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Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.**Summary**

The Historic Moravian Bethlehem Historic District, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, is nationally significant under NHL Criterion 1 as a physical expression of an eighteenth-century structured communal religious society. Seeking “nothing less than the rebirth of the Christian world from Russia to the Ohio Valley,” the Moravians created an international religious community with a network of towns, cities, and communities that stretched across the world. Bethlehem served as the center of Moravian activities in America and as such, it played a key role in both the international and American Moravian community. Bethlehem residents operated within a unique and distinctive economic structure. Believing it to be more effective to live and work within a large communitarian setting, Bethlehem residents “shared dining rooms, dormitory-style housing, workshops, and ownership of buildings, tools, fields, and pastures, and they relied on their piety to render comprehensible all the sacrifices required to build a home in the rugged country of northeastern Pennsylvania.”¹ With its intact core of buildings, the district preserves some of the most important structures and sites relating to the Moravians in the New World. The Historic Moravian Bethlehem Historic District is also nationally significant under NHL Criterion 4 as an outstanding example of Moravian architecture and town planning. Possessing what is “perhaps the largest concentration of vernacular Germanic architecture in the United States,”² Bethlehem is a physical manifestation of the artistic, architectural, cultural, religious and industrial attributes that set the Moravians apart from other colonial settlers. The *Gemeine* or community planned town created here was done in conjunction with the larger Moravian Community based in Herrnhut, Germany.

Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

Historic Moravian Bethlehem encompasses 14.7 acres in the southwestern portion of the Central Bethlehem National Register Historic District along the western end of Church Street and extending west to the Monocacy Creek.

Bell House Complex

The Bell House Complex, as it is known locally, is a series of interconnected buildings built between 1741 and 1772. This complex, on the north side of West Church Street, along with the Widows’ House and Single Brethren’s House across Church Street, formed the core of domestic life in early Bethlehem. By 1747, the community had developed kitchen gardens and began planting orchards along the south facing hillside.

Gemeinhaus (66 West Church Street) (Contributing building)

Located at the western end of the complex, this building was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1975 as the birthplace and residence of Lewis David von Schweinitz, the Father of American Mycology, or the study of fungi. Built of white oak timbers in the German Colonial style, it was constructed in two stages and is considered “one of the largest log structures erected in this country...”³ “The center section (33 feet by 32 feet) and the west section (31 feet by 32 feet) were built in 1741-42. The east section (29 feet by 32 feet) was built in 1742-43.”⁴ The Gemeinhaus is a two story, 10 bay building with partial cellar, a two story attic, and steep roof with kicked eaves. Originally there was a double row of dormers. The upper row of three dormers on the north

¹ Katherine Carté Engel, *Religion and Profit: Moravians in America* (University of Pennsylvania Press,), p. 14.

² Murtagh, *Moravian Architecture*, 21.

³ Deborah Stephens Burns and Richard J. Webster, *Pennsylvania Architecture: The Historic American Buildings Survey with catalog entries, 1933-1990* (Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 2000), 323.

⁴ Vernon H. Nelson, *The Bethlehem Gemeinhaus* (Bethlehem, PA: Moravian Congregation of Bethlehem, 1990), 6.

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and south facades was removed in the early 20th century with repairs to the roof; however, the framing for the dormers remains on the interior on the building. The original roof was made of wooden shingles which were replaced with slate in the nineteenth century. There is a small clapboard one story addition on the northwest façade, the remainder of a series of wooden sheds no longer extant. The south (main) façade has herringbone-patterned double doors with wooden entrance porches.

In 1777, the Gemeinhaus was parged with stucco and scored to resemble coursed stone, remnants of which remain under the southwest entrance porch. In 1868, the parging was removed and replaced with wooden clapboards.⁵

The interior walls are of log construction with dovetailed joints and mortar between the logs. These walls were plastered in 1750.⁶ On the interior, there are two halls running north-south with two sets of stairs going from cellar to upper attic. Food storage, food preparation, and cooking took place in the lowest or cellar level. This portion of the building is above ground at the western end with two windows and an entrance containing its original door under the southwest porch. A modern heating system has been installed where the cooking hearth had been. The floor boards on the first and second floors have been replaced, but the floor boards on the two attic levels are original. In addition, many of the doors, door frames, and hardware are also original. According to the cross sectional view of the building from the 1742-43 and pre-1772 floor plans, the basic floor plan of the building remains virtually unchanged.

The Gemeinhaus remained a residence for single and widowed women until 1966 when it became home to the Moravian Museum of Bethlehem.

Single Sisters' House (46 West Church Street) (Contributing building)

The first section of the Single Sisters' House was constructed in 1744 parallel to the Gemeinhaus along the limestone bluff and facing south. "In addition to the use of native limestone, appearing in Bethlehem for the first time in this structure, the use of concave cornice forming a simple transition from the wall to the overhang of the roof was also introduced in this structure. Noteworthy also are the red brick arches over each window as well as in the lintel between the square-headed sash and the flat arch."⁷ This two-story, five bay, German Colonial style building has a two story attic under a hipped gambrel slate roof with gabled dormers on the lower attic and shed dormers on the upper attic. The building has a partial cellar on the northern side. It is constructed of roughly coursed limestone that is pointed with a flush joint. "Set in the masonry of the south façade, abutting the frame of the center bay is a vertical sundial and date stone inscribed with 1744, marking the year of the building's construction. The sundial is crafted from a slab of limestone with corresponding Roman Numerals and hour lines carved into its face. The triangular arm (gnomon), which serves to cast a shadow on the limestone face, is formed from unidentified metal. This is likely Bethlehem's earliest municipal timepiece, predating the first town clock installed above the First Bell House in 1747."⁸ This building also has herringbone-patterned doors.

On the interior, the building has a center hall plan with a 10 foot wide hallway flanked by brick chimneys at the midpoint. The building was heated with tile stoves and "...the wood for fueling the tile stoves in each of the separate spaces was stored in [large woodbins] cubbies and concealed from view by the large wood doors that

⁵ Ibid., 13.

⁶ Ibid., 12.

⁷ Murtagh, *Moravian Architecture*, 38.

⁸ David Scott Parker, *Historic Structures Report: The Sisters' House & Bell House Volumes I & II*. (Bethlehem, PA: David Scott Parker Architects, LLC., 2003) vol. I, 31.

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close over the arched openings still operating on eighteenth century wrought iron strap hinges and pintils and held shut by a wrought iron latch bar and keeper.”⁹ The floor of the center hall is made of brick pavers approximately 9 inches square and laid in a running bond. According to the Historic Structures Report, many of the doors, door frames, hinges and locks are original as are the floor boards on the second, third and fourth floors. “Though alterations have been made to the original arrangement of rooms at all floor levels of the 1744 section, the floor plan retains a remarkable degree of historic integrity... Alterations to the original 1744 configuration are typically the result of re-arrangements needed to accommodate two later additions to the north and east. As such, the bulk of the present interior arrangement is eighteenth century, and therefore Moravian origin.”¹⁰

The building was constructed originally as the Single Brethren’s House, but the population of single men in the community increased so rapidly that they outgrew the space and in 1748, the building became home to the Single Sisters. It provided workspace and a dormitory for the women. Single women continued to live in the building until December 2007 after which the space became part of the Moravian Museum of Bethlehem.

Single Sisters’ House (northern extension) (50 West Church Street) (part of Single Sisters’ House contributing building)

This extension, measuring 69 feet by 28 feet, was built perpendicular to the Single Sisters’ House. Constructed of limestone in 1751-52, it is in the same architectural style as the 1744 section with shallow segmental brick arched windows and gambrel roof on the east façade with shed dormers in the lower and upper attic. While the south wall connects to the original Single Sisters’ House, the northwest corner is attached to the east wall of the 1749 addition of the Bell House. The building has two, three-story stone buttresses on the west façade added in 1756.¹¹ There is also a herringbone-patterned door on this building.

On the interior, the floor levels between the 1744 and 1752 sections are the same. Interior stone walls remain intact except where connected to the Bell House and 1744 section of the Single Sisters’ House. Later partitions have been added in some of the larger spaces. “At the northern end of the first floor, the large open space dedicated for use as a dining hall for the Sisters in 1751 remains complete....Original brick flooring laid in a herringbone pattern also survives in this space.”¹² The *Saal* (chapel) for the Single Sisters is located on the second floor above the dining hall. “Turned wooden posts and heavy timber sub beams of period origin survive... The double entry doors to this space are remarkable examples of the skill and artistry of both the Moravian wood joiners and their fellow metalworking tradesmen... The doors are crafted with mortise and tenon joinery and all joints are fastened with irregularly sized hewn pegs ... The doors turn on wrought iron pintils and ornamental cross-shaped side-hinges...”¹³

As noted above, this addition housed the dining room, *Saal* (chapel), workspaces for the Single Sisters and *Schlafsaal* (sleeping hall) on the third floor. Single women continued to live in the building until December 2007 after which then became part of the Moravian Museum of Bethlehem.

⁹ Ibid., vol. I, 32.

¹⁰ Ibid., vol. I, 32-33.

¹¹ Ibid., vol. I 47.

¹² Ibid., vol. I 44.

¹³ Ibid.

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Single Sisters' House (eastern extension) (44 West Church Street) (part of Single Sisters' House contributing building)

The eastern extension was constructed in 1772 in the same German Colonial style as the 1744 Single Sisters' House and connecting to the east wall. This two story stone building has a two story attic with pedimented gable dormers on the lower attic and shed dormers on the upper attic and a full basement. Measuring 69 feet in length by 44 feet in width, the building has nine bays on the north and south façades and three bays on the east elevation and a slate roof with kicked eaves. The windows have shallow segmental brick arches and the exterior doors are herringbone-patterned.

On the interior, the building was used as workrooms and dormitory space for the single women of the community. "Like the previously discussed interiors of the Sisters' House, the interior of the 1772 Eastern Addition is also remarkable for its high degree of integrity...Numerous complete and original door ensembles survive with their original frames, door slabs, wrought iron hinges, locks, and latches. Typical of eighteenth century Moravian construction, the section's flooring is mostly random width tongue-and-groove white pine planking."¹⁴ The third floor *Schlafsaal* (sleeping hall) "contains perhaps the most remarkable space within the complex and here again, the level of historic integrity is noteworthy. With the exception of a small anteroom and stair area, a single large room measuring 54 by 36 feet occupies the entire floor."¹⁵ "If one compares the original drawings with the building as it now stands, very little difference can be noted between the finished building and the structure proposed in 1771."¹⁶

In 1958, a small two story stone addition with brick arched windows and sloping copper clad roof was built to house modern bathrooms, the only ones in the entire Sisters' House complex. The space, measuring 14 feet by 18 feet, is located on the northern façade of the 1744 section, tucked between the eastern and northern extensions. The gambrel roof of the 1744 section is visible above this 1958 addition. The Eastern Addition continues to house single women of the community.

