Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

M: 35-5

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Bethesda Meeting House

AND/OR COMMON: Temple Hill Baptist Church

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 9400 Wisconsin Avenue (Rockville Pike)

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN: Bethesda __ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Eigth

STATE: Maryland CODE: 24 COUNTY: Montgomery CODE: 031

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	X RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Church & Parsonage: Temple Hill Baptist Church/Cemetery:Cemetery Association

STREET & NUMBER: 9400 Wisconsin Avenue (Rockville Pike)

CITY, TOWN: Bethesda __ VICINITY OF STATE: Maryland 20014

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Montgomery County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER:

CITY, TOWN: Rockville STATE: Maryland 21250

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE:

DATE:

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

CITY, TOWN: STATE:

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This property occupies a prominent knoll overlooking Rockville Pike (Route 355) just south of the Capital Beltway. It consists of a cemetery, parsonage and the church itself.

The church is a large, frame structure built in the Greek Revival "temple" form. It is one of very few Montgomery County examples of this elsewhere popular style, and even this building features prominent Gothic-style windows throughout.

The gabled main facade faces east and contains three bays. The central entrance is flanked by two large pointed-arch windows identical to the Gothic-style windows along the sides of the building. The bays are separated by wooden pilasters which also emphasize the corners of the building. The pilasters support a wide frieze that wraps around the structure beneath the eaves. The gable end here is of shiplap siding, and a recessed carved panel reads "Bethesda Church, Rebuilt 1850." The rest of the siding on the church is of clapboards.

Each of the double doors has two raised vertical panels. There is a large, pointed-arch overlight above the doors that features delicate, "foliated" muntins and stained glass panes. The open, two-story pedimented portico that spans the entire front is an early 20th century addition. An old photograph of the church shows a much smaller hood-type portico, decorated with shingles (probably a Victorian addition itself.)[1] A bell (reportedly once owned by Paul Revere) now rests on a wooden frame that is suspended near the ceiling of the portico. True to the Greek form, the church never included a bell tower.

With the exception of the windows, the sides and rear of the church repeat the Greek Revival style of the front, i.e., boxed cornice, frieze and pilasters. The sides are three bays deep and the windows, like those on the front, feature triple sash with a fixed-arch section of foliated muntin atop double-hung, fifteen-over-twenty sections.

The grade slopes downward towards the rear of the church, so that a partial basement is exposed. It is made of stone taken from the ruins of the previous church. The northeast cornerstone of this 1850 church is also from the earlier building. It reads "BMH 1820." At the rear of the church, a small, three-sided apse is cantilevered out over the basement wall. It features two small Gothic windows. The present roof of the entire building is asphalt shingle.

Inside, the church also exhibits few modern changes. An entrance vestibule is formed underneath the former slave gallery. The

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DESCRIPTION (continued)

center aisle is flanked by rows of wooden pews. The original pews (removed to Bethesda, and subsequently taken to a mission in North Carolina) have been replaced by Gothic-style pews from the old First Baptist Church of Washington. To the right of these, the side-window glass is clear, to allow light, while the rest of the glass in the church is rare stained glass, reportedly from Sandwich, Massachusetts. Behind the small, elevated pulpit in the chancel, the light from the apse gives illumination. Present ceiling chandeliers are electric, but marks of the previous gas and oil lamps can be seen on the ceiling which is a high, flat surface.

Attention is drawn to the front of the church by an arched, vault-type opening over the apse. It is trimmed with the same Greek-style pilaster molding seen throughout the building. On both sides of this are slim brick chimney stacks that have been plastered over. They once were used as flues for the heating stove and carried an elevated pipe toward the rear of the structure. The present heating system, like most of the few modernizations here, has been well screened; it rises through grates in the old oak floor between the pews.

