

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Silver Hill Baptist Church and School

Other names/site number: DHR #030-5180

Name of related multiple property listing: African American resources in Fauquier County, Virginia (1865-1973+)

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

2. Location

Street & number: 13323 Silver Hill Road

City or town: Bealeton State: VA County: Fauquier

Not For Publication: n/a Vicinity: n/a

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

 Signature of certifying official/Title:	<u>11.1.22</u> Date
<u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____ Signature of commenting official:	_____ Date
_____ Title :	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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

Date of Action

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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

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

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: Religious Facility

FUNERARY: Cemetery

EDUCATION: School

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Gothic Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: CONCRETE; METAL; SYNTHETICS: Vinyl

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The 1902 Silver Hill Baptist Church and School at 13323 Silver Hill Road is sited on the east side of Silver Hill Road (Route 615) in Bealeton, which is in the southern part of Fauquier County, Virginia. More specifically the Silver Hill Baptist Church is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Silver Hill Road and Dyes Lane (Route 633) and the southeast corner of the intersection of Silver Hill Road and Kingwood Drive. Associated with the church building are a school, a cemetery, a sign, and a well, all of which are contributing except for the sign, which postdates the property's period of significance. The resources are situated on one 2.65-acre lot, covered in a manicured grass lawn and dotted with trees and shrubbery. The school stands in the northern portion of the property and there is a cemetery situated in the southeastern portion of the property. The property is accessed via a gravel drive, which extends east from Silver Hill Road and connects to a gravel parking area located to the south of the school and to the north of the church. The overall setting remains largely rural with some mid- to late-twentieth-century residential development interspersed with extensive green space. The property has integrity of location, setting, and association, and, despite alterations to the church over time, integrity of design, workmanship, materials, and feeling.

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Narrative Description

Church – Exterior Description

Silver Hill Baptist Church at 13323 Silver Hill Road is a one-story, one-bay, vernacular frame church building constructed circa 1902 with elements reflective of the Gothic Revival style. The continuous parged stone foundation supports a structural system clad in horizontal vinyl siding. The building is covered with a front-gabled roof, sheathed in standing-seam metal. The Gothic Revival style was popular in the mid- to late-nineteenth century; however, elements of this style were utilized in ecclesiastical buildings well into the twentieth century (Novelli et al. 2015:49). It is expressed on Silver Hill Baptist Church through a flared pyramidal-hip-roofed bell tower centered on the west façade as well as through the wood, louvered, lancet vents on the belfry; and wood, louvered, diamond vents directly below the belfry. Other fenestration on the tower includes one-over-one, vinyl replacement sash windows.

The primary entrance, centered on the façade of the bell tower, is filled with double-leaf, full-glazed doors and is accessed via a concrete ramp, with a concrete walkway extending north across the front of the church to the gravel parking area. Other fenestration on the core includes one-over-one, vinyl replacement sash windows featuring a fanlight, six-over-six faux muntins, and faux stained-glass glazing. These windows were installed within the last decade and replaced older, double-hung wood sash windows. There was also an exterior-end, concrete-block chimney located on the south elevation that was sometime during the last 30 years. The core of the church comprises the sanctuary, the balcony, and the bell tower. Since the initial construction of the church, circa 1902, there have been five additions to the building, all of which are along the rear of the 1902 sanctuary and are smaller in height, footprint, and massing.

A circa 1945, one-story addition extends from the east elevation (rear) of the church. The foundation for this addition is not visible as it is hidden by later construction. The frame structural system is covered with a hipped-roof clad in standing-seam metal roofing. This addition comprises the choir loft along with the original pastor study and finance office.

Extending south off of the prior additions is a circa 1970, one-story, gabled-roof addition that houses the fellowship hall. This is supported by a continuous parged concrete-block foundation and has a structural system clad in horizontal vinyl siding and covered with standing-seam metal roofing. There is an exterior-end, partially-parged concrete-block chimney on the east elevation. Fenestration includes a single-leaf, half-glaze, wood door, with a three-quarter glaze storm door, a double-leaf paneled wood door, and two-over-two, double-hung wood sash windows. A concrete ramp provides access to the entrance on the south elevation of this addition.

A circa 1975, one story, hipped roof addition extends from the east elevation of the church. This addition spans one side of the circa 1945 addition. The later addition has a continuous concrete foundation that supports a frame structural system clad in vinyl siding. The roof is clad in standing-seam metal. There is an exterior-end concrete-block chimney on the east elevation. Fenestration includes a single-leaf steel door, one-over-one wood sash windows and paired nine-

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light wood casement windows. This addition includes bathrooms, a hallway, a boiler room, and a kitchen.

A circa-2008, one-story, shed roof addition is located off the north elevation of the church. The concrete foundation supports a frame structural system clad in vinyl siding. The roof is clad in standing-seam metal. Fenestration consists of a single-leaf steel door with a wood stoop.

The final addition on the Silver Hill Baptist Church is located on the west elevation of the circa-1970 addition and the south elevation of the original core. This circa 2010, one-story addition houses the pastors' study and has a continuous concrete foundation with a frame structural system clad in vinyl siding. The shed roof is clad in standing seam metal roofing. Fenestration includes a single-leaf steel door and a one-over-one vinyl sash window with faux muntins. This covers the location of an original window on the south elevation of the original core of the resource.

