

Hilltop Altar Crawl

Tour of Historic Churches

Davenport, Iowa

Sunday, May 19th, 2013
1:00 - 5:00 pm

Sponsored by:

Hilltop Campus Village: An Iowa Main Street Community located in Davenport, Iowa. Its goals include creation of a revitalized, mixed-use neighborhood that is family friendly, clean and safe, alive with activities and excitement, and retention of a diverse population living and working in the established district.

P.U.N.C.H. (People Uniting Neighbors and Churches): Formed in 2004 by the churches in the Brady Hill neighborhood of Davenport, its goal is to make the neighborhood a better place to work, worship and live in.

Bethel A.M.E. Church, 323 W. 11th St.* - This Craftsman-style stucco and half timbered building, designed by the noted Davenport architectural firm of Clausen and Clausen, has been in service since 1908. The interior features barrel vaulting over the nave and a domed apse behind the altar as well as stained glass windows sponsored by members of the congregation.

Bethel A.M.E. traces its roots to its founding January 1, 1866, when a group of people came together to sign papers of association as The African Methodist Episcopal Church of Davenport. Two of the signers and one of the three original trustees could not write their names. But that didn't deter them from their determination to found the earliest African American congregation in Davenport and one of the oldest in the state. During its first years, circuit riders served as ministers for worshipers meeting in a small frame building on Fourth Street between Gaines and Western. By 1903, the congregation had grown, and property at 11th and Ripley was purchased for \$1800. With the foundation and basement finished by 1908, services began in that portion. The sanctuary was completed in 1912, constructed in part by the parishioners themselves. The new church was renamed Bethel A.M.E. Church, the same name it carries today.

Bethel's community outreach includes operation of a food pantry and a computer lab for seniors. Its GenAge Ministry serves hot lunches to seniors Thursdays 11:30 am-1 pm, and its Usher Board provides dinners at the Salvation Army meal site. Members of the Ester Stovall Missionary Society visit the sick in nursing homes and hospitals as well as participating in mission activities outside Davenport.

Bethel's entire church building will be open for tour on May 19th. A bake sale will raise funds for youth activities.

Directions: Parking available in the lots on the west side of the church and to the north across 11th Street. Entrance, also handicapped accessible, is on the west side.

First Baptist Church, 1401 Perry St.* - The cornerstone for the building was laid in 1889 during the 50th anniversary of the founding of the congregation; the church was dedicated in 1890. The site had served as a Civil war training camp.

Calling itself "Calvary Baptist," the congregation worshiped in the new sanctuary designed in the Romanesque Revival style by John S. Wollacott of Chicago using a combination of brick and rough stone. The large arched, unique, stained glass windows of the sanctuary were created by Wells Glass Company of Chicago. The arch of the windows also emphasizes the Romanesque style. The original cost of the lot and the building was less than \$32,000.

Parishioners paid to have a memorial in each of the stained glass windows, with set amounts ranging from \$5 to \$200. The large windows are "The Baptism of Jesus," "The Good Shepherd" and "Jesus as a Boy in the Temple." The steeple was removed in the 1950's following a severe storm. In 1956, administration offices and a fellowship hall were added to the north side.

Davenport's Baptists held their first service on September 13, 1839. The congregation's first church was built at the corner of 4th and Brady on land donated by Antoine LeClaire. Since its founding 175 years ago, the congregation of First Baptist has held regularly scheduled services.

First Baptist gives back to its community through its mission program that supports local agencies like Humility of Mary, Winnie's Place, Lydia Home, Food Pantry and the Salvation Army meal site. It sponsors AA meetings and yoga classes, and supplies office space for P.U.N.C.H.

Today's tour includes the sanctuary, a display of historical items and refreshments in Fellowship Hall.

Directions: Park in the church lot between 14th and 15th Streets, entering from Perry, 14th or 15th. Enter church through door at adjacent to lot (also the handicapped entry) or front door at 14th and Perry.

