

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



## 1. Name of Property

historic name Helena United Methodist Church

other names/site number MS-H-21

## 2. Location

street & number 6479 Helena Road

N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Helena

N/A ☐ vicinity

state Kentucky code KY county Mason code 161 zip code 41055

## 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

Signature of certifying official / Title Mark Dennen/SHPO

12/24/09  
Date

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 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:)

James R. Colwell  
Signature of the Keeper

2/3/2010  
Date of Action

## 5. Classification

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

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site
<input type="checkbox"/>	Structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	<b>Total</b>

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

N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

### Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

### Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: Concrete block

roof: Asbestos shingle

other:

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**Narrative Description**

Helena United Methodist Church (MSH-21) is located in Mason County, Kentucky in the community of Helena. It is located on the north side of Kentucky 324, and directly accessible from that road. Helena is located approximately 9 miles south of Maysville, seat of Mason County, and 11 miles south of the Ohio River. The community sits about a mile-and-a-half between two north-south running transportation corridors, State Route 11 to the east, and the former L & N Railroad to the west.

**Description of the site and community**

The community of Helena today is an unincorporated town of less than 100 people. The town was started in 1829 or 1830 and grew considerably. In 1854 it was incorporated and had a post office, churches, school, and stores. The L&N railroad located a station, named Helena Junction, west of the present church. The small community was based on agriculture, with livestock and tobacco being the principal products (Calvert and Lee, p. 107). By the early-twentieth century, the town was quite prosperous. The previous Methodist church used by the congregation was constructed of wood in the nineteenth century and burned in 1914. The present church was built on a new site and completed the following year.

Helena today is a small unincorporated community surrounded by farm land. Much of the land currently belongs to an Amish community. Many of the houses in Helena are quite old, many are log structures covered by various types of siding. The store, post office and other places of commerce are long gone, but the church remains.

The church site today occupies an area of .75 acres. There are no other structures on the property. On the east and west side are houses, the Helena Road on the south and farm land on the north. The lot is rectangular with road frontage of 156 feet and is 208.5 feet deep. On the west side of the lot is the gravel entrance lane from the Helena road, with the lane forming a loop to the north.

The congregation began using the property apparently after April 23, 1913. The property was purchased from the heirs of William Luttrell (Deed book 115, page 635) There is no record in the County Clerk's office of the church owning this or any other property prior to this date. There is a photograph of the previous Methodist church that burned. Possibly it was originally constructed on farmland owned by a congregation member. There is no record of the original church except for the photograph and that the knowledge that it burned. Local historians have offered that the wooden church used to stand down Helena Road from the present church's location (Calvert and Lee, p. 118).

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**The church exterior**

According to the June 28, 1915 report in Maysville's *Daily Public Ledger*, the day after the church was dedicated, the cost of the new structure was \$10,000. A crowd of over one thousand people from churches in neighboring communities attended the event. The collection received from the dedication service was \$5,300. This amount relived the new church of all indebtedness. The church's architect, who designed it in the Classic Revival style, is not known.

The structure is a one-story rusticated concrete block church with T-plan, projecting apse on rear, tower with vestibule at southeast corner, and a concrete block raised basement. Except for the basement windows, all the church's windows are stained glass. The original shingles still cover the roof. The church's main entrance opens to the south with double doors, each having two small lights, and both topped by a stained glass transom. The Helena United Methodist Church exhibits Classic Revival style. The features of the church that lead to categorizing it in the Classical Revival style are regular patterning of fenestration, broad gables with an oculus-like openings, one-over-one fenestration, clean lines, and restrained ornamentation.

The blocks used in constructing the church were produced in Carlisle, Kentucky and transferred to the site by train. The local congregation used their own horses and wagons to transfer the concrete block from the Helena Junction train station to the building site. The stained glass windows were manufactured in Paris Kentucky and transferred to the site by train. It is not recorded who constructed the new church. The church contains a full basement with a poured concrete floor; the space has been used for both church and public meetings.

The church is accessed by one set of double doors, replacements of the original 3-panel doors, that enter into the vestibule after ascending concrete steps that are the height of the raised basement. On the southwest side of the church is a single door that enters directly into the sanctuary after ascending a set of concrete steps. On the rear of the church there is a door that enters into the pastor's study. Its steps were made of wood; they have been removed long ago and not replaced. The basement is accessed either by interior steps leading from the main floor, or from an external wood panel door on the east side with steps leading into the basement.

The main floor is lit for the most part by one-over-one double-hung windows. Four windows puncture the south side, 5 windows light the east and west walls, and 3 smaller windows light the north side. These windows all have heavy stone lintels. On both the south, east and west sides, these windows follow the same pattern: a bank of two or three windows are grouped beneath the circular window, with a single window flanking the group on each side. The bell tower has a single double-hung one-over-one light window on its south side, more or less at the level of the circular windows, and two—one at the level of the circular windows, and one below in line with the main door—on its east side. Two chimneys rise from the southward slope of the roof, visible from the front of the building.

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The rear (north) side of the church is plainer than the other sides, with an apsidal projection that contains a circular window in its small gable roof. Unlike the other sides, this circular windows does not contain double-hung windows beneath. Double-hung windows puncture the wall approximately at midpoints of the north side wall on either side of the apse.

**The Church Interior**

The interior of the church continues much of the exterior aesthetic, with simple wood moldings and restrained design features. The original embossed metal tiles cover the ceiling of the main floor of the church. The church interior was constructed for a seating capacity of several hundred people, and the ceiling rises to a dramatic height.

Circular stained glass windows light the north side wall over the pulpit, and south wall. On the sides and under the balcony the windows are rectangular. Many of the windows bear the names of former congregants or scriptural phrases. Each window has similarities in design and color pattern, and each has a circular symbol in the upper part that makes each window distinctive. For example, Noah's Ark fills one of those circles; another has the cross and crown of Jesus; the circular window behind the pulpit has an eye, symbolizing the watchfulness of the divinity.

The vestibule with the main entry doors was directly under the bell tower. It has one rectangular stained glass window on the east side and double wood panel doors leading into the sanctuary. The sanctuary has stained glass windows on three sides, a pulpit centered on the north side, and an apse that projects beyond the pulpit (northward). The sanctuary has folding wood panel doors which allow much of its southern space to be reduced in size by shutting those doors. Stairs to the balcony and to the basement are in this southern part of the interior. The pastor's study is located on the north east part of the church.

