

FINAL

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Indiana
COUNTY: Wayne
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Bethel A.M.E. Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Bethel A.M.E. Church

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
200 South 6th Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Richmond

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Tenth

STATE: Indiana CODE: 18 COUNTY: Wayne CODE: 177

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Board of Trustees of Bethel A.M.E. Church

STREET AND NUMBER:
200 South 6th Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Richmond

STATE:
Indiana

CODE:
18

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Recorder's Office, Wayne County, Indiana

STREET AND NUMBER:
Court House, 4th & Main Streets

CITY OR TOWN:
Richmond

STATE:
Indiana

CODE:
18

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Indiana Register of Historic Landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: 1969-74 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Indiana Department of Natural Resources

STREET AND NUMBER:
202 N. Alabama Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Indianapolis

STATE:
Indiana

CODE:
18

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Indiana

COUNTY: Wayne

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

I. Exterior. Bethel A.M.E. Church is a one story cruciform plan bearing wall brick church having a cross-gabled roof. A 2½ story bell tower with pyramidal roof is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of the arms and shaft of the cross. It is the entry to the church as reconstructed in 1892-94. The arms and east end of the shaft of the cross have triple arched Palladian type windows with round-headed arches filled with stained glass. These were added in the 1892 remodeling. The original church as built in 1894 faced east with its principal entry on 6th Street. It was a simple Greek Revival structure. In 1892 the east entry was replaced by a tripe arched stained glass window. The existing voids on the north and south sides were filled with stained glass and the west window of the church was removed and replaced by huge doors opening into the 1892 addition. The bell tower fenestration consists of 4 round arched single paned windows at the second level and 8 round arched windows on the third level below the pyramid. These voids were originally not filled with glass. The 1892 addition, which makes the arms of the cross, is of Romanesque flavor. It has buttresses at each end, and a Romanesque main cornice, which was carried across the 1854 church. The present church is largely Romanesque in appearance.

II. Interior.

A. 1854 Church. The interior of the 1854 church is simple, plain and in keeping with its origin as a Methodist Meeting House. Simple architraves with corner blocks surround each door and all windows. All interior fittings such as pews and pulpit have been removed. The triple windows formerly over the altar and pulpit have been replaced by double leaf doors made to match the interior trim, opening into the 1892 church. The floor is overlaid with linoleum, underneath the linoleum is the original ash floor.

B. 1892 Church. The 1892 addition is approximately cubical. It maes the arms of the cross. The interior roof is supported by groin"vaulting"manufactured from wood trusses, exposed to view. The vaults meet over the center of the cube some 25 feet above the floor. The seating plan is of the auditorium type, the floor slopes from east to west toward the altar and pulpit. The altar and choir are in a nave-like niche in the west wall. The pews seem to be original, although the altar and pulpit are 20th century replacements. Interior standing trim consists of roll-moulded Romanesque architraves on all exterior doors and windows; supported by a flat back band. The 1892 addition's floor is carpeted, underneath the floor is of narrow white oak.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) First church 1845, additions 1892-94			
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			
<p>I. <u>Architectural Significance</u>. Bethel A.M.E. Church represents a social, religious and cultural center indigenous to free black communities in the midwest. Its architectural style in its present form is a mixture of Romanesque and Neo-classical elements, common to the late 19th century. It is a simple late 19th century structure. It is, however, an important example of Negro church architecture of the 19th century. By the end of the 19th century, Black Americans were sufficiently affluent to erect handsome permanent church buildings, which served as educational, social, political and cultural centers for the Black community. Bethel A.M.E. Church is an important survival from this period. It is important as a symbol of Black status in the late 19th century, and as representative of the type of Black church architecture of the period.</p> <p>II. <u>Historical Significance</u>. Bethel A.M.E. Church was organized by William Paul Quinn in 1836. Quinn established a training class in Richmond lead by Cornelius Overman. George Black was appointed scribe. Black's records form the history of the church for its first 25 years. In May, 1837, Gardner Mendenhall donated a lot for the purpose of erecting an African Methodist meeting house on South Marion(now 6th)Street. A 2 story frame warehouse was moved to the site and redone into a church and school. A freedom school for blacks was conducted on the second floor, the first floor being used for religious purposes. Rev. William Paul Quinn dedicated the church in October, 1837. At this time, Richmond had a substantial community of free blacks. Rev. Quinn the son of a Spanish-Honduran-Irish father and a Sudanese mother, had emigrated to the United States in 1800. He was an early Methodist Exhorter. After a short period of alliance with dissident Quaker Elias Hicks, Quinn was ordained a minister in the Afro Methodist Church and sent to the Midwest to establish Afro Methodist Churches and educational centers. One of his principal tasks was to provide for educational and social facilities for free blacks. Blacks were not permitted to attend schools in the Midwest at that time. In 1839, Quinn decided to make Richmond his base of operations, since it had one of the</p>			

