

COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Historic Resources

Stefanie K. Taillon
*Secretary of Natural
and Historic Resources*

2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

Julie V. Langan
Director

Tel: (804) 367-2323
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www.dhr.virginia.gov

August 12, 2025

Christian Goodwin, County Administrator
Louisa County
Louisa County Administration Building
1 Woolfork Ave, Ste 301
Louisa, VA 23093

Re: Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery, Louisa County

Dear Administrator Goodwin:

The Department of Historic Resources, Virginia's historic preservation office, has received a completed nomination for the above referenced resource. The DHR is planning to present the proposed nomination to the Virginia State Review Board and the Virginia Board of Historic Resources for recommendation to the National Register of Historic Places and for inclusion in the Virginia Landmarks Register.

For your review and comment, **enclosed** is a copy of the draft nomination as it is to be presented to the Boards on **Thursday, September 18, 2025**. Your comments will be forwarded to the SHPO Director and the Boards along with the nomination for consideration. Should you have any questions regarding the nomination or the register process, please contact Austin Walker, National Register Program Manager, at (804) 482-6439 or austin.walker@dhr.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

Jolene L. U. Smith
Director, Division of Resource Information & Register

Enclosure

Western Region Office
962 Kime Lane
Salem, VA 24153
Tel: (540) 387-5443
Fax: (540) 387-5446

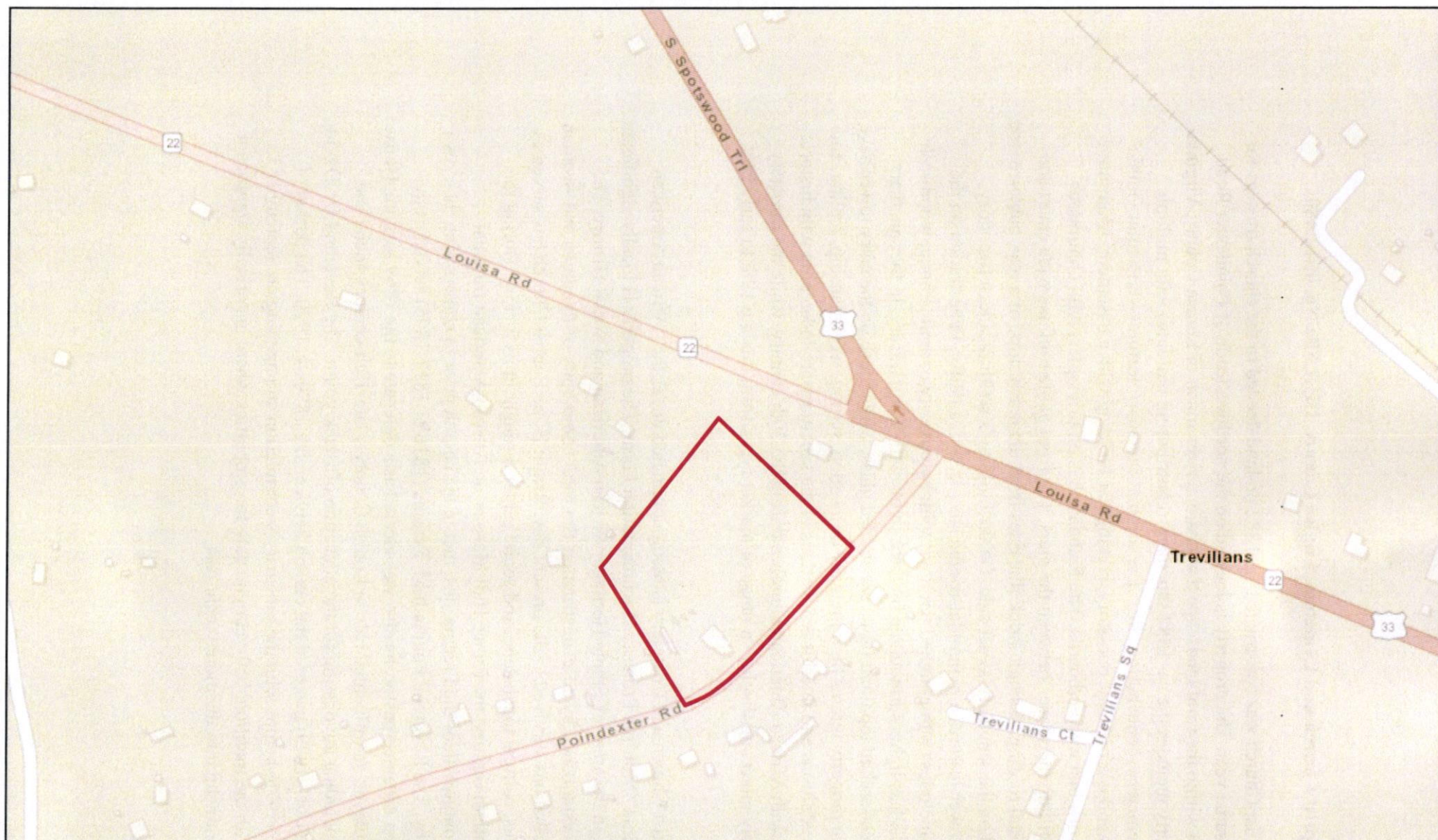
Northern Region Office
5357 Main Street
PO Box 519
Stephens City, VA 22655
Tel: (540) 868-7029
Fax: (540) 868-7033

Eastern Region Office
2801 Kensington Avenue
Richmond, VA 23221
Tel: (804) 367-2323
Fax: (804) 367-2391

Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery, Louisa County, DHR File No. 054-5480


Bright Hope Baptist Church was constructed ca. 1882 on land deeded to the church trustees for one dollar in the same year. The property is located on the northwest side of Poindexter Road (State Route 613) within the rural landscape that characterizes much of Louisa County, Virginia. The church property includes the ca. 1882 sanctuary (contributing building) with multiple additions and a cemetery (contributing site). The original sanctuary features vernacular Gothic Revival elements and is a one-bay, one-story, rectangular building with a basement. Aluminum siding covers the original weatherboards. The foundation is on brick piers with continuous concrete block infilling the spaces between the piers. The front gable roof has wide eaves and standing-seam metal roofing. A single brick flue rises from the north slope of a rear, gable-roofed extension located on the sanctuary's east side. On the building's south façade, a two-story, projecting entry tower features a pyramidal-roofed steeple with a belfry. Fenestration on the original building includes Gothic-arched windows with two-over-two, double hung, wood sash featuring pebbled-glass lights surmounted by three lights with wood tracery. In the sanctuary windows, the lancet-arched top three lights are stained glass, while those on the entry tower have pebbled glass. The property retains high integrity of location, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association. Rear additions and interior renovations in the sanctuary are in keeping with historic trends associated with African American churches during the 20th century, while the cemetery remains completely intact and displays a range of marker types from the late 19th to early 21st century.

Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery is being nominated under the "African American Churches in Virginia" Multiple Property Documentation Form. The property is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: African American and Social History. The congregation was established by a Reconstruction Era rural community of freedmen and -women in Louisa County that has survived to the present day. Bright Hope Baptist Church has served as a community nexus, cultural touchstone, and social center throughout its history. During the early to mid-twentieth century, the Prince Hall Masons, an African American fraternal organization and outgrowth of the Freemasons, met in the church prior to constructing their own meeting hall nearby. The Reverend Fountain M. Perkins (1816 or 1817-1896) served as the congregation's first ordained pastor; he also was elected as a delegate to the 1869 Virginia House of Delegates and played an influential role in Louisa County's late-19th-century social and political realms, including advocating for the education of Black youth. The Reverend Dr. David Nathaniel Vassar (1847-1929) pastored the church between the 1870s-c. 1920. The period of significance, 1882-1975, begins with the sanctuary's completion and opening on September 15, 1882, and ends with the traditional 50-year end date for properties where historically significant activities have continued into the more recent past.



BOUNDARY MAP

Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery
Louisa County, VA
DHR ID# 054-5480

 Nominated Boundary

0 600
Feet





The National and State Registers in Virginia

A Quick Guide to the National Register of Historic Places and Virginia Landmarks Register

- Established under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the **National Register of Historic Places** is the Nation's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation, administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. Properties listed in the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture.

In 1966, the Virginia General Assembly established the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, now the Department of Historic Resources. DHR is the State Historic Preservation Office responsible for nominating properties to the National Register and managing the **Virginia Landmarks Register**, the State's official list of properties important to Virginia's history. The same evaluation criteria and nomination form are used for the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

■ Key Points

- Listing in the National and State Registers is honorary. It recognizes a historic property's importance to its community, the State, and/or the Nation and encourages good stewardship.
- National and State Register listings do not place any obligations or restrictions on private property owners. Owners remain free to do what they wish with their property within existing laws and regulations and are not required to restore or maintain a property in particular ways as a result of listing.
- To ensure public participation in the process, property owners and local officials are notified and given the opportunity to comment on proposed nominations. When a nomination is submitted to the National Park Service, another public comment period is published in the Federal Register.

■ Benefits of Register Listing

- Owners of listed properties may qualify for Federal and State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits, historic preservation easements, and Federal and State grants for historic preservation when funding is available.
- Federal agencies whose projects affect a listed property must give the Department of Historic Resources an opportunity to comment on the project and its effects on the property.

■ Additional Information

DHR Historic Registers Program:

<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/programs/historic-registers/>

VLR Online, an online database of State and National Register listings in Virginia:

