

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 830 North Benton Avenue [N/A] not for publication

city or town Springfield [N/A] vicinity

state MO code MO county Greene code 077 zip code 65802

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/ Deputy SHPO

Date 11/10/01

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Name of Property

Greene County, Missouri
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage--Black

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance

1922-1951

Significant Dates

1922

1926

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Name of Property

Greene County, Missouri
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
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Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Ethnic Heritage--Black

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- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Name of Property

Greene County, Missouri
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	[15]	[47][45][20]	[4][1][1][8][8][0][0]	2	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting		Northing			
3	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
4	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard Lee Burton, President
organization Historic Springfield, Inc. date April 10, 2001
street & number P.O. Box 50305 telephone (417) 831-2627
city or town Springfield state MO zip code 65805-0305

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the complete form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Trustees, Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church ATTN: Mr. John Jamison
street & number 830 North Benton Avenue telephone (417) 864-8815
city or town Springfield state MO zip code 65802

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Summary:

Benton Avenue African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church is a two-story tile block and brick Late 19th & 20th Century Revival style church building, with an eclectic presentation of Classical and Modern details and a rectangular plan. Construction of the building began in 1922 and was completed in 1926. It is located at 830 North Benton Avenue, in Springfield, Greene County, Missouri. The church is situated on the southern boundary of the Midtown Historic Neighborhood at the southeast corner of the intersection of North Benton Avenue and East Central Street. Historically, it was a part of the vital African-American community that resided in this area north of the Jordan Creek Valley in the Late 19th/Early 20th Century. It replaces an earlier wood frame church building constructed in 1877 on the same site. The church building is constructed of tile block covered in brick in a stretcher bond and has terra cotta and limestone detailing. It has a medium-pitched gable roof with asphalt shingles. In total, the building reflects a unique and engaging variety of Period Revival styles countered by elements of Modern design. Triangulated parapets with white terra-cotta coping rise above the pediments at the primary west and rear east elevations and above the central bay at each of the side south and north elevations, invoking Jacobethan Revival style influences. Louvered oculi beneath the triangulated parapets provide attic ventilation. The building has several banding treatments, including a decorative cornice band of white terra-cotta found at the primary west elevation above the second story and a flat band of soldier bonded brick at the rear east elevation. Both second story bands wrap to projecting bays on the side elevations. A simple flat band of soldier bonded brick on top of limestone block wraps around the building below the first story. The primary west and side south and north elevations have symmetrical fenestration. Its original windows are intact and are double-hung wood sash with translucent patterned glass and limestone sills. The large nave windows at the side elevations have Romanesque Revival style arches formed by fan lights, with limestone keystones above. A small rectangular Art Deco-influenced porch at the main entrance is supported by square brick pilasters and columns with distinctive limestone detailing. It has a flat roof with a wood cornice and dentil molding. A side entry at the east side of the side north elevation has a decorative Greek Revival style limestone doorway. The building rests on a concrete foundation. The original building floorplan is unchanged. It consists of a vestibule at the main entrance that provides access to the large open sanctuary and chancel in the nave and the balcony above. Offices are located on the first and second floor at the east of the building behind the chancel. A large fellowship area in the full finished basement is currently used for worship during the winter months to control heating costs. The building's exterior and interior remain virtually unaltered, aside from surface maintenance. Therefore, it retains intact its integrity of design, materials, craftsmanship and location. A small one-story wood frame ranch-style building is located at the east side of the property and is a non-contributing building. It originally served as the parsonage, but is now leased for commercial use.

Elaboration:

Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church is situated on the southern boundary of the Midtown Historic Neighborhood at the southeast corner of the intersection of North Benton Avenue and East Central Street. It replaces an earlier wood frame church building constructed on the same site in 1877 and enlarged in 1886. The

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Midtown National Register Historic District (listed July 13, 1989) and the campus of Drury University are located directly north across East Central. Stone Chapel (*c. 1880-92*), owned by Drury University and individually listed on the National Register on October 21, 1982, is opposite Benton Avenue A.M.E. on the northeast corner of the intersection. The expanding Drury University campus continues to the east of the church property, including the site of Washington Avenue Baptist Church (National Register listing December 22, 2000; demolished January 2001) to the southeast. Modern commercial buildings are located south of the Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church building. The area directly west across North Benton is known as the Government Plaza District. Central High School, built in 1893 in the Richardsonian Romanesque style and later greatly enlarged and altered, is at the northwest corner of the intersection. Further west on East Central are found the Midtown Carnegie Branch Library (*c. 1903*), the First Church of Christian Scientists (*c. 1915*) and the Greene County Courthouse (*c. 1912*). The southern tier of East Central west of Benton Avenue A.M.E. is almost fully occupied by the City Government Plaza, including the U.S. Custom House and Post Office (*c. 1891-94*) or "Old City Hall. These historic buildings are connected by large areas of surface parking and some modern construction. Historically, Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church is a part of the vital African-American community that resided in this area north of the Jordan Creek Valley in the Late 19th/Early 20th Century. The Church was once surrounded by bungalow style homes, small businesses and the segregated school. These domestic, commercial and public buildings have been lost to institutional development.

The subject property is a distinctive example of a church building in the Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals style, presenting an engaging contrast of nostalgia, created through Classical details and traditional materials, and Modern ingenuity, presented in interesting Art Deco forms. It is a two-story tile block and brick building with a full basement, and is three bays wide and 5 bays deep. The building's original rectangular plan (43-½ feet wide and 60 feet deep) is unaltered and consists of a large nave with sanctuary and chancel that fill the two stories, a stacked vestibule and balcony at the west and offices and interior staircase behind the chancel at the east. It is set at the northwest corner of the lot at a 32-foot setback from the street at the east and north. Original cut limestone curbs are still found at the street. Pour concrete sidewalks cross the east and north boundaries. A poured concrete sidewalk leads to the main west-facing entrance. A modern detached sign (In Memory of Mrs. Blanche Duffie) is angled at the corner. The lot has a slight grade, sloping down west to east. A loose gravel drive runs across the south boundary from the North Benton Avenue at the west and follows the property around the east exiting onto East Central at the north.

It has a medium-pitched gable roof covered in black asphalt shingles. The roof decking is 1" X 6" tongue-and-groove board. A large steel ventilation stack with a decorative scrolled terminus is found at the east side of the roof's south face and is still operable. A brick chimney, which supported the building's original coal furnace, was once at the southeast corner, but has been partially removed. Triangulated parapets with intermittent steps, reflecting the influence of Jacobethan Revival design, rise above the pediments at the primary west and rear east elevations and wrap around each of the sides. A smaller triangulated parapet is

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
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centered above the third bay at each of the side south and north elevations. The first and fifth bays on the side south and north elevations project slightly and have flat parapet walls at the roofline. The pediment parapets and side pediment walls are capped with white terracotta coping. The building has several banding treatments, including a decorative cornice band of white terra-cotta found at the primary west elevation above the second story and a flat band of soldier bonded brick at the rear east elevation. A simple flat band of soldier bonded brick on top of limestone blocks wraps around the building below the first story.

The exterior brick walls are constructed of tile block covered in brick in a stretcher bond. Corners of the building are punctuated with limestone quoins. Iron tie-rods running south to north support the walls below the second story at the west and below the roofline at the east ends of the building. The primary west and side south and north elevations have symmetrical fenestration. Windows are double-hung wood sash with translucent patterned glass and limestone sills. Those at the west façade are double windows with multiple four-over-two top sashes and single-paned bottom sashes. First story windows have limestone lintels. Basement windows at the façade and the central bays of the side elevations are double with four-over-two paned top and bottom sashes. The second third and fourth bays of the side south and north elevations have large arched Romanesque Revival style openings formed by double windows with fanlights above. The main entrance is at the façade's central bay and is covered by a rectangular porch of Art Deco design. It has a flat roof with wood trim and dentil molding. The porch is supported on square brick pilasters and columns with limestone detailing, which rise above the porch roof forming free-standing piers. A Greek Revival style limestone doorway marks a basement entry at the east end of the side north elevation. The full basement has a large fellowship hall, kitchen and bathrooms. It is used for worship services during the winter months to control heating costs. The building rests on a concrete foundation. It is exposed following the west-to-east slope of the lot.

West Elevation:

The west-facing facade is of tile block and brick construction laid in a stretcher bond. It is symmetrically fenestrated and has three bays. A small porch at the second central bay defines the main entrance. A triangulated parapet with intermittent steps and a flat terminus rises above the gable pediment and continues to the side elevations. It is capped with white terra-cotta coping. Two louvered oculi are centered side-by-side beneath the triangulated pediment, providing attic ventilation. A sculpted metal grille in a rosetta pattern is in front of each of the wood louvers. Each oculus has a brick border in a soldier bond, with a limestone keystone placed at each 90° point around its circumference.

A decorative cornice band of white terra-cotta is found above the second story and wraps around to the side elevations. It forms the arched header for each of the three symmetrically placed double windows beneath. The second story windows are double-hung, wood sash with translucent patterned glass. The top sashes have multiple four-over-two panes, while the bottom sashes are single paned. The windows have limestone sills (*See Photos 1 and 2*).

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

The main entrance to the church is centered at the second bay. A staircase with 6 limestone steps rises to a poured concrete rectangular stoop. Low brick piers with poured concrete caps are found on either side of the staircase. The entrance has double doors with a single transom with translucent patterned glass above. The current doors are modern metal with three-over-three panes, which replace the original paneled wood doors still retained by the property owners. The height and width of the entrance door opening is unchanged. A small rectangular porch covers the main entrance and has a flat roof with a wood cornice and dentil molding. It is supported by square brick pilasters and columns with distinctive limestone detailing. Beneath the roof, the pilasters and columns have cut limestone blocks providing the appearance of capitals in an interesting Art Deco style. The pilasters and columns rise above the porch roof and have a limestone cap and quoins. Their bases have limestone quoins(See Photo 3).

A double window is on either side of the main entrance at the first and third bays of the first story. These windows are centered beneath and identical to the second story windows, except they have flat limestone lintels. At the basement level, double windows are centered beneath first story windows at the first and third bays. These are double-hung wood sash, with both sashes having four-over-two panes. The flat soldier bonded brick and limestone band that wraps around the building beneath the first story serves as the header for the basement windows. The partially exposed poured concrete foundation serves as their sills. The cornerstone is located at the northwest corner of the building just above the soldier bonded brick and limestone band (See Photo 4).

Cornerstone

<p>August 27, 1922</p>	<p>Benton Ave. A.M.E. Church Trustees F. McCullah Jno. Haywood Lizzie Perkins J.S. Hardrick H. Bedell V.J. Foster Geo. Abernathy H.A. Britton S.A.G. Campbell, Secy. F.F. Moten, Pastor</p>
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(North Face)

(West Face)

South Elevation:

The side south elevation is rectangular and symmetrically fenestrated. It has five bays with the first and fifth bays at the west and east ends projecting slightly as continuations of the primary and rear elevations. The west first bay has a flat parapet wall at the roofline capped with white terra-cotta coping. The white terra-cotta cornice continues from the primary west elevation across the first bay and serves as the arched header for a second story paired window. Like those on the second story of the primary elevation, this is a double

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
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window with double-hung wood sashes and translucent patterned glass. The top sash has multiple four-over-two panes, while the bottom sash is single paned. The window has a limestone sill. The first story and basement of the first bay each has a smaller single window centered beneath the second story double window. The soldier bonded brick and limestone band between the first story and basement continues from the primary elevation and across the entire side south elevation. Limestone quoins above the band further punctuate the projecting first bay (*See Photo 5*).

A triangulated parapet, similar in style but smaller in scale to those found on the primary and rear elevations, is centered at the roofline above the third bay. A single louvered oculus with sculpted metal grille and a soldier bonded brick border and limestone keystones is centered beneath this parapet. The second, third and fourth bays each have a large arched Romanesque Revival style window opening that rises to fill the first and second stories. This arched opening is filled with a double window and fanlight above. The window is double hung wood sash with translucent patterned glass. Both top and bottom sashes are single paned. The arched opening is supported with a soldier bonded brick voussoir and limestone keystone. It has a limestone sill that rests on slightly projecting limestone brackets. The three central bays each have a double window at the basement level and directly beneath the large arched window openings. These windows are identical to that at the basement of the façade.

The projecting east fifth bay has a flat parapet wall at the roofline capped with white terra-cotta coping. A flat band of soldier bonded brick continues from the rear east elevation across the fifth bay and serves as the header for the second story single window beneath. The first story window is repeated from the first bay. Limestone quoins are found at the fifth bay above the flat brick and limestone band below the first floor that continues to the rear of the building. A stair well is centered beneath the first story window and leads to a basement door with a transom above. Original exposed steel gutters run between the side parapet walls and the triangulated parapet at the center. Modern galvanized downspouts run alongside the inside of the projecting first and fifth bays.

East Elevation:

The rear east elevation has asymmetrical fenestration. The windows at the second and first story and basement across four bays follow the course of the interior rear staircase. Like the façade, the rear elevation has a triangulated parapet with intermittent steps and a flat terminus that rises above the gable pediment and continues to the side elevations. It is capped with white terra-cotta coping. A single oculus is centered beneath the parapet. A flat band of soldier bonded brick crosses the gable pediment and continues to the side elevations. It serves as the header for the second story windows beneath. The band is punctuated at the corners of the elevation with limestone quoins. The second story has a single window at each of the second and fourth bays. These are double-hung wood sash with translucent patterned glass. The top sash has multiple four-over-two panes and the bottom is single paned. They have limestone sills. The first story has a single window in each of the four bays. The second and fourth windows are centered beneath the second story windows. They are identical in detail to the first story windows of the façade, but vary in size. The

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
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first bay window of the first story is placed slightly higher than those of the other bays, which are in alignment. The flat brick and limestone band crosses the rear elevation between the first story and basement and serves as the header for two windows beneath. These windows are positioned off-center between the second-third and third-fourth bays and are single and double, respectively. A coal shoot with a cast iron door is located between the first and second bays. The concrete foundation is exposed (about 8 inches).

North Elevation:

The side north elevation is virtually identical to the south in reverse. One exception is a side basement entry at the east first bay centered below the first story window. It has a decorative classically styled Greek temple limestone doorway, consisting of a pediment header supported by two half columns on either side of the door. The columns have Doric capitals and tall flat bases. This doorway might generally be considered highly ornamental for a basement entry. However, its detail is understandable, as it served as the main entrance for the congregation during the three years it met in the basement for worship services until the upper floors were completed in 1926. Another exception is that on this elevation, unlike the side south elevation, the large arched window openings are connected by a band of limestone block. The sculpted metal rosetta grille is missing from the oculus on this elevation (*See Photo 6*).

Interior:

The building's original rectangular floorplan is unchanged (*See Figures 1-3*). It consists of a vestibule at the main entrance that provides access to the large open sanctuary and chancel in the nave and the balcony above. Offices are located on the first and second floor at the east of the building behind the chancel. A large fellowship hall in the full finished basement is currently used for worship during the winter months to control heating costs. Bathrooms are located at the west end of the basement. A small entry, kitchen and mechanical room are at the east. An interior staircases rises up north to south along the center of the back east wall from the basement to the second floor. The interior of the building has had some decorative alterations (e.g., modern lighting, vinyl floor surfaces, some paneling), which are reversible. The original stain-finished wood trim is all intact. It suffers from some delayed maintenance, which is currently being addressed through a building restoration effort. Overall, the building's interior retains its full integrity.

Entrance into the building is through the exterior double doors at the façade's central bay into an enclosed first floor vestibule. Matching staircases are located at each of the south and north sides of the main entrance. These stairs each rise eight steps toward the side building walls and have simple wood balustrades of stain-finished pine with a newel post and concave turned spindles. The landings at each side of the first floor vestibule lead through swinging stain-finished pine double doors into the nave. A second pair of matching staircases is found along the south and north exterior walls. These have an enclosed paneled balustrade stained pine and lead to the balcony at the second floor above the vestibule. They rise two steps toward the exterior walls, turn and rise toward the east thirteen steps to the balcony. A third pair of staircases is found adjacent east of the balcony stairs. These lead down to the basement. The plaster walls and ceiling are painted white. The vestibule's original stain-finished pine door and window casings are

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
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intact. The vestibule floors are carpeted, as are the stairs from the entrance and those to the basement. The stairs to the balcony are uncarpeted (*See Photo 7*).

The nave is entered through double doors to aisles on south and north sides of the sanctuary leading to the chancel at the east. The sanctuary has three columns of stained finished curved pews with carved end panels arranged to form an elliptical seating pattern. Each column has ten pews. The floor has a slight rake declining to the chancel. The sanctuary's original plaster walls and ceilings are painted white. The ceiling has six modern hanging globe light fixtures and a ceiling fan. The wood casings around the large arched window openings remain stain-finished. The aisles are carpeted, while the floor areas beneath the pews have vinyl tile (*See Photos 8 - 11*).

The chancel consists of a raised platform and choir loft separated from the sanctuary by a stain-finished wood pine wood communion rail. Stained-finished wood doors on either side of the chancel lead to first floor offices behind the nave's east wall. A modern stained-finished oak pulpit, communion table and two pastoral chairs sit at center on the raised chancel platform. The choir loft is located beneath a tall half-dome and separated from the chancel platform by a paneled half-wall of stain-finished pine. Its proscenium arch has a carved wood keystone and is supported on each side by a fluted wood pilaster with an Ionic capital. The bottom half of the choir loft walls have been covered with modern composite wood paneling. The paneling covers two original symmetrically placed doors that entered into the choir loft from the rear east hall behind the chancel (*See Figure 4*).

The balcony at the back of the sanctuary sits on top of the first floor vestibule. The stairwells from the first floor are enclosed by a half-wall of stain-finished bead board. The balcony has three double windows at its rear west wall and one at each of the side south and north walls. The original stain-finished pine window casings are intact. It has three columns of straight wood pews, each with three rows. A row of five pews crosses the full width of the west wall. These pews appear older and are a different style than those in the sanctuary below. It may be that these pews were used in the earlier 1886 wood frame church building. The balcony's wood floor is bare.

The first floor behind the nave's east wall has two square offices, one each in the southeast and northeast corners of the building. The offices are connected by a long narrow corridor, with a staircase along the east wall rising north to south to the second floor on top of a staircase descending south to north to the basement below. The second floor has two square offices and corridor repeating the plan of the first floor below.

The basement is accessed from the first floor vestibule at the west side of the building down a wide enclosed staircase landing in a small entry foyer with a single window. Doors on the west walls of each of these small foyers lead to Ladies and Men bathrooms at the southwest and northwest corners of the building, respectively. Each bathroom has a double window at its west wall. Single doors on the foyer east walls lead into the large fellowship hall.

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
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The basement fellowship hall is a rectangular open space. It has three evenly spaced double windows on each of its side south and north walls. Four iron posts are located in the middle of the open hall and support two exposed joists (two posts per joists) running the depth of the building. The hall has a bare poured concrete floor. A raised poured concrete platform is at the west end of the hall. This platform was placed at the time of the original construction to be used as the chancel while the congregation first met in the basement while the upper floors were completed. Ironically, it stills serves as a chancel since the congregation continues to hold services here in the winter. A door behind the "basement chancel" leads to large storage closet.

There are three doors at the east side of the fellowship hall. The south door leads to the mechanical room, which currently houses the building's HVAC system and has an exterior door at its south wall. It originally housed the building's coal-burning furnace. The coal bin is still evident. The center door from the fellowship hall leads into the kitchen. The north door leads into a large entry foyer accessed from the outside through the north basement entry. Again, this recalls the period between 1922 and 1926 when the congregation entered here for worship services in the basement. This foyer was large enough to have allowed a small gathering for welcoming the congregation and visitors as they entered. An interior staircase at the southeast corner of the foyer rises to the south to the first floor corridor and offices above.

Non-contributing Building:

A one-story frame ranch-style building with a symmetrical rectangular plan is located at the east end of the property directly behind the historic church. The primary elevation faces north and is setback thirty-two (32) feet from East Central Street. The building was constructed in 1952 to serve as the church's parsonage. It replaced the earlier wood frame church built in 1877 and used as the parsonage when it was moved to this location on the lot to accommodate construction of the 1922 church building. The current parsonage building has a gable roof covered with modern asphalt shingles and rests on a cinder block foundation. The gable roof pediment on the side west and east elevations is supported by simple brackets. The roofline on the primary north and rear south elevations has exposed rafters. A gabled dormer is centered at the north face of the roof and covers a recessed porch on the building's primary north elevation. It is supported by simple brackets. The primary north elevation has three bays, consisting of symmetrically placed double windows on each side of the recessed porch. The porch serves as the central bay and has a large picture window and the single door main entrance at its west side. The north face of the porch is veneered with brick. The building was extensively renovated inn 1989. Modern siding was used to cover the original wood lap siding, corner boards, roof brackets and other exterior wood surfaces. The original double-hung wood sash windows were replaced with modern metal windows. Although the parsonage building was originally constructed in close proximity to the church property's period of significance, the recent renovations significantly impacted its integrity. It is a non-contributing building and is currently leased-out for commercial use (*See Photo 12*).

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Current Conditions:

Benton Avenue A.M.E. continues to serve its historic function and, with the commitment of its current congregation, will be a significant and inspiring active house of worship for new generations. While the congregation's membership has continued to decline, church leadership has upheld stewardship of the building as a key priority and made thoughtful decisions about its maintenance within available resources. In 1989, the congregation, led by Trustee Vincent F. Foster, completed a major building project to re-tuck-point the exterior walls. Upon his passing in 1999, Brother Foster bequeathed his estate to Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church for the establishment of a restricted building fund to provide for its current and on-going maintenance needs.

The positive impact of Brother Foster's bequest is already evident through restoration efforts currently being implemented by the congregation. In February 2001, the church put a new and much needed asphalt shingle roof on the building. Several leaks in the roof were causing deterioration in several places of the interior plaster walls. Four layers of asphalt shingles (1 black, 1 green and 2 red) in various stages of decay were removed. The bottom black layer of shingles was judged to have been the original roofing for the building. The congregation chose a consistent black asphalt shingle for the new roof, replacing the most recent red surface and, therefore, enhancing the building's historic character. Despite the leak issues, the roof decking and the trusses underneath continue to be in excellent condition. Only a few small sections of roof decking needed to be repaired.

The congregation is now beginning a project to repair the interior plaster walls. A local professional craftsman trained in old lath and plaster technique will make the required repairs. Concurrently, the congregation has also initiated a project to repair, as needed, and paint the original double-hung, wood sash windows. Additional maintenance needs are being identified and will be addressed as resources generated by the church's new building fund become available.

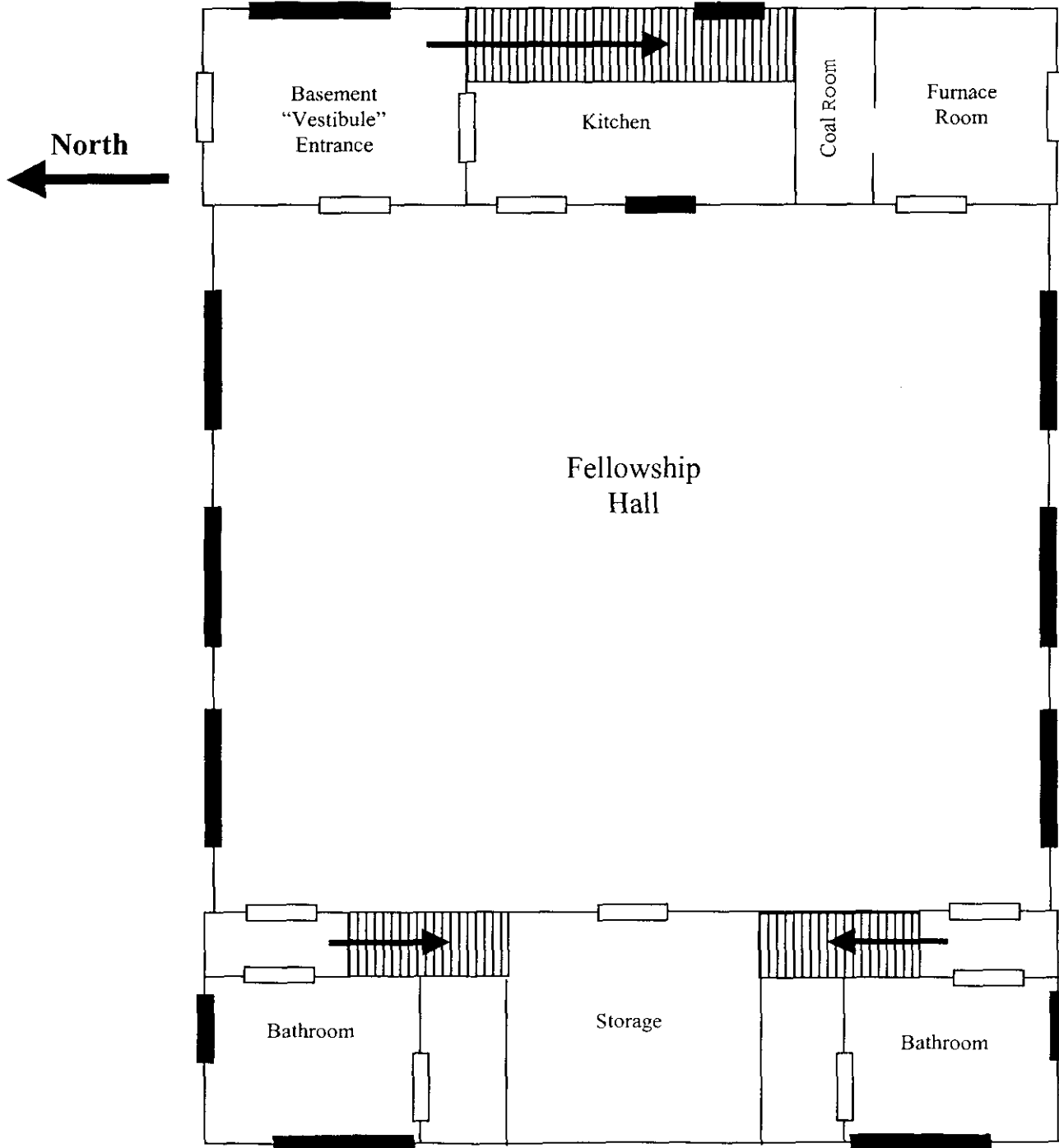
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Figure 1: Floorplan Basement Level (Not to Scale)



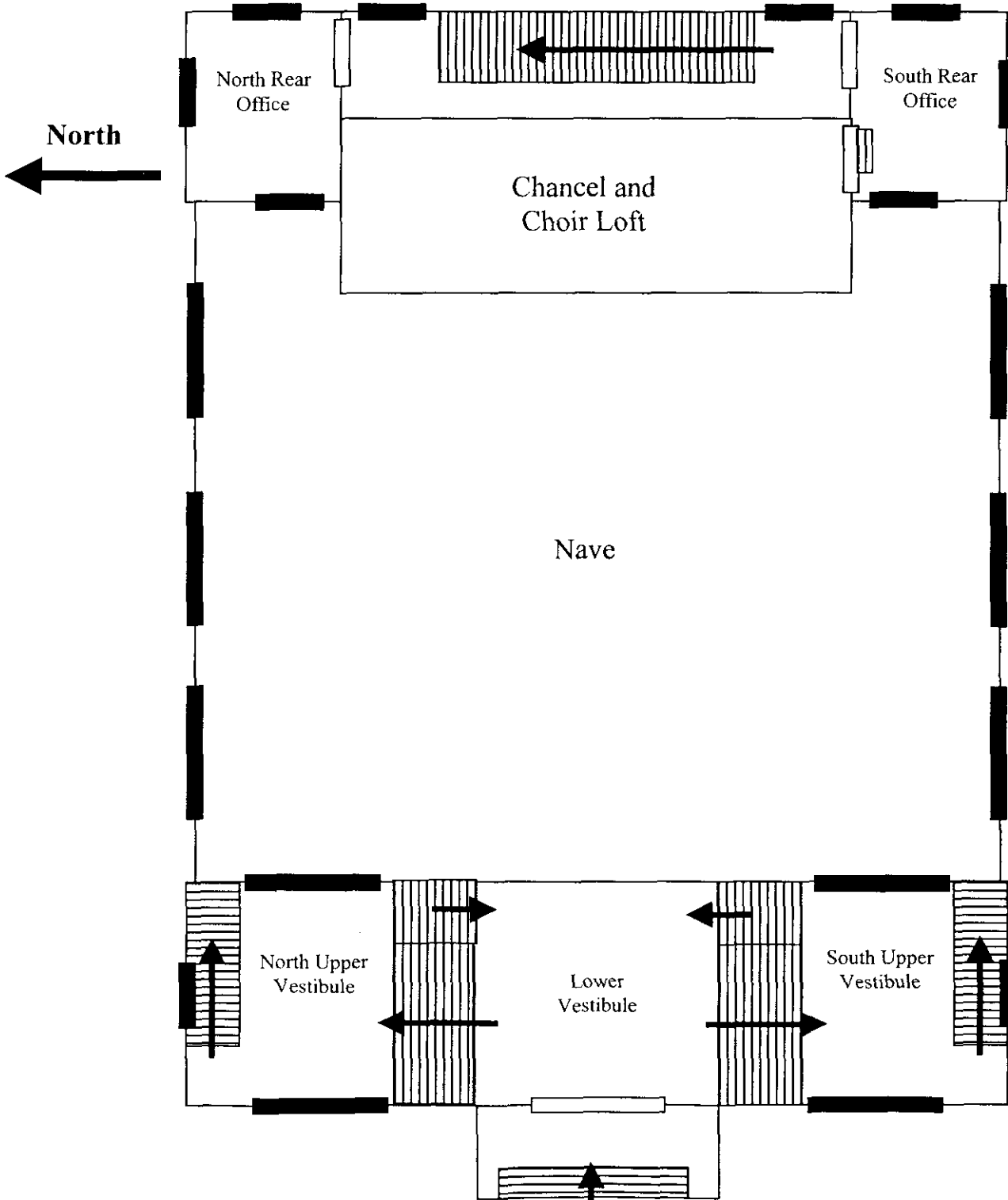
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Figure 2: Floorplan First Floor (Not to Scale)



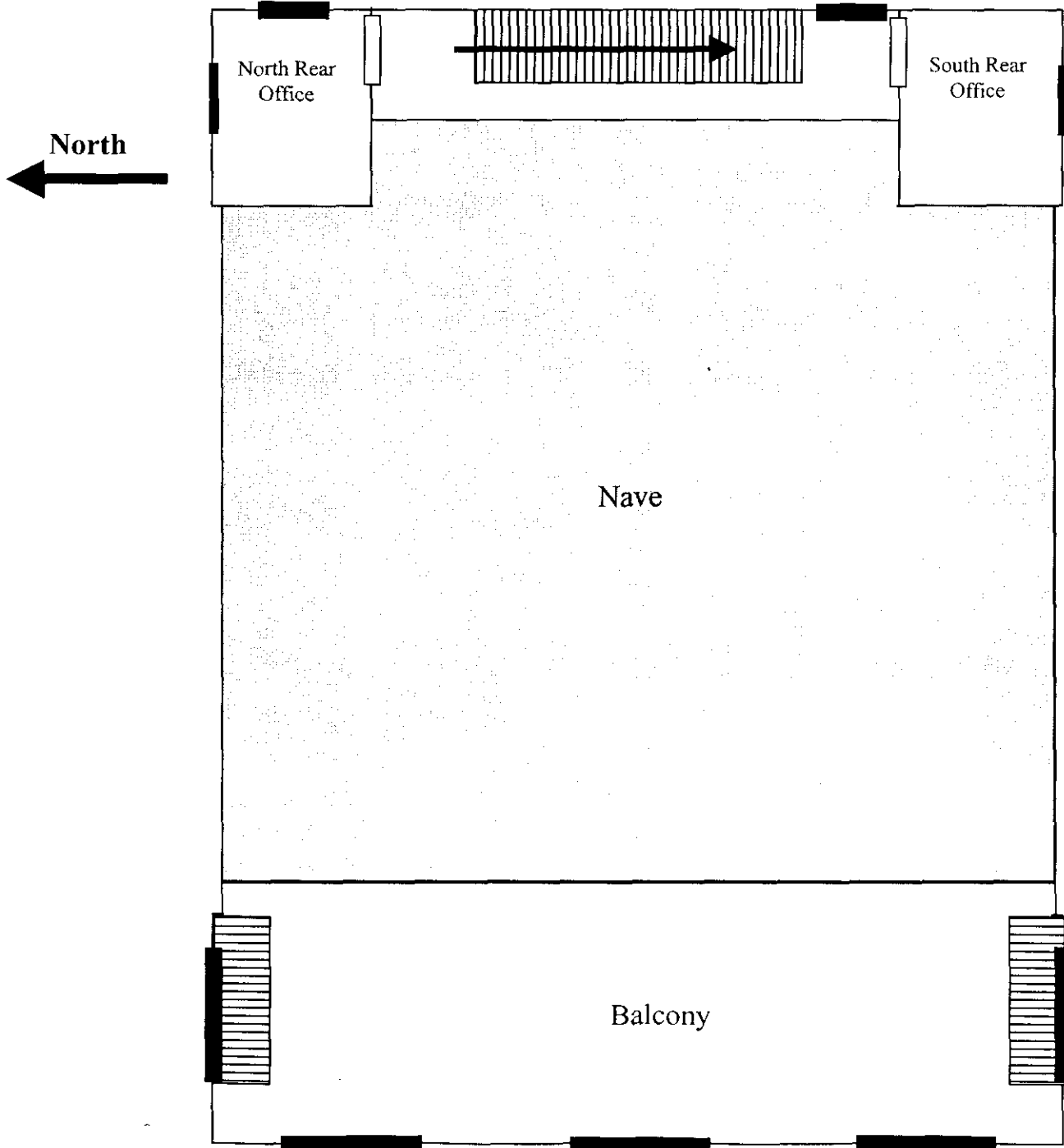
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Figure 3: Floorplan Second Floor (Not to Scale)



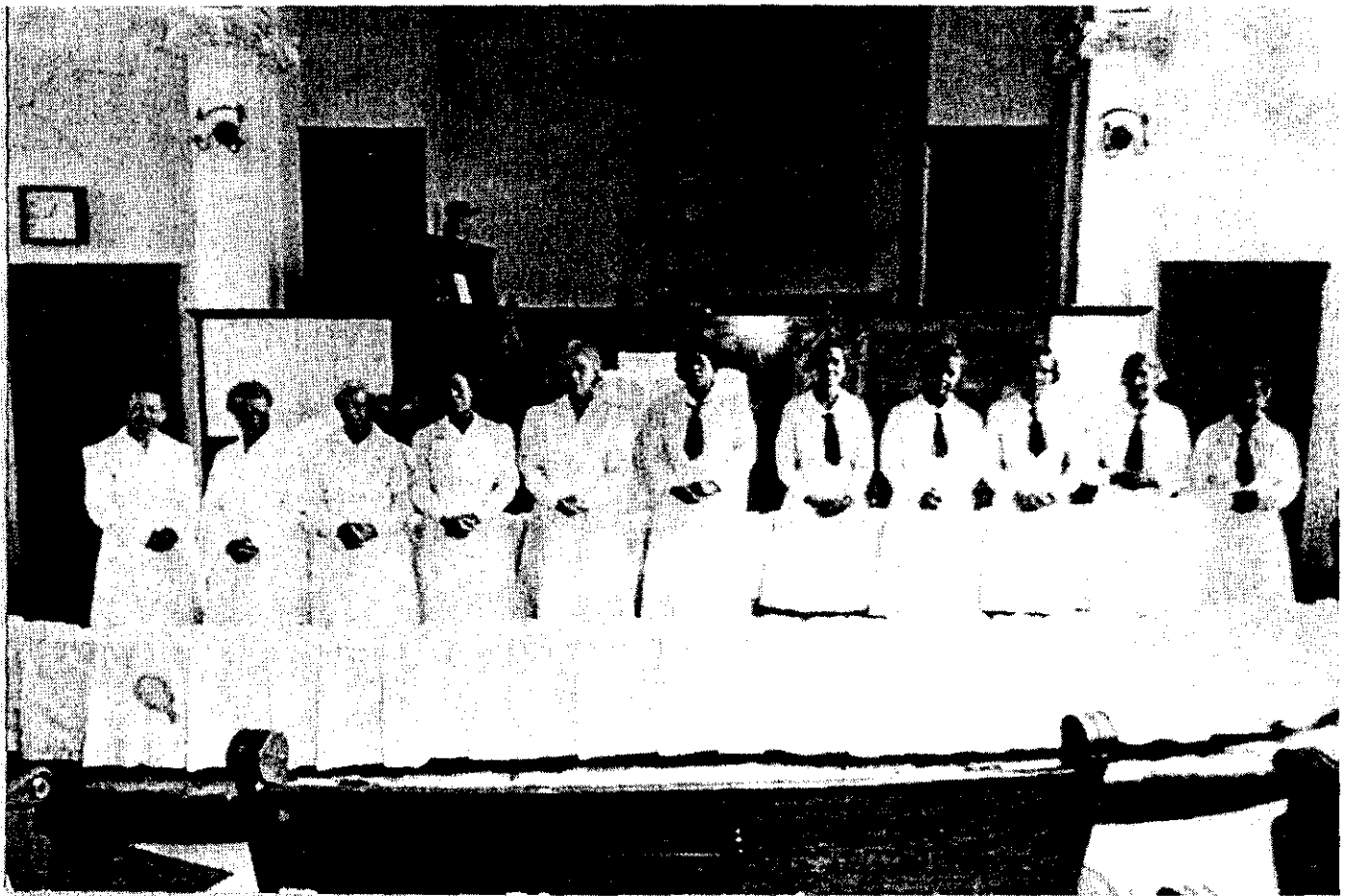
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Figure 4: Historic Photograph Interior, Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church. A group of early deaconesses stand at the east chancel. Note the two doors entering into the choir loft under the proscenium. (Photo: From the Dr. Katherine G. Lederer Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Southwest Missouri State University. Used with permission.)



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Summary:

Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church, located at 830 North Benton Avenue in Springfield, Missouri, is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of ETHNIC HERITAGE-BLACK and SOCIAL HISTORY and under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE. As one of only three remaining historic African-American church buildings in Springfield, Benton Avenue A.M.E. is an important cultural resource that has served the active ministry of its 129-year old congregation since the first worship service was held in its basement in 1923. Under ETHNIC HERITAGE-BLACK and SOCIAL HISTORY, it also reflects the role of faith in the social and cultural development of the Springfield community and its African-American population during the post-slavery to pre-integration period. As they faced the trials of cultural and political institutions that oppressed and excluded them, African-Americans turned to their churches for leadership, comfort and hope. Reflected in the Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church building, their social and religious histories are convergent and provide significant insights to the past, present and future of whites and African-Americans in Springfield. Under ARCHITECTURE, it is significant as a distinctive example of a Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals style church building, with a unique and eclectic presentation of Classical and Modern details. Built between the two World Wars, it reflects the strong contrasts in nostalgia and modernity that typified this period of emerging free expression and eclecticism. Its high quality of materials, craftsmanship and design are reflective of the prosperity of Springfield's early African-American population. Because it is of a later period than Springfield's other remaining historic African-American Churches, it is particularly unique and significant within the comparative context of the Gothic Revival style of these earlier buildings. The building is virtually unaltered and, therefore, retains full integrity. The period of significance is determined to be 1922 to 1951, beginning at the start of construction and ending at the minimum age criterion.

Criterion A: ETHNIC HERITAGE-BLACK AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Early History

The early history of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church and Springfield's other African-American churches is entwined in the socio-economic development of a frontier community that promised prosperity and fullness to the people who settled it. As they faced the trials of cultural and political institutions that oppressed and excluded them, African-Americans turned to their churches for leadership, comfort and hope. As reflected in the Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church building, their social and religious histories are convergent and provide significant insights to the past, present and future of whites and African-Americans in Springfield.

Because of a natural spring in what is today known as the Jordan Creek Valley, John Polk Campbell in 1829 had selected this area as the future site of Springfield. Mr. Campbell went back to his home in Maury County, Tennessee, and in March of 1830, he returned with his family and slaves to this new frontier. In 1835, Mr. Campbell donated 50 acres of land on the southwest of the creek first known as a branch of

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Wilson's Creek (and later the Jordan) and laid out the town site. Springfield was incorporated in 1838 – the Public Square is still considered the heart of its downtown.

The first recognized African-American church in Springfield, Wilson's Creek Chapel (Methodist), was built in 1847 on the banks of Wilson Creek.¹ It was established when a slave, Tom Armstrong, petitioned his owner, William Townsend, to construct a log cabin where African-Americans could worship. Springfield Mayor Ounce reportedly gave official permission on October 3, 1847.² According to local tradition, the name of the tributary was later changed to Jordan Creek because of the number of baptisms performed in its waters.

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church was the most active white congregation to encourage African-American members. The Ozark Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church met in Polk County on April 4, 1844, and passed a resolution to establish the Springfield congregation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. One of the signers of the constitution for this new Cumberland Presbyterian congregation dated May 19, 1844, was "Leah, a black woman." This congregation later became known as the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The Cumberland Presbyterians did not divide into separate white and African-American congregations until after the Civil War. The church first met in a log meeting house constructed by the Methodists in the area of the 1200 block of North National. It later constructed a wood frame building at the corner of Jefferson and Olive (just northeast of the Public Square). This building was begun in 1859, but not completed until 1869 because of the interruptions of the War.³ By that time the congregation had become segregated.

A proliferation of African-American churches did not occur until emancipation was ratified in 1865, when religious rights accompanied the newly granted freedoms. Following the Civil War, many newly emancipated slaves immigrated to Greene and surrounding counties, adding greatly to the African-American population already here (By 1875, African-Americans accounted for a quarter of the population of Greene County.). Local white congregations and outside organizations began to support African-American missions of various denominations. And, the African-American community was soon divided into Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists.

The Methodists continued to worship in the log cabin that served Wilson's Creek Chapel until 1865. In that year, an arsonist burned the cabin and the congregation moved to a new church at the corner of Jefferson and Phelps. Three blocks northeast of the Public Square, the land for the new wood frame building was donated by freed slave Fleming McCullah. Rev. Pitts was thought to be pastor at the time and led the church in this position three times before his death in 1889. Wilson's Creek Chapel was renamed Pitts Chapel in recognition of his service to the church and the entire African-American community.

Through the support of the Cumberland Presbyterians, Peter Lair, freed slave and ordained minister, established Second Cumberland Presbyterian Church (Colored) in 1865. It is not known where this early

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church met. But, by 1872 the African-American Presbyterians were located in a wood frame building on the southwest corner of Benton Avenue and Water Street. "Father Lair" led the congregation in worship for many years, followed by Rev. T.J. (Thomas Jefferson) Diemer, son of a white slave owner, and Rev. Debo.⁴

Springfield's African-American Baptist church was organized in 1867 and is the congregation of faithful worshippers currently active at the Washington Avenue Baptist Church site. The church was established as a mission of the white congregation of the First Baptist Church of Springfield. It was called the Second Baptist Church (Colored). Like the Second Cumberland Presbyterians, the Second Baptist Church was named consistent with the tradition of the time in which African-American churches of a denomination were subordinated to the white church in the community. The church originally worshipped in a building located in the southeast corner of the Public Square.⁵

The circumstances surrounding the establishment of Second Baptist Church (Colored) are not recorded in the local historic documents of the First Baptist Church, still active today. Oral history indicates that early records of First Baptist Church were burned in the fire on January 6, 1909, which destroyed the Baldwin Theater at 318-322 St. Louis Street. The acting secretary of First Baptist Church at the time is said to have held an office at the Baldwin Theater and kept records there.

Through association with the Second Cumberland Presbyterians, the church relocated in 1872 to the newly erected frame structure east of the Public Square at Benton and Water, which was shared by the two African-American congregations (Worship services for the two were held at separate times). Henry Frost, an early Trustee of Second Baptist, and "Father Lair" of Second Cumberland Presbyterian were neighbors, living a block apart on South Hampton Avenue between East Walnut and East St. Louis Streets. The association between Second Cumberland Presbyterian (Gibson) and Second Baptist (Washington Avenue) was no doubt nurtured by these two neighbors and early church leaders. It is possible that they worked together to provide this shared building.

In 1868, only two church buildings in Springfield were located north of the Public Square. These served African-American congregations – the Methodists of Wilson's Creek Chapel and the Second Cumberland Presbyterians and the Second Baptists at Benton and Water. As in other parts of the country, these churches were the center of African-American life in Springfield. During the next decade, the expanding population and economy of Springfield, fueled by the arrival of the railroad in 1870, began placing pressures on the areas north and east of the Public Square. These pressures, coupled with the prosperity and growth of their own congregations, caused the African-American churches to look further north of their existing wood frame buildings to the lands across Jordan Creek.

While African-Americans came to Springfield as slaves in the early part of the 19th Century, they also came as freedmen and had the right of property ownership. Land holdings of African-Americans increased following emancipation. Several prominent African-Americans resided on East Walnut Street during the

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1870's. But, by the 1890's, East Walnut had become the exclusive neighborhood of Springfield's white wealthy upper middle class and African-Americans were prohibited from walking on its sidewalks. Maintaining their property between East Walnut and St. Louis Streets, African-Americans became concentrated in neighborhoods like "East End" around Hampton and Florence Avenues and McDaniel Street (then, Minor Street). Further north, they became firmly established in the Jordan Creek Valley in the area known to them as Happy Hollow.

At the end of the 19th century, the eastern portion of the Jordan Creek Valley and lands north to Center Street served as the residential neighborhoods for Springfield's African-American population. In this concentrated area, African-Americans of all economic levels and professions (laborers and prominent merchants alike) went about the tasks of daily life, contributing significantly to the economic and cultural development of the entire Town of Springfield. The several African-American churches had been established within the area to serve the spiritual needs of this faithful Community.

In addition to the Methodist (Pitts Chapel), Presbyterian (Second Cumberland Presbyterian) and Baptist (Second Baptist) churches already noted, a fourth African-American church was established by this time in the area north of the Jordan Creek. Initial organizational meetings leading to the establishment of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church, now known as Benton Avenue A.M.E., were believed to have been held in 1874 in a building on the North Washington Avenue property owned by Second Baptist Church. An 1872 pictorial map indicates that a building did exist at this location prior to the construction of the brick Second Baptist Church building completed in 1885.⁶ This supports claims that the A.M.E. Church met and worshipped here prior to the construction of their first church building in 1877.

The African Methodist Episcopal denomination is one of the oldest separate Black Methodist Churches in the United States. During the early history of the country, Methodist churches accepted Black members into their congregations. However, Blacks were allowed only limited participation and were required to sit and observe communion separately. The independent Black church developed in protest to prevailing racism and discrimination. The founding of the African Methodist Episcopal Church is attributed to the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen (1760-1831), a freedman and the first ordained preacher of African descent in America. In November 1787, Richard Allen and his followers (including Absalom Jones, William White and Dorus Ginnings) withdrew from St. George Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia and organized the Free African Society. This group subsequently bought an abandoned blacksmith shop and moved it to a lot at the corner of Sixth and Lombard Streets. They repaired the building and here established Bethel Church, which was dedicated by Bishop Francis Asbury in 1794. Richard Allen was ordained by Bishop Asbury in 1799 and later became an elder. In April 1816, Rev. Allen convened a General Conference of 15 preachers and laymen in Philadelphia for the purposes of establishing religious freedom for Blacks separate from the control of White Churches. The establishment of the African Methodist Church resulted from this conference, with Rev. Allen being elected as its first bishop. By 1836, the A.M.E. Church had 86 member congregations across the country.⁷ The Indiana Conference was formed on October 2, 1840, and originally

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included Missouri.⁸ In 1852, the General Conference of the A.M.E. Church authorized the Missouri Conference. It was formally organized on September 13, 1855. Only a few independent Black churches existed in slave-holding Missouri prior to the Civil War; and, as late as 1856, no A.M.E. churches were found west of St. Louis.⁹

While Black Methodists had met and worshipped in Springfield since 1847, an African Methodist Episcopal Church was not organized until well after the Civil War. In 1874, a schism occurred in Wilson's Creek Chapel and disaffected members are said to have begun meeting in the Second Baptist Church (Missionary Baptist Church) building on North Washington Avenue under the leadership of Rev. Spottwood "Sparks" Alexander. This new congregation later rented and met in an old brewery on Water Street, just north of the Public Square. They subsequently rented a frame building known as the "Old Christian Church" located directly west of the Public Square at the corner of Main Avenue and College Street.¹⁰

On February 25, 1873, Alexander Burns, son of a Springfield policeman, acquired from Charles E. and Kate S. Harwood a lot at the southeast corner of Center Street (now Central) and Benton Avenue.¹¹ This lot was later selected as the site for a new church building for the African Methodist Episcopal congregation. There are minor discrepancies in the timing for construction of the first A.M.E. Church building on this site. Overall, the early history of African-Americans in Springfield is not well-documented. But the following outlines the most likely scenario based on oral histories and available documentation.

In a Warranty Deed dated on August 2, 1877, and recorded on March 5, 1879, Alexander Burns sold the lot at Center and Benton to the Trustees of the A.M.E. Church, John R. Kelly, Aaron Isbell, Lewis Tutt and Granville Allen, and their successors in office.¹² The Trustees were directed in this deed to "erect or cause to be built thereon, a house of Worship for the use of the Members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church." In their 1915 history of Greene County, Fairbanks and Tuck state that a wood frame building was constructed on this site in 1876. However, the 1877 Warranty Deed suggests that no building was on the site prior to the transfer of property from Alexander Burns to the Church's Trustees. Given the proximity of these dates and the casual regard for documenting the early history of Springfield's African-Americans, it is likely that the 1915 account was inaccurate.

At any rate, it is accepted through oral history that the first A.M.E. Church building was a one-room frame structure built no later than 1877. The address for this building was 510 East Center, indicating that it may have had a primary north elevation. Fairbanks and Tuck note that this building was later enlarged by an addition on the east side.¹³ A cornerstone held by the current Benton Avenue A.M.E. congregation is marked "A.M.E. Church, Aug. 19, 1886" and most likely dates to that addition. It also confirms that at least until 1886, the congregation was named simply the African Methodist Episcopal Church. A Deed of Trust, dated September 25, 1886, and recorded October 15, 1886, secured a note with Queen City Building and Loan Association in the amount of \$1,000.00.¹⁴ It is likely that this note is associated with the building expansion.

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Lewis Tutt

One of the more prominent early organizers of the A.M.E. Church in Springfield was Lewis Tutt. Born in 1840, Brother Tutt was born into slavery as the son of a white Arkansas slaveholder named H. Tutt. He came to Springfield during the Civil War with his mistress, Mrs. Tutt, to escape the hostilities that arose when General C.B. Holland abandoned the fort at Yellville near the Tutt farm. Mrs. Tutt later returned to Arkansas, but Lewis Tutt remained in Springfield and slowly prospered. He married Emma McCullah on August 17, 1865. Earlier in the spring of 1865, his white half-brother, David K. Tutt, was killed on the Public Square during a famous shoot-out with Wild Bill Hickock. Lewis and his wife had one son, David F. Tutt, born on October 16, 1866. For ten years, he worked for Granes & Hornbeck, merchants, and for W.C. Hornbeck. Following a year on Springfield's police force, Brother Tutt opened his own grocery business and continued to prosper in its operation until 1890. He subsequently invested in real estate and acquired houses, lots and a store on Boonville Avenue, north of the Public Square. One of the original Trustees of the A.M.E. Church, he contributed generously to its first building. He also was an organizer of the Eureka Lodge of Masons, No. 39, and served two terms as master of the lodge. Goodspeed noted in 1893 that Lewis Tutt was one of only two Blacks to own lots in Maple Park Cemetery. His son, David F., died at the age of 23 on August 11, 1890, and was buried at Maple Park. Lewis Tutt at some time also arranged for the re-interment of his half-brother's (David K.) remains to one of his Maple Park lots.¹⁵

Fleming McCullah

Fleming McCullah was another one of the early organizers of the A.M.E. Church in Springfield. Brother McCullah was born into slavery on September 14, 1845, in Osceola, St. Clair County, Missouri, to a white father and slave mother. He was one of the numerous immigrant freedman who came to Springfield after the Civil War seeking new opportunities. Arriving in Springfield in 1865, Fleming McCullah worked for C.W. Crawford on his farm for half of the crops. He married Martha Jane "Jennie" Ayers, a former slave of the Danforth family, on December 10, 1867. By 1868, Brother McCullah had saved sufficiently to buy 40 acres in Taylor Township, Greene County, later building it to a tract of 62 acres. In 1882, he traded the Taylor tract for 120 acres of timberland north of Springfield. A successful farmer and businessman, he gave his found prosperity back to the African-American community, contributing greatly to its religious and educational needs.¹⁶

Prior to his activities with the A.M.E. Church, Fleming McCullah was associated with Wilson's Creek Chapel. He has been credited with donating the land at the corner of Jefferson and Phelps where Wilson's Creek Chapel built its second building following the 1865 arson of its original log cabin. His role in the organization of the A.M.E. Church suggests that he may have been a prominent force in the schism within Wilson's Chapel in 1874. Throughout the rest of his life, Brother McCullah was a strong and generous supporter within the A.M.E. Church. His sister was Emma McCullah Tutt, wife of A.M.E. Church Trustee Lewis Tutt. The father of seven children, Fleming McCullah maintained an intense interest in education within the African-American community and was active in Lincoln School, Springfield's segregated public school (See Figures 1 - 5).

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A Time of Change and Growth

In 1891, the Cumberland Presbyterians moved across the Jordan, like the Baptists in the previous decade. At the time of the Baptists' move north, the Presbyterians bought their share of the frame church at Benton and Water. They continued to worship here under the leadership of "Father" Lair. In 1891, Reverend H.A. Gibson led the Presbyterians in their move to a new brick church building north of the Jordan at the corner of North Washington and Pine (now East Tampa). Like the Second Baptist Church building constructed in 1885, the new Second Cumberland Presbyterian Church was in the Late Gothic Revival Style. The Second Cumberland Presbyterian congregation subsequently renamed itself and the church building in honor of Rev. Gibson on his passing.¹⁷ Gibson Chapel Presbyterian Church is still active today at this location.

Pitts Chapel (previously Wilson's Creek) was the last of the African-American churches to cross the Jordan Creek. On July 8, 1909, torrential rains caused the Jordan Creek Valley to flood, taking many lives and destroying many homes and businesses. The wood frame church building of Pitts Chapel at Jefferson and Phelps is said to have been washed away.¹⁸ In 1911, Pitts Chapel completed a new brick church building at the corner of Benton and Tampa (two blocks west of Gibson Chapel), where it continues its ministry today. It also was built in the Late Gothic Revival style.

For all the African-American congregations, the church at the turn-of-the-century often provided the only hope and source of comfort for a minority population oppressed by prevailing racist sentiments. The most compelling and extreme reflection of racism in turn-of-the-century Springfield was the 1906 Public Square lynching of three African-American men. On Easter Day that year, a riotous white mob hung Fred Coker, Ben Allen and Horace Duncan from the Gottfried Tower at the center of the Square and desecrated their corpses.¹⁹ Because of the lynching and riot that followed, many African-Americans left Springfield for St. Louis and other larger and more tolerant urban areas. Left behind was a wounded community of both African-Americans and whites which has never fully been healed. While the event received national interest, its cruelties were soon overshadowed by the Great San Francisco Earthquake. No one was brought to trial. The Gottfried Tower was taken down from the Public Square in 1910 and put to use as a bell tower for a south side fire station, eradicating even the physical memories of the event.²⁰

An account of activities at the Baptist, Methodist and A.M.E. Churches at the time of the lynching is not available. However, the families of the congregation at Gibson Chapel (just to the south of the A.M.E. and Washington Avenue Baptist churches and directly east of Pitts Chapel) are said to have sought sanctuary in its basement while the men stood guard through the night.²¹ It is reasonable to suppose that the families of the other African-American congregations acted likewise.

The early wood frame building at Benton and Center continued to serve the strong and growing ministry of the A.M.E. Church through the first decade of the 20th Century (See Figure 6). By 1915, the congregation

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had 152 members. Services were being held every evening during the week under the pastorage of Rev. T. Allen Harvey. Regular prayer was held on Wednesday evening and class meeting on Friday evening. There were seven auxiliary organizations, each having nine members, and both junior and senior Christian Endeavor Leagues.²² It was also by this time that the A.M.E. Church may have become known as Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church. It is not known exactly when the Church renamed itself, but it can be conjectured that it was soon after the turn-of-the-century. In its 1893 biographical record, Goodspeed continues to reference the congregation as the African Methodist Episcopal Church.²³

In 1904, the Second Baptist Church renamed itself Washington Avenue Baptist Church, when a schism reportedly occurred over the congregation's name between a group faithful to early Pastors A.B. Franklin and W.A. Brown. Dr. Katherine Lederer, a noted expert on local African-American heritage, reports that the congregation renamed itself to reject the stigma associated with recognition as the "Second" church generally given to African-American churches of the time according to Jim Crow customs. Second Cumberland Presbyterian Church changed its name to Gibson Chapel and Wilson's Creek Methodist Church to Pitts Chapel, closely associating themselves with their early and much-beloved pastors. It is possible that the A.M.E. Church also sought to strengthen its identity around this time by changing its name to Benton Avenue A.M.E. and highlighting its very visible and prominent location.

During its first 50 years, the spiritual and leadership needs of the A.M.E. Church were met by numerous pastors with few serving for an extended time. The following provides a list of the known pastors during this earlier period, with dates of service noted where available.

Rev. Spottwood "Sparks" Alexander (1872)	E.A. Vaughn
Rev. B.F. Watson	C.C. Cole
Rev. M.S. Parks (c. 1877)	Rev. Thatcher
J.W. Shropshire	H. Attaway
George W. Gaines	C.A. Williams
W.A. (or H.) Dove	J.A. Allen
J.S. Jackson	A.C. Scott
J.C. Caldwell	C.W. Newton
S.J. Brown	W.R. (or B.) Brooks
C.W. Preston	Rev. T. Allen Harvey (c. 1915)
R. Sevmore	R. J. Robertson
James Madison	John H. Lewis
A.C. Jerril	J.W. Williams
E.W. Lewis	R. H. Harbert
M. Collins	Rev. F.F. Moten
F.S. Snellson	

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In 1917, the A.M.E. Church established a mission church, Reedy Chapel A.M.E. Church on North Weaver in the historic African-American neighborhood of Westport. Reedy Chapel was built as a one-story rectangular wood frame building. The congregation here was active for many years. The building also housed the Fulbright School for African-American elementary students until the new Lincoln School was built in 1932. In recent years, Reedy Chapel closed and its dwindling congregation merged with Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church. Vacant for many years, Reedy Chapel has been recently acquired and is again in active service, the home of a new non-affiliated ministry (*See Figure 7*).

A New Church Building

By the early 1920's, the congregation of the A.M.E. Church had outgrown its earlier building and needed a larger church home. On March 27, 1922, under the pastorage of Rev. F.F. Moten, the old wood frame building was moved to the far east corner of the lot; and the congregation broke ground for a new brick church for the congregation by that time called Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church. Sister Jennie Allen, the oldest living member at the time, turned the first shovel at the ground-breaking. Construction of the new building proceeded quickly and the cornerstone was laid at the northwest corner during a crowded ceremony on August 27, 1922 (*See Figures 8 and 9*). The cornerstone recognizes the church leadership at this time. The Board of Trustees was chaired by Brother Fleming McCullah and included John Haywood, Vincent J. Foster, Lizzie Perkins, George Abernathy, James S. Hardrick, H.A. Britton, Henry C. Bedell and S.A. Greene Campbell, who served as Secretary.

The full basement of the church was completed by January, 1923, and the first floor was surfaced to serve as a roof. At this time, the congregation began holding worship services in the basement. On the first Sunday, Rev. Moten and the members marched the short distance from the old building to the new singing "Onward, Christian Soldiers." The raised concrete platform at the west end of the basement served as the chancel. The exceptional detail of the limestone doorway to the basement on the north elevation is well-understood considering that, for the next three years, it served as the main entrance for the congregation. The new brick Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church building was completed in 1926 under the pastorage of Rev. C.B. Crawford.

Under the pastorage of Rev. H.M. Davis, a mortgage on the building held by Mr. G.G. Lydy was reduced from \$20,000 to \$8,000. This reduced debt was paid by February 1943 and, on February 21 and 22, the congregation held special "Mortgage Burning" ceremonies. Mrs. Ellen Elsinger, the oldest living member at the time, held the mortgage for the burning (*See Figure 10*). The congregation observed the 40th anniversary of the Mortgage Burning with a re-enactment on February 20, 1983. Brother Henry C. and Sister Lulu Bedell held the mortgage for the re-enacted burning.

The following provides a full chronological list of the known pastors of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church. Dates of service are noted where available. The current pastor of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church, Rev. Dr. James Rupert Lee, Jr., was called to its pulpit in 2000.

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Rev. F.F. Moten (c. 1922)	Rev. D.O. Meadows (1957)
Rev. R.C. Ransom	Rev. Oliver L. Brown (1959 - 1961)
Rev. C.B. Crawford (c. 1926)	Rev. Frank R. Veal (
Rev. W.H. Lacey	Rev. Fred M. Hughey (1961)
Rev. M.S. Smith	Rev. Wesley Beaver
Rev. J.W. Garner	Rev. William H. Hickman (c. 1972)
Rev. B.N. Allen	Rev. I.H. Aldridge
Rev. Paul Kidd	Rev. John A. Barnes (1976)
Rev. H.M. Davis (c. 1940)	Rev. Caesar Richburg
Rev. J.E. Foster (1945)	Rev. Penny Pitchford (c. 1982)
Rev. George Martin (1947)	Rev. Donna Roberson (1985 - 1990)
Rev. J. Russell Brown (1948)	Rev. Joe P. Taylor (1990 - 1991)
Rev. C.B. Bryant (1949)	Rev. T.J. Bauer (1991 - 1992)
Rev. H. Calvin McMillan (1951)	Rev. Darlene Herron (1992)
Rev. L.E. Embray (1954)	Rev. Dr. James Rupert Lee, Jr. (2000 - Present)

The Church and Public Education

Following emancipation, the task of educating Springfield's African-Americans became one of the many challenges the city faced during its reconstruction. Under slavery, African-Americans were subjugated by ignorance and illiteracy. With emancipation, education became their hope for self-sufficiency and prosperity. The Freedmen's Bureau established a post in Springfield to help resettle and educate African-Americans.

Over 35 years after Joseph Rountree established the first school in Springfield for the community's whites in 1831, the Freedmen's Bureau School was organized. Two white teachers, Miss Emeline Howard of the Iowa Society of Friends and Mrs. Letitia Townsend of the Northeastern Freedmen's Aid Commission, oversaw the school. It met in Wilson's Creek Chapel Methodist Church (now Pitts Chapel) in its wood frame building at the corner of Jefferson and Phelps. The Freedmen's Sunday School was held for adults who worked during the week.²⁴

The Freedmen's School ended in 1867 when the Springfield public school system was established (April 24, 1867) and included a "Colored" School.²⁵ Since no building existed for the segregated school, it continued to meet in Wilson's Creek Chapel Methodist Church. Enrollment the first year was 48 students.

In 1872, Springfield built its first school for African-Americans, the Washington Avenue Colored Public School, between North Washington and Benton Avenues, just east of Drury Lane and north of where Drury College library stands today. The first white school, Central School, was completed a year earlier on the corner of Jefferson and Olive, a block northeast off the Public Square (The school was located just north of the wood frame building completed by First Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1869).

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The "Colored School" on Washington Avenue was a handsome two-story brick building. Its location is indicative of the concentration of African-Americans who resided (or were intended to reside) north of the Public Square and across the Jordan Creek. At the time, African-Americans lived and owned property and businesses east of today's Drury Lane and south to the Jordan Creek. And, they continued to reside further south in the area north of East Walnut Street. Close proximity to the School was probably a key factor in the decision of the A.M.E. and Second Baptist Churches when they acquired land for their new buildings in 1872.

Shortly after the construction of Washington Avenue Colored Public School, Drury College began its development in the area, having been organized under Missouri general statutes in August 1873. Unsuccessful in its efforts to buy the Washington Avenue School building, Drury bought the land west of it and there erected at the cost of \$7,000 its first academic building according to the same plans. The building was begun in August and completed for occupancy on September 25, 1873, the start of Drury's first term.²⁶ Ten years later, Drury bought land south of Center Street (now Central) and constructed a new brick building at the southeast corner of Center and North Washington Avenue, offering it to the City as a trade for the "Colored School." In 1883, the Washington Avenue Colored Public School was moved to this new location and renamed the Lincoln School. The old Washington Avenue Public School building was renamed East Academy Hall and used by Drury as a museum, science building and fine arts building until it was demolished in 1914. The site is northeast of Benton Avenue A.M.E.

By 1892, the one segregated school could no longer accommodate the needs of Springfield's growing African-American population. That year, Douglass School was built at 835 South Main to serve as Springfield's first segregated elementary school. Lincoln became the high school. Following the turn of the century, elementary schools were also held in African-American churches, like the Fulbright School in Reedy Chapel on North Weaver (a mission of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church) and the Vernon Avenue School in the basement of Metropolitan Baptist Church on Vernon Avenue (now Summit).

A new Lincoln School for all grades was built in 1931 at a cost of \$145,000 through the support of the Julius Rosenwald Foundation (the first of four Rosenwald schools built in Missouri). Julius Rosenwald of Chicago, a Sears Roebuck executive, had established the foundation to assist in the education of African-Americans in the South and border states. Internationally recognized architect W.B. Ittner of St. Louis designed the new school, representing a strong investment by the Rosenwald Foundation in Springfield's entire community. Elementary students were folded into the new Lincoln School, located at 815 North Sherman Avenue.

During the dedication of the new Lincoln School on May 21, 1931, Mr. E.A. Barbour, Sr., made the presentation address. Fleming McCullah delivered an acceptance speech on behalf of its African-American constituents. Brother McCullah has already been noted for donating the land at the corner of Jefferson and

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Phelps where Wilson's Creek Chapel built its second building and for later helping organize the African-American Methodist Episcopal Church now known as Benton Avenue A.M.E. He served as Trustee of Benton Avenue A.M.E. at the time of the construction of its new Church building in 1922. Mr. H.P. Study was superintendent of schools at the time. Enrollment during the first year was about 400 students.²⁷

Of the four segregated African-American public schools built in Springfield between the start of Springfield Public Schools in 1867 and the end of segregation in 1955, only "New" Lincoln remains standing. The Washington Avenue Public School, then Drury's East Academy Hall, was demolished in 1914. Douglass School was closed in 1932 and later demolished. After the construction of "New" Lincoln, the "Old" Lincoln building fell into private ownership. It was later acquired by Drury and demolished in the 1970's to make room for a parking lot (This parking lot is now just north of Drury University's architecture school). Following desegregation in 1955 "New" Lincoln became part of Springfield's integrated public schools and was renamed Eastwood Junior High School.²⁸ It closed shortly after that. Currently part of the Ozarks Technical College campus, the school building is being rehabilitated. This significant cultural resource was individually listed on the National Register on May 31, 2000.²⁹

William H. McAdams

William McAdams, a member of Benton Ave. A.M.E. Church, was closely associated with Springfield's segregated public school and the education of its African-Americans. Born on September 7, 1860, Brother McAdams was the son (one of seven children) of Lewis McAdams, a slave of William McAdams who ran a saddle and harness business. The elder McAdams moved to Jefferson City shortly after emancipation, but returned to Greene County in 1881. In 1884, he bought 200 acres at Valley Water Mill, where he maintained a prosperous farm. The family attended Gibson Chapel Cumberland Presbyterian Church.³⁰

While in Jefferson City, William H. McAdams attended Lincoln Institute and graduated in 1880. Upon the family's return to Springfield, he took the position as third assistant of Washington Avenue Public School. He achieved great success and was named principal of Lincoln School (known now as "Old" Lincoln) when it opened in 1883. He served in that position, leading Lincoln to a "high state of perfection," until his death in 1922.

Brother McAdams married Ida Violet Bryant on August 26, 1886 (*See Figures 11 and 12*). Miss Ida Bryant was born on August 16, 1887, to a family that achieved prominence in the post-war years. The Bryant family were members of the A.M.E. Church, so it is likely that Brother McAdams began his association with it at the time of their marriage. They had three sons Orval E. (b. December 16, 1867), William H. (b. December 28, 1890) and Charles L. (b. May 9, 1893). Sister Ida Bryant was active in the A.M.E. Church and served as a longtime Trustee until her passing in 1965. Both William H. and Ida. V. Bryant are buried in Lincoln Cemetery.³¹

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Springfield Public Schools remained segregated until 1955, following the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*.³² Under the leadership of Superintendent Willard Graff, Springfield Public Schools was one of the first districts in the country to successfully integrate under the *Brown* decision. One of the important factors in the post-segregation development of Springfield Schools was the integration of the district's faculty. As a first step in this giant leap, Superintendent Graff selected Olive Decatur, an experienced teacher at Lincoln School and revered member of Washington Avenue Baptist Church. The daughter of an African-American maid, Sister Decatur graduated from "Old" Lincoln School in 1917 (one of three students in the graduating class) and was educated at Wilberforce University, a private university founded by abolitionist Wilber Force. She returned to Springfield and taught at both "Old" Lincoln School and "New" Lincoln School.³³

Highly esteemed in both African-American and white communities, Sister Decatur was selected as the first African-American to teach at a previously all-white school when Springfield Schools were integrated in 1955. First at Pipkin School and then at Parkview School, she provided leadership that helped make Springfield's successful integration under the *Brown* decision one of the first in the nation. Until her retirement, Sister Decatur continued to be regarded for her contributions in educating Springfield white and African-American youth.

Rev. Oliver L. Brown

Following the integration of Springfield Public Schools in 1955, Rev. Oliver L. Brown was transferred to Benton Avenue A.M.E. from Topeka, Kansas, in 1959. As the lead plaintiff in the landmark case *Oliver Brown et al. vs. the Board of Education of Topeka*, Rev. Brown must have provided great inspiration to the Benton Avenue A.M.E. congregation and the entire Springfield African-American population as they crossed the previous boundaries of segregation.

In the summer of 1950, Rev. Brown was one of thirteen parents in Topeka who volunteered to participate in a local NAACP initiative to fight the system of segregation. The parents took their children to the all-white schools in their neighborhoods to enroll them for the fall. Refused admission, the children were forced to attend one of the four segregated schools in Topeka, which for most meant traveling a long distance from their homes. For the Browns, their daughter Linda was not allowed to attend nearby Sumner Elementary School, so had to attend segregated Monroe Elementary School. The parents filed suit against the Topeka Board of Education on behalf of their 20 children. Rev. Brown was the first parent listed in the suit, so the case became named for him as it moved through the courts and into history.

The lawsuit was filed in February 1951 and represented by three Topeka lawyers (Charles Bledsoe, Charles Scott and John Scott), with assistance from Robert Carter and Jack Greenberg of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. The U.S. District Court ruled against the plaintiffs, and, the case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. In December 1952, the Supreme Court had similar cases from Delaware, the District of Columbia, South Carolina and Virginia on its docket, in addition to the *Brown* suit from Kansas.

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These five cases were consolidated and decided under one name, *Oliver Brown et al. vs. Topeka Board of Education*, choosing to put the Kansas case first to highlight the issue of segregation as broader than just a Southern one. The case for the plaintiffs was successfully argued by NAACP chief lawyer Thurgood Marshall, with a unanimous decision in their favor handed down in 1954. The landmark *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision reflects the significant, and often pivotal, role that the Supreme Court can have in impacting national and social policy.³⁴

Oliver Brown was born in Topeka on August 2, 1918, the youngest of ten children. In Topeka, he attended Buchanan Elementary School, Boswell Junior High School and Topeka High School. He went on to study theology at Topeka's Washburn University and later finished his theological studies through correspondence courses from the Bible College in Chicago. He married his high school sweetheart, Leola Williams, in 1939. They had three daughters – Linda, Terry and Cheryl. Rev. Brown was ordained as an A.M.E. minister in 1951 and began his pastoral ministry in 1953 at St. Mark A.M.E. Church in Springfield. Three years later he was transferred to his second pastoral assignment at Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church in Springfield, Missouri.³⁵

Rev. Brown's association with Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church, although outside its period of significance (1922 – 1951), certainly enhances the importance of this historic resource. Upon arrival in Springfield in 1959, the Browns enrolled their daughter Linda in the recently integrated Central High School, located diagonally across the street from Benton Avenue A.M.E. on the northwest corner of North Benton Avenue and East Central Street. Linda graduated from Central in 1961. Sadly, Rev. Brown was killed shortly after her graduation on June 20, 1961, in a car accident while en route to Topeka. He is buried at Topeka's Mount Hope Cemetery. Although his pastorage at Benton Avenue A.M.E. was cut short by his untimely death, Rev. Brown and his spirit for equality undoubtedly had a significant impact on the church's congregation.

The Church Today

The Jordan Creek Valley largely consists of deteriorating industrial sites and vacant lots. The City's current Jordan Valley Park development promises to bring new life to this area. However, the homes and businesses of its historic African-American inhabitants have been lost and the northern areas of the Valley continue to be developed through institutional expansion. The Benton Avenue A.M.E. congregation historically has shared with all of Springfield's African-Americans the common bond of emancipation and segregation that affected every aspect of life in the Jordan Creek Valley. Its historic church building was designated a Springfield Historic Site on January 25, 1982. With the demolition of Washington Avenue Baptist Church in January 2001, the three historic church buildings here are the only remaining corporate reflection of the once vital African-American neighborhood.³⁶

In 1962, Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church had a congregation of 500 members. Over the next 20 years, its size declined precipitously to 60 members in 1982. By 1992, the congregation consisted of only 20-30

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members. Today, the church's roll carries the name of 17 members. Though small in number, the current congregation has a strong faith and a strong commitment to rebuilding its ministry and preserving its historic church home.

Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church is in the Kansas City South District of the Northwest Missouri Conference of the 5th District of the A.M.E. Church. Under the pastorage of Rev. Dr. James Rupert Lee, Jr., who travels for Sunday services from St. Louis, it is reaching out to new members and implementing a significant restoration effort on the building. Through the original 1877 Warranty Deed, the Trustees of Benton A.M.E. Church retain title to the property. Ownership by a local congregation is highly unusual within the A.M.E. denomination, as it is most often retained by the bishopric or convention. The forethought of its founding Trustees has provided the current and future generations of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church with local control of the building and freedom from hierarchical pressures as it continues to act on its stewardship commitment to this historic resource.

Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church Membership and Board - 2001

Rev. Dr. James Rupert Lee, Jr., *Chairperson - Ex Officio*

Stewards

Sister Georgia Burton, *Pastor's Steward*
Sister Frances Douglas
Sister Delores Smith
Brother John Jamison

Trustees

Brother John Jamison, *Chairman*
Brother Carlos Anthony Armstrong
Sister Georgia Burton

Members

Sister Courtney Armstrong	Brother DaLontre Clark	Sister D'Alize Johnson
Sister Alice Bagley	Sister Andrea Clark	Sister ShaLitha Mercado
Brother Gerald Brooks	Sister Sarita Hayes	Sister Anitra Smith
	Brother Michael Hayes	

Vincent F. Foster

The future of the Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church building as a house of worship for its congregation and as a historic resource for the community at-large has been ensured through the generosity and commitment of Vincent F. Foster. Brother Foster was a former Trustee of the church and grandson of V.J. Foster, one of the Trustees at the time of its construction in 1922. V.F. Foster made at the time of his passing in 1999 a bequest to the church to establish a restricted building fund. Income generated from this fund is currently

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being used to support needed maintenance and restoration efforts including the new roof and interior plaster wall repair. With the on-going security of Brother Foster's bequest, the current and future congregations are well-positioned to retain ownership of their historic church building and have the financial resources to sustain its physical needs, while withstanding acquisition pressures from expanding institutions.

Vincent F. Foster was born in Springfield on September 12, 1924, and raised by his maternal grandparents Vincent J. and Mary Foster. His mother, Carrie Mae Foster Penn, died in 1925 shortly after his birth. The elder Fosters subsequently adopted Vincent F. as their son. He graduated from "New" Lincoln in 1942, with honors as the "Outstanding Male Senior of the Class of 1942." He attended Lincoln University in Jefferson City for a semester, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy (STM1) and served in World War II. Upon discharge, he entered the Chicago Technical College, receiving a diploma in Architectural Drafting and Design in 1947 and a Bachelor of Science degree in Architectural Engineering in 1951. Working in the construction industry in Chicago for 15 years, Brother Foster moved back to Springfield, where he continued his career in the building trades. His experience and interests in craftsmanship and architectural design were of significant benefit to Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church.³⁷

Like his grandfather, Vincent F. Foster took an active role in the life of Benton Avenue A.M.E. and served it in many leadership positions. As a Choir member, Treasurer, Steward and Trustee, he faithfully served the Church with particular appreciation and respect for its heritage and historic building. His personal calling was to oversee the physical needs of the Church. In 1989, he spearheaded the renovation of the parsonage building (which he had built in 1952, apparently during visits from Chicago) and restoration projects on the historic church building. Mr. Foster passed away on May 2, 1999, and was buried in Lincoln Cemetery beside his grandparents and mother. Although Benton Avenue A.M.E. lost a lifelong friend, his faith, contributions and leadership will be remembered by future generations as reflected in the historic building he served so diligently and gave so generously to preserve. The fellowship hall in the church's basement, where the congregation first held services in 1923, has been named in his honor (*See Figures 13 and 14*).

Criterion C: ARCHITECTURE

The period between War World I and World War II was marked by strong contrasts, as architectural expressions were developed to articulate a prevailing dichotomy between nostalgia and modernity. Passions both for looking backward and for a new inventive spirit resulted in a final flourish of historicism inspired with new freedoms.³⁸ Within this context, Benton Avenue A.M.E. was built as a distinctive example of a Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals style church building. While at first blush its rectangular, parapeted mass might appear stark and unremarkable, further study reveals an engaging and unique interplay between its Classical elements of design, traditional materials and imaginative Modern detailing. The variety of historic idioms present, combined with its more modern details, creates a significant (yet difficult to classify) reflection of popular period style.

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By the second decade of the 20th century, American preferences in domestic and commercial architecture had more fully embraced Modern design. However, church buildings continued to utilize Classical styles (e.g., Romanesque) that had well passed their main period of popularity. It is likely that ecclesiastical thought continued to view Classical style as providing a more sacred setting. In this regard, Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church perhaps reflects a period of final transition in church architecture (and ecclesiastical thinking) from the historicism of European-influenced style to more wholly American Modern design.

The rectangular, symmetrical mass of the Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church building can perhaps be defined overall within the spirit of Greek Revival style (and its later contributions to Neo-Classicism). Its simplicity in geometric form, symmetry and surface smoothness are characteristic of Greek temple architecture. Absent, however, is the dominant presentation of columns and porticos most closely associated with Greek style. The exception is the delightful limestone basement entry found on the side north elevation. This decorative Greek temple style doorway consists of a pediment header supported by two half columns on either side of the door. The columns have Doric capitals and tall flat bases. It served as the main entrance for the congregation during the three years it met in the basement for worship services until the upper floors were completed in 1926.

Benton Avenue A.M.E. also reflects the historicism of the Jacobethan Revival style. According to Whiffen, the adjective "Jacobethan" is derived by compounding Jacobean and Elizabethan.³⁹ It was first formally articulated in the 1950's by Henry-Russell Hitchcock to describe a "revival" of Jacobean and Elizabethan aesthetics born in England around 1830. However, few buildings within the Jacobethan Revival style exist from this earlier period. Most known buildings within this style were constructed after 1890 in pursuit of a "cheerful" alternative to the more solemn aesthetics of the period. Most Jacobethan designs were for domestic buildings. However, this style had its greatest proportional impact on educational architecture. One of the most noteworthy collections of the Jacobethan Revival style was the series of schools designed by William B. Ittner in St. Louis, MO. Ittner served as Commissioner of School Buildings and subsequently as a consulting architect to the St. Louis Board of Education during the period between 1897 and 1915. As his career progressed, Ittner increasingly favored in his school designs the Jacobethan style using an E-plan.

Buildings within the Jacobethan Revival style are characterized in part by rectangular windows divided into rectangular lights and triangular gables that rise above the roof and that are often parapeted. Brick and stone are the favorite materials, with brick used for the exterior wall surfaces and stone for ornamentation such as quoins, window frames and parapets. The presentation of windows, stone embellishments (quoins, window lintels and sills and horizontal band) and prominent parapeted gables on the primary west and rear east elevations of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church are all Jacobethan expressions. The application of this style, most associated with domestic and educational designs, to a religious building is certainly significant. Its proximity to one of the style's most noted adherents, William B. Ittner, is at least of coincidental interest. It is also of interest that Mr. Ittner acted as a consultant for Springfield Public Schools as he extended his influence beyond St. Louis (The period 1910 through the 1920's was one of heavy expansion for Springfield

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Public Schools). Mr. Ittner subsequently designed Springfield's segregated "New" Lincoln School constructed in 1932.⁴⁰

The Romanesque Revival style is another Classical tradition found within the historic expressions of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church. By 1860, church buildings in America were more frequently Romanesque, reviving this round-arched medieval style. The large arched window openings (formed by fanlights on top of large rectangular double-hung windows) on the side south and north elevations of Benton Avenue A.M.E. and the oculi are all reflective of this style. In fact, these Romanesque details perhaps most clearly define Benton Avenue A.M.E. as an ecclesiastical setting.

In contrast to its nostalgic Greek, Jacobethan and Romanesque details, Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church also presents a freer, more modern spirit. Countering its Revivals style historicism is the rectangular porch on the primary west elevation. Here is found the inventiveness of the Art Deco style, associated with the free expression of the 1920's. The rectilinear form, geometric limestone detailing of the columns and pilasters and piers rising above the porch roof are characteristic of Art Deco design. This singular element provides the bridge that carries Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church away from its historic traditions and into the modern optimism that must have been present within the Congregation at the time of the building's construction.

The Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church building is also architecturally significant within the comparative context of the other historic African-American Church buildings located in Springfield's Jordan Creek Valley. Washington Avenue Baptist Church (*c. 1885, demolished 2001*) at 729 North Washington, Gibson Chapel (*c. 1891*) at 316 East Tampa and Pitts Chapel (*c. 1912*) at 706 North Benton are earlier church buildings in the Late Gothic Revival style (*See Figures 15 – 17*). Through their high quality of materials, craftsmanship and design, all four historic buildings reflect the increasing prosperity, as well as vitality and size, of Springfield's African-American population at the turn-of-the century. As the congregations grew, they were able to replace their earlier small, presumably simple wood frame buildings with these larger, higher style brick and stone churches. Constructed a decade later than Pitts Chapel, Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church, however, reflects an evolution of style preferences among the African-American community consistent with that of the American white majority.

End Notes

1. Dr. Katherine Lederer, Many Thousand Gone: Springfield's Lost Black History. (Springfield, MO: Southwest Missouri State University, 1986) p. 28.
2. Jonathan Fairbanks and Clyde Edwin Tuck. Past and Present of Greene County, Missouri, Vol. I. (Indianapolis: A.W. Bowen, 1915), p. 612.
3. Duane Meyer and V. Marie Arnold. A Brief History of First and Calvary Presbyterian Church, Springfield Missouri. (Springfield: First and Calvary Presbyterian Church, 1987), pp. 2-3.

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4. Pauline Diemer, granddaughter of Rev. Diemer, is a member of Washington Avenue Baptist Church.
 5. Jonathan Fairbanks and Clyde Edwin Tuck. Past and Present of Greene County, Missouri, Vol. I. (Indianapolis: A.W. Bowen, 1915), p. 611.
 6. Greene County Archives. Bird's Eye-View of Springfield (Map). Springfield, 1872.
 7. Henry J. Young. Major Black Religious Leaders, 1755-1940. Nashville: Abingdon, 1977.
 8. Emory Stevens Bucke, ed. The History of American Methodism, 3 Volumes. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1964), p. 2:536-528 and 533.
 9. Gaston Hugh Wamble. "Negroes and Missouri Protestant Churches Before and After the Civil War." Missouri Historical Review 61. (April 1967), p. 321. Additional perspective on the development of A.M.E. churches in Missouri can be gained by reviewing National Register listings of other historic A.M.E. church buildings in the state. National Register of Historic Places. St. Matthew's A.M.E. Church. Cooper County, MO. Listed March 16, 1990. National Register of Historic Places. St. Paul's A.M.E. Church. Boone County, MO. Listed September 4, 1980.
 10. The history of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church, like that of most African-American resources in Springfield, is not well-documented and has been largely handed-down through oral accounts. In 1983, Dr. Katherine Lederer published a series of articles in Springfield! Magazine, which chronicled the history of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Dr. Lederer's series has been invaluable to the preparation of this nomination. Dr. Katherine Lederer. "Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church Represents One of Oldest Black Denominations." Springfield! Magazine. (Springfield: April, 1983), p. 42. Dr. Katherine Lederer. "Funeral Director Chronicles Church History." Springfield! Magazine. (Springfield: May, 1983), p. 42. Dr. Katherine Lederer. "Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church Observing 112th Anniversary." Springfield! Magazine. (Springfield: June, 1983) p. 38.

Programs from anniversary services at Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church have also documented early events in its history. Those cited here were written at a time when several of the Trustees from the period prior to 1922 were still living and active in the Church and, therefore, are considered reliable. Souvenir Program: 91st Anniversary 1872-1963. Springfield, MO: Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church, 1963. Souvenir Program: 177th Founder's Day of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 92nd Anniversary of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church. Springfield, MO: Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church, 1964. Also, Rev. Darlene Herron. Benton Avenue African Methodist Episcopal Church in Notes. (Springfield, MO: 1993).
 11. Greene County Recorder of Deeds. Book 28, Page 233. (Springfield, 1873).
 12. Greene County Recorder of Deeds. Book 37, Page 348. (Springfield, 1879).
 13. Jonathan Fairbanks and Clyde Edwin Tuck. Past and Present of Greene County, Missouri, Vol. I. (Indianapolis: A.W. Bowen, 1915), p. 613.
 14. Greene County Recorder of Deeds. Book 26, Page 95. (Springfield, 1886).
 15. Pictorial and Genealogical Record of Greene County, Missouri. (Chicago. Goodspeed Brothers, Publishers, 1893), p. 289.
 16. Pictorial and Genealogical Record of Greene County, Missouri. (Chicago. Goodspeed Brothers, Publishers, 1893), p. 290.

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
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17. Dr. Katherine Lederer, "Gibson Chapel Presbyterian Church: They Crossed the Jordan." Springfield! Magazine. (Springfield: November, 1982), p. 38.
 18. "Damage to Property Expected To Reach \$500,000," Springfield Daily Republican (Springfield: July 8, 1909), p. 1.
 19. "Three Negroes Lynched by Mad Mob," Springfield Republican, (Springfield: April 15, 1906), p. 1. Also, "Troops Sent Here to Preserve Peace," Springfield Republican, (Springfield: April 16, 1906), p. 1. Dr. Katherine Lederer also provided a summary of activities surrounding the lynching and its impact on the Springfield community in a three-part series for Springfield! magazine in 1981. Dr. Katherine Lederer, "And Then They Sang a Sabbath Song," Springfield! Magazine (Springfield: April 1981), p. 26. Dr. Katherine Lederer, "And Then They Sang a Sabbath Song," Springfield! Magazine (Springfield: May 1981), p. 33. Dr. Katherine Lederer, "And Then They Sang a Sabbath Song," Springfield! Magazine (Springfield: June 1981), p. 24.

The 1906 lynching was not the first in Springfield. In June 1871, a 20 year-old African-American man, Bud Isbell was lynched by a mob. While he strangled, the crowd fired shots into his body. He was accused of violently attacking a white woman, Mrs. Peter Christian, and was in custody of the authorities when the mob took him. Jesse M. Robertson, History of the Negro in Greene County, Missouri: 1865-1871. (Springfield: Academic Paper, 1968), p. 22.
 20. "Plaza Tower Will Replace Fire Department Belfry," Springfield Republican, (Springfield: March 12, 1910), p. 18.
 21. Dr. Katherine Lederer, "And Then They Sang a Sabbath Song," Springfield! Magazine (Springfield: May 1981), p. 33.
 22. Jonathan Fairbanks and Clyde Edwin Tuck. Past and Present of Greene County, Missouri, Vol. I. (Indianapolis: A.W. Bowen, 1915), p. 613.
 23. Pictorial and Genealogical Record of Greene County, Missouri. (Chicago. Goodspeed Brothers, Publishers, 1893), p. 281, 289-290.
 24. Dr. Katherine Lederer, "Pitts Chapel United Methodist Church Proudly Traces Its Beginnings Back to Log Church Built in 1847." Springfield! Magazine. (Springfield: January, 1983), p. 39.
 25. R.I. Holcombe, ed. A History of Greene County, Missouri. (St. Louis: Western Historical Company, 1883), p. 801.
 26. When it was first established in August 1873, the institution was named Springfield College. However, it was changed to Drury College in December of the same year in honor of the school's largest contributor at that time. R.I. Holcombe, ed. A History of Greene County, Missouri. (St. Louis: Western Historical Company, 1883), pp. 813 and 814.
 27. "New Lincoln Is Dedicated." Springfield Leader & Press. (Springfield, May 22, 1931).
 28. "Fifth Junior High Named Eastwood." Springfield Leader & Press. (Springfield, April 7, 1955).
 29. An in-depth discussion of the social history associated with Springfield's segregated public schools is found in the National Register nomination for Lincoln School prepared by Dr. Katherine Lederer. National Register of Historic Places. Lincoln School. Greene County, MO. Listed May 31, 2000.
 30. Pictorial and Genealogical Record of Greene County, Missouri. (Chicago. Goodspeed Brothers, Publishers, 1893), p. 281.

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
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31. Lincoln Cemetery was established in 1919 as a segregated burial place for African-Americans in Springfield. Prior to its establishment by a white for-profit corporation, Lincoln Memorial Park Cemetery Corporation, African-Americans were buried in a segregated area at the south end of Hazelwood Cemetery. Lincoln Cemetery original consisted of a total of 10 acres bought from Eastlawn Cemetery, which divided it from its southern end. Today, only 2.5 acres still remain. Lincoln Cemetery is located on the northern tier of East Chestnut Expressway at the intersection of South Barnes. Although still active, it faces endangerment from industrial pressures and lack of regular maintenance. Access to the cemetery's records are not available. However, the following is a partial list of past Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church members known to be buried in Lincoln Cemetery.

Eugene Billings
William H. Bland
Blanche Duffie
James Duffie

Vincent J. Foster
Mary Foster
Vincent F. Foster
Ida. V. McAdams

William H. McAdams
Carrie Mae Foster Penn

32. "Court's Ruling Ended Lincoln School Era." Springfield News and Leader. (Springfield: January 21, 1979), p. 1B.
33. "Schools Integrated in Two-Year Period." Springfield News and Leader. (Springfield: January 21, 1979), p. 1B. Also, Dr. Katherine Lederer. Many Thousand Gone: Springfield's Lost Black History. (Springfield, MO: Southwest Missouri State University, 1986), p. 35.
34. National Register of Historic Places. Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site. Shawnee County, KS. Listed October 26, 1992. Also, Bruce Allen Murphy. "Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka," World Book Online Americas Edition, <http://www.aolsvc.worldbook.aol.com/wbo/wbPage/na/ar/co/079300>. (June 1, 2001).
35. Deborah L. Dandridge, Archivist. Kansas Collection, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS. (Interview: June 4, 2001)
36. Built in 1885, Second Baptist Church (Colored), later renamed Washington Avenue Baptist Church, was listed on the National Register in December 2000. Acquired by Drury University in October 2000, the building was demolished in January 2001 for land clearance to accommodate construction of Drury's new science facility. National Register of Historic Places. Washington Avenue Baptist Church [preferred]. Greene County, MO. Listed December 22, 2000.
37. Springfield News and Leader. "Obituary of Vincent F. Foster." (Springfield: May 5, 1999), p. 4B.
38. Leland M. Roth. A Concise History of American Architecture. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1979.
39. Marcus Whiffen. American Architecture Since 1780. A Guide to the Styles. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1992), p. 178.
40. National Register of Historic Places. Lincoln School. Greene County, MO. Listed May 31, 2000.

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
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Figure 1: Historic Photograph Fleming McCullah, early organizer of the A.M.E. Church at 830 North Benton Avenue, Springfield, Greene County, Missouri. Brother McCullah served as Chairman of the Trustees at the time of cornerstone laying of the Congregation's new brick church building. (Photo: From the Dr. Katherine G. Lederer Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Southwest Missouri State University. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Figure 2: Historic Photograph Fleming McCullah and his wife, Mary Jane "Jennie" Ayers, a former Danforth slave. (Photo: From the Dr. Katherine G. Lederer Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Southwest Missouri State University. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
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Figure 3: Historic Photograph Fleming and Jennie McCullah and their son, Lewis, in front of their log home. (Photo: From the Dr. Katherine G. Lederer Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Southwest Missouri State University. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Figure 4: Historic Photograph Emma McCullah Tutt, sister of Fleming McCullah and wife of A.M.E. Church Trustee Lewis Tutt. (Photo: From the Dr. Katherine G. Lederer Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Southwest Missouri State University. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Figure 5: Historic Photograph Fleming McCullah and his family outside their log home. (Photo: From the Dr. Katherine G. Lederer Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Southwest Missouri State University. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Figure 6: Historic Photograph A.M.E. Church Trustees Fleming McCullah, Ida Bryant McAdams and John Haywood outside the church's original wood frame building constructed in 1877 and replaced with the current brick church completed in 1926. (Photo: From the Dr. Katherine G. Lederer Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Southwest Missouri State University. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Figure 7: Historic Photograph Reedy Chapel A.M.E. Church, a mission of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church, built in 1977 on North Weaver in the historic African-American neighborhood of Westport. (Photo: 1999. Historic Springfield, Inc. Used with permission.)



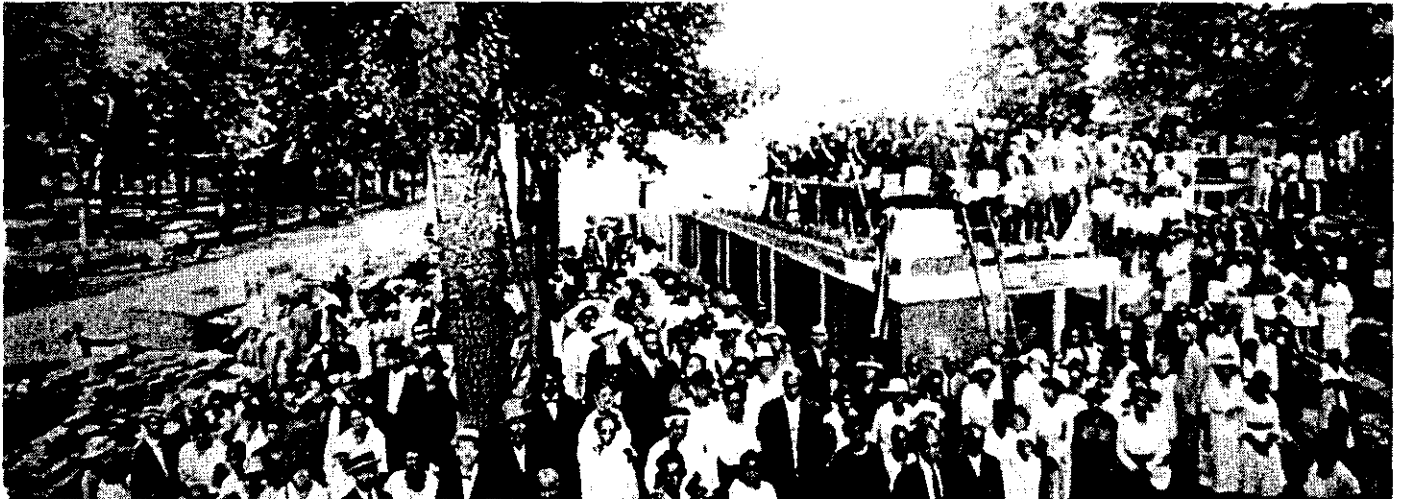
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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
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Figure 8: Historic Photograph Cornerstone laying ceremony for Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church on August 27, 1922. View from northwest toward the primary west and side north elevations. The building in the distance is reported to be the original wood frame church building moved for construction of the new brick church. (Photo: 1922. From the Dr. Katherine G. Lederer Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Southwest Missouri State University. Used with permission.)



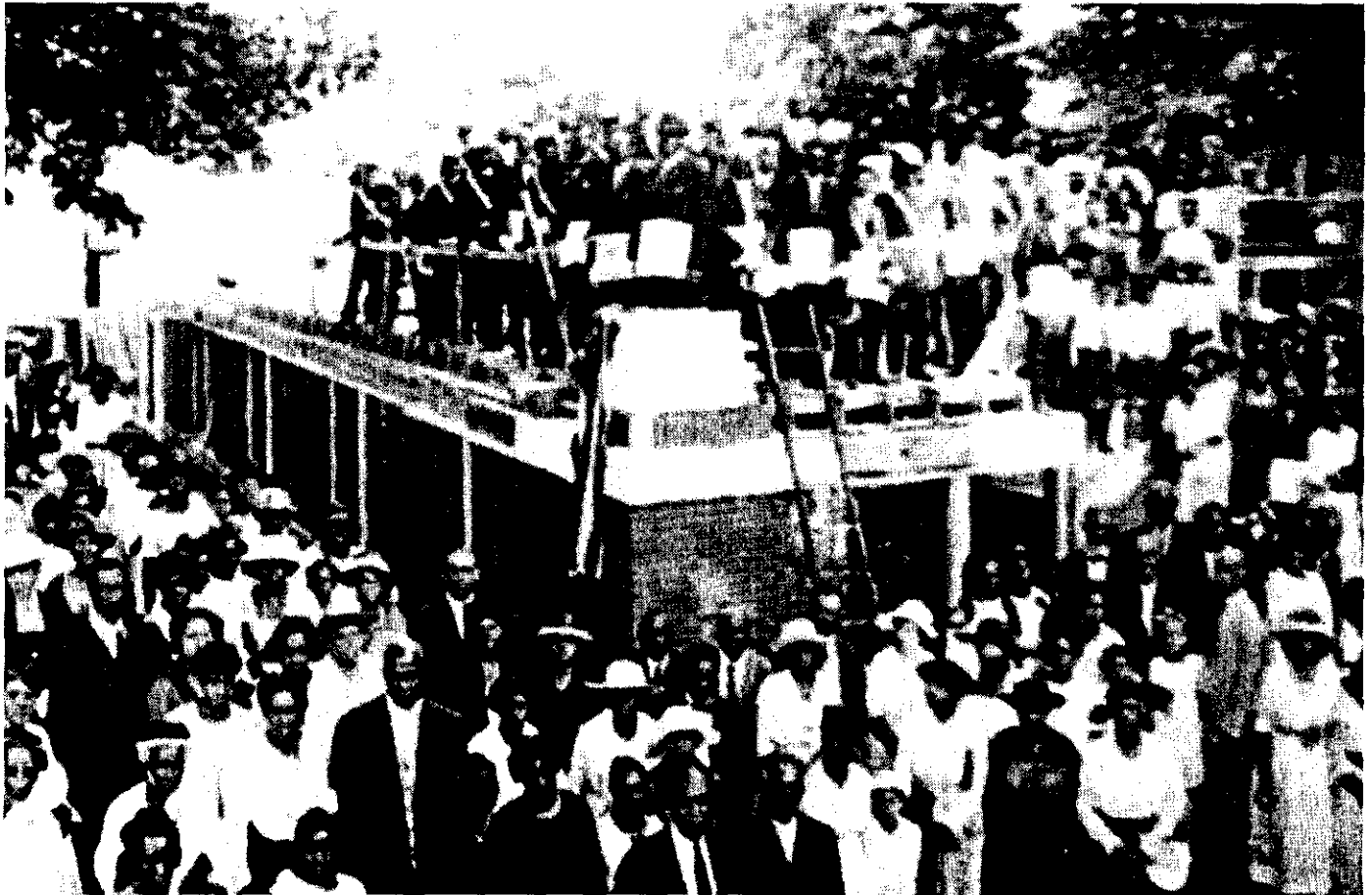
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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Figure 9: Historic Photograph Close-up of cornerstone laying ceremony for Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church on August 27, 1922 (Figure 8). The Prince Hall Masons are gathered on top of the basement level. Note that the Greek Temple style limestone doorway at the north side elevation (left of photo) is partially installed. (Photo: 1922. From the Dr. Katherine G. Lederer Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Southwest Missouri State University. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Figure 10: Historic Photograph The special "Mortgage Burning" ceremonies held by the Benton Avenue A.M.E. Congregation on February 21 and 22, 1943. Mrs. Ellen Elsinger, the oldest living member at the time, held the mortgage for the burning. (Photo: 1943. From the Dr. Katherine G. Lederer Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Southwest Missouri State University. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Figure 11: Historic Photograph William H. McAdams (left), a member of Benton Ave. A.M.E. Church, started teaching in Springfield's segregated schools in 1881 and rose to serve as principal of "Old" Lincoln. His brother-in-law, Ned Bryant, is at the right. (Photo: From the Dr. Katherine G. Lederer Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Southwest Missouri State University. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Figure 12: Historic Photograph William H. McAdams, principal of "Old" Lincoln School, with his students. (Photo: From the Dr. Katherine G. Lederer Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Southwest Missouri State University. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
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Figure 13: Historic Photograph Vincent J. Foster family. Seated from left to right are Vincent J. Foster, his wife Mary and son Albon. His daughter Carrie Mae Foster Penn, mother of Vincent F. Foster, is standing. The elder Mr. Foster was a Trustee of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church at the time of its construction in 1922. (Photo: Date unknown. Courtesy of Mr. John Jamison. Used with permission.)



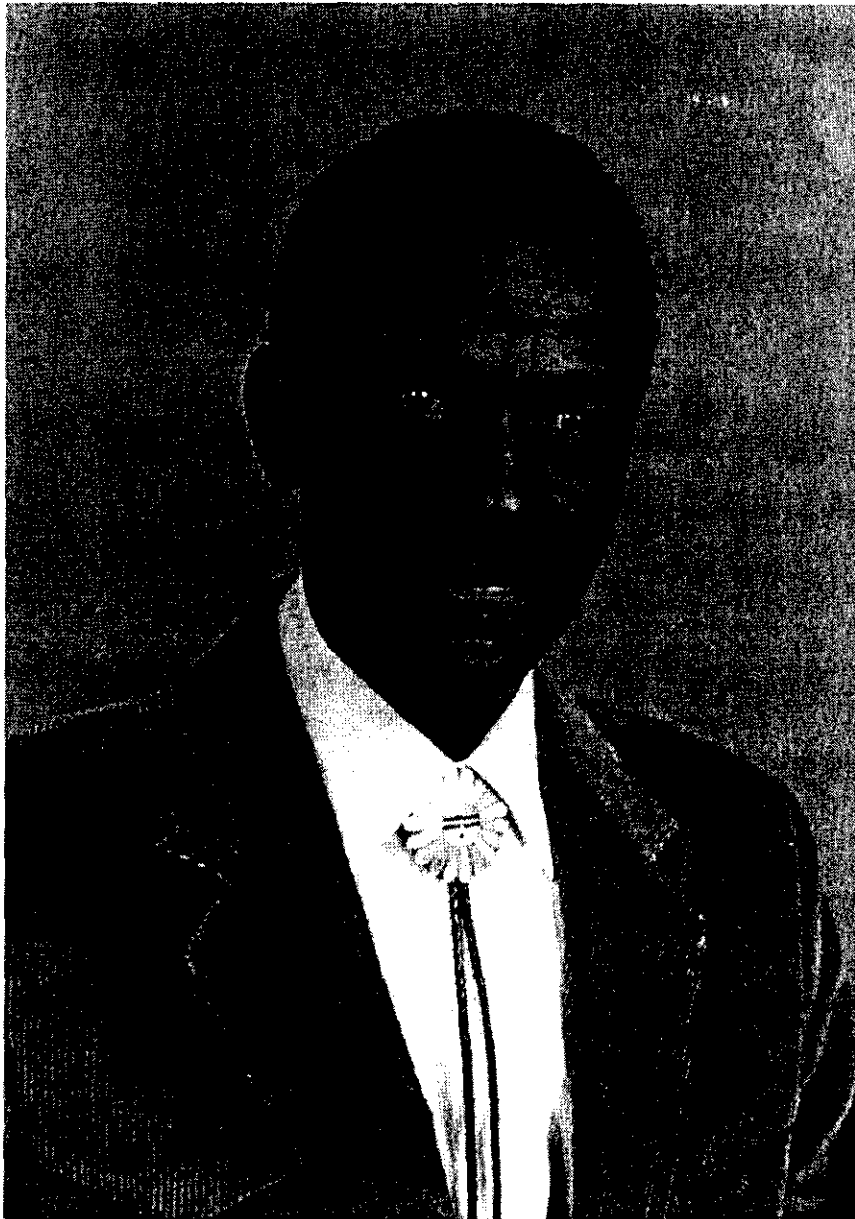
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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
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Figure 14: Historic Photograph Vincent F. Foster. Brother Foster was grandson of Vincent F. Foster. Like his grandfather, Vincent F. was a Trustee of Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church. His bequest following his passing in 1999 established a restricted building fund for the church's on-going maintenance and preservation. (Photo: Date unknown. Courtesy of Mr. John Jamison. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Figure 15: Historic Photograph Washington Avenue Baptist Church (*c. 1885, demolished 2001*), previously located at 729 North Washington Avenue in Springfield, Greene County, Missouri. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on December 22, 2000, just prior to its demolition. (Photo: 1999. Historic Springfield, Inc. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Figure 16: Historic Photograph Gibson Chapel (*c. 1891*), located at 316 East Tampa Street in Springfield, Greene County, Missouri. (Photo: 2000. Historic Springfield, Inc. Used with permission.)



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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Figure 17: Historic Photograph Pitts Chapel (c. 1912) at 706 North Benton Avenue in Springfield, Greene County, Missouri. (Photo: 2000. Historic Springfield, Inc. Used with permission.)



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Springfield News and Leader. "Obituary of Vincent F. Foster." Springfield, MO: May 5, 1999.

Springfield News and Leader. "Schools Integrated in Two-Year Period." Springfield, MO: January 21, 1979.

Springfield Republican. "Plaza Tower Will Replace Fire Department Belfry." Springfield, MO: March 12, 1910.

Springfield Republican. "Three Negroes Lynched by Mad Mob." Springfield, MO: April 15, 1906.

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary for Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church is defined as:

“ALL OF LOT FIFTY-EIGHT (58) EXCEPT THE EAST FIFTY-SIX FEET THEREOF, IN HARWOOD, LIENBY AND BOYD’S ADDITION TO THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI; LOCATED UPON AND BEING A PART OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION THIRTEEN (13), IN TOWNSHIP TWENTY-NINE (29) OF RANGE TWENTY-TWO (22) IN GREENE COUNTY, MISSOURI.”

Boundary Justification:

The selected boundary includes the land historically associated with the building’s date of significance. The legal description above is maintained by the Greene County Recorder’s Office, according to the recorded plat.

The land is that acquired by Alexander Burns on behalf of the Church’s original Trustees, as identified in a Warranty Deed, dated February 25, 1873, and recorded on June 28, 1873, (Book 28, Page 233), as described below:

“LOT NUMBER FIFTY-EIGHT (58), IN HARWOOD, LIENBY & BOYD’S ADDITION TO SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI, SAID LOT BEING NINETY (90) FEET AND NINE (9) INCHES WIDE ON BENTON AVENUE AND TWO HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN FEET AND SIX INCHES (214 FT. & 6 INCHES) DEEP ON CENTRE AVENUE.”

Ownership of the land subsequently was conveyed from Alexander Burns to the Trustees, John R. Kelly, Aaron Isbell, Lewis Tutt and Granville Allen, and their successors in offices in a Warranty Deed, dated on August 2, 1877, and recorded on March 5, 1879 (Book 37, Page 348).

The Trustees later conveyed the east 56 feet of their land through a Deed of Trust, dated September 25, 1886, and recorded on October 15, 1886 (Book 26, Page 95), to Queen City Building and Loan Association as security for a \$1,000.00 note. The Trustees identified in the Deed were Granville Allen, John R. Kelly, Peter McBrown, Jacob Oakley, Lewis Tutt, William Gatewood and William Reeves. Also listed as an assignor on the deed was R.L. Goode, trustee for S.J. Brown. No prior association between S.J. Brown and the subject property has been identified to-date. Ownership of the same 56 feet of the subject property was transferred to Bertie Carnahan in a Warranty Deed, dated August 4, 1887, and recorded on October 28, 1887 (Book 36, Page 83), as described below:

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

“BEGINNING AT THE NORTH EAST CORNER OF LOT NUMBER FIFTY-EIGHT (58) IN HARWOODS LIENBY AND BOYDS ADDITION TO THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI, AND RUNNING THENCE WEST ALONG THE SOUTH LINE OF CENTER AVENUE FIFTY SIX FEET, THENCE SOUTH NINETY FEET, THENCE EAST FIFTY SIX FEET, THENCE NORTH NINETY FEET TO THE PLACE OF THE BEGINNING, THE SAME BEING FIFTY SIX OFF THE EAST END OF SAID LOT NUMBERED FIFTY-EIGHT IN SAID ADDITION TO SAID CITY OF SPRINGFIELD.”

All subsequent descriptions of the subject property establish its boundaries as the original lot acquired by Alexander Burns in 1873 less the east 56 feet. In 1923, the Trustees of the A.M.E. Church of Springfield, Missouri (then identified as Fleming McCullah, James S. Hardrick, John Haywood, S.A.G. Campbell, Henry Bedell, George Abernathy, V.J. Foster, H.A. Britton and Lizzie Perkins) deed the property as security for a \$5,000.00 note to G.G.Lydy (party of the second part) and The Citizens Bank of Springfield, Missouri (party of the third part) through a Deed of Trust, dated January 15, 1923, and recorded January 18, 1923 (Book 443, Page 23), as described below: This Deed corresponds with the first worship services held in January 1923 in the basement of the Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church building still under construction.

“ALL OF LOT NUMBERED FIFTY-EIGHT (58) IN HARWOOD LIENBY AND BOYD’S ADDITION TO THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD (EXCEPT THE EAST FIFTY-SIX FEET THEREOF) TOGETHER WITH BRICK AND STONE CHURCH BUILDING THEREON AND ALL LIGHT AND OTHER FIXTURES AND IMPROVEMENTS ON SAID LOT FIFTY-EIGHT (EXCEPT EAST 56 FEET AFORESAID).”

The designated boundary for Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church is consistent with this and all subsequent descriptions of the subject property recorded with the Greene County Recorder’s Office.

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

This nomination was prepared for the following sponsoring organizations:

1. Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
830 North Benton Avenue
Springfield, MO 65802

Board of Trustees
Mr. John Jamison, *Pastor's Trustee*
2. City of Springfield Landmarks Board
P.O. Box 840
Springfield, MO 65802

Ms. Paula Ringer, *Chairman*
3. Midtown Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 214
Springfield, MO 65801

Mr. Kenneth C. Williams, *President*

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Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
Greene County, Missouri

Photographs:

- The following is the same for all photographs:

Benton Avenue A.M.E. Church
830 North Benton Avenue
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri
David J. Eslick
March 1, 2001
Negatives on file with Historic Springfield, Inc.; P.O. Box 50305; Springfield, MO 65805-0305

EXTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS

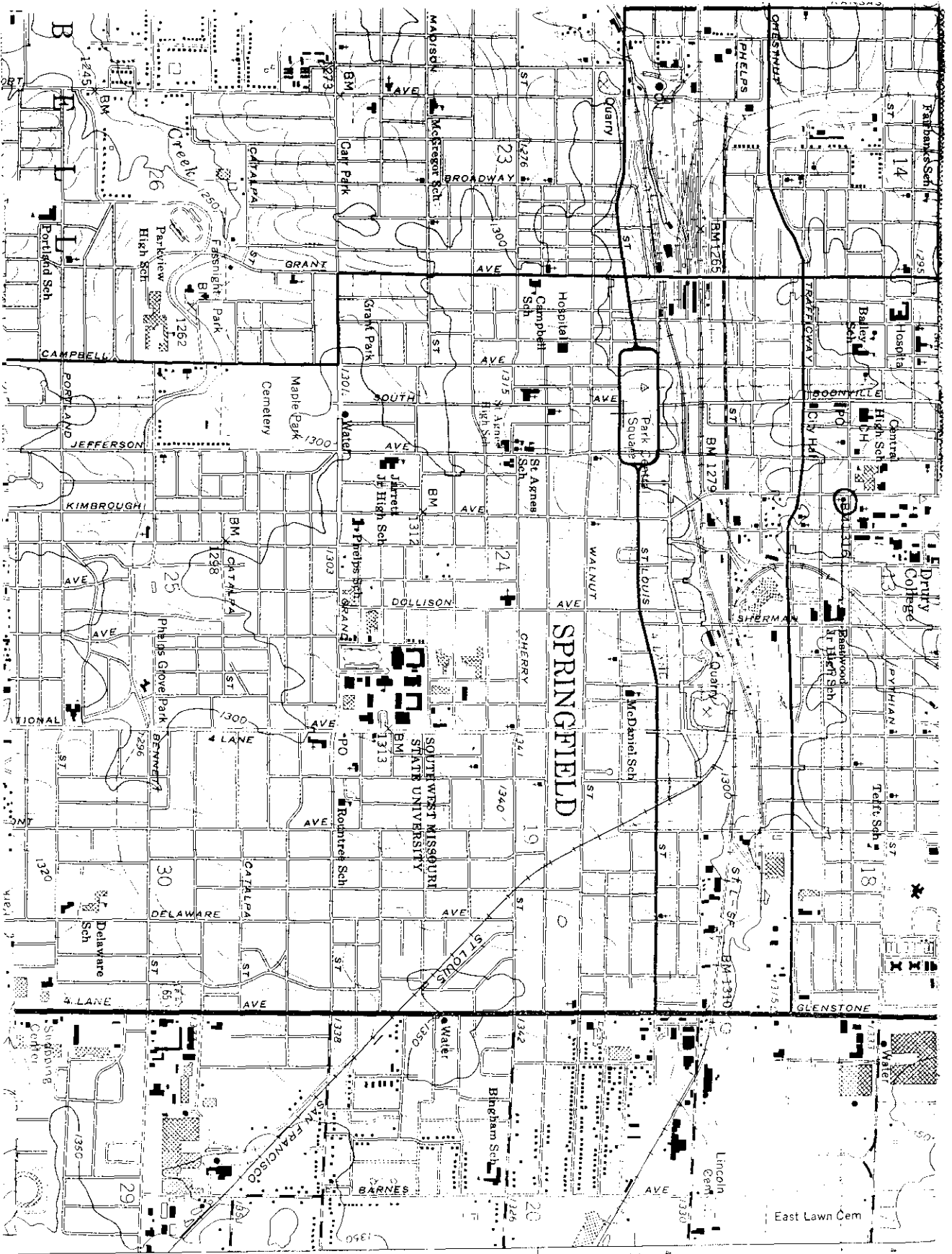
- Photo 1:** Primary west elevation from northwest view (Roll 2, Frame 3)
- Photo 2:** Primary west elevation from southwest view (Roll 2, Frame 13)
- Photo 3:** Detail. West primary elevation with rectangular Art Deco-influenced porch and triangulated pediment above gable. Terra-cotta cornice band forms arched headers above second story windows. From northwest view (Roll 2, Frame 8)
- Photo 4:** Detail. Cornerstone at northwest corner of the building above lime stone and brick band between basement and first story. From nothwest view (Roll 2, Frame 11)
- Photo 5:** Side south elevation (Roll 2, Frame 17)
- Photo 6:** Side north elevation (Roll 4, Frame 35)

INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS

- Photo 7:** View of vestibule from north landing into nave. Main entrance from primary west elevation is at right. South stairs rising to the balcony are in the distance (Roll 3, Frame 14)
- Photo 8:** View of nave from second floor balcony at rear west of the sanctuary toward the east chancel (Roll 1, Frame 34)
- Photo 9:** View of chancel at front east of the sanctuary from south central aisle. Proscenium arch over chancel supported on carved wood pilasters with Ionic capitals (Roll 1, Frame 12)
- Photo 10:** View of sanctuary from north wall across to south wall (Roll 1, Frame 17)
- Photo 11:** View of rear west of sanctuary from east chancel. South and north central aisles rise with raked floor to double doors at rear into west main vestibule. Second floor balcony above (Roll 1, Frame 4)

OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS

- Photo 12:** Non-contributing building on east side of lot behind historic church building. Rear east elevation of church in distance. From northeast (Roll 2, Frame 23)



(GALLOWAY)
7358 II NW

4116

4117

4118 LTM Reference
1230'
EDNE 15
Easting: 494520
Northing: 4118100

Scale: 1:25K
Missouri
Greene County
A.M.E. Church
Benton Avenue

4119







