

VLR-9/14/98 NRHP-2/22/99

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 any 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.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bethel Baptist Church

other names/site number 20-

2. Location

street & number 1100 Huguenot Springs Road Not publication

city or town Midlothian, vicinity

state Virginia code VA county Chesterfield code 041

zip code

3. State/ Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Mr. Catherine Jensen 12/8/98
Signature of certifying official Date

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES
State or 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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register _____

See continuation sheet.

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 Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

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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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Religion</u>	Sub: <u>religious facility</u>
<u>Funerary</u>	<u>cemetery</u>
<u>Recreation & Culture</u>	<u>sport facility - gymnasium</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Religion</u>	Sub: <u>religious facility</u>
<u>Funerary</u>	<u>cemetery</u>
<u>Recreation & Culture</u>	<u>sport facility - gymnasium</u>
_____	_____

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Gothic

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick masonry
roof slate
walls brick masonry

other cemetery fence is cast iron

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) **See continuation sheet**

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8. Statement of Significance

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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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than fifty years old or achieved significance in the past fifty years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Religion _____

Period of Significance 1894 - 1948

Significant Dates 1894

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation Other - French Huguenot's

Architect/Builder W. C. West

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) **See continuation sheet**

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

- 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: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property 20.06 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	260 420	41 54 980	B	18	260 380 41 54 860
C	18	260 215	41 54 925	D	18	260 220 41 54 930

___ 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.)

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

name/title Mrs. Lucille C. Moseley

organization Church Historian, Bethel Baptist Church date May 16, 1998

street & number 2200 Mt. Hermon Road telephone 804/794-5907

city or town Moseley state VA zip code 23120

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Submit the Additional Documentation

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Bethel Baptist Church

street & number 1100 Huguenot Springs Road telephone 804/794-8590

city or town Midlothian state VA zip code 23113

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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Section 7 Page 1

Bethel Baptist Church
name of property

Chesterfield County, VA
county and state

7. Description, continued

Bethel Baptist Church is located in the rural northwestern countryside of Chesterfield County between the James and Appomatox River. This church sits in its original location adjoining Hillsborough Tavern, which served as a stagecoach stop on the Richmond-Buckingham Road. Hillsborough Tavern is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

In *Chesterfield County, Early Architecture and Historic Sites*, (date) Jeff O'Dell states:

"The present Bethel Baptist Church, built in 1894, is the third meeting place of this congregation, which was established as a offshoot of Spring Creek Church in 799. Located just north of the U.S. 60 at Hillsborough Tavern, the present Gothic Revival structure is the only nineteenth century brick church in Chesterfield. "Constructed of five-course American bond brick, with decorative buttresses defining each bay, the building features a steep gable roof sheathed in slate and pierced by gabled vents. The fleur-de-lis finials capping the vestibule and main front gable are said to have been used because a large part of the congregation was of the French Huguenot descent. Indeed, the general form and detailing of the church appears to be based on French rather than English or other Continental Gothic models." (1&2)

The interior of the church, as elaborate as it's exterior, remains intact. A handsome rib-vaulted chancel is located on the West End of the interior. The wainscoting and ceiling are of tongue in groove beaded pine. A stained glass windows, on the west wall, erected to the memory of the founding pastor, the Rev. Benjamin Watkins, on the 100th anniversary of his death in 1831, is particularly handsome. The bench pews and pulpit furniture are original.

Modifications since its original date of construction include building a wing in 1906 to accommodate the Men's Brotherhood Bible Class. Additional classrooms and office space were built adjoining the church in 1980 and 1987. Quoting architect Carl Morris on the classrooms, he states, "even though they butt to it, no changes were made in the original 1894 building."(3)

O'Dell gives a clear description of the present church building:

"In 1893, what had originally begun as repairs to the 1820 meeting house resulted in more than the congregation had foreseen. In the process of rebuilding the roof and the west wall of the earlier church, the carpenters determined that the old walls could not sustain the weight of the new truss roof. The members accordingly voted to proceed with a complete rebuilding based on plans drawn up by Richmond architect W.C. West. The resulting brick structure, erected at a cost of \$3,223, was the most elaborate rural church in the county." (5)

