

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Colored Methodist Episcopal Church at Georgetown-Fairlee

and/or common Asbury United Methodist Church

## 2. Location

street & number West side Georgetown Rd., .7 miles north of Caulk's Field Rd.,  
West of Fairlee  not for publication

city, town Chestertown  vicinity of First congressional district

state Maryland county Kent

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Rev. Ralph A. Kemmerlin (Minister, not owner); Trustees of Asbury U.M.  
Church

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone no.: \_\_\_\_\_

city, town Chestertown state and zip code Maryland

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Court House liber WHG28

street & number (1953 Cemetery east side of road only; no deed recorded for church lot) folio 417

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title \_\_\_\_\_

date \_\_\_\_\_  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

# 7. Description

Survey No. K-481

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

Asbury Church's gable-roofed main section (nave), measuring about 27' x 37', and gable-roofed chancel were built in 1879. The 3-level, pyramidal-roofed entry/tower was added near the southwest corner in the 1920's. The side wing, which opens to the nave, appears to have been an earlier addition. Behind the side wing are 2 shed-roofed additions, the rearmost mid-20th century.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. K-481

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Black History

**Specific dates** **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
and/or  
Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  
Level of Significance:  national  state  local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Since its building in 1879 Asbury Church has served as a focus for the black community known as Georgetown located on Georgetown Road and on a portion of Caulk's Field Road. Since there is no longer a school or lodge hall for the community, the church and its adjacent hall are the only public gathering places remaining in this still thriving community of about 60 residences. Because of continuous use and the pride of the community in the church, it has been considerably altered over the years. Nonetheless, the late 19th century rural vernacular church style is clearly discernible.



## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.1 DESCRIPTION (continued)

Building Form and Material

1. Size - Main Section: 1 story, 3 bays wide (gable end), 3 bays deep (27' x 37')

Wing A: 3 levels, 1 bay wide, 1 bay deep (1920's)

Wing B: 1 story, 1 bay wide, 2 bays deep

Wing C: 1 story, 1 bay wide, 1 bay deep

Wing D: 1 story, 1 bay wide, 1 bay deep

Wing E: 1 story, 2 bays wide, 1 bay deep

2. Plan type - 1 large rectangular room: (main section)

3. Roof type - Main Section: gable

Wings: A (tower) - pyramidal; B - gable; C - shed;  
D - shed, E - gable (chancel);

4. Chimneys - Location: Northeast side, between 2nd and 3rd bays - for stove; paneled on interior

Materials: brick

Decorative elements: in disrepair; no longer used; cap missing

5. Material/Walls - Main Section: Frame - brick-type sheet asphalt over lapped weatherboard with about 5" exposure; cornerboards are covered but protrude.

Wing A (tower): Frame - same for 1st story (to eaves line of adjacent roofs); 2nd level - decorative wood shingles, mostly in this pattern but with 2 courses in center of rounded shingles; 3rd level - lapped weatherboard with rectangularly framed louvered openings on 3 sides. Between 2nd and 3rd levels and between 3rd level and the pyramidal roof there is a boxed projection (about 8"). The second level, over the entry door, has one window, a 4/4 double-hung with the upper sash a rounded gothic arch.



Wing B: Side section to nave - same as main section - Frame

Wing C: Same as main section

Wing D: Concrete block walls (washrooms)

Wing E: Same as main section (chancel)

6. Material/Roofs - Main section: asphalt shingles over wood shingles

Wing A: Asphalt shingles

Wing B: asphalt shingles over wood shingles

Wing C: asphalt roll

Wing D: asphalt roll

Wing E: asphalt shingles over wood shingles

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.2 DESCRIPTION (continued)

7. Material/Foundation - Main Section: brick piers (mostly covered by plywood)

Wing A: brick piers  
 Wing B: brick piers  
 Wing C: brick piers  
 Wing D: concrete blocks  
 Wing E: brick piers

8. Age - Wings: A - 1920's; B - perhaps contemporaneous with main section; C - early to mid 20th century; D - mid 20th century; E - contemporaneous with main section

9. Style - rural, vernacular Victorian Gothic

Building Elements and Details

1. Doors - Main entry: Location/Description: Approach side of Wing B (tower/narthex); wide double doors (6 raised and beveled panels) nearly new; tripartite half-round transom with colored glass; plain transom bar; plain frames; double wooden screen doors; concrete step and stoop with modern metal railing - added 1920's?