<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers/>



The National and State Registers in Virginia

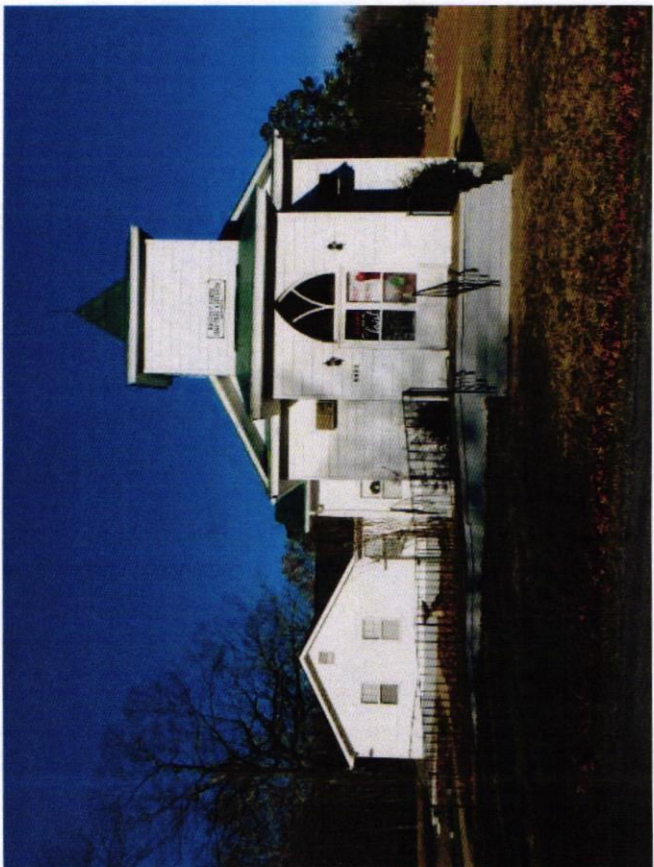
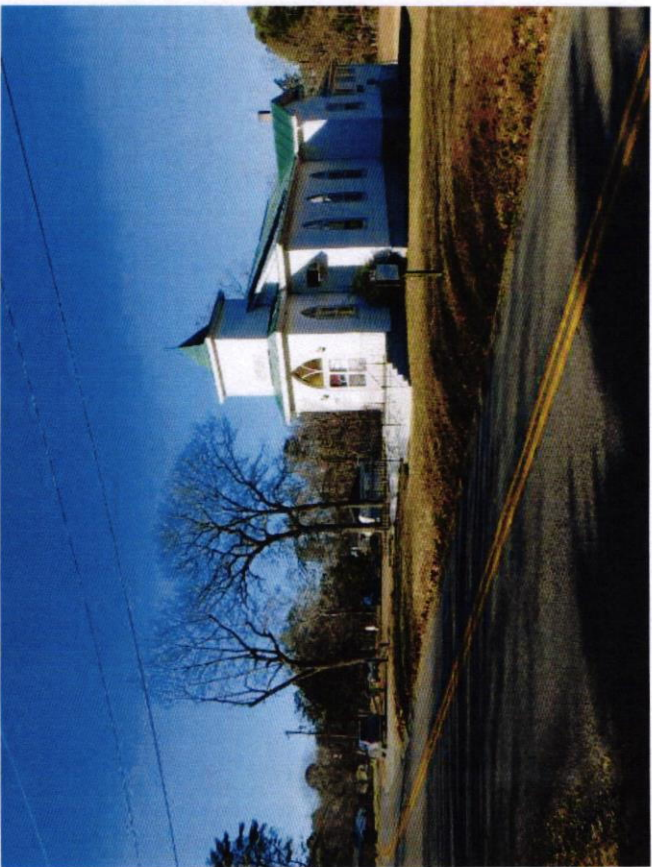
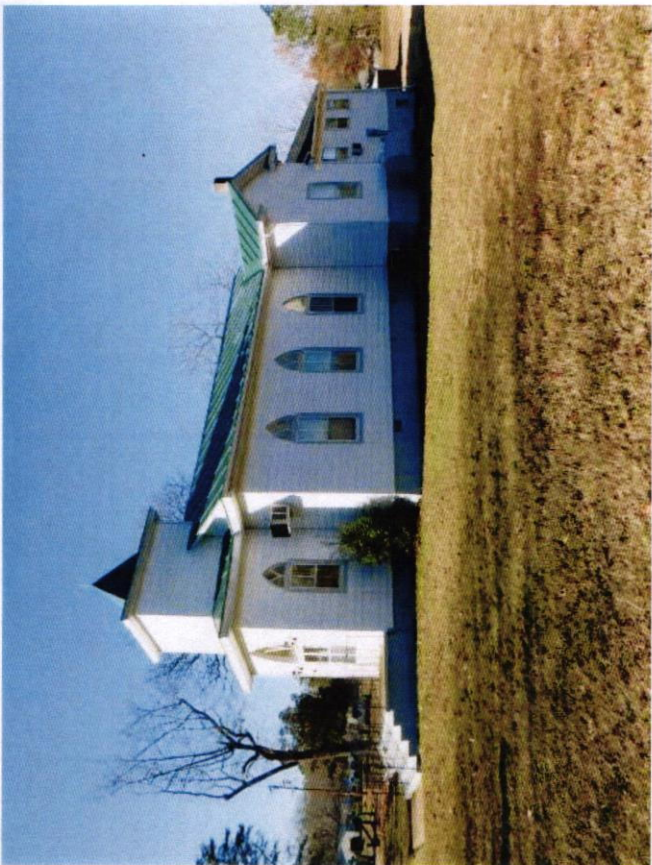
Rights of Private Property Owners to Comment or Object to a Nomination for Listing

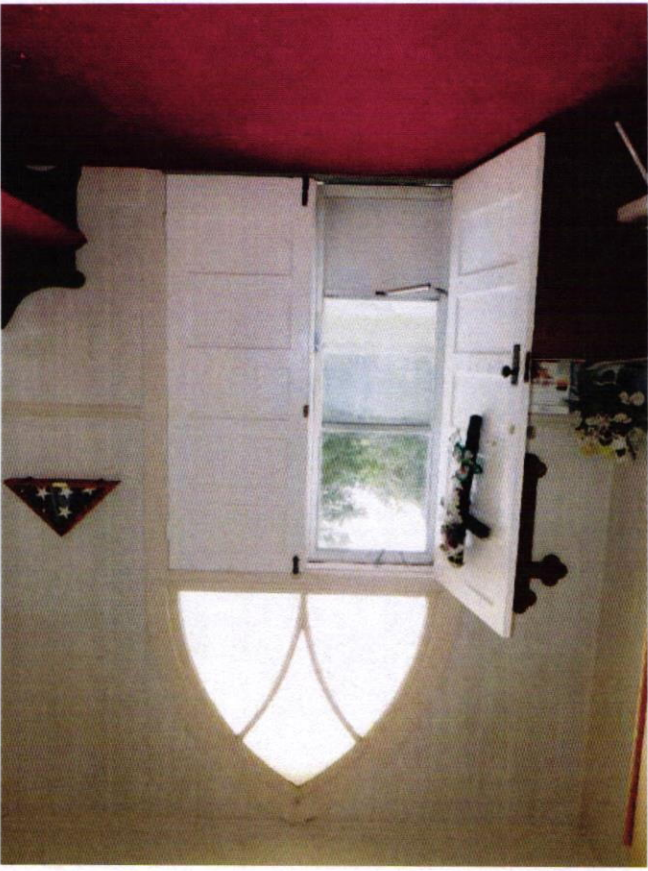
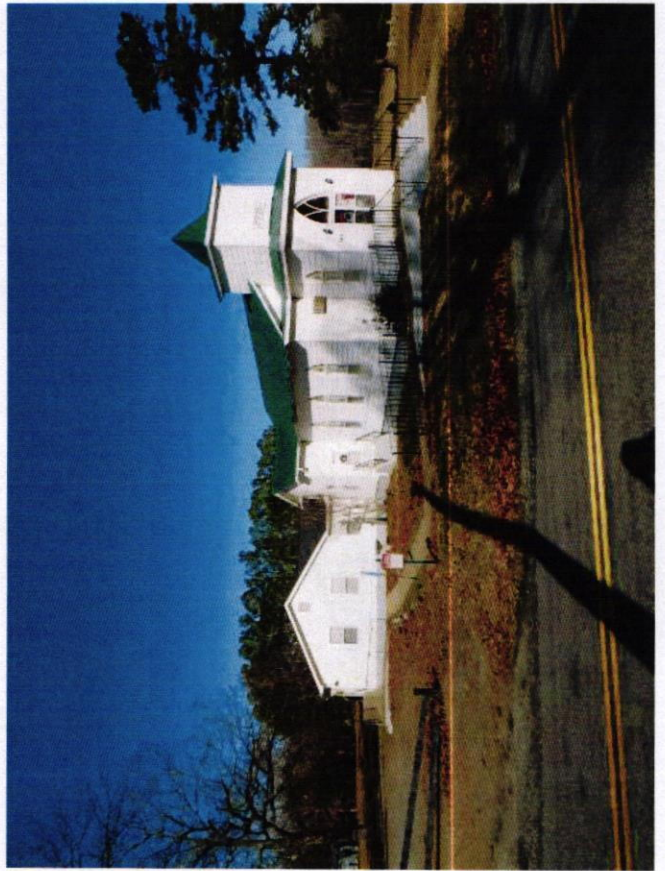
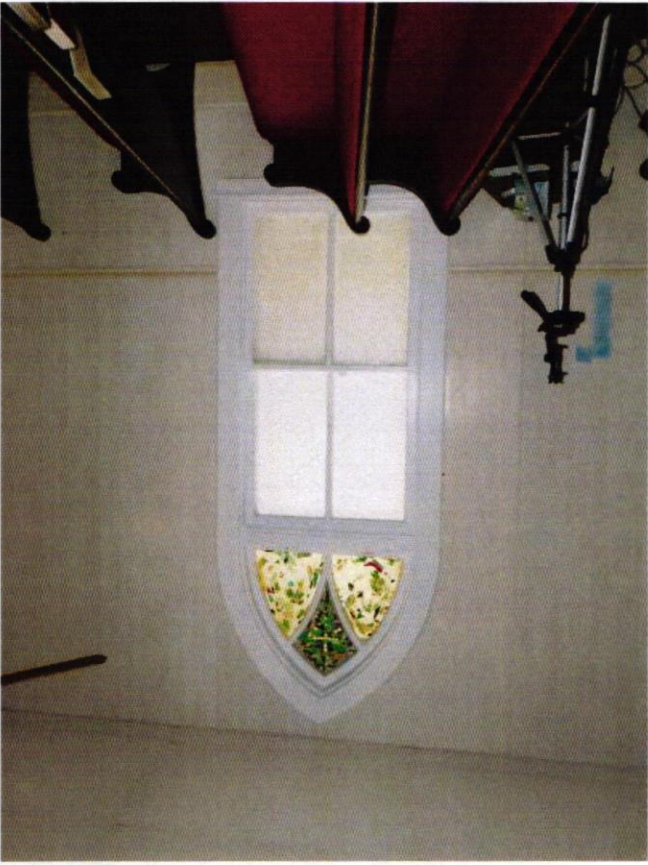
■ **Supporting and/or Commenting on a Nomination**

- A private property owner who supports a nomination for listing in the Registers is invited to send a letter of support but is not required to do so for the nomination to proceed. Private property owners are also welcome to comment without formally supporting or objecting to a nomination. Copies of letters of support and/or comment are provided to the Boards for review, along with the nomination to which they refer, and are included with the nomination if it is recommended to proceed to the NRHP.

■ **Objecting to a Nomination**

- Per 17VAC10-20-200, a private property owner has the right to object to listing in either or both Registers. For a private property being individually nominated, each owner or partial owner may object to listing regardless of the portion that party owns. For a historic district that is being nominated, each owner of private property in the district is counted as one individual regardless of how many properties that party owns or whether the properties contribute to the significance of the district.
- An objection to listing must be provided to DHR in writing a minimum of 7 business days prior to the Board meeting. Letters of objection must be addressed to the State Historic Preservation Officer at the Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.
- When objecting to listing, any owner or partial owner of private property must submit to DHR a written statement that references the subject property by address and/or parcel number and certifies that the party is the sole or partial owner of the private property, as appropriate.
 - For objections to listing in the VLR, the written statement of objection must be attested and notarized by a notary public in order to be counted by DHR in determining whether a majority of private property owners has objected to a nomination.
 - Objection letters concerning NRHP listing are not required to be notarized. Per 28 U.S. Code § 1746, a written objection should state: "I declare (or certify, verify, or state) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on (date). (Signature)".
 - A property owner may submit a single written objection to listing in both the VLR and NRHP, but in order for the objection to be applied to the VLR listing, the letter must be notarized.
- If a **majority** (50% + 1) of private property owners object according to the process above, the nomination will not proceed to listing. In such cases, DHR is still required to submit the nomination to the National Park Service for a Determination of Eligibility for the NRHP, per 36 CFR 60.6(n).
- Letters of objection received a minimum of 7 business days prior to the Board meeting will be copied to Board members for review, along with the nomination to which they refer. If the nomination is approved to proceed to the NRHP, all letters of objection will be forwarded to the National Park Service to consider with their review of the nomination, along with any letters of support or comment that DHR has received.
- Letters of objection to listing in the NRHP may be submitted to DHR even after the Board meeting at which the nomination is approved. DHR will forward any letters of objection to the National Park Service. The National Park Service continues to accept letters of objection up to the date of listing in the NRHP. The National Park Service typically concludes review and approval of a nomination within approximately 45 days of receipt of the nomination from DHR.





