

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Old German Baptist Brethren Church

Winston-Salem vicinity, Forsyth County, FY0203, Listed 12/1/2014

Nomination by Heather Fearnbach

Photographs by Heather Fearnbach, February 2014



Façade view



Side and rear view

**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 German Baptist Brethren Church

other names/site number Fraternity Church, Old Order Church, Old Fraternity Church

2. Location

street & number 4916 Charnel Road

N/A not for publication

city or town Winston-Salem

N/A vicinity

state North Carolina

code NC

county Forsyth

code 067

zip code 27127

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 for 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

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

State or 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)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	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
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT: Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: meetinghouse

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
walls WOOD: Weatherboard
roof METAL
other

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1860-1950

Significant Dates

1860

1942

1950

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Ellis, Alexander Hampton, builder, 1860

Beckner family, builders, 1942, 1950

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 _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Name of Property

Forsyth County, NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 0.3 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

See Latitude/Longitude coordinates continuation sheet

1	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

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 Heather Fearnbach
organization Fearnbach History Services, Inc. date 7/24/2014
street & number 3334 Nottingham Road telephone 336-765-2661
city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27104

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 Thomas J. Keith, Muddy Creek Investments, LLC.
street & number 3450 Fraternity Church Road telephone (336) 816-5777
city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27127

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 listing. 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 20303.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

Section 7. Description

Setting

The Old German Baptist Brethren Church is situated on Charnel Road's south side 0.18 of a mile west of Fraternity Church Road in southwest Forsyth County. The building's gable ends have a north/south orientation. A grass lawn surrounds the meetinghouse. The L-shaped 0.3-acre parcel's north and west sections are open, but sizable deciduous trees shade the east and south sides. The lot includes a gravel drive and a small gravel parking area east of the meetinghouse. To its southwest, evergreen trees and shrubs screen the one-story, gable-roofed, concrete-block restroom building. South of the church parcel, the access drive splits into two residential driveways that terminate in front of each house. The surrounding area encompasses a wide range of residences and domestic and agricultural outbuildings, primarily built during the twentieth century, as well as fields, pastures, and wooded areas.

Muddy, South Fork, and Salem Creeks, their tributaries, and springs punctuate the landscape, guiding the area's settlement patterns from the mid-eighteenth century to the present. German Baptist Brethren operated numerous farms and constructed the 1860 meetinghouse on land donated to them by Jacob Faw and Edwin Hanes, who owned the surrounding acreage. At about the same time, members created a burial ground just over three-tenths of a mile to the northwest on the north side of what is now Shady Acres Lane. A two-story heavy-timber-frame house thought to have been erected in the early nineteenth century by the Hanes family stands approximately two-tenths of a mile west of the meetinghouse at Charnel Road's west end. Property that belonged to the Faw family for generations is south of the church, currently accessed from Fraternity Church Road. Historically, an unpaved road connected Jacob and Sarah Faw's farm to the meetinghouse. The family frequently traversed the route due to Jacob's almost four-decade-long tenure as the congregation's minister. The Faws often accommodated visiting Brethren in their home.¹

Exterior

In 1860, local carpenter Alexander Hampton Ellis directed Brethren including Thomas Hanes to construct a one-story, front-gable-roofed, heavy-timber-frame meetinghouse insulated with brick nogging. The sanctuary originally featured a double-leaf entrance on its south gable end, two large double-hung windows on each of the east and west elevations, and, projecting from the northeast corner, a small room that functioned as a lovefeast kitchen and was sheltered by gable roof lower than that of the church.² During the early twentieth century, the congregation added a single-leaf exterior

¹ Michael O. Hartley and Martha B. Hartley, "Hope-Fraternity Area Study," survey forms, 2008; Thomas J. Keith, email correspondence with Heather Fearnbach, July 2014.

² Alexander H. Ellis, known as "Sandy," was likely of the Brethren faith, as his wife's obituary states that she attended the "Dunkard Church." Thomas Hanes and his wife Maria, who was Isaac and Magdalene Faw's daughter, had

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

door to the 1860 lovefeast kitchen's east elevation. North of the door, a single double-hung window illuminates the room.

The Brethren subsequently expanded the meetinghouse with two balloon-frame rear (north) additions: the one-bay-deep area west of the lovefeast kitchen that enlarged the sanctuary in 1942, followed in 1950 by the one-bay-deep lovefeast kitchen that spans the north elevation's full width. A single double-hung window pierces the 1942 addition's west elevation. The 1950 kitchen's west elevation is blind, while its north elevation contains a central single-leaf door flanked by large double-hung windows. A matching window at the east elevation's center provides additional light. The Beckner family—William, his sons Clyde and Carl, Clyde's sons Lewis and Paul, and Clyde and Carl's first cousin Jacob Beckner—all of whom were farmers, erected the 1942 and 1950 additions with the assistance of other Brethren and their neighbors.³

The Old German Baptist Brethren Church reflects mid-nineteenth-century architectural trends. The weatherboarded structure initially featured wide corner boards capped with narrow trim boards. The congregation removed the original sheathing in the mid-twentieth century and covered the building with German siding with a seven-inch exposure. The simple corner boards installed at that time are slightly narrower than the original corner boards. Plain flat boards with butt corners surround windows and doors.

Double-hung six-over-six wood-sash windows of various sizes illuminate the interior. The windows in the 1860 meetinghouse are the largest at approximately 79 inches tall and 68 ½ inches wide, while the single-bay 1950 lovefeast kitchen addition's windows are 63 inches tall and 53 inches wide. The 1860 lovefeast kitchen's window measures 55 inches tall and 45 inches wide.

The original double-leaf door on the south elevation, which had two tall vertical panels on each side, was still in use around 1910. Soon thereafter, the congregation replaced it with a five-panel double-leaf door, likely at the same time as they installed five-panel single-leaf doors on the kitchen's east and west elevations. In 1942, the congregation moved the primary entrance from the south gable end to the east elevation, filling the south door opening with German siding and a window matching those

resided nearby since their May 25, 1823, marriage. North Carolina marriage bonds; United States Census, Population Schedule, 1860; "Mrs. Ellis," *People's Press*, March 27, 1884; ca. 1910 photograph of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church in the possession of Thomas J. Keith; Harvey Dinkins, Peggy D. Chappell, "Fraternity Church of the Brethren," *The Village Gazette*, Clemmons Historical Society, Spring 2001, p. 2; "History of Fraternity Church," 200th anniversary brochure.

³ "Old Church to Be Remodeled," likely *Winston-Salem Journal*, 1942 clipping in Fraternity Church of the Brethren archives; Wilmer C. Austin and Hazel H. Beckner, telephone conversations with Heather Fearnbach, July 21, 2014; U. S. census, 1940.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

already existing in the room.⁴ The six-panel door on the 1950 addition's north elevation is original. Formed concrete stairs ranging from one to four steps tall lead to the three entrances. As the 1860 building's 1942 four-step entrance is elevated the highest above grade, a metal pipe railing provides security.

The current standing-seam metal roof has protected the church since 1950, replacing earlier metal and cedar shingle roofs. The 1860 meetinghouse's ceiling beams and roof trusses are hand-hewn timbers mortised and pegged together, but the balloon-frame wood rafters, ridge board, and nailing strips that support the roof appear to date to the early twentieth century. Tapered rafter ends buttress the 1860 building's deep eaves, while the balloon-frame roof system installed in 1950 to shelter the north additions includes plain rafter ends.

