

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: Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Other names/site number: Hosanna First Colored Methodist Protestant Church, Hosanna Meeting House, Hosanna African United Methodist Protestant Church, Hosanna African Methodist Episcopal Church, Hosanna African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Hosanna African United Methodist Protestant Church

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & number: 531 University Road

City or town: Upper Oxford Township State: PA County: Chester

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification


As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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 X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

	2/7/2024
Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date	
_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____ Signature of commenting official: Date	
_____ Title : State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

Hosanna Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Chester County, PA
County and State

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

Hosanna Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Chester County, PA
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

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

Hosanna Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Chester County, PA
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Mid-19th Century

Other: Vernacular/Rural School Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: _____

Foundation: STONE/Sandstone

Walls: BRICK

WOOD

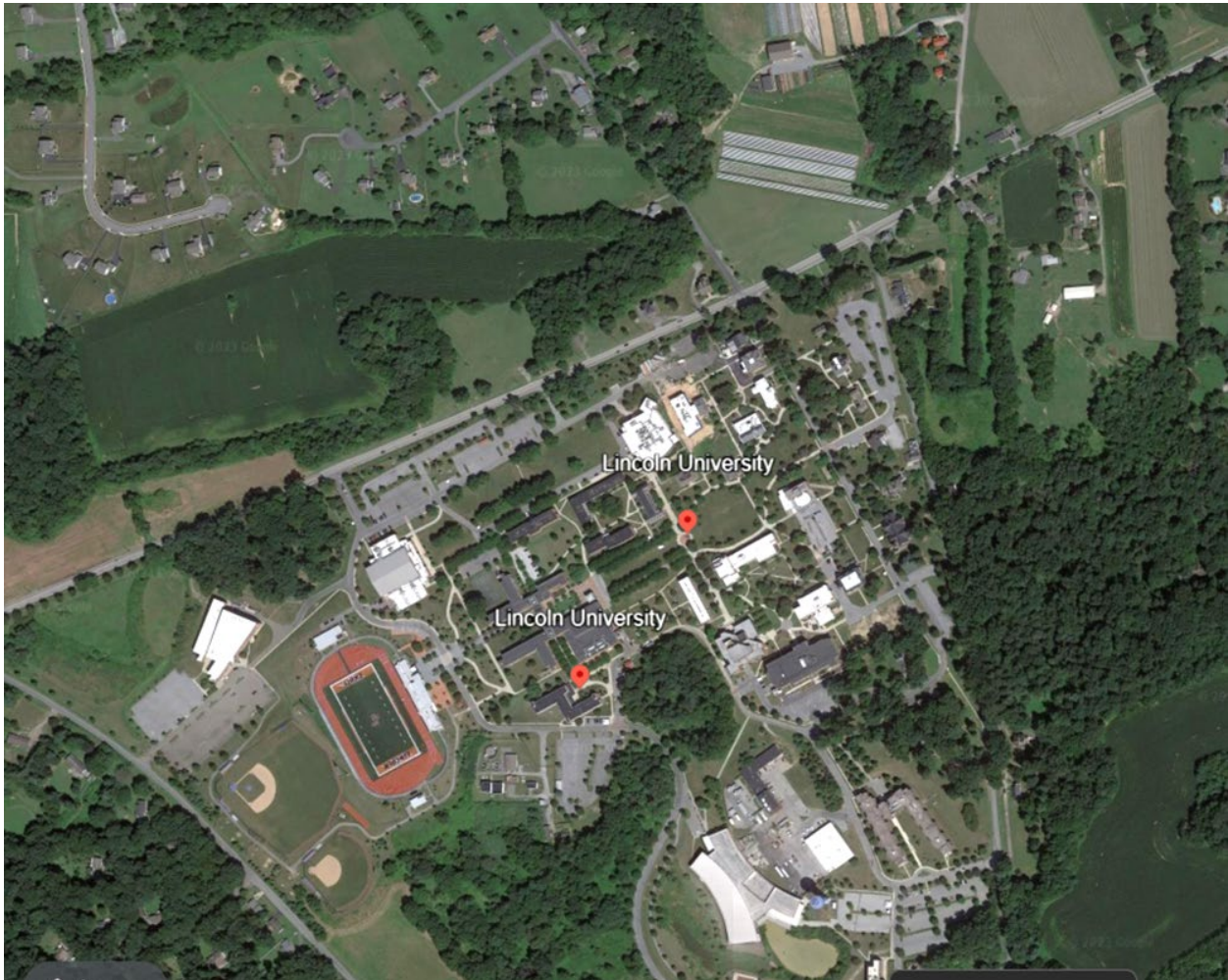
Roof: STONE/Slate

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.)

Hosanna Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Chester County, PA
County and State



Map. Aerial view showing Hosanna AUMP Church in relation to Lincoln University. The proposed National Register Boundary is shown in red. Source: GoogleMaps.

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Name of Property

Chester County, PA

County and State

Summary Paragraph

The Hosanna African Union Methodist Protestant (AUMP) Church, built in 1843, is located on the south side of Baltimore Pike, at the intersection of Baltimore Pike (Old US 1) and Village Road in Lincoln University, Upper Oxford Township, Chester County, PA.¹ The site is located at the northeast corner of the campus of Lincoln University, adjacent (to the west) to the original university entrance (see Map). The school borders the church property on three sides (east, west and south). Hosanna AUMP Church was at one time the spiritual center of Hinsonville, an agricultural community of free blacks established in the early 19th century, and pre-dated the school by just over a decade.² The area continues to be rural and largely agricultural in character.

Narrative Description

The primary, and only, church entrance faces north, onto Baltimore Pike. The building is set back from the road and on a rise above it. Access to the church from the street is via a concrete stairway structure (date unknown; appears to be mid-to-late 20th c. construction) consisting of five steps with a pipe rail on the west side, supported by concrete cheek walls, up to a landing and concrete walkway to the building entrance. The year of the church's founding, "1843," is in surface-mounted letters on the north (outward) face of each cheek wall. (Photo 1; see Photo Key plans at the end of this section.) The remainder of the property is a cemetery with 91 headstones, including members of the historic Hinsonville community and 17 Civil War veterans of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, scattered mostly in the front yard on the east and west sides of the building. This cemetery, as well as the remaining unfenced grassy space to the east of the church, is included in the boundaries of the historic Hosanna Church property. (Photos 2, 3) A metal bench and bronze plaque in the lawn in front of the building, on the east side of the doorway, were placed by the Toni Morrison Society "Bench by the Road Project" in 2015. Mature trees along the south and west property boundaries provide a visual barrier between the Hosanna AUMP site and Lincoln University buildings beyond. An outhouse on the grounds (location unknown) was removed in 2013.



