

= Hebron Church ( Intermont , West Virginia ) =

Hebron Church ( also historically known as Great Capon Church , Hebron Lutheran Church , and Hebron Evangelical Lutheran Church ) is a mid 19th century Lutheran church in Intermont , Hampshire County , in the U.S. state of West Virginia . Hebron Church was founded in 1786 as Great Capon Church by German settlers in the Cacapon River Valley , making it the first Lutheran church west of the Shenandoah Valley . The congregation worshiped in a log church , which initially served both Lutheran and Reformed denominations . Its congregation was originally German speaking ; the church 's documents and religious services were in German until 1821 , when records and sermons transitioned to English .

The church 's congregation built the present Greek Revival style 1 1/2 story church building in 1849 , when it was renamed Hebron on the Cacapon . The original log church was moved across the road and subsequently used as a sexton 's house , Sunday school classroom , and public schoolhouse ( attended by future West Virginia governor Herman G. Kump ) .

To celebrate the congregation 's 175th anniversary in 1961 , Hebron Church constructed a brick community and religious education building designed to be architecturally compatible with the 1849 brick church . As of October 2015 , the church continues to be used by the West Virginia Western Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America . Hebron Church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on December 16 , 2014 for its architectural distinction as a local example of vernacular Greek Revival church architecture in the Potomac Highlands .

= = Geography and setting = =

Hebron Church and its cemetery are located east of Carpers Pike ( West Virginia Route 259 ) in the unincorporated community of Intermont , about 3 20 miles ( 5 15 km ) southwest of Yellow Spring , and 5 63 miles ( 9 06 km ) northeast of the town of Wardensville . Capon Lake and the Capon Lake Whipple Truss Bridge are 0 64 miles ( 1 03 km ) northeast of the church . The church and its cemetery are on a 3 879 acre ( 1 570 ha ) lot .

Hebron Church is on the plain of a predominantly rural agricultural and forested area of southeastern Hampshire County , in the Cacapon River Valley . Baker Mountain , a forested , narrow anticlinal mountain ridge , rises west of the church , and the western rolling foothills of the anticlinal Great North Mountain rise east of the valley . The Cacapon River , just southeast of the church , is hidden from the church and cemetery by mature foliage . George Washington National Forest , encompassing the forested area east of the Cacapon River , is east of the church .

The National Register of Historic Places listing for Hebron Church includes the brick church and cemetery . They are accessible from WV 259 by a semicircular asphalt driveway , separated from the church and cemetery by a wrought iron fence and lined with large , old growth maple trees along the property 's northwestern perimeter . A paved brick walkway leads from the gate to the northwestern façade and two main entrances of the church . The church is surrounded on its northeastern , southeastern , and southwestern sides by a cemetery which is still in use . The cemetery contains over 600 gravestones , several yuccas , a hemlock tree , and a boxwood . A modern brick community building , within the historic boundary south of the church and cemetery , is used for church activities .

= = History = =

= = Background = = =

The land on which Hebron Church and its cemetery are located was originally part of the Northern Neck Proprietary , a land grant from Charles II of England to seven of his supporters in 1649 which was renewed by an official patent in 1688 . One of these seven supporters , Thomas Colepeper , 2nd Baron Colepeper , acquired the entire area in 1681 ; his grandson , Thomas Fairfax , 6th Lord

Fairfax of Cameron , inherited it in 1719 . Under Fairfax 's ownership , the Cacapon River Valley was predominantly inhabited by English @-@ speaking settlers as early as the late 1730s ; most came from Pennsylvania and New Jersey . As settlement progressed during the second half of the 18th century , the fertile land of Hampshire County ( including the Cacapon River Valley ) also attracted German settlers from Pennsylvania and elsewhere in Virginia before and after the American Revolutionary War ( 1775 ? 1783 ) .

