

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 Tabernacle Methodist Protestant Church and Cemetery

other names/site number Tabernacle United Methodist Church

2. Location

street & number 5601 Liberty Road Not for publication

city or town Greensboro vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Guilford code 081 zip code 27406

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 forth 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.)

William S. Price, SHPO 1-24-95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of 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:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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): _____

Tabernacle Methodist Protestant Church
Name of Property

Guilford, NC
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
1	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

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

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)

Gothic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
walls weatherboard
roof asphalt
other granite

Narrative Description

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

see 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 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- RELIGION
- ARCHITECTURE
- other: Funerary Art

Period of Significance

1822-1945

Significant Dates

1822
1891

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

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):

- 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:

Tabernacle Methodist Protestant Church
Name of Property

Guilford, NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

4

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 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 Kaye Graybeal

organization _____ date 12/21/94

street & number 5618 Tower Road telephone 910-292-5177

city or town Greensboro state NC zip code 27410

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 Mr. Bill Archer

street & number P.O. Box 236 telephone 910-674-3000

city or town Pleasant Garden state NC zip code 27313

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. 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 20503.

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SECTION 7: PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Site

The 1891 Tabernacle Methodist Protestant church building is located about ten miles south of the city of Greensboro on Liberty Road, formerly Highway 421. Situated on a knoll facing west towards the road, the frame sanctuary is surrounded in three directions by undulating open field and scattered houses; to the rear (east) is a wooded area within which lies a stream and pond. The grounds are grassed with the exception of a white concrete sidewalk which surrounds the church and one and a half acres in front (west) of the church which is graveled for parking. The parking area is shaded by five large white oaks and four maples. To the immediate northwest of the 1891 church building is a brick Minimal Traditional-style sanctuary building completed in late 1994. It is flanked by two one-story brick wings earlier completed in 1968 and in 1975. A paved state road, Methodist Road (SR 3551), runs north- and southwesterly about fifty feet from the front of this new sanctuary and serves primarily as a driveway from Liberty Road to the church's parking area. Across the road to the northwest of the church buildings is a brick, 1957 ranch-style parsonage. To the south of the complex of church buildings is the largest portion of the cemetery, which is thought to contain mid-eighteenth century burials; however, the earliest discernible grave marker dates from 1822. The cemetery wraps around the east side (rear) of the 1891 church building. Of the entire present 16.54 acre parcel, the 1891 church building and the cemetery occupy approximately six acres (Guilford County Tax Map ACL-4-225-359-13).

At the completion of the frame church building in 1891, two other nineteenth-century buildings existed on the property. These were the Tabernacle School, also known as Tabernacle Academy, and a frame parsonage. The Tabernacle School was erected during the 1870s on the northern-most corner of the parcel. Folk Victorian in form, the building was side-gabled with an off-center engaged front gable and two Colonial Revival pedimented front entries. The parsonage, built in 1898, was a one-story Gothic Revival structure, fronted by a pair of projecting gabled wings with an engaged porch (Directory, 1969).

When the Tabernacle School closed in 1930, the church purchased the building and relocated it to a within about fifty feet north of the church building. In 1931 it was remodeled using Craftsman details and used as a Sunday school building and assembly hall (Directory, 1979). In 1936, a one-story structure of unhewn logs was erected just to the northwest of the Sunday School Building. Known as the "Log Hut," it served as the fellowship hall (Directory, 1969). In 1946, a graveled circular drive was laid off in front of the church, retaining a large white oak within the grassed inner circle (Directory, 1969). This drive was eradicated in 1993 and

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expanded into a larger parking area; however, the oak remains (personal communication with Kay Kiger, church secretary December 6, 1994). In 1956, the 1898 parsonage was relocated to a site approximately one mile away on Woody Mill Road (SR 3389) and extensively remodeled. A new brick ranch-style parsonage was built in 1957, and is presently utilized (Lillian Trogdon, personal communication, November 26, 1994).

In 1968, a one-story brick fellowship hall building was erected to serve as one of two wings to the future sanctuary. Upon completion of this building, the Log Hut was sold and relocated to Randolph County, North Carolina (Directory, 1979).

In summary, the only nineteenth-century building remaining on the site today is the 1891 sanctuary. The other buildings date from the late twentieth century, including the 1957 parsonage, the auxiliary buildings built in 1968 and 1975, and the new sanctuary building built in 1994.

The cemetery covers about 4 acres mostly to the south of the 1891 church building, although about two dozen late twentieth century markers are located to the rear (east) of the building. The land slopes slightly to the east, towards a creek and wooded area beyond the property line.