Inside are stairs that lead to the basement and to the balcony. There is a small room open to the balcony where the rope for the bell originally hung. The balcony contains wooden pews that were part of the original church that burned, according to older congregational members. A large circular stained glass window is directly behind the pews. At this time the balcony is not in use. In the late 1940's it was closed to save on heating costs. With the current expansion in church membership it is planned to restore the balcony for use.

The basement ceiling is supported by a central wooden beam with steel posts resting on the floor. The floor was poured when the church was constructed. The basement has been divided into a large central room with a small storage area along the north wall, a kitchen and heating\cooling area along the south wall. Rectangular windows light the basement, with clear glass surrounded by a border of small square stained glass lights. They were constructed to open and allow air flow through the basement area.

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**Changes to the building over time**

The church is much as it was in 1915. There major modification to the structure since its construction has been the removal of the bells from the bell tower. The removal was completed in the 1970s due to a structural weakness in the base of the tower. The tiles in the ceiling in the entrance vestibule were removed, having been damaged by water penetrating from the failing bell tower.

In the 1970s the coal bin was converted into a small Sunday School room in the basement and a rest room was added to the southwest corner of the main floor. The basement stairs have been modified for a chair lift that was placed in the church in the 1980s. The pews from 1915 were replaced in the 1980s and carpet now covers the original floor.

Other modifications include upgrades on the heating/cooling system and plumbing. While the church retains its original shingle roof, at this time roof replacement is underway. The original shingles contain asbestos. The new shingles were chosen to match the original color as closely as possible so as to retain the original character of the structure.

Plans are in progress for the construction of a handicap accessible ramp from the parking area.

## 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)

Property is:

- ☒ 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.

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been Requested)
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

### Period of Significance

1914

### Significant Dates

1914

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

### Cultural Affiliation

NA

### Architect/Builder

Unknown

### Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance**

The Helena United Methodist Church (MSH-21) meets National Register Criteria C and Criterion Consideration A. Its significant in the area of Architecture has been evaluated within the context "Church Architecture in Mason County, Kentucky, 1900-1930". Its architectural identity is recognized by comparing it with the county's other churches; its architectural significance arises from how it reveals its community's identity and values. It is the only Classical Revival church in the area. The building is structurally sound, contains most of its original character, and still serves the current congregation and community as it did originally. The basement's intended use as a multipurpose room for the community indicates the structure not only would be used for religious purposes but could also serve community needs. The church was constructed with a modest design, solid construction, and simple lines, in keeping with the views and values of the congregation of the time.

**Historic Context: Church Architecture in Mason County, Kentucky, 1900-1930**

Mason County is recognized as one of Kentucky's centers of settlement and early development, and its historic architecture has been recorded with an awareness of its significance in the Commonwealth's past. The county was established in 1788, partitioned from Bourbon County. At the time of Kentucky's statehood in 1792, Mason County included all of the state east of the Licking River, stretching from present-day Campbell County in the north to Pike County to the south, an area spanning at least 17 of Kentucky's current counties. Maysville functioned an early transportation center, linking the Ohio River with the important Lexington to Maysville road, already a well-worn path when chartered as a turnpike by the legislature in 1817 and macadamized in the 1830s (Perrin, Battle, and Kniffin, 1888, p. 511).

Out of appreciation for this history, Mason County's resources have received better than average attention and recording. At the time of this nomination, Mason County has 1819 sites entered in the Kentucky Heritage Council survey database. This is thorough coverage given its relatively low population in 2000, 16,800, and the corresponding low number of households, 6847 (U.S. Census).

The single most prolific recorder of historic places in Mason County is a former Kentucky Heritage Council (the SHPO) employee, Gibson Worsham, an architect who left the staff to become a private consultant. He undertook two large projects that contribute to this nomination: a comprehensive survey of rural Mason County in 1989-1990, and a survey of Maysville in 1991-1992. These projects were sponsored by the Buffalo Trace Area Development District and supported by a Survey and Planning grant from the National Park Service and the SHPO. He recorded approximately 500 properties in the earlier effort (Worsham, 1990, p. 3) and another 500 properties in Maysville in the later one (Worsham, 1993, p. 3). Worsham recorded the Helena United Methodist Church and several comparison properties in 1989.

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Worsham offers the same overview of religious activity in both the Mason County and Maysville survey reports (pages 42-49 and 32-34, respectively). That is, mainline Protestant sects—Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterian—form local churches in the eighteenth century. The emotional tenor of the Great Awakening revivals in the first decade of the nineteenth century exerts an influence upon these early groups, shifting some local practices toward new theologies and more demonstrative expressions. Barton Stone's Christian Church gained adherents in the first part of the nineteenth century, as did the spirited preaching of Alexander Campbell in the 1820s and 1830s, whose "Campbellites" merged with the Christian church to form the Disciples of Christ. Soon after, the rightness or wrongness of slavery came to dominate nearly all religious debates, leading many local congregations to split into factions that aligned with either the denomination's Northern or Southern conference.

While one theme, severe conflict leading to division, defines religious history—Catholics vs. Protestants, rational vs. emotional Protestantism, slavery vs. abolitionist groups—there seems no effort by splinter groups to erect buildings that physically distinguish themselves from the former group to which they once belonged. Worsham does not report observing any correlation between Mason County's church architecture and religious belief during the nineteenth century. In fact, many congregations split into two by dramatic disagreements found no contradiction in continuing to use the same building at different times each Sunday, until one group could build a new worship space for itself (1990: 45).

This disconnection of form from theology is perhaps an Americanism in church design from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Church builders in the new republic seemed intent on proclaiming a greater patriotic expression than a theological one. That is, the thousands of small Greek temple-form churches erected throughout the land celebrated the democratic ideals associated with that form yet did not also connote the polytheistic pagan rituals that citizens in ancient Greece carried out in those temples. One such Mason County church, the Bracken Baptist Church (MS-MI-25, National Register 1983), of the early 1840s witnesses the local acceptance of this fashion. This trend illustrates that some of the vocabulary of church architecture cannot be interpreted too literally.

