

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name St. John's Congregational Church & Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 69 Hancock Street not for publication
city or town Springfield vicinity
state Massachusetts code MA county Hampden code 013 zip code 01109

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Brona Simon February 8, 2016
Signature of certifying official Brona Simon, SHPO Date

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:) Additional Documentation Approved

Joy Edson H. Beall 6-28-16
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	district
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Religion, religious facility
- Religion, church-related residence
- Domestic, institutional housing

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Religion, religious facility
- Social, civic

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Late Gothic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation: Brick
- walls: Wood, shingle
- roof: Asphalt
- other: Stucco

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

St. John's Congregational Church is located in the Old Hill neighborhood of Springfield, Massachusetts. The associated Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls is situated on an adjoining lot east of the church. The church was completed in 1911, and the Home for Working Girls was opened two years later. Both buildings were designed in a similar style by local architect B. Hammett Seabury, who created plans for numerous church, school, civic, and residential buildings in Springfield in a career that spanned more than 50 years. Sheathed with wood shingles and distinguished by traditional Gothic elements, the buildings exhibit an overall influence of the Shingle Style. The church has a modified nave plan, with entrances in the corners of the Hancock Street façade. The principal entrance, located at the base level of a three-story tower with a crenellated top, is at the street corner created by the intersection of Hancock and Union streets. The front and north side walls contain transomed window groups. A large, Gothic-arched window, containing numerous ogee lancets, is centered in the front gable. The sanctuary is finished with white plaster walls, unpainted wood trim, and an open trusswork ceiling in the manner of an English country church. A wing on the south side of the nave contains a social room, connected by a series of folding doors. Another assembly room and kitchen are housed in the basement. The adjoining building was built to function both as the pastor's residence and as a home for working girls. The two-story, hipped-roof building resembles the many two-family houses in the neighborhood, but its plan was adapted to its specialized use. It incorporates half-timbered porch features that match those used on porches on the church. Rooms on all three floors open onto a central hall, with church and common living spaces on the first floor, and bedrooms on the second floor and in the attic. A kitchen was originally located in the basement, but was later moved up to the first floor. Both buildings retain original exterior and interior materials and design features.

Narrative Description

St. John's Congregational Church and Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls are located on the southeast corner of Hancock and Union streets in Springfield's Old Hill neighborhood, about a mile east of the city center. The property is situated in the midst of a residential section just off State Street, a major commercial artery linking the neighborhood with Springfield's downtown, and on which the Springfield Armory is located. The area is characterized by detached, wood-frame, single and multiple dwellings, constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Hancock Street is a mixed-use thoroughfare. There are a number of vacant lots in the vicinity of the church where houses have been lost; some currently function as parking lots. The north side of Union Street opposite the nominated property has been cleared, and a large religious facility was constructed in 2013 to accommodate St. John's sanctuary, Sunday school and meeting rooms, and business offices. Until recently, the church and parsonage each occupied small lots, with their footprints nearly filling them to the lot lines. The church's address was 69 Hancock Street, while the Parsonage/Parish House's address was 643 Union Street. Those lots are now combined into a single parcel with a single address, 69 Hancock Street. There is no setting or landscape of consequence, just small green spaces between the buildings and the sidewalks. A chain-link fence running along the south property line belongs to an adjoining property.

Completed in 1911, St. John's Congregational Church was designed in a restrained, modern interpretation of an English Gothic ecclesiastical style, reflecting the modest taste of its African American congregation and local community. Despite its English Gothic antecedents, the pervasive use of wood shingles on the exterior associates the design with the American Shingle Style, or as it was known in its day, the Modern Style. Its small scale and domestic features distinguish the church as a welcoming religious and social center for Springfield's minority families. These two functions are clearly represented on the principal Hancock Street façade, where the entrance into the sanctuary occupies the base of the three-story crenellated tower at the street corner, and the entrance leading to the social rooms is centered in a one-story, front-gable pavilion, domestic in scale, at the opposite corner (PHOTOS 1 & 2). Both entrances are tucked beneath gable hoods with open framing in an English manner, as is the half-timbered gable above the social entrance. The original doors in these entrances have been replaced by paneled doors with glazing in the pattern of a cross, and concrete steps with brick side walls have been added, presumably in place of wood structures.

The square-planned tower has matching entrances, framed by two-story shingled buttresses on both of its street sides (PHOTO 1). The doorways are surmounted by narrow sash windows decorated with Gothic label molds in the second story, and paired, pointed-arch openings with louvers in the third-story bell stage. (There are louvered openings on all four

sides at the top, and a third, small window squeezed in the second story on the east side of the tower.) Stepped parapets cap the tower's four walls above narrow wood cornices, which contain gutters that drain off of spouts projecting from the corners.

The fenestration of the gabled front wall is comprised of a group of five connected windows and transoms at the entrance level, spanned across the top by a single label mold (PHOTO 2). Each window and transom contains patterned stained glass, and has been covered with protective plastic panels that have clouded with age. Above these is a large, pointed-arch window that fills the gable. It, too, is framed by a narrow label mold. The large opening is partitioned into two tiers of ogee-headed lancets containing patterned stained glass and covered with discolored plastic panels. A tiny pointed opening is positioned above the large window in the apex of the gable, and appears to be glazed even though it is located above the ceiling inside.

The Union Street façade also has entrances in the corners: one in the tower matching that on the Hancock Street façade, and the other within an open porch with a half-timbered gable at the rear (PHOTO 3). The rear entrance provides access to the front of the sanctuary and the choir loft, as well as to the basement via stairs (there are stairs in all four corners of the building). In between the entries, the north elevation contains four transomed window groups, similar in finish to the larger group on the front, and separated by shingled buttresses. Three gabled dormers containing lancets with patterned stained glass are located in the roof. The safety windows on this side of the church have a clarity that suggests that they were added more recently. A small cupola with a pyramidal roof is located on the roof ridge at the rear of the building. Apparently put there for ventilating the air space above the ceiling, its openings have been boarded over. A concrete ramp with brick sides was constructed on the north side of the tower in 1995, replacing the concrete stairs added earlier.

The "social" entry pavilion on the southwest corner of the Hancock Street façade is offset to partially conceal a one-story, hipped-roof wing on the south side of the building that contains the social room annexed to the sanctuary (PHOTO 2). There is a pair of transomed windows on the front to the south of the entry pavilion, and four pairs along the south wall, all with label molds across their heads. A service entry and porch anchors the easterly end of this façade, and two hipped-roof dormers are contained in the roof. A brick chimney exiting the rear of the wing's roof serves the kitchen stove.

The east end of the building is featureless by comparison. A shallow projection, about four feet in width, with a gable roof is centered on the wall corresponding with the location of the apse on the interior (PHOTO 3). The apse is much deeper, so this feature is merely an exterior representation of the traditional component of church architecture. A large cross has been superimposed on the blank wall. Two of the windows flanking the apse on the second story have been repurposed as the entry points for ductwork associated with the interior air-conditioning system, added in 2005. An exterior brick chimney containing the furnace flue is somewhat hidden behind the apse projection.

The majority of the gabled section of the building is occupied by the sanctuary. Doorways enter from lobbies in the corners of the Hancock Street façade (PHOTO 7). The tower lobby has two exterior doors, and one interior door leading into the sanctuary. This lobby also contains an open staircase leading up to a "counting room" in the second story of the tower—where, until recently, offerings were tallied—and down to the basement (PHOTO 12). Due to leaks in the tower roof, the plaster ceiling in this room collapsed in 2014 and was replaced. The secondary entrance opens into a lobby with a doorway entering the sanctuary and a doorway entering the adjoining social room, and another stairway leading to the basement. In both lobbies, the exterior doors and the interior doors have been replaced. As noted above, the exterior doors are paneled with glazing in a cross pattern; the interior doors are made of plate glass.

The sanctuary is a voluminous space with white plaster walls and unpainted woodwork (PHOTOS 4, 5, and 7). The dominant architectural feature of the room is the trusswork ceiling, repeating the Gothic arch motif seen in the large, pointed-arch window on the front wall and the pointed arch framing the apse opening in the rear. The apse contains an elevated stage that projects out into the room to provide a platform for the pulpit; the extant pulpit was installed in 2005 (PHOTO 6). Within the arch, which is edged with faux quoins molded into the plaster, a further-elevated platform supports the choir and a pipe organ installed in 1915. Windows and dormers on the north wall are spaced between the posts supporting the roof trusses and above a chair rail that encircles the room (PHOTO 9). The windows are framed by simple, unpainted wood trim. The opposing south wall is finished in a similar fashion. The spaces between the trusses contain four wide openings trimmed in unpainted wood, with folding doors of wood and glass that open on the social room (PHOTO 10). The four pairs of windows on the south exterior wall of the social room align with the doorways. The room is divided in half by an archway that could once have been closed off by folding doors (now removed, PHOTO 11).

Numerous changes were made in the sanctuary and social room in 2005, when the church began telecasting services. New pews were installed, replacing the original seating with similar wood furniture in the same arrangement. A sound booth was constructed against the exterior wall of the social room, and sound and video equipment were installed, including monitors suspended from the ceiling. Pendant lighting was also added. Air conditioning was installed and delivered into the sanctuary through two round duct pipes running across the ceiling. None of these additions significantly affected the historic fabric of the building.

An assembly room was created in the basement under the sanctuary at the time the church was built (PHOTO 13). It is finished with plaster walls, beadboard wainscoting, and a pressed-metal ceiling; the wood floor was later covered with the existing asphalt tiles. A kitchen and furnace room are enclosed on the east side of the room, and two storerooms on the south side, under the social room, have been combined into a single nursery (PHOTO 14). Stairs from both entry lobbies as well as from the two rear service entrances are located in the corners. Modern bathrooms have been added.

St. John's Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls

This large, 2½-story, domestic building resembles the many two-family houses that characterize the neighborhood, but it was consciously designed to house the pastor as well as board working girls and women (PHOTOS 15-20). Planned with 26 rooms, all accessible off of central halls on four levels with staircases front and rear, the first floor contained the pastor's living quarters, a parlor for boarders, and church offices. A guest chamber, thirteen dormitory rooms, and lavatories were arranged on the second floor and in the attic. Bath facilities were provided on each floor. The basement contained a kitchen, dining room, sewing room, and laundry. These spaces and their finishes survive essentially intact, although the original functions no longer exist. The first story is currently used for church offices and a food bank; the other floors are vacant.

The wood shingle-sided exterior is distinguished by a three-bay front façade with central entrances on both stories (PHOTOS 15-16). A full, shed-roofed front porch with half-timbered sides and wood railings is intact. It is surmounted by a sleeping porch centered on the second story. The pediment of the porch's gable-front roof is half-timbered, and the porch has been closed in with sash windows. (The spaces between the half-timbering are filled in with beadboard panels rather than plaster.) The organization of the front façade is finished on the attic story by a central hipped-roof dormer.

The fenestration of the side walls is irregular, and responds to interior functions. The west side's first bay contains a one-story projecting window that distinguishes the boarders' parlor within (PHOTO 18). The next two windows illuminate a large room that may have been a part of the pastor's residence; the two rooms have since been combined with the removal of the dividing partition. Two more windows in the rear are associated with kitchen-related spaces. Six windows are spaced across the second story and correspond with five rooms on that side. Each of the two hipped-roof dormers represent an attic room. The windows on the east wall of the building are more irregular in their spacing (PHOTO 16). Windows in the front bay are part of a reception room on the first floor, and a boarder's room on the second. Three vertically aligned windows in the next bay indicate the location of the front stairs leading from the first story to the attic. A large, one-story bay window is contained in the pastor's office behind the stairs. Rooms in the pastor's residence are represented by windows on the first story, as well as in a one-story wing appended to the southeast corner of the building. Second-story and attic windows were for boarders' rooms. The rear stairs are contained in a second extension in the center of the rear wall. A porch formerly spanned the remaining section of the rear wall at the southwest corner of the house, where a doorway exited the pastor's kitchen.