The Cemetery . ca. 1822. contributing site

The cemetery is sited on high ground, which is a typical physical characteristic of early southern cemeteries, for reasons both practical and sacred. Elevated sites provided dry grave locations, and also indicated respect for the dead (Jordan as stated in Clauser, p. 3). Also a traditional southern characteristic, the cemetery is laid out with an "ordered chaos" in the traditional east-west orientation with the head to the west (Jordan as stated in Clauser, p. 4). Approximately thirty rows and fifteen columns of markers form an overall rectilinear pattern; however, there are obvious deviations from this spatial arrangement. The outer seven rows around the perimeter of the cemetery are mid- to late twentieth stones which are mostly granite stele-type markers. The inner sixteen rows are mid- to late nineteenth and early twentieth century granite markers. About half of these makers date from 1852 to 1880; the other half date from between 1890 to 1920. A variety of funerary art forms in the Gothic Revival and Classic Revival styles are represented in these periods. Among these are eight-foot (2) and four-foot tall (6) obelisks, finialed columnar forms (4), There are numerous tablet markers. Embellishments include granite urns (3) and images of lambs (6).

The ruts of an old service road which once bisected the cemetery from east to west, separate the markers closest to the 1891 sanctuary, about one quarter of the total markers, from the remainder of the cemetery. The oldest markers, dating from 1822, and some fieldstones,

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possibly of Revolutionary War era, are located just south of this old service road. A tumble rock wall surrounded this part of the cemetery until ca. 1923 (Lillian Trogdon, personal communication, September 11, 1994). Three and one-quarter acres on the east were purchased in 1984 for future expansion of the cemetery (Notes on chronology of church, p.7).

The Church . 1891. contributing building**The Exterior**

Typical of rural Guilford County churches of the period, the gable-end rectangular frame structure of the Tabernacle Church discernibly utilizes hierarchical patterns in plan and overall character that emphasize its function. The front entrance is located in the narrow west gable end opposite the apse, creating a longitudinal axis five bays deep. These characteristics compose a simple Gothic Revival expression, although the roof is only moderately pitched. The entire structure is clad in beveled clapboard and corner boards enframe the entire structure. Below a molded baseboard is a brick foundation of common bond.

There are five windows on each longitudinal elevation and two flanking the front entry. They are vertically comprised of five wood-framed sections including a horizontally-hinged, chain-hung center section. The window openings contain stained glass-images which depict religious iconography rendered in opalescent, marbled, blue-green and violet glass with black border accents. Wood cut-outs or "false-shaping" are utilized to form shallow elliptical arches capped with a pedimented motif over these window openings. This motif crowns the elliptical arch of the stained-glass transom over the main entry doors as well. Five granite steps lead up to a pair of painted entry doors employing mortise and tenon construction and five molded and sunken panels. The original brass hardware including doorknobs, escutcheon plates, key holes, door hinges and finial pins are embellished with motifs of Egyptian influence.

The eaves are enclosed with wood stripping. A molded cornice and frieze band are returned on the gable ends. Wood-louvered lozenge-shaped vents are centered in both gables. A belfry, enclosed with wooden louvers, is located on the front (west) roof end, with its original 1936 bell still in place. (Directory, 1969).

The Interior

Within the interior space, four of the bays comprise the sanctuary nave; the fifth comprises the narthex. The nave is laid out in symmetrical double-aisle plan, with three sections fifteen pews deep which seat approximately 200 laity. The semicircular plan of the raised chancel is

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defined by a molded wood altar rail with straight balusters. A plastered circular chancel arch frames a three-sided apse which is five feet deep and fourteen feet wide. Each of the two canted walls of the apse behind the the chancel contain windows with brilliantly colored stained-glass design depicting images of Christ. A raised choirloft located on the north wall is sixteen feet long and projects eight feet into the front of the sanctuary. The flat ceiling is approximately twenty feet high. The narthex contains a small bell-rope room on the east side and a storage room on the west.

Whereas the form and detail of the overall structure are simple, the interior woodworking and hardware display embellishment. The heart-pine ceiling, wainscot, pews, pulpit and floors are original and impart a warm, mellow atmosphere. The wood strip ceiling pattern is one of the most notable features of the interior. The ceiling plane is divided into sixteen rectangles, four deep by four wide. Each of the four middle sections, which are the widest, are laid out in wood strips placed on the diagonal, forming a concentric diamond, or chevron pattern. The three-inch wood strips in the outer sections run perpendicular to the longitudinal walls, except for those in the corner sections, which run parallel. The wood strips are alternately plain and reeded. The sections are divided by heavy molded beams also embellished with reeding. Tripartite cavetto crown molding enframes the ceiling. Nine stemmed pendant light fixtures with opaline glass shades hang from each of the ceiling beam intersections.

