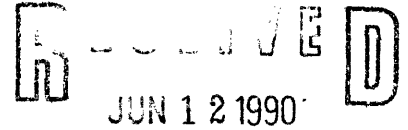


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

**NATIONAL  
REGISTER**

1. Name of Property

historic name: ST. JOHN'S METHODIST CHURCH

other name/site number: S-3300

2. Location

street & number: Southeast Corner of Springfield Crossroads

not for publication: NA

city/town: Georgetown, Indian River Hundred vicinity: X

state: Delaware county: Sussex code: 005 zip code: 19947

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: building(s)

Number of Resources within Property:

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

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

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

=====  
4. State/Federal Agency Certification  
=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.   See continuation sheet.

Daniel M. Hoff  SHPO  May 25, 1990   
Signature of certifying official Date

DELAWARE DIVISION OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

NA   
Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====  
5. National Park Service Certification  
=====

I, hereby certify that this property is: ~~Entered in the~~  
National Register

- entered in the National Register  Allene Byer   5/12/90   
  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  
  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain):

for  Signature of Keeper Date of Action

=====  
6. Function or Use  
=====

Historic:  Religion; Church  Sub:    
 Cemetery   
Current :  Religion; Church  Sub:    
 Cemetery

=====  
7. Description  
=====

Architectural Classification:

Gothic Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation brick roof asphalt shingles  
walls weatherboard other wood  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

=====  
8. Statement of Significance  
=====

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : A

Areas of Significance: Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: 1907

Significant Dates : N/A

Significant Person(s): N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

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St. John's Methodist Church and cemetery is located in Indian River Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware on the southeast corner of Springfield Crossroads about three miles southeast of Georgetown. The surrounding area is farm land and has been for over two hundred years. The crossroads consists of the church complex, a house and a small, frame, nineteenth-century store. The church fronts on Delaware State Route 30, the Milford-Millsboro Road, a wide, two lane highway; the side road is a smaller road, Sussex Road 47, that goes to Georgetown and to St. George's Chapel. Historically, it was known as the Chapel Road because of its association with that chapel.

The St. John's church complex consists of the 1907 church, a cemetery and a church hall. The grounds are well maintained. There is a small grove of trees next to the church hall.

St. John's Church is a single-story Gothic-Revival frame building built in 1907. The building is a long, narrow rectangle with a raised brick foundation and no basement. The church is set out on a east/west axis with the main entry in the west gable end.

The exterior walls are of mill-sawn weatherboards with plain corner boards. The steeply pitched gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The cornice is plain with overhanging eaves and exposed decorative rafter ends. An exterior brick chimney is centrally located on both north and south walls.

A two-story belfry tower with a steeply pitched pyramidal roof is found at the southwest corner of the church. Three open, square-headed windows form an arcade in the belfry. A pent roof at the base of the steeple features a miniature cross gable above each arcade window. The steeple roof is covered in wooden square-cut shingles painted white. The upper portion of the steeple tower is decorated with a square and triangle pattern of wooden shingles. The lower portion of the tower is standard horizontal weatherboard. A tall, stained glass lancet window pierces the south side of the tower. A double door entrance crowned with a stained glass, Gothic-Revival transom light is found on the (west) front facing elevation of the tower. The steeple was damaged by lightning on August 23, 1983. The steeple was repaired in exactly the same manner in which it was originally constructed. A bell was added to the steeple at that time.

A matching northern entrance is located on the northwest corner of the church in a small gable-roofed, single-bay extension. Both entrances are thus situated in extensions distinct from the main block of the church. The wooden doors are panelled. The entrances flank a large, arched, Gothic, stained-glass window consisting of three lancet windows surmounted by two lozenge-shaped sections and a small diamond section. As in the

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National Park Service

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belfry tower, the upper third of the facade is covered with a square and triangle pattern of wooden shingles.

The south nave wall exhibits three stained-glass lancet windows, and the north nave wall contains four matching windows. All windows are set in plain wood surrounds with arched, molded caps.