United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery
Other names/site number: DHR #054-5480
Name of related multiple property listing: African American Churches in Virginia
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 9833 Poindexter Road
City or town: Louisa State: VA County: Louisa
Not For Publication: ☐ N/A Vicinity: ☒ X

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☐

District

☒

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Object

☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: Religious Facility: Church

FUNERARY: Cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: Religious Facility: Church

FUNERARY: Cemetery

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Gothic Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD; BRICK; CONCRETE; GLASS; METAL;
SYNTHETICS

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Bright Hope Baptist Church was constructed ca. 1882 on land deeded to the church trustees for one dollar in the same year. The property is located on the northwest side of Poindexter Road / State Route 613 within the rural landscape that characterizes much of Louisa County, Virginia. The church property includes the ca. 1882 sanctuary (contributing building) with multiple additions and a cemetery (contributing site). To the rear (north) of the church are an unattached metal carport (noncontributing structure), metal shed (noncontributing building), and a small assortment of playground equipment. The original sanctuary features vernacular Gothic Revival elements and is a one-bay, one-story, rectangular building with a basement. Aluminum siding covers the original weatherboards. The foundation is on brick piers with continuous concrete block infilling the spaces between the piers. Both the piers and concrete blocks have been painted white. The front gable roof has wide eaves and standing-seam metal roofing. A single brick flue rises from the north slope of a rear, gable-roofed extension located on the sanctuary's east side. On the building's (south) façade, a two-story, projecting entry tower features a pyramidal-roofed steeple with a belfry. A cross-shaped vent is on the south façade of the belfry. From the southwest side of the building, a concrete ramp leads to the façade's main entry. A short flight of concrete steps leads to the concrete block stoop's poured concrete deck. Fenestration on the original building includes Gothic-arched windows with two-over-two, double hung, wood sash featuring pebbled-glass lights surmounted by three lights with wood tracery. In the sanctuary windows, the lancet-arched top three lights are stained glass, while those on the entry tower have pebbled glass. The building has several small rear additions along with a larger rectangular addition that extends perpendicular to the rear additions. All additions have concrete block foundations, gable roofs with composite shingles, and vinyl siding.

The property's retains very good integrity of location, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association. The rear additions have altered the church's original form, massing, and footprint, leaving the north (rear) elevation obscured. The type, form, and function of the additions, however, is typical of rural African American churches that have evolved over an extended period to accommodate growing

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congregations and new programming. Interior renovations in the sanctuary also are in keeping with historic trends associated with African American churches during the 20th century. The cemetery is completely intact and displays a range of marker types from the late 19th to early 21st century. The property's overall integrity of design, materials, and workmanship, therefore, is quite good.

Narrative Description

Setting

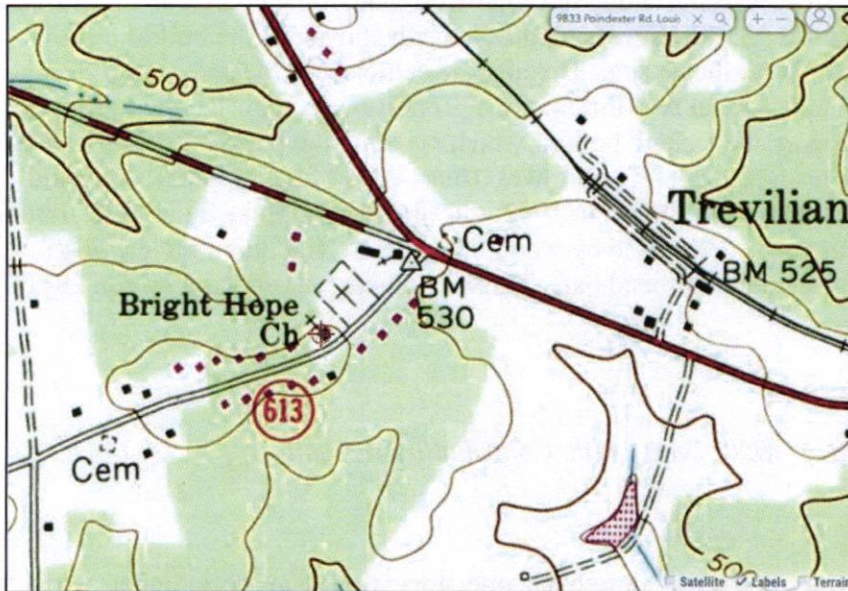


Figure 1. 1978 topographic map detail showing vicinity of Bright Hope Baptist Church. The pink squares along Poindexter Road denote ranch dwellings built between 1972-1978. The church at the crossroads now serves a commercial use. (Image Source: Historical Topo Map Explorer, U.S. Geological Survey, <https://livingatlas.arcgis.com/topomapexplorer/index.html#maps=&loc=-78.08,38.05&LoD=15.64>).

Bright Hope Baptist Church is in the vicinity of the crossroads village of Trevilians and stands approximately 4.5 miles west of the Town of Louisa, which is the local seat of government. The property is situated 0.1 mile south of Poindexter Road's intersection with Louisa Road, just west of Trevilians (Figure 1). From this intersection and extending southeast, Louisa Road includes the collocated alignments of State Route 22 and U.S. Route 33. At the intersection, U.S. Route 33 branches northwest to become S. Spotswood Trail while Louisa Road/ State Route 22 continues northwest on a separate alignment. The intersection is located near Trevilians, named after founder James L. Trevilian. During the mid-19th century, a station named

Trevilian Depot was along the Central Virginia Railroad tracks that ran through the area; the tracks and vacant depot now are owned by the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway. The crossroads at Trevilians/ Trevilian Depot coalesced into a small village that included a few merchant stores and dwellings. Today, a small cluster of late-19th-century dwellings is located a short distance south of the railroad tracks and the former depot. A series of widely dispersed c. 1960-c. 2000 commercial buildings line Louisa Road and are reflective of the automobile-centric commercial development that became common in rural Virginia during the 20th century. Trevilians had its own post office until the 1990s, when the U.S. Postal Service closed it. Between 1972-1978, ranch dwellings on large lots were built along Poindexter Road in the immediate vicinity of the church. Due to their low density and modest scale, the dwellings do not detract from the rural feeling of the area.

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Bright Hope Baptist Church stands approximately 2.7 miles east of the Green Springs Historic District (NHL 1974; NRHP 1973; VLR 1973; 054-0111), a verdant area that continues to be characterized by agricultural operations amid widely dispersed former plantation dwellings. Prior to the Civil War, a large population of enslaved African Americans worked at the plantations. Following Emancipation, many freedpeople moved to the Trevilians intersection, where the land was less desirable than in the Green Springs area and, therefore, could be acquired at a more affordable price from landowners.

Bright Hope Baptist Church occupies 4.725 acres on the northwest side of Poindexter Road. From the road, a gravel driveway is marked with a wood fence and a steel gate installed in 2022 by congregation member Eric Aaron. The entry drive extends along the southwest side of the church to a gravel parking lot that is shaded by several mature deciduous trees. A grassy lawn surrounds the building and a large pine tree is adjacent to the church's northeast side. The historic cemetery is located a short distance northeast of the church and occupies about two-thirds of the property's acreage. To the northwest (rear) of the church are a detached carport and a shed, both of which postdate the period of significance and are, therefore, noncontributing resources. On the northwest (rear) edge of the property, John and Adrienne Rivera donated 1.13 acres to the church in 1982; this area was stipulated not to be used as a cemetery. Today, a playground area is delineated by wood fence posts. The playground equipment consists of a metal slide, swing set, and overhead bars. This equipment was added between 2011-2012, based on aerial photos.¹

Detailed Description

Church with Additions, c. 1882, c. 1920, 1980, 1998, Contributing Building²

Exterior

Built c. 1882, this vernacular Gothic Revival church is a one-story, three-bay, rectangular, wood frame building with a transept projecting at right angles from the nave. The transept appears to be original to the building. The building rises from a brick pier foundation with concrete block infill between piers, all of which has been painted a uniform gray. Rectangular vents pierce the concrete block infill at regular intervals. The exterior walls of the church are clad with aluminum siding; this alteration occurred in 1982 and was funded by congregation members. Remnants of the historic weatherboard siding are visible within the attic of the vestibule and steeple. The front gable roof is covered with standing-seam metal; the gable-roofed bays of the transept also have standing-seam metal roofing and returned eaves. The roofing was most recently patched, water-proofed, and painted green in 2022 by W.W.MV & Son Painting-Richmond. A 1998 above-ground propane tank stands alongside the transept's northeast wall, beneath a window.

On the building's façade, a c. 1920, two-story, projecting tower includes the primary entrance vestibule and a belfry. Within the vestibule's attic, the original gable end of the c. 1882 building is visible, indicating that the vestibule and belfry were later additions. The tower's foundation includes painted brick piers that are very similar to those supporting the c. 1882 sanctuary with concrete-block infill

¹ Historic Aerials by NETROnline, Nationwide Environmental Title Research LLC, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>.

² Information herein regarding 20th century alterations and renovations to the property was provided by Lisa Aaron, Bright Hope Baptist Church, Timeline of Renovations, March 2025.

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between the piers. Windows lighting the vestibule also match those on the sanctuary. The similarity in materials suggests that the vestibule and belfry were added within a few decades of the church's completion. The vestibule's entry and an entry to the transept have matching stacked-panel wood doors, which may indicate that remodeling occurred c. 1920; the projecting tower could have been erected at that time. The projecting tower is visible on the earliest available aerial photos from 1952.³

On the tower's façade, the entrance contains a pair of aluminum 2-light storm doors that shelter the interior stacked-panel doors. Above the doors, a large, lancet-arched transom has wood tracery and three lights of pebbled glass. The bell tower has a pent wraparound that ties into the returned eaves of the main roof. Centered above the pent is a sign that reads "Bright Hope Baptist Church / Founded 1882." Above the sign is a cross-shaped vent at the belfry level. A metal-clad, conical roof with a single straight finial crowns the tower. Electric carriage-style lamps flank the entry. Fronting the façade is a flight of concrete steps that lead to a concrete block stoop with a poured concrete deck. A concrete block ramp with a poured concrete deck leads from the southwestern side of the church up to the stoop. Metal handrails flank the ramp and steps, the latter of which also has a central rail. The windows on the bell tower and sanctuary feature rectangular, two-over-two, double hung, wood window sash topped with lancet-arched transoms that feature wood tracery and three lights. The transept has rectangular six-over-six, double hung wood sash. Plain wood casing with butt joints frames the rectangular windows and the arched transoms. The southwest wall of the west transept has an entry with an aluminum storm door covering a stacked-panel wood door, accessed by concrete steps with metal railings, all of which matches the design of the front steps. The lumber used to build the original church was salvaged from the nearby house of Lucy Hughson (this dwelling was once owned by James L. Trevilian, founder of the Trevilians crossroads village). Mrs. Hughson was the subject of a newspaper report connected to the Civil War Battle of Trevilian Station on June 11-12, 1864.⁴ The house was damaged by shelling during the battle and Mrs. Hughson fled the home with her baby in her arms while the war raged around her.⁵

Two modestly sized additions extend from the rear of the church. Based on aerial photos, the earliest addition dates to 1980 and spans the northwest (rear) wall of the transept. The 2002 aerial shows that a perpendicular rear addition had been added to the 1980 addition.⁶ Both of the additions are frame construction rising from concrete block foundations that are painted gray. Vinyl siding clads each addition and their gable and shed roofs have composite shingle roofing. A concrete block exterior flue rises near the transept's northwestern (rear) corner and is partly obscured by the 1980 addition, which spans the transept's northwest (rear) elevation. This addition is built on a raised basement that is lit by

³ Historic Aerials by NETROnline, Nationwide Environmental Title Research LLC, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>.

