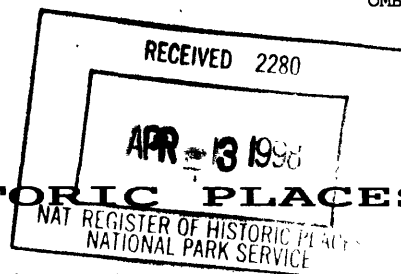


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



424

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 any 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 St. Paul Camp Ground  
other names/site number St. Paul A.M.E. Camp Ground

2. Location

street & number 940 St. Paul Rd. not for publication   
city or town Harleyville vicinity   
state South Carolina code SC county Dorchester code 35 zip code 29448

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds 3/25/98  
Signature of certifying official Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, S.C. Department of Archives & History, Columbia, S.C.  
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 commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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 4-30-98

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

### 5. Classification

<b>Ownership of Property</b> (Check as many boxes as apply)	<b>Category of Property</b> (Check only one box)	<b>Number of Resources within Property</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<b>Contributing</b>	<b>Noncontributing</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>43</u>	<u>17</u>	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>43</u>	<u>17</u>	objects
				Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

### 6. Function or Use

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

Cat: <u>RELIGION</u>	Sub: <u>Religious facility</u>
<u>RELIGION</u>	<u>Church-related residence</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Camp</u>

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

Cat: <u>RELIGION</u>	Sub: <u>Religious facility</u>
<u>RELIGION</u>	<u>Church-related residence</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Camp</u>

### 7. Description

<b>Architectural Classification</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Materials</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>No Style</u>	foundation <u>Brick</u>
	roof <u>Metal</u>
	walls <u>Wood: weatherboard: board-and-batten</u>
	other <u>      </u>

**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 prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Religion
- Social History
- Architecture
- Ethnic Heritage-Black
- 
- 
- 

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1881-1947

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**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)**

- 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: South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Approximately 9 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
1	17	548400	3673920	3	17	548080	3673860
2	17	548300	3673780	4	17	548160	3674040
		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.)

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Sarah Fick  
organization Preservation Consultants, Inc. date June 1997  
street & number P.O. Box 1112 telephone (803) 723-1746  
city or town Charleston state S.C. zip 29402

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### Additional Documentation

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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)

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### Property Owner

---

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

name The St. Paul Camp Ground Association  
street & number c/o L.H. Brown, P.O. Box 55 telephone (803) 462-7310  
city or town Harleyville state S.C. zip code 29448

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

St. Paul Camp Ground  
name of property  
Dorchester County, South Carolina  
county and state

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=====  
**Narrative description**

St. Paul Camp Ground is an excellent example of a Methodist camp meeting ground. It contains the buildings common to such properties in South Carolina: a tabernacle, tents, stores, and privies. The site and buildings possess integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The buildings and grounds are used for one week each year (at St. Paul, the week ending the third Sunday in October). Then papers, household goods, and other belongings are removed, the power and water are shut off, buildings locked and grounds deserted.

At the north side of St. Paul Road, the camp meeting ground is a flattened circle, tilted northwest to southeast, enclosed by a paved ring road. The tabernacle, a little above the center of the circle, is surrounded by 69 numbered sites. The access drive from St. Paul Road, between #69 and #2, is slightly west of center.

The tabernacle is a one-story building, 46' X 65', clad in rough-sawn weatherboard, with a gable-on-hip roof of V-crimped metal. The building is oriented with its short sides northwest and southeast. There are no windows; two entryways, without doors, are evenly spaced at each side. The interior of the tabernacle has an earthen floor that is covered with straw during Camp Meeting Week, open rafters, and unplastered walls. The preaching stand is on a raised wooden platform at the southeast short side, flanked by side pews. Two aisles split the rows of wooden pews facing the pulpit. The tabernacle is remembered as having originally been an open building. The walls were clad in weatherboard sometime during the first decades of the twentieth century.

There are 54 tents, two stores, and a storage house on the numbered sites at St. Paul Camp Ground. Twelve sites are vacant. Permanent buildings have never been erected on eight of them; a fire several years ago destroyed four tents (#35-38) at the northeast side of the campground. The tents face into the circle. All have front-gable roofs of V-crimped metal, a single entry, and earthen floors that are spread with straw during Camp Meeting Week. Most (forty-one) have a loft or full half-story at the attic level; only thirteen are one-story in height. Some of the one-story tents have a sleeping platform accessed by a ladder. The best examples of the tents have wide rough-sawn board siding, a single window at the front and small opening at the gable end, windowless side walls, and a rear gable or shed enclosure with metal or masonry flue for the outdoor stove. There is a sloping shed roof across the front, to shelter an open porch. Plank benches may be built across the front wall or between the porch supports.