The rear (east) gable end displays a shallow, gable-roofed projection encompassing all but the southern-most bay of the wall. This extension forms the apse and houses the pulpit. The north and south side of the apse have a single stained-glass lancet window. The exposed southern bay of the apse also has a single lancet window. The exposed gable areas of both the rear wall and the wall of the apse are decorated with a pattern of square and triangle wood shingles.

On the interior it became evident that the narthex and the bell tower are identical projections along with the wainscoting moulded chair rails and moulded door surrounds. No door leads from the north entrance but a double-hinged covered door leads from the bell tower into the nave.

The nave has moulded chair rail and wainscoting identical to the entrances. The moulding and the Gothic lancet windows are wide and heavily moulded. The ceiling is covered with original pressed tin in a floral design. The pews are made of heavy oak and have delicately curved sides and backs. The turned balustrade around the chancel is also made of heavy stained oak.

The apse at the east end of the building curves out into the nave and is accessed a low step.

North of the church is the church hall. It was originally constructed in the mid 1930s as a Civilian Conservation Corps barrack at the Georgetown Camp. In 1949, it was declared surplus and donated to the church. It is a large building, 80' x 20' with a 20' addition on the west end that contains a kitchen.

The cemetery is on the south side of the church. It's dimensions are 189' by 347'. The oldest section is enclosed by a low rusticated cement block wall. The wall wraps around behind the church. A new section of the cemetery is enclosed by a modern metal fence and separated from the older cemetery by a narrow dirt lane. The stones are laid out in rectangular lots in regular rows. Most of the stones date from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There are, however, a fair number of 1850s and 1860s stones near the present church and alongside the cemetery wall on the main road. There is some family grouping of stones but there are very few individual family plots. The carving on the stones reflect religious themes with some individualized passages of poetry or biblical lines.

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St. John's Methodist Church and cemetery is eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion C as an well-preserved and excellent example of the use of the Gothic-Revival style in a small rural church and for its well planned and laid out cemetery which contains a large collection of intact nineteenth-century and early twentieth century tombstones.

The church congregation dates its beginnings to the 1830s. The members were loosely affiliated with the Methodist Church and organized as "Johnson's Society." They meet in private homes and in the school that was located near Springfield Crossroads. The name may refer to the large number of Johnson family farms that surrounded the church in the 1850 - 1880 period.

On May 21, 1852, the Society met and organized themselves as St. John's Church. The Society's pastor, John Hough, was appointed as chairman of a building committee. An acre of land was purchased at Springfield Crossroads in July of 1852. The frame of the church was raised in September of the same year.

The first burial was in May of 1853. In 1857, the burial ground was laid out in lots and arrangements for a fence were made. Additional land for the cemetery was bought in 1874 and in 1893.

In 1892, a circuit agreement was made with the Methodist conference. St. John's was made a part of the Georgetown Circuit along with three other small local churches. St. John's remains in the Georgetown circuit along with two other churches.

As the congregation grew, need for a large facility was needed. The original church was enlarged in 1892. In 1907, the congregation decided to build a new building, the present church. The old church was sold in 1908 and moved across the street to the Wilson Farm. The former church was used as a barn until it was torn down in 1956.

The church building is rectangular in plan as are most rural Delaware churches. While the main architectural influence is the Gothic-Revival, there are elements of the Queen Anne in the steeple and in the small wings that are used to house the front doors. The wings are actually small vestibule entrances. The effect of their use is to provide more useable space on the interior since a lobby area is not needed and the wings give the front facade of the church a more massive appearance. The large stained-glass window dominates the front. Above the window in the gable-end of the church, square cut shingles provide a decorative pattern that is repeated on the steeple. The design of the building with its small front wings and the broken line of the rear wall is not found on other rural Delaware churches.

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The interior of the church is plain, without much carving, but the tin ceiling is very elaborate and intact. The chancel and nave are open to the congregation. Just a railing and a raised platform separate the apse from the nave.

