

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received **APR 26 1984**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic St. George Lutheran Church

and/or common

2. Location

street & number State Road 252 and County Road 600 W N/A not for publication

city, town Edinburgh v.i.c. vicinity of

state Indiana code 018 county Shelby code 145

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 type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name St. George Lutheran Church

street & number R. 2

city, town Edinburgh vicinity of state Indiana 46124

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Shelby County Recorder's Office
Shelby County Courthouse

street & number S. Harrison Street

city, town Shelbyville state Indiana 46176

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>N/A</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

St. George's Lutheran Church is a rural interpretation of the ecclesiastical Greek Revival style, but with the round arches and brackets associated with the Italianate. Constructed of brick made on the farm just east of the site, it measures 40' x 60'. No architect is known and according to tradition, the congregation designed, as well as built, the church.

The main (east) facade of the church (Photo 1) has a central entrance of double doors surmounted by a large round-arch transom. Single round arched windows flank the entrance. Each of the three bays is set apart by engaged brick pilasters, each without a base but with simple, corbeled capitals. The gable end is flush to the pilaster depth, thus forming a recessed panel in which each opening is centered. A stone water table forms the sill of each panel. All the round arch openings are formed by a double row of headers rising from a limestone springer. Each six over six window is of original, stenciled glass (Photo 4) with a three-paned cathedral glass transom. The east gable has widely spaced, paired console brackets supporting the narrow cornice and the narrow returns.

The square bell tower (Photo 3) is centered over the entrance, and is covered with pressed metal. Its four round arches reveal an excellent view of the bell, cast for the congregation in 1868 by a foundry in Cincinnati. The tower's steeply pitched hip roof is topped by a 19th century weathervane made by a congregation member.

The north and south facades are identical (Photo 2). Each of the four round-arched windows is centered in a recessed panel. Each panel is separated by engaged pilasters identical to the main facade. Paired consoles support the gable eaves above each engaged pilaster. On the south, a below-ground addition constructed in 1958 attaches to the church at the level of the panel's stone sill.

The west facade of St. George's is blank.

The original roof, as well as the bell tower roof, were wood shingles. Both have been replaced by asphalt shingles.

Most of the original interior detailing remains. All the woodwork, doors, and transoms are original, as is the balcony with a stylized lyre motif railing. The walls, originally plaster, have been covered with sheetrock. The pressed metal ceiling and pressed metal cove molding (Photo 6) were installed in 1936. The original pews were built in the church and nailed to the church floor. They were arranged without a center aisle, the three seating sections being separated by four aisles. In 1958 the pews were carefully removed, reconstructed, and reinstalled to provide a center aisle (Photo 6).

The altar of the chancel is dominated by a large oil painting of "The Good Shepherd," purchased in 1898 by the young ladies organization—The Band of Hope. The artist is unknown. The painting was retouched in 1911 and 1953. The altar furnishings were purchased by the congregation in 1933. The present light fixtures were installed in 1967.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input 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 1867 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

St. George's Lutheran Church is a significant example of rural ecclesiastical Greek Revival architecture. The congregation has been a significant part of the rural community by virtue of its 146 year tenure at this crossroads.

When the present church was erected in 1867-68 a toll gate stood at the intersection of the improved road to collect tolls in both directions. The church became a landmark and a point of reference for rural travelers. Its close proximity to District #8 School (a one-room brick now in ruins) allowed St. George's to hold the school's graduation exercises for many years. The adjoining cemetery predates the 1838 founding of the congregation.

Most of the founding members of St. George's parish were German, immigrants or descendants of early German settlers in Ohio and Pennsylvania. Some of them migrated to Indiana soon after Edinburgh was founded in 1821. There is little exact information on the religious developments which precede the founding of St. George Church.

In the summer of 1838, Rev. Abraham Miller organized St. George Evangelical Lutheran Church at the Warner farmstead about four and one-half miles east of the village of Edinburgh. Neither the size of the charter membership, nor the reasons for the choice of the church's rather "un-Lutheran" name were permanently recorded. However, the names of 32 early parishioners were affixed to a constitution which the congregation adopted in 1846. The congregation's first house of worship was a frame building erected in 1844 on land acquired from Daniel Heck, secured by a deed that was finally recorded in 1849. The site of that building (moved in 1867) was approximately 400 feet south of the present church.

Rev. Jacob E. Wesner came to serve St. George's in 1863; it was his first charge. By 1867, the old building was considered inadequate and the congregation resolved to secure ground adjoining their cemetery for the purpose of constructing a new building. The cornerstone for the new building was laid in an impressive ceremony in 1867. There is no record of who designed the symmetrical structure, but the members did much of the work themselves. Records show that tanners and carpenters were hired and the \$232.02 owed them was paid in 1869. Almost \$5,000.00 was raised by subscription "for the purpose of building a church house for St. George Evangelical Lutheran Church on the ground where Edward Karns' old house now stands, north-east of the graveyard." At its dedication in 1868, the interior had few appointments. The focal point of the sanctuary was a centrally located reading desk, or rostrum, on a raised platform. The pews were constructed in the sanctuary by members of the congregation and are still in use today. The altar painting was not added until 1898, a gift from the young ladies of the congregation.

Because the congregation was composed of German immigrants engaged in agriculture, St. George was not a church of great wealth. An architect-designed building or even a structure of elaborate detail was simply not within the congregational means. The

9. Major Bibliographical References

Shelby County Historical Society
Congregational History of Indiana Kentucky Synod, LCA
St. George Historical Committee

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Edinburgh

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	5	9	5	2	3	0	4	3	5	7	5	6	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

Starting at State Road 252 and Shelby County Road 600 W, 300' North, 130' West, 300' South and 130' East.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Harold Isley, Chairman, Historic Committee

organization St. George Lutheran Church date September 22, 1983

street & number R. 2, Box 250 telephone 812/587-5432

city or town Edinburgh state Indiana 46124

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature James M. Aderson

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

date 4-19-84

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

5-24-84

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation sheet St. George Lutheran Church Item number 8

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solution for St. George was a structure designed by the congregation and built with labor and materials donated by members. The brick for the church was made on the adjoining farm of Edward Karns, a founding member of the congregation. Much of the finishing work was done by members themselves. All of this served to produce a uniquely individual edifice for the St. George congregation. A Greek revival structure in balance and proportions, the round-arched windows are more commonly associated with the Italianate style. Aligned with the Greek Revival engaged pilasters are paired Italianate brackets. The combination of elements present an unusual rural interpretation of the Greek Revival. Adding to the significance of the structure is its relatively unaltered condition. Elements have been added, such as the 1936 tin ceiling and 1933 altar furnishings, but the original elements are still in place, conveying to the visitor a strong sense of its mid-19th century origins.