Most of the tents have been rebuilt over time, but retain the style of the earlier structures. There is some flexibility for taste, and one tent has board-and-batten siding. A few have insect screening at the front porch, and many have modern construction materials at the rear cooking area. Only fifteen feature incompatible

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modern exterior materials, mostly concrete block construction or plyboard or particle-board siding. A few of these have a poured concrete slab foundation.

Replacement material in the tents is to be expected of buildings used only once a year, and is typical of conditions at other campgrounds. At Cypress, where a dozen or more tents have been added since 1978, and Indian Field, where a number of buildings have been replaced after storms or fires, construction materials closely match the historic conditions. On the other hand, much of the rebuilding at Shady Grove and Mt. Carmel uses modern materials. The dedication of the tent holders of St. Paul Camp Ground to its historic appearance can be seen in the wide rough-sawn boards used in the repairs to Tents #48 through 52.

The two stores are an integral part of the campground. Unlike those at Indian Field and Cypress, the one-story frame buildings occupy spots in the circle (#2 and #47). With its front-gable roof and shed porch, #2 resembles a tent, while #47 has a rear-sloping shed roof with a double-width window opening with awning-hung wood shutter at the front. The entry openings are at one side and the rear of the building. The storehouse (#11) is a one-story gable-roofed building similar to a tent.

The privies, in accordance with campground rules, are behind the tents, outside the paved ring road.<sup>1</sup> Privies are ephemeral structures, frequently replaced or moved, but most are small frame structures with a rear-sloping metal shed roof, weatherboard siding, and an entry in the side facing toward the tents. Like the tents, they are numbered, but not every tent has a privy.

The inside lawn of St. Paul Camp Ground is level and grassy, dotted with tall pine trees. Drinking and washing water was formerly provided by open wells, and then by pitcher pumps scattered about the campground. These were replaced by an electric pump with CMU housing and spigots at the rear of the tents.

Electric wires strung to the tabernacle and tents have replaced the original practice of firestands, elevated platforms scattered about the campground. Non-contributing structures inside the campground are a small plywood storage building at the southeast side of the tabernacle and the CMU pump house.

<sup>1</sup> "Rules and Regulations Governing Use of the Campground" in Lucius H. Brown, "St. Paul Camp Ground 1993" (Harleyville: Board of Trustees, St. Paul Camp Ground, 1993).



DEC - 1 1997

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S. C. DEPARTMENT OF  
ARCHIVES & HISTORY

St. Paul Camp Ground  
name of property  
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=====  
**Statement of significance**

St. Paul Camp Ground is an excellent example of a unique property type, the Methodist camp meeting ground. It is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A, for its significance in the areas of Social History, Religion, and Ethnic Heritage: Black. It is also eligible for the National Register under Criterion C, for its significance in Architecture.

Although St. Paul Camp Ground is a religious property (Criteria Consideration A), its primary significance lies in its historical importance and architectural distinction.

Several related properties in South Carolina have already been listed in the National Register of Historic Places:

Indian Field Methodist Campground	Dorchester County	listed 3 March 1973.
Cypress Methodist Campground	Dorchester County	listed 26 April 1978.
Mount Carmel AME Zion Campground	Lancaster County	listed 10 May 1979.
Cattle Creek Campground	Orangeburg County	listed 19 May 1983.
Camp Welfare	Fairfield County	listed 6 December 1984.

**Additional information**

St. Paul Camp Ground is one of four similar properties in Dorchester County, all historically associated with branches of the Methodist Church. The earlier two, Indian Field and Cypress, are associated with white churches. The two established after the Civil War, Shady Grove and St. Paul, were organized by African-Americans.

The camp meeting tradition began in the late 18th century, and during the early 19th century became an important part of South Carolina's social and religious culture. The physical arrangement of a campground has not changed significantly since that time. In 1885 the Charleston News and Courier published a description of an AME camp meeting at Lincolnville. There were canvas tents and wood "shanties" where worshippers stayed. The central pavilion (tabernacle) was an open shed, 50' X 70', with seating capacity for 700 people. All the buildings had earthen floors covered with pinestraw. The writer also described booths or tents, some of canvas, some of pine bushes, that sold refreshments.<sup>2</sup>

Camp meetings are temporary, attended by members of a number of churches rather than being part of a diocesan order. Therefore, the histories of religious denominations do not detail the active dates, charge ministers, or mergers of campgrounds. Camp meeting is mentioned throughout denominational histories, but references are to a general and well-known custom rather than to the activities at a particular

<sup>2</sup> News and Courier, 4/28/1885.