The 42-inch-high wainscot features alternating reeded panels, rests on a nine-inch molded base and is capped with molded chairrail. This reeding is repeated on the molded window surrounds. The two sets of mortise and tenoned double doors leading from the vestibule to each of the sanctuary aisles also feature reeding on recessed double panels. These doors are fitted with wooden door knobs and keyholes.

The pews are richly detailed; the backs and arm ends are rolled and embellished with a carved cinquefoil design on the end panels. The end panels are also carved with a molded cathedral window design. The original heart-pine pulpit lectern is still in use, with an eight-inch base added for height (Directory, 1969). Its intricately detailed carving depicts Gothic Revival motifs and detailing such as drop pendants and corbelling.

The original heart-pine four-inch wood strip floors are covered in red carpet in the aisles and chancel, but are exposed in the pew section.

Alterations

Exterior alterations occurred mostly during the 1940s; however, in 1935 an unpolished marble cornerstone was placed in the east foundation corner of the front facade depicting the

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date of the 1830 Methodist Protestant schism, and the open belfry with pentecostal cap was added to the west end roof in 1936 (Notes of church chronology, p. 5). The cap was later clad in oxidized copper and crowned with a copper cross, probably during the 1940s. (Lillian Trogdon, personal communication, September 11, 1994). Among exterior alterations that took place during the 1940s is the replacement of wooden roof shakes with black asphalt shingles in the early decade. (J. Davis Horney, personal communication, September 2, 1994). A pre-1946 photograph pictures dark-stained five-panel double entry doors with arched top panels, that compliment the simple Gothic Revival style of the building. The current doors are painted white and the top panels have no arch. The same photograph indicates that the foundation was at that time vented by honeycombed brickwork in a diamond configuration.

The most significant exterior alterations took place in 1946 and include the installation of the leaded stained glass in the original window openings and entry transom. (Directory, 1969). Hinged wood-louvered shutters, painted green, were removed from all the window openings at this time. A 1946 addition, an organ pipe room, projects eight feet from the north corner of the rear (east) facade and is eleven feet wide (J. Davis Horney, personal communication, September 2, 1994).

In 1987, low shrubbery was planted at the foundation of the church, and a twelve-foot wide cement pad was poured in front of the the church for a congregating area (Notes on church chronology, p. 8).

The earliest known change to the interior was the installment of three, four-armed oil-burning chandeliers which hung from the center longitudinal ceiling beam, replacing wall-hung kerosene lamps. These were replaced in 1926 by carbide gas lights which were used until the 1940s when they were wired for electricity. In 1953, the current nine pendant light fixtures were installed (Brief History, p. 2). According to a chronology of "Historical Highlights" listed in the 1969 Tabernacle Methodist Church Directory, most of the interior alterations took place in the 1930s and 1940s. Two cast iron wood-burning stoves, one flanking each front side of the sanctuary, were replaced in the early 1930s with wood-burning furnaces. These were replaced with a gas furnace in the 1940s. A metal floor grille in each of the two aisles mark the wood furnace locations beneath the floor (J. Davis Horney, personal communication, September 2, 1994). The choirloft was added on the north wall at the sanctuary's front in 1936. It was raised and lengthened to its present size in 1938. The molded altar rail was also added in 1936 (A Brief History, p.3). The aisles and chancel were carpeted in 1939, and sheet linoleum was laid in the narthex (Kirkman, p. 11). Two four-paneled pine doors were added in 1946; one leads to the northeast exterior and the other leads to the east exterior. A pipe organ was added in 1947 replacing a small reed organ and piano. Although the organ console was replaced in 1987, the original pipes remain (A Brief History, p. 3). The plaster walls above the wainscot were repaired and the pews and floors

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were refinished in 1953. A ten-foot high backlit wooden crucifix, hand-carved by a member, was hung on the center wall of the apse in the 1984 (Notes on church chronology, p. 6).

SECTION 8: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**Summary**

The Tabernacle Methodist Protestant Church and Cemetery is locally significant under Criterion A and Criteria Consideration A for its associative value in the development of religious Methodism in Guilford County in the early nineteenth through the mid-twentieth centuries. The site of the 1891 building and the cemetery which predates it was an eighteenth-century campground and meeting place called Eden that is referred to in journals and diaries of early Methodist circuit riders who frequented the north-central section of the state. The evolution of events, beginning with the 1828 formation of the North Carolina Annual Conference and the 1829 formation of the Associated Methodist Church that led to the prominent present-day status of the United Methodist Church in Guilford County are represented in the cemetery. Both the church building and the cemetery are also locally significant under Criterion C. The building is a rare surviving example of a simple, vernacular interpretation of the Gothic Revival style. It is also the most well-preserved and maintained example of a typical turn-of-the-century frame church remaining in the rural sections of the county. The cemetery is significant for its representation of a variety of nineteenth through mid-twentieth century granite funerary art forms. Also well-preserved and maintained, it is one of the few extant, intact, nineteenth and twentieth century church cemeteries in Guilford County exhibiting such a variety. Although the cemetery is thought to contain a few burials dating from the mid-eighteenth century, the beginning of the period of significance for the site is represented by the 1822 date of the earliest marked stone in the cemetery. The period ends in 1945, prior to the most significant of the few physical alterations in the church building in 1946.

