

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 Bethel Church and Graveyard

other names/site number Bethel Community Church 045-025-05012

2. Location

street & number Bethel Rd. (1160N), 1/2 mi. W. of Riverside Rd. (500E) N/A not for publication

city or town Attica vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Fountain code 045 zip code 47918

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.)

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: Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

- 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:) _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
1	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	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: Religious facility

Funerary: Cemetery

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion: Religious facility

Funerary: Cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th C.: Greek Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stucco

walls Metal: Aluminum

roof Asphalt

other Metal: Cast Iron

Stone: Limestone, Sandstone, Marble

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Art, Exploration/Settlement, Ethnic Heritage: Black, Religion

Period of Significance

1825-1860

Significant Dates

1825, 1835, 1850

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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):

- Criteria for previous documentation on file (NPS).

Primary location of additional data:

- Criteria for primary location of additional data.

Name of repository:

Indiana State Library

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 7.3 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 6	4 8 4 9 1 0	4 4 6 0 4 5 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

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 Jeffrey L. Bossaer & Suzanne Fischer (DHPA Intern)

organization Bethel Community Church date 5 April 1994

street & number 5108 N. Riverside Rd. telephone 317/764-4908

city or town Attica state IN zip code 47918

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 (see continuation sheet)

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Bethel Church & Graveyard, Fountain Co., IN

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Bethel Church sits on a low knoll shaded by maple and walnut trees. A gravel driveway leads from the county road to the building (approximately 500 feet), then branches to circle the church and cemetery. The church is a plain, white, one-story, gable-front frame building, now covered with aluminum siding. It is built in the Greek Revival style on a simple rectangular plan 36' x 50', with a medium-pitch gable roof covered in asphalt shingles.

The main facade of this timber-framed building faces south. The foundation is made of sandstone block coated with stucco. Wooden pilasters edge all four corners of the building, and the facade has a pediment separated by a wide frieze and architrave. All of these features are now hidden beneath the aluminum siding. Centered under the gable is a plain door with sidelights on the right side only, replacing the original four-panel wooden double doors. Above the door is a two-light transom. The door surround consists of pilasters supporting a full entablature. Above the door surround is a small carriage-style lamp. In front of the door is a low concrete stoop with metal railings and two steps. A bell is mounted on a concrete slab near the right side of the stoop. The medium-pitch gabled roof is covered in asphalt shingles and has a wide eave overhang.

Both side elevations have four full-height twelve-over-twelve sash windows, covered with modern aluminum storm windows, evenly spaced along the walls. On the west side, between the first two windows, a small structure is attached, forming a lowered cross-gable that contains the door leading to the basement. This part of the building was added in 1953.

The rear (north) elevation is completely unornamented except for the corner pilasters and cornice returns. No doors or windows break up the blank wall.

The interior consists of a single space with 14' ceilings. The walls are plastered lath. Two rows of box pews are divided by a central aisle. The pulpit area is slightly raised with a short, curved wooden railing around it. The windows have simple molded trim with wide cornices.

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Alterations include the digging of a basement in 1947 and construction of a gabled-roof entry to the basement in 1953. An inside stairway to the basement was built east of the pulpit in 1966. The basement will seat approximately 55 people and has a small kitchen. White aluminum siding was installed in the 1970s and aluminum storm windows in the 1980s. New concrete steps were added in 1985. The damaged copper roof was replaced with asphalt shingles. The sandstone foundation was stuccoed in 1968, and the double doors were replaced sometime before 1915.

The cemetery begins just behind the church. It contains over 600 marked graves and dozens of unmarked graves. There are four sections to the cemetery: the old cemetery, the North addition, the Northwest addition, and the 1930 addition.

Grave markers display a wide range of funerary art; many of the earlier examples are artistically outstanding.

An iron fence runs along the south edge of the property. Originally, the fence surrounded the church building, but it was moved to the roadside sometime between 1910-1928. It is counted as a contributing structure.

