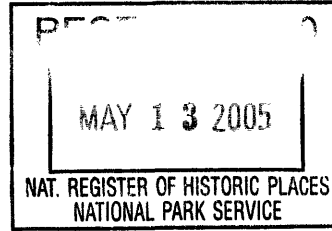


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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**



**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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. Paul's Lutheran Church
other names/site number 32ME2199

2. Location

street & number 4474 1st St NW N/A not for publication
city or town Hazen vicinity
state North Dakota code ND county Mercer code 057 zip code 58545

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title *Merlan E. Paaverud, Jr.* 5-11-05
Merlan E. Paaverud, Jr. Date
State Historic Preservation Officer (North Dakota)

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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): _____

Signature of the Keeper *Edson Beall* Date of Action 6/25/05

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Name of Property

Mercer, ND
County and State

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)

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

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

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

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls VINYL
roof ASPHALT
other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave
- D** a cemetery
- E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1921 - 1954

Significant Dates

1921

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Name of repository:

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Name of Property

Mercer, ND
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 4.33

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	14	311588	5255906	3		
	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4		
	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Adolph Miller

organization _____ date June 2004

street & number 201 Miller Ave telephone 701-745-3574

city or town Stanton state ND zip code 58571

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Mercer County, ND

Description

St. Paul's Lutheran Church is located on an unnumbered gravel road in Mercer County in the rural Pick City area with State Highway 200 running north and south directly to the west of the historic property. A wooden sign located out by Highway 200 reads, "St. Paul's Lutheran, Mercer County's Oldest Church, ELCA." The surrounding land is in rural agricultural use, consisting of cultivated land and pastures, and scattered farm and non-farm residences with related buildings.

The south part of this plat was designated as the cemetery, with a fence line running east-west through the property. A steel gate with an arch reading "St. Paul's Cemetery - 1889" constructed about 20 years ago marks the entrance to the cemetery.

The present church building in operation today was built in 1921 after the original building was destroyed in a cyclone. Built with a concrete foundation, a partial basement was included in the construction at that time. In the summer of 1970, the members of St. Paul's congregation gathered to add a full basement under the church structure. That basement serves many purposes and is used for Sunday school and meetings. It has a full kitchen and modern bathroom facilities. There are two ways to enter the basement, either from the outside on the west end of the building or from the church vestibule. Four wood windows on each of the south and north sides allow light into the basement.

The church's entrance faces east and is approached by a concrete flight of stairs leading up to the wood double doors. The ADA-accessible ramp, built in 1996 of steel poles and wire mesh, meets the south side of the landing.

The church is wood-framed and originally had wood lap siding painted white. White vinyl siding in the same width was installed over the wood siding in 1999. The rectangular building features two windows flanking the front door on the east side, four window on the north side, an apsidal bay to the west, behind the altar area, with a basement door only visible from the exterior, and four windows and a door to the vestry on the south side. The windows are wood, 1:1, single-hung sash with a separate, fixed, half-circle windows above each. The windows on the south side of the building, most affected by the UV rays, were replaced in September 2003 with in-kind wood windows.

The front gabled roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles, which replaced the original cedar shakes in 2000. Narrow eaves are made more decorative by the addition of short gable returns. A single story steeple sits atop the roof ridge at the east end of the building, topped with a pyramidal roof and a white wooden cross. Four louvered arches pierce the four sides of the steeple. Like the rest of the building, the steeple was originally wood-sided with a cedar shingle roof, but is currently sheathed in vinyl mimicking the original wood and topped with asphalt shingles.

The interior of the church consists of two main spaces: the vestibule and the sanctuary. The vestibule is a small entry space flanked by two cloakrooms. A staircase to the basement is found to the left of the doors upon entry. One enters the sanctuary through wood double doors. Oak pews flank the aisle.

The slightly raked floor appears to be maple. A similar wood was used for the door and window trim. Two raised steps lead to the chancel, which occupies the bay that projects through the west wall of the church. The vaulted ceiling extends into the chancel.

The altar is made of wood and draped with white cloth. A centerpiece of Jesus on the cross and two candle holders adorns the altar. Two chairs sit on each side of the altar. The aisle, steps, and chancel are carpeted. The pulpit is white-painted wood.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7, 8 Page 2

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Mercer County, ND

Description (continued)

The pastor's office in the southwest corner of the building is a 6 by 6 foot square room, furnished with two chairs, a small oval table, and shelving for the loud speaker control unit.

The St. Paul Lutheran Church has sustained some changes over the years. A basement was added, as was an ADA-accessible ramp to the front door. The original siding was covered with vinyl as the parishioners could not keep up with the painting schedule for the wood siding. A few of the windows have been replaced, but in kind. Overall, St. Paul's retains integrity of design, setting, location, feeling, association, and even materials and workmanship (even though the original siding is covered, it does still exist).

Statement of Significance

Immigration of the Odessa and Basarabia groups from the area around the Dead Sea began in the 1880s. In the second half of the 19th century, Russia had invited German settlers into southern Russia because of German advancements in farming. To entice settlers, the Russians offered freedom from civil and military service, freedom from taxes for 10 to 30 years, and freedom from religious persecution. Tzar Alexander II promised 30 to 60 hectares of land to each carefully selected family. These new settlers would serve as models for the peasantry in southern Russia. The settlers would prepare and work the land for better production, improving practices in wheat growing, sheep raising, silk and wool production, trade, and handicrafts.