Church - Interior Description

The primary entrance is located on the west elevation of the church. The double-leaf, full-glaze entry door gives way to the ground-level of the bell tower. The floor is carpeted, and the walls are clad in gypsum drywall. Another double-leaf, six-panel, composite door provides access from the bell tower into the sanctuary. Aside from the balcony, there are no interior partition walls within the sanctuary. The carpeting continues from the bell tower into the sanctuary, where the walls have been plastered and the ceiling is clad in drop ceiling tile. There are two windows on the north wall and one on the south wall and each wall has an air-conditioning unit installed in the wall in alignment with the top of the windows. Pews run the length of the longitudinal walls with seven rows along the north wall and eight rows along the south wall, forming a central aisle that leads to the altar and pulpit at the eastern end of the sanctuary. The altar and pulpit are adorned with wood paneling. The pulpit is behind the altar and sits higher than the ground level via concrete steps that have been covered with carpet. The pulpit extends into the arched entry to the circa 1945 choir loft, which is on the same level as the pulpit.

In the northwest corner of the sanctuary a staircase leads to a small second-story balcony that contains three rows of pews on the south side. The balcony is supported by two square, wood posts on the ground level and by three vertical iron tie rods extending from the balcony to the ceiling. The balcony provides access to a single second-story room of the bell tower that was used as a small office at one point. That room provides access to the bell through a hatch in the ceiling.

1945 Addition Interior

The 1945 addition is accessed via a large arched opening directly east of the altar and pulpit. The opening was made when this addition was constructed and leads into the choir loft. The choir loft, like the altar, is elevated compared to the rest of the sanctuary. The floor is carpeted, and the walls and ceiling are finished with drywall. Within the choir loft there are two single-leaf, two-panel, wood doors, one on the north and one on the south walls.

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The door on the north wall of the choir loft provides access to what was originally the pastor's study, constructed at the same time. This study can be accessed from the choir loft to the south; from the sanctuary via a single-leaf, six-panel, composite door to the west; and from the circa-1965 addition via an open doorway to the east. The circa 1945 pastor's study currently functions as a passage from the sanctuary to the circa 1975 addition.

The south door in the choir loft gives access to what is currently the financial office of the church. This room is larger than the pastor study with carpeted floors and drywall-finished walls and ceiling. The space can be accessed from the choir loft to the north; from the circa 1975 addition to the east via a single-leaf, six-panel, composite door; and from a small hall, also completed during the 1945 building campaign, extending off of the south wall of the sanctuary via another single-leaf, six-panel, composite door.

1975 Addition Interior

The circa 1975 addition is accessed through the east doorway in the circa 1945 pastor's study. This gives way to a hallway that runs north-south along the back of the choir loft to a doorway that accesses the financial office. The floors of this hall are covered with carpet and the walls and ceiling with textured drywall. Directly to the north in this hallway, when entering from the 1945 pastor's study, is a single-leaf steel door providing exterior access. There are two single toilet bathrooms on the east side of the hallway that are accessed via single-leaf, six-panel, composite doors on the east wall of this hallway. The bathrooms have linoleum floors.

To the south of these bathrooms is a single-leaf steel door labeled as the 'Heater Room.' This doorway provides access to the heaters along with the kitchen. The kitchen extends south and is aligned with the financial office. The floors are sealed concrete, and the walls have faux-wood-paneling. The kitchen can also be accessed from the circa 1970 addition via a single-leaf composite door on the south wall and from the exterior via a single-leaf, three-panel, half-glazed, wood door on the north elevation.

Circa 1970 Fellowship Hall Interior

The-circa 1970 addition is used as a fellowship hall and can be accessed through the previously mentioned small hallway off the south end of the sanctuary that also provides access to the circa-1945 financial office and the circa 2010 addition. The dining hall is located south of this hall through a doorway with a temporary collapsible door that opens into a large and open area with a sealed concrete floor, wood paneling covering the walls, and drywall covering the ceiling. On the north wall of the dining hall is the doorway for the aforementioned small hallway, along with the doorway to the kitchen. On the east wall is a brick fireplace which ties in to the exterior-end, partially parged, concrete-block chimney on the east elevation. This fireplace appears to be sealed and is no longer in use. On the south wall is the double-leaf, six-panel door providing exterior access.

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Circa 2008 Bathroom Interior

The circa-2008 addition can be accessed via a single-leaf, six-panel, composite door on the north wall of the sanctuary adjacent to the door accessing the circa 1945 pastor's study-turned-hallway. There is a small waiting area on the other side of the doorway that includes a single-leaf steel door on the addition's west wall. An additional single-leaf, six-panel, composite door is located to the north, separating the waiting area from the stalls, and providing access to the stalls and sink. The sink is located on the west wall and the stalls are on the east. The stalls have double-leaf, six-panel, composite swinging doors, the floors are covered with linoleum, and the walls and ceiling are covered with drywall.

Circa 2010 Addition Interior

The 2010 addition, the current pastor's study, is accessed from a single-leaf, six-panel, composite door on the west wall of the hallway connecting to the south wall of the sanctuary. The floor is carpeted, and the walls and ceiling are covered with drywall. There is a single-leaf, steel door providing exterior access on the west wall of the study. There is also a small closet located in the northwest corner of the room.

Secondary Resources

Silver Hill School- Exterior

The Silver Hill School is located directly north of the church across the gravel parking lot and is a contributing building. This one-story, one-bay building was constructed circa 1903 in no discernable style. The stone pier foundation supports a wood-frame structural system. The exterior walls are clad in vinyl-siding. The front-gabled roof is sheathed with standing-seam metal and adorned with a wood belfry. The bell was relocated to the church belfry, but it is unclear when this occurred. Historic imagery suggests there was once an interior-end brick chimney towards the east elevation. That chimney is no longer visible from the exterior but is still visible within the school (AAHA n.d.). The primary entrance to the school is located on the west elevation and is an off-center, double-leaf, six-panel, steel door that is accessed via a concrete ramp. Historic imagery indicates that the original entrance was a centered single-leaf, wood door that was accessed via a wood deck on the same elevation. Other fenestration includes four windows, two on the north elevation and two on the south elevation. The original window sash are no longer intact, and the window openings have been boarded over with plywood.

