

1046

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Lynch Chapel United Methodist Church  
other name/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number: jct. CR 41 & CR 32 not for publication: N/A  
city/town: Morgantown vicinity: X  
state: West Virginia code: WV county: Monongalia code: 061 zip code: 26501

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 \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet.)

Randall Reid-Smith  
State Historic Preservation Officer

3 October 2006  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature of Certifying Official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Lynch Chapel United Methodist Church  
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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

entered in the National Register  
See continuation sheet.

*for*  
*Edson H. Bell* 11-15-06

determined eligible for the  
National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the  
National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property:**

**Category of Property**

private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

building(s)  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	2	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	2	TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

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**Historic Functions**

RELIGION: Church

**Current Functions**

RELIGION: Church

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**7. Description**

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**Architectural Classification:**

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
REVIVALS: Late Gothic Revival

**Materials**

Foundation: Stone  
Walls: Wood  
Roof: Asphalt  
Other: Wood

**Narrative Description**

(See continuation sheets)

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**Applicable National Register Criteria**

- 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**

Property is:

**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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1902

**Significant Dates**

1902

**Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(See continuation sheets)

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**Bibliography**

(See 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property:**        1 acre

**USGS Quad Name:**        Rivesville Quad Map

**UTM References:**        **Zone**   **Easting**        **Northing**  
                                 17        578561        4386106

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(See continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification**

(See continuation sheet)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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Name/Title: Hannah Leigh Cole, student

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: August, 2006

Street & Number: 239 Lynch Road Telephone: 304-685-6593

City or Town: Morgantown State: WV Zip: 26501

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**Property Owner**

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Name: The United Methodist Church, West Virginia Area

Street & Number: 900 Washington Street, East Telephone: 304-344-8330

City or Town: Charleston State: WV Zip: 25301

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**Location and Setting**

Lynch Chapel United Methodist Church is situated at the junction of County Route 41 and County Route 32 in rural Monongalia County on approximately one acre. It rests on a hillside facing Little Indian Creek Road and borders 80 acres upon which sits the Lynch family homestead. The setting presents a pleasant, peaceful country scene of a white church amidst green pines. Built by local men and church members, the church rests in its original setting among the pines in its original splendor, representing the common frame form of church architecture found in rural Appalachia and America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The property includes the contributing church building and two noncontributing privies.

**Description**

**Lynch Chapel**

**1902**

**Contributing**

The small, one-story, rectangular church has its original drop siding and stone foundation. The building has a front-gable roof covered in asphalt shingles. The front of the church features an entrance vestibule with a set of replacement double-doors. The doors are topped with a wide lancet (pointed arch) window. Each side of the vestibule has a narrow, double-hung sash lancet window. Centered above the vestibule is a steeple bell tower with a pyramidal roof boasting folk Victorian accents such as delicate brackets and scrollwork. The tower also features its original, functional bell and its pulley mechanisms. Handicapped accessibility has been provided by a ramp leading to the top of a flight of stairs to the double front doors.

Each side elevation has four lancet windows symmetrically placed. Each window is one-over-one, double-hung sash with a simple hood and key. From the rear of the church extends the pulpit area. It has a gable roof-line with return cornice ends and each side features one window.

The interior of the church sanctuary has horizontal wood siding with vertical beaded wainscoting. To the front of the room, or rear of the church, includes a raised platform with two steps and a handcrafted altar and railing bearing the words "do in remembrance of me." The pulpit is lit by a deco-style drop light and accented by a painting of Jesus Christ. The church has original handcrafted wooden pews, with carved shields on the side supports, resting on original hardwood floors. The ceiling is stained tongue and groove wood with two ornate brass drop lights with etched glass globes suspended from the center. To the sides, deco-style drop lights illuminate the pews.

A small furnace room and restroom were recently constructed to the rear of the sanctuary, off the vestibule. The bell pull rope hangs in the vestibule.





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**Statement of Significance**

Lynch Chapel United Methodist Church is eligible for listing in the National Register under *Criterion C: Architecture* as a locally significant example of the Late Gothic Revival style of architecture. The church also meets *Criterion Consideration A: Religious Properties*. The period of significance is 1902, the year the church was constructed.

**History**

The Cold Spring Methodist Episcopal Church, served by Monongalia circuit riders, was organized in 1849. The name was derived from “a spring of water that ran over a bed of coal on land owned by Jacob Yost on the south-western part of Grant District” (Ralph Snyder). The first leader of the church was John B. Lough. Not only was he leader of the church, Lough served as justice to the Monongalia Circuit Court from 1852 to 1864; (Cole) served in six different state houses (the Virginia legislature in 1853 and the West Virginia legislature in 1863, 1864, 1870, 1871, and 1874); and was recording steward of the Granville and Monongalia circuits and the Cold Spring Episcopal Church (Core, 368) and later the new Lynch Chapel. The importance of Lough’s involvement in the legislature is perhaps more due to the significant time period during which he served, even more so than the longevity of his political career.

