

CH-505

1886-1890

Pisgah United Methodist Church

Pisgah

Private

Located in the crossroads village of Pisgah at the northeast corner of Poor House and Mason Springs roads, Pisgah United Methodist Church stands on a 1.5-acre lot that encompasses the small chapel and a cemetery. The building is a simple 1-story, front gable frame building, three bays wide and three deep. Clad in vinyl siding, the original rectangular block building is set atop a brick pier foundation. The church is sparingly adorned with modified lancet-style windows with multi-colored marbleized stained glass panes. The only other adornments are the single quatrefoil oculus windows that pierce each gable end of the building, and the double-leaf paneled wood doors surmounted by a pointed arch transom on the facade.

Pisgah United Methodist Church is a good example of the numerous "circuit" churches that dot Charles County's rural landscape. Its modest scale and architectural adornment are common features of these types of rural churches that were served by itinerant ministers who held services intermittently throughout the year. The Pisgah congregation is one of the oldest Methodist congregations in Charles County, and its current church building is the second to stand on this site. The church stands in the crossroads community of Pisgah which had its beginnings as a small postal stop in the mid-19th century.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
MD INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Inventory No. CH-505

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1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Pisgah United Methodist Church

common/other name _____

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number 7020 Poor House Road not for publication _____

city or town Pisgah vicinity X state Maryland code MD

county Charles code 017 zip code 20646

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification N/A

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4. National Park Service Certification N/A

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5. Classification

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Ownership of Property (Check all that 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>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Is this property listed in the National Register?

Yes _____ Name of Listing _____
No X

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-505

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6. Function or Use
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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RELIGIOUS Sub: Church
FUNERARY Cemetery

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RELIGIOUS Sub: Church
FUNERARY Cemetery

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7. Description
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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Gothic Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation pier: brick
roof front gable: asphalt shingles
walls frame: vinyl siding
other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property.)

See Continuation Sheet No. 7-1

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

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-505

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Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1850-1948

Significant Dates 1850

1886-1890

1940

1971

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation Undefined

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property.)

See Continuation Sheet No. 8-1

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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(Cite the books, articles, legal records, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Brown, Jack D., et al. *Charles County, Maryland, A History*. Charles County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Charles County Land Records, Charles County Courthouse, La Plata, Maryland.

Klapthor, Margaret Brown. *The History of Charles County, Maryland*. La Plata, MD: Charles County Tercentenary, Inc., 1958.

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreege of Property 1.5 acres

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property at 7020 Poor House Road is designated as Parcel 386 on Map 30, Grid 18 on the Charles County Property Map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The church at 7020 Poor House Road has been associated with Parcel 386, Map 30 since its construction between 1886 and 1890.

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Kathryn Gettings Smith, Architectural Historian
organization Charles County Planning Dept. date Oct.14,1998
street & number P.O. Box B telephone 301-645-0689
city or town La Plata state MD zip code 20646

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12. Property Owner
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name Pisgah United Methodist Church at the Crossroads
street & number 17 Mattingly Avenue telephone 301-743-7490
city or town Indian Head state MD zip code 20640
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MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-505

Pisgah United Methodist
name of property
Charles County, Maryland
county and state

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HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Development Period (s):

Agricultural-Industrial Transition,
1815-1870
Industrial/Urban Dominance
Modern Period, 1930-present

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme (s):

RELIGION
FUNERARY
ARCHITECTURE

RESOURCE TYPE(S)

Category: Building
Site

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function (s): RELIGION/Church
FUNERARY/Cemetery

Known Design Source: Unknown

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-505

Section 7 Page 1

Pisgah United Methodist
name of property
Charles County, Maryland
county and state

=====
Located in the crossroads village of Pisgah at the northeast corner of Poor House and Mason Springs roads, Pisgah United Methodist Church stands on a 1.5-acre lot that encompasses the small chapel and a cemetery. The building is a simple 1-story, front gable frame building, three bays wide and three deep. Clad in vinyl siding, the original rectangular block building is set atop a brick pier foundation. The church is sparingly adorned with modified lancet-style windows with multi-colored marbled stained glass panes. The only other adornments are the single quatrefoil oculus windows that pierce each gable end of the building, and the double-leaf paneled wood doors surmounted by a pointed arch transom.

The site is level and contains several mature trees at the rear, and an asphalt paved parking area at the front. The cemetery adjoins the church building on the north and east and contains several mature cedar and elm trees. A low metal pipe rail supported by concrete piers encloses the church lot and a portion of the cemetery. The cemetery contains approximately 100-150 graves, mostly marked by engraved headstones and arranged in loose rows running north-south.

