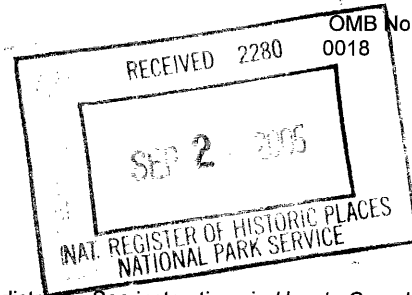


(Oct. 1990)



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 United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 322 E. McNeal Street N/A not for publication
city or town Bolivar N/A vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Hardeman code 069 zip code 38008

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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy State Historical Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
Date 9/22/05
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.
determined eligible for the National Register.
determined not eligible for the National Register.
removed from the National Register.
other, (explain):

Signature of the Keeper: Elson W. Beall
Date of Action: 11.9.05

United Sons and Daughters of
Charity Lodge Hall
Name of Property

Hardeman 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	0	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
Historic Rural African-American Churches in TN MPS

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

EDUCATION: school

SOCIAL: meeting hall

RELIGION: religious facility

SOCIAL: meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Pyramidal

foundation Brick Piers

walls Weatherboard

roof METAL

other GLASS

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheets.

United Sons and Daughters of
Charity Lodge Hall
Name of Property

Hardeman County, TN
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: African-American
ARCHITECTURE
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

c.1928-1955

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown; United Sons & Daughters of Charity Lodge, builders

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

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

United Sons and Daughters of
Charity Lodge Hall
Name of Property

Hardeman County, TN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre Bolivar East 439 SW

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 319461 3903042
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carroll Van West
organization Center for Historic Preservation Date April 19, 2005
street & number Middle Tennessee State University—Box 80 Telephone 615-898-2947
city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37132

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

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

Photographs

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

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Rev. Robert Parham, Pastor (contact person), Greater Springfield Baptist Church
street & number 407 S. Madison Street telephone 731-658-5751
city or town Bolivar state TN zip code 38008

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

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall,
Hardeman County, Tennessee

DESCRIPTION

The United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall (Lodge Hall) is at 322 E. McNeal Street, south of the courthouse square (NR 01/10/1980), in Bolivar, Hardeman County, Tennessee. The unassuming circa 1928 building stands adjacent to the Union Cemetery and directly abuts McNeal Street. The Lodge Hall is a one-story weatherboarded frame building that rests on a brick pier foundation and has a hipped metal roof that is supported by slightly protruding rafters.

The north facade has symmetrically arranged dual entrances. Each entrance has an original four-panel wooden door.

The east elevation has three regularly spaced bays. The bay in the center and the northern most bay have four-over-four double-hung windows, covered by a wooden shutter with original metal latches. The southern most bay has an entrance, with a wooden door, immediately flanked by two original four-over-four double-hung windows, each with a wooden shutter that has original metal latches.

The south elevation is a weatherboard wall, except for a centered single four-over-four, double-hung window.

The west elevation has four symmetrically arranged bays, each with a four-over-four double-hung window that has a wooden shutter with original metal latches. A partially deteriorated exterior brick flue extends from the roofline at the approximate center of the wall.

The interior of the lodge hall is one large room. At the south end of the room is a small square wood platform for the pulpit. Located throughout the room are wood pews and slat-back wood chairs that could be arranged for services and/or meetings. The west wall contains a metal gas stove and stove pipe, which was installed c. 1960 replacing an earlier stove. The doors have their original metal hardware. The wood floors, ceiling, and thin wood board walls are also original to 1928. Four-inch wood baseboards run along the north, west, and east walls. The baseboards on the south wall, however, are different, approximately six inches in height, and date to an unknown period.

The United Sons and Daughters Charity Lodge Hall meets the integrity registration requirements listed in the Historic Rural African-American Churches in Tennessee, 1850-1970 MPS. The historic building has been used for religious services since its construction as well as other community uses. It exhibits a strong degree of integrity in setting, massing, workmanship, materials, design, and overall exterior and interior appearance. Of particular note is that the exterior has experienced no additions, and its original doorways and windows are intact. The interior retains its original thin-sawn wood ceiling and wood floors. Overall, the church retains a high degree of integrity in location, feeling, and association, and serves as a cultural landmark in this community.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall,
Hardeman County, Tennessee

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall in Bolivar (pop. 5802), Hardeman County, Tennessee, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its local significance in the African-American ethnic heritage of social history and under Criterion C for its extant architectural statement of the unassuming style of community buildings erected by African Americans in Bolivar during the era of Jim Crow segregation. It meets the registration requirements for Criterion A and Criterion C significance as outlined in the Rural African-American Churches in Tennessee, 1850-1970 MPS.

