

CAPSULE SUMMARY

B-5243

Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church

1500 Gorsuch Avenue

Baltimore, Maryland

1901-1929

Private

The Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church located at 1500 Gorsuch is a prime example of the church constructed in the first third of the twentieth century to serve the Homestead neighborhood. Built in 1901-1903 with substantial renovations in 1928-1929, the building's evolution reflects the growing prosperity of Homestead and its residents, as well as the value they placed on religion and community outreach. The original church building and its later additions are architecturally defined by their pointed Gothic arches, generous use of stained glass, stone ashlar façade, and picturesque silhouette—all features commonly employed by vernacular adaptations of the Gothic Revival style. Although the church's name was altered from its historical title, it has been continuously occupied by the same congregation throughout its history.

The two-story, religious building located at 1500 Gorsuch Avenue was constructed over two major building campaigns between 1901 and 1929 to serve as the Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church. The property is located at the eastern corner of Kirk (formerly Taylor Street) and Gorsuch Avenues, with an alley that runs along the northeastern boundary of the site. The church proper is rectangular in plan, with a square tower engaged with the western corner of the vaulted sanctuary. A later addition (generally known as the Sunday School building) to the southeast forms an L-shaped plan that hugs a small front lawn. The building is clad in uncoursed, dressed ashlar stone, with the exception of the northeastern and southeastern (rear) Sunday School elevations, which are clad in rusticated, concrete masonry blocks. The gabled roof of the church is covered in slate shingles and is lined with vented dormers. The roofs of the tower and Sunday School additions are both flat and concealed behind heavy stone parapets.

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Inventory No. B-5243

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church

other Homestead United Methodist Church

2. Location

street and number 1500 Gorsuch Avenue ___ not for publication

city, town Baltimore ___ vicinity

county

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church

street and number 1500 Gorsuch Avenue telephone (410) 243-4419

city, town Baltimore state MD zip code 21218-3623

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Courthouse liber MLP 7922 folio 244

city, town Baltimore tax map 09 tax parcel 001 tax ID number NA

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
 Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
 Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Recorded by HABS/HAER
 Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
 Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
				Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
				0

7. Description

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Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The two-story, Late Gothic Revival-style religious building located at 1500 Gorsuch Avenue was constructed over two major building campaigns between 1901 and 1929 to serve as the Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church. The property is located at the eastern corner of Kirk (formerly Taylor Street) and Gorsuch Avenues, with an alley that runs along the northeastern boundary of the site.¹ The church proper is rectangular in plan, with a square tower engaged with the western corner of the vaulted sanctuary. A later addition (generally known as the Sunday School building) to the southeast forms an L-shaped plan that hugs a small front lawn. The building is clad in uncoursed, dressed ashlar stone, with the exception of the northeastern and southeastern (rear) Sunday School elevations, which are clad in rusticated, concrete masonry blocks. The gabled roof of the church is covered in slate shingles and is lined with vented dormers. The roofs of the tower and Sunday School additions are both flat and concealed behind heavy stone parapets.

The church's founding congregation was formed in 1875, and the building located at 1500 Gorsuch Avenue was their fourth site to inhabit for religious purposes. In 1900-1901, the church assembled four residential parcels to create one large property suitable for construction, and by the end of 1901 had broken ground on their future church, which would be formally dedicated in March of 1903. A major building and renovation campaign was inaugurated in 1928, to improve the architectural appearance of the church and augment its educational and community facilities. As well as the addition of the exterior tower and Sunday School, the basement and sanctuary were remodeled to accommodate larger groups. *Sanborn Fire Insurance* maps from the years 1928-1936 and 1951 record this addition as the only major exterior change undertaken on the property. Between 1949 and 1969, the church was renamed the Homestead United Methodist Church, although the original congregation still owns and inhabits the property.

Setting

The property is located at an intersection with exposures along Kirk and Gorsuch Avenues, as well as along a rear alley to the northeast. The property is rectangular, with the approximate dimensions of 112 by 90 feet. The northeastern and southeastern building elevations front directly on the property lines, thus allowing for modest setbacks along the principal street exposures, as well as for a small rectangular lawn contained by the building's L-shaped footprint. Set within this lawn is a pedimented stone sign, supported by sloping wing walls and clad in a stone pattern and finish similar to the church building. The western corner of the property, as well as its southwestern edge, is lined with a low, stone retaining wall, which negotiates the difference in elevation between the sidewalk and lawn, and also accommodates various building entrances as the site slopes gradually to the southeast. The entrances are connected to the sidewalk with concrete stairs and/or walkways. Located on the southwestern façade of the engaged tower, the principal church entrance is

¹ Kirk Avenue runs southeast-northeast and Gorsuch Avenue runs northwest-southwest.

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connected to the sidewalk via a monumental, two-tiered stair. The stair is constructed of concrete with painted steel railings, and features stone side walls capped with a wide, stone coping.