The church building consists of two parts, the historic front gable frame church erected between 1886 and 1890, and a 1-story concrete block "Fellowship Hall" addition completed in 1971. The facade of the original church is three bays wide with a centered projecting vestibule. The front gable vestibule encloses the entry which consists of a double-leaf wood panel door surmounted by a pointed arched transom filled with three marbled stained glass panes. The vestibule is framed by a single modified lancet-style window on either side. Each lancet window contains a 4/6 double-hung wood sash window with marbled stain glass panes. Just above the vestibule projection, an oculus window with a quatrefoil light pierces the gable end of the church. The steeply pitched roof terminates in boxed eaves with no decorative raking cornice on the gable ends.

The east elevation of the church is pierced by three modified lancet windows identical to those at the front. The rear of the building has been partially obscured by the 1971 concrete block addition. However, the original gable-roofed apse projection that is centered on the rear elevation is still visible above its eaves. The apse contains a single oculus window that matches the one on the facade. At the west end of the historic building, only two of the original three modified lancet windows are still exposed. The third was removed when the concrete block addition was built.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-505

Section 7 Page 2

Pisgah United Methodist
name of property
Charles County, Maryland
county and state

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Besides the 1971 concrete block addition, the original church has been most significantly altered by the addition of vinyl siding and metal frame insulating windows on the exterior. The original window and door moldings have been encased within aluminum and vinyl coverings, as have the eaves. The sole remaining wood trim is visible above the double door entry on the facade between the door and the transom above. In addition, the original brick pier foundation has been infilled with concrete block and metal vents added at the apex of each gable end.

The second, non-historic, section of the church consists of a low-slung, 1-story side gable structure constructed of concrete block. Used as a meeting hall, the addition extends off the west elevation of the original church and wraps around and across its rear. At the east end of the addition a narrow concrete block stove flue extends above the roof line. The addition is pierced by two windows and an entry on its south or front elevation. The windows contain double-hung wood sash windows with a 2/2 horizontal light arrangement. Approached by a concrete ramp, the entrance is filled by a single leaf flush wood door. No openings pierce the west elevation, but the rear or north elevation contains four bays; three windows and a doorway. Again, the windows contain modern 2/2 wood sash, and the entry, a single flush wood door. All the windows are set on rowlock brick sills.

There are no additional outbuildings associated with the church.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-505

Section 8 Page 1

Pisgah United Methodist
name of property
Charles County, Maryland
county and state

=====
Pisgah United Methodist Church is a good example of the numerous rural "circuit" churches that dot the Charles County landscape. Its modest scale and architectural adornment are common features of this type of rural church served by itinerant ministers who held services intermittently throughout the year. The Pisgah congregation is one of the oldest Methodist congregations in Charles County, and its current church building is the second to stand on this site. The church stands in the crossroads community of Pisgah which had its beginnings as a small postal stop in the mid-19th century.

The Pisgah United Methodist Church congregation was formed sometime before 1850. In that year, Mrs. Mary Milstead, a local landowner, sold 1.5 acres of land on "the main road that leads from Port Tobacco to Counter Mills (Marbury vicinity)," to the Methodist church. The church intended to "erect and build, or caused to be erected and built thereon, a house or place of worship for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church...."¹ Shortly thereafter, the first frame church was complete. Oral evidence identifies this original chapel as a small frame building with a gallery in the sanctuary.

In 1872, Pisgah was transferred from the Charles Circuit, Potomac District of the Baltimore Conference to the Charles-St. Mary's Circuit. As the congregation grew, the need for a new church building began to be felt. In 1886, the Board of Church Extension for the Methodist Episcopal Church donated \$125 towards the construction of a new chapel at Pisgah. This new church was dedicated January 19, 1890 as a monument "to a devoted Christian man, who had long communed at the altar of the old church, and whose remains lie in its graveyard, Wm. H. Rowe."²

A contemporary article in *The Episcopal Methodist* periodical describes the new Pisgah chapel as "tastefully furnished, beautiful for situation, an ornament to the country, and an honor to the congregation."³ During the 1920s, the church became one of the stations on the six-station Charles Circuit, and the cemetery was

¹ Charles County Land Records, February 16, 1850, Liber WM 3, Folio 589.

² Brown, et al., *Charles County, Maryland*, pp.163-164.

³ Brown, et al., p.164.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-505

Section 8 Page 2

Pisgah United Methodist
name of property
Charles County, Maryland
county and state

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laid off into plots and cemetery records initiated. In 1940, the church ordered the marbled stained glass that presently fills the chapel's windows from Czechoslovakia. The current "Fellowship Hall" was added to the church in 1971 to serve as a meeting hall.