= = = Establishment = = =

As the population of German settlers in the region began to increase , the desire for Lutheran religious services and education also grew . Ministers , including Henry Muhlenberg disciple Christian Streit , began to establish congregations in the largest communities of western Virginia . Muhlenberg was a German pastor , requested by colonists in Pennsylvania , who served as a missionary there from 1742 until his death in 1787 ; he is considered the patriarch of the Lutheran Church in the United States . Johannes Schwarback and Muhlenberg 's son , Peter , reportedly visited the Cacapon River Valley between 1763 and 1776 ( before Hebron Church 's founding ) . Streit , charged with ministering to a Lutheran congregation in Winchester , settled there on July 19 , 1785 .

Hebron Church , originally known as the Great Capon Church , was established by early German settlers in 1786 as a united German congregation of the Reformed and Lutheran denominations . The congregation was also known as the German Churches , since it served both denominations . In its earliest days , the church was served by pastors connected with congregations in the Shenandoah Valley . Streit incorporated the church into his circuit shortly after its founding , regularly traveling to the Cacapon River Valley for baptisms and weddings , but his ministry did not extend west of Cooper Mountain . According to the oldest extant church record , six people were confirmed in the Lutheran Synod and nine confirmed in the German Reformed Church in November 1786 . On September 23 , 1787 , seven more people were confirmed in the Lutheran Synod ; the church 's enrollment then began to increase .

Early religious services were held in the log church on land deeded to Reformed trustee Jacob Huber and Lutheran trustee John Nicholas Schweitzer , both of whom were church elders in 1786 . The deed conveying the land to the trustees specified that it was to be used for a German church and burial yard . The united congregation became Hebron Church , the first Lutheran church west of the Shenandoah Valley .

While the Reformed and Lutheran congregations used the log church , they were ministered by two pastors . Abraham Gottlieb Deschler ministered to the Lutherans and Jacob Rebas ( or Repass ) ministered to the Reformed congregation until the latter dissolved around 1813 . Although the church served both denominations , it was later served by one minister ( Reformed or Lutheran ) . Originally a German @-@ speaking congregation , its documents and religious services were in German until 1821 ( an early transition to English for a German denomination in the United States ) . By that time , under the pastorship of Abraham Reck ( 1812 ? 21 ) , the congregation was known as Capon Church .

= = = Construction = = =

The congregation of Great Capon Church built the present one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half @-@ story Lutheran church building in 1849 , when it was briefly renamed Hebron on the Cacapon after Hebron ( the city associated with Judah , Abraham , and Isaac ) . The church was later known simply as Hebron Church .

The brick church was constructed east of the original log structure , which was west of the present community building . The 1849 church was originally topped by a wooden shake roof , and its windows had double @-@ hung wooden sashes . Its pews were built by Alfred Brill , Jacob Himmelwright and Frederick Secrist with lumber milled by Brill . The church was constructed under the ministry of H. J. Richardson ( 1848 ? 53 ) .

The log church was moved from its original location in the south corner of the cemetery to a hill across the road from the brick church . It was used as a sexton 's house for the church , and was a Sunday school classroom for about 30 years . In addition to religious instruction , the log building was a public schoolhouse . Future West Virginia governor Herman G. Kump and his brother , judge Garnett Kerr Kump , received part of their primary education in the schoolhouse . By 1885 , a Mr. Miller was teaching business principles at the school . The log building succumbed to the elements , and no longer exists .

= = = Later history = = =

Peter Miller ministered to the congregation at Hebron Church four times , for a total of 25 years , between 1858 and 1918 . Licensed in 1858 and ordained in 1860 , Miller engaged in missionary work for rural congregants in the Capon and North River Parish of Hampshire and Hardy counties for 60 years . He established many of the area 's Lutheran churches and , according to the North Carolina Synod of the Lutheran Church in America , was " an outstanding figure in this large , mountainous , thinly populated territory , who for sixty years almost continuously was recognized as everybody 's pastor . " By 1867 , the church membership was 106 , its largest congregation to date .

On October 13 , 1879 , a post office was established near Hebron Church to serve the adjacent community ( then known as Mutton Run ) . In December 1884 , the church roof caught fire from an adjacent flue , burning a hole through the sanctuary 's ceiling which was soon repaired . On August 11 ? 15 , 1886 , Hebron Church celebrated its centennial . During the celebration , Miller read a complete history of the German churches in the region . The centennial was reportedly the first of any Lutheran congregation in the southern United States .

The wrought @-@ iron fence along the church driveway was installed in April 1895 , replacing a picket fence . In 1905 , the church 's wood roof was replaced with a metal one , the present stained @-@ glass windows were installed , its interior and woodwork were painted and new lamps were installed for better illumination . The stained @-@ glass windows were supplied by Madison Alling of Newark , New Jersey in memory of his father , who summered at nearby Capon Springs Resort . Alling also provided four hanging lamps and calcimine for the interior walls and paint for the interior woodwork . Anton Reymann of Wheeling , West Virginia funded the metal roof and the sanctuary 's painting and decoration .

On June 11 , 1915 , the post office changed its name to Intermont ( after the Intermountain Construction Company ) , operating until its closure on January 29 , 1972 . The unincorporated community around Hebron Church continues to be known as Intermont , after the former post office . By 1921 , the Winchester and Western Railroad had been constructed to the east of Hebron Church by the Intermountain Construction Company to connect Wardensville with Winchester and develop the area 's timber , mining , and fruit industries .

In 1932 , the church 's piano was donated by George E. Brill of Baltimore . Hebron Church celebrated its 150th anniversary in 1936 , during the pastorate of Lawrence P. Williamson ( 1930 ? 37 ) . On October 29 , 1961 , in celebration of the church 's 175th anniversary , the congregation dedicated a new brick community and religious @-@ education building designed to be architecturally compatible with the 1849 brick church . The new building , which hosted community gatherings , events and Sunday school , was built just south of the brick church at the edge of the cemetery ( where the old log church was originally located ) . Walter A. Sigman ( 1960 ? 65 ) was pastor when the community building was dedicated .

= = = Preservation = = =

In 2008 , a survey of historic properties in the county was undertaken by the State Historic Preservation Office of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History . Following this survey , the Hampshire County Historic Landmarks Commission and the Hampshire County Commission began an initiative to place these identified structures and districts on the National Register of Historic Places . Preparation of the necessary documentation for Hebron Church , French 's Mill , Yellow

Spring Mill , and the Nathaniel and Isaac Kuykendall House began in April 2013 , when Governor Earl Ray Tomblin awarded \$ 10 @, @ 500 to the Hampshire County Commission . The cost of the commission 's documentation of the history and significance of the four properties was \$ 15 @, @ 000 , of which the county paid \$ 4 @, @ 500 .

All four properties were accepted for the NRHP on December 16 , 2014 , with Hebron Church a unique local example of Greek Revival church architecture in the Potomac Highlands . Because the church 's original architectural design , workmanship , and building materials are extant , architectural historian Sandra Scaffidi assessed the church as providing " insight into the construction techniques of a mid @-@ 19th @-@ century ecclesiastical building . " Hebron Church is one of six extant , rural pre @-@ Civil War church buildings in Hampshire County ; the other five are Bloomery Presbyterian Church ( 1825 ) , Mount Bethel Church ( 1837 ) , Old Pine Church ( 1838 ) , Capon Chapel ( c . 1852 ) , and North River Mills United Methodist Church ( 1860 ) .

As of October 2015 , the church 's congregation is part of the Potomac Conference in the West Virginia @-@ Western Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America . Ministered by David A. Twedt , Hebron Church has 22 baptized members , 19 confirmed members and an average attendance of six .

= = = Pastors = = =

Since the church 's founding in 1786 , the following pastors have ministered to the congregation at Hebron Church :

? Reformed pastors ; the remaining pastors were Lutheran .

