

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 96001358

Date Listed: 12/2/96

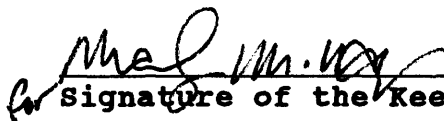
**Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery
Property Name**

**Haywood
County**

**TENNESSEE
State**

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

12/5/96
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 8

This nomination is amended to delete Other: Civil Rights Movement as an area of significance, since that is already covered under the Ethnic Heritage: African American category.

Criterion C is also deleted, since the nomination is not claiming significance for architecture.

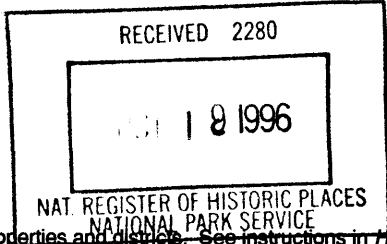
These changes have been confirmed with the Tennessee SHPO.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

12508

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery
other names/site number Woodlawn Missionary Baptist Church

2. Location

street & number Woodlawn Road, east of Tennessee Highway 19 not for publication
N/A
city or town Nutbush vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Haywood code 075 zip code _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Herbert L. Hays 10/3/96
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

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

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Carol D. Shull 12-2-96

Woodlawn Baptist Church & Cemetery
Name of Property

Haywood County, TN
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
2	0	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
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility
FUNERARY: cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility
FUNERARY: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Gothic and Classical Revival Influences

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
walls BRICK
roof ASPHALT (shingle)
other CONCRETE; METAL

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 year of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: African American
 PERFORMING ARTS: music
 RELIGION
 SOCIAL HISTORY
 OTHER: Civil Rights Movement

Period of Significance

1870 - 1966

Significant Dates

1870, 1927- 1928, 1954 - 1956, 1964 - 1966

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

UNKNOWN

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

Woodlawn Baptist Church & Cemetery
Name of Property

Haywood County, TN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 8.5 acres

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

Durhamville, TN 422NW

1 16 289860 3947900
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing
4 _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carroll Van West
organization MTSU Center for Historic Preservation date May 1996
street & number PO Box 80, MTSU telephone 615-898-2947
city or town _____ state TN zip code _____

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 0r 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

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

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Woodlawn Baptist Church c/o Sarah Doyle
street & number Post Office Box 646 telephone 901-772-8157
city or town Brownsville state TN zip code 38012

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

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

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Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, Haywood County, TN

VII. Description

The Woodlawn Baptist Church is located on Woodlawn Road, just east of Tennessee Highway 19, which is south of the unincorporated village of Nutbush in Haywood County, Tennessee. Built in 1927-28, using, in part, bricks from an earlier Victorian era church, the building was initially Gothic Revival influence in style. In the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s, the congregation added an annex with kitchen, restrooms, community rooms, and classrooms to the rear of the building. In 1964-66, the congregation added the Classical Revival-influenced two story portico to the north facade. Thus, the church now has a mixed architectural style, combining the earlier Gothic Revival with a modern interpretation of Classical Revival influences. The brick building rests on a brick foundation and has an asphalt shingle gable roof.

The north facade contains five symmetrically arranged bays, which are original to the 1927-28 building. Seven concrete steps, which were added in 1966, lead to the glass and metal front door, which replaced the earlier wood paneled door in 1966. Placed symmetrically on either side of the door are paired one-over-one double-hung windows; these are original to 1927-28 and provide light to the interior balcony. Flanking the entrance, at the east and west corners, are two castellated Gothic Revival style towers. They, too, contain two original pairs of one-over-one double-hung windows, symmetrically arranged on the north facade and on the east and west elevations of the towers. These provide light to the stairs leading to the balcony and the balcony itself. At the northwest corner of the west tower is a concrete block dedicating and dating the building as "Woodlawn Baptist Church, 1927." The 1966 Classical Revival portico is made of wood, topped by a gable asphalt shingle pedimented roof. Three plain columns and capitals on both the east and west side support the pediment, which is covered in aluminum siding.

The east elevation contains four symmetrically arranged bays and shows the southeast portion of the annex that was added to the building from 1954 to 1956 and from 1964 to 1966. The four casement windows contain colored glass and date to 1966. The air conditioning units added in 1966 are also evident on this elevation. On the annex, four concrete steps and a metal railing lead to a wooden paneled door, which is covered by a gable

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Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, Haywood Co., TN

asphalt shingle covered doorway. This leads into the pastor's study and men's restroom that was built in 1954-56. To the east of the doorway is a paired four-over-four double-hung window that dates from 1956. At the east end of the annex, it is clear how the additions from 1964-66 were connected to the earlier annex. The brick from 1954-56 is darker in color and the broken gable roof line of the 1964-66 addition was connected directly to the south gable roof side of the 1954-56 annex. Two windows are present; the north window is a four-over-four double-hung window from 1956; the south window is an eight-over-eight double-hung window from 1964-66.

