

## MINNESOTA HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

HISTORIC NAME: German Evangelical Salem Church COUNTY: LeSueur  
 CURRENT NAME: CITY/TWP.: LeSueur vic. Tyrone Township  
 LEGAL DESC.: Begin at the NW corner of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 25, ADDRESS: County Road 156  
 thence Ely 12.65 rods; thence Sly 12.65 rods; thence Wly 12.65 east of LeSueur  
 rods; thence Nly 12.65 rods to beginning.

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <u>X</u>	Excellent _____	Local <u>X</u>	Primary <u>Settlement</u>
Structure _____	Good <u>X</u>	State _____	Secondary <u>Religion</u>
Object _____	Fair _____	National _____	Others <u>Architecture</u>
District _____	Deteriorated _____		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:	Yes _____ No <u>Restricted X</u>	PRESENT USE:
VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD:	Yes <u>X</u> No _____	Services for
OCCUPIED:	Yes <u>X</u> No _____	Special Occasions

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1870	ORIGINAL USE: Church
ORIGINAL OWNER: Salem Church	ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Unknown

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Zion United Church of Christ 240 South Elmwood LeSueur, MN 56058	ACREAGE: Less than one acre <u>X</u>
LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: LeSueur County Historical Society Elysian, Minnesota 56028	UTM REFERENCE: St. Thomas Quad. 15 / 437350 / 4925880
FORM PREPARED BY: Britta Bloomberg	
DATE: August, 1980	

## DESCRIPTION:

The German Evangelical Salem Church is located about six miles east of Le Sueur on County Road 156 in section 25, Tyrone Township. The small frame church is situated beside a small cemetery in a rural setting of cultivated fields and scattered farmsteads.

The Greek Revival church was constructed in 1870 and is a simple rectangular structure sheathed in white clapboard. The gable roof is covered with shingles and pierced by a chimney at the north end. The gable returns, small central doorway framed by pilasters and entablature, and name and date plaque are the only features adorning the north facade. Simple fenestration on the east and west sides consists of three evenly-spaced rectangular windows, double hung, with six-over-six lights.

The building's interior retains significant integrity. Many of the original furnishings remain although some of the smaller items and the organ have been removed for security purposes.

Salem Church and the adjoining cemetery are maintained by Zion Church of Le Sueur. Labor Day services have been held there annually since 1976.

## SIGNIFICANCE:

The German Evangelical Salem Church of Tyrone Township is primarily significant for its association with the German immigrant population that settled and farmed northwestern parts of Le Sueur County. Immigrant populations were largely responsible for initially settling and farming the rural parts of most central Minnesota counties. Whereas native-born Americans were frequently the earliest settlers in a region, their interests were often speculative, and they platted the towns and engaged in trades and business there. Usually, it was the immigrant populations who widely settled the rural areas and developed farming as a principal occupation. Dispersed rural communities of immigrant settlers from the same region or country were formed, often centered around a rural church. The German Evangelical Salem Church is an excellent representative of the rural churches initially constructed by immigrant congregations which provided a focus for the county's rural populations. Additionally, the simple Greek Revival style marks the building as an unusually early surviving example of a rural church building, contrasting with the more common, later, Gothic style.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

LeSueur Bicentennial Book Committee, LeSueur, Town on the River, 1977.

Neill, Edward D., History of the Minnesota Valley, Minneapolis: North Star  
Publishing Co., 1882.

