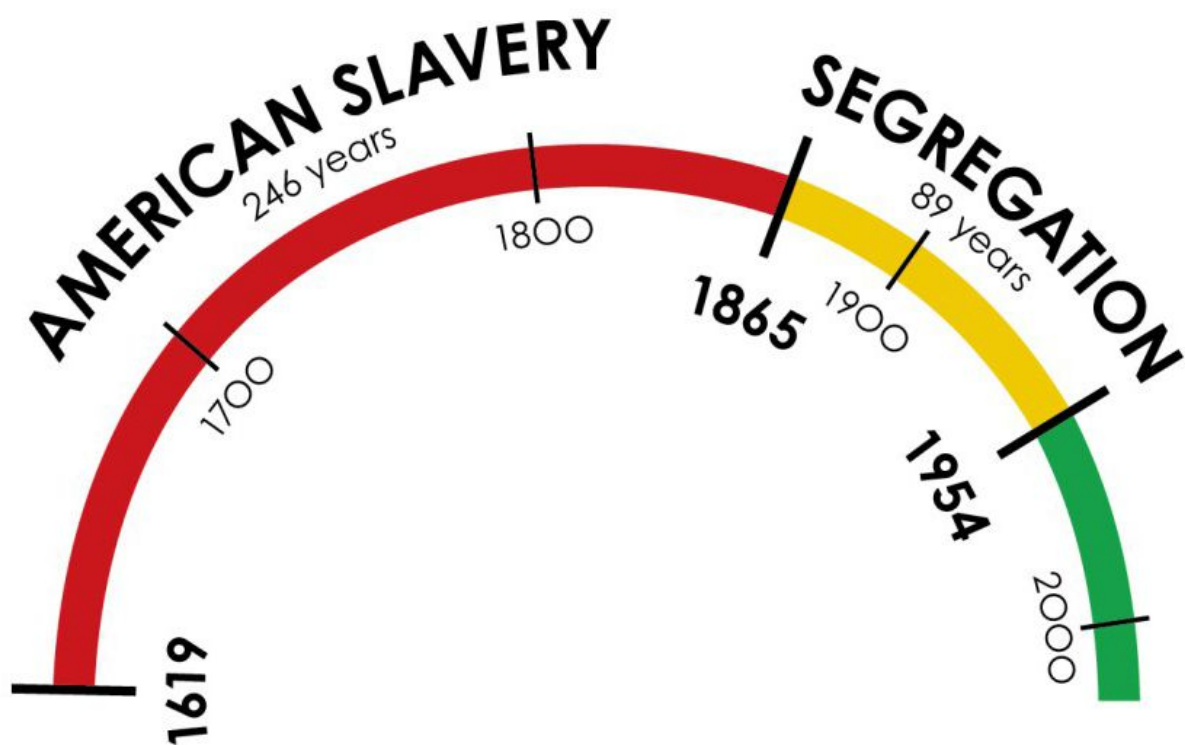


Appendix A - Diocesan History of Slavery

As we consider how to best “repair the breach” around the legacy of slavery here in the Diocese of Maryland, it is worthwhile perhaps to consider the history of the diocese as an institution and how it has responded to not just slavery, but also the continuing legacy.

For more information on the legal and political history of reparations, please refer to the book, *Reparations: Pro & Con*.

Brophy, A. L. (2006). *Reparations: Pro and Con*. Oxford University Press.



Racism in the Anglican and Episcopal Church of Maryland

Mary Klein, diocesan archivist and Kingsley Smith, historiographer

Presented at "400 Years of Anglican Episcopal History" the Tri-History Conference (National Episcopal Historians and Archivists; the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church; Episcopal Women's History Project), June 24-27 2007 in Williamsburg, VA

For all its ironies and ambiguities, the Proprietary Colony granted to the Calvert family in the 17th Century really did establish an unusual system of religious toleration, proclaiming, though not always obeying, the radical notion that Christian disagreements about doctrine and practice should not literally be death or life matters. But this glimmer of decent respect for others did not prevent the colonial system from exploiting labor, at first as indentured servants, and by 1638 as chattel slaves. Soon the law was that all slaves were Africans, and all Africans were legally slaves unless they had solid evidence of manumission.

In 1692, to guard against papist plots and the threats of dissenters, the process of establishing the Church of England began, so that by 1702 only Anglicans could hold public office, the several vestries were in effect the local governments, and all free men (and all slaves, male and female) were taxed at 40 pounds of tobacco per annum to build the churches and pay the parsons—tobacco that was raised largely by slave labor.

The Rev. Thomas Bray came to Annapolis in 1700 as commissary for the Bishop of London to get the colonial parishes organized he gave instructions that, in the spirit of his Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, there be missionary concern for "the red and the black" in the colony, but the Native Americans were largely ignored, and the Church's work among the Africans was never effective—as we will soon see.

Independence meant disestablishment of the Church, whose economic welfare and social status remained deeply embedded in slavery. After Maryland abolished slavery in November, 1864 (by a 51% vote!), Black Marylanders were still suppressed, through sharecropping, unfair wages and legalized discrimination, especially separate schools. Parishes and diocesan institutions were almost entirely segregated.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts sent a questionnaire to all clergy in the Colonies in 1724, and both questions and answers are very telling. Charged with converting natives, catechizing slaves, as well as ministering to settlers in America, Colonial clergy, under the auspices of the Bishop of London, were overseen by a Commissary from the Bishop.

Question number seven read, "Are there any infidels, bond or free, within your parish; and what means are used for their conversion?" Of the 23 responses from Maryland clergy, none made any effort to convert the Indians. Some said the Indians "are averse to Christianity," one reported that he did not understand their language, and another said there were a few Indians in his parish, but nothing was done for them.

But efforts to minister to slaves varied greatly. Only three reported, in answer to the 1724 questionnaire, that there was no instruction or baptism of slaves, and the remaining 20 reported slave baptisms, several slave communicants, and one parish noted it had a free

Black family of communicants. Robert Scot of All Faith Parish in St. Mary's County answered that "most slaves attend church with their masters," but William Tibbs at Old St. Paul's in Baltimore said that "most Negroes refuse instruction." Clergy were frustrated in their attempts to catechize slaves, because many masters feared the consequences of education. Some thought that once a slave was baptized, he or she would have to be freed.

The Rev. Thomas Bacon, of Talbot County published a series of sermons he had addressed to "Masters and Servants" in 1743. He told the slaves that clergy were "under a particular temporal tie, as we are supported by a poll tax, in which every slave, above sixteen years of age, is rated as high, and pay as much, as the master he or she belongs to, and have an equal right to instruction with their owners."

He advised them that whatever good they did on earth would be rewarded by "The Just Master in Heaven" who "will pay you good wages and will make no difference between you and the richest freeman upon the face of the earth." At the same time, he advised them that their position in the earthly life was ordained by God, and that if "Wicked Overseers" mistreated them, they must bear it, trusting that their masters would receive their just rewards in heaven. The only exception to obeying their masters' every wish would be if they were commanded to do something sinful such as "steal, murder, set a neighbor's house on fire, to do harm to anybody's goods, or cattle or to get drunk, curse and swear, or to work on Sundays."

To the masters, Bacon insisted that the color of one's skin had nothing to do with having a human soul, and that Negroes were capable of salvation, and should not be treated as brutes or beasts of burden. He insisted that masters should bring them for baptism, and suggested they employ a schoolmaster to teach their slaves the Creed, Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments. He said that, "Next to our children and brethren by blood, our servants, and especially our slaves, are certainly in the nearest relation to us. They are an immediate and necessary part of our households, by whose labours and assistance we are enabled to enjoy the gifts of Providence in ease and plenty, and surely we owe them a return of what is just and equal for the drudgery and hardships they go through in our Service." Masters should set good examples; pray for the conversion of their slaves; establish the use of daily Family Prayer, to which the servants should be invited; read the Bible to their children and slaves; insist the slaves attend church on Sundays, then ask them what they had learned; and to be careful in the choice of Overseer.

Bacon also proposed and established a Charity Working School for the "maintenance and education of orphans and other poor children and Negroes" in 1750 in Talbot County; and for Frederick County in 1761 after he became rector of All Saints' church there. His plan was this: "Their souls are to be taken care for, by training them up in the Way they should go; their bodies are to be fed, lodged, clothed and supplied with medicines when they are sick, and they are to be trained up to Industry." He thought that 50 pounds could be spent in buying two slaves to train as school servants.

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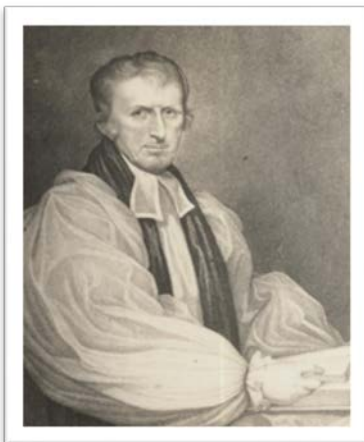
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How matter-or-fact and business-like the decision to break up a family seems. We do not have Bishop Claggett's reply, but in his 1816 will there were no slaves mentioned.

The registrar of the Vestry of St. Peter's parish in Talbot County responded to questions sent by Bp. Claggett in 1797 with a tirade against Quakers and Methodists who were stirring up trouble by preaching abolition. He also proposed that "manumitted slaves and those descendants be not permitted to run about from County to County or to leave that in which their manumitter resided unless to quit the state entirely and not to possess their manumissions or any copy thereof, so as to be able to furnish runaway slaves therewith, who assume their names..."

In Charles County, both the clergy, John Compton and Hatch Dent, were slave owners; indeed, of the 19 clergy listed in the 1791 Journal who could be located in the 1790 census, all owned slaves except for the Rev. George Bower out in Washington County in Western Maryland, and The Rev. James Kemp, who would become Maryland's second bishop.



James Kemp was born in Scotland in 1764, and came to Maryland in 1787, a year after graduating from Marischal College in Aberdeen.

He was consecrated America's first bishop Suffragan in 1814. (And that is another fascinating and controversial event in the life of the Diocese of Maryland.) In answering questions posed to him by a Mr. William Helmsley in an 1809 letter, Kemp wrote that "slavery in unquestionably contrary to the spirit and genius of the Christian dispensation."

He also wrote that a timetable for eventual abolition would be the best way to end that evil, admitting that "considerable time would be required."

He said that "the most correct line of conduct for a Christian to pursue would be to exert his influence on the public opinion to produce a legal plan of gradual emancipation." He went on, "I was taught at an early period to abhor slavery. And when a few slaves came into my

possession, I immediately formed a plan for their gradual emancipation, which I am carrying swiftly into effect.”

The report on the State of the Church as sent to the Convention Journal of 1816 reminded members of the church of their obligations “to make every possible provision for the religious instruction of the people of colour; a duty now so generally, and most criminally ignored. They would take the liberty to recommend to all, and more especially to the proprietors of slaves, the excellent sermons of the Rev. Thomas Bacon...” And Bishop Kemp admonished, “Nor let me omit to call your attention to the people of colour. This is part of our Lord’s vineyard, in which there is need of great exertions. And you will, in all probability, experience most success, by addressing them by themselves and in a familiar and easy way.” By 1818, the Convention had Bacon’s sermons printed and ready for distribution.

A letter written to Bp. Kemp in 1824 by the Rev. Henry L. Davis of Annapolis is in some contrast to the letter to Bp. Claggett concerning a slave.

Mr. Davis had just lost his job as President of St. John’s College, and wrote Bp. Kemp on a very personal and delicate matter on December 9. “This note will be handed to you by my man Sandy, who is sent to your city for the purpose of being hired as a waiter in a tavern, boarding house or private family. I have become so poor that I can no longer afford to keep so valuable a servant about my house. His grandfather, whom I have brought over from Cecil, will answer all my purposes in the house and the garden. Sandy was raised by my mother, and regularly trained to house work. He is a tolerable cook and gardener and an excellent waiter, brisk, intelligent and honest. ... I beg that you will have the goodness to inquire among your friends for a home for Sandy. If you find a place, have the further goodness to stipulate that his wages shall be paid, at the end of every quarter, to Mr. Edward J. Coale.”

This letter seems to show that Mr. Davis held affection, esteem and concern for Sandy. He trusted him enough to go to Baltimore alone from Annapolis, and deliver a letter to the bishop. However, Davis’ poverty, and perhaps other considerations in 1824, prevented him from freeing Sandy. He wanted to find a “home” for Sandy, not an “owner,” but Sandy’s wages were to be sent to a third party, presumably to pay a debt. He also assumed that the Bishops friends were also slave-holders, even in the city of Baltimore.

The people who were the Antebellum church in Maryland, like the church in Maryland at every time and on every question, held varied views on slavery, worship and instruction for slaves, and whether owning slaves was compatible with Christianity.

St. Paul’s Church in Baltimore did organize The Maryland Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and the Relief of Free Negroes and Others Unlawfully Held in Bondage in 1789. Although it was the 4th anti-slavery society to be organized in America, it never drew in many supporters, either in Baltimore or anywhere else in the state.

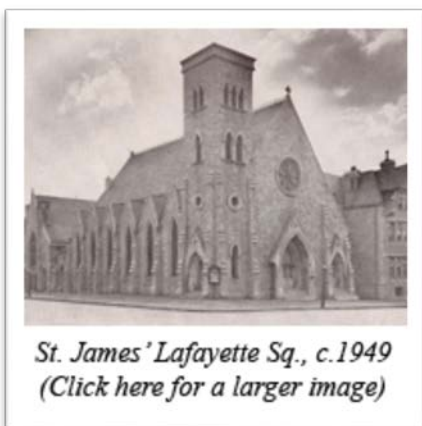
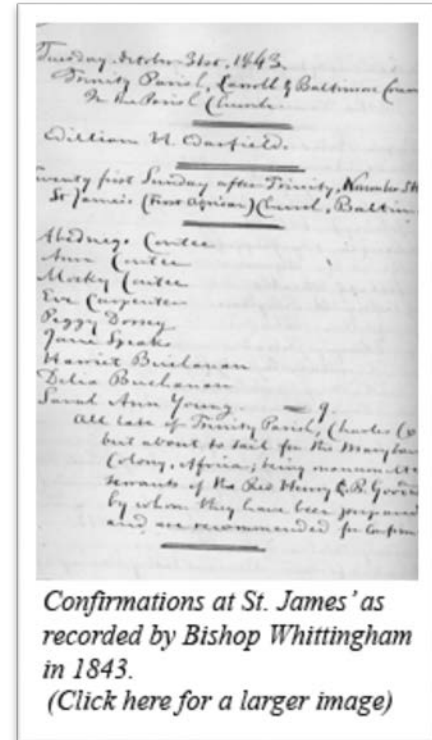
By 1820, the problem of what to with freed slaves became so worrisome that The Maryland State Colonization Society was begun. Backed by such Episcopalians as Francis Scott Key and Chief Justice Roger Taney of Washington, and John Eager Howard of Baltimore, the goal of the Society was to secure an African colony as a new home for freed slaves.

Sure that people of color could never be fully accepted as equals in America, where they were obvious by their skin color, these Colonizationists were by no means Abolitionists. In a scathing 1843 letter to Mr. John Brackenridge, Francis Scott Key's daughter Anna wrote that her father was "altogether averse to being classed with the abolitionists" and he had only freed "3 or 4 selected individuals who were trained with a view to sending them to Liberia, but who preferred to remain in this country and were permitted to do so." She said she was not worried that anything "will ever associate the memory of my Father with Northern abolitionists in the minds of Southern men."

On November 1, 1843, Bishop Whittingham entered the following note into his confirmation book: "At. St. James' First African Church, Baltimore. Nine persons all late of Trinity Parish, Charles County, but about to sail for the Maryland Colony, Africa; being manumitted servants of the Rev. Henry Goodwin by whom they have been prepared and are recommended for confirmation."

Several clergy wrote to Bp. Kemp saying they could not take a parish in Maryland because it was a slave-holding state. And at least one wrote saying he did not want any parish outside a slave state.

The Rev. John Scott, writing from the Eastern Shore of Maryland, deplored the state of slavery, but distrusted Abolitionists. He said, "The colored population seems to fare well enough so far as their bodies are concerned, but do thy not 'perish' in the most important sense, 'for lack of knowledge?' A determined slaveholder can, with a very bad grace, condescend to impart religious instruction to 'those in bondage' for he is afraid of entrusting them with that message which teaches reciprocal duties throughout the whole circle of human connexions ..."



St. James' First African Church in Baltimore City, the first Episcopal Church specifically for Blacks south of the Mason-Dixon Line, was founded in 1824 by the Rev. William Leavington as a place "where both bond and free of African descent might worship the common Father of all."

However almost immediately, the free Black members wanted to exclude slaves from membership. Leavington's answer was to quote scripture, "the Apostle says, whether bond or free, ye are all one in Christ Jesus," and to quote Bishop Kemp who said the object of building such a church was that "both bond and free might serve

God; and that above all people in the world, we ought to be the most united in the world."

The Rt. Rev. William Rollinson Whittingham became bishop of Maryland in 1840, and served until his death in 1879. He was a New Yorker, a Unionist, and a man who worked for toleration in every quarter. He was also a meticulous record-keeper. During his first year in office, he began to list everyone he confirmed, and keep those lists in a book.

He divided his lists by always noting “colored” confirmations in a separate column. His accounting of how many “colored” people were confirmed, where they were confirmed, and what their names were provide a fascinating glimpse into the makeup and practices of the diocese on the eve of the Civil War.

The new bishop took a survey of communicants in 1840, asking rectors to send him a list of names. More parishes in St. Mary’s County supplied names of “colored communicants” than any other county.

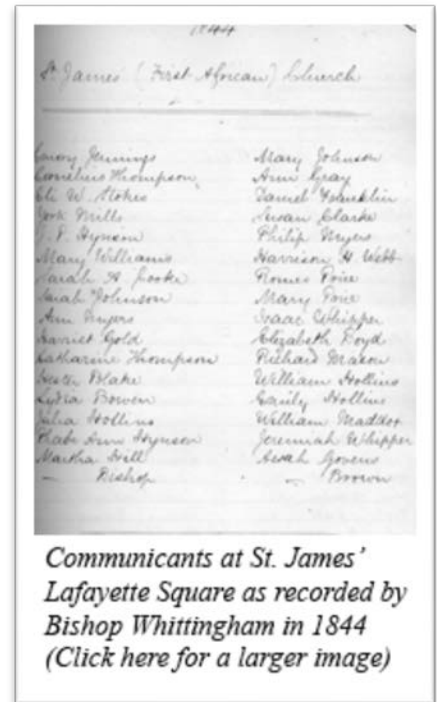
(The southernmost county on Maryland’s western shore, St. Mary’s County numbered about 5,900 slaves among their total population of 13,700, by no means the county with the largest slave population; but by percentage, 42% of the population were slaves. Actually Charles County had a slave population of almost 60% slaves.)

The parishes in St. Mary’s County reporting “colored” communicants included All Faith Parish listing 53 communicants, including four “colored persons,” all with only first names. King & Queen Parish reported 72 communicants, including 12 “colored” communicants, (with first names only) but noted that “almost 11 others, whose names are not known at present” should also be included. St. Andrew’s Parish listed 56 communicants, including nine colored persons, all with both first and last names. Trinity Church located in William & Mary Parish enumerated 20 communicants, including 5 “colored,” four of whom had the surname of Briscoe.

Upon quick examination, it would seem that those “colored” confirmands with first names only were slaves; and those with first and surnames were free. But we cannot be certain. In the 1870 census, five years after the end of the Civil War, in Maryland there were hundreds of Black inhabitants listed with no surname at all. Also, the practice of euphemistically calling slaves “servants” in Maryland clouds the facts.

Bishop Whittingham had a narrow line to walk during the Civil War to hold the Diocese together. Although he was a vocal anti-slavery man and Unionist, in writing to a friend in June of 1861 he said, “My difficulty is that two-thirds of the most intelligent of the laity of my diocese, and fully 1/5 of the soundest, most earnest and devoted and (strangely enough!) most learned of my clergy ... insist that they do true allegiance in contending for ‘States’ rights’.”

And in another letter to an Eastern Shore clergyman, “Most unhappily the men (and women) so beguiled by subserviency to the Southern movement are mostly in the Church, and throughout the diocese are among its leading members, both clerical and lay.”





Only one parish in Maryland has any discernable tie to the Underground Railroad, Emmanuel Church in Cumberland.

If you look at the map of Maryland, the state becomes very narrow in Western Maryland, in some places only a couple of miles away from the Pennsylvania border.

Cumberland had become a major trading center by 1805 when it was chosen as the starting point of the National Road as it crossed through western Pennsylvania to the Ohio River. The National Road Stage

Company began operating a line through Cumberland in 1842; and the B&O Railroad finished a line to Cumberland in 1853. With so many travel possibilities, fugitives could walk, be hidden in wagons, stages or trains, and come very close to freedom in Cumberland. According to the oral history of Emmanuel Church, runaways were hidden in the church basement, and the Black sexton, Samuel Desno, rang the church bell when it was safe to enter the church.

The Church in Maryland seemed puzzled over what to do with the number of freed slaves living in its diocese following the Civil War.

A Committee on Freedmen had been appointed in 1866, and in 1867 reported “no plan, except that every possible effort be made upon the part of the clergy to extend their ministry to them. If we would not incur the guilt of turning them away into the darkness of Romish superstitions, or to the agrarian creeds of fanaticism, or to sectarian forms and preaching, we must provide churches and schools, teachers and minister for them.”

In a further statement, the committee said, “Things are tending more and more to make this People as separate and distinct a nation as possible. If they are to be reached through the church, it can only be done by following the example of antiquity in giving to each distinct nationality churches and pastors of their own.” They also suggested that local pastors “direct and mold their (his Black congregants) intellectual life...until they can be prepared to regulate their ecclesiastical affairs in communion with our Branch of the Church Catholic.”

Being in temperament and custom Southern, even the most liberal of Marylanders thought that it would be impractical for Black and whites to worship together. Blacks would tend to be relegated to the far corners of the church, would never be elected to the vestry, never sing in the choir, nor serve at the altar, much less be part of Diocesan gatherings. Strangely, a lone dissenting voice was heard on the Eastern Shore. The Rev. Robert Scott in Snow Hill urged “worshipping together to dissipate prejudices.”

Every bishop throughout the rest of the nineteenth and well into the twentieth centuries pushed for funding for separate “Colored Missions,” and attempted to secure African-American clergymen to fill those missions. The Rev. Alexander Crummell worked tirelessly in Washington, D.C. and the Rev. Calbraith B. Perry in Baltimore. Bp. William Paret in the 1890’s championed a National Commission for Church Work Among Colored People, schools for colored children, and stated in his 1889 Convention Address, “Of the whole

number of persons confirmed, only 85 were colored people... The population of the diocese is 967,000, with some 250,000 colored people. Are we doing our duty? Are we doing as much as we would do, if they were heathen in some distant land? The clergy cannot all preach to the Negroes, nor do I think it is everyone's duty. *Their race instinct insists on their separate gatherings.* But let every congregation give one annual offering for the Commission on Church Work Among the Colored People." Bp. Paret was also a trustee of King Theological Hall, a seminary for African-Americans in Washington, D.C.

It seems the best the Diocese of Maryland could do was push for separate churches and institutions for African-Americans, well into the 20th century. Not a voice of prophecy, but very much a church of the culture, it did not advocate anything radical, but was held captive by the majority views of the region.

The Diocese of Easton (the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay) was separated in 1867, and Washington (the District and four southern counties) in 1896; this closing part refers to the continuing Diocese of Maryland.

After the Civil War the Church identified itself with the Jim Crow system of separate (and quite unequal) facilities, programs and clergy. St. James' and five other "colored churches" were erected in Baltimore City, and a few more elsewhere.



Of these, five in the City and one in Annapolis are primarily African-American congregations. There are fewer than 1,000 Blacks out of about 9,000 Episcopalians in Baltimore, whose population of 630,000 is two-thirds Black.

Still, among Episcopalian Black church leaders from Baltimore have been Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, the Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray, Representative Parren Mitchell, and Bishop Michael Curry. In fact in 1935 Justice Marshall, then a young lawyer, had won the case of Murray vs. Pearson in which the Court of Appeals of Maryland removed the color barrier for admission of Blacks to the University of Maryland Law School.

The systemic disparities continued to be taken for granted well into the 20th Century. In the 1948 the editor of the newspaper *The Afro-American*, himself a member of St. James', challenged Bishop Noble Powell and the trustees of the diocesan Church Home and Hospital to admit Negroes. This was politely, firmly and categorically denied.

The board president replied curtly, "It is impossible for us to consider this matter at this time." There was a clear threat that "a change in policy...would result in withdrawal of the present staff...[and] the closing of the institution." In 1956, a Board committee recommended "working toward the admission of Negro patients, nurses and staff...insofar as it is feasible," but not yet, since "desegregation...would bring such a number of Negro patients that our already over-crowded facilities would become ineffective."

In the 1950s, when the Diocese opened a swimming pool at the Bishop Claggett Diocesan Center, the issue of allowing Black and white children to swim together was raised—this time accepted, thereby opening a new era: Claggett became the first diocesan institution to show people how integration works.

However, in the '50s and '60s many congregations in racially changing neighborhoods in Baltimore chose to close down and move to the suburbs. This “white flight” went largely unchallenged, but beginning in 1963 Bishop Harry Lee Doll began working heroically to support the civil rights movement and to align the Episcopal Church of Maryland on the side of racial justice and harmony.

In his first Convention address as diocesan, he said, about race relations, “Each one of us was baptized into the death of Jesus Christ. Every soul so baptized is a member of that Body...be their skin black or yellow or red or white.” In 1968, just after the assassination of Martin Luther King and the racial turmoil in the streets of Baltimore, he said “The time has passed when we can be neutral in this fight,” and wrote in a pastoral letter “Those of us who are white Christians must confess to complacency and a clinging to the known and familiar in regard to civil rights.” He endorsed the Poor People’s March and the General Convention Special Program, spoke out publicly for integration in the Church, and was frequently the object of anger and insult by his flock.

But this was the turning point. Instead of looking for polite ways to keep Black Episcopalians out of their churches, now the majority white church people are searching for gracious and effective ways of welcoming all races and affirming diversity. In this decade, Bishop Robert Ihloff has challenged the church to wrestle vigorously with overcoming our sad history by studying reparations for specific programs to end racial, economic and social inequality. Our Suffragan, John Rabb, has been a national leader as chair of the General Convention Commission on racism. In 2007 our diocesan Convention, after long study and warm debate, strongly (though not unanimously!) adopted a formal apology for the Church’s acceptance of racism, and pledged to move now into effective action.

Footnotes:

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“manumitted slaves and those descendants be not permitted to run about from County to County or to leave that in which their manumitter resided unless to quit the state entirely and not to possess their manumissions or any copy thereof, so as to be able to furnish runaway slaves therewith, who assume their names...” (VF June 5, 1797)

In Charles County, both the clergy, John Compton and Hatch Dent, were slave owners; indeed, of the 19 clergy listed in the 1791 Journal who could be located in the 1790 census, all owned slaves except for the Rev. George Bower out in Washington County in Western Maryland, and The Rev. James Kemp, who would become Maryland’s second bishop.

James Kemp was born in Scotland in 1764, and came to Maryland in 1787, a year after graduating from Marischal College in Aberdeen. He was consecrated America’s first bishop Suffragan in 1814. (And that is another fascinating and controversial event in the life of the Diocese of Maryland.) In answering questions posed to him by a Mr. William Helmsley in an 1809 letter, Kemp wrote that “slavery in unquestionably contrary to the spirit and genius of the Christian dispensation.” He also wrote that a timetable for eventual abolition would be the best way to end that evil, admitting that “considerable time would be required”. He said that “the most correct line of conduct for a Christian to pursue would be to exert his influence on the public opinion to produce a legal plan of gradual emancipation.” He went on, “I was taught at an early period to abhor slavery. And when a few slaves came into my possession, I immediately formed a plan for their gradual emancipation, which I am carrying swiftly into effect.” (VF July 27, 1809)

The report on the State of the Church, as sent to the Convention Journal of 1816, reminded members of the church of their obligations “to make every possible provision for the religious instruction of the people of colour; a duty now so generally, and most criminally ignored. They would take the liberty to recommend to all, and more especially to the proprietors of slaves, the excellent sermons of the Rev. Thomas Bacon...” And Bishop Kemp admonished, “Nor let me omit to call your attention to the people of colour. This is part of our Lord’s vineyard, in which there is need of great exertions. And you will, in all probability, experience most success, by addressing them by themselves and in a familiar and easy way.” By 1818, the Convention had Bacon’s sermons printed and ready for distribution.

A letter written to Bp. Kemp in 1824 by the Rev. Henry L. Davis of Annapolis is in some contrast to the letter to Bp. Claggett concerning a slave. Mr. Davis had just lost his job as President of St. John’s College, and wrote Bp. Kemp on a very personal and delicate matter on December 9. “This note will be handed to you by my man Sandy, who is sent to your city for the purpose of being hired as a waiter in a tavern, boarding house or private family. I have become so poor that I can no longer afford to keep so valuable a servant about my house. His grandfather, whom I have brought over from Cecil, will answer all my purposes in the house and the garden.

Sandy was raised by my mother, and regularly trained to house work. He is a tolerable cook and gardener and an excellent waiter, brisk, intelligent and honest. ... I beg that you will have the goodness to inquire among your friends for a home for Sandy. If you find a place, have the further goodness to stipulate that his wages shall be paid, at the end of every quarter, to Mr. Edward J. Coale." (VF Dec. 9, 1824)

This letter seems to show that Mr. Davis held affection, esteem and concern for Sandy. He trusted him enough to go to Baltimore alone from Annapolis, and deliver a letter to the bishop. However, Davis' poverty, and perhaps other considerations in 1824, prevented him from freeing Sandy. He wanted to find a "home" for Sandy, not an "owner", but Sandy's wages were to be sent to a third party, presumably to pay a debt. He also assumed that the Bishops friends were also slave-holders, even in the city of Baltimore.

The people who were the Ante-bellum church in Maryland, like the church in Maryland at every time and on every question, held varied views on slavery, worship and instruction for slaves, and whether owning slaves was compatible with Christianity.

St. Paul's Church in Baltimore did organize The Maryland Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and the Relief of Free Negroes and Others Unlawfully Held in Bondage in 1789. Although it was the 4th anti-slavery society to be organized in America, it never drew in many supporters, either in Baltimore or anywhere else in the state. (Bierne, p.47.)

By 1820, the problem of what to with freed slaves became so worrisome that The Maryland State Colonization Society was begun. Backed by such Episcopalians as Francis Scott Key and Chief Justice Roger Taney of Washington, and John Eager Howard of Baltimore, the goal of the Society was to secure an African colony as a new home for freed slaves. Sure that people of color could never be fully accepted as equals in America, where they were obvious by their skin color, these Colonizationists were by no means Abolitionists. In a scathing 1843 letter to Mr. John Brackenridge, Francis Scott Key's daughter Anna wrote that her father was "altogether averse to being classed with the abolitionists" and he had only freed "3 or 4 selected individuals who were trained with a view to sending them to Liberia, but who preferred to remain in this country and were permitted to do so." She said she was not worried that anything "will ever associate the memory of my Father with Northern abolitionists in the minds of Southern men." (SF: Francis Scott Key. Anna Key Turner.)

On November 1, 1843, Bishop Whittingham entered the following note into his confirmation book: "At. St. James' First African Church, Baltimore. Nine persons all late of Trinity Parish, Charles County, but about to sail for the Maryland Colony, Africa; being manumitted servants of the Rev. Henry Goodwin by whom they have been prepared and are recommended for confirmation."

Several clergy wrote to Bp. Kemp saying they could not take a parish in Maryland because it was a slave-holding state. (Nov. 30, 1822; Coxe, Jan. 19, 1841) And at least one wrote saying he did not want any parish outside a slave state. (VF, 1855, Adams, Rev. C.C.) The Rev. John Scott, writing from the Eastern Shore of Maryland, deplored the state of slavery, but distrusted Abolitionists. He said, "The colored population seem to fare well enough so far as their bodies are concerned, but do thy not 'perish' in the most important sense, 'for lack of knowledge?' A determined slaveholder can, with a very bad grace, condescend to impart religious instruction to 'those in bondage' for he is afraid of entrusting them with that message which teaches reciprocal duties throughout the whole circle of human connexions ..." (Unindexed, Oct. 6, 1843)

St. James' First African Church in Baltimore City, the first Episcopal Church specifically for Blacks south of the Mason-Dixon Line, was founded in 1824 by the Rev. William Leavington as a place "where both bond and free of African descent might worship the common Father of all." However almost immediately, the free black members wanted to exclude slaves from membership. Leavington's answer was to quote scripture, "the Apostle says, whether bond or free, ye are all one in Christ Jesus", and to quote Bishop Kemp who said the object of building such a church was that "both bond and free might serve God; and that above all people in the world, we ought to be the most united in the world." (SF History: St. James' Church, Baltimore)

The Rt. Rev. William Rollinson Whittingham became bishop of Maryland in 1840, and served until his death in 1879. He was a New Yorker, a Unionist, and a man who worked for toleration in every quarter. He was also a meticulous record-keeper. During his first year in office, he began to list everyone he confirmed, and keep those lists in a book. He divided his lists by always noting "colored" confirmations in a separate column. His accounting of how many "colored" people were confirmed, where they were confirmed, and what their names were provide a fascinating glimpse into the makeup and practices of the diocese on the eve of the Civil War.

The new bishop took a survey of communicants in 1840, asking rectors to send him a list of names. More parishes in St. Mary's County supplied names of "colored communicants" than any other county. (The southernmost county on Maryland's western shore, St. Mary's County numbered about 5,900 slaves among their total population of 13,700, by no means the county with the largest slave population; but by percentage, 42% of the population were slaves. Actually Charles County had a slave population of almost 60% slaves.) The parishes in St. Mary's County reporting "colored" communicants included All Faith Parish listing 53 communicants, including 4 "colored persons", all with only first names. King & Queen Parish reported 72 communicants, including 12 "colored" communicants, (with first names only) but noted that "almost 11 others, whose names are not known at present" should also be included. St. Andrew's Parish listed 56 communicants, including 9 colored persons, all with both first and last names. Trinity Church located in William

& Mary Parish enumerated 20 communicants, including 5 “colored”, 4 of whom had the surname of Briscoe.

Upon quick examination, it would seem that those “colored” confirmands with first names only were slaves; and those with first and surnames were free. But we cannot be certain. In the 1870 census, five years after the end of the Civil War, in Maryland there were hundreds of black inhabitants listed with no surname at all. Also the practice of euphemistically calling slaves “servants” in Maryland clouds the facts.

Bishop Whittingham had a narrow line to walk during the Civil War in order to hold the Diocese together. Although he was a vocal anti-slavery man and Unionist, in writing to a friend in June of 1861 he said, “My difficulty is that two-thirds of the most intelligent of the laity of my diocese, and fully 1/5 of the soundest, most earnest and devoted and (strangely enough!) most learned of my clergy ... insist that they do true allegiance in contending for ‘States’ rights’.” And in another letter to an Eastern Shore clergyman, “Most unhappily the men (and women) so beguiled by subserviency to the Southern movement are mostly in the Church, and throughout the diocese are among its leading members, both clerical and lay.” (Brand, vol II, p. 20, 21)

Only one parish in Maryland has any discernable tie to the Underground Railroad, Emmanuel Church in Cumberland. If you look at the map of Maryland, the state becomes very narrow in Western Maryland, in some places only a couple of miles away from the Pennsylvania border. Cumberland had become a major trading center by 1805 when it was chosen as the starting point of the National Road as it crossed through western Pennsylvania to the Ohio River. The National Road Stage Company began operating a line through Cumberland in 1842; and the B&O Railroad finished a line to Cumberland in 1853. With so many travel possibilities, fugitives could walk, be hidden in wagons, stages or trains, and come very close to freedom in Cumberland. According to the oral history of Emmanuel Church, runaways were hidden in the church basement, and the black sexton, Samuel Desno, rang the church bell when it was safe to enter the church. (Wm. Switala, Underground Railroad in Delaware, Maryland and West Virginia, 2004)

The Church in Maryland seemed puzzled over what to do with the number of freed slaves living in its diocese following the Civil War. A Committee on Freedmen had been appointed in 1866, and in 1867 reported “no plan, except that every possible effort be made upon the part of the clergy to extend their ministry to them. If we would not incur the guilt of turning them away into the darkness of Romish superstitions, or to the agrarian creeds of fanaticism, or to sectarian forms and preaching, we must provide churches and schools, teachers and minister for them.” In a further statement, the committee said, “Things are tending more and more to make this People as separate and distinct a nation as possible. If they are to be reached through the church, it can only be done by following the example of antiquity in giving to each distinct nationality churches and pastors of their own.”

They also suggested that local pastors “direct and mold their (his black congregants) intellectual life...until they can be prepared to regulate their ecclesiastical affairs in communion with our Branch of the Church Catholic.” (1867 Journal, pp.96, 103)

Being in temperament and custom Southern, even the most liberal of Marylanders thought that it would be impractical for black and whites to worship together. Blacks would tend to be relegated to the far corners of the church, would never be elected to the vestry, never sing in the choir, nor serve at the altar, much less be part of Diocesan gatherings. Strangely, a lone dissenting voice was heard on the Eastern Shore. The Rev. Robert Scott in Snow Hill urged “worshipping together to dissipate prejudices.”

(SF: History, All Hallows’ parish, Worcester Co.)

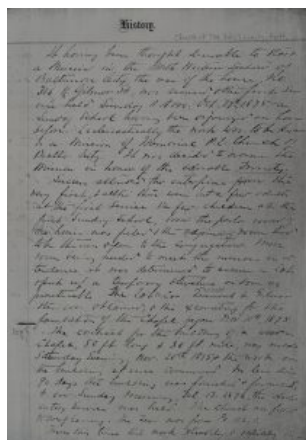
Every bishop throughout the rest of the nineteenth and well into the twentieth centuries pushed for funding for separate “Colored Missions”, and attempted to secure African-American clergymen to fill those missions. The Rev. Alexander Crummell worked tirelessly in Washington, D.C. and the Rev. Calbraith B. Perry in Baltimore. Bp. William Paret in the 1890’s championed a National Commission for Church Work Among Colored People, schools for colored children, and stated in his 1889 Convention Address, “Of the whole number of persons confirmed, only 85 were colored people... The population of the diocese is 967,000, with some 250,000 colored people. Are we doing our duty? Are we doing as much as we would do, if they were heathen in some distant land? The clergy cannot all preach to the Negroes, nor do I think it is everyone’s duty. **Their race instinct insists on their separate gatherings.** But let every congregation give one annual offering for the Commission on Church Work Among the Colored People.” Bp. Paret was also a trustee of King Theological Hall, a seminary for African-Americans in Washington, D.C.

It seems the best the Diocese of Maryland could do was push for separate churches and institutions for African-Americans, well into the 20th century. Not a voice of prophecy, but very much a church OF the culture, it did not advocate anything radical, but was held captive by the majority views of the region.

Parish History

From the Archives: Holy Trinity, Baltimore

by Mary Klein, diocesan archivist



Quoting a history of Holy Trinity Church written by Howard H. Evans in 1978, "The Supreme Court ruled in 1948 that restrictive covenants – private agreements barring members of minority groups from buying or renting property in certain neighborhoods – could no longer be enforced by state or Federal courts. Shortly after the rendering of that momentous decision, Baltimore experienced a racial change in the composition of many neighborhoods that were heretofore all white." Caught up in that demographic change was the Church of the Holy Trinity on the northwest side of Baltimore at Lafayette and Wheeler Streets.

Holy Trinity had begun on October 17, 1875, in a house at 306 N. Gilmore Street, as a mission of Memorial Church, with some additional help from Emmanuel Church. The assistant minister at Memorial, the Rev. Otis A. Glazebrook, was in charge of the Mission, which by November of 1875, was strong enough to begin constructing a church building at the corner of Gilmore and Tennant (now Riggs) Streets. The building was "a wooden chapel, 80 feet long and 36 feet wide" which was completed in 90 days. On Sunday morning, February 13, 1876, the service of dedication was held in the church. The congregation continued to grow, but by May of 1920, *The Maryland Churchman* ran the following notice, "By an almost unanimous vote, the congregation of Holy Trinity Church, Riggs and Gilmore Streets, have decided to sell their present church building and move to the lots purchased by the Church Extension Society, corner of Wheeler and Lafayette Streets." In October of 1920, the church building was sold to Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church, "a Negro congregation", and by February of 1922, the new building was finished. Built as a combination parish house and worship space, Bishop John Murray dedicated the edifice on February 19 "in the presence of a congregation that filled every seat and many chairs placed even in the vestibule."



By 1953, the congregation of Holy Trinity had shrunk and decided to merge with St. Bartholomew's on Edmonson Avenue. In a June 18, 1953, agreement, it was stated, "That the physical assets of Holy Trinity, consisting of the building and land at Wheeler and Lafayette Avenues, be turned over to the Convention of the Diocese, without restrictions, but with the expressed request that it be used for the establishment of a Negro congregation, bearing the name of Holy Trinity."

Accordingly, Bishop Noble Powell gave temporary oversight of the new congregation to the Rev. Cedric Mills, the rector of St. James' Church, Lafayette

Square, and asked the Rev. Van Samuel Bird to take up the position of vicar. The *Baltimore Afro-American* reported, "On the first Sunday in October, Father Mills and his choir went over and participated in opening services at the new church." The new vicar wrote in a November article in *The Maryland Churchman*, "Even though there are a number of Episcopalians in the neighborhood, the greatest strength will perhaps come from the unchurched people. The Church has a great challenge and opportunity for real missionary work. We hope to make Holy Trinity the neighborhood church, and develop a vital program for the church and the community."



In his ten years at Holy Trinity, the Rev. Van Bird encouraged the new congregation, eventually serving as pastor to nearly 400 members, and brought the church to the brink of self-supporting status, having begun the canonical process before he left in 1964. The Diocesan Convention of 1968 accepted the congregation into full parish status, under the leadership of the Rev. Robert Powell, who completed the drive to build an education and office building. The Rev. Linwood Garrenton served from 1972-1982, and the Rev. Eddie Blue came in 1984, staying until 20//.

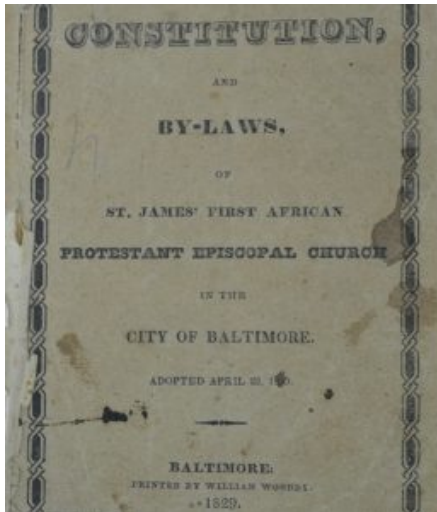
In recalling the words of the first vicar of Holy Trinity as he accepted a new call, the people of Holy Trinity can share in his assessment. "The greatest accomplishment was contributing to and enabling the emergence and growth of a truly Christian community of love. In this community called Holy Trinity, we persons of different ages, levels of income and education, spiritual perspectives and sensitivities, knew that we were loved and belonged. We affirmed and loved others who were not a part of this particular community. In a small way, I was an instrument for the birth of a 'caring community'".



Parish History

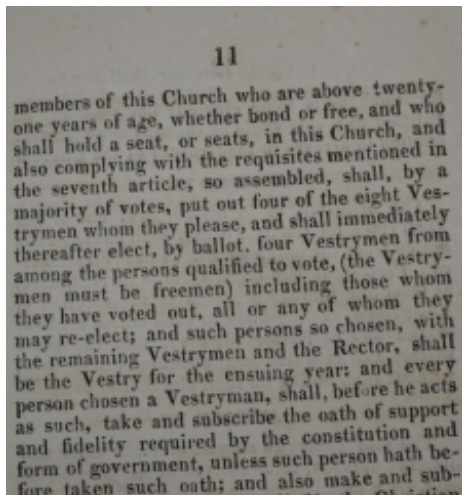
From the Archives: St. James', Baltimore

by Mary Klein, diocesan archivist



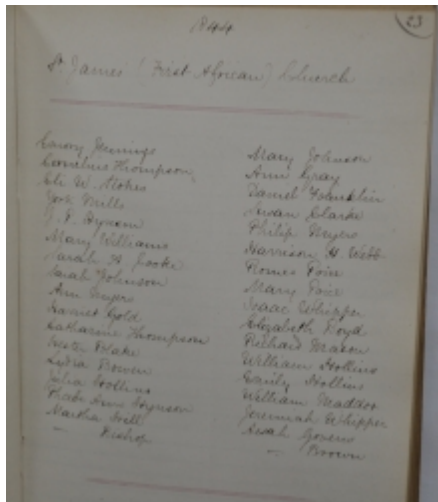
"William Leavington, a native of New York, was ordained [to the diaconate] by the Rt. Rev. William White on March 18, 1824 in Philadelphia. Mr. Leavington, a free man of color, elected to go South below the Mason-Dixon Line, and amid the auction block and slave pen, made an attempt to raise a church wherein both bond and free of African descent might worship the common Father of all." So reads the first paragraph of a history of St. James' Church written in 1949. The Rev. Mr. Leavington was encouraged by the bishop, James Kemp, and a few others, and in by June of 1825, he had secured an upper room at Park Avenue and Marion Street in which to hold divine services and Sunday School. The fledgling congregation remained in that upper room until March, 1827, when the congregation moved

into their first church at the corner of Guilford and Saratoga Streets. It was only the third Episcopal Church in the city, following St. Paul's and St. Peter's.



Article I of the constitution and by-laws for St. James' Church (written in 1829) stated, "This church shall be called, distinguished and known by the name of St. James' First African Protestant Episcopal Church in Biltmore" [sic], and it also indicated that "all male members of this Church who are above 21 years of age, whether bond or free" were eligible to vote in vestry elections. But in 1834, Mr. Leavington wrote in his parochial report, "Although the constitution of the church gives to those brethren who are in bondage, the right of membership in the church, much dissatisfaction has prevailed among some of the free brethren; yet with the blessing of the great Head of the Church, it has been happily and finally settled." Quoting Bishop Kemp, Mr.

Leavington said, "the venerable bishop told us that both bond and fee might serve God; and above all people in the world, he thought, we ought to be the most united in the world".

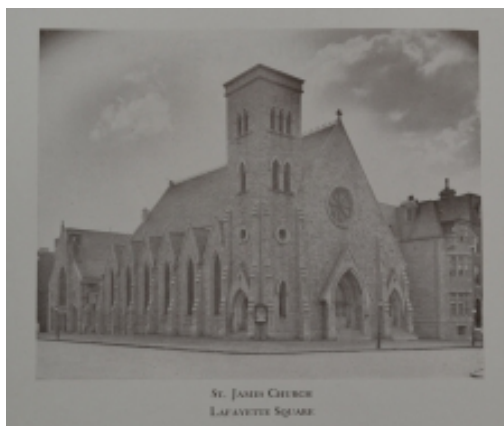


When Bishop Whittingham asked for a list of communicants from each church in 1844, St. James' sent in the names of 34 persons, two of whom, Eli Stokes, and Harrison Webb, would go on to become Episcopal priests. But as the years wore on, the congregation fell on hard times, and St. Paul's Church took over the spiritual charge of St. James' from 1873-1888, sending clergy to minister to the congregation. The church building was condemned in 1889, and the congregation temporarily moved to Howard Chapel at Park Avenue and Dolphin Street, until they took possession of a former Baptist Church on High Street, west of Lexington. But in 1891, the fragile nature of St. James' Church was about to be transformed by the Rev. George Freeman Bragg, who would lead the parish

until his death in 1940.



The day Dr. Bragg arrived in Baltimore, November 17, 1891, with his mother, wife and two babies, the state of St. James' Church was very low; Bp. Paret had assumed paying the total salary of the new rector (\$200 per year), and there was no rectory; but by 1901 the membership had grown from 63 to 180, and the neighborhood was changing, with new settlers from Europe flooding in. *The Maryland Churchman* reported in July 1901, "St. James' First African Church, driven out of East Baltimore by the invasion of its territory by a foreign population, has sought a new place on Park Avenue, at the corner of Preston Street." The old church was sold to a Jewish congregation as a synagogue, and a new building was erected, serving the congregation until 1932.



By 1925, the communicant list had grown to over 500, and "the gradual migration of blacks into West Baltimore convinced Dr. Bragg that St. James' needed larger quarters in a location closer to the heart of the black population." Because of this "gradual migration of blacks to West Baltimore" the Church of the Ascension, which had been built on Lafayette Square in 1867, decided to move to a new location. St. James' sold their church building to the city which was interesting in making "certain improvements" to the neighborhood, and in 1932 purchased

Ascension's church, chapel, rectory, and Parish House (which included a bowling alley and garage). The Church of the Ascension had promised Bishop Murray before his death in 1929, not to sell their complex until they had

offered it to St. James' for "the Church's work amongst the colored race", and as a consequence St. James' congregation moved into their present facility on Easter Day, 1932.

In addition to Dr. Bragg, during whose tenure twenty men were sent into the ministry, St. James' has nourished great leaders in the Church. The Rev. Cedric Mills, rector from 1940-1963, was elected Bishop of the Missionary District of the Virgin Islands in 1963; and the Rev. Michael Curry, rector from 1988-2000, became Bishop of North Carolina in 2000, and Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in 2015. As the Rev. George Bragg wrote, "St. James', weak and insignificant in material things, has nevertheless been strong in spiritual things, and has given freely of her sons to 'bear the message glorious'.



*Reading at the Colonial Society Book Club, St. James Church.
Inquiries and Admissions welcome, Baltimore.*

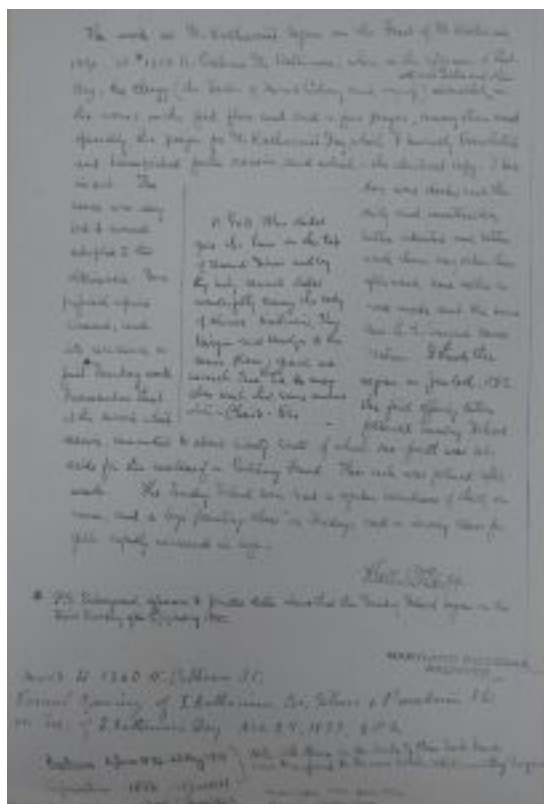


St. James Honors Group Confirmed 50 Years Ago Or More

Parish History

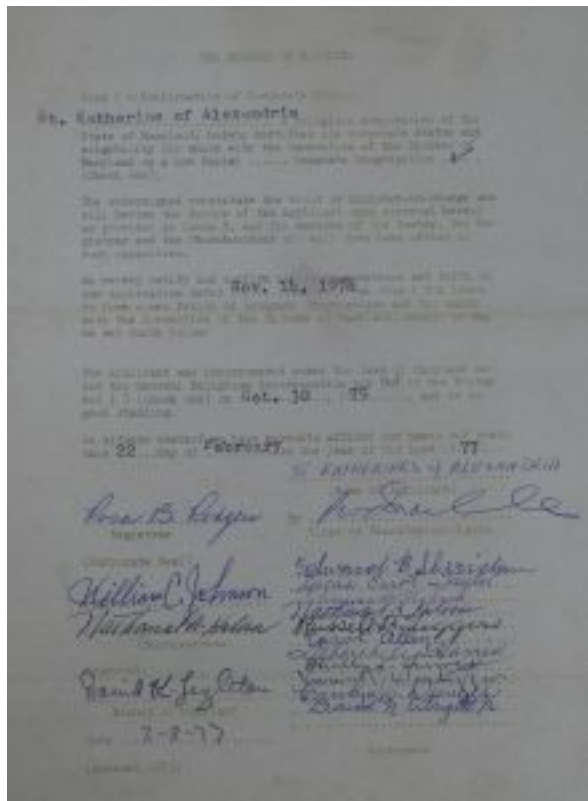
From the Archives: St. Katharine of Alexandria

by Mary Klein, diocesan archivist



From the first-hand account of the founding of the Church of St. Katharine of Alexandria, written by the Rev. Walter Clayton Clapp; "The work of St. Katharine's began on the Feast of St. Katharine [November 25], 1891 at 1350 N. Calhoun Street, Baltimore, when in the afternoon of that day, the clergy (the rector of Mount Calvary and myself) with some Sisters and others, assembled in the rooms on the first floor and said a few prayers, among them and specially, the prayer for St. Katharine's Day, which I hurriedly translated and transcribed for the occasion. The day was dark; and the house was very dirty and unattractive, but it seemed better situated and better adapted to the work than any other then obtainable. Soon afterward some rather superficial repairs were made and the house cleaned, and Mrs. E.L. Sargent

came into residence as Matron. The first Sunday work began on the First Sunday after Epiphany, January 11, 1892. I remember that the first offering taken at the service which followed the Sunday School session amounted to about twenty cents, of which one-fourth was set aside for the nucleus of a Building Fund. This rule followed afterwards. The Sunday School soon had a regular attendance of thirty or more, and a boys' painting class on Fridays and a sewing class for girls rapidly increased in size."



Parochial reports of the 1890's listed St. Katharine's as a mission of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, itself a mission of Mt. Calvary Church. The 1892 report from the Archdeacon of Annapolis stated, "The new Mission of St. Katharine in Calhoun Street, under the able superintendence of Mrs. Sargent, as a Mission of St. Mary's, has been most successful in the few months it has been open. One of the most interesting features of the work being that the workers are entirely recruited from the communicants of St. Mary the Virgin." In addition to the sewing school for girls, an "Industrial School" helped women gain skills they could translate into employment,



The mission moved a few doors away, to 1360 North Calhoun Street, in 1895, and in 1899 relocated to a house at Gilmor and Presstman Streets. The Sisterhood of St. Mary and All Saints, a group of African-American nuns raised up by the All Saints' Sisters of the Poor, opened St. Katharine's Home for Colored Girls at 2000 Druid Hill Avenue. Two of the St. Mary and All Saints' Sisters, Leila Mary and Babetta Francis, assisted by an English Sister Petronella, provided the administration of the orphanage. As the Black sisterhood failed to gain more members, it virtually disbanded by 1911, and the All Saints' Sisters of the Poor took charge of St. Katharine's orphanage, which ran until 1935. On April 1, 1994, St.

Katharine's Memorial park was dedicated on the site where the Home once stood, a legacy of peace and love to the neighborhood.



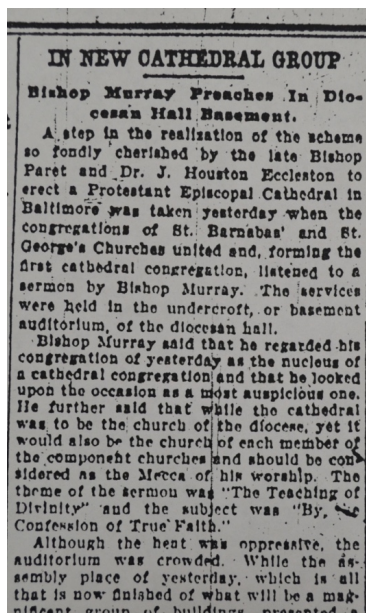
Mt. Calvary purchased the former St. George's Church, at the corner of Presstman and Division Streets, which was built in 1882 as a memorial to Bishop Whittingham, for the congregation of St. Katharine in 1910, and the building was rededicated as St. Katharine's in 1912. Gaining independent status in 1975, the parish called its first black priest, the Rev.

Peter Bramble, in 1977. Mt. Calvary transferred the deed for St. Katharine's Church to ownership of the vestry in 1996, and the church still has a mission to the neighborhood, although many of its members no longer live in close proximity. Neighborhood outreach remains a goal, continuing in the original intent of the founders.

Parish History

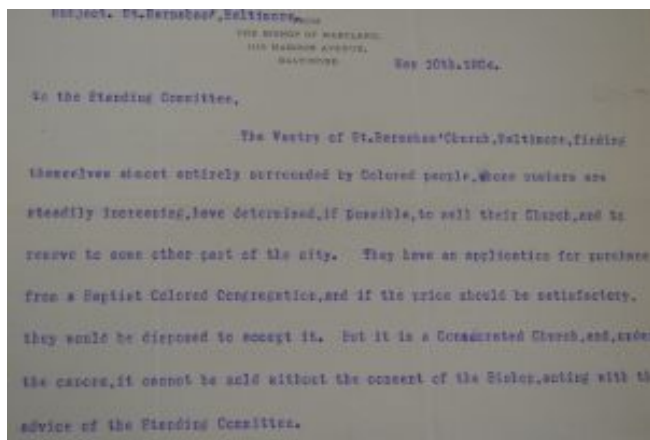
From the Archives: St. George's and St. Barnabas, our cathedral's nucleus congregations

by Mary Klein, diocesan archivist



"A step in the realization of the scheme so fondly cherished by the late Bishop Paret to erect a Protestant Episcopal Cathedral in Baltimore was taken yesterday when the congregations of St. Barnabas' and St. George's Churches united, forming the first cathedral congregation." So read a newspaper article of June 12, 1911, reporting on a service held in the newly completed Cathedral undercroft, which consisted of the Communion Service, a sermon by Bishop Murray, and a choir of men and boys singing "Ancient of Days".

The cornerstone of St. Barnabas' Church, located at Biddle Street and Argyle Avenue, had been laid on All Saints' Day, 1859, as the Missionary Church for the North Western district of the city. Their 1901 parochial report listed over 600 communicants, with 153 pupils in the Sunday School. Yet on May 10, 1904, Bishop William Paret wrote the following letter to the Standing Committee, "The vestry of St. Barnabas' Church, Baltimore, finding themselves almost entirely surrounded by Colored people, whose numbers are steadily increasing, have determined, if possible, to sell their Church, and to remove to some other part of the city."



St. George's Church

Meanwhile, St. George's Church, at Presstman and Division Streets, which had been built in 1882 as a memorial to Bishop Whittingham, seemed to be prospering as well. In 1900, the vestry authorized enlarging the facility by erecting "a two-story brick building 19.5' X 15'

on the organ side of the church.” The parochial report estimated 309 communicants, and 103 in the Sunday School. However, in November of 1904, the vestries of St. Barnabas’ and St. George’s voted to “consolidate” the two congregations, each keeping their own vestry, paying its own allotment to the diocese, and worshipping together at St. George’s.



St. Barnabas' Church

St. Barnabas’ building was sold in 1907 to the Roman Catholic archdiocese of Baltimore, which immediately placed it under the auspices of “the Josephite Fathers, the Catholic society of priests who conduct parishes for colored people in this country”. The congregation, still called St. Barnabas’, worshipped there until 1931, when they joined St. Pius’ Church on Edmondson Avenue, and the church sold to a Baptist congregation. The building was turned into a garage in 1941, and demolished when Martin Luther King Blvd was built in 1982. A Diocese of Maryland Anglo-catholic parish, Mt. Calvary Church, purchased St. George’s Church in 1910, to become the home of one of their black missions, St. Katharine of Alexandria, which still worships there today.

After St. Barnabas’ sold their building in 1907, the vestry purchased a lot at St. Paul & 35th Street as a site for a new church building for the combined congregations of St. Barnabas’ and St. George’s; however, in May of 1908, a deal was reached with the Cathedral Foundation: St. Barnabas’ would sell their lot, give the \$9000.00 to the Cathedral Foundation in exchange for worship space in the soon-to-be-built Cathedral. Hence, the congregations of St. George’s and St. Barnabas’ gave up their identity, their buildings, and their assets in order to become part of the vision for a diocesan Cathedral, and the nucleus of a worshipping congregation. But, human beings in particular and societies in general, are complicated things! That self-sacrificing act was tempered by the reasons the

Parish History

From the Archives: The Church of St. Mary the Virgin

by Mary Klein, diocesan archivist



According to a November 15, 1880 article published in a national publication, *The Church News*, written by an unnamed correspondent from Baltimore, the mission that was to become the Church of St. Mary the Virgin was begun by “two earnest and active colored laymen”, James Thompson and C.M.C. Mason, in September of 1868. But the Baltimore *Afro-American* of February 20, 1932, published a slightly different account. “Nearly one half of the congregation of St. James’ First African Church, under the leadership of Mr. Cassius M.C. Mason, withdrew and initiated the St. Philip’s Mission in the new section of the city. Most of them were of the younger set, who felt that the older ones had

not given the younger set a chance.” The fledgling congregation met in a hall over a feed store on Howard Street until the building was sold by the city to “make room for public buildings” early in May of 1873. Quoting the *Church News* article, “Having called on the rectors of the city parishes for aid in their difficulty, they found none who would assist them until they reached the clergy of Mt. Calvary Church, the Rev. Joseph Richey and the Rev. Calbraith B. Perry.” The rector, Joseph Richey, promised that Fr. Perry would be in charge of the congregation, and arranged for the use of a hall not far from Mt. Calvary, at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and St. Mary’s Street. Made “bright and attractive” to house the mission, which took the name of St. Mary the Virgin, it folded in the former St. Philip’s congregation, which, according to the *Afro-American*, numbered about 30. The Rev. Mr. Richey preached at the first evening service in the converted hall, on May 18, 1873, saying, “You will no longer be treated as outcasts to whom it should be considered a sufficient favor if the smallest trifle is given, but as children of One Father, bought by the blood of One Redeemer, and sanctified by One Holy Ghost.”

Only a few months after the congregation moved into its converted quarters, Elizabeth Oliver purchased a church building from a congregation of Swedenborgians (the Third New Jerusalem Church) on Orchard Street, improved it by adding a porch, and gave its use to St. Mary’s congregation. The first service, led by Fr. Perry, took place on September 21, 1873.



In 1872, the rector of Mt. Calvary Church, the Rev. Joseph Richey, had appealed to the Foundress and Mother Superior of the All Saints' Sisters of the Poor in London to send him some help in establishing a school. Richey was an ardent young Tractarian Movement priest who embraced the movement's commitment to work among the poor and uneducated, and saw Baltimore as a field "ripe for harvest". After dutifully writing to Bishop Whittingham for permission to bring a few Sisters into the Diocese of Maryland, he met three Sisters as they disembarked from the ship "Celtic" in New York City on December 10, 1872. When the Sisters took the train to Baltimore a few days later, The Rev. Mr. Richey had to tell them he did not yet have a house ready for them, and took them to the home of a parishioner, Margaret Harrison and

her niece, Elizabeth Oliver, who would become the generous patron of the congregation of St. Mary the Virgin.



Shortly after taking up the work in Baltimore, Sister Harriet and Fr. Richey began making plans to establish a Black Sisterhood, and by 1876, the first aspirant was in place. Calling themselves "The Sisterhood of St. Mary and All Saints" three African-American nuns, along with four English nuns, worked to establish a school for girls and an orphanage for boys associated with the new St. Mary's Mission. Both the St. Mary's Parish School and the St. Mary's Home for Colored Boys were on Biddle Street, and post-Civil War conditions in Baltimore's poorest areas were appalling. Suffering from oppressive summer heat, lack of sewage, and filthy streets, the nuns still did parish visiting, and took care of the many orphaned boys in their care. They clothed the children, educated them, and took to the streets with their "begging wagon" asking for donations to feed the little ones.

FROM November to June of 1887, Sister Verena, with four colored assistants, had charge of St. Mary's Parish School, and great gratitude is due them for arduous and faithful duty. The attendance averaged seventy-five. About \$75 was realized from the ten cents *per caput* charge determined on after January. Not only in organizing the parish school, but in seeing the parents at their homes, was the influence of these Sisters felt, and it is no less than due them that this recognition of their services be made. They were cordially assisted by the members of the Young Ladies' Guild of St. Mary's. Mrs. Gregg also valuably aided in an *interim*.

An article from *The Maryland Churchman* of February, 1888, praised the nuns for running the St. Mary's Parish Day School, which boasted 75 pupils. "Not only in organizing the parish school, but in seeing the parents at their homes, was the influence of these Sisters felt."



The Chapel of St. Mary the Virgin remained on Orchard Street as a mission of Mt. Calvary Church, and the congregation grew in numbers and strength; but a devastating fire on the night of February 5, 1947, destroyed the church completely. In mourning the loss of the church, an article in *The Maryland Churchman* stated, "The lovely altar, with its beautiful panels from Jerusalem, was burned beyond repair; the marble steps of the altar lay in ruins; the two acolyte stools in the sanctuary, skillfully carved by artists from the Gold Coast, a gift from Queen Victoria of Great Britain, went up in smoke; the 'golden gates' to the chancel became a twisted mass of scrap metal. As crowds of people witnessed this conflagration, tears flowed in abundance." Also lost were stained glass windows in memory of two of the All Saints' Sisters of the Poor, as well as a memorial window to Joseph Richey. Despite the loss, the decision was made to rebuild on the same spot, and a new chapel was consecrated in 1953.

In 1958, the city's proposed expressway route meant that St. Mary the Virgin's church buildings would be condemned in 3-5 years to accommodate the new highway, so a new site was sought. The Church of the Ascension had merged with the Church of the Prince of Peace in 1932, sold its Lafayette Square buildings to St. James' Church, and built a new edifice at 3121 Walbrook Avenue. By 1959, Ascension & Prince of Peace again wanted to relocate, this time to Liberty Road at Rockdale, and the diocese purchased the Walbrook church, parish hall and rectory for St. Mary the Virgin, which moved into it in July, 1959. By 1965, the mission had become an independent congregation with full parochial status, and in 1970 called its first African-American priest, the Rev. Lloyd V. George. Still a presence in the Walbrook community today, adjacent to Coppin State University, the Church of St. Mary the Virgin bears witness to 150 years of steadfast faith and outreach to their community.

Diocesan History

The Claggett Center

by Mary Klein, diocesan archivist



From the beginning of his Episcopate in 1944, Bishop Noble Powell dreamed of having a place where the whole diocese could meet for conferences, study, retreats and camps, thus developing a family spirit within the diocese. A piece of property near Reisterstown was purchased for this purpose in 1947, but was soon sold because the cost to make the property suitable would have cost nearly \$50,000. In 1950, the Buckingham School Foundation offered their school property in Frederick County to the diocese. The Buckingham School had existed from 1890-1944, and consisted of 290 acres, a working dairy farm, and school buildings. The Buckingham School Foundation even offered \$30,000 to the diocese to help put the buildings in working order, so on November 30, 1950, the whole property was deeded to the diocese. By February, 1952, the Center was ready enough for the clergy conference to be held there; in addition to Diocesan conferences

and camps, the facility was used by 4-H and Boy Scout groups.



In 1955, Bishop Noble Powell received a letter from a woman who had taken her daughter to summer camp at the Claggett Center, saying she was shocked to see “three negro girls” there as campers. Indignant that she had never been informed that there was “integration of the races” taking place at camp, she asked if the bishop could insure that in the future, “our children will sleep with those of their own race”. The bishop’s reply tells us a great deal about his own beliefs and struggles. Saying he was raised in the Deep South (He was born in Alabama in

1891), and understood the problems and the traditions of segregation, he said, nevertheless, “I know the inheritance, and at the same time, I know what is laid upon me as one who tried to follow Jesus Christ.”



Claggett Center the spiritual center for all, and we have tried to put Jesus Christ at the center of the Center.”

Clarifying the position of the diocese and of himself, he continued, “The policy at Claggett is consonant with the tradition long established in the diocese, where in Church gatherings there has been no distinction, certainly in the more than a quarter of a century that I have known this beloved diocese...When Claggett policy was being formed, no question was ever raised as to what approach, other than the Christian approach, would be made to the use of the facilities. From the beginning there has been no segregation... We have tried to make



Christ planted and growing in our hearts gives us any hope at all.”

Addressing the bigger problem of racial problems in America, the bishop continued, “What disturbs me most of all, as I look at this problem of race, is the fact that we, in the Church, have not been leaders as we should have been, in solving the situation, but too often have left it to civil authorities to initiate what we should have taken in hand. In my judgment, we shall never be able to solve the question of race relationships by law. Only the application of the principles of Jesus