⁴ According to the American Battlefield Trust, Trevilian Station was the largest all-cavalry battle of the war. See <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/civil-war/battles/trevilian-station>.

⁵ An account of Hughson's flight from the war were published in a letter to the editor of the Staunton *Daily Leader* on September 21, 1915. The letter describes Lucy Hughson's presence in the home during the Civil War battle; when the house was hit by shells, the writer described a Union soldier on horseback racing to the woman as she ran away from the battle to accelerate her escape. In a 1938 newspaper article, "Mother's Race Across Battlefield is Recalled," in the Richmond *Times-Dispatch* on May 18, 1938, the article states, "Her old home has been razed and much of the lumber has gone into the Bright Hope Negro Baptist Church, only a few yards from the site."

⁶ Historic Aerials by NETROnline, Nationwide Environmental Title Research LLC, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>.

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three small, two-light windows with concrete sills. The main level has windows on the northeast and northwest walls with square, six-over-six, double hung, wood sash.

A 1998, one-story addition is attached to the 1980 addition's southwest side via a frame, one-story hyphen; a small contemporaneous, shed-roofed extension covers a portion of the 1980 addition's northwest (rear) wall. The 1998 addition is oriented to face southwest toward the gravel parking lot and rises from a slightly raised basement or crawlspace. A ramp built of concrete blocks with a concrete deck leads to the primary entry; the ramp likely was built at the same time as the ramps and steps to the church's main entrance and the transept's entry. The walls are clad with vinyl siding. New composite shingle roofing was installed in July 2024. An entry is centered on the 1998 addition's southwest façade and includes a two-panel, single-leaf door. Pairs of windows with six-over-six sash flank the entry. The addition's southeast wall has three windows with six-over-six sash. The northwest gable end wall has two small windows with six-over-six sash, while the northeast wall has a single rectangular window with six-over-six sash. The addition's rear extension has a single window with six-over-six sash on its northwest wall and a hexagonal window on its northeast side.

Interior

The original church's vestibule, sanctuary, and transept are finished with carpeting over much of the historic wood flooring, painted synthetic paneling with a molded chair rail, and plaster ceilings. The sanctuary has a dropped acoustical tile ceiling with flush-mounted fluorescent lights, hiding the original ceiling from view. Ceiling fans with lights also are in the sanctuary, along with a large, centered, brass light fixture with frosted glass shades. Such finishes are typical of historic African American churches that have been renovated since the mid-20th century. The durability and affordability of synthetic panels alleviated plaster maintenance and acoustical tile ceilings and carpets improved sound quality during religious services. Two groups of wood pews with scroll ends and red upholstery flank the center aisle. The carpeting does not cover the wood flooring beneath the pews. All of the windows in the vestibule and sanctuary are framed with painted, plain wood casing and wood sills. The centered pulpit is on the northwest (rear) wall of the transept and is fronted by the altar table, with a piano on the southwest side of the table and a portable lectern and microphone on the southeast side. The rear wall of the transept retains a centered window with stained glass lights. To the southwest is a rectangular window with six-over-six wood sash that now looks into the passage of the 1980 rear addition. Northeast of the pulpit on the rear wall, a historic window opening has been converted to a curtained entry that leads into the rear addition. Another entry is on the transept's southwest wall and has a stacked-panel wood door. According to the congregation's records, electrical service was added to the building in 1946. Between 1996-2016, a public address system, an additional furnace, and a baptismal pool were added to the sanctuary, which required upgrades to the electrical and plumbing systems.

Above the sanctuary, the attic framing consists of king post trusses with rafters, rafter ties, and diagonal braces extending between the rafters and rafter ties; purlins are not present. The wood members are not uniform in size or shape. Some members appear to have adze marks while others are machine-sawn.

In the 1980 rear addition, a passage extends the length of the original building and is finished with dark-stained wood wall paneling, red carpeting, and sheetrock on the ceiling. Entries on the northwest side of the passage lead to two offices, two restrooms, and a choir room. The offices have synthetic paneling,

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sheetrock ceilings, and carpeted floors. In the addition's basement are a furnace and air handler for a heating and air conditioning system; the furnace was replaced during the 1990s and a second furnace was installed during the 2000s. The outdoor compressor was replaced in 2024. A propane tank alongside the building's northeastern elevation fuels the furnace. This addition marked the first time that indoor plumbing was included in the building and a major upgrade was made to the electrical system. The addition was dedicated on September 14, 1980.

The 1998 addition is named the Juanita J. Braxon Fellowship Hall, to honor the congregation member whose bequeath paid for its construction. Both the addition and its hyphen are finished with vinyl composition flooring and sheetrock walls and ceilings. The addition's main area serves as a meeting room/ fellowship hall. A restroom, kitchen, and closet are on the northwest side of the addition. The kitchen has sheetrock walls and ceilings and vinyl composition flooring. Oak lower and upper cabinets line the walls. A separate heating and air conditioning serves the addition. The addition was dedicated on January 11, 1998.

Cemetery, 1957, Contributing Site

Located northeast of the sanctuary, the cemetery is within a large, roughly square, grassy field that covers about two-thirds of the property's total acreage (Figure 2).



Figure 2. 2015 aerial view of Bright Hope Baptist Church. Burials in the cemetery appear in two groups (see arrows above) (Image Source: Google Earth historical imagery).

Land records show that, on August 26, 1957, John G. May, executor of the Matie Day Danne estate, conveyed three acres to Bright Hope Baptist Church specifically for use as a cemetery. Church trustees at the time of this transaction were John Sims, Joseph Hill, and John Bratcher, Sr.

Approximately 300 marked and unmarked burials are within the cemetery. The gravestones are placed in a number of scattered groups, with one group in the northwest quadrant of the square, and two more in the southwest and east quadrants. The markers date to the mid-20th century to the present and generally consist of machine-cut, polished granite markers set vertically atop ashlar bases; square and rectangular rock-faced granite bases with affixed metal plaques; granite blocks with a top, angled,

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polished side that bears the inscription and rough-cut sides, placed atop granite bases; and plain, square, vertical stone markers. A few graves retain metal tabs of the type that funeral homes provide for burials. Due to the lack of cemeteries open to African Americans during the segregation era, the congregation of Bright Hope Baptist Church made its cemetery available to the local community. Burials for church members are along the southeastern side of the cemetery while nonmembers are buried along the northwestern side (see arrows in Figure 2).

Secondary Resource

Carport, c. 2003, Noncontributing Structure

A metal carport stands a short distance to the north (rear) of the church's rear additions. The one-story, front gable structure has a combination of wood and metal framing. The corrugated metal siding continues upward to cover the front gable roof. Based on aerial photography available through Google Earth, the carport was erected between 2002-2003.

Shed, 2024, Noncontributing Building

This 1-story, A-frame metal shed is a dark gray color and has bright white roofing. The shed was erected in July 2024.

Integrity Analysis

Bright Hope Baptist Church is located in rural Louisa County in an area that has not seen substantial new development since the early 20th century. Along Poindexter Road, in the property's immediate vicinity, approximately fourteen 1972-1978 ranch dwellings are the only newer buildings within sight of the historic church. Due to mature landscaping, slightly rolling topography, the curving road, and the modest scale of the dwellings, these newer buildings have little visual impact on the rural landscape. Therefore, Bright Hope Baptist Church has high integrity of location and setting.

The property has good integrity of design, materials, and workmanship as an evolved sanctuary that has remained in continuous use since it was erected. The c. 1882 church's vernacular Gothic Revival architecture is representative of Virginia's rural, late-19th century, African American churches, as explicated in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPD) entitled "African American Churches in Virginia." Additionally, the form of the building, with its entry tower, belfry, interior vestibule, and rectangular sanctuary with transept, later rear additions with offices, and a fellowship hall are character-defining features associated with the evolution of African American churches from date of construction up to the present. Although the 1980 and 1998 additions postdate the property's period of significance, they do not detract from the property's overall integrity due to their association with important historic congregational activities that have continued up to today; these activities are centered around expansion of programs and the assortment of fellowship and community events that the church has hosted since its founding. The building is in good condition and retains a high degree of integrity of design, workmanship, and materials associated with its areas and period of significance of c. 1882-1975. Alterations to the projecting tower, sanctuary, and transept, such as infilling of the brick pier foundation with concrete blocks and installation of aluminum siding over the sanctuary's original weatherboards,

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are typical of the upgrades made to rural African American churches during the mid- to late 20th century. Historic materials, including weatherboard siding, brick piers, and original windows, are present. The interior framing members visible in the attic are representative of the vernacular construction methods and materials used in the building's original construction. The synthetic paneling, carpeting, and acoustical tile ceiling in the vestibule, sanctuary, and transept covered rather than replacing historic materials, which remain in situ. The 1980 addition includes two restrooms, which marks the installation of indoor plumbing at the church. The 1998 Juanita J. Braxton Fellowship Hall has standardized materials, including wood window sash, composite shingles, sheetrock wall and ceiling finishes, and vinyl composition flooring, which have been commonly used since the mid-20th century; vinyl siding has been widely available since the 1980s. The addition of a fellowship hall with a kitchen at African American churches at some point during the 20th century is an almost universal feature of those buildings that predate World War II and still house active congregations today. Fellowship halls and kitchens facilitated congregational traditions of sharing meals after Sunday services, celebratory occasions, homecomings, reunions, fundraising dinners, and other events. The 1998 addition's large multipurpose space was another important improvement that allowed congregational meals to be enjoyed indoors and provided a suitable space for different types of meetings, such as Bible study, community events, and special programs. Fellowship halls, such as this example, are found at African American churches still in active use up to the present. The association of the two additions with important communal activities, therefore, means that they do not erode the property's overall integrity of design.

The cemetery retains integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association. The burial ground has been in continuous use since it was established in 1957. An assortment of burial markers is indicative of the trends in funerary art since the mid-20th century. The burials are grouped in two areas; interments for church members are toward the eastern side while those for community residents are toward the western side. The inclusion of individuals who were not congregation members is indicative of the significant communitywide activities that have been part of Bright Hope's history since its founding.

