

# EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT



**Cultural Resources, Southeast Region  
National Park Service**

**2001**



**Cultural Resources  
Southeast Region  
National Park Service  
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2001  
Historic Structure Report  
Ebenezer Baptist Church  
Martin Luther King, Jr.  
National Historic Site  
Atlanta, Georgia  
LCS#: 90002

Previous page, North elevation of  
Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta,  
Georgia. (NPS, 2001)

**T**he historic structure report presented here exists in two formats. A traditional, printed version is available for study at the park, the Southeastern Regional Office of the NPS (SERO), and at a variety of other repositories. For more widespread access, the historic structure report also exists in a web-based format through the SERO intranet, which includes links to individual files for a variety of photographs, documents, plans and other material used in compilation of the printed report.

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# Executive Summary

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

Most of the information for this HSR was compiled in the summer and fall of 1999, with additional research and building investigation conducted in the spring and summer of 2000. Historical research included a survey of available sources at the church, which were few, and of information that had already been compiled by the NPS. Most of this information was in the form of photocopies of original documents and photographs. The location of most of the original material has not been confirmed but it is thought that much of it still resides with the King family or with individual church members. Oral interviews were conducted with Rev. Roberts, the current pastor; Howard King, chairman of the church's building committee; David Johnson, long-time church member and now the building's custodian; and several other church members whose memories encompassed the historic period. Especially helpful and generous with their time have been Miss Lillian Watkins, who served as Daddy King's secretary for many years; Mr. and Mrs.

Jethro English, who have been active members of Ebenezer for over sixty years; and Mr. David Stills, the church's organist in the 1950s and 1960s. In addition, interviews with Mr. Paul Muldawer and Mr. J. W. Robinson, architects for the 1970 changes to Ebenezer, and Mr. Robert Norwood, contractor for the work in 1970, helped in understanding the alterations that were made to the building after 1968.

Sources at the Auburn Avenue Research Library on African-American History were searched, including microfilm copies of the *Atlanta Independent* (1903-1928) and *Atlanta Daily World* (1932-present), the city's two, most-important, black-owned newspapers in the twentieth century. Ms. Anita Martin, librarian at the Auburn Avenue Library, was especially generous with her assistance in searching early issues of the *Independent* and other sources for information regarding Ebenezer. At the Atlanta-Fulton County Public Library, newspapers and periodicals were also searched, including the index to the *Atlanta Constitution* since 1941. Other sources of information included the files of the Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Natural Resources, the Atlanta History Center Library, and the Georgia Baptist Historical Society at Mercer University. A single sheet of drawings for the 1956 addition and remodeling was provided by David Stills. Microfiche copies of the plans for the 1970 alterations were located at the City of Atlanta's Bureau of Buildings.

Ms. Barbara A. Yocum, architectural conservator with the Building Conservation Branch, Northeast Cultural Resources Center, NPS, conducted an extensive study of the paint finishes on the exterior

and selected interior spaces of the church. A total of 142 paint samples were removed for study. The initial building investigation by Mr. Klaus Roche, Ms. Susan Turner, and Mr. Rob Yallop, architects with Lord, Aeck, & Sargent, provided a great deal of information about the building. Their condition assessment of the building is included in Appendix C and many of their findings are incorporated throughout this document. During the course of that and subsequent building investigation by NPS staff, there was only limited removal of modern materials that, in some areas, cover significant parts of the building's historic interior features.

In developing this historic structure report, NPS staff at the Park have been unstinting in their support for the project. In particular, Ms. Carol Ashe, museum technician, and Mr. Dean Rowley, historian, were extremely helpful in locating documents and in directing researchers to appropriate sources. Finally, Ms. Wendy Janssen, chief of resource management and park planning, and Mr. Frank Catroppa, park superintendent, have maintained enthusiastic interest in the project and their willingness to discuss issues that have arisen and to review a variety of drafts of the report has greatly expedited the work.

This historic structure report was developed by the Cultural Resources Stewardship division of the NPS's Southeast Regional Office under the direction of Mr. Dan Scheidt, chief of Building Conservation Research. Mr. Tommy Jones, architectural historian, provided original historical documentation, wrote the narrative portion of this report, and assisted in development of the web-based version of this report. Mr. Jon Buono, historical

## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

architect, produced HABS photographs of Ebenezer and was responsible for publication of the final document.

### HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Ebenezer Baptist Church represents one of the major influences in Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life. His grandfather and his father built the church into one of the city's most influential African-American churches during the first half of the twentieth century and Dr. King himself used the church as a platform from which to launch his preaching career in the late 1940s. Because of Dr. King's leadership in the Civil Rights Movement, Ebenezer was often the site of meetings and rallies, including the organizational meetings that led to the founding of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957. In addition, Dr. King served as co-pastor at Ebenezer in 1960-1968 and his funeral was held from the church in April 1968.

In all Park planning documents to date, two periods of significance have been identified for the church: Martin Luther King, Jr.'s youth, 1929-1947, and the Civil Rights Movement and Dr. King's funeral, 1960-1968. Because the building was extensively remodeled and expanded in 1955-56, after which Dr. King's name and that of Ebenezer became inextricably linked in history, it is the building's appearance during the second period (1960-1968) that is of most significance to American history.

However, within months of Dr. King's death, Mrs. Coretta Scott King began directing an effort to create the Martin Luther King Memorial Center, now the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Non-Violent Social Change. Ebenezer was in-

timately bound up with these efforts, holding title to much of the present King Center property until 1973. During that interval, initial plans for a "memorial park" on Auburn Avenue included three focal points: the birth home, the grave site, and Ebenezer. Plans were being drawn up for major changes to Ebenezer when Dr. King was re-interred on Auburn Avenue in January 1970. Lack of funding and other difficulties prevented execution of the entire plan, which included a circular chapel at the rear of Ebenezer, and only the addition to the front of the Christian Education Building and the changes to the vestibule and stairwells in the old church were ever executed.

While it is too soon to declare the historical significance of the 1970 work, it is not too soon to recommend that it be preserved, especially since reconstruction of the stairwells and of the front of the Education Building would require far more documentation than is currently available. Code issues, current building use and occupancy, and the larger changes to the street-scape around the church since 1968 were also factors in arriving at the conclusion that reconstruction of the building exterior, stairwells, and vestibules as they appeared before 1970 should not be pursued at this time. Dr. King's influence was felt long after his death; and, although the genesis of the King Center is not now a part of the Park's interpretive plan, consideration should be given to expanding interpretation to include the early efforts to memorialize him and continue his work. For Ebenezer, at least, the period of significance relative to the King legacy logically ends with Daddy King's retirement in 1975.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

No architect has been documented for the Late Gothic Revival design of Ebenezer which was constructed over a seven-year period, beginning in 1914. Due to financial difficulties, construction stopped after completion of the basement story, which was occupied in late summer 1914, and did not resume until after World War I. In June 1921, the congregation was able to continue construction and completed the upper story containing the sanctuary in January 1922. Again, money was in short supply and it was not until the late 1930s or early 1940s that the exterior of the basement walls were stuccoed as originally intended. In the late 1930s, pews finally replaced benches in the sanctuary and, in 1940, a great Wurlitzer pipe organ replaced an old pump organ that had been brought from the old building on Gilmer Street.

In 1955-56, the Christian Education Building was constructed, but was not connected to the original building except by the elevated walkway near the rear of the building. The interior of the church was also remodeled, which included replacement of the original choir loft, pulpit stage, and free-standing, pipe organ with the present stage, choir loft, and organ chambers. A baptismal pool was also installed behind the choir and the sanctuary's seating area expanded to include the old church office under the rear of the balcony. The vestibule was also expanded and access to the basement altered at the same time. The basement was reconfigured as well with an expanded Fellowship Hall, a new stage, kitchen and ladies room. Central air-conditioning was installed about 1960.

In 1970-71, a new vestibule and a gift shop were constructed in front of the Christian Education Building. This work also included demolition of part of the east wall of the northeast tower, complete reconstruction of both stairwells, and alterations to the church's vestibule. A small addition was built at the rear of the church to allow for expansion of the 1956 baptismal pool and improvements to circulation around the choir loft.

Around 1970, the interior of the sanctuary was remodeled by covering the original wainscot with gypsum drywall and painting most of the interior woodwork white. In the mid-1970s, the Hill-Green-Lane pipe organ and the choir loft seating, both of which had been installed in 1956, were replaced. The pulpit furniture, which dates to the 1930s, was removed to the Education Building and replaced at that time as well. The bathrooms and basement were remodeled in the late 1970s and the original church announcement board was relocated after 1985.

The "Condition Assessment" by Lord, Aeck, & Sargent, which was completed in November 1999, was limited to the exterior envelope of the building, its structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection systems and a life safety and accessibility analysis. It found that the building is in generally good condition with the major building elements, structure, and envelope intact and functioning as originally intended. The assessment did not include the Christian Education Building, the 1970 connection with the church, or the elevated walkway between the buildings.

The most significant problems that were identified with the building's envelope

## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

are related to the drainage channel on the east side of the building which has contributed to major plaster deterioration in the basement. Water penetration in and around window frames and deterioration of wood frames and trim was also noted as was some cracking and delamination of the stucco at the basement level.

The most significant structural problems that were identified are in the attic where recent repairs may have compromised the structure and where the historic construction methods for the roof and ceiling do not meet modern standards. Some deterioration of the arched window and door openings was noted as was the deteriorated and substandard structure that supports the baptismal pool.

The building's mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems are generally outdated and beyond their useful life, which has resulted in reduced efficiency and, in some cases, hazardous conditions. The building's electrical system presents the most critical deficiency and concern. Numerous fire and electrocution hazards are present, due in large part to the proximity of live parts and equipment to trash and other stored materials. Poor storage methods throughout the building pose a major code violation and fire hazard. The building's fire detection system is very limited and in poor condition.

Like most historic buildings, the historic design and interior arrangement of Ebenezer do not comply with and are not conducive to modern standards. Of particular concern is the fact that, when the church is filled to capacity on all levels, the entrance vestibule and main exit doors can not accommodate those exit-

ing from the Fellowship Hall and those exiting from the sanctuary and balcony above. In addition, the building is not handicapped accessible.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The congregation's continued use of the building has complicated planning. While most of their use is compatible with the Park's responsibility to preserve and interpret the building, their use of the basement for food service and storage create hazards to the building and also preclude full restoration and interpretation of that area. Although these uses will eventually be phased out, they will have to be accommodated in the short term.

The work recommendations outlined in this historic structure report fall into three major categories:

### 1. Stabilization and preservation of the existing historic building:

- repair of windows and doors
- re-working of the storm drainage system at the base of the east elevation
- exterior masonry repairs
- structural improvements to the roof and ceiling system
- removal of all stored materials and debris from all mechanical and electrical utility spaces in order to reduce the risk of fire and related hazards.
- preservation of the 1970 addition to the Christian Education Building and the other contemporaneous changes to the exterior and to the stairwells, vestibule, and baptismal pool in the church.

2. Rehabilitation of the building's systems and infrastructure to accommodate modern, code-compliant use:

- replacement and upgrade of all mechanical and electrical systems
- construction of a small, free-standing building behind the church to house mechanical and electrical equipment
- reconfiguration and redesign of the 1970 addition to the rear (south) side of the building as necessary to address accessibility and other functional issues

3. As an aid to interpretation, restoration of the historic character of the significant interior spaces as they appeared in 1968:

- restoration of the sanctuary, including re-creation of choir loft seating, return of original pulpit furniture, and re-creation of the historic architectural and painted finishes
- restoration of the Hill-Green-Lane pipe organ
- restoration and continued use of the Fellowship Hall for community activities

# Administrative Data

## LOCATIONAL DATA

*Building Name:* Ebenezer Baptist Church  
*Building Address:* 407 Auburn Avenue, N. E.,  
Atlanta, Georgia  
*LCS#:* 90002

## PROPOSED TREATMENT

The NPS' general management plan and development concept plan for the Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic Site and Preservation District (1986) recognized that Ebenezer Baptist Church and the King birth home are the most important sites in the Park. As such, both structures are placed in the most-restrictive of NPS' three preservation categories for the Park. In both cases, the objective is to fully preserve or restore the appearance of these buildings to the period of historical importance associated with Dr. King.

The management plan also states that proposed uses and treatment of all NPS owned or managed structures and sites will be in accordance with a series of park management objectives for protection of cultural resources and interpretation. These objectives include the development of working relationships with those agencies, organizations and individuals with whom cooperation is

essential in order to fulfill the established purposes of the park. These would, of course, include the congregation of Ebenezer Baptist Church.

The 1986 management objectives also include other statements that are applicable to the current considerations surrounding treatment and use of Ebenezer. These include establishment of barrier-free access; implementation of a program "that will enhance energy conservation"; minimization of interference between visitor activities and those of area residents; and inventory, documentation, evaluation, protection, and maintenance of cultural resources within the park boundaries to the fullest extent possible in a manner consistent with the park's authorizing legislation, other legislative mandates, and NPS policies.

## RELATED STUDIES

*Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site, Historic Resource Study.* National Park Service, 1994.

*Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site, General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan.* National Park Service, 1986.

Historic American Buildings Survey,  
Project # GA-2169-F (1985)

## CULTURAL RESOURCE DATA

*National Historic Landmark:*  
Listed 5 May 1977.

*National Register of Historic Places:*  
Listed 10 October 1980.

*Periods of Significance:*  
National significance as Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, boyhood church. King helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Council here in 1957 and was co-pastor from 1960 until his assassination in April 1968. His funeral was held from the church, which has since become a shrine to his memory.

# Historical Background & Context

## OVERVIEW

Organized in 1886, Ebenezer Baptist Church is neither the oldest nor the largest of Atlanta's great African-American churches; but, because of its associations with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Civil Rights Movement, it is by far the best-known and most historically-significant of those churches. King, his father wrote, was "a son of the Baptist South, there'd never be any doubt about that," and, although he took a thoroughly modern approach to his Baptist faith, Ebenezer was one of the major influences on his choice of career and the way in which he conducted that career.[1]

### *Date of Erection*

The cornerstone was probably laid in March 1914; basement completed and occupied in August 1914 (*Atlanta Independent*, 27 June, 29 August 1914). Construction resumed in June 1921 and completed early in 1922 (City of Atlanta Building Permit #1502).

**Architect**

No architect has been identified for the original building, although some oral traditions credit Rev. A. D. Williams with the design. Edward C. Miller designed the 1955-1956 additions and alterations. Muldawer & Patterson in association with J. W. Robinson designed the addition to the front of the education building and alterations to the church itself in 1970

**Builder and Suppliers**

Primary contractor and labor for original building and pre-World War II alterations have been traditionally attributed to members of the congregation.

Barge-Thompson Construction Company, Atlanta, 1955-1956 additions and alterations.

Robert Norwood Construction Company, Atlanta, 1970 addition and vestibule alterations and other modern alterations.

Stained glass: J. V. Llorens Stained Glass Studio, Atlanta, now in business in Decatur, Georgia, 1922, 1956, and other dates.

**Date Ownership**

10 January 1913	407 Auburn Avenue, A. J. Dalbridge to Rev. A. D. Williams, bond for title (Fulton County Deed Book 350, p. 587).
5 February 1913	407 Auburn Avenue, Rev. A.D. Williams to Trustees of Ebenezer Baptist Church (Fulton County Deed Book 464, pp. 269-271).
12 June 1919	407 Auburn Avenue, A. J. Dalbridge to Trustees of Ebenezer Baptist Church. (Fulton County Deed Book 502, p. 575).
2 June 1947	21 Jackson Street, Mrs. Maggie Gaines to Ebenezer Baptist Church (Fulton County Deed Book 2233, p. 357).
7 July 1951	25 Jackson Street, F. S. Burch to Ebenezer Baptist Church (Fulton County Deed Book 2662, p. 577).
30 June 1952	28 Jackson, Annie Harris Tucker to Ebenezer Baptist Church (Fulton County Deed Book 2754, p. 643).
26 January 1955	413 Auburn Avenue, Bethel Baptist Church to Ebenezer Baptist Church (Bk 2964, p. 336; plat book 53, p. 14).

**ORIGINS**

There were no African-American churches in Atlanta prior to the Civil War but, in the years immediately after the War, at least four were organized: Big Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (1865), Friendship Baptist (1866), First Congregational (1867), and Wheat Street Baptist (1870). Others followed, especially Baptist churches, with Friendship on the west side of town and Wheat Street on the east side establishing a number of mission churches in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as the city's African-American population grew and flourished.



Saunders' Bird's-Eye Map of Atlanta, 1892, showing original Ebenezer Baptist Church. (Atlanta Historical Society)

According to church tradition, Rev. John A. Parker, who was then a member of Wheat Street Baptist, organized Ebenezer Baptist Church "in the latter part of November 1886." [2] At that time, Wheat Street church was located at the corner of what are now Old Wheat St. and Fort St., a few blocks west of its present location. Ebenezer was probably organized to serve the new working-class neighborhood that had sprung up to the east along the railroad Belt Line in the late 1870s and 1880s. [3] "In a short time" after the church's organization, according to church history, the congregation boasted fifty members and was meeting in a "box-like structure" on Airline Street, a narrow street that parallels the Belt Line between Auburn and DeKalb Avenues. [4] Saunders' 1892 bird's-eye map of Atlanta indicates a steepled church on the east side of Airline Street (originally Air-Line, after the Atlanta and Charlotte Air-Line Railroad), opposite its intersection with Old Wheat Street east of Randolph Street. Although Ebenezer is not listed in the city directories before 1900, there is no other church known to have existed on Airline during this period ei-

ther, and it seems likely that the church shown on the map was the original Ebenezer Baptist Church. [5]

There is no record that the congregation ever held title to the Airline Street church, although it may have been held by one of the members. In any case, the site was heavily mortgaged, according to a later account, and the congregation may even have lost possession of the building by the time Parker died in 1894. [6]

### REV. A. D. WILLIAMS

On 4 March 1894, Rev. Adam Daniel Williams was called to the pastorate of the struggling congregation, which by then had dwindled to around eighteen members and was meeting "in a small shack" on Airline Street. [7] Williams, who had moved to Atlanta from Greene County, Georgia, the previous year, proved to be a dynamic leader and, within a year, membership had grown to sixty-five. Over the next few years, he saw Ebenezer through an era of rapid growth that, by 1904, made it the second largest African-American congregation on the east side of Atlanta. [8]

Perhaps as early as 1897, the congregation was strong enough to buy a lot on McGruder Street where they may have built a church in 1897 or 1898. [9] The building could not have been large, however, and, with a membership of 120, the congregation bought "a beautiful, spacious structure, 40 x 80," at 176 Gilmer Street in December 1900. [10] The wood-framed building, which had been built in the 1870s for the white congregation of the Fifth Baptist Church, was purchased for \$2500, "together with... all furniture in said church except or-



Ebenezer Baptist Church, 176 Gilmer Street, 1900-1913. (Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site (MALU) Collection)

gans, pulpit set, books, communion set and desk." [11]

By the early 1900s, Williams was considered one of the most successful pastors in the city, adding 91 members to the church rolls and collecting \$2,376.58 in contributions in 1903 alone. By 1904, membership was more than 400 and Williams' "church society," a contemporary account noted, "is one of the strongest in the city, having upward of \$500 in bank," with "all departments of the church... now in a flourishing condition." Williams' success at fund-raising would be legendary over the years, even though, as that same account noted, he worked "under the shadow of Wheat Street Baptist and

Bethel A. M. E. Churches, two of the most influential churches in our city." [12]

In the early 1900s, Jim Crow and segregation were being ever more rigidly enforced within a milieu that was increasingly virulent in its attacks on African-Americans. Goaded especially by the racism of *The Atlanta Georgian*, one of the city's three daily papers, and by the vicious race-baiting of the 1906 gubernatorial campaign, white Atlanta erupted into a three-day race riot in September 1906 that left at least a dozen black citizens dead and scores injured. As a result, in the years leading up to World War I, the city became increasingly segregated, and the old racially-integrated residential patterns soon disappeared, transforming old neighborhoods like the Old Fourth Ward into predominantly black communities within the space of a few years. In addition, the city's black entrepreneurs, who were severely restricted in their options for business downtown, transformed Auburn Avenue into a "black Peachtree." In many ways, the opening of the Odd Fellows Building in 1912 and its Auditorium in 1914 symbolized the beginning of the heyday of "Sweet Auburn."

## A NEW CHURCH

Ebenezer continued to grow as a congregation in the years leading up to World War I and, probably as part of the increasing segregation of Atlanta after 1906, they began searching for a new location away from downtown. Rev. Williams was active in real estate and the congregation appears to have considered several options for a new home. In September 1912, the congregation acquired a lot on the west side of Boulevard, just

south of Auburn, apparently with the intent of constructing a church there.[13] However, a better location became available and, on 10 January 1913, Williams received bond for title to a lot at the southeast corner of Auburn Avenue and Jackson Street, which was to become Ebenezer's permanent home.[14]

The seller of the Auburn Avenue lot was A. J. Dalbridge, an ex-slave and shoemaker who had become one of the larger property owners in Atlanta's African-American community as early as 1890.[15] The purchase price for the property was \$5,750, with terms being \$1000 down and four annual payments beginning 10 April 1913.[16]

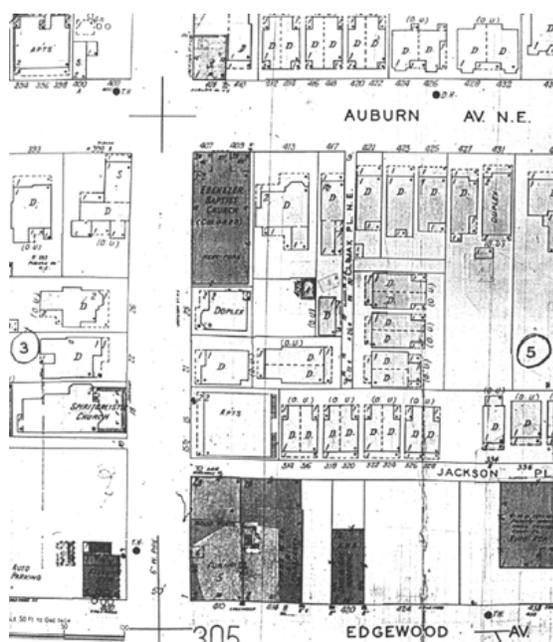
In February 1913, Ebenezer sold the Boulevard lot to the Odd Fellows and, in March, Rev. Williams conveyed the property on Auburn at Jackson to the church's trustees.[17] Preparations for construction probably began about that time. A two-story, wood-framed house had been built on the lot in the 1890s when Auburn Avenue was still a primarily white residential thoroughfare, and the first order of business would have been its removal.[18]

In July 1913, Ebenezer announced plans for a "rally for the benefit of the new Twenty-five Thousand Dollar Church, which will be erected on their lot, corner Auburn and Jackson Streets. The combined seating capacity of the main auditorium and the gallery will aggregate twelve hundred and fifty.... Now with 750 substantial members, Ebenezer is going to erect a modern Church edifice that will be in keeping with the great city of Atlanta." The newspaper article announcing the rally went on to note that "few churches in the city have made strides

more rapidly, nor have contributed more to the moral and intellectual growth of the city. Dr. Williams is an earnest, conscientious and well-informed minister whose influence in the city is acknowledged and appreciated."[19]

However, as late as the fall of 1913, construction had not yet begun on the new site, and information collected at that time for the 1914 Atlanta City Directory still listed Ebenezer at the old Gilmer Street address. Nevertheless, on 10 November 1913, the trustees sold the old church building for \$5000 and, by January 1914, were meeting in an old house at 444 Edgewood Avenue.[20]

Finally, at 2:00 PM, Monday, 17 March 1914, Ebenezer held public "ground breaking exercises" for the new building.[21] There is no date of installation on the corner stone, but it may have been laid around this time as well. The stone is thought to contain deeds, a membership list, and other documents related to the church's early history as well as a bottle of wine.[22] Noting that the church was founded in November 1886, the original inscription included the names of the church's officers--J. W. Johnson, Chairman, H. G. Edwards, Vice-Chairman, P. O. Watson, Secretary, and P. Y. Veasey, Treasurer--and of its deacons--R. B. Hunter, G. W. Scott, George Dalton, Dock Hill, J. F. Harris, J. W. Walker, W. M. Moore, Rastus Kennedy, Samuel Martin, Jethro English, Sr., and L. M. Brantley. The inscription also instructed that "the Receptacle in this stone to be opened and contents read March 1939." The stone was laid by Smooth Ashlar York Rite Lodge, "F & A, A. Y. M. N. C." [23]



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1925; vicinity of Ebenezer Baptist Church. (Georgia State University Pullen Library)

In spite of Rev. Williams' reputation as a successful fund-raiser, the congregation had considerable difficulty in supporting the construction and, by that summer, was still "struggling to get into the basement" of their new building.[24] In late June 1914, the *Atlanta Independent* reported that the congregation was still "appealing to the people for financial aid" in completing their building. The congregation was making, the report continued, "strenuous efforts to raise \$2,000 by the second Sunday in July. Dr. Williams will for that purpose give a grand pit cooked barbecue" that was guaranteed to "eclipse any barbecue ever given here." [25]

Fund-raising must have been successful and, on 29 August 1914, the newspaper reported that "Ebenezer Baptist mem-

bership, their friends and admirers will worship in their own edifice tomorrow, Sunday, August 30th, inst. The basement has been fully and handsomely completed. It is beautifully equipped with pews, electric [sic] and such church fixtures as progressive Atlanta approves. The seating capacity [of the basement] covers 3,200 square feet and will easily seat six hundred... When they shall have completed their church in its entirety, they will have one of the most modern church buildings in the State." [26]

No plans for completion of the church were announced as the congregation occupied the newly-finished basement in 1914, probably because they still needed another \$15,000 to complete the building. Ebenezer was not unusual in taking years to complete its building. Limited funding has forced many congregations, black and white, to build their churches in phases over a period of years. Even Wheat Street Baptist, which announced plans for their present building in 1922, was unable to complete it until 1939.

More importantly, however, Ebenezer faced the increasing turmoil and disruption in the black community as the "Great Migration" got underway during World War I. Brought on by the collapse of the farm economy under the onslaught of the boll weevil and by the generally wretched oppression and submarginal wages that most black Georgians were forced to endure, this migration drained away a half million Southern blacks seeking better job opportunities in the North and set back the nascent development of many African-American institutions, churches, and communities. As the war grew and cotton prices rose, the labor shortage became so acute that threats and intimidation were used by

white landowners and businessmen in a futile attempt to stem the tide; but it continued, nonetheless, with 50,000 leaving Georgia in 1916 alone.[27] Even Rev. Williams was tempted to leave the South and considered accepting a pastorate in Columbus, Ohio, in 1919.[28]

Ebenezer was only one of many churches that watched its congregation melt away in the late 1910s and early 1920s. Between 1918 and 1924, Ebenezer's membership declined from 900 to 280, a decline that some have interpreted as a sign of competition from younger preachers but which may have been more directly related to general out-migration.[29] Undoubtedly, shrinking membership severely curtailed the congregation's financial resources and was the main factor in delaying completion of the building.

In addition to the general out-migration during the period, Ebenezer's congregation must have suffered from Atlanta's "Great Fire" in May 1917. Beginning in a shop near Fort and Decatur Streets, three blocks southwest of the church, and whipped by high winds, the fire burned virtually unchecked northeastward along Hilliard, Jackson, and Boulevard before finally burning itself out against a line of dynamited houses on the north side of Ponce de Leon Avenue. Nineteen hundred families, representing five percent of the city's population, were left homeless, with the overcrowded black neighborhoods along Auburn Avenue and Old Wheat Street being especially hard hit. Ebenezer itself appears not to have been damaged in the fire, although the blocks immediately west and northwest of the church were totally destroyed.

In the fire's aftermath, the poor, black residents on the east side often could not afford to rebuild and, in any case, many took the opportunity to relocate to the new African-American residential district that was developing on the west side of Atlanta. With the demands that rebuilding from the fire must have put on the church's membership and with the inevitable loss of members that must also have occurred, it is not surprising that completion of the church was delayed even longer.[30]

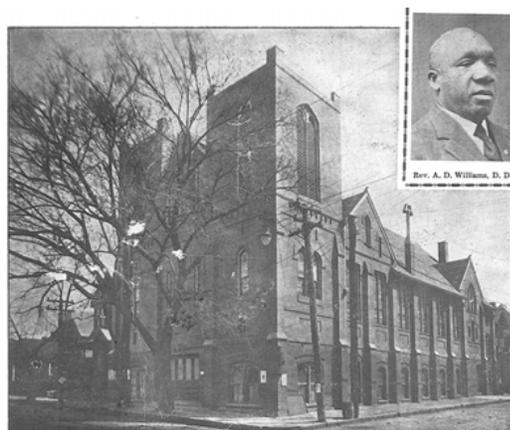
The congregation may have made some plans to continue construction on the church while the community rebuilt itself in 1918.[31] That does not seem likely, however, since it was not until June 1919 that A. J. Dalbridge finally conveyed title of the property to Ebenezer, indicating that the original mortgage had been paid off, two years behind schedule.[32] Not until 4 June 1921 did Rev. Williams apply to the city for a permit to "build one story & basement brick church" at an estimated cost of \$30,000. No architect was listed on the permit and "day" (meaning day labor) was the only description of the builder.[33]

An additional cornerstone ceremony may have been held a week or so later, since the date of "June 12, 1921" has been added at the bottom of the original stone. Presumably, the congregation continued to use the basement for services while construction continued on the sanctuary. While several articles concerning Ebenezer's original construction appeared in the *Atlanta Independent* in 1913 and 1914, there is no mention of the building's completion in the 1921 or the 1922 papers. In November, the church secured a loan from the Standard Life Insurance Co. for \$12,288 to help fi-

nance construction, with payments due each November 1922-1926.[34] Although the building permit was completed early in 1922 and the building probably occupied around that time, there is every indication that the building was only barely finished, lacking at least the stucco that was intended to finish the exterior of the basement.

Even with the building finished and occupied (at a total cost of \$40,000, according to one source)[35], the diminished congregation struggled to keep it open, leading Rev. Williams to issue a public appeal for donations from the larger community to retire the \$3,500 that the congregation still owed on the building in 1924. The appeal, which was issued to Rev. Williams' "good friends, white and black without regard to denomination," noted that Ebenezer's membership consisted "most largely of working people who are employed by their white neighbors and their ability to contribute is limited by the salary they receive." [36] How successful Williams was in this appeal has not been recorded.

It appears that Ebenezer's membership continued to decline after 1924 until finally stabilizing around 200 on the eve of the Great Depression.[37] Among the few new members was Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr., who married the Williams' daughter, Alberta, at Ebenezer on 25 November 1926. Taking up residence with the Williams at 501 Auburn Avenue, King continued to preach at churches in East Point, College Park, and elsewhere around Atlanta, although the center of his life remained Auburn Avenue. Three children were born to Rev. and Mrs. King--Christine in 1927; Martin Luther



EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH, ATLANTA, GA.  
BUILT BY REV. A. D. WILLIAMS D.D., PASTOR, 1921

**Ebenezer Baptist Church,  
407 Auburn Ave., c. 1924.  
(MALU Collection)**

"M. L." King, Jr., in 1929; and Adam Daniel "A. D." King in 1931, all of whom were born at the Williams' house at 501.

When Rev. Williams died of a heart attack on 21 March 1931, the congregation was devastated. From a struggling congregation meeting "in a shack" on Airline Street in 1894, Ebenezer had become one of the city's great African-American churches. Now, with the membership sharply reduced by forces entirely out of its control, the prospect of finding a replacement for the beloved Rev. Williams must have seemed daunting.

### **REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR.**

Rev. King was not the congregation's immediate choice for pastor. Some of the deacons felt that an older, more experienced man would be a more suitable replacement for Rev. Williams. In addition, King himself was serving as pastor at Traveler's Rest Baptist Church, where his



**Ebenezer Baptist Church, unidentified group at front doors, probably late 1930s. Note absence of stucco on basement-level walls. (MALU Collection)**



**View to southwest of unidentified banquet group in basement Fellowship Hall, probably late 1930s. (MALU Collection)**

wife wished him to remain. It was only after Mrs. Williams spoke on her son-in-law's behalf that the trustees finally offered Rev. King the pastorate in October 1931.[38]

Rev. King found the congregation on the verge of losing their building. Late in 1931, the realty company that held the mortgage on the church, which had an outstanding balance of \$1,100, went bankrupt. The new mortgage holder was Atlanta Federal Savings Bank which, without notice to the congregation, abruptly padlocked the doors at Ebenezer. Only by the considerable negotiating skills of Rev. King was the congregation able to refinance their mortgage and reopen the church.[39]

Officially installed as pastor in April 1932, King continued much of Williams' earlier work as he quickly gained the congregation's love and respect. He es-

tablished a building fund and, within a year was given a raise which made him one of the best-paid ministers among Atlanta's black congregations. The congregation had always been generous within its means, and Rev. King was a master at soliciting the dimes, quarters, and dollars that helped pay off the mortgage early in 1935, eighteen months ahead of schedule. At the same time, Rev. King continued Rev. Williams' leadership in providing aid to those in need, and much of the money that was raised was "poured back into the community" as the local economy deteriorated in the early 1930s. Besides providing food and clothing to those in need, Ebenezer ran a day-care center, bought and supplied medicines and, as King wrote in his autobiography, "tried to be an anchor as the storm rose." [40]

Rev. King's stature within the community grew throughout the 1930s. He was active in the local chapter of the NAACP, which his father-in-law had helped found

in 1918, and in the Atlanta Missionary Baptist Association, of which he was elected moderator in October 1935. He was also a leader in many efforts to organize the African-American community and was elected president of the Atlanta Ministers Council, an interdenominational organization of ministers dedicated to fighting "the Negroes' battles along civic, political, and educational lines." [41]

As the economy improved somewhat in the late 1930s, the growing congregation at Ebenezer was able to make some improvements to the building before the outbreak of World War II. Whether or not these changes occurred as part of a single project has not been documented, but they included installation of carpeting, replacement of the pulpit furniture, and changing of the "usual hard Church benches to the present modern pews," a distinction that is difficult to understand today. [42] In addition, it is believed that the pink marble urns currently in the sanctuary were donated around this time by Mrs. Nannien W. Crawford, long-time member of Ebenezer, general director of Ebenezer's Baptist Training Union and secretary of the State Sunday School Convention in Georgia. [43]

While these changes escaped notice in the local papers, the "crack new," two-manual, Wurlitzer organ that was installed in the fall of 1940 did not. Mrs. King had continued the church choir begun by her mother, Jennie Celeste Williams, but had also organized a second choir in 1932 and, later, a third as well. In September 1937, she initiated the first in a series of annual musicals at the church, although she was no doubt hampered in their presentation by the old mechanical John Brown organ, which is

thought to have been brought to the church from the Gilmer Street church. According to a contemporary newspaper account, the new Wurlitzer was "said to be the most modern type available... It can be reduced to a tone so soft that the average ear would be strained to hear it, and can be increased to a volume so great it will shake the edifice." [44]

Installed by Neal Davis of the L. J. Davis and Son Company, the organ was dedicated "before a house packed from floor to gallery" on Friday evening, 1 November 1940. "Bringing back the sainted memory of the late Dr. A. D. Williams," according to the newspaper, "Rev. King dedicated the organ in memory of Dr. Williams... [and] music lovers from throughout the city" heard a "thrilling program" under the direction of Mrs. King and L. B. Byron, the church organists. Leading off the program was Graham Jackson, the nationally-acclaimed musician and perennial favorite of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Jackson "took the audience by surprise when he rendered a number depicting bombs falling in Europe, breaking it off with a piece in which one could still hear the praise of God." A variety of other musicians, including Byron and Mrs. King, performed as well, as did the choirs of Ebenezer. [45]

By World War II, Ebenezer was clearly recovering from the turmoil and hard times of the preceding twenty-five years and, as agitation for civil rights increased dramatically after the war, Ebenezer and other African-American churches, as they always had, often hosted rallies and meetings in support of the cause. [46] In November 1945, for example, Ebenezer



View to southeast in sanctuary, c. 1940, showing new Wurlitzer organ installed in the fall of that year. (Original image courtesy of David Stills)

hosted the Georgia convention of the NAACP and, the following January, hosted a speech by Mary McLeod Bethune, the nationally-known black educator.

In March 1947, Ebenezer celebrated its 60th anniversary and the 15th anniversary of Dr. King's pastorate at the church.[47] The event program noted that the congregation had grown tremendously, from 600 in the early 1930s, to 2,400 by 1941, and 3,700 in 1947. One of the services at that celebration opened with a song by Dr. King's son, Martin Luther King, Jr., then a student at Morehouse College.[48]

### **REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

On 25 February 1948, Martin Luther King, Jr., was ordained a Baptist minister and appointed associate pastor at Ebenezer. Although he was only nineteen years old and would not graduate from

Morehouse until June, King, Jr., was already establishing his credentials as a minister, having offered the grave-side prayer at Morehouse College president Dr. John Hope's funeral the preceding February. That summer, King, Jr., preached several times at Ebenezer before leaving in September for Chester, Pennsylvania, where he enrolled at Crozer Theological Seminary.[49]

Each summer while he was at Crozer, King, Jr., returned to Atlanta and, serving as associate pastor, preached regularly at Ebenezer. In May 1951, he received his bachelor of divinity degree from Crozer, delivering the valedictory address at commencement. He also received the award given to the graduate who, "in the judgement of the faculty, has been the outstanding member of his class during his course at the seminary." That summer, back in Atlanta, he served not as "associate pastor" but as "pastor in charge" at Ebenezer.[50]

In the fall of 1951, King, Jr., enrolled at Boston University's School of Theology, where he continued his studies for two more years. As he had always done, however, he regularly returned to Atlanta, preaching at Ebenezer's sixty-fifth anniversary on 16 March 1952 and attending his parents' twenty-fifth anniversary celebration in November 1952. He also served as pastor-in-charge at Ebenezer 12 June - 7 September 1952 and, again, in the summer of 1953. He met Coretta Scott in Boston during this period and, in June 1953, they were married by Rev. King, Sr., at her parents' home near Marion, Alabama. Three days later, they were back in Atlanta, where Rev. King, Sr., baptized Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., in the old basement baptismal at Ebenezer. They spent the

summer with the elder Kings at 501 Auburn Avenue before returning to Boston where they completed their studies in the spring of 1954. That same year, the young King became pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, and, in 1955, gained international attention as leader of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, one of the landmarks of the Civil Rights Movement.[51]

During this same period, the City of Atlanta was moving forward with plans for freeway construction and "urban renewal" that would remake the face of the city, Auburn Avenue, and the Old Fourth Ward. The Lochner Plan of 1946 laid out the proposed freeway system, which originally had called for demolition of much of the black business district at the western end of Auburn Avenue. The next year, the city began in earnest its efforts at "urban renewal," with the African-American neighborhoods on Atlanta's east side being a special focus of attention. Over the next ten or fifteen years, through both public and private efforts, most of the old residences along Auburn Avenue and Old Wheat Street west of Boulevard were removed, including all of those west and north of Ebenezer.

Ebenezer's congregation participated in this "renewal" when, in June 1947, they bought a small, wood-framed house on a 40' x 52' lot facing Jackson Street in the rear of the church.[52] Two years later, in July 1951, they bought the 46' x 107' lot and house next to the first on Jackson Street.[53] Then in June 1952, Ebenezer bought a third lot, on the west side of Jackson opposite the first two, and it is thought that all of these were soon cleared for parking lots.[54] In addition, street lights were at last installed by the



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., preaching at Ebenezer, c. 1960. (MALU Collection)

city on Auburn Avenue from Ivy (now Peachtree Center Avenue) to Boulevard in 1950.[55]

With the face of the neighborhood beginning to undergo some significant changes in the early 1950s, Rev. King, Sr., and his congregation began planning major changes for Ebenezer as well. In January 1955, the trustees bought the 52' x 145' lot and 2-story house at 413 Auburn next door to the church, which had been the parsonage for Big Bethel. By the end of the year, they had cleared the lot for Ebenezer's new "Christian Education Building," which had been "a long-time dream" of Rev. King, Sr.[56] In November 1955, the church applied for a building permit to make 12,000 square

feet of additions to an "ordinary masonry" church at 407 Auburn, with the work valued at \$169,000. The builder was Barge-Thompson Construction Co., a well-known local firm with offices at 136 Ellis Street and active in the construction industry since the 1920s.[57] The building permit did not list the architect, Edward C. Miller, nor was there any mention of the major renovation of the church itself that occurred at the same time.[58] Miller's career has not been well documented but included some of the buildings on the Morehouse College campus.[59]

Construction went quickly and, on 27 May 1956, "the two-story beautiful and modern educational building" was dedicated with a sermon by "the dynamic Dr. M. L. King, Jr., of Montgomery, Alabama." [60] In addition to the "contemporary architecture" of the new building, the old sanctuary was remodeled and expanded to more or less its present condition. New features included a completely-reconstructed stage and choir loft, which were flanked by organ chambers for the new Hill Green Lane pipe organ that was installed at the same time. For the first time, too, the congregation would have a baptismal pool in the main sanctuary and, in the new circular opening above the baptistry, Llorens Stained Glass Company of Decatur installed a leaded panel of stained glass depicting Jesus at Gethsemane, one of the company's most popular designs.[61]

The late 1950s saw Rev. King, Jr., "virtually commuting between Montgomery and Atlanta," as he led organization of the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC) in 1957 and continued to lead the movement that he had helped create



**Ebenezer Church and new Christian Education Building, 1956. (MALU Collection)**

in Montgomery in 1955. By 1959, the strain had become too much for King and he resigned as pastor at Dexter Avenue in order to devote himself more completely to the SCLC. In addition, "Daddy" King had always wanted his son to work with him at Ebenezer, which he was finding more and more difficult to manage by himself. So, the younger Kings moved back to Atlanta where Dr. King, Jr., was named co-pastor with his father at Ebenezer.[62]

With his return to Atlanta early in 1960, Martin Luther King, Jr., solidified his position as leader of the Civil Rights Movement, traveling widely and frequently, preaching his message of non-violent resistance against the often-rabid forces of segregation. Ebenezer remained an open pulpit for King and from it he preached some of his most significant sermons, including one of his last, which he preached at Ebenezer on 4 February 1968 and in which he spoke of imagining his own death. Exactly two months later he was dead. [63]

King's funeral was held on Tuesday, 9 April 1968, and was, according to Ralph David Abernathy, "the nearest thing in our history to a state funeral for a black." [64] Carried on national television, it began with a service at Ebenezer that was much delayed by the difficulties in seating the huge numbers of mourners who tried to press into the sanctuary. "Celebrities, fearful that they might disturb the decorum of the occasion," were forced to enter the church through the walkway from the second floor of the Educational Building and through the fire escapes at the rear of the building. [65] The body had lain in state in Sisters Chapel at Morehouse College, King's alma mater, since Saturday, and there had been talk about having the funeral at a larger venue. "But this was his church, his father's and his grandfather's," Rev. King, Sr., explained later. "There he was baptized, and had grown up, and been imbued with the deep religious faith which had guided his life and informed his spirit; there he and his family had preached for three generations. Ebenezer was one of Martin's great loves. It was only fitting that it should be the scene of his funeral." [66]

From Ebenezer, the coffin was placed on a mule-drawn farm wagon for the procession back to Morehouse, where another ceremony was held for even larger crowds. Finally, with people left fainting in the heat of an Atlanta spring, a motorized cortege carried the procession to South View Cemetery on Jonesboro Road in southeast Atlanta. There, King was laid to rest in a crypt next to his grandparents. The inscription on his tomb read: "Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, I'm free at last."

## KING MEMORIAL

King's assassination sparked riots across the country and further polarized an already divided black leadership in the civil rights movement. Stokely Carmichael, Floyd McKissick and others urged black militancy in the face of what seemed to be intransigent white opposition to the Civil Rights Movement and some pronounced the non-violent protest movement dead. Opposition to the war in Vietnam was exploding as well and the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy in June deepened the pall of violent confrontation that had descended over the country. Besides his personal grief over his son's death, the senior Dr. King was overwhelmed by the responsibilities that he now shouldered alone at Ebenezer. So, on June 15, it was announced that his younger son, Rev. A. D. King, would be resigning as pastor at Zion Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky, so that he could return to Atlanta and take over his late brother's position as associate pastor at Ebenezer and "to play an increased role in the SCLC." [67]

By that summer, too, a variety of efforts were underway to memorialize Dr. King, including designation of a historic district on Auburn Avenue. The city's "Butler Street Urban Renewal Project" was well underway and, even before King's death, large areas of the Old Fourth Ward had already been razed. By the spring of 1968, all of the buildings on Auburn between Jackson and Boulevard were gone except for Ebenezer and the small commercial structures at the southwest corner of Auburn and Boulevard. However, as early as August 1967, Mrs. King had met with Mayor Allen to urge that her husband's birthplace be spared and, in the spring of 1968, Vice-Mayor Sam

Massell headed a committee that was working toward official designation of a historic district in the area. However, the concept of historic districts was relatively new at that time and, then as now, misconceptions abounded about possible restrictions on owners' use of their property. As a result, when Massell's plan was presented to the Board of Aldermen's Zoning Committee in August, it was turned down and not until 1974 was a National Register district designated on Auburn Avenue.[68]

Meanwhile, on June 26, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Center was incorporated by Dr. King's widow, Coretta Scott King, and a library established to begin collecting and archiving her late husband's papers, which were almost the only estate that he had left for his family. Over the rest of that year, Mrs. King completed her autobiography *My Life With Martin Luther King*, which was published the following spring, and was also directing development of ambitious plans for "a memorial of hope," which she announced just before the "first commemoration services" of King's birthday at Ebenezer on 15 January 1969.[69]

The King Memorial was to be built on two sites, according to Mrs. King's statements that day: one near Atlanta University and the other on Auburn Avenue. According to a newspaper report the next day, the AU site would include the Institute for Non-Violent Social Change, an institute for Afro-American Studies, a Museum of Afro-American Life and Culture, as well as the King library and archives. The second site, on Auburn Avenue, would include "a memorial park" in which King would be re-entombed, a Freedom Exhibition Hall, "and the re-stored birthplace will be nearby." [70] By

the time that the International Circle of Friends of the Martin Luther King Memorial Center held its kickoff fund raiser for the Center, which Mrs. King had estimated would cost \$25-40 million, the idea of "a chapel in Ebenezer" was also a part of the plan.[71]

The first celebration of King's birthday at Ebenezer drew a huge crowd that jammed the church and spilled out onto the sidewalk. Although that was a special occasion, the church continued to draw a large number of visitors who just wanted to see where King had preached.[72] As the *Atlanta Daily World* noted in July 1969, "Ebenezer Church will long be a mecca to those who would thrill at the sight of visiting one of the nation's great shrines." [73]

That fall, the Center acquired property at 671 Beckwith St., SW, and, on 21 October 1969, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Library was formally opened at that location. Staff had been hired by then, and over 1,500 books were already a part of the collection.[74] Fund raising that would allow implementation of the other parts of the Memorial plan was slow, however. Apparently at President Nixon's suggestion, negotiations had begun in the spring of 1969 seeking federal funding to support the Center; but, by fall, they had gone nowhere and were abandoned. "We felt that to get federal support for a memorial would have been a beautiful thing," Mrs. King stated at a press conference on 28 September 1969, "But President Nixon's attitude, his lack of real concern, suggests that we have not evolved from racist reflexes." [75]

Nevertheless, enough money was raised through Ebenezer and the SCLC, according to Rev. Abernathy's memoir, for the

Center to acquire some of the vacant land on Auburn Avenue next door to the church's complex of buildings. Encompassing what is approximately the western third of the present King Center property, the property allowed the Center to begin the first phase of the Auburn Avenue component of the King Memorial, which was removal of Dr. King's tomb to Auburn Avenue.[76]

In the pre-dawn darkness of 13 January 1970, the King family and Rev. Abernathy watched as Dr. King's body was removed from its crypt in South View Cemetery.[77] After sealing the coffin, which had not been done in the confusion that surrounded the funeral, the body was re-interred on Auburn Avenue. It was, the *Constitution* reported the next day, "a first step toward building the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Park. Permanent entombment will eventually take place in an area near the Ebenezer Church where King preached, which will contain the Memorial Center." [78]

Surrounded by a white picket fence and located near where the present crypt is located, the new grave site was ready when the second annual commemoration of Dr. King's birthday was held at Ebenezer on Thursday, 15 January 1970. Nearly a thousand people crammed their way into the church for the service, which included remarks by Dr. Vincent Harding, acting director of the Martin Luther King Memorial Center, and Dr. Benjamin Mays, president emeritus at Morehouse and recently elected president of the Atlanta Board of Education. The church service was followed by a brief, graveside ceremony. In reporting the event, the *Atlanta Constitution* and the *Atlanta Daily World* both reported



View to southwest showing original burial site of Dr. King on Auburn Avenue. Sign at center reads "Future Home of Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Park"; Ebenezer is at right in this image. (MALU Collection)

that the church, the crypt, and Dr. King's birthplace "are to all be parts of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Center." [79]

On Saturday, January 17, another component of the Memorial Center was opened at 87 Chestnut St. NW near the Atlanta University campus. Called the Institute of the Black World, it was part of a new wave of programs and projects across the country that aimed to reinforce pride in African-American culture. Besides an open house at the Institute's headquarters, the program included "A Celebration of Blackness" which aimed "to recreate the experiences of black people from Africa to 1970 by way of the spoken word, song, dance, and musical instruments." [80]

By that time, plans were well underway for major alterations to Ebenezer.[81] The architectural firm of Muldawer and Patterson was engaged for the work and



Schoolchildren at original King grave site near Ebenezer. (MALU Collection)

they, in turn, associated themselves with J. W. Robinson, who had remodeled the King's house on Sunset Avenue in 1966. Muldawer and his wife, Carol, were active in the civil rights movement and had become close friends with Andrew Young. As a result of that relationship, Muldawer had been engaged to design the Martin Luther King, Jr., Village, a mixed-use development on Logan Street S. E. for which ground was broken as part of the 1969 commemoration of Dr. King's birthday.[82]

In addition to his friendship with Young, Paul Muldawer had also established his reputation in Georgia's historic preservation movement, which was then in its formative years, when he developed the first set of design guidelines for new construction in Savannah's historic district in 1968. Thirty years later, those guidelines have been expanded and revised but the fundamental philosophy of compatible design criteria that he developed in 1968 remains intact. Using those criteria, Muldawer designed major additions to the church that were intended to "echo" but not compete with or overwhelm the historic building (which, of course, did not

include the fourteen-year-old Christian Education Building).[83]

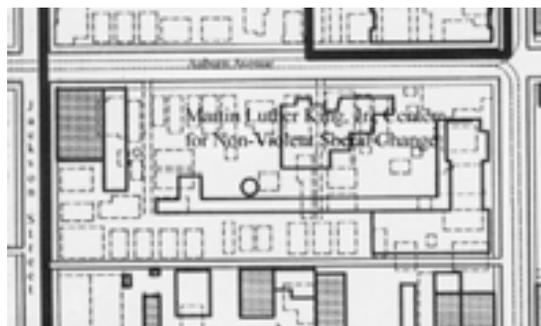
By June, the architects had completed plans that included several components, the most dramatic of which was the addition of a circular, memorial chapel in the parking lot at the rear of the church. Plans also called for construction of a new, two-story addition in front of the Christian Education Building and a connecting "hyphen" to the old church. In the church itself, plans called for partitioning and remodeling of the basement, presumably to provide meeting and office space for the Memorial Center; complete reconstruction of the stairwells and vestibule; enlargement of the baptismal pool; and a variety of other less-significant alterations and improvements to it and the Christian Education Building.[84]

The plans were too ambitious, however; and, by the summer of 1970, it was clear that fund raising was falling far short of expectations. While Morehouse College had received significant donations in King's memory, the Auburn Avenue component of the King Memorial Center faced greater challenges in attracting support. Part of the reason for this may have been the condition of the surrounding neighborhood where, even before King's death, "urban renewal" had cleared whole blocks, including most of the block of Auburn Avenue between Jackson and Boulevard. By 1970, disinvestment in the Old Fourth Ward, which had begun long before King's death, and "white flight" from the city, which had begun in earnest in the 1960s, had turned what was left of his neighborhood into a crime-ridden slum. Homes, stores, and even churches were burglarized, often at gunpoint, and there were frequent assaults on pedestrians throughout the

downtown area. On July 12, none other than the assistant pastor at Wheat Street Baptist was gunned down outside the rental office at Wheat Street Gardens at five o'clock in the afternoon.[85] It would be a long, uphill battle for those who had some vision for a historic district and a revitalization of the Old Fourth Ward.

So severe was the financial crisis at the Memorial Center that, in August, Mrs. King was forced to drastically reduce the staff at the King Library "due to a tenuous financial situation." The *Daily World* reported that the cutback in personnel "was made so that other projects, including the institute for non-violent social change and a memorial park surrounding her husband's crypt, could be gotten off the ground." [86] A few days later, the *Constitution* reported more fully on the staff changes at the King Library Project and at the Institute for the Black World and noted that "the second component of the memorial center, still in the planning stages, will be located on Auburn Avenue, centered around Dr. King's birthplace and Ebenezer Baptist Church, where he served with his father as co-pastor." [87] Mrs. King said, "We know that we need something like \$10 to \$20 million over a period of years to build the total complex." And, she added, "we may have to cut that back." [88]

By then, the final plans for Ebenezer had been approved by the city, but large components of the project had been deleted, including the new chapel and the remodeling of the basement. "No money," architect Robinson said simply, but noting that the church was also reluctant to give up what little parking it had for construction of the chapel. [89]



Map showing King Center buildings overlaying footprints of historic buildings. Ebenezer is shaded structure at left.

