

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Old Franklin United Brethren Church

other names/site number Old Franklin United Methodist Church

### 2. Location

street & number Franklin Church Road, 1/2 mi. N. of Fox Run Rd.  Not for publication

city or town Brookville at Hwy. 101  vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Franklin code 047 zip code 47012

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Ruth R. Ralab*

1-27-95

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
  - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain.) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

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

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion/Church

Funerary/ Cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion/ Church

Funerary/ Cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Federal

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Vinyl

Narrative Description

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion  
Architecture  
Exploration/Settlement

**Period of Significance**

1831-1910

**Significant Dates**

1831

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Reed, Joseph

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

National Register files

Old Franklin United Brethren Church  
Name of Property

Franklin, IN  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.686

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	6
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6	7	6	3	6	0
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4	3	7	4	7	3	0
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Zone Easting Northing

2 

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3 

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Zone Easting Northing

4 

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See continuation sheet

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martha Shea, Franklin County Historian / Suzanne Fischer, DHPA Intern

organization N/A date 3-26-94

street & number 650 East 8th Street telephone 317/647-5182

city or town Brookville state IN zip code 47012

#### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

#### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Ralph Watterson, Chairman of the Board

street & number 14023 Franklin Church Road telephone 317/647-6948

city or town Brookville state IN zip code 47012

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Old Franklin United Brethren Church

Franklin Co., IN

The Old Franklin United Brethren Church is a one-story, side-gabled brick building with a central cross-gabled vestibule upon which rests a bell tower and steeple. The church is built on a simple rectangular plan in the Federal style. It has a low-pitched asphalt shingled gable roof. The church is sited on a level area facing east, and the ground slopes gradually away from the building on the north and west sides. Gravestones surround the church on three sides, with the largest concentration of stones on the west side. Many of the graves date from the 1830s and 1840s.

The church rests on a foundation of coursed, rough-cut stone. The walls are of brick laid in common bond, with no ornament other than door and window sills and lintels.

The front elevation is symmetrical with five bays and a central door. An 8'x10' vestibule, added to the original facade in 1910, forms a lowered cross-gable.

The main entrance is modern, consisting of a single metal and glass door surrounded by a transom and sidelights, replacing earlier double doors. The inner door is a wooden four-panel double door with glazing in the upper panels and a two-light transom. The glazing in the upper panels was added in 1910.

All windows in the church are one-over-one double hung sash measuring 3'x7', with modern aluminum storm windows. Those in the vestibule are older two-over-two wood-framed windows. All windows have flat-arched brick lintels and limestone sills. The windows do not have any other trim except for the wooden jambs, which are painted white.

The gable roof is trimmed with a simple molded cornice with cornice returns on the main and cross gables. A wide frieze board runs along the roof line. All wood trim is painted white.

Set into the vestibule gable is a cement slab inscribed, "Franklin U.B. Church 1831."

The bell tower is a straight-sided wooden structure, approximately 6' square and 12' high. It has one unglazed window on each face and is covered in white vinyl siding. The tower has a pyramidal roof covered in asphalt shingles and topped with a metal cap and decorative finial. When the tower was built in 1910, its lower half flared outward and was covered in wooden shingles.

The north and south elevations are identical except for

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Old Franklin United Brethren Church

Franklin Co., IN

the addition (in 1927) of a small shed-roofed enclosure for the basement stairs on the north elevation. A door on the east side of this addition leads directly to the stairs. Each side elevation contains two windows placed toward the edges of the walls. Originally, each side elevation had a door centered under the gable; one for men and one for women. These side doors were bricked up sometime before 1910. S-shaped tie rod ends are visible just above window level.

The basement, dug in 1927, is entered through an outside door on the north side of the church. A brick structure containing a small, 3-light window in its concrete foundation shelters the stairs. Another small window in the original stone foundation on the right end of this side provides light to the basement and an opening for the filler pipe for the heating oil tank.