Photo 1. View to south.

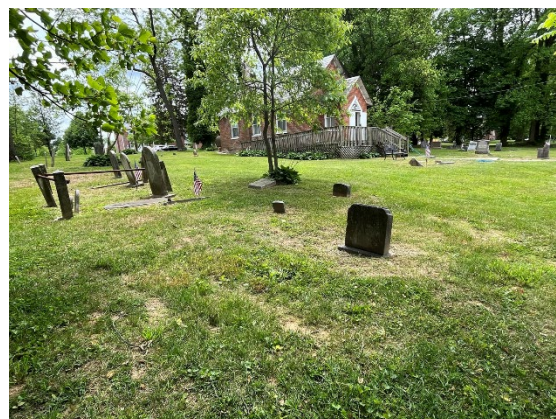


Photo 2. View to southwest.



Photo 3. View to southeast.

¹ Both the eastern and western property boundaries were originally delineated by roadways. Village Road (which appears on some maps as Maple Drive) still borders the church property to the west, running perpendicular to Baltimore Pike. Historically, Ashmun Avenue, which nearly mirrors Village Road on the east side of the church grounds, served as the eastern property boundary.

² Lincoln University was established as the Ashmun Institute in April 1854.

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Name of Property

Chester County, PA

County and State

The church is a modest, one story, one bay by five bay, common bond red brick building, raised on a rubble fieldstone foundation. In plan, the building is a rectangle overall with a projecting gable-roofed entry vestibule, one bay deep, centered on the north façade, and a projecting one-bay deep shed-roof apse extension on the south (rear) elevation. All roof areas have deep overhanging eaves supported by faux wood rafters with clipped ends and are covered with gray slates (likely original).³ An exterior brick chimney (stucco above the roofline) is just off-center to the south on the east (side) elevation, directly adjacent to the south side of the center window on the main block. A large metal gas tank stands at the southeast corner of the building, between the main block and the smaller apse projection. The church is an example of mid-19th c. vernacular church architecture, and bears more than a passing resemblance to rural school style architecture. According to Lanier and Herman, authors of *Everyday Architecture of the Mid-Atlantic*, this confluence is common, and the architecture of small rural churches during the 19th c. century often closely parallels the designs of rural school buildings. (Photos 4, 5, 6, 7)



Photo 4. View to southwest.



Photo 5. View to east, west (side) elevation.



Photo 6. View to northeast.



Photo 7. View to northwest.

³ The closest slate quarries to Hinsonville would have been the peach bottom slate quarries of Delta, PA. Peach bottom slate, no longer quarried, has one of the longest service lives of any slate quarried in the US.

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Chester County, PA
County and State

Name of Property

Windows are all two-over-two wood sash with clear panes in the upper sash and decorative pressed glass panes in the lower sash, and wood lintels and sills.⁴ Several windows have galvanized triple-track screen/storm sash frames over the exterior openings. A modern (late 20th c.?) wooden ramp with a picket railing, and lattice enclosing the base, wraps the northeast corner of the building, providing handicapped access to the entrance door which is six steps above grade. The pair of solid wood doors at this north entrance are a 20th c. addition. (Photo 8) The original stone door sill and wood threshold are visible in the floor just inside this new doorway, as are cut-outs for hinges from an earlier door in the original trim around the interior side of the opening. Over the entry door, in a triangular panel framed by plain wood boards are the words, "HOSANNA A.U.M.P CHURCH." in applied wood block letters. A datestone with the year of construction, 1843, is located at the top of the foundation at the northeast corner of the main block of the building.



Photo 8. View to south, church entrance.

The north doorway is the only means of entry (or exit) to the building, and opens to a small vestibule. The floor is carpet (assumed to be over wood flooring) and the walls and ceiling are plaster. Applied to the lower +/- 3'-0" of the walls is vertical beaded board wainscot with a molded cap. The vestibule is naturally lit by the two-over-two windows, one each on the east and west (side) walls. (Photos 9, 10)



Photo 9. Vestibule, view to northeast.

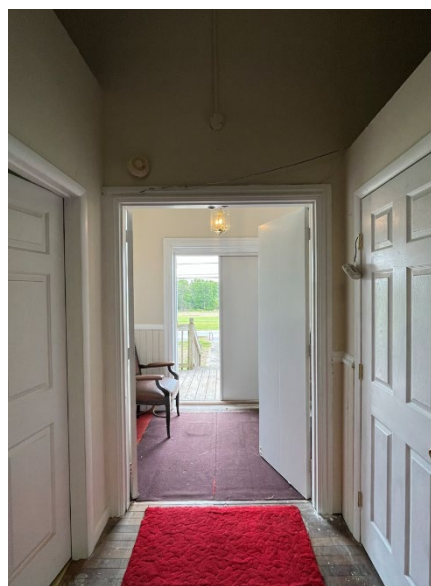


Photo 10. View to south from Sanctuary into Vestibule.

Centered on the south wall of the vestibule is another pair of plain wood doors (also of 20th c. vintage) that open to the sanctuary space, a rectangular room with a raised altar and apse (two steps up) at the south end. The space is organized with a center aisle and rows of pews to each side, six on the east and five on the west. The walls and ceiling are plaster. The same vertical beaded board wainscot and molded

⁴ In a few instances decorative pressed glass has been replaced by clear glass panes, likely due to breakage.

