

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **AUG 8 1986**  
date entered **SEP 4 1986**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Washington Methodist Church

and/or common (same)

**2. Location**

street & number (no number) Main Street at Church Street N/A not for publication

city, town Washington N/A vicinity of

state Mississippi code 28 county Adams code 001

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

The Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church,  
name The West Jackson-Vicksburg District, c/o Bishop Robert C. Morgan

street & number P. O. Box 1201

city, town Jackson N/A vicinity of state Mississippi

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Adams County Courthouse, Chancery Clerk's Records

street & number Courthouse Square on S. Wall between Market and State streets

city, town Natchez state Mississippi

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Statewide Survey of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1976  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Mississippi Department of Archives and History

city, town Jackson state Mississippi 39205

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Set close to the ground on a small, flat lawn bordered by old cedars and live oaks, the Washington Methodist Church faces north to a nearby frontage road that runs alongside the six-foot high bank of Washington's Main Street, now a four-lane divided road that serves as U. S. Highways 61, 84, and 78.

The three-bay Flemish-bond brick facade of the 42' x 52' building rises from a base band of cement parging to a parapet brick gable kicked out at the eaves. Centered in the gable is the brick arch of a half round opening that is filled with a flat wood panel and is framed, like the openings below, with wood structural members whose leading edges are rounded in the manner associated with the Federal style. Below are two ranges of openings with segmentally arched heads. In the upper range, the center window is closed by a flat wood panel bearing an attached neon cross while the outer windows are closed by louvered shutters. In the lower range are three identical doorways, each trimmed with a cut-stone lug sill and with jambs and soffit bearing Federal style molded panels matching in number and trimming those on the doors. Each doorway is closed by a pair of five panel doors separated from a five light transom sash by a transom bar elaborately molded in the delicate, fine profiles associated with the Federal style. On the four-bay sides, the common bond brickwork rises from the cement-parged base to the eaves, where four courses form dentils and a sawtooth cornice. The upper openings are short, nearly-square windows topped by flat arches with flaring brick voussoirs. Round edge wood frames contain pairs of louvered shutters that are hung on parliament hinges with a date range of 1820 - 1860. The lower openings are tall windows topped by segmental arches with plain boards filling the arches. Round edge frames, which trim the twenty-over-fifteen light double-hung sash, are set beneath square edge frames, which trim transom sash, each with small square colored-glass panes surrounding a large clear glass pane. Across the back is a low, one story, 35' x 72', three-by-six bay, cement block addition with paired 3/3 sash windows, overhanging eaves, and exposed rafter ends. The shallow pitched roof extends as a shed up to the back wall of the church, covering all but the segmental arched tops of two windows and the plain gable above. The ends of the addition that extend fifteen feet beyond the church on each side are sheltered by gable roofs. Clapboards cover the exposed side walls beneath the shed roof of the center part of the addition.

The interior of the church is a single space with rough-finish plaster walls, random-width wide-board floors, and a beaded-board ceiling angled down from a flat center to hit the walls just above the lower range of windows. A plain baseboard is paralled at the level of the window sills by a four inch, rounded edge, chairrail with a double bead in the center. The flared window jambs are plastered. The narrow, steep ovolo and cockbead associated with the Federal style trims the narrow window frames and the door architraves. Separating the freestanding pews from the pulpit is a heavy turned baluster railing set on a kneeling step. The railing bows forward in front of a low center platform for the pulpit. Centered on the back wall is a large wooden frontispiece composed of two chamfered pilasters supporting an ogee cornice and a plain frieze without architrave. A wainscot of narrow, beaded boards angles up and across the frontispiece between the two plain doors that flank the platform. The rear addition contains classrooms ranged around the outer sides of a large center room, all finished with plywood paneling and wall board, acoustic ceiling tiles, and asphalt floor tiles.