While most rural Delaware churches are rectangular in plan, are wood constructed of wood, and contain a single floor, most of them have been so altered over the years that surviving examples without additions are rare. For instance, the Zoar Methodist church, two miles south of St. Johns Church has been covered in colored form-stone or block-faced stucco. Others have had modern church halls built directly onto the church. This either doubles the size of the building or, in addition, the hall is made of a non-compatible material such as cement or cinder block. Many other churches have been re-sided or have had their interiors redone to such an extent that the original historic fabric is lost. At St. John's Church, the congregation has gone to great lengths to preserve the church. The building is kept freshly painted. A central heating and cooling system has been installed. Recently the congregation had all of the stained glass windows in the church re-leaded.

The cemetery was established as an integral part of St. John's Church. The original purchase of the land in 1852 provided space for the cemetery. However, there are some early nineteenth century tombstones in the cemetery and church records indicate that there may have been a small burial there prior to church ownership. The present layout of the cemetery in rectangular lots dates to 1857. The stones are arranged in rows with the head stones facing east. There are no internal plantings or decorative features except for some individual lot fences. There is also a small brick walkway and commemorative marker to indicate the location of the original church. The present rusticated cement block well was erected in 1937. The cemetery is a contributing element to the complex.

The third building at St. John's Church is a church hall. It has only been in its present location since 1949. It was originally built in the mid-1930s as a barracks for the Georgetown Civilian Conservation Corps. During World War II it was used to house German Prisoners of War. These prisoners were hired out to local farms and businesses to replace the normal work-force that were serving in the American Armed Forces. Because the church hall is a recent addition to the church complex and was not historically associated with the church, it is a non-contributing element to this nomination. It is, however, potentially eligible for listing for its association with the CCC camps and POW camps in Delaware. Most of the CCC camp and the POW buildings in Delaware have been destroyed over the years since 1945.

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**COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING**

St. John's Methodist Church is located in the Lower Peninsula/Cypress Swamp region of Delaware. Its construction in 1907 places it in the Urbanization and early Suburbanization period in Delaware history. It is an example of property type 14, reflecting popular religious development.



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9. Major Bibliographical References

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See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

A preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

NA previously listed in the National Register  
 NA previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 NA designated a National Historic Landmark  
 NA recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 NA recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: 1.76

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>18</u>	<u>473240</u>	<u>4281300</u>	B	___	_____	_____
C	___	_____	_____	D	___	_____	_____

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

The bounds are the legal parcel that includes all of the property of St. John's Church described as Sussex County tax parcel 2-34-8-52.

Boundary Justification: \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

The nominated acreage has historically been associated with St. John's M.E. Church since at least 1893. Even though there is a new section of the historic cemetery, it is located on land purchased by the congregation in 1893 for cemetery expansion.

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: Stephen G. Del Sordo, Historian; Don Duhadaway, Jr., Historian;  
Kimberly R. Sebold, Research Assistant

Organization: Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation Date: 8/15/89

