

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Pleasant Hill Church

other names/site number Keeps Creek Church, -17-084-45005

2. Location

street & number CR 400 S at CR 675 W N/A not for publication

city or town Logansport vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Cass code 017 zip code 46947

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Pat L. Roberts 11-20-95
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
 State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 Signature of certifying official/Title Date

 State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Pleasant Hill Church
Name of Property

Cass Co., IN
County and State

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious Facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL: Meeting Hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other CONCRETE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Pleasant Hill Church
Name of Property

Cass Co., IN
County and State

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.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1875 - 1909

Significant Dates

1875

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Pleasant Hill Church Association

Pleasant Hill Church
Name of Property

Cass Co., IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

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

3

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Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martha B. Justice

organization Pleasant Hill Church Association date 4-30-95

street & number RR 2, Box 197 telephone 219/652-4236

city or town Logansport state IN zip code 46947

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Trustees of Pleasant Hill Church

street & number RR 2, Box 197 telephone 219/652-4236

city or town Logansport state IN zip code 46947

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. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Pleasant Hill Church
Cass County, Indiana

Architectural Description

Pleasant Hill Church is a gable-front, brick building with white wooden trim and a white clapboard belfry. The church sits on the southeast corner of a nearly flat 1/4 acre lot carved out of a cultivated field. The hill on which the church stands overlooks Keeps Creek, and the building sometimes is known locally as Keeps Creek Church. A small cemetery occupies the right side of the lot and part of the space in front of the building. No outbuildings stand on the property. The lot itself does not contain any trees, but a distant row of trees frames the farmer's field in which the church lot is located. A blacktopped country road runs along the front of the church.

Two contributing resources exist on the site; the church (building) and the cemetery (site).

The church was vacant for a long time and its windows were boarded up, but has been recently restored. The belfry was rebuilt, a new roof put on in 1989, and the interior refurbished. Very little new material was necessary, as the original fabric was fairly intact.

The church is built on a simple, symmetrical, rectangular plan, 50' x 33'. It is built of red bricks that were made on the premises of local clay, as was common practice at the time. Its decorative features are Italianate in style. The foundation is made of stone blocks topped with a 6" concrete slab. Two to three courses of stone are visible above ground level. The concrete slab projects slightly from the stones. The moderately-pitched gable roof has a slight overhang and is covered in composition shingles. A wide frieze board follows the roof line on all elevations, giving a slight Greek Revival effect. Four shallow concrete steps lead from the front entrance to an overgrown, broken concrete sidewalk that extends to the road.

The main facade contains the front entrance and two windows, one placed on each side of the door. All of the windows in the building are long, narrow, 4-over-4 sash windows, with segmental arches made of two rows of headers, and concrete sills. Simple architrave trim surrounds the windows and door. The door and all of the wooden trim around the windows and roof line are painted white. The front entrance is a panelled double door

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Cass County, Indiana

topped by a segmental arch transom of two lights. The door and windows have hoods formed by a protruding row of brick headers, at whose ends are tapered brick pendants. Located equidistantly between the door and the windows, and at all four corners of the building, are shallow buttresses the thickness of one brick. A protruding frieze of bricks, level with the buttresses and consisting of three rows of stretchers and one row of headers, runs below the wooden frieze on the front and side elevations. Above the door is a semi-circular stone framed with a row of headers. The lettering reads:

The Church at Pleasant Hill

1875

J. Justice

J. Eyman

M.P. Klepinger

Trustees

The belfry is about 8' tall and sits at the front of the church on the peak of the gable. Its low base is made of horizontal boards and is approximately 4'x4' square. The belfry is symmetrical, with one louvered opening in each side. Simple pilasters trim each corner and a wide frieze board runs under the roof line. Italianate brackets, four on each side, decorate the cornice. The low-pitched pyramidal roof is covered in asphalt shingles and is topped by an 8' wooden spire which is 1' in diameter at the base and tapers to 2" at the top.

Both side elevations of the church are identical. Four windows, the same as on the main facade, are evenly spaced along each wall, separated by the shallow buttresses. The left side has a chimney placed near the edge of the roof, in line with the central buttress. The right side has ivy growing between and partially obscuring the two rearmost windows.

The rear elevation shows a plain brick wall with no openings. The only features are the wooden frieze board and the corner buttresses. A few ivy plants grow up the rear of the building and some lilies and other flowers are planted along the base of the wall, extending around the corners and a short way down the two side walls.

The interior of the church is very plain. The walls are plastered and painted white. A 13" high baseboard, painted light brown, runs along all of the walls and is topped with a 3"

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Pleasant Hill Church
Cass County, Indiana

walnut molding. The windows are surrounded by a narrow chair rail molding similar to that on the baseboards. The inside of the front door has walnut or brown-painted trim around the doorframe and its panels. The floor is constructed of pine boards that range from 3" to 5" in width. The ceiling is a Tudor arch-shaped barrel vault, plastered and painted the same color as the walls.

At the rear of the church is a platform that extends the full width of the interior. It extends 9' 3" out from the wall and is 16" high. One full-width step leads up to the platform. Fourteen wooden pews of simple design were purchased from an abandoned church in 1992 to replace the originals. A newly-constructed wooden pulpit is of similar design to the pews and sits in the center of the platform. There is no other interior ornament or artwork. There is no heat or electricity in the building. Iron fixtures at the windows originally held kerosene lamps.