Still, the church had major issues that it needed to address, if it was going to fulfill even a part of its role in the memorial park, where King's grave was already a point of pilgrimage. As Robinson remembered, "Ebenezer had a number of problems. First thing, they started holding all the activity for Dr. King there and they realized that the only connection [between the old church and the Education Building] was the skywalk." In addition, "a whole lot of visitors was coming in every Sunday because they wanted to see the church that he had preached at" and there were tremendous problems with "the very narrow stairs" that formed the church's main entrance. [90]

In addition, Daddy King complained that during baptisms the congregation could not see the ceremony and the choir disliked the awkward access to the choir loft that required a temporary floor over the baptismal pool in order for them to pass back and forth to the doors at the rear of the loft. [91] These problems had been addressed in the original design in a small connecting structure between the old church and the circular chapel. So, in order to address these problems, the decision was made to go ahead with the

addition to the front of the Education Building, the remodeling of the stairwells and vestibule, and the expansion of the baptismal pool and halls at the rear of the church. A building permit was issued on August 18 and, a short time later, Robert Norwood Construction Co. began work on the project, which was valued at \$68,000.[92]

The King Center continued its retrenchment for the next two years as Auburn Avenue became the primary focus for the King Memorial. On September 1, the King Memorial Center and the Institute for the Black World formally dissolved their ties after "it became clear to both the Center and the Institute that their interests and potential would be maximized by the Institute's becoming a fully autonomous and independent operation." [93]

In the face of practical realities, the King Center's vision for the memorial continued to evolve as it regrouped and reorganized. On March 15, 1972, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Center was reincorporated as the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Social Change, and Mrs. King had turned the Center's full attention to the birth home block. J. W. Robinson was among those that began planning restoration of the birth home in 1972 and, the following year, work began there and in development of a master plan for the King Center. In November, Ebenezer conveyed title to the three-acre tract that it had acquired to the east of the church to the King Center and, although a dispute with the architects had stalled the project, over 4 million dollars had been raised for the Center by April



View to southwest of Ebenezer showing 1970 addition to front of Christian Education Building. (NPS, 2000)

1974.[94] That same year, the long-sought historic district designation came to fruition with formal listing of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places.

Although Ebenezer remained a strong and vibrant congregation, the last years of Rev. King's tenure were marked by tragedy. Barely a year after his eldest son's assassination in Memphis, Rev. King's younger son, A. D., died in an accidental drowning, which deprived him of his other son and of his right arm at Ebenezer. Then, on the last Sunday morning in June 1974, in the sanctuary at Ebenezer, Mrs. King, Sr., and Deacon Edward Boykin were shot to death by a deranged assassin while she was at the organ playing "The Lord's Prayer." Having lost both his sons, Rev. King, Sr., found the loss of his wife, especially in such a way, almost too much to bear and, not wanting "the church to decline under my leadership," he tendered his resignation to the Board of Deacons that fall.[95] In early January 1975, Rev. King

baptized Ebenezer's new minister, Rev. Joseph Lawrence Roberts, Jr., and, in August, formally retired as pastor at Ebenezer Baptist Church.[96]

### THE RECENT PAST

In 1976-77, Ebenezer remodeled the basement bathrooms and some of the offices in the Education Building but, more important, the New York architectural firm of Bond & Ryder had finally completed construction of the permanent tomb, reflecting pool, colonnade, and "Chapel of All Faith" at the King Center. In addition, in October 1979, ground was finally broken for "Freedom Hall," which had been a feature of the Center's plans from the very beginning.

In November 1984, Daddy King died and was laid to rest at South View. Rev. Roberts continued the "social action heritage" that had been created at Ebenezer by Dr. Williams and the Kings over the preceding decades.[97] Under his tenure, the growing congregation recognized the historical significance of Ebenezer Baptist Church, which they designated their "Heritage" sanctuary, and began planning for their new "Horizon" sanctuary, which opened across the street in 1999.

In April of 1996, the United States through the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service (NPS) secured a 50-year lease on the original building with an option to renew the lease for an additional 49 years.[98] The sanctuary of old Ebenezer Baptists Church continues to be a focus for King Day celebrations and other special occasions. In addition, the National Park Ser-



View to north of Ebenezer's "Heritage Sanctuary," located across Auburn Avenue from the historic sanctuary in which Dr. King preached. (NPS, 2000)

vice conducts daily tours of Ebenezer, which remains one of the Park's primary visitor destinations.

## ENDNOTES

[1] Martin Luther King, Sr., *Daddy King* (NY: William Morrow & Co., 1980), p. 147; Clayborn Carson, *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, Vol. 2 (University of California Press, 1992), p. 1-2.

[2] The church cornerstone provides the organizational date and Parker's name.

[3] See Saunders' "Bird's-Eye Map of Atlanta," 1892, Atlanta Historical Society.

[4] Rev. G. S. Ellington, "A Short Sketch of the Life and Work of Rev. A. D. Williams, D. D.," included in "Programme of the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Pastorate of Rev. A. D. Williams of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Beginning Monday Night, March 16, 1924."

[5] The only notice of Ebenezer's existence prior to the 1900 Atlanta City Directory is in the 1890 Directory, where Rev. John Parker, who resided at what was then 67 Howell Street, gave his occupation as "pastor, Ebenezer Bapt Ch." The church itself had no listing.

[6] Ellington and "Rev. A. D. Williams," *Atlanta Independent*, 2 April 1904, establishes location on Airline St. and that "there was no building at all." The "Souvenir Program... 1947" states that Parker died in 1894 and that the congregation was behind in payments on their building.

[7] Accounts vary as to membership when Williams became pastor. "Rev. A. D. Williams," *Atlanta Independent*, 2 April 1904, and "Ebenezer Baptist Church's Great Rally for New Church...," *Atlanta Independent*, 27 June 1914 set membership at 17; "Ebenezer Baptist Church," *Atlanta Independent*, 12 July 1913, gives 18 members and mentions the "small shack" in which they were then meeting. A. B. Caldwell, ed., "Rev. A. D. Williams," *History of the American Negro and his Institutions, Georgia Edition*. (Atlanta, 1917), states that there were only seven members. Later accounts, including Ellington, set the number of members in 1894 at 13. Caldwell also states that the congregation had "no church building at all."

[8] Ellington.

[9] *Atlanta Independent*, 2 April 1904, suggests that they moved to McGruder Street around 1897 and Ellington states that the congregation built a church on McGruder Street, "what is now known as Mt. Pleasant Church." However, Fulton County Deed Book 148, pp. 304-305, dated 26 May 1899, gives purchase price for 50' x 150' lot as \$550. Deed Book 145, p. 265, dated 20 June 1900, gives sale price of \$600. *Atlanta Independent*, 27 June 1914, states that they "bought and sold a church on McGruder Street, worth about \$1,000." The existing Mt. Pleasant Church on McGruder Street appears to have been constructed after 1914, although an older building could be hidden beneath a later remodeling.

[10] *Atlanta Independent*, 2 April 1904, puts membership at 400 in that year; 12 July 1913 puts membership at 120 when they moved to Gilmer and Bell.

[11] Fulton County Deed Book 152, p. 76.

[12] Ellington; *Atlanta Independent*, 2 April 1904; Fulton County Deed Book 207, p. 119.

[13] Fulton County Deed Book 350, p. 471.

[14] Fulton County Deed Book 350, p. 587.

[15] Michael Leroy Porter, "Black Atlanta: An Interdisciplinary Study of blacks on the East Side of Atlanta, 1890-1930." (Ph.D. dissertation, Emory University, 1974), p. 47.

[16] Fulton County Deed Book 350, p. 587; Book 464, p. 269-272.

[17] Fulton County Deed Book 350, p. 587.

[18] See 1911 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

[19] "Ebenezer Baptist Church," *Atlanta Independent* 12 July 1913.

[20] Fulton County Deed Book 396, p. 117; *Atlanta Independent*, 17 Jan 1914, in an announcement of a "mass meeting" for proposed YMCA to be held at Ebenezer, "now on Edgewood avenue near Jackson street." Modern histories say the building was located at 444 Edgewood, where a 1-story wood-framed house is shown in the 1911 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Atlanta. The house was torn down by the 1920s for a commercial building.

[21] *Atlanta Independent*, 14 March 1914.

[22] Interviews with Jethro English, Jr., and Christine King Farris.

[23] The Lodge that laid the stone has not been identified but was not the Prince Hall Lodge, according to the Lodge's current Grand Master.

[24] *Atlanta Independent*, 27 June 1914.

[25] *Atlanta Independent*, 27 June 1914.

[26] *Atlanta Independent*, 29 August 1914.

[27] John Dittmer, *Black Georgia in the Progressive Era, 1900-1920* (University of Illinois Press, 1980), pp. 185-190; "Migrants Made 'Good' in Northern Industry," *Atlanta Independent*, 27 March 1924.

[28] Ellington; also *Daddy King*, p. 14.

[29] "A Worthy Cause," *Atlanta Independent*, 28 February 1924.

[30] Kuhn, et. al., *Living Atlanta*, p. 27.

[31] "A Worthy Cause," *Atlanta Independent*, 28 February 1924, implies that construction may have resumed in 1918.

[32] Fulton County Deed Book 502, p. 575.

[33] City of Atlanta Building Permit #1502, on microfilm at Atlanta History Center.

[34] Fulton County Deed Book 456, p. 513.

[35] Ellington.

## Historical Background & Context

- [36] "A Worthy Cause," *Atlanta Independent*, 28 February 1924.
- [37] *Daddy King*, p. 89.
- [38] *Daddy King*, pp. 91-92.
- [39] *Daddy King*, p. 93.
- [40] *Daddy King*, p. 89.
- [41] Carson, p. 80.
- [42] "Souvenir Program, Sixtieth Anniversary of the Church and Fifteenth Anniversary of the Pastor, March 10-16, 1947.
- [43] Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. Jethro English and Miss Lillian Watkins, who thought that the urns may actually have been solicited by Mrs. Crawford, who was a caterer, from one of her employers. The 1947 Anniversary Program includes a photograph and information about Mrs. Crawford.
- [44] "Ebenezer Baptist Church Has New Pipe Organ," *Atlanta Daily World*, 28 October 1940. Interview with David Stills, organist at the church 1950-1973, believed that the John Brown organ had been used in the old Gilmer Street church.
- [45] "Master Organ Is Dedicated At Ebenezer," *Atlanta Daily World*, 2 November 1940. There is no mention in the several newspaper articles of Dr. Benjamin Mays' reputed dedication of the organ at that time.
- [46] *Daddy King*, pp. 99-101.
- [47] "Souvenir Program, Sixtieth Anniversary of the Church and Fifteenth Anniversary of the Pastor, March 10-16, 1947."
- [48] Carson, p. 86.
- [49] Carson, p. 86.
- [50] Carson, pp. 88-90.
- [51] Carson, Vol. 2, pp. 39-40.
- [52] Fulton County Deed Book 2233, p. 357.
- [53] Fulton County Deed Book 2662, p. 577.
- [54] Fulton County Deed Book 2754, p. 643.
- [55] Mason, p. 158.
- [56] Fulton County, Deed Book 2964, p. 336; Plat Book 53, p. 14; "Ebenezer Dedicates Education Building," *Atlanta Daily World*, 29 May 1956.
- [57] City of Atlanta Building Permit #9461, microfilm, Atlanta Historical Society. Plans (#2589) for this work are listed on the permit and in the records of the city's Bureau of Buildings but cannot be located. Six rolls of microfilm (#19.3-19.8) were searched unsuccessfully and Gloria Russell, one of the Bureau's staff, attempted to find the plans in storage at City Hall East, again unsuccessfully. A single sheet of drawing for this project was located in the private collection of David Stills in May 2001.
- [58] *Atlanta Daily World* articles on 26 and 29 May 1956 credit Miller with the design, as does David Stills, organist at the church between 1950 and 1973.
- [59] Interview with David Stills. Plans for some of his work at Morehouse are on file at the city's Bureau of Buildings. Miller formed a partnership with Leon Allain in 1957 that lasted about ten years. According to architect J. W. Robinson, after Miller's death, his widow returned his drawings to his clients, so that there is no collection of his papers. Allain died on 22 June 2000.
- [60] "Ebenezer Dedicates Education Building," *Atlanta Daily World*, 29 May 1956.
- [61] Interview with J. V. Llorens, Jr., whose father began the company in 1921. Unfortunately, the company, which is still in business in Decatur, discarded all of the company's old business records about 1995.
- [62] Coretta Scott King, pp. 167-168.
- [63] *Daddy King*, pp. 314-315
- [64] Abernathy, *And the Walls Came Tumbling Down*, p.456.
- [65] "King Returns To His Church," *Atlanta Constitution*, 9 April 1968.
- [66] *Daddy King*, p. 304.
- [67] "Brother to Share Dr. King's Pulpit," *Atlanta Constitution*, 17 June 1968.
- [68] *Atlanta Constitution*, 23 August 1968. Also see "Auburn-Boulevard Proposal, Martin Luther King Memorial," May 1968 in NPS-SERO files.
- [69] *Atlanta Constitution*, 15-16 January 1968; *Atlanta Daily World*, 16 January 1968.
- [70] "Spare King's Slayer, Rev. Abernathy Asks," *Atlanta Constitution*, 16 January 1968.
- [71] "Kicks Off Drive For King Memorial," *Atlanta Daily World*, 25 September 1968.
- [72] Interview with J. W. Robinson.
- [73] Editorial, *Atlanta Daily World*, 29 July 1969.
- [74] "King Library Unveiling Due This Afternoon," *Atlanta Constitution*, 19 October 1969; "M. L. King, Jr., Library Formally Opened Sun.," *Atlanta Daily World*, 21 October 1969.
- [75] "Mrs. King Drops Bid for Nixon Help," *Atlanta Constitution*, 28 September 1969.
- [76] Abernathy, p. 465. An exhaustive search of the index to the records of Fulton County Deeds and Mortgages, 1885-1975, has not produced a deed for this transaction, which Rev. Abernathy's memoir indicates occurred before 1970. However, Ebenezer's conveyance (in two parts) of most of the present King Center site to the Center in November 1973 is recorded in Deed Book 6022, p. 312 and 319.

## PART 1 DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

[77] "Dr. King's Body Moved, A Memorial Is Planned," *New York Times*; "King Body Taken to New Site," *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dr. M.L. King Jr.'s Body Brought Home to Auburn Ave.," *Atlanta Daily World*, 14 Jan 1970.

[78] "King Body Taken to New Site," *Atlanta Constitution*, 14 January 1970.

[79] "1,000 Honor King at Church Service," *Atlanta Constitution*, 16 January 1970. "Martin Luther King Day," *Atlanta Daily World*, 18 January 1970.

[80] "Official Opening of Martin Luther King Memorial Center," *Atlanta Daily World*, 18 January 1970.

[81] Interview with Paul Muldawer.

[82] Interview with Paul Muldawer. "Spare King's Slayer, Rev. Abernathy Asks," *Atlanta Constitution*, 16 January 1969.

[83] Interview with Paul Muldawer. "Historic Preservation Plan for the Central Area General Neighborhood Renewal Area, Savannah, Georgia," U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1968.

[84] A complete set of these plans can be found on microfiche at the City of Atlanta's Bureau of Buildings but neither Muldawer nor Robinson have any original copies of the plans or other documents relating to the 1970 alterations.

[85] *Atlanta Daily World*, 13 July 1970.

[86] "Mrs. King Blames Financial Situation in Firings of 12," *Atlanta Daily World*, 6 August 1970.

[87] "Prospects of King Center Shrunken by Tight Budget," *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, 16 August 1970.

[88] "Mrs. King Blames Financial Situation in Firings of 12," *Atlanta Daily World*, 6 August 1970.

[89] Paul Muldawer also remembers the congregation's reluctance to build on their small parking lot.

[90] Interview with J. W. Robinson.

[91] Interview with J. W. Robinson. Paul Muldawer also remembers that the baptismal was altered to improve sight lines.

[92] City of Atlanta Building Permit, on microfilm at Atlanta History Center.

[93] "King Center and Black Institute Dissolve All Ties," *Atlanta Daily World*, 8 September 1970.

[94] Fulton County Deed Book 6022, pp. 312, 319.

[95] *Daddy King*, p. 204.

[96] "Dr. King Baptizes Successor as Ebenezer Church Pastor," *Atlanta Constitution* 6 January 1975; "Pastor at Ebenezer to Pursue Heritage," *Atlanta Constitution*, 11 October 1975.

[97] "Ebenezer Church Is Not Just a Shrine," *Atlanta Constitution*, 14 January 1978.

[98] Fulton County Deed Book 20941, pp. 60-66.

## Historical Background & Context

# Chronology of Development & Use

<b>Ebenezer Baptist Church</b>	
March 11, 1913	Ebenezer Baptist Church acquires property. (Fulton County Deed Book 350, p. 587)
March 1914	Cornerstone laid. (Circumstantial evidence)
August 1914	Basement finished and occupied. ( <i>Atlanta Independent</i> , 29 August 1914)
June 4, 1921	Building permit issued for completion of building. (City of Atlanta Building Permit #1502)
January 31, 1922	Building permit marked "completed."
1925	New church appears on Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

<b>Ebenezer Baptist Church</b>	
late 1930s-before 1947	Cornerstone opened; installation of scored stucco on exterior; replacement of pews and pulpit furniture. (Circumstantial evidence, oral interviews, 1947 Anniversary Program)
November 2, 1940	New Wurlitzer organ dedicated; installed by Neal Davis of the L. J. Davis and Son Company, Atlanta. ( <i>Atlanta Daily World</i> , 28-30 October, 2-3 November 1940).
January 26, 1955	Ebenezer Baptist Church buys 52' x 145' lot and house at 413 Auburn (Fulton County Deed Book 2964, p. 336; Plat Book 53, p. 14)
November 4, 1955	Building permit issued to make 12,000 s.f. additions to and, although not mentioned in the permit, to remodel the interior of the old church, which included major alterations to the sanctuary, the basement, the vestibule, and to the northwest tower stairwell. Cost, \$150-169,000; builder, Barge-Thompson Const. Co., 136 Ellis St. (City of Atlanta Building Permit #9461)
May 27, 1956	New building dedicated, remodeling of old building complete ( <i>Atlanta Daily World</i> , 26 May 1956, 28 May 1956).
October 17, 1956	Final building inspection
1958-1960	"Installation of air-condition [sic] system" (1962 church history)
August 18, 1970	Building permit issued for new, 1800 sq. ft., vestibule in front of Christian Education Building, alterations to both stairwells and vestibule in the original building, a 400 sq. ft. addition to the rear of the church and an enlarged baptismal pool. Valuation, \$68,000; Architect, J. W. Robinson; Contractor, Norwood Construction Co., Atlanta. (City of Atlanta Building Permit #5195)
June 20, 1971	Building permit for additions marked "completed."

<b>Ebenezer Baptist Church</b>	
c. 1974	Organ console replaced, woodwork painted white, pulpit furniture and choir loft seating replaced. (Oral interviews and "Ebenezer Church Not Just A Shrine," <i>Atlanta Journal-Constitution</i> , 14 November 1978)
after 1975	Hill-Green-Lane pipe organ abandoned, partially dismantled and replaced by present Baldwin electronic organ. (Oral interviews with David Stills)
November 18, 1976	Building permit issued for addition of toilet in basement; builder Robert Norwood. (City of Atlanta Building Permit #6690)
February 2, 1977	Building permit for basement bathroom marked "completed."
c. 1980	Vinyl floor covering installed beneath pews in auditorium.
May 1980	New vinyl tile floor and paneling in basement. (dedicatory plaque)
1984	Roof replaced
c. 1993	Pulpit furniture replaced
1998-99	Roof replaced; wooden louvers in tower openings and windows in third level of northeast tower removed and replaced

## INITIAL CONSTRUCTION 1913-1922

The congregation acquired the lot at the southeast corner of Auburn and Jackson in February 1913. The purchase price was \$5,750, which included a two-story, wood-framed house dating from the 1890s.[1] It is not known if the house was demolished or, as was often the case during the period, if it was simply relocated off the property. In any case, the natural slope of the land, which is generally from southeast to northwest, required excavation to a depth of around 4'-5' and a low retaining wall was necessary along the east and south sides of the original lot in order to create a full, day-light basement. Part of this retaining wall survives beneath later concrete curbs and slabs in the courtyard on the east side of the church.

For a variety of reasons, ground was not broken for the building until 17 March 1914, an event that attracted notice in the *Atlanta Independent*. [2] There is no date of installation on the corner stone, which was originally installed on the northwest corner of the building. It may have been laid around this time as well, since the inscription does call for opening of the stone in March 1939, which is a reasonable, 25-year interval from its presumed date of installation.

By the summer of 1914, the congregation was "still struggling" to get into the new basement and attempting to raise more funds to complete the building. Fund raising must have been successful and, on 29 August 1914, the *Atlanta Independent* reported that "Ebenezer Baptist membership, their friends and admirers will worship in their own edifice tomorrow, Sunday, August 30th, inst.

The basement has been fully and handsomely completed. It is beautifully equipped with pews, electric [sic] and such church fixtures as progressive Atlanta approves. The seating capacity [of the basement] covers 3,200 square feet and will easily seat six hundred... When they shall have completed their church in its entirety, they will have one of the most modern church buildings in the State." [3]

The newspaper account may have been somewhat enthusiastic in its assessment of the manner in which the basement was finished. The nature of the temporary roof that was installed in 1914 has not been documented but the plain, brick walls that are still visible on the east side of the building characterized the original appearance of all of the exterior walls of the basement. The primary criterion for the choice of this brick, which would also be used on the east and south walls of the main auditorium, was clearly cost and not appearance. This sort of "value engineering" is a characteristic of many historic buildings and found wherever a brick wall was intended only as a substrate for a finer finish material or where the wall would be part of a secondary elevation. [4]

Entrance to the basement was through a door from Jackson Street in the northernmost bay of the basement proper. There was also a door opening, which led to the furnace room, from Jackson Street near the rear of the building. It is not known if the now-closed opening near the center of the north wall of the basement was in use prior to completion of the vestibule in 1922.

Basement windows were all double-hung, wooden sash, glazed with a glass

that was striated to render it translucent but not transparent. Openings in the brick walls were created by shallow relieving arches; but the effect of a full Roman-arched opening was suggested by arched glazing openings within the upper sash of each window.

Presumably, given its construction date and the character of the existing floor, the basement had a concrete floor originally but there has been no coring of the floor or other type of investigation that can prove that was the case. It is assumed that the existing plastered walls and beaded, tongue-and-groove board ceiling--both characteristic of the period but now hidden beneath modern finishes--date to 1914.

The south end of the basement appears to have originally been partitioned into a furnace room, kitchen and at least one bathroom. An early feature of the basement was a raised platform for the pulpit and a baptismal pool that was constructed at the center of the south end in front of the furnace room. The side walls of the platform splayed inward toward the rear and walls were finished in the same beaded, tongue-and-groove boards that were used on the ceiling throughout the basement.

Beneath the wooden floor of the pulpit podium was the baptismal pool, a necessity in any Baptist church, since the denomination's most distinguishing article of faith is its interpretation of the rite of Baptism as requiring total immersion in water rather than the symbolic sprinkling of water that is characteristic of the Methodists and other denominations. Historically, and continuing until after World War II in many rural areas, the rite had ordinarily been accomplished at the

nearest available creek, lake, or other body of water. For evident reasons, this was not always convenient for city churches and, with the advent of municipal water, the logistics of carrying out the rite were greatly simplified for the Baptists. While the indoor baptismal at Ebenezer would have seemed quite progressive at the time, its use required removal of the pulpit furniture and opening of a hatch or boards covering the top of the pool.[5] The precise location of the pool and how it was filled and emptied have not been documented. The building was supplied with water from the municipal water system and at least one restroom in the southeast corner of the basement was also part of the church's original construction.

It is believed that Rev. Williams's study was originally located in the basement level of the northwest tower.[6] It ceased to function in that capacity after a new study was completed under the choir loft at the south end of the auditorium in 1922. Another room, which was used for a variety of purposes, was located in the basement of the northeast tower as well, with both rooms accessed by doors off a corridor under what is now the south end of the vestibule. As the newspaper noted, the building was wired for electricity in 1914, which probably included the metal, goose-necked fixture that still survives over the original Jackson Street entrance. A similar fixture also appears above the front doors in early photographs.

Heating was probably limited to two coal-burning stoves, vented through small, square chimneys in the walls on either side of the building. The newspaper also mentioned that the basement had "pews" but these may have been

only simple wooden benches, since even the main auditorium did not have pews until the late 1930s. In addition, it is thought that the congregation moved the old John Brown pump organ from the old church and probably began using it in the basement of the new building.

Completion of the church was delayed by a variety of factors and not until 4 June 1921 did Rev. Williams apply to the city for a permit to "build one story & basement brick church" [sic]. The permit stated that the ground plan dimensions would be 50' x 104' and that construction cost was estimated at \$30,000. No architect was listed on the permit and "day" (meaning day labor) was the only description of the builder.[7] Presumably, the congregation continued to use the basement for services while construction continued on the auditorium. Few particulars of this phase of construction have been documented but there appear to have been no major delays once construction resumed. Although some plans for the entire building may have been in place in 1914, they must not have been extensive, perhaps no more than a floor plan. There were almost certainly no detailed drawings and, in any case, execution of the plans was left up to the congregation's discretion. Much of the actual construction of the building is thought to have been done by church members, masons being particularly well-represented in the congregation.[8]

The wood-framed roof was decked with boards, set close together, and, according to the building permit, finished with a "composition" shingle. The dangers of wood-shingled roofs had long been known and, after the Great Fire in 1917, Atlanta was quick to require the use of composition or asphalt shingles on all

new construction. Photographs show that hexagonal, "french" shingles provided the original roof-covering and were also used for subsequent re-roofing until the 1970s or 1980s. The color of the original shingles has not been identified but black or other dark-colored shingles appear to have been in place in the 1960s.

Stained glass windows were installed in 1921-22, by Llorens Stained Glass Company. Joseph V. Llorens, Sr., began the company in Atlanta in 1921 and, according to his son J. V. Llorens, Jr., the company installed all of the stained glass windows at Ebenezer.[9]

The building permit was marked completed in January 1922, but only after the congregation had borrowed an additional \$12,288, presumably to finish the building. Oddly, however, there is no mention in the *Atlanta Independent*, the local black weekly, of the building's completion, perhaps because the congregation was unable to finish the building entirely. Early photographs of the church prior to World War II, show that the existing stucco had not yet been installed. Close examination of one of these photographs shows that the plane of the red-brick veneer on the upper parts of the building extends 1-2" beyond the plane of the unstuccoed basement walls. This suggests that stucco was originally intended for the basement walls but, probably due to a shortage of funds, was not actually completed until the late 1930s or early 1940s.

In addition, later accounts (1947) of Rev. King's replacement of "the usual hard Church benches" with "the present modern pews" and his introduction of carpeting into the building in the late 1930s or early 1940s suggests that the building

had not been fully furnished or decorated in 1922. The interior of the auditorium was mostly complete, however, with plastered brick walls, stained and varnished woodwork, oak flooring, and a stamped-steel ceiling.

One of the most prominent features of the original interior of the church was the great choir loft at the south end of the auditorium. Spanning the entire width of the auditorium and reached by stairs located at its east end, the loft rose over eight feet above the auditorium floor and created a paneled backdrop to the pulpit platform. A single, double-hung window, glazed with stained-glass panels, appeared in the rear wall on either side of the loft. The large circular opening that is located high on the south wall of the church was originally filled with amber-colored glass and, although partially intercepted by the ceiling and always hidden by the pipes of the organ, still cast light into the area behind the organ pipes.

The height of the choir loft above the auditorium floor made possible a series of spaces beneath the choir loft. Under the western end of the loft was the pastor's study, which could be entered by a door from the auditorium and may have had its own private washroom. Beneath the eastern end of the loft was the women's restroom and the stairs up to the choir loft. There was also reported to have been a conference room beneath the center portion of the choir loft along with a stairway to the basement.[10]

A small vestibule at the main Auburn Avenue entrance to the church connected through large uncased openings to the stairwells on the east and west sides that led up to the auditorium. A door on the

original south wall of the vestibule led to a short flight of stairs to the basement.

The balcony at the rear of the auditorium, which could be entered at both ends from the stairwells, extended over the auditorium floor to a distance of around twelve feet and continued on a series of raised platforms to the north end of the church. The main floor of the auditorium did not, however, extend to the front of the building since the original church office was located between the tower stairwells and beneath the balcony. In addition to the present entrances at the north end of the auditorium beneath the balcony, a series of double doors also opened from a hall that crossed between the stairwells, office and auditorium and off which the door to the office was located.[11]

In both stairwells were wooden staircases that extended from the vestibule to the auditorium and balcony levels. Neither staircase continued to the third level of the towers, which is located above the upper balcony floor, and neither continued to the basement. A third wooden staircase is reported to have run from the south side of the vestibule to an opening near the center of the north wall of the basement. No physical evidence for these features has yet been located, but the plan of these stairs is shown on the 1956 drawings.[12]

The original exterior and interior doors in the building have been lost and only the front entrance doors are clearly visible in early photographs. The entrance doors were plain, wooden, 2-panel doors with large panes of striated or frosted glass in the upper panel. They are reported to have been mounted in pairs as folding doors.

A furnace room was an original feature of the basement, although equipment was not installed until 1921-1922. Located behind the basement stage, the room is serviced by a brick chimney that rises against the outside of the western end of the rear (south) wall of the building. The 1924 Sanborn maps indicate only that the building had a "furnace" but the character of the sheet-metal ducts, some of which are visible in early photographs of the basement, indicates that the furnace was a typical, gravity-flow system, most likely coal-fired, and with a series of registers and returns in the floor of the auditorium. Wood- or coal-burning stoves continued to heat the basement at least until the 1940s.

Construction work may have ruined the original brick sidewalks that were installed along Auburn Avenue in the 1890s. At least by 1924, the brick had been replaced with hexagonal, concrete pavers similar to those used all across the city after the early 1900s. The narrow "green way" between the sidewalk and the curb was a feature of most late nineteenth and early twentieth century residential streetscapes and this feature remained intact as the paving material of the sidewalks was being replaced. Two large, deciduous trees remained in the green way near the northeast corner of the church in the early 1920s.

### **EARLY ALTERATIONS c. 1935-1947**

As noted in the historical overview, the 1920s and early 1930s were difficult times for the congregation and it was not until 1935 that the original debt on the building was retired. By then, "Daddy" King had rebuilt the congregation, which had dwindled from a high of over 900 in

1918 to as few as 200 on the eve of the Great Depression and, by the late 1930s, enough prosperity had returned to support a resumption of Ebenezer's building campaign.

The means by which Rev. King and the congregation funded these changes is not clear, although it is believed that many of the memorials on the stained glass windows were given through subscription to a building fund. The memorials consist of names painted on clear glass panels that were added to the face of the original leaded panels. These memorials were installed over a period of time, with three generations of memorials visible in as many varieties of painted script. The larger script of the earliest of these may date to the 1920s, but the latest and most numerous are the smaller, more uniform script that was used in the late 1930s or early 1940s.[13]

A number of changes have been identified from this period, most of which might be seen as completing the building that had been envisioned twenty years earlier. The most significant change on the exterior was installation of the scored stucco at the basement level. The stucco was installed by Samuel Martin, a mason and member of the congregation, and its installation finally brought the exterior of the building to a state of completion.[14] As part of that project, the cornerstone may have been opened, its contents viewed, and resealed. A record of the deeds, letters, and other artifacts viewed at that time has not been located.[15]

Changes were also made on the interior around this time, as the church went "from the usual hard Church benches to the present modern pews." It is also

thought that the original pulpit and chairs on the raised platform in front of the choir loft and the communion table on the auditorium floor below the pulpit were replaced around this time as well. Except for the newspaper's comment quoted above, no historical documentation for the origin of these features has been located, although all of them had certainly been installed by the time the first known photograph of the auditorium was taken in the early or mid-1940s. The character of their detail, however, suggests that the pews and the pulpit furniture were installed in the mid- to-late 1930s, perhaps as late as World War II, but not in the 1920s. In addition, prior to 1947, the pink marble urns presently in the auditorium had been solicited by Mrs. Nannien W. Crawford, long-time member of Ebenezer, general director of Ebenezer's Baptist Training Union and secretary of the State Sunday School Convention of Georgia.[16]

The best-documented alteration to the church occurred in the fall of 1940 when a "costly and attractive" Wurlitzer pipe organ, "the latest available," replaced the old John Brown pipe organ which the congregation may have brought with them from the old Gilmer Street church and which eventually had been electrified. According to a contemporary report, the Wurlitzer organ featured 2,000 pipes, "ranging from 6 inches to 16 feet long with a band of 4 'C' depths of tone" and included an "echo" chamber in the third level of the northwest tower at the rear of the auditorium. The console was so large and heavy that it could not be placed in the choir loft but had to be placed on the floor near the east end of the stage. Except for the echo pipes, which were located behind a grill on the west wall of the upper balcony, the pipes

were placed to the rear of the choir loft and, with their gold-painted surfaces, provided a dramatic back-drop to the choir itself.[17]

### **ADDITIONS AND REMODELING 1955-1968**

One of the most common changes that were made to early twentieth century Protestant church buildings was partitioning of the basement or, particularly in the mid-twentieth century, the addition of a separate classroom building or wing. In both cases, the spaces would be used by the church's Sunday School, offices and other activities. The basement at Ebenezer had been partially partitioned for class rooms but Dr. King, Sr., was thinking about an addition by the early 1950s, if not before. At the same time, the old building, although refurbished in the late 1930s, had some basic problems that the congregation also needed to address. In January 1955, the congregation bought the 52' x 145' lot and 2-story house at 413 Auburn, next door to the church, apparently with the intent of constructing an addition to the church. The new "Christian Education Building" was designed by a local African-American architect, Edward C. Miller, and it is assumed that he also designed the changes that were made to the auditorium and vestibule at the same time. The existence of plans for the work was noted on the building permit but only one sheet of drawings has been located. (See Appendix E)

The work was apparently not phased; and, because the old church office between the stairwells at the rear (north end) of the auditorium was slated for removal, a temporary office was installed at the third level of the northeast

tower.[18] In November 1955, a building permit was issued and demolition of the house may have begun at that time. Grading and footings were completed in February 1956 and, by March, framing was complete. Although the building permit was not completed until October, most of the work had been completed by the time the building was dedicated on 27 May 1956.[19] See Reconstructed Plans, 1955-56.

Although the "contemporary architecture" of the Christian Education Building made no pretense of compatibility with the old church building, it was set fifteen feet behind the front of the church, leaving the east side of the northeast tower exposed and a small yard in front of the new building. It was also set along the eastern boundary of the expanded church property, which put it about twelve feet away from the east side of the old church, with the space between being paved as a "play space for children." [20]

Two-stories high with a flat roof, the new building was constructed with a red brick veneer and aluminum, awning-type windows. The most prominent design features of the new building were the concrete spandrels that framed the windows on the front of the building, a cantilevered concrete canopy over the main entrance, front steps which were flanked by concrete planters, and a large cross that rose from the canopy to the roof line of the building. The new building was also connected to the old church by means of an elevated and enclosed, metal skywalk that ran from the second floor of the new building next to the new pastor's study to a new entrance which was created toward the rear of the east side of the auditorium near the choir loft.

On the first floor of the new building was located a "spacious recreation room, a nursery, a beginner's room, primary rooms, a library, a counsel room for the pastor, a large clerical office [and] waiting room. On the second floor were "two large assembly rooms at each end of the hall for Junior and Intermediate departments respectively" and several smaller classrooms which housed adult classes and the Ushers' room. The pastor's study was also located on the second floor, near the skywalk, and was finished with "paneled walls of Philippine mahogany, ample built-in book case and an intercommunicating system which gives direct contact with the main auditorium, basement auditorium, nursery and clerical office." [21]

The church itself underwent major alterations and renovation. The most dramatic changes occurred in the main auditorium where the original choir loft and pulpit stage at the south end of the space were completely removed. A new wall was constructed about four feet inside the original rear (south) wall of the building and flanked by new, floor-to-ceiling organ chambers projecting further onto the floor of the auditorium. The new wall allowed creation of a small baptismal pool to replace the original pool under the basement stage. The new pool was decorated by a mural on the rear wall and by a wooden canopy over the partially-glassed opening on the front. [22]

The new organ chambers concealed most of the organ pipes, but several of the gold-painted pipes from the old Wurlitzer were used to decorate the front face of the chambers. Large, grilled openings open over the sides of the choir loft, where the pipes for a new Hill-

Green-Lane Pipe Organ were installed. Pink curtains were hung inside the grills at first but were subsequently removed when it was found that they dampened the organ's sound.[23]

The new walls were finished with plaster on wire lath and a wood-paneled wainscot constructed of sheets of Luan or Philippine mahogany paneling, though originally specified as oak. All of the new woodwork, including the organ chamber grilles, was stained and varnished while the original stained-and-varnished woodwork in the auditorium was painted to match the plaster walls, which were painted in a rose pink color.[24]

To replace the seating area lost by the new arrangement of the pulpit, choir loft, and organ chambers, the walls and corridor separating the old church office from the main auditorium were removed and a series of platforms constructed to continue the raked floor of the auditorium. Pews from the front of the auditorium were then relocated to this area. At the same time, the chairs that had been used for seating in the balcony and in the old choir loft were replaced by metal-framed, theater-style, wooden seats. The design of the seats in the balcony, which remain in place, differed somewhat from those in the choir loft, which have now been lost.[25]

The original light fixtures (1922) in the auditorium, which were hung from chains and were fitted with a mixture of "school-house" and pendant-style glass globes, were replaced by the existing recessed lighting in 1956. A three-dimensional, free-standing cross, lit from the inside, was mounted above the new baptismal canopy. On the exterior of the building, a blue, metal-framed, sign with

"Ebenezer Baptist Church" announced in white neon was also installed above the main entrance.

According to the newspaper report of the remodeling in 1956, the vestibule was "enlarged and new entrance doors installed"; but the report failed to offer additional descriptive information and recent oral interviews have produced conflicting information about the precise nature of those changes. However, plans show that the vestibule was enlarged to its present configuration in 1956. To replace the original stairway from the vestibule to the basement, new stairs to the basement were created in the northeast tower and along the east side of the auditorium.

In addition to the new stairs, there were other changes to the basement in 1956. The old door opening from Jackson Street was replaced by a window and the interior staircase removed and; in the southwest corner of the fellowship hall, a new exit to Jackson Street was created. The original kitchen on the east side of the basement was replaced by a ladies' lounge. The old furnace room door off Jackson Street was closed and a new kitchen created out of what may have originally been a coal storage area and/or janitor's closet in the southwest corner of the basement. All of the original interior doors in the auditorium, balcony, basement and elsewhere were replaced by solid-core, flush doors in 1956. In addition, the old folding doors at the main entrance were replaced with the existing doors, sidelights, and transom at the same time.

Neither the new Christian Education Building nor the church itself were air-conditioned in 1956, although the fur-

nance in the old building may have been replaced at that time. By 1960, however, a central air-conditioning system had been installed for the auditorium.[26] In addition, the great crowds that often came to hear Martin Luther King, Jr., preach provoked a crackdown by the local fire marshal so that fire exits had to be added at the rear of the building. Finally, the auditorium was repainted once between 1956 and 1968 and the color scheme changed. The "rose-pink" walls from 1956 were repainted in a slightly different color (called "peach" in the paint study). At the same time, the original (1922) wainscot and other woodwork, which had been painted a slightly darker shade of "rose pink" in 1956, were repainted in a dark brown that blended with the stained-and-varnished woodwork of the choir loft.

#### **ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS 1970-1975**

The popularity of Ebenezer as a tourist attraction after Dr. King's death in 1968 was part of the reason that major alterations were made to the buildings in 1970.[27] The Atlanta architectural firm of Muldawer & Patterson (Paul Muldawer and James Patterson) in association with J. W. Robinson developed the plans, but they were apparently too ambitious for the church's budget. By the time construction started in August 1970, a proposed chapel addition at the rear of the church and redevelopment of the Fellowship Hall for classrooms had been deleted from the plans. The remainder of the work, valued at \$68,000, was completed by Robert Norwood Construction Company of Atlanta by June 1971.[28]

The new vestibule that was built in front of the Education Building was the most

significant change to the complex. It replaced the old International-Style facade of the Education Building with a new red-brick facade that was designed to echo the Late Gothic Revival detailing of the original church. This addition was also designed to provide a ground-level connection between the Education Building and the old church, which necessitated demolition of the east wall of the northeast tower of the church. In addition, the congregation had long complained of the difficulties in negotiating the old stairwells from the church's original vestibule to the main auditorium, particularly in providing handicapped accessibility and in carrying coffins up and down for funerals. As a result, the northeast tower staircase was completely redesigned, changing the three narrow flights of stairs between floors to the present two wide flights of stairs with a chair-lift. This eliminated the stairs from the church vestibule to the basement and so the northwest stairwell was also reconfigured to include the present stairway to the basement.[29]

Although the proposed circular chapel at the rear of the building was not constructed, a smaller addition was made that allowed for the construction of a larger baptismal pool that provided better lines of sight from the auditorium. It also provided an ambulatory between the two sides of the choir loft, eliminating the awkward earlier arrangement where passage was made on a temporary wooden cover over the baptismal pool.

In addition, the auditorium was probably redecorated at this time.[30] Redecoration included covering the original paneled wainscot down the sides of the auditorium with gypsum dry wall. Walls,

ceiling, and all of the wainscot, including the 1956 mahogany panels around the choir loft, were painted white as were the organ grills, baptismal canopy, and the paneling in front of the balcony. The existing spotlights may also have been added to the 1956 recessed lighting about this time.

In the early 1970s, the organ console was replaced and, by the mid-1970s, the theater-style seating in the choir loft had been replaced with Colonial-style pews with white end panels. The 1930s pulpit furniture was also replaced by a matching white-trimmed pulpit, communion table and chairs; and red seat cushions were installed on the auditorium pews. The 1930s pulpit furniture is now located in the Christian Education Building.

#### **ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS 1976-2000**

Some time after Mrs. King's murder in 1974, a memorial fountain was installed in the connection between the northeast stairwell and the vestibule to the Christian Education Building. In 1976, the ladies' room in the basement was expanded and both bathrooms were remodeled with suspended ceilings and new tile.[31] The work was done by Robert Norwood, who had completed the 1970 additions and alterations and who made minor alterations to the Christian Education Building in 1977.[32] In 1980, a new vinyl floor was installed in the basement and it was probably at this time that the basement walls were paneled and the old stage enclosed.[33]

In 1984, the church was reroofed, which included some alterations to the valleys around the towers. Within the last ten years, the 1970s pulpit furniture and

choir loft pews were replaced by the existing furniture and a new church announcement board has been placed over the basement windows in the north face of the northwest tower. The original announcement board has been relocated to the east side of the front of the Christian Education Building. In addition, the stained-glass windows were covered with Plexiglas panels around 1990 and the roof was replaced again in 1998.[34]

The existing wood-patterned, vinyl floor covering under the pews in the auditorium appears to be modern, although its origins have not been documented. Its design and the degree of wear suggest that it dates to the 1970s or 1980s. Finally, after 1975, the Hill-Green-Lane pipe organ was replaced by the present Baldwin electronic organ. The abandoned pipes of the old organ remain in place and its console is reported to be in private hands.[35]

**ENDNOTES**

- [1] Fulton County Deed Book 350, p. 587; Book 464, p. 269-272.
- [2] *Atlanta Independent*, 14 March 1914.
- [3] *Atlanta Independent*, 29 August 1914.
- [4] Wheat Street Baptist Church and many of the nearby commercial buildings show a similar difference in materials on primary and secondary facades.
- [5] Sarah Reed and the Englishes both recalled the original baptismal pool.
- [6] English interview referenced Rev. Williams' study in the basement of the northwest tower.
- [7] City of Atlanta Building Permit #1502, on microfilm at Atlanta History Center.
- [8] Interview with Jethro and Auretha English, long-time church members, on 5 August 1999. Mr. English's father, also named Jethro, was a member of the church's building committee when the auditorium was completed in 1921-1922.
- [9] Unfortunately, Mr. Llorens, Jr., also stated that the company had destroyed all of its old records a few years ago. Attribution of the windows to Llorens was confirmed in an interview with Christine King Farris, sister of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- [10] English, Watkins, Farris and Stills interviews.
- [11] Interviews with Sarah Reed and Lillian Watkins, both of whom worked as church secretary for many years.
- [12] Interviews with Watkins, Farris, Stills and Barnhardt mention flights of stairs from the vestibule to the basement. Top of basement door opening is visible in center of north wall of Fellowship Hall.
- [13] Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Jethro English, Jr. Shortly after their marriage in 1937, they donated a memorial to his father, who was a member of the Board of Deacons when the building was constructed 1914-1922.
- [14] Interviews with Mrs. Jethro English and Miss Lillian Watkins credited Samuel Martin with installing the stucco. Informants disagree on Johnson's "sponsorship."
- [15] Several church members, including the Englishes, Miss Watkins, and Mrs. Farris confirmed that the cornerstone was opened, but none could remember when. It is possible that this occurred in March 1939, the opening date inscribed on the stone, but no mention of the stucco or cornerstone opening was found in the *Atlanta Daily World* during that period. The stucco appears first in the 1947 photograph of the church, where its apparently stained condition provides some support for the assumption that it was installed a few years earlier.
- [16] Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Jethro English noted Crawford's donation of the urns; 1947 Program includes photograph and information about Crawford.
- [17] "Ebenezer Baptist Church Has New Pipe Organ," *At-*

- lanta Daily World*, 28 October 1940. David Stills, organist at the church 1950-1973, believed that the John Brown organ had been used in the old Gilmer Street church.
- [18] Interview with David Stills.
- [19] "New Christian Education Building at Ebenezer," *Atlanta Daily World*, 26 May 1956. Shirley Barnhardt, a member of the church, remembers that the sanctuary renovation had been completed by the time of her father's funeral in March 1956.
- [20] *Atlanta Daily World*, 26 May 1956.
- [21] *Ibid.*
- [22] *Ibid.*
- [23] See 1961 Anniversary Program.
- [24] Interview with David Stills.
- [25] Mrs. English believed that the balcony seating was changed around 1956, although no other documentation for that change has been found. The style of the metal end panels suggest that the seats could have been installed some time earlier. A photograph of David Stills taken at the Hill-Green-Lane organ console in the late 1950s shows the seating installed in the choir loft in 1956 and it differs from that which remains in the balcony.
- [26] See 1961 Anniversary Program, which mentions that "air-condition" had been installed 1958-1960. However, note that windows are open in the auditorium in the photographs from Dr. King's funeral in 1968.
- [27] Interviews with Miss Lillian Watkins and Christine King Farris.
- [28] City of Atlanta Building Permit #5195.
- [29] The modern materials in the stairwells cover all evidence of the earlier details.
- [30] See "Daddy" King, p. 200, which mentions that new organ was in place but not operational when his wife was murdered in June 1974.
- [31] City of Atlanta Building Permit #6690 for 407 Auburn appears to document these changes.
- [32] City of Atlanta Building Permit #0837 for 413 Auburn Avenue documents this change.
- [33] A dedicatory plaque for this floor is located in the basement and dated May 1980.
- [34] Interviews with Howard King, chairman of the church's building and grounds committee since around 1990, has confirmed these changes although there has been no documentation for precisely when they occurred.
- [35] Interviews with David Stills.

# Physical Description



Main entrance at corner of Jackson and Auburn St. (NPS, 2001)

This section contains a systematic accounting of all features, materials, and spaces according to age, significance, and general integrity. A detailed inventory of individual building features is included in Appendix C and is summarized in the body of this chapter. The text and detailed assessment discuss causes of deterioration and structural inadequacy.

Ebenezer Baptist Church is a rectangular, masonry building, the basement of which was constructed in 1914 and the remainder in 1921-1922. A vernacular interpretation of the Late Gothic Revival of the early twentieth century, the building features load-bearing brick walls and a steeply-pitched, end-gabled roof with lower cross-gables at each end. Engaging and rising a few feet above the north-facing main gable are two, square, flat-roofed towers, each with corner merlons.

On the primary elevations (west and north), a reddish, face brick is used, laid in running bond; on secondary elevations, which include most of the east and south sides of the building, a brownish, common brick is used, laid in six-course, common bond. In addition, the primary facades are finished with scored stucco at the basement level and are decorated with corbeled string courses, window hoods, and recessed panels and niches at the upper levels.

The brick walls of the building include two-story, brick buttresses that divide the structure into nine bays each on the east and west elevations and three on the main (north) facade. Fenestration is accomplished through a variety of Gothic-arched and flat-topped openings, many of them glazed with panels of stained glass.

The interior includes an entrance vestibule with flanking stairwells in the towers, all of which have been remodeled in 1970. The main auditorium, which was remodeled in 1956 and again in the mid-1970s, is a large, rectangular space that features a raked floor and raised platforms for the pulpit and choir at the south end, and a full-width balcony at the north end. On either side of the choir loft, organ chambers (1956) engage the corners of the original auditorium space. The building also has a full, day-light basement which is partitioned at the south end into a variety of spaces, including a raised stage area.

The adjacent Christian Education Building was constructed in 1956 and is connected to the church by an elevated walkway (1956) near the south end of the building and by the modern vestibule (1970) at the north end. The historic "International Style" facade of the Christian Education Building was obliterated in 1970 when the existing vestibule and gift shop were added to the front of the Christian Education Building. The facade of this addition is brick and repeats the buttresses, blind niches, and belt courses of the original church building, to which it is connected by a corridor through the northeast tower. The hipped-roof, masonry addition that obscures much of the rear of the original church building was also constructed in 1970.

The outside dimensions of the building are 50'-1" x 113'-4", which includes the 9'-0" x 47'-7" addition (1970) at the rear of the building. Because of the sloping site, the height of the stuccoed base of the building varies from around 9'-6" at the northeast corner, 11' at the northwest corner, and 10' at the southwest corner. The ridge of the gable roof rises to a height of about 43' above the basement and as much as 53' above ground level in front of the building. Each of the two towers is about 17', east to west, and 19', north to south, with the merlon parapets set about 4'-8" above the ridge line of the roof.

The adjacent Christian Education Building (1956) is set 13' east of the original building but is connected to the original building by an elevated walkway (1956) near the rear and by the Education Building's front vestibule (1970).



**Detail of brick wall on east side. At right are red face brick and stucco used on primary elevations; at left is common brick used on secondary elevations. (NPS, 2000)**

## EXTERIOR WALLS

The original basement walls (1914), which are most clearly visible in the courtyard on the east side of the building, were constructed of a dark, common brick, fairly uniform in size but varying in coloration, and set with a hard, greyish-tan mortar. A similar brick continues in the upper parts of the walls (1921-1922) on most of the east and south sides of the building, differing from the basement walls only in that the mortar is more nearly tan in color. The quality of the masonry work is utilitarian, with brick irregularly laid and finished with wide ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " +), struck joints.

In contrast, the primary elevations of the building, which include all of the west and north sides, the east side of the northeast tower, and the chimney and the west end of the south wall, are finished with a veneer of reddish, face brick, laid in running bond using a hard, tan-colored mortar. On primary elevations, the brick is more regular than on secondary elevations, with narrower joints (around  $\frac{3}{8}$ ") neatly tooled, although there are rough edges where the numerous angled bricks that were required were shaped by hammer breaks rather than sawing. The exposed brick walls at the tops of the towers are finished with a smooth-finished, concrete coping.

The basement walls on the primary elevations (north and west) are stuccoed and scored to resemble large, stone blocks, approximately 14" x 28", all of which have been painted grey in recent years. Although the stucco was not installed until the late 1930s or early 1940s, it must have been a feature of the original plans since the face of the

brick veneer on the upper walls was installed in 1921-1922 to project about an inch beyond the plane of the basement walls. (110) The stucco has undergone some repairs in addition to alterations to original openings that occurred in 1956.

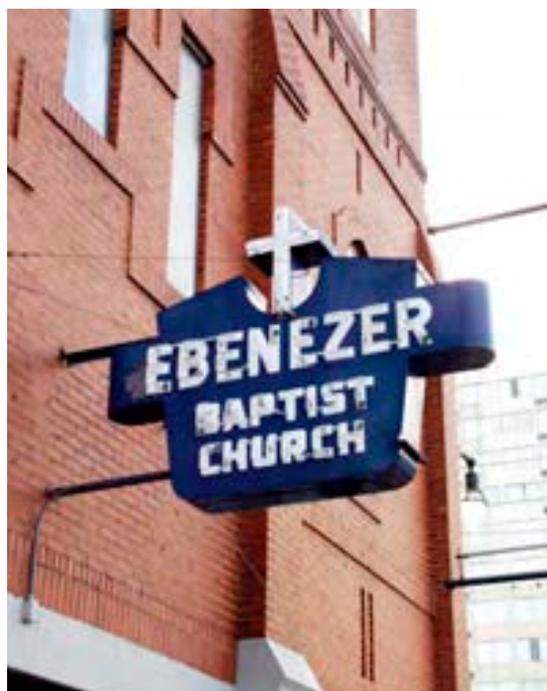
Two-story, brick buttresses, 26" wide and projecting about 13" from the plane of the walls, divide the building into nine bays each on the east and west elevations and four bays each on the north and south. On the north and west sides, the buttresses rise from a continuous, concrete plinth that provides a base for the stuccoed walls. The tower buttresses rise about two feet higher than the side-wall buttresses and both feature corbeled brick coping at the top.

Window and door openings are created by brick segmental arches except on the veneered facades where cast-iron lintels allow for some flat-topped openings. Basement level openings generally have granite sills, rough-faced on the sides, except where concrete has been used for later additions or alterations. In the upper parts of the building, a projecting, rowlock course forms a sill at each opening and there are also projecting, brick window hoods at the tops of the openings above the basement level.

