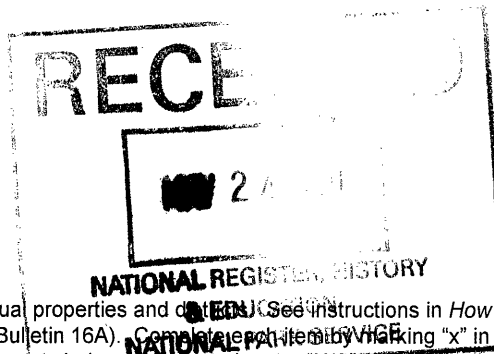


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



730

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Henderson Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church  
other names/site number Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church (Preferred); Henderson Memorial Chapel

2. Location

street & number Church Street  not for publication N/A  
city or town Rutledge  vicinity N/A  
state Tennessee code TN county Grainger code 057 zip code 37861

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  
 nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert L. Weyer 5/19/00  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall 6/22/00  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church  
Name of Property

Grainger County, Tennessee  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

Historic Rural African-American Churches in TN

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGIOUS FACILITY: church

RELIGIOUS FACILITY: church

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style

foundation CONCRETE

walls weatherboard

CONCRETE

roof METAL

other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** N/A

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 year of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: African-American  
RELIGION

**Period of Significance**

1890-1948

**Significant Dates**

1890

**Significant Person**

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

UNKNOWN

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):** N/A

- 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State Agency
  - Federal Agency
  - Local Government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository:  
MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church  
Name of Property

Grainger County, Tennessee  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Approximately one acre

**UTM References**

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

Dutch Valley Quad 154-SE

1 17 273980 4017910  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Susan A. Besser, Project Coordinator, Rural Historic African-American Churches Project  
organization Center for Historic Presentation date September 15, 1998  
street & number 1421 E. Main Street telephone 615-898-2947  
city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37131

**Additional Documentation**

submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Kenny Dailey, contact person Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church  
street & number Church Street or General Delivery telephone 423-828-4509  
city or town Rutledge state TN zip code 37861

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Henderson Chapel, AME Zion Church  
Grainger County, TN

## 7. DESCRIPTION

Located on Church Street in Rutledge, Grainger County, Tennessee, is the Henderson Chapel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church. Built circa 1890, the church is a one-story weatherboard building with a concrete block foundation. It has steep front gable standing seam roof and bell tower with pyramid roof. There are no outbuildings on the small lot with the church. Its simple front gable form is common among rural African-American churches built between 1870 and 1950.

The south facade has a central entrance with a red door and a steep gable roof with wide sawn trim along the eaves. Four concrete steps, circa 1940, lead to the entrance. The steps and concrete block foundation are also painted red. The square bell tower has diagonal patterned wood siding on three sides and a pyramidal roof of standing seam metal. Louvered vents are on each side of the bell tower.

The west elevation contains two one-over-one double-hung windows with simple wood lintels. A concrete block addition with standing seam metal roof, circa 1940, has a side entrance and one two-over-two double-hung window. An air conditioning unit was placed in the window circa 1980.

The north elevation shows the gable end of the concrete block addition, circa 1940. The concrete block wall is solid and unpainted. It is roofed by a frame gable roof, covered in metal.

The east elevation contains two symmetrically placed one-over-one double-hung windows with simple wood lintels. An air conditioning unit has been placed in the northwest window. By examining the exterior, there is an unpainted portion midway along the original window. This would indicate that a flue was located there providing ventilation for a coal burning stove. The concrete block addition of this elevation is painted white. It has a side entrance and two-over-two double-hung window.

The interior retains its original shape, plan, and wood floors. Added circa 1990, however, are new faux pine paneling, new wood pews, a drywall ceiling and new wood pulpit and communion table. The pulpit and communion table are located at the west end of the interior. One church bench reportedly dates to the 1801 courthouse of Grainger County.

The church's building materials, i.e., the framing, comes from the timber originally used in the construction of the 1801 courthouse. The courthouse was dismantled in 1890 and the usable timber was incorporated into the new church building.

Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church meets the integrity registration requirements set forth in the

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# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number   7   Page   2  

Henderson Chapel, AME Zion Church  
Grainger County, TN

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Historic Rural African-American Churches in Tennessee, 1850-1970 MPN Cover Sheet. It has a high degree of integrity in its location, setting, feeling, and association. The church building remains on a small urban lot situated between the primary white churches of the town (to its southwest) and the town square (to the northeast). The church retains the vast majority of its historic building materials, design, and workmanship on its exterior while its interior retains its historic design, framing, and some original building materials. The concrete block addition is more than 50 years old and represents a common way for congregations to enlarge their space and their services to their congregations in the Jim Crow Era of 1890 to 1945. The addition does not overwhelm the original design, materials, or workmanship of the church.

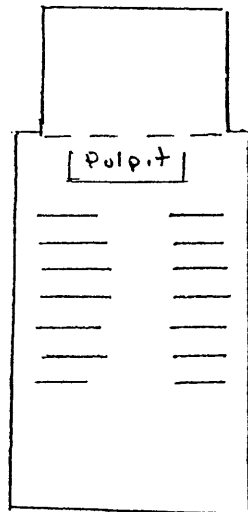
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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Henderson Chapel, AME Zion Church  
Grainger County, TN

Site Plan  
NTS. 1999



Concrete block and frame  
gable addition, c. 1940

Church, 1890

Church St.



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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Henderson Chapel, AME Zion Church  
Grainger County, TN

## 8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church in Rutledge, the seat of Grainger County, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its local significance in African-American ethnic identity and religion. It is the oldest African-American congregation in Grainger and the oldest extant African-American church building in the county. Built in 1890 and as one of the handful of extant nineteenth century African-American church buildings in the state, Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church meets the registration requirements for Historic Rural African-American Churches in Tennessee, 1850-1890.

The organized AME Zion activity in Grainger County dates to 1833, the date when the local congregation and local historians agree that the predecessor to Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church was established. Only two other White Methodist churches existed in Grainger County at this time: Central United Methodist established in 1824 and Shiloh Methodist Church established in 1827. The AME Zion congregation in Grainger County, therefore, is one of the oldest African-American Methodist congregations in Tennessee. This early date also makes the congregation one of the oldest in the South, especially in the rural South. Members wishing to establish an AME Zion church first met in a New York City convention in 1821 and the Reverend James Varick became church superintendent in 1822. But the Zionists did not formally split from the AME church until 1824. The first General Convention did not take place until 1828. This rural East Tennessee congregation, Henderson Chapel AME Church was established less than ten years after these pivotal events in New York.

The history of the Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church building is grounded in nineteenth century events. The initial meeting place of the AME Zion congregation is unknown. Congregation tradition is that the members used private homes for worship services in the early years. The first documented reference to the congregation appears in Goodspeed's History of Tennessee (1887), where it is notes the first courthouse of Grainger County was still extant, but was now "used by the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church as a house of worship." (854) This was a log and frame building, constructed in 1801. The local Presbyterian church acquired the building for its worship services in 1846, at which time a new courthouse was built in Rutledge. The Presbyterians used the 1801 building for their services for an unknown period of time. Sometime after the Civil War, the building passed to Henderson Chapel AME Zion congregation.

In the late 1890s, the heirs of Dr. Joseph Hoffmeister, a mid-nineteenth century physician in Rutledge and an elder of the local Presbyterian church, donated land on Church Street for the location of a new AME Zion church building. At that time, the 1801 courthouse building was dismantled and the usable lumber incorporated into the present church building. The first name



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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Henderson Chapel, AME Zion Church  
Grainger County, TN

of the church was Henderson Memorial AME Zion Church. It is believed that the name Henderson is in honor of Mary E. Henderson, the daughter of Dr. Joseph Hoffmeister and his second wife Nancy Huddleston Hoffmeister.