The south elevation also shows how the annex expansion of 1964-66 was incorporated into the annex of 1954-56. The elevation contains six approximately symmetrical bays. At the easternmost end is an eight-over-eight double-hung window where a small library was added to the pastor's study in 1964-66. The next window to the west is a two-over-two double-hung window that provides light to the south end of the 1954-56 annex. The difference in brick color between the two periods is especially apparent, the earlier 1954-56 annex being darker in color than the additions made from 1964-66. The remainder of the south elevation dates to the 1964-66 renovations. Three concrete steps lead to a modern security door, added circa 1990, that opens into the kitchen. Directly to the west of the door is an eight-over-eight double-hung window. Two paired eight-over-eight double-hung windows to the west then provide light to classrooms.

The west elevation is a mirror image of the east elevation, with the exception of the air conditioning units which are not present.

The interior is dominated by the large sanctuary, which is oriented in a north (from the front door and balcony) to a south (the chancel area) direction. Thirty wood pews from 1927-28 are arranged in three sets of ten. Between the three sets are two aisles, which begin at wood double doors from 1964-66, to the pulpit. The wood floor from 1927-28 remains in place, but was covered in carpet along the aisles, in the vestibule, and at the pulpit, in 1966. Air conditioning vents, and faux pine paneling, were added to the balcony between 1964-66. The acoustic tile ceiling dates circa 1940, but the chandeliers are from 1966. In

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1976, the congregation added pine paneling along the south wall of the sanctuary and placed a painting of a river at the baptismal pool as part of a "bicentennial" effort to upgrade the baptismal pool, which plays a central role in the church's ceremonies and theology. The balcony contains four pairs of pews; the rear two were taken from the original nineteenth century church; the others date to 1927-28.

At the southeast and southwest ends of the sanctuary are wood doors circa 1954-56 that lead into the church annex, which was constructed circa 1954-56 and 1964-66. A hallway, with four foot high stained pine wainscoting, connects the two ends of the original 1954-56 annex. On the east end is the pastor's study and a men's restroom, which was updated in 1973. On the west end is a women's restroom and ladies lounge; the restroom was updated in 1973. Carpets were placed over the original wooden floors throughout the annex in 1966.

In 1965-66, the annex was expanded with the addition of five new carpeted rooms. The library and kitchen/cafeteria were placed on the east end; the west end contained new rooms for the choir, the deacons, and two Sunday School classrooms. The kitchen contains the same four foot high pine wainscoting founded in the earlier addition; however, the classrooms and the rooms for the choir and the deacons have three foot high faux pine wainscoting.

The cemetery contains burials from 1870 to 1995, with the majority of the stones identified dating prior to 1946; it is a contributing site to the nomination (C). Many graves are unmarked today because they originally had only a small wooden markers; other early graves contain only a small stone to designate the location. However, the large cemetery contains other gravemarkers that document local masonry skills as well as the ability of wealthier members of the congregation to purchase finely carved and designed stones from professional stonecarvers and gravemaker companies. As a remaining artifact of the beginnings of this African-American religious institution in the Reconstruction era, the cemetery is of significance to African-American ethnic identity in Haywood County. It also is the oldest post-Civil War African-American cemetery to be documented thus far in Haywood County; consequently, the cemetery is also a significant document of the settlement patterns of newly freed

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Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, Haywood Co., TN

