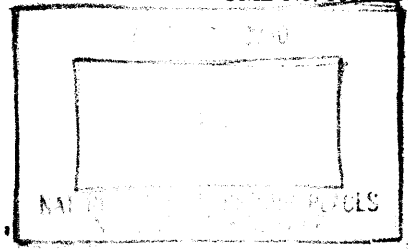


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



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

1. Name of Property

historic name Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Clear Springs Road (County Road 956) N/A not for publication

city or town Calhoun vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county McMinn code 107 zip code 37309

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Richard M. Tom 12/19/2006
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Edson H. Beall 2-1-07

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church
Name of Property

McMinn County, TN
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
2		sites
		structures
		objects
3	0	Total

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

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGIOUS: religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGIOUS: religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Gable-front

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Weatherboard

roof Metal

other Glass; Metal

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

Areas of Significance

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

(Enter categories from instructions)

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

ARCHITECTURE

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.

Period of Significance

c. 1860-1933

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

Significant Dates

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

c. 1860, 1933

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

B removed from its original location.

C moved from its original location.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property

Architect/Builder

Unknown

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

Primary location of additional data:

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

State Historic Preservation Office

previously listed in the National Register (church)

Other State Agency

Previously determined eligible by the National Register

Federal Agency

designated a National Historic Landmark

Local Government

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

University

Other

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Name of repository: McMinn County, TN Historical Society

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church
Name of Property

McMinn County, TN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 7 Acres Calhoun, TN 125 SW

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>710162</u>	<u>3905261</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Archambault/Historic Preservation Planner
organization Southeast Tennessee Development District date May, 2006
street & number 535 Chestnut St., 3rd Floor telephone 423.424.4266
city or town Chattanooga state TN zip code 37402

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

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

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name J.E. Firestone, Trustee of the Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church (contact person)
street & number 405 Bowater Road telephone 423.263.2616
city or town Delano state TN zip code 37325

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

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

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National Park Service

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Section number 7 Page 1

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church
McMinn County, TN

VII. Description

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church is located along Clear Springs Road (County Road 956) approximately five miles east of Calhoun (pop 496), McMinn County, Tennessee. The surrounding landscape of the church is rural and moderately wooded. The church is located on a seven-acre parcel of land, east of Clear Springs Road in the southwestern section of the county. Constructed circa 1860, the nominated church building is a one-story, gable-front frame building clad with weatherboard that rests on stone piers. The gable roof is covered with metal and includes a square steeple with wood vents capped by a pyramidal roof, which covers the church's original bell. The roof was originally covered with wooden shingles. A small, stone chimney protrudes from the center of the roof's ridgeline.

The east facade features the front entrances to the church. It has two symmetrical bays and includes two entryways into the church. Each front entrance has original paired, wooden doors and a four-pane transom. Leading up to the main entrances are a single set of three concrete steps. The façade also has moderate cornice returns.

On the south elevation, a series of three windows are symmetrically placed. Two hinged, wooden shutters cover each opening. The shutters originally covered three, six-over-six double-hung sash window units. All of the six-over-six windows in the church were replaced by twelve-over-twelve windows in the 1920s. The south elevation retains only one twelve-over-twelve window. The other two windows were damaged due to vandalism in 2005. The damaged windows have not been replaced. The rear elevation, facing west, features two, twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash windows, covered by wooden shutters.

The north elevation has three symmetrical bays, with two twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash windows, which are covered by swinging wooden shutters. The central bay, originally a window opening, was converted into a doorway in the early 1900s. This side entrance features a single wooden door with a four-pane transom, which is similar to the two front entryways.

The one-room sanctuary is 40 feet in length and 28 feet in width. The interior features a raised platform for the original pulpit, which is located in front of the west wall. Behind the pulpit along the west wall is a pew with two, twelve-over-twelve windows positioned symmetrically behind the pew. A set of three wood pews in the southwest and northwest sections of the sanctuary face the sides of the pulpit. The center of the sanctuary features a central support beam and also served as the location for the pot-bellied stove, which was removed in 1933 when Sunday services ceased at the church building. On either side of the center support post and extending toward the main entrance, are two sets of five wood pews. The original pews were replaced with the current set of pews in the 1950s.