Two interior, square, brick chimney stacks served three stoves, two of which are intact. The sanctuary stack straddles the roof ridge near the 1860 meetinghouse's north end. A 1942 photograph illustrates the single-shouldered brick end chimney executed in common bond that rose on the 1860 lovefeast kitchen's north elevation. Builders removed that chimney to allow for the 1950 addition's construction and installed a stovepipe chimney that pierces the 1860 lovefeast kitchen's east roof slope at its junction with the 1950 addition.

The 1860 structure and the 1942 addition rest on a continuous brick foundation. Louvered wood foundation vents allow basement crawl space access as well as ventilation. The 1950 kitchen has a formed concrete foundation.

Interior

The 1860 meetinghouse contained one large open room and the lovefeast kitchen at what was then the church's northeast corner. The 1942 addition west of the kitchen increased seating capacity by creating an L-shaped sanctuary. The 1950 addition to the north resulted in a larger lovefeast kitchen.

The meetinghouse retains original, hand-planed, flush wall and ceiling boards ranging from seven to eight inches tall and attached with cut nails. The varnished flush wall sheathing rises to mid-wall height below later painted narrow beaded boards. The room also features 11 ½-inch-tall baseboards. The 1942 addition's wall and ceiling sheathing is entirely beadboard, but the wall's lower section is not painted, emulating the original room's flush and beaded board finishes. Plain quarter-round trim molding fills the corners and floor/wall junction. Narrow hardwood floors have been installed on top

⁴ Hazel Beckner remembers the primary entrance being on the south elevation at the time of her first visit in 1938, but that the door had been moved to the east elevation by the time she moved to North Carolina in November 1943. Ca. 1910 photograph of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church in the possession of Thomas J. Keith; Dinkins, "Old Church to Be Remodeled;" Hazel H. Beckner, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach, July 21, 2014.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

of the original wider pine floor boards. The painted flat-board door and window surrounds throughout the building have butt corners. A mid-twentieth-century two-panel door leads from the meetinghouse into the 1950 addition.

Two hat racks, each consisting of four metal wires held at two levels by wood spacers, span the room on either side of the double-leaf east entrance. During worship services, the racks served as the repository for male members' traditional black broad-brim hats. Ceiling-mounted mid-twentieth-century electrical light fixtures illuminate the interior.

The heating system comprises wood-burning stoves and metal flues. G. T. Glascock and Son of Greensboro produced the stove in the main room, a cast-iron "Charter" model patented in 1877. Its rectangular body includes a door on the front end and two top burners. A low platform with an adjustable register extends from the front below the door. In the 1860 lovefeast kitchen, the smaller Reeves Dixie Copper Alloy stove has an oval body supported by four flared legs. In order to insure the building's warmth during services, church members lit the stoves a few hours before worship began. Hazel Beckner recalls that for many years during the mid-twentieth century her husband's cousin Jacob H. Beckner undertook this task.⁵

The 1860 kitchen's south wall is covered with hand-planed flush boards and beadboard sheathes the remaining elevations. The room's southwest corner contains a small vertical-board closet with a board-and-batten door. A cast-iron thumb latch secures the mid-nineteenth-century two-panel door on the south elevation east of the closet. The early-twentieth-century five-raised-panel door on the room's west wall retains its original cast-iron rim lock with a porcelain knob.

East of the interior door in the 1950 lovefeast kitchen, a wide post-and-lintel mantel removed from the 1860 lovefeast kitchen's fireplace ornaments the German-sided south wall, which was initially an exterior elevation. The mantel, now solely decorative, surrounds a section of German siding rather than a firebox. Contractors demolished the 1860 lovefeast kitchen's chimney to allow for the 1950 addition's construction.

A parged chimney stack containing the stovepipe flue rises east of the mantel. The room's remaining walls are plastered with simple wood baseboards. The plaster ceiling and poured concrete floor are in good condition. A base wood kitchen cabinet and open shelves line the west wall.

Significant early furnishings remain in the possession of the building's current owner Thomas J. Keith: three long tables that feature wide single-board tops supported by pegged central and end braces and chamfered legs; the ministers' table; three benches with wide board seats, narrow back slats, and chamfered legs; and a ninety-gallon cast-iron kettle.

⁵ Hazel H. Beckner, telephone conversations with Heather Fearnbach, July 21, 2014.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

Restroom, 1980, noncontributing building

This one-story concrete-block building has German-siding in the gable ends above wood single-leaf doors that secure the men's and women's restrooms. Asphalt shingles protect the building, which rests on a poured concrete foundation and floor. A central door on the west elevation provides access to a small utility and storage room.

Integrity Assessment

The Old German Baptist Brethren meetinghouse retains mid-nineteenth-century elements including a heavy-timber frame insulated with brick nogging, simple corner boards and window and door surrounds, hand-planed flush-board interior wall and ceiling sheathing, and a two-vertical-panel interior door with a cast-iron thumb latch. Later modifications complement the original finishes. The congregation added beadboard to the 1860 meetinghouse walls' upper sections and sheathed the small lovefeast kitchen's north, west, and east walls and the 1942 gabled addition's walls and ceilings with the same material. In 1950, church members erected a larger one-room frame kitchen with a plaster ceiling and walls and updated the entire building with German siding and a new metal roof. The building has not been altered since that time.

Archaeological Potential Statement

The Old German Baptist Brethren Church is closely related to its surrounding environment. Archaeological remains such as trash pits, privies, wells, and other structural elements which may be present can provide evidence that contributes to the understanding and interpretation of the contributing structures. Information including land-use patterns, agricultural practices, social standing, and social mobility, as well as structural details, is often apparent only in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological evidence may well be an important component of the property's significance. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but artifacts and features undoubtedly exist and further investigation should be undertaken as part of the property's future development.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

Section 8. Statement of Significance

The Old German Baptist Brethren Church on Charnel Road in southwest Forsyth County was the first meetinghouse erected by the Fraternity Brethren, organized in 1775 as North Carolina's third congregation of that denomination. Worshipers gathered in their homes until 1860, when local carpenter Alexander Hampton Ellis oversaw the Brethren's construction of a one-story, front-gable-roofed, weatherboarded, single-room meetinghouse in which to hold services. The heavy-timber frame is insulated with brick nogging, a feature commonly seen in Piedmont structures erected by settlers of German heritage. The 1860 building, which is the state's oldest extant German Baptist Brethren meetinghouse, includes a small gable-roofed lovefeast kitchen that projects from what was originally its northeast (rear) corner.

The 1860 meetinghouse and its 1942 and 1950s balloon-frame rear additions reflect the Old Order Brethren's religious practices, particularly traditional worship services such as lovefeasts that are integral to the Brethren faith. The building's open plan allowed flexibility for an egalitarian arrangement whereby benches faced a long table and bench at the same floor level from which multiple elders and ministers, most of whom operated neighboring farms, collaboratively led meetings. Additional long tables were necessary in order to accommodate lovefeasts, a three-part service comprising footwashing; shared meals consisting of meat, soup, buttered bread, pickles, and water consumed in silent meditation; and communion. West of the 1860 lovefeast kitchen, the 1942 addition, which significantly increased seating capacity by providing more space for benches, is simply finished in the same manner as the original meetinghouse. The 1950 kitchen addition spanning the north elevation's full width more than doubled the space available for lovefeast preparation. The Old German Baptist Brethren Church meets National Register Criterion C as it derives its primary significance from the building's architecture dating from 1860 to 1950, which manifests the denomination's worship practices and thus also qualifies for Criteria Consideration A.