First Christian Church, 510 E. 15th St.* - First Christian's sanctuary is the newest on today's tour, dedicated in 1966. The church complex was built in two stages. The east wing, containing educational rooms and a second floor gymnasium with a barrel-vaulted ceiling, was built in 1953 as Gillum Hall. At the time this hall was built, the congregation worshiped in an 1890 sanctuary just west of the new building. In 1964, that sanctuary was leveled to construct the church, library, kitchen, offices and Fellowship Hall, all designed by Quad Cities architect Lloyd Wayland.

This congregation will celebrate its 175th year in Davenport in 2014. Davenport's First Christian Church began in a home at 3rd and Main on July 28, 1839 with 21 charter members. The first church home was in the Tapley carpenter Shop at 2nd and



*Individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places

Sources: ♦ Individual Church Histories ♦ National Register Nominations ♦ The Davenport Democrat and Leader 80th Anniversary Edition, 1935
♦ The Davenport Times Davenport Centennial/Times 50th Anniversary Edition, 1936

Brady. As the congregation grew, it constructed two different buildings at the same location at 5th and Brady, one in the 1840's and the second in the 1850's. The second building, now known as Hibernian Hall, is a National Register property that still stands today.

First Christian is affiliated with the Christian Church also known as the Disciples of Christ, a denomination that grew out of the Scottish Presbyterian Church; it is recognized as having its roots in the United States. First Christian joins two other churches in supporting Our House, a free pre-school for at risk children on East 12th Street. It also provides meals for the Salvation Army meal site, food for the Churches United food pantry, supplies for the Crisis Center for Battered Women, volunteers for Habitat for Humanity, maintains membership in P.U.N.C.H., and hosts a monthly Upper Room Coffee House.

The tour will feature music and visits to the sanctuary, prayer chapel, fellowship hall and gymnasium, as well as an historical display and refreshments.

Directions: 15th Street is one way going west. Parking is available in the church lot behind the sanctuary, accessible from Farnam or LeClaire. From parking lot, enter central doorway on north side of building.

First Presbyterian Church, 1702 Iowa St. * - Built 1897-98, First



Presbyterian's sanctuary was designed by the Galesburg architectural firm of Gottschalk & Beadle who designed a nearly identical church on Galesburg Square that was completed one year earlier. Its stained glass windows are by J and R Lamb Studios of New York City. It is an excellent local example of the Richardsonian Romanesque. Steep roofs and block-like form give an overwhelming feeling of weight and mass. This feeling is accentuated by the rock-faced Marquette brownstone walls whose strongly horizontal coursing is further emphasized by wide belt courses of lighter, smoothly dressed stone. The tower's vertical panels and short spire rising from the mass of the building create a dramatic statement and makes it one of the more important churches of this design in the state of Iowa.

The founding congregation met in April, 1838 in a small building on Ripley Street with ten members. Over the past 175 years, the congregation has worshiped in six different buildings, including one which is believed to be the first Davenport church with a steeple. Two other Presbyterian congregations, Newcomb and Mt. Ida, began as chapel outreach efforts of First Presbyterian. Through the years, the church has continue to enhance its home, with the addition of an educational wing, a sixty-one rank Casavant Frères pipe organ, and an elevator.

First Presbyterian Church's members are involved in Christian Education, Mission and Outreach projects, and a renowned Music Ministry program. The church hosts and sponsors the Davenport Unit of the Boys and Girls Club, the Scott County Meal Service Office, and local Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troops. Mission and Outreach include sponsorship of refugee families, national and international mission trips, and other community involvement projects. The Music Ministry program includes six choirs and the Performing Arts Series.

Altar crawl visitors are invited to tour the sanctuary, balcony, chapel and the elaborately decorated original pastor's study, as well as enjoy an organ demonstration and refreshments in the Fellowship Hall.

Parking: Visitors may park in the Kirkwood Boulevard parking lot, west side of church. Enter on Kirkwood Boulevard (portico) or corner of Iowa & Kirkwood (Kirkwood Landing entrance). Elevator entrance is accessible from Kirkwood Boulevard parking lot.

St. John's United Methodist Church, 109 E. 14th St.* - The cornerstone for today's church was laid in 1902 and services began in 1903. Built at a cost of \$112,000, it was designed by prominent Davenport architect Parke T. Burrows with F. G. Clausen serving as supervising engineer.



