

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

Type all entries - complete applicable sections

STATE:	Pennsylvania	
COUNTY:	Dauphin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	

1. NAME  
St. Peter's Kierch  
AND ORIGIN  
St. Peter's Church

2. LOCATION  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
31 West High Street Northwest corner N. Union and W. High Sts.  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Middletown  
STATE: Pennsylvania CODE: 42 COUNTY: Dauphin CODE: 043

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY  
OWNER'S NAME:  
St. Peter's Lutheran Church  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
Union and Spring Streets  
CITY OR TOWN: Middletown STATE: Pennsylvania CODE: 42

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION  
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Lancaster County Courthouse  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
39 East Grant Street  
CITY OR TOWN: Lancaster STATE: Pennsylvania CODE: 42

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS  
TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Pennsylvania Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks  
DATE OF SURVEY: continuous  Federal  State  County  Local  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
William Penn Memorial Museum  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
Box 1026  
CITY OR TOWN: Harrisburg STATE: Pennsylvania CODE: 42

STATE: Pennsylvania  
COUNTY: Dauphin  
ENTRY NUMBER:  
DATE:

FOR NPS USE ONLY

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. Peter's Kierch is a two and one-half story, Georgian style structure built with red sandstone that has been cut and coursed. The church is rectangular in shape and has a moderate-pitched gable roof. Originally, the church had a gallery on the east, south, and west. The wine glass pulpit on the north is supported by a post eight to ten feet high and is reached by a narrow winding stairway. The church may be entered from either High or Union Streets, with the main entrance on High Street via the church yard. A stairway leads from each entrance to the gallery, meeting in the southwest corner. The windows contain forty-four diminutive panes each (eleven high and four across). The panes are approximately nine by twelve inches and the windows are highlighted by an arch and keystone on the top and sill on the bottom. Each side of the church contains three windows that reach to the second story.

The floor is made of bricks, nine inches square. The pews are narrow and high with straight backs. For the first sixty years of its existence the church did not contain any means of heating. In 1813 a bell tower was added at the rear. The tower contains a belfry and is topped with a weathervane and ball above. The main door is in a recessed doorway and is topped with a lintel. An arch with keystone above is atop the lintel. The entire church is surrounded by a white picket fence.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

1767

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |                                       |   |  |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education    | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry     | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape    | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian            | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature   | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military     |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   | <input type="checkbox"/> Music        |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. Peter's Kierch (Church) of Middletown marks the advancement of colonial Lutheranism from Philadelphia to the more sparsely inhabited portions of western (now central) Pennsylvania. Through the industrious ministry of the Reverend Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, known as the "Patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America," settlements were provided with churches and ministers. As was the case with St. Peter's, the ministers were assigned to several churches in the area and traveled from one to the other holding services at intervals of two to three weeks in a particular church.

Land for St. Peter's was purchased for a nominal fee from George Fisher, founder of Middletown. The land was retained in a trust for the sum of one grain of wheat per annum, payable on the first of May. The cornerstone was laid on July 12, 1767, but the building was not completed until late that year as is evidenced in the journals of Reverend Muhlenberg who noted that at the time of the first service on September 12, 1767, there were no windows or doors. In the first congregation there were sixty-six adults and sixty-eight younger members.

Services were held in this edifice until January 26, 1879, when the present church, constructed in 1877-8, was first occupied. This church, known today as St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, is located next to the parish house erected in 1929.

St. Peter's Kierch stands today as a tribute to the pioneer spirit of the German Lutheran settlers who inhabited and developed the central Pennsylvania area. Middletown, located midway between Lancaster and Carlisle and a part of Lancaster County until 1785, functioned as the hub of activity of the expanding young state. A section of the Chronicles of Middletown states that "Middletown was at this time the center of business and population in this section of Lancaster County for Harrisburg had no existence until ten years later...." In 1785 Middletown and its surrounding area were incorporated into Dauphin County.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Pennsylvania	
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(Number all entries)

8. Significance (cont.)

St. Peter's Kierch represents the early sandstone church in a rural community. For its time and location, it can be considered as a quite elegant structure.

The elegance of the church is well illustrated in its refining features. On the exterior there are its large multi-pane windows, moulded cornice, semi-circular stone arches and its small tower section, which was added later. The interior features a brick floor, straight back pews, gallery and wine glass pulpit. The use of contrasting lintel beams and keystones as well as raised panel doors and heavy protruding sills justifies the architectural merit of the structure. In conclusion, while the church has undergone some minor alteration, it remains basically intact both on the interior and exterior.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Two Hundredth Anniversary Cornerstone Laying, St. Peter's Kierch 1767-1967  
 Journals of Convention of Synod in Philadelphia, June 25-26, 1769  
 Journals of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg  
 Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania  
 Land deed, Lancaster county, 9/18/1764  
 Deed of collection from Lt. Governor John Penn, September 28, 1764

