NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

4-1-04

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name **Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church**

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number **902 Broadway** ______Not for publication

city or town **Lincoln** _____vicinity

state **Illinois** code **IL** county **Logan** code **107** zip code **62656**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide X locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[signature] /SHPO — 3/24/04
Signature of certifying official — Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau — American Indian Tribe

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

____ entered in the National Register ______________________ __________
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined eligible for the National Register ______________________ __________
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined not eligible for the National Register ______________________ __________

____ removed from the National Register ______________________ __________

____ other (explain): ______________________ __________

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)
_x_ private
___ public-local
___ public-State
___ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)
_x_ building(s)
___ district
___ site
___ structure
___ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
RELIGION: religious facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
RELIGION: religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
OTHER: gable front

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation **BRICK**

Roof **ASPHALT SHINGLES**

Walls **BRICK**

other **WOOD; LIMESTONE**

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

__x_ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

____ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

____ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

____ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

__x_ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

____ B removed from its original location.

____ C a birthplace or a grave.

____ D a cemetery.

____ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

____ F a commemorative property.

____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)
ETHNIC HISTORY: Black
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance **1880 - 1954**

Significant Dates **1880**

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation **N/A**

Architect/Builder **Unknown**

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)
___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
___ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # __________
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # __________

Primary Location of Additional Data
___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
_x_ Other

Name of repository
Lincoln Library, Springfield IL; Lincoln Public Library, Lincoln, IL

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property **less than 1 acre**

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	**16**	**299030**	**4446495**	3	__	______	______
2	__	______	______	4	__	______	______

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title **Reverend Peggie D. Senor, Pastor**

organization **Allen Chapel AME Church** date **2/10/04**

street & number **1420 S. 16th Street** telephone **217/732-7537**

city or town **Springfield** state **IL** zip code **62703**

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:
Continuation Sheets

Maps
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs
Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name **AME Connectional Church, under guardianship of Allen Chapel AME Church**

street & number **902 Broadway** telephone **217/732-7537**

city or town **Lincoln** state **IL** zip code **62656**

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.0. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

DESCRIPTION

The Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, located in Lincoln, Illinois, faces South on Broadway and is located at the corner of Broadway and Sherman. Allen Chapel is two city blocks from the Logan County courthouse. The church is located in a primarily residential area just outside of Lincoln's National Register Historic District.

Allen Chapel is a one-story, brick, rectangular, gable-front building with a brick foundation. The low to moderately pitched roof is clad with asphalt shingles and has wood soffits and fascia. All of the windows openings are original and have pointed arches. The original sashes were replaced with aluminum windows in the 1960s or 1970s, but the wood window frames are intact. The front façade or South elevation has a central entrance flanked on each side by a window. Three concrete steps with a cast iron rail, which are later replacements, lead to the entrance. Adjacent to the steps is a concrete ramp with a metal railing, which provides handicapped access to the church. The original Gothic-arched door opening remains intact; the doors have been replaced with more secure metal doors. The multi-light stained glass in the transom above the door was replaced with a wood transom with two lights; the glass in the transom lights is coated to resemble stained glass. The transoms in all the windows are covered with painted plywood. The windows all have limestone sills. A brick water table is present on the front elevation only. The cornerstone is on the Southeast side and reads: Allen Chapel AME Church 1868. (The date denotes the founding of the church, not its construction.)

The west elevation has four windows and a chimney with a limestone cap, which is located on the roof slope in the center of the building. This elevation is visible from the street and the handicapped ramp is accessed from this side. The north elevation is without any detail. The lower portion of the wall (approximately 4 feet in height) is covered with parging. Due to the proximity of the building to the east of the church, only a small portion of the east elevation is visible from the street. It is similar to the west elevation except the window opening on the northeast corner (toward the rear of the church) is now a door and a small concrete ramp has been added to allow handicapped access.

The interior of Allen Chapel has experienced little alterations. The floor plan is the same, open rectangular space. The plaster walls, the wood trim windows and the wainscot that runs the perimeter of the room are still intact. The original wood paneled ceilings and the Gothic arched

window openings are intact underneath the acoustic dropped tile ceiling. There are two aisles which lead to the altar, one on each side of the front entrance. Two small areas on either side of the entrance are partially enclosed by partition walls which hide a computer/educational area, a small bathroom, and a copier and work space for the preparation of Holy Communion. A small bathroom is located behind the partitioned walls in the southeast corner. The partitioned walls are easily removable, are approximately six feet high, and have plexi-glass in the upper halves, so the view of the entrance is not obstructed. The north end of the room, where the altar is, is separated for the rest of the church by a balustrade, which is original to the church. This area is slightly elevated. The original wooden floor is beneath the carpeted aisles and altar, and parquet floor. The original pews were freestanding; ninety percent of the pews were replaced with new cushioned pews.

Integrity

Allen Chapel AME Church retains sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register. It has remained largely unaltered since 1880 when it was built. The church was never an elaborate building, and its most striking details, the Gothic arches, are still intact, save the one opening on the northeast corner, which is not visible from the street. The original windows are gone, but the new windows have not detracted from the integrity of the church. The building has not had any additions over its 124 years of existence. The interior space is intact and the majority of the interior changes are reversible. The original ceiling is beneath the acoustic tiles and the partitioned areas are not permanent, small, do not extend to the height of the ceiling, are completely removable, and are partially see-through. Given the constraints of the one-room floor plan, the small bathroom is located in probably the most inconspicuous place.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Allen Chapel African Methodist Church is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its local significance as a community center for African Americans in Lincoln, Illinois. The chapel also meets Criterion Consideration A for religious properties that derive their significance from their historic association. Prior to the Civil Rights movement in America, Black churches provided their congregations with more than a place to worship. Rather these institutions were places where the Black community could hold political meetings, provide their children with education, and support each other during a time when racial segregation was the norm. Allen Chapel represents the broad patterns and trends associated with the African American community in the United States. Its period of significance is from 1880, the year the church was built, until 1954, the fifty-year cutoff for significance to the National Register.

