

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED OCT 24 1975

DATE ENTERED NOV 12 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Orchard Street United Methodist Church (Formerly Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church)

AND/OR COMMON

Orchard Street United Methodist Church

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

510 Orchard Street

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

CODE
24

COUNTY

Baltimore City

CODE
510

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM in progress
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

H.C.D. - Housing and Community Development

STREET & NUMBER

222 Saratoga Street

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore City Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Saratoga and St. Paul Streets

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Orchard Street United Methodist Church is located on the northwest side of Orchard Street southwest of Druid Hill Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland. Its principal facade of pressed brick faces southeast. Attached to the rear of the nave of the church is a classroom and auditorium building. This rear structure, with its principal elevation facing northeast, forms an over-all T-shaped plan for the entire complex. A two-story link about four feet wide connects the two large buildings. Built of the same type of red brick as the classroom portion, this link is bonded into the rear building but not the church which extends to Orchard Street.

This nineteenth century church possesses a mixture of revival styles. The main church is Romanesque Revival, but the rear building is Romanesque with a large Gothic window in its northeastern facade. The narthex, forming the Orchard Street facade, contains two staircases which lead to galleries above the aisles and in the narthex. The nave, approximately 54 by 74 feet, has superimposed columns dividing the nave and aisles and a plastered ceiling with ornamental arched trusses. Clerestory windows light the nave.

The rear building is approximately 50 by 75 feet. Its first story is divided into classrooms with a central corridor. The second floor is a large hall or auditorium with a stage at one end and a balcony at the other. The plastered ceiling is arched. Between the windows, plaster-paneled, arched beams are supported by pilasters. All ornament is of a simple Roman style.

There are three existing cornerstones, all of which have been removed from the buildings. One with dates "1837, Rebuilt 1859, 1882" is thought to have come from the main church structure. Another, probably from the auditorium part, shows "1838, 1879, 1903" and is thought to be a replacement for a third reading "Orchard St. M. E. C., S. S. & Classrooms, Rebuilt A.D. 1879". The rear Sunday School and auditorium building is thought to be on the site of the original structure of 1837-38.

The condition of the Orchard Street Church has deteriorated since the congregation moved about two years ago. It has been vandalized, and most windows are broken and boarded. Several fires have damaged various portions, but there has been no serious structural damage. Most of the church's furnishings, including hand carved pews, pulpit furniture and organ pipes, have been removed. There are a few pews remaining in the galleries. However, enough exists so that restoration is feasible.

(See Continuation Sheet No. 1)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) black history
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

"Orchard Street United Methodist Church formerly known as Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church, is located on Orchard Street and Druid Hill Avenue*. Metropolitan began back in the days of slavery; when the section of town where the buildings are now located was known as "Scrabbletown" and Druid Hill Avenue was Ross Street. "It was built in 1837 on a piece of ground situated and lying in the City of Baltimore, beginning at the corner formed by the intersection of the northwest side of Orchard Street and the South West side of Elder Alley which alley is laid out parallel with Ross Street (Druid Hill Ave.) and at a distance of one hundred and twenty feet. Southwestwardly bounding on Orchard Street fifty three feet eight inches northwestwardly parallel with Ross Street (Druid Hill Avenue) one hundred and twenty five feet to Moore's Alley.

"Northeastwardly bounding on the South East side of Moore's Alley fifth three feet eight inches to Elder Alley and South Eastwardly bounding on Elder Alley one hundred and twenty five feet to the place of the beginning".¹ In 1825 a west indian black man name Truman Le Pratt held prayer meetings in his house on Orchard Street. The other two trustees at that time were Basil Hall and Cyrus Moore. As time went on, the blacks attending the meetings began to get bigger. Truman Le Pratt got the idea about a church, and gave the first sum of money toward its construction. His wife was employed by the Moore family. George and Henry Moore owned or were agents for a lot of property in Baltimore.

"During this period in history blacks were given things without anything being recorded, or any legal transaction such as a deed. Truman Le Pratt's wife asked her employer for some land to build a house of worship for her people. She was promised some land by the family. However, this was by word of mouth only.

*Mrs. Elizabeth M. Newman, Researcher, Committee for the Preservation of Orchard Street Church, 2402 Arunah Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland, has written a paper entitled History of Orchard Street United Methodist Church, Formerly Metropolitan M. E. Church. Since her research describes the significance of this church, it has been quoted.