A second contributing building in this nomination is the gymnasium building, now used as the Educational Building/Fellowship Hall. Built in 1910 as a sports facility and meeting hall, it was a simple white frame building with a tin A-roof and gable front and rear facades. The interior was one large room with a stage on the West End. Modifications include the gym being wrapped in brick in 1960. Four classrooms added on each side, and a front porch with columns. The original portion is being used as a fellowship hall for serving dinners and holding receptions, the stage converted to a kitchen, and wing classrooms used by Sunday school classes. (CONSIDERED NONCONTRIBUTING)

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The cemetery also contributes to this nomination under Criterion A, with handsome cast-iron fence that contains fleur-de-lis as an important part of its design; it is a strong reminder of the French heritage of many of the church members.

Nearly 500 persons are buried in the cemetery. This is the final resting-place for buried soldiers of virtually every war in our nation's history from the Revolution through Vietnam. A Virginia highway marker denotes previous recognition to the significance of Bethel in the history of the state. The marker is located in front of the church beside the road.

At least two earlier meeting houses served the congregation before this 1894 sanctuary. Robert B. Semple states in "A History of The Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia" that "the (Middle District Baptist) Association met May 1803 at Bethel Meeting House in Chesterfield County." (4) No records survive about this meeting house but it is assumed that it was a simple log or frame building.

Between 1820 and 1826 this building was replaced by a larger and considerably finer Flemish-bond brick structure with five-bay facade and hipped roof.

Endnotes:

1. O'Dell, Jeffrey M. Chesterfield County, Early Architecture and Historic Sites. 1983. P. 352.
2. Ibid.
3. Letter from Mr. Morris, dated March 5, 1998.
4. Semple.. P. 260.
5. O'Dell. P. 352.

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Bethel Baptist Church
name of property

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8 - Statement of Significance

Bethel Baptist Church, located in northwestern Chesterfield County, Virginia, is being nominated for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion "A" for its involvement in the struggle for religious liberty in Virginia and the nation and its hosting of an Afro-American component of its congregation. Colonists, during the eighteenth century dissented from the Church of England before, during and following the Revolutionary War. Bethel counts among its founding members several Huguenot families whose ancestors had fled from France in 1700 to escape persecution by the Catholic Church there and established a settlement nearby on the James River at Manakin-towne. Religious liberty was an abiding goal of these groups of early settlers.

Another historic component of the church' history are the black members of the congregation. In the era prior to the civil war, Afro-Americans comprised a significant portion of the congregation. They separated to form their own church in the years immediately proceeding the Civil War. The church cemetery also contributes under Criterion A as the final resting place for war veterans and several citizens who contributed to the well being of the community.

The present Educational Building/Fellowship Hall, built as a gymnasium for the use of the youth of the community in 1910, might be consider eligible under Criterion "C" as a sports facility associated with the good health movement during the "progressive era," though it to has undergone several modifications in the past.

Baptist Beginnings in Chesterfield County, Virginia

In "A History of Bethel Baptist Church, 1817-1967", the author describes the struggle for religious liberty in Virginia as it pertained to this church as follows:

Sweeping over Virginia shortly before the Revolutionary War, a great religious upsurge left its mark in Chesterfield County. In December 1770 itinerant Baptist preachers Joseph Anthony and William Webber defied local magistrates and crossed the James River from Goochland County, coming first into what is now Powhatan County and later into Chesterfield to preach to the eager crowds. They were, however, thrust into the Chesterfield jail for "misbehavior by itinerant preaching". Undaunted, these fearless messengers preached from the grated windows of their cells. According to the journal of Daniel Trabue, a youth of Huguenot descent, John Waller, who had baptized the jailed preachers, stopped by Trabue's father's house en route to visit the men. Waller was accompanied by John DuPuy of Powhatan, also a descendant of nearby Manakin-towne Huguenots. After much urging, John Waller was allowed to preach to neighbors and friends assembled at the Trabue home.

