The relationship between black women and Methodism extends all the way back to the time of John Wesley, Methodism's founder. Wesley had a number of significant encounters with black women, all of which concerned to some extent their relationship to the Christian faith. An extensive conversation he had with a slave woman at the home of a Rev. Mr. Thompson in South Carolina early in 1737 immediately comes to mind. Wesley recorded in his journal:

Finding a young Negro there, who seemed more sensible than the rest, I asked her how long she had been in Carolina. She said two or three years; but that she was born in Barbados, and had lived there in a minister's family from a child. I asked whether she went to church there. She said 'Yes, every Sunday, to carry my mistress's children.' I asked what she had learned at church. She said, 'Nothing; I heard a deal, but did not understand it.' 'But what did your master teach you at home?' 'Nothing.' 'Nor your mistress?' 'No.' I asked, 'But don't you know that your hands and feet, and this you call your body, will turn to dust in a little time?' She answered, 'Yes.' 'But there is something in you that will not turn to dust, and this is what they call your soul. Indeed, you cannot see your soul, though it is within you; as you cannot see the wind, though it is all about you. But if you had not a soul in you, you could no more see, or hear, or feel, than this table can. What do you think will become of your soul when your body turns to dust?' 'I don't know.'

In response to the woman's sincere interest and probing remarks, Wesley went on to explain what would be the state of her soul in the afterlife if she persevered in the good life:

'Why, it will go out of your body, and go up there, above the sky, and live always. God lives there. Do you know who God is?' 'No.' 'You cannot see Him, any more than you can see your own soul. It is He that made you and me, and all men and women, and all beasts and birds, and all the world. It is He that makes the sun shine, and rain fall, and corn and fruits to grow out of the ground. He makes all these for us. But why do you think he made us? What did He Make you and me for?' 'I can't tell.' 'He made you to live with Himself above the sky. And so you will, in a little time, if you are good.'

Wesley was evidently touched by the manner in which the woman reacted to his teaching:

The attention with which this poor creature listened to instruction is inexpressible. The next day she remembered all, readily answered every question; and said she would ask Him that made her to show her how to be good.

2Ibid., p. 351.
3Ibid.
In November, 1758, Wesley baptized two slave converts, one of which was obviously a woman. According to Wesley, this woman deeply rejoiced "in God her Savior, and is the first African Christian I have known."4

When the Methodist faith reached America, black women were among its first adherents. A servant named Betty attended one of the first Methodist society meetings in America, held at the home of Philip Embury in New York in 1766.5 Less than four decades later, Rachel and Margaret, two female servants, contributed considerably to the building of the chapel which became the John Street M.E. Church in New York.6

When Richard Allen, the Delaware ex-slave, conceived the idea of a separate Methodist Church for people of African descent in 1786, black women were among his most ardent supporters. Such support occasioned the birth of the African Methodist Episcopal Church under Allen's leadership in 1816. Jarena Lee and Sarah Allen, Richard's wife, figured prominently in the early development of this church. Black women were also involved in the movement which resulted in the formation of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in 1821. This body produced women of the stature of Harriet Tubman, the towering figure who led three hundred or more slaves to freedom. Tubman could be looked upon as one of the most courageous women produced by this country. In the years before and after the Civil War, black female involvement in African Methodism extended into a number of areas and assisted in the birth and development of other bodies such as the Union Church of Africans, the First Colored Methodist Protestant Church, and the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church.7

This essay focuses largely on the role played by black women in the rise and development of African Union Methodism. More specifically, it discusses black female participation in the early history of the Union Church of Africans, and in the histories of those churches which derived from this body; namely, the African Union Methodist Protestant and Union American Methodist Episcopal Churches. This topic deserves special attention for two reasons. First, because it has received virtually no attention from historians of the American Church. Second, it has intrinsic value to students of Afro-American religious history who have imbibed the notion that black women confined their attention to the home while their men shaped black religious institutions and defined the perimeters of their ministries and missions.

