

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

historic name Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

other names/site number BR-4

2. Location

street & number 908 Morris Fork Road

NA

not for publication

city or town Morris Fork

NA

vicinity

state Kentucky code KY county Breathitt code 025 zip code 41314

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

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):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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5. Classification

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input 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	
4		buildings
		district
		site
3	1	structure
		object
7	1	Total

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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

Religion/Religious Facility
Religion/Church-related Residence
Social/Meeting Hall

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

Religion/Religious Facility
Social/Meeting Hall
Domestic/Institutional Housing

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American

Movements/ Craftsman
Other: Rustic

Materials (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Stone/Limestone; Concrete Block
walls: Wood/Shake/Log/Board and Batten
Concrete Block/Log/Stone Veneer/Board
and Batten
roof: Asphalt shingle
other:

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center (BR-4) is located in southwest Breathitt County, near the border with Perry and Owsley Counties. The church, community center/manse, and associated buildings and structures were developed from 1927-1960 as the Presbyterian mission in Morris Fork grew. There are four buildings and three structures proposed for listing on this 3.58 acre property, described in the Section 7 continuation sheets.

Narrative Description

Property Setting and Character

The Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center/Manse property is located at 908 Morris Fork Road in southwest Breathitt County, Kentucky at an elevation of 860 feet. Breathitt County is situated within the Eastern Kentucky Cultural Landscape Region. The site on Morris Fork Creek is approximately fifteen miles south of Booneville, the seat of Owsley County, and thirty miles southwest from the Breathitt County seat at Jackson. The site can be accessed from Morris Fork Rd, and is located approximately five miles from the junction with State Route 28.

The 4.12 acre property, of which 3.58 acres are proposed for listing, is composed of four buildings, including the Church (A), the Community Center and Manse (B), the Little Rock House (C), and the Stable (D) and four structures, including a low stone wall (E3), a stepping stone path and concrete pad (E2), stone entry columns (E1), and a modern poured concrete sidewalk (F). The buildings are situated parallel to Morris Fork Road in nearly a straight line, nestled in the foothills of the mountains directly to the rear. A three-board wooden fence defines the property boundary along Morris Fork Road. A stone-columned entry provides vehicular access from the road to the church and to the community center building. This entry is no longer used; access is currently available through an asphalt drive that leads to the Craft Shop parking lot, directly south. A lawn area is situated between the nominated buildings and the fence boundary. A site plan is included as Attachment One.

If approaching the property from the south side parking lot, a modern poured concrete sidewalk is encountered that leads to the church's entry doors. This sidewalk wraps the church's primary façade and continues around the north elevation. A low stone wall forms the border of the south lawn near the church's foundation wall. This low stone wall extends to the front of the property and forms what may originally have been flower beds.

From the church's north elevation side door, an older stepping stone walk extends to the rear of the manse/community center directly north. This walk ends in a poured concrete pad at the rear of the manse/community center; a poured concrete sidewalk leads to the little rock house. A hand-traced message is positioned at the northeast end of the poured concrete pad. It states, "1960 Work Camp Liberty Corner, NY."

The stable property is situated at a modest distance from the manse and there is no extant walkway that leads to its doors. The manse/community center has a small poured concrete sidewalk at its front entry as well. Though there are numerous trees located on the property, the main built area is largely void of tree shade. There are a few deciduous and conifer trees located around the church and manse/community center; however, the majority of the land is cleared field.

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Feature A—The Morris Fork Presbyterian Church¹ (contributing building)

Exterior Description

The church is a one-story wood L-shaped frame building with a rusticated stone foundation, built in 1929 and expanded in 1956. The original portion of the building was constructed using all local materials and local labor with the exception of the stained glass windows, which were purchased using a \$900.00 gift from the Board of National Missions, church pews, and flooring.² Stone masonry on the original portion of the church was done by local resident and stone mason “Rock George” Riley. Riley “fashioned the rocks into foundation stones, fireplaces, chimneys---whatever stonework was needed.”³ Riley, who was a former moonshiner, honed his skills at stone masonry on this building and made a name for himself as a stone mason. Two building campaigns are currently represented. The original portion of the church was constructed in 1929 and includes a sanctuary, Sunday School/dining room, and a choir room. In 1956, mission work camps from Westminster Presbyterian Church in Dayton Ohio and from the Minnesota Synod built the addition, in collaboration with local laborers, which included classrooms and a larger dining space.⁴ This addition was built using some local materials, some local labor, and with little cash on hand.

The 1929 portion of the church building has an asphalt shingle roof, hand-split wood shingle walls, eight-light wood casement windows (unless otherwise noted), and vertically-set half-round logs at the gable. Front-gable regular coursed mortared cut-stone entry vestibules are situated on the east (front) and north elevations. The 1956 addition has an asphalt shingle roof, a concrete block foundation wall, irregular-coursed square-cut stone veneer or board and batten covering, a concrete block structure, and either board and batten or vertically-set half-round logs at the gable. Windows on the addition are also eight-light wood casements with stone sills, unless otherwise noted. A stone-veneer projecting front gable entry is situated on the primary façade and leads to kitchen/classroom space. A pyramidal-roofed cupola was positioned atop the original church’s roofline. This vertically-placed half-round log structure was moved during the 1956 renovations to correspond to the center of the new church facility.

Front (East) Façade

The front elevation presents the 1929 church and the 1956 classroom addition. If proceeding from south to north, the 1956 stone-veneer entryway is visible first. A single stone step provides access to this entry. The entry has a single-leaf board and battened door with decorative iron straps. Continuing north, a small front porch serves as connector between the addition and the original church. This porch is supported on three wood columns and has a stone foundation wall. Two casement windows are situated in the wood-shingled recessed porch space; these windows surround a single-leaf six-panel wood door, of which three panels are glass. This door leads to the original choir room. Further north is the projecting front-gable entry that leads to the sanctuary. On the lower right (northwest) corner of this entry is a datestone A.D. 1929. Three stone steps access this entry which features a double-leaf board and batten door with decorative iron straps. A jack arch with a central keystone is situated above the entry doors; just below this is a row of vertically-placed half-round logs. A rusticated stone cross is positioned at the gable’s peak. The entry is flanked by two six-over-six double-

¹ The church is currently known as a chapel, due to its status within the Presbyterian Church. In this nomination, the building will be referred to by its historic name, Morris Fork Presbyterian Church.

² Ollie Turner, “Morris Fork Presbyterian Church Re-Opens,” *The Jackson Times*, 26 May, 2005.

³ Nola Pease VanderMeer with Frederick L. Luddy, *The Tired Country Smiles* (Detroit: Harlo Press, 1983), 89.

⁴ Sam and Nola VanderMeer, “Christmas Letter, 1957,” in David Eugene Rule, *An Account of Morris Fork and the Vander Meers Breathitt County, Kentucky*, n.p., 2000.

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hung wood windows. Above the entry is the front gable of the church wall. This gable has vertically-set half-round logs and a centrally-placed tripartite stained glass window. Finally, the wooden cupola is located near where the addition was appended to the main building. This cupola features a cut-out section that forms the shape of the cross. Both the original building and the addition have a slight roof overhang which partially conceals metal gutters.

North Elevation

The north elevation displays the side of the original church building. The roofline is characterized by a small cross gable which extends at the church's northwest corner (near the rear of the elevation). Two wood casement windows, which face front (east), are situated on the cross-gable portion of the building. On the northeast side of this corner is a carved stone cross, near the front datestone

If proceeding from east to west (front to rear), eight casement windows are encountered which are arranged with two paired windows flanking a central group of windows. Like the primary façade, there is a projecting gable-front stone entry, which leads to the original dining room/Sunday School room. This entry is positioned near the building's northwest corner and features a stone cross atop the gable. A small rectangular shaped single-light wood window is located near the top of the stone wall on the entry, facing east. Another window on the west side is positioned in the same manner and visible only from the rear. Vertically-placed half-round logs are located above this entry in the gable.

The side of the front (east) projecting entry is also visible from this elevation; a small rectangular-shaped stained-glass window is positioned near the top of the stone wall on the entry vestibule. This window features a Craftsman-style tulip motif.

West (Rear) Elevation

The west elevation is not readily visible, as it is in very close proximity to a steep hill. From a plateau on the hill accessible solely on foot, the 1929 building and 1956 addition can be viewed. If progressing from north to south, there are five evenly spaced pairs of wooden casement windows on the 1929 portion of the building. Atop the roof is a small board and batted wooden dormer with two two-over-two wood windows. To the south of the original building is the 1956 addition. This portion of the building features board and batten walls over a concrete block structure. Again, if moving from north to south, there are four pairs of wooden casement windows. The wall height lowers from one-and-a-half story to one-story on the rear southwest corner of the 1956 addition.

South Elevation

The south elevation features the 1956 addition and small portions of the original building, visible from this angle. The south side of the 1956 building is characterized by stone veneer and board and batten on the gable. If progressing from west to east (rear to front), there are four pairs of wood casement windows with stone sills. Also visible on the south elevation is the side of the 1956 projecting stone front gable entry. There are two rectangular-shaped three-light wood windows on each gable near the top of the stone veneer wall.

The south elevation of the original building is intact and can be seen as well. The church's south side is characterized by a pair of wood casement windows and a group of four casement windows. The side of the 1929 projecting front gable can also be viewed from this elevation. It has a rectangular-shaped stained glass window near the top of the stone wall. This window features a Craftsman-style tulip motif.

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Exterior Alterations

After 1956, there have been no significant exterior alterations. The 1956 addition is within the Period of Significance, as it physically displays the development of the mission community. Further, the addition utilizes the same design vocabulary as the original and like materials. Therefore, it is considered a historic and significant change. Moving the church's cupola from the top of the original building to the center of the updated facility in 1956 can also be viewed in light of growth of Morris Forks' social and religious mission in southwestern Breathitt County. Therefore, two major changes to the original building's fabric are important to the story of Morris Fork and to integrity at the property.

Interior Description

The following interior description has been organized to correspond with the two building campaigns. The author will begin with description of the original building and conclude with narrative regarding the 1956 addition. A floor plan is included as Attachment Two.

1929 Church Building

The 1929 building consists of the church sanctuary, a Sunday School/dining space with stage, and a choir room.

The sanctuary has a traditional small church floor plan without apse. An altar area is situated at the end of a long central aisle with nine wooden pews located to either side. The altar features a centrally-placed pulpit and a wood-paneled dais on which choir and ministers might sit during the service. The dais is accessible from a set of two wooden steps positioned on its north and south ends. The altar area is crowned by a centrally-positioned tripartite stained glass window. A stained glass cross is situated below these windows. All furniture within this space was made by church members circa 1929, including two pulpits, tables, caned wooden chairs, and caned wooden benches. Pews and flooring were not made locally, but were purchased through donated funds.⁵

Upon admittance through the double-leaf front doors, a small entry vestibule is encountered. This vestibule is lit by Craftsman style stained glass windows on its north and south ends. A five-panel single-leaf wood door provides access to the sanctuary interior. The sanctuary interior has quarter-sawn oak flooring, wood panel battened walls, and an exposed truss-system on the ceiling. The church sanctuary is characterized by two wooden soffits located on either side of the central aisle at the ceiling. These soffits are supported by twelve round unworked braced wood columns. The exposed rafter system, which is composed of sawn members and round pole collar supported by angle braces, is in turn let into its respective soffit. Amber-colored window glass adds to the rustic feeling encountered in the chapel. The space is lit by several wagon-wheel chandeliers, specified by Reverend Sam VanderMeer and fabricated from old wagon wheels by church members. The overall effect calls to mind the rustic lodge style, popular in state parks across Kentucky during the 1920s-1940s.