From this simple beginning grew the Baptist movement in Chesterfield County, Virginia. Here other Baptist ministers were also persecuted and jailed - seven in all. Such persecution made the rapidly multiplying dissenters from the Church of England more determined than ever to seek religious freedom. Finally, in 1786 Thomas Jefferson's "Statute of Virginia for Religious Liberty" eased somewhat the task of organizing Baptist churches throughout Virginia." (Weaver. 1967. P. 7).

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Bethel Baptist Church
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Bethel traces its beginnings to the 1790's when several members of Spring Creek Church (constituted in 1790) living in this neighborhood found it too difficult to travel the distance to the meeting house, especially in the cold winter months. They began holding prayer meetings once a fortnight at Shortt's State stop on the Richmond-Buckingham Road. Land was soon purchased from John and Olive Shortt in 1799 by the Baptist Society for the purpose of establishing a house of worship there. 1 Shortt's Stage was later re-named Hillsborough Tavern when the Spears family operated Hillsborough Post Office as well as a tavern there. (2)

Located nearby, only four-and-a-half miles away, were the settlement of Huguenots at Manakin-towne on the James River. These French settlers arrived in Virginia circa 1700 seeking religious freedom as they fled persecution by the Catholic Church in France. Here William Byrd II gave each family 133 acres of river frontage to the west of his settlement at Richmond. (This land was the site of an abandoned village once occupied by the Monacan Indians). Here the Huguenots freely worshiped in the manner they chose, establishing Manakin Episcopal Church. But before the century ended many Huguenots migrated inland away from their river settlement intermarried with nearby English families, and adopted their neighbor's religious faith. Recorded among Bethel's founding members are such French family names as Trabue, Martin, Foudree, Forsee, Ammonette, and Flournoy. (3)

The Black Members of Bethel

In 1861 the church membership numbered 182, with 70 white and 82 black members. From inception Bethel's white members brought their servants to Sunday services. They were baptized members of the congregation. After the Emancipation Proclamation church elders asked if they wished to remain or join the Midlothian African Church. Forty-two retained their Bethel membership but met at a separate time and were told that they must abide by the rules of the church.

Mrs. Annie Wheel, clerk of Mount Sinai Baptist Church, describes its beginnings as follows:

"With an increase of population, the local blacks began to worship in bush (brush) arbors that were moved from place to place. It was during that time that William and Rebecca Spears noticed the good work and determination of the people and gave them land to erect a building. In the year 1874 the first church was built, the materials used were vintage boards and slabs. This church was located where we now have our cemetery. Miss Betty Spears named it "The Mount Sinai Baptist Church." (4)

Bethel members William and Rebecca Spears of Hillsborough Tavern to trustees of Mt. Sinai conveyed the deed to the property on July 3, 1878. (5) The present church is said to have been designed by a member of the Watkins family and was constructed in 1884 by a local carpenter named Wooldridge.

With the founding of Mt. Sinai, this became Bethel's second daughter church. Church members provided the land and the leadership to help get it started. Bethel's members were assisting their black members in forming their own independent place of worship in the difficult days of reconstruction following the Civil War. This served as another instance of religious liberty manifested in the life of Bethel Church.

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Bethel's Relationship with Hillsborough Tavern

Bethel Church property adjoins that of Hillsborough Tavern, a Virginia Historic Landmark and listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Once known as Shortt's Stage when owned by John and Olive Shortt, this was a stagecoach stop on the Richmond-Buckingham Road. Bethel actually had its beginnings in this old tavern in the 1790's.. When Baptists in the community found it too difficult to travel to Spring Creek Church they began holding prayer meetings regularly at Shortt's Stage. These continued to be held there for several years.