The rear elevation is also 5 bays wide. Originally, there were five windows across the back, with the center window extending down only half as far as the other four. Only the outer two windows remain; the other three are bricked up but the outlines and lintels still remain visible. A small brick chimney extends the full height of the elevation and is centered over the original center window. The two inner windows that are now bricked up are about 1' shorter than the rest of the windows in the church, indicating that the remaining windows were enlarged from their original configurations.

The interior space consists of a full-width seating area with the rear 1/4 of the building divided into three areas. The center area is the pulpit, raised on two steps. The two side rooms are enclosed, and are used for Sunday school and work space. The large seating area is divided into three parts by the addition of lowered ceilings on the sides. The sides may be closed off with accordion doors to form extra rooms. The ceilings are covered in accoustic tile. Originally, the interior was a single space; the modifications were made in 1945 and 1957.

The trim around the windows and main entrance is white painted wood. The moldings are narrow and rather simple, with a small bead running up the inner edges.

The only outbuilding is a rectangular, gable-roofed tool shed/privy with vertical wood siding and asphalt roof

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Old Franklin United Brethren Church

Franklin Co., IN

shingles. It was constructed after the period of significance (1920) as a generator shed and is counted as a non-contributing building.

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Old Franklin United Brethren Church

Franklin Co., IN

The Old Franklin United Brethren Church, built in 1831, was one of the first Brethren churches built in Indiana and the oldest one still remaining. It was the first Brethren church built in the Whitewater Conference, the circuit that includes most of central Indiana. The United Brethren in Christ were among the first settlers in eastern Indiana and established congregations as early as 1812--only twelve years after the official founding of the sect in America. Most of their church buildings date from after the Civil War; before that time, most Brethren services were held in private homes, barns, or outdoors. The Old Franklin United Brethren Church is significant under Criterion C for its architecture which is characteristic of the plain buildings favored by conservative sects such as Quakers and Mennonites. These churches were very different from those of the mainstream Protestant denominations such as Baptists and Methodists during the same time period. The church is also significant under Criterion A in the areas of religion and settlement for its association with a non-mainstream Protestant sect whose members were among the first settlers in Indiana. The property is also eligible under Criteria Consideration A because its primary significance is architectural and historical, not religious. The period of significance includes the date of construction (1831) and the last significant architectural modification, the bell tower and vestibule (1910).

European settlement in Franklin County began in earnest after the Treaty of Greenville in 1795 opened this land for purchase. Among the first settlers were several families who had emigrated from South Carolina in 1801. These families settled temporarily in Ohio until the government reduced the minimum amount of Indiana land a buyer needed to purchase from 640 to 80 acres, and also lowered the price per acre. The Caroline settlers began building their cabins in 1804 along the east bank of the Whitewater River. These families later became the nucleus of the United Brethren Church and were responsible for building the Franklin meeting house in 1831.

The United Brethren were organized in 1800 as an offshoot of the German Anabaptist/Pietist movement. The first Brethren congregations were found in Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, but had spread to Indiana by 1812.



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Old Franklin United Brethren Church

Franklin Co., IN

The Brethren never achieved a strong following in the South due to their strong anti-slavery stance, but had large numbers of adherents in the Midwest. The Brethren were primarily farmers and of German descent; most of their preaching was done in the German language. As farmers, they were willing to settle on the frontier in hopes of finding new and fertile farmland, and were frequently among the first families to move into newly-opened lands. Their independence, perhaps encouraged by their foreign language and customs, made them well-suited for frontier life.

When the Brethren first settled in Indiana, they held worship services in homes, barns, or in groves of trees. Almost all of the congregations were served by travelling preachers or circuit riders; a congregation with its own minister was called a "station." The denomination established itself in Indiana most firmly between 1808 and 1830; these were considered the pioneering years for Brethren preaching in the state.