For the most part, church buildings in Mason County can be distinguished from non-church buildings, but beyond that, form and design give little clue to the identity of the group inhabiting the space. We can see a clearer division between rural and urban churches than between, for instance, rural Baptist churches and rural Presbyterian churches.

Churches in rural settings of Mason County tend to show a greater formal consistency than churches in urban settings do, so much so that "rural church" can serve as a category with a meaningful content more so than a category named "urban church" can. Those rural churches tend toward modesty in scale, rectangular shape, entry in the center of the gable side, and three or four bays in length. For many, the single decorative detail comes in the form of lancet arched windows, a hallmark of the gothic style, but many others have flat-topped windows.

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Worsham observes Mason County's antebellum churches following statewide architectural trends, that is, a continuing influence by the Greek Revival:

The simple brick nave-plan building...[is]...typical of many Protestant churches built throughout Kentucky during the Antebellum period, with its square-headed windows, paired doors, pediment, and panels of plain brick divided by strip pilasters (1990: 45).

By the late-nineteenth century, theological disagreements cease to impose themselves into the narrative of church design. The main issue that Worsham observed about any denomination seems to have been the architectural style of the new building it erected. He notes

Most rural and village churches took the vernacular nave-plan form with details often drawn from published pattern book sources. During the late nineteenth century several earlier churches were refaced or altered to give them a more complex silhouette or a more functional layout. A tower and vestibule were added to the Mayslick Christian Church, the Mayslick Baptist Church, and the Shannon Methodist Church (1990: 47).

Churches in Maysville might be termed "urban churches" due to their setting, but they exhibit much greater diversity in form and stylistic achievement than their rural counterparts do. Just the large size of some urban churches would require that an architect provide the design, which would open the door to greater influence of style in the resulting building. While the iconic plain church form of rural Mason County might seem a bit out of place in Maysville, the smaller villages of Dover, Helena, Minerva, Mayslick, and Washington all contained a mix of church forms, some extremely simple, others much more architectural.

This nomination author has selected 1900 through 1930 as the span of time to analyze church design in Mason County for a number of reasons. First, this time corresponds closely to the 25-year increments available for searches of the Kentucky Heritage Council survey database, from which we can draw a manageable population of comparison properties. Second, the early twentieth century architectural designs differ sufficiently from Victorian-era eclecticism of the nineteenth century, providing a substantial aesthetic on its own. Finally, Worsham seems not to have found much of architectural interest beyond the 1930s, despite continuing to record structures built as late as the 1950s (1993: 19).

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## Church Buildings Built in Mason County built 1900-1930 in the SHPO database

Name	Survey Number	Construction Date	Style
Murphysville Methodist Church	MS-154	1919	Vernacular
Orangeville Christian Church	MS-338	1911	Vernacular
<b>Helena Methodist Church</b>	<b>MS-H-21</b>	<b>1914</b>	<b>Classical Revival</b>
St. Patrick's Catholic Church	MS-M-129	1910	Gothic Revival
Bethel Baptist	MS-M-724	Ca. 1910	Former schoolhouse
Worthington Chapel	MS-MI-27	Ca. 1915	Vernacular
St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church	MS-ML-84	1923	Late Gothic Revival
Unnamed Church	MS-W-84	Ca. 1919	Vernacular

From this group of early-twentieth-century churches, there appears a division between Catholic groups, who employ gothic architecture, and Protestant groups, who chose not to use it. This would make a certain sense, as the gothic style would be identified with Catholicism, particularly the edifices of the medieval church that gave rise to the Reformation. However, an exclusive identity between gothic style and Catholic churches in Mason County disappears when the study group widens. The following non-Catholic churches in the county chose a gothic style of architecture for their building: First Presbyterian of Maysville (MS-M-66, 1850), Church of the Nativity Episcopal (MS-M-110, 1850), Washington Presbyterian (MS-W-29, ca. 1860), Maysville Christian (MS-M-116, 1876), Mayslick Presbyterian (MS-ML-54, 1877), Scott Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church (MS-M-607, 1884), Maysville First Baptist (MS-M-132, 1886), Orangeburg Methodist (MS-332, ca. 1890), Dover United Methodist (MS-D-10, ca. 1890), Dover Christian (MS-D-4, ca. 1950). Gothic style not only spans all Christian groups, it spans all times. It signals quite strongly the building's function as a church.

If any trend in the first part of the twentieth century presents itself, it is one of traditional design choices. That is, Mason County's Catholic churches selected a style consistent with centuries of Roman church design; Protestant churches in rural or small-town Mason County continued to invoke the simple form called here "rural church." Two congregations—Bethel Baptist in Maysville, and the United Methodists in the small town of Helena—chose somewhat non-traditional forms.

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Bethel Baptist, an African-American congregation in Maysville, occupied a building which formerly served as a school. Perhaps this choice was one of convenience, but we cannot overlook the very strong tradition within Kentucky's black population that sees schools and churches as the anchors of its community. Both building types stand as institutions for African Americans in the struggle to obtain social acceptance—schools providing freedom through intellectual development and churches providing a spiritual path to freedom. Bethel Baptist Church congregation appropriated a building symbolizing one path to self determination, and switched that building's use so that it could provide another path to liberty.

**Evaluation of the Design of the Helena United Methodist Church**

It makes more sense to interpret Helena United Methodist Church's design in light of the community's other constructions than if we try to see it as an effort to equal or surpass the design quality of the county's other churches. Its significance comes from what it says about its rural community. Much of its message results from what it does **not** do—it is not highly mannered, it is not overly formal, it rises not much above the level of houses that surround it, it does not occupy a much bigger lot than its neighbors, it isn't oversized, it calls little attention to itself. While more aesthetic in treatment than the rural church form defined above, it hardly could be called showy. Its carries itself within its landscape in roughly parallel the way a successful citizen in Helena might be expected to exhibit him/herself.

Helena is a stringtown sitting amid Mason County farmland. Two dozen buildings line State Route 324, one-half facing north, the other half facing south. Two large barns sit at opposite ends of the community, bookends at once admitting to the agricultural setting and announcing the beginning of the community. Behind many of the houses stand historic structures more typical of farms than urban lots—chicken coops, wash houses, smoke houses. There is no pretense to make one's property more than it is: a member of a farming community.