The property's integrity of location and setting, combined with the qualities of the design, materials, and workmanship of the architectural resources to evoke a strong sense of historic time and place. Furthermore, the property is a representative example of the rural African American religious properties described in the "African American Churches in Virginia" MPD. The combination of aesthetic, material, and visual qualities imbue Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery with high integrity of feeling and association.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

- ☒ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☒ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1882-1975

Significant Dates

c. 1920 (remodeling of church)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

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Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery is being nominated under the "African American Churches in Virginia" Multiple Property Documentation cover document (MPD). The property is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: African American and Social History. The congregation was established by a Reconstruction Era rural community of freedmen and -women in Louisa County that has survived to the present day. Bright Hope Baptist Church has served as a community nexus, cultural touchstone, and social center throughout its history. During the early to mid-twentieth century, the Prince Hall Masons, an African-American fraternal organization and outgrowth of the Freemasons, met in the church prior to constructing their own meeting hall nearby. The Reverend Fountain M. Perkins (1816 or 1817-1896) served as the congregation's first ordained pastor; he also was elected as a delegate to the 1869 Virginia House of Delegates and played an influential role in Louisa County's late-19th-century social and political realms, including advocating for the education of Black youth. The Reverend Dr. David Nathaniel Vassar (1847-1929) pastored the church between the 1870s-c. 1920. The period of significance, 1882-1975, begins with the sanctuary's completion and opening on September 15, 1882, and ends with the traditional 50-year end date for properties where historically significant activities have continued into the more recent past but do not meet Criteria Consideration G. One significant date, c. 1920, relates to the addition of the entry tower to the original building and interior remodeling that was completed, which is indicative of the congregation's growth and progress since the 1880s.

Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery meets Criteria Consideration A for religious properties and Criteria Consideration D for cemeteries. The property's significance is derived from its historic role as a cultural and social center for a rural African American neighborhood starting in the early 1880s. Through the congregation's support of local schools and a local fraternal organization, and the significant contributions of the Reverend Perkins and the Reverend Dr. Vassar, Bright Hope Baptist Church has served its congregation and local community through decades that included times of difficulty and prosperity. Justification of the church's ability to meet the specific registration requirements of the "African American Churches in Virginia" is provided at the end of this section.

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

Criterion A (Ethnic Heritage: African American; Social History)

The origins of Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery reflect key themes in American history, including migration, war, and the pursuit of freedom. It is unclear when the congregation was formed; however, one key event that marked Bright Hope's early history is the acquisition of land that their building now occupies. In 1870, Charles L. and Mattie Danne owned the land where Bright Hope Baptist Church is located. Charles was the son of a German immigrant, and

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he had a general store in the crossroads village of Trevilians, Virginia.⁷ Charles and Mattie Danne transferred their land to the congregation for \$1 so that the church could be constructed.⁸ Documentation that explores the motivation that drove this donation has not yet been identified. The Dannes' family cemetery is located near Bright Hope, north of the intersection where the church is located. According to information gathered for the Louisa County Sestercentennial, the deed prohibited the land from being used as a trading post, dance hall, "house of ill-repute," or a location with foul language.⁹ These restrictions remain in place, thus maintaining the use of this space. Once the land was acquired, the lumber used to construct Bright Hope Baptist originated from Lucy A. Hughson's dwelling following the Civil War Battle of Trevilians. During the battle, Lucy Hughson fled her home with her infant son to survive the encroachment of the Civil War onto her property. Unfortunately, her house was not spared during the battle and was ultimately destroyed. The lumber that once sheltered her family, therefore, was repurposed for Bright Hope Baptist Church.¹⁰

Upon the building's completion, the Reverend Fountain M. Perkins was the first ordained minister of the church. He had been ordained c. 1867, nearly two decades before Bright Hope Baptist Church officially opened its doors on September 15, 1882.¹¹ It is believed that once the Civil War ended, Black believers became part of Bright Hope Baptist or another nearby church, Foster Creek, both of which were associated with Rev. Perkins.¹² Further research is needed to explore where congregants met before Bright Hope was constructed; they may have gathered at a different church, a brush arbor on their land, and/or in private dwellings.

For many African Americans, religion provided hope for a future in which they could resist and escape slavery, just as the Israelites escaped from Egypt.¹³ As a result, their faith and community became synonymous with freedom. This mindset likely shaped Bright Hope Baptist Church during its early years because much of the congregation included people who had been Emancipated during the Civil War.

⁷ "Charles Danne Jr.," Virginia, U.S., Death Records, 1912-2014, https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/9278/records/103946?tid=&pid=&queryId=311edee4-6ac9-42d2-ab08-00c465bc485d&_phsrc=Ttm21&_phstart=successSource.

⁸ "Danne Cemetery Trevilians, Louisa County, Virginia." Interment.net-Cemetery Records. Accessed March 2025. <http://www.interment.net/data/us/va/louisa/danne/index.htm>. According to Robin Patton from One Shared Story, the property transfers in Louisa were recorded as \$1 or \$10 because the Clerk of the Court charged a recording fee calculated from the sale price of the property.

⁹ "Louisa County, Virginia, *Louisa County, Virginia, 1742-1992, 250th Anniversary: Sestercentennial* (Louisa Virginia: The Committee, 1992).

¹⁰ Pat Jones, "Mother's Race Across Battlefield is Recalled," *Times Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), May 15, 1938.

¹¹ Lisa Clemmer and *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, "Fountain M. Perkins (1816 or 1817-1896)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 7, 2020, <https://encyclopediaivirginia.org/entries/perkins-fountain-m-1816-or-1817-1896/>.

¹² Ed Hottinger, correspondence with Robin Patton, April 2025. For additional research, explore the records of the nearby White church, Lasely United Methodist Church.

¹³ William Montgomery, "African American Churches in Virginia (1865-1900)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*. Virginia Humanities, Dec. 07, 2020.

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Earliest Pastors

Bright Hope Baptist Church was founded by locally influential religious and political leaders, including Marshall L. Perkins, Fountain Perkins, Gabriel Williams, and Harrison Easton. The church's first ordained, but second recorded, pastor, the Reverend Fountain Perkins (1816 or 1817-1896), was himself born into slavery c. 1817.¹⁴ While enslaved, he acquired a basic education as well as training in scientific farming techniques. The latter resulted in his role overseeing his enslaver's farm. Virginia's General Assembly had imposed increasingly stringent restrictions on educational opportunities for enslaved African Americans during the early 19th century. The means through which Perkins obtained literacy is not known at this time. Perkins served as the pastor at Bright Hope Baptist Church from 1882- c.1892; during this period, he also pastored at other Black churches in Louisa County; sharing of pastors was a common practice during the Reconstruction Era when ordained ministers were scarce. Rural congregations such as Bright Hope could not always attract a full-time pastor, nor afford to pay their salary. Many ministers at the time were based at one church but pastored several congregations. They traveled to each church to preach a sermon and perform rites such as baptisms and marriages on a regular basis.

Documentation of when and how Rev. Perkins became free has not yet been found. It is evident, however, that he valued and invested in upward mobility for Black people, as seen in his political involvement during Reconstruction. The start of his pastoral and political roles began during the same timeframe. His experiences and values in these two realms likely intersected and informed one another.

Prior to pastoring Bright Hope, Perkins spoke at political meetings in the Town of Louisa, the local seat of government, including at a gathering in 1867.¹⁵ Two years later, he served as one of two representatives of Louisa County to the House of Delegates (1869-1871), and was named to the Republican State Central Committee. His active involvement in politics allowed him to pursue meaningful change for African Americans who, although free from slavery, lacked the civil liberties held by their White counterparts. During the General Assembly meeting in October 1869, Rev. Perkins influenced the recognition of fundamental rights for Black citizens by voting to ratify the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.¹⁶ The Fourteenth Amendment acknowledged U.S. citizenship of all persons "born or naturalized in the United States," including formerly enslaved people, and guarantees equality before the law through due process.¹⁷ The Fifteenth Amendment's Section 1 stated, "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on

¹⁴ Lisa Clemmer and *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, "Fountain M. Perkins (1816 or 1817-1896)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 7, 2020, <https://encyclopediaivirginia.org/entries/perkins-fountain-m-1816-or-1817-1896/>.

¹⁵ *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria, VA), April 11, 1867.

¹⁶ Lisa Clemmer and *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, "Fountain M. Perkins (1816 or 1817-1896)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 7, 2020, <https://encyclopediaivirginia.org/entries/perkins-fountain-m-1816-or-1817-1896/>.

¹⁷ With this language, Congressional leaders intended to overturn the U. S. Supreme Court's infamous 1857 *Dred Scott v. Sanford* decision, in which the Court found that African Americans were not U.S. citizens. "Birthright citizenship" is the principle that a person born within the U.S. is automatically a citizen. This clause did not apply to Native Americans, however, who were not legally declared U.S. citizens until the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924.

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account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”¹⁸ The phrasing of the amendment explicitly referred both to a person’s race or skin color, as well as whether they had at any time been enslaved. Section 2 of the amendment granted Congress the power to pass laws to protect voting rights. Interestingly, Oliver H.P.T. Morton, a U.S. Senator from Indiana, pushed through an amendment to a bill that covered the readmission of Virginia, Mississippi, and Texas to the U.S., which required the three states to ratify the 15th Amendment as a condition for their return to the Union.¹⁹ On February 3, 1870, the necessary three-quarters of states had voted to ratify the 15th Amendment.

After his term in the House of Delegates was complete, Rev. Perkins chaired a Republican mass meeting in July 1872, but according to the *Richmond Dispatch*, a White-owned newspaper, “convened so quietly that very few persons not interested therein had heard of it.”²⁰ The meeting took place in the basement of the First African Baptist Church (today’s First Baptist Church) in Louisa, with a large turnout of Black voters attending. Despite the secrecy around its convening, it had a significant turnout of a majority of the county’s Black residents.²¹ This event demonstrates how Rev. Perkins’ political involvement is exemplified throughout his life and occurred within the community. The fact that the meeting was not well-advertised was likely to ensure the safety of attendees from hostile White people who resented African Americans’ participation in political matters. Perkins led his party in the midst of uncertainty and racism that would shift over time. These concerns worsened over the next few decades as conservative Democrats regained political control in the South by the 1900s. In an article written in 1928, the author indicated that Democrats repeatedly were able to “elect an intelligent white man to represent the county in the House of Delegates” by using their greater financial resources to their advantage.²² During the Reconstruction Era, Democrats also used the proposed disenfranchisement of people who had sworn loyalty to the Confederate States of America to their own political advantage. This resulted in many White people’s hostility toward Black individuals who were politically engaged, as well as any of their White supporters.