Bell House (56 West Church Street) (Contributing building)

The Bell House was constructed in three building campaigns from 1746 to 1748. The center section measures 35 feet by 20 feet with a 21 foot addition constructed to the east in 1748, which connects to the northern extension of the Single Sisters' House and the same size addition to the west in 1749 which connects to the eastern elevation of the Old Chapel. This two story limestone building has 7 bays, a cellar under the center and west sections, and a two story attic with gambrel slate roof, belfry, and balustrade. It was constructed in the same German Colonial style as the adjacent buildings with shallow segmental brick arched windows and herringbone-patterned doors.

The Bell House was the married people's choir of the community for a few years and then from 1749 until the mid-1790s was home to the Moravian Seminary for Young Ladies, reputed to be the oldest girls' boarding school in the original Thirteen Colonies. The building also housed the apothecary and kitchen facilities. "As a result, the interior was altered and rearranged on many occasions during the eighteenth century, followed by more severe alterations during the nineteenth century when the spaces were outfitted as apartments. Even so, a great deal of original and early historic architectural fabric remains intact, as confirmed by period architectural

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., vol. I 59.

¹⁶ Murtagh, *Moravian Architecture*, 41.

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documentation, selective probing and paint analysis.”¹⁷ Since the nineteenth century, the Bell House has contained six apartments.

Old Chapel (64 West Church Street) (part of Gemeinhaus contributing building)

The Old Chapel was constructed in three months in 1751 as an addition to the Gemeinhaus. By 1749, the community had grown to over 200 people and a larger place of worship was needed. This German Colonial stone style structure (66 feet by 32 feet) has two stories with a one story attic and shed dormers. Because the stonemasons were concerned about the insecure rock formations beneath the walls of the Chapel, two stone buttresses on the west and one on the east were added during the construction to help support the clay tile roof.¹⁸

The building used the northeastern elevation of the Gemeinhaus and the western elevation of the Bell House for a portion of its walls. Because there was no exterior entrance into the Chapel, doorways from the Bell House and the Gemeinhaus were added to provide access. Women and girls entered through the Bell House and men entered through the Gemeinhaus. A narrow gallery ran along the north wall with an entrance from the second floor of the Bell House for elderly women. The narrow gallery on the south end held the organ.¹⁹ The interior walls were plastered. Timber for the interior was floated down the Lehigh River from the Moravian sawmill in Gnadenuhuetten.²⁰

In the eighteenth century, the ground floor contained a dining hall for the married people’s choir. Later this space became a work area for the candle makers. This level was completely refurbished in the 1990s to add restroom facilities and a meeting room for the church. However, the original interior masonry walls remain unchanged.

In 1865, a narrow two story stone addition was constructed on the north elevation to provide a choir loft and an entrance from the exterior into the building. At this time, the south end of the interior was renovated to create a pulpit alcove changing the direction of the pews from facing west along the long wall to facing south and the new pulpit alcove.²¹ A portion of the original gallery and door can still be seen in the lower attic of the Gemeinhaus. The door from the Old Chapel into the Bell House was also eliminated; the opening has been converted into a bookcase in the second floor southwest room of the Bell House. Since the 1860s, the Old Chapel has remained unchanged (with the exception of the second means of egress constructed in the 1990s) and continues to serve as a place of worship today.

The Widows’ House (53 West Church Street) (Contributing building)

Built in 1767-68 on the south side of West Church Street, the Widows’ House is a two story German Colonial style limestone structure (78 feet by 44 feet) with brick segmental arches over the windows. It has a two story attic with pedimented dormers on the lower attic and shed dormers on the upper attic. “A coved plaster cornice extends across its front to provide transition from the façade to the gable roof with the kick at the front eaves, another characteristic of Bethlehem’s Moravian buildings.”²² The brick chimneys are an important architectural

¹⁷ Parker, Historic Structures Report, 75.

¹⁸ Ibid., 24.

¹⁹ Kenneth G. Hamilton, Church Street in Old Bethlehem (Bethlehem, PA: Moravian Congregation of Bethlehem, 1988), 23.

²⁰ Margaret Schwarze, The Old Moravian Chapel 1751-1951 (Bethlehem, PA: Bi-centennial Committee, 1951), 2. In the 1990s when a five foot section of a first floor beam was removed to provide space for a second means of egress, it was noted that this squared timber piece had Roman numeral markings, dovetail joints, and wooden pegs. This beam section is now part of the Moravian Museum collection.

²¹ Hamilton, Church Street, 25.

²² Burns, Pennsylvania Architecture, 52.

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feature. "In the upper attic the two chimneys are corbelled toward one another as they near the roof. Beneath the roof peak they are brought together by an arch that forms the continuing web between the two chimneys above the roof line."²³ In 1794-95, a two story stone addition (20 feet long) was constructed to the east to provide more living space and a chapel for the widows.

The east/west width of the original section of the Widows' House (78 feet) is exactly the same as the east/west width of the space between the Gemeinhaus and the 1744 section of the Single Sisters' House. "With the erection of the Widows' House, the Bell House Square complex now came as near to completion as it was ever to be, a state that is indeed formal when one views the Bell House from the second floor center window of the Widows' House. Visually if not actually, the buildings that face each other across the intrusion of present Church Street interact as a cohesive whole, creating a successful urban complex of considerable beauty and standing as a prime example of the eighteenth century's capabilities in the planning and control of a community's environment."²⁴

A two story stone wing (80 feet by 40 feet) was added to the south in 1889 and attached on both floors to the original building by means of a narrow hyphen and short interior passageways.²⁵ This addition is not visible from Church Street and does not affect the overall feeling of the district.

The interior of the Widows' House has a central passage and can be considered a type of Pennsylvania German house *Durchganigenhaus* or passage hall house.²⁶ The building originally housed the widows of the Moravian community with communal living and work rooms on the lower floors and sleeping quarters in the lower attic. The widows used the communal kitchen to provide meals for the girls attending the Moravian Seminary for Young Ladies, thus providing income for the Widows' Choir. In the nineteenth century, communal living gave way to apartments for the widows. With the exception of a few additional interior walls, the building has its original wide pine floor boards and many of the doors continue to have their iron strap hinges and box locks. According to Murtagh, "in the Widows' House, ... there is a great sense of the building as it was originally built."²⁷ Today, the Widows' House continues to house widows as well as graduate students attending the Moravian Theological Seminary.

Central Moravian Church (406 Main Street) (Contributing building)

Constructed in 1803-1806 at the corner of Main and West Church Street of limestone covered with stucco (measuring 145 feet by 70 feet) the Central Moravian Church was the first Bethlehem Moravian building not in the German Colonial style. "Stylistically, the Central Moravian Church is in the Anglo-American tradition and specifically in the Federal style."²⁸ The plan of the church is traditionally Moravian with the sanctuary in the center and pavilions at the east and west ends.²⁹ The pavilions are two and a half stories with a raised basement at the western end to accommodate the kitchen for food preparation for special services. The central section is one story with attic and basement. The Doric belfry, placed directly over the central portion of the structure, has a large octagonal copper-covered cupola capped with a clock and weathervane. Foundation walls are six feet deep and six feet wide.

²³ Murtagh, *Moravian Architecture*, 86.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 83-84.

²⁵ Hamilton, *Church Street*, 27-28.

²⁶ Burns, *Pennsylvania Architecture*, 51.

²⁷ Murtagh, *Moravian Architecture*, 86.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 52.

²⁹ Historic Moravian Churches in Gracehill, Northern Ireland and Christiansfeld, Denmark, for example, are designed on a similar plan.

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The entrance doors are located at the eastern and western ends of the north and south facades. Five large arched windows dominate the central portion of the north and south facades. The 60 by 90 foot sanctuary has no interior columns. In the attic, heavy oak timbers with mortised and pegged construction and at key locations forged iron straps support the roof and the belfry.³⁰

The interior east wall of the sanctuary has seen several changes over the years. In the Moravian tradition, the pulpit is on the long wall. Central was designed in that manner, but by the time the sanctuary was completed, the shorter east wall was the pulpit end of the church and the Oriel Pulpit was installed. The Oriel Pulpit was removed in 1851 and in 1867 an apse was created in this wall along with the installation of gas lamps. Also at this time, the benches were replaced with pews.³¹

In 1816, the east and west ends of the building were altered to cover the flat roofed pavilions due to leaking. The roof over the central section was extended to tie the entire structure beneath one continuous roof. The town clock, built by Augustine Neisser for the Bell House in 1747, was moved to the belfry of Central Moravian Church by Jedediah Weiss, Moravian clockmaker, in 1824 and rebuilt in 1877.³²

On the east elevation the entrances are on grade. On the western elevation, due to the slope of the hillside, long exterior staircases are needed to reach the entrance doors. According to Howland, mention was made in the Church minutes of April 27, 1835 that red sandstone steps be built and an iron stair railing be used. Howland continues to postulate: "In the records of the Board of Trustees for 1857 there is again discussion of repairs to the outer wall [located beyond the stairs] and steps, but here, too, the account is too meager to afford an accurate picture. It may be that the great flight of steps at each of the western corners was made then. Steps similar to the ones of today appear in the Kleckner photograph of 1866."³³ Levering states that in 1857, "the wall was removed and replaced by the present iron fence."³⁴ Elaborate iron railings surround the church on the east, south and west sides. "Externally the only significant change, other than the lengthening of the roof, was the addition in 1833 of imitation stone-work about the auditorium windows."³⁵

Central Moravian Church continues to be used for religious services, performances by the Bach Choir of Bethlehem and other musical groups, and community gatherings.³⁶ The belfry of the church is the iconic symbol of present-day Bethlehem.

Waterworks (Contributing building)

The 1762 Waterworks, a National Historic Landmark (designated in 1981) and an American Civil Engineering Landmark, was constructed of limestone in 1762 in the German Colonial style. Located within the Colonial Industrial Quarter along Monocacy Creek, it is 24 feet by 24 feet with two stories and a one story attic, shallow segmental brick arched windows, and a jerkinhead roof clad in red clay tiles. It has herringbone-patterned doors. "This is the structure that still stands in Bethlehem essentially unchanged from its original form."³⁷ The building had many uses over the years including as a residence; however, the stone structure itself, wheel pit,

³⁰ Garth A. Howland, *An Architectural History of the Moravian Church* (Bethlehem, PA: Times Publishing Company, 1944), 42.

³¹ Joseph Mortimer Levering, *A History of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 1741-1892*, (Bethlehem, PA: Times Publishing Company, 1903), 690-691.

³² Hamilton, Church Street, 31.

³³ Howland, *Architectural History*, 38-39.

³⁴ Levering, *A History of Bethlehem*, 690.

³⁵ Howland, *Architectural History*, 64.

³⁶ In 1900, the Church was the site of the first American performance of Johann Sebastian Bach's complete *Mass in B minor* by the Bach Choir of Bethlehem and, for this, has been named an American Music Landmark.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 75.

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and pump area remained intact.³⁸ The building, the waterwheel, and the pumping mechanism were restored in 1972 using the original eighteenth century master craftsmen's drawings in the collection of the Moravian Archives of Bethlehem.

Extensive archeological studies were done at this site in 1964 and 1972 and through a Save America's Treasures Grant, the 18 foot diameter waterwheel was repaired in 2009 after damage from Hurricane Ivan using the original eighteenth century drawings. Today, the Waterworks and the use of the Monocacy Creek to power various early industrial operations are interpreted at this site.

Tannery (Contributing building)

Located to the north of the Oil Mill ruins, within the Colonial Industrial Quarter along Monocacy Creek, the 36 foot by 66 foot Tannery was constructed in the German Colonial style in 1761. It is a five bay, three story, limestone building with a one story attic, clay tile gable roof, shed dormers, shallow segmental brick arched windows. It also had herringbone-patterned doors. The Moravian Church sold the tannery and its operations in 1830.³⁹ Tanning continued until 1873 when the structure was converted into a multi-family dwelling. The building was restored over the period 1968-71 by John Milner Associates as an historic property interpreting the eighteenth century tanning operations. An archeological report, pieces of the original vats, and tools are in the collection of Historic Bethlehem, Inc.

Archeological Site (Contributing site)

The entire district is counted as one contributing archeological site. This site is not individually eligible under the high standards of Criterion 6, however, the archeological resources found within the site contribute to our understanding of an eighteenth-century structured communal religious society and the artistic, architectural, cultural, religious and industrial attributes that set the Moravians apart from other colonial settlers.

Within the boundary of the nominated property, specific archeological features and areas have been professionally documented. Based on these investigations, archeological resources are likely to exist throughout the entire district. The documented features include the following:

God's Acre (43 West Market Street) (contributing feature to the archeological site)

God's Acre, located on the crest of a hill to the north of the Bell House Complex, is the Moravian Cemetery laid out by the Moravian benefactor, Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf in 1741. Early Moravians referred to it as the *Hutberg*, after the hill in Herrnhut, Germany, where the Moravian cemetery was located on Zinzendorf's estate. Burials are according to the Choir System (groups determined by age, gender, and marital status) with individuals interred with their choirs rather than with their families. Europeans, African-Americans, and American Indians are buried together side-by-side. All the headstones are flat to the ground and of similar size illustrating that all are equal in death. Strangers' Row is a section of the cemetery along the Market Street fence set aside for strangers (non-Moravians) who died in Bethlehem. The first burial occurred in 1742 and the last in 1911.

Pathways still lead from the Old Chapel, the Bell House Complex, and Central Moravian Church to the cemetery. A funeral would process from the church led by the Trombone Choir to the burial site.

³⁸ Karen Zerbe Huetter, *The Bethlehem Waterworks* (Bethlehem, PA: Historic Bethlehem, Inc., 1976), 14.

³⁹ Levering, *A History of Bethlehem*, 652.

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Colonial Industrial Quarter

A ten acre area located on the hillside below Central Moravian Church and stretching to the Monocacy Creek, the eighteenth century industrial area was situated to take advantage of both the prodigious spring supplying potable water and the Monocacy Creek supplying water power for the mills, craftsmen, and trades of early Bethlehem.

“Established by the Moravians in 1741, this area eventually housed thirty-two industries which employed advanced technological methods to produce a variety of products making Bethlehem nearly self-sufficient.”⁴⁰ By the mid-1800s, many of the original eighteenth century buildings were converted into other uses and some were torn down. By the 1950s, the area had become an automobile junk yard and a blight on the city. Beginning in the late 1950s, there was civic and cultural interest in preserving and restoring one of America’s earliest industrial centers. During a period of Urban Renewal in the 1960s, the site was cleared of debris and rundown structures, archeological studies were undertaken, and restoration work proceeded as funds were raised.

Pottery (Contributing feature to the archeological site)

Located to the west of Central Moravian Church on the west side of Main Street are the pottery ruins. The ruin consists of the foundations and a wall fragment of the Moravian pottery. It was constructed in 1749 of limestone as a two story building measuring 32 feet x 35 feet.⁴¹ It was used as a pottery until 1758 when the first floor became the clothmaker and stocking weaver’s shop and the second floor became home to thirteen widowers. The building stood until the early 20th century when it was partially dismantled and the stone converted into brownstone dwellings. In the 1960s, during Urban Renewal, a north wall and foundations were saved. Today it is displayed as an archeological ruin. An archaeological report and pottery sherds are in the collection of Historic Bethlehem, Inc. Yale University Department of Archeology and Anthropology is currently conducting a dig at the site.

Oil Mill (Contributing feature to the archeological site)

Constructed ca.1765 of limestone measuring 30 feet x 66 feet, the Oil Mill was located between the Waterworks and the Monocacy Creek. It operated with two undershot water wheels. The Oil Mill was demolished in 1934 as a project of the Works Progress Administration with the stones used for retaining walls along the Monocacy Creek; only the foundations of the Oil Mill remain today. Extensive research was completed by Carter Litchfield and his team in the early 1980s with their findings published in a book, *The Bethlehem Oil Mill 1745-1934*, about milling operations in eighteenth century Bethlehem.

Butchery (Contributing feature to the archeological site)

The Butchery, located north of the Tannery next to the Ohio Road, was constructed in 1752. Today it is an archeological site with only the foundation walls extant. Illustrations from the eighteenth century show a two story building. The butchery, also called the slaughter house, provided meat for the community and hides for the tanning operations next door. By the early 20th century, it had been converted into a laundry and cleaning business. As part of the Urban Renewal project in the 1960s, the building was torn down. All that remains of the eighteenth century fabric is the foundations.

⁴⁰ Burns, Pennsylvania Architecture, 323.

⁴¹ Murtagh, Moravian Architecture, 92.

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Dye House (Contributing feature to the archeological site)

The, located north of the Butchery across the Ohio Road, was constructed of limestone in 1771 as a two story, three bay building with a one story section on the west side where the actual dyeing operations took place. Today, the Dye House is an archeological ruin with the remaining portions of the exterior walls and foundations stabilized in 2007. From the remaining walls and window openings, it can be postulated that the Dye House was constructed in the same German Colonial style with shallow segmental brick arches over windows. The Dye House is currently being investigated by the Yale University Department of Anthropology and Archeology. Their reports to date are in the collection of Historic Bethlehem, Inc.

Furthermore, based on these below ground investigations, the documented above ground visible archeological features, the excellent below ground integrity noted within these areas, and the lack of any major soil-moving disturbance within the district, the entire district is likely to contain additional, as yet undocumented remains including such things as buildings no longer extant as well as artifacts of everyday life that date to the period of significance.

Ohio Road (contributing feature to the archeological site)

A diagonal road known today as Ohio Road leads down the hill between the Smithy site and Pottery and across the stone bridge over the Monocacy Creek. This road, following an early American Indian trail and the bridge appear on the Plan of Bethlehem dated 1766.

Discontiguous Resources**Sun Inn** (564 Main Street) (Contributing building)

The Sun Inn begun in 1758 and completed in 1760, measures 60 feet by 40 feet. It is a two story German Colonial style limestone building with a one-story attic and basement, jerkinhead roof of clay tiles, shallow segmental brick arched windows, and herringbone-patterned doors. The Sun Inn was located "out of town" but faced south and the west edge of its south elevation aligned directly with the eastern wall of the 1748 Single Brethren's House located on the south side of West Church Street. Over the years, many additions and changes were made to the Inn. In 1983, through a grant from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, all the later appurtenances were removed and the Inn restored to its eighteenth century appearance using the original master craftsmen's drawings. The stone walls and attic level are original.

Goundie House (501 Main Street) (Contributing building)

The ca.1810 Goundie House is a Federal five bay 2 ½ story brick residence with classical pedimented dormers which match the central entrance. Measuring 40 feet by 33 feet, this house has a white limestone belt course and wood pediments with keystones above the windows. Built by the Moravian brewer, John Sebastian Goundie, it is believed to be the first brick residence in Bethlehem and the first private home to reflect the new architectural American Federal style rather than the "Old World" German Colonial style.⁴² The interior has a central hall plan with two rooms on each side on both the first and second floors. A distinctive feature is a beehive oven connected to fireplaces on both the first and second floors. It was saved from demolition in the 1970s and restored to its 1810 appearance both on the exterior and interior. Today, the house provides museum space for exhibitions related to the history of Bethlehem.

⁴² Burns, Pennsylvania Architecture, 323.

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Noncontributing Resources**Springhouse** (Noncontributing building)

The ca. 1970 Springhouse is a reconstructed hewn log building of white oak timber with dovetail joints and cedar shake roof. The original log springhouse ca. 1764 was constructed with shelves for foodstuffs belonging to the various choirs. A prodigious spring on the hillside nearby provided fresh water to the community and cooling for the springhouse. The spring provided water to the city of Bethlehem until the early 1900s when it was capped due to contamination. Because it is a reconstruction the Springhouse is a noncontributing building.

Smithy Complex (424 Main Street) (Noncontributing building)

The Smithy Complex, located to the north of the Pottery ruins, is a reconstructed 2½ story stone building in the German Colonial style with shallow segmental brick arched windows, herringbone-patterned doors, and clay tile roof. The original building was constructed in 1750 and expanded in 1761 as a smithy complex with workrooms and forges for the nailsmith, locksmith, blacksmith, tinsmith, gunsmith, and gunstock maker. Blacksmithing operations ceased around 1829. The building stood until the early 20th century when it was mostly dismantled and the stone converted into brownstone dwellings. The Smithy, reconstructed in 2004 of limestone taken from a local eighteenth century barn being torn down, was built on the foundations of the original smithy. The reconstruction was based upon various archival resources found within the collections of the Moravian Archives of Bethlehem. The original vaulted cistern is intact. An archeological report, tools, and metal objects made in the eighteenth century smithy are in the collection of Historic Bethlehem, Inc. Today, the Smithy is an historic site interpreting a mid-1700s blacksmith shop with skilled blacksmiths demonstrating the eighteenth century techniques. Because it is a reconstruction, the Smithy is a noncontributing building.

