



## Indiana Historical Bureau

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# News

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### **“Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church” Indiana State Historical Marker Will Be Dedicated in Indianapolis**

A public dedication ceremony for an Indiana state historical marker is scheduled for Saturday, June 20, 2009. The state historical marker that commemorates Bethel A.M.E. Church’s place in Indiana history will be dedicated at 414 West Vermont Street, Indianapolis. The ceremony will begin at 10:00 A.M. Eastern Daylight Savings Time.

The text follows for the state marker entitled “Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church”:

A.M.E. Church traces its origins to founding of Free African Society in Philadelphia, 1787. Circa 1836, Augustus Turner, a barber, and other black settlers organized this Indianapolis congregation to worship freely and support their community. Trustees bought land 1840 on Georgia Street for first church. Church held black state conventions, aided fugitive slaves, established a school, and recruited for U.S. Colored Troops during the Civil War. Arson destroyed Georgia Street church in 1864. Land purchased here in 1865. Church completed in 1870; listed in National Register of Historic Places, 1991.

The public is invited to attend the dedication ceremony for this state historical marker that commemorates Bethel’s important role as a pioneering leader of Indiana’s African-American population in the 1800s. The congregation, which is celebrating its 172<sup>nd</sup> year of existence, will conduct a tour of the historic church building and host a reception following the ceremony.

State historical markers commemorate significant individuals, organizations, places, and events in Indiana history. These markers help communities throughout the state promote, preserve, and present their history for the education and enjoyment of residents and tourists of all ages. For more than 90 years the Indiana Historical Bureau, an agency of the State of Indiana, has been marking Indiana history. Since 1947, the marker format has been the large roadside marker, which has the familiar dark blue background with gold lettering and the outline of the state of Indiana at the top. There are approximately 500 of these markers across the state.

For more information about this marker, the state Historical Marker Program, and other resources about Indiana, visit the Indiana Historical Bureau’s website at [www.IN.gov/history](http://www.IN.gov/history) or call 317-232-2537.

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