Two five-paneled single-leaf wood doors are situated on either side of the altar area on the west wall. These doors lead to the Sunday School/Dining room space.

1929 Sunday School/Dining Room

⁵ Nola VanderMeer, 89.

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The Sunday School/dining room space is a long narrow open-plan room that extends past the sanctuary on the north and south sides, approximating in plan the appearance of a transept. Previously, this room was divided by two sets of folding doors, in order to divide it into three spaces when needed.

On the south end of the space is a raised stage, probably used for choir and pageant performances as well as for teaching, and on the north end is male and female restroom space, which is part of a later interior remodeling campaign. A five-paneled single-leaf wood door leads from the north end of the space to the exterior of the building.

This room has quarter-sawn oak floors, battened wood walls, an open wood ceiling with half-round joists and large wood-pieced support beams. Several wood wagon-wheel light fixtures hang from the ceiling. Four windows light this space on the west side. As in the sanctuary, all the furniture was built by church members, including a built-in cabinet (located on the east wall), chairs, and tables.

1929 Choir Room

This small space is accessible from a single-leaf four-paneled wood door off the sanctuary's south wall and from a single-leaf five-paneled wood door from the stage space down one wooden step. The original portion of this room has a later dropped acoustical tile ceiling, painted (cream) wood battened walls, and a tile floor. The later addition to this room was appended in 1956 and has concrete block walls. The 1956 addition extended this space from approximately where the front porch ends south toward the parking area. Please see attached floor plan for more information.

The Choir Room was intended to furnish storage space for choir robes, musical equipment, and hymnals. The room also served for a time as classroom space. The west wall of the choir room has handmade wooden storage cabinets. The east wall faces toward the front porch space and has a five-paneled single-leaf wood door and is lit by three windows. The south wall is part of the 1956 addition and has a two-paneled single-leaf wood door that leads into a hallway in the addition.

1956 Entry Vestibule and Hallway

The entry vestibule located at the far south end on the primary façade accesses the 1956 addition space. Two three-light wood sash light this space. Both the hall and the vestibule have acoustic tile ceiling and poured concrete floors; the vestibule has wood-paneled batten walls and the hall has concrete block walls. Off the vestibule to the north is a small storage closet, which serves as janitorial space. Adjacent to the south is restroom space. Both access doors are single-leaf two-paneled wood doors.

1956 Classroom Space

This room originally functioned as two classrooms. In 1988, the space was renovated, within the original footprint, to serve as kitchen space. The room has tile floors, acoustic tile ceiling, and concrete block walls. Cabinets, stove, and a refrigerator are situated on the south and east walls. Two sets of casement windows light this space on the south wall. Entry to the kitchen is furnished through a single-leaf two-paneled wood door on the north wall (into the hall) and a single-leaf two-paneled wood door on the west wall (into the classroom/dining room space).

1956 Classroom/Dining Room Space

This long narrow room nearly mirrors the adjacent 1929 Sunday School/Dining Room space in shape and proportions. The room has concrete block walls, tile flooring, and an asbestos tile ceiling. The north wall of

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this room, however, has wood-panel batten walls, as it was part of the 1929 structure. The north end of the room opens onto the stage space in the 1929 portion of the building. Therefore, the stage can be viewed from either the 1956 Classroom/Dining Room space or the 1929 Sunday School/Dining Room space. The 1956 room is lit by two sets of casement windows on its south side and four sets of casement windows on its west side. Furniture in this space was not hand-crafted and includes many dining tables and chairs.

Interior Alterations

There have been no major additions or subtractions from the building's interior form, shape, or materials. The main alteration in 1956, as discussed previously, is within the Period of Significance. Minor changes include a cosmetic renovation of the classroom space into a kitchen in 1988; addition of restrooms in the far end of the dining room; and addition of new floors and ceiling to the choir space in 1956. The building retains the majority of its interior finish and detailing. Remarkably, even the handmade furniture from 1929 remains in situ.

Feature B—The Morris Fork Community Center and Manse (contributing building)

Exterior Description

The Morris Fork Community Center and Manse, hereafter Morris Fork Community Center, is a two-and-a-half story stone, frame, and concrete block building, constructed in at least two major building campaigns. The original building, constructed circa 1927, has a stone foundation and stone ground floor. The top story and a half has a frame structural system covered with weatherboard. Windows on the original portion of the building are six-over-six double-hung wood sash, unless otherwise noted.

The two-story addition, constructed circa 1950, has concrete block structural walls, encased in board and batten vertical siding on the first floor and weatherboard on the second floor. The addition has a concrete block foundation. Windows on the addition are six-over-six double-hung wood sash windows, unless otherwise noted. The roof on both the circa 1927 building and the circa 1950 addition is covered in asphalt shingles. The addition is offset slightly west from the original portion of the building.

This building was the main community meeting space for Morris Fork Presbyterians and others in the vicinity. Health clinics, game nights, and other community activities took place within its walls from circa 1927 to circa 1969. In addition, the building served as living space for the resident minister and his family on the second floor. Visitors and working guests were lodged within the building as well.

According to a local source, the community center was demolished and rebuilt circa 1940. The author could find no evidence to support this claim, either in written primary sources or through study of the building itself. The style and materials of the original portion of the building match the work done on the church, which was built in 1929. Sources suggest that the community building was constructed circa 1927.⁶

Front (East) Façade

The primary façade presents the circa 1927 community center and circa 1950 addition. The addition was placed to the north (right) of the original building. If proceeding from south to north, the circa 1927 community center is first encountered. This building, as previously detailed, has a stone ground floor and top story and a half

⁶ Webb B. Garrison, "Kentucky's Mountain Preacher," *Missionary Biography No. 9* in David Rule, correspondence to William VanderMeer, includes newspaper articles, letters, and other sources, on file at Morris Fork Presbyterian Church, 9 June, 2008, not published, no page.

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covered in weatherboard. The ground floor of the original façade features two pairs of windows, a single-leaf six-panel wood door, and a window. The second story has four pairs of wood sash windows. The roof overhangs the eaves on this portion of the building. A metal gutter is located beneath the overhang.

The circa 1950 addition, as noted above, has a first floor board and batten and weatherboard covering and a second story sheathed in weatherboard. The first floor of the addition features two sets of wood windows flanking a centrally-located porch space. This recessed porch is supported by four round wood columns and has a nine-light, two panel single leaf entry door. The walls are exposed concrete block and the porch floor is poured concrete. The second story features three pairs of three-over-one double-hung wood windows. Like the original portion of the building, the addition has a roof overhang which furnishes space for metal gutters.

North Elevation

The north elevation displays a portion of the circa 1927 building and the circa 1950 addition. The ground floor of the circa 1927 building has three pairs of windows, one pair of which features a six-over-one sash. The second story has a pair of eight-light wood casement windows, while the top half-story has a pair of windows which light the partially-finished attic space. The first floor of the circa 1950 addition has a pair of windows offset east and the second story features a pair of three-over-one wood windows, placed slightly east of center.

West (Rear) Elevation

The west elevation displays the rear of the circa 1927 building with circa 1950 addition to the north. If proceeding from north to south on the first floor of the circa 1950 addition, there are two one-over-one wood windows, a single-leaf wood panel three-light door, and three wood windows. A one-story gable-front porch, supported by two small square-shaped wood columns, shelters the entry door, near the center of this elevation. On the second floor of the addition are three wood windows.

If proceeding from north to south on the first floor, the original portion of the building has one six-light wood window, a wood window, a single-leaf six-panel wood entry door with aluminum screen, a wood window, and two six-light wood windows. A one-story shed-roofed porch shields the rear entry from the elements. On the second story, again proceeding from north to south, there is a three-panel wood door, which originally led from Reverend VanderMeer's study, and four wood windows. The top half-story shed-roofed dormer features a wood window, a set of three wood windows, and a wood window.

South Elevation

The south elevation presents the circa 1927 portion of the building. On the ground floor is a fenestration opening covered in painted plywood, a wood window, and a pair of three wood windows. On the second story are three wood windows and a pair of three wood windows. Finally, on the top half-story is a pair of two wood windows.

Exterior Alterations

Exterior alterations to the building have been minimal. It appears that some windows were removed and replaced with old wood windows from elsewhere, but it is equally possible that the window patterns were always somewhat random, given the homemade nature of the building. Additionally, sources note the presence

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of an upstairs sleeping porch that has been removed.⁷ This may have been a porch on the rear that would have accessed the minister's study as well.

The sole major change was the appendage of the circa 1950 addition to the original building. This alteration is important to understanding the development of the mission community in Morris Fork and is within the Period of Significance. Further, the addition utilizes the same design vocabulary and visible materials as the original.

Interior Description

The following interior description has been organized to correspond with the two building campaigns. The author will begin with description of the front original portion of the house and continue to the 1950 addition.

Circa 1927 Community Center and Manse Interior

The original portion of the building has cork tile or poured concrete floors, half-round log open ceilings or battened wood ceilings, and wood panel or whitewashed stone walls, unless otherwise noted.

First Floor of the 1927 Community Center

Upon entry through the front door, a long hallway is visible which extends to the rear of the building. This hallway has wood panel walls and an open ceiling that features half-round log joists. The logs currently have insulation between them. To the left is a large community room and to the right is a community kitchen space. The community room features original cork-tile floors, whitewashed stone and wood panel walls, and a large round stone hearth with a simple wood shelf-mantel. Wagon wheel lights hang from the ceiling, which has half-round logs with asbestos tile between them for insulation. The space is lit by two sets of windows on the east wall and a set of three windows on the south wall. The kitchen is situated across the hall. It has poured concrete floors, an acoustic tile ceiling, and several built-in cabinets. One window lights the space on the east wall, while a set of three windows provides light on the north wall. Down the hall, there is an exit door on the west wall. Directly southeast of this door is a straight-run of wooden stairs that extends thirteen steps to the second floor.

The hallway forms an "L" shape continuing north. One poured concrete step leads into a bunk room for guests. The bunk room has a large cut-stone hearth, wood paneled walls, and handmade wooden bunk beds. A half-height wood wall divides this space into two rooms. Modern HVAC conduit is visible on the ceiling below half-round logs. The hallway also extends south, past the stair to a small janitorial closet.

Second Floor of the 1927 Community Center

The original portion of the manse consists of four bedrooms, a pastor's study, a hall, a dining room/kitchen space, the attic stair, and a bath room; the latter of which was added in a later remodel. The second floor of the building has carpeted or vinyl tile floors, acoustic tile or wood paneled ceilings, wood paneled walls, and several handmade built-in storage cabinets. Original five-panel wood doors are in situ, for the most part.