Silver Hill School- Interior

The interior of the school is mostly intact. The flooring is hardwood, and the walls and ceiling are clad in wood boards. The walls are painted black from the floor to the bottom of the windows, which is about three feet in height. The rest of the interior is painted white. On the east wall there is a partial chimney flue which shows evidence of a wood stove being present at some point. The school is currently used as a storage space for the church.

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Silver Hill Cemetery

A circa 1900 cemetery is located in the southeast portion of the property and is a contributing site. The cemetery is not organized with a discernable plan or layout. There are approximately 70 gravestones and multiple unmarked fieldstone markers. The majority of headstones were granite. The simple designs of the headstones varied with age as the older ones generally are upright markers and some of the newer ones are flat markers. The earliest marked interment dates to 1914 and the latest dates to 2016. Many of the individuals buried here were members of the church and include some of the founding families such as the Coles. The cemetery has been subject to vandalism over many years but retains its historic elements.

Well

The circa 1960 well, a contributing structure, is located to the west of the primary resource along Silver Hill Road. The well is constructed with poured concrete, and has a square base with a circular cap. There is a metal component that arches over the well cap. It contributes to the property because it dates to the period of significance and reflects provision of drinking water to the property during a period of modernizing the property between the 1940s and early 1970s.

Sign

A noncontributing circa 2000 sign is located to the west of the primary resource along Silver Hill Road. The sign is constructed with stretcher-bond brick and flanked by foliage. The sign provides the church's name along with the Reverend's name and scheduling details.

Integrity Analysis

When evaluating the integrity of African American resources, particularly places of worship, the intangible aspect of integrity should be foreground in the discussion, as these culturally significant places physically grow and change along with their congregation. Overall, the Silver Hill Baptist Church and School at 13323 Silver Hill Road maintain a high level of integrity of association setting, feeling, and location. The church and school retain a moderate level of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship.

The primary resource has a high level of association as it continues to operate as a church as well as function as a social gathering space for the Silver Hill community. Services are still held along with annual events such as homecoming where members of the church past and present come together to celebrate the church and community. The same can be said of the school; while it no longer functions as an educational building, it retains its association with the church and remains an important part of the lives of former students. Although the property and surrounding area has seen moderate residential development, the property still retains the characteristics of a rural church. The surrounding area is primarily wooded, and the community has not outgrown the church. Therefore, the property retains a high level of integrity of location, setting, and feeling.

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The integrity of design, materials, and workmanship of the church and school have been slightly diminished due to renovations to both buildings. Both the church and school have had vinyl replacement siding installed on the exterior and the roofing materials have been replaced. Since the late twentieth century, the church has undergone common modifications such as replacement of window sash and doors. The same can be said for the school, which has had its exterior brick chimney removed and the original entry door replaced with a new pair of doors. As such, the church and the school retain a moderate level of design, materials, and workmanship. In sum while the appearance of the church and school may have changed over time their significance and meaning to those who live in the community has not diminished in the slightest.

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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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: African American

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1902-1971

Significant Dates

1902

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School is significant under Criterion A at the local level, in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: African American and Social History. The Silver Hill Baptist Church and School are a rare example of a late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century African American church and school that remain intact in a Reconstruction-era community in Fauquier County. There are two other such communities that have been documented within Fauquier County, Virginia (Walker 2021), each of which is within an NRHP-listed historic district, the Asheville Historic District (030-5323) and the Morgantown Historic District (030-5322). Like the community of Silver Hill, Morgantown features the circa 1902 Mt. Nebo Baptist Church and the circa 1891 Morgantown School. The same can be said for the Asheville Historic District that features the circa 1899 First Asheville Baptist Church and the circa 1910 Asheville School. Both of these historic districts are listed in the NRHP under Criterion A and Criterion C (Walker 2021). The Silver Hill Baptist Church and School continues to be an integral gathering place, a safe haven, and essential component to the social and religious aspects of the lives of the people of the Silver Hill community. Silver Hill Baptist Church and School meets Criteria Consideration A for religious properties because its significance is derived from its historic role as a community space established during the Reconstruction Era as an autonomous space within which Black members could exercise religious and cultural practices, gain experienced with financial and property management, and engage in educational and outreach efforts for community improvements. The property continued in this role through the Jim Crow era and the Civil Rights Movement. The property's period of significance begins in 1902, when the core of the extant church was constructed, and ends in 1972, the traditional end date for property where historic activities have continued into the more recent past but do not meet Criteria Consideration G. The Silver Hill Baptist Church and School is nominated under the Multiple Property Documentation form, *African American Resources in Fauquier County, Virginia*. Both the church and the school were a significant part of the African American experience in the county and contributed to the development and sustenance of the Silver Hill community.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Historic Context

Church and Community History

The Silver Hill community, whose name was probably derived from Hannah Blackwell's Silver Hill tract located on the road from Crittenden's Mill to Morrisville, is a historic African American enclave established during Reconstruction by Thomas Hannibal Coles, a formerly enslaved man who operated a blacksmith shop and lived with his wife, Ellen, in Silver Hill. In 1876, the Coles purchased thirty-three acres from the roughly 350-acre "Silver Hill" tract owned by the heirs of

