

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: Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church

Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 153 Winchester Street

City or town: Paw Paw State: WV County: Morgan

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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 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

<p style="font-size: 1.2em; color: blue; font-family: cursive;">Susan M. Pierce</p>	<p style="font-size: 1.2em; color: blue; font-family: cursive;">2-26-24</p>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	
Date	
<u>West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
<p>In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
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>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/church

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

WORK IN PROGRESS

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19th CENTURY/Gothic Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: stone; Walls: vinyl Dutch lap siding over original wood siding; Roof: metal

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

Located in Paw Paw, Morgan County, WV the former Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church is a simple Gothic Revival rectangular one-story wood frame building of about 1,000 SF constructed on a stone foundation. It is situated on a sloping lot measuring approximately 75' x 140'. While constructed in 1876 on the outskirts of the settlement of what would become the Town of Paw Paw in 1891, the town grew up around it and by the early 1920's it was in the center of town. The front gable end facade on the north end of the building has a small protruding vestibule flanked by a pair of lancet (pointed arch) windows. Centered on the front facade of the building is a bell tower/steeple with a pyramidal roof. The tower also features its original, functional bell and pulley mechanism. The long sides of the building each have three equally spaced lancet windows. Both gable ends retain their fishscale shake shingles. The red metal roof is steeply pitched. Extending off the rear elevation is a small addition. This addition was used for storage and as a sacristy. It is in very poor structural condition due to extensive termite damage.

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Narrative Description

Paw Paw, in Morgan County, is located along the Potomac River in an area known as the Paw Paw Bends. The Paw Paw Valley is surrounded by the ridges of Sideling Hill, Green Ridge, Purslane Mountain, and Town Hill.

The building is located approximately a quarter mile south of the intersection of Winchester Street and Henry Miller Highway (West Virginia Route 9). It sits on a small 0.24 acre sloping lot bordered by Ruth Bevans Lane to the South, a residential lot with a late 1800's "I-House" to the west, and the modern Morgan County EMS building to the east [previously the approximate location of the Bevan's large family home constructed to replace the original Bevans home demolished for the B&O railroad cut in 1914]. The building is several blocks from the Potomac River and the immediate area is a mix of older single-family homes, an early 1900's church, and a 1990's apartment block with some more recent infill on previously vacant lots.

The public entrance faces north and is reached by a concrete walkway extending westerly at a 90-degree angle to Winchester Street. Several concrete steps lead up from the walkway to the vestibule with its double front doors.

Exterior

The former Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church is a wood frame, one-story, gable front building currently sided in Dutch lap style vinyl siding. This vinyl siding approximates the original Dutch lap wood siding in width, height, and overall profile. Limited exploration indicates the original wood siding is in good condition underneath the vinyl. The building is on a raised stone foundation with a small basement in the northeast corner accessed from the exterior. The rest of the area under the church is a shallow crawlspace. The roof is steeply pitched and covered in metal sheets; however, while they are old, they are not believed original. The front (north) facade (photo 1) has a small double-door vestibule flanked by a pair of lancet windows. Window trim is simple flat stock. Centered on the front facade is a bell tower/steeple with a pyramidal roof. The west elevation (photo 2) clearly shows the distinctive lancet windows with their individual panes of stained glass. The south end of the building (photo 3) is devoid of any detail except the fish scale shake shingles. The small addition used as a sacristy and for storage at the rear of the building has failed structurally with regards to the foundation, floor joists, and flooring due to extensive termite damage. While it is extant all indications are it will require removal. The east elevation (Photo 4) is identical to the west elevation except for an exterior brick chimney (used at one time as a flue for a heating source in the basement) and the bulkhead providing access to the basement and crawlspace (Photos 13 and 14).

Interior

The interior is comprised of two rooms. The main space is a rectangular room with a 16' ceiling. The lower section on three of the walls is covered in non-original panel wainscoting. Separating the wainscoting from the stamped tin walls is a narrow decorative stamped tin strip. The

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stamped tin on the walls in a church motif extends to a stamped tin cove/ceiling. The back wall of the interior is covered in non-original paneling. The original wood floor, at one point, was covered in 12x12 glue down floor tiles. A raised floor, approximately 12' wide, extends the full width at the back of the church. The main center carrier beam under this section of the floor has failed resulting in the floor dropping several inches. A bell pull rope hangs next to the entry. The second room, at the back of the church, is a small addition that at one time served as the sacristy and storage. This small room has an exterior entrance, three double hung windows and a closet. The wall shared with the main space shows the original exterior Dutch lap wood siding of the main structure. (Photos 5-12)

Integrity

The former Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church retains its historic integrity as it relates to Criterion A – Social History -- as a simple religious building constructed by local citizens. It is a representative of the early rural religious architecture of the region and an important rural church on the western edge of Morgan County that came about due to the influx of Irish Catholics to the area. While the exterior of the building has experienced some alterations made outside the period of significance (vinyl siding, gable end attic vents, a through-the-wall AC unit, metal porch cover, alterations to the steeple, and clear plexiglass covers to protect the stained glass windows)¹ these do not diminish the overall historic feel as it relates to the building's overall shape, form, and features. The building has kept its historic integrity in terms of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, association, and feeling. The building retains all eight stained glass lancet windows with operable lower sashes, and while portions of the interior walls have been modified with modern paneling, the amount of decorative stamped tin walls, ceiling cove and ceiling still intact readily conveys a sense of history.

The building is in its original location on 0.24 acres of land perched prominently above the original section of the Town of Paw Paw. Although many of the original buildings and structures in town from the period of significance have been demolished or heavily altered, enough of the historic fabric remains to serve as indicators of this town's history.

The building continues to express its original design and significance as a simple place of worship and gathering in the late 1870's, reflecting an influx of Irish immigrants as the settlement that eventually became the Town of Paw Paw in 1891 prospered after the Civil War.

¹ As the owner, the author of this nomination is committed to removing many of the later alterations such as the metal porch cover, plexiglass window covers, AC unit, and vinyl siding in the course of restoring the building for adaptive reuse.

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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 (*closed in 1994*)
- 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.)

Social History

Period of Significance

1876-1951

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

N/A

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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.)