Historical Background

Area Settlement History

The Muddy Creek basin's abundant water supply, natural resources, and fertile soil proved attractive to English, Scots-Irish, and German settlers who joined the movement south to homestead by 1750. The population influx precipitated the formation of Rowan County, encompassing the area west of Orange and north of Anson Counties, in 1753. That same year, after six months of exploring North Carolina in search of suitable land to settle, Bishop August G. Spangenberg led the Moravians to purchase 98,985 Rowan County acres from English Lords Proprietor John Carteret. They called the land "Wachau"

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

after an Austrian estate that had belonged to their benefactor and spiritual leader Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf. The tract later became known as “Wachovia,” the Latin form of the name.⁶

In an effort to establish a Moravian presence in Wachovia, fifteen unmarried men traveled from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, to the North Carolina backcountry, arriving on November 17, 1753. Twelve of them remained to create a settlement called Bethabara.⁷ The majority of Moravian immigrants were craftsmen and shopkeepers, most of whom who had little farming experience but possessed the necessary skills to establish congregation towns. The colonists’ communal approach to land use and agriculture within the Wachovia Tract was thus initially quite different from that of other self-sufficient backcountry residents. The Moravian church retained ownership of the land and provided food, clothing, shelter, and medical care for residents who in turn constructed buildings, tended livestock, and planted and harvested gardens, orchards, and fields collectively.⁸

Moravian elders modified their original land use plan in order to attract settlers who required sizable tracts to farm profitably and wished to purchase rather than rent acreage. By allowing carefully-vetted colonists to move to North Carolina and acquire land from the church, they not only increased Wachovia’s work force but recruited new congregants and clientele for Moravian craftsmen and shopkeepers. The communities of Friedberg, Friedland, and Hope, established south of Salem between 1771 and 1780, contained centrally-located meetinghouses that also served as schools surrounded by individual farms, often comprising several hundred acres. This decision permitted typical dispersed frontier settlement patterns rather than the Moravians’ usual town planning approach.⁹

In a few notable instances, sizable groups of settlers relocated to Wachovia from elsewhere in the colonies. German Baptist Brethren, also called Dunkers, purchased property in the 1750s near what would become Friedberg and founded the Fraternity Brethren congregation in 1775. German families who had been acquainted with Moravians in Germany and in Broadbay, Maine, when they initially

⁶ Penelope Niven and Cornelia B. Wright, *Old Salem: The Official Guidebook* (Winston-Salem: Old Salem, Inc., 2004), 8-17; Frank V. Tursi; *Winston-Salem: A History* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1994), 30-34, 43; Michael O. Hartley and Martha B. Hartley, “There is None Like It:” The South Fork Settlements and the Development of Colonial Wachovia,” Old Salem, Inc., 2003, 15-16, 22.

⁷ Johannes Lischer, one of Bethabara’s first twelve settlers, served as the courier between Wachovia and Bethlehem, connecting the communities through frequent trips. Adelaide L. Fries, ed., *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina, Volume I, 1752-1771* (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, 1968 reprint), 73-74, 78-79; Richard W. Starbuck, email correspondence with Heather Fearnbach, November 17, 2013.

⁸ Daniel B. Thorp, “Assimilation in North Carolina’s Moravian Community;” *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (February 1986), pp. 22, 32; Darrell Spencer, *The Gardens of Salem: The Landscape History of a Moravian Town in North Carolina* (Winston-Salem: Old Salem, Inc., 1997), 21-25.

⁹ Thorp, “Assimilation in North Carolina’s Moravian Community,” 34-36; Michael O. Hartley and Martha B. Hartley, “At the Confluence of the Three Forks of Muddy Creek,” N. C. Study List Application, April 2009; S. Scott Rohrer, “Evangelism and Acculturation in the Backcountry: The Case of Wachovia, North Carolina, 1753-1830,” *Journal of the Early Republic*, Summer 2001, pp. 199-229.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

immigrated to America, rented or bought nine two-hundred-acre lots in Friedland in 1771. Tobacco farmer Daniel Smith led English-speaking Moravians from Carroll's Manor, Maryland, to settle along Muddy Creek in southwestern Wachovia in 1772. They attended worship services in Friedberg until completing a meetinghouse in 1780 and being formally recognized by Moravian elders as the Hope congregation. The English colonists' close friendships with their German-speaking neighbors resulted in acculturation, intermarriage, and the consolidation of land holdings in the Hope-Friedberg area to create large farms, some of which continue to be operated by descendants of the original owners in the twenty-first century.¹⁰

Wachovia's German Baptist Brethren

Moravian records document the presence of German Baptist Brethren in Wachovia by 1756. In February 1772, three "Dunkards" initiated negotiations to purchase one thousand acres of the Wachovia tract. Early settlers of the faith such as Jacob Schutz, who acquired two hundred acres flanking Muddy Creek's south fork in March 1773, and George Tanner, who bought an adjacent parcel, established productive farms. The Moravians' Friedberg diarist noted in May 1774 that a "dunker meeting" drew Moravian attendees and detailed three Dunkard baptisms in August 1775. Historian Roger Sappington postulates that an ordained minister would have presided over such events, thus supporting the existence of a German Baptist Brethren congregation at that time.¹¹

Community members included the families of Jacob and Anna Magdalena Yount Faw, also spelled "Pfau," and Jehu and Magdalene Croll Burkhart. Jehu Burkhart's father Jonathan Burkhart and Jacob Faw journeyed from Switzerland to the American colonies by the 1750s. Jehu, Magdalene, and their children moved to Wachovia in 1775 from Frederick County, Maryland, perhaps after learning of the opportunity from their Moravian neighbors. Jehu, a Brethren elder, guided the nascent Fraternity Brethren congregation, which was the denomination's forth in North Carolina after Uwharrie (established around 1742), Catawba (created circa 1752), and Yadkin (formed about 1760). Settlement slowed as the Revolutionary War escalated, although the Halifax Congress exempted pacifists of the Brethren, Mennonite, Moravian, and Quaker faiths from military service. Jacob and Anna Faw and their children resided in Frederickstown, Virginia, and Frederick County, Maryland, before acquiring acreage in North Carolina, where they lived on Muddy Creek by 1778. The August 10, 1791, marriage

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Schutz is also spelled Schott and Sheet in period sources. Surry County Deed Book A, p. 40, and D, p. 386; *Records of the Moravians, Vol. II*, 670, 729, 732, 744, 758, 837, 914; Roger Sappington, *The Brethren in the Carolinas: The History of the Church of the Brethren in the district of North and South Carolina* (Kingsport, Tennessee: Watson's Lithographing Company, 1971), 48-51; C. Daniel Crews and Richard W. Starbuck, *With Courage for the Future: The Story of the Moravian Church, Southern Province* (Winston-Salem: Moravian Church in America, Southern Province, 2002), 27.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

of the Faw's son Isaac and the Burkhardt's daughter Magdalene epitomizes the close bonds between Wachovia's Brethren householders.¹²