Historical Background and Religious Context: Methodism in Guilford County in the 18th through 20th Centuries

The rise of Methodism in Guilford County followed the 1771 establishment of the county and the founding of evangelical denominations there. In order to establish the Anglican Church in the American colonies, it was Britain's policy to initiate parishes along with the formation of a county. Settlers of Methodist Episcopal affiliation were among the few who chose to adopt the established church of the colony. Most settlers who migrated to Guilford County remained loyal to their natural religious affiliations. These settlers were an eclectic group of yeoman farmers drawn from English, Ulster-Scot, and German origins, each retaining their idiosyncratic religious practices. Perhaps indicative of the settlers' disregard

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for the Anglican Church, the county was given the name of Unity Parish rather than the typical saint's name adopted in other locations (Smith, pp. 9-10).

Eighteenth-century American Methodism was spread by circuit riders, ministers or elders appointed to travel a route on horseback and preach at designated stops. Circuit riders played a major role in the establishment of organized churches since their camp meeting attracted hundreds for socializing, preaching, conversion, and passionate displays of religious fervor. The first record of Methodism in piedmont North Carolina was recorded in 1780 when Andrew Yeargan was appointed to the Yadkin Circuit, which included Guilford County and the camp meeting at the present-day Tabernacle site (Minutes, 1773-1813).

The surmise of church historians that the episcopal congregation that led to the founding of the Tabernacle Methodist Protestant Church was formed as early as the year 1800 is recorded in the church's chronology of establishment, although there is no authentic documentation (Directory, 1969). However, the formation of the Guilford Circuit in 1783 and the establishment of the nearby Pleasant Garden Methodist (five miles west) and Grace Methodist Churches, (a few miles southeast) in 1792 and 1800 respectively render an 1800 establishment date plausible. (Burkhead, p. 254 and Hughes, 1988).

There is further evidence found in the cemetery's six unmarked fieldstones to strengthen the speculation of an 1800 congregation establishment date. These are possibly the gravemarkers of soldier casualties from the pre-Revolutionary War Battle of Alamance, which took place in 1771 in the eastern adjacent county of that name (Dyer personal communication with Annie and Millie Sheppard, 1965). Many Scots and Englishmen from the southeast Guilford area fought in the battle, and the surnames (Pugh, Sharpe, and Fields) of some who fought are found on descendants' gravemarkers at the cemetery (Dyer, 1967, p. 5). Soldiers from the Battle are indeed buried in the nearby Alamance Presbyterian Church cemetery located in Guilford County about five miles north of Tabernacle Church. Given this evidence, the first burials at the Tabernacle site could feasibly have taken place during the latter half of the eighteenth century, with regular congregational meetings ensuing.

Although the cemetery was not formally laid out until 1803, according to church history there were many grave sites already mounded with interment at this time (Dyer, 1967, p. 5 and 1968, p.16). Cemetery records of 1916 indicate the earliest recorded burial in the Tabernacle Cemetery to be 1812; however, the location of this stone is not currently known (Guilford Battle, p. 260). A survey conducted by church members determined the earliest marked stone to be 1822 (Lillian Trogdon, personal communication, September 11, 1994).

Another theory relating to the establishment of the the burial ground and church is passed down through the oral history of the church is thought to have taken place before the 1771

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Battle of Alamance. To the southeast of the present-day church is the head of stream which became a camp site along a western route, at the intersection of Kings and New Garden Roads. It is noted on the *Historic Documentation Map* as "Traveler's Stop." The oral history of the church relates that a child became ill with fever as his family traveled west along the route. The family camped with others by the spring, and nursed the child through the night. However, the child died in the early hours of the morning, and was buried at daybreak in the earliest section of the present-day cemetery. During the burial service, a decision was made to build a church near the site since many travelers stopped by the spring to camp (Directory, 1969, p. 1).

Numerous references to a campground and worship site called *Eden* at the head of a spring in southeast Guilford have been noted in the diaries of Methodist circuit riders from the early 1800s (Diaries of Mann and Daub). There is speculation among local church historians that early mentions of *Eden* in the diaries refer to the Tabernacle worship and burial site, since in religious writings burial grounds are often referred to as *Eden*.

