

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

SC-903

# 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: SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church

Other names/site number: Sts. Peter & Paul Russian Orthodox Church

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: 2384 Front Street

City or town: St. Helena State: NC County: Pender

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A

### 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:

  X   A     B   X   C     D

<u>Agen Cherry, SHPO</u>	<u>2/20/2017</u>
<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<u>North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources</u>	
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	

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

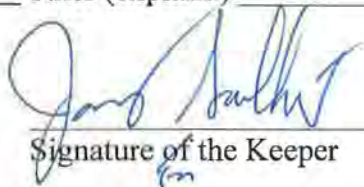
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**4. National Park Service Certification**

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

4-17-2017

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

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/religious facility

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/religious facility

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Russian Orthodox

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, WOOD, GLASS, CONCRETE, METAL

### 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

Saints Peter and Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church, whose cornerstone inscription reads: "SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church 1932", is located in St. Helena, a small Pender County village (incorporated in 1988) in North Carolina's coastal plain. The church, occupying a 1.25-acre lot, is situated on a level site 400 feet south of the intersection of South Front and East Main streets, on the east side of the street. It stands amid manicured lawns with trees next to the building, deciduous, pine, cedar and wild vegetation in the woods on the north side, and open farm fields to the east and south. The historic and current tax parcel boundary extends beyond the church yard into the open farm fields on the east. Six-tenths of a mile to the east is the main highway, US Highway 117, running north-south through the Cape Fear River basin. Drainage ditches run along both sides of South Front Street and an unpaved path extends from the street to the front of the church which is set thirty feet back from the road. Six wide brick steps rise from a semicircular concrete pad to the double-leaf entrance tucked beneath a semicircular bracketed hood. Metal railings are on each side of the steps. A gravel driveway to the south of the church provides access to a grassy area used for vehicular parking with culverts below the walkway and driveway. At the east end of the lot are a rustic arbor and table used for church picnics and other outdoor events. The church is in very good condition and the property retains a high degree of integrity in its location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

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## **Narrative Description**

SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church exhibits features reflecting Eastern Orthodox architecture in the red brick exterior walls, arched windows containing multi-light sash and lunette transoms, a bracketed hood over the front entrance, an oculus window above the entrance, an apsidal east end, and an octagonal cupola crowning the west, front, façade. Brick buttresses with concrete shoulders occur between the three arched windows in the north and south elevations and at the corners of the structure. The cupola has eight louvered openings above a base of flush boards, a molded sill, angular corner pilasters with splayed tops and neck moldings. The cupola terminates in a metal onion dome surmounted by a metal Orthodox cross. A similar cross rises from the eastern roof ridge.

## **Exterior**

The exterior of SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church presents a combination of architectural influences. The simple rectangular massing, front gable roof, patterned brickwork and the oculus façade window refers to traditional American church design forms. The distinctive onion dome cupola and interior floor plan, decoration and finishes relate to Eastern Orthodox church design. The rectangular, thirty-foot by fifty-six-foot brick-veneered, one-story building is three bays wide across the western façade, five bays long on the north and south sides with blind arches in their east and west bays, and an apsidal east end. The church is surmounted by a gable-front roof covered with asphalt shingles. The red wire-cut brick walls are laid in a stretcher bond pattern with flush mortar joints. The foundation of stretcher bond bricks is separated visually by a soldier course circling the building. The upper walls have the same stretcher bond pattern as the foundation and terminate at the molded eaves and rake boards. Six brick steps at the façade rise to a concrete stoop flanked by metal railings. Above the double-leaf front doors is an arch containing bricks in a basket-weave pattern and a bracketed arched hood. The doors open into the narthex vestibule which extends across the western front of the church. The north side entrance in the eastern bay is reached by six concrete block steps enclosed by brick side cheeks with soldier brick caps. The single, solid panel door opens into a small room adjacent to the sanctuary.

The west façade features a central entrance with paired wooden doors each faced with applied moldings with indented corners and gold wooden Orthodox crosses in their upper sections. The entrance is flanked by arched windows containing four-pane lunette transoms above nine-over-nine wooden sash. The windows contain clear glass panes. The brick arches spring from masonry imposts and incorporate soldier bricks without keystones. The window and door sills are composed of rowlock bricks. The arch above the front entrance is protected by a bracketed and molded gable with cove ceiling faced with flush boards and crowned by a gold Orthodox cross. An oculus window encircled by soldier bricks and a masonry keystone is centered above the front entrance. The molded wood window frame encompasses twelve teardrop shaped clear glass panes. The north and south elevation walls and windows duplicate those at the front of the

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church, and six shouldered brick buttresses with concrete caps rise between the windows and the corners of the structure. The east and west bays on the side elevations have blind arches. The cornerstone occupies the northwest corner of the building with inscriptions in Cyrillic on the west side and English on the north side.

