

Site M:26/10/39

Jerusalem M.E. Church

21 Wood Lane

Built: 1858, rebuilt 1893, partially remodeled 1954

The Methodists of Rockville, both black and white, used this Church until the schism caused by slavery. After the Civil War, the black Methodists fell heir to the original building, and the "Southern" Methodists built a new church on Montgomery Avenue. In 1893 the old building was taken down, and the present building constructed using the original bricks. It has stepped buttresses, a high basement and a square corner tower. The tower once featured a belfrey and steeply conical roof but the upper portion was removed in 1954, at which time the building was stuccoed.

Survey No. M: 26/10/39

Magi No. 1650552608

DOE yes no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Jerusalem M. E. Church

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 21 Wood Lane not for publication

city, town Rockville vicinity of 8 congressional district

state Maryland county Montgomery

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input 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 Trustees of Jerusalem Church

street & number 21 Wood Lane telephone no.: 424-0464

city, town Rockville state and zip code Maryland 20850

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Land Records liber BS7

street & number Montgomery County Courthouse folio 330

city, town Rockville state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title National Register - West Montgomery Ave. Historic District-1974

~~Locally designated historic district - 1974~~

date M-NCPPC - 1976 federal state county local

pository for survey records City of Rockville

city, town Rockville state Maryland 20850

7. Description

Survey No. M: 26/10/39

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date of move _____

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

This 4-bay by 6-bay modest brick church faced with stucco faces south on Wood Lane. Raised on a high foundation and reached by cascading concrete front steps, the main facade of this Romanesque-influenced church is composed of a large gable end and a square southwest corner tower. Asphalt shingles cover the steeply pitched gable roof.

The front-facing gable end has a balanced appearance. The main entry is framed in a round-arched opening composed of paired wood paneled doors and a leaded glass, half-round light composed of green-shaded panes. The door is flanked by two narrow double-hung pointed-arch windows, each featuring stained glass. A centered round stained glass light is positioned above the entry. The eaves have been sheathed with aluminum slats and there is no cornice molding.

The square buttressed tower which rises from the southeast corner once supported a belfry similar to that on the Rockville Christian Church (M:26/10/22), but was removed and the exposed brick parapet added during renovations in the 1950s. There is a single wood paneled door in the pointed-arch opening on the first floor of the tower.

The west facade is composed of three pairs of tall pointed-arch stained glass windows which are separated by wall buttresses. The east facade has a similar arrangement on its middle and northeast bays, but on the southeast corner the tower projects slightly and the third pair of windows is divided. The basement level of both sides has 2-over-2 windows; there is a northeast corner entry with paired wood panel doors. An interior brick chimney rises near the center of the east end wall.

8. Significance

Survey No. M: 26/10/39

| 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 type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | | |

Built 1857-8

Specific dates Rebuilt 1893 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 Methodist Episcopal Church has been identified with this location on Wood Lane since 1835. In the 150 years since, it has endured financial struggles, schism, the Civil War and resulting crises, and even a tornado.

The early 19th century saw ^{the} rise of Methodism in Maryland. The groups of individuals who banded into small "classes" for study and prayer usually did so in private homes and received only intermittent visits from the circuit-riding ministers. The local class often preceeded the erection of a church building by as much as a generation, as was true in the case of Rockville.¹

1835 George and Elizabeth Sands sold lot 82 in the original Town of Rockville to the Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America for \$50. The Deed stated that the lot was located "On the north side of Wood Lane at the end of the first line of Lot 31...they shall erect and build...thereon a house or place of worship for the use of the members of the Methodist Church, according to the rules and disciplines which may be agreed upon...by the ministers and preachers of the said Church...".²

The Sands also owned a tavern in a building across Wood Lane at the corner of the Frederick Road (Washington Street). This lot would also become the property of the church after 1849, and since the congregation was small and could not support a building as yet, the Parsonage became the focus of services and ceremonies until the membership accrued enough money to erect a fitting Church building.

The local Methodists formally incorporated in 1852. The 1853 Quarterly Minutes of the Rockville Circuit recorded interest payments on the Circuit Parsonage, but no mention of a church building. From the same period a bill is included for furnishing the Rockville parsonage; this bill includes monies for sofa, bedstead, cooking stove and carpet, indicating that the parsonage was being used for the first time.³ Several articles in the local newspaper between 1855 and 1858 announce marriages performed at the parsonage, but none at a Church building.

Local histories and available evidence seems to point to the construction of the brick Church building on Wood Lane sometime in 1857/58. The first mention of the building announced that the "Agent for the Maryland State Bible Society, Providence permitting, will preach and present the claims of the Bible Cause at the following places...April 11,...

