• Religious Communities in Transition:

Eryn Brennan

Three African-American Churches in Preston Heights

The history of three African-American churches in the Preston Heights area, including Trinity Episcopal Church, Zion Union Baptist Church, and Holy Temple Church of God in Christ reveal narratives steeped in transition as urban renewal and socioeconomic shifts continuously altered the landscape of these religious communities. The three churches encapsulate the transformation of buildings and landscapes subjected to urban renewal as well as the history of urban renewal itself as it has metamorphosed over time. Trinity's narrative addresses the first urban renewal efforts in Charlottesville in the 1940s, while Zion Union's history is bound to the severe urban renewal efforts in the 1960s (Figs. 1 & 2). In turn, the history of the Holy Temple Church and its congregation reflect contemporary developments in urban renewal manifested in the process of gentrification (Fig. 3).

The architectural forms chosen for the new churches that succeeded those destroyed by urban renewal are suggestive of each religious community's particular response to racial uplift. For instance, Zion Union Baptist Church and Trinity Episcopal Church appropriated a modern architectural vocabulary for their new churches, which can be interpreted as representing a break from a past defined by displacement, dislocation, and destruction. However, as modernity is often associated with progress, their modern expression also signified a measure of success and triumph over past obstacles. The churches had struggled early on with either fledgling congregations or substandard facilities, which was compounded by the difficulties inherent in displacement. Thus the new churches provided more space and modern amenities, and stood as a testament of the religious community's perseverance through a tumultuous past.

It should also be noted that the site planning for the new churches was equally influenced by the transformation of the American landscape confronted with the ubiquitous presence of the automobile. The introduction of the automobile among all economic classes by the mid-1960s and 1970s altered the site planning of the new churches, as church officials were forced to accommodate the parking needs of their congregations. However, the necessity of parking lots also demonstrated how religious communities, fractured and scattered after urban renewal, no longer lived within walking distance of their churches.

Trinity Episcopal Church began as an Episcopal mission in August, 1919. Services were initially held in the Odd Fellows hall, a popular African-American public gathering space in the early twentieth century (Fig. 4).[1] The small congregation was led by Reverend Thomas Brown who was sent to Charlottesville to "investigate the possibility of opening a mission among the colored people of Charlottesville."[2] Mr. Brown had attended the Bishop Payne Divinity School in Petersburg, Virginia, which sought to educate African-American clergy for the growing number of African-American churches constructed in the post-Civil War era. By September, 1919, a small building in a relatively undeveloped part of town at the foot of Beck's Hill was purchased by founding members, Melvin McGuinness, Oscar Conn, and Mrs. Crockett (Fig. 5).[3] Funds

[1] "History of Trinity Episcopal Church," located in the Trinity Episcopal vertical file at the Albemarle County and Charlottesville Historical Society.
[2] "Rejoicing in Trinity's Journey," November, 1999, located in the Trinity Episcopal vertical file at the Albemarle County and Charlottesville Historical Society.
[3] Teresa Price, a member of Trinity Episcopal for over sixty-five years, claims that the structure had previously been a church. Sanborn maps and written histories indicate the building was constructed on the site between 1913 and 1918.

for the purchase were donated from the diocese and the prominent African-American landowner, John West.[4]

The church was a vernacular wooden structure that consisted of an attached sanctuary and parish hall with an adjoining house for the vicar, Reverend Thomas Brown (Fig. 6). Situated on a prominent corner below Vinegar Hill, the church possessed three projecting gables and a spacious yard (Fig. 7). The members of the church lived in the predominantly African-American neighborhood centered around the church on Pearl Street, Pearl Street Lane, Preston Avenue, and Altamont Street (Fig. 8).[5] The majority of the African-American families that attended Trinity Episcopal Church were well-established home-owning citizens who walked to services and community events held throughout the week. Although the congregation more than doubled in the first ten years, it had not outgrown the building at the corner of Preston Avenue and High Street.

The pressure of urban development, and what was conceivably the first urban renewal efforts in Charlottesville, forced the congregation to abandon the High Street location in 1939. The church and surrounding homes were razed in order make way for the construction of the all-white Lane High School.[6] The community displaced by the development moved to other areas in or near Vinegar Hill, and the church's leaders purchased an empty lot at the corner of Tenth Street and Grady Avenue (Fig. 9).[7] With the assistance of Bishop Roy W. Mason, a Gothic Revival church was donated to Trinity Episcopal by the Church of the Ascension in Palmyra, and was dismantled, moved, and

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[4] Ibid.
[5] Teresa Price, interview, October 21, 2005.
[6] "Rejoicing in Trinity's Journey," November, 1999.
[7] Teresa Price, interview, October 21, 2005.

reassembled at the new location in 1939.[8] The wood-frame church had a pointed arch cut into the projecting gable, a slate roof, a simple rose window above the door, and lancet windows circumscribing the building (Fig. 10). Originally constructed by a bridge builder, C. Chastin Cocke in 1910, the structural design of the church's roof, much akin to bridge construction, is exposed inside the worshipping hall (Fig. 11).

The second Trinity Episcopal Church held up to one hundred and ten people, however the growing congregation necessitated the construction of an adjoining parish hall behind the church (Fig. 12). Thus, similar to the layout of the High Street church, the second Trinity church was located on a prominent corner and possessed a main worshipping hall, an attached parish hall, and a house for the rector adjacent to the church constructed circa 1914 (Fig. 13).[9] The addition and rector's house appropriated the green and white color scheme of the Gothic Revival church, which lent the small corner in the heart of Preston Heights an architectural unity and coherence.

CORNER of 10th + MAIN

The new church serviced the African-American neighborhoods in the surrounding area outlined in the map delineating the racial boundary in the Preston Heights area in 1948 (Fig. 14).[10] Although cars increasingly became an integral part of life by the mid-twentieth century, it was less likely for lower, middle, and working class African-American families to own a vehicle in the 1950s. Given that these were precisely the kinds of families that Trinity Church serviced, providing parking for congregation members at that time was not an issue since members walked to services. Teresa Price, a

[8] Reverend William Nowell, vicar of New Covenant Pentecostal Church, interview, October 23, 2005.
[9] Sanborn Maps Company, 1907, 1920, and 1929.
[10] Charlottesville City Directory, 1948.

member of Trinity for over fifty years, continued to walk to church with her family from Sixth Street after their house on Pearl Street was razed in 1940.[11]

By the 1960s the congregation and its outreach programs had outgrown the facilities at Tenth and Grady Avenue. The nursery school, preschool program, and summer school activities established in conjunction with two other Episcopal churches, St. Paul's Memorial Church and Christ Episcopal Church, became popular in the 1950s and initiated the development of a multi-racial congregation. The children's church camps were desegregated in 1952 under the leadership of Reverend Charles Fox, and increasing numbers of members from the white community and the University of Virginia further facilitated membership growth over the next two decades.[12] This increasing membership, as well as the fragile condition of the church and parish hall, necessitated the construction of a new facility.[13]

In 1961 the Trustees of Trinity Episcopal Church purchased an undeveloped lot on Preston Avenue from George T. Huff and the Hayden Corporation for fifteen thousand dollars (Fig. 15).[14] However, due to financial hardships construction of the new church did not begin until 1973. In an effort to develop a multi-racial congregation, the Preston Avenue site was chosen because it was situated between the African-American and white population centers of Charlottesville.[15] Furthermore, although the Vinegar Hill African-American neighborhood had been displaced by urban renewal in the 1960s, the new site was still within walking distance for congregants residing in Preston Heights.

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[11] Teresa Price, interview, October 21, 2005.
[12] "Rejoicing in Trinity's Journey," November, 1999.
[13] Ben Critzer, "Church Looks for Congregation," *Charlottesville Daily Progress*, December 23, 1974.
[14] George T. Huff purchased the land from the descendents of Thornton Anderson, who acquired the property in 1870 from George William. Deed records office, City of Charlottesville Courthouse, deed book 228, p.46.
[15] Teresa Price, interview, November 14, 2005.

Upon its completion in 1974, the new church on Preston Avenue exhibited a modern vernacular stylistic vocabulary (Fig. 16). The low, horizontal planes and vertical dark wood paneling exuded a postmodern vocabulary popularized by Charles Moore with the Sea Ranch Condominiums in 1965 (Fig. 17). Indeed, like Sea Ranch, the new Trinity Episcopal Church was inconspicuously tucked into its hillside site. The underlying reasons regarding the committee's design choice remains elusive. A majority of the funds for the new church were donated from the diocese office in Richmond, and church officials from Charlottesville's Trinity Episcopal were given a tour of modern churches in the Richmond area.[16] However, none of the churches observed on the tour were similar to final design submitted and approved by the Richmond office.[17]

Trinity's new modern church was large enough to house its growing congregation and outreach programs, although the layout and plan was not conducive to functions related to Sunday services. The long, narrow windows along the façade did not provide natural light for the interior, and the sloping roof above the shallow entrance left little room for congregants to mingle before and after services (Fig. 18). Furthermore, the altar in the parish hall was located in the rear corner of the room, which created an awkward diagonal procession (Fig. 19). Thus in the 1993 Reverend Scott Benhase initiated a renovation of the entrance façade and parish hall. A gable roof sheltered an exterior entrance and led into a foyer lighted by numerous windows along the façade (Fig. 20). Simultaneously, the parish hall was reoriented on a central axis and widows were added along the clerestory to create a luminous interior (Fig. 21).[18]

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[16] Stephen Waters, interview, October 11, 2005.
[17] Ibid. Requests to look at the minutes from committee meetings in the early 1970s concerning decisions for the design of the new church have thus far been denied.
[18] Reverend Melana Nelson-Amaker, interview, November 13, 2005.

The site plan of the new Trinity Church also reflected shifts in planning and design based on the ubiquitous consumption of automobiles among all economic classes of society by the 1970s. In 1940, when the church on the corner of Tenth and Grady was assembled, providing parking for church members was not a concern. However, by the 1970s the need to provide parking for congregants determined the layout of the site. The church, no longer situated on a prominent corner, was setback from the street and possessed an ample parking lot to the rear (Fig. 22). Thus the new church appropriated a modern architectural vocabulary and responded to contemporaneous developments in urban design based on the pervasive presence of the automobile.

Trinity Episcopal Church was the first church in the group currently under examination subjected to urban renewal efforts in Charlottesville. In the case of Trinity however, the appropriation of a modern design most likely signified an embrace of the stability modernity can provide. The forced removal from the High Street location was deep in the past. Issues such as the dilapidated church at Tenth and Grady and the desire to integrate and build a larger congregation were more immediate concerns that required the attention of church leaders in the 1970s. Nonetheless, the forced move from High Street was a portentous development as the expansion of Charlottesville's "white" downtown into nearby African-American communities would have its most devastating effects twenty years later. In the 1960s the razing of the predominately African-American community established in Vinegar Hill resulted in the demolition of two African-American churches, including Zion Union Baptist Church (Fig. 23).[19]

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[19] James Robert Saunders and Renae Nadine Shackelford, *Urban Renewal and the End of Black Culture in Charlottesville, Virginia; An Oral History of Vinegar Hill* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1998), 70.

Zion Union Baptist 1895

Zion Union Baptist Church was formed in 1895 by a group of workers formerly associated with Mount Zion Baptist Church.[20] Services for the congregation were first held in the old firehouse on West Main Street until a site was purchased from John Cochran by early church leaders for six hundred dollars in 1895 (Fig. 24).[21] Construction of a church at the Fourth Street location began in 1902 and lasted seventeen years.[22] A 1907 Sanborn map reveals that the initial building was a wooden structure situated toward the back of the property line (Fig. 25). However, by 1920 a brick building situated toward the front of the property line and perpendicular to the street had been erected on the site (Fig. 26).[23] It is likely that the extended building campaign necessitated the construction of a temporary building to house the congregation until a permanent structure was completed.

The Gothic Revival red brick church was closely bound by its property line, hence the construction of four modest dwellings by F. H. Birch in 1916 directly behind Zion Union could not be disputed by church officials.[24] The gable-roofed church had triple lancet windows on the street facade, single lancet windows circumscribing the building, and an attached tower on the south side (Fig. 27). Coincidentally, the construction of Zion Union Baptist church coincided with the construction of the nearby Ebenezer Baptist Church, which was rebuilt after a fire in 1907 (Fig. 28).[25] Ebenezer was designed by prominent African-American architect, John Anderson Lankford, and was most likely completed before Zion Union. Hence, given the similarity between the two churches, it

Ebenezer Baptist

[20] Chris Snowbeck, "Church Celebrates Centenary with Song," *Daily Progress*, March12, 1995.
[21] Deed records office, Charlottesville Courthouse.
[22] "Zion Union Baptist Church," narrative prepared for an exhibit in August 1998 at the Albemarle County and Charlottesville Historical Society, located in the vertical file on Zion Union Baptist Church.
[23] Sanborn maps, 189?, 1907, and 1920.
[24] Deed records office, Charlottesville Courthouse, land record book, 1916.
[25] Richard Guy Wilson, *Buildings of Virginia: Tidewater and Piedmont* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 150.

is possible that the builders of Zion Union took their cues from Lankford's design. Although no interior images of the first Zion Union Baptist Church survive, the similarity to Ebenezer Baptist Church suggests that the interior followed the typical format of Baptist churches, which consist of a large, open interior focused upon the pulpit.[26]

The Zion Union Baptist Church serviced the predominately African-American community in Vinegar Hill for over sixty years. Although some members would have owned cars by the 1960s, the proximity of the church to the neighborhood it serviced precluded the church's need to provide parking for the congregation. Furthermore, the limited size of the lot, acquired in a period before the ubiquitous presence of automobiles, would not have permitted space for parking.

When the Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority purchased Zion Union's Fourth Street lot for forty-eight thousand dollars in 1964 as part of a drastic urban renewal campaign that sought to raze Vinegar Hill, the church was in excellent condition.[27] The building was demolished in 1965, and today the site on which it stood is a parking lot for Staples (Fig. 29). The congregation held services in Jefferson School for eighteen months, a time referred to as "the days of wilderness" by the late Reverend Johnson, until a new building was completed in 1967.[28] Anticipating the move, the trustees of Zion Union purchased an undeveloped lot in 1962 on Preston Avenue for five thousand dollars from Septimia West Butcher, a descendent of the prominent African-American landowner, John West (Fig. 30).[29] The money acquired from the purchase of

ZION UNION ↓ PRESTON AVE

[26] Ibid.
[27] Wayne Clark, interview, October 18, 2005. Deed records office, City of Charlottesville Courthouse, deed book 233, p.100.
[28] A brief written history located in the vertical files at the Charlottesville and Albemarle County Historical Society, "Zion Union Baptist Church," 2.
[29] Deed records office, Charlottesville Courthouse, deed book 233, p. 100.

the Fourth Street lot was not enough to cover construction costs for a new church however, hence the trustees took out a loan for approximately one hundred thousand dollars to build the church we see today on Preston Avenue (Fig. 31).[30]

The details concerning the commission of the prominent local architect, Milton La Tour Grigg, to design a new modern church are unknown (Fig. 32). Grigg, known for his traditional approach to architecture, designed several Colonial Revival homes, headed the restoration of Monticello and Edgemont, and was responsible for numerous restorations of extant churches throughout the area.[31] However, for a brief period in the mid-1960s Grigg delved into modern architecture, evidenced in his design for the new Zion Union church. He had become a member of the Church Architectural Guild of America in the 1950s, and was aware of the liturgical and architectural changes taking place in the 1960s. He became an advocate of the concept of "community worship," where the church was conceived as an informal space with the congregation brought closer to the altar rather than the "traditional hierarchy of spaces and zones which were both dogmatically and physically separated."[32] This burgeoning idea was conducive to modern design as well as the established formulaic layout of Baptist churches that constituted a large space focused on the pulpit.

Grigg's design for the Zion Union's new church also reflected modernist trends visible in other contemporaneous churches, such as Frank Lloyd Wright's First Unitarian Church in Madison, Wisconsin completed in 1951 (Fig. 33). The architectural historian, Robert C. Broderick, describes Wright's design; "the dominate feature of this church is

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[30] Wayne Clark, interview, October 18, 2005.
[31] Joseph Michael Lasala, *The Life and Career of Milton La Tour Grigg*, (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1989).
[32] Ibid., 38.

the up-thrust triangle of the roof, which, prow-like in appearance, is vestigially a steeple and yet part of the church proper."[33] Thus Grigg's design of Zion Union Baptist Church reflected not only modern trends in religious architecture, but new ideas concerning the relationship between church and congregation articulated in the open spatial arrangement of the interior (Fig. 34).

However, the willingness of the instrumental Reverend Floyd Johnson to construct a modern church rather than a traditional church that reflected the form of the previous church can be interpreted as a clear break from the past. The forced removal from Fourth Street was received negatively among congregation members.[34] Unlike the first Trinity Episcopal Church, the Zion Union Baptist Church on Fourth Street was in sound condition, which made its destruction seem drastic and unnecessary. Hence the use of a modern architectural vocabulary for the new church represented a separation from a past defined by dislocation, displacement, and destruction. The voting process by which the congregation decided on the design of the new church, as well as the lack of any material vestiges of the Fourth Street Church in the new Zion Union further emphasizes this point.[35]

The destruction of the first Trinity Episcopal Church presaged the urban renewal efforts of the 1960s and the destruction of Zion Union Baptist Church. While today Zion Union congregants are deeply fond of the Preston Avenue church, there are still tangible remains of the Fourth Street church in the memory of those who bore witness to the events of the 1960s. Wayne Clark, the junior warden of Zion Union, further elucidates how the effects of urban renewal are still being felt among congregation members as the

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[33] Robert C. Broderick, *Historic Churches of the United States* (New York: Wilfred Funk, Inc., 1958), 212.
[34] Wayne Clark, interview, October 18, 2005.
[35] Ibid.

children of residents removed from Vinegar Hill lack the sense of community embedded in the old Zion Union church and neighborhood that was destroyed.[36]

Some of Zion Union's members were moved to Westhaven in the mid-1960s, although the majority of congregants scattered throughout Charlottesville, Greene County, Crozet, and Lake Monticello. Hence the Preston Avenue site provided parking for members, which reflected not only the rise of car ownership among church congregants but also the fact that many members could no longer walk to church. Urban renewal efforts had scattered the Zion Union congregation and unraveled a tightly interwoven social, residential, and religious community. As the local historians Saunders and Shackelford note, "the churches that had existed on Vinegar Hill were an essential source of unity for that black community" because, as Rebecca McGinness states, "they didn't have any other place to go."[37] However, Zion Union's large congregation enabled the church to flourish even after urban renewal efforts as it galvanized members to initiate fundraising events to finance the construction of the new church.[38]

In contrast to Zion Union Baptist Church and Trinity Episcopal Church, the Pentecostal Holy Temple Church of God in Christ located on Twelfth Street in Preston Heights was not significantly affected the by urban renewal efforts in the 1960s (Fig. 35). Hence the church and surrounding neighborhood, constructed primarily by Reverend Charles H. Brown, maintains an architectural unity and coherence that surpasses the corner overtaken by Trinity Episcopal Church in 1939. Reverend Charles H. Brown, originally from Profit, Virginia, acquired construction skills at an early age when he

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[36] Ibid.
[37] James Robert Saunders and Renae Nadine Shackelford, *Urban Renewal and the End of Black Culture*, 72.
[38] Ibid.

worked for the Barnes, Concress and Dunn construction firm (Fig. 36).[39] After the company folded at the dawn of World War II, Brown moved to Scottsville, Virginia to manage a dairy farm. However, realizing construction rather than farming was his profession of choice, he and his wife, Angie Loving Brown, moved to Charlottesville in 1945.[40] The Brown family settled at 354 10 ½ Street and Reverend Brown worked with Lee Construction and Allied Block Concrete Company until he founded his own construction business in the late 1940s.

In 1946 Norton B. Wilder was sent from Memphis, Tennessee to found a chapter of the Church of God in Christ in Charlottesville.[41] A site for the church, located at the corner of Twelfth Street and Rosser Avenue, was acquired in the same year, and early services were held in a large green canvas tent (Fig. 37). Brown, licensed as a Pentecostal minister in 1937 and a member of the church, was contracted by Wilder to construct a permanent church on the site in 1947.[42] The shortage of funds led Brown to mortgage his house to finance the construction of the new church, and upon its completion in 1947, he was appointed pastor of the Charlottesville Chapter of the Church of God in Christ (Fig. 38).

1947 Holy Temple

Brown's connections established in the white community when he worked with Lee Construction and Allied Concrete Block Company enabled him to acquire the materials necessary to build the church at a reasonable price. Thus the new church was a modest size one room, single-story, front gabled-roof concrete block structure (Fig. 35).

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[39] Charles Giametta, "The Rev. C. H. Brown Ministers to the Souls of the Faithful," *Charlottesville Daily Progress*, personal archives of Rev. Ralph Brown.
[40] Angie Brown, interview, October 3, 2005. Deed records concerning the purchase of the site by Norton Wilder were inconclusive.
[41] Rev. Ralph Brown, interview, September 29, 2005.
[42] Angie Brown, interview, October 3, 2005.

With the exception of a sill, the windows circumscribing the church were unadorned, and the gable above the entrance door was layered with stucco. A smaller gabled wooden entrance porch located on the street façade sat atop a concrete base and provided a transitional space between the exterior and interior. The church reflected the form, scale, and materials employed in the group of seven houses constructed on the street in the early 1940s (Fig. 39).[43] These houses possess either side or front gables as well as wooden porches set atop concrete bases (Fig. 40). Indeed, the only features that distinguish Holy Temple from the surrounding houses are its prominent corner location and slightly larger square footage. Thus the seamless material and formal qualities between church and neighborhood suggest that Reverend Brown was intentionally referencing the early residences, although this hypothesis is speculative.

After the congregation settled into the new church, Reverend Brown's construction business began to flourish and he added nine employees to his payroll.[44] In 1952, Brown purchased approximately two acres of land behind the church from Edward R. Martin, a prominent Charlottesville landowner and his associate.[45] The undeveloped land had been used as an informal dumping ground, thus before Brown began construction he and his crew hauled the trash out of the wooded area surrounding the church. The first house Brown constructed on his land was located behind the church and completed in 1953 to house his growing family.[46] By 1956, Brown's land was platted and three houses in the neighborhood were also complete (Fig. 41).[47] The houses, like the church, were concrete block structures with similar porch treatments (Figs. 42 & 43).

706 Built 1953

[43] Deed records office, Charlottesville Courthouse, deed book 467, p.844.
[44] Angie Brown, interview, October 3, 2005
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Land Record Books, 1948-1955, located in the Charlottesville Courthouse.

Some were single-story, side-gabled houses with dormers, while others were one and a half or two-story structures.

The use of concrete blocks reflects a shift in the perception of concrete building materials once deemed inappropriate for residential structures. Although the decision to use concrete blocks rather than wood or brick no doubt reflected Brown's connections to the Allied Concrete Block Company, concrete blocks were also cost efficient and incredibly sturdy. The economic efficiency of concrete blocks allowed Brown to provide more square footage for clients without increasing the cost of construction, which made houses affordable for the African-American community. For C. H. Brown, concrete blocks became the material of choice for the one hundred and fifty homes and buildings he constructed in Charlottesville between the 1950s and 1970s. Thus we see the proliferation of concrete block residential structures in the African-American community that developed around the church in Preston Heights (Fig. 44).

Reverend Brown would either sell or rent his houses to African-American families who faced socially enforced residential segregation and found housing options limited in Charlottesville.[48] Brown quickly acquired a reputation in the African-American community for providing homes for families unable to build or place a down payment on a house since banks rarely financed African-Americans. However, due to his local reputation, the bank would allow Brown to draw on a bank note for ten thousand dollars in order to construct a house.[49] Brown also maintained a merchant's account with Allied Concrete Company, which allowed him to purchase construction materials without immediate payment. Thus, when Brown's clients paid him, he would in turn pay Allied

[48] Christopher S. Combs, "A Community in Turmoil: Charlottesville's Opposition to Public Housing," *Magazine of Albemarle County History* 56 (1998): 118-153.
[49] Ibid.

Concrete. As the Reverend's daughter, Angie Brown noted, "before there was urban renewal or HUD, there was C. H. Brown."[50]

Reverend Brown's reputation and activities at the Holy Temple Church of God in Christ ushered in a period of great social and community prosperity for the church throughout the 1960s and 1970s. The church was a community center for residents and African-American students at the University who had few social outlets. Holy Temple Church also engaged in numerous community activities, including a tutorial program for high school students in the 1960s. In 1974, a radio station was constructed inside the church by Reverend Brown's son, John Brown (Fig. 45).[51] The station broadcast gospel programs twenty-four hours a day and was arguably the first African-American voice on the radio in the area until it was shut down by the FCC in 1976, because it "exceeded the limits for a low-power radio station."[52]

Although Holy Temple Church was relatively unaffected by urban renewal efforts in the 1960s, socioeconomic changes in the last twenty years reveal the effects of a new kind of urban renewal. The church was not subjected to the disruption, dislocation, and destruction characteristic of urban renewal efforts in the mid-twentieth century, however gentrification throughout the 1990s has significantly transformed the neighborhood around the church. The visible manifestation of this shift is not palpable in architectural terms, but rather in the displacement of congregants unable to afford to live near the vicinity of the church. Reverend Brown's houses cost between seven to ten thousand dollars to build. Today, these houses sell for one hundred and twenty to one hundred and

[50] Ibid.
[51] Rev. Ralph Brown, interview, September 29, 2005.
[52] Kathy Hoke, "Station Owner See Dream Grow with City," *Charlottesville Daily Progress*, July 15, 1983.

seventy-five thousand dollars (Figs. 46 & 47).[53] Thus while an architectural continuity exists in the narrative of the Holy Temple Church of God in Christ and its surrounding neighborhood, the recent shift from a predominately African-American neighborhood to a growing white neighborhood reflects contemporary processes of urban renewal under the guise of gentrification.[54]

Parenthetically, since C. H. Brown's neighborhood was not subjected to urban renewal in the 1960s it maintained an architectural unity and quaintness which has made it an attractive place to settle today. This development raises questions concerning the phenomenon of gentrification as a contemporary process of urban renewal, albeit one that destroys communities rather than buildings. It further begs the question, if Vinegar Hill had been rehabilitated rather than razed, would it continue to be occupied by a predominately African-American community?

The effect of urban renewal in its various manifestations throughout the twentieth century have greatly impacted the African-American churches in the Preston Heights area. The forced removal of Trinity Episcopal in the 1940s and Zion Union Baptist Church in the 1960s uprooted these religious communities and unraveled the intricately woven social and religious fabric that existed in Vinegar Hill and the community at the foot of Beck's Hill. While Holy Temple Church of God in Christ was not subjected to the traditional definition of urban renewal, the contemporary process of gentrification as a new form of urban renewal has significantly altered the religious and residential community of the church. Although the churches forced to move are now deeply embedded in their new sites, the displacement, dislocation, and destruction characterized

[53] Deed records office, Charlottesville Courthouse, property records database.
[54] Rev. Ralph Brown, interview, September 29, 2005.

by urban renewal is an integral part of their history. This history, as well as the transformation of the urban landscape as it folded under presence of the automobile, is expressed architecturally in the new modern churches.

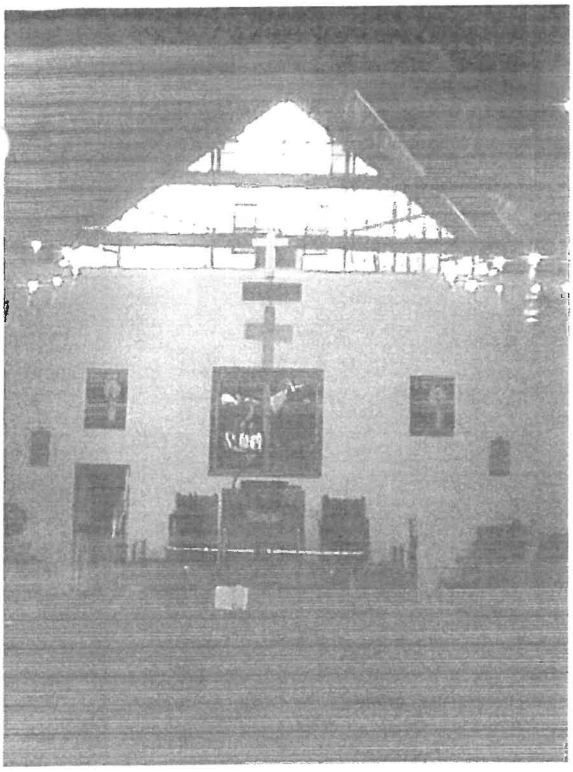

Figure 34. Interior of Zion Union
Source: The author

Figure 36. Reverend Charles H. Brown
Courtesy of the personal archives of Reverend Ralph Brown

Figure 35. Interior of Holy Temple Church of God in Christ
Source: The author

Figure 37. Site of lot purchased by Holy Temple
Source: Sanborn Map Company, 1929

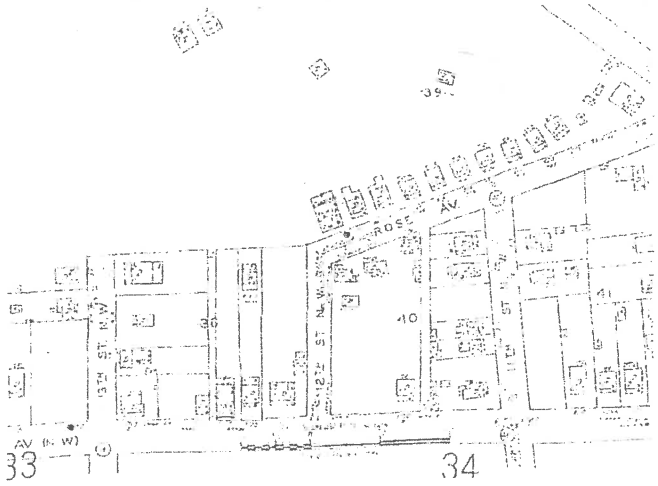

Figure 38. Holy Temple Church, 1947
Source: Sanborn Map Company, 1950

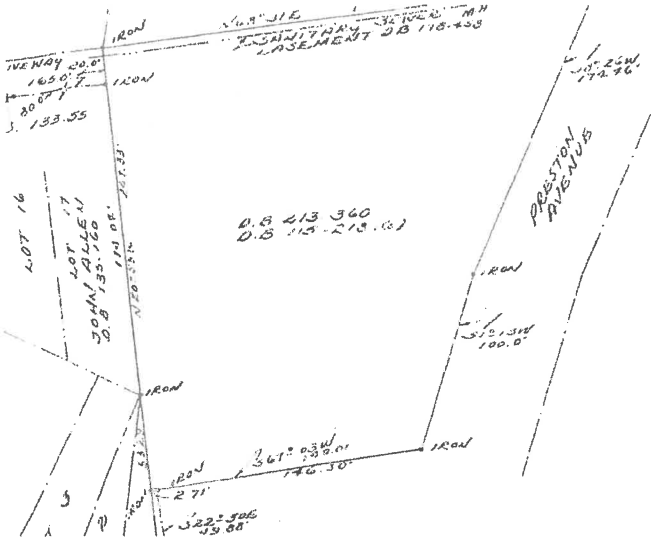

Figure 30. Lot purchased by Zion Union Baptist Church in 1962
Courtesy of the deed records office, City of Charlottesville

Figure 31. Zion Union Baptist Church
Source: The author

Figure 32. Milton La Tour Grigg
Courtesy of the University of Virginia, Special Collections

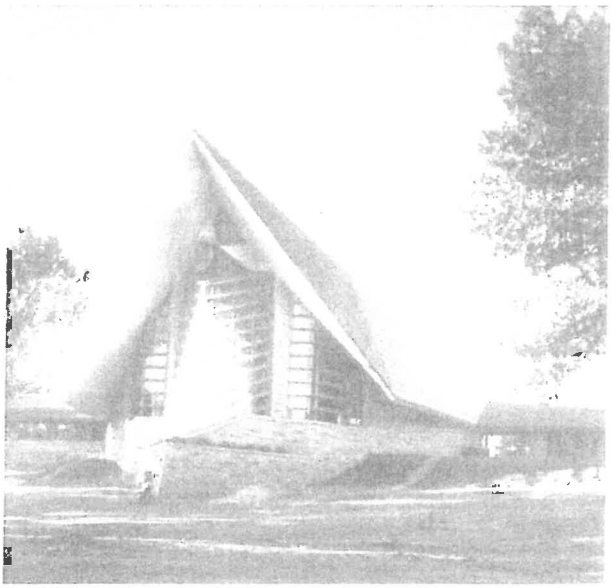

Figure 33. First Unitarian Church, Frank Lloyd Wright, 1951
Source: Robert C. Broderick, *Historic Churches of the United States* (New York: Wilfred Funk, Inc., 1958), 212.

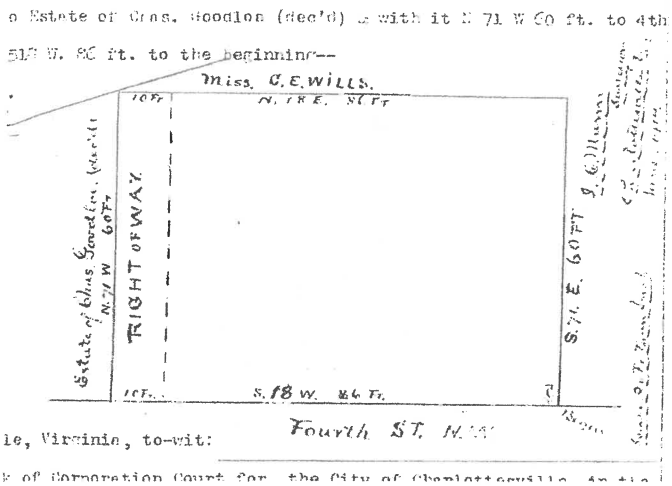

Figure 24. 1895 Plat
Courtesy of the deed records office, City of Charlottesville

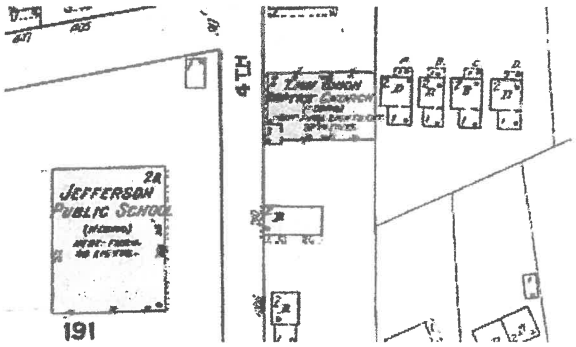

Figure 26. Zion Union Baptist Church
Source: Sanborn Map Company, 1920

Figure 28. Ebenezer Baptist Church, 1907
Source: The author

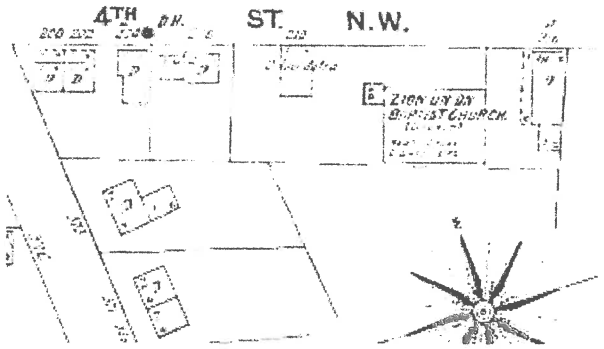

Figure 25. Zion Union Baptist Church
Source: Sanborn Map Company, 1907

Figure 27. Zion Union Baptist Church, circa 1920
Courtesy of the Charlottesville and Albemarle Historical Society

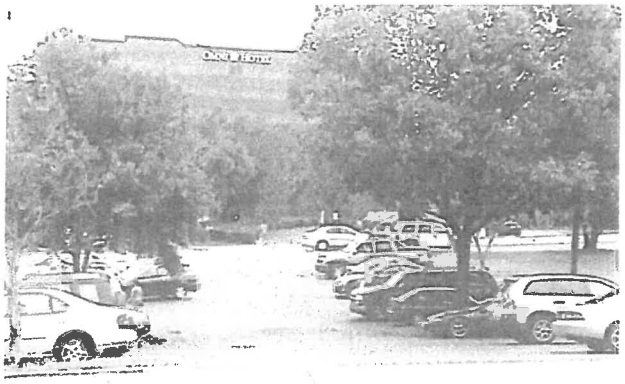

Figure 29. Former site of Zion Union
Source: The author

Figure 7. Trinity Episcopal Church, ca. 1927
Courtesy of Trinity Episcopal photographic archives

Figure 8. Streets around Trinity Episcopal
Source: Sanborn Map Company, 1907

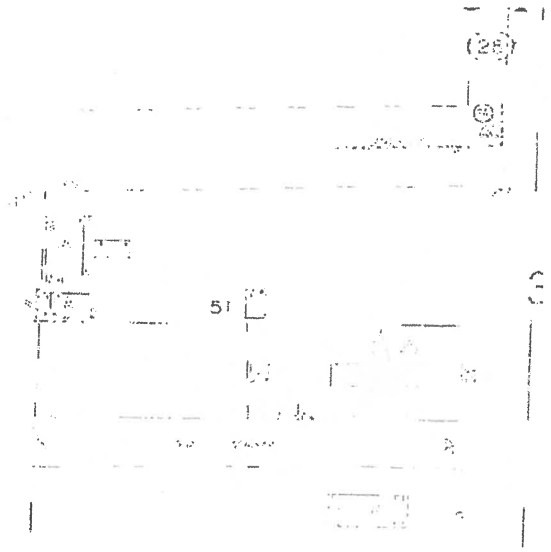

Figure 9. Empty lot purchased by Trinity Episcopal
Source: Sanborn Map Company, 1929

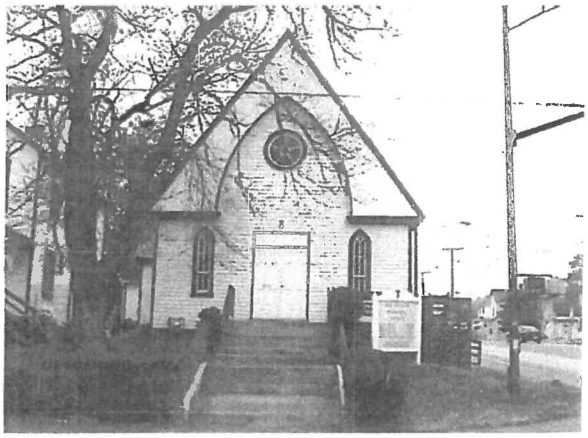

Figure 10. Trinity Episcopal, 1939
Source: The author

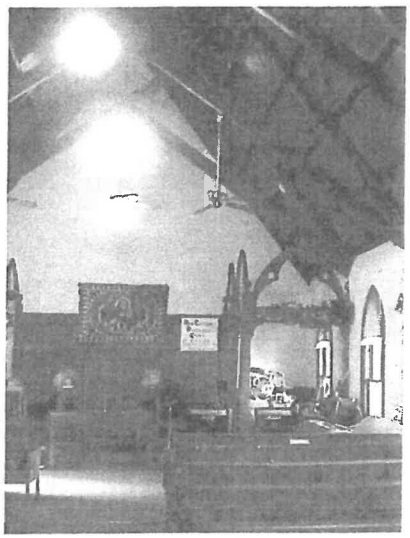

Figure 11. Interior of second Trinity Episcopal
Source: The author

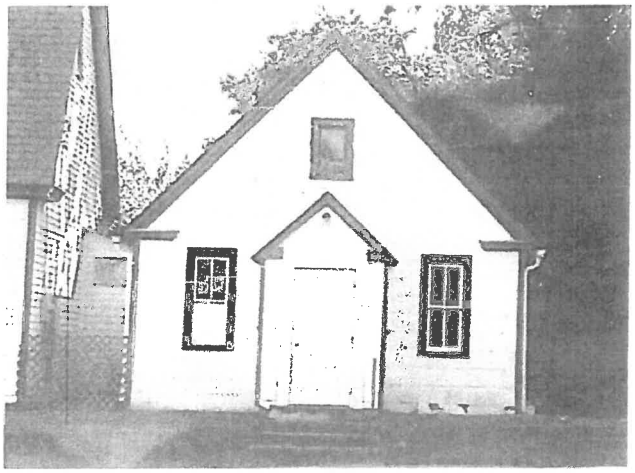

Figure 12. Parish hall adjoined to the rear of the church
Source: The author

Figure 18. Windows and entrance of Trinity Episcopal
Source: "History of Trinity Church," located in the vertical file at the Albemarle County and Charlottesville Historical Society

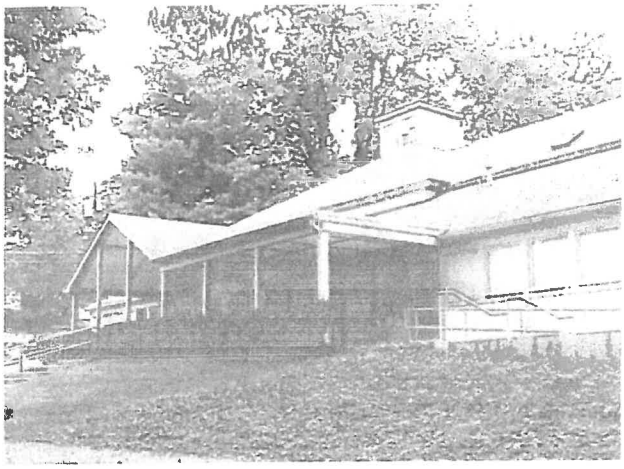

Figure 20. Newly renovated façade of Trinity Episcopal, 1993
Source: The author

Figure 22. Parking lot behind Trinity Episcopal
Source: The author

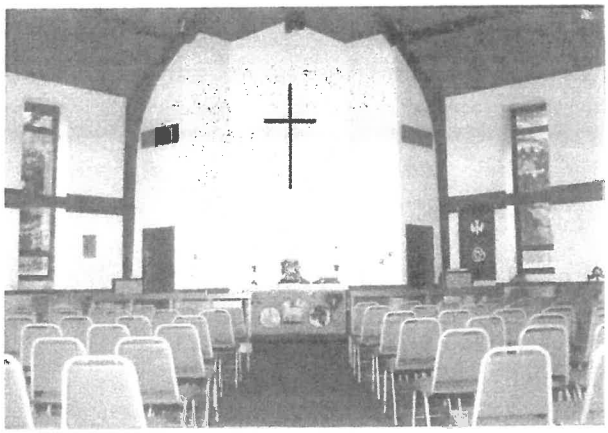

Figure 19. Main altar in the parish hall
Courtesy of Trinity Episcopal photographic archives

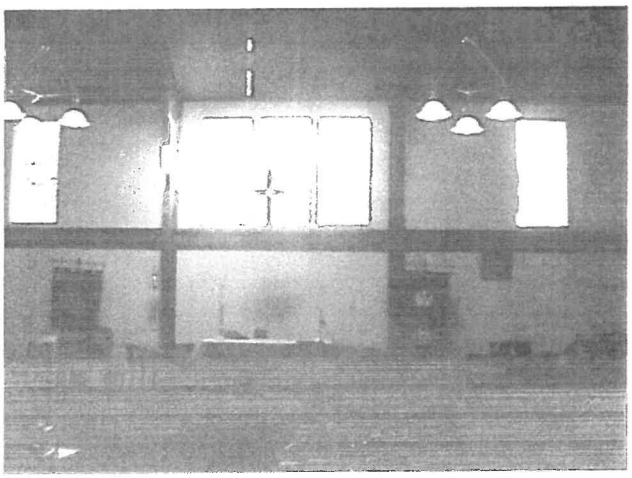

Figure 21. Interior of parish hall, altar and clerestory windows
Source: The author

Figure 23. The razing of Vinegar Hill, 1960s
Courtesy of Charlottesville Housing Authority, http://www3.lib.virginia.edu/schwartz/credit/aerial2c1.html

Figure 13. Rector's house next to the church
Source: The author

Figure 14. Neighborhood surrounding Trinity Episcopal
Source: Sanborn Map Company, 1969

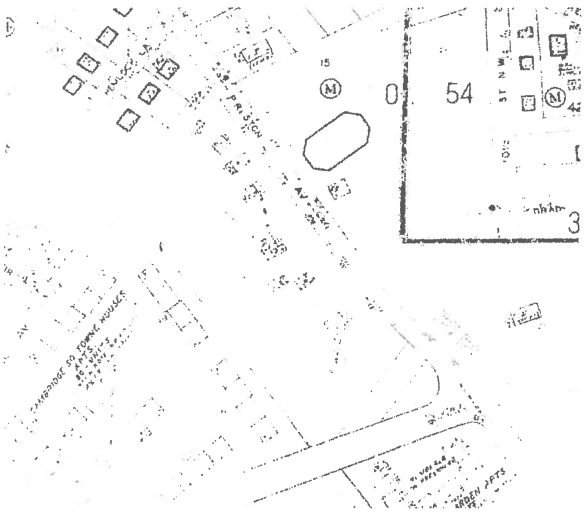

Figure 15. Lot on Preston Avenue purchased by Trinity Episcopal in 1961
Source: Sanborn Map Company, 1969

Figure 16. Trinity Episcopal Church, 1974
Courtesy of Trinity Episcopal photographic archives

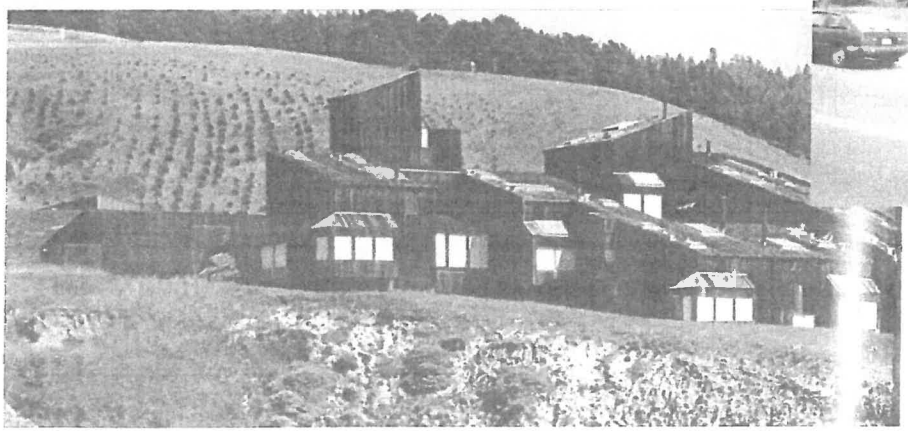

Figure 17. Sea Ranch Condominiums, 1964
Source: Donlyn Lyndon, *Houses by Moore, Lyndon, Turnbull & Whitaker* (Tokyo: A.D.A. Edita, 1975), 54.

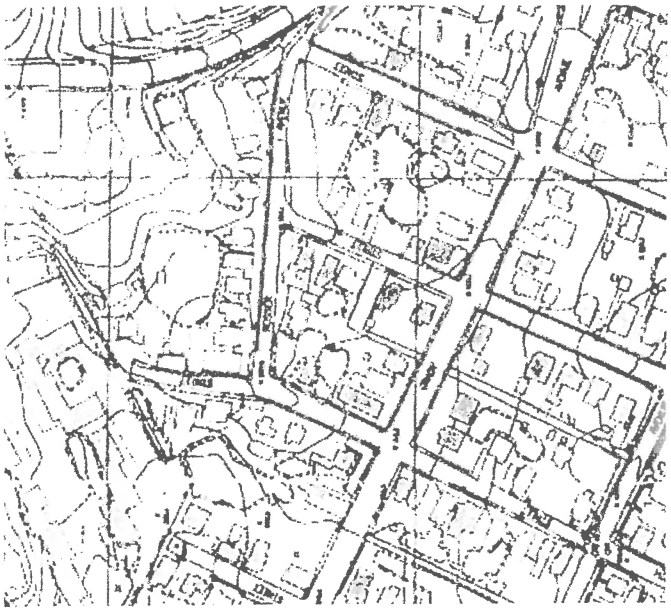

Figure 44. Light green color shows the concrete block structures in Preston Heights
Source: Community History residential group research

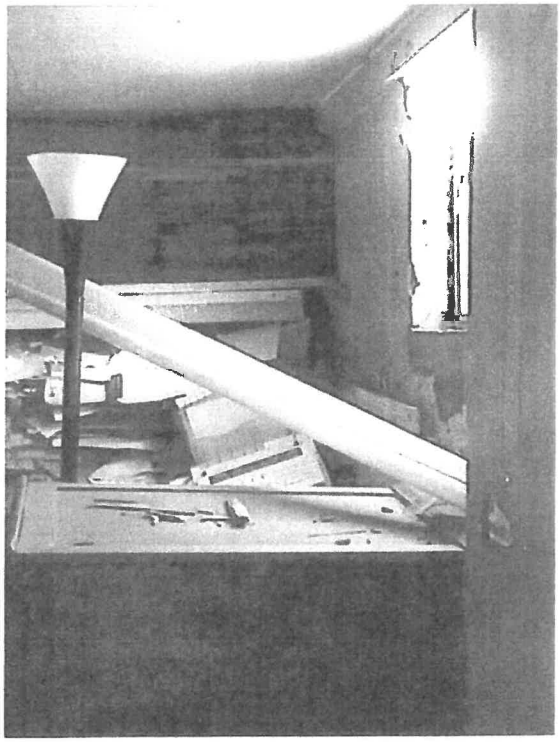

Figure 45. The room that housed John Brown's radio station
Source: The author

Figure 46. 703 12th Steet NW sold for 120,000 in 2004
Source: The author

Figure 47. 705 12th Steet NW, recently altered and covered with siding, sold for 175,000 in 2005
Source: The author

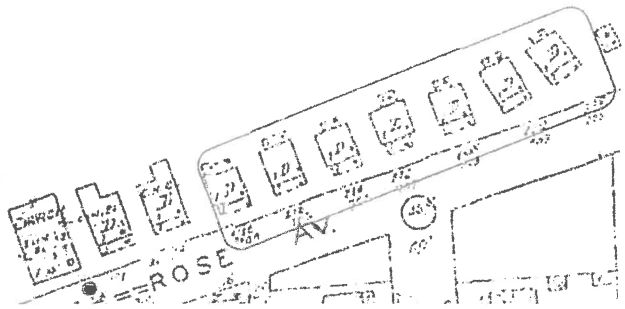

Figure 39. Homes constructed on Rosser Avenue, early 1940s
Source: Sanborn Map Company, 1950

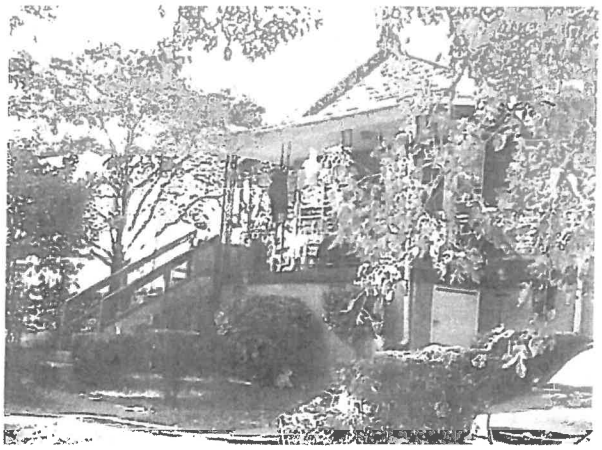

Figure 40. 216 Rosser Avenue
Source: The author

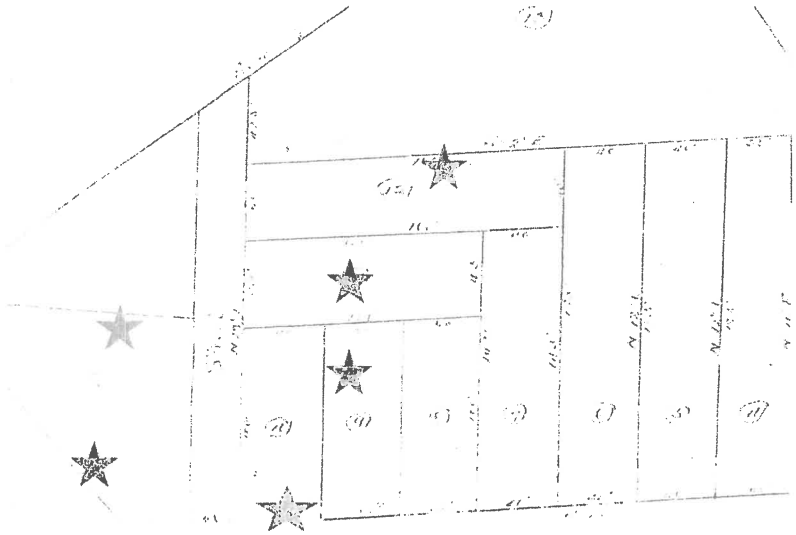

Figure 41. Plat showing the Reverend Brown's properties around the church designated with the red star
Courtesy of the deed records office, City of Charlottesville

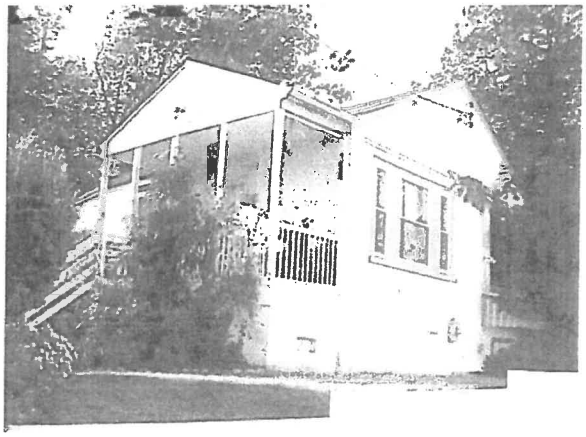

Figure 42. 1201 Rosser Avenue
Source: The author

Figure 43. 703 12th Steet NW
Source: The author

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Interviews

1. Anderson, Geneva. Member of Trinity Episcopal Church for sixty years. October 13, 2005.

2. Brown, Reverend Ralph. Retired pastor of Holy Temple Church of God in Christ. September 30 and October 6, 2005.

3. Brown, Angie. Daughter of Charles H. Brown. October 3, 2005.

4. Nelson-Amaker, Reverend Melana. Pastor of Trinity Episcopal Church since 1996. November 13, 2005.

5. Nowell, William. Pastor of vicar New Covenant Pentecostal Church. October 23, 2005.

6. Price, Teresa. Member of Trinity Episcopal Church for sixty-five years. October 21, 2005.