MONTGOMERY COUNTY CEMETERY INVENTORY REVISITED

BURIAL SITE INFORMATION

Name: **Trinity United Methodist Church Cemetery**	Inventory ID: **147**
Alternate name: Trinity ME Church Cemetery	
Address: **NW corner of Clopper Rd/Germantown Rd, Germantown intersection**	
Website:	
GPS coordinates: Latitude: **39.163514**	Longitude: **-77.283356**
FindaGrave: https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2346391	

BURIAL SITE TYPE

Category: ☒ **Religious** ☐ Community ☐ Family ☐ African American ☐ Other:

BURIAL SITE EVALUATION

Setting/location description: ☐ Rural ☐ Urban ☒ **Suburban** ☐ Wooded ☐ Other:		
General condition (See conditions sheet): ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☒ **Poor** ☐ None		
Is there a formal entrance? ☐ Yes ☒ **No**	Accessibility: ☐ Inaccessible ☒ **By foot** ☐ By car	
Is cemetery active (recent burials)? ☐ Yes ☒ **No**	Is there a cemetery sign: ☒ **Yes** ☐ No	
Is cemetery being maintained? ☐ Yes ☐ Minimal ☒ **No** (If yes, note caretaker's name below)		
Are there visible markers? ☒ **Yes** ☐ No	Approximate number of burials/visible markers: **4**	Date ranges: **1877–1896**

Description: (markers, materials, arrangement, landscaping/vegetation, fence, paths and roads, etc.)

- **50'x50' cemetery accessible from Germantown Community Center, across two recreational fields.**
- **Very overgrown with vegetation. Eagle Scouts have tried to keep it maintained.**
- **Wooden rail fence surrounding entire property. Needs to be reset. Some rails replaced.**
- **Grave markers are broken and moved. Only one remains upright.**

BURIAL SITE CONTACT

Name: **Trinity United Methodist Church**		
Relationship to burial site:	Advocacy contact:	
Address: **13700 Schaeffer Road**		Phone: **301-540-4300**
City: **Germantown**	State: **MD**	ZIP Code: **20874**

BURIAL SITE SURVEYOR

Name: **Susan Soderberg**	Survey Date: **3/24/2018**	Time spent: **20 min**
Address:		Phone:
Email:		
Photographer: **Cay Savel**		

COMMENTS

Suggestions for follow-up:

- **Contact former Eagle Scouts to return and clean it up bi-annually.**
- **Needs a locked chain-link fence**

Safety issues, invasive vegetation removal, fence removal/restoration, signage, trash, erosion, vandalism:

- **Uneven ground sunken depressions.**
- **Being uses for illicit activities. Homeless person was camping there.**

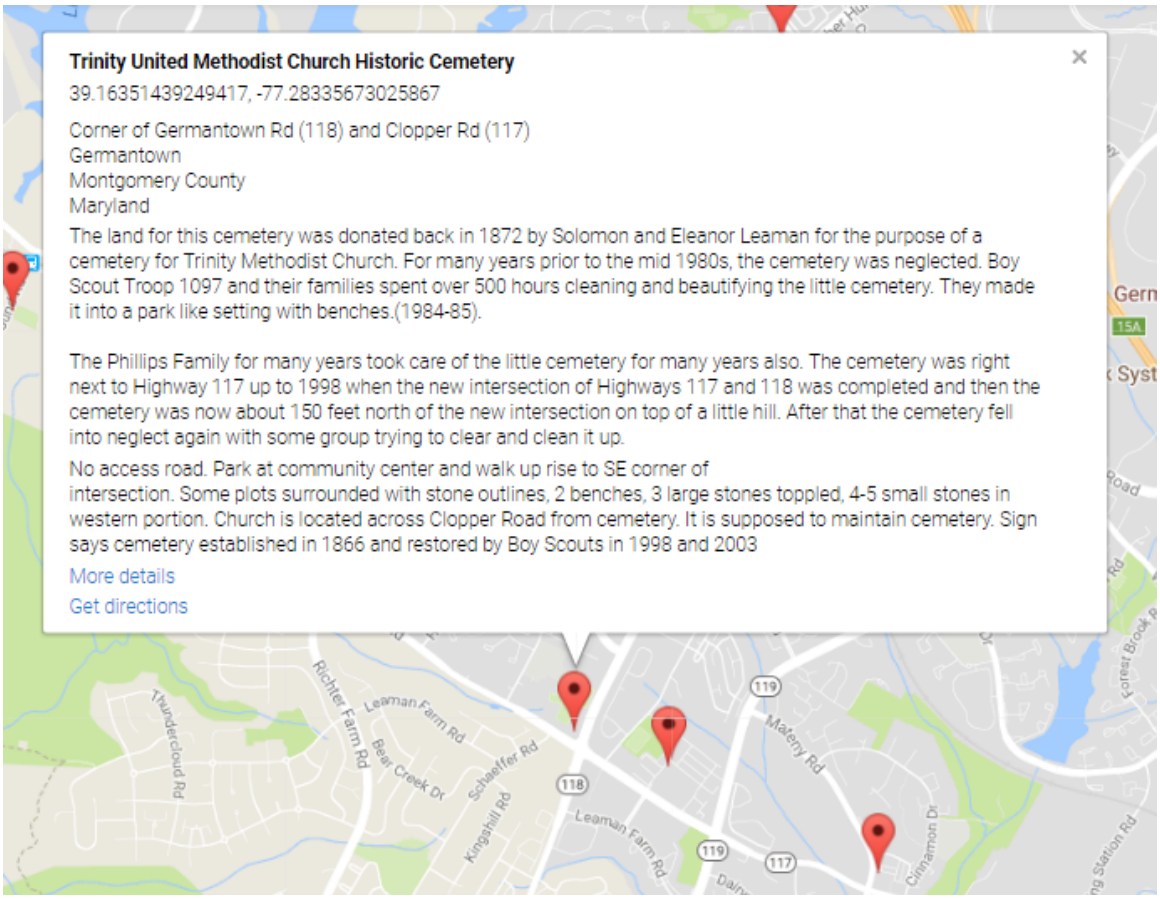
Anything of significance about this cemetery?

