



Indiana Historical Bureau Division of the Indiana State Library

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NEWS

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“City Church” State Historical Marker Will Be Dedicated in Gary, Indiana

FAITH CDC, Gary Downtown Emerson Neighborhood Spotlight (GAR-DENS), and Legacy Foundation will host a public dedication ceremony on Saturday, September 14, 2019 for an Indiana state historical marker commemorating City Church, an ornate, Methodist cathedral in Gary from 1926-1975. Attendees are encouraged to gather at 504 Broadway by 9:45 a.m. CST. Guests will then walk together to the marker near the site of the abandoned church at 577 Washington St., Gary, IN 46402 for the unveiling at 10:00 am CST. This dedication marks the beginning of the Decay Devils Love Fest and the City of Gary’s Preservation Tour that will begin at 11:00 a.m. CST.

The text follows for the state marker entitled “**City Church**”:

In the early 1900s, immigrants, white migrants, and black southerners came to Gary for work in the steel industry. Rev. William G. Seaman founded City Church downtown in 1926 to serve as a Christianizing influence on the diverse population. The ornate Methodist cathedral, funded in part by U.S. Steel, housed a gym, theater, music studio, cafeteria, and commercial unit. Open seven days a week, the church served as a meeting space for many events in the city. Although the congregation remained segregated, the church offered programs for African Americans and immigrants. Membership peaked in the 1950s, but fell in the 1960s when white residents fled Gary for the suburbs. The church struggled to adapt to the community and closed in 1975.

The public is invited to attend the dedication for this marker that examines City Church’s history within Gary and the communities it served. The church followed the rise and decline of the city throughout the twentieth century. This is the twelfth state historical marker to be installed in Lake County. For a listing of other markers in the county, see: <https://www.in.gov/history/markers/3819.htm#lake>.

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 over 100 years, the Indiana Historical Bureau has been marking Indiana history. Since 1946, 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. Over 650 of these markers have been installed over the years.

For more information about the Indiana Historical Marker Program and other resources about Indiana, visit the Indiana Historical Bureau’s website at <http://www.IN.gov/history> or call (317) 232-2535. To learn more about City Church’s history, see “City Church: Spirituality and Segregation in Gary” via the [Indiana History Blog](#). For more information about the marker dedication ceremony commemorating City Church, please contact marker applicant Curtis Whittaker of FAITH CDC at CWhittaker@cawhittakercpa.com.