

F-2-55

Ceres Bethel A.M.E. Church
Burkittsville vicinity
Private

1870

The Ceres Bethel A.M.E. Church is a one-story frame structure with a three-bay gable facade on the south, facing a small cemetery. The church has round-arched windows flanking the double doors of the main entrance. The siding was probably german originally, but is now covered with composition siding. A datestone at the southeast corner gives the name of the church and the date 1870 with the first pastor's name, L. Benson. The church is a good example of the post-Civil War black rural church built by freed slaves in the vicinity of their former homes as slaves. The cemetery contains graves dated from about 1870 to the present. A colored school stood just west of the church in the 1870's, is no longer extant.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Magi No.

DOE ___yes ___no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Ceres Bethel A.M.E. Church

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 6000 block Gapland Road, east side ___ not for publication

city, town Burkittsville vicinity of congressional district 6th

state Maryland county Frederick

3. Classification

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

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

name Ceres Bethel A.M.E. Church

street & number telephone no.:

city, town Burkittsville state and zip code Md. 21718

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Frederick County Courthouse liber

street & number 100 W. Patrick Street folio

city, town Frederick state Md. 21701

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. F-2-55

Condition		Check one	Check one
<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 checked="" 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.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE COUNT: 1

The Ceres Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church is a one-story frame hall-type church built in 1870 on the east side of Gapland Road about 1-1/2 miles west of Burkittsville, Frederick County, Maryland. The church faces south with a three-bay gable elevation with round-arched windows. The side elevation has three window bays. The exterior is covered with composition siding. The building is in generally deteriorated condition. A cemetery adjoins the church on the south and west with earliest death dates about 1870.

The building probably had german siding originally and a raised entrance porch. The current center bay entrance on the south has double 4-panel doors reached via a concrete block staircase. The stone foundation is raised on the south, east and north elevations as the site is very steep, sloping down to the east. The windows in the south elevation have six lights in a 4/2 pattern and the side elevation windows are 6/6 sliding sash. Pews are visible inside the church through a missing sash in the west elevation. At the southeast corner of the foundation is a stone which reads "Ceres Bethel A.M.E. Church 1870, L. Benson, pastor".

The cemetery has scattered family groupings of stones, many of which have fallen or been moved under shrubbery. Burials as recent as 1990 have taken place. The 1873 C. O. Titus Atlas of Frederick County shows a school just west of the church, but no visible trace remains of this structure.

8. Significance

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 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1870 **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.

The Ceres Bethel A.M.E. Church is a good example, although deteriorated, of a post-Civil War black church established by freed slaves in the Burkittsville community. It may be compared to the Sunnyside Methodist Church at Mountville (F-2-43), an 1899 frame building which replaced the original log church. It is unknown whether the Ceres Bethel Church has log structure; however, it would be in keeping with its mountainside location to have been built of logs. Other black churches established by freed slaves are the Wayman A.M.E. Church (F-8-123) and the Silver Hill M. E. Church (F-8-124), both ca. 1868 buildings which served the freed slaves in the Libertytown and Mt. Pleasant areas. All three share the hall plan with three side windows and a gable front entry. Materials are simple and cheaply obtained at the time of construction. Undoubtedly, the members of the three congregations built the structures themselves.

The Ceres Bethel Church and the demolished school that stood west of the church are shown on the 1873 C. O. Titus Atlas of Frederick County. Dates on the headstones seem to indicate that the church was most active from 1870 through the 1930's. The probable causes of the decline of the church were the advent of the automobile, giving blacks as well as whites the mobility to move gradually away from the traditional settlements, and the advent of World War II, when blacks often went to the cities to work in defense plants or went into military service, and eventually settled elsewhere.