Most buildings date to before the second World War. The newest residences, three ranch houses, also occupy those sites at the ends of the community, where the house site was scooped out from the adjacent farmland. Except for two t-plan houses, Helena's residences have a plain appearance and rectangular plan; occupants enter their homes under the eaves, most under the cover of a porch. The community seems to have escaped the Victorian-era temptation to indulge in complex forms that hid surprising configurations of interior space.

Two non-residential buildings sit within the line of houses, the United Methodist church and a store, the now-vacant Berry Building (MS-D-4), suggesting that a complete village consists of its people and a place for commerce and worship. A few houses remain in Helena from the days before the railroad arrived in the area. Though the tracks skirted the town a mile-and-a-half to the west, it doesn't appear the townsfolk felt any need to grow in the direction of that important transport system, much less sensed the urgency that struck a few nineteenth century communities—those towns that wholly relocated to the rails so as to avoid being bypassed by what that line promised.

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The clapboard covered Methodist Church building which preceded the nominated building was a very traditional version of the rural church. It had a rectangular form, gable-side entry, and three double-hung 2-over-2 windows on each side with flat heads. Congregants entered the building through a bell tower that projected from the very center of the front gable. A historic photo of the structure cropped off any cross that might have risen above that bell tower. Without the cross, a casual observer might have taken the building for a one-room schoolhouse.

The building that became the community's new church signaled its identity as a church much less ambiguously. Its circular stained glass windows, asymmetrical form, ashlar stonework, crenelated parapet atop the bell tower, and ceremonial entry steps leading to the paired entry doors, all pointed to an ecclesiastical function. The previous church looked extremely on par with the surrounding frame residences that made up Helena; this new church architecturally extended the limits of the community's design palate. In a clear but not showy way, the new building promoted an elevated image of church within the community. The vocabulary—masonry materials, light classical detailing, clean lines, regularity in massing—was drawn from residential architecture, but the grammar communicated a refined view of church for a very rural community.

As is common with many rural churches, this building afforded meeting place to community as needed. In housing a basement which the previous building lacked, the 1915 church has dual spaces: secular-community space for all Helena residents in the basement, and sacred space for the congregation above. In the way that the church's exterior design elevated the design quality of the town's collective architectural expression, the church's interior gave a higher respect to the religious matters inside. In offering a separate space for public use of the buildings, which could allow non-religious people to discuss non-religious matters, the sacredness of the ceremonial space above would be enhanced.

In these ways, the church's design, from its spaces to its physical details, gives us important cues about a farming community with a solid identity, which seems to have grown more complex at a certain point in time. It would be intriguing to see if the story of this church's design, interpreted here as a community willingly embracing a change in its public aspect, has analogues showing it undergoing other changes during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Were other changes going on in Helena that were social or sociological in nature, at the eve of World War I? Or, was the new church instead, nothing more than a one-off, prompted by an accident and more an expression of an architect's tastes than his clients'? This much can be seen: the church was unusual-yet-fitting within the context of Mason County church design of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the church marked a conspicuous anomaly within the design landscape of Helena. It is significant for the questions it answers, as well as for the new ones it prompts, on how design can inform us about community identity.

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**Evaluation of the Integrity of the Helena United Methodist Church**

To meet Criterion C and Criterion Consideration A, a church in Mason County, Kentucky built from 1900-1930 must retain the following integrity factors which constitute the basis of its architectural significance: design, materials, and feeling. Other integrity factors can be present and reinforce the sense of important design.

The Helena United Methodist Church is an unusually well preserved property. Normally, evaluation of integrity will require a greater depth of analysis of the subject structure, comparison with similar others within the context, and consideration of the impact of lost historic material on the ability of the nominated property to tell its story. The Helena United Methodist Church is so intact, the normal methodology would seem excessive. Only two changes are observable. First, is the removal of the bell and its housing from the bell tower; second is the more recent replacement of the original 3-panel double front door with a modern double door having a fanlight on each door in place of the upper panel on the historic door. These changes do not constitute a loss of integrity of materials, as more than 95% of the building's materials are intact.

The building's integrity of design and feeling have been affected by the removal of the bell and the top of the bell tower. This removal has made the tower look squatter than it did, but certainly does not rob the church of its basic architectural identity, nor result in an unpleasing aesthetic design. Historic photographic views of the church indicate that the original bell tower rose some 12 feet from the top of the entry steps to the eave line, then about another 12-15 feet to the top of the tower—which was a point a few feet above the ridgeline. Today, the truncated bell tower rises only about half of that distance above the eave line, and its top stops a few feet below the building's ridge line. The full height that the tower once had gave an upward emphasis to the overall building composition. It balanced the earthbound effect of the rest of the building's mass. The church currently lacks the full extent of that upward emphasis, but the remaining portion of the tower still contributes to that vertical visual line. The change to the bell tower and to the front door, while departures from the complete historic design, are compatible enough to allow evaluation that the building retains its integrity of design and feeling.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**Name of Property **Helena United Methodist Church**County and State **Mason County, Kentucky**

Section 9

Page 1

**Bibliography**

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[http://books.google.com/books?id=qPsTAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_v2\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=qPsTAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_v2_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=&f=false)

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[http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/QTTable?\\_bm=n&\\_lang=en&\\_qr\\_name=DEC\\_2000\\_SF1\\_U\\_DP1&\\_ds\\_name=DEC\\_2000\\_SF1\\_U&\\_geo\\_id=05000US21161](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/QTTable?_bm=n&_lang=en&_qr_name=DEC_2000_SF1_U_DP1&_ds_name=DEC_2000_SF1_U&_geo_id=05000US21161)

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(Expires 5/31/2012)

County and State

**Acreage of Property** .75 acres

Quad Name Elizaville

1	17	257 880	4264 000
	Zone	Easting	Northing

3 Zone Easting Northing

2                                                                                
Zone      Easting      Northing

4                                                                 
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description See continuation sheets

**Boundary Justification** See continuation sheets

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Don Sundys	L. Martin Perry/National Register Coordinator
organization	Kentucky Heritage Council	date 11/10/09
street & number	448 Markwell Road	300 Washington St. telephone 859-233-2009
city or town	Hillsboro	state KY zip code 41049
e-mail	dsundys@windstream.net	

## Property Owner:

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property **Helena United Methodist Church**

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Section 10

Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description

The area proposed for listing in the National Register is given property code H-01-002, account number 0030000 in the Property Valuation Administrator's Office. From the original deed ( Deed Book 115, pg. 635) that area "Beginning at a point in the center of the Helena Turnpike road opposite a fence post near the Southeast corner of the I.O.O.F. building porch, thence in the center of the said pike S. 89 1/2 E 237 links (156 feet), thence leaving the pike N. 1E. 316 links (208.5 ft) to a stone: thence N. 89 1/2 E. 237 links (156 feet) to a stone in Lucien Luttrell's fence; thence with his line South 316 links to the beginning.

