

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

### SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 90001863

Date Listed: 12/6/90

Bethsaida Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church Parsonage

Property Name

Skagit WA  
County State

N/A  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*for* *Antoniello P. Lee*  
Signature of the Keeper

*5/10/91*  
Date of Action

=====  
**Amended Items in Nomination:**

**Statement of Significance:** Under Criteria Considerations (Exceptions), A is checked.

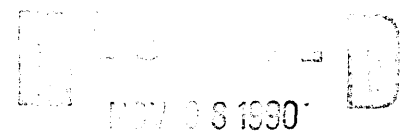
This information was confirmed with Leonard Garfield of the Washington State historic preservation office.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



**NATIONAL  
REGISTER**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See Instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the Instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Bethsaida Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church Parsonage  
other names/site number N/A

### 2. Location

street & number 1754 Chilberg Road, Pleasant Ridge  not for publication  
city, town La Conner  vicinity  
state Washington code WA county Skagit code 057 zip code 98273

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	—	— sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	—	— structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u> objects
			<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
 See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official *Jack E. [Signature]* Date 10/26/90  
Washington State Department of Community Development Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register. Entered in the National Register  
 See continuation sheet. 12/6/90  
 determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.  
 determined not eligible for the National Register.  
 removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion: church-related residence

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

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## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Late Victorian vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone: granite

walls wood: weatherboard

roof other: composition shingles

other

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Bethsaida Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church Parsonage is a rectangular two story frame structure constructed in 1894 to serve as the pastor's residence for a small country church in the lower Skagit River valley. Located on a hillside that overlooks the fertile valley floor, the parsonage is the best preserved reminder of the historic Pleasant Ridge community. Located on the same property are the foundations of the church (which burned in the 1960s), located just south of the house; the Young People's Fellowship Hall (c. 1910) to the west of the parsonage; and a nonhistoric garage (c. 1987) to the rear of the house. In the immediate vicinity of the nominated property are the two-room Pleasant Ridge public school, built in the 1880s west of the parsonage; the Pleasant Ridge cemetery; and several older houses, from the late 19th century and early 20th centuries (mostly remodelled).

The parsonage today reflects an extensive rehabilitation of the property completed between 1984 and 1989. Prior to the rehabilitation the house was used for many decades as storage for potatoes, and had generally been allowed to deteriorate, culminating in a fire around 1962 which heavily damaged the interior. Subsequently, windows and doors were removed, which exposed the interior to weather.

The parsonage is built on a rectangular plan that measures approximately 32 feet across the east facade and west rear elevation, and 26 feet along the north and south side elevations. The two story house rests on a coursed granite ashlar foundation (with lattice skirt on the front porch) and is sheltered by a hipped roof with projecting eaves covered with composition shingles. A one story hipped roof wing, added about 1910, extends off the southeast corner of the house to form an L. The rear wing measures approximately 23 feet across the east and west and extends 26 feet to the west. Since the recent rehabilitation, a one story hip roof sun room, measuring 10 feet by 15 feet, extends off the wing to the south. The sun room is enclosed with fixed full height windows, with a central glazed door leading to the outside. It is the only substantial new construction in the house.

The parsonage is built of balloon frame construction, and is sided on the exterior with bevelled drop siding, corner boards, and a plain frieze that extends beneath the eaves of the house. The boxed eaves are supported by paired console brackets, all of which are original to the building. Two corbeled brick chimneys, rebuilt following the fire, rise from the hip roof.

Fenestration on the house is symmetrically arranged (reflecting the simple central-hall plan of the interior) and is characterized by one-over-one double-hung wood sash windows. Single windows are placed on the side elevations and windows are paired on the facade. The ground floor side windows are ornamented with entablature hoods, while windows on the facade are trimmed with plain surrounds. All the frames and trim are original, although the windows have been reglazed and new wood sash replicated so that the present appearance is nearly identical to the original. The only new window is the shallow hipped dormer added to the center of the facade at the attic level.

Entry to the house is provided through a central single leaf front door. The door is panelled with a glazed upper panel and surmounted by the original operable transom. A second story door provides access to the upper balcony.