Black Churches in America have served as sanctuaries for African Americans since they were first established. Before the end of slavery in 1865, Black churches in free states offered assistance to runaway slaves. After the Civil War, the importance of African American churches within the Black community only increased, for while slavery was abolished, prejudice was prevalent. They assisted rural Southern Blacks during the Great Migration and helped launch the Civil Rights Movement. Their importance within the African American community is undeniable. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya explored their significance in *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, as quoted in *Powerful Artifacts: A Guide to Surveying and Documenting Rural African-American Churches*:

> The Black Church has no challengers as the cultural womb of the Black community. Not only did it give birth to new institutions such as schools, banks, insurance companies, and low income housing, it also provided an academy and an arena for political activities, and it nurtured young talent for musical, dramatic, and artistic development. E. Franklin Frazier's apt descriptive phase. "Nation within a nation" pointed to these multifarious levels of community involvement found in the Black Church, in addition to the traditional concerns of worship, moral nurture, education and social control. Much of Black culture is heavily indebted to the Black religious tradition, including most forms of Black music,

> drama literature, storytelling and even humor. (Center for Historic Preservation, 2000: p.5)

Since their establishment Black churches, in many places, were the only organizations where African Americans assembled and worked together to support each other. "For over 100 hundred years, scholars of African-American culture, history, and religion---- along with writers and commentators over the decades in between--- have consistently pointed to the church as the single most significant institution in African-American life from the late antebellum era to the modern times." (Center for Historic Preservation, 2000: p.5) By looking at the history of Black churches, it is apparent how their establishment and their continued service have played a crucial role in the African American community.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
*(The majority of this passage was taken from **Powerful Artifacts: A Guide to Surveying and Documenting Rural African-American Churches**.)*

Prior to the Civil War, many American churches were divided over slavery. Opinions over the moral issue of slavery created schisms between north and South denominations and led to the creation of churches that were established by and for African Americans. The role of these Black churches was to provide opportunities for the betterment of the Black community. The African Methodist Episcopal Church is one such church that was formed with the intent to support the abolition of slavery in the United States. The AME Church is a United States Methodist Church, not affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church governmentally, that was formally organized in 1816. It was developed from a congregation formed by a group of Philadelphia- area Blacks and former slaves who withdrew in 1787 form St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia because of discrimination. This was where Pastor Richard Allen, the AME Church's founder, took a stand for the slaves and former slaves of the St. George's congregation.

Richard Allen was born on February 14, 1760, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a slave to a Quaker lawyer, the Honorable Benjamin Chew, Chief Justice of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania from 1774-1777. Richard Allen, his parents and three other children were sold to a Mr. Stokeley in Delaware, near Dover. Allen recorded that Stokeley was a very tender humane man who was more like a father to his slaves than a master. As Richard and his brother grew older, they were permitted to attend meetings of the Methodist Society. In 1777, at the age of 17, Allen was

converted by the preaching of freeborn Garrettson and joined the Methodist Society. He later bought his freedom for two thousand dollars in Continental money. He commenced traveling in 1783 and later returned to Philadelphia and joined the White congregation at St. George Methodist Episcopal Church.

He was licensed to preach in 1784 and was permitted to hold services in the morning at about 5:00 a.m. As the attendance of colored people at St. George's increased, the hostile attitudes of the officers and members also increased and on a Sabbath morning in 1787, the sexton met them at the door of the church and sent them to the gallery. On another morning during prayer at St. George Allen heard considerable scuffling and low talking. As he raised his head, he saw the trustees pulling members Absalom Jones and William White off their knees telling them that they could not kneel before the altar. When they finished prayers, the Black members, led by Richard Allen and Absalom Jones withdrew from St. George's church.

In 1794 Richard Allen, and his followers assembled in his Philadelphia home and organized the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church. The church struggled for its independence until 1816 when the supreme court of Pennsylvania declared Bethel to be an independent church. Allen saw his chance to propagate his ideas about Methodism and decided he needed an organized discipline located around the country. Sixteen delegates from Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey assembled in Philadelphia on April 9, 1816. They resolved to unify as a new church called the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, which was controlled by African Americans and dedicated to improving their condition.

Richard Allen, Absalom Jones William Gray, and William Wilcher were appointed to find a parcel of land to build a church where the worship of God could be carried out without interference. They chose a lot on Sixth Street near Lombard, in Philadelphia, and Richard Allen was authorized to negotiate for its purchase. The lot belonged to Mark Wilcox. This lot was bought in 1787 and is the oldest parcel of real estate owned continuously by African Americans. All churches named Mother Bethel have been erected on the same ground. A frame building formerly used as a Blacksmith shop was purchased and hauled to the lot at Sixth Street. Carpenters repaired it and fitted it for a place to worship. Bishop Francis Asbury, who was one of the most influential White Methodists in the United States, preached the first sermon and dedicated the building as the first church in July 1794. Reverend John Dickins, pastor of St. George's, sang and prayed the house be called "Bethel" for the gathering in of thousands of souls. The frame building was used for eleven years, until 1805 when another church was

erected; the latter was used for 36 years until 1841. The Convention of Independent African Churches was held in this building in April 1816 and the African Methodist Church was organized.

The Church that Allen and his associates organized adopted the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church (ME) with only a few minor changes. The pro-slavery provisions in the Methodist Discipline were stricken. On April 9, 1816 the congregation elected the Reverend Daniel B. Coker as their first bishop. However he resigned the next day, opening the door for Richard Allen to be elected two days later. From these beginnings the AME church spread throughout the North and Midwest and by 1856 the church numbered some 20,000 souls. Allen and the AME Church both desired to improve relations between Blacks and Whites and to instill a sense of civic pride in Blacks and immediately offered support and services to the community. This tradition of public service reached the South when AME missionaries embarked from the Northern states took their message to their Southern brethren.