In 1799 the Shortts deeded one-half acre to the Baptist Society for the purpose of building a house of worship.(6) Little is known of this first meeting house, but it was probably a log structure. It was constructed sometime prior to 1803 for it is recorded that the annual meeting of the Middle District Baptist Association was held at Bethel Meeting House that year. (7)

James Howard, who has been assembling land in Chesterfield since the 1790's, bought Hillsborough Tavern in 1810 and sold the church an additional one-third acre in 1820. (8) This was undoubtedly in anticipation of building their first substantial building, a brick structure which was the first brick church in Chesterfield County. It was begun in 1820 and completed in 1826. (9)

Austin Spears purchased the 616-acre Hillsborough parcel from Howard's heirs in 1826. Spears descendants, continued to live here until 1972, were dedicated members and strong supporters of Bethel throughout all those years.

Caroline Spears, William E. Spears and Rebecca P. Spears deeded the church three-and-a-half acres of land in 1874. (10) Julian A. Spears and his wife in 1932 exchanged 1/20 acre in front of the church that was the Spears Family Graveyard for an equal amount land in the church cemetery. (11) Family members relate that Mr. Spears moved only the tombstones and left the bodies in front of the church. Gladys Spears Dance deeded an additional 1.21 acres in 1973, further *diminishing* the Hillsborough acreage and increasing that of the church. (12). In 1977 the church purchased 12.9 acres north of the church along the Huguenot Springs Road. (13)

An adjoining acre was received as a gift from Edwin W. Ellett and wife and Betty Ellett Lile and husband in 1979, further increasing this buffer.. (14) These two most recent acquisitions were also of land that had once belonged to the Hillsborough Tavern tract.

Bethel had its formative prayer meetings in the Tavern and through the years accumulated seven pieces of property from its owners to assemble the 20.06 acres of land, which is still owned by the congregation to this day.

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Bethel Cared for the Welfare of the Poor

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries churches assumed the obligations of caring for the widows and orphans as well as the *poor of the congregation*. Bethel assumed the responsibility adhered to caring for the poor and helpless from the beginning of its history.⁽¹⁵⁾

Church records reveal that in 1825 Sister Winifred Trabue remembered Bethel in her will as she left the church \$100, the "interest resulting therefrom to be applied to the use of the poor of said church."⁽¹⁶⁾
This interest from the \$100 bequest supported the poor of the church for many years.

The Bethel Church ladies helped visit the sick and nurse the wounded at the hospital. In fact, one of our members relates how her grandmother, Bethel member Sara Jane Martin Harris, a widow, met her future husband while nursing the soldiers at the hospital.⁽¹⁷⁾ He was Charles Winham of Company C, 7th Tennessee Infantry. Following his recovery they were married and lived out their lives in our community and lie buried in our church cemetery. The attached copy of an 1863 letter from another admirer, Lemuel Harris of the 11th Alabama Volunteers, testifies to his pleasant memories of his stay at Huguenot Springs.⁽¹⁸⁾

The hotel/hospital burned around the turn of the century and only the foundations remain today.

The Cemetery

The early settlement patterns in colonial Virginia favored widely scattered farmsteads with accompanying family burial grounds. In contrast, New England's settlement patterns were of small villages that provided the predominance of parish cemeteries. In Virginia, few rural church cemeteries were established until the mid to late 1800's. (19)

Bethel's cemetery was established in 1885 to provide a final resting place for the members of the church as well as friends in the neighborhood

The cemetery is enclosed with a handsome cast-iron fence, purchased in 1904 and added to in 1932. The design in the fence features a fleur-de-lis, memorializing the early French Huguenot families who contributed to the establishing of the church.

Recognized by the Chesterfield Historical Society as having the widest variety of war veterans of any church cemetery in the county, we have placed appropriate grave markers on all veterans' graves. Here are two Revolutionary War markers, one War of 1812 veteran, 22 Confederate soldiers, 3 Union soldiers, 9 World War I veterans, 23 World War II veterans, 1 Korean War and 1 Vietnam veteran. The local Boy Scout Troop, denoting love and respect for these defenders of freedom place flags on their graves on Memorial Day and Veteran's Day.

Here also lie over 400 others, prominent and ordinary citizens whose lives have been molded by this church. Included among the noteworthy citizens are Senator J.B. Watkins and Delegate W.W. Baker, whose brief biographies follow:

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John Benjamin Watkins, Promoter of Scientific Agricultural Methods

Senator J.B. Watkins (1855-1931) whose many accomplishments are chronicled in the "National Cyclopedia of American Biography" (20), represented the 35th District in the Virginia State Senate 1904-1912 and 1927-1931, covering Chesterfield, Powhatan, and Goochland Counties and, until 1910, Manchester (South Richmond).

