

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

DRAFT

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name First Community Church
Other names/site number Community Church, Crutcher Memorial Community Church,
Community Methodist Church, First Independent African Methodist Community Church.
Name of related multiple property listing The Civil Rights Movement in Nashville, Tennessee, 1942–1969
(Remove "N/A" if property is part of a multiple property listing and add name)

2. Location

Street & Number: 1815 Knowles Street
City or town: Nashville State: TN County: Davidson
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A Zip: 37208

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official: **Date**

Title: **State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	1	objects
2	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Colonial Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Brick, concrete, metal, synthetic

Narrative Description

The present First Community Church was erected around an earlier one-story church building in 1960. (Figures 1-3). Church records state that the older building was moved here on rollers around 1940. At that time, the fellowship was called the First Independent African Methodist Community Church. Congregation member Jesse Palmer Walker was responsible for the 1960 design of the building and Frederick Valentine supervised construction. Modifications were made to the church building in 1992 when a rear extension was added. The 1960 portion of the gable front church building is one and one-half stories, built with concrete block, with brick veneer covering the concrete block on the façade and parts of the side elevations. The two-story 1992 extension is composed of concrete block. Historic windows are metal with frosted or colored glass, unless otherwise specified, while the gable and eaves are covered with synthetic siding. Historic low brick walls and a non-historic informational sign are the only embellishments on the property. The church building occupies most of the flat lot, with a concrete handicap accessible ramp leading to the portico.

The north façade is dominated by a one and one-half story gable front portico resting on four rectangular columns. The gable field is sheathed in synthetic siding and “First Community Church” is written on the entablature. Non-historic glass and metal double-leaf doors are flanked by tall twelve-light metal windows.

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These 1960 windows and all other 1960 windows have twelve-lights with two light operable sections on the top and bottom, a four light section that is operable, and a fixed four light section. The operable sections are hopper or awning windows. A concrete pad and ramp with metal railing lead up to the portico. A 2002 steeple is visible at the apex of the gable roof. The cornerstone reads:

First Community Church
Organized July 24, 1932
Rev. W.Y. Horton, Founder
Rebuilt October 24, 1960
Rev. C.T. Vivian, Pastor
Rev. K.W. JangDhari 1967-

Brick and concrete block are visible on the east elevation. The brick veneer section is at the northern edge and is separated from the concrete section by a brick pilaster; there is one twelve-light window on the brick section. Three concrete block pilasters separate two pairs of twelve-light windows, a single twelve-light window and a single-leaf metal door, and a single twelve-light window on the 1960 section of the church building. Window sills are concrete block. HVAC equipment is located at this elevation. The southern part of the elevation is the 1992 two-story concrete block classroom extension. Three irregularly placed one-over-one windows are located on the second story of the extension and the first story has two one-over-one windows and a single-leaf door.

Faced with concrete block, the south elevation has no embellishments and is close to the property line. The gable field is covered with synthetic siding.

Brick and concrete block are visible on the west elevation. The brick section is at the northern edge and is separated from the concrete section by a brick pilaster; there is one twelve-light window on the brick section. Three concrete block pilasters separate two pairs of twelve-light windows, a single twelve-light window and a single-leaf metal door, and a single twelve-light window on the 1960 section of the church building. Sills are concrete block. Mechanical equipment is also located at this elevation. The southern part of the elevation is the 1992 two-story concrete block classroom extension. Two one-over-one windows are located on the second story and the first story has a single-leaf metal door. A metal fire escape is located at the southern end of the elevation.

Inside First Community Church, historic double-leaf doors lead from the narthex to the sanctuary. The First Community Church sanctuary retains its historic character. Carpeting covers historic wood floors in the aisles; wood floors under the pews were refurbished in 2022. Acoustic tile paneling covers the arched ceiling and walls are plaster. Lighting and wood pews are not historic, although the pews are in the same local as historic pews. At the north end of the sanctuary single-leaf wood doors lead to small rooms. The altar configuration at the south end of the sanctuary is composed of wood and, like the other parts of the interior, is newer material in the historic space.¹ The choir stand is in its historic location but was turned so that it

¹ Historic wood remains below the altar. Personal communication Rev. Ella Clay, 25 January 2023.

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faces the congregation rather than the pulpit. Single-leaf wood doors flank the altar and baptistry, leading to the classroom extension (west door) and to rest rooms. Most interior changes occurred during the 1960s, although the ceiling tiles may be later.² New materials maintain the historic patterns and volumes of the interior spaces. (Figure 2)

During the pastorate of Rev. Kendrick JangDhari, a building fund was initiated to construct a dining room and program educational area. According to church historian Ardana Foxx and Pastor Ella Clay, partial funding for the two-story classroom extension came through former First Community pastor Dr. Cordy Tindell Vivian after he spoke on Oprah Winfrey’s tribute program to Martin Luther King, Jr.³ Along with the funds collected from Rev. Vivian, the congregation’s building fund and fundraising, the extension was completed in 1992 while under the pastorate of Rev. Harold Simmonds. A plaque leading to the extension has images of Vivian and states “Dr. Cordy Tindell Vivian and Octavia Geans Vivian, dedicated this day July 19, 1992.” A single-leaf metal door leads to a large classroom space to the south. Walls along the first story classroom are covered with current events information and photos of former church pastors (Figure 15). Walls in the extension are drywall or concrete block. The second story classrooms are accessed by an interior metal double-run stair with metal railings, at the east elevation. Dropped paneled ceilings, tile floors, and unadorned walls are characteristic of all rooms in the extension. Three rooms with doors are on the east part of the space while most of the space is open. A narrow hallway at the northwest leads to a small kitchen

The low brick walls at Knowles Street are contributing, having existed when the church was rebuilt in 1960. (Figure 3) It is a contributing structure.

The sign is non-contributing. Situated in front of the church, the date is not known but is outside of the period of significance. It is in the same location as an earlier sign. (Figure 1). It is a non-contributing object.

² Ardana Foxx. Personal communication, 15 November 2023.

³ This was Oprah’s Tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. on what would have been his sixtieth birthday in 1989. Vivian was one of several notable individuals who knew King and were significant in the Civil Rights movement. He spoke about his Basic Diversity training program which is still active today. For more information on the Basic Diversity program see <https://www.basicdiversity.com/about-basic-diversity/>.

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Site Plan. Courtesy of Richard Grubb and Associates⁴

Integrity

Location. According to church records, city directories, and Sanborn maps, First Community Church was at this location by 1940-1941. It has not been moved since that time so it is in the location where significant events occurred.

Design. First community church was remodeled in 1960 under Rev. Vivian’s direction. Church members were responsible for the design and construction. A concrete block and brick veneer building encased the earlier church building. A 1992 rear extension was completed with Rev. Vivian’s financial assistance.

⁴ Site plan and maps in the nomination were created by Richard Grubb and Associates.

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Materials from this timeframe exist throughout the church. Space usage and functions of the building continue to be for church and community services as planned by the membership. The church retains its historic design.

Setting. The setting remains as it was during the period of significance. First Community Church is in a residential neighborhood comprised of primarily one-story, with some two-story, brick veneer or weatherboard houses. Houses are situated close to the road with minimal landscaping. Basic bungalows and ranches line the streets with few empty lots. The church takes up most of the parcel it is on.

Materials. The available historic records and interviews with the church pastor and historian show that the exterior brick and windows are historic, from the period of significance. Change have been made to the interior materials, sometimes covering historic materials – such as carpet over wood. Overall, the church building retains a high degree of historic material from the period of significance.

Workmanship. First Community Church was designed and constructed by congregation members under C. T. Vivian’s leadership. Evidence of the members craft in construction and design are evident on the exterior and extant on the interior.

Feeling. Since First Community Church retains its historic location, design, workmanship, and setting, it has integrity of feeling from the period of significance.

Association. First Community Church was directly associated with Rev. Vivian during the years he was active in and promoted civil rights in Nashville. It is the only church in Nashville where he pastored. The church functioned as a community center, meeting place, civil rights activity center both during and after Vivian’s pastorship. Integrity of association is especially strong.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Ethnic Heritage: Black

Social History: Civil Rights

Period of Significance

1957-1969

Significant Dates

1959-1960

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Vivian, Rev. Cordy Tindell (C.T.)

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Walker, Jesse Palmer

Valentine, Fred

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

First Community Church is eligible for listing in the National Register under criteria A and B for its local significance in African American heritage and for civil rights social history from 1957 to 1969. For criterion A, the church was one of several churches used as strategy centers during the Nashville Student Movement’s nonviolent sit-ins during 1959-1960.⁵ First Community Church was involved in outreach since its establishment in Nashville, especially during the critical 1960s Civil Rights Movement and through the end of the period of significance. Meetings were held in the church on civil rights and the church, voter registration, and race relations. Speakers at the church included those from the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), such as Z. Alexander Looby and Rev. J. Metz Rollins of the Nashville Christian Leadership Council (NCLC), and others as nationally prominent as Rev. James Lawson. A locally well-known member of the congregation was Johnetta Hayes, who was the first female president of the Nashville NAACP and an active participant in the city’s desegregation efforts.

Under criterion B, First Community Church is eligible for its association with Rev. Cordy Tindell (C.T.) Vivian from 1957 to 1961, the years he pastored at the church. Rev. Vivian was one of the three major pastors, along with Kelly Miller Smith and James Lawson, who guided students and organized workshops and demonstrations.⁶ A founding member and vice-president of the NCLC, he was in the front of Nashville’s silent march after the Looby bombing and along with Diane Nash confronted Mayor Ben West at the Davidson County Courthouse. Although only at First Community Church for a short time, this was during a significant period of the Nashville sit-in movement and helped solidify Rev. Vivian’s commitment to civil rights activism. The church is the building in Nashville associated with him during this critical time. It was also during Vivian’s tenure that the church was rebuilt. Rev. Vivian had been active in civil rights before he came to Nashville and continued to gain national acclaim after he left the city, continuing his civil rights work. For this reason, the level of significance is local and the area of significance is civil rights. There are no other properties in Nashville associated with Rev. Vivian’s civil rights activities.

Property Type

First Community Church is a Strategy Center property type and it meets the registration requirements for Strategy Centers set forth in *The Civil Rights Movement in Nashville, Tennessee, 1942–1969*. This is defined as a space where meetings were held about civil rights and community information was reported. Training, mass meetings, speeches, and fundraisers are types of events that occurred in First Community Church. Strategy Centers are directly associated with significant events or people and they retain physical and associative qualities from the period of significance. The nomination documents that meetings were held in the church during Rev. Vivian’s tenure and throughout the period of significance in the nomination. NCLC, NAACP, race relations, and civil rights, were often the topics of discussion at the church. Therefore the building meets the associative qualities needed for a strategy center. As the section on integrity states,

⁵ MTSU Center for Historic Preservation and Tennessee Preservation Trust, “The Nashville Civil Rights Historic Resource Study” (Murfreesboro, TN, 2003), NP; C. T. Vivian with Steve Fifer, *It’s in the Action: Memories of a Nonviolent Warrior* (Montgomery: New South Books, 2021), 38.

⁶ Henry Hampton, and Fayer, Steve. *Voices of Freedom: An Oral history of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s* (New York: Bantam, 1991), 59.

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First Community retains its integrity from the period of significance so it has the associative qualities of Strategy Centers.

Criteria Consideration

The building meets criteria consideration A because the significance is for historic importance under criterion A and B, and not for a particular religion.

Narrative Statement of Significance

First Community Church began in 1932 as the First Independent African Methodist Community Church. Rev. Wayman Y. Horton led the new congregation of 182 members and held services in members' homes and in tents.⁷ A building was constructed on Scovel Street and meetings were held there until after the current property was purchased in 1936.⁸ Church trustees, eight members of the congregation, and Rev. James Crutcher met in a parishioner's home and agreed to purchase the property on Knowles Street, then called Thompson Street. (Figure 4) According to the church's written history, the Scovel Street building was moved on rollers to Knowles Street. Nashville city directories show the church building at 1815 Knowles Street in 1941 (Figures 5 and 6). Sanborn Maps show this as Crutcher Memorial, after Rev. James Crutcher, who led the congregation until 1950 (Figure 7).⁹

In January of 1941 Rev. Crutcher was mentioned in *The Nashville Tennessean* stating that a "community center has been organized for the general welfare of the less fortunate without regard to creed."¹⁰ The same article reported that he was the president of the "Independent Church of more than 55 congregations."¹¹ In August Rev. Crutcher was in Birmingham, Alabama attending the biennial conference of sixty independent nondenominational community churches, although he was no longer the president.¹² Crutcher spoke at the newly formed Southern Regional Council in 1944. Formed to promote racial equality, the organization held a conference in Nashville that year.¹³

In 1950, the African American Biennial Council of the Peoples Church of Christ and Community Center and the White National Council of Community Churches joined together to form the International Council of Community Churches (ICCC), of which First Community became a charter member.¹⁴ The group is a

⁷ Rev. Horton is on the church charter of incorporation. Personal communication from Ardana Fox, 1 February 2023.

⁸ Church records have 1732 Scovel but available city directories and Sanborn maps do not have that address in the early 1930s.

⁹ Research has shown that the church has also been known as Community Church (1958 and 1959 city directories), Crutcher Memorial Community Church (1932/1957 Sanborn) and Community Methodist Church (1941 city directory). It has been called First Community Church over the years and was formally changed to this name in 1966.

¹⁰ *The Nashville Tennessean*, 19 January 1941, 44, "Happenings With Colored People," <https://www.newspapers.com/>, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/161154360/?terms=community%20center%20has%20been%20organized&match=1>

¹¹ Ibid, 44.

¹² *The Nashville Tennessean*, 31 August 1941, "Happenings With Colored People," 24, <https://www.newspapers.com/>, https://www.newspapers.com/image/147876158/?terms=rev%20j%20n%20crutcher&match=1&clipping_id=113061401 .

¹³ *The Nashville Tennessean*, 30 July 1944, "Happenings Among Colored People", 45, <https://www.newspapers.com/>, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/148105091/?terms=Southern%20Regional%20Council&match=1>.

¹⁴ Personal communication from Rev. Ella Clay, 11 April 2003.

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voluntary association of self-governing, ecumenical churches.¹⁵ The ICCC is an international, interracial, and intercultural association of churches. First Community's participation in the civil rights movement in Nashville align with the ecumenical ICCC and with bylaws of the church:

Article IV. Objectives. The First Community Church, as an outgrowth of the desire of a group of people, feeling the need thereof to unite their religious and financial means and forces, that they might through a centralized and inclusive effort offer the fullest possible privileges and opportunities to the whole community for the religious, the social, the educational and recreational good of all.¹⁶

Historically, First Community Church had a close association with the American Baptist Theological Seminary (ABT, historic district NR 6/14/2013). Founded in 1924, the ABT was a strong proponent of Christian education, racial equality, and leadership. Rev. Moses Williams, First Community pastor from 1950-1954, and Rev. Samuel Cameron, pastor serving after Rev. Williams, were ABT graduates.¹⁷ The seminary provided student pastors to First Community and other churches as needed. In 1957 and until 1961, one of the leaders of the Nashville Civil Rights Movement and pastor of First Community was ABT's C.T. Vivian. Vivian was at ABT from 1955 to 1960, receiving a Bachelor of Theology degree.¹⁸

C.T. Vivian was born in 1924 in Howard, Missouri and moved to Illinois as a child. Attending a desegregated school, after fights protecting himself and other students, he began to realize the power of helping others and how nonviolence was important.¹⁹ After graduating high school he attended Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois. After moving to Peoria, Illinois, he worked at Carver Community Center where he met his wife, Octavia Geans. It was in Peoria that Vivian first participated in a nonviolent civil rights protest when he joined the local campaign to desegregate restaurants in 1947. Rev. Vivian stated in 2011 that the nonviolent techniques used in Peoria were based on ideas from the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), an organization that played a pivotal role in the Civil Rights Movement.²⁰ In 1953 he became the vice-president of Peoria's NAACP chapter. While working at Foster and Gallagher, a mail order company, Vivian felt a call to the ministry. He intended to go to Colgate Rochester divinity school in New York but when he found that his pastor, who was on the board of ABT, had saved money for him to go to Nashville, he changed plans. He later stated:

¹⁵ International Council of Community Churches, <https://www.iccnw.org/about/>.

¹⁶ Tennessee Historical Commission Information Packet 2007. Available at the Tennessee Historical Commission, Nashville, TN.

¹⁷ Tennessee Historical Commission Information Packet 2007.

¹⁸ Carroll Van West, et al, "American Baptist Theological Seminary Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2012), Section 8.

¹⁹ Bobby Lovett, Wynn, Linda, and Eller, Caroline, *Profiles of African Americans in Tennessee* (Nashville: NP, 2021 second ed.), 294; Lydia Walker, *Challenge and Change: The Story of Civil Rights Activist C. T. Vivian* (Alpharetta, GA: Dreamkeeper Press, 1993), 10-12.

²⁰ Library of Congress, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Civil Rights History Project, transcript of interview with C.T. Vivian, conducted by Taylor Branch in Atlanta GA, 29 March 2011, 11.

https://www.loc.gov/resource/afc2010039text.afc2010039_crhp0006_Vivian_transcript/?st=pdf&pdfPage=11

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When I got the call to ministry, as I said, I wanted to go to Colgate Rochester but I was on my way to American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville because of how everything happened. So I go there and I've often thought if I had gone to Colgate Rochester, I would have missed my life because the connections and the attitudes and the actions of going to American Baptist made it possible for me to be involved in the movement. And if you notice that I ended with Martin King, but that even before that, in Nashville, Kelly Miller Smith was pastor of First Baptist Church and the natural leader of the movement, right--was a minister, right? When you look at the people, Bernard Lafayette and Jim Bevel and any number of others of us, John Lewis, we were all at the seminary.²¹

Like other Civil Rights leaders C.T. Vivian was a proponent of the beloved community. His move to Nashville and the ABT provided a way to work for making Nashville a beloved community. Encouraged by Martin Luther King, Rev. Smith, and Rev. James Lawson, the beloved community was a philosophy about "a community in which everyone is cared for, absent of poverty, hunger, and hate."²²

A veteran of protests from his time in Peoria, Vivian continued to protest while in Nashville. In 1956, he refused to move to the back of a Nashville Transit Authority bus, resulting in the bus driver getting all passengers off the bus and driving Vivian to the police station.²³ His actions "helped lead to the desegregation of the city's bus system in January 1957."²⁴ In 1957 he began his ministry at First Community Church, while also working as an editor for the Sunday School Publishing Board of the National Baptist Convention.²⁵ Rev. Vivian resigned from the editor position when the board refused to publish a long article he had written. In March of 1959 Rev. Vivian was installed as the second vice-president of the NCLC. Mrs. C. M. (Johnetta) Hayes, a member of First Community, was the assistant secretary, and Rev. Smith was first vice-president.²⁶ Always at the forefront of the city's civil rights activities, Rev. Smith helped organize the NCLC, pastored at First Baptist Capitol Hill, and was a board member of ABT. It was Rev. Smith who

²¹ Ibid, 29. https://www.loc.gov/resource/afc2010039text.afc2010039_crhp0006_Vivian_transcript/?st=pdf&pdfPage=29

²² David Halberstam, *The Children* (New York: Random House, 1998), 79; Barry Everett Lee, "The Nashville Civil Rights Movement: A Study of the Phenomenon of Intentional Leadership Development and its Consequences for Local Movements and the National Civil Rights Movement" (Dissertation, Georgia State University, 2010), 43, <https://doi.org/10.57709/1350732> ; Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Upon This Rock: The Black Church, Nonviolence, and the Civil Rights Movement" (PS: Political Science and Politics Volume 33, No. 2 June 2000), 171, <https://doi.org/10.2307/420886>; Harvard Graduate School of Education, "Achieving Kings Beloved Community," <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/19/01/achieving-kings-beloved-community#:~:text=Beloved%20community%3A%20a%20community%20in,was%2C%20in%20fact%2C%20possible>

²³ Lovett, *Profiles of African Americans in Tennessee*, 293.

²⁴ Bobby L. Lovett, *The Civil Rights Movement in Tennessee: A Narrative History* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2005), 126.

²⁵ Benjamin Houston, *The Nashville Way: Racial Etiquette and the Struggle for Social Justice in a Southern City* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 83; Lovett, *Profiles of African Americans in Tennessee*, 292. P. 83; C. T. Vivian, *It's in the Action: Memories of a Nonviolent Warrior*, 28. This was an interview with Martin Luther King that Vivian ended up self-publishing..

²⁶ *The Nashville Banner*, 3 March 1959, "Christian Council To Hear Shuttleworth," 6, <https://www.newspapers.com/>, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/603317964/?terms=Nashville%20Christian%20Leadership&match=1>

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invited community leaders including Rev. Vivian to attend James Lawson's workshops.²⁷ Rev. Vivian encouraged others to be part of the sit-ins. For example, for one protest he stated "We'll let our vacant pulpits be our testimony tomorrow morning..."²⁸

As one of the mentors to the student protestors, along with reverends Lawson and Smith, Rev. Vivian explained his philosophy about the nonviolent training in a 2011 interview:

But it seemed as though that if you didn't have a moral and spiritual understanding of what you were doing, there was the willingness to duck the deal, be willing to get beat, but only as a way of saying you're nonviolent. But you see, I don't use nonviolent by itself anymore. It has to be nonviolent direct action to me, right? You have to be acting nonviolently against the negative forces, and that you didn't try to get away from being beaten or get away from being hit by a car.²⁹

Rev. Vivian was an advocate of nonviolent action, but his speech did not always reflect this. He was also known as being "fiery", not afraid to speak his mind. Journalist David Halberstam noted:

If, of the older ministers who now began to counsel the younger activists, Kelly Miller Smith was the gentlest and most subtle figure, and Jim Lawson the most cerebral and intellectual, then there was no doubt who the most fiery was. It was the Rev. C.T. Vivian. Cordy Tindell Vivian, C.T. to everyone who knew him, always seemed wired, quick to explode. Like Jim Lawson he had not grown up in the South, being raised in small towns in Illinois, and like Jim Lawson he did not defer to white people, but Jim Lawson did not defer in a quiet, rather low-key way, and C.T. did not defer in an edgy way, which seemed to draw the sharpest of lines, and which seemed to invite additional confrontation. More than any of the other Nashville ministers, he seemed able to provoke the anger, both verbal and physical, of his adversaries. He was intense and outspoken: C.T., his wife, Octavia, once said in a masterpiece of understatement gave long answers to short questions.³⁰

One example of his outspokenness is found in his comments after the sit-ins, when students had been charged and the demonstrators' lawyers sought to remove Judge John Harris from the cases. Rev. Vivian noted that police had helped prevent more violent actions in the city after the bombing of Hattie Cotton School in 1957. He suggested that the police would also crack down on the peaceful demonstrations -- "If there is a bloodbath, it will be because the police want a bloodbath."³¹ In later interviews about the sit-ins Rev. Vivian remembered "The police knew they represented the city, the merchants, the thugs, more than

²⁷ John Lewis with Michael D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1998), 82.

²⁸ Quoted in *Ibid*, 101.

²⁹ Library of Congress, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Civil Rights History Project, 71. https://www.loc.gov/resource/afc2010039text.afc2010039_crhpf0006_Vivian_transcript/?st=pdf&pdfPage=71

³⁰ Halberstam, *The Children*, 56.

³¹ *The Nashville Tennessean*, "Judge Harris Ouster Sought", 1 March 1960, 2, <https://www.newspapers.com/>, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/111999041/?terms=first%20community%20church&match=1>

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they represented us.”³² He was just as vocal about his religious faith, which guided his actions. Welcoming students from Minnesota to First Community Church at Eastertime in 1960, he stated “Easter is the perfect time for them to get an understanding of what we’re doing here. The cross is the creative symbol of God in action. That’s what we’re trying to do-- take the creative action in obedience to God.”³³

Another example of his nonviolent yet very candid actions occurred after Mayor Ben West formed a biracial committee to report on potential solutions to the sit-ins. In addition to the sit-ins, a boycott of downtown stores by African Americans occurred, so merchants were worried. The committee’s recommendations came out on April 5, 1960. Their proposal was to have one lunch space for Whites and one lunch space for Blacks and Whites together. Rev. Vivian was one of many who signed a statement that disagreed with the committee’s solution. His later recollection of the incident shows his nature and his commitment to racial equality: “Vanilla and Oreo sections. I’m being facetious, but what I mean is the Committee recommended that stores should have two kinds of lunch counters: one for Whites only and one for Blacks and any Whites who might choose to join them. We at NCLC said, no thank you. So did the students--quickly.”³⁴

Objections to the committee’s recommendations were that it was only to take effect for ninety days and it still recommended segregation of Blacks and Whites at lunch counters. Rev. Vivian was even more vocal after the bombing of Nashville civil rights activist attorney Z. Alexander Looby’s house. A strategy meeting had been scheduled at Clark Memorial Methodist Church for the early morning of April 19, 1960, with reverends Vivian and Lawson and movement leaders in attendance.³⁵ Before the meeting started, Looby’s house was bombed. Rev. Vivian later recalled, “We knew we had to respond. Such an act demanded that the city fathers come to terms with the moral bankruptcy of existing policy—even if they didn’t countenance the bombing itself....We decided to mobilize the students at ABTS, Fisk, Meharry, and Tennessee A&I, as well as the community at large, for a march to city hall.”³⁶

The result was the march to the Davidson County Courthouse (NR 3/23/1987).³⁷ On April 19, 1960, Rev. Vivian, Diane Nash, and Bernard Lafayette were at the front of the march with about 3000 participants.³⁸ Vivian recalled the march as part organized and part spontaneous.³⁹ The marchers began at what was then Tennessee A and I (now Tennessee State University, historic district NR 6/14/1996) and walked most of the way in silence, with some singing at the beginning of the march. In an interview later in his life, Rev. Vivian

³² Hampton, *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s*, 59.

³³ *The Nashville Tennessean*, 17 April 1960, “Nashville Churches Invite Motorcading Students, 8, <https://www.newspapers.com>. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/112098968/>

³⁴ Vivian, *It’s in the Action: Memories of a Nonviolent Warrior*, 41.

³⁵ The church became Clark Memorial United Methodist in 1968. *One Hundred Twentieth Anniversary Celebration 1867-1987*, brochure at Clark Memorial

³⁶ Vivian, *It’s in the Action*, 43.

³⁷ Barry Lee Everett, “The Nashville Civil Rights Movement: A Study of the Phenomenon of Intentional Leadership Development and its Consequences for Local Movements and the National Civil Rights Movement”, 212 and 214; Vivian, *It’s in the Action: Memories of a Nonviolent Warrior*, 43.

³⁸ The number varies in current and contemporary accounts from 2-4000,

³⁹ Library of Congress, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Civil Rights History Project, 83. https://www.loc.gov/resource/afc2010039text.afc2010039_crhp0006_Vivian_transcript/?st=pdf&pdfPage=83

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“...remembered that it was a silent march with participants walking three abreast, an idea he borrowed from the silent anti-lynching marches of the first decade of the twentieth century.”⁴⁰

Rev. Vivian considered the bombing and subsequent march a turning point in the Civil Rights Movement and the “first big march of the movement.”⁴¹ At the courthouse, he started to read a prepared statement (Figure 8) about the mayor’s failure to lead. When the mayor objected, a brief argument ensued with Rev. Vivian shouting “Prove it, Mayor. Prove the statement is wrong!”⁴² At this point, Diane Nash intervened and asked the mayor if segregation was wrong, and if the lunch counters should be desegregated to which he responded yes. Continuing his discussion/argument with Mayor West, Rev. Vivian responded that the issue was bigger than just lunch counters. The ultimate result was that on May 10, 1960, Nashville became the first major southern city to desegregate several downtown lunch counters.⁴³ While Diane Nash is rightly credited with having Mayor West respond that segregation of the counters was wrong, Rev. C.T. Vivian should be also credited with being a march organizer and leader of the Nashville Student Movement. Nash recalled: “C.T. Vivian presented our position to Mayor Ben West on the steps of City Hall. He was an eloquent spokesperson. His fire was very much in evidence. He has a certain commitment in his personality that really pervades the things he does and says, and that was his role that day.”⁴⁴

The Nashville community’s efforts at desegregation did not end after downtown lunch counters were opened to African Americans. On April 20, 1960, the day after the march to the courthouse, Rev. Vivian in his role as an NCLC officer presided over a meeting “Against Practices of Racial Discrimination in Our Community” at the Fisk University Gym (NR 2/9/1978 as part of Fisk University Historic District). Work continued to desegregate the city’s theaters, schools, other public places, and to encourage voting. Participants of Nashville’s desegregation movement also moved on to other local and national Civil Rights Movement events including the Freedom Rides and March on Washington. Many sit-in participants were part of a 1960 Folkways Records titled *The Nashville Sit-in Story*. Conceived by folk musician, activist, and music director at Highlander Folk School (Highlander Folk School Library Building, NR 10/5/2022) Guy Carawan, it relates the sit-in story with songs and words. Rev. Vivian was the narrator on the record.⁴⁵ Reverends Vivian and Lawson were the speakers at a student mass meeting at Fisk University gym on January 29, 1961. Participants also viewed NBC’s *White Paper Sit-Ins* and CBS’s *Anatomy of a Sit-In*.⁴⁶ In addition to his pastoring and civil rights activities, Rev. Vivian, who was always interested in writing, was the editor of a

⁴⁰ Barry Lewalkere Everett, “The Nashville Civil Rights Movement: A Study of the Phenomenon of Intentional Leadership Development and its Consequences for Local Movements and the National Civil Rights Movement”, 214.

⁴¹ Hampton, *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s*, 65.

⁴² *The Nashville Tennessean*, 20 April 1960, “Integrate Counters-Mayor”, 1, <https://www.newspapers.com/>, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/112101198/>

⁴³ Tennessee Historical Commission marker text.

⁴⁴ Hampton, *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s*, 66.

⁴⁵ <https://folkways.si.edu/the-nashville-sit-in-story-songs-and-scenes-of-nashville-lunch-counter-desegregation-by-the-sit-in-participants/african-american-spoken-american-history-documentary-struggle-protest/album/smithsonian> and <https://folkways-media.si.edu/docs/folkways/artwork/FW05590.pdf>

⁴⁶ Rev. Kelly Miller Smith Collection, Special Collections Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN.

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short-lived weekly African American newspaper, the *Nashville Star News*. It began in March 1960 but filed for bankruptcy in August 1961.⁴⁷

First Baptist Capitol Hill and Clark Methodist are the churches most often cited for their roles in Nashville's Civil Rights Movement. However, like First Community, many other churches had ties to the NCLC and supported the nonviolent protests. Churches helped raise bail money, helped get attorneys, and supported the economic boycott that occurred along with the sit-ins.⁴⁸ As noted by Rev. Vivian: "Our efforts began to resonate in the larger Black community after the police started putting people in jail. Folks came forward to put up their houses as bail. A mass meeting started on a large scale. People filled the churches, whatever church we would be in—largely First Baptist but any number of the others of those six ministers that were originally in on things. Now the movement was cooking."⁴⁹

First Community Church continued to be involved in events through its members, including Rev. Vivian and Hayes. Monthly meetings of the Nashville NAACP were held at the church. Z. Alexander Looby spoke to the Nashville branch of the NAACP on the role of city government in 1961. Rev. J. Metz Rollins and Diane Nash were speakers at a NCLC sponsored mass meeting about the situation in Birmingham, Alabama in May of 1961 (Figure 9).⁵⁰ The meetings included the efforts of the NAACP Political Action Committee to register voters.⁵¹

After Rev. Vivian left Nashville, Rev. McCoy Ransom was the pastor at First Community in the early 1960s. He was a board member of the NCLC and participated in various community activities. For example, Race Relations Sunday is an ecumenical observance for churches across the US.⁵² In 1962 a theology professor from Vanderbilt University spoke at the church as part of their Race Relations Sunday meeting.⁵³ Rev. Lawson, then pastor at Scott Chapel Methodist Church in Shelbyville, Tennessee returned to Nashville to speak at First Community in April 1962 on Operation Open City and "Economic Withdrawal and the Battle for Equality."⁵⁴ Reverends Lawson, Metz, and Smith joined First Community's Rev. McCoy Ransom in

⁴⁷ *The Nashville Tennessean*, 12 January 1961, "Oldest Negro Paper Here Quits Publication", 19, <https://www.newspapers.com/https://www.newspapers.com/image/111563064/?terms=Nashville%20News-Star&match=1>; and *The Nashville Tennessean*, 6 August 1961, "Newspaper Files Bankrupt Plea", 54, <https://www.newspapers.com/https://www.newspapers.com/image/111563325/?terms=Nashville%20News-Star&match=1>.

One of three Black newspapers closed around this time. *The Nashville Globe* (Est 1906) and *The Nashville Commentator* (Est c. 1948) were the other two.

⁴⁸ Barry Lee Everett, "The Nashville Civil Rights Movement: A Study of the Phenomenon of Intentional Leadership Development and its Consequences for Local Movements and the National Civil Rights Movement", 171.

⁴⁹ Vivian, *It's in the Action: Memories of a Nonviolent Warrior*, 38.

⁵⁰ Lovett, *The Civil Rights Movement in Tennessee: A Narrative History*, 165.

⁵¹ *The Nashville Tennessean*, 24 October 1961, "Looby To Address NAACP Chapter", 2, <https://www.newspapers.com/https://www.newspapers.com/image/112895027/?terms=looby%20to%20address&match=1>

⁵² The Free Dictionary, Th<https://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Race+Relations+Sunday> Up until 1965 Race Relations Sunday was sponsored by the National Council of Churches, now individual denominations sponsor. It is held on the first Sunday closest to Lincoln's birthday.

⁵³ *The Nashville Tennessean*, 10 February 1962, "Midstate Religious News", 7, <https://www.newspapers.com/https://www.newspapers.com/image/111343774/>

⁵⁴ *The Nashville Tennessean*, 2 April 1962, "Lawson To Speak At NCLC Rally", 5, <https://www.newspapers.com/https://www.newspapers.com/image/111841355/>

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1962 for a mass meeting sponsored by the NCLC. A flyer for the meeting stated that the NCLC wanted “to make Nashville the beloved community.”⁵⁵ (Figure 10) The Rev. L.L. Dickerson, manager of Greenwood Cemetery, spoke on “The Church and Civil Rights” at First Community in 1964.⁵⁶

Noted earlier, Johnetta Hayes was a long-time congregation member and trustee of the church who was active in the Nashville Colored PTA, school desegregation, and the NAACP. She was a chair of the NAACP Nashville education committee, first vice-president and later the first woman president of the Nashville NAACP around 1959-1962, and a leader in many other organizations. Hayes helped organize adults who were walking children to schools during the 1957 desegregation of Nashville’s schools. She also accompanied parents and students on the first days of desegregated schools.⁵⁷ In 1962, when she was president of the Nashville branch of the NAACP, Hayes welcomed the director of the Middle Tennessee voter registration drive to speak at First Community.⁵⁸ In a 2003 interview Hayes stated:

When I became local president of the NAACP in 1959, we were in the midst of marches and sit-ins lead by mostly college students. Old and young were involved. Our pastor at the time, Rev. C.T. Vivian was very actively involved in the movement. He was Vice President of the student Non-Violent Movement Committee. We sat in at churches, theaters, restaurants, and businesses. John Lewis and Diane Nash led the students in the movement. They held meetings at local churches. First Community was one of the churches.

Rev. Vivian was one of the leaders in the desegregation of buses. He was among those attacked by the whites.... I became the first woman to serve the local NAACP....Rev. Vivian encouraged the entire church to be involved.⁵⁹

As well as the more prominent names from First Community, parishioners worked in the background of the Civil Rights Movement in Nashville and attended meetings and trainings. One example is Dorothy Johnson who attended workshops at Highlander Folk School. A photo shows her, Rosa Parks, and Johnetta Hayes’s daughter Elaine Gross.⁶⁰ Johnetta Hayes is also seen in a photo from Highlander. (Figures 11 and 12.) The connection to Highlander is also seen in two workshops held there in 1961. Due to the success of the sit-ins, “New Alliances in the South” focused on studying the Nashville and Atlanta sit-ins. Rev. Vivian and Hayes

⁵⁵ James M. Lawson, Jr. Papers, Box 21, Folder 24_047), Special Collections Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN.

⁵⁶ *The Nashville Tennessean*, 21 March 1964, “Dickerson To Talk On Rights, Church, 6, <https://www.newspapers.com/>, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/111871616/>

⁵⁷ Sonya Ramsey, “‘We will be ready whenever they are’: African American teachers’ responses to the Brown decision and public-school integration in Nashville, TN 1954-1966” Gale Literature Resource Center, originally published in *The Journal of African American History*, Winter-Spring 2005.

<https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?p=LitRC&u=googlescholar&id=GALE|A133608061&v=2.1&it=r&sid=LitRC&asid=3a826372>

⁵⁸ *The Nashville Tennessean*, 24 September 1962, “NAACP Plans Vote Talk Meet, 20, <https://www.newspapers.com/>, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/112929779/>

⁵⁹ Interview by Charles Wilson, Jr. Feb 2003. Courtesy of Ardana Fox.

⁶⁰ Photo from Ardana Fox.

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presented at the workshop.⁶¹ In April 1961 “New Frontiers for College Students” studied the sit-ins and discussed future options. Rev. Vivian spoke on “The Nature and Role of Non-Violence” and John Lewis assisted in the workshop.⁶² The church continued to welcome speakers. They placed newspaper ads or notices in the local paper in October 1972 and April 1973 inviting all to come hear speakers.⁶³

Near the end of his ministry at First Baptist, Rev. Vivian began a campaign to construct a modern church. Completed circa 1960, congregation member Jesse Palmer Walker designed the building and member Fred Valentine directed the construction of the church building. Jesse Palmer Walker (1901-1992) was born in Tennessee and was a trustee of First Community and Church. He was noted as a carpenter in the 1930 census, a fireman in the 1940 census, and as a mechanical helper in the 1950 census.⁶⁴ Frederick Valentine (1888-1988) was born in Mississippi near Natchez. After hearing Booker T. Washington talk, Valentine enrolled at Tuskegee Institute in 1906. After graduating he moved to Georgia and learned the bricklaying trade. He moved to Nashville in 1925, bought a home, and rebuilt it himself after a fire.⁶⁵ Funeral visitation services for both Walker and Valentine were held at First Community Church. Walker was interred at Hills of Calvary Cemetery and Palmer at Greenwood Cemetery.⁶⁶ (Figure 13)

First Community Church sponsored a concert by J. Robert Bradley, at the Tennessee War Memorial (NR 11/16/2017) on November 6, 1959. The proceeds from the event were to go to the building program for the church.⁶⁷ Memphis native Bradley was known world-wide for his rich baritone, especially as he sang arias and spirituals.⁶⁸ Rev. Vivian wrote an editorial in *The Tennessean* that same month stating that “We are presently building a church. We have had the unusual good fortune to have the men of the church do three-fourths of the building.”⁶⁹ He also noted that all but two of the men were novices. The new church building

⁶¹ “Workshop on New Alliances in the South” agenda, <https://teva.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/highlander/id/1395>
Tennessee Virtual Archive

⁶² Lee, 221; “New Frontiers for College Students” agenda, Civil Rights Movement Archive,
https://www.crmvet.org/docs/610407_highlander_workshop.pdf

⁶³ *The Tennessean*, 28 October 1972, ad for speaker at First Community, 7, <https://www.newspapers.com/>
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/112038534/?terms=first%20community%20church&match=1>; *The Tennessean*, 28 April 1973, “Midstate Religion News”, 6, <https://www.newspapers.com/>
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/111693399/?terms=first%20community%20church&match=1>

⁶⁴ Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/>,

⁶⁵ *The Tennessean*, 10 June 1988, “Just another day to work in the garden except,” <https://www.newspapers.com/>,
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/112459726/?terms=fred%20valentine&match=1>

⁶⁶ *The Tennessean*, 13 December 1988, Death Notice for Fred Valentine, <https://www.newspapers.com/>,
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/112965824/?terms=fred%20valentine&match=1>; *The Tennessean*, Death Notice for Jesse Palmer Walker, 30 May 1992,
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/112723500/?terms=Jesse%20Palmer%20Walker%20death%20notice&match=1>

⁶⁷ *The Tennessean*, 6 November 1959, “Bradley Concert Set”, 10.
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/111612691/?terms=%22first%20community%20church%22%20&match=1>

⁶⁸ For more information on Bradley see *Profiles of African Americans in Tennessee*.
<https://digitalscholarship.tnstate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1059&context=conference-on-african-american-history-and-culture>

⁶⁹ *The Tennessean*, 19 November 1959, “Religion in Life: Tools for Building Lives,” 21.
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/111555005/?terms=%22first%20community%20church%22%20&match=1>

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encapsulated the 1940 building in brick and concrete block. In a 2011 interview Rev. Vivian stated “I had left Nashville to go to Chattanooga and I was pastoring in Chattanooga. I'd built a church in Nashville—when I went to Chattanooga, I wanted to build a church as well, because the church we had was nice, but it wasn't what I wanted.”⁷⁰

Around the same time he was moving to Chattanooga, Rev. Vivian went on the second round of the Freedom Rides, the organization of which was taken up by the Nashville students.⁷¹ In 1961, Rev. Vivian and his family were in Chattanooga where he was pastor at the Cosmopolitan Community Church. Before he left Nashville, Rev. Smith, as president of the NCLC, announced that there would be a “recognition program” for Rev. Vivian. The announcement noted “We are cognizant of the many and various ways the Rev. Mr. Vivian has contributed to the planning and successes of the projects of the Non-Violent Movement.”⁷² (Figure 14.)

In 1962 Rev. Vivian became an advocate of kneel-ins as a different tactic to protest segregation. Participants would attend segregated churches and if asked to leave would go outside and kneel and pray.⁷³ Rev. Vivian was in Chattanooga until 1963 when he went to work in Atlanta. In an *Ebony Magazine* article “The Men Behind Martin Luther King” Vivian is mentioned as giving up his position in Chattanooga to work as the Director of Affiliates for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).⁷⁴ He is mentioned as being on the first Freedom Ride to Jackson, MS and as being among the first clergymen arrested for protesting segregation. Rev. King called Rev. Vivian “the greatest preacher to ever live.”⁷⁵ Rev. Vivian continued to have a major impact on the Civil Rights Movement throughout his life. Rev. James Lawson speaking about the Nashville Student Movement is quoted in *The Civil Rights Movement in Tennessee*: “The Nashville movement did, of course, affect the entire movement in the country and in the South. Martin King called our movement the model movement up to that time. Eventually, any number of us served the SCLC staff, including C.T. Vivian, Diane Nash, Jim Bevel, and Bernard Lafayette....So the Nashville scene perhaps more than any single scene, with the possible exception of Montgomery in 1955-56, became ... the most significant movement in terms of its ongoing effect across the country”.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ Library of Congress, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Civil Rights History Project https://www.loc.gov/resource/afc2010039text.afc2010039_crhp0006_Vivian_transcript/?st=pdf&pdfPage=156, page 156 of transcript.

⁷¹ Walker, 37-39.

⁷² Kelly Miller Smith Papers, Vanderbilt University, Box 1. Identifier MSS.0400.

⁷³ Lovett, *The Civil Rights Movement in Tennessee: A Narrative History*. 177. Lovett states that Vivian originated the idea but the first kneel-ins occurred in Atlanta and Memphis 1960. See Kneel-Ins and the Last Segregated Hour at https://www.huffpost.com/entry/kneel-in-and-the-last-segregated-hour_b_2199312

⁷⁴ *Ebony Magazine*, June 1965, “The Men Behind Martin Luther King, 166-8, Google Books, <https://books.google.com/books?id=Nd4DAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA168&dq=c.+t.+vivian&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiaocTSpp38AhWAQzABHS3qB3gQuwV6BAgHEAY#v=onepage&q=c.%20t.%20vivian&f=false>

⁷⁵ *USA Today*, “C.T. Vivian was a giant in the civil rights movement, 5 things you may not have known about him”, 22 July 2020, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/07/22/what-to-know-about-civil-rights-leader-ct-vivian/5472850002/>

⁷⁶ Lovett, *The Civil Rights Movement in Tennessee: A Narrative History*, 155.

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Rev. Vivian participated in the struggles in Birmingham and Selma (where he was beaten by Sheriff Jim Clark), and was the Tennessee chairman for the March on Washington.⁷⁷ Around 1965-1966, he formed a program in Alabama called VISION to help educate African Americans. This later became the U. S. Department of Education's Upward Bound program.⁷⁸ In 1966 he was in Chicago as the director of the Urban Training Center for the Christian Mission. Despite staying very active in the Civil Rights Movement throughout his life, Rev. Vivian wrote about the failure of the movement in his 1970 book *Black Power and the American Myth*. If the strategic goals of the Civil Rights Movement were to create a new condition in the African American community, bring the African American middle class into the Movement, change the values of the U. S., "a revolution was necessary"⁷⁹ and this included nonviolent revolution, and there needed to be mass support. He believed that myths about the U. S. lead to the failure. These myths were that Americans will do what is right, legislation leads to justice, America is an open society, and an ethic of love forms the conscience. Rev. Vivian considered the nonviolent movement ending and new strategies emerging.

Rev. Vivian returned to Nashville several times, usually speaking about civil rights. Visits included speaking at First Community Church's 40th anniversary celebration in July 1972 and the 85th anniversary celebration in August 2017. At the 40th anniversary, when he was then the director of the SCLC's Operation Breadbasket, Rev. Vivian spoke of the importance of the Black man as the "Joseph of America."⁸⁰ According to Dr. Forrest E. Harris, president of American Baptist College, "Upon Dr. Vivian's visits to Nashville, we would often drive to First Community Church and sit outside the church as he would reminisce fond memories of his pastorate and social justice work while in Nashville."⁸¹ Although he was the pastor at First Community, Rev. Vivian was also a member of the congregation of Spruce Street Baptist Church during his time in Nashville.⁸² While he also visited the Spruce Street church, and spoke at different meetings in Nashville, First Community Church is the place where he is known to have actively encouraged participation in the city's civil rights actions. Other places where he lived are not extant. This is the property associated with his productive life in Nashville.

Among his many other activities after leaving Nashville, Rev. Vivian founded the Black Action Strategies Center in 1977 and the C.T. Vivian Leadership Institute in 2008. Vivian returned to Atlanta in 1977. He awarded the Congressional Medal of Freedom in 2013.⁸³ Rev. Vivian died in 2020 on the same day as Civil rights leader and colleague John Lewis.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 183.

⁷⁸ Walker, x; *USA Today*, "C.T. Vivian was a giant in the civil rights movement, 5 things you may not have known about him".

⁷⁹ C. T. Vivian, *Black Power and the American Myth*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2020. First published by Fortress Press 1970), 39

⁸⁰ *The Tennessean*, 17 July 1972, "Blacks Hold Key to Saving America, Activist Says", 6, <https://www.newspapers.com>, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/112028909/?terms=first%20community%20church&match=1> Operation breadbasket promoted boycotting white owned businesses that refused to work with blacks.

⁸¹ Personal communication from Rev. Ella Clay.

⁸² Linda Wynn, personal communication.

⁸³ Black Past, <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/vivian-cordy-tindell-c-t-1924/> and *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, "In Memoriam: Cordy Tindell Vivian (1924-2020)" <https://www.jbhe.com/2020/07/in-memoriam-cordy-tindell-vivian-1924-2020/>

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):		Primary location of additional data:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	<input type="checkbox"/>	State Historic Preservation Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously listed in the National Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other State agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously determined eligible by the National Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Federal agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	designated a National Historic Landmark	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local government
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	<input type="checkbox"/>	University
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Name of repository: Metro Historical Commission	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):			

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.17 acres **USGS Quadrangle** Nashville West

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (These coordinates should correspond to the corners of the property boundary. Add additional coordinates if necessary. Enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Datum if other than WGS84:

- A. 86.8090355°W 36.1721232°N NW
- B. 86.8088711°W 36.1721532°N NE
- C. 86.8089421°W 36.1717201°N SW
- D. 86.8087737°W 36.1717469°N SE

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County Assessor of Property defines the boundary as:

Map & Parcel: 081 15 0 173.00

Legal Description: LOT 21 J M & T J & G W HARDING ADDN

The 1936 deed for the property also says the property is on lot 21 of the JM and GW Harding addition. This is the current and historic boundary of the church.

Boundary Justification

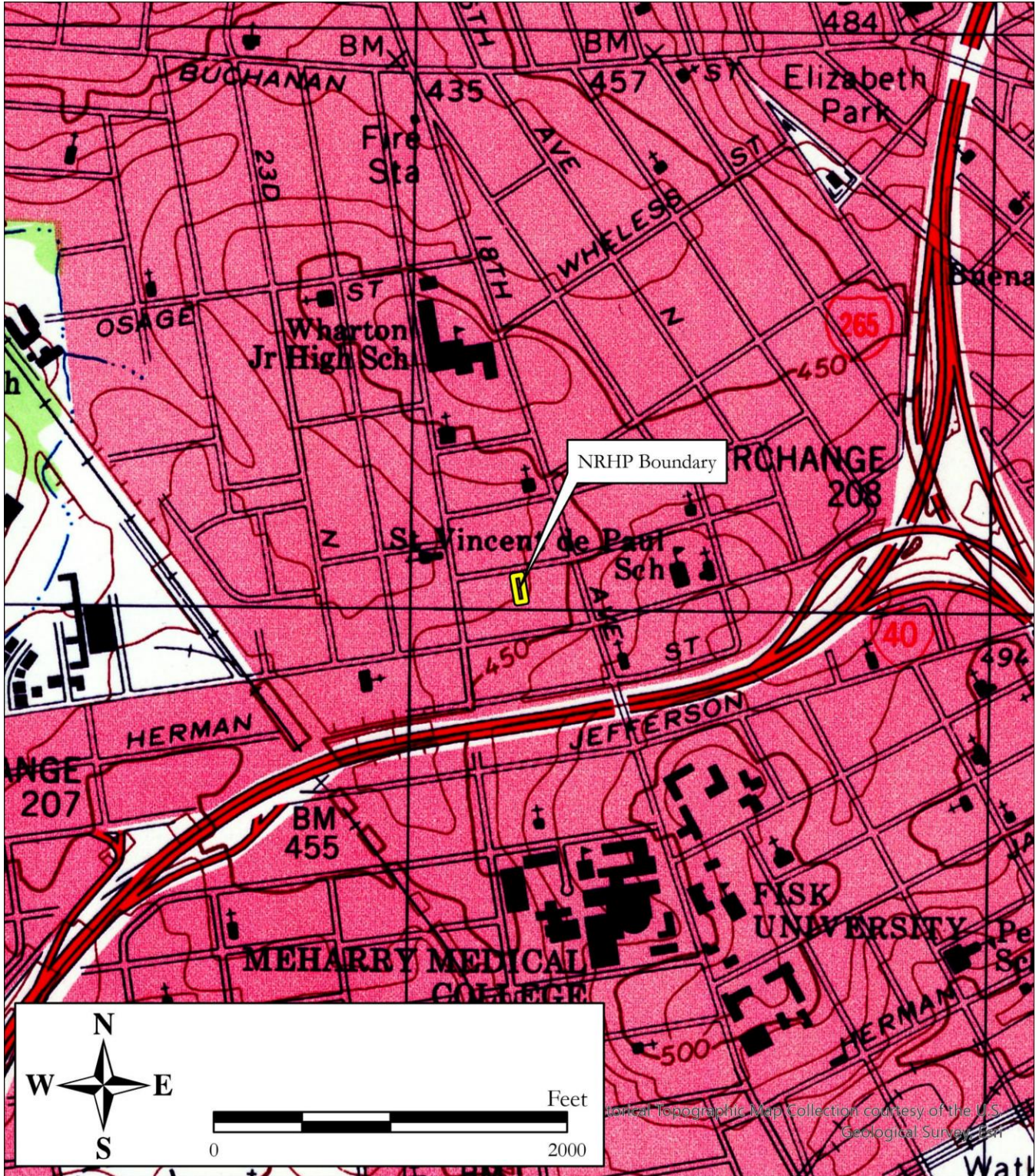
The boundary includes the parcel on which the church sits. It is bounded by other parcels, an alley, and Knowles Street. It is the legal description of the property during the period of significance and encompasses the historically significant resources.

.

First Community Church
Name of Property

Davidson County TN
County and State

USGS Topographic Map



First Community Church
Name of Property

Davidson County TN
County and State

Boundary Map



Boundary Map from ESRI 2022. Map created by Richard Grubb and Associates.

First Community Church
Name of Property

Davidson County TN
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

Name Claudette Stager

Organization Metro Historical Commission

Street & Number 3000 Granny White Pike Date _____

City or Town Nashville Telephone 615/862-7970

E-mail Claudette.stager@nashville.gov State TN Zip Code 37204

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Photographs** (refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints. Photos should be submitted separately in a JPEG or TIFF format. Do not embed these photographs into the form)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. can be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps. They can also be embedded in the Section 7 or 8 narratives)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Section number Supplemental Images Page 27

First Community Church

Name of Property

Davidson County TN

County and State

The Civil Rights Movement in Nashville,
Tennessee, 1942-1969

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Photo Log

Name of property: First Community Church
City or vicinity: Nashville
County: Davidson State: Tennessee
Photographer: Claudette Stager and Caroline Eller
Date Photographed: November 1, 2022 and November 2023

- 1 of 20. North façade, facing south.
- 2 of 20. Cornerstone, facing south.
- 3 of 20. North façade and east elevation, facing southwest,
- 4 of 20. East elevation showing original building (foreground) and extension (back), facing southwest.
- 5 of 20. South (rear) elevation, facing north.
- 6 of 20. West elevation, facing southeast.
- 7 of 20. West elevation, facing northeast.
- 8 of 20. Doors to church in background, sanctuary doors in foreground, looking north.
- 9 of 20. Sanctuary, facing west.
- 10 of 20. Sanctuary, facing west.
- 11 of 20. Sanctuary, facing south.
- 12 of 20. Sanctuary, facing northeast. 13 of 20. Typical window, facing east.
- 14 of 20. First floor classroom, facing southeast.
- 15 of 20. First floor classroom, facing southwest.
- 16 of 20. Entry to extension, facing south.
- 17 of 20. Entry to extension, showing dedication plaque to the Vivian, facing south.
- 18 of 20. Standing at extension, staircase to second floor classrooms, facing east.
- 19 of 20. Second Floor classroom, facing east.
- 20 of 20. Second Floor classroom, facing west.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

First Community Church

Name of Property

Davidson County TN

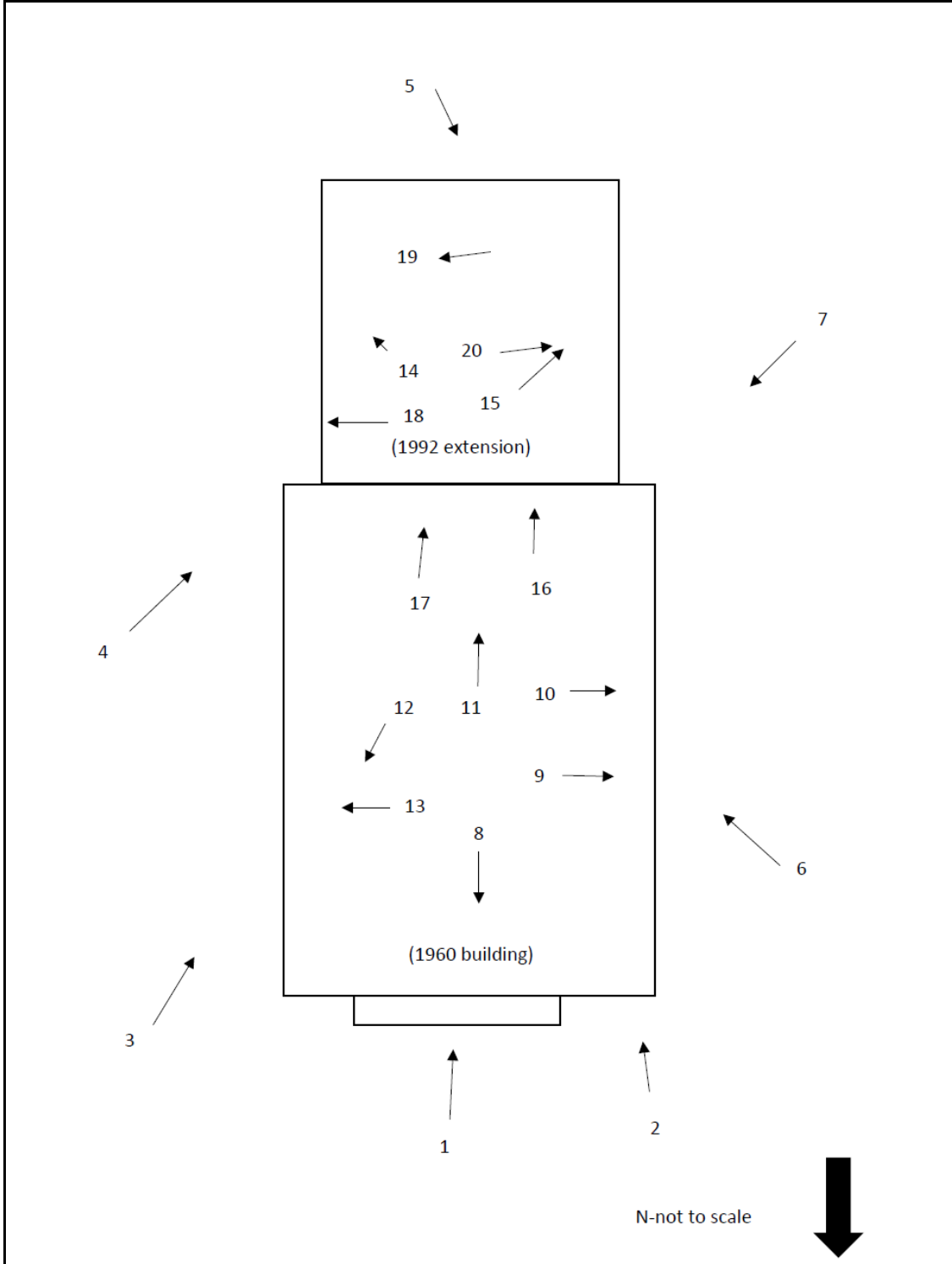
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Site Plan with Photos Keyed



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Supplemental Images



Figure 1. First Community Church circa 1956. Photo courtesy of Ardana Foxx, church historian.



Figure 2. First Community Church prior to 1960. Photo courtesy of Ardana Foxx

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First Community Church

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Figure 3. First Community Church circa 1960. Photo courtesy of Ardana Foxx.

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Continuation Sheet

Section number Supplemental Images Page 31

First Community Church
Name of Property
Davidson County TN
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The Civil Rights Movement in Nashville,
Tennessee, 1942-1969
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

NUMBER 73645 RECORDED JULY 7, 1936. W.Y.HORTON ET ALS., TO THE TRUSTEES 501
OF THE FIRST INDEPENDENT AFRICAN METHODIST
954 COMMUNITY CHURCH.

For and in consideration of the sum of ONE (\$1.00) DOLLAR, AND OTHER GOOD AND VALUABLE CONSIDERATIONS HEREINAFTER SET FORTH,

WE, W.Y.HORTON, PORTER WYNN, CHARLES H. BURTON, WILLIAM WOODARD, JAMES NIXON CRUTCHER, PALMER WALKER AND SALLIE LILLARD, ALL OF NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, HAVE THIS DAY BARGAINED AND SOLD AND DO HEREBY TRANSFER AND CONVEY TO PALMER WALKER, SALLIE LILLARD, CHARLIE BURTON, CHARLIE LESLIE, LIZZIE DUNCAN, J.N.CRUTCHER, AND O.L.WHITTAKER, TRUSTEES, AND W.Y.HORTON, PASTOR, (ALL THE ABOVE BEING TRUSTEES AND PASTOR, RESPECTIVELY,) OF THE FIRST INDEPENDENT AFRICAN METHODIST COMMUNITY CHURCH, A TENNESSEE CORPORATION, AND TO THEIR SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNS FOREVER, A CERTAIN TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND IN DAVIDSON COUNTY, STATE OF TENNESSEE, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS, TO WIT:

LOT NO.21 ON THE MAP OF J.M., T.J., AND G.W.HARDING'S ADDITION TO NASHVILLE, AS OF RECORD IN BOOK 21, PAGE 80, R.O.D.C., TENNESSEE.

SAID LOT NO.21 FRONTS 50 FEET ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THOMPSON STREET AND RUNS BACK BETWEEN PARALLEL LINES 150 FEET TO AN ALLEY IN THE REAR, AND BEING THE SAME PROPERTY HERETOFORE CONVEYED TO W.Y.HORTON AND OTHERS BY DEED FROM ROBERT LUSK AND WIFE, OF RECORD IN BOOK _____ PAGE _____, R.O.D.C., TENNESSEE.

SAID LOT IS ENCMBERED BY A LIEN RETAINED IN THE ABOVE MENTIONED DEED FROM ROBERT LUSK AND WIFE TO SECURE THE PAYMENT OF THIRTY-SIX (36) MONTHLY NOTES DATED MAY 15, 1936, FOR TEN DOLLARS (\$10.00) EACH WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE LAST OR 26TH NOTE, WHICH IS FOR FIFTEEN DOLLARS (\$15.00). SAID NOTES ARE SIGNED BY THE SAID W.Y.HORTON AND OTHERS, AND ARE PAYABLE TO ROBERT LUSK MONTHLY BEGINNING JUNE 15, 1936, AND THE SAID GRANTEEES HEREIN NAMED, NAMELY THE TRUSTEES AND PASTOR OF THE FIRST INDEPENDENT AFRICAN METHODIST COMMUNITY CHURCH, HEREBY ASSUME AND AGREE TO PAY ALL OF SAID NOTES.

To Have and to Hold the said tract or parcel of land, with the appurtenances, estate, title and interest thereto belonging to the said J.N.CRUTCHER, AND O.L.WHITTAKER, TRUSTEES, & W.Y.HORTON, PASTOR, THEIR heirs and assigns, forever, and WE, PALMER WALKER, SALLIE LILLARD, CHARLIE BURTON, CHARLIE LESLIE, LIZZIE DUNCAN, J.N.CRUTCHER, AND O.L.WHITTAKER, TRUSTEES, & W.Y.HORTON, PASTOR, THEIR heirs and assigns, forever, and WE, LIZZIE DUNCAN, J.N.CRUTCHER, AND O.L.WHITTAKER AND W.Y.HORTON, PASTOR, HEREBY ASSUME AND AGREE TO PAY ALL OF SAID NOTES, have a good right to convey it, and the same is unincumbered, EXCEPT BY TAXES FOR 1936 WHICH GRANTEEES ASSUME.

And WE, _____ do further covenant and bind OURSELVES, OUR heirs and representatives, to warrant and forever defend the title to said land to the said PALMER WALKER, SALLIE LILLARD, CHARLIE BURTON, CHARLIE LESLIE, LIZZIE DUNCAN, J.N.CRUTCHER, O.L.WHITTAKER, AND W.Y.HORTON, PASTOR, THEIR heirs and assigns, against the lawful claims of all persons whomsoever.

Witness OUR hand, S this 27 day of MAY, 1936.
HIS MARK
Witness: CHARLES LESLIE JAMES N. CRUTCHER PALMER WALKER
MARK CHAS.H. BURTON SALLIE LILLARD
PORTER WYNN
WILLIAM WOODARD W.Y.HORTON

STATE OF TENNESSEE, DAVIDSON COUNTY.
Personally appeared before me, JESSE W.SKILLERN a Notary Public in and for said County and State, the within-named W.Y.HORTON, PORTER WYNN, CHARLES H.BURTON, WILLIAM WOODARD, JAMES NIXON CRUTCHER, PALMER WALKER AND SALLIE LILLARD, the bargainer, with whom I am personally acquainted, and who acknowledged that THEY executed the within instrument for the purposes therein contained.
And _____ wife of the said _____ having appeared before me privately and apart from _____ the said _____ acknowledged the execution of the said instrument to have been done by _____ freely, voluntarily, and understandingly, without compulsion or constraint from _____ said husband.
Witness my hand and official seal at Nashville, Tennessee, this 27 day of MAY, 1936.
Commission Expires 11TH day of JULY, 1938. (Seal) JESSE W.SKILLERN, Notary Public.
U.S.R.S. \$0.00.
RECD JULY 6, 1936 AT 11:08 A.M.

Figure 4. Page 1. Deed. Metro Nashville Register of Deeds

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

First Community Church
Name of Property
Davidson County TN
County and State
The Civil Rights Movement in Nashville, Tennessee, 1942-1969
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Supplemental Images Page 32

NUMBER 73645 RECORDED JULY 7, 1936. W.Y.HORTON ET ALS., TO THE TRUSTEES 501
 OF THE FIRST INDEPENDENT AFRICAN METHODIST
 954 COMMUNITY CHURCH.

For and in consideration of the sum of ONE (\$1.00) DOLLAR, AND OTHER GOOD AND VALUABLE CONSIDERATIONS HEREINAFTER SET FORTH,

WE, W.Y.HORTON, PORTER WYNN, CHARLES H. BURTON, WILLIAM WOODARD, JAMES NIXON CRUTCHER, PALMER WALKER AND SALLIE LILLARD, ALL OF NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, HAVE THIS DAY BARGAINED AND SOLD AND DO HEREBY TRANSFER AND CONVEY TO PALMER WALKER, SALLIE LILLARD, CHARLIE BURTON, CHARLIE LESLIE, LIZZIE DUNCAN, J.N.CRUTCHER, AND O.L.WHITIAKER, TRUSTEES, AND W.Y.HORTON, PASTOR, (ALL THE ABOVE BEING TRUSTEES AND PASTOR, RESPECTIVELY,) OF THE FIRST INDEPENDENT AFRICAN METHODIST COMMUNITY CHURCH, A TENNESSEE CORPORATION, AND TO THEIR SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNS FOREVER, A CERTAIN TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND IN DAVIDSON COUNTY, STATE OF TENNESSEE, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS, TO WIT:

LOT NO.21 ON THE MAP OF J.M., T.J., AND G.W.HARDING'S ADDITION TO NASHVILLE, AS OF RECORD IN BOOK 21, PAGE 80, R.O.D.C., TENNESSEE.

SAID LOT NO.21 FRONTS 50 FEET ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THOMPSON STREET AND RUNS BACK BETWEEN PARALLEL LINES 150 FEET TO AN ALLEY IN THE REAR, AND BEING THE SAME PROPERTY HERETOFORE CONVEYED TO W.Y.HORTON AND OTHERS BY DEED FROM ROBERT LUSK AND WIFE, OF RECORD IN BOOK ____, PAGE ____, R.O.D.C., TENNESSEE.

Figure 4. Page 2. Deed. Metro Nashville Register of Deeds

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First Community Church
Name of Property
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

<p>4902 Murphy Saml J 4904 Keele Harold D 4905 West Nashville Nazarene Church 4907 McElya Edwin E 4908 Denning Wm 4909 Vacant 4911 McKenzie Kenneth M 4912 Burns Geo E 50th av N intersects 5001 Housley Cath Mrs 5003 Givens Geo W 5009 Walker Adolphus 5009 1/2 Howell Jennie Mrs 5011 Vacant 5011 1/2 Lampley Henry J 51st av N intersects 5100 Moss Robt T 5102 Kelly Wm L 5104 Willis Daisy M Mrs 5106 Kelly Ollie B 5108a Page Jesse B 5108b Paschall Denis W 5108c Priest John T 5110 Benzenhafer John C 5112 McKirby Maurice C 52d av N intersects (ss not open) 5200 Stearns Lillie Mrs Hood Walter L rear Smith G Eug 5201 Burris Curtis A 5202 Moore Tipton E Hester Arline Mrs 5204 Sanders Wm D 5205 Sullivan Hershel B 5206 Lampley Jas W 5207 McKenzie Frank C 5208 Walker J Frank 5209 Warner Kizer B 5210 Hinson Jack P 5211 Jones Thelma Mrs 5213 Johnson Fred M 5215 Greer Volia Campbell Fount T 53d av N intersects 5301 Burnett John W gro 5302 Smith Paul E 5303 Hatley Geo L 5304 Foster Walter R 5305 Perry Thos A 5306 Cope Eunice L Mrs rear Goodwin Noble B 5307 Myers Cornelius 5308 Sprinkler G Franklin McKenzie Wallace 5309 Kirchofer Arth E 5310 Crunk John C 5311 Austin Arth R 5312 Pomeroy Lizzie P Mrs 5313 Roberts Lelia E Mrs 5314 Bessire Fred L 54th av N intersects 5400 Thompson Leonard 5401 Merville Oscar H 5402a Burnett C Howard 5402b Brown Walter T 5403a Barbee G Franklin 5403b Forsythe Eliz Mrs Lee Mabel Mrs 5406 Davids Chas G 5407 Hardcastle John F 5409 Hardcastle Ira I 5410 Edwards Jesse M</p>	<p>5 Smith Wash (c) 6 Vacant 7 Vacant 8 Vacant 9 Hughes Douglas (c) 10 Chanclor Rudolph (c) 11 Chanclor Harold (c) 12 Love Jas B (c) 13 Miller Saml (c) 14 Vacant 15 Nixon Jas (c) 16 Woodrow Ernest (c) 17 Hamlett Jas (c) 18 Hill Azalee (c) 19 Burrell John (c) TERRACE BLVD—From 308 33d av N north beyond Theresa, east of NC&StLRR 106 Cleveland Wm W St Francis begins 201 Joscelyn Berthold H 203 Joscelyn Earl W Theresa begins McAdoo av begins TERRACE PLACE—From 116 20th av S west to 21st av S 2000 Mertens Constantin Mertens Louis C mus tchr 2001 Palmer Hal L 2002 Hanson Minnie W Mrs 2003 Hailey John T 2004 Kuhn Kath W Mrs 2005 McGovern Philip Carlton John J contr 2006 Nance Milton S 2007 Edgar Emma Mrs 2008 Bottoms L Ernest 2009 Rand McNally & Co publr 2010 Lee Sarah Mrs 2012a Ratterman Mary B Nolan Wm L jr 2012b Love Van G 2013 Cunningham E Warren 2014 Yowell Jas A 2014b Bloomstein Wm Wall Eliz L mus tchr 2015 Smith Alice B Mrs 2016 Phi Kappa Psi Fraternity House 2017 Myers J Vernon 21st av S intersects TEXAS—From Wichita av south, 2 west of N 1st Everglade ends (not open) THERESA—From 200 Terrace blvd west to NC&StLry 3511 Ramsey Lawrence R NC&StLry THOMAS—From 14 Garden north to North Hill 138 Mitchell Hattie D (c) 140 Reid Thelma S (c) 166 Huddleston Chas L (c) 168 Huddleston Louis (c) 1244 Vacant Shepherd ends 1246 Harris Erastus (c) 1252 Ward Fannie (c)</p>	<p>1013A Treon John A 1015A Stinson Felix T 1019A Simmons Danl R Gallatin rd intersects THOMPSON—From 1500 16th av N west to 21st av N 1600 Pankey L B (c) 1601 Chaney Theo 1602 Suttle Mary E (c) 1602b Herron Saml (c) 1602 1/2 Strawther Wm (c) 1603 Merritt Cordell (c) 1604 Miller Ida (c) 1604 1/2 Thompson Susie (c) 1605 Thacker Chas (c) 1606 Mason Dennis (c) 1607 Epps Jas (c) 1608 Hurt Adelle (c) 1609 Overton Nanie (c) 1610 Lehning Emile C E 1611 Hawkins Roxie (c) 1611 1/2 Whatley Loucis (c) 1612 Koch Wm F 1613 Barr Henry (c) 1614 Haynes Andrew (c) 1615 Bailey & Davis (c) gros 17th av N intersects 1702 Whittemore Mary (c) 1704 Betty Oliver (c) 1704 1/2 Collier Pearl (c) 1706 McLaurine Zannie (c) 1706b Ellison Ella (c) 1707 Stanley Whitman P (c) 1708 Crawford Saml (c) 1709 Segine Mattie (c) 1710 Ray Henry R (c) 1711 Crawford Geo (c) 1712 Frierson Thos A (c) 1713 Miller Oliver T (c) 1714a Winsett Jos (c) 1714b Pegram Henry (c) 1715 Adkinson Jerly J (c) 1716 Mayberry Mamie (c) 1717 McClain Annie (c) 1717b Gustus Alice (c) 1719 Jackson Maggie (c) 1720 Statton Robt (c) 1721 Howard David H (c) 1722 Davis Mattie (c) 1724 Marshall Early (c) 1725 Hawkins Cornelia (c) 1726 Sivley Geo (c) 1727 Vacant 1729 Dawson Lemuel T (c) 1730 DeBerry Jos L (c) 1731 Smith Jos (c) 1734 Jordan Tommie (c) 1736 Green Willard Y (c) 18th av N intersects 1801 Polite Annie (c) 1802 Henry John S (c) 1804 Jordan Benj (c) 1806 Allen Eug (c) 1808 Steele Clarence (c) 1809 Jordan Coy (c) 1810 Childs Alton (c) 1812 Hill Pearl (c) 1813 Sharpe Saml (c) 1814 Minnis Jas G (c) 1816 Moreland Bennie T (c) 1817 Hall Thos A (c) 1818 Brown Sarah A (c)</p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY</p>
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Figure 5. US City directories from Ancestry.com. Nashville 1940. Showing no building at 1815 Knowles.

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<p>837 Walker Wm L © 1005 Nelson Leonard © 1007 Williams L Vernon 1009 Lund Avert C 1011 Carlson David 1013ΔTreon John A 1015ΔStinson Felix T 1019ΔWakelin Chas T Gallatin rd intersects THOMPSON—From 1500 16th av N west to 21st av N 1600 Pankey L B (c) 1601ΔChaney Theo 1602ΔSuttle Mary E (c) 1602b Herron Saml (c) 1603½ Strawther Wm (c) 1603ΔMerritt Cordell (c) 1604 Miller Ida (c) 1604½ Thompson Susie (c) 1605 Thacker Chas (c) 1606ΔMason Dennis (c) 1607ΔEpps Jas (c) © 1608 Hurr Adelle (c) © 1609ΔOverton Nanie (c) © 1610ΔLehning Emile C E © 1611 Hawkins Roxie (c) © 1611½ Whately Loucis (c) 1612 Koch Wm F 1613 Barr Henry (c) © 1614 Haynes Andrew (c) 1615 Bailey & Davis (c) gros 17th av N intersects 1702ΔWhittemore Mary (c) © 1704 Vacant 1704½ Collier Pearl (c) 1706 McLaurin Zannie (c) 1706b Gray Louise (c) 1707ΔStanley Whitman P (c) 1708 Crawford Saml (c) 1709 Segine Mattie (c) 1710ΔRay Henry R (c) 1711 Crawford Geo (c) © 1712ΔFrierson Thos A (c) © 1713ΔMiller Oliver T (c) © 1714a Winsett Jos (c) © 1714b Pegram Henry (c) 1715 Dixon Jas (c) 1716ΔMayberry Mamie (c) © 1717 McClain Annie (c) 1717b Gustus Alice (c) 1719 Jackson General (c) 1720ΔLester Jas (c) © 1721ΔGregory Saml (c) © 1722ΔDavis Mattie (c) © 1724ΔMarshall Early (c) 1725ΔHawkins Cornelia (c) © 1726 Sivley Geo (c) © 1727ΔHadley Mitchell (c) 1729ΔDawson Lemuel T (c) © 1730ΔDeBerry Jos L (c) 1731 Brown Sallie (c) 1734ΔPage Dessie D (c) 1736 Dobson John (c) 18th av N intersects 1801 White David (c) 1802 Henry John S (c) 1804ΔJordan Benj (c) © 1806ΔAllen Eug (c) © 1808 Steele Clarence (c) © 1809 Jordan Coy (c) © 1810 Ellis Louis (c) 1812ΔHill Pearl (c) © 1813ΔSharpe Saml (c) 1814 Minnis Jas G (c) © 1815 Community Meth Church (c) 1816 Moreland Bennie T (c) © 1817 Hall Thos A (c) © 1818 Brown Sarah A (c) © 1819 Vacant</p>	<p>306½ Talley Jas (c) 312a Williams Walter (c) 314 Mays Henry (c) 315 Blood Ellen (c) 316 Aeklen Connie (c) 318 Brown Chas (c) 320 Brown Isaiah (c) 320a Shaw Pearl (c) 320b Vacant 320c Long John W (c) Cedar intersects THOMPSON LANE (Woodbine) (Part formerly Timmons lane)— From ½ block east of Logan av west beyond Blackman rd, inter- secting 2900 Nolensville rd 200 Vickers Dock J Bolton Ernest 201ΔSuddeth Link 204 Yates Myrtle E Mrs © 205 Rader Lela Mrs © Logan av ends 206 Allen Lewis R © 209ΔTucker Jas M © 212ΔLeuthold Chris Hale John H 215ΔBriley Clarence H 228ΔAkin Chas G © 230 Reed Thos R Akin av ends 307 White Tim V 311 Duncan Riley C Nolensville rd intersects 403 Wright Oscar L 405 Halley Jas R restr 406 Finnell A Jos © 407ΔFrazier Georgia Mrs © 408 Finnell A Jos gro Grandview av ends Elizabeth begins 501 Smith Wm W 504 White Roger A 510 Lunn Perk 512 Little Ray E 518 Nelson Chas R 520 Poteete Steph A 521ΔYoung Sam W © 600 Watson Dowell D 602 Perry Jesse 604 Vaughn Herschel 607 Jones Grace Mrs 610 Bowers Henry W 611 Fisher John L 611½ Vacant 613 Davis Wm F (c) 613½ Ward Alvin (c) 614 Arnold John D © 615 Easley Jas (c) 615½ Vacant 617 Claybrook Felix (c) 617½ Eldridge Wm (c) 619 Crowley Howard (c) 619½ Crowley Wilson (c) 621 Ewing Kelley (c) 621½ Davis Frank (c) L&NRR overpass Cruzen av ends Blackman rd begins 700 Hall John H (c) 702 Williams Robt (c) THORNBERG — From Central av south to 1018 Edgehill av, 3 west of 8th av S 1101 Beason Elmer (c) 1105 Turner Geo jr (c) 1107ΔTurner Geo (c) © 1122 Bills Geo (c) ©</p>	<p>South to Denton av, 1 west of Bransford av 1903 Plaxco Paul © THRUSTON—From 2000 10th av S west to 12th av S 12th av S intersects THUSS AV (Woodbine) — From McComb av west to 3200 Nolens- ville rd 218ΔRamsey Carl M Rev © 221ΔStansell Russell A 222 Sanford Turley L © 223 Stovall Mahlon L © 224 Fuson Lemuel I © 235ΔGailey S J 318 Tatum Jesse L © 320 Vacant 321 Knox Lester S © 323 Leuthold Lawrence W © 325 Lane John B © 327 Ghee Grady P © 329 Vacant Nolensville rd intersects TILLMAN AV — From 819 Porter rd east to city limits, 1 north of Eastland av 200ΔHoover Arth C jr Powers intersects Campbell av begins 300ΔSadler Wm G © 307ΔHill Mary E Mrs © 309 Carr Wm H © 317ΔChasteen Wm R © City limits TIMMONS (Woodbine) — From 1 block east of 3000 Nolensville rd west beyond Mead av 304 Pike Clinton P 305ΔLazenby Thos B © 309 Rieves Leslie T 310ΔSelner Luke L © 312 Gotto Nathan 314 Nelms Ersie Mrs © 316 Burke Herman Nolensville rd intersects 472 Johnson John W 473 Marks J Leslie © 474 Cochran Inez L Mrs © 475ΔJacobs Judge H 476ΔBowden Alice B Mrs © Shumate Thos W 478ΔClark Herschell G Mead av begins 500ΔGreen Sarah M Mrs © Terry Warren B 501 Merrill Hugh H © 503ΔYoung Geo W © 504ΔSlate Claude D © 505 Terry Warren B jr 507ΔHerring Jesse H 508ΔThompson Edw C © 509 Finger Julian 510ΔTune Wm L © 511 Vaden Elijah W 513 Cochran Edw E 515 Young Morrell 517ΔBowden E Burton © 518ΔGay Alvin L © 519 Moore Ray L © 520 Inman Jas C © 521ΔAlessio Chas © TIMMONS LANE (Woodbine) — (Changed to Thompson la)</p>	<p>L&N east 208 S 208½ 210 K 212 W 215Δ 215 H 219 M 220 F 221 H 222 H 223 V 224 H 225 R 226 C 227 F 230 J 237 C C TORBE west 2606Δ 2608Δ 2610 V 2612 V 2700Δ 2702 F rear R 2705 S 2706 H 2707 V 2708 T 2711 M 2711a 2713 V 2715 H 2716Δ 2719 T H V 2800 H 2801 S 2803 H 2807Δ 2808 T 2809Δ 2811 V 2812 S 2813Δ 2817 C 2818 H 2819 S 2820Δ 2822Δ 2825Δ 2826 T 2827 S 2828 F 2830Δ 2831 A 2834 S 2835 F 2836 S 2838 H 2839 J 2840Δ 2841 H 2843Δ 2844 S 2900 F 2904 F 2907 T 2908 2909</p>
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COMPARE! - then Save at Castner's

Figure 6. US City directories from Ancestry.com. Nashville 1941. Showing "Community Meth Church (c)" at 1815 Knowles.

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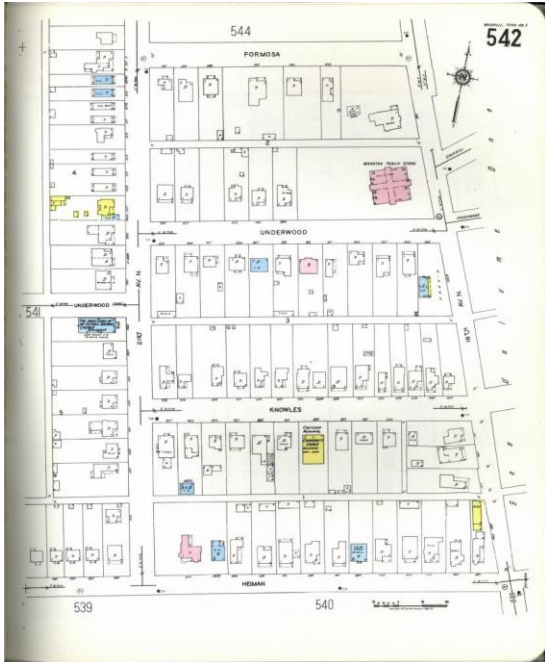
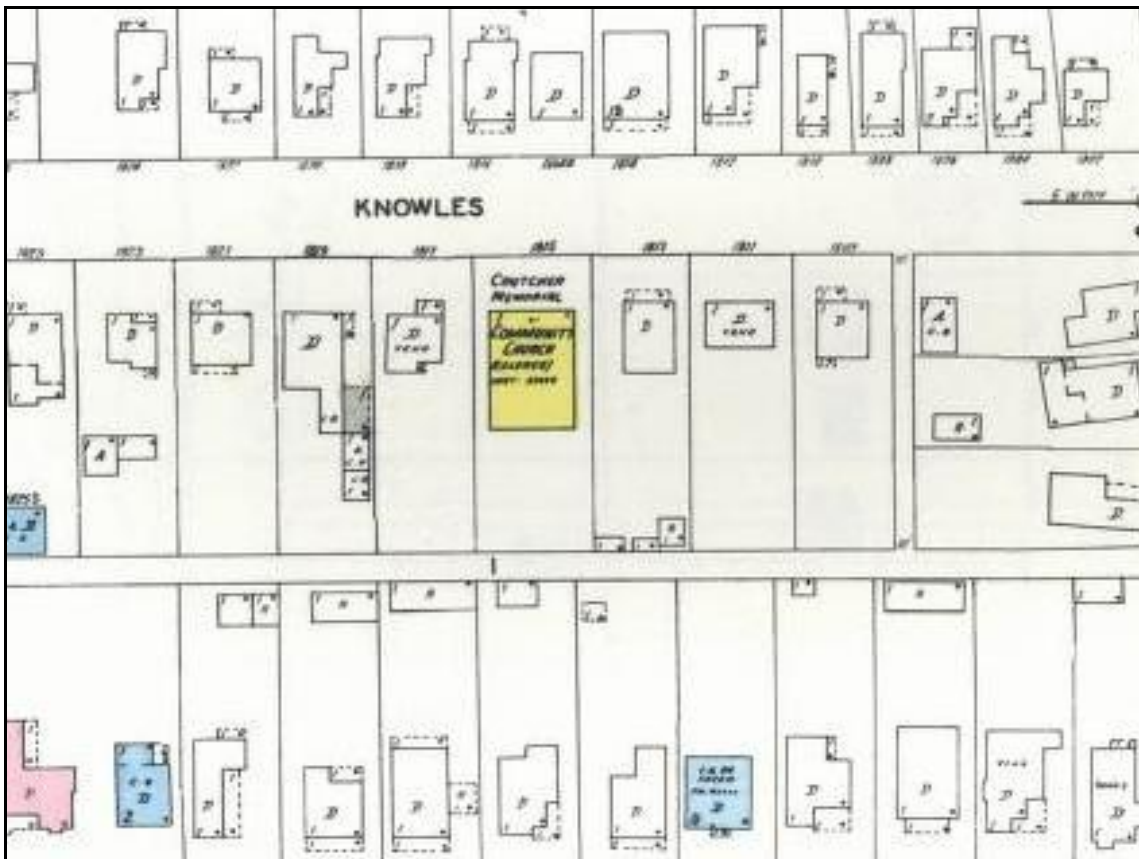


Figure 7. Sanborn 1932 republished 1957. Showing Crutcher Memorial Community Church at 1815 Knowles. Library of Congress.

https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3964nm.g3964nm_g08356195705/?sp=44&r=0.199,0.566,0.617,0.305,0



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First Community Church

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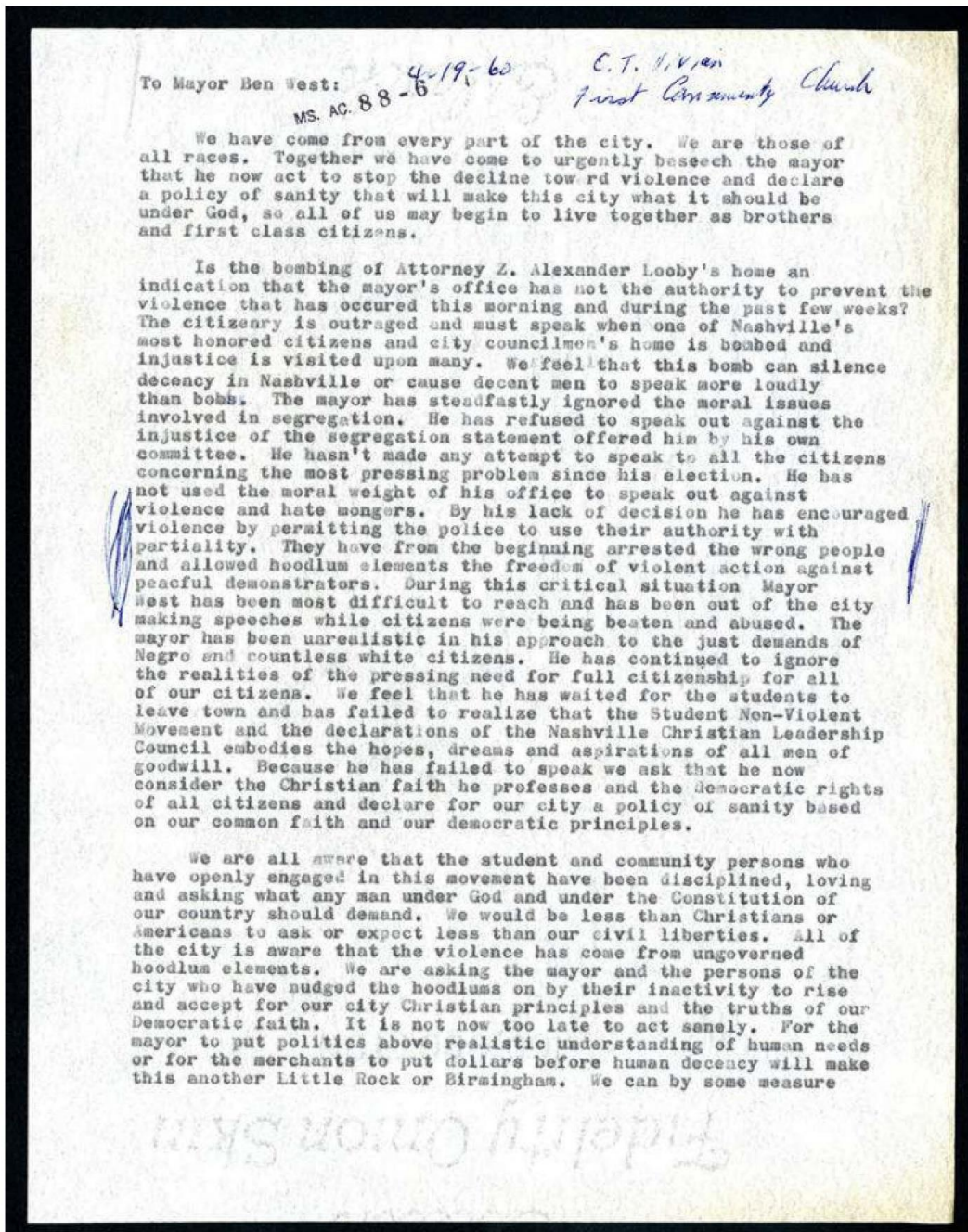


Figure 8. Page 1. Copy of statement read to Mayor Ben West by Vivian. Tennessee Virtual Archive, Tennessee State Library and Archives.

<https://teva.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15138coll18/id/963/rec/1>

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United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

First Community Church

Name of Property

Davidson County TN

County and State

The Civil Rights Movement in Nashville,
Tennessee, 1942-1969

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Supplemental Images Page 37

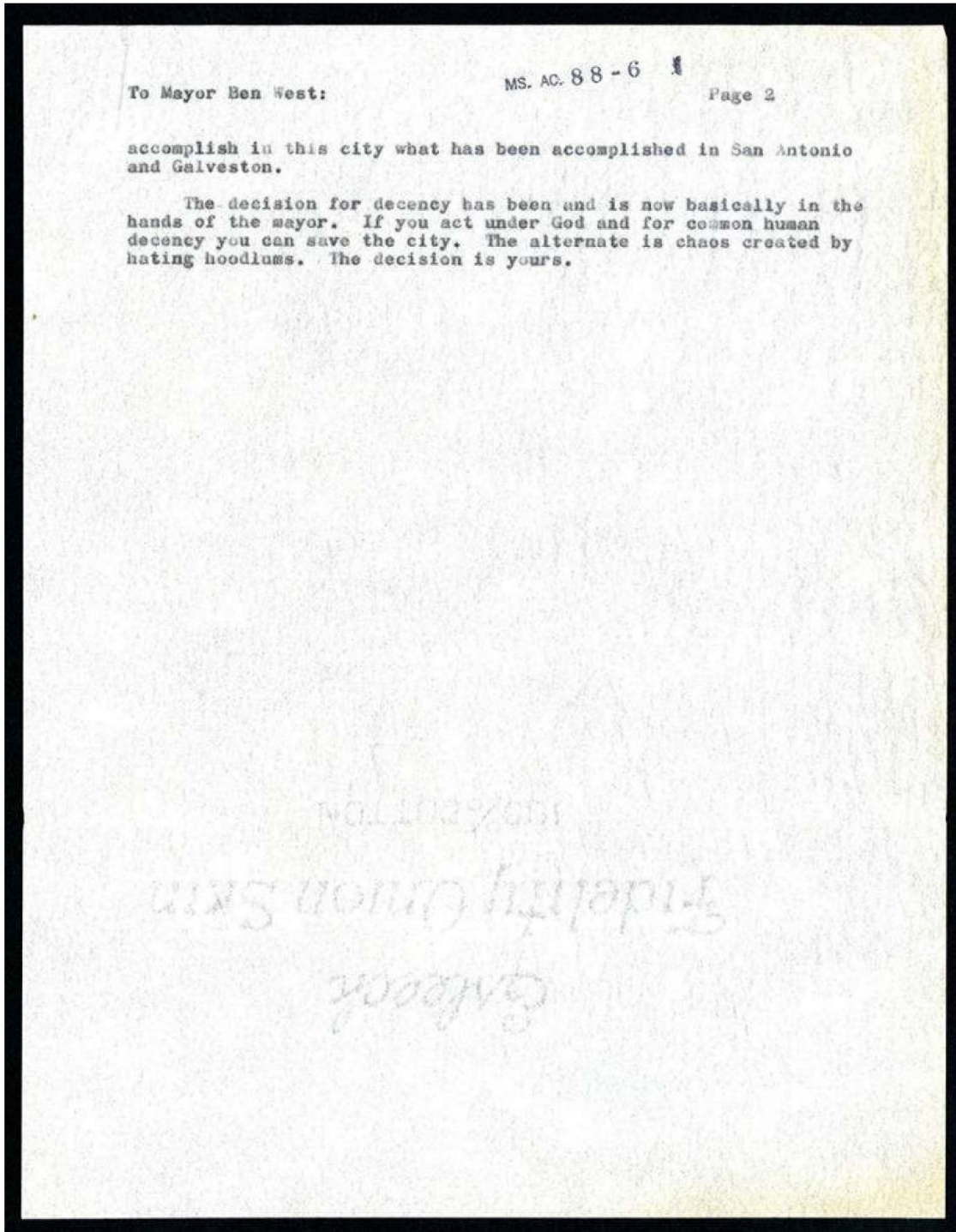


Figure 8. Page 2. Copy of statement read to Mayor Ben West by Vivian. Tennessee Virtual Archive, Tennessee State Library and Archives.

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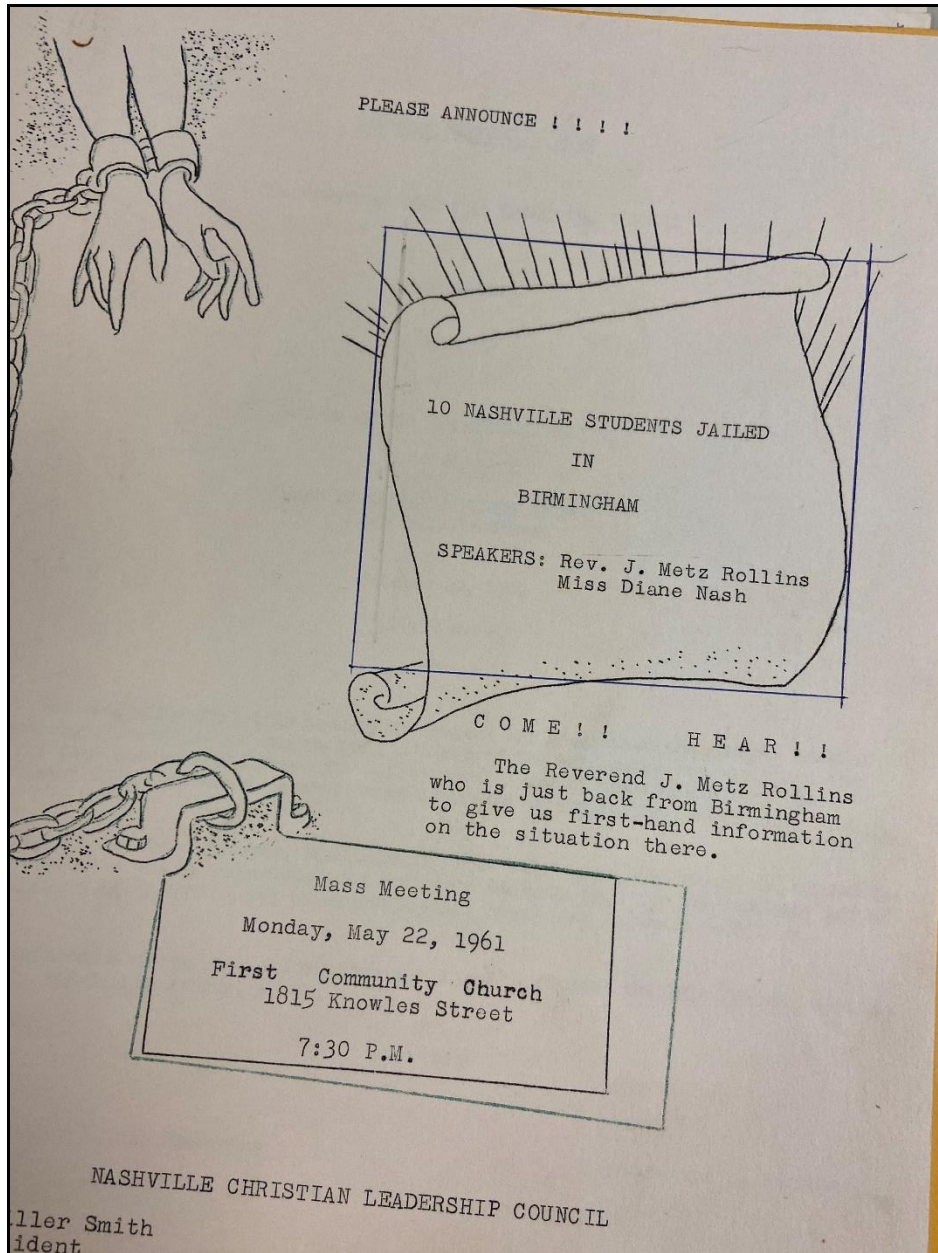


Figure 9. Flyer for NCLC meeting at First Community on May 22, 1961. Rev. Kelly Miller Smith Collection, Special Collections Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN.

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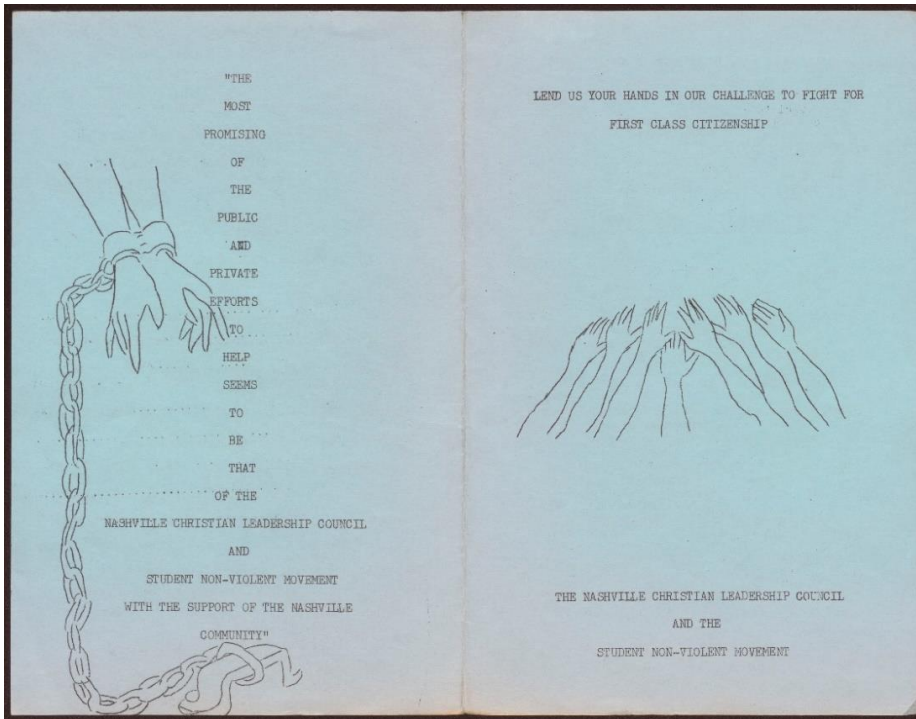
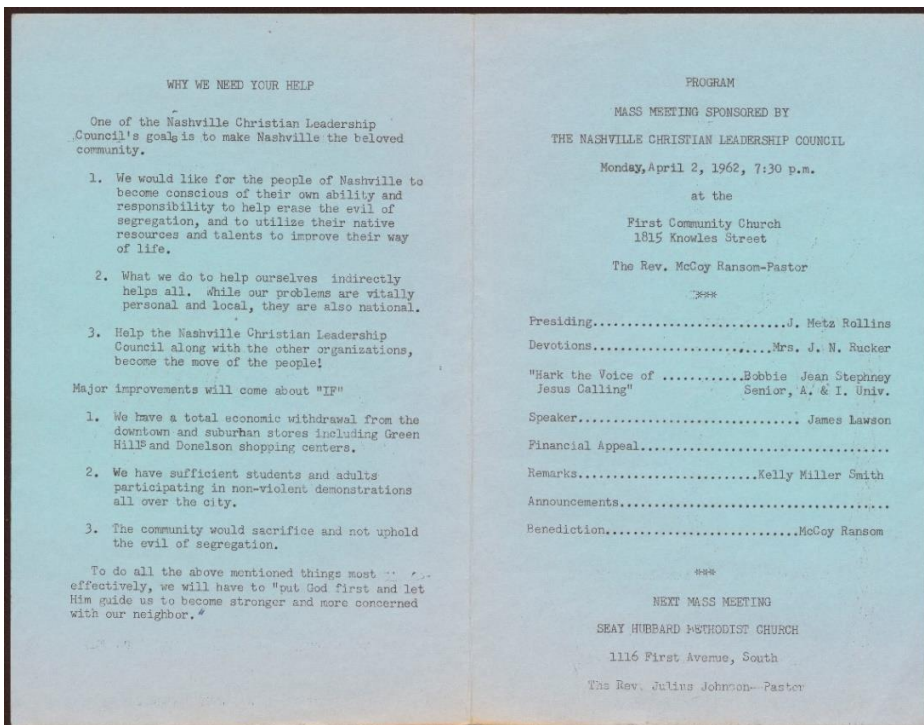


Figure 10. Flyer for meeting at First Community Church on April 2, 1962. James M. Lawson, Jr. Papers, Box 21, Folder 24_047, Special Collections Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN.



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Figure 11. Johnetta Hayes (far right back) at Highlander Folk School with youth. Photo courtesy of Ardana Fox.



Figure 12. Dorothy Johnson, aunt of First Community Church historian Ardana Fox at Highlander. She was 17 when the photo was taken and was 84 in 2022. Rosa Parks (back to the right of Johnson), and to the right, Elaine Gross, daughter of Johnetta Hayes. The photo was taken about five months before Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus (December 1, 1955) sparking the Montgomery bus boycott later that year. Photo courtesy of Ardana Foxx.

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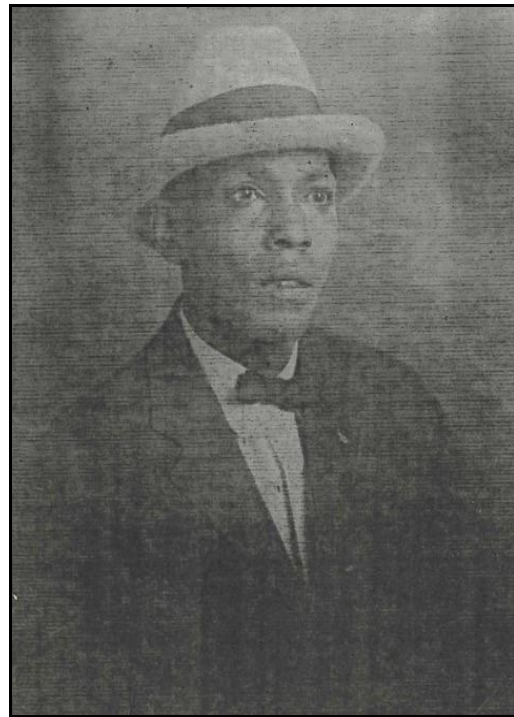


Figure 13. Jesse Palmer Walker (J.P. Walker, left) and Frederick Valentine (1888-1988). Walker not only designed the church, but he also built the first communion table. Photos courtesy of Ardana Foxx.

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Tennessee, 1942-1969

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NASHVILLE CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
319 Eighth Avenue, North
Nashville, Tennessee

July 7, 1961

Dear Friends:

The Nashville Christian Leadership Council invites you to a special recognition program, honoring the Rev. C. Tindell Vivian. The Rev. Mr. Vivian, 1st Vice-President of NCLC has accepted the pastorate of the Community Church of Chattanooga, Tenn. and we sincerely regret we will not have his active participation in the future plans of the movement. We are all cognizant of the many and various ways the Rev. Mr. Vivian has contributed to the planning and successes of the projects of the Non-Violent Movement.

You may show your appreciation and pay tribute to this great leader by being present on this special occasion.

The program will be held at First Baptist Church, 319 Eighth Avenue, North, July 17, 1961 at 7:30 P. M.

We hope to see you there.

Sincerely yours,
NASHVILLE CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Kelly Miller Smith

Kelly Miller Smith, President

CMH:kb

P. S. What can I do?

- ** Place this announcement in your bulletin.
- ** Tell a friend.
- ** Announce in your services.
- ** Inform all members of your organization.

A T T E N D ! ! !

Figure 14. July 7, 1961 letter for program honoring C.T. Vivian, Kelly Miller Smith Papers, Box 1, Special Collections Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN.

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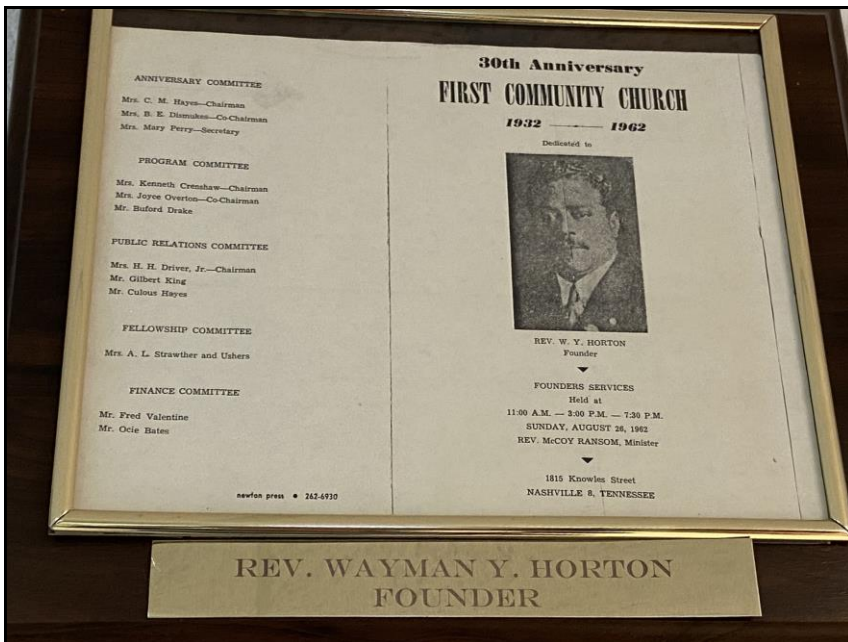
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Figure 15. Photos of pastors displayed in church.



Rev. Wayman Horton



Rev. James Crutcher

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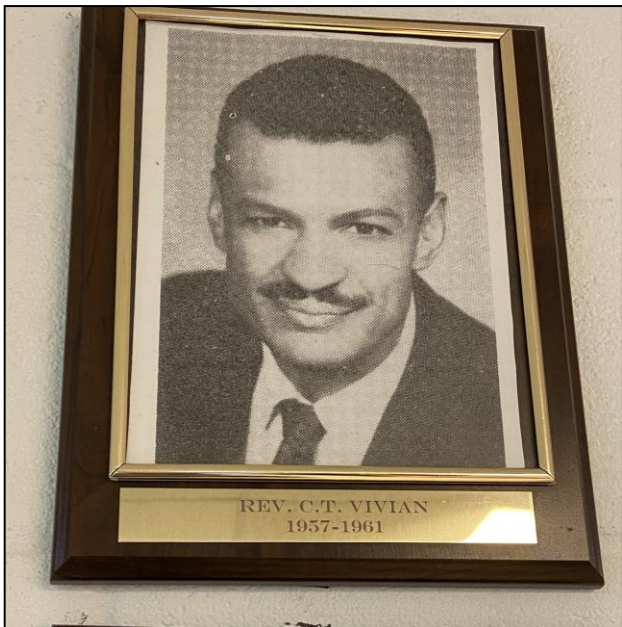
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Rev. Moses Williams



Rev. C.T. Vivian

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Rev. Kendrick Jangdhari

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Property Owner(s):

(This information will not be submitted to the National Park Service, but will remain on file at the Tennessee Historical Commission)

Name First Community Church, c/o Rev. Ella Clay

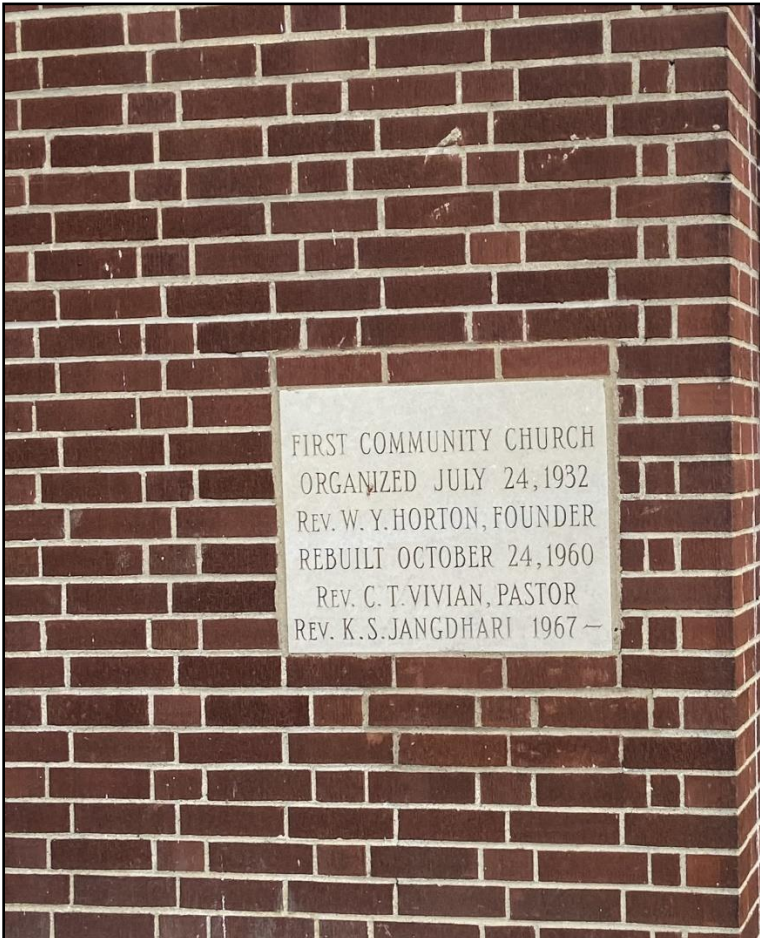
Street & Number 1815 Knowles Telephone (615) 320-0100

City or Town Nashville State/Zip TN 37208

Copy Church Historian Ardana Foxx at same address.



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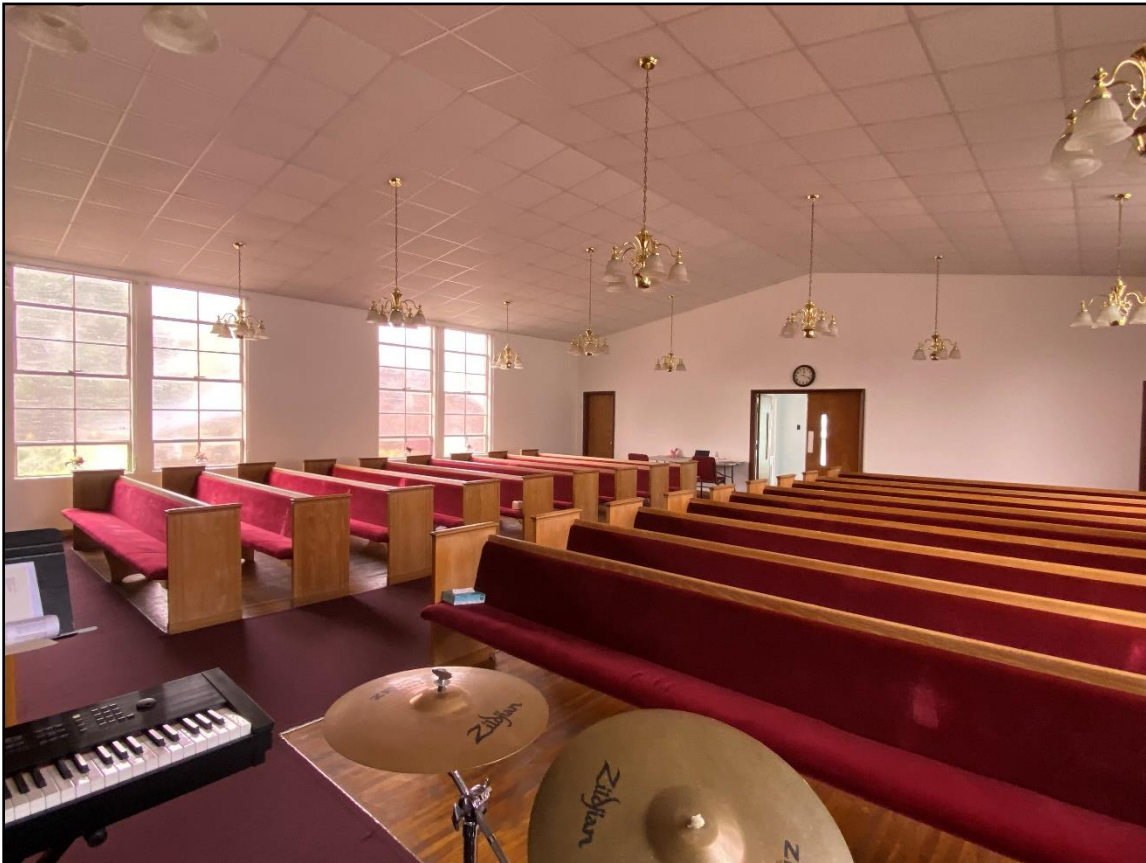
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