

# Guide to the Reference Collection of David DeWitt Turpeau 1947



Published for the African American Methodist Heritage Center By  
General Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church, Madison, New Jersey  
P.O. Box 127, Madison, NJ 07940  
2018-04-13



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1947

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aamc.ms.gcch5639

The purpose of this finding aid is to help you understand the nature of this collection and to assist you in the retrieval of material from this collection. The following pages contain a brief biographical history of the person, or persons, who created or collected these papers, followed by a general description of the collection in the scope and content note. If more detailed information is warranted then series descriptions also appear. The container listing appears last and is the listing of material in each box, or container, of this collection. To request material you need to turn to the container listing section. It is essentially a listing of file folders, or artifact items, in the collection. Each folder, or item, has a call number associated with it. Each folder also lists the inclusive dates of the material in the folder. On the material request form list both the call number and the folder, or item, title. Use a different line for each folder, or item, requested. When your request sheet is complete, or full, bring it to the archivist and the material will be retrieved.

### Biographical Note

David DeWitt Turpeau (1873-1947), An African American Methodist pastor and state representative, was born on November 8, 1873, in St. Martinville, Louisiana. David was the third child of Michel Turpeau and Isabelle Hill Turpeau. Primary and secondary schooling included St. Martinville elementary school, Gilbert Academy in Baldwin, Louisiana and Mt. Kisco High School in New York State. Turpeau graduated from Bennett College, Greensboro, North Carolina and continued his studies at Nyack Bible School in South Nyack, New York, before entering Drew Theological School in Madison, New Jersey.

While at Drew he was appointed to a Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) church in the Ossining, New York area. After graduation the Delaware Annual Conference bishop assigned Turpeau to a church in New Haven, Connecticut. He also enrolled at Yale University around the same time as his appointment. Later he served churches in Hudson, New York and Orange, New Jersey. After transferring to the Washington Annual Conference he became the pastor of the Rockville MEC and later in Baltimore at the Ames MEC. Later the bishop appointed him to the Mount Zion MEC and finally Turpeau became a district superintendent of the Washington District. Temperance was always a major part of his ministry. While serving in the Washington Annual Conference he would eventually become the superintendent of Maryland's Anti-Saloon League.

Later Turpeau would transfer to the Lexington Annual Conference where he pastored both the Warren MEC in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and the Calvary MEC in Cincinnati, Ohio. Eventually he would once more serve as a district superintendent. While pastoring in the Cincinnati area Turpeau became interested in politics as a form of an extension ministry. In 1938, voters in Hamilton County elected him to the Ohio General Assembly. Turpeau later retired from active ministry in 1942 to focus on his political career. He would serve in the Assembly until his death on February 13, 1947. That same year the Ohio General Assembly honored his service by presenting a lengthy resolution to the legislative body.

Turpeau married Ila Marshall on November 3, 1901. The union produced eight children including a daughter named Leontine who would eventually become the first African American woman elected bishop in both the United Methodist Church or any other Protestant denomination.

### Scope and Content Note

The papers contains one small book and a pamphlet authored by Turpeau. The book is an autobiography and the pamphlet discusses interdenominational cooperation.



## **Arrangement**

Material has been arranged in the following manner. The publications are arranged alphabetically in the folder.

## **Related Material**

### **Access Restrictions**

There are no restrictions regarding this collection.

### **Use Access**

Detailed use restrictions relating to our collections can be requested from the office of the archivist at the General Commission on Archives and History. Photocopying is handled by the staff and may be limited in certain instances. Before using any material for publication from this collection a formal request for permission to publish is expected and required.

### **Preferred Citation**

When citing material from this collection please use the following format: Direct reference to the item or its file folder, The Reference Collection of David DeWitt Turpeau, African American Methodist Heritage Center - GCAH, Madison, New Jersey. Do not make use of the item's call number as that is not a stable descriptor.

## **Index Terms**

### ***Subject Terms***

Autobiography--African American authors.  
Ecumenical movement

### ***Geographic Terms***

### ***Subject Names - Corporate Bodies***

Methodist Church (U.S.). Lexington Annual Conference  
Methodist Episcopal Church. Delaware Annual Conference  
Methodist Episcopal Church. Lexington Annual Conference  
Methodist Episcopal Church. Washington Annual Conference

### ***Genre Terms***

Autobiography--African American authors.  
Ecumenical movement

### ***Occupation Terms***

Minister  
State Legislator

## **Table of Contents**



## Container List

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
2413-6-1:4	Publications: Up from the Cane-Brakes and Ventures in Inter-Denominational Good Will and Cooperation	1947

