

# Virtual reality re-creation of iconic Indy church to be revealed to public

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Bethel AME Church. Credit: Indiana University

The 3-D digital re-creation and preservation of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, the oldest African-American church in Indianapolis, will be unveiled Oct. 6 to the public.

Students and faculty at the IU School of Informatics and Computing at IUPUI have protected the church's history and legacy with 3-D digital

preservation techniques using [virtual reality](#).

The event, hosted by the Bethel AME Church and the School of Informatics and Computing, is open to the public free of charge. It will take place from 4 to 6 p.m. in the Mini Auditorium of the IPS Office of Racial Equity at Crispus Attucks High School, 1140 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St. The entrance to the [school](#)'s parking lot is on West 11th Street. Access is through Door 10.

"Many people have visited or attended special events at the Bethel AME Church, once located at 414 W. Vermont St., and now they have the opportunity to revisit the church in virtual reality," said Andrea Copeland, associate professor and chair of the Department of Library and Information Science.

"They will experience a unique method of preserving a historic place," said media arts and science faculty member Zeb Wood. "Through the use of a VR headset, they will see the inside of the church's sanctuary to scale. Participants will be able to move around inside of the church, and soon they will be able to interact with and learn about its members and their contributions to the city of Indianapolis."

The church was 3-D scanned for reference to become an interactive, informal and formal educational space that instigates innovative, collaborative learning opportunities.

The [church](#)'s congregation was shown the virtual reality re-creation on Sept. 10.

Bethel AME Church played vital roles in the Underground Railroad, the founding of Indiana's NAACP, and the School for Black Children in Indianapolis.

Provided by Indiana University

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