Errors appear to have been made in laying out the building, perhaps as early as 1914, which led to a number of irregularities in the finished building. The errors began with construction of the basement and creation of the buttresses and three, unequally-sized bays across the front of the building. While the front doors are centered in the facade, they are not centered in the middle bay, due to the fact that the western bay was built a foot shorter than the eastern bay. When con-

struction resumed on the upper part of the building, the trios of windows at the second and third levels in the center bay had to be centered in the bay and not the facade in order to minimize the design problems that were created by the misplaced buttresses. Because the placement of the ridge of the roof had to be centered between the equally-sized towers, the off-center placement of the openings in the center bay is readily apparent at the top of the gable. In addition, the openings in the western bay were aligned with the basement window which was centered in the too-short bay between the buttresses. This threw the center line of these openings, and of the opening in the north face of the northwest tower, a foot off center, an error most apparent in the placement of the louvered opening in the northwest tower.

Problems also arose with the placement and height of the cross gables on each side of the building. While the cross gables at the north end of the building were intended to be broader than those at the south, the heights of the gables are irregular, with the tops of those on the west side of the building approximately two feet lower than those on the east. In addition, the rear (south) gables are not aligned, the gable on the west side being placed slightly lower and 2'-6" closer to the rear wall than is the gable on the east side. Finally, there is a height difference of a few inches in the side walls (east and west) of the building. While these errors would not be noticed on the exterior, they are apparent on the interior where installation of the ceiling could do little to disguise the differences.



View of neon sign at main entrance to Ebenezer. (NPS, 2000)

**North Elevation:** The north facade features the main entrance to the building, which is located in the middle bay of the stuccoed base. Pairs of arched windows appear in the flanking bays at the basement level and tall, narrow, Gothic-arched openings appear in the towers at each level. The taller openings at the top of the towers were filled with wooden louvers, except where 6/6, double-hung windows replaced the lower part of the louvers in the northeast tower in 1956. The center bay features a trio of rectangular openings set in a Palladian fashion at the main floor level and a large, three-part, Gothic-arched opening in the gable between the towers.

The walls between the buttresses above the stuccoed base are recessed slightly from the plane of the tower walls. Between the lower wall and the tower wall is a shallowly-corbeled belt course decorated with a series of recessed bricks that recall the more-elaborate cornice lines and bolder modeling of the Early Gothic Revival. Also on the lower walls of the towers are small, narrow, vertically-aligned brick recesses that evoke the arrow loops in medieval fortifications, with two located below and one above each of the Gothic-arched tower windows. The openings on the main level feature corbeled, brick window hoods and the lower belt course is continued as a sill for the windows in the center bay. As with most Late Gothic buildings, there is no corbeling at the cornice line of the gabled roof, which is finished with a simple 1" x 8" fascia and plain 1" x 3" cornice board. At the tops of the towers, a narrow belt course is corbeled slightly from the wall and, above that, a very low parapet wall with corner merlons. Parapet and merlons are capped with cast-concrete coping.

The cornerstone, which circumstantial evidence dates to 1914, is located at the northeast corner of this facade. It is marble and thought to contain a time capsule that was last opened around 1939. At the bottom of the stone, just left of center, the date "June 12, 1921" has been added to the original inscription. The existing church announcement board is placed over the two basement windows in the front of the northwest tower. Installed since 1980, it replaced a similar, but slightly smaller announcement board that was installed on the left side of the windows against the buttress.



Original sign board, now on front of Education Building. (NPS, 2000)

The original board was probably installed in the late 1930s or 1940s, though it does not appear in known photographs until 1947. It is now located on the front of the Christian Education Building. Both boards are metal-framed, lighted, and have a locking, glass door that can be opened to change the announcements.

Projecting from the wall just above the front doors is a neon sign announcing "Ebenezer Baptist Church." Installed around 1956, the sign features a metal base painted dark blue against which white neon tubing spells out the church's name. On the forward edge of the sign is painted "Custom Signs 426-4766."

**West Elevation:** The west elevation, which faces Jackson Street, continues much of the architectural detail found on the front of the building, including brick buttresses, belt courses, and window hoods. Blind openings with typical brick hoods flank the window in the north gable and also the lower window in the south gable. In the southernmost bay on this side, there was originally a door from the pastor's study, although it ap-

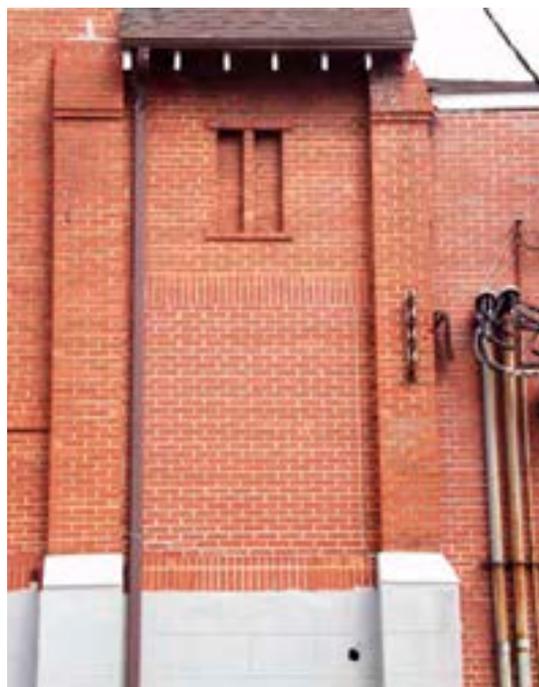


View of west elevation.  
(NPS, 2000)

parently never had steps to the ground. It was bricked up in 1956 but a smaller pair of blind openings remains high on that same wall. In addition, the rhythm of the windows is continued in slightly-recessed brick panels that appear in the walls beneath the window openings.

Near the center of this elevation, a small, square brick chimney, capped with metal, rises above the roof line from the wall below. Originally capped with a t-shaped, terra-cotta stack, this chimney provided a flue for a coal-burning stove in the basement.

The existing Jackson St. door was created in 1956 to replace the original entrance to the basement (1914), which can still be identified in the bay next to the northwest tower. Beneath the south gable, the pattern of the original furnace room door opening, which was also closed during the 1956 remodeling, can be seen in the scoring of the stucco. Note, too, the imprint of the original down spouts in the stucco surface behind the existing modern down spouts.



Detail from south end of west side, showing infilled door opening below blind niches. (NPS, 2000)

The mast for the building's electrical service is located at the west end of the rear addition, with five runs of 3" conduit descending that wall before entering the 1970 addition a few feet above the ground. Nearby, at the corner of the original building, is an older metal mast with four brown porcelain insulators that may date to the 1920s. A metal, goose-neck electrical fixture, minus its shade and fittings, still extends above the original Jackson Street entrance, which is now a window near the north end of this side.

**East Elevation:** Most of the east elevation of the original building is obscured from view from the street by the 1970 addition to the front of the Christian Ed-



View south showing skywalk (1956) between the Education Building and the east side of the church. (NPS, 2000)



View to northeast, showing historic church at left and 1956 Education Building at right. (NPS, 2000)

Education Building. That addition also destroyed most of the east wall of the church below the northeast tower and also included removal of a pair of Gothic-arched, stained-glass windows similar to those that remain on the west side of the northwest tower.

The switch from the red brick veneer of the primary elevations to the coarser masonry of the secondary elevations occurs around the center of the north gable on this side. In addition, the differences in construction of openings is readily apparent in that gable, with an iron lintel creating a flat-topped opening in one window while a shallow, brick segmental arch typical of the openings in the basement and secondary elevations is used in the other.

In the southernmost bay on this side, a new door opening was created in 1956 and connected to the corridor next to the pastor's study on the second floor of the Education Building by the present metal-framed, glass-enclosed, elevated walkway. Beneath it is a door into the base-

ment, also created in 1956 to replace an original window opening in that location.

Near the north end of the east wall is a small area where a reddish mortar was used in laying the common brick. This indicates that red mortar, intended to match the red face brick (a fashionable combination in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries), was considered for the building rather than the color-contrasting mortar that was finally chosen and which was, by the 1920s, the more fashionable choice.

Just south of the center of this elevation, a small, square brick chimney, similar to the one on the west side of the building and also capped with metal, rises above the roof line from the wall below. It served another coal-burning stove in the basement.

**South Elevation:** Most of the original south elevation of the building has been obscured by the 1970 addition, although the original south gable of the church rises above the hipped roof of the addi-

tion. The gable has the same simple fascia and rake mold found along the north gable but the only opening now visible is the large circular vent near the top of the gable wall. What appears to be the original wood frame remains in place but the glass or louvers that would have originally filled the opening have been replaced by Plexiglas and an aluminum vent. Against the western side of this wall, a chimney for the furnace room rises to the height of the roof ridge and is also an original feature of this elevation.

The original elevation included at least two windows at the basement level, which are still visible in the basement furnace room. At the main level on the south end of the building were two stained glass windows similar to those used under the large Gothic-arched windows in the cross gables. The Gothic windows were closed when the auditorium was remodeled in 1956.

## FOUNDATION

The site, which slopes from southeast to northwest, was originally excavated to allow for a day-light basement. Drilling of the basement walls suggests that the below-grade footings and foundation are probably constructed of granite or other hard stone. A ledge that surrounds the interior of the basement walls about 4' above the basement floor appears to mark the top of the foundation.

## STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS

**Walls:** The exterior walls of the original building (1914, 1921-22) are load-bearing masonry that appear to exhibit two methods of construction. The basement walls and the walls on secondary eleva-

tions are laid in a 6-course, common bond while the upper walls on the primary elevations are laid in a running bond, which indicates a veneered wall. The outside walls of the towers above the stairwells use structural clay tiles (approximately 5" x 8" x 12" with two hollow cores), but it has not yet been possible to determine the extent of the use of clay tiles elsewhere in the building.

A few of the interior walls are wood-framed, including the south wall of the vestibule, the choir loft and organ chamber walls, and all of the interior partitions at the south end of the basement except for the east and west walls of the furnace room, which are masonry, and the modern metal-and-glass curtain wall across the front of the stage.

**Roof:** The roof is framed with wood using rafters that are approximately 1-5/8" x 5" and are set on approximately 16" centers.

**Ceilings and Floors:** The ceiling structure of the auditorium is hung from six, steel, scissors trusses, built up with 2" x 2", bolted, angle iron. Between the trusses are laid 2" x 8" wooden ceiling joists, 24" on centers, running parallel to the side walls of the church. Note that the trusses may not be aligned with the masonry side-wall buttresses.

Original internal floor, ceiling and roof framing is wood. The main floor of the building rests on 1-3/4" x 11", rough-sawn joists, spaced 15-16" on centers, running east and west, and supported by the side walls of the church, two rows of posts that run north and south in the basement, and the side walls of the furnace room at the rear of the basement.



Front doors, installed in 1956, off Auburn Avenue. (NPS, 2000)

Parts of this framing are visible where the original ceiling has been destroyed off the stairwell in the southeast corner of the basement. The wooden posts, which are square and have chamfered edges, remain in place except for four at the south end which have been replaced by metal posts. All posts are now boxed by plywood paneling. The nature of the framing that creates the raked floor of the auditorium has not been investigated but is most likely a conventional wooden system.

The historic floors throughout the basement and in the vestibule are all concrete slabs on grade as is the modern (1970) ground floor in the rear addition. The floors that were installed in 1970 in the second floor of the rear addition, in the ground floor of the towers, and in the stairwell landing in the northeast tower are reinforced concrete supported by steel I-beams.

## DOORS AND WINDOWS

The main entrance into the building is through double doors (each 3'-0" x 6'-8") in the center of the basement level of the Auburn Avenue facade. Reached by two steps from the sidewalk, the opening is original (1914-1922) but the existing doors, which are wood, faced with planks of oak and hung with wrought-iron, strap hinges, date to 1956. Fixed, door-like panels in a similar style flank the doorway, and narrow, leaded panels of colored cathedral glass (also 1956) form a transom and sidelights for the opening. Similar glass is used in small rectangular openings in the upper part of each door.

Both of the historic door openings on the Jackson Street side of the building were closed in 1956. The present Jackson Street entrance into the basement was created prior to 1968 out of an original window opening in one of the rear bays on the west side of the building. It is now closed with a steel door, 3'-0" x 6'-8", in a metal frame and has a steep, temporary, wooden ramp installed to the sidewalk.

The auditorium originally had no entrance at the south end of the building but, prior to 1968, the openings (3'-0" x 6'-8") were created to provide emergency egress. The metal steps that were first installed at these openings were replaced when the rear addition was constructed in 1970. On the east side, the church has entrances at the basement level and at the skywalk from the second floor of the Christian Education Building, both created in 1956. Both doors are wood, 3'-0" x 7'-0", with three horizontal lights in the upper portion.



Typical windows at lower level of towers. (NPS, 2000)

Fenestration includes a variety of sizes and types, including Gothic-arched and flat-topped openings. In the front (north) gable and in both of the cross-gables at the south end of the building, large Gothic-arched openings are fitted with a trio of wooden windows with double-hung sash glazed with leaded panels of stained glass. Smaller, Gothic-arched openings appear in the second level of the tower and in each of the cross gables at the north end of the building, also with wooden, double-hung sash and leaded panels of stained glass.

At the main level on the sides of the building, the openings are rectangular and filled with pairs of windows, each with fixed sash above smaller pivoting sash and glazed with leaded panels of stained glass.

The basement openings are filled with pairs of wooden, double-hung, 2/2 windows. The upper sash are rectangular but are constructed with arched glazing channels that give the openings the effect of being Roman-arched. Except in

the base of the towers where sash are glazed with colored, opalescent glass, the basement sash are generally filled with a finely-ribbed, translucent glass, but some of the original glass has now been replaced with other varieties of translucent, textured glass.

On the east side of the building, concrete was used to infill the lower portion of the basement openings when the courtyard was created in 1956. The openings were further infilled when planters were installed between the courtyard and the basement wall in 1984. The planter has been recently emptied of plant material and dirt but the brick remains in the openings.

Typical basement window. (NPS, 2000)



Except for the circular window above the choir loft on the interior, all of the leaded glass panels in the building use a similar design and materials that are characteristic of and presumed to date to the 1921-1922 completion of the structure. The basic geometric design of the windows is created by the lead lines and the use of contrasting colors to define borders and panels, but the windows are also decorated with stained-glass medallions and clusters of grapes and grape leaves that are painted and fired on the glass.

The medallions in the double windows on each side of the auditorium are decorated in a series of Biblical motifs that are also painted and fired on the glass. The series, which is the same on each side of the church, begins with a cross and anchor paired in the first and sixth windows and the Bible and Ten Commandments in the second and fifth windows. In between, a cluster of grapes and sheaf of wheat are paired in one opening and a cluster of lilies and the Greek characters alpha and omega in the other. In the center medallions of the Gothic-arched, triple windows in the south gables are painted portraits of Rev. A. D. Williams (in the west window) and of Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr. (in the east windows).

On the interior of the stained glass windows in the auditorium are clear panes of glass that have been added to the face of the panels in the pivoting sash. The panes, which are not fixed in place, are inscribed with memorials in painted script and are simply slid into three-sided leaded channels affixed to the face of the original panel of stained glass.



Stained-glass panels on west side of sanctuary with medallion portrait of Rev. A.D. Williams. (NPS, 2000)

Llorens Stained Glass reports that they reupitted the leaded panels of stained glass in the 1950s and differences in the existing glass show that there have been some other repairs, including replacement of a few pieces of the original glass. The stained-glass windows were covered by the existing Plexiglas panels in the early 1990s, according to the church's present chairman of building and grounds.

Wood-framed screens are found at the basement windows and may have been an early, if not original, feature of the building, although the frames are now filled with open wire mesh.

## ROOF

The uninsulated roof is wood-framed and has a solid deck of random-width boards. The roof extends across exposed rafter ends (which may be false), trimmed with a 3", cyma reversa, bed molding between the rafters. The existing, asphalt-shingle, roof covering is of modern de-

sign and was installed in 1998.

According to the building permits and the Sanborn maps, the original roof covering consisted of "composition" shingles. Historic photographs show that the original shingles were hexagonal, "French shingles," a type that was popular throughout the early twentieth century and which can still be found today. The earliest photograph of the church (c. 1924) shows metal finials at the peak of each gable on the west side of the building, but these had disappeared by 1947. The number of times that the building has been re-roofed has not been fully documented but hexagonal shingles were in place on the building at least through the 1960s.

The surface of the roof is penetrated by chimneys that rise from the outside walls on each side of the building. At the rear, the roof is penetrated by cast-iron vent stacks from the kitchen in the southwest corner of the basement and the bathrooms in the southeast corner. The character of the flashing in these areas has not been identified.

Indentations in the stucco behind down spouts at the basement level indicate that corrugated rectangular down spouts were a feature of the building when the stucco was installed. The 1924 photograph of the building indicates the use of ogee or style "K" metal gutters that were probably of galvanized steel, painted white. However, a 1956 photograph also shows the presence of a rectangular metal gutter and round downspouts on the east side of the building. Since both types of gutters were widely used throughout the early twentieth century (and ogee gutters remain popular today), it is impossible to say if both of

these gutter types were used on the building at the same time. All of the historic gutters and downspouts were recently replaced with the existing galvanized ogee gutters and corrugated rectangular down spouts, painted brown.

There were alterations to the flashing of the front gable to the side towers around 1956. The added metal was presumably installed to prevent rainwater from washing down the front of the building, which must have been a problem even though the valleys are sloped to drain to the rear and behind the towers to down spouts along the northernmost side gables.

### **INTERIOR FLOOR PLAN**

The main entrance into the church is through a street-level vestibule located between the towers at the north end of the building. The vestibule is flanked by stairwells in the towers that provide internal access between the basement, vestibule, main auditorium and balcony.

The basic floor plan of the main auditorium is rectangular with a balcony at the rear that extends between the towers to the front (north) wall of the church. The main floor of the auditorium was extended beneath the balcony when the original church office was relocated in 1955. At the south end of the auditorium, the original full-width choir loft was replaced in 1956 by the present choir loft, which is set between two organ chambers, and the pulpit platform, which projects on to the floor of the auditorium. Beneath the organ chambers and behind the baptismal are connecting passageways, including access to the el-



View to southwest in vestibule. (NPS, 2000)

evated walkway on the east side of the building and the emergency exits in the rear addition (1970).

The basement includes one large rectangular space with smaller, ancillary spaces at the south end. The latter include a kitchen in the southwest corner, the furnace room in the center, and restrooms and a stairwell in the southeast corner. Between the kitchen and the restrooms is a wood-framed, elevated stage, now enclosed by a metal-framed and glass wall. At the north end of the basement, rooms that were originally located in the lower levels of the two towers were eliminated when the stairwells were reconfigured in 1970.

### VESTIBULE AND STAIR TOWERS

The vestibule and the stair towers have undergone numerous changes and, unlike other parts of building, the changes have been so thorough that most evidence of earlier periods has been lost or totally obscured. As a result, a number of questions remain concerning the physical evolution of these spaces.

The first alteration occurred in 1955-56 when, according to newspaper reports, the vestibule was "expanded." This included removal of the original (1922) basement stairs and partition wall on the south side of the original vestibule and construction of a new staircase to the basement along the south side of the northeast tower. To access the new stairs, a second opening was created in the south end of the east wall of the vestibule and there may have been alterations to the west wall as well. In addition, a new staircase was constructed to the temporary church office in the upper level of the northeast tower. The stairwell in the northwest tower may not have been altered at this time.

In 1970, the vestibule and stair towers reached their present configuration and appearance when the staircases in both towers were completely reconstructed and their rise in each tower reversed from counter-clockwise to clockwise. The east wall of the vestibule was mostly removed as was most of the east wall of the northeast tower so that the connection could be made to the new addition in front of the Education Building. A new opening also appears to have been added at the south end of the west wall and new stairs to the basement were created in the northwest tower.

**Floor:** The vestibule floor is concrete, possibly slab-on-grade, and set 2'-2" above the level of the Auburn Avenue sidewalk and 4'-10" above the below-grade basement floor. New floors were constructed in both towers in 1970. The original floor-covering in the vestibule was probably asphalt tile, as was used elsewhere in the building, but that has not been documented. The present floor covering in the vestibule is unglazed, 4"

x 8" terra cotta tile, which extends into the first level of the towers. Staircases landings are carpeted concrete.

**Walls:** Oral interviews indicate that the walls in the vestibule and, perhaps, in the stairwells were originally finished with a wood wainscot like that which was also used in the main auditorium. It was removed in 1956. Main walls throughout the vestibule and stairwells are plaster on masonry; mostly original except on the east and west walls of the vestibule where they were substantially replaced in 1970. Bannister walls in the stairwells are plaster on wire lath.

**Ceilings:** The original ceilings in the stairwells are 3-1/4" wide, wood, double-beaded, tongue-and-groove boards now hidden by suspended, acoustical-tile ceilings that were installed in 1970 or later. The ceiling in the vestibule was replaced in 1970. It is not clear if the "pre-cast, lightweight concrete plank" that was specified for the vestibule ceiling was actually installed but paint evidence suggests that the fire-rated wall specified for the south wall of the vestibule was not installed.

The original, beaded, tongue-and-groove ceilings in the stairwells remain in place along with the 3" cyma reversa bed mold with which they were trimmed, but these features are now hidden by modern acoustical-tile ceilings, suspended 3-4" below the original.

**Staircases:** The original staircases in the towers were wood-framed but details of their construction and finishes, including the bannisters, have not been documented. A wooden staircase was added to the temporary church office in the top level of the northeast tower in 1955 but

it was removed along with the rest of the tower staircases in 1970.

The existing staircase in the northeast tower is reinforced concrete on a steel frame. The 1970 plans indicated that the contractor had the option of using steel or wood in the northwest stairwell but which was actually used has not been documented.

**Doors:** Interior openings off the vestibule are all simple and uncased. The large openings between the vestibule and northeast stairwell and between the northeast stairwell and the addition in front of the Education Building were both created in 1970 by the use of steel I-beams as headers for the openings. The evolution of the openings on the west side of the vestibule has not been documented.

**Miscellaneous:** Lighting is all modern, dating to 1970 or later. According to oral interviews, an Oasis water fountain (possibly two of them after 1956) was a feature of the vestibule. The wooden bench at the base of the stairs in the northwest tower was installed in 1970.

**Paint:** In 1956, the walls of the vestibules and stairwells were painted in a dual color scheme with pinkish-brown used on the lower portion of the walls and a peach color used on the upper walls. The ceilings were painted in a cream color. Windows and other woodwork were also painted in the pinkish-brown color. Evidence of this historic paint scheme survives in the northeast tower but, except for the ceiling, has been mostly encapsulated by later changes in the vestibule and northeast stairwell. (See Paint Study in Appendix.)

## TOWER ROOMS

The spaces at the third level of each of the towers were originally left unfinished and were, apparently, accessible only via hatches off each side of the balcony. During the course of the 1955-56 renovations, both spaces were adapted for new uses. In the northeast tower, a new staircase was constructed from the balcony landing to the top level of that tower; windows installed in the louvered openings; and the space finished for a temporary church office. A wood-framed, plaster ceiling was installed in the space and a wood-framed, plaster wall was erected on the west side of the space to create a stairwell and a small closet.

In the northwest tower, part of the space was partitioned into a chamber for the "echo" pipes of the new Hill-Green-Lane organ and the present access door was created at the west side of the top of the balcony. At the same time, a large, louvered opening was created on the west wall of the balcony to provide an opening for the sound from the echo organ.

View to north in northeast tower. (NPS, 2000)



During the 1970-71 renovations, the added staircase was removed and the office was abandoned, although the windows and interior finishes were left in place. At the same time, the louvered opening off the balcony was closed and the echo organ chamber was also abandoned, although the louver and pipes remain in place. During replacement of the louvers in the northeast tower in 1999, the ceiling of the old office (1956) was removed.

**Floors:** Floors in both spaces are wood-framed and finished with tongue-and-groove pine. In 1956, the floor in the office in the northeast tower was covered with 9"-square, red, asphalt tiles surrounded by a border of black tiles, 11" x 12".

**Walls:** Walls are unfinished in the northwest tower, showing a combination of brick and structural clay tile. Walls in the northeast tower were plastered in 1956.

**Ceilings:** A wood-framed ceiling was installed at 8' in the northeast tower in 1956. Finished with plaster or drywall, it has since been removed.

**Miscellaneous:** A fluorescent light fixture, installed in 1956, remains in the old office in the northeast tower.

**Paint:** In 1956, the walls of the vestibules and stairwells were painted in a dual color scheme with pinkish-brown used on the lower portion of the walls to a height of 60" and a peach color used on the upper walls. Evidence of this historic paint scheme survives in the northeast tower.



View to south from balcony. (NPS, 2000)

## AUDITORIUM

The auditorium (or sanctuary as it has been recently called) underwent a major remodeling in 1955-56. The remodeling included replacement of the original choir loft (along with the rooms beneath it) with the present choir loft, organ chambers and baptismal. The work in 1955-56 also included removal of the original church office from beneath the balcony between the towers and expansion of the auditorium seating into that area. A stairway to the basement was also added along the east side near the south end of the auditorium. All of these changes are considered to be historically significant.

Additional changes occurred in 1970 and included enlargement of the door openings from the main floor into the tower stairwells. The renovations in 1970 may also have included installation of the dry-wall over the original wood wainscot. About 1974, the historic organ was also abandoned, although most of the pipes were left in place.

**Floors:** The original auditorium flooring--which is oak, presumably tongue-and-groove--is now covered by a combination of modern materials. In the aisles, the flooring is covered with red carpeting that has been installed over 1/4" plywood sheeting. The carpet continues on the pulpit platform. Parts or all of the carpeting have been replaced repeatedly since 1956. The flooring beneath the pews on the main floor and in the choir loft has been covered with modern (c. 1980) sheets of vinyl floor covering whose design imitates the appearance of wood flooring. The only original (1914-1922) flooring that remains exposed is the 3-1/4", tongue-and-groove, pine flooring that was used in the balcony, which has been painted brown.

View to southwest of choir loft and pulpit stage. (NPS, 2000)



**Walls:** Throughout the building, the masonry walls were originally plastered, except where a wood-paneled wainscot was originally used in the auditorium, the vestibule and, possibly, the stairwells as well. The paneling around the main floor consisted of 3/4", double-beaded, tongue-and-groove boards installed vertically on 3/4" furring attached to the masonry walls. The paneling was completely removed from the vestibule in 1956 and, in the auditorium, was covered with drywall by 1978 and, perhaps, as early as 1970. The wainscot is finished by a simple chair rail, some of which has been replaced at the north end of the auditorium, probably when the doors were enlarged in 1970. Note that the beaded board that is shown in the drawing of the wainscot on HABS sheet 13 is a section of tongue-and-groove board like that used on some of the ceilings and is not typical. The remainder of the chair rail uses a plain board with eased edges.

Typical auditorium ceiling panel. (NPS, 2000)



Most of the original plaster above the auditorium wainscot survives and is still visible, except at the south end where it is hidden behind the plaster-on-wire-lath walls of the 1956 organ chambers and baptismal. Around the 1956 choir loft and organ chambers, the lower walls are paneled with sheets of Philippine mahogany plywood finished with narrow strips of semi-circular molding. Painted white since the mid-1970s, this paneling was originally stained and varnished to match the earlier woodwork in the auditorium.

**Ceilings:** The ceiling of the auditorium is finished with die-stamped, steel, panels installed over a solid deck of 3/4" x 5-1/2" tongue-and-groove boards and painted. The field of the ceiling is set with square panels stamped with an octagonal design. While the design itself is repeated in 26" x 26" squares, the full metal panels may be as long as 96". The fields in the ceiling are surrounded by 4" molding, stamped with panels, and a wide filler strip with a stamped classical border and textured background. The ceiling is finished by a metal cornice stamped in a stylized acanthus-leaf design. (See HABS drawings, Sheet #14.)

**Doors:** Interior doors are wood, flush-style, veneered with Philippine mahogany which was originally stained and varnished. All of the doors have been painted, except for the inside face of the choir loft doors. Double doors, each 2'-6" x 6'-8", open from the stairwells to each aisle of the auditorium and from the stairwells to each side of the balcony. The balcony doors are mounted as swinging doors. Larger, single doors, 3'-0" x 7'-0", lead from each side of the auditorium beneath the organ chambers to the stairwells and corridors around the choir loft. A large metal grill closes an

opening which has been cut through the lower face of the door on the east side of the choir loft and provides ventilation for the HVAC equipment that is located under the east organ chamber. Except for the doors to the choir loft, the doors that open to the auditorium have small, square windows, glazed with a pane of clear glass.

**Hardware:** Original hardware (1914-1922) remaining in the building is limited. It includes the pivot-type sash latches at the double-hung windows in the basement and in the towers and the cupboard-type latches on the pivot windows in the auditorium. Double-hung windows have sash-counterweight pulleys and counterweights that are probably cast iron. Pivoting windows in the auditorium also have metal pivots and stay bars. Most of the existing door hardware dates to 1956, including the decorative steel hinges and door set used at the front door. However, the 1956 lock and its decorative escutcheon have been replaced by modern, aluminum "panic-bar" door openers. The swinging-door mechanism and handles at the balcony doors may date to 1956. Push plates and automatic door closers that were a part of the 1956 doors into the auditorium may have been replaced at some locations.

**Lighting:** Much of the existing recessed lighting in the auditorium ceiling dates to 1956, except for the spotlights which may have been installed at a later date. Inside the organ chamber in the southwest corner of the building is the gold-painted metal canopy, chain and socket for one of the auditorium's original (1922) ceiling-hung, electric light fixtures, although its glass globe is missing.



View of painting behind baptismal pool. (NPS, 2000)

**Baptismal Pool:** The baptismal pool behind the choir loft was created in 1956 and expanded in 1970 to its existing configuration. The original pool had a temporary wood covering that allowed passage behind the choir loft when the baptismal was not in use. The means of descent into the original pool has not been identified. The wood canopy above the opening into the sanctuary dates to 1956 and is hung with red velvet drapery. A panel of plate glass closes the lower part of the opening so that the actual baptism could be better observed. The 1970 addition expanded the baptismal pool by creating an opening in the original south wall of the church.

On the rear wall of the baptismal is a painting that depicts the Jordan River. It is oil on 1/8" Masonite, 10' long and

about 4' high, mounted on wooden slats attached to the masonry wall. It is signed in the lower left corner: "Alice Mae Favre/787 Sunflower Rd./ Rochester, PA." The painting was originally installed on the rear of the 1956 baptismal pool and was moved to its present location in 1970. In that process, part of the original painting was evidently lost, since the clouds visible in the sky in the original painting are no longer present.

**Pews:** Most of the existing pews date to the 1930s. They are oak and are set in a central rank of fifteen, 19'-long pews with two side ranks of sixteen, 7'-long pews. During the 1956 remodeling, pews were probably taken from the front of the auditorium and, with some alterations, relocated to the expanded auditorium space beneath the rear of the balcony. Two pews are also set perpendicularly to the rest opposite the west end of the stage.

In the balcony, the existing theater-style seating was installed in 1956, replacing wooden chairs that had been used up until that time. The seating has cast-metal frames and contoured plywood bottoms and backs veneered in maple. (See HABS Sheet 13.) Similar seating in a different design was used for the remodeled choir loft in 1956 but it was replaced by the present Colonial-style pews around 1974.

The origin of the wooden bench in the main landing in the northwest tower has not been identified, although it may have been part of the church's original (1922) seating equipment.



Theatre-style seating in balcony. (NPS, 2000)



Typical pew end. (NPS, 2000)



Original pulpit used by Dr. King, now in Education Building. (NPS, 2000)

**Pulpit Furniture:** The existing pulpit, trio of chairs and communion table are modern, having been acquired in the early 1990s. They replaced an earlier set of Colonial-style furniture that had replaced the historic furniture in the 1970s. The historic pulpit from which Dr. King preached and the contemporaneous chairs and communion table, all of which date to the 1930s, are now located on the second floor of the Christian Education Building.

**Organs:** The organs now on the floor of the auditorium are both modern, electronic organs, which replaced the pipe organ that was used through the early 1970s. However, most of the pipes for the Hill-Green-Lane pipe organ that was installed in 1956 remain in place in the organ chambers on either side of the choir loft and in the "echo" chamber on the west side of the balcony. The organ was "revoiced" in 1968 and the console

replaced in 1974 before finally being removed. Note that the gold-painted pipes on the outside of the organ chambers were part of the 1940 Wurlitzer but were installed in their existing location as decoration in 1956. The grilled openings of the main organ chambers remain open but the opening to the echo chamber off the balcony is now closed, although its metal louver remains in place behind the plaster that now covers the opening.

**Paint:** (See Paint Study in Appendix D)

## BASEMENT

Approximately two-thirds of the basement floor space is encompassed by the Fellowship Hall, which features a raised stage (now enclosed) at its south end. In the southeast corner of the basement are men's and ladies' restrooms and a corridor that leads to stairs and an exit into the courtyard on the east side of the



View to north in Fellowship Hall. (NPS, 2000)



View to south in Fellowship Hall. (NPS, 2000)

building. In the southwest corner of the basement is a kitchen and, between it and the men's room is a furnace room.

The basement, which was initially finished in 1914, was remodeled in 1956, when the kitchen was relocated, the stage reconstructed, and the rest rooms remodeled. A proposed plan to subdivide the Fellowship Hall into classrooms was never implemented but, in the late 1970s, most of the floor was remodeled.

**Floors:** Flooring in the basement is vinyl tile, installed in 1980, presumably over a concrete slab that may date to 1914. In some of the corridors at the south end of the building, there are older vinyl-asbestos tiles that probably date to 1956.

**Walls:** The original (1914) plaster walls are now hidden behind modern plywood paneling, except in the furnace room behind the stage. Original plaster was probably sand-finished and included curved plaster returns on each side of the window openings, similar to that which survives in the furnace room and at one of the basement windows in the northwest tower.

**Ceilings:** Double-beaded, tongue-and-groove boards, 3-1/4" wide, were originally used on the basement ceilings. These are now hidden by a modern (c. 1980), acoustical-tile ceiling suspended about 25" below the original wood ceiling. A 3" cyma reversa bed mold was used around the perimeter of the original ceiling. In the bathrooms, plaster-on-wire-lath ceilings (1956) are dropped below the original wood ceiling and are themselves now hidden above modern, acoustical-tile ceilings (c. 1978).

**Doors:** Basement doors are also flush-type doors, except on the modern wall across the stage where there is a metal-and-glass door. All wooden doors in the basement are painted. Two or three of the doors in the southeast side of the basement date to 1956 but the remainder were installed in 1970 or later.

**Stairways:** In the southeast corner of the building, there is a series of stairways that provides connections between the auditorium and the choir loft and baptismal pool and to the outside exits

from the auditorium and from the basement. Except for the concrete passageways and outside metal stairs in the 1970 addition, all stairways in the southeast corner of the building appear to be wood-framed with wooden treads and risers and date to 1956.

The narrow stairway that descends in two straight flights to the basement on the east side of the auditorium was added in 1956 to replace the original basement stairs that were removed from the southeast corner of the building at the same time. In 1970, the stairs were reconfigured to their current L-shaped plan.

Another wooden stairway is located beneath the wooden ramp that has been installed from the Jackson Street entrance down the west wall of the basement. The original door opening and stairs were created in 1956; the metal door that now fills the opening was probably installed in 1970 or later.

## SITE

The original church property consisted of a single lot that fronted approximately 51.3' along the south side of Auburn Avenue and approximately 107.5' along the east side of Jackson Street. In the late 1940s, the church bought the two houses at 21 and 31 Jackson Street, immediately behind the church and, by the mid-1950s, had demolished these to create the parking lots behind the church. In 1955, the church bought the house at 413 Auburn, which was demolished for construction of the present Christian Education Building. In the 1970s, the church also acquired the lot at the northeast corner of Jackson Street and Jackson Place, which brought the church

property to its present configuration. The current NPS lease of Ebenezer Baptist Church includes all of these parcels except for the footprint of the Christian Education Building and the parking lot on the east side of the complex. The leased site encompasses approximately .44 acres of land.

The site slopes gently from the southeast to the northwest and it appears that the original lot was generally leveled prior to construction of the building. This necessitated construction of a low retaining wall along the east side of the original building, perhaps originally continuing across the rear toward Jackson Street. The few courses of stone that are visible beneath the pavement on the west side of the courtyard between the church and the Christian Education Building are probably part of that original retaining wall.

**Sidewalks:** The site is bounded on both street sides by concrete sidewalks that extend from the granite curb at the street to the exterior wall of the building. There are two or three generations of concrete pavement in these sidewalks, all modern. The sidewalks were originally paved with brick but, by 1924, probably in conjunction with construction of the church, those on Auburn Avenue in front of the church had been replaced with hexagonal, concrete pavers. The brick sidewalk along Jackson Street was replaced with concrete in the 1930s or 1940s. Most of the concrete pavers on the Auburn Avenue sidewalk were probably replaced in the 1950s, perhaps in conjunction with construction of the Christian Education Building, but the concrete pavers in front of the church itself remained in place until after 1973.

Changes in the pavement along the Auburn Avenue sidewalk appear to document the original "green way" that separated the sidewalks from the street curb. Mature, deciduous trees appear in the green way in the 1924 photo but disappear before the 1940s. The Jackson Street sidewalk, which was slightly narrower than the Auburn Avenue sidewalk, appears to already have been paved from the curb to the building by 1924.

Electrical power poles were located near the northeast, northwest, and southwest corners of the church at least as early as the 1920s. By 1956, those at the corner of Auburn and Jackson had been removed and, in 2000, only the one at the rear of the church along Jackson Street remains in place. A U. S. Postal Service drop box has been located on a raised concrete base on the Auburn Avenue sidewalk near the northwest corner of the church since at least the mid-1950s. Its concrete pad remains evident but the box itself has been located a few feet east of its original location.

Because of its corner location, the church's surroundings have also included directional signage and there are also modern light poles. A municipal, pebble-aggregate, trash barrel is also located near the front of the church.

On the front of the building near the northwest corner, an inoperative water spigot and galvanized-steel pipe protrudes from the pavement a few inches from the building. Whether or not this feature has any historical significance as a public or semi-public water source is not known.



View to north between church and Education Building. (NPS, 2000)

**Courtyard:** A small, concrete courtyard was created between the original building and the Christian Education Building in 1956. Built on top of the retaining wall for the original lot, the courtyard is separated from the church by a paved, ground-level gutter that runs along the side of the building. The gutter and the poured concrete that infills the lowest part of the original basement windows were probably installed along with the courtyard in 1956. In 1984, the basement windows were infilled further when brick planters were installed against the church and around the courtyard. The planter along the basement windows has now been emptied but the infill in the lower part of the window openings remains in place. Most of the remainder of the site is asphalt-paved for parking except for a narrow strip at the south end of the Education Building.

**Parking Lots:** The only vegetation on the site is found in the courtyard planters and across the rear of the Christian Education Building. None of it appears to include historic plant material or design.



**View to northeast of parking lot and intersection of Jackson Place and Jackson Street. (NPS, 2000)**

The remainder of the site is paved with asphalt. On the east and south sides of the site, surface drainage directs rainwater to the adjacent streets. On the west side along Jackson Street, down spouts are connected to underground drain lines, two of which are terra-cotta and one modern PVC.

In the rear, the perimeter of the site behind both buildings is fenced with a high, chain-link fence and another chain-link fence, topped with razor wire, encloses the rear of both buildings. These apparently date to the 1970s but a series of metal post holes in the present parking lot still mark earlier metal fences. These earlier fences may have been installed in the 1950s, after the church acquired and cleared the two Jackson lots for parking, but did not enclose the lot at the northeast corner of Jackson Street and Jackson Place, which the church did not acquire until the 1970s.

# Sources of Information

## **NPS Reports**

Blythe, Robert W., Maureen A. Carroll, Steven H. Moffson. *Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site: Historic Resource Study*. Cultural Resources Planning Division, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, August 1994.

Lawless, Lucy A. *Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site Cultural Landscape Report: Birth-Home Block*. Cultural Resources Planning Division, Southeast Region, National Park Service.

## **Public Records**

City of Atlanta Building Permits, on microfilm at Atlanta History Center. Document construction in 1921, remodeling and additions in 1956, 1970, 1976.

Fulton County Deed Books, 1890-1960, Fulton County Courthouse. Document acquisition of property 1913, 1947, 1952, 1956.

## **Maps and Plans**

Saunders' "Bird's-Eye Map of Atlanta" (1892) at the Atlanta Historical Society. Documents the original church building on Airline Street along with the general appearance of the Old Fourth Ward at that time.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, on microfilm at Georgia State University, 1911-1932. These document the buildings in the area, including Ebenezer Baptist Church as it was completed in 1922.

**No plans of the original construction** have been located. The City of Atlanta's Bureau of Buildings has a record of plans from 1956, but these have not been located in those files. A single sheet of drawings from 1956 exists in the collection of David Stills, former organist at Ebenezer. Plans from the 1970 renovation can be found on microfiche at the Bureau of Buildings, but no original drawings have been located.

### Periodicals

*Atlanta Constitution, Atlanta Journal, Atlanta Georgian*, on microfilm at Atlanta-Fulton County Library. These papers were not researched extensively, since the white dailies did not typically carry much news pertaining to the city's African-American community.

*Atlanta Daily World*, Vol. 2 - Vol. 27, 1932 - 56. Atlanta, Ga., Rare Periodicals and Newspapers Collection, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System--Auburn Avenue Research Library. Excellent documentation for the historic period after 1932, including extensive coverage of Wurlitzer installation in 1940 and remodeling and addition in 1955-1956.

*Atlanta Independent: Official Organ of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows & Knights of Pathos*. Vol. 1, #27 - Vol. 27, #18, 23 Jan 1903 - 27 Dec 1928. Atlanta, Ga., Rare Periodicals and Newspapers Collection, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System Auburn Avenue Research Library. Excellent documentation for initial construction-related activity in 1913-1914. Period of 1921-1922 was searched but little relevant documentation discovered.

*The Blue Book of Southern Progress: Manufacturer's Record*, 1909, 1911, 1922-45. No mention of Ebenezer is included in the available indices of these reports.

*Ebony, Time, Newsweek, Life, and Look*, Atlanta-Fulton County Public Library. Coverage of funeral of Dr. King in 1968 included numerous photographs, including some color images of interior of sanctuary.

White, Dana F. "The Black Sides of Atlanta: A Geography of Expansion and Containment, 1870-1970." *The Atlanta Historical Journal*, vol. 26 (Summer/Fall, 1982), pp. 199-225.

## APPENDIX

### Books

- Martin Luther King, Jr.: His Life--His Death*. Ft. Worth: Sepia Publishing Co., 1968.
- Baldwin, Lewis V. *There Is a Balm in Gilead: The Cultural Roots of Martin Luther King, Jr.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.
- Caldwell, A. B., ed. *History of the American Negro and his Institutions, Georgia Edition*. Atlanta, Ga: 1917. Rare Books Col., Atlanta/Fulton Public Library System--Auburn Avenue Research Library. Excellent documentation for the early history of the church.
- Carson, Clayborn, ed. *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.* University of California Press, 1992. This work includes a comprehensive chronology of Dr. King's life through 1956, including many details pertinent to Ebenezer. The papers themselves do not offer any direct information about Ebenezer.
- Dittmer, John. *Black Georgia in the Progressive Era, 1900-1920*. University of Illinois Press, 1980.
- Ebenezer Baptist Church. *Ebenezer: A Centennial Time Capsule, 1886-1986*. Atlanta: Ebenezer Centennial Publishing Committee, 1991. This modern history of the church repeats and sometimes misinterprets older sources of information.
- Heyrman, Christine Leigh. *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997.
- King, Coretta Scott. *My Life With Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Holt & Co., 1969. Little relevance to the architectural history of Ebenezer.
- King, Rev. Martin Luther, Sr. *Daddy King: An Autobiography*. New York: William Morrow & Co., 1980. One of the best sources for information on the church's history in the mid-twentieth century, including a few building-related details.
- Kuhn, Clifford M., Harlon E. Joye & E. Bernard West. *Living Atlanta: An Oral History of the City, 1914-1948*. University of Georgia Press, 1990.
- Mason, Herman "Skip", Jr. *Going Against the Wind: A Pictorial History of African-Americans in Atlanta*. Atlanta: Longstreet Press, 1992.

## Unpublished Sources

Porter, Michael Leroy. "Black Atlanta: An Interdisciplinary Study of Blacks on the East Side of Atlanta, 1890-1930." Ph.D. dissertation, Emory Univ., 1974.

Three anniversary service programs (1924, 1947, and 1961) are especially useful in documenting the building's history. Original copies of these programs have not been located during the course of this study.

In addition to the photographs reprinted in the anniversary programs, other historic photographs have been useful, although original prints of these photographs have been difficult to locate. Exterior photographs of the church were included in the 1924 and 1947 programs and an undated photograph of the front entrance in the 1930s can be found in NPS files. Photographs of the exterior in 1956 and later and of the sanctuary in 1968 and later are numerous. The earliest image of the interior is included in the 1947 program. A rare view of the rear (north) end of the sanctuary on Easter 1962, an image of a banquet in the basement in the late 1930s, and an image of the basement stage in the early 1960s are also included in the NPS files. David Stills has a small collection of historic photographs that includes images of the Wurlitzer and of the Hill-Green-Lane organs and which also document the appearance of the 1956 choir loft seating. No historic photographs of the vestibule, stairwells, or other areas of the building have been located.

Videotape of Dr. King's funeral was obtained from NBC-News Archives in New York. The quality is not good but the video does document the historic color and other details of the sanctuary.

## Oral Interviews

The current pastor, church secretary and several church members whose memories encompass the historic period were interviewed during the course of this study. Most helpful were those with Miss Lillian Watkins, who was Rev. King, Sr.'s secretary through his long tenure as pastor at the church; retired church organist David Stills, who grew up in the church and became church organist in the early 1950s; Mr. and Mrs. Jethro English, Jr., who also grew up in the church, with his father being a member of the original building committee in 1914; and Mrs. Shirley Barnhardt, a third-generation member of the church. A telephone interview with Mrs. Christine King Faris, Dr. King's sister, was also extremely helpful, but additional interviews with her, Miss Watkins, Mr. Stills, the Englishes, and others are needed to confirm details about the building's historical evolution and to provide additional information to support the NPS's interpretive program for the site.

# Introduction

This section of the historic structure report is intended to present and evaluate alternative treatments and uses for Ebenezer. The goal is to show how a plan for treatment and use can be implemented with minimal adverse affect to the historic church. The following sections outline issues surrounding the ongoing use of the building as well as legal requirements and other mandates that circumscribe treatment of the building. These are followed by an evaluation of the various treatment options—preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration—before describing in more detail the proposed ultimate treatment: general preservation of the exterior of the building and restoration of the sanctuary and basement.



# Requirements for Use

The evolution of Ebenezer Baptist Church from religious edifice to commemorative landmark began almost immediately after Dr. King's death in 1968 and, by 1970, visitation for commemorative events as well as ordinary tourism had become a significant part of the site's use. With creation of the Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site in 1980, tourism continued to increase and, by the 1990s, plans were underway to construct a new church across the street. With its completion in 1999, the congregation negotiated the present 50-year lease (with an option to renew for 49 years) giving the National Park Service (NPS) "exclusive occupancy and use" of the historic church, now referred to as the "Heritage Sanctuary," to distinguish it from the new "Horizon Sanctuary" across the street. The lease, which includes part of the surrounding site, states that this use "shall also include, but is not limited to, the right to rehabilitate and maintain" the church and "to administer and interpret" it as part of the Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site.

Although not a part of the lease agreement or of the Park's General Management Plan, there has also been a desire on the part of the congregation and NPS staff to maintain a "living" church that continues to function as it has in the past. As a result, special use permits are issued for use of the sanctuary for special events, including King Day commemorative services each January. In addition, the congregation continues to use the old basement stage for its gift-shop inventory and to use the old kitchen to prepare meals for the homeless after Sunday Services.

Although this multiplicity of uses may be difficult to schedule, there is no inherent conflict between them and the Park's

major objective, which is to preserve, maintain, and interpret the site for the American people. And, since it is difficult to imagine circumstances under which its traditional uses would be abandoned and the building given over only to daytime tours (like the birth home), plans for treatment of Ebenezer must address issues of active use. Rest rooms will have to be present somewhere in the building as will code-compliant kitchen facilities. Finally, continued use of the church for large meetings and services is assumed and treatment options will have to address modern life-safety and other code requirements for places of assembly.

# Requirements for Treatment

The enabling legislation for creation of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic Site in 1980 stated that the Secretary of the Interior "is authorized to take only such actions within and upon the grounds of the Ebenezer Baptist Church as will directly support appropriate public visitation to and within the church in accordance with the purposes of the Act, or which will assist in the maintenance or preservation of those portions of said church which are directly related to the purposes of this Act."

The NPS' development concept plan (which is no longer a valid document) and its General Management Plan for the Martin Luther King, Jr., Historic Site and Preservation District (1986) recognized that Ebenezer Baptist Church and the King Birth Home are the most important sites in the Park. As such, both structures are placed in the most-restrictive of NPS' three preservation categories for the Park. In both cases, the objective is to fully preserve or restore the appearance of these buildings to the period of historical importance associated with Dr. King. The management plan also states that proposed uses

and treatment of all NPS owned or managed structures and sites will be in accordance with a series of park management objectives for protection of cultural resources and interpretation. These objectives include the development of working relationships with those agencies, organizations and individuals with whom cooperation is essential in order to fulfill the established purposes of the park. These would, of course, include the congregation of Ebenezer Baptist Church.

The 1986 management objectives also include other statements that are applicable to the current considerations surrounding treatment and use of Ebenezer. These include establishment of barrier-free access; implementation of a program "that will enhance energy conservation"; minimization of interference between visitor activities and those of area residents; and inventory, documentation, evaluation, protection, and maintenance of cultural resources within the park boundaries to the fullest extent possible in a manner consistent with the park's authorizing legislation, other legislative mandates, and NPS policies.

The NPS lease of the site states that "the Sanctuary" of the church "will be renovated in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation" (i.e., The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, 1995 edition). In addition to the NPS's own internal review of any treatment of Ebenezer, the Park's enabling legislation specifies that "plans for the construction, exterior renovation, or demolition of any structure" in the Park is subject to the Atlanta Urban Design Commission's "review and comment." A cooperative agreement be-

tween the Commission and the NPS has formally established procedures for AUDC review of NPS proposals for treatment of Ebenezer.

The City of Atlanta currently uses the 1997 Edition of the Life Safety Code and the 1994 edition of the Standard Building Code, with the Life Safety Code taking precedence. Numerous violations of these codes have been noted in Lord, Aeck, & Sargent's condition assessment report, most of them related to the building's ageing mechanical and electrical systems. A comprehensive assessment of the site's compliance with modern building codes is also included their report.

Occupancy of the building is classified as "unsprinklered existing assembly" with a total occupant load for the entire building calculated at 1,011. However, the requirements for adequate means of emergency egress cannot now be met for this number of people, with the configuration of the stairways and the vestibule being the principal source of concern.

Requirements for accessibility mandated by the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and Official Code of Georgia Annotated: Title 30 Chapter 3, are not met in the existing building. Although previous attempts have been made to make the building more accessible, these are not compliant with current codes, with the principal difficulty being the variety of floor levels that are encountered in the building. Lord, Aeck, & Sargent's report provides a complete analysis of the problem and several alternatives that can be considered.

Ebenezer has not been declared a "Landmark Museum Building" under the

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State's revised building code (House Bill 839, As Amended by House Bill 368, 4 April 1985). Designation would allow additional flexibility in interpreting and implementing the specifics of modern building code and life safety requirements and could be useful in preserving the building's historic character.

## Requirements for Treatment

# Alternatives for Treatment

In the broadest sense, three alternative approaches to the treatment of Ebenezer Baptist Church can be identified: preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration. Each of these approaches is fundamentally different and each has a different impact on the existing historic building.

The first alternative, preservation, would seek simply to repair existing material and maintain the existing character of the building, making those repairs and alterations that are necessary (1) to secure the building and its contents against further deterioration, (2) to eliminate threats to life safety, and (3) to make improvements to the building's fire detection system. A preservation approach would maximize the amount of existing historic material that can be retained and would require the least investment of Park resources.

This approach would also leave in place features that have, in some places, dramatically altered the character of the building as it existed during Dr. King's lifetime. Because of that, the NPS's ability to interpret the building

during that period would remain somewhat compromised. A preservation approach which seeks strictly to preserve the status quo would also not be able to meet NPS policy management objectives in terms of energy efficiency and handicapped accessibility.

The primary facades of Ebenezer are mostly intact and well-preserved but the rear and east sides were altered by additions in 1970. The rear addition obscures historic window and door openings on the church; but, since the rear is a secondary elevation, that change may be less significant to the interpretation of Ebenezer.

While the rear addition may be of minor importance, the 1970 addition to the front of the Christian Education Building is clearly a major alteration to Ebenezer. However, the lease of Ebenezer does not include the footprint of the Education building or of its 1970 addition and, therefore, treatment options for those areas would be premature. Nevertheless, because of the addition's impact on the historic church, the options ought to at least be mentioned at this time.

To preserve the front addition, of course, eliminates the possibility of reconstructing the front of the Education Building as Dr. King knew it. However, it should be recognized that, by the time Dr. King died, nearly all of the historic buildings on both sides of Auburn Avenue between Jackson and Boulevard had been razed for "urban renewal." Preservation of the existing building would respect Ebenezer's role in the earliest efforts to create a King Memorial on Auburn Avenue, which began within months of the assassination. While the changes that occurred to the building in 1970 are too

close in time, perhaps, for a full assessment of their historical significance, they have now been a part of Ebenezer for more than a generation and their associations with the beginnings of the King Center can not be dismissed lightly. Even if Ebenezer were restored to its appearance before 1970, it would do little to help interpretation of a vanished historic setting. At this late date, such a restoration of the exterior hardly seems worth the effort, especially since there is an excellent photographic record of the exterior of the building as it appeared from 1956-1968.

Preservation of the interior appearance of Ebenezer is more problematical, since the series of ad hoc changes that began in 1970 have dramatically altered the historic character. This is especially regretful in the sanctuary where most visitors expect to see it as it was during Dr. King's lifetime--most go away without being disabused of that notion. And, while the exterior changes can be easily interpreted through a single photograph, those on the interior do not lend themselves to easy interpretation.

The second alternative, rehabilitation, would subsume the concerns of the first but would also seek to make improvements and/or alterations that would increase the building's utility to Park visitors and others that use the building. These would include improvements in accessibility for the disabled and replacement of building systems and/or equipment that may be antiquated but which are not hazardous to the building, its contents, or its occupants. Since this approach would focus on the building's function and not its design, the building's existing character and features would be mostly preserved.

Energy efficiency and accessibility would naturally be addressed in an approach that included rehabilitation as a goal. However, such an approach would also be somewhat more intrusive on the building's existing condition and some additional loss of existing historic material might be expected, especially if functionality becomes the only consideration. In any case, a rehabilitation approach alone would do little to improve the Park's ability to accurately interpret the building during Dr. King's lifetime.

The third alternative, restoration, would seek to return the building to its historic appearance in the past, presumably 1968. This would necessitate removal of the 1970s additions and elimination of other alterations that have occurred both inside and outside the building since 1968. It would also include those concerns outlined in the first approach. Restoration is often an attractive goal for the treatment of landmarks like Ebenezer; and, in several instances, restoration of lost or obscured features is eminently feasible and recommended. In particular, the historic appearance of the interior of the auditorium is well-documented and most of the historic interior finishes remain intact. Restoration of the basement would also require little conjecture about details; but could only be considered if the congregation is willing to alter their use to accommodate restored conditions. Presumably, too, the basement would be open for interpretation to visitors; otherwise, there is no point in restoration.

However, the changes that were made to the stairwells and vestibules in 1970 were so thorough that returning them to their appearance before that time would be a treatment that was more reconstruction than restoration. Too, building

investigation, historical research, and oral interviews with church members and others have failed to document all of the details necessary for reconstruction of these areas without resorting to a significant amount of conjecture. Even if these areas can be documented, a full restoration approach would seriously reduce the building's compliance with building and life-safety codes (the changes to the stairwells and vestibule in 1970 were meant, in part, to correct or mitigate code violations that existed at that time). Reduction of visitors to comply with code requirements for the restored conditions in the stairwells and vestibule would probably eliminate the possibility of continuing to use the building for church services, King Day celebrations, and other such events. Full restoration of the stairwells and vestibule would also render useless the connection to the 1970 vestibule at the front of the Christian Education Building. Since the Government's lease stops at the east wall of the original stairwell, any changes to the stairwell that affect use of that connection must be carefully considered. The relationship of these areas to the issues raised above concerning the exterior also should be considered.

Likewise, removal of the rear addition and restoration of the original baptismal pool would seriously affect continuing use of the pool and the choir, since part of the function of the rear addition is to provide a proper ambulatory at the rear of the choir loft. In addition, a restored baptismal, while possible, would do no more than bring the mural over the pool four feet closer to the sanctuary and, at the same time, reduce the congregation's ability to see any baptism that might occur. Since the velvet curtains beneath the historic baptismal canopy

were generally kept closed, it might be found that removal of the rear addition and restoration of the baptismal are of little utility to interpretation of Dr. King's church.

# Ultimate Treatment & Use

In essence, the ultimate treatment of Ebenezer Baptist Church should (1) preserve and maintain the existing, historically-significant features and materials of the building; (2) rehabilitate the building's systems to comply with modern building, life safety, and accessibility codes; and (3) restore some of the significant features that have been lost to unsympathetic modern additions or alterations. In any case, the main concerns should always be focused on (1) repairing and maintaining those existing features that contribute to the building's historic character, and (2) slowing the rate at which those existing historic materials are lost.

This plan is predicated on preservation and maintenance of the 1970 addition to the front of the Christian Education Building and the contemporaneous changes to the vestibule and stairwells in the original church. Not only does this addition relate well to the King Center, which occupies the rest of the block, but its associations with the genesis of the Center also make it an important part of the history of the building and the district. In addition,

reconstruction of the original stairwells would significantly reduce code compliance relative to means of egress. This would likely necessitate severe curtailment of the building's use or major intervention into the building's historic fabric in other areas to create additional means of egress. Furthermore, were the decision made to reconstruct the stairwells and vestibule, adequate documentation to support such a treatment has not been located. Since it is quite possible that no one ever took a photograph of these areas and because they are only dimly remembered, adequate documentation may never be forthcoming.

This plan envisions restoration of the sanctuary and basement to their appearance prior to the alterations of the 1970s. In both cases, nearly all of the original finishes remain intact beneath modern drywall (1970) and plywood (1980) and little, if any, conjecture will be required to recreate the appearance of these spaces, including their architectural features, colors, furnishings, and decoration. However, compromises will be necessary in treatment of the double doors at the rear (north end) of the sanctuary, which replaced single doors in 1970, and the door at the rear (north end) of the basement, which was relocated from the east end of that wall when the staircases were reconfigured in 1970. Because of the problems with egress, these doors will probably have to be maintained. Since the doors themselves differ little from those that they replaced, appropriate painting can bridge the gap between historical authenticity and modern use and code requirements.

**Exterior:** The highest priority on the exterior is insuring that the building and its contents are protected from further de-

terioration. Since the roof has only recently been replaced and the gutters are in good working order, the most pressing concern will be halting water penetration from the concrete gutter along the east side of the building and around window and door frames on all sides. Reconstruction of the wooden louvers in the tower openings is now complete and included replacement of the historic double-hung windows in the northeast tower. Deterioration of the exterior woodwork, including window frames and trim, should be repaired (little replacement should be necessary). Cleaning and minor repairs should be done to the stained glass as the Plexiglas panels on the exterior are removed for repainting and reset or replaced. The yellowed Plexiglas in the circular opening in the south gable and the metal vent in the same opening should be repaired or replaced in kind, if necessary. The wood-framed screens at the basement windows should be repaired, rescreened, and replaced as necessary. Some minor repointing of the masonry and replacement of the missing concrete plinth along the Jackson Street sidewalk would complete critical exterior repairs.

The neon sign above the front entrance should be restored to working order. Although not critical to the building's preservation or interpretation (since most tourism occurs during daylight hours), this lighted sign is a notable feature along Auburn Avenue, in much the same way as the recently-restored neon cross and "Jesus Saves" sign on the steeple of Big Bethel. The church's historic announcement board, which was relocated in the early 1990s, should also be repaired and returned to its original location in the western bay of the Auburn Avenue facade.

Finally, the existing, new roof covering is not entirely appropriate in its design or coloration. Historic photographs indicate that hexagonal, "French-style," shingles, black or dark grey, would be the appropriate roof-covering.

**Interior:** Some of the most critical needs on the interior are simple improvements in housekeeping and routine maintenance. Closets, crawlspaces and other spaces throughout the building, including the attic, are littered with boxes, paper and other debris that may represent a significant fire hazard.

The condition of the existing electrical system is poor and is a serious hazard to the building, its contents, and its occupants. The HVAC systems are also in poor condition, with most equipment long past its useful life. The building has a fire/smoke detection and security system that is quite limited and inadequate to meet the needs of a National Historic Landmark. Fire suppression equipment is limited to the kitchen stove. The building's mechanical and electrical systems will need almost total replacement and systems for fire detection and suppression should be installed throughout the building. Rest rooms are also in poor condition and should be thoroughly renovated or replaced.

Plaster is spalling at several locations throughout the building and paint is beginning to peel from the metal ceiling in the sanctuary. Plaster repair and repainting should also include restoration of the historic colors wherever possible. The modern, vinyl floor covering under the pews in the auditorium is badly worn and should be removed. This would allow repair and refinishing of the historic wood floors.

Restoration of the sanctuary should include exposure and repair of the wood wainscot and trim, much of which remains in place; replication of the historic colors and finishes on walls, ceilings, and woodwork; and restoration of the Hill-Green-Lane pipe organ, parts of which remain in the building and elsewhere. It should also include replacement of the existing choir loft pews with theater-style seating similar, but not identical, to that in the balcony and return of the historic pulpit furniture and communion table. Pews need only minor repairs and refinishing. Significant items that are presently missing from the building include the announcement boards that were hung on the organ chamber walls and the clock that hung on the front side of the balcony. A historic furnishings report may be necessary to complete an inventory for final furnishing and decoration.

**Accessibility:** Providing for barrier-free access to Ebenezer is a challenge since the historic building was built with the sanctuary elevated above street level. The towers would be appropriate areas in which to consider such changes. Because the east wall of the northeast tower was partially demolished and the interior of both towers mostly gutted in 1970, that part of the building contains very little historic material and, therefore, little would be lost, even with the installation of an elevator. The main problem with that approach, however, is that, for it to work, the steps from the Auburn Avenue sidewalk would have to be ramped, probably with a railing, all of which would seriously compromise the integrity of the building's primary facade. Unless an accessible entrance could be created through the addition to the front of the Education Building into the north-

east tower, the option of using the towers for handicapped access is not viable. Handicapped access could be designed at the rear (south end) of the building with minimal impact on historic materials. The design should not alter the baptismal pool or eliminate passage behind the choir loft. It could include redesign of access to the pool and to the choir and other changes that might be necessary inside the 1970 rear addition.

**Site:** Replacement of the existing modern concrete sidewalk in front of the church itself (but not in front of the Christian Education Building) with hexagonal, concrete pavers might be considered since these existed until sometime after 1973. The brick sidewalk along Jackson Street and the hexagonal pavers in front of the Christian Education were both replaced with concrete prior to 1968. This treatment would be most appropriate within the context of a park-wide program of sidewalk restoration that would aim to recreate the assortment of paving materials that existed during the historic period.

Although the modern street signs and utility poles that have been added since 1970 may have to remain, efforts should be made to improve the appearance of the Auburn Avenue streetscape in front of the church. The city's trash container should be moved away from the main entrance to the church. The postal drop box should also be replaced on its original concrete pad, which remains on the sidewalk a few feet west of its present location.

At the rear of the building, improved maintenance of the site is mandatory and consideration may be given to removal of the chain-link and razor-wire

fence. However, it should be noted that chain-link fencing was a feature of the site by 1970, if not before, and is a telling reminder of how far the neighborhood descended into chaos in those years. In any case, security may still be a concern and removal of the fencing should be done in consultation with Ebenezer and the King Center, whose parking lot adjoins that of the church.

# Historic Documents

STATE OF GEORGIA, Fulton County. No. 147636

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS: That Geo. Delbridge of the County and State aforesaid, part of the first part, as John and Emily W. Williams part of the second Geo. Delbridge heirs and assigns for the good use of Charles Edward Fane Shandals \$11500.00 Dollars for the payment of which well and truly to be made, the said part of the first part to-wit: Geo. Delbridge heirs, executors and administrators, jointly, severally and jointly by those persons named with Geo. Delbridge heirs and assigns with Geo. Delbridge on the 10th day of January in the year of our Lord One Thousand, Nine Hundred and thirteen

THE CONDITION OF THE FOREGOING OBLIGATION IS, That whereas the said part of the first part last aforesaid do hereby agree in and to the said part of the second part a certain tract or parcel of land, situate, lying and being in the City of Atlanta, and a part of land lot Forty-six (46) in the Fourteenth (14th) district of originally being now Fulton County Georgia, more or less, at the Southwest corner of Auburn Avenue and Jackson Street, measuring thence Fifty-two (52) feet east in the South side of Auburn Avenue thence extending back South said width as front One Hundred and Eight (108) feet more or less along the East side of Jackson Street.

Vertical handwritten notes on the left margin, including "Geo. Delbridge" and "John and Emily W. Williams".

Large block of handwritten text and signatures at the bottom of the page, including "Geo. Delbridge" and "Arnold Rogers".

STATE OF GEORGIA,

Fulton County.

No. 259525-

THIS INSTRUMENT, made this 12 day of June in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand

Five Hundred and Ninety between  
H. J. Melbridge

of the State of Georgia and County of Fulton part of the one part, and  
H. C. Edwards - J. W. Johnson - P. O. Watson, R. F. Woodruff, and  
J. F. Harris Trustees Ebenezer Baptist Church

of the State of Georgia and County of Fulton part of the other part  
Witnesseth: That the said party of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of Two Thousand  
Some Hundred and Fifty (\$2500.00) Dollars, to him paid or

and before the making and delivery of these presents, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, he has granted, bargained, sold, aliened,  
and by these presents doth give, grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the said party of the second part, his heirs, assigns and  
all that tract or parcel of land lying and being in the City of Atlanta, and part of land  
that tract or parcel of land lying and being in the City of Atlanta, and part of land  
lot forty (46) six in the Fourteenth District of originally Henry, now Fulton County,  
Georgia, commencing at the southeast corner of Auburn Ave. and Jackson Street, running  
thence fifty two feet (52) East of the South side of Auburn Ave., thence extending South  
South same with no front one hundred and eight feet (108) more or less along the East  
side of Jackson Street.

To Have and to Hold the said tract or parcel of land, with all and singular the rights, tenures and appurtenances thereto in any  
wise belonging, or in anywise appertaining, unto the said party of the second part, his heirs, assigns and assigns forever, to the said party of the  
first part, his heirs, assigns and assigns forever, in full discharge of all claims.

And the said party of the first part, for himself, his heirs

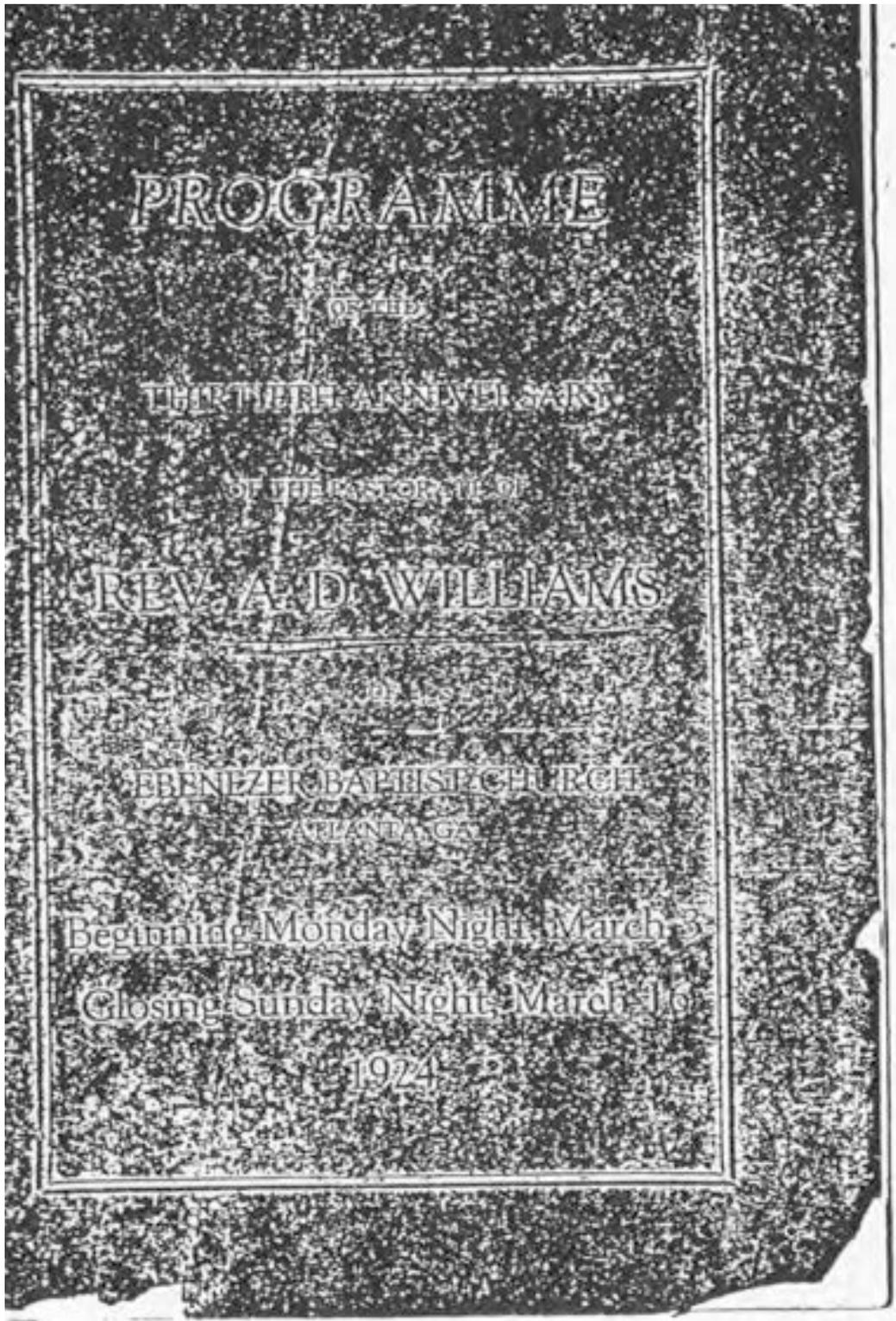
do hereby warrant and defend the right and title to the above-described premises, unto the said party of the second part, his heirs, assigns and assigns forever,  
against the claims of all persons whatsoever.

In Witness Whereof, The said party of the first part by him, his heirs and assigns his

Signature, Name and Authority in the Presence of  
Alex D. Hamilton Jr. H. J. Melbridge (Witness)  
W. J. Shaw (Witness)

Witnessed and attested the day and year above written.  
June 12 - 1910  
June 21 - 1910  
Arnold Krofles - C.R.C.







REV. A. D. WILLIAMS, D. D.

**MONDAY NIGHT—MARCH 3**  
 Second Mt. Olive Night  
 Devotions by Deacon J. W. Johnson.  
 Music by Second Mt. Olive Choir.  
 Paper: "The History of the Ebenezer Baptist Church."  
 —Miss Odessa Edwards.  
 Sermons by Rev. C. W. Jenkins.  
 Offering taken by officers of Second Mt. Olive.

**TUESDAY NIGHT—MARCH 4**  
 Mt. Zion Night  
 Devotions by Brother William Gilpin.  
 Music by Mt. Zion Choir.  
 Paper: "Duty of The Ebenezer Church to Its Pastor."  
 —Mrs. Odessa Edwards.  
 Sermons by Rev. J. T. Downey.  
 Offering taken by Deacons of Mt. Zion.

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT—MARCH 5**  
 National Compact Night  
 Warfield Martin Parks and National Commissioner Simmons and others will have charge of the Program. National Compact Band will furnish music.

**THURSDAY NIGHT—MARCH 6**  
 Insurance Campaign  
 Pilgrin Life and South. The Standard Life and the Atlanta Life. Each will furnish two sermons and an address. Mr. E. E. Perry, presiding.  
 Collection by Mr. E. W. Chambliss and Mr. S. W. Walker.

**FRIDAY NIGHT—MARCH 7**  
 Bethel A. M. E. Church Night  
 Devotions by Deacon E. C. Edwards.  
 Music by Bethel Choir.  
 Paper: "The Williams as a community asset." —Mr. Malvin Francis.  
 Sermons by Dr. J. T. Hall.  
 Collection by officers of the Bethel Church.

**SUNDAY MORNING—MARCH 8**  
 Devotions by the Deacons Band.  
 Music by the Ebenezer Choir.  
 Sermons by Rev. H. M. Smith, Jr., pastor St. John Baptist Church, Greenville.  
 Collection and Adjournment.

**SONDAY AFTERNOON**  
 2:00 P. M.  
 Liberty Baptist Church  
 Music by the Choir.  
 Paper: "Rev. Williams as an Organizer." —Miss Louise Crawford.  
 Sermons by Dr. Ernest Hall.  
 Offering taken by Deacons of Liberty Church.

**SONDAY EVENING**  
 7:30 P. M.  
 Music by the Ebenezer Choir.  
 Sermons by Rev. H. M. Smith, Jr.  
 Church by the Ministers Band.  
 Offering taken by the Officers.  
 Benediction.

**MONDAY NIGHT—MARCH 9**  
 West Hunter and Rev. J. B. Church, Mt. Moriah and Trustees Rev. Baptist Church, Drs. Prichard and Chalmers, pastors. They will preach and their Choir will furnish music.  
 Paper: "Rev. Williams as a Denominational Asset." —Mrs. Francis E. Powell.  
 Offering by the officers of these Churches.

**TUESDAY NIGHT—MARCH 10**  
 Mt. Vernon, Dr. E. D. Florence and The Atlanta Baptist Ministers Union.  
 Paper: "Rev. Williams as a Preacher." —Mrs. Pearl Bane.  
 Further program to be arranged.  
 Collection by officers of the Mt. Vernon Baptist Church and the Ministers' Union.

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT—MARCH 11**  
 Mt. Olive Baptist Church and Bethlehem Baptist Church  
 Devotions by Deacon E. B. Hunter.  
 Music by Mt. Olive Choir.  
 Sermons by Dr. J. M. Nabrit and Rev. N. T. Thompson.  
 Paper: "Duty of the Sunday School Teachers to the Pastor." —Miss Gladys Edwards.  
 Offering by the Officers of the Mt. Olive and Bethlehem Churches.

**A SHORT SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND WORKS OF**

**REV. A. D. WILLIAMS, D. D.**

By Rev. C. S. Ellington

The subject of this sketch, the Rev. Adam David Williams, D. D., first saw the light of day January 2, 1803, at Prentiss, Green County, Ga. He is the son of the valiant Willie and Lucinda Williams. His father Willie was an old slavery time preacher, not a regular ordained minister, but what the people in those days called an exhorter. While Williams was born to show signs of a bright mind; at the age of seven years he had absorbed the poetry for miles around with his ability to repeat. He could count most any ordinary sum and give you the answer for any ordinary question in figures as long as you did not deal in fractions. This of itself was quite a novelty in those days. When he was ten years of age he went to school for three weeks and learned one day of that time, which was all the schooling he had until after he was thirty years of age, except when learning he got to a Sunday School. He was carried through the Atlanta's academy and through the first, second and third readers in the Sunday School, under the tutelage of the Rev. P. Franklin.

Rev. Williams' father died in 1814, leaving him with a Mr. R. L. Burgess. Living with Mr. Burgess for at least ten years and working in the house most of that time, Mr. Burgess' children used to take a great deal of pride in teaching little Williams how to read and write, and receiving of which, etc. He was converted in 1824 and was baptised the second Sunday in August in that year, by the Rev. P. Franklin. He began preaching August, 1825, one year after he was baptised under the administration of Rev. P. Franklin at Brick's Run Church in Green County, having shown some signs of having been called to preach from early childhood. It was his ardent pleasure to preach the Gospel of evildoers, cats, dogs, hares or any thing that died. The children of the community would call him to preach the fathers and they would have a big shout.

Having been licensed to preach in 1828 by the Rev. P. Franklin, he continued in the country until the second day in 1833, when he came to Atlanta. During his seven or eight years in the country where he was licensed by prayer, the Rev. H. M. Smith of Crawford, Ga., was at that time in town, taking him with him on his work from town to town, giving him a chance to deliver and in the mean time giving him a lot of wholesome instruction.

**THURSDAY NIGHT—MARCH 13**

Allen Temple, A. M. E. Church

Devotions led by Brother Willie Moore.  
Music by the Allen Temple Choir.  
Prayer: "Study of the Deacons Board in the Dodge and Church."  
Sermon by Dr. E. E. Wood.  
Offering taken by officers of Allen Temple.

**FRIDAY NIGHT—MARCH 14**

Beulah Baptist Church

Devotions led by Brother Samuel Martin.  
Music by the Beulah Choir.  
Prayer: "What of the Fathers of the Eleazer Baptist Church?"  
Sermon by Dr. L. A. Folsom.  
Offering by the officers of Beulah.

**MONDAY MORNING—MARCH 15**

Devotions by the Deacons Board.  
Music by the Choir.  
Sermon by Bro. H. M. Smith Sr., Crawford, Ga.  
Collection and communion by members.

**TUESDAY AFTERNOON**

2:30 P. M.

Friendship Baptist Church

Music by Friendship Choir.  
Address: "The Duty of the Church and People to the Community, City, State, Nation and the World."  
Sermon by Dr. E. E. Corlier.  
Collection by officers of the Friendship Baptist Church.

**WEDNESDAY EVENING**

7:30 P. M.

Music, exhortation, roll call.

P. S. The Eleazer Choir will be on hand to furnish music in the event of the absence of any participant.

Methodist Baptist Church, Lithonia, Ga., one Sunday a month for six years and a half. He was called to the Central Baptist Church in Denver, Colorado, but did not serve. He organized and was called to the Andrew Baptist Church in Detroit, but could not serve. Was called to the Liberty Hill Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio, but did not serve. Rev. Williams has raised in three thirty years an average of 800-900 hundred dollars a year at the Ebenezer Baptist Church; he has had an average of one hundred a year; he has raised an average of about thirty couples a year; he has had in membership by death the average of about twelve a year; he has had in the last six years by migration at least seventy per cent of the members, but still survives. He has served the Atlanta Baptist Ministers' Union for seven years as president. He served the Atlanta Association as Moderator for seven years. He has represented Georgia on the Foreign Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention for twelve years. Was some leader of the Georgia Delegation to the National Baptist Convention for six years. He is now a member of the Executive Board of the State Baptist Convention, is trustee of the Central City College, and is chairman of the Mission Board of the State Baptist Convention, and also a Church Member. He has served as President of the S. A. S. C. P. for two years and the Association attained its highest development under his administration.

He received the four year course in Theology at Morehouse College, graduating in 1918. The honorarium Degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by his alma mater in 1924. Rev. Williams is regarded as one of the strongest preachers of his day, not least what the world understands from a technical educational point of view, but his experience and profound thought and his intense practical way in expounding the gospel, places him quite with the leading preachers of his day and generation. He is indeed a great preacher.

He married Miss Annie C. Davis, October 20, 1920, who was one of Syneman's lovely girls. Among her charming graces is her culture, self-reliant mind, and her devotion to home life. Rev. Williams often says he could not succeed without her, who has proved to be one of the strongest forces of her husband. Rev. Williams contributes his success to her enabled piety, her intense devotion and her deep spiritual life. He often says it matters not where he goes, nor what time of night he may come in, he always finds the Bible either near her head, on the bed, or in a chair

Rev. Williams acknowledges with gratefulness the very kind consideration shown him by Dr. E. P. Johnson, the pastor of Bond St. Baptist Church of this city, who also gave him some recognition and some chances for development along with some who-some-inventions. Coming to Atlanta the day he was thirty years of age, January 2, 1905, he began his career in the city of Atlanta. He reached the city with one dime and a few dollar gold pieces that he had found some years before. Before he had secured a job of such he had taken the wire thread and had to pay Dr. Butler his five dollar gold piece. Securing a job he went to work on January 10th in a machine shop, by November 15th, 1905, he was called to the Springfield Baptist Church in August 1910, and also the Baptist Church at Kenesaw. He served the Baptist Church at Kenesaw until December 1913, and served the Springfield Baptist Church of this city until May, 1914. In the next time he was called to the pastorate of Ebenezer Baptist Church on March 14, 1914, and has served this church until the present. During those thirty years he made two attempts to go to other fields of labor, both of which were frustrated by the permission of God. He attempted to leave this church for the Shiloh Baptist of this city in 1915, but was unsuccessful. He attempted to leave this church and go north in 1917; that attempt also was a failure. Six services at this church have been at overwhelming success. Finding the church with only thirty-seps members and 20 church buses at all, he began his career with those church members and one of his first achievements was to add about sixty-five members to the church the first year he was called. One of the next achievements was to buy and build on McClellan St. what is now known as Mt. Pleasant Church. Success continued, the church continued to grow in strength and popularity and so did he. He led the church to Sell and Calvary Streets, and bought the white parson's Fifth Baptist Church building. The Church remained there for thirteen years, when they bought this lot and built a basement here on this corner, the corner of Adams Ave. and Jackson street, for one of the most spacious and modern Church houses among the colored people in the country, a church that is one hundred and six feet in length, fifty feet in width and about twenty-seven feet between joists at a cost of \$240,000.

Rev. Williams has pastored, in connection with this Church, Zion Hill Baptist Church, Rockmart, Ga., one sermon in the month for six months, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Covington, Ga., one sermon a month for five years,

...ly. And he knows that what ever may be his fault he has a wife who is pouring her life. She makes him friends and holds them to him. In every way she is a model wife for a minister.



Albert Christian Williams

... Their union has been blessed with three children, Fanny Laine, and little Ducks Williams, both of whom Albert is fond of. Albert is Christian, the ablest worker. She is a member of the First Church of the Holy Spirit in Washington, D. C. She is the very image of her father and is blessed with the same spirit of mission and holding friends. She takes an interest in her father's work. Recently she is very glad of her own take such deep interest in Church work as she does. She is a B. Y. P. U. worker, Sunday School teacher, having received her diploma in Sunday School work from Spelman Seminary. She worked up and has the highest class of Jerusalem in the Sunday School which she is at home in her mission. She will receive her membership in the Junior B. Y. P. U. and the Young Girls Club. She plays the organ well and is the assistant organist of the Church.



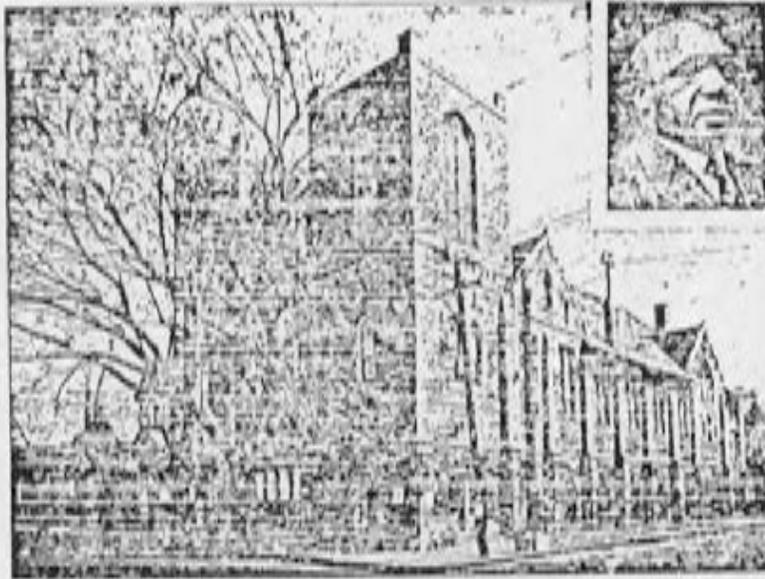
Mrs. Jennie C. Williams

She belongs to the Missionary Circle, and is fond every Auxiliary of the Church, and the membership is by her like it is by her mother—they all love her.

Rev. Williams will not take to himself the credit of being commended at the Ebenezer Baptist Church by himself, he always says that his success is due to three things, the prayers and protection of Providence, the assistance and fidelity of his wife, and the love and cooperation of the members, for he had not been for such a number of years as Deacon, Mrs. Molly Johnson and her daughter, Mrs. Frances Griffin, Mrs. Leticia Evans, Deacons Henry Edwards, Mrs. Fanny Edwards, Mrs. Sally Thibault, Mrs. Elna Carter, Mrs. K. W. Crawford, Brother P. M. Over, Rev. E. J. Williams, Mr. P. O. Watson, Sister Ellen Coakley, Bro. Wad. Adams, Sister Jessie Coak, Sister Silas Coak, Sister Victoria Blandin, Sister Pearl Reeves, Sister Emma Coak, Sister Mary Edith Solomon, Mrs. Ed. McWhorter, Sister Manon Jones, Sister Willie Miller, Bro. Mat. Geer, Sister Ella Thomas, Bro. Geo. Hill, Sister Janie Lewis, Bro. Ed. Jenkins, Sister Pauline Howell, Sister Mattie Berry, Bro. Willie Brown, Sister Emma Brown, Sister Mary Howell, Bro. Willie Palmer, Sister Adie Lewis, Mr. Ed. Ray, Mrs. Martha Galloway, Mrs. Mary Lamb, Mr. Perry Taylor, Mrs. Anna Taylor, Mrs. Sarah Strickland, Rev. C. S. Ellington, Mr. N. F. Deibel, Mrs. Hattie Thomas, Jr., Mr. Howard Jones, Mrs. Annie Williams, Mrs. Emily Thompson, Mrs. James Moore, Mr. Willie Coak, Mrs. Lizzie B. Cook, Mrs. James McCall, Mr. John McCaffery, Sr., Mrs. Anna McCaffery, Jr., John Ainslie Rhodes Taylor, Mrs. Elizabeth Williams, Mrs. Mariah Little, Mr. Ed. Little, Mrs. Mattie Little, Mrs. Ma. Jones, Mrs. Charlotte Collins, Mr. J. B. Reeves, Mr. Ed. Williams, Mr. Sam. Cabanan, Mr. W. K. Gibson, Mr. C. J. Bant, Mrs. Willie May Storey, Mrs. Lulu Wright, Mrs. Lennie Phares, Mrs. Orla Collins, Mrs. George Parkdale, Mrs. Seta Mearns, Mr. Jasper Phares, Mr. Casser Phares, Mrs. Mattie Moss, Mr. Louis Bennett, Mrs. Nettie Parker, Mrs. Katie Marshall, Mrs. Ella Wood, Mrs. Jennie Arnold, Mrs. Margie Hawkins, Mr. Emory Crawford, Mrs. John Chensland, Mr. Charles Johnson, Mrs. Francis Jordan, Mr. John Henry Ed. Welch, Mrs. Sola Edwards, Mrs. Sallie Johnson, Mrs. Jane Welch, Mrs. Maria Soper, Mrs. Annie Babbins, Mrs. Manie

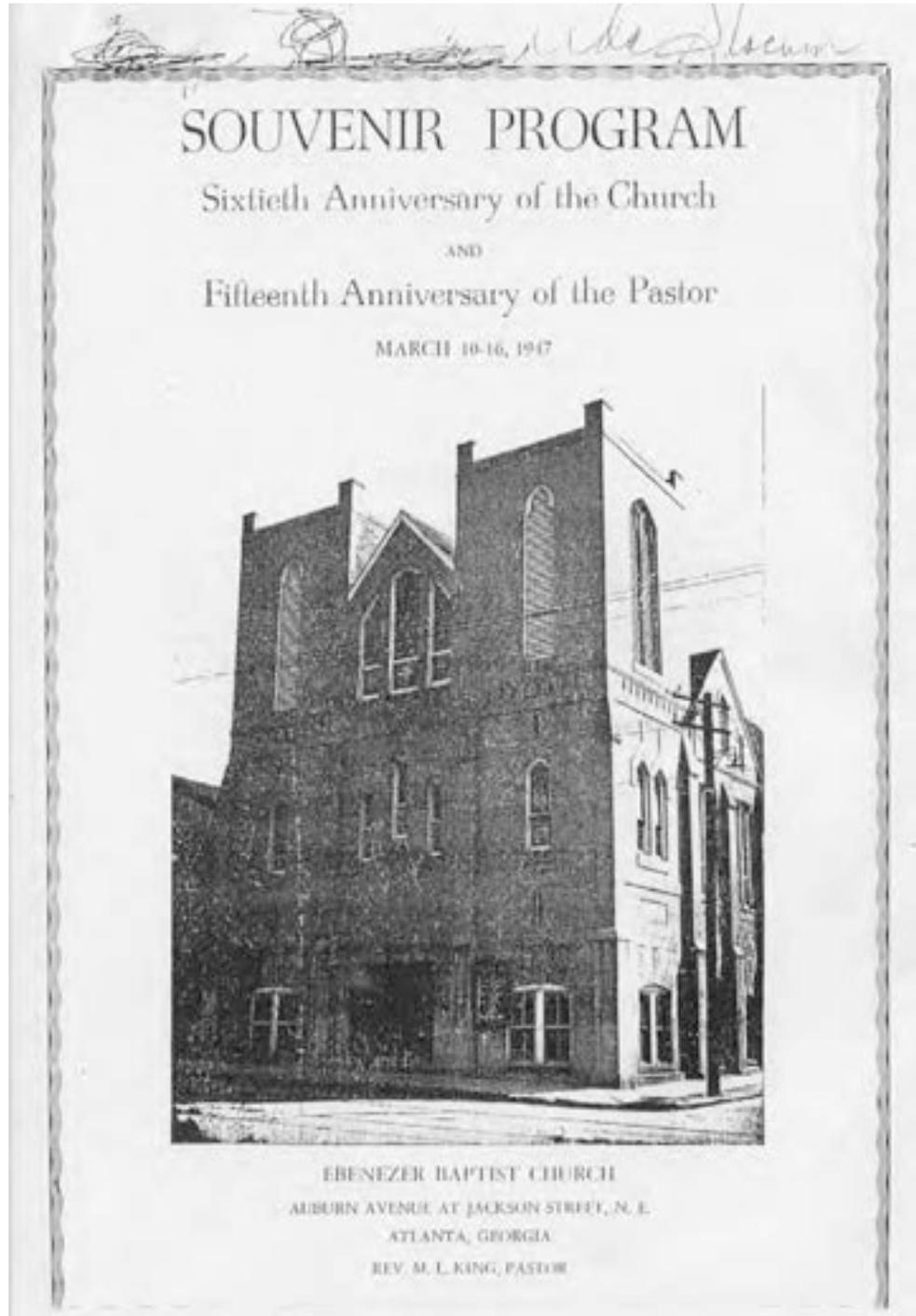
Talbot, Mrs. Hattie Walker, Mrs. Sallie Manley, Mrs. Aida May Darrin, Mrs. Virginia Moore, Mrs. Willie Rogers, Mrs. Corliss Brown, Mrs. Fanny Martin, Mr. J. F. Harris, Mr. Richard Wood, Mrs. Mildred Wood, Mrs. Victoria Brown, Mrs. Amelia Solomon, Mrs. Lillian Solomon, Mrs. Fanny Souder, Mr. W. B. Powell, Mr. H. W. Allen, Mr. Emory Ray, Mrs. Arthur Neal, Mrs. Lou. Mrs. Rebecca Souder, Mrs. Ethel Carter, Mr. W. J. Feltner, Mr. Joseph Coakley, Mr. Monroe Cooper, Mrs. Ella J. Lyons, Mrs. Mary Stewart, Mr. Erwin Kramlich, Mrs. Fiedel Kramlich, Mrs. Mary Solomon, Mrs. Sarah Nichols, Mrs. Ariana Edwards, Mrs. Emma Edwards, Mrs. Gaby Edwards, Mrs. Stella Johnson, Mrs. Stella Miller, Mr. Segrus Watson, Mr. J. W. Jones, Jr., Mr. Willie Carter, Mrs. Louise McWhorter, Mrs. Lema Derrault, Sister Lurline Allen, Sister Fanny Stokes, Mr. James Banks, Mr. Frank Taylor, Mr. Walter Richardson, Sister Sarah Robinson, Mrs. Sadie P. Bennett, Sister Lillian Bennett, Sister Jane Carter, Sister Manon Lee Johnson, Sister Lillie May Duffins, Bro. W. B. Brown, Mr. Jack W. Brown, Mrs. Mary Lawson, Mrs. Julia Kaulin, Mrs. Samuel Martin, Mrs. Estelle Leblanc, Mrs. Susan Theriot, Mrs. Sarah May Coak, Mrs. Ollie W. Swift, Mrs. John Williams, Mr. and Mrs. S. T. Carter, Mrs. Emma Mel, Mrs. Louisa Stewart, Mrs. Manon Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. L. M. Brantley, Mr. John Dicks, Mrs. Manon Dickey, Amanda Griffin, Ella Stewart, and many others.

The foregoing members with their families, contributions and cooperation, have been of much value in the success of Rev. Williams's thirty years' career at the Ebenezer Baptist Church, and a great number who have gone north and whose names appear in various list have not been named. Their love, sympathy and cooperation can never be forgotten. But I am sure a generous public will subscribe me to me, but one never be forgotten, whose love and respect for me poster and whose devotion and service to the church helped me underrately in building up the wonderful career of the pastor at this church these thirty years, namely, Deacon Cal Collins, Bro. Luchins Bess, Mrs. Betty Bess, Mrs. Fannie Adams, Bro. Jackson Garfield, Mrs. Jackson Garfield, Bro. J. H. Waltham, Sister Edith Lewis, Mrs. Mary Adams, Deacon James McNeal, Deacon Alex. Phares, Deacon Louis Williams, Deacon Charles Smith, Deacon Jerry Robinson, Bro. James Griffin, Sister Ella McNeal, Sister Fanny Bant, Bro. L. J. Solomon, Bro. C. W. Manley, Bro. Lard Collier, Sister Mattie Robinson, Sister Anna Adair.



EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH, AND (INSERT) REV. A. D. WILLIAMS, THE PASTOR

Please include me by mention just a few of the most faithful members who have left us and expressed their whole love and loyalty in the church, whose devotion is still cooperation with the pastor, and serve as trustees: Mrs. Tommy Brown, Mrs. Chas. Collier, Mrs. Mary Adams, Mrs. Jimmie Davis, Mrs. Marie Lambkin, Mr. Fred Cohen, Mrs. Rosa Lester, Mrs. (Mrs. Precher), Mr. James Collins, Mrs. Minnie Brown Coates, Mrs. Elizabeth Jay, Mr. W. S. Collier, Mrs. Pearl Collier, Mrs. Frances Anthony, Mrs. Anna White, Mrs. Leah Reed, Mrs. Annie Sapperton, Mr. James Carter, Mrs. Ernie Carter, Mr. and Mrs. Larrison Spartin, Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Warren, Mrs. Beat Thomas Case, Mrs. Ella W. Dixon, Mr. J. W. Arbo, Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Davis, Mrs. Jessie Edwards, Mrs. Sarah Edwards, Mrs. Lizzie Gilmore, Mrs. Florence Ward, Mrs. Bessie Coates, Mrs. Alice Jennings, Miss Christine Lutzner, Mrs. Harry Downs, and a host of others whose names are not mentioned in section.

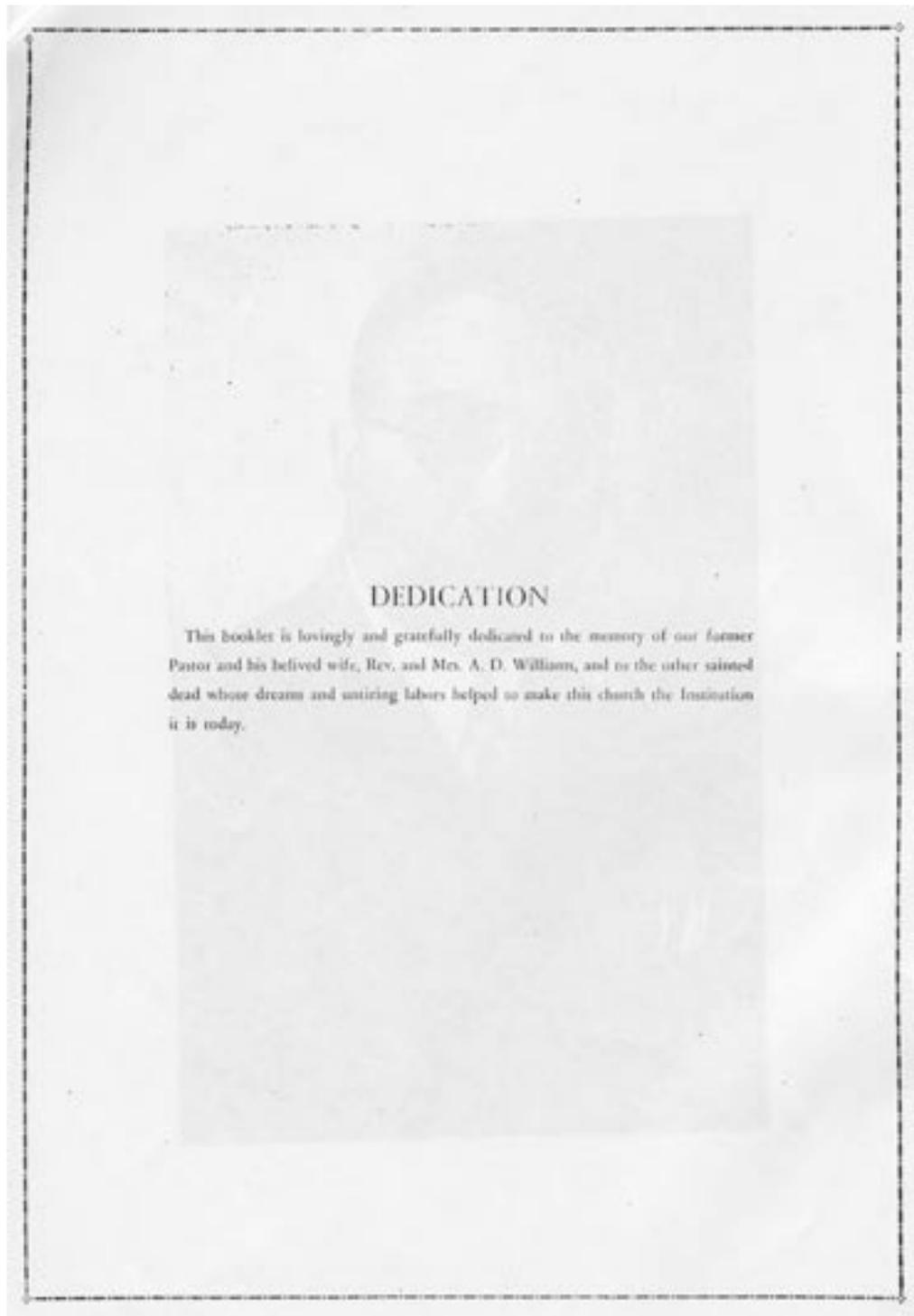


## FOREWORD

In our great system of human relationships there are institutions which stand out as symbols of progress. The progress of an institution is in a large measure attributed to the dynamic leadership of an individual. For this reason we are passing to overlook our present day strife, upheaval and sort of social chaos to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Ebenezer Baptist Church. This church has been a beacon of light, a ray of hope, a center of all that is good and righteous for 60 years. We pause likewise to pay a tribute to our Pastor, Rev. Martin Luther King who for the past 15 years has been at the helm of this great institution.

When we are carrying out our celebration we are not reflecting the opinion of an individual, but the opinion of all who have followed the growth and progress of the Ebenezer Baptist Church. Especially has the church grown and developed under the present leadership.

We can not overlook the fact that the many loyal, faithful members have played their roles in the growth and development of this church. They have stood by lending their aid with unswerving effort and devotion. Many have gone on but the fruit of their labors is still to be seen. We fervently pray that God will continue to bless our leader and that this great church of ours will continue to stand as a haven of peace and satisfaction where those who seek a closer walk with God will run.



### DEDICATION

This booklet is lovingly and gratefully dedicated to the memory of our former Pastor and his beloved wife, Rev. and Mrs. A. D. William, and to the other sainted dead whose dreams and untiring labors helped to make this church the Institution it is today.

THE PASTOR AND HIS FAMILY



Alfred, Mrs. King, Rev. King, Christine and Martin Luther, II

Rev. Martin Luther King, a native of Stockbridge, Ga., was married to Miss Alberta Christine Williams of Atlanta, Ga., November 25, 1936. To this union three children have been born: Willie Christine, a Junior at Spelman College, Martin Luther II, a Junior at Morehouse College and Alfred (A. D. Williams) King, a Junior high school student at Palmer Memorial Institute, Sedalia, N. C.

Rev. King is a graduate of Morehouse College and also holds the degree of Doctor of Divinity recently conferred upon him by Morris Brown College. He is Moderator of the Atlanta Association, and a member of the Executive Boards of the State and National Baptist Conventions. Practically every movement in Atlanta of civic and political nature and any other movement which tends to work toward human betterment claims Rev. King's support and affiliation.

Mrs. King attended Spelman Seminary, Hampton Institute and Morris Brown College from which she holds the degree of Bachelor of Arts. She is the daughter of the late Dr. and Mrs. A. D. Williams.

REGULAR ORDER OF WORSHIP	
ORGAN PRELUDE	
PROCESSIONAL	Choir
HYMN	Congregation
INVOCATION	
CHANT	
SELECTION	Choir
RESPONSIVE READING	Selected
SELECTION	Choir
EMERGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS	
OFFERTORY (FOR MISSIONS)	
ANTHEM	Choir
PERIOD OF MEDITATION	
SERMON	
INVITATIONAL HYMN	
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF VISITORS	
DOXOLOGY—BENEDICTION	
WEEKLY ACTIVITIES	
Sunday 9:30 A. M.	Sunday School
Sunday 11:30 A. M.	Morning Worship
Sunday 6:00 P. M.	Baptist Training Union
Sunday 7:30 P. M.	Evening Worship
Monday 6:00 P. M.	Missionary Society
Monday (after 4th Sunday) 8:00 P. M.	Deaconess Meeting
Tuesday 6:00 P. M.	Scout Meeting
Tuesday 8:00 P. M.	Ward Meetings
Wednesday 6:00 P. M.	Junior Choir Rehearsal
Wednesday 7:00 P. M.	Youth Choir Rehearsal
Wednesday 7:00 P. M.	Junior Usher Board
Wednesday 8:00 P. M.	Prayer Meeting
Thursday 8:00 P. M.	Choir I Rehearsal
Friday 8:00 P. M.	Choir II Rehearsal
Friday 8:00 P. M.	Teachers Meeting
Friday 8:00 P. M.	Ushers Meeting

## HISTORY OF THE EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH

In the latter part of November 1886, the Ebenezer Baptist Church was organized by the Rev. John Parker, who was then a member of the Wheat Street Baptist Church. In a short time the membership boasted some fifty members. Rev. John Parker was made pastor and labored with the worshippers until his death in 1894. After Rev. Parker's death the membership dwindled to thirteen. The box-like structure that was used for worship had a heavy indebtedness upon it. Of this indebtedness the group was thirteen notes behind with the payments.

It was in the face of these unfavorable conditions that the Rev. A. D. Williams, began his career. He began a task which proved to be a great herculean task. Under the leadership of Dr. Williams the debts were liquidated, the dispersed membership reunited and the congregation greatly increased. So great was the increase, that the building would not accommodate the crowds. Because of this the members were forced to move from the site on Airline Street to McGruder Street, where the Mt. Pleasant Church now stands. Later this site was sold and there was purchased a site where the Holsey Temple Church now stands.

While the constant changing of sites was taking place Dr. Williams was continually searching for something better. From this search the members purchased the Old Fifth Street Baptist Church (white) located on the corner of Bell and Gilmore Street. In four years and five months this band of Christian workers had freed themselves of this indebtedness. As a result of many successful revivals the membership continued to grow until a still larger edifice was sought.

Under the leadership and advice of Dr. Williams the present site was purchased. While the basement of this structure was in the process of erection the members worshipped in a store front on Edgewood Avenue. Being unable to finish the main auditorium of the present site, members worshipped in the first unit of the church from 1914 until 1922 at which time the main auditorium was completed. Great was the time and much rejoicing and thanksgiving was made manifest at the accomplishment of this task. The cheap frame building had been transformed into an eighty thousand dollar structure.

With this achievement, Dr. Williams worked steadily for nine years more, at which time he was called from

labor to reward. Before terminating the accomplishments of our former pastor, we dare not go without giving honor and praise to his loving wife, Mrs. Jennie C. Williams, who worked loyally and faithfully by her husband's side until his death. It was she who we knew as the earthly power behind his every undertaking. Without her his burdens would have been heavier, his work harder and his path more stony. Praise be to God who gave us these saints whom he has now called back to dwell with him.

At the home going of Dr. Williams, Ebenezer was again left without a pastor, financially the church was at a low ebb, dark days were the lot of the congregation, who had heard faint whispers of their financial ruin and dissolution. God heard their prayers and saw their needs. He sent to these loyal worshippers a man, young in years, but old in the service of the Lord. This man was none other than our present pastor, Rev. Martin Luther King.

During the first years of his pastorage, thousands of dollars were raised which served to quiet many financial fears. New hope and confidence was again in the hearts of the members. The church in a few years now was again headed toward success. The depression came with its miseries, but the Church moved on, reducing its indebtedness and improving its facilities.

In the fifteen years of Rev. M. L. King's pastorage many noteworthy efforts have come to be realization. The membership has grown from approximately 600 to 3700. The choir has grown from a few voices to approximately 150, comprising four choirs with three directors of which Mrs. M. L. King is head; from the usual hard Church benches to the present modern pews, from the old style pipe organ to the present electrically controlled Wuritzer Organ. It is one of the most modern obtainable, having around 2,000 pipes and near 700 wires in the cables which operate the huge instrument.

Rev. King possesses the art of an organizer and director, which is the keynote of any successful church.

Ebenezer looks onward and upward to even greater success and prays that our heavenly Father, who has guided us through the years, will continue to bless and prosper us as we move forward for Christ and the Church.

MEMBERS PRIOR TO 1906



Oldest members from point of service. All having joined prior to 1906 and still active today. Most of them are affiliated with several organizations in the church.  
 Standing L. to R.: P. O. Watson, Olessa Jones, Nansien Crawford, Emma Clayton, Carrie Bell Watson and H. C. Edwards.  
 Seated L. to R.: Mannie Anderson, Amelia Griffin, Ella West, Sallie Mosley, Eliza Peck and Cornelia Hill.  
 Others not appearing on picture: George Scott, Emory Neal, Vivie Andrews and Emily Eberhart.

REMINISCENCES OF THE PAST

November, 1940—Dedication of newly installed Windizes Pipe Organ.  
 November, 1945—Mar Bell Finch, Soprano, presented in recital by Choir No. 2.  
 May, 1946—Curtis Holland, Baritone, presented in recital by Youth Choir.  
 February, 1947—Fisk Jubilee Singers.

ANNIVERSARY  
SPEAKERS

1937-1947

- |                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1937—Rev. Noble Y. Beall   | 1942—Rev. Charles H. Haynes  |
| 1938—Rev. Malvin H. Watson | 1943—Rev. Russell C. Barbour |
| 1939—Rev. Noble Y. Beall   | 1944—Rev. Jesse Jai McNeil   |
| 1940—Dr. J. M. Nohr        | 1945—Rev. L. M. Yobin        |
| 1941—Dr. C. D. Hubert      | 1946—Dr. J. M. Nohr          |
|                            | 1947—Rev. D. Albert Jackson  |

Men's Day

- 1944—Rev. Ralph Riley  
 1945—Rev. Ralph Mark Gilbert  
 1946—Rev. W. E. Carrington

Youth Day

- 1945—Rev. M. L. King  
 1946—Dr. B. E. Mayes  
 1947—Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown



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**EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH.**

On the 4th Sunday in this month Ebenezer Baptist Church, Rev. A. D. Williams, D. D., pastor, will have their well-planned rally for the benefit of the new Twenty-five Thousand Dollar Church, which will be erected on their lot, corner Auburn and Jackson streets. The combined seating capacity of the main auditorium and the gallery will aggregate twelve hundred and fifty. Dr. Williams, his wife and little daughter, will contribute seventy-five dollars—\$25.00 each. Many of the deacons and members will donate from five to twenty-five dollars.

Few Churches in the city have made strides more rapidly, nor have contributed more to the moral and intellectual growth of the city. Dr. Williams is an earnest, conscientious and well-informed minister whose influence in the city is acknowledged and appreciated. Nineteen years ago, he and his flock numbered 18 on Airline street, in a small shack. A few years ago with 120 they moved to Bell and Gilmore streets and paid \$3,000 for a better erection. Now with 750 substantial members, Ebenezer is going to erect a modern Church edifice that will be in keeping with the great city of Atlanta. Ebenezer could boast of a few thousand members, but the pastor and deacons believe in the system of yearly clearing the books of dead ones, suspended ones and all but live and active members.

**TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY.**

Atlanta Independent 17 January 1914

of their faithful people deserve the thanks of the entire city for the large attendance of both men and women.

ed much ce was so This Sunday at 3 p. m. the next big mass meeting will be held at Ebenezer Baptist Church, now on Edgewood avenue near Jackson Street, with Rev. A. D. Williams and his large membership. The speakers will be Rev. W. R. Hendrix, pastor of the great Wesley Memorial Methodist Church and Prof. S. H. Archer, of Morehouse College. You just can't afford to miss hearing these men of God.

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meeting of Life Insurance, the com- Building. meeting to vote charter. ed and

The following persons have paid in full: Mr. W. S. Cannon, \$50; Dr. R. M. Reddick, \$50; Dr. L. P. Walton, \$25; Mrs. Ella Russell, \$10; Mr. Joe F. Russell, \$5; Rev. D. W. Cannon, \$5; Mr. A. T. Solomon, \$25; W. P. Arnold, \$3; John Osborn, \$3.

The Y. M. E. Club of the Third ward met in its regular monthly

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Atlanta Independent 14 March 1914

The Ebenezer Baptist church, of which Rev. A. D. Williams is pastor, will hold their ground breaking exercises next Monday at 2 p. m. March 16, corner Auburn and Jackson street. The public is cordially invited to be present. The Atlanta Baptist Ministers' Union will turn out in a body and representatives from all the denominations will be on hand to assist and encourage this struggling church. Let us all go out and lend our presence and financial assistance to this faithful pastor and people.

With your aid our Negro regalia house, the Central Regalia Company of Cincinnati, Ohio, will be the largest regalia house in the country.

Dr. S. G. Means, pastor of St. James A. M. E. church, Columbus,

Atlanta Independent 27 June 1914

**EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH'S GREAT RALLY FOR NEW CHURCH BUILDING, BEING ERECTED AT THE CORNER OF AUBURN AVENUE AND JACKSON STREET.**

Rev. Dr. A. D. Williams, pastor of Ebenezer Baptist church, came to this city from the country in 1830, at the age of 30 years. He said he only had 10 cents when he reached here, and today he ranks as one of the foremost pulpit orators of the race. The secret of his success is that he puts God first and all other things second. Hence he has the absolute confidence of his members, and all who know him place implicit confidence in his word.

He first pastored Springfield Baptist church on Orme street, where he was first ordained to preach the gospel. He was called to Ebenezer Baptist church, March, 1894, with a membership of only 17, but now has a membership of 650. They bought and sold a church on McGruder street, worth about \$1,000.00, and are now erecting one at the corner of Auburn avenue and Jackson street, at a cost of \$15,000. They are now struggling to get into the basement and are appealing to the people for financial aid.

Rev. Williams the pastor of this church, has made it a rule and trained his people to encourage and contribute to every worthy cause or enterprise, which looks to the uplift and best welfare of our people and community. Dr. Williams and his congregation are now making strenuous efforts to raise \$2,000 by the second Sunday in July. Dr. Williams will for that purpose give a grand pit cooked barbecue. It will be one of the most interesting and best ever given by a church. This Dr. Williams guarantees and assures the public that it will eclipse any barbecue ever given here. Those who know the man will not doubt for a moment, for he is the very embodiment of veracity and truth and stands second to none when it comes to his word. His word is as good as his bond.

Dr. Williams and his people are soliciting from their many friends, and it is the imperative duty of all lovers of God and humanity to come to their rescue, by giving as God has blessed you, for this is His cause as well as that of his people. No one who has seen the great work going on at the corner of Auburn avenue and Jackson street, by Dr. Williams and his people, will hesitate to contribute all in his power.

The Independent comments this great work which the doctor and his people are doing for the members and the community at large. Dr. Williams is a good man and worthy of all acceptance. His name is a synonym for honesty, integrity and upright living. Above all, he is a true ambassador and soldier of the cross and is a Moses to his people, to lead them from darkness to the marvelous light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

THE Y. M. C. A. IS COLLECTING Toomer has been under the treatment

Atlanta Independent 29 August 1914

**MISCELLANEOUS EVENTS.**

By R. G. McAden.

Ebenezer Baptist membership, their friends and admirers will worship in their own edifice tomorrow, Sunday, August 30th inst. The basement has been fully and handsomely completed. It is beautifully equipped with pews, electric and such church fixtures as progressive Atlanta approves. The seating capacity covers 3,200 square feet and will easily seat six hundred.

Dr. A. D. Williams, pastor, his deacons, members and friends have struggled untiringly to gain this present achievement and when they shall have completed their church in its entirety, they will have one of the most modern church buildings in the State.

Sunday-school at 9:30. The program for the day begins at 11 o'clock. Some of the best talent in the race will participate during the day.

The public is cordially invited and is expected to contribute something toward this splendid moral force. This edifice is found decorating the corner of Auburn avenue and Jackson street.

Rev. J. W. Jackson, District Missionary for Georgia, under joint appointment of the National Baptist

Atlanta Independent 28 February 1924

**A WORTHY CAUSE.**

Dr. A. D. Williams, pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church, corner Auburn avenue and Jackson street, who has been pastor for 30 years, appeals to the good people of Atlanta who believe in churches, to assist him in raising \$3,000.00 by March 14, 1924. Dr. Williams has been in our midst for more than 30 years and has served faithfully as a cause for the uplift of our community, whether religious, political, fraternal, social or otherwise. He has never made an appeal to the public to help him with his financial burdens for the reason he has always had the good sense to build within the means and ability of his own congregation, to take care of their personal success, but he finds himself in his position! When he began to build six years ago, he had 900 members and the plans and obligations were laid for 900 members, but by reason of migration and other economic conditions that he could not control, the membership has been reduced to 280 members—280 members can hardly carry the burden of 900.

There is an indebtedness of \$1,500.00 against the church and he wants to raise this amount on the fortieth anniversary of his pastoring at Ebenezer Baptist Church March 14, 1924, and he appeals to his good friends, white and black without regard of denomination to help him out. Let us do our best for the Doctor, he deserves it! His membership consists mostly of working people who are employed by their white neighbor and their ability to contribute is limited by the salary they receive. God loves a cheerful giver, and his great gift to the poor, lendeth to the Lord.

Atlanta Daily World 18 November 1936

# Ebenezer Holds Its Annual Fair Week Exhibition

By LILLIE P. BERRY

This is annual Fair Week at Ebenezer Baptist Church, and the members have manifested much interest by attending in large numbers. Those who have not attended any of the previous fairs are urged to make the attendance a habit. Housewives are urged to make a vacation from kitchen drudgery and eat at the Fair. Many interesting games will be played throughout the week ending Friday.

There are eight booths each displaying attractive displays of skilled handwork, canned fruits and other products. At the end of the fair, a prize will be awarded the owner of the best decorated booth.

The general public is cordially invited to come out and have a good time night.

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College Dept. News

Atlanta Daily World 5 December 1936

strangers are always welcome.

**EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH**

The pastor is urging every member to attend church Sunday. He will speak at the morning and evening service. Choir No. two will render the music. On last Sunday the Gospel chorus rendered music and they were truly at their best, we appreciate very much the efforts put forth to organize this chorus, they are to be commended.

The pastor wishes to thank all who helped to make our annual Fair such a success. Especially do we thank the many merchants who gave fruit, coco cola, dry goods, vegetables and numerous other things. All members are urged to be at Holy Communion Sunday night, this being the last Communion Sunday of the year. All members who joined during the past month please be present in order that you may be fellowshipped Sunday. Come and bring a friend, you will hear a good sermon at either of the services.

Rev. M. L. King, pastor  
 Lillie Pearl Berry, rep.

**Thankful Baptist Church**

Rev. J. W. Tate has been conducting a two-weeks meeting in

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Atlanta Daily World 13 March 1937

**S Church News**

**EMENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH**  
 will bring to a close, its Fiftieth Anniversary this Sunday. There have been speakers every night during the celebration who made fine compliments of the work done under the direction of the pastor, Rev. M. L. King.  
 Sunday morning, the Rev. Noble Y. Deale will preach the anniversary sermon. Sunday night, a musical will be given. Everyone is cordially invited to attend services all day.

**BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH**  
 The Busy Bee club of the Mt. Ward of the Bethlehem Baptis

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**ELIZABETH MAE**  
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Atlanta Daily World 14 March 1937

## Fifth Anniversary Of Dr. M. L. King Closes Today

Today will terminate the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Ebenezer Baptist church and the fifth anniversary of the pastor, Rev. M. L. King.

Rev. Noble Y. Beall, Field Secretary of Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, will deliver the Anniversary sermon at the morning service. At 3 P. M. Rev. J. T. Doney will preach. His will be accompanied by his choir which will furnish music for the occasion.

Chorus number one and two, and the Gospel Chorus under the direction of Mesdames G. B. Winkfield and A. W. King, will render the final program. Good singing is guaranteed a welcomed public.

### Baptists Conclude Mor

Atlanta Daily World 21 March 1937

## Double Anniversary At Ebenezer Church Closes; Map Plans For Spring Revival

By TERRY GALANTI

What was started by leaders at the church's anniversary in the history of Ebenezer Baptist church, the Rev. M. L. King, speaker, came to a close Sunday with an interesting anniversary sermon delivered by Dr. Noble Y. Beall, while, field secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention. During the morning services, the local program was sponsored by Choir No. 1, with Deacon Emory Neal presiding.

Members of the program consisted of a paper by Mrs. Ethel L. Hamilton on "A Christian Arbitrator", followed by the choir entitled "Work To The Lord", and original poems dedicated to the church and pastor by Mrs. Gladys McMichael. The afternoon service featured a sermon by the Rev. J. T. Doney, pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist church, before a house filled to the limit and well beyond. The local program featured a program by the BYPU with Mrs. K. W. Gentry presiding.

The B.T.U. chorus rendered a number. The pastor BYPU rendered a paper by Miss Gladys McMichael on "Oh, Look For Jesus and Peter", and a solo by A. D. W. King, with the chorists. Doney rendered a reading by A. James Johnson, M. E. M. Mac Allister read a paper on "The B.T.U. An Asset to the Church and Pastor", followed by a selection, a quartet composed of Miss Willie Mae Shepherd, Mrs. Auretha Eubank, David Hill and Ope Hudson. More than 40 voices were featured in a program sponsored by two choirs. Sunday night, with the direction of Mrs. Alice King and L. B. Boyd, more than 400 was raised at the afternoon services.

The Rev. M. C. Durham, of Nashville, Tenn., will conduct the spring revival, which begins April 28 and continues for two weeks nightly, it was announced.

### Local Meetings

**THE REGULAR COMMUNICATION OF LODGE NO. 612 TO MEET**

The regular communication of Masons Lodge No. 612 of A. A. V. M. will be held in its temple, Tuesday evening at 7:30 o'clock. All members are urged to attend. By orders of Rev. J. E. Judd, and J. D. Brantwell, secretary.

**THE COLLEGIATE FOURS TO MEET WEDNESDAY**

will meet with Martin 12, at 51 and Houston Street N. E. corner of 14, Howell Street N. E. Wednesday, at 8 P. M.

## Ashby St. Coal Yard

285 Ashby St. S.W. RA. 6303  
BEST KY. RED ASH COAL  
3 BAGS for \$1.00  
WE DELIVER

## WOMEN'S QUERY SHOWS

Adm. Club, March 11, March 1959

## Ebenezer In Midst Of Big Anniversary

By TERRO GALANTI

What bids fair to be possibly the best anniversary of the pastor and church is now in progress at Ebenezer Baptist, Dr. M. L. King, minister. The drive this week marks the fifty-second anniversary of the church and the seventh of the minister.

Tuesday night featured a brilliant sermon delivered by Dr. T. M. George, outstanding pastor of First Baptist church, Reynoldstown, who preached from the theme "Christian Service." For one to give service," the Rev. Mr. George said, "patience must be manifested. There is nothing in you if you can't give service. God wants service." The First Baptist church choir and congregation appeared on the program.

Preceding the sermon, a local program was presided over by Mrs. Laura Henderson, which was sponsored by the Missionary Society. The program consisted of a paper by Miss Virginia Mae Harris on "What the Missionary Society Means to the Church and Pastor", readings by E. Kate Lewis and M. Kate Harris, a selection by chorus of Missionary Society and musical number by Juniors.

Rev. A. D. Williams is president of the Missionary Society, which was featured during the service.

(Continued on Page 2, Col. 1)

Baptists attending Sunday  
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## Ebenezer In

(Continued from Page 1)

Deston E. Neal is the general director of the program committee, while L. B. Ryan and Mrs. Weaver presides at the organ and piano respectively. The First Baptist church and Ebenezer raised \$28.80.

Monday night, the opening addressing to Miss Lillian Watkins, secretary, the Rev. J. R. Barnett and the Butler Street Baptist church conducted a splendid program, which was enjoyed by a packed house. Dr. Barnett preached on "The Ideal Minister". He held the interest of his hearers in an able manner.

The Deacons of Ebenezer sponsored the program with Deston J. W. Johnson presiding. Deston Johnson English, Jr. read a newspaper on "The Progress of the Church Under the Leadership of Rev. King". The Butler Street Baptist and Ebenezer Baptist churches raised \$50 Monday night.

Tonight, the program provides for a sermon by the Rev. C. S. Jackson and remarks by Rev. J. L. King. The public is cordially invited.

## Four Convicted

(Continued from Page 1)

total of twenty-four months on three counts of Indecent proposal to females. Jeremiah Pickens was given twelve months on a similar charge.

Accused of pushing a wife at Mother, Norman West was acquitted.

Atlanta Daily World 28 October 1940

51

## Ebenezer Baptist Church Has New Pipe Organ

Ebenezer Baptist church, pastored by Dr. Martin Luther King, is completing plans for the dedicatory services for the new pipe organ to be held next Friday night. Several noted musicians have been invited to appear on the program at this promising event which should attract an overflow crowd. This occasion, marking another milestone for Ebenezer, will be under the direction of the organists, L. B. Byron and Mrs. Alberta King.

The program of music was rendered on a new Wurlitzer organ recently installed. It contains approximately two thousand pipes, ranging from six inches to fifteen feet long.

The organ is said to be the most modern type available with a console consisting of sixty-seven control tablets. It can be reduced to a tone so soft that the average ear would be strained to hear it, and can be increased to a volume so great it will shake the edifice.

**JONES-KITCHEN**

ATHENS, Ga.—Miss Irene Jones and Andrew Kitchen were married

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Atlanta Daily World 30 October 1940

## To Dedicate New Ebenezer Pipe Organ Friday Night

By FANCHEREAU ARNOLD

Ebenezer Baptist church, pastored by the Rev. Martin Luther King, will dedicate its costly and attractive pipe organ, recently installed, in a blaze of religious glory, pomp and rejoicing Friday night at eight o'clock with some of the city's leading musicians appearing on the program which leaders predicted would jam the edifice with people.

The new pipe organ, with 100 console located on the main floor is the latest obtainable. One of the fine things of the organ is the quickness of action; for example the console could be placed in a distant city and, if connected, the moment the key is touched, music would sound in Ebenezer.

L. B. Byron and Mrs. Alberta King, organists for the church, will have charge of the program slated for Friday night. Attendants are invited to attend this promising event.

A check-up on the new instrument revealed that it has 67 control tablets, and the console and the echo organ located in the balcony are controlled by electric cables consisting of approximately 600 wires. It is estimated that there are 3,000 pipes in it, ranging from 8 inches to 16 feet long with a bore of 4 "C" depths of tones.

Other interesting features of the organ is the fact that it has chimes, aeolians, harps, bells, violins, clarinets, vox humana and trumpets. It also has two sets of vox humana that are nearest to human voice imitation, arranged to imitate a human chorus. The pipes of the main organ are installed in the rear of the edifice around 20 feet from the console, which controls them.

The organ is being installed by Mr. Neal Davis of the J. J. Davis and Son Company. It is a two-manual Wurlitzer.

and Near East.

# Master Organ Is Dedicated At Ebenezer

By TASCHEREAU ARNOLD  
(WORLD Religious Editor)

Music, the like never heard before in Ebenezer Baptist church pastored by Dr. M. L. King, Jr. out Friday night when the church and pastor dedicated the crack two-manual Wurliitzer pipe organ the glory of God in blaze of celestial enthusiasm before a house filled from the main floor to the gallery.

Bringing back the same memory of the late Dr. A. D. Williams, who formerly pastored the edifice, the present pastor, Dr. King, dedicated the organ in memory of Dr. Williams after it had been formerly turned over to him by Deacon Emory Neal, chairman of the Trustee Board.

### MUSIC LOVERS PRESENT

Music lovers from throughout the city jammed the church to witness the thrilling program. Of widespread interest were two items done by the nationally renowned musician, Graham Jackson, on the new organ. Applause followed.

(Continued on Page 5, Col. 1)

Washington Hi ..... 20  
Howard High ..... 0

## Master Organ

(Continued from Page 1)

pleasure was rendered the famous musician who took the audience by surprise when he rendered a number depicting bombs falling in Europe, breaking it off with a piece in which one could still hear the people of God.

The principle address was masterfully delivered by the Rev. Mr. King, who dedicated the instrument to the memory of Dr. Williams. He thanked the vast audience for its presence at the initial program.

Mrs. Alberta King, wife of Pastor King, presided at the console as L. B. Byron directed the choir of the church in renditions of several enjoyable selections. The choir opened with two request numbers: "Hush and Rocky Road" and "You Have Got to Cry Sometime Before You Get to Heaven".

L. B. Byron pleased with two selections as he gracefully presided at the console. Mr. Byron and Mrs. King are the organists for the church.

### SUNDAY COMMUNION DAY

Sunday, which is communion day, the Rev. Mr. King will fill the pulpit. All choirs will sing during the day.

Several white people came out to witness the program. Mr. Davis, white, who installed the organ and his father were presented to the audience.

The Rev. Mr. King will leave for Chicago early next week to attend the funeral services for Dr. L. K. Williams, who lost his life in a plane crash recently.

# ARK

Atlanta Daily World 3 November 1940

## They Dedicated A New Organ At Ebenezer

A PACKED HOUSE greeted the dedication of a mammoth pipe organ in the Ebenezer Baptist church, Atlanta, Georgia, of which the Rev. M. L. King is the pastor. It was a pretty sight in the beautiful church as the crowd sat in rapt attention to a program of music from the joining together of the many choirs of the church into a chorus for the occasion.

Mr. Graham Jackson, a musician of note played the first selections which depicted the bombing of England by plane. He made it so realistic in your imagination, you could see the planes as they dropped their devices of death, an imitation by the great organist on the instrument, yet he ended up the exciting episode above the din of the bombing, you could hear the solemn music of "God Save the King".

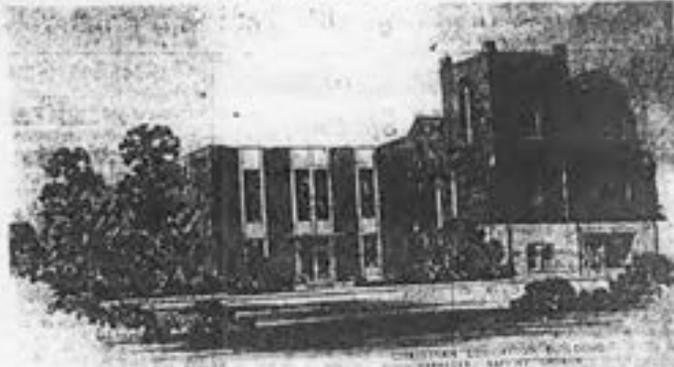
Prof. L. B. Byron, the organist, played several difficult arrangements, but with his skill he played with ease; also Mrs. M. L. King, wife of the pastor, took a turn at the new organ.

The Rev. M. L. King must be congratulated on his success of carrying on a great work of his predecessor, the late Rev. A. D. Williams, and from the prospect of the things wrought by him, he and his congregation will automatically be classed among the greatest churches of America.

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Atlanta Daily World 26 May 1956

## NEW CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BUILDING AT EBENEZER



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BUILDING AT EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH

After months of anxious waiting the members of Ebenezer Baptist Church are now ready to enter the new Christian Education Building. Sunday, May 27, will mark the opening day at which time the building will be dedicated. The dedication ceremony will be presided by the Rev. Dr. M. L. King, Jr., of Montgomery, Alabama at 3:30 p. m.

The new education building is of contemporary architecture and is two stories high. The ground floor consists of spacious recreation room, a library, magazine room, primary room, a church, a central room for the pastor, a large central office writing room.

On the second floor are two large assembly rooms at each end of the

floor for church and interdenominational conferences respectively. Both are located by three elevators for ready access.

Also on this floor will be found classrooms for adults, College youth, youth department consisting of grade school and office and the Pastor's Study with parlor, single bath-in-law room and an intercommunication system which gives direct contact with the main sanctuary, basement, auditorium, nursery and street level.

There is an eighteen foot wide corridor above the auditorium stage facing Auburn Ave. An explicit passage way between the new education building and the existing church building will provide play space for children. Best seats will be found on both floors.

The existing church sanctuary has been altered in the front end, the auditorium has been altered around nearly 20 per cent. A new stage has been constructed. On the floor level a new women and youth lobby. On the Jackson street side has been erected a new kitchen that will be equipped with the most modern equipment. A new set of restrooms which has been provided in both the new existing church building.

The exterior facade of the existing church building enlarged and new entrance doors installed. In the new existing sanctuary a new altar and side aisle have been constructed which provide seating for 400-500 persons. The rear and side walls of the choir and pulpit area are paneled with Honduras Mahogany joining to match the existing work. Planking

### Anderson Park Exercises Stated

The Anderson Park Elementary School's graduation exercises will be held Thursday, May 31, 1956 at 10:30 in the school auditorium. We are inviting our parents and friends to be present.

The school and Teachers Association of the Anderson Park School will on 2000 Thursday night May 31, 1956 at 7:00 p. m. At this meeting we will present different groups. First of the year and present the first grade in a program under the supervision of Robert Gentry.

Miss O. E. Williams, president.

### Nesbit Jones

(Continued From Page One)

traffic violations: 1) speeding 2) driving on wrong side of road 3) driving on wrong side of road 4) improper lane-changing

After Nesbit's death of 11 p. m. Wednesday, an additional driver driving northbound who looked toward Gary. He was driving north on Grand Street when he

- Prayer: Mrs. Queen Edwards, Mrs. Martha Robinson, Mrs. Ruth Moore, Barbara Smith, Angela Jones, Jr., Mrs. S. Benson, Mrs. Minnie Kallstrom, Mrs. Cora Stakes, Barbara Adams, Mrs. Howard, Betty Lee, Mrs. William Thomas, Delia Mae Thomas, Orla Lee, Thomas, Dorothy LaSalle, Thomas, Mary Elizabeth, Thomas, George, Thomas, Herman, Mark, Thomas, Bertha, David, Martin, James, Victor, Evelyn, Colander, Turbin, Lenny, Irvin, Walter, Samuel, Warr, Jack, Walter, Doreen, Myrta, Susan, Betty, James, Walter, Ethel, Andrew, Jr., Vienna, Juana, Ella, Vienna, Leona, William, Arthur, White, Norman, Wilson, Dennis, Vienna, Williams, Marjorie, Williams, Shirley, Patricia and William, Elizabeth Sims
- \*Walden  
\*Walden

### TELEVISION PROGRAM

4 • • • MEMPHIS DAILY WORLD • • • TUESDAY, MAY 20, 1956

## EBENEZER DEDICATES EDUCATION BUILDING

Several hundred members and friends of the Ebenezer Baptist Church Sunday afternoon heard the dynamic Dr. M. L. King Jr. of Montgomery, Ala. call upon church members to stand up and be witnesses for Christ every day. He said Christians must stand up and be counted to the extent of being willing to even suffer death in defense of what they believe.

The young minister, who has become internationally known because of his prominence as one of the leaders in the famous bus protest in the Alabama city, gave the dedicatory sermon for the two-story beautiful and modern educational building which joins the church at Auburn Avenue and Jackson St. The structure report-

edly cost about \$150,000. The new addition to the church is a long-time dream of Ebenezer pastor, Rev. M. L. King, Sr. who presided at the services where his son was the principal speaker. Among others on the program were Rev. Paul A. Anderson, Rev. John Porter, Dr. Melvin Watson, Rev. Nancy Brown, Rev. H. I. Bearden, Rev. G. W. Dudley, Rev. I. R. Searcy and E. C. Miller, architect.

After the dedicatory service which was held in the church, open house was held in the new building next door. Refreshments were served the large number who inspected the new addition. Mrs. M. L. King, Sr. and others served as hostesses during the open house period.

## Racial Bias Still In Effect, Powell Charges

NEW YORK - (NNPA) - Despite the orders of President Eisenhower

Mr. Powell's New York secretary Mrs. Hattie Freeman Dodson, who



Atlanta Constitution 9 April 1968

FOR LAST TIME

# King Returns To His Church

By DON WINTER

A reverent crowd watched the body of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. enter his home church for the last time Monday afternoon from an his widow and his loved spirit were marching in Memphis.

Dr. King's coffin was taken from St. Peter's Chapel at Spelman College about 4 p.m. His brother, the Rev. A. D. Williams King of Louisville, had kissed the casket, on view since Saturday, in a private ceremony.

More than 600 people waited outside the porticoed, red-brick church for the coffin to come in. The people were citizens for the most part, although singer Aretha Franklin, who performed at the last Southern Christian Conference convention in Atlanta, appeared briefly. She left when photographers learned her identity.

THE JOURNEY from the westside campus to Ebenezer Baptist Church on Auburn Avenue NE took only a few minutes. Police motorcycles headed up the procession of flower-filled hearse, limousine, and hearse with Dr. King's coffin.

The coffin was placed on a stand in the wall of Ebenezer Church. A light illuminated Dr. King's displayed body, and floral arrangements hid the altar and choir stalls and dignified

the camera mounted in the baptismal font, in readiness for Tuesday's funeral.

Outside the crowd lined up to view the body. One line extended east on Auburn Avenue almost to Boulevard NE. On the west side of the church the line stretched back to E. D. G. W. S. D. Avenue.

The mourners waited patiently for their turn. A thick cluster of vigilants stood on the far side of the street, across from the line. Even though the line moved much faster than at Spelman, those mourners did not join it.

CELEBRITIES, fearful they might disturb the decorum of the occasion, crossed the line and entered Ebenezer's sanctuary through a passage from the adjoining educational building.

Singer Nancy Wilson and her entourage took this route. So did Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Robert F. Kennedy of New York.

Sen. Kennedy came to the church a little before 9 p.m. He had come directly from Dr. King's home on Sunset Avenue in Vinson City, where the senator had paid his respects to Mrs. King.

The senator, with several aides, including John Doar and Burke Marshall, both instrumental in Kennedy's civil rights enforcement activities as attorney general, went wordlessly into the church and quickly filed past the coffin.

Sen. Kennedy's wife, Ethel, accompanied her husband.

Mrs. Jackie Kennedy was reportedly in Atlanta Monday evening. It was not known if she planned to view the body.

Several other notables, including a large contingent of entertainers, had told officials at Ebenezer Church that they might visit the church sometime before the funeral.

## Aid Eyed For City Hit by Blast

RICHMOND, Ind. (AP)—Officials Tuesday explored sources of financial aid for explosion-scarred downtown Richmond as the FBI worked to identify bodies recently uncovered in the rubble.

The death toll from Saturday's gas powder explosion stood at 44 with 22 of the victims identified, state police said.

Officials said the explosion and perhaps two spread flames and debris through a two-block section in this northern Indiana city of 41,000. Three buildings were destroyed and five others damaged extensively. Officials

WOMEN OFTEN

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Atlanta Journal 9 April 1968

**SINGER-AURTHA KITT TALKS TO REPORTERS HERE**  
She, Actor Ben Gazzara (Background) Attend Rites

**ANOTHER FUNERAL**  
**King Sr. Conducts**  
**Rites of Son's Teacher**

**By The Associated Press**  
Almost unnoticed in the shadow unattended television cameras and dark floodlights set up for his son's funeral at Ebenezer Baptist Church, the Rev. Martin Luther King Sr. conducted another funeral service.

As he preached the Monday sermon, the Rev. Mr. King tried perhaps not to think about his son, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., slain in Memphis by a sniper's bullet last Thursday.

But the forest of lights and twinkering cameras would not let him forget that his son's funeral would be held in that same church Tuesday.

The Rev. Mr. King was preaching the funeral of Mrs. Ruth Davis, Dr. King's Sunday school teacher, who died in Atlanta a few hours before her papa was killed.

"Three weeks ago Mrs. Davis told me, 'I want you to be there to preach my funeral,'" the Rev. Mr. King said in his sermon. "I haven't looked at her because I saw my son yesterday and it almost killed me. I'd rather remember them as they were the last time I saw them."

Dr. King's father had viewed the body of his son along with tens of thousands of other mourners as it lay in a casket at Spelman College. He had been almost overcome.

SEVERAL HUNDRED persons attended the funeral of Mrs. Davis, who died in her mid 50s. It was an unpretentious service with a tempo broken only briefly when the soloist, Auretha English, began weeping midway through her song and sat down.

The choir finished the hymn, "Jesus Is Always There."

A large crowd lined the street outside, including newsmen awaiting the arrival of Dr. King's body, which was being brought from Spelman.

As the blue metallic-colored casket was brought out of the church, the crowd stirred. Several asked, "Who's that?"

A few knew that it was a woman who had taught Dr. King in Sunday school.

**Bahamians**  
**Hold Election**  
**Wednesday**

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP) — Premier Lynden O. Pindling was to leave the business and government center in Nassau and return to his out-lying home while results of the Bahamian general election are tallied.

Pindling's Progressive Liberal party and the opposition party, the United Bahamian party, feel now that Wednesday's voting may come off peacefully.

Rock and bottle throwing incidents disrupted some earlier political rallies. The gangs of

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Atlanta Constitution 16 January 1969



### Spare King's Killer Rev. Abernathy Asks

Rev. Abernathy, leader of the Atlanta-based Southern Christian Leadership Conference, today called for the release of James Earl Ray, the assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and for the government to spare the life of the convicted slayer.

Abernathy, speaking at a news conference here today, said he was "appalled" by the news that the federal government was considering the execution of Ray. He said that the government should show "mercy" and spare the life of the man who had been convicted of the murder of King.

Abernathy said that he had spoken with several members of the clergy and the laity, and they all agreed that the government should show mercy to Ray. He said that he would continue to fight for Ray's release and for the government to spare his life.

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Atlanta Daily World 25 September 1969

# Kicks Off Drive For King Memorial

The International Circle of Friends for the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Center has

held their "Kick Off" meeting for their first Fund Raising Project Sunday, Sept. 21, at the Americana Hotel.

The Memorial Center will be erected on two sites in Atlanta. One will be permanent place of anchorage of Dr. King, A Freedom Exhibition Hall, the Restored birthplace of Dr. King, and a chapel in Ebenezer Baptist Church, which was the leader's home church and today is preserved by his father. The other site, near Atlanta University will include the Institute for Non-Violent Social Change, an Institute for Afro-American Studies, a library and archives and a museum of Afro-American life and culture.

## GETS WINGS



SYLVIA ARLENE LOGAN

Miss Sylvia Arlene Logan, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas B. Logan of 3125 Gordon Road, SW, Atlanta, has graduated from Eastern Airlines' flight attendant training center in Miami, Florida, and has started her career as a stewardess.

Miss Logan is a graduate of Booker T. Washington High School. Prior to joining Eastern, she was employed by the U. S. Post Office in Atlanta.

After completing stewardess training, Miss Logan reported to New York where she will be based.

She will fly to most of the 46 airports Eastern serves in 28 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Bermuda, the Bahamas and the Virgin Islands.

The first Fund Raising Project will be held here that will take place on Nov. 24 at the Americana Hotel, at 122 Street and 10th Ave., New York City.

The International Circle of Friends will honor the incomparable Dr. Eva Jaska, conductor of the "Eva Jaska Choir" the late George Gerard, who appointed her special director for "Fury and Bess."

She is a product of Western U., Kansas, and Langston University.

Some of the honorary chairmen are Mrs. John Mosier, of the Urban League, Actor Ossie Davis, Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, Duke Ellington, Dr. Ward Pigeon, and Gertrude McBrown. The President of the New York Chapter of the Circle of Friends is Miss Linda Page.

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Atlanta Constitution 9 October 1969

# King Library Unveiling Due This Afternoon

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The newly-organized Martin Luther King Jr. Library with approximately 1,500 books dealing with the civil rights movement from 1964 to the present will be officially opened with speeches and guided tours for the public from 5 to 7 Sunday.

The library, located at 411 Beckwith St. SW, 2 blocks west of Hunter Street, will be open regularly from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays. It will be closed Sundays.

Featured speakers for the official opening will be Mrs. Martin Luther King Jr. and Lerone Bennett, who is senior research fellow at the Institute of the Black World. The library is directed by Dr. Vincent Harding, former chairman of the history and sociology department of Spelman College.

Among the 1,500 volumes are copies of all of the late Dr. King's books including translations in 23 languages, and works by Malcolm X and other black leaders with philosophical persuasions different from those of Dr. King.

The library's reference works include the Negro Almanac, the 17-volume International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences and the American Negro Reference Book.

The bookshelves and office occupy one floor of the Interdenominational Theological Center.

The library is intended primarily for research. "Because of our limited copies the books won't be circulated," explained Willie L. Harrilord Jr. M, the library's archivist who came here from the Harry Truman Memorial Library at Independence, Mo., where he worked from 1967 to 1968 organizing the Truman presidential papers.

Harrilord, a graduate of the University of Kansas, is working to index and catalog the many handwritten documents of the civil rights movement, including the manuscripts of Dr. King's books, his letters and the various materials of other leaders.

The handwritten materials will be ready for researchers in about one year.



Atlanta Constitution 28 September 1969

# MEMORIAL FOR SLAIN LEADER AT STAKE

## Mrs. King Drops Bid for Nixon Help

**NEW YORK** — An effort to seek President Nixon's help for a national memorial in Atlanta to the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. has been abandoned because of what the King family believes is the President's indifferent attitude toward black and poor people.

The collapse of seven months of unpublicized negotiations — initially encouraged by Nixon himself — was outlined Saturday by Coretta "Boss" King, widow of the Nobel prize-winning civil rights leader, in an interview here.

Mrs. King said: "We felt that to get federal support for a memorial would have been a beautiful thing not only for our country but for oppressed people throughout the world. But President Nixon's attitude, his lack of real concern, suggests that we have not received the support we need."

A WHITE HOUSE spokesman in Washington, informed of Mrs. King's statement, said that this was the first time he had heard that the King family planned to break off the talks.

Leonard Garment, a principal figure in the discussions between the administration and the family of the slain civil rights leader, said that he had not been aware of any difference of opinion over Nixon's civil rights record.

"It would be a disservice to the cause of civil rights and the late Martin Luther King if this becomes a political football," he said.

Though he indicated that the administration had turned down the King family's proposal for a federal memorial, he added: "As recently as last week we conducted discussions that we thought were very interesting and

were recognized as such on both sides. This is the first time I had heard that the King family plans to abandon the discussion."

MRS. KING said she talked with the President by telephone from Atlanta early in February to ask his help for legislation for a Freedom Memorial Park in the two downtown blocks that contain her husband's birthplace, the Ebenezer Baptist Church, where he and his father preached, and his grave.

"Mr. Nixon seemed to like the idea, he even sounded enthusiastic," she said. "He said he would send the best man for the job, to talk to me and promised that the plan would receive immediate attention from the White House."

A few weeks later, Robert H. Finch, the secretary of health, education and welfare, visited Mrs. King in Atlanta. He offered his own department's help for the creation of a black studies program as part of the memorial, she said.

"We agreed at the time that nothing should be said publicly until the President announced the plan for the memorial park," she continued. "We hoped that the best time would be April 4—the anniversary of Martin Luther King's assassination."

THE PLAN was called off after the death of former President Eisenhower on March 28, she said, because it would have coincided with the week of national mourning decreed by Nixon.

Nevertheless, she said, talks on the memorial continued between Harry H. Wachtel, Mrs. King's lawyer, and Garment, a White House aide. At one point, she said, Garment met with architects who had been working on the project, including Hubert Madison of Cleveland and Robert Nash of Washington.

Wachtel, an old friend of the King family who was present during the interview, said that despite the enthusiasm displayed by Finch he noticed "a growing indifference" during his meetings with Garment.

"My fears were confirmed when he received a letter from the White House dated Aug. 1 stating that at this time the President was 'not prepared' to support the proposed legislation. The letter was signed by Mr. Garment and offered to help if we wanted to seek private means to go ahead with the project."

Mrs. King said she attributed the "cooling off" to what she described as Nixon's "Southern strategy" — taking a slower course on school desegregation and poverty programs to win support from Southern legislators on such issues as the Vietnam war and the military procurement bill.

THE DECISION to break off further talks at the White House was reached last Monday when the King family met with some of its close advisers in Atlanta, she said.

An characterized by Mrs. King and Wachtel, the meeting was emotional and bitter. King's father, the Rev. Martin Luther King Sr., was quoted as having exclaimed "Martin's memory has gotten cold."

"We had to convince ourselves that the national government was not willing to help us," Mrs. King asserted. "Now that we know they are not, we will have to mobilize the people of the nation. We are convinced there is still a tremendous need for a memorial to Martin Luther King's memory."

### IN MAJOR ORCHESTRA

# A Tuba Tooter, And He's Only 19

By BILL MONTGOMERY

San Francisco's Symphony claimed the slight, 19-year-old tuba player performing with a major orchestra—21-year-old Floyd Cooley, a former high school football player.

Sorry about that, "Frisco, but Atlanta's got you beat. Nineteen-year-old Michael D. Moore of 205 Mandline Road, Decatur, is in his second season with the Atlanta Symphony. He began playing the tuba at age 10.

Moore tops San Francisco's Cooley in that category too — the young West Coast musician tried his first notes on a tuba at 11.

MUSICAL TALENT SEEMS TO RUN in the Moore family. Michael learned the tuba from his father, E. W. Moore, who played that instrument with the Atlanta Symphony for six years.

Not is Michael's skill confined to the tuba; He also plays piano, string bass, guitar and electric bass.

He began playing the piano at 8, and wrote a piece of his own by the time he was 11.

A music major at Georgia State, Michael presented at least 20 new works with the Georgia State Brass ensemble, and two major works with the Atlanta Symphony.

So you see, San Francisco, in music—as in the National League Western Division — Atlanta's No. 1.

# M. L. King Jr. Library Formally Opened Sun.

Atlanta Daily World, 21 October 1969

The Martin Luther King Jr. Library project led its formal opening Sunday evening in the ITCC auditorium. The opening began at 7 p.m. and was scheduled to terminate at 9 p.m., however a stream of visitors and other interested persons continued to pass through the doors as late as 7:45 p.m.

The Martin Luther King Library was established in July, 1968. It grew originally out of the efforts of Mrs. Coretta Scott King, members of the King family, and several friends, to insure the gathering, preservation and future use of Dr. King's papers.

It has rapidly expanded its scope towards becoming a major documentation center for the Post-1954 Freedom Movement.

From the viewpoint of scholarly and intellectual life, the Library Documentation Project has been motivated out of the recognition that the Black Freedom Struggle—perhaps the most dynamic American social movement of our century—has largely been ignored by the recent surge of interest in the student movement of the late 1960's.

Few black scholars and almost no black institutions had sought seriously to document this history made in our own generation.

However, we seek to gather documentary materials in this period for more than ordinary scholarly purposes. We do this work out of a conviction that we must control and write our own history.

We do it because we believe that we must understand both the places and failures of the past in order to move into the new phases of our struggle. We do it, of course, for the sake of our children and their

children, who may have some tragic recollections of the movement of their fathers.

### ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

One of the most important aspects of the Library's task is self-consciously developed in its on-the-job training.

It assumes a responsibility to introduce the black community to the immense possibilities of archival work, and most of the students and many of the full-time staff are working in this context for the first time.

Those members of the staff with skills in these areas work regularly with others to expand this reservoir of abilities.

Consistent with this are the future plans of the Library staff for bringing in internships surrounding communities to help them develop some of the basic skills involved in archival work.

We also wish to involve people in local communities in the collecting process. By these means, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library Project hopes to reproduce itself on minor levels in many communities in the collecting process the next ten years.

### FUTURE

It is planned that the Library Project will eventually become part of a larger library complex. It will be related at once to the Institute of the Black World of the Martin Luther King Center, and, hopefully, to the larger

library resources of the Spauld County Center.

Thus, the Library will likely become a wing or section of a reference structure, related in a variety of creative ways to similar projects elsewhere and constantly available to the students and faculty in the Spauld County Center. An historic cultural center, the King Library would eventually be made available to students, scholars and other persons who seek to reconstruct the period since 1954.

A continuing program, worked out in cooperation with the Institute of the Black World, will also make significant use of many of the collected materials. The Library will continue to provide other services, such as answering mail and phone inquiries concerning the life of Dr. King, including requests for photographs. The staff has prepared certain preliminary bibliographical research tools to facilitate this task.

### FUNDING AND OTHER RESOURCES

The work of such a Library Project is not one of the most glamorous aspects of the current surge towards Black Studies, so it does not have an easy time raising funds to do its work.

Nevertheless, we are convinced that there can be no serious exploration of the Black Experience without such a library resource as ours. Indeed America as a whole will never be understood in its post-1954 development without such records. Thus the Project welcomes contributions of every kind, materi-

ally or otherwise—books, films, audio-visuals and photographic materials and financial contributions (both in-kind and cash).

It seeks for equipment (especially in the realm of audio-visuals and photographic materials) and financial contributions (both in-kind and cash) of more than two hundred thousand dollars in the six necessary years. All who wish to share in this task are encouraged to contribute in whatever way possible.



Atlanta Constitution 14 January 1970

AT EBENEZER

# King Body Taken to New Site

Mrs. Martin Luther King Jr. and her four children were present during the pre-dawn hours Tuesday as King's body in its crypt was transferred from South View Cemetery to a site near the Ebenezer Baptist Church.



The removal of the crypt leaves the site available for a new memorial center.

LAST, "Thank God Almighty, I'm Free At Last," was a first step toward building the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park. Permanent ceremonies will eventually take place in an area near the Ebenezer Church where King preached, which will contain the memorial center.

Mrs. King, with the approval of the center's board of trustees, chose the time of transferring her husband's body so that the site could be officially inaugurated Jan. 15—King's 41st birthday anniversary.

The widow registered the transfer of the body by made at night, so that it could be done without fanfare, "as a matter of taste and dignity."

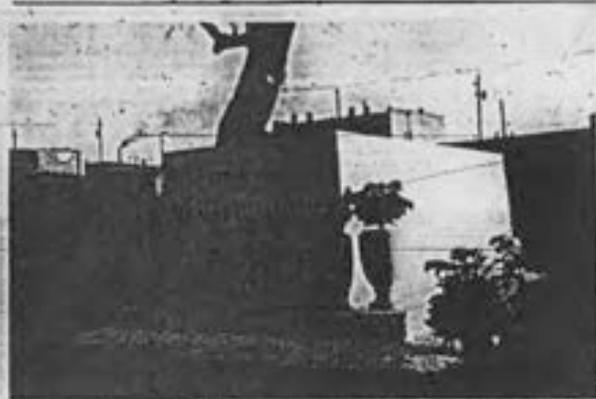
A service commemorating the birthday of the civil rights leader will be held Thursday at the Ebenezer Baptist Church. Afterward, those attending will file past the new crypt.

The main speaker will be Dr. Benjamin E. May Jr., president emeritus of Morehouse College, and the new head of the Atlanta Board of Education.

Other speakers include Dr. Ralph David Abernathy, successor to King as president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Mayor Sam Massell and the Rev. C. T. Vivian, a member of the memorial center's board of trustees.

Cotton Country

Atlanta Daily World 14 January 1970



KING'S NEW GRAVE SITE JUST EAST OF EBENEZER - The grave will become the center of a memorial structure located by Auburn Ave., Northwest, Edgewood Ave., and Jackson Street. The Crime Prevention Bureau of the Atlanta Police Department assigned a 24-hour security detail for the removal of King's tomb from the Southview Cemetery late Monday night and movement to the new location. This guard is scheduled to remain through today (Jan. 15). Another division of the police department is scheduled to handle the security during the development of the memorial. (Photo by W. A. Scott, 411)

## Dr. M. L. King Jr.'s Body Brought Home To Auburn Ave.

The family of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., announced Tuesday that Dr. King's remains were removed to Monday night from Southview Cemetery in a not altogether to his church, Ebenezer Baptist Church, 407 Auburn Avenue, N.E.

This was the first step toward building the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park, which will include a permanent mausoleum. The park will contain the Auburn Avenue area of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center.

The King family, with the advice of the Board of Trustees of the Memorial Center, decided that this is an appropriate time to transfer the remains, and officially inaugurated the site in a special service today, Jan. 15, Dr. King's 42nd birthday anniversary.

The service, beginning Thursday noon at Ebenezer Baptist Church, will commemorate Dr. King's life and work. After the service, persons attending will file past the new crypt.

At the Ebenezer Baptist Church, which will also contain

The main speaker at the Thursday service will be Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, president emeritus of Morehouse College and chairman of the board of trustees of the Memorial Center. Other speakers include Dr. Ralph David Abernethy, successor to Dr. King as president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC); Atlanta Mayor Sam Riffe; Rev. C. T. Votaw, a member of the Memorial Center's board of trustees and chairman of the governing board for the location of the Black World; and Robert Calloway, chairman of the board of deacons at Ebenezer Baptist Church. Rev. J. E. Lowery, chairman of the board of SCLC, will preside. Dr. Martin Luther King, Sr., will respond for the family.

Music will be provided by the Morehouse College Glee Club and the church choir of Ebenezer Baptist Church.

One year ago, January 24, Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., announced plans for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center, which will encompass

a variety of projects in the Atlanta University and Auburn Avenue areas.

In the Atlanta University phase, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, DeSmet Center Project and the location of the Black World, are already being established. The next step plan

Continued On Page Seven

### Dr. M. L. King Jr.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and for this phase is creation of an Institute of Nonviolent Social Change, to be followed by a Museum of Black Life and Culture.

In the Auburn Avenue phase the family desired a permanent establishment in this neighborhood where Dr. King was born and where he served with his father as Co-Pastor of the church. January 15 marks the beginning of this phase. As King said in the church which designated the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park, and plans call for this to include the establishment of the restored mortuary at 301 Auburn Avenue, and a memorial workshop center, and a "Tribune Hall" of tributes to Dr. King's life and the movement he led.

Elsewhere in the nation — many other educational institutions and non-profit organizations are planning to honor Dr. King. For example, public schools will be closed in New York, Philadelphia and Berkeley, Calif.; the public schools in Washington, D.C., will hold special morning assemblies; many clubs for the elderly will organize the funeral in New

Atlanta Constitution 16 January 1970

# 1,000 Honor King At Church Service

By ROBERT DeLEON

Nearly 1,000 persons gathered Thursday at Ebenezer Baptist Church to honor the 41st anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther King Jr., the civil rights leader who was cut down by an assassin's bullet April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tenn.

Dr. Vincent Harding, acting director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Center, said at the ceremony, "This is a national day not only because Martin Luther King was a black man but because he was in the history of this nation, black or white, because there is a day commemorated in his honor."

He added, "On this occasion, people all over the nation and

the world have gathered together to remember and honor Martin Luther King Jr., but the most important reason we are gathered here is because of what our mothers and daddies told us when we were young, 'Freedom is a constant struggle.'"

"He would have said today's nation," Dr. Harding continued, "because from this very soil, by faith and through struggling we have come a long, long way, but we still got a long way to go."

In delivering his tribute, Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, made a "collect, person-to-person call to Heaven" as that he could speak to the martyr.

"When you left us, Martin, there were 40 million people in this—the most affluent nation in the history of the world—who were classified as poverty stricken. That number has not decreased at all since you left, Martin. In fact it has increased," Abernathy said.

"You told us," he continued, "that the Ph.D.s would have to join the D.D.s and that the D.D.s would have to join the No D's and we've progressed some

Continued on Page 2B-A, Col. 1

# 1,000 Attend King Service

Continued from Page 1-A

since that time. We've elected a Jew as mayor and a black man as vice mayor. But you know, Martin, there still are Uncle Toms and Nervous Nellies right here in Atlanta, Georgia."

As he ended his "conversation," Abernathy exhorted, "The way to honor Martin Luther King is not to weep and cry, but to get up and save the sick and dying men of America through non-violent means."

Newly elected Mayor Sam Maslow called Dr. King "a friend of mankind and a friend of humanity."

That I support the declaration of this day as a national holiday in his (King's) honor." He later presented a proclamation that Jan. 11 shall officially be "Martin Luther King Jr. Day."

Following the reading of "We Shall Overcome" and the "Star Spangled Banner" by the girl club of Dr. King's alma mater, Morehouse College, Dr. Benjamin W. Mays, president emeritus of the school and recently elected president of the Atlanta Board of Education, delivered the commemorative address.

Reminiscing over the years of his association with Dr. King, Mays said, "When Martin Luther had completed his doctorate at Boston University, I offered him a position on the faculty at Morehouse. After giving serious consideration to my invitation, he decided that he should accept the pastorate of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. When he returned to Atlanta as copastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church, I again offered him, work as a part-time professor. Had he accepted my offer to teach at Morehouse, no doubt he would be alive today, but his name would still be among the immortal few who have achieved real greatness."

Mays said that "whether Dr. King's charisma, his brilliant mind, and his unquenchable spirit, Negroes would hardly have 'stuck it out' during the now famous Montgomery bus boycott."

"For Dr. King it was the beginning of an incredible Negro struggle which was to bring him world-wide honor and acclaim — and death. From that moment on, until his assassination, he moved steadily from height to height, loved by his friends and hated by his enemies," Mays said.

Mays noted that many things have been done throughout the

world to perpetuate the name of Dr. King and added, "All these are wonderful, and no one realizes more than I that these things are being done. But it would be tragic, indeed, if we did all these things to prove our love for Martin Luther King Jr., while repudiating the philosophy by which he lived and died. Let us today reevaluate our lives to the philosophy of militant non-violence as an effective way to attain social change. May we praise him not only with our lips but with our deeds as well."

Concluding, Mays said, "Years ago, R. G. Wells named the 'biggest men of history' — a Greek, Roger Bacon, an Englishman, Abraham Lincoln, an American, and Jesus Christ, a Jew. To that list let me add the names of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr."

Through the efforts of Mrs. Corretta Scott King in a broadcast, and her own and her children, the commemorative service at Ebenezer Baptist Church, presented two prints of King and the children.

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. thanked everyone for attending and making possible the special service and said, "To you white men — My white brothers, Jews and Gentiles alike — I love you. I am your brother."

Later, a brief ceremony was held at a crypt near the church where Dr. King's body was moved last Tuesday. The church, crypt and King's home are in all the parts of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Center.

Earlier Thursday the Georgia House of Representatives passed a resolution introduced by Fulton Reps. Ben Brown and William Alexander recognizing Jan. 11 as the birthday of the late Rev. Dr. King in the State Senate. Lt. Gov. George T. Smith noted that a bill introduced by Fulton Sen. J. Lee Johnson making Jan. 11 a state holiday, should be sent back to committee for further consideration.

Thousands of Americans in other parts of the nation, black and white, also paid tribute to Dr. King. Several states officially observed "Martin Luther King Jr. Day." crowds gathered for memorial ceremonies and many schools released students for a holiday or to attend special programs.



Atlanta Daily World 6 August 1970

# Mrs. King Blames Financial Situation In Firings Of 12

Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr. said that "a tenuous financial situation" led to the dismissal of 12 staff members of the memorial center honoring her late husband.

Mrs. King said the cutback of personnel in the Library Documentation Project of the center was made so that other projects, including establishment of an institute for non-violent social change and a memorial park surrounding her husband's crypt, could be gotten off the ground.

During the first of two news conferences Mrs. King held on the subject, she was picketed by the library staff members who had been dismissed, they said, without notice last week.

The protestors carried

signs reading "MLK Center employees seek fair labor practices," "what happened to movie funds" and "save the King Center."

In the second news conference, Mrs. King said the \$2 million received from showing the special film "King-Montgomery to Memphis," was divided among the Southern Christian Leadership Conference founded and headed by her husband, the Martin Luther King Jr. Foundation and other organizations.

The Memorial Center, she said, received only \$300,000 of the money which was donated to it by the foundation.

She said "the cutback of staff in the Library Documentation Project was an administrative

necessity, because of a tenuous financial situation. These cutbacks were necessary in order that a large indebtedness be liquidated."

She added "it was the only practical solution we saw, with the exception of phrasing out the whole library operation. It was a matter of trying to balance the whole center."

Mrs. King said earlier that the center board, of which she is president, also has removed Dr. Vincent Harding of Atlanta University as acting director of the center. Dr. Julius S. Scott Jr. has been named executive director.

She said with Scott as a full time director, the center will be able to embark on a fund raising project to attempt to complete the center, including a memorial library.

"We know that we need some thing like \$10 to \$20 million over a period of years to build the total complex," she said, "and we may have to cut that back."

A.A.
SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 1970
  
The Atlanta Journal and
CONSTITUTION

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## INTERNAL DISSENSION

# Prospects of King Center Shrunk by Tight Budget

By
BILL MONTGOMERY

Behind the shake-up at Atlanta's Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Center lies a tangle of financial woes and internal dissension.
THIS INSTITUTE, as well as a proposed "freedom hall," a museum of black life and culture and a memorial park on Auburn Avenue, are planned for the future, but their future is uncertain because of the financial situation.

BILL, the center's new executive director, a 43-year-old educator, is confident the center will survive, not only as a memorial to the slain civil rights leader, but as a structure for research to bring about harmony between black and whites.
Rapid, nonviolent social change to gain equality and opportunity is what Scott sees as the main job of the memorial center.

Dr. Julius S. Scott, chairman of the sociology department at Spelman College here, was named executive director of the center Aug. 4, succeeding Dr. Vincent Harding.
"My basic commitment is to establish continuity between what Dr. King said and thought and so affirm the lessons that he taught us and we seem to be forgetting," Scott said.

The announcement of Scott's appointment by Dr. King's widow, Mrs. Coretta King, was marred by the appearance of pickets, former employees of the center's library documentation project who complained they were fired, Mrs. King, embarrassed by the protests, replied that the employees were "laid off" due to lack of funds.
"I think the mood of black people today is, so clearly, a reversion against the immobility of white racism." He sees an increasing willingness by many blacks to "use any means necessary to achieve liberation . . . but if you succumb to the methodology of the oppressor you reduce the effectiveness of what you are trying to accomplish."

THE INCIDENT was symptomatic of the difficulties facing the center and its new director. A native of Houston, Tex., Dr. Scott is a graduate of Wiley College, Marshall, Tex., and Garrett Theological Seminary at Northwestern University in Illinois, where he received a bachelor of divinity degree.
Scott feels there is little commitment by the Nixon administration on behalf of blacks that Washington is zig-zagging from one position to another for political advantage and little else.

He received his Ph.D. in sociology and higher education from Boston University, and served on the faculty at Wiley College, Brown University, Boston, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Texas Southern University, and most recently at Morris Brown College. He was appointed this summer to head the sociology department at Spelman.
"THEY'RE playing games—it's a Mickey Mouse, lame paper approach to total equality."

On the civil rights front, Scott headed a voter registration project in Choctaw County, Ala., and participated in the 1965 Selma March and restaurant desegregation campaigns in Chicago and Evanston, Ill.
"This country has the ability to change. The potential is there for brotherhood, reconciliation. If the country does not move quickly, black disenchantment may become so awful that it will be difficult to talk at all."

Scott said he agreed to head the center for just one year, that his main ambition is to direct the proposed Institute for Non-Violent Social Change in the memorial complex.
Scott rejects the philosophy of black separatists that whites are the "enemy" and have no place in the black freedom movement, but he feels the central effort must come from blacks themselves.

The effect by white liberals should be to break down barriers among their own people. I'm very dubious about folks who come from Buckhead to clean up New City. I'm not denigrating that gesture, but let's see them work at ending housing and job discrimination in white communities first.
Scott's appointment comes at a time when the memorial center is being forced to operate on an austerity budget. The library documentation project, which is collecting Dr. King's papers and other documents, taped interviews and discourse material on the civil rights movement, is \$21,000 in debt.

Twenty-one full and part-time employees, out of a staff of 33 on the library project, were dropped. According to Scott, 11 of these laid-off employees were students hired to work until the fall. Eight of those dismissed had planned to remain with the center, although two of those were students who were to be employed only part-time in the fall.
"TWENTY-ONE full and part-time employees, out of a staff of 33 on the library project, were dropped. According to Scott, 11 of these laid-off employees were students hired to work until the fall. Eight of those dismissed had planned to remain with the center, although two of those were students who were to be employed only part-time in the fall."

The biggest cuts on the library project have been from the collecting staff, staffers who traveled around the nation gathering documents, as well as interviews with those involved in the black movement.
Scott conceded that the temporary employees were dropped before they planned to leave, but he said the financial-bid made the layoffs necessary.

With the appointment of Dr. Scott as director, Harding, former chairman of the history department at Spelman College, moved to full-time direction of the Institute of the Black World, another unit of the King center.
The biggest cuts on the library project have been from the collecting staff, staffers who traveled around the nation gathering documents, as well as interviews with those involved in the black movement.

THE INSTITUTE is devoted to research on black history, culture, economics and society in an effort to learn from the black experience how to solve current problems. The institute has sponsored seminars and lectures for educators and students from the Atlanta University Center.
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The second component of the memorial center, still in the planning stages, will be located on Auburn Avenue, centered around Dr. King's birthplace and Ebenezer Baptist Church, where he served with his father as co-pastor.
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Atlanta Daily World 8 September 1970

## King Center And Black Institute Dissolve All Ties

The Board of Directors of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center and the governing Council of the Institute of the Black World announced a mutual decision to dissolve official ties, effective September 1.

For the past two years, the Institute of the Black World, in its planning phase and as a full operation, was a component of the Memorial Center.

During this time, there was an awareness of the experimental nature of this relationship. As a result of accumulated experiences, it became clear to both the Center and the Institute that their interests and potential would be maximized by the Institute's becoming a fully autonomous and independent operation.

A representative group of the Center's Board and the Institute's Governing Council stated that a fair and equitable financial settlement had been accomplished, in a spirit of mutual esteem and understanding.

Atlanta Constitution 6 January 1975

# Dr. King Baptizes Successor As Ebenezer Church Pastor

By ALICE MURRAY

Constitution Religion Writer

Dr. Martin Luther King Sr. baptized the man who will succeed him as pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in a formal service Sunday night.

Dr. King immersed Dr. Joseph L. Roberts Jr., a Presbyterian minister and administrator who will take over the pastorate after "Daddy" King retires in August.

But Dr. King hastened to let his congregation of 44 years know that just because he has chosen the man to pastor Ebenezer after he retires, he is far from finished with preaching.

"I promise to carry on until He comes. I have not tendered any resignation yet," said the father of the slain civil rights leader and Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

"There may not be as many preachers been preaching as long as me in the Baptist church. But I'm not going to be junked. I'm going to preach until I go home."

As the choir sang, "Amazing Grace," the 75-year-old patriarch, dressed in long, flowing black robes, baptized Dr. Roberts.

After immersing the 39-year-old black man who holds one of the five top executive positions in the 900,000-member Presbyterian Church U.S., Dr. King said, "We're here to-

right by God's amazing grace. It's amazing, we've got this man at this church. It's amazing, or maybe it's grace."

Dr. Roberts, who is director of the Division of Corporate and Social Ministries of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., will officially resign his post at the denomination's General Assembly in June and take over as Ebenezer's pastor Aug. 1.

Of the unusual switch from Presbyterian to Baptist, Dr. King said to his congregation, "You're looking at the face of a minister who has no hang-ups about denomination. We're all trying to make it in."

Under Baptist doctrine, a person must be immersed in order to be a member of the denomination. Having been a member of both the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church, U.S., which recognizes a baptism form known as sprinkling, Dr. Roberts had to be immersed before he could officially succeed Dr. King.

About 400 persons filled the red brick church on Auburn Avenue to near capacity as women in black dresses and spotless white gloves searched for empty seats for late arrivals.

Members of the congregation also voted Sunday night to accept Dr. Roberts' ordination in the Presbyterian Church and to ordain Dr.

King's grandson, J. Robert King, who is a ministerial student at Morehouse College, to assist Dr. King until he retires.

Atlanta Journal and Constitution 14 January 1978

# Ebenezer Church Is Not Just a 'Shrine'

By ALICE MURRAY

Contributing Editor

The clanging of the front bell at Ebenezer Baptist Church echoes throughout the educational wing of the historic building on Auburn Avenue. Outside stand tourists who come from around the world to visit what has been called the "holiest religious shrine in America."

During the summer months, the bell rings almost constantly, keeping a full-time church worker busy giving brief tours through the church where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. preached and where the mother of the late civil rights leader was killed.

Even in the winter the visitors flock to Ebenezer, especially in the days surrounding the annual King birthday commemoration going on this weekend.

But the church is more than a tourist attraction, maintains its pastor, Dr. Joseph L. Roberts Jr.

According to Roberts, who took over the leadership of the church upon the retirement of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in August, 1975, the church is a place of activity seven days a week and is filled with participants in a myriad of community ministries.

Ranging from the Golden Age Center, which provides day care for the elderly, to a reading program for adults, the ministries at Ebenezer make sure the rooms are rarely empty.

Since Roberts left his job as an executive for the Presbyterian Church U.S. to take over the flock at Ebenezer, the church has added 430 new members to its rolls and the annual budget has doubled.

But more than numerical and financial growth, Roberts looks at the heritage of Ebenezer — where "Daddy" King still serves as pastor emeritus, and is very

much a part of the institution — for a key to its future.

"Ebenezer is the most conspicuous black church, and because of that it has certain responsibilities," Roberts said, calling it his job to try to help the church live up to its reputation.

"It is a conspicuous model of what Christian community should be. It isn't survival, it's mission that this church is all about," he said.

That goal of mission is reflected in the week-long programs at Ebenezer.

The reading center in a well-lit room on the second floor of the education wing is open from 9 a.m. until 11 p.m. on weekdays to help combat illiteracy in the Atlanta area.

Started as a joint project of the church and the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Social Change, the reading center "deals with the stuff you need to know — not just the Dick and Jane stuff,

but how to fill out employment applications," Roberts said.

The reading center currently has 33 volunteer tutors who work with about 60 students each week, he said.

Downstairs in a large room beneath the sanctuary, handmade crafts items hang on the walls of the Golden Age Center, displaying the handwork of the elderly.

The Golden Age Center has four staff members paid through a government grant to provide day care for older persons. The purpose, Roberts said, is to take care of older persons who cannot stay home alone, but who are not sick enough to go to a nursing home.

Other church activities include a food and clothes closet which served over 300 persons last year, a legal assistance program for church members, and medical programs on subjects such as hypertension and diabetes, Roberts said.

# Historic Images

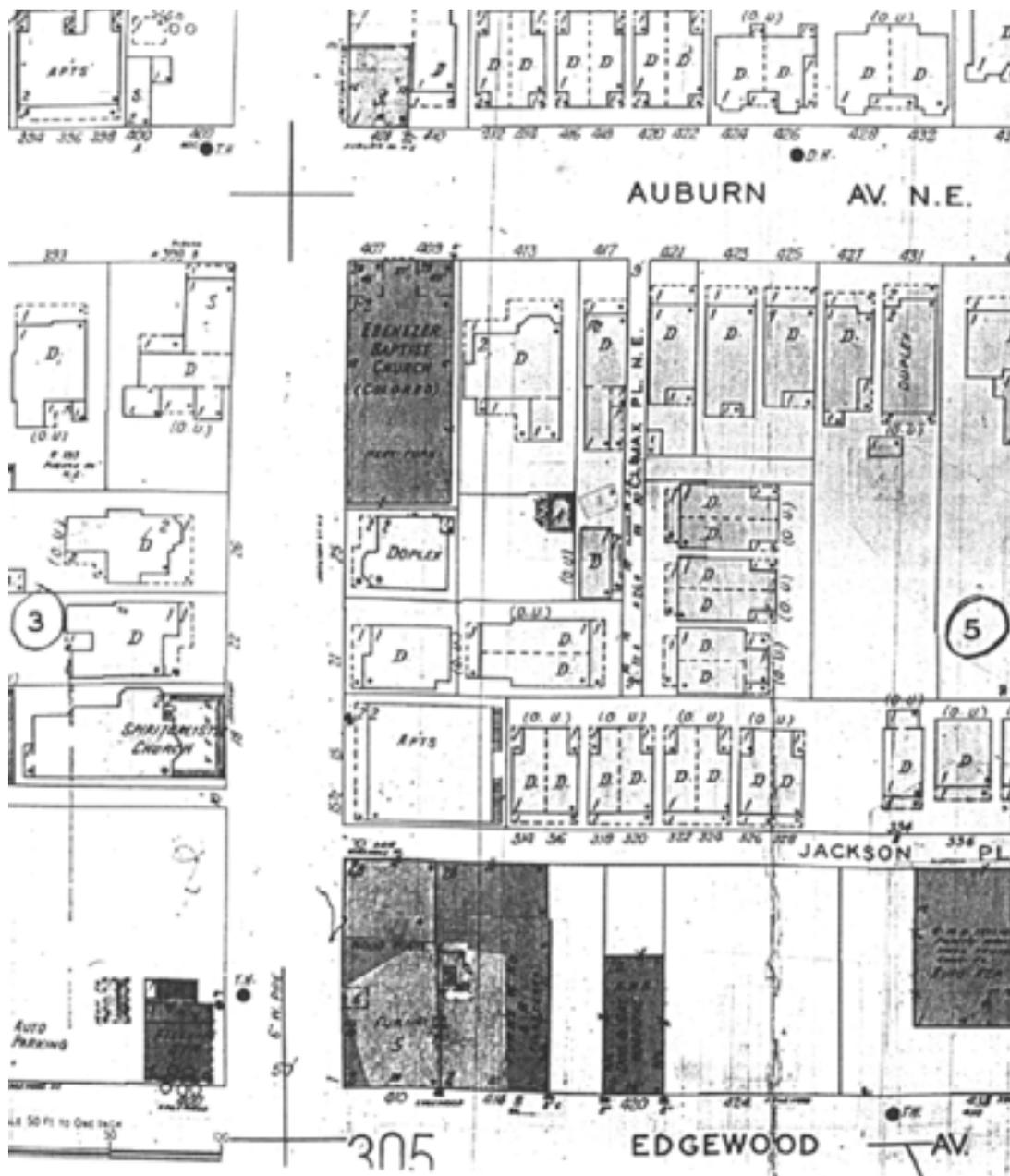


Detail from Saunders' 1892 bird's-eye map of Atlanta, showing original Ebenezer Baptist Church on Airline Street (just left of center in this image); original map at Atlanta History Center.



**EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH, ATLANTA, GA.**  
BUILT BY REV. A. D. WILLIAMS, D. D., PASTOR, 1921

View from northwest of Ebenezer Baptist Church; included in "Pro-gramme..." of anniversary services in 1924; location of original image not known. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



Detail from 1925 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, showing Ebenezer at the southwest corner of Auburn Ave. and Jackson St. Copy from microfilm files, Georgia State University.

APPENDIX B



View to southeast in sanctuary, c. 1940, showing Wurlitzer organ installed in the fall of that year; original image from David Stills. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



View of group of people at Auburn Ave. entrance to Ebenezer, c. 1940; photo taken, prior to installation of stucco; location of original image not known. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



View to southwest in basement Fellowship Hall, c. 1940; location of original image not known. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



View of choir loft and baptismal, c. 1956; location of original image not known. Copy from NPS MALU collection.

APPENDIX B



Mrs. M. L. King, Sr., at Wurlitzer, c. 1940; original image from David Stills. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



View of Wurlitzer organ console, c. 1950; organist David Stills at organ; original image from David Stills. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



View of Hill-Green-Lane organ console, organist David Stills at organ, c. 1956; original image from David Stills. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



View to southwest of new Christian Education Building, c. 1956; original image from David Stills. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



View to south of new Christian Education Building, c. 1956; original image from David Stills. Copy from NPS MALU collection.

APPENDIX B



View to south of basement stage, c. 1960, location of original image not known. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



View to north in sanctuary, Easter Sunday, 1962; location of original image not known. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



Undated photograph showing Martin Luther King, Jr., preaching at Ebenezer. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



View to southwest of present site of King Center with Ebenezer at right and first entombment of Dr. King at center. Sign reads "Future Home of Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Park"; undated photograph. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



View of first entombment of Dr. King on Auburn Avenue; undated photograph. Copy from NPS MALU collection.



View to southeast of Ebenezer, 1985. Copy from NPS MALU collection.

# Historic Paint Finishes Study

**PAINT ANALYSIS:**

**EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH**

**Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site  
Atlanta, Georgia**

by Barbara A. Yocum  
Architectural Conservator

Building Conservation Branch  
Northeast Cultural Resources Center, National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Lowell, Massachusetts

May 2000

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- D. Munsell Color Swatches

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **Project Scope**

The objective of this project was to identify the painted finishes that existed in 1968 on the exterior and selected interior spaces of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site in Atlanta, Georgia. This was to be accomplished by microscopically analyzing approximately 100-150 paint samples extracted from the building. On the exterior, this was to include the painted wooden elements and the painted stucco foundation. Inside, areas to be sampled included the large basement room, the front vestibule, the northwest and northeast stairways, and the sanctuary. The findings of the analysis were to be presented in a written report, which would include color matches of the historic 1968 paints to the Munsell Color Notation System.

### **Historical Background<sup>1</sup>**

The Ebenezer Baptist Church was the home to the early ministry of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his father and grandfather before him. The church became one of the most influential African-American churches in Atlanta, and because of its association with Dr. King and the early Civil Rights Movement, possibly one of the most influential African-American churches in the United States. It was the site of meetings and rallies that led to the organization of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957, the place where Dr. King was co-pastor from 1960-68, and the site of Dr. King's funeral in 1968. The later period of significance, 1960-68 time frame, is also the focus for the date of restoration—that is 1968.

The building was originally constructed in two phases: 1914 (basement story) and 1921-22 (upper stories), but was not completely finished until the late 1930s or early 1940s. At this time the existing pews were installed in the sanctuary, and the exterior foundation walls were stuccoed and scored. In 1955-56 the interior was extensively remodeled, the Christian Education Building was constructed, and an elevated walkway was built connecting the Education Building and the church. A small addition was also constructed on the back side of the church. Other interior renovations occurred in the 1970s, and the church's original announcement board was replaced in the late 1980s.

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1. *This information in this section, written by Peggy Albee, was derived from the Executive Summary of the Historic Structure Report, written by Tommy Hart Jones for the Southeast Regional Office in 1999.*

## **II. METHODOLOGIES**

### **Site Visit and Acknowledgements**

A four-day site visit was made to the Ebenezer Baptist Church, Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site, by Architectural Conservator Barbara Yocum, April 3-6, 2000. An orientation to the site was conducted on the first day by Dan Scheidt, Chief, Building Conservation Research, NPS Southeast Regional Office; Wendy Janssen, Chief, Resource Management and Park Planning, Martin Luther King, Jr., NHS; and Tommy Hart Jones, Historic Preservation Consultant and author of the developmental history section of the “Historic Structure Report.” The superintendent of Martin Luther King, Jr., NHS, Frank Catroppa, also made an appearance and was briefed on the goals of the paint-analysis project. Ladders and assistance with sampling the high reaches of the building’s exterior were provided by John S. Wood, Facility Management staffer, Martin Luther King, Jr., NHS. Inspiring words and a deeper understanding of the site were conveyed by the Reverend G.H. Williams, Interpretive Ranger at the Ebenezer Church. Finally, answers to numerous follow-up questions have been generously provided by Tommy Jones.

### **Archival Sources**

Information on the history and architectural evolution of the Ebenezer Baptist Church was provided by the developmental history section of the “Historic Structure Report,” by Tommy Hart Jones, dated November 1999. Also useful was a newspaper article from the *Daily World* dated May 26, 1956, which describes alterations made to the building in 1956.<sup>1</sup> Architectural drawings of existing conditions had been prepared by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1985, and include elevation drawings, section elevations, and floor plans. While historic photographic views of the church building are known to exist, these were not available for this project.

### **Paint Analysis**

A total of 142 paint samples was removed from exterior and interior elements of the Ebenezer Baptist Church building. These were distributed as follows:

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1. “New Christian Education Building at Ebenezer,” courtesy of Tommy Hart Jones.

## APPENDIX D

Exterior	15 samples
Large Basement Room	17 samples
Vestibule	9 samples
Northwest Stairway	31 samples
Northeast Stairway	22 samples
Sanctuary	<u>48 samples</u>
Total	142 samples

Prior to sampling, site notes were first made to record the existing painted finishes, and photographs were taken. Samples of paint were then extracted using an X-Acto knife fitted with a No.-18 blade. Each sample was placed in a separate small coin envelope and labeled with the sample location. Sample locations were also recorded on elevation drawings and floor plans (see Attachment A). The samples were then transported to the paint laboratory of the Northeast Cultural Resources Center in Lowell, Massachusetts, for analysis.

Each paint sample was assigned a log number, which is derived from the Cultural Resources Center's "Integrated Research Organization System" (IROS). This system provides a three-part code that identifies the site, the building from which the sample was taken, and the sample number. The first sample removed for this study, for example, was assigned log number "MALU A407-413 P01." "MALU" signifies Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site; "A407-413" is the park's structure number for the Ebenezer Baptist Church; the letter "P" indicates that the sample is paint; and the number "01" indicates that this is the first sample removed from the building.

The paint samples were mounted in petrie dishes filled with microcrystalline wax and microscopically viewed under reflected tungsten light at 10 to 63 times magnification with a Nikon SMZ-2T microscope. Certain characteristics of each paint layer were noted and recorded, such as color and the presence/absence of lead. Lead paints were identified by a spot chemical test using a solution of sodium sulfide and water. Paints containing calcium carbonate, such as calcimine and whitewash, were identified using a diluted solution of hydrochloric acid. Shellacs were distinguished from varnishes by their solubility in alcohol. Finish coats were differentiated from primer coats by the presence of dirt layers and/or adhesion characteristics between paint layers. Chromochronology charts summarizing the results of the paint analysis may be found in Attachment C of this report.

Dating of paint layers was accomplished by several means. If the date of a substrate was known, the first painted finish was assigned the same date as its substrate. For example, the first paint layer on a plaster wall installed in 1914 would be dated "1914." Datable alterations were also helpful in dating paint finishes, such as later suspended ceilings that preserved earlier finishes on the upper walls and ceilings. Finally, limited information on paint finishes had been previously obtained by Tommy Jones in interviews with church members.<sup>1</sup>

## Color Matching

Paint finishes identified as likely dating to the historic restoration date “1968” were color matched to the Munsell Color Notation System. No color matches were made to shellac or varnish finishes. Munsell color notations are listed in section III, “Analysis Results and Conclusions” and are also included in the chromochronology charts (Attachment C). Munsell color swatches may be found in Attachment D.

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1. T. Jones, “Historic Structure Report,” p. 28.

### **III. ANALYSIS RESULTS & CONCLUSIONS**

#### **Exterior**

##### **Description**

The Ebenezer Baptist Church is a three-story brick building with two front towers. The existing structure was constructed in several phases: the basement story in 1914, the upper stories in 1921-22, and a rear addition in 1970. Stucco scored to resemble masonry blocks was added to the ground-story brickwork circa 1935-45. A brick building located to the east side of the church, the Christian Education Building, was built in 1956 and joined to the church by a connector on the east side of the second story. A full-story connector addition joined the two buildings on the front side in 1970. Plexiglass storm panels were installed over the stained-glass windows in the upper stories in 1990.

No documentation is known to exist on the historic painted finishes of the exterior, except for historic exterior photographs which were not available for this study. Selected elements, such as louvers in the upper towers, were replaced and painted under contract in 1999. The brick walls of both the main church and its additions are unpainted today, and bear no evidence of earlier finishes. Other elements are painted either light gray, brown, or white. A light-gray paint covers the stuccoed walls of the first story, and the wooden frames and sashes of the windows. All elements of the front doorway are painted brown. White paint finishes the upper wooden elements of the building including the window louvers in the upper stories of the two towers, and the fascia, soffit, and exposed rafter ends of the roof.

##### **Paint Samples**

Fifteen (15) paint samples were extracted from various exterior elements of the church building and assigned log numbers MALU A407-413 P01 through P15. These were removed from the stuccoed walls in the ground story, front doorway elements, window frames and sashes, and the fascia, soffit, and rafter ends. A painted, curved piece of wood found loose behind the fascia at the south end of the east elevation was also sampled. This wooden fragment, which may be the remnant of a former wooden gutter, was labeled and given to MALU staff for inclusion in the building's architectural-artifacts collection. See Attachment A, pages A-3 through A-5, for exterior elevation drawings annotated with the paint-sample locations. A descriptive listing of the individual paint samples and their locations may be found in Attachment B, page B-3. A

chromochronology chart recording the paint layers within the paint samples is included in Attachment C, page C-3.

### **Discussion of Findings**

No exterior paint finishes were identified from the original (1914) portion of the building. As many as 12 layers of paint, some containing lead, were observed on elements dating to 1921-22. The earliest finish was found to be a cream-color, lead-based paint. This was seen in samples from a window frame of a second-story, stained-glass window, and the upper wooden elements of the building including the fascia, soffit, and rafter ends. This early paint was also found on the small piece of curved wood, described above, that may have been a portion of an early wooden gutter.

Five layers of paint, the earliest of which is white, are on a window in the west elevation of the ground story that had been converted from a doorway in 1956. This same paint profile was also observed in a sample from the sash of a large stained-glass window in the second story, suggesting that the sashes were either repaired or replaced in 1956. Other wooden elements of the exterior also appear to have been painted white in 1956, except for the front doorway. Here “new entrance doors” were installed in 1956, according to a newspaper of that date; the “Historic Structure Report” assumed that the entire doorway unit had been replaced at this time. The doorway’s earliest (1956?) finish, observed in a sample from the transom, is a varnish. The paint scheme of 1968 was likely similar to that of 1956, except that the front doorway may have been painted a red-brown color by this time, which was applied over the varnish.

The exterior doorway appears to have been changed once again around 1970, judging by the new appearance of the wood substrate and the few number of paint layers on the doors and side panels. Additional information on the doorway may be provided by the historic photographic views of the building and/or contract documents relating to the work of 1970.

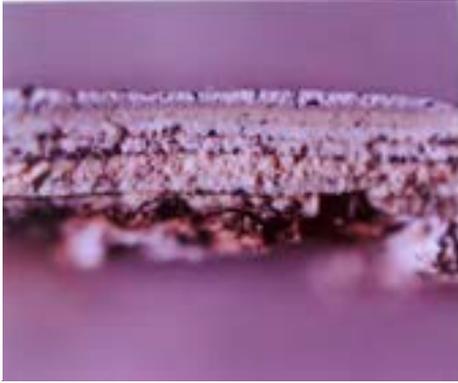
The first painting of the ground-story stuccoed walls appears to have taken place in recent years, perhaps as late as the 1980s. This is based on the relatively few number of paint layers (only two, both colored light gray) observed in the paint samples.

## Exterior

### Summary: Circa-1968 Finishes

FINISH	MUNSELL COLOR	ELEMENTS	NOTES
White-color paint	N 9.5/	Woodwork: <sup>2</sup> Window trim <sup>2</sup> Window sashes <sup>2</sup> Window screens <sup>2</sup> Fascia <sup>2</sup> Soffit <sup>2</sup> Rafter ends	No samples of paint were examined from the tower louvers or the rake boards in the gable ends of the building. It is likely, however, that these elements would have been painted the same white color as the windows, fascia, soffit, and rafter ends in 1968.
Red-brown-color paint	2.5R 2/2	<sup>2</sup> Doorway transom <sup>2</sup> Other doorway elements?	Photographic sources should be consulted to verify the 1968 appearance of the exterior doorway, since the paint evidence suggests that repairs or alterations may have been made to the doors circa 1970.

<p>Unpainted</p>	<p><b>10YR 7/1</b> (Unpainted stucco color)</p>	<p><sup>2</sup> Stuccoed walls, first story</p>	<p>The finding of only two recent applications of gray-color paint to the stuccoed base of the church building strongly suggests that the stucco was unpainted in 1968. Restoration to the 1968 date would therefore involve removing the existing paint. Alternatively, a paint color could be used that more closely resembles the color of the unpainted stucco.</p>
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**Exterior.** Photomicrograph of paint sample MALU A407-413 P14 from an exposed rafter on the south side of the east elevation. Taken at 40X magnification, under reflected tungsten light. Arrow points to the circa-1968 paint layer.

## Large Basement Room

### Description

A large room in the basement served as the original sanctuary of the church when it was constructed in 1914. It was later used as a meeting hall upon completion of the upper portions of the church building in 1921-22. A new stage was constructed at the south end of the room, a former exterior doorway at the north end of the west wall was converted to a window, and a stair to the sanctuary was added to the east wall in 1956. Flush-panel doors are also believed to have replaced earlier doors at this time. A plaque on the north wall notes that the room was modernized in 1980 with new tile flooring and curtains. Although not specifically mentioned, the existing wall paneling and suspended ceiling may also have been installed about this same time. A wheelchair-accessible ramp at the west wall dates to sometime after 1985, as does the glass-wall enclosure at the stage.

No documentation is known to exist on the history of the painted finishes in the large basement room. Most of the existing exposed surfaces are unpainted today, including the flooring, the wall paneling, and the suspended ceiling. The plaster walls preserved beneath the paneling are painted a light green color, and the beaded-board ceiling above the suspended ceiling is painted gray-green. Modern flush-panel doors have a clear resinous finish, while the corresponding doorway trim is painted either yellow or brown. White paint covers the window sashes and trim, along with the ramp railing installed sometime after 1985.

### Paint Samples

Seventeen (17) paint samples were extracted from various elements of the large basement room and assigned log numbers MALU A407-413 P16 through P32. These were removed from the plaster walls, beaded-board ceiling, doorway trim and doors, window trim and sashes, and the ramp railing. Only small areas of wall surface, and no columns, were accessible for sampling due to the extensive covering of wall paneling. See Attachment A, page A-6, for a floor plan of the basement annotated with the paint-sample locations. A descriptive listing of the individual paint samples and their locations may be found in Attachment B, pages B-3 and B-4. Chromochronology charts recording the paint layers within the paint samples are included in Attachment C, pages C-4 and C-5.

## **Discussion of Findings**

The earliest paint scheme, possibly dating to 1914, used lead-based oil paints on the window trim and sashes and the beaded-board ceiling. The windows were painted gray, and the ceiling yellow. The plaster walls may have remained unpainted for a time, judging by a heavy layer of dirt between the plaster and the first layer of yellow-color paint. More extensive sampling would be required, however, to verify this conclusion.

It was not possible to specifically identify the painted finishes of the basement room for the year 1922, when the upper stories of the building were completed, lacking both documentary and physical information. More definitive data was available for the year 1956, when the doorway at the north end of the west wall is said to have been converted to the existing window. The first painted finish on this window is a white primer followed by a gray-green finish coat. This same gray-green paint also appears to have been used on the existing plaster walls, the board ceiling, and the trim of the doorways at the south wall.

The paint scheme had been slightly altered by circa 1968, although the predominate color continued to be green. The earlier 1956 gray-green color on the ceiling appears to have remained unchanged, possibly due to the height and consequent difficulty of painting the ceiling. A light blue-green paint colored the plaster walls and the doorways at the south wall, while the windows were painted a light gray-green color.

Alterations not identified by the “Historic Structure Report” appear to have been carried out around 1970, based on the paint evidence. A plasterboard enclosure was constructed at the east stairway to the sanctuary, complete with a doorway with metal trim and a flush-panel door. A second doorway of similar design was also installed at the west end of the north wall, accessing a new stairway to the front vestibule. As before, the ceiling retained its 1956 paint, while all other elements of the room were painted a light green color. Only the new flush-panel doors were given a clear, varnish-type finish.

Yellow-color paint was used in combination with the later wall paneling and a suspended ceiling, believed to have been installed in the 1980s. While the paneling and ceiling were themselves unpainted, yellow paint finished the existing doorway trim, window trim, and window sashes.

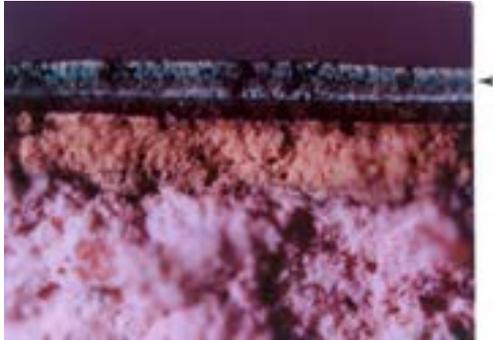
## Large Basement Room

### Summary: Circa-1968 Finishes

FINISH	MUNSELL COLOR	ELEMENTS	NOTES
Light-blue-green-color paint	<b>2.5BG 6/2</b>	<sup>2</sup> Plaster walls <sup>2</sup> Doorway trim, south-wall openings	Restoration of the basement walls and columns to their 1968 appearance will first involve removing the existing later (circa-1980s) wall paneling. Additional research is required to determine the 1968 configuration and appearance of the basement doorways. Only those at the south wall were identified as existing in 1968, based on the paint evidence.
Gray-green-color paint	<b>10GY 5/2</b>	<sup>2</sup> Beaded-board ceiling	The exposed circa-1968 paint finish of the basement ceiling is preserved today above the existing suspended ceiling. If this finish is in good condition, some consideration should be given to cleaning, rather than repainting.

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Light-gray-green-color paint	<b>5GY 7/1</b>	<sup>2</sup> Window trim <sup>2</sup> Window sashes	Although only two windows were sampled in the basement, it is assumed that all windows would have been finished in a similar manner.
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**Large Basement Room.** Photomicrograph of paint sample MALU A407-413 P18 from the north wall of the large basement room. Taken at 40X magnification, under reflected tungsten light. Arrow points to the circa-1968 paint layer.

## Vestibule

### **Description**

The vestibule is the main entrance of the church located on the front (north) side of the building. This front portion of the building was presumably part of the original construction of the church in 1914, although no information is available on its early use and configuration. While the front doorway opening is noted in the “Historic Structure Report” to date to 1914, it is unclear whether or not it was then used as the main entrance to the sanctuary, which was located in the basement story. Alterations were undoubtedly made to the vestibule in 1921-22, when the upper portions of the building were completed and stairways to the upper stories were installed. The entrance vestibule was later “enlarged” in 1956, according to a newspaper article dated May 26 of that year. This is thought to have involved the removal of a basement stairway located at the south wall, according to the “Historic Structure Report.” The most recent changes date to 1970, when a wide opening was created in the east wall and a new doorway was added to the west wall to communicate with the adjacent remodeled stairways.

No documentary information is available on the historic painted finishes of the vestibule. The floor is presently covered with unpainted ceramic tiles, and vinyl baseboard trims the lower portions of the walls. The plaster walls and ceiling are painted white, and the front doorway is varnished. Doorway openings at the east and west walls have no trim and no doors.

### **Paint Samples**

Nine (9) paint samples were extracted from various painted elements of the vestibule and assigned log numbers MALU A-407-413 P33 through P41. These were removed from the lower and upper plaster walls, the plaster ceiling, and the front (north) doorway. See Attachment A, page A-6, for a floor plan of the vestibule annotated with the paint-sample locations. A descriptive listing of the individual paint samples and their locations may be found in Attachment B, page B-4. A chromochronology chart recording the paint layers within the paint samples is included in Attachment C, page C-6.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The earliest paint observed on both the plaster walls and ceiling was dated 1956, the year the vestibule was “enlarged.” Additional physical investigation would be required to determine if the walls and ceiling were completely rebuilt at this time or simply replastered. All paints used in the vestibule in 1956, and in subsequent years, are a non-lead type. The walls were found to have

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been divided horizontally in 1956, with the lower walls painted a brown color and the upper walls a light-peach color. The corresponding ceiling color was cream. Additional research is required to determine the appearance of the front doorway in 1956, which appears to have been substantially rebuilt circa 1970, based on the exterior paint evidence.

The lower walls appear to have been touched up once before a complete repainting of the vestibule was carried out sometime after 1956. It is this latter paint scheme which is believed to have existed in 1968. The lower walls were then painted a pink-brown color, and the upper walls a peach color. The ceiling was repainted cream.

The paint scheme was altered in 1970, when the walls were painted a light brown color. The wooden elements of the rebuilt front doorway were stained and varnished. The walls were next painted beige, and later white, which is the existing paint scheme today.

**Vestibule**

**Summary: Circa-1968 Finishes**

<b>FINISH</b>	<b>MUNSELL COLOR</b>	<b>ELEMENTS</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Pink-brown-color paint	<b>2.5YR 6/4</b>	<sup>2</sup> Lower plaster walls	Selective paint stripping should be done to identify the exact line of demarcation between the darker-painted lower walls and the lighter-painted upper walls.
Peach-color paint	<b>2.5YR 7/6</b>	<sup>2</sup> Upper plaster walls	See above.
Cream-color paint	<b>2.5Y 8.5/2</b>	<sup>2</sup> Plaster ceiling	The plaster substrate of the room, including the ceiling, appears to date to 1956.

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<p>Unknown</p>	<p>?</p>	<p><sup>2</sup> Doorway trim <sup>2</sup> Doors</p>	<p>The doorways at the east and west walls of the vestibule were altered in 1970 by adding and/or enlarging the existing openings, and by removing the existing trim and doors. The finishes evidence on the exterior (north) doorway suggests that these doors were also repaired and/or altered in 1970. Photographic views should be examined to verify the appearance of this exterior doorway in 1968.</p>
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## Northwest Stairway

### **Description**

The northwest stairway, located in the northwest corner tower, is one of two main stairways in the church. This stair connects four levels of the building: the basement story, the vestibule story, the sanctuary story, and the balcony story. The original stair in this location was built in 1921-22 and led from the vestibule story to the balcony story. An alteration made in 1956 in the sanctuary story of the stair hall enclosed an opening at the south end of the east wall with plaster. The existing modern stairway replaced the original wooden stair in 1970,<sup>1</sup> and added a new stair to the basement story in place of an earlier basement room. This modern stairway features plaster sidewalls on metal lath and wide wooden handrails. The existing suspended ceiling in the balcony story also likely dates to 1970.

No documentary information is available on the historic painted finishes of the northwest stairway. The plaster walls and ceilings in all stories are presently painted white. Wall surfaces covered by the 1970 stair and above the suspended ceiling in the balcony story are finished with a peach-color paint, while the ceiling boards above the suspended ceiling are painted cream.

### **Paint Samples**

Thirty-one (31) paint samples were extracted from various painted surfaces of the northwest stairway and assigned log numbers MALU A407-413 P42 through P72. These were removed from the plaster walls, stair sidewalls, ceilings, doorway trim and doors, and window trim and sashes. See Attachment C, pages A-6 through A-8, for floor plans of the northwest stairway annotated with paint-sample locations. A descriptive listing of the individual paint samples and their locations may be found in Attachment B, pages B-4 and B-5. Chromochronology charts recording the paint layers within the paint samples are included in Attachment C, pages C-7 through C-9.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The earliest painted finish found in the northwest stairway is a gray-blue paint dating to circa 1914. This early paint was observed in two paint samples removed from the window trim and sash of the north window in the vestibule story. This window had been a feature of a northwest

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1. Note that the "Historic Structure Report" dates the existing stair as 1956, but similarities in construction with the northeast stair, which is dated 1970, strongly suggest that both stairs date to 1970.

basement room from circa 1914 until 1970; it was incorporated into the existing basement stairway in 1970.

Painted finishes relating to the northwest stairway of 1921-22 were identified as yellow calcimine paint on the walls, cream-white paint on the ceiling, and dark shellac over coats of white primer and brown paint on the window trim and sashes. Dark shellac alone finished the trim of the doorway in the balcony story in 1921-22. These early paints were found in the sanctuary and balcony stories of the northwest stairway. No early paints appear to have survived on the walls and ceilings of the basement and vestibule stories, where extensive remodeling work was carried out in 1970.

Subsequent paintings up to 1956 used various shades of green oil-based paints on the walls, and light shades of gray, white, and cream on the ceiling. The woodwork of the doorways and windows retained their dark shellac finish.

The year 1956 is when the green-painted walls of the stairway were repainted in a two-tone scheme of brown and peach. Similar to the vestibule, the walls appear to have been divided horizontally, with the lower walls painted brown and the upper walls peach. The wooden doorways and windows were also painted brown, and the ceiling white. Dating of this paint scheme is based on the observation that this was the first finish on the section of plaster wall installed in the southeast corner of the sanctuary stair hall in 1956. One additional painting in light pink appears to have occurred before 1968.

The paint finishes that existed in the northwest stairway in 1968 are believed to have been covered and encapsulated by the alterations of 1970, such as the new stairs and the suspended ceiling in the balcony story. Pink-brown paint was used on the lower walls, the doorway trim, and the window trim and sashes; peach-color paint finished the upper walls; and cream paint colored the ceiling. This was the same paint scheme that had been identified in the entrance vestibule described in the previous section.

The transition to a monochromatic paint scheme in neutral colors of cream and white coincided with the installation of the new stairs and suspended ceiling in 1970. Extensive changes were made to the plaster walls and ceilings in the basement and vestibule stories at this time. It is also clear from the paint evidence that the trim and flush-panel double doors in the sanctuary story were installed in 1970, as was the flush-panel door in the balcony story. These doors had previously been dated 1956 by the "Historic Structure Report."

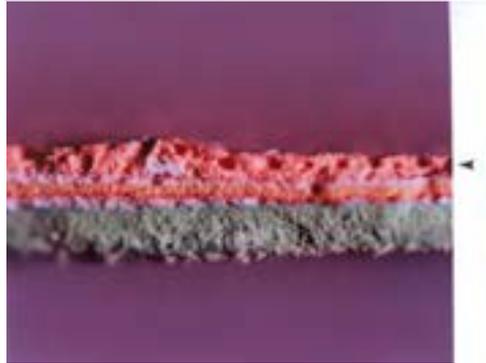
### Northwest Stairway

**Summary: Circa-1968 Finishes**

<b>FINISH</b>	<b>MUNSELL COLOR</b>	<b>ELEMENTS</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Pink-brown-color paint	<b>2.5YR 6/4</b>	<sup>2</sup> Lower plaster walls <sup>2</sup> Window trim <sup>2</sup> Window sashes <sup>2</sup> Doorway trim, balcony	Selective paint stripping should be done to identify the exact line of demarcation between the darker-painted lower walls and the lighter-painted upper walls.
Peach-color paint	<b>2.5YR 7/6</b>	<sup>2</sup> Upper plaster walls	See above. This paint finish is preserved today above the circa-1970 suspended ceiling in the balcony story.
Cream-color paint	<b>2.5Y 8.5/2</b>	<sup>2</sup> Ceiling	This paint finish is preserved today on the beaded-board ceiling above the circa-1970 suspended ceiling in the balcony story.
Unknown	?	<sup>2</sup> Trim and doors, sanctuary doorway <sup>2</sup> Balcony door	Additional research is required to determine the 1968 configuration and appearance of the sanctuary doorway and the balcony door, since the existing doorway and doors appear to date to circa 1970.

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Unknown	?	<sup>2</sup> Original (circa-1921-22) stairs	No remnants are known to survive of the original stairs that were replaced by the existing modern stairs circa 1970. Removal of the existing stairs will likely provide considerable physical evidence of the configuration of the missing historic stairs.
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**Northwest Stairway.** Photomicrograph of paint sample MALU A407-413 P64 from an area of wall surface between the sanctuary and balcony stories covered by the circa-1970 stair. Taken at 40X magnification, under reflected tungsten light. Arrow points to the circa-1968 paint layer.

## Northeast Stairway

### Description

The northeast stairway, located in the northeast corner tower, is one of two main stairways in the church. This stair connects three levels of the building: the vestibule story, the sanctuary story, and the balcony story. The original stair in this location was built in 1921-22 and led from the vestibule to the balcony story. An alteration made in 1956 in the sanctuary story of the stair hall enclosed an opening at the south end of the west wall with plaster. A steep stair was also added to the balcony story about this time to access a new office installed in the upper story of the northeast tower. Renovations in 1970 replaced the original stair of the northeast stairway with the existing modern stair. The later steep stair to the tower office may also have been removed at this time, and the stairway opening covered by the existing suspended ceiling.

No documentary information is available on the historic painted finishes of the northeast stairway. The plaster walls and ceilings in all stories are presently painted white. The walls above the suspended ceiling in the balcony story are painted cream and the board ceiling white.

### Paint Samples

Twenty two (22) paint samples were removed from various painted surfaces of the northeast stairway and assigned log numbers MALU A407-413 P73 through P94. These were removed from the plaster walls, stair sidewalls, ceilings, doorway trim and doors, and window trim and sashes. See Attachment A, pages A-6 through A-8, for floor plans of the northeast stairway annotated with the paint-sample locations. A descriptive listing of the individual paint samples and their locations may be found in Attachment B, pages B-6 and B-7. Chromochronology charts recording the paint layers within the paint samples are included in Attachment C, pages C-10 through C-12.

### Discussion of Findings

The earliest painted finish found in the northeast stairway is a gray-blue-paint dating to circa 1914. This early paint was observed in two paint samples removed from the window trim and sash of the north window in the vestibule story. This window had been a feature of a northeast basement room from circa 1914 until 1970; it was incorporated into the vestibule story of the remodeled northeast stairway in 1970. This same gray-blue paint had also been used in the northwest basement room, as described in the previous section on the northwest stairway.

Painted finishes relating to the northeast stairway of 1921-22 were identified to be the same as those used in the northwest stairway. These included yellow calcimine paint on the walls, cream lead-based paint on the ceiling, and dark shellac over coats of white primer and brown paint

on the window trim and sashes. Dark shellac alone finished the trim of the doorway in the balcony story. These early paints were found in the sanctuary and balcony stories of the northeast stairway. No early paints appear to have survived on the walls and ceilings of the vestibule story, where extensive remodeling work was carried out in 1970.

Subsequent paintings up to 1956 used various shades of green paint on the walls, and light shades of gray, white, and cream paint on the ceiling. The woodwork of the doorways and windows retained their dark shellac finish.

The year 1956 is when a stair was added to the balcony stair hall to access a new office installed in the upper story of the northeast tower. The existing green-painted walls of the stairway were repainted in a two-tone scheme of brown and peach at this time. The walls were most likely divided horizontally, similar to the vestibule and the northwest stairway, with the lower walls painted brown and the upper walls peach. The wooden doorways and windows were also painted brown, and the ceiling cream. Dating of this paint scheme is based on the observation that this was the first finish on the section of plaster wall installed in the southeast corner of the sanctuary story stair hall in 1956. Two additional paintings, in light pink and pink-brown/peach, appear to have occurred before 1968.

The paint finishes that existed in the northeast stairway in 1968 were likely covered and encapsulated by the new stairs installed in 1970. These historic painted surfaces are unfortunately not visible in the northeast stairway as they are in the upper stories of the northwest stairway. The findings of the paint analysis indicate, however, that the same paint scheme that existed in the vestibule and the northwest stairway in 1968 had also been used in the northeast stairway. Pink-brown paint colored the lower walls, the doorway trim, and the window trim and sashes; peach-color paint finished the upper walls; and cream paint was on the ceiling.

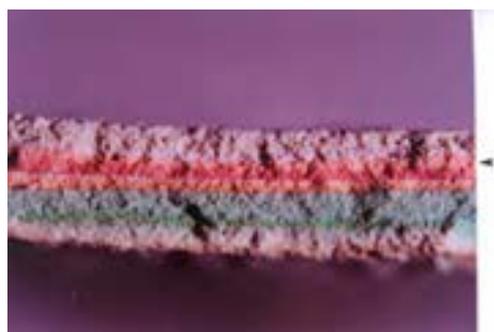
Neutral colors of cream and white were the paint colors chosen for the renovations of 1970. These paint finishes are preserved today above the suspended ceiling in the balcony story, suggesting that the ceiling was installed sometime after 1970. The paint evidence also clearly indicates that the existing trim and flush-panel doors in the sanctuary story were installed in 1970, as was the flush-panel door in the balcony story. These doors had previously been dated 1956 by the “Historic Structure Report.”

## Northeast Stairway

### Summary: Circa-1968 Finishes

<b>FINISH</b>	<b>MUNSELL COLOR</b>	<b>ELEMENTS</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Pink-brown-color paint	<b>2.5YR 6/4</b>	<sup>2</sup> Lower plaster walls <sup>2</sup> Window trim <sup>2</sup> Window sashes <sup>2</sup> Doorway trim, balcony	Selective paint stripping should be done to identify the exact line of demarcation between the darker-painted lower walls and the lighter-painted upper walls.
Peach-color paint	<b>2.5YR 7/6</b>	<sup>2</sup> Upper plaster walls	See above
Cream-color paint	<b>2.5Y 8.5/2</b>	<sup>2</sup> Ceiling	
Unknown	?	<sup>2</sup> Trim and doors, sanctuary doorway <sup>2</sup> Balcony door	Additional research is required to determine the 1968 configuration and appearance of the sanctuary doorway and the balcony door, since the existing doorway and doors appear to date to circa 1970.

Unknown	?	<sup>2</sup> Original (circa-1921-22) stairs	No remnants are known to survive of the original stairs that were replaced by the existing modern stairs circa 1970. Removal of the existing stairs will likely provide considerable physical evidence of the configuration of the missing historic stairs.
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**Northeast Stairway.** Photomicrograph of paint sample MALU A407-413 P89 from the west wall of the balcony story. Taken at 40X magnification, under reflected tungsten light. Arrow points to the circa-1968 paint layer.

## Sanctuary

### Description

The sanctuary is located in the upper stories of the church building constructed in 1921-22. It is accessed by the northwest and northeast tower stairways, and by a basement stair installed in 1956. Original features and elements include a balcony on the north side, large windows, and a pressed-metal ceiling. The pews in the main story were installed circa 1930-35, while those in the balcony story are believed to have been reused from another building and installed around 1956, when other changes were made to the sanctuary. These included the reconfiguration of the front (south) end of the sanctuary, where a new raised choir area and pulpit were created and a baptismal pool was installed. Partition walls built in the southeast and southwest corners created large rooms that served as sound chambers for a new pipe organ. Additional seating was also created in the rear of the main story by removing the partition walls of a former church office and incorporating the space into the sanctuary. A stair leading directly to the basement was installed at the south end of the east wall. The addition of plasterboard over the original wooden wainscot is believed to be a later alteration dating to the 1970s.

Little information is available on the historic painted finishes of the sanctuary. While historic photographic views of the sanctuary do exist, these were not available for this study. A newspaper article written after the renovation of 1956 noted that “the rear and side walls of the choir and pulpit area are paneled with Honduras Mahogany painted to match the existing pews.”<sup>1</sup> Church members recall that the plaster walls were then painted a “pink-rose color,” the new woodwork was stained and varnished, and the original stained-and-varnished woodwork was painted.<sup>2</sup> A white-painted finish is believed to have been introduced sometime in the 1970s. The plaster walls were last painted white by the National Park Service in 1999.

The existing finishes of the sanctuary include white-, cream-, and brown-color paints, and clear resinous coatings resembling varnish. White paint covers the upper plaster walls above the wainscot, the entire south wall, and the sanctuary side of the balcony rail. Cream-color paint finishes the wainscot, the trim and doors of the doorways, and the pressed metal ceiling. Brown paint is found on the baseboards, the window trim and sashes, and the floorboards of the balcony. A varnish-type finish covers the wooden pews in the main story, the sides of the raised platform at the south end of the sanctuary in the main story, and the wooden seats of the pews in the balcony story. Earlier painted finishes preserved within the sound chambers for the pipe organ installed in 1956 include green paint on the walls, and white paint on the pressed-metal ceiling.

- 
1. “New Christian Education Building at Ebenezer,” *Atlanta Daily World*, May 26, 1956.
  2. “Historic Structure Report,” *Chronology of Development and Use*, p. 9.

## **Paint Samples**

Forty-eight paint samples were extracted from various painted surfaces of the sanctuary and assigned log numbers MALU A407-413 P95 through P142. These were removed from the baseboards, wooden wainscot, plaster walls, metal ceiling, doorway trim and doors, window trim and sashes, pews, baptismal pool, and other miscellaneous woodwork. See Attachment A, pages A-7 and A-8, for floor plans of the sanctuary annotated with the paint-sample locations. A descriptive listing of the individual paint samples may be found in Attachment B, pages B-7 and B-8. Chromochronology charts recording the paint layers within the paint samples are included in Attachment C, pages C-13 through C-17.

## **Discussion of Findings**

The original (1921-22) paint scheme of the sanctuary was found to be similar to that of the northwest and northeast stairways. Yellow calcimine paint colored the walls; a cream-color, lead-based paint was used on the pressed-metal ceiling; and dark shellac finished the exposed woodwork of the room. Original woodwork elements on which this shellac was identified include the wainscot in the main story, the window trim, the paneled columns supporting the balcony, and the paneled rail and floorboards of the balcony. No shellac remains on the stained-glass-window sashes, suggesting that the sashes were either repaired or replaced in 1956. Shellac was probably also used on the trim and doors of the original doorways, none of which survive today.

Subsequent paintings up to 1956 used various shades of green-color paint, and one of yellow, on the walls. The ceiling was repainted with less frequency in colors of cream or white. The woodwork retained its dark shellac finish, and was also used on the pews installed in the main story circa 1930-35. The finishes that were on the walls and ceiling just prior to the alterations of 1956 are preserved today within the sound chambers of the pipe organ located in the upper northeast and northwest corners of the sanctuary. These include a light-green paint on the walls, and white-color paint on the metal ceiling.

The alterations of 1956 included a new paint scheme for the sanctuary. Both the old plaster walls and the new plaster walls at the south end of the sanctuary were painted a peach color (remembered by church members as a “rose-pink” color). The old woodwork that had previously been shellacked was painted dark pink, except for the floorboards that appear to have remained unpainted. A metal railing at the new stairway to the basement was also painted dark pink over a red-lead primer. The new “Honduras Mahogany” woodwork at the south end of the room was finished with a dark varnish. This included the wainscot, the doorway trim and doors, the open grillwork at the east and west walls, and the canopy over the baptismal pool. The interior walls of the pool were painted cream; and the pressed metal ceiling of the sanctuary was white.

One additional painting of the room appears to have been carried out prior to the funeral of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in April 1968. The plaster walls were repainted a peach color, the old woodwork was painted brown, and the walls of the baptismal pool were colored light blue-green. The floorboards in the main story and in the balcony were also likely painted around this time with a red-brown color paint. The ceiling appears to have remained white in 1956, and the woodwork at the south end of the room retained its dark varnish finish.

There is some question as to when the next refinishing of the sanctuary was carried out—either in 1970, when the northwest and northeast stairways were modernized, or sometime after Martin Luther King, Jr.'s mother was shot and killed in the sanctuary in 1974. Additional research may pinpoint the exact date of the improvements; for the purposes of this report the year “circa 1970” is used. It was at this time that various minor alterations were made to the sanctuary and the paint scheme was lightened. Plasterboard was installed over the original (1921-22) wainscot and to the interior side of the balcony rail. The paint evidence also clearly indicates that the existing baseboards were added at this time, as were the doorway trim and doors at the north wall. The formerly dark-varnished woodwork at the south end of the room was painted cream, as were the walls and most of the remaining woodwork (not including the pews). The ceiling was painted white. Only the window trim and sashes continued to be painted brown, while the new baseboards received the same red-brown color as the floorboards.

Several repainting of the sanctuary have occurred since circa 1970. All have replicated the paint scheme of that time period.

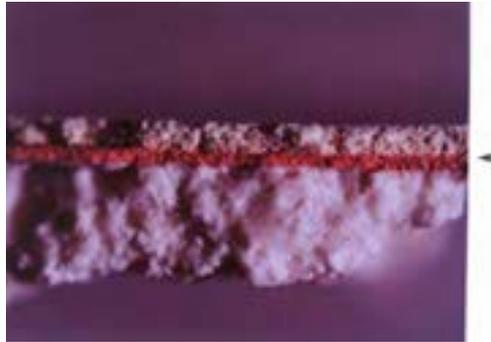
## Sanctuary

Summary: Circa-1968 Finishes

<b>FINISH</b>	<b>MUNSELL COLOR</b>	<b>ELEMENTS</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Peach-color paint	<b>2.5YR 7/6</b>	<sup>2</sup> Upper plaster walls, above wainscot	The plaster walls of the sanctuary were first finished with peach-color paint in 1956. They had been repainted in a similar shade by 1968.
Light-blue-green-color paint	<b>2.5BG 6/2</b>	<sup>2</sup> Interior plaster walls of baptismal pool (above pool)	The interior of the pool itself appears to have been replastered when it was enlarged in 1970.
Brown-color paint	<b>2.5YR 3/4</b>	<sup>2</sup> Wainscot, east and west walls <sup>2</sup> Window trim <sup>2</sup> Window sashes	This brown-painted finish is preserved on the original wainscot at the east and west walls, beneath circa-1970 plasterboard.
Red-brown color paint	<b>10R 2/4</b>	<sup>2</sup> Floorboards, main story and balcony story	Vinyl flooring installed sometime after 1968 presently covers the floorboards in the main story; floorboards are exposed in the balcony story.
White-color paint	<b>N 9.5/</b>	<sup>2</sup> Pressed-metal ceiling	The ceiling has been painted either cream or white since its installation in 1921-22.

APPENDIX D

Shellac	No color match	<sup>2</sup> Circa-1930-35 pews, main story <sup>2</sup> Circa-1956 pews, balcony story	The pews in the main story currently have a clear-varnish finish (polyurethane?) over the original shellac.
Varnish	No color match	<sup>2</sup> All 1956 woodwork elements at the south wall, main story	Restoration will require removal of existing later paint from the woodwork.
Unknown	?	<sup>2</sup> Doorways, south wall main story	The existing doorways date to circa 1970.



**Sanctuary.** Photomicrograph of paint sample MALU A407-313 P109 from the circa-1956 south plaster wall. Taken at 40X magnification under reflected tungsten light. Arrow points to the circa-1968 paint layer.



**Sanctuary.** Photomicrograph of paint sample MALU A407-413 from the circa 1921-22 balcony rail. Taken at 40X magnification, under reflected tungsten light. Arrow points to the circa-1968 paint layer.

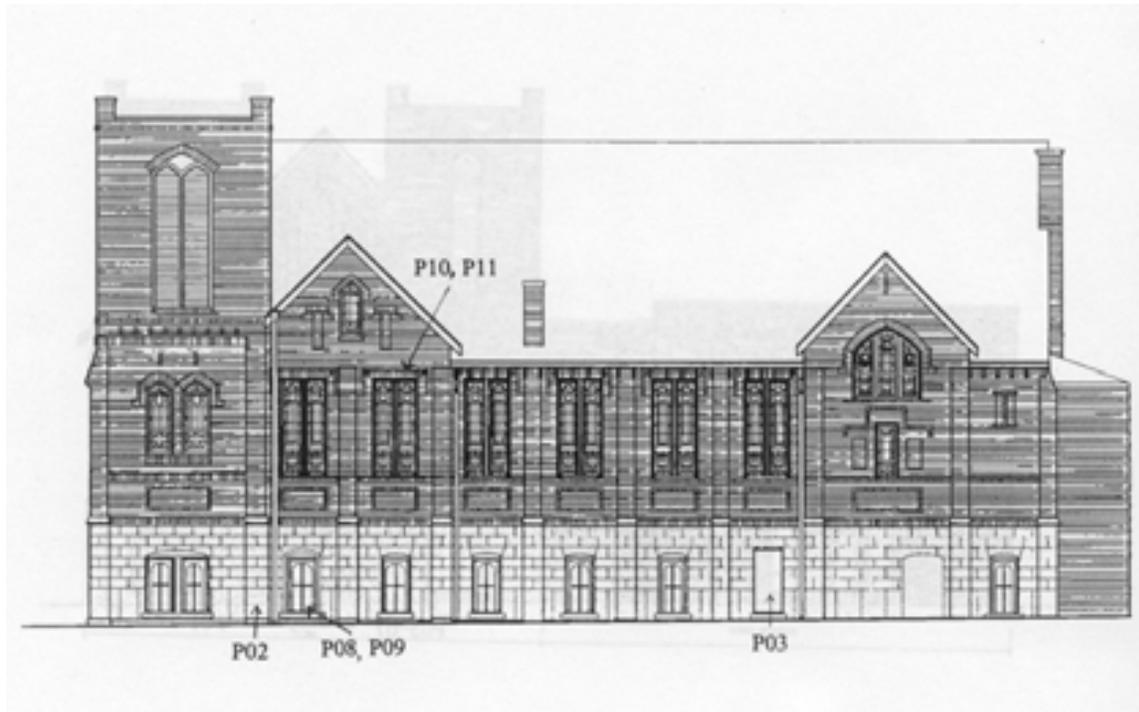


**IV. ATTACHMENTS**

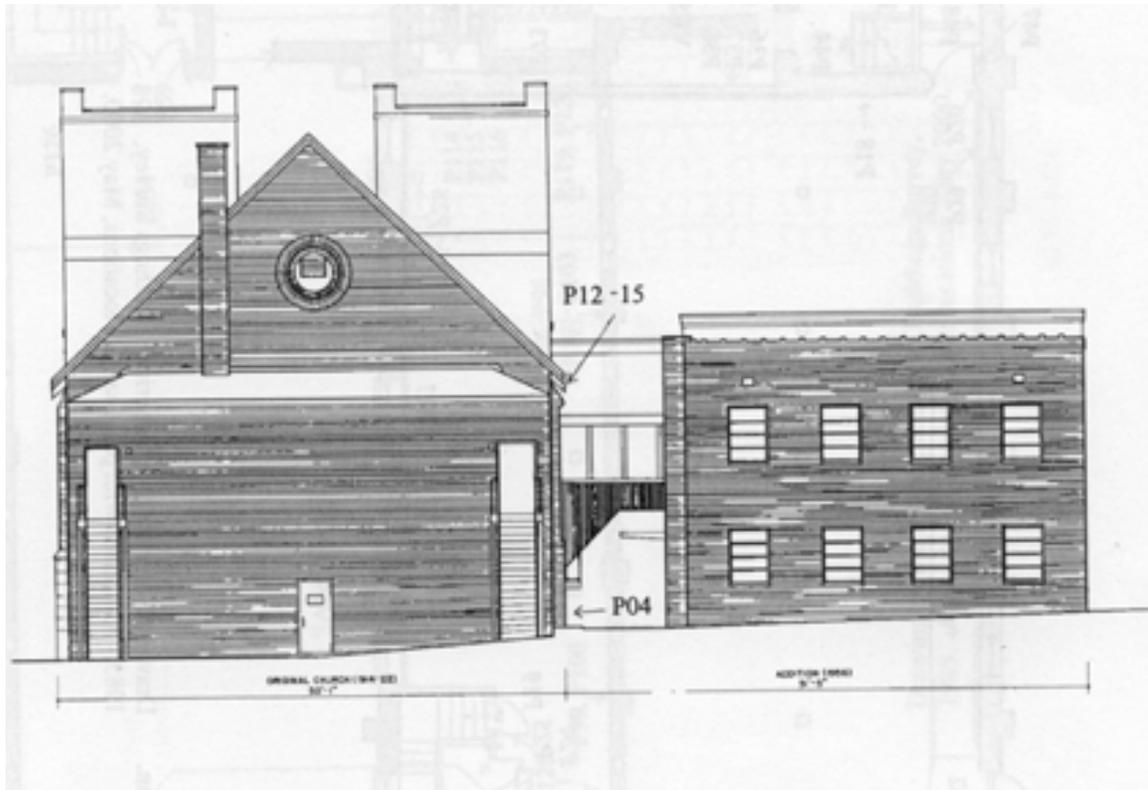
**ATTACHMENT A:**  
**Annotated Architectural Drawings**



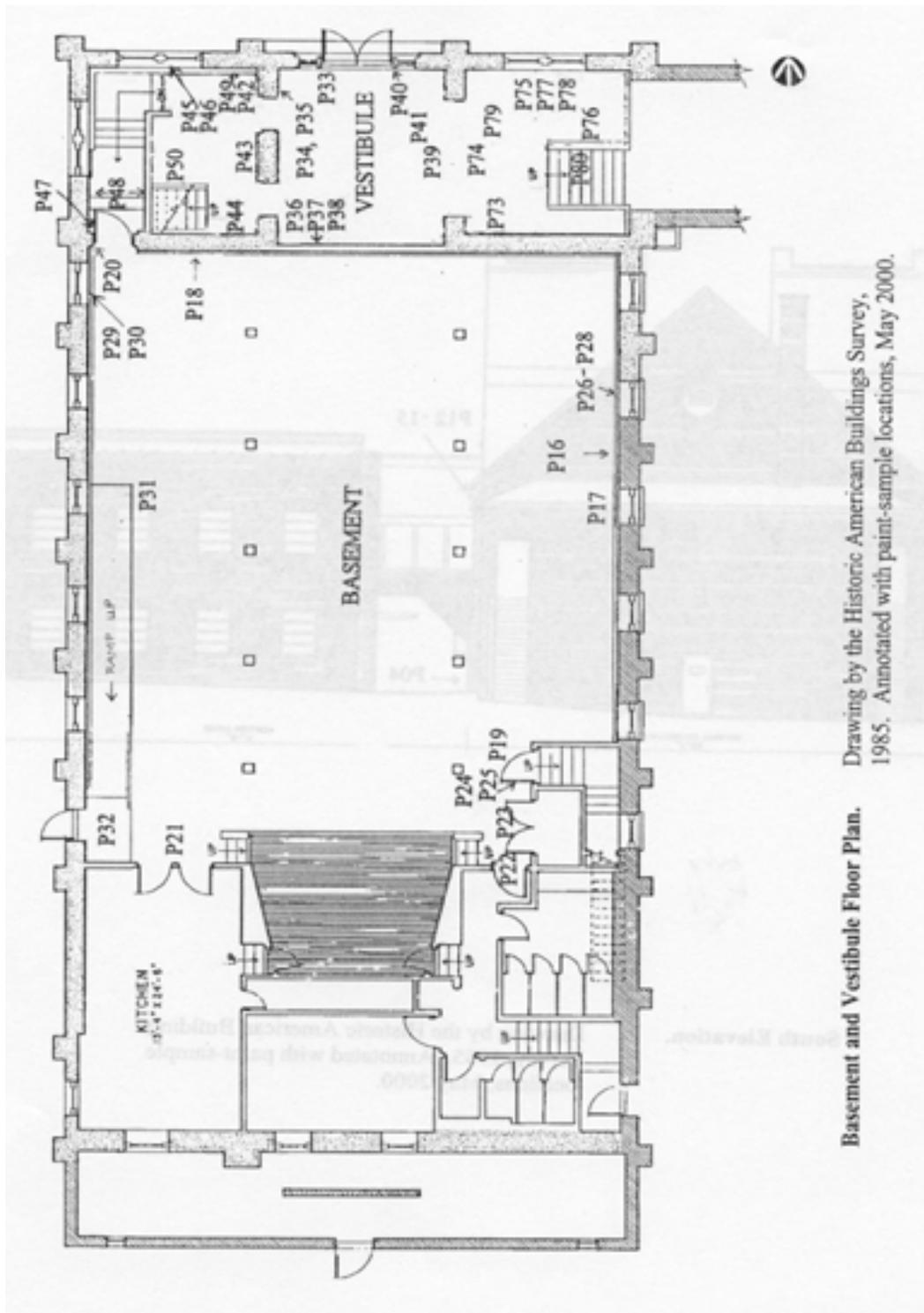
**North Elevation.** Drawing by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1985. Annotated with paint-sample locations, May 2000.



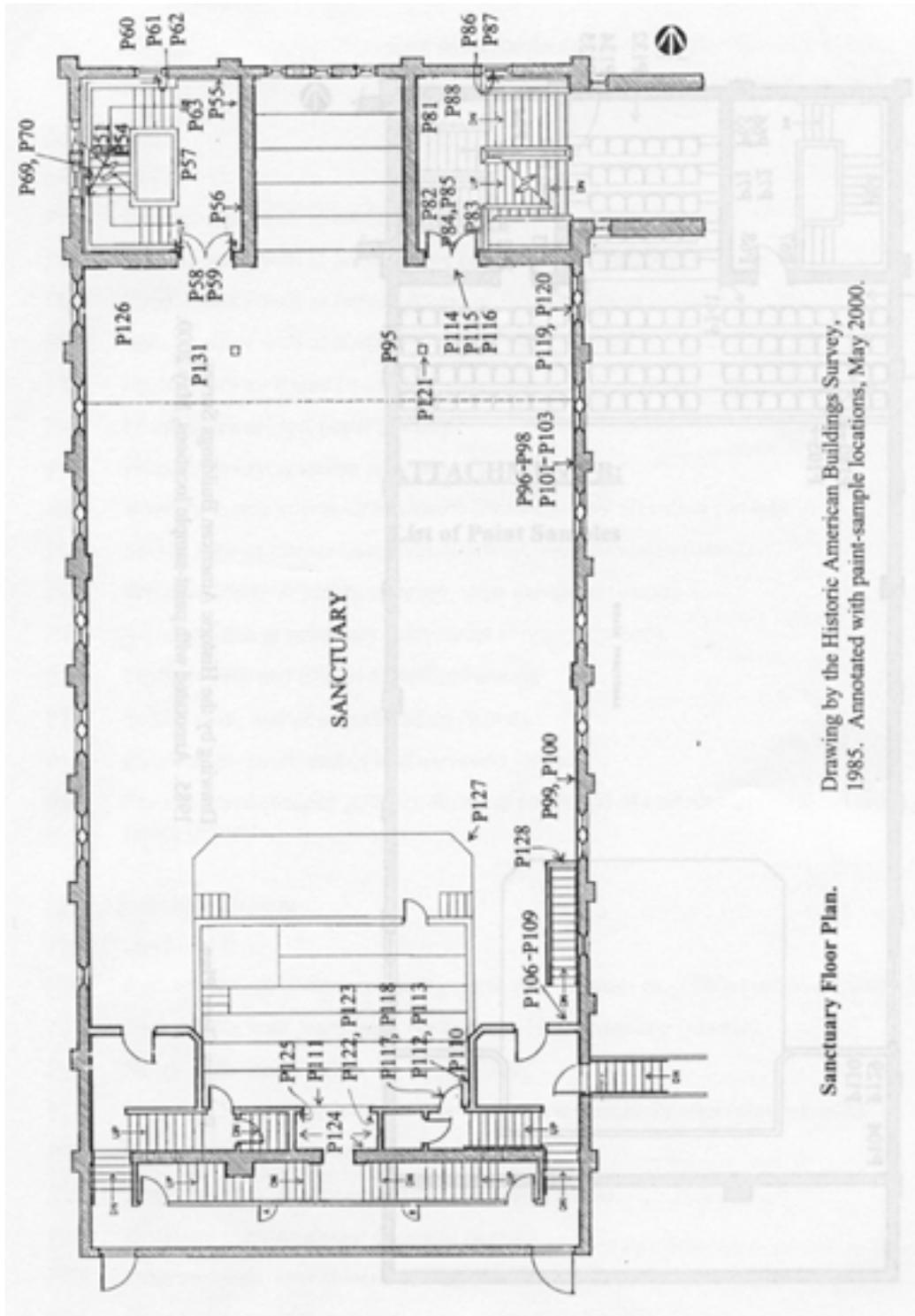
**West Elevation.** Drawing by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1985. Annotated with paint-sample locations, May 2000.



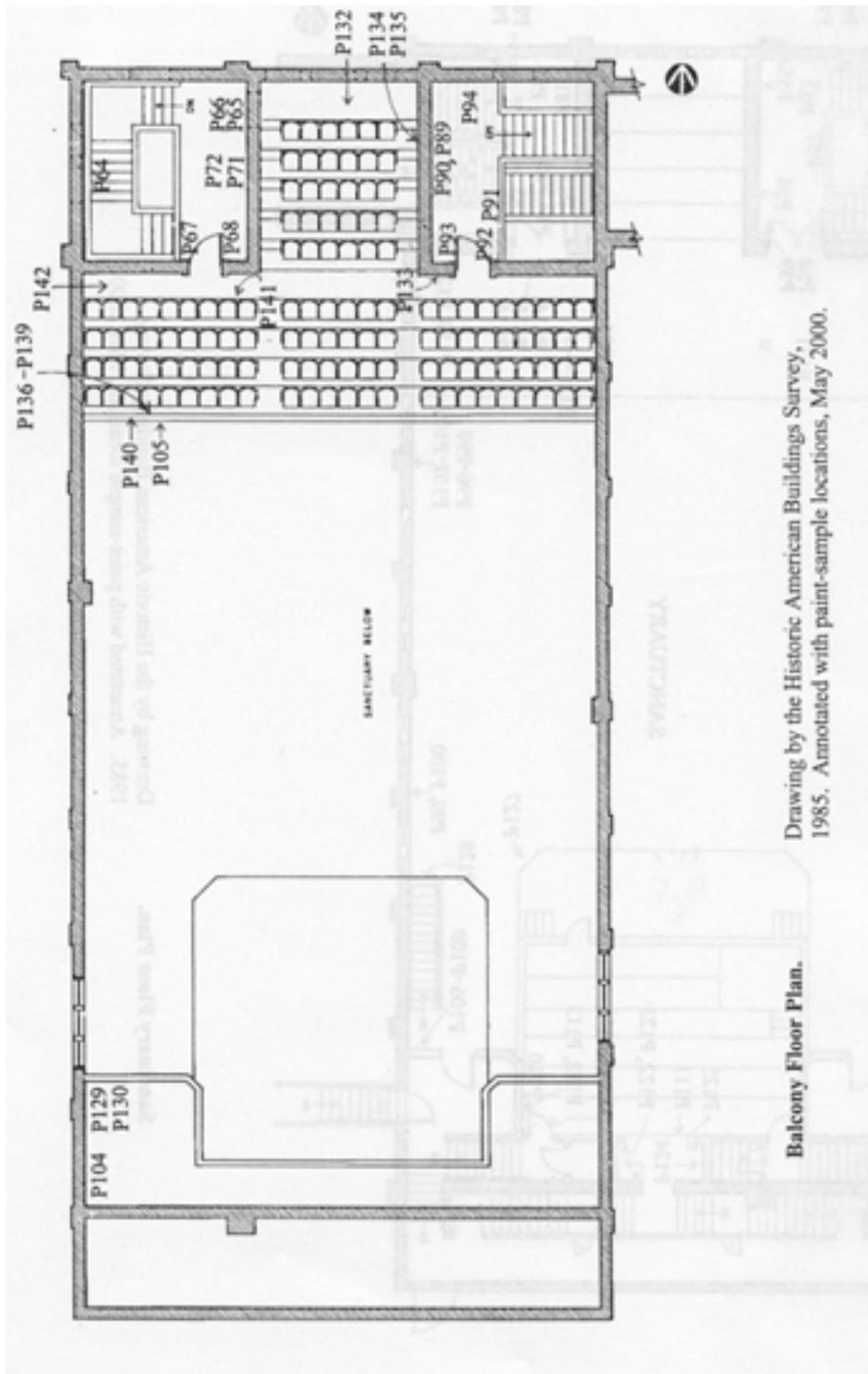
**South Elevation.** Drawing by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1985. Annotated with paint-sample locations, May 2000.



**Basement and Vestibule Floor Plan.** Drawing by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1985. Annotated with paint-sample locations, May 2000.



Sanctuary Floor Plan.  
Drawing by the Historic American Buildings Survey,  
1985. Annotated with paint-sample locations, May 2000.



**ATTACHMENT B:**

**List of Paint Samples**

**Exterior**

MALU A407-413:

- P01 Ground-story wall at north elevation (stucco).
- P02 Ground-story wall at north end of east elevation (stucco).
- P03 Ground-story wall at former doorway, west elevation (stucco).
- P04 Ground-story wall at north end of east wall (stucco).
- P05 Front doorway frame (wood).
- P06 Front doorway, left panel (wood).
- P07 Front doorway, transom sash (wood).
- P08 Window frame at former basement doorway, west elevation (wood).
- P09 Screen sash at former basement doorway, west elevation (wood).
- P10 Window frame at sanctuary story, west elevation (wood).
- P11 Window sash at sanctuary story, west elevation (wood).
- P12 Fascia, south end of east elevation (wood).
- P13 Soffit, south end of east elevation (wood).
- P14 Rafter ends, south end of east elevation (wood).
- P15 Curved wood (former gutter?), found at south end of east elevation behind damaged fascia (wood).

**Large Basement Room**

MALU A407-413:

- P16 East lower wall (below window), north end, beneath ca.-1980s paneling (plaster).
- P17 East middle wall, north end, beneath ca.-1980s paneling (plaster).
- P18 North wall, inside utility cabinet (plaster).
- P19 East wall beneath paneling, above doorway to sanctuary stair (plasterboard).
- P20 Doorway trim, northwest doorway (metal).
- P21 Doorway trim, southwest double doorway (wood).
- P22 Doorway trim, southeast doorway (wood).
- P23 Doorway trim, east closet doorway (wood).
- P24 Doorway trim, east doorway to sanctuary stair (metal).
- P25 Door of east doorway to sanctuary stair (wood).
- P26 Window frame, east window (wood).

- P27 Window sash, east window (wood).
- P28 Paneling at east window (caulk).
- P29 Window frame, west window at former doorway location (wood).
- P30 Window sash, west window at former doorway location (wood).
- P31 Bottom newel at west ramp railing (wood).
- P32 Beaded board ceiling above suspended ceiling, southwest corner (wood).

**Vestibule**

- P33 North wall above exterior doorway (plaster).
- P34 West wall (plaster).
- P35 West wall at doorway opening (plaster).
- P36 South wall behind vinyl baseboard (plaster).
- P37 South upper wall (plaster).
- P38 South lower wall (plaster).
- P39 East wall above doorway (plaster).
- P40 Exterior doorway elements (wood).
- P41 Ceiling (plaster).

**Northwest Stairway**

**Basement & Vestibule Stories**

MALU A407-413:

- P42 North upper wall (plaster).
- P43 East wall (plaster).
- P44 South wall (plaster).
- P45 North window trim (wood).
- P46 North window sash (wood).
- P47 South wall of basement stair, to west side of basement doorway (plaster).
- P48 East and west walls of basement stairway (plaster).
- P49 North wall of stair, below handrail (wood).
- P50 Side wall of stair to sanctuary story (plaster).
- P51 Side wall of stair to sanctuary story, west lower wall at first landing (plaster).
- P52 Side wall of stair to sanctuary story, west wall above handrail at first landing (plaster).
- P53 Ditto P52.
- P54 Upper (original?) west wall at stair to sanctuary story (plaster).

**Northwest Stairway**

**Sanctuary Story**

MALU A407-413:

- P55 North wall and northerly portion of east wall (plaster).
- P56 South end of east wall (plaster).
- P57 Low west partition wall at stair (plaster).
- P58 Trim at south doorway (wood: note wood unpainted where covered by stair).
- P59 Doors at south doorway (wood).
- P60 Window trim, north window (wood).
- P61 Window apron, north window (wood).
- P62 Window sash, north window (wood).
- P63 Ceiling at north wall (plaster).
- P64 West wall covered by upper stair, below window (plaster).
- P65-68 [See Northwest Stairway: Balcony Story]
- P69 Window trim, west window (wood).
- P70 Window sash, west window (wood).

**Northwest Stairway**

**Balcony Story**

MALU A407-413:

- P65 East wall, below drop ceiling (plaster).
- P66 East wall, above drop ceiling (plaster).
- P67 Door trim, south doorway (wood).
- P68 Door, south doorway (wood).
- P69-70 [See Northwest Stairway: Sanctuary Story]
- P71 Ceiling molding at east wall, above suspended ceiling (wood).
- P72 Beaded-board ceiling, above suspended ceiling (wood).

**Northeast Stairway**

**Vestibule Story**

MALU A407-413:

- P73 South wall (plaster).
- P74 West wall above doorway opening (plaster).
- P75 North wall above window (plaster).
- P76 Exterior side wall of stair (plaster).

- P77 Window trim, north window (wood).
- P78 Window sash, north window (wood).
- P79 Ceiling (plaster).
- P80 Interior side wall of stair (plaster).

### **Northeast Stairway**

#### **Sanctuary Story**

MALU A407-413:

- P81 West wall, north portion (plaster).
- P82 West wall, south portion (plaster).
- P83 Low east partition at stair (plaster).
- P84 Door trim, south doorway (wood).
- P85 Doors, south doorway (wood).
- P86 Window trim, north window (wood).
- P87 Window sash, north window (wood).
- P88 Ceiling (plaster).

### **Northeast Stairway**

#### **Balcony Story**

MALU A407-413:

- P89 West wall, below suspended ceiling (plaster).
- P90 West wall, above suspended ceiling (plaster).
- P91 Low east partition at stair (plaster).
- P92 Door trim, south doorway (wood).
- P93 Door, south doorway (wood).
- P94 Beaded-board ceiling, above suspended ceiling (wood).

### **Sanctuary**

MALU A407-413:

- P95 Main story: floorboards beneath sheet vinyl (wood).
- P96 Main story: toe molding of baseboard at east wall (wood).
- P97 Main story: face of baseboard at east wall (wood).
- P98 Main story: top molding of baseboard at east wall (wood).
- P99 Main story: wainscot at east wall, beneath plasterboard (wood).

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- P100 Main story: wainscot at east wall (plasterboard).
- P101 Main story: upper molding of wainscot at east wall (wood).
- P102 Main story: nosing & shelf above wainscot at east wall (wood).
- P103 Main story: upper wall above wainscot at east wall (plaster).
- P104 Balcony story: upper west wall of northwest organ loft (plaster).
- P105 Balcony story: paneled rail at balcony, sanctuary side (wood).
- P106 Main story: face of baseboard at south end of sanctuary (wood).
- P107 Main story: top molding of baseboard at south end of sanctuary (wood).
- P108 Main story: wainscot above baseboard at south end of sanctuary (wood).
- P109 Main story: upper wall above wainscot at south end of sanctuary (plaster).
- P110 Main story: woodwork trim at upper wainscot, south end of sanctuary (wood).
- P111 Main story: canopy at south wall (wood).
- P112 Main story: trim at grille, south end of sanctuary (wood).
- P113 Main story: grille, south end of sanctuary (wood).
- P114 Main story: doorway trim, northeast doorway (wood).
- P115 Main story: doorway jamb, northeast doorway (wood).
- P116 Main story: double doors, northeast doorway (wood).
- P117 Main story: doorway trim, southeast doorway (wood).
- P118 Main story: door, southeast doorway (wood).
- P119 Main story: window mullion, east window (wood).
- P120 Main story: window sash, east window (wood).
- P121 Main story: paneled column supporting balcony (wood).
- P122 Main story: jamb at opening to baptismal pool, south wall (wood).
- P123 Main story: trim at opening to baptismal pool, font side (wood).
- P124 Main story: south, east & west upper walls of baptismal pool (plaster).
- P125 Main story: north upper wall of baptismal pool (plaster).
- P126 Main story: pew back (wood).
- P127 Main story: side wall of low platform at south end of sanctuary (wood).
- P128 Main story: railing at stair to basement (metal).
- P129 Balcony story: pressed metal ceiling in northwest organ loft (metal).
- P130 Balcony story: pressed metal cornice at west wall of organ loft (metal).
- P131 Main story: pressed metal ceiling, underside of balcony (metal).
- P132 Balcony story: floorboards (wood).
- P133 Balcony story: north wall (plaster).
- P134 Balcony story: toe molding of baseboard at east wall of north alcove (wood).
- P135 Balcony story: face of baseboard at east wall of north alcove (wood).
- P136 Balcony story: toe molding of baseboard at balcony rail (wood).

- P137 Balcony story: face of baseboard at balcony rail (wood).
- P138 Balcony story: top molding of baseboard at balcony rail (wood).
- P139 Balcony story: interior surface of balcony rail above baseboard (plasterboard).
- P140 Balcony story: top surface of balcony rail (wood).
- P141 Balcony story: pew back (wood).
- P142 Balcony story: pressed metal ceiling at northwest corner (metal)

**ATTACHMENT C:**

**Chronochronology Charts**

**EXTERIOR ELEMENTS**

(Chart 1 of 1)

<b>Elements:</b>	Window trim (2 <sup>nd</sup> story), fascia, soffit, & rafter ends	Former wooden gutter?	Window trim and screen at former doorway, west elevation of ground story; also, second-story window sash, west elevation	Front doorway, frame & transom	Front doorway, doors	Stuccoed walls, ground story
<b>PAINT SAMPLES:</b>	P10, 12, 13, & 14	P15	P08, 09, & 11	P05a & 07	P05b & 06	P01, 02, 03 & 04
<b>Substrates:</b>	Wood	Wood	Wood	Old wood	New wood	Stucco
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1921-22	1921-22	1956	1956?	1970?	1935-45
1921-22	Cream* -resinous finish-	Cream* -resinous finish-				
	Gray (thin)*	Gray (thin)*				
	Cream*	Cream*				
	Cream* Cream	Cream* Cream				
	Cream	Cream				
	Cream	Cream				

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	White	White	White	White	White	Varnish		
1956	White	White	White	White	White			
Extant 1968	White (N 9.5/)	White (N 9.5/)	White (N 9.5/)	White (N 9.5/)	Red-Brown (2.5R 2/2)			
1970	Cream	Cream	Cream	Cream	Brown	White Brown		
1980s	Gray	Gray	Gray	Gray	Brown	Brown	Gray	
1990s	White			Gray	Brown	Brown	Gray	

**Key:**  
\* Paint contains lead.

# LARGE BASEMENT ROOM

(Chart 1 of 2)

Elements:	Lower east wall, below window	East & north walls at mid-height (below window)	East wall above sanctuary doorway	Ceiling boards, above suspended ceiling	East window frame & sash	West window frame & sash (former doorway)
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P16	P17 & 18	P19	P32	P26 & 27	P29 & 30
<b>Substrates:</b>	Plaster	Plaster	Plasterboard	Beaded boards	Wood	Wood
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	Post-1914 repair?	1914	1970	1914	1914	1956
1914		-dirt-		Yellow*	Gray*	
		Yellow			Gray	
		Yellow			Light Gray	
		Yellow			Yellow	
		Yellow			Yellow	
	Brick Red	Dark Red Brick Red		Light Gray	Yellow	
	Medium Green	Medium Green				
	Light Gray Dark Green	Light Gray Dark Green		Light Gray	Yellow	
	Light Green	Light Green			Light green	

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1956	Gray-Green	Gray-Green		Gray-Green (10GY 5/2)	Gray-Green	White Gray-Green
	Yellow-Green	Yellow-Green				
	Blue-Green	Blue-Green				
Extant 1968	Light Blue-Green (2.5BG 6/2)	Light Blue-Green (2.5BG 6/2)			Light Gray-Green (5GY 7/1)	Light Gray-Green (5GY 7/1)
1970	Light Green Brick Red	Light Green	Light Green		Light Green	Light Green
	Light Green		Light Green		Light Green	Light Green
1980s	[Wall Paneling]	[Wall Paneling]	[Wall Paneling]	[Suspended Ceiling]	Yellow	Yellow
					White	White

**Key:**  
\* Paint contains lead.

**LARGE BASEMENT ROOM**

(Chart 2 of 2)

Elements:	Doorway trim: northwest and sanctuary doorways	Doorway trim: southwest and southeast doorways	Doorway trim: east closet	Door to sanctuary stairway	Railing at west ramp	Paneling caulk at window frame, west wall
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P20 & 24	P 21 & 22	P 23	P25	P31	P28
<b>Substrates:</b>	Metal	Wood	Wood	Wood	Wood	Caulk
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1970	1914	1980s	1970	1980s	1980s
1914		Varnish				
1956		Gray-Green				
		Yellow-Green				
		Dark Blue-Green				

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Extant 1968		Light Blue-Green (2.5BG 6/2)					
1970	White & Gray Primers Light Green	Light Green	Varnish				
	Light Green						
1980s	Yellow	Yellow		Yellow	White	Yellow	
		Brown			White	White	

**VESTIBULE**

(Chart 1 of 1)

Elements:	Lower south wall, behind vinyl baseboard	Lower south wall, above baseboard	Upper walls, north and south	North end of west partition, and upper east partition above doorway	Ceiling	North doorway, below transom
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P36	P37	P33 & 38	P34, 35, & 39	P41	P40
<b>Substrates:</b>	Plaster	Plaster	Plaster	Plaster	Plaster	New Wood
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1956	1956	1956	1970	1956	1970
1956	Light Peach	Light Peach Brown	Light Peach		Cream	
		Light Pink Brown				
Extant 1968		Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)	Peach (2.5YR 7/6)		Cream (2.5Y 8.5/2)	
1970	[Vinyl Baseboard]	White Light Brown	White Light Brown	White Light Brown	White	Brown Stain Varnish
		Beige	Beige	Beige	White	
		White	White	White	White	
		White	White	White	White	



**NORTHWEST STAIRWAY**

**Basement & Vestibule Stories**

(Chart 1 of 3)

<b>Elements:</b>	Walls, basement and vestibule stories	Upper west wall, first stair landing	Window trim, northwest window, north wall (former basement room)	Window sash, northwest window, north wall (former basement room)
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P42, 43, 44, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53	P54	P45	P46
<b>Substrates:</b>	Plaster & wood	Plaster	Wood	Wood
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1956 & 1970	1921-22	1914	1914
1914			Gray-Blue	Gray-Blue
				Light Gray*
				Yellow
				Pink-Beige
				Yellow
1921-22	Yellow+ (Remnants)			Cream
	Pale Green			Mint Green
	Blue-Green			Deep Green

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			Light Green			White
			Light Green			Yellow
			Blue-Green			Light Gray
1956			Dark Peach Light Peach			Light Yellow
			Light Pink			Mint Green
Extant 1968			Peach (2.5YR 7/6)			Pink-Brown
1970			White Cream			Cream
			Cream			Cream
			White			White
			White			White
			White			White

**Key:**

- \* Paint contains lead
- + Calcimine paint

**NORTHWEST STAIRWAY**

**Sanctuary Story**

**(Chart 2 of 3)**

<b>Elements:</b>	North wall & north end of east wall	South end of east wall	Low wall at stairs & ceiling	West wall below window at upper stair	Sanctuary doorway, trim and doors	North & west windows, trim and sashes
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P55	P56	P57 & 63	P64	P58 & 59	P60, 61, 62, 69 & 70
<b>Substrates:</b>	Plaster	Plaster	Plaster	Plaster	Wood	Wood
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1921-22	1956	1970	1921-22	1970	1921-22
1921-22	Yellow+ (Remnants)			Yellow+ (Remnants)		White Brown Dark Shellac
	Pale Green			Pale Green		
	Blue-Green			Blue-Green		
	Light Green			Light Green		
	Light Green			Light Green		
	Blue-Green			Blue-Green		
1956	Peach Light Peach Brown	Peach Light Peach Brown		Peach Light Peach		Light Peach Brown

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Extant 1968	Light Pink	Light Pink	Light Pink	Light Pink	Light Pink	Light Pink	Light Pink	Light Pink	Light Pink
	Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)	Peach Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)	Peach Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)	Peach (2.5YR 7/6)	Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)	Peach (2.5YR 7/6)	Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)	Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)	Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)
1970	White Cream	White Cream	White Cream	Cream	[Stair Covers Wall]	Cream	Cream	Cream	Cream
	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White
	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White
	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White

**Key:**  
+ Calcimine paint.

**NORTHWEST STAIRWAY**

**Balcony Story**

**(Chart 3 of 3)**

<b>Elements:</b>	<b>East wall</b>	<b>East wall, above suspended ceiling</b>	<b>Ceiling molding at wall, above suspended ceiling</b>	<b>Ceiling boards</b>	<b>South doorway, trim</b>	<b>South doorway, door</b>
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P65	P66	P71	P72	P67	P68
<b>Substrates:</b>	Plaster	Plaster	White	Beaded boards	Wood	Wood
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1921-22	1921-22	1921-22	1921-22	1921-22	1970
1921-22					Dark Shellac	
	Pale Green	Pale Green	Cream-White Pale Green	Cream-White		
	Blue-Green	Blue-Green	Light Gray Blue-Green	Light Gray*		
	Light Green	Light Green	White* Light Green	White*		
	Light Green	Light Green	Cream Light Green	Cream-Yellow		
	Blue-Green	Blue-Green	Cream Blue-Green	Cream-Yellow		

APPENDIX D

1956	Peach Light Peach	Peach Light Peach	Peach Light Peach	White Peach	White	Brown Brown	
	Light Pink	Light Pink	Cream Light Pink	Cream	Cream	Light Pink	
Extant 1968	Peach (2.5YR 7/6)	Peach (2.5YR 7/6)	Cream Peach (2.5YR 7/6)	Cream Peach (2.5YR 7/6)	Cream (2.5Y 8.5/2)	Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)	
1970	White Cream	[Suspended Ceiling]	[Suspended Ceiling]	[Suspended Ceiling]	[Suspended Ceiling]	White Cream	Cream
						Cream	Cream
	White					White	White
	White					Cream	Cream
						White	White
						White	White
						White	White

**Key:**  
\* Paint contains lead

**NORTHEAST STAIRWAY**

**Vestibule Story**

**(Chart 1 of 3)**

<b>Elements:</b>	<b>Walls (including stairway)</b>	<b>Ceiling</b>	<b>Window trim and sash at north wall (former basement room)</b>
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P73, 74, 75, 76 & 80	P79	P77 & 78
<b>Substrates:</b>	Plaster	Plaster	Wood
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1970	1970	1914
1914			Gray-Blue
			Light Gray
			Yellow
			Pink-Beige
			Yellow
			Cream
			Mint Green
			Deep Green
			White
			Yellow
			Light Gray
			Light Yellow

APPENDIX D

					Mint Green
Extant 1968					Pink-Brown
1970	Cream	Cream	Cream	Cream	Cream
	Cream	Cream	Cream	Cream	
	White	White	White	White	White
	Cream	Cream	White	White	Cream
	White	White	White	White	White

**NORTHEAST STAIRWAY**

**Sanctuary Story**

**(Chart 2 of 3)**

Elements:	West wall, north end	West wall, south end	Low east wall at stair	Ceiling	South doorway, trim and door	North window, trim and sash
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P81	P82	P83	P88	P84 & 85	P86 & 87
<b>Substrates:</b>	Plaster	Plaster	Plaster	Plaster	Wood	Wood
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1921-22	1956	1970	1970	1970	1921-22
1921-22						White* Brown Dark Shellac
	Pale Green					
	Bright Green					
	Blue Green					
	Light Green					
	Mint Green					
	Blue-Green					
1956	Peach Brown	Peach Brown				Brown
	Light Pink	Light Pink				Light Pink

APPENDIX D

Extant 1968	Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)	Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)	Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)				Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)
1970	White Cream	White Cream	Cream	Cream	Cream	Cream	Cream
	Cream	Cream		Cream	Cream		
	White	White	White	White	White	White	White
	Cream	Cream	White	White	Cream	Cream	Cream
	White	White	White	White	White	White	White

**Key:**

\* Paint contains lead

**NORTHEAST STAIRWAY**

Balcony Story

(Chart 3 of 3)

Elements:	West wall	West wall above suspended ceiling	Low east wall at stair	Ceiling, above suspended ceiling	North doorway, trim	North doorway, door
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P89	P90	P91	P94	P92	P93
<b>Substrates:</b>	Plaster	Plaster	Plaster	Beaded boards	Wood	Wood
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1921-22	1921-22	1970	1921-22	1921-22	1970
1921-22		Yellow+ (Remnants)		Cream*	Dark Shellac	
	Pale Green	Pale Green				
	Bright Green	Bright Green				
	Blue-Green	Blue-Green		Light Gray*		
	Light Green	Light Green		White*		
	Light Green	Light Green		Cream		
	Mint Green	Mint Green		Cream		
	Blue-Green	Blue-Green		Cream		
1956	Light Peach	Light Peach Brown			Brown	
	Light Pink				Light Pink	

APPENDIX D

Extant 1968	Peach Peach (2.5YR 7/6)			Cream (2.5Y 8.5/2)	Pink-Brown (2.5YR 6/4)	
1970	White Cream	White Cream	Cream	White White	White Cream	Cream
	White	[Suspended Ceiling]	White	[Suspended Ceiling]	White	White
	White		White		White	White
	White		White		White	White

**Key:**

\* Paint contains lead.

**SANCTUARY**

(Chart 1 of 5)

<b>Elements:</b>	Main Story: east plaster wall Balcony Story: north plaster wall	Balcony Story: plaster walls, northwest organ loft	Main Story: plaster walls, south end of sanctuary	Main & Balcony Stories: ceiling, underside of balcony and at balcony story	Balcony Story: cornice at west wall, northwest organ loft	Balcony Story: ceiling, northwest organ loft
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P103 & 133	P104	P109	P131 & 142	P129	P130
<b>Substrates:</b>	Plaster	Plaster	Plaster	Pressed Metal	Pressed Metal	Pressed Metal
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1921-22	1921-22	1956	1921-22	1921-22	1921-22
1921-22	Yellow+ (Remnants)	Yellow+ (Remnants)		Cream*	Cream*	Cream*
	Pale Green	Pale Green		Cream*	Cream*	Cream*
	Light Blue-Green	Light Blue-Green		Cream*	Cream*	Cream*
	Blue-Green	Blue-Green		White	Blue-Green	White
	Light Green	Light Green		Cream	Light Green	Cream
	Light Green				Light Green	
	Light Yellow	Light Yellow		Cream	Light Yellow	Cream
	Blue-Green	Blue-Green				
	Light Green	Light Green		White	Light Green	White

APPENDIX D

1956	Peach		Peach	White (N 9.5/)		
Extant 1968	Peach (2.5YR 7/6)		Peach (2.5YR 7/6)			
1970	Cream		Cream	White		
	Cream		Cream			
	White		White			
	White					
1999	White					

**Key:**  
 \* Paint contains lead.  
 + Calcimine paint.

**SANCTUARY**

(Chart 2 of 5)

<b>Elements:</b>	Main Story: floorboards	Main Story: baseboard, toe molding and face at east and south walls	Main Story: baseboard, top molding at east and south walls	Main Story: wainscot beneath plasterboard at east wall	Main Story: wainscot at east wall	Main Story: wainscot and upper molding at south wall
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P95	P96, 97, & 106	P98 & 107	P99	P100	P108 & 110
<b>Substrates:</b>	Wood	Wood	Wood	Wood	Plasterboard	Wood
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1921-22	1970	1970	1921-22	1970	1956
1921-22				Dark Shellac		
1956				Dark Pink		Dark Varnish

APPENDIX D

Extant 1968	Red-Brown (10R 2/4)		Brown (2.5YR 3/4)		Cream	
1970	Red-Brown	White-Cream Red-Brown	[Plasterboard]	Cream	Cream	Cream
	[Vinyl Flooring]	White Red-Brown		Cream	Cream	Cream
		White Brown		White	White	White
				White	White	White

**SANCTUARY**

(Chart 3 of 5)

<b>Elements:</b>	Main Story: molding at upper wain- scot and shelf at east wall, main story Balcony Story: paneled rail at balcony, sanctuary side	Balcony Story: floorboards	Balcony Story: baseboard toe molding and face	Balcony Story: interior side of balcony rail	Main Story: paneled col- umn support- ing balcony  Balcony Story: upper surface of balcony rail	Main Story: window trim at east wall
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P101, 102, & 105	P132	P134, 135, 136, 137, & 138	P139	P121 & 140	P119
<b>Substrates:</b>	Wood	Wood	Wood	Plasterboard	Wood	Wood
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1921-22	1921-22	1970	1970	1921-22	1921-22
1921-22	Dark Shellac	Dark Shellac			Dark Shellac	Dark Shellac

APPENDIX D

1956		Dark Pink						Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Extant 1968		Brown (2.5YR 3/4)	Red-Brown (10R 2/4)					Brown (2.5YR 3/4)	Brown (2.5YR 3/4)
1970		Cream	Red-Brown	Cream Red-Brown	Cream Red-Brown	Cream Red-Brown	Cream Red-Brown	Cream	Brown
		Cream	Red-Brown	Cream Red-Brown	Cream Red-Brown	Cream Red-Brown	Red-Brown	Cream	Light Brown
		White	Brown	White Brown	White Brown	White Brown	Brown	White	Brown
		White	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	Brown	White	

**SANCTUARY**

(Chart 4 of 5)

<b>Elements:</b>	Main Story: window sash	Main Story: woodwork at south wall (canopy, grillwork, doorway trim & door)	Main Story: doorway trim, jamb, and doors at north wall	Main Story: baptismal font, jamb and trim at opening (interior side)	Main Story: baptismal font, interior walls above pool	Main Story: railing at stairs to basement
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P120	P111, 112, 113, 117, & 118	P114, 115, & 116	P122 & 123	P124 & 125	P128
<b>Substrates:</b>	Wood	Wood	Wood	Wood	Plaster	Metal
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1956?	1956	1970	1956	1970?	1956

APPENDIX D

1956		Dark Pink	Dark Varnish		Dark Varnish	Cream	Orange* Dark Pink
Extant 1968		Brown (2.5YR 3/4)				Light Blue- Green (2.5BG 6/2)	
1970		Brown	Dark Varnish		Cream	Pale Green	Cream
		Light Brown			Cream		Cream
		Brown			White & Pale Blue	Pale Blue	White
			White		White & Blue	Blue	

**Key:**

\* Paint contains lead.

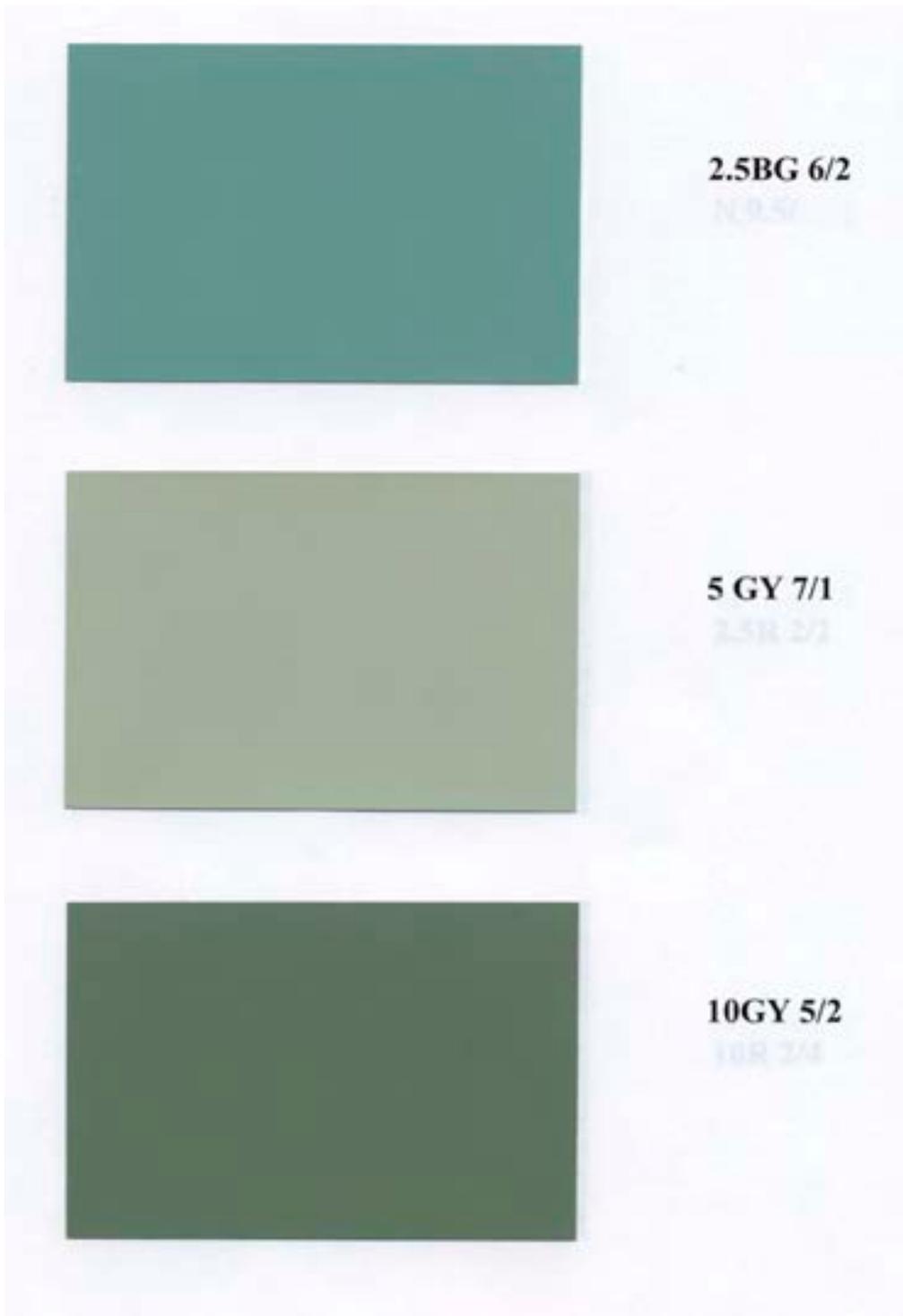
**SANCTUARY**

(Chart 5 of 5)

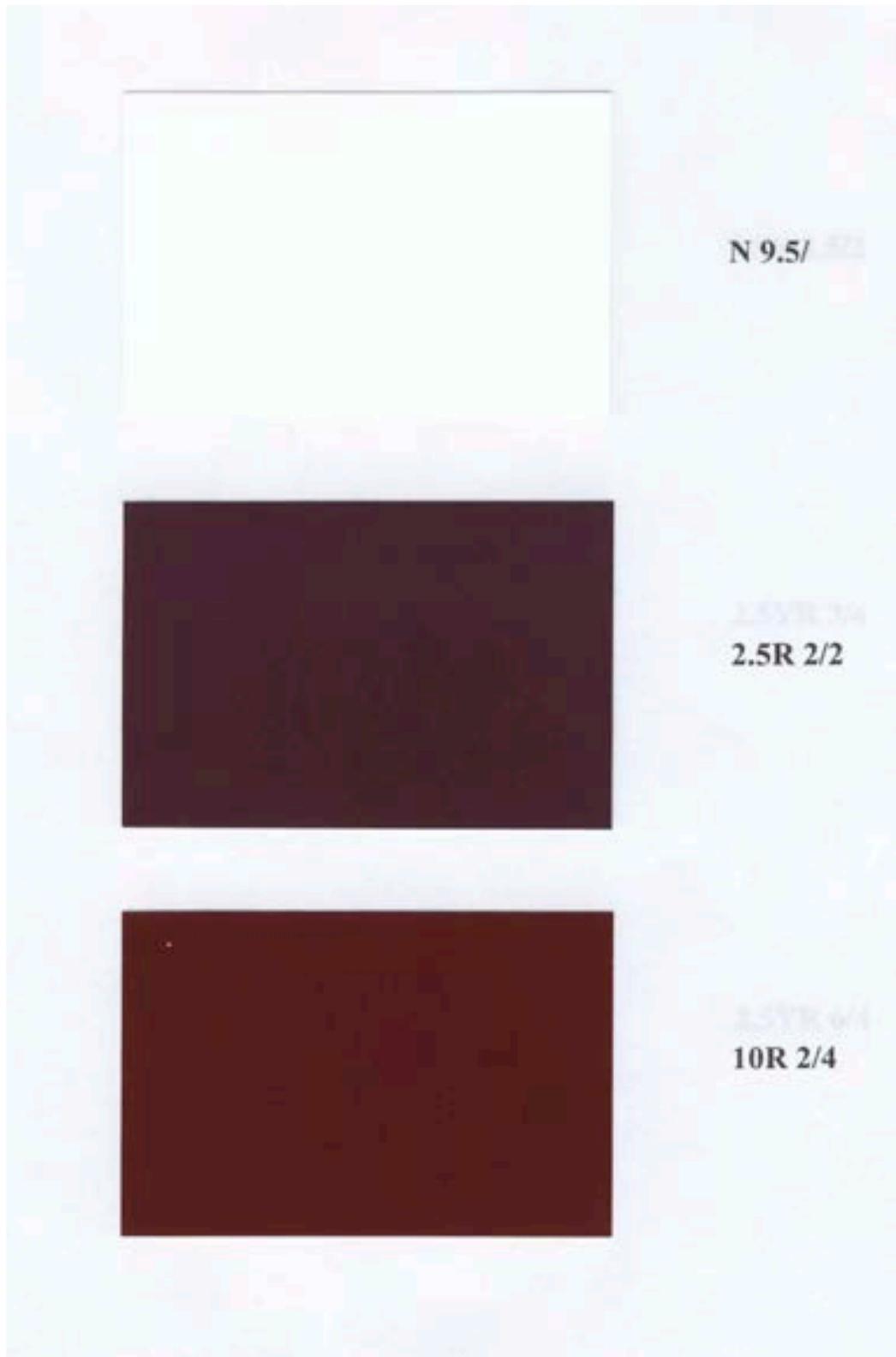
<b>Elements:</b>	Main Story: circa-1930-35 pews	Main Story: low platform, south end of sanctuary	Balcony Story: pews (wooden seats)—installed 1956?
<b>Paint Samples:</b>	P126	P127	P141
<b>Substrates:</b>	Wood	Wood	Wood
<b>Circa Dates:</b>	1930-35	1970?	Unknown
1921-22			
1930-35	Dark Shellac		
1956			Light Shellac
Extant 1968			
1970	Clear Varnish	Brown Stain Clear Varnish	

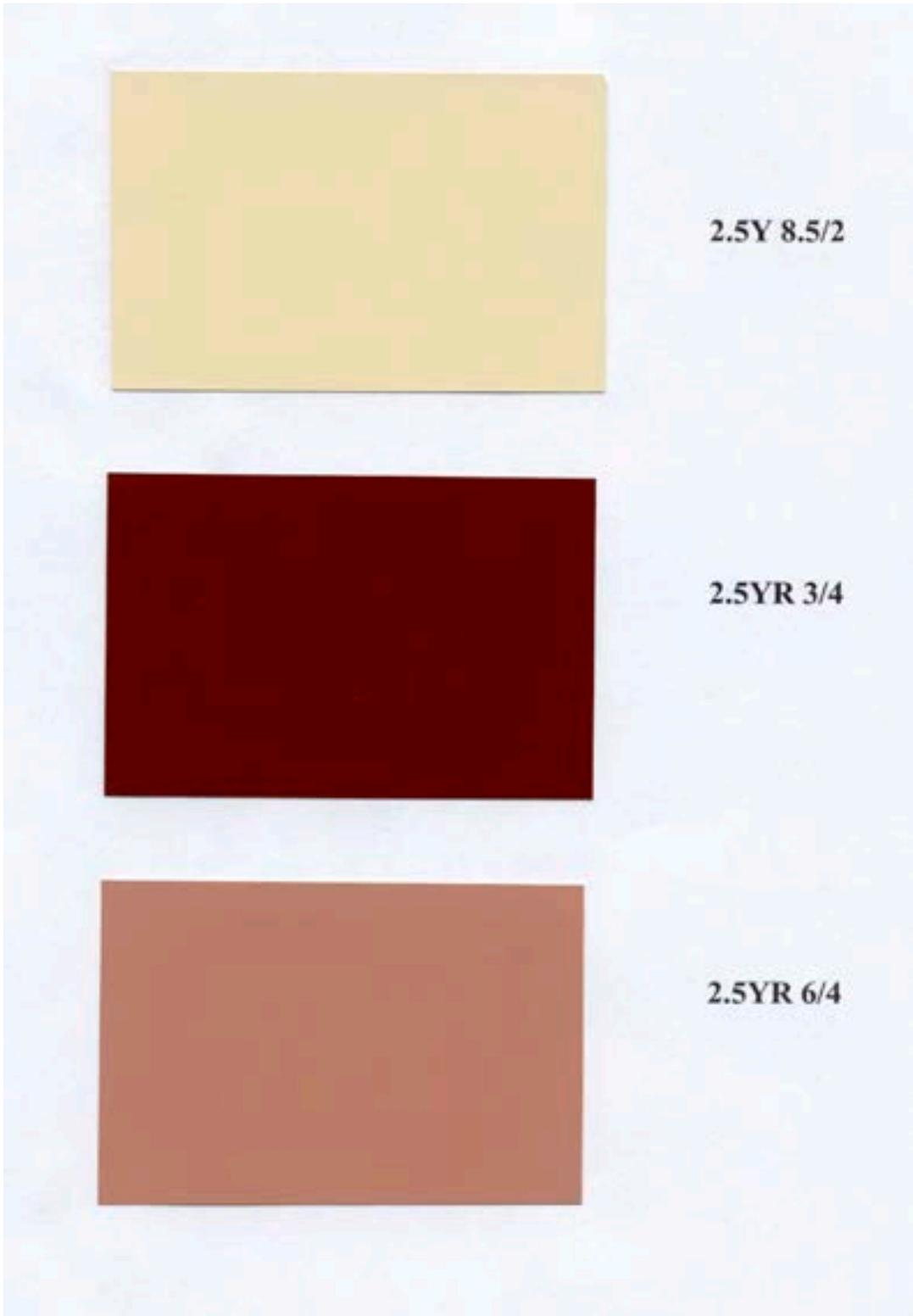
**ATTACHMENT D:**

**Munsell Color Swatches**



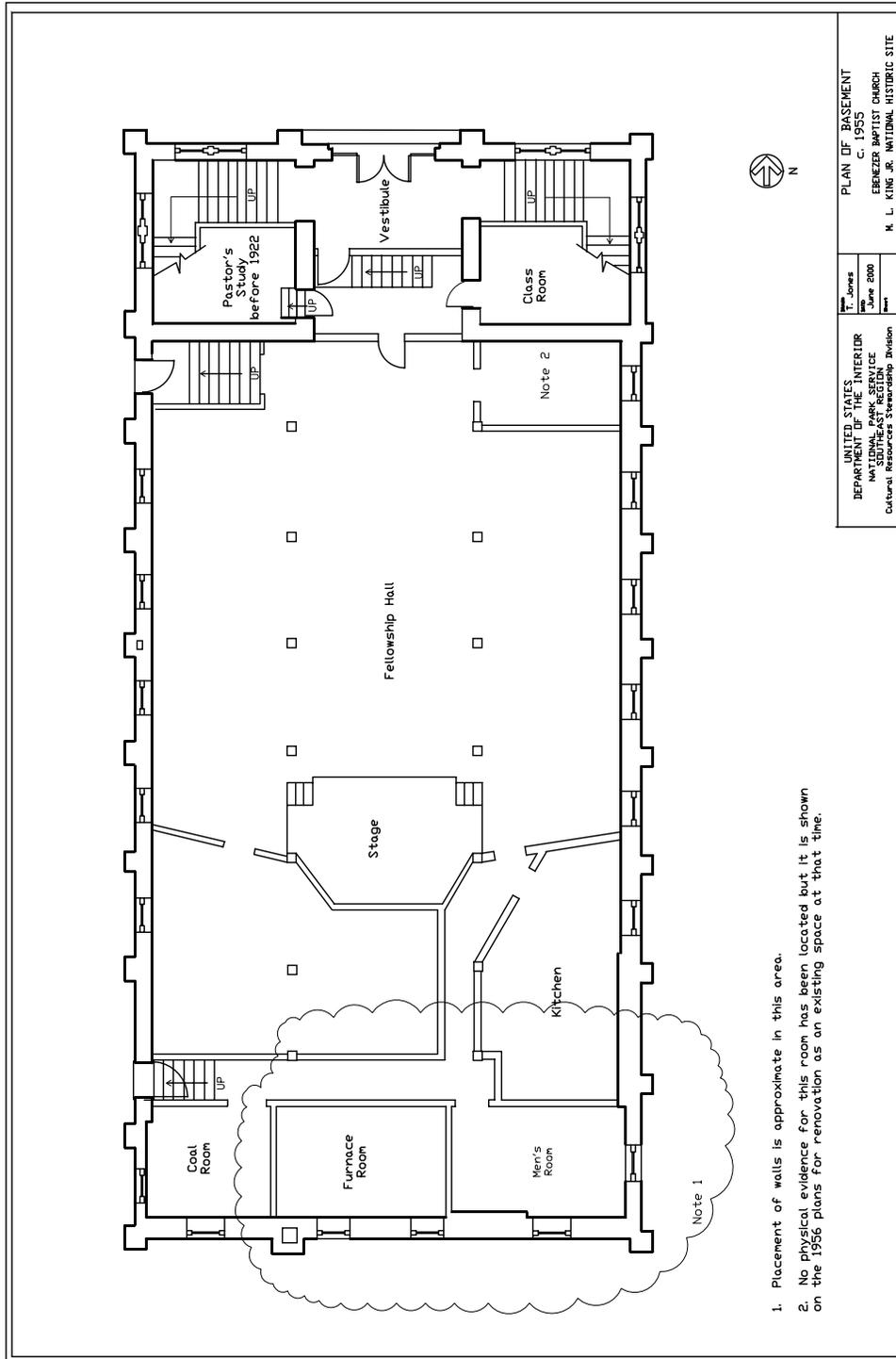
APPENDIX D

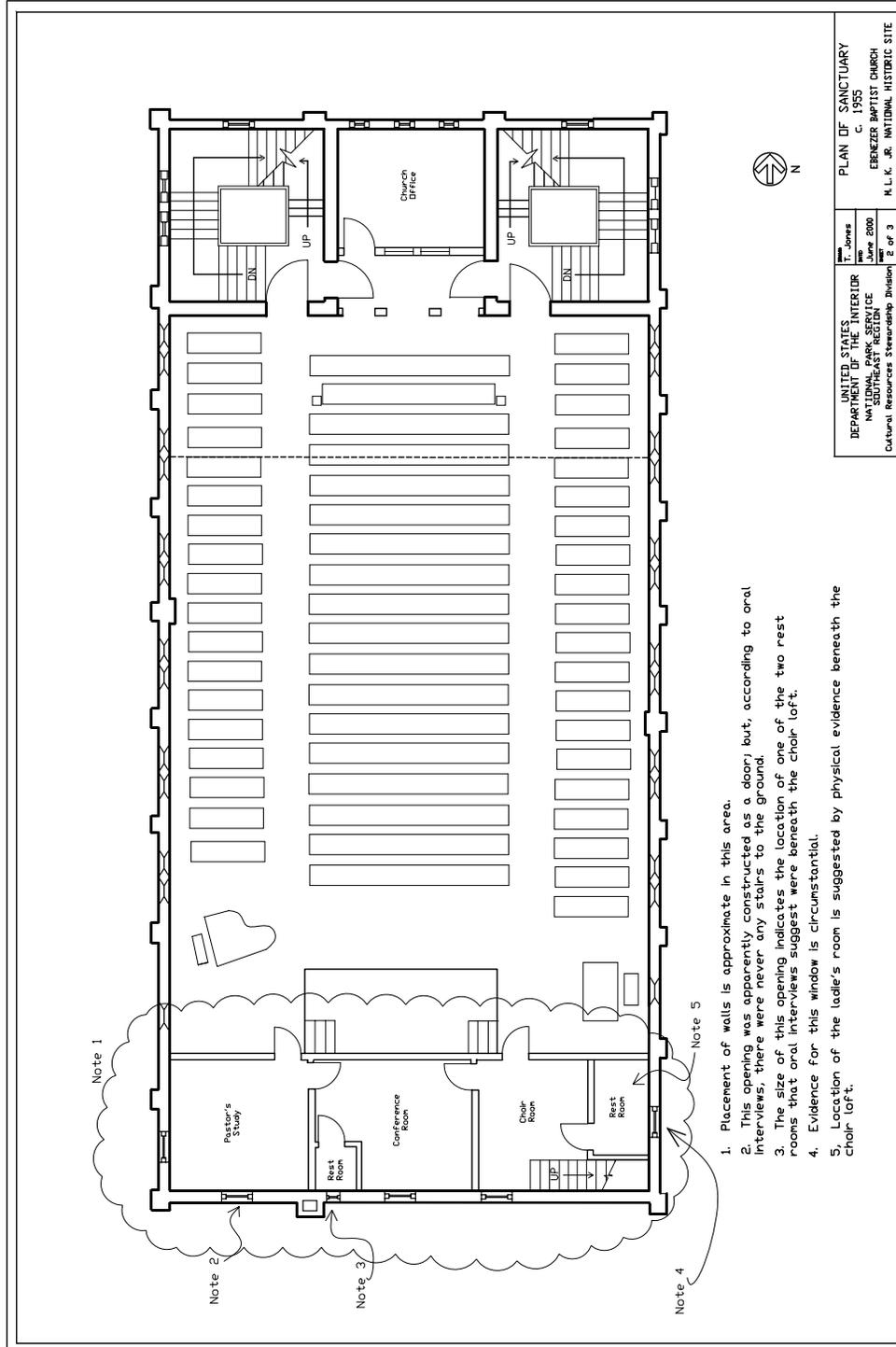


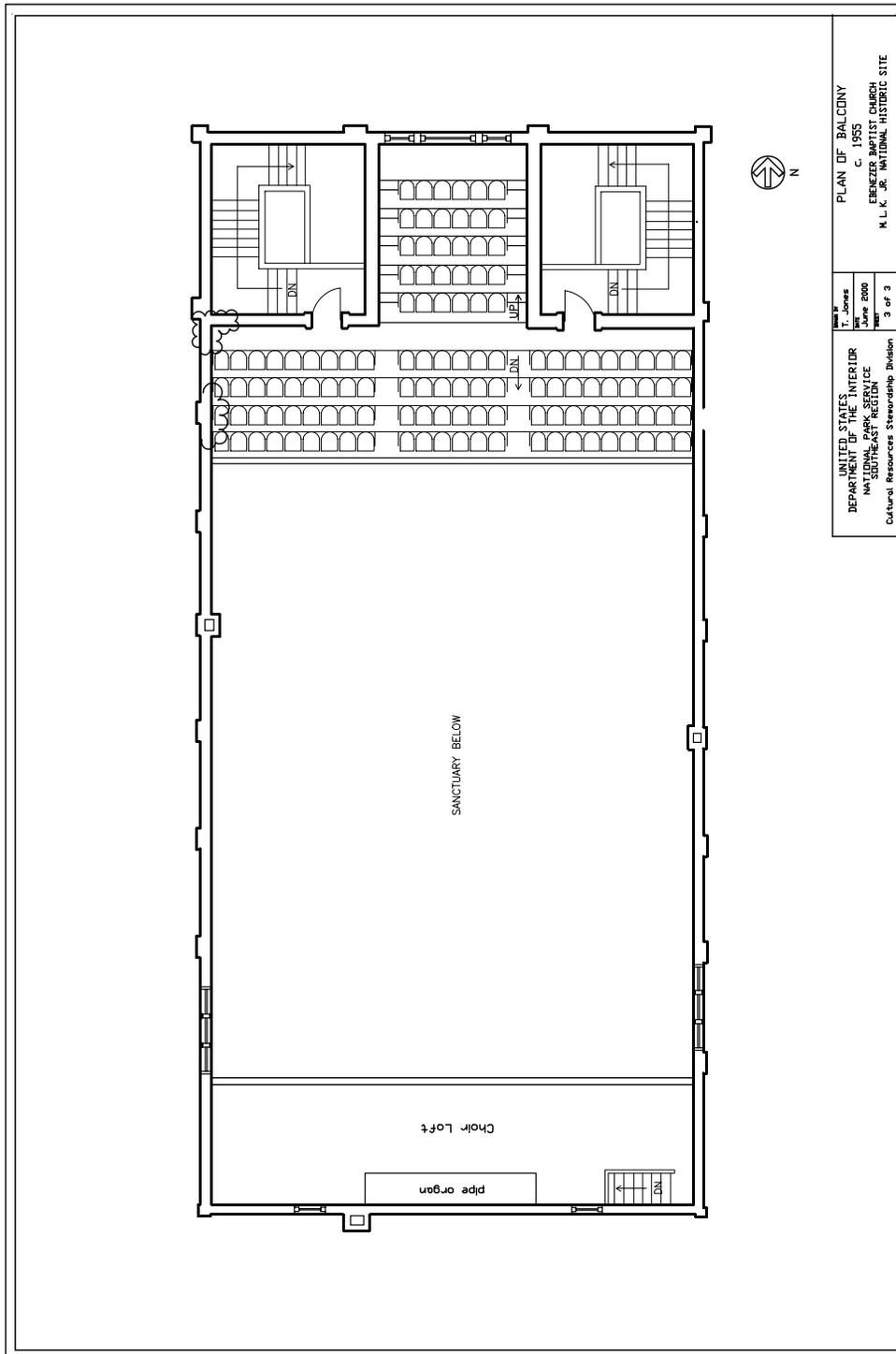


# Drawings

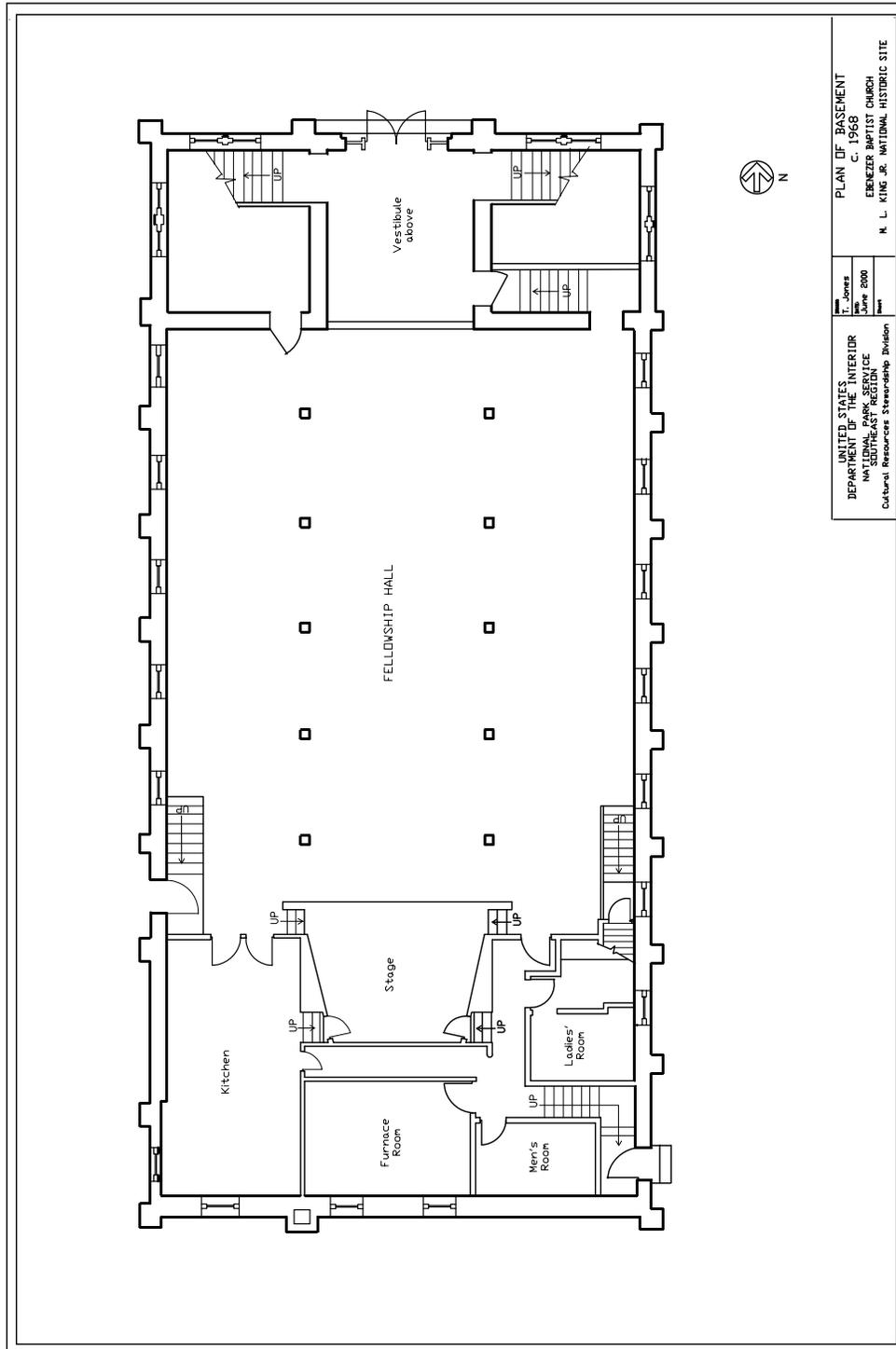
-1955 & 1968 Reconstructed Plans  
delineated by Tommy Jones,  
Architectural Historian



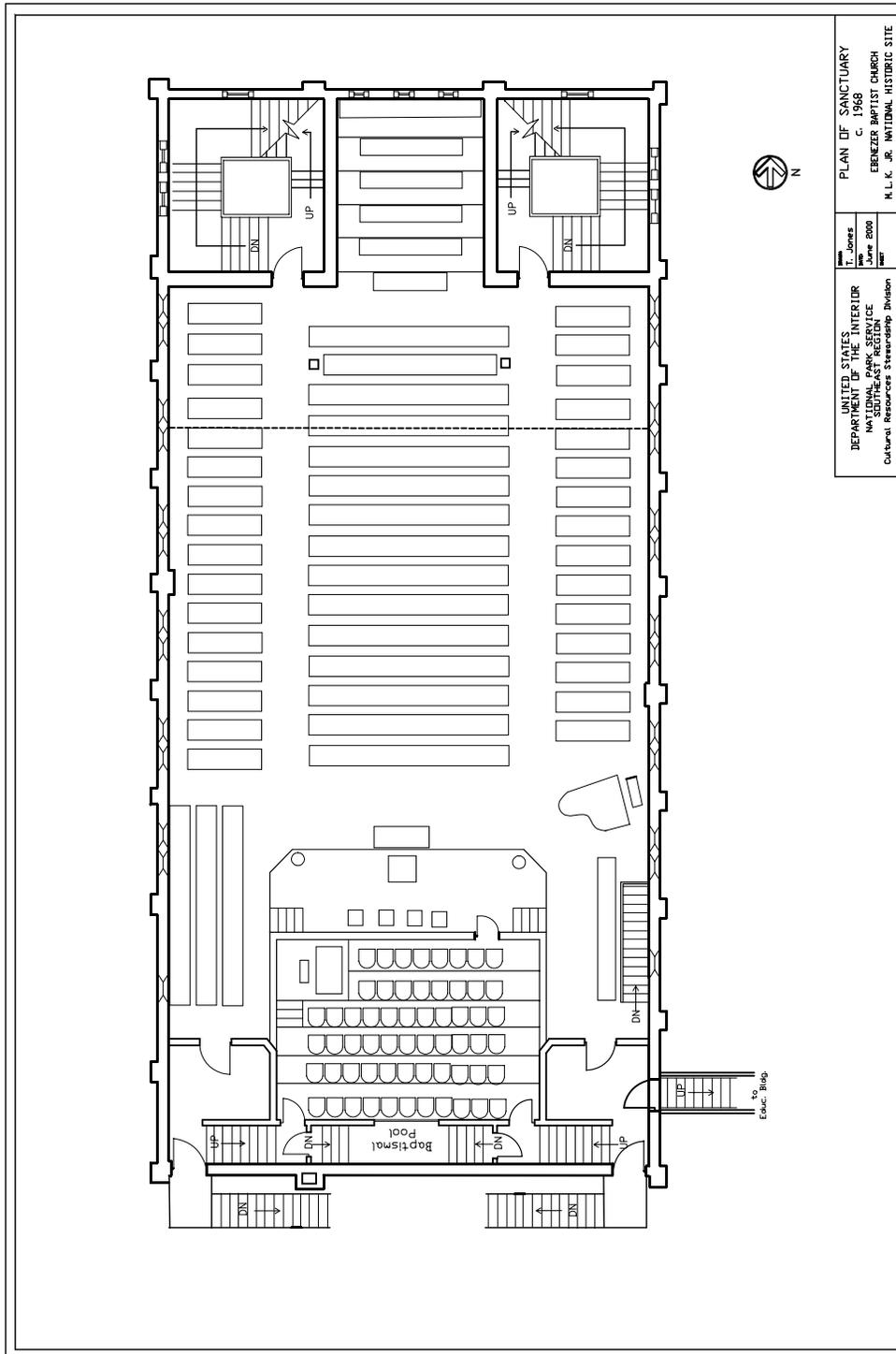


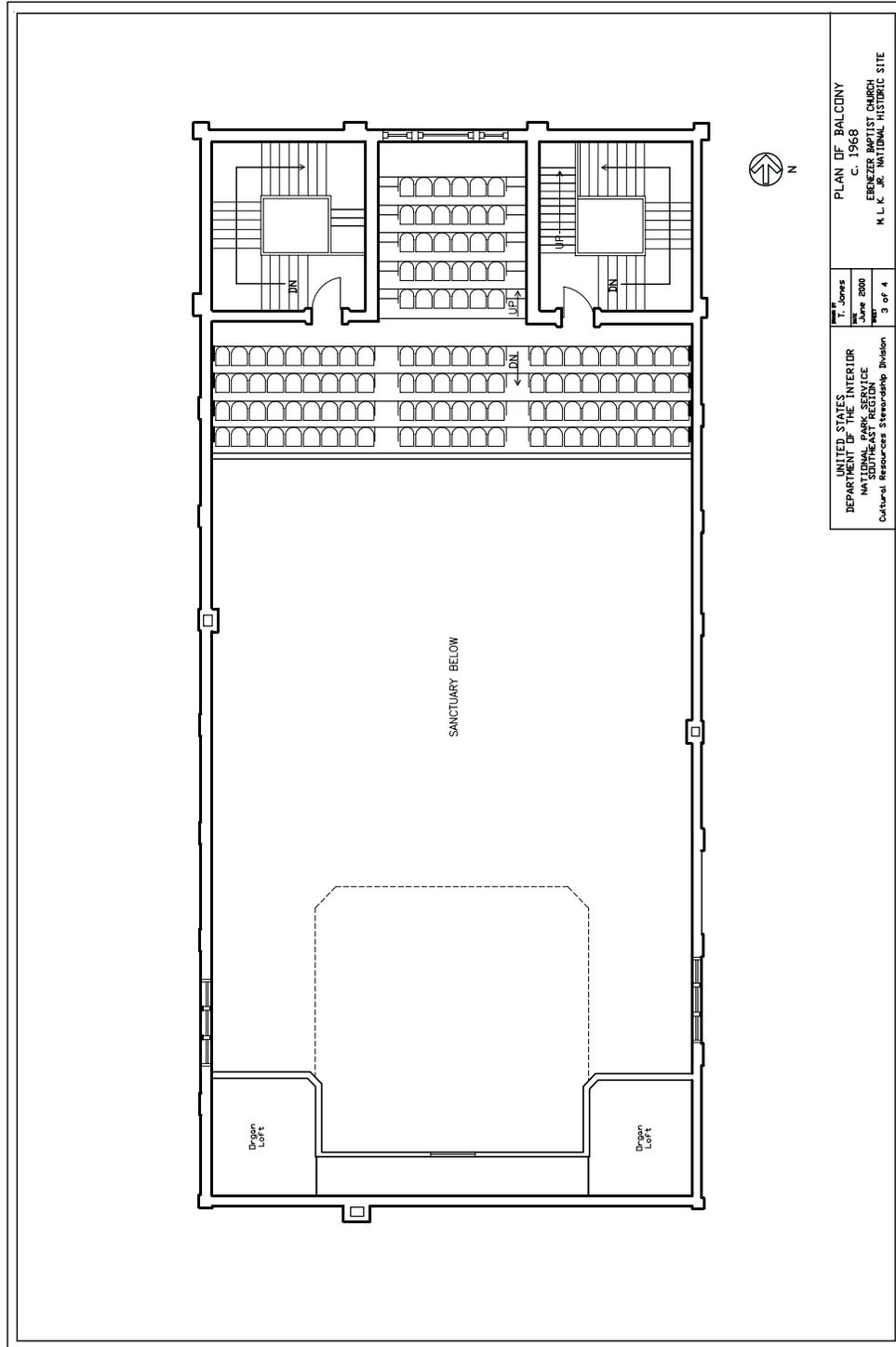


UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SOUTHEAST REGION Cultural Resources Stewardship Division		Drawn by Jones Date June 2000	Title PLAN OF BALCONY C. 1955 EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH M.L.K., JR. NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
		No. 1 of 3	



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SOUTHEAST REGION Cultural Resource Stewardship Division		Date: T. Jones June 2000	PLAN OF BASEMENT c. 1968 EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH N. L. KING JR. NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
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UNITED STATES  
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
 SOUTH-EAST REGION  
 Cultural Resources Stewardship Division

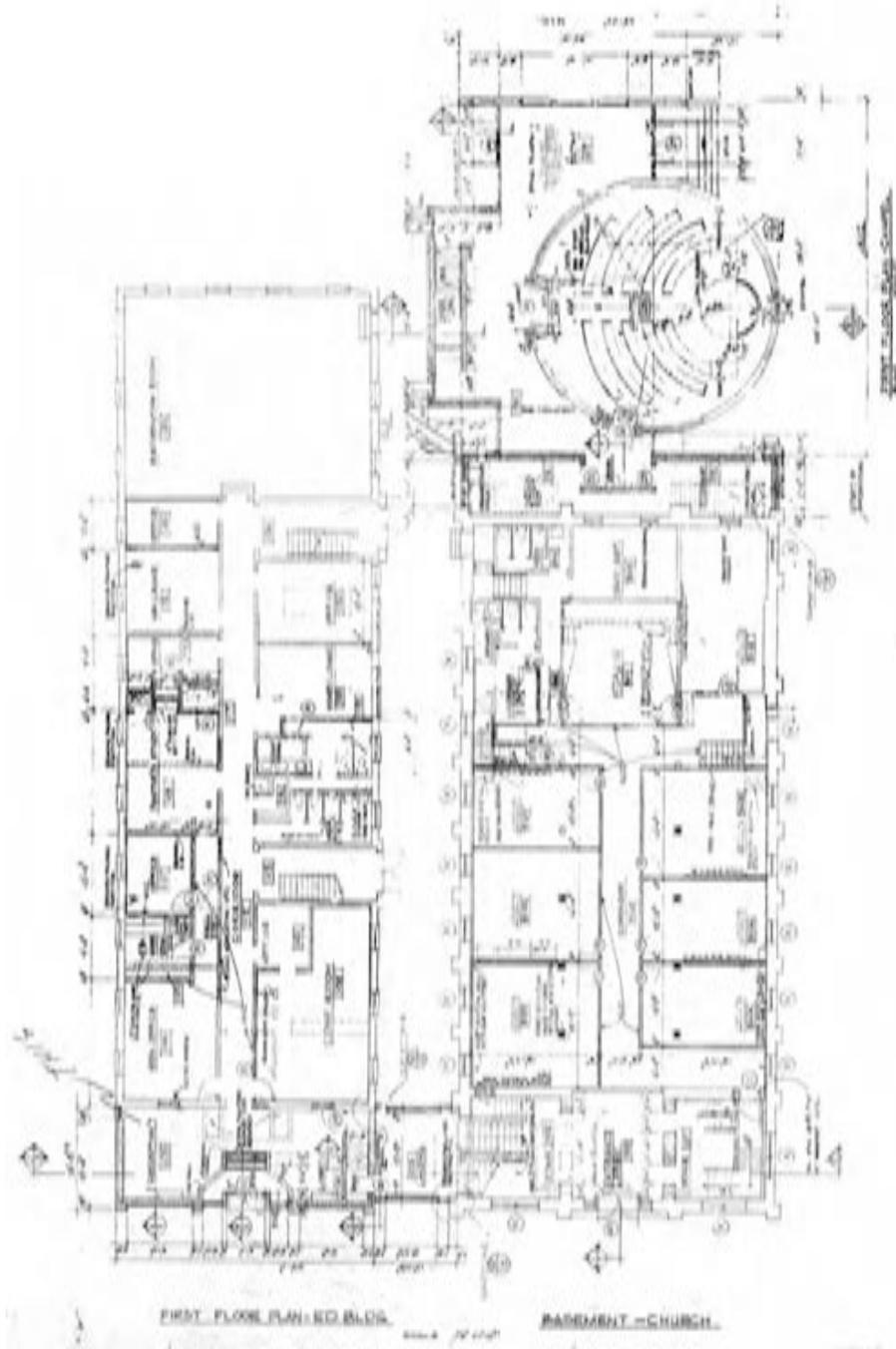
PLAN OF BALCONY  
 C. 1968  
 EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH  
 M. L. K. J. NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Date: T. Jones  
 Date: 2000  
 Page: 3 of 4

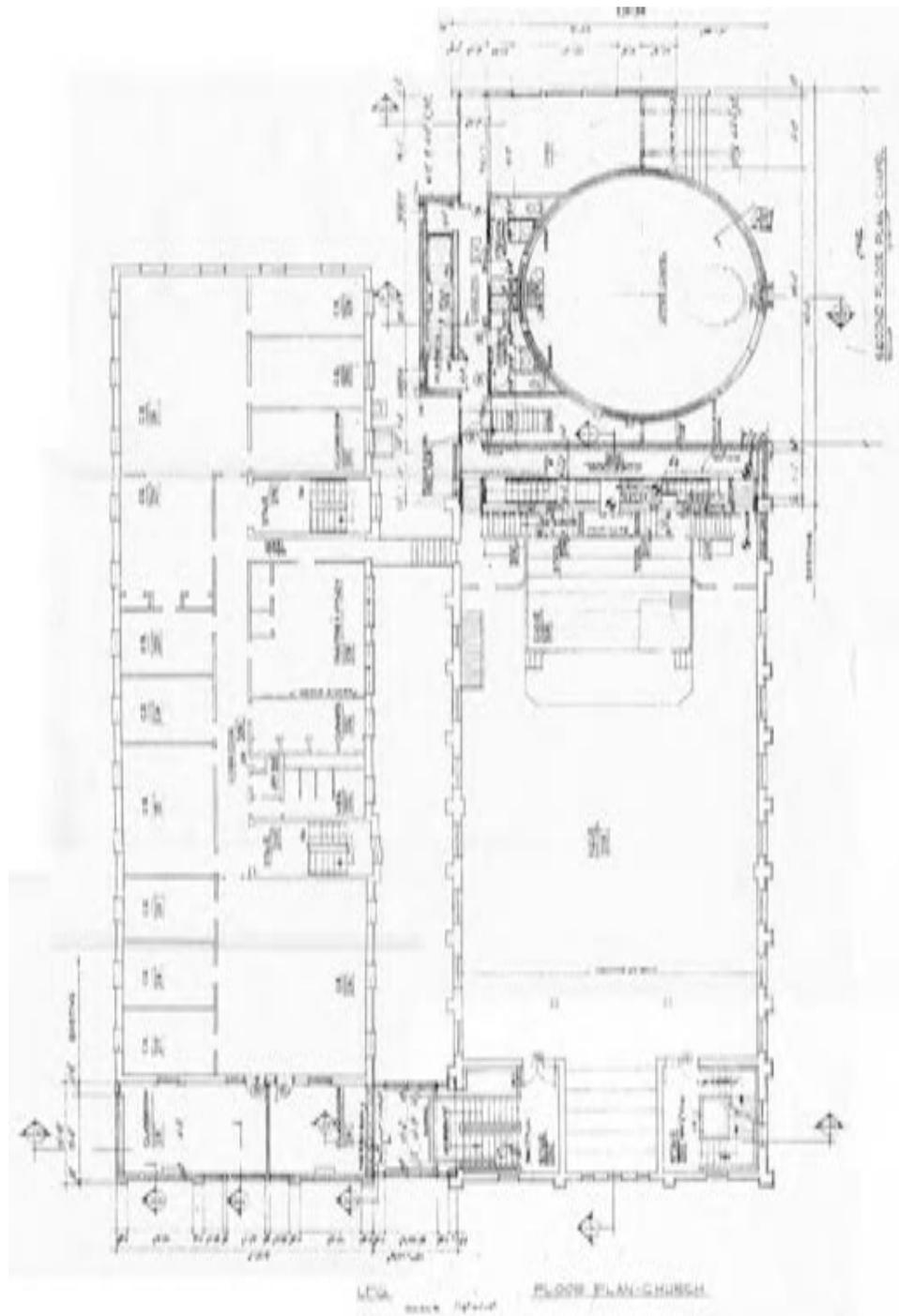


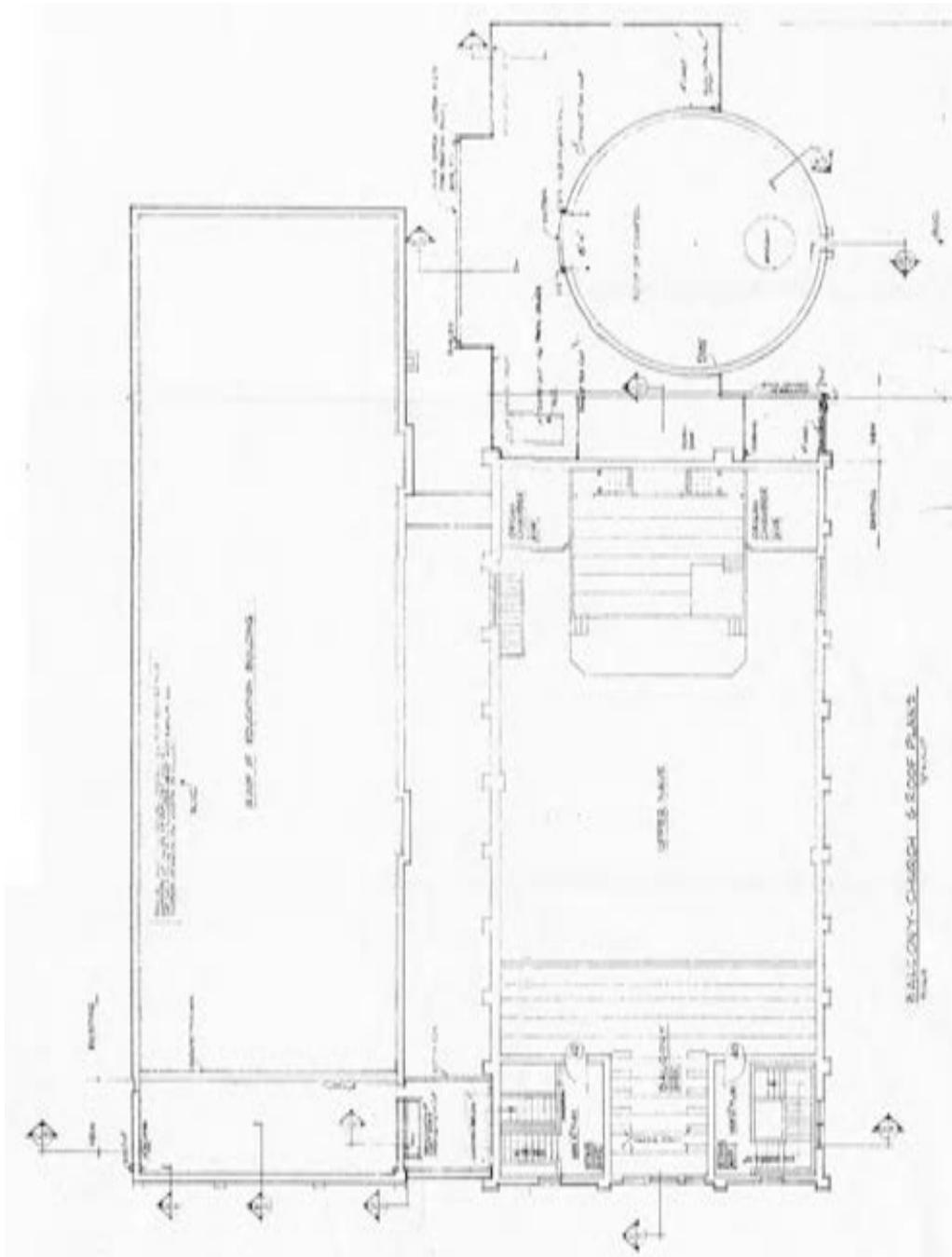
# Drawings

-1970 Plans for Renovation  
Muldawer & Patterson with J.W. Robinson,  
Architects

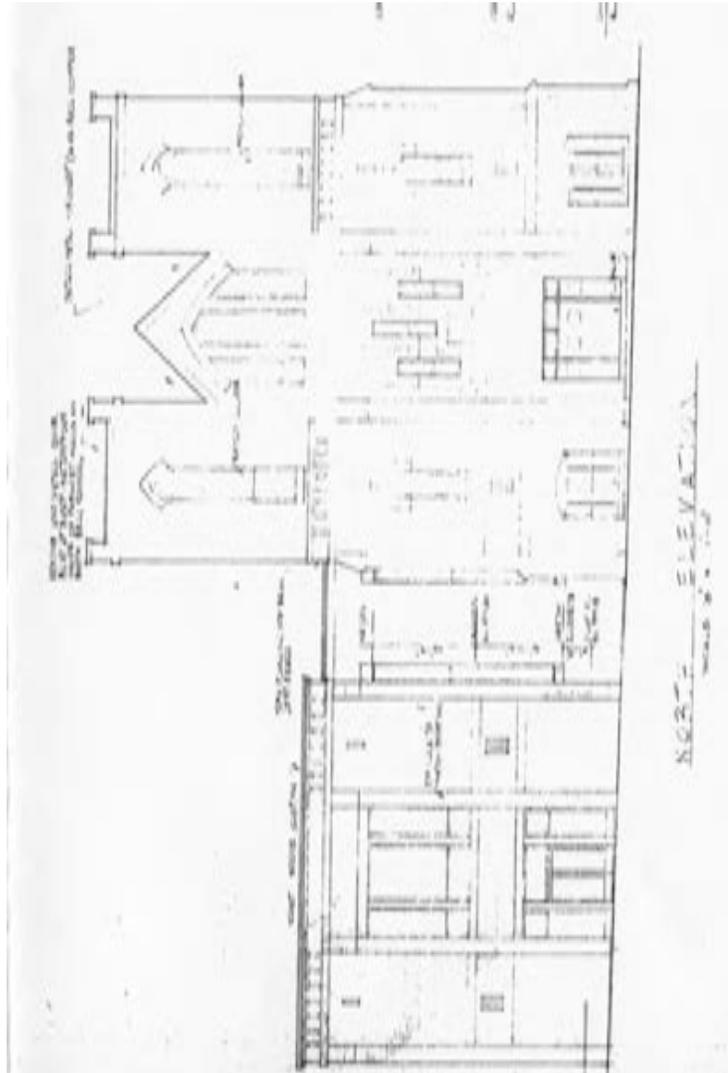


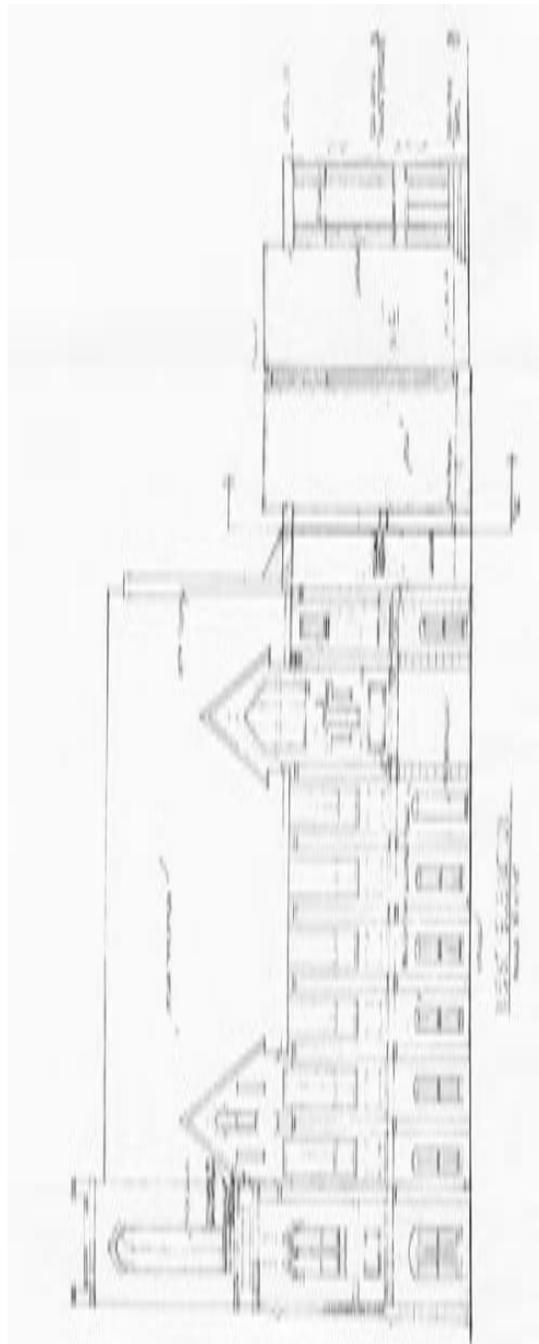
APPENDIX E



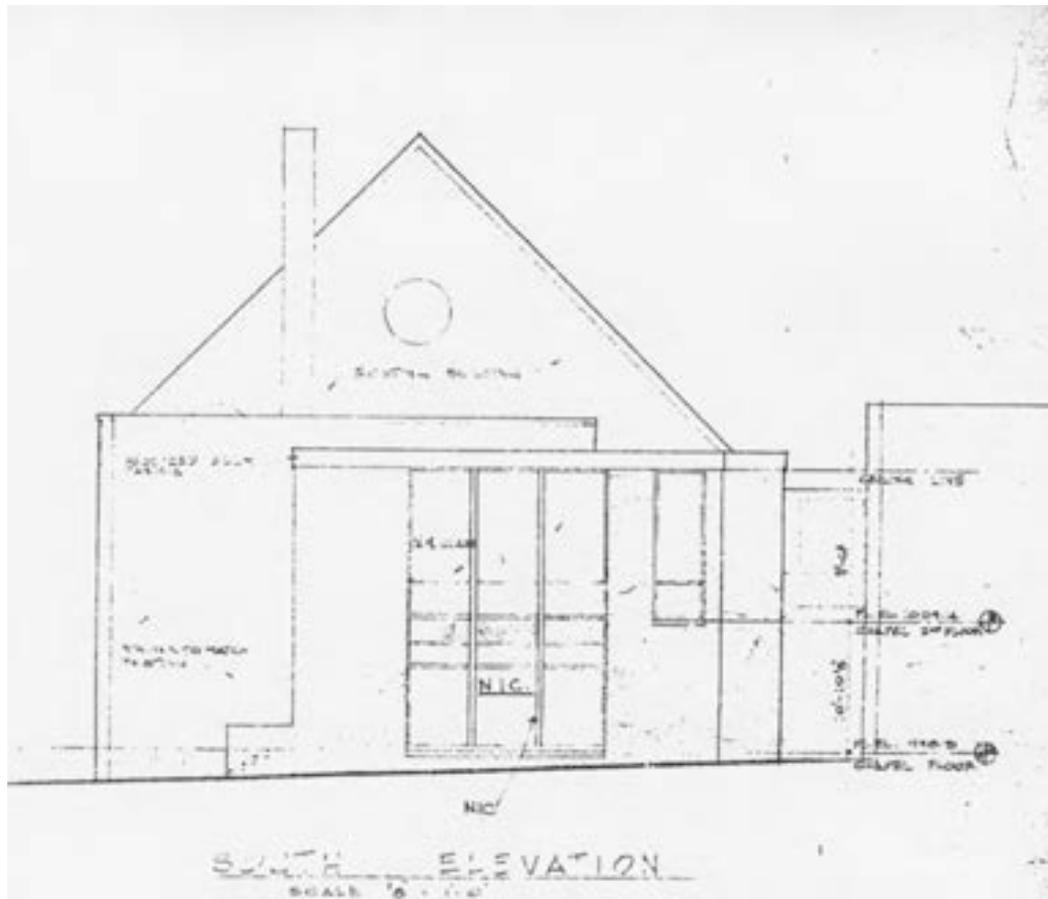


APPENDIX E





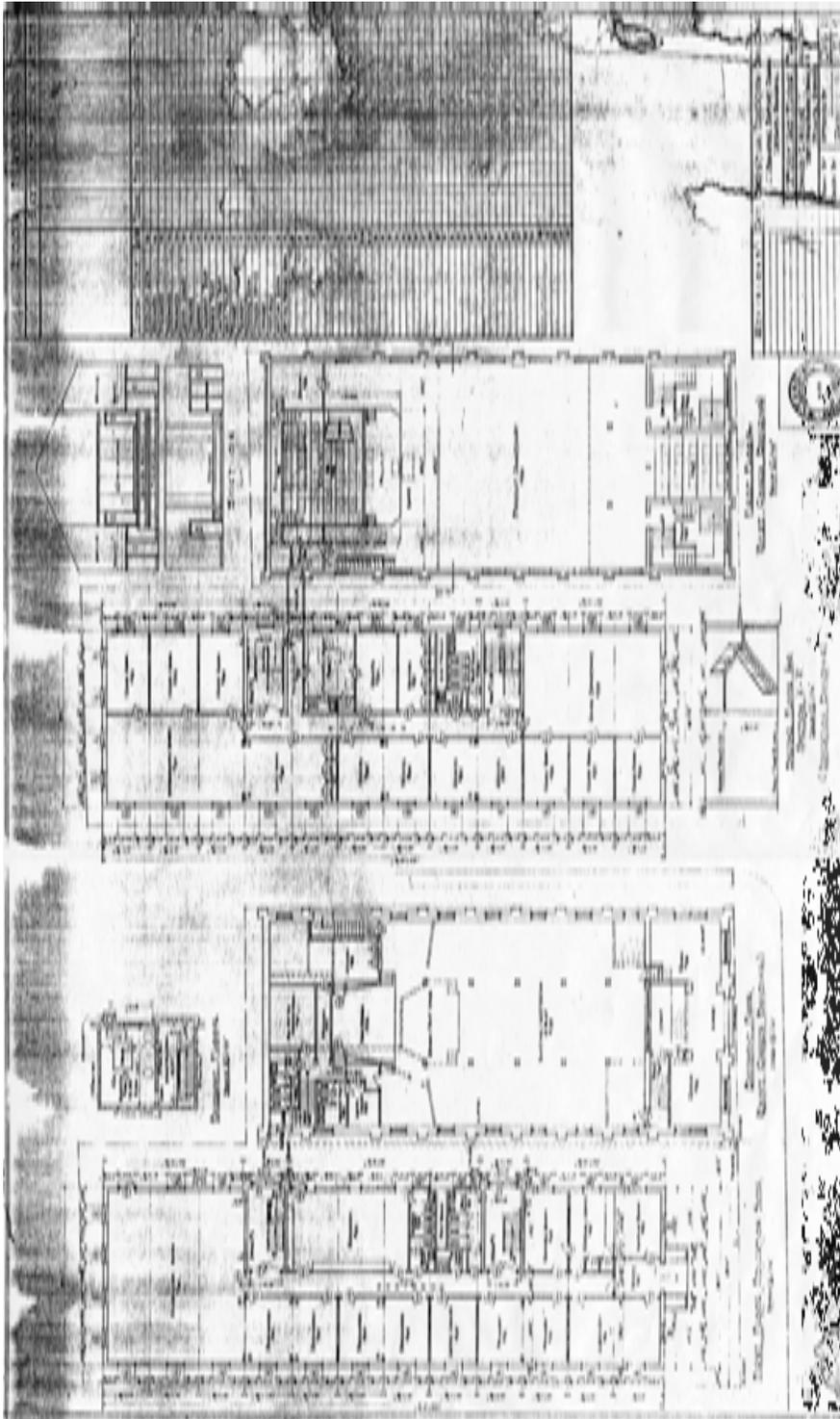
APPENDIX E





# Drawings

-1956 Plans for Renovation  
Edward C. Miller, Architect





**A**s the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