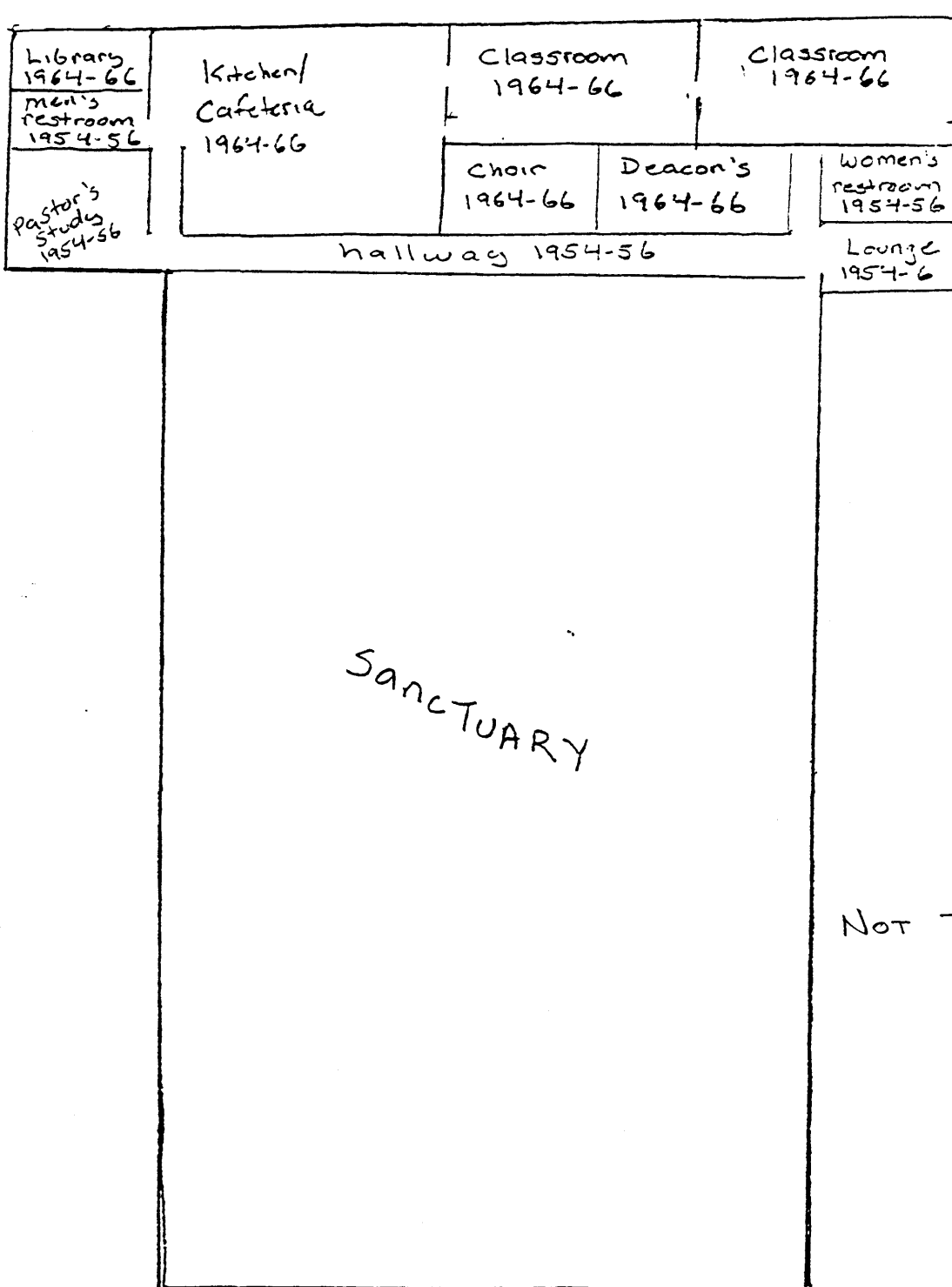
African-Americans in Haywood County during the immediate years following emancipation.

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Woodlawn Baptist Church & Cemetery
Haywood County, TN



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Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, Haywood Co., TN

VIII. Statement of Significance

The Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, located south of the rural community of Nutbush, in Haywood County, Tennessee, are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for significance in African-American ethnic heritage, specifically in the areas of religion, music, social history, and the Civil Rights Movement. Constructed in 1927-28, with later renovations and additions made in 1954-56, 1961, 1964-66, and 1976, the Woodlawn Baptist Church still serves as a significant place of identity, culture, and community for African Americans in Haywood County.

The history of the congregation of the Woodlawn Baptist Church dates to the era of slavery, circa 1845. Harden Smith (1829-1929) was a slave carpenter of William H. Loving, served as the first minister. Loving operated a plantation east of Brownsville in the community known as Brooklyn, now known as Nutbush. Loving's children secretly taught Smith how to read and write; Loving, himself, was a minister. Between 1845 and 1850, Harden Smith began to preach secretly to small numbers of slaves, who often congregated along the Hatchie River. In 1850, Smith married Jane Rucker (d. 1882). Throughout the 1850s, a sizeable gathering of African Americans from neighboring plantations began to receive Sunday evening worship services at a nearby white church. With the end of the Civil War, the newly freed people quickly broke any formal ties with the white church. On the second Sunday in June 1865, Harden Smith led the establishment of the Woodlawn Baptist Church; the first service was held in a brush arbor.

