

DISCOVER

Delmarva

HOME OF AMERICA'S
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

On the Delmarva Peninsula lovely old churches remain today as symbols of the Americanization of Christianity. In our nation's early days the spirit of many of these churches and the spirit of 1776 went hand in hand.

Separation of Church and State is one of our country's great contributions to Western culture in both religion and politics. The freedom of worship legally established by Maryland's Toleration Act, passed by the Assembly in 1649, is one of the cornerstones of the American Republic.

Old houses of worship standing apart in the countryside or within quiet and timeless churchyards in the heart of rushing towns, still embody much of the character of the new world. Their simplicity is beautiful and their meaning to the nation that developed gives them today the special aura of shrines.

Some of Delmarva's early churches can be singled out as unique in the nation and are featured in this guide.

Others are worth visiting for their individual history, architecture, furnishings, or some special feature. Many of the early American structures were remodeled in the eighteen hundreds to conform to Victorian tastes and have recently been restored to their original lines.

All of them give depth to the culture of the Peninsula. For this we owe much to citizens on and off Delmarva who have loved these churches enough to become personally involved in restoring them.

This is not a listing of all the early American churches on the Peninsula. It is an attempt to point out that there are simple heritage buildings here that can be, to the sensitive visitor, as impressive as cathedrals.

Prepared by the Delmarva Advisory Council
with the advice of a
Committee of Delmarva Ministers.

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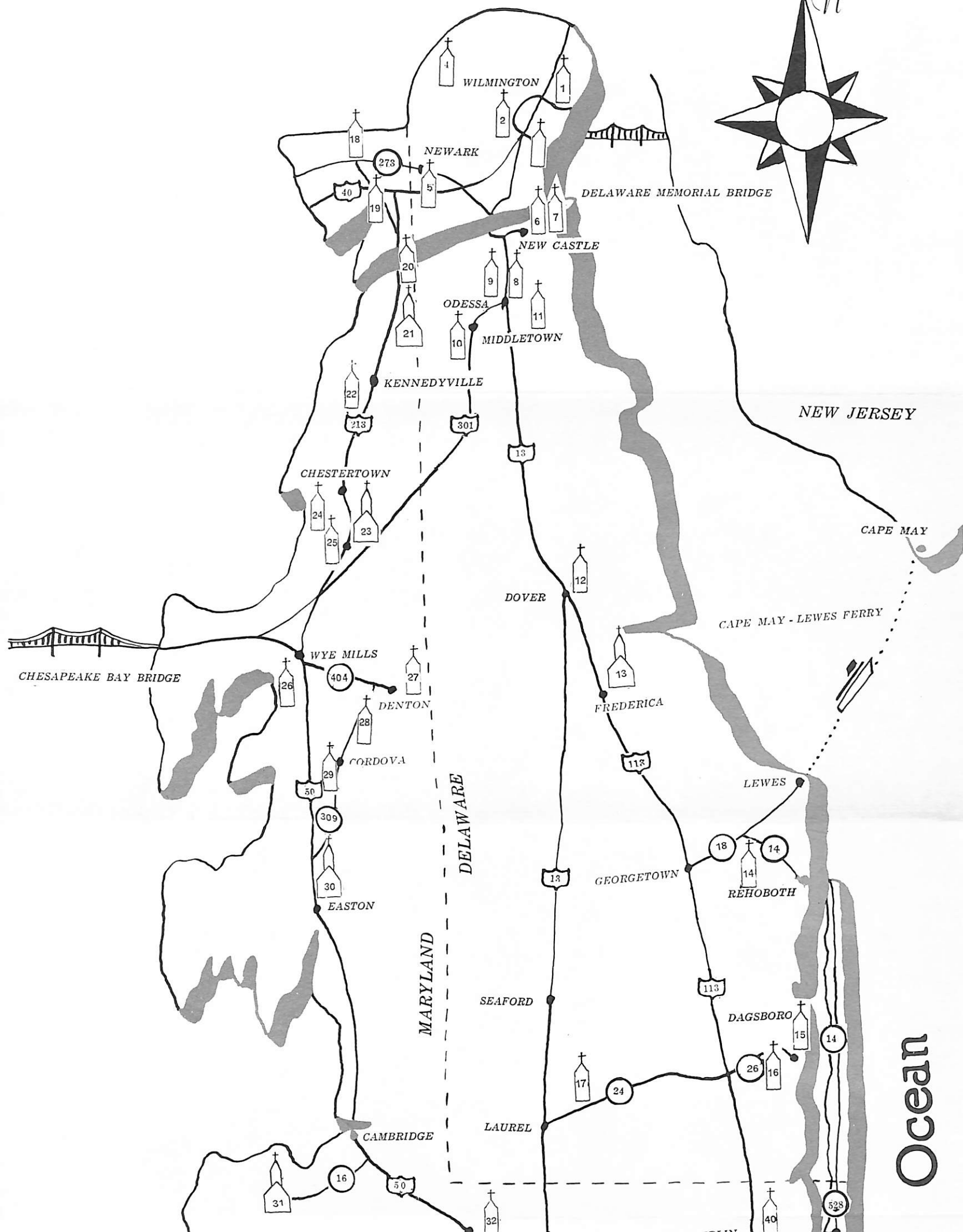
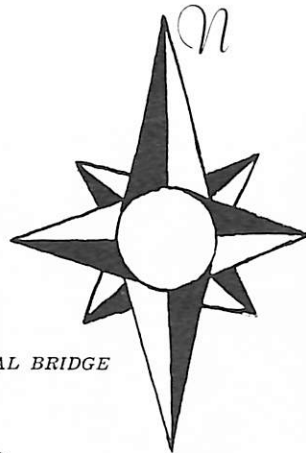
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Delmarva's National Heritage Church Tour