A fifteen-light wooden French door furnishes access to the manse space. Entry from the stair furnishes direct access to the dining room/kitchen space. This combination room has a handmade built-in butler's pantry on its north wall. The living room area is situated south of the kitchen space. The living room has original wood panel walls and a central tile fireplace with a wood panel mantel. The space is lit by one set of windows on the

⁷ Nola VanderMeer, 130. Several sources note that there was an upstairs sleeping porch. On page 130 of Nola VanderMeer's book, for example, a guest describes having to sleep on the porch in the winter's cold.

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east wall and a set of three windows on the south wall. From here, a narrow hallway leads south to the private bedrooms and a bath. If following the hall north, the pastor's study is encountered on the west side of the hall, as well as a small half-bath.

Top Half-Story of the 1927 Community Center

Attic access is located off the central hallway north of the main stair. Twelve steps lead from the second floor to the attic area. This space mostly makes use of an open-floor plan; however, three rooms were created to lodge mission guests. In the bedroom space, there are plywood ceilings, wood floors, and closets. The remainder of the space is unceiled. The attic also served as storage space, given the number of cabinets and shelves.

Circa 1950 Addition

This addition was constructed to furnish more guest space with the growth of summer work camps to the mission. The addition has poured concrete, wood, or carpeted floors; asbestos tile ceilings, gypsum wallboard or concrete block walls; and hollow-core plywood doors.

First Floor of the Circa 1950 Addition

The first floor of the addition extends north from the original building. Two additional rooms have been appended to first floor bunk room for additional guest lodging. The original bunk room opens into a large concrete block room with an acoustic tile ceiling, and poured concrete floors. A door accesses the exterior on this room's west wall. A handpainted sign is positioned on the room's north wall. It reads:

Even youths grow tired and weary
And young men stumble and fall, but
Those who hope in the Lord will renew
their strength. They will soar on wings
like eagles; they will run and not grow
weary; they will walk and not be
faint. Isaiah 40:30-31

To the north of this room is another small room, also used for lodging. This room makes use of the same materials.

Second Floor of the Circa 1950 Addition

The hallway extending north from the pastor's study leads into the circa 1950 addition. There are two bedrooms and a large bathroom in the addition space. From the hall, proceeding north, there is a large bedroom, which opens onto a hallway. This hall continues north and ends at a large bedroom suite. To the west, there is a commodious bathroom with wooden built-in cabinets.

Interior Alterations

There have been few interior changes. In the original portion of the house, insulation has been inserted between the logs in the distinctive half-round log ceiling, changing its appearance. This does not appear to be a permanent alteration, but simply done to make guest accommodations more temperate in the winter months. Also, bathrooms were added at some point in the 1950s/1960s. As with the church, the addition could be considered an historic and valuable change, as it is within the Period of Significance; uses like materials and

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design; and was clearly meant to be subservient to the original part of the building. Further, it tells the story of growth of the Morris Fork mission community.

Other Buildings within proposed National Register boundary

The following building/structures are located within the 3.58 acre tract nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

C-The Little Rock House (contributing building)

This small one-story side-gable building was intended as a guest house for visitors frequenting the Morris Fork mission property and is located to the rear of the community center and manse. The building, which was constructed circa 1929, has an asphalt shingle roof and smooth-faced uncut cobblestone walls. Windows are positioned in pairs of six-light wooden casements with the exception of a single casement on the primary facade. A stone chimney is located on the building's north elevation. A battened door provides access to the interior, which was not accessible. A single whitewashed room was observed from the window opening.

A small one-room stone addition was appended to the building's south elevation circa 1940. This addition has an asphalt shingle roof, regular-coursed cut stone walls, and a battened door.

D-The Stable (contributing building)

This two-story outbuilding is located northeast of the main complex of buildings, near Morris Fork Road, and was originally intended to house mules and horses. The stable is a frame front gable building with a second story hay-loft, built circa 1935. The stable has wood siding, a corrugated metal roof, overhanging roof eaves, and a stone foundation. There are no window sash remaining in situ; they are stored within the stable building for later use. The east elevation has been altered through addition of a roll-top garage door. This door was probably added circa 1950 when State Highway 28 was extended to the Morris Fork area. A new car was donated to the community that year, which was the first car in the immediate area.⁸ Before this time, all travel was done from Morris Fork by mule or horse.

On the interior, the stable has a poured concrete floor, vertical wood walls, and is unceiled. Several small wood posts are positioned throughout the first floor, in order to help support the second story. The first floor of the building consists of a small tack room, a work room, and space for stables converted to automobile storage. Access to the top story is provided through a small ladder stair. Originally intended as a space to store feed, the second floor housed work camp volunteers in later days. The building was altered in the 1950s with the addition of a metal roll-top garage door for automobile access. This change should be considered significant in its own right, as it demonstrates the success of the mission community in bringing evenly paved roads to the area. The sole important change was removal of the two-story porch from the building's east elevation. It is unclear when this change occurred. In spite of this, the building retains sufficient integrity to demonstrate its significance.

E-Other Structures (contributing structures)

Stone column entry (E1)

⁸ Sam and Nola VanderMeer, "Morris Fork Christmas Letter, 1950," in Rule, *An Account of Morris Fork and the Vander Meers Breathitt County, Kentucky*, n.p., 2000.

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A stone-columned entry marks the original access from the road to the church and community center. Two stone columns are located on either side of an entry drive. This entry is no longer used; access is currently available through an asphalt drive that leads to the Craft Shop parking lot, directly south.

The stone columns were built with rounded rough-cut cobble stones and are approximately three-feet high. They have square cobblestone caps and square shafts.

Stepping Stone Pathway and Poured Concrete Pad (E2)

From the church's north elevation side door, an older stepping stone walk extends to the rear of the manse/community center directly north. This walk ends in a poured concrete pad at the rear of the manse/community center; a poured concrete sidewalk leads to the little rock house. A hand-traced message is positioned at the northeast end of the poured concrete pad. It states, "1960 Work Camp Liberty Corner, NY." The rounded cobble stone stepping path was probably included in Sam VanderMeer's original site plan.

Low Stone Wall (E3)

A low stone wall forms the border of the south lawn near the church's foundation wall. This rough-cut regular coursed wall extends to the front of the property and forms what may originally have been flower beds. It appears to have been an original part of the property, designed by Sam VanderMeer as part of his overall landscaping plan.

F-Other Structures (noncontributing structures)

Poured Concrete Sidewalk (F)

If approaching the property from the south side parking lot, a modern poured concrete sidewalk is encountered that leads to the church's entry doors. This sidewalk wraps the church's primary façade and continues around the north elevation. According to local sources, the sidewalk was recently poured to connect the gravel parking area with the church. It is possible that an earlier walk existed here, which may have been a stepping stone path, similar to the walk from the church to the community center.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Social History

Period of Significance

1927-1960

Significant Dates

1929, 1956, ca 1927, ca 1950, and ca 1935

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

VanderMeer, Samuel (presumed designer)

Community of Morris Fork (builders)

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.

Period of Significance (justification)

The selected Period of Significance, 1927-1960, corresponds to the era in which active community development was occurring in Morris Fork, Kentucky, due to the presence of the Morris Fork Church and Community Center.

Criteria Considerations

The church meets Criterion Consideration A, as it is owned by a religious group and currently used for religious services. The church's significance is interpreted within the Social History Area of Significance, not within the Area of Religion. This follows guidance in the National Register bulletin, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation."

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Summary Paragraph

The Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center/Manse⁹ (BR-4) meets National Register Criterion A, and is significant within the historic context, "Mission Work in Eastern Kentucky, 1870-1960." The property is significant at the local level and conveys the importance of church-based missions to social history in southwest Breathitt County. Following guidance established under Criterion Consideration A for a property owned by a religious group, this nomination focuses primarily on the social/community meaning of mission work in Eastern Kentucky, rather than emphasizing its religious function or significance.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Social History (Criterion A)

The Morris Fork Church and Community Center/Manse is a physical representation of the development of community institutions in the mountain town of Morris Fork. From 1927 to 1960, the church mission assisted the local community in southwest Breathitt County through development of health care programs, improved roads, agricultural education, community gatherings, moonlight schools, and other events at the 3.58 acre property. The mission is locally identified as a source of civic pride, demonstrating the efficacy of privatized community development programs in early-to-mid twentieth century Eastern Kentucky.

Developmental history/additional historic context information

Historic Context: Mission Work in Eastern Kentucky, 1870-1960

The Problem of Appalachia

Beginning in the period following the Civil War, Appalachia began to be defined as a problem or at least an oddity throughout the United States. While the rest of America, including the nonmountainous urban South, was rapidly industrializing, Appalachia seemed to have suspended development in the frontier era. Southern mountaineers, like most rural people in the Victorian age, did not have access to urban amenities such as home electricity, streetcars, and passable roads. Further complicating transportation was the cost of developing roads in the mountain areas, which were wrought with engineering issues, such as cutting through mountains.

At the same time, foreign immigrants journeyed to America from Southern and Eastern Europe in unprecedented numbers. Native-born Victorian Americans saw these mostly Roman Catholic, non-English peoples as a threat to English Protestant American values and harkened back to the Scottish/English mountaineer as the *true* American. The southern highlander was both romanticized and criticized in popular culture from authors such as Kentucky's own James Lane Allen and John Fox, Jr. and northern newspapers, such as the *New York Times* and *Harper's Magazine*. For whatever reasons, urban Americans, especially those in Kentucky's Bluegrass Region and in the northeast, were both appalled and fascinated by the lifestyles of rural mountain people.

⁹ Hereafter, the community center/manse will be referred to as the community center.

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Historian Ron Eller writes:

Attracted to the mountains by the local-color literature, ever-growing numbers of urban visitors flocked to the Appalachians after 1880 for a respite from city life. These newly rich tourists and traveling journalists supported a seasonal tourist industry in the region, but they developed only marginal contact with the local mountain people. More often than not, they ended up viewing "the natives," as they called the mountaineers, as quaint and primitive, if not degenerate, and they usually returned to the North with accounts of a beautiful and fabulously rich landscape inhabited by a race who lacked an appreciation of its potential. Unable to reconcile the disparity between mountain life and their own affluent urban life, northern visitors identified the mountain people with other "backward peoples" whom the leading industrial nations at that time were seeking to "develop," and to whom the term "natives" was commonly applied. As a result of tourism and local-color literature, the mountaineers would subsequently become "hillbillies" and "poor whites," the subject of a massive missionary movement to the region which over the next half-century would seek to bring 'our contemporary ancestors' into mainstream American life.¹⁰

The southern mountain region was well-known by northern and central Kentucky industrialists since the 1870s. This region held precious natural resources which were exploited for the benefit of industrialization by urban American entrepreneurs. Native timber stands, some of which were hundred of years old, and bituminous coal were taken from the region to build new houses in suburban America and to heat and light urban/suburban homes. Railroads began to cross the region in order to move the raw materials out of Appalachia, but rarely were these lines planned to assist with transportation difficulties in the mountains. The great paradox of poverty in the Southern mountains was, then, that the region was wealthy in raw materials, but did not benefit in proportion to its gifts.

