

D-610  
Unity-Washington United Methodist Church  
Hurlock  
Public Worship

1858, 1899, 1957, 1969

The history of the Unity-Washington United Methodist Church begins at the close of the eighteenth century when a Methodist meeting was established in northeastern Dorchester County; the exact year of its founding is not known. On August 22, 1800, a meeting was held on the farm of Jacob Wright, Sr. where a board of trustees was elected according to the policy of the Methodist Episcopal church. Due to President Washington's death the previous year, it was decided to name the congregation in his honor. Less than a year later, on February 7, 1801, a ¾-acre parcel of Jacob Wright's "North Division" tract was conveyed to the trustees, "for the purpose of building a Chappell or House of Worship now called Washington Chappell." A single-story frame building, measuring 24' by 32', was erected on the lot, and its exterior siding was coated with tar and the roof was painted red. The doors and windows were painted with white lead. The Washington Chapel congregation used this structure until the mid nineteenth century when a much larger membership financed the construction of a stylish Greek Revival frame structure with pilastered corners and bracketed eaves in 1858. The original Washington Chapel was relocated to a new site and used by the black residents in the district as a church and school. It is identified as such on the Williamsburg district map in the Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson atlas published in 1877. Two years later, on March 13, 1879, the old Washington Chapel burned when fire escaped a stove pipe and ignited the building.

The Washington Methodists continued to worship at this location until 1888 when it was decided to relocate the building to the expanding town of Hurlock's Station, which had developed gradually after the Dorchester & Delaware Railroad was completed between Seaford and Cambridge in 1869. Hurlock's Station grew significantly more important commercially with the prospect of an intersecting line, the Baltimore & Eastern Shore Railroad, being planned and built between Talbot County and Salisbury in 1886-90. In 1888 the Washington Methodist congregation voted to relocate their church into the developing town. The congregation acquired a lot on the corner of North Main and Oak streets and moved the frame structure to its new site with the gable-front entrance façade oriented to Main Street.

At the same time a group of Hurlock residents established a town congregation of the Methodist Protestant faith in 1888 under the pastorship of Reverend R. S. Williamson and after 1890 by Reverend B. P. Truitt. The Methodist Episcopal and Methodist Protestant congregations worshipped in their respective churches until the mid twentieth century when the bishop of the conference stated that the regional resources were not sufficient enough to supply two ministers for separate congregations in Hurlock, and he ordered that the two memberships merge. The new congregation was renamed Unity-Washington Methodist Church of Hurlock, and their first, joint service was held on May 24, 1953. The united memberships worked cooperatively over the next several decades to enlarge and remodel the old Washington church with an educational wing in 1957-58 and a redecoration of the nineteenth century building in 1969.

While altered architecturally with an exterior veneer of brick, this prominent Methodist church incorporates the oldest structure in the town of Hurlock. The main

sanctuary of the Unity-Washington United Methodist Church dates to 1858, and its original gable-front pediment and south side eave retain rows of decorative eave brackets. The Greek Revival influenced church was enlarged with a new cross wing, tower, and apse in a major remodeling of the building in 1899-1900.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-610

## 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Washington Methodist Church  
 other Unity Washington United Methodist Church, Washington Chapel, Unity M. P. Church

## 2. Location

street and number 110 North Main Street not for publication  
 city, town Hurlock vicinity  
 county Dorchester

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

name Trustees of Unity Washington United Methodist Church of Hurlock  
 street and number P. O. Box 298 telephone 410-943-3222  
 city, town Hurlock state Maryland zip code 21643-0298

## 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dorchester County Clerk of Court liber MLB 742 folio 368  
 city, town Cambridge tax map 400 tax parcel 450 tax ID number 010398

## 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District  
 Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
 Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
 Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
 Recorded by HABS/HAER  
 Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<u>1</u> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

**Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory**  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Description

Inventory No. D-610

### Condition

excellent       deteriorated  
 good             ruins  
 fair               altered

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

The Unity Washington United Methodist Church is a single brick veneered frame church that stands on the southwest corner of the intersection of North Main and Oak streets in the town of Hurlock, Dorchester County, Maryland. The church faces northeast with the principal gable roof oriented on a northeast/southwest axis. Built in three principal stages, the church core, encompassing two-thirds of the sanctuary, is a bracketed Greek Revival structure erected in 1858 on a site approximately a mile north of town along MD Route 331 where the church cemetery is located. In 1888, the mid nineteenth century church was relocated to this site at a time when the town of Hurlock was growing steadily. The second period of construction dates to 1899-1900 and included a cross wing to the north, an apse to the south, an entrance and bell tower in the northeast corner and a largely remodeled interior. Fifty-seven years later a two-story Sunday School addition was built to the rear. The final major change occurred in 1969 when the exterior of the church was covered with a brick veneer.