The former Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church² is located in the Town of Paw Paw, Morgan County, West Virginia. The town is situated in an area along the Potomac River called the "Paw Paw Bends". The building is eligible for listing under Criterion A: Social History. The building was constructed by local Catholic families as an influx of new citizens and immigrants arrived in response to the area's development and growing prosperity. Irish Catholics were a small minority of the population so this church provided an important place to gather that otherwise would have been inaccessible to them given the remoteness of Paw Paw. The building also meets Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties on the grounds of historical importance for its association with the minority Irish Catholic community in Paw Paw. The period of significance was from the building's construction in 1876 to 1951 when the local tannery, the town's primary employer, closed resulting in a loss of population and a decline in prosperity. The Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church has survived with minimal alterations to its historical form and retains a high degree of integrity.

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

General History

With the beginning of commercial navigation of the Potomac River in 1749 by fur traders of the Ohio Company, who traveled as far west as Cumberland, MD, land in the area of present day Paw Paw was settled by farmers and rivermen.³ As additional settlers began arriving around 1800 in the immediate area of present day Paw Paw, a town began to emerge, and this growth accelerated in 1836 as the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company began work on the Paw Paw Tunnel directly across the Potomac River in Maryland.⁴ Then two years later, in 1838, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad - constructing a rail line from Harpers Ferry to Cumberland, MD - reached the settlement. Shortly thereafter two general merchandise stores and a train depot (1845) were constructed.⁵

² Catholic Mission Churches are those that are not locally self-supporting, do not have a resident priest, and depend at least partially on funding from their "owning" parish and/or diocese. A Catholic Parish is a stable community of parishioners with a church who have a priest. A Catholic Diocese is a group of parishes, and missions supervised by a bishop.

³ Morgan County Historical & Genealogical Society, Berkeley Springs, WV, *Morgan County, WV and its People*, (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co, 1981), 12.

⁴ Morgan County Historical, *Morgan County*, 12.

⁵ Lewis Largent, "Historical Sketch of Paw Paw," in *Once Upon a Time in Paw Paw*, ed. Janet Galliher and Vicki Sirbaugh (1997) n.p.

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In 1846 the first Post Office was established with Isaac Baker as the first postmaster and the settlement was officially referred to as “Isaac Baker’s Store or Depot”.⁶ Later the settlement was identified as “Paw Paw Tunnel”, eventually “Tunnel” was dropped and the area became simply known as “Paw Paw”.⁷

At the time Paw Paw was incorporated in 1891, there were four churches in the town.⁸ These were the Church of Christ, demolished in 1914 to make way for the B&O railroad cut; the Mount Olive United Methodist African American Church, built in 1888 and demolished in 1996; the Paw Paw United Methodist Church, constructed in 1875 after the original church was dismantled by Union Troops to build shelters during the Civil War; and the Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church. These four churches all bore similar shapes and features despite serving different denominations. Of the two remaining churches, only the Catholic Church retains its original form and most of its early features and details.

Criterion A

The westward spread of Catholicism from the eastern shore of Virginia into what is now present-day West Virginia was a slow and arduous process met with skepticism and suspicion, often verging on outright hostility. While the colony of Maryland, established in 1632 by Cecelius Calvert, known as Lord Baltimore, for the purpose of allowing Catholics in Anglican England to emigrate to the colonies to practice their religion, had formally granted religious freedom to all Christians via the Maryland Act of Toleration in 1649,⁹ the same cannot be said for the colony of Virginia. In Virginia, it was not until after the Revolutionary War that Catholicism began to slowly be accepted.

General George Washington hastened that acceptance when he expressed his appreciation for French Catholics who fought alongside him during the Revolutionary War by saying on March 12, 1790:

To the Roman Catholics of the United States of America: I hope ever to see America among the foremost nations in examples of justice and liberality. And I presume that your fellow citizens will not forget the patriotic part which you took in the accomplishment of their revolution and the establishment of your government, or the important assistance which they received from a nation in which the Roman Catholic faith is professed. May the members of your society in America, animated alone by the pure spirit of Christianity, and still conducting

⁶ Morgan County Historical, *Morgan County*, 12.

⁷ Morgan County Historical, *Morgan County*, 12.

⁸ Largent, “Historical Sketch of Paw Paw,” n.p.

⁹ “Maryland – The Catholic Experiment.” *U.S. History.Org*, www.ushistory.org/us/5a.asp. Accessed November 21, 2023.

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themselves as the faithful subjects of our free government, enjoy every temporal and spiritual felicity.¹⁰

The first significant Catholic presence in what is present day West Virginia began in the years immediately following the American Revolution. The pioneer Catholic families settled in the lower Shenandoah Valley, a region of West Virginia that is known as the Eastern Panhandle. Although Catholics had been settling on the Maryland/Pennsylvania side of the border of what was then western Virginia since the first part of the 18th century, few had crossed over into the lower Shenandoah Valley. The initial reluctance of Catholics to settle in Virginia can be directly related to the anti-Catholic laws enacted there during colonial times, when the practice of their religion was declared illegal and behavior towards Catholics was openly hostile. The advance of Catholicism into Virginia appears to have begun after the restrictions on their religion had been removed by the state legislature with the 1786 Act for Establishing Religious Freedom.

Priests from Maryland and Pennsylvania visited the Catholics who had settled in the Eastern Panhandle during these initial years. A letter, written by a Reverend Denis Cahill in 1795, tells of the conditions he encountered in western Virginia. Based in Hagerstown, Maryland, Cahill traveled into western Virginia, getting as far as Cumberland, Maryland, some 70 miles. He ministered to the Catholic families he encountered, organizing them into formal missions, and initiating the building of churches.¹¹ He reported finding Catholics throughout the Eastern Panhandle.

Catholicism spread slowly through Virginia as there were still only seven churches in the state in 1820. Those seven included churches established in Martinsburg, Shepherdstown, and Bath - all in what is now the eastern panhandle of WV.¹² In 1820 the Town of Bath, and the settlement along the Potomac River that eventually became the Town of Paw Paw, were both part of the newly established Morgan County, yet the two could not have been more different and distant being separated by 30 miles and two mountain ranges. It was not until 1849 that a contract was let to the Hampshire and Morgan Turnpike Company to complete a road (present day WV Route 9) from Paw Paw to the Town of Bath.¹³ Even after the road was finished it still was an arduous and dangerous trip from one town to the other. Most Catholics who settled in western Virginia during this period arrived on their own and settled at great distances from one another.¹⁴

¹⁰ "The Catholic Church in Virginia." *New River Notes*. www.newrivernotes.com/catholic-church-in-virginia/. Accessed November 21, 2023.