West:

SS. PETER & PAUL'S  
RUSSIAN ORTHODOX  
GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH  
1932

North:

РУССКАЯ ПРАВОСЛАВНАЯ  
ГР. КАӨ. ЦЕРКОВЬ СВВ.  
АПОСТОЛЬ ПЕТРА И ПАВЛА  
1932

The Russian translation is: "Russian Orthodox Cathedral Church dedicated to the Saints and Apostles Peter and Paul."<sup>1</sup>

The east wall of the church projects into a semicircular apse containing two narrow, arched windows of twelve lights and four-light transoms. The cupola at the apex of the front gable is the most prominent exterior feature of Russian Orthodox design. The octagonal form of the cupola has flush siding in its base, eight fixed louvers and pilasters enclosing the bell chamber, and a broad molding supporting the multi-faceted metal onion dome.

### Interior

The interior of SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church presents the Eastern Orthodox tradition of arrangement and design of a narthex or vestibule, nave, screen or Iconostasis enhanced with religious icons and paintings and a sanctuary or altar area.

The narthex, lighted by the two front windows, has quarter-turn stairs with landings along the north and south walls leading to a balcony across the west end of the church. The stairs have square newel posts and pickets, and molded handrails in their lower sections, handrails attached to the north and south walls, and balustrades extending from the top of the steps to the west wall of the church. Paired paneled wooden doors open into the nave with each door having a diamond shaped glass pane in its upper section. The balcony is lighted by the circular window and transoms of the two front windows.

The nave with rows of benches separated by a center aisle has three arched windows on the north and south sides and features plaster walls hung with icons and religious paintings, a tripartite wooden paneled screen or Iconostasis between the nave and the sanctuary and altar behind the screen at the east end of the room and a balcony across the west end with vertical board woodwork and a molded top railing enclosing the gallery. The Iconostasis, on a platform raised two steps above the nave floor, contains three arched doorways entering the altar area: a paired central entrance called the Beautiful Gates or Royal Doors entered only by priests, and two

<sup>1</sup> Bishir, Catherine W and Michael T. Southern. *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina*. (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1996), 229

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flanking Deacon's or Angel's doors with depictions of angels. The center of the sanctuary contains a square wooden altar on a raised platform with linen and silk coverings, cross, candles and other religious objects. A painting of the Last Supper hangs above the central doors, and depictions of Christ the Savior on the right and Mary or Theotokos on the left combine with other images of Russian Orthodox saints. Other religious fixtures in the nave include votive candle stands, a tetrapod or table on which portable icons rest, candelabra or manoualia beside the icon tables, and wooden benches for congregants unable to stand through the extended services. The walls and coved ceiling are of smooth plaster and the wood floor, terminating in plain baseboards, is covered in places by rugs, and carpet runners. A balcony extends across the west end of the nave with its face finished with vertical tongue-and-groove boards and a molded railing. Ceiling fixtures light the space and a rope connected to the cupola bell drops in front of the circular window adjacent to a ceiling hatch giving access to the cupola.

### **The Sanctuary**

The holiest area of the church interior is the Sanctuary, also called the Altar or the Throne, where the Eucharistic service is performed by the priest and assisting clergy, behind the closed doors of the Iconostasis. The square wooden altar in the center of the space, is covered by cloths and is surrounded by religious articles: candelabra, censers, liturgical books, communion sets, a tabernacle for the Elements, and a crucifix. On the north side of the altar area is the place where the Eucharistic Elements are kept before being taken to the altar. At the outer corners of the sanctuary are small rooms for storing vestments and other items used in the services. The north room has an additional door opening to the exterior.

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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

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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**Period of Significance**

1933  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1933  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Carroll, John T., contractor  
\_\_\_\_\_

**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.)

SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church, built in 1932-1933, is located in the small rural community of St. Helena, south of the Pender County seat of Burgaw. The church is a rare example of an Eastern Orthodox house of worship in southeastern North Carolina which combines the traditional American church forms with dark red brick walls, arched windows with soldier brick voussoirs and rowlock brick sills, and distinctly Russian Orthodox features of a gold metal onion dome and Orthodox crosses crowning the front and rear gables. The Orthodox character of the interior of the church is evident in its square central nave and apsidal eastern sanctuary containing the altar, separated from the nave by a three-door screen or Iconostasis raised above the nave floor. Framed depictions of saints, tables supporting holy relics, and candles and other religious articles are arranged within the nave, and moveable wooden benches, an unusual feature in Orthodox churches where the congregation and clergy traditionally stand throughout the service, are placed toward the west end of the room and flank the center aisle.