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Chester County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

cap seen in the foyer is in the sanctuary, on all walls, including at the altar and apse area. Wood window sills align with the top of the wainscot. Moulded trim at the windows and doors (including in the vestibule) is the same, and is typical of the mid-19th c. and likely original. The sanctuary floor is pine boards over which a thin, modern carpet has been laid, but not attached, down the center aisle, across the front of the altar area, and into the apse. (Photo 11)

Two enclosed rooms have been created in recent years in the sanctuary, on either side of the doorway at this north end of the space. (Photo 12) To the east is an enclosure, with no ceiling, approximately 4'-0" x 7'-3", that contains a furnace. A galvanized metal rectangular duct extends up from the unit in the space, and south down nearly the full length of the sanctuary above the east row of pews, suspended below the ceiling (see Photo 11). To mask this enclosure somewhat, the beaded board wainscot and molded cap were removed from the original wall area within the enclosure and applied to the sanctuary side of the enclosure walls. To the west is a toilet room enclosure, approximately 6'-0" x 7'-4", installed in 2013.⁵ Here the beaded board wainscot was removed, although not reinstalled. Doors to both spaces are modern, six-panel doors. The height of both enclosures is below the sanctuary ceiling, maintaining the visibility of the full volume of the space and mitigating the impact of these intrusions.

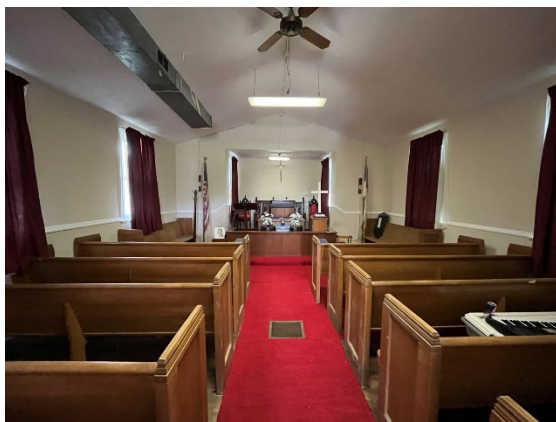


Photo 11. View to south in Sanctuary.

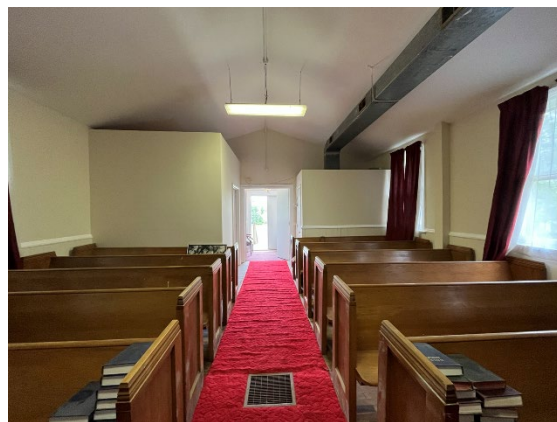


Photo 12. View to north in Sanctuary.

When the furnace enclosure was created, a single pew from the eastern side of the church was moved to the front of the sanctuary to serve as an additional row of choir seating. When the restroom was added in 2013, two pews from the western side of the church were also moved to the front of the sanctuary, and now mirror the choir seating on the opposite side of the altar. Based on the current layout, the church would have originally accommodated fourteen pews, seven on each side of the center aisle. The current pews appear to be later replacements although the original seating type is not known.

What appear to be three gray stone slabs covering an area approximately 3'-0" x 6'-0" are in the floor at the southeast corner of the sanctuary. (Photo 13) While these appear to be stone, nails in the material and securing a small rectangular sheet of aluminum along the east edges of two adjoining slabs, indicate that this is some other, more penetrable material (wood?). (Discoloration, wear and tear, and dirt, obscure the material's surface characteristics.) (Photo 14) It has been suggested that they provided a fire and heat-resistant base for a stove, although the extant chimney is more than 10 feet away (to the north) (see Photo 7); there is no visible evidence to suggest a former stove pipe location (e.g., ghosting of the stove pipe on

⁵ According to the HRSF the furnace enclosure dates to the mid-20th c. Elizabeth M. Shultz, "Hosanna Church," Historic Resource Survey Form, 2014, p. 5.

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Chester County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

the wall). The slabs are below the surface of the current wood flooring, and may extend further beyond (to the north or west) what is currently visible. Additional investigation and/or documentation is needed to determine the original use/intent of this feature.



Photo 13. View to northeast in Sanctuary.



Photo 14. Detail view of floor at northeast corner of Sanctuary.

A small area of the crawlspace under the floor is accessible via a (non-historic) hatch in the floor in the new toilet room space. Floor joists are undressed wood logs. The earliest sanctuary flooring, visible in section at the cuts to create the hatch opening, was wide, tongue-and-groove, pine boards (likely the original flooring). Above this is the present narrower pine board flooring, and in the toilet room, a plywood underlayment for the sheet vinyl finished floor. The hatch, clearly recent, appears to have been cut to accommodate access for the water utility lines for the toilet room.

Hosanna AUMP Church stands on its original foundation where it was built in 1843, giving it integrity of location. Although there have been modifications to make the building more accessible, Hosanna AUMP Church remains largely unchanged and retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The building would be immediately recognizable to Hinsonville residents of the 19th century. While Lincoln University has grown around the church, Hosanna's location on Baltimore Pike has allowed it to remain visually distinct from the school, separated from it as it is by lawns and groves of trees. The area immediately surrounding the church is largely unchanged, giving Hosanna integrity of setting. Hosanna AUMP Church possesses a high level of integrity and is worthy of listing in the National Register.

