

# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church and Cemetery

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

## 2. Location

Street & number: 291 Chapel Hill Road

City or town: Natchez State: Mississippi 39120 County: Jefferson

Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: X (Church Hill Community)

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D

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Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Kate Stout</u>	Date <u>11-14-18</u>
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<hr/>	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
<hr/>	
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

*Joe Bulky*  
Signature of the Keeper

1.24.2019

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
<u>1</u>	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

Religion/Religious Facility

Funerary/Cemetery

**Current Functions**

Religion/Religious Facility

Funerary/Cemetery

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals: Gothic Revival

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick/Wood

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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#### Summary Paragraph

Jefferson Chapel African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church and Cemetery is a rural African American church property located north of Natchez in the former plantation community of Church Hill in Jefferson County, Mississippi. It is sited on a rise above a sunken dirt road off of Highway 553, which is the main road through the Church Hill Rural Historic District. The earliest grave marker in the cemetery dates back to 1898. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in September 2000, the Church Hill Rural Historic District is the most significant and intact plantation district in the state, but by necessity its boundary was drawn tightly around the intact antebellum plantation properties, while the actual Church Hill community is much larger and includes an important post-bellum story of former enslaved people who stayed in the area and built their own institutions such as Jefferson Chapel.

The original Jefferson Chapel church was established in 1880, and the first structure was replaced by the wood-frame structure erected between 1908 and 1912. The one-story early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Gothic Revival style wood frame building was later bricked in the mid 1970s when church leaders recognized the need to preserve this treasure for future generations. The building features pointed-arched windows, tracery, and colored stained glass. The building interior has a vaulted ceiling, bead board walls, wainscoting and original wood flooring, and doors, trim and pews have been well preserved. The original bell in the steeple rang when church leaders alerted the community during funerals. The cemetery is located on the westerly side of the church on the 2.5 acres property. This sacred property has historic integrity as depicted by the grave markers that have been carefully preserved by church family members for generations.

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## Narrative Description

Occupying a 2.5-acre property, the Jefferson Chapel African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church and Cemetery sits atop a hill overlooking a rural dirt road in a community that was predominantly people of African descent in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The church is located in southwest Jefferson County, near the SR 553 and rural Chapel Hill Road, less than 20 miles from the City of Natchez and approximately seven miles from the Natchez Trace Parkway. Around 1800, American settlers inhabited the area for cotton production in the rich silt loam soil. The Church Hill community got its name from Christ Church leaders. Christ Church consisted of an all-white Episcopal congregation located on a hill at the intersection of Church Hill Road and Highway SR 553 and across the road from the old Wagner Country Store. The topography is rolling, with mature trees including water oaks and pines dotting the landscape. An abandoned sunken road roughly delineates the southwestern property line behind the cemetery, and a chain-link fence running along Chapel Hill Road, which forms the eastern boundary.

Climbing a dirt drive up from Chapel Hill Road, the visitor sees first the front-gabled, tan-textured-brick church with a prominent Gothic-arched entrance and tall wood-framed square tower and pyramidal steeple. The façade is unadorned except for a lighter-colored brick cross inset into the brickwork above the entrance, cornerstones on the left and right corners, and a triangular attic vent in the gable end. The focus is on the entrance, which is centered on the eastern (E) façade and reached by a single flight of concrete steps with metal-pipe railing. The entrance consists of a double-leaf, wood door, each leaf with two arched panels above two rectangular panels. A Gothic-arched transom with tracery is outlined with rowlock bricks and is filled with colored glass panes. Above the entrance, centered on the gable ridge is a square bell tower, originally clapboard but now covered with vinyl siding, topped by a pyramidal raised-seam metal roof and a cross.

The church is rectangular in plan, with the side elevations having four single Gothic-arched windows with Y-tracery, colored-glass panes, and rowlock sills. The front-gabled roof is clad in raised-seam metal, and the eaves are boxed and covered in vinyl. Originally, the chancel was evident on the rear (W) elevation with a semi-octagonal apsidal projection, but an early single-bay addition enclosed that feature when the church was remodeled during the 1975 renovation that the previous exterior rear doors—each a 4-panel wood door with 2-light transom—now exit into a wood-paneled entrance lobby and restroom spaces. A later rear addition built in 2004 continued the plane of the side elevations another three bays to encompass a fellowship hall with a kitchen, which can be accessed from the sanctuary or from the parking lot on the side of the church. A concrete walk formerly led from the side entrance of the church to the one-story parsonage on the south side of the building, but the parsonage was demolished in 2016.

Inside, the sanctuary is rectangular and highly intact as it were when it was originally constructed before 1912. The interior has a semi-vaulted ceiling of original beadboard, 27 feet high to its highest point. Metal turnbuckle rods span the width of the sanctuary, creating the bottom chord of a truss. A semi-circular turned altar rail defines the chancel, which is further highlighted by a round arch outlining the semi-decagonal apse. Above the arch, a painted banner reads “God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, Man Our Brother.” Original pulpit, chairs, and communion table

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remain in place. Walls are beadboard, installed horizontally, with a vertical beadboard wainscot and chair rail. Original stained glass windows remain in place, and the wood floors are also original. Interior doors are original 4-panel wood doors with box locks and 2-light transoms and are surrounded with molded trim with decorative bases and crowned cornerblocks. Original or early furnishings also include wooden pews arranged in three sections with two aisles, and three matching electric chandeliers.

### **The Church Bell & Cistern (water source)**

The original church bell remains in the beautiful white wood encased steeple. Oral testimony indicates the church members would ring the bell to alert the community when there was a funeral or before worship service. A deep cistern was previously located near the side entrance of the main facility and served as the water source for the church until water pipelines were added in the Church Hill community in later years. An additional bay was added behind the choir stand at this time when indoor restrooms were installed. Previous restroom facilities were located on the easterly side of the church while the cistern was located on the westerly side. Water from the cistern was used in earlier years for christening young children by sprinkling water while older children and adults were baptized in a pond on the property of church members.

### **Cemetery**

Spreading out to the south of the church all the way to the southern, western, and eastern property lines is the church's cemetery, with graves possibly dating to before the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The oldest marker and one of the most prominent is that of George A. Fitzgerald, who was born in 1833 and died in 1898. Shifting ground has caused the Fitzgerald marker and many others of the antique headstones in the cemetery to tumble over and break. Most of the inscriptions on the headstones show the names of family members who were born after the Civil War. A few markers were hand-made of concrete. Markers are made of different material, shapes and sizes, and recent burials include modern granite markers. Each marker is a clear distinction of the most popular design at the time of the burials.

*"Gone but not forgotten"* is a common inscription on headstones in the cemetery. Some graves are designed with small markers for both husband and wife joined together with a larger headstone and a scripture. Although the cemetery does not have an organized grid, the graveyard is generally grouped by family members buried in respective areas with their loved ones. In the summer of 2017 church and family members initiated a project to update older markers with beautiful legible headstones to honor the memory of family members. Although the older headstones were worn and illegible, some have been stored for historic significance.