Secondary entries: Location/description: North west corner of Wing C - plain flush door; recently added trim; one high concrete access step

2. Windows - Main Section: type - double-hung; one fixed round window - approach gable

lights - large 4/4 with colored pebbled glass; 4 smaller 4/4 gable end details - plain wood sills; plain 4" trim, round headed to conform to shape of upper sash. On the interior the glass framing still looks roundheaded but the frames are rectangular.

shutters - none

On gable end approach facade a central group of 3 windows (1 large, 2 small) replaced the original entry to the church.

Wings: type - double hung  
 lights - A: 4/4 with rounded gothic arch upper sash; B: same as main section; C: one 6/6; D: 2 jalousie type; E: same as main section (one chancel window no longer opens to outside but to Wing C).

details - plain frames

shutters - none

3. Dormers - none

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.3 DESCRIPTION (continued)

4. Roof details - Main section: overhang all sides of about 12-14"; soffit follows rafters; ogee with fillets crown molding; small bevel bed molding

Wings: B - same as main section but gable end has either fascia board or top course of weatherboard left to show; same is true of approach gable end (only) of main section. A - plain box cornice to which pyramidal roof flares slightly; composite bed molding; E - plain fascia and soffit

5. Color - Current: red brick-look asphalt paper with grey "mortar"; trim is white; 2nd and 3rd levels of tower are white; roof is dark green

Historic: grey weatherboard

6. Other - The altar rail, which is placed 6-7 feet in front of the opening to the lower-roofed chancel, appears to be original. Its shape is rectangular, with one side open and the 2 corners rounded. Now painted a medium brown, it has turned catalogue balusters 4" On center with turned and square newels with large flattened ball caps at each end. Within the altar rail is a modern oak altar. Immediately behind it is a raised platform (13") mostly in the nave with steps at both sides leading to a second platform (8") which is entirely within the chancel.

The chancel has one window on each side. Paneling in the chancel was added only to about 4 feet, with the original plaster above. At the chancel's rear corners the plaster is curved. Original window trim remains in the chancel. The opening to the chancel is a segmental arch whereas the nave ceiling is shaped.

The congregation has recently installed new oak, cushioned pews, retaining two pine originals at the side front (not fastened to floor) for extra seating. These varnished pews, with a kind of modified fleur-de-lis finial on the ends, appear to have been from a church supply house and not locally made.

The round window of the approach gable is now only visible from the exterior. It is possible that when the now-removed gallery was in place that the rear ceiling configuration was different from the present one, allowing the window to show on the interior. In any case, the plaster ceiling shows evidence of much repair work.

#### Interior Description

1. Plan type - one large rectangular room (nave) with addition to southwest for additional seating. Chancel is under its own lower gable roof to the northwest of the nave. Other portions of the building are not visible from inside the nave.

2. Major stair - none at present; rear gallery and stair have been removed

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.4 DESCRIPTION (continued)

3. Major trim - Windows/doors: Except for chancel, all window trim is recent, applied after wall paneling. Plain stained clamshell/ranch casing. 2 side windows of chancel - all 4 sides (no sills) is:  Chancel chair rail is fillet with bevel beneath topped by top flat

board about 1½" wide.

Baseboards: Modern clamshell/ranch type added when sheet paneling applied.

Cornices: Modern 1½"  $\pm$  clamshell added at time of paneling.

Chair rails: None; before paneling the upper wall was said to have been plastered, with some sort of board wainscoting and chair rail.

4. Major doors - <sup>1)</sup>Wide double entry doors to narthex, - recent - 6 panels, <sup>2)</sup>1/1 panel door to storage room and lavatories, <sup>3)</sup>recently added double narrow doors (6 raised and beveled panels) - Narthex to nave.

5. Floors - Modern strip oak over original flooring; most is carpeted

6. Walls/ceiling finishes - recently applied medium oak plywood sheet paneling on walls; ceiling is plaster, painted white

Outbuildings/Site Description

1. Major outbuildings - "Necessaries" - to rear of Wing E - 14' x 6' with 2 low doors. Material - vertical weatherboarding; wood shingle roof

Sunday School - 1 story - 5 bays wide, 2 bays deep. Built in 1970 to replace burned 2 story building. Material - concrete block walls; asphalt-shingled gable roof.

2. Site description - The church stands on high ground with the nave's gable end facing the road, which is about 60 feet distant. A lawn lies between church and road, with several large trees near the road. Fifteen or twenty feet to the southwest there is a 1 story recent (1970) Sunday School building, in front of which is a small gravel parking area. To the northeast is a large grassed cemetery.

3. Views to/from site - trees are immediately to the rear of the site. Across the road, to the southeast is the newer portion of the church cemetery with woods behind. Across the road and to the northeast a mobile home and several residences are visible. To the southwest two houses are visible on the same side of the road.