These buildings, encompassed within the boundary of the Historic Moravian Bethlehem Historic District, are the important core of eighteenth century Moravian Bethlehem. These structures, designed and built by the early Moravian community, express the societal needs of these sophisticated, cultured, and religious people. The buildings remain intact with a high degree of integrity and are an integral part of the city of Bethlehem to this day.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
 Nationally: X Statewide: Locally:

Applicable National
 Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations
 (Exceptions):

A B C D E F G

NHL Criteria:

1 and 4

NHL Criteria Exceptions:

1 and 5

NHL Theme(s):

III. Expressing Cultural Values

1. Educational and intellectual currents

5. Architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design

V. Developing the American Economy

4. Workers and work culture

Areas of Significance:

architecture, commerce, community planning and development, economics, education, engineering, industry, performing arts, religion

Period(s) of Significance:

1741-1810

Significant Dates:

1741, 1744, 1746-49, 1751, 1752, 1758, 1761, 1762, 1768, 1772, 1803-06, 1810

Significant Person(s):

Cultural Affiliation:

Architect/Builder:

Andreas; Arbo, John

Antes, Henry; Christensen, Johann Christopher; Hoeger, Andreas; Schober,

Historic Contexts:

III. Development of the English Colonies, 1688-1763

D. Social and Economic Affairs,

2. Economic Affairs and Ways of Life

XXX. American Ways of Life

E. Ethnic Communities

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State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

The Historic Moravian Bethlehem Historic District, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, is nationally significant under NHL Criterion 1 as a physical expression of an eighteenth-century structured communal religious society. Seeking “nothing less than the rebirth of the Christian world from Russia to the Ohio Valley,” the Moravians created an international religious community with a network of towns, cities, and communities that stretched across the world. Bethlehem served as the center of Moravian activities in America and as such, it played a key role in both the international and American Moravian community. Bethlehem residents operated within a unique and distinctive economic structure. Believing it to be more effective to live and work within a large communitarian setting, Bethlehem residents “shared dining rooms, dormitory-style housing, workshops, and ownership of buildings, tools, fields, and pastures, and they relied on their piety to render comprehensible all the sacrifices required to build a home in the rugged country of northeastern Pennsylvania.”⁴³ With its intact core of buildings, the district preserves some of the most important structures and sites relating to the Moravians in the New World. The Historic Moravian Bethlehem Historic District is also nationally significant under NHL Criterion 4 as an outstanding example of Moravian architecture and town planning. Possessing what is “perhaps the largest concentration of vernacular Germanic architecture in the United States,”⁴⁴ Bethlehem is a physical manifestation of the artistic, architectural, cultural, religious and industrial attributes that set the Moravians apart from other colonial settlers. The *Gemeine* or community planned town created here was done in conjunction with the larger Moravian Community based in Herrnhut, Germany.

The period of significance for this district stretches from 1741, when the Moravians first determined that their town would be situated near the Monocacy Creek, to 1810, when the community began to change, becoming increasingly secularized and losing its distinctive communal characteristics. This district qualifies under NHL Exception 1 as it is a religious institution which derives its significance from its architectural and historic importance. The district also qualifies under NHL Exception 5 as it contains a cemetery that is uniquely and architecturally distinct.

The Origins of the Moravian Church

Several attempts to reform the Catholic Church preceded the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. The early followers of the Bohemian priest, Jan Huss (1369-1415), were among these early proto-Protestant movements. Huss had called for a vernacular liturgy as well as access to communion in both kinds (bread and wine) for laypeople. Attacking the church for its worldliness and corruption, Huss also insisted upon the elimination of indulgences, permission for priests to marry, and a rejection of the concept of purgatory. Following his excommunication from the church in 1409, Huss traveled to Constance to appear before a general council of the Church. There, he was condemned and burnt at the stake in 1415.⁴⁵ Although Huss left few writings, fifty years after his death, his followers united, calling themselves *Unitas Fratrum* or Unity of the Brethren. This movement spread rapidly through the Czech lands and by the sixteenth century, ninety percent of the residents of this area were Protestant.

⁴³ Katherine Carté Engel, *Religion and Profit: Moravians in America* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), p. 14.

⁴⁴ Murtagh, *Moravian Architecture*, 21.

⁴⁵ John R. Weinlick and Albert H. Frank, *The Moravian Church Through the Ages* (Bethlehem, PA: Interprovisional Board of Publications, 1996), 8-14.

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During the Catholic Counter Reformation, these lands were re-Catholicized and the Moravians were driven underground, creating what came to be known as the “Hidden Seed.” In 1722, leaders of the *Unitas Fratrum* were introduced to a young nobleman from Saxony (in present day Germany), Count Nikolas Ludwig von Zinzendorf, who allowed the members of the *Unitas Fratrum* to live freely on his estate. Zinzendorf, a Lutheran Pietist, became their benefactor and religious leader. The Moravian community founded on the Count’s estate became known as Herrnhut or “Under the Lord’s Care.”

Under Zinzendorf, the *Unitas Fratrum* or the Moravians as they came to be called, “adopted an ecumenical and expansionist outlook, while also developing a unique kind of spiritualism that shaped all aspects of their religious practice and society.”⁴⁶ Moravians strictly adhered to the tenets of the New Testaments; members were expected to undergo a conversion experience and then strictly obey the Moravian code of conduct. Believing themselves to be the chosen people of God, the Moravians followed “a communitarian ideal in which worshippers were divided into discrete ‘choirs’ or cohorts by age, sex, and marital status.”⁴⁷ These divisions divided families as family members were divided into different choirs. Because each choir had its own leaders and because choirs were divided according to sex, Moravian women had control over half the community. As part of this communal structure, the Moravian Church also regulated all economic activity.

In 1731, during a visit to the court of Christian VI in Denmark, Zinzendorf was “grieved to hear of so many thousands and millions of the human race, sitting in darkness.”⁴⁸ Under his guidance, the Moravians became global missionaries, with members of the Moravian Church traveling abroad to bring Christianity to people around the world and to renew spiritualism and belief among Protestants.⁴⁹ Starting with expeditions to the Danish West Indies and Greenland, the Moravians left their home base in Germany, not to escape persecution, but rather to spread their version of Christianity. Moravian settlements now sprang up across Europe and in the Americas. By the mid-eighteenth century, the Moravians’ influence could be felt as far afield as Denmark, England, Ireland, the Netherlands, the West Indies, South Africa, Tanzania, Greenland, Russia, India, Surinam, Canada, Australia, and Central America, as well as the area that would become the United States.⁵⁰ In England, the great Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century was shaped, in part, by the Moravians and in 1749, the Moravians secured state recognition for their Church from the British Parliament, ensuring the spread of the Moravian Church into the British colonies.⁵¹ A German Reformed missionary’s complaint that “the crafty Herrnhuters [Moravians] would carry away by their seductive doctrines, many of our members as well as of other denominations” reveals the success the Moravians had in finding converts.⁵²

The Moravian sense of community developed within the traditions of the Church as Christ centered and espoused the pietistic preaching and writings of Zinzendorf. Every aspect of a Moravian’s life was tied to their religious fervor which fueled the development of settlements around the world. Throughout this period, Herrnhut continued to serve as the center for the increasingly international Moravian movement and all plans for community and economic development, missionary travels, and establishment of new settlements worldwide were sent to Herrnhut for approval.

⁴⁶ Michele Gillespie and Robert Beachy, *Pious Pursuits: Moravians in the Atlantic World*, p. 9.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9

⁴⁸ Richard Price, *Alabi’s World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), p. 59. J. Taylor Hamilton and Kenneth G. Hamilton, *History of the Moravian Church* (Winston-Salem, NC: Interprovisional Board of Christian Education, 1967), 43.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁵⁰ Paul Peucker, *The Importance of Moravian Archives in Preserving Moravian Communities* (Lecture presented at Moravian Heritage Network Conference, Bethlehem, PA, November 9, 2004), 1.

⁵¹ Collin Podmore, *The Moravian Church in England 1728-1760* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1998), 1.

⁵² James D. Rice, “Evangelicals and the Invention of Community in Western Maryland” *Maryland Historical Magazine* Vol. 101, No. 1, Spring 2006 (Baltimore, MD: Maryland Historical Society, 2006), 27.

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Early Moravian Missions in the New World

In 1735, after having received a grant of land in the region of Savannah, Georgia, Moravians traveled to North America to preach the gospel to the American Indians and Europeans.⁵³ There, they built a mission and school and began outreach to local tribes. However, following the outbreak of war between the British and the Spanish, the Moravians, many of whom were pacifists, left Georgia to avoid the war.

As the mission in Georgia foundered, a few Moravians reached out to make contact and begun working with the Schwenkfelders in southeast Pennsylvania. The beliefs of the Schwenkfelders were rooted in the teachings of the Protestant reformer, Caspar Schwenkfeld von Ossig. Like the Moravians, they, too, had suffered persecution in Europe and they, too, had found refuge under the patronage of Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf. However, unlike the Moravians, the Schenkfelders did not advocate missionary work, preferring instead to emphasize the role of inner spirituality over the idea of outward religious practices. These beliefs kept their numbers low and meant that the Schwenkfelders were a diffuse group. When they were forced to flee Europe, the Schwenkfelders had settled in Pennsylvania.

Following the failure of the Moravian settlement in Georgia, Henry Antes, a master builder and leader in the German communities of colonial America, secured permission from the Methodist evangelical minister, George Whitfield, to allow the Moravians to live on land Whitfield owned in Nazareth, Pennsylvania. Upon settling there, the Moravians embarked on a campaign to convert the American Indians who lived in this region. However, a disagreement over theology led Whitefield to ask the Moravians to leave. Antes now purchased 500 acres of land at the confluence of the Lehigh River and the Monocacy Creek from William Allen. This would become the site of a new Moravian community known as Bethlehem.⁵⁴ Ultimately, the Moravians would acquire approximately 4,000 acres in Bethlehem. This community became their principal base in the New World serving as both the religious and administrative center for the Moravian Church in North America and sending missionaries as far afield as the West Indies.

When the Moravians came to Pennsylvania, “[t]here were over one hundred thousand German settlers in Pennsylvania, constituting one-third of the [total] population, many without pastoral leadership.”⁵⁵ Germans who were not Moravians included families who had migrated on their own as well as members of other organized religious groups, such as the Mennonites, Dunkers, and the Schwenkfelders. These Germans, whose religious beliefs varied widely, were primarily farmers who retained private ownership of their land. Settlement by the Moravians occurred quickly and by the eve of the American Revolution, one fourth of all Germans settlers were affiliated with the Moravian church.⁵⁶

Germanic Architecture in Bethlehem

The German Colonial architectural style traces its origin to German speaking immigrants to the North American colonies from the late 1600s through the early 1800s. These immigrants coming from various areas of what is known today as Germany and eastern Europe settled primarily in Pennsylvania, Maryland, New York, and Ohio where they developed a unique Germanic architectural style.

⁵³ Hamilton, *History of the Moravian Church*, 82.

⁵⁴ Tim Noble, *Henry Antes House National Historic Landmark Nomination*, 1992, Section 8, 3.

⁵⁵ Eloise Miller, “To Fly as Doves to the Dovecote.” *The James Burnside Bulletin of Research*. Vol. 5, No. 2. (Bethlehem, PA: Burnside Plantation, Inc., 1992), 19.

⁵⁶ Michele Gillespie and Robert Beachy, *Pious Pursuits, German Moravians in the Atlantic World*, p. 6.

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Key aspects of this style can include: steeply pitched roof with a kicked eave usually covered with clay tiles or wood shingles, interior chimneys, attics with shed dormers, stone or brick arches over the windows, vertical siding in the gable, diagonal board doors, paling insulation (*Stroh Lehm*), the *Liegender Stuhl* truss and pent roofs.

These notable features were secondary to the plan, which differentiated the Germanic culture from its “English” counterparts by how the occupants utilized the living and work spaces. Whereas a building in the Anglo tradition focused on the open fireplace in the kitchen (the hall of the Hall and Parlor House), daily life in the Germanic building centered in the Stube (stove room) which housed the five plate iron stove affixed to the rear wall of the internal fireplace. In the Germanic tradition, the kitchen was a utilitarian workroom with the main living space relegated to the heated, clean stove room.

The Moravians utilized many of these features in the construction of larger communal buildings in Bethlehem, Nazareth, and settlements in North Carolina and elsewhere. Their homes, dormitories, inns, houses of worship and industrial structures exhibit these culturally identifiable architectural traditions brought from Europe and adapted to their American experience.

Establishment of Bethlehem

William Murtagh has pointed out that “[w]hile the Pennsylvania German took himself to the wilderness as a settler to clear land for himself and his family alone, the Moravians migrated as an organized group.”⁵⁷

Bethlehem, unlike other Pennsylvania towns, was a closed communal theocracy; the Church planned all settlements and owned all the land, buildings, and goods, with the community operating under the General Economy and the Choir System. Bethlehem was also a highly structured community, guided by the Moravian mission of spirituality and supported by their economic vitality and desire for self-sufficiency. The town plan did not rest on the practice of selling off land for development or on the need for individual family homes and gardens nor on municipal buildings. In Bethlehem, there was to be no competition for the best parcel of land and no race for commercial profits.

In the early spring of 1741, the Moravians chose a spot on the hillside along the American Indian trail leading down to the prodigious spring flowing near the Monocacy Creek. A limestone ridge running east to west and sloping down to the south to the Lehigh River and to the west to the Monocacy Creek influenced the actual location of the buildings. Based on the topography of Bethlehem, the Moravians sited their large-scale choir houses or residential buildings in a line along the limestone bluff overlooking the Lehigh River. Their industrial buildings were placed along the Monocacy Creek and the Lehigh River to take advantage of the water power.

The first log house built by the Moravians was built here alongside the spring. Although no longer extant, this log house provided shelter while the *Gemeinhaus* or community house was built along the limestone ridge. The *Gemeinhaus* was the residence, school, church, hospital, and workplace for the earliest settlers of Bethlehem. During the early years of the community, all of its residents---some eighty people---lived in the *Gemeinhaus*. As they constructed other large choir houses, the Moravians situated them along this ridge facing south on a north-south axis.

In 1742, Count Zinzendorf, the benefactor of the Moravians, arrived in Bethlehem and on July 7th, he staked out the plot of land to the east of and in line with the *Gemeinhaus* for the Single Brethren’s House. Completed in 1744, the Single Brethren’s House was Bethlehem’s first stone building and home to fifty men and several

⁵⁷ Ibid.

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boys. The rapid growth of the community soon led to the need for a new and larger Brethren's House and in 1748, the new Single Brethren's House was completed to the west of the *Gemeinhaus* but on the same north-south axis.

In November of that same year, twenty-one single sisters and twenty-eight older girls moved into the vacated 1744 Single Brethren's House. The Single Sisters' Choir also grew rapidly and by 1752 a wing to the north was added which provided a second dormitory, dining hall, and chapel called the Single Sisters' *Saal*. The widows of the community also received their own choir house in the 1760s; this building was situated directly opposite the Bell House forming a courtyard where many community activities took place. The Single Sisters' Choir House and the Widows' Choir House were expanded to the east to provide more work and living spaces for the choirs in 1772 and 1780 respectively.

The town plan was centered around the community's *Gemeinhaus* which housed the church and the large choir houses where members of the community lived. The Single Sisters' House and Bell House were located to the east and the second Single Brethren's House to the west along what was to become Church Street. The southern slope to the Lehigh River provided the ideal location for the kitchen and herb gardens. In 1746, the Bell House was constructed to house the Married People's Choir which expanded to the east and west over the next three years to provide additional space. The bell in the tower was used to announce the start of the day, the time for dinner, time for worship, and community events.

With the community increasing through the arrival of the Sea Congregations (organized groups of Moravians) from Europe, the *Gemeinhaus Saal* (place of worship) became too small for all the worshippers. In 1751, the second place of worship, now called the Old Chapel, was constructed in just three months. The worshippers sat according to their choirs on long benches facing the long wall to the west. The brethren entered through the *Gemeinhaus* and sat at the southern end; the sisters entered through the Bell House sat on the northern end. Religious paintings by Johann Valentine Haidt hung on the walls. There was no entrance from the outside until the 1860s.

At the top of the ridge tied to the choir houses with a walking path was God's Acre, where members of the community were buried. Just as in life where every member of the community worked and lived together regardless of race, gender, or ethnicity, all were equal in death and buried together according to their choirs. All the tombstones are of similar size and lay flat to the ground.

Moravian Settlements in North America

Although the first Moravians came from Germany, the settlement rapidly became a very diverse community, with settlers coming from all over Europe. Immigration was planned in most part to ensure that specialists in every field were available to support the missionary efforts of the Church in Bethlehem and beyond. German was the common language, but at one time in the mid-eighteenth century, fifteen different languages were spoken in Bethlehem. There was no separation on the basis of ethnicity, race, social class, or academic training. American Indians, African Americans, and Europeans lived, ate, attended school, worked, and worshipped together.

As the center for the Moravian Church in North America Bethlehem was the community from which all other Moravian settlements developed. With about 4,000 acres, Bethlehem was a site of considerable industrial production, providing almost all of the necessary industrial goods for the community. Nazareth, situated ten miles to the north of Bethlehem, served as the farming community supplying the two communities with much needed foodstuffs. Moravians from Bethlehem went on to establish communities in Emmaus and Lititz, both in

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Pennsylvania, and Hope in New Jersey. They also founded settlements in Ohio, Wisconsin, and North Carolina. Moravians from Bethlehem, both missionaries and craftsmen, frequently travelled back and forth among these various settlements.

John Carteret, Earl of Granville and the Proprietor of the Province of North Carolina, was so impressed with what the Moravians had accomplished in Bethlehem that he offered to sell 100,000 acres of land to the Moravians to encourage them to settle in the Carolinas.⁵⁸ In 1752, Bishop Spangenberg, head of the Moravian Church in North America, led a group that traveled from Bethlehem to North Carolina to survey and purchase land. The following year, fifteen men travelled from Bethlehem to begin building this new Moravian settlement. All these men were skilled craftsmen.

Following the Earl of Granville's offer, several Moravian communities were built in the Carolinas. Today Bethabara, Bethania, and Old Salem are the survivors of that early Moravian settlement in North Carolina. Bethabara (designated a NHL in 1999), established in 1753, had the same societal structure of the Choir System and General Economy with communal choir houses. Although historically similar to Bethlehem, only three standing buildings remain in Bethabara along with the cemetery. This property is most significant for its archeological investigations and what they could tell us about this first Moravian community in North Carolina. In Bethania (designated a NHL in 2001), established in 1759, the Moravians owned their own houses and lived in family units. In addition to its national significance in community planning and development, Bethania also represents a Moravian open field agricultural village. As an agricultural community, Bethania contrasts with Bethlehem (and Salem), both of which were developed as broader communities with such functions as schools, shops, and industries. Salem (designated a NHL as the Old Salem Historic District in 1966) was to be the central settlement for the Moravians in North Carolina. It had both private family residences and also choir houses (the Single Brothers House was designated a NHL in 1970) with a central square and town grid (the Salem Tavern was designated a NHL in 1964). Salem was a closed community under theocratic control until December of 1856 when Salem was incorporated as its own municipality by the North Carolina General Assembly. The Old Salem Historic District is not only nationally significant as an early and major Moravian community but also for its preservation of that community. During the early 20th century, development pressures created concern for, and then interest in, preserving the buildings of Salem connected with its Moravian past. Through these efforts, local wide ranging preservation zoning was established, a nonprofit group was founded to guide the preservation efforts, and Old Salem developed a living museum with educational components.

The Moravians worldwide maintained extensive communication directly with Herrnhut and among the various settlements. Convinced that "Christians could not live alone but needed their brothers and sisters to grow in their faith," Zizendorf maintained that "communication between the members of the congregation was essential for the spiritual and temporal prosperity of the church."⁵⁹ This communication took various forms: meetings, conferences, synods, letters, diaries, and travel. The Moravians also keep extensive records such as daily account books, maps and views of the communities and surrounding areas, music manuscripts, and other church records. The records of this communication system are housed in the holdings of Moravian Archives principally in Bethlehem, Salem, London, Genadendahl (South Africa) and Herrnhut.

⁵⁸ Penelope Niven, *Old Salem*, (Winston-Salem, NC: Old Salem, Inc., 2004), 15.

⁵⁹ Carola Wessel, "Connecting Congregations: The Net of Communications among Moravians as Exemplified by the Interaction between Pennsylvania, the Upper Ohio Valley, and Germany." *The Distinctiveness of Moravian Culture*. edited by Craig Atwood and Peter Vogt, (Nazareth, PA: Moravian Historical Society, 2003), 153.

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One type of these records is the *Lebenslauf* - the personal diary of an individual which was written by the person themselves and completed by a congregant at the death of the person. The *Lebenslauf* provides incredible insight into the daily lives of individual Moravians. Individual missionaries sent their *Lebenslauf* to Bethlehem where copyists reproduced the diaries. These diaries were then circulated publicly as they “were sent to the UEC [Unity Elders Conference in Herrnhut] in Germany. The UEC read these diaries to keep informed about the mission work, and, after a final revision, circulated them among the various Moravian congregations, where they would be read in public meetings.”⁶⁰ All of this ensured that the Moravian Church was a very centralized organization with constant communication between its many branches.

Gender Roles

Reflecting the sexual divisions implicit in the choir system, the Bethlehem community was sharply divided with “a man’s world and a woman’s world in the settlement.”⁶¹ The man’s world stretched to the west to the industrial area and the woman’s to the east with a cherry tree lined walking path along the limestone ridge as illustrated in the 1749 Garrison view of the settlement. Despite these divisions, the Moravians believed that all people, men and women should receive the same education; that all people should receive health care; that women should have equal rights with men in the community; and that all people should work together for the good of the community without prejudice as to their race, gender or ethnicity. Building on this social system, the Moravians developed large institutional choir houses which were built in the German Colonial style of architecture. These buildings reflect the complex nature of this communal society whose primary objective was to provide for the entire community and support missionaries in the field.

Members of the choir lived and worked together. Each choir house had an infirmary and they each had a place of worship. In the Single Sisters’ Choir and the Widows’ Choir, the women led their own worship services. By dissolving the patriarchal nuclear family and replacing it with the choir system, the Moravians created “a community [that]...led to the significant empowerment of women.” Scholars have pointed that gender roles were such that “both female and male choir leaders...taught economic, social and religious lessons, set moral examples, and upheld order and discipline in their respective gendered groups.”⁶²

This concept of large choir houses providing home, work, and worship space especially for the single and widowed women of the society was unusual. In secular communities, these “excess” women were often considered a burden to the family unit and they typically held a marginal place in most eighteenth-century European and American societies. In contrast, Moravian women played important roles in the Bethlehem community and they actively contributed to the economic well-being of the settlement.

Even in communities which used a “choir system” similar to the Moravians, women’s roles tended to be tightly circumscribed. In the Ephrata Cloister, another mid-eighteenth century religious communal society in central Pennsylvania, the plan of the community was based on religious attributes. The Ephrata Cloister segregated their community into celibate men, celibate women, and householders (married people) who lived in their own homes. They also built separate structures for the brothers and sisters of the community in the Germanic style with “several distinctive features, including steeply pitched roofs punctuated by multiple dormer windows.... Ephrata buildings usually are not symmetrical, their windows are small, and their doors are both narrow and low.”⁶³ However, their founder, Beissel, encouraged celibacy and denial of any human comfort. They ate only

⁶⁰ Ibid., 159.

⁶¹ Parker, Historic Structures Report, 15.

⁶² Aaron Spencer Fogelman, “Jesus is Feminine: The Moravian Challenge in the German Communities of British North America,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2003), <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/wm/60.2/fogelman.html>, 8.

⁶³ Bradley, Ephrata Cloister, 21.

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one meal a day and had no heat in most parts of their buildings. For the members of the Ephrata Cloister, the only way to God was through the denial of self.

This was not the situation among the Moravians as “celibacy was not a Moravian ideal.”⁶⁴ In fact, the Moravians actively encouraged marriage and sent married couples into the mission fields. The Moravians believed that “within marriage, the husband took on the role of Christ the Bridegroom, while the wife symbolized the Bride.” Unlike many of their Protestant brethren, the Moravians did not view sex in negative terms, tying it to the fall of man. Instead, Moravians maintained that “when husband and wife had intercourse, they performed on earth what was to come in heaven: the unification of Christ and his Bride.”⁶⁵

This tendency toward greater sexual equality led to what many non-Moravians viewed as a feminization and sexualization of “the sacred in unacceptable ways.”⁶⁶ Moravian women who were well-educated crossed gender roles by being ordained and allowed to preach. In fact, “Moravian women had more opportunities to participate in formal church rule and decision making than did women in Lutheran, Reformed, and most other communities.”⁶⁷

Economic Structure

The Moravians viewed themselves not as a church, but rather as a religious community working together for a common good. For the first twenty years, Bethlehem operated under a General Economy where everyone contributed to the economy of the community. In turn, the community cared for everyone by providing food, clothing, shelter, education, and health care. According to some scholars, “the leaders of early Bethlehem strove for economic self-sufficiency, believing that they could better support their missionary activities and also be less affected by outside secular influences if they provided most of their own material needs.”⁶⁸

Bethlehem’s Moravians divided themselves between the Home Congregation and the Pilgrim Congregation. The Home Congregation, the community members living and working in Bethlehem, supported the Pilgrim Congregation who served as missionaries among “un-churched” Europeans and indigenous peoples in the field.⁶⁹ When these missionaries returned to Bethlehem (the Home Congregation), others left to join the Pilgrim Congregation in the mission fields. By 1748, Bethlehem’s missionaries were working in 30 different locations across Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Maine and Virginia, not counting the West Indies.⁷⁰ Three years later, a sixth of the town’s residents, some 88 people out of 744, were preaching “the gospel in places away from Bethlehem.”⁷¹ For Church administrators, the challenge was to continue to produce goods and services which could be used to support both the Home and Pilgrim Congregations---even as many of Bethlehem’s craftsmen and artisans left the community to serve as missionaries in the Pilgrim Congregation.

Because all Moravian communities in North America grew out of Bethlehem, Bethlehem also served as a staging area training crafts people and preparing missionaries before they travelled on to work in the new

⁶⁴ Weinlick, *The Moravian Church Through the Ages*, 59.

⁶⁵ Paul Peucker, “Moravians, Marriage and Sex.” *Journal of Moravian History*. Number 10, Spring 2011 (Bethlehem, PA: The Moravian Archives, 2011), 12.

⁶⁶ Fogelman, *Jesus is Feminine*, 12.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁶⁸ Carter Litchfield, Finke Hans-Joachim, Stephen G. Young, Karen Zerbe Huetter, *The Bethlehem Oil Mill 1745-1934: German Technology in Early Pennsylvania* (Kemblesville, PA: Olearius Editions, 1984), 11.

⁶⁹ Schwarz, *Bethlehem on the Lehigh*, 14.

⁷⁰ Weinlick, *The Moravian Church Through the Ages*, 90.

⁷¹ Litchfield, *The Bethlehem Oil Mill 1745-1934*, 11.

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settlements. The potter, for instance, who went on to establish the pottery in North Carolina apprenticed in Bethlehem for ten months.

In order to provide for themselves and the missionaries, the Moravians in Bethlehem developed a large industrial area at the same time they were building their choir houses. The property the Moravians purchased along the Monocacy Creek and Lehigh River had been chosen in part because it was located next to an incredible spring that produced 1,800,000 gallons of water a day. In an age when water power was crucial, the siting of Bethlehem was no accident. The community immediately began building their heavy industrial area near their spring. Initially they used small log structures for their workshops. Drawing on “the technological heritage of Europe,” the Moravians built their own industrial base in Bethlehem.⁷²

Using the Monocacy Creek, the Moravians devised a series of raceways to power their mills as well as a pumping system to pump their fresh spring water to the community’s residential areas on the hillside above. As the first pumped municipal water system in America, the 1762 Waterworks was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1981.

Henry Antes worked with the Moravians to devise a plan to have the community develop specialized endeavors. Following his direction, “the town of Nazareth which had recently been purchased from the financially troubled Whitfield, would become the agricultural center, comprised of six plantations, each specializing in particular products. It is also likely that Antes’ scheme was instrumental in shaping the industrial organization of Bethlehem as well. This concept of dividing the different enterprises into separate, almost autonomous businesses called Economies, became a trademark of Moravian cooperation and played a substantial role in the remarkable worldly success of the Brethren.”⁷³ This concept also grouped the choir houses, schools, and places of worship in one area and the heavy trades and industries in another resulting in the development of one of the largest concentrations of crafts, trades, and industries at the time.

Bethlehem developed a significantly large concentration of industrial activities in a short period of time, in a relatively small geographic area. Within two years of their arrival in Bethlehem, the Moravians had built a saw mill, soap mill, and wash houses along the Lehigh River. They had also constructed their first grist mill, oil mill, tannery, blacksmith shop, and brass foundry near the Monocacy Creek. By 1747, thirty-two crafts, trades, and industries were established including a butchery, tawery, clockmaker, tinsmith, nailor, pewterer, hatter, spinning, weaving, cooper, dye house, community bakery, candlemaker, linen bleachery, fulling mill, saddlery, tailor, cobbler, flax processing, wheelwright, carpenter, and mason. Because “Bethlehem was planned to be the industrial center into which the surrounding Moravian agricultural plantations poured their raw materials and from which they took finished articles, the large industrial concentration marveled at by so many eighteenth century travelers, contained a variety of special use structures.”⁷⁴

As the community developed, the Moravians replaced the log buildings with larger buildings. The pottery, tannery, butchery, dye house, smithy complex, oil mill, and waterworks were built of limestone in the German Colonial style beginning in the late 1740s through to the early 1770s. The 1762 Waterworks and the other Bethlehem mills provide insight into the technological practices used by the Moravians during the second half of the eighteenth century.

Many trades operated directly in or reflected the structure of the choir houses. The saddlery, tailor, cobbler, community bakery, a bell foundry and brass works were, for example, all located in the 1748 Single Brethren’s

⁷² Ibid., 12.

⁷³ Noble, Henry Antes House, Section 8, 5.

⁷⁴ Murtagh, Moravian Architecture, 13.

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House. The sisters living in the Single Sisters' House followed the traditionally female trades of spinning, weaving, and dressmaking. They also filled practical positions such as nurses, laundresses, cooks, gardeners, and teachers, all of which were integral for the success of the community.

When John Adams visited during the Revolutionary War, he called Bethlehem a "curious and remarkable Town" stating to his wife Abigail in a letter (April 1777) that "They have carried the mechanical Arts to greater Perfection here than in any Place which I have seen ... They have a fine sett of Mills. The best Grist Mills and bolting Mills, that are any where to be found. The best fulling Mills, an oil Mill, a Mill to grind Bark for the Tanyard, a Dying House where All Colours are dyed, Machines for shearing Cloth, &c."⁷⁵

Within this community, the Moravians operated as a single cashless entity or household. However, with the development of so many crafts, trades and industries, Bethlehem was able to supply most of its own needs and offer the excess production of goods for sale or trade to support themselves and their missionaries. Even with their desire to be a self-sufficient community, the Moravians needed to purchase items such as gunpowder, iron, glass, and salt which they could not make themselves.

Unlike many small rural eighteenth-century communities, Bethlehem's economy rested on the skills of its workers rather than on its agricultural production. These trades were the key assets in providing funds or cash for the missionary efforts of the Moravians. Katherine Carté Engel who has studied the Bethlehem community in depth has pointed out that "the trades were the main source of revenue... In 1752 this profit, from outside sources amounted to 1,036 [pounds], with no single trade dominating"⁷⁶ The Moravians conducted trade with Philadelphia and its countryside, New York, the West Indies, and even other communities in Europe. In 1753 the Moravians even opened the "Strangers' Store" where non-Moravians from the surrounding areas could purchase merchandise. Of the approximately 200 items for sale, 90% were made in Bethlehem.⁷⁷

The Church controlled the quantity and quality of goods produced and their pricing. Carté Engel refers to the economic climate in early Bethlehem as one of "moral capitalism" because the Moravians' economy and work were all done to support the Home and Pilgrim Congregations and their mission. "Through the Strangers' Store and their other business endeavors," Carte Engel has argued that "Bethlehem's Moravians embraced the basic mechanisms of market capitalism: market-based pricing, reasonable profit margins, and healthy competition."⁷⁸

Under the General Economy, every member of the community received medical care. Moravian Bethlehem began a long tradition of quality medical care and innovative medical practices. The first trained physician arrived in Bethlehem in June 1742 and, along with eight male and seven female nurses, he provided health care for members of the community. Sick women were cared for in the *Gemeinhaus* and a nearby small log structure was used to care for sick men. The physician and the nurses held regular meetings to discuss medical subjects and the care of their patients. As was typical of eighteenth-century medicine, these practitioners emphasized preventative care recommending exercise, moderation in diet, and isolation of sick children and adults to prevent the spread of disease.⁷⁹ Bethlehem actually boasted more medical practitioners than most eighteenth-century communities, and even more than many of its sister Moravian communities.

⁷⁵ Karen Zerbe Huetter, John Adams' Bethlehem, 11.

⁷⁶ Katherine Carte Engel, *Of Heaven and Earth: Religion and Economic Activity among Bethlehem's Moravians, 1741-1800*, (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 2003), 79.

⁷⁷ Litchfield, *The Bethlehem Oil Mill 1745-1934*, 12.

⁷⁸ Engel, *Of Heaven and Earth*, 259.

⁷⁹ Charles A. Waltman, *eighteenth Century Bethlehem Medical Practices* (Bethlehem, PA: Oaks Printing, 1986), 35-37.

