The Saint James African Methodist Episcopal Church was first constructed by the original twenty-seven families that created the Black community of Freedman Town in Denton County. The church was built in order to have a central location for worship services rather than switching between different homes. According to L.T. Lambert, Henry and Charlotte Maddox were the community members who led their community to start cutting timber to build the church’s foundation. In the 1890s the church made the move from its original location to Quakertown on Oakland Avenue. Although it would go under several reconstructions in the next thirty years, the church would remain in its original location and stand as a pillar for the Quakertown community.

The importance of this church can be seen in the many testimonies from Quakertown residents and their descendants. People described being called by the ringing church bell on Sundays and the promise of seeing friends and family while also listening to the multiple services throughout the day. The church also provided shade for picnics, Easter egg hunts, and children’s activities. St. James’ importance to the community was further proven in 1913 when the Fred Douglass School burned down. Classes continued in the church’s basement until the new school’s completion in 1916. When there was a resurgence of interest in Quakertown in the 1980s, the St. James Church was one of the first Quakertown buildings to have its application for a historical marker granted in 1984. The church, now located on East Oak Street after 1922, held a special service to celebrate the dedication of the marker on June 2, 1985. St. James Church still stands as a pillar of the Black community in Denton as it did back in the nineteenth century. For over a century it has stood as an institution to bring together people for worship and a sense of community.