

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Holy Cross Faith Memorial School

Other names/site number: Miss Ruby's School

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: 88 Baskervill Drive

City or town: Pawleys Island State: South Carolina County: Georgetown

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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:

X A X B ___ C ___ D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

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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** _____

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
-

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Site

Structure

Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

2

2

buildings

1

1

sites

2

structures

objects

3

5

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/School

RELIGION/church-related residence

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious facility

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: Brick; Walls: Wood/weatherboard;
Roof: Metal

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

Holy Cross Faith Memorial School is located at 88 Baskerville Drive, just outside the Town of Pawleys Island in Georgetown County. The building stands on its original site on the campus of Holy Cross Faith Memorial Episcopal Church. The school is located on a coastal peninsula called the Waccamaw Neck and is less than fifteen miles from the City of Georgetown, across the Waccamaw River. Built in 1932, Holy Cross Faith Memorial School is a two-story balloon framed clapboard building. Architect Henry S. Burden designed the Colonial Revival style building. The building features two arched entry doors, six-over-six sash windows, gable metal roof, and a two-story side porch. Like most early 20th century school buildings in the region, its design is straightforward and utilitarian. It was built as a one-room school with living quarters above for the clergy. Although the first floor has an open plan, it was designed to be easily divided into multiple classroom areas on a temporary basis. The school is located on a much larger church campus, which includes several other resources. The chapel (1952, relocated c. 1960) and the cemetery (established c. 1950) are considered part of the school's historic setting and are therefore contributing. Adjacent to the building to the west is the site of an earlier church and school building, converted into a memorial garden honoring Ruby Forsythe, the long-term

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headmistress of the school, in 1995. As the garden is commemorative in nature, it is considered non-contributing. Four other non-contributing resources postdate the period of significance, the Holy Cross Faith Memorial Church (2005), Drive and Parking Lot Network (2005), the Smith Medical Clinic (2015, 2023), and the church sign (c. 2022). The school retains historic integrity, as discussed in greater detail below.

Narrative Description

1. Holy Cross Faith Memorial School (1932)- Contributing Building

Exterior

The two-story building was built in 1932 to serve as a school and parish house for Holy Cross Faith Memorial Church. Architect Henry S. Burden's original drawings survive in the collections of Brookgreen Gardens (Figure 1). The balloon-frame building stands on brick piers and features a metal front-gable roof (Photos 1, 3). The brick pier in the southeast corner includes the cornerstone (Photo 5). The plan of the building is rectangular, with three bays on the north and south elevations, and nine on the east and west elevations. The building is clad in wood siding and, unless otherwise noted, features six-over-six wood sash windows. The windows on the first floor are slightly taller than those on the second floor are. The six original brick chimneys are all extant, with three on the east side of the roof and three on the west side. The chimney tops feature simple brick corbelling. When built, the building did not have indoor plumbing and was historically served by a hand-pumped well and outhouses. Electricity, HVAC, and plumbing were added to the building to facilitate its continued use.

The overall design of the building is simple and most of its distinct Colonial Revival features are present on the front (south) elevation (Photos 1-2). The fenestration pattern of this elevation has arched double entrance doors and a large central window on the second floor. The western door leads into the classroom space, while the eastern door accesses the stairwell to the second floor. Although one of the front doors provided access to the school area, it appears that the side entrance on the west elevation ultimately came to serve as the primary entry point for the school. Each recessed entrance is accessed by a small run of wooden steps with simple square balusters and newel posts. The walls of the recess are clad in beadboard, and a fanlight transom is present above each of the six-paneled doors. Small lantern sconces flank the entrances. On the second floor, the central window is twelve-over-twelve wood sash. Above the window is a semi-circular sunburst panel arch with a keystone. Standard second-floor six-over-six windows flank the central window. Above the central window, in the gable end, is a circular louvered vent with four keystones.

The west elevation (Photo 1) appears to have become the functional front of the building by the late 20th century, with the entrance at the side porch becoming the main entrance. Counting from south to north, all nine bays feature the standard windows for their floor, except for first floor bays six, eight, and nine. Bay six contains what is now the building's primary entrance, a single paneled door with a two-lite transom above, flanked by small lantern sconces. Bay eight originally contained an entrance door, which was removed at an unknown date, and bay nine

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features the shorter six-over-six window, standard for the second floor. While Burden's original plans show a one-story side porch near the west end of the elevation, that configuration was later altered. The original porch spanned bays six to eight. The current porch spans bays four to six on the first floor, and bays four and five on the second floor. The stairs to the porch are located in bay six, in line with the entrance. A shed roof awning covers the entrance door. The awning is wood frame and bracketed to the elevation, with a metal roof. The two-story section of the porch features three square wood columns on each level, spanned by square balusters, and covered by a front-gable roof. The date of the two-story porch is unknown, but it was in place by 1974 (Figure 10).¹

The east elevation (Photos 2-3) generally matches the west elevation, but without the two-story porch. The entrance in the sixth bay is a paneled door with a two-light transom, and is covered by the same type of awning found on the west elevation. A single small lantern sconce is to the south of the door. The windows in the eighth and ninth bays (counted from the south) on the first floor are the shorter windows typically found on the second floor. The entry porch extends out from the sixth bay and features a small run of steps to the south and a handicapped ramp to the north, which likely dates to c. 2005. The porch and steps feature the same square balusters and newel posts as the other elevations. A non-historic white picket fence adjacent to this elevation was removed in late 2023.

The rear elevation of the building faces north and is partially obscured by a later metal fire escape, likely installed c. 2005 (Photo 4). All the windows on this elevation are the short six-over-six sash. The first floor features a centered pair of windows, with single windows flanking either side. The entrance on the second floor is centered, with the typical shed-roof awning above. There are two windows to the east and one to the west. The fire escape extends from the second-floor entrance with its stairs to the east side. The fire escape leads to a paved walkway in front of a gravel drive and parking area.

Interior

On the first floor, the classroom is a single large open space designed to be subdivided with movable partitions (Figure 1, Photos 6-7). The walls and ceilings retain their original painted beadboard finish, though the floors have been replaced with modern wood laminate installed in 2005. The original plans (Figure 1) show how the space might be temporarily divided to allow for two classroom areas in the southern section of the building (Photo 6), with a larger classroom in the rough center of the space, just south of the stage (Photo 7). The stage was located at the north end of the first floor, with small rooms to either side. The stage could also be closed off to form a classroom. The interior configuration of the first floor is largely intact, apart from the enclosure of part of the stage area at the north end of the building in 2005 (Photo 7). However, the enclosing walls are recessed, allowing the simple proscenium to read. A stair was also added at the center of the stage, which originally was accessed only by two side stairs.

¹ Terri Harris, "Volunteers Give School a Facelift," *Sun-News*, August 28, 1974.

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The second floor, which served as a living quarters, is accessed via the interior stair at the southeast corner of the building. The large central window on the front elevation provides light for the stairwell (Photo 8). The stair landing opens into a center corridor, which runs the length of the second floor from south to north. Historically, the corridor would have ended at the small medicine room at the far north end of the building, but this area was removed to allow for a second point of egress leading to the fire escape. The upper section of the original wall of the medicine room remains intact. As on the first floor, the walls are clad in beadboard, and the second floor retains its original hardwood floors. The rooms flanking the corridor are now used for office and meeting space, but historically included a kitchen, living room, dining room, study, and four bedrooms. The room at the southwest corner was an assembly room for guilds. Its access from both the stair landing and the private corridor in the living quarters indicate its use as a more publicly accessible meeting area (Figure 1).

2. Miss Ruby's Garden (1995)- Non-Contributing Site

The garden adjacent to the school was created in 1995 (Photo 13).² The site memorializes both the educational contributions of the school and Ruby Forsythe. It is located on the site of the original 1903 church and school, known as Faith Memorial Mission. The brick walls and patio constructed in 1995 follow the original perimeter of the building, which was demolished in 1924. The patio and brick knee wall create a cruciform paved area surrounded by plantings. At the north end of the garden is a bronze portrait plaque depicting Ruby Forsythe (Photo 14). The portrait plaque is set into a brick surround. It was created and donated by renowned American sculptor Frederick Hart, whose vast body of work included commissions for Washington National Cathedral, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and statues or busts for public figures such as Senator Richard Russell, Senator Strom Thurmond, Vice President Dan Quayle, and President Jimmy Carter, among many others.³ The garden is considered a non-contributing resource because it is commemorative.

3. Holy Cross Faith Memorial Chapel (1952, moved c. 1960) – Contributing Building

The chapel, of stuccoed concrete block construction, was built in 1952 (Photo 15). The previous chapel building, once located on Parkersville Road, had served the parish from the mid-1920s until it burned in 1942. For the following decade, church services were held in the classroom of the school building. The new chapel was constructed in 1952. The chapel building was moved about 125 yards from the cemetery area to its present location when Highway 17 was widened, about 1960. The chapel is rectangular in plan, with a front-gable metal roof. An earlier asphalt shingle roof was replaced following storm damage in 2015. The gable ends have vertical wood siding with a scalloped edge. A small front-gable porch covers the double doors of the front entry. There are three side pilasters on each of the side elevations with diaper-patterned

² Kristina Torres, "Memorial to Miss Ruby unveiled," *Sun-News*, May 22, 1995.

³ "Biography," Frederick Hart, accessed November 22, 2023, <https://frederickhart.com/project/bio-video/>; "Chronology," Frederick Hart, accessed November 22, 2023, <https://frederickhart.com/project/chronology/>. Hart had family ties to South Carolina and lived in Conway with Dr. Cathcart Smith's family for several years, through whom he became familiar with Miss Ruby and the school. He was appointed to the Board of Trustees for Brookgreen Gardens (less than five miles from Holy Cross Faith Memorial) in 1986.

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stained-glass windows between them. The windows are paired with either transoms or smaller, single windows. The interior features a traditional nave, chancel, and altar. The cypress paneled ceiling was installed in 2015. Most of the original furniture survives, including wooden pews that were built by parishioners (Photo 19). The chapel co-existed with the school for most of the period of significance, and is therefore considered contributing as part of the historic setting.

4. Holy Cross Faith Memorial Church (2005) – Non-Contributing Building

The current main church of the parish is a double-height building with a front-gable roof topped by a steeple. It has board-and-batten siding, with large clear glass windows on the side and rear elevations. The front of the church faces west, towards a drive and parking lot area. The sanctuary seats about 300 people. It was designed by SGA Architecture and dedicated in 2005.

5. Smith Medical Clinic (2016, 2023) – Non-Contributing Building

The Smith Medical Clinic, designed by David Graham Architecture, was built in 2016, and enlarged in 2023 (Photo 17). It is a one-story building that houses the Baskervill Food Pantry in addition to the free medical clinic. The building features board and batten siding and a hipped metal roof.

6. Holy Cross Faith Memorial Cemetery (circa 1950) – Contributing Site

Located across Highway 17 from the main campus, the cemetery (Photo 20) has been used since the mid-20th century for the burial of parishioners. A six-foot tall brick wall that surrounds the property on three sides delineates it. There are approximately 119 marked graves in the cemetery.⁴ The site includes the graves of Ruby Forsythe (Photo 18) and Rev. William Forsythe, and is included as a contributing resource as part of the historic setting of the school during the period of significance.

7. Drive and Parking Lot Network (2005) – Non-contributing structure

An interconnected network of drives and parking lots was built on the site in 2005. The network is a mixture of asphalt paving and gravel.

8. Holy Cross Faith Memorial Episcopal Church Sign (c. 2022) – Non-contributing structure

A large church sign is present at the intersection of Highway 17 and Baskervill Drive. Based on Google Street View imagery, it was installed between 2019 and 2022.

Integrity

Holy Cross Faith Memorial School retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The building stands on its original site and in its original

⁴ “Holy Cross Cemetery,” Find a Grave, accessed January 26, 2024, <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/1769282/holy-cross-cemetery>.

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location, on the historic campus of Holy Cross Faith Memorial Episcopal Church. The property has not significantly changed in character or boundaries, despite minor property transfers at the margins. The design of the building has changed little since 1932. The original one-story side porch designs have been altered. The two-story porch on the west elevation is a later addition of unknown date, though it was built by 1974, within the period of significance. Minimal updates made in 2005 did not significantly affect the building's historic character. One entrance door was removed from the west elevation, and a fire escape was added to the rear elevation. The current floorplan largely matches the 1932 plans, apart from the recessed enclosure of the stage and the removal of a small room to allow for a second point of egress from the upstairs living quarters. Apart from the replacement of hardwood with laminate on the first floor, some changes to the porches, and replacement of the galvanized plate roof with a comparable material, the original materials and workmanship of the building are still intact and evident, with wood sash windows, clapboard siding, beadboard, and hardwood floors upstairs. While new buildings have been added to the church campus over the years, the overall setting remains largely intact. Dominated by legacy live oak trees, the campus continues to serve its original purposes as a religious and community center today. Buffered by woodlands and wetlands, it still projects an air of spiritual tranquility, despite the growth of the area. Preservation of most of the architectural elements of the school has ensured that the building projects, both inside and out, a clear sense of its time and function. While this building no longer functions as a school, it is known within the church community and in the wider community as Miss Ruby's School. An interpretive panel and memorial sculpture in the adjacent garden reinforce that corporate memory.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION
ETHNIC HERITAGE: BLACK

Period of Significance

1932-2000

Significant Dates

1932
1937-1938
1974
1991

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Forsythe, Ruby Middleton
Forsythe, Rev. William Essex

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Burden, Henry S.

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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.)

Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, also known as Miss Ruby's School, is significant at the local level under Criterion A: Education and Ethnic Heritage – Black for its use as a one-room African American parochial school on the Waccamaw Neck from 1932 until 2000. The school is also significant under Criterion B: Education and Ethnic Heritage – Black for important associations with the productive lives of renowned local educators Rev. William Essex Forsythe, from 1932 to 1974, and Ruby Middleton Forsythe from 1937-1938 through 1991. Holy Cross Faith Memorial School is a religiously affiliated property, but it meets Criterion Consideration A because its importance is primarily derived from its associations with local educational history. Although it was a parochial school operated by the Episcopal Church, most students were not Episcopalian. Religion was a consistent part of the school curriculum during its years of operation, but the significance of the building is the critical role that Holy Cross Faith Memorial School and the Forsythes played in the educational development and achievement of local children. The property also meets Criterion Consideration G, as the school persisted with traditional teaching methods and continued to be an important educational institution for the local African American community until it closed in 2000. Likewise, Ruby Forsythe, commonly known as Miss Ruby, continued to teach at the school, with great effect, until 1991, garnering national attention for her work as an educator.⁵ The continued importance of both the school and Ruby Forsythe to the local educational landscape is exceptionally significant, as both school and teacher offered an alternative educational experience to Black youth in the local community during the late 20th century.