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In 1743, within two years of arriving in Bethlehem, an apothecary shop was opened in the *Gemeinhaus*. This shop also provided another source of income for the Moravian Church. Ultimately, the apothecary shop moved into the Bell House and a laboratory was then erected in 1752 along what was to become Main Street. In 1747, an herbal garden across from the *Gemeinhaus* was planted to provide medicinal herbs for the apothecary shop. The apothecary supplied medicines not only for Bethlehem but also for the surrounding areas and it developed into one of the most successful enterprises for the Church.⁸⁰

“As a closed-community,” the Moravians did not want “intercourse with the general frontier population that frequented Bethlehem.” By “placing guest lodges well outside of town, with the Crown Inn south of the Lehigh [River],” the Moravians were able to maintain a distance from non-Moravians.⁸¹ The Crown Inn, built by the Moravians in 1743, was located on the south side of the Lehigh River directly across from the 1748 Single Brethren’s House. Because of its location across the river, the Crown Inn provided accommodations for visitors and travelers but also reduced non-Moravian intrusions on the fledgling settlement. The tavern remained open during the French and Indian War, but its role diminished greatly with the opening of the Sun Inn.

Erected between 1758 and 1761, the Sun Inn was located on the crest of a hill at the northern edge of town .2 of a mile from the Single Brethren’s House. It was facing south on the same north south axis as the choir houses on Church Street and was sited in a direct line from the easternmost wall of the Single Brethren’s House. It was more convenient than the Crown Inn, but still distant enough from the Moravian choir houses along what was to become Church Street. At the Sun Inn, patrons were introduced to higher standards than were typical at conventional taverns. Rooms were arranged in suites which could be locked for security and privacy.⁸² When the General Economy ended in 1762, the Church hired a superintendent to run the Inn and paid him an annual wage.⁸³ This enterprise also provided income for the Church. Throughout the 1760s, 1770s, and 1780s, the Inn hosted delegates to the Continental Congress, future presidents, provincial governors, statesmen, natural scientists, business leaders, and military officers. George and Martha Washington each stayed one night at the Inn at different times. When wives travelled, they were privately served by the Innkeeper’s wife. In 1783, Dr. John Schepf travelling through Bethlehem wrote “Its accommodations equal those of the first hotels in America.”⁸⁴

In addition to the industrial area, Moravian plantations (or farms) with cultivated fields surrounded the Bethlehem settlement. Apple and peach orchards were located to the east and north of the community, herb and vegetable gardens stretched from the choir houses to the Lehigh River along the southern slope. North of the 1748 Single Brethren’s House, a large barn, stockyards, and stable stood on the eastern slope of the hillside near the first house. Moravians used crop rotation and fertilized their fields with lime. They grew wheat, oats, rye, corn, peas, barley, and buckwheat and raised sheep on Sand Island. In a 1757 view of Bethlehem the Crown Inn and some out buildings are in the foreground; however, the kitchen and herb gardens are clearly defined as well as the orchards and the large barn with stock yard.

Burnside Plantation is a prime example of a Moravian farm which operated under three distinct economic systems: first as a private farm, then under the General Economy, and finally under the Lease System. In 1747, Moravians James and Mary Burnside purchased 500 acres approximately a half mile north of the industrial quarter along Monocacy Creek. Their farm, Burnside Plantation, was the first privately held property in the settlement and the first private home. In 1752, James was elected as the first representative to the Pennsylvania

⁸⁰ During the American Revolutionary War, Dr. Matthew Otto introduced inoculation to prevent a small pox epidemic in the 1770s in Bethlehem.

⁸¹ Parker, *Historic Structures Report*, 15.

⁸² William C. Reichel, *The Old Moravian Sun Inn* (Bethlehem, PA: The Sun Inn Preservation Association, 1981), 25.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 34.

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Provincial Assembly from the newly formed Northampton County. He was a contemporary of Benjamin Franklin serving with him on the Committee for Indian Affairs. In 1757, the farm became Plantation #4 under the General Economy when the widow Mary Burnside sold the farm to the Moravian Church. At the end of the General Economy in the mid-1760s, the farm was leased by the Church to a series of tenant farmers until 1848 when the property was sold.

Moravians and Native Tribes

In a diary entry of October 1743, the community noted that “[o]ur brethren ... reported that, though the Irish people were trying to make the Indians suspicious of Bethlehem, the latter have nevertheless requested that the brethren should come and preach to them occasionally.”⁸⁵ The goal of the Moravian Church was to treat indigenous peoples fairly, to establish friendly relations, and to offer to share the gospel with those who were interested.⁸⁶ Moravians did not wish to convert entire villages or even entire families, simply those who were prepared to listen. Moravians allowed converted American Indians to continue those aspects of their lifestyle which did not conflict with Christian practices. Two Bethlehem residents, John Pyrleaus and his wife, lived among the Mohawk for several months improving their language skills. In 1743 in Bethlehem, Pyrleaus founded a school to teach American Indian languages.⁸⁷ Classes for Moravian missionaries were held in Mahican, Mohawk, and Lenape in the 1744 Single Brethren’s House.

“Early evidence of the almost constant presence of Indians in Bethlehem in the eighteenth century” may indicate that the Moravians had good relations with local tribes⁸⁸ In 1752, an Indian Hotel was constructed just across the stone bridge on the west bank of the Monocacy Creek in the Colonial Industrial Quarter to provide lodging for traveling American Indians. In 1792, fifty-one chiefs and warriors of the Six Nations visited Bethlehem on their way to meet with George Washington in Philadelphia; they attended services in the Old Chapel and were greeted by students in the Bell House.⁸⁹

During the French and Indian War in the mid-1750s, Bethlehem was a crowded, fortified town with European refugees and American Indian converts fleeing the countryside. The Moravian Church petitioned the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania to erect a village for the Christianized Indian families. The Church was granted permission and acquired 1,000 acres of land adjacent to Burnside Plantation in 1757 for the sum of 1,000 pounds. In 1758 along with their Moravian brethren, members of various tribes, principally Delawares, Mahicans, and Wampanoags who had converted to Christianity, built a village called Nain located approximately one mile northwest of the center of Bethlehem and just west of Burnside Plantation. The road from the Bethlehem settlement to Nain ran along the southern boundary of Burnside Plantation. In 1763 as the French and Indian War raged on along the frontier, the Colonial government moved the Nain inhabitants to Philadelphia.

Culture and Society

The Moravians followed the educational philosophy of the seventeenth-century Moravian religious leader and educator Bishop Jon Amos Comenius who believed that “education should be methodical and reasonable, like nature, with preparation arranged step-by-step. Classes, too, should be by age, and texts assigned in a logical

⁸⁵ Kenneth G. Hamilton, ed. *The Bethlehem Diary Volume I 1742-1744* (Bethlehem, PA: Archives of the Moravian Church, 1971), 169.

⁸⁶ Paul Larson, *Early Bethlehem and the Native Americans* (Bethlehem, PA: Oaks Printing, 1987), 5.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁸⁸ Murtagh, *Moravian Architecture*, 68.

⁸⁹ William C. Reichel and William H. Bilger, *A History of the Moravian Seminary for Young Ladies* (Lancaster, PA: New Era Press, 1901), 100-105.

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sequence.”⁹⁰ Comenius espoused the then-radical view that “education should start in infancy, with the mother as the first teacher.” Believing that “mothers must be equipped to instruct” their children, Comenius argued for female education.⁹¹ Around the age of three boys and girls were divided into separate classes in an infant school that was located in a log structure where Central Church stands today.⁹² Although girls were taught separately in Moravian schools, female and male curricula did not substantially differ from one another. Girls learned mathematics, sciences, foreign languages, music; they also learned practical and decorative crafts such as fine needlework and china painting.⁹³

Within the context of the eighteenth century, the Moravians in Bethlehem tended to be well educated. The community also promoted and encouraged interest in decorative arts and music. While the socio-economic backgrounds of the Moravians varied, they “had the backing, association, and leadership of not only a religious hierarchy but of the well disposed nobility as well, chiefly in the form of Count Zinzendorf, his daughter the Countess Benigna, and others of the lesser German nobility.”⁹⁴ Countess Benigna von Zinzendorf, daughter of the benefactor of the Moravians, visited the colonies with her father and was instrumental in founding the oldest boarding school to educate women in the Original Thirteen Colonies in 1742. Classes were first held in the *Gemeinhaus*, then moved to the Bell House in 1749. Female education in Bethlehem predated education for boys by several months. During the American Revolution, many of the Colonies’ more prominent citizens visited Bethlehem and the Moravian schools, especially for girls, were admired. Non-Moravians petitioned the Church to open their schools to those outside the Church and, in 1784, after much deliberation, non-Moravians were accepted into the schools. George Washington’s niece along with the daughters of John Jay and General Greene were among the non-Moravians who attended school here.

Music was taught in the schools and was an important part of all the worship services and daily lives. The *Collegium Musicum*, founded in 1744 in the first Single Brethren’s House, was composed of string and brass instruments.⁹⁵ The *Collegium* performed both sacred and secular music, practicing one hour each evening. However, participation in music was not limited to members of the *Collegium*. Boys and girls, along with men and women, were encouraged to play musical instruments and each choir house had its own musical instruments and choral groups. The Single Sisters, for example, ended each evening with a hymn sing in their *Saal*.

Wherever they went, Moravians brought music - their instruments, hymnals, and music manuscripts.⁹⁶ They composed original music and made musical instruments. With their extensive communications and travel to other Moravian settlements in Europe, the Moravians had access to the musical works of Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and other notable composers of their day.⁹⁷

Music was written and performed for special occasions. A number of composers and instrument makers lived and worked in Bethlehem in the eighteenth century. John Antes made string instruments and composed

⁹⁰ Susan Swasta and Richard Krohn, *Mind, Body and Spirit: Moravian Academy 1742-1992*, (Bethlehem, PA: Moravian Academy, 1991), 4.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.*, 45-46.

⁹³ Mabel Haller, “Early Moravian Education in Pennsylvania” *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society*. Vol. XV, (Bethlehem, PA: Times Publishing Co., 1953), 17.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 130.

⁹⁵ Paul Peucker, “The Role and Development of Brass Music in the Moravian Church,” *The Music of the Moravian Church in America*, edited by Nola Reed Knouse, (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2008), 173.

⁹⁶ Vangie Roby Sweitzer, *Tuned for Praise: The Bethlehem Area Moravian Trombone Choir, 1754-2004* (Bethlehem, PA: Central Moravian Church, 2004), 3.

⁹⁷ The first American performances of Haydn’s *Creation* and Bach’s *St. John Passion*, *St. Matthew Passion* and the complete *Mass in B minor* took place in Bethlehem.

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chamber music. Two important eighteenth-century Moravian organ builders in America, Gottlob Klemm and David Tannenburg, lived and worked in Bethlehem, and for a time at Burnside Plantation.⁹⁸ While at Burnside Plantation, Tanenburg who is “considered one of the greatest organ builders of the eighteenth century because he was a consummate master in executing multiple crafts, combining them with superior aesthetic judgment,”⁹⁹ built an organ for the Moravian settlement in North Carolina.¹⁰⁰ John Federick Peter, also a Bethlehem resident, composed a set of six string quintets, believed to be one of the earliest American Chamber works. The Bethlehem Area Moravian Trombone Choir is “a unique entity that has used slide trombones exclusively for 250 years, giving it the rare distinction of being the oldest musical organization of its kind in the nation from the point of continuous uninterrupted service.”¹⁰¹ The first complete quartet (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) of trombones arrived in 1754. This musical group announced the arrival of dignitaries and the death of Church members, played for the Easter Dawn Service, Christmas vigils, and many other religious and secular occasions.