To the south of the church is the parsonage. This is a two-story, frame Victorian structure of a modified cruciform plan. Church records show that a "manse" was built here for the preacher in 1851.[2] Subsequent church records were fairly well kept and these make no mention of a later parsonage. If the present building was indeed built in 1851 or so, it was 30 or 40 years before the style became generally accepted in Montgomery County. Although it exhibits traits of the later "Queen Anne" style (shingled gables, one-over-one sash, German siding, etc.), it also possesses a number of "Cottage Gothic" motifs made popular by Andrew Jackson Downing between 1840 and 1870. The house is festooned with hood-type gables, verandahs, scrolled brackets, bay windows, etc., all of these basic to a Downing-influenced house. Although not a strictly Gothic-appearing structure, the design may have been based on a pattern shown in Cottage Residences (1842) or The Architecture of Country Houses (1850).[3]

See continuation sheet #2

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Bethesda Meeting House
Bethesda,
Maryland

CONTINUATION SHEET ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

DESCRIPTION (continued)

At any rate, the present building is a particularly noteworthy piece of architecture, and appears to have been standing for a number of years when a photograph of it was taken in 1918.[4] Downing and his protege, Calvert Vaux, had designed the Dodge houses in Washington in the 1850's. Rev. Smith, rector at Bethesda Church at that period, was a native of New England and a former Baltimore merchant, who was certainly aware of developments in architecture outside of Montgomery County.[5]

[1]Photograph appears in the Washington Star, "Rambler" article, May 18, 1919.

[2]Eugene & Edythe Clark, The Spirit of Captain John (New York, 1970), p. 131.

[3]Carolyn Flaherty, "The Domestic Architecture of Downing," Old House Journal (New York, October 1974).

[4]Unpublished glass-plate negative in the "Rambler" collection, Columbia Historical Society, Washington, D.C.

[5]Georgetown Architecture, Historic American Buildings Survey Selections, #10, 1970, by the Commission of Fine Arts and H.A.B.S., pp. 17-36.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	X RELIGION	
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE	
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE	
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER	
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION	
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	X OTHER (SPECIFY) Local History	
		__INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architecturally, the Bethesda Meeting House and parsonage represent sophisticated styles that, for one reason or another, never flourished in Montgomery County.

The background of the church and its various congregations is inextricably linked with the history of Montgomery County, from its earliest inception up to present times. In fact, the name of the modern community of Bethesda is taken from this landmark church. The word refers to a place of healing mentioned in the Bible. It is especially significant that present day Bethesda, Maryland, is known world wide as a center of healing, due to the Bethesda Naval Hospital, the National Institute of Health, and the National Library of Medicine located there.

The church is the subject of a recently written, full length book that documents its history fully. A brief summary of that history appears below:

The structure now known as the Temple Hill Baptist Church was originally the Bethesda Presbyterian Church, erected in 1850. The Bethesda Presbyterian congregation had its origins in the group founded by the Reverends Hugh Conn and John Orme, before the Revolutionary War. The group's original meeting house was built on an acre of land deeded to the Presbyterians by Edward Offutt in 1746. The land was in the Captain John Creek area, and the worship center subsequently became known as the "Cabin John" Meeting House.

[The exact derivation of the term Cabin John is unknown. Some assert that the name came from Captain John Smith, the first white settler in the area. Other sources suggest that a stranger who built a log house in the area became known as John of the Cabin. (Clark, The Spirit of Captain John.)]

The records indicate that in its early days the congregations of Cabin John and Bladensburg were united and shared the services of the same minister. One of the outstanding early pastors was James Hunt, who graduated from Princeton in 1759 and was ordained by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, N.J., the following year. Hunt led the United

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

congregations during the time of colonial unrest and was an ardent advocate of an independent America. In 1779 Hunt acquired 365 acres in Montgomery County; the land was about six miles south of Rockville and bounded on the east and west by present day Old Georgetown and Seven Locks Roads. It was at this farm, named Tusculum after a mountain outside of Rome, that he founded the first private secondary school for boys. Many of the students boarded at the nearby home of Samuel Wade Magruder. Perhaps Reverend Hunt's most famous pupil was William Wirt, who served as U.S. Attorney General from 1817 to 1829, and was a presidential candidate in 1832 on the Anti-Masonic ticket. After Reverend Hunt's death in 1793 the Cabin John congregation became affiliated with those at Seneca and Difficult, abandoning its connection with Bladensburg.