Boundary Justification

The area that is proposed for listing is the appropriate area to convey the architecturally significant resource. This area also has been the historic boundary for the property since the main feature's construction. The boundary selected is a rather small area for a church, and that modest size has been part of the interpretation of the church's architectural message.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Name of Property **Helena United Methodist Church**

County and State **Mason County, Kentucky**

Section Photos Page 1

**Photographic Identification**

Property: Helena United Methodist Church

Location: Mason County, Kentucky

Photographer: Don Sundys

Date: October, 2009

Location of digital media: Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort KY

**Image Specific information:**

0001: View of church, view to northwest

0002: View of church, view to southeast

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property **Helena United Methodist Church**

County and State **Mason County, Kentucky**

Additional  
Documentation

Page 1

Pictorial History of Helena United Methodist Church

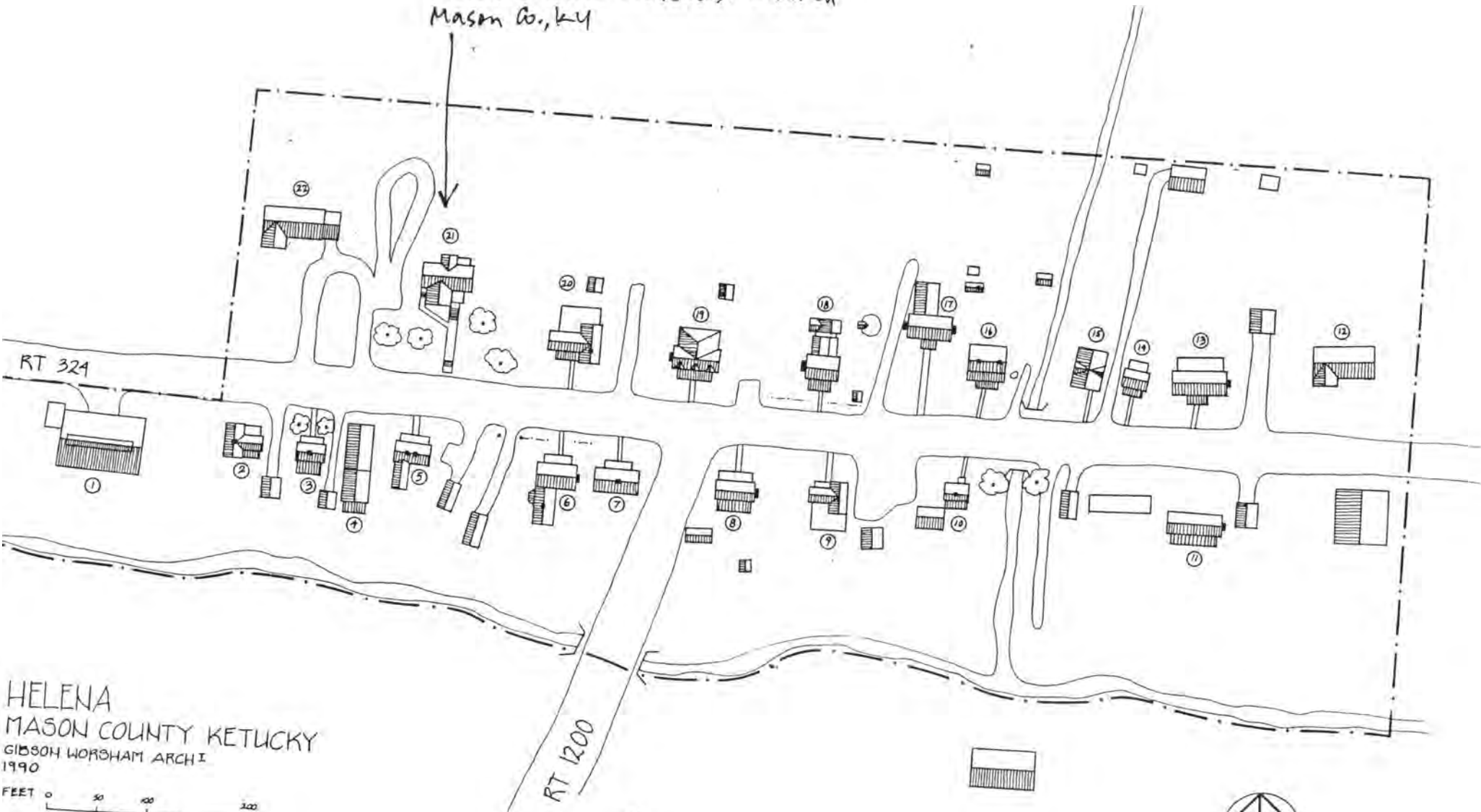


The Original Helena United Methodist Church that burned and prompted the construction of the current structure.



The church as it appeared with the bell tower. ( From a comemorative plate.)