Historian Dave Whisnant posits, "there were four profoundly important, interrelated processes going on in the mountains...by the end of the nineteenth century: economic colonization by northeastern capital; the rise of indigenous resistance among workers and farmers; the discovery of indigenous culture by writers, collectors, popularizers, and elite-art composers and concertizers; and the proliferation of (mostly Protestant) missionary endeavors."¹¹ This nomination is concerned with the latter.

Mission Work in Eastern Kentucky

There has been no definitive study of secular or religious mission work in Eastern Kentucky. There have been articles and portions of books devoted to study of mission work, yet the topic remains woefully under-examined.¹² These sources indicate that mission work developed out of the early twentieth century Progressive Era notion of using one's education and training to solve social problems rampant, or at least more publicized, in the new industrial economy, such as poverty, lack of educational opportunities, and inadequate housing in rural and urban areas.

¹⁰ Ronald D. Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers: Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982), 43.

¹¹ David E. Whisnant, *All that is Native is Fine: The Politics of Culture in an American Region* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), 6.

¹² Whisnant includes a study of Hindman Settlement School in Knott County in *All that is Native is Fine: The Politics of Culture in an American Region*, and a study of the Council of the Southern Mountains, based in Berea, KY in *Modernizing the Mountaineer: People, Power, and Planning in Appalachia* (Boone, N.C.: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1980).

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Regrettably, sources regarding missionaries' work are not particularly sympathetic to this life vocation. Some historians employ the tactic they accuse missionaries of when they simplify the missionaries' motives to suggest a lack of empathy-- a type of "noblesse oblige"-- for the people served. In any case, this nomination works from the notion that most missionaries did help the communities they served, and did so in a sympathetic fashion. While missionaries may have been naïve regarding the economic and political forces that shaped Appalachia, they were genuinely interested in solving the problem of poverty in its various forms throughout the region. And there were real problems in the Appalachian mountains, including lack of educational opportunities, a lack of public amenities (libraries, school, community gathering locales), "moonshining," soil erosion (due to logging), and poor agricultural practices, among others.

Missions and Settlement Schools as a Property Type

Mission work in Eastern Kentucky includes both secular and religious community-building and was generally accomplished by women. As a property type, mission stations could include school buildings, dormitories, community centers, health care facilities, libraries, churches, and demonstration farmlands or some combination of all of the above. Frequently, the sites have great historic value for the communities they served, still evident today.

Historic sources indicate that private-church based missions were largely on the decline beginning in the 1960s. While largely due to efforts of missionaries and others from the late nineteenth century onward, the federal government began to intervene to provide public assistance (through the states) to those in need. Therefore, the 1960s time frame is a useful place to suspend our consideration of this important phase of social history in Eastern Kentucky. Until the 1960s, social and economic outreach in this part of Kentucky was a much more privatized effort. With the creation of the federal government's *Great Society* anti-poverty programs in the mid-1960s under President Lyndon Johnson, governmental efforts began to coordinate activities and provide financial and other forms of assistance to families in need. From the late nineteenth through the mid-twentieth centuries, settlement schools and mission stations served as an important form of relief as well as important community focal points for Eastern Kentucky families.

As a property type, most of these mission stations are significant for their historic associations (Criterion A and Criterion B) with social history or community development as an important theme. If significant under Criterion C, these communities may be characterized architecturally by a homemade rustic style, popular in the Late Victorian/early Craftsman era, or as the work of a master architect working with the mission community.

Mission resources may undergo some physical change before the ability to communicate their historic value is fully lost. Each integrity factor should be assessed as a way to recognize the entire complex, with emphasis on how the complex reveals the work of the mission--its function. Demolition of certain buildings within the mission property may not fully eradicate the property's overall integrity, as long as the destroyed buildings are not essential to telling the story of work at the mission. For example, if a church-based mission school property is missing a barn or other outbuilding, the property may yet retain enough other important elements to demonstrate its identity and significance. If however the same property was missing the church and school, the property may no longer retain its historic integrity.

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The judgment that a property has integrity of feeling and association depends heavily upon our understanding of the site's historic identity and significance. These sites began service as important community focal points, and our appraisal of their historic integrity requires that we recognize how those physical properties delivered a service that supported a community, and sometimes even created that community. The importance these places had historically, and how that function has changed recently, is indicated in the property's material evolution. Many have not been used full-time since the changes in the region that began in the 1960s. With the shift in the administration of social programs that began at that time, some mission properties have suffered neglect or have been remodeled with the same sense of practicality that brought them into being. With careful consideration, these mission sites may successfully be recognized as retaining the essential vestiges of their place, enabling us to perceive the important role they played in their Eastern Kentucky communities: the way that they transformed a place, and the ways that they in turn have been transformed.

Examples of Mission Sites in Eastern Kentucky

An example of a mission school with multiple functions is found in Hindman, Knott County, Kentucky (KTH-22). The school was founded in 1902 by May Stone and Katherine Pettit, genteel ladies from the central Bluegrass region, with help from the national Women's Christian Temperance Union and at the urging of native Knott Countian Uncle Sol Everidge. The school was intended to educate Knott County's young people in remedial subjects, such as arithmetic and reading, and practical skills, such as animal husbandry and homemaking. Given the poor road conditions, the school included dormitories where local children could board. At its peak in the 1930s before being subsumed by the county school system, Hindman had a kindergarten, middle school, and high school, teaching such diverse topics as woodworking, home nursing, weaving, and basketry. In addition, the school sponsored community-oriented programs. A library, a nursing station, a weaving facility (that employed local women), agricultural conservation programs, and salubrious social events formed the basis for community outreach efforts. The school served as a focal point for the areas surrounding Hindman throughout the early-to-mid twentieth century.

Pine Mountain Settlement School in Harlan County (HL-4,)¹³ is another example of this type of missionary endeavor. Similar to Hindman, the school was founded by the Kentucky Federal of Women's Clubs through the efforts of May Stone, Katherine Pettit, and Ethel de Long. Industrial subjects were offered along with more academic subject matter. Because of the rural setting at Pine Mountain, the school was able to develop demonstration agricultural projects not possible in the town of Hindman. As the National Register nomination notes, "The benefit of the school at Pine Mountain to the community has been immense. Eastern Kentucky contained few schools in the late 1800s. Even as late as 1880 in Harlan County, there were no libraries, no private schools, no academies, and no high school. It was not until 1910 at Mt. Pleasant (renamed Harlan in 1912) that the first high school was organized in the county (Harlan County Daily Enterprise, September 23, 1962, p. 11). With the coming of the railroad to Harlan and the rapid development of the coal industry in the second decade of the twentieth century, more schools were constructed. However, for many years places such as Pine Mountain remained isolated and difficult to reach even by wagon. The Pine Mountain Settlement School can in many respects be called a school of, for, and by the mountain community."¹⁴

¹³ Gloria Mills, Daniel Kidd, and Donna Hopkins, "Pine Mountain Settlement School," Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, Copy on file at the Kentucky Heritage Council, Approved 1978

¹⁴Ibid., Section 8, 3-4.

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Religious Missions in Breathitt County

Following the general trends for mission work in Eastern Kentucky, Breathitt County became the beneficiary of several missionary efforts in the early twentieth century. Breathitt County shared in the problems endemic to eastern Kentucky, such as lack of schools in proximity, good roads, sustainable agricultural practices/education, community meeting space, and health care facilities. Additionally, Breathitt County had the unfortunate reputation for being violent "feud-country" as well as a bastion of moonshiners.

Breathitt County was also impaired in the early twentieth century by outside interests who timbered much of the land and removed the coal. Very little of the resources or benefits were felt locally. A Works Projects Administration (WPA) History of 1940 notes, "The tempo of exploiting these natural resources was slow for almost a century. Bottom lands were taken up by the first settlers who were sturdy homesteaders. Later, as the population increased, the headwater hills were peopled and steep hillsides brought under cultivation. Timber was cut and coal was mined on a comparatively small scale early in the history of this section, but not until the era of the railroad did wholesale exploitation take place."¹⁵ The book goes on to say, "None of the fine virgin forests that once covered the hills of Breathitt have been spared."¹⁶ This sad fact meant that, "the history of agricultural development in Breathitt, as in most sections of the country, is one of soil depletion, erosion, and inefficient farming methods."¹⁷ Three-quarters of Breathitt County farmed at the subsistence level by 1940, as a result of land denudation.

Mission stations were established to help Breathitt Countians with these difficulties. Largely endeavors begun in the early twentieth century by women missionaries, the county had several Methodist and Presbyterian missions in place by the mid-twentieth century. An example of this was the founding of Oakdale Christian High School (BR-2) in 1921 by Elizabeth O'Connor, a Methodist missionary. The goal of this school was to teach practical skills and basic academic subjects to an underserved youth population in an area west of the county seat at Jackson. This property included a library, primary and secondary school, church, a farm, and a dorm complex. Another mission begun in the early 1900s is the Canoe Presbyterian Training School (BR-1). This school featured offerings similar to those at Oakdale and was started by Patsy Turner, a Presbyterian missionary.

Perhaps the most famous Presbyterian mission property in Breathitt County, other than Morris Fork, was organized by Reverend Edward Guerrant, a native of Sharpsburg, Kentucky in Bath County, with assistance from local people. This mission was known as the Highland Institute.¹⁸ As of 1940, this site included a seven-acre campus and 600-acre farm. The campus was composed of an infirmary, a furniture shop, dorms, school buildings, a "practice-home" for girls, a cannery, laundry, and chapel.¹⁹ Guerrant is a hero in the Presbyterian mission world for his founding of innovative financing methods, known as the "Society of Soul Winners."²⁰ The Society promoted its missions and accepted financing from ecumenical sources, unlike previous missionary efforts that targeted Presbyterians only. Guerrant often noted that missions were built to break the cycle of poverty, while providing a good Christian education.

¹⁵ Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration, *In the Land Of Breathitt*, American Guide Series (Northport, N.Y.: Bacon, Percy & Daggett Publishers, 1941), 12.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 141-142.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Louis B. Weeks, *Kentucky Presbyterians* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1983), 133.

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The Presbyterians Church was highly involved in mission work, across the country and even internationally in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As an outgrowth of women's home missions in the late nineteenth century, there was a Board of National Missions by 1923, associated with the church, as well as several publications highlighting home mission work, such as *Presbyterian Missionary* and *Home Mission Monthly*.²¹ Missionary work was promoted as a calling to young Presbyterians. The poor and needy were highlighted in Presbyterian prayer circles and publications. An additional advantage was that missions brought new members to the church body.

It is within this context that Sam and Nola VanderMeer became interested in performing mission work in Eastern Kentucky.

Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center/Manse Property History

Early History

Though there had been a Presbyterian congregation organized on Long's Creek in 1924 by Rev. Ike Gabbard, the Morris Fork Church and Community Center was formally established by Samuel VanderMeer in 1926.²² That year, construction of a community house was begun and VanderMeer was received under care of the Presbytery of Buckhorn as a candidate for the ministry.²³ The following year, VanderMeer was ordained to the ministry and married Nola Pease, a nurse missionary serving on Wooton's Creek in Leslie County. VanderMeer met Pease at Wooton's Creek, when attempting to get primary care for children in Morris Fork.