On the west side of the driveway surrounding the church, there is a wooden privy, painted white, and having two doors. It was built after 1940 and is counted as a non-contributing building.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Bethel Church and Graveyard are eligible under criteria A and C in the areas of art, religion, ethnic heritage, and exploration/settlement. Bethel Cemetery is significant in the history of settlement in Fountain County; although the church was built in 1850 on the site of two earlier churches (1827 and 1830), the congregation had been meeting on or near the site since 1825 and the oldest tombstone in the graveyard dates from that year. The church was influential in the religious and social life of the county; although the founding members were Methodists, the Quaker and United Brethren sects in the area voted to join the Bethel congregation in 1828. The property is also significant under ethnic heritage because of its connection with an ante-bellum African-American settlement, the only remains of which are some tombstones in Bethel graveyard. The cemetery is significant in the area of art because it exhibits an excellent collection of carved stones dating from 1825, many of which came from the same workshop and were carved by church members.

The beginning date for the period of significance, 1825, coincides with the first marked burial in Bethel Cemetery. The closing date of 1860 was chosen because it marks the end of the African-American migration to the Bethel area and the decline of the local stone quarries and tombstone-cutting businesses.

Bethel Church is significant in the area of religion for the unusually large size of its rural congregation and the number of preachers it furnished to other churches. When the United Brethren and Quaker congregations voted to join the Bethel Methodists in 1828, the resulting congregation became one of the largest in the state of Indiana. The present building was built in 1850, replacing a small frame church (built in 1830), which replaced the original log structure (built in 1827). One reason for the new building was the popularity of the quarterly meetings held at Bethel; the congregation had expanded to the point where a larger church was essential. Bethel was the only church in the rural area east of Attica until 1870, so it served a large geographical area for regular services as well as the

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Bethel Church & Graveyard, Fountain Co., IN

special quarterly and camp meetings.

Bethel Graveyard is significant in the area of exploration/settlement because it has burials dating from the first years of white settlement in Fountain County. The nearby town of Attica was not founded until 1825 and the oldest tombstone at Bethel dates from that year.

The area's first white settler, Casey Emmons, built his cabin in 1822 just east of Attica; he is buried at Bethel. The cemetery also contains graves of other early settlers. A second wave of settlers came to the area during the 1840s as construction workers on the Wabash & Erie Canal. Work on the canal south of Lafayette began in 1845, and the resulting influx of laborers and canal-borne immigrants swelled the ranks of Bethel Church members.

The graveyard is also significant for ethnic heritage because of the number of African-American graves. Before the Civil War, members of the Bethel congregation had aided runaway slaves, hiding them in their homes and the swamp behind the cemetery. Some of the blacks built cabins in the woods north of the swamp and remained in the community for the rest of their lives. In the years just before the Civil War, there were approximately 20-25 cabins built and occupied by African-Americans. One resident was a former servant to Davy Crockett, and was one of the six survivors of the Alamo. After the Civil War, most of the black settlers at Bethel moved away from the area. There are no more blacks in the Attica area today, and the only remnants of their presence are some tombstones in the Bethel cemetery. Although the blacks were buried in a separate corner of the cemetery, it was unusual at this time for them to be buried in a white cemetery at all. Two of the black graves are those of Civil War soldiers, with government-issued stones.

Most notably, the cemetery is significant in the area of art for its collection of beautifully-carved stones. In 1835, stonemason James Killin moved to the Bethel area and began practicing his trade. In 1837, he and his wife moved to another home just north of the church, where he operated a sandstone quarry. Killin became an active member of Bethel

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Church, and served as a lay minister, preaching at several other locations in addition to Bethel. Killin trained many local men in the stonecutting business, and had as many as six of them boarding with the family at one time. All of the stonecutters were members of Bethel Church, and frequently made tombstones for the members of their own families who were buried in that cemetery. Killin's quarry was one of the two most profitable businesses in the area during the 1840s. Other local quarries also did a good business providing stone for the canal, but after the canal was opened to traffic in 1846, the availability of imported marble and other stone made the Killin quarry unprofitable. Killin sold his quarry in 1853, but the new owner never operated it.