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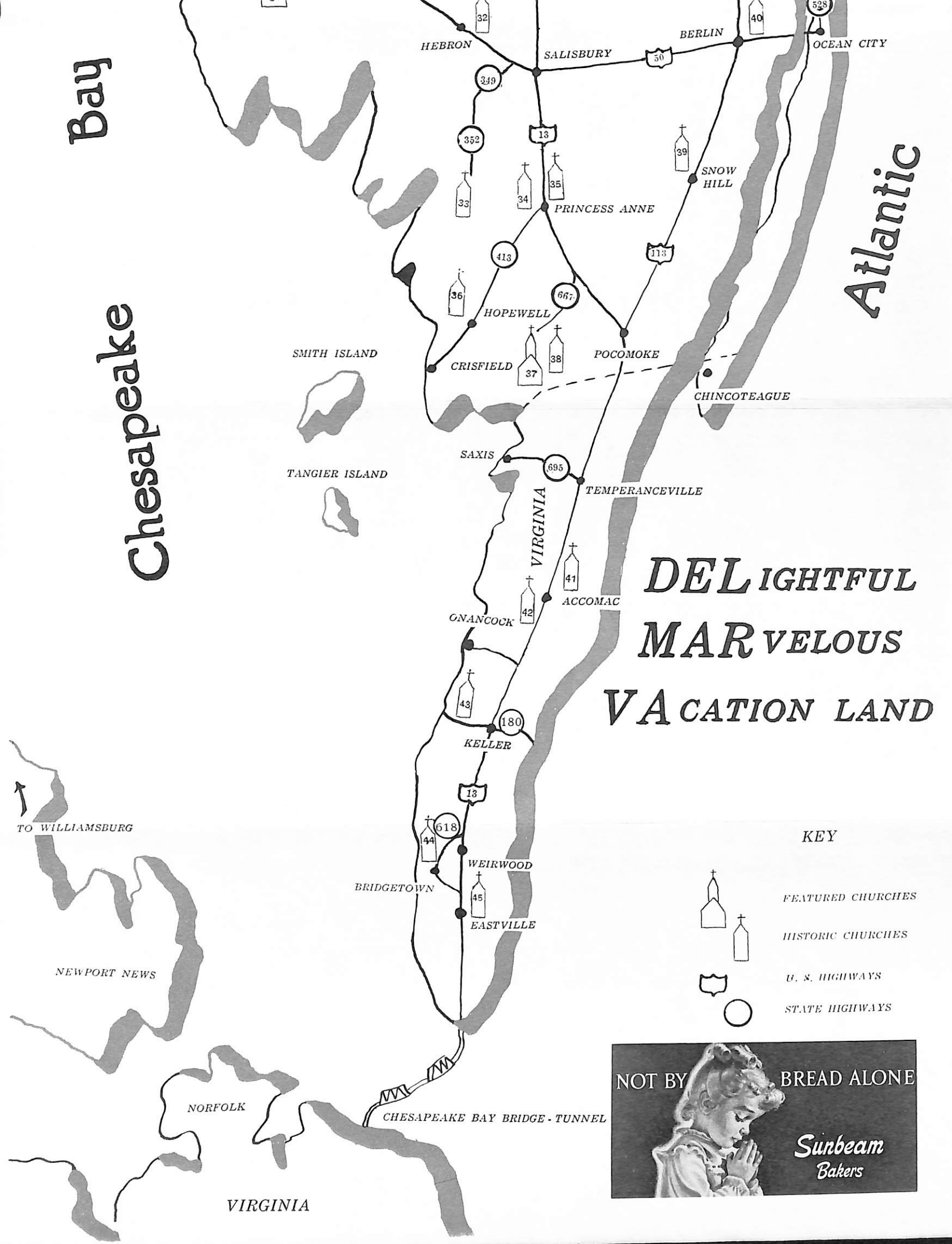