In his diary, the Reverend Thomas Mann, who served on the Guilford Circuit beginning in 1805, refers to a preaching point in southeast Guilford County as *Eden* (Minutes, 1773-1813). In 1807 he wrote that while traveling the Haw River Circuit he followed a family and their buggy from Mount Pleasant, near Kimesville, N.C., and crossed southeast Guilford County to a campground called *Eden*. The destination was a preaching arbor on a knoll. The travel time noted by Mann, from early morning to 11:00 a.m., correlates to the distance between Mt. Pleasant and present-day Tabernacle Church. Mann's physical description of the area is also fitting, although he mentions no distinctive landmarks to irrefutably corroborate the theory. The surnames of meeting attendees that Mann mentions: Hanner, Hardin, Rankin, and Jarrell, are some of the earliest names associated with the area and Tabernacle Church according to the church's membership records, land deeds and gravemarkers. Further, Mann mentions an elder, Thomas Anderson, who attended the quarterly conference (Diary of Thomas Mann). Thomas Anderson was appointed to the Guilford Circuit in 1784, which included one in *Eden*, as well as one in Pleasant Garden, which is a four miles west of the present Tabernacle Church (Minutes, 1773-1813). The diaries of Guilford circuit riders Peter and Michael Doub also mention preaching at a stop called *Eden* in southeast Guilford.

The 1828 election of Andrew Jackson to the presidency of the United States precipitated a liberal spirit of democracy which may have encouraged the Methodists' protest of the absolute power of the British episcopacy since subservience to bishops was irreconcilable with their republican doctrine. Therefore, it was not surprising that many Methodist churches were subsequently inspired to separate from the episcopacy and become Protestant. The Methodist Protestants advocated a changed order of ministerial offices, conferences with local ministries represented and fuller lay representation (Carroll, pp.11-13). The North

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Carolina Annual Conference was formed in this same year of 1828, the oldest Conference in the Methodist Protestant Church. The following year, at a Guilford meeting at Moriah Methodist Church (the first Methodist Protestant Church in western and central North Carolina), all Guilford Circuit members (which included Tabernacle) except two withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church and formed the Associated Methodist Church (Clark, p. 69).

The earliest documented reference to the name Tabernacle is that of an 1828 entry in the diary of Reverend Peter Daub, a Guilford Circuit rider who mentions a camp meeting there. (Burkhead, p. 262). It is in this year that the Methodist Episcopal Churches severed from the episcopacy (Clark, 1966, p. 68). The Minutes of the Methodist Conference do not mention Tabernacle Methodist Protestant Church before 1830. The name Eden, which is possibly the first name of the site, is referred to in the diaries of Circuit Riders only prior to 1829 (Diaries of Mann and Daub). A name change would have been appropriate in response to the extrication; therefore, the theory that the worship site was referred to as *Eden* prior to 1829 is strengthened. An 1807 entry in the diary of Reverend Thomas Mann, also of the Guilford Circuit, is the first definitive reference to *Eden*, a campground and preaching site in the proximate area of the current Tabernacle site. Several of the elder members of the recent congregation remembered hearing the name *Eden* mentioned in relation to Tabernacle, but could not verify the connection of the name with the Tabernacle site (William H. Dyer personal communication with Williard H. Coble and Minnie and Callie Sheppard, et.al., 1967).

Between 1790 and 1800, Methodist Episcopal circuit riders frequently traveling the Fayetteville Road route eventually built a brush arbor in the area that is now the cemetery on the south side of and nearest to the 1891 church building. A log building was later erected on the site of the present-day cemetery to the south of the old east-west service road. In 1839, it was dismantled and replaced by a larger frame building, and a larger preaching arbor was built as well (A Brief History, p.1 and Stockard, p. 129). The earliest known land transaction involving the church, took place in 1841 when the Reverend Jonathan Causey, Sr. deeded land to church trustees for two dollars (A Brief History, p.1 and Stockard, p. 129). The earliest recorded deed, dated October 10, 1876, indicates the grantor as Joseph H. Causey, who deeded four acres plus "ten poles" including the site of the 1891 sanctuary and land for expansion of the cemetery, to five trustees of Tabernacle for the sum of thirty-two dollars (Deed Book 95, p. 221).

The 1876 deed mentions the "line of a school," probably the Tabernacle School, later known as Tabernacle Academy. The frame school building was erected in the late 1870s on what is now the northeastern-most corner of the church property (Directory, 1975). Principal Martin H. Holt gained wide recognition, but left in 1879 apparently because of lack of

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community support. He joined his brother, Allen Holt, to become co-principal of still-prominent Oak Ridge Military Academy in northwest Guilford County (Jones, 1952).