¹¹ W.M Newman & Halvorson, P. L. (1993). *The Church Membership Studies: An Assessment of Four Decades of Institutional Research*. *Review of Religious Research*, 35(1), 55-61. doi.org/10.2307/3511060. Accessed December 12, 2023.

¹² *History of St. Francis of Assisi Parish*. "Part 1: The Beginnings of Catholicism in Virginia." stfrancisparish.org/hist1.html. Accessed November 21, 2023.

¹³ Morgan County Historical, *Morgan County*, 13.

¹⁴ The Association of Religious Data Archives. (1990). *Churches and Church Membership in the U.S.*, www.thearda.com/. Accessed December 12, 2023.

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During the early 1800's the nearest Catholic Church to the Paw Paw area was approximately 7.5 miles (direct distance) downriver and across the Potomac in Little Orleans, MD. This church, St Patrick's, belonged to the Archdiocese of Baltimore. While the current church building in Little Orleans was dedicated in 1860, an earlier "Mass House" was previously located in the general vicinity. In May of 1808, Leonard Bevans donated "one and one quarter acre" to the Baltimore Diocese "for the better convenience and advantage of Roman Catholics residing in the neighborhood of Fifteen Mile Creek" which flows through Little Orleans.¹⁵ Those Roman Catholics included those "across the river" in western Virginia who crossed the river (and after 1820, the diocesan boundaries) to Little Orleans for Mass. One such Catholic family was the Nortons. Per an interview with local Paw Paw historians Brown and Barbara Norton, Timothy Norton, the family patriarch, had emigrated from Ireland to work on the canal and settled in the area of Magnolia, VA where he became the B&O stationmaster.¹⁶

With the founding of the Richmond Diocese in 1820, formed from the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Richmond became the seventh diocese in the United States. Parishes were small, far flung, and poor for most of the early history of the Richmond Diocese. Developments in transportation (canals, railroads, trolley lines, and automobiles) led to modest growth in the Catholic population. Immigration also contributed to this gradual increase.¹⁷ From 1836 until 1850 alone, as many as 400 immigrant workers, mainly Irish, labored to complete the 3,118-foot Paw Paw Tunnel in Maryland along the C&O Canal, just across the Potomac River from Paw Paw, WV.¹⁸ Given the 14 years it took to complete the tunnel, more than a decade behind schedule, many of the laborers, like Timothy Norton, settled in the general area.

In 1868, JB Hoyt and Company of New York constructed a tannery (leather factory) in the settlement of Paw Paw due to the ready access to oak bark for the tanning process, good transportation, and plentiful water from the Potomac.¹⁹ The establishment of the tannery, in addition to the employment opportunities brought by the arrival of the railroad and C&O canal decades earlier, began to change the ethnic (and religious) makeup of the Paw Paw area on both sides of the Potomac.

¹⁵ Maryland Historical Trust. "Saint Patrick's Catholic Church" (Inventory Form for State Historic Sites Survey). apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa/PDF/Allegany/AL-I-A-054.pdf. Accessed November 21, 2023.

¹⁶ Brown and Barbara Norton, interview by David Abruzzi, Paw Paw, WV, December 10, 2023.

¹⁷ Father Anthony E. Marques, *Catholic Diocese of Richmond*. "Brief History of the Diocese". richmond-diocese.org/about-us/history-of-the-diocese/. Accessed November 21, 2023.

¹⁸ *National Park Service*. "Archeology at C & O Canal in Paw Paw Tunnel and Brickworks-Paw Paw Tunnel Worker's Camp and Brickwork". www.nps.gov/articles/archeology-at-c-o-canal-paw-paw-tunnel-and-brickworks.htm#:~:text=Here%2C%20as%20many%20as%20400,violent%20riot%20here%20in%201838. Accessed November 21, 2023.

¹⁹ Morgan County Historical, *Morgan County*, 13.

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The growing number of Catholics and Catholic immigrants, and the nearest Catholic Church in the Richmond Diocese being far too distant in the Town of Bath to allow parishioners to regularly attend Mass, likely led the small number of local Catholics in the vicinity of Paw Paw to fund their own church. The *South Branch Intelligencer*, reporting in the April 30, 1875 edition, "A church is about to be erected in Paw Paw, Morgan county, to cost between \$1,500 and \$1,800 and, we learn from a correspondent in the *Morgan Mercury* that the proprietors of the extensive tanning establishment at that place, Messrs Hoyt and Co will subscribe a large proportion of the funds for the erection of the church".²⁰ On Christmas Day, 1876 Leonidas Ambrose Bevans²¹ and Margaret Jane Bevans [Leonidas Bevans' second wife], prominent citizens, landowners, and Catholics, deeded the newly constructed church and lot for \$1.00 to Reverend James Gibbons, Archbishop of Richmond.²² The property for the building had been parceled out of the Bevans' family land. Prior to the church being constructed the Bevans had regularly hosted local parishioners and the traveling priest in their home.²³ Although the building's ownership was transferred from the Bevans on December 25th, it was not until eight months later that the Church was officially dedicated. The *South Branch Intelligencer* reported in the August 17, 1877 edition that "The Catholic Church at Paw-Paw, Morgan county will be dedicated Sunday next".²⁴ The dedication was conducted by Reverend Charles Van Quickelberge, Pastor of Saint Joseph's Church, Martinsburg. Following the dedication Saint Charles was assigned as a mission church to the Church of Assumption, Keyser, WV.²⁵

In a November 1878 letter, Father Fitzsimmons, recently transferred to Keyser, WV, wrote to Bishop Keane that he would be taking a census of all who claimed to be Catholic in Paw Paw to determine if there were enough parishioners to establish a congregation [parish], and if it lived up to expectations to eventually establish a school.²⁶

²⁰ *South Branch intelligencer*. April 30, 1875, Image 3. chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026826/1875-04-30/ed-1/seq-3/#date1=1836&sort=relevance&date2=1875&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&index=2&words=Paw&proxdistance=5&state=West+Virginia&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=paw+paw&phrasertext=&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=2. Accessed November 21, 2023.