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## 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

(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 grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Settlement/Exploration

Ethnic Heritage: Black

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1898-1975

**Significant Dates**

1898 - Oldest grave marker in cemetery

1912 - Current Church Dedicate

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation**

African American

Native American

**Architect/Builder**

Rev. Benjamin Rutherford

Gregory Construction

Engelson Powers

C.B. Fitzgerald

Bernard Adams

D.W. Howard, Contractor

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Built between 1908 and 1912, the Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church is locally significance under Criterion A in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Ethnic Heritage: Black and under Criterion C as a good example of an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century rural Gothic Revival church building. The generations of grave markers in the adjacent cemetery attest to the long history of free people of color who purchased land in the community around Church Hill community and built institutions after the Civil War for worship and education such as Jefferson Chapel.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

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**A. Settlement/Exploration and Ethnic Heritage/Black:** Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church and its cemetery are locally significant under Criterion A for Settlement/Exploration and Ethnic Heritage/Black. Although the Church Hill plantation community was long settled before the Civil War, African Americans, whether free people of color or enslaved, were limited by law to establish their own institutions such as churches until after 1865. Jefferson Chapel was formerly established during an in 1880 after Reconstruction. Newly freed people of African and Native American descent populate its cemetery. The burial site contains the graves of many of these early community builders. Very few of the houses belonging to the family members remain in the Church Hill community. Most of the significant structures such as the two-room school which had been the only educational structure for rural students in Church Hill has long been demolished. The two-room, two-level school was located near the old Wagner store. Most of the structures that tell the history of these families have been lost to time with no other surviving historic places associated with this period. People who continue living in and near Church Hill can attest to the fact that they were students at this school.

### **C. Architectural Significance**

Built in 1912, Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a high-quality rural example of a Gothic Revival church building featuring a prominent Gothic-arched entrance with tracery-filled transom, a wood-framed tower, and stained glass windows with Y-tracery. The interior is particular intact with beadboard walls, wainscot, and semi-vaulted ceiling, wood-paneled doors with crowned cornerblock trim, early chandelier light fixtures, original pews, turned altar rail, and round-arched apse. In 1975, the congregation decided to modernize their historic building rather than demolish it and added a tan-brick veneer to the originally clapboard exterior, a common upgrade by African American congregations after the modern Civil Rights Movement era beginning in the 1950 and 1960s. The brickwork shows high-quality craftsmanship, highlights the original Gothic arches rather than detracts from them, and is the only major modification to the building.

### **Background**

Since the early 1800s, several generations of the same families have lived in the Church Hill (Jefferson County) community, formerly known as the Maryland settlement. Residents continue to refer to this rural area of Jefferson County, Mississippi as “Church Hill” even after the area’s zip code became a part of the Natchez postal service. The church and cemetery have been well maintained with dignity and pride by church family members for generations.

Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church was established in January 1880 by local African Methodist Episcopal leaders. The A.M.E. Church was established by Richard Allen in 1816 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Church leaders and missionaries established churches where social and educational activities were known to be held for people of African descent.

Jefferson Chapel was deeded by a chartered member from the Washington United Methodist Church (W.U.M.C.), William P. Foster (1837-1881) a white planter who attended an all-white



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congregation located at Washington, Mississippi near historic Jefferson College. The Foster Mound Plantation property is in close proximity to the W.U.M.C. owned by the Foster family who were white. His father, James Foster was known to have donated property for historic Jefferson College as well as for the W.U.M.C.

Close neighbors to the Foster family in Adams County, a county adjacent to Jefferson County, were George Fitzgerald and his brother James, early Scottish planters who settled in the Mississippi Territory.<sup>1</sup> In 1804, George Fitzgerald manumitted his “negroe woman” Mary and her four children, a practice commonly understood to mean that the children were his. The Manumission document prepared in 1804 was written in George Fitzgerald’s own handwriting to ensure his family would be sustained “forever” and not to be supported by a public system of welfare. He went on to write, “more particularly principles of humanity and tender to the said Mary and her four children as aforesaid or being unfit to undergo the hardships of slavery to which the said Mary and her four children might in a state of bondage be exposed.”<sup>2</sup> A careful review of this document validates that his intent was for Mary, “a negroe woman,” her children, and successive generations to be self-sufficient and self-supporting for generations to come.

According an 1810 map of the Natchez District, the Fitzgeralds and Fosters were neighbors near St. Catherine’s Creek before George Fitzgerald died. After George Fitzgerald died in 1808 in Natchez and James died in 1817, their neighbors and friends administered the business of their properties. The Fitzgerald daughters married white men and may have never used their father’s last name after marriage therefore eliminating the recognition among white and black family members. The Fitzgerald son married an enslaved woman and had seven children.

Jefferson Chapel in Jefferson County included part of the vast amount of property formerly owned by the Fitzgerald brothers. Descendants of this family and others populated the church and continue to worship at this location. Names such as Fitzgerald, Griffin, Kaho, Patterson, Payne, Powers, Sanders, Thornton, Ware, White and other descendants of the first settlers are names prominent among the grave markers. The headstones are inclusive of women in these families whose names may have changed due to marriage and who are rarely remembered as descendants of the first settlers.

African American and Native American descendants of George and James Fitzgerald continued to live in communities throughout Adams, Claiborne and Jefferson Counties for generations. A newspaper article shows George Ralston, an attorney acting on behalf of the Estate of George and James Fitzgerald was advertised in the newspaper for sale in 1824. The property was to be sold at the John Henderson’s store on January 1, 1825. The property advertised consisted of 1650 acres withholding 150 acres for the welfare of the Fitzgerald brothers’ descendants.<sup>3</sup> According to an 1810 map of the Natchez District where George Fitzgerald’s property was located, it appears some of the Estate property may have been sold to William P. Foster.<sup>4</sup> Being familiar

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<sup>1</sup> Early Southwest Mississippi Territory. Natchez District of the Mississippi Territory. FITZGERALD, Jaime and FITZGERALD, Jorge. <http://www.natchezbelle.org/sw/1792cs.htm>. Retrieved June 6, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Rose, Judy. *A Legacy of Heirs: The Final Truth*, Published by Jefferson Chapel Family & Friends Foundation, Inc., 2016, pg. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Ralston, George. Land for Sale. Newspaper.com. January 1, 1824. Retrieved May 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Deed Book O, page 292. Adams County Courthouse. April 1825.

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with the neighboring Fitzgerald family, William P. Foster and his wife Laura sold two acres of property in Jefferson County to the Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church in 1880 considering these free people of color would need a place to worship and bury their loved ones.

Of course, participating members, like William Foster of Washington U.M.C. may also have been associated with Bishop Richard Allen, the first Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church because of his close relationship with the United Methodist Bishops Asbury and Lorenzo Dow. They were all teachers of Methodism and Christianity. This connection may have been associated with the need for the free people of color to acquire their own church property and worship separately from the white congregations.

The 1868 Mississippi Constitution, Article I. – Bill of Rights Sec. 2. changed the Civil Rights for people of African descent and for married women. Unlike the Mississippi Constitution of 1832 which prohibited legislature from passing any law intended for freed slaves while the 1868 Mississippi Constitution enabled people of African descent to own their own property.

The 1868 Mississippi Constitution indicates that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, except by due process of law.<sup>5</sup> People of African descent were not permitted to gain title to property for building their own homes or places of worship before the 1868 Mississippi Constitution. Although many of these descendants were free people of color, prior to the 1868 legislation, only white men were able to gain title to property. The transfer of property for Jefferson Chapel shows the deed was filed at 10:00 a.m. on May 28, 1881, at a time when tensions remained high shortly after the Reconstruction period. The Fosters may have sold the property in association with the United Methodist Church to give these free people of African descent a separate place to worship and bury their loved ones.

Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church was rebuilt and dedicated around 1912 in the current location after it is believed the original structure deeded in 1880 burned down around 1908. Oral history has it the first church burned and was rebuilt by descendants of the original church members who were skilled carpenters and builders.

In 1975, the exterior of the church was bricked to slow down deterioration of the aged wood-frame structure built before 1912. Generations of church family members have maintained the early 20th Century Gothic Revival Style church with arched interior ceilings, original beaded board walls, hand carved pews, colored stained glass windows and original hardwood floors are all intact. The church bell in the steeple still rings when the rope is pulled. It was years ago to alert the community of church service times. The graveyard holds the remains of early church leaders, their descendants including veterans, preachers, teachers, well-respected community contributors and families and friends.

### **The Founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church**

In 1787, Richard Allen (1760-1831) and his friend Absalom Jones parted ways with the white Methodist churches and founded the Free African Society (FAS) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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<sup>5</sup> Mississippi HistoryNow, The 1868 Constitution of the State of Mississippi.  
<http://www.mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/articles/102/index.php?s=extra&id=269>. Retrieved September 12, 2018.

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The FAS was established to support the social needs of the church members and their communities. Mr. Allen was a lecturer and educator before he became the first Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal church. Prior to establishing the Free African Society, Richard Allen received his training in Methodism, often traveling with Bishop Asbury and Richard Whatcoat on mission trips. He was a well-spoken lecturer preaching to predominantly white Methodist churches. On occasion Richard Allen preached at all-white St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church. Allen thought there was a need to form the black Methodist congregations to teach an orderly and disciplined society of free people of African descent starting educational institutions in many states, including Mississippi. Lorenzo Dow, a traveling Methodist preacher fearlessly denounced "the efforts to discriminate against Negroes" in the early Methodist churches. He questioned the far-reaching authority of Bishop Coke, Asbury, and McKendree, and accused Asbury of being jealous of the rising power of Richard Allen.<sup>6</sup> The first Methodist camp meeting was held at the Washington campground led by Learner Blackman, Nathan Barnes, Lorenzo Dow and Randal Gibson beginning in 1804 and continued on until 1847.<sup>7</sup> In 1816, the Independent black Methodist leaders found a need to hold a conference in Philadelphia to form a separate Methodist body for a free African society for social and educational purposes. They called the new organization the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church. Congregation leaders elected Richard Allen as the first A.M.E. bishop.<sup>8</sup> Through detailed research, it seemed that Richard Allen, Lorenzo Dow and Bishop Asbury attending Methodist conferences from Philadelphia to Mississippi were associated through the United Methodist Church (UMC) when William P. Foster was a chartered member of Washington United Methodist Church. Commonality among these men was their teaching in Christianity and Methodism.

In 1816, the Methodist Annual Conference was held at the home of William Foster in Pine Ridge where "1,703 whites and 540 colored"<sup>9</sup> participated in the event. Free people of color were able to worship alongside white people earlier in the 19th century, whereas white men who were slaveholders could not serve as officers in the Methodist church.

### Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church History

According to "The Jefferson Chapel Story" in the 113th (1994) and 123rd (2004) Anniversary program booklets, the property was deeded to church organizers as follows:

This indenture was made on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of January, in the year of our Lord 1880 between William P. Foster and Laura Foster, his wife of the county of Adams, state of Mississippi of the one part, all of Jefferson County and the state of Mississippi, witness that the said other part, for consideration of the sum of Ten dollars for said land containing two acres.

<sup>6</sup> Brawley, Benjamin Griffith, 1832-1939. Lorenzo Dow: Electronic Edition.

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/church/brawleyld/brawley.html#note12>. Retrieved, June 10, 2018.

<sup>7</sup> Photo of Washington Campground Historic Marker. Washington, Mississippi. Photo taken April 7, 2018.

<sup>8</sup> Jefferson Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, 113<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary! Program booklet, pg. 1

<sup>9</sup> Retrieved: Dunbar Rowland,

<https://books.google.com/books?id=REwTAAAYAAJ&pg=PA225&lpg=PA225&dq=Bishop+William+Foster+Uvvnited+Methodist+Church+in+Natchez&source=bl&ots=7U15oCsMjU&sig=TnEFjg7QDLNEQHwyqMN6ec2Qado&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewiCz438lazaAhXnYt8KHWdmCn4Q6AEIRTAI#v=onepage&q=Foster&f=false>

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The 1880 deed shows the property is located just off the main road from Selsertown to Church Hill, bounded by lands of Leon Ross, on the east by James Archer, and on the south and west by Arundo Plantation, owned by William P. and Laura Foster. Witnessed by hand and sealed the 8th of January 1880. W.C. Nichols of Jefferson County. William P. Foster, et al and Durke Ellis, et al, deed filed for record, May 28, 1881 at 10:00 p.m.

While he owned Arundo Plantation, William Peter Smith Foster (1837-1881)<sup>10</sup> and his wife Laura actually resided south of Foster Mound at Glen Mary Plantation five miles northeast of Natchez and two miles west of Washington, near St. Catherine Creek, in Adams County, Mississippi.<sup>11</sup> He was the son of Mary Maury Foster (1811-1883) and William James Foster (1798-1870). William P. Foster purchased property from the Estate of George Fitzgerald, and in 1880 sold two acres to Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church. He had been a chartered member of Washington United Methodist Church near Jefferson College in Adams County.<sup>12</sup> The deed for the Jefferson Chapel was recorded in the Jefferson County courthouse in Deed Book II, page 483 on May 28, 1881.<sup>13</sup>

The church was organized in 1880. The first of two cornerstones laid September 15, 1912 shows the church leadership as Bishop O. W. Chiles, Rev. A.W. Timmons, Messrs. Roger Adams, Thomas Fitzgerald, Walter Woods, Sam Woods, Hence Hoy, Alexander Morris and Alexander Adams.

According to the 113<sup>th</sup> Anniversary program booklet, Reverend Benjamin Rutherford designed the church building and Gregory Construction Company built the original structure. The officers at the time of construction were Wade Morris, Paris Martin, George Fitzgerald, Lettie Kaho, Acquilla Martin, Elam Harris, Ceasar Griffin, Marie Johnson, Quitman Irleand, Dan Tyler, Henry Bird, George Washington and other church members.

The deed to the church reads:

*This indenture was made on the 8th day of January, in the year of our Lord 1880 between William P. Foster and Laura Foster, his wife of the county of Adams, state of Mississippi of the one part, all of Jefferson County and the state of Mississippi. The deed for the land for Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church was drawn up by William P. Foster, et., al and Durke Ellis, et al,. The deed was filed for record on May 18, 1881 at 10:00 p.m. Witnessed by hand and sealed the 8th day of January 1881, W.C. Nichols, Justice of the Peace of Jefferson County.*

### **First leaders of Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church**

<sup>10</sup> Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form for Glen Mary Plantation and Tenant House, <https://www.apps.mdah.ms.gov/nom/prop/2204.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form – Glen Mary Plantation and Tenant House. <https://www.apps.mdah.ms.gov/nom/prop/2204.pdf>. Retrieved: May 28, 2018.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> The Fayette Chronicle, July 9, 1981. Local Church celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by Linda Green.