In 1878, the North Carolina Conference divided and formed a Western Conference. In 1880, the two Conferences reunited at the Annual Meeting held at the Tabernacle Methodist Protestant Church (Clark, pp. 69-70). Previous Annual Conferences had been held at Tabernacle in 1861 and 1872. According to J. Elwood Clark in his book Methodism in Western North Carolina, "The Methodist Protestant Church developed strong leaders and made important contributions to the whole social order" (1966, p. 70). This is true of Tabernacle since several of the Church's ministers have served as Conference presidents (Carroll, p. 13).

When the 1839 church building was demolished and construction began on the present Gothic Revival sanctuary building in 1889, services were held in a nearby school house, possibly the Tabernacle Academy building. The new sanctuary was completed in June, 1891, at a cost of two thousand, five hundred dollars. (A Brief History, p. 2). The following year, the North Carolina Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church was held at the "new" church at Tabernacle. This was the fifth Conference hosted by the church. In 1898, a one-story Gothic Revival cottage was erected to the northwest of the church as the parsonage.

As the sanctuary building was being constructed, the Tabernacle Methodist Church Woman's Foreign Missionary Society was formed in 1890 and the Woman's Home Missionary Society in 1909. The latter Society established a Children's Home in Denton, North Carolina which was later moved to High Point and then to Winston-Salem, North Carolina in 1941. This was the first Methodist Protestant orphanage ever established. (Kirkman, pp.3-6). In 1928, the two Women's Missionary Societies united and became known as Women's *Missionary Work*. In 1937, this society served as host for the Branch Meeting of the Women's Missionary Work of the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church. This was the first such Branch Meeting ever held in a rural county church (Kirkman, p. 8).

In 1939, the three branches of the Methodist Church merged. These included the Methodist Episcopal Church, The Methodist Episcopal Church South, and the Methodist Protestant Church (Bumgarner and Carroll, 1984, p.10) In 1968, the traditions of these early churches blended to become the United Methodist Church, and Tabernacle Methodist Church took on that title (Our Bicentennial, 1984).

In spite of the severe decline in church and Sunday school membership in the 1960s and 1970s, the Tabernacle Methodist Church continued to expand (Bumgarner and Carroll, 1984). In 1968, a new classroom and office building was erected, and in 1975 a new fellowship hall building. These buildings were to serve as auxiliary wings to a future larger

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sanctuary. The erection of the new classroom building reflected the record of the Western North Carolina Conference as being the most active among the United Methodists in promoting Christian education (Bumgarner and Carroll, 1984).

In 1991, Tabernacle United Methodist Church celebrated the centennial of the erection of their sanctuary building. It is the one remaining nineteenth-century building of three once on the site since the relocation of the parsonage in 1957 and the demolition of the Tabernacle Academy / Sunday School Building in 1975. A Minimal Traditional brick sanctuary was completed in late 1994 to accommodate the rapidly growing membership, currently at approximately 700 (personal communication with Kay Kiger, Church Secretary, December 6, 1994). The sanctuary is erected between and joins two earlier auxiliary buildings completed in 1968 and 1975. The early formation of Tabernacle Methodist Protestant Church and its current prominence as a United Methodist Church are testimony to its significant contribution throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to the evolution of the Methodist Church and its widespread establishment of over fifty congregations in Guilford County today.

Architectural Context: 19th Century Frame Church Buildings- Guilford County

Historically in Guilford County, the church was, and is still often today, a focal point of rural life. It is often prominently situated at main crossroads or on a knoll, as is Tabernacle. The typical turn-of-the-century church in Guilford County was a gable-end rectilinear frame structure influenced by the Gothic Revival style in form and detail, as represented by Tabernacle. Among the characteristics that distinguish it from other extant examples from the period in the county are its well-proportioned and detailed architectural elements. Additionally, the building is little altered and the most well-preserved frame church surviving from the period. The Guilford County Architectural Resources 1979 survey identified thirteen simple frame gable-end churches including Tabernacle. Of the twelve other rural churches, the most similar in form and style to Tabernacle are the McLeansville United Church of Christ (early 20th c.) and Bethany United Church of Christ (late 19th c.), both in northeast Guilford. However, the former is in a state of disrepair and the latter has been brick-veneered. Thacker Memorial United Holiness Church near Brown's Summit in northeast, Wadsworth Congregational Christian Church in Sedalia in southeast, Peace United Methodist Church in northwest, and Mt. Carmel Baptist Church in southwest are also frame gable-end Gothic Revival structures, but have added front gable-end vestibules.

Early Guilford County church buildings are scarce because of the continual necessity of providing larger, updated facilities as congregations grow. These early church buildings were usually log and were eventually replaced by a frame structure. Many of these frame structures were replaced by a brick or brick veneer structure. The Tabernacle Church

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buildings have followed this pattern; however, the 1891 frame building was preserved rather than replaced when a brick building was erected in 1968. There are no surviving antebellum log or frame churches in the county. Only three brick church buildings survive from this the nineteenth century, the oldest being a Quaker meeting house dating from between 1810 and the 1820s.