The site of Pisgah United Methodist Church has continuously been in use as a place of worship since 1850. The present historic church reflects the typical architectural expression of rural congregations during the second half of the nineteenth century. It's modest size and simple adornments speak to the limited means of most of the small and scattered religious congregations throughout the County. These "circuit" churches were used by the church on an intermittent basis by the traveling clergymen that served the circuit. However, the small chapels also served as community meeting places where dances, school classes, or public business could be conducted. Thus, these simple frame churches served as early community centers and social gathering places, as well as, as religious institutions.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-505

Pisgah United Methodist
name of property
Charles County, Maryland
county and state

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Chain of Title:

February 16, 1850:

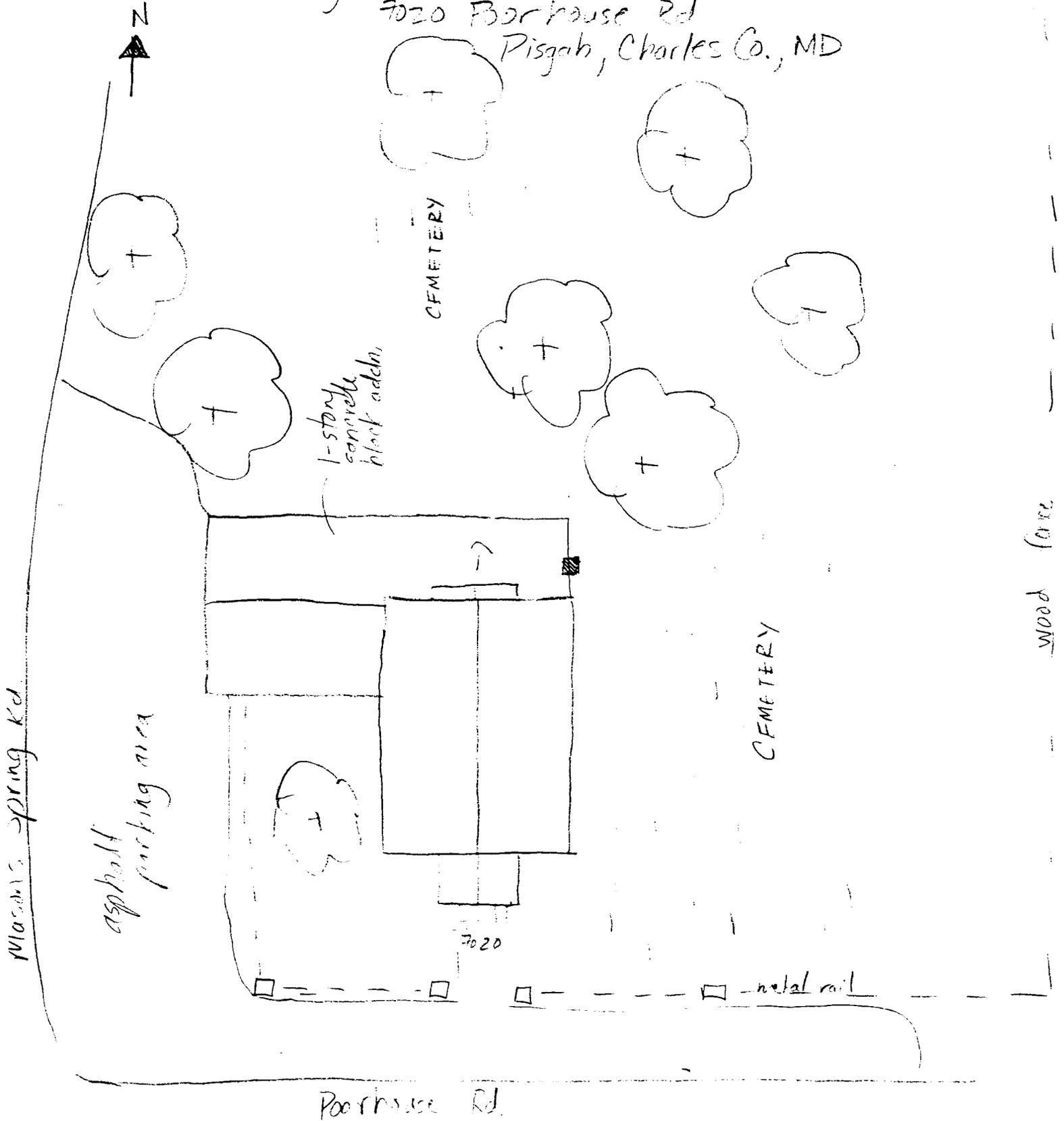
Mary Milstead to Church Trustees:
John B. Carpenter, Ezekiah B.
Franklin, Francis F. Garrett, George
N. Rowe, William H. Rowe
1.5 acres, on road from Port Tobacco
to Counter Mills
"For use to build a place of
worship"
Charles County Land Records
Liber WM 3 Folio 589