A major remodeling occurred in 1902, according to a 1974 church booklet. These changes probably included the replacement of the flat flaring brick arches with segmental ones, the heightening of the lower windows to allow installation of the colored glass transom sashes, the removal of the interior galleries that attached between the upper and lower windows, the installation of a ceiling that kept the shape of the original but attached to the walls below the upper windows rather than above them, and the installation of the pulpit frontispiece. The rear addition was built in 1946, according to the same source.

# 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1828

Builder/Architect Unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Washington Methodist Church is significant for its architectural rarity in Mississippi and for its close association with the history of its community. Though altered, its original configuration is still discernable and significant as one of less than a half dozen Mississippi churches built in the Federal style before the Greek Revival style was introduced to the state. It gains additional importance as the meeting place for people in the town of Washington, which had been the territorial capital and which became an intellectual center for the old Natchez region. Jefferson College particularly utilized the building for its commencement exercises and for lectures during the 1830's by the Jefferson College and Washington Lyceum. Today, it is the only historic church surviving in the village of Washington.

The traditional date of 1828 agrees stylistically with the building and, more importantly, is supported by documentary evidence. On property acquired from Maria Spencer on August 13, 1825, the trustees built the church shortly before May 13, 1828, when the adjoining National Register property, Meadvilla, was sold with reference to the lot where "a Brick Methodist church has been recently erected" and with a map depicting a building labeled "church" on the site of the present church (Deed from John Snodgrass & wife to Benjamin L. C. Wailes, recorded in Deed Book Q, pages 240-242, in the Adams County Courthouse deed records.)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property about 3/4 acre

Quadrangle name Washington, Mississippi

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 15 66111115 31491471310  
Zone Easting Northing

B                    
Zone Easting Northing

C                  

D                  

E                  

F                  

G                  

H                  

Verbal boundary description and justification Lot 29, Parcel 2, Map 75 in the Adams Co. Tax Records, being a parcel 230' x 150', having been reduced by the enlargement of the highway from the original lots acquired in 1825, which were "Lots 2 and 4 of Square 13 in the original plat of the town of Washington."

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ronald W. Miller, Executive Director

organization The Historic Natchez Foundation

date November 29, 1985

street & number (109 N. Commerce) P. O. Box 1761

telephone (601) 442-2500

city or town Natchez

state Mississippi

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Kenneth H. P. Pool

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date August 4, 1986

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature]  
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date 9/4/86

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
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Continuation sheet Washington Methodist Church Item number 9

Page

Blain, William T. Education in the Old Southwest: A History of Jefferson College, Washington, Mississippi. Washington, Miss.: The Friends of Jefferson College, 1976.

Cain, J. B. "Washington Methodist Church, 1799-1949." A machine copy of a typescript now in the Washington Methodist Church folder in the Historic Sites File at the Historic Natchez Foundation, Natchez, Mississippi.

Washington Methodist Church. Washington Methodist Church, Washington Mississippi, Organized in 1799, Present Building-1828, One Hundred and Seventy-Fifth Anniversary, October 10 and October 13, 1974. (no author, place, or date other than the title). In the Washington Methodist Church folder in the Historic Sites File at the Historic Natchez Foundation, Natchez, Mississippi.

