

Churches

By Amy Landsaw, Celine Lopez, and Maria Macke

Before the formation of all the churches in Marshall, circuit-riding preachers ministered to the settlers of this small town. Early Congregationalists, Methodists, and Catholics held the first Services in private houses and schoolhouses. About 1840, Dean Andrews, T. F. Day and Patrick Conahy organized a society of their respective denominations. Marshall's churches in order of existence are as follows:

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



The First Congregational Church began on April 3, 1841 by Rev. M. A. Jewett and Joseph Graff of Terre Haute, Indiana. The first church building was erected in 1850 and was believed to be the first church of Marshall. It has always been at the current site. Col. William B. Archer donated the ground. The cost was about \$1500. The First Congregational Church was also the first church in Marshall to have Sunday school. A new church was built in 1892 and was dedicated to the memory of Rev. Dean Andrew, who was the first minister. On Sunday, February 28, 1909 the present building was built. In 1928, Rev. Roland G. Bristol began serving the church and did until his death in 1936. After his death, his wife, Maude Bristol, was asked to serve. She accepted and served from 1937 until 1942, when she accepted another parish. The First Congregational Church celebrated its 150th Sesquicentennial Anniversary in 1991; the present minister is Reverend Donald Graham.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



While Terre Haute was flourishing, around 1838, people came streaming from the east down the newly constructed National Road. Among these people were the Rev. and Mrs. Abel English and family. They had traveled by covered wagon from New Jersey. Rev. English and his family traveled west along the road until he came to a small settlement of eight or ten houses. This small settlement was our town, Marshall, Illinois. While he was building his homestead, Rev. English preached at the Armstrong Church, the Livingston Church, and the church in Marshall. His first meetings were held in the Andrew's frame schoolhouse. Unfortunately, he died before the first church building was completed in 1849, but he was still known as the first pastor of the First United Methodist Church of Marshall. Soon the church began to grow and the small 32 by 50-ft

building would not hold the growing audiences, so services had to be held in the courthouse and other buildings. It was realized that a new building would be needed.

A new brick building (the old church had been built out of poplar logs) was built and lasted until 1873. Not even a year later, during the pastorate of Reverend Pilcher, there was a great revival, which added 300 additions to the church. A building committee was selected and work was begun in 1873, for a building that was to be 40 by 80-ft. It cost \$9,000. Work began on the building in the spring of 1873. Hiram Huston, Eli Layton, Barney Eckel and Will English went to a stone quarry south of town and dug out the first stones for the foundation. During the 34 years that the building stood, men's quartet, an orchestra and the "Ladies Aid" organization was formed. It lasted until 1907 when it was condemned unsafe for use. The last service was held in this church, on Easter Sunday, April 19, 1908.

A new building was completed on March 7, 1909. On the same day it was completed, the Kandy Kitchen Girls donated the pipe organ. It cost \$1,500 and is called the "Frances Archer Gard Memorial" organ. The first organist was Ethel Hurst Gorham, an original Kandy Kitchen Girl. The stained-glass windows also date back to the construction of the church. The first sermon in that building by Bishop Robert McIntyre preached. The new building left the church \$16,000 in debt, but during three services held over that weekend, the money was raised and the building was paid off. DR. W. E. Parr of Kokomo had organized the fund-raising services.

In 1985, Herb and Marion Trefz gave a generous contribution to the church. Three years later, the money helped to add a chapel, a meeting room, an office, a foyer, restrooms and an elevator to the First United Methodist Church. Since June 1988, David Deal has been the pastor.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH



Catholics first began to settle in Clark County in 1837. Most of them came from Ireland and Germany and traveled from the south by the Wabash River and from the east by the National Trail. The German Catholics settled south of Marshall, while the Irish Catholics began their settlements east of Marshall. At the time, Father Buteux of Terre Haute celebrated mass and administered sacraments in their homes. In 1847, Father High Brady from Eston, Pennsylvania was sent to Marshall to become the first resident pastor. He at once hired Major Griffith to build the first church, which was a small building with stained glass windows. It was located at the corner of Fulton and Market Streets (Tenth and Locust). Father Brady made several trips back east to collect funds for the church. He died while on a trip to visit the bishop in Chicago. The bishop sent Father Nichols from Chicago, but he only stayed for four months. Father Ryan of North Arm was put in charge of the Catholic Church of Marshall and he finished the building of the church. During this time, Col. William B. Archer gave a plot of land on the west edge of town to the parish for a cemetery. Father Ryan served the parish until 1860, when Father D. Byrne became pastor, followed by Father Herbert Hoffman and Father H. J. Hoven. In 1862, Father Hoven laid the stone for the foundation of the present building, but it was not built until 1868. In April, 1867,

Father J. A. Mark became the pastor. At the completion of the church, he purchased forty-two pews for \$115 and two freestanding confessionals for \$40. The church's bell was cast on 1869.

