

~~PH 0662054~~ PH 0180688

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED FEB 2 1978  
DATE ENTERED AUG 10 1978

# 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  
**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**  
AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**  
STREET & NUMBER **White Street (NW corner)**  
CITY, TOWN **Round Top** VICINITY OF **10th**  
STATE **Texas** COUNTY **Fayette**

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**  
NAME **Bethlehem Lutheran Congregation**  
STREET & NUMBER **White Street**  
CITY, TOWN **Round Top** STATE **Texas**

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**  
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. **County Clerk's Office**  
STREET & NUMBER **Fayette County Court House**  
CITY, TOWN **La Grange** STATE **Texas**

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**  
TITLE **HABS (TEX 3124)  
Texas Historic Landmark**  
DATE **1936 & 1972  
1963**  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS **Library of Congress  
Texas Historical Commission**  
CITY, TOWN **Washington  
Austin** STATE **D.C.  
Texas**

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The setting for the church is particularly beautiful and somewhat medieval in character. The churchyard is surrounded by a sandstone wall which was built between 1867 and 1874, enclosing a cemetery with many old and elaborate markers of early Round Top families. The churchyard wall curves down a hill to the southwest with a panoramic vista through many ancient native trees.

The building is a one-story rectangular, stuccoed ashlar sandstone structure, 30'6" on the three-bay front by 55' in length. The cedar-shingled roof is gabled with a rear jerkinhead and a single-stage cedar-frame belfry with louvered openings and a pyramidal roof. There are stuccoed stone flying buttresses on the southwest wall. The main entry facade has double panel doors with a single row of seven lights above, flanked by 6 over 6 double-hung sash windows, with 6 over 6 sash windows to the choir loft directly above those flanking the main entrance. The fenestration of the two 55' facades includes three equi-distant pairs of 6 over 6 sash windows, each pair separated by a narrow vertical post. The rear entrance has a single centered wooden door with a single 6 over 6 sash window above, the stained glass lights forming the shape of a cross. All of the doors and windows are very simply trimmed with wood.

The church is open plan with a choirloft containing an historic hand-made cedar pipe organ above the vestibule at the entrance. The ceiling is barrel-vaulted.

Sandstone for the building was quarried from the banks of Cummins Creek, which bounds the church site on the west. The cedar framing timbers were cut from Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) trees growing in the Cummins Creek bottom and hand-hewn into beams. Total cost of the structure was \$2,400.00.

In 1873, iron tie rods were inserted across the interior of the building to strengthen the walls. The four stone buttresses were added to the southwest side of the building in 1881. No other major additions or changes have been made to the exterior of the building.

Inside the church, a 51-note keyboard cedar pipe organ was installed in 1867. The organ was begun on June 24, 1864, according to a date left on one of the cedar pipes. The organ has eight ranks of pipes, mostly made from local cedar timber, and has tracker action. The original altar and pulpit were dismantled and a modern altar installed during the early 1960's.

Handwritten notes and stamps at the bottom of the page, including "Texas Historical Commission" and "Library of Congress".

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED FEB 2 1978
DATE ENTERED AUG 10 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The building and grounds are well-kept by the congregation and generally in good condition, though the stone walls of the building are developing cracks which will need attention. The church will continue to be used for weekly religious services and occasional public concerts on the organ under the joint sponsorship of the congregation and The University of Texas at Austin Winedale Museum.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input checked="" 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

May 6, 1866-Oct. 28, 1866

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Carl Siegismund Bauer

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bethlehem Lutheran Church, its simple style evincing its strong German heritage, was the social and religious center for the German settlers in the Round Top area during the last half of the 19th century. It also housed the first school in Round Top from 1866 to 1878. The church's 1867 cedar pipe organ, thought to be the first made in Texas, has continued to benefit both its parishioners and those who attend the occasional public organ concerts held in the church.

According to church records, the cornerstone was laid May 6, 1866, and the new building was dedicated October 28, 1866. The church served as the focus of the religious and community life of the German settlers in the Round Top area. Its dominating position at the end of the town's old main street symbolized the traditional authority of the German Lutheran pastor over his flock.

The town of Round Top was laid out in 1852 by a German immigrant, Edward Henkel, at the place where the roads from Brenham to Austin and Houston to Austin crossed Cummins Creek, and it quickly became a trading and social center for both German and Anglo-American farmers in the northeastern corner of Fayette County. A Lutheran congregation was organized at Round Top in 1855, but it was not until 1861, when Pastor Adam Neuthard arrived, that a move to build a church and school was initiated. Pastor Neuthard was born in Lauterback, Baden, September 11, 1828, and graduated from the Lutheran seminary of St. Chrischo Chrischona, in Switzerland, in 1860. He came to Texas as a missionary and immediately set about organizing a permanent congregation and school in Round Top. The building of the structure was delayed by the economic deprivations of the Civil War, but in the Spring of 1866, Neuthard persuaded Carl Siegismund Bauer, an experienced stone mason from Weisa, Saxony, and the builder of several other important structures in Round Top, to oversee construction. For five months Bauer, with his sons and sons-in-law just returned from the war, other kinsfolk and people of the community worked together as volunteers to complete the structure.