The precise date of the dedication of the new church is unknown. According to Harry Moore's *A History of the Churches in Grainger County, TN*, "on the day of dedication a man's hat was placed in the front of the inside isle (sic) to receive the contributions which were brought and placed therein for aid in defraying expenses incurred in building." (135) The best informed conclusion, however, is that the new Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church building dates to 1890; the deed transferring the property from the Hoffmeister heirs to church trustees Alfred Early, Alfred Tate, John Daily, and Eli Daily was filed in January 1891.

The location of the new building was on Church Street, away from the central core of the town where the congregation had previously met. By the early twentieth century, two large White churches, for the Methodists and Presbyterians, were built southwest of Henderson Chapel. Over time, this small African-American church remained in its isolated surroundings, with the town to the northeast and the primary White churches and cemeteries to the southwest. Even today, the section of Church Street that serves Henderson Chapel is narrow, keeping to its late nineteenth century width. The setting of the Henderson Chapel, therefore, has changed little in over one hundred years.

Henderson Chapel served as a local African-American school from its construction to an unknown date in the twentieth century. The Rosenwald school building program constructed no schools in Grainger County. According to congregation members, the use of the building as a school at least extends to circa 1920. The church became the center of African-American cultural activity throughout the Jim Crow Era as the site of lectures, community picnics, and other social activity. The congregation built a concrete block addition to the rear of the church to better provide space for its social and Sunday school activities circa 1940. In 1950, the Zion Hill Baptist Church was established, thus creating a second African-American church in the Rutledge area.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the African-American population in Grainger County dwindled. Today, only 110 African-American residents remain in the county, according to a 1994 census estimate. Yet, the Henderson Chapel AME Zion church continues to hold regular services; indeed, in 1990 the congregation carried out a modest modernization of the church's interior to keep the building attractive and comfortable for its members. Although simple and unadorned in appearance, Henderson Chapel is actually a rare and imposing artifact of nineteenth century traditions of African-American religion in Appalachia East Tennessee.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church  
Grainger County, Tennessee

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## 9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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*History of Tennessee*. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1887.

Kouwehoven, John. *The Beer Can by the Highway*. New York: Doubleday, 1961.

Moore, Harry. *A History of the Churches in Grainger County, TN*. Grainger County Historical Society, 1986.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 7

Henderson Chapel, AME Zion Church  
Grainger County, TN

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## 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the Henderson Chapel, AME Zion Church is bounded on the south by Church Street beginning at a point 340 feet east from the corner of Church Street and Beet Street, proceeding 60 feet west, then proceeding 60 feet north, then proceeding 60 feet east, then proceeding 60 feet south. The property is recorded in Deed Book 24, page 399.

### Boundary justification

The nomination property contains all the extant historical property associated with Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church.