Narrative Statement of Significance

A Note on Organization

The statement of significance is ordered chronologically, rather than by criteria. This organizational structure was chosen because of the extreme challenges of providing separate narratives for the school and its two primary teachers, Rev. William Forsythe and Ruby Forsythe. The type and quality of education offered at the school is inextricably tied to the Forsythes, who lived and worked in the school building. Under the Forsythes, the school offered full terms (a rarity for early 20th century Black schools), rigorous academic instruction, and individual attention beyond what most public schools could provide. Given the intertwined narratives of the Criterion A and Criterion B arguments for the significance of this property, they are discussed together in two distinct periods. Following a brief contextual history of African Americans in Georgetown County and predecessor mission schools, the statement moves to the period from 1932 to 1974, covering the traditional historic period (i.e. more than fifty years ago). This period begins with the opening of the school and the beginning of Rev. Forsythe's time as a teacher there, and encompasses the start of Miss Ruby's tenure at the school starting in 1937-1938. The first period ends with Rev. Forsythe's death in 1974, which also marked the end of

⁵ The name Miss Ruby is used in this nomination to refer to Ruby Forsythe, as this was the title and name used by her students and members of the local community and is understood as an honorific.

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upper grade of education at Holy Cross Faith Memorial and coincides with the current fifty-year cut-off. While some aspects of education at Holy Cross Faith Memorial in this period may be directly tied individually to Rev. Forsythe or Miss Ruby, it is generally understood that they functioned as a teaching team and that together they made important contributions to local Black education during this time. The second period runs from 1975 to 2000, when the school closed, and is inclusive of Miss Ruby's last year of teaching in 1991, before her death in 1992. The second section makes the case for the exceptional significance of Miss Ruby's accomplishments as an educator in this period, as well as for the exceptional importance of the school for its locally unique use of mixed-age instruction until its closure twenty-four years ago.

Criterion A & Criterion B: Education and Ethnic Heritage – Black (1932-1974)

Georgetown County & Local African American History

Holy Cross Faith Memorial School is located in unincorporated Georgetown County, just outside of the Town of Pawleys Island and less than fifteen miles from the City of Georgetown. The school is located on the Waccamaw Neck, a peninsula bounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the east, Winyah Bay to the south, and the Waccamaw River to the west. Pawleys Island is a small barrier island separated from the peninsula by Pawleys Island Creek. The incorporated town includes only the island, but the area around the island is also commonly referred to as Pawleys Island, and many historical accounts give this as the school's location. The island was used as a resort for wealthy white planters beginning in the early 19th century and continues to be a tourist destination.⁶ This part of South Carolina's coast, commonly known as the Grand Strand, is defined by sixty miles of continuous beach in Horry and Georgetown counties, stretching from the state border with North Carolina down to Winyah Bay.⁷

Indigo and rice were the primary cash crops grown in Georgetown County before the Civil War, though the former fell out of favor by the end of the colonial period. Georgetown County became famed for its rice. In 1840, the county was responsible for nearly half the rice production in the nation. Rice was a labor-intensive crop and white planters relied upon the labor of enslaved people to produce it. Enslavers imported many African laborers from the Gold Coast, an area of western Africa known for its rice production.⁸ By 1860, enslaved people accounted for eighty-five percent of Georgetown County's population, representing over 18,000 people. Only Charleston and Beaufort counties had larger enslaved populations in the state. At the time, less than 200 African Americans living in the county were free.⁹

⁶ Lee G. Brockington, "Pawleys Island," South Carolina Encyclopedia, accessed September 20, 2023, <https://www.sencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/pawleys-island/>.

⁷ Barbara Stokes, "Grand Strand," South Carolina Encyclopedia, accessed September 20, 2023, <https://www.sencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/grand-strand/>.

⁸ Alexia Jones Helsley, "Georgetown County," South Carolina Encyclopedia, accessed September 20, 2023, <https://www.sencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/georgetown-county/>.

⁹ J.W. Joseph et al., "Historic Resources Survey of Georgetown County – Final Report," October 20, 2006, New South Associates Technical Report 1222, p. 35. Available at [https://scdah.sc.gov/sites/scdah/files/Documents/Historic%20Preservation%20\(SHPO\)/Research/GeorgetownCounty2005-2SM.pdf](https://scdah.sc.gov/sites/scdah/files/Documents/Historic%20Preservation%20(SHPO)/Research/GeorgetownCounty2005-2SM.pdf).

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The Civil War and the end of slavery in the 1860s brought a dramatic decline in rice production. Freed people who remained in Georgetown County were typically left with little choice but to enter into employment contracts with their former enslavers, who continued to own and control most of the land. By the end of the 19th century, the economy had largely shifted to the timber industry and trade commerce driven by railroad expansion and the port at Georgetown. The county's Black population, which began to decline during the war, continued to shrink in the early 20th century, as discrimination and lack of economic opportunity pushed African Americans north during the Great Migration. The Atlantic Coast Lumber Company, a major employer in Georgetown, closed in 1932, further devastating the local economy during the Great Depression.¹⁰

The construction of a new paper mill in Georgetown in 1936 and increasing tourism in the area helped the economy recover during the mid-20th century, and the Black population rebounded nearly to pre-Civil War levels after World War II. The county's population remained scattered, with seventy-nine percent of residents living in rural areas as of 1950. Local interest drove most tourism until the late 1960s, when coastal residential development took off. The African American population fell from 34,798 in 1960 to 21,659 in 2000. Displacement of African Americans in the county was in large part due to coastal development, including resorts and golf courses. Developers purchased land from Black owners and the new developments drove up property taxes, forcing more relocations. As of 2020, the Black population of Georgetown County was 18,156 out of 63,404 total residents, a little under thirty percent.¹¹

Early Mission Schools

After the Civil War and the end of slavery, church missions or charitable societies provided most educational opportunities for African Americans.¹² The roots of Holy Cross Faith Memorial School are in two such 19th century mission efforts. In 1887, the white owners of nearby Brookgreen Plantation established Waccamaw Mission for the now free Black workers still living on the property after the Civil War. In 1896, the plantation owners gifted the mission chapel and an associated acre of land to the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina. That site became Holy Cross-Brookgreen Mission, containing a church, medical clinic, and a school, which were all sited on the plantation about five miles north of the nominated property. Despite minimal funding, this mission served the Black population at Brookgreen and the surrounding area through 1930.¹³

Holy Cross Faith Memorial also has roots in Faith Memorial Mission, established in 1899 near the nominated property.¹⁴ The mission was located in the Parkersville community, an African

¹⁰ Ibid., 53-59.

¹¹ Ibid., 59-61.

¹² Katherine H. Richardson, "African American Primary and Secondary Public School Buildings in South Carolina, ca. 1895-1954," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, March 7, 1996, Section E, Page 1.

¹³ "Waccamaw Mission." *Brookgreen Gardens Journal*, Volume XV, #2 (1985): 1-4; "Our History," Holy Cross Faith Memorial Episcopal Church, accessed December 12, 2023, <https://www.holycrossfm.org/history>.

¹⁴ *Journal of the One Hundred and Eighth Annual Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina* (Charleston, S.C.: Lucas & Richardson Co., 1898), 44. *Journal of the One Hundred and Tenth Annual Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina* (1900), 66-67, 83.

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American settlement so named after Black merchant William J. Parker of Charleston, who acquired the land from a prominent white family in 1869.¹⁵ In 1884 Parker sold 50 acres of that property to the Reverend B.H. Williams, also of Charleston, “being a part of what was formerly known as ‘Midway Beach,’ later as Parkersville” (Figure 2).¹⁶ On December 29, 1899, Reverend Williams sold twenty acres of the property to the Trustees of the Diocese of South Carolina for \$120, “for the Faith Memorial Mission” (Figure 3).¹⁷ A simple board-and-batten church building was constructed on that site by 1903, when academic classes began (Figure 4). A new church on Parkersville Road replaced the earlier building in 1924. Reverend Benjamin Martin, an African American priest, served both Holy Cross-Brookgreen Mission and Faith Memorial Mission. Rev. Martin and his wife Viola offered a basic education to the children of both missions at the church buildings.¹⁸

Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, 1932-1974

When Holy Cross Faith Memorial was built at its current site in 1932, it was under the charge of Rev. William Essex Forsythe, a Black Episcopal priest who took over the parish in 1926 or 1927 (Figure 5).¹⁹ Parishioners and students from this early period of the school’s history recalled the arrival of Rev. Forsythe as an important turning point in the history of the missions. In addition to his role as rector, Rev. Forsythe’s responsibilities also included the operation of both mission schools, and he proved to be a skilled educator.²⁰ Rev. Forsythe was born in Jacksonville, Florida in 1899, to Rev. Maynard and Mary McQueen Forsythe. He attended Edward Waters College in Jacksonville and Bishop Payne Divinity School in Petersburg, Virginia. Before coming to Holy Cross Faith Memorial, he served at Calvary Protestant Episcopal Church in Charleston, Church of the Atonement in Walterboro, and St. Stephen’s Protestant Episcopal Church in Charleston.²¹

In 1926, Rev. Forsythe married Ruby Ethel Middleton (Figure 6). Ruby was born on June 17, 1905, in Charleston, South Carolina. Her father, Lewis, was a brick mason and plasterer, and her mother, Marthenia, was a washerwoman. She was raised in a middle-class household in an integrated neighborhood. After attending a private Quaker-run school, she was able to obtain a college education, graduating with a teaching license from Charleston’s Avery Institute in 1921 and then earning a bachelor’s degree from South Carolina State College in 1924. For the first ten years of the Forsythes’ marriage, the couple largely lived apart, with Ruby staying in Charleston to care for her aging parents, and William living in neighboring Georgetown County, where he had charge of the Faith Memorial and Holy Cross-Brookgreen missions. Ruby joined her husband at Pawleys Island after her parents died, where she was ever after known as “Miss Ruby” by the local community. Miss Ruby may have arrived as early as 1937, but certainly was

¹⁵ Deed Book B, page 464, Georgetown County Recorder of Deeds.

¹⁶ Deed Book I, page 59-61, Georgetown County Recorder of Deeds.

¹⁷ Deed Book S, page 295, Georgetown County Recorder of Deeds.

¹⁸ “Our History,” Holy Cross Faith Memorial Episcopal Church.

¹⁹ Most sources give 1926 as Rev. Forsythe’s first year as rector. However, Ruby Forsythe remembered him arriving on the first Sunday in October of 1927. Parks, “An island in the sun,” 67.

²⁰ Corrine Rice. *Holy Cross Faith Memorial Church: A History by the Brown Family and Others who Remember It Well* (Privately published, 2001), 11.

²¹ “Rev. Forsythe Dies,” *State*, March 5, 1974.

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teaching at the school by 1938.²² Having grown up in the city, she struggled to adapt to the isolated, rural life on Pawleys Island. “There’s nothing but woods,” she explained in a 1987 television interview, “And ah, baby, I cried. I cried for one solid month. Many times I said to my husband, I said ‘Now listen, let’s pick up and go.’ And he would always say: ‘Wherever you go you will find problems, so what’s the use of running?’”²³ This line of reasoning apparently convinced her, as Miss Ruby continued to live and teach at Holy Cross Faith Memorial for over fifty years.

The absorption of the Holy Cross-Brookgreen Mission into Faith Memorial created Holy Cross Faith Memorial Mission and spurred the construction of a new school and rectory building. In 1930, the Diocese sold the Brookgreen Mission property to Archer Huntington, a wealthy white industrialist from New York who had also made other financial contributions to the Diocese’s work in the area. As a result, the Holy Cross and Faith Memorial missions merged, and the nominated building was constructed in 1932 to house the consolidated schools and serve as parish rectory.²⁴ The room on the first floor served as the classroom, with living quarters above for the Forsythes (Figure 1). Like its predecessor institutions, the new school would serve Black students, as schools in South Carolina remained segregated through most of the 20th century.²⁵ Although the school was parochial, statistics from public schools in the period inform the educational situation in Georgetown County at the time of its construction. In 1932, average daily attendance at a white public school in Georgetown County was 176 students. For Black schools, the daily average attendance was only 70 students.²⁶ The Great Depression deeply affected Georgetown County, and 1932 saw the closing of one of the county’s major employers: the Atlantic Coast Lumber Company.²⁷ The Julius Rosenwald Fund, a private philanthropic effort to help pay for the construction of Black schools, was another victim of the Depression.²⁸ The report of the State Superintendent of Education in 1932 was frank about the state’s prioritization of white over Black students during the Depression: “Whenever financial conditions are hard, the colored schools are the first to suffer.”²⁹

Holy Cross Faith Memorial School was built during this period of financial difficulty when Black public schools, already underfunded compared to white schools, were faced with extremely limited budgets. Many teachers at South Carolina Black public schools in 1932 were

²² Parks, “An island in the sun,” 67; Michael Ryan, “Mrs. Ruby’s One-Room School Is Still Going Strong,” *Austin American-Statesman*, January 25, 1987.

²³ “Today’s Lesson: ‘I’ll Try’ – American Story with Bob Dotson,” YouTube, accessed October 2, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7SSpNj7LdZU>.

²⁴ “Our History,” Holy Cross Faith Memorial Episcopal Church; “History of the Gardens,” Brookgreen Gardens, accessed September 18, 2023, <https://www.brookgreen.org/history-gardens>. Albert Sidney Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820-1957* (Columbia, S.C.: R.L. Bryan Company, 1957), 456.

²⁵ Cleveland L. Sellers, Jr., “Segregation,” *South Carolina Encyclopedia*, accessed December 21, 2023, <https://www.scencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/segregation/>.

²⁶ “Sixty-Fourth Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education of the State of South Carolina, 1932,” Joint Committee on Printing, General Assembly of South Carolina, 28.

²⁷ Joseph et al., “Historic Resources Survey of Georgetown County,” 59.

²⁸ Katherine H. Richardson, “African-American Primary and Secondary Public School Buildings in South Carolina, ca. 1895-1954,” (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1996), Section E, 13.

²⁹ “Sixty-Fourth Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education of the State of South Carolina, 1932,” 28.

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working without pay. While there was a major push to construct new, modern Black schools in the 1920s, those efforts dwindled in the 1930s.³⁰ Holy Cross Faith Memorial School offered some amount of hope for the local community amidst the Depression. The combined parish house and school building cost \$6,000 to construct.³¹ Designed by Charleston-based architect Henry S. Burden, the Colonial Revival building featured a large open classroom area with a stage flanked by two small rooms. The classroom space and stage were designed so they could be subdivided by canvas curtains, forming up to four distinct classroom spaces on the first floor (Figure 1).³² Bishop A.S. Thomas reported the school's immediate success, stating, "The work here has taken on new life and the school is much increased in enrollment."³³ The response of the local community is evident in the enrollment numbers; within a year of opening the school was serving 151 students.³⁴ Although Holy Cross Faith Memorial was a private parochial school, Georgetown County was apparently paying for teacher salaries there by 1935, though other operating costs continued to be paid by the mission.³⁵

Rev. Forsythe, the rector of Holy Cross Faith Memorial, initially served as the principal and sole teacher at the school, until he was joined by his wife, Ruby, in 1937-1938. Norman Deas (Figure 13), who attended the school in the 1940s and later volunteered there, described Rev. Forsythe as "a strict, military type of person" who did not hesitate to discipline his students.³⁶ "Miss Ruby," as she was known throughout the community, came to Holy Cross Faith Memorial School as a professionally trained educator with nearly a decade of experience under her belt.³⁷ Together, the couple ran Holy Cross Faith Memorial in a manner typical of the one-room schoolhouses that could still be found throughout rural South Carolina (discussed more under Criterion G). The exact courses offered and the division of ages between teachers fluctuated over the years, but Rev. Forsythe generally taught the older children and Miss Ruby the younger ones. Aside from that very broad division, children of a variety of age levels were taught together. Rev. Forsythe taught foreign languages not commonly available for study in public schools, such as French, Greek, and Latin. He also focused on teaching math, including algebra, science, and geography. According to Miss Ruby, Rev. Forsythe was "the book worm in our family." Based on one local account from 1991, "most of the Black men you see around Pawley's [sic] working on construction can speak Latin and Greek" due to the instruction they received from Rev. Forsythe in their youth.³⁸ The Forsythes also took on students with developmental disabilities.³⁹ Though

³⁰ Ibid., 27-28.

³¹ "Report of the Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina," *The Spirit of Missions: The Missionary Magazine of the Episcopal Church*, Vol. XCVII (1932): 66-67.

³² Plan for Parish House and Rectory for Faith Memorial and Holy Cross Parish, Waccamaw, SC, circa 1931, Brookgreen Gardens Archives, Murrells Inlet, SC.

³³ "Report of the Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina," *The Spirit of Missions: The Missionary Magazine of the Episcopal Church*, Vol. XCVII (1932): 66-67.

³⁴ "Report of the Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina," *The Spirit of Missions: The Missionary Magazine of the Episcopal Church*, Vol. XCVIII (1933): 66.

³⁵ Jim Nichols, "Black Litchfield School Nears End of 75 Years," *Sun-News*, May 29, 1977.

³⁶ Georgetown County Library, "The Forsythe Legacy: Norman Deas," YouTube, accessed September 28, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmFY5JXItyw>.

³⁷ Marguerite Worth Parks, "An island in the sun: The educational achievements of Mrs. Ruby Middleton Forsythe," (The University of Iowa, 1993), 21, 66-67.

³⁸ Ibid., 73.

³⁹ Mary Miller, "Will Mission School End Without Father Forsythe?" *Sun-News*, May 17, 1974.

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the “ungraded” organization of the school undoubtedly reflected the same sort of practical constraints that structured other mixed-age one-room schools, by advancing students based on academic progress rather than age, it also likely made it easier to accommodate students with special needs.⁴⁰

Rev. Forsythe and Miss Ruby taught their students lessons that extended far beyond their classroom exercises. Discipline was strict and expectations were high. All shared in the work of making the school function. Students rotated responsibility for gathering firewood for the stove, cleaning the building, and gardening. When asked a question, teachers expected students to stand before giving their answer. Parliamentary procedure ruled in after-school club meetings, there was a dress code, and graduation exercises included robes as well as a processional march in step.⁴¹ The school days were often longer at Holy Cross Faith Memorial than at public schools. Alumna Johnnie Deas, who attended the school in the 1960s, remembered arriving by eight in the morning and not leaving until five or five-thirty at night.⁴² Students were not coddled, but there was method behind the high expectations. Miss Ruby said, "It's good for a child to lose as well as win. They must learn in life they are going to be up today and maybe down tomorrow." It was to encourage children to achieve to their highest potential that she coined the phrase that would become the school motto, "Never say I can't; always say I'll try."⁴³

According to Miss Ruby, she and Rev. Forsythe sought to fulfill an unmet need in the community with their school: “There were talented children...who were not being given the privilege of self-expression. There was a great deal of ability being wasted.” In an unfinished history of the school, Rev. Forsythe summarized the educational philosophy that governed teaching at Holy Cross Faith Memorial:

Faith Memorial recognizes that if a student is to succeed in later life, he must develop self-reliance and initiative directed by an appreciation of opportunity and a sense of responsibility. This, perhaps, is the very keynote spirit of the school. Healthy bodies, active minds, they are important, but the development of self-reliant character is vastly more so...This is done...not by keeping the students down, not by forcing them to conform to a multitude of petty regulations, but by giving them every opportunity, within reasonable limits, to stand on their own feet, and in the wholesome atmosphere of the school, to see the merits of clean living, of fair play, and of systematic attention to the day's work.⁴⁴

While the Forsythes always employed traditional teaching methods at Holy Cross Faith Memorial and enforced strict discipline, sometimes with corporal punishment, they also

⁴⁰ Parks, “An island in the sun,” 207-208.

⁴¹ Corrine Rice, *Holy Cross Faith Memorial Church: A History by the Brown Family and Others who Remember It Well*, (Privately Published, 2001).

⁴² Georgetown County Library, “The Forsythe Legacy: Johnnie Deas,” YouTube, accessed December 15, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgNmnrMJ-yA&t=573s>.

⁴³ Rice, *Holy Cross Faith Memorial Church*.

⁴⁴ Jim Nichols, “Black Litchfield School Nears End of 75 Years,” *Sun-News*, May 29, 1977.

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encouraged freedom of thinking and expression among their students, and focused on building self-esteem.⁴⁵

By 1938 there were three teachers (Viola Martin Brown, the remarried widow of Reverend Benjamin Martin, had joined the Forsythes) and 185 students at the school.⁴⁶ Students at Holy Cross Faith Memorial accounted for over 80% of Black students enrolled in Georgetown County's private or denominational schools that year.⁴⁷ Unlike many other Black schools in this period, Holy Cross Faith Memorial operated for a full school year. Alumnus Julius Henry Blake, who was a student in this period, recounts that he attended another school prior to Holy Cross Faith Memorial where students were only in class for five months per year and it took two years to advance grades. His parents, concerned about the slow progress, moved him to Holy Cross Faith Memorial, where he attended school nine months out of the year.⁴⁸

Even as the Great Depression eased, the economic situation for the local Black community remained extremely challenging: "The condition that I grew up in...it was just plain poverty, and I guess the relief was to go to that school," recalled alumnus Norman Deas, who attended Holy Cross Faith Memorial from 1946 to 1950. The local population put great stock in receiving a proper education, recognizing that it could lead to improved circumstances. Alumna Barbara Riley, who attended the school in the 1950s and 1960s, explained the important role of Holy Cross Faith Memorial in providing a chance for a better life to local children: "Because we were a rural, poor community, we knew that education was important, and in order for us to get away and do something better than living at Pawleys, you had to have an education."⁴⁹

In 1939 there were at least six Black public schools operating on the Waccamaw Neck, and Holy Cross Faith Memorial. These were Hobcaw, Betts Village, Marysville, Parkersville, Brookgreen, and Laurel Hill. Documentation on these schools is scant, and it does not appear that any survive. The best documented is Parkersville, which was constructed with Rosenwald funds in 1921 and demolished in 1960.⁵⁰ Indeed, very few pre-World War II Black schools are known to still stand in Georgetown County. The 2006 Historic Resources Survey of Georgetown County identified only four extant historically Black schools: Winyah Elementary, Elm Grove School, Sandy Island School, and Holy Cross Faith Memorial School. Winyah Elementary was built c. 1925 and is located at 67 Geneva Lane, Georgetown, behind Mt. Olive AME Church. The school

⁴⁵ Nichols, "Black Litchfield School Nears End of 75 Years."; Parks, "An island in the sun," 138; Georgetown County Library, "The Forsythe Legacy: Burns and Alfreda Forsythe," YouTube, accessed December 15, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOID_ttjHcY.

⁴⁶ Parks, "An island in the sun," 72.

⁴⁷ "Seventieth Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education of the State of South Carolina: 1938," (Joint Committee On Printing, General Assembly of South Carolina, 1938), 162.

⁴⁸ Georgetown County Library, "Forsythe Legacy Julius Henry Blake," YouTube, accessed October 2, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8mejJFFO82Y>. Blake did not specify in his interview what years he attended the school, but since he was born in 1929, he was likely at Holy Cross Faith Memorial in the late 1930s-early 1940s.

⁴⁹ Georgetown County Library, "The Forsythe Legacy: Barbara Riley," YouTube, accessed October 2, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pp_5wcXt7r0.

⁵⁰ South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) Highway Map, Georgetown County, 1939. University of South Carolina Digital Collections, <https://digital.tcl.sc.edu/digital/collection/scrm/id/553/rec/1>. Gina Vasselli, "Historian to speak at Pawleys Island fundraiser," *Sun-News*, February 17, 2011.

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building is last clearly visible on aerial photographs from 2011 and it is not known if it still stands. Elm Grove School, built c. 1940 and formerly located at 3287 Rose Hill Road, Georgetown, was demolished in 2007.⁵¹ Sandy Island School, built in 1932 and located at 32 Sandy Island Road, Sandy Island, is extant and was listed in the National Register in 2020 (Figure 14). The school served only the children who lived on Sandy Island, as the island was (and is) only accessible by boat.⁵²

Although there were public schools across the river in nearby Georgetown, no school buses ran for Black children, making local educational options like Holy Cross Faith Memorial vital for rural Black communities. Norman Deas recalled how the school was an educational center for children living on the Waccamaw Neck: “I think at that time, because of deep segregation, and no transportation for the Blacks at that time, as far as public school buses and so forth, Faith Memorial School was the core for us that lived on...the southern causeway, all the way up to Murrells Inlet.”⁵³ The area described by Deas is about a ten or eleven mile stretch of the Waccamaw Neck. Into at least the 1950s it was typical for students to walk multiple miles to get to and from the school.⁵⁴

Despite the difficulties of transportation during Jim Crow segregation, the Forsythes expected graduates of their school to continue their education across the river at Howard High School in Georgetown and, ideally, to attend college: “It was important that everybody, it was a community thing as well as a personal thing, that we not end our education. We went to the eighth grade, and it was important that we not end it there... You just were expected to go to high school, you were expected to graduate, and you were expected to go to college, if it was possible...” recalled alumna Barbara Riley.⁵⁵ Students from Holy Cross Faith Memorial typically excelled at Howard, having been offered coursework under the Forsythes that was not available to their public school counterparts. Students from Holy Cross Faith Memorial were academically advanced compared to children who had come up through the public schools.⁵⁶ Indeed, Norman Deas graduated from Howard High School as salutatorian, and another classmate from Holy Cross Faith Memorial was valedictorian. Deas went on to graduate college with a degree in economics before starting a twenty-eight-year career with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.⁵⁷

⁵¹ Joseph et al., “Historic Resources Survey of Georgetown County,” 113-114; Google Earth Pro and Google Maps Street View.

⁵² Alli Crandell et al., “Sandy Island School,” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2020, South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office.

⁵³ Georgetown County Library, “The Forsythe Legacy: Norman Deas.” “Southern causeway” refers to South Causeway Road, which connects the Waccamaw Neck to Pawleys Island and is about three-and-a-half miles south of Holy Cross Faith Memorial School. Murrells Inlet is located on the Waccamaw Neck, about seven-and-a-half miles northeast of the school.

⁵⁴ Bob Pierce, “Holiday Spirit Is Praised, Illegal Spirits Are Recalled,” *State*, November 29, 1953.

⁵⁵ Georgetown County Library, “The Forsythe Legacy: Barbara Riley.” Riley attended the school in the 1950s and 1960s.

⁵⁶ Parks, “An island in the sun,” 73.

⁵⁷ Zane Wilson, “Alumnus returns as role model,” *Sun-News*, October 16, 1995.

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According to alumna Johnnie Deas, the confidence and self-belief of Holy Cross Faith Memorial students came from the Forsythes: “[Rev. William and Ruby Forsythe] instilled in us that you could do anything you wanted to do. There were no failures. We didn’t even think in terms of, you know, not being able to succeed in school. I mean that was an expectation and that’s just what we did. I mean we didn’t know there was an alternative, I didn’t know there was an alternative.”⁵⁸ This mentality stayed with Deas, who went on to college and graduate school, and in 1996 became the first Black woman to serve as Deputy Chief for the Georgetown Police Department.⁵⁹

The financial support once offered by the Georgetown County Board of Education for teacher salaries disappeared in 1950, as the board planned for the closure of Holy Cross Faith Memorial as part of school consolidation. Rev. Forsythe sought additional monetary support for the school from the Episcopal Diocese of Charleston, but none was forthcoming. The Forsythes decided to keep the school open anyway, relying largely on donations.⁶⁰ Despite the school’s financial troubles, it continued to provide an educational experience in keeping with the high standards that community members had to come to expect of it. The Forsythes were so successful as educators that the Georgetown public schools made a concerted effort to hire them away from Holy Cross Faith Memorial in the 1950s, but the Forsythes were unmoved, preferring the academic freedom of the mission school.⁶¹ Local African American parents continued to send their children to Holy Cross Faith Memorial in large numbers, with over 120 students enrolled in 1953.⁶²

The 1950s were a period of significant change for Black education in South Carolina. In the late 1940s, a survey of the state’s public schools by the George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, TN (commonly known as the Peabody survey), documented severe inequality between rural and urban schools, as well as Black and white schools, and a desperate need for consolidation and improvement of school facilities. The recommendations of the Peabody survey were given little notice by white politicians, however, until Black families in Clarendon County sued for integrated schools in 1950. Their case, *Briggs vs. Elliott*, ultimately combined with four others to form *Brown v. Board of Education*. In 1954, the United States Supreme Court’s ruling on *Brown* determined segregated public schools unconstitutional. South Carolina’s all-white General Assembly, in direct response to the *Briggs* case and anticipation of *Brown*, passed legislation to “equalize” Black and white schools in 1951 in the hopes of avoiding integration.⁶³ While the State Education Finance Commission spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on new, large, International Style schools in Georgetown County, Holy Cross Faith Memorial continued to operate as a one-room school on the first floor of the 1932 parish house.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ Georgetown County Library, “The Forsythe Legacy: Johnnie Deas.”

⁵⁹ Ruth Yodaiken, “New deputy chief becomes highest ranking black female,” *Sun-News*, March 29, 1996.

⁶⁰ Miller, “Will Mission School End Without Father Forsythe?”

⁶¹ Parks, “An island in the sun,” 162.

⁶² Bob Pierce, “Holiday Spirit Is Praised, Illegal Spirits Are Recalled,” *State*, November 29, 1953.

⁶³ Rebekah Dobrasko, “Equalization Schools in South Carolina, 1951-1960,” National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2009).

⁶⁴ “\$925,811 School Work Is Approved,” *State*, April 14, 1956.

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As South Carolina's public schools slowly crept towards integration, which would not be comprehensive across the state until 1970, Holy Cross Faith Memorial remained exclusively for Black students.⁶⁵ The Forsythes were not opposed to integration, but they believed there were advantages to shared culture and experiences within the student body, and between pupil and teacher. As one observer noted, "Miss Ruby did not see integration itself as harmful, but felt that because of their background and history, African-Americans brought differences to the classroom that were not recognized by white teachers." Miss Ruby also once explained she would not accept a white student to Holy Cross Faith Memorial because, "They wouldn't feel they belonged."⁶⁶ The experiences of some Black area students in integrated schools reflect these concerns. Yvonne Tucker-Harris, an alumna of nearby Sandy Island School, left predominantly white Winyah High School in Georgetown after two years in the 1970s, because "the white teachers were not as helpful to African American students...[they] didn't want to help someone like me."⁶⁷ Students' experiences of integration varied widely, and were often impacted by the specific way their district implemented the new unitary school system.⁶⁸ In nearby Georgetown, Winyah and Howard high schools respectively remained predominately white and Black after integration, until the construction of a consolidated Georgetown High School in 1985.⁶⁹

Some change did come to Holy Cross Faith Memorial as a result of integration. Motry Martin, the third teacher at Holy Cross Faith Memorial in this period, opted to leave her position for a public school teaching job after integration.⁷⁰ Although only Black students were accepted at the school, at least one white volunteer teacher, Father John C. Templeton, helped at the school after the death of Rev. Forsythe in 1974.⁷¹ The decision to keep Holy Cross Faith Memorial an all-Black school is indicative of the level of control the Forsythes exercised over the institution, for other Episcopal missions did integrate in the 1960s. In 1966, the Diocese of South Carolina abolished the separate archdeaconry devoted to work with the African American community, and initiated plans to integrate the church's summer camps. This included Camp Baskerville, a historically Black camp located on the same property as Holy Cross Faith Memorial (apart from a swimming pool ruin, the camp is no longer extant).⁷² Although the camp integrated, it continued primarily to serve African Americans. From 1966 to 1982 the camp ran Operation Compenso, a summer camp designed to encourage underprivileged youth to remain in school. The camp included remedial coursework in several subjects, and with some classes taught at Holy Cross Faith Memorial School (Figures 14 and 15).⁷³

⁶⁵ Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 544.

⁶⁶ Parks, "An island in the sun," 175-76.

⁶⁷ Crandell, et al., "Sandy Island School."

⁶⁸ Edgar, *South Carolina: A History*, 544.

⁶⁹ Geoffrey Henry and Ellen Jenkins, "Georgetown Historic District Survey, Georgetown, South Carolina," (Columbia, SC and Norcross, GA: TRC, 2010), 4-6.

⁷⁰ Parks, "An island in the sun," 76.

⁷¹ Miller, "Will Mission School End Without Father Forsythe?"

⁷² Carl Reynolds, "Episcopal Bishop Ends Segregation," *Florence Morning News*, April 30, 1966.

⁷³ "Camp Baskerville: Operation Compenso," College of Charleston Libraries, accessed December 15, 2023, https://findingaids.library.cofc.edu/repositories/3/archival_objects/47636; Adger Brown, "Minister Practices What He Preaches," *State*, July 28, 1968.

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The Forsythes continued to operate Holy Cross Faith Memorial as they had always done, even as the world changed around them. Private Black schools in South Carolina were dwindling by the postwar period. The Presbyterian Church closed all of their mission schools for Black students by 1949. One of their shuttered schools, Coulter Memorial Academy in Cheraw, became a Black public high school.⁷⁴ The Avery Institute in Charleston, a Reconstruction Era-institution and Miss Ruby's alma mater, became a public school in 1947 before closing in 1954.⁷⁵ The Penn School, a private Black boarding school on St. Helena Island founded in 1862, graduated its last class in 1953 and re-opened as a community center.⁷⁶ By the 1963-1964 school year, the last time the Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education listed schools by race, only seventeen other Black private, parochial, or special schools were operating in the state.⁷⁷ Georgetown County school district records confirm that Holy Cross Faith Memorial was the county's only Black private or parochial school in the early 1950s, a distinction that was likely true throughout the school's operation.⁷⁸ Meanwhile, the number of white-only private schools in South Carolina exploded in the 1960s and 1970s, as white parents pulled their children out of public schools to avoid integration.⁷⁹

While integration only minimally affected Holy Cross Faith Memorial, another transition fundamentally changed the school: the death of Rev. Forsythe in 1974. The *Sun-News* reported that his death "marked an end to the era of love, compassion and wisdom that this good man brought to the people of his parish" and raised immediate questions about the viability of the school moving forward. Volunteers and the community rallied around Holy Cross Faith Memorial, determined to keep it open. At this time, the school received \$400 a year from the Episcopal Diocese of Charleston. A very small amount of money came from tuition, but as Miss Ruby noted, "The children's parents pay what little they can, but they're poor, they have nothing to give." Three volunteer teachers helped fill in the gap left by Rev. Forsythe. Father John C. Templeton, a white priest, taught English and History, while public school teachers Ethel Syndab and Anna B. Thompson taught math on evenings and weekends, outside regular school hours.⁸⁰ Miss Ruby kept students at the school late, studying by the light of kerosene lamps. The efforts of Miss Ruby and the volunteer teachers ensured the older students did not fall through the cracks after the death of Rev. Forsythe. Of the nine ninth grade graduates in the spring of 1974, all had scores of 85% or better on their SC Curriculum Test, with five scoring over 90%.⁸¹

⁷⁴ Nick Linville et al., "Coulter Memorial Academy" National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2022), Section 8, 22.

⁷⁵ "Avery Institute History," Avery Institute, accessed December 15, 2023, <http://www.averyinstitute.us/history.html>.

⁷⁶ Queen Quet Marquette L. Goodwine, "Penn Center," South Carolina Encyclopedia, accessed December 13, 2023, <https://www.scencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/penn-center/>.

⁷⁷ "Ninety-Sixth Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education, State of South Carolina, 1963-1964," (State Budget and Control Board, 1964), 159.

⁷⁸ Annual Report of the County Superintendent of Georgetown County, 1951-52, in S152045, Annual Reports of County Superintendents, Division of Finance and Operations, South Carolina Department of Education Records (S.C. Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.).

⁷⁹ Edgar, *South Carolina: A History*, 545.

⁸⁰ Miller, "Will Mission School End Without Father Forsythe?"

⁸¹ Harris, "Volunteers Give School a Facelift."

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While the Diocese seriously considered closing the school after the death of Rev. Forsythe, the community was adamantly opposed to the idea and did not want to send their children to public schools.⁸² Parents were likely especially concerned about transferring students to local public schools in 1974, as the public elementary schools serving the Waccamaw Neck were overcrowded and older students often spent two hours on the bus to get to high school. While efforts were underway to build a new consolidated school, the proposed site was not convenient for residents of the Pawleys Island area.⁸³ Hearing the concerns of local parents, the Diocese relented and decided to keep Holy Cross Faith Memorial open. Just before the start of the 1974-1975 school year, a group of about thirty volunteers from Myrtle Beach, mostly airmen from the local Air Force Base, arrived to refurbish the school building (Figure 10). Volunteers painted the building, sewed window and stage curtains, re-finished floors and desks, and, in a first for the school, installed playground equipment. The money for this work came from grassroots fundraising efforts by the Altar of Rosary Society at the Myrtle Beach Air Force Base.⁸⁴

Holy Cross Faith Memorial is one of a small handful of extant pre-World War II Black schools in Georgetown County. Like other Black schools from this period, Holy Cross Faith Memorial is a reflection of segregated education in South Carolina and the resulting creation of parallel institutions. However, as a parochial school, and under the leadership of Rev. Forsythe and Miss Ruby, Holy Cross Faith Memorial was able to provide an exemplary and rigorous educational experience beyond what most public schools could offer. Many small Black rural schools did not survive the consolidation and “equalization” of the state’s public schools in the 1950s and 1960s, let alone the eventual coming of integration, but Holy Cross Faith Memorial persisted throughout this period and beyond. In many ways the school, and the Forsythes, became the heart of the local community: “‘It’s more than a school,’ said Joan Sherman who graduated in 1960 and now has three children of her own in school there. ‘It’s home. We all come back to Father and Mrs. Forsythe with our troubles and our good times. They cared.’”⁸⁵ The work of the Forsythes carried Holy Cross Faith Memorial through the tumultuous middle decades of the 20th century, a period in which they educated hundreds of local Black children. Their methodology as educators brought individualized attention and the expectation of success to Black students living in a discriminatory society, offering students an environment of unwavering support, continuity, and cultural understanding.

Criterion A, Criterion B, & Criterion Consideration G: Education and Ethnic Heritage – Black, 1975-2000

Holy Cross Faith Memorial School is exceptionally significant within its local context for providing a unique educational experience to the community’s African American children from 1975 to 2000 through its continued use of mixed-age instruction typical of one-room schoolhouses of the early 20th century. While single-age, multigrade schooling was the norm in American primary and secondary education after World War II, Holy Cross Faith Memorial continued until its 2000 closure to educate local Black children using a classroom structure and

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Fred Meade, “School Site Not Ideal, But Logical,” *Sun-News*, April 8, 1974.

⁸⁴ Harris, “Volunteers Give School a Facelift.”

⁸⁵ Ibid.

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instructional methods that were more or less unchanged at least since Rev. Forsythe took charge of the school in the 1920s. At no other school in Pawleys Island or the rest of Georgetown County is this form of education known to have endured so long, making Holy Cross Faith Memorial School exceptionally significant under Criterion A: Education to its local context. As had been true throughout the school's history, for local residents the school's enduring educational significance was inextricably tied to its leaders, the Forsythes, and it is likewise exceptionally significant under Criterion B for continued associations with Ruby Forsythe through 1991. Miss Ruby took over leadership of the school in 1974 and received national recognition for her accomplishments as an educator in the late 20th century. The local community continued to value the school highly and worked very hard to keep the school operating despite financial hardship and a changing educational landscape. Holy Cross Faith Memorial was so unusual and successful in this period that Miss Ruby not only received national media attention, but also became the subject of a doctoral dissertation on education.

The One-Room School and Mixed-Age Instruction in the 20th Century

Holy Cross Faith Memorial is exceptionally significant in part for its continued operation as a traditional one-room schoolhouse until the year 2000, decades after the closure of all other local one- and two-room country schools. Drawing upon the same methods and experience practiced at the school from its beginning, Ruby Forsythe continued to instruct mixed-age students in a single space using basic methods like memorization and recitation, making it a locally unique, enduring representation of a pedagogical experience no longer found anywhere in Georgetown County during this latter portion of the period of significance.

The one-room schoolhouse has roots back to the earliest efforts to provide formal schooling to American children, with one historian writing that, “[t]he history of the one-teacher school in America, until well along in the nineteenth century, is the history of American education.” Beginning in the colonial era and developing through the 19th century, schooling in America generally took place in one-room buildings where a single teacher would instruct between ten and thirty students ranging anywhere from six to fourteen years of age. This mixed-age approach to instruction was virtually synonymous with the one-room (and by extension, one- or two-teacher) school building, with the use of shared space making it impractical if not impossible to divide students on any more than an informal basis. Even into the early 20th century, mixed-age schooling in one-room schoolhouses continued to be common in more rural, southern states like South Carolina, where the first true public education systems were not created until after the Civil War. As more states and local communities began making provisions for publicly available schooling, education normally took place in one-room schoolhouses with pupils of a variety of ages. Especially in rural settings, the teaching of children in a single-room, mixed-age schoolhouse was a practical necessity. If communities wished to establish a school, instructing children of a variety of ages in a single space was the best way to justify the expense of hiring a teacher. Although segregation resulted in Black schools being materially unequal and often overcrowded compared to their white counterparts—or simply nonexistent—this sort of mixed-

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age instruction prevailed in Black and white public schools alike up to the turn of the 20th century.⁸⁶

Within a few decades of Holy Cross Faith Memorial's construction, the sort of age-diverse, one-room instruction offered at the school would virtually disappear from the educational landscape of South Carolina in favor of the consolidated "graded school." The origins of the American graded school system go back to the mid-19th century, when education reformers like Horace Mann began advocating for single-age grades that better reflected students' shared levels of natural intelligence and maturity. This more rigid organization necessarily required larger school populations, and graded schools unsurprisingly took their earliest root in more urban settings, especially in the New England states. In South Carolina, the graded school movement did not make significant headway in reshaping the public schools until at least the 1920s, with one-teacher schoolhouses still making up some 60 percent of the state's overall public-school plant in 1918. However, within two decades the number of one-teacher schools in the state would decline by two-thirds from 3,313 in 1918 to 1,147 in 1936, at which point roughly one-third of public-school students remained in such buildings. Unsurprisingly, public officials were significantly slower to offer more modern, consolidated school facilities to African Americans. A state survey published in 1937 reported that those students still in one- or two-teacher schools accounted for less than 10 percent of the state's white pupils, but more than half its Black students.⁸⁷

The one-room school experience endured for most Black pupils in South Carolina until the mid-20th century, when civil rights activists in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) began achieving major legal victories against segregation. As discussed earlier, litigation by the NAACP and local African Americans in Clarendon County, S.C. prompted the State of South Carolina to embark on a massive school construction campaign aimed at "equalizing" Black and white schools in an attempt to forestall federal integration orders. As a result, dilapidated and overcrowded one- and two-teacher Black country schools across the state were finally closed and consolidated into larger, modern school plants that were significantly more comparable to the facilities provided to the state's white students. Of the six Black public schools on Waccamaw Neck in the 1930s, only the old Parkersville Rosenwald School remained open by 1955. At that time, seven teachers instructed 198 pupils (including special education) in grades 1-7 with a regular curriculum structured around single-age grades.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ E.E. Stonecipher, "A Brief History of the One-Teacher School," *Peabody Journal of Education*, vol. 25, no. 3 (Nov. 1947), 130-38 (quotation on 130). M. Yvette Turner, "Age Grading," in Thomas C. Hunt et al, eds., *Encyclopedia of Educational Reform and Dissent*, vol. 1 (SAGE Publications, Inc.: Thousand Oaks, Ca., 2010), 33-34.

⁸⁷ Turner, "Age Grading." W.H. Gaumnitz, "Are The One-Teacher Schools Passing? 18 Years of History," U.S. Department of the Interior—Office of Education Pamphlet No. 92 (U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1940), p. 13. *Fiftieth Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education of the State of South Carolina* (Gonzales & Bryan, State Printers: Columbia, S.C., 1919), p. 37. There were roughly 4,000 public schools in the state in the mid-1930s. James H. Hope, *A Survey of School Buildings, Grounds, and Equipment in South Carolina* (1937), unnumbered letter of transmittal and p. 73.

⁸⁸ See previous sections on the seven Waccamaw Neck schools. Annual Report of the County Superintendent of Georgetown County, 1955-56, in S152045, Annual Reports of County Superintendents, Division of Finance and Operations, South Carolina Department of Education Records (S.C. Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.).

