

# 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: Chapel on the Forks

Other names/site number: Buck Run Baptist Church

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

## 2. Location

Street & number: 3984 Georgetown Road

City or town: Frankfort State: KY County: Franklin

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

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

Chapel on the Forks  
Name of Property

Franklin County, KY  
County and State

#### 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

☐

Chapel on the Forks  
Name of Property

Franklin County, KY  
County and State

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

0

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use Historic Function** (Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/religious facility

**Current Function** (Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> AND 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Late Gothic Revival

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: stone

Walls: brick

Roof: asphalt

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 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.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Chapel on the Forks is a front-gable brick Gothic Revival style building located at 3894 Georgetown Road, Frankfort, KY. The property is located at the Forks of Elkhorn, where north and south Elkhorn Creek join before flowing north to the Kentucky River. It sits on a peninsula that is bound on the north, east, and south by Elkhorn Creek. The church originally was named Buck Run for its location, which was further east along Georgetown Road near a small creek named Buck Run. The church was constructed at the original site in 1848. It was moved to its current location brick by brick in 1888 and was reconstructed on a limestone foundation. No photographs or sketches of the church on Buck Run Creek were located and the only description of the building is that it was “a snug little brick meeting house, forty (sic) by thirty.”<sup>1</sup>

The Gothic Revival sanctuary is intact and is oriented southeast toward Georgetown Road. It is one-story tall, with a steeply pitched gable roof that is topped by a frame octagonal-shaped cupola. The façade features a central projecting gable-end vestibule/anteroom. Lancet windows are symmetrically spaced along both side elevations and the façade of the sanctuary. The building currently incorporates three additions. All three additions were created to allow more room for church activities outside of the sanctuary space. The 1948 addition appears to have added room to the rear of the sanctuary for Sunday School activities, a study, and possibly daycare. The 1968 addition incorporated more room for dedicated classrooms and offices as well as an indoor recreation area. The 1983 addition provided room for a commercial kitchen and a large reception area. Each addition supported the growing church by providing activity and gathering spaces while allowing the sanctuary to maintain its original footprint and retain the interior space for worship.

Chapel on the Forks retains the historic integrity necessary to convey its significance as an example of Gothic Revival architecture. The location has experienced changes since it was used as a church from 1888 to 1994. The congregation began holding services at a newly constructed building across the street in 1994. The original sanctuary and additions continued to serve as part of the church campus until 2016 when the congregation relocated to a much larger facility 4 to 5 miles away. Although the building is no longer used for religious purposes, it retains the appearance of a rural church. Additions to the sanctuary are located to the northwest; they do not radically or significantly alter the overall footprint or mask the primary elevations of the original 1888 building. These additions did not involve a substantial removal of historic materials. The sanctuary is intact, and it retains original materials on the exterior and interior; changes to the complex overtime have centered on maintenance and addressing a growing congregation. As a result, the sanctuary has been left relatively untouched. In addition, the building’s prominent position on the Forks of Elkhorn is

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<sup>1</sup> Kentucky Heritage Council, “FR-87 Buck Run Baptist Church,” Kentucky Historic Resources Individual Inventory Form, 1986.



unchanged and the naturalistic setting is preserved. As a result, the building retains integrity of materials, workmanship, design, location, setting, feeling, and association for its period of significance.

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### Narrative Description

**Buck Run Baptist Church** was founded in 1818 with 21 charter members near the Scott County-Franklin County line on a little creek from which it took its name. Originally meeting in members' homes, the congregation eventually built a brick church in 1848. The meeting house on Buck Run Creek was moved brick by brick approximately three miles to its current location at the Forks of Elkhorn in 1888, overlooking the Elkhorn Creek. The current church has three additions.



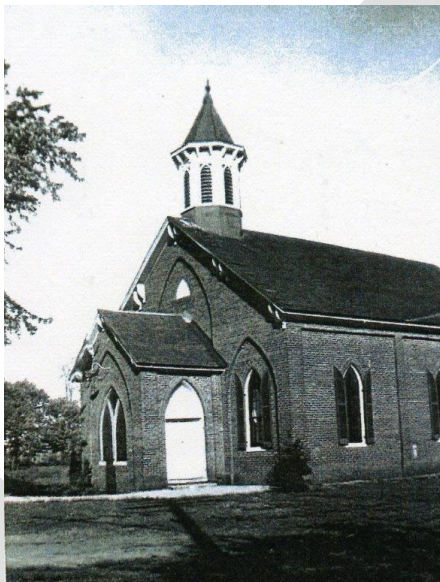
Looking southwest toward the northeast side of the church (date unknown), Taylor, Richard, *Elkhorn, Evolution of a Kentucky Landscape*, 173.



Undated photo of Chapel before additions, Courtesy Capital City Museum

The original Chapel on the Forks sanctuary building is a single-story, gable-front brick building laid in a six-course common bond. The building rests on a roughly coursed limestone foundation. The façade of the building has three bays, including a projecting one-story gable-front brick vestibule. Recessed pointed-arch brick bays embellish the façade of the

building on either side of the vestibule projection. A central recessed brick bay extends to the gable of the façade above the roof of the projecting vestibule. This bay holds a central inset stone panel with the following engraving "BUCK RUN BAPTIST CHURCH. ORGANIZED 1818. REBUILT 1888." The vestibule also features a recessed brick, a pointed-arch bay on its façade. The recessed bay is pierced by a pointed-arch window that features stained glass divided into three sections by wood tracery. The window bay arch is accented by a double row of brick headers. Both side elevations of the vestibule feature a pointed-arch brick bay that holds a double-leaf entry; both entries are topped by wood paneling that extends to fill the pointed-arch of the opening and the arches of both openings are embellished with a double row of brick headers. Both entries retain historic wooden doors and paneling. The recessed brick bays of the building façade flanking the vestibule are pierced by pointed arch bays that also hold stained glass. A double row of brick headers accents the top of each bay. Both side elevations of the building are divided into three bays, by pilasters. Each pilaster is 4" deep and 1' 5" wide; the area between the pilasters is recessed. Each of the side elevation bays holds a central lancet window; each window is topped by an arched double row of brick headers and holds a stained glass sash. Each side bay has a small central opening near the top of the foundation that allows air circulation beneath the building. The northeast elevation (rear) of the building is masked on the first level by the 1948 addition. The gable of the rear wall is blank and features six-course common bond brick like the other elevations.



Chapel on the Forks 1935, Courtesy of Todd McDaniel

Windows throughout the original mass of the building have wooden sills. The building is topped by a steeply pitched asphalt-clad roof that features paired scroll-sawn wooden eave brackets on the façade; the roof of the vestibule has similar wooden eave brackets. An octagonal frame cupola tops the roof on the façade gable end. Each side of the cupola has a pointed-arch opening that holds a louvered wood vent. The cupola is topped by a steeply pitched octagonal roof clad in asphalt. The eaves of the cupola roof feature small wooden brackets that mimic those on the primary mass and vestibule.