¹⁸ “15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Voting Rights (1870),” National Archives and Records Administration, May 16, 2024, <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/15th-amendment#transcript>. Note that women were not included in the extension of voting rights. Women’s right to vote was not recognized until ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution in

¹⁹ Morton, a vocal proponent for Reconstruction and civil rights for African Americans, inserted the language due to partisan interests in Congress and at the state level who sought to prevent ratification of the 15th Amendment. In many states outside the South, White populations often did not want to extend the franchise to African Americans. Ultimately, however, ratification of the 15th Amendment proceeded, and Virginia, Texas, and Mississippi each ratified it as required by Morton’s legislative amendment. See Earl Maltz, “The Coming of the Fifteenth Amendment: The Republic Party and the Right to Vote in the Early Reconstruction Era,” *Louisiana Law Review*, Vol.82, No. 2 (Winter 2022), p. 395-451.

²⁰ Convention and Republican Mass Meeting at Louisa Courthouse,” *Richmond Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), July 30, 1872.

²¹ “Convention and Republican Mass Meeting at Louisa Courthouse,” *Richmond Dispatch* (Richmond, VA), July 30, 1872.

²² “Smith Frankness Converts Gordon,” *Times Dispatch* (Richmond, Va.), August 05, 1928.

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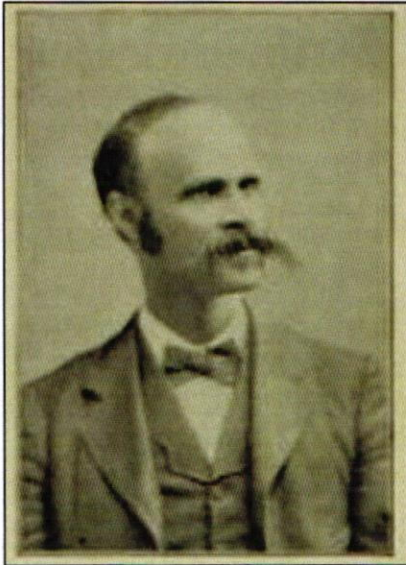


Figure 3. Undated photo of the Rev. Dr. David Nathaniel Vassar (Image Source: Charles Henry Corey, 1834-1899. *A History of the Richmond Theological Seminary: With Reminiscences of Thirty Years' Work Among the Colored People of the South* [Richmond, Va.: J. W. Randolph Co., 1895]).

Bright Hope Baptist Church's third recorded pastor, the Reverend Dr. David Nathaniel Vassar (1847-1929), began pastoring at the church c. 1892-1920, following Rev. Perkins's illness (Figure 3). Just as Rev. Perkins had done, Rev. Dr. Vassar pastored at multiple churches, including Louisa County's First African Baptist Church. Born in 1847 in Bedford County to his mother Susan Vassar, a free woman of color, Vassar was kidnapped at about age three and sold into slavery. It is not known how long he remained enslaved.²³ He grew up in Lynchburg, Virginia, and taught himself to read using merchant shop signs. From there, he pursued his education at the Academy of Madison University, where he became one of the first Black men in Virginia to earn a college degree.²⁴ He and his wife, née Alice Walker Kinckle, supported the Richmond Theological Seminary (today's Virginia Union University), founded in 1876.²⁵ He was one of the early students at the school and later served as a professor at the seminary, where he taught mathematics and natural science, helping to educate future generations of Black Baptist leaders for 25 years.²⁶ His interest in and value of learning are showcased through his lifelong acquisition of knowledge, his profession, and his service in this field. By c. 1896, Vassar had served as pastor at Louisa's First Baptist

Church for over 30 years and, on a part-time basis, he had begun pastoring at Bright Hope in 1892.²⁷

Rev. Dr. Vassar resigned from Richmond Theological Seminary in 1901 due to health challenges. His impact on the education of Black people of all ages extended beyond the professional positions that he occupied. Richmond Theological Institute became part of Virginia

²³ Charles Henry Corey, *A History of the Richmond Theological Seminary, with Reminiscences of Thirty Years' Work among the Colored People of the South*. HathiTrust, accessed March 18, 2025. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc2.ark%3A%2F13960%2Ft1gh9bq7x&seq=6&q1=madison%2Buniversity>.

²⁴ Charles Henry Corey, *A History of the Richmond Theological Seminary, with Reminiscences of Thirty Years' Work among the Colored People of the South*. HathiTrust, accessed March 18, 2025. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc2.ark%3A%2F13960%2Ft1gh9bq7x&seq=6&q1=madison%2Buniversity>.

²⁵ Since the Civil War's end, creation of seminaries for African American men had ranked as a high priority among all of the Protestant denominations with a presence in Virginia. Additional information about the establishment of seminaries is in the MPD entitled "African American Churches in Virginia."

²⁶ "Noted Educator Passes Away." *Fulton History*. Accessed March 18, 2025. [https://fultonhistory.com/Newspapers/23/Pittsburgh PA Courier/Pittsburgh PA Courier 1929-1930/Pittsburgh PA Courier 1929-1930 - 0074.pdf](https://fultonhistory.com/Newspapers/23/Pittsburgh%20PA%20Courier/Pittsburgh%20PA%20Courier%201929-1930/Pittsburgh%20PA%20Courier%201929-1930-0074.pdf).

²⁷ For more information on the various religious roles Rev. Vassar occupied, see Charles Henry Corey, *A History of the Richmond Theological Seminary, with Reminiscences of Thirty Years' Work among the Colored People of the South*. HathiTrust, accessed March 18, 2025. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc2.ark%3A%2F13960%2Ft1gh9bq7x&seq=6&q1=madison%2Buniversity>. And "The Virginia Baptist State Convention Meets. Rev. Mitchell Elected President- A Large Attendance- The Virginia Seminary," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), May 24, 1890.

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Union University in 1900. The seminary and, by extension, Vassar, influenced individuals throughout the nation, conferring diplomas to students from numerous states, including Texas, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.²⁸ In addition to educating future generations of African American Baptist leaders, Dr. Vassar also advocated for primary education. In 1890, he and his contemporaries sought to organize a State Education Convention to meet the educational needs of Black students in Virginia. He served as the chairman of the Call and Invitation Committee, assisting with the selection of leaders and pastors.²⁹

The Board of Education also appointed Vassar to two church associations, the Northern Virginia Association and the Shiloh Association.³⁰ Church associations in the Baptist denomination referred to groups of congregations in a geographic area, such as a city, county, or multiple adjoining localities, that chose to hold annual meetings and to share resources such as educational materials and doctrinal matters.³¹ Despite the collaborative nature of these associations, each participating church retained complete independence in its operation.³² Vassar served as a representative of the Board of Education in the church associations, highlighting the collective interest among churches to invest in the education of Black children in their community. He served as the Moderator of the Shiloh Baptist Association for two years.³³

The leadership of Rev. Dr. Vassar elevated the station of Bright Hope Baptist Church within the larger statewide convention. Under Vassar's leadership, Bright Hope also hosted the Annual Meeting of a fraternal organization, the Imperial Order of King David, in 1917 and again in 1963. The fraternal order, founded in Richmond in 1908 by Mr. and Mrs. W. B. F. Thompson, focused on community service, public health, and education programs, and offered financial benefits, such as life insurance policies, designed to serve the needs of African Americans, most of whom were not served by White-owned financial institutions.³⁴

Supporting Community Institutions

²⁸ "Anniversary Exercised- Excellent Discourses- The Conferring of Diplomas," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), May 5, 1894. For more examples of his connection to the Richmond Theological Seminary see "Rev. Dr. Vassar's Effort," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, Va.), May 12, 1894.; "Anniversary Exercised- Excellent Discourses- The Conferring of Diplomas," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, Va.), May 12, 1894.

²⁹ "The Following is The Call For an Education Convention to be Held at Lynchburg, Va., July 30 & 31, 1890, at the Court of St. Baptist Church." *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), July 26, 1890.

³⁰ "The Following is The Call For an Education Convention to be Held at Lynchburg, Va., July 30 & 31, 1890, at the Court of St. Baptist Church." *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), July 26, 1890.

³¹ Lena McDonald, Kayla Halberg, Ashlen Stump, and Marcus Pollard, "African American Churches in Virginia," Multiple Property Documentation Form, March 2025, approval pending at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond.

³² C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 26.

³³ Charles Henry Corey, *A History of the Richmond Theological Seminary, with Reminiscences of Thirty Years' Work among the Colored People of the South*. HathiTrust, accessed March 18, 2025. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc2.ark%3A%2F13960%2Ft1gh9bq7x&seq=6&q1=madison%2Buniversity..>

Additional information about church associations is in the MPD, "African American Churches in Virginia

³⁴ "The Imperial Order of King David," Advertisement, *The Richmond Planet*, November 15, 1930, p. 9.

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The efforts of Rev. Perkins and Rev. Dr. Vassar were essential to meet the needs of African American people that were otherwise unmet. Education for Black students was greatly lacking and federal support was nonexistent. As a result of the Constitution of Virginia, ratified in 1869, the first statewide public school system for school-age children was established in 1870. However, Black and White students were required by law to attend segregated schools, and the majority of public funds went to schools for White children. Following the Civil War, White people in the South thought "an educated negro was a good ploughhand spoiled."³⁵ These dehumanizing sentiments resulted in a lack of eagerness among the state and federal government to educate African Americans and allow them to be anything besides physical laborers.

Louisa County's first public school for African American students was not built until 1883. Before the construction of formal schools, education for African American students was limited to and often held "in log cabins, private homes, and churches."³⁶ The requirement for local school boards to establish public schools was not accompanied by adequate resources, especially those for Black students. As a result, for many years, Black parents and organizations, including church congregations, funded many of the necessary expenses, including furnishing the schools, contributing to teachers' lodgings, and paying for the buildings. Bright Hope is also believed to have opened its building for the purpose of public schooling for children during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. However, limited documentation exists because the home of the church clerk burned down many years ago and living members do not have a recollection of these events. Churches, community members, and philanthropists led the way in education, more than the local school board itself. In 1916, there were 48 schools for African American students in Louisa County; however, 38 were privately owned.³⁷

A chapter of "Willing Workers," a private organization, was formed in Louisa County in response to underfunding of public schools for Black children. This organization raised money, bought half an acre of land, and built a two-room private school with the help of community members in Mt. Garland. In 1903, similar efforts resulted in the first private, secondary school for African American students in Louisa County. Mt. Garland also educated students from adjacent counties, requiring students to pay \$1 per month to attend.³⁸ During the 1910s-1920s, Bright Hope Baptist Church engaged in fundraising for construction of public schools in Louisa County through the Rosenwald Fund. The congregation also supported First Baptist's secondary school until the Rosenwald Training School was established in 1926.³⁹ Without the effort and

³⁵ Note the use of dated terminology. Paul Everett Behrens and A. M. Jarman (advisor). *A Survey of Negro Education In Louisa County*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, Master of Arts, 1949.

³⁶ Pearl Mills Harris and Alberta Guy Despot, *A Brief History of Education in Louisa County, under the Auspices of the Louisa County Education Association* (Orange, Va: Orange Review, 1963).

³⁷ Paul Everett Behrens and A. M. Jarman (advisor). *A Survey of Negro Education In Louisa County*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, Master of Arts, 1949.

³⁸ Louisa County, Virginia, *Louisa County, Virginia, 1742-1992, 250th Anniversary: Sestercentennial* (Louisa Virginia: The Committee, 1992).

³⁹ Robin Patton, correspondence with Commonwealth Preservation Group, April 7, 2025.

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investment from churches and other community groups, the educational landscape in Louisa would have looked drastically different.

