

Collection #
M 0450

**NEW BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH (INDIANAPOLIS, IND.)
RECORDS, 1907–1986 (BULK 1957–1980)**

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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

**VOLUME OF
COLLECTION:** 3 manuscript boxes, 1 photograph folder

**COLLECTION
DATES:** Inclusive 1907-1986; Bulk 1957-1980

PROVENANCE: F. Benjamin Davis, Pastor, New Bethel Baptist Church, 1619-65
Martindale, (now Dr. Andrew J. Brown St.), Indianapolis, IN,
46205, 16 September 1985

RESTRICTIONS: None

**REPRODUCTION
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**ALTERNATE
FORMATS:**

**RELATED
HOLDINGS:**

**ACCESSION
NUMBER:** 1991.0683X

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The New Bethel Church was organized in July, 1875, in the home of William Jackson in Indianapolis. The Church was organized by Reverend Jacob R. Reiner with the help of Jackson, J. Ball, S. Goliath, Gable Griffin, Hannibal Hall, G. Patterson, D. Scott, and S.W. Watkins.

New Bethel first appeared in the Indianapolis City Directory in 1878. Its location was listed as 'eastside Beeler, north Lincoln Avenue.' The address listed in 1881 was 83 Beeler St. In 1895, the street name was changed to Martindale Avenue. Its current address is 1535 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Avenue. (Although the Church has remained on the same property, the name of the street reflects its most recent name change). In 1987, the street name was changed to honor a local minister, Andrew Brown. Dr. Brown is the pastor at the neighboring St. John Missionary Baptist Church.

New Bethel Baptist Church has had several pastors, many whom have held long tenures. Reverend G. Smith served briefly between the pastorships of Reiner and Reverend Nathaniel A. Seymour. Seymour became pastor of the Church in 1879. He was the founder and first president of the New Bethel Baptist Church Convention which was organized in 1918. When Seymour died in 1937, Reverend George Baltimore became pastor of the Church following a brief time as acting pastor. During Baltimore's tenure the Church grew from a small building to a large structure with a basement, classrooms, and a balcony.

Dr. J.O. Clark succeeded Baltimore as pastor in 1949. During his term the Church purchased additional property. The existing building was completely remodeled. A sports outreach program, a day nursery, and a library were also established during his tenure. In 1951 Dr. Clark organized a radio program. When Dr. Clark died in 1953, he was succeeded by New Bethel's current pastor, Dr. F. Benjamin Davis.

Sources: Materials in the Collection
Indianapolis City Directories

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains material related to the New Bethel Baptist Church in Indianapolis. The collection spans from 1907-1986. Most of the material dates between the late 1950s and 1980. There are program booklets from church anniversaries, newsletters, and bulletins. The bulk of the material, however, pertains to other Baptist institutions or organizations to which New Bethel has an affiliation. The collection includes a 1907 minute book from the Baptist Ministerial and Deacon's Alliance and most of the official journals of the annual Indiana Missionary Baptist State Convention from 1965-1982.

In addition to materials from state conventions and the New Bethel Baptist Church, there are program booklets from other Baptist churches and organizations. There is a 1942 directory of Black Baptist churches in the United States; a few issues of the *National Baptist Union-Review*, a news organ of the National Baptist Publishing Board. Earlier editions of the newspaper include an Indiana page. There are also materials related to Central Baptist Seminary, a training school for ministers which opened in Indianapolis in 1943.

There are several photographs in the collection. Most of the photographs relate to groups in the Church including the Women's Missionary Society, Baptist Training Union, Gospel Choir and the Men's Bible Class. The photographs are stored in Visual Collections.

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Mount Paran Reporter, Indianapolis, 1959	Box 1, Folder 8
Baptist Ministers Foresight, Indianapolis	Box 1, Folder 9
City Churches Usher's Union, Indianapolis	Box 1, Folder 10
Central Baptist Theological Seminary	Box 1, Folder 11
Indiana Negro Missionary Baptist Ministerial Convention, 1913 Minutes	Box 1, Folder 12
Indiana Negro State Missionary Baptist Association, Minutes, 1928	Box 1, Folder 13
Baptist Ministerial and Deacon's Alliance, Minutes, 1907-1914	Box 1, Folder 14
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BOX 2: Indiana Missionary Baptist State Convention Official Journals, 1970-1982; National Baptists Organizations and Directories

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National Baptist Union- Review 1976

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National Baptist Union- Review 1979

Box 3, Folder 8

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The Y's Man Newsletter 1961-1963

Box 3, Folder 10