In the fall of 1876, Father Charles Kuhlman became pastor. During his term, a Catholic school was started in the 1880's and was run by the Dominican Sisters. It was located west of the church. It was closed and torn down around the turn of the century. He also wrote a Catholic newspaper called "The Church Progress," which was published in Marshall and read throughout east central Illinois. In 1891 Father David Moroney succeeded him. While he was the pastor, he contributed by adding a wrought iron fence and arch to the cemetery, adding the spire and cross placed on the church tower, enlarging the choir loft, obtaining an organ and installing the present stained-glass windows.

Monsignor Michael Donahue holds the distinction of having served the parish longest. He served for about 30 years from 1939 until 1968. He died on September 9, 1971 and is buried in St. Mary's Cemetery. Father Joseph Murray became pastor in 1968. He purchased the altar facing the people and added carpeting and draperies to the church and rectory and began improvements on the cemetery.

In 1990, plans were initiated to build a parish center behind the church. It was completed in November of 1991. The current pastor is Father Jeff Grant.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH



Members of the Christian Church, who had located in Marshall, first met in 1856 in the Clark County Courthouse. Later the church was moved to a log schoolhouse before building. The sanctuary on Locust Street was built in 1859. The first minister was Henry Musgrave. In 1905, the building was remodeled because of the need for room, when Sunday school became an important factor of the church. In 1925, the E. E. Howell residence, across the street from the church, was made for a parsonage. Also, in the same year, a two-story addition was added on to the church. Again, in 1948, an addition was made to the building. More classrooms and a basement were added.

As the congregation continued to grow and grow, new property was purchased next to the high school. In 1993, the construction of a new building was complete. The present pastor is Father Jeff Noel. The design of the First Christian Church was the same as all other Christian Churches of that era. The church was rectangular in shape, with two entrances, on each side of the front, with aisles running to the rear. The men used one side and the women the other. In case of parents with children, the father and mother entered their respective doors, then sat in the same seat on either side of the partition in their center, that they might assist each other in caring for their children. In 1905, the building was remodeled by moving the pulpit to the north-west corner, changing to one entrance in the south-east corner, elevating the rear floors installing up-to-date pews, erecting a choir loft and adding a small room, under which was added a modern heating plant for the building.

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



In 1857, the Presbyterian Church purchased a building site in Marshall at the corner of Chestnut and Michigan Streets. The trees on the lot were cut down and a frame building was built. The lumber from the trees cut down was used as the church's first pews.

On May 31, 1904, the Presbyterian congregation sold their building to the United Brethren Church for \$200. The congregation had not grown as anticipated and had been vacant for many years. The first pastor of the new church, Rev. S. O. Stoltz, expended \$600 to add a vestibule, an alcove and a new foundation to the church building.

In 1946, the Evangelical Church Conference and the United Brethren Church Conferences met in Johnstown, Pa. They united and changed the name to the Evangelistic United Brethren Church. A year later, the members of the Marshall church chose the name Marshall Trinity Evangelical United Brethren Church. The name again changed in April of 1968, when the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Church combined, to form the Trinity United Methodist Church. Also, in 1968, an educational unit was built, providing space for eight classrooms and restroom facilities.

In 1993, the plans to build a new church building were approved, with the groundbreaking in 1994. On April 2, 1995, it was completed and was dedicated to the glory of God. The current reverend is Rev. Douglas Elmore.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

On Feb. 12, 1891, the First Baptist Church was organized. Reverends R. Wiley, T. J. Thornton and R. O. Hawkins had secured the privilege to hold Baptist services in the First Christian Church in Marshall until they organized their own. On May 16, 1938, the church voted to disband and sell their meetinghouse to the Marshall American Legion. The proceeds from the sales went to the Canni Baptist Children's Home. When the church disbanded, their members went to various churches of other faiths, as well as some to nearby Baptist Churches.

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST



Persons interested in Christian Science first met at the home of a high school music teacher for a testimony meeting in Marshall on December 2, 1918. The meeting was held to determine if enough people were interested to hold regular, informal public Christian Science services. Their first public meeting was held on January 5, 1919 in the front room of the Pythian Theater Building. It was a regular Sunday church service.

In 1924, it was unanimously voted to become a church instead of a society. The Mother Church, the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Mass., accepted the application. The location at 614 Pine Street was obtained in 1953. It was remodeled to make a church auditorium, reading room and Sunday school rooms. On Sunday, February 28, 1954, the first service was held in the new church home. The church closed its doors in 1993.

WESLEYAN CHURCH



Rev. R. S. Wheeldon of West Terre Huate, Ind, began the Wesleyan Church of Marshall. It was formerly known as the Pilgrim Holiness Church. In answer to a letter from Laura Ogle, Rev. Wheelman came and held a tent meeting on South 6th Street in 1921. A few Christians, under the leadership of Rev. Wheeldon, rented the Evangelical Church building at the corner of 10th and Plum Streets. The congregation outgrew that church and in 1931 it was torn down. It had been 81 years old. A new building was erected on the same site and dedicated on September 27 of that year. Since then, the church has been remodeled inside and out. The Pilgrim Holiness Church changed to the Wesleyan Church in 1968 when it merged with the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America. The current pastor is Rev. Paul Burress.