He was a prominent businessman, establishing Watkins Nurseries in 1876, which still flourishes today under the leadership of his great-grandson, Senator John C. Watkins. As a legislator his main accomplishments were in the development of scientific agricultural methods, in the promotion of public schools for blacks, and in public health. These interests led Senator Watkins to serve as a member of the Board of Visitors of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University for twenty years and as its Rector for four of those years. In addition, he was a member of the Board of Visitors of Farmville State Teachers College (now Longwood College) from 1908-1931.

He died in 1931 at the age of 76 and lies buried in our cemetery. Among his distinguished pallbearers was the Lieutenant Governor of Virginia.

W.W. Baker, Father of Health Work in Virginia

Bethel was the home church of William Washington Baker (1844-1927). A naval hero when he served the Confederacy, he later represented this area in the Virginia House of Delegates for nearly twenty years, 1883-1884 and 1897-1916, where he was highly respected and very influential.. (21)

Quoting Raymond Pulley in his book "Old Virginia Restored, an Interpretation of the Progressive Impulse, 1870-1930", he writes: "The Legislature (in 1908) also took steps to increase the powers of the state in the area of public health." (P. 145) This was an obvious reference to Mr. Baker's work in this area, for one of his greatest achievements occurred in 1908 when he was the author of an act which reorganized the State Board of Health. This law later made possible Catawba Sanatorium in Roanoke County, Blue Ridge Sanatorium in Albemarle County, and Piedmont Sanatorium near Burkeville.

Probably due to his leadership in establishing these tuberculosis sanatoriums he was asked to serve as the first president of the Virginia Tuberculosis Association.

Mr. Baker served on several state commissions and committees, including those for the Jamestown Exposition of 1907 and for the enlargement of the State Capitol, the State Library, and the State Penitentiary. He was also a deacon and life-long member of Bethel. He died February 21, 1927 and is buried in our cemetery.

Both Senator Watkins and Delegate Baker were active in the affairs of Bethel during a twenty-year period of exceptional church growth and progress. The new sanctuary was built in 1894, a wing was added to it in 1906, the gymnasium was constructed in 1910, and a baptistery was installed beneath the pulpit in 1914. These two men provided the leadership as these substantial building projects were accomplished during this relatively short period of time.

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Highway Marker

In 1992 the Virginia Department of Historic Resources awarded a historic highway marker to Bethel. This contributes to Bethel's historical significance under the "Recreation and Culture" function. The text of it reads as follows:

In 1799 the local Baptist Society acquired this land and soon built a meetinghouse. The Bethel congregation worshiped in the meeting house and was constituted as a church in 1817. About 1820 the members built a brick church here - the first in Chesterfield County. The present sanctuary, which replaced it in 1894, was then the most elaborate rural church in the county, having Gothic buttresses, fine exterior detailing, and a rib-vaulted chancel. In the churchyard are buried soldiers or virtually every war from the Revolution through Vietnam. (Virginia Marker 0-50).

Bethel Church: A Potential Archaeological Research

The church, facing on Huguenot Springs Road, adjoins the back yard of Hillsborough Tavern, which fronts on Midlothian Turnpike. The church now owns the land on which probably sat early dependencies of that once 600+ acre property. It is logical to believe that such outbuildings would have been located a short distance behind the tavern, on what is today church property. Although no archaeology has been done to date, artifacts that may reveal important information about the tavern as well as the church may be close beneath the surface, awaiting future investigation.

The site of the 1820 church building is in the front yard of the present church. An older member remembers her parents pointing out the spot on which the old church was located. Present-day members of the Chesterfield Historical Society have walked over the area with "dosing rods" which give a strong (though unscientific) reaction to the whereabouts of the foundations of this early building. Professional archaeologists with probing rods could more accurately identify the foundations, and probably also unearth artifacts long buried.

