The history of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church may not be one of brilliant achievement viewed from material standards, but when all factors are taken into consideration its lustre remains undimmed. Founded in an early period of the Civil War, in a pioneer community built upon virgin prairie lands in a young commonwealth; organized by a handful of Freedmen - just released from the chains of slavery, and a few other Negroes; with only a few of their group to draw upon; with an economic handicap inherent in a situation of a settlement of impecunious emigrants, with little work - at small wages, and their own personal struggle for existence and to eke out a competence for the proverbial "rainy day"; with a little financial assistance from their white neighbors, who too were struggling to erect churches, schools, and a College, and create business; with little or no educational background upon which to draw, its founders with almost prophetic vision, laid a most ennduring foundation for a building that was to be a sacred heritage to posterity in succeeding generations, serving them with ever increasing usefulness and effectiveness; and erected an enduring monument to typify their struggles, aspirations and achievements. To their vision, consecration, and dedication of self to a great cause; and to their singleness of purpose and practical sense that prompted them to translate their dreams into objective reality; we are today, their beneficiaries, deeply indebted for this priceless legacy.