Background

In 1873, a group of African American free men in Bolivar established the United Sons and Daughters of Charity as a local self-help and benevolent organization to assist African Americans in the wake of the end of the Freedmen's Bureau and Reconstruction in Bolivar and Hardeman County. Bolivar had been a center of Freedmen's Bureau activity, especially after September 1868 when it became the headquarters for a bureau sub-district that served freed people in Carroll, Hardeman, McNairy, Hardin, Decatur, Henderson, and Madison counties. The Freedmen's Bureau operated a school there from 1867 to 1869, and its closure may have prompted local African Americans to begin discussions about establishing their own social-educational organization.¹

The benevolent group formally organized on January 13, 1873, and the founders were Joseph Bright, who had married Mary Jefferson in May 1867; Nathan Bills, who married Rosa Wilkinson in January 1873; William Miller, Abraham Miller, and James Smith. According to the group's constitution and by-laws, a copy of which still resides at the Greater Springfield Baptist Church in Bolivar, the United Sons and Daughters of Charity formed "to aid and assist each other, attend the sick, bury the dead, and advance the standard of our race and people." The initiation fee was 50 cents; members were also expected to pay 25 cents monthly dues. The United Sons and Daughters was one of several similarly focused African American benevolent organizations to form in Tennessee during the Reconstruction era. One of the oldest was Nashville's Sons and Daughters of Relief, which was established on May 26, 1866. One of its founders was named William Miller, but it is not known if the William Miller of Bolivar and the William Miller of Nashville were one and the same person. Another significant early Nashville group was the Colored Benevolent Society, formed by 1869. In Memphis, an active network of male and female benevolent organizations existed, beginning with groups such as the Sons of Ham (1866), United Sons of Zion (1867), and the Daughters of Zion (1867). The "newly established mutual-aid and benevolent organizations," according to historian Brian D. Page, "emerged from black churches throughout Memphis. These organizations pooled together their resources in order to help African American neighborhoods, creating a vital community framework."²

¹ Jonathan K. T. Smith, "Genealogical and Historical Gleanings from the Freedmen's Bureau Records West Tennessee." www.tngenweb.org/madison. Accessed 11/19/2004.

² Brian D. Page, "Stand by the Flag: Nationalism and African American Celebrations of the Fourth of July in Memphis, 1866-1887," Carroll V. West, ed., *Trial and Triumph: Essays in Tennessee's African American Past* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2002), 188.

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National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places
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Hardeman County, Tennessee

In 1909, the Sons and Daughters of Charity decided to expand its level of community service by purchasing a lot and building a lodge hall on E. McNeal Street, a part of town which emerged in the years of Reconstruction and Jim Crow as the cultural heart of Bolivar's African American community. As the city's Sanborn Map of 1913 documents, the lodge hall stood across the street from a segregated-black Episcopal Church and next to Union Cemetery. Down the street a few more lots were the Springfield Baptist Church and the St. Paul CME Church. This grouping of African American community institutions were segregated by physical features and by political city boundary lines from the rest of Bolivar. To the north of the African American community buildings a deep ravine divided E. McNeal Street from other city streets. With the boundary line running to the west and the north, the town's city limits were drawn to exclude the African American neighborhood as well.

Within this segregated enclave, however, the lodge hall prospered. In the 1920s, the lodge hall burned down when a fire that started at the nearby Baker Manufacturing Company ran out of control. The African American community raised funds and replaced the 1909 building with a new building (the nominated property), an unassuming frame structure with a hipped roof and dual entrances reminiscent of church buildings, at the same location as the older lodge hall. Its appearance was not accidental; the building served during the week and on Sundays as a church building for several congregations who did not have or could not afford their own building. According to a brief history of the Sons and Daughters of Charity, prepared by Arlyne Lake Cheers in 1990, "the structure flourished as one of the first public buildings other than churches, erected by Negroes in Bolivar."³ The new building served as a school, with Douglas Harris and Rosie Bills among the teachers who worked there. "Worship services were also held in the Lodge Hall," explains Cheers. "Ministers, who were not pastors of churches, met to worship with congregations."⁴ Penecostal, Baptist, Methodist, and Church of Christ groups met in the building. The neighboring established churches, especially St. Paul CME and Springfield Baptist, also used the building for social gatherings—box suppers, special events—as well as for fundraising events for the churches. Thus, the building was busy throughout the week with secular and sacred events in the evenings, and church services on Sunday.