The Spears Family Graveyard is adjacent to the 1820 church foundations. Thirty-seven bodies, left behind when Julian Spears moved their tombstones in 1932, are easily identifiable with the "dowsing rods." This site may also prove of interest to archaeologists some day. Many archaeological possibilities exist on this site awaiting future exploration.

ENDNOTES:

1. Chesterfield County Deed Book 23, P. 314.
2. Axelson. "Virginia Postmasters and Post Offices" P. 42 1981.
3. Bethel Church Minute Book 1
4. O'Dell, Jeffrey M. Chesterfield County, Early Architecture and Historic Sites. 1983. P. 359.
5. Chesterfield County Deed Book 63, p. 129

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6. Chesterfield County Deed Book 23, p. 314
7. Semple, Robert B. "A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia", Revised and extended by Rev. G. W. Beale. 1894. P. 260.
8. Chesterfield County Deed Book 23, p. 487.
9. Bethel Church Minute Book 1.
10. Chesterfield County Deed Book 61, p. 22.
11. Chesterfield County Deed Book 216, p. 150.
12. Chesterfield County Deed Book 1091, p. 560.
13. Chesterfield County Deed Book 1290, p. 85.
14. Chesterfield County Deed Book 1438, p. 739.
15. Weaver, Bettie Woodson, "Bethel Baptist Church, 1817-1967." 1967. P. 10.
16. Virginia Cavalcade, Winter 1969. "Huguenot Springs" by Bettie Weaver. P. 14.
17. Ibid. P. 14
18. Ibid. P. 15
19. O'Dell, Jeffrey M. Chesterfield County, Early Architecture and Historic Sites" p. 483.
20. National Cyclopedia of American Biography, Vol. XXX. 1913. P. 155.
21. Men of Mark in Virginia, Vol. III. 1907. P. 24-26.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Axelson, "Virginia Postmasters and Post Offices" 1981 p. 42

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National Park Service

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Richmond News Leader, 21. Feb. 1927.
Richmond Times Dispatch. 30 Nov. 1931 and Nov. 1936.

PERIODICALS;

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Virginia Highway Marker, 0-50

10. Geographical Data
(Continuation)

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary includes all of the property within Chesterfield County, Virginia tax parcel number - 711710564100000.

Boundary Justification:

The land included in the boundary is historically associated with the Bethel Church since its founding. The boundary includes all four of the contributing resources cited in Section 5 of this form.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Site Name: Bethel Baptist Church

