

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED JUN 2 1976
DATE ENTERED OCT 9 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC *St.*
New Herrnhut Moravian Church
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *E of Charlotte Amalie*
CITY, TOWN *Charlotte Amalie* VICINITY OF *1* COUNTY *St. Thomas* CODE *0900*
STATE *U.S. Virgin Islands* CODE *78* COUNTY *St. Thomas* CODE *0900*

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME *The Moravian Church c/o Pastor Hampton Morgan*
STREET & NUMBER *P.O. Box 117*
CITY, TOWN *St. Thomas* VICINITY OF *U.S. Virgin Island* STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. *Recorder of Deeds*
STREET & NUMBER *No. 18 Kongens Gade*
CITY, TOWN *Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas* STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE *U.S. Virgin Islands Inventory of Historic Places*
DATE *May 1976* FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS *Virgin Islands Planning Office*
CITY, TOWN *Charlotte Amalie, U.S.V.I.* STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

New Herrnhut Moravian Church is located 1.9 miles east of Fort Christian, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas and .01 miles south of Center Line Road. New Herrnhut is significant as the site of the first missionary station of the Moravians on the island of St. Thomas. Architecturally, the simple, almost austere form of the church is an esthetic reflection of the sober tenets of the Moravian religion. The site was purchased in 1737, and the church probably constructed soon after this date.

Originally, the site possessed all the buildings usual to a plantation, but due to severe damage caused by the 1867 hurricane, the only major buildings remaining are the original one-story church, and a 20th century building, housing the Sunday School and church offices, built over the foundations of an earlier structure. There is also a bell tower, which still possesses its original bell. The bell tower is said to be contemporaneous with the church, but appears to be of a later date.

The church is a simple rectangular block without projections, constructed of ballast brick and stucco, measuring 64' x 34' with the long side on the north-south axis. The foundations project slightly from the main wall of the building, similar to a molded watertable. The roof is hipped and covered with corrugated metal.

The church is 4 bays on the long sides by 2 bays on the ends. The windows are in the form of semi-elliptical arches. All the windows have double shutters which are constructed of diagonally placed planks. There are two entrances on the ends of the church, approached by brick and stucco staircases. On the north end, the staircase is the typical West Indian "welcoming arms" type, with the walls splaying outwards at the base.

The hardware on the exterior includes wrought iron drive pintles, shutter hooks, and wrought strap hinges with lima-bean cusps, affixed with clinched wrought iron nails and leather washes. The south door has a metal rim lock, a replacement for an earlier, smaller lock of the same type.

The interior plan of the church is a single, open room, stuccoed and painted. The ceiling is notable, as it is the typical West Indian "tray" form: a planked surface with sharp angles in the corners similar to an inverted tray. The central rectangle of the ceiling, corresponding to the top ridge of the hipped roof, has two square openings at either end for ventilation. The windows in the interior have been set into deep niches. The depth of the wall, measured at the door openings, is 26 inches.

The grade of the site runs sharply from west to east, and there is

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

New Herrnhut Moravian Church was the first of the Moravian Missions established in the Virgin Islands.

The Moravians, whose missionary work began in 1732, were the first of the religious groups in the Danish West Indies to establish active missionary work with the slaves. The role assumed by the Moravians was to provide for the well-being of the slave through religion and education. The Moravian missionaries are credited with providing the foundation upon which emerging black social patterns in the Danish colonies were established, specifically, the active participation of white religious groups in providing and establishing religious guidance and education for the slave.

In August of 1737, Frederick Martin, a Moravian Missionary, purchased from a Mrs. Solomons a plantation on the east end of St. Thomas. Prior to being named New Herrnhut after the mother church in Germany, the mission had been called The Brethren's Plantation, The Brethren's Tutu and Posaunenberg.

The slave population provided both labor for the plantation and the congregation for the mission. The Moravians faced opposition by the other planters who were against slaves receiving formal education or religious instruction. However, attempts by the planters to destroy the Moravian mission were unsuccessful.

By 1770, New Herrnhut was a thriving plantation supporting mission activities with all the typical buildings of an active plantation including a church, housing for the pastor, the lay brothers and the slaves. By educating the slaves and training them to be artisans, New Herrnhut experienced the same type of economic security prevalent among many plantations.

The hurricane of 1867 severely damaged New Herrnhut and much of the plantation was allowed to fall into ruin, although some church and school activities were continued. Presently, there is a one story church building, several ruins including the original bell which was used to summon slaves to meetings and church. The bell is still used to sound the beginning of each church service at New Herrnhut.

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a retaining wall running along the east side of the church between the two end staircases. The modern concrete structure (used for Sunday school and the church offices (42 feet by 56 feet), built over the foundations of an earlier structure, lies immediately to the north on the lower grade. Due to the lack of structural evidence remaining from the earlier building and its lack of architectural distinction, it is of little significance. About 15 feet above the northwest corner of the church lies a brick bell tower. It is about 10 feet high, in the form of a tiered free-standing arch, with a molded, gable cap. A small bell is contained under the head of the arch.

An original cistern is located alongside the Sunday school building, on the same north-south axis of the church. There is also an historic graveyard located about 400 feet to the south of the church, alongside the point in the road where the entrance road turns north to lead directly to the church.

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New Herrnhut is architecturally significant as probably the earliest example of Moravian mission architecture on any of the islands. With its ballast brick and stucco construction, simple rectangular shape, plain shuttered windows and hipped roof, New Herrnhut Moravian church set the type for 18th century Moravian architecture that was to remain unchanged throughout the century, and which reappears significantly at Emmaus Moravian church in St. John, with a construction date of 1918.