

## A.M.E. Church Memorial

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Atlanta {Georgia} {February} 1st 1866

To the {Honorable} Senate and House Representatives

We your humble Petitioners Freedmen of Atlanta Ga. and members of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, and a portion of the congregation lately worshiping with Said Church, Beg leave to represent to your honorable body, that during the late campaign of General Sherman through Georgia, our house of worship was torn down to the ground, and utterly demolished by a party of Federal Soldiers. It was without the least provocation on our part, as we ever [[demeaned?]] ourselves loyal, and never misused the Federal Soldiers, believing them our best friends.

Your petitioners would state that it was a large, commodious, and well finished edifice, that had been built by ourselves when in slavery, our contributions for building were raised, by very many hours of severe toil after our daily tasks were done for our Masters, And by denying ourselves many of the comforts of life. It was our crown and Joy. It was to us what the temple was to the Jews. When the dark days of war had passed, and we gathered again here from our wanderings, "our holy and beautiful house" was a mass of ruins, Havings no place but under the open canopy of Heaven to publicly worship the God of our fathers, we gathered courage from adversity and trusting in God, out of the broken fragments remaining of the building, fitted up the skeleton of a house for the present exigency, but wholly inadequate to the wants of the congregation. As almost all of us have been slaves all our lives, we are without pecuniary means to build another house of worship, most of us our struggling for dear life, dependent on the small proceeds of our daily labor to support our families, and aid the sick and inferior among us. We feel deeply thankful to the United States Government, who under God have given us the inestimable boon of Freedom.

We are fully conscious of the desire for our welfare, for our physical condition and moral elevation. Your petitioners are therefore the more bold and hopefull, considering that our church was destroyed by federal soldiers, without any provocations on our part, to petition your honorable body to make an appropriation of money to enable us to build another house of worship. Our church was valued at seven thousand dollars, we therefore ask the Government to assist us in rebuilding it. And we your servants will ever pray for your happiness and endless felicity.

Names of the Preachers  
[[235 signatures]]