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SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church meets Criterion C and Criteria Consideration A for listing in the National Register due to the local architectural significance of its traditional American forms combined with distinguishing Eastern, or Russian Orthodox detailing. The period of significance is 1933 when the church was completed and opened for services.

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

### **St. Helena Historical Background**

The man who stood of pre-eminence in the twentieth century development of Pender County was Hugh MacRae (1865-1951). An 1885 graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, his scientific interests led him to initiate a number of projects including operating a cotton mill, improving electric power, extending railroads, and farming. His genius in the field of scientific farming found its outlet in 1905 with the organization of the Carolina Trucking Development Company in Wilmington. From that beginning, he expanded his plans by finding farmers from Europe where crowded conditions and political unrest might attract immigrants to resettle in New Hanover, Pender, Bladen, and Columbus counties.<sup>2</sup>

A developer and industrialist during the early part of the twentieth century, MacRae planned and directed several projects in southeastern North Carolina including the establishment of six rural "colonies" in Pender, New Hanover and Columbus counties. The object of the settlements was to bring in farmers from Europe to till abandoned farms and experiment with new agricultural practices. The colonies were initially settled by a variety of immigrants including Italians in St. Helena, Hollanders in Castle Haynes and Van Eden, Greeks in Marathon, Poles in Artesia, and Germans and Hungarians in New Berlin, later renamed Delco.<sup>3</sup>

In 1939, *News & Observer* writer Gladys Best Tripp explained how MacRae took on the project to change farming practices in the Southeast. He organized the Carolina Trucking Development Company to develop eastern North Carolina farm lands by intensive farming and demonstrate the section's agricultural advantages for early spring vegetables and small fruits for northern markets. In 1906, a representative of the company sailed to Italy to interview and select reliable farmers in Northern Italy and arranged to send thirty families to Pender County. Their destination was a settlement of some 2,000 acres located twenty-two miles in the pine woods

<sup>2</sup> Riley, Jack. "Hugh MacRae, 1865-1951." (Burgaw, NC: Published by the author, 1991).

<sup>3</sup> St. Helena Centennial Committee. *The History of Saint Helena, North Carolina From Then Until Now, 1905-2005*; Pitzer, Donald E. *America's Communal Utopias*. (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1997), 464; Powell, William, *The North Carolina Gazetteer*, (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1968), 140; Leonard, Teresa. "Past Times: Hugh McRae recruited immigrants to seed farming colonies. (Raleigh: News & Observer, July 4, 2014)

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north of Wilmington, named St. Helena for both the mother of Constantine, the first Christian Roman, as well as the wife of the current Italian king.<sup>4</sup>

In St. Helena and other colonies, the immigrants were sold ten acres of land and a three-room house for \$240, payable over three years. After clearing the woods for agriculture, the Italians immediately began to plant vineyards and were very successful with the methods they had brought from the mother country. The cut wood was purchased by the Power Company in Wilmington and the ashes from the burning of this wood were sent back to St. Helena to build up the land's fertility.<sup>5</sup>

The Italians, familiar with viniculture in their former country, planted grape vineyards and produced local wines to be transported to merchants in northern cities. With hard work, the farmers prospered, but in 1908, discussions arose in North Carolina to impose a state-wide prohibition law against the manufacture and sale of spirituous liquors except in incorporated towns. The Turlington Act, as it was known, passed the state legislature in 1909.<sup>6</sup> Believing that the prohibition would destroy their business, many of the Italians left the colony and moved to cities where high wages were available in industries during World War I.<sup>7</sup>

In spite of the loss of the Italian farmers in St. Helena, MacRae proceeded to attract people from other areas of the United States and Europe through the post-World War I era, including Belgium, Hungary, Serbia and Slovakia. Between 1924 and 1932, thirty-five families moved to St. Helena, among them the Debaylos, Mizeraks, Bakans, Vdoviches and Boruches. They came from both northern United States cities and directly from Europe to settle on farming land in Pender County.<sup>8</sup> Some of the newcomers were gathered into the settlement of Castle Haynes, south of St. Helena, named for the colonial owner of the original plantation. The different nationalities cooperated with each other, and the members of the community learned from the experience of the others.<sup>9</sup>

Two of MacRae's colonies that did not succeed were Van Eeden, north of St. Helena and the county seat of Burgaw; and Artesia, west of St. Helena in Columbus County near Lake Waccamaw. The first of these was named for a Dutch physician and visionary, Frederick van Eeden, who, in 1909, joined with MacRae in acquiring farmland for Dutch settlers. The projected

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<sup>4</sup> Tripp, Gladys Best. (Raleigh: *News & Observer*, July 16, 1939)

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Lefler, Hugh Talmage and Albert Ray Newsome. *North Carolina. The History of A Southern State.* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1954; 1963), 538.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Ainsley, W. Frank and Edward F. Turberg. *Field Trip Guide; A Grand Tour of Pender County.* (Wilmington: UNCW, Dept. of Earth Sciences, 1988), 5.

