

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 90000318
Methodist Episcopal Church
Property Name

Date Listed: 3/9/90
Clay FL
County State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Amy Federman
Signature of the Keeper

3/9/90
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

The Criteria Consideration, A, for religious properties, should be checked.

Discussed and concurred in by the Florida SHPO in March 1990.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JAN 23 1990

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Methodist Episcopal Church at Black Creek
other names/site number Middleburg United Methodist Church

2. Location

street & number 3925 Main Street n/a not for publication
city, town Middleburg n/a vicinity
state Florida code FL county Clay code 019 zip code 32068

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Buildings of Middleburg, Florida
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
[Signature] 1/18/90
Signature of certifying official Date
Florida State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. Amy Federman 3/9/90
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion: Religious Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion: Religious Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Frame Vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Wood: Drop Siding
roof Metal: Tin
other n/a

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Exploration & Settlement

Architecture

Period of Significance

1847-1860

Significant Dates

1847

1852

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

Barthlow, Charles F.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 2 acres

UTM References

A 17 4168510 3132164410
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

All that property contained in parcel number 6316 in Township 5 South, Range 24 East, Section 12.37 S $\frac{1}{2}$ in the community of Middleburg, Clay County, Florida.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the original property of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Black Creek donated by John Schuefler in 1847. The lot has retained the original configuration historically associated with the building.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Stephen A. Olausen/ Barbara E. Mattick, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date January 1990

street & number R.A. Gray Bldg., 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

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Middleburg United Methodist Church**SUMMARY**

The Methodist Episcopal Church at Black Creek, now known as the Middleburg United Methodist Church, is located at 3925 Main Street, Middleburg, Florida. It is a one-story, front gabled, Frame Vernacular religious building. The main block of the building is rectangular, with a one-story gable roofed addition on the rear. A three-part bell tower dominates the main facade. Notable interior features include a wide, central aisle, flanked by pews made from hand dressed lumber, and a central altar. The building is situated on a two acre wooded lot that includes the Methodist cemetery, which is counted as a site, and one non-contributing building.

PRESENT AND ORIGINAL PHYSICAL APPEARANCE:

The Methodist Episcopal Church at Black Creek was built in 1847 on a wooded lot on Main Street. The Catholics and Baptists in Middleburg each built a church in the 1840s also, but their buildings no longer exist. There were only a few scattered houses in the unincorporated village of Middleburg at that time. The original lot of the Methodist church was two acres, with approximately two hundred feet of frontage on the then unpaved Main Street. John Schuefler's general store, located across the street, was the nearest other building.

A one-story building to the east of the original church building was added to the property in the 1970s, and is the sole non-contributing resource on the property (photo 8). An historic cemetery, which surrounds the original church on its sides and to the rear, contains the remains of most of the prominent families of the community, and features many decorative historic headstones. It is counted as a contributing site on the property (photo 3).

The Middleburg United Methodist Church is a one-story, Frame Vernacular building. It has a rectangular plan and a moderately pitched, gabled roof with boxed eaves and returns. The building is oriented north and south. The main facade (north elevation) is dominated by a central, two-story bell tower (photos 1 and 2). The tower is a three-part structure, consisting of a pyramidal roof over an open belfry, supported by chamfered corner posts; a square shaft with drop siding; and

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a first story entrance porch with chamfered column supports and side balustrade. The tower shelters the main entrance, which has double, four-panel doors. It is flanked by double-hung sash windows with 9/9 lights. The main facade retains its original horizontal, flush, wood plank sheathing; while the tower, sides, and rear elevation have drop siding which was added during the late nineteenth century. The east and west elevations of the church have three evenly spaced, double-hung sash windows, with 9/9 lights (photo 3). The rear elevation features a gable roofed addition, with a central shed roofed porch, flanked by two double-hung sash windows with 6/6 lights (photo 4). The building sits on a brick pier foundation.

The interior of the church consists of a large seating area and a rear vestry room (photos 5 and 6). Although the altar has undergone several changes, the seating area for the congregation has retained many of its original features, including the hand-hewn pews (photo 7) and lighting fixtures. It is not known when the fixtures were electrified.

The church maintains its original physical characteristics to a large degree. There have been, however, several alterations over the course of its 142 year existence. The church was originally a plain rectangular, front gabled structure. The bell tower was added in 1852, and the church bell, which was cast in New York, was installed in 1860. In the late nineteenth century, the original horizontal flush wood plank sheathing was replaced with drop siding on all elevations, except the main facade. The rear, gable roofed addition was added c1927. In 1974, the original wooden front steps were replaced with the present brick stoop. During the summer of 1980, an extensive restoration of the building was undertaken. It included the repair of the window panes and pews, and the repainting of the exterior walls, steeple, interior walls, and floors. The only major alteration to the interior has been the addition of seating for the choir, completed in the early 1950s.