F-2-55

Ceres Bethel A.M.E. Church
Burkittsville
Frederick County

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont
(Harford, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery Counties,
and Baltimore City)

Chronological/Development Period:
Industrial/Urban Dominance, A.D. 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Themes
Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Community Planning
Social/Educational/Cultural

Resource Types:

Category: Building

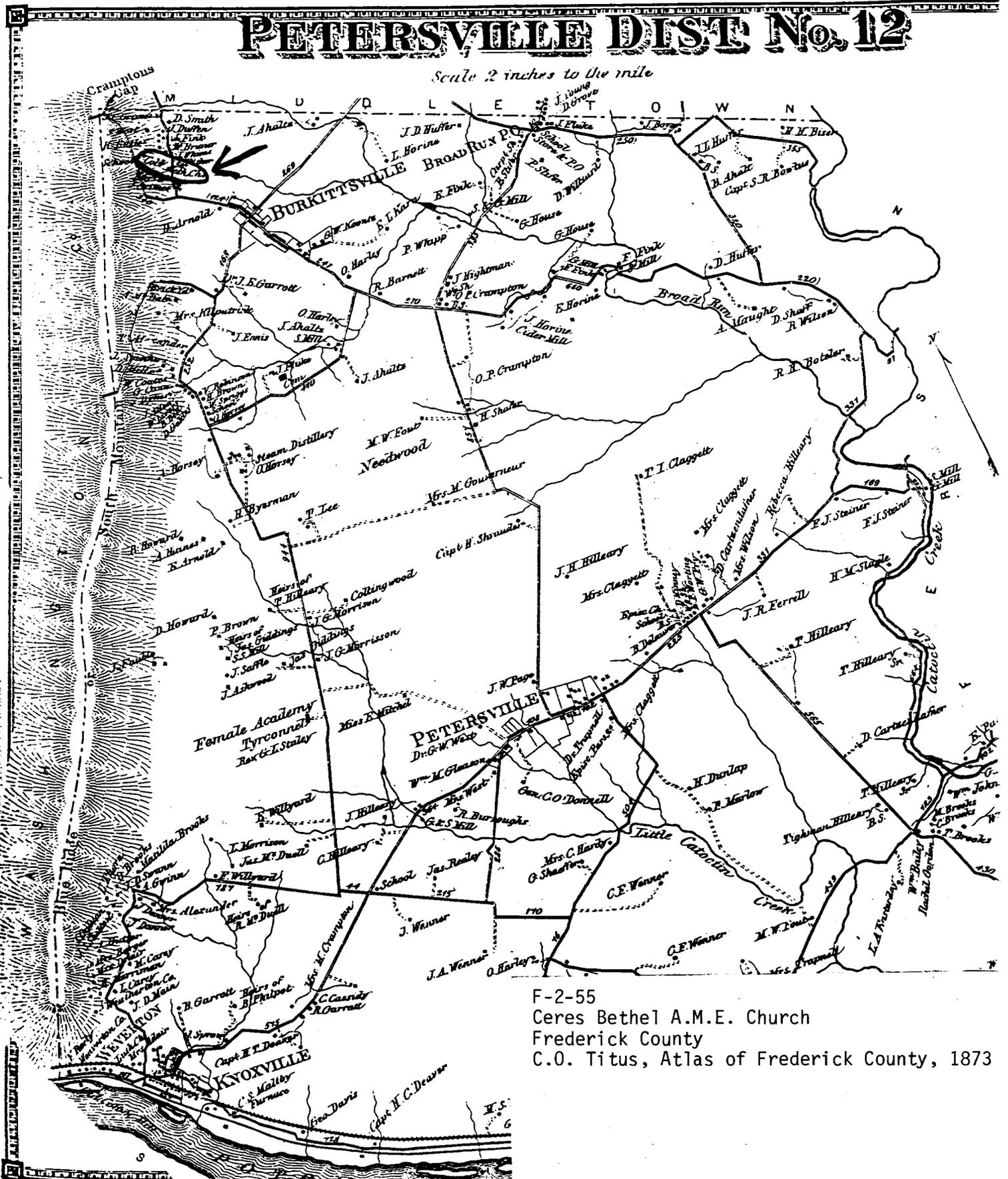
Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function and Use:
Religion/religious structure/church