The northeast (main) elevation is an asymmetrical façade with the off-center entrance and bell rising three stories, and it capped by a steeply pitched pyramidal spire topped by a copper cross. Situated at the top of a flight of concrete steps, the modern double door entrance is framed by a Colonial Revival surround and it is topped by a rectangular colored glass transom with "Welcome" figured in the design. The second story of the tower is defined by round windows, and the third level, originally open, is enclosed and defined by paired vents on four sides. The pyramidal spire is covered with patterned slate, and ball finial turrets mark the four corners of the tower base. A copper cap covers the peak of the spire which is surmounted by a copper cross. The northeast front of the sanctuary is three bays across with a large double colored glass window flanked by single, rectangular colored glass windows. The gable end is finished by a bold pediment enriched with sawn brackets. The tympanum is covered with vinyl siding. Fixed in the south corner of the wall is a marble datestone that reads, "Washington M. E. Church, 1801-1858, 1899."

The northwest side elevation of the nineteenth-century church is an asymmetrical façade with the projecting cross wing extending north from the main body of the building. The cross wing, dating from 1899-1900, was styled in the same fashion as the 1858 church with a gable end pediment enriched with sawn brackets. The gable end wall is defined by a double colored glass window that is flanked by smaller single width colored glass windows to each side. Fixed in the eastern corner of the north wall is another marble datestone simply inscribed with the date 1969, which signifies when the church was covered with a brick veneer. Extending from the west side of the cross wing is the two-story Sunday School room addition built in 1957-58.

The south side of the church is marked by a projecting single bay apse trimmed with a bracketed pediment. Colored glass windows flank the apse. The rear wall of the 1858 church is defined by short cornice returns at the base of the roof which carry a molded bargeboard that trims the gable end. Colored glass windows pierce this wall as well to light the sanctuary.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-610

Name  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 7 Page 1

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The interior finishes of the sanctuary date largely from the 1899-1900 remodeling. The ceiling of the 1858 section is enhanced with pressed metal in a repeating octagonal gridwork design, and a heavy cove cornice features fleur-de-lis and acanthus leaf motifs. Hanging from the ceiling are neo-Gothic chandeliers. The side walls have a vertical tongue-and-groove board wainscoting. The south wall of the sanctuary is pierced by a squarish opening with rounded upper corners that frames the apse recess. The apse recess is framed by Victorian moldings, and all of the window and doors are framed with Victorian corner block surrounds. The pews and altar furniture date from the third quarter of the twentieth century.

# 8. Significance

Inventory No. D-610

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates	1801 (Founded) 1888 (Moved)	Architect/Builder
Construction dates	1858, 1899-1900 (Remodeled), 1957 (Sunday School wing), 1969 (Brick veneer)	

Evaluation for:

National Register                       Maryland Register                       not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

While altered with a mid twentieth century brick veneer, this prominent Methodist church on the corner of North Main and Oak streets incorporates the oldest structure in Hurlock. The main sanctuary of the Unity-Washington United Methodist Church dates to 1858, and its exterior retains a bold gable front elevation trimmed with decorative eave brackets. The Greek Revival influenced church was enlarged with a new cross wing, tower and apse in a major remodeling of the church in 1899-1900. A third wave a significant work occurred during the mid twentieth century with the construction of an Educational Sunday School room wing in 1957 and the application of the exterior brick veneer and other Colonial Revival details in 1969. At the same time the entire interior was reworked.