The most substantial exterior reconstruction during the recent rehabilitation was replacement of the original two story porch that spanned the facade prior to 1940. After that date, the porch was dismantled (with some elements stored on the property) and a small gabled canopy sheltered the front door. The porch has now been entirely rebuilt, closely replicating the original as illustrated in a 1903 photograph. The porch is composed of square posts (with bevelled edges) and capitals, a stick-work railing, and a spool and spindle frieze. The lower level is surmounted by a plain frieze with brackets, and the first floor roof supports a second story balcony with a decorative stick work railing. The only difference between the original porch and the reconstruction is that the railing heights have been raised somewhat to meet current building codes. A one story rear porch at the inside corner of the L is sheltered by a hipped roof with spindle frieze, returned to the house during rehabilitation.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

 nationally     statewide     locallyApplicable National Register Criteria  A    B    C    DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A    B    C    D    E    F    G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ReligionEthnic Heritage: European (Scandinavian)

Period of Significance

1894-1925

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Not Known

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State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Bethsaida Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church Parsonage at Pleasant Ridge is the best preserved structure in one of Skagit County's earliest Euro-American settlements, and is significantly associated with the Scandinavian community in the region and the development of the Swedish Lutheran church in northwestern Washington. Sited at the foot of a hillside that overlooks the Skagit Valley flats, the parsonage is located on property that includes the Young People's Fellowship Hall and the foundations of the original church (burned in the 1960s). The Bethsaida congregation was a pioneer Swedish Lutheran church in the county and the parsonage was a home base for pastors who established Scandinavian Lutheran congregations throughout Skagit and Whatcom counties and as far north as Port Angeles and Vancouver, British Columbia. Although deteriorated and heavily damaged in a fire about 1980, the house has been rehabilitated by the present owners, with minimal new construction, and it again reflects the early history of the Scandinavian church and the Pleasant Ridge community.

The history of Pleasant Ridge: Located on a hillside above the Skagit Valley flats, about two and one half miles southeast of La Conner, Pleasant Ridge was the site of one of the first American settlements in the county. Samuel Calhoun was the first American to arrive in the area, squatting on a Swinomish Indian camp site on Pleasant Ridge in 1863 where he built a log cabin. Calhoun is often cited as the first permanent white American settler in mainland Skagit County. He worked with another early settler, Michael Sullivan, to drain over 100 acres of marsh land on which he raised oats and hay. In 1867, land surveyor John Cornelius arrived from Whidbey Island with his wife Bessie, and surveyed the land (precipitating further settlement). School was first taught at Pleasant Ridge in 1872; the first internment at the cemetery on the ridge was in 1876; and by the early 1880s the fertile valley had attracted a group of Scandinavian settlers, a mission of the Scandinavian Lutheran Church had been formed, and the extant Pleasant Ridge school was opened. In 1890, construction of the Swedish Lutheran church had begun. By the mid-1920s, however, with the increase in automobile travel, the small agricultural community was in decline. The church was disbanded in 1925 and the school was closed in 1929. Today, the cemetery, a deteriorated schoolhouse, and the parsonage of the church are the most distinctive reminders of the community's history.

The history of the Bethsaida church: In January, 1881, a small group of Swedish immigrants residing in La Conner, Pleasant Ridge, and on Fir Island, met at the Fir Island school with Swedish Lutheran Pastor Jonas Vender. Vender was a missionary sent to the west by the Augustana Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, a synod organized in 1860 for Swedish immigrants in the United States. Most of its adherents lived in the Middle West, but as early as 1879 Pastor Peter Carlson had been sent to the Pacific Northwest to serve Swedes in present-day Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. That first year, Carlson travelled to the La Conner area, where he determined the need for a mission church. Vender followed up with his visit in the winter of 1881.

Under Vender's leadership the small group organized a new mission church, the first in Skagit County, whose original members included most of the pioneer Swedish community. The church had no permanent minister but was visited several times a year by a pastor, most frequently Carlson.

