

WAKE FOREST WEEKLY

October 7, 1866

ONE END STARTS A NEW BEGINNING

The end of the Confederacy signaled freedom for millions of southern black slaves and prompted the emancipation of the black church. This started the emergence of the black church as a separate institution.

A NEW HOME FOR BLACKS

The creation of autonomous black churches was a major achievement of the Reconstruction era. Black churches became virtually the only place for African-Americans to find refuge.



THE OLIVE BRANCH BAPTIST CHURCH

Since its early beginning, Olive Branch has held a unique position in the total welfare of the community. Because of its sanctuary many groups gathered at Olive Branch. The members of the church were very helpful to all the community churches that began later.

BEFORE THE CHURCHES

In many cases, the homes of worshipers where religious services were held were little more than crude dugouts... several of these makeshift religious bodies sometimes grew into large politically and socially active churches.

THE FIGHT FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Black and White preachers, for example, were often attacked for holding services for blacks

The Artist statement

This representation of a 1866 newspaper give you a feel of the time and what was happening then. The visuals and the statements given help any reader to understand the importance of religion and the church during reconstruction. One thing that the reader might not understand is that the picture in the middle is of the Olive Branch Baptist Church. This church is very historically important because it was the first church built after the Civil War. There is a misconception about these churches that most people overlook, but it is documented fact that these churches were not solely built and run by African Americans. In fact white people contributed to the production of the black church. Also not only did black preachers give sermons, but quite a few of them were given by white men. This go to show that in the eyes of religion we are all seen as equal. This newspaper visual was made to communicate to people that, even though most people didn't see African Americans as humans, and gave them little to no rights, they could still seek refuge. You could say that these churches were a safe haven for the people. Not only did they churches give a place for people to worship, but they also were very involved in their community and took part in any local events. With the end of the came lots of privileges for blacks, but it also came with many responsibilities and burdens. Many people looked to God for answers, and there was no better place to do this then in one of his holy churches