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With the closure of all other Pawleys Island-area one-room schools, Holy Cross Faith Memorial became the only local school where the traditional mixed-age curriculum continued to be available. As had been the case at other one- and two-teacher country schools, that pedagogical milieu at Holy Cross Faith Memorial was originally born of the practical limitations of educating a scattered, rural population. Ironically, the school's endurance into the late 20th century saw it operate in periods when forms of mixed-age instruction have come back into pedagogical vogue, after having been denounced for decades as an inefficient product of necessity. Influenced by the post-World War II progressive education movement, education reformers in the latter half of the 20th century movement advocated for a variety of forms of mixed-age or "nongraded" instruction, as well as open or semi-open classroom spaces. Supporters argued that rigidly classifying and spatially separating students on the basis of age or any other single criterion neglected important variations in individual ability, frequently framing such efforts as a needed return to the sort of instruction offered in the one-room schoolhouse. Yet such appeals often romanticized the one-room schoolhouse experience and neglected how those earlier lessons in places like Holy Cross Faith Memorial were framed by practical rather than pedagogical considerations. They also often overlooked the extent to which firm, at times even harsh discipline was a hallmark of many one-room schoolhouses, a point exemplified by the Forsythes' firm management of Holy Cross Faith Memorial.⁸⁹ However, as discussed in detail below, regardless of the original circumstances that gave rise to the pedagogical structure of Holy Cross Faith Memorial, the African American families it served steadfastly testified to its enduring effectiveness in the hands of the Forsythes, whose methods remained largely unchanged for the entirety of the school's operation.

"Miss Ruby's School," 1975-2000

Holy Cross Faith Memorial's exceptional significance under Education and Ethnic Heritage: Black derives both from its endurance as the only local site of the one-room schoolhouse model of education and for its association with the continuing local significance of school headmistress and chief educator Ruby Forsythe, whom local residents understood to be integral to the school's success and local importance.

While the death of Rev. Forsythe in 1974 forced Holy Cross Faith Memorial to drop its upper grades, the school continued to operate for students through fourth grade for the remainder of the 20th century.⁹⁰ The Diocese considered closing the school after the passing of Rev. Forsythe, but they ultimately kept it open following the objections of the local community. The local attachment to Miss Ruby helped fuel the desire to keep the school going: "To these people the building is Holy Cross Faith Memorial; the School is one five-foot three wisp of a woman, Ruby Forsythe," reported the *Sun-News*.⁹¹ Volunteer teacher Father John C. Templeton believed that "Just the exposure to Ruby Forsythe would justify keeping this school open." Despite being in

⁸⁹ Turner, "Age Grading." Jonathan Zimmerman, *Small Wonder: The Little Red Schoolhouse in History and Memory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 3-5, 154-56.

⁹⁰ Michael Ryan, "Mrs. Ruby's One-Room School Is Still Going Strong," *Austin American-Statesman*, January 25, 1987.

⁹¹ Harris, "Volunteers Give School a Facelift."

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her seventies, Miss Ruby took over leadership of the school at the request of her community and the bishop.⁹²

The end of Holy Cross Faith Memorial School appeared imminent at several points over the next quarter-century, but the community repeatedly rallied to keep it in operation, reflecting its continued exceptional significance. Although the *Sun-News* reported the school was likely to close in the spring of 1977, it was still open that winter, with fifty-eight students. By then, Miss Ruby was the only full-time teacher, supported by eight volunteer teachers who worked part-time. Finances continued to be a major issue for the school, with parents running monthly fundraisers to pay the bills. Most students attended Holy Cross Faith Memorial for free, with only fourth grade students expected to pay an annual tuition of three dollars. Despite the financial limitations of the school, students continued to come, some traveling from neighboring Horry and Charleston counties.⁹³ The primary draws of the institution were “the quality of its teaching” and “the varied richness of its cultured and academic experience.”⁹⁴ The unique educational experience at Holy Cross Faith Memorial brought a new generation of students to learn from Miss Ruby, many of whom were children of graduates.⁹⁵

The waning decades of the millennium brought little change to Miss Ruby’s classroom. She continued to teach students in the late 20th century much as she had done in the early 20th century, creating a sort of educational time capsule:

Holy Cross-Faith Memorial is a unique situation. The teacher has been using teaching methods taught in training institutions over a century ago. One can see the theories presented in the historical works in progress. For those who question the idea of the effectiveness of an all-black school, Holy Cross-Faith Memorial provides an example where historical traditions are actually applied. Parents and educators banter back and forth the merits of memorization and recitation. At Holy Cross-Faith Memorial this approach was still in practice, as it had been for over 50 years. Holy Cross-Faith Memorial and Miss Ruby were a living history of Black education. They showed many aspects of education that have been forgotten.⁹⁶

Miss Ruby built her educational system upon the twin foundations of discipline and self-esteem. The style and content of her teaching was essentially unchanged from the turn-of-the-century, with a focus on fundamental knowledge skills learned largely through repetition.⁹⁷ In his 1987 television profile of Miss Ruby for NBC, Bob Dotson noted that Miss Ruby’s teaching methods might be considered old-fashioned, such as her prohibition on calculators. Nevertheless, Dotson

⁹² Mill, “Will Mission School End Without Father Forsythe?”

⁹³ Nichols, “Black Litchfield School Nears End of 75 Years”; Shelley Ridout, “58 Strong in 39th Year,” *Sun-News*, December 1, 1977.

⁹⁴ Nichols, “Black Litchfield School Nears End of 75 Years.”

⁹⁵ Ridout, “58 Strong in 39th Year.”

⁹⁶ Parks, “An island in the sun,” 45-46.

⁹⁷ Parks, “An island in the sun,” 137-139.

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commented on the effectiveness of her instruction, with her students able to read by age four.⁹⁸
Today, most children learn to read at age six or seven.⁹⁹

Although the school day adhered to a tight structure, students were encouraged to think for themselves. For example, Marguerite Parks, an educator who visited Holy Cross Faith Memorial while researching her doctoral dissertation in 1990-1991, observed fourth graders writing a composition on “The Value of Honesty and Integrity,” a theme intended to improve their feeling of self-worth and encourage them to think about morality, society, and their relationship to both.¹⁰⁰ Discussion was also a key component of the class day: “They read their social studies, health, science and reading out loud as a group and then discussed it. Miss Ruby not only asked the questions at the end of the book, she asked other ones she found pertinent to the subject. Often she would simply talk with the younger students and then have them tell her what they had discussed.”¹⁰¹

Since Holy Cross Faith Memorial School accepted pre-school students, many children started learning from Miss Ruby around age three, and continued with her until fourth grade. This gave Miss Ruby some distinct advantages as a teacher, as she knew the children extremely well and could individualize their work accordingly. Some students came to the school at older ages, often from the public school system, and sometimes struggled to adapt to the unusual environment of Holy Cross Faith Memorial. With all of the grades in a single classroom, Miss Ruby often used “peer tutoring,” with older or more advanced students assigned to help teach those who were younger or further behind. This approach not only helped younger or struggling students learn the material, but also offered the helping students a chance to experience responsibility.¹⁰² It also exemplified the extent to which Holy Cross Faith Memorial continued to practice instructional methods associated with the earlier one-room schoolhouse model, with peer-tutoring having commonly been used in country schools of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.¹⁰³

By the late 1980s, a few pieces of technology made their way into the classroom, such as copiers and recording machines. The local Catholic church, Knights of Columbus, and Rotary Club all made equipment donations to the school. Computers remained notably absent. Miss Ruby explained: “I’m not against computers, but I think that when people are dependent upon a machine they use their minds less, so I build the mind first. They can use the machine later.”¹⁰⁴ This is not to say Miss Ruby was not adaptable. While her teaching methodology remained consistent, she recognized the importance of acknowledging the world in which her students lived. The textbooks used by the school by the early 1990s were the same as those used at the Georgetown public schools. Gardening, sewing, and Latin eventually made way for more

⁹⁸ “Today’s Lesson: ‘I’ll Try’ – American Story with Bob Dotson,” YouTube.

⁹⁹ Holly Rosenkrantz, “When Do Kids Learn to Read?” *U.S. News & World Report*, August 30, 2021, <https://www.usnews.com/education/k12/articles/when-do-kids-learn-to-read>.

¹⁰⁰ Parks, “An island in the sun,” 139-142.

¹⁰¹ Parks, “An island in the sun,” 197.

¹⁰² Parks, “An island in the sun,” 151-155.

¹⁰³ Paul Theobald, “One-Room Schoolhouse,” in Richard J. Altenbaugh, ed., *Historical Dictionary of American Education* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999), 267-68.

¹⁰⁴ Ryan, “Mrs. Ruby’s One-Room School Is Still Going Strong.”

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modern subject matter, and she made a point of addressing current societal issues with her students, such as drug use.¹⁰⁵

Some of the content of Miss Ruby's lessons may have varied throughout the years, but the same underlying principles always dictated the educational method at Holy Cross Faith Memorial School. Miss Ruby balanced accountability with encouragement, and discipline with love, emphasizing the importance of becoming a good and responsible citizen over pure academic achievement. In many ways, Miss Ruby embodied the concept of a "star teacher" developed in Martin Haberman's 1991 article, *The Ideology of Star Teachers of Children in Poverty*:

"Stars are different from other teachers in that they are aware of the connection between their behavior and their ideology, and they accept this challenge because they believe the purpose of schooling is to form good people who are knowledgeable." A star teacher goes beyond teaching Geometry or American History. Star teachers believe "it is their responsibility to help students see meaning in knowledge, integrate and apply it to their lives and remain permanently affected by learning."¹⁰⁶

Generally, Miss Ruby was extremely successful in this regard, with many of her former students going on to higher education and careers as ministers, lawyers, and other professional positions. In 1986, one of her former pupils graduated from the Air Force Academy. The student received a scholarship to the Academy after being valedictorian at both her junior high and high schools. Miss Ruby joined with other teachers to write letters of encouragement to their former student. Out of twelve Black cadets in her year, she was one of only two who graduated. Not every child was a success story, however, by Miss Ruby's own admission.¹⁰⁷ When asked about the ability of her students to transition successfully to public school, Miss Ruby said, "some of them are prepared, some are more than prepared, but others will never be prepared."¹⁰⁸

As the Pawleys Island area developed into a major tourist area in the late 20th century, Holy Cross Faith Memorial took on an almost legendary importance for the local Black community. According to Miss Ruby, parents of her students identified the school as "about the only cultural thing we have among our people on this island." In keeping with the school's venerated status, parents continued to fundraise and provide volunteer maintenance and cleaning to keep the school running. Parents of Holy Cross Faith Memorial students remained adamant that "Mrs. Ruby will give them something the public schools can't." In 1987, parent Deborah Greggs explained: "The children progress more here. If Mrs. Ruby feels that a child needs individual help, she's willing to give it."¹⁰⁹

Late in her life and career, Ruby Forsythe began to receive national recognition for her extraordinary efforts as an educator, beginning with *Newsweek* magazine naming her as one of America's "unsung heroes" in a 1987 article. She was subsequently featured on "60 Minutes," in

¹⁰⁵ Parks, "An island in the sun," 187, 219-220.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 1.

¹⁰⁷ Ryan, "Mrs. Ruby's One-Room School Is Still Going Strong."

¹⁰⁸ Parks, "An island in the sun," 88.

¹⁰⁹ Ryan, "Mrs. Ruby's One-Room School Is Still Going Strong."

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Family Circle magazine, and on Bob Dotson's "American Story" series on NBC.¹¹⁰ Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Brian Lanker selected Miss Ruby as one of the women photographed and profiled in his 1989 book *I Dream A World: Portrait's of Black Women Who Changed America* (Figure 8). The book included famous names such as Rosa Parks, Oprah Winfrey, and Maya Angelou, as well as less widely-known figures such as Septima Poinsette Clark, a contemporary of Miss Ruby's who taught in Charleston and became an important civil rights activist.

As previously noted, teacher and University of Iowa doctoral student Marguerite Parks made Miss Ruby the subject of her dissertation on education, which she completed in 1993. Parks, a white public-school teacher, went into her first classroom with little knowledge of African American history or culture. She quickly realized familiarizing herself with these subjects was critical to building trust and relationships with her Black students. Recognizing the shortcomings of her own teacher education program, and the broader failings of public-school education for many African Americans in the late 20th century, Parks believed that Miss Ruby and her school could offer important lessons for other teachers. Of Miss Ruby, she said, "It appeared that her students were accomplishing what mine were not; they were staying in school and a large majority were going on to college. I wanted to know what she did at Holy Cross-Faith Memorial School that I could carry into my classroom. I wanted to know how she beat the odds, if in fact she did." Parks' work is one of the strongest indicators of the exceptional significance of Miss Ruby and Holy Cross Faith Memorial, as it demonstrates the interest in the school and its primary teacher from the broader educational community, and not only as a human interest story for the media.¹¹¹

Miss Ruby continued to teach at Holy Cross Faith Memorial School until 1991. The eighty-six-year old teacher had surgery that fall and was never able to return to the classroom. She went to stay with her son and only child, Burns Forsythe, and his family, who lived in Mount Pleasant, just outside of Charleston. She retained hopes of returning to the school into March of the next year, but died in her sleep on the morning of May 29, 1992, age eighty-seven. It was graduation day at Holy Cross Faith Memorial School. Her son traveled to the school that same night to give the commencement address.¹¹²

The accolades for Miss Ruby continued after her death in 1992. Miss Ruby's Kids, a Parent-Child Home Program in Georgetown focused on early learning, was founded in 2003 and named in Ruby Forsythe's honor.¹¹³ She was also selected for inclusion in the 2006 book *101 Women Who Shaped South Carolina*.¹¹⁴ In 2015, Ruby Forsythe was posthumously inducted into the

¹¹⁰ Becky Billingsley, "Grand Women: A look at seven Strand women and their historic legacies," *Sun-News*, September 26, 1999; Bob Dotson, "Today's Lesson: 'I'll Try' – American Story with Bob Dotson," YouTube, accessed October 2, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7SSpNj7LdZU>.

¹¹¹ Parks, "An island in the sun," 3-6.

¹¹² Dewanna Lofton, "Legacy of love, learning surrounds Miss Ruby," *Sun-News*, March 9, 1992; Yolanda Jones and Elaine Gaston, "Pawleys School, community lose 'Miss Ruby' Forsythe," *Sun-News*, May 30, 1992.

¹¹³ "History of the Organization," Miss Ruby's Kids, accessed October 2, 2023, <https://www.missrubyskids.net/team-history/>.

¹¹⁴ Valinda W. Littlefield ed., *101 Women Who Shaped South Carolina* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 121.

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Georgetown County Women's Hall of Fame.¹¹⁵ Rev. Tony Campbell, the executive director of Camp Baskerville, claimed in 1991 that Miss Ruby had "taught nearly every black person in Pawleys Island."¹¹⁶ She viewed her teaching vocation as extending beyond academic learning, saying, "You got to start with the little things that are not in the book to teach respect. The schoolteacher today has to be mother, father, counselor, everything."¹¹⁷ For more than fifty years, Miss Ruby was all these things and more to her students, shaping the young minds of the Pawleys Island Black community generation after generation.

