



## JONES MEMORIAL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

Tradition holds that one Sunday, a black man stood up at the back of a white church and talked about the need for the black people of Greeneville to have a church of their own. He then walked out and was followed by others who believed the same. It was this group of pioneers that founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church, or the "freedom" church.

On September 18, 1867, former United States President, Andrew Johnson, granted an acre of his land to the following trustees: Samuel Johnson, William Jackson, Lewis Ballard, Samuel Greer, Madison Jones, Thomas Clem and George Clem. The purpose of the land grant was to establish a church and a schoolhouse to benefit the colored people of Greeneville and its vicinity.

Jones Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church was organized by the Reverend Jones in about 1870. The first Church structure was a frame building located between Main and Irish Streets. In 1949, the Church moved to its present location on the corner of Wesley and Clem Streets. It was later enlarged to its current size. The Church sits adjacent to Wesley Cemetery.

One of the more influential ministers of the Church was Reverend L. W. Howard who came to Greeneville in 1937. He also taught school in the Greene County School System, and became the scoutmaster of the first African American Boy Scout Troop in Greeneville.