ABSTRACT

"FROM EMANCIPATION TO JIM CROW: THE WORK AMONG THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN POPULATION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE DIOCESE OF VIRGINIA 1865-1892"

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D. Min. Project under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. King

In the period immediately following the end of the Civil War, the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia was confronted with a concern which it had only barely begun to consider at the start of the War: how were African-Americans to be incorporated (or not) in the life and ministry of the Diocese? This paper explores the actions of the Diocese during the period 1865-1892 to initially incorporate, and then exclude African-American congregations and clergy from the leadership of the Diocese, especially in light of the development of Jim Crow in post-war Virginia.

Jane W. Dailey, in her book Before Jim Crow: the Politics of Race in Postemancipation Virginia, explores the development of Jim Crow laws as a result of the collision between public and private spheres of influence in civil society. When the private rights of white citizens began to be impacted by the public rights of newly freed slaves and freedmen, previously uncodified rules of separation between the races began to be codified in statute. However, she, like other historians of the Jim Crow period, including C. Vann Woodward, have neglected to tell the story of the development of Jim Crow practices in Christianity in the postwar South.

The Diocese of Virginia began a good effort to include African-American laity and clergy in the life of the Diocese immediately following the war. Missionaries were appointed, some white, some African-American. A segregated divinity school was established in Petersburg to educate African-American clergy. Congregations were rejuvenated or started. While no African-American congregation was admitted to the annual Diocesan Council as a full member, African-American clergy were incorporated as they were ordained. By 1889 there were nine African-American clergy at work in various parts of the Diocese. However, in that same year, the Council acted to separate African-American congregations into a “Colored Missionary Jurisdiction,” and limit the participation of newly arrived or ordained African-American clergy in the Diocesan Council.

Using the records of the Diocese as provided in the Journal of Council, this paper examines the actions of a number of participants in the life of the Diocese, including both white and black clergy and Diocesan bishops. After the canonical changes of 1889 were
ratified in 1890, the Diocese’s efforts among the African-American population entered a period of decline, as predicted by the nine African-American clergy in 1889: “As men who must one day appear before the judgment seat of Christ, we affirm as our belief that the adoption of the afore-mentioned amendment will put an end to the growth of the work of the Church among our people.” They were right. Just as in the secular world, with separation came failure.
From Emancipation to Jim Crow:
The Work Among the African-American Population
of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia
1865-1892

by
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The genesis of this paper came in an Episcopal Church history class taught by the Rev. Dr. Donald Armentrout in the fall of 2004. Then a limited review, the paper began as a survey of the history of the work of the Diocese of Virginia (encompassing the entire state of Virginia) among African-Americans, during the time after the Civil War, until 1892, when the Diocese was divided into the Diocese of Virginia and what would become the Diocese of Southern Virginia. (Southern Virginia was subsequently divided into Southern Virginia and Southwestern Virginia in 1919.) A short paper piqued a continuing interest, one which was only strengthened when I was assigned as deacon-in-charge, later priest-in-charge, to churches in Mecklenburg County, Virginia, one of the two counties in which James Solomon Russell exercised his ministry. It has been my privilege to serve in several of the congregations which resulted from Archdeacon Russell’s efforts.

I would also like to acknowledge my gratitude to the staff of the Jessie Ball DuPont Library at the University of the South, especially in the Theology section and in the microfiche reference section. It was interesting to discover that Sewanee’s collection of microfiche records far outshone the records readily available to me in Virginia. My thanks go to Dr. James Dunkley, Joan Blocher, and Heidi Syler.
Foreword

The primary source for the topic of this paper is the Journal of the Council of the Diocese of Virginia. This annual publication, along with several secondary sources published before 1970, consistently refer to African-Americans as ‘colored’ or ‘Negroes,’ and paint them as uneducated, uneducable, and in need of the guardianship of whites. For the sake of historical accuracy, I have maintained their original terminology. I find it pejorative, and considered changing or modernizing the language. But I came to understand that the strongly unpleasant feelings I experienced in reading the original material (especially by Bishop Randolph) was important to the understanding of the thesis: that great injustice was done in the Councils of the Church to African-Americans in the nineteenth century. And it was - and is - important to leave myself and the reader feeling unsettled to be reminded of that injustice.

The Journal of Council for the Diocese is the record of an event held every May of the years which I examined (except 1865), and it is dry and dusty, both literally and figuratively. The information is of great value as a source of “official actions”, and particularly valuable are the bishops’ reports and appended parochial reports. However, one must note the somewhat incomplete nature of the records, especially the parochial reports. Then as now, there is no penalty for the minister-in-charge of a parish who does not submit records.
Chapter 1 – Postwar Virginia: Jim Crow Rises

In 1954, the historian C. Vann Woodward, then a professor of history of The Johns Hopkins University, delivered a series of lectures at the University of Virginia, in which he posited that the Jim Crow laws of segregation were not the immediate result of the Civil War but rather were later consequences of Reconstruction and the Compromise of 1877, which left minor local practices of segregation in place. Informal, non-statutory segregation only became formalized in statute in the latter part of the 19th century, not immediately following the War or the end of Reconstruction. The lectures were published in 1955 as *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, and became influential in the thought of several generations of historians.¹ More importantly, the book had a place in the Civil Rights movement, given its publication right in the middle of a budding rights movement and important Supreme Court decisions.²

While most Jim Crow laws affected voting and other political rights, eventually they ran so deep as to affect all aspects of life, from where to sit on the train to where one walked on the sidewalk. In addition, Woodward dealt with a geographic region where there was significant diversity in politics, economics, and social mores. What happened in the eastern seaboard South was often very different from what happened in the

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² Although Brown v. Board of Education [347 U.S. 483 (1954)] was decided in 1954, declaring ‘separate but equal’ to be unconstitutional, as late as the early 1960’s various states were attempting to subvert the decision. For example, Prince Edward County, Virginia’s Massive Resistance plan to close elementary and secondary schools rather than integrate, continued through 1964. Amy E. Murrell, “The ‘Impossible’ Prince Edward Case: The Endurance of Resistance in a Southside County, 1959-1964,” in *The Moderates’ Dilemma: Massive Resistance to School Desegregation in Virginia*, ed. Matthew D. Lassiter and Andrew B. Lewis (Charlottesville, Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 1998), 134-167.
westernmost Southern states. And the upper South was very different from the lower South.

Historian Jane Dailey made a significant contribution to the understanding of Jim Crow antecedents in Virginia in her book, *Before Jim Crow: The Politics of Race in Postemancipation Virginia*, published in 2000. Focusing on postwar politics, education, and social mores, she supports the thesis that there were important points of interracial interaction before formalized laws began to prohibit it. She also notes the “instability of social categories.” Moving beyond Woodward, she examines the ways in which social, political and gender categories affected each other, with very fluid boundaries between them. A white congressman needed the votes of both black and white, but how did he deal with his colored constituents? Dailey notes that one Virginia congressman assured his white audiences that he met with his African American constituents on his back porch or in the kitchen. Of course, the white constituents would have been received in the parlor.

However, like Woodward, Dailey omits one important part of the social fabric of Southern life. Both Woodward and Dailey omit Christianity and the history of developing segregation in that sphere. By the time the war ended, most Protestant denominations were already split, either racially or geographically, and there was little to no interaction among the races in religion. However, that was true only of denominations with a polity which permits such divisions. The Episcopal Church, one of very few which did not split geographically or racially during the Civil War, also became one of

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very few postwar denominations where black and white clergy and congregations continued to have a relationship.

This thesis is an examination of the incorporation of African-Americans into the Diocese of Virginia during the postwar period, prior to the division of the diocese in 1892. During the Sewanee Conference of 1883, it was noted that Virginia was among the leaders in working among the African-American population. However, by 1889, the previous full incorporation of the black clergy and congregations in the annual Diocesan Council (convention) was legislated out of existence. In hindsight, the Canon finally approved in 1890 was the beginning of the end of successful Episcopal ministry in the African-American populations of postwar Virginia.
Chapter 2 – A Review Of Politics, Society And Race In Postwar Virginia

Dailey examines postwar life in the public sphere with a survey of the Readjuster political movement in Virginia politics, which she describes as "an institutional force for the protection and advancement of black rights and interests."\(^5\) The Virginia Readjuster movement was not the only interracial political movement in the South but it may have been one of the most important, despite only having control of statewide politics for 4 years.\(^6\)

The movement was born out of, and gained its name from, a postwar financial crisis. The state of Virginia had deeply indebted itself before the war to build railroads and canals to link the western part of the state (and the western states) to the eastern ports and terminals, but that infrastructure was left in ruins at the end of the war. However, the debt remained, and became a constant source of dispute between those who would honor and pay it, and those who would discount some or all of it, and "readjust" the state’s debt. For the white elite, honor demanded the full repayment of the debt and the interest incurred during the war.\(^7\)

The debt and the dispute over whether to pay it influenced the nascent establishment of state-supported schools for all races. The only schools in antebellum Virginia were expensive academies to which the sons (and occasionally daughters) of the wealthy were sent, or the pauper schools, which provided a rudimentary education.\(^8\) The state’s Constitution of 1864, adopted in Alexandria by a Unionist convention, called for

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\(^7\) Dailey, *Before Jim Crow*, 17 and following.
free public schools, but the legislature which convened in late 1865 made no financial provision for them. The question then became: provide for the schools or pay the debt? Postwar taxation was based on property ownership, not income. A $1 capitation tax on males of voting age, designated for public education, was turned into a poll tax in 1876.

There was another dispute concerning the schools: white elites were concerned that “radical ideas of equality” would be encouraged in free public schools. That was settled in 1870 when a bill passed the state legislature which provided for separate schools.

The controversy between repayment of the debt and public school support intensified in the late 1870’s. First, there was the dispute of how to value the debt that could be attributed to the now-independent part of the state called West Virginia. Second, the railroads, the beneficiaries of the antebellum debt, did little to contribute to its repayment. Third, when the tax income of the state no longer met the needs of debt repayment and schools (as well as other social services), the Virginia legislature and governor (known as ‘funders’) chose to honor the debt, unlike other states which repudiated part of their debt. Social services and schools had their support reduced, and by 1879, about one-half of the school population was no longer in school.

The political movement known as the Readjusters expressed concerns of high taxation, poll taxes, and services which were paid for through taxation but not received. White landowners in the western counties, black agricultural workers in the eastern

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9 Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 22.
10 Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 27.
12 Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 25.
14 Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 29.
15 Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 30.
counties, and urban black and white workingmen became the proponents of a political movement to readjust the debt.\textsuperscript{16}

William Mahone, a self-made railroad millionaire, former slaveholder and former Confederate general, became the unlikely leader of this interracial political party.\textsuperscript{17} Using the honor language of those who sought to fully fund the state debt, he noted that they had already begun to repudiate the debt by failing to make the interest payments. He also compared the honor of those who chose to fund the debt (the bonds were by then held by a majority outside the state) with the dishonor of robbing the school funds to pay the debt.\textsuperscript{18}

By 1879, the dispute over the nearly non-existent funding of public education had created an interracial alliance of Readjusters. Non-elite whites and blacks believed that the government, then primarily in the hands of traditional party affiliates, was acting against their interests. While the schools they sought were to be separate, they nevertheless saw education as primary among the services that government should provide.\textsuperscript{19} Other issues important to the black community were not pursued by the Readjuster organization, for fear of alienating white workingmen and small farmers.\textsuperscript{20}

The election of 1879 resulted in an interesting alliance in the General Assembly between Republicans (some of whom were African-American) and the third-party Readjusters, giving the alliance the majority.\textsuperscript{21} (The white vote had been split between the Conservatives (funders) and Readjusters.)\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{16} Dailey, \textit{Before Jim Crow}, 32.
\textsuperscript{17} Dailey, \textit{Before Jim Crow}, 37.
\textsuperscript{18} Dailey, \textit{Before Jim Crow}, 40-41.
\textsuperscript{19} Dailey, \textit{Before Jim Crow}, 42-43.
\textsuperscript{20} Dailey, \textit{Before Jim Crow}, 46-47.
\textsuperscript{21} Dailey, \textit{Before Jim Crow}, 47.
\textsuperscript{22} Dailey, \textit{Before Jim Crow}, 46.
Mahone, who had been elected U.S. Senator by that alliance in 1879\textsuperscript{23} (though not sworn in until March 1881), was one of two new Senators added to an evenly divided Senate, and his voting affiliation would determine whether the Republicans or Democrats controlled the U.S. Senate. He affiliated with the Republicans, and by doing so, gained control over the patronage of thousands of political jobs in the state, from post offices to customs houses.\textsuperscript{24} The Readjusters had begun to realize that the African-American voter was interested in more than just debt and schools. One of the most important ways any political party kept the faithful in line during the 1880’s was in the application of patronage. Patronage and the lack of a secret ballot\textsuperscript{25} maintained party discipline.

Malone acted to “ensure that every community in Virginia benefited materially from voting Readjuster.”\textsuperscript{26} Women and men, black and white, were appointed to federal positions, and the Readjusters won their goodwill.\textsuperscript{27} And at both the state and federal levels, African-American Republicans continued to remind the third-party Readjusters that their continued success “was due in no small measure to the black vote.”\textsuperscript{28} And with appointment to public office, the African-American population gained authority.

Whether it was as a postal worker or as a school teacher, such increasing black authority left some white Virginians “uneasy about this renegotiation of public power.”\textsuperscript{29} But the Democrats of the day failed to see that the divisions to be exploited were not

\textsuperscript{23} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 55. Until 1913, U.S. Senators were elected by the various state legislatures, not by popular vote.
\textsuperscript{24} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 57ff.
\textsuperscript{25} The secret or Australian ballot did not arrive in Virginia elections until the early 1890’s.
\textsuperscript{26} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 59.
\textsuperscript{27} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 59. While women could not vote, the political affiliations of their male relatives were examined for the women’s suitability as appointees.
\textsuperscript{28} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 65.
\textsuperscript{29} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 76.
solely race based. In the election of the 1881, the Readjusters championed economic and educational interests, and won not only both houses of the General Assembly, but the office of Governor as well. With that control, the Readjusters could act finally to reduce the antebellum debt, thus achieving their original goal.

While some Readjusters interpreted the victory “as a rejection by white men of race as a political issue”, this victory indicated even more the division between public and private spheres. While politics and commerce might be integrated, private spheres remained segregated, especially those of and relating to women.

There were two spheres of influence for every person, incorporating social mores, political/statutory standards, and gender roles. The public sphere included voting and jury duty, initially only for white men and later incorporating African-American men. In addition, there were the private spheres of influence, which might be noted in the phrase “a man’s home is his castle.” Leadership as a head of a household gave a man certain rights and responsibilities over the lives of those in the household, including wives, children, and servants. “The trick for the Readjusters was to construct a public/private divide firm enough to contain white household heads’ fears about their ability to control their own dependents … while creating room for black men in politics. . . . But where did a post office located in a store or the front room of a private home – fairly common situations – belong?” On the other hand, facilities for education and transportation were clearly public and thus were among the first racial boundaries established in statute.

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30 Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 82ff.
31 Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 83.
32 Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 83.
33 Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 85.
34 Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 86.
Dailey goes a step further by examining the collision of the public right of universal manhood suffrage with the private right of access to women and girls, both as wives and mistresses. Virginia’s law against miscegenation\textsuperscript{35} is a clear example of a defined social boundary, where public rights ended and private rights began. And it was in the school systems that the fallacy of absolute barriers was most clearly exposed: parents, then as now, could not fully control what their children were exposed to.\textsuperscript{36}

In Danville, a thriving Piedmont manufacturing town and transportation hub, an event in 1883 exposed another apparent rigid barrier that could not be maintained. The Danville Riot of 1883, born out of a dispute between black and white, male and female, over the possession of the sidewalk, was indicative of two standards of civil behavior in society: one for whites, and one for the other side of color lines.\textsuperscript{37} Incidents such as this were ammunition for Democratic politicians who began to use race as rhetoric against the Readjusters.\textsuperscript{38}

Suddenly the public sphere was spreading into the private sphere, even in churches. Dailey quotes one Readjuster vestryman as having to resign his position because all the other vestrymen were funders.\textsuperscript{39} In one county, contributors to the building of a church backed out when they found out it was being built by Readjusters.\textsuperscript{40} Suddenly the white Readjusters were tainted by their association with black Readjusters.

\textsuperscript{35} Loving v. Virginia, decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1967, invalidated Virginia’s interracial marriage prohibition as prohibited under the 14\textsuperscript{th} amendment.
\textsuperscript{36} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 96ff.
\textsuperscript{37} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 103ff.
\textsuperscript{38} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 112ff.
\textsuperscript{39} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 144.
\textsuperscript{40} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 144.
A hard fought election had rhetoric fueled in part by scurrilous stories of the Danville Riot, and the interracial Readjuster coalition was defeated in 1883.\textsuperscript{41} While there is no doubt that racial issues contributed to the results in 1883, "a new departure required individuals to challenge so much of what supported their own sense of who they were and who they expected to become."\textsuperscript{42} Democrats sought to consolidate their power in 1884 by adopting certain of the Readjuster platform items.\textsuperscript{43} But note one important piece of the platform: within 10 years they had acted under the Walton Act to discriminate against illiterate voters. The latter were no longer permitted to have assistance to read the ballot as they voted, nor were party symbols permitted on the ballot. A voter was required to put a line through the names of those for whom they did not intend to vote.\textsuperscript{44} One can understand easily how illiterate voters, black and white, were almost completed eliminated.

This provides the context for the actions of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia.

\textsuperscript{41} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 152.
\textsuperscript{42} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 156.
\textsuperscript{43} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 156.
\textsuperscript{44} Dailey, Before Jim Crow, 160-161.
Chapter 3 – The Church: We Begin at the End

After the actions of the 1889 Council of the Diocese of Virginia, revising an Article in the Diocesan Constitution regarding representation of colored congregations in the Diocesan Council, the nine colored ministers present stated their concerns, and asked that their statement be recorded in the Journal of the Council.

We, whose names are herewith appended, Clergymen of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia, in the fear of and presence of Almighty God, who hears our solemn declaration, do represent that this question of separate organization, under its many forms and devices, has been carefully considered and discussed at length in meetings duly convened for that purpose in all of the missions represented by us. So unanimous and determined are the congregations represented by us, that they have put into our hands papers affirming their strong disapproval of the amendment to the Constitution of the Diocese. They recognize the fact that they are a part and parcel of the Church in this Diocese, although weak and in a struggling condition. However, they are of the opinion that this should not operate against them in receiving the protection and fraternal sympathy of the strong.

Beyond all doubt, we believe that the amendment adopted yesterday by this Council, relating to this question, was the most speedy way of settling it, but not we fear as God would have it settled. As men who must one day appear before the judgment seat of Christ, we affirm as our belief that the adoption of the afore-mentioned amendment will put an end to the growth of the work of the Church among our people.

And we beg permission to record our most solemn protest against the change in the Constitution.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES S. RUSSELL, GEORGE F. BRAGG, JR.,
JOHN T. HARRISON. LAFAYETTE WINFIELD,
D. W. TAYLOR, B. F. LEWIS, WM. P. BURKE,
GEO. E. HOWELL, W. E. HOWELL.”

This chapter will show that they were right to protest.

Twenty years earlier, the 65th Council of the Diocese of Virginia took place in Fredericksburg, at St. George’s Church in 1869. The minutes seem mundane, but show evidence of a church still trying to recover from the ravages of the Civil War. West Virginia was still part of the Diocese. Bishop John Johns noted in his report that he had consecrated one new church built to replace two destroyed in the war and St. Mark’s in Culpeper petitioned Council to be allowed to replace St. James, destroyed in the war, without the usual notice required of new parishes. The most interesting report was made about a new colored church in Petersburg: Bishop Johns reported on his visit to St. Stephen’s Church, in Petersburg (Dinwiddie County), where he confirmed 12 persons, and ordained a priest for the congregation:

“I must express my gratitude for the favorable circumstances under which this congregation commences its course, I trust of increasing prosperity and usefulness. The Rector in a long and careful examination by the brethren who united in his ordination, gave satisfactory proof of his aptness and meetness for the work of the ministry, and, by his faithfulness, diligence, and his irreproachable conduct as a deacon, has secured the respect and confidence not only of his own people, but of the Christian community by which they are surrounded.

This first complete organization of a congregation of the kind in this Diocese, commences with encouraging prospects. I trust that under God’s blessing, it will prove a safe and edifying example and pattern, to be successfully followed by many others.”

St. Stephen’s Church still exists, with a heritage of which the community there is justifiably proud. And in the very same Journal of 1869 was the petition of this congregation to be admitted to the Council “as a parish with all the rights and privileges

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46 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1878, 52. West Virginia did not become a separate diocese until 1877-1878.
47 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1869, 26.
48 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1869, 19.
49 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1869, 28. Two other congregations had petitioned for admission to Council in 1866, a congregation in Halifax County, and St. Philip’s, in Richmond. Their petitions were tabled. The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1866, 36.
of other parishes of this Diocese."\textsuperscript{50} It was noted that their petition was not in good order, as they had not given the requisite notice required by Canon XI of the Diocese, but the committee considering the petition unanimously recommended "that notwithstanding the informality, the prayer of the petitioners be granted."\textsuperscript{51} The petition was held over and assigned to a committee of fifteen to report back the next day.\textsuperscript{52}

Whereas, This Council at its annual session in 1866 did pledge itself to encourage the formation of colored Episcopal congregations, and to that end did promise to take under its care any such congregations as might be organized, and for the protection of the interests of such congregations, and for their representation in the Council of the Diocese, did and does still annually elect a Standing Committee . . . .\textsuperscript{53}

This colored congregation was to be "taken under the care of this Council" and their affairs were entrusted to the Standing Committee on colored congregations. They were assured of the desire of all the Council for their continued growth and prosperity.\textsuperscript{54} But they were not received on an equal basis into Council.

At the same Council, a committee of three clergymen and two laymen was appointed to consider and report about a plan for the Church's work among colored people at the next Council. However, an additional motion to appoint a committee to prepare a canon "defining the position of colored congregations" was defeated.\textsuperscript{55} One might say that this petition of St. Stephen's Church was a watershed event in the Episcopal Church's ministry to the colored people: this is the beginning, and the beginning of the end. For the first time the Diocese was presented with an opportunity to

\textsuperscript{50} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1869, 178.
\textsuperscript{51} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1869, 54.
\textsuperscript{52} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1869, 54.
\textsuperscript{53} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1869, 56.
\textsuperscript{54} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1869, 56.
\textsuperscript{55} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1869, 56-57.
examine how to incorporate African-American churches into the life and work of the Diocese. Committees and commissions would be appointed on irregular bases over the next twenty years, but at the end of those twenty years, the action of Council was to set the colored congregations and clergy apart and limit their influence in Diocesan Council. While colored clergy had taken their place in the Council as equals (until 1890), colored congregations never achieved the status of white congregations. There was no further effort to admit colored parishes with the privileges of other parishes.
Chapter 4 – The Churches

While there were eventually many more than four colored congregations in the Diocese of Virginia, I have chosen to profile the following. Generally, St. Philip’s in Richmond is regarded as the oldest, predating the Civil War, but having had its ups and downs and occasional closings, it loses the title of oldest continuous African-American congregation to St. Stephen’s in Petersburg, which has remained continuously in operation since its founding in 1868. St. Paul’s in Lawrenceville might be considered a relative newcomer, but its strength came from its best known priest, the Rev. James Solomon Russell, later to be an Archdeacon of the Diocese of Southern Virginia and the founder of St. Paul’s Normal School, later St. Paul’s College. Payne’s Chapel in Westmoreland County was the work of the late Rt. Rev. John Payne, Bishop of Liberia, and the person for whom the Divinity School in Petersburg would be named. Payne’s Chapel suffered after the Bishop’s death, and there seems to have been no other white rector in Washington parish who had the Bishop’s heart for ministry among the African-Americans. Each of these churches has a story to tell.

As noted above, St. Stephen’s in Petersburg was founded in 1868, with the Rev. J. S. Atwell shortly becoming its Rector. He was the first black presbyter ordained in Virginia. The Journal of 1869 lists a creditable beginning: 52 colored communicants, and 6 Sunday School teachers (4 white, 2 colored). Additionally the congregation reports

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56 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1891, 52; a statistical summary of the size of the two proposed Dioceses showed 276 white congregations, and 21 colored congregations.
57 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1869, 126. Atwell notes that he has been at the congregation since September 10, 1868, sent there by the American Church Missionary Society, on the request of Virginia’s Assistant Bishop Whittle.
58 Brydon, The Episcopal Church Among the Negroes of Virginia, 9-10.
income of $275, extraordinary for the time, for its size, and for the makeup of its congregation.\textsuperscript{59} It would be unwise to think that all these funds came from the congregation; even into the 1890’s the majority of St. Stephen’s funds seem to have come from individuals and societies outside the congregation. (I have declined to use the term parish, since the Council had refused their petition, but they certainly were entitled to the name if they were self-supporting.)

Parish reports may be unreliable and they were occasionally omitted: St. Stephen’s 1889 report shows $410.43 in income, with 245 communicants and 303 scholars and teachers in the Sunday School.\textsuperscript{60} In the Journal of the Council of 1890, St. Stephen’s is not listed at all among the Dinwiddie churches, and there is no late report.\textsuperscript{61} The year 1891 shows a decline: 219 communicants, 80 teachers and scholars in the Sunday School and 76 in the Parochial School. The income of $261.11 is less than it had been twenty years before.\textsuperscript{62}

St. Stephen’s in Petersburg was always known for an important ministry in the life of the colored community, and that was education. In 1870, Atwell reported 115 scholars in the parochial school,\textsuperscript{63} and 146 by the next year.\textsuperscript{64} In 1873, the Rev. Churchill J. Gibson noted on behalf of the Committee on the State of Church that education, both in Sunday Schools and in parochial schools, was a significant way to influence the hearts and minds of the colored people and increase the influence of the Episcopal Church.

“Why should not such schools be multiplied, by earnest, persevering efforts, in every

\textsuperscript{59} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1869, 126.
\textsuperscript{60} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1889, 162-163.
\textsuperscript{61} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1890, 185-189.
\textsuperscript{62} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1891, 193.
\textsuperscript{63} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1870, 127.
\textsuperscript{64} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1871, 125.
parish?" It was happening at St. Stephen’s: by 1876 there were 350 students in the parochial school of a church with only 58 communicants, although the numbers fell in subsequent years. This school seems to have been what was called a Normal school, teaching basic academic skills and those practical skills which would be useful in gaining employment (e.g., sewing for the girls). It is also said to have been training teachers as well.

St. Stephen’s was also intimately connected with the foundation of what was eventually chartered as the Bishop Payne Divinity School in Petersburg. The Divinity School was founded in 1878 as a branch of the Virginia Theological Seminary because of the need to find a place in which to train James Russell. The Revs. Giles Cooke, Thomas Spencer, and John D. Keiley were the first instructors. Spencer’s salary was paid by the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Theological Seminary. Eventually the school, commonly called the Branch School in the Diocesan reports, would be chartered by the state and renamed The Bishop Payne Divinity School.

There was an important change in the leadership of St. Stephen’s in 1872-1873. Atwell left, and the Rev. Giles B. Cooke, a former Major in the Confederate Army, took charge of the congregation on May 11, 1873. By 1886, the Journal reports that the Rev. R. A. Goodwin was in charge. The 1889 Journal of Council reports 245

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65 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1871, 89.
66 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1876, 147.
68 Harris, The Bishop Payne Divinity School, chapter 1, 1.
69 Harris, The Bishop Payne Divinity School, chapter 1, 3.
70 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1880, 50.
71 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1885, 35.
72 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1873, 89.
73 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1873, 137.
74 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1886, 36.
communicants at St. Stephen’s, a very large congregation. Moreover, by 1889, Goodwin was no longer listed as rector, and the Rev. William P. Burke, colored, was listed as the Minister\(^75\) (signifying the person in charge was a deacon).

In Brunswick County, the Rev. Otis Glazebrook of St. Andrew’s and Trinity Parishes reported in 1871 that “in last year’s report... eight of the colored communicants... were omitted because I had not at that time organized a colored congregation.”\(^76\) This is the first mention of what would become a center of colored work in the Diocese. In 1872, Glazebrook garnered Bishop Johns’ approbation: “The success of Mr. Glazebrook’s labors amongst the colored people might encourage other brethren, having similar opportunities, to go and do likewise.”\(^77\) It is interesting to note that Glazebrook reported black communicants with his white communicants (carefully delineated, of course). Numbers of congregational reports exist where black marriages or funerals were reported with white records, but rarely were there black communicants recorded in a primarily white church.\(^78\) In 1878, the Rev. Robb White became the Rector at St. Andrew’s,\(^79\) and he was a great addition to the work among the colored people. He would be a key link to the people of the Zion Union Churches (see below). However, he left St. Andrew’s in 1881 (one suspects that failure to receive his promised salary was a significant reason) although he noted that the colored communicants had purchased a lot for a church in Lawrenceville.\(^80\) By 1882 James Russell was noted as missionary in

\(^75\) *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1889, 162.
\(^76\) *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1871, 117.
\(^77\) *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1872, 44-45.
\(^78\) See for example, *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1872, 134-135 and page 158, where Monumental Church in Richmond lists one colored communicant.
\(^79\) *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1878, 161.
\(^80\) *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1881, 153.
Brunswick County. It seems to be at this point that the black and white congregations separated. Russell was listed as assistant at St. Andrews, the primarily white congregation, but he had three mission churches for which he was responsible. By 1883, St. Andrew’s had no Rector, and Russell was listed as the minister at St. Paul’s. By 1887, thanks in part to Russell’s efforts there were six churches reported in Brunswick County: one white and five black, with the former having 72 communicants, 5 baptisms, and $193.26 in income, and the latter having 207 communicants, 52 baptisms, and $1840.27 in income. There were one white priest, two black priests, and one black deacon in the county.

St. Philip’s Church in Richmond has a more difficult history. While it is reported as having been organized before the Civil War, petitioning for admission to Council in 1866, the church does not appear in the Journals until 1875, when the Bishop reported confirming one there. Brydon reports that the church ceased to exist for three or four years after its organization about 1861, and the building was turned over to a colored Baptist congregation. It was restarted in 1870 in a new location, with a new minister. The first parochial report appeared in 1879, with the Rev. William B. Dame (colored) noting, “This church is quite feeble, and yet there are evidences of vitality.

Confirmations 4, communicants 9, marriages 1. Baptisms: Adult 1, infant 1; total 2. The Sunday School is under the care of Wm. D. Bison, Esq., and numbers eight teachers

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81 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1882, 10.
82 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1882, 138.
83 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1882, 233.
84 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1883, 160-161.
85 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1887, 138-140.
86 Brydon, The Episcopal Church Among the Negroes of Virginia, 8-9.
87 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1875, 37.
88 Brydon, The Episcopal Church Among the Negroes of Virginia, 9.
from our various churches, with 70 scholars.”

St. Philip’s continued its feeble life, with inconsistent parochial reports. Primarily served by colored deacons, the church was occasionally vacant. In 1891, the parochial report of the Rev. John Wesley Johnson showed 53 communicants, 66 scholars and teachers in the Sunday School, and 45 in the parochial school. Total income was $314.40.

The fourth colored congregation we examine came to be known as Payne’s Chapel, in Washington Parish in Westmoreland County, on the Northern Neck. In 1871, the Rt. Rev. John Payne was reported as the acting Rector of St. Peter’s Church in Washington Parish. While the parish was white, he did report a thriving colored Sunday School, with 25 scholars and teachers. The next year he reported 70 in the Sunday School. “The service at Monroe, near President Monroe’s birthplace, is for the colored people, as is also one held on the third Wednesday evening of every month at Wakefield, and on Sunday evenings at Cavalla.” There were 100 colored Sunday scholars in 1874. By 1878, the Rev. William Latané reported the parish statistics, and while he included colored baptisms, funerals, and marriages, there was no mention of colored scholars in a Sunday School. On April 22, 1881, Bishop Whittle consecrated the Payne Memorial Chapel, and thereafter the two, St. Peter’s and Payne Chapel, are reported together. Rev. Latané reported a colored Sunday School that year. St. Peter’s and Payne Chapel continued the way of many rural churches in the following years, with

89 *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1879, 181.
90 *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1891, 220-221.
91 *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1871, 171.
92 *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1872, 191.
93 *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1874, 196.
94 *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1878, 229.
95 *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1881, 47.
96 *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1881, 236-237.
vacancies and missing parochial reports. (One interesting note is that the white matron of 
the combined Normal School and Divinity School in Petersburg was Mrs. Martha Payne, 
the Bishop’s widow.97)

These four churches provide just a glimpse of the ‘colored work’ of the Diocese 
of Virginia. There were occasional successes, most often associated with educational 
enterprises, but often the work was left in the hands of the white rectors of a parish. The 
white clergy were already burdened with work, ministering in multiple locations and 
often failing to receive their promised salary (a standard report in the Journal was the list 
of parishes which had not met their obligations). While the Bishop and Council urged 
local ministers to expand their spheres of influence among the colored population, it was 
the rare white priest who made any such effort. Some of the more important work was 
done by women, black and white, who founded Sunday Schools and worked under the 
authority of white ministers. Bishop Whittle commended Mrs. Jennings, “a faithful 
colored woman”, for her work in Lunenburg in his report of 1880,98 and the white Mrs. 
Pattie Buford’s work with black churches in her area was the cause of the interest of the 
Zion Union Churches in the Episcopal Church.99

If one attempts to track the health of a congregation by its statistics, lack of 
information or non-standard information is a hazard. And of course, these are dry 
statistics, with no information on the reasons for decline or increases. We may speculate: 
most of the colored congregations did rely on outside support, and some clergy were 
better fund-raisers than others. Occasional general economic depression also impacted

97 The Journal of Council (Virginia). 1891, 279.
99 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1879, 39.
both the giving of the congregation and the ability of those outside the parish to contribute to its welfare. In other parochial reports (some noted below), one can track special giving for special projects such as a rectory or classroom building. James Solomon Russell’s reports offered tidbits of good news about his congregations. But while there are few certainties about these colored congregations, it is clear that by the time of the division of the Diocese in 1892, only one of the twenty-one colored congregations in the original Diocese (which covered the state) was self-supporting and unaided by the Diocese.¹⁰⁰ That one is not identified, but was likely to have been St. Paul’s in Lawrenceville, with nearly $1100 in income reported.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1891, 52.
¹⁰¹ The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1892, 174.
Chapter 5 – The Colored Clergy

There are four colored clergymen who prove of great interest to our examination. The Revs. J. S. Atwell, Thomas W. Cain, John H. M. Pollard, and James S. Russell were among the earliest black clergy or the more prominent. It is interesting to see the way they are recorded in the Journal. During the periods of their postulancy and candidacy leading to ordination, race is noted in the Bishop’s report of all candidates. However, after they are ordained Deacon, when the Journals list the clergy of the Diocese, those clergy actually attending the Council, or names of committee members, race was never mentioned. The only place in which race was noted in the official actions of the Diocese precedes the protest of the black clergy mentioned above: “Rev. George F. Bragg presented the following protest from the Colored Clergy, which was ordered to be spread upon the JOURNAL.”

We have already met the Rev. J.S. Atwell, from St. Stephen’s in Petersburg. Stationed in Virginia by the American Church Missionary Society at Bishop Whittle’s request, he was originally from Kentucky. He was ordained presbyter in 1869 by Bishop Whittle, but left Virginia for Georgia in 1872. While pursuing his work at St. Stephen’s in Petersburg, he was also conducting two services per month in Richmond, and “attempting to revive” St. Philip’s Church. While his tenure in the Diocese may have been short, his work at St. Stephen’s was foundational.

102 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1889, 75.
103 Brydon, The Episcopal Church Among the Negroes of Virginia, 9-10.
The Journal of 1878 lists Cain as a candidate for priest’s orders.\textsuperscript{104} That may have been a misprint, for the Journal of 1880 notes that he was ordained Deacon on December 21, 1879, to serve at St. Philip’s in Richmond.\textsuperscript{105} His work there was aided by the Diocesan Missionary Society, which provided financial support to numbers of clergy in the Diocese.\textsuperscript{106} In 1881, his report notes that he was paid his promised salary of $420.\textsuperscript{107} He was finally ordained priest on April 29, 1883,\textsuperscript{108} and his report in the Journal of Council lists him as Rector of the parish (he had previously been listed as ‘Minister’). St. Philip’s was in an ‘up’ year, for the parish income was $1282.99. Cain seems to have been regularly in attendance at the Diocesan Council, and was included when a committee was formed to consider a canon on Colored Mission Churches in 1886.\textsuperscript{109} However, by 1888 he had left the Diocese, with a letter dimissory to Texas.\textsuperscript{110}

The Journal of 1878 lists Pollard as a candidate for deacon’s orders.\textsuperscript{111} He was ordained to the diaconate on June 28, 1878 in the chapel at the Virginia Theological Seminary, to be assigned to Alexandria.\textsuperscript{112} In 1880, he was reassigned to Petersburg, to assist with the colored work there.\textsuperscript{113} In 1882, Bishop Whittle noted that he was preaching once a month in Trinity Chapel in Lunenburg.\textsuperscript{114} The 1884 Journal of Council shows his location as Norfolk,\textsuperscript{115} and he is now shown as a candidate for priest’s

\textsuperscript{104} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1878, 44.
\textsuperscript{105} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1880, 35.
\textsuperscript{106} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1880, 55.
\textsuperscript{107} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1881, 193-194.
\textsuperscript{108} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1883, 31.
\textsuperscript{109} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1886, 20-21.
\textsuperscript{110} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1888, 27.
\textsuperscript{111} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1878, 44.
\textsuperscript{112} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1879, 33.
\textsuperscript{113} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1880, 37.
\textsuperscript{114} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1882, 34.
\textsuperscript{115} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1884, 10.
orders. In 1885, Bishop Whittle’s report of a visitation in Norfolk does not sound promising: “Mr. Pollard, under very unfavorable circumstances, has much to encourage him, but he must have a church building and the means to pay at least two teachers to make his mission a success.” He was finally ordained presbyter December 14, 1886 in St. Paul’s, Norfolk, a white church, but the same journal which records that action notes his letter dimissory to South Carolina. He later became Archdeacon in North Carolina.

The Rev. James Solomon Russell is first mentioned in the Journal of Council when his postulancy is noted in 1880. We have already noted that the Divinity School in Petersburg was formed partly as a result of his educational needs. He was trained at the Branch School, and ordained Deacon by Bishop Whittle on March 9, 1882. He is reported in that year’s Journal as a missionary in Brunswick County, and the Bishop confirmed 18 colored people in St. Andrew’s Church (a white church) on April 25 of that year. The Bishop’s report of the confirmation noted that Zion Union Church members were among those confirmed. Russell had two or three congregations at all times, and was active in ministry in several counties. He was ordained priest on February 9, 1887.

116 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1884, 28.
117 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1885, 29-30.
118 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1887, 29.
119 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1887, 32.
120 Brydon, The Episcopal Church Among the Negroes of Virginia, 12.
121 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1880, 35.
122 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1882, 32-33.
123 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1882, 34.
124 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1882, 34.
125 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1887, 30.

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In October of 1886, Bishop Whittle made a tour of the colored congregations in Brunswick and Mecklenburg counties, accompanied by Russell and a white priest, and confirmed 170 in his tour.\textsuperscript{126} As noted above, by 1887, there was an extensive colored church infrastructure in Brunswick County and neighboring counties, and one should lay the responsibility for that success as Russell’s feet. His work in St. Paul’s Normal School continued in historically black St. Paul’s College, one of three such Episcopal colleges (St. Paul’s was closed in 2013).

When we examine the stories of these men as it could be determined from the Journals, we must note the extent of time between the date of their ordination to the diaconate, and the date on which they were ordained presbyter. To recap:

- **Cain** December 21, 1879-Deacon  
  April 23, 1883-Priest
- **Pollard** June 28, 1878-Deacon  
  December 14, 1886-Priest
- **Russell** March 9, 1882-Deacon  
  February 9, 1887-Priest

There is no evidence that white deacons were held in their order for such extended periods of time. There are two possible reasons: it may very well be that these men, with more limited prior educational opportunities, were not as well prepared for the canonical examinations required of those being ordained to the priesthood, and were held back for remedial work. Professor Spencer of the Branch School would occasionally note the poor preparation of his students. Pollard was actually a student at the Branch School for two years after his ordination to the Diaconate.\textsuperscript{127} The letters dimissory for other Dioceses noted for Cain and Pollard soon after their ordinations as presbyters points out a second possibility: it seems that as deacons they were totally under the Bishop’s

\textsuperscript{126} *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1887, 28-29.
\textsuperscript{127} Brydon, *The Episcopal Church Among the Negroes of Virginia*, 12.
authority as to where their ministries were located. Note Pollard’s ‘assignments’ above. It may be that the Bishop lost that authority once the man was ordained presbyter. Often the Bishop’s report would note that Virginia raised up many men for the ministry, only to lose them quickly to other dioceses. It may be that these men’s presbyteral ordinations were delayed in order to keep them a bit longer. And of course, we cannot dismiss the possibility that their presbyteral ordinations were delayed because they were colored. Of those we have been able to follow, two left the Diocese soon upon ordination as a presbyter. They may well have received a better offer elsewhere.
Chapter 6 – The Zion Union Apostolic Churches

The 1879 Journal of Council begins the story of the one of the most interesting events of the colored work in the Diocese. Bishop Whittle was reporting on work in the Diocese, and he noted the progress of the colored work:

“I am glad to be able to report a small increase in the number of colored persons confirmed. This portion of our population is becoming more and more accessible to the teaching and influence of our church, and the time has arrived, it appears to me, when every minister who believes that they are included in the Saviour's redeeming work, should believe also that they are included in the commission which commands him to preach the gospel to every creature. It will be seen from the parochial reports that quite a number of the brethren of the clergy, and of the laity are laboring amongst the colored people, and, when all things are considered, with as much encouragement and success as they have any right to expect, but as yet we have only made a beginning in the great field which God has opened everywhere around us. . . .

In Brunswick county a devoted lady by simply manifesting the spirit and following the example of the blessed Saviour, has so gained the confidence of the colored people that, by means of her influence, an organized body, composed of a number of preachers and of several thousand members, has asked to be received into communion with our church.”  

The devoted lady was Mrs. Pattie Buford of St. Andrew’s Church in Lawrenceville. The Rev. Drs. Dashiell and Weddell were dispatched by the missionary committee to confer with the bishops and ministers of the Zion Union organization. Their report is particularly helpful to comprehend the Episcopal Diocese’s view of the petition from the Zion Union Apostolic Churches.

We were notified that the ministers and members of this religious body were seeking to be taken into the care of our church. . . We went to the place of meeting at half-past ten o’clock Wednesday morning. There were

128 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1879, 36-37.
129 Brydon, The Episcopal Church Among the Negroes of Virginia, 10.
130 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1879, 37.
upon the ground in waiting for us, fifteen of the ministers and a thousand or
twelve hundred from their various congregations. . . .

The result of the conference was that by an unanimous vote the
organization puts itself into the care of the Protestant Episcopal Church,
giving their assent to our doctrine, discipline and worship. . . .

It ought to be understood by all our diocese, and especially by
friends in the North, that these ministers and their congregations desire to be
with us - not because of Episcopacy, not because they have any trouble in
their minds concerning the validity of their orders. . . . They have been led
to desire such an union for reasons which in our judgment are more to the
glory of God and to the credit of our church.

In their poverty and friendlessness, along with their yearning for a
better condition, these people have been helped by our church through one
of its female communicants. Through her they have gotten to some extent
education for their children - care for their sick and their aged - religious
books, such as Bibles, Prayer Books and Catechisms, for their Sunday
schools, and commentaries for their ministers. . . . They have said just about
this - ‘We wish to go with you for we believe the Lord is with you.’

As your committee we will briefly express our belief that with
proper care we can reach and impress a very large colored population, and
that we can rely upon many of them to be grateful and loyal children of our
ecclesiastical household. . . .

We were deeply affected by our interviews with them. They ap-
preciate the situation. They have been praying for help - the help has seemed
to come - they want to go hand in hand with the people who have shown for
them the feeling of brethren. The responsibility now upon our church we
think is a most serious one. It may be a crisis with these negroes; it is a crisis
with us.

We recommend that effort be made by this executive committee to
procure a suitable clergyman who shall work amongst their congregations as
an evangelist. He would find ample work in a field which, in our judgment,
has nowhere else an equal in the number and in the teachable spirit of those
to whom he would minister.

T. G. DASHIELL, A. W. WEDDELL

Where did the Zion Union Churches come from? Brydon says they were
organized in 1869, along Methodist lines, with an “elaborate system of bishops and
ministers.” There were many adherents in Brunswick and Mecklenburg counties, and he
notes that James Russell was the secretary of their organization. The 1879 report on

131 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1879, 37-38.
132 Brydon, The Episcopal Church Among the Negroes of Virginia, 10.
The State of the Church notes that their bishop, more than 20 preachers, and over 2000 communicants were seeking entry into the Episcopal Church.\textsuperscript{133} This was an extraordinary opportunity for the church, to have ready-made congregations dropped into their laps.

But there were complications. The Committee on Colored Work, to whom Bishop Whittle’s report on the Zion Union Apostolic Church was referred, was concerned about the vagueness of their application to become a part of the Diocese. In other words, there had been no formal application under the appropriate Canons. Nevertheless, the committee did want to encourage the work, so they proposed a series of actions. They proposed that an evangelist be appointed to the work, under a special committee of the Revs. Robb White and E. B. Jones, already in the Lawrenceville area, and the Rev. R. A. Goodwin (later to be associated with St. Stephen’s, Petersburg) and J. R. Jones, Esq. These men were authorized to employ as Catechists the ministers of the Zion Union Churches and encourage candidates for ordained ministry among the Zion Unionists. The Diocesan Missionary Society and Committee on Colored Congregations were directed to provide Sunday School and day school materials. Most interestingly, they also proposed “[t]hat as colored ministers are ordained, they be received, as heretofore, to seats and to all the privileges of members of this Council, and that the status of colored Episcopal congregations (if any) which may be formed, as to lay representation in the Council, be left for future consideration and decision.” And “[l]astly, that our deputies to the next General Convention be charged with the duty of bringing before the house of clerical and lay deputies the question of the expediency of giving to the colored

\textsuperscript{133} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1879, 84.
people of Virginia and the other Southern States, when desired, a full and complete
curch organization of their own race, under such constitutional and canonical provisions
as the General Convention in their wisdom may devise and ordain." All of their
proposals were accepted by the Council.

One of the greatest concerns about the Zion Union ministers becoming Episcopal
ministers related to their lack of basic education. These men wanted to come directly into
ordained Episcopal ministry, but "the educational requirements of the ministry were . . .
beyond their ability." The next report of the special committee to the 1880 Council
remarked:

In reply to the question, "How close do you wish the union between
us to be?" they replied, "As close as we can get." The most serious question
which your committee has had to consider and decide has been with
reference to the confirmation of their ministers. When the Bishop, in
November last, visited the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, where our Church
School for them is held, quite a number of their ministers, as well as
members, desired to be confirmed; but it was the unanimous opinion of the
committee, and we were glad to find that the Bishop was of the same
opinion, that these ministers ought not, at this time to be confirmed. By
confirmation they would have become laymen in the Episcopal Church.
They are not ready for ordination. Not being authorized to perform the
ministerial functions, their flocks would have been scattered, and, in many
cases, lost to our influence. Many of these ministers are studying in the
hope that they may yet be ordained in our Church. In many cases we know
them to be godly, earnest men, and trust that some of them may at least be
able to take deacons' orders in the Church, and work under a presbyter,
who, as evangelist shall be over all their congregations, so far as our
Church is concerned."

Keeping in mind the time overlap of some of these reports, we should recall that
in the same Journal of Council (1880), it is noted the James Russell had been accepted as

134 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1879, 88-89.
135 Brydon, The Episcopal Church Among the Negros of Virginia, 11.
136 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1880, 66.
a postulant.  It is clear that some of the Zion Unionists had already begun the process of pursuing the formal education they would need to be ordained in the Episcopal Church.

The Rev. Robb White had taken the job of Evangelist to the Zion Union churches as of July 1, 1879. The letter of welcome issued by the 1879 Council to the ministers and members of the Zion Union Apostolic Churches had made a favorable impression upon them. He reported a meeting of the Zion Union Apostolic Church ministers and delegates on March 10, 1880, where they met to consider their present and future relations to the Episcopal Church:

Resolved, 1st. That holding firmly to our church organization as now constituted, and with no present desire to change the same, we feel the deepest gratitude to the Protestant Episcopal Church for the Christian love and charity which has been extended to us by the same in teaching and disciplining our people, aiding them to embrace a pure Christian faith, and to lead godly and Christian lives.

2nd. That we earnestly desire that the work controlled by the same principle shall be continued, as we feel that great spiritual improvement to our churches has resulted from the faithful Christian teaching and instruction of Mrs. Buford, the missionary, and others of the committee charged with that work.

3rd. That the Book of Common Prayer of the Protestant Episcopal Church contains sound doctrine for the edification of all Christian people, and we recommend its use in our churches as the ministers shall find it practicable.

4th. That we desire to record our deep sense of gratitude to Mrs. F. E. Buford, and our high appreciation of her untiring zeal and devoted work, and we heartily pray Almighty God to prolong her life to us for future usefulness among our people.

5th. That we desire that Rev Robb White shall be continued as missionary to the churches of our communion.


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137 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1880, 35.
It appears that at least one of the appended names, William E. Howell, was later ordained Deacon in the Church.\textsuperscript{138}

White’s final report as Evangelist (he had been doing the job only half-time) reveals that there were Zion Union Churches in North Carolina (Brunswick County is on the state line) and he had visited them with Bishop Lyman’s permission. There had been a convention of the Zion Union Churches in Boydton, and one of their bishops named William Howell had attacked the Episcopal Church. White was informed that resolutions confirming the relationship between the Zion Union Churches and the Episcopal Church were passed over Bishop Howell’s opposition. Apparently the Episcopal emphasis on education was a concern to Howell, and he attempted to ostracize those who sought further education. Howell is said to have been removed from the Zion Union ministry. While White had already tendered his resignation as of July 1, 1881, the Zion Unionists had asked him to stay until their annual meeting in August 1881, and in his report White leaves it to Bishop Whittle to decide his leaving date. He regretted leaving them.\textsuperscript{139}

The committee reporting on the Status of the Church noted that the Zion Union Churches were happy with the situation as it was: they continued to use the Prayer Book (as they were able) as it contained sound doctrine; they were grateful to the Episcopal Church, but they continued to prefer their own organization. The committee declined to consider a replacement for the Rev. White to work among the Zion Union Churches, as they thought that it was now high time for the local parish rectors in Mecklenburg and Brunswick counties to take over. They did recommend that Bishop Whittle appoint

\textsuperscript{138} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1886, 32, records the ordination of 4 colored men to the diaconate at St. Stephen’s in Petersburg, including William E. Howell, on December 11, 1885.

\textsuperscript{139} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1881, 241-243.
assistants for these clergy, for work among the colored people. By 1882, Russell was listed as resident in Brunswick County.

It would seem that this was the end of the formal relationship between the Zion Union Apostolic Churches and the Episcopal Church. However, in 1882, Professor Spencer at the Branch Divinity School reports having five new students from the Zion Union churches: their “instruction has been necessarily of a most elementary character, as the minds of the students permitted of no other.” While the formal relationship seems to have ended with White’s resignation, the informal relationship was strengthened with Russell’s arrival. While Norman states that Russell himself never identified the church of his youth, Brydon consistently notes that he was from the Zion Union Churches. That would explain a great deal of his success in his missionary work. He was known to them, and the ministers could easily observe any advantages that ordination in the Episcopal Church had brought to his congregations. Indeed, his 1882 report shows that one of his three congregations is a Zion Union church, located at Mercy Seat, with a large Sunday School there.

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140 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1881, 86-88.
141 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1882, 10.
142 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1882, 64.
143 Norman, James Solomon Russell, Educator, Archdeacon and Saint of Southern Virginia, 17.
144 Brydon, The Episcopal Church Among the Negroes of Virginia, 10.
145 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1882, 233.
Chapter 7 – The Colored Congregations and Ecclesiastical Structure

What to do with colored congregations was a problem even before the Civil War. As early as 1860, the Diocese appointed a Standing Committee on Colored Congregations. It seems to have been only marginally successful, however. In the Diocesan list of the various committees of the Council, it was not listed.\textsuperscript{146} In an address in 1888, even Assistant Bishop Randolph notes the committee’s lack of effective work, indeed invisibility.\textsuperscript{147} Instead, as a colored congregation approached the Council for recognition, as in the case of St. Stephen’s in 1869, they were referred to the care of a non-functional Standing Committee on Colored Work. While another committee was appointed,\textsuperscript{148} a motion to consider a canon defining the position of colored congregations was defeated.\textsuperscript{149}

There were stirrings in the national church as well about missions among the colored people. In December 1876, Bishop Whittle attended the Executive Committee of the Commission of Home Missions to Colored People in New York City, at the request of the Diocesan Standing Committee on Colored Congregations. He was to speak about the work in Petersburg.\textsuperscript{150}

But it is important to understand that these years also were years when there were other concerns: round dancing was soundly denounced by the Bishop in 1878 and he

\textsuperscript{146} See for example, \textit{The Journal of Council (Virginia)}, 1887, 22-24, where standing committees on Credentials, State of the Church, Widows’ and Orphans’ Fund, Episcopal Fund, Brotherhood, Disabled Clergy, Bruce Fund, Diocesan Missionary Society, Parochial Reports, Admission of New Parishes, Elections, Finance, Clerical Support, and Sunday Schools are enumerated. But there was no enumeration of the membership of the standing committee on Colored Work.

\textsuperscript{147} \textit{The Journal of Council (Virginia)}, 1888, 39.

\textsuperscript{148} \textit{The Journal of Council (Virginia)}, 1869, 54-57.

\textsuperscript{149} \textit{The Journal of Council (Virginia)}, 1869, 51.

\textsuperscript{150} \textit{The Journal of Council (Virginia)}, 1877, 33.
hoped that no one doing such a thing will be presented for confirmation.\footnote{The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1878, 51-52.} The 1878 Council passed a resolution iterating prior exhortations against the evils of social drinking.\footnote{The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1878, 79.} And finally, there was a report on the delinquencies of salaries promised to ministers — a continuing problem.\footnote{The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1878, 89-91.} In 1879, the Bishop’s report on the issue of ritualistic innovations (flowers, colored altar cloths for various church seasons, and “groups of variegatedly vested and artistically attitudinizing priests”) takes up fourteen pages of the Journal record as he exhorts his clergy to avoid such things.\footnote{The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1879, 40-53.} (Ritualism derivative of the Oxford Movement in England was perhaps delayed in its arrival in Virginia by the Civil War.)

The colored work takes up space in the Journals, but the words are only that. The 1879 Standing Committee on Colored Work of thirteen persons was appointed, but only one of them (W. M. Dame) appears to have been colored. The names listed are familiar ones to the reader of Journals of Council, leading rectors and laymen all, but the Rev. Giles Cooke of Petersburg, a white man leading the strongest colored congregation in the Diocese, is not on the committee.\footnote{The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1879, 97.} The 1879 Special Committee on the Zion Union Churches preferred to recommend that any clergy from those churches subsequently ordained in the Episcopal Church be given the same privileges as other members of Council. However they postponed the matter of the status of the congregations or of lay representation.\footnote{The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1879, 89.} One who reads these records can be surprised at the lack of proactive
planning for the incorporation of those who would come to the Church as a result of this important ministry of the Diocese.

The 1882 report on colored work states that the work is growing though small. There were three colored church buildings, three colored clergymen, and four [white?] clergymen giving their entire time to colored work. There were 1500 scholars in colored Sunday Schools, and 82 colored persons were confirmed by bishop. There were parochial schools in Petersburg, Richmond, Gordonsville, Lexington, Powhatan, Halifax, Charlotte, Lunenburg, including sewing schools. "In conclusion – while frankly confessing that the Diocese of Virginia has not measured up to the full standard of its duty, we rejoice to find in the facts as herein given, assurance that this important department is by no means ignored nor neglected." And in 1883, Bishop Whittle noted that he has given a white church in Essex County, and St. Stephen’s Church, Bristol Parish, Petersburg, permission to organize as a mission church under Canon XII of the Diocese. This seems to be the first time that any black church has been given official status. In the same report, Bishop Whittle notes that “[o]ne of the most important, difficult, and pressing questions we have to determine is, how may our Church best do the work amongst this people which God has given it to do? And as, in my judgment, proposing the first and wisest step towards the solutions of this question, I was rejoiced to receive” from Bishop Green of Mississippi, an invitation to Sewanee in July, 1883. He was not able to attend the Sewanee Conference but had asked the Executive Committee of the Diocesan Missionary Society to select two presbyters and two

\[157\] The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1882, 70-71.

\[158\] The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1883, 35.
alternates and defray their expenses.\textsuperscript{159} And the Committee on Diocesan Colored Work reported that they believed the question to be discussed at Sewanee was quite serious, and offered the following opinion:

We believe that the true – the only solution of our Church’s relation to the colored race will be found in giving them the right and encouraging them to the exercise of their right in a separate organization. They have asked, as we know, and it is natural that they should request, separate congregational organizations. The race difficulty, in a social point of view, is a real one. The colored people recognize it as clearly as the white, and are prepared to act accordingly. A white pastor to a colored congregation is not and cannot be such a pastor as a congregation desires and really needs. He may visit the homes of the people, he may go in and out of their families, but there is no such free, unrestrained recognition of their families by his. . . .

Our white congregations have no intention of asking colored men to be their rectors. It is in no spirit of resentment, but in the natural desire for more than the semblance of church relationship that the colored people ask that their pastors shall be of their own race.

What is true of congregations, is in its principle true of the larger organizations. The intercourse between the white and the colored ministers and laymen in Councils and Conventions is not, and whilst they are so few in number and their churches are so feeble, as not to have lay representation, it very surely will not be as real as it ought to be between Christian men of the same Church. There is brotherly kindness, genuine, unfeigned. There is a cordial welcome to every colored man who enters our Councils, but all of us know that under the present condition of things, our colored brethren, though they have every right upon this floor with the rest of us, do not feel that they have the same measure of influence which we all would desire for them. However much this or any other Diocese might need a Bishop, . . . we know that we would never make choice of any other than a white Bishop to go in and out amongst our families and congregations. . . .

We submit, that in order to have the work thoroughly done, there must be thorough organization, and such an organization as will not make this large body of our population feel that they are merely patronized. We trust the Council will agree with us in the request that our Deputies to the General Convention will use their best efforts to have the colored people encouraged to prepare for an organization which will be their own, subject, of course, to the General Convention, but in other respects independent and separate, and under the fostering care of the General Church to devise and

\textsuperscript{159} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1883, 36-37. The Sewanee Conference of 1883 was convened by the Dioceses of the Civil War Confederacy to examine the relationship of the Church to the former slave populations.
execute for themselves such plans as shall conduce to their moral and spiritual well-being.

This report was unanimously approved by Council.¹⁶⁰

In October 1883 Alfred Randolph was consecrated as the Assistant Bishop of the Diocese. In his first visit to St. Stephen’s in March of 1884, he noted with approval the prudence and fidelity with which the mission was conducted. But he closed his report by saying, “Questions of organization and of the relation of these missions to the government of the Church can afford to wait.”¹⁶¹ It is interesting to note that he did not long hold this opinion.

What was happening? The work was becoming successful! Bishop Whittle noted in 1885 that he had confirmed 864 during the year, of whom 216 were colored - that is, 25%. Additionally, Professor Spencer had reported 14 students at the Branch School, of whom seven were candidates for deacon.¹⁶² The Diocesan Committee on the Separate Organization of the Colored People continued and was enlarged to thirteen men, but none of them, lay or clergy, are identifiable as colored.¹⁶³

Bishop Randolph may have himself encouraged attitudes which prevented the inclusion of colored clergy in the committees to decide their ecclesiastical fate. The portion of Randolph’s 1886 address about the colored work is printed here in detail for the flavor it offers:

I wish to repeat here some extracts from a published communication of my own, suggested by the visits recorded in this report:
A doubt exists in the minds of many of our people as to the adaptation of our Church to the religious education of this race. That doubt

¹⁶⁰ The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1883, 78-80.
¹⁶¹ The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1884, 6, 25, 37-38.
¹⁶² The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1885, 34.
¹⁶³ The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1885, 69.
is theoretical. Wherever the practical effort has been made the results have dissipated the impression. . . . [The Episcopal Church] teaches that a Christian is not only one who prays in private and in public, who reads his Bible, who spends time in religious thought and meditation, who is studying to work out his salvation with fear and trembling, but he must be truthful and honest and just and temperate and pure and self-controlled and kindly and loving towards his fellow-men. . . . The proposition that [the Negro] is incapable of education . . . is equivalent to the proposition that he is incapable of salvation by the gospel. Surely only the ignorant and the unthinking among us can adopt such a conclusion. The church that addresses itself to the mighty task of bridging over the gulf between Christian faith and Christian morals, in the mind of the negro, is the one best adapted to bear to him the message of the gospel.

If I were a politician I would advocate the Christian education of the colored population, as the strongest ground for the stability of our political institutions. . . . As a political economist I would advocate the evangelizing of the race, as contributing to national wealth and material prosperity. . . . If I were engaged in a trade I would advocate their Christian education, for as they are elevated by the power of the gospel all the conditions of their temporal life would be progressively improved. . . . But these are not the motives which impel the Christian Church in the work of their evangelization. These incidental blessings follow in the pathway of the Christian faith, but they are as nothing compared with the infinite blessings which Christ brings to all of the children of men. We must refuse to estimate the value of our missionary efforts in terms of material progress.

We must believe that these people have souls to be saved; we must believe that Christ lays upon Christians the responsibility of bringing these wanderers home to God. This alone can kindle the enthusiasm and inspire the self-sacrifice needed for the work. If we do that, Christ will take the future of the two races . . . into His own hands. He will cause them to dwell together in peace, each filling its own sphere and working out its own destiny. He will solve the problems that statesmen cannot solve with reference to the relations and development of the races under a common government; He will bless us in the great work He has given us to do, and open the way, perhaps in the near future, for our colored population, Christianized and civilized, to bear to their own race, in the long darkened continent of Africa, the salvation of the Gospel for the life here and the life that is to come. 7

The views here expressed have been confirmed by contact with this work, and reflection upon the problems it involves; during thirteen years of my ministry. 164

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164 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1886, 44-47.
Bishop Randolph’s paternalistic, evangelical, social gospel strikes an odd chord. Despite his statements about winning these ‘heathen’ to Christ, one is left to wonder about his motivations for colored evangelism.

The 1886 Report of the Committee on Separate Organization for Colored Brethren strikes a similarly odd note. While it might have been preferable for the races to worship together, the colored people had acted to remove themselves from white churches in which they once worshiped; it was not the action of the whites to remove them. Even the Methodists and Baptists had come to understand that separate organizations were necessary. It was a foregone conclusion that in these separate congregations they would not tolerate white ministers, so the committee concluded that the wisest action was to train colored ministers for the mission. “The whites, to whom it is in the Providence of God committed, must sedulously guard and preserve inviolate in its purity that deposit of truth and of duty which it is theirs to keep and to transmit. Nothing would be gained for either race by which this previous deposit was imperilled (sic).” Using the example of various Indian Missionary Dioceses established by the General Convention, they suggested the same for the colored people: a Colored Missionary jurisdiction for the Diocese. 165 To that end, they proposed Canon XIII of the Diocese. After discussion and amendment, 166 the canon was adopted as amended in a vote by orders: Clergy 68-18 (Cain and Pollard were among the Noes; Russell was absent from Council) and Lay: 72-6. 167 The Canon read:

OF COLORED MISSION CHURCHES.
Section I. The colored people of Virginia, who are, or may hereafter be, connected with the Protestant Episcopal Church, shall

165 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1886, 55-57.
166 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1886, 57-63.
constitute a Missionary jurisdiction of the Diocese.

Sec. 2. It shall be lawful to organize Mission churches or congregations, composed exclusively of colored persons, within the limits of any already existing Parish, subject to the same conditions and regulations as are other Mission churches (see Canon XII), and specially those of this Canon.

Sec. 3. Colored churches and congregations . . . may be associated with other churches similarly constituted in convocations. . . .

A General Convocation to be composed of two clerical and two lay deputies from each local convocation, may be held at such time and place . . . to be presided over by the Bishop or Assistant Bishop, with power to consult and devise measures for their common welfare, which measures shall take effect when approved by the Council of the Diocese.

Sec. 4. Colored congregations . . . may acquire and hold property of their own . . . but cannot come into possession of the property of any white congregation, except by transfer, under the laws of the State of Virginia. . . .

Sec. 5. There may be appointed by the Bishop one or more Presbyters, who shall have general supervision of the colored churches and congregations within a prescribed district, whose duty it shall be to preside at meetings of convocation; to administer the Lord's supper for colored deacons; to advise and aid such colored deacons, and when desired by themselves, colored Presbyters also, in preparing classes for confirmation, and in general to discharge such other duties as may be assigned by the Bishop.\(^{168}\)

The date was 1886 and our survey in Chapter 1 helps us understand that what was happening in Virginia politics might possibly be surfacing in the Council. Separation, not integration, was becoming the rule. During the following year’s Council (1887), the Rev. E. Hubard offered the following motion to completely reconsider the inclusion of colored ministers and laity. The motion was tabled and apparently never acted upon.

\textit{Whereas}, it is a matter of fact well know to all the members of this Council and of this Diocese, that the Constitution of the Church in this Diocese was adopted altogether by white congregations, and that the Church, from its reorganization in 1785 to the year 1865, was administered altogether upon the basis of a white membership and of a white constituency and a white Convention or Council; and \textit{Whereas}, although no legislation to that end has ever been had, colored ministers have been allowed to sit in this Council; and

\(^{168}\) \textit{The Journal of Council (Virginia)}, 1886, 63.
Whereas, it is a matter of anxious concern with many, whether such a change in the membership of our Diocesan Council is in accordance with the fundamental law of this Diocese, as originally adopted. Resolved, That the matters involved herein be referred to a committee to consider and report to this Council what action in the premises is expedient, and the form of the same.” 169

At the same time there was much self-congratulation from those preparing the report on the State of the Church: the parochial reports revealed significant growth in the black congregations. There had been 215 colored among 1,544 baptisms; 291 colored among a total of 1,350 confirmations; 924 out of 15,299 communicants in the Diocese were colored; 110 of 450 marriages were colored; of 947 funerals, 63 were colored; and of 14,806 Sunday School scholars and teachers, 2,307 were colored.170

In 1888, Bishop Whittle was kept from Council by illness, and Bishop Randolph presided over the Council.171 He reported that that there had been no implementation of Canon XIII, with the exception of the appointment of the Rev. E. B. Jones (white) to supervise the colored churches in Mecklenburg, Brunswick, Lunenburg, and Nottoway counties.172 Here is how the Bishop saw it: the colored clergy were not unwise, and they realized that real power arose out of the Diocesan Council. However, during the discussion of the canon the year before, it was stated that nothing in the canon was to operate to sever the relationship of the colored clergy and the Council. Under Canon XIII, the separate African-American organization’s clergy representatives were to have been their sole representatives in Council. “But if the colored clergy, under the interpretation of the second article of the Constitution, [dealing with membership in the

169 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1887, 57.
170 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1887, 56, 71.
171 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1888, 19, 22.
172 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1888, 40-41.
larger Council of the Diocese] continued to be members of the Council with all the functions of membership, the provisions of the fourth section” of Canon XIII, establishing the separate colored organization, was contradictory.\textsuperscript{173} Therefore, Bishop Randolph implied that the colored convocation had become a voluntary organization, with no legislative function at all.

A committee was appointed to respond to the Bishop’s address, and proposed a change in Article II of the Constitution of the Diocese, governing representation in the Council. The current references to clergy and laymembers would include the phrase ‘(being white),’ and add a new Section 3: “The Council shall yet further be composed of four clerical delegates from the colored missionary jurisdiction of the Diocese, as constituted under Canon XIII - of Colored Mission churches. The colored clergy now connected with the Diocese shall however retain their right to a seat and voice in the Council.”\textsuperscript{174} In an unusual event, there were three colored clergy (James S. Russell, George F. Bragg, Jr, G. E. Howell) on this committee, and they submitted a minority report: “While we appreciate the earnest desire of the majority of this committee to honestly and fairly settle this question in such as manner as they think will best promote the work among our people, yet we are conscientiously unable to concur with them in their recommendation.”\textsuperscript{175} The resolution to refer the amendment to the Vestries of the churches of the Diocese passed easily. As with other constitutional changes, a second reading in the following year was required.

\textsuperscript{173} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1888, 41.
\textsuperscript{174} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1888, 70.
\textsuperscript{175} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1888,70-71.
In 1889, Bishop Randolph again stated his opposition to the presence of colored representatives in the Council.176 Noting that the Episcopal Church is, more than perhaps any other, an elected government of the church,

Do we propose to clothe people who are not twenty-one years of age, no, not ten years of age, these powers of self-development, with the responsibilities of a complex government like this? Is it justice to the doctrine, discipline and worship of that grand Church which we have inherited to entrust its purity, its stability and its mighty mission under God to a people who have had no such training, no such discipline of ages of self-control and of moral and intellectual progress? The question ... is not a question of race, a question of color, but it is a question of faculty, of ability. It is a question of capacity of character.177

The proposed amendment to Title II of the Constitution, removing colored members, lay and ordained, from participation in the Diocesan Council unless they were representatives of the Colored Missionary Jurisdiction, passed in 1888, and was passed on a second reading in 1889 (Clergy: aye 51, nay 46; Lay; aye 72, nay 23). This left present and future canonically resident colored clergy unable to have seat and voice in council unless they were one of the four elected clerical delegates from the colored missionary jurisdiction.178 Subsequent proposals to amend followed: one would have allowed two clergy and two lay representatives from the colored convention (as opposed to four clergy) and another would have allowed the colored representatives, clergy or lay, to vote only on matters affecting the colored convention. Finally, one clergyman offered an amendment to grandfather in the current colored clergymen of the Diocese: “The colored Clergy connected with the Diocese on May 1st, 1889, shall, however, retain their right to

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177 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1889, 44.
178 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1889, 46-47.
a seat and voice in the Council so long as they shall retain their canonical connection with
the Diocese, and subject to the restrictions and limitations affecting the rights of the
Clergy to seats and voice in the Council, as provided by Section 1 of this Article of the
Constitution.”\footnote{179} All this was again referred to a committee, which reported out a newer
version of Article II. The references to white clergy in Section 1 were removed, but a
new clause was added: “Provided further, that only such Colored Ministers shall be
members as are specified in Section 3 of this Article.” Likewise for Section 2:
“Provided, that only such colored delegates shall be members as are specified in Section 3
of this Article.” And Section 3 was completely rewritten: “The Council shall also be
composed of the Colored Ministers having a seat and voice in the Council on the 17th
day of May, 1889, and of two Clerical and two Lay delegates from the Colored
Missionary Jurisdiction of the Diocese, as the same is now or may hereafter be constituted
by Canon.”\footnote{180} This was the final product, against which the colored ministers protested
(see Chapter 3).

The proposed substitute amendment passed in 1889\footnote{181} and in a second reading in
1890.\footnote{182} Now Article II of the Constitution, specifying the composition of the Diocesan
Council, included the Bishops, all white ministers in parishes, professors from the
Virginia Theological Seminary, missionaries, and disabled clergy. But the only colored
clergy to be included were two clergy delegates from the Colored Missionary Jurisdiction
and those colored clergy canonically resident on May 17, 1889.\footnote{183}

\footnote{179 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1889, 49-50.}
\footnote{180 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1889, 73-74.}
\footnote{181 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1889, 76.}
\footnote{182 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1890, 67-68.}
\footnote{183 Article II, as amended is found in Appendix I.}
As a result of the amendment of Article II of the Constitution, Canon XIII was also amended unanimously in 1890 as well. All African-Americans were now placed in the Colored Missionary Jurisdiction of the Diocese. Provisions included the establishment of colored congregations under the same provisions as any other congregations, but specified that the consent of nearby vestries to such establishment was not necessary. A Presbytery (race not specified) appointed by the Bishop was to have supervision of the colored churches and act as the Bishop prescribed. The Colored Convocation would initially be convened by the Bishop but subsequent meetings were to be determined by the Convocation itself. The Bishop and any assistant Bishop were *ex officio* members of the Convocation, and the Bishop was the President. Every colored minister was automatically a member, and each colored congregation was entitled to one lay delegate. The Convocation was to elect two lay and two clergy representatives to “represent them in the Council of the Diocese”. Finally, each congregation could hold real and personal property on its own, and transfers of such property between white and colored congregations was to be governed by the laws of the State of Virginia.\(^{184}\)

\(^{184}\) *The Journal of Council (Virginia)*, 1890, 102. The complete Canon XIII is presented in Appendix II.
In the Diocesan Journal of 1891, statistics were provided for two proposed new dioceses which would be formed in 1892.\textsuperscript{185}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Diocese of Virginia (northern Virginia)</th>
<th>New Diocese (as yet unnamed; southern Virginia from Lee Co. in the far west, to Accomack Co. on the Eastern Shore)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White clergy:</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored clergy:</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White communicants:</td>
<td>9,464</td>
<td>9,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored communicants:</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>1,156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.5% of total of 9,612)</td>
<td>(11.25% of total of 10,276)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White congregations:</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored congregations:</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White self-supporting:</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored self-supporting:</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There had been 1,304 colored communicants in the entire diocese before division; the number had barely doubled in 1936, to 2,619 (200\% increase). There were 18,564 white communicants in the report above, and 38,665 white communicants in the state in 1936.

\textsuperscript{185} The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1891, 52.
(208% increase). While the statistical difference appears insignificant, as Brydon noted in 1937, the words of the colored ministers’ protest had come true (see Chapter 3):

While it is not the only reason for the slow growth of the Church among the Negroes since 1889, the taking away of right of seat and vote from the Negro clergy and segregation of Negro clergy and laity into a subordinate position has been one of the most vital factors in the situation. The Negro clergymen have had to bear in the silence the jibe thrown at them by ministers of the predominant Negro denominations that the Colored Episcopal Minister occupies an inferior position among the other clergy of his own Church. Unquestionably this fact has kept many an able Negro out of our ministry.  

And that lack of full incorporation of colored clergy and laity may well have kept many a devoted Christian man or woman out of Episcopal churches.

When the Diocese was divided in 1892, into the Diocese of Virginia and the Diocese of Southern Virginia, roughly along the lines of the James River, as noted above, the great majority of colored clergy, laity and congregations were in the Diocese of Southern Virginia. By 1894, the Diocese of Virginia recorded only two colored clergy among their number, one of whom remained a deacon for 11 years. By 1900, there were no colored clergy identified. There was no colored work identified under the report of the Missions Committee and there were only three colored congregations identified, two in Richmond, and one in Orange County. While the Bishops continued to confirm colored persons (520 white, 33 colored reported for the conciliar year) and

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186 Brydon, The Episcopal Church Among the Negroes of Virginia, 15-16.
187 Brydon, The Episcopal Church Among the Negroes of Virginia, 16.
188 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1894, 6-9 and The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1900, 73. Thomas Vaughan served in Gordonsville, Orange County, from the time of his ordination as a Deacon in 1889, in his 40’s, until his death in March of 1900.
189 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1900, 6-9.
190 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1900, 22-23.
191 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1900, 104-109.
192 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1900, 49.
local rectors occasionally had colored communicants, especially in urban areas, there was no significant colored missionary work undertaken in the Diocese of Virginia.¹⁹³

By 1893, in its inaugural Diocesan Council, the Diocese of Southern Virginia had retained six of the nine who signed the letter of protest about the reorganization in 1889.¹⁹⁴ The others had left. Apparently through the sheer force of will of Archdeacon James Solomon Russell, the Colored Missionary Jurisdiction of the Diocese of Southern Virginia met annually to receive reports and elect their canonical representatives to Diocesan Council. By 1908, of the original nine protestors, only three remained to be grandfathered into Diocesan Council. The records indicate four additional colored clergy, for a grand total of seven.¹⁹⁵ While Archdeacon Russell’s careful report indicates his optimism, he notes that the work among the colored people is handicapped for “lack of men and means.”¹⁹⁶

The Episcopal Church in Virginia, one of the few to undertake a brave incorporation of African American clergy and congregations into the life of the Diocese, eventually allowed the effort to succumb to the political and social effects of the times. As previously acceptable informal separation between public and private spheres (public life of the church versus private life of personal faith) began to blur with the success of black clergy and congregations, the Diocese succumbed to the contemporary secular practice of statutory separation. A promising beginning in the years immediately after the Civil War, with one very strong congregation requesting admission to Council, and clergy

¹⁹³ *The Journal of Council (Virginia),* 1900, 146-147, 152. Two white Richmond churches report colored communicants: St. John’s and All Saints. St. John’s had a significant colored Sunday School.
¹⁹⁵ *The Diocese of Southern Virginia Annual Convocation of the Colored Missionary Jurisdiction,* 1908, 1.
¹⁹⁶ *The Annual Convocation of the Colored Missionary Jurisdiction (Southern Virginia),* 4.
being raised up and trained locally, was ended as Council continued to refuse to address the incorporation of colored congregations in the structure of Diocesan governance. What began with equity as colored clergymen were initially included in Council, also succumbed to the prevailing winds of separation, especially with a Bishop who preferred separation to incorporation and spoke of the human beings involved in paternalistic terms. As in the secular world, separation rarely resulted in equality or success.
APPENDIX I

Article II of the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Virginia, 1890

SECTION I. The Council shall be composed of the Bishop and the Assistant Bishop (if there be one), and of the Ministers, except as hereinafter provided, who now are or may hereafter be canonically settled in Parishes or churches within this Diocese; Professors of the Theological Seminary of Virginia. Missionaries within this Diocese, and under its ecclesiastical authority, being Clergymen of this Church and canonically connected with this Diocese: Provided, that any such Ministers who may have been so canonically settled up to the time of disability, but whom age or infirmity prevents from exercising their clerical functions shall be members ex officio: Provided further, that only such Colored Ministers shall be members are specified in Section 3 of this Article: Provided further, that no Minister under ecclesiastical censure or process shall be entitled to a seat in the Council, and no Minister shall be entitled to a seat unless he has been canonically connected with the Diocese for the six calendar months preceding.

SEC. 2. The Council shall also be composed of lay members, consisting of one delegate for each Parish or church entitled to representation, chosen by the Vestry thereof, except as hereinafter provided. Every such Parish or church having more than one officiating Minister canonically settled, shall be entitled to send as many lay delegates as it has Ministers, and in every case the delegate or delegates shall be communicants in the Church: Provided, that, only such colored delegates shall be members as are specified in Section 3 of this Article.

SEC. 3. The Council shall also be composed of the Colored Ministers having a seat and voice in the Council on the 17th day of May, 1889, and of two clerical and two lay delegates from the Colored Missionary Jurisdiction of the Diocese, as the same is now or may hereafter be constituted by Canon.” 197

197 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1890, 271-272.
APPENDIX II

Canon XIII - OF COLORED MISSION CHURCHES of the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Virginia, 1890

SECTION 1. The colored people of Virginia who are, or may hereafter be, connected with the Protestant Episcopal Church, shall constitute a Missionary jurisdiction of the Diocese.

SEC. 2. It shall be lawful to organize Mission Churches or congregations, composed exclusively of colored persons, within the limits of any already existing Parish, subject to the same conditions and regulations as are other Mission Churches (see Canon XII), and specially those of this Canon, except that consent of the Vestry or Vestries need not be obtained.

SEC. 3. There may be appointed, by the Bishop, one or more Presbyters who shall have general supervision of such colored churches and congregations as the Bishop may designate, and perform such duties as he may prescribe.

SEC 4. A Convocation shall be held annually at such time and place as may be designated by the Bishop as to the first meeting, and afterwards by the Convocation itself. The colored ministers of the Diocese, in good standing, shall be members of the Convocation, and it shall be the duty of every such minister to attend its meetings. The Vestry of every Colored Mission Church or congregation shall elect one male lay delegate annually, who, upon the presentation of a certificate signed by the minister (or warden, if there be no minister,) and Register of the Vestry, stating that the delegate, is not less than twenty-one years of age, and is a communicant of the Protestant Episcopal Church, shall be entitled to a seat in the Convocation.

The Bishop, the Assistant Bishop (if there be One), and the Presbyters mentioned in Section 3. shall be ex officio members of the Convocation. The Bishop (or in his absence the Assistant Bishop) shall be President of the Convocation.

SEC. 5. The Convocation shall have power to consult and devise measures for their common welfare, which measures shall take effect when approved by the Council of the Diocese.

SEC. 6. The Convocation shall elect annually two Clergymen and two laymen to represent them in the Council of the Diocese.

SEC. 7. Colored congregations, constituted as above provided, may acquire and hold property of their own, as by law provided, but cannot come into possession of the property of any white congregation, except by transfer, under the laws of the State of Virginia; nor shall any white congregation come into possession of the property of any colored congregation, except by like transfer.”

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198 The Journal of Council (Virginia), 1890, 102.
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Since the online version is not consistently paginated, I have chosen to include in the reference notes which chapter or appendix they appear in.


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The Church and the Negro, Five Editorial Articles from The Church Standard, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1906.


The Diocese of Virginia Annual Council meetings and records:

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The Diocese of Southern Virginia Annual Council meetings and records:

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