In 1820 the Presbytery of Baltimore directed that a church be organized on the Rockville Pike for Presbyterians in the southern reaches of the Cabin John congregation. The Elders purchased a parcel of land on the Pike, which was part of the tract Leeke Forest, and either built or converted a structure already there to serve as the Bethesda Meeting House. John Mines was pastor of the Bethesda and Rockville congregations from 1823 to 1849. He also served as the principal of the Rockville Academy.

The first Bethesda Meeting House was destroyed by fire on November 23, 1849. The pastor, Randolph Smith, immediately set out to build a new church. He not only solicited subscriptions, but also participated in the actual construction. The stones of the original structure were used as the foundation of the new wooden church. This new building, on a hill overlooking the Rockville Pike, served as the Bethesda Presbyterian Church from 1850 until 1925 when the congregation decided to erect a new church farther south in Bethesda. The records of the church contain references to the baptisms, marriages and funerals of many of the area's prominent families. Among them were the names Magruder, Stone, Willson, Perry, Veirs and Muncaster.

When the church moved to its new location, the trustees sold the building and seven acres of land to May Fitch Kelley in 1925. The Presbyterian congregation, however, retained ownership of the cemetery and the graveyard. Mrs. Kelley, who held the property for twenty years,

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Bethesda,
Maryland

CONTINUATION SHEET ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

sold it to a Catholic missionary group, the White Fathers (a Canadian group). After several changes of ownership, the property was purchased by the trustees of the Temple Hill Baptist Church in the 1950's. Reverend William B. Adams, the pastor since then, has turned down several lucrative offers to sell the property, and he and his congregation have recently embarked on a program to restore the old church.

M: 35-5

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Land Records of Montgomery County, Md.
Clark, Eugene & Edythe. The Spirit of Captain John. New York: Carlton Press, Inc., 1970.
A 250 Year Heritage. 1973 booklet by the Bethesda Presbyterian Church, Bethesda, Md.
Historical Discourse...delivered by Rev. Parke P. Flournoy,1880.
Numerous newspaper articles.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A			
B			
C			
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

bjn

NAME / TITLE: Reverend & Mrs. William B. Adams & Congregation/Michael Dwyer

ORGANIZATION: Temple Hill Baptist Church/M-NCPPC

DATE: 8/26/76

STREET & NUMBER: 9400 Wisconsin Avenue/5107 Muncaster Mill Road

TELEPHONE:

CITY OR TOWN: Bethesda/Rockville

STATE: Maryland

20014 /20853

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL ___

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

GPO 892-453

Form No. 10-300a
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Bethesda Meeting House
Montgomery County
CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER PAGE 1 (Addendum)

ADDENDUM TO BETHESDA MEETING HOUSE NOMINATION
Bethesda Presbyterian Church Cemetery

The Bethesda Presbyterian Church Cemetery is situated at 9410 Rockville Pike (Wisconsin Avenue) in Bethesda, Maryland, adjacent to and north of the present Bethesda Meeting House, which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on April 18, 1977.

The acre of ground on which the cemetery is located was purchased in October, 1820 from Thomas Cramphin for the token sum of one dollar. It was part of a larger tract known as Leake (or Leeke) Forest, which had been the earliest land grant in the area, surveyed in 1688 for Colonel Henry Dulany. The deed for this acre of land contains the following sentence:

> . . . for the purpose of having erected thereon a church or meeting house for the accomodation of a Presbyterian congregation or society which it is in contemplation to form and establish in that neighborhood and to and for the use of a burying ground and yard for the convenience of said church or congregation . . . (Deed V/308, 12/25/1820)

A stone meeting house was built on the property in 1820, and burials were made in the land around the church. The earliest existing grave marker is that of Abraham Wingerd, who died in 1820. The church was built by the Captain (Cabin) John Presbyterian Congregation of Potomac and was named the Bethesda Meeting House. The cornerstone of the building on the original acre was used in 1850 in a new church located about 100 yards south of the original property (the 1850 structure is the one currently listed on the National Register). It is at this newer structure that the original cornerstone, inscribed "B.M.H. - 1820," can still be seen.