Town Planning

Moravian town planning in Bethlehem is distinguished from that of other secular and religious groups by a set notion of how a town center should be developed and how it should function. Although the physical characteristics of Moravian town centers varied slightly from one Moravian settlement to another, this idea of a set town center remained constant. The Moravian town plan has been applied across all continents, with minor changes reflecting local building traditions. Although the settlements differ, the scale of the buildings used by common people was monumental for the eighteenth century; the communities had the internal *Zeitgeist* which dictated segregated segments of the community as determined by the Choir System.

Studies of the Moravian have argued that “The appearance of prosperity and physical order depicted in early images of Bethlehem is a direct product of the religious beliefs and European experience of the settlement’s builders. Bethlehem, like the Old World settlements from whence its founders originated, was fashioned in accord with the Moravian’s fundamental belief in the Choir System and its strict segregation of the sexes.”¹⁰² The Moravians in Bethlehem lived in a communal society organized into groups, called choirs, segregated by age, gender, and marital status. The choirs included: little girls, little boys, single sisters, single brethren, married people, widows, and widowers. Under the Choir System, everyone spent their daily lives living, eating, attending school or working, and worshipping in their choir.

Other communities in the American colonies developed very differently. Savannah, Georgia, where the Moravians had tried to start a settlement but failed, developed in the 1730s, a few years before Bethlehem. Savannah was a community planned on a grid pattern with wide main streets, secondary streets half as wide and service roads even narrower. In this community, the “units, called wards, contained forty house plots and had an identical layout: four groups each of ten house plots and four plots reserved for public buildings enclosed a public square.”¹⁰³ Families purchased plots and erected their houses according to the plan. In Savannah, unlike Bethlehem, the typical single family house of this period was made of wood 24 foot by 16 foot with a main room having an interior fireplace, two smaller rooms and a loft for sleeping.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁸ Paul Larson, “James Burnside, the Burnside Plantation and Pennsylvania Organ Building in the Eighteenth Century” The James Burnside Bulletin of Research. Vol. 5, No. 2. (Bethlehem, PA: Burnside Plantation, Inc. 1992), 12.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 15.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 13.

¹⁰¹ Sweitzer, Tuned for Praise, 1.

¹⁰² Parker, Historic Structures Report, 15.

¹⁰³ A.E.J. Morris, History of Urban Form Before the Industrial Revolutions (Harlow, England: Pearson Education Ltd., 1994), 348.

¹⁰⁴ Linley, The Georgia Catalog, 10.

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Closer in terms of geography to Bethlehem, late seventeenth-century, Philadelphia was laid out in a gridiron pattern with wide streets, a center square and four flanking squares.¹⁰⁵ Plans included spaces for a State House, Meeting House, Market, and Schoolhouse. Commerce was concentrated along the waterfront. The plan was used to advertise the colony in London.¹⁰⁶ In Philadelphia, the typical home was a multi-family, three story brick house with each family living in their own section of the building.¹⁰⁷

Change and the Moravian Community in Bethlehem

In 1762, following the death of Count Zinzendorf, the Moravians' benefactor, his family faced mounting debt. The Moravian Church agreed to assist the Zinzendorf family by assuming much of the debt Zinzendorf had taken on for the benefit of the Church and its missions. Each Moravian settlement at the time had to assume a pro-rata share of the debt; in return they would receive ownership of the land that had been bought with Zinzendorf's funds. With this restructuring, the Moravian Church in Bethlehem gained total ownership of its 4,000 acres of land and buildings, ending the General Economy.¹⁰⁸

In Bethlehem, the Moravian Church, both its civil and religious functions, transitioned to a market economy which led to the further development of the town. Under this new structure, "key profitable businesses, such as the mills and the store, would remain in the church's hands in order to support missionary work, church workers, and the schools. The workers in those industries would receive an annual wage, but businesses that were less profitable or less capital intensive could be privatized by turning them over [leasing] to the craftsmen."¹⁰⁹ Moravians now worked for wages or leased trades and businesses while the Church continued to own all the property. This meant a significant shift in how Bethlehem cared for its own: while "the church had previously shielded individuals from financial hardship and ensured that everyone in town enjoyed a rough equality...families [now] had to manage on their own."¹¹⁰ As part of this shift, Moravians living in the choir houses were now required to pay the Church for room and board. However, Bethlehem remained a closed community with only Moravians able to participate in the new Lease System.

With the end of the General Economy, many married Moravians abandoned the Choir System to live in more traditional nuclear family groups; as part of this, they built and lived in their own homes. In 1765, the American Indians returned to their town of Nain briefly, sold many of their homes to members of the Moravian community, and moved west.¹¹¹ The Nain houses became an important source for private family residences, with six of them being "dismantled and moved to Bethlehem and re-erected on the south side of Market Street."¹¹² Andreas Schober, a Moravian stone mason and supervisor of the building of some of the large, German Colonial style stone buildings located along Church Street, moved one of the Nain village houses to the southwest corner of Market Street and Heckewelder Place as a home for his family. Housing was also added in the Colonial Industrial Quarter; the first house was that of the miller constructed adjacent to the grist mill in 1780. As single family homes were built and private gardens were planted, the landscape of Bethlehem changed. Even the *Gemeinhaus* itself was converted into family apartments.¹¹³

¹⁰⁵ Richard C. Collins, Elizabeth A. Waters, and A. Bruce Dotson, *America's Downtowns: Growth, Politics, and Preservation* (New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1991), 92.

¹⁰⁶ Morris, *History of Urban Form*, 338-340.

¹⁰⁷ Morris, *History of Urban Form*, 339.

¹⁰⁸ Schwarz, *Bethlehem on the Lehigh*, 17.

¹⁰⁹ Engel, *Of Heaven and Earth*, 184.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹¹¹ Paul Larson, *Early Bethlehem and the Native Americans*, 42.

¹¹² Murtagh, *Moravian Architecture*, 108.

¹¹³ In 1780, one of the families that lived in the *Gemeinhaus* had a son, Lewis David de Schweinitz, who went on to become the

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During this period, the community expanded to the north along the road past the northern boundary of the cemetery and toward the east. On a map of Bethlehem of 1766, one can see the development of private homes following the end of the General Economy, the expansion of the community along Mile Road (now Market Street) which was the main way to access the horse ford along the Minsi Trail to cross the Lehigh River, and the layout of the industrial area mainly along the Monocacy Creek. Town lots were developed and private homes erected on land leased from the church. In a letter dated February 16, 1791, Bishop John Ettwein stated that “Herrnhut has 100 building sites, this plan [for Bethlehem] already contains 80! Why should one consider it foolish if one says: in 20, 30, 40, or 50 years, all these lots will be resided on, when the plan has provided for it?”¹¹⁴

When the Central Moravian Church was constructed between 1803 and 1806 at the corner of Church and Main Streets, the population of Bethlehem stood at just under 600 residents and yet, the new church was built to accommodate 1,500 worshippers. Residents believed that the town would only continue to expand and this new “church was the realization of a plan suggested as early as November 1754: Bethlehem should offer to Christian Indians and to friendly colonists a great central sanctuary in which they could unite in worship with the Moravians, especially on festival occasions.”¹¹⁵

Further change came after the American Revolution as this small Moravian settlement began to be increasingly exposed to the influences of the non-Moravian world. In 1794, the first bridge across the Lehigh River was built and by 1799 stagecoaches made daily runs to Philadelphia. With greater exposure to the outside world, the community became increasingly secularized. As the eighteenth century drew to a close, more goods were being imported into the community than were being produced in Bethlehem.

The 1810 Johann Sebastian Goundie House on Main Street exemplifies this transitional period. While the Lease System and Church ownership of property were still in effect, and at a time when business leaders were beginning to pressure the Church to relax its control, Mr. Goundie petitioned the Church administrators for permission to build a substantial American Federal style, private residence on land he leased from the Church. Mr. Goundie was the town brewer and a successful businessman. His new private home and its furnishings reflect the changing values and practice of this community.

With the completion of the Central Moravian Church in 1806 and then the Goundie House in 1810, the community turned away from both its German Colonial architectural roots and its tradition of building large institutional choir buildings. New architectural styles were used and private, family homes became increasingly common. The imposing Central Moravian Church, built during this period, is typical of this new building style and, as a result, it differs substantially from the surrounding German Colonial style buildings. The establishment of the Lehigh River Bridge and the placement of this new and visually distinct church catalyzed more nineteenth-century development along Main Street.

These changes had far ranging sociologic, economic, and geographic influences on the community. With the placement of Central Moravian Church at Main and Church Streets, development began to expand along Main Street. The farm yards were pushed back out of town and the commercial and residential district expanded toward the Sun Inn.

father of American Mycology. As the birthplace of deSchweinitz, the Gemeinhaus was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1975.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Hamilton, Church Street, 29. At the time of its completion, Central Moravian Church was probably the largest church in Pennsylvania. Burns, Pennsylvania Architecture, 323.

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As single men increasingly began to leave Bethlehem to escape the close regulation of the Church, the Single Brethren's Choir became empty. It was formally disbanded in 1814 and the choir house was taken over by the girls' school. Reflecting the more restricted options facing eighteenth-century women, the Single Sisters' Choir lasted well into the nineteenth century, far longer than any of the other choirs. This choir gave single women a sense of security and control of their own destiny, economic and social support, companionship, and assistance of their fellow sisters.

With the coming of the canal in the 1820s, local Moravians continued to pressure the Church for further economic reforms and a greater lessening of the Church's control. As Bethlehem turned away from its founding ideals, the settlement began to lose its distinctive qualities. In the 1840s, the Lease System ended and the Church began selling off much of its land. Church control of business and civil government completely ended and Bethlehem was formally incorporated as a borough in 1845. Just as the Quakers in the Philadelphia area were able to adapt to the changing world, the Moravians were successful in bringing their community into a modern American economy. Other religious communal groups such as the Harmonists (Rappites) and the Brethren of Ephrata were not as adaptable and their communities dissolved and disappeared from American society.

Today, Historic Moravian Bethlehem is an outstanding example of an urban heritage with its fine ensemble of eighteenth century Moravian buildings with their distinctive architectural quality and superior construction techniques. This eighteenth century Moravian settlement "became one of those rare places where noble social experiments were attempted. Equal rights, education and high culture were extended to all regardless of creed, race or gender."¹¹⁶ Bethlehem has been able to transfer its historic traditions and cultural values to contemporary life. As you walk the streets of present-day Bethlehem, you can still experience the characteristic ways in which the early Moravians planned, designed, built, and lived in this exceptional settlement on the colonial frontier. As the intact and well-preserved core of the original settlement, the buildings that make up the Moravian Historic District continue to convey the significant contributions in town planning, architecture, culture, music, and religion that were unique to the Moravians in Colonial America.

¹¹⁶ Larson, Early Bethlehem and the Native Americans, 5.