¹ Liber T. K. 295 Folio 352

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 24 1975
DATE ENTERED	NOV 12 1975

Orchard Street United Methodist Church
(Formerly Metropolitan Methodist
Episcopal Church)-Baltimore City
CONTINUATION SHEET Baltimore, Md.

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

DESCRIPTION CONTINUED, ITEM NUMBER 7

The Committee for the Preservation of Orchard Street Church intends to preserve the entire complex for use as a museum and a cultural center for the Black community, not as a church for religious use by one denomination.*

*The information for this description was obtained from James Thomas Wollon, Jr., A.I.A., Havre de Grace, Maryland.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 24 1975
DATE ENTERED	NOV 12 1975

Orchard Street United Methodist Church
(Formerly Metropolitan Methodist
Episcopal Church)-Baltimore City
CONTINUATION SHEET Baltimore, Md.

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

The Moore brothers died before any deed could be drawn up. George died in 1822 and Henry died one year later in 1823. Margaret, wife of Henry Moore and Administrator of the property, gave Mrs. Le Pratt the land without a deed or any legal document.

"The deed for this building was started in 1839 after Margaret Moore Administrator of the property of Henry Moore, was carried to court by Kirkpatrick Ewing and his wife Malvina. The back building was left in tact and the deed for this Church and premises was completed in 1840.² This building is rectangular shape made of red bricks with six or more windows facing Druid Hill Avenue. The entrance to this Church is on Moore's Alley. I cannot give any further description because it is in the process of being renovated.

"The second building was added to this building in 1853.³ It is also rectangular in shape with six or more windows on the side facing Elder Alley or Moore's Alley. The entrance to this building is on Orchard Street. The congregation became so large until the trustees found it necessary to build another Church. The trustees used what funds they had to build this Church. When the conference of 1856 met, an agent named W. M. D. Ryan made a resolution, that the conference pay for the erection of the Church, and it was approved.⁴ A sabbath school was added to this building in 1865.⁵

"The extension to the two buildings was added in 1882 on Orchard Street and Elder Alley. This extension was necessary to meet the demands of the flourishing congregation.⁶ When one moves about Baltimore searching out old landmarks, there is none that deserves any more recognition than the Old Orchard Street United Methodist Church formerly Metropolitan M. E. Church. For truly it has weathered many storms, being the oldest building still standing in Baltimore City built by blacks one hundred thirty eight years ago.

²Liber T. K. 295 Folio 355

³Liber E. D. 49 Folio 59

⁴Christian Advocate (1856)

⁵Bradford Papers (1867)

⁶The Morning Herald - Whole No. 2294, p. 1

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED OCT 24 1975

NOV 12 1975

DATE ENTERED

Orchard Street United Methodist Church
(Formerly Metropolitan Methodist
Episcopal Church)-Baltimore City
CONTINUATION SHEET Baltimore, Md.

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

⁴ Father John Hersey, Street Preacher and Missionary in Baltimore in 1836, was associated with Light Street Church. Father Hersey helped to handle the bricks used in building the Church in 1837. He passed the bricks to the men who were putting them in position. From the Old Dallas Street Methodist Church, he got a piece of railing and had it used in connection with the steps leading to the basement, he did this for the ministers that held meetings there.⁷

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Orchard Street Church is the oldest existing building built by Blacks in the City of Baltimore. Two of the buildings are pre-Civil War structures (first church, 1837 and second church, 1853). The Church is a 19th century interpretation of Renaissance Italian architecture with some Gothic Revival portions.

⁷ Sketch of Rev. John Hersey (1879).

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 24 1975
DATE ENTERED	NOV 1 2 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Orchard Street United Methodist Church
(Formerly Metropolitan Methodist
Episcopal Church)-Baltimore City
CONTINUATION SHEET Baltimore, Md.

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 4

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Atlas Baltimore and Its Environs" Vol. 1, p. 25 (1876)

"Bradford Papers", Box 1215 (vii) (1867)

"Christian Advocate", Baltimore Conference Journal of M. E. Church (1856)

Liber E. D. 49 Folio 59

Liber T. K 295 Folio 352

Liber T. K. 295 Folio 355

Marine, F. E. Rev. "Sketch of Rev. John Hersey", Baltimore, Maryland: Hoffman
and Company, 1879.

The Morning Herald, Whole No. 2294, page 1, Column 6, May 16, 1882.