Various church groups also joined together at the lodge hall for annual membership meetings, and various church choirs performed for the audience. Local residents viewed the building as a non-denominational setting for gospel music performances; during the lodge's annual membership drive, it also hosted gospel music groups as a way of attracting people to the meeting. Presidents of the group who served at the lodge hall have been Stonewall Bills, P. T. (Judge) Miller, Charlie Miller, Henry C. Polk and Rev. James R. Grimes. As late as 1990, the members continued "to meet quarterly and pay benefits to the families of its members in the event of sickness or death and support other organizations which also 'promote the welfare and advance the standards of Negro people.'"⁵

³ Arlyne Lake Cheers, "The United Sons and Daughters of Charity," unpublished typescript, 1990, attached to nomination for United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall, Ten in Tennessee Nomination Form, 2004, Tennessee Preservation Trust, Nashville.

⁴ Ibid.

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Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 4United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall,
Hardeman County, Tennessee

Organizations, for example, have used the lodge hall as a common ground location for meetings meant to attract a diversity of African Americans from different churches. From the 1940s through the end of the period of significance (1955), meetings about civil and employment rights for various industries and companies located in Bolivar took place at the lodge hall. From 1950 to 1970, the lodge hall's significance within the landscape became even more pronounced as it became the only remaining African American cultural institution on E. McNeal Street when the other churches relocated their sanctuaries and built new edifices on the west side of town. These new churches were clustered near the first public school constructed for African Americans in Bolivar, the four-teacher Rosenwald-supported Bolivar Industrial School, constructed between 1924 and 1925, which was replaced by a larger school building in the 1950s. Membership during this period of change decreased; although in 1987, a membership roll counted 117 individuals, representing a cross-section of the city's African American population. Today, the United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall is the oldest African American community building in Bolivar.

The Lodge Hall is also eligible for listing in the National Register due to its architectural significance as a largely extant example of the type of vernacular design and craftsmanship that would be found in African American community buildings constructed in small southern towns during the era of Jim Crow segregation. The building's original paneled doors, its dual entrances, and its unadorned facade speak to the building's dual function as religious and secular space within the larger white-dominated built environment of Bolivar. The dual entrance of the façade reflects a strong vernacular tradition found in rural and small-town church architecture from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, one that typically found women using one entrance and men using the other entrance. Thus this vernacular design conveyed to local residents the sacred use of the building. The interior design of one large undifferentiated space, however, reflects the building's secular use—as a lodge that embraced both men and women members and that might be used by groups dominated by either men or women. The fact that the building is in good repair and remains solid on its foundations is a testament to the craftsmanship of the unknown builders who constructed it before the Great Depression.

⁵ Ibid.

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United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall,
Hardeman County, Tennessee

IX. Bibliography

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Mayfield, Cathy. Letter to Carroll Van West, January 12, 2004[5]. United Sons and Daughters of Charity Nomination File. MTSU Center for Historic Preservation. Mayfield administers the local historic district commission for the City of Bolivar.

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United Sons and Daughters of Charity. "Program for Mid-Winter Membership Campaign and Membership Roll." Typescript. St. Paul CME Church, Bolivar. January 11, 1987.

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West, Carroll V., ed. *Trial and Triumph: Essays on Tennessee's African-American Past*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2002.