²¹ Leonidas Ambrose Bevans was the grandnephew of Leonard Bevans who donated land "for the better convenience and advantage of Roman Catholics" in Little Orleans, MD in 1808.

²² Morgan County Deed Book 11, Page 162.

²³ Norton Interview, December 11, 2023.

²⁴ *South Branch intelligencer*. August 17, 1877, Image 3. chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026826/1877-08-17/ed-1/seq-3/#date1=1875&sort=relevance&rows=20&words=Paw+Paw-Paw&searchType=basic&sequence=0&index=10&state=West+Virginia&date2=1877&proxtext=paw+paw&y=18&x=14&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=2. Accessed November 21, 2023.

²⁵ Barbara Norton, "Saint Charles Catholic Church," in *Once Upon a Time in Paw Paw*, ed. Janet Galliher and Vicki Sirbaugh (1997) n.p.

²⁶ Gerald P. Fogarty, S.J., *Commonwealth Catholicism A History of the Catholic Church in Virginia* (Notre Dame, Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 174-175.

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Those Irish immigrants who had settled in the area of Greenridge in Maryland while laboring on the tunnel, across from Paw Paw, were now able to attend Mass at Saint Charles by crossing diocesan boundaries and the Potomac River.²⁷ This eliminated the need to travel a great distance to attend Mass at a church in the Baltimore Diocese. These Maryland Catholics (and relatively recent immigrants) is what likely led Father Fitzsimmons assigned as the parish priest at Keyser, and responsible for Saint Charles, to write Archbishop Gibbons of the Richmond Diocese in January 1879 recommending permanent arrangements be made regarding missions that crossed state and diocesan lines.²⁸

In October 1881, Bishop Keane, having visited Paw Paw reported to Archbishop Gibbons that all the missions in the area were “wretchedly poor”. In February 1882, Fitzsimmons’ replacement, Father Mahony, wrote to Bishop Keane that the “people of Keyser and Paw Paw were working heart and soul with me” and as such was sad he had to go.²⁹ Per the WV Historic Property Inventory Form for the church completed by Practical Preservation in November 2021, 11 families and 53 individuals were members of the St Charles Catholic Mission Church and held services bi-monthly in 1895.³⁰

One of those prominent early families was the James M. Norton family. James, son of Timothy, and his wife Mary Louise Wenner Norton had moved from Magnolia to Paw Paw and had three children. They were one of the founding families of the Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church.³¹ Five generations of Norton boys were baptized in the church beginning with James Henry Norton in 1888.³² The Norton family link to the church is especially strong with Madge Norton owning a boarding house across Winchester Street from the church where, for many years, the Catholic priest from Ridgeley had a room. After Sunday Mass Madge Norton would make breakfast for the priest and the extended Norton family.³³

The Leonidas Ambrose Bevans family, having donated the land for the church, was another prominent and founding family of the Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church. Leonidas Ambrose Bevans, and his first wife Mary Gale, entered into an assumption agreement with Ellen Gale in March 1858 to lease Ellen Gale’s husband’s lands in Morgan County for \$100 per year to be paid in annually in two installments.³⁴ Leonidas was born and raised across the Potomac River in Maryland and married Mary Gale from Morgan County in 1851 and they had four children after settling on the outskirts of the Paw Paw settlement.³⁵

²⁷ Norton Interview, December 11, 2023.

²⁸ Fogarty, 274.

²⁹ Fogarty, 174-175.

³⁰ Sandra Scaffidi, St Charles Catholic Church WV Historic Property Inventory Form (2021). (Provided by the WV State Historic Preservation Office) n.p.

³¹ Norton interview, December 11, 2023.

³² Patricia Norton, Letter on St Charles Catholic Church, 31 March 1990 (Letter on file at St Vincent DePaul Catholic Church, Berkeley Springs, WV).

³³ Norton Interview, December 11, 2023.

³⁴ Deed Book 7 page 261.

³⁵ *Find a Grave*, database and images, memorial page for Leonidas Ambrose Bevans (8 Jul 1823-7 Jul 1897),

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Additional families that figure prominently in the history of Saint Charles during the period of significance include the Keslers, McDonalds, Kaylors, McCabes, Hanrahans, Kifers, and Cadigans.³⁶ Per Jeanne Lyons, lifelong resident and local historian, the McDonalds and Cadigans were associated with the tannery having been transferred from New Jersey to Paw Paw.³⁷

In 1911, responsibility of the church transferred to Martinsburg with a priest holding mass once a month. Mass increased to twice a month in 1915 when the church transferred to Saint Anthony's in Ridgeley, WV. Saint Charles remained the responsibility of Saint Anthony's until 1974 when the mission transferred to Saint Vincent DePaul in Berkeley Springs. In the same year the boundaries of the Richmond and Wheeling-Charleston Dioceses were adjusted to align with the state boundaries.³⁸ The adjustment/realignment of diocesan boundaries came about to "fix" the borders in the Eastern Panhandle of WV and the Southwest corner of Virginia that were misaligned after West Virginia seceded from Virginia in 1861. This realignment finally brought Saint Charles and the other Catholic Churches in the Eastern Panhandle into the Wheeling-Charleston Diocese with the rest of WV.

While the congregation never grew to warrant establishing a permanent Catholic parish in Paw Paw, the building served as a Catholic place to socialize and worship for the local community and, in later years, vacationing weekenders. However, just as Paw Paw's prosperity took a hit in 1951 following the sudden closing of the tannery, so did the church's membership. In her 1990 letter, Patricia Norton noted that in 1941, Mass was celebrated every Sunday and eight-to-ten new families joined Saint Charles after a new cut sole factory opened at the Paw Paw Tannery. Unfortunately, after the tannery closed just ten years later the number of families regularly worshipping at Saint Charles shrunk to just six-to-eight.³⁹ West Virginia's tanneries began to close in the 20th century as heavy deforestation reduced tanbark supplies. For those that carried on, demand for harness leather diminished as automobiles became prevalent and petroleum based products, such as synthetic rubber, cut into the market for sole leather. Paw Paw was one of the last U.S. Leather operations to shutdown in 1951.⁴⁰ In 1994, despite objections from the members of Saint Charles, the Wheeling-Charleston Diocese made the decision to close the Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church.