## HISTORIC CONTEXT

The history of the Unity Washington United Methodist Church begins at the close of the eighteenth century when a Methodist meeting was established in northeastern Dorchester County; the exact year of its founding is not known. On August 22, 1800 a meeting was held on the farm of Jacob Wright, Sr. when a board of trustees was elected according to the policy of the Methodist Episcopal church. Due to President George Washington's death the previous year, it was decided to name the congregation in his honor. Less than a year later, on February 7, 1801, a 3/4-acre parcel of Jacob Wright Sr.'s farm was conveyed to the trustees, "for the purpose of building a chapel, or house of worship, now called Washington Chapel, thereon, for the use of the preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church."<sup>1</sup> A single story frame chapel, measuring 24' x 32,' was erected on the 3/4-acre parcel, and its exterior siding was coated with tar and the roof was painted

<sup>1</sup> Dorchester County Land Record, HD 16/574, 2.7.1801 as cited in Unity-Washington United Methodist Church, Bicentennial Anniversary Celebration, 1801-2001.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Name Unity Washington United Methodist Church  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 1

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red. The doors and windows were painted with white lead.<sup>2</sup> The Washington Chapel congregation used this structure until the mid nineteenth century when a much larger membership financed the construction of a stylish Greek Revival frame structure with pilastered corners and bracketed eaves in 1858. The original Washington Chapel erected in 1801 was relocated on a new site nearby and used by the black residents in the region as a church and school. It is identified as such on the Williamsburg District map in the Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson atlas published in 1877.<sup>3</sup> Two years later, on March 13, 1879, the old Washington Chapel burned when fire escaped a stove pipe and ignited the building.

The Washington Methodists continued to worship at this location until 1888 when it was decided to relocate the building to the quickly expanding town of Hurlock, which had developed gradually after the Dorchester and Delaware Railroad was completed between Seaford and Cambridge in 1869. Hurlock's Station, as it was known in the late nineteenth century, grew rapidly during the mid to late 1880s with the prospect an intersecting line, the Baltimore and Eastern Shore Railroad, being planned between Talbot County and Salisbury. In 1888, with sizable growth in the village population, the Washington Methodist congregation decided to abandon their rural site and move the congregation into the crossroads village. The congregation acquired a lot on the corner of North Main and Oak streets and moved the large frame structure to its new site with the gable front entrance façade oriented to Main Street.

At the same time a group of Hurlock residents established a town congregation of the Methodist Protestant faith in 1888 under the pastorship of Reverend. R. S. Williamson and after 1890 by Reverend B. P. Truitt.<sup>4</sup> The Methodist Episcopal and Methodist Protestant congregations worshipped in their respective churches until the mid twentieth century when the bishop of the conference stated that the conference resources were not able to supply two ministers for separate congregations in Hurlock, and he ordered that the two memberships merge.<sup>5</sup> The new congregation was renamed Unity-Washington Methodist Church of Hurlock, and their first joint worship service was held on May 24, 1953.<sup>6</sup> The united memberships worked together over the next several decades to enlarge the old Washington church with an educational wing in 1957-58, and a redecoration of the 19<sup>th</sup> century building in 1969.

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> John L. Graham, ed. *The 1877 Atlases and Other Early Maps of the Eastern Shore of Maryland*. Wicomico County Bicentennial Committee, 1976, p. 82.

<sup>4</sup> Unity-Washington Methodist Episcopal Church history, p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 22.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p. 22.

D-610  
Unity-Washington United Methodist Church  
Hurlock

HD 16/574

Jacob Wright, Sr.

to

2.7.1801

Trustees of Washington Chapell

Thomas Foster, William Woollen, Alexander Rowing,  
Benjamin Collison, Timothy Corkran, William Carrole,  
and Elisha Wright

\$ .66

to the Lot and House hereafter mention forever, All that part or parcel of Land called North Division lying and being in Dorchester County and State aforesaid, beginning at a marked post standing on the side of the road, and on the line of the Grove, then running North seventy degrees, West sixteen Perches, then South twelve degrees West twelve perches then North seventy three [degrees] East eighteen perches to the first Beginning Containing Three Quarters of an Acre more or less and also all the Estate right, title, Interest property claim and demand whatever of him the said Jacob Wright, Senr.

....forever as Trustees for the purpose of building a Chappell or House of Worship now called Washington Chappell thereon for the use of the preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Inventory No. D-610

Dorchester County Land Records, various volumes, Dorchester County Courthouse.

Graham, John, ed. *The 1877 Atlases and other Early Maps of the Eastern Shore of Maryland*. Wicomico County Bicentennial Committee, 1976, p. 67.

Hallman, E. C. *The Garden of Methodism*, The Peninsula Annual Conference, 1948, p. 311.

Personal Interviews with Debbie Sherman and Rev. Bonnie Shively, 11.2.2007.

*Unity-Washington United Methodist Church, 1801-2001*, Bicentennial Anniversary Celebration booklet, 2001.