As the German Baptist Brethren presence in Wachovia grew through the 1790s, the community encouraged their neighbors to join them in worship. The Moravians' Salem diarist noted a four-hour "Dunker" meeting on June 23, 1799, that constituted a service held in German and English and three baptisms in Muddy Creek's South Fork with more than three hundred witnesses. Jehu Burkhardt oversaw the Fraternity congregation until his 1809 departure for Montgomery County, Ohio, after which Isaac Faw assumed the Brethren's guidance until his 1835 death. Isaac's wife Magdalene died the same year, and the couple's son Jacob, born in 1810, married Sarah Martin. The Faw farm generated agricultural products sufficient to supply the family's needs as well as surplus to sell in Salem. Jacob studied to become a church elder, exploring denominational doctrine with Brethren minister John Bowman of Rocky Mount, Virginia, in 1838. After receiving baptismal rites and ordination, Jacob accepted in 1839 the charge to lead Fraternity's communicants. Bowman and other Franklin County, Virginia, Brethren elders subsequently visited him in North Carolina and preached several times a year. Fraternity Church members met in their homes until erecting a meetinghouse in 1860 on a 0.3-acre lot donated to them by Jacob Faw and Edwin Hanes, who owned the surrounding farms. Fraternity became one of nine congregations in the First District of Virginia upon that entity's 1866 creation.¹³

Jacob Faw served as Fraternity's minister for just over four decades, maintaining strong relationships with Virginia Brethren as well as Moravian and other neighbors who attended weekly services and annual meetings. Fraternity Brethren often accommodated out-of-town visitors in their homes. South of the church at Jacob and Sarah Faw's house, a small room accessed only from the porch provided respite for Brethren guests.¹⁴

¹² Isaac Faw's son Isaac Jr. (1802-1836) was also active in the congregation but passed away shortly after his 1834 marriage to Mary Ann Martin. North Carolina Land Grant Book 67, p. 153; *Records of the Moravians, Vol. III*, 1064, 1207, 1343, 1399; *Records of the Moravians, Vol. IV*, 1925; *Records of the Moravians, Vol. VI*, 2662; marriage records; death certificates; A. B. Faust and Gaius Marcus Brumbaugh, *Lists of Swiss Emigrants in the Eighteenth Century to the American Colonies* (Washington, D. C.: National Genealogical Society, 1925), 145-146; Amy Faw and Linda Faw, *The Faw Family Record* (Chilcothe, Illinois: privately printed 1955, revised 1964), unpaginated; Sappington, *The Brethren in the Carolinas*, 51-53, 79, 82-83, 97-100; Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed., *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Volume 3* (Philadelphia, PA, and Oak Brook, IL: The Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc., 1984), 1490.

¹³ The 1860 land transaction encompassed forty-eight square poles. Forsyth County Deed Book 3, page 466; *Records of the Moravians, Vol. VI*, 2624, 2636, 2662, 2909, 2920; *Records of the Moravians, Vol. VIII*, 3628, 4210; *Branson's Business Directories*, 1867, 1869, 1878, 1884; photocopies of selected Brethren Church minutes 1841-1960 in the possession of Thomas J. Keith; D. H. Ziglar, *A History of the Brethren in Virginia* (Elgin, Illinois: Brethren Publishing House, 1908), 151, 153-154; Sappington, *The Brethren in the Carolinas*, 98-101; Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed., *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Volume 1* (Philadelphia, PA, and Oak Brook, IL: The Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc., 1984), 480-481, 511.

¹⁴ Thomas J. Keith, email correspondence with Heather Fearnbach, July 2014.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

Fraternity's membership numbered sixty-seven in 1881, soon after which Jacob Faw experienced profound personal losses and professional challenges. Sarah died in 1882 at the age of sixty-seven. Her death followed that of their forty-year-old son Jonah earlier that year. Jonah's older brother Amos, well-regarded as a Brethren pastor since his 1876 ordination, delivered the Easter Sunday address prior to his death in 1883 at the age of forty-four. During this period, Jacob Faw mediated tension between conservative and progressive Brethren that resulted in the congregation's 1885 division. He then organized twenty-two communicants, about a third of the Fraternity Brethren, to form a church that maintained traditional practices such as uniform dress and worship without music or Sunday school. Jacob and Sarah Faw's grandsons Charles Rufus Faw and James Franklin Robertson, who had perpetuated the family's legacy of religious service by becoming ministers in 1883, led the New Order congregation. At the time of Jacob Faw's 1887 death, Old German Baptist Brethren membership had grown to approximately seventy. The congregation diminished during the twentieth century, numbering about twenty-two in 1952 and declining thereafter. Pastors through 1963 were Jacob and Sarah Faw's son-in-law Levi Herman Sides; three Beckner brothers: John Ezra, William Abram, and Benjamin Elias; William Beckner's son Clyde Samuel Beckner and son-in-law Joel Harvey Bowman; and Joel Bowman's son Levi Harvey Bowman. After that time, elders Ezra Rutrough, Russell Knaus, and Adam Rutrough sequentially orchestrated worship until 1999.¹⁵

Both the Old German Baptist Brethren and the New Order of the Brethren held services in the 1860 meetinghouse until 1900, when elder Charles Rufus Faw and his wife Rosa conveyed one acre one mile north of the original property to the New Order. Faw, whose vocations included architectural draftsman, educator, and Brethren minister, designed the weatherboarded front-gable-roofed sanctuary completed that year and crafted its pulpit. Ross Sides assisted with the structure's planning and built a drop-leaf table and other furnishings. The congregation also included other carpenters and masons who donated their services, resulting in a total construction cost of less than \$400. By 1908, the New Order congregation at 3760 Fraternity Church Road comprised 115 members overseen by Charles Rufus Faw, James Franklin Robertson, and assistant pastor Jeremiah Barnhart. By 1975, the

¹⁵ Levi Herman Sides (1859-1916) married Jacob and Sarah Faw's daughter Nancy (1853-1926). Their daughters wed members of the Beckner family. Sallie Maria Sides (1875-1946) married William Abram Beckner (1872-1966) and Cora Rebecca Sides (1877-1960) wed Benjamin Elias Beckner (1878-1947). William Abram and Sallie Beckner's daughter Nancy Elizabeth (1898-1983) married Joel Harvey Bowman (1903-1986). *Records of the Moravians, Vol. XII*; 6266; *Records of the Moravians, Vol. XIII*, 6843, 6858, 7173; gravemarkers; "Mrs. Sarah Faw," *People's Press*, March 2, 1882; "Rev. Amos Faw," *People's Press*, April 5, 1883; "Rev. Jacob Faw," *People's Press*, June 8, 1887; F. P. Tucker, "Elder Jacob Faw—Biographical Sketch of an Exemplary Man—His Faith—The Dunkard Church, Etc.," *The Union Republican*, June 16, 1887, p. 1; photocopies of selected Brethren Church minutes 1841-1960 in the possession of Thomas J. Keith; Bill Sharpe, "Dunkard Clings to Customs of Pilgrims 200 Years Ago," unidentified evening newspaper clipping, likely *Twin City Sentinel*, November 30, 1936; Sappington, *The Brethren in the Carolinas*, 98-101; Nancy Jamison (William Beckner's great-granddaughter), "Stepping Back into the Sands of Time: Beckner/Sides History Tour, July 8, 2000," Boones Mill, Virginia.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

congregation had grown to 270. As of 2014, Fraternity Church of the Brethren enrolls 172 communicants.¹⁶

