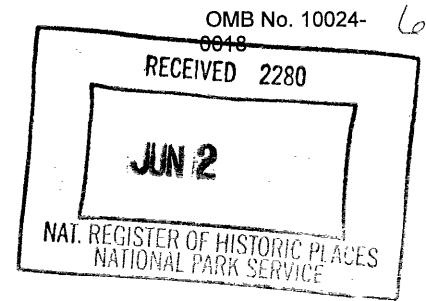


(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



OMB No. 10024-0048 696

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 Original Church of God

other names/site number Sanctified Church

2. Location

street & number 115 Gordon Street

N/A  not for publication

city or town Pulaski

N/A  vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Giles code 055 zip code 38748

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.)

Herbert C. Hays  
Signature of certifying official/Title

6/26/06  
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:)

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

8-9-06  
Date of Action

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

Original Church of God  
Name of Property

Giles County, Tennessee  
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	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

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

Historic Rural African-American Churches in Tennessee, 1860-1970

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

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

RELIGION/religious facility

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

RELIGION/religious facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival influence

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone; concrete  
walls brick; concrete  
roof metal; asphalt  
other wood

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Original Church of God  
Name of Property

Giles County, Tennessee  
County and State

**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** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion  
Ethnic Heritage: black  
Architecture

**Period of Significance**

ca.1907-1956

**Significant Dates**

ca.1907  
1943

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**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

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State Agency
  - Federal Agency
  - Local Government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: Center for Historic Preservation  
Middle Tennessee State University

Original Church of God  
Name of Property

Giles County, Tennessee  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre. Pulaski, Tenn 059 NE

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 497440 3896073  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

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 Elizabeth H. Moore, Research Fellow  
organization MTSU Center for Historic Preservation date November 10, 2005  
street & number Box 80 telephone 615-898-2947  
city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37132

### 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 Bishop James Murray, Original Church of God  
street & number 115 Gordon Street telephone 931-424-8634  
city or town Pulaski state TN zip code 38748

**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.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Original Church of God  
Giles County, Tennessee

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## 7. Physical Description

The Original Church of God is located at the northern end of downtown Pulaski (pop 7871) on Gordon Street. It faces north on Gordon Street and sits in a residential area located a block west of the intersection of Gordon and North First Street, or US Highway 31. The property includes two contributing properties, the ca. 1907 church building and the 1943 cinder-block structure used as a fellowship hall at the rear of the church. The one-room brick church building features an arched entry, corbelled cornice and a rough-cut stone foundation. The Original Church of God remains largely intact and is a significant example of an early twentieth century African-American church.

Built between 1907 and 1909 from the bricks of the burned Giles County Courthouse, the Original Church of God is a load-bearing masonry, rectangular-shaped building with a hipped, raised-seam metal roof, stepped brick cornice, and brick structural pilasters on each of the side façades. The rough-cut stone foundation is visible at the base of the building. The building has undergone some interior modernizations and exterior alterations such as the post-1987 replacement of the windows and the wood-paneled double entrance doors, but its form and overall appearance retain a high degree of architectural integrity.

The north, or front, façade contains the central entrance doors and flanking windows. The central entrance doors are solid wood double doors framed with a rounded wood arch. A semi-circular transom sits above the door within the arch. The transom is original, but the solid double doors replaced the original two-panel double doors from the burned Giles County courthouse. There is a replacement one-over-one, double-hung wood window on each side of the entrance with a row of brick headers above each window. A walkway leads from the street to the central entrance with two cement steps up to the door. The west façade contains three one-over-one double-hung, wood windows set slightly off-center toward the rear of the building. A row of brick headers lines the top of each window. On this façade, the rough-cut stone foundation, structural pilasters, and stepped brick cornice are visible.

The south, or rear, façade of the building is divided into three bays. The center of this façade contains a rectangular projecting apse with a sloping raised-seam metal roof. The east and west walls of this section each contain a one-over-one, double-hung wood window. In the bay to the west of this section is a six-panel door leading into the church. A wood ramp leads from the door to a sidewalk. To the east of the apse is a one-over-one, double-hung wood window. The east façade of the building is largely hidden by trees but is identical to the west façade of the building and contains three one-over-one, double-hung wood windows slightly off-center toward the rear of the building. The door and windows on the south and east façades are each topped with a row of brick headers. Storm windows cover the windows on each façade. An interior non-functioning brick chimney is located on the east side of the roof ridge.