The cemetery has been in continuous use since the church was built. The lots are laid out in straight rows, with most of the graves on the south side of the building. A few graves are located at the front and the rear of the church. Many of the modern gravestones are of granite, while most of the 19th c. and early 20th c. stones appear to be made of marble or limestone. Two of the most common types of pre-1940 monuments are tall obelisks and small, flat stones with rounded tops.

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Pleasant Hill Church
Cass County, Indiana

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Statement of Significance

Pleasant Hill Church is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A in the area of religion, and Criterion C, architecture. Its importance in the area of religion comes from its original use as a meeting place for three different denominations. Architecturally, it is significant as the best existing example of a late 19th c. one-room country church in Cass County. The church meets Criterion Consideration A because of its local significance in the areas of architecture and religion.

Pleasant Hill Church represents a workable solution to the problem of constructing a church for small congregations in a sparsely-settled rural area. All three denominations that banded together to build Pleasant Hill had been holding services in Clinton Township since about 1840. The Dunkards began holding quarterly meetings in 1839 at the Klepinger or Shideler farmsteads. The New Lights and Campbellites, who were fewer in number, met irregularly in the southern part of the township. The dates given in the Cass County history for the first meetings of these denominations (and also of the Baptists, who began holding meetings in Logansport in 1841) coincide with the popularity of religious revivals sweeping the nation at this time. Pleasant Hill is the only known 19th century church in the county which was built as a cooperative effort by several congregations. It is also interesting to note that a central doctrine of the Christian Church groups was to unite Protestant sects and dissolve dogmatic boundaries between denominations. Obviously, this is reflected in this cooperative effort.

When a congregation grew large enough to make meetings at the homes of members impractical, it might seek to construct its own building. Probably none of the three denominations occupying Pleasant Hill Church had so many members that a special building was necessary, but by 1875, even the smaller congregations in Cass County had built or were in the process of building their own churches. Pleasant Hill was only the third church building to be constructed in Clinton Township. The Methodists erected the first one, about 1857-8. The Lutherans built a church in the 1860s, and Pleasant Hill followed in 1875. The land for Pleasant Hill Church was part of a farm owned by James and Mary Justice, whose descendants and kin still live and own much of the land in this

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Pleasant Hill Church
Cass County, Indiana

area. At one time, the District #3 grade school stood across the road from the church; together, the two buildings were a focus for community activity.

The original deed to the church property was made out to three men as trustees of the denominations responsible for the building: Michael Klepinger of the "Christian Church commonly known as the New Lights;" James Justice of the "Christian Church commonly known as the Campbellites;" and Jacob Eyman of the "Church of God commonly known as the Dunkard Church." Each of these three denominations was allowed to control the building and its use for one week out of every month, beginning on Friday night. The fourth week was reserved for the use of "all other orthodox denominations." When not otherwise occupied, the building was available for any other purpose that was "not in any way or character immoral in its tendencies."

The cooperation among the three denominations made it possible to build a sturdy, brick building that might have been difficult, if not impossible, for any one of them to have constructed individually. Since all three were accustomed to holding services at irregular intervals, it was not difficult for them to share the building. Although they had differences in doctrine, the denominations were not radically dissimilar in their basic beliefs; all three were Protestant sects that flourished after the Second Great Awakening.

The last service at Pleasant Hill was held in 1909 and was a funeral for one of its members. In 1939, surviving members of each of the three denominations voted to transfer control of the building and the cemetery to the Pleasant Hill Cemetery Association. Although the cemetery was still in use, the building fell into disrepair and was used only for storage. In the 1980s, the Pleasant Hill Church Association began restoring the building. It is now used for the annual meeting of the Cemetery Association and is available for the public to view as a restored example of a 19th c. country church.

Pleasant Hill is also important architecturally as the most intact example of a one-room, 19th c. rural church in Cass County (Unfortunately, it was only rated "Notable" in the Cass County Interim Report; the building was restored *after* the survey was performed). Only two other brick, one-room rural churches remain in the county; one is in ruins and the other has had a modern vestibule added. The county's other small rural churches are usually frame with wood siding. According to the survey, most churches in the county's urban areas or in small towns are not built on a simple, rectangular plan, and

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Pleasant Hill Church
Cass County, Indiana

usually have at least one of the following: vestibules, basements, colored glass, bell towers, and additional Sunday School or meeting rooms. Pleasant Hill is a good example of the simple architecture and interior design favored by some of the smaller Protestant sects of the 19th century. The building's integrity is probably due to two reasons: the congregation's abandonment of the building as a church, but the continuing use of the building for storage and continuing use of the cemetery. Since the last service was held in 1909, there was no reason for modern alterations or additions to be constructed for a growing congregation. As there was no stained glass or expensive furnishings that could have been sold or vandalized, the simple interior also remained intact.

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Pleasant Hill Church Cass Co., IN

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Helm, Thomas B. History of Cass County, Indiana. Chicago: Brant & Fuller, 1886.

Powell, Dr. Jehu Z. History of Cass County, Indiana. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1913.

Original deed of property dated 1976

Secretary's minutes of the Pleasant Hill Church Association, 1939.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

One quarter of an acre out of the West half of the Southwest quarter of Section 11, Township 26, Range 1 W. as follows:

Commencing at the Southeast corner of the graveyard situate in the abovementioned tract about 40 rods South of the Southeast corner of said described tract, running ten rods West; thence four rods South; thence ten rods East; thence four rods north to the place of beginning, being the ground upon which the brick church is built.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Description is the original deed boundary.