Although the Old German Baptist Brethren Church on Charnel Road had a much smaller membership, the congregation regularly held worship services and annual meetings attended by Brethren from Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and other North Carolina communities. Forsyth County native and Old German Baptist Brethren Church member Paul W. Beckner met his wife Hazel Hubbard, then a member of Peters Creek Church of the Brethren in Roanoke, Virginia, at such a gathering. The couple married on November 7, 1943, and resided in a refurbished four-room tenant house on the Fraternity Church Road dairy farm owned by his parents, Clyde and Margaret Beckner. Nine years later, Paul and Hazel engaged Dewey Johnson and two other men to construct a home for them on a Kinnamon Road tract they had purchased from Paul's parents. Soon after the dwelling's February 1953 completion, the young couple began providing accommodations for Brethren visiting for worship services or passing through the area. Hazel Beckner remembers hosting thirty-three guests in conjunction with the annual meeting on the third Sunday in September one year. This significant undertaking entailed providing lodging after the Saturday evening lovefeast, breakfast on Sunday morning, and lunch after Sunday worship. Many out-of-town Brethren traveled to Winston-Salem by train, typically arriving on Saturday morning and leaving on Sunday afternoon.¹⁷

The Beckners' farming operation was successful, generating dairy products, eggs, beef, pork, and produce that the family sold on a Friday delivery route that extended from Hope to downtown Winston-Salem. However, as the Old German Baptist Brethren Church membership continued to dwindle and their teenage son was without peers, the Beckners elected to move in 1961 to a Brethren community in Virginia and sold their farm at a loss. Paul's parents, Clyde and Margaret Beckner, his

¹⁶ James Franklin Robertson's parents were Christian and Rebecca Faw Robertson and Charles Rufus Faw's parents were Amos and Rebecca Sides Faw. The New Order congregation added rear Sunday school classrooms to the frame church in 1925 and brick-veneered and remodeled the sanctuary in the Gothic Revival style in 1931. Subsequent improvements include the excavation of a basement to create fellowship hall and kitchen in 1953. General contractor Wilson-Covington executed the \$40,000 wing comprising a large foyer, church office, and classrooms dedicated on April 9, 1961. Forsyth County Deed Book 62, p. 138; Ziglar, *A History of the Brethren in Virginia*, 154; WSCD, 1899-1930; U. S. censuses, 1900-1930; death certificates; "Faw Funeral To Be Today," *Winston-Salem Journal*, December 15, 1930; "Charles R. Faw," *Twin City Sentinel*, December 15, 1930; Lillian King Markland, J. P. Roberston, "A Brief History of Fraternity, Church of the Brethren," August 2, 1937, typewritten document in the Fraternity Church of the Brethren archives; Interviews with Emmert Bright, Irene Crater, Lucille Nelson, and others by Dewey Williard and Karen Haynes, published as "Reflections on Fraternity," a series of articles that appeared in the *Fraternity Press* beginning in March 1988; Historic Dunkard Church on Banks of Muddy Creek Will Be Dedicated Today," *Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel*, September 13, 1931, p. C-6; Fraternity Church of the Brethren, "Services of Dedication," April 9, 1961; "200th Anniversary Celebration, 1775-1975, History and Homecoming Program," August 23-24, 1975, pp. 8-9; Fraternity Church of the Brethren; David Kindy, Fraternity Church of the Brethren pastor, conversation with Heather Fearnbach, March 14, 2014.

¹⁷ Hazel H. Beckner, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach, July 21, 2014; Forsyth County Deed Book 603, p. 77.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

brother Lewis H. Beckner, Lewis's wife Rachel, and the couple's children followed in 1962. Other Brethren left Forsyth County around the same time. Some of the Bowman family relocated to Virginia as well as to California in 1963.¹⁸

Franklin County, Virginia, native Wilmer C. Austin also met his wife, Clara Marie Beckner of Forsyth County, at a Brethren church event. Clara was Jacob H. and Rosabelle Rutrough Beckner's daughter. Her uncle, church elder Ezra Rutrough, who lived in Franklin County, Virginia, for most of his life, married the couple in Forsyth County on May 27, 1951. From the following year through 1999, the Austins remained active members of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church. Wilmer Austin remembers that beginning in the mid-1960s the congregation held services every other Sunday, alternating with attending meetings in Virginia Brethren churches. Although membership dropped to eleven in 1964 and seven by 1980, bi-weekly services and annual meetings continued through the 1980s. The large annual gatherings then ceased for a few years, but resumed from 1995 until 1999. At that time, Wilmer and Clara Austin, their son Donnie Wayne Austin, his wife Rachel Ann Bowman, and their children were the only resident members.¹⁹

In July 1999, the Austins as trustees sold the almost one-half-acre property to district attorney Thomas J. Keith, who owns the neighboring farms that had once belonged to the Faws and Haneses. The Austins relocated to a Brethren community in Ferrum—a small Franklin County, Virginia, town—where Wilmer and Donnie continued to work as carpenters. Church contents auctioned in August 1999 included benches, tables, kitchen wares, and implements necessary to conduct lovefeasts and other worship services. Thomas J. Keith acquired significant early furnishings: three long tables that feature wide single-board tops supported by pegged central and end braces and chamfered legs; the ministers' table; three benches with wide board seats, narrow back slats, and chamfered legs; and a ninety-gallon cast-iron kettle.²⁰

German Baptist Brethren Denominational Presence in North Carolina

The German Baptist Brethren's North Carolina presence has been nominal, comprising forty-three congregations beginning with Uwharrie around 1742 and culminating with Statesville Fellowship's 1962 creation. Sunday services, lovefeasts, and annual meetings strengthened ties among North

¹⁸ Hazel H. Beckner, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach, July 21, 2014.

¹⁹ Wilmer C. Austin, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach, July 21, 2014; marriage certificate; Durnbaugh, ed., *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Volume 1*, 511; Joe Goodman, "There Are Few Old Order Dunkards Left in this Area," *Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel*, September 13, 1964;

²⁰ The 1999 auction proceeds were divided among several Brethren congregations to subsidize various needs. Clara Marie Beckner Austin, born on November 12, 1931, died on September 27, 2008. Forsyth County Deed Book 2079, p. 1187; gravemarker; Les Longenecker, auctioneer, notice for private auction to be held on August 19, 1999; Charles D. Thompson Jr., *The Old German Baptist Brethren: Faith, Farming, and Change in the Virginia Blue Ridge* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 39-40.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

Carolina's Brethren communities and those in Virginia. Fraternity (1775) was one of six eighteenth-century parishes including Uwharrie, Catawba (ca. 1752), Yadkin (ca. 1760), Dutchman Creek (ca. 1780), and Flat Rock (ca. 1795). It was not until 1844 that Yancey County worshippers founded the seventh North Carolina congregation, followed by Brummetts Creek (1845); Pleasant Valley (1870, later called Pleasant Ridge); Mill Creek (1878); Green River Cove (1880); Peak Creek (ca. 1888) and Mount Carmel (1890), which later merged as the Church of Ashe County; Long Hope (1890); St. Paul (1891); Pleasant Grove (1894); and Blue Ridge (1897). Fraternity's Old German Baptist Brethren Church, created after tension between conservative and progressive worshippers resulted in the group's 1885 split, was the state's only Old Order congregation.²¹