Artistic Context: Funerary Art in Late 19th and Early 20th Century Rural Guilford County Churchyards

The Tabernacle United Methodist Church Cemetery is one of the few extant, well-intact, turn-of-the-century church cemeteries in Guilford County exhibiting a variety of funerary art from several periods. The cemetery's grave markers represent the three distinct phases suggested by state archaeologist John Clauser, Jr. (pp. 2-3). These are the pioneer, the transitional, and the modern phases, with each representing the constant change of the cultural landscape in Guilford County since the late eighteenth century. The six unmarked fieldstones, possibly Revolutionary War era or earlier, represent the pioneer phase of the eighteenth century. They are characteristically consistent with those markers documented to be of Revolutionary War soldiers at the nearby brick German Reformed Church in Whitsett and at Alamance Presbyterian Church five miles north (Smith, p. 115). The mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century funerary art forms represent the transitional phase. In this phase, the obelisks and classical columnar forms crested with finials and urns reflect the sculptural richness of Gothic Revival and Classical Revival styles. These attenuated vertical images symbolize the Victorian attitude of confidence in life after death (National Register Bulletin 15, p.12). Figural imagery is also present in the carved embellishments such as lambs and granite urns. In the transitional phase, the variations of marker types ranging from simple tablets to eight-foot obelisks which distinguishes families of wealth and prominence. The elaborate styled are more prevalent in the city of Greensboro's cemeteries than in those of the rural county. The twentieth century typical stele-type granite markers represent the modern phase with little variation.

Other cemeteries in Guilford County representing the same periods and/or marker styles are those of Alamance Presbyterian Church, Friedens Lutheran Church and Low's Lutheran Church. The Alamance Presbyterian Church Cemetery, five miles north of Tabernacle Church Cemetery, contains marble markers of Revolutionary War soldiers dating to the 1790s. The few remaining fieldstones markers are believed to be the gravemarkers of soldier casualties from the 1771 Battle of Alamance, which took place in the eastern adjacent county of Alamance. (Garland Jobe, personal communication, December 7, 1994). However, as at Tabernacle, most are granite markers dating from the mid-nineteenth century. There are a few four-foot tall obelisk forms, tablet markers, as well as later stele-type markers which are located in a separate section of the cemetery. The gravestones of Friedens Lutheran Church

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Cemetery located in the Gibsonville vicinity of southeast Guilford date to the 1750s, perhaps some of the oldest marked stones in the county (Smith, p. 96). The markers in this cemetery, as at Tabernacle, represent a variety of funerary art forms. Low's Lutheran Church Cemetery, located in the Kimesville vicinity of southeast Guilford County, also contains gravestones dating from the 1790s; however, there are no tall attenuated forms as at Tabernacle (Smith, p. 120). Also unlike Tabernacle, this cemetery retains a tumble rock wall typical of turn-of-the-century rural cemeteries.

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SECTION 10 - GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries include approximately 6 of the current 16.54 acres of parcel 13 as indicated by the heavy dashed line on the accompanying Guilford County Tax Map ACL -4-225-359.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include the setting of the 1891 Tabernacle Methodist Protestant Church and the nineteenth-century cemetery that adjoin it to the south and east. The north boundary of this approximate 6-acre tract is drawn to exclude a late twentieth-century church complex and cemetery section.

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All photographs by Bill Jones of 1227 Ritters Lake Road, Greensboro, N.C.
Date of photographs 2-6 and 9-14: September 1994
Date of photographs 1, 7, and 8: December 1994
The original negatives are located at the North Carolina Division of Archives and History,
Raleigh.

1. Front (west) and south elevations of the 1891 church building looking northeast.
2. South elevation of 1891 church building and a portion of the cemetery looking north.
3. South elevation of 1891 church building and the oldest portion of the cemetery looking northeast.
4. Southeast corner (side and rear elevations) of 1891 church building looking northwest.
5. North and east (rear) elevations of 1891 church building, rear elevation of 1975 building, and cemetery looking west.
6. 1994 church building under construction, 1975 building, 1891 church buildings, and cemetery looking north.
7. 1994 church building, 1975 building, 1891 church building, and cemetery looking north.
8. Obelisk and columnar gravemarkers looking northwest.
9. Overall view of interior sanctuary looking east towards the chancel.
10. Chancel including altar rail and apse looking east.
11. Sanctuary ceiling looking south towards the chancel.
12. Pulpit detail.
13. Church pew detail.
14. 1985 aerial view showing 1968 and 1975 building, 1891 church building and grave plots (photo of original taken 9/94).