Credit: Mrs. Lucille Mosley

Date: May , 1998

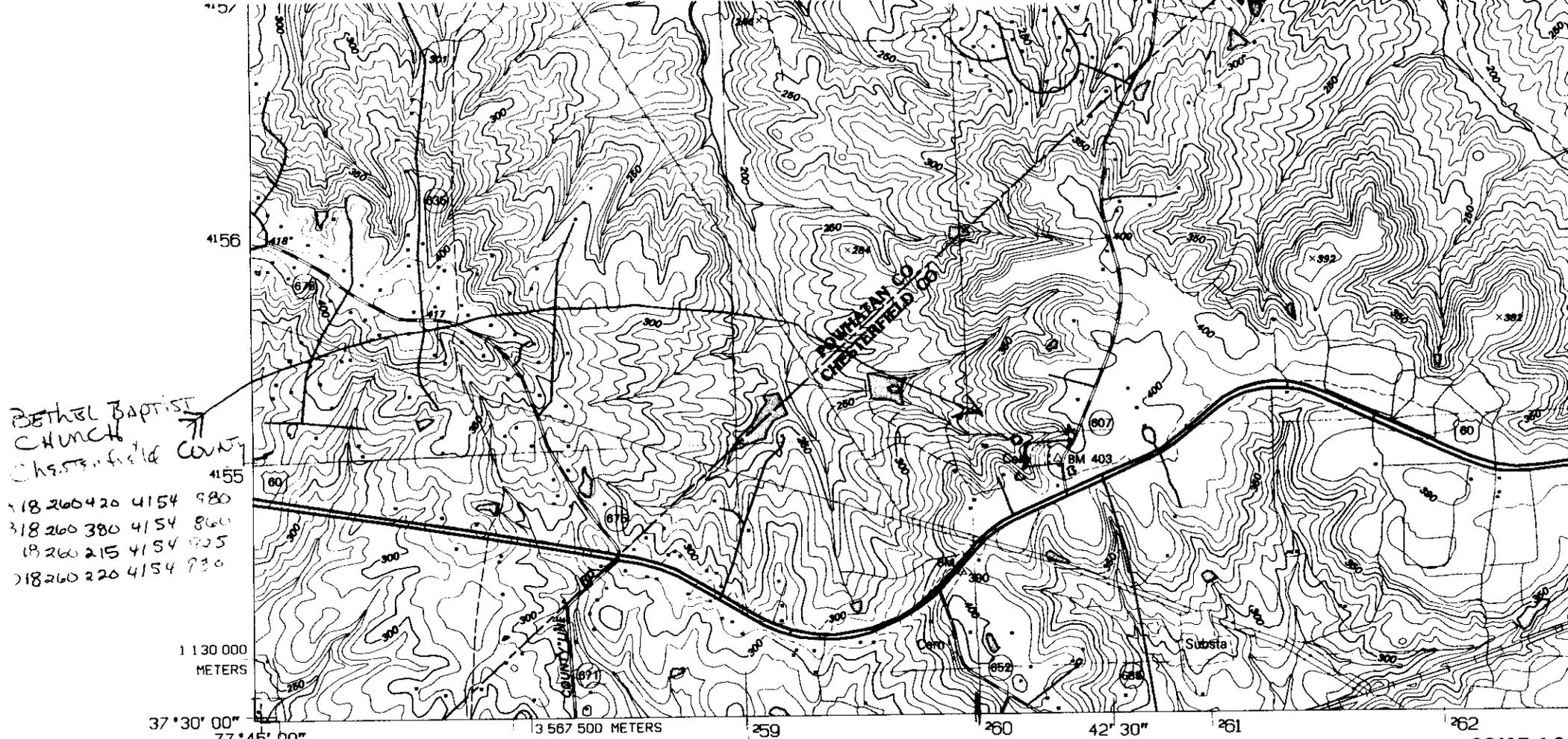
Negative Filed: Virginia State Library and Archive

1. View of Northwest corner, primary façade facings East, gym building in background.
Neg. No.
Photo 1 of 4

2. View of east entry elevation in to church with gym in background.
Neg. No.
Photo 2 of 4

3. View of South elevation of church with 1981 addition in rear
Neg. No.
Photo 3 of 4

4. View of cemetery along east fence line looking northwest
Neg. No.
Photo 4 of 4

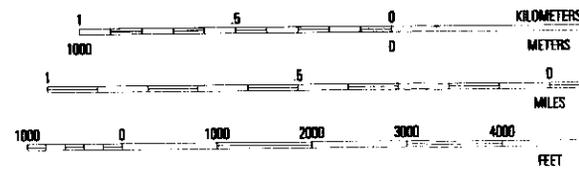
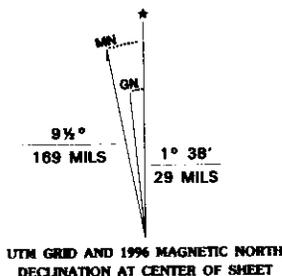


Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Commonwealth of Virginia, Departments of Mines, Minerals and Energy, and Transportation

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from imagery dated 1962
 Field checked 1964. Revised from imagery dated 1994
 Survey control current as of 1964. Map edited 1996
 Contours not revised. Contours that conflict with revised planimetry are dashed

North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). Projection and blue 1000-meter ticks: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 18
 2 500-meter ticks: Virginia Coordinate System of 1983 (south zone)

North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 83 and NAD 27 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software



CONTOUR INTERVAL
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACT OF 1930
 FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, CO
 AND VIRGINIA DIVISION OF MINERAL RESOURCES
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND