

PROPERTY INFORMATION

PROPERTY NAME	Mount Salvation Baptist Church (Current and Historic)
PROPERTY ADDRESS	1961 North Culpeper Street Arlington, VA 22207
TAX PARCEL	07006129
USGS QUAD (S)	WASHINGTON WEST (DC)
COUNTY/INDEPENDENT CITY	Arlington (County)

ADDITIONAL PROPERTY INFORMATION

ARCHITECTURE SETTING	Suburban
OWNERSHIP CATEGORY	Private

SITE DESCRIPTION

November 2019: The Mount Salvation Baptist Church and its adjoining cemetery are located on an irregular-shaped, predominately flat lot on the east side of North Culpeper Street. The church is centered on the lot with paved parking lots located north and south of the building and mature trees and the cemetery located to the church's east and southeast. The south parking lot is the smaller of the two, as the cemetery begins approximately half way into the depth of the lot on the south side; it extends east and north and is nestled within the east/southeast section of the lot.

The church building is surrounded by a concrete plaza that incorporates brick planters adjacent to the north side of the building, ADA-compliant ramps, and stairs to accommodate the changing grade and building levels. A brick retaining wall lines the west section of the plaza near the sidewalk; the area between the public sidewalk and the plaza is filled with mature landscaping. The church sign located west of the church has an asymmetric brick form that mimics the rooflines of the north and central section.

PROPERTY HISTORY

November 2019: Reverend Cyrus Carter, originally from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, organized several Baptist churches within the African-American communities in Northern Virginia between 1866 and 1873. Rev. Carter organized the First Baptist Church of Chesterbrook, the First Baptist Church of Vienna, Mount Salvation Baptist Church (Mount Salvation) in Arlington, and Shiloh Baptist Church in McLean, VA (SBC n.d.). When Rev. Carter organized Mount Salvation circa 1872, the congregation began meeting at the residence of Brother Moses and Hattie Pelham by 1879 in what became known as "Pelham Town" (MSBC n.d.; ACHPP 2016:19); the colloquial name for the acreage near Hall's Hill owned and occupied by the Pelham family.

Bazil and Francis Hall owned the 327-acre plantation that became the Hall's Hill/High View Park neighborhood. To recoup losses after the Civil War, Hall eventually subdivided and sold the plantation in one-acre lots to African Americans between 1881 until his death in 1888 (ACHPP 2016:12-15). According to the history of Mount Salvation, the current one-acre site was purchased in 1884 by the trustees of the church from Bazil and Francis Hall for \$80. Original church trustees included Moses Pelham Sr. Washington Jones, Bonaparte Moten, Harrison King, and Horace Shelton. Land for the cemetery was acquired in 1888, and the first permanent church was constructed in 1892 (MSBC n.d.; ACHPP 2016:19; Maas et. al. 2016: 106). Research suggests an interim one-room, wood-framed church existed between 1884 and 1892. Through circa 1885,

the Independent School, an area school for African American children in Hall's Hill/High View Park, used the building for classes when the Washington School District constructed a new Sumner School at the corner of Lee Highway and N. Culpeper Street (MSBP n.d.; Best et. al. 1995).

Reverend Cyrus Carter of Lincolnvile, VA was Mount Salvation's first officiating pastor (MSBC n.d.). Under the pastorate of Reverend Chinnor Coleman (1905-1917), the building was enlarged, and a baptismal pool installed. Rev. N.R. Richardson was pastor from 1931-1966; he and his family lived in D.C.. His assistant pastor was Rev. James E. Browne (Jones 2018:59). Under Richardson, the church had its most prolific building campaign beginning in the 1940s. Renovations in 1942 included a façade renovation and the addition of a basement, new windows and automatic bells/chimes. The two-story central bell tower was constructed in the 1950s and a new composition shingle roof was added over the original roof in 1963 (ACHPP 2016: 19; SID 2013b; ACBP 1963).

Rev. Browne was the assistant pastor of Mount Salvation, and during this period, he began to lead young adult activities. The church was a member of the Northern Virginia Baptist Association, a group of black Baptist churches. Rev. Browne made sure Mount Salvation youth were involved in the Association's youth activities, especially the annual convention. He also was an integral part of the Baptist Center, a property they owned where meetings, religious services, and summer camps were held (Jones 2018:88).

Mount Salvation played an essential role during the civil rights movement by organizing events in conjunction with Calloway Baptist Church, the Arlington branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and HHHVP residents (Jones 2018: 73). Rev. Browne had moved from Cherrydale to 2011 N. Culpeper and became president of the local chapter of the NAACP during this time. Rev. Browne opened his home for a local NAACP meeting that included Attorney Thurgood Marshall and Attorney Robinson where the decision was made to shift from focusing on "equalizing" African American schools and starting suit to desegregate and end Jim Crow laws (Browne in Bozeman et. al. 2004; Jones 2018:73).

The original 1892 Mount Salvation church building was demolished on July 24, 1975 to make way for a new structure approved for construction on May 13, 1974 (ACDP n.d.; Building Permit No.8760-C). Architect Charles J. Bryant, of Bryant & Bryant (Washington, D.C.) designed the new masonry and steel structure; E.L. Daniels of Arlington, VA was the contractor. The new church is associated with the historic Mount Salvation Baptist Church Cemetery (VDHR #000-9812).

