

# THINK Pleasant Square

## Honoring the legacy of the church elders

The important connection of Bethel AME Church to properties on N. Cherry Street include our memories of Wilbur Singleton, Richard Singleton, and Mrs. Birdie Smith, who were lifelong active members of Bethel AME Church. It is our understanding that others, including the Offord family and other long-time friends of Bethel AME Church, also occupied some of this property. Even the corner lot, not currently owned by the city, is owned by a family with cross-generational ties to Bethel AME Church.



Wilbur and Louise Singleton owned property at 321 N. Cherry Street and raised their family of 6 children there. The house was always filled with wonderful aromas from the kitchen where Louise, a self-taught master chef, prepared meals. They entertained a huge extended family of grandchildren almost every weekend. Holidays were extra special. Wilbur worked at Armco, French Bauer Dairy, the old Charles Meis Shoe Factory, GHR Foundry in Dayton, and at the Lebanon Museum.



Richard Singleton along with his wife Cora raised their family just three houses away from his Uncle Wilbur at 313 N. Cherry Street. He was a faithful member of Bethel AME Church. The Annual Fish Fry was his fundraiser for the church and he, family and friends would catch all the fish served. The ladies of the church would prepare the side dishes. Richard worked for the US Postal Service in Lebanon as a Postman and he was heavily involved in the Youth Sports Programs in Lebanon.



Miss Birdie Mae Smith lived at 319 N. Cherry Street and was a devoted member of Bethel AME Church. The Smith family lived at 315 N. Cherry Street and were also members of Bethel AME Church. The Singleton Family can trace their membership at Bethel A.M.E. Church back to when the church was first founded. Three generations of Singleton descendants are currently active members at Bethel and are highly involved in the Lebanon community.