The church is located in a residential neighborhood populated with houses in a mix of sizes, styles, and configurations, the predominant being two-story, brick row houses constructed in the early twentieth century. Facing the church diagonally across the intersection is a branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, a one-story, Classical Revival-style building completed in 1911.²

Exterior

The L-shaped footprint of the building is formed by two rectangular wings: the sanctuary (1901-1902, later modifications) and the Sunday School (1928-1929). Although the roof structure, fenestration, and height of the original sanctuary is distinct from that of the school, their similar cladding material—as well as the architectural treatment of the engaged tower (1928-1929)—unites them as a single, contiguous unit. The buildings, which were constructed in a vernacular interpretation of the Gothic Revival style, are clad in a dressed stone laid in an uncoursed ashlar pattern, with variegated tones ranging from dark brown to grayish blue in color. The rear, southeastern and northeastern elevations of the school are clad in rusticated concrete masonry blocks, laid in an all-stretcher-bond pattern.

The sanctuary building is surmounted by a steeply pitched, gabled roof clad in slate shingles. The slope of the roof breaks slightly as it approaches the wooden eaves, which project slightly from the wall below and are lined with exposed rafter tails. This projection is supported on the northern corner by a scrolled, wooden bracket. Aluminum gutters, which connect to vertical downspouts on the northeastern and southwestern elevations, line much of the length of the eaves. The roof is punctuated by triangular dormers (three on the northeastern elevation, two on the southwestern), which contain horizontal wooden slats and appear to be used for attic ventilation.

Originally designed to be symmetrical, the northwestern elevation's westernmost bay was obscured by the addition of the engaged tower. In its original configuration, it was five bays wide, with the open gable of the roof suggesting a single-story, vaulted space within. In its current state, the elevation's center contains a triple row of slender windows. These are divided by stone mullions and housed under pointed arches. Fixed, wooden frames contain vividly colored stained glass featuring a mix of geometric patterns and religious imagery. To the northeast, a single stained glass window—typical of those throughout—is set within a fixed wooden frame and supported by a plain stone sill and lintel. Four 12/12, double-hung windows on the

² *The Baltimore Sun*, "New Library Is Opened," December 10, 1911, <http://www.proquest.com>.

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basement story correspond to the arrangement of windows above, and are contained by simple stone lintels and sills, the latter set flush with the level of the ground. To the exterior of these windows has been affixed a metal mesh grille. A single, arched and vented opening is contained at the peak of the gable roof. The corresponding, southeastern sanctuary elevation—concealed behind the Sunday School addition on the first and basement stories—is blind, saved for a matching vented opening.

The sanctuary's southwestern and northeastern elevations are similar in appearance and fenestration. They are seven bays wide (the two outer, original bays of the southwestern elevation have been obscured by the tower and school additions) and generally symmetrical, with typical stained glass windows on the first story and either 8/8 or 12/12, double-hung windows on the basement story corresponding to those above. Also on the basement story, the easternmost bay of each elevation contains an entry door set beneath a blind transom.

The four exposed elevations of the Sunday School are more regular in their organization and spacing. Each features two full stories, upon which are arrayed five bays on the northwestern elevation, six on the southwestern, and nine on the southeastern. Each opening contains a single 1/1, double-hung window with a flat concrete sill and lintel, except in certain cases where the openings have been enlarged to accommodate an entry door. On the eastern side of the southwestern elevation, a concrete stair leads to a sunken well, containing a door and side vents partially clad in wood weatherboards. The northeastern elevation, which fronts directly on the alley, has three bays on the first story and two on the second. The northwestern and southwestern elevations are clad similarly to the sanctuary and tower structures. Here, however, the perceived level of the flat roof is demarcated with a continuous stone sill course. Above this, the stone parapet and coping are given small, castellated notches. On the southeastern and northeastern elevations, the concrete block cladding rises unbroken to form the parapet walls, which are lined with terra cotta tiles along the top. A square, concrete block chimney rises from the eastern corner of the school. As the site slopes downward to the southeast, more of the basement story is exposed to suggest the building's foundation. Although the foundation is not delineated on the stone-clad walls, on the southeastern and northeastern elevations, it is treated with uncoursed ashlar stone rather than the typical concrete block.