Aside from the replacement of the central entrance door and windows, the exterior of the structure remains largely intact. Features such as the load-bearing masonry walls, the stepped-brick

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Original Church of God  
Giles County, Tennessee

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cornice, the brick structural pilasters, and the raised-seam metal roof contribute to the architectural significance of the building.

The interior of the Original Church of God also retains much of its original integrity. It contains a single rectangular-shaped room with a rectangular apse at the south end. A single section of replacement pews and two side aisles run the length of the church. Historic furniture includes the communion table and a hand-made altar. The evident mid twentieth century changes are the replacement pews, the acoustical tile ceiling, and the carpeting covering the floor. Two structural posts support the roof along the central axis of the building. Vertical beaded board wainscoting and plaster walls line the room. Within the apse is a slightly elevated platform that is likely original to the building. At the southeast corner of the room, a later, slightly elevated platform is enclosed by a wood rail. The slight alterations to the interior appear to have been made c. 1950 to modernize the church, but the original wall materials, plan and proportions of the interior retain their historical integrity.

A contributing small cinder-block building constructed in 1943 sits directly behind the church building and is used as a fellowship hall and classroom. The building faces toward the west and is topped with a side-gable roof of composite shingles. The gable ends of the building are covered in asphalt shingles and wood boards. The west façade contains two four-panel wood doors and two filled-in windows. A nonhistoric shed roof supported by three wood posts has been added to shelter the entrance. An exterior brick chimney lies on the east end of the south façade. The east façade contains a six-light window and a later bathroom addition constructed ca. 1965. This small bathroom addition stretches from the north end of the east facade and is covered by a shed roof and weatherboard siding.

The interior of this structure is a single room with cinder-block walls, a cement floor, and an acoustical tile ceiling. A stove sits along the south wall of the room and is connected to the exterior brick chimney. Along the east wall are two doors into the separate men's and women's bathrooms of the bathroom addition and two six-light windows, the northernmost is a glazed window into the bathroom. Aside from the bathroom addition and the covering at the entrance, this structure remains largely unchanged from its original form.

The Original Church of God stands as an intact example of an early twentieth century African-American church. It has continued to serve the community as a church and as a center for African-American life.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Original Church of God  
Giles County, Tennessee

## 8. Statement of Significance

The Original Church of God Church is nominated to the National Register under Criteria A for its statewide historical significance in the area of African-American ethnic heritage as it relates to religion. It is also being nominated under criteria C for its local significance in architecture. The building falls under Criteria Consideration A as a building owned by a religious institution and used for religious purposes. The church served as a place of worship and as a social center for the local African-American community. It meets the registration requirements stated in the Historic Rural African-American Churches in Tennessee, 1860-1970 Multiple Property Submission completed in 1999. It was included in the Multiple Property Submission as a part of the Church of God (Original) and Church of God statement of historic context as the earliest known black Church of God congregation and extant building in the state.<sup>1</sup>

The Original Church of God is architecturally significant under Criteria C as an intact example of a rural African-American church. Notable architectural features are its load-bearing masonry form, its brick structural pilasters, and its stepped brick cornice. Many of the African-American churches in Pulaski built at this time were of frame construction and later churches were often faced in brick or concrete block with a frame structural system. The salvaging of the bricks from the 1907 burning of the county courthouse allowed the congregation to erect this load-bearing structure supported by architectural features such as the brick structural piers and stepped brick cornice. The church also secured the two-panel double doors that were once located at the front entrance of the courthouse. Although these doors have since been replaced, it is interesting to note the use of recycled materials from the county courthouse, a symbol of political power in the midst of Jim Crow segregation, for use in an African-American church. The church has undergone some changes, the post-1987 replacement of the original front doors, the post-1987 replacement of windows, the dropping of the interior ceiling, and the carpeting of the floor. Although these changes have been made, the structure maintains a high degree of architectural integrity. At the rear of the church sits a contributing 1943 cinder-block structure used as a fellowship hall or classroom. During the 1940s and 1950s, many rural churches began constructing fellowship halls to provide additional space for their growing congregations.