Both Nola Pease VanderMeer and Sam VanderMeer were missionaries, who came to the mountains from Illinois and New Jersey respectively. As young people, Sam and Nola VanderMeer felt called to international mission-work, however, each experienced setbacks that kept that dream unfulfilled. Instead, Nola Pease came to Leslie County in 1917 as a nurse missionary at Wooton's Creek for a Presbyterian National Board of Home Mission's project. A minister's daughter, Nola worked for missionary Mary Rose McCord administering immunizations, attending to the sick, and delivering babies from 1917 until her marriage to Sam VanderMeer in 1927.

A native of The Netherlands, Sam VanderMeer graduated from Union Missionary Training Institute in Brooklyn, New York in the early 1920s and began mission work for the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church also in Brooklyn. Due to a friendship made there, VanderMeer "vacationed" in 1923 Breathitt County. Though initially unsure he wished to commit to life in Appalachia, rather than South American mission work, VanderMeer was back within the year and began teaching school and preaching in southwestern Breathitt County.

Growth at Morris Fork, 1927-1969: Sam and Nola VanderMeer as Community Builders

Before the twentieth century, Morris Fork was, by all accounts, a community disconnected from the rest of Breathitt County, due to a very poor transportation system. Nola VanderMeer describes the excruciating trip to

²¹ Clifford Merrill Drury, *Presbyterian Panorama: One Hundred and Fifty Years of National Missions History* (Philadelphia: Board of Christian Education, Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1952), 208.

²² David Rule, "Historical Summary of the Morris Fork Presbyterian Church," correspondence to William VanderMeer, includes newspaper articles, letters, and other sources, on file at Morris Fork Presbyterian Church, 9 June, 2008, not published.

²³ Ibid.

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the county seat at Jackson, thirty miles north, as follows, "we would ride horseback four miles to Buckhorn. This would take about two hours. At Buckhorn, we would try to get a truck to take us to Chavies---a fifteen mile trip. We could make this safely if it weren't too icy or snowy or if there weren't a tide from heavy rain to flood the road. Once into Chavies, we would finally board the train for the remaining twenty miles to Jackson."²⁴ She characterized the poor condition of local roads by explaining their maintenance: "In and around Morris Fork, we had a good many road 'workins.' For these, both men and women would take shovels, hoes, any and all helpful tools...to fill chug holes and level bumpy stretches. In spite of their efforts, a team of mules would often have to come to the rescue of a vehicle trying to make its way over the last miles to us."²⁵ In addition, Morris Fork had a reputation for "feuding" and "moonshining," that further advanced lore about "Bloody Breathitt." In sum, Morris Fork was a poor community, in spite of the riches of coal and timber, which Sam VanderMeer and later Nola VanderMeer found in dire need of assistance.

A 1950 article in *Presbyterian Life* magazine notes the situation the VanderMeers encountered, "Natives of Bloody Breathitt were accustomed to take this carnage for granted. Except for an occasional brush with a revenue agent foolhardy enough to risk his life in the area, the mountain people had no escape valve other than their private feuds. There was no industry, little business, and a very poor type of farming. People were accustomed to living on a diet of pork and corn bread, seldom saw a dollar in cash. Houses were old and dilapidated, often without windows. Sanitary facilities consisted of open-pit privies. Whole communities were infected with trachoma and hookworm...Few in the entire section had ever seen a screened window, running water, or an electric light."²⁶

In response to these conditions, the community program that the VanderMeers established was far more ambitious than just saving souls. The VanderMeers founded community institutions that were not accessible, nor likely to come to Morris Fork, without their intervention. In essence, the couple brought modern amenities to the area. The health and well-being of each family in the Morris Fork community was addressed through extremely creative methods. For instance, when it became clear that women in the community worked longer and harder hours than men, the VanderMeers organized a women's group, called the "Dorcas Society," that met weekly in the community house for prayer, self-help education, and quilting. Another example concerns adult literacy. Since many adults in the community could not read and write, Sam VanderMeer organized "moonlight schools" to teach the willing.

Over the forty-two years the VanderMeers called Morris Fork home, they developed strong community services that attempted to meet the needs of young and old in the mountain community. Health and dental clinics, agricultural programs, moonlight schools, the yearly Community Fair, sanitary privy construction, pie and box suppers, recreational activity nights, and new traditions, such as celebration of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Independence Day were all included in the program for Morris Fork.

After Sam's marriage to Nola in 1927, Morris Fork's community program blossomed. Building upon her ten years experience as a public health nurse, Mrs. VanderMeer "secured funds from the state board of health. She persuaded the railroad to give free rides to patients going to city hospitals. Baby clinics, vaccinations,

²⁴ Nola VanderMeer, 165.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Webb B. Garrison, "Kentucky's Mountain Preacher," *Presbyterian Life Missionary Biography* No. 9, 5 August, 1950.

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inoculations, and sanitary toilets all became part of the established program at Morris Fork Church."²⁷ While Reverend VanderMeer attended to souls, Mrs. VanderMeer became known as a nurse-midwife on-call for the entire community.

In November 1927, the VanderMeers were contacted by the Forest Hills Presbyterian Church in Newark, New Jersey and asked if they would like a missionary sponsor. Church correspondence explained that the New Jersey church's former mission in eastern Kentucky had not worked and they were looking for a new partner. The VanderMeers enthusiastically accepted Forest Hills' offer of \$125.00 a month stipend along with other material and in-kind support.²⁸

Shortly thereafter, the VanderMeers approached Forest Hill Church Officials with the idea of erecting a church building. The congregation had been meeting in an old school house near the creek and squeezing into the tiny community center space for services. The VanderMeers had a larger vision, which included a community building, church, camp buildings, and stable for their multi-faceted program. Forest Hill Church officials pledged \$5,000 to start the project.²⁹ On land donated by church member Charlie Turner,³⁰ the first building on the property, a six-room community center and manse, was constructed.³¹ Labor and materials were all provided by local church members and associates.

In 1929, the Morris Fork Presbyterian Church was constructed. Reverend VanderMeer designed the church building and it was executed by community members. Building the church became a community affair with "all of the members to take some part...Each one did something; even a little child of about two years of age held a hammer in her hand, with the hand of an adult grasping the child's hand and a small nail was driven."³² The first incarnation of the church included a sanctuary, Sunday School room, and choir room. All materials, with the exception of church pews, stained glass windows, and flooring, were found locally and church members pitched in to help develop the site. For example, "large rough rocks were brought from the creeks and hills [and] were cut and hand-chiseled by 'Rock George' Riley."³³ Two hundred chairs were handmade for the Sunday School room, along with two pulpits, choir benches, and tables.³⁴ Landscaping for the site was not neglected either. Sam VanderMeer, who was also an amateur horticulturalist, developed a natural landscaping plan that made use of mountain greenery, including rhododendron, holly, pine trees, and azaleas from the nearby hills.³⁵ The church became known as "the little brown church in the wildwood." At around the same time, the little rock house, directly behind the community center, was built, in order to accommodate visitor's to the site. A stable was added to the site circa 1935 to accommodate the sole means of travel---by horse or mule.

Quickly, the Morris Fork Church and Community Center became a focal point in the community. While Mrs. VanderMeer was educating the community about proper health care, Reverend VanderMeer was developing agricultural programs to modernize farming methods in the area. Through the county extension agency, he

²⁷ Garrison, "Kentucky's Mountain Preacher."

²⁸ Nola VanderMeer, 81.

²⁹ Ibid., 89.

³⁰ Nola VanderMeer, 88.

³¹ Margaret Bishop, "Uncle Sam's Early Days At Morris Fork," *The Breathitt County Journal*, Winter 1989, 26.

³² Bishop, 26.

³³ Nola VanderMeer, 89.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid., 90.

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introduced the idea of crop-rotation and hybrid seeds to local farmers. VanderMeer also persuaded county extension agents to come to Morris Fork on a regular basis. For a short while, the VanderMeers even operated a small school for adults.

The VanderMeers organized activities that encouraged local folks to achieve at their highest levels. One such event was the yearly Community Fair. This event occurred after harvest season at the nearby Morris Fork Consolidated School (established in 1933 by the county) and was meant to display a family's home-making and agricultural contributions. The fair was also intended to introduce new, modern techniques in household economy and agriculture. Nola VanderMeer discusses the first such fair circa 1935 in her book, "So the first fair passed in Morris Fork...something of a disappointment. But the bit of my own canning I displayed did seem to offer a ray of hope. At least the folks took note of it and talked about how nice everything looked. Undaunted, Sam said 'We'll have a good fair next year; wait and see, everybody will help.' And Sam was right. The next year we did indeed have a good fair...and the next year and the next and all the nexts."³⁶ By 1966, a *Jackson Times* newspaper article noted the great success of over 3,000 entries and participation of 137 families.³⁷ Participation from across the state and the nation flourished as well. The same article noted visitors from Lexington and a "busload" of Presbyterian women from the Synod of Nebraska.

County Extension agent Conrad Feltner describes the scene in 1937, "When I went to Breathitt County in 1927, I found there were approximately thirty mission stations in the county...There were some eight or ten mission stations involved in all aspects of the community life: religious, social, health, economic, and educational. Of this group, Morris Fork stood out as a leader."³⁸ Feltner continues, "In these days getting to Morris Fork was quite a task...On arriving... in the morning, we would have a 4H meeting. After lunch the farmers would gather, and I would discuss agricultural recommendations with them, and the home agent would meet with the homemakers in the afternoon."³⁹ Henry Cravens, also an extension agent, recalls, "I was in the County Agent's office in Jackson soon after arriving there in February 1931. I walked this tall, slender Dutchman with pleasant manners and a big smile. He made it seem mandatory that I come to Morris Fork, meet his men and young people and help start a 4H club."⁴⁰ During a typical over-night trip, Cravens noted, "There were so many visitors, I had to sleep on the upstairs porch of the community house..."⁴¹

The VanderMeers encouraged visitors from across the United States and the world to come learn from and work at the site. Just as often, the couple paved the way for Morris Fork's young people to visit and in some cases relocate to areas with more economic opportunity. In her book, Nola VanderMeer discusses many instances of young people she personally helped leave Morris Fork to pursue educational and job opportunities---sometimes against the wishes of their parents.

The former goal of attracting outside interest in this important work is best observed through the organization of youth summer work camps. Begun in the late 1920s, summer work camps allowed young people a better understanding of mission work. The first group came from a Newark, New Jersey Presbyterian Church and

³⁶ Nola VanderMeer, 144.

³⁷ Author unknown, 38th Annual Morris Fork Fair Hailed as Great Success by All," *The Jackson Times*, 6 October, 1966.

³⁸ Ibid., 131.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 130.

⁴¹ Ibid.

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thereafter from all over the United States. These groups assisted with the many projects and tasks necessary to running a mission, including "painting, carpentering, digging wells and ditches, working in gardens—along with helping with Bible Schools, Sunday Schools and church services."⁴² Visiting missionaries Charles and Emily Egbert went a step further in 1951, when Charles, a registered electrician, wired and electrified the community center and church for free. A generator provided electrical service for much of the community, while Charles busily adapted older houses to accept this modern amenity. Without the church's intervention, it may have been a long time before Morris Fork had electrical service.

