5-2-1954

Newspaper; 1954-05-02; Recounts Progress

Bethel A.M.E. Church

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bethel-ame

Part of the History Commons

Recommended Citation

"Newspaper; 1954-05-02; Recounts Progress." Bethel A.M.E. Church. Monroe Fordham Regional History Center, Archives & Special Collections Department, E. H. Butler Library, SUNY Buffalo State. https://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/bethel-ame/122

This Papers is brought to you for free and open access by the Church Collections at Digital Commons at Buffalo State. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bethel A.M.E. Church by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons at Buffalo State. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@buffalostate.edu.
The Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church

Bethel AME Church Recounts Progress

After only 11 months in its new location the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Michigan and East Perry St., has increased the size of its congregation by almost one-third.

The oldest Negro church in Buffalo, the Bethel congregation has moved its location three times since it was founded 123 years ago. Its first location in Vine Alley was used as one of the "stations" of the "Underground Railway" which helped escaping slaves prior to the Civil War.

The congregation moved to a church in Eagle St. about 30 years ago. Last July they moved to their new location, formerly the home of the Covenant Presbyterian Church. It is located adjacent to Offermann Stadium.

Rev. Harry J. White, pastor of the church, announced yesterday that 180 new members had been added to the church membership since moving to the new location. He stated there were 23 active organizations within the church. Among the attractions offered are four bowling alleys, a dramatic stage and a gymnasium.

During the past year the group raised approximately $21,000 for the church. The purchase price of the church was $120,000 with a 90 per cent down payment and a 12-year mortgage. The money collected this year will be used to carry on the church activities, to finance a $15,000 interior and exterior beautification program starting in June, and to reduce the mortgage. Rev. White said if contributions continue at the present rate, the debt may be retired several years before it is due.

Among the special activities carried on by the church are a Well Baby clinic sponsored by the Erie County Health Department, fashion shows and plays, and an employment agency for congregation members. Many of the church activities are inter-racial. Rev. White commented that many of the old time white residents of the area come into the church occasionally to worship. Rev. White, who came to Buffalo two years ago, is a graduate of Wilberforce University, the oldest Negro college in America. He is presently planning for a Vacation Bible School to be held in the church this summer. He explained that during the hot weather the bowling leagues cease operations, but that he wants to always have some attraction going on to keep the children off the streets. He has been promised help from the City Recreation Department.

The future looks bright for the church, Rev. White thinks. He is much encouraged by the fact that more Negroes are moving into the Masten District, and the enthusiastic support he has received in this first year in the new location.