<sup>9</sup> Leonard, (Raleigh: *News & Observer*, July 4, 2014)

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colony, however, attracted only a handful of farmers because of poor soil conditions and the place was soon abandoned.<sup>10</sup>

Artesia was settled in 1910 by Polish and Dutch farmers who cleared the land and planted strawberries to be sent to northern city markets. The colony, however, did not survive for long because most of the farmers moved out of the area to find better jobs during World War I.<sup>11</sup> In both cases, the land was sold to established local farmers who continued to grow fruits and vegetables for local use and market sales.<sup>12</sup>

A boost to the prosperity of farmers in the immigrant colonies was the establishment, in 1917, of the Coastal Experiment Station at Willard, near the northern border of Pender County. Here work in improving the levels of agricultural management and the economy were successful. Through the Station's direction, the Scuppermong and Muscadine grape varieties regained their former importance in the region after the end of prohibition in the 1930s. During the 1950s and 1960s, the Station helped tobacco become the county's major cash crop which accounted for half the income of county farms.<sup>13</sup>

In 1932, another innovative developer, Harold Huntington, a New Jersey farmer, finding the soil quality in Pender County similar to that in his home state, introduced blueberries to Pender County. By mid-century Pender County became known as "the blueberry center of the State."<sup>14</sup>

In general, then, the twentieth century was Pender County's most prosperous agricultural era, and although following generations of native and immigrant farmers saw fluctuations in both population and production due to two world wars, a national economic depression, and the attraction of other rural and urban areas, the farm reports continued to be promising.<sup>15</sup>

### **John G. Boruch and St. Helena**

John G. Boruch was born on July 7, 1877 of Russian parents in the village of Olshanitzza near Lviv, at the time a part of Poland and now Ukraine.<sup>16</sup> As a youth he attended Saint George Institute in that city, graduating with the degree of Doctor of Letters. In 1897 he sailed for the

<sup>10</sup> St. Helena Centennial Committee.

<sup>11</sup> Ainsley, W. Frank "Pulsating patterns of land occupancy: The impact of colonization experiments on the rural South," (*Pioneer America Society Transactions*, Vol X), 43-52, 1987.

<sup>12</sup> Ainsley, *A Grand Tour*, 5

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Mangus, Amy Kilgore and Ann Debaylo Mizerak. "Sts. Peter & Paul Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church." (Wilmington, NC: *Wrightsville Beach Magazine*, January 2015), 5.

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United States aboard the Hamburg-Amerika steamer *Christiania*, from Stettin, a port on the border of Germany and Poland, to New York. From there he traveled to Olyphant, Pennsylvania, northeast of Scranton, in a coal-mining region of the state where many Orthodox immigrants had settled. There he was engaged as church choir director and teacher in the parochial school.<sup>17</sup>

In November 1902, Boruch was called to Passaic, New Jersey, to be choir director and teacher in the parish school of the recently organized SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in downtown Passaic. At that time the church was under the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic See in Newark, New Jersey, and by the end of the decade plans were being taken by the Catholic church to claim title to the church property. Concerned that their traditional rites and traditions would be lost, Boruch and his parish priest, and the approval of the parishioners, petitioned the Russian Orthodox Church authorities to intervene and allow them to become members of the Russian Orthodox Church diocese.<sup>18</sup> In 1910, the church came under the jurisdiction of the Aleutian and North American Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church, and the church was officially named Saints Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church. Boruch held musical and teaching positions for thirty years, ending in 1932. At that time he was ordained a priest at the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of St. Nicholas in New York City. He was then commissioned by the Bishop in New York to organize and establish an Orthodox parish in the small farming community of St. Helena.<sup>19</sup> Within a short time, with a membership of forty, a capital fund-raising program was initiated and funds from church members and friends enabled church construction to commence.<sup>20</sup> Hugh MacRae donated 1.25 acres for that purpose.<sup>21</sup>