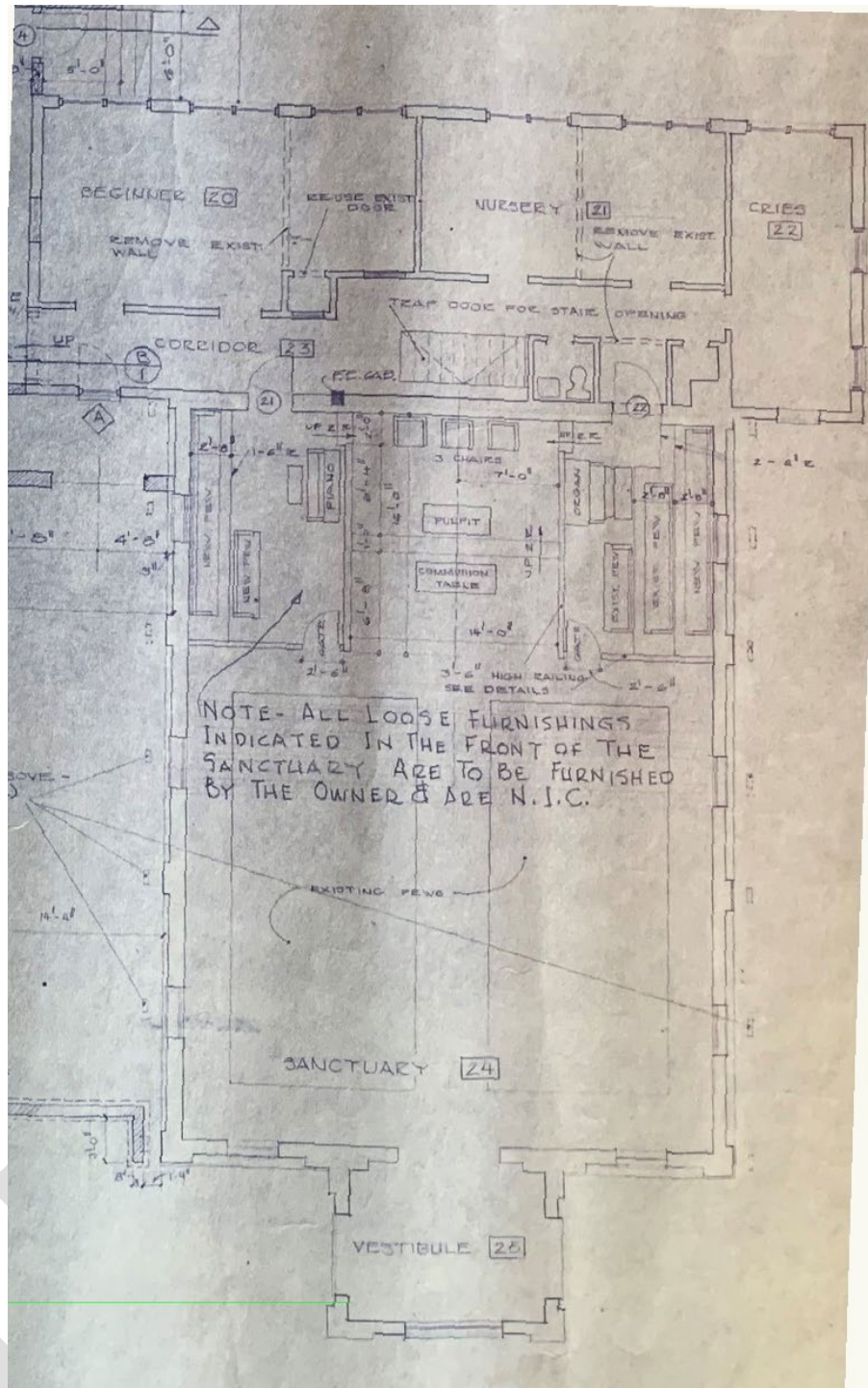
The interior of the church, including the vestibule, is plastered and has beadboard wainscoting. The interior has a central aisle as well as side aisles, with two rows of wooden pews. The pulpit area is flanked by two partitioned areas for the choir and organists. The flooring along the central aisle is covered in carpet, areas beneath the pews have been left uncarpeted and reveal wood plank flooring. The vestibule floor is tiled.

#### **The 1948 Addition: (Noncontributing addition)**

The first addition, completed in 1948 using recycled brick from the local mill, extends from the rear (northwest elevation) of the sanctuary. The rear addition complements the 1888 church in overall scale, materials, and design. The 1948 addition is constructed of brick laid in running bond and has a rectangular footprint. It rests on a poured concrete

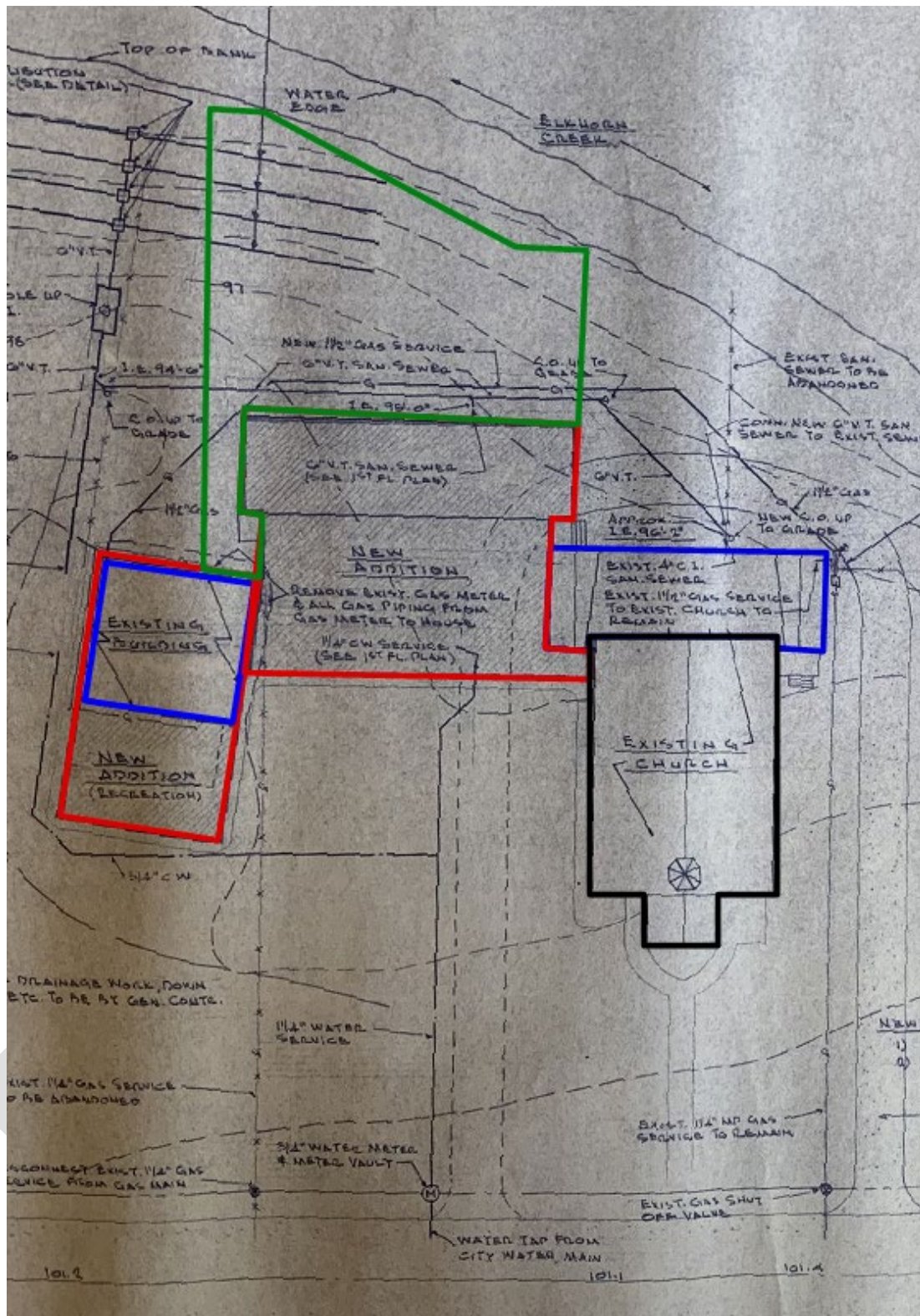
foundation. The addition is comprised of a one-story, shed-roof section (the portion physically attached to the rear elevation of the original sanctuary) that is flanked by one-story, brick, gable-end sections. The gable-end portions of the addition extend approximately 9 feet beyond the footprint of the sanctuary on either side. Both gable-end sections are attached to the rearmost pilaster on each side elevation of the sanctuary. The northeast gable-end addition has an arched opening on the façade that holds a single-leaf, arched wooden door. The arch above the door is accented by a double row of brick headers. The northeast elevation of this section has two pointed-arch window bays that hold wooden, double-hung sashes. The window bays are topped by a double-row of brick headers. The rear elevation of the northeast gable-end portion of the addition has one window that holds paired three-over-one-light, double-hung wood window sashes. The rear of the shed-roof section of the addition is pierced by four window bays, each holds paired three-over-one-light, double-hung wood window sashes. Windows throughout the addition have poured concrete sills. The northwest gable-end section of the addition was partially encompassed in 1968 by another addition. The only original fenestration remaining on this section of the 1948 addition is a window on the rear that is identical to the window on the rear of the northeast gable-end section. Based on a photograph of the church before the 1968 addition, the façade of the northwest gable-end section of the addition appears to have originally held a window. This window was likely covered during the 1968 construction. Brick infill on this section of the building indicates that the original window opening was modified to hold the current rectangular window bay; this likely was done for consistency along the facade of the addition. The poured concrete foundation of the 1948 addition is still visible on this section of the building despite the 1968 modifications.