= = Architecture = =

According to Sandra Scaffidi , Hebron Church 's architecture exemplifies a " local interpretation " of the Greek Revival architectural style , which was popular at the time of its construction . With its simple wooden doors , returning eaves and symmetrical front gable design , Hebron Church is representative of a vernacular interpretation of Greek Revival architecture . Only one other church building in eastern Hampshire County , Timber Ridge Christian Church in High View , was built of brick . The overall plan of Hebron Church exemplifies traditional Lutheranism , with the sanctuary 's one @-@ room floor plan enabling the congregation to be near its minister and easily participate in worship . Scaffidi wrote , " The Greek Revival front @-@ gable form of the Hebron Church reflects the early settlers ' desire to worship in a modest , uncluttered fashion . "

= = = Exterior = = =

The 1849 church is a small , one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half @-@ story , front @-@ gable building . The main façade ( northwestern elevation ) has two main entrances , enclosed by white @-@ painted wood , recessed panel doors , and capped by white @-@ painted stone lintels with two stone corner blocks . The church 's exterior is brickwork , laid in Flemish bond on the main façade and a five @-@ course American bond on the northeastern , southeastern and southwestern elevations . Two blue @-@ gray stained glass windows ( installed in 1905 ) are symmetrically placed above the main entrances , each capped by stone lintels with two stone corner blocks . The main façade is crowned by a white painted entablature molding with two cornice returns , exemplifying Greek Revival architectural design . In the top of the gable , a square date stone engraved " 1849 " is embedded in the brickwork above a gooseneck light fixture . Although the church is now topped by a metal standing @-@ seam roof , it was originally sheathed by wooden shakes .

On the church 's northeastern elevation there are three large , symmetrical stained @-@ glass windows , each with a fixed upper sash and a lower hopper sash . Like the main façade 's doorways and windows , the sills , lintels and lintel corner blocks of the stained @-@ glass windows are white @-@ painted stone . Below the windows is an exposed coursed @-@ stone foundation with five tie

@-@ rod masonry anchor plates . A small brick chimney is present on this elevation . The church 's southwestern elevation also has a coursed @-@ stone foundation , with five tie @-@ rod anchor plates , banked into the ground below three symmetrical stained @-@ glass windows with fixed upper sashes and lower hopper sashes and encased with white @-@ painted stone sills , lintels and lintel corner blocks . On this elevation are a small brick chimney in the roof slope and metal snowbirds along the roof line . Downspouts are located at the southern corners of the northeastern and southwestern elevations . The church 's southeastern ( rear ) elevation has an exposed coursed @-@ stone foundation 4 feet ( 1 @. @ 2 m ) high , due to its location on sloping ground . At the center of this elevation is a protruding , gabled brick extension for the interior altar , with symmetrical stained @-@ glass windows on both sides . The gabled protrusion is capped by aluminum flashing . An 1895 wrought @-@ iron fence encloses the property 's northwestern perimeter , and a paved brick walkway provides pedestrian access from the driveway to the two main entrances .

= = Interior = =

The church interior has an open floor plan , with a sanctuary measuring 28 feet ( 8 @. @ 5 m ) wide and 43 feet ( 13 m ) long . The floor plan is an open nave , with two aisles partitioning three sections of rectangular wooden pews . Although the pews had been painted white , they have been restored to their original wood finish . The sanctuary 's interior walls are plaster , and the floors are sheathed in wide wooden planks . The nave is topped by a ceiling fabricated on tongue and groove wooden planks painted white . Three large stained @-@ glass windows , framed by wooden molding and recessed approximately 6 inches ( 15 cm ) , are symmetrically located on the northeastern and southwestern walls . The lower portion of each window contains a memorial dedication , which opens into its lower hopper sash . On the northwestern side of the interior are the two main entry doors , which access an unadorned narthex . Two tapered @-@ square pilasters support an upper gallery loft , possibly used by slaves during religious services . The gallery is fronted by a solid balustrade , accented with dentil molding and recessed wooden panels .