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4Ibid., IV, p. 292.
5Mason Crum, The Negro in the Methodist Church (New York: The Editorial Dept. of the Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church, 1951), p. 11.
7In 1954 the "Colored" Methodist Episcopal Church became the "Christian" Methodist Episcopal Church.
Black women were involved in the African Union Methodist movement from the beginning. Several were among those who followed Peter Spencer and William Anderson out of the Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church in Wilmington, Delaware in 1805 to protest segregation in worship. They assisted in the organization of Ezion M.E. Church, a body that was to function as a mission under Asbury and the predominantly white M.E. Conference. This was the first African Methodist Church organized in Wilmington.\(^8\) In 1812, when a white elder sought to undermine the decision-making powers of Ezion’s black membership, thirteen black women joined Spencer and Anderson in protest. They included Margaret Allen, Deborah Anderson, Hannah Benton, Amelia Butch, Maggie Debbery, Ferreby Draper, Lydia Hall, Sarah Hall, Susan Hicks, Grace Powell, Annes Spencer, Anna Trunn, and Ellen Weeks.\(^9\)

Information concerning these women is amazingly scarce. Their names appear in early Wilmington newspapers, in the Articles of Association of the Union Church of Africans (1813), and in Daniel J. Russell, Jr.’s *History of the African Union Methodist Protestant Church*. They were involved in the official break with the M.E. Conference in 1813, and were among the organizers of the Union Church of African Members in September of that year.\(^10\) References to Ferreby Draper, who was affectionately called “Mother” Draper by black and white Wilmingtonians, have been found in several issues of Wilmington newspapers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Referred to as “one of the early saints of the Union Church of Africans,” she had come to Wilmington from Milford, Delaware in 1787. When she died on May 21, 1868, the news of her death was carried in Wilmington’s *The Delaware Tribune*, dated May 28, 1868.\(^11\) Lydia Hall, also known as “Mother” Hall, was

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\(^10\)“Articles of Association of the Union Church of Africans, in Wilmington, State of Delaware (1813),” pp. 1-6; *The Morning News* (August 26, 1889), pp. 1 and 8; and Russell, *History of the African Union Methodist Protestant Church*, pp. 8-9. The Articles of Association mentioned in notes 8 and 9 are the same ones mentioned in this note. The titles “African Union Church,” “Union Church of Africans,” “Union Church of African Members,” and “Union Methodist Connexion” were used interchangeably to refer to the same body.

\(^11\)*The Delaware Tribune*, Wilmington, Delaware (May 28, 1868), p. 3; *The Morning News* (August 26, 1889), pp. 1 and 8; and *The Morning News* (August 29, 1927), p. 5. The title “Mother” has always been applied to elderly black women who are considered strong spiritual forces in the black church.
mentioned a number of times in Thomas Scharf's two-volume *History of Delaware, 1609-1888*, an 1888 publication. Information on Annes Spencer, the wife of Peter Spencer, is available in the personal will record of her husband. Additionally, the names of many of the women who took part in the early Spencer movement were recorded as early as 1802 in the membership records of Asbury M.E. Church, the white church from which they broke away in 1805.

One of the most significant and unique aspects of the rise of the Union Church of Africans was its acceptance of women, at least in principle, as preachers. Spencer and Anderson, the earliest leaders of the church, were impressed with the manner in which the Quakers had resolved the issue of female preachers, and they decided that women who had a conviction that God had called them to preach should be given equal opportunity with men to serve as licensed preachers. The position of the early Union Church of Africans was clearly spelled out in its 1852 Book of Discipline:

> Concerning women preachers, the Quaker Friends have always spoken for us, that being their way, they shall always preach for us when they have a mind, and none but them.

It should be noted that the granting of such a privilege to women was not an indication that the male component of this church intended as a rule to accept women in all roles of authority and influence. Undoubtedly, the men of the Union Church of Africans, including Spencer and Anderson, were not completely free of the concept of women's subordination. Although women could be licensed preachers, they were not designated to be elder ministers and lay elders. These positions, which constituted the highest in the church's hierarchy, were reserved for men. For the most part, the women accepted the dominant male view of themselves, and thus took their subordination at certain levels for granted. Even so, it is a credit to the tremendous foresight of Spencer and Anderson that women in their church were given a chance very early to fill a role that was not so readily available to women in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and in other black

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15 Ibid., pp. 52-64.
denominations. The case of Jarena Lee, probably the first female preacher in the A.M.E. Church, is illustrative of the difficulty women faced in becoming preachers in other black churches. When she shared her call to preach with Richard Allen, the A.M.E. founder, he told her that the A.M.E. Book of Discipline “did not call for women preachers.” Even though he later supported the Rev. Mrs. Lee’s ministry, the A.M.E.s were quite slow in coming to terms with female preachers. Hence, Spencer’s Union Church of Africans was the first black denomination in America to state as a matter of doctrine that women could and should have the right to preach the Gospel.

It is equally important to note that there is no strong evidence to suggest that women took advantage of their right to become licensed preachers in the Union Church of Africans in the pre-Civil War years. It is clear that a few women in the church performed duties traditionally associated with the ordained ministry, or exercised what may be termed “limited clergy rights.” Women such as “Mother” Ferreby Draper, “Mother” Lydia Hall, Araminta Jenkins, and Annes Spencer visited the sick, gave wise counsel to the young, and undoubtedly undertook exhortation and religious teaching in church and in the home. The ministries of such women were seriously restricted as to movement, function, and opportunities of leadership, but they nevertheless became great spiritual forces in their church and community.

The church related activities of women like “Mother” Draper, “Mother” Hall, Araminta Jenkins, and Annes Spencer extended into a number of areas. They participated in the movement in 1813 to inaugurate the Big August Quarterly, a religious festival which became associated with the Union Church of Africans a year later. Women occasionally outnumbered men at these early festivals, which occurred annually on the last Sunday in August. Some appeared in satins and homespuns, calicoes and velvets. Others showed up in the cast-off finery of their white mistresses, or in the most gorgeous apparel of their own. Alice Dunbar-Nelson, the wife of the great black poet, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, wrote concerning such women in 1932. She was a teacher at the Howard High School in Wilmington, and was afforded the chance to interview a number of elderly blacks who had attended some of the earliest Big Quarterlies. Her research tells us that women not only formed much of the presence of these


17Scattered references to the variety of duties performed by women in the early Union Church of Africans can be found in the stacks of minutes of the regular meetings of the elders of that church, which are stored at the Historical Society of Delaware in Wilmington in Boxes 70-76. These minutes date as far back as the 1850s.
festivals, but were responsible for making many of the major preparations for them. Weeks in advance of Big Quarterly, as the festival was known to many, the women mapped plans and selected foods to be served to the celebrants. Fund-raising activities were held, and prayer meetings were conducted to prepare themselves spiritually for the big day. Women generated much of the spirit and excitement at Big Quarterlies as they involved themselves totally in the preaching, singing, praying, dancing, feasting, and storytelling which marked the occasions. Thus, they contributed immensely to a rich legacy of Afro-American custom, folklore, and tradition.

Equally significant were the contributions made by black women to the growth and expansion of the Union Church of Africans. When financial difficulties threatened the existence of the body in 1835, its female component responded admirably to Spencer's call for aid. A group of loyal women from the various congregations in the denomination walked from Woodstown, New Jersey to New York City and met at the home of one Sister Polke. Here they united in an effort to raise money to assist Spencer and Anderson in meeting their financial obligations. Their efforts met with a measure of success. The result was the formation of the Peter Spencer United Daughters of Conference, the first of a number of female societies organized in connection with the Spencer churches.

Benevolences were another major item on the agenda of women in the early Union Church of Africans. In 1861, a group of women met at the home of Araminta Jenkins in Wilmington and started the Grand Body of Daughters of Conference, a society devoted to caring for retired ministers, their families, and others who stood in need of the bare necessities of life. This society replaced the Peter Spencer United Daughters of Conference, which was disbanded when most of the congregations broke away from the parent organization between 1851 and 1856. Among its organizers were Caroline Anderson, Elizabeth Bayard, Anna M. Chippey, Sarah E. Chippey, Esther Craig, Angelina Glasco, and Harriet E. Purnell. Branches of this society have continued to function in the Spencer churches since that time.

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Women in the U.A.M.E. Church

Most of the women in the original Union Church of Africans broke away under Ellis Saunders and Isaac Barney between 1851 and 1856 and became a part of the Union American Methodist Episcopal Church. Only a few remained in the parent body, which continued as the African Union Church until 1866. From the outset, the U.A.M.E. leaders, having roots in the Spencer tradition, agreed to continue the practice of accepting women as licensed preachers. The official position of the U.A.M.E. Church concerning this issue was stated in detail in the 1892 edition of its Book of Discipline:

All female members of the Union American M.E. Connexion (or any individual church) that are, or may be wrought upon to preach the word of God, may be dealt with according to the rules of our Book of Discipline; namely, application may be made to the Board of Stewards. The pastor in charge, with the Stewards, shall at a time specified, examine the applicant without prejudice or partiality. If in their judgment she be a proper person, a time shall be designated for a trial sermon before the membership and officials of said church. A two-thirds vote of the membership and officials present on the occasion of the trial sermon shall determine whether or not she shall be accorded the privilege of exercising her gifts and graces in the church of which she is a member; and elsewhere at such times as the pastor and officials may deem expedient, so long as her life and doctrine accord with the Christian profession.

According to the provisions of this Book of Discipline, women who became licensed preachers were subject to the same restrictions as men who served in that capacity. Each year they had to receive special recommendations from their pastors in charge in order to remain active. Furthermore, they could not hold any other form of license, could not be considered members of any quarterly conference, and could not be a part of the official board of the church. Such restrictions did not apply in the case of women who assumed pastoral charge of congregations.

By the turn of the century, a significant number of women, comparatively speaking, had become recognized preachers in the U.A.M.E. Church. Some became pastors of small congregations, while others served as assistants to male pastors. Still others assumed the roles of local preacher and evangelist, often speaking at various churches in the connection. In recent years women have become deacons and elders in the church in greater numbers than in the past. In 1974 the Rev. Mrs. L. Emma Cables was ordained a deacon by Bishop David E. Hackett. She had served admirably as a local preacher for three years. She had also studied at the Boulden Academy and Seminary, the U.A.M.E. School of Religion in Wilmington, Delaware. Some twenty or more other females in this

22Ibid.
small denomination have become deacons since the ordination of the Rev. Mrs. Cables. By 1975 there were four female elders in the U.A.M.E. Church. Presently, the church boasts of at least twenty active female ministers, constituting almost a third of the total number of ministers. The Rev. Mrs. Irene C. Dutton, who pastors the historic Mother U.A.M.E. Church in Wilmington, is by all odds one of the most capable leaders and dynamic speakers in her denomination. U.A.M.E. women have been quick to defend their roles as ministers. The Rev. Mrs. L. Emma Cables undoubtedly spoke for all women preachers in her church when she said:

I see no reason why anyone should consider it unusual for a woman to be a minister. Women do a great deal of important church work of many kinds; and being a minister and a preacher most certainly should be one of them.\(^{24}\)

U.A.M.E. women have been a major force behind the establishment of local congregations. "Aunt" Nancy Lewis, a Maryland ex-slave, was among the organizers of the Mt. Calvary U.A.M.E. Church in Aberdeen, Maryland in 1868. In 1889, Edith Jackson, Jane Jackson, Rachel Johnson, Margaret Vanduesen, and Mary H. Villodas helped organize the missionary society which became the Grace U.A.M.E. Church in Rome, New York. Several women took the lead in establishing the Pilgrim U.A.M.E. Church in Camden, New Jersey in 1895.\(^{25}\) During the latter 1890s, the Women's Home and Foreign Mite Missionary Society of the U.A.M.E. Church was formed to support church growth and development in America and abroad. Women like "Mother" Daisy M. Webster, who organized this society, became quite active in the attempt to save local churches that constantly faced the danger of dying out.\(^{26}\)

Such activities on the part of U.A.M.E. women continued in the twentieth century. At the turn of the century a Rev. Mrs. Dorsey organized the St. Mark U.A.M.E. Church in Glassboro, New Jersey. Emma Johnson and Mary Roberts were among the founders of the Mt. Zion U.A.M.E. Church in Albion, New Jersey in 1907. The founders of the St. Luke U.A.M.E. Church in 1933 included almost all women, among whom were "Mother" Anna B. Scott, Louise Bell, Florence Jackson, Rev. Mrs. Mary Neal, and Hannah Farmer. This church was established in Lawnside, New Jersey. In 1937 the Rev. Mrs. Mary R. Spencer, described as a woman "with a strong faith and determination," took the lead in forming the Mt. Olivet U.A.M.E. Church in Penns Grove, New Jersey. Bonita Johnson, Mattie Lawson, Martha Pierce, and several other women were among the organizers of the Mt. Carmel U.A.M.E. Church in Paulsboro, New Jersey in 1956. In 1960-61, Olivia P. Thomas, Brenda Thomas, and a number of other women took part in the establishment of

\(^{24}\)Ibid.


\(^{26}\)The Discipline of the Union American Methodist Episcopal Church, 1942, pp. 110-115.
the Peter Spencer U.A.M.E. Church in Utica, New York. In 1977 Dr. Mabel Harmon and Catherine Hackett joined the delegation which went to Jamaica to check on the development of U.A.M.E. foreign missions in that part of the world.\textsuperscript{27}

U.A.M.E. women have achieved great recognition for their work at the conference level. At the turn of the century female lay representatives at conferences were granted many of the same privileges as men.\textsuperscript{28} Previously, the Women’s Home and Foreign Mite Missionary Society and the Peter Spencer United Daughters of Conference had been formed to work in conjunction with the annual and general conferences. The Women’s Home and Foreign Mite Missionary Society adopted as its primary emphasis the raising of funds for the development of mission work in America and Canada. The Peter Spencer United Daughters of Conference had a different function, as evidenced by the following statement in its Laws and By-Laws:

The object shall be to cultivate a system of unity, a more zealous spirit, increase the finance of the Annual Conference, assist in the care and support of the Episcopal residences, aid the ministry, and be governed by the laws of this body subject to the Bishop of the Conference in which said body is organized.\textsuperscript{29}

In addition to such responsibilities, this group functioned as a benevolent society in that it frequently aided the needy, the sick, the widowed, the orphaned, and the handicapped. Its work on behalf of such causes was of such importance that it evoked high praise from George W. Bailey, the General Superintendent of the U.A.M.E. Church, in the Spring of 1876. Speaking before the delegates of the Delaware Conference, he noted that "much good has been accomplished by the society."\textsuperscript{30}

Presently, several female conference societies are active in the U.A.M.E. Church, among them the Women’s Home and Foreign Mite Missionary Society, the Peter Spencer United Daughters of Conference, and the Sisterhood. Since 1979 a considerable number of women have served on major conference committees, among them Delores J. Loper, Ruth E. Graham, Ruth Evans, Irene C. Dutton, Julia Nicholas, Mabel Grinage, and Estella Crawford. All of these women are ministers in their denomination. Most of them took a very active part in the most recent General Conference of the U.A.M.E. Church, which was held in Philadelphia in October, 1982. In the future, a number of rising young and

\textsuperscript{27}Our Heritage, pp. 27-28, 32, and 36-38; and Private Interview with Bishop David E. Hackett of the U.A.M.E. Church, Wilmington, Delaware, May 10, 1979.

\textsuperscript{28}The Discipline of the Union American Methodist Episcopal Church, 1942, pp. 124-125.

\textsuperscript{29}Etzell Predow, et. al., Compilers, The Laws and By-Laws of the Peter Spencer United Daughters of Conference and Mite Missionary Society of the Union American Methodist Episcopal Church (Wilmington: printed by request of the U.A.M.E. Church, 1968), p. 2.

\textsuperscript{30}The Discipline of the Union American Methodist Episcopal Church, 1942, pp. 108-110; and Every Evening (May 1, 1876), p. 3.
dynamic female ministers, such as Etta Robertson, will take their places among the leadership of the U.A.M.E. Church.

Women in the A.U.M.P. Church

In 1865-66, women such as “Mother” Ferreby Draper and “Mother” Lydia Hall were involved in the decision-making process which resulted in the merger between the African Union Church and the First Colored Methodist Protestant Church. The resulting body was the African Union First Methodist Protestant Church of the United States of America or Elsewhere, commonly known as the African Union Methodist Protestant Church. In the late nineteenth century, women in this church began to assume more active and visible roles in ministry. Martha Abrams applied for a license to preach at the quarterly conference in Wilmington in November, 1885, but there is no record to indicate that her wish was granted. Around the same time, a dynamic young woman named Lydia Archie was achieving recognition as one of the most impressive preachers in the A.U.M.P. Church. During the final two decades of the nineteenth century she was quite active at both the local church and the conference levels, receiving recognition in such reputable Wilmington newspapers as The Evening Journal. The Rev. Mrs. Archie later served for many years as the pastor of a local congregation in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. In 1920 Daniel J. Russell, Jr. referred to her as “the oldest ordained female preacher in the African Union M.P Church.” By this time she had also become the most widely known female preacher in the Spencer churches.

Throughout the twentieth century A.U.M.P. women made their presence felt as preachers and pastors. Clara Wright, a giant in stature, pastored the Friendship A.U.M.P. Church in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania for some thirty years before passing on early in 1950. Women who were active as conference evangelists around this same time included Mary R. Bishop, Elizabeth Clayton, Pearl King, Lucinda Morgan, and Minnie Wadsworth. In the early 1970s the Rev. Mrs. Ann B. Henderson achieved great success as a pastor. She pastored the St. Thomas A.U.M.P. Church of Glasgow, Delaware from 1965 to 1975. She is now the assistant pastor of the Mother A.U.M.P. Church in Wilmington, Delaware.

31Minutes of the Quarterly Conference of the African Union M.P. Church, Wilmington, Delaware, November 27, 1885, unpublished accounts stored at the Historical Society of Delaware, Wilmington, Delaware.
32The Evening Journal, Wilmington, Delaware (August 25, 1890), p. 3.
and is very active in conference activities. One of the highlights of the 1982 General Conference of the A.U.M.P. Church, held in Newark, Delaware in September, was the ordination of the Rev. Miss Dorothy Norwood as a deacon. She promises to be one of the most progressive-minded young leaders in the future development of her church. Today there are about eighteen female ministers in the A.U.M.P. denomination, constituting nearly half of the total number of active preachers.36

Aside from being involved in the ministry of their church, A.U.M.P. women assumed other roles such as participating in the organization of churches. Roxalina Baker and Susan Boggs were among the organizers of the St. Matthew A.U.M.P. Church in Philadelphia in 1877. Emily Lawrence, Jane Smith, and Phoebe Smith helped to form the black Methodist society which became the Wickham A.U.M.P. Church of Port Jervis, New York in 1898.37

36Telephone interview with Sara Gardner, September 22, 1982. Mrs. Gardner is a long-time member of the Mother A.U.M.P. Church and a historian in her own right.
In 1897 a small group of women from local A.U.M.P. congregations met at the home of Emma Skinner in Chester, Pennsylvania and organized the Women's Home Mite Missionary Society. This society operated in connection with the conferences to insure church growth and development in America and abroad. By 1910 it had become one of the most important conference auxiliaries, mainly because of contributions made earlier by women like Emma Skinner, Mary Hinson, Lena Richardson, and "Mother" Katie Hopkins. Throughout the early years of this century this society was confronted with the burdensome task of working with the General Conference in seeking ways of maintaining a declining denomination.

Other female societies formed in connection with the A.U.M.P. Conference in the first half of this century included the Preacher's Aid Society, the Christian Endeavor Society, the Benevolent Club, the President's Aid Society, and the Board of Stewardesses. The Christian Endeavor Society and the Benevolent Club were devoted to giving assistance to the needy, the sick, the widowed, the orphaned, and the handicapped. These societies are no longer active.

Presently, A.U.M.P. women who direct important female societies in the A.U.M.P. Conference include Dr. Eva Walters, President of the Grand Body of Ministers' Wives and Daughters Club; the Rev. Miss Alice Willis, President of the Junior Missionary Society; Gloria Ross, President of the Women's Home Mite Missionary Society; and Arnetta Watson, President of the Grand Body of the Daughters of Conference. All of these groups are active in both the local church and the conference levels.

Since the 1960s women have served the conference with distinction in a number of other capacities. Jimmie L. McClinton, Irene Taylor, Alice Whye, Gloria Wilson, and Corina Montgomery are among those who have been a part of the Board of Directors of the African Union School of Religion in Wilmington. In 1979 five women held positions on the Board of General Officers of the A.U.M.P. Conference, among them Mildred Demby, the Conference Statistician; the Rev. Mrs. Ann B. Henderson, Director of Church Extension; Corina Montgomery, President of the Sunday School Association; Ellen Holtz, Assistant Secretary of the Conference; and Eleanor Dailey, Acting Assistant Secretary of the Conference. All of these persons, with the exception of the Rev. Mrs.

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39 Minutes of the 93rd Session of the Annual Conference of the African Union First Colored M.P. Church, of the Middle District, Chester, Pennsylvania, May 15-20, 1907 (Wilmington: Hubert A. Roop, 1907), pp. 30-34; and Russell, History of the African Union Methodist Protestant Church, p. 23.
Henderson, are still holding these positions. Additionally, women are represented on almost all of the standing committees of the conference, including the Board of Conference Examiners and Ordination. The same holds true for the U.A.M.E. Church.41

The progress made by women in the histories of the A.U.M.P. and U.A.M.E. Churches is not to suggest that women have been accepted at all levels of the hierarchies of these churches. It will undoubtedly be a long time before these and other African Methodist churches follow the lead of the United Methodist Church in electing women to the episcopacy. There are still men and women in the Spencer churches who are more receptive to male preachers, and who would prefer to have a male pastor as their pastor. Most women in these churches are still filling traditional female roles as missionaries and Sunday School teachers. However, this should not obscure the fact that the A.U.M.P. and U.A.M.E. denominations are unique in that they extended the right to preach to black women more than a century ago.