Monongalia County entered the Civil War in April 1861 as part of the state of Virginia and emerged in June of 1863 as part of the state of West Virginia. Not only was the county forced to transfer its allegiance from one government to another, but the change was made under the stress and agony of war. It is remarkable that the functions of government continued uninterrupted through this period of time and that the lapse of public affairs that has so often accompanied such a political revolution in world history did not at all take place. For the new state legislature of the newly formed state of West Virginia in 1863, Monongalia County sent Delegates Lee Roy Cramer and Lough. Even Winston Churchill has been quoted expressing his amazement that delegates were elected in 1863 and that the due process of law was not suspended during the war. “It was astonishing that in the height of ruthless civil war all the process of election should be rigidly maintained. They believed the purpose of government was to serve the people and, come what may, they were determined to uphold it” (Core, 575).

The Cold Spring congregation, led by Lough, first met in the schoolhouse on Little Indian Creek Road. Gatherings moved to a new United Methodist Church built in 1902 to replace the old Cold Spring Church. “The Lynch family donated the land and finally paid off the indebtedness on the building. Out of gratitude, the congregation named it Lynch Chapel” (Dilgard). Originally, Indians camped on the land surrounding the old Lynch homestead and its acreage (a small

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portion of which was donated for the building of the chapel) and hacked a trail through its woods. Later, that land was transferred to Samuel Lynch by a deed bearing the signature of Benjamin Harrison, signer of the Declaration of Independence and three-time governor of Virginia, whose grandson and great grandson both served as presidents of the United States. A large smooth stone on which the Indians ground their corn is still wedged on the grounds of the Lynch property close to its homestead, which borders Lynch Chapel. The homestead was constructed in 1855 and its first inhabitants were “among the first settlers in the Indian Creek area” (Wiley, 726).

The social life of the Little Indian Creek Community began to take root in the new Lynch Chapel Church, as the congregation used it, as well as its nearby community building and bordering property for its spelling bees, husking parties, bean shellings, apple parings, and quilting bees. “Families planning husking parties would haul their corn to the churchyard and place it all in one pile. Along about dark, the huskers would arrive. The captains were selected and a rail or board was put in the center of the pile. Then each side would race to see which side could first husk its pile. At the bean shellings a lot of beans were gathered. All the neighbors were invited in to help shell the beans. After the beans were shelled the young people danced, played peel-the-willow, and enjoyed various other games. At the apple parings the girls got partners. The girl peeled the apple and the partner cored it. Then the apples were sent to some other person who would string them on strings then they were hung to dry” (Rich).

**Significance and integrity**

Eligible for its local architectural significance, Lynch Chapel exhibits excellent qualities of the Late Gothic Revival style of architecture. This style was popular among churches during the first decades of the twentieth century. The style is a successor to the earlier Gothic Revival and High Victorian Gothic styles popular in the nineteenth century United States. Elements of the style exhibited by Lynch Chapel include the pointed arched windows and restrained use of detail.

When compared to the few other small, rural churches in the immediate area, Lynch Chapel retains a high level of integrity as the others have additions and/or siding and altered interiors. Lynch Chapel has been well maintained and its architectural integrity, including materials and design, has been preserved by its congregation. The addition of the modern conveniences, such as the furnace, restroom, and ramp do not affect its ability to convey architectural significance.

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**Summary**

Lynch Chapel United Methodist Church, resting on a hillside facing Little Indian Creek Road and bordering eighty acres upon which rests the Lynch family homestead, presents a pleasant, peaceful country scene of a white chapel amidst green pines. Built by local men and church members, the church rests in its original setting among the pines in its original splendor, representing the common frame form of church architecture found in rural Appalachia and America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

This chapel serves as a reminder of the simple country church, which served as an anchor for rural communities in nineteenth and twentieth century America. It is architecturally significant reflecting the Late Gothic Revival style architecture. The building is a recognized landmark and has retained its original materials of construction.

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**Bibliography**

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Core, Earl L. The Monongalia Story. Vol. I, III, IV. McClain Printing. Parsons, WV. 1984.

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Moroney, Mary Jean. "A gift of beauty from the past." Dominion Post. Jan. 22, 1978.

Ralphsnyder, Iris. "Cold Spring Episcopal Church History." Monongalia County, WV. 1922.

Rich, Elmer & Stanley Brock. "Lynch Chapel Record 1925-1967." Secretary Notes.

Wiley. History of Monongalia County. p.726.

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**Verbal Boundary Description:**

Monongalia County Grant District Map 11 Parcel No.2. See attached tax map.

