Bethel A.M.E. Church

Contents: Documents featuring Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church at 214 S. Monroe St in Yazoo City, Mississippi.

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HISTORIC CHURCHES
IN
DOWNTOWN
YAZOO CITY

Bethel African Methodist
Episcopal Church
(Painting by Hope Carr)

Bethel African Methodist
Episcopal Church
(Painting by Hope Carr)
Bethel A. M.E. Church
214 S. Monroe St., Yazoo City

Organized in 1868, Bethel is the oldest African American congregation in Yazoo City. After affiliating with the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the congregation moved to this site in 1890. Designed by A. S. King, Bethel A.M.E. is one of the earliest brick churches built by African Americans in Mississippi and is the only downtown Yazoo City church building left standing after the Fire of 1904. Although the building has had alterations, Bethel retains its historic Romanesque Revival tower, whose steeple is clad in sheet metal panels stamped to resemble shingles.
CITY LANDMARK CHURCH IN NEED—The congregation of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church is seeking help from the general community so that it can make use of its Gothic style church building on South Monroe street. Because of loose bricks and leaning walls, the building has been declared unsafe by the city. A fund drive is being led by a committee headed by Percy Calvin, chairman of the board of trustees and the pastor, the Rev. J. S. Butler. David Brown, Harlie Bennett and others are assisting in the effort. It is going to cost $15,000 to repair the church building. Donations could be sent in care of the Bank of Yazoo City or direct to Bethel Church, P. O. Box 356.
Bethel African Methodist Episcopal
Oldest Negro Church In Yazoo City

YAZOO CITY-The Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, which is located at 214 South Monroe Street, has the honor of being the oldest Negro Church in Yazoo City, and one of the oldest in the state of Mississippi.

Shortly after slavery, all the colored people worshiped together in what was called “The Market” located on Jefferson Street. In about 1888 Bethel pulled out as a separate group and moved to North Monroe Street. It was about 1972 when she became fully united with the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1990 she moved to the present spot, that building was constructed under the leadership of Rev. Dangerfield. It was perhaps the first brick Church built by negroes in the state of Mississippi.


In 1964 the building was partly collapsed during storm and was rebuilt in 1966. The belfry was left during the renovation a cross was added to the church tower. Alfred M. Workless was pastor at this time.

The present stewards of the church are Mr. Perry, Mr. G. G. Young, Mr. Daniel Brown, Mr. Leon S. and Mrs. Haute Bennett.

The pastor is Rev. G. S. James, treasurer, Mrs. Calvin and secretary, Mrs. H. L. Bennett. Recent church has purchased new red wine carpet for the floor and aisle.

City Ready To Turn
7Th Street Pool Over To Park Commission

The City Board stated that the Thursday meeting that the Street Swimming Pool is ready for use as soon as life guards can be hired and that its operation is to be turned over to the Park Commission.

It was agreed that charges of fifteen and twenty-five dollars would be in effect. There was discussion as to whether the Park Commission had enough money in their budget to operate the pool. Mayor Johnson stated that $1067 small outstanding bill of the $30,000.00 Park Budget available for Park Services.

The Board indicated that it felt there was enough available from this fund to hire the necessary guards and open immediately upon getting qualified life guards.

Yazoo Rescue Unit Continues To Grow

YAZOO CITY—Glenn Stamey and Sidney Harber recently joined the Yazoo Rescue Unit and increased its membership to nineteen. This leaves the Unit six short of the 25 advocated in its constitution.

City Court

CRIMINAL COURT

Twelve criminal cases were on the record this week with fines of four hundred and five dollars levied.

Two people were fined a hundred dollars each for possessing moonshine. One person was fined twenty-five dollars for unauthorized use of a motor vehicle and there were three fines each for disturbing the peace of fifteen dollars each.

Discharging a firearm cost one person twenty-five dollars. Other fines were $15 for disorderly conduct, $25 for getting a license to carry, $30 for attempted forgery and two fines of fifteen dollars each for public drunkenness.

TRAFFIC COURT

A total of forty-one traffic violations were recorded for the week with a total of $739.50 collected in fines.

There were six fines for driving while intoxicated, four for $100 each and two for $50, and one fine for driving while disorderly.

Six fines of $10 each were issued for driving without a driver’s license.

One fine of $7.50 was levied for running into a parked car.

Eight fines for speeding were passed out. Five of these were for ten dollars, two fifteen dollars and one forty-dollar fine.

Diversion tickets of one dollar each was paid for violation.
YAZOO
Its Legends and Legacies

by
Harriet DeCell and
JoAnne Prichard

with an introduction by
Willie Morris

YAZOO DELTA PRESS
1976
...have resided here always, almost—gentlemen who have built up the town, and who have a deep interest in all that concerns its prosperity—why, I ask, are these gentlemen cast aside, and a new set of men—men little identified with the school and its prosperity, placed over their heads?"

Mrs. Prewett countered in her editorial comment that rotation in office was a cardinal principle of democracy and that the new board was "more interested in the schools than the old one, if you allow the number of children apportioned among them to be anything in the counting."

For the following twenty years the school situation remained stationary—until 1870 when A.T. Morgan and his brothers took a personal interest in fostering public education.

Churches

Churches were a focal point of life in Yazoo County from its inception. Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Catholic groups were well organized by 1845. All the denominations had both black and white members prior to the Civil War. In the southern states in 1847 there were 139,578 Negro members of the Methodist Church, 100,000 Negro members of the Baptist Church, and 7,000 Negro members of the Presbyterian Church. In Yazoo County both Baptist and Methodist reports showed Negro and white members of the same congregations in addition to missions of all-Negro membership scattered about the county. 20 Negro slaves were frequently assigned to a special section of the church and the cemeteries of the churches with both Negro and white membership had a "slave section."

Methodist Church

The Methodists were established before 1830 with a Benton-Manchester charge, called the Yazoo Circuit, becoming a regular appointment by 1829. Prior to that time circuit riders going from Vicksburg through Mechanicsburg to Holmes County stopped along the way to preach in the rude log huts provided for the purpose or in interested individuals' homes.

Significantly, the Methodist preacher was not necessarily a resident of his charge. For instance, David Wiggins, the presiding elder of the Yazoo District in 1858, lived at Sharon. One individual, therefore, could serve a large area and the proliferation of Methodist groups in Yazoo County to more than fifteen by the 1850's was a testament to the success of the method of organization. To offset the problem of the itinerant minister, the Methodist groups developed in each community local preachers, usually four or five interested laymen, who attended to the daily business of the church and participated in revivals in subsidiary ways.

Richard Abbey and William Winans were among the active local preachers in Yazoo County. 21

According to tradition, the first Methodist preaching service in Yazoo City was held in 1828 by John G. Jones, a pastor of the Warren circuit, who was passing through the area. He gathered a small handful of people together in a hut on the top of what is now Jefferson Street for the service. The next year Alexander Talley was appointed to serve individuals in an area which also included Phoenix and portions of Holmes County. In 1836 the Benton and Manchester churches were placed on a circuit together, but the panic of 1837 caused the new charge to have financial problems so that it was returned to a circuit that covered a much larger territory. In 1842 a lot for a permanent church was purchased in Yazoo City and the group became a separate entity with a single station appointment for the preacher.

African Methodist Episcopal Church

Bethel Church in Yazoo City had its roots in the pre-Civil War period, but its formal organization dates from 1868. The members of the Bethel Church had attended the other Methodist churches in Yazoo County until the slaves were freed. After 1865 Negroes of all denominations worshipped at "the Market Place," an area located on East Jefferson Street just above where St. Stephens Methodist Church is today. In 1868 one group broke away to form the Bethel A.M.E. Church, and they erected the present building shortly thereafter.

Methodist churches in the county were numerous. John Cotton was sent to Benton in 1829 when he organized the Yazoo Methodist circuit. In
The steeple of the Bethel A.M.E. Church in Yazoo City rises over Monroe Street. The present building was erected in the 1880's and is the oldest standing church building in Yazoo City. (John George 1975)

1831 Thomas Griffin served the circuit and in 1832 John Lane was appointed. In 1836 the Benton church became a regular appointment with Jeptha Hughes as the preacher. Out of a Benton Methodist protracted meeting sprang the Presbyterian Church in Yazoo City.

Two other Methodist churches in Yazoo County that were established very early were at Dover and at Ebenezer. The Dover church was a union church originally, combining Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist members until after the Civil War. Generally, it was served by Methodist preachers who also served Fletchers Chapel Methodist church. The Ebenezer Church was established in 1828 but moved into Holmes County when it was formed in 1833.

Fletchers Chapel Methodist Church was founded in 1849 and named for John Fletcher, a close friend of John Wesley. The wood frame building that served as a house of worship for the community was razed in 1964 and replaced with a brick structure. The old building, built with slave labor during the pastorate of Francis M. Featherston, had stood through the Civil War with several bullet holes as reminders of the skirmishes that swirled around it in 1863 and 1864.

Ellison Methodist Church, located about a mile west of Deasonville, was first known as New Hope Church. The original building was donated by Moses Ellison and his wife Mary.

Tranquil Methodist Church was famous for its campground. First the camp meetings were held in brush arbors, then in open-air shelters with crude benches for seats. The Rev. John Watson Purvis organized in the 1840's the Tranquil Methodist Church in a log cabin on Woodlawn Plantation, several miles from the present Tranquil site.

On August 31, 1857, Adamson Waters and his wife, Mary Belinda Waters, gave four acres of land to be used as a church site and cemetery for the Midway Methodist Church. Serving as the original trustees were Stephen Luse, Adamson Waters, William L. King, Samuel N. Ratcliff, John W. Purvis, Henry A. Purvis, and Edward W. Cooper.

**Baptist Church**

Ten churches were listed in the Yazoo Association in 1836 by the Baptist Convention and six of the churches in the county today had their origins prior to the Civil War. In Yazoo City in 1843 the Baptists and Presbyterians combined forces to form a Sunday School of some thirty to forty tuition-paying boys and girls. The group celebrated their anniversary the next year with a procession which marched to the new Presbyterian church building. They were addressed by the Rev. Mr. Gray of Vicksburg. These children also partici-
had taken office of the radicals. His wife was a proud, haughty woman, and felt these things most keenly. The Northerner who had "surrendered" failed to cut the knot by marrying a most beautiful, accomplished, and worthy "Southern lady." Not only was he excluded from the Yazoo "upper crust," and limited in his social status to the "stags," the "ladies" of Yazoo refused longer to recognize her.

Bowman

In 1873 F. P. Hilliard, who was the then incumbent, and Albert T. Morgan were opposing candidates for sheriff of Yazoo county. Morgan, who was of the Ames faction, was elected by a large majority. Hilliard, who was of the Powers faction, refused to vacate, and had the office stored with firearms and ammunition, and kept a strong guard on hand to resist any attack or effort of violence by Morgan and his followers to obtain possession of the courthouse and offices. It was said at the time that the guns and ammunition belonged to the State and were furnished by Governor Powers, being shipped back to Jackson after Hilliard's death. Early one morning in January, 1874, Hilliard's men were on guard, suspecting no danger, seeing that there were no men around or in sight, went to breakfast, leaving the courthouse and the sheriff's office in charge of only one young man, a brother-in-law of Hilliard, who was instructed to give the agreed signal if force was threatened. Morgan, ever on the alert and watching his opportunity, speedily summoned an armed band of negroes which he had organized for the purpose, rushed into the office and took forcible possession. The alarm was given and Hilliard quickly gathering a posse of men, sought to drive out Morgan and his followers. As he entered, pistols were rapidly discharged. Hilliard, receiving a fatal shot, was borne from the courthouse to the street, and died in a few minutes. Several others were wounded but not mortally. This affray occurred a few days before the decision of the Supreme Court mentioned above. Morgan was arrested, waived trial before Chancellor W. A. Drennan at Yazoo City, was found guilty of murder, and remanded to jail without bail. Governor Ames for this cause alone removed Drennan and appointed Thomas Walton of Oxford chancellor in his stead. Under the law, Morgan's remedy, if he was not guilty of murder, was by appeal to the Supreme Court, but the Legislature then in session usurped the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and passed a special act granting Morgan a new trial, which was shortly after heard by Walton, and Morgan was released on a small bond. The succeeding grand jury ignored an indictment against Morgan and he went free, officiating as sheriff until the latter part of 1875, when he fled the county and was never seen in Mississippi again.

Morgan

The election of 1873 was in a certain sense the climax in our State of "radical rule," so called by the enemy. It was the year when the varied progressive influences converging from different and often widely separate centers of thought, interest and action, converging upon Mississippi with none other than weapons of truth, met and for a time overcame "the enemy" upon ground of his own choosing. Up to this time Mr. Hilliard had held the most lucrative office in the county—that of sheriff and ex-officio tax collector—uninterruptedly, or for a period beginning in 1869 and continuing more than four years.

Notwithstanding our disagreement upon the school and certain other questions, I had given him a hearty and unfeathering support. I had done this not because of any especial personal regard for him, or that he entertained for me, nor because I was under any obligations whatever to him, but solely because I desired to lay the foundations of our party upon a broader basis than mere race lines (which would have restricted its membership to the colored people, led by a handful of "Yankees"), and believed that an exhibition of unflagging political friendship for Mr. Hilliard would at last be accepted by the native whites as evidence of the sincerity of my professions in that regard.

My term had expired in the Senate. I enjoyed no means or facilities whatever for influencing either those delegates from the masses who had sent them there, to vote for me, or than my name and the memory among them of my service.

Without money or patronage at my disposal, and with convictions of duty respecting party leadership which bade my making promises of reward contingent upon my election, at the close of my four years' term in the Senate I was as powerless to reward friends or to punish foes with our party as my baby boy, then two years old.

But though Mr. Foote was a warm advocate of Mr. Hilliard's re-election, he, together with the official members of the A. M. E. Church which had got a foothold in Yazoo too, had been for weeks engaged in canvassing the county in Mr. Hilliard's interest, supplied, as was at the time openly proclaimed and well known, with "ample funds" and all manner of expenses, it all failed, and, as the denizens of Yazoo City will remember to this day, the shout that went from the convention upon the vote nominating me, "nearly lifted the roof from the court-house," as everybody said.

... out of a total register of more than fifteen hundred and of a white vote of thirty-one hundred and thirty-seven, he received but four hundred and thirty-one, while I received twenty-six hundred and sixty-five. The fact is I received nearly, if not quite, as large a number of white votes as he.

When the bond was complete and the time provided by law for me to qualify and enter upon the duties of my office had arrived, I appeared before the proper officer, took the oath of office required by law and made the usual per
Bethel A.M.E. has served Yazoo City for over 90 years

Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church has the honor of being the oldest Negro Church in Yazoo City, and one of the oldest in the state of Mississippi.

Shortly after slavery, the blacks worshipped together in what was called "The Market" located on Jefferson Street. In about 1868, Bethel pulled out as a separate group and moved to North Monroe Street. Around 1872, they became fully united with the African Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1880, she moved to be present spot on Monroe Street. The present building was constructed under the leadership of the Rev. Dangerfield; it is perhaps the first brick church built by negroes in the state.

Some of the members of Bethel at that time were Mr. and Mrs. Donaldson, Mr. and Mrs. Wough and Mr. and Mrs. Will Chew. Their son, who was blind, was then the organist of Bethel Church, and his daughter played the cornet.


The following is the pastor's message:

Ninety years ago the Founding Fathers organized and built for themselves and also this generation, a place to worship. That place is Bethel. Today Bethel is as young as the morning, although she is 90-years-old. Her energy knows nothing of exhaustion and her freshness never faces fatigue. The brilliance of her brightness never blurs, the sunlike sheen of her sympathetic face never shadows and the sufficiency of her saving strength never stalls, her "hand is not shortened, that it cannot save."

No furrows disfigure her graceful features, no defects mar her clear discernment, nor is there any weakness in her wondrous will. Her body of glory and beauty of countenance are unwrinkled by years, while her vigorous vitality and virtuous energy are unwarried by ceaseless activity. The march of seasons cannot mar her fairness nor foul weather destroy her freshness, for she has the dew of her youth. The century cannot change her comeliness nor cramp her compe teme, for her's is immune from infirmity and insured to infinity.

In the past 90 years, the history of Bethel has been great. She has been comfort to the weary, strength for the weak, a place where man and God meet. Let us hold high the beacon of truth, hope and brotherhood and pray that Bethel will continue to serve the present age.

It is incumbent upon all of us as members, friends, men and women of this day to work assiduously to keep fertile the soil from which our spiritual strength comes. Let each of us devote our energies and thought processes to the ideal of a new and greater Bethel. You have fought, and we shall continue to fight until our dream is accomplished, until Bethel's building is adequate for this present day and years to come. True is this dictum: "We strive with faith, or by faith we are consumed."

Bethel is everybody's altar, are you willing to work to see the dream come true? "God bless the church on the avenue that hears the city's cry; The church that sows the Seed of the Word where the masses of men go by; The church that makes midst the city's roar, a place for an altar of prayer; With a heart for the rich and a heart for the poor, And rejoices in their burdens to share. The church that's true to the call of Christ who wept o'er the city's need, And who sent His disciples to labor for Him where the forces of evil breed. The church that lives and the church that lives, as seen by the Master's eye—God bless the church on the avenue that answers the City's cry. —R. Walker

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Yazoo Memorial Chairman
1507 Jackson Ave.
Yazoo City, MS 39194

COME WORSHIP AT

Bethel A.M.E.
COME WORSHIP AT

Bethel
A.M.E. Church

Sunday School
--9:30 a.m.
Worship Services
--11 a.m.
Wednesday Prayer
--6:30 p.m.

For more than 90 years, Bethel A.M.E. Church has administered to the needs of the black community. Bethel has the distinct honor of being the oldest Negro Church in Yazoo City, and one of the oldest in the state of Mississippi. Come worship with us!

214 South Monroe St.

Yazoo City, MS 39194
The Churches Of Yazoo
Bethel to be part of tour

Yazoo City’s Bethel Church, 214 S. Monroe St., will be one of two churches open during this year’s Spring Spectacular historic tour.

Founded in 1868, Bethel Church united with the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1872 and is probably the first brick church built by blacks in Mississippi.

Spring Spectacular begins Friday, March 26, with a Garden Fair and seminar at Satartia’s No Mistake Plantation.

Home and church tours will begin Saturday, March 27, and will continue March 28. The Trinity Episcopal Church will offer box lunches for sale Saturday.

Other sites that will be on tour during Saturday’s historic tours are the Will Thompson home, the Sam Olden home, the Bob Bailey home, the Yazoo County Courthouse and the Bethel Church.

Tours of the First United Methodist Church, the Hollies (the Olive Story home) and the J.P. Sartain home will be available Sunday, March 28.

For details on the Garden Fair, contact Amanda Bailey at 746-5398. For information regarding the historic tours, contact Discover Yazoo at 746-2088.
AFRO-AMERICAN SONS & DAUGHTERS

YAZOO CITY, MISSISSIPPI

1849-1949

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS TO YAZOO COUNTY AND THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

BY JOSEPH C. THOMAS

THOMAS & KIRK PUBLISHING
YAZOO CITY, MISSISSIPPI

Published
1977
Bethel A.M.E. Church

Pastored by Reverend H.H. King in 1906. Reverend King was also President of Peoples Penny Savings Bank.

Drawing by Hope Carr.
Bethel A.M.E. Church

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Shortly after slavery, all the Colored People worshipped together in what was called "The Market," located on Jefferson Street. In 1868, Bethel pulled out as a separate group and moved to North Monroe Street. It was in 1872 when she became fully united with the African Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1890, she moved to the present location on Monroe Street. The present building was constructed under the leadership of Reverend Dangerfield. It is now known that Bethel is the first brick church build by Negroes in the state of Mississippi.

Some of the members of Bethel at that time were: Mr. & Mrs. Donaldson, Mr. & Mrs. Wough, and Mr. & Mrs. Will Chew. The Chew's son, who was blind, was the organist of Bethel Church, and his daughter played the coronet.

Some of the pastors from past to present were:

- Reverend G.W. Porter (also principal of Yazoo City Training School)
- Reverend H.H. King (1904) (also President of Peoples Penny Savings Bank)
- Reverend J.W. Hair (1908) (paid an indebtedness of $775.00)
- Reverend G.M. Hayden (1919)
- Reverend T.S.J. Pendleton (1921) (paid an indebtedness of $1,800.00)
- Reverend J.E. Field (1923-1924)
- Reverend E.D. Wilson (1924-1927)
- Reverend P.H. Polk (1927-1928)
- Reverend A.W. Walker (1928-1933)
- Reverend E.M. Smith (1933-1947) (He pastored perhaps longer than any other.)
- Reverend Brown (1947-1948)
- Reverend A.T. Ward (1948 and during 1949) (Remodeled the inside of building and added balcony.)

Courtesy of Mr. G.G. Young
Bethel A. M. E. Church
5. Monroe St., Yazoo City, MS

built in the 1880's, the oldest standing church building in Yazoo City
Historical marker unveiled

Bethel A.M.E. Church on South Monroe Street unveiled its historical marker Tuesday morning. The marker recognizes the church as one of the earliest brick churches built by African Americans in Mississippi.
**Architecture and identity**

**Historic churches inspire book**

By Jean Gordon

Historic churches dot the landscape in towns and cities throughout the state, helping to tell the stories of the communities' spiritual and cultural histories.

Now many of those buildings have been captured in a new book of photographic essays called *Historic Churches of Mississippi*.

(University Press of Mississippi, $40) by Madison County photographer Sherry Pace.

"I wanted to create a book with both books that I've done something unique," said Pace, who in 2006 published the picture book *Tikal: Houses of the Mayans*.

In this way I felt like I could preserve our history.

The 178-page book features color photographs of 133 churches — and a few synagogues — from Aberdeen to Tupelo City. The accompanying captions describe the architectural style of each church, which range from simple wooden structures to grand cathedrals.

*See PHOTOS, 2E*

**Details**

Sherry Pace signs copies of her book *Historic Churches of Mississippi* at University Press of Mississippi, 401 N. State St., Friday, June 29, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Saturday, July 7, Noon-1:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 9, Noon-1:30 p.m.

Sunday, Aug. 19, 1-2:30 p.m.

**For more**


The book is $40.

*See PHOTOS, 2E*

**By Keely L. Carter**

**Gulf Coast Press**

**40 years later, Franklin's defining anthem still commands 'Respect'**

**MPB adding digital radio channel, more local shows**

By Gary Petties

**For details**

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**SUNDAY**

**Trinity Lutheran Church hosts the Metro Jazz Festival**

This month's installment of its free Bach to Blues Series at 6 this month's installment of its free Bach to Blues Series at 6 this month's installment of its free Bach to Blues Series at 6 this month's installment of its free Bach to Blues Series at 6 this month's installment of its free Bach to Blues Series at 6 this month's installment of its free Bach to Blues Series at 6
"Respect": Took Redding song to whole new level

From 1R

That year the song she recorded and released—{
I Never Loved a Man the Way I Love You}, the album that featured "Respect." The album is regarded as a soul music masterpiece.

Franklin worked with Jerry Wexler, an Atlantic Records producer who also is credited with coining the term "rhythm and blues."

She went into the studios at Atlantic Records in New York on Valentine’s Day of '67 to record the song, despite having a cold.

The title track had already been released and had soared to No. 4 on Billboard's R&B chart. Fans wanted more.

And Franklin gave it to them. Before that day's session was over, Franklin recorded four singles for the album, including "Respect." 

Great handwork

Wexler was amazed at Aretha Franklin's handwork. She'd done most of the arrangements a long time before she got to the studio, finding up the chords and figuring out how the rhythm would be laid down.

"When the standout of the song was the way Franklin spelled it out—R-E-S-P-E-C-T—asserting her own boss-ho-funk voice and power.

Franklin also added to the track's slang term popular in the black community at the time.

"We sisters and I decided to add the sock-it-to-me," Franklin said earlier this year, almost replaying her role in the recording of the song.

Wexler said it was Franklin who brought the song to him, wanting to record it.

He says she ultimately decided on the song title—"Respect," a feeling Franklin also added to the track.

"She placed it where it was needed," Wexler said.

Handywork

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Wexler was amazed at Aretha Franklin's handwork. She'd done most of the arrangements a long time before she got to the studio, finding up the chords and figuring out how the rhythm would be laid down.

"When the standout of the song was the way Franklin spelled it out—R-E-S-P-E-C-T—asserting her own boss-ho-funk voice and power.

Franklin also added to the track's slang term popular in the black community at the time.

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MPB: Classical music may be reduced

From 1R

According to McGhee, if the station decided to cut back on classical music by reducing the number of hours of classical music in 2005, it would not be concerned with the possible implications.

"I don't listen to public radio much as I used to before the network started shrinking," said McGhee.

"I subscribe to Sirius Satellite, so I get all the classical music I want," she said. As far as MPB more to offer music and cultural programming on the digital channel, McGhee said: "That's moving in the right direction." 

MPB Radio station manager Percy Watson said the possible reduction in service could be a problem for the station and its listeners.

"Regardless of the changes and the issues that come up with the digital format, we will continue to focus on the network service," said Watson.

To comment on this story, call Glynn Pettus at (601) 961-7037.
Bethel A.M.E. Church is a part of state, local history

By JAMIE PATTERSON
Managing Editor

Hovering above several valleys of the Yazoo landscape.

Gazing up towards the sky, the steeple serves as a reminder of fellowship, faith and history.

The outline of her bell tower can be seen from atop many hills and landscapes.

In 2006, Bethel A.M.E. Church is the oldest African-American congregation in Yazoo City. Now located at 214 S. Monroe St., the church is also one of the four brick churches built by African-Americans in Mississippi.

Recognized by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Bethel’s story spans over a century of history, with its congregation forming a church in 1868. And it all began with a small group, coming together in faith and fellowship.

"Shortly after slavery, all the colored people worshipped together in tight-knit groups. It was shortly after the Civil War, and the community’s black population were beginning to establish businesses, churches and other groups.

Part 2 of a 4-part series

See Church, Page 5

February is National Heart Health Month

Take steps today towards keeping your ticker strong!

Yazoo Herald
Wednesday, February 10, 2016
Church survived the Great Fire of 1904

what was called The Market, located on Jefferson Street,” Thomas said. “In 1904, Bethel pulled out as a separate group and moved to North Monroe Street.”

In 1872, the church united with the African Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1890, the church relocated to its present location on Monroe Street.

“The present building was constructed under the leadership of Rev. Dangerfield,” Thomas continues.

Bethel would become the first brick church constructed by blacks in the state of Mississippi. The pulpit furniture, bell and bell tower are said to be all part of the original structure.

The church building was constructed in the Romanesque Revival style, with its steeple covered in sheet metal panels stamped to resemble shingles.

The church also survived the Great Fire of 1904, and is the only downtown church building left standing since the great tragedy.

“The Chew’s son, who was blind, was the organist of Bethel Church,” Thomas said. “And his daughter played the coronet.”

Some of the pastors of the past include:

• Rev. J.W. Hair (1908), who paid an indebtedness of $775.
• Rev. G.M. Hayden (1919).
• Rev. T.S.J. Pendleton (1921), who paid an indebtedness of $1,600.
• Rev. J.E. Field (1923-1924).
• Rev. H.P. Polk (1927-1928).
• Rev. A.W. Walker (1929-1933).
• Rev. E.M. Smith (1933-1947), who pastored perhaps longer than any other
• Rev. A.T. Ward (1948)

Bethel A.M.E. Church is the first brick church constructed by blacks in the state. It is the oldest black congregation in Yazoo City. A Yazoo City resident told city leaders that he would like to see the tax dollars used for timely work when it comes to certain services.

Alderman A. Urby Brent Jr. asked Starling if the district would ever consider hiring a public relations employee to offer insight about the district to the public more efficiently. He also said that person could attend the city council meetings on their behalf.

“Can’t you appoint somebody with knowledge enough with school business since board members can’t make it (here),” he asked.

“Some members of the (school) board feel they don’t have to answer to this board,” Starling replied.

Mayor Diane Delaware agreed that no one has to “answer” to the city board. “Answer to could be a loaded question,” Delaware said. “All boards that we ask to come to these meetings...it’s to share, collaborate, to make sure that we understand what we are doing so that we can all engage together to do what is best for the students, parents, everybody.”

Delaware said the joint meetings are also public relations employee to offer insight stands what it going on with daily operations.

“Well, some board members don’t even know what is going on until we read about it in the newspaper,” Starling replied.

The city council thanked Starling for her presence at this week’s meeting, later moving to school board nominations.

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Resident would like to see city services improve in the future

By JAMIE PATTERSON
Managing Editor

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