Hosanna Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Chester County, PA
County and State

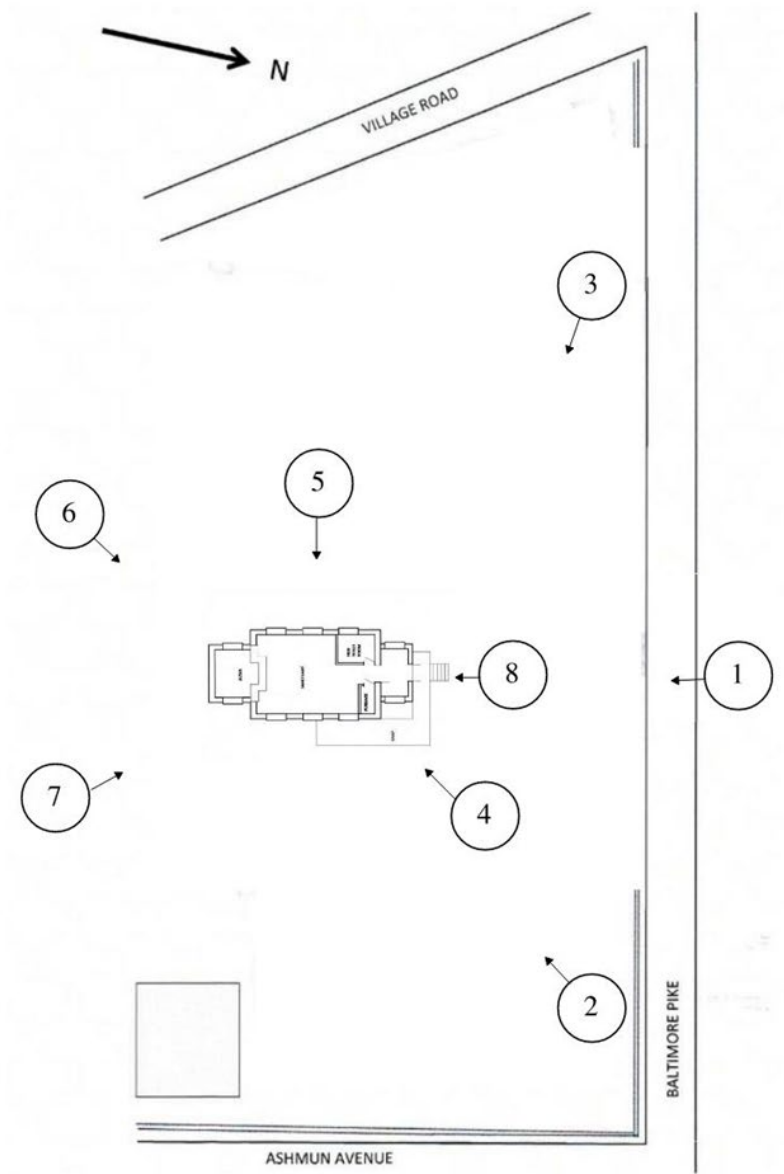


Photo Key Plan, Site Plan

Proposed National Register Boundary shown in red.

Hosanna Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Chester County, PA
County and State

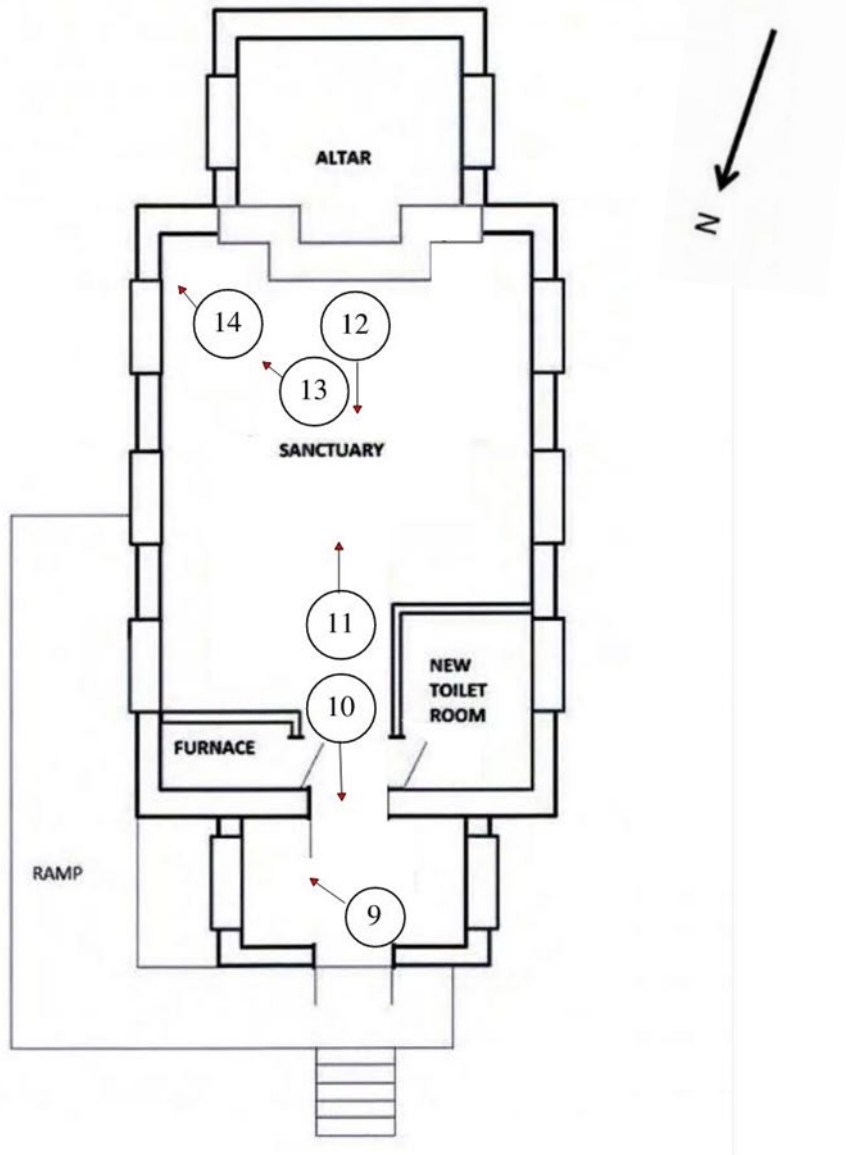


Photo Key Plan, Floor Plan

Hosanna Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Chester County, PA
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

- 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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE/Black

RELIGION

SOCIAL HISTORY

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Chester County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

Period of Significance

1843-1883

Significant Dates

1843-1845

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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.)