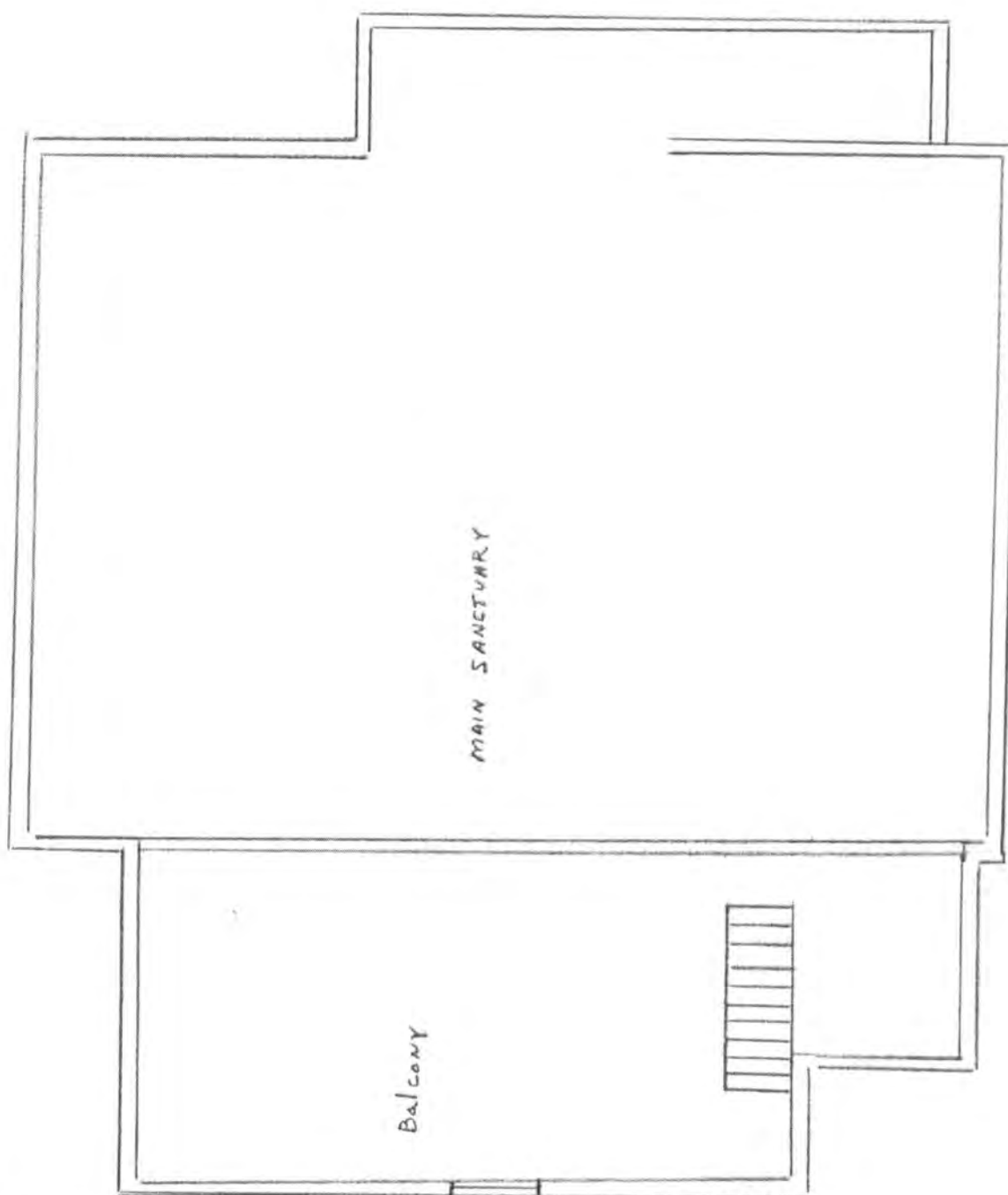
Helena United Methodist Church  
Mason Co., KY