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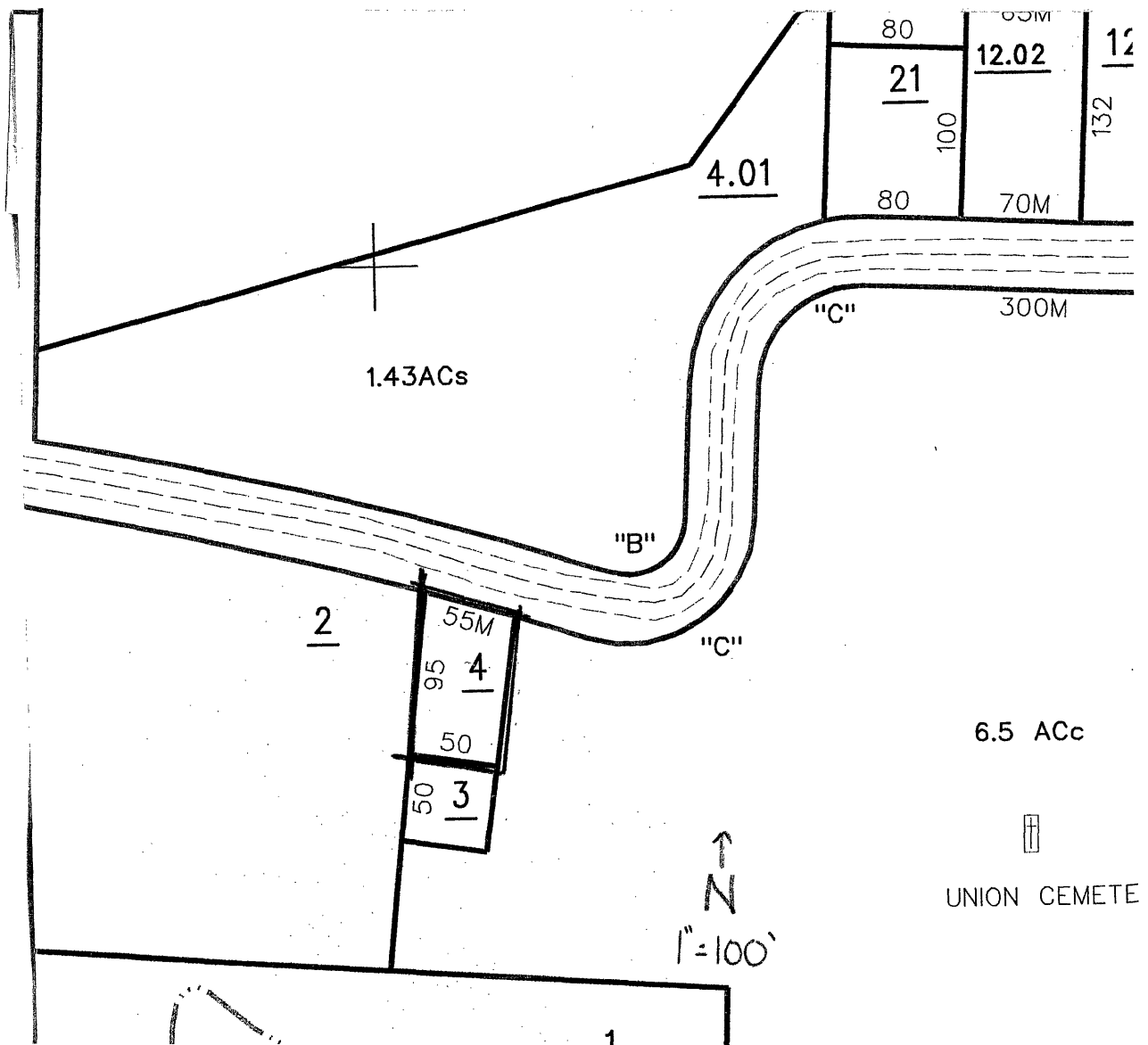
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United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall,
Hardeman County, Tennessee

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The nominated property is at 322 East McNeal Street, immediately west of the entrance gate to Union Cemetery, as indicated by parcel 4 on the attached Hardeman County Tax Map 79-B, Group C. The nominated lot contains all of the historic property associated with the United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall.



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United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall,
Hardeman County, Tennessee

PHOTOGRAPHS

United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall
Bolivar, Hardeman County, Tennessee

Photos by: Carroll Van West
 MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

Date: November 2004-11-19

North facade, facing south
1 of 16

North façade and east elevation, facing southwest
2 of 16

East elevation, facing west
3 of 16

North facade and west elevation, facing southeast
4 of 16

West elevation and south elevation, facing northeast
5 of 16

South elevation, facing northeast
6 of 16

Brick pier foundation, facing north
7 of 16

Sanctuary, east wall, facing southeast
8 of 16

Sanctuary, west wall, facing southwest
9 of 16

Sanctuary, facing south
10 of 16

Sanctuary, facing north
11 of 16

Sanctuary, east wall interior door, facing east
12 of 16

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United Sons and Daughters of Charity Lodge Hall,
Hardeman County, Tennessee

Sanctuary, detail of pulpit and platform, facing southwest
13 of 16

Sanctuary, detail of northeast corner, original pulpit furniture, facing northeast
14 of 16

Sanctuary, detail of front door hardware
15 of 16

North façade and view of Union Cemetery, facing southeast
16 of 16