



Crossroads

Crossroads Publishes Important Series on the Early History of St. James CME Church

The *Crossroads* editorial team is pleased to feature a series of articles, authored by **Brianna Harrison**, on the establishment of St. James CME Church, which was founded under the auspices of Trinity. A native of Tallahassee, Harrison holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Florida A&M University and plans to earn a master's of applied science degree in history in 2018.

The first part of the series (below) sets the wider context for early African American church life in Tallahassee and, in turn, St. James CME church.



Trinity Helped Start Church and School for Freed Slaves: Part 1 – Origin of African American Church

By Brianna Harrison

The condition of slavery in the United States resulted in a distinct African American culture. A key part of this culture was religion. Throughout enslavement, African Americans retained African religious traditions, such as medicine men, and combined them with Protestant Christianity.

The synthesis of the traditional religious practices of West Africa and Protestantism created the African American churches that are prevalent

today. Outside of historically Black colleges or universities, the Black church is an institution remnant of slavery and the Reconstruction Era.

This ongoing series highlights a particular church and denomination, St. James Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, located in Tallahassee, FL, in the years after the Civil War. Leading up to the establishment of the church, I provide historical background of the rise of African American churches in the U.S. Using St. James Colored

(cont. on p. 2)



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Upcoming Events:

Historical Society /Preservation of Church History Committee Meeting, 3 p.m., August 1, 2018
Heritage Room, 3rd Floor
All are welcome to attend.

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("Trinity Helped to Start," cont. from p. 1)

Methodist Episcopal Church as a model, I argue that African American churches, though nominally and demographically Black, have American values and principles at the core, making them an essential part of American religiosity.

The history of African American churches is one rooted in the synthesis of West African spiritualism and Christian practices. In regard to these churches, the Third Atlanta Conference of 1898 issued a report which claimed

The Negro Church is the only social institution of the Negroes which started in the African forest and survived slavery; under the leadership of priest or medicine man, afterward of the Christian pastor, the Church preserved in itself the remnants of African tribal life and became after emancipation the center of Negro social life. So that today the Negro population of the United States is virtually divided into church congregations which are the real units of race life. (Du Bois, 1898 [published in 1903], n.p.)

The report argues that churches are the sole social institution within African American culture that began in Africa and prevailed through the system of slavery. The African American church went through stages that resulted in the prevalence of church congregations. These congregations continued on into the nineteenth century and serve as the origin of African American churches.

The first religious congregation in Tallahassee, capital of the Territory of Florida, began in 1824, two years after Spain conceded the land to the United States. During its early years as a station church of the South Carolina and then the Georgia Methodist Conferences, Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church welcomed both races to worship. Tradition reports the use of slave galleries and later Sunday afternoon services in which Blacks were free to follow, to a certain extent, their own religious practices. That freedom would eventually lead to the creation of St. James Church.

The Rise of African American Churches Leading to the Establishment of St. James

C.W. Harper discusses the ways in which historians have theorized the start of all-Black churches before and after the Civil War. In the three decades prior to the Civil War, the Christian church "became one of the strongest allies of the pro-slavery element" (Harper, 1972, p. 119), abandoning early anti-slavery sentiments, and Blacks took notice.

In response to their bondage, slaves attending White Protestant churches emphasized the afterworld and its paradisiacal elements and rewards that contrasted with slaves' earthly status. Harper, however, notes issues with this view within the historiography. He cites **Vincent Harding's** belief that there existed a rebellious element amongst some slaves, which resulted from involvement with the Christian church. **Gabriel Prosser, Denmark Vesey** and **Nat Turner** (all preachers) are examples of this exhibited defiance as a result of being introduced to "scriptural authority" (Harper, 1972, p. 119).

Prosser, Vesey, and Turner are also examples of African Americans using Christianity to solve their own issues. Biblical teachings grew "central in the inspiration of the leader." Moreover, these enslaved leaders or preachers possessed the ability to support their fellow "Negro churchmen" in ways White preachers had failed (Pope, 1964, p. 145).

This element introduced by African American practitioners of Christian theology was fundamental to the establishment of Black churches after the Civil War. After emancipation, a few African Americans "could be found in white churches in the South, in very small numbers" (Pope, 1964, p. 145). Most, however, opted to construct their own churches, designed to cater to their immediate political, economic, social, and spiritual needs. Though these separate churches for newly freed African Americans existed, their theology, rituals, and structure were largely modeled after White churches.

Looking Ahead...

*Look for Part 2 of "Trinity Helped Start Church and School for Freed Slaves" by Tallahassee historian and scholar, **Brianna Harrison**, in the October 2018 issue of the Crossroads.*



Former structure of St. James Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. The church body was organized around 1845 under the auspices of Trinity M.E. Church as a place of worship for African American slaves. By the early 1870s, Trinity Trustees signed over to St. James the control of their property at the corner of Park and Bronough. The structure in the photo was built in 1899 and remodeled in 1948. (Photo credit: View showing St. James C. M. E. Church at 104 N. Bronough St. in Tallahassee, Florida. 197-?. Black & white photoprint, 5 x 7 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. <<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/253770>>, accessed 28 June 2018.)

For instance, the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), though a separate entity, modeled their organizational structure after the structure of White churches. **Richard Allen** and **Absalom Jones** established the AME Church in the early nineteenth century. It developed out of the Free African Society, which was established in 1787. Disenchanted by the widely blatant discrimination of Black Methodists by White Methodists,

the colored people belonging to the Methodist Society of Philadelphia convened together, in order to take into consideration the evils under which they labored, arising from the unkind treatment of their white brethren, who considered them a nuisance in the house of worship, and even pulled them off their knees while in the act of prayer, and ordered them back to their seats. (Baxter, 1920, p. 6)

Through a judicial process, the AME Church established itself within Methodism but separate from White Methodists, especially regarding ownership of church property. As a result, the AME Church prevailed as a viable congregation for African Americans (Baxter, 1920).

Although the AME Church differed demographically from White Methodist churches, the two possessed similarities in theology. Their “belief as Methodists” did not allow them to espouse Apostolic Succession, which is the belief that there is an uninterrupted trans-

fer of spiritual authority from the Apostles to bishops and popes (Baxter, 1920, p. 18). Like their White counterparts, Blacks who adhered to the African Methodist Episcopal Church believed in the basic tenets of American Protestantism.

In this case, it is clear that African Methodism operated on Methodist principles. Through their departure from the Methodist church, African Methodists did not desire to alter the Methodist religious traditions; they simply desired to function separately from Whites because of discriminatory practices. The African Methodist Episcopal Church is nominally African and comprised of descendants of Africans. Ideologically and theologically, however, the AME Church is as American as their White counterparts, similar to their brethren within the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, which will be the topic of the next part in this series.

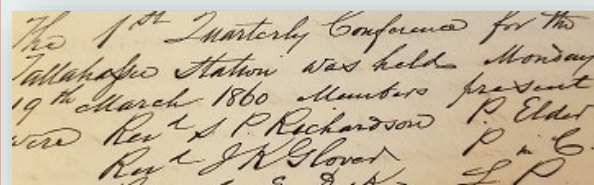
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Clergy Chronicles: The Short Life of the Rev. Jasper K. Glover, Part 2

By Pamela C. Crosby

This is the second part of a short two-part history of the life of **the Rev. Jasper K. Glover**, who served as Trinity's pastor in 1860 (Crosby, 2017, p. 7). *The Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Smith & Smith, 1870) includes a memorial biographical description of his brief life's service. It portrays him as a highly intelligent and well-educated young man who preached "blustery sermons" eloquently with originality and reasoned argument and was "likeable, and intensely committed to his faith" (p. 409).



Trinity's Quarterly Conference Minutes refers to Glover as "P in C," or "Preacher in Charge," March 19, 1860.

What little we know about the Rev. Glover provides some insight into his personality. After serving as pastor in 1860, he was appointed as presiding elder of the Tallahassee District in the same year. This responsibility afforded him the opportunity to get to know **Charles A. Hentz**, a physician who lived in Quincy, FL., an area included in the district. Hentz maintained a diary, which was later published, recounting stories of his rural practice, personal life, and church experience and mentions the Rev. Glover as a close friend.

Glover visited Hentz and his wife often, and Hentz describes him as a very active and delightful person, enjoying many different hobbies. For example, Hentz recounts in his diary, "Bro. Glover of Tallahassee here tonight—on this way to Hackle Trap—Orson [brother-in-law of Jasper] & Glover shot 6 doves and squirrel this evening" (Hentz, 2000, p. 342). And he enjoyed quoits, a game similar to horseshoes, playing with Hentz "at sunset" with "iced lemonade afterwards" (p. 373).

Through Hentz's eyes we see Jasper riding his horse on his rounds, visiting and enjoying the company of his friends and preaching "beautiful" sermons. According to Hentz, Glover's topics ranged from the resurrection to the "New Birth" (p. 375).

Although he had been quite an active young man,

Jasper suffered a pulmonary hemorrhage on April 14 1861—the same day Florida residents were receiving dispatches from telegraph offices of the surrender of Fort Sumter. The Rev. Glover survived the hemorrhage, took up his rounds again, but later suffered another hemorrhage. Hentz recalls the following in his autobiography published with his diary:

On one of his rounds he was on Lake Jackson, in Leon Co--; he had made all arrangements for a big fine fishing expedition on the following morning—; had bait all ready, and was to start before day-break—; during the night. . . he had a frightful hemorrhage, without any warning—; physicians were sent for to Tallahassee—; and his wife was sent for, and he lay there for a long time, in a very prostrate condition—; he never recovered. (p. 589)

The Florida Conference memorial notes that Glover died in Waukeenah, FL. on November 22, 1862. It is not clear from Hentz's report when and for what reason Glover had moved to Waukeenah or how long he was ill before he died. Nevertheless, it was a sad ending to a promising life. The young minister, who at one point had served as chaplain for the House of the Florida State Legislature (Florida, p. 19), was only 33 years old when he died.

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Community Matters for Lives in Transition: Trinity's Young Adults at the Start of 10 Years in Ministry

By Nick Quinton



Trinity Young Adults on bowling outing August 9, 2009; from left: Aaron Podey, Jenna Lockwood, John Lockwood, Melanie Quinton, Nick Quinton, Tony Fotsch, Debbie Fotsch, Sarah Watters, Mike Watters, Lillian Watters (in Mike's arms), Allison Corrigan, Bailey Corrigan (on Allison's shoulders), Mike Corrigan, with Pam MacRae-Podey behind the camera.

Lent 2018 marked the start of the 10th year for Trinity's current Young Adult (YA) ministry. The group continues its great work in making disciples by gathering with friends to study and serve in the midst of a major transition in life for them. Over these first nine years, many friends have come and gone, but this ministry feels very much the same now as then.

Our very first gatherings were part of the church-wide Lenten Study on *Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living* by Reuben Job (2007). We enjoyed Wednesday night suppers in Moor Hall and stimulating discussion about living the rules: do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God. Our first study culminated on Easter morning when we provided snacks to people living in the Chain of Parks.

At the time, **the Rev. Tony Fotsch** was working to start a young adult ministry, and I agreed to help out. The church wide Lenten Study under the organization and guidance of **the Rev. Barbara Hynes** proved to be a great vehicle to get young adults involved at Trinity.

Excitement around the initial study spun into a summer long meeting on Wednesday nights. The early participants swapped out responsibility for meals and discussed *Serious Answers to Hard Questions* (Wesley Ministry Network). We also held social events including movie and game nights, bowling, meals out, and a trip

to Mule Day. After that summer the YAs moved study from Wednesday nights to Sunday mornings, kept the social events going, and committed to serve meals at the Shelter.

With a new Sunday small group, the YAs took over the Conference Room for seven years of lively debate and heartfelt connection. During that time, a group of YAs began to gather on Tuesday nights in the library for study. Social events became a regular part of our time together when **Nancy Duncan** joined as co-convenor of the group in Lent 2012. Not only did Nancy lead the study, she and husband and co-convenor, **Jimmie Duncan**, committed to hosting meals at each break in the class curriculum. The Tuesday night tradition of study and social connection continues today under the leadership and care of **Susan Bowers**, who joined as convenor of the YAs in 2016.

