

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G.# 72-9-25 Building Date: 1911

Building Name: Fairmount Heights (Grace) Methodist Church

Location: 716 59th Avenue, Fairmount Heights, Md.
Private/Religious/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description:

This is a large stucco-covered church building, crossgabled with corner entry tower. The six bays of the main block are lighted by gothic-arch windows with tracery, and the principal east gable front is lighted by a tall gothic-arch window flanked by two smaller ones, all filled with stained glass. Entrance is into the east facade of the entry tower, through plain wooden double doors with a single-pane transom. Above the entrance in the tower is a large complex window in the shape of a cross; the tower has a shallow pyramidal roof. The building is covered with yellowish textured stucco; set into the north corner of the east facade is a cornerstone which reads:

Fairmount Heights
M. E. Church
1909-1911.

Significance:

Fairmount Heights (Grace) Methodist Church was originally established in 1909 and the first services were held in Charity Hall. For a short time after this, services were held in Pastor Joshua Barnes' home at the location of the present World War II monument. In 1909, after Barnes' death, the trustees of the church acquired two unimproved lots on Fairmount Avenue, and began to raise money for the construction of a church. The church was completed in 1911. This original church was a simple frame meetinghouse style structure, with three gothic-arch windows in the principal gable front and a small belfry at the ridge. In 1950, under the pastorship of Rev. Edward S. Williams, the church was enlarged, the entry tower was constructed, and the entire structure was covered with stucco. The resulting handsome structure is a noticeable landmark in the town of Fairmount Heights.

Acreage: 12,500 square feet

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Fairmount Heights Methodist Church

and/or common Grace Methodist Church

2. Location

street & number 716 59th Avenue ___ not for publication

city, town Fairmount Heights ___ vicinity of congressional district 5

state MD county Prince George's

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 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 checked="" 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, Fairmount Heights Methodist Church

street & number 716 59th Avenue telephone no.:

city, town Fairmount Heights state and zip code MD 20743

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber

street & number 14735 Main Street folio

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input checked="" 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.

The Fairmount Heights (Grace) Methodist Church stands at 716 59th (originally Fairmount) Avenue. It was built in 1911 (and enlarged in 1950) on lots 47-49, Block D of the Fairmount Heights subdivision, which was platted in 1900.

This is a large stucco-covered church building, crossgabled with corner entry tower. The six bays of the main block are lighted by gothic-arch windows with tracery, and the principal east gable front is lighted by a tall gothic-arch window flanked by two smaller ones, all filled with stained glass. Entrance is into the east facade of the entry tower, through plain wooden double doors with a single-pane transom. Above the entrance in the tower is a large complex window in the shape of a cross; the tower has a shallow pyramidal roof. The building is covered with yellowish textured stucco; set into the north corner of the east facade is a cornerstone which reads:

Fairmount Heights
M. E. Church
1909-1911

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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" 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 1911, 1950

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.

Grace Methodist Church is a large and handsome building which is a noticeable landmark in the community. It was begun in 1911 on one of the lots in the Fairmount Heights subdivision.

The Town of Fairmount Heights is located just outside the easternmost point of the District of Columbia in Prince George's County, Maryland; it is composed of a group of early twentieth-century subdivisions that form one of the earliest planned communities for blacks in the Washington, D. C., area. The community began with the Fairmount Heights subdivision in 1900, followed by five adjoining subdivisions, the last being Sylvan Vista platted in 1923. The Town was incorporated in 1935, and grew steadily through the years before World War II.

The land which was to become Fairmount Heights consisted, during the late nineteenth century, principally of parts of the small farms of John H. Wilson, John and Caroline Silence, Samuel Hoover, Mosby Brown and John Wiessner, all clustered around the east corner of the District of Columbia. In the early years of the twentieth century, these farms were bought up and subdivided by land speculators, who then began to sell individual lots to black families, most of whom worked in the District of Columbia.

The first section of Fairmount Heights was subdivided in 1900 by Robinson White and Allen Clark (both white men) out of parts of several small farms which they had purchased from the Wilson, Godfrey, Belt and Lee families. Robinson White was a lawyer and developer who resided in the District of Columbia; Allen C. Clark was a lawyer and manager of the Equitable Life Insurance Company of Washington, D. C. White and Clark had approximately fifty acres surveyed by

County Surveyor Edward L. Latimer, and laid out in lots and streets radiating from the northeast boundary of the District of Columbia. The deep, narrow lots were generally 25 by 125 feet; two of the streets were named for these first two developers. Sale of lots began almost immediately, and within a few years, dwellings were constructed and a community began to form.

From the beginning, blacks were encouraged to buy lots and settle in the new community. White and Clark sold the lots at relatively low prices, making home ownership finally attainable for black families. Most of the earliest purchasers of lots worked for government agencies; many built their own houses, or relied on friends and family to help with construction. Many families were quick to seize the opportunity to move out of the city, determined to progress, by hard work and amid healthful surroundings, toward a better life.

The earliest dwellings were of frame construction, modest in size and form, and many of these have not survived. Within a few years, however, several interesting and substantial houses were constructed for individuals who would make significant contributions to the development of Fairmount Heights. Also within the early years, congregations were established and church buildings were constructed.