Peter Williams in *Houses of God: Region, Religion, and Architecture in the United States*, indicated that style, social class, religion, and ethnic background were some of the many the factors that went into designing early church buildings.⁴¹ Overall, early rural WV churches,

www.findagrave.com/memorial/31206652/leonidas-ambrose-bevans. Accessed November 21, 2023.

³⁶ *History of Morgan County Churches* (pamphlet).

³⁷ Jeanne Lyons, interview by David Abruzzi, Paw Paw WV, July 18, 2023.

³⁸ Norton, "Saint Charles Catholic Church".

³⁹ Norton, Letter.

⁴⁰ David Rotenstein, "Tanneries." e-WV: The WV Encyclopedia. 05 November 2010. www.wvencyclopedia.org/articles/68531. Accessed December 30, 2023.

⁴¹ Peter W. Williams, *Houses of God: Region, Religion, and Architecture in the United States* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), xiii.

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regardless of denomination, are typically unadorned with few exterior architectural details. Per Wheeling-Charleston Diocese archivist Jon-Erik Gilot, Saint Charles is likely one of the five oldest standing Catholic Mission Churches in the state of WV.⁴²

The Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church provided a place for social gatherings and essential religious services for a small Catholic minority in Paw Paw and the surrounding area that was isolated from larger, more established Catholic communities. It played an important social and cultural role in their daily lives, as well as significant events from baptisms to weddings to funerals.

After nearly 150 years since its construction, the former Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church continues to convey its historic association with the Town of Paw Paw's social history. For more than 115 years, this building served as a place of worship for the small minority of Catholic parishioners in the area. It remains largely unchanged since that time. The length of its use, coupled with its historic integrity in terms of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, association, and feeling makes the building worthy of an individual nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Criteria Consideration A: Properties that are Primarily Religious in Nature

Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church meets the Criteria Consideration A on historical grounds, as a religious property that derives its primary significance from its associations with important historical patterns and events that were consequential on a local level and a state/regional level.

For the many ethnic communities who settled in West Virginia throughout history, churches were a central place to gather and maintain cultural identity for groups of people who relocated to a new home. Churches played a social role and a critical support network for parishioners. In the case of Catholic churches in WV they provided a place of sanctuary and belonging for a minority religious group in the area that were initially met with suspicion and often outright hostility.

As a gathering place serving the Irish Catholic Community in Paw Paw and surrounding area well into the 20th century, the Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church was an anchor for those Catholics who settled in the area.

For these reasons Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church meets the criteria consideration for listing of properties that are primarily religious in nature in the National Register of Historic Places.

⁴² Interview with Jon-Erik Gilot (Wheeling-Charleston Diocese Archivist), interview by David Abruzzi, Wheeling, WV, 29 September 2023.

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<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026826/1875-04-30/ed-1/seq-3/#date1=1836&sort=relevance&date2=1875&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&index=2&words=Paw&proxdistance=5&state=West+Virginia&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=paw+paw&phrasertext=&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=2>. Accessed November 21, 2023.

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UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 17N Easting: 718491 Northing: 4378939

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

The building sits on a small sloping lot bordered by Ruth Bevans Lane to the South, a residential lot with a late 1800's I-House to the west, and the modern Morgan County EMS building to the east. The boundaries are shown as a solid redline on the attached map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary selected is the current and historical property boundary on which the former Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church is located.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: David Abruzzi, RA (collaboration with Joseph Fox, Upper Potomac Historian)
organization: Cacapon Preservation Solutions, LLC
street & number: 18534 Cacapon Rd
city or town: Great Cacapon state: WV zip code: 25422
e-mail david@cacaponpreservationsolutions.com
telephone: 304-947-7465
date: 31 December 2023

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.

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- **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.)

Figure Log

- 1 of 4. USGS Topographical Locational Map
- 2 of 4. Satellite Imagery
- 3 of 4. Exterior Photo Key
- 4 of 4. Interior Photo Key

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: St Charles Catholic Mission Church

City or Vicinity: Paw Paw

County: Morgan

State: WV

Photographer: David Abruzzi

Date Photographed: 30 December 2023

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

- 1 of 14. Main Elevation, Facing South
- 2 of 14. West Side Elevation, Facing East
- 3 of 14. Rear Elevation, Facing North
- 4 of 14. Oblique Angle, Facing Southwest
- 5 of 14. Main Interior Area, Facing North
- 6 of 14. Main Interior Area, Facing West
- 7 of 14. Main Interior Area, Facing South
- 8 of 14. Main Interior Area, Facing East

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- 9 of 14. Main Interior Area, Stamped Tin Wall Detail
- 10 of 14. Main Interior Area, Stamped Tin Cove/Ceiling Detail
- 11 of 14. Storage Room/Sacristy, Facing South
- 12 of 14. Storage Room/Sacristy, Facing Northwest
- 13 of 14. Basement/Crawlspace, Facing Southwest
- 14 of 14. Basement/Crawlspace, Stone Foundation Detail

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.