The north wall features two, twelve-over-twelve windows with wooden shutters, and a side entrance door with a four-pane transom window. The east wall includes two, main-entrance doorways with four-pane transom windows, and a ladder, located at the northeast corner of the sanctuary. The ladder extends into the church's attic, allowing access to the bell tower. Three, symmetrically placed window openings with wooden shutters are located on the south wall. The window opening located near the east wall (front entrance)

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Section number 7 Page 2

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church
McMinn County, TN

includes a twelve-over-twelve window. The original, wide-plank pine wood ceiling contains six light fixtures and an opening near the center for the pot-bellied stove's pipe. The interior walls and floors are constructed of original, pine wood as well.

The baptismal pool, a contributing resource to the nominated property, is located approximately 70 feet east of the church's entrance at a spring. Vines and wood posts with chains surround the baptistery and stone steps descend into the baptismal pool on both sides. The spring water in the pool flows into Clear Springs Creek. The baptismal pool was used from the church's inception until 1933.

The Clear Springs Cemetery, also located on the seven-acre plot, is west of the church and along Clear Springs Road. The cemetery contains approximately 350 graves. The earliest burial in the cemetery was in 1863 and the majority of the stones date to the period of significance. While the cemetery is still open to burials, the most recent was in 2001. The stones in the cemetery are fairly modest in size and ornamentation. The non-extant Clear Springs School stood atop the hill behind the church property near Clear Springs Road from circa 1870 until the 1920s.

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Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church
McMinn County, TN

VIII. Statement of Significance

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, built c. 1860, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its architecture as a rural church. It is a rare unaltered example of a modest rural church building in McMinn County. The building represents the functional and unadorned style of church buildings found in rural southeast Tennessee communities. Built c. 1860, the church retains the majority of its historic materials including multi-pane windows and wide plank wood walls and ceiling. As a result, it retains a high level of integrity as a rare example of a modest church in the region dating from the mid-1800s.

Background

Presbyterianism became prevalent early in Tennessee's history. In 1777, Samuel Doak entered the northeastern Tennessee territory from Virginia, and established congregations near the Holston and Watauga Rivers. The frontier denomination split from the original Calvinist doctrines, which believed in predestination. The frontier Presbyterians or Cumberland Presbyterians, who formed in 1810, placed more emphasis on the free will of the human being.¹ McMinn County became the heart of the revival movement in Tennessee during the 1830s and 1840s. The first revival Presbyterian camp meetings were held in southeast Tennessee.² Hiram Douglas, a prominent preacher in the southeast Tennessee and north Georgia territory in the 1830s, was a member of the Hiwassee Presbytery and later became the organizing pastor of the Charleston Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Bradley County (N.R. listed 07/12/1984).³

The Clear Springs community, located five miles east of Calhoun, was a farming community when it was settled in the early nineteenth century. Calhoun, Tennessee, plotted on a 640 acre reservation by Major John Walker, a half-blood Cherokee, served as the McMinn County seat from 1820-1823. Later the county seat was permanently moved to Athens.⁴

On April 24, 1843, a congregation comprised of 23 people initially came from nearby Spring Creek Church and joined Pleasant Hill Church, and worshipped at a campground at the site of the present church. Some of the earliest members present at the Pleasant Hill Campground service were Reverend Floyd McGonegal, John Camp, and John Armstrong.⁵ Reverend McGonegal served as pastor of Pleasant Hill from 1843-1845.⁶

¹ Roebuck, David G. "Celebrating a Living Faith: Developing a Tour of Religious Sites in Southeast Tennessee." 8 December 2004, p. 4.

² Byrum, C. Stephen. *McMinn County*. Memphis State University Press: Memphis, TN, 1984, p. 82. See also, Morelock, Ann and Trehwitt, Katharine, ed. *History of the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Cleveland, Tennessee, 1837-1987*. Church Committee: Cleveland, 1989, p. 35.

³ Lillard, Ray G., ed. *The History of Bradley County*. The History Committee, Bradley County Chapter, East Tennessee Historical Society: Cleveland, TN, 1976, p. 110.