On August 11, 1932, construction of the church got underway under the supervision of Wilmington contractor, John T. Carroll. According to Father Boruch's son, Nestor Boruch, a daughter, Olga, an art teacher in Garfield, New Jersey, is credited with the church design. Members of the congregation assisted in the construction of the church, mixing sand and hauling bricks so that the walls up to the roof were completed by Old Christmas, January 7, 1933.<sup>22</sup>

Besides worship services, Father Boruch arranged for Biblical plays and performances to be given, taught the children reading and writing, and organized an *a capella* choir to sing during church services. To preserve the traditions and customs of their homeland, community members made Easter egg decorations (*pysanky*) and other seasonal ornaments and ethnic edibles as an enduring legacy of their cultural and religious heritage. His daughter, Olga, came down from

<sup>17</sup> Boruch, Nestor. "The History of Sts. Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Church. In Observance of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary." (Burgaw: July 12, 1982), 2

<sup>18</sup> Scott, William Winfield. *History of Passaic and Its Environs, Vol. 1.* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1922), 558-519; Boruch, 2.

<sup>19</sup> Boruch, *op cit.*, 2.

<sup>20</sup> "Christmas To Be Observed January 7 By St. Helena Russians and Ukrainians." (Wilmington, NC: *Wilmington News*, December 29, 1937).

<sup>21</sup> Pender County Deed Book 180, p.132-133, December 9, 1932.

<sup>22</sup> Boruch, *op cit.*, 2.

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New Jersey to St. Helena every Christmas holiday where she designed and made costumes, stage sets and created decorations for religious events.<sup>23</sup>

In 1959, Father Boruch was called to St. Nicholas Cathedral in New York City where he was elevated to the rank of Right Reverend, but due to poor health he was released from his parochial duties and was appointed pastor emeritus of SS. Peter and Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church on May 22, 1968. He died, at the age of ninety-two, on October 1, 1969 and is buried in St. Helena cemetery near the church where most of his old congregation are interred.<sup>24</sup>

### Russian Orthodoxy in the United States

Russian Orthodoxy had its beginnings in Sitka, Alaska when, in 1794, eight Russian Orthodox monks opened a mission for the native Aleutians. The mission, at that time was in Russian territory, operating under the supervision of Moscow and became a diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church after the United States purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867. A year later, in 1868, the first Orthodox Church in the continental United States was organized in San Francisco, California, and in 1872 the diocesan see moved from Alaska to San Francisco. More and more parishes were being founded across the continent and, in November 1870 the first Russian Orthodox Church in New York City was consecrated.<sup>25</sup>

Through the end of the nineteenth century, Orthodox churches expanded south and east across America drawn by a rising influx of Eastern rite immigrants leaving their native homes in Central and Eastern Europe and the Middle East to find work in American industrial cities and on rural farms.<sup>26</sup>

By 1917, the American diocese was the largest in the Russian Orthodox Church, growing across the United States from ten parishes in 1890 to more than 350 in 1917. Most of the funding for the diocese was provided by the Russian Church, through the Imperial Missionary Society. But the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 caused a rift between the Russian and American church bodies resulting in the Patriarch of Moscow proclaiming that all Orthodox churches outside of Russia would become self-governing. The American churches organized themselves as the Russian Orthodox in America in 1924 and, in the early 1960s, communication was reestablished with the Patriarch of Moscow. The St. Helena church remains a member of that body.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Stokoe, Mark and Leonid Kishkovsky. *Orthodox Christians in North America 1794-1994*, (Orthodox Church in America, 1995), 7, 11-12.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* 13.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* 28

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In 2006, Russian Orthodox congregations were found across North Carolina including Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Durham and St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Fletcher. In North Carolina, the Greek Orthodox Church is slightly more populous than the Russian Orthodox Church with foundations in Asheville, Burlington, Charlotte, Durham, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Raleigh, Wilmington, and Winston-Salem.<sup>28</sup>

### **Russian Orthodox Liturgy and Russian Orthodox Architecture in the United States.**

In order to understand the architecture of Russian Orthodox churches, a review of the church's liturgy follows. The Russian Orthodox church is one of a group of Eastern Orthodox churches that separated from the Western Roman Catholic Church in 1054 and though the differences in beliefs between Orthodox Christians and Catholics are minor, their worship services are more noticeably different. In an Orthodox church, the interior space is divided into two. The nave, the main body of the church building, is where the faithful assemble standing. To the east of the nave is the sanctuary and altar. The nave symbolically represents the earth, while the sanctuary represents Heaven. Between the two is the Iconostasis or icon screen. At the center of the Iconostasis are paired Royal Doors through which only the priest and clergy enter and exit. In the Russian Orthodox service, the priest walks from the sanctuary through the doors into the nave holding the Gospel. There he reads or chants selected passages from the Bible to the people. He then returns to the sanctuary and the Royal Doors are closed. The priest blesses the bread and wine and reenters the nave to distribute communion to the people.<sup>29</sup>