Inter-church connections created a network and community of Black Christians. Relationships between churches developed as a result of sharing a pastor and attending church events of neighboring congregations. Rev. Perkins pastored at both Oak Grove Baptist Church and Bright Hope, a common practice for pastors of African American churches due to the limited number of ordained Black Baptist preachers before the Civil War.⁴⁰ Before the Civil War, African American believers were required by state law to attend religious services under the supervision of White religious leaders. This, combined with limited access to formal education, resulted in a period after the Civil War where it was more logistically and financially feasible to have one minister pastor at multiple churches within a region rather than have each congregation support their own minister. Prior to his time at Bright Hope, Perkins pastored First Baptist Church in Louisa, as well as Springfield Baptist Church and Foster Creek Baptist Church in Louisa County.⁴¹

The practice of having one minister lead multiple congregations encouraged inter-church relationships to flourish. This dynamic allowed congregations to attend each other's services, as many contemporary churches did not meet weekly; instead, they held worship services on a first and third or second and fourth Sunday schedule, with the minister traveling from week to week between the churches. The connections that were established in these spaces resulted in individuals from other congregations having deep relationships with Bright Hope and its members. This could be observed even far into the 20th century in Bright Hope Baptist Church's cemetery, which was established in 1957; some of these individuals were not members of the church but felt connected enough to choose this location as their final resting place. This demonstrates both the interconnectedness of churches and the ways that Bright Hope served its congregants directly while also meeting the needs of the broader community. Other indicators of Bright Hope's ongoing relationships with other African American institutions in Virginia and Washington D.C. are blurbs in local newspapers that mention special programs being hosted by the congregation. For example, on May 19, 1958, Juanita Braxon sponsored a program by the Manual Training Institute for Boys in Hanover County. On May 11, 1962, Mrs. J.J. Braxton and Mrs. M. V. Hunter sponsored a performance by the Hanover All Boys Choir. In 1967, the Reverend H. Ellis Turner and his all-male chorus performed at Bright Hope.⁴² Events such as these provided opportunities for young people to participate in church programs, to entertain local residents, and to gather for a celebratory event. Participation in sponsored events such as

⁴⁰ Louisa County, Virginia, *Louisa County, Virginia, 1742-1992, 250th Anniversary: Sestercentennial* (Louisa Virginia: The Committee, 1992).

⁴¹ Lisa Clemmer and *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, "Fountain M. Perkins (1816 or 1817-1896)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 7, 2020, <https://encyclopedia.virginia.org/entries/perkins-fountain-m-1816-or-1817-1896/>.

⁴² "News from Colored Readers," *The Orange Review*, May 16, 1957, p. 7; "Colored News," *The Orange Review*, May 10, 1962, p. B-9; "Orange County News and Notes," *The Orange Review*, July 6, 1967, p. 8. Note that, during the segregation era, White-owned newspapers typically had a section dedicated to news concerning African Americans. Full digitized and searchable issues of *The Orange Review* and other Virginia newspapers are available at Virginia Chronicle, Library of Virginia, <https://virginiachronicle.com/>.

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these also permitted African Americans to travel in groups in relative safety during a time when Jim Crow segregation laws and White vigilantism threatened the mobility of Black people.⁴³

Bright Hope Baptist Church's leaders and members also engaged with large events such as the Virginia Baptist State Convention, which facilitated inter-church relationships. In 1889, Dr. Vassar attended the convention where one of the main topics included calling out discriminatory actions of the American Baptist Publication Society. The Society removed the names of

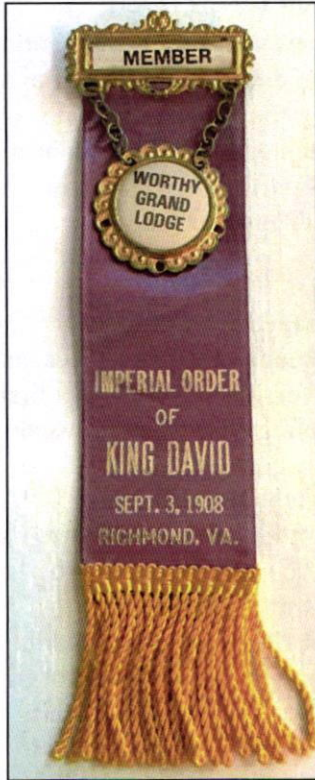


Figure 4. Grand Lodge Session generic badge
(Source: Theda Skocpol collection, Harvard University, 2024.)

presumably Black contributors to the *Baptist Teacher* without indicating a valid justification for this action. One of the reverends at the Convention, the Reverend Dr. Anthony Binga Jr., delivered a resolution addressing this issue, which stated that the attendees “believe discrimination because of color incompatible with Christianity and at war with the principles of that kingdom which is distinguished from others by the equality of its members, as shown by the Intercessory prayer of its King.”⁴⁴ Bright Hope’s participation in such events not only showed their investment in interchurch relationships but also highlighted both their desire to address the discrimination within faith communities and their belief that faith had always been connected to freedom and equality for them. This continued throughout the church’s history.

Bright Hope hosted and attended multiple fraternal organization meetings. These were collaborative events that created opportunities for local community members to meet new individuals, reconnect with friends, and hear from a diverse range of speakers. In 1917, Bright Hope Baptist Church hosted the Grand Lodge convention of the aforementioned Imperial Order of King David (IOKD; Figure 4).⁴⁵ IOKD was founded by W.B.F. and Adelaide Thomson and the organization consisted of men and women who embodied “honest integrity, peaceful industry and graces that go to make a good citizen.”⁴⁶ This event included White and Black attendees as well as speakers from various regions of Virginia, including the Reverend T.M. Johnson of Trevilians, Miss Ethel Lemus of Richmond, and the Reverend W.H. Ford from

⁴³ Detailed discussion of the limitations imposed on African Americans throughout Virginia’s history is in Kayla Halberg, Ashlen Stump, Lena McDonald, “*The Negro Traveler’s Green Book in Virginia: Race, Space, and Mobility*,” Multiple Property Documentation Form, 2024, on file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, draft pending review by the State Review Board and Virginia Board of Historic Resources.

⁴⁴ “The Virginia Baptist State Convention Meets. Rev. Mitchell Elected President- A Large Attendance- The Virginia Seminary,” *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), May 24, 1890.

⁴⁵ “Annual Meeting of Imperial Order of King David,” *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), September 15, 1917.

⁴⁶ “Rising Fraternal Order,” *Richmond Planet*, November 15, 1930.

Fourth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Insurance of Virginia... Covering Business of 1909 (Richmond, VA: Davis Bottom, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1910), pp. 927-29.

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Ashland.⁴⁷ The *Richmond Planet*, a Black-owned newspaper in Richmond, mentioned that men and women spoke at this event and attendees were interracial. Such events allowed for the exchange of ideas on a large scale and created opportunities to connect across racial lines or gender roles. Rev. Dr. David N. Vassar pastored Bright Hope at this time. The event is particularly noteworthy, as most IOKD events were held in locations frequented by African Americans, but this was one of the few IOKD events where White people also were recorded in attendance; at this time, state laws and social customs essentially prohibited integrated gatherings.⁴⁸ Bright Hope hosted the Imperial Order a second time in 1963.

During the early to mid-twentieth century, the Prince Hall Masons, an African-American fraternal organization and outgrowth of the Freemasons, met in the church prior to constructing their own meeting hall nearby. In July 1963, Bright Hope hosted the St. John's Day Celebration, a gathering for "[all] members of the 12 Lodges in the District, as well as visiting Masons, OES, and friends."⁴⁹ Throughout Bright Hope Baptist Church's history, it has served as a gathering place for students, followers of the faith, community members, and those pursuing progress for Black people.

Although there is limited documentation of the role of Bright Hope Baptist Church in the Long Civil Rights Movement, the church's desire to be connected to racial advancement was evident in the pastors they selected. The Reverend Benjamin F. Bunn from Charlottesville, the Reverend Paul F. Spraggs from Cumberland County, and the Reverend Joseph Haden St. from Goochland, Virginia, were consistently engaged in improving conditions for Black residents in their respective communities before coming to Bright Hope. Rev. Bunn pastored Bright Hope and First Baptist Church in Louisa starting in 1944. He organized the Young Adult Fellowship at First Baptist Church. Individuals from other churches, as well as some progressive White people, were invited to participate in this group to discuss racial issues. The group had multiple iterations before it became the Charlottesville Inter-racial Commission and later the Charlottesville Virginia Council on Human Relations. They sought to transform housing, education, and employment for African Americans.⁵⁰ Members of the Inter-racial Commission were invited to a Civil Rights event hosted by the University of Virginia in 1948. The event allowed Southerners who supported civil rights for African Americans to gather and hear from faculty and local clergy, including Rev. Bunn.⁵¹ Additionally, Rev. Bunn and his wife, Imogene Bunn, founded the Charlottesville NAACP branch c. 1945. This group was influential in combating massive resistance during the public school desegregation movement of the 1940s-

⁴⁷ "Annual Meeting of Imperial Order of King David," *Richmond Planet* (Richmond, VA), September 15, 1917.

⁴⁸ "Rising Fraternal Order," *Richmond Planet*, November 15, 1930. *Fourth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Insurance of Virginia... Covering Business of 1909* (Richmond, VA: Davis Bottom, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1910), pp. 927-29.

⁴⁹ "St. John's Day Schedules of Area Masons," *Progress-Index* (Petersburg, VA), July 18, 1963.

⁵⁰ Drewary J. Brown, "BridgeBuilders," Charlottesville Bridgebuilders, 2019, <https://cvillebridgebuilders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/CVile-Bridge-Builders-2ndprinrun-8-pages.pdf>.

⁵¹ "Meeting Tomorrow Will Draft Declaration on Civil Rights," *The Daily Progress*, November 1948, https://search.lib.virginia.edu/sources/uva_library/items/uva-lib:2789279?x=0.331&y=0.146&zoom=1.469&page=3.

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1960s.⁵² Mrs. Bunn also embodied racial progress and advocacy. On the C'ville Bridge Builders website, Mrs. Bunn was described as a "Civil-rights [hero]."⁵³ She was a public health nurse and broke various color barriers in her field. She served as the Nursing Director in the Thomas Jefferson Health District, and she became the "first black public health nurse administrator in Virginia."⁵⁴ Additionally, she helped Black students gain admission to UVA's School of Nursing in Charlottesville, and she assisted Black nurses in securing employment with the city and state. Both Rev. Bunn and Mrs. Imogene Bunn lived lives that fought against the racist systems in which they lived and navigated while also establishing gathering spaces and coalitions to make improvements on a larger scale.