The church is eligible under Criteria A for ethnic heritage in the area of religion. The congregation formed around 1900 and dedicated this structure in 1909 as its first permanent meeting place. It is located in what was once known as Dollar Hollow and, according to a 1951 article on black churches in Pulaski, was also called, "Sanctified."<sup>2</sup> The church has played a significant role in the African-American community and in Pulaski through its continuous operation as a church. Not only did the building provide a place to worship, it also has served as a center for African-

<sup>1</sup> Carroll Van West, "Historic Rural African-American Churches of Tennessee, 1850-1970," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submission (1999), sec. E, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Nelle Roller Cohen, "Pulaski History: Forty-Second Installment—Churches: The Negro Churches," *Pulaski History, 1809-1950* (Pulaski, TN: Privately published, 1951).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Original Church of God  
Giles County, Tennessee

American life in Pulaski and has contributed to the formation of an African-American identity in a segregated society by providing a safe gathering place during the struggle for racial equality during the first half of the twentieth century. Like other African-American churches, sermons and church meetings of the Original Church of God focused on courage and pride and gave the congregation optimism in the eventual integration of segregated society.<sup>3</sup>

The church carries statewide significance under Criteria A in that it is the earliest known African-American Church of God congregation to have formed in the state of Tennessee. Furthermore, the structure is the earliest known extant Church of God building in the state of Tennessee.<sup>4</sup> The Church of God denomination developed around 1900 as a result of the Holiness and Pentecostal movements that were gaining in popularity during the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. These charismatic religious movements attracted communities in rural parts of Tennessee who believed in revivalism and an "enthusiastic, optimistic, and authentically biblical approach to religion."<sup>5</sup> The state of Tennessee played an important role in the development of the black Church of God movement. Mary Magdalena L. Tate, a black Tennessean who helped organize and presided over the First General Assembly of the Church of God in 1908, is considered one of the founders of the holiness movement in the country. Her work influenced the development of black Church of God congregations across the state and the South during the first part of the twentieth century. Until the 1910s, Southern Holiness and Pentecostal Churches were interracial, but African-Americans did form their own denominations, such as the black Church of God. The Historic Rural African-American Churches in Tennessee, 1860-1970 Multiple Property Survey identified eight Church of God or Original Church of God congregations concentrated in Middle Tennessee. The Original Church of God in Pulaski is the earliest known congregation and the earliest known extant building in the state associated with this denomination.

Following the Civil War and Emancipation, the African-American community in Pulaski began establishing neighborhoods, churches, schools, and businesses in an attempt to break free from the social and political constraints of the Old South. The presence of Federal troops in the north section of town at Fort Hill allowed this recently emancipated group to create safe spaces in which to live, work, worship, learn, and play in their newly gained freedom. The impact of this Federal occupation is seen today in the historically black neighborhood on Pulaski's north side that centers around post-war institutions such as Bridgeforth School, the Original Church of God, and Beulah Missionary Baptist Church. These extant resources are a significant representation of these gains made within the African-American community during the post-war period.

The Original Church of God was founded by Elder C.W. Gray after coming to Pulaski in 1900. He held his first sermon on the front porch of Cora and Allison Smith's house at Wales Station, a mining and agricultural area northwest of Pulaski. Church meetings were held in members' homes

<sup>3</sup> West, sec. E, p. 36.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, sec. E, p. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, sec. E, p. 15.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Original Church of God  
Giles County, Tennessee

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until they were able to purchase a tent to serve as a meeting place. Services were then held wherever a lot could be rented, including locations on Childers Street, First Street, and near Fort Hill. By 1907, the church members decided to construct a permanent building. They purchased a lot on Gordon Street on April 27, 1907, from R.N. Puryear and his wife Mattie.<sup>6</sup>

The purchase of the church site occurred almost simultaneously with the burning of the county courthouse in April 1907. Mr. Ben McGrew, one of the town's leaders, helped the congregation obtain the bricks and front door from the burned courthouse. The front doors have since been replaced, but the salvaged bricks make up the load-bearing masonry walls of the church. The bricks had been produced for the 1855-1858 building of the courthouse in the kiln of Eph Lunsford and Steve Vaughan near the old Catholic Church on the south side of town at Fifth and Shoal streets.<sup>7</sup>

The Original Church of God was dedicated in 1909 and has continuously held regular worship services and Sunday School classes. Elder Murphy Crawford was pastor in the new building, and the trustees of the church included Robert Gordon, Laurence Kennedy, Thomas Davis and Richard A. Martin. Many members stayed with the church throughout their lives and in 1987, eighty years after construction began, two original members remained, Sarah Young Marsh and Mary Brown Reed McCoy.<sup>8</sup>

In 1943, the congregation constructed a small cinder-block building at the rear of the church to accommodate their increased membership. This structure was intended for use as a fellowship hall and classroom and continues in this capacity today. The only other physical addition to the church is a ca. 1965 bathroom addition containing separate men's and women's bathrooms along the east wall of the fellowship hall.

