

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 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 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name BETHEL MEMORIAL CHURCH
other names/site number Bethel Baptist Memorial Church VDHL Site No. 21-35

2. Location

street & number County Route 622 N/A not for publication
city, town White Post X vicinity
state Virginia code VA county Clarke code 043 zip code 22663

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: X private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal
Category of Property: X building(s), district, site, structure, object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing (1), Noncontributing (0) buildings, sites, structures, objects. Total: 2

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: Douglas C. Mitchell, Director VA Department of Historic Resources
Date: 9-26-89

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
entered in the National Register.
determined eligible for the National Register.
determined not eligible for the National Register.
removed from the National Register.
other, (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
Religion/Religious Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
Religion/Religious Structure

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Early Republic/Federal

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick  
walls Brick

roof Metal

other \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

Bethel Memorial Church is located off of county route 622 in southern Clarke County. The present building, built between 1833 and 1836, exists with only a few minor alterations to its original fabric. It is a rectangular building constructed of brick and laid in five course American bond. It is two stories high and sits on a low brick basement. The front facade has two doors and the side facades are five bays of windows. Bethel's interior has many well-preserved elements including late nineteenth century oil lamps and grain-painted pews. Bethel Memorial Church is one of Clarke County's best preserved religious structures.

The entrance facade is the east side of the building. This gable-end facade is three bays wide. On the ground level, the two outer bays are entry doors and the central bay is a twelve over twelve window. The second story of this facade is made up of three bays of twelve over twelve windows. The two entrance doors on this facade of the church appear to be original. They are eight-panel wooden doors with a four light rectangular transom above.

The side (north and south) elevations are identical. The second story of the side elevations is composed of five bays of twelve over twelve windows (these appear original). The ground level is also made up of five bays; four are twelve over twelve windows, and the fifth is an entrance door. The windows on the ground level were replaced by large panes in the late nineteenth century and were restored to their original size in 1969. The end bay on both of the side elevations is occupied by doors which are identical to those on the main facade. These side entrances give access to the gallery staircases. The brick walls of these two elevations are capped by a mouse tooth brick cornice (now partially obscured by gutters).

The west (rear) of Bethel Memorial Church is composed of two bays of twelve over twelve windows on two levels. The sashes of the windows on the ground level were restored to their original size in 1969. The upper level windows appear original.

The brick work at Bethel has been repointed in most places, especially in the lower stages of the building. In most cases, the mortar was not properly matched. Standing seam sheet metal covers Bethel's gable roof. There is an interior flue located in the center of the church towards the east end. It was added in 1874. It appears that at one time there were shutters for the windows, but they are now missing. There are flat arches over all the doors and windows at Bethel.

The interior of Bethel follows the form promised by the entry facade. The twin entrances give access to vestibules with a room occupying the interior areas between them. There is a door into this room from only the northern vestibule. On the other side of both vestibules are the gallery stairs. On entering the main space of the church, two aisles divide the

**8. Statement of Significance**

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

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
N/A

Period of Significance

1833-1939

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1833-1836

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Unknown

\_\_\_\_\_

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

Bethel Memorial Church serves as a tangible and accessible reminder of life in nineteenth century Clarke County. It is also architecturally significant in that it remains basically untouched since its construction in 1833-36. Its history involved many influential families in Clarke County. The minute books of Bethel which exist from 1808-1930 are a testament to the importance of the church in the community during that period.

Bethel Memorial Church is situated off of one of the earliest roads in Clarke County. The building marks the approximate location of a mid-eighteenth century Quaker meeting house. The land now occupied by Bethel Memorial Church was part of the 1730 grant by Thomas 6th Lord Fairfax to Robert "King" Carter. In 1740 the property was conveyed to Robert Burwell, grandson of Robert Carter. Robert's son, Nathaniel, received this tract along with 2,309 acres when he married Mary Wormley. In 1771, John H. Norton bought the tract and in the same year conveyed it to Alexandria Henderson. Major Thomas Massie acquired 145 acres in 1791 from Henderson, and in turn sold fifty-eight acres including the Bethel tract to William Davis. Mention of "God's Acre on the hill known as Bethel's Meeting House" in a deed of 1765 has led to speculation that the church site was a gift to the Quaker congregation from Robert Burwell. William Davis, the last private owner of the site, was one of the founding members of the congregation of Bethel Baptist Church in 1808.

It is believed that the Quakers had a log meeting house on this site called Bethel. Because of their religious beliefs, Quakers were not so popular during and after the Revolutionary War and tended to gather more closely in larger congregations. Either for this or for other reasons, the log meeting house was unoccupied when the Baptist congregation decided to take it over in 1808. Bethel's minute books start in 1808 and document the history of the church from that period on. They speak of the female members of the church and how in 1855 they were finally allowed to vote on church matters. The minute books also include many details about the black members of the congregation. The last entry in the minute books was dated June 8, 1930. From that time on Bethel has experienced long periods of non-use. In the 1940s, Beverly Brownley McKay, whose family had long been associated with the church, was the prime mover in the restoration of the graveyard and the church to make them sound. The restoration efforts have continued since then. In the recent past, Bethel was only used on rare occasions but now efforts are being made to diversify its uses and make it more accessible to the public.