In an article from the *Tidings* in 2009, the Rev. Tony Fotsch described the then new Trinity YA group as “a collection of young Christians that desires to journey deeper in faith as it connects with life, loves to grow closer in fellowship, and [is] very passionate, motivated and energetic to serve in ministry to the world” (p. 5).

In a community blog, short-lived but lively (July-October, 2009), discussions of the YA mission statement unfolded. The primary focus of those conversations was support for one another to live out our faith in openness and honesty about what we were going through.

In a May 2018 *Tidings* article, commemorating this milestone at Trinity, Susan Bowers highlighted care, compassion, and growth as central to the current work of the YAs. It is clear that though the names and faces have changed, the mission to serve those in this incredible period of life transition has not.

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Friend in Faith

By Dot Binger

Trinity has been a Friend (capital “F” intended) to the Wesley Foundation at Florida State College for Women (FSCW) and Florida State University (FSU) since the late 1920s, when Trinity helped initiate a Methodist student organization on campus.

The 1935 *Articles of Incorporation of the Methodist Student House* states that “the general nature and object of the corporation is to aid, strengthen, and develop in every proper and useful way the spiritual and social lives of all students attending the Florida State College for Women located in Tallahassee, Florida” (Clerk of Court’s Office, 1935, Art. II). Among the signers of these articles were three Tallahassee women, members of Trinity. Their names appear on the document as **Mrs. O. C. Parker, Sr., Mrs. Beth Walton Moor, and Mrs. W. E. Van Brunt.**



Early Wesley Foundation building, 705 West Jefferson Street, decorated for the holidays. While no evidence so far confirms it as the first building, no record of any earlier building has been found.

Several years earlier, Trustees of Trinity acquired property on Jefferson Street for the purpose of constructing a building to be used for a Methodist student organization at FSCW, which would come under the authority and direction of the Florida Conference Woman's Missionary Society (at present, United Methodist Women). Because the organization could now hold the title to the property, Trinity transferred the Jefferson Street property to the Methodist Student House, Inc. for the sum of one dollar. The deed was executed on October 8, 1935.

The conference leadership of Methodist women appointed its first deaconess, **Elsie Moore**, who served from 1930 to 1932, to direct the program at the Methodist Student House, also known as the Wesley



Alpharetta Leeper, the last deaconess to direct the Wesley Foundation at FSU, sits on the steps of the Wesley Foundation building. She left the Foundation in 1952, and temporary staff served until 1954.

Foundation, but they relied heavily on local Methodist women at Trinity to provide ongoing support to the deaconess, whether it was to provide guidance, acquire equipment, or provide socials for the female students (“Minutes of Trinity Missionary Auxiliary,” 1933).

The Student House provided a full program throughout the week, including Sunday School and a spirited program on Sunday evening, but the students relied on Trinity for Sunday worship at 11:00. The outstanding quality of worship, music, and preaching at Trinity was new for those from Cottondale, Bushnell or Holopaw, FL, but nurtured their growth in Christian faith. However, students from Miami and Tampa also filled the pews and never forgot the challenge of sermons like those of **the Rev. Dr. Jack Anderson** and other Trinity ministers.

Although the women's college became FSU in 1947, the Wesley Foundation remained the responsibility of conference Methodist women until 1954 when an ordained minister, **the Rev. Austin Hollady**, was appointed as director and minister. Authority and responsibility were transferred to the Florida Conference Board of Education.

Trinity's role changed, but its support did not waver. Trinity members continued to serve on the Wesley Foundation Board of Directors, helping to provide local leadership and effective advocacy at the conference level. In 1958 the local board (mostly Trinity members) sent a strongly worded letter to the Board of Education, chastising that board for inadequate planning to assume responsibility and in treating other Wesley Foundations differently, saying “this child [FSU Wesley Foundation] grew until today [such that now] he is a

towering giant, and we struggle in vain to clothe him in knee britches." The Board requested the immediate appointment of an associate director and a parsonage for the director. Both requests were granted (Wesley Foundation Board, 1958).

What tremendous foresight those members of Trinity possessed in acquiring the site on Jefferson Street and helping to lay the foundation for a program that has nurtured faith and church leadership in thousands of students and continues to do so—from a stunning view of the campus it serves.