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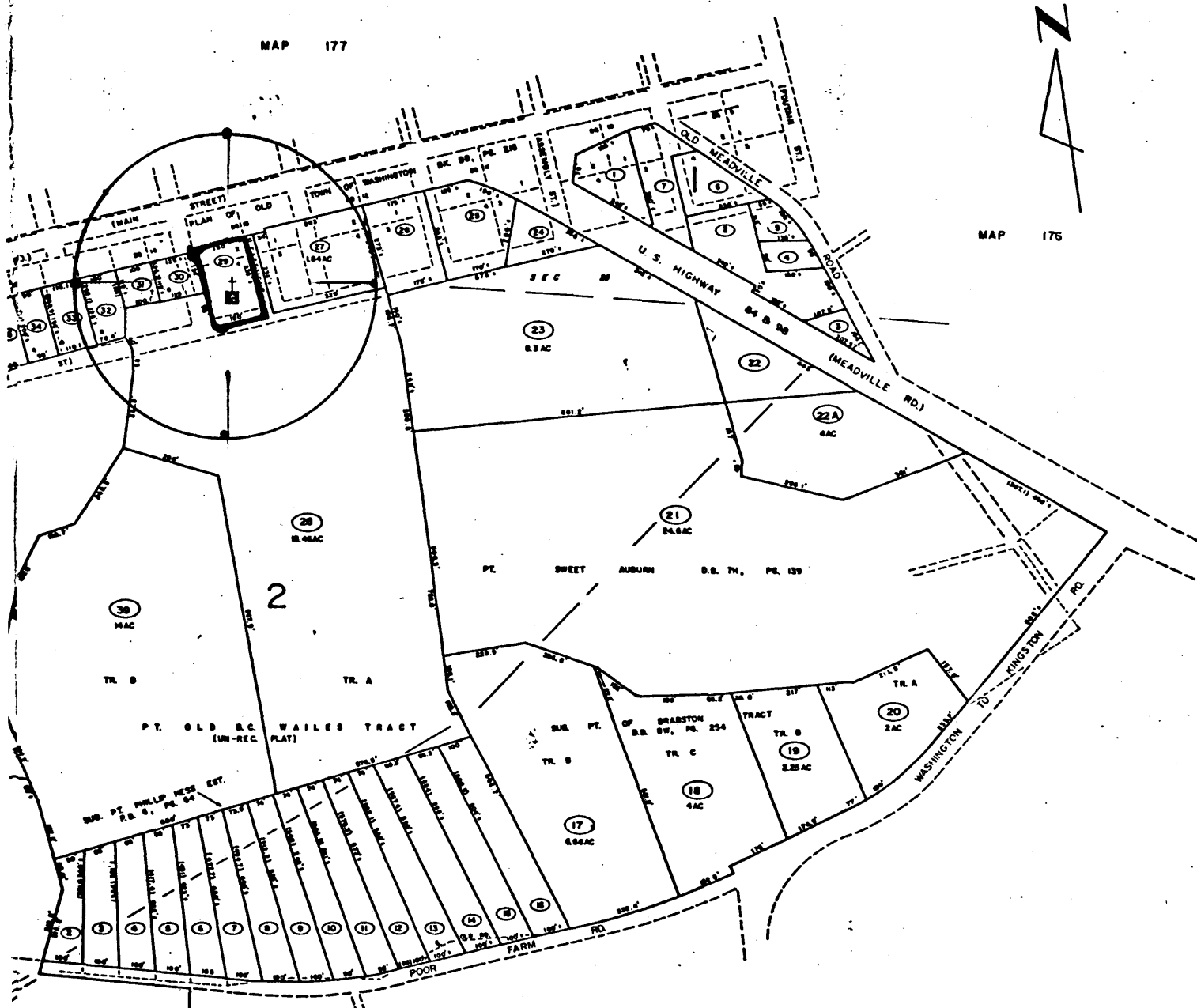
Washington  
Methodist Church

Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page

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Tax Map #175  
dated 1967  
Adams County, Mississippi

MAP 53



Washington Methodist Church, North facade  
Washington, Adams County, Mississippi  
Historic Natchez Foundation  
Ronald W. Miller  
December 1, 1985  
Photo 1 of 5





Washington Methodist Church, oblique view  
from northeast

Washington, Adams County, Mississippi

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December 1, 1985

Photo 2 of 5



Washington Methodist Church, east side  
elevation

Washington, Adams County, Mississippi

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Ronald W. Miller

December 1, 1985

Photo 3 of 5



Washington Methodist Church, detail of  
paneled reveal of one of the north  
doors

Washington, Adams County, Mississippi  
Historic Natchez Foundation

Ronald W. Miller

December 1, 1985

Photo 4 of 5



Washington Methodist Church, Interior,  
viewed from northwest corner  
Washington, Adams County, Mississippi  
Historic Natchez Foundation  
Ronald W. Miller  
December 1, 1985  
Photo 5 of 5