The Hosanna Church, now the Hosanna African United Methodist Protestant (AUMP) Church, built from 1843 to 1885, is historically significant under National Register of Historic Places Criteria A as a surviving feature of the village of Hinsonville, a pre-Civil War free black settlement in southern Chester County, Pennsylvania. The church played a central role in the life of Hinsonville residents, serving as a worship space and a gathering place for leaders in the abolition and colonization movements. The cemetery, a contributing site resource, marks the final resting place of Hinsonville founding residents and their descendants, including 17 Civil War veterans of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment. The history and significance of the church is also bound to the founding of the Ashmun Institute in 1857, later Lincoln University, through the relationship between Hosanna founding member James Ralston Amos and Ashmun Institute founder, the Reverend John Miller Dickey. It was through his efforts to educate and prepare Amos for a ministry in Africa that Dickey established what would become the first degree-granting black college in the US.⁶ James Ralston Amos and his brother Thomas H. Amos were the first graduates. Because of its location, just six miles north of the Mason-Dixon Line, it is likely that Hosanna AUMP Church was a station on the Underground Railroad; it was visited by such significant individuals associated with that effort as Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth. The period of significance begins in 1843, the year the church was built, and ends in 1883, by which time the Village of Hinsonville had

⁶ Universities and colleges that were originally founded to educate students of African American descent are identified by the US Department of Education as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The Ashmun Institute was founded in 1854 and renamed Lincoln University in 1866. It is the first of 107 HBCUs in the US. Cheyney University (formerly the Institute for Colored Youth), also in southeastern Pennsylvania, was founded earlier, in 1837, but initially focused on providing training in trades and agriculture. Cheyney did not offer academic degrees until later in its history. <https://cheyney.edu/who-we-are/>. Kathleen Abplanalp, "Lincoln University Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, May 2021, p. 16.

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Chester County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

been taken over by Lincoln University and the village of Lincoln University, just a few miles to the south, and no longer appeared on county maps.⁷

Author's Note: This nomination borrows heavily, and at times directly, from the research and writing of Elizabeth M. Shultz, author of the "Hosanna Church" Historic Resource Survey Form" (2014).

Narrative Statement of Significance

Hosanna Church and the Village of Hinsonville

Hosanna AUMP Church at one time stood, not at the edge of a large university campus as it does today, but at a crossroads in the Village of Hinsonville, a free black community located approximately 4 miles northeast of the Village of Oxford, PA. The earliest purchase of land around which the village would grow was purchased in 1829 by Edward Walls, a free black man from Maryland. The first permanent resident of the area was another free black man from Maryland, Emory Hinson, for whom the village was named. Hinson settled on land purchased from John Leeke, a Quaker, in 1830.⁸ John Leeke played an important role in the development of Hinsonville, as it was only through Leeke's willingness to sell land to blacks, and to accept blacks as his neighbors, that the dream of landownership and the ability to earn a living by farming, was realized by Hinson and those that followed. And so, the small community grew. It was soon, "a scattered community of perhaps a half-dozen Negro families: the Wallses, the Steeles, the Drapers, the Hinsons, the Hiltons, all interrelated and with kin in the other similar settlements from Kennett Square to Lancaster County."⁹ And as the mid-century approached, blacks, "owned much of the land on all four corners of the original crossroads as well as numerous acres along the Oxford-Jennersville Road [current Baltimore Pike] for about a mile to the west of the junction."¹⁰ Rather than formal boundaries, land ownership defined the village of Hinsonville.

The establishment of Hosanna Church at Hinsonville was tied to the broader experiences of the free black population in Pennsylvania prior to the Civil War. While there could be free black communities like Hinsonville, freedom still had many limits. The idea of free blacks, "holding their own church services was as foreign as the idea of blacks holding political office or running independent businesses." In *Hinsonville, A Community at the Crossroads*, the authors summarized the atmosphere at the time:

⁷ Church membership was reported to be at its height from 1853 to 1880. Coni Porter Uzelac, "Hosanna Church, A.U.M.P.: Past and Present," speech transcript of the Dedication of an Official State Historic Marker, 9 May 1992, <http://www.usgwarchives.net/copyright.htm>.

⁸ "The History of Hosanna A.U.M.P. Church," pamphlet, n.d., n.p., and Marianne H. Russo and Paul A. Russo, *Hinsonville, A Community at the Crossroads: The Story of a Nineteenth-Century African-American Village* (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2005), p. 19.

⁹ Horace Mann Bond, *Education for Freedom: A History of Lincoln University, Pennsylvania* (Lincoln University: Lincoln University of the Commonwealth System of Higher Education of Pennsylvania, 1976), p. 197.

¹⁰ Russo and Russo, *Hinsonville, A Community at a Crossroads*, p. 19.

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Chester County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

[The] northern attitudes of whites paralleled southern attitudes... Blacks were excluded by law and by custom from steamers, trolley cars, railroads, hotels, restaurants, and much else. They were not welcome in most churches, even Quaker meeting houses, although in some they were relegated to balconies or special benches that set them apart from the white congregation. The humiliation and outrage wrought by the various forms of discrimination led to the gradual establishment by blacks themselves of separate institutions, in particular their own churches, which soon shaped the core of their lives.”¹¹