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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(Number all entries)

Item(8) Continued

strongest free black communities in the Midwest. Quinn was made a Bishop of the Afro Methodist Church in 1844. He initiated a string of Afro Methodist Churches about one days' wagon ride apart from Louisville, Ky. to Detroit, from St. Louis Mo. to Chicago. These churches, in addition to their other functions, were shelters for fugitive slaves during the 1840's and 50's. In 1847, Rev. Robert Jones became the first resident pastor of Bethel A.M.E. Church. During the years prior to the Civil War, the frame church on South 6th Street was a "freedom school" and a major place of refuge for fugitive slaves in Richmond.

In 1854 a German Methodist Congregation built a 1 story brick Greek Revival Church at the southwest corner of Market(South "A") and Marion(South 6th) Streets. The German Methodist congregation did not survive the Civil War. It merged with the English Methodists and the building was sold to the Hicksite Friends. In 1868, the Hicksite Friends completed their large new meeting house on Broadway(North "A"). Since William Paul Quinn had a strong attachment to the Hicksites, he acquired the old church on Marion St. for the Bethel Congregation. Quinn dedicated the new church in 1868.

In 1873-75, James M. Townsend, a native of Massachusetts and a veteran of the 54th Massachusetts Colored Regiment during the Civil War took the pulpit of Bethel Church. Townsend was a political activist. After his short tour as minister, he entered public life. He was elected to the Indiana General Assembly in 1885, as Indiana's first Black legislator. In 1889, President Benjamin Harrison appointed Townsend Registrar of the General Land Office. Upon his resignation in 1891, he reassumed the pulpit of Bethel Church. Townsend raised the funds for the construction of the 1892 addition to the Church. He left for a higher position in Chicago in 1894. Townsend retired to Richmond after the turn of the century. He died in Richmond in 1913. James M. Townsend was a colorful, effective Black political, social and religious leader.

The twentieth century history of Bethel A.M.E. Church has been relatively placid. A succession of highly qualified ministers have conducted the church's programs for its congregation. Its former educational position was obsoleted by universal free public education for blacks. Bethel A.M.E. Church was, in the 19th century, much more than a religious institution. It was the social, political and cultural heart of the Richmond free black community. This community was in great part led by its ministers, who were effective political, social and cultural leaders in the black and in the larger white community.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

A.Harris, A Historical and Pictorial Survey of Bethel A.M.E. Church(1974); E.L. Thornborough, The Negro in Indiana History (1965); D.L. Payne, A History of the Afro Methodist Church(1893); H.C. Fox, ed, Memoirs of Wayne County(1912)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		39° 49' 32" N	84° 53' 40" W	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 0.15

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Indiana	18	Wayne	177
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Thomas J. Reed, Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Old Richmond, Inc. DATE: Oct. 31, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
34 S. 9th St.

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond STATE: Indiana CODE: 18

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST: _____
Keeper of The National Register

Date _____