Although now plastered and an interior wall, the first level of the rear wall of the sanctuary remains intact. This is evident by the visible thickness of the wall and also by the 1968 blueprints, where it is clear that the first level of the rear wall of the sanctuary was left in place. Drawings for the 1948 addition were not located, so it is not clear if the two current entry bays on the rear wall of the original sanctuary were original to the 1888 construction or were created as part of the 1948 construction to provide access to the addition directly through the sanctuary. Any current physical evidence is covered by interior plaster. A passageway for electrical wiring was visible from the basement wall along the original rear of the sanctuary. This passageway was inspected for any evidence of changes made to the rear wall, but the view it permits is limited. Only the crawlspace under the sanctuary was visible.



1968 Coblin and Gray Blueprint, Sanctuary and 1948 rear addition, note retention of the rear sanctuary wall





1968 Coblin and Gray Blueprint: Black=1888 Sanctuary; Blue=1948 Addition; Red=1968 Addition; Green=1983 Addition

Currently, the majority of the interior of the 1948 addition is clad in paneling and the floor is carpeted. The 1948 addition included a full basement that spans the length and width of the first level portion. The basement is accessed through a large hinged door on the floor within the 1948 addition next to the rear wall of the sanctuary. The basement is divided into four rooms. One central room is located at the bottom of the stairs. A boiler room is located off the central

room to the northeast. Two additional rooms are located off the central room opposite the boiler room. The walls in the basement are poured concrete; board marks are visible on the walls indicating that wood was used for framing.

Although the construction date is not conclusive, an additional building was reportedly erected during the 1948 construction period. It was located approximately 70 feet west of the sanctuary. It was a one-story building, but its original material, massing, and original use is unknown. The building first appears on the blueprints for the 1968 addition, where it is noted as an existing building that then served as a parsonage. This building was fully encompassed by the 1968 addition.



Chapel on the Forks 1964-1965, Donated by Winona Fletcher and Karen Carber, the only photo of façade located after the 1948 addition but before 1968 addition (note window on façade of one-story gable section of 1948 addition)



Chapel on the Forks 1964-1965 from across the creek Donated by Winona Fletcher and Karen Carver, white frame building is no longer extant

**The 1968 Addition:** (*noncontributing addition*)

A second addition, designed by Frankfort architects Coblin and Gray, was added in 1968. The 1968 construction incorporated two main sections, a one-story classroom addition that spanned west of the sanctuary and a one-story indoor recreation area that was located west of the classroom addition. The classroom addition physically connects to the west elevation of the 1948 addition and the west elevation of the sanctuary. The only interior connection between the 1968 addition and the sanctuary was through the 1948 addition. The 1968 classroom addition abuts the west elevation of the 1948 gable-end one-story section and wraps around its northwest elevation. Both sections of the 1968 addition are one-story brick buildings laid in running bond that rest on a poured concrete foundation. Both sections have flat roofs that are inset below brick walls creating a parapet. The 1968 addition incorporates a modern design but also features architectural elements that complement the Gothic Revival style like pointed-arch windows and a cloister with pointed-arch column detailing.

Perhaps the most prominent feature of the 1968 addition is the covered walkway, or cloister, that extends from the west elevation of the sanctuary. It is supported by brick columns that incorporate the Gothic Revival style through connecting pointed arch framework that is parged. The cloister covers a poured concrete sidewalk and shelters windows along the façade of the classroom portion of the addition. This section had a square footprint. Based on the 1968 plans, which roughly match the current building divisions, this portion of the addition was divided into classrooms and incorporated space for a library. The rooms flanked a central corridor that ran northwest-northeast. Two entries provided access to the interior of the addition from the cloister. Each classroom on the south side of the corridor had a window sheltered by the cloister that looked toward Georgetown Road. Classrooms on the north side of the corridor had windows on the northwest elevation that faced the creek. The windows and doors on the south side of the addition remain; fenestration on the north side of this portion of the addition were infilled when the 1983 addition was constructed. The east elevation of the classroom addition extended beyond the west end of the footprint of the 1948 addition and incorporated an outside entry. The west elevation of the classroom addition originally had an outside entrance that opened onto the west end of the central corridor. This west elevation of the classroom addition became an interior wall when the 1983 addition was constructed.

The recreation area section of the addition was located further west and was attached to the classroom addition on the southwest corner. This portion of the 1968 addition had a square footprint and was attached to an existing building (discussed above in the 1948 addition section). The new section was created as a recreation area and the existing building was used partially for storage and partially as a kitchen. The buildings were clad in the same exterior brick and the parapet wall of the new construction spanned the existing to give the appearance of one building period. The interior of the 1948 addition was remodeled as part of the 1968 work, according to the plans the remodeling included the removal of interior walls and doors. Windows in this addition have fixed, metal, pointed-arch stained glass sashes. The area on each side and above each window sash, between the sash and roofline of the building, is infilled and clad in parging.





1981 Aerial imagery with 1968 addition, Vintage Aerial Website







1968 Recreation area addition, existing 1948 building retained but encapsulated

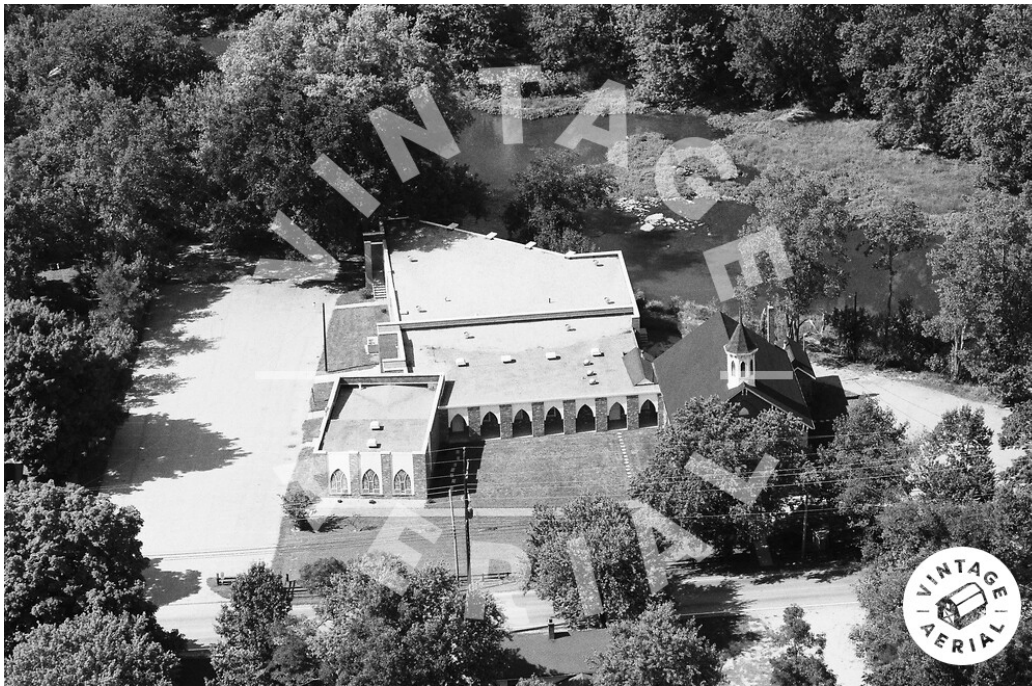
#### **The 1983 Addition (*noncontributing addition*)**