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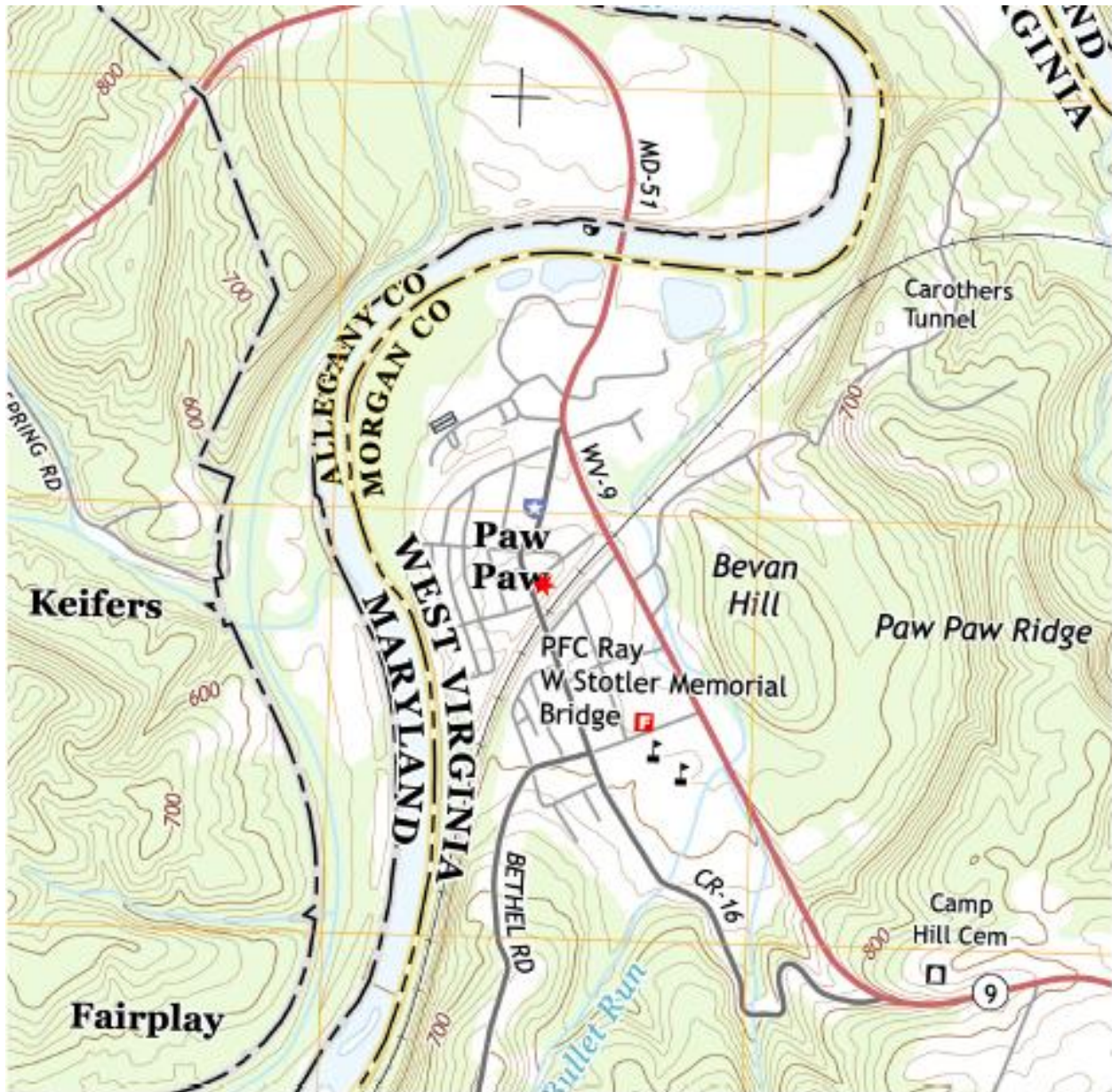


Figure 1: USGS Topographical Locational Map

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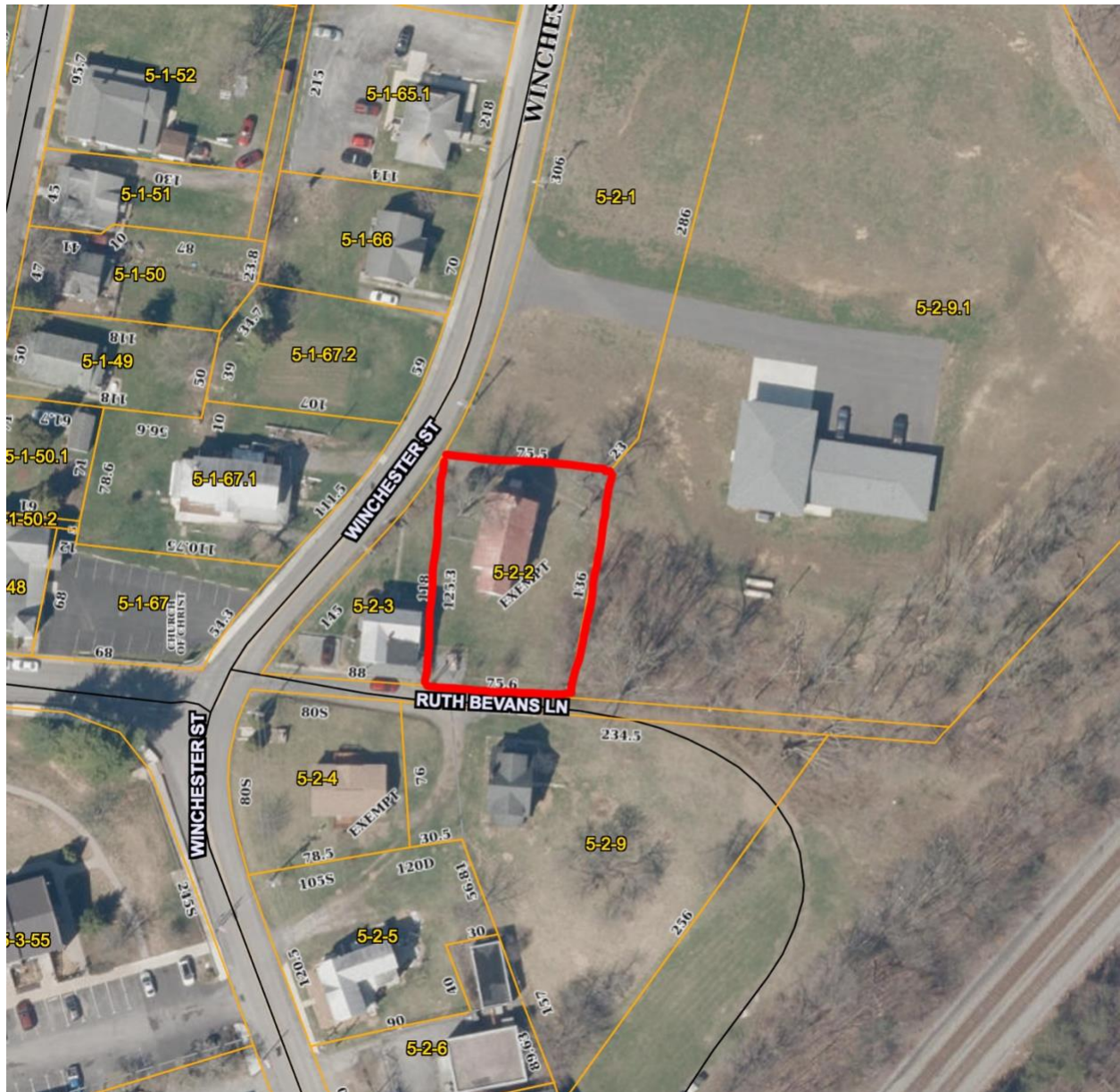