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Hannah Blackwell (Fauquier County Circuit Court, Warrenton, Virginia [FCCC] 1876:Deed Book [DB] 76:385). Coles purchased an additional acre of Blackwell's estate with its appurtenances in 1885 "for use of the congregation worshipping at the Silver Hill Church forever" (FCCC 1885:DB 78:397). In documentation related to the sale, Thomas H. Coles is listed as a church trustee along with David Jackson and Horace West. According to Eugene Scheel's *The Guide to Fauquier*, the rear portion of the church was first used for worship in 1869, though available architectural evidence cannot confirm this (Walker 2021). The church was originally established in 1870 on a site adjacent to the old Silver Hill School (Scheel 1976). The current church building, according to Scheel, was constructed in 1902 and the core still stands to this day. The Silver Hill School, which is located north of the church on the property, was constructed in 1906 and was no longer in use by the 1940s (Scheel 1976). However, alternate sources suggest that the school had been constructed by August 1903 (The Times Dispatch 1903). The church itself was among an Advisory Council of local churches including Oak Share, St. James, Mt. Pleasant, and Oak Grove, among others in the late-nineteenth century, when this group was referred to as the Northern Virginia Baptist Association (AAHA 1891). The Northern Virginia Baptist Association was established in 1878 out of the First Baptist Church in Warrenton, Virginia. The idea behind the association was that it would promote the union of churches and provide a channel for fraternal intercourse and mutual counsel (Northern Virginia Baptist Association 2022). This helped foster a strong relationship among these institutions that has persisted to the present day.

The Silver Hill Baptist Church and School experienced notable development under the leadership of Reverend Leamon W. White. Pastor White was originally a Methodist who joined the Baptist Church in 1931. He became ordained in 1943 at the Vermont Avenue Baptist Church of Washington, D.C. (Washington Post 2002). Following his ordination, he made his way to Silver Hill Baptist Church in 1944 and succeeded Reverend W.H. Gibson. Under Reverend White the church would construct the sanctuary's 1945 addition that included the choir loft, original pastor's study, and the current financial offices (Kelly 2021). Along with this he brought electricity to the church and established ushers.

Reverend White's contributions were not only felt by the church, but by the school as well. Operating during the Jim Crow era when every aspect of Virginia's statewide public school system was segregated, the Silver Hill School provided classes up to 7th grade and had every grade in the single classroom simultaneously. The teacher would rotate groups, teaching one at a time while the other students studied. Alumni from this time remember the school fondly and enjoyed their time there. One drawback to school was the lack of a bus service for the Silver Hill community, although white children were bussed to their schools. Black students walked distances of up to 3.5 miles to get to school, and then walked the same distance to go home at the end of the day (Callahan, Isette, personal communication 2022). Reverend White recognized this injustice and is credited with securing a means for the children of the Silver Hill community to have a bus to take them to and from school, although details of this effort are not fully known. Reverend White only remained at Silver Hill Baptist Church until 1949. From there, he went on to become the pastor at the Mount Bethel Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. This established a strong relationship between Silver Hill Baptist Church and the Mount Bethel Baptist Church that continues to the

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present day, as members of the Mount Bethel Baptist Church are invited to the homecoming celebration in Silver Hill every August (Callahan, Isette, personal communication 2022).

Silver Hill Baptist Church continued to evolve over the remaining part of the twentieth century. The most notable addition to the property in the second half of the twentieth century came under the leadership of Reverend Joseph C. Hackett with the construction of the circa 1970 dining hall (Kelly 2021). It was also under Reverend Hackett that the church constitution was written. Today the church is led by Reverend Dr. James R. Kelly, who became the pastor of Silver Hill Baptist Church in July 2012. Reverend Dr. Kelly continues to work towards his goals of raising money to purchase a site for a second church sanctuary to allow the congregation membership to grow as the surrounding area is experiencing rapid development (Kelly 2021).

The cemetery that is associated with the church features a 1914 death date for the earliest marked interment, which is for the church founder Thomas Hannibal Coles (Find A Grave 2011). It is likely, however, that there are earlier, unmarked graves, considering the congregation was founded in 1869, the current property was purchased in 1876, and worship occurred here continually. The cemetery has continued to expand as an additional acre of land was acquired by the church under the leadership of Reverend Hackett. More than 70 known interments are present, with a variety of markers, and the cemetery is still in active use. Recently, the church has begun to sell burial plots to those who are not members of the church as a way to raise more funds for future endeavors (Kelly 2021).

Community Engagement and Improvement (Ethnic Heritage and Social History)

Early in the twentieth century the church gained a reputation for its role in the community. According to written records, there was an instance in 1921 where a member of the church had fallen ill and the church came together and raised 20 dollars to hire a nurse for her. Later in that decade, the church aided in providing Silver Hill with much-needed telephone service, something the community had previously been without. In 1925, the church held a vote and made a decision to buy shares in the Elk Run Telephone lines. These shares cost approximately five dollars per share and became the means for bringing telephone service to the community (Kelly 2021). During the early-twentieth century, the church donated to multiple educational institutions both within and outside of the Silver Hill community. In 1915 and 1927, the church sent funds to the Industrial School of Manassas and during the 1930s, funds were sent to the Warrenton Training School (Kelly 2021), which served as a high school for Black students in Fauquier County.

African American churches developed an annual tradition early in the twentieth century where those congregates who had left the area would return to their home church for large celebrations. This tradition became known as “homecoming” and occurred annually sometime between June and September (Barthel 2021). One of the first homecomings at the Silver Hill Baptist Church took place in 1903 and was documented by a newspaper reporter for *The Times Dispatch* newspaper of Richmond, Virginia (The Times Dispatch 1903). In the article’s description of the church, the bell tower was suggested to be a feature of the church added at a later date. The reporter noted that this homecoming attracted not just those from the African American community but also over one

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hundred people from the White community; the balcony on the second story of the sanctuary was utilized by Whites to view the services throughout the day. Generally, there were two services held, one at 11 AM and the other at 3 PM, and there were other events, such as children dancing and playing games. Dinner was reportedly served on a table at least twenty feet long placed in front of the church and described as nothing less than a feast. The meal included roast beef, mutton, turkey, fried chicken, cornbread, biscuits, and an assortment of other foods. At the end of the last service the preacher requested that the members of the church remain seated until all of the White attendees had made their way down the steps and exited the building. To this, the reporter concluded that, “white people are not more politely treated nor are they more free from insult or harm at their own churches than right here” (The Times Dispatch 1903). This demonstrates that, early in its existence, Silver Hill Baptist Church was not only a place of significance in the African American community but in a seemingly rare instance had even become a welcoming place for Whites during a time where racial injustice and racial terror were commonplace in Virginia.