In 1886, Pastor Gustav Adolph Anderson (born Sweden, 1854), was named pastor of Tacoma's First Lutheran Church, and assumed responsibility for visiting mission congregations and preaching stations in the Puget Sound region. As one of the area's few Swedish Lutheran pastors, he made regular visits to the Pleasant Ridge group and in 1890 reorganized the congregation. Reverend Anderson served the congregation for the next several years (during which time he also organized a congregation in Port Angeles) before leaving in 1893 for Spokane.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Angelika Anderson Olson, "A Sketch: Bethsaida Swedish Lutheran Church, La Conner, Washington," unpublished manuscript, 1967. Copy available at OAHP.

Columbia-Konferensen, Minnesalbum (Rock Island, Illinois: Lutheran Augustana Book Concerns Tryckeri, 1903), pp.29-33. An official directory of the Augustana Synod's Northwest conference, with a history of each congregations in the conference.

Rodney Olson, "Dr. and Mrs. G. A. Anderson," unpublished manuscript by Anderson's grandson, . Copy available at OAHP

Dick Fallis, "Memories of Pleasant Ridge," Skagit Valley Herald, May 23, 1981, p.5.

Lori Buher, "Pleasant Ridge 'Spud House' restored to former splendor," The (La Conner) Telegraph, October 22, 1986, p. 1.

An Illustrated History of Skagit and Snohomish Counties (Interstate Publishing Company, 1906).

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 #

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property less than one

La Conner, WA 7.5' USGS Quad.

UTM References

A	<u>10</u>	<u>541290</u>	<u>5359730</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

That portion of the Northwest quarter of the Southwest quarter of the Section 33, Township 34 North, Range 3 East W.M. in Skagit County, Washington, being more particularly described as follows: Beginning 110 feet south of the quarter corner between Sections 32 and 33, Township 34 North, Range 3 East W.M.; thence south 220 feet; thence east 231 feet, more or less, to county road; thence north 165° west along county road, 229 feet, more or less, to a point 110 feet south of the north line of the northwest one quarter of the southwest one quarter of said Section 33; thence west 165 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning except any portion that may lie within that certain strip of land conveyed to Skagit County for road purposes by deed recorded under Auditor's file No. 700272.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated parcel includes the original churchyard, including parsonage, fellowship hall, and church ruins.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/title	<u>L. Garfield, with research provided by Thomas and Elaine Dinan, property owners</u>		
organization	<u>Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation</u>	date	<u>August 1990</u>
street & number	<u>111 West 21st Avenue, Mail Stop KL-11</u>	telephone	<u>(206) 586-2901</u>
city or town	<u>Olympia</u>	state	<u>Washington</u> zip code <u>98504</u>

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The interior of the parsonage includes considerable original material with some new construction necessitated by the fire. The original "four square" floor plan on both the first and second floors is well preserved. The center doorway leads to a central hall with staircase. To either side of the hall are the four public rooms. To the north is the front parlor and rear library; to the south is the front dining room and rear kitchen. The parlor and dining room are lighted by the large sets of paired windows on the facade as well as by the single side windows. Trim throughout the first floor includes fluted door and window surrounds with bull's-eye corner block moldings. Approximately 80 percent of the trim is original. A sliding pocket door (damaged in the fire) has been replaced between the parlor and library. During restoration, the original library mantelpiece was returned to the house.

To the rear of the kitchen in the wing was a pantry, bathroom, and storage space, added in the 1950s, which has since been remodelled into a single open living room, with a broad entry leading from the kitchen. Against the south wall of the wing, a small window was removed and French doors installed to provide access to the new sun room.

The stairway which leads to the second floor features the original turned balusters and newel posts. The second floor consists of four bedrooms organized around a central stair hall. The two front bedrooms are slightly larger (measuring about 12 feet square). Single leaf doors feature transoms and windows are trimmed with fluted surrounds and bull's-eye moldings. Most of the original fir floors survived the fire and were refinished; most of the original plaster and lath walls were damaged and were replaced with sheet rock.

Other structures on the property include the historic Young People's Fellowship Hall, built about 1910, which is located immediately west of the parsonage. The rectangular hall is a one story, wood frame structure resting on stone piers behind a vertical wood skirt, and sheltered by a gabled roof. The building is clad with drop siding and trimmed with corner boards and a plain frieze beneath the eaves. The hall is lighted by tall wood frame double-hung windows (some boarded), and is entered through panelled double doors in the north gable end. The doorway is sheltered by an engaged hipped porch roof, supported by turned posts. The building is used for storage.