⁴ Wooten, John. *Scrapbook History of McMinn County*. Cleveland, TN, 1937, pp. 339, 371.

⁵ Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church Minutes, 1843-1933, McMinn County Historical Society, Athens, TN, p. 2. See also, *McMinn County, Tennessee and Its People, 1819-1997*. McMinn County Heritage Book Committee: Don Mills, Inc.: Waynesville, NC, 1997, p. 71.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church
McMinn County, TN

The first families to live in the Calhoun, TN area and attend the Pleasant Hill Church included family names such as Clark, Scarbrough, Dillon, Wilson, Longly, Hambright, Connel, Armstrong, Manker, Michaels, Templeton, Hampton, Camp, Liner, and Coughman.⁷ The prominent Hambright Family included Benjamin Hambright who assisted in the establishment of McMinn County in 1820. Benjamin's father, Captain John Hambright, fought at King's Mountain during the Revolutionary War.⁸

In 1852, elders of the Pleasant Hill Campground, who included Anderson and John Clark, Thomas Bishop, Wade Hampton, William Scarbrough, and William Porter, purchased a two-acre parcel of land for \$12.50 to build a church at the present location.⁹ During the 1850s, the name of the church changed from Pleasant Hill to Clear Springs.¹⁰ The name was derived from the natural springs, which are located directly east of the church. Members of Clear Springs were baptized in the spring pool. Circa 1860, members of Clear Springs built a white frame church, similar in style with others in the region, with a belfry and bell. On April 5, 1860, Reverend Jeremiah R. Fryor delivered the dedication sermon.¹¹

The Clear Springs Church was originally associated with the Hiwassee Presbytery for most of the nineteenth century.¹² In 1894, Clear Springs became a member of the Knoxville Presbytery, organized in 1827, because the Presbytery membership division line was on the McMinn/Bradley County line.¹³ Clear Spring's sister church, Charleston Cumberland Presbyterian Church, located in north Bradley County near the Hiwassee River and built in the 1850s, became members of the Chattanooga Presbytery. Circa 1897, members of Clear Springs joined the Chattanooga Presbytery because they could be better served by their geographic proximity to Chattanooga.¹⁴

The new building served its religious function, but also served as a singing school and education center until a grade school was built on the hill behind the church during the 1870s.¹⁵ Clear Springs was a prominent gospel-singing center in East Tennessee. The original gospel-singing quartet included Tom Bishop, Fletcher Melton, John McDonald and Allen McDonald. The Clear Springs School consolidated with the Claxton School in 1921. The community school in Claxton became one of the first consolidated schools in McMinn County.¹⁶

⁶ Morelock and Trewitt, *History of the First Cumberland Church*, p. 202.

⁷ Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church Minutes, 1843, p. 1.

⁸ Wooten, John. *The Hambrights of Tennessee*. Cleveland, TN, 1937, p. 6.

⁹ McMinn County, Tennessee Deed Book K Pages 79, 305.

¹⁰ Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church Minutes, 1858, p. 10. Note: There is a gap in the church minutes from 1845 until 1858. There is no exact date known when the church changed its name from Pleasant Hill to Clear Springs.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 5 April 1860, p. 23.

¹² Bigham, Bill. *Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church*. Available at:

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~tnmcminn/CLAXTON.html>

¹³ Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church Minutes, 1894, p. 59. See also, McDonnold, B.W. *History of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church*. Board of Publication Of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1899, p. 147.

¹⁴ Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church Minutes, 1 August 1897, p. 59.

¹⁵ *McMinn County, Tennessee and Its People, 1819-1997*, p. 71, and J. Edward Firestone, Interview, 16 May 2006.

¹⁶ Bigham, *Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church*.