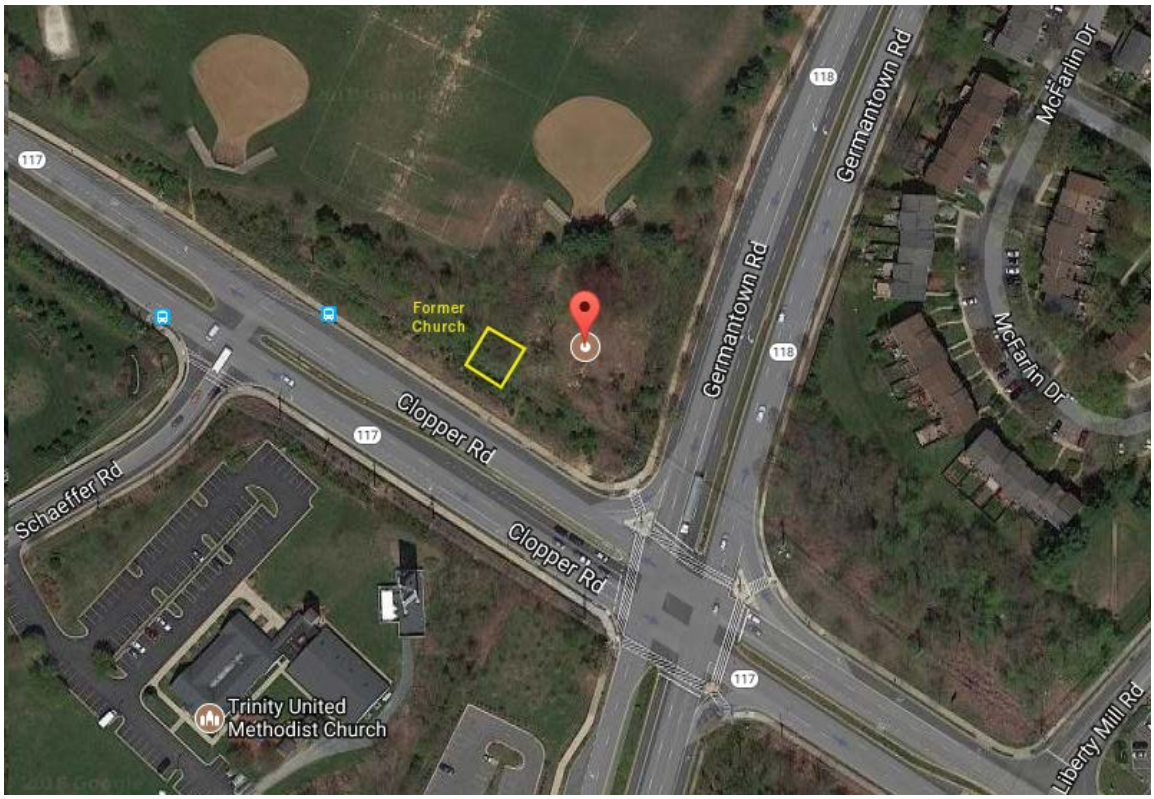
- **Original 1868 church, the earliest Methodist church in Germantown, is gone.**

SOURCES

Cite sources used and resources available:

- **MHT Form M; 19-17-2** https://mht.maryland.gov/secure/medusa/PDF/Montgomery/M;%2019-17-2.pdf
- **History of Germantown, MD, Susan Soderberg, 1988.**
- **Germantown Historical Society files, including copy of 1872 deed.**


Trinity United Methodist Church Historic Cemetery
39.16351439249417, -77.28335673025867
Corner of Germantown Rd (118) and Clopper Rd (117)
Germantown
Montgomery County
Maryland
The land for this cemetery was donated back in 1872 by Solomon and Eleanor Leaman for the purpose of a cemetery for Trinity Methodist Church. For many years prior to the mid 1980s, the cemetery was neglected. Boy Scout Troop 1097 and their families spent over 500 hours cleaning and beautifying the little cemetery. They made it into a park like setting with benches.(1984-85).
The Phillips Family for many years took care of the little cemetery for many years also. The cemetery was right next to Highway 117 up to 1998 when the new intersection of Highways 117 and 118 was completed and then the cemetery was now about 150 feet north of the new intersection on top of a little hill. After that the cemetery fell into neglect again with some group trying to clear and clean it up.
No access road. Park at community center and walk up rise to SE corner of intersection. Some plots surrounded with stone outlines, 2 benches, 3 large stones toppled, 4-5 small stones in western portion. Church is located across Clopper Road from cemetery. It is supposed to maintain cemetery. Sign says cemetery established in 1866 and restored by Boy Scouts in 1998 and 2003
More details
Get directions
Richter Farm Rd
Leaman Farm Rd
Bear Creek Dr
Schaeffer Rd
Kingshill Rd
Thundercloud Rd
Matery Rd
Cinnamon Dr
119
118
117


Former Church
Clopper Rd
Schaeffer Rd
Germantown Rd
McFarlin Dr
Trinity United Methodist Church
Liberty Mill Rd
117
118

Montgomery County Cemetery Inventory
Photograph Log

Cemetery Name: Trinity United Methodist Church Cemetery		Inventory ID: 147
Photographer: Cay Savel		Date: 3/24/2018
Time	**Photo No.**	**Description and direction you are facing** (Ex: detail of wall around Carr plot facing North)
3:39 pm	1	Northeast intersection of Germantown Road and Clopper Road
|	2	Approach from field, facing southwest
|	3	Approach to cemetery, facing southwest
|	4	Possible field marker at foot of hill
|	5	Cemetery sign at cemetery entrance, facing east
|	6	Cemetery sign
|	7	Center of cemetery, facing south
|	8	Panoramic from west to north
|	9	Panoramic from north to east
|	10	Panoramic from south to west
|	11	Christian T. Leaman marker
|	12	M. E. M. marker
|	13	Solomon Leaman marker
4:00 pm	14	Mary Appleby marker

1. Northeast intersection of Germantown Road and Clopper Road

2. Approach from field, facing southwest

3. Approach to cemetery, facing southwest

4. Possible field marker at foot of hill

5. Cemetery sign at cemetery entrance, facing east

6. Cemetery sign

7. Center of cemetery, facing south

8. Panoramic from west to north

9. Panoramic from north to east

10. Panoramic from south to west

11. Christian T. Leaman marker

12. M. E. M. marker

13. Solomon Leaman marker

14. Mary Appleby marker

Trinity Methodist Church in Germantown

Susan Cooke Soderberg, May 2018

The Methodist Church was founded by John Wesley in England in the 1740s and spread in the Colonies of Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania by Francis Asbury, Robert Strawbridge and others beginning in the 1760s. By June 1773 Maryland had 500 of the 1,160 Methodists in the American colonies. The Montgomery Circuit was formed in 1788. The Rockville circuit, of which Germantown became a part, was formed in 1844. The Church had been against slavery since its founding, but in America slaveholders were allowed as members until a ruling by the General Conference in 1844 forbid pastors from owning slaves. The southerners responded by splitting off and forming the Methodist Episcopal Church South in 1845. This rift spread to Maryland in 1860, although new M.E. South churches were generally not formed in this state until after the Civil War.[i] In Germantown the split did not occur until 1901.

In April of 1866 Rev. D.W. Arnold began preaching in Germantown as part of the Rockville circuit. In September of the next year Solomon and Eleanor Leaman donated ¼ acre of land on the edge of their farm along Clopper Road to the trustees of the new church.[ii] A log building 36 feet by 22 feet was erected on the property in the fall of 1868 to be finished in 1869.[iii] In December 1872 the Leamans donated an adjacent 11 square perches (.07 acre) of land for a church graveyard.[iv]

Today that property is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Clopper Road and Germantown Road where there is a cemetery but no remnants of the church building. Original members of this church included the family names of Leaman, Appleby, Metz, English, Hall, Crawford, Mills and Fulks.[v] Slavery was no longer an issue and for thirty-five years the Northern leaning and the Southern leaning Methodists in Germantown got along just fine. It wasn't until 1902 that they decided to form two separate congregations.