The continuous operation of the church for almost 100 years has made it an important part of Pulaski's African-American community. It served as a place of worship, but also as a social, civic, and cultural center for the members of this community. During the Jim Crow period, African-American churches provided a safe and nurturing place for blacks to gather as they formed their identity and strove for racial equality. Architecturally and historically, the Original Church of God stands as an intact representation of this struggle from the post-war period through Jim Crow segregation.

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<sup>6</sup> Giles County Deed Book, 68/164-165.

<sup>7</sup> "A Church Made of Courthouse Brick," *The Giles Free Press* (4 June 1987), p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 6

Original Church of God  
Giles County, Tennessee

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

"A Church Made of Courthouse Brick." *The Giles Free Press*. 4 June 1987.

Cohen, Nelle Roller. "Pulaski History: Forty-Second Installment—Churches: The Negro Churches." *Pulaski History, 1809-1950*. Pulaski, TN: Privately published, 1951.

Giles County Deed Book 68. Giles County Courthouse, 1907.

Phelps, Johnny. *Picture Giles County*. Pulaski, TN: Pulaski Publishing, 1996.

West, Carroll Van. "Historic Rural African-American Churches of Tennessee, 1850-1970." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submission, 1999.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 7

Original Church of God  
Giles County, Tennessee

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## 10. Geographical Data

### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries for the nominated property are shown on the accompanying Giles County, Tennessee tax map as parcel number 12.

### Boundary Justification

The nominated boundaries include the extant historic property associated with the Original Church of God and represent the current and historic legal boundaries owned by the church at this location.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number     photos     Page     8     Original Church of God  
Giles County, Tennessee

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Photos by: Dr. Leslie N. Sharp  
Center for Historic Preservation  
Middle Tennessee State University  
Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission  
Date: August 2005

# 1 of 11

Original Church of God: North Facade. Photographer facing south.

# 2 of 11

Original Church of God: Northwest corner. Photographer facing southeast.

# 3 of 11

Original Church of God: West elevation. Photographer facing east.

#4 of 11

Original Church of God: Southwest corner. Photographer facing northeast.

#5 of 11

Original Church of God: Interior. Photographer facing northeast.

#6 of 11

Original Church of God: Interior. Photographer facing south.

# 7 of 11

Original Church of God: Interior. Photographer facing south.

# 8 of 11

Original Church of God: Site. Photographer facing northeast.

