

D-789
Little Zion M. E. Church
Vienna vicinity
1898
Private

The Little Zion M. E. Church survives as an intact example of late nineteenth century Methodist church design with a well preserved exterior and interior. Dated by a marble cornerstone to 1898, the church is located in the rural countryside near Henry's Crossroads, southeast of Vienna. No longer functioning, the congregation does maintain a cemetery located on the opposite side of Henry's Crossroads Road. Although little is known at present about this African-American church, the Methodist congregation at this location predates the age of the extant building since a "Colored Church and School" existed at this location during the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-789

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Little Zion M. E. Church

other

2. Location

street and number Henry's Crossroads Road not for publication

city, town Vienna vicinity

county Dorchester

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

name Trustees of Little Zion M. E. Church

street and number telephone 410-

city, town state MD zip code

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dorchester County Clerk of Court liber folio

city, town Cambridge tax map tax parcel tax ID number

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 Noncontributing
<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	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	_____ _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<u>1</u> _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	_____ _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	_____ _____
		<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-789

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.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Little Zion M. E. Church stands on the north side of Henry's Crossroads Road, approximately a mile north of Henry's Crossroads, Dorchester County, Maryland. Supported on a minimal brick pier foundation, the gable front frame church is sheathed with plain weatherboards, and the steeply pitched roof is covered with fiberglass shingles. Built in 1898, the church faces southwest with the roof oriented on a northeast/southwest axis. The interior has survived largely intact with late nineteenth century finishes including original pews and altar furniture. A cemetery associated with the congregation is located across the road.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Little Zion M. E. Church, owned by an historic African-American congregation, stands on the north side of Henry's Crossroads Road southwest of Vienna in Dorchester County, Maryland. The single-story frame church, erected in 1898, is supported on a brick pier foundation, and the exterior is clad with plain weatherboards. The rectangular, one-room frame church is covered by a steeply pitched roof sheathed with fiberglass shingles. Across the road from church is a cemetery with above ground burials vaults typical of the poorly drained landscape.

The southwest (main) façade is a symmetrical three-bay gable-front elevation with a center double door entrance flanked by narrow four-over-four sash windows. The plain window surrounds retain Victorian pintels. Set in the southwest corner of the southwest pier is a marble datestone inscribed, "Little Zion M. E. Church" and the date 1898. The gable end is pierced by a round arched single-pane sash window. The edge of the gable front roof is finished with an extended eave with returns.

The northwest and southeast sides are largely alike with three four-over-four sash windows defining each wall. The window trim is a plain and retains Victorian shutter hardware. Trimming the base of the gable roof on each side is a boxed cornice enhanced with a late nineteenth century crown molding.

The northeast (rear) wall is marked by a three-sided hip roof apse with small two-over-two sash windows on each side and a blind wall surface on the rear face. The upper gable end is a blind wall surface as well.

The interior has survived with intact late nineteenth century finishes including vertical beaded board wainscoting stretching around the perimeter of the sanctuary. The wall surfaces above the wainscoting is plastered. Single flue brick stacks covered with plaster are located on each side,

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Name Little Zion M. E. Church
Continuation Sheet

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but have been cut off above the ceiling since they do not extend through the roof. Metal tie rods extend through the building from side to side. An arched ceiling following the line of rafters and collar beams is covered with plaster. Victorian pews with decorative carved end panels topped by a tri-foil top accompany a turned baluster altar rail that is anchored by turned newel posts with ball finials.

8. Significance

Inventory No. D-789

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	Architect/Builder
Construction dates 1898	

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.)

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The Little Zion M. E. Church survives as an intact example of late nineteenth century Methodist church design with a well preserved exterior and interior. Dated by marble cornerstone to 1898, the church is located in the rural countryside near Henry's Crossroads, southwest of Vienna. No longer functioning, the congregation does maintain a cemetery located on the other side of Henry's Crossroads Road. Although little is known about this African-American church at present the Methodist congregation at this location predates the age of extant building since a "Colored Church and School" existed in this location during third quarter of the nineteenth century.¹

¹ John L. Graham, ed. *The 1877 Atlases and Other Early Maps of the Eastern Shore of Maryland*. Wicomico Bicentennial Committee, p. 81.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. D-789

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

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property ¼ acre lot
Acreage of historical setting 1 acre lot
Quadrangle name Mardela Springs, MD Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