Figure 2: Satellite Imagery

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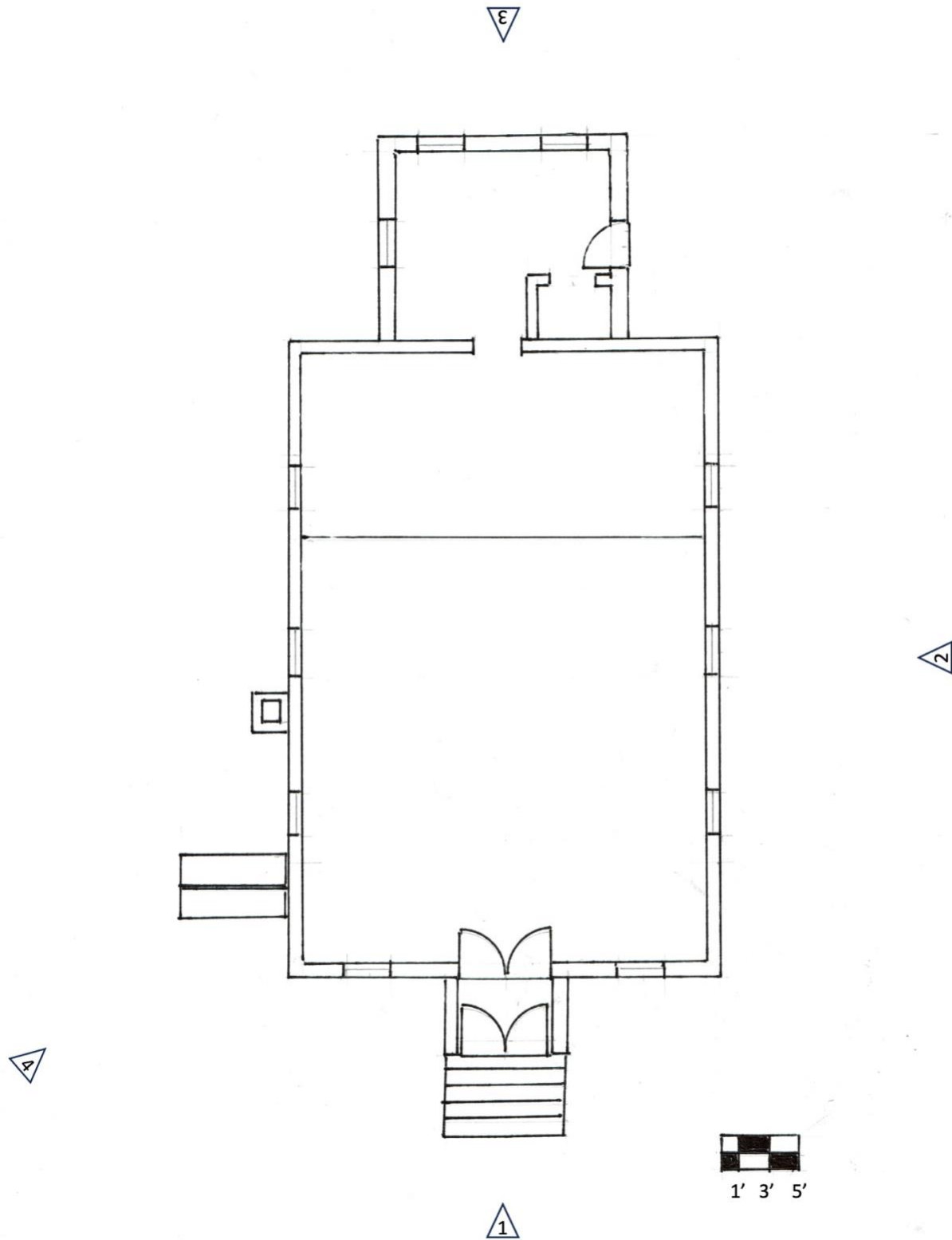


Figure 3. Exterior Photo Key

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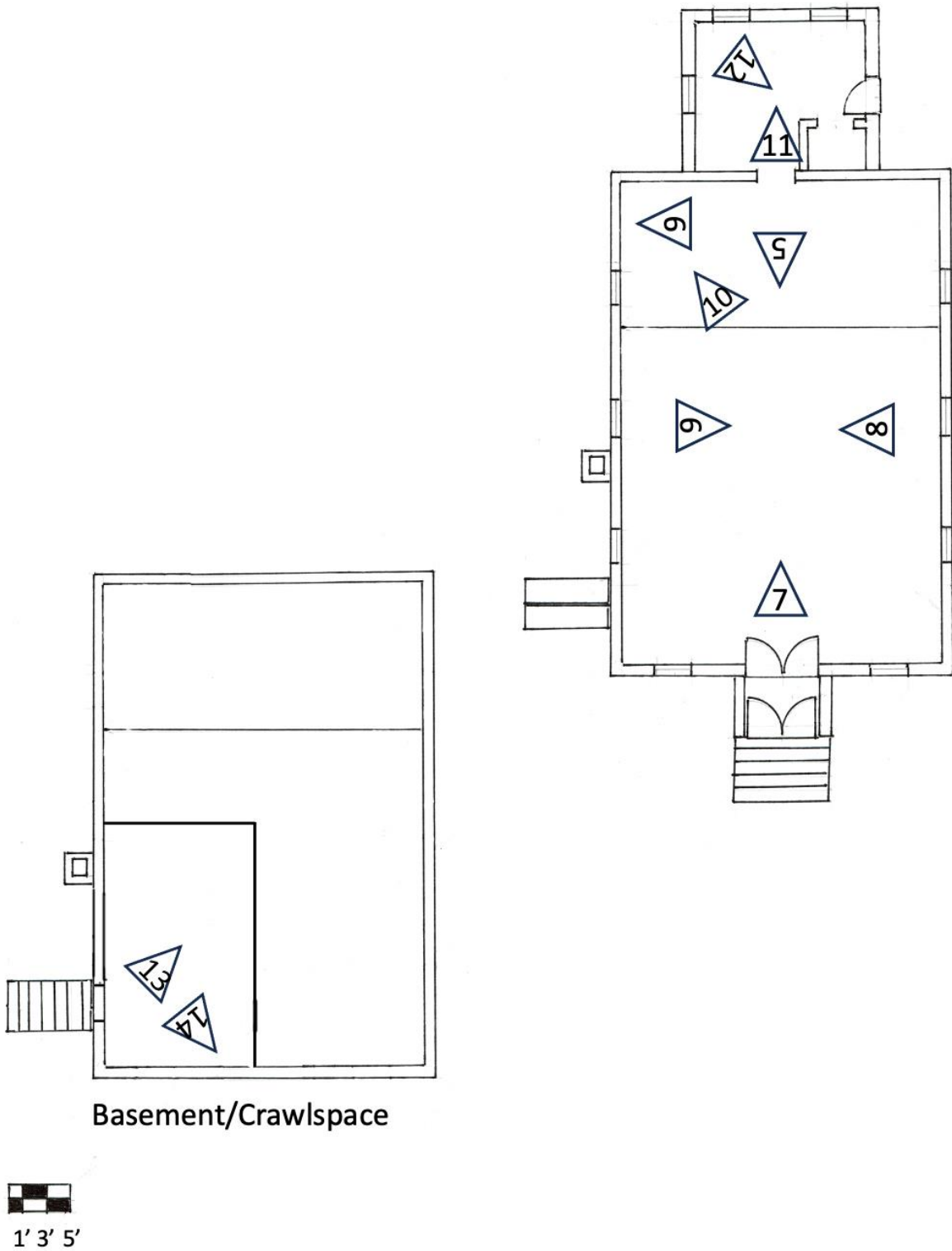