In 1926 the Bethesda Presbyterian Church congregation had outgrown the frame church of 1850, and it relocated in Bethesda at Wilson Lane and Clarendon Road, where it remains today. Ownership of the one-acre cemetery land has been retained by the Bethesda Presbyterian Church continuously since 1820, while the property on which the second Bethesda Meeting House was built in 1850 has passed through private ownership from 1925-1944, to an order of the Roman

continued

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Montgomery County
Maryland

CONTINUATION SHEET ITEM NUMBER PAGE 2 (Addendum)

Bethesda Presbyterian Church Cemetery, continued

Catholic Church from 1944-1952, to the ownership of the Temple Hill Baptish Church, which uses the property today.

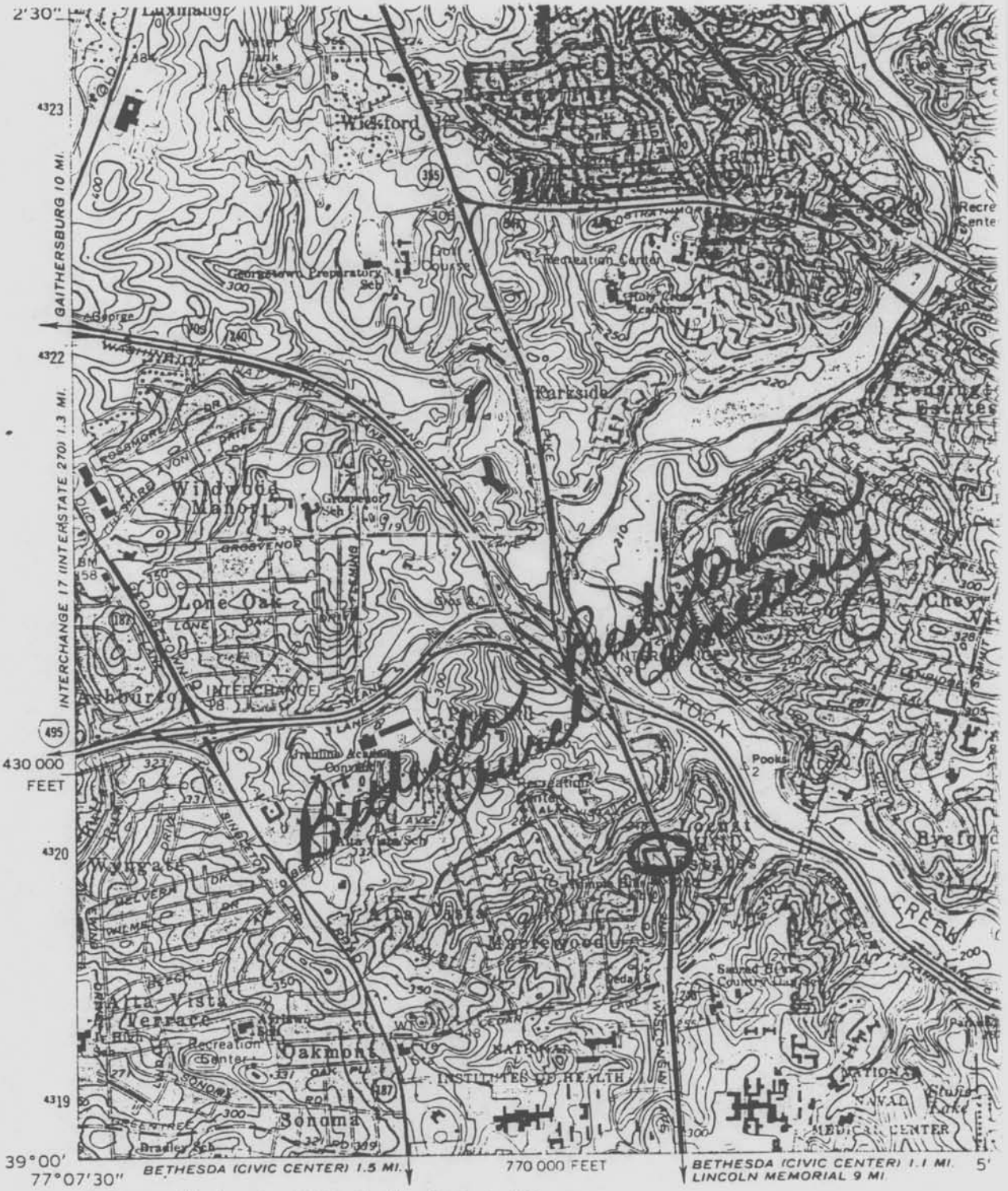
While there is no space for additional burials, the Bethesda Presbyterian Church Cemetery is well maintained and permanent markers have been erected to describe and identify this historic place. The cemetery is on a beautiful hillside site amongst larger trees; it has galvanized wire fencing on three sides. The older grave markers apparently were made by local craftsmen. Many prominent local leaders of the community are interred here, including the Reverend Parke Poindexter Flournoy, D.D., and his family. Dr. Flournoy had served the Bethesda Presbyterian Church as Pastor from 1875-1882 and from 1890-1922, providing vital leadership in the church and community for several generations. He was made Pastor Emeritus of the church on his retirement in 1922. Members of other prominent families interred here include Gingells, Magruders, Perrys, Renshaws, Spatses, and Wilsons. These families and many others who are buried in this historic cemetery played an important role not only in the history of Bethesda Presbyterian Church, but also in the development of the community and the county.