The square tower at the building's western corner is nearly identical on each of its two exposed elevations, save for the first story. Vertically, the tower is divided into three uneven subsections. On the upper section is located a pair of pointed arch openings, separated by a stone mullion, and filled with horizontal wooden slats. The central section features a single window opening supported under a shallow, pointed arch. The twin lights of the fixed, wooden frame are glazed with translucent, ground glass panes. On the northwestern elevation of the lowest section, a single window opening spans nearly the entire width of the wall, and is supported under

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a shallow, pointed arch. The window is divided into four fixed, vertical frames, each glazed with stained glass planes and capped with a pointed, ogee arch. Beneath this, a wide rectangular window is similarly divided into four fixed panes. On the southwestern elevation of the tower's lowest section, a shallow, pedimented projection houses the main entry door, set within a splayed opening beneath a pointed arch. The glazed, double door within has an upper transom divided into eight fixed panes. Above the door opening, a series of ascending stone panels forms a mock screen, framed by blind stone aediculae. The entry itself leads to a substantial, stone-and-concrete stairway. Each wall of the tower is framed by shallow piers, located just inside the tower's outer edge, creating a narrow reveal at the corner. The piers terminate at the outer spring line of the uppermost tower openings, and are capped by a tapered coping. Above this, the steps of the tower's parapet wall give a chunky, castellated appearance, and are finished with a simple stone coping. Surmounting the tower is an illuminated, glass-and-metal cross.

Interior

EHT Tracerics attempted to contact the owners of Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church in order to conduct an interior survey of the building, but had no success. Communication efforts included telephone calls to the church phone number and several site visits during the course of our documentation effort for the church. Our final effort occurred on August 21, 2013, when Tracerics attempted to access the interior of the building, but the building was unattended and closed.

Integrity

Homestead United Methodist Church, the religious structure located at 1500 Gorsuch Avenue at the intersection of Kirk Avenue, appears to have retained a high degree of historic integrity. Although the original, circa 1902 sanctuary building has been much altered and added to, extending the range of significance to the completion of the tower and Sunday School additions more closely reflects its total period of development and the growth of its associated congregation. Its historic integrity, therefore, must be measured against a period of significance dating from 1901 to 1929. The character and quality of the exterior cladding materials—particularly the variegated, uncoursed ashlar stone that covers the most visible church elevations—appear to have remained relatively unchanged, with the exception of some discoloration resulting from the oxidation of individual stones themselves. Additionally, exterior fenestration, stone and wood detailing, roofing material, and site features have remained largely untouched, although nominally degraded in condition. Therefore, the overall fair to good condition of extant historic fabric adequately conveys the building's integrity of materials and workmanship. The greatest deterioration of its material integrity comes from unsympathetic repair or replacement activities, specifically: replacement of many of the original doors; new security grilles on select

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windows; and the addition of aluminum gutters and downspouts along cornice lines not treated with parapet walls. The building is sited on a prominent parcel with exposure along two streets, and its massing and profile are distinct from the prevailing scale and streetscape of the surrounding neighborhood. As the church was intended both to act as a visual landmark and to serve the surrounding residents—both qualities which it retains—the property has a high degree of integrity of location, setting, and association. Certain buildings shown on the relevant *Sanborn Fire Insurance* maps are no longer extant, including the residence on the parcel directly to the southeast, but the surrounding neighborhood is intact enough to adequately convey the setting of the church during its period of significance.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates 1901-1929 **Architect/Builder** B. F. Bennett Building Co.

Construction dates 1901-1903; 1928-1929

Evaluation for:

National Register Maryland Register not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Statement of Significance

The building located at 1500 Gorsuch is a prime example of the church constructed in the first third of the twentieth century to serve the Homestead neighborhood. Built in 1901-1903 with substantial renovations in 1928-1929, the building's evolution reflects the growing prosperity of Homestead and its residents, as well as the value they placed on religion and community outreach. The original church building and its later additions are architecturally defined by their pointed Gothic arches, generous use of stained glass, stone ashlar façade, and picturesque silhouette—all features commonly employed by vernacular adaptations of the Gothic Revival style. Although the church's name was altered from its historical title of Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church, it has been continuously occupied by the same congregation throughout its history.

Historic Context

Homestead

Robert Gorsuch and his syndicate including John Fox, Edward Jackson, and John W. Van Hook desired to establish Baltimore's first middle-class suburban neighborhood. Named "Homestead" in honor of the old family estate, the 1850 subdivision was one-and-three-quarter miles from Baltimore City's courthouse and a quarter-mile north of the city's limits. The plat consisted of over 1000, 16x90 foot lots, fronting 50-foot streets and 20-foot alleys.³

Homestead struggled to grow due to poor financial planning and a lack of reliable transportation to Baltimore City. In 1888, however, Baltimore City's annexation of the surrounding western and northern sections of

³ Baltimore County Circuit Court, "Plan of the Buildings Lots of the Homestead," Plat Book JWS 2, Folio 88, Maryland State Archives, MSA C2136, <http://www.plato.mdarchives.state.md.us> (accessed June 12, 2012); Baltimore City Circuit Court, "Plan of the Building Lots of the Homestead," Plat Book RHB, Folio 2412, Maryland State Archives, MSA 2828-5046, <http://www.plato.mdarchives.state.md.us> (accessed June 12, 2012).

