St. Margaret's

ESTD EPISCOPAL CHURCH 1894



Unveiling Our Truth:
A Racial History of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, Washington, DC

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and the Reparations Committee
of the Diocese of Washington

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to uncover and share the history of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church with respect to race and racism, in accordance with the Diocese of Washington's resolution, "Toward Repentance and Reparations in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington," passed in 2023.[1] As the Rev. Dr. Maria A. Kane writes, "The stories that we all tell (or don't tell about the past) determine how we live the Gospel in the present and future. Parish history projects aren't an exercise in shaming or disremembering. They are an act of holy 're-membering' that which is so deeply a part of all of us. They situate us in God's larger narrative of sin, repair, and redemption."[2]

This report seeks to recount St. Margaret's history truthfully, acknowledging both the contributions we've made toward dismantling racism, as well as our complicity in furthering racism, so as to inform our ongoing journey toward God's vision of what the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., called the beloved community.

This report has been stewarded and prepared by members of St. Margaret's Racial Justice Task Force, led by Gene Batiste, Jacqueline Maki, and Annika Mitic (Co-chairs), with principal contributions from Cathleen Connelly, the Rev. Richard Weinberg (Rector), and those who provided oral histories of their living memories of St. Margaret's from the 1940s onward. Farar Elliott served as final editor, having led the earliest research efforts as archivist of St. Margaret's prior to the project's inception. Additional research assistance was provided by Russell Ball, Jen Mariano, John McCall, Isabelle Melese d'Hospital, and Helen Templin. All involved also benefited immensely from research conducted by the late parishioner, Lonn Taylor, in the 1990s. Records consulted include: St. Margaret's Vestry Minutes, Civil War documents, historical census data, oral histories, and archived website narratives. Detailed footnotes are provided throughout the report.

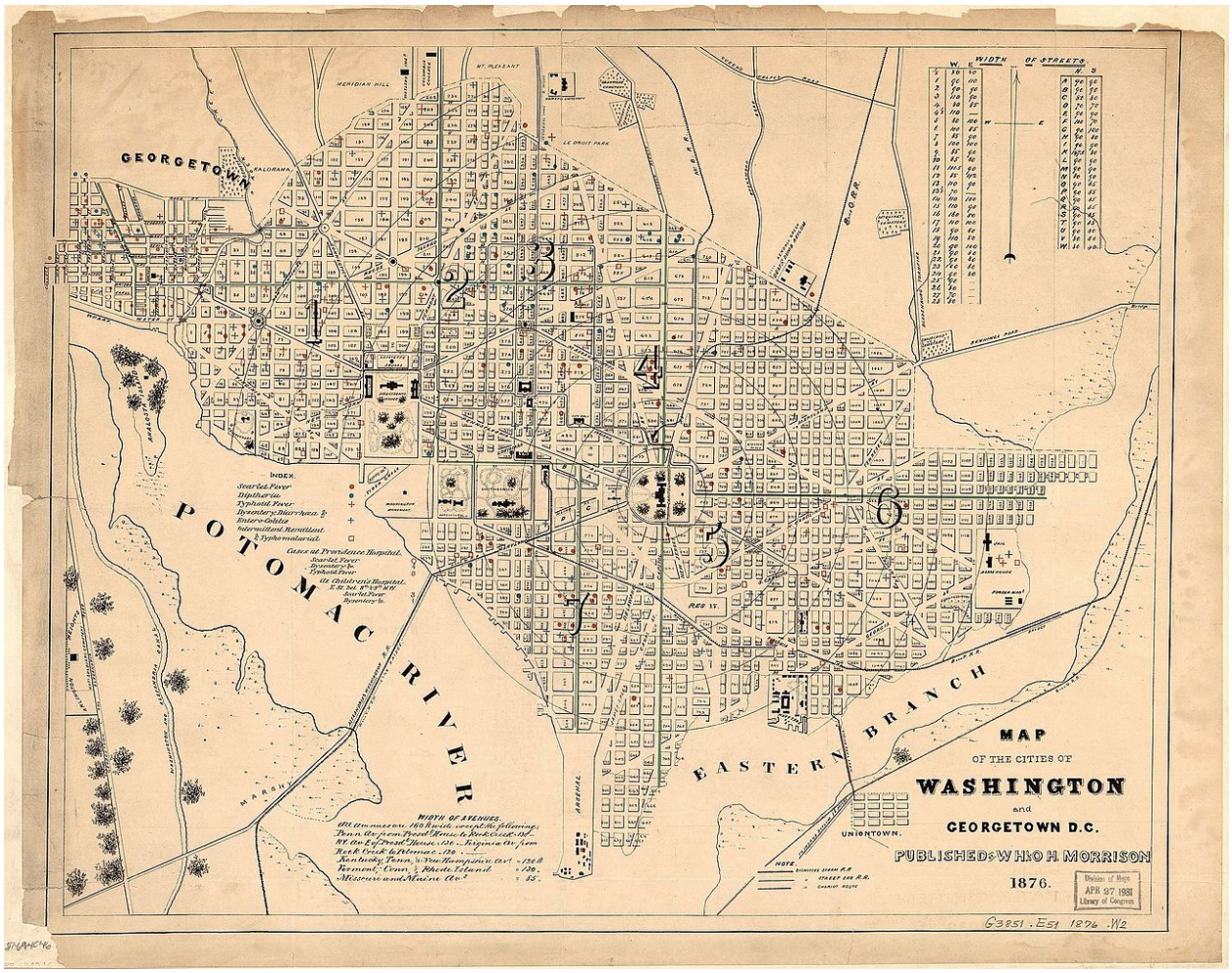
Before St. Margaret's

The Nacotchtank, also known as the Anacostans, and the Piscataway tribes were the original stewards of the land where Washington, D.C., now stands. The Nacotchtank lived along the Anacostia River, relying on fishing, farming, and trading, while the Piscataway resided primarily along the Potomac River in Southern Maryland. Both tribes were part of the larger Algonquian-speaking peoples with structured social systems led by chiefs. English explorers, such as Captain John Smith, encountered these tribes in the early 1600s, initiating trade and diplomatic relations. However, as English settlers established colonies, tensions rose over land

[1] Episcopal Diocese of Washington, "Resolution 1: Toward Repentance and Reparations in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington," February 2023, https://edow.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/02/Resolution-1-PASSED-Eng-Spa.pdf.
[2] Maria A. Kane, "Parish History - The Stories That We Tell," Episcopal Diocese of Washington e-newsletter, August 24, 2023.

and resources, leading to conflicts, disease, and displacement that drastically reduced indigenous populations. By the late 1600s and early 1700s, many surviving tribe members were assimilated, relocated, or forced onto reservations, as the English Crown granted large tracts of land to settlers, including a 600-acre land grant to a former indentured servant, John Langworth.

The land where St. Margaret's Episcopal Church now stands, located just north of Florida Avenue on Connecticut Avenue, NW, was part of these early colonial land grants. Up until most of the 19th century, Florida Avenue, then called Boundary Street, was the northern border of Washington City, and Connecticut Avenue ended at Boundary Street. The area north of Boundary Street was part of an unincorporated area called Washington County, land that was rural and semi-rural throughout with wooded lands, working farmsteads, and gentlemen estates. The passage of the Organic Act of 1871 consolidated Washington City, Georgetown, and Washington County into a single municipality.



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[3] W.H. & O.H. Morrison. *Map of the cities of Washington and Georgetown D.C.*, 1876. https://www.loc.gov/item/87694046/.

Consolidation into one municipality intensified the development that Georgetown and Washington City had been experiencing throughout the nineteenth century. Growth was spurred by land speculation, which was rampant in Washington County. Syndicates were formed to purchase land and develop subdivisions. Speculators focused on land just north of Boundary Street and a movement started to extend Connecticut Avenue. That area came to be called Connecticut Avenue Extended or Connecticut Avenue Heights.

The rush to develop was so haphazard that an 1887 report of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, the three-member panel that governed the consolidated municipality, noted that many of the streets in new developments "go nowhere and connect with nothing."
Land development and real estate speculation was often the subject of articles in the local papers. *The Evening Star* reported in 1890 that "a syndicate said to be 'well heeled,' has recently acquired nearly all the land on each side of the line which Connecticut Avenue will follow when extended." Their investments in land, the article continues, has reached a half-million dollars. "It is the intention of this syndicate to make extensive improvements in the line of subdividing the property, and they also intend to open up and extend Connecticut Avenue at their own expense…[I]t is the desire of the new owners to bring their property at once on the market."[4]

The 1887 Commissioners Report led to Congress passing an "act to provide a permanent system of highways" for the District of Columbia,[5] requiring streets in future subdivisions built outside of the City of Washington and Georgetown to conform to the general plan of the City of Washington.[6] The idea was to provide an orderly and regular framework for the expansion of development in what had been Washington County–"replacing the hop-scotch/higgledy-piggledy subdivisions laid out earlier."[7]

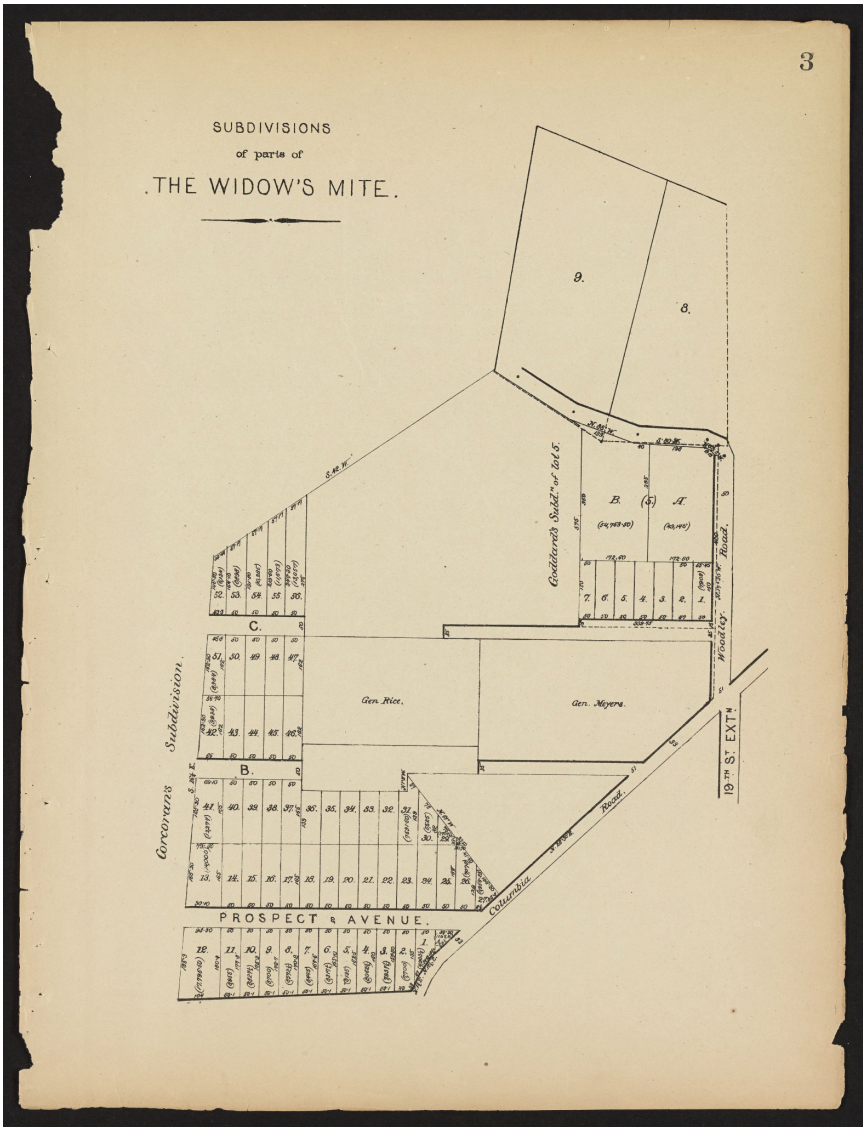
Against this backdrop of a growing city and real estate and land speculation, **George Truesdell, Lawrence Sands, James B. Wimer, LeRoy Tuttle, Robert J. Fisher,** and **Sophia Little** began to discuss the building of a new Episcopal Church north of Florida Avenue, in the area that was formerly Washington County. They are the founders of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church.

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[4] "Real Estate Gossip," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), February 8, 1890, 6. https://www.loc.gov/item/sn83045462/1890-02-08/ed-1/
[5] U.S. Congress. "Act of March 2, 1893. Chap. 197—An act to provide a permanent system of highways," *U.S. Statutes at Large, Volume 27 -1893, 52nd Congress*. https://www.loc.gov/item/llsl-v27/.
[6] John Clogett Proctor, ed., *Washington Past and Present* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1930), 159.
[7] Lewis Montgomery Miller, comp, *Laws relating to the permanent system of highways outside of the cities of Washington and Georgetown*. United States Congress House Committee on the District of Columbia (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1908), 3–4. https://books.google.com/books?id=k4zVAAAAMAAJ

The Little Family

Before moving to the building of the church, it's important to explore the Little family, who arguably were the first among the parish's founders. The Little family immigrated from Ireland, and its patriarch, **John Little,** was born in 1805 in Washington. In 1836, he bought 56 acres of land in Washington County, in the Kalorama Triangle and Washington Heights area.
In the 17th century, the land was part of **Anthony Holmead's** large estate called The Widow's Mite.[8] In 1828, the 56 acres John Little would come to own were sold by **Ann Maria Thornton** to the **Hines** brothers, **Christian** and **Matthew**, who tried unsuccessfully to establish a silkworm farm on the land.



[8] "23 Detailed Maps of Washington, D.C. in 1874," Ghosts of DC, accessed July 24, 2024, https://ghostsofdc.org/2020/01/31/1874-maps-washington-dc/.

The Hines sold the land to John Little in 1836 for $4,800 (about $162,000 in today's dollars), and it became known as Little's Woods, sometimes referred to as Littlewoods.[9] John Little farmed the land and raised cattle. In census documents in the 19th century, he is listed either as a farmer, butcher, or both.

The Little Family's Enslavement Practices

John Little was also an enslaver. He used the labor of enslaved people to run the farm and grow his wealth. Little purchased his first enslaved person, **Moses Bell,** from another butcher and slave trader in Alexandria, Virginia, in 1837. Within a year, Little sold Bell to a man called **Keating,** who then sold Bell to **James Rhodes**.

The sale became the subject of a U.S. Supreme Court case. At the time of Little's enslavement of Bell, the District of Columbia was governed by the laws of Virginia and Maryland, which were in force prior to those states ceding land to create a Federal City. Washington County was governed by Maryland law. Under Maryland law, enslaved people could not be purchased elsewhere and transported to the state to be sold again. If that happened, the enslaved person would become entitled to their freedom. On those grounds, among others, Bell sued for his freedom in local court, which ruled in his favor. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the lower court ruling.[10] Moses Bell won his freedom.

Bell was the first of many people Little enslaved. As Little's business prospered, he built a large three-story manor house and other buildings on Littlewoods and added to his slave holdings. The 1850 Slave Inhabitants Census, which lists color, gender, and ages—but not the names of enslaved individuals—shows that Little enslaved 12 men, women, and children. The 1860 Slave Schedules show that he enslaved 11 people, plus held two enslaved people in trust for his orphaned niece and nephew.

In 1862, Congress, unfettered after secession by the no votes of Southern statesmen, passed the District of Columbia Compensated Emancipation Act, ending slavery while giving enslavers loyal to the Union a means to petition for compensation. The Act provided for no compensation to those enslaved.

John Little petitioned for compensation for 12 enslaved people.[11]

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[9] Stephen A. Hansen, "John Little: Irish Immigrant, Butcher and Slave Owner," *Washington Chronicles*, November 14, 2021, https://www.washingtonchronicles.com/2021/11/JohnLittle.html/; John Clagett Proctor, "Christian Hines, Author of 'Early Recollections of Washington City,' with Notes on the Hines Family," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society, Washington, D.C.* 22 (1919): 36–61, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40067120.