(Most of the above has been extracted from The Spirit of Captain John - A History of the Bethesda Presbyterian Church, Montgomery County, Maryland, by Eugene and Edythe Clark, New York: Carlton Press, Inc., 1970.)

Donald H. Humphries
Colonel, USAF (Retired)
Chairman, Board of Trustees
Bethesda Presbyterian Church

Wilson Lane & Clarendon Road
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

18 November 1977



(FALLS CHURCH) 5561 I NW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS, USC&GS, and WSSC

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1955. Field checked 1956. Revised 1965

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18, shown in blue

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Area covered by dashed light blue pattern is subject to controlled inundation to 351 feet

UTM GRID AND 1971 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

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photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
Field checked 1956. Revised 1965

ction. 1927 North American datum
based on Maryland coordinate system
Transverse Mercator grid ticks,

lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

field light blue pattern
ed inundation to 351 feet

M:35-5

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1°18'
23 MILS

UTM GRID AND 1965 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

Kensington Quad

SCAL

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CONTOUR IN
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FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICA
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC M

Clay Teunis, 2003
Art of the Dead
Gardens of Stone, Room VIII

Clay Teunis, 2003
Art of the Dead
Gardens of Stone, Room VIII

Clay Teunis, 2003
Art of the Dead
Gardens of Stone, Room VIII

Clay Teunis, 2003
Art of the Dead
Gardens of Stone, Room VIII

Clay Teunis, 2003
Art of the Dead
Gardens of Stone, Room VIII

#35-5

NAME BETHESDA PRESBYTERIAN CH.

LOCATION ROCKVILLE PIKE, BETHESDA, MD.

FACADE NE

PHOTO TAKEN 9/10/74

M. REMYER

#35-5

NAME BETHESDA PRESBY. CHURCH - PARSONAGE

LOCATION ROCKVILLE PIKE, BETHESDA, MD.

FACADE NE

PHOTO TAKEN 9/10/74

M. BOYER