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Taking Care of Trinity's History

A Report from the Trinity Historical Society and Preservation of Church History Committee

While reading this newsletter, you may have noticed that its articles have been recounting Trinity's past 193 years. While the society and church committee love to tell a good story researched from the church's archives, this new column, beginning in this issue, tells what is happening now—after all, "now" will be tomorrow's history.

—Linda Yates, Trinity Historical Society Chair

It's a Good Sign

Since 2009, an image in front of the church of a Methodist circuit rider has welcomed churchgoers. The image, displayed with a summary of Trinity's history, was no match for the Florida sun, however, and its sepia colored pictures and message had faded a little more each day. **Rex Adams** asked Trinity member **Jonathan Leach**, who works for Printing Solutions, for a price quote to refurbish it. Jonathan did the work and received clearance from his boss to complete the project. *Thanks, Jonathan, for a good job!*

200th Anniversary Committee Appointed

In 2024, six years from now, Trinity United Methodist Church will be 200 years old. There will be a celebration befitting the first religious congregation in the capital city of the Territory of Florida. That capital city, Tallahassee, started the same year and will be having its own celebration.

The Rev. Dr. Wayne Wiatt approved the appointment of a core group of church members, chaired by **Lynn McLarty**, to begin planning. Events are expected to span many months leading up to Celebration Sunday in September 2024. Special subcommittees

will be added as each event is planned. The core committee nominees will be presented to the Church Council for approval. Trinity community members may read about the committee's work in future issues of the *Monthly Tidings* and in future issues of *Crossroads* as Trinity counts down the months before the anniversary.

Tidings Preserved in Book Bindings

The church newsletter, the *Monthly Tidings*, continues to document the church's history. Earlier issues were preserved in hard bindings, but in recent years issues have been stored in archival quality boxes and placed in a crowded closet. There they were kept in good condition, but it was hard to use them as a research tool. While researching some Trinity history one day, **Lynn McLarty** sought to remedy that problem. He and **Rex Adams** found a local printer with contacts with a book bindery in Jacksonville. Now bound volumes of past issues of the *Tidings* have been added to the collection in the Heritage Room. Please drop by to look at these copies and also other archives. The Heritage Room is open during the Sunday School hour and often on Wednesday afternoons.

2018 Historical Society Officers

Linda Yates, Chair
Dot Binger, Secretary
Bob Jones, Historian

Lynn McLarty, Membership Archivist
Rhonda Work, Vice Chair of Historic Preservation
Mary Margaret Rogers, Member-at-Large
Pamela C. Crosby, Publications Editor

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History Website: <http://www.tumct.org/welcome/about/history/>

The purpose of Crossroads is to provide descriptions of historical events. Its intent is not to endorse or criticize theological or ethical positions related to issues that these descriptive accounts might raise. While we strive to be as accurate as possible, we make mistakes sometimes. Please send your comments, corrections, and requests for printed copies to Pamela Crosby, editor, at pcrosby@tumct.org.

Call for Submissions of Articles Relating to the History of Trinity

The Crossroads editor and team welcome submissions of historical articles relating to the history of Trinity for consideration of publication in the newsletter.

Works considered may be personal stories or historical research. The word limit is 500 words. Longer articles can be adapted as a series of shorter articles if appropriate.

We will consider articles on the basis of these criteria: relevance to the purpose of the newsletter, which is to publish articles that pertain to the history of Trinity in a substantial way; quality of writing; historical accuracy; clarity; conciseness; coherence; and readability. While the articles may refer to or quote other historical publications, they should be original works and not excerpts. Writing should be free of disrespectful language. Privacy and copyright pertaining to others mentioned or cited in the articles or appearing in photos will be considered before publication. Photos should not violate privacy, copyright, or other established laws. A list of resources used for historical research may be requested. Original sources are preferred. All articles are subject to editor approval. Submissions are welcomed at any time. We especially encourage young historians to research and submit. Please send to **Pamela Crosby**, editor, at pcrosby@tumct.org.

Here are some examples for topics:

- Any Sunday School class
- HEO
- Lay church leaders
- Any adult study or ministry
- United Methodist Women
- Lay Academy
- Children's Sunday School
- Ministers
- Local missions

Or a topic of your choosing!