Prior to the Civil War, slave owners, who feared that it would serve as a catalyst for slave revolts, banned the AME church from any areas in the South. But when the Union forces occupied areas of coastal South Carolina in 1863, AME missionaries James D. Lynch and James D. Hall were sent from Baltimore to Charleston to establish mission churches. Their arrival marked the beginnings of permanent AME mission churches in the South. By 1866 missionaries and local residents had established AME churches in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee.

The AME missionaries condemned the institution of slavery and excluded all slave owners as members. They also tried to set moral examples of dignity, education and neat physical appearance for the Southern African Americans in hopes of alleviating some of the prejudices against color. The AME ministers did not approve of emotional outbursts at its services and instructed the members to approach the altar decorously. Some of the most prominent Black men in the South joined the church during the nineteenth century. These included Martin R. Delaney, doctor, explorer, and Black nationalist; Henry M. Turner, bishop of the AME church, Georgia politician and African emigrations; James Lynch, clergyman and Mississippi politician; and Hiram Revels, clergyman and senator from Mississippi.

After the Civil War the AME Church turned its attention to Reconstruction politics and pushed for civil and political equality for Black people. The Reconstruction Act of 1867 provided

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African Americans with the opportunity to participate in Southern politics. Taking advantage of the situations, a heterogeneous group of twenty-three AME Church missionaries became politicians who held office. Only three were Northern, the rest came from the South and border states. Thus, from it very origins in the crucible of slavery, the AME church established a reputation for community and political activism.

In the late nineteenth century, the AME church made quick headway among the million of newly freed people of color in the South. Before the Civil War the Methodist Episcopal Church counted over two hundred thousand African America members. After they were legally freed, most of those Blacks shifted it religious affiliation to the AME Church. By 1886 only 78,742 Black members out of 207,766 remained associated with the Southern White M.E. Church. Four years later, in 1870, most of the African Americans who still remained in the White Methodist Episcopal Church, South, left to establish the Colored Methodist Episcopal (CME) church. Many Black Methodists in the South believed that AME church provided them with the greater opportunity to exercise their talents and education, and to express their identity and dignity. By 1868, AME churches were founded in every Southern state and by 1896 there were over 450,000 members.

AFRICAN AMERICAN CHURCHES IN THE MIDWEST AND CHICAGO

The establishment of African American churches in the Midwest took place after 1787 when Congress designated the Northwest Territory, which was to be antislavery. Runaway slaves to the territory increased after slave revolts in the South; in particular, after the 1831 revolt in Southampton, Virginia, led by Nat Turner. It was shortly afterward that free Blacks in the Northwest Territory began to organize their own religious institutions. Among the first was the Providence Negro Baptist Anti-Slavery Association of Ohio, formed in 1836. In Illinois, the Wood River Baptist Association was formed in 1839, with representatives from churches in Alton, Ridge Prairie, and Ogle Creek selecting John Livingston, the founder of Springfield's Zion Baptist Church, as moderator. That same year Bishop William Paul Quinn of Alton helped organize a Black Methodist church there, which was comprised of seven members. (Fisher, 1963: pp. 552-554).

The disputes over slavery affected religious organizations in the United States, which became divided over the issue:

> The national controversy over the handling of fugitive slaves resulted in schisms in many of the established White denominations, and before the Civil War, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists had split into Northern and Southern groups. Disunity in the churches appeared to be racial as well as sectional, and the separation of races in the churches began to emerge as the general pattern. (Fisher, 1963: p. 554.)

Black churches became a refuge for free Blacks as well as runaway slaves, and Quinn Chapel African Methodist Episcopal of Chicago was no exception. Quinn Chapel, named for Bishop William Paul Quinn, was founded in 1847, and was the first Chicago church established by African Americans. By 1850 Chicago's Black population of slightly over 300 was comprised largely of runaway slaves. Quinn Chapel helped those who escaped slavery, gave them a place to stay, and provided them with the means to get to Canada. (Fisher, 1963: p. 554-555) The church denounced the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, which required that runaways be returned to slavery, and organized a Liberty Association "for the general dissemination of the principles of Human Freedom" in retaliation (Fisher, 1963: p. 555)

The success of Quinn Chapel gave Blacks of other denominations confidence to establish their own churches in Chicago (Fisher, 1963: p.555). The first Black Baptist Church was formed between 1850 and 1853, and in the 1870s there were four or five black churches in the city. By the late 1890s, there were at least a dozen Black Baptist churches alone (Fisher, 1963: p. 555, p. 559, p. 562).

Black churches offered their congregation more than religious services, and this trend continued well into the twentieth century. African American churches in Chicago proved essential in aiding the many Black migrants who moved to Chicago from the South during what became known as "The Great Migration." The exodus of African Americans leaving the rural South for the urban North was attributed to many factors. Chicago and the Northern states were better of economically and could offer more, and better paying, jobs. This was especially true after World War I. Natural disasters and crop blights contributed to the decline of the Southern farm. Racial discrimination and Black oppression in the South and the promise of better treatment in the North certainly played a part for those who decided to move (Holli and Jones, 1995, p.308). Northern Black churches came to the aid of the Southern Black migrants:

> The most important institutions founded by the migrants were their churches. At first, the city's established Black churches exerted special efforts to recruit newcomers, and thousands of migrants readily accepted the invitations....Some of the larger institutions, led by Olivet Baptist and Institutional AME, viewed the newcomers as a challenge to their expanded programs, which included such services as employment bureaus, housing directories, and day nurseries. Others advertised guidance, dynamic preaching, or "good singing" (Holli and Jones, 1995, pp. 337-338).