An estimated 100 of the 120 antebellum gravestones at Bethel were cut by Killin's workers; 44 of these are of sandstone from the Killin quarry and 71 are of marble. Marble was imported to the area beginning in the 1840s, and some of Killin's former workers set up a marble-carving business in Attica after 1853. Some marble tombstones with earlier dates are thought to have been replacements for damaged sandstone markers. The marble tombstone business in the Attica area flourished until about 1860, then the distinctive style of Killin-trained stonecutters gave way to more standardized Victorian gravestone art, examples of which can be found in any cemetery in the country. In general, the sandstone gravestones are the most artistically significant. Attica historian J. Wesley Whicker could identify which stones were carved by which Bethel stonecutters in the pre-1860 period, but the post-Civil War marble stones were anonymous in their similarity.

Of the 44 sandstone gravestones remaining at Bethel today, 35 are attributed to James Killin himself. Killin's gravestones are notable for their beautifully-shaded and sharply-incised lines. Some of the stones have traditional motifs of weeping willow trees, clasped hands, and cherubs' heads. Two graves have half-size sandstone coffins in front of the tombstones. Some of the stones have no designs at all, save for the decorative lettering. At a time when most gravestones in the area were mass-produced by Cincinnati stonecutting shops, the stones cut by Killin and the other

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Bethel stonecutters stand out because of their simple artistry. The shapes of the stones were influenced by classical architecture, with shaped pediments and acroteria, in keeping with the Greek Revival art and architecture prevalent at this time. Although Bethel is not the only cemetery in the region to have gravestones produced by these men, it is significant because of the great number of attributed stones and because of the stonecutters' membership in Bethel Church.

Bethel Cemetery is currently owned by Logan Township. The cemetery was enlarged in 1930 and again in 1980, and is still in use today. The Bethel Cemetery Association (a group of volunteers, separate from the church) was formed in 1981 to promote community interest in the cemetery, finance special improvement projects and historic preservation, and keep cemetery records. The Association holds Memorial Day services every May.

Bethel Church withdrew from the Methodist Conference in the early 1930s, and the building remained vacant until the congregation reorganized in 1939 as the non-denominational Bethel Community Church. Besides holding Sunday services, the church serves as the township polling place and hosts an annual community homecoming celebration. In 1980, Bethel won an award from the Farm Bureau as the most improved rural church in a nine-county area. Bethel continues to play an important role in the religious and social life of the rural Attica area.

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Additional information on the Killin family quarry and the tombstone-cutting industry in Attica was furnished by Richard Stringfellow, Curator of Collections, Tippecanoe County Historical Association.

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Bethel Church & Graveyard Fountain Co., IN

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at a point 280 feet south of a large concrete post in the northeast corner of the property, running south 960 feet to the center of Bethel Road, thence along said highway 339 feet; thence in a northerly direction 960 feet to a point 280 feet south of a concrete corner post; thence east 330 feet roughly along a gravel driveway to the place of beginning. The site contains 7.3 acres of land, more or less, containing Bethel Church and Cemetery, located in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, section 2, township 21 N, range 7 W, Fountain County, Indiana.