#9 of 11

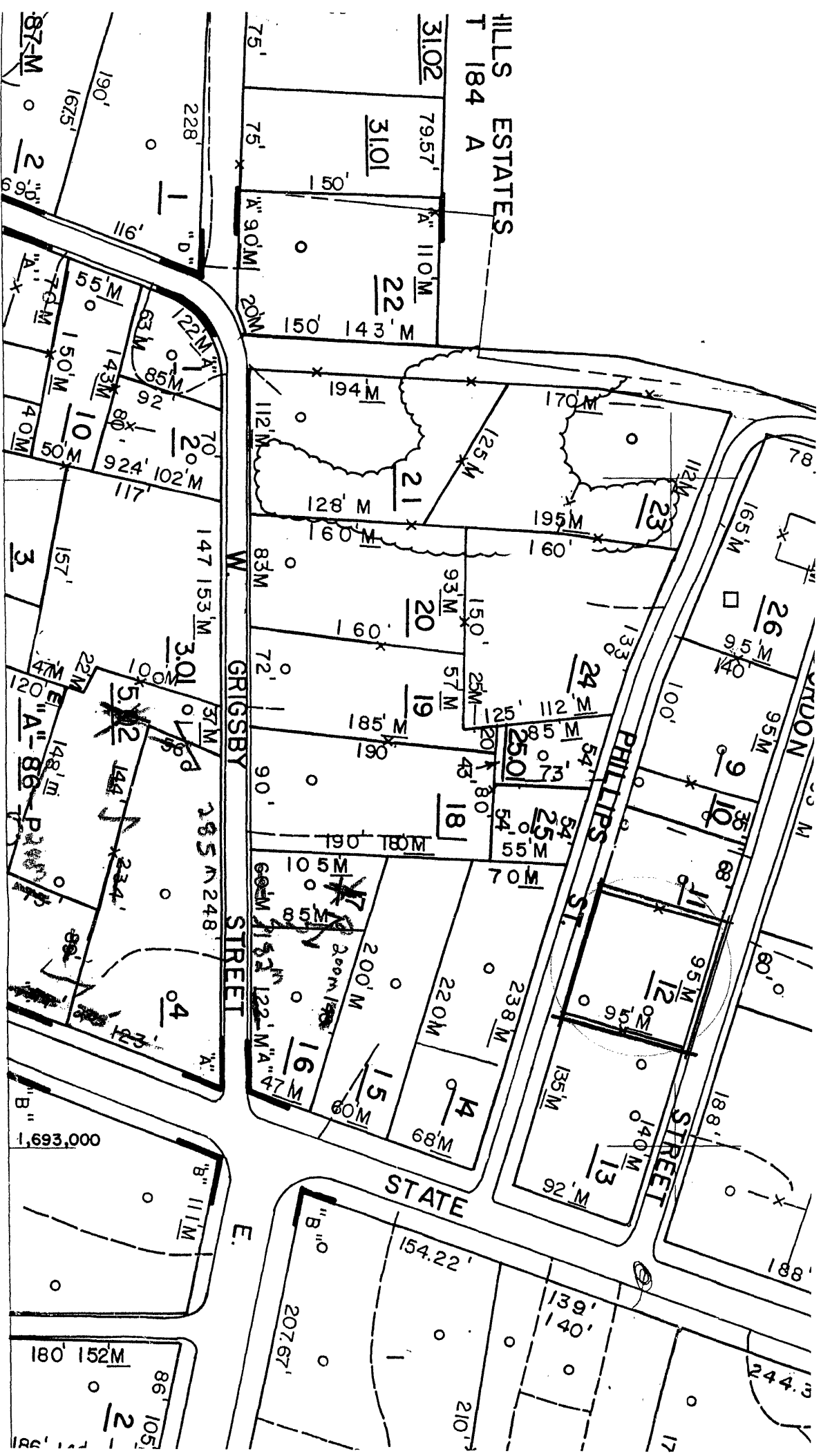
Original Church of God: Fellowship hall. Photographer facing east.

#10 of 11

Original Church of God: Fellowship hall. Photographer facing northwest.

#11 of 11

Original Church of God: Fellowship hall interior. Photographer facing southeast.



PREPARED FOR  
 STATE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION

BY  
 WILLIAMS-STACKHOUSE AND ASSOCIATES  
 NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

SEE MAPING AND ENGINEERING SERVICE, INC.  
 AND  
 WILLIAMS-STACKHOUSE AND ASSOCIATES  
 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