Use of Building

Current - church

Historic - church

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.5 DESCRIPTION (continued)

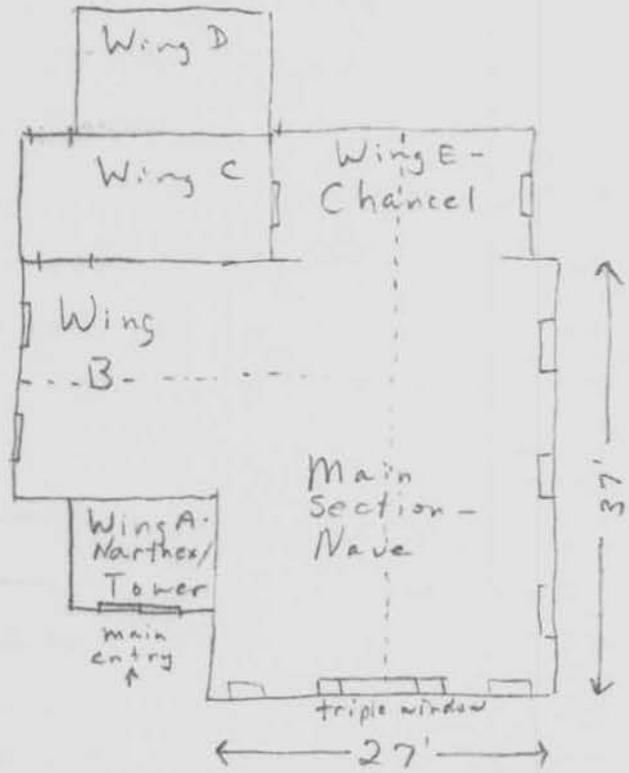
History of Building/Past Ownership

(Source is commemorative centennial book published by the church.) Residents of the Georgetown-Fairlee black community began holding services in 1863. From then until 1879, when the church was built, the congregation worshipped at the old East Georgetown School for Colored Youth. Land was purchased in 1874 from John and Harriet Blake for \$80. The plot included the burial ground of the Thomas Brown family; this area, to the north of the church, became the church's cemetery.

Under the leadership of the Rev. Asbury Grinnage who was sent by the Delaware Conference (organized in 1864), by 1879 the congregation had raised enough money to pay for construction materials. In the 1930's the adjacent old West Georgetown School (which after school use was discontinued served as a lodge hall for a fraternal order) was converted into a church hall and named Asbury Hall. This two-story building burned in 1970 and soon thereafter was replaced by a 1-story gable-roofed building of concrete block. In 1953 additional cemetery space was acquired across the road from the church by gift of Tulip Forest Farms.

Georgetown is one of the largest black communities in rural Kent County (more than 60 residences were counted). Many of the houses appear to date from the late 19th and early 20th century ( a few in ruinous condition), but some appear quite new. Although employment has changed over the years for community residents (from mostly farm work to mostly work in the county towns), enough people who grew up in Georgetown stayed or returned as adults to keep the community stable and thriving. Decendants of the original church trustees are still church members.