While the deal was originally mutually beneficial, the perceived value of the German farmers to Russia eventually decreased and the Russians decided to change the terms of their agreement. They asked the German settlers to become Russian citizens, with the attendant civic duties. The Germans refused and accordingly lost their special status in Russian society. In some areas, the military drafted these settlers, sometimes with an eye to taking back the land the settlers had been given. With abuses being perpetrated by the Russian military in some areas, the German settlers felt unwelcome. Some fled back to Germany. Others, often hearing of land available in the United States through their churches, choose the United States as their refuge. The Homestead Act of 1862 made it easy for settlers to come to North Dakota and after many years without a homeland, these people ventured to America and life in a strange new country. Immigration of these groups began in the mid 1880s.

After a long trek from South Russia, many Germans from Russia found their way to the North Dakota Territory and to the Krem area of Mercer County. They left everything they had once known behind, bringing only a few meager belongings and much hope. They came for freedom – the freedom to choose to live their lives as they saw fit and the freedom to worship the faith of their own choosing. Their faith was strong and it gave them courage their quest for a free life in America. It was this strong faith that kept them going through the hard times of life on the North Dakota prairies.

As these settlers claimed their land in Mercer County, many found that they shared the Lutheran faith with their neighbors. In 1889, the people of this area banded together and formed the St. Paul's Lutheran congregation.

There were 29 charter members. They first gathered wherever they could - in the Bohrer School, the Birkkolz School and in a sod building on the Priebe farm, among others. In 1902, they decided to build a dedicated church building on the current site.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Mercer County, ND

Significance (continued)

Between 1902 and 1905, additional buildings were added to the church site. Since the primary transportation in those days was the horse and buggy, a large, long barn was built for horses. In addition, a smaller barn was built to house the pastor's horse. A parsonage was added in 1905. A Sunday school building was also built.

Weather permitting, supply pastors from the Krem parish served the congregation until 1902. The St. Paul's congregation still belonged to the Krem parish until 1913. It was at that time that the congregation decided that they could be self-supporting and separated from the Krem parish by calling their first Pastor, J. O. Graep.

Church services were held only in German, a practice that continued until 1963. Sunday school was held every Sunday. The younger classes were taught by women of the church; the pastor instructed the upper classes.

Because the congregation primarily spoke German, church records for many years were written in the old German-Russian script. Most of the records still exist, but the people who can read and translate them are now few and far between. The following is information gathered from the records of 1920 and 1921.

Disaster struck the church on June 8, 1920, when a cyclone passed through the area, destroying all of St. Paul's buildings except the parsonage. All that could be salvaged from the rubble was the silver altar service that is still used today.

Later in 1920, a building committee of five men made plans for the rebuilding of the church. The new building was to be 40 feet by 28 feet. The congregation also added a bell that weighed between 350-400 pounds. The inside of the new building had 12 foot ceilings; walls and ceilings were covered with pressed tin painted white. Pages of the minutes are missing, and the designer and cost of the new building is unknown.

In 1938, disaster and tragedy struck St. Paul's congregation once again. The parsonage was destroyed by fire. A young woman died in the fire, which was discovered to be arson. After an investigation by authorities, the church's pastor at the time, J. O. Janssen, was charged with manslaughter, bringing an end to his pastorate. A new parsonage was built in 1940. In 1956, the pastors began residing in the town of Stanton, so the parsonage was sold in 1959.

Modern times brought changes to the congregation. In 1963, the congregation of St. Paul's began their first services in English.

Today the church holds regular Sunday services and the congregation is active. WELCA is a women's group that provides flowers and balloons to cheer the sick. They handle bible camp registration, hold bazaars, and serve pancake and sausage meals. WELCA also provides special dinners for people that need financial help, with matching funds from Lutheran Brotherhood organizations such as Trivent.

For 115 years, the St. Paul's congregation has been active in the lives of rural Mercer County residents, specifically the immigrant Germans-from-Russia. The existing building is the physical manifestation of the centrality of the church in the social and cultural lives of this group. The use of the German language in services and Sunday school served to keep a valuable part of the culture viable for years longer than many other immigrant groups in North Dakota.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 4

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Mercer County, ND**

Significance (continued)

Addendum A

Pastors:

J. O. Graep	1913 - July 1919
J. O. Erpenstein	1919 - July 1920
Hans Wuerth	1921 - July 1926
Voelzke	1926 - July 1933
Hans Janssen	1935 - July 1938
Briest	1940 - 1942
Wulff	1943 - 1946
D. Bergsteadt	1948 - 1953
H. Weber	1956 - 1958
W.H. Simpfenderfer	1959 - 1962
Dolan	1962 - 1970
Dennis Anderson	1970 - 1974
Campbell	1975 - 1976
Keith Garness	1977 - 1981
Boger	1981 - 1988
Joel Sherer	1988 - 1989
Benjamin Fetcher	1989 - 1991
Jay Spoonheim	1993 - 1995
Ronald Hildahl	1999 - 2001

Pastor Marvin Mutzenberger is the present interim pastor. He was born and raised in this area and is proud to be living in Stanton again.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9, 10 Page 5

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Mercer County, ND

Bibliography

Congregation of St. Paul's Lutheran. "Church records." N.p., 1920-1921.

Diede, Pauline Neher. Speaking Out on Sod House Times. Hebron, ND: P.N. Diede, 1985.

Philipps, John. The Tragedy of the Soviet Germans: a story of survival. N.p., J. Philipps, 1983.

Rath, George. The Black Sea Germans in the Dakotas. Freeman, SD: Pine Hill Press, 1977.

Verbal Boundary Description

Starting from the corner stone, east of the northwest quarter, Sec. 34 - Township - 146 - Range 85, 1,386 feet east, thence due south 710 feet, due east 266 feet, due north 710 feet, due west 266 feet, which completes a square block, containing 4.33 (hundreds) acres.

Verbal Boundary Justification

This is the entire parcel historically associated with the church.