Bay

Chesapeake

Atlantic

**DELIGHTFUL
MARVELOUS
VACATION LAND**



KEY



FEATURED CHURCHES

HISTORIC CHURCHES

U. S. HIGHWAYS

STATE HIGHWAYS

NOT BY BREAD ALONE



VIRGINIA

DELAWARE

1. **Old Swedes, Heliga Trefaldighets Kyrka, or Holy Trinity Church**, East Seventh Street, Wilmington. In 1638 New Sweden was settled where Wilmington is today and the Swedish Lutheran church was consecrated on Trinity Sunday, June 4, 1699. When the Swedish mission in America ended in 1789, Old Swedes became a Protestant Episcopal church. It remains in use in its original design. It is open 12 noon to 4 p.m. daily except Monday, with guide service.
2. **First Presbyterian Church**, Park Drive and West Street, is the original Presbyterian church of Wilmington and bears the date 1740. In 1917 it was moved to its present site and became the headquarters of the Colonial Dames of Delaware.
3. **Asbury Methodist Church**, Walnut and Third Streets, Wilmington, was dedicated in 1789 by Francis Asbury, first American bishop of the Methodist Church. Allan McLane, Revolutionary War hero, is buried in the adjacent cemetery.
4. **Hockessin Friends Meeting House**, Hockessin in New Castle County, was built in 1738. It overlooks from a knoll the beautiful Hockessin Valley near the Pennsylvania line.
5. **Welsh Tract Baptist Church**, south of Newark at Cooch's Bridge, was founded by 16 people who formed the original congregation in Wales in 1701, emigrated to America and settled on forty thousand acres granted by William Penn. Their original log church was the first Baptist church in Delaware. The present brick one, built in 1746, still bears the marks of a cannon ball that passed through it when Cornwallis met Washington's troops at Cooch's Bridge in 1777.
6. **Old Presbyterian Church**, Second Street, New Castle, was built in 1707. New Castle was a port of immigration and this became the mother church for later ones along the Susquehanna River, the Cumberland Valley, and south into the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Open to visitors.
7. **Immanuel Church**, New Castle, completed in 1706, overlooks The Green near the site of the old log fort of 1672. It is at the heart of one of the most authentically preserved colonial communities there is, and welcomes visitors.
8. **Old Drawyers Presbyterian Church**, one-half mile north of Odessa on U.S. Route 13, is a lovely colonial church built in 1773 by a congregation organized in 1708. The bricks were made locally and the structure remains unaltered. Descendants of earlier congregations organized Friends of Old Drawyers in 1895 to preserve the building and care for its acres of grounds.
9. **Appoquinimink Friends Meeting House**, in Odessa, west of U.S. 13 on Delaware Route 301, is only 20 feet square. It is said to be the smallest brick house of worship in the United States. It was built in 1785. After a period of disuse it was restored to life in 1939 and 15 to 20 Friends continue to gather for weekly meetings.
10. **Old St. Anne's Episcopal Church**, one mile south of Middletown on Delaware Route 71, is dated 1768. Inside are the original box pews and Palladian window; outside, an oak three centuries old, lovely boxwood and ivy brought from England. There is an anniversary service here the third Sunday in June and morning prayer every Sunday from the end of June through August.
11. **Old Union Methodist**, 4 miles south of Odessa on U.S. Route 13, built in 1847, welcomes visitors at all times. There are picnic tables in an adjoining grove.
12. **Christ Episcopal Church** in Dover on State Street at the foot of East Water Street. When Dover was laid out in 1717, Church Square was reserved and the brick church which was built there in 1734 remains as the nave of the present church. Caesar Rodney, who made a historic ride to sign the Declaration of Independence, is buried in the spacious churchyard. There are regular services and the church doors are open.
13. **Barratt's Chapel**, near Frederica, 11 miles south of Dover on U.S. Route 113, was built in 1780 and is called the "Cradle of Methodism in America." It was here that Bishop Thomas Coke met Francis Asbury in 1784 and planned the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in this country. Here the first sacrament of communion was administered in this country by authorized Methodist preachers. Visitors may enter the chapel and visit the adjoining museum Tuesday through Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on Sunday from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. There are Sunday evening services in summer at 7:30.
14. **St. George's Episcopal Church** near Lewes. (At Five Points, turn west from Route 14 onto a country road to the left of Delaware Route 18, and continue for five miles, always bearing left.) The original Palladian window, box pews, galleries and raised pulpit with its curved handrails and steps were recently restored as they were in 1794. Summer services are held every Sunday at 11 a.m. and in the winter in mid-afternoon. Visitors may get the key at the nearest farmhouse.
15. **Blackwater Presbyterian Church**, one mile west of Clarksville on Route 26, was organized in 1667 when William Tunnell resigned from Prince George's Chapel, the Established Church. The present church was built in 1767. The Tunnell family is still associated with it.
16. **Prince George's Chapel**, on Delaware Route 26 in Dagsboro, was built in 1757. Its original pine interior with galleries and barrel-type ceiling remains and has never been painted. A local Preservation Committee hopes to replace the church's weakened main beam and preserve it as a historical site.
17. **Christ Church**, at Broad Creek, 3 miles east of Laurel on Route 24, is a frame structure built in 1771. Its original unpainted, heart-of-pine interior is still in excellent condition. A local Committee for Old Christ Church supplies guides on Sunday afternoons from 1 to 4 p.m. in summer.

MARYLAND

18. **Brick Meeting House**, Calvert at the junction of State Routes 272 and 273 in Cecil County near the Mason-Dixon Line. The brick end of this house of worship was built in 1724 and the stone end in 1751. During the Revolution General William Smallwood's Continentals used the building as a hospital.
19. **St. Mary Anne's Episcopal Church**, North East on Route 272 at the head of North East River, was built in 1742 at a time when the Church of England was the Established Church in Maryland. In the churchyard are plain field-stone grave markers of early Indian converts.
20. **Old St. Augustine Episcopal Church**, 3 miles south of Chesapeake City on Route 310, was built in 1838. A Society for the Restoration and Preservation of Old St. Augustine restored the church in 1964. The simple, white-frame structure looks out over beautiful farmland. Regular services are held.
21. **Old Bohemia or St. Francis Xavier Jesuit Church**, two miles down a country road off Route 282 in Warwick, was founded in 1704 and became one of the earliest permanent Catholic establishments in the English colonies. The present church dates from 1792. The Jesuit plantation once included 1185 acres, living quarters, water-powered saw and grist mills, brick kiln, blacksmith shop, barns and 20 slaves.
An Academy founded in 1745, once stood on the grounds. It was the only school attended by John Carroll who later became the first Catholic Bishop of the United States.
The Old Bohemia Historical Society, organized in 1953, hopes to buy back the original land and restore the whole plantation. The church and museum in the rectory are open from 1 to 6 p.m. on the third Sundays of June, July, August and September.
22. **Shrewsbury Episcopal Church**, near Kennedyville on Route 213, was built in 1832. Among the ancient trees of the churchyard are old tombstones such as that of General John Cadwalader, who fought in the Revolution. Open all the time.
23. **Emmanuel Episcopal Church**, in Chestertown, is where a conference of clergy and laymen in 1780 first accepted the name Protestant Episcopal Church to replace the designation, Church of England, in the province. The church was completed in 1772 and dominates the heart of Chestertown.
The Rev. Dr. William Smith, rector of the church at the time of the historic conference, was the founder of Washington College in 1782. He solicited and received for the college the direct support of General George Washington.