The 1983 addition was attached to the north elevation of the 1968 classroom addition. It primarily encompasses a large reception hall and a commercial kitchen. This addition spans northwest toward Elkhorn Creek. Although this addition incorporates some architectural elements that complement the earlier addition, such as soldier course brick coping, a flat roof, and parged window surrounds, it does not feature elements of the Gothic Revival style. The 1983 addition is clad in running bond brick and rests on a poured concrete foundation. Window bays throughout the addition are large and each holds a ribbon of three rectangular metal sashes; the bottom sash of each function as an awning window. Similar to the 1968 addition, the window bays around the sashes are infilled and clad in parging. The roof of the 1983 addition is flat; it is recessed below the brick walls creating a parapet. It is evident on the east elevation that the 1983 addition was slightly taller than the 1968 addition.

The west elevation of the 1968 classroom addition was encompassed as part of the 1983 addition. As a result, the brick walls that were once exterior are now interior walls. It is assumed this was done to create a solid wall that conformed with the remainder of the addition. Two west elevation entries were incorporated into the exterior wall that was added to the 1968 classroom addition. An additional entry that accessed the reception area was located further north along the west elevation of the addition. When the 1983 addition was attached to the rear elevation of the 1968 classroom addition, the windows along the rear elevation were infilled. An interior corridor was created between the rear wall of the 1968 classroom addition and the south wall of the 1983 addition. The portion of the 1983 addition directly north of this corridor serves as a large commercial kitchen. The area north of the kitchen is one open room, with windows facing



the creek; windows span the entire north (rear) elevation of the 1983 addition. The north (rear) elevation of the 1983 addition is located less than 30 feet from the creek.



1986 Aerial imagery showing 1968 and 1983 additions, Vintage Aerial Website

#### Development of Forks of Elkhorn

The Forks of Elkhorn is located east of Frankfort, where the North and South Forks of Elkhorn Creek meet. Elkhorn Creek travels 17 miles before it ends at the Kentucky River to the north. The landscape of the Forks is distinctly unique within the area. The approach to the Forks from the west, in the direction of Frankfort, is dramatic. The old Frankfort-Georgetown Pike (now Georgetown Road/Route 460) descends a treelined hill, then levels out through a flat section of land that spans just long enough to provide a glimpse of what once was a thriving rural community. The area known as the Forks spans from the drop in elevation east to the bridge that crosses over Elkhorn Creek; this span is just a little over a quarter of a mile. With South Elkhorn to the south, North Elkhorn coming in from the east, and Elkhorn Creek traveling north, the community is encircled by water, resembling the oxbow of a river. The Forks are located in southeastern Franklin County.



Google Earth Aerial, current view of the Forks community

Frontiersmen started laying claims to the land in the area during the late eighteenth century. Franklin County was formed in late 1794; it was the 18th county created in Kentucky. The county is comprised of mostly rolling terrain, with the richest soil located to the south; the county is bisected by the Kentucky River. Franklin County is home to Frankfort, the capital of Kentucky, as well as the seat of Franklin County. Frankfort became the capital of the state in 1792, and eight years later Frankfort was Kentucky's second-largest town, with 628 residents. Frankfort had the heaviest concentration of population growth, but most of Franklin County's increase was scattered among small rural settlements. The Forks of Elkhorn became a major community in the southeastern section of Franklin County by the early to mid-1800s. The area primarily was attractive because of its rich soil for farming and raising livestock.<sup>2</sup>

The area also attracted entrepreneurs who took advantage of waterpower provided by the Elkhorn. Ebenezer Stedman (1808 - 1885) was the owner of a very successful paper mill on the Elkhorn that brought industry to the area. The mills produced the paper for the state government, lawyers, newspapers, novels, and even Orlando Brown. Stedman harvested logs from the creek for his business and always was able to create enterprise from the flowing waters of the Elkhorn. He constructed dams for his mill and added steam power when the creek was too dry to provide ample power. After a terrible span of bad luck, Stedman's success came to a halt when he was forced to file for bankruptcy. The bricks from one of Stedman's mills were used to build the Sunday School rooms on the back of the Chapel on the Forks (1948 addition).<sup>3</sup>

A.W. Macklin (1799 – 1863) was the wealthiest and most well-known resident and businessman of the Forks of the Elkhorn during the mid-nineteenth century. As a farmer, banker, dam builder, manufacturer, and all-around entrepreneur of the Elkhorn, he built many businesses in the area. Macklin reportedly owned all of the land from east of The Forks west to the Kentucky River excluding Frankfort. Macklin Mill was located just across from the 1888 church site. Macklin was an active member of Buck Run Baptist Church (at its initial location on Buck Run Creek), eventually having his funeral there. "...A grand funeral at Buck Run, where the church was fuller than any of them had ever seen it, their employer lying in his best suit..." Local legend has it that the first Baptist Sunday school in Kentucky was held at Macklin Mills, just across from the current church.<sup>4</sup>

Macklin also sold hemp products such as bagging and rope made from hemp grown on his property on the Forks. Macklin established a factory to manufacture hemp products in 1840. Three years later, he had a dam created east of the Forks to use waterpower for his mill. In 1844, only four years after establishing his hemp factory, Macklin created a substantial flouring mill on his property, capable of producing 150 barrels a day. Reportedly, his flour mill was the only one in a fairly large area powered by water that was capable of operating year-round. Macklin's mills produced wheat, flour, corn meal, and feed. Much of what was produced from local farmers was sold in Frankfort.<sup>5</sup>

The Forks of Elkhorn had a Postmaster as early as 1844, but it was not until 1860, that the Federal Census listed the Forks of Elkhorn as a Post Office within District No. 1 of Franklin County. This was the first census to recognize the Forks as a community. In 1870, for the first time, the population was recorded in the Federal Census as the Forks of Elkhorn District. The 1860 census listed only one merchant in The Forks; occupations other than farmer and laborer included wagon maker, seamstress, cooper, wool carder, blacksmith, shoemaker, miller, gunsmith, clergymen, carpenter, and physician. By 1870, the Forks of Elkhorn District had several occupations related to retail, including grocers, a dry goods merchant, and a notions dealer.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Kramer, Carl E, *Capital on the Kentucky: A Two Hundred Year History of Frankfort & Franklin County*, (Frankfort, Historic Frankfort, Inc., 1986), 78.