Immediately south of the parsonage is the stone foundation of the church building, which was destroyed by fire in the 1960s. The foundation is composed of coursed granite blocks, and now serves as a border for a garden. The only nonhistoric structure on the one-acre site is a gambrel roof, wood frame garage, located west of the house, and built in the late 1980s.

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In 1889, J. H. Chilberg donated an acre of land at Pleasant Ridge for a church building for the Bethsaida congregation. Olaf Polson, Fred Anderson, and Peter Downey formed a fund raising committee, and hired Arthur Dahlbom as builder. By December, 1890, the new church was underway.

Despite construction of the church, the congregation was still without a permanent pastor. In 1892, a student pastor named S.H. Newman arrived, and stayed for a year with the group during which time construction of the church was finished. The following summer, O. N. Glim, another student pastor, arrived and remained two years. During Glim's tenure, the new parsonage (Pastorsbostallet) was built at a cost of \$1,200. Then, by 1895, the congregation secured its first full-time pastor with the arrival of the newly-ordained N. J. W. Nelson.

Nelson, who lived with his family in the new parsonage, served five years, worked closely with Swedish-Finnish immigrants in the Cedardale area south of Mount Vernon, and served several other preaching stations in the region. Nelson was succeeded in 1901 by B.S. Nystrom who remained until late 1902. He, in turn, was succeeded by G. A. Anderson, who was convinced by the congregation to leave his Spokane church and return to the mission field that he had served many years earlier.

Anderson and his family arrived at the parsonage in 1903 at which time the church had over 100 members. That year, the Columbia Conference of the Augustana Synod had 21 congregations in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. The Bethsaida church served the entire area north of Everett and south of British Columbia. Thus, during his tenure at Pleasant Ridge, Anderson travelled to preaching stations throughout the region, and organized permanent congregations in Anacortes, Mount Vernon, Vancouver (British Columbia), Sedro-Woolley, Cedardale, Burlington, and elsewhere. He revived the congregation at Fairhaven (Bellingham), and preached there regularly until a permanent pastor could be arranged. He organized smaller church groups and ladies' aid societies at Mount Borne, Lake Campbell, Avon, and Bay View, and held services as well at logging camps, sawmills, and other places where Scandinavians were residing. During his pastorship, Anderson was elected first president of the Columbia Conference of the Augustana Synod. Anderson also introduced the first English-language services in the churches of the area, beginning with Pleasant Ridge. The Young People's Fellowship Hall at Pleasant Ridge, located to the rear of the parsonage and still extant dates to Anderson's pastorship.

Anderson served as pastor for the Pleasant Ridge congregation until his death in 1917. (Mrs. Anderson died six months later.) He was succeeded by G. K. Andeen (1917-20), who resigned in a dispute over the merger of the Pleasant Ridge and Mount Vernon churches; and Andrew G. Anderson (1920-1925). That year, the congregation voted to merge with the larger Mount Vernon congregation, and the Pleasant Ridge church was closed.

Abandoned and in poor repair, the church eventually was destroyed by fire in the 1960s, and the youth meeting hall and parsonage were allowed to deteriorate to the point where they were structurally unstable. Following a rehabilitation in the 1980s, however, the pastor's residence once again conveys much of the simple, late Victorian character that it originally possessed. Destroyed historic elements--like the front porch-- were carefully replicated based on historic photographs, and new construction was limited to a sun room off the rear wing and a small dormer window at the attic level. Today, the parsonage more strongly conveys the history of the community than any other extant structure in Pleasant Ridge.

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Together with that portion of the following described parcel lying south of the Valentine Road. Beginning at the Northwest corner of the said Northwest one quarter of the Southwest one quarter; thence east 12 Rods; thence south 6 rods and 11 feet; thence west 12 rods; thence north to the point of beginning. Except county road and ditch rights-of-way. Also except that portion conveyed to Skagit County, by deed dated October 7, 1950, recorded under Auditor's file No. 452180.