From 1865 to 1870, the congregation grew rapidly. Harden Smith received formal religious training from white missionaries of the Baptist Home Mission Board. Soon after his ordination circa 1868, he held a revival, which gained 400 new members for the church. The congregation then made plans to build a permanent brick church building, replacing the earlier brush arbor and small frame church; due to the influence of the Home Mission Board, the church was initially known as the Woodlawn Missionary Baptist Church. As an unpublished church history relates, "a special rally day was held where each member was assessed one dollar. This was a major financial effort for people just out of slavery who had never experienced using or handling money." (1)

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Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, Haywood Co., TN

In late December 1869, Issac Read sold to Dublin Shaw, William Evans, Isham Lankford, James Owens, Allen Peebles, Allfred Baucom, and Thomas Read, the trustees of the "Wood Lawn Colored Baptist Church," a 2.5 acre lot for the sole purpose of erecting a church, school house, and "burying ground." (2) This lot is still part of the current 8.5 acre lot of Woodlawn Baptist Church. The present cemetery, therefore, dates to 1870 and since that date it has remained a significant burial ground for African Americans in rural Haywood County. The construction of the initial brick church began in 1870, guided by former slave Will Wallace Brink, a master brick mason.

The early history of the congregation of Woodlawn Baptist Church is associated with several significant historical trends in African-American religion in the South. As historian William E. Montgomery has observed, "[i]n rural areas there were countless congregations that slave preachers had led in the old days and continued to gather and conduct religious services for as frequently as possible with the coming of freedom." Ministers like Harden Smith "may not have been licensed by established demoninational authorities, but they nevertheless ministered to organized congregations." (3) The northern missionaries typically assisted rural ministers such as Harden Smith to receive formal training and to become part of wider support networks in the region, across the state, and even extending into the north. Historian Montgomery points out: "Northern missionaries were unquestionably important contributors to the expansion of the black church in the South, but they did not do it alone. The freedmen were responsible for much of it themselves." (4) Indeed, at congregations like Woodlawn Baptist Church, "freedmen only wanted the missionaries to assist them in organizing their churches, not to reform the way they worshipped." (5)

Another significant aspect of the early history of the congregation of the Woodlawn Baptist Church is the slave congregation's decision, at the time of emancipation, to choose formal affiliation with the Baptist church. The Baptist church, in general, dominated the newly created African-American churches in the Reconstruction South, but much more so in some states, such as Virginia (where 83% were Baptists) or neighboring Arkansas (60% were Baptists) than in Tennessee. In Tennessee, 40% of the African-American church goers were Baptists. The members

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of the Woodlawn church probably did look to a Baptist affiliation because of past negative contacts with the churches of their planter masters. In Haywood County, the Episcopal Church dominated the planter class, as it did throughout West Tennessee. "Black church affiliation," according to William Montgomery, "was not based on chance, nor was it a replica of white patterns of church association, and it certainly was not the result of white evangelization alone." (6) Rather, the members of Woodlawn Church claimed to be Baptists because "Baptist theology blended particularly well with African religious traditions. The Baptists' insistence on baptism by immersion clearly distinguished them from other evangelical denominations and resembled some of the river ceremonies in areas of West Africa where many slaves had come from." (7) At Woodlawn today, the interior of the sanctuary is dominated by, indeed the entire interior plan is designed to focus attention on, the dunking pool for baptism. Setting this special area apart from the remainder of the church was important in the 1870s as it was in 1976 when the church redesigned the pool to include painted decoration that suggests a naturalistic setting down by a river. Just as important, and just as clearly tied to the twentieth century traditions of Woodlawn Baptist Church, "Baptist polity attracted blacks who wanted independence from white control;" these new congregations became "the building blocks of black Baptist polity." (8) The tradition of independence that marks many aspects of the history of the Woodlawn Baptist Church dates to the beginning years of the congregation.

The period of 1870 to 1890 witnessed continued expansion and growth of the congregation. Rev. Harden Smith also emerged as a key leader in the nascent religious organizations for African Americans in West Tennessee. Woodlawn was a "mother" church for other Missionary Baptist congregations in Haywood County; from it would grow the later Spring Hill Baptist Church, the Durhamville (Elam) Baptist Church, the Hickory Grove Missionary Baptist Church, and the Oakview Missionary Baptist Church. Rev. Smith served as an organizer of the Howe Institute in Memphis and Roger Williams University in Nashville. He also played an important role in the creation of the National Baptist Convention. His church produced other prominent African-American ministers, including Rev. W.F. Lovelace and J.R. Evans, who served as Dean of Roger Williams University, as well as locally important professionals such as Dr. J.W. Evans, who practiced in

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Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, Haywood County, TN

Brownsville for 40 years, and Smith's own daughter, Sara R. Smith Beard, who was one of the first African-American school teachers in Haywood County's public schools. Under Smith's guidance, Woodlawn Baptist Church also assumed vital community roles. He was one of the trustees for the initial public school for blacks in Haywood County, the "Freedmen School of Brownsville." The church has been a supporter of public education ever since; according to a list compiled by the Historical Committee of the church in 1995, Woodlawn has produced 46 public school teachers for Haywood County.