Figure 4: Interior Photo Key

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Photo 1. Main Elevation, Facing South

Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church
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Photo 2. West Elevation, Facing East

Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church
Name of Property

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Photo 3. Rear Elevation, Facing North

Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church
Name of Property

Morgan, WV
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Photo 4. Oblique Angle, Facing Southwest

Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church
Name of Property

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Photo 5. Main Interior Area, Facing North

Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church
Name of Property

Morgan, WV
County and State

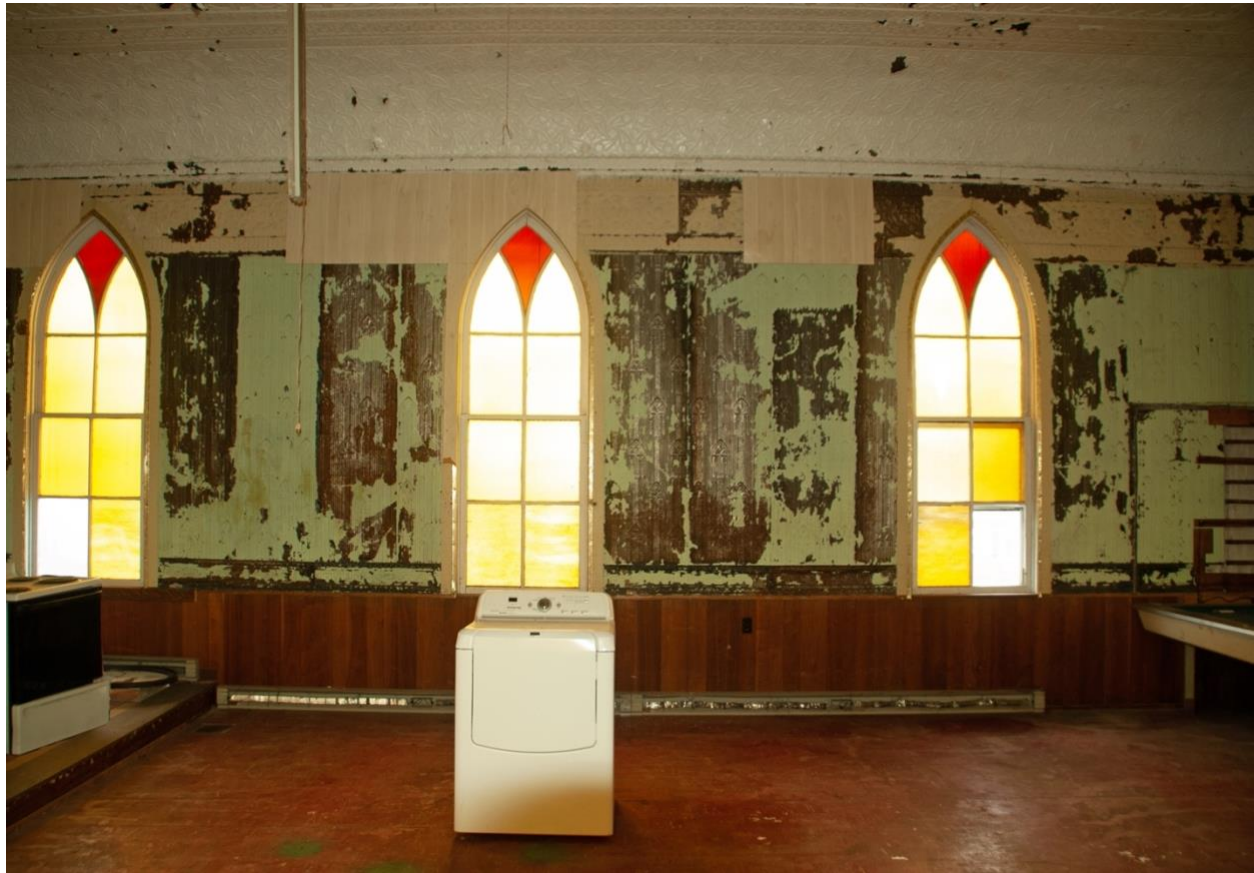


Photo 6. Main Interior Area, Facing West

Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church
Name of Property

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Photo 7. Main Interior Area, Facing South

Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church
Name of Property

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Photo 8. Main Interior Area, Facing East

Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church
Name of Property

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Photo 9. Main Interior Area, Stamped Tin Wall Detail

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Name of Property

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Photo 10. Main Interior Area, Stamped Tin Cove/Ceiling Detail

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Photo 11. Storage Room/Sacristy, Facing South

Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church
Name of Property

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Photo 12. Storage Room/Sacristy, Facing Northwest

Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church
Name of Property

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Photo 13. Basement/Crawlspace, Facing Southwest

Saint Charles Catholic Mission Church
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Photo 14. Basement/Crawlspace, Stone Foundation Detail