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When the Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. was organized in 1880, church trustees were Durke Ellis, James Gaylor, James Ransom, Ishmael O'Quinn and Nathaniel Ransom<sup>14</sup> according to information provided in 1981 by Mrs. Aimee E. Fitzgerald to Linda Green, a reporter for the Fayette Chronicle.<sup>15</sup> In May 1881, the trustee had fully paid for the church property and obtained clear title to the Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church. Additional church organizers of the earlier church were Wade Morris, Paris Martin, George Fitzgerald, Acquilla Martin, Elam Harris, Ceasar Griffin, Lettie Kaho, Marie Johnson, Quitman Ireland, Dan Tyler, Henry Byrd and George Washington.<sup>16</sup>

A cornerstone located on the left front corner of the church and the Anniversary program booklets include the names of at least two grandsons of George Fitzgerald, one of the first settlers in the Mississippi Territory.<sup>17</sup> Two Scottish settlers, James and George Fitzgerald names are shown in the 1792 Spanish Census indicating they lived at Saint Catalina (translated as St. Catherine)<sup>18</sup> located near Foster Mound Plantation. An antique 1810 map of the Natchez District located at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) shows George Fitzgerald owned parcels in Adams and Jefferson counties before his death in 1808. George and James Fitzgerald's descendants have continued to live in the Natchez area for more than 215 years. Many of their descendants continued their worship as well as furthered their educational aspirations based on the Methodist teachings. Foster, Martin, Gaylor, Adams, Ellis, Griffin, Harris and Fitzgerald were landowners, before the U.S. Civil War as shown on the 1810 map.

Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church was built by skilled people of African descent during the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Surrounding the church, a community of social consciousness ensured that families were supported during times when they faced challenges in the mainstream society.

In 1910, two years before the physical structure for the Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church was dedicated, the population had decreased in Jefferson County from 21,292 to 18,221 when the Mississippi census was taken.<sup>19</sup> Due to continuing population decline, the membership roll began to diminish significantly during the Depression era and the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s, leaving a smaller number of faithful members to carry on the legacy of their ancestors by continuing to support families in the Church Hill community.

Some of the pastors of that time and later were, The Reverends I.S. Cartwright, W.T. Bolty, Foley and Benjamin Rutherford. Historically, the A.M.E. Church organization, formed predominantly by men, continued for generations assigning only male pastors. The current pastor, Rev. Emma Scott, is the first female pastor in all of Jefferson Chapel's history.

<sup>14</sup> Jefferson Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church. 113<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary Program Booklet, pg. 1.

<sup>15</sup> The Fayette Chronicle. Local Church celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by Linda Green. July 9, 1981

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Rose, Judy. *A Legacy of Heirs: The Final Truth*, Published by Jefferson Chapel Family & Friends Foundation, Inc., 2016, pg. 5.

<sup>18</sup> 1792 Spanish Census, Natchez District of the Mississippi Territory. Head of Household: Jaime Fitzgerald (SC) and Jorge Fitzgerald (SC). <http://www.natchezbelle.org/adams-ind/1792cs.htm>. Retrieved May 28, 2018.

<sup>19</sup> Retrieved: <https://www.census.gov/population/cencounts/ms190090.txt>



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## **Native Americans**

Recent oral testimony by Sadie Kaho-Walls a current officer of the church said “the Kaho family are Native American descendants.” Her statement clearly shows the diversity of the descendants of African, Scottish and Native American descendants who started Jefferson Chapel. Sadie Kaho-Walls is a descendant of Lettie Kaho who is named as one of the first female church organizers on the 1912 cornerstone.

## **The Church Building**

The one-story early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Gothic Revival style wood frame building was constructed after 1908 while a cornerstone on the left front shows the names of the trustees when the church was dedicated in 1912. Deterioration in the wood-frame building caused leaders to brick the church in the mid 1970s. Church leaders recognized the need to preserve this historic structure for future generations for a place of worship and education, in that order.

According to the anniversary programs:

The present structure was designed by the Rev. Benjamin Rutherford and built by the Gregory Construction Company. The lumber for the rebuilding was shipped by rail from Jackson to Stanton, Mississippi. It took a community effort to haul the building materials from Stanton to the church property on Chapel Hill Road. The church family played an important role in preparing the ground to build the new structure.<sup>20</sup>

The Knights of Pythias, a fraternal masonic organization laid the cornerstone on the structure dedicated in 1912. The names of leaders on the cornerstone are:

### **Pastors:**

Rt. Rev. J.M. Corner, D.D., Bishop  
Rev. O.W. Chiles, D.D., Presiding Elder  
Rev. A.W. Timmons, B.D.P.C.

### **Trustees:**

Roger Adams  
Thomas Fitzgerald  
Walter Woods  
Sam Woods  
Hence Hoy  
Alexander Morris  
Alexander Adams

Oral testimony has it that church leaders Engelson Powers, Columbus B. Fitzgerald and Bernard Adams added two additional rooms to the existing structure during the 1975 renovation adding

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<sup>20</sup> Jefferson Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church 123<sup>rd</sup> Year Anniversary Program Booklet, The Jefferson Chapel Story. 2004. pg. 6

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restrooms for women and men. The ceiling and wallboards were donated by Bernard Adams and the fixtures were donated by Herbert Sanders, Sr. and Caesar Adams.

The Knights of Pythias also laid the cornerstone after the church was bricked in 1975. The new addition was dedicated and a new cornerstone, located on the right front corner of the church, was laid in 1983.<sup>21</sup> Trustees names on the 1975 cornerstone are shown as:

Caesar Adams  
Althea Ford  
Columbus B. Fitzgerald, Sec.  
Will T. Fitzgerald  
Bernard Adams  
John E. Ware  
Engleson C. Powers  
William Payne, Sr.  
Herbert Sanders, Sr.  
Vera Kaho-White  
Roger Adams

The Pastor at the time was Rev. Sherman Berry, Rev. J.D. Watkins, Presiding Elder, and Rt. Rev. F.C. Cummings, Bishop. Laid by Revel Lodge No. 3, May 29, 1983. M.W. Stringer, Grand Lodge F. & A.M. – P.H.A. Grand Master H.M. Thompson. Herbert Sanders, Sr. obituary shows he was a member of the Knights of Pythias.

The original Knights of Pythias was an organization of white men originally formed in Philadelphia. Black men were not permitted to join as members however, the history of the Mississippi Masonic organization shows:

The first African American Pythias lodge was organized in Vicksburg, Mississippi, April 1880, by Dr. T. W. Stringer, and known as Lightfoot Lodge No. 1. The primary objective of fraternal organizations is to promote friendship among men and to relieve suffering. It bases its lessons and builds its ritual largely on the familiar story of the friendship of Damon and Pythias. Strict moralities, absolute truthfulness, honor and integrity is thoroughly instilled in the minds of its membership.<sup>22</sup> The Revel Lodge No. 3, May 29, 1983 M. W. Stringer Grand Lodge, F & A.M. – P.H.A., Grand Master – H. M. Thompson.