See continuation sheet

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

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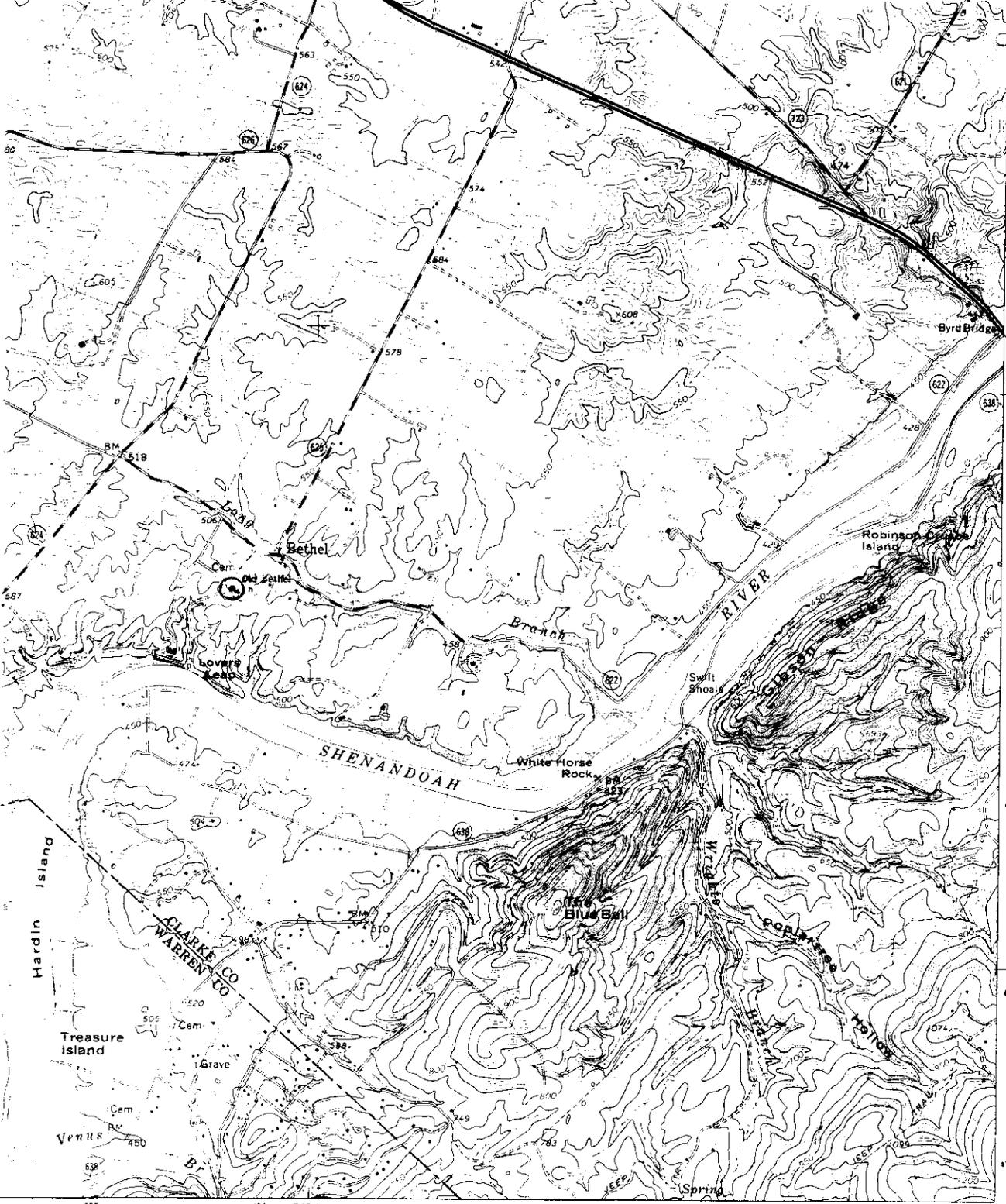
space into three seating areas. The gallery above surrounds three sides of the building and is supported by seven slender unfluted baseless Doric columns. These seven columns are repeated again on the gallery level and act to help support the ceiling. The railing on the gallery level is made up of a plain handrail and square balusters.

At the west end of the church is the pulpit area which is marked by a platform two steps above the floor of the body of the church. On either side of the pulpit area are robing rooms.

The columns and the seating bear evidence of grain painting. The columns have all been painted green from the pews upward. The best examples of grain painting can be seen in the ends of the pews. The oil lamps at Bethel were installed in 1874 and are still in use. Two stoves were also installed at the same time for heating purposes. Bethel Memorial Church has never been electrified so it still relies on the oil lamps as a source of light. The stoves have not been used in over ten years but are still stored in the church.

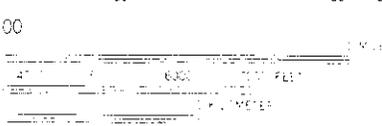
Bethel's graveyard is located to the north of the church. It contains the graves of many of the church's former members. It has two family plots which are both enclosed by stone fences. One contains the graves of the Sowers family, while the other contains members of the Kerfoot family. The graveyard is shaded by mature oak and pine trees. The entire churchyard is enclosed by a board fence which was built in the mid-1970s.





4326  
 OETHEL MEMORIAL  
 CLARKE CO., VA  
 UTM REFERE  
 17/755645/43239

UPPERVILLE 8 MI  
 MIDDLEBURG 16 MI



10 FEET  
 DATUM OF 1929

MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
 S. CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903  
 SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983,  
 move the projection lines 8 meters south and  
 24 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	—————	Light-duty	—————
Medium-duty	—————	Unimproved dirt	- - - - -
U. S. Route	—————	State Route	—————

BOYCE, VA.

39078-A1-TF-024

1966  
 PHOTOREVISED 1978  
 DMA 5362 II SE—SERIES V834

UPPERVILLE  
 560 13 NW