During the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1878, Smith worked closely with the white county health directors to combat the disease. Woodlawn was a local political center for African Americans, until Jim Crow laws barred African-American voting in 1889. Harden Smith clearly established traditions of religious, social, and political activism for Woodlawn Baptist Church. His activities on behalf of the church in the late nineteenth century reflect well W. E. B. DuBois's observations in The Souls of Black Folks: the African-American preacher was "a leader, a politician, an orator, a 'boss,' an intriguer, and idealist." (9) The late Victorian era African-American preacher like Harden Smith combined "spiritual and political leadership, [which] followed a pattern carried over from traditional West African societies." (10) Harden Smith was no different from his contemporaries in Covington, Jackson, or Memphis; he "looked after the freed people's welfare, helping to build an institutional infrastructure that provided a variety of social services ranging from education to burial insurance." (11) His leadership established lasting precedents for the twentieth century activism of Woodlawn Baptist Church.

In 1891, the church congregation had grown to an extent that more land was required and an additional 2.5 acres were purchased from James D. and Lucy E. Read. This new addition would later serve as the location for the present church building. (12)

The history of Woodlawn Baptist Church is not well known for the period from 1891 to 1922. This era, as is well known, was one of the worst in Tennessee history for racial segregation and racial violence of whites against African Americans. Lynchings increased; voting rights and other legal protections disappeared. (13) Rev. Harden Smith remained pastor throughout this period

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Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, Haywood County, TN

until his retirement at the age of 93 in 1922.

During these years of denied opportunity, Woodlawn Baptist Church established one final tradition--music--that would mark its history in the twentieth century. This is another area of local significance associated with the church; the music traditions coming from this congregation impacted local and regional interpretations of the blues and popular music. According to the research of Sharon Norris, "older members of the present congregation remember stories of musicians [like Primbrook Whitelow, a horn player, who had been born into slavery at Nutbush in 1858] and singing having been a major part of the services" of Harden Smith. David Brack was the organist at that time.(14) Smith "pulled all the Black musicians and singers together and provided an avenue for them to perform Spirituals." Norris concludes that "out of his slave congregation came the early Black musical heritage of Nutbush and a large representation of the musical heritage of West Tennessee," including locally, regionally, and nationally important artists. These included blues artist Sleepy John Estes, the Bootsie Whitelow String Band, Rev. Clay Evans, and Anna Mae Bullock (Tina Turner), whose family church was Woodlawn, where she attended as a child before joining the nearby Spring Hill Baptist Church, where she could sing in the choir. (15) The artistic roots of these individual artists, however, lay with two earlier Woodlawn Church bands, which performed from the late nineteenth century into the 1930s. The original Woodlawn band was composed of Prima Whitelow, Jim Green, George Peebles, Will Owens, Beab Daniels, and Lawrence Tyus. The second Woodlawn band was established in the 1920s and included Alan Tyus, Sewell Flagg, Sr., Bootsie Whitelow, William E. Watkins, and Westley Watkins. The bands played blues, gospel, jazz, and black spirituals in local churches and other venues in the area. Of the musicians involved in these bands, Bootsie Whitelow would emerge as the most influential. According to James Byers, an elderly Brownsville resident, "Bootsie put his band on a horse drawn wagon and played the Labor Day picnics, county fairs, school, and church socials and back yard barbeques in Nutbush, Brownsville, and Ripley." Local historian Sharon Norris claims that Tina Turner later wrote a song, "Bootsie Whitelaw" in honor of this early twentieth century musician. Even into the 1950s and 1960s, Woodlawn was a center for African-American music. On June 18, 1950, the church

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hosted a Sunday program to honor the gospel composer, Lucy E. Campbell of Memphis.(16)

In 1927-28, the congregation chose to build a new, larger brick church, across the road from the cemetery. Harden Smith had retired in 1922; the decision to build a new church building at a new location was, in part, a deliberate act to symbolize that leadership of the congregation had passed into a new age and a new generation. However, Woodlawn members wanted to keep a close link to the past. L. V. Hill recalled: "when they started building the new church, I would leave school and come directly to the site and help my parents and the other people clean the bricks from the old church" so they could be reused in the new building. Rev. A.L. McCargo, who then led the congregation, was proud of how the members "formed a convoy of wagons and hauled the building materials from Brownsville." (17) The initial design of the church was a vernacular interpretation of Gothic Revival, featuring two Castellated Gothic towers.