The school stayed open for another eight years after the death of Miss Ruby. It remained exceptionally significant in this period, as it continued to function as a Black one-room school, serving an important educational function for the local community. Miss Ruby's assistant Carolyn Wallace became headmistress of Holy Cross Faith Memorial School (Figure 12). Wallace was an alumna of the school, as was her mother.¹¹⁸ Wallace began attending the school in 1942 at age three, and returned to work as Miss Ruby's assistant in 1986. Wallace continued to use the traditional teaching methods employed by Miss Ruby. Although she was an assistant, Miss Ruby saw her as a teaching partner, stating, "She is not working under me. She is working with me." Wallace continued to hold her students to the same high standards established during the tenures of Miss Ruby and Rev. Forsythe, often with good results. One group of siblings who studied under her were all honor roll students in high school. Wallace also worked well with difficult students. She recalled one such student with fondness: "This little boy was a horror in public school," Wallace says. He told her how he hated Miss Ruby's School too. "But at the end of the year, he had perfect attendance," Wallace says. "And I told him, 'You must have liked coming here because you never missed a day. He just started laughing, and his happiness made my day.'"¹¹⁹

The financial situation at Holy Cross Faith Memorial remained tenuous in the 1990s. The school did not pay Miss Ruby a salary, though she presumably lived above the school free of charge. Following her passing, the school paid three teachers to keep the school going, requiring an increased financial commitment. With the death of Miss Ruby, donations to the school decreased. The school survived through a combination of community support, benefit concerts and festivals, grants, and fundraising campaigns. Dale Davis, an NBA player and graduate of Clemson University, spearheaded one major fundraising effort in 1998, which raised \$10,000. Unfortunately, this only covered a fraction of the \$60,000 needed annually to run the school.¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ Clayton Stairs, "'Miss Ruby' inducted into Georgetown County Women's Hall of Fame," *Georgetown Times*, March 11, 2015, updated August 20, 2020.

¹¹⁶ Yolanda Jones, "Miss Ruby," *Sun-News*, February 3, 1991.

¹¹⁷ "Ruby M. Forsythe, Educator born," African American Registry, <https://aaregistry.org/story/a-teacher-in-its-truest-sense-ruby-forsythe/>.

¹¹⁸ Kristina Torres, "School struggles to raise cash," *State*, August 1, 1995.

¹¹⁹ Johanna D. Wilson, "From Student to Head of Class," *Sun-News*, February 8, 2005.

¹²⁰ Laura L. Blust, "Concerts benefit Pawleys school," *Sun-News*, September 4, 1992; Lyn Riddle, "1-room school hangs on," *Atlanta Constitution*, September 12, 1995; "Thanks!" CellularOne ad, *Sun-News*, October 15, 1995; "A dream alive," *Sun-News*, October 9, 1996; Johanna Wilson, "Hoops star nets \$10,000 for school," *Sun-News*, August 25, 1998.

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Ultimately, the financial challenges of keeping the school open proved to be too great to overcome. The school closed in 2000, following one last graduation ceremony that June. Thirty-five students attended Holy Cross Faith Memorial during its final academic year.¹²¹ By the time the school closed, it was believed to be the last one-room school still operating in the state.¹²² Alumni gathered the weekend after the school closure for a program to honor their alma mater and the Forsythes, one of several local ceremonies to commemorate the school. Alumni were saddened by the closure, but also understanding: “‘I hate to see the old school go,’ added Marian Grant Brown, a member of the class of 1944. ‘But like Miss Ruby always said, there is an end to everything.’”¹²³ Holy Cross Faith Memorial School served as a pillar of Black education in the local community for sixty-eight years. Created in the midst of the Great Depression and at the height of Jim Crow segregation, it continued to serve the local Black community through the remainder of the 20th century. The value the community placed on the school even in its final decades is evidenced by their dedicated efforts to keep it open and their reverence for the education offered in this one-room schoolhouse.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

The school closed in 2000 and the building stood empty until 2005, when it was restored as part of the renovation of the entire church campus. The former school was adapted to serve as a parish house and nursery downstairs with offices upstairs.

¹²¹ “One room school graduates final class, celebrates headmistress,” *State*, May 16, 2000.

¹²² John O. Sands, *A Heritage of Service*. Pawleys Island, SC: Holy Cross Faith Memorial Church, 2016.

¹²³ Kelly M. Burch, “Generations close book on Miss Ruby’s,” *Sun-News*, June 1, 2000.

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Holy Cross Faith Memorial School

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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): _____

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 11.7 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 33.463386° | Longitude: -79.114366° |
| 2. Latitude: 33.461890° | Longitude: -79.111407° |
| 3. Latitude: 33.461115° | Longitude: -79.111905° |
| 4. Latitude: 33.460607° | Longitude: -79.111248° |
| 5. Latitude: 33.460296° | Longitude: -79.111585° |
| 6. Latitude: 33.461708° | Longitude: -79.114331° |

Holy Cross Faith Memorial School
Name of Property

Georgetown County, SC
County and State

7. Latitude: 33.462379° Longitude: -79.113834°

8. Latitude: 33.462833° Longitude: -79.114686°

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

The nominated property is represented by the blue line on the attached NRHP Boundary Map. The property discussed herein straddles Route 17 today. It is bounded to the northeast by an adjoining parcel acquired by the church in 2007, to the northwest by the property of Baskervill Housing Development Corporation, and to the south by Pawleys Island Lumber Company. The cemetery across the highway is defined by a brick perimeter wall that separates it from adjacent residential properties.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the nominated property include the school and its surroundings, representing the totality of the remaining property originally owned by Holy Cross Faith Memorial Episcopal Church. This is the remnant of the roughly 20-acre property originally acquired in 1899, the waterfront and marsh having been divested and developed.

10. Form Prepared By

name/title: John O. Sands
organization: _____
street & number: 4463 Fringetree Drive
city or town: Murrells Inlet state: SC zip code: 29576
e-mail: john.sands1949@gmail.com
telephone: (843) 340-9973
date: April 15, 2023

name/title: Virginia E. Harness with Edwin C. Breeden
organization: SC Department of Archives & History
street & number: 8301 Parklane Road
city or town: Columbia state: SC zip code: 29223
e-mail: vharness@scdah.sc.gov; ebreeden@scdah.sc.gov
telephone: (803) 896-6196
date: January 26, 2024

Holy Cross Faith Memorial School
Name of Property

Georgetown County, SC
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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Photographs

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

Photo Log

Name of Property: Holy Cross Faith Memorial School

City or Vicinity: Pawleys Island

County: Georgetown County

State: South Carolina

Photographer: John O. Sands

Date Photographed: March 29, 2023, unless otherwise noted (Photos verified as accurate by John O. Sands on February 2, 2024, apart from the removal of a non-historic picket fence visible in some images).

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

Photographs

1 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, looking northeast.

Holy Cross Faith Memorial School
Name of Property

Georgetown County, SC
County and State

- 2 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, looking northwest
- 3 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, looking east (2/2/24).
- 4 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, looking south.
- 5 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, cornerstone on southeast corner.
- 6 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, Interior first floor, classroom, looking south.
- 7 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, Interior first floor, classroom, looking north.
- 8 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, Interior second floor, stairwell, looking south.
- 9 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, Interior second floor, hallway, looking north.
- 10 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, Interior second floor, assembly room for guilds, looking west.
- 11 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, Interior second floor, living room, looking south.
- 12 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, Interior second floor, dining room, looking west.
- 13 of 20 Miss Ruby's Garden, non-contributing site of the former Faith Memorial Church, looking west.
- 14 of 20 *Ruby Middleton Forsythe*, sculpture by Frederic Hart, located in Miss Ruby's Garden, looking west.
- 15 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial Chapel, 2052, contributing, looking west.
- 16 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial Sanctuary, 2005, non-contributing, looking east.
- 17 of 20 Smith Medical Clinic, 2016, non-contributing, looking south (2/2/24).
- 18 of 20 Grave of Ruby Middleton Forsythe, looking northwest.
- 19 of 20 Interior of chapel building, looking northwest.
- 20 of 20 Holy Cross Faith Memorial Cemetery, looking northeast (2/2/24).

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Index of Figures

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- 3 of 15 Plat of land transferred from Reverend B. H. Williams to Trustees of the Diocese of South Carolina, December 29, 1899. Plat Book B, page 43, Georgetown County Recorder of Deeds.
- 4 of 15 Faith Memorial Church and School, with students and Reverend Benjamin Martin, photographer Essie C. Matthews, 1915; collection of New York Public Library.
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- 6 of 15 Ruby Middleton Forsythe in the classroom, Georgetown County Digital Library.
- 7 of 15 Ruby Middleton Forsythe on the steps of the school, Holy Cross Faith Memorial Church Archives.
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- 9 of 15 Rev. John C. Templeton teaching students in interior of school building, 1974. *Myrtle Beach Sun News*, May 17, 1974, p. 4.
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- 12 of 15 Carolyn Wallace inside Holy Cross Faith Memorial School, 1996. *Greenville News*, May 28, 1996, p. 3D.
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28, 1968, p. 4F.

15 of 15 “Operation Compenso” campers at Camp Baskervill *The State*, July 28, 1968, p. 4F.

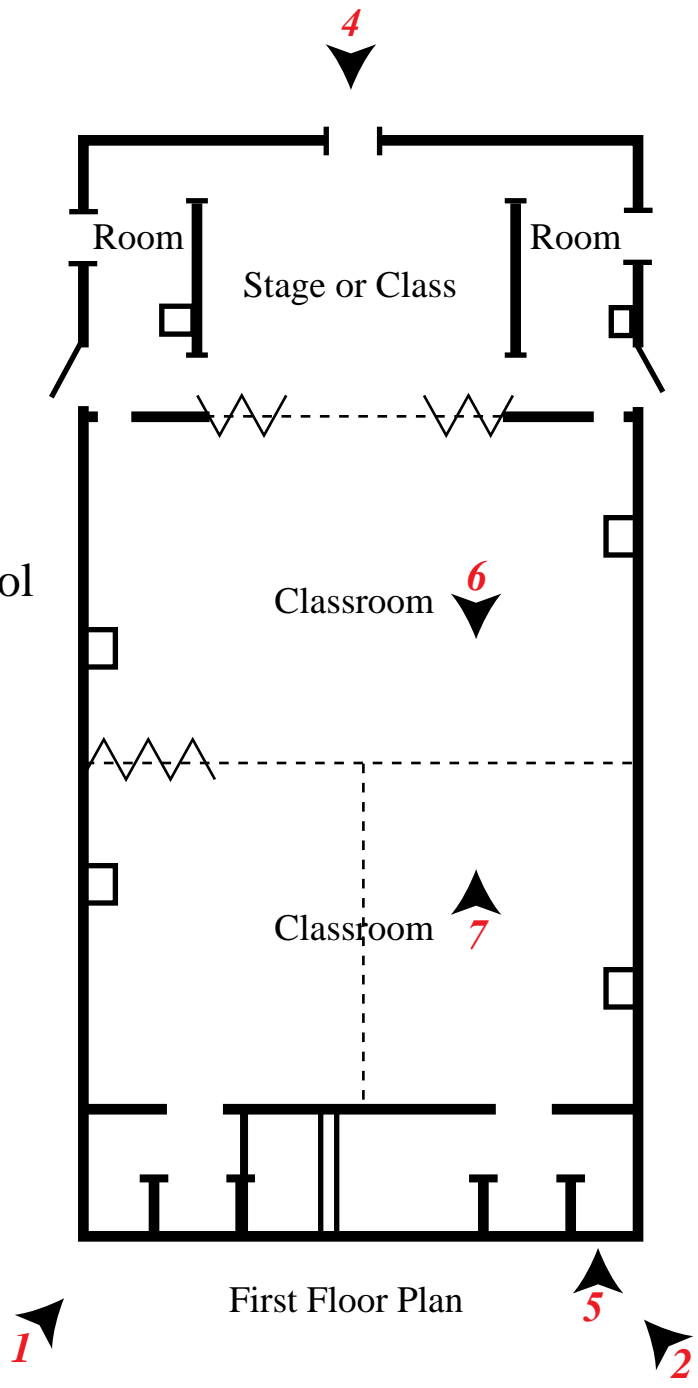
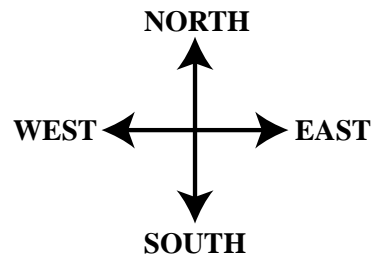
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain 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:

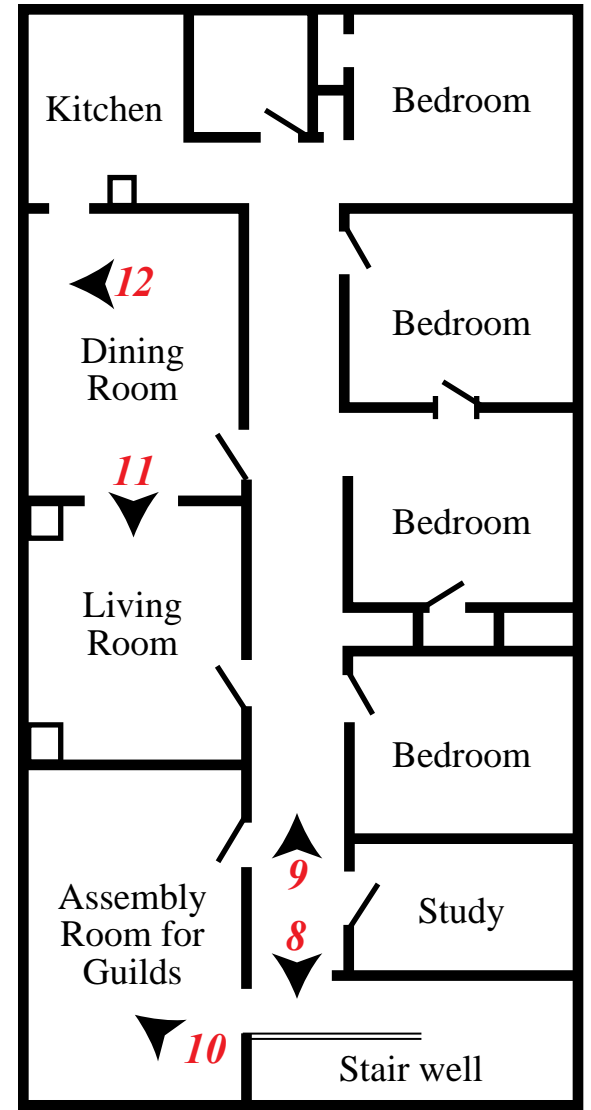
- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

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.