The Silver Hill Baptist Church still holds homecoming on the fourth Sunday of every August. For homecoming, former members who have moved away from the community often return and create a sense of a reunion of family and friends (The Circuit Newspaper 1945:3; Harolyn Bland, personal communication 2021). As previously mentioned, members from other churches such as the Mount Bethel Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. would also attend due to their strong relationship.

The Silver Hill Baptist Church and School have been a hub for the African American community of Silver Hill, Fauquier County, Virginia, since the congregation’s establishment in 1869. Like many African American churches, the congregation predates the physical building in which they worship. It is unclear if an older church building predated the current one; however, the present building, with its circa 1902 core, and the circa 1903 Silver Hill School remain largely intact. Although both buildings have undergone several modifications, these layers of change reflect growth of the local community and flourishing congregation during a tumultuous century of social unrest, civic change, and immense cultural pride. Racial segregation and discrimination during Jim Crow led to a growing, Black-focused congregation, while widespread change during the Civil Rights era and subsequent political and social movements continued an important focus on African American enclaves as a notable nucleus of cultural activity.

Scholars of African American history and culture continually point to ecclesiastic facilities and schools as ranking among the most important institutions in African American life from the colonial era through today. Historic African American churches, especially rural examples, are “historical artifacts of the creation, development, persistence, and continuity of three vital and interrelated components of African-American ethnic heritage: ethnic identity, religion, and education” (Center for Historic Preservation Middle Tennessee State University 2000:5, 27). In many African American enclaves, these buildings were a key part of the community as well as an assured safe place for social gatherings during many years of racial segregation and discrimination. Many rural African American churches in the South “were the nerve centers of their denominations, simultaneously sending pulses of humanity running upward through the institutional hierarchy and generating cohesion and a sense of belonging among people in isolated

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neighborhoods and settlements whom the larger society shunned because of their race” (Montgomery 1993:254). In regard to Silver Hill Baptist Church this statement holds true. The church still plays an active role in the community as services are still held and annual events such as homecoming occur. Despite the challenges of the twenty-first century, such as multiple economic recessions and a global pandemic, Silver Hill Baptist Church persists through it all. The church is actively working to attract new members by embracing some of the newer technologies in the twenty-first century, such as recorded sermons. However, that is not due to a lack of current members as even those who left the area long ago still return to Silver Hill Baptist Church. The Silver Hill Baptist Church has persisted through over a century and will continue to be a symbol of strength for the Silver Hill community.

Similar to these ecclesiastic facilities, schools were also an important institution in African American life, especially during the era of segregation in Virginia’s public schools from 1870 through the 1960s. Schools in African American communities represented an effort to provide educational opportunities that had been denied to Black Virginians prior to the Civil War. The efforts were enacted not only for the betterment of the individual student but also for the community as a whole. Schools, much like churches within the community, were multi-functional spaces that provided education, meals, and recreation for children; they also served as dental clinics and toxoid clinics in the late 1930s (Coleman 1939:130). In addition, African American schools provided employment for many highly trained African American men and women during the years of segregation, when professional job opportunities were very limited. These historic African American educational facilities were extremely important to the communities they serve, and although most no longer function as schools, they continue to be significant resources for their communities and touchstones to Fauquier County’s past.

Ecclesiastical and educational institutions became focal points of Reconstruction-era African American communities in the south. Churches were seen as not only places of social gathering but as safe spaces during the one hundred years between the end of the Civil War and the successes of the Civil Rights Movement, during which African Americans faced racial segregation and discrimination. This is the case with Silver Hill Baptist Church, which became a place of congregation for both religious and secular activities, spearheaded community improvement project, and ensured care for those in need. Similarly, the Silver Hill School offered services that were otherwise hard to obtain in the African American community. This included education, meals, and recreation for the children along with opportunities for African American teachers to find gainful employment when such opportunities were limited. It is rare that these institutions survive together in a Reconstruction- era African American community in Fauquier County. The fact that the Silver Hill Baptist Church and School have survived well over a century is indicative of the continued strength of the community and their ideals as it pertains to education, religion, and ethnic identity.

MPD Registration Requirements

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School meets the registration requirements set forth in the *African American Resources in Fauquier County, Virginia*, MPD. The MPD states that “churches

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associated with Fauquier County's African American communities are important because of their multiple functions in addition to being places of worship" (Section F, p. 64). The MPD states that a church must have historic association with an African American community in Fauquier County between 1865–1973+/- and provides examples of how a church may be significant under Criterion A, such as meetings to organize civil rights actions, activities for the educational advancement of members of the congregation or larger community, publications, or social gatherings or trips sponsored by the church for the betterment of the congregation or community.