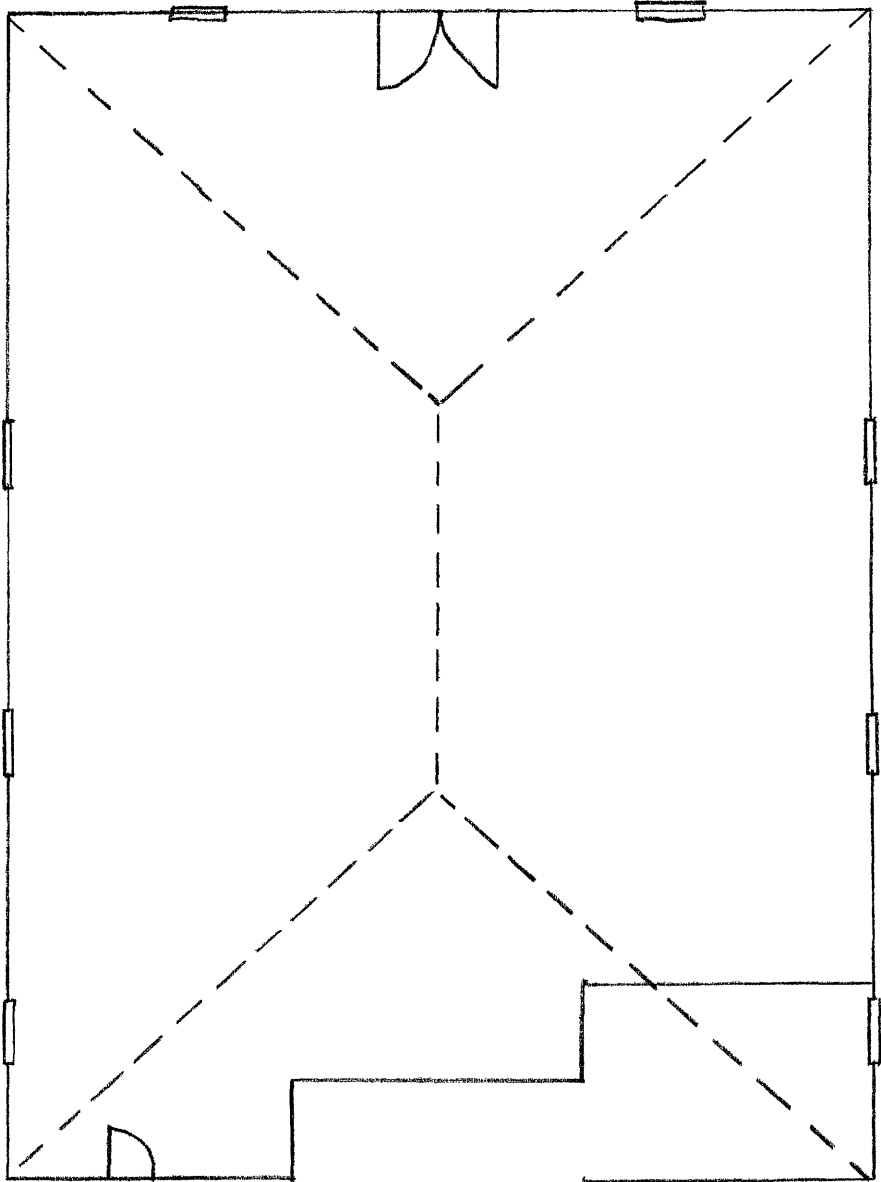
ORIGINAL CHURCH OF GOD  
 RUASKI, GILES COUNTY, TN

GILES COUNTY TAX MAP  
 PARCEL 12

SCALE: 1" = 100'



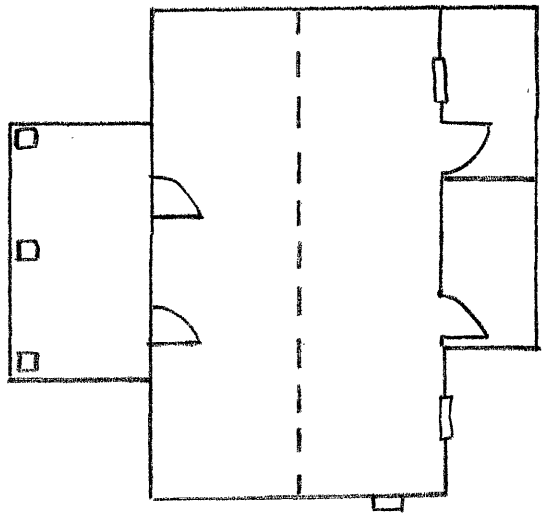
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- 1/4 PARCEL HOOK
- INTERIOR TRACT LINE
- DISTRICT LINE
- 29 SUBD. LOT NO
- PARCEL OUTLINE
- (1/20 AC) TOTAL ACREAGE
- 3/4 SECTION CORNERS

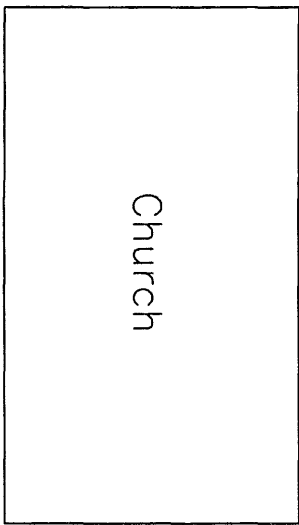
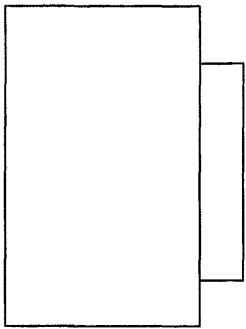


ORIGINAL CHURCH  
OF GOD  
Giles Co, TN  
NOT TO SCALE

RAISED PLATFORM

↑  
N





Gordon Street

US 31W/North First Street

Original Church of God  
115 Gordon Street  
Pulaski, Tennessee



Not to Scale