Another native of Germany, John Traugott Wantke, built the cedar pipe organ still occasionally used by the congregation. The organ was

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

- Franke, Gertrude, (ed.), **A GOODLY HERITAGE: THE STORY OF CARL SIEGISMUND BAUER AND HIS DESCENDENTS.** Uvalde, Tx.: Printit Office Supplies, 1959.
- Obst, Martin H. & Banik, John G., **OUR GOD IS MARCHING ON: A CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH, ROUND TOP, TEXAS.** Austin, Tx.: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1966.
- TEXAS CATALOGUE, HABS.** San Antonio, Tx.: Trinity University Press, 1974.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 14 | 721 | 7,8,0 | 3,3 | 2,7 | 8,1,0  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C \_\_\_\_\_

Round Top, Tex. 3096-212  
 Scale - 1:24000

B \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The legal description on file in the County Clerk's Office, La Grange, Tx., is "Church Lot, Town of Round Top, James Winn League." The three acres includes the cemetery within the walled churchyard.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE **Joe Williams, Project Director**  
**Binnie McCreary, Research Assistant**

ORGANIZATION **Texas Historical Commission** DATE **November 1, 1977**

STREET & NUMBER **P. O. Box 12267** TELEPHONE **475-3094**

CITY OR TOWN **Austin** STATE **Texas**

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ LOCAL **X**

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 *Shelley Johnson*

TITLE **Texas Historic Preservation Officer**

DATE **1-24-78**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION *W. D. Smith*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER *Charles Wherry*

DATE **8/10/78**

DATE **8.1.78**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED FEB 2 1978

DATE ENTERED

AUG 10 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

dedicated by the congregation on January 13, 1867. Two other organs built by Wantke are known to be in existence. One is in a New Braunfels museum and the other is owned by Otto Hofmann of Austin, an organ builder himself. The organ has been cited as a "Historical American Organ" by the American Organ Historical Society.

Round Top is a Lutheran community with a strong religious tradition and Bethlehem Church has been its religious and social center for many years. Between 1866 and 1878 it served as a classroom for the pupils who attended Pastor Neuthard's school, the only school in the area, and from 1878 to the early 1960's it was the classroom for Lutheran confirmation classes, which play an important role in the social life of the Round Top community. The church and churchyard are a major attraction for the twenty thousand tourists who annually visit the many historic preservation projects in and near Round Top. Since 1972, it has been the site for a series of organ concerts sponsored by the nearby University of Texas at Austin Winedale Museum. It is a structure with social and historic significance that transcends its purely religious role.

Property

*Bethlehem Lutheran Church*

State

*Ill.*

Working Number

*2.2.78.2391*

*Fayette*

*78002928*

**TECHNICAL**

Photos *3*

Maps *1*

**CONTROL**

*OK 2.2.78*

**HISTORIAN**

*Important early historical associations*

*Sheffy  
4-4-78  
accept*

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

*accept  
Braham  
3.7.78*

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

**OTHER**

**HAER**

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_

Review \_\_\_\_\_

*German community associations*

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

*Accept  
Franklin for Letovich  
07/29/78*

**BRANCH CHIEF**

**KEEPER**

*Signature  
8/10/78*

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_

Send-back \_\_\_\_\_

Entered

**AUG 10 1978**

Federal Register Entry

*9.5.78*

Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

INT:2106-74





*BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Round Top*

AUG 10 1978

Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
Round Top, Fayette Co., Texas

Lonn Taylor, 1976  
Lonn Taylor

Northwest oblique  
Photo #1 *23*

FEB 2 1978

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



AUG 10 1978

Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
Round Top, Fayette Co., Texas

Texas Historical Commission, 1970  
THC Files

Southwest oblique  
Photo #2

23

FEB 2 1978

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



AUG 10 1978

Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
Round Top, Fayette Co., Texas