With the phenomenal growth of these summer camps, more lodging space was needed. In the 1930s, a camper cabin was built (which is no longer extant) to house mission workers and the stable's hayloft was converted to a boy's dorm. The community center also proved too small for lodging both mission guests and summer camp lodgers. An addition was made to the building circa 1950 to accommodate guests.

The church itself experienced growth throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Membership statistics gathered by Reverend Rule demonstrate this progress.⁴³ From its inception in 1927 when the church had 67 church members and 100 Sunday School participants, enrollment grew yearly to a peak in the late 1940s and early 1950s of approximately 191 members and 238 Sunday School participants. Given the greatly expanded congregation, there was a need for additional space. In 1956, summer work camps labored alongside local congregants to append a small addition to the church. This addition included an enlarged Sunday School room/dining room, classroom space, and additional storage.

In collaboration with the local community and county officials, the mission was successful in getting a modern highway to the site circa 1950. As noted above, access to the site was very poor; Morris Fork Creek was the primary way into and out of the community. A heavy rain or snow would make travel within the community extremely dangerous. Sam VanderMeer indefatigably lobbied the State Highway Department to build a road to the site. VanderMeer used a health and safety argument, noting that they were unable to save lives in emergency situations. Finally, the State Highway Commissioner agreed to meet on site to view these difficulties. Apparently the trip was so harrowing that a stretch of road (SR 28) was finally built from Booneville to Morris Fork, though it was gravel-paved until the mid-1960s.⁴⁴ Additionally, a gravel road was constructed above the creek to furnish access to the community from SR 28. All of this was accomplished by 1950. In that year, the VanderMeers received a station wagon as a gift from the Southport Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis for use by the entire Morris Fork community.⁴⁵ About the same time, the old stable was converted on the first floor to accommodate the new car. Regular horse and mule travel was at an end in Morris Fork, Kentucky.

In all, the mission community greatly impacted the development of Morris Fork. Where once a poor disconnected mountain community with few amenities, such as medical care, electricity, roads, community space, or schools, mission work doggedly brought Morris Fork into the twentieth century. In addition to spiritual work, community institutions and amenities were developed, such as the community center and church, established roads, medical care, and modern agricultural practices. Further, the attention of county and state

⁴² Ibid., 142.

⁴³ David Eugene Rule, Correspondence to William VanderMeer, includes newspaper articles, letters, and other sources. On file at Morris Fork Presbyterian Church, 9 June, 2008, not published.

⁴⁴ Nola VanderMeer, 166.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 182.

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officials was obtained in the process. Morris Fork was no longer ignored and in essence blossomed under the care of the VanderMeers and the local mission community.

In 1969, Sam VanderMeer was forced to retire from service at Morris Fork due to a heart condition. The VanderMeers reluctantly left the community and took up residence in central Kentucky. In July 1975, Sam VanderMeer passed away. Nola VanderMeer lived to be 108 years of age. She died in September 2001.

Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center, 1969-present

To some extent, the success of the VanderMeers was the undoing of this small mountain community mission. Better roads meant that Morris Fork residents could access doctors, health care, and urban amenities in nearby towns, such as Jackson and Booneville. Further, encouragement for young people to leave for better opportunities meant that the mission would have a smaller and smaller audience. While church membership was steady throughout the 1970s, by 1988, there were only six congregants and no Sunday School participants. The church was dissolved that year and the property was transferred to the Buckhorn Children's Foundation.

In 2005, the church was reopened as the Morris Fork Presbyterian Chapel, due to the efforts of former congregants Naomi Belcher, Cleda Turner, and David Turner. The church's homecoming celebration in May 2005 attracted over 200 residents and visitors.⁴⁶ No longer a church, the Chapel operates under the Session of the McGuire Memorial Presbyterian Church in Beattyville, Kentucky. Reverend David Rule is the residing pastor of the chapel. The Morris Fork Chapel Board is eager to get their history recognized and honored by listing in the National Register of Historic Places. They hope to begin restoration on the community center/manse and other buildings in the near future.

Evaluating the significance of the Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center/Manse within the context "Mission Work in Eastern Kentucky, 1870-1960"

The Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center is an important example of a mission property in southwestern Breathitt County. The property was developed by a Presbyterian mission couple and operated from the 1920s through the 1960s to address the needs of the community in Morris Fork, Kentucky. Disconnected by modern transportation, Morris Fork had few amenities before the mission's appearance. The VanderMeers, like missionaries before them, brought health care, community education, good roads, social events, spiritual well-being, and recreational activities to areas in which they were sorely needed.

Morris Fork can be viewed within the context of the creation of missions in Eastern Kentucky in the early twentieth century. The Morris Fork mission station meets the criteria for significant mission work, established above, within the context of "Mission Work in Eastern Kentucky, 1870-1960."

Integrity Considerations

The Morris Fork Church and Community Center has an excellent level of integrity to its Period of Significance, 1927-1960, and successfully represents a mission property in southwest Breathitt County. The property has retained its integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association. While small changes have occurred over time, none of these negatively impact the overall integrity of the property.

⁴⁶ David Eugene Rule, Correspondence to William VanderMeer, includes newspaper articles, letters, and other sources, on file at Morris Fork Presbyterian Church, 9 June, 2008, not published.

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The property remains in its original *location* and no buildings have been moved within the campus. Integrity of *setting* has also been preserved. There have been no significant additions or subtractions that would diminish the integrity of setting. The property retains its historic acreage and the natural rural setting along a small two-lane road adjacent to mountain woodlands and Morris Fork Creek. There has been little development in the area that would alter this bucolic appearance. Most of its original buildings, with the exception of the camper's cabin, are also intact. The principal buildings, which would include the church and community center, remain in situ and have had very few alterations. The sole important change to the setting was the removal of the camper's cabin in recent times. Removal of a single non-principal building, especially a small dormitory building (used a few times a year), is not a change that would negatively impact integrity of setting at a mission property in Eastern Kentucky. Removal of the community center or the church would be a far more serious change, given these buildings' involvement in the everyday lives of Morris Fork community members.

Integrity of *materials* and *workmanship* are also present at the property. The buildings and structures retain their homemade rustic appearance and materials. Historic siding, wood shingles, stone landscape features, stone detailing, historic wood windows, and historic interior features, such as fireplaces, original handmade furniture, and built-in cabinets remain in situ. A few interior alterations have been made. For example, classroom space in the 1956 portion of the church was renovated to serve as a kitchen. Further, the 1929 church choir room was modernized in the 1956 building campaign. Neither of these small-scale changes impact overall integrity of materials and workmanship at the property. Other alterations are mostly cosmetic in nature and are reversible changes, such as the insertion of insulation between the half-round log ceiling framework in the community center.

Integrity of *design* has also been preserved. No additions have been appended to any building or structure on the property outside the Period of Significance, from 1927-1960. The additions that have occurred are in keeping with the property's history and missionary functions. In other words, the additions that occurred to the church in 1956, the community center circa 1950, and the stable circa 1950 are important to understanding the development of the mission community.

Another design change includes moving the church's cupola from the top of the original building to the center of the updated facility in 1956. This action can be viewed in light of growth of Morris Forks' social and religious mission in southwestern Breathitt County. Removal of an upper level porch on the stable and a second story sleeping porch on the community center has impacted integrity of design and materials, though not seriously. Both buildings retain sufficient materials, workmanship, and design to convey their important association with the mission property.

Feeling and *Association* remain with the property, as it retains its historic appearance and is strongly identified as an important community mission in southwest Breathitt County. Local community members, in fact, were the driving force in preserving these important buildings in recent years. In all, the buildings, structures, and landscape that comprise the Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center retain excellent integrity and successfully present the appearance of an early-to-mid twentieth century mission property in southwestern Breathitt County.

Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and
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9. Major Bibliographical References

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County and State

Primary Sources

Rule, David Eugene. "An Account of Morris Fork and the VanderMeers, Breathitt County, Kentucky." Compiled Christmas Letters and other Correspondence 1927-1975. On file at the Morris fork Presbyterian Chapel, not published.

Rule, David Eugene. Correspondence to William VanderMeer, includes newspaper articles, letters, and other sources. On file at Morris Fork Presbyterian Church, 9 June, 2008, not published.

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 # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property 3.58 acres

UTM References

1	<u>17</u> Zone	<u>277 150</u> Easting	<u>4140 232</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing		<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

The area proposed for listing is a 3.58 acre parcel, the historic portion of 4.12-acre property currently recorded in the Breathitt County Property Valuation Administrator's (PVA) office under the account 034-00-00-031.00. That account number corresponds with the former property maintenance system as Map 34, Parcel 31. The area proposed for listing is highlighted in bold black ink on Attachment Three, which is rendered in a 1" = 200' scale. The area proposed for listing does not include the land on which the Morris Fork Crafts Store currently sits.

Boundary Justification

The proposed National Register boundary includes the 3.58 acres historically associated with the property. Within this boundary are the historically significant buildings, structures, and land associated with the Period of Significance.

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The Morris Fork Craft Store sits on a .54-acre area within the 4.12-acres site. That Store is a modern metal prefabricated building. The previous building standing there burned in 1988. This .54-acre part of the property was donated to the Morris Fork Church circa 1965 by Ms. Grace Post, who was a teacher there, after the school was closed and declared surplus property by the county school board. As there are no historic buildings on that .54-acre area associated with Morris Fork Church and Community Center, and the land itself has no historic association, this part of the 4.12-acre property is not proposed for inclusion within the National Register boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rachel M. Kennedy
organization University of Kentucky date 1 June, 2010
street & number 1020A Export Street telephone 859.806.7265
city or town Lexington state KY zip code 40506
e-mail rmkenn2@uky.edu

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Attachment One: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center Site Plan

Attachment One A: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center Site Plan, Photography sketch map

Attachment Two: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church Sketch Plan

Attachment Two A: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church Sketch Plan, Photography sketch map

Attachment Three: Verbal Boundary Description Map

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Photography sketch maps are included for the Morris Fork property as Attachment One A and Attachment Two A.

1-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and
Community Center
Name of Property

Breathitt, KY
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Photographer: Rachel Kennedy

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Principal façade of Morris Fork Presbyterian Church; Note low stone wall near porch area. Camera facing northwest.

1 of _16_

2-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Rachel Kennedy

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: North Elevation of Morris Fork Presbyterian Church; Note stepping stone pathway. Camera facing southeast.

2 of _16_

3-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Rachel Kennedy

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: West (Rear) Elevation of Morris Fork Presbyterian Church. Camera facing north.

3 of _16_

4-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Rachel Kennedy

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: South Elevation of Morris Fork Presbyterian Church; Note low stone wall. Camera facing north.

4 of _16_

Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and
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5-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Bill Macintire

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Interior view of Morris Fork Presbyterian Church sanctuary, camera facing west; Note handmade wood furniture on the altar.

5 of _16_.

6-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Bill Macintire

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Interior view of Morris Fork Presbyterian Church Sunday School and Dining Room. Camera facing north from stage area.

6 of _16_.

7-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Rachel Kennedy

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Principal Façade of Morris Fork Community Center. Camera facing west.

7 of _16_.

8-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Rachel Kennedy

Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and
Community Center

Name of Property

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Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: North elevation of Morris Fork Community Center. Camera facing south.