St. John's is a good example of turn-of-the-century Gothic Revival, with an exterior of light colored rock-faced stone. Rather than the soaring verticality often characteristic of the Gothic style, this church, despite the tower pointed arches and profusion of finials, presents a massing of solid geometrical forms and a relatively low profile, emphasized by the strongly horizontal masonry coursing.

The sanctuary's floor plan includes a fan shaped main floor with a wide, raked balcony above. The interior retains much of its original woodwork including quarter-sawn oak in the vestibules and cherry and walnut in the sanctuary. The original pews are still in use, reconfigured to allow for a center aisle which the church did not originally have. Carved wooden panels of Gothic tracery decorate the ceiling. The narthex at the rear of the sanctuary has been closed off using wooden panels and glass etched with symbols of the disciples.

St. John's is undergoing exterior restoration, including rebuilding of the large stained glass windows, replacement of some deteriorated stonework and repointing of the masonry joints.

Elnathan Gavitt, a Methodist minister sent to work among the Indians, built the first house constructed for the purpose of worship in the city in 1835. Davenport Methodist congregations trace their beginnings to a small group that began meeting in 1836 in Rockingham, a community located on Davenport's southwest side. The first services in Davenport began in 1837, and the first Methodist church was erected in 1843. During the 19th Century, several Methodist congregations formed and additional buildings erected. Two churches came together to form the congregation that dedicated St. John's in 1903. Community outreach includes The Center, a group of ministries addressing diverse community needs; Volunteers in Mission who focus on helping restore homes destroyed in natural disasters; being home to the oldest boy scout troop in Davenport; and its membership in P.U.N.C.H.

Visitors will tour the sanctuary, a conference/history room, the downstairs of the former parsonage and The Center, located across 14th Street and home to the popular "Skate Church", where refreshments will be served.

Directions: Parking available in church lot on Perry St. behind the church. Please use Perry Street entry.

*Individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places

Sources: ♦ Individual Church Histories ♦ National Register Nominations ♦ The Davenport Democrat and Leader 80th Anniversary Edition, 1935
♦ The Davenport Times Davenport Centennial/Times 50th Anniversary Edition, 1936

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, 121 W. 12th St.* - With its cornerstone laid in 1867, the Gothic Revival Cathedral is the oldest church on the tour and was consecrated in 1873 as Grace Cathedral. It was the first cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa. It was designed by Edward Tuckerman Potter of New York City, one of the leading church architects of his time.

The church is constructed of native rock-faced random limestone. Measuring 135 x 82 feet, the building is four bays long and three bays wide with a basilica plan and semicircular apse, a small vestry on the north and small vestibule on the southwest side. Dressed Indiana limestone was used as the cap for the water table, the beveling of the buttresses, framing of the lancet windows and the compound lancet arched doorway, as well as for the tracery in the large rose window. Each side bay is divided by stone buttresses. An uninterrupted band of clerestory windows, one foot high, stretches the length of the roof dividing the two pitches of the roof on the exterior and distinguishing the nave from the aisles on the interior. Laminated wood beams, highlighted with vermilion, form an interesting and intricate complex of transverse and rib arches. Gold painted star shaped bolts and stenciling add rich ornamentation. It wasn't until 1998 that original 19th century



plans for the bell tower and steeple were realized when a generous donor funded their completion. One hundred thirty years after it was begun, Trinity Cathedral was completed.

Local Episcopalians trace their roots to 1836 services held by traveling clergymen. Trinity Episcopal Parish was established in 1841. Its first church was a small frame building erected at Fourth and Main Streets, with a rude altar, plank benches and a round stove in the nave; a second church, destroyed by fire in 1874, featured the first pipe organ in Iowa. Its third church became known as "Old Trinity." In the mid-19th Century, another group of church members formed a second parish. After worshipping at several locations, they became the congregation that first called Grace Cathedral home. Congregations from the old Trinity Episcopal Parish and Grace Cathedral merged in 1910 to form Trinity Cathedral.

Community activities include Positive Parenting, a year-round preschool/childcare program created so teen mothers can finish high school, participation in a Churches United meal site program on behalf of the Salvation Army, and membership in P.U.N.C.H.