The significance of the new age at Woodlawn Baptist Church became most apparent during the pastorage of Rev. J.A. Caldwell, who served at the church from 1942 to 1954. To solve pressing financial needs, Caldwell launched a campaign to pay off the mortgage from the 1927-28 construction. Then in the 1950s, he led the congregation on a new building fund campaign, to build a rear annex for Sunday School teaching and community functions. [The annex was finally funded and built in the years 1954-56, under the guidance of Rev. B.T. Hopkins.] During the Caldwell years, Woodlawn Baptist enhanced and extended its reputation as a social, religious, political, and community center in rural Haywood County. During World War II, the church hosted community meetings where members explained the course and developments of the war, as well as associated federal policies and programs, such as War Bond drives. The American Red Cross held meetings at the church. During and after the war, the church also became the regular meeting place of local Home Demonstration Clubs and 4-H chapters. It hosted Community Club sessions where women members would be taught handicrafts, rug making, mattress making, and proper table manners and polite behavior. Woodlawn Baptist Church was one of the first places that held the early organizational meetings to raise money to build a hospital for African Americans in Haywood County. That goal never

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Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, Haywood Co., TN

materialized out of the meetings of the 1950s, but the initiative did grow into the Golden Circle Life Insurance Company, a large insurance company that still operates today. (18)

Civil Rights activism returned to rural Haywood County in 1958-59 after almost twenty years of terrorism directed against African-American residents following the lynching of Elbert Williams, who had tried to start a NAACP chapter, in 1940. (19) As county resident C.P. Boyd recalled those years: "Haywood County was a terrible place for blacks. You could get a beating because a policeman didn't like you. It was hard to imagine. It was awesome; you could be beaten for nothing." (20) In 1959, determined citizens, largely from the rural areas of the county like Douglas and Nutbush and including members of the Woodlawn congregation, established the Haywood County Civic and Welfare League. "The African Americans of the 1960s," observed Richard Cuoto, "firmly demanded the rights they were entitled to as Americans and as human beings." (21) The history of the movement in Haywood County is documented, in part, by the events that would take place at Woodlawn Baptist Church throughout the decade in addition to the changes that both the congregation and the church building would experience. Indeed, it would be during the late 1950s and 1960s that the most significant associations with African-American political and social history would take place at Woodlawn Baptist Church. The building itself mirrors this period of significant transformation in the nature of race relations in the South in general and Haywood County in particular, a pattern of events which historians now recognize as the single most important change in the American South during the twentieth century.

Woodlawn Baptist Church, under the guidance of Rev. R.W. McClendon from 1961 to 1964, Rev. Virgil J. Caldwell from 1964 to 1968, and Rev. William Kelly, Jr., from 1969 to 1973, played a significant role in the social, political, and cultural transformations of that time. It became a place where residents could learn about meetings, events, and the latest news about the movement. In one speech to the congregation from 1964 that has been preserved, Mabel Beard Leigh, a granddaughter of Harden Smith, informed the church of the most recent developments. She observed: "Though the race question has important social implications, it is fundamentally a moral and spiritual issue.

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Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, Haywood Co., TN

Only moral approaches provide a solution." (22) At Woodlawn Baptist Church, meetings took place to teach residents how to register to vote; Elmer Beard of the church, the grandson of the founder, became the first African-American voter in Nutbush since the late Victorian era. (23) Symbolic of this activism, and the renewed pride in race and achievement that occurred in African-American communities throughout the Civil Rights era, the deacons at Woodlawn Baptist Church expanded and upgraded the facilities at the church. The congregation enjoyed increased economic opportunities due to the legal end of segregation; it desired to make a statement with the building, similar to that of the congregation during the 1920s when it moved the building and built the present brick church. This new generation, which courageously led the congregation and the community into the Civil Rights Movement, also wanted their church building to be as progressive, as comfortable, as any other rural church in Haywood County. No longer did they need to downplay their wealth, their pride, their heritage in order not to bring too much attention to themselves. In 1966, the members added air-conditioning units, replaced the original windows from 1927-28 with casement windows, and, most symbolically, added the Classical Revival-styled portico to the front facade. Throughout the early twentieth century in the South, the gleaming white columns of the Classical Revival were closely associated with the imposition of Jim Crow segregation; in a phrase, white columns were equal to white supremacy. (24) After the passage of the Voting Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965, along with other legislation and new federal regulations, African Americans at Woodlawn Baptist Church made their own cultural statement with the interior and exterior improvements at the church: they now had the power and freedom to have a church the equal of any of the rural white churches in Haywood County. Travelers along Tennessee Highway 19, between Ripley and Brownsville, would always see the gleaming white columns of the church; Woodlawn Baptist Church became an architectural, as well as cultural, landmark in the landscape of West Tennessee. As the unpublished church history remarks, the congregation of Woodlawn Baptist Church in 130 years has moved from a brush arbor to "a monumental historical edifice." (25)