SURVEYOR ASSESSMENT/RECOMMENDATION

November 2019: The Mount Salvation Baptist Church is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Although it is associated with the history of religion in Arlington County and African American heritage in the Hall's Hill/High View Park (HHHVP) neighborhood, the resource is less than 50 years old and does not meet the "exceptional importance" threshold to satisfy Criteria Consideration G. The building retains its integrity of location, design, materials, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association.

SURVEYOR RECOMMENDATION: NOT NRHP ELIGIBLE

PRIMARY RESOURCE INFORMATION

RESOURCE CATEGORY	Religious
RESOURCE TYPE	Church/Chapel
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	1974 (Local Records)
HISTORIC TIME PERIOD	The New Dominion (1946 to the present)
HISTORIC CONTEXT (S)	Architecture/Community Planning, Religion, Ethnic Heritage (Black)

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	No discernible style
FORM	Irregular
NUMBER OF STORIES	2.0
CONDITION	Good
THREATS TO RESOURCE	None Known

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

November 2019: The Mount Salvation Baptist Church is a one- and two-story, irregular-shaped building constructed with a split-level floor plan. It has four distinct sections. The north section has an asymmetrical front-gabled roof covered with replacement architectural shingles that has a clerestory ribbon window on the south façade of the higher roof. The asymmetrical central section houses the vestibule that connects the north and south sections; its roof is covered with replacement architectural shingles. The south section has a flat, built-up roof that houses the HVAC equipment; a red wooden fence installed adjacent to the south roof parapet serves to obscure the rooftop equipment. A small, one-story shed roof extension off the south section reads as an addition and constitutes the fourth distinct area of the building. A concrete slab foundation supports the building's masonry walls, which are covered by multi-toned, brown buff-colored brick veneer laid in running stretcher bond.

Porches include a shed-roofed covered entry with stepped brick landing on the north façade that covers a secondary egress entrance; it features a hollow-core metal door. A one-bay shed-roofed porch with metal post supports exists on the north side of the central vestibule. The integrated, recessed porch entry on the south section has a tinted-glass, storefront-style entry that has double-pane doors with transom flanked by large fixed-pane windows. A shed roof awning covers a rear entry to the south section.

There are no dominant windows on the primary or secondary elevations. A stained-glass ribbon window articulates the transition plane between the dual-height roofs of the north section; an identical stained-glass ribbon window exists on the rear (east) side of the north section. Main fenestration, two-pane, fixed windows covered by security bars, exist on the side (south) and rear (north) façade.

Exterior ornamentation includes metal coping, brick sills, and three cornerstones embedded in the west corner of the building. The cornerstones read (in order of oldest to most recent):

- (1) Mount Salvation Baptist Church / Built June 26, 1892 / by Rev. Joseph Matthew / Rebuilt Aug. 30, 1942 / by Rev. N. R. Richardson*
- (2) Basement & Front Built / July 29, 1951 / Rev. N. R. Richardson D.D.*
- (3) Mount Salvation Baptist Church Arlington, VA / Organized 1872 in the Year of Our Lord by Rev. Cyrus Carter / Erected May 1974 / Dedicated to the Glory of God / Rev. John b. Howard, D.D., Pastor*

EXTERIOR COMPONENTS

COMPONENT	COMPONENT TYPE	MATERIAL	MATERIAL TREATMENT
CHIMNEYS	--	--	--
ROOF	Gable; flat (built-up)	Asphalt	Shingle
WINDOWS	Fixed	Metal	--
STRUCTURAL SYSTEM/EXTERIOR TREATMENT	Masonry	Brick	--
FOUNDATION	Solid/Continuous	Concrete	--

PORCH	I-bay(2N); I-bay inset (E)	--	--
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Best, David, Vivian Bullock, Phyllis Costley, and Mignon Johnson. Addendum to the "Summary of Oral History Transcripts for High View Park (Hall's Hill)". August 9, 1995. On file the Arlington Public Library.

Bozeman, Ellen, Rev. James E. Browne, Sr., Ronald Deskins, Robert Eldridge III, Bernard Hamm, Michael Jones, Jane Ludlow, Martha Ann Miller, Eleanor Monroe. "Arlington Celebrates the 50th Anniversary of the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education Decision. Discussion: School Integration in Arlington County." May 11, 2004. On file at the Center for Local History, Arlington Public Library.

Jones, Wilma. *My Halls Hill Family: More Than a Neighborhood*. Arlington: Wilma J, LLC, 2018.

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Mount Salvation Baptist Church (MSBC). Brief History. No date. Accessed November 2019 at, <https://www.mtsalvationbaptistchurch.org/our-history>.

----- Photograph of Mount Salvation Baptist Church. 1950. In ACHPP 2016, pp. 19.

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Slavery Inventory Database, LLC. Photograph of Mount Salvation Baptist Church Cornerstone. May 21, 2013(b). Accessed November 2019 at, <https://historicwanderings.blogspot.com/2013/05/mt-salvation-baptist-church-arlington-va.html>.