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School is significant under Criterion A at the local level, in the areas of Ethnic Heritage, African American and Social History. The Silver Hill Baptist Church and School are a rare example of a late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century African American church and school that remain intact in a Reconstruction-era community in Fauquier County. Silver Hill Baptist Church and School also meets Criteria Consideration A for religious properties because its significance is derived from its historic role as a community space established during the Reconstruction Era as an autonomous space within which Black members could exercise religious and cultural practices, gain experience with financial and property management, and engage in educational and outreach efforts for community improvements, as well as nurturing spiritual and emotional sustenance during difficult times. The property continued in this role through the Jim Crow era and the Civil Rights Movement. The property's period of significance begins in 1902, when the core of the extant church was constructed, and ends in 1972, the traditional end date for property where historic activities have continued into the more recent past but do not meet Criteria Consideration G.

With regard to the MPD's integrity recommendations, Silver Hill Baptist Church and School is located within the current boundaries of Fauquier County and is within the eponymous African American enclave established during Reconstruction by Thomas Hannibal Coles, a formerly enslaved man who operated a blacksmith shop, and his wife Ellen Coles. The circa 1902, one-story, one-bay, front-gable, vernacular frame church building has integrity of design as the form and massing of the original building are evident while, during the period of significance, the footprint has been expanded to include a choir loft, two offices, a fellowship hall, restrooms, and a kitchen, all of which are associated with the church's ongoing activities from the 1900s up to today. A major character-defining architectural feature on the church is the Gothic Revival-influenced, centered, three-story entrance tower with belfry. The building's front-gable form with gable-end entrance, gable roof with metal sheathing, and continuous, parged stone foundation are all typical elements of rural African American churches as described in the MPD. On the interior, the original sanctuary is retained, although cosmetic finishes such as carpets and upholstered pews reflect recent minor modifications. The exterior integrity of workmanship and materials for the church is somewhat eroded by use of replacement vinyl siding, window sash, and exterior doors, but they are compatible with the building's frame construction with sizes of openings maintained and wood siding still extant beneath the newer vinyl siding. The sloped, poured concrete deck fronting the main entry is not historic but provides universal accessibility to congregation members and guests. Overall, therefore, the church's integrity is in keeping with the MPD's registration requirements. Likewise, the circa 1903 school and circa 1900 cemetery on the property retain integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, and materials. Lastly, as a

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whole, the property has high integrity of feeling and association that conveys its historic and current use as a rural church serving the nearby African American community. The cemetery provided a similar essential function by allowing community members to bury loved ones according to their preferred funerary practices and traditions and to maintain kinship networks among the congregation and community members. The circa 1903 school embodies the determination of local residents to see their children educated to the highest standards they could attain. As the locus for meeting the community's core needs for spiritual sustenance, accessibility to interments, and educational opportunities, Silver Hill Baptist Church and School has been at the heart of the Silver Hill community for well over a century.

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School
Name of Property

Fauquier County, VA
County and State

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Silver Hill Baptist Church and School
Name of Property

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Silver Hill Baptist Church and School
Name of Property

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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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA;
Afro-American Historical Association of Fauquier County

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR #030-5180

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 2.65

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School
Name of Property

Fauquier County, VA
County and State

1. Latitude: 38.482650 Longitude: -77.659130
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or
UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:
2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The historic boundaries for the Silver Hill Baptist Church and School is coterminous with the current tax parcels where the resource is situated and are recorded as parcel numbers 7815-39-2855-000 and 7815-39-4800-000 as recorded in Fauquier County, Virginia, land records. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the enclosed tax parcel map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundary encompasses the 2.65-acre tract composed of the property's original one-acre parcel that was deeded to Trustees of Silver Hill Baptist Church from the Hannah Blackwell Estate in 1885. (FCCC 1885 DB 78:397), the one-acre parcel acquired at a later date to allow expansion of the cemetery on the property, and the smaller tract where the school is located. All of the land within the historic boundary was associated with the property during its period of significance and comprises the current extent of the property. All known associated historic resources and the historic setting are included in the historic boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Dan Dilks, Jr., Architectural Historian
organization: Dovetail Cultural Resource Group
street & number: 11905 Bowman Drive, Suite 502
city or town: Fredericksburg state: VA zip code: 22408

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School
Name of Property

Fauquier County, VA
County and State

e-mail ddilks@dovetailcrg.com
telephone: 540-899-9170
date: September 2022

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, 13323 Silver Hill Road (DHR# 030-5180)

City or Vicinity: Bealeton

County: Fauquier State: Virginia Photographer: Heather Staton

Date Photographed: April 19, 2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Northwest Oblique of Building Core
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0001

2 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Southwest Oblique of Building Core and Additions
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0002

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School
Name of Property

Fauquier County, VA
County and State

3 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, South Elevation of Building Core and Additions
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0003

4 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Southeast Oblique of Circa-1970 Fellowship Hall
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0004

5 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, East Elevation of Additions
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0005

6 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Northeast Oblique of Additions
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0006

7 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Sanctuary, Looking East
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0007

8 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Sanctuary, Looking West
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0008

9 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Sanctuary, Looking Southeast
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0009

10 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Altar and Pulpit, Looking West
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0010

11 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Sanctuary North Wall
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0011

12 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Balcony, Looking South
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0012

13 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Stairway, Looking North
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0013

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14 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Circa-1975 Hallway, Looking South
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0014

15 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Circa-1970 Fellowship Hall, Looking Southwest
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0015

16 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Circa-1975 Kitchen, Looking Northeast
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0016

17 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, West Elevation of the School
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0017

18 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Southwest Oblique of the School
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0018

19 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Northeast Oblique of the School
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0019

20 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, View of Cemetery, Looking Southwest
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0020

21 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, View of Cemetery, Looking East
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0021

22 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, View of Cemetery, Looking South
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0022

23 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Thomas H. Cole Gravestone, Looking Southwest
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0023

24 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Well Superstructure, Looking North
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0024

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School
Name of Property

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25 of 25:

Silver Hill Baptist Church and School, Sign, Looking North
VA_FauquierCounty_SilverHillBaptistChurchandSchool_0025

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours

Tier 2 – 120 hours

Tier 3 – 230 hours

Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.