(continued)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - JERUSALEM CHURCH, Wood Lane, Rockville, MD (Continued)

Rockville, M.E. Church at 3 o'clock." The second mention indicates the social crises confronting the Church and the State; it was an editorial in the local paper complaining that the noise and attendant "fracas" resulting from the Negroes roaming the streets following their use of the Church basement for night temperance meetings. The article closed with the admonition to owners: "Keep your slaves at home".⁴

Methodism had appealed to free and slave blacks since its beginnings. The records of the Rockville Circuit from 1844 on record the names of local members, and the "exhorters" who aroused the local groups. There were separate black and white registers of members and expenses in some years but not all. In 1858 there were ten colored members listed in the Rockville Circuit, although there may have been many more who had not been received into a class, but who attended various Sunday Schools, services, singings and the aforementioned temperance meetings.

It should also be noted that in Rockville the land immediately to the east and northeast of the Church had been owned by the Martin family of free blacks since 1831 and that more and more blacks had settled in an enclave nicknamed "Haiti" which lay further north of the Church (on land around Martin's Lane.)⁵

The Methodists in Maryland had tried to settle the slave-owning issue since 1844 without success. In 1861 the Conference of Southern Methodists was set up, and in 1863 pro-slavery members of the Rockville congregation petitioned to join the Virginia District of this dissident group. During these years, many of the Rockville membership removed themselves from worshipping at the Wood Lane site; they met in private homes until 1868-69 when they purchased land for the construction of a new church on Commerce Lane and a new parsonage directly behind it on Jefferson Street (See Survey Site #26/10/24). But even after the War, the bitterness remained and for several years lawsuits were waged all over the State (and in Rockville) to determine ownership of the old church properties.

The bitterness and hostility of the Civil War and post-War years had caused a group of black Methodists to form the African Methodist Episcopal Church. They met first in a log cabin, but moved to a frame building owned by N. D. Offutt and located on Lots 40 and 41 across Washington Street. The Sentinel reported the burning of this building on March 22, 1874, with a loss of \$800.

The 1879 Hopkins Atlas shows the A.M.E. lots (40 & 41) as "Site for Colored M.E. Church". The Atlas also shows the original Wood Lane site on lot 82 as "Colored M.E. Church", and while it is true that the colored members of the "old" congregation had fallen heir to the building, it would be several years before Jerusalem United Methodist Church would be a viable congregation. In 1881 they joined the Washington Mission Conference, an arm of the M.E. Church organized for Negroes. In 1892 the congregation formally incorporated and set about meeting the needs of its membership by enlarging the old church. The original brick structure was taken down, but the bricks were carefully cleaned

(continued p. 8.2)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - JERUSALEM CHURCH, Wood Lane, Rockville, MD (continued)

and used again in the new edifice. Additional strips of land on both sides were purchased from the owners. The rival A.M.E. Church members taunted that Jerusalem would never rise again, but in 1893 the new Church, erected partially on the old Church foundations, was formally dedicated.⁷

A photograph taken c. 1906 (attached) shows the brick building with buttresses along the side wall, a square corner tower topped by a polygonal wood shingled belfry and a high raised center entry. It was heated by a pot-bellied stove. (Although no documentary evidence indicates an architect for this building, it should be noted that builder Edwin M. West was part-owner of adjoining lot 31, that he was in 1893 constructing the Christian Church on Jefferson Street, and that the tower, belfry and shingling of this Church are similar to the Christian Church; this leads to the conclusion that West may have submitted and/or been hired to draw the plans for Jerusalem Church.)

The 1906 photograph also shows some replacement of brick and repairs to the steeple area, probably caused by the damage suffered in the 1896 tornado that swept through Rockville and leveled outbuildings and trees; the Episcopal Church also suffered damage to its steeple in this storm.

A Rural Survey in Maryland, published by the Missions of the Presbyterian Church, recorded information about Black Churches in Montgomery County c. 1915. It made this comment about the Rockville Churches: "Several buildings notably the Methodist Episcopal and the A.M.E. Churches in Rockville are brick structures, better than some white churches."

A new parsonage was constructed adjacent to the Church in 1912 (see Site #26/10/40).

Jerusalem Church continued to prosper through the next decades. During the tenure of Rev. Walter Williams, some remodeling was necessary.⁸ In 1954, over \$13,000 worth of improvements was made to the Church: the brick was covered with white stucco and the belfry was removed from the square tower just above the tower windows. The top of the tower was finished by a cap of moulded brick with crenellated corners. During the enlargement of the front stairs an 1858 cornerstone was located.

The members of Jerusalem welcomed the inclusion of the Church within Rockville's Historic District in 1974 in recognition of the part played by the Church in the cultural, sociological and architectural history of Rockville.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Those Incredible Methodists: A History of the Baltimore Conference of the United Methodist Church, Baltimore Conference Commission on Archives and History, Baltimore (1972), p. 26.