There were differences between the Northern and Southern African American Churches, which quickly became apparent to the Southern migrants. Many migrants gravitated to the larger established churches upon first arriving to Chicago because they offered more social services and employment assistance, as well as a place to meet other Southern Blacks. But the services of the Northern churches were more restrained and less demonstrative than to what many Southerners were accustomed. Thus once the migrants became more established in the city, they could opt to stay with the larger churches they first joined upon arriving in Chicago, or join another church that would be more to their liking. To have such a variety of choices was new to Black migrants as well. (Holli and Jones, 1995, p. 339-340)

Black churches also offered a way for members to improve their status both economically and socially. "Because the church was such an important Black institution, sometimes a family's upward mobility within it afforded family members opportunities for high levels of achievement (Savage, 1994: p. 53)." The right church could mean more opportunities for its members:

> As a mode of adaptation to the new environment, choosing a church -- or starting a new one -- symbolized the hopes of many migrants....In addition, many could realistically look forward to "bettering their condition" either by joining a more prestigious church or by organizing and leading a new congregation. And all this took place within institutions controlled by Blacks, relatively insulated from oppressive race relations. "I goes every Sunday and Wednesday nights to prayer meeting," remarked one migrant who belonged to Olivet Baptist Church, "just to thank God that he let me live to go to a place of worship like that, a place where my people worship and ain't pestered by the White man. (Holli and Jones, 1995: p. 339-340)."

The number of Black churches in Chicago continued to grow. Of the nearly 500 Black congregations in Chicago by the mid 1940s, almost one hundred had their own church buildings. These organizations combined had about 200,000 members and were comprised of some thirty denominations. (Fisher, p. 569)

AFRICAN AMERICAN CHURCHES AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Historically, Black churches have been prone to split over differences and form new denominations, and such practices were never seen as a threat to their existence. But as the push for equality among the races increased, some held the belief that the need for Black churches would diminish and result in their demise. Dr. Miles Mark Fisher, an African American pastor, teacher, and church historian, wrote the following passage in his article "Negro Churches in Illinois," which appeared in the 1963 autumn issue of the *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*:

> The continued existence of separate Negro churches is in doubt....Since the United States Supreme Court school desegregation decision of May 17, 1954, "separate but equal" facilities -- for religious groups as elsewhere -- have begun to disappear. In some Negro churches the change as been in little more than name. For example, the General Conference of the "Colored Methodist Episcopal Church" held at Memphis in 1954 changes the name of that denomination to "Christian Methodist Episcopal Church." A recently organized Congregational church at 3101 West Warren Boulevard [in Chicago] is known as the Warren Avenue Integrated Congregational Church (Fisher, 1963: pp. 568 - 569).

If there were any doubts over the continued existence of Black churches, they were erased with the onset of the Civil Rights Movement, which began in the churches. The boycott on the Montgomery, Alabama, buses, coordinated by Martin Luther King, Jr., was organized and coordinated in his church, the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. (Congressman John Lewis, p. 62, Savage, ed.) In Selma, Alabama, the First Colored Baptist Church was listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its association with the Civil Rights Movement and for its part in the Voting Rights Bill of 1965 (Louretta C. Wimberly, 1999: p. 28). Clearly, these institutions took part in enabling African Americans to demand fair treatment and fight for their rights.

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN CHURCHES

(The majority of this passage was taken from the Multiple Property Document ***African American Churches in Craven County, North Carolina, 1864 – 1947;*** *and* ***Powerful Artifacts: A Guide to Surveying and Documenting Rural African-American Churches in the South*** *While these are from studies of African American Churches in a particular area, Allen Chapel shares similar characteristics.)*

The African American church of the mid 1800s to mid 1950s comes in the same variety of forms and styles that characterized the White church, but with certain distinctive features. The style of Black churches varies as greatly as that of White churches. Predominant in the first half of the twentieth century are the Gothic Revival and Classical Revival churches. Since designs of most Black churches originated from church members who were often part-time artisans rather than with architects, they tend to be simple and straightforward. Few have colored glass windows. Many African American churches are of frame construction and have been brick veneered since 1950. Urban Black sanctuaries were often built on raised basements, allowing space for a fellowship hall and Sunday School rooms. In White churches, these functions are more typically housed in extensions of the main block. One explanation for the frequent inclusion of basement rooms was their greater economy of construction in comparison of wing extensions. Another is the size constraint of the small urban lots on which many Black churches are sited.

On the interior, the floor plan is identical to that of churches of Whites of the period. All follow a longitudinal processional from entrance into a vestibule, through sections of pews usually separated by a single center aisle but sometimes by two aisles, to the chancel area containing the pulpit, chairs for church leaders, choir seating, and generally, an altar table. The importance of music in a Black service often led even the smallest churches to equip their space with an organ.

The only resource typically associated with the African American church is the parsonage. If present, it is located close to the sanctuary. Like White congregations, African American congregations usually built a residence for the minister to avoid the expense of paying his rent.

On the whole, historically African American church buildings tend to be smaller and vernacular in design in comparison to those churches attended by Whites, thereby an expression of the limited economic resources in the Black community: "The most typical rural African-American church building for 1850 – 1890 is a one-story, gable roofed, rectangular-shaped building, with the primary entrance on the gable end. The foundation may be brick, concrete, or stone piers.

The walls are frame and the windows typically are square or rectangular (Center for Historic Preservation, 2000: p. 31)." African Americans excelled in the building trades, particularly masonry and carpentry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. African American churches from this time are mostly constructed of brick, as were churches attended by Whites, and almost invariably have marble cornerstones. The frequent use of cornerstones may reflect the hard work of Black congregations to replace their nineteenth century buildings with stylish brick sanctuaries in the twentieth century. The original buildings that housed pioneer African American congregations have all but disappeared through various circumstances -- some were replaced by larger and more permanent buildings, others were destroyed by fire, etc. A historian described the progression of the freedmen's places of worship as moving from brush arbors to rude buildings and finally to frame brick churches. Few of these churches' congregations had the means to erect landmark churches during the formative years. The present buildings are generally the third or fourth sanctuaries erected by the congregations.