Holy Cross
Faith Memorial School
Pawleys Island, SC



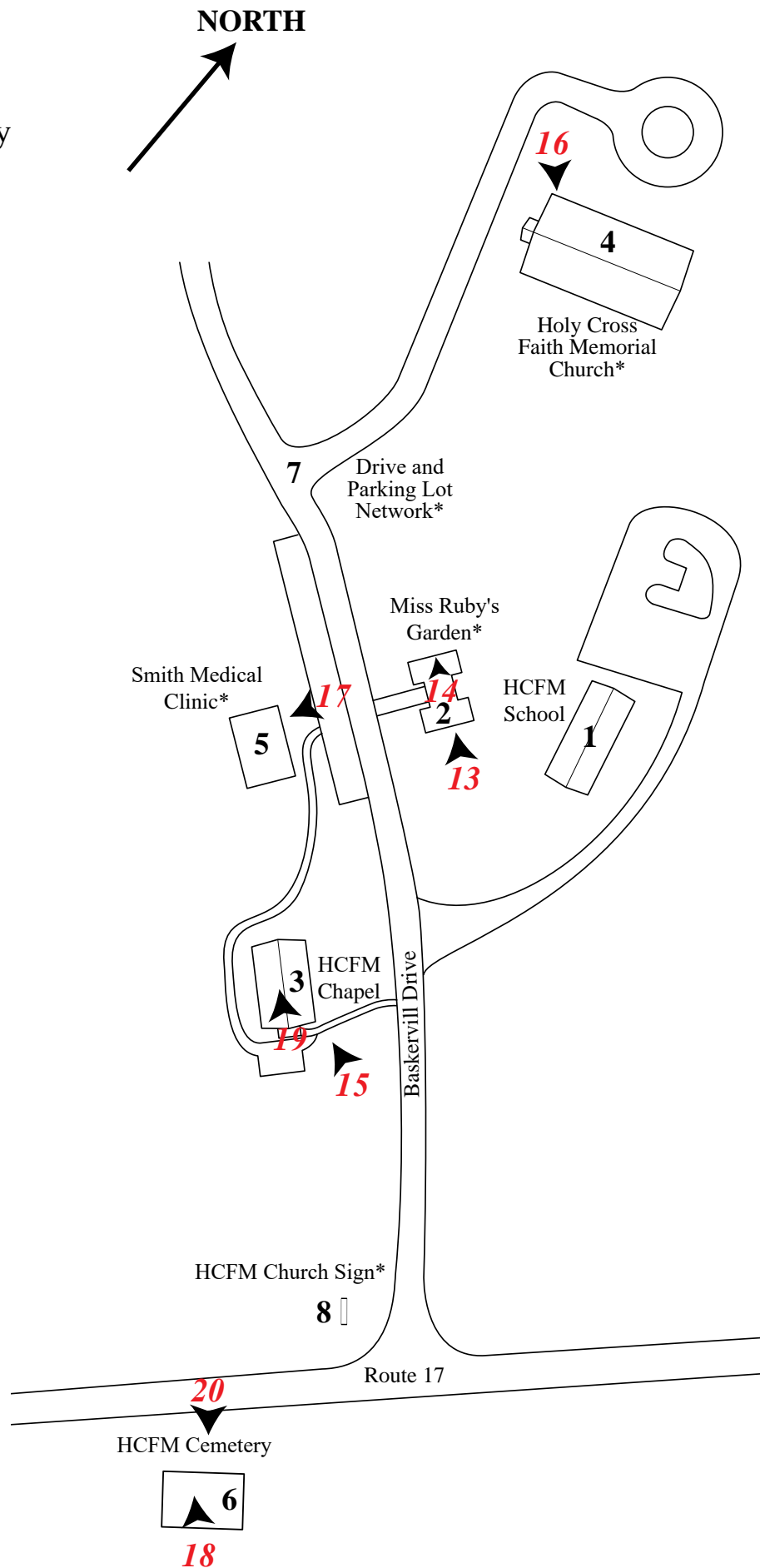
First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan

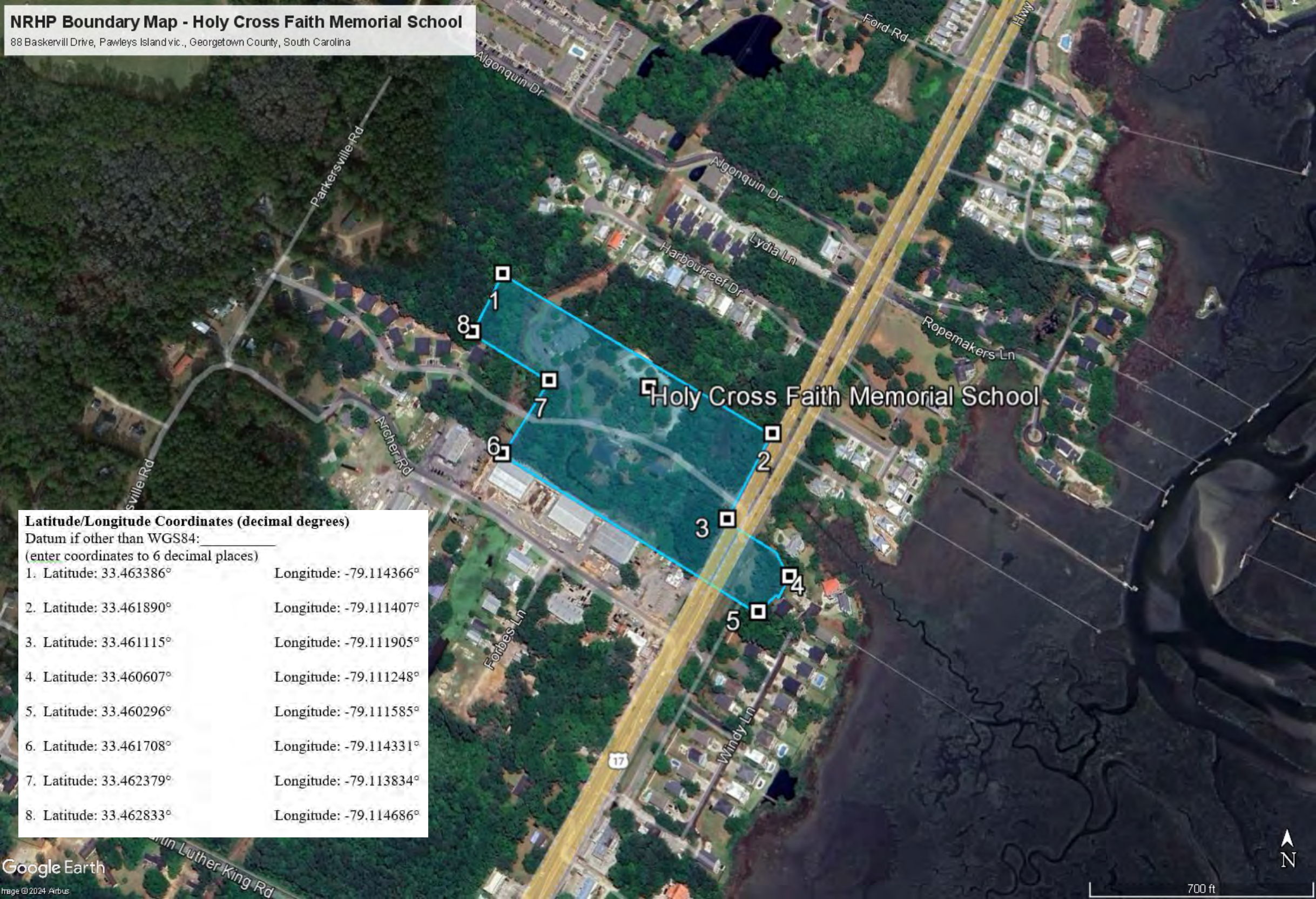
Holy Cross Faith Memorial School Site Map & Campus Photo Key

* =non-contributing
Black # = Resource
Red Italic # = Photo
(not drawn to scale)



NRHP Boundary Map - Holy Cross Faith Memorial School

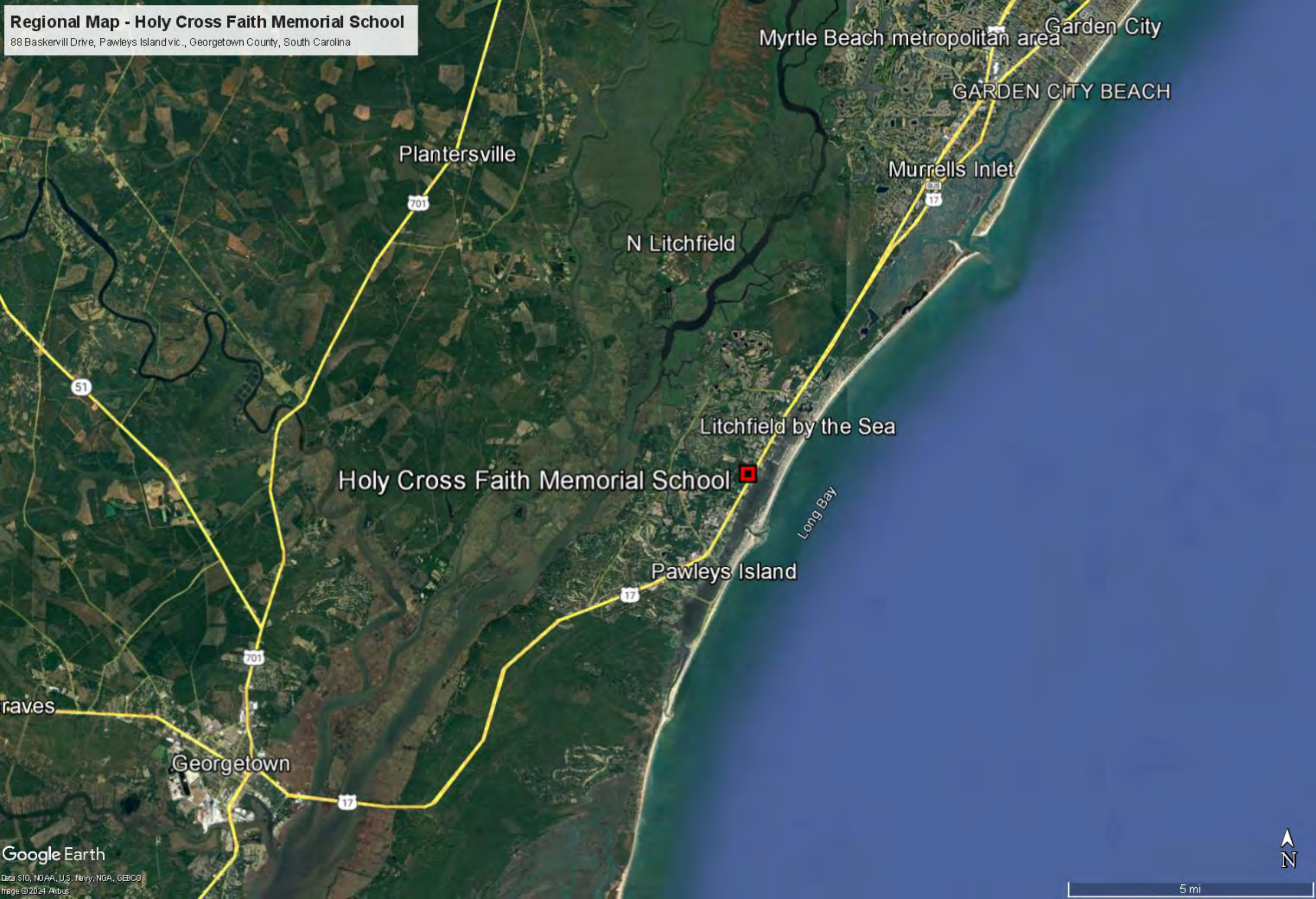
88 Baskerville Drive, Pawleys Island vic., Georgetown County, South Carolina



Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)	
Datum if other than WGS84: _____	
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)	
1. Latitude: 33.463386°	Longitude: -79.114366°
2. Latitude: 33.461890°	Longitude: -79.111407°
3. Latitude: 33.461115°	Longitude: -79.111905°
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7. Latitude: 33.462379°	Longitude: -79.113834°
8. Latitude: 33.462833°	Longitude: -79.114686°



Regional Map - Holy Cross Faith Memorial School
88 Baskerville Drive, Pawleys Island vic., Georgetown County, South Carolina



Myrtle Beach metropolitan area
Garden City
GARDEN CITY BEACH

Plantersville

701

N Litchfield

Murrells Inlet

17

Litchfield by the Sea

Holy Cross Faith Memorial School

51

Long Bay

Pawleys Island

17

701

Georgetown

Georgetown

17

Google Earth

Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO
Image © 2024 Airbus

5 mi



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4





HOLY CROSS AND FAITH
MEMORIAL PARISH HOUSE
ERECTED 1932
RT. REV. A.S. THOMAS, BISHOP
REV. E.L. BASKERVILL, ARCHDEACON

Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11



Photo 12



Photo 13



Photo 14



Photo 15



Photo 16



Photo 17



Photo 18



RUBY M.
FORSYTHE
1905 — 1992
MANICHAULT

Photo 19



Photo 20



Figure 1



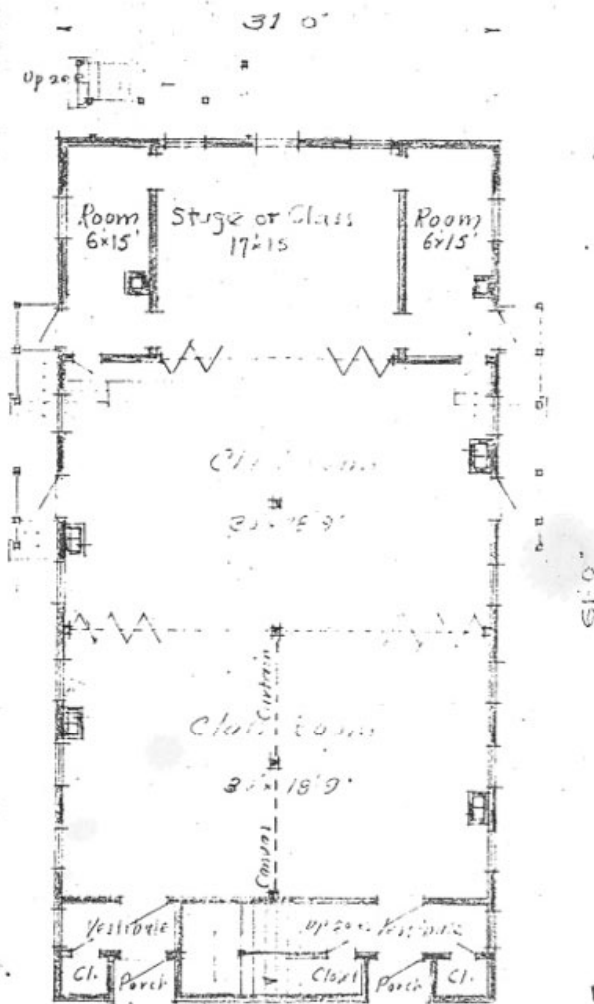
FRONT ELEVATION.
1/8 Scale.

PARISH-HOUSE-AND-RECTORY.

— FOR —
AITH-MEMORIAL-AND-HOLY-CROSS.

PARISH, Waccamaw, S.C.

Henry S. Burden, Architect.
67 Broad St. Charleston, S. C.



FIRST-FLOOR-PLAN.



SECOND-FLOOR-PLAN.