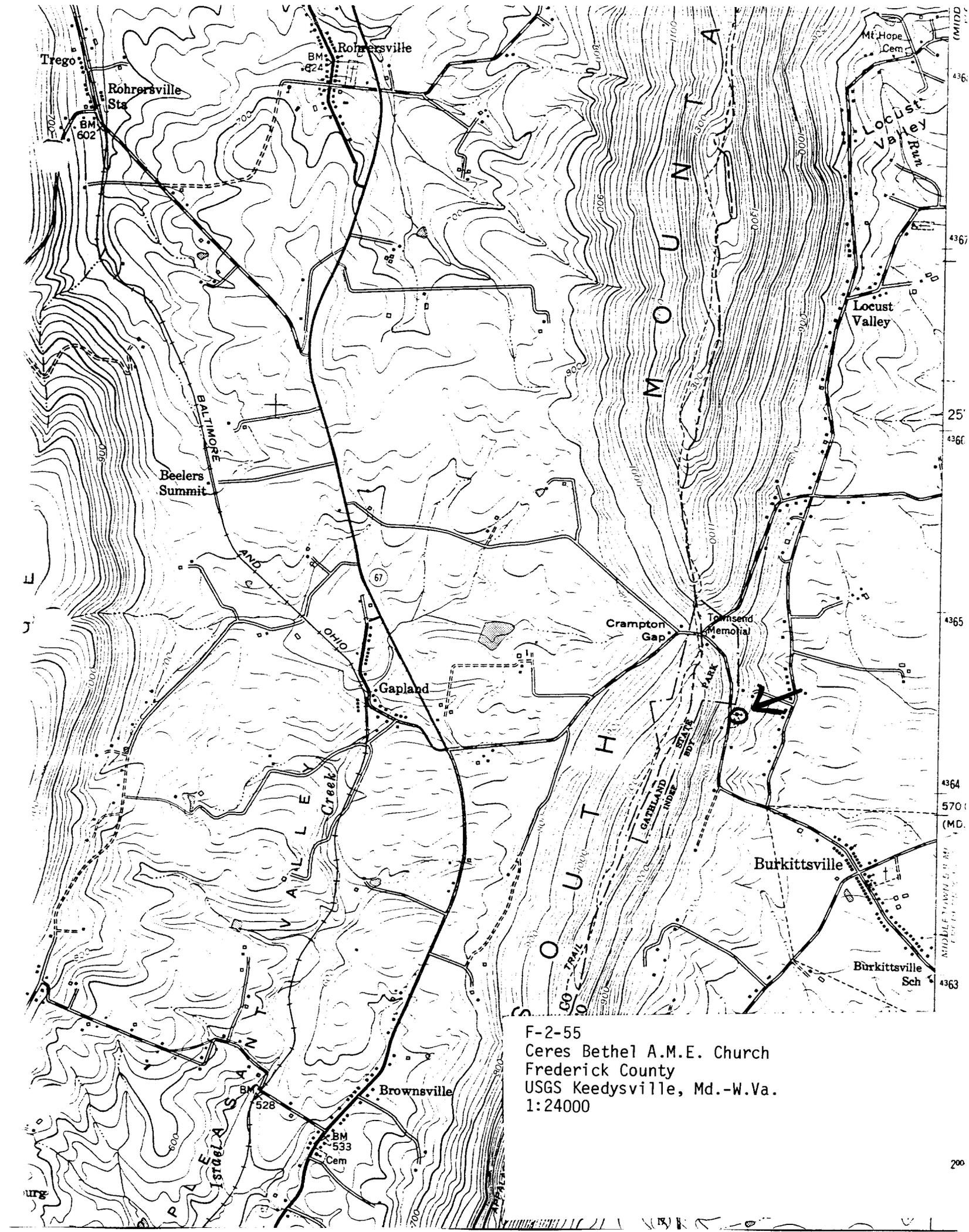
Known Design Source: None

PETERSVILLE DIST No. 12

Scale 2 inches to the mile



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Ceres Bethel A.M.E. Church
Frederick County
C.O. Titus, Atlas of Frederick County, 1873



F-2-55
Ceres Bethel A.M.E. Church
Frederick County
USGS Keedysville, Md.-W.Va.
1:24000