The Allen Chapel certainly fits within the general characteristics of African American Churches as defined above. It is vernacular in design, with its Gothic-arched openings being its only stylistic feature. No additions have been made to the original gable-front, rectangular-shaped chapel. The building next to the chapel was the parsonage, but is now under different ownership.

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN LINCOLN

Lincoln, Illinois, located in Logan County, was established in 1853 and became incorporated on February 16, 1865 when the communities of Pottsville and Lincoln united. Many African Americans who came to settle in Lincoln were relocated former slaves. Before the Civil War, the Federal Census of 1850 had no record of any free Blacks in the county. In 1860, there were only twenty-five Blacks recorded in the county's census (Hodges and Levene, et al, 1964: p. 57, 60.) Although there is no documentation, it is possible that African Americans who resided in the city before 1865 made their way to Lincoln via the Underground Railroad, since Lincoln was located along one of the known routes. After the Emancipation Act, Union Soldiers returning home brought ex-slaves to the north. The Federal Census of 1870 recorded one hundred sixteen "free colored" residents of Logan County, a marked increase from the previous census (Hodges and Levene, etal, 1964: p. 63). Most Lincoln citizens reacted unfavorably towards these former slaves. In many cases soldiers rolled the slaves up in blankets to smuggle them into the town. The former slaves were forced to remain indoors during the day, and had to sneak outside after

dark for a breath of fresh air. Their memories of their enslavement were fresh in their minds, and they spoke of the horrors they encountered. One Black woman told of how she was sold four times after the death of her mother before coming to Lincoln. (*Lincoln Evening Courier – Lincoln Herald*, 1939)

Logan County never had a large African American population; in the Federal Census records from 1870, 1880, and 1890, Blacks made up somewhere between 1 per cent to 2 per cent of the county's entire population (Hodges and Levene, et al, 1964: p. 63, 66, 69). During the Great Migration, Northern cities such as Chicago had a tremendous increase in the African American population. In 1910, the census recorded 44,103 Blacks living in Chicago. In 1920, the number had increased to 109,458 and by 1930, the population had more than doubled from the last census (Hodges and Levene, et al, 1964: p. 52). The African American community in Logan County in the early to mid 1900s experienced little growth. In 1900, before the Great Migration, Logan County's African American population was 314. In 1910, it had increased to 377, but in 1920, that number had dropped to 353. In the 1930 census, the number had only increased over the previous ten years by two people (Hodges and Levene, etal, 1964: pp. 72, 75, 78, 81). This limited growth might stem from the lack of industry to support a large Black community. The decent jobs were all going to Whites, while African Americans were forced to take what was left. During that time, the so-called "Black jobs" consisted of working as servants, carriage drivers, horse groomers and stable help, cooks, domestic workers, wet nurses, and yard work. A survey of early city directories of Lincoln confirm this, for the vast majority of Black women served as domestics and the majority of Black men were laborers, meaning generally that they did any job that they could find (Lincoln City Directories, 1900, 1907, 1910). Other professions of African Americans noted in the directory included barbers, blacksmiths, pastors, and hairdressers, but these were far fewer in number than the laborers and domestics. The 1910 Directory listed one woman as a nurse and the other as an office clerk; this was a stark contrast to the majority of low-skilled jobs held by African Americans at the time (Lincoln City Directory, 1910). It also appeared as if the most of the blue collar factory and mining jobs went to White workers, although there was at least one Black miner listed in the 1907 directory and one Black worker at the Mattress Factory listed in the 1910 directory. The majority of employees at the Lincoln Foundry, which made manhole covers and grates, were African American. (Gleason: 2003).

Perhaps the best written accounts of the Black community in early twentieth century Lincoln appear in the short stories written by Lincoln native William Maxwell. Dr. Darold Leigh Henson,

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author of *Mr. Lincoln, Route 66, and Other Highlights of Lincoln, Illinois*, chronicled Maxwell's observations Lincoln's social classes:

> Without question, the most thorough expression of a White Lincolnite's experience with Blacks is found in the writings of William Maxwell. His Lincoln stories feature main characters based on his upper-middle-class family, which employed Blacks to take care of the yard and barn and work in the house cooking and cleaning and taking the dirty clothes home to their shacks to wash. Maxwell reveals that his parents paid their Black servants reasonable wages (*The Front and Back Parts of the House*) and allowed them to take home leftover food (suggested by the privilege given to Rachel by the Kings in *Time Will Darken It*). (Henson, 2003).

Maxwell, who lived in Lincoln from his birth in 1908 until 1923, drew upon his experiences in Lincoln in his novels and short stories. Although not entirely autobiographical (he referred to his work as "autobiographical fiction") Maxwell's works provided a vivid portrayal of the social classes and racial divisions that he perceived from his childhood experiences there (Henson, 2003).

According to Maxwell's stories, Blacks and Whites in Lincoln lived their lives separate from one other. They were isolated socially as well as physically, with the division occurring on 9th and Elm streets. Henson told of Maxwell's account of this in *Billie Dyer* (1989), about a real African American from Lincoln:

> West of Elm Street "the neighborhood took on an altogether different character [different from the large houses of the well-to-do on Ninth Street]. The houses after the intersection were not shacks, but they were not a great deal more. Grass did not grow in their yards, only weeds. There was usually a certain amount of flotsam and jetsam, whatever somebody more well to do didn't want and had found a way to get rid of. . . . . Elm Street was the dividing line between the two worlds….On either side of this line there were families who had trouble making both ends meet, but those who lived below the intersection didn't bother to conceal it" (Henson, 2003).