An additional one-half acre was purchased by community members namely Floyd Woods, Walter Patterson, Evans Fitzgerald, and other church members who donated the land to Jefferson Chapel to add to the existing two acres. Before the May 30, 2004, 123<sup>rd</sup> Jefferson Chapel Anniversary Year celebration, the church members added a new fellowship hall to the original

<sup>21</sup> Personal Photo collection of Judy Rose. Weaver. Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church Remodeled 1983 Cornerstone.

<sup>22</sup> History of Knights of Pythias, <http://knightsofpythiasfl.com/history>. Retrieved May 28, 2018

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structure. Contractor, Rev. D.W. Howard constructed the new addition.<sup>23</sup> A small house served as the church parsonage previously located on the west side of the church and in front of the cemetery, was used for housing pastors who were assigned to the church. The parsonage was demolished around 2016.

### Historic graveyard

The Jefferson Chapel burial site is located closer to SR 553 bordering Chapel Hill Road, on the south side of the church. Mrs. Aimee Sanders-Fitzgerald informed the Fayette *Chronicle* reporter “church counted a membership of more than 400 family members in earlier years.” When the cemetery was inventoried in 2013, there were more than 100 headstones visible at this burial site. Other unknown markers may be buried under mud as a result of erosion. Some burials since 2013 are unaccounted.

Many of the graves hold descendants of the first church founders and successive generations. More than five generations of family members are buried in this historic cemetery. The oldest headstone in the cemetery is George A. Fitzgerald buried in 1898. The next oldest markers with a legible date are those of Ann Wood (1923) and Everett Sanders (1924). Everett Sanders was the father of Aimee E. Sanders-Fitzgerald and Herbert Sanders, Sr. both were life-long members of Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church. Everett Sanders was buried on the top of the hill at one of the highest points in the cemetery.

At least two known grandsons of one of the first settlers in the Mississippi Territory were early members of Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church.<sup>24</sup> They were George and Thomas Fitzgerald. Two Scottish brothers, James and George Fitzgerald were settlers in the Natchez District as early as 1787. Their names are shown in the 1792 Spanish Census indicating they lived at Saint Catalina (translated as St. Catherine) located near Foster Mound Plantation.<sup>25</sup> An 1810 map of the Natchez District<sup>26</sup> with names of the first settlers found at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) shows George Fitzgerald owned parcels in Adams and Jefferson counties. He died near his home at St. Catherine Creek in 1808. Even William Johnson, a free man of color living in Natchez, wrote a diary recognizing the names of these two Scottish brothers’ children. The diary was transcribed and published as *The Barber of Natchez*, in 1954 by Edwin Adams Davis and William Ransom Hogan.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Jefferson Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church 123<sup>rd</sup> Year Anniversary Program Booklet, The Jefferson Chapel Story. 2004. pg. 6

<sup>24</sup> Rose, Judy. *A Legacy of Heirs: The Final Truth*, Published by Jefferson Chapel Family & Friends Foundation, Inc., pg. 5. 2016

<sup>25</sup> 1792 Spanish Census, Natchez District of the Mississippi Territory. Head of Household: Jaime Fitzgerald (SC) and Jorge Fitzgerald (SC). <http://www.natchezbelle.org/adams-ind/1792cs.htm>. Retrieved May 28, 2018.

<sup>26</sup> Digital 1810 Map of the Natchez District. Mississippi Department of Archives & History (MDAH), Collection MA/91.0011(c). Jackson, Mississippi. Retrieved June 14, 2018.

<sup>27</sup> Davis, Edwin and Hogan Ransom, William. *The Barber of Natchez*, Louisiana State University Press. Published 1954 and 1973. Pg 251.

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Many of their descendants have continued to live in the Natchez area for more than 215 years. The Fosters deeded the property to the 1880 trustees, Durke Ellis, James Ransom, Ishmael O'Quin and Nathaniel Ransom, Trustees of the African Methodist Episcopal Church all of whom were descendants of early settlers in the Mississippi Territory before the Civil War and before the first church was built.<sup>28</sup> Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church located in Church Hill, Mississippi was later organized by the descendants of first landowners that will carry their legacy forward into new generations.

Rev. Claude Powers and his wife Florida Fitzgerald Powers, Rev. Herbert Sanders, Jr. and Professor J.D. and Vera Kaho-White headstones acknowledge their accomplishments with professional titles. More recent headstones are adorned with encased photos of the person buried at the site while a little lamb is very common on a number of headstones. Generations of the Adams, Day, Fitzgerald, Gaylor, Griffin, Sanders, Kaho, Ware, Wood, Woods, Martin, Patterson, Plummer, Payne, Powers, Rumble, Sanders and other families were members of Jefferson Chapel and are buried in the cemetery. Approximately 6 generations of church members and their families are represented in the Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church cemetery since the 1898.

## Veterans

Families of Veterans who served in the United States Military from the Civil War to World War II buried their loved ones in the Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. graveyard. This well-manicured burial site is located closer to SR 553 bordering Chapel Hill Road with more than 100 family and friends of Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church. No less than three men buried in the cemetery fought in the U.S. Civil War as United States Colored Troops (USCT). They are George A. Fitzgerald (1863), Alfred Jackson (1861-1865), and Adkins Martin (1863-1866). Jefferson Chapel cemetery is also the resting place for a number of former church members and their families who served in the United States military during World War I and World War II.. More recent graves included military veterans who served during the Vietnam War. Known veterans are in order of their service to the United States Military:

1. Martin, Adkins, Private, 66<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Co H., United States Colored Infantry, Co K
2. Fitzgerald, George A., Private, 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment, United States Colored Heavy Artillery
3. Jackson, Alpheus, Private, 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Co B., United States Colored Infantry
4. Green, Leonard, PVT, US Army, World War I
5. Payne, Benjamin, MS PVT Co. C 530 Engineers, World War I
6. Henderson, Martin, World War II
7. Payne, Sr., William, World War II
8. Ware, Berthone D., Mississippi S1, USNR, World War II
9. Fitzgerald, Elmo B., TLC5, 7656 Port Co. TC World War II
10. Ford, Jr., Leon, Mississippi PFO US Army, World War II
11. Ikard, Jr. Eli W., World War II

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

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12. Ware, Charlie, CPL US Army
13. Fitzgerald, Will T., Armed Forces (1952), Korean War

George A. Fitzgerald was the father of a number of children with his wife Martha as well as children in other relationships. He could possibly be known as the “father of Jefferson Chapel cemetery” as his descendants stretch far and wide at this burial site. He also has the oldest headstone. The veterans who are named above returned to the Jefferson County communities from active military duty to support their families, the church and their farms. The women remained in the community educating and caring for the growing number of children, caring for their homes and tending their gardens. Some of the women were missionaries, teachers, school administrators, musicians, cooks, domestic and hospital workers, seamstresses and homemakers. Census records show common occupations for the men were domestic servants, preachers, teachers, carpenters and farmers.

### **Remembering the heritage of Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church family**

Sadie Kaho-Walls, a current officer of the church recently revealed, “the Kaho family are Native American descendants.” She is a descendant of Lettie Kaho who is named as one of the church organizers as shown on the 1912 cornerstone and as documented in the 113<sup>th</sup> and 123<sup>rd</sup> anniversary program booklets. Vera Kaho White served as trustee during the 1975 church remodeling. The program booklet credits stewardesses, Mrs. Juliet Fitzgerald-Sanders, Mrs. Luvirda Martin-Fitzgerald and Mrs. Anna Morris for donating the first communion set to the congregation for the 1912 dedication. Artifacts, bibles and hymnals are historical items that have been preserved in memory of the church family’s ancestors.