MARYLAND (continued)

24. **St. Paul's Episcopal Church**, 9 miles west of Chestertown on Route 21 near Langford Bay, was built in 1713 for a recorded cost of 70,000 pounds of tobacco. It has been in continuous use ever since. A Vestry House built in 1766 was used for colonial elections, as a school, and as a barracks for troops in the War of 1812.
In the churchyard are enormous trees predating the colony. Open.
25. **St. Luke's Episcopal Church**, in Church Hill on Route 213, was completed in 1732. It is distinguished by the tone of its brick, its semi-circular apse, gambrel roof, and the beautifully lettered panels on either side of the chancel.
26. **Old Wye Church**, off U.S. Route 50 on Route 662, was built in 1721, restored once in 1854 by the parish, and again in 1949. The present restoration, accurate and complete, was directed by William G. Perry, supervising architect for Colonial Williamsburg.
For visitors there are printed guides to the furnishings of the Church, the reconstructed Vestry, and Parish House. There are 11 a.m. Sunday services and the buildings are open Thursday and Friday from 3 to 5 p.m., Saturday from 11 to 5, and Sunday from 2 to 5 p.m.
27. **Neck Meeting House** in Denton, Caroline County. Nicholite Friends in the area built this house in 1802. Northern troops used it for barracks during the Civil War. The Choptank Electric Cooperative next door now owns and protects the building and will give the key to visitors.
28. **St. John's Chapel**, at Hillsboro, near Denton in Caroline County. The chapel was built in 1853. Local citizens recently organized St. John's Parish Association to save this fine example of Gothic revival structure.
29. **St. Joseph's Catholic Church** near Cordova, Maryland, on Route 309, celebrated its bicentennial in 1965. The old church was established as a Jesuit mission by Father Joseph Mosley, who built the brick chapel and dwelling place in 1782 under one roof to evade the law of the time against public places of worship for Catholics. This is the oldest Catholic church on the Eastern Shore and only recently added electricity.
30. **Old Third Haven Friends Meeting**, South Washington Street, Easton, was built in 1682 by the Religious Society of Friends from timbers hewn with a broad axe. It is believed to be the oldest frame building dedicated to religious meetings still existing in America.
It remains a symbol of the early spirit of the Maryland Free State. William Penn preached here in 1700 to an assemblage from both sides of the Bay, including the state's most prominent Catholics, Lord and Lady Baltimore and their party. Open all the time.
31. **Old Trinity Episcopal Church**, at Church Hill south of Cambridge on Route 16, can be traced back to before 1690. It is one of the country's oldest Protestant churches now in active use.
The present, beautiful restoration, under the auspices of Edgar and Bernice Garbisch of Cambridge, is the result of years of research and of accumulating old pine for the interior furnishings. Hand-woven hangings were reproduced in England on 17th century looms.
In the churchyard is the plot of the distinguished Carroll family, including the grave of Anna Ella Carroll who was friend, advisor and ghost writer to Abraham Lincoln.
The church is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except Tuesday, and there are Sunday services at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.
32. **Spring Hill Episcopal Church**, west of Salisbury on U.S. Route 50, dates from 1773. Within are its original furnishings and natural wood paneling.
33. **Old Green Hill Episcopal Church**, 12 miles west of Salisbury on Route 352, is dated 1733. It is all that remains of an early Port of Entry. Its walls, brick floors, high back family pews, high pulpit and "clerk's desk" are all original. There is an annual service the last Sunday in August.
34. **Manokin Presbyterian Church** in Princess Anne can be reached by crossing the old White Haven ferry from Green Hill. It was built in 1765 and is one of the five early Presbyterian churches founded by the Reverend Francis Makemie. Open.
35. **St. Andrews Episcopal Church**, Church Street, Princess Anne, was built in 1770 and reconstructed twice in the 19th century. Communion silver given to the congregation in 1717 by William Stoughton is a community treasure today. Open.
36. **St. Peter's Church**, at Hopewell on Route 413, was built in 1850. It is distinguished as the place where Joshua Thomas, the Methodist "Parson of the Islands" of Chesapeake Bay, was moved to preach his first sermon.
37. **Rehobeth Church**, on Route 406 on the Pocomoke River, was the first Presbyterian church in America. It was built in 1706 through the initiative of the Reverend Francis Makemie who is remembered as "the father of American Presbyterianism."
The interior of Rehobeth has been altered many times, but except for a few changes in the windows, the exterior brick walls have remained as they were laid two and a half centuries ago. The church is still active and has 200 members.
38. **Coventry Episcopal Church**, across the road from Rehobeth, is not actually a church, but the ruins of one that was originally built in 1740.
39. **All Hallows Episcopal Church**, in the town of Snow Hill, was built in 1748 for a cost of 120,000 pounds of tobacco. It is of soft-hued brick with distinctive windows rising to the eaves. Queen Anne gifts are cherished by the church, including the bell, hanging between two cedar trees in the churchyard. Open.
40. **Old St. Martins**, on U.S. Route 113 near Showell, is a simple brick church built in 1759. It was the original Protestant Episcopal Church of Worcester Parish. It is shuttered and bolted, but annual services are held in June.