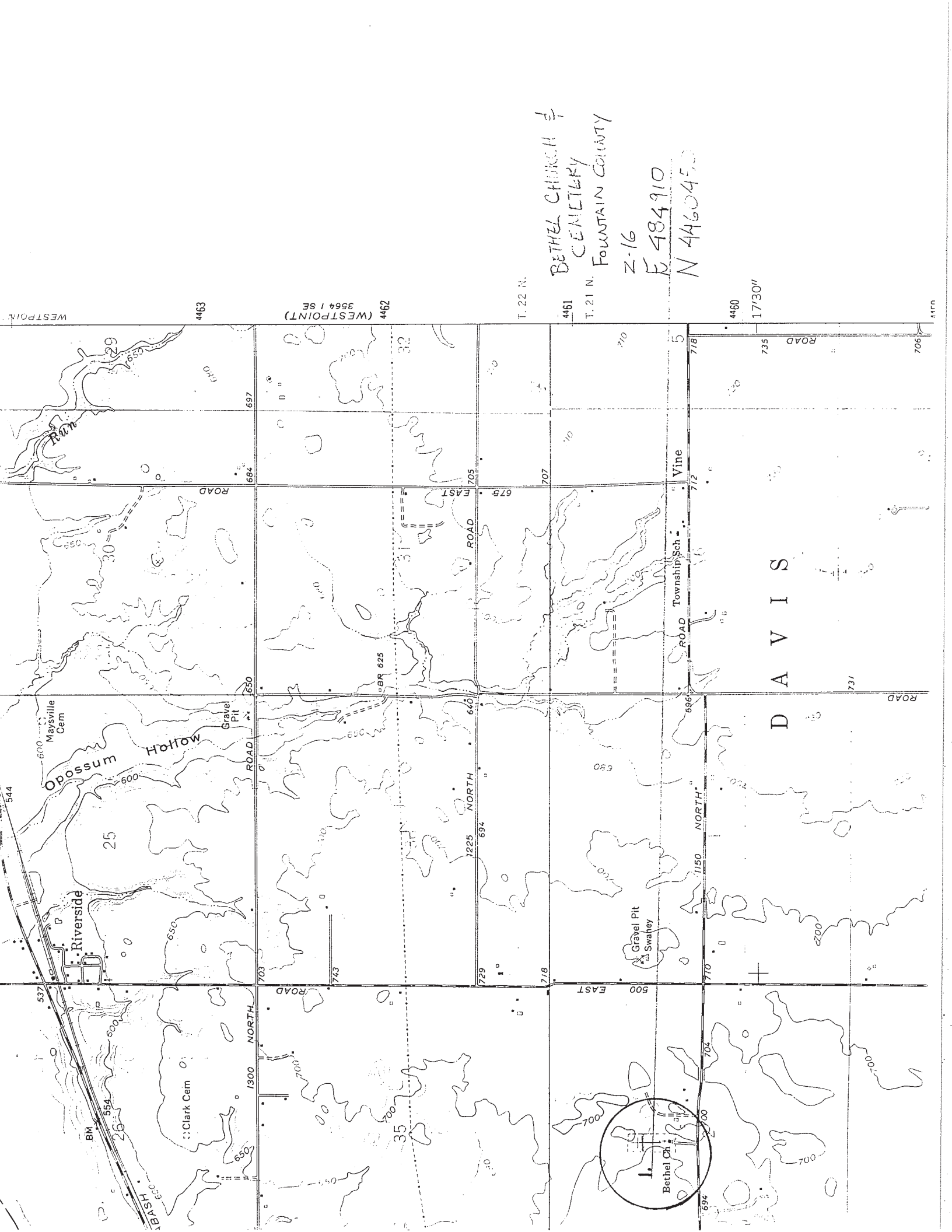
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

All the land described in the current deed of the property with the exception of the northernmost portion which was purchased by the cemetery owners after the period of significance (ca. 1930).

ADDITIONAL ITEMS: PROPERTY OWNERS

Bethel Community Church
Board of Trustees
c/o Glen Bossaer
4863 N. Riverside Rd.
Attica, IN 47918

Bethel Cemetery
Logan Township Trustees
c/o Jack Sorters
400 E. Washington St.
Attica, IN 47918



BETHEL CHURCH
 CEMETERY
 FOUNTAIN COUNTY

Z-16

E 484910

N 4460450

T. 22 N.

4461

T. 21 N.

4460

1730'

(WESTPOINT)
 3564 1 SE
 4462

4463

WESTPOINT

4460

D A V I S

