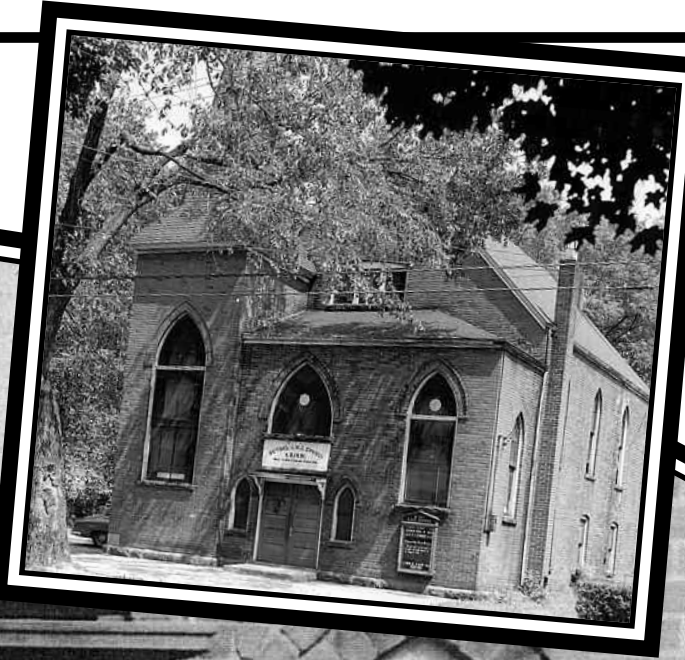


SUNDAY SCHOOL AT BETHEL A.M.E., CA. 1930

DUNBAR COMMUNITY CENTER, AT 420 NORTH FIFTH AVENUE FROM 1937 TO 1960, FLOURISHED UNDER THE CREATIVE LEADERSHIP OF DIRECTOR DOUGLAS WILLIAMS.



BETHEL A.M.E. CHURCH WAS AT 632 NORTH FOURTH AVENUE FROM 1895 TO 1971. IN THE LATE 1940S ROSEMARION ALEXANDER BLAKE (CIRCLED BELOW) BECAME CITY HALL'S FIRST FEMALE BLACK OFFICE WORKER.



SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH (LEFT) CELEBRATED HARVEST DAY IN THE 1940S IN THEIR ORIGINAL 1880S BUILDING ON THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF BEAKES STREET AND NORTH FIFTH AVENUE. THE CONGREGATION BUILT A NEW CHURCH ON THE SITE IN 1953.

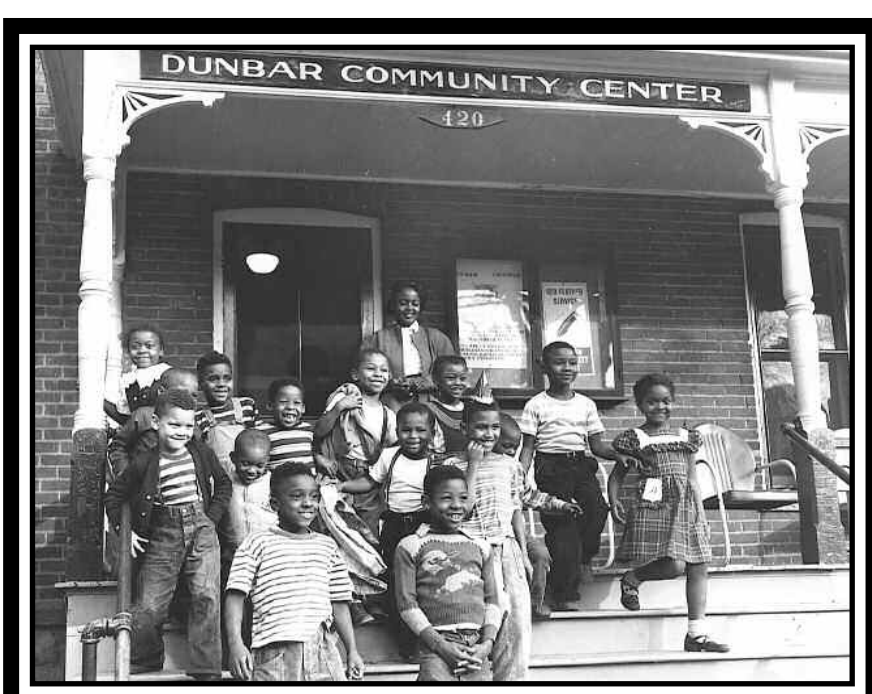


ANN ARBOR'S AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

African Americans established a close-knit community in this neighborhood near their churches and the Dunbar Center, a gathering place for all blacks. Bethel African Methodist Episcopal and Second Baptist churches evolved from the small 1853 Union Church nearby at 504 High Street. Nineteenth century blacks were carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, barbers, and draymen, as well as domestics and laborers. They helped build the railroad and the university. In 1890, George Jewett, son of a blacksmith, was UM's first black

football player. He later owned a dry-cleaning business on South State Street. Katherine Crawford, an 1898 UM Medical School graduate, opened a medical practice in her family's Fuller Street home.

The 1920s building boom created jobs; Ann Arbor's black population doubled to almost 600. Post World War II prosperity brought that number to 3,200 by 1960. Few, however, were employed in city offices, or on school or university faculties, or held elected positions. Segregated housing practices restricted most black families to this area.



DUNBAR CENTER WAS NAMED FOR BLACK POET PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR. ITS CONSTITUTION PROMOTED "CIVIC AND CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL INTEREST AND ACTIVITIES" AND DIRECTED "CHARACTER BUILDING AND COMMUNITY BETTERMENT PROGRAMS AMONG THE COLORED CITIZENS OF ANN ARBOR AND ITS SUBURBS." IT PROVIDED A DROP-IN CENTER FOR KIDS, LIKE THOSE SHOWN (LEFT) WITH ASSISTANT DIRECTOR VIRGINIA ELLIS AROUND 1940. SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS INCLUDED TEAS AND DANCES (RIGHT), AND CLASSES IN READING, COOKING, MUSIC, AND ARTS AND CRAFTS.

IN THE LATE 1950S DUNBAR'S BYLAWS WERE AMENDED TO INCLUDE ALL CITIZENS AND THE NAME WAS CHANGED TO THE ANN ARBOR COMMUNITY CENTER. IT MOVED TO A NEW BUILDING ON NORTH MAIN STREET IN 1960.



SPONSORED BY ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA AND DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITIES; ALPHA PHI ALPHA, KAPPA ALPHA PSI, AND OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITIES; BETHEL AME CHURCH AND SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROSEMARION BLAKE, THE ANN ARBOR COMMUNITY CENTER, AND THE BENTLEY HISTORICAL LIBRARY