VIRGINIA

- Although other faiths gained strength after the American Revolution, the spiritual life of the early colonists on the Virginia Shore was dominated by the Church of England. As early as 1624 the Virginia Assembly made the Established Church mandatory in every organized settlement. After the Revolution some of these early churches were revived and restored by independent American denominations.
41. **St. James Episcopal Church**, in Accomac off U.S. Route 13, was built at its present location in 1838. It is a Basilican type with four fluted Doric columns.
In 1779 local history records that the original church staged a mock funeral for George Washington, with ritual, a coffin, pallbearers and false solemnity.
 42. **Makemie Presbyterian Church**, also in Accomac, is dated 1838, though its beginning goes back to 1690 and to the Reverend Francis Makemie. The building was much abused during the War between the States, but was restored in 1925.
 43. **St. Georges Episcopal Church**, at Pungoteague off U.S. Route 13 on Route 180, can be dated around 1738. During the Civil War, Federal troops stabled their horses there, ripping out interior woodwork and one brick wall. About 1880 the ruin was remodeled and reshaped from its original cruciform design into the present rectangular building. Still in use is communion silver made in London in 1735.
 44. **Hungars Episcopal Church**, near Bridgetown off U.S. Route 13 west on Route 618. Records of the assigning of pews date the present building around 1742. Traces of the kiln in which the brick was burned can be seen close by. After the Revolution and the disestablishment of the Church of England, the building was so desecrated that lead from the organ pipes was used for weighting fishnets.
It was restored in 1851. Communion silver given the church in 1742 by John Custis of Williamsburg, remains in use.
 45. **Christ Episcopal Church**, in Eastville, was built in 1826, but is part of a much earlier heritage. It is of a piece with the history of the Eastville area where settlers arrived in 1614, only seven years after Jamestown. In Eastville are the oldest continuous court records in America dating from 1632 and the oldest standing Courthouse in America. The church prizes communion silver presented by John Custis in 1741 and a silver plate given by Governor Nicholson about 1692.