When the church celebrated the Centennial Anniversary in 1981, an article in the *Fayette Chronicle* states that only two known pianists had served Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church. The two musicians were Mrs. A. E. Plummer, who served 40 years and Mrs. Aimee Ezella Sanders-Fitzgerald, who served more than 50 years as music director. Mrs. Sanders-Fitzgerald was a well-respected educator in Jefferson County and taught many of the African American children in this rural community. She also taught many of the children music and piano lessons at her home in Church Hill and at church. She received her license to teach in 1923 and received a Bachelor of Science degree from Jackson State University. She taught at the Reeves Public School until 1931. Oral testimony from students who attended the Church Hill school remembers the structure as a two-room, two level building located near the old Wagner’s Country store. It was said that Mrs. Aimee Sanders-Fitzgerald taught the upper level classes from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades and Mrs. Lucille Williams taught the lower level, Pre-primer (currently Pre-K) to 4<sup>th</sup> grades. The structure has long been demolished due to deterioration. Mrs. Sanders-Fitzgerald served as the principal of the only school in Church Hill for this rural community. She later moved to a Lidell High School in Fayette and received numerous awards from the Mississippi Association of Education (M.A.E) and National Education Association (N.E.A.). Mrs. Aimee Sanders-Fitzgerald worked at the Jefferson County school until her retirement. She died in September 1983.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Fitzgerald, Aimee Ezella Obituary. 1983.



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In an interview with Linda Green in preparation for the 100<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary in 1981, Mrs. Aimee E. Sanders-Fitzgerald said:

“More than 400 family members and descendants of the first founders of Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church continue to live in the Natchez area. They have been attending the Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church for more than 100 years. She continued to reminisce saying to the reporter, “there are still some members who remember the days of coming to church in buggies, in wagons, by foot and on horseback.”<sup>30</sup>

Although a large number of former members have since migrated to other states throughout the United States, families make regular visits back to their home church for worship. It is not uncommon for church family members who moved away from Church Hill to be brought back to Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church to be buried in the cemetery.

The church and cemetery have been maintained by members of Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church since the beginning of its existence. The church family has continued to be self-sufficient with descendants who continue to support the church. The church has not had to hire outside caretakers to keep the church in its fine present condition. Most all of the members are descendants of families who worshipped at the church for nearly 140 years and takes pride in maintaining their heritage.

The conclusion of the Jefferson Chapel Story as written in the 113<sup>th</sup> Anniversary program booklet shows:

On this day, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1994, as we celebrate the 113<sup>th</sup> year of our church, we pray that god will keep the ones of us remaining to celebrate this historical event, and that our children will cherish and remember our ancestors who struggled to build such a structure to leave a heritage for us to lean on.<sup>31</sup>

## Comparables

The two other churches in the Church Hill community that can be compared to and contrasted with Jefferson Chapel are Christ Church, located at the crossroads center of this expansive rural plantation district, and Richland M.B. Church. Built of brick rendered with scored stucco in 1858 for the state’s first Episcopal congregation, Christ Church is a significant example of the antebellum Gothic Revival style, with its functional hammer-beam roof, buttresses, and stained-glass lancet windows. The church also has a slave gallery, underscoring the reality that slaves were encouraged to worship with their owners and were generally not allowed to form their own congregations. While sharing a stylistic vocabulary, Jefferson Chapel demonstrates a later and more vernacular form of Gothic Revival. The characteristic of the structure of Jefferson Chapel is more modernist displaying the craftsmanship of the African American building skills with

<sup>30</sup> Green, Linda. The Fayette Chronicle, Local Church celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. July 9, 1981.

<sup>31</sup> Program Committee for the 113th Anniversary of Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church. Jefferson Chapel Story, 113th Anniversary program booklet. 1994

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common materials such as beadboard used in decorative ways rather than applying ornamental treatments.

The more comparable property is Richland Missionary Baptist (M.B.) Church, built c.1900 and located east of Christ Church on the west side of Highway 553. This Gothic Revival-style wood-framed church building features a front gable between two different-height square towers with flared pyramidal roofs. Windows are 2/2 double-hung-sash with Y-tracery transoms, and some colored glass panes. A front-gabled vestibule has been added to the front, bringing the front wall into the same plane as the towers. The church once had a one-room schoolhouse on the property (demolished c.2005), and a cemetery with only a few surviving markers extends to the rear. Still an active congregation, Richland M.B. Church is also considered a locally significant and intact rural Gothic Revival African American church, with the same areas of significance as Jefferson Chapel.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### **Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Jefferson Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church 123<sup>rd</sup> Year Anniversary Program Booklet, The Jefferson Chapel Story. 2004. pg. 6.

Green, Linda. The Fayette Chronicle, Local Church celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. July 9, 1981.

Rose, Judy. *A Legacy of Heirs: The Final Truth*, Jefferson Chapel Family & Friends Foundation, Inc. Published 2016. Limited Edition.

History of Knights of Pythias, <http://knightsofpythiasfl.com/history>. Retrieved May 28, 2018.

1792 Spanish Census, Natchez District of the Mississippi Territory. Early Southwest Mississippi Territory. Head of Household: Jaime Fitzgerald (SC) and Jorge Fitzgerald (SC). <http://www.natchezbelle.org/adams-ind/1792cs.htm>. Retrieved May 28, 2018.

Davis, Edwin Adams and Hogan Ransom, William. *The Barbers of Natchez*, Louisiana State University Press. Published 1954 and 1973. Pg. 251.

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### **Previous documentation on file (NPS): v**

- 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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

### **Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** 063-CHH-4028

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 2.5 Acres

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 31.679787 | Longitude: -91.234972 |
| 2. Latitude: 31.678833 | Longitude: -91.235298 |
| 3. Latitude: 31.678465 | Longitude: -91.234393 |
| 4. Latitude: 31.679116 | Longitude: -91.233552 |

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Foster W.P. et.al

To: Deed Durke Ellis, Et-al (James Ransom, Ishmael O'Quin and Nathaniel Ransom, Trustees of the African Methodist Episcopal Church called "Jefferson Chapel")

Filed for Record May 28th 1881 at 10:00 a.m.

A certain lot or parcel of land, situate, lying & being in Jefferson County and State aforesaid & bounded as follows:

On the east by the lands of James Archer, on the South & West by lands of William P. Fosters' Arundo Tract and being a part of said Tract & on the North by lands belonging to Leon Roos and lying on the Main Road from Selsertown to Church Hill the same being in square shape, the N.E. corner beginning at a large Oak tree on the Main Road and which is one of the Boundary Trees of James Archers land and is at the point where the road turns suddenly to the East, and from thence in a generally western direction along the old Road, that led to the Arundo place Ninety-nine yards from thence ninety-nine yards parallel with the Main Road. Southwardly and thence ninety-nine yards parallel with the first-line it strikes the Main Road and thence following the Main Road, the place of beginning and containing or intended to contain embrace within the aforesaid boundaries Two (2) Acres on it being the same upon which is built the Methodist Episcopal Church called Jefferson Chapel.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the church building and cemetery on 2.5 acres owned by Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Judy Rose Weaver  
Organization: Jefferson Chapel Family & Friends Foundation, Inc.  
Street & number: P.O. Box 870033  
City or town: Stone Mountain state: Georgia zip code: 30087  
E-mail info@JeffChapFFFoundation.org  
Telephone: 470-779-1048  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.