[10] John McLean and Supreme Court of the United States, *U.S. Reports: Rhodes v. Bell, 43 U.S. (2 How.) 397 (1844)*, https://www.loc.gov/item/usrep043397/.

[11] Susan C. Lawrence, Elizabeth Lorang, Kenneth M. Price, and Kenneth J. Winkle, *Civil War Washington*, "Petition of John Little, 21 June 1862," June 21, 1862, source text: a microfilm reproduction of the original document held at the National Archives and Records Administration, Microcopy 520, Reel 5, Records of the Accounting Officers of the Department of the Treasury, 1775–1978, National Archives

In the petition, he lists the enslaved people he asked to be compensated for and described how he came to own them and the amount he asked to be compensated for each person as follows:

1. **Delilah Prout,** 63, black, well-built, over 180 pounds. She is an old woman of good appearance and a first-rate cook. $100
2. **Leander Prout,** 28, child of Delilah, black. Perfectly sound, he is a butcher by trade and a first-rate hand. He could easily bring $25 or $30 a month. $3,000
3. **Tabitha (Prout) Rigney,** 25, child of Delilah, copper colored. She has a good appearance but complains considerably. She is a first-rate house servant. $1,000
4. **Celeste Prout,** 23, child of Delilah, black. She is a healthy and industrious house servant. $1,500
5. **Hortense Prout,** 21, child of Delilah, black. She is a healthy and industrious house servant. $1,500
6. **Kalisti Prout,** 20, child of Delilah, black. She is a healthy and industrious house servant. $1,500
7. **Narcissa Rigney,** 7, daughter of Tabitha, mulatto. She is healthy and promising. $300
8. **Fermore Worthington,** 5, child of Tabitha, mulatto. He is healthy and promising. $300
9. **Matilda Rigney,** 6 months, child of Tabitha, mulatto. She is healthy and promising. $50
10. **Elsie Grey,** 5, daughter of Kalisti, black. She is healthy and promising. $300
11. **Benjamin Purnell,** 26, black. Perfectly sound, he is a butcher by trade and a first-rate hand and could easily bring $25 or $30 a month. $3,000
12. **Geoffrey McKenzie,** 50, black. He is a very good farm hand. $300

In January 1839, Little purchased from **B. O. Shekell** and **W. H. Williams** Delilah and her two children, Leander and Tabitha, while they were on their way South. Celeste, Hortense, Kalisti, Narcissa, Fawn, Elsie, and Matilda were born while Little enslaved their mothers. He purchased Ben from Mr. Darrell and Geoffrey from Mr. **JBH Smith,** executor for the estate of **George Bomped.**

On behalf of his orphaned niece[12] and nephew,[13] whose enslaved people he held in trust, Little also filed claims for the loss of:

1. **William Crown,** 33, mulatto, very strong, honest, good-tempered and an experienced butcher who hires out for $25 a month.
2. **Lucie Simms,** 25, a bright, good-looking mulatto woman and industrious house servant.
3. **Willie,** Lucie's 3-year-old son.
4. **Lillie,** Lucie's 5-month-old daughter.
5. **John Hamilton,** 22, black, very strong and hired out as a farm hand for $25 a month.

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and Records Administration, Record Group 217.6.5. Within the National Archives' Archival Description Catalog, see ARC Identifier 4644616 / MLR Number A1 347, https://civilwardc.org/texts/petitions/cww.00744.html.

[12] Lawrence et al., *Civil War Washington*, "Petition of John Little, Guardian of Julia A. Little, 21 June 1862," https://civilwardc.org/texts/petitions/cww.00746.html.

[13] Lawrence et al., *Civil War Washington*, "Petition of John Little, Guardian of John O. Little, 21 June 1862," https://civilwardc.org/texts/petitions/cww.00745.html.

Little petitioned for total compensation of $18,050 and received $5,343.60 (which amounts to $166,000 in today's dollars).[14]

Prior to 1862, enslaved people could gain their freedom through self-purchase, being freed by the slaveholder, or through escape. There is no record that any enslaved person owned by John Little gained freedom before the Compensated Emancipation Act, but there is a record of an escape attempt.

In 1861, 20-year-old **Hortense** fled Littlewoods. Reporting of her escape and capture were noted in the June 17, 1861, edition of *The Evening Star* on page 3:

> A FUGITIVE. – A slave woman belonging to Mr. John Little having eloped, Mr. Little made diligent search and ascertained that she was in one of the Ohio camps. He made a visit to the camp and told the colonel commanding what he wanted, and the reply was, 'You shall have her, if she is here.' Search was made, and the fugitive was found, completely rigged out in male attire. She was immediately turned over to the custody of Mr. Little, and was taken to jail. Every opportunity is afforded loyal citizens of loyal States to recover their fugitive slaves.[15]

Only a small number of documented slavery sites exist in the District of Columbia. One of those sites is "The Site of John Little's Manor House," added to the National Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom in 2008, and "Hortense Prout Freedom Seeker/John Little Farm Site/Kalorama Park National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Site" was added to the city's African American Heritage Trail, Washington, DC, in 2014.[16] In 2018, her daring escape was commemorated with a marker placed in Kalorama Park.

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[14] Dorothy S. Provine, *Compensated Emancipation*, Petitions No. 744, 745, and 746 (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, Inc., 2009), 183-184.
[15] "A Fugitive," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), June 17, 1861, 3, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1861-06-17/ed-1/seq-3/.
[16] Government of the District of Columbia. Historic Preservation Review Board. "Application for Historic Landmark for Kalorama Park," https://dmv.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/Kalorama%20%20Park%20nomination_0.pdf.



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John Little died in 1876. He and his wife **Margaret**, who had died in 1872, are buried in Congressional Cemetery. Founded in 1807, the charter of Congressional Cemetery denied the burial of people of color within its fenced grounds. The cemetery is the final resting place of many of Washington's elite and includes members of Congress and Senators. A large, engraved monument marks the Little family graves.

On the grounds of Littlewoods, there was also a cemetery. In 1915, **Margaret Caroline Sands,** John Little's granddaughter, recalls that in it were unmarked graves where servants [slaves] were buried. And by that date, the graves were "entirely built over by small stores on 18th Street."[18]

Upon his death, Little's wealth, built with the labor of enslaved people and valued in the 1870 Census at $150,000 ($3.5 million today), passed to the next generation, his five surviving daughters: **Sophia Little, Finnella Alexander, Margaret Sands, Sarah Baldwin,** and **Ida Stevens**. The daughters were not interested in continuing their father's farming and butcher business and divided the land among themselves. Over the years, they began to sell land to developers.

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[17] Mary Belcher, photographer. "Hortense Prout Escaped Slavery in Adams Morgan 157 Years Ago. Now, A Nearby Park Commemorates Her," by Martin Austermuhle, DCist, November 26, 2018, https://dcist.com/story/18/11/26/hortense-prout-escaped-slavery-in-adams-morgan-157-years-ago-now-a-nearby-park-commemorates-her/.
[18] Proctor, "Christian Hines" 40-41, https://www.jstor.org/stable/40067120?seq=5.

The Little family, made prosperous through their involvement in enslaving people of African descent, played a significant role in the founding of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, as the next generation of Littles became key figures in the establishment and development of the parish. While John Little's descendants received thanks and accolades from the parish, including the dedication of the current pulpit (pictured below) to Sophia Little a year following her death on All Saints Day 1902, for most of its history, the church did not acknowledge the enslavement of human beings as the source of the Littles' wealth and largesse to St. Margaret's.





St. Margaret's Founding Businessmen and Real Estate Speculators

The founding of St. Margaret's is deeply intertwined with the ambitions and enterprises of prominent businessmen and real estate speculators of the late nineteenth century, whose activities contributed to increasing racial inequality in Washington, D.C.