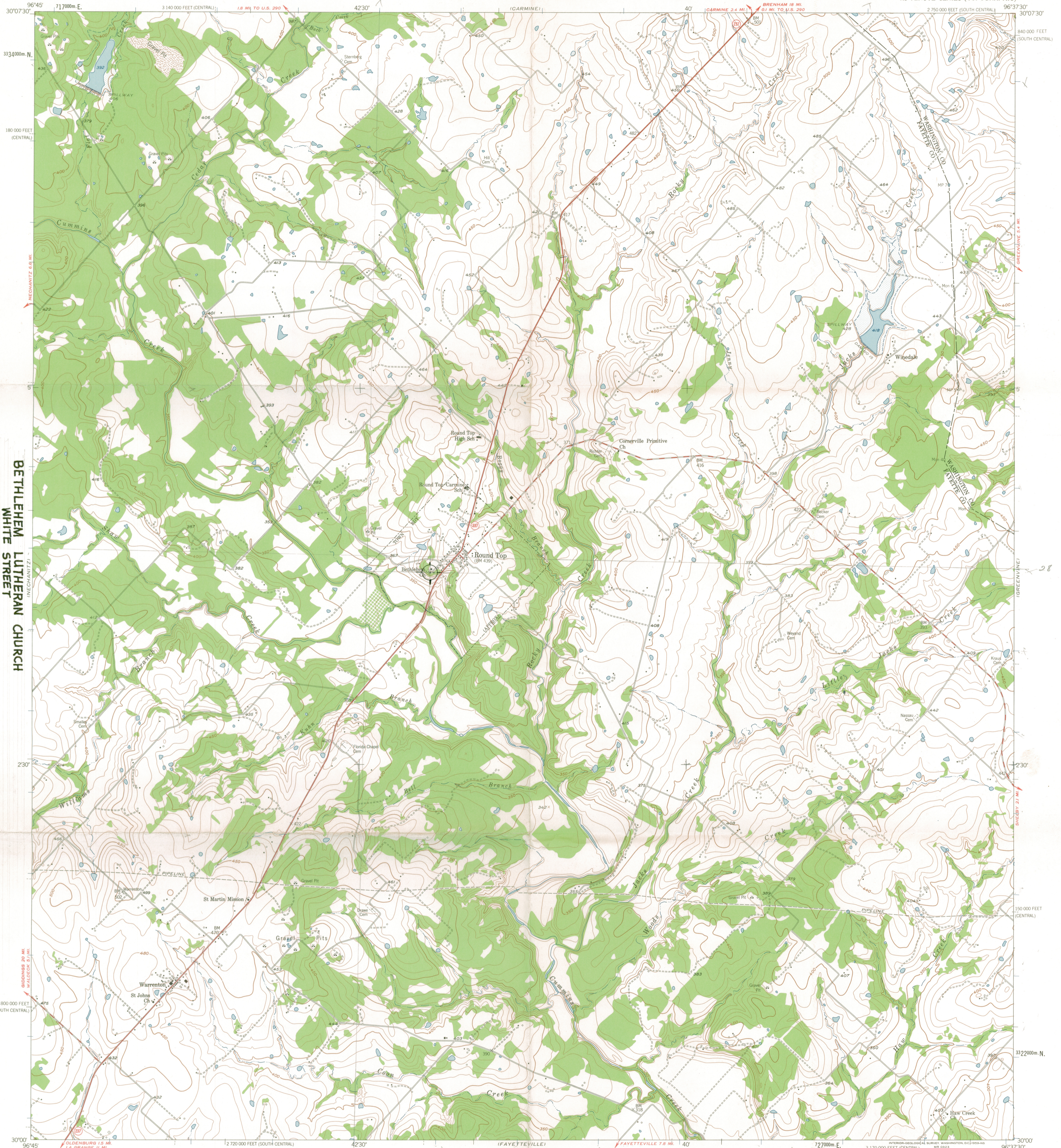
Texas Historical Commission, 1970  
THC Files

Northwest facade

Photo #3 43

FEB 2 1978

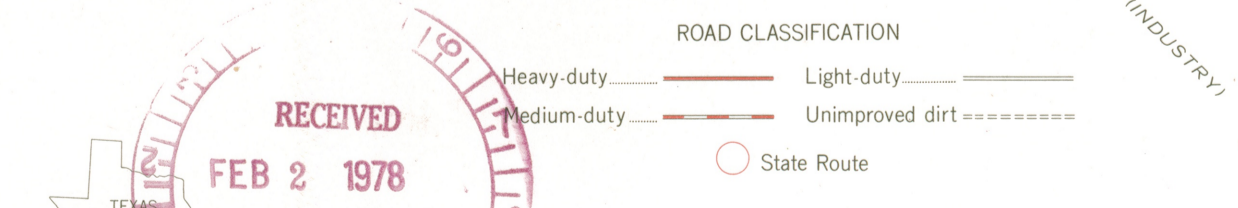
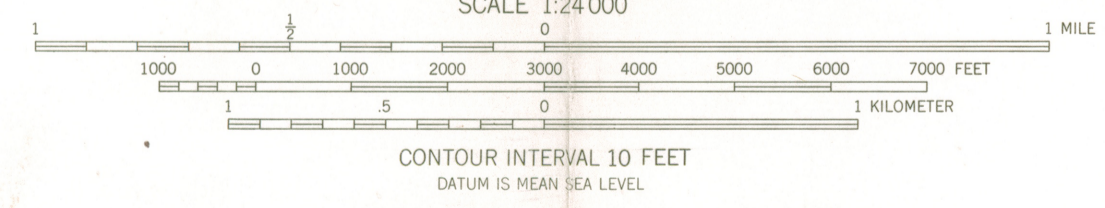
PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH  
ROUND TOP, FAYETTE COUNTY, TEXAS.  
UTM REFERENCE: 14T20180/5521810