**Boundary Justification:**

The National Register boundary includes the area historically associated with Lynch Chapel when constricted in 1902.

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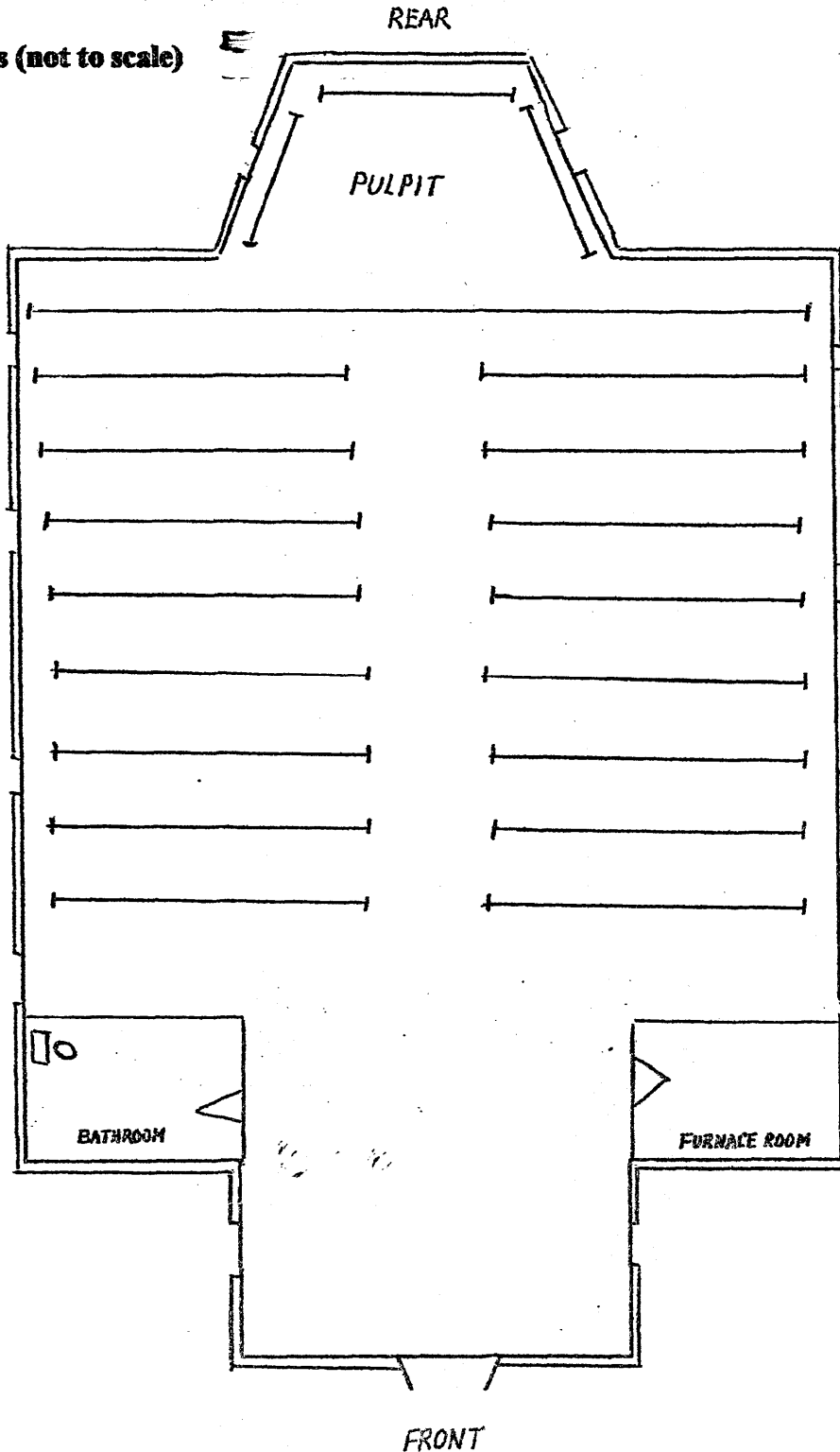
Photographer:      Erin Riebe  
Date:      July 2006  
Images:      Digital

- Photo 1 of 5      Lynch Chapel, general overview, camera facing southeast
- Photo 2 of 5      Entrance detail, camera facing southeast
- Photo 3 of 5      Side elevation, window detail, camera facing west
- Photo 4 of 5      Exterior pulpit area detail, camera facing south
- Photo 5 of 5      Church interior

# Lynch Chapel United Methodist Church

Junction of Rt. 41 and Rt. 32  
Grant District Monongalia County  
Morgantown, WV 26501

Floor plans (not to scale)



Lynch Chapel United Methodist Church  
 Monongalia County, WV