Russian Orthodox architecture in America, dating from the latter part of the nineteenth century into the middle of the twentieth century constitutes two distinct patterns of design in scale, interior floor plans, and decoration. One type, usually in large urban areas for larger parishes, is square in plan with projecting bays on each elevation to contain the narthex or vestibule, side chapels and a recess for the choir. The corners of the structure have low towers capped by onion domes and the center of the church is marked by a large dome and Orthodox cross. The central nave has walls and columns rising up to support the dome. Walls, ceilings and domes are colorfully ornamented with mosaics and painted murals depicting religious images and scenes. The Iconostasis at the east end of the narthex rises in several tiers containing numerous effigies of saints and the Royal Doors are elaborately ornamented.

One example of the urban architectural design is SS. Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Cathedral in Passaic, New Jersey (1902-1903). This is the church that John Boruch was a member, choir master and teacher from 1902 to 1932. The impressive building has exterior brick walls and stone accents, a Greek cross plan with angled corner bays, arched windows, a tall

<sup>28</sup> Williams, Wiley J. *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006),

<sup>29</sup> Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. "A Reader's Guide to Orthodox Icons." (<https://wikipedia.org>), August 15, 2016.

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Catholic Church

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staged corner tower with a steeple crowned by an onion dome, a central dome on an octagonal base and an ornate interior with tall columns supporting the central dome. A similar example is St. Mary's Orthodox Church in Coaldale, Pennsylvania (1909-1914) with features resembling the design of the Passaic cathedral, with exterior brick walls and stone accents, a Greek cross plan with angled corner bays, arched and square-topped windows, a tall staged corner tower with a tall octagonal cupola and onion dome, a central dome on an octagonal base and an ornate interior with tall columns supporting the central dome.

In contrast to these urban churches, those in smaller communities and rural areas were frequently designed with an eye for economy and simple function. They usually have a rectangular basilica plan, and a front gable roofline on which a single onion dome or cupola rests either above the entrance or at the building's center. Many churches have a projecting center front entrance tower, while others have a plain façade with a square or octagonal roof stage for the dome set back slightly from the façade. Late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century churches are often brick, and frame buildings are less common. They are designed in a variety of styles ranging from Gothic Revival, Romanesque, and Byzantine to simple towered frame and masonry structures. Colonial or Classical Revival style features, such as the pedimented or hooded entrance and brick patternwork, can be seen. Windows are either round or pointed arched or topped with a flat lintel, although round arched openings appear to be more common. Inside, the traditional form of narthex, nave and sanctuary carries through in a linear way with the walls and iconostasis containing images of Christ, St. Mary, St. John or St. Michael and often the patron saint of the parish. Examples of these churches in similar communities are discussed below.

SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church was the only Eastern Orthodox church in North Carolina when it was constructed. Therefore, no comparable pre-World War II properties are within the state. Architectural features similar to the design elements in the St. Helena church include exterior brick walls and buttresses, arched windows, gable-front roofs, circular windows, and front towers with an onion dome or a bell-cap cupola covered by a dome.

Several of the comparable churches dating from 1900-1920 are located in northern states, and each is constructed of brick. Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Catasauqua, PA (1903) features round and pointed-arch fenestration, has brick exterior walls with semicircular and pointed-arch fenestration, a projecting front tower capped by an octagonal cupola and faceted metal dome, and small onion domes at the front corners of the building. St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Norwich, CT (1909-1914) has a steep gable-front roof, arched windows, a projecting front tower with a tall octagonal cupola and faceted metal onion dome. The interior of the church has an arched ceiling. St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, New Castle, PA (1910) features round and pointed-arch windows, a gable-front roof, an octagonal cupola at the front end of the roof and a circular window above the double entrance doors. St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Brookside, AL (1916) has a front jerkinhead roof, round arched windows, buttresses, a square tower with a square base at the front end of the roof, brick exterior walls, a gable-front roof, arched windows, a square



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tower with an octagonal cupola at the front end of the roof and an onion dome capped by an Orthodox cross.

Churches dating to the 1920s and 1930s include: Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Clayton, WI (1921) with a gable-front roof over the sanctuary and hip-roofed bays flanking the projecting front tower, arched windows, a square front tower with an octagonal cupola and onion dome and a circular window above the arched, double door entry has exterior brick walls, a gable-front roof over the main portion of the church and hip-roofed bays flanking the projecting front tower, arched windows, a square front tower with an octagonal cupola and onion dome and a circular window above the double entrance doors. St. John the Baptist Orthodox Cathedral, Mayfield, NJ (1930) incorporates corner buttresses with small onion domes, a gable-front roof, arched windows with keystones and a square front tower with an octagonal cupola surmounted by a large onion dome. The front corners of the tower are edged in quoins, and the double door entrance is within a pedimented classical stone surround. Above is a decorative oculus window.

