

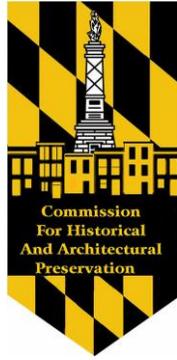
**Baltimore City
Commission for Historical and
Architectural Preservation**

**Landmark Designation Report
October 13, 2015**



**Greater Faith Baptist Church (Keen Memorial Methodist
Protestant Church)**

3000-3004 Huntingdon Ave.
Baltimore, Maryland



Commission for historical & architectural preservation

ERIC HOLCOMB, *Executive Director*

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STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE
Mayor



THOMAS J. STOSUR
Director

Significance Summary

The church now the home to Greater Faith Baptist Church was constructed for Keen Memorial Methodist Protestant Church, one of the oldest churches in the Remington community, which served the community for 107 years. The church began in 1887 and served the Remington community through its ministry and through outreach to railroad workers, establishment of the neighborhood's YMCA, and other community events. The church was also active in the greater Methodist Church and its social activism, such as temperance in the early-20th century, and ending racial discrimination in the mid-20th century. Today the church is home to the Greater Faith Baptist Church, and is the only historic church in Remington that is still extant and serving its original purpose today.

History

Keen Memorial Methodist Protestant Church is one of the earliest established churches in Remington, and is the only early church in Remington that still functions as a church. Remington was originally a part of the estate of William Remington. It began developing in the early 1880s as a rowhouse suburb to house employees of the railroad lines located along the Jones Falls.¹ It has long been a working class neighborhood. The church was founded in 1887, and originally held services in the home of Joshua Barton, located at 2707 Huntingdon Ave.² The congregation was originally called the Remington Methodist Protestant Mission, and later the Remington Methodist Protestant Church.³

The church was one of several Methodist Protestant churches in Baltimore. This regional denomination of Methodism was founded in Baltimore in 1828 by former members of the Methodist church, and received the name "Methodist Protestant Church" in 1830.⁴ The schism was due not to ideological differences, but issues of governance in the church, particularly the role of laypersons and the power of the clergy. The Methodist Protestant Church was particularly active in Baltimore and south central Pennsylvania.⁵

May 13, 1888 was the date of dedication of their first church, described as "a neat frame structure" costing \$750, located at the corner of Remington Ave. and 30th St. (then called William Street).⁶ That same year, Remington became part of Baltimore City as part of the annexation of Baltimore County.

Beginning in the spring of 1896, the pastor Howard O. Keen led the congregation in the charge to construct a new church building. The present church building located at the northwestern corner of the intersection Huntingdon Ave. and 30th St. was completed in early October 1897, and opening services were held on October 11, 1897.⁷ The congregation decided to rename their church after him, to honor his zeal in constructing the church.⁸ Though he was still very much alive, they named it "Keen Memorial". He was known as an "eloquent and popular pastor."⁹ The name was officially changed to Keen Memorial Methodist Protestant Church in 1900 through an amendment to its charter.¹⁰

During the early 20th century, the church was very active in the temperance movement and Anti-Saloon League, which were values held by the Methodist Protestant Church at large.¹¹ Through the efforts of Rev. Keen, the church opened a branch of the Young Men's Christian Association at 2929 Huntingdon Ave.¹² In the 1960s, it participated in the Methodist Church's charge for their ministers and layman to end racial discrimination.¹³

Even earlier in the 20th century, the church appears to have been very progressive in terms of race. In 1906, the *Sun* reported that a Rev. Horace H. Jones, an African American missionary who had recently returned from Liberia, was to preach at Keen Memorial, which was considered to be very unusual at that time.¹⁴

The church was a mainstay in the community. The Remington Improvement Association was organized in 1907 at the church, with 105 charter members.¹⁵ The church was also very engaged with railroad workers, as the railroad employed many residents of Remington, and by extension, members of the church. The church participated in annual memorial services to railroad workers, and was also very involved with the Pennsylvania Railroad Branch of the YMCA.¹⁶ It held annual carnivals that drew large crowds, including the Governor.¹⁷

In 1908, the plans for a two-story brick parsonage located adjacent to the church were submitted by A.S. Beane, who served as the pastor for over 21 years in the early 20th century.¹⁸ In the *American Architect and Architecture* journal, he was credited as the architect of the plans.¹⁹ The parsonage was built between 1908 and 1912, and has the address of 3004 Huntingdon Ave.²⁰ Interestingly, in 1915, the Park Board approved the sale of two strips of land adjacent to the church for the parsonage, although it was already constructed.²¹ In 1917, the Park Board sold two additional small lots to the church to round out the lot on which the church and parsonage are located.²² In 1922, the church published plans to construct a Sunday School and social hall that was to be two stories tall and 40 ft by 45 ft.²³ The existing rear one story addition was likely a more modest alteration of the original plan.