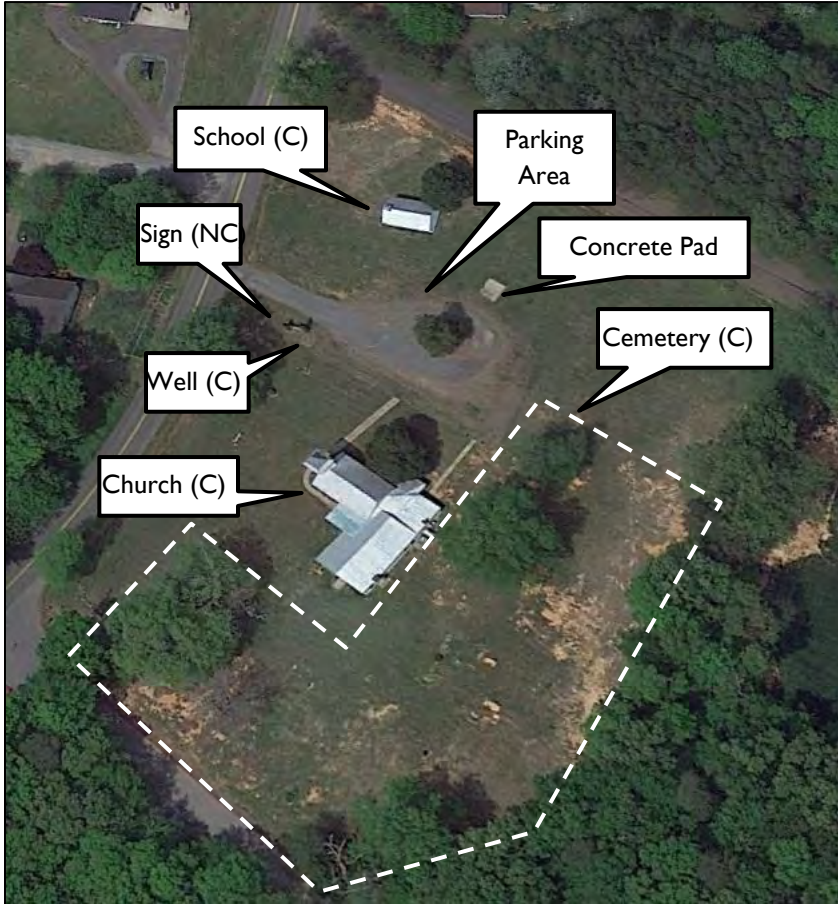
030-5180, Silver Hill Baptist Church and School
Address: 13323 Silver Hill Road,
Bealeton, Fauquier County, Virginia
GPIN#: 7815-39-2855-000 and 7815-39-4800-000
Latitude: 38.482650
Longitude: -77.659130
1998 Richardsville 7.5-Munited United States Geological Survey Topographic Quadrangle Map
Not to Scale

030-5180, Silver Hill Baptist Church and Cemetery
13323 Silver Hill Road, Bealeton, Fauquier County, Virginia
Location Map



030-5180, Silver Hill Baptist Church and School
Address: 13323 Silver Hill Road,
Bealeton, Fauquier County, Virginia
GPIN#: 7815-39-2855-000 and 7815-39-4800-000
Latitude: 38.482650
Longitude: -77.659130
2021 Aerial Imagery (Fauquier County, VA 2021)
Not to Scale

030-5180, Silver Hill Baptist Church and Cemetery
 13323 Silver Hill Road, Bealeton, Fauquier County, Virginia
 Sketch Map



Contributing Resources:

- Church (building)
- School (building)
- Cemetery (site)
- Well (structure)

Non-contributing Resource

- Well (structure)

