chapel, interior, chancel apse, view to W

6 of 26

Grace Chapel, interior, woodwork detail, view to N

7 of 26

Grace Church, view to W

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Grace Church, view to SW

9 of 26

Grace Church, view to W

10 of 26

Grace Church, view to NW

11 of 26

Grace Church, view to E

12 of 26

Grace Church, interior, molding

13 of 26

Grace Church, interior, view to NW

14 of 26

Grace Church, interior, reredo

15 of 26

Grace Church, interior, lectern

16 of 26

Grace Church, interior, view to N

17 of 26

Grace Church, interior, font

18 of 26

Grace Church, interior, view to S

19 of 26

Grace Church, hyphen, view to SW

20 of 26

Grace Church, hyphen interior, view to N

21 of 26

Grace Church, hyphen interior, view to S

22 of 26

Grace Church, brickwork detail

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Original Grace House, view to E

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Original Grace House and New Grace House, view to NE

25 of 26

Hyphen and New Grace House, view to NW

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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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Latitude Longitude

Grace Episcopal Church
Lancaster County, VA
249-5007; 249-5028-0018

Legend

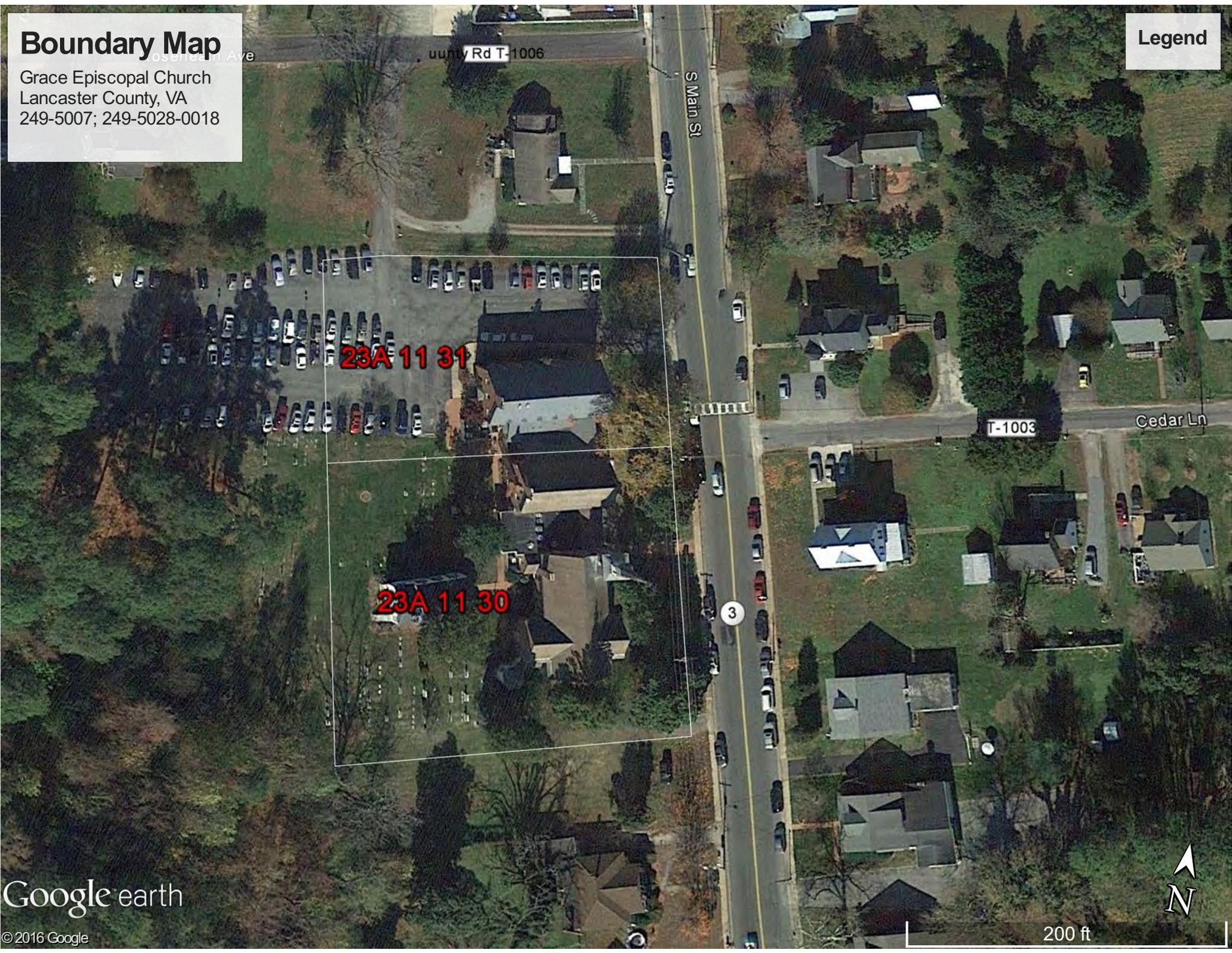
- 3 37.706042° -76.379677°
- 2 37.706203° -76.378927°
- 4 37.706928° -76.379964°
- 1 37.707043° -76.379199°



Boundary Map

Grace Episcopal Church
Lancaster County, VA
249-5007; 249-5028-0018

Legend



23A 11 31

23A 11 30

Google earth

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200 ft



Resource Map

Grace Episcopal Church
Lancaster County, VA
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Legend

- E** Churchyard
- D** Grace Chapel
- C** Grace Church
- A** New Grace House
- B** Old Grace House
- F** Parking Lot