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Baltimore County increased the properties' value as the city became responsible for improvements to the local infrastructure. Additionally, the tax structure for annexed land spurred investment and development.⁴ Coupled with City Passenger Railway's purchase of the Halls Spring Passenger Railway in 1885 and its electrification in 1894, housing developed at a rapid pace in the first quarter of the twentieth century.⁵ The neighborhood's desirability was further increased in 1901 when the city purchased Clifton Park, located directly to the east.⁶ As a result, large lot owners and developers filled in Homestead, creating an eclectic architectural landscape of circa 1850-1890 wood-frame or brick free-standing dwellings and circa 1890-1930 brick row houses.

Early *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* record numerous businesses interspersed among residential dwellings along Harford and Gorsuch Avenue, suggesting a prosperous and growing commercial district. Similar to other successful neighborhoods, influxes of residents lead to the construction of additional places of worship. In 1900, Homestead contained three churches: St. Thomas Episcopal Church (1857) at the northwest corner of Carswell and Kirk Avenues, Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church (1876) at the southeast corner of Gorsuch and Kennedy Avenues, and St. Matthew's German Evangelical Lutheran Mission Church (1889) mid-block on the south side of Gorsuch Avenue between Kennedy Avenue and Robb Street. During the 1920s, additional churches of varying denominations were constructed directly northeast of Homestead along The Alameda to further serve the regions rapidly growing population.

Frequent with urban churches, the buildings were utilized by various congregations due to the neighborhood's shifting demographics. In the 1950s and 1960s, African-American Baltimoreans faced a scarce supply of housing due to the results of urban renewal, highway construction projects, and racism. Urban renewal efforts displaced more than seventy-five thousand people. Coupled with new developments reserved only for Caucasians, dishonest real estate brokers engaged in blockbusting. The real estate developers stirred fear in white neighborhoods by claiming real estate prices were about to plummet due to changing demographics. As a result, the realtors were able to purchase the houses at low prices. They then sold the dwellings to African Americans willing to pay higher prices since they had very limited options for home ownership.⁷ These predatory practices accelerated the middle and upper class flight from Coldstream-Homestead-Montebello. The developers who benefited from such tactics often stepped away from the community, having made

⁴ For more information regarding the annexation's tax structure, Sherry Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 219.

⁵ Eric L. Holcomb, *The City as Suburb: A History of Northeast Baltimore Since 1660* (Chicago: The Center for American Places, 2008), 123.

⁶ Olson, 217.

⁷ George Lipsitz, *How Racism takes Place* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2011), 103.

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minimal investments towards its improvement. The resulting shift in population led to the sale of many of the church buildings to new congregations by the 1970s.

Homestead United Methodist Church

The Homestead United Methodist Church (formerly the Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church) congregation was informally organized in 1875, and their earliest services were held in the open air on a lot at the corner of Homestead Street and Kennedy Avenue. By 1876, they had gathered sufficient resources to construct a small wood-frame building on a property at the intersection of Kirk Avenue and Montpelier Street. This building—a prototypical Gothic Revival-style chapel with batten walls, triangular pointed arches, and a steeply pitched, gabled roof—was moved to a new site on the corner of Kennedy Street and Gorsuch Avenue. During this time, the church was recognized as an independent Methodist congregation, but they would not be formally organized until June of 1881, and would assume the name of Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church.⁸

In 1900, the church moved to erect a permanent, more substantial church building to accommodate its growing membership, and began to acquire connected parcels at the eastern corner of Kirk and Gorsuch Avenues. In January of 1900, the church purchased from Eliza Gilman a rectangular parcel with 90 feet of frontage on Kirk Avenue and 32 feet along Gorsuch.⁹ The adjoining lots, also 32 feet wide, were purchased in April 1900¹⁰ and October 1901¹¹ from Lockhart Scott and I. Annie Carswell. The final property, a sixteen-foot-wide parcel forming the eastern boundary of the site, was leased from Lockhart Scott Carswell in October 1901, until it could be purchased in March 1904.¹²

With a single, large property assembled, the church could focus on the construction of its new building. Ground was broken in October 1901, and the cornerstone was laid in November. The B. F. Bennett Building Company of Baltimore undertook the building construction and site development. In June 1902, the first service was held in the church, which would not be formally dedicated until March 1903. Built in the

⁸ *The Baltimore Sun*, "Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church Here Traces History Back to 1875," December 14, 1931, <http://www.proquest.com>.

⁹ Baltimore City Land Records, "Eliza Gilman, life tenant under the last will and testament of John S. Gilman, to Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore County," Liber RO 1831, Folio 133, <http://www.mdlandrec.net> (accessed June 14, 2012).

¹⁰ Baltimore City Land Records, "Lockhart Scott Carswell and I. Annie Carswell to Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore County," Liber RO 1841, Folio 524, <http://www.mdlandrec.net> (accessed June 14, 2012).