The Old German Baptist Brethren, a sect formed in 1881, remains the most conservative of the denomination's branches, perpetuating worship practices such as the three-part, several-hour-long lovefeast ceremony that begins with ritual footwashing followed by an agape (shared) meal and communion. Seating for services is segregated by sex. Although congregations execute lovefeasts with slight variation, in most cases participants pour water into large basins in order to wash and dry the feet of another person, thus emulating the actions of Jesus Christ when he washed his disciples' feet before they consumed bread and wine prior to his execution. The Brethren adopted the footwashing practice to emphasize the importance of service, humility, and unity, as well as to symbolize the cleansing of the body and mind necessary before partaking of the eucharist. Brethren agape meals typically encompass meat, soup, buttered bread, pickles, and water consumed in silent meditation. Some congregations conclude with pie and coffee. After finishing the meal, participants clear the tables prior to scripture readings, exhortations, and communion bread and wine consumption. Communicants take a small piece of bread from a circulated loaf and a sip of wine from one of two cups, one passed from person to person on the men's side of the aisle and one on the women's side. New Order Brethren typically sing hymns between the three lovefeast stages, but services held by Old Order Brethren do not include any form of music.²²

Old Order congregations also employ strict uniform dress codes to reflect beliefs in pacificism and nonconformity. Men maintain long beards and wear black broad-brim hats, white stand-up collar shirts, and dark jackets, vests, and pants. Women cover their heads with white prayer caps and dark bonnets and wear shoulder capes and aprons over long dresses accompanied by dark stockings and shoes.²³

²¹ Durnbaugh, ed., *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Volume 3*, 1490, 1502.

²² Durnbaugh, ed., *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Volume 1*, 480, 967, 969; Carl F. Bowman, *Brethren Society: The Cultural Transformation of a "Peculiar People"* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 59.

²³ Durnbaugh, ed., *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Volume 1*, 480, 967, 969.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

German Baptist Brethren Meetinghouse Architecture Context

As with most faiths, German Baptist Brethren initially gathered in their homes to worship. By the 1830s, however, North Carolina congregations reflected a national propensity to construct rectangular one-room meetinghouses without embellishment or rigid interior arrangement. The plain buildings' open plans facilitated their use for secular community events as well as religious services. Entrances were often located on a long elevation rather than in a gable end. On the interior, instead of the popular Protestant orientation toward an elevated pulpit, benches faced a long table and bench at the same floor level from which multiple elders and ministers collaboratively led services. Additional long tables were necessary in order to accommodate lovefeast meals and communion. Meetinghouse design manifested the need for a kitchen from which to prepare and serve food, a fact reflected in popular nomenclature as historian Carl F. Bowman notes that early-nineteenth-century meetinghouses were sometimes known as "lovefeast houses." Simple, functional architecture was paramount. In 1846, Brethren prohibitions regarding "superfluity" and extravagance included admonishments against erecting costly residences and meetinghouses and filling them with fine furnishings, carpetings, and paintings.²⁴

The 1860 Old German Baptist Brethren Church, which is completely devoid of ornament, was suitably austere. The heavy-timber frame is insulated with brick nogging, a feature commonly seen in Piedmont structures erected by settlers of German heritage. The building reflects mid-nineteenth-century architectural trends in its simple corner pilasters, hand-planed flush-board wall and ceiling sheathing, and two-vertical-panel interior door with a cast-iron thumb latch. The earliest bench and table arrangement is unknown, but was likely similar to the configuration remembered by Hazel Beckner at the time of her first visit in 1938, when pews faced north in front of the double-leaf entrance that provided access from the south gable end. Two windows pierced each of the side elevations.²⁵

Brethren doctrine dictates that "God's people" constitute churches rather than structures, making the place of worship's appearance and interior arrangement immaterial.²⁶ Around 1897, Brethren elder Daniel Vaniman addressed the need for more up-to-date and efficient meetinghouse design and arrangement in a treatise promoted in periodicals such as *The Missionary Visitor* for several subsequent decades. His suggestions included adopting popular "neat and becoming" architectural

²⁴ Photocopies of selected Brethren Church minutes 1841-1960 and list of love feast table settings and meal contents in the possession of Thomas J. Keith; Bowman, *Brethren Society*, 61, 64, 81; "Dunkards Hold 'Big Meeting' Near Clemmons," *Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel*, September 13, 1964.

²⁵ A photograph of the 1860 building appears in Lillian King Markland's 1931 article, "Historic Dunkard Church on Banks of Muddy Creek Will Be Dedicated Today." Hazel H. Beckner, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach, July 21, 2014.

²⁶ James C. Vandermark, "The Brethren Adventure," September 1989, typewritten document in the Fraternity Church of the Brethren archives, p. 9.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

styles such as Gothic Revival, adding Sunday school rooms, and installing “practical pews” that featured hinged rear leaves that could be raised to create tables. This innovation allowed all members of the congregation to remain facing toward the elders’ table during lovefeast services.²⁷ The mid-twentieth-century pews in the Old German Baptist Brethren Church reflect Vaniman’s design standard, as the slatted backs support attached three-board table tops.

The twentieth-century modifications to the Old German Baptist Brethren Church manifest the congregation’s pragmatism as they are simply executed and greatly improved the building’s functionality. The gabled addition completed in 1942 has beadboard-covered walls and ceilings that require little maintenance and match earlier interior finishes. The increased seating capacity and change in primary entrance location from the south gable end to the east elevation did not impact worship service execution, as pews still faced a long table and bench at the same floor level from which multiple elders and ministers collaboratively led services. According to Hazel Beckner, who joined the congregation in 1943, pew placement simply shifted from facing north to an arrangement whereby most pews faced west, with a few aligned east/west flanking the elders’ table at the west elevation’s center. A lovefeast meal serving plan that postdates the 1950 addition illustrates pews facing west divided by a central aisle, with the women seated closest to the kitchen and the men on the aisle’s south side.²⁸ The east entrance, is, like the original entrance, at the rear of the sanctuary. It also allowed for more convenient access from the driveway and parking area adjacent to the east elevation.

The spacious 1950 kitchen provided the space necessary to perpetuate traditional religious practices such as lovefeast that are integral to the Brethren faith. Hazel Beckner recalled that a Virginia Brethren minister visiting in 1949 advised the congregation to build the kitchen addition in order to better accommodate large gatherings. Ample room for food preparation, water heating, and dishwashing was particularly critical for the two-day annual meetings, which comprised multiple services including lovefeast. The congregation also hoped that the updated facility would help to attract worshippers and retain members.²⁹

The 1950 kitchen addition provided a well-equipped area from which members orchestrated lovefeast meals through May 1999. A jacket, or metal frame built to accommodate the fires needed to heat two large cast-iron pots, occupied a portion of the kitchen adjacent to the stovepipe chimney flue. The congregation used one pot to heat water and the other to cook meat and soup. Women contributed bread, butter, and side dishes they made at home. As there was no well, members brought water from their farms until the owners of the house southeast of the church dug a well and allowed the congregation to use it. During large gatherings, a wood barrel with a spigot provided drinking water

²⁷ Daniel Vaniman, “The House of God,” *The Missionary Visitor*, April 1912, pp. 115-118.

²⁸ Undated (post 1950) diagram showing bench arrangement and love feast serving plan in the possession of Thomas J. Keith.