Historically, this was certainly true. In the 1880 United States Census, there were approximately 100 African Americans in Lincoln; most were located in East Lincoln Township. Most African

Americans listed in the city directories from the early 1900s, resided in the same area, which included North Elm, Broadway, Delavan, Elliot, and North Sheridan.

In *Time Will Darken It* (1948), Henson points to the following passage, where Maxwell elaborates on the relations between the two races:

> In the world east of Elm Street, the upper-middle class Whites considered themselves superior to their Black employees and so were distanced from them. The Black employees knew more about their employers than the employers knew about their employees: "Something like a great pane of glass, opaque from one side, transparent from the other, divided the two halves of Elm Street. Beulah Osborn, the Ellises' hired girl, Snowball McHenry, who worked in Dr. Danforth's livery stable, and the Reverend Mr. Porterfield, who looked after Mrs. Beach's furnace from October until April and her flower garden from April until October, knew a great deal about what went on in the comfortable houses on the hill. But when they or any of their friends and neighbours passed under the arc light at the intersection, the comfortable part of Elm Street lost all contact with them" (Henson, 2003).

The physical division between both the African American and White communities in Lincoln is also reflected in city directories and federal census records. But Maxwell is able to capture the sentiments of White Lincolnites towards Blacks in his writing. He made this observation in "The Front and Back Parts of the House" when he recalled this discovery as a young child. Henson explained:

> Maxwell also notes that his parents regarded their Black servants with more consideration than some other White Lincolnites did: "One of the things I didn't understand when I was a child was the fact that grown people -- not my father and mother but people who came to our house or that they stopped to talk to on the street -- seemed to think they were excused from taking the feelings of colored people into consideration. When they said something derogatory about Negroes, they didn't bother to lower their voices even though fully aware that there was a colored person within hearing distance" (Henson, 2003).

Henson wrote of Maxwell's belief that the history of the African American community in Lincoln was still largely overlooked, when Maxwell criticized the publication *The History of Logan County 1982*:

> The only things I can think of that the white people of Lincoln were at that time willing to share with the colored people of Lincoln were the drinking water and the cemetery .... [S]omeone who had never lived there [Lincoln] might conclude from this book that the town had no Negroes now or ever. Except for the group pictures of the Lincoln College athletic teams, in which here and there a dark face appears among the lighter ones, there are no photographs of Black men and women. And though there are many pictures of White churches of one denomination or another, there is no picture of the African Methodist Episcopal Church -- only a column of text, in which the buildings it occupied and the ministers who served it are listed (Henson, 2003).

Dr. Henson pointed out some inaccuracies in Maxwell's statement, but on the whole, largely supported his observations:

> Just for the record, the photos of athletic teams with Blacks are for Lincoln Community High School, not Lincoln College. On page 36 of Mr. Beaver's history, five of the six Lincoln Community High School basketball teams from 1929 to 1980 show Blacks. Yet, Maxwell's point is indisputable: Beaver's History of Logan County 1982 clearly does not present as much information about Blacks as Dooley's 1953 *The Namesake Town: A Centennial History of Lincoln, Illinois* (Henson, 2003).

So while historically there were not any laws of segregation in Lincoln -- there were no separate schools, no separate water fountains, etc. -- Blacks and Whites did not interact with one another, except perhaps on a professional level. Early city directories gave no indication that there were many Black establishments. There was a Black-owned barbershop and a Blacksmith's shop, and perhaps there were other Black businesses that were not noted -- they may have been small and operated out of someone's house. At any rate, given the few known African American businesses, it is perceivable that the Black community in Lincoln was never large enough to sustain its own business district, as was done in other cities. Since there did not appear to be any

established Black organizations either, it is highly probable that the heart of the Black community in Lincoln was within its two African American churches.

THE ALLEN CHAPEL AME CHURCH

In 1868 Lincoln's first African American Church, the Allen Chapel AME church, was formed by Spencer Donegan, and his wife, Elizabeth Lucenda Allen. Parishioners met in the Donegan home until they purchased the old school on the corner of Broadway and Sherman from the city of Lincoln, with a down payment of $200 and two notes of $300 for a total of $800 as recorded in the abstract. The first pastor of the Church was Rev. T. A. Hall, and he and Rev. Ward organized the group. The church became a part of the Annual Conference of the Connectional Church in 1869, Rev. L. M. Davis was assigned to the church as pastor, and the church was attached to the Decatur Circuit. In its formative years, the chapel received assistance from pastors from Springfield, who served as overseers of the church for a period of time (Saul, 2003: p. 2A; Beaver, 1982).

For seven months in the early 1870s the building also served as an African American School with 30 students. (Saul, 2003: p. 2a) The church building was also the site of political rallies. One such rally occurred in 1876, when African Americans of Logan County met at the AME church to organize a sub-county committee in support of President U.S. Grant. One of the resolutions the committee supported was the proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which would not allow religious groups control over money raised through taxes to support public schools or money from any public fund (*Lincoln Herald*, February 1876).

The congregation, which consisted of three members upon its establishment in 1868, had grown substantially and by 1875, there were 108 members (Donnelly, et al, 1878: p. 278). The great revival, held in Lincoln in 1875, undoubtedly contributed to the increase in church members. In 1880, the congregation had outgrown the former schoolhouse and constructed the red brick church, which still serves as the Allen Chapel today, at a cost of $1,000 (Saul, 2003: p. 2A). The artisans of the congregation and Black community worked shoulder to shoulder to physically build Allen Chapel. Financing was generated from meager earnings from salaries as laborers, domestic workers, and other menial employment. Allen Chapel was the house of worship, training, theater, and meeting place for people of color.