8 of _16_.

9-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Rachel Kennedy

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: West (Rear) Elevation of Morris Fork Community Center. Camera facing southeast.

9 of _16_.

10-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Bill Macintire

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Interior of Morris Fork Community Center, Downstairs Community Room Mantel. Camera facing west.

10 of _16_.

11-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Bill Macintire

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Interior of Morris Fork Community Center, Manse Living Room on Second Floor. Camera facing south.

11 of _16_.

12-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and
Community Center
Name of Property

Breathitt, KY
County and State

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Rachel Kennedy

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Principal façade of Little Rock House. Camera facing west.

12 of _16__

13-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Rachel Kennedy

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Principal façade of stable. Camera facing north.

13 of _16__

14-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Rachel Kennedy

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: East elevation of stable. Camera facing north.

14 of _16__

15-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Rachel Kennedy

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and
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Description of Photograph(s) and number: Setting at Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center. View along Morris Fork Road from the stable building. Camera facing south.

15 of _16_.

16-Name of Property: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

City or Vicinity: Morris Fork

County: Breathitt County

State: KY

Photographer: Rachel Kennedy

Date Photographed: 6 April, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Setting at Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center. View of stone column entry (no longer is use) from Morris Fork Road. Camera facing west.

16 of _16_.

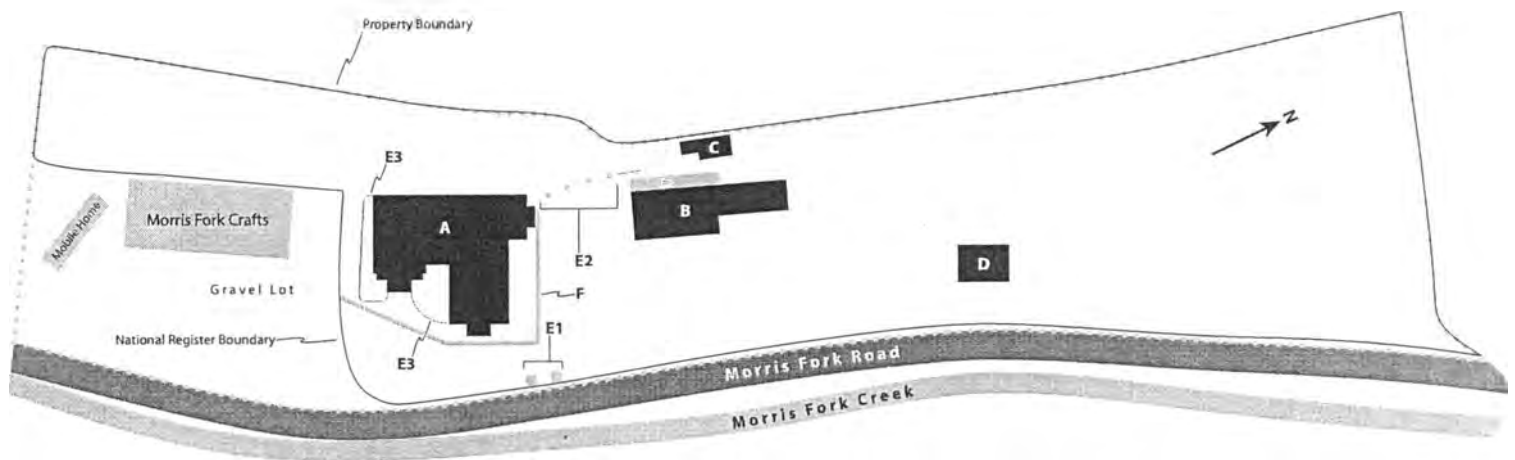
Property Owner:

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

name _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

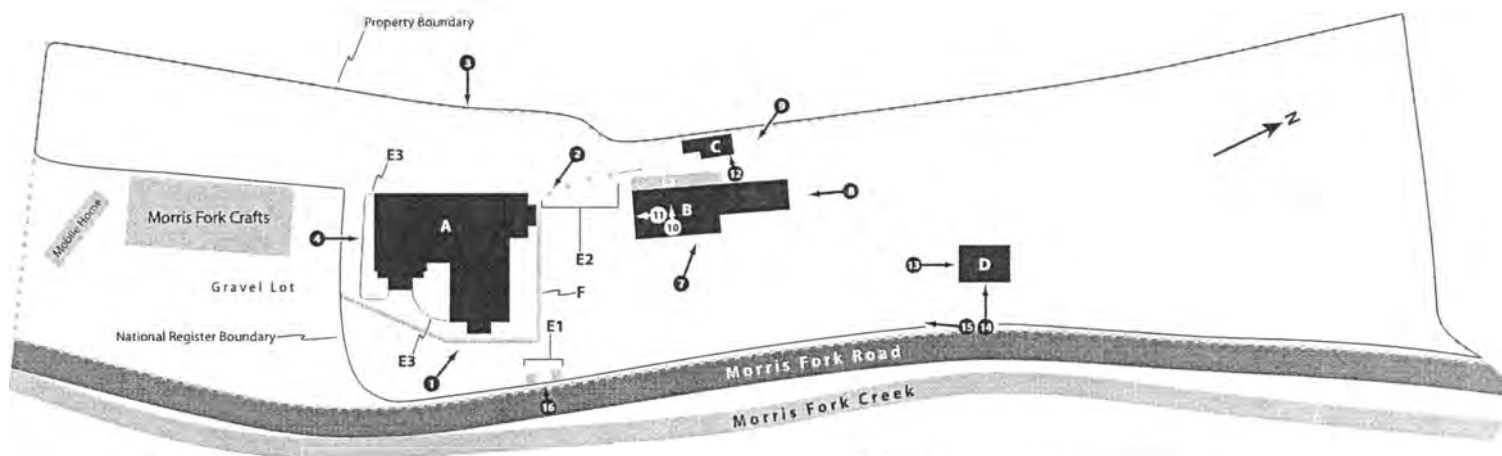


Attachment One:
Morris Fork Presbyterian Church & Community Center (BR 4) Site Plan

Breathitt Co, Ky

- A: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church
- B: Morris Fork Community Center and Manse
- C: Little Rock House
- D: Stable
- E1: Stone Column Entry
- E2: Stepping Stone Pathway & Poured Concrete Pad
- E3: Low Stone Wall
- F: Poured Concrete Sidewalk

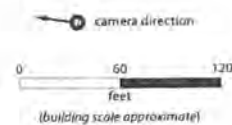


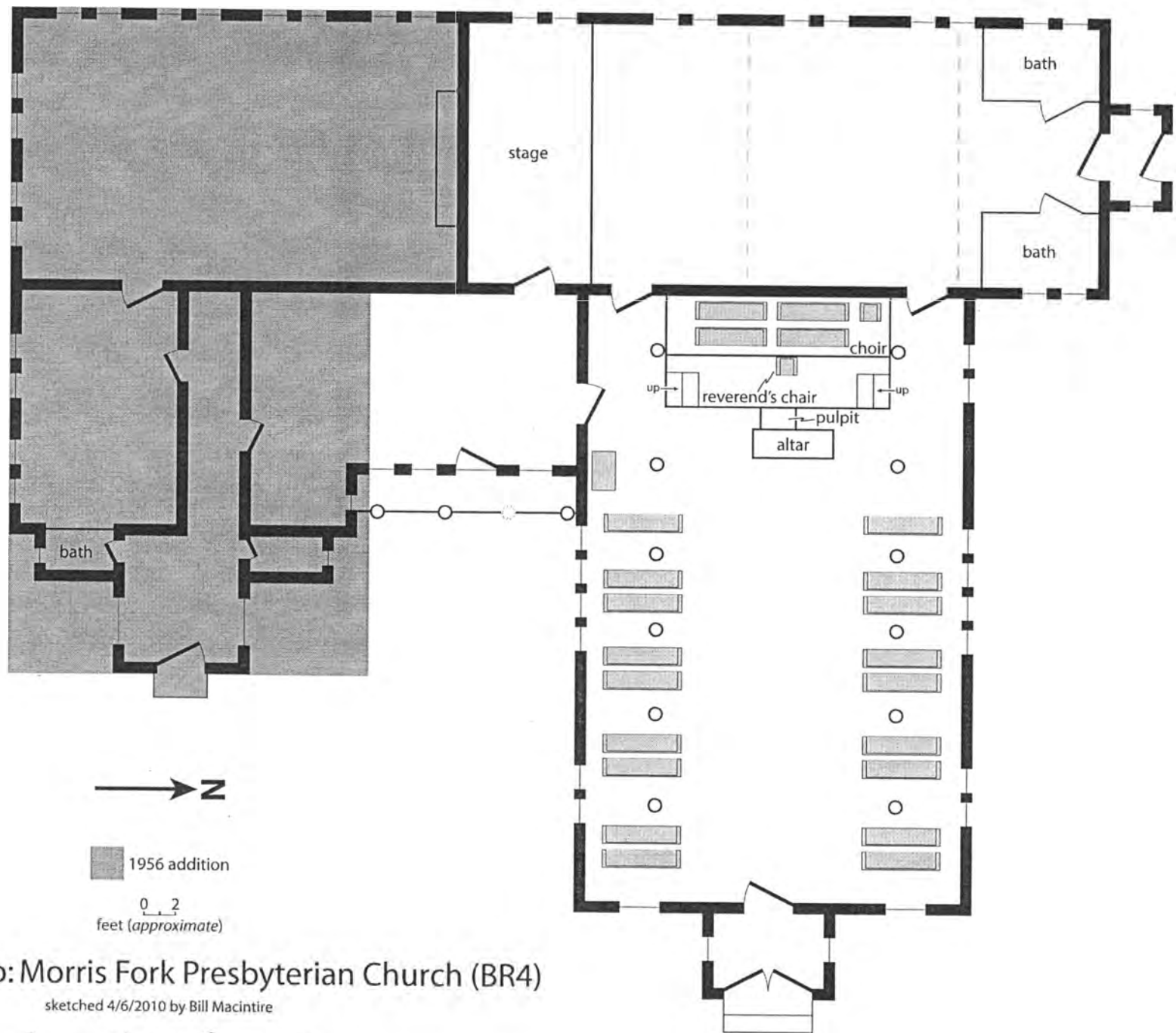


Attachment One A:
Morris Fork Presbyterian Church & Community Center (BR 4) Site Plan
Photography Sketch Plan

Breathitt Co., KY

- A: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church
- B: Morris Fork Community Center and Manse
- C: Little Rock House
- D: Stable
- E1: Stone Column Entry
- E2: Stepping Stone Pathway & Poured Concrete Pad
- E3: Low Stone Wall
- F: Poured Concrete Sidewalk