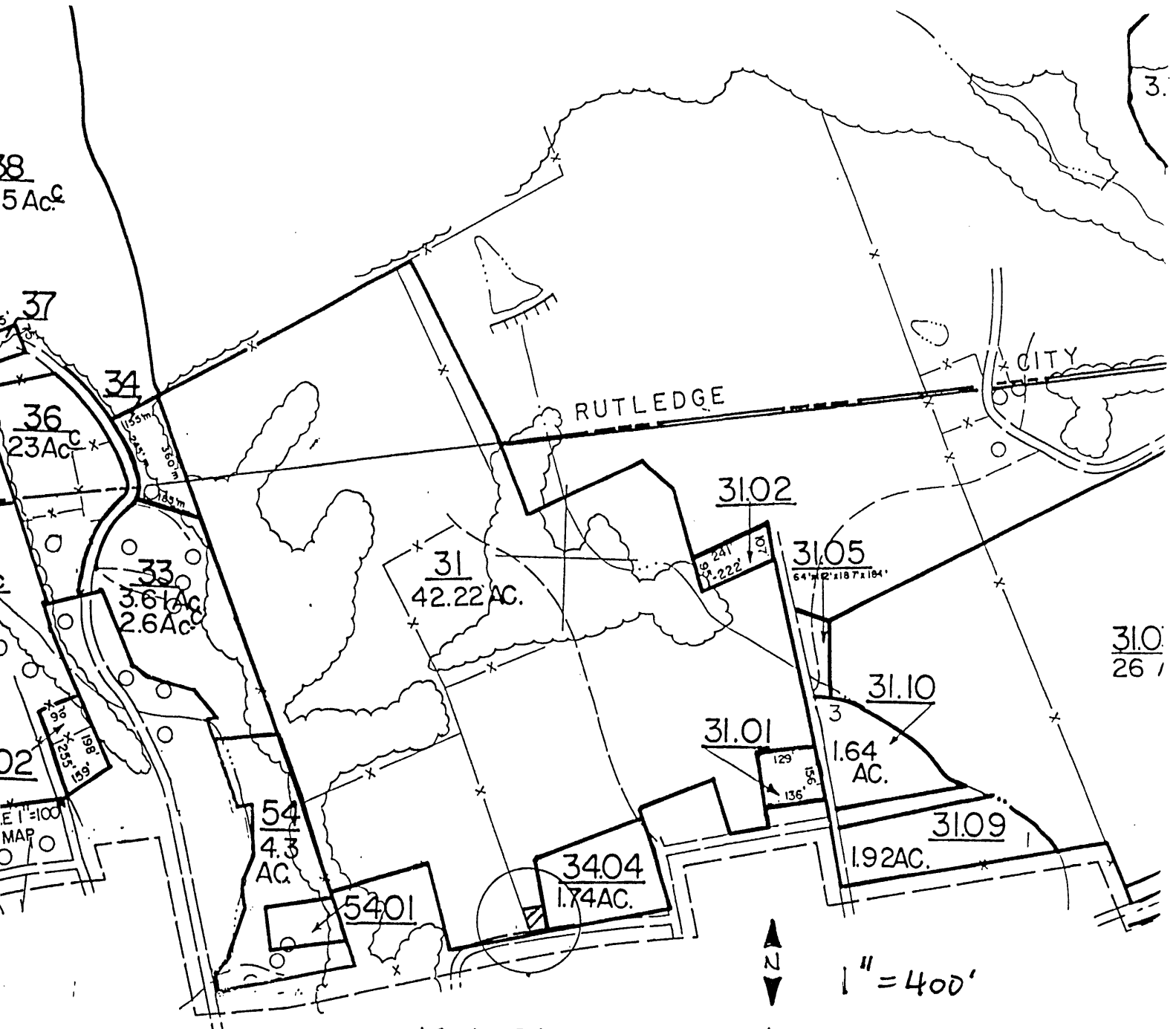
The tax map for this property has the scale of 1" = 400'. The Tennessee Board of Equalization prepares this scale map for rural areas. In the past, the Tennessee Historical Commission has used this scale map for nominations and has found that the 1" = 400' adequately meets our office needs. The Tennessee Historical Commission does not have the facilities to prepare maps to the scale preferred by the National Park Service.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Henderson Chapel, AME Zion Church  
Grainger County, TN



HENDERSON CHAPEL A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

RUTLEDGE

1190'

United States Department of the Interior  
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Henderson Chapel, AME Zion Church  
Grainger County, TN

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## PHOTOGRAPHS

Henderson Chapel AME Zion Church  
Church Street  
Rutledge, Grainger County, TN

By:    Kimberly Murphy  
      East Tennessee Development District

Date: August 17, 1998

Neg.: Tennessee Historical Commission  
      2941 Lebanon Road  
      Nashville, TN 37243

Church, south facade, facing north  
1 of 6

Church, south and west elevation, facing northeast  
2 of 6

Church, south and east elevation, facing northwest  
3 of 6

Church, west elevation with rear addition, facing southeast  
4 of 6

Church, interior from window in west elevation, facing east  
5 of 6

Church, interior, from window in east elevation, facing west  
6 of 6