

# Self-Guided Easton Tours *Bike or Walk*

## HISTORIC HOUSES OF WORSHIP



*Third Haven Meeting House—Open for viewing*

Tour Time: 1½ hours • Cycling Time: 20 minutes  
Safety Rating (4 of 5): *Use Sidewalks on S. Washington St.*

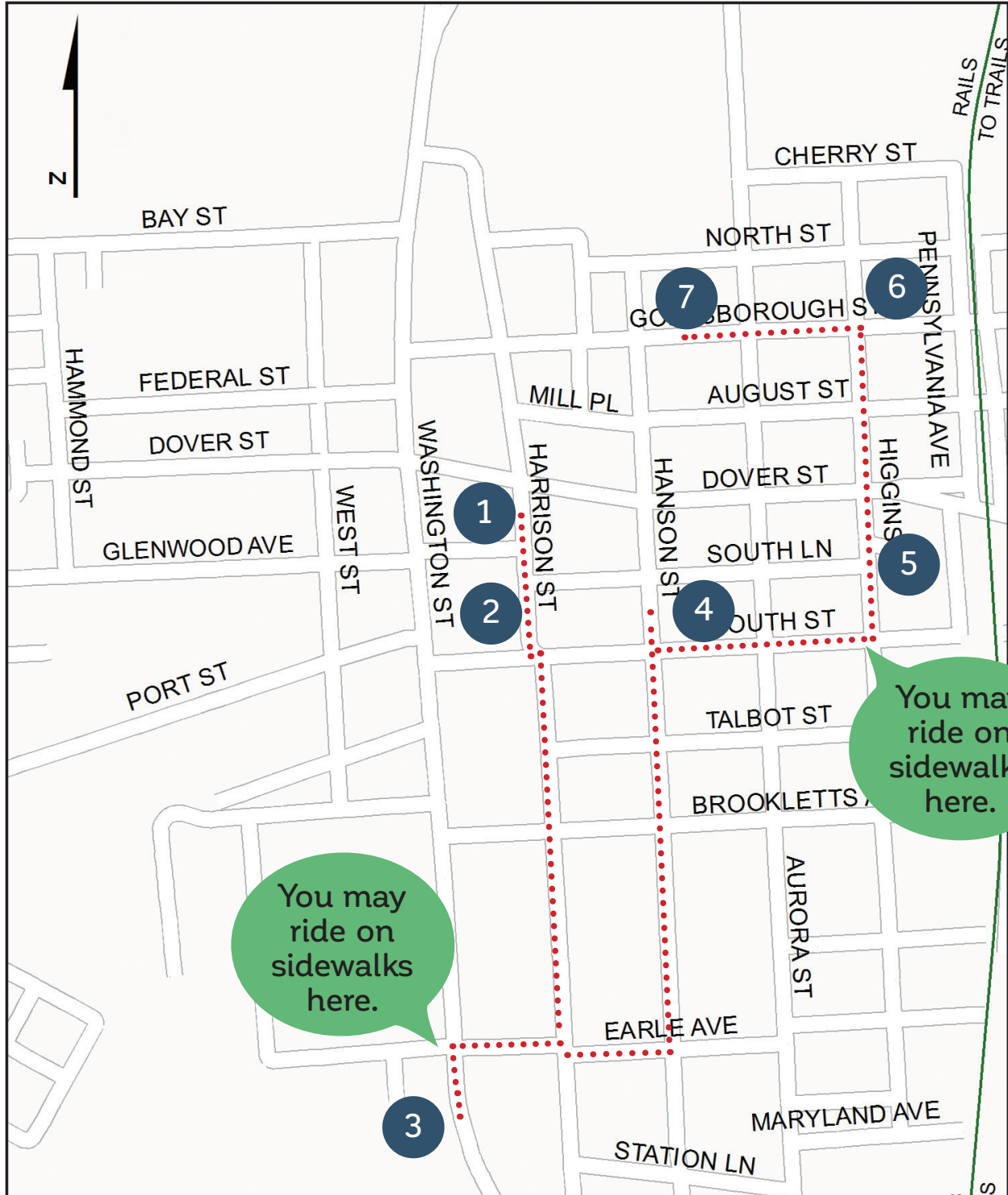
### OTHER EASTON TOURS:

Black History • Fun Facts and Ghost Stories  
Historic Buildings • Historic Waterfront



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## HISTORIC HOUSES OF WORSHIP



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## HISTORIC HOUSES OF WORSHIP

- 1 **All tours begin at the Talbot County Visitor and Resource Center:** 11 S. Harrison St. Come in and learn about other sites, activities, and events in Talbot County.

*As you exit, turn right onto S. Harrison St.*

- 2 **Christ Church:** 111 S. Harrison St. (1840-1845) Christ Church was founded in 1687. Its current structure, a granite Gothic Revival style common to the period, was designed by Philadelphia Architect, William Strickland.