¹¹ Baltimore City Land Records, "Lockhart Scott Carswell and I. Annie Carswell to Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore County," Liber RO 1927, Folio 381, <http://www.mdlandrec.net> (accessed June 14, 2012).

¹² Baltimore City Land Records, "Lockhart Scott Carswell to Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore County," Liber RO 2061, Folio 81, <http://www.mdlandrec.net> (accessed June 14, 2012).

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northernmost corner of the site, the original church building was a simple, barnlike structure with a steeply gabled roof. Clad in stone, the building had a vaulted first story set upon a full basement. The building footprint was rectangular, save for a small gabled porch at the western edge of its southwestern elevation, which provided access to the interior sanctuary.

In 1928, an extensive building campaign was planned, to expand the church's facilities and give it a grander appearance. A large, two-story addition on the building's southeastern corner would double the area of the building's footprint and house Sunday School classrooms and offices. Although the principal church entry would remain in place, its small porch was replaced with a monumental stone tower and entry stair. The double row of stained glass windows on the sanctuary's northwestern elevation were combined to create three slender windows, and those on the basement story were enlarged. On the interior, the auditorium chancel was rebuilt, the gallery removed, and the pipe organ (which had been dedicated in 1919) was relocated to an alcove to create additional seating area. Further, the basement kitchen and gathering spaces were remodeled and modernized, as were the building's lighting and heating systems.¹³ *Sanborn Fire Insurance* maps from the years 1928-1936 show a small outbuilding at the eastern corner of the site, which was likely demolished to make way for the Sunday School. Construction progressed quickly, and the new buildings were celebrated during a week-long opening ceremony in March 1929.

Soon after the renovations were finished, the church and its property were deeded to the Baltimore City Missionary and Church Extension Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore (Baltimore City Missionary).¹⁴ In 1949, the Baltimore City Missionary would return ownership of the property to Homestead Methodist itself, with the congregation ostensibly continuing to occupy the site in the intervening period.¹⁵ The congregation celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1931, with a souvenir pamphlet that highlighted the growth of the church, its successive edifices, and its prominent members.

No records could be found relating to building alterations or improvements conducted after 1929. However, in November of that year, the church purchased the Queen Anne-style residence located at 1430 Carswell Street for use as their rectory. The building had been previously owned by St. Thomas Church and had also

¹³ Pastor William J. Meeks, letter to the Baltimore City Missionary & Church Extension Society, June 18, 1928. Lovely Lane Archives, Baltimore, Maryland.

¹⁴ Baltimore City Land Records, "Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore County to Baltimore City Missionary and Church Extension Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore," Liber SCL 4993, Folio 391, <http://www.mdlandrec.net> (accessed June 14, 2012).

¹⁵ Baltimore City Land Records, "Methodist Missionary and Church Extension Society of the Baltimore Districts (formerly known as Baltimore City Missionary and Church Extension Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore) to Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore County," Liber MLP 7922, Folio 244, <http://www.mdlandrec.net> (accessed June 14, 2012).

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been used for religious purposes. In 1947, the church also inherited the vacant, adjacent lot. Although this building was likely abandoned by the church during the 1980s, it remained in their possession until 2005, when it was sold to a non-profit youth center.¹⁶

During the second half of the twentieth century, church membership gradually declined and the congregation became predominantly African American, reflecting the shifting demographics of the Homestead community. By 1969 at least, the congregation's name had been changed to the Homestead United Methodist Church; they continue to use building for religious, educational, and charitable purposes.¹⁷

¹⁶ *The Baltimore Sun*, "Hard birth for dream of city youth center; Students: Youngsters are upset and surprised when their planned facility meets neighborhood opposition," August 21, 2005, <http://www.proquest.com>.

¹⁷ *The Baltimore Sun*, "Letters to the Editor: Active Dreamer," January 30, 1969, <http://www.proquest.com>.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Church and Presbytery records held at the Maryland State Archives.

Local church records held at the Lovely Lane Museum & Archives, Baltimore.

Historic Baltimore *Sun* articles, accessed through ProQuest Historic Newspaper Databases.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1928-36, 1915-1951.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property Less than one
Acreage of historical setting Less than one
Quadrangle name Baltimore East

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property located at 1500 Gorsuch Avenue is associated with historic lot numbers 537-543 as recorded on the plat titled "Plan of the Building Lots of the Homestead," submitted by proprietors Robert Gorsuch, John Fox, John W. Van Hook, and Edward B. Jackson in 1852. These lots were aggregated through four purchases made in 1900-1904, to create a single lot as it exists today, with approximate dimensions of 112' by 90'. The property is located in Block 4131, Lot 001 of Ward 09, Section 17 of Baltimore City. The property boundaries are defined to the northwest by Kirk Avenue, to the southwest by Gorsuch Avenue, and to the northeast by an unnamed alley. Its southeastern property line is shared by the adjacent property, 1504 Gorsuch Avenue. The building has been historically associated with this lot since its construction in 1901-1903.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Robyn Chrabascz, Historic Preservation Officer		
organization	EHT Traceries, Inc. for Baltimore City DHCD	date	September 25, 2013
street & number	417 E. Fayette Street, Suite 301	telephone	443-984-1871
city or town	Baltimore	state	MD