The two congregations vied with each other on which would finish their new church building first, and divided the furnishings of the old building. There were many church picnics, suppers and socials held to raise money. By all accounts the competition was friendly and the separation mutually satisfactory. The original log church was purchased by Robert Hickerson who moved the building to the Darnestown-Germantown Road where it was a tenant house until it burned down a short time later.

The Northern congregation incorporated as Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church in February 1903, and in April re-executed a deed for the old property in March and purchased land from Clara and Charles Bowman on Darnestown-Germantown Road (now Liberty Mill Road) for the new church. Trustees at the time were: Albert O. Appleby, James B. Dorsey, Nelson G. Jones, John L. Best, and Perrie T. Waters. The Crawford family also came over to the Trinity church from the original. The Church was completed in 1904 (although the cornerstone is marked 1902).

This church had a tall steeple on the front corner, the top of which came down in a storm in the 1930s and was never rebuilt. It had four tall windows on each side and three in the front. These windows were gradually made into beautiful stained glass depictions of Bible scenes as parishioners donated money for them. There was an oil lamp chandelier that hung from the open arch ceiling that would be lowered to light and then raised to illuminate the sanctuary. A milk can filled with dirt acted as a counterweight for the chandelier.

In 1939 the "Episcopal" was dropped from the name, and in 1953 it became part of the Clarksburg charge, along with Dickerson. The Parsonage for the pastor was in Clarksburg. In 1958 new oak pews were installed in this church.

Meanwhile, the Methodist Episcopal Church South did not fare as well over the years. Horace D. Waters donated land for the new building on the northwest side of the Darnestown-Germantown Road (now Liberty Mill Rd.) about 100 yards from Clopper Road at the intersection today of Duchin Road, where a new church was built.[vi] This church had a tall steeple with a bell in the center front, and four tall windows on either side. The Leaman, Horace Waters, Metz, and Browning families made up the early congregation. Ethel Browning played the piano in the church and Wilson Jordan came as pastor in 1929. Wilson Jordan became ill in 1931, and soon after, this church closed its doors. The building was sold and became a residence and later a doctor's office. It is still there.

Mr. Jordan recovered and became quite famous in Germantown for playing the local Santa Clause, and greeting everyone, young and old with a "Howdy old timer." He and his wife, Charlotte, joined Trinity church when the congregations united in 1939 and were very active members. Carlton and Ethel Browning also joined Trinity and Ethel played the organ and directed the choir.[vii]

With the merger of the Methodist Church with the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1968 the Methodist Church became known as the United Methodist Church.[viii] Trinity Church in Germantown, with the anticipation of a great increase in local population, purchased seven acres across Clopper Road from the original log church from Herbert King in 1979 where they would build a new larger church building. To that end, the old Trinity Church building was sold in 1988 to the U.S. Zen Institute, a Buddhist congregation from Taiwan. The church building was irreparably burned in October 1992[ix] from a lit candle knocked over by a curtain blowing in an open window.[x] It was torn down and a new Buddhist temple now occupies the site.

The cemetery at the site of the original church remains and is still owned by Trinity Church. It contains several graves. Those that are visible are Solomon Leaman (1803-1877), Mary E. Metz (1814-1879), Martha J. Leaman (1872-1876), and Mary Appleby (died 1889). There are many more scattered stones indicating additional graves. The site is continuously overgrown with vines, briars and weeds and has been the clean-up project for three separate Eagle Scouts.

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[i] McGuckian, Eileen, "Maryland Methodism and the Jerusalem United Methodist Church, Rockville, Maryland c.1780-1915," *The Montgomery County Story*, vol.XV, No.5, Nov. 1972, pp. 1-2, 5-8.

[ii] Montgomery County Land Records, Liber EBP 3, Folio 411, Jan. 22, 1867..

[iii] "Report by the Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Germantown" to the Quarterly Meeting of the Rockville Circuit of the Baltimore General Conference, Feb. 13, 1869.

[iv] Montgomery County Land Records Liber EBP 10, Folio 233, Dec. 20, 1872.

[v] Burton, Mary Dorsey, "A History of Trinity United Methodist Church, Germantown Maryland, 1902-1973."

[vi] Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form M-19-17-2, "Old Methodist Church and Cemetery," 1976, Geraldine Berkman, researcher.

[vii] Soderberg, Susan, The History of Germantown, Maryland, 1988, p.98.

[viii] Jones, Rev. Bruce, " A Brief History of Trinity United Methodist Church," 1982.

[ix] *The Germantown Gazette*, Wednesday, October 28, 1992.

[x] Fire Marshal's investigative report.