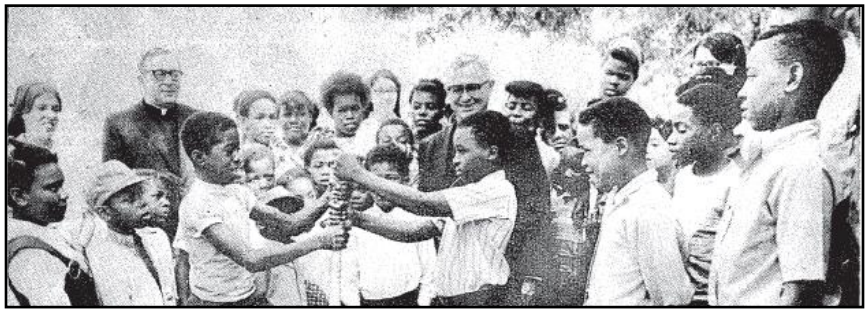
Preliminary Summary of Information

Submitted to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in February 2021



Pentecostal Church of Holiness (Formerly Our Lady of Lourdes)

4208 W. 15th Street

CITY OF CHICAGO
Lori E. Lightfoot, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
Maurice D. Cox, Commissioner

On Cover: Bishop Dempsey, of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, watches on with Rev. Raymond Pavis (left) and sisters of the church school as kids choose teams for a neighborhood baseball game. Drain, "Lourdes Parish, A Light That Shines," *Chicago Defender*, April 21, 1973: 25.

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual building, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, Planning, Historic Preservation & Sustainability Division, City Hall, 121 North LaSalle Street, Room 1000, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; web site: www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks

This Preliminary Summary of Information is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within the final landmark designation ordinance as approved by City Council should be regarded as final.

CONTENTS

Location Map 2

North Lawndale and the Settlement of Czech Chicago 4
Early Development of North Lawndale 4
Czech Settlement in Chicago During the Nineteenth Century 5

Beginnings as Our Lady of Lourdes Parish 6
Parish Founding and Growth, 1889 to 1930 6

Construction and Design of the Church Building 9
The Architectural Style of the Pentecostal Church of Holiness 11
Exterior Description of the Church 14
Interior Description of the Church 18

Architect Louis Guenzel 18

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and North Lawndale: 1933 to 1974 21
Our Lady of Lourdes and Bishop Michael R. Dempsey: 1965 to 1974 23

Later History: 1974 to 2015 24

Criteria for Designation 28

Significant Historical and Architectural Features 32

Bibliography 34

Pentecostal Church of Holiness (Formerly Our Lady of Lourdes)

4208 West 15th Street

Date of Construction: 1931 to 1932
Architect: Louis Guenzel

The distinctive bell tower of the Pentecostal Church of Holiness rises proudly above the intersection of 15th Street and South Keeler Avenue in Chicago's North Lawndale Community Area. The church and its former Catholic parish were originally known as Our Lady of Lourdes. The parish was closed in 2005 and in 2015 the church building became the Pentecostal Church of Holiness.

The brick church was designed by architect Louis Guenzel and is a handsome, if humble, example of the Romanesque Revival style combined with the simplicity and technological advancement of the Art Deco style. It possesses a strong and historic connection to Chicago's North Lawndale community where it played a significant role in the civil rights movement and has continued to support social justice within the community.

Since its opening in 1932, the church has served as an important center of worship for the community's parishioners of Catholic faith. Originally a Roman Catholic parish, known as Our Lady of Lourdes, the humble Romanesque Revival style church building was the achievement of a predominantly Czech-speaking parish, which was founded in 1892. During the early to mid twentieth century North Lawndale became a destination for new residents who were seeking jobs, better housing, and a less congested place to live.

Following the church building's completion in 1932, the greater North Lawndale area gradually grew to include Irish and Polish families, and it became the center of Chicago's Jewish community. By the mid 1950s, African Americans were also attracted to North Lawndale's jobs, housing, and verdant residential blocks.

As an anchor of North Lawndale's Catholic community, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, became the spiritual home for new Catholic African American residents. Beginning in the 1960s, under the leadership of Reverend Michael Dempsey, Our Lady of Lourdes initiated and supported new programs to address the community's poor housing conditions and to improve job opportunities. The parish's efforts were recognized in 1967, when Vice President Hubert Humphrey visited the church and led to Father Dempsey's consecration as a Bishop in 1968. Over the following decades the Pentecostal Church of Holiness remained a strong anchor within

The Pentecostal Church of Holiness was completed in 1932 for Czech-speaking Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic parish in Chicago's North Lawndale community area.

