

## A Dream Comes to Life

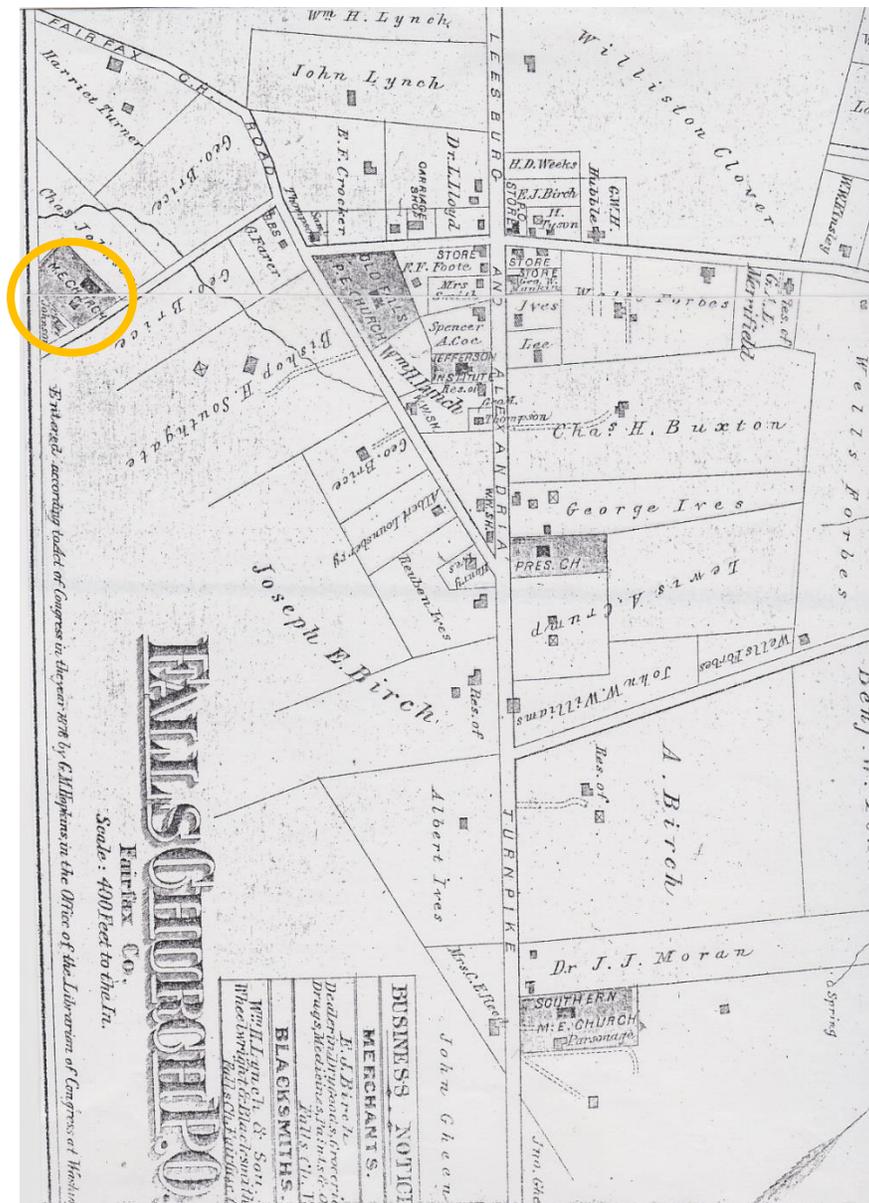
The roots of Galloway United Methodist Church began before the civil war, when enslaved African American were encouraged by Elder Hiram Reed, a local white minister, to begin their own church. It is said that slaves on the Dulany Plantation, land where Galloway church now stands, would meet and worship in secret among the grove of trees on the hill. Prior to the end of the Civil War, meetings were held in the home of Harriet and George Brice, ex-slaves of plantation owners in the area. They met with other friends who were interested in having a church they could freely attend in the Falls Church community. Harriet, her husband, George, and a friend named Jacob Ross of Washington, DC discussed the possibilities of building a church and how they could raise the money to do so. Harriet and friend, Frances Jackson, held fundraisers and rallies to begin raising money. One of the fundraisers involved carrying baskets of berries to the open markets in Washington, DC to sell. George Brice and