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Endnotes

1. "Church History," Unpublished document, Woodlawn Baptist Church, Haywood County, TN. A copy is in the author's possession; the author is unknown.
2. Deed, Issac Read to Trustees of Church, filed January 1, 1870, Haywood County Deed Book 1, Page 636, Haywood County Courthouse, Brownsville.
3. William E. Montgomery, Under Their Own Vine and Fig Tree: The African-American Church in the South, 1865-1900, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993), p. 86.
4. Ibid., p. 84.
5. Ibid., p. 85.
6. Ibid., p. 107.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., pp. 107 and 111.
9. William E. B. DuBois, The Souls of Black Folks: Essays and Sketches, (Chicago, 1909), p. 190.
10. Montgomery, Under Their Own Vine and Fig Tree, p. 309.
11. Ibid.; also see, Armstead L. Robinson, "Plans Dat Comed from God: Institution Building and the Emergence of Black Leadership in Reconstruction Memphis," Orville V. Burton and Robert C. McMath, Jr., eds., Toward A New South?: Studies in Post-Civil War Southern Communities, (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1982): pp. 71-102.
12. Deed, James D. and Lucy E. Read to Deacons, Woodlawn Baptist Church, March 2, 1891, Haywood County Deed Book 14, Page 363, Haywood County Courthouse, Brownsville.
13. See Richard A. Couto, Lifting the Veil: A Political History of Struggles for Emancipation, (Knoxville: University of

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Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, Haywood Co., TN

Tennessee Press, 1993), pp. 89-116.

14. Sharon Norris, Nutbush; of Cotton Fields, Butterflies, and wild Onion Ridge, (Unpublished manuscript, 1995), p. 85.

15. Ibid., pp. 86-87, 154-55.

16. Ibid., pp. 167-68; Haywood County Negro News, June 11 (?), 1950.

17. Norris, Nutbush, pp. 85-86.

18. Joint interview of Gladys E. Jones, Lollie Lee Mann, Sharon Norris, Earl Lee Reed, L.V. Hill, Sewell Flagg, Jr., Opal Brack, and Sarah Doyle, Woodlawn Baptist Church, October 20, 1995; "Church History;" Haywood County Negro News, April 14 and July 5, 1950.

19. See Couto, Lifting the Veil, pp. 127-193.

20. Richard A. Couto, Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around: The Pursuit of Racial Justice in the Rural South, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), p. 34.

21. Couto, Lifting the Veil, p. 196.

22. Norris, Nutbush, p. 149.

23. "Joint Interview of Gladys E. Jones, et. al."

24. Catherine Bishir, "Landmarks of Power: Building a Southern Past, 1885-1915," Southern Cultures, inaugural issue, 1994: pp. 27-28.

25. "Church History," p. 4.

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Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, Haywood County, TN

X. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery contain 8.5 acres of land on Woodlawn Road in Haywood County, Tennessee, and is marked as Parcel 15 on the attached Haywood County Tax Map 46.

The Tax Map for this nomination has the scale 1" = 400'. This scale tax map is prepared by the Tennessee State Board of Equalization for rural areas. In the past, the Tennessee Historical Commission has used this scale map for nominations and has found that the 1" = 400' scale adequately meets our office needs. The Tennessee Historical Commission does not have the facilities to prepare maps to the scale preferred by the National Park Service.