In 1819, two Brethren preachers of German descent began holding services in the home of Henry Fry. Perhaps these men converted the people who were to become the congregation of the Old Franklin church, because it was unlikely that these Scots-Irish and English settlers from South Carolina would have been exposed to Brethren teachings before reaching Indiana. The first Brethren pastor assigned to the Franklin circuit was John C. McNamar, one of the first Brethren pastors to preach in English. He formally organized the congregation at a service in the Fry home on 5 June 1824 with 28 charter members.

By 1831, the congregation had grown large enough and prosperous enough to support a permanent pastor and meeting house. Henry Fry donated the land for the building, half a mile from his own home, built in 1810 and still standing. At this time, it was unusual for the Brethren to have church buildings; Virginia had only 3 of them as late as 1850, while the first church building in southwestern Ohio was not constructed until 1851, forty years after the congregation was established. The boom in Brethren church construction did not come until after the Civil War.

The Franklin congregation built their meeting house along the guidelines established in the Discipline: "Let all our meeting houses be built, plainly and neatly, with

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Old Franklin United Brethren Church

Franklin Co., IN

free seats, and not more expensive than necessary...." The simple, one-story Franklin church was probably the second Brethren church built in Indiana and is the oldest one now standing. It was built by Joseph Reed from brick made on the site. Unlike most other churches of the time which were end-gabled and frequently two-story, the simplicity of the Franklin meeting house was reflected in the side-gabled, unornamented building. Doors in both ends of the church ensured that men and women would be separated while entering the church as well as during the service. Simple, backless benches provided seating, while the preacher spoke from a pulpit that was on the same level as the congregation, so as to remind worshippers that all men were equal in the sight of God.

During the 1830s and 1840s, the Franklin church hosted several annual meetings of the Brethren leadership from all over Indiana; it was still one of the few Brethren churches at the time.

The cemetery surrounding the church contains many early burials from the 1830s and 1840s, as well as a number of later graves. Veterans from each of America's wars from the Revolution to Korea are buried there, as are Wilbur and Orville Wright's maternal grandparents, who were charter members of the church.

In 1889, the United Brethren in Christ split the church over the issue of whether its members should be allowed to join secret societies such as the Freemasons; until this time, secret societies had been forbidden to the Brethren. Bishop Milton Wright (father of Wilbur and Orville) led the conservative faction which followed the old constitution, while the Franklin congregation joined the liberal group. In 1968, the liberals merged with the Methodists to form the United Methodist Church, which holds services at the Franklin church to this day.

The Franklin congregation added a bell tower and vestibule to the old building in 1910, installed a heating system in 1927-8, and put up partitions and remodelled the interior in 1946. Despite these changes, the effect of the original interior space has not been lost. At some point prior to 1910, the two doors on the ends of the building were bricked up, so both men and women had to enter by the central door. This modification to the building might

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Old Franklin United Brethren Church

Franklin Co., IN

reflect changing Brethren attitudes and practices; unlike some of the more conservative sects such as Mennonites, the Brethren adapted their practices to changes in society.

The Franklin church stands as an example of the simple, plain buildings erected by a group of early settlers according to religious guidelines. Their style of architecture was symbolic of their belief in simplicity and equality, and the Franklin church forms an important contrast to its contemporaries, which were beginning to show the more elaborate forms characteristic of the eastern churches early settlers had left behind when they came to the frontier.

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Old Franklin United Brethren Church Franklin Co., IN

Bibliography

Adkins, Ralph. General Background of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. Non-published, 1952.

Atlas of Franklin County, Indiana. Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co., 1882.

Bone, Wilma. Franklin United Methodist Church History, 1823-1989. Non-published, 1989.

Condo, Adam Byron. History of the Indiana Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. [n.p.]: Indiana Conference, 1926.

Fetters, Paul R. (ed.). Trails and Triumphs: A History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. Huntington, IN: Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Department of Church Services, 1984.

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. Franklin County Interim Report. Indianapolis: Department of Natural Resources, 1978.

Stoffer, Dale R. Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines, 1650-1987. Philadelphia: Brethren Encyclopedia, 1989.