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

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CHAIN OF TITLE

Parcel 1:

November 29, 1871 Thomas J. Irving and Frances A. Irving to John S. Gilman.
Land Records of Baltimore County
Liber EHA 77, Folio 151

Will of John S. Gilman.
Office of the Register of Wills of Baltimore City
Liber 63, Folio 58

January 26, 1900 Eliza Gilman, life tenant under the last will and testament of John S. Gilman, to Homestead
Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore County.
Land Records of Baltimore City
Liber RO 1831, Folio 133

Parcel 2:

December 21, 1872 Caleb L. Taylor to Lockhart Scott Carswell
Land Records of Baltimore County
Liber EHA 81, Folio 142

April 5, 1900 Lockhart Scott Carswell and I. Annie Carswell to Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church of
Baltimore County.
Land Records of Baltimore City
Liber RO 1841, Folio 524

Parcel 3:

October 26, 1901 Lockhart Scott Carswell and I. Annie Carswell to Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church of
Baltimore County.
Land Records of Baltimore City
Liber RO 1927, Folio 381

Parcel 4:

October 27, 1901 Lease: Lockhart Scott Carswell to Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore
County.
Land Records of Baltimore City
Liber RO 1927, Folio 382

March 4, 1904 Lockhart Scott Carswell to Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore County.
Land Records of Baltimore City
Liber RO 2061, Folio 81

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. B-5243

Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church
Continuation Sheet

Number 9 Page 2

Parcel 1,2,3, & 4
April 18, 1929

Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore County to Baltimore City Missionary and Church Extension Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore.
Land Records of Baltimore City
Liber SCL 4993, Folio 391

April 13, 1949

Methodist Missionary and Church Extension Society of the Baltimore Districts (formerly known as Baltimore City Missionary and Church Extension Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore) to Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church of Baltimore County.
Land Records of Baltimore City
Liber MLP 7922, Folio 244



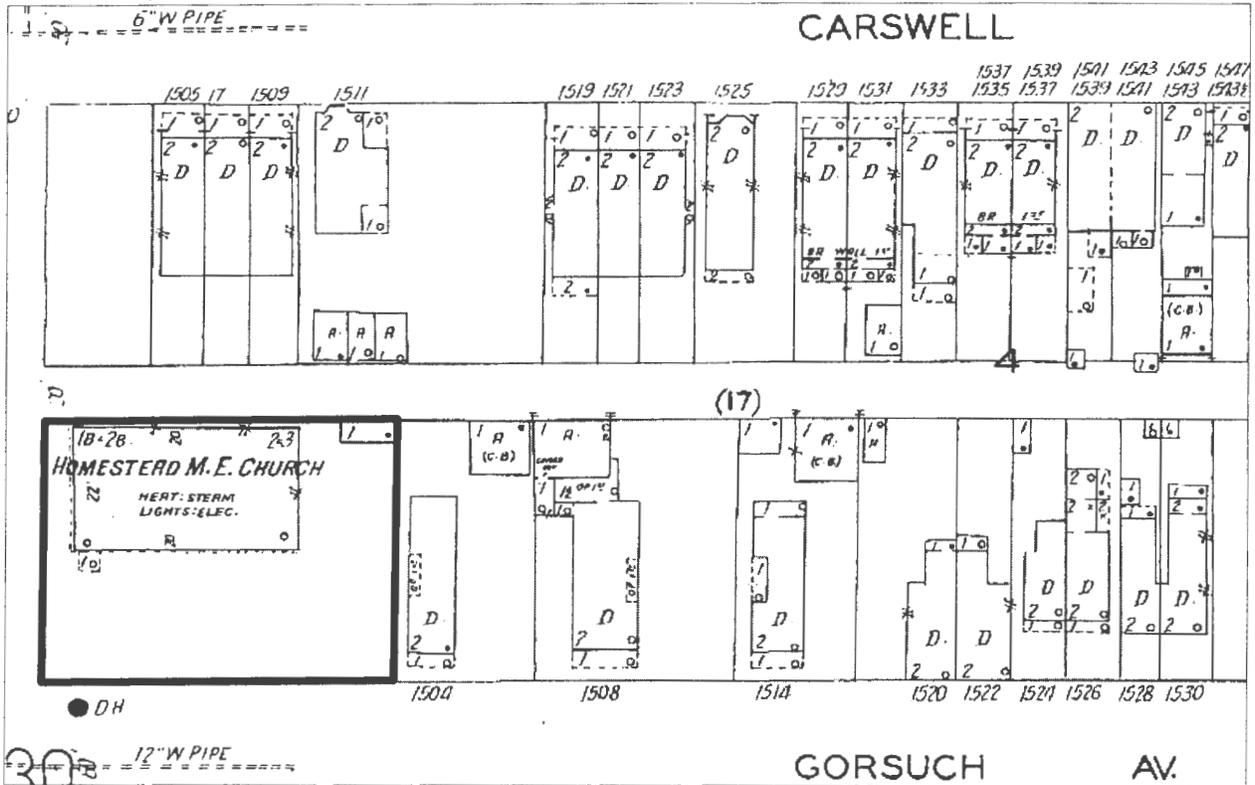
1500 Gorsuch Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21218-0000
City of Baltimore
Baltimore East, USGS Topographic Map, 1953, Revised 1974
EHT Tracerics, Inc., 2012