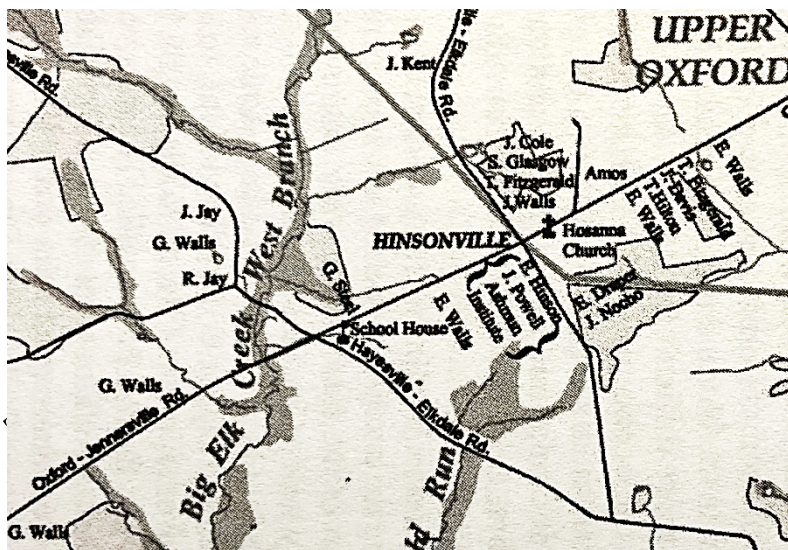


Figure 1. This map, “Hinsonville at Midcentury,” illustrates the informal boundaries of the village of Hinsonville as defined by landowners. “At midcentury, its half-dozen family farms extended along the east-west axis of the Oxford-Jennersville Road. At the easternmost end lay the twenty-five -acre farm of Edward Walls, managed in 1850 by James R. Amos and later sold to Thomas Fitzgerald. Opposite it was the nineteen-acre farm of Emory Hinson, later sold to Thornton Hilton. Two miles down the road toward Oxford, George Walls’s forty-seven-acre West Branch farm defined the western extent of Hinsonville. In between, clustered around the Hinsonville crossroads, lay other ten-acre plots of Edward Walls and William Walls; the homesteads of Joshua Jay, Josiah Davis, and Jesse Hinson; and in their midst, the Hosanna Church.” (Source: Russo and Russo, pp. 60-62.)

Within this social and political milieu, the residents of Hinsonville built Hosanna Church beginning in 1843, completing it in 1845. William Walls, Samuel Glasgow and the Amos brothers, Samuel, James and Thomas, reportedly undertook the challenge of visiting neighbors, black and white, to solicit funds for the building program.¹² The half-acre parcel of land upon which the church would be built was given by Edward Walls in 1841, although the deed for the property was not transferred until 1851. The Grantees were Samuel G. Glasgow, Samuel Amos and James Amos, “Trustees & members of [the] First Coloured Methodist Protestant Church.”¹³ Samuel Glasgow, a brick maker and Hinsonville resident, provided the bricks for building.

¹¹ Russo and Russo, *Hinsonville, A Community at a Crossroads*, pp. 13-14.
¹² Russo and Russo, *Hinsonville, A Community at a Crossroads*, p. 50.
¹³ Russo and Russo, *Hinsonville, A Community at a Crossroads*, pp. 50, 56-57.

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Name of Property

At its inception, Hosanna was associated with the First Coloured Methodist Protestant Church. Within a few years it would become a part of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) movement, which was born of the Free Africa Society in Philadelphia in the late 1780s. The African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church and Connection, usually called the AUMP Church, is also a Methodist denomination. It was chartered by Peter Spencer (1782–1843) in Wilmington, Delaware, in 1813 as the Union Church of Africans, and later became known as the African Union Church.¹⁴ The church was also the Hosanna African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church for a time, finally becoming Hosanna AUMP Church in 1888. Possibly because of its shifting associations with various protestant sects, the building was often identified simply as the Hosanna Meeting House. This may have also been a reflection of its role in the community beyond a house of worship.

Numerous academic sources identify Hosanna, and Black churches in general, as the centers of their daily experience. “Second only to the family, the church was the institution that gave definition and structure to the community.”¹⁵ In the absence of opportunities in broader social and political circles, the Black church played an outsize role in political thought, education, and community leadership. Church committees were an opportunity for leadership experience. “Even the women’s sewing circle, organized to make articles for the annual fair, had a president, vice president, and secretary.”¹⁶ The church also became the center of self-governance, serving as a community courthouse of sorts to resolve minor disputes. Black leaders sought to counter White stereotypes of ignorance and immorality by placing an emphasis on education and morality. The church, as the only organized institution in Black communities, served multiple roles.

Viewed in this context, Hosanna AUMP Church is a representative mid-nineteenth century example of the movement toward independent African churches in the northeastern United States that had begun in the half century after the Revolutionary War as part of the Second Great Awakening. Black participation in predominantly white Congregational churches declined dramatically during this period, ceasing almost completely by the 1840s and 1850s.¹⁷ The establishment of the church at this time is a clear indicator of the independent spirit that infused Hinsonville and the strong sense of community created by its residents. In concert with the historical significance of this larger religious movement, Hosanna stands as a monument to the aspirations of the free black men and women who settled Pennsylvania in the decades prior to the Civil War. The Church became more than just a place of worship; Hosanna emerged as the thriving center of the village of Hinsonville, hosting a diverse variety of social gatherings, in addition to its religious services, weddings, and funerals.

¹⁴ Elizabeth Shultz, “Hosanna Church: The Last building in Hinsonville,” *Pennsylvania Historic Preservation, Blog of the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office*, 26 March 2014, <https://pahistoricpreservation.com/hosanna-church-last-building-hinsonville/> (15 June 2023).

¹⁵ Russo and Russo, *Hinsonville, A Community at the Crossroads*, p. 43.

¹⁶ Russo and Russo, *Hinsonville, A Community at the Crossroads*, p. 53.

¹⁷ Richard J. Boles, “Documents Relating to African American Experiences of White Congregational Churches in Massachusetts, 1773–1832,” *The New England Quarterly*, 86:2, p. 312, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43284993>.

Chester County, PA
County and State



Figure 2. Hosanna Church, identified by its first affiliation as an African Methodist Episcopal Church, at the crossroads at Hinsonville in an 1847 map, just a few years after it was built. (Source: S.M. Painter & J.S. Bowen, *Map of Chester County, Pennsylvania from Original Surveys* (West Chester, PA, 1847).)