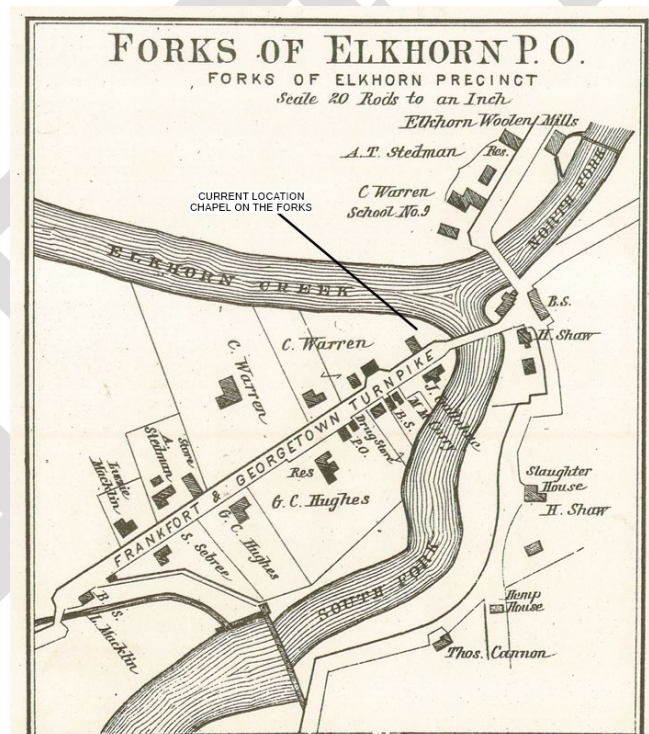
<sup>3</sup> Taylor, Richard, *Elkhorn, Evolution of a Kentucky Landscape*, (Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 2018), 138, 161.

<sup>4</sup> Taylor, 168-173.

<sup>5</sup> Taylor, 172.

<sup>6</sup> Kentucky. Franklin County. 1860 *United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2020.; Kentucky. Franklin County. 1870 *United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2020.U.S. Appointments of U.S. Postmasters, 1832-1971: Kentucky Casey-Graves

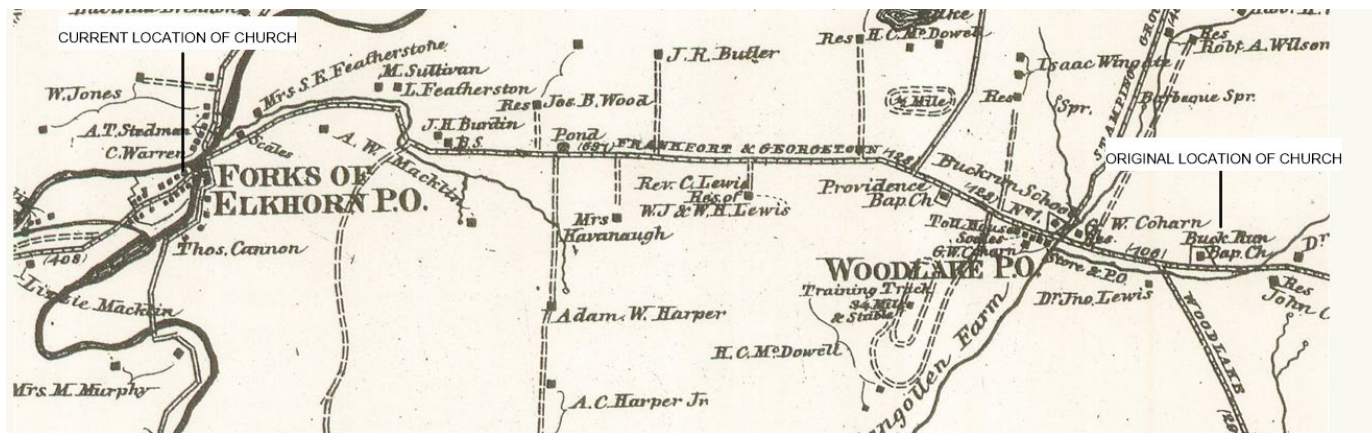
The 1882 *Lake Atlas of Franklin County* provides a valuable glimpse of what the community looked like during the period that the church was relocated there from Buck Run Creek. Chesterfield Warren owned more than half of the land on the west side of Georgetown Pike. He was appointed Postmaster of the Forks of Elkhorn in 1855; he was listed as a merchant on the 1860 census, and a rural grocer on the 1870 census. Likely, at least one of the buildings noted as being owned by C. Warren was a store. South of Warren's properties is a store and residence owned by A. Stedman and a residence owned by Lizzie Macklin. A drugstore, post office, and two unknown businesses are illustrated east of Georgetown Pike. Elkhorn Woolen Mills and a School are noted further north on the west side of the north fork of Elkhorn Creek and a slaughterhouse and hemp house are depicted on the east side of the south fork of Elkhorn Creek. Unlike other rural precincts in Franklin County, The Forks did not have a church at this time. The nearest churches, Buck Run Baptist and Providence Baptist were located approximately three miles east along Georgetown Pike in Woodlake.<sup>7</sup>



1882 Atlas of Franklin County, Detail of Forks of Elkhorn

<sup>7</sup> Lake, D. J. & Company and B. N. Griffing, *An Atlas of Franklin County, Kentucky, from Actual Surveys* (Philadelphia, 1882), 38.  
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1882 Atlas of Franklin County, Forks of Elkhorn left  
and the previous location of Buck Run Baptist Church in Woodlake (right)

In addition to the community's growth during the mid to late nineteenth century, another development was brewing that had the potential to make the area accessible to a larger population. During the 1880s, Kentucky Midland Railroad was securing financial support for a line that would connect Frankfort to Paris with a potential for connections further east. Frankfort and Franklin County both invested in the project. When an election was held in 1887 a stock subscription for the line was supported unanimously by the voters of the Frankfort. Rural precincts, on the other hand, were not as supportive; Forks of Elkhorn was the sole precinct that voted for investing in the rail line. Likely as a result of the precinct's support, the county pressed the railroad company to direct the line as close to The Forks of Elkhorn as possible. The line was completed from Frankfort to Georgetown in 1889, with a depot constructed directly northeast of The Forks. The station initially was called Forks of Elkhorn but was later changed to Elsinore. When the line was completed in 1890, it was 40 miles long and extended from Frankfort to Paris.<sup>8</sup>

With the community growing and discussions of a railroad directly connecting east, The Forks would have been considered an ideal location for a community church. During this same period Buck Run Baptist Church, located approximately three miles east of The Forks, was experiencing discord with the Baptist Church that stemmed from the 1850s. As a result, the church was looking for a new home away from its neighboring church Providence Baptist. As explained by a previous pastor (Dr. Robert H. Jackson, pastor 1966-1974 and again in the 90s) of Buck Run,

"the rift resulted partly from the 'Know Nothing' controversy of the 1850s in which the church membership here, as elsewhere lined up against each other in political camps; partly, the schism stemmed from a clash of outlooks from persons of two different economic and social standings in the community...the Providence Church represented the large, wealthy landowners while Buck Run was a congregation composed of persons of modest means. In 1871, for reasons that are unclear, Buck Run withdrew from the Franklin Baptist Association...The church decided to move from a locale that by then had two Baptist churches within a stone's throw of each other and whose close proximity engendered a spirit of competition and confusion rather than complementation in the Lord's work."<sup>9</sup>

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1888 Mary Warren (widow of Chesterfield Warren) deeded a little less than 2 acres of land on the Forks to the trustees of Buck Run Baptist Church, retaining land to the west with her residence. According to the deed, Ms. Warren reserved the right to erect a gate and use a portion of the sold lot to turn around her wagons and other vehicles to access her adjacent stable.<sup>10</sup> This piece of land is the current location of the Chapel on the Forks.

<sup>8</sup> Kramer, 237-238.; Rennick, Robert M. *Kentucky Place Names* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1984), 105.

<sup>9</sup> Case, Phillip, "The miracle called Buck Run," *State Journal* (Frankfort, KY), November 15, 1998.

<sup>10</sup> Franklin County Deed Book, Mary Warren to Trustees, Buck Run Baptist Church, May 31, 1888, Franklin County Deed Book 25, 1887-88, pp. 469-70, Reel 7002322, Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives, Frankfort, Kentucky.

When the church was relocated on the Forks in 1888, the area around it was thriving for a small rural community. The population of the Forks area grew from 1,386 in 1880 to 1,662 in 1890.<sup>11</sup> The growing population, ample businesses, and the pending railroad would have made the Forks of Elkhorn a prime choice for the location of a community chapel. It would be in a location easily accessible by a population of potential congregation members and it would provide a community service that had never before been offered within the precinct.