Fairmount Heights (Grace) Methodist Church was originally established in 1909 and the first services were held in Charity Hall. For a short time after this, services were held in Pastor Joshua Barnes' home at the location of the present World War II monument. In 1909, after Barnes' death, the trustees of the church acquired two unimproved lots on Fairmount Avenue, and began to raise money for the construction of a church. The church was completed in 1911. This original church was a simple frame meetinghouse style structure, with three gothic-arch windows in the principal gable front and a small belfry at the ridge. In 1950, under the pastorate of Rev. Edward S. Williams, the church was enlarged, the entry tower was constructed, and the entire structure was covered with stucco. The resulting handsome structure is a noticeable landmark in the town of Fairmount Heights.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG#72-9-25

Grace Methodist Church Anniversary Booklet
Pearl, S.G. Fairmount Heights, Maryland; A History, M-NCPPC 1991

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 12500 sq ft

Quadrangle name Washington East

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

TM 65, FH Blk D, lots 47-50

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

| | | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| A | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |

| | | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| B | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |

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| C | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
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| D | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
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| E | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
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| F | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
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| G | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
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| H | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| | | | |
| | | | |

11. Form Prepared By

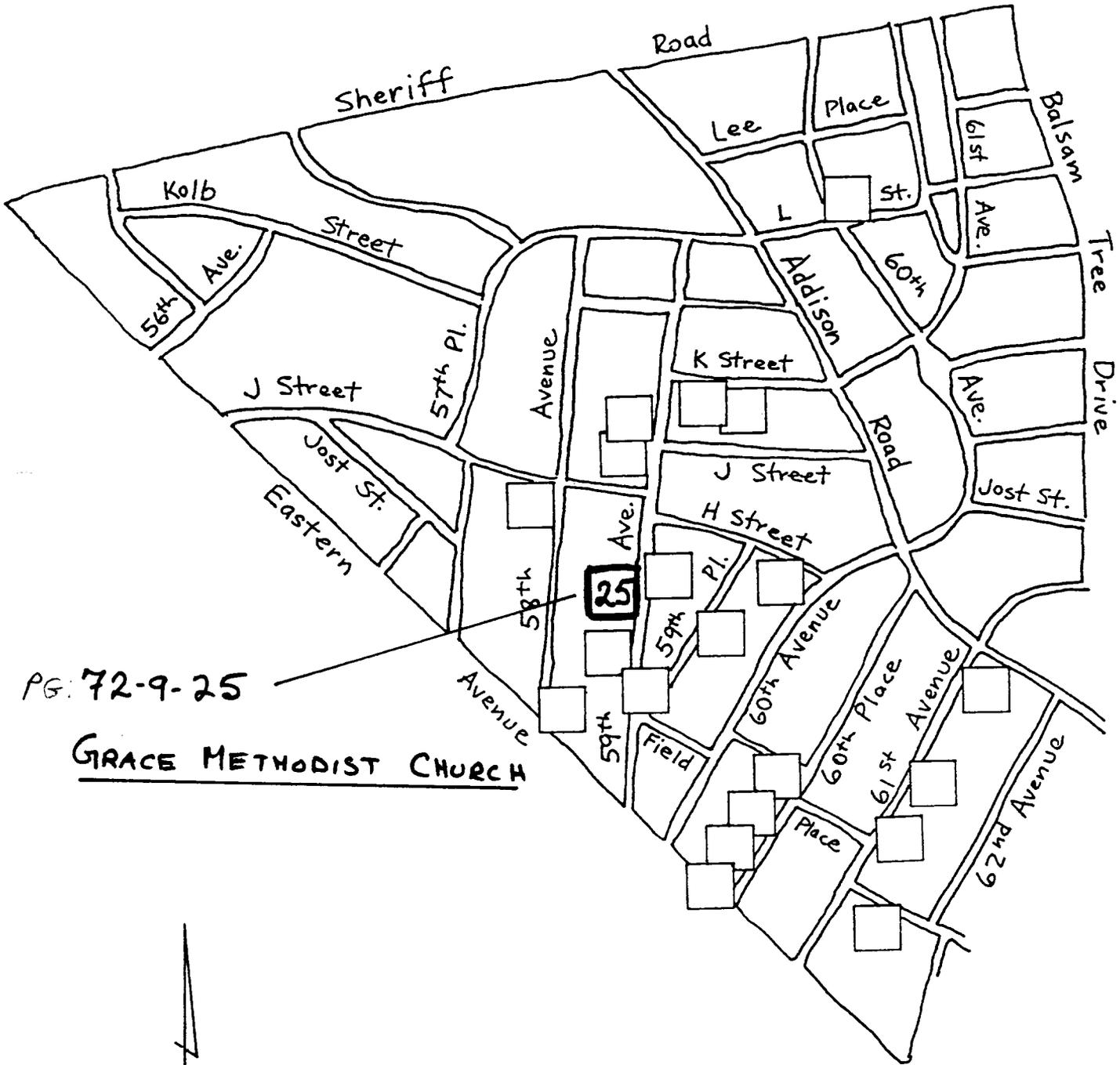
name/title Susan G. Pearl, Research/Architectural Historian
Prince George's County
organization Historic Preservation Commission date June 1991
street & number c/o M-NCPPC, 4th floor CAB telephone 301-952-3521
city or town Upper Marlboro state MD 20772

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

Town of Fairmount Heights



PG. 72-9-25

GRACE METHODIST CHURCH





DISTRICT HEIGHTS 2.3 MI. UPPER MARLBORO 11 MI. 55' 334 335000m E INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY WASHINGTON D. C. — 1971 76'



PG: 72-9-25
72-9-25

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------|-------|
| Heavy-duty | ————— | Light-duty | ----- |
| Medium-duty | ————— | Unimproved dirt | ----- |
| ○ Interstate Route | ○ U. S. Route | ○ State Ro | |

FEET
EVEL
ATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
ATELY FEET



WASHINGTON EAST, MD. — D. C.
N3852.5—W7652.5/7.5

ACCURACY STANDARDS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
MBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

1965
PHOTOREVISED 1971
AMS 5661 IV NW—SERIES V833



P.O. # 72-9-25

Grace Methodist Church
716 59th Ave, Fairmount Heights.

FH D: 47-47

P.O. Co.

Susan L. Pearl

February 1991

FH: 11147