#### **Architectural Significance of SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church.**

Features of the architectural design of SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in St. Helena shared with early-twentieth-century smaller Orthodox churches in other communities include the onion domed cupola at the front gable roof ridgeline; red wire-cut brick walls laid in a running bond; round-arched windows with cast-stone impost blocks, and the distinctive circular widow above the entrance. Corner buttresses and those that flank the window openings and the east apse are topped with stone caps; even the chimney flue is decorated with matching cast stone blocks. The basketweave brick panel above the front entrance and the rowlock and soldier courses along the foundation, and framing the windows and doors show the attention to the building's brick craftsmanship. The apsidal east end, an octagonal cupola above the western front façade crowned by a gilded metal dome and Orthodox cross, and the small Orthodox crosses at the east end of the main roof and over the gabled entrance hood are the distinctive characteristics of Russian Orthodox church architecture. The interior of SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church is restrained, however, it contains the identifying interior features, namely the narthex, nave, the raised paneled Iconostasis with its Royal Doors and recessed side doors, and the curved sanctuary space behind it. Two sets of stairs lead to the full-width balcony at the west end. The blue tint of the walls, arched ceiling, the icon table, framed icons and a multitude of votive candles reflect the Russian Orthodox concept of church design and ritual transposed to rural North Carolina.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical Mentions

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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: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** PD0091

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 1.25 acres

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Latitude: N 34.514675

Longitude: W 77.9147608

SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek  
Catholic Church  
Name of Property

Pender County, NC  
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Or

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |          |           |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 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 is identified as PIN 3228-70-0068. The boundary is shown on the accompanying National Register boundary map, drawn to a scale of 1 inch = 200 feet.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the nominated property includes the acreage historically associated with the church and provides an appropriate setting.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Edward F. Turberg  
organization: Architectural Historian  
street & number: 307 North 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
city or town: Wilmington state: NC zip code: 28401  
e-mail eturberg@ec.rr.com  
telephone: 910-762-6301  
date: January 4, 2017

**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.

SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek  
Catholic Church  
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Pender County, NC  
County and State

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: SS. Peter & Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church  
City or Vicinity: St. Helena  
County: Pender State: NC  
Photographer: Edward F. Turberg  
Date Photographed: March 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