Rev. Spraggs, the church's pastor during the 1960s, was involved with the Civil Rights Movement and anti-poverty movement, as is evidenced in his speech for the Central Piedmont Action Council, Inc. (C-PAC) Board of Directors' Meeting in 1980. At this meeting, he discussed his engagement in various transformative social movements as well as the importance of continuing this work. He recognized C-PAC's progress in gathering financial support for anti-poverty programs, and he urged listeners not only to be invested in community action but also to motivate those living in poverty to work towards their own progress.⁵⁵ Following Rev. Spragg's pastorship, Rev. Haden (1969-1975) led Bright Hope Baptist Church. He was passionate about faith and education. In addition to becoming a preacher, he also taught at Richmond Virginia Seminary and his former elementary school. He started a foundation that supported children's education and a magazine that explored the experiences of Black and Hispanic children.⁵⁶ Each of these individuals was passionate about racial progress through their unique lenses of community and interracial conversations, social movements, education, and, of course, Christianity. It is unclear how Bright Hope Baptist Church participated in racial advancements in the mid-twentieth century; however, congregants were certainly exposed to the guiding principles and value systems of these three pastors, and they likely had opportunities to engage with these programs as well. The value of racial progress through education, politics, and community gathering has been consistent throughout the church's history.

Bright Hope's congregation expanded the church in 1980, signifying their growth and desire to reinvest in their church. Additions to churches are often a sign of health as the church is growing and able to raise sufficient funds to accomplish ambitious goals. This is particularly noteworthy considering that Bright Hope Baptist began as a church that shared their minister with other

⁵² "Massive resistance" is the term used to identify the coordinated legal, political, and social policies to resist desegregation of Virginia's public schools. See James Hershman, "Massive Resistance," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 7, 2020, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/massive-resistance>.

⁵³ Drewary J. Brown, "BridgeBuilders," Charlottesville Bridgebuilders, 2019, <https://cvillebridgebuilders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/CVile-Bridge-Builders-2ndprintrun-8-pages.pdf>.

⁵⁴ Drewary J. Brown, "BridgeBuilders," Charlottesville Bridgebuilders, 2019, <https://cvillebridgebuilders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/CVile-Bridge-Builders-2ndprintrun-8-pages.pdf>.

⁵⁵ "C-PAC Holds Annual Meeting," *Farmville Herald*, June 25, 1980, Volume 90, Number 93 edition, <https://viriniachronicle.com/?a=d&d=TFH19800625.1.19>.

⁵⁶ Rev. Joseph Haden, interview with Dr. Alyce Miller at Second Union School in Goochland County, Virginia, on March 28, 2014, https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/goo_items/9/. A transcript of the interview is at https://viriniachronicle.org/sites/default/files/Joseph%20Haden_Rosenwald%20Schools%20Oral%20History%20Transcript.pdf.

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churches. Their pastor at the time, Rev. Sherman Thomas, drove fundraising and envisioned this addition. Initially, the goal was to add bathrooms to the church, but the construction ultimately included a raised basement, an office and a pastor's study, two restrooms, and a choir room. These alterations were completed in time to welcome Oak Grove congregants following the closure of their church in 1979. In 1998, a second addition was funded by a bequest from congregation member Juanita J. Braxon, long-time leader of Willing Women and youth (Can Do) groups.⁵⁷ A fellowship hall and a kitchen are historically significant features in most African American churches as they facilitate communal gatherings for numerous purposes ranging from religious study to celebratory events to community meetings. With the Juanita J. Braxon Fellowship Hall, Bright Hope Baptist Church continued its long tradition of being community-oriented and open to all.

Registration Requirements

Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery is being nominated under the "African American Churches in Virginia" Multiple Property Documentation form (MPD). The property is an example of a church-based historic district, which is one of the property types identified in the MPD. The property includes a c. 1882 church with additions from c. 1920, 1980, and 1998, as well as a cemetery that has been in use since it was established in 1957. The church building's original design and its subsequent additions, including remodeling and upgrades, match the typical architectural trends described in the MPD. Bright Hope Baptist Church originally included a sanctuary with a transept and was expanded c. 1920 with a projecting tower that included a primary entry, vestibule, and belfry. A 1980 rear addition included restrooms, office spaces, and a new heating and air conditioning system. A 1998 addition that includes a fellowship hall, restroom, and kitchen signifies the continued importance of traditional congregational activities, such as church suppers and celebrations, that occur regularly. The cemetery associated with the church includes marked and unmarked burials that are grouped in two sections; one section is for congregation members and the second is for members for the larger community, an aspect that is indicative of Bright Hope's important role as a community nexus. A variety of marker types dating from the 1950s onward are found throughout the cemetery, which remains in active use. All of these are character-defining aspects of cemeteries associated with churches established during the Reconstruction Era.

Bright Hope Baptist Church has significance at the local level in the areas of Social History and Ethnic Heritage: African American, which are among the areas of significance for church-based historic districts that are substantiated in the MPD. The congregation was established by a Reconstruction Era rural community of freedmen and -women in Louisa County. The church and congregation have served as a community locus, cultural touchstone, and social center up to the present day. Congregation members and pastors have been involved in day-to-day operations at the church as well as in larger community improvement projects, notably the support of public schools during the segregation era. A local lodge of the Prince Hall Masons, a historically all-Black masonic order, regularly met at the church until their own meeting hall was constructed. The Imperial Order of King David, a benevolent society, also met at the church on occasion. The

⁵⁷ Robin Patton, correspondence with Ashlen Stump, Commonwealth Preservation Group, March 24, 2025.

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intertwining of churches, fraternal and mutual aid organizations, and schools is a significant phenomenon in the history of African American communities. These institutions aided Black Virginians after Emancipation and with providing essential support through the injustices of the segregation era and successes of the mid-20th century Civil Rights Movement. The Reverend Fountain M. Perkins was the second pastor hired by the Bright Hope congregation. He served one term in the Virginia General Assembly as a delegate from Louisa County starting in 1867. During his time as a delegate, Perkins voted for passage of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, participated in negotiations to design Virginia's first statewide public school system, and served on committees to represent his constituents' interests. Bright Hope's third pastor, the Reverend Dr. David N. Vassar, helped to found the Richmond Theological Institute, which became part of Virginia Union University in 1900, while also serving as pastor at First Baptist Church in the Town of Louisa. He held leadership roles in two regional Baptist associations in Virginia, through which he exercised influence on denominational policies, doctrine, and other matters. The property's period of significance, 1882-1975, is within the historic period extensively discussed in the MPD's historic context, Sanctuaries of Governance and Social Structure: The Role of African American Churches from Reconstruction to Civil Rights, 1861-1968. The MPD's registration requirements provide that, for properties where historically important activities have continued to the present, ending a nominated church's period of significance 50 years prior to the date of nomination, is appropriate. As is explained in Section 7, Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery has integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association that convey the property's historic significance. Because the property's significance is based in its association with significant trends under Criterion A in the areas of Social History and Ethnic Heritage: African American, Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery also meets Criteria Considerations A and D.

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Patton, Robin. Correspondence with Commonwealth Preservation Group, April 7, 2025.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR No. 054-5480

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.725 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

2. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

3. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

4. Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____

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Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

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

The nominated boundary for Bright Hope Baptist Church encloses the entirety of tax parcels 24 67 and 24 68 as recorded by the Tax Assessor's Office of Louisa County, Virginia. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the attached Sketch Map, which has a scale of 1"=137'.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated boundary includes the full extent of the acreage historically and currently associated with Bright Hope Baptist Church since the church's construction c. 1882 and the establishment of the associated cemetery in 1957. All known associated historic resources are encompassed by the boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

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telephone: 757-923-1900

date: _____

Research about the history of Bright Hope Baptist Church by Lisa Aaron, congregation member and church historian, and Madeline Gonzales, intern for One Shared Story, has been utilized in preparation of this nomination.

name/title: Madeline Gonzales (researcher)

organization: University of Virginia/ intern at One Shared Story

street & number: 400 Emmet Street South/ PO Box 633

city or town: Charlottesville/ Gordonsville state: VA zip code: 22903/ 22942

Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Louisa County, VA
County and State

telephone: 540-894-1049
date: 2022

name/title: Lisa Aaron (researcher)
organization: Bright Hope Baptist Church
street & number: 9833 Poindexter Road
city or town: Louisa state: VA zip code: 23093
telephone: 540-894-1049
date: 2022

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery

City or Vicinity: Trevilians

County: Louisa State: Virginia

Photographer: Marcus Pollard, Commonwealth Preservation Group

Date Photographed: February 2025

Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Louisa County, VA
County and State

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

Photo Number of 26	Description	Camera Direction	Date	Photographer
1	View along Poindexter Road looking toward the ca. 1882 Bright Hope Baptist Church.	W/SW	2025	CPG
2	Façade of Bright Hope Baptist Church	NW	2025	CPG
3	Oblique showing façade and southeast elevation of church	W	2025	CPG
4	Detail of entry tower roof	W	2025	CPG
5	Northeast elevation of church	SW	2025	CPG
6	Detail of northeast elevation founding showing brick piers and concrete block infill	SW	2025	CPG
7	Oblique showing southeast and northeast (rear) elevations of church	S	2025	CPG
8	Northeast (rear) elevations of church	SE	2025	CPG
9	View from NW corner of church with carport at left and cemetery in background	NE	2025	CPG
10	1998 rear addition, northwest and southwest elevations	E	2025	CPG
11	Southwest elevation and southeast façade of church	N/NE	2025	CPG
12	Detail of 1980 and 1998 additions	NE	2025	CPG
13	Detail of windows on sanctuary's southwest elevation	NE	2025	CPG
14	Southwest elevation and southeast façade of church	N	2025	CPG
15	View toward southwest quadrant of cemetery from Poindexter Road	NE	2025	CPG
16	View from cemetery toward outbuildings and playground area at rear of property	W	2025	CPG
17	Shed and carport	W/NW	2025	CPG
18	Vestibule and primary entrance	SE	2025	CPG
19	Church sanctuary	NW	2025	CPG
20	Typical window sash in sanctuary	SW	2025	CPG
21	Interior of transept looking toward entry	SE	2025	CPG
22	Passage within 1980 addition	SW	2025	CPG
23	Office within 1980 addition	SE	2025	CPG
24	Office within 1980 addition	NW	2025	CPG
25	Kitchen within 1998 addition	NW	2025	CPG
26	Fellowship hall within 1998 addition	NW	2025	CPG

Bright Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Louisa County, VA
County and State

Embedded Images Log

Figure No.	Caption
1	1978 topographic map detail showing vicinity of Bright Hope Baptist Church. The pink squares along Poindexter Road denote ranch dwellings built between 1972-1978. The church at the crossroads now serves a commercial use. The map indicates that the cemetery alongside Bright Hope Baptist Church was fenced at the time (Image Source: Historical Topo Map Explorer, U.S. Geological Survey, https://livingatlas.arcgis.com/topomapexplorer/index.html#maps=&loc=-78.08,38.05&LoD=15.64).
2	2015 aerial view of Bright Hope Baptist Church. Burials in the cemetery appear in three larger groups (see arrows above), along with a few more widely dispersed burials (Image Source: Google Earth historical imagery).
3	Undated photo of the Rev. Dr. David Nathaniel Vassar (Image Source: Charles Henry Corey, <i>A History of the Richmond Theological Seminary, with Reminiscences of Thirty Years' Work among the Colored People of the South</i> . HathiTrust. Accessed March 18, 2025. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc2.ark%3A%2F13960%2Ft1gh9bq7x&seq=6&q1=madison%2Buniversity).
4	Grand Lodge Session generic badge (Source: Theda Skocpol collection, Harvard University, 2024.)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
Tier 2 – 120 hours
Tier 3 – 230 hours
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.