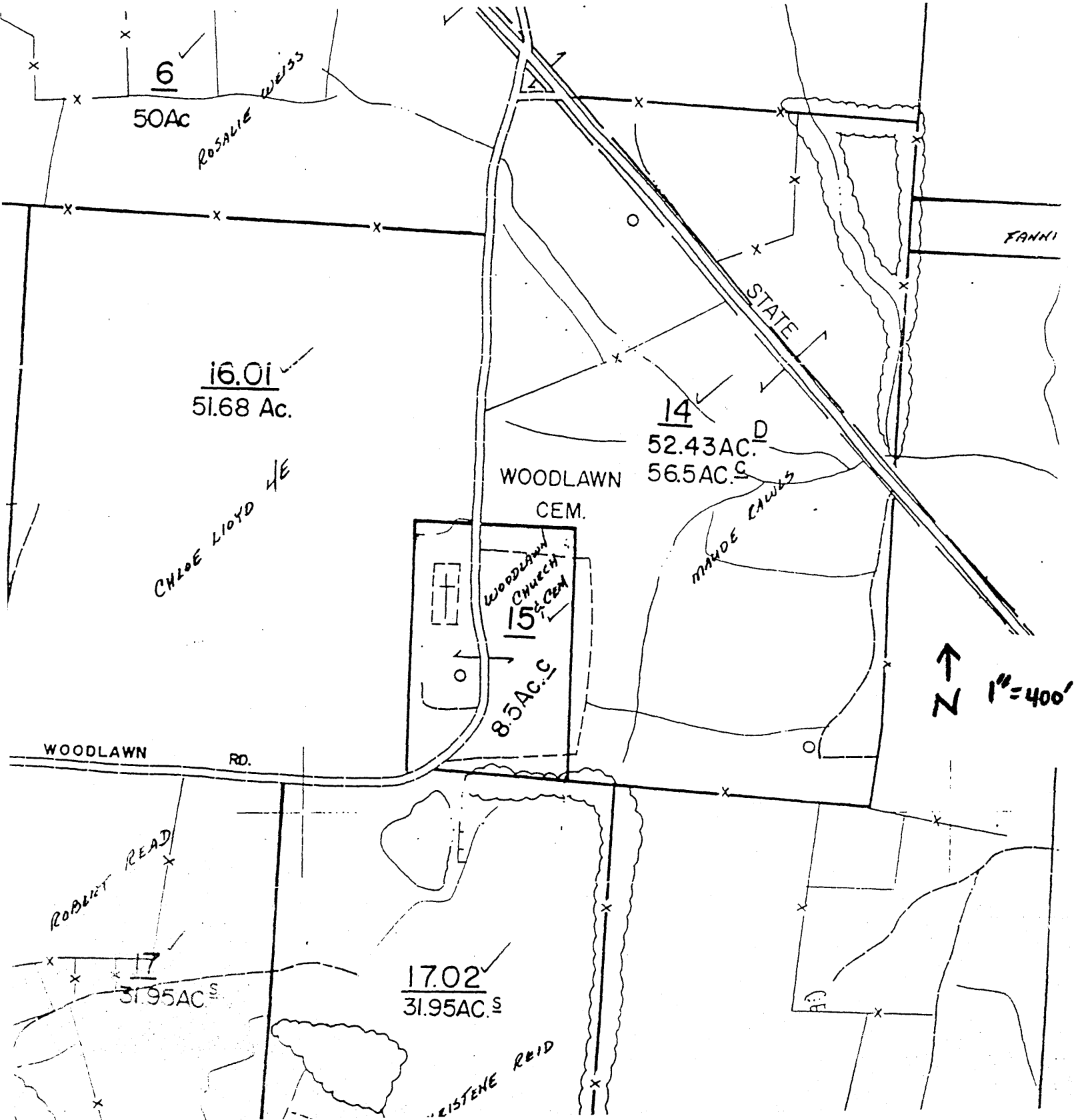
Boundary Justification

The nominated acreage contains all of the historic land associated with the Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery during the period of significance.

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Woodlawn Baptist Church & Cemetery
Haywood County, TN



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Woodlawn Baptist Church, Haywood County, TN

PHOTOGRAPHS

Woodlawn Baptist Church

Haywood County, TN

Photos by: Carroll Van West

MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

Date: October 20, 1995

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission

2941 Lebanon Road

Nashville, TN 37243

North facade, from the cemetery, facing southeast
1 of 17

North facade and west elevation, facing southeast
2 of 17

North facade, facing south
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East elevation, facing southwest
4 of 17

East elevation, facing west
5 of 17

South elevation (the 1950s and 1960s annex), facing north
6 of 17

West elevation, facing southeast
7 of 17

Sanctuary, from balcony, facing south
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Sanctuary, from pulpit, facing north
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Community room, facing east
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Kitchen, facing southeast
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Woodlawn Baptist Church and Cemetery, Haywood County, TN

Hallway, men's restroom, facing east
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Sewell Roberts cemetery stone, facing north
13 of 17

Cemetery markers, facing north
14 of 17

Evans family markers, facing north
15 of 17

Cemetery overview, facing northwest
16 of 17

Cemetery, from site of first church toward the new church, facing southwest
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