

WO-239

Zion United Methodist Church
Bishopville
private

1908

The Zion United Methodist church, sometimes referred to in older records as the St. Martin's Neck Methodist Episcopal church, was erected in 1908 under the leadership of Reverend Emory McDowell. The St. Martin's Neck Methodist congregation, however, is much older. A congregation is known to have organized as early as the late 1770s. Recorded in Bishop Francis Asbury's journal are references to having preached at "St. Martin's southeast of Bishopville." Dedication an early church building occurred in April of 1810.

This early twentieth-century church is similar to others from the same period with its conservative use of Gothic Revival style features. The pointed arch lancet windows and the three-story pyramidal roofed spire are the most dominant features. Standing east of the church is the old School No. 3, now used as a community hall for the church.

HISTORIC CONTEXT INFORMATION

Resource Name: Zion United Methodist Church

MHT Inventory Number: W0-239

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA:

1) Historic Period Theme(s):

Architecture, Agriculture

2) Geographic Orientation:

Eastern Shore

3) Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

1870-1930 Industrial / Urban, Dominant

4) Resource Type(s):

1. Standing Structure

a. Church

2. Object

a. Cemetery

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic ZION METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

and/or common ZION UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2. Location

street & number North side of Back Creek Road _____ not for publication

city, town Bishopville ___x vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Worcester

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 | ___ private residence |
| ___ site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | ___ entertainment | x religious |
| ___ object | ___ in process | x yes: restricted | ___ government | ___ scientific |
| | ___ being considered | ___ yes: unrestricted | ___ industrial | ___ transportation |
| | x not applicable | ___ no | ___ military | ___ other: |

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

name Trustees of Zion United Methodist Church

street & number c/o Reverend Don Willard telephone no.:

city, town Bishopville state and zip code MD 21813

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Worcester County Clerk of Court liber

street & number Worcester County Courthouse folio

city, town Snow Hill state MD 21863

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. WO-239

| | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| 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 Zion United Methodist church is located on the north side of Back Creek Road east of Bishopville, Worcester County, Maryland. The single-story frame church faces south with the gable oriented on a north/south axis.

Built in 1908, the aluminum clad weatherboard frame church is supported by a minimal, continuous brick foundation and is covered by a steeply pitched asphalt shingle roof. Dominating the south elevation is a three-story entrance and bell tower. Attached to the east side of the church is a shorter single-story Sunday school addition erected in 1967.

The south (main) elevation is a symmetrical three-bay elevation with a centered projecting bell tower. The entrance has been reworked, but retains a triangular shaped colored glass transom. The second floor of the tower is lighted by a diamond-shaped colored glass window, while the third floor is marked by louvered openings on each side. The short pyramidal spire is interrupted by small gable roofs above each louvered opening, and the peak is topped by a small cross. Flanking the tower are single colored glass lancet windows. Fixed in the front corner of the foundation is a marble datestone inscribed "Zion M. E. Church, Built 1881, Rebuilt, 1908"

The west side of the church is pierced by four colored glass lancet windows, while the east side is partially covered by the single story Sunday school room addition. When the Sunday school room was added the colored glass windows removed from the east wall were reused in the south wall of the addition.

To the north (rear) side of the church a single-story shed roofed addition has been added which partially covers the three sided apse. Rising through the roof is a narrow brick stove stack.

The interior has been reworked with resheathed walls and a remodeled altar. Inside the main entrance a double-door is topped by a double-pane transom. Framing the colored glass windows is Victorian molded trim. The Victorian pews feature Gothic shaped panels in each end. More modern altar furniture is featured on the raised pulpit.

Behind the church is a nineteenth- and twentieth century cemetery.

8. Significance

Survey No. WO-239

| 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/ 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 checked="" 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 | | |