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Name of Property

Chester County, PA

County and State

Although there has not yet been definitive evidence that Hosanna was a stop on the Underground Railroad, there are decades of oral histories that members of the church assisted negroes on their journey north from southern slave-holding states. For example, Pauli Murray, a Hinsonville family descendent, recalled how Hosanna Church meetings often provided concealment for fugitives:

The meetings were held on Saturday evenings and, according to some of the local residents, the church has been used as a transfer point for fugitives going west to Christiana in Lancaster County. Weekends provided the best opportunity for escape since slaves were off duty from Saturday noon until Monday morning. If they were successful in reaching Hosanna Meeting House while the meetings were in progress they mingled with the congregation and would drive away in a wagonload of free Negroes who hustled them to the next Underground station.¹⁸

Hosanna Church and the Founding of the Ashmun Institute (Lincoln University)

Hosanna's role at the center of the spiritual and social life of the free black community of Hinsonville, its members' likely participation in Underground Railroad activities, and its association with the founding of the Ashmun Institute, put it at the center of two significant philosophical positions related to slavery in the 19th c, the abolition and colonization movements. Abolitionists called for an end to slavery and the integration of blacks into American society. Those who ascribed to the ideals of the colonization movement believed free blacks would never be assimilated, and favored sending them to Africa to support the colonization of Liberia. The colonization movement especially engaged religious leaders who saw the potential for blacks to not only colonize Liberia, but to serve as missionaries. Slavery was, "a part of God's plan to Christianize and enlighten black people."¹⁹

It was the coincidence of the evolving thinking of Reverend John Miller Dickey, a Presbyterian minister from nearby Oxford and a proponent of the colonization movement, and the encouragement of Hosanna trustee James Ralston Amos, which led Dickey to establish the Ashmun Institute in 1853. Amos, a Hinsonville resident and trustee of Hosanna Church, approached Dickey with the request for training to further his education and prepare him for Christian ministry. Dickey first provided personal instruction to Amos. Many sources describe this nascent period, when Amos would walk from his home in Hinsonville to Oxford to meet with Dickey for instruction. Dickey's efforts to place James Amos at more formal educational institutions, (Princeton Theological Seminary, the Presbyterian Institute in Philadelphia) were stymied by "vigorous protests from his fellow white students."²⁰ Inspired by Amos' aptitude and commitment, Dickey proposed to establish a school himself for the training of young black men to serve as missionaries to Africa.

The support of parishioners of Hosanna Church for the establishment of the Ashmun Institute in 1853 reflected their understanding of the importance of education, and specifically the importance of ordaining their sons. "For as long as blacks had been free in America, they understood education as an instrument of upward mobility and a key to dignity, opportunity, and prosperity."²¹ Although there were schools like Oberlin Collegiate Institute in Ohio that accepted African American students as early as 1833, there was

¹⁸ Russo and Russo, p. 72.

¹⁹ Cheryl Renée Gooch, PhD, *Hinsonville's Heroes: Black Civil War Soldiers of Chester County, Pennsylvania* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2018), p. 16.

²⁰ Russo and Russo, p. 98.

²¹ Russo and Russo, *Hinsonville, A Community at the Crossroads*, p. 94.

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Chester County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

no college or university that had yet been established specifically for the higher education of African American students.²² Consequently, the establishment of the Ashmun Institute was integral to the advancement of the African American population of the local area.

The Ladies Auxiliary Society of Hosanna A.U.M.P. Church held weekly meetings to help finance the construction of the Institute. The women also fed the construction workers even as they provided and also did missionary work in the area, feeding and clothing the needy.²³

John Miller Dickey acquired the 30-acre Powell Farm, just west of Hosanna Church, for the Ashmun Institute in 1853 (see Figure 1).²⁴ Brickmaker and Hinsonville resident Samuel Glasgow donated the bricks for the first Institute building, Ashmun Hall. In addition to supporting the founding of the school and providing the first students from amongst its congregation, anecdotal evidence relates that Hosanna AUMP Church was the first place that the students at the seminary were able to practice their sermons in front of an audience. Ashmun Institute student Christian A. Fleetwood recalled in 1860 that students from the school also, “largely made up the choir of the little Hosanna Church, just outside of the gates...”²⁵



Figure 3. Hosanna Church, identified as Zion Church on this 1883. Note that Hinsonville has by this time been taken over by Lincoln University. The railroad, south of the university, gave rise to a new crossroads, the village of Lincoln to the south. (Source: Map of Chester County, 1883 (Chester County, PA: H.W. Kirk & Company, 1883).)

John Miller Dickey's devotion to missionary work in Africa dovetailed with his support for the Colonization Movement, and both ideals were brought to bear in the founding of the Ashmun Institute. These purposes are reflected in the original school's name; Jehudi Ashmun was an agent of the American Colonization Society who served as the governor of Liberia from 1822 to 1828. At least two men who grew up in Hosanna AUMP Church immigrated to Liberia as colonizing missionaries before 1859. These were the first three graduates of the Institute, James and Thomas Amos, joined by 1859 Ashmun graduate, Armistead Miller. Samuel Glasgow, the brick maker and one of the wealthiest residents of Hinsonville, did not attend

²² The Oberlin Collegiate Institute established in 1833 was a preparatory school and offered programs in manual labor and theology. It was not until 1850 that the Institute transitioned to Oberlin College and offered “coursework in the classics, sciences, the fine arts, and music, among other disciplines.” Oberlin College & Conservatory, “About Oberlin: Oberlin History,” <https://www.oberlin.edu/about-oberlin/oberlin-history> (13 October 2023).

²³ Euell Nielsen, *Hosanna African Union Methodist Protestant Church (1843-)*. BlackPast.org. <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/hosanna-african-union-methodist-protestant-church-1843/> (2 November 2015).

²⁴ This was land formerly owned by Emory Hinson. Hinson left Hinsonville for a ‘free colored’ settlement in Upper Canada in 1851, “when the kidnapping and fugitive slave raids across from the Maryland line had made the life and bodily security of even bona fide free Negroes a perilous hazard all along the slave border.” He died there in 1853. Bond, *Education for Freedom*, pp. 130, 225. For additional information on the development of Lincoln University, see Kathleen Abplanalp, “Lincoln University Historic District,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination, May 2021.

²⁵ Bond, *Education for Freedom*, p. 251.

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Chester County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

the Institute, but ultimately left his successful business in Pennsylvania and moved his family to Liberia as colonists.