²⁹ Hazel H. Beckner, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach, July 21, 2014.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 16 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

cooled with a chunk of ice procured on the morning of the event. Members cleaned dishes in large metal wash tubs and stored them in the cabinets on kitchen's west elevation. The congregation never added running water or an electric stove.³⁰

Although auctioneers sold in August 1999 some furnishings, kitchen appliances, and implements needed for lovefeast, significant mid-nineteenth-century items remain in the possession of the building's current owner Thomas J. Keith. Three long tables feature wide single-board tops supported by pegged central and end braces and chamfered legs. After the 1942 addition, the ministers' table occupied the space between the windows on the west elevation. Three benches with wide board seats, narrow back slats, and chamfered legs represent early seating. The congregation used the ninety-gallon cast-iron cooking pot to prepare lovefeast meat and soup.³¹

Historic Brethren churches in North Carolina

Architectural surveys indicate that only a few historic Brethren churches remain in North Carolina. The ca. 1910 Golden Valley Church of the Brethren in rural Rutherford County is an intact example of a once ubiquitous but now rare front-gable-roofed form sheathed with original weatherboards and pedimented double-hung wood windows with six-over-six sash. Shed canopies surmount the two five-panel doors on the gable end. The building rests on a stone foundation and is protected by a metal roof.³²

The 1860 Old German Baptist Brethren meetinghouse, the 1900 Fraternity Church of the Brethren, and the ca. 1910 front-gable-roofed Golden Valley Church all initially manifested the popular front-gable-roofed form perceived as being "churchly." The primary entrances of many Baptist, German Reformed, Lutheran, and Mennonite meetinghouse entrances throughout North Carolina were initially located on long elevations, but gable-end entrances prevailed by the late nineteenth century.³³

Nineteenth-century heavy-timber and balloon frame Forsyth County churches

The Old German Baptist Brethren Church is one of four nineteenth-century heavy-timber-frame sanctuaries identified in Forsyth County architectural surveys. The earliest, the 1809 Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church, stands at what is now 150 Clubhouse Circle in the county-owned Tanglewood Park near Clemmons. Local farmer Henry Eccles's role in erecting the front-gable-roofed church is

³⁰ Wilber C. Austin and Hazel H. Beckner, telephone conversations with Heather Fearnbach, July 21, 2014.

³¹ Les Longenecker, auctioneer, notice for private auction to be held on August 19, 1999; Thomas J. Keith, conversations with Heather Fearnbach, 2014.

³² Nancy Van Dolsen, "Historic Architecture Survey Report, SR 1700, Rutherford County," NCDOT, January 2000, pp. 7-11.

³³ Michael T. Southern, senior architectural historian, North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, email correspondence with Heather Fearnbach, March 10, 2014.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 17 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

documented by the inscription of his initials and the date on a framing member. Heavy-timber corner posts and plates are visible on the interior, which features flush-board sheathing and a balcony secured by a pierced balustrade and accessed by a straight run of stairs. The congregation remodeled the building in the late nineteenth century, adding two-over-two sash windows, a double-leaf paneled door, a gabled entrance porch, and weatherboards, most of which are intact. A small shed-roofed apse projects from the west (rear) elevation. Simple wood benches comprising wide board seats and backs face the elevated altar platform. Although the building was moved about three hundred yards from its original site in 1932, contractors returned it to the earlier location in 1954 as part of a renovation that included the steeple's construction.³⁴

The Red Bank Baptist congregation organized in 1859 and soon erected a heavy-timber-frame building that is the core of the sanctuary at 8104 Red Bank Road in north Forsyth County near Germanton. The circa 1860 structure is the second-oldest in the Pilot Mountain Baptist Association.³⁵ Like the Old German Baptist Church of the Brethren, the one-story, front-gable-roofed, weatherboarded sanctuary was sheathed with German siding by the mid-twentieth century. The building has a projecting gabled vestibule addition with a recessed double-leaf entry, a hip-roofed steeple, replacement six-over-six sash windows, and gabled wings extending across the rear and from the north elevation. Vinyl siding has been installed since 1979.

In 1823, Moravian land administrator and botanist Lewis David de Schweintz conveyed just over ten acres of what is now Forsyth County's southern section to eighteen men who desired to provide a nondenominational place of worship for area residents. They constructed a brush arbor and a log sanctuary named Pleasant Fork Church that served various groups for many years. The property owners erected the heavy-timber frame sanctuary at what is now 1412 Pleasant Fork Church Road around 1868 after the log building burned.³⁶ The front-gable-roofed sanctuary features raised-five-panel double-leaf doors, a boxed cornice with gable-end returns, a pyramidal-roofed steeple, a metal standing-seam roof, and a stone foundation. Operable two-panel shutters secure most of the original tall nine-over-six sash windows.

By the late nineteenth century, Forsyth County builders transitioned from heavy-timber to balloon framing, availing themselves of readily-available dimensional lumber. Most churches erected during

³⁴ United States Census, Population Schedule, 1860; "History: Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church," undated Tanglewood Park information packet; Gardner Gidley, "Tanglewood - Old Church," County Historic Site Inventory, April 9, 1971; Evelyn Wilson, "Mt. Pleasant Methodist Episcopal Church," undated report in survey file.

³⁵ Harry Goble, Red Bank Baptist Church pastor, interview with Gwynne S. Taylor, August 20, 1979.

³⁶ Various sources provide different dates for the second church's completion date. The cornerstone gives an 1868 date and it appears that a sanctuary was dedicated on March 12, 1869, but several newspaper articles assert an 1871 construction date. The congregation that became Advent Moravian met in Pleasant Fork Church from 1845 to 1897. *Twin City Sentinel*, August 25, 1951; John Herndon, "Service to Mark 88th Anniversary," 1956; "Pleasant Fork," 1967; Mamie Braddy, "Pleasant Fork to Elect New Officials," no date, articles from church scrapbook.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 18 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

the period remained simple in form and finish, with front-gable-roofed, weatherboarded buildings prevailing. Growing congregations often demolished earlier log and heavy-timber frame structures or expanded them. Many additions, like those at the Old German Baptist Brethren Church, are devoid of ornamentation. However, new construction sometimes manifested popular Gothic Revival-style elements such as pointed-arched windows and bell and/or entrance towers. Examples include Union United Methodist Church, where parishioners replaced an earlier meetinghouse with a balloon-frame sanctuary featuring a three-tier corner belltower erected in 1885 at 8935 Shallowford Road at a cost of \$1,100.00.³⁷ The 1889 balloon-frame Gothic Revival-style African American Saint Paul United Methodist Church at 401 New Street in Kernersville provided more expansive worship space than the congregation's previous heavy-timber-frame Main Street Methodist Episcopal Church sanctuary.³⁸

The Hope Moravian congregation erected in 1896 the sanctuary at 2759 Hope Church Road, which stands east of the original church site and cemetery only a few miles northeast of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church. In 1923, builders executed the projecting entrance vestibule with a bellcast roof and hip-roofed belltower designed by C. Rufus Faw as well as the rear addition including a lovefeast kitchen, four Sunday school classrooms, and a basement fellowship hall. A cross-gable wing with additional classrooms followed in 1950 and a two-story brick education building in 1964. The church, which was extensively remodeled in 1976, has pointed-arch windows with textured glass, a replacement double-leaf front door surmounted by a fanlight, and bonnet hood above the entrances.³⁹

Other late-nineteenth-century balloon-frame churches include the front-gable-roofed Benefit Church at 3270 Benefit Church Road in Kernersville, which retains two front doors surmounted by two-light transoms on the south elevation, but has been otherwise altered since 1979. The front-gable-roofed, frame, Gothic Revival-style, turn-of-the-twentieth-century Bethlehem Methodist Episcopal Church at 5390 Pine Hall Road near Walkertown vicinity features a small corner belltower with a pyramidal hip roof extending, a projecting front-gable vestibule, and pointed-arch opaque-stained-glass windows with pointed louvered shutters.