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campground.<sup>3</sup> For that reason, and because very few small churches have reliable archives, precise documentation about St. Paul Camp Ground is not available. Neither is it certain whether ownership of the land has been a factor in the survival of the camp meetings that remain active, although this seems likely.

As early as 1869, freedmen in the area southwest of Harleyville began holding religious meetings under a bush arbor (or "brush arbor") at the "Old Prayer Ground," near the site of today's St. Paul AME Church. Sometime before 1873, the group acquired two acres of land for construction of a church that eventually became St. Paul. Their meetings were periodically visited by Richard H. Cain, Presiding Elder of the Charleston District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and a leader in its expansion.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout the 1870s and 1880s Methodist camp meetings, held separately by whites and blacks, were extremely popular. When the trustees of St. Paul AME Church purchased land for a camp ground, they were pursuing a mainstream activity. In 1880, under their pastor the Rev. Joseph White, trustees Caesar Dunning, W. A. Heyward, Isaac Lincoln, and William Hutson bought from Peter D. Weathers 113 acres on which to build a campground. Most of this land still belongs to the church, which stands at its southwest side on Thomas Kate Road. The property at the south side of St. Paul Road is farmed, and a few parcels have been deeded to members of the community for house sites.

St. Paul Camp Ground draws from a large area besides its home church. Several affiliated churches in Harleyville, St. George, Ridgeville and Dorchester share preachers and choirs, and their members tent at St. Paul Camp Ground.<sup>5</sup>

The use of the campground for its original purpose, and retention of its historic character, are protected by its Board of Trustees. "The persons who build a camp or tent on the premises shall not have a deed or title to the camp, and camps may be transferred only with the consent of the trustees and the tent owner."<sup>6</sup> Under the guidance of its trustees, the general appearance of St. Paul Camp Ground and its function as a place of worship and community reunion have continued for a century.

<sup>3</sup> Albert D. Betts, History of South Carolina Methodism (Columbia: The Advocate Press, 1952). Daniel A. Payne, History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (1892; rep. NY: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1968). Charles S. Smith, A History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Being a Volume Supplemental to a History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church by Daniel Alexander Payne... (1922; rep. NY: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1968).

<sup>4</sup> Lucius H. Brown, "The History of St. Paul AME Church and Their Annual Camp Meeting" (Harleyville: Board of Trustees, St. Paul Camp Ground, 1993). Bernard E. Powers, Jr., Black Charlestonians. A Social History 1822-1885 (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1994), pp. 90-92, 200-204.

<sup>5</sup> Interview, Lucius H. Brown, Harleyville SC.

<sup>6</sup> "Rules and Regulations Governing Use of the Campground."