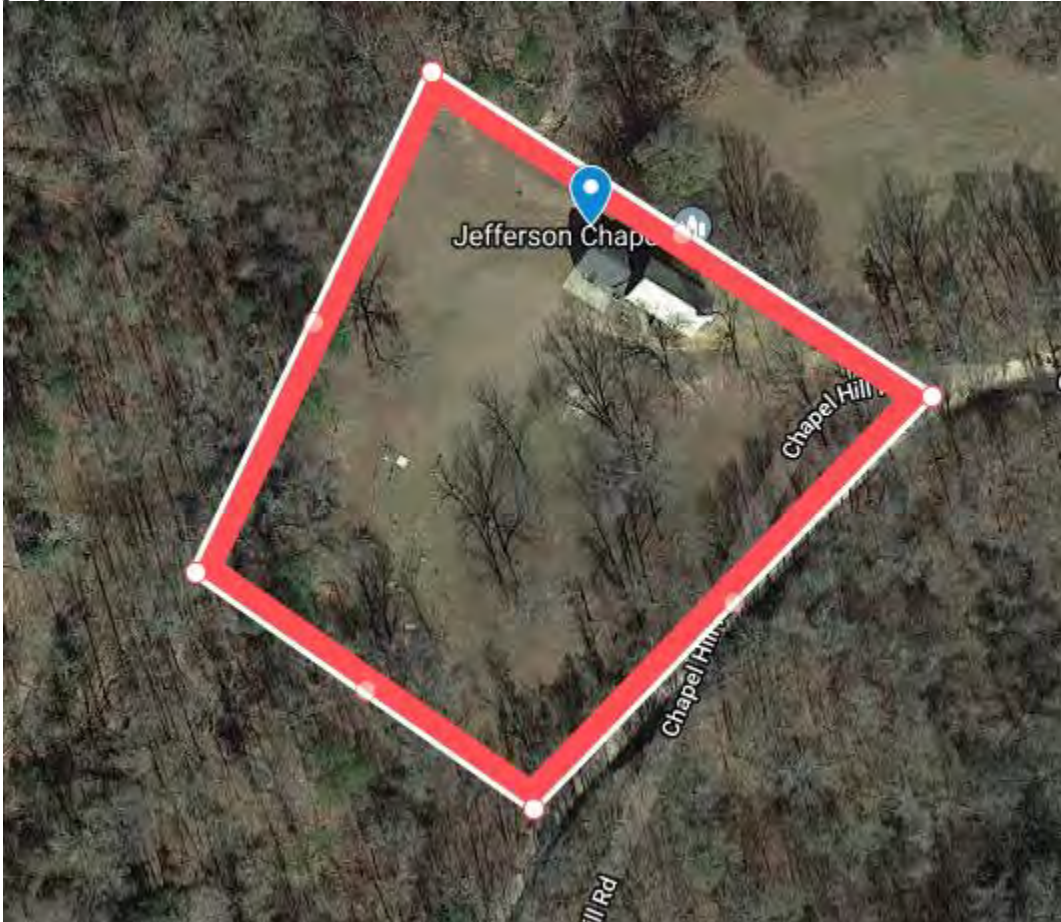
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Google map below with red polygon red indicating the defacto propertline.



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06:40:38 p.m. 10-17-2018

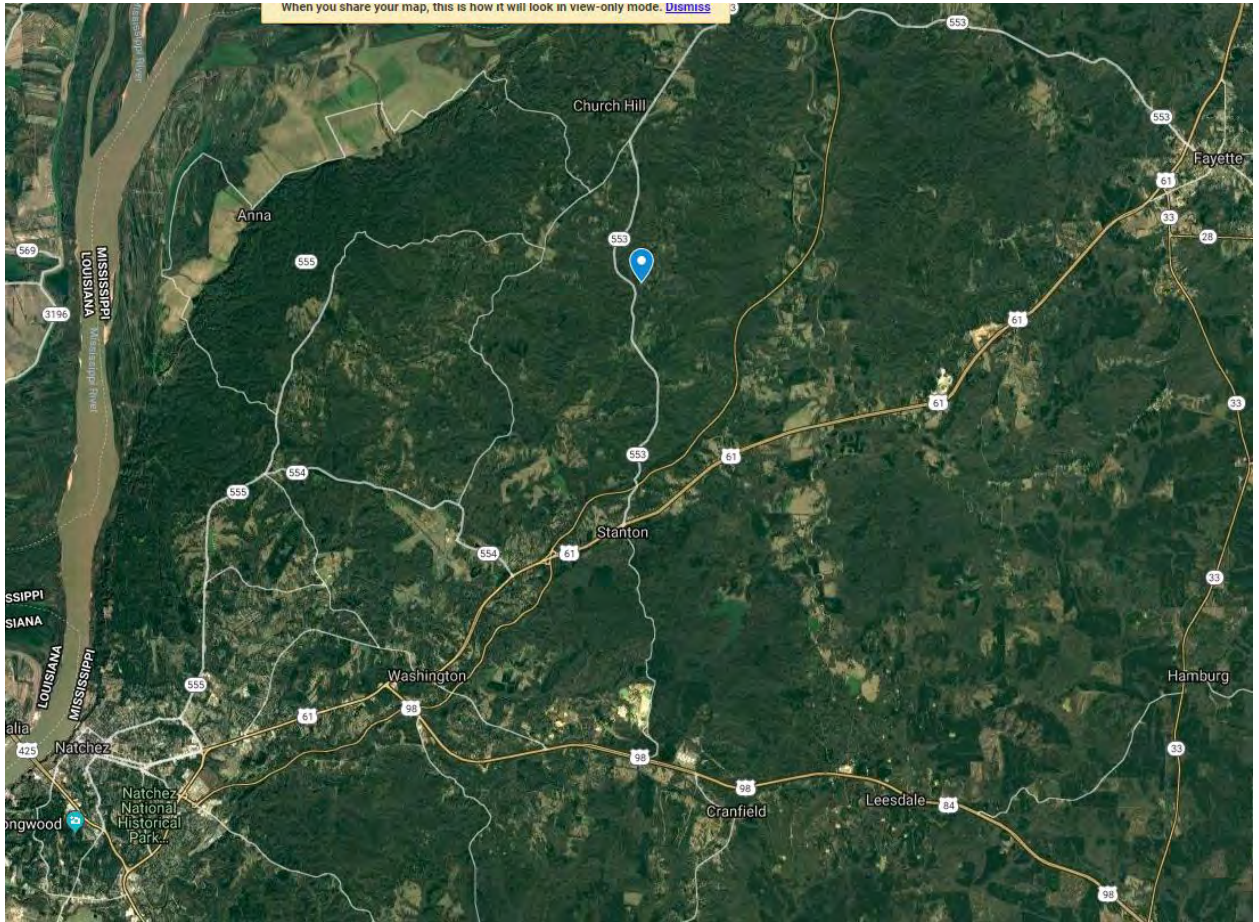
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Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church and Cemetery