Wilmore, Augustus Cleveland. History of the White River Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. Dayton, OH: United Brethren Publishing House, 1925.

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Old Franklin United Brethren Church, Franklin Co., IN

Verbal Boundary Description

That certain tract or lot of ground situated lying and being in the Township of Fairfield in the State and County aforesaid where the Franklin Meeting House now stands, it being part of the northeast quarter of Section Twenty-Six (26) in Township Ten of Range Two West of the meridian line drawn from the south of the Great Miami River and bounded as follows to wit: beginning on the north and south section line of said section, thence west thirteen and a half poles to a stone, thence north agreeable to the section line eighteen poles and a half to a stone on the bank so as to include the spring, thence east east thirteen and a half poles to the section line, thence along the section line to the place of beginning, containing one acre and one half and nine perches strict measure.

Boundary Justification

Excerpt from the original deed dated 3 April 1832 and being the historical boundary of the church and cemetery.

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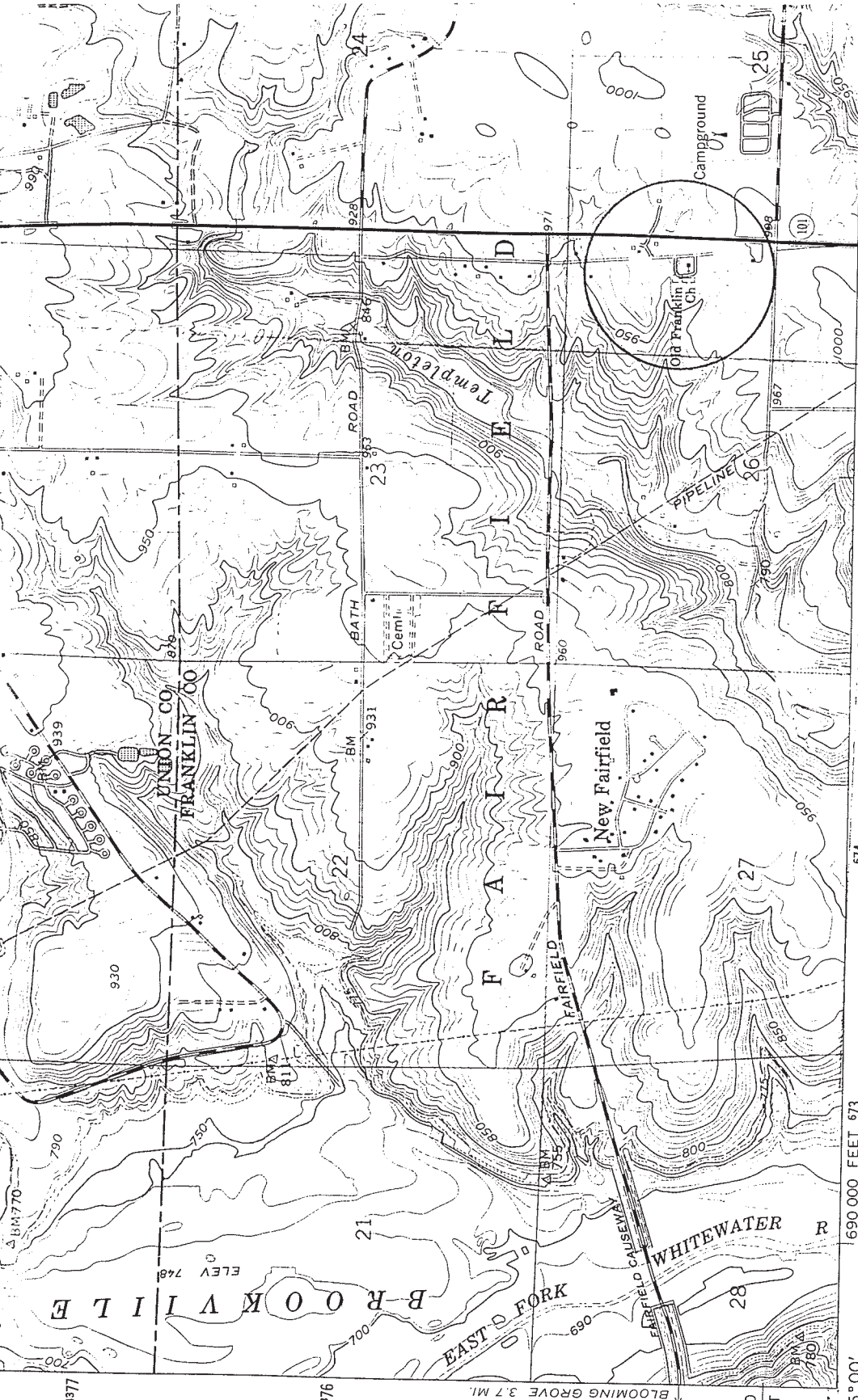
Old Franklin United Brethren Church