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Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church
McMinn County, TN

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church maintained a consistently strong congregation into the twentieth century.¹⁷ Then in the late 1920s and early 1930s its usage significantly declined because of an older congregation, the rise of the automobile, and a shift to urban areas.¹⁸ According to the Clear Springs minutes, dated on August 11, 1931, Pastor W.E. Morgan, W.A. Blades, and Fannie Bishop held a special meeting because the church was in a “disorganized condition.”¹⁹ Efforts to attract new members were unsuccessful and the Clear Springs Church ceased Sunday services shortly after October of 1933.²⁰ Members of the Liner and Firestone families made up most the congregation during the church’s final years of continual Sunday services. In fact, the last people to be baptized at Clear Springs were Waymand Firestone, J. Edward Firestone, Willie Belle Liner, and Lucille Liner.²¹

Clear Springs members began to move away from the area. Some attended the nearby Charleston Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and others, as the church minutes indicate, began attending local Baptist churches and exploring other religious denominations.²²

Today the church’s setting remains rural in southern McMinn County. Clear Springs Church is now used for special events, such as funerals, weddings, fall revivals, and homecomings. The Clear Springs Cemetery is located west of the church on a hill. The earliest burial in the cemetery is Jane Hambright, who was buried on January 17, 1863. The most recent burial is George Vernon Liner, who was buried on June 27, 2001. Annual homecomings are held on the second Sunday every June.²³ Past homecomings have brought well-noted gospel singers such as the Spear Family and The Statesmen Quartet. Annual events continue to be held at the Clear Springs Church by the trustees so it may continue to serve its religious function and avoid demolition.²⁴

The Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church building is similar in architectural style with other rural church structures in the southeast Tennessee area. Other examples of simple, rural meetinghouses in the region include the Mt. Zion Methodist Church (c. 1850)(N.R. listed 07/06/1982), located near Decatur, Meigs County²⁵; Charleston Cumberland Presbyterian Church (c. 1860), Bradley County²⁶; and the Beth Salem Presbyterian Church (c. 1870, 1920) (N.R. listed 06/22/2000) near Athens, McMinn County.²⁷ All four structures are one-story, gable-front frame churches covered with weatherboard siding. In addition, they

¹⁷ *McMinn County, Tennessee and Its People, 1819-1997*, p. 71.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church Minutes, 11 August 1931, p. 89.

²⁰ J. Edward Firestone, Interview, 16 May 2006.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 24 September 1933, p. 84.

²² *Ibid.*, 11 August 1931, pp. 87-88.

²³ *McMinn County, Tennessee and Its People, 1819-1997*, p. 71.

²⁴ J. Edward Firestone, Interview, 16 May 2006.

²⁵ Toplovich, Ann. “Mount Zion Church. Historic Resources Survey of Meigs County, Tennessee”, (Multiple Resource Nomination). Tennessee Historical Commission, 6 July 1982.

²⁶ Addison, Stephen and Lillard, Roy. “Charleston Cumberland Presbyterian Church” (National Register Nomination), Bradley County Historical Society, 12 July 1984.

²⁷ “Beth Salem Presbyterian Church” (National Register Nomination), 22 June 2000. Note: The Beth Salem Presbyterian Church was reconstructed in the 1920s after the original church burned.

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Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church
McMinn County, TN

are all three-bays deep with wood shutters and wood paneled doors. The Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church serves as one of the few physical reminders of an early, rural meetinghouse in McMinn County and southeast Tennessee.

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Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church
McMinn County, TN

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J. Edward Firestone, Interview by author, 16 May 2006.

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Morelock, Ann and Trewhitt, Katharine, ed. *History of the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Cleveland, Tennessee, 1837-1987*. Church Committee: Cleveland, TN, 1989.

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Toplovich, Ann. "Mount Zion Church. Historic Resources Survey of Meigs County, Tennessee", (National Register Multiple Resource Nomination). Tennessee Historical Commission, 6 July 1982.

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_____. *Scrapbook History of McMinn County*. Cleveland, TN, 1937.