B-5243

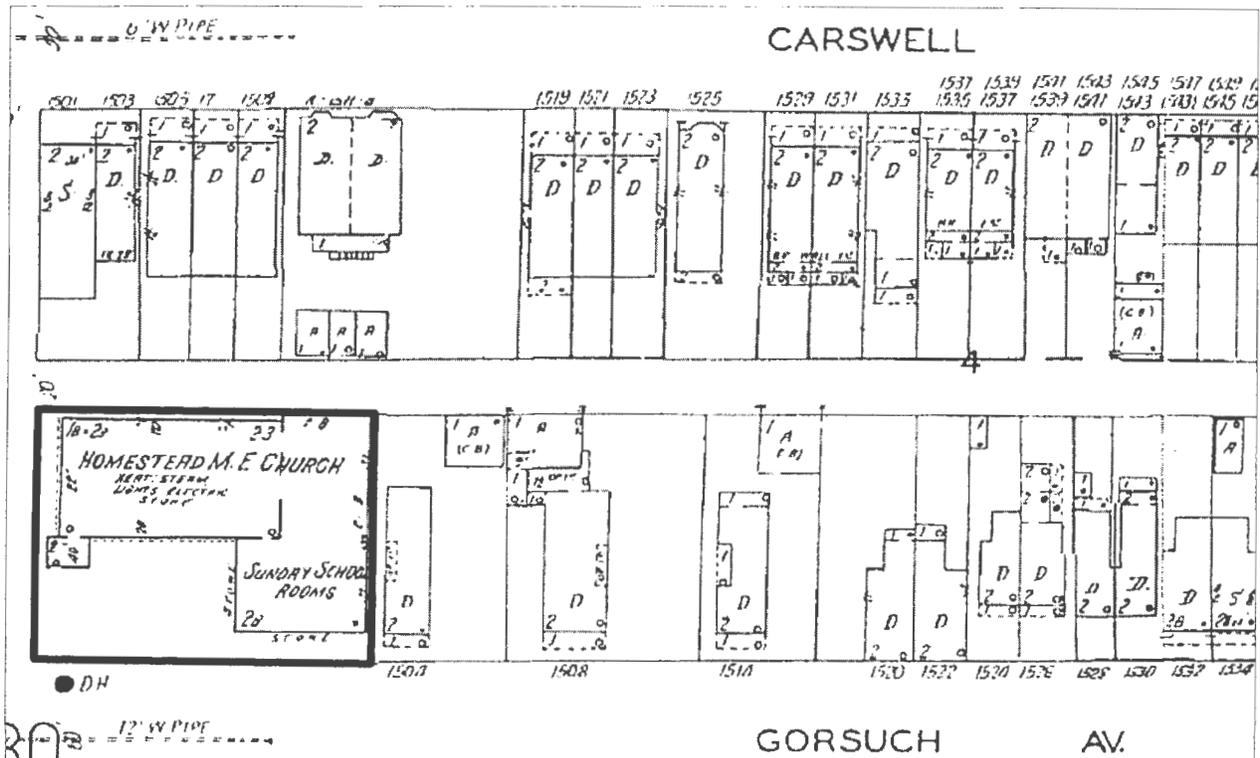
Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church (Homestead United Methodist Church)