Today, Chapel on the Forks is one of only a few buildings left in the community that dates from the 1800s, the other remaining buildings are residences. Little did the congregation know when they established a new physical presence for their church on the Forks that one day it would be one of less than a handful of historic buildings remaining in the community. In 2000, the church faced discussions of demolition as a result of a road proposal that lasted at least until 2002. As recently as 2002, the Department of Highways was considering reconstructing Georgetown Road that currently runs in front of the sanctuary. Alternatives included raising the existing road or creating a new road corridor that was elevated. According to the district magistrate at the time, one alternative “would totally wipe out the Forks of Elkhorn community.” The magistrate, Franklin Judge-Executive, and many residents were opposed to the alternative that would erase the Forks community. When a second traffic study was completed in 2002, the “through-traffic” was calculated as 16% lower than it was 10 years earlier. Overtime the road proposal was dropped.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Kramer, 222.

<sup>12</sup> Baker, Dave, “Hunting Noah’s Rainbow,” State-Journal, May 12, 2000, A1; Pearl, Charles, “New options studied for Georgetown Road,” State-Journal, April 1, 2002, A1.

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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

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

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**Period of Significance**

1888

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**Significant Dates**

1888

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**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation**

(Complete only if Criterion D is marked above.)

**Architect/Builder**

1888 Unknown

1948 Unknown

1968 Coblin and Gray of Frankfort, KY (copies of original drawings)

1983 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.)

Chapel on the Forks (FR-87), originally constructed in 1848 and moved to its current site in 1888, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type (gable-front, Gothic Revival architecture in Franklin County) of construction. The building is significant at the local level (Frankfort, Franklin County) as an example of architecture that embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Gothic Revival style and displays a high level of local craftsmanship. Chapel on the Forks lacks the embellishments of larger urban examples of Gothic Revival style religious buildings such as buttresses, steeples, crenelated parapet walls, and towers. Instead, with its masonry construction, lancet windows, steeply pitched roof, pointed-arch entry bays, and overall single-pile massing, Chapel on the Forks represents a less academic rural example of the Gothic Revival style.

The period of significance for the property is 1888 when the sanctuary building was reconstructed at the current site. At this time the building took a prominent physical spot on the Forks of Elkhorn, becoming an anchor for the community, not only as a gathering place but also as a recognizable physical feature on the landscape.

The building meets Criteria Consideration A, as a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural distinction. It also meets Criteria Consideration B, as a building that has been moved from its original location but gains significance from architectural value; also, the period of significance for the building begins after it was reconstructed at its current site.

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

Gothic Revival Architecture and Rural Churches in Kentucky

The Gothic Revival style of architecture was introduced to America during the early nineteenth century. Early on, it primarily was used for public buildings, but soon it spread throughout the country and became a popular style for religious architecture. The introduction of the style coincided with a period of growth in both the Catholic and Protestant religions in America (Freedom of Religion, The Second Great Awakening, Virginia's Religious Disestablishment). As a result, churches being constructed during the period often featured characteristics of the Gothic Revival style. According to Clay Lancaster, "the preference for the style stemmed largely from economy. Churches could be built with plain brick walls, unadorned pointed windows, simple portals without porticoes, gables without pediments, and relieved inside by a few plaster details at a cost less than that required for the elaborations of the classic styles."<sup>13</sup>

One of the earliest Kentucky churches recognized as featuring the style was Saint Thomas Church near Bardstown. Construction of the church started in 1813; a Baltimore architect finished the building in 1814. The church was generally based on the 1807 Baltimore chapel of Saint Mary's Seminary.<sup>14</sup> Although more embellished, the Bardstown church incorporates pointed-arch windows and recessed brick pointed arch bays, similar to other churches constructed during the period in rural Kentucky. Rural churches that utilized Gothic Revival characteristics likely saw the style as an economical alternative that allowed them to create an affordable church, but also modern and comparable to other, possibly even larger and more ornate, churches.

Examples of rural Kentucky churches in and around Franklin County during this period that incorporated the Gothic Revival style include Old Providence Church (NRIS# 76000864) near Winchester in Clark County, Pisgah Presbyterian Church (NRI # 83002906) near Versailles in Woodford County, Peaks Mill Christian Church (FR-43, status undetermined) near Frankfort in Franklin County, and Saint Francis Mission at White Sulphur (NRIS# 73000847) near Georgetown in Scott County.<sup>15</sup> Saint Francis near Georgetown is of particular interest as a comparison to Chapel on the Forks. Saint Francis was constructed several years before Chapel on the Forks in 1820; it is located only 6 miles east, also on Georgetown Road (US-460). Characteristics of the Gothic Revival style shared by both churches include brick construction, pointed arch bays, and windows, steeply pitched roof, front-facing gable, octagonal cupola with wooden louvered vents, and single-pile massing. Another similarity these two churches share is the melding of styles, which was quite common in rural America during this time. Rural areas during this period were not as exposed to architectural styles as urban areas. As a result, characteristics of a style were often implemented alongside elements of an earlier architectural style.<sup>16</sup> It was a local approach to larger cultural influences. Saint Francis, for example, incorporates an arched façade entry that features a fanlight, a nod to Federal architecture. Similarly, Chapel on the Forks uses square brick pilasters to divide the side elevations, a holdover from Greek Revival architecture. Similar to rural areas elsewhere in America, the Gothic Revival style began to dominate religious architecture in Kentucky during the nineteenth century. Although it never quite reached the popularity level of its predecessor Greek Revival, the Gothic Revival style certainly left its mark on rural churches in America.

Chapel on the Forks is eligible under Criterion C as an example of a rural interpretation of the Gothic Revival style. It reflects the cultural patterns of the time and embodies the distinctive characteristics of that type of construction.

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<sup>13</sup> Clay Lancaster, *Antebellum Architecture of Kentucky* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1991), 249.

<sup>14</sup> Clay Lancaster, *Antebellum Architecture of Kentucky* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1991), 252-253.

<sup>15</sup> No Gothic Revival rural churches listed individually for architecture were located in the Franklin County architectural inventory.

<sup>16</sup> William H. Pierson, Jr., *Technology and the Picturesque, the Corporate and the Early Gothic Styles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 136.



Saint Thomas Church near Bardstown, Archdiocese of Louisville



Old Providence Church near Winchester, Kentucky African American Griots



Pisgah Presbyterian Church, near Versailles, Kentucky Historical Society



Peaks Mill Christian Church, near Frankfort, Salt River Christian Fellowship





Saint Francis Mission at White Sulphur, near Georgetown, Ss. Francis & John Catholic Church



Saint Francis Mission at White Sulphur, near Georgetown, Ss. Francis & John Catholic Church

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\_\_\_\_\_, "Kentucky, Franklin County." <https://vintageaerial.com/photos/kentucky/franklin/1986/CFR/6/19>

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**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: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_ FR-87

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 1.790

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: 38.214945 Longitude: -84.8799744

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

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 certain lot of ground in the Forks of Elkhorn Franklin County, Kentucky, on the North side of the turnpike, beginning at a planted stone in the edge of the pike and running thence Northwardly to another stone planted inside the stone wall at the edge of the creek thence up the creek with the meanders thereof the abutment of the bridge thence Westwardly with the same and the line of the pike to the beginning, being the Eastern portion of the lot of ground conveyed by Mrs. Warren to L. Featherston, M.B. Lucas, W. Chinn, and J.W. French, Trustees of Buck Run Baptist Church.