The church grew quickly and successfully through evangelism. In 1915, Rev. A. S. Beane converted 100 people and added 75 members to his church during a seven week long revival.²⁴ The church was also very active in the larger Methodist community, participating in the annual summer Methodist Camp-meetings at Jackson Grove, as well as annual meetings and events.²⁵

Following the merger between the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1939, the church became the Keen Memorial United Methodist Church.²⁶ The church celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1963.²⁷

By the 1970s, the loss of industry had hit the neighborhood hard. The parish house at 3004 Huntingdon Ave. was leased to House Center, Inc., a youth center originally started by Johns Hopkins University. The center provided drug abuse outreach in the

neighborhood, particularly focusing on glue-sniffing, along with other drug and alcohol abuse.²⁸ In the 1970s and 1980s, the church served as a polling center for elections.²⁹

After 107 years of serving the Remington community, the church closed. On June 11, 1994, at its annual meeting, the Keen Memorial United Methodist Church was discontinued, after which it became the property of the Baltimore-Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church, Inc.³⁰ The property was sold to Remnant Baptist Church of Maryland on December 15, 1997.³¹

Remnant Baptist Church was founded in 1979, so it is not an historic congregation. It has owned the church in Remington for almost 20 years, and is a caring steward of the property. Today, it is called Greater Faith Baptist Church.³²

The property is not listed on a federal, state, or local inventory of historic places.

Architectural Description

The property consists of a three-bay wide, deep two-story Gothic Revival church and its adjacent two story brick rectory. Constructed of brick, today it is clad with stucco and concrete. The façade faces Huntingdon Ave. and features a steep side gabled roof and a bell tower and entrance on its south bay, a large arched stained-glass window above a band of three smaller stained glass windows, and a smaller tower an entrance on the north bay. The side elevation, facing 30th Street, features four bays of arched stained glass windows on the second floor, with paired windows and a door below. There is a rear one-story addition. The roof is clad with slate. Located immediately adjacent to the church at 3004 Huntingdon Ave. is the two story brick porch-front rowhouse that served as the rectory. Constructed approximately ten years after the church, it was designed to seamlessly visually relate to the church. The details such as a second floor bay window and porch front also relates to the predominant rowhouse architecture in the surrounding block. This Gothic Revival church structure and rectory is an excellent example of a community church constructed in the late 19th century.

Staff Recommendations

The property meets CHAP Landmark Designation Standards:

B. A Baltimore City Landmark may be a site, structure, landscape, building (or portion thereof), place, work of art, or other object which:

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Baltimore history;
3. That embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

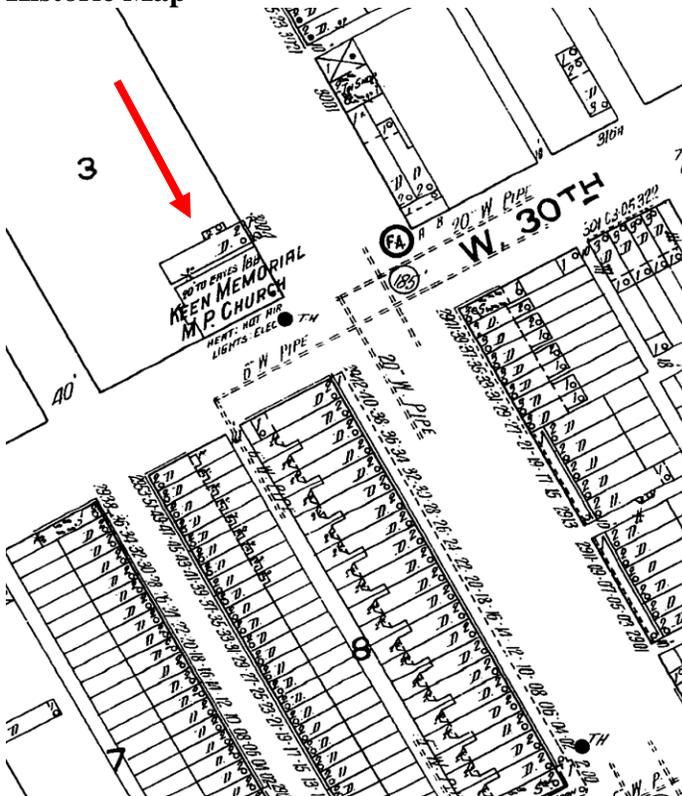
The church today known as Greater Faith Baptist Church was constructed for Keen Memorial Methodist Protestant Church, one of the oldest churches in the Remington

community, which served the community for 107 years. The church began in 1887, and served the Remington community through its ministry, but also through outreach to railroad workers, establishment of the neighborhood's YMCA, and other community events. The church was also active in the greater Methodist Church and its social activism, such as temperance in the early-20th century, and ending racial discrimination in the mid-20th century. Today the church is home to the Greater Faith Baptist Church, and is the only historic church in Remington that is still extant and serving its original purpose today.