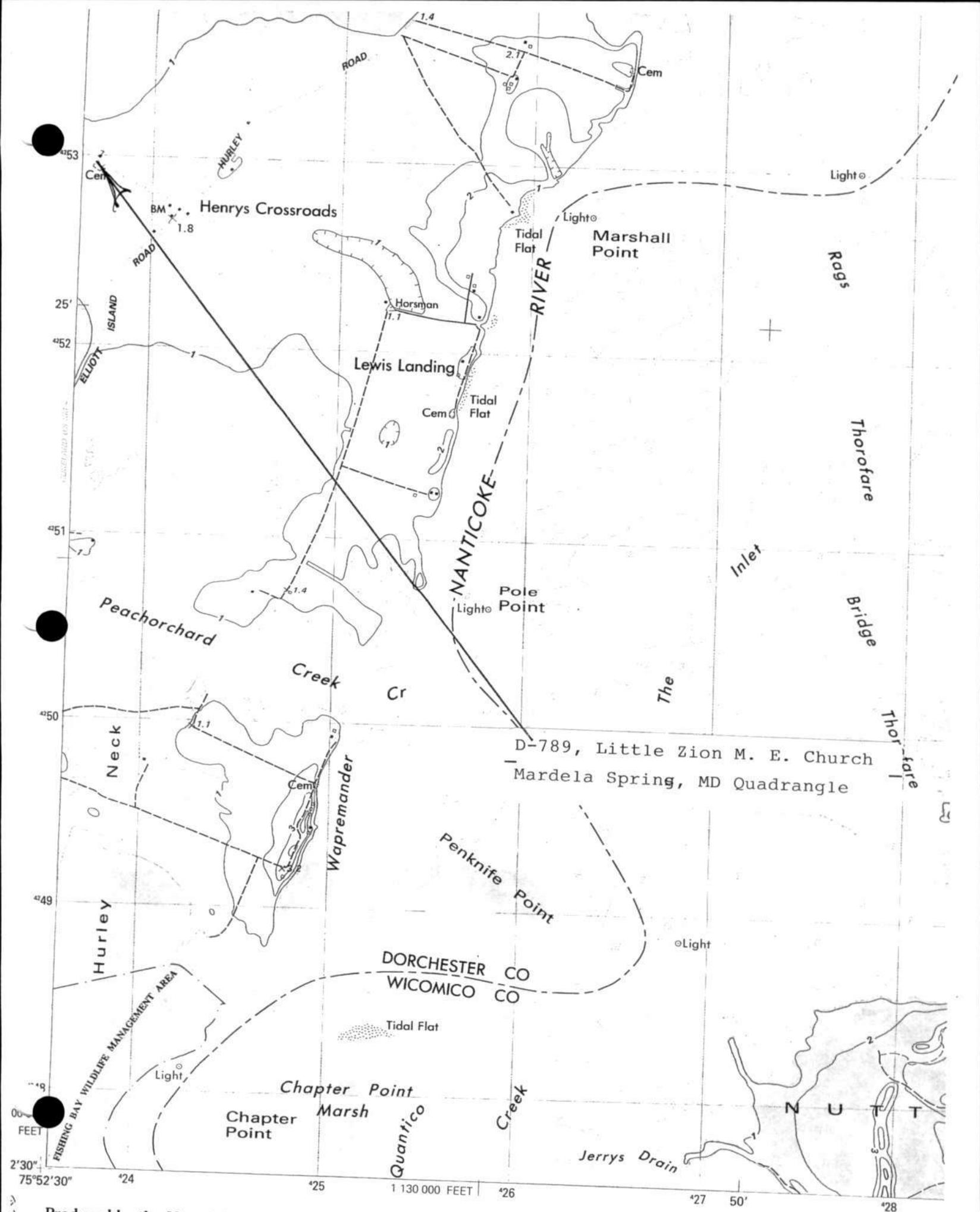
11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian		
organization	Chesapeake Country Heritage & Preservation	date	12.03.2009
street & number	P. O. Box 5	telephone	410-651-1094
city or town	Westover	state	Maryland 21871

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





D-789

LITTLE ZION M. E. CHURCH
VIENNA VIC., DORCHESTER Co. MD.
SOUTHWEST ELEVATION

1. 2010, PAUL B. TOUANT, PHOTO.
NEE / MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

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LITTLE ZION M. E. Church

VIENNA VIC., DORCHESTER Co., MD.

NORTHEAST ELEVATION

1. 2010, PAUL P. TOWNS, PHOTO.

WEB. / MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

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LITTLE ZION M. E. Church

VIENNA, DORCHESTER Co., MD.

interior

1. 2010, Paul B. Touart, Pittsv.

Wet. / MD. Historical Trust

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