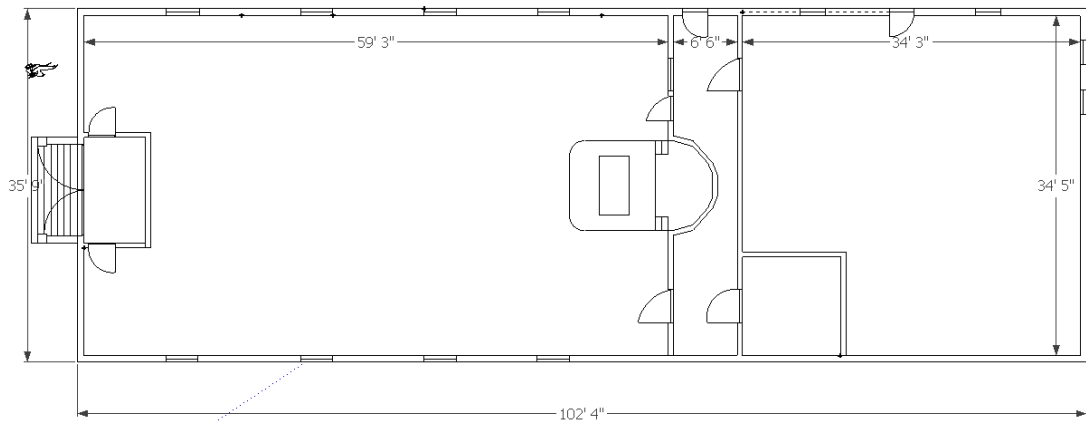
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- **Sketch map** and floor plan for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Floor Plan**



- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)



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### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Name of Property: Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church and cemetery

City or Vicinity: Natchez, Church Hill Community

County: Jefferson County

State: Mississippi

Photographer: Jennifer Baughn, Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Date Photographed: March 9, 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 16: Front (E) of Jefferson Chapel – photo taken from Chapel Hill Road, view to W
- 2 of 16: Front and S elevations, view to NW
- 3 of 16: View of church from cemetery, view to NW
- 4 of 16: S elevation, view to NE
- 5 of 16: S and W (rear) elevations, with fellowship hall addition to left, view to NE
- 6 of 16: Typical original Gothic arch window with tracery
- 7 of 16: Church interior, view to altar, to W
- 8 of 16: Arched apse/choir loft, pulpit, and altar rail, view to W
- 9 of 16: Church interior, view from pulpit to rear of sanctuary, to E
- 10 of 16: Typical original pews
- 11 of 16: Typical original Gothic arch windows with colored glass
- 12 of 16: Typical 4-panel door with transom and trim with cornerblocks and crowns
- 13 of 16: Cemetery, with view to church, to N
- 14 of 16: Cemetery headstones
- 15 of 16: 1975 cornerstone
- 16 of 16: 1912 cornerstone

**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 listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:NPS\\_natchez-trace1-natchez-to-jackson.pdf](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:NPS_natchez-trace1-natchez-to-jackson.pdf)

Google Map <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Jefferson+Chapel+AME+Church/@31.694105,-91.2287442,690m/data=!3m2!1e3!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x862f54bed35350e9:0x1124f6bbcfb112a!8m2!3d31.694105!4d-91.2265555>. Retrieved June 10, 2018.





























GOD OUR FATHER    CHRIST OUR REDEEMER    MAN OUR BROTHER

WOMAN SOCIETY	30
WOMAN SOCIETY	6
WOMAN SOCIETY	6
WOMAN SOCIETY	6
WOMAN SOCIETY	1
WOMAN SOCIETY	39.00
WOMAN SOCIETY	\$ 1048

WOMAN SOCIETY  
WOMAN SOCIETY  
WOMAN SOCIETY  
WOMAN SOCIETY  
WOMAN SOCIETY





SUNDAY SCHOOL	30
ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY	6
ATTENDANCE TODAY	5
BROUGHT BIBLE	\$
ENROLLMENT	1
OFFERING LAST SUNDAY	\$9.00
OFFERING TODAY	\$1045

이웃을 사랑하라  
너희의 이웃을  
같이 사랑하라  
너희의 이웃을  
같이 사랑하라  
너희의 이웃을  
같이 사랑하라















GENTLEMEN

+	
SUNDAY SCHOOL	30
ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY	6
ATTENDANCE TODAY	5
BROUGHT BIBLE	\$
ENROLLMENT	1
OFFERING LAST SUNDAY	59.00
OFFERING TODAY	\$1045











JEFFERSON CHAPEL A. M. E. CHURCH

REMODELED 1975

TRUSTEES

CAESAR ADAMS      ALTHEA FORD

C. B. FITZGERALD, SEC.      W. T. FITZGERALD

B. ADAMS      JOHN E. WARE

E. C. POWERS      Wm. PAYNE

H. SANDERS      VERA WHITE

ROGER ADAMS

REV. SHERMAN BERRY, PASTOR

REV. J. D. WATKINS, PRESIDING ELDER

RT. REV. F. C. CUMMINGS, BISHOP

LAI D BY REVEL LODGE NO. 3, MAY 29, 1983

M. W. STRINGER GRAND LODGE

F. & A. M.—P. H. A.

GRAND MASTER H. M. THOMPSON



JEFFERSON CHAPEL

A. M. E. CHURCH

LAI D SEPT. 15, 1912

BY REV. J. M. CORNER D. D.

BISHOP

REV. O. W. CHILES D. D. P. E.

REV. A. W. TIMMONS B. D. P. C.

TRUSTEES

R. ADAMS

T. FITZGERALD

W. WOODS WOODHAY

ALEX MORIS

ALEX ADAMS



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church and Cemetery

Multiple Name:

State & County: MISSISSIPPI, Jefferson

Date Received:  
12/10/2018

Date of Pending List:  
12/28/2018

Date of 16th Day:  
1/14/2019

Date of 45th Day:  
1/24/2019

Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100003343

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

Appeal

SHPO Request

Waiver

Resubmission

Other

PDIL

Landscape

National

Mobile Resource

TCP

CLG

Text/Data Issue

Photo

Map/Boundary

Period

Less than 50 years

Accept     Return     Reject    1/24/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary    Automatic listing due to Federal Government shutdown  
Comments:

Recommendation/    Accept / A & C  
Criteria

Reviewer    Jim Gabbert

Discipline    Historian

Telephone    (202)354-2275

Date    1-29-2019

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
Jim Woodrick, director  
PO Box 571, Jackson, MS 39205-0571  
601-576-6940 • Fax 601-576-6955  
mdah.state.ms.us

December 3, 2018

Joy Beasley  
Keeper of the National Register  
National Park Service  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

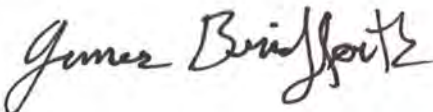
Dear Ms. Beasley:

We are pleased to enclose the nomination form and supporting documents to nominate the following property to the National Register of Historic Places:

Jefferson Chapel A.M.E. Church and Cemetery, Natchez Vicinity, Adams County

The property was approved for nomination by the Mississippi National Register Review Board at its meeting on November 7, 2018.

We trust you will find the enclosed materials in order and will let us hear from you at your convenience.

Sincerely, 

Katie Blount  
State Historic Preservation Officer

By: James Bridgforth  
Architectural Historian