Locator Map



Historic Map

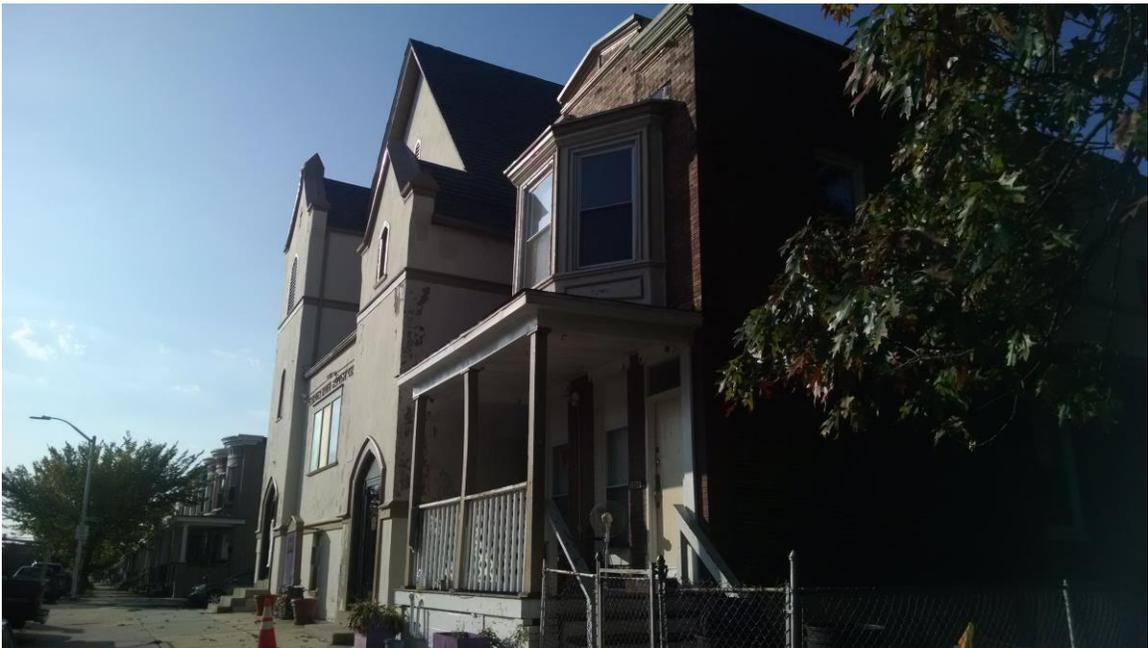


1915 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, depicting the building at the intersection of Huntingdon Ave. and 30th St. (Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps 1914-1915, Vol. 7, Sheet 708)

Current Photographs



The façade of the church and rectory.



Looking south on Huntingdon Ave., the rectory is in the foreground.

¹ Mae Mortimer

² "Homes For Endeavorers" *The Sun* (1837-1989); Oct 11, 1897; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun, pg. 10; Mae Mortimer, "Remington" in *Beyond the White Marble Steps: A Look at Baltimore Neighborhoods*, edited by Leslie Rehbein and Kate E. Peterson (Baltimore: The Citizens Housing & Planning Association) 1979, pg. 37.