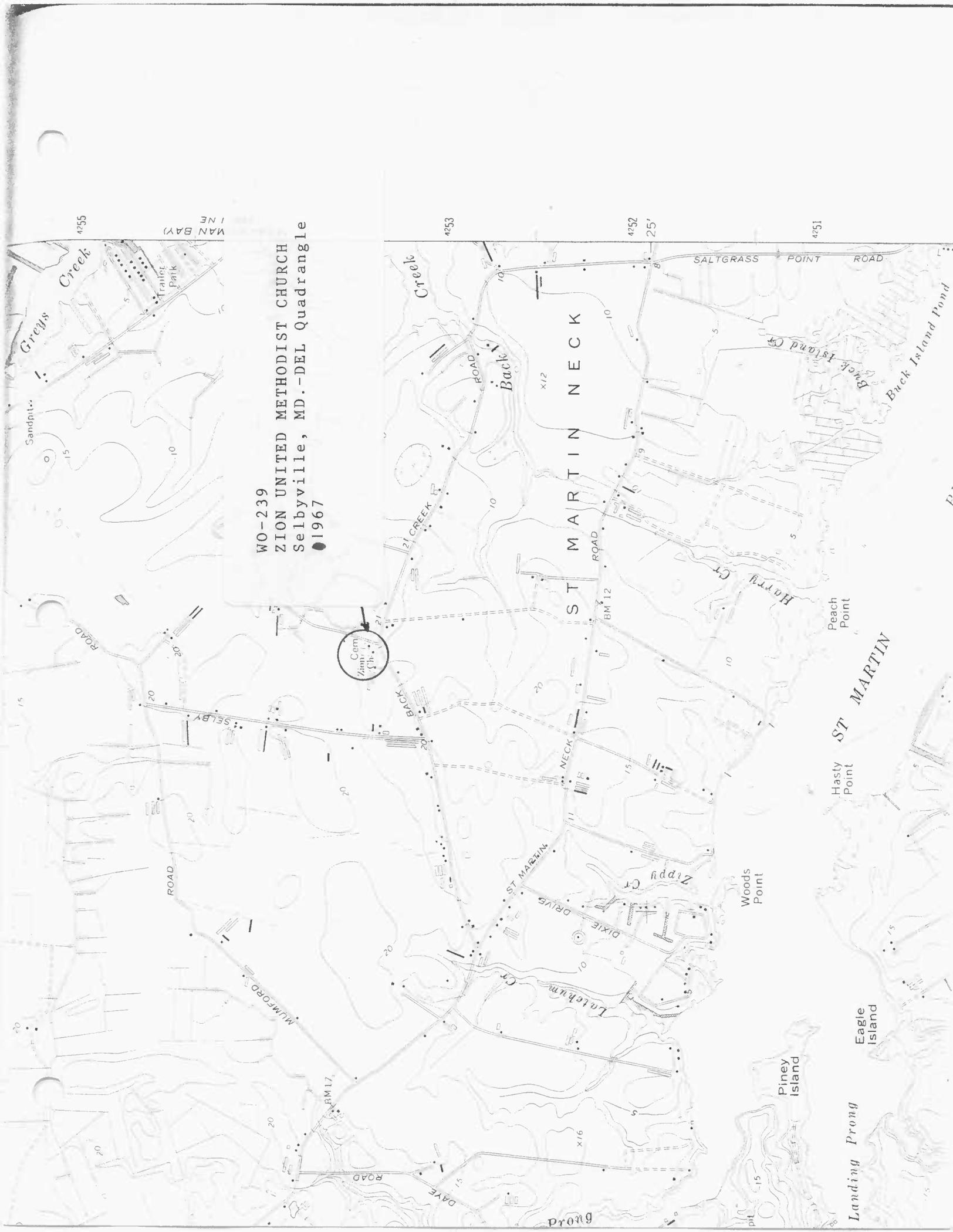
Specific dates 1881, 1908 **Builder/Architect**

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.

Zion United Methodist church was erected in 1908 on the site of an older structure built in 1881, however a Methodist congregation is reported to have been meeting in the area since the late eighteenth century. The early twentieth century church features simple references to the Gothic Revival style with pointed arch, colored glass lancet windows. Dominating the front of the single story structure is a three-story entrance and bell tower capped by a pyramidal roofed spire. Along with an exterior cladding of aluminum the interior has been remodeled with resheathed walls and a restyled altar. Victorian pews with Gothic arched end panels and molded trim that frames colored glass windows comprise the most significant interior period features. The old School No. 3 standing next to the church has been converted to a community hall. (See WO-240)



WO-239
ZION UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Selbyville, MD.-DEL Quadrangle
● 1967

MAN BAY LINE 4255

4253

4252 25'

4251

Greys Creek
Sandpit
Training Park

Creek
Back Neck

SALTGRASS POINT ROAD

ST MARTIN NECK

Buck Island Cr
Buck Island Pond

Cem.
Zion Mth. Ch.

Peach Point

ST MARTIN

Hasty Point

Woods Point

Eagle Island

Landing Prong

Piney Island

ROAD
SELBY
ROAD
ROAD
MUMFORD
ROAD
ROAD
ROAD

21 CREEK
BACK NECK

ST MARTIN
NECK
ROAD
ROAD
ROAD

ST MARTIN
DIXIE DRIVE
ZIPPY CR
LATHAM CR

DAVE
ROAD

6000