While the Ashmun Institute was founded to fulfill the Rev. John Miller Dickey's goal of improving the circumstances of free blacks by training them to colonize Africa as Christian missionaries, the Institute's goals shifted after the Civil War. By the academic year of 1865-1866, the leadership of the newly re-named Lincoln University, recognized that the greatest priority of the institution was the education of free black men.²⁶

Lost Hinsonville

Like other free black settlements from the pre-Civil War era of the United States, Hinsonville no longer exists, and except for Hosanna AUMP Church and its relationship with Lincoln University, might not be so easily identified. For example, all that remains of Pandenarium, a former free black village settled in 1854 by 63 African Americans freed by Virginia plantation owner Charles Everett upon his death, near Indian Run, in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, is an archaeological site. After emancipation many African Americans left small communities like Hinsonville and Pandenarium for developing black communities in urban areas where there were opportunities for employment and a greater chance of finding family members.²⁷ As residents left Hinsonville, their properties were purchased by Lincoln University; the university literally expanded into the village as residents moved away and its success as an educational institution grew.

While it is difficult to identify other free black settlements from the pre-Civil War era, the record of African Methodist churches provides some insight. From a height of nearly 40 African Methodist churches in Chester County at the close of the 19th century, "By 1920, their number had dwindled dramatically, and by the 1970s many had vanished altogether."²⁸ Of 24 historically black churches established in Chester County between 1817 and 1861, only 3 are still active and except for Hosanna, were built after the Civil War. Mount Zion AME Church (Devon, PA), Mount Zion AME Church (Atglen, PA), and Hosanna AUMP, the subject of this nomination. The Mount Zion AME Church, Devon, built in 1880 and expanded in 1906, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2015 for its role in the 20th century as a community gathering place for African Americans battling racial segregation in local schools in the 1930s.²⁹ The Mount Zion AME Church at Atglen was built in 1934, replacing the original 1866 building which was lost to fire. The Ebenezer African Methodist Episcopal

²⁶ David McBride, "Africa's Elevation and Changing Racial Thought at Lincoln University, 1854-1886," *The Journal of Negro History* 62, No. 4 (October 1977), p. 364.

²⁷ James and Lois Horton, *In Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community, and Protest Among Northern Free Blacks, 1700-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 83. Also, Joanne Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "Race" New England, 1780-1860* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998).

²⁸ Jonathan Hoppe, "Documenting Chester County's Black Churches and Cemeteries,"

<https://hoppejl.wordpress.com/2022/10/26/documenting-chester-countys-black-churches-and-cemeteries/>. And from Bond, *Education for Freedom*, "One of the circumstances that John Miller Dickey later quoted as a reason for the establishment of Ashmun Institute to train ministers was the existence of 42 'worshipping places' for 'colored' people within the three nearby counties of Chester and Delaware in Pennsylvania, and New Castle in Delaware..." From *The Oxford Press*, Oxford, Pa., April 22, 1885 in Bond, p. 127.

²⁹

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Zion_A.M.E._Church_\(Tredyffrin_Township,_Chester_County,_Pennsylvania\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Zion_A.M.E._Church_(Tredyffrin_Township,_Chester_County,_Pennsylvania))

Hosanna Church and Cemetery

Name of Property

(AME) Church was built in 1852 and grew out of the Free African Society (FAS) established by Richard Allen, Absalom Jones and others in Philadelphia in 1787. It survives in the landscape, although it stands today as a stabilized ruin, still surrounded by a sparse cemetery. (Figure 4) The church is located on Bacton Hill Road, named for the community for which the church was built, in East Whiteland Township, Chester County.³⁰

Conclusion

Hosanna AUMP Church is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A for ethnic heritage and social history. Given its linchpin location in a free black settlement in pre-Civil War Pennsylvania, its association with the establishment of Lincoln University, the first degree-granting Historically Black College/University in the US, its role in the anti-slavery movement from both the abolition and colonization perspectives, and the likelihood that it played a role in the activities of the Underground Railroad, Hosanna AUMP Church is a historical resource of significance, worthy of listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Future Research

Given the location of Hosanna AUMP Church, just 6 miles north of the Mason-Dixon Line, its anti-slavery reputation, and its proximity to Philadelphia, it is certainly likely that the site played a role in assisting freedom seekers. Further documentary research, forensic investigation of the building (what is below the boards at the southeast corner of the Sanctuary?) and archaeological investigation may yield additional information to confirm Hosanna AUMP's role.

Chester County, PA
County and State



Figure 4. The Ebenezer AME Church, Frazer, PA, built in 1852, survives in the landscape, but as a ruin. (Source: Google Maps.)

³⁰ East Whiteland Township, "Ebenezer AME Church," <https://www.eastwhiteland.org/362/AME-Church-in-Bacton-Hill> (16 June 2023).

Hosanna Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Chester County, PA
County and State

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Hosanna Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Chester County, PA
County and State

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Hosanna Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Chester County, PA
County and State

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: Lincoln University, Chester County Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .3

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Latitude: **39°48'40"N**

Longitude: **75°55'31"W**

Hosanna Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Chester County, PA
County and State

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

The north boundary is Baltimore Pike. The west boundary is along a line of trees at the west edge of the cemetery, which is a visual boundary between the Hosanna Church and Lincoln University properties. The south boundary line is approximately halfway between the Church and the paved parking area of the university. The east boundary is also marked by a stand of trees east that visually define the east end of the cemetery.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The proposed National Register boundary includes the building and cemetery, which surrounds the building and four sides.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Barucco
organization: sbk + partners, LLC
street & number: 805 Clifford Avenue
city or town: Ardmore state: PA zip code: 19003
e-mail suzannabarucco@gmail.com
telephone: 610-357-9763
date: 14 August 2023

Hosanna Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Chester County, PA
County and State

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: Hosanna Church and Cemetery
City or Vicinity: Lincoln University
County: Chester County
State: Pennsylvania
Photographer: Suzanna Barucco
Date Photographed: 19 May 2023

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

Photo #	View
1	View to south.
2	View to southwest.
3	View to southeast.
4	View to southwest.
5	View to east, west (side) elevation.
6	View to northeast.
7	View to northwest.
8	View to south, church entrance.
9	Vestibule, view to northeast.
10	View to south from Sanctuary into Vestibule.
11	View to south in Sanctuary.
12	View to north in Sanctuary.
13	View to northeast in Sanctuary.
14	Detail view of floor at northeast corner of Sanctuary.