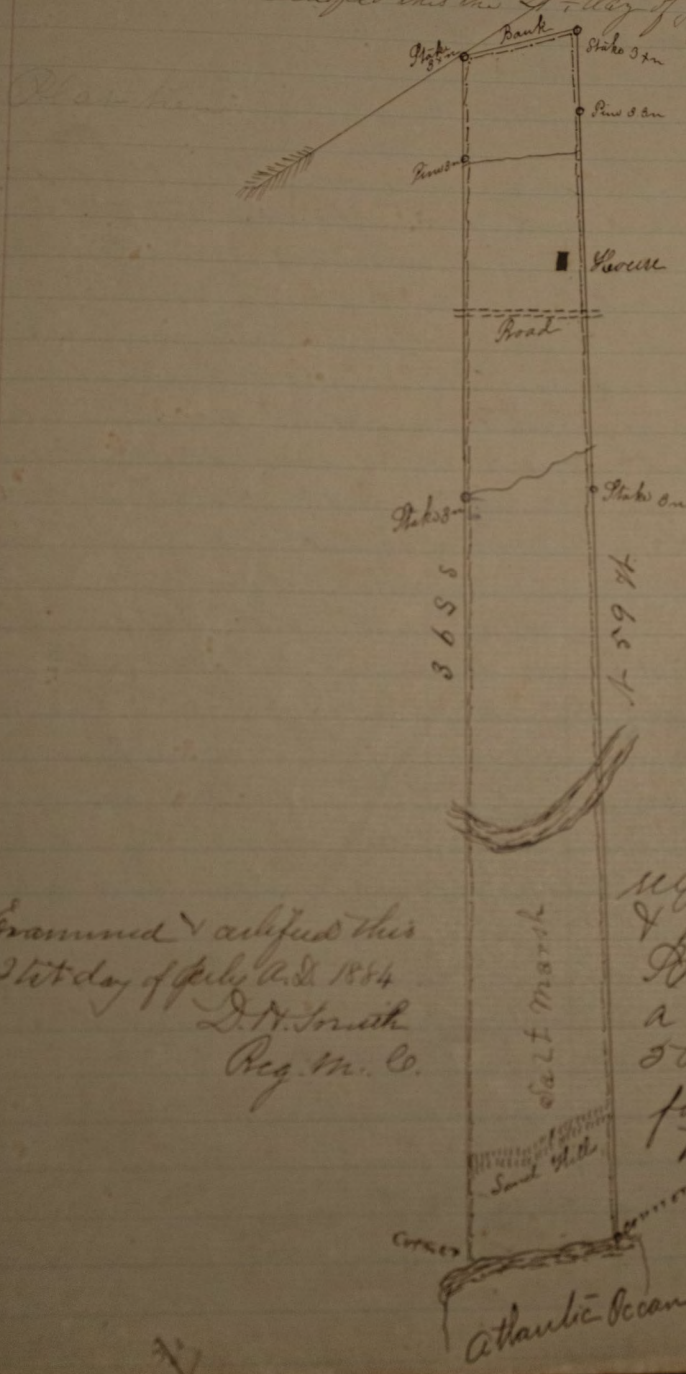
1/8 Scale.

Figure 2

...unto the within named B. W. Williams, his heirs and assigns,
 all her interest and estate, and also all her right and claims of Dower,
 To wit, or to all and singular the premises, within mentioned and related,
 Given under my hand and seal, this 5th day of July, Anno Domini
 1884
 J. W. Gleason (seal) (J. W. Gleason) Anna Parker
 Justice

Recorded this 21st day of July, 1884, in Book 8 page 198
 J. W. Davis, Auditor Georgetown County, S.C. (Sec 25)

Examined and Certified this the 21st day of July, A. D. 1884
 D. H. Smith - Reg. M. C.



State of South Carolina
 Georgetown County

At the request of Andrew Brown & with the consent of James Small & Co. I have laid out a tract of land containing 50 acres and having set form & marks as shown on the above Plat.

Aug 11th, 1882 J. C. Fuller
 J. F.

Examined & certified this 21st day of July, A. D. 1884
 D. H. Smith
 Reg. M. C.

Figure 3

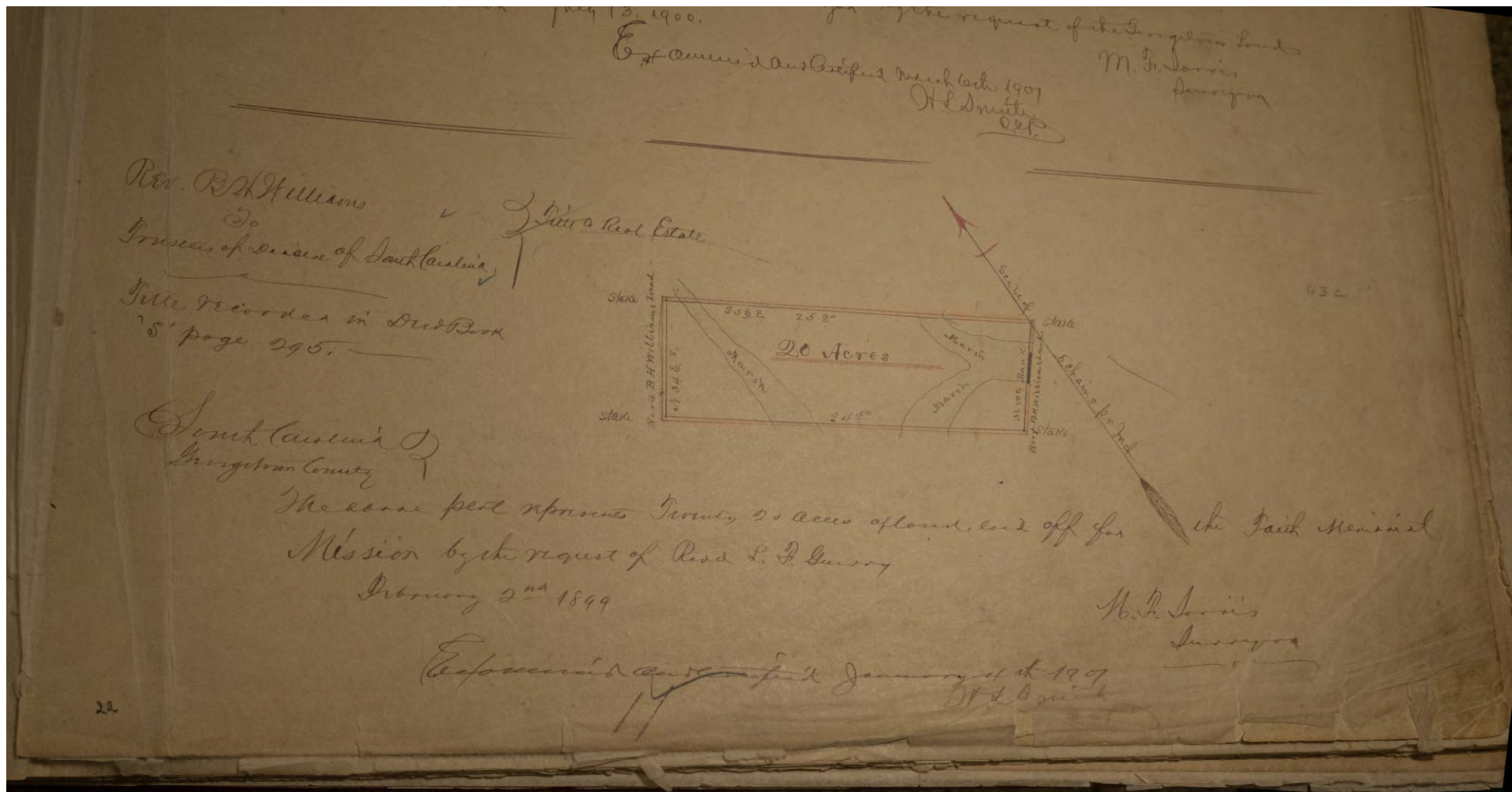
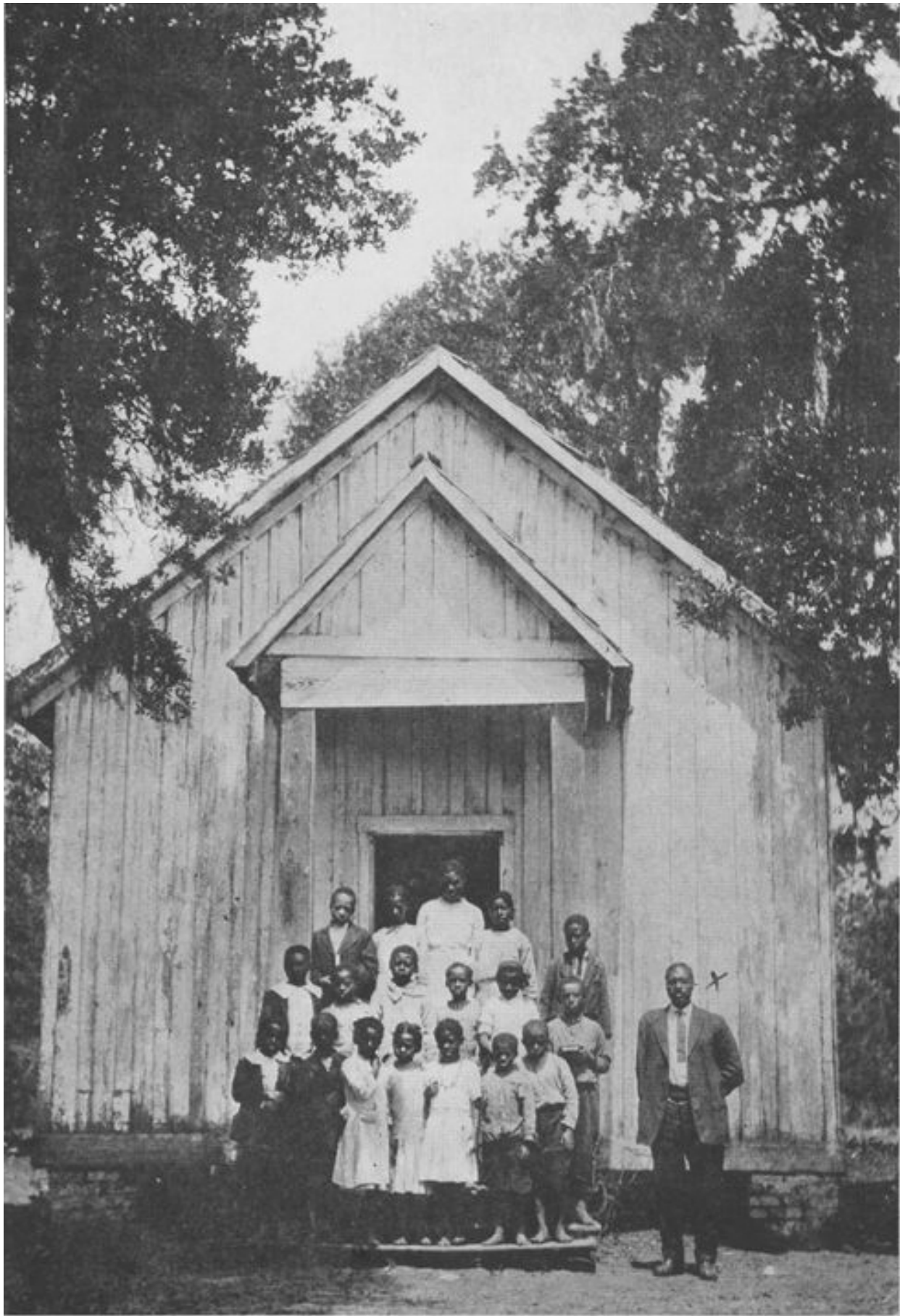


Figure 4



FAITH MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9

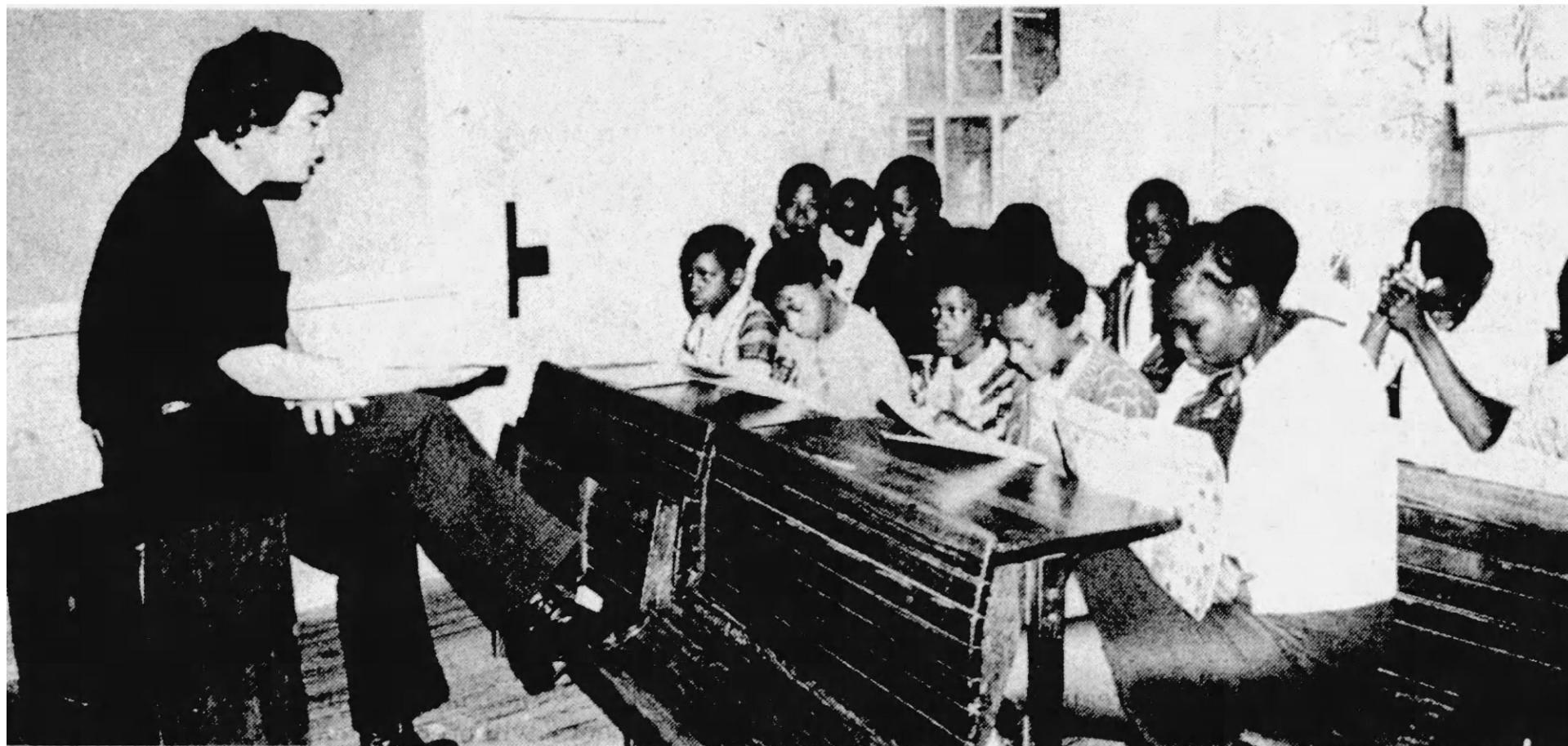


Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16