The religious revival of 1875 must have given Lincoln's African Americans encouragement, for another Black church, Second Baptist, which was formed the previous year, built a church on the northeast corner of Broadway and Sherman, across from the Allen Chapel. The Second Baptist congregation began meeting in members' homes until 1876, when Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Jefferson donated a lot for the church's construction. The small frame church served the congregation until a new church was built. This church served as the Second Baptist Church until 1997 when the congregation built a new edifice at 1728 Tremont Street (Saul, 2003: p. 2A).

In *The Namesake Town: A Centennial History of Lincoln, Illinois*, Harriet Dyer Brummel was interviewed and provided an account of her family. Brummel was the daughter of Alfred and Laura Dyer, former slaves, who were among the early African American settlers in Lincoln. Mrs. Brummel explained how religion was an important part of her parents' lives: " 'In looking back over the years,' Mrs. Brummel said, "I am proud of my father and mother, who were highly regarded by all who knew them, White as well as Black. Their deep religious faith has been my help and strength throughout my life.' (Dooley, ed. 1953: p. 33) The Dyers were members of Allen Chapel. When he was young, William Maxwell went to Allen Chapel with Mrs. Dyer. (Dyer's daughter worked for the Maxwells). Dr. Henson reprinted Maxwell's recollection of the experience, which appeared in the *The Front and Back Parts of the House*:

> During one of those times when my father was searching for a housekeeper and Mrs. Dyer was in our kitchen, she stopped me as we got up from the table at the end of dinner and asked if I'd like to go to church with her to hear a choir from the South. It was a very cold night and there was a White full moon, and walking along beside Mrs. Dyer I saw the shadows of the bare branches laid out on the snow. Our footsteps made a squeaking sound and it hurt to breathe. The church was way downtown on the other side of the courthouse square. As we made our way indoors I saw that it was crammed with people, and overheated, and I was conscious of the fact that I was the only White person there. Nobody made anything of it. The men and women in their choir were of all ages, and dressed in White. For the first time in my life I heard 'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot,' and 'Pharaoh's Army Got Drownded,' and 'Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?' and 'Joshua Fit de Battle of Jericho.' Singing 'Don't let nobody turn you round,' the choir yanked one another around and stamped their feet (in church!). I looked at Mrs. Dyer out of the corner of my eye. She was smiling. 'Not my brother, not my sister, but it's me, O Lord!" the White-robed singers shouted.

> The people around me sat listening politely with their hands folded in their laps, and I thought, perhaps mistakenly, that they too were hearing these spirituals for the first time (Henson, 2003).

The primary function of Allen Chapel AME Church was to provide for the spiritual well-being of the African American community and to give them hope. This was the basis for the African Methodist Episcopal Church, which was never a segregated or Jim Crow institution, although its membership is predominately African American. The educational efforts of the AME Church moved along two well-defined lines: providing publications and encouraging education in the annual conferences, which would trickle down to the local church. Allen Chapel was equipped with the teachings of the principles of the AME Church, printed in the Book of Disciplines (1817), the Book of Concern, and the Christian Recorder, which it used to bring respect to the people of color in the heart of Lincoln, a highly segregated community, where a minimal record is made of Allen Chapel's early existence.

Allen Chapel was established at a time when the responsibility fell to African American churches to make up for the shortfalls that plagued African Americans. It was the educator, molder, and motivator of the arts and artist. It was the hub of the Black community within a predominately White community. It gave African Americans a place to hold meetings, offer leadership training, and provide other tools necessary for its parishioners to lead a full life and to take root and grow under its roof. Allen Chapel assumed the tasks of the formulator of Black culture, extra bed and table, mission, disciplinarian, listening ear, voice, day care, social worker, foster care home, single parent provider -- all that was denied to people of color at that time.

The early Black leaders of Lincoln and Springfield who gave of their time, talent and treasure to aid in the growth of the chapel included Spencer Donegan, John Stone, Jackson Palm, Louis Gouch. Sam Johnson, and Jack McMerry. Those who served as pastors of the church since its inception include W. T. B. Harwood, Brassfield, C. W. Thompson, Maude C. Johnson, Kenneth Tinsley, J. W. Wright, S. H. Williams, E.K. Swanson, W. R. Thompson, L. W. Laughton, Boyde Patrick, Frank Beard, Tiney Walker, Galda McCants, John Crider, Rev. Lindsay, Napolean Bonaparte, and Peggy Senor. Since its establishment, Allen Chapel has had four women pastors; Maude C. Johnson, who served during the 1940s, was the first.

Some of the former slaves and their families were part of the founding of Allen Chapel, including Millie Smith, the Orendorffs, Dockfort, Susan Camper, William Bibb, Albert Perkins,

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Presto Townsend and Lige Townsend. Other well-known members of the church include Aaron Dyer, a former slave, who was part of the Underground Railroad movement in Springfield, Billie Dyer a World War I war hero and surgeon, and Langston Hughes, the famous poet and author, who moved to Lincoln in 1915 at the age of thirteen.

Allen Chapel represents the simple lifestyle of the people of color residing in Lincoln at the time it was built. African Americans came to the city in hope of finding a new life by the very essence of the name Lincoln. They found Allen Chapel, whose members were of outstanding character and ability. The modest chapel reflects the monetary status of its congregation and what its members were able to afford at the time of construction. It was well built, therefore able to withstand the fire and floods that are part of this community's history. The chapel continues to serve as the place of worship for the AME Church. It is one of two African American churches in Lincoln and yet it is the only one with sufficient integrity, for the historic Second Baptist Church across the street from the Allen Chapel has since been converted into apartments. In 2003 Allen Chapel was designated, by City Council resolution, a historical site in the city of Lincoln, Illinois.