Visitors will tour the sanctuary and rarely opened original sacristy.

Directions: Visitors may park in the lot at Palmer Dr. (11th St.) and Brady. Enter at red doors facing Main St.

Religious Life in Davenport

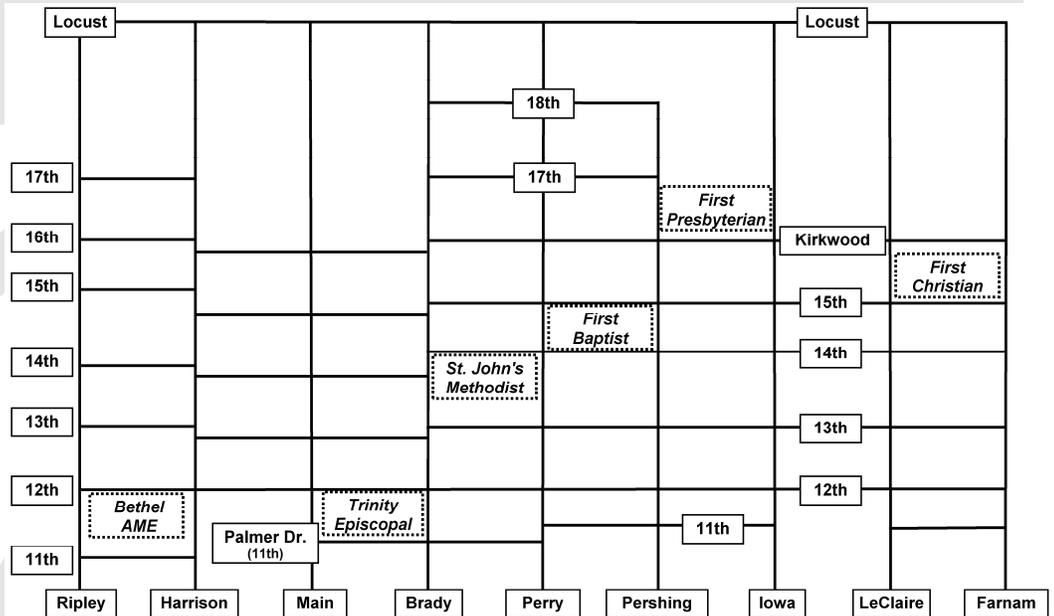
The roots of the churches and congregations participating in today's tour are planted deeply in the rich soil of this early settlement along the Mississippi. The first recorded visit of a minister in the area is found in Colonel George Davenport's journal. There he wrote that Rev. John Kinney (religious affiliation not noted) preached for the first time on the island in 1829. The second frame building built here was erected in 1835 for the purpose of holding Methodist worship services and a Sunday School. The first sanctuary, St. Anthony's, was consecrated in 1838, only two years after the city was platted. In rapid succession, other denominations began establishing places of worship in homes and shops.

Davenport's founder, Antoine LeClaire, himself a Catholic, was an early supporter of religious life of all faiths. He generously donated the tracts of land on which Catholic, Congregational, Baptist, and Christian congregations built their churches. The first churches were humble ones, frame or log structures, sometimes erected by the minister and a few congregants. They tended to be built close to the downtown area between Main and Perry. As the city's population increased and neighborhoods expanded, new sanctuaries were built, further up the hill and away from the noise of the increasing train traffic.

Many churches on tour today are the fourth or fifth structures built by their congregations. They were built between 1867 and 1966, with most dating to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Only Bethel A.M.E. remains in its first sanctuary. The congregation toiled for forty years before being able to construct its place of worship.

The buildings' architects came from firms in Davenport, Galesburg, Chicago and New York; their styles reflect design trends of the eras in which they were built. Five of the six are individually listed on the National Register.

What they all share in common is people of faith who both worship together and work to better the communities they serve. And they all reach out a hand of welcome to you on today's tour.



*Individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places

Sources: ♦ Individual Church Histories ♦ National Register Nominations ♦ The Davenport Democrat and Leader 80th Anniversary Edition, 1935
 ♦ The Davenport Times Davenport Centennial/Times 50th Anniversary Edition, 1936