Being newly described as a certain tract or parcel of land near Frankfort in Franklin County, Kentucky said tract of land lying on the northwest side of Georgetown Road, and being approximately 0.54 miles east of the intersection of Georgetown Road and Old Grand Dad Road, being commonly known as 3894 Road and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at an Iron Pin (set) on the northwest side of Georgetown Road, said point being a corner to Jerry D. Ball and Michelle Somtrakool (Deed Book 579, Page 756); thence with Ball and Somtrakool N23 36'49" W, 344.70'. Passing a Witness Pin (set) at 318.10' to the lower water mark of the Elkhorn Creek; thence with Elkhorn Creek for five calls. Then northerly line of Georgetown Road (said point bearing N 73 56'15"E 84.47' from a Witness Pin (set)); thence with Georgetown Road S 58 38'16"W to the Point of Beginning and containing 1.790 acres.

Franklin County Deed Book 594, Page 351.

Surveyed by Gary Roland, PLS 3363, CAM Surveying in February 2020.



**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The current 1.790 acres has been historically associated with the resource. It is the same property conveyed to the church in 1888; it encompasses the land along the creek and Georgetown road and includes parking for the building.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Andrea Wilson Mueller, Owner

organization: Ama On The Creek

street & number: 100 Old Georgetown Road

city or town: Frankfort state: Ky zip code: 40601-8864

e-mail: andrearae24@hotmail.com

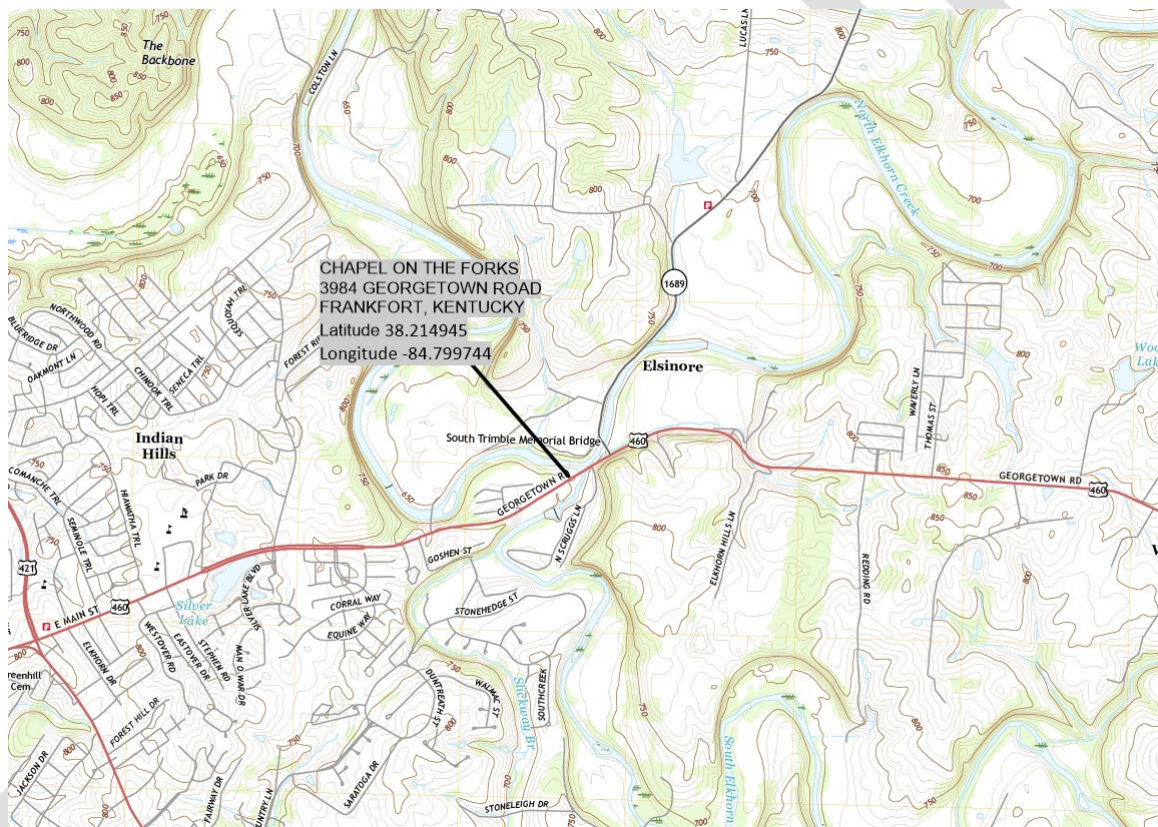
telephone: 502.229.3365

date: 7.8.2020

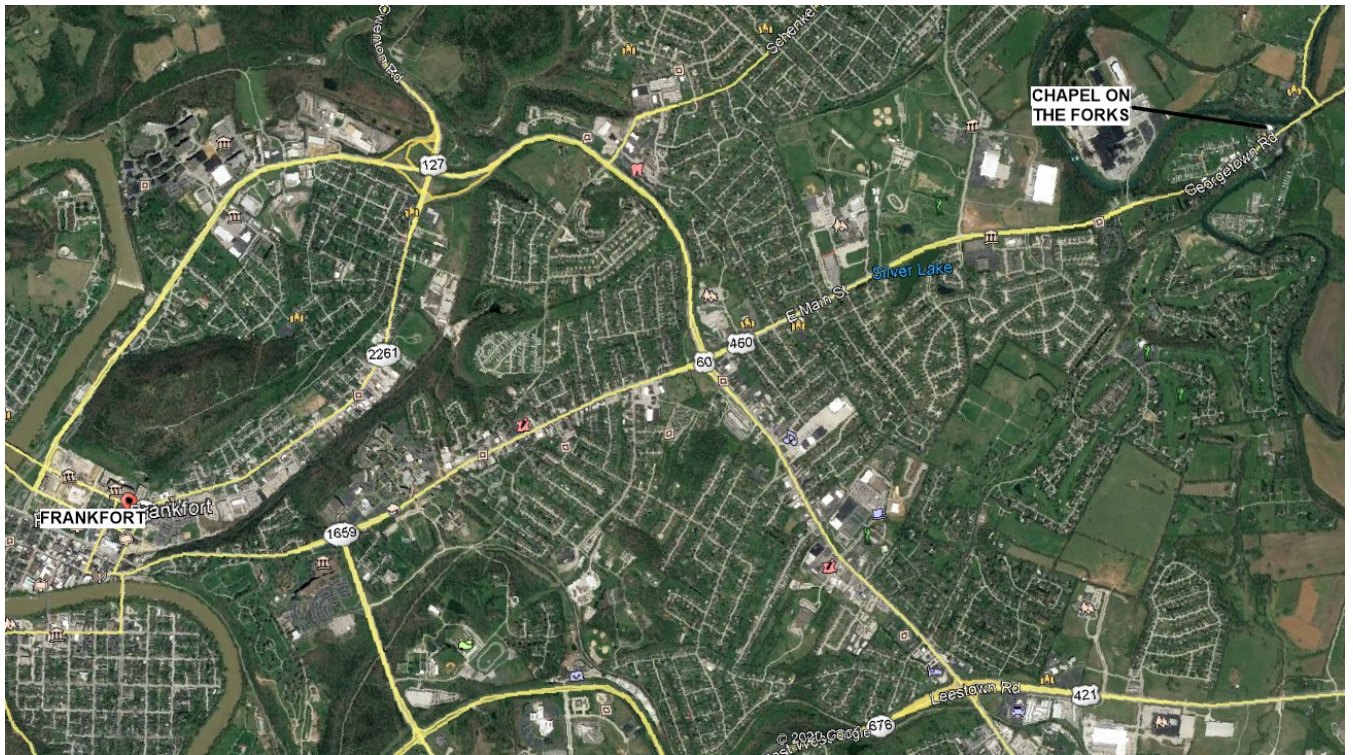
## Additional Documentation

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.)