Franklin Co., IN

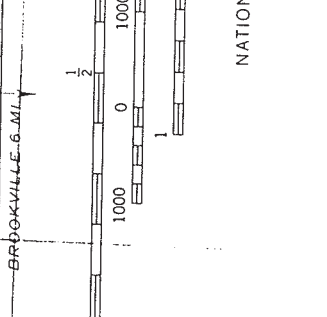
Photographs

The following information is the same for all photographs:

1. Old Franklin United Brethren Church
2. Franklin Co., Indiana
3. Martha Shea
4. January 1994
5. Martha Shea, 650 E. 8th St., Brookville, IN
- 6 & 7.:
  - #1. Camera facing west, main facade, ca. 1900
  - #2. Camera facing northwest, ca. 1910
  - #3. Camera facing west, main facade, 1994
  - #4. Camera facing north
  - #5. Camera facing east, rear elevation
  - #6. Camera facing south, north elevation with 1927 addition
  - #7. Camera facing northwest, outbuilding (privy/storage shed)
  - #8. Camera facing west, interior, platform and altar
  - #9. Camera facing northwest, interior
  - #10. Camera facing north, interior
  - #11. Camera facing northeast, interior
  - #12. Camera facing east, interior, entrance
  - #13. Camera facing southeast
  - #14. Camera facing south



WHITCO  
4062 IV.1  
SCALE 1:2



CONTOUR INTERVAL  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERT

UTM GRID AND 1981 MAGNETIC NORTH  
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
AND INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AT

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, USCE, and Indiana  
Flood Control and Water Resources Commission  
Culture compiled from aerial photographs taken 1940  
Topography by planetable surveys 1946. Revised from aerial  
photographs taken 1973. Field checked 1974  
Depth curves and soundings compiled from USGS - Indiana  
Department of Natural Resources lake charts  
Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Indiana  
coordinate system, east zone. 1000-meter Universal  
Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 16, shown in blue  
1927 North American Datum. To place on the predicted  
North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines  
2 meters south and 4 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where  
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked  
Areas covered by dashed light-blue pattern are subject to controlled inundation  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries  
of the National or State reservations on this map

4977  
4376  
BROOKVILLE  
ELEV 748  
790  
750  
930  
UNION CO.  
FRANKLIN CO.  
BATH ROAD  
925  
846  
971  
996  
23  
22  
21  
28  
27  
26  
25  
Campground  
Old Franklin Ch. I.  
PIPELINE  
New Fairfield  
FAIRFIELD  
FAIRFIELD CAUSEWAY  
WHITEWATER R.  
EAST FORK  
BLOOMING GROVE 3.7 MI.  
730 000  
FEET  
39° 30'  
690 000 FEET 673  
674  
57° 30'  
675  
677  
BRIDGEMANVILLE 6 MI.

FRANKLIN UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH  
FRANKLIN CO.  
3922 INE  
E 676360  
N 4547730