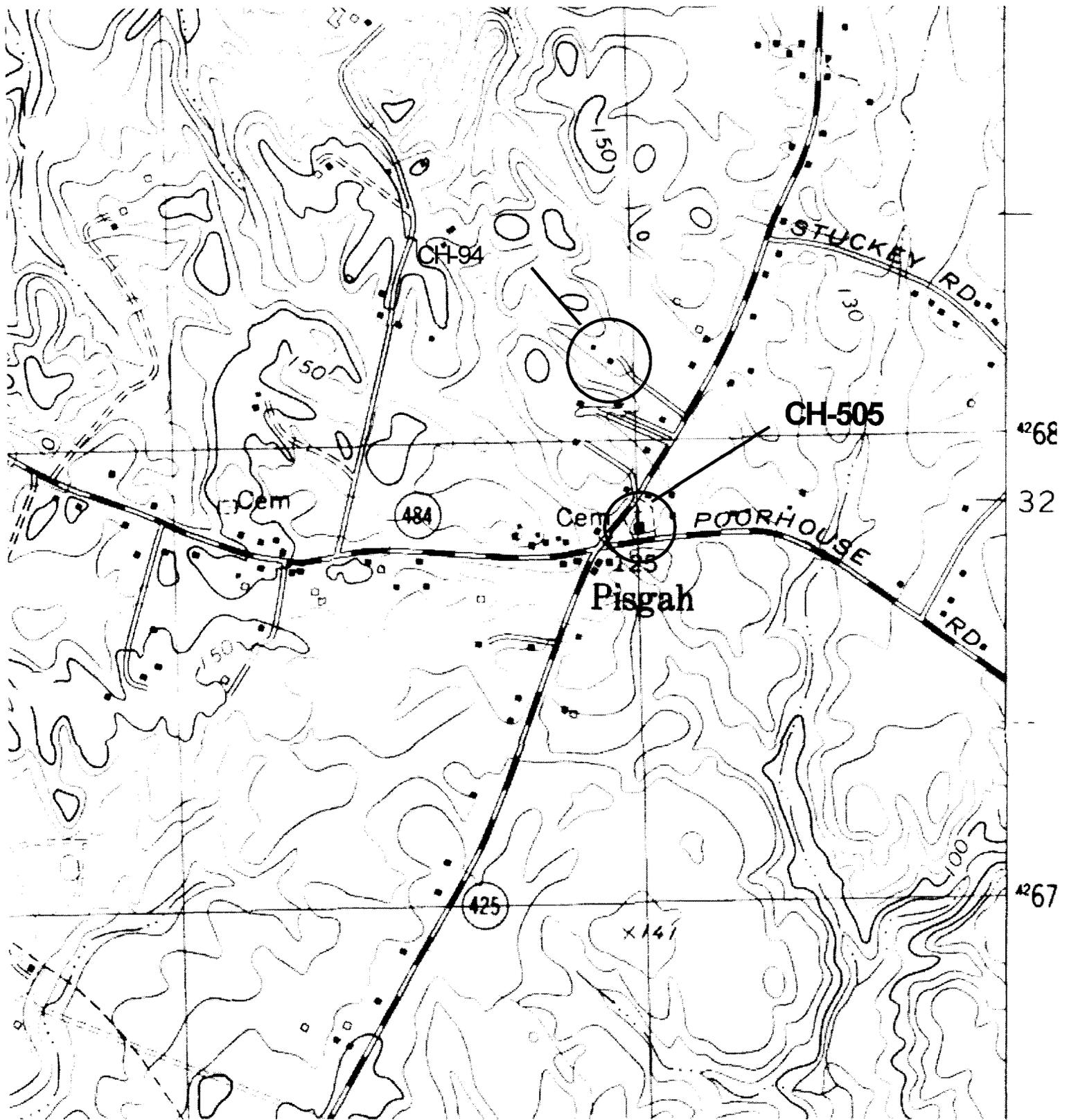
RESOURCE SKETCH MAP

CH-505

10/98

Pisgah United Methodist Church
7020 Poorhouse Rd
Pisgah, Charles Co., MD





Pisgah United Methodist Church
Charles County, MD

CH-505

INDIAN HEAD, MD QUAD



CH-505

PISGAH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
CHARLES COUNTY, MD

K.G. SMITH

10/98

MARYLAND SHPO

FACADE, LOOKING NORTH

1 OF 5



CH-505

PISGAH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

CHARLES COUNTY, MD

K.G. SMITH

10/98

MARYLAND SHPO

EAST ELEVATION

2 OF 5



CH-505

PISGAH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
CHARLES COUNTY, MD

K.G. SMITH

10/98

MARYLAND SHPO
NORTH ELEVATION

3 OF 5



CH-505

PISGAH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
CHARLES COUNTY, MD

K.G. SMITH

10/98

MARYLAND SHPO
WEST ELEVATION

4 OF 5



CH-505

PISGAH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
CHARLES COUNTY, MD

K.G. SMITH

10/98

MARYLAND SHPO

CEMETERY, LOOKING NE

5 OF 5