Plan



----- roof ridges

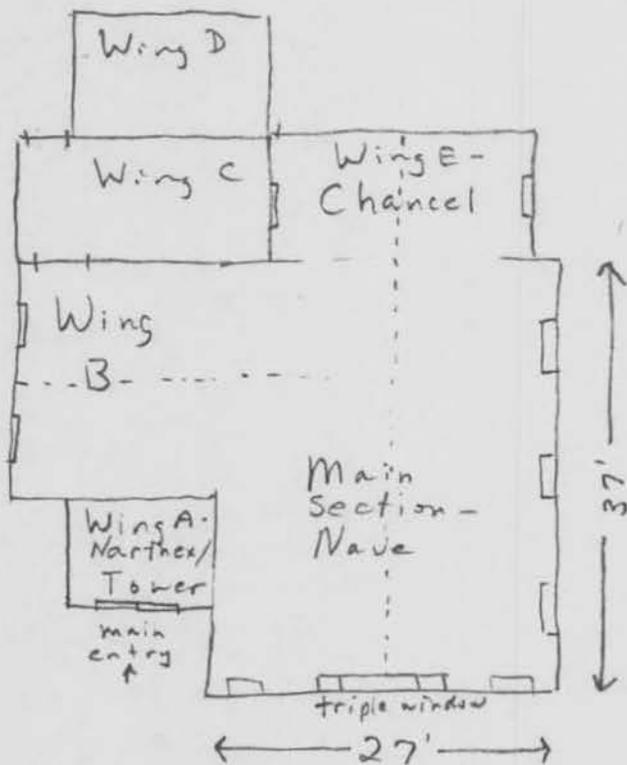
M. Q. Fullaw

7/15/81

K-481

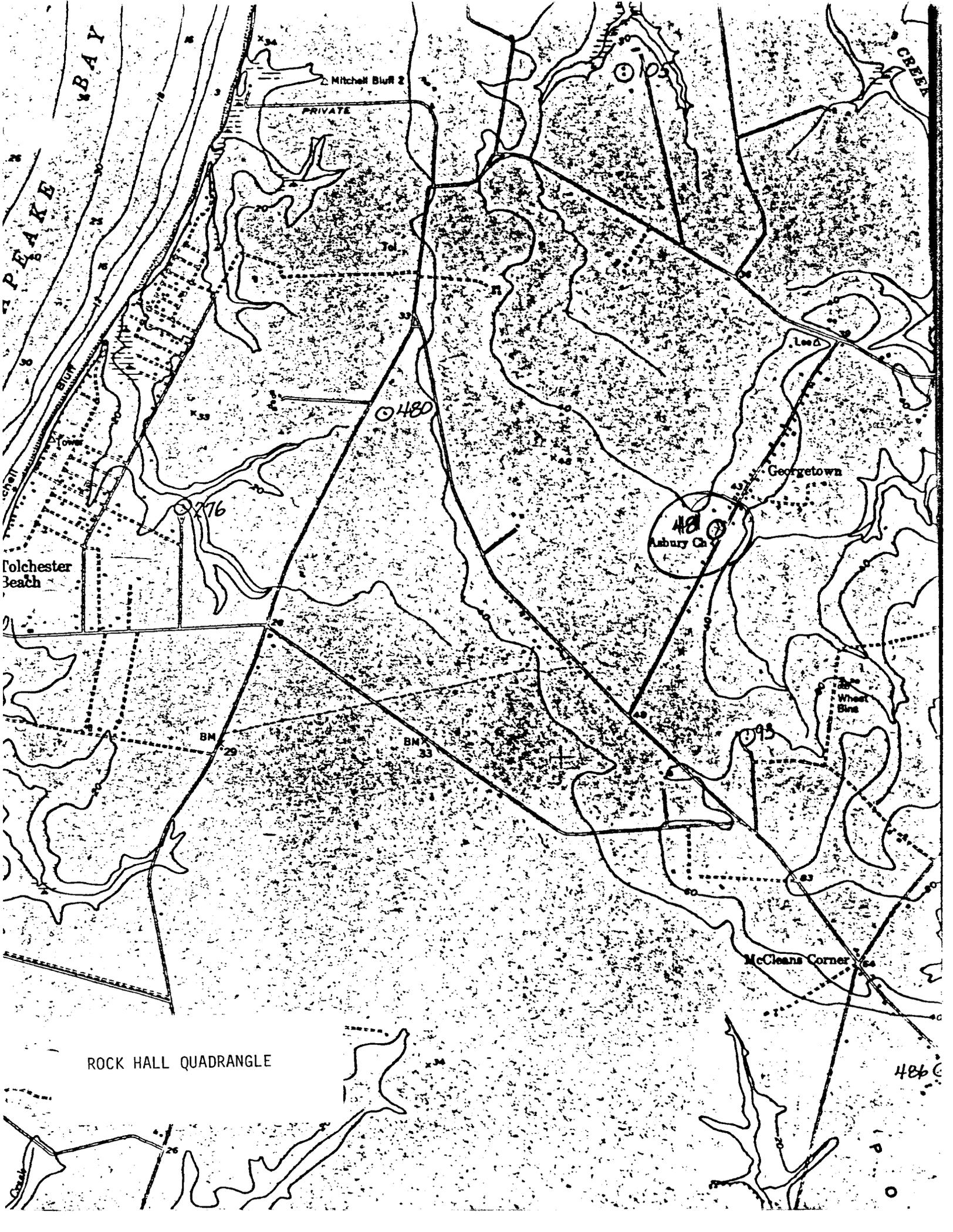
Asbury U.M. Church

Plan



----- roof ridges

M. Q. Follow  
7/15/81  
K-481  
Asbury U.M. Church



PEAKE BAY

Mitchell Bluff 2

PRIVATE

Folchester Beach

480

476

481  
Asbury Ch.

Georgetown

BM 29

BM 33

McCleans Corner

ROCK HALL QUADRANGLE

486 C



View to North

ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (K-481)

Georgetown, Chestertown, Kent County

Photograph: M.L. Fritz, July 1981