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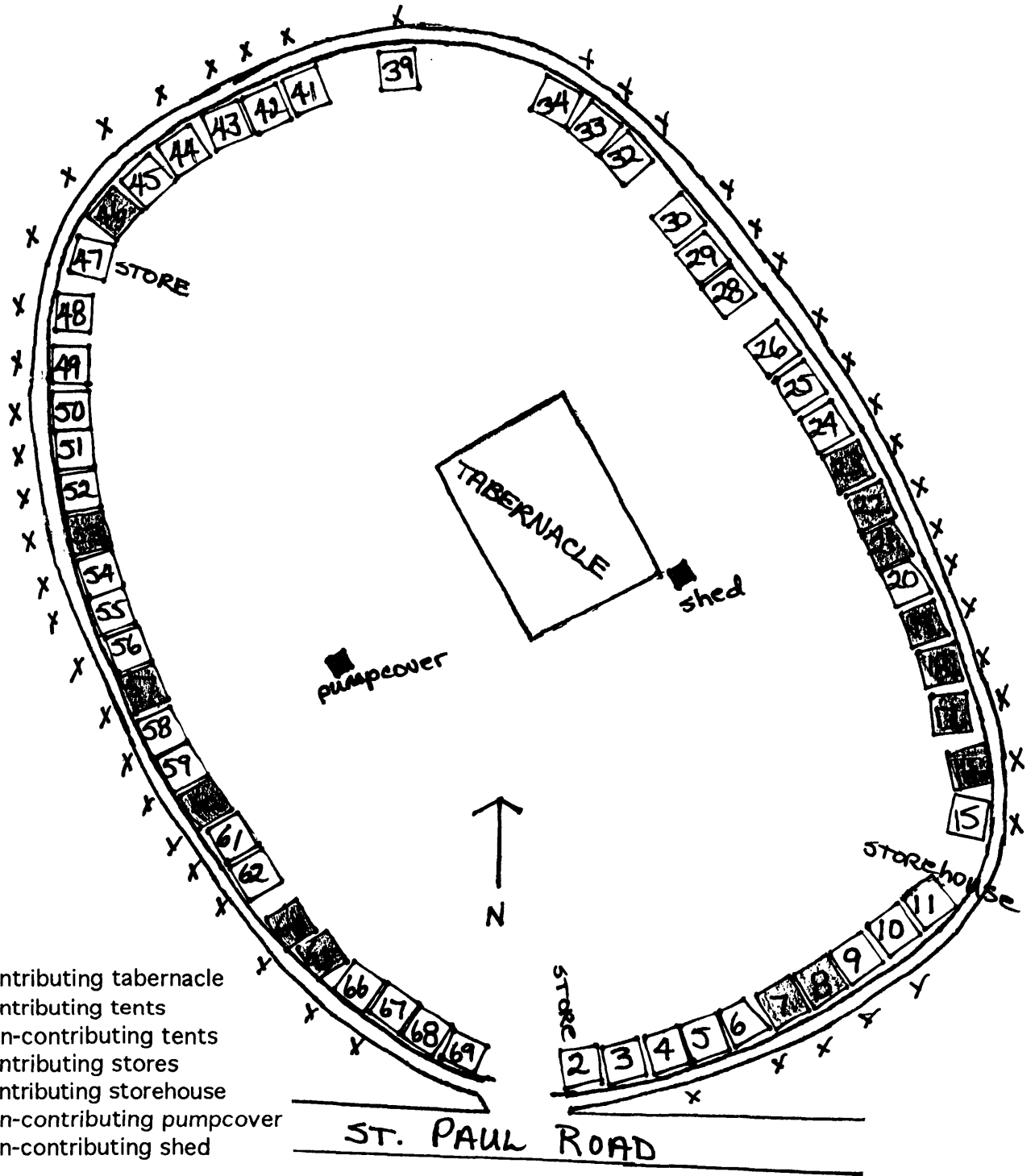
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**Bibliography**

- Betts, Albert D. History of South Carolina Methodism. Columbia: The Advocate Press, 1952.
- Brown, Lucius H. "The History of St. Paul AME Church and Their Annual Camp Meeting." Harleyville: Board of Trustees, St. Paul Camp Ground, 1993.
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- Charleston News and Courier.
- Fick, Sarah, and Steven Davis. Dorchester County Historic Resources Survey, Final Survey Report. Charleston and Summerville: Preservation Consultants, Inc., and Dorchester County Planning Department, 1997.
- Payne, Daniel A. History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. 1892; rep. NY: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1968.
- Powers, Bernard E., Jr. Black Charlestonians. A Social History 1822-1885. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1994.
- Smith, Charles S. A History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Being a Volume Supplemental to a History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church by Daniel Alexander Payne... 1922; rep. NY: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1968.



- 1 contributing tabernacle
- 39 contributing tents
- 15 non-contributing tents
- 2 contributing stores
- 1 contributing storehouse
- 1 non-contributing pumpcover
- 1 non-contributing shed

x = PRIVY  
 ■ = NON-CONTRIBUTING

St. Paul Camp Ground  
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**Verbal boundary description**

The boundary of St. Paul Camp Ground extends along the north side of St. Paul Road at the south side of the property, and circles the nominated area 70' outside the paved ring road surrounding the campground.

**Boundary justification**

The campground property has not been subdivided from the rest of the larger parcel owned by St. Paul AME Church. Therefore the boundary was drawn to include the entire area historically set aside for the camp meeting. It includes the privies and a buffer for planned expansion of the campground outside the ring road.

**Photographs**

Location of Original Negatives: State Historic Preservation Office  
South Carolina Department of Archives and History

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Name of Photographer: Sarah Fick  
Preservation Consultants, Inc.  
Date of Photographs: April 16, 1997

**Photo # View**

- 1 Tabernacle, camera facing southeast.
- 2 Tabernacle interior, camera facing northwest.
- 3 Tents #32, 33, and 34, camera facing east.
- 4 Tent #10, camera facing south.
- 5 Tent #6, camera facing south.
- 6 Tents #56, 55, 54, 53, 52, and 51, camera facing north.
- 7 View inside porches from Tent #54, camera facing north.
- 8 Rear view, from Tent #30 to Tent #23, camera facing south.
- 9 Tents #22 and 21 (typical non-contributing tents with modern material), camera facing southeast.