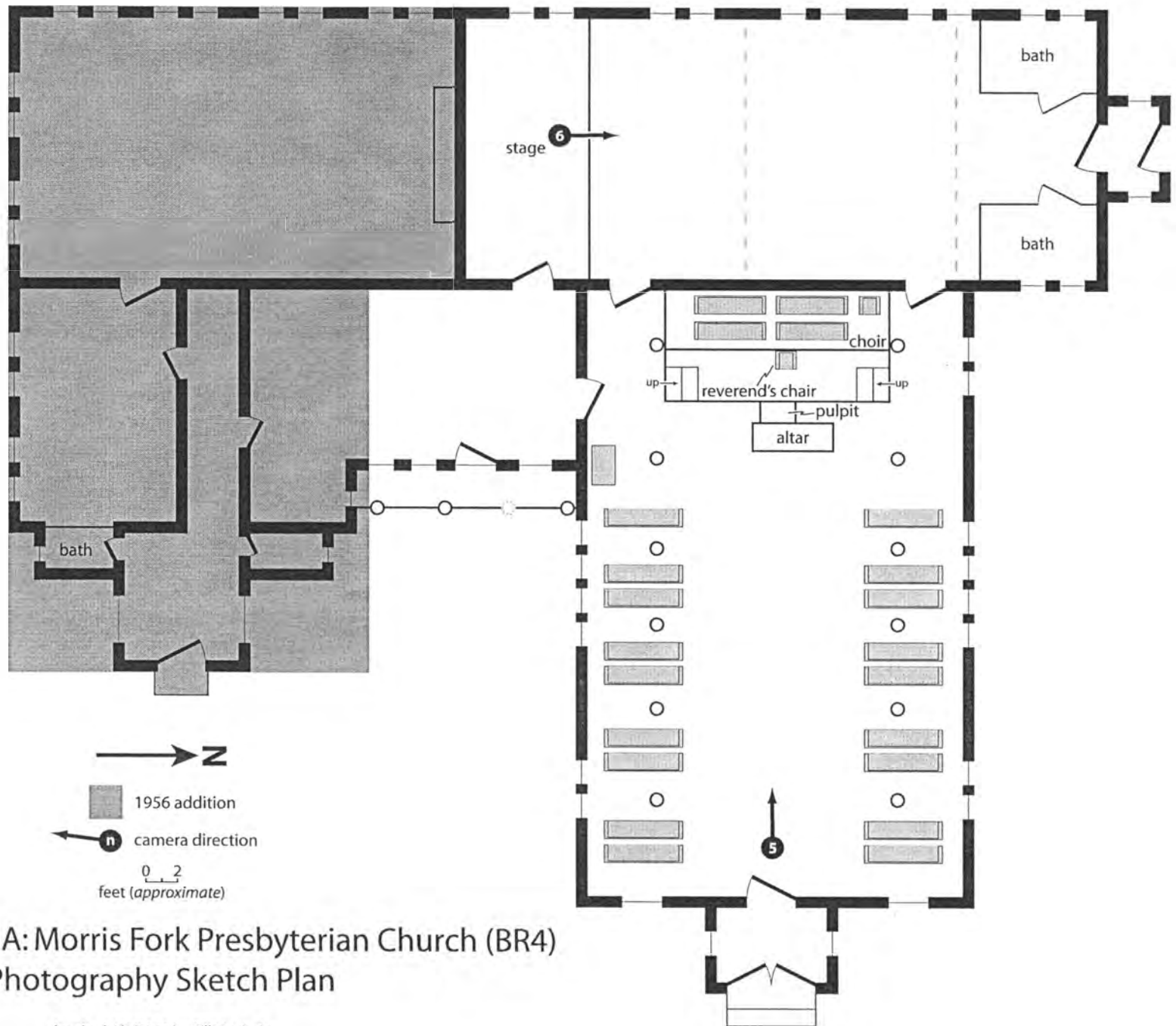




Attachment Two: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church (BR4)

sketched 4/6/2010 by Bill Macintire

Breathitt Co., KY

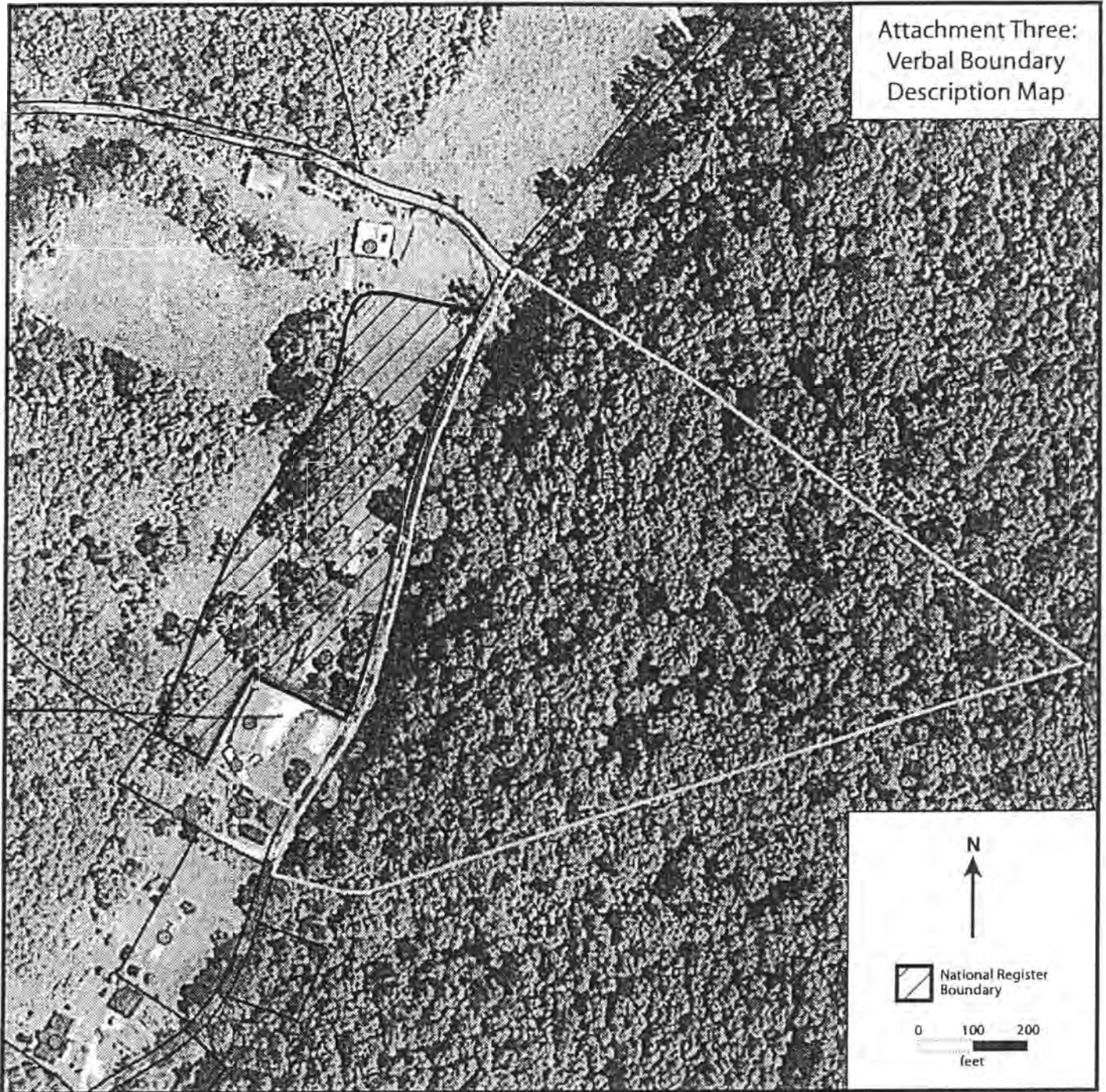


Attachment Two A: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church (BR4) Photography Sketch Plan

sketched 4/6/2010 by Bill Macintire

Breathitt Co., KY

Attachment Three:
Verbal Boundary
Description Map



Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center
Breathitt Co., KY

Recommendation: SLR Return Action: SLR Return None

State Name: KY County: 1

Reference No. 1000090

Solution:

Changed

Problem:

2103) all Kentucky to form

Edson:

After consulting with
SHPO, we have
changed the Area of
Significance. I have
substituted the appropriate
Pages in lieu of an SLR.

Please track as such -
New Area of Significance:
SOCIAL HISTORY

✓ $51/01 = 17$

is fork Pres. Church &
seminary Center

Resolution:

SLR: Yes No

Databases Change:

Recommendation: SLR Return Action: SLR Return None

Documentation Issues Discussion Sheet

State Name: KY County Name: Bushy Resource Name: Morris Fork Pres. Church & Community Center

Reference No. 10000908 Multiple Name: _____

Solution:

Changed Area of Significance

Problem:

2/13/11 all Kentucky to Jim for review

Resolution:

SLR: Yes No

Database Change: _____

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: KENTUCKY, Breathitt

DATE RECEIVED: 10/01/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/26/10
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/10/10 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/15/10
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10000908

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: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 11/10/2010 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Provides a good context for the significance of this and similar missions in improving the lives of folks in remote sections of Appalachia. e

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A
REVIEWER J. Crabtree DISCIPLINE Historic
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.



































Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods
Aerial photographs taken 1950. Field check 1953. Revised 1961
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Kentucky coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 17, shown in blue
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

TRUE NORTH
MAGNETIC NORTH
APPROXIMATE MEAN
DECLINATION, 1961

SCALE 1:24,000
1 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET
1 5 10 KILOMETER
CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.,
KENTUCKY GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY,
AND KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Medium-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Unimproved dirt - - - - -
State Route (circle)

COWCREEK, KY.
NE/4 BOONEVILLE 15' QUADRANGLE
N3722.5-W8330/7.5

1961

Morris Fork
Pres. Church Community
Center
Brentnutt Co., KY
UTM Reference:
Zone 17
Coordinates according to
NAD 83
Easting 277150
Northing 4140232
Coordinates accord
with NAD 27
Easting 277135
Northing 4140019



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

September 24, 2010

MARK DENNEN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER



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

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed are nominations approved at the September 8, 2010 Review Board meeting. We are submitting them for listing in the National Register:

- ✓ **Morris Fork Presbyterian Church and Community Center**, Breathitt County, KY
- Headley, Hal Price, Sr., House**, Fayette County, KY
- Arcadia Apartments**, Jefferson County, Kentucky
- Bradfordsville Christian Church**, Marion County, KY
- St. Joseph Church**, Marion County, KY
- Bardstown Historic District (Boundary Increase)**, Nelson County, KY
- Woodstock**, Todd County, KY

Two of these forms, the Bradfordsville Christian Church (# 09001141) and St. Joseph Church (# 09001142) are resubmissions. They were returned and have been revised according to the comments made on the return sheets.

We request substantive review for the **Hal Price Headley, Sr., House**. The local historic preservation commission and the State Review Board both recommended the property as eligible at the National level of significance, as the house's designers, architects Polhemus and Coffin, had a national reputation for defining the house's French Provincial Revival style. The argument on the form claims local level of significance, and cites Polhemus and Coffin's national accomplishments as support for a claim that the house is a locally significant instance of the style, as the style has not been fully studied locally. We have attached the draft minutes of the meeting, containing the Board's discussion. Note the comments of Dr. Patrick Snadon, the Board's sole member representing the discipline of Architectural History. As SHPO, I have selected Local significance as a more defensible level than National.

We appreciate your consideration of these nominations.

Sincerely,

Mark Dennen, SHPO and
Executive Director
Kentucky Heritage Council