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Guilford County, N.C.

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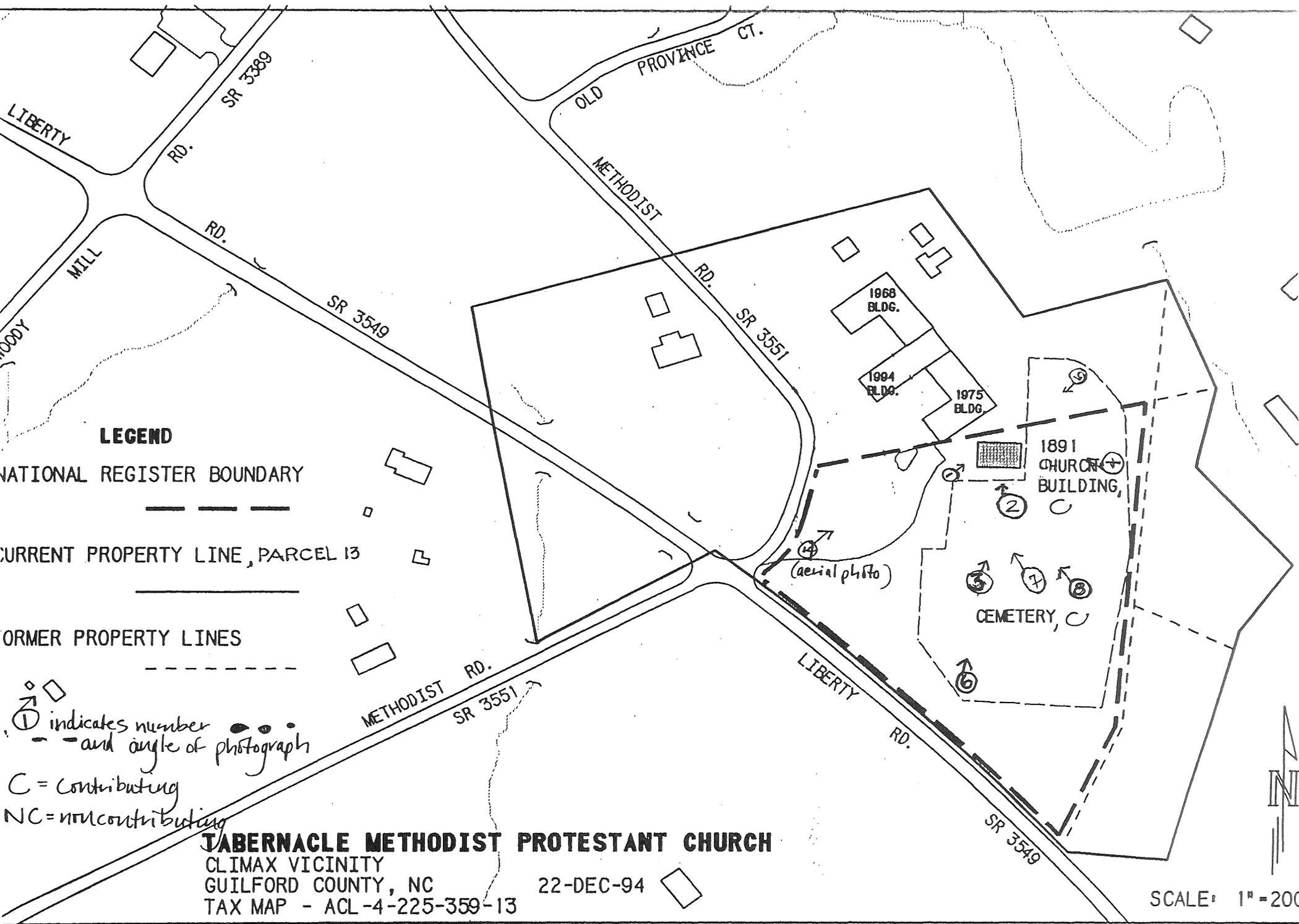
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13. Church pew detail.
14. 1985 aerial view showing 1968 and 1975 building, 1891 church building and grave plots (photo of original taken 9/94).



LEGEND

NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY



CURRENT PROPERTY LINE, PARCEL 13



FORMER PROPERTY LINES



① indicates number and angle of photograph

C = Contributing

NC = noncontributing

TABERNACLE METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH
 CLIMAX VICINITY
 GUILFORD COUNTY, NC
 TAX MAP - ACL-4-225-359-13

22-DEC-94

SCALE: 1" = 200'



Tabernacle Methodist Protestant Church and Cemetery
Guilford County, N.C.
Climax Quad

OR Zone 17
E/617500
N/3980680

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

5056 11 SW
18 (MCLEANSVILLE)

6 MI. TO INT. 85