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- ³ “He Likes to Know Smart Men: Local Briefs” *The Sun* (1837-1989); May 14, 1888; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 4; “Homes For Endeavorers”
- ⁴ J. T. Murray and T.H. Lewis, *History of the Maryland Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church* (Baltimore, W.J.C. Dulany), 1882, pg. 9-10. Accessible as a Google E-book.
- ⁵ Milton W. Loyer, “The Methodist Protestant Church in Central Pennsylvania or What Ever Happened to Hawley Memorial Church?” in *The Chronicle: Journal of the Historical Society of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church* Vol. II, Spring 1991. Accessible at: https://www.lycoming.edu/umarch/chronicles/1991/chronicle_1991.htm
- ⁶ “He Likes to Know Smart Men: Local Briefs”; Mae Mortimer.
- ⁷ “Homes For Endeavorers”
- ⁸ “Homes For Endeavorers”
- ⁹ Mae Mortimer
- ¹⁰ “LOCAL BRIEFS: BITS OF NEWS GATHERED IN ALL SECTIONS OF BALTIMORE” *The Sun* (1837-1989); Mar 12, 1900; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 7
- ¹¹ “BIBB MILLS TAKES POST IN ALABAMA: Maryland Anti-Saloon League Counsel ...” *The Sun* (1837-1989); Aug 12, 1922; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 18; “RAIN WETS "DRY" PARADE: But, Nothing Daunted, Thousands March For ...”, *The Sun* (1837-1989); Nov 5, 1916; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 16
- ¹² “Huntingdon Branch Y. M. C. A.” *The Sun* (1837-1989); Jan 6, 1900; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 7
- ¹³ “UNITY ADVANCES, METHODISTS TOLD: Bishop Cheers And Warns As Conference Ends”, *The Sun* (1837-1989); Jun 10, 1963; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 34
- ¹⁴ “NEWS OF THE CHURCHES: THE SECOND GERMAN EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION'S NEW ...” *The Sun* (1837-1989); Jul 6, 1907; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 7; “Improving Grotto At St. Benedict's” *The Sun* (1837-1989); Jul 6, 1907; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 7
- ¹⁵ “Remington Residents Organized” *The Sun* (1837-1989); Feb 21, 1907; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 6
- ¹⁶ “MAYOR TO ENTERTAIN THEM”, *The Sun* (1837-1989); Jun 9, 1912; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 9
- ¹⁷ “KEEN MEMORIAL HAS CARNIVAL: Church Folk Enjoy Automobile Rides And Merry-Go-Rounds”, *The Sun* (1837-1989); Jul 18, 1911; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 7
- ¹⁸ “TO DEVELOP OREM TRACT: AUCHENTOROLY CO. ACQUIRES LAND FROM PARKWAY ...” *The Sun* (1837-1989); Oct 16, 1908; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 8; “ONLY GIRLS IN THE BLOCK” *The Sun* (1837-1989); Apr 13, 1908; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 6; “Rev. A. S. Beam, Pastor Of Church 21 Years, Dies:...” *The Sun* (1837-1989); Sep 22, 1928; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 3
- ¹⁹ “The American Architect”, Vol. 94, No. 1718, November 25, 1908, pg. 20. In *American Architect and Architecture* Vol. 94 (New York: J.R. Osgood and Company), 1908. Accessible as a Google e-book;
- ²⁰ “FINE SILVER IN NEGRO'S HOME” *The Sun* (1837-1989); Jul 21, 1912; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 8
- ²¹ “Approves Land Sale To Church”, *The Sun* (1837-1989); Sep 15, 1915; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 14
- ²² “City Will Sell Lots To Church”, *The Sun* (1837-1989); Sep 19, 1917; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 5
- ²³ *Manufacturers Record* Vol. 82, August 17, 1922, pg. 82. Available as a Google e-book.
- ²⁴ “Te Deum Window for Church” *The Sun* (1837-1989); Jan 23, 1915; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 5
- ²⁵ “JACKSON GROVE OPENED: CAMP NEAR ODENTON ALMOST A CENTURY OLD JACKSON ...”, *The Sun* (1837-1989); Aug 4, 1905; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 6
- ²⁶ Amelia Muller, “Last M. P. Conference Held Before Union Of Churches: Ritualistic ...” *The Sun* (1837-1989); Jun 20, 1939; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Baltimore Sun*, pg. 9; Deed from The

Baltimore-Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church, Inc. to Remnant Baptist Church of Maryland. Baltimore City Circuit Court (Land Records) PMB 6950, p. 89.

²⁷ “75th Birthday Today At Keen Memorial” The Sun (1837-1989); Mar 31, 1963; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun, pg. 42

²⁸ Earl Arnett, “Youth center has reduced the glue sniffing”, The Sun (1837-1989); Feb 9, 1973; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun, pg. B1

²⁹ “Other 2 -- No Title”, The Sun (1837-1989); Sep 11, 1970; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun, pg. A12; Rafael Alvarez, “In Remington, few are called, fewer bother to vote” The Sun (1837-1989); Nov 4, 1987; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun, pg. 9A

³⁰ Deed from The Baltimore-Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church, Inc. to Remnant Baptist Church of Maryland. Baltimore City Circuit Court (Land Records) PMB 6950, p. 89.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Dr. Leah White, pastor of Greater Faith Baptist Church. Personal Communication.