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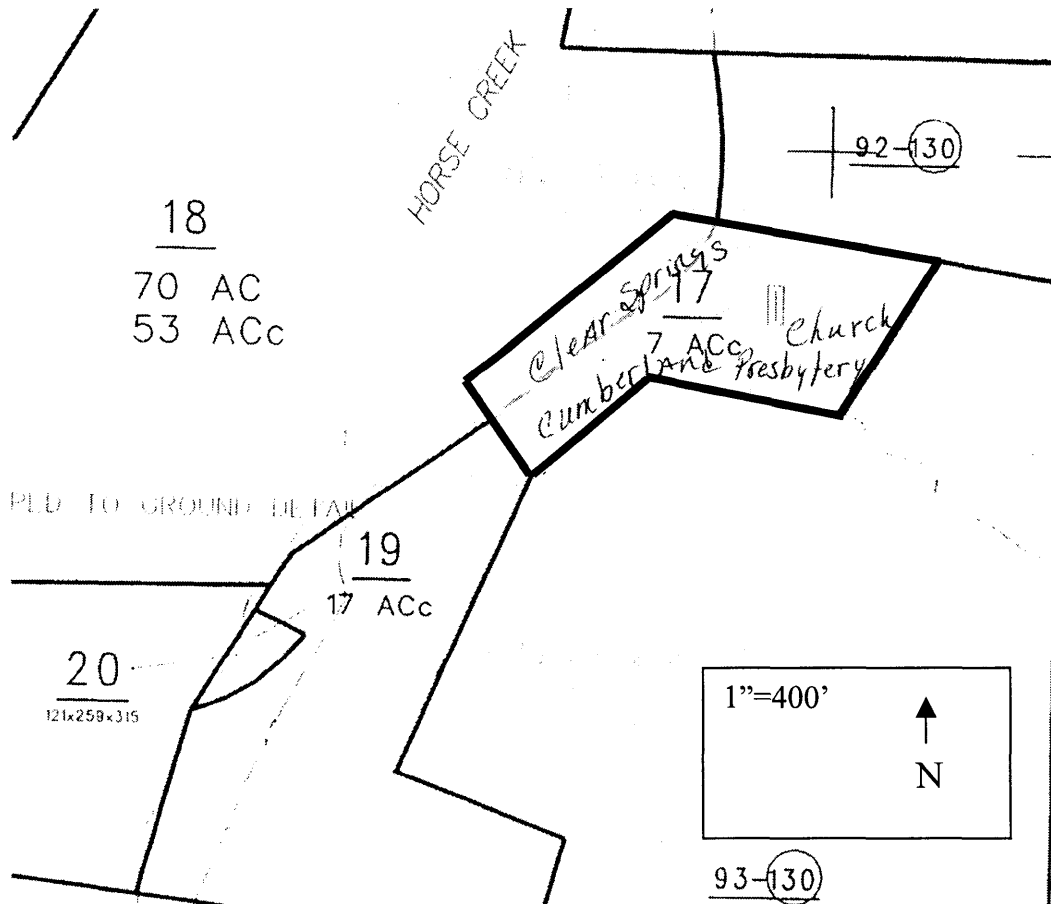
Section number 10 Page 8

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church
McMinn County, TN

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal boundary description and boundary justification:

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church is located off of Clear Springs Road (County Road 956), approximately 5 miles east of Calhoun in McMinn County, Tennessee. It is listed as Parcel 17 on McMinn County Tax Map 129. The scale of the map is 1"=400' and is the only scale available for this area. The nominated boundaries contain the extant historic church structure, baptismal pool, and cemetery on the seven-acre rural, wooded lot.



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Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church
McMinn County, TN

Section number PHOTOS Page 9

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographer: Paul Archambault
Southeast Tennessee Development District
535 Chestnut Street, 3rd Floor
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402

Date: June 2006
Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, east facade, facing west
1 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, east facade, facing west
2 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, east facade & north elevation, facing southwest
3 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, north elevation, facing south
4 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, north & west elevations, facing southeast
5 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, west elevation, facing east
6 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, west & south elevations, facing northeast
7 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, south elevation, facing north
8 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, south elevation & east facade, facing northwest
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Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church
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Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, sanctuary and main entrance, facing southeast
10 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, sanctuary and main entrance, facing east
11 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, main entrance, facing southeast
12 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church, interior view of window, facing north
13 of 18