- 3 **Third Haven Meeting House:** 405 S. Washington St. (1682-1684) This is the oldest Quaker meeting house in the United States, the oldest frame house of worship in the US, and Maryland's oldest documented building. Quakerism, begun in England in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century by George Fox and others seeking freedom of religion, holds as its core belief that there is "That of God" (a spark of the divine) in every person. Thus equality is central to Friends' beliefs and actions. From the beginning, women served pivotal roles at a time when that was unheard of. It was a woman, Elizabeth Harris, who brought Quakerism to Maryland in 1657. The commitment to equality continued as Friends supported abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, civil rights and other social justice issues.

During the colonial period a number of Quakers owned slaves. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, many Quakers advocated abolishing slavery within its membership, proceeding step by step, first banning the importation of slaves, then trading, then owning. By 1771 the Religious Society of Friends became the first religious body in the U.S. known to prohibit slavery among its members. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century Third Haven Friends were active in national and local abolition societies. A Quaker facilitated the founding of the African American community of Unionville by providing land to black veterans and their families.

The meeting house was originally built on 3 acres of land on the banks of the Tred Avon River, which served as the highway of its time. As the town of Easton grew, Friends acquired more land, including the present day lane.

The building was expanded in 1797, resulting in the asymmetrical roofline evident today. In 1880, a brick meeting house was constructed for use in cold weather, with the added amenities of electricity, heating, and plumbing.

The property is also home to a large graveyard with simple marble markers. Third Haven is still used as a place of worship, and visitors are welcome.

Take a detour to  
Grace Lutheran Church  
on 111 Brookletts Ave.

*At the end of the lane turn left on S. Washington St.,  
then right on Earle Ave., then left onto Hanson St.*

Our tour continues to a pair of historically important African American churches dedicated by Frederick Douglass in 1878, 50 years after he fled Talbot County as a slave. They are located on The Hill, which is one of the oldest free black communities in the United States. Many descendants of the original settlers still live and worship here.

**4 Bethel A.M.E Church:** 110 S. Hanson St. (1877) This is believed to be the oldest A.M.E. congregation in Talbot County. In 1818, the Rev. Shadrach Basset preached the first sermon from the back of a wagon. The congregation's first house of worship was in a carpenter's shop. The current structure is built in the Gothic revival style of the period. The church played an important role in the religious life of black Eastonians.

Like other religious and ethnic minorities, this community was aided by the local Quakers, who sold them their first church building. The years before the Civil War were particularly hard for the congregation as laws prohibited their meeting on Sunday and pastors were frequently threatened with being resold into slavery. Once they nearly lost their church, but a sympathetic Town Clerk granted the congregation a charter.

*Turn right on South St., then left on Locust Lane, then right on South Lane (church is at corner of South Lane and Higgins St.).*

**5 Asbury United Methodist Church:** 18 S. Higgins St. (1876) The congregation formed in 1836 and served as the center of The Hill community. The Gothic/Victorian-style church, with its distinctive Bell Tower was rebuilt in 1876. The church is currently under restoration.

*Turn around on South Lane, then right on Locust Lane. Turn left onto Goldsborough St.*

**6 Trinity Episcopal Church:** 315 Goldsborough St. (1891-1894) was the dream of the first Bishop of Easton, The Right Rev. Henry Champlin Lay. Construction on the building was begun in 1891 at a time when few American dioceses had cathedrals. In 1894 the Cathedral was completed (except for the spire and tower) and consecrated.

The Cathedral is built of granite shipped by water from Port Deposit, Maryland, with a slate roof in the English Gothic style. Most of the furnishings of the church, including the marble baptismal font, the brass pulpit, and the lectern were in place by 1894. The stained glass windows were donated at various times from 1891 to 1979.

The variety of styles reflects changing tastes over almost a century. The interior wood beams, trusses and windows emphasize the ascendant roof. The spire and tower were added in 1978. A major interior renovation of the Cathedral began in 2013 with construction of a worship platform in the Nave and the inclusion of a new altar, credence table, and cross made of Wye Oak, red ivory, and satinwood.

**7 Bishop's House:** 214 Goldsborough St. (1880) Victorian style, built by Captain Edward Roberts for Clintonia and Philip Frances Thomas, governor of Maryland (1848-1851), and Maryland's First Comptroller. Upon his death, the property was sold to the Trinity Episcopal Church, serving as the residence for the Bishops of the Diocese of Easton. Architectural features of the 3½ story clapboard and gabled roof home include 14 foot first floor ceilings, second floor guest rooms with 12 foot ceilings and working fireplaces. The wraparound porch is carried by double square columns. It is now a Bed & Breakfast.