1500 Gorsuch Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21218

Sanborn Map 1928, Volume 7, Sheet 719



Sanborn Map 1953, Volume 7, Sheet 719



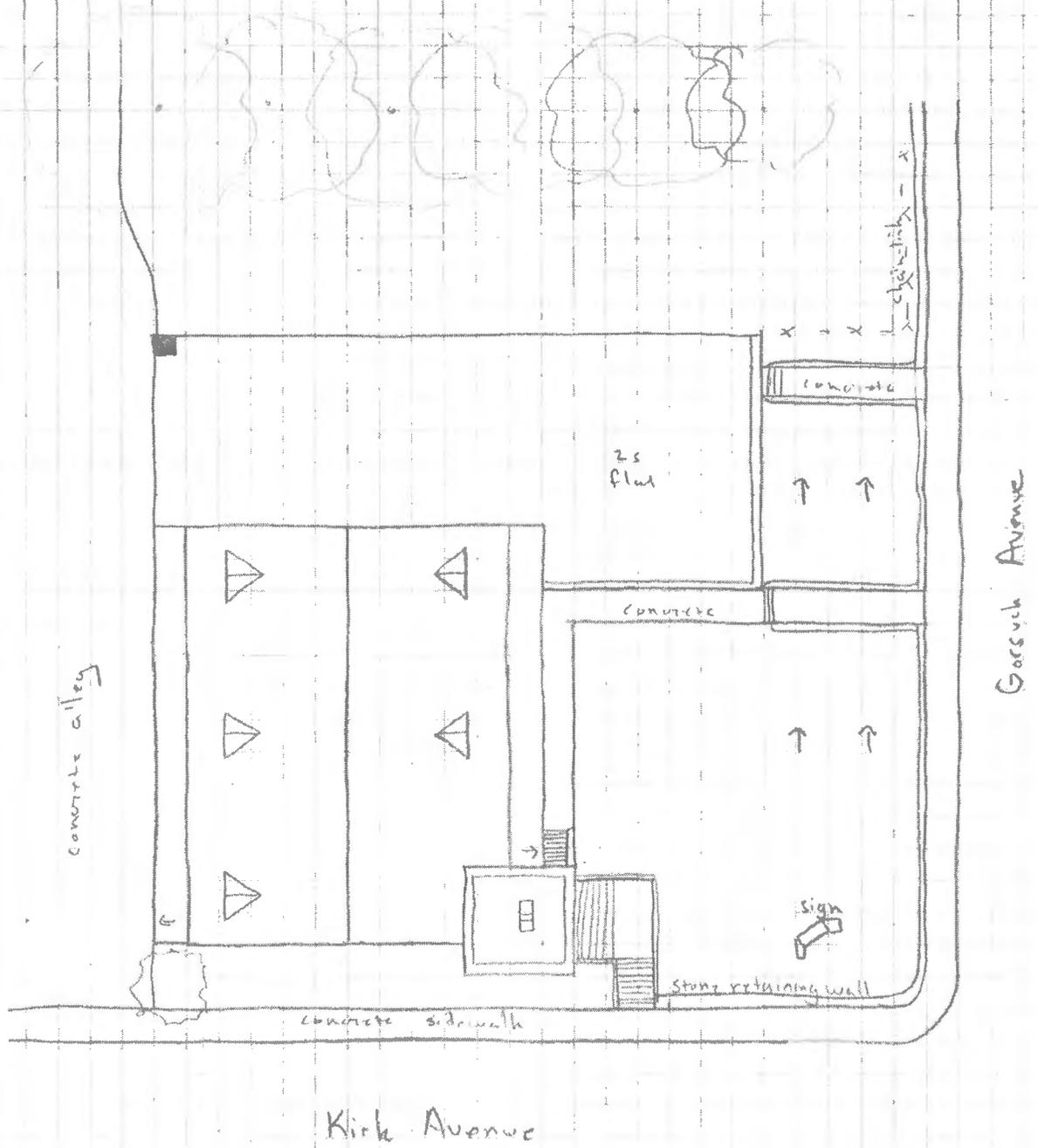


Coldstream Homestead Montebello

Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church
B-5243
1500 Gorsuch Avenue
Coldstream Homestead Montebello, Baltimore City
Map Courtesy of Baltimore City GIS
Prepared by EHT Tracerics, 2012



Adams
Park



Date 5/8/2012

I.D.# B-5243

Not to Scale

Address 1500 Garsuch Avenue/Homestead United Methodist Church

**Homestead Methodist Episcopal Church
B-5243**

Photographer: EHT Tracerics

Date: May 10, 2012

1.	1500 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5243_2012-05-10_01.tif	Façade, looking northeast
2.	1500 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5243_2012-05-10_02.tif	South and east elevations, looking northwest
3.	1500 Gorsuch Avenue	B-5243_2012-05-10_03.tif	North and west elevations, looking southeast



B-5243

HOMESTEAD METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1500 GORSUCH AVENUE

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

EHT TRACEMES

5/2012

MDSHPO

FACADE, LOOKING NORTHEAST

* 1 OF 3



B-5243

HOMESTEAD METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1500 GORDON AVENUE

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

EHT TRACER4ES

5/2012

MDSHPO

SOUTH & EAST ELEVATIONS, LOOKING NORTHWEST

* 2 OF 3



B-5243

HOMESTEAD METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1500 GORSUCH AVENUE

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

EHT TRACEMES

5/2012

MDSHPO

NORTH & WEST ELEVATIONS, LOOKING SOUTHEAST

#3 OF 3