USGS Topographical Map, Frankfort East Quadrangle 2019



Current Aerial illustrating Chapel on the Forks in relation to Frankfort





Photo Key

## 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: Chapel on the Forks

City or Vicinity: Frankfort

County: Franklin

State: Kentucky

Photographer: Andrea Mueller

Date Photographed: 7.1.2020, 7.29.2020, 8.5.2020

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

Photo 1: Façade and northeast elevation of Chapel on the Forks, view northwest

Photo 2: West elevation of Chapel on the Forks, view northeast

Photo 3: Stained glass on façade of vestibule, view northwest

Photo 4: Sanctuary interior, view from front vestibule looking toward the rear of the sanctuary, view north

Photo 5: Sanctuary interior, view from rear of the sanctuary looking toward front vestibule, view south

Photo 6: Sanctuary interior, view from choir/organist partitioned area, view south

Photo 7: Vestibule interior, view southeast

Photo 8: 1948 gable-end addition on northeast side of sanctuary, view northwest

Photo 9: 1948 gable-end addition on northeast side of sanctuary, view west

Photo 10: Rear of 1948 addition on rear of sanctuary, view southeast

Photo 11: Rear (north elevation) of 1948 addition, section to right of 1948 gable is the 1968 addition, view southwest

Photo 12: Façade of northwest gable-end section of 1948 addition, note brick infill and poured concrete foundation, view northwest

Photo 13: Rear wall of 1888 sanctuary and attached 1948 addition, taken from roof of 1983 addition, illustrates remaining original rear of sanctuary and encapsulation of 1948 northwest gable-end section of 1948 addition, view southeast

Photo 14: Interior of northeast gable-end section of 1948 addition, view southeast

Photo 15: Interior of shed-roof section of 1948 addition, view northwest

Photo 16: Rear wall of original sanctuary, now plastered interior wall of 1948 addition, view south

Photo 17: View from basement passageway through crawlspace of sanctuary, view southeast

Photo 18: Hinged door to basement under 1948 addition, view northeast

Photo 19: Basement under 1948 addition, central room, view east

Photo 20: Façade of 1968 addition, view northeast

Photo 21: 1968 addition window, view east

Photo 22: 1968 addition "cloister," view north

Photo 23: Central corridor in classroom addition, view east, Photo 2020

Photo 24: 1968 addition, west elevation exterior entry now interior door, view north

Photo 25: 1968 addition, west elevation exterior now interior wall, view south

Photo 26: 1968 addition west elevation, right half was constructed in 1968 and left half (with pedestrian door and paired double-hung windows) was existing, view east

Photo 27: 1968 addition east elevation (left) and 1983 addition east elevation (right), view west

Photo 28: 1968 addition (left) abutting 1948 addition (right) on façade, view north

Photo 29: 1968 addition connection to northwest corner of sanctuary, view northeast

Photo 30: Corridor of 1983 addition, rear (north) elevation of 1968 addition (left) and 1983 addition (right), view west

Photo 31: West elevation entries added in 1983 to 1968 addition, view east

Photo 32: West elevation of 1983 addition, windows and leftmost door open onto reception area, view east

Photo 33: North (rear) elevation of 1983 addition, view northwest

Photo 34: North (rear) elevation of 1983 addition, view southeast

Photo 35: East elevation of 1983 addition, view northwest

Photo 36: Interior reception room of 1983 addition, windows facing creek, view north

Photo 37: Interior reception room of 1983 addition, view west

Photo 38: Interior kitchen area of 1983 addition, roller partition opens onto reception area, view north



Photo 1: Façade and northeast elevation of Chapel on the Forks, view northwest





Photo 2: West elevation of Chapel on the Forks, view northeast



Photo 3: Stained glass on façade of vestibule, view northwest



Photo 4: Sanctuary interior, view from front vestibule looking toward the rear of the sanctuary, view north



Photo 5: Sanctuary interior, view from rear of the sanctuary looking toward front vestibule, view south



Photo 6: Sanctuary interior, view from choir/organist partitioned area, view south



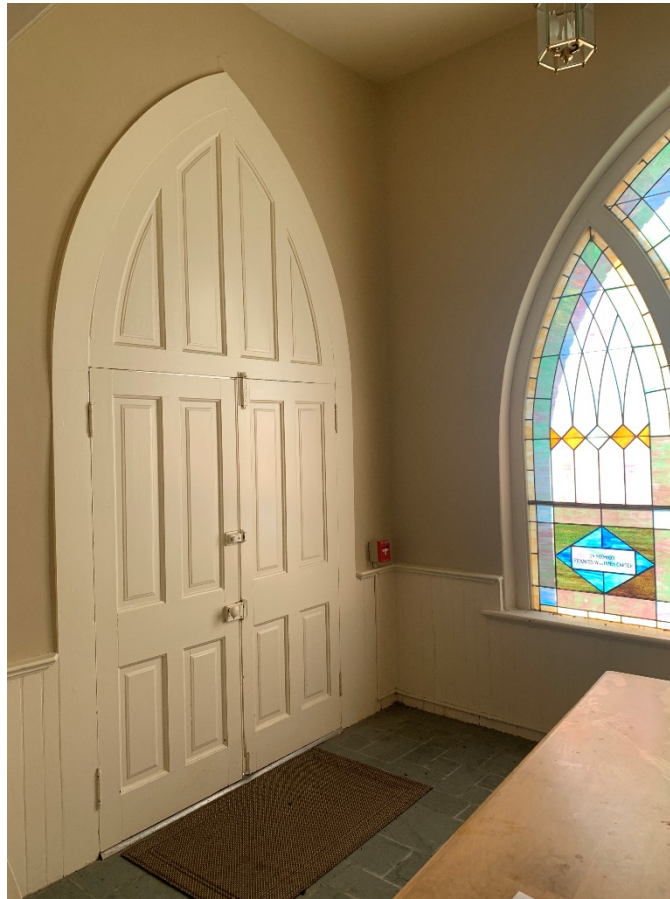


Photo 7: Vestibule interior, view southeast



Photo 8: 1948 gable-end addition on northeast side of sanctuary, view northwest





Photo 9: 1948 gable-end addition on northeast side of sanctuary, view west



Photo 10: Rear of 1948 addition on rear of sanctuary, view southeast





Photo 11: Rear (north elevation) of 1948 addition, section to right of 1948 gable is the 1968 addition, view southwest



Photo 12: Façade of northwest gable-end section of 1948 addition, note brick infill and poured concrete foundation, view northwest



Photo 13: Rear wall of 1888 sanctuary and attached 1948 addition, taken from roof of 1983 addition, illustrates remaining original rear of sanctuary and encapsulation of 1948 northwest gable-end section of 1948 addition, view southeast



Photo 14: Interior of northeast gable-end section of 1948 addition, view southeast





Photo 15: Interior of shed-roof section of 1948 addition, view northwest



Photo 16: Rear wall of original sanctuary, now plastered interior wall of 1948 addition, view south



Photo 17: View from basement passageway through crawlspace of sanctuary, view southeast



Photo 18: Hinged door to basement under 1948 addition, view northeast





Photo 19: Basement under 1948 addition, central room, view east



Photo 20: Façade of 1968 addition, view northeast



Photo 21: Current photo of 1968 addition window, view east



Photo 22: 1968 addition "cloister," view north





Photo 23: Central corridor in classroom addition, view east, Photo 2020



Photo 24: 1968 addition, west elevation exterior entry now interior door, view north



Photo 25: 1968 addition, west elevation exterior now interior wall, view south



Photo 26: 1968 addition west elevation, right half was constructed in 1968 and left half (with pedestrian door and paired double-hung windows) was existing, view east





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Photo 34: North (rear) elevation of 1983 addition, view southeast





Photo 35: East elevation of 1983 addition, view northwest



Photo 36: Interior reception room of 1983 addition, windows facing creek, view north



Photo 37: Interior reception room of 1983 addition, view west



Photo 38: Interior kitchen area of 1983 addition, roller partition opens onto reception area, view north

**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.