Jacob Ross chose a piece of land they thought would be perfect for the church. Since African Americans still had difficulty purchasing land even when they had the money to do so, George enlisted the help of his employer, John S. Crocker, warden of the jail in Washington, DC and a retired Union colonel in the Civil War. He asked if he would take their money and purchase the land for them. Crocker agreed and the first payment of \$75 of the \$175.00 selling price was made. On July 1, 1867, the final payment of \$100 was made to Mr. Crocker and the land was deeded over to the first Trustees of the church, appointed by Jacob Ross and Harriet Brice.<sup>i</sup> The names of these men were Robert Gunnell, George Rumbles and Sandy Parker. Rev. Edgar Murphy was appointed first pastor. The group was given an old loading platform from the West Falls Church train station and a log

structure was built.<sup>ii</sup> It was not only used for church meetings but also as a school for the African American children of the community. Miss Sue Riddle, a white lady from up North,, came to teach reading and writing as well as Sunday school classes to the African Americans in the community.<sup>iii</sup> This was the first organized Sunday school program to serve African Americans in Falls Church.<sup>iv</sup> Under Miss Riddle's supervision, Miss Margaret Peyton, daughter of Isaac "Uncle Ike" Peyton, taught the Catechism Class and Miss Amanda Brice, daughter of George and Harriet, taught the Bible Class. The First Methodist Episcopal Church (colored) was finally a reality. It joined the Falls Church Circuit through the action of the Washington Conference which was comprised of churches in Falls Church/Fairfax (First Methodist Episcopal Church (colored), McLean (Pleasant Grove), and Langley Hall's Hill, (Calloway) and a small church in Hunter's Mill that lasted only a year. At the time this church was established the circuit officers were Samuel Sharper, Sandy Parker, Robert Gunnell, George Rumbles, Oscar

Washington and Thornton Wilson. Rev. Murphy was followed by Rev. Robert Wheeler in 1868, Rev. Charles W. Walker in 1869, Rev. George R. Walker in 1870 and Rev. Noble Watkins in 1871.



A map of Falls Church land ownership in 1878. Galloway is designated by the initials “M. E. Church” on the upper left in between land owned by Charles Johnson and George Brice.<sup>v</sup>

Around 1871 it became apparent that a more suitable house of worship was necessary. Harriet Brice went to her former slave master, William Y. Dulin (owner of the Dulin plantation and after whom Dulin United Methodist Church of Falls Church is named) and asked if he would donate the timber needed to build the new structure.<sup>vi</sup> Dulin, who had also donated the land on

which Dulin Church was built, agreed. The lumber came from a tract of land Dulin owned near what became Camp Alger in 1898. The lumber was hewn by members of the church including Rev. Noble Watkins, the church pastor and a carpenter by trade, Isaac “Uncle Ike” Peyton, James Turner, Thomas Green, Jacob Jackson and David Johnson. Green was a local preacher at the time. The new edifice was named Watkins Chapel after the current minister. The old log structure located on the back of the church lot continued to be used for education and entertainment for a few years after. Miss Margaret Peyton, one of the Sunday school teachers, was the first to be married in Watkins Chapel.

In 1887, the town of Falls Church annexed the section of the town that held most of its “colored” citizens to Fairfax County. The Caucasian residents of “the village”, many of whom had families who had lived in the area for generations and whose cultural values were like those of the traditional Southern lifestyle, preferred segregation in both community and schools. The annexation consisted of the area south of Lee Highway and was called the “colored settlement”. This left the town of Falls Church predominantly Caucasian. African American children had to go to school in Fairfax County since there were no schools for them in their community and Falls Church paid their tuition to do so.

Watkins Chapel continued to grow as a place of worship for the African American Methodists of this community. In 1901 it was determined that there was a need for a larger building. On June 27<sup>th</sup>, 1901 another name change took place and Galloway Chapel and parsonage were built, named after the minister at the time, Rev. John Galloway. During Rev. Galloway’s pastorate the Circuit separated and consisted of only Galloway (Falls Church) and Pleasant Grove (McLean). By 1918 the church basement was completed. In 1919 Rev. C. Brady came to the Chapel. He was followed by Rev. John A. Reid in 1920 at which time the parsonage underwent its first renovation. It has since been renovated several times but continues to be used as such to this day.



A member of the Tinner family, a family whose descendants were slaves on the Dulany plantation, used his skills as a craftsman to help beautify the new sanctuary. Melvin Tinner carved and built the prayer railing in front of the pulpit as shown in the picture above. The kneeling pads that were used at the altar are displayed in Galloway’s Fellowship Hall in the museum area.

*The original parsonage structure, used today though the interior has aluminum siding has been added to*

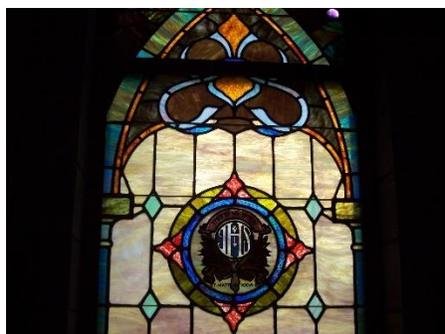


*built around 1901, continues to be been completely renovated and the exterior.*

Realizing the importance of being politically active and defending the rights of the African American members of the community, Joseph Tinner and Louis Summerall, both members of Galloway, and another leader in the Falls Church African American community, Dr. Edwin B. Henderson, established the Colored Citizens Protection League which evolved into the first rural N.A.A.C.P. chapter in the country. The formation of this chapter was in response to the Falls Church City Council's plan in 1915 to segregate the city by designating an area where African Americans could live. Joseph Tinner, known as a great orator, was elected president and spent many evenings speaking before the Council against their plans to segregate the city. Tinner's bravery, determination and crusade for fair treatment of the African Americans in Falls Church identified him as the "voice" of the people of color of the community. He continued to fight for civil rights until his death in 1928.<sup>vii</sup>

Sometime around 1920 the church name was changed to Galloway Methodist Episcopal Church to reflect changes in the Methodist Circuit. In 1922 Rev. E. D. Venture came to serve for a couple of years.

In 1924 beautiful stained-glass windows were installed in time for Easter Sunday. The



efforts of a few faithful members, Mrs. Mattie Brown Hunter (another Brice daughter) and Mrs. Fannie Richards, made this possible by holding "Window Rallies" to raise the funds.

Rev. J. L. Brown, the pastor of Galloway

from 1924 – 1925, thought it important that the church have a written history. He established a Church History Committee composed of Mrs. Rosa Stribling, Mrs. Fannie Richards, and Mrs. Mattie Brown and they went to the Fairfax County Courthouse to gather information for the history. They also went into the community to interview various persons including Bro. "Ike" Peyton, Bro. James Turner, Bro. George Thomas and Sister Margaret Brown. With the information they gather the committee wrote the first church history of Galloway. This history was proudly presented and read to the congregation on Easter Sunday morning, April 20, 1924. The members of the church were greatly enlightened by the information shared since they had not before heard the story of how and by whom the church was started.



Between 1925 and 1928 Rev. E. W. Holland came to serve Galloway as pastor. Under his leadership four brothers of the Tinner family once again used their skills to beautify the church and the property. Being stone masons, they installed a stone wall in front of the church and later one in front of the parsonage. These four brothers, Joseph, Charles, Harrison and

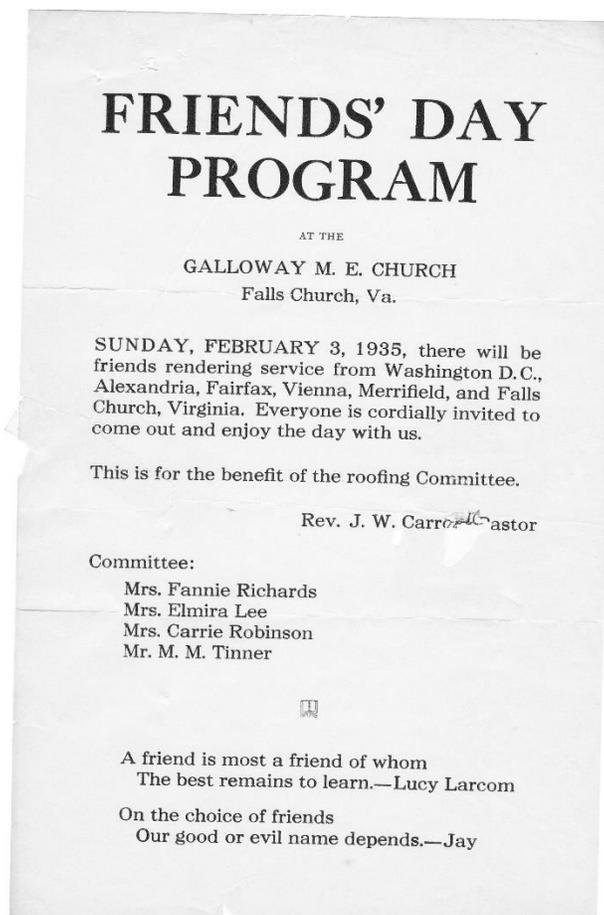
Melvin, were well known in the community for the craft of stonemasonry. Unfortunately, both walls were torn down when the city widened what was then Shreve Road and renamed it Annandale Road. Though the current walls in front of both the church and the parsonage are stone, they are not the originals. Another accomplishment of Rev. Holland was introducing the church position of Financial Secretary. Mrs. Fannie Richards was the first church member elected to this position and she served for four years.

The years between 1928 and 1936 brought three hard-working pastors to the church. In 1928 Rev. Robert Griffin was assigned as pastor of Galloway. He served for only two years but during that time Galloway met new milestones. The District Conference of the Methodist Church was hosted at the church. This was a first for Galloway and Rev. Griffin worked diligently to ensure that the program was perfect. It was during this time that the second wall was built by the Tinner brothers in front of the parsonage. The church and parsonage were also newly whitewashed. Creative ways of raising funds for the church were instituted such as holding a "Turkey Contest and Concert". The person who donated the largest sum of money (over \$15.00) won a "big Turkey".

Rev. Griffin left in 1930 and Rev. D. M. Pleasants became the church pastor. It was the start of the Great Depression and times were hard. Death claimed several faithful members of the church. Still Galloway was able to stand strong with the installation of a new furnace, the placement of iron railings down the front steps of the church and installation of an electric light on the church arch. Rev. Pleasants ended his term of service in 1933 and Rev. John W. Carroll became the new pastoral leader. He served for three years and during this time the church enjoyed many improvements including a renovation of the parsonage, installation of a cement walk leading up to the parsonage, placement of a new roof on the church, the introduction of a new Holy Communion Service and the placement of two new electric lights on either side of the pulpit. The money for the lights came from a donation of \$25.00 given to the church in memory of the death of one of the church members, Mrs. Banks.

LOOK!	LOOK!	LOOK!
TURKEY CONTEST AND CONCERT		
at		
Galloway M. E. Church		
Wednesday Evening, December 11, 1929		
Under the auspices of Stewards		
CONTESTANTS		
Mrs. Cora Patterson	Mrs. Emma Denny	Mrs. E. M. Griffin
A Big Turkey will be given the Contestant with largest sum over \$15		
Mrs. Fannie Richards, Directress	Mrs. Estella J. Evans, Pianist	
Rev. R. A. GRIFFIN, Pastor		
Tickets	-	10 Cents

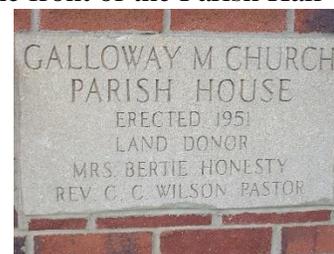
Being in fellowship with other churches and church members was and continues to be an important aspect of African American church culture. Pastors, their choirs and congregations would frequently visit other churches to render Sunday afternoon services. Sharing a big meal, hearing a powerful sermon and inspiring music was on many occasions the major social event of the week during the early days of Galloway. Pictured below is the program for the first Friend's Day held on Sunday, February 3, 1935.



Rev. Columbus C. Wilson came to serve Galloway as pastor in 1936. He served for almost twenty years, the longest term of any pastor at the church. He and his wife, Azille, were strong supporters of not only the church but also the community and they worked diligently to bring a better life to all. Many accomplishments were met, and many service organizations established during Rev. Wilson's time at Galloway. These included:

- A second renovation of the parsonage
- The Willing Hand Club was organized in 1935. The members included Mrs. Bertha Wade, Pres.; Mrs. Alma Lane, Sec.; Mrs. Leora Robinson, Tres. The club painted the interior of the church, put in a bathroom in the parsonage, and restrooms in the church.
- The Women's Society, Mrs. Mary Richards, Pres., installed new tile flooring in the entire church.
- A new pulpit set given by The Industrious Few Committee.

- Modernization of the kitchen took place
- A new organ with chimes installed – 1949
- In 1951, Mrs. Bertie Honesty, a daughter of Harriet and George Brice, donated land to the church so that a Parish House could be built. This structure was used as a fellowship hall and had a kitchen in the back where many wonderful meals were prepared for special celebrations at the church. The hall also had a stage on which Easter and Christmas plays were performed.
- She also donated 300 chairs for the Parish Hall and curtains for the church. The curtains were made by Mrs. Honesty, Mrs. Fannie Richards and Mrs. Juanita Ford
- Mr. & Mrs. Stuart McIntyre donated brick facing on the front of the Parish Hall
- A movie projector was purchased
- A mimeograph machine purchased to make bulletins for Sundays
- The Women's Society of Christian Service was organized by Mrs. Fannie Tyler in 1940. The first President was Mrs. Azille Wilson, Mrs. Carrie Robinson, Vice President, Mrs. Fannie Richards, Secretary and Mrs. Mary Dusom, Treasurer. Later presidents of this organization included Mrs. Carrie Robinson, Mrs. Mary Richards, Mrs. Doris Jackson, Mrs. Estelle J. Evans, and Mrs. Elaine Dorsey.
- The 1946 District Conference was entertained at Galloway
- In 1949 the School of Missions met at Galloway. Mrs. Mary Richards was Host President and Mrs. Estelle J. Evans was Dean.
- The Junior Choir was organized by Mrs. Etta Winston and Mr. Cornelius Taylor in 1954. Robes, caps and hymnals were donated to the choir by Mr. Stuart McIntyre.



Ms. Althea Taylor, a long-time member of Galloway began a tradition many years ago of having Galloway's pastor and congregation travel to Seneca, Maryland to fellowship with her husband's church and render the afternoon service. This tradition continued through 2014 with Seneca Community Church sharing services with Galloway at its annual church anniversary service. Pictured below are members of Galloway's congregation (mid 1940's) posing for a picture before leaving for Seneca.



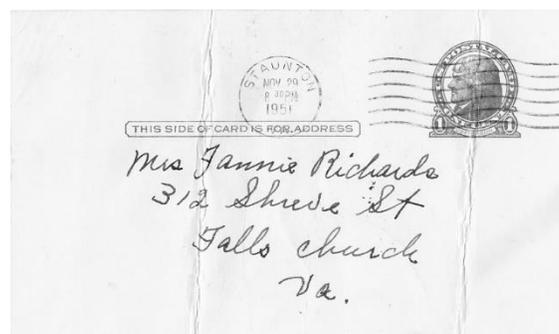
Rev. Wilson became ill towards the end of January 1959. He stayed in Freedman's Hospital in Washington, D.C. for one week before he passed on January 27, 1959. He was buried on January 31, 1959 in the Pleasant Grove Church Cemetery in McLean, Virginia. He had faithfully served Galloway for nineteen years and eight months, the longest term of any pastor before him. His passing was a sad time for the members of Galloway. Five pastors served the church between the time of Rev. Wilson's death and the meeting of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church in June of 1960 at which time a new pastor was formally assigned. These pastors were Rev. Samuel Horsey, Rev. John Peters, Rev. Kelly L. Jackson, Rev. Caleb E. Queen, and Rev. Wendell Bean.

The women of Galloway worked hard to raise the funds to keep the church going and support the various ministries. They had very creative ways of accomplishing this task by holding events such as "Turkey Contests and Concerts", "Window Rally's, and "Parcel Post Sales". In the early days of the church some of the women would walk to Washington, DC to sell freshly picked blueberries to raise money for the church. No task was too big or too small when it came to the church and supporting its needs.



A "Parcel Post Sale" was a popular fund-raising activity of churches in the 1940's and 50's. Pictured here is a postcard received by Mrs. Fannie Richards inviting her to send a small package that could be "sold for 50 cents" a fair being held at the church of a friend. The message is written in prose to add a touch of fun.

Dear Miss Jennie  
 Did you ever hear of a parcel  
 post sale?  
 Well, listen now, I'll tell  
 you a tale.  
 Our club is having a fair;  
 We are asking all to have a  
 share.  
 Will you send us a package we  
 can sell for ~~a quarter?~~ <sup>50¢</sup>  
 It's loads of fun for man,  
 wife, son or daughter.  
 Will sell it just as it comes  
 through the mail,  
 That's why it's called a par-  
 cel-post sale.  
 December 15th we have set for  
 the date,  
 Please send your parcel so it  
 won't be late.  
 Just address it to the under-  
 signed,  
 And we'll thank you a lot for  
 being so kind.  
 Send package to *Natalie Taylor*



In June 1959 Rev. Ernest E. Arter was appointed to Galloway by the Annual Conference. He believed that the officers of the church should always be seeking to better themselves in their positions, so he advocated for their attendance at Leadership School and that they put the skills they learned into action at the church. He became active in the local N.A.A.C.P. and placed visitation of the sick and oppressed in the community high on his list of priority service. His wife played the piano for the Junior Choir. As was with the previous pastors, improvements to the church were ongoing. A second installation of stained-glass windows took place in late 1959. These memorial

windows were installed in the choir loft and dressing room and were donated by church members who had inscriptions placed on them with the names of family members who had been members of Galloway and had passed on. In 1962 the Carpet Committee was organized to raise funds to carpet the church. Mrs. Elaine Dorsey was President; Mrs. Fannie Richards, Vice President; Mrs. Cora McIntyre, Secretary; and Mrs. Olivetta Thompson, Treasurer. A large center light was installed in the choir loft, donated by Mrs. Elmira Brent in memory of her mother, Mrs. Caroline Carpenter. Rev. E.E. Arter left Galloway in 1965.

Rev. Joseph Haskins, Sr. was the next pastor to be appointed to serve the Galloway flock. His term of appointment lasted four years. Rev. Haskins was credited with bringing about an increased level of involvement of the youth in the church. He was also active in the civil rights movement and was the first African American preacher to speak at the Baccalaureate service for a white high school in Virginia. Many physical improvements and additions were made in the church during his tenure. These included purchasing a cover for the organ; installing new carpet paid for through the fund-raising efforts of the Carpet Committee; purchasing red drapes for the front of the choir loft; having Junior Choir robes made by Mrs. Winston, Mrs. Richards, and Mrs. McIntyre; having white communion chair covers for the pulpit made by Mrs. Elaine Dorsey and Mrs. Fannie Richards; purchasing new hymnals and worship books; purchasing metal tables for the Parish Hall; having donated an offering basket in memory of Mrs. Mary Richards; having donated the cross, vases and candle holders for the altar by "The Industrious Few" as a memorial to Mrs. Elmira Brent; having donated the piano and two collection plates by the Usher Board; having donated a new front door by Mrs. Elsie Dale; having donated a baptismal fount by Mrs. Ethel Robinson and having donated a public speaking system by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Coates. Mr. Garland Hicks chaired a committee that solicited funds to buy new pews for the church. Persons who donated towards pews did so in the memory of loved ones who had passed, and name plates were placed on the ends of the pews.

In 1968 Galloway became part of the Central Conference (Virginia/North Carolina) and became known as Galloway United Methodist Church. Amid all the progress occurring at the church, tragedy visited the congregation. Sad times came to Galloway with the passing of Rev. Haskins' son, Joseph, Jr., from an accidental drowning in the late 60's. Rev. Haskins and his family moved to another church soon after. Rev. Ben Broaden came to serve in 1969 and served for a year.

Rev. Richard A. Bell was appointed to Galloway in 1970. He realized that the old sanctuary was beginning to fail structurally and in collaboration with the congregation he initiated a solid building fund program. The church began considering whether the original building could be renovated or if it needed to be razed and a new sanctuary built. In 1973 a Building Club call was made to begin fundraising efforts. Other fundraising projects took place to add to the funds collected during the original call. On August 1, 1984 Galloway sold property that had been bequeathed to the church and collected \$183,971.62. The thought of building a new church was both exciting and sad for the members of the congregation. They loved the old

church and what it represented to them. They also knew that they had to accept the reality that the old building could not stand the test of time. Rev. Bell had gotten the church off to a good start on this new path. When he left, he was succeeded by Rev. Terry J. Burley (1974), Rev. John Bethea (1975), Rev. Sylvester Shannon (1979), Rev. Calvin Sydnor III (1981), and Rev. Rendell R. Rozier (1983). All supported the church congregation in their efforts to raise funds for a new sanctuary.

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<sup>i</sup> Fairfax County, VA Deed Book No. 4, Page 555

<sup>ii</sup> Personal Statement of George W. Thomas Dec. 2, 1928

<sup>iii</sup> Galloway Church History document 1867-1970

<sup>iv</sup> Fendley, Stan "The Churches of Falls Church -Then and Now", The Falls Church Times. Aug. 13, 2009

<sup>v</sup> Mary Riley Styles Falls Church Public Library, Virginia Room Map Collection, Falls Church, B-1, B-2

<sup>vi</sup> US Federal Census - Slave Schedules 1860, Fairfax, Pg.13

<sup>vii</sup> Tinner Hill Foundation. "History of Tinner Hill – About Joseph Tinner" <http://www.tinnerhill.org/history/>