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property	<u>Lot 10,967 square feet</u>	
Acreage of historical setting	<u>Lot 10,967 square feet</u>	
Quadrangle name	<u>Federalsburg, MD 1944</u>	Quadrangle scale: <u>1:24,000</u>

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The metes and bounds of this property are coincidental with the current boundary of the lot.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

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name/title	<u>Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian</u>		
organization	<u>Chesapeake Country Heritage &amp; Preservation</u>	date	<u>10/31/2007</u>
street & number	<u>P. O. Box 5</u>	telephone	<u>410-651-1094</u>
city or town	<u>Westover</u>	state	<u>Maryland 21871</u>

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600



Collinson, Timothy Cokran, William Carrol, and  
 Elisha Wright and their Successors as Trustees to  
 the Lot and House hereafter mention forever,  
 All that part or parcel of Land called North Di-  
 vision lying and being in Dorchester County and  
 State aforesaid, beginning at a marked post standing  
 on the side of the Road, and on the line of the  
 Grove then running North Seventy degrees, West  
 Sixteen Perches, then South twelve degrees, West  
 twelve perches then North seventy three three East  
 eighteen perches to the first Beginning Containing  
 Three Quarters of an Acre more or less and also  
 all the Estate right-title, Interest property claim  
 and demand whatever of him the said Jacob  
 Wright Senr. his heirs and Assigns forever.  
 To Have and To Hold the aforesaid part of  
 a Tract of land herein bargained and sold with the  
 Appurtenances thereunto belonging unto the aforesaid  
 Thomas Foster, William Woollem, Alexander  
 Rowing, Benjamin Collison, Timothy Cokran  
 William Carrol, and Elisha Wright and their  
 Successors forever as Trustees for the purpose  
 of building a Chappell or House of Worship  
 now called Washington Chappell thereon for the  
 Use of the preachers of the methodist Episcopal  
 Church and such other preachers as a Majority  
 of the above named Trustees shall permit, and

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 Benjamin

576

a majority of all the Succeeding Trustees that shall legally from time to time be chosen according to the manner of Electing Trustees as laid down now by the General Conference held by the Preachers of the aforesaid Church, so as always to keep the number of Trustees not to exceed nine nor under seven - In Witness whereof the said Jacob Wright have hereunto set his hand and Affixed his Seal the day and Year above written.

Witnesses

Signed Sealed and Delivered  
 in the Presence of } Jacob Wright   
 In: Stovers

Rich<sup>d</sup>. Pattison

On the back of the aforesaid Deed were the following Endorsements Viz:

Dorchester County to wit, Be it Remem- bered that on the Seventh day of February and in the year of our Lord eighteen hun- dred and one personally Appeared the within named Jacob Wright before us two of the Justices for the County aforesaid and State of Maryland and did then Acknowledge this Deed of Bargain and Sale with the lands and premises therein Contained to be the right of the within named Thomas Proster, William Woolen, Alexander Rowing, Benjamin Collison, Timothy Lockran, William

Carroll, and as Trustees for Febry 7<sup>th</sup> 1801. Woolen, Alex Timothy Cook Sixty six & within Deed In Stovers Rich<sup>d</sup>. Pattis

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 from Woolford Sta day of Ma (Pr.)

Del: E. W.

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Mapped by the Army Map Service  
 Published for civil use by the Geological Survey

Control by USC&GS

Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods  
 and by planetable surveys 1944. Aerial photographs taken 1942

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 30° 27' 34" I  
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D-610  
 Unity Washington United Methodist Church  
 Federalsburg Quadrangle, 1944



D-610

Unity - Washington United Meth. Church

HURLOCK, Dorchester Co., MD.

Southern ELEVATION

9/07, Paul Touant, photos submitted

Met., MD. HISTORICAL TRUST



D-610

UNITY - WASHINGTON UNITED METH. CH.  
HULLOCK, DORCHESTER CO., MD.

NORTHWEST ELEVATION

9/07, PAUL THOMAS, PHOTOGRAPHER

METH./MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

D-610

1898

Unity Methodist Church  
Hurlock  
Private

Unity Methodist Church is the largest building in Hurlock; its spire towers over the residences and shops on either side of it. It is a brick building with an off-center frame tower. The tower is topped by a pyramidal roof and has an open belfry. Hurlock was an early center of Methodist activity in Dorchester County and this church replaced the much older Washington Methodist Church.

Unity Methodist Church

D-10



D-610

Unity Methodist Church

50%