HELENA  
MASON COUNTY KENTUCKY  
GIBSON WORSHAM ARCH I  
1990

FEET 0 50 100 150

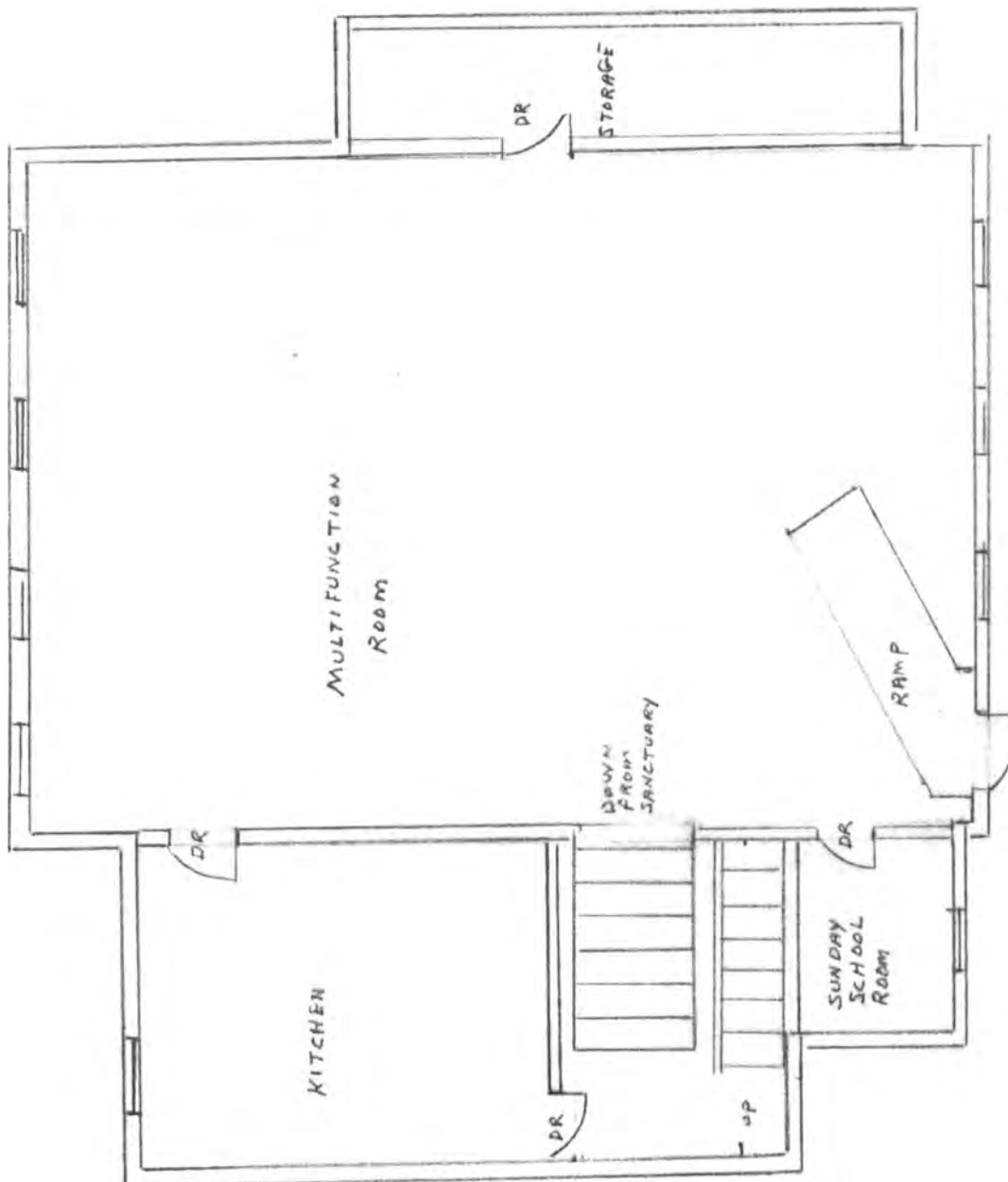




**Balcony Level**

**Helena United Methodist Church**

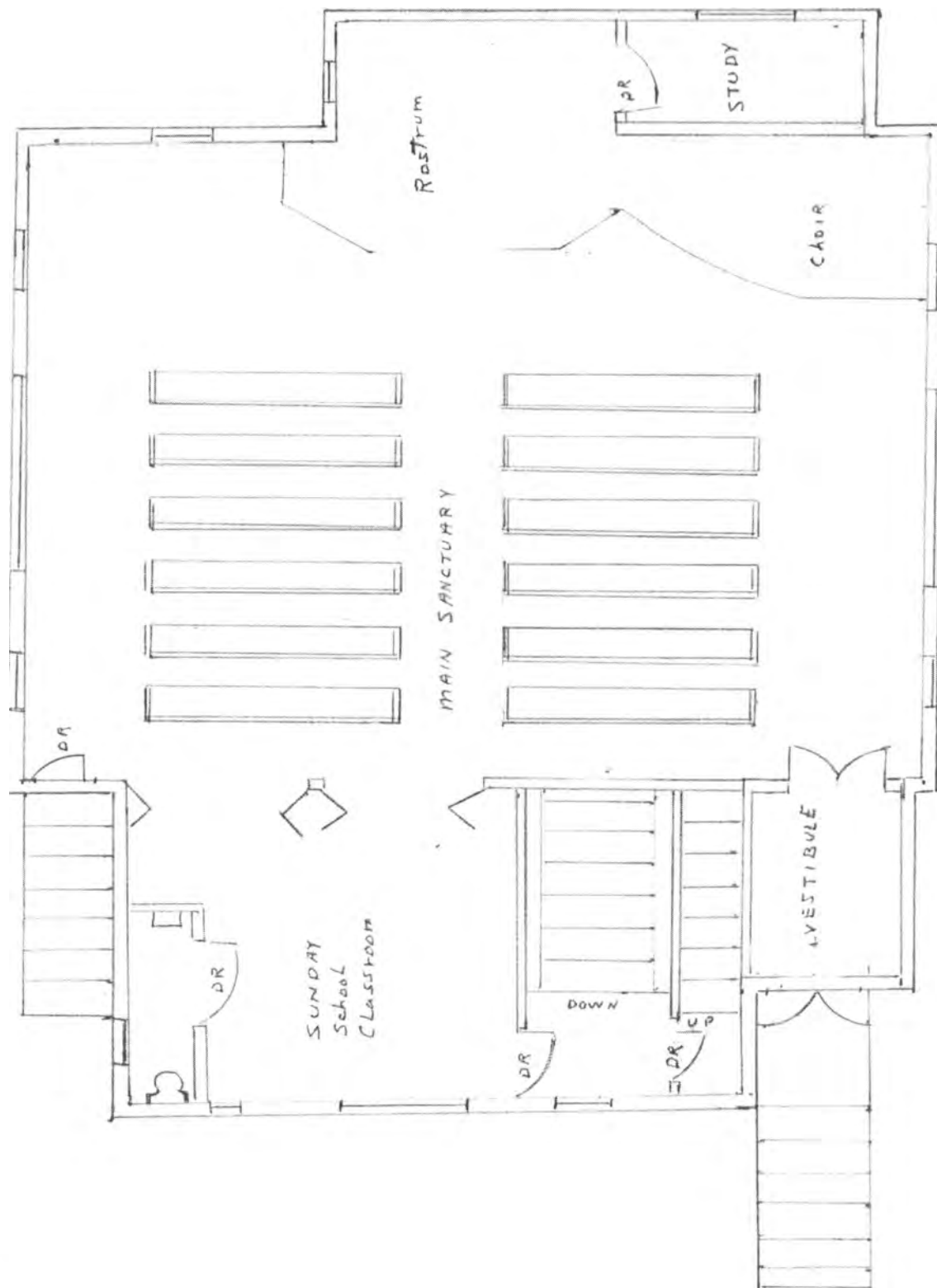
**Mason County, KY**



BASEMENT LEVEL

Helena United Methodist Church

Mason County, KY



**Main Sanctuary Level**

**Helena United Methodist Church**

**Mason County, KY**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Helena United Methodist Church  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: KENTUCKY, Mason

DATE RECEIVED: 12/24/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/19/10  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/03/10 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/07/10  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 09001311

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 2/3/2010 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Good example of style and materials. Excellent integrity.*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept C