Street & Number: 15 The Green Telephone: (302) 736-5685

City or Town: Dover State: Delaware ZIP: 19901

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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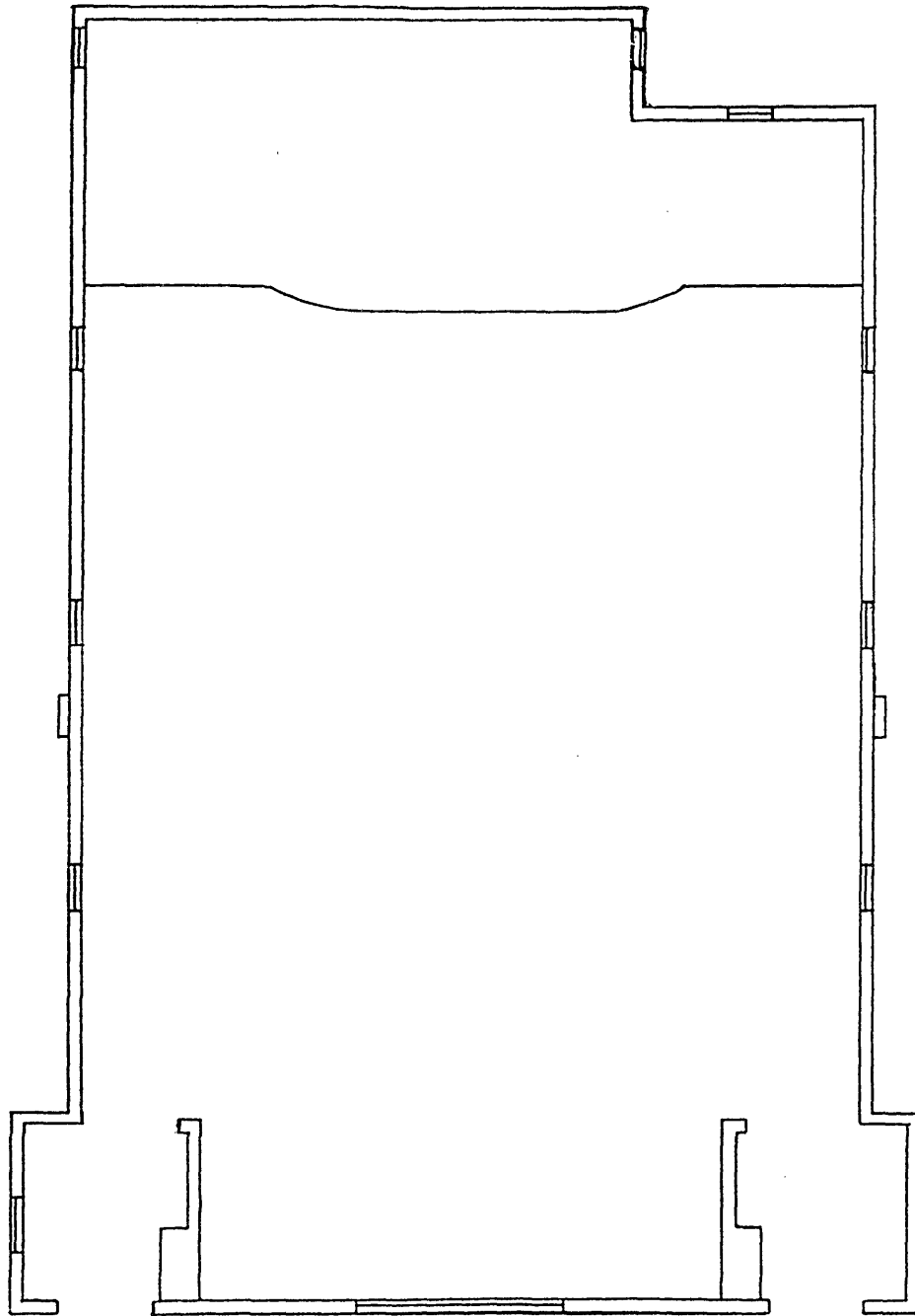
Page #   1  

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- Moore, J. Everett Jr. A History of St. John's Church. Springfield Crossroad, DE, n.d. Collected manuscript.
- Zebley, Frank R. The Churches of Delaware. Wilmington, DE: By the Author, 1947.