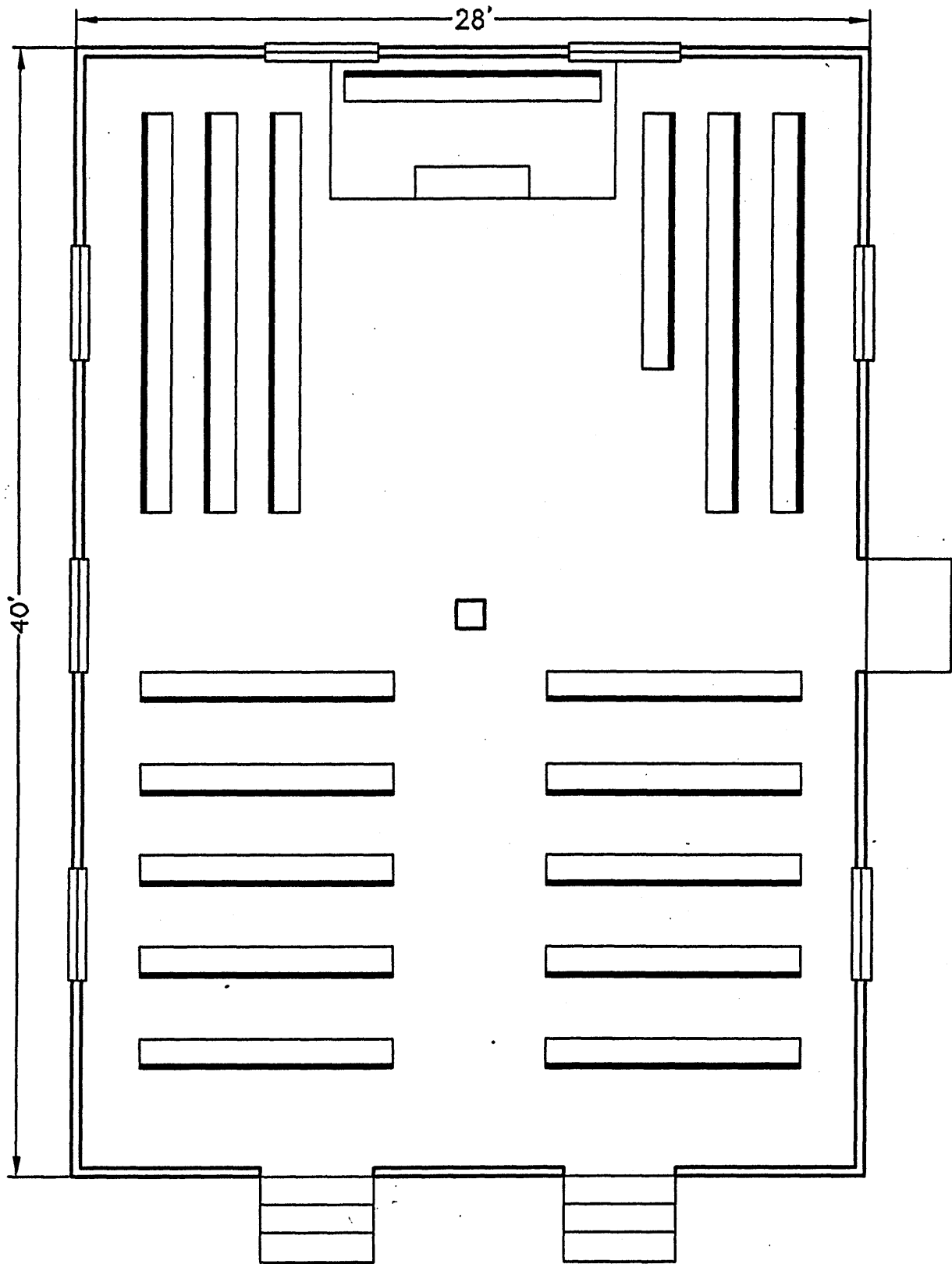
Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church Baptismal Pool, facing northwest
14 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Church Baptismal Pool, facing southeast
15 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Cemetery, facing southwest
16 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Cemetery, facing west
17 of 18

Clear Springs Cumberland Presbyterian Cemetery, facing south
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*Clear Springs Cumberland
Presbyterian Church
McMinn County, Tennessee*