

## **Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church (founded 1843, building 1925)**

*291 Park Avenue, Huntington*

The Bethel A.M.E. Church is the oldest African-American Church in Huntington and is also one of only two North Shore African Methodist Episcopal Churches still holding services. The Church has served as a center of African-American community life for 156 years.

The original incorporators of the Church were brickyard workers employed in the Crossman Brickyards on Huntington's West Neck. Unfortunately, the Church's early records were destroyed in a fire. The founders of the church and their families are buried in a small church-yard cemetery located to the rear of the church. Eleven headstones survive, but archaeological study has shown that graves lie beyond marker locations.

The Church purchased the property on which it is currently located in 1844 from the Huntington Methodist Church. The Huntington Methodist Church had erected a small house of worship there in 1837-38 that had more recently been used by them for Sunday school classes. This building became the first church building for the Bethel A.M.E. congregation. Immediately adjacent to this property was St. John's Episcopal Church and its cemetery. However, when the Episcopal Church burned in 1905, it was relocated to its present site on Main Street, leaving only the Episcopal Cemetery on Park Avenue. In 1907 a parsonage was built alongside the Bethel A.M.E. Church. The current A.M.E. building was constructed in 1925 by the Rev. George A. Lonzo, replacing the original structure.



The present structure is a wood-frame vernacular church building with Colonial Revival and Gothic details. Standing one and one-half stories divided into three bays by a central pediment entrance pavilion, this gable-roofed church is sheathed in clapboard and shingle. In addition to round headed stained glass windows (four on each side and paired above the door), the Church has a large pointed arch stained glass window behind the altar. The interior has original woodwork, pressed tin ceiling, and gothic-styled oak altar appointments.

*For more information contact the  
**Bethel A.M.E. Church**  
291 Park Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743  
631-549-5014*