REVIEWER J. Gubbert

DISCIPLINE Hishman

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



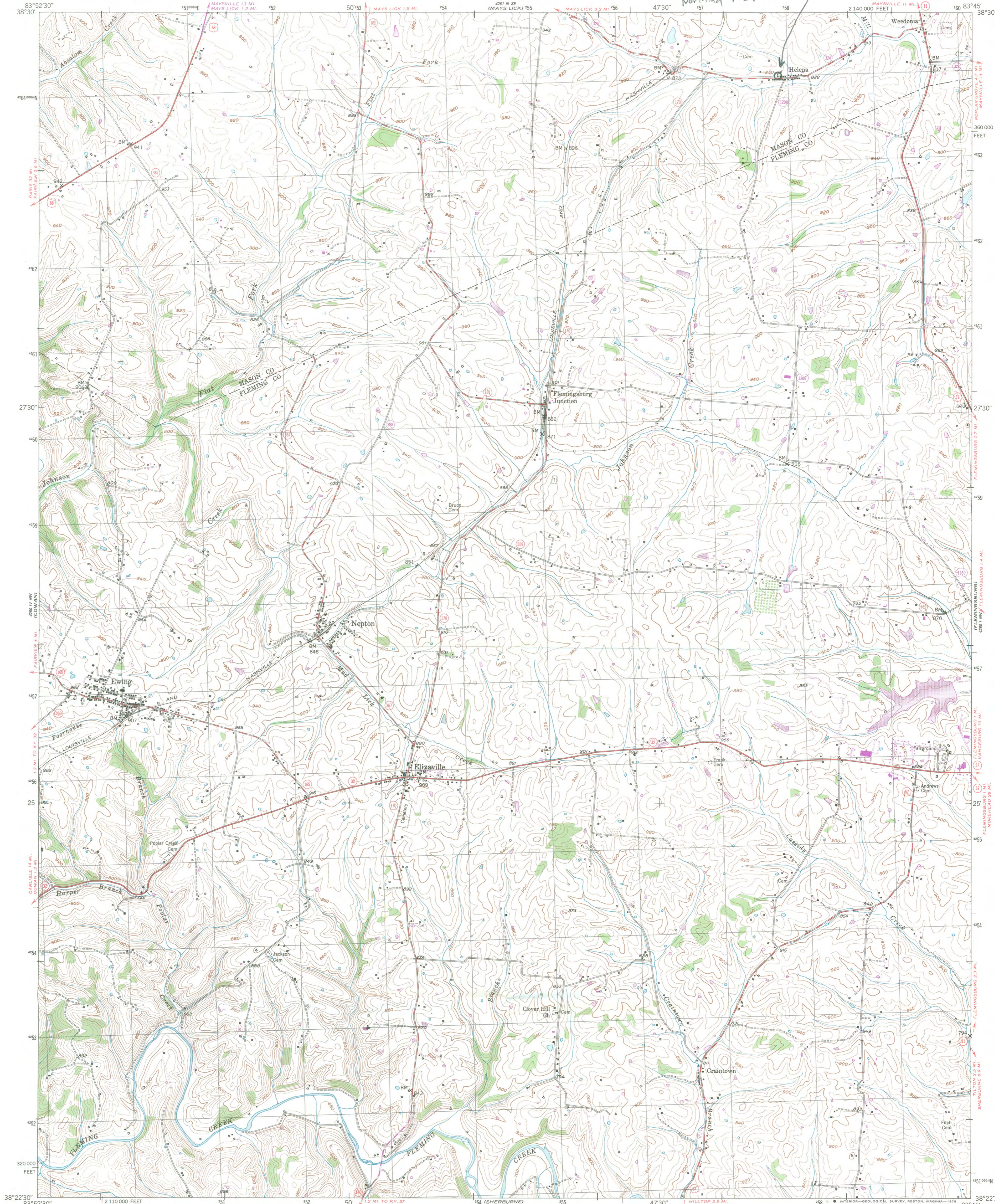
09/02/2009



09/02/2009

Helena United Methodist Church  
Mason Co., Ky  
Zone 17  
Easting 257 860  
Northing 4264 000

ELIZAVILLE QUADRANGLE  
KENTUCKY  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)  
NE/4 EWING 15' QUADRANGLE  
MAYSVILLE 11 MI.  
2 140 000 FEET



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

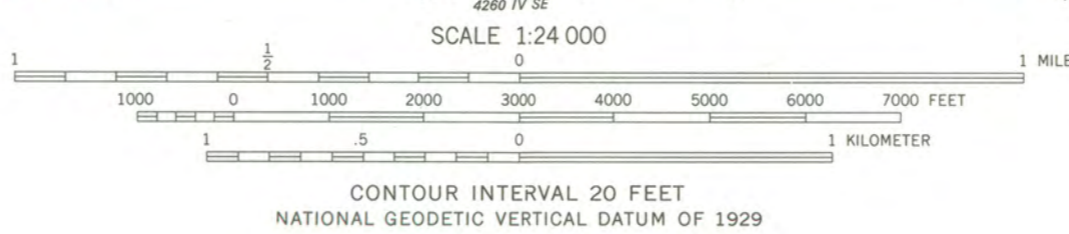
Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods  
Aerial photographs taken 1950. Field check 1952

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Kentucky coordinate system,  
north zone

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 17

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs  
taken 1975 and other source data. This information  
not field checked. Map edited 1978



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	4 LANE 10 LANE	Light-duty
Medium-duty	4 LANE 10 LANE	Unimproved dirt

U. S. Route State Route



ELIZAVILLE, KY.  
NE/4 EWING 15' QUADRANGLE  
N3822.5-W8345/7.5

1952  
PHOTO-REVISED 1978  
AMS 4260 IV NE-SERIES V893

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
KENTUCKY GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY 40506,  
AND KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY 40601  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



STEVEN L. BESHEAR  
GOVERNOR

**TOURISM, ARTS AND HERITAGE CABINET  
KENTUCKY HERITAGE COUNCIL**

MARCHETA SPARROW  
SECRETARY

THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
300 WASHINGTON STREET  
FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY 40601  
PHONE (502) 564-7005  
FAX (502) 564-5820  
www.heritage.ky.gov

MARK DENNEN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

December 21, 2009



Ms. Carol Shull, Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service 2280  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed are nominations approved at the December 14, 2009 Review Board meeting. We are submitting them for listing in the National Register:

**Colonel Gaines House (Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation)** Boone County, KY  
**Terrace Court Historic District**, Boyle County, Kentucky  
**Newport Courthouse Square Historic District**, Campbell County, Kentucky  
**Mud Brick House in Greensburg**, Green County, Kentucky  
**Callaway-Goodridge-Robertson Farm**, Henry County, Kentucky  
**Fourth District Elementary School**, Kenton County, Kentucky  
✓ **Helena United Methodist Church**, Mason County, Kentucky  
**Franklin Grade and High School**, Simpson County, Kentucky  
**Milliken Building**, Warren County, Kentucky

We appreciate your consideration of these nominations.

Sincerely,

Mark Dennen, SHPO and  
Executive Director  
Kentucky Heritage Council