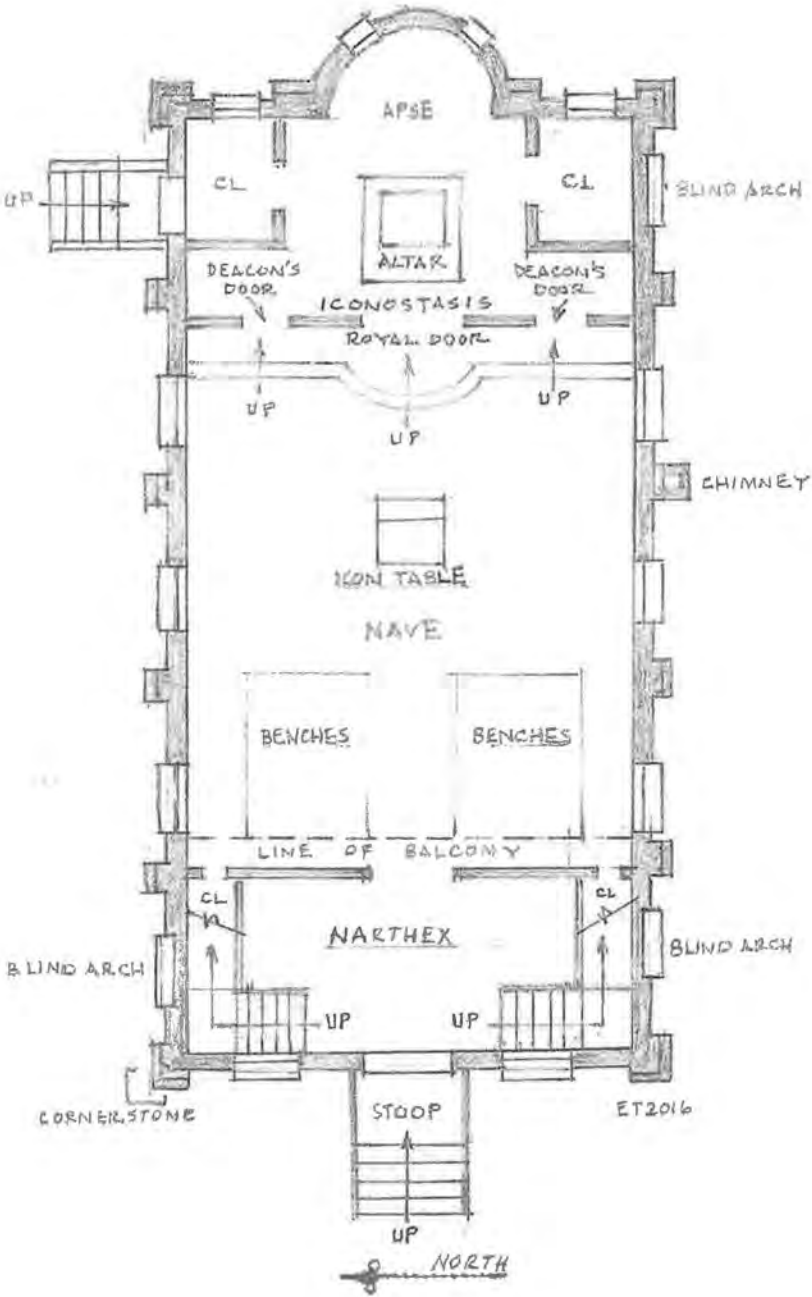
- 1) Exterior view looking northeast.
- 2) Exterior view looking southeast.
- 3) Cornerstone at northwest corner of building.
- 4) Exterior view looking southwest.
- 5) Exterior view looking northwest.
- 6) Vestibule and stair to balcony.
- 7) Nave looking east.
- 8) Nave looking north.
- 9) Nave looking south.
- 10) Nave looking west.
- 11) Nave icon table, cross and Iconostasis looking east.
- 12) Sanctuary altar looking northeast.
- 13) Sanctuary altar looking southeast.
- 14) Wheel window and transoms in balcony looking southwest.
- 15) Rustic arbor and benches southeast of church.

**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.

SS. Peter & Paul Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church  
2384 South Front Street  
St. Helena, Pender County, North Carolina

Floor plan – not to scale





W Main St

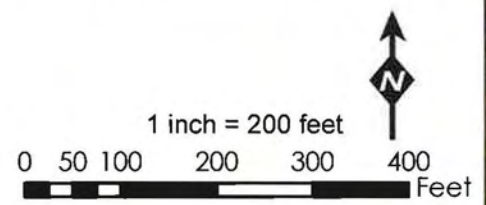
E Main St

Front St



**SS. Peter & Paul Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church**  
**2384 Front Street**  
**St. Helena, Pender County**  
**North Carolina**

Latitude N 34.514675  
Longitude W 77.914608



 National Register Boundary









SS. PETER & PAUL'S  
RUSSIAN ORTHODOX  
GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH  
1932



РУССКАЯ ПРАВОСЛАВНАЯ  
ГР. КАӨ. ЦЕРКОВЬ СВВ.  
АПОСТОЛЬ ПЕТРА И ПАВЛА  
1932







HONOR ROLL

Albert I. Bausch	Robert
Debor I. Boruch	Bob
Gregory D. Dufek	John
Alex D. Dufek	Peter
Simon M. Hulek	Andrew
Vladimir M. Hulek	Stephen
Jerome W. Fiderman	Douglas
Theodore J. Mizera	April

St. Peter & Paul, Russian C.  
CHURCH OF ST. HELGON

Welch's  
Starkist  
Starkist  
h's CONDENSED Grape Jelly



















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received:  Date of Pending List:  Date of 16th Day:  Date of 45th Day:  Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept  Return  Reject  Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer  Discipline

Telephone  Date

DOCUMENTATION:

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



**North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources  
State Historic Preservation Office**

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Roy Cooper  
Secretary Susi Hamilton

Office of Archives and History  
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

February 23, 2017

Ms. Stephanie Toothman, Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1201 Eye Street NW (2208) Eighth Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: Little River High School – Durham County  
Green Hill Cemetery – Haywood County  
Imperial Tobacco Company Office Building – Lenoir County  
Elizabeth Wright Prince House – Macon County  
SS. Peter and Paul's Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church – Pender County

Dear Ms. Toothman:

Enclosed are the above referenced nominations to be approved for the National Register of Historic Places.

We trust you will find the nominations to be in order. If you have any questions please call Ann Swallow, 919.807.6587.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Cherry".

Kevin Cherry, Ph.D.  
State Historic Preservation Officer

KC/jct: enclosure