Landscape Elements

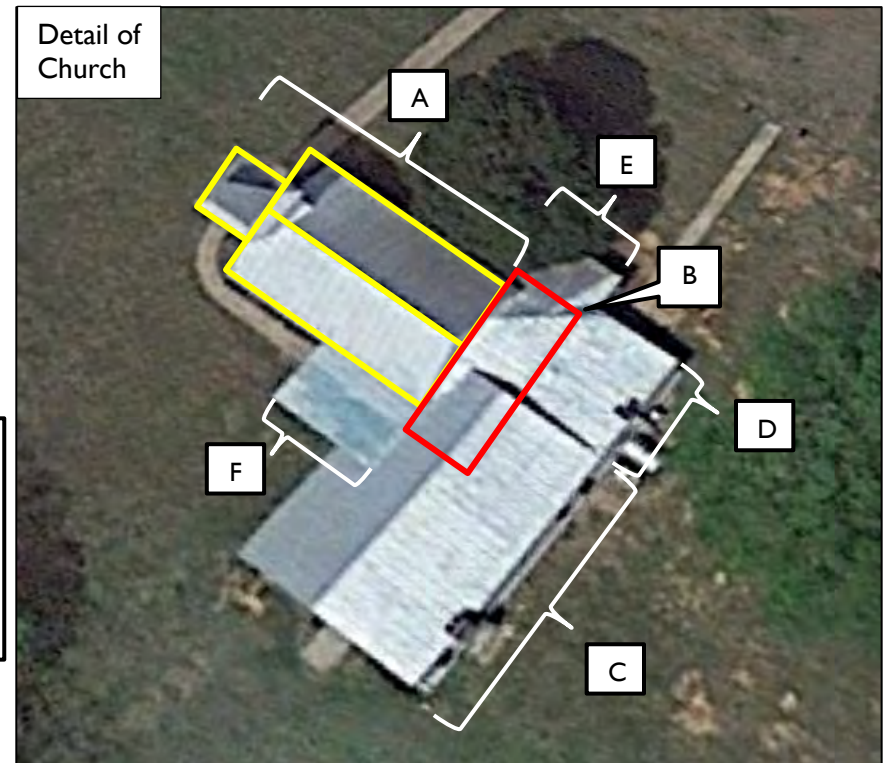
- Parking Area
- Concrete Pad



030-5180, Silver Hill Baptist Church and School
 Address: 13323 Silver Hill Road,
 Bealeton, Fauquier County, Virginia
 GPIN#: 7815-39-2855-000 and 7815-39-4800-000
 Latitude: 38.482650
 Longitude: -77.659130
 2021 Aerial Imagery (Google Earth 2021)
 Not to Scale

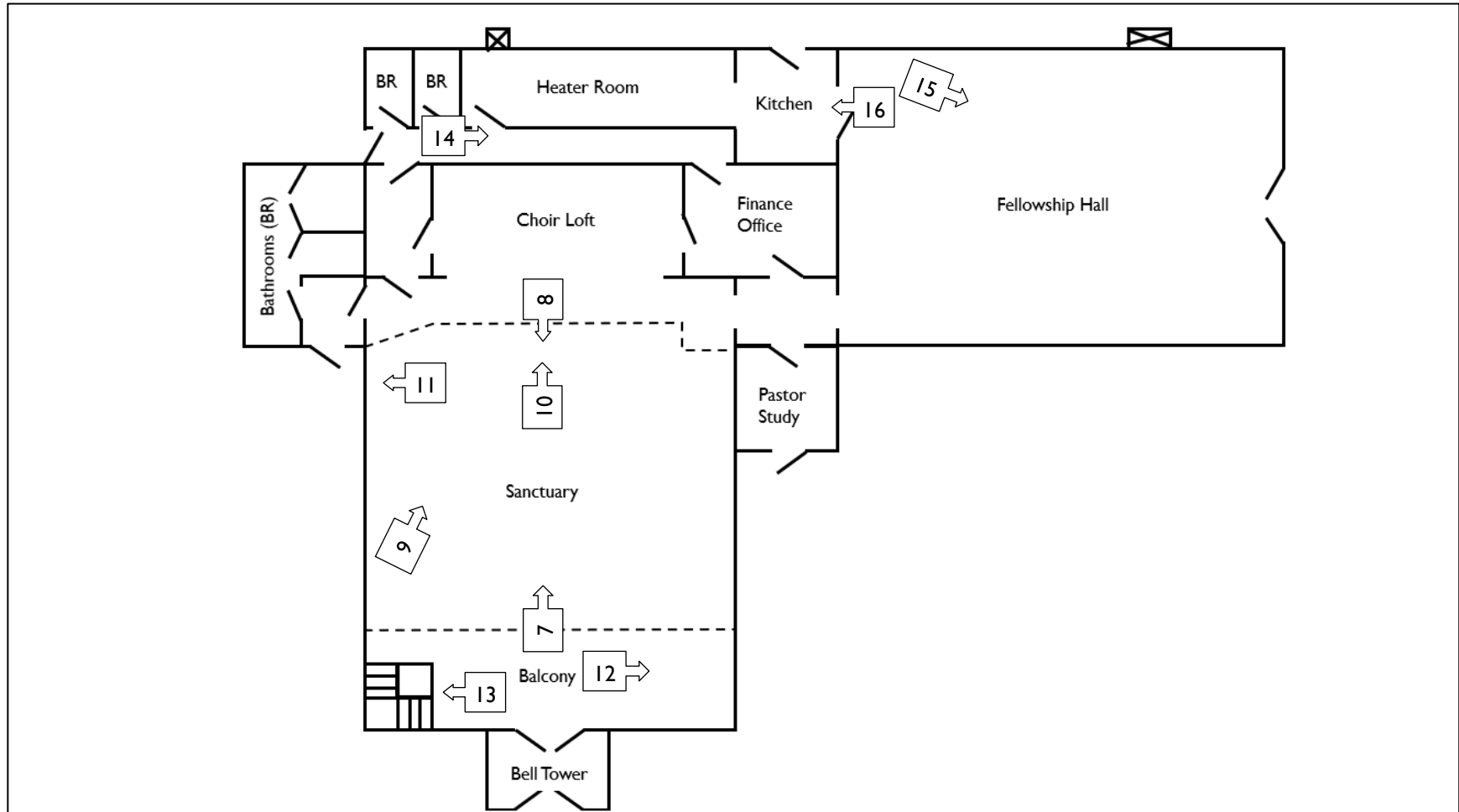
Detail of Church Key:

- A. 1902 Core
- B. Ca. 1945 Choir Loft
- C. Ca. 1970 Fellowship Hall
- D. Ca. 1975 Addition
- E. Ca. 2008 Addition
- F. Ca. 2010 Addition





030-5180, Silver Hill Baptist Church and School
Address: 13323 Silver Hill Road,
Bealeton, Fauquier County, Virginia
GPIN#: 7815-39-2855-000 and 7815-39-4800-000
Latitude: 38.482650
Longitude: -77.659130
Photo Key Map (1 of 2)
2021 Aerial Imagery (Google Earth 2021)
Not to Scale



030-5180, Silver Hill Baptist Church and School
Address: 13323 Silver Hill Road,
Bealeton, Fauquier County, Virginia
GPIN#: 7815-39-2855-000 and 7815-39-4800-000
Latitude: 38.4826
Longitude: -77.6952
Photo Key Map (2 of 2)
Not to scale