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Middleburg United Methodist Church**SUMMARY**

The Methodist Episcopal Church at Black Creek is significant on a local level under Criterion A in the area of Exploration and Settlement in the context of the Initial Period of Development of Middleburg, 1835-1860 (see the Middleburg multiple property group cover, Section E). The Methodist Church has additional significance under Criterion C as a relatively rare example of antebellum, vernacular, religious architecture in Florida. The building meets the criteria established in the associated property type, Wood Frame Buildings of Middleburg, 1835-1915 (see the Middleburg multiple property group cover, Section F).

Historic Significance

The Methodist Episcopal Church at Black Creek was built in 1847 during Middleburg's first significant period of expansion. It is one of only two surviving antebellum buildings in the community, and the only church from that period which remains.

The Methodists of Middleburg had been holding regular services since the early 1820s without a permanent meeting place. On February 1, 1847, John Scheufler, a local general store owner, bought a lot from Benjamin Frisbee on Main Street, opposite his store and the Catholic Church. Expressing his desire to have "the Gospel preached among men," he subsequently donated the lot to the church trustees, Ozias Budington, George Branning, Elijah Blicht, Andrew J. Phillips, and John Summerlin, in a deed of gift dated May 13, 1847.

The church was probably built sometime between May 1847 and October 1848. The men most responsible for its completion were George Branning and Ozias Budington. Together, they organized the construction effort and supplied the necessary materials. Most of the labor for the construction was provided by George Branning's slaves. The overseer for the job was Charles F. Barthlow. The framework and exterior of the building were constructed of heart pine and fastened with hand wrought nails. The church bell, cast in New York in 1852, and installed in the church's bell tower in 1860, was donated by George Branning.

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The construction of the church, together with the development of other institutions associated with town life, signalled the beginning of Middleburg's evolution from a sparsely populated frontier settlement to an established community. Its completion was the result of efforts by several of the community's most influential pioneers.

Architectural Significance:

The first churches in the American colonies were vernacular copies of European designs. The perpetuation of tradition was a primary function of these early religious structures. Similar massing and organization of interior spaces were essential to early examples because they were illustrative of the history of the faith. Established architectural forms, therefore, were preferred for their familiarity. These early American churches were based on Medieval and Gothic vernacular designs. They were most commonly rectangular in plan with the interior space organized to focus on the pulpit. The dominating exterior feature was the steeple, which was either placed on the front gable end or in the center of the main roof.

As greater wealth accumulated in American cities during the eighteenth century, churches began to take on more elaborate architectural forms. Because of the strong ties with England in the eastern states, adaptations of designs by Christopher Wren and James Gibbs were the most popular in growing urban centers. Beginning about 1800, a revived interest in Gothic and Classical forms in the United States wrought a change in church design. The use of Classical designs expressed contemporary values of democracy and secularism, and represented a break in reliance on traditional religious architectural forms. The Gothic style, however, with its European Christian heritage, satisfied a desire for ritual and tradition.

Throughout the nineteenth century, vernacular religious buildings were constructed utilizing elements of the Classical and Gothic styles. Most followed the pattern established during the colonial period by adapting high-style designs to fit the scale of the religious community's resources. Vernacular churches generally exhibit three major elements, the

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entrance, the congregational space, and one or several vertical elements. Historically, variation in vernacular church design has been governed by the placement of these elements in relation to one another.

There are six basic identifiable variations in vernacular church architecture repeated throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They are: the center-steeple, side-steeple, gable-end, steepled-ell, twin towers, and temple-front. The first five examples listed are most heavily influenced by Gothic traditions, while the last draws its precedents from Classical traditions. In center-steeple examples, the main elevation consists of a gable end with a dominating center steeple extending from the facade. The emphasis is on verticality, and is heavily influenced by high style Gothic designs.

The Methodist Episcopal Church at Black Creek is an excellent example of an antebellum, center-steeped, frame vernacular church. It is significant as a type of vernacular architecture as it was applied to religious buildings in rural areas during the pre-Civil War years. It retains its original architectural integrity to a large degree.

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INVENTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Middleburg United Methodist Church, 3925 Main Street
2. Middleburg, Clay County, Florida
3. Candy Devore
4. July 1989
5. Historic Property Associates
6. View of N (main) facade, facing S
7. 1 of 8

Items 1-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.

6. View of N facade and W elevation, facing SE
7. 2 of 8

6. View of E elevation and part of the cemetery, facing NW
7. 3 of 8

6. View of S (rear) elevation, facing N
7. 4 of 8

6. General view of interior, facing N
7. 5 of 8

6. General view of interior, facing S
7. 6 of 8

6. Interior, detail of hand-hewn pews
7. 7 of 8

6. Non-contributing main church building
7. 8 of 8