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE



In the summer of 1941, under the leadership of Rev. and Mrs. Robert Hale and Rev. Elston, the Marshall Church of Nazarene held a tent meeting on South Sixth Street in a little triangular park by the Trinity Church. After the tent meetings ended, a little mission church began in a building at the corner of Seventh and Locust Streets. On February 15, 1942, Rev. Ralph Cozad organized a small church. At the time, there were 15 charter members. This building is no longer there. The church has moved two other times, once to the location of Fourth and Plum Streets. The building there was bought from the American Legion and has since been bulldozed away. It is currently the parking lot for the Baptist Church. The current location is South Ninth Street, which was dedicated in 1977. The current pastor is Rev. Dennis Wright.

MARSHALL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH



Rev. W. A. Fusion, local missionary for the Westfield Baptist Association, came to Marshall and held a two-week tent revival on Pine Street. A council of 30 members from Mill Creek and Freedom Baptist churches, who were interested in a church in Marshall, met on July 9, 1944. The group met in the Odd Fellows Hall until the spring of 1945 when a yellow house was purchased on Third and Archer. The house was raised and a basement was added. It

was dedicated January 9, 1949. An auditorium was also added and completed in August 1956. An educational wing and fellowship area was added and dedicated on August 18, 1974. The church celebrated 50 years in July of 1994 and was debt free. The current minister is Rev. Brian Fuller.

MARSHALL CHURCH OF CHRIST



Members of the Church of Christ first started to meet at the home of Grace Mills at 202 Plum St. in 1947. After about six months, they moved to the old firehouse and then to 816 Hickory St. Their last move was to the present location on N. 2nd St. Construction began in the spring of 1961 after the money was raised. The building was built by members of the church and it was dedicated Oct. 16, 1961. The mortgage was paid off in September 1972.

Many different ministers from neighboring communities preached here on Sundays. The first full-time minister was Alec Dickson, who helped design the building along with Clayton Kuhn. He served for eight years. Grady Latham followed him, but he only stayed for a year before going back to college. When he left, Larry Van Devender and Tom Montgomery filled in as part-time preachers until the end of June 1975. Many other preachers followed them with the present preacher being Carl Moran.

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH

On March 29, 1949, the first Lutheran worship service was conducted in Marshall. The service was held in the American Legion Hall under the direction of Pastor Gerken. The hall served as a temporary worship quarters of the small congregation.

The congregation was officially organized on May 3, 1985. Not long after the organization of the congregation, plans were made to build a new chapel. The late Harry H. Kuhn aided in financially to the congregation's need for a new chapel. On June 14, 1955, three and one-half acres were purchased on the southwest corner of Myrtle and Sixth Streets in Marshall from Harry Green.

Through a bequest, a grant, and funds from the Mission Board of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, Concordia was able to purchase the portable chapel from the Trinity Lutheran Church of Urbana. The building was completely refurbished, shipped to Marshall, and erected as a permanent structure on the purchased land. The cornerstone was laid on October 27, 1957, the first worship service was held on December 22, 1957, and the dedication was held on May 18, 1958.

Various ministers faithfully served the Concordia Lutheran Church. On July 17, 1960, Rev. Henry Kuhn was installed as pastor of Concordia. He was followed by a number of ministers. The final minister of the church was Deacon Gary Shively. He served from June 1995, until the closing of the church in April 1996. The final service to the church was held on Easter Sunday, April 7, 1996. The Concordia Lutheran Church was dissolved on April 8, 1996.

TRUTH TABERNACLE



Truth Tabernacle's first church service was held on Sunday, June 4, 1996, at 2:00 p.m. It took place in a rented church building located at 702 Sycamore St. The church began in 1995, when Pastor Moses had a desire to begin a United Pentecostal Church in Marshall.

After renting the church building on Sycamore St. for only one year, the church purchased the former Concordia Lutheran Church building on S. Rt. #1. Upon moving to the new location, the 2:00 p.m. Sunday service was changed to Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening. The church also holds children's ministry, K.I.D.S. Church, which is held on Sunday mornings during the adult worship service. The congregation has grown from an attendance of two to an average of 38 for the month of December 1997. A baptismal tank has been installed in the newly purchased building.

NEW LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD



The New Life Assembly of God located at 1609 South Eighth Street was founded on September 1, 1996. The Reverend Tim Foster ministers to eighty members, with services twice a week. The New Life Church offers Sunday Life Group classes, Sunday morning and evening worship services, and a Wednesday evening service. Current ministries include Royal Rangers for boys, Missionettes for girls, monthly adult night out, Joy Fellowship for women, Tuesday Ladies Bible Study, and the Terre Haute Federal Penitentiary. The Assemblies of God formed in 1914 in the midst of a sweeping global revival. In this revival people began speaking in unknown languages, outstanding miracles and signs of God's presence were openly shown. People were saved and lives were magnificently changed. Participants of the revival were given the name Pentecostal.

People seeking a strong religious church settled the city of Marshall. That accounts for the vast number of churches in our small community. To learn more about the churches and their histories, we gathered information from books, old newspapers, and conducted interviews for oral histories. Throughout our search for information, we interviewed Mrs. Nelli Wallace of the Church of Nazarene, Mrs. Virginia Shawler of St. Mary's Church, and Mrs. Eileen Ellington of the First Christian Church.