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods  
Aerial photographs taken 1956. Field check 1958  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,  
south central and central zones  
1,000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 14, shown in blue  
Areas covered by dashed light-blue pattern  
are subject to controlled inundation

TRUE NORTH  
MAGNETIC NORTH  
APPROXIMATE MEAN  
DECLINATION, 1958



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER 25, COLORADO OR WASHINGTON 25, D.C.  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROUND TOP, TEX.  
N3000-W9637.5/7.5

3096-212  
AUG 10 1978

1958

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE      TEXAS

Date Entered      AUG 10 1978

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Mustang Branch Site (41 MC 163)	McMullen County
Throckmorton County Courthouse and Jail	Throckmorton Throckmorton County
Bethlehem Lutheran Church	Round Top Fayette County
Pagan Site (41 LK 85)	Live Oak County

Also Notified

Honorable Lloyd M. Bentsen  
Honorable John G. Tower  
Honorable E. de la Garza  
Honorable Omar Burleson  
Honorable J. J. (Jake) Pickle

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. Truett Latimer  
Executive Director  
Texas Historical Commission  
P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711

# NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

① NAME as it appears on federal register: Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
 ② OTHER NAMES:  
 ③ date of entry: AUG 10 1978  
 ④ county code: 149

⑤ LOCATION street & number: White St. city / town: Round Top vicinity of: state: TX county: Fayette  
 ⑥ NPS REGION: SW

⑦ OWNER  PRIVATE  STATE  MUNICIPAL  COUNTY  MULTIPLE  FEDERAL (agency name)  
 ⑧ ADMINISTRATOR:

⑨ EXISTING SURVEYS  HABS  HAER  NHL ⑩ FUNDED?  YES  NO ⑪ CONGRESS. DISTRICT: 10th ⑫ SOURCE of NOMINATION  STATE  FEDERAL

⑬ WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?  YES, NAME:  NO  
 ⑭ WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?  YES, NAME:  NO  
 ⑮ ACREAGE: if state who prepared form? Texas Hist. Comm.  
 LOCAL  PRIVATE ORGANIZATION

⑯ CONDITION  deteriorated  altered  original site  
 excellent  ruins  unaltered  moved  
 good  unexposed  reconstructed  unknown  
 fair  unexcavated  excavated  
 ⑰ features:  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2  SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3  
 NOT INTACT-0  NOT INTACT-0  NOT INTACT-0  
 UNKNOWN-4  UNKNOWN-5  UNKNOWN-6  
 NOT APPLICABLE-7  NOT APPLICABLE-8  NOT APPLICABLE-9

⑱ ACCESS  YES-Restricted  YES-Unrestricted  No Access  Unknown ⑲ ADAPTIVE USE  YES  NO ⑳ SAVED?  YES  
 ㉑ IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT?  yes  no

㉒ AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE :  
 ARCHEOLOGY-prehistoric-2  COMMERCE-6  ENGINEERING-11  LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15  POLITICS / GOVT.-21  RECREATION-28  
 ARCHEOLOGY-historic-1  COMMUNICATIONS-7  ENTERTAINMENT-26  LAW-16  RELIGION-22  SETTLEMENT-29  
 AGRICULTURE-3  CONSERVATION-8  EXPLORATION-12  LITERATURE-17  SCIENCE-23  URBAN PLANNING-31  
 ARCHITECTURE-4  ECONOMICS-9  HEALTH-27  MILITARY-18  SOCIAL / HUMANITARIAN-24  OTHER (SPECIFY)  
 ART-5  EDUCATION-10  INDUSTRY-13  MUSIC-19  SOCIAL / CULTURAL-30  
 INVENTION-14  PHILOSOPHY-20  TRANSPORTATION-25  
 ㉓ CLAIMS: explain  
 'first'   
 'oldest'   
 'only'

㉔ functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: CURRENTLY:  
 ㉕ dates of initial construction: major alterations: historic events:  
 ㉖ ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION

㉗ architectural style(s): ㉘ architect: ㉙ master builder: ㉚ engineer:

㉛ landscape architect / garden designer: ㉜ interior decorator: ㉝ artist: ㉞ artisan: ㉟ builder/contractor:

㊱ NAMES give role & date  
 PERSONAL:  
 EVENTS:  
 INSTITUTIONAL:

㊲ NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP