

Shorter A.M.E. Church Laid the Cornerstone of a Sanctuary

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Biographical Note

Members of Shorter A.M.E., Denver's oldest black church, conducted a ceremony on Sunday, November 5, 1989, to lay the cornerstone of a sanctuary, which will host 1,000 worshippers. This new sanctuary will expand on the six and one-half acres, which already contains an education center, day-care center and senior citizens housing complex. The new sanctuary is expected to be the last construction on the property. This remaining construction was held to the end to show church members' commitment to the community.

"We're survivors," said Sheila Bowman, who was baptized in the Shorter AME Church 63 years ago, just one year after the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) torched the old church at 23rd and Washington Streets. A church historian said Shorter was organized in 1868 by two women, including a former slave. The first congregation worshipped in a log cabin at 19th and Holiday Streets. Church members soon built another church at 19th and Stout Streets, land currently occupied by the downtown Denver post office.

In 1889 a new Shorter was built at 23rd and Washington Streets. The KKK burned this site in 1925. Church members picked up again and rebuilt on the same site and remained there until 1981. Shorter then moved to Martin Luther King Boulevard and Richard Allen Court where it is located today.

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

The newspaper clipping is an article by *Rocky Mountain News* staff writer Gary Massaro about Shorter African Methodist Episcopal Church laying the cornerstone of a sanctuary to host 1,000 worshippers. A photograph accompanies the article of Billy J. Ganaway, grandmaster of the Masons of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge, conducting the ceremony. The date of the newspaper clipping is Monday, November 6, 1989.

File Folder

FF 1 November 6, 1989

Newspaper clipping: *Rocky Mountain News* article by Gary Massaro, "Church building on past" – page 6.