

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED **AUG 14 1975**
DATE ENTERED **SEP 5 1975**

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 224 Crawford Street

(N.W. corner S. 3rd St. on U.S. Hwy. 41 & Crawford St.) NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Terre Haute

___ VICINITY OF

7th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Indiana

18

Vigo

167

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Civic

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Trustees of Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church

STREET & NUMBER

224 Crawford Street

CITY, TOWN

Terre Haute

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Indiana

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Vigo County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Third and Wabash Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Terre Haute

STATE

Indiana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE General survey undertaken by Sheldon Swope Art Gallery in its study of
local architectural structures

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Sheldon Swope Art Gallery

CITY, TOWN

Terre Haute

STATE

Indiana

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Allen Chapel, the oldest Black Church in western Indiana, was first housed in a simple wood structure two blocks away from the present building. In 1870 the congregation moved into a handsome brick structure styled in the Lombard Italiniate manner. At the present location, severe damage caused by a tornado and fire in 1913, the building was rebuilt on the present foundation resulting in the present yellow brick structure with stone courses, designed by local architect, J.W. Hensen.

The most outstanding feature of the building is a tower on the south-east corner. It stands on a heavy stone base and is capped with a low pyramidal broach tower. On each face of the upper register are four closely grouped, round headed slit windows. The double doored pedimented entry is at the base of the tower. This tower houses the original Vigo County courthouse bell, which is said to have been loaned to the Chapel by Judge William D. Mack. Another short tower is located on the south-west corner. Two Gothic, stained glass windows with wooden tracery on the south side and one on the east, accent the simple facade. There are also several small rectangular stained glass windows.

The unpretentious interior contains a small apse and alter on the north wall and a balcony encasing the other three walls. Metal sheeting decorated with impressed classical motifs is applied to the ceiling. A 1905, Herney pipe organ in the chapel, is the only tracker action organ remaining in Terre Haute.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Afro American History
	<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

1837, 1870, 1913

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

J.W. Hensen

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1837, Rev. William Paul Quinn founded the Allen Chapel, the oldest black church in western Indiana, which was destined to become a focal point for the black community in Vigo County. Allen Chapel is an affiliate of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the oldest black church organization which was started in 1789 by Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, two self-educated blacks who had purchased their freedom before the legal end of slavery in Pennsylvania.

Members of Allen Chapel have, through the years, continued this spirit of determination so a great deal of historical interest stems from significant black figures who were associated with the Chapel. Rev. Hiram Revels, a former Allen Chapel pastor, organized and instructed the first school for blacks in the county. Classes were held in the Chapel for a weekly fee of 25¢ per pupil. Revels was later to become the first black elected to the United States Senate, replacing Jefferson Davis as senator from Mississippi. The Chapel also sponsored prominent blacks, such as the dynamic abolitionist, Fredrick Douglass, as speakers.

The Chapel has gained admiration as a refuge for the oppressed and as a place where blacks newly arrived in Terre Haute from North Carolina could find shelter. An underground railroad station was located in the first Allen Chapel. The ecclesiastical organization also provided an educational refuge, besides Revel's school. Allen Chapel also housed the first public school for blacks in Terre Haute.

For nearly 150 years, Allen Chapel has been regarded with pride as the oldest black organization in western Indiana and continues to be a focal point for black culture in the area. Much of its significance comes from its role as a symbol of black unity and contribution in the community. The Jethro Bass family, for example, one of the founders of the church, still has a member as the pianist.

Thus, the Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church is important as an architectural expression in the black community and for its associations with black history in Terre Haute.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Church minutes of various parish organizations and other church papers.
 Gradsby, H.C., History of Vigo Co., Indiana with Biographical Selections, S.B. Nelson & Company, Chicago, 1891
 Johnson, Edward A. (Ed.), School History of the Negro Race in America, (2 vols.), A.M.S. Press, Inc., New York, 1911
 Handy, James A., African Methodist Episcopal History International Library of Negro Life & History (10 vols), Assoc. for the Study of Negro Life and History, United Publishing Corp., Philadelphia, 1970

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	16	4614	31610	43	67	67	10	B						
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			
C								D						

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Audrey Acton Graham (member & Sunday School Teacher)

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church

7/23/75

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Route 1

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Merom

Indiana

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

[Handwritten Signature]

TITLE

Indiana Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

August 6, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

[Handwritten Signature]

DATE

9/5/75

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

[Handwritten Signature]

DATE

9-2-75

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

[Handwritten Signature]