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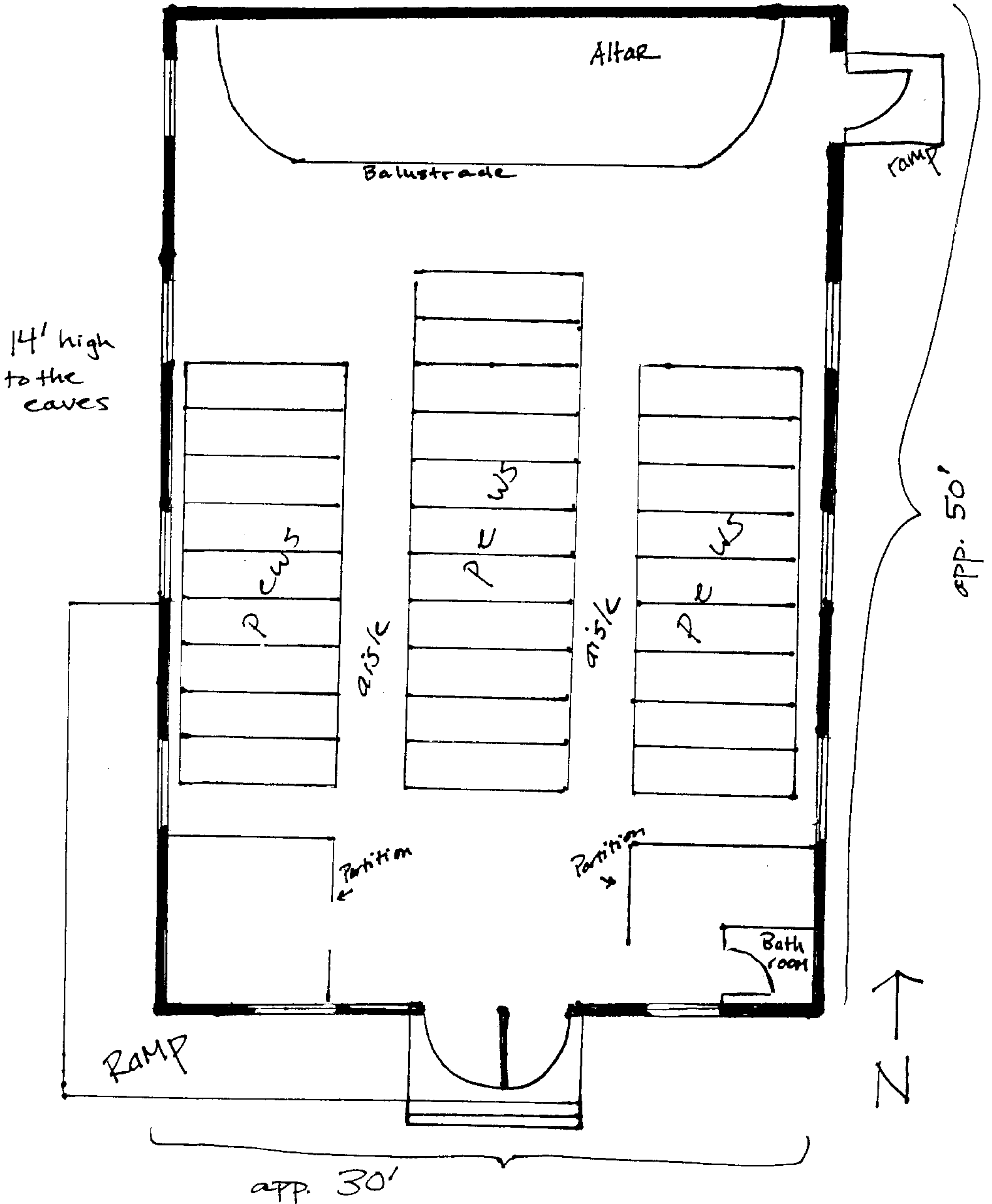
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary description of the Allen Chapel AME Church, located at 902 Broadway in Lincoln, Illinois is as follows: The Northwest Portion of the Northwest lots 7,8 in Block 8, Lathan Addition, Logan County, Township 20 North, Range 2 West, Section 31.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the church and the land currently owned by the Allen Chapel AME Church.

Allen Chapel AME Church
902 Broadway Lincoln, IL



KEY: State, County, Property Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number, NHL, Action, Date, Multiple Name

ALASKA, WRANGELL-PETERBURG BOROUGH-CENSUS AREA,
Five Finger Light Station,
Island of The Five Fingers, approx. 37 mi. NW of the city of Petersburg,
Petersburg vicinity, 04000416,
LISTED, 5/12/04
(Light Stations of the United States MPS)

CALIFORNIA, COLUSA COUNTY,
Cecil Ranch,
1840 CA 45,
Grimes, 03000988,
LISTED, 5/14/04

CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES COUNTY,
Anderton Court Shops,
332 N.Rodeo Dr.,
Beverly Hills, 03000987,
LISTED, 5/14/04

CALIFORNIA, MONTEREY COUNTY,
Monterey County Jail,
142 W. Alisal St.,
Salinas, 03000337,
REMOVED/DETERMINED ELIGIBLE, 5/13/04

CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO COUNTY,
Canfield--Wright House,
420 Avenida Primavera,
Del Mar, 02001747,
LISTED, 5/14/04

CONNECTICUT, HARTFORD COUNTY,
Southern New England Telephone Company Building,
55 Trumbull St.,
Hartford, 04000417,
LISTED, 5/12/04

FLORIDA, ORANGE COUNTY,
Tinker Field,
1610 W. Church St.,
Orlando, 04000456,
LISTED, 5/14/04

ILLINOIS, BUREAU COUNTY,
Lone Tree School,
19292 250 North Avenue,
Tiskilwa vicinity, 04000418,
LISTED, 5/12/04

ILLINOIS, DU PAGE COUNTY,
Emery, Jr., William H., House,
281 Arlington,
Elmhurst, 04000421,
LISTED, 5/12/04

ILLINOIS, LOGAN COUNTY,
Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church,
902 Broadway,
Lincoln, 04000422,
LISTED, 5/12/04