The central hallways are narrow, and contain doorways off the halls lead into nearly every room. On the first floor, double doors opposite the stairway entered the former boarders' parlor (PHOTOS 17 & 18). Each room on the second and attic floors has a doorway with glazed transom (PHOTO 19). Rooms are small, with a single window each; one retains a sink (PHOTO 20). The basement kitchen, pantry, and laundry still retain their built-in cabinetry, but appliances have been removed. Throughout the house, original plaster walls and ceilings, 3/2 wood sash, wood panel doors, and stained and varnished woodwork are essentially intact. Superficial changes have occurred on the first floor, which still functions with church and food-pantry activities.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are located on the church property or in the general area (within one mile), sites may be present. Environmental characteristics of the property represent some locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of ancient sites. The nominated property is located on a level to moderately sloping land surface, a favorable characteristic; however, the church is also located more than 1,000 feet from the nearest freshwater wetlands, an unfavorable locational characteristic. The area is also classified as urban land, where natural soil characteristics (e.g. drainage) are difficult, if not impossible, to determine. In general, however, because of our current state of knowledge for Native subsistence and settlement activities, the small lot size (approximately 0.26 acres), and the fact that any potential resources that might have been present were destroyed by construction activities for the church and parsonage, the potential for locating significant ancient Native American sites on the nominated property is low.

The potential for locating significant historic archaeological resources on the church property is low to moderate. Additional historical research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may contribute important evidence related to the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of the St. John's Congregational Church parish, the African-American community of Springfield, and the Springfield community in general. Archaeological and historical resources may also contribute information related to the living conditions of women and girls who lived in the Home for Working Girls. Detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features may contribute evidence of individual girls or groups, possibly from similar countries of origin, families, or other social groupings.

Important information may also be present for African-American ethnicity in the study area. Detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features may contribute important evidence for the survival of cultural traits in the lives of African Americans who emigrated to the Springfield locale, mostly from the American South during the period of the Great Migration. By 1905, DeBerry noted that 52% of the 906 adult African Americans living in Springfield were born in the American South, mostly from Virginia. Recent research has shown the survival of West African cultural traits in the slave communities of the American south. Research has also indicated the survival of these cultural traits with free black African and Native American communities in Massachusetts, mostly from within burial contexts. Any evidence of African-American ethnicity could be extremely valuable to this nomination.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Ethnic Heritage
- Religion
- Social History

Period of Significance

1911-1966

Significant Dates

- 1911 (Church completed)
- 1913 (Home for Working Girls completed)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Rev. William DeBarry

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

- B. Hammett Seabury, architect (both buildings)
- Edwin T. Davis & Sons, builder, parsonage

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance originates with the completion of the church in 1911, and extends to within 50 years of the present to incorporate the continuing significance of its history in the areas of ethnic heritage and social history.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

The property is a religious institution with significance in the areas of architecture, ethnic heritage, and social history, as well as a religious landmark in Springfield's African-American community.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

Springfield's St. John's Congregational Church and Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls is significant under National Register Criteria A and B for its programs of social and community work and for its associations with the Rev. William N. DeBerry, who was largely responsible for transforming St. John's into a socially active "institutional" church. Created at a time when African-American migrants from the South were settling in increasing numbers in Springfield and tending to align with the city's African-American Baptist and Methodist churches, St. John's under DeBerry created a multifaceted and virtually unparalleled program of social service that drew many southern migrants into its Congregational fold. The church's home for working girls and women, boys' and girls' clubs, employment bureau, domestic science night school, and other groups played critical roles in helping southern African Americans adjust to the circumstances and inequities of northern urban life. Its struggle against racially based housing and employment discrimination and advocacy of African-American educational and political achievement continued after DeBerry resigned the pastorate in 1930, and as the city of Springfield experienced the greatest African-American population increases in its history. The church under DeBerry also established Camp Atwater in North Brookfield, the nation's first summer camp primarily for African American children. Completed in 1911, St. John's Congregational Church and Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls also is significant under Criterion C as an intact, distinguished example of a small church complex planned by and designed for an African-American congregation. Designed by B. Hammett Seabury, a Springfield architect known for the design of churches, schools, public buildings, and residences throughout the city, the buildings have a modest but well-crafted and dignified appearance that represented the humility and aspirations of DeBerry and his congregation. St. John's traditional English country church form and iconographic Gothic elements are interpreted in a modern manner, particularly in its Shingle Style exterior. The subtle use of memorial windows for abolitionist figures conveys the African-American presence, and the incorporation of a social room adjoining the sanctuary represents the inseparability of the church's religious and social missions. The property retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and is significant at the local and state levels.

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

Architecture

St. John's Congregational Church, completed in 1911, was designed in a restrained, modern interpretation of an English country church style, reflecting the humble aspirations of its African-American congregation and local community. Despite its small scale and domestic features, the church represents a religious and social landmark in Springfield's history, and reflects an effort to improve the status and living conditions of blacks migrating into New England from the southern states. The church was designed to provide the congregation with a respectable and comfortable place of worship, with icons of abolitionist history, including John Brown—who lived in Springfield from 1846 to 1849—incorporated in its stained-glass window plan. The plan included a social room adjoining the sanctuary, where girls and young women associated with the church's Women's Social Union could congregate, and, in the basement, a dining room, kitchen and Sunday School rooms. The accompanying annex, designed in a manner similar to the church, opened in 1913, and contained the pastor's living quarters and church offices on the first floor, dormitory rooms on the upper two levels, and a kitchen and dining room in the basement. As with the church, the Parish Home for Working Girls served both pastoral and social functions. Springfield architect B. Hammett Seabury provided the plans for both buildings. He designed many church, school, civic, and residential buildings in the city during a career that spanned more than 50 years.

Ethnic Heritage & Social History

The church is one of Springfield's prominent black churches that from the outset was intended to serve the spiritual and social needs of African Americans arriving in the city during the Great Migration. The church's mission was intended to ameliorate their impoverished conditions and facilitate their transition into the urban workforce. The church's home for working girls and women, boys' and girls' clubs, employment bureau, domestic science night school, and other groups played critical roles in helping southern African Americans adjust to the circumstances and inequities of northern urban life. Its extensive social programs, in the absence of any sort or level of government assistance, were similar to those of

Jane Addams's Hull House in Chicago, begun several decades earlier. Its struggle against racially based housing and employment discrimination, and advocacy of African-American educational and political achievement, continued after DeBerry resigned the pastorate in 1930, and as the city of Springfield experienced the greatest African-American population increases in its history.

Religion

Historically, African Americans' belief in a benevolent deity who looked after them was important to their self-preservation and community-building. Religious values of brotherly love, tolerance, forgiveness, and turning the other cheek provided them with the means to cope with the indignities and assaults they experienced in a society where they were considered, at best, second-class citizens.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Rooted in an antebellum schism among local Methodists over the issue of slavery, St. John's Congregational Church in Springfield was founded under its current name in November 1890, and occupied the church at the southeast corner of Hancock and Union Streets for more than a century. One of the most active and respected of the nation's historically African-American "institutional churches," St. John's emerged just as post-Civil War African-American migration from the South had abated slightly, and its new sanctuary was completed just before a new wave of migration—the so-called Great Migration—quicken the pace of settlement and began to profoundly alter the racial profile of Springfield, and many other northern cities.

St. John's Congregational Church emerged from race-based controversy, and has since remained continually engaged with it. It originated in Zion or Zion's Methodist Church, which was built on Sanford Street in 1844, and whose founding was, according to most accounts, undertaken or in some way aided by members of the Pyncheon Street Society, some 40 congregants of Springfield's First Methodist Society who, in the same year, had withdrawn over the church's refusal to take a formal stand against slavery. *King's Handbook of Springfield* stated in 1876 that the Sanford Street church "was an independent church . . . which was for several years aided by liberal contributions from both Congregationalists and Methodists."¹ At that time, the population of African descent in Springfield was probably about 250 persons, unremarkable for a town of its size: in 1850, African Americans made up 0.4 percent of the total Springfield population of 11,766.

Despite the relatively modest size of its African-American population, that community appears to have been politically active from an early point. No local history asserts the existence of an earlier black church than Zion Methodist, and it was with this congregation that radical abolitionist John Brown worshipped while he lived in Springfield and managed a wool trading partnership between 1846 and 1849. He gave the church its "lectern Bible," probably when he left the city for North Elba, New York, in 1849, but he returned to Springfield often over the next several years to wrap up the affairs of his failed business. On one of these visits, in January of 1851, Brown organized a local chapter of the United States League of Gileadites, formed to "resist" the provisions of the September 1850 federal Fugitive Slave Act. The agreement bound the 26 signatories and seventeen other unnamed African Americans to "collect together as quickly as possible" with weapons (which Brown is said to have provided) "exposed to view" should any alleged fugitive from slavery be arrested. At least five members of Zion Methodist (one of them a woman, of three who signed) were among the 26 who signed the agreement.²

¹ Moses King, ed., *King's Handbook of Springfield, Massachusetts* (Springfield: James D. Gill, 1884), 190, *The History of St. John's Congregational Church, Springfield, Massachusetts, 1844-1962* (Springfield, MA: History Committee of St. John's Congregational Church, 1962), 15-16 (hereafter cited as *History of St. John's*), notes that at its first board meeting on October 14, 1845, the Pyncheon Street Society voted that any person of African descent who wished to attend its meetings might do so freely but had also built the Zion Methodist Church, the cornerstone of which referred to it as the "Free Church" and dated its construction to 1844. The Pyncheon Street Society's own church was completed on that street in March of 1845. The North Congregational Church, founded by men of "deep anti-slavery convictions" in 1846, rented the Free or Zion Methodist Church while its own sanctuary was being built; see *The North Congregational Church Springfield, Massachusetts. Fiftieth Anniversary, October 25 to November 1, 1896, Sermon by Rev. Frank Barrows Makepeace* (Springfield, MA: North Congregational Church, 1896).

² The agreement was reprinted in "somewhat condensed" form, with the names of its signers, in F. B. Sanborn, ed., *The Life and Letters of John Brown* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1891), 124-127, and their affiliation with Zion Methodist is cited in *History of St. John's*, 19-20. One of them was William Green, very likely the fugitive who had escaped from Maryland in 1839 and published *Narrative of Events in the Life of William Green, (Formerly a Slave.) Written by Himself* in Springfield in 1853. The *Springfield Republican*, October 15, 1850, reported that the city's African Americans had assumed a militant posture even before the formation of the League branch: "Our colored friends in town are getting excited in regard to the new fugitive slave law. We understand most have armed themselves and are determined to do valiant battle for their rights." See Wayne E. Phaneuf et al., *The Struggle for Freedom: The History of African Americans in Western Massachusetts* (Springfield, MA: Springfield Republican, 2013), 39.

In order to be free to choose their own minister, the Zion Methodist congregation reorganized as the Free Congregational Church in February of 1864, and in 1867 the church name was changed to Sanford Street Congregational Church. Though it had had several notable and politically engaged pastors in earlier years, between 1870 and 1877 the church had no regular pastor, and in 1871 it had only 38 members—even as the African-American population of Springfield had nearly doubled between 1860 and 1870, from 276 to 539 persons. This first of Springfield's African-American population booms was also the first notable movement of people from South to North, people who were much more inclined to worship in Baptist or Methodist churches than in Congregationalist ones, the last never strongly established among southern African Americans. Springfield's Third (then Pilgrim) Baptist Church arose from weekly prayer meetings among eight people of color in 1869 and exploded in 1872, when "large numbers of people came to this city from Virginia and about one hundred became members of the Mission," according to the church's online history. The 1876 Springfield directory noted that Pilgrim Baptist then had 170 members and was "probably the largest church of colored people in the city."

Sanford Street Congregational Church's membership fluctuated dramatically in the postwar period, increasing to 70 persons in 1882, dropping to 35 in 1885, and never again exceeding 60 persons until 1893. By the late 1880s, many of the church's older members had died, other members had moved out of Springfield, the church building itself was in disrepair, and the congregation could not attract a minister who wished to remain. Between 1884 and 1899, the church's history states, no minister stayed more than four and a half years, and the average tenure was two years. "Very much like those in the dark, they are feeling their way along, hardly knowing what to do, or how to do it," the church reported to the Hampden Conference and Benevolent Association of Congregational Churches in 1888. More critically, this report noted, the city's black population was no longer clustered around the church's downtown location:

The edifice itself is not only old and become dilapidated, but is now away, or aside, from the people over whom the church might hope to exert an influence. This is owing to the fact that there has been a movement of the colored population, from the lower to the higher portion of the city. There is now a large community on 'the Hill,' entirely unprovided for spiritually, except as they may find their way into Hope Church, Eastern Avenue Church, Highland Baptist Church, or into some mission chapel in their vicinity. Some few, no doubt, do enter these churches, but the great mass are virtually unprovided for. The true location for the Sanford Street Church, in the future at least, would seem to be somewhere on 'the Hill' where a field of labor is open before her.³

Accordingly, in 1888 the church founded the St. John's Society⁴ at the Quincy Street Mission, which it had established on "the Hill" in 1877 with the assistance of Hope Congregational Church, also an African-American church, which had been founded in that section of the city in 1865. Two years later, on November 19, 1890, the city's Congregational church leaders met to consolidate the Quincy Street Mission and the Sanford Street Congregational church in a body to be known as "the church of St. John," and to be housed in the Quincy Street Mission. At that time sixteen members of the Sanford Street congregation and six members of Hope Congregational Church joined the new church, which set about selling the Sanford Street building (not extant) and raising funds for a new sanctuary. The \$2,100 profit from the sale of the Sanford Street church helped reduce the mortgage on St. John's first building, erected on the site of the former mission in the fall of 1892.⁵

The reputation of St. John's as an exemplary "institutional church"—that is, one whose mission and activity embraces whatever promotes the "moral and social betterment" of its congregation—stems from the ordination of William Nelson DeBerry on June 28, 1899. DeBerry not only presided over St. John's Congregational Church for 31 years, but he put in place a program of "institutional activity" that gained the church nationwide acclaim.

Born August 29, 1870, in Nashville, Tennessee, William N. DeBerry was the son of Casper DeBerry (1829-1894) and his wife Charlotte Mayfield; several biographical accounts state that his parents had been enslaved. His father worked as a

³ *St. John's History*, 32-33.

⁴ While some sources claim the church was named for John Brown, *St. John's History*, 39, states that it was "named after the beloved disciple. . . . There are some who feel that because of John Brown's close connection with St. John's, and the reverence and love the members held for him, that he shared in the name along with the beloved disciple."

⁵ *St. John's History*, 37, 40-45; "Colored Churches Consolidate," *Springfield Republican*, November 20, 1890, 7.

railway shop painter during the week and served as a preacher at the city's Mt. Zion Baptist Church on Sundays. In the 1890s, DeBerry put himself through Fisk University and Oberlin Theological Seminary by working as a sawmill laborer, summer-session schoolteacher, hotel waiter, and Pullman porter.⁶ Upon his 1899 graduation from Oberlin he sought a pastorate in the South, but he agreed to become minister of St. John's, which then had 108 members. According to biographer Lily Hardy Hammond, the Springfield congregation told DeBerry that he must be married, so DeBerry returned to Nashville to marry Amanda R. McKissack, a fellow Fisk graduate from Pulaski, Tennessee. By 1900 the couple was living on Taylor Street in Springfield, for the church as yet had no parsonage, and soon afterward the DeBerrys moved to 275 Eastern Avenue, where they and their daughters, Charlotte Pearl (born 1900) and Annie M. (born 1905), lived until 1914.

Hammond, who apparently interviewed DeBerry for her biographical sketch, stated that through his first years in Springfield DeBerry wished to return to the South, as several pastors of St. John's had before him; the church history observed that "the dedicated zeal of many of these young ministers in the early years of the church led them to feel that their greatest service to God and the Negro was in the South." Yet the "Missionary Association" advised him that he would be more effective in the North. Hammond wrote, "'He told his people he could not stay with them unless they would undertake a broader service to the colored community of Springfield. He wanted a church that would be open seven days in the week, helping people on work days and rest days alike.'" ⁷ A contemporary account reported that DeBerry credited Atlanta Congregational minister H. H. Proctor for having suggested, on a visit to Springfield, that DeBerry begin "a work of every day helpfulness" in the city, modeled on the one Proctor had put in place at his church.⁸

In 1902 DeBerry instituted "Circles of Service," which placed church members in fundraising groups aligned with various aspects of church work, and it may have been he who organized the first celebrations of John Brown's birthday. "DeBerry said that previously it had been the custom to celebrate the anniversary by procuring prominent negro speakers," the *Springfield Republican* reported, but on May 8, 1907, Brown's 107th birthday, he chose to bring together formerly enslaved Springfielders to relate their experiences in slavery.⁹ However, DeBerry's real activism on behalf of the city's African Americans awaited both his own investigation of their situation and the construction of a new church and a parish house. Probably in late 1904, he and three assistants spent ten weeks canvassing the city's African-American homes to develop a demographic, residential, educational, social, economic, and religious picture of the population in order to identify those "barriers which ought to be removed" to improve the material, social, and moral situation of local African Americans. The findings of DeBerry's *Sociological Survey of the Negro Population of Springfield, Mass.* were cited in a 1914 thesis and summarized by DeBerry in the February 5, 1905, issue of the *Springfield Sunday Republican*, but no copy of the pamphlet, if it was published, has been located.¹⁰ DeBerry reported on the basis of the survey that more than 52 percent of Springfield's 908 adult African Americans had been born in the South, the largest number (286 of 476) in Virginia, and nearly 47 percent had moved to Springfield since 1895. He attributed this sizable immigration to the "unusual persecution" then prevailing in the South, and he insisted—as he repeatedly did in later studies—that improving virtually every aspect of the lives of African Americans hinged on "their industrial activity." He noted in the *Republican*:

Three hundred and twenty black men out of 375 are confined to certain servile types of employment in Springfield, not because they are all unfit for anything higher, but because race prejudice has closed the door of industry opportunity against these men as a class. . . . They do not ask to be taken out of the menial strata of industry before they are capable of entering the higher but that as a class they may be emancipated from the merciless industrial ostracism which shuts out the capable and worthy negro

⁶ Nahum Daniel Brascher, "Warm Tribute Paid Dr DeBerry by Widely Known Negro Editor," *Springfield Sunday Republican*, May 18, 1924, 6; Mrs. Lily Hardy Hammond, *In the Vanguard of a Race* (New York: Council of Women of Home Missions, 1922), 63-77; her biography of DeBerry is Chapter 5, "A City Pastor." See also "Rev. Dr. W. N. DeBerry, Negro Leader, Is Dead: Son of Former Slave Parents Won Fame From Interracial and Social Work," *Springfield Union*, January 21, 1948, 1, 10.

⁷ *St. John's History*, 48; Hammond, *In the Vanguard of a Race*, 74.

⁸ Hammond, *In the Vanguard of a Race*, 73-76; Brascher, "Warm Tribute."

⁹ *St. John's History*, 52-53; "Local Intelligence: In Honor of John Brown," *Springfield Republican*, May 9, 1907, 4; *Boston Herald*, May 10, 1907, 6.

¹⁰ William N. DeBerry, "Negroes of Springfield," *Springfield Sunday Republican*, February 5, 1905, 11; Joseph William Bowers, "The Springfield Negro" (Thesis, International Young Men's Christian Association College, 1914). Bowers' thesis basically replicated the method and subjects of DeBerry's 1905 work; DeBerry then organized identical surveys in 1922 and in 1940. They are *Sociological Survey of the Negro Population of Springfield, Mass.* (Springfield: St. John's Institutional Activities, 1922), 17; Lyman and Merrie Wood Museum of Springfield History Archives; and William N. DeBerry, ed., *Sociological Survey of the Negro Population of Springfield, Mass.* (Springfield: Dunbar Community League, [1940]), online at http://www.forgeofinnovation.org/springfield_armory_1892-1945/Documents/Springfield_Sociological_Survey_1940.pdf.

because God chose to create him black. For our progressive worthy young women we ask the identical chance as for our progressive worthy young men.

DeBerry's plea that Springfield's many mills and factories offer blacks work other than as custodians or unskilled laborers, however, fell on virtually deaf ears for many decades following.

Between 1899 and 1906, membership at St. John's had risen from 108 to 176 persons, and the church building at 205 Quincy Street was, according to the church history, growing crowded. In 1909, DeBerry attempted to buy a lot at the southeast corner of Hancock and Union streets, one street north of the Quincy Street church, but was rebuffed by an owner who asserted that a black church would devalue surrounding property. DeBerry arranged for a white realtor to buy the property, which contained a wood-frame house "with rather a disreputable history," and the realtor transferred title to St. John's Congregational Church two weeks later.¹¹ The 1910 atlas map of this section of Springfield shows the property owned by St. John's, with the house standing roughly in the middle of the lot. By 1910, church members and others had subscribed \$12,000 of the \$18,000 estimated cost of building and furnishing the new church. A "double mixed quartet," which presented more than 60 concerts of "southern jubilee melodies" throughout the region, and another young people's chorus together contributed \$3,200 to this campaign. Ground was broken for the new church in mid-March of 1911, and the cornerstone laid on April 16 of that year. DeBerry placed a copper box in the cornerstone that contained church yearbooks from 1901 to 1911, an account of the meeting in which members voted to build a new church, and the names of 363 people who had subscribed five dollars or more to the building fund. The last service at the Quincy Street church took place on November 2, 1911, and three days later DeBerry presided over the first service at the new St. John's Congregational Church.¹²

The church was designed in a restrained, modern interpretation of an English country church, reflecting the humble aspirations of its African-American congregation and local community. It conformed with prevailing models of church architecture, indicating the congregation's desire to integrate into the majority population. The church also was conceived to make a statement of its members' African-American heritage, particularly with the Abolitionist Movement. In addition, spaces were included in the plan to accommodate the church's social mission. The design was developed with Springfield architect B. Hammett Seabury; he apparently was selected by the church for his overall reputation with public and institutional architecture. If he had been recommended for the job through other channels, it has not been recorded. Seabury had previously designed Hope Congregational Church on State Street, in partnership with Francis B. Richmond, in 1883 (not extant); the School for Christian Workers Building, also with Richmond, in 1886; and the parish house for Memorial Church (Richard Upjohn, 1855) on Memorial Square in 1894. (Memorial Square was listed in the National Register in 1977.) By the time he was retained by St. John's, Seabury was the architect of record for dozens of buildings in Springfield and other Connecticut Valley towns.

Scion of a prominent Newport, RI, family—where he continued to accept commissions while living in Springfield—Benjamin Hamett Seabury was a recent graduate of Boston Tech (an early name for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1865-1910) when Francis R. Richmond joined him in a partnership in Springfield in 1882. Richmond began his career as a carpenter in the Amherst area. He came to Springfield to apprentice with architect Eugene C. Gardner (1836-1915), who published a number of design books including *Common Sense in Church Building* (1880). The partnership of Richmond and Seabury lasted until 1890, after which Seabury maintained an independent office in the Besse Block, in downtown Springfield, until his death in 1945. His son, Harry M. Seabury, joined and succeeded him in the practice.¹³

In *St. John's History*, the church's main auditorium was described with curved ash pews (since replaced) and interior walls wainscoted in ash to the base of the windows. On the south side of the sanctuary were "social rooms," which could

¹¹ *St. John's History*, 54. See the history for more details about the previous owners and attempts to negate the sale. The lot was 99 x 120 feet. The 1899 map of this section of Springfield shows that the lot was then owned by the estate of "M. Bateman and J. M. Ross"; Joseph M. Ross then owned the lot and building just south, where St. John's Boys' Club was later located. Ross was an insurance clerk; "M. Bateman" was the Irish-born widow Margaret Bateman, whose 1907 death certificate shows her residence as 91 Hancock Street, on the southeast corner of Hancock and Quincy streets. By 1910 Bateman's widowed daughter Annie F. Hennessey owned what became the boys' club across Quincy Street, as well as 91 Hancock Street.

¹² *St. John's History*, 55-56. The Quincy Street church was later sold, and it is now the site of New Jerusalem Church of God in Christ, which razed the former St. John's Church and constructed the building currently on the site in 1984-1985. See Leigh Ann Hurt, "Jerusalem church starts Quincy Street building," *Springfield Union*, July 4, 1984, 14.

¹³ Information gleaned from National Register Nomination Form for Springfield's Memorial Square Historic District (1977) and internet searches.

accommodate another 125 persons, separated from the auditorium by folding wood doors. The pulpit, choir loft, and organ (installed in June 1915) occupied the church's east side. There also was a small study on the right side of the pulpit, and the belltower contained a small "counting room" and office. In the church basement was a large room used for Sunday School classes, a kitchen and a pantry, bathrooms, and a utility room. "Downstairs is a big room with movable seats for Sunday-school and for entertainments," Hammond wrote. "Here also are kindergarten rooms, the church kitchen, and rooms for classes in cooking and in arts and crafts."

The main Hancock Street façade of the church features eight "art glass" windows (the church history does not indicate who designed them), dedicated to John Brown, "the hero of Harper's Ferry"; the African-American poet and activist Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, given by a church literary club; and six prominent church members whose biographies reveal the varying backgrounds of church membership. Sarah C. Howard James was born in Falmouth, Virginia, about 1825, and had married North Carolina native and barber Henry James by 1848, possibly in Ohio. Their children Celestine, Mary, George, and Erastus were born in Ohio between 1848 and 1862. By 1863, when daughter Lena was born, at least part of the family was living in Haiti, one group among hundreds of African Americans who participated in a largely unsuccessful effort to establish a viable colony there. By 1869, the Jameses had returned to the United States and were living in New York State near the Massachusetts border; there their son William B., who funded a memorial window to his mother at St. John's, was born. By 1868, however, Celestine James had moved to Springfield, where that year she married the Virginia-born coachman James Thornton; her sister Lena was living in the city by 1883, when she married Thornton's brother George, also a coachman and the subject of a second memorial window.¹⁴ By 1890 Henry James had died, and his widow moved to Springfield with her son William; she lived in his Monroe Street household until she died in January of 1905.

The St. John's window memorializing Ida E. Putnam Fultz represents that part of the congregation with New England roots. Born in Springfield in 1848, Ida Elizabeth Putnam was the daughter of barber John Putnam, born in either Framingham or Greenfield, MA, about 1817, and Annie E. James of Meriden, CT. She lived in Springfield for most, if not all, of her life. In 1895 she married Joseph D. Fultz, an ice peddler who had been born in Richmond, VA, and by 1900 the couple was living on Quincy Street with her two young children; Fultz was then shown as a teamster. Ida Fultz died at the age of 26, in 1904. Fultz was a Massachusetts native who married a southern migrant, while Olivia Virginia Dennis, memorialized in another window, was a southerner who married a northern man. Born in Salisbury, MD, in 1852, Olivia Goines DeCoursey had been married once before by the time she came to Springfield about 1879. In that year she married Charles Sumner Dennis, a coachman born in Hinsdale, MA, about 1857, not long after Massachusetts abolitionist senator Charles Sumner had delivered his famed antislavery "Crime against Kansas" speech and had been beaten with a cane on the Senate floor by South Carolina Representative Preston Brooks. Dennis was a teamster in 1900, an auto plant watchman in 1910, and a woodworker at the United States Armory in Springfield in 1920. Olivia Dennis died in 1924.¹⁵

The main auditorium of the new St. John's Congregational Church could seat 375 persons, only 50 more than the old Quincy Street church was designed to accommodate. Clearly, more was at play in building the new church than an issue of capacity: Hammond's reference to space for kindergarten, cooking, and arts and crafts instruction suggests as much. She noted as well that the social rooms "are large, well-furnished parlors, with a piano and a victrola, magazines and books, a sub-station for the public library. Prayer-meetings are held here on Thursday nights, but on all other week nights the rooms are open to various clubs for women and girls under the care of a trained worker. Three hundred are enrolled in these clubs."¹⁶ The rooms were designed, according to one 1917 church pamphlet, "as a social center for young women" and were open from seven until ten o'clock every evening.

It seems probable that DeBerry wanted an impressive new structure on a main thoroughfare—not on a side street, as Quincy Street is—that would not only make manifest the perceived stature of the church organization but would also house activities of "every day helpfulness" to the community at large. Even as St. John's often benefited from white philanthropy and DeBerry sought consistently to achieve interracial cooperation, he and his congregation arguably wished to proclaim through the new church what an activist African-American institution could do for themselves—just as one

¹⁴ The 1860 census shows the family in Ravenna, Ohio, and the 1875 New York state census shows them in the town of North East, in Dutchess County, New York.

¹⁵ Charles Dennis's Social Security claim and his grave identify his middle name as Sumner.

¹⁶ Hammond, *In the Vanguard of a Race*, 75; *St. John's Congregational Church and Institutional Activities, Springfield, Massachusetts* (Springfield: St. John's Congregational Church, [1917]), 10-11, Lyman and Merrie Wood Museum of Springfield History Archives.

New Haven African-American minister had advised when he closed his address to the newly formed St. John's congregation in 1890 "by exhorting his hearers not to depend too much upon outside aid and describing self-help as the first element of success in the case of their brethren at New Haven."¹⁷

The social rooms for women of the church were complemented by an adjacent boys' club (not extant) south of the church, and a building that served as both a parsonage and a home for working girls and women. The latter building, built at 643 Union Street just east of the church, opened in November 1913, and is a component of the nominated property. (Note: while the parsonage/home for working girls now is part of a single parcel with the church and shares its address, 69 Hancock Street, it will be referred to in the following narrative by its historical address, 643 Union Street.) Designed by B. Hammett Seabury in a style compatible with the neighboring church, the 26-room house featured living quarters for the minister and his family; church offices, and a parlor for boarders on the first floor; a guest chamber and thirteen rooms for boarding girls on the second and attic levels; and a kitchen, dining room, and laundry room for the girls' use in the basement, where each girl also had a locker in which to keep "her stock of groceries."¹⁸ Its purpose, according to a 1917 church pamphlet, was "to offer to colored working girls and women the advantages and protection of a well-ordered, Christian home and it is open alike to all regardless of religious persuasion," along the same general lines as a YWCA. "Here women and girls who come to the city as strangers may, at a nominal cost, secure accommodations for either a transient or permanent period. Here also they are aided in finding suitable employment and protection against the many dangers to which the homeless young woman is exposed in every large city."¹⁹ Another club, the Women's Welfare League, used the social rooms on Thursday afternoons, and two clubs for younger girls met on the basement level.

The 1920 census shows DeBerry and his wife Amanda (mistakenly named "Lydia" in the census) sharing the 643 Union Street home with twelve African-American women, ranging from 24 to 49 years of age. Seven had been born in northern states (though two had at least one southern-born parent), and the rest were from South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Louisiana. The North was better represented among the home's occupants than it was in the city's African-American population in 1922: DeBerry's sociological survey of that year showed 659 of Springfield's 2,066 African-American adults as having been born in the North and West. The occupations of the home's residents generally mirrored what DeBerry's surveys revealed of African-American female employment—half did domestic work in homes or hotels, two were dressmakers, and one was a hairdresser—but three of the home's residents in 1920 worked as teachers and clerks, unusual for African-American women at the time.²⁰ In 1930, ten women lived at the 643 Union Street home, and by 1940, five women boarded there. Most of the women in the 1930 and 1940 censuses were domestic workers, but the 1930 census also included an elevator operator in an office building, and an assistant in a doctor's office. Two women—Corinne Beauduit and Lillian Garrison—lived in the house from at least 1920 through 1940. Born in Louisiana about 1890, Beauduit worked as a maid in a private household in 1920 and 1930, but by 1940 was a finisher of men's clothing. The church history notes that she also served as the home's assistant matron, though years of her service in this capacity are not indicated. Garrison, born in Tennessee in 1888, was probably living at the home earlier, perhaps from its opening; while she is not listed in the 1913 Springfield directory, she was shown in 1916 as having "removed to Tennessee." By 1918, she was listed as rooming at 643 Union Street, and directories show her at this address through at least 1963. Garrison remained in Springfield until she died in December of 1974. In 1920 she was a dressmaker, but she later worked as a domestic, and she may have spent some seasons of the year working in Palm Beach, Florida, where a woman of that name, race, and birthplace is shown in the 1935 state census.

Just as the church's social rooms were designed to offer women a space in which to spend their evenings usefully, the boys' club was meant to offer young African-American men "a desirable substitute for the streets as a place in which to spend their leisure time." According to the church history, Joseph William Bowers, a native of London, Ontario, who had probably just started his education at the International Young Men's Christian Association College (later Springfield College), established a club for African-American males under the age of eighteen at St. John's in 1910. It met first, apparently, at the old church, and then in the Sunday School room on the new church's basement level. In 1915, seeking more room for the club, St. John's was again compelled to purchase property from the same party (whom the church identifies only as "Mr. K") who had unwittingly sold the church lot six years before. Holyoke woolen manufacturer Frank

¹⁷ Rev. Mr. Miller, paraphrased in "Colored Churches Consolidate."

¹⁸ *St. John's History*, 60-61; Brascher, "Warm Tribute."

¹⁹ *St. John's Institutional Activities*, 8. This passage appears almost verbatim in Bowers, "Springfield Negro," 51, as do other passages in this pamphlet.

²⁰ DeBerry's 1922 survey found, of 462 employed African-American women, 288 were in domestic service, 83 were laundresses, 27 were dressmakers, 10 were hairdressers, 9 were clerks, and only one was a teacher. DeBerry, *Sociological Survey* (1922), 10, 12.

Beebe, who had become involved with DeBerry's church work about 1910, agreed to buy the house and lot at the northeast corner of Hancock and Quincy streets and to transfer title to the church, and to also purchase the St. John's Club for Boys and Young Men, which opened on April 30, 1915. To appease the owner after the sale and an ensuing controversy over lot lines, the church built a fence four feet west of the lot's eastern boundary and abutting properties "Mr. K" owned on Quincy Street.²¹ The boys' club had two pool rooms, a reading room, a game and meeting room, a piano, and a victrola, and it sponsored basketball and other athletic teams that competed in the city's Sunday School Athletic Association.

By 1917, the church also offered a free employment bureau—for men at the boys' club and for women at the parish home.²² St. John's offered a "night school of domestic training" in the church basement, which taught "plain and fancy cooking, the preparation and serving of special meals, dressmaking, embroidery, and the proper care of the home" to increase the appeal of African-American women in the city's domestic service market. "Along with the steady development of domestic science must come necessarily the development of domestic service," the 1917 pamphlet noted. "The latter must be lifted ultimately from the degradation of a menial occupation to the dignity of a lucrative profession. No woman who engages in this form of work and fits herself for it need be ashamed of her calling." The church created the position of parish visitor, who was to visit homes in the parish, manage the social rooms, and supervise domestic science classes. It created the Men's Community Club, which met monthly, particularly "in the interest of the men who have recently migrated to the North and who need such fellowship, direction and help as the older residents can give." At this time it sponsored the St. John's Jubilee Double Quartet, essentially the same group that had helped raise funds for the new church, and had launched a campaign to build a home for "aged colored people" on a five-acre tract on Boston Road donated by member Cora W. Wilks. DeBerry envisioned the home as not only meeting "a long felt need" but also as providing a space to train young African-American boys in the potentially "lucrative" industries of truck gardening and raising poultry.²³

DeBerry then turned his attention to housing, which he termed "one of the most trying and difficult of all the problems" African Americans confronted in Springfield.²⁴ His experience in buying the land for the church and the boys' club had demonstrated the difficulty African Americans confronted in Springfield and many other northern cities, and the rapid immigration of southern African Americans in the first years of the Great Migration exacerbated the problem. Between 1910 and 1920 the city's black population rose from 1,475 to 2,650 persons, or nearly 80 percent, while the total city population grew by 46 percent over that decade. "So intense is the antipathy to negro families as neighbors that it is seldom if ever that a colored family secures a tenement on a street where negroes have not hitherto lived, without raising a storm of indignant protest," DeBerry wrote in the *Republican* in 1905, and while he allowed that some of the city's black families "would disgrace any respectable street," he could not fathom treating all African-American families with "the same scornful contempt when they seek to get decent homes." In his 1914 college thesis, Bowers had found 99 property owners among the 348 African-American families in Springfield; 231 families lived in 254 rental units. A 1912 survey of the city's housing conditions by the Union Relief Association found that most housing occupied by racial and ethnic minorities was overcrowded and unsanitary; the survey ranked almost 37 percent of the 404 buildings it examined as in bad condition.²⁵

In housing as in employment, DeBerry's work in Springfield was not unprecedented: in 1907, members of the Loring Street African Methodist Episcopal Church had created the Mutual Housing Company to respond to the problems of

²¹ *St. John's History*, 61, 63-64.

²² St. John's was not the first in Springfield's African-American community to work on the employment issue. William Hughes, born a slave in Virginia in 1825 and living in Springfield by 1870, returned five times to Virginia, each time bringing back "ten to fifteen" African Americans to do domestic work. About 1902, Ella M. Haynes Clark Stewart—born in Lynchburg, Virginia, and a Springfield resident since at least 1893, when she married laborer William M. Stewart—ran the Highland Employment Bureau from her 53 Mason Street home to supply "cooks, butlers, and 'general, second and third maids'; the business remained active until about 1927. Stewart, who had been instrumental in raising funds for the new St. John's church, was the first African-American graduate of the Evening School of Trades at Springfield's Technical High School. On Hughes, see Jeanette Davis-Harris, "The Turning Northward," in Phaneuf et al., ed., *Struggle for Freedom*, 80-81; on Stewart see Bowers, "Springfield Negro," 22-23, 49.

²³ *St. John's Congregational Church and Institutional Activities*.

²⁴ *Sociological Survey of the Negro Population of Springfield, Mass.* (Springfield: St. John's Institutional Activities, 1922), 17, Wood Museum Archives.

²⁵ Carol Aronovici, *Report on Housing Conditions in Springfield, Massachusetts Prepared for the Housing Committee of the Union Relief Association* (Springfield, [1912]), 9, 20. The report made no effort to evaluate housing conditions by racial or ethnic background, though it noted that 3.34 percent of the 7,370 persons surveyed were black, and that the second-highest proportion of lodgers was among blacks, at 14.22 percent; 26.35 percent of Polish immigrants surveyed were lodgers. DeBerry's 1940 social survey noted the persistence of housing discrimination in Springfield—of 741 families surveyed, 84 percent were renters—and, though it expressed puzzlement over the slightly higher crime rate among African Americans relative to their share of the local population, it suggested that "the deplorable living and housing conditions" in the city's North End, where 80 percent of African-American arrests took place, bore some responsibility.

scarcity and discrimination in housing, and DeBerry himself was a trustee of this group by the early 1940s, if not earlier. Still, the need for housing was great and growing. According to the church history, St. John's secured the assistance of Frank Beebe once again to buy an eight-unit apartment building at 81 Orleans Street, at the corner of Quincy Street two blocks west of the church. Beebe agreed to serve as purchaser on the condition that tenants lived up to an agreement to keep the properties in good order; if they did, he would deed the property to the church. DeBerry and his church workers selected tenants, held a conference with each of them, and after an interval sufficiently long to convince him that the venture was viable, Beebe transferred title to the church. In 1918 St. John's also bought at least three tenements along Quincy Street abutting church property from "Mr. K," whose wife's illness compelled him to leave the city and sell his remaining real estate. These properties, two three-deckers and one two-family home, were numbered 146 through 154 Quincy Street; one of the three-deckers and the two-family dwelling are extant and in separate ownership.²⁶ Three years earlier the will of church member Henrietta M. Purvis Coleman left her home at 49 Hancock Street, just north of the church, two Jennette Street building lots, and houses and lots at 59 Quincy Street and 610-12 Union Street to St. John's Congregational Church. By 1926, 25 African-American families and twelve unmarried women lived in church-owned housing.²⁷

In 1911 DeBerry and other Springfielders of both races incorporated St. John's Institutional Activities, Inc., as a body to create and administer these programs. The 1917 pamphlet describing the work of the church pointed out that it gave parishioners "something to do aside from money raising" to support the church:

In St. John's Church there is life and activity not only on Sunday, but every day and night of the week. The Church is therefore made to serve the social and practical needs of the people on the week day as well as their spiritual needs on Sunday. The result is that it is to them a very different institution from what it was when its energies were confined to the ordinary, traditional methods of church work. To these methods we have no desire to return after our six years' experience in the broader and more interesting sphere of every-day, applied Christianity.²⁸

By 1918, St. John's Congregational Church had extricated itself from debt and had founded a North End Mission to serve the growing black population in that section of the city. DeBerry's work had begun to earn wider attention. In 1918 grateful parishioners gave DeBerry a new car and a "purse" in recognition of his work, and in December of the same year the "Emergency Charity Chest of Springfield" (very likely what was elsewhere and later referred to as the Community Chest, now the United Way) invited St. John's Institutional Activities to share in its fund for charitable organizations. In 1920 the short-lived Interchurch World Movement, founded in 1918 to unite Protestant churches, awarded St. John's Congregational Church its highest rank. Two years later, the Committee of Social and Religious Survey of New York included Springfield among the cities with populations greater than 100,000 where its field workers would examine faith and religious affiliation. Based on an examination of census data and interviews with more than 16,000 Springfield residents, the survey declared that, measured against its "national yard stick" of church community involvement, St. John's and the Olivet Community House of South Congregational Church "are doing what only two or three per cent of the city churches of America have attempted. They fall in the very exceptional class of socially adapted churches, and tend toward skyscraper programs." By contrast, at least three African-American churches and numerous others in the city were considered "one-story" churches with "underdeveloped" programs featuring only Sunday preaching, Sunday school, a women's missionary society, and a young people's group.²⁹ Hammond's book, with its chapter on DeBerry's work at St. John's, was first published in 1922, and the Wichita, Kansas, *Negro Star* called St. John's "one of the most unique institutional churches in the country" in 1925.³⁰ In 1927 DeBerry won the first award and gold medal from New York's

²⁶ *St. John's History*, 63-67. In 1910 one of the Quincy Street properties was owned by nurse Harry O. Fisk, while the Mutual Housing Company owned 164 Quincy Street.

²⁷ *St. John's Institutional Activities, Inc., Springfield, Mass., 1926* (Springfield: St. John's Congregational Church, 1926), Wood Museum Archives.

²⁸ *St. John's Institutional Activities* (1917), 6.

²⁹ Jane Olcott Waters, comp., *A First Book of the Social and Religious Survey of Springfield, Massachusetts, Compiled from Preliminary Reports and Graphs Presented at the Findings Conference, October 17th and 18th, and the Programizing Conference, December 12th and 13th, 1922* (New York: Committee on Social and Religious Surveys, 1923), <https://archive.org/stream/firstbookofsocia00walt#page/n5/mode/2up>. The national yardstick ranked the nation's churches, based on the survey's review of five hundred churches in cities of 100,000 or more across the country, according to the range of their activity. More than 80 percent of those surveyed offered "the most usual" and "conventional" programs, such as Sunday School, ladies' aid groups, and young people's societies, but less than 20 percent offered more than half of the thirty-three activities the survey sought, including choirs, men's groups, scouting troops, boys' clubs, bands, dramatic clubs, kindergartens and day nurseries, employment offices, and classes in domestic sciences, sewing, and civics (the last at the top of the yardstick).

³⁰ "Dr. William N. DeBerry Preaches at Fisk Sunday," *Negro Star* (Wichita, KS), December 18, 1925, 1.

William E. Harmon Foundation for “distinguished service in religion and social welfare among Negroes of the United States,” and the next year the Springfield Publicity Club awarded him the William Pynchon Medal for outstanding public service.³¹

In 1901, when DeBerry published the church’s first directory, 102 persons were listed as St. John’s members; the 1929 directory listed 481 members. Most were Springfield residents, and seventeen others lived near enough to the city to attend Sunday services; thus St. John’s may have been viewed as a desirable church among African-American Congregationalists in the larger region. The church’s institutional program continued to grow: in the 1920s it opened a Girls’ Club at 620-22 Union Street, created Camp Atwater (NR, 1982) on land in North Brookfield given to the church, and worked with the city to create and maintain a “Community Playground” on Hancock Street north of the church in 1927. But by then St. John’s had begun to experience internal dissension. In 1924, DeBerry proposed to the church board that St. John’s Institutional Activities be separated from the church. A later account of the separation intimates that it was proposed at the instigation of the Community Chest, which offered to recognize St. John’s Institutional Activities “as the nucleus of the recognized social service agency among the colored people of Springfield” if it were reorganized as a nonsectarian group. Two members of the St. John’s board refused to approve the separation, which transferred title to all the church’s real estate to the new entity—chiefly the parish home, the girls’ and boys’ clubs, the Hancock Street playground, four multifamily dwellings, and the Orleans Street apartment house.³² In November of 1930, St. John’s Institutional Activities became the Dunbar Community League and the St. John’s Parish Home became the Dunbar Home, both named for the African-American poet Paul Laurence Dunbar.

Also in 1930, William N. DeBerry resigned his St. John’s pastorate to become executive director of the Dunbar Community League, and Reverend Roland T. Heacock, who had been an associate minister at St. John’s from 1926 to 1929, became St. John’s minister in February of 1931. The separation of St. John’s institutional work left the church without a social program and, at the onset of the Great Depression, with greatly restricted income. Its straitened circumstances became painfully evident in the church’s inability to raise the funds it needed to build a new parsonage; Heacock and his family were compelled to rent an Orleans Street apartment from the Dunbar Community League.³³

Though it continued to acquire property—the church ultimately bought an eight-room house at 310 King Street in 1933 to serve as the parsonage and a new parish home, though it was apparently not used to board single women—St. John’s struggled through the Depression.³⁴ In 1935 it had to borrow money to buy coal, and debt began to accumulate. Mrs. Abbie Parkhurst, a “friend of the church” who lived on Maple Street with her husband Frederick, a consulting engineer, instituted a hot lunch program, in which church women cooked and served meals to unemployed men and women in the area. She also gave the church land in Belchertown for a second camp, but the church returned the property to her when it found itself unable to maintain the property. But as the Depression eased and the war-oriented economy began to gear up, the church put in place new programs. In 1940 Alfreda Lancaster, a Florida native who had lived with her family in Springfield since at least 1930, began a nursery school and kindergarten in the church’s basement, and Boy and Girl Scout troops were also organized.³⁵

In view of the war emergency and the possibilities it offered of boosting black industrial employment, DeBerry conducted his third sociological survey of the city’s African Americans in 1939 and 1940, under the auspices of the Dunbar Community League. The research found “less gain for our Negro population in the past 18 years than could be desired,” the survey noted; moreover, the gains African Americans had made in mill and factory employment during the First World War had been “neutralized” by the Depression and had “virtually restored the black man’s pre-war industrial status. . . . in the main that of the ‘hewer of wood and drawer of water.’” Fully 70 percent of the 781 African-American adult men surveyed, and 80 percent of the 357 adult women, were employed in “some form of domestic or menial

³¹ Founded in 1922, the William E. Harmon Foundation funded playgrounds, nursing programs, African-American artists, and traveling exhibitions of African-American art. Its Award for Distinguished Achievement among Negroes was instituted in 1926. See the foundation’s Wikipedia entry and Anne Evenhaugen, “African American Art and the Harmon Foundation,” *Unbound 22* (February 2013), Smithsonian Libraries, <http://blog.library.si.edu/2013/02/african-american-art-and-the-harmon-foundation>.

³² *St. John’s History*, 73.

³³ *Ibid.*, 77-78.

³⁴ Though it may have been used as a boardinghouse at some point, the 1940 census shows only Heacock and his family at 210 King Street.

³⁵ Lancaster, born about 1911, had been employed by the local Works Progress Administration program in the late 1930s, and was an inspector at Perkins Machine and Gear Company in West Springfield during World War II. After the war she moved to New York City, but she soon returned and worked as a nurse for various city hospitals until her death in October of 1963.

service,” and 194 employable men had no jobs as of January 1, 1940. The November 1941 issue of the *Dunbar Record* (which St. John's Institutional Activities had begun as *The Record* in January 1930) noted, however, that four of the city's larger industries “have recently opened their doors wider by increasing the number of Negro employees and admitting them not only as common laborers but also as skilled mechanics,” and the Springfield Armory then employed 128 African Americans, three of them as supervisors.

Still, DeBerry's 1940 survey noted, church membership was relatively robust. In 1939-1940 there were twelve African-American church organizations in Springfield with a total membership of 2,164 members—the black population of Springfield at that time was 3,212 persons—and 91 percent of those 2,164 church members were affiliated with four churches: Third Baptist, with 700 members; St. John's, with 530 members; Bethel African Methodist Episcopal, with 400 members; and Mt. Calvary Baptist, with 340 members. Though DeBerry was no longer formally affiliated with St. John's, he acknowledged the role it and other African-American churches played in the community:

Because of the peculiar social and industrial plight of the Negro people as a racial entity in the American body politic, and because of their native spiritual endowment, the church has filled, what, without it, would have been a desolate vacuum in their religious and social life. Accordingly, the Negro churches in Springfield, as elsewhere, have fulfilled and are still fulfilling an indispensable function, both as regards the people whom they serve and the community in which they live.³⁶

St. John's long tradition of a highly educated and activist ministry continued in 1945, when Albert B. Cleage replaced Roland Heacock as pastor. Like DeBerry, Cleage was a graduate of what was then the Oberlin School of Theology, and he had been a social worker in Detroit's public welfare department before becoming copastor of the Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples in San Francisco, founded in 1944 and claimed to be the first major interracial and interfaith church in the United States. At St. John's, Cleage instituted the Pilgrim Fellowship and College Forum, and he organized and led numerous interracial, citywide youth conferences in Springfield. Despite the concerns of some in the congregation that the church could not support itself, Cleage also ended St. John's status as a “mission” church, which meant it no longer would receive financial support from the Massachusetts Congregational Conference and Missionary Society (now the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ). Also during Cleage's tenure, the dispute arose over title to what were now Dunbar Community League properties that ultimately restored to the church much of the property it had signed over to St. John's Institutional Activities, Inc., in January of 1924.

Newspaper and church accounts indicate that two events triggered the controversy—first, a dispute over Community Chest funds, and, second, the belief that the Dunbar Community League was preparing to sell some of its real estate property in order to maintain its programs. In March, 1947, the league reported that it planned to build a large community and recreation center on land it owned on the corner of Monroe and Hancock streets, though it acknowledged that high building costs in the postwar years prevented it from doing so immediately. By July the league instead announced its plan to buy the Olivet Community House from South Congregational Church, a plan that seemed to trigger the ire of the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The NAACP's Youth Council asserted that the Dunbar Community League had failed to stem the creation of numerous “pool rooms and teenage hangouts” in the Hill district because of its “outmoded ineffective social service program” and its lack of facilities and equipment to conduct needed recreational and social work. The NAACP branch called for the Springfield Community Chest to discontinue its support of the league and turn the funds over instead to the local YMCA, so that it might establish “an extension program in the Hill area.” DeBerry, who had only recently retired as executive secretary of the league, charged that the youth council was made up “mostly of a small group of young people at St. John's,” and was being directed not by the NAACP but by St. John's pastor Albert Cleage “and one or two other adults who use it as a convenient mouthpiece of public criticism and protest.” DeBerry called the idea of an extension program “absurd and puerile” and asserted that the NAACP branch was doing everything in its power to block the league's acquisition of the Olivet property. Its actions were motivated, he charged, by “mingled jealousy, malice and fear.”³⁷

³⁶ DeBerry, *Sociological Survey* (1940), 8.

³⁷ “Dunbar League Plans to Erect Large Building,” *Springfield Union*, March 19, 1947, 1; “NAACP Council Fires Blast at Dunbar League,” *Springfield Union*, July 12, 1947, 4; “Youth Council Attack Rapped by Dr. DeBerry,” *Springfield Union*, July 15, 1947, 1, 6; “Head of NAACP Answers Critic of Procedure,” *Springfield Union*, July 24, 1947, 1.

Upon learning that the league planned to sell some of its real estate, Cleage claimed that the 1924 transfer of properties had been illegal because they had been bequeathed for religious purposes, the main claim of the lawsuit the church filed against the league in the fall of 1947. The suit initially identified the properties Henrietta Coleman had left to the church in her will in 1915—the houses and lots at 49 Hancock Street, 59 Quincy Street, and 610-12 Union Street, and the two building lots on Jennette Avenue—as well as 72 Marion Street and a property on Pease Street also left by will to the church. The lawsuit also asserted that the church was unable to determine the extent and value of its real property because the Dunbar League held all of the pertinent records. Later, the church added properties that had not been bequeathed to it but that it had acquired before St. John's Institutional Activities was set off as its own corporation—the 81 Orleans Street apartment building and the three tenements at 146-156 Quincy Street, 643 Hancock Street, and 616 Union Street.

The suit was still in Superior Court on January 20, 1948, when William Nelson DeBerry died at the age of 78. It seems likely that DeBerry's death precipitated the out-of-court settlement almost exactly a month later. The consent decree called for St. John's Congregational Church to pay the Dunbar Community League \$11,500 for the Dunbar Home at 643 Union Street, the tenements at 146-52 Quincy Street, and interest in the lot at the corner of Hancock and Quincy Streets (the onetime site of the St. John's Boys' Club), and it gave the league until November 1, 1948 to leave its Dunbar Home headquarters. In June of the same year, the league acquired Olivet Community House from South Congregational Church and moved its operations from Dunbar Home and the boys' and girls' clubs to the Oak Street building.³⁸

Albert Cleage left Springfield in 1950, and in November of 1951 Charles E. Cobb became minister of St. John's Congregational Church. Cobb set about to restore “the loyalty and good will of a large portion of the church membership that had either drifted away or left in anger because of the lawsuit,” the church history states, and to retire the \$6,000 mortgage on the properties it had acquired from the Dunbar Community League. A January 1952 rally raised enough money to extinguish this debt and to refurbish the church and the floors of the parish home; four years later the church's Emma Warner Group redecorated 643 Union Street to make it “more homelike for the girls and women living there” and to create better first-floor space for church club meetings. Many new church clubs—among them Amanda DeBerry Group, Psi Group, Pastor's Aid, Flower Guild, and French Conversation Class—were created in the 1950s, and in 1953 the church's Mr. and Mrs. Club raised funds to send 30 African-American high school students on a tour of preeminent historically black colleges in the South. Cobb wrote in April 1953:

In spite of many opportunities for educational, social and recreational advancement, the youth of today exhibit a listlessness and apathy toward themselves and their world which retards the maximum use of those advantages. [While] this . . . is not unique to the Negro youth of Springfield, it is nonetheless true. They need to see other Negro youth who are progressing toward a definite goal, to learn of what other Negroes have done in various fields, and to identify themselves in spirit with those persons.³⁹

During Cobb's pastorate the church created the School for Civic Responsibility, which endeavored to “jolt,” as Cobb put it, “many from the lethargic attitude toward city politics” they demonstrated by bringing church members together regularly with city officials, school board members, and other local leaders. In 1956 he and the Pastors' Council, composed of Springfield's African-American ministers, publicly challenged the local school board to hire African-American teachers in the public schools in some semblance of proportion to the share African Americans held of the local population. Between 1940 and 1950 the city's black population had almost doubled, from 3,213 to 6,173 persons—and by 1960 Springfield's 7,086 African Americans were 14.8 percent of the total city population. At the end of the 1956-1957 school year the superintendent of schools resigned, and nine new African-American teachers were hired for the coming school year. The New England Regional NAACP presented an award to the Pastors' Council for its work in bringing greater racial diversity to the public school teaching staff.⁴⁰

³⁸ “Rev. Dr. W. N. DeBerry, Negro Leader, Is Dead: Son of Former Slave Parents Won Fame From Interracial and Social Work,” *Springfield Union*, January 21, 1948, 1, 10; “St. John's and Dunbar Dispute Is Settled,” *Springfield Union*, February 21, 1948, 1, 13; “Dunbar League May Buy Olivet House,” *Springfield Union*, February 22, 1948, 1, 10A; “Olivet House Keys Given to Dunbar League,” *Springfield Union*, June 16, 1948, 1, 20. See also *St. John's History*, 83-85. Neither the church history nor newspaper accounts make any mention of the other properties named in the suit. The church history notes that DeBerry was buried from South Congregational Church, not from St. John's, because of the rancor the lawsuit had fueled.

³⁹ Cobb quoted in *St. John's History*, 94.

⁴⁰ *St. John's History*, 90-94, 99-100.

In 1957 the Congregational Christian Churches of America merged with the United Church of Christ in America, and in November of 1960 St. John's Congregational Church joined the United Church of Christ. In the same year, church member Naomi Terressa Cummings began lunch-hour research that culminated in the church's fine history, published in 1962. Cummings, born in July 1903 in Savannah, Georgia, came with her mother Lillian to Springfield between 1910 and 1920, the early years of the Great Migration; by 1920 her mother was working as a domestic servant in Greenfield, while Naomi remained in Springfield with her maternal grandmother, dressmaker and St. John's member Annie L. McTier, at her 683 Union Street home. Lillian and Naomi Cummings gave the clock in the church auditorium in memory of McTier. Naomi Cummings was a graduate of Howard University, and had done postgraduate work at the Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University) School of Social Work. By 1940 she was working as an instructor in the local WPA's recreation program, and by the 1950s she was working for the city public welfare department. On her lunch hours, she began to research the church and the city's African-American history, and the scrapbooks she compiled over the next six years became the basis of the published church history, written by church members Dr. Mary C. McLean, Dorothy J. Pryor, and Martha K. Cobb; Sylvia G. Humphrey chaired the book's editing committee.⁴¹

The church history listed 397 members of St. John's Congregational Church in 1962, just as the African-American population of the city was growing more rapidly than ever before. In 1960, the census showed 7,086 African Americans in Springfield; by 1970 the population had risen to 20,615 persons, an increase of more than 190 percent, at a time when the total city population had begun to decline. In 1960 Springfield's population stood at 174,363 persons; by 2000 it had fallen to 151,989 persons. Of those, 31,960 were African American, then 21 percent of local population. A St. John's anniversary booklet, published in 1994, listed 264 members, two-thirds of church membership in 1962. However, church attendance and membership, now racially diverse, began to climb again afterward. By the turn of the 21st century, St. John's was compelled to hold three services each Sunday to accommodate worshippers, and the church installed video monitors in the basement rooms for those who could not be accommodated in the first-floor auditorium and social rooms. In 2013 the church relocated its sanctuary and offices to a new building at 45 Hancock Street, across Union Street from the 1911 church, which continues to be used for Wednesday evening services; its basement level is used for weekly suppers for the homeless, and the former Parish Home for Working Girls now serves as a food pantry and food storage space.

The church and parsonage/parish house today have a single address, 69 Hancock Street.

Archaeological Significance

Historic archaeological resources described above have the potential to contribute information important to this nomination; however, by the time the church and the Parsonage/Home for Working Girls were constructed in 1911, much of that historical documentation and locational/architectural information was already in the public domain through public records and other forms of documentation. Given that, most post-1911 resources would be of limited research interest to many researchers. Archaeological resources can contribute important information that bears directly on the significance of this nomination. Any evidence in features related to early 20th-century African-American working girls, individually or as a group, would be important by contributing an example of an underreported social group in American society, as well as their roles in industry and in the home. Important research may focus on topics including how African-American working girls adapted to a new area to live, new job, home, social relationships, and diet.

Detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features, if they exist, may contribute a wealth of information relating to the social, cultural, and economic lives of African Americans in the Springfield area during the early 20th century. This information may concern family- and community-based social groups, occupations, religion, and recreation.

As noted above, archaeological research at the St. John's Congregational Church and Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls begins with the construction of St. John's Church in 1911. No information is available that identifies any historical activity on the property prior to that date. Most of the potential resources described above may be limited to a short period after that date. Occupational-related features, and structural evidence of barns, outbuildings, and other features and objects that are not extant or documented in plans and in the literature, is unlikely.

⁴¹ See the foreword in *St. John's History* and Mrs. Juanita Griffin, "Union St. Women Devoted Years to Church History," *Springfield Sunday Republican*, August 11, 1963, 45.

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"NAACP Council Fires Blast at Dunbar League." *Springfield Union*, July 12, 1947. 4.

"Youth Council Attack Rapped by Dr. DeBerry." *Springfield Union*, July 15, 1947. 1, 6.

"Head of NAACP Answers Critic of Procedure." *Springfield Union*, July 24, 1947. 1.

"Rev. Dr. W. N. DeBerry, Negro Leader, Is Dead: Son of Former Slave Parents Won Fame From Interracial and Social Work." *Springfield Union*, January 21, 1948. 1, 10.

"St. John's and Dunbar Dispute Is Settled." *Springfield Union*, February 21, 1948. 1, 13.

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St. John's Congregational Church & Parsonage
Name of Property

Hampden, Massachusetts
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been Requested)
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: Massachusetts State-Wide Survey

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): SPR.4176 & SPR.4177

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

Lat/Lon 42.10795 -72.56829

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>701054</u>	<u>4664624</u>	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary follows the lot lines for the church and parsonage. See attached City of Springfield Assessors Map. (Note: while the parsonage/home for working girls now is part of a single parcel with the church and shares its address, 69 Hancock Street, its address was formerly 643 Union Street.)

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated boundaries represent the original dimensions of the lots on which the church and parsonage were constructed.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Neil Larson & Kathryn Grover, Larson Fisher Associates, Inc., with Betsy Friedberg, MHC, NR Director
organization Massachusetts Historical Commission. date February 2016
street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470
city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125
e-mail betsy.friedberg@sec.state.ma.us

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: St. John's Congregational Church & Parsonage

City or Vicinity: Springfield

County: Hampden **State:** Massachusetts

Photographer: Neil Larson

Date Photographed: 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 20: View of church exterior from NW.
- 2 of 20: View of church exterior from SW.
- 3 of 20: View of church exterior from NE. Parsonage visible on left.
- 4 of 20: View of church sanctuary from west.
- 5 of 20: View of church sanctuary ceiling trusses.
- 6 of 20: View of church sanctuary apse from west.
- 7 of 20: View of church sanctuary from east.
- 8 of 20: Window commemorating John Brown in west wall.
- 9 of 20: View of north side of sanctuary.
- 10 of 20: View of south side of sanctuary showing social room through doorways.
- 11 of 20: View of social room from west, sanctuary on right.
- 12 of 20: Stairs to tower in NW corner lobby.
- 13 of 20: View of basement dining room from SW.
- 14 of 20: View of basement kitchen from south.
- 15 of 20: View of parsonage from NW.
- 16 of 20: View of parsonage from NE.
- 17 of 20: Interior view of parsonage, first-floor hallway from north.
- 18 of 20: Interior view of parsonage, first-floor parlor, from east.
- 19 of 20: Interior view of parsonage, second-floor hallway from north.
- 20 of 20: Interior view of parsonage, second-floor dormitory room from east.

St. John's Congregational Church & Parsonage
Name of Property

Hampden, Massachusetts
County and State

Property Owner:

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name St. John's Congregational Church

street & number 45 Hancock St. telephone 413-734-2283

city or town Springfield state MA zip code 01109

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

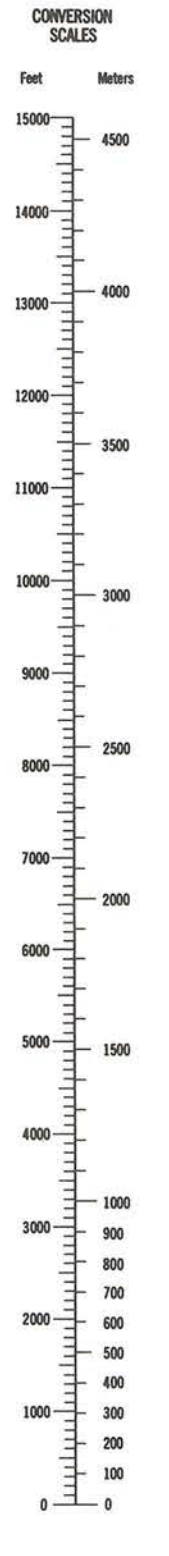
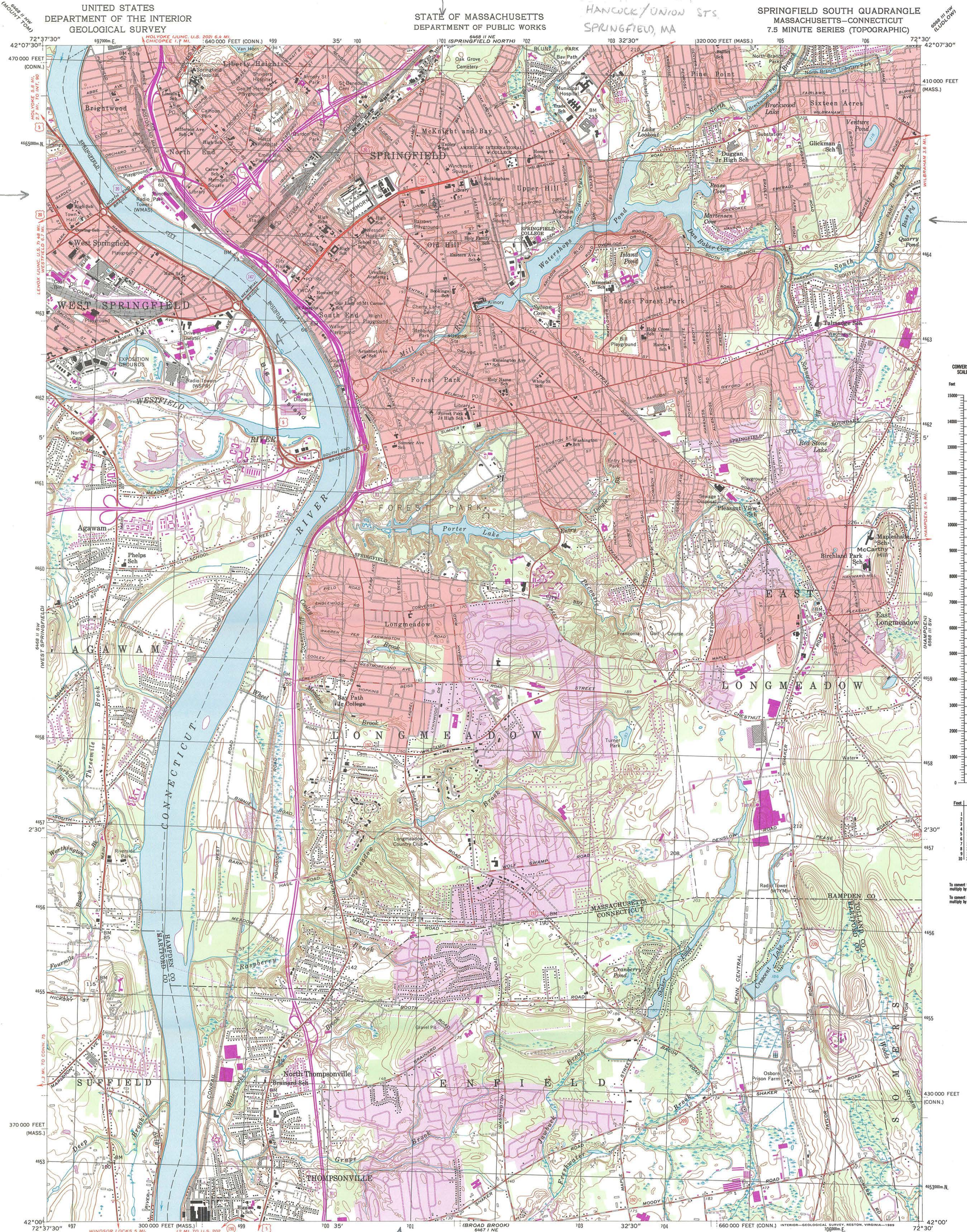
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

St. John's Congregational Church & Parsonage
Name of Property

Hampden, Massachusetts
County and State



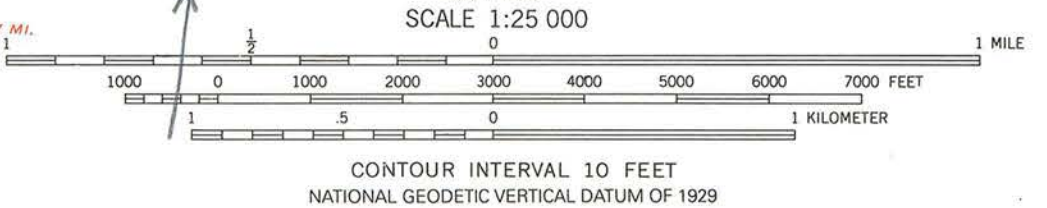
Springfield (Hampden County), MA Assessor's map, Excerpt



Feet Meters
1 3048
2 6096
3 9144
4 12192
5 15240
6 18288
7 21336
8 24384
9 27432
10 30480

To convert feet to meters
multiply by 0.3048
To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, Massachusetts Geodetic Survey,
and Connecticut Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1933 and 1942
Culture revised from aerial photographs by photogrammetric
methods. Aerial photographs taken 1957. Field check 1958
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone, and Connecticut coordinate system
100-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 18
Red tint indicates areas in which only
landmark buildings are shown
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas
Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with the State
of Massachusetts agencies from aerial photographs taken 1975 and other
source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt - - - - -
U.S. Route ——— State Route ———
Interstate Route ———

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983,
move the projection lines 5 meters south and
38 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

SPRINGFIELD SOUTH, MASS.-CONN.
42072-A5-TF-024
1958
PHOTOREVISED 1979
DMA 6468 II SE-SERIES V814



















IN MEMORY OF
JOHN BROWN
"HERO OF HARPER'S FERRY"



IN M... OF...









A plaque on the wall to the left of the staircase, containing text that is partially obscured and difficult to read. The text appears to be a dedication or commemorative message.





A row of wooden cabinets with glass doors, containing various kitchen items like plates, bowls, and containers. Some items are labeled with white tags.

A wooden countertop with various items including boxes of 'Stretch-A-Rite', 'Borden's' soup, and other kitchen supplies. Below the countertop are wooden cabinets with drawers, some labeled with white tags.

A stainless steel table with a metal frame. Underneath the table, there are several large metal pots, plastic containers, and other kitchen items.

A stainless steel stove with a large pot on top. The stove has multiple burners and a large oven door below. A yellow tag is hanging from the side of the stove.

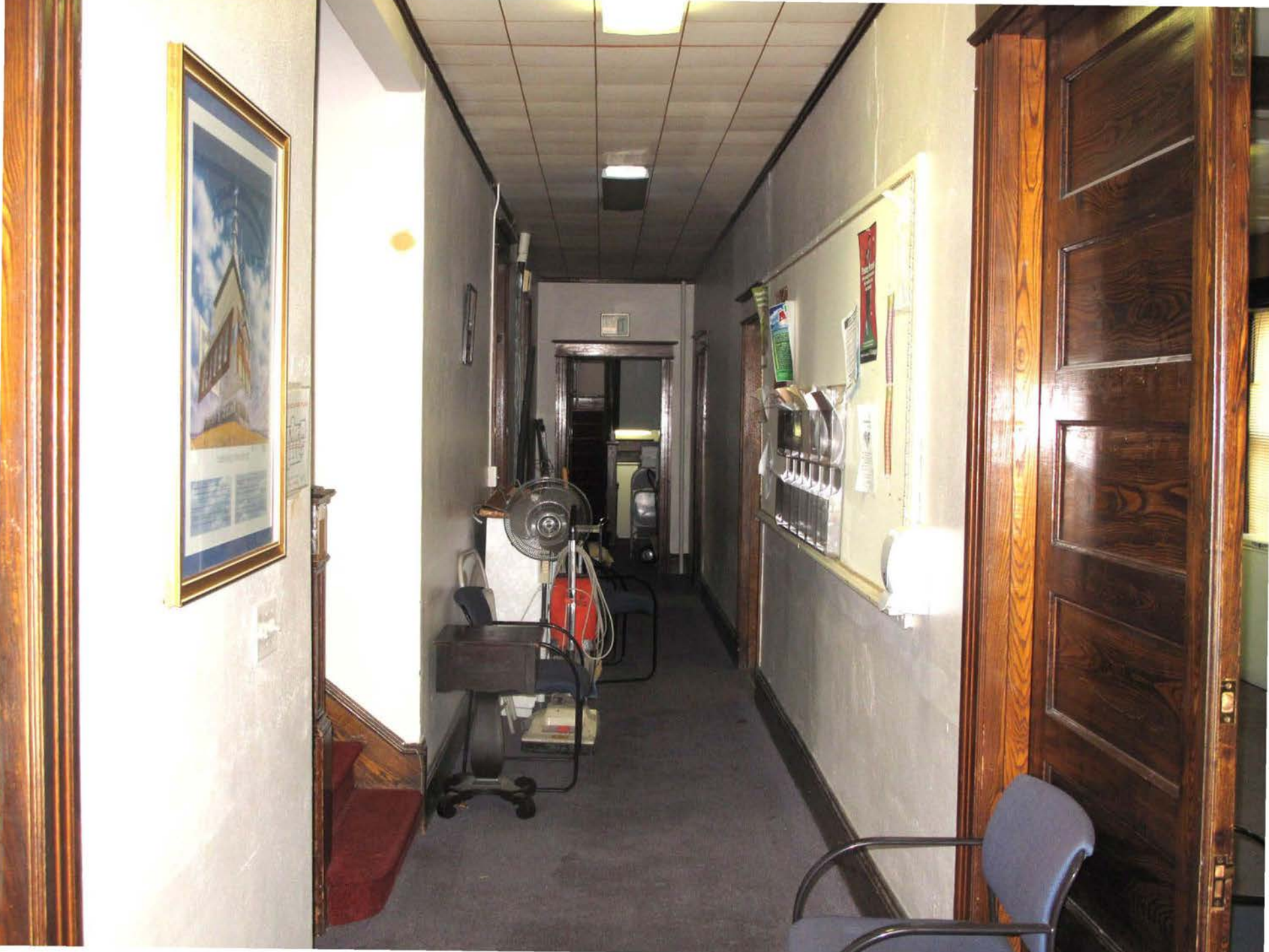


St. John's William N. DeBerry
Education Center



St. John's William N. O'Leary
Educational Center

48S F85









National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: St John's Congregational Church & Parsonage--Parish for Working Girls

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Hampden

DATE RECEIVED: 5/13/16 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/28/16
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000140

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 6.28.16 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

This nomination was returned to the state on 4/5/2016. The State resubmitted the nomination with a revised statement of significance changing the level of significance to State and Local (thus deleting the claimed National significance from the original submission). The Resubmitted Property was listed in the National Register on 6/28/2016

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

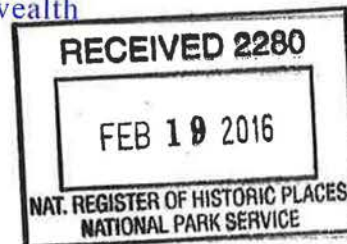
TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

The reference to "Additional Documentation Approved" by Edson Beall on the signature page is a clerical error - it is a resubmitted nomination, not Additional Documentation.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission



February 8, 2016

Mr. J. Paul Loether
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

St. John's Congregational Church & Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls,
69 Hancock Street, Springfield (Hampden), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the properties in the district were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

One letter of support has been received.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Ralph Slate, Springfield Historical Commission
Rev. Calvin J. McFadden, Sr., St. John's Church
Mayor Domenic Sarno, City of Springfield
Neil Larson, Kathryn Grover, consultants
Chair, Springfield Planning Board



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: St. John's Congregational Church & Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls
(Middlesex County, MA)
Reference Number: 16000140

Reason for Return:

This nomination is being returned for additional information concerning the claimed National significance of the property. The property is nominated at the National level of significance under National Register Criteria A and B for its association with programs of social and community work and for its association with the life of the Reverend William Nelson DeBerry. The property is also deemed to be of Local architectural significance.

While it is clear that the programs established and administered by the Reverend William Nelson DeBerry had a significant impact on the African-American community in Springfield, MA, the nomination does not provide a national context for these social program and does not explain the nationwide impact that the Reverend DeBerry might have had. Please either provide national contextual information on these social programs and explain how Reverend DeBerry and the programs he established had an impact on the Nation as a whole, or consider changing the level of significance under which the property is nominated.

Patrick Andrus

Patrick Andrus, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
202-354-2218
patrick_andrus@nps.gov
4/05/2016



Andrus, Patrick <patrick_andrus@nps.gov>

St. John's Congregational Church and Parsonage, Springfield, MA

1 message

Friedberg, Betsy (SEC) <betsy.friedberg@state.ma.us>
To: "Andrus, Patrick" <patrick_andrus@nps.gov>

Tue, Apr 19, 2016 at 10:44 AM

Hi Patrick,

Attached are pdfs of the cover sheet with Brona's signature and the opening page of section 8, along with our cover letter. The hard copy will follow shortly.

Best regards,

Betsy

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125
Ph: 617-727-8470
Fax: 617-727-5128
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc
betsy.friedberg@sec.state.ma.us

3 attachments



cover letter 4.15.16.pdf
39K



Cover sheet revised 4.14.16.pdf
64K



revised significance summary para 4.13.16.pdf
117K



RECEIVED ^{BF}

APR 16 2015

MASS. HIST. COMM

ST. JOHN'S CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

REV. DR. CALVIN J. MCFADDEN, SR., SENIOR PASTOR

A MEMBER CHURCH OF THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION AND THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

April 10, 2015

St. John's Congregational Church
45 Hancock St.
Springfield MA 01109

MA Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Blvd
Boston MA 02125

Attention: Brona Simon
Executive Director

Re: Historical Designation

Dear Ms. Simon

Please accept this letter as a notification of intent of St. John's Congregational Church to pursue registration with the national history designation through the MA Historical Commission. Any assistance and direction to achieve this notable honor will be greatly appreciated by our members, senior pastor and governing board.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Respectfully
Elder Marcus Alston
Co-Chair
St. John's Congregational Church
Board of Elders

"BUILDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE CONGREGATION AND THE COMMUNITY"

643 Union Street • Springfield, Massachusetts, 01109 - 3618 • Church Office: 413.734-2283 • Fax: 413.747-8892



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

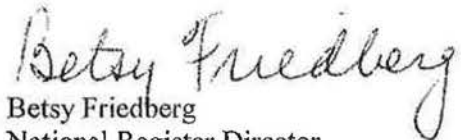
April 15, 2016

Mr. J. Paul Loether
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

As discussed with Patrick Andrus, the enclosed two pages for the nomination form for St. John's Congregational Church & Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls, Springfield (Hampden County), MA, should be exchanged for pages in the nomination originally submitted on February 8, 2016. Thank you.

Sincerely,


Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name St. John's Congregational Church & Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 69 Hancock Street not for publication
city or town Springfield vicinity
state Massachusetts code MA county Hampden code 013 zip code 01109

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

national statewide local

Brana Simon February 8, 2016
Signature of certifying official Brana Simon, SHPO Date

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

Springfield's St. John's Congregational Church and Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls is significant under National Register Criteria A and B for its programs of social and community work and for its associations with the Rev. William N. DeBerry, who was largely responsible for transforming St. John's into a socially active "institutional" church. Created at a time when African-American migrants from the South were settling in increasing numbers in Springfield and tending to align with the city's African-American Baptist and Methodist churches, St. John's under DeBerry created a multifaceted and virtually unparalleled program of social service that drew many southern migrants into its Congregational fold. The church's home for working girls and women, boys' and girls' clubs, employment bureau, domestic science night school, and other groups played critical roles in helping southern African Americans adjust to the circumstances and inequities of northern urban life. Its struggle against racially based housing and employment discrimination and advocacy of African-American educational and political achievement continued after DeBerry resigned the pastorate in 1930, and as the city of Springfield experienced the greatest African-American population increases in its history. The church under DeBerry also established Camp Atwater in North Brookfield, the nation's first summer camp primarily for African American children. Completed in 1911, St. John's Congregational Church and Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls also is significant under Criterion C as an intact, distinguished example of a small church complex planned by and designed for an African-American congregation. Designed by B. Hammett Seabury, a Springfield architect known for the design of churches, schools, public buildings, and residences throughout the city, the buildings have a modest but well-crafted and dignified appearance that represented the humility and aspirations of DeBerry and his congregation. St. John's traditional English country church form and iconographic Gothic elements are interpreted in a modern manner, particularly in its Shingle Style exterior. The subtle use of memorial windows for abolitionist figures conveys the African-American presence, and the incorporation of a social room adjoining the sanctuary represents the inseparability of the church's religious and social missions. The property retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and is significant at the local and state levels.

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance)

Architecture

St. John's Congregational Church, completed in 1911, was designed in a restrained, modern interpretation of an English country church style, reflecting the humble aspirations of its African-American congregation and local community. Despite its small scale and domestic features, the church represents a religious and social landmark in Springfield's history, and reflects an effort to improve the status and living conditions of blacks migrating into New England from the southern states. The church was designed to provide the congregation with a respectable and comfortable place of worship, with icons of abolitionist history, including John Brown—who lived in Springfield from 1846 to 1849—incorporated in its stained-glass window plan. The plan included a social room adjoining the sanctuary, where girls and young women associated with the church's Women's Social Union could congregate, and, in the basement, a dining room, kitchen and Sunday School rooms. The accompanying annex, designed in a manner similar to the church, opened in 1913, and contained the pastor's living quarters and church offices on the first floor, dormitory rooms on the upper two levels, and a kitchen and dining room in the basement. As with the church, the Parish Home for Working Girls served both pastoral and social functions. Springfield architect B. Hammett Seabury provided the plans for both buildings. He designed many church, school, civic, and residential buildings in the city during a career that spanned more than 50 years.

Ethnic Heritage & Social History

The church is one of Springfield's prominent black churches that from the outset was intended to serve the spiritual and social needs of African Americans arriving in the city during the Great Migration. The church's mission was intended to ameliorate their impoverished conditions and facilitate their transition into the urban workforce. The church's home for working girls and women, boys' and girls' clubs, employment bureau, domestic science night school, and other groups played critical roles in helping southern African Americans adjust to the circumstances and inequities of northern urban life. Its extensive social programs, in the absence of any sort or level of government assistance, were similar to those of



Andrus, Patrick <patrick_andrus@nps.gov>

St. John's Return

1 message

Andrus, Patrick <patrick_andrus@nps.gov>
To: Betsy Friedberg <betsy.friedberg@state.ma.us>

Tue, Apr 12, 2016 at 9:06 AM

Hi Betsy: as discussed, here is a pdf of the Return Sheet for St. John's in Springfield. A hard copy of the return will be mailed to you today. We will hold onto the original nomination file. When you send in the revised pages I will switch them with the originals, we will process this as a Resubmission and take action asap.

Regards,

Patrick

—

Patrick Andrus, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
(202) 354-2218
patrick_andrus@nps.gov

StJohns.pdf
58K

**Andrus, Patrick** <patrick_andrus@nps.gov>

Return nomination

1 message

Andrus, Patrick <patrick_andrus@nps.gov>
To: Kevin Moriarty <kevin_moriarty@nps.gov>

Wed, Apr 13, 2016 at 10:53 AM

Hi Kevin: the nomination for the St. John's Congregational Church & Parsonage/Parish Home for Working Girls in Middlesex County, MA (Ref # 16000140) is a Return. I signed the Return Sheet on 4/5/2016, sent the State an electronic copy of the Return Sheet and mailed the hard copy of the Return Sheet.

The State requested that we hold onto the original nomination/photos/map and they will quickly revise the statement of significance and send it to us, at which point we will treat the nomination as a Resubmission, switch-out the pages and list the property.

Sooooo ... I have put the file in Edson's drawer. Can you mark in your Return Book that it was returned on 4/5, and hold onto the original file?

Thanks,

Patrick

--
Patrick Andrus, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
(202) 354-2218
patrick_andrus@nps.gov



Andrus, Patrick <patrick_andrus@nps.gov>

Fwd: today's NR listings

1 message

Beall, Edson <edson_beall@nps.gov>
To: Patrick Andrus <Patrick_Andrus@nps.gov>

Mon, Jul 11, 2016 at 8:41 AM

Hi Patrick,

Was St John's Congregational Church & Parsonage--Parish for Working Girls in MA ever listed? I assumed it was when we got the AD. Do you have a listing date? as it never made the Weekly List.

Thanks, Edson

Thank you for your interest in the preservation programs of the National Park Service.

Sincerely,

Edson H. Beall, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
Washington, D.C.
Phone: 202-354-2255
Fax: 202-371-2229
E-mail: Edson_Beall@nps.gov
Web: <http://www.nps.gov/nr/>
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/NationalRegisterNPS>

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bergen, Phil (SEC)** <phil.bergen@state.ma.us>
Date: Fri, Jul 8, 2016 at 2:58 PM
Subject: today's NR listings
To: "Edson_Beall@nps.gov" <Edson_Beall@nps.gov>

Hi Edson....today's listings include a church in Springfield, MA (#16000140) that is listed as "Additional Documentation Approved." We did send in additional documentation, but I'm unable to find when it was originally listed. In preparing the certificate we send out, I'd like to put in the original listing day.

I haven't seen it appear in a weekly listing.

(We've been paying attention to this one, because of the state meeting when it was approved to go to Washington. It is primarily an African-American church, and several lady members accompanied their pastor from Springfield to the meeting. When the State Board gave it their approval, the ladies jumped up and broke into an impromptu version of the Pointer Sisters "I'm So Excited," something that had never happened before to my knowledge.)

Thanks...the ladies of Springfield will be very excited.

Phil

ACTION: NATIONAL REGISTER INFORMATION SYSTEM

Id 16000140 DR 02/19/2016 MA Hampden St John's Congregational Chur>
01 More

Name St John's Congregational Church & Parsonage--Parish for
Working Girls
Address 69 Hancock St.

City Springfield Vicinity Restrict
State MASSACHUSETTS County Hampden
Status DATE RECEIVED/PENDING NOMINATION Date 02/19/2016
Day45 04/05/2016 Resource Type BUILDING Acreage 0.9

Multiple

Contributing bldg	2	Site	Strc	Obj	Total
Noncontributing bldg		Site	Strc	Obj	Total
Park					

Massachusetts Historical Commission Digital Image Submission Form

Please submit one form for each group of digital images

About your digital files:

Camera Used (make, model): Canon PowerShot G10

Resolution of original image capture (camera setting including resolution and file format):

1600 x 1200 JPEG

File name(s) (attach additional sheets if necessary) check here to refer to attached photo log:

MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0001
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0002
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0003
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0004
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0005
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0006
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0007
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0008
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0009
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0010
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0011
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0012
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0013
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0014
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0015
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0016
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0017
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0018
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0019
MA_Hampden County_St. John's Congregational Church & Pasonage_0020

About your prints:

Printer make and model: HP Envy 5660

Paper: brand & type (i.e., Epson Premium Glossy Photo)

HP Premium Plus

Ink: HP 62

Signature: (By signing below you agree that the information provided here is true and accurate.)



Signature: _____

Date: 15 November 2015