At the southeastern end of the sanctuary , the altar is atop a decagonal platform about 8 feet ( 2 @. @ 4 m ) above the floor and accessible by a pair of four @-@ step staircases . On the elevated platform is also a table holding a Bible . A recessed rectangular apse , flanked by a pair of fluted , engaged columns , is behind the altar . A painting of Jesus hangs in the center of the apse , with an American flag to its immediate north . An organ and a piano are north of the altar , with a baptismal font south of it . The altar platform and aisles are carpeted red . The sanctuary 's northern and southern elevations exposed brick chimneys connected to gas heating units , which were installed around 1970 . A brass chandelier with clear glass hurricane globes is suspended in the center of the sanctuary ; on the northern and southern elevations , two brass electric lanterns are adjacent to the stained @-@ glass windows .

The upper gallery on the northwestern side of the church is accessed by a twelve @-@ step wooden spiral staircase , and has an unfinished wooden floor . Four wooden pews have white @-@ painted sides and unfinished seats and rails . The gallery 's ceiling height is about 6 feet ( 1 @. @ 8 m ) at its tallest and about 5 feet ( 1 @. @ 5 m ) at its shortest , due to the sloping wooden floor . Two stained @-@ glass windows , which cannot be opened , are along the northwest wall . A small closet , accessible through a wooden door with two parallel vertical panels and original latch hardware , is at the base of the staircase . The church 's original plasterwork and a 10 @-@ inch ( 25 cm ) vertically @-@ cut wooden board , suggesting half @-@ timbering , are visible in the closet .

= = Community building = =

The church 's community building , a non @-@ contributing structure within the historic boundary , is southwest of the church . The building is a venue for Sunday school classes and community gatherings . The front gable building , completed in 1961 , is sheathed in brickwork . Similar to the church , the building is built into a gently @-@ sloping bank with its one @-@ story elevation at

grade facing west toward WV 259 . Its two @-@ story eastern elevation is at the foot of the hillside . The building 's western façade has a central entryway with double doors , topped by a six @-@ light transom and flanked by engaged pilasters . Its gable , sheathed in aluminum siding , incorporates a gabled pediment and the building 's perimeter is surrounded by a wide , flat frieze . The building 's southern elevation has wooden windows with 12 @-@ over @-@ 12 double @-@ hung sashes on brick window sills . Its basement level has one entrance , flanked by wooden double @-@ hung sash windows and four casement windows . The northeastern elevation has three stained @-@ glass windows on the main level , with three wooden eight @-@ over @-@ eight double @-@ hung sash windows ; a single wooden six @-@ over @-@ six double @-@ hung sash window is in the gable . The building is roofed with asphalt shingles , and a brick chimney is along the slope of the northern elevation 's roof line . Its northeastern elevation has five wooden 16 @-@ over @-@ 16 double @-@ hung sash windows on the main level and four on the lower level , in addition to two wooden four @-@ over @-@ four sash windows .

= = = Cemetery = = =

Hebron Church is surrounded on three sides by a cemetery , consisting of about 700 granite , marble , slate and wooden gravestones laid in semi @-@ regular rows running northeast to southeast . The cemetery also abuts the northeastern elevation of the community building . Its interments date from about 1806 to the present ; early gravestones have deteriorated beyond recognition , and may be older than 1806 . Slaves and other people of color are interred in a small area of the cemetery 's southeastern section , with simpler markers than the cemetery 's other gravestones . Although its gravestones are generally rectangular granite stones and large obelisks , the cemetery 's earliest gravestones were simple wooden boards . Several gravestones are ornately carved , including one modeled on a tree stump . The cemetery is active , with the most recent burials at the property 's northern end . Dr. William Blum , Sr. , an electrochemist at the National Bureau of Standards who invented a chrome plating technique used in banknote printing , is interred at the cemetery .