Congregation members often assisted local builders with church construction. James T. Parrish drew the plans for the front-gable-roofed 1898 Elm Grove Methodist Church at 7240 Reynolda Road in the Seward vicinity and helped to build it. The vinyl-sided sanctuary is characterized by a central projecting belltower with two splayed pent roof tiers, a splayed pent roof hood over the entry, and four-over-four sash windows with opaque stained glass. John M. Long, a local carpenter, installed the interior woodwork, fabricated the pulpit, and served on the first Board of Trustees. The sanctuary

³⁷ Mary Haynes Dalton, "West Bend (Little Yadkin Township) North Carolina: Historical Records and Memories," 2005, manuscript at the Lewisville Branch of the Forsyth County Public Library.

³⁸ Sarah Friende Hamlin, "Saint Paul United Methodist Church, Kernersville, North Carolina: History," July 1, 1991.

³⁹ "Charles R. Faw," *Twin City Sentinel*, December 15, 1930; Crews and Starbuck, *With Courage for the Future*, 100, 426, 525, 548, 609, 654, 697.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 19 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

interior is very similar to that of Pleasant Grove Methodist Church, where the craftsmanship is attributed to Long and T. Houston Hunter. Each church features a wooden arch with a cross outlining the chapel area.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Mildred Doub, interview with Gwynne S. Taylor, February 15, 1980.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 20 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 21 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 22 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 23 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 24 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 25 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 26 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

Section 10. Geographical Data

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Latitude: 36.010966
Longitude: -80.341871

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church are indicated by the bold line on the enclosed map. Scale: three-eighths of an inch equals approximately twenty-four feet.

Boundary Justification

The Old German Baptist Brethren Church occupies the same 0.3-acre tax parcel conveyed to the congregation in 1860.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 11 Page 27 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

Section 11. Additional Documentation

Photo Catalog

Photographs by Heather Fearnbach, 3334 Nottingham Road, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, February 20, 2014, and September 3, 2014. Digital images located at the North Carolina SHPO.

1. Northeast oblique
2. South elevation and restroom building
3. Southeast oblique
4. Northwest oblique
5. 1860 meetinghouse, looking southeast
6. 1860 meetinghouse, looking south
7. 1860 meetinghouse, looking north into 1942 addition
8. 1860 lovefeast kitchen, southeast corner
9. 1950 lovefeast kitchen, northeast corner
10. 1950 lovefeast kitchen, southeast corner

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

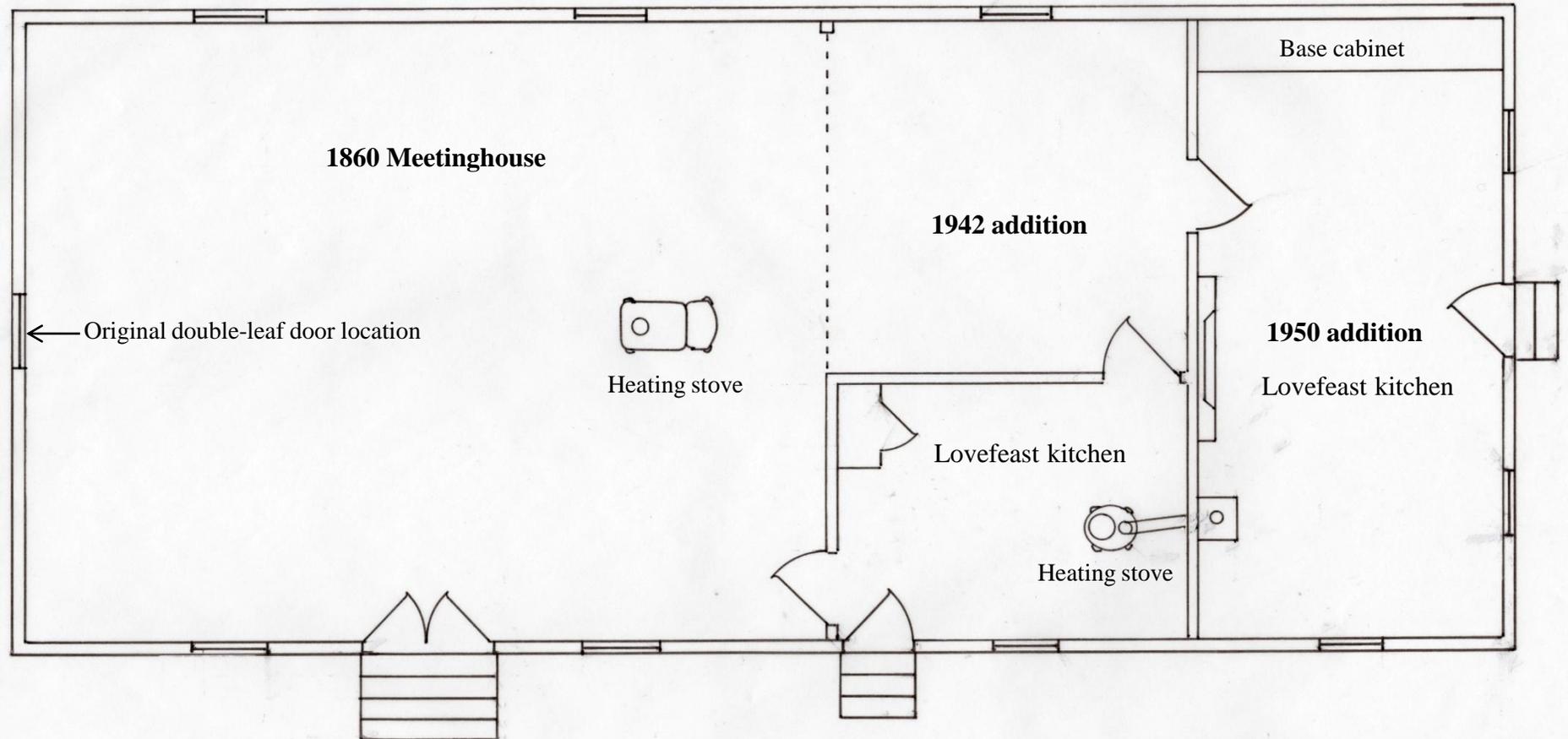
Section number 11 Page 28 Old German Baptist Brethren Church
Forsyth County, NC

Historic Photograph



Ca. 1910 photograph of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church
from the collection of Thomas J. Keith

**Old German Baptist Brethren Church Floor Plan
4916 Charnel Road
Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, North Carolina**



Floor plan measured by Heather Fearnbach and Emily Fearnbach on February 20, 2014, and drawn by Emily Fearnbach on March 7, 2014

Reduced from 1/4" = 1' scale to fit page

National Register Boundary Map



Old German Baptist Brethren Church
4916 Charnel Road
Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, North Carolina

Heather Fearnbach, Fearnbach History Services, Inc. / March 2014

Base aerial photo courtesy of Forsyth County GIS at http://maps2.co.forsyth.nc.us/geodata_08/