St. John's Methodist Church  
Sussex County  
Georgetown, Delaware



N ↙

*not to scale*

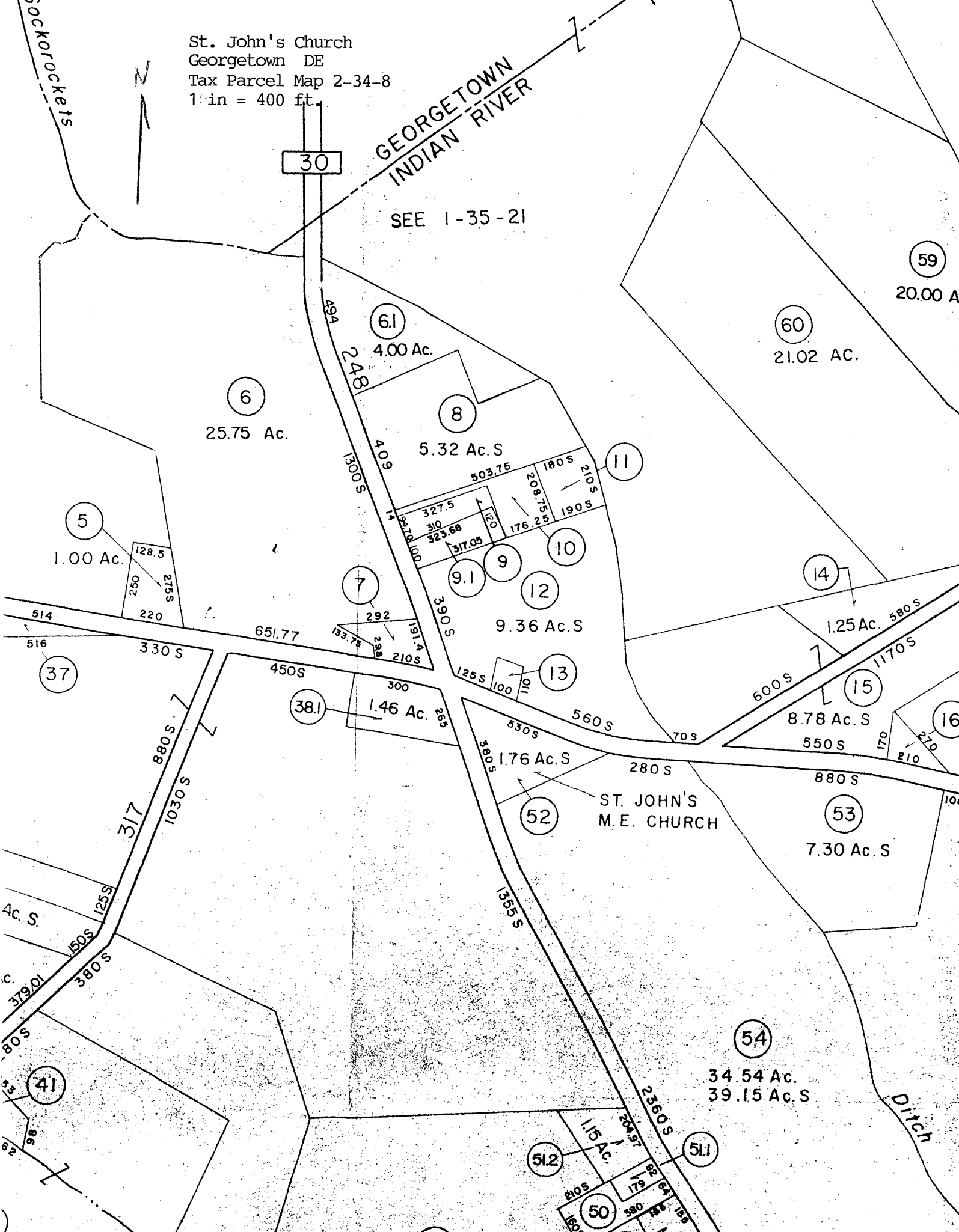
St. John's Church  
Georgetown DE  
Tax Parcel Map 2-34-8  
1 in = 400 ft.

GEORGETOWN  
INDIAN RIVER

SEE 1-35-21

30

Sockorockets



6  
25.75 Ac.

6.1  
4.00 Ac.

8  
5.32 Ac. S

60  
21.02 AC.

59  
20.00 Ac.

5  
1.00 Ac.

9.1  
9.36 Ac. S

12  
9.36 Ac. S

14  
1.25 Ac. 580 S

37

38.1  
1.46 Ac.

13  
1.76 Ac. S

15  
8.78 Ac. S

16

ST. JOHN'S  
M.E. CHURCH

52

53  
7.30 Ac. S

Ac. S

54  
34.54 Ac.  
39.15 Ac. S

41

51.2  
1.15 Ac.

51.1

50

Ditch