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES								
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degree	Minutes	Seconds	Degree	Minutes	Seconds	Degree	Minutes	Seconds	Degree	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	12	03	76	43	56.5
NE	0	0	0	0	0	0						
SE	0	0	0	0	0	0						
SW	0	0	0	0	0	0						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: approximately one acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Pennsylvania Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks

ORGANIZATION: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission DATE: July, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER: Box 1026

CITY OR TOWN: Harrisburg STATE: Pennsylvania CODE: L2

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

Owner of property notified 5/6/72

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: [Signature]  
 State Liaison Officer

Title: Deputy Executive Director, Pa. Historical & Museum Commission

Date: 1/11/72

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

Keeper of The National Register

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

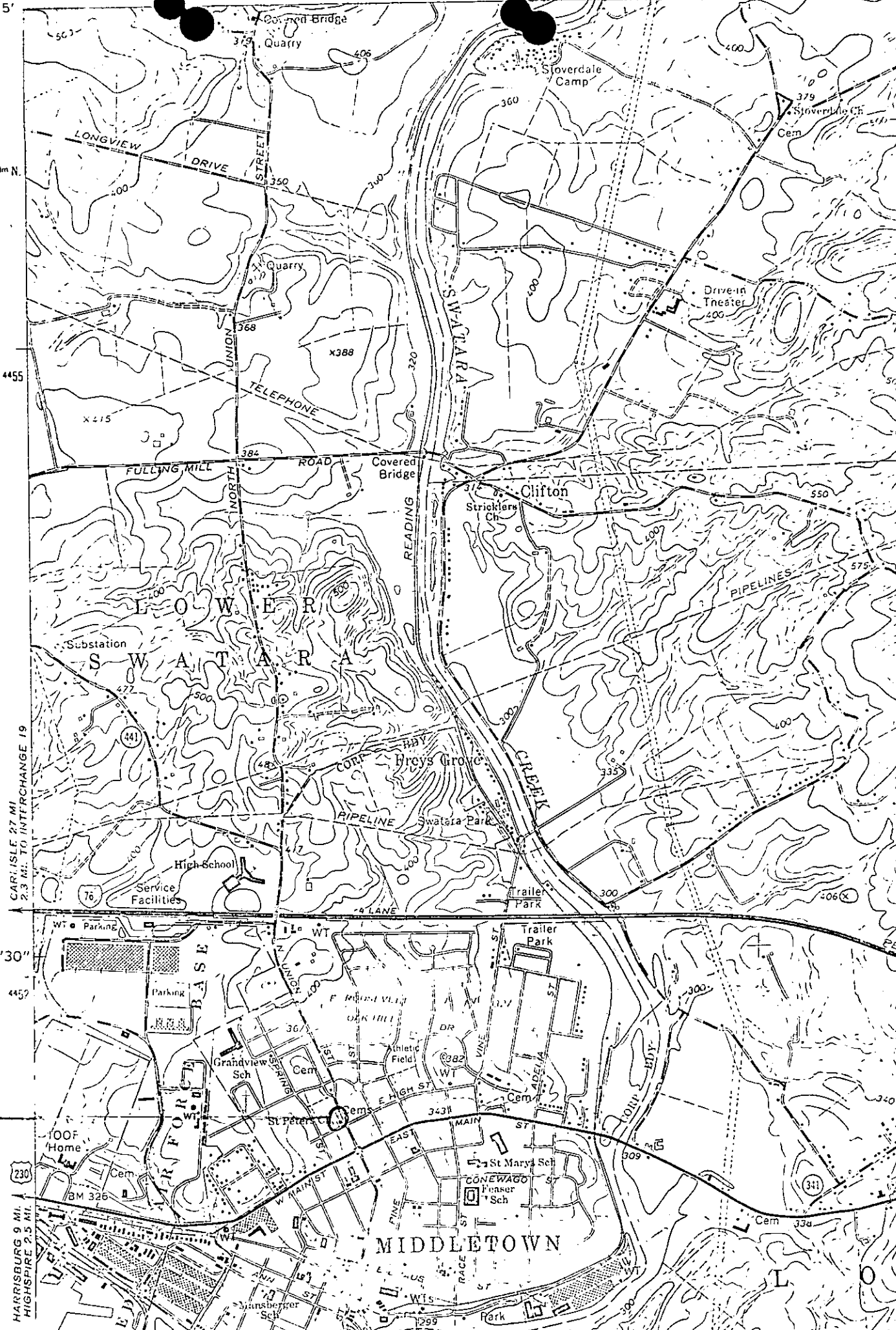
SEE INSTRUCTIONS

76° 45' 35.2000m E.

HUMMELSTOWN T. 1 MI. 42 50

40° 15'

4456000m N.



ST. PETER'S KIERCHE

CARISLE 27 MI.  
2.3 MI. TO INTERCHANGE 19

12'30"

HARRISBURG 9 MI.  
HIGHSPIRE 2.5 MI.

MIDDLETOWN