(continued 8.3)

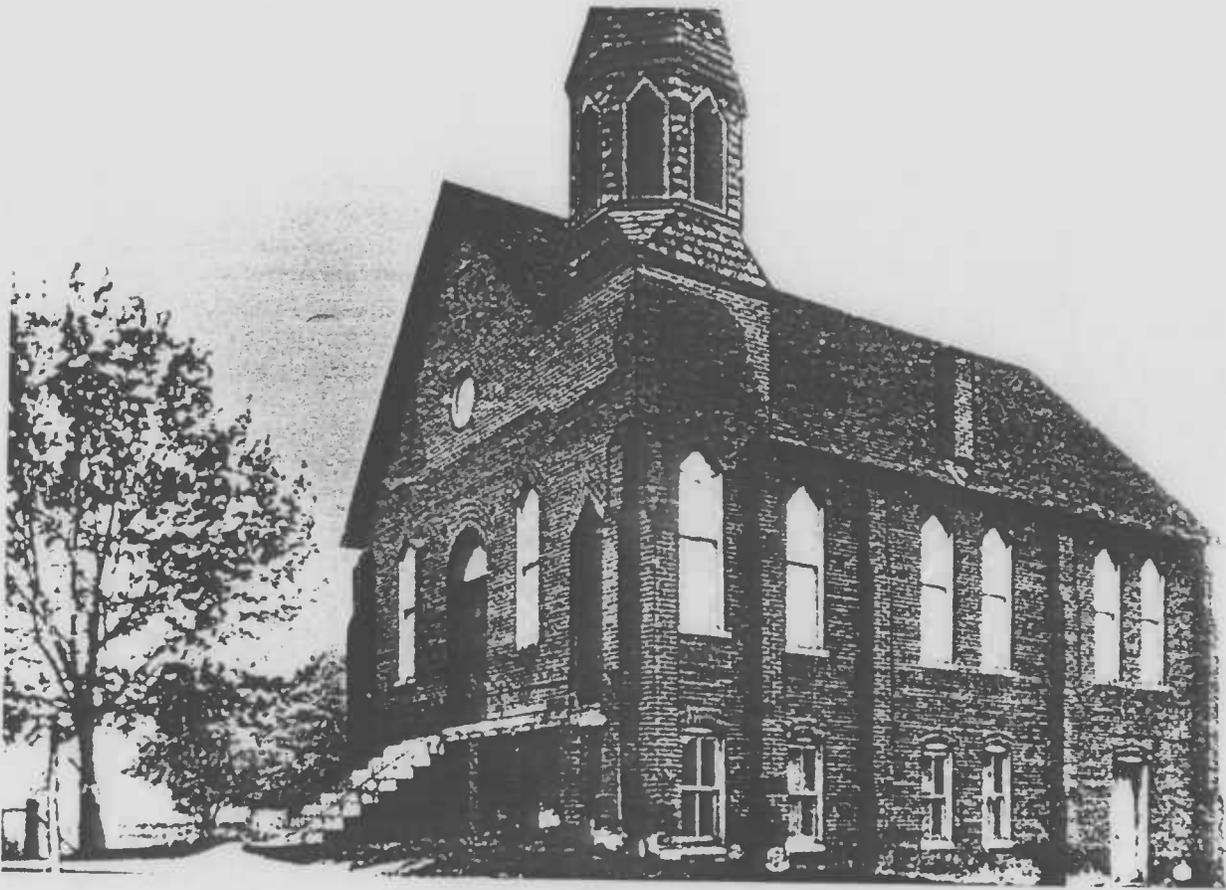
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - JERUSALEM CHURCH, Wood Lane, Rockville, MD

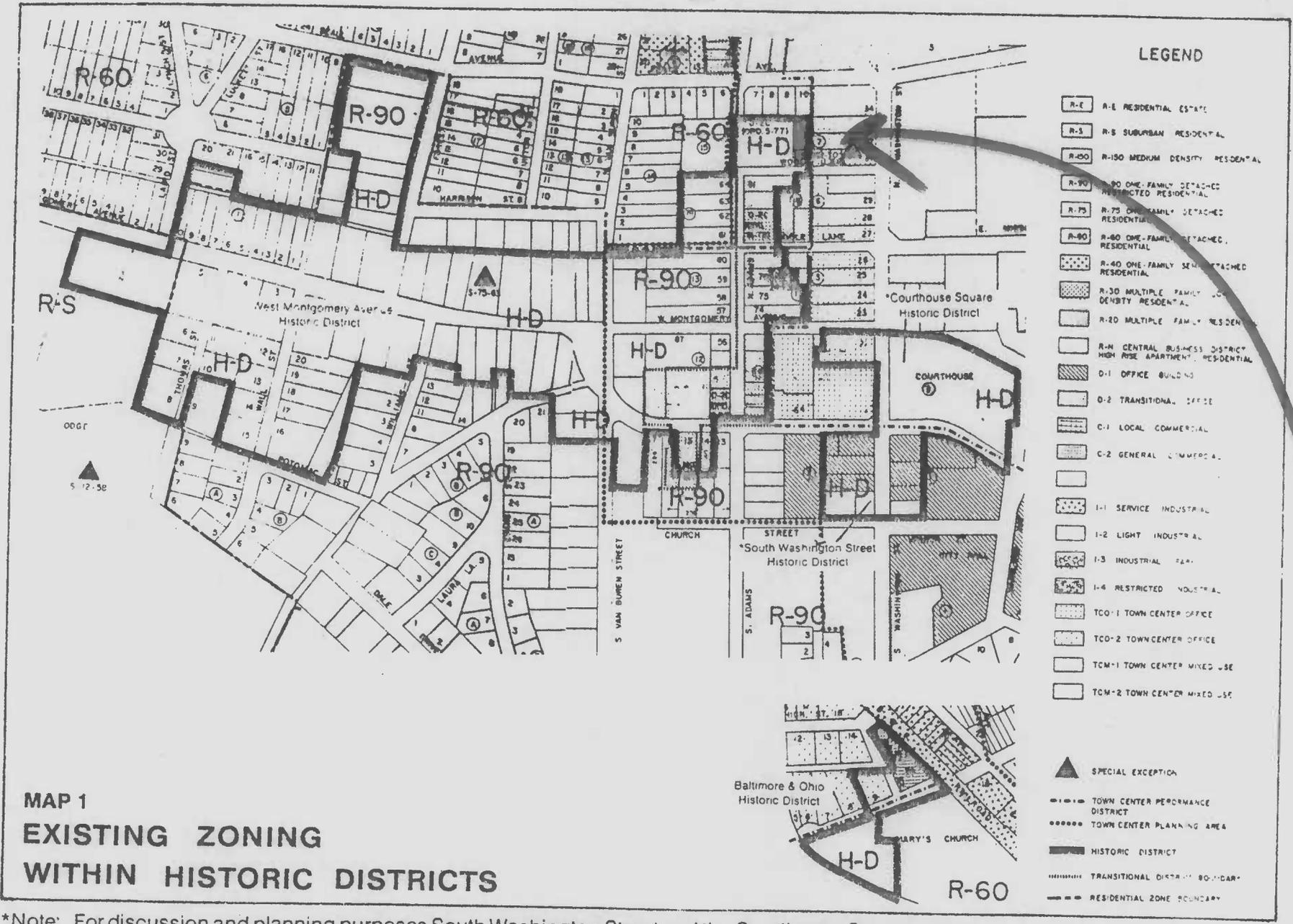
Footnotes (continued):

2. Elizabeth Sands had received lots 29 and 82 from the Will of Thomas O. Williams. Deed to Trustees at Land Records BS 7/330 (1835); 1831 Tax Records show lot 82 as unimproved.
3. Montgomery County Story, Vol XV No. 5, 1972, "Maryland Methodists and Jerusalem United Methodist Church, Rockville Maryland", p. 5.
4. Montgomery County Sentinel, March 28, 1858 and August 27, 1858.
5. Free black Samuel Martin owned lot 32, adjoining lot 82 from 1831 until his death in 1873. In the partition of his estate in 1884 the deed to one of his heirs describes the lot as beginning at a tree near the north-east corner of the old brick Methodist Church..." J.G.H. 9/165 (1884).
6. Sentinel, November 3, 1893.
7. Montgomery County Story, op. cit., pp. 8 and 9.
8. Interviews in 1972 with several members of the Church, including ex-pastor Rev. Williams.

M: 26/10/39

Jerusalem M. E. Church
21 Wood Lane, Rockville
circa 1906





**MAP 1
EXISTING ZONING
WITHIN HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

*Note: For discussion and planning purposes South Washington Street and the Courthouse Square district are considered independent Historic Districts even though they are shown on the existing zoning map as one district.

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 Jerusalem M. E. Church
 21 Wood Lane
 Rockville



Jerusalem Church

M: 26/10/39
Jerusalem Church
From 1979 Peerless Rockville
calendar



RICHARD H. ANDREWS
1608 Faragut Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20851

M: 26/10/39

Jerusalem M. E. Church
21 WOOD LANE

EAST/NORTHEAST ELEVATION

AUGUST, 1984

1023-12