In the 1880s, **Francis Newlands,** a politician from Nevada, and his friends began acquiring 1,700 acres of rural farmland in the northwest of Washington, D.C., up Connecticut Avenue Extended and across the Maryland line. By 1892, he had chartered the Rock Creek Railway, a streetcar company that built miles of trolley car track from Connecticut Avenue at Calvert Street to Jones Bridge Road to serve his planned development of the land. In that year, he and his partners founded the Chevy Chase Land Company and began construction on the first planned housing subdivision in what is now Chevy Chase, Maryland. The Chevy Chase Land Company is still in existence today.

In addition to being a Congressman and Senator from Nevada, Newlands was a shrewd businessman, a real estate speculator, and racist. Holding white supremacist views, he advocated restricting and ultimately stripping African Americans of their right to vote. During the nineteenth century his real estate developments did not have racial or religious covenants, but high prices ensured that affordability was limited to whites. By the early twentieth century, racial and religious covenants were attached to his developments, prohibiting African Americans and Jews from ownership.[19]

Newlands was in business with the businessmen who were also founding members of St. Margaret's: Truesdell, Tuttle, Sands, Wimer, and Fisher. They incorporated and served as the first Board of Directors of Newlands' company, the Rock Creek Railway, and several of them, along with Sophia Little, owned land along Connecticut Avenue Extended.

George Truesdell

George Truesdell trained as a civil engineer and served in the Union army during the Civil War before moving to Washington in the 1870s, where he began buying land. He was a prominent businessman, real estate speculator, and developer, who founded the Eckington and Soldiers' Home Railway trolley line and developed the Washington subdivision of Eckington. One of the founders of the Board of Trade, he advocated for the extension of roads outside the then city limits, including Connecticut Avenue Extended. Together with Tuttle and Sands, he formed the Washington Heights Water Supply Company in 1886 to bring water to property along the proposed Connecticut Avenue Extended.[20]

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[19] Marc Fisher, "Chevy Chase, 1916: For Everyman, A New Lot in Life," *The Washington Post,* February 14, 1999, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1999/02/15/chevy-chase-1916-for-everyman-a-new-lot-in-life/b59d9130-b374-4337-b784-f22f0960c653/.

[20] "The Washington Heights Water Supply Company has been incorporated," *The Washington Critic* (Washington, D.C.), July 24, 1886, 2, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn82000205/1886-07-24/ed-1/seq-4/.

Truesdell built his estate home, Managasset, on 15 acres of land he owned in what is now Kalorama Triangle and was neighbor to Sophia Little, her siblings, and Tuttle. He was a founder of St. Margaret's and member of its first Vestry. As one of the seminal members of the Board of Trustees of the [National] Cathedral Foundation formed in 1893, he was a generous contributor to it and to the Bishop of Washington. Between the 1890s, at about the time of St. Margaret's founding, and 1911 he sold off his estate lot by lot, demolished Managasset and moved downtown where he joined the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany.

LeRoy Tuttle

LeRoy Tuttle was a banker who moved to Washington in 1860, recruited by the Treasurer of the United States, and became Assistant Treasurer of the United States. He was responsible for the vaults of the Treasury and issued the country's bonds during the Civil War. After his work at Treasury, he "devoted his energies to the manufacturing industries" and to his large real estate holdings.[21] He owned and developed the Tuttle subdivision, along Connecticut Avenue, and was neighbor to Truesdell and Sophia Little.

As for Tuttle's business interests, in addition to serving as an incorporator and member of the Board of Directors of the Rock Creek Railway Company and incorporator of the Washington Heights Water Supply Company, he was the Treasurer and member of the Board of Directors of the Potomac Terra Cotta Pipe Company, which manufactured and supplied sewer pipe to the expanding neighborhoods of Washington.[22]

Tuttle didn't have a long walk to church on Sundays. His personal home was perched on the land where the Generator Hotel now stands, at the corner of LeRoy Place and Connecticut Avenue. The photo below taken in 1903 shows Tuttle's estate flanked by its new neighbor, the Highlands apartment building (now the Churchill Hotel). A Connecticut Avenue Extended cable car can be seen on the far right side of the image. St. Margaret's would be located off the far lower left of the image, at the bottom of the block.

[21] "Mr. LeRoy Tuttle's Funeral," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), November 30, 1894, 5, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1894-11-30/ed-1/seq-5/.
[22] "The War of the Plumbers and the Potomac Terra Cotta Water Company," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), October 29, 1875, 5, https://www.newspapers.com/article/evening-star-the-war-of-the-plumbers-an/147767454/.

[23]

Lawrence Sands

Lawrence Sands married **Margaret Little Sands,** daughter of John Little and sister of Sophia. He was a lawyer, businessman, real estate speculator, and incorporator and member of the Board of Directors of the Rock Creek Railway. He formed the Washington Heights Water Supply Company with Truesdell and Tuttle. He and his wife lived in Mintwood, the home they built on that portion of Littlewoods, which Margaret inherited from her father. Sands became a member of the first Vestry of St. Margaret's.

J.B. Wimer

J.B. Wimer was a real estate agent, broker, developer, and speculator. He brokered real estate transactions in the Washington Heights, Columbia Heights, and Fort Reno areas of the city. He

[23] Michael R. Harrison, email message to the Rev. Richard Weinberg, July 24, 2024, scan of a photo of LeRoy Tuttle's house from *Connecticut Avenue Highlands at the Nation's Capital*, originally in the personal collection of historian Robert Truax.

was an incorporator and member of the Board of Directors of the Rock Creek Railway Company and a member of the first Vestry of St. Margaret's.

Robert Fisher

Robert Fisher was an incorporator and member of the Board of Directors of the Rock Creek Railway Company and a member of the first Vestry of St. Margaret's.

Building a New Church

In 1892, Sophia Little offered to donate land from Littlewoods near Woodley and Columbia Roads for the site of a new church.[24] **LeRoy Tuttle,** a prominent member of Rock Creek Parish, secured a $250 contribution toward the building of the church.[25] Tuttle, **Lawrence Sands, Robert J. Fisher,** and **James B. Wimer** formed a Building Committee and, together with Sophia Little, quickly raised $8,000 ($300,000 today) toward the construction of the church. Episcopalians living in the area of Connecticut Avenue Heights decided not to wait until a church was constructed and began holding services in the interim.[26] The first services were held either in the home of Sophia Little or her sister Sarah Baldwin.[27]

The men on the Building Committee were landowners on either side of Connecticut Avenue Extended, whose business interests included real estate speculation and development. All were on the Board of Directors of the newly formed Rock Creek Railway Company.[28] Incorporated in 1888, its electric car service began in 1890, eventually connecting the area of Florida Avenue and 18th Street across Rock Creek Park and up Connecticut Avenue Extended to Chevy Chase. The Railway Company was founded to support the development of land holdings of the Chevy Chase Land Company.[29] It played a significant role in the development of Northwest Washington. The railway's presence increased the value of the land and subdivisions within its proximity.

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[24] "A New Episcopal Church," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), February 27, 1892, 12, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1892-02-27/ed-1/seq-12/.
[25] "Parish Rolls of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church Include Many Well-known Washington Families," *The Washington Herald* (Washington, D.C.), July 24, 1920, 8, https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83045433/1920-07-24/ed-1/?sp=8.
[26] "St. Margaret's Completed," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), September 28, 1895, 9. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1895-09-28/ed-1/seq-9/.
[27] "St. Margaret's Episcopal Church Was Organized in 1897; President Wilson and Mrs. Galt Were Married There," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), February 23, 1946, A-8. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1946-02-23/ed-1/seq-8/.
[28] "Notice of First Meeting of…Rock Creek Railroad Company," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), September 7, 1888, front page. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1888-09-07/ed-1/seq-1/.
[29] "The Rock Creek Electric Railway," *The Electrical World,* January 14, 1893, 23, retrieved via Google Books.

The Building Committee contracted with an architect to draw plans for the new church at the end of 1892, but that site and those plans were abandoned for reasons unknown, potentially because of the Panic of 1893, a depression that swept the United States touching every economic sector.

Efforts to build the church resumed in 1894. *The Washington Times* reports that the church was "organized" in the latter part of that year. During the winter of that year and the spring of 1895, as the number of worshipers multiplied, Lawrence Sands and his wife, Margaret, another Little sister, opened their home, called Mintwood, to worshipers. They held services in the billiard room, which accommodated 150 people.[30]

The effort to build a new church was not welcomed by all Episcopalians in the newly formed Diocese of Washington. It was reported that at its inaugural convention, the rectors of St. Thomas' and St. John's Georgetown exchanged angry words. Only four blocks away and within 150 feet of the parish boundary, the rector from St. Thomas', a church struggling to raise funds for its building, argued that it was in the best interest of the Diocese to prevent the location of churches where they are not needed. The rector from St. John's replied: "It mattered not, if real estate interests or sordid motives govern the selection of a site for a church, God could overrule to his own glory not only that condition, but wrath, avarice and greed…"[31] It appears that the positioning of the new church at the foot of Connecticut Avenue Extended was seen by some as a means to enrich the landowners in the area by providing an anchor and accelerant for growth and development. Despite objections, Bishop Satterlee approved the establishment and location of St. Margaret's.

At the same time that efforts refocused on building a new church, George Truesdell was appointed one of the three District of Columbia Commissioners, serving from 1894 to 1897. During his tenure, the Commission allocated funds for the development of Connecticut Avenue's extension, including the running of water lines and asphalt paving of streets (fall of 1894), the running of gas lines (fall of 1894), and the erection of gas street lamps (fall of 1895).

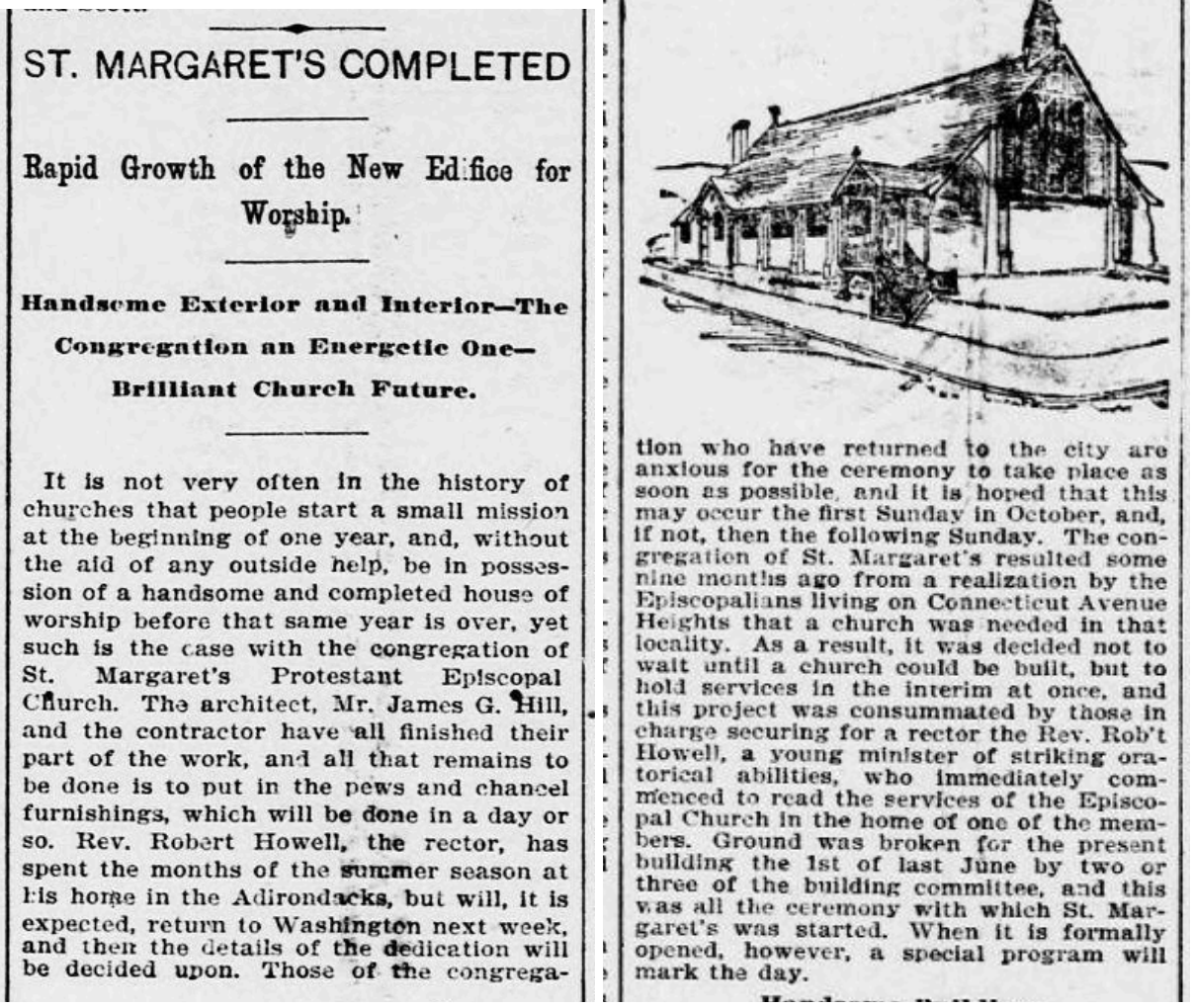
Rock Creek Parish lent the new church $5,000 ($187,000 today) as a down payment on a building site. While it is unclear who sold the land to St. Margaret's, it was likely one or more wealthy speculators. At that time, real estate sales were booming at what was then the topmost point of Connecticut Avenue, and many prominent landowners such as Tuttle, Truesdell, and others subdivided their land into lots and received the benefit of its popularity. In the spring of 1895, land was purchased for $47,000 ($1.75 million today) for the church. *The Evening Star* reported in June that "a few weeks ago some 6 lots were purchased" on the northwest corner of Bancroft and Connecticut, and the "church will be built on the 2 southern most of these lots."[32]

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[30] "President's Fiancee a Churchwoman," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), October 17, 1915, 74. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1915-10-17/ed-1/seq-74/.
[31] "Men of the Cloth Angry," *The Washington Times* (Washington, D.C.) June 5, 1895, 2. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn87062244/1895-06-05/ed-1/seq-2/.
[32] "New St. Margaret's," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), June 22, 1895, 9. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1895-06-22/ed-1/seq-9/.

Construction was funded by the money raised by the men of the Building Committee and Sophia Little.

Margaret Caroline Sands, daughter of **Lawrence** and **Margaret Little Sands,** niece of Sophia Little and granddaughter of Margaret and John Little, broke ground for the construction, and the church was named St. Margaret's. Margaret Caroline also was the church's first Sunday School member. The church, at the corner of Bancroft Street and Connecticut Avenue, held its first service on October 13, 1895.[33] Its footprint changed as it expanded from a small chapel to a large church over its early years. Truesdell, Tuttle, Sands, Fisher, and Wimer were the first Vestrymen of the new church. At that time, women were not permitted to serve on vestries in the diocese.



ST. MARGARET'S COMPLETED

Rapid Growth of the New Edifice for Worship.

Handsome Exterior and Interior—The Congregation an Energetic One—Brilliant Church Future.

It is not very often in the history of churches that people start a small mission at the beginning of one year, and, without the aid of any outside help, be in possession of a handsome and completed house of worship before that same year is over, yet such is the case with the congregation of St. Margaret's Protestant Episcopal Church. The architect, Mr. James G. Hill, and the contractor have all finished their part of the work, and all that remains to be done is to put in the pews and chancel furnishings, which will be done in a day or so. Rev. Robert Howell, the rector, has spent the months of the summer season at his home in the Adirondacks, but will, it is expected, return to Washington next week, and then the details of the dedication will be decided upon. Those of the congregation who have returned to the city are anxious for the ceremony to take place as soon as possible, and it is hoped that this may occur the first Sunday in October, and, if not, then the following Sunday. The congregation of St. Margaret's resulted some nine months ago from a realization by the Episcopalians living on Connecticut Avenue Heights that a church was needed in that locality. As a result, it was decided not to wait until a church could be built, but to hold services in the interim at once, and this project was consummated by those in charge securing for a rector the Rev. Rob't Howell, a young minister of striking oratorical abilities, who immediately commenced to read the services of the Episcopal Church in the home of one of the members. Ground was broken for the present building the 1st of last June by two or three of the building committee, and this was all the ceremony with which St. Margaret's was started. When it is formally opened, however, a special program will mark the day.

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[33] "St. Margaret's Opened," *The Evening Times* (Washington, D.C.) October 14, 1895, 6. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024441/1895-10-14/ed-1/seq-6/.

[34] *Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), September 28, 1895. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Library of Congress. https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1895-09-28/ed-1/seq-9/.

Today, we look to our patron saint, **Margaret of Scotland,** as the touchstone for the naming of our parish. Likely, the presence of three generations of Margarets in the Little family also played a role in the selection of the name of the new church.

Race in and around St. Margaret's in the First Half of the Twentieth Century

According to 1890 census data, the population of the District at the time of St. Margaret's establishment was 230,392, comprising 154,695 whites; 75,572 Blacks; and 125 other non-whites. As is clear from the families who made up the church's earliest members, the parish was founded to serve as the spiritual home of affluent and socially elite white families.

The first Rector, **the Rev. Richard Lewis Howell,** exemplified the membership's affluent status. Known in newspapers as "the richest clergyman in America," thanks to the fortune he inherited from his father,[35] Howell was described as "a young minister of striking oratorical abilities."[36] An in-depth search of newspaper archives did not reveal any public statements by Howell with regards to slavery or segregation; however, Howell was familiar and likely comfortable with the slave-owning past of St. Margaret's founders, having been born into a family that maintained close ties with cousins such as **Varina Howell Davis**, wife of Confederate leader **Jefferson Davis**. Richard Howell moved to town in the early 1890s and quickly became involved with the nascent church. Howell arranged to be appointed the assistant to the Rock Creek Parish Rector, from which perch he stepped up fundraising for St. Margaret's, oversaw the building of the chapel, and served as Rector until February 1, 1899.

At the turn of the century, St. Margaret's became one of the largest churches in the diocese, moving from hope-filled beginnings to become an established, growing, and positive presence in the District of Columbia. The Rector in the early 20th century, **the Rev. Herbert Scott Smith,** was, by all accounts, an exceedingly proper and meticulous man, the son of a Methodist minister.[37] He never married and lived with his sister **Caroline**, who served as his hostess, in the rectory at 1859 Mintwood Place, a street which had been developed from the Sands' family estate.

Smith led St. Margaret's for 41 years, during which multiple seasons of growth in membership led to expansions of the building. In 1900, rather than build an entirely new structure, it was proposed that the church be shifted to a north/south axis. The original structure became the transept for the redesigned church. The new configuration of the building was completed in 1904.

By 1909, at least one of the three stained glass windows from Tiffany Studios was in place, with the others to follow soon thereafter. The named donors for stained glass windows offer some of

[35] "Preacher left $5,000,000," *The Washington Post* (Washington, D.C.), February 4, 1910, 6, accessed via ProQuest Historical Newspapers.
[36] *Washington Evening Star*, September 28, 1895.
[37] 1910 Federal Census.

the most enduring testaments to the backgrounds of the parish's wealthy philanthropists. Many of the donors who supported the church's expansion came from families who were prominent slave owners in the first half of the 19th century. For example, the Gunston Hall School gave the "Sower" window to honor its headmaster, **Beverly Randolph Mason,** whose funeral took place at St. Margaret's in April 1910 and was officiated by the Rector.[38] Mason was the great-grandson of U.S. Founding Father **George Mason**.

By 1913, St. Margaret's was feeling growing pains again. The available space was deemed insufficient for the needs of the ministry and mission of the parish. And while the Vestry was all male, women played the most forward-looking role in the young parish's development. It was the Rector's Aid Society, an organization of the women of St. Margaret's, that proposed the idea of purchasing property directly adjacent to the sanctuary north on Connecticut Avenue for the addition of a much-needed parish hall.

Smith's long tenure at St. Margaret's and the growth of the parish under his rectorship suggest that he was a man perfectly suited to his job—minister to an affluent parish in an affluent neighborhood. He led the parish through the upheaval of World War I and the economic trials of the Great Depression, and through it all, the parish thrived. A highlight of his ministry was no doubt his officiating at the wedding of **President Woodrow Wilson** to his second wife, **Edith Bolling Galt,** in 1915. Smith's positioning of the church as a high-society flock continued even beyond his tenure and into the 1940s, when the St. Margaret's choir was part of the state funeral for Speaker of the House **William Bankhead**.[39]

Mid-century Diversification and Outreach to the Neighborhood

In the early 20th century, the racial history of Adams Morgan, across Connecticut Avenue from where St. Margaret's is located, reflected the broader racial dynamics of Washington, D.C. Like the blocks immediately surrounding the church, it was developed and occupied by wealthy white Washingtonians. Starting in the 1920s, St. Margaret's side of Connecticut Avenue diverged from Adams Morgan. The latter area experienced significant demographic shifts over the decades, influenced by patterns of segregation and later, urban renewal efforts. In Adams Morgan, an influx of immigrants, some from Asia and some from Europe, in the 1920s; a growing Black population in the 1930s; and a new wave of immigrants from Latin America in the 1950s made Adams Morgan. Following several landmark Supreme Court decisions and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, white residents of Adams Morgan were part of the familiar pattern of "white flight" to the suburbs.[40] Between 1940 and 1970, while the neighborhood immediately around St. Margaret's

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[38] "Obituary for Major Beverly Randolph Mason, Fairfax, Virginia, 1910," *Confederate Veteran,* Vol. XVIII, No.10 https://web.archive.org/web/20090327094630/http://files.usgwarchives.net/va/fairfax/obits/1910/m2500000.txt.

[39] *Washington Evening Star,* September 16, 1940.

[40] *Ward 1 Heritage Guide,* DC Preservation Office, 2015.

remained almost exclusively inhabited by white Washingtonians, the area directly east, which came to be known as Adams Morgan, grew steadily in the percentage of non-white residents.[41]

The earliest known ministry beyond the original affluent, white congregation came during **the Rev. Malcolm Marshall's** tenure, who served as the fourth Rector of St. Margaret's for 30 years, from 1948 to 1978. Marshall (of European descent) was born in Massachusetts in 1911. His tenure marked a period of increased engagement with the surrounding community, which included a more racially and socioeconomically diverse population. This shift is reflected in the Vestry's minutes and Parish Annual Reports, as well as in the memories shared by long-time parishioners and Marshall's two daughters.

Sharon Dove, a lifelong member since 1946, recalls that during her childhood, the only person of color at St. Margaret's was the sexton. Coming from a non-wealthy white family, Dove observed that the parish was predominantly affluent and white, yet she never encountered direct opposition to racial diversity. It wasn't until the 1960s that the first families of color started attending St. Margaret's, Dove recalled. This gradual increase in diversity marked a significant shift in the parish's demographic makeup, reflecting broader social changes. Dove's recollections highlight the church's journey from a homogenous congregation to one beginning to embrace racial diversity.

By the mid-sixties, Parish Annual Reports began celebrating intentional outreach ministries. Bimonthly ecumenical meetings with representatives of other parishes began in 1964. Included in the meetings were celebrated African American faith leaders **Bishop Marie Reed,** founder and Pastor of the Sacred Heart Spiritual Church, and **the Reverend R. T. McIntyre,** Pastor of Meridian Hill Baptist Church on Kalorama Road, NW, with whom St. Margaret's partnered on a summer program for "underprivileged children."[42]

St. Margaret's also played an essential role in the formation of the Adams Morgan Community Council, contributing personnel in addition to "a considerable amount of money to the Council and its associated agencies," reported to have exceeded $16,000 (worth more than $150,000 in today's dollars).[43]

In 1967, the "New Thing" art movement was introduced as an initiative to encourage creativity among neighborhood children, teens, and adults, with the "New Thing Jazz Workshop" beginning in St. Margaret's Parish Hall in April and drawing more than 100 people weekly. By 1969, the "New Thing, Art and Architecture Center" was operating Black culture programs for all ages, including an African dance troupe, a teen film company, a teen graphics company, and a high school for dropouts, continuing to use the Parish Hall every Tuesday evening for three and a half years.[44]

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[41] https://mappingsegregationdc.org/#anchor1.
[42] "That the Broken Body Might Be One," *1964 Annual Report*, St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, published for the Annual Meeting on April 19, 1965, x.
[43] "Work in the Community," *1966 Annual Report,* St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, published for the Annual Meeting on January 16, 1967, x.
[44] *1967 Annual Report; 1969 Annual Report,* St. Margaret's Episcopal Church

In addition to work in the Adams Morgan community, the Civil Rights Movement came to St. Margaret's doorstep in the 1960s. The 1963 March for Jobs, Peace, and Freedom, and the 1968 riots in DC following the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., took place scant miles or even blocks from the church. The Bishop of Washington and the Dean of the Cathedral spoke publicly on behalf of racial justice, but St. Margaret's was not to be found in the news articles.

Several parishioners who joined St. Margaret's within the last five years of Marshall's tenure in the early 1970s also described the congregation as predominantly white and wealthy, with very few African-American or Hispanic members, not fully reflecting the neighborhood's diversity. **Carolyn Eaves** recalls being the first U.S.-born African-American member. By the time she joined the parish in 1973, there were more than a dozen members of African descent already active in the parish, mostly from elite diplomatic families from the Caribbean or African countries.

Eaves and others also note the diversification of lay leadership, including the Vestry. **Cecil Brathwaite** is remembered by Eaves as the first person of color and first Black man elected to serve on St. Margaret's Vestry. In 1970, Brathwaite was appointed to serve as Registrar of the Vestry, a role he held for two years before being elected as a voting Vestry member in 1972. In 1975, Brathwaite suggested women be ushers and crucifers, which led the Rector to call for women lay readers as well. Brathwaite was born in Manhattan, New York, in the late 1920s to parents who immigrated from the West Indies. Both he and his wife, **Viola Brathwaite,** are interred in the church columbarium, and Cecil Brathwaite is further honored with an altar rail dedicated to his memory.

In 1978, **Alice Vetter** became the first Asian American and first woman of color elected to serve on the Vestry. Prior to serving on the Vestry, Alice Vetter, along with her husband **Charles Vetter,** had long held lay leadership positions. In 1975, when Alice Vetter was co-president of the Family of St. Margaret's, a committee of lay people, she and another volunteer called for the parish to sponsor a Vietnamese refugee family. Vetter went on to serve on the Vestry for eight years, becoming the Junior Warden in 1981. She died in December 2022 at the age of 95. At the end of her funeral service at St. Margaret's, she was interred in the columbarium beside her husband, who had predeceased her.

Following Marshall's tenure, the fifth Rector, **the Rev. Stephen Arpee,** served from 1979 to 1984. His tenure, though marked by internal division and an eventual resignation, did not uncover significant developments regarding race within the church. His departure, however, set the stage for a new chapter under the leadership of St. Margaret's sixth Rector.

The Tenure of the Rev. Vienna Cobb Anderson

Significant changes began to occur in the life of St. Margaret's under **the Rev. Vienna Cobb Anderson,** the sixth Rector, who served from 1986 to 1996 and also holds the distinction of being the first woman called as Rector by any parish in Washington. Anderson, who is of

European descent, actively encouraged participation from marginalized groups, including the LGBTQ+ community and people of color. Anderson recalled that this led to a more diverse congregation—socially, racially, and socioeconomically—despite some initial resistance from long-standing members.

Lou Steadwell, an African American, who, along with his white wife and three biracial children, joined St. Margaret's in 1987, recalled that at that time, the congregation was still "predominantly white, with only about 10% racial and ethnic minorities, mainly Black families from Africa and the Caribbean." Over the years, while the involvement of racial and ethnic minorities fluctuated, there were significant periods of strong outreach to the broader community, Steadwell recalled.

The Rev. Charlie Gilchrist, an Associate Rector hired by Anderson, played a pivotal role in expanding St. Margaret's outreach efforts. A native Washingtonian of European descent and former Maryland State Senator and Montgomery County Executive, Gilchrist was known for his dedication to public service and advocacy for minority communities. After his political career, he was ordained an Episcopal priest and continued his commitment to social justice through his ministry.

One of Gilchrist's significant outreach efforts was the establishment of "Desayuno y Diálogo" (Spanish for "Breakfast and Dialogue"), a program initially created to support Central American war refugees fleeing violence and instability in their home countries. The program represented St. Margaret's first intentional outreach to the Latino population. In the 1980s, the diverse, Mount Pleasant-Adams Morgan neighborhood "absorbed thousands of Salvadorans who had fled a murderous civil war and settled in the area, nearly doubling the city's Latino population."[45] The feeding program sought to meet the basic needs of "the mostly young, male, and poor new immigrants who were packed into dilapidated, overcrowded apartments," doing day labor work.[46]

The program was renamed Charlie's Place in 1999 to honor Gilchrist's hard work and commitment to the poor. To this day, the program remains St. Margaret's most significant and continuous outreach ministry, operating in some fashion every week since 1990. It is also the context in which the largest number of people of color gather and are served inside the walls of St. Margaret's. The relative disparity between this gathering and the church's worship services speaks to the continuing imbalance of power and privilege in St. Margaret's membership.

Steadwell emphasized that while there has never been any direct hindrance to diversity in his time at St. Margaret's, "the unique stories and contributions of minority parishioners have often gone unacknowledged." He believes that more deliberate actions are needed to make the church genuinely inclusive and welcoming to all.

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[45] Chris Myers Asch and George Derek Musgrove, *Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation's Capital* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 413.
[46] Ibid.

The Twenty-first Century

Prior to calling the Rector who would succeed Anderson, **the Rev. Eugene Sutton** was appointed the interim Priest-in-Charge, thereby becoming the first African-American and first priest of color to serve in a clerical role at St. Margaret's. Sutton's leadership positions in the Church later included serving as Canon Pastor at Washington National Cathedral and ultimately as Bishop of Maryland until his retirement in 2024.

Longtime parishioner **Paige Cottingham-Streater** began attending St. Margaret's during Sutton's tenure and notes how Sutton and subsequent Black clergy were notable spiritual leaders. "Sutton's presence and sermons were the reason I returned to St. Margaret's week after week after searching for a church home," Cottingham-Streater shares. Cottingham-Streater, an African-American and cradle Episcopalian, later became the first Black woman to serve as St. Margaret's Junior Warden, one of many prominent roles she has played in the parish.

The tenure of **the Rev. Susan Blue** (of European descent), who served as Rector from 1997 to 2010, was marked by her deep commitment to pastoral care and significant improvements to the church's physical infrastructure. Blue's tenure also saw the introduction of liturgical contributions to racial justice. Church programming marked Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday, Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, Lunar New Year, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, as well as religious commemorations such as the Feast of Absalom Jones, the first Black Episcopal priest. Liturgical prayers, choral anthems, and hymn selections also changed to reflect a greater emphasis on racial diversity and inclusion.

Blue hired the parish's first African-American Assistant Rector, **the Rev. Caron Gwynn,** a native Washingtonian, a third generation Episcopalian, and the first woman sponsored for ordination to the priesthood from her home parish, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, D.C. Gwynn served as Assistant Rector at St. Margaret's from 2006 to 2009. She went on to serve two other parishes in the Diocese of Washington, including as Priest-in-Charge and then Rector of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, D.C., from 2011 to 2017. She returned to serve St. Margaret's in 2024 as an adjunct priest.

Further evidence of the importance of clergy of color became clear in St. Margaret's role in lifting up new clergy from outside the traditional mainstream. People of color, women, and LGBTQ+ aspirants found support at St. Margaret's. **The Rev. Dr. Ronald David** joined St. Margaret's in the early 2000s while undertaking a discernment process and was eventually ordained in the Diocese of Los Angeles in 2003. **The Rev. Melanie Mullen,** a longtime parishioner, went from St. Margaret's to seminary and thence to the priesthood in 2013, going on to serve as the Episcopal Church's Director of Reconciliation, Justice, and Creation Care. **The Rev. Dr. Bertram Nagarajah,** alongside his wife Sherene, came to Washington from Sri Lanka, raised his family in the church and was ordained to the vocational diaconate in 2018, serving both at St. Margaret's and in the Diocese of El Camino Real in California.

Following Blue's retirement, St. Margaret's called **the Rev. Kimberly Lucas** as its eighth Rector in 2011, making her the first African-American to hold this position. Lucas' leadership marked a significant milestone in the church's journey toward greater inclusivity and diversity. She brought with her a wealth of experience and a passion for social justice, furthering the church's commitment to serving all people.

Lucas also underscored her commitment to confronting and dismantling racism within and beyond the church community during her time at St. Margaret's. She provided pre-marital counseling to interracial couples through the prism of her own marriage and her biracial children—her husband, **Mark Retherford,** is white, and together they have four children. Interviewed by the news media in 2017 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of *Loving v. Virginia,* the Supreme Court case that struck down state laws against interracial marriage, Lucas spoke firsthand of the challenges faced by interracial couples in a society that still grapples with racism. As she shared at the time, "I have not yet counseled an interracial wedding where someone didn't have a problem on the bride's or the groom's side. I think for a lot of people it's OK if it's 'out there' and it's other people, but when it comes home and it's something that forces them to confront their own internal demons and their own prejudices and assumptions, it's still really hard for people."[47]

It is also notable that before Lucas' appointment, St. Margaret's benefited from the leadership of another Black Interim Rector, **the Rev. Anne-Marie Jeffery,** who currently serves as Canon for Congregational Vitality on the Diocese of Washington's staff. Together with the earlier interim leadership of the Rev. Eugene Sutton and the Assistant Rectorship of the Rev. Caron Gwynn, Jeffery's leadership helped pave the way for Lucas' historic appointment and the ongoing diversification of the church's clergy and congregation. Over her years at St. Margaret's, Paige Cottingham-Streater observed how clergy of color transformed the church experience for newcomers. "We cannot underestimate," she reflected, "what it meant for some of our congregants and youth of color to see Eugene, Anne-Marie, Kym, and Caron—people who look like them—at the altar."

St. Margaret's current Rector, **the Rev. Richard Weinberg,** was first called to St. Margaret's as Associate Rector in 2017 and was later appointed Priest-in-Charge in 2019, when Lucas was elected Bishop of Colorado. Weinberg was named the ninth Rector of St. Margaret's in 2020, which also makes him the parish's first openly gay Rector. Born and raised in a white middle-class family in D.C.'s Northern Virginia suburbs, Weinberg is fluent in Spanish as a second language. He and his partner **Alban Zamora,** from the Dominican Republic, adopted their two teenage sons from Colombia, all of whom have also been active in the parish's life.

Weinberg advocated for the appointment of **the Rev. Francisco Serrano** as the parish's first Latino clergy. Serrano, originally from El Salvador, was appointed by the Bishop as St. Margaret's Deacon in 2022.

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[47] "50 years later, interracial couples still face hostility from strangers," CBS News/AP, June 12, 2017, https://www.cbsnews.com/news/50-years-loving-case-interracial-couples-still-face-hostility-from-strangers/.

In the five years preceding the publication of this report, the parish has more concretely addressed racial justice. Notable initiatives include the completion of the Episcopal Church's Sacred Ground anti-racism program by three different annual cycles of participants, totaling more than 50 parishioners. The parish established an action-focused Racial Justice Task Force in July 2022 and has convened annual "Racial Justice listening sessions and planning retreats" in August 2022 and September 2023. Additionally, St. Margaret's developed and implemented a Supplier Diversity Program and expenditures tracking system approved by the Vestry in December 2022. The parish launched the "Loving Our Neighbors through Medical Debt Relief" campaign in Spring 2024 to erase more than $3 million in medical debt for eligible people in the District and Maryland. The parish has also redefined its relationship with and expanded services for the guests of Charlie's Place.

Conclusion: Reflecting on St. Margaret's Journey toward Racial Justice

Throughout its history, St. Margaret's Episcopal Church has experienced both alignment with and divergence from the broader movement for racial justice. There have been notable periods when the church took intentional steps toward inclusivity and outreach, reflecting a commitment to serving the entire community. The efforts during the tenures of the Rev. Malcolm Marshall and the Rev. Vienna Cobb Anderson exemplify this alignment. Under their leadership, the church actively engaged with the surrounding, more racially diverse community through initiatives like the "New Thing" art movement, the Adams Morgan Community Council, and the establishment of Charlie's Place.

However, there were also times when the church took its lack of racial diversity for granted, reflecting the broader societal norms and biases of the periods. Early in its history, the church primarily served affluent, white families, and it took decades before significant steps were made to diversify the congregation and leadership. While individual members and clergy made efforts to foster inclusivity, these actions were sometimes isolated and not part of a broader, sustained strategy.

As St. Margaret's continues to move forward, this report serves as both a reflection on past shortcomings and a guide for future actions. By acknowledging where we have fallen short and celebrating our progress, we can continue to strive toward becoming the Beloved Community that reflects God's vision of justice and inclusivity for all. This journey requires ongoing commitment, reflection, and action to ensure that St. Margaret's remains a place where all are truly welcome and valued.

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Appendix A: Parish Timeline

- **1892:** Sophia Little offers land from her family’s estate for a new church; initial fundraising and planning begin.
- **1894:** St. Margaret’s Episcopal Church is officially organized.
- **1895:** First service held in the newly built church at the corner of Bancroft Street and Connecticut Avenue.
- **1948:** The Rev. Malcolm Marshall begins his tenure as the fourth Rector, marking a period of increased community engagement.
- **1960s:** First families of color start attending St. Margaret’s; introduction of ecumenical meetings and intentional outreach ministries.
- **1967:** “New Thing” art movement initiated, drawing neighborhood children, teens, and adults.
- **1971:** Cecil Brathwaite appointed as Clerk of the Vestry, later elected as a voting Vestry member.
- **1986:** The Rev. Vienna Cobb Anderson becomes the first female Rector of St. Margaret’s, encouraging diversity and outreach to marginalized groups.
- **1990:** Establishment of “Desayuno y Diálogo” (later Charlie’s Place) by the Rev. Charlie Gilchrist.
- **1997:** The Rev. Susan Blue becomes Rector, focusing on pastoral care and church renovations.
- **2011:** The Rev. Kimberly Lucas becomes the first African-American Rector of St. Margaret’s.
- **2017:** The Rev. Richard Weinberg joins as Associate Rector, later becoming Rector in 2020.
- **2022:** Appointment of the Rev. Francisco Serrano as St. Margaret’s first Latino Deacon.
- **2024:** Launch of “Loving Our Neighbors through Medical Debt Relief” campaign, erasing over $3 million in medical debt for eligible low-income people in DC and Maryland.

Appendix B: List of St. Margaret's Rectors

1. The Rev. Richard Lewis Howell, 1894–1899 (5 years);
2. The Rev. Herbert Scott Smith, 1899–1940 (41 years);
3. The Rev. Almond T. Eyler, 1940–1947 (7 years);
4. The Rev. Malcolm Marshall, 1948–1978 (30 years);
5. The Rev. Stephen Arpee, 1979–1984 (5 years);
6. The Rev. Dr. Vienna Cobb Anderson, 1987–1996 (9 years);
7. The Rev. Susan Blue, 1997–2010 (13 years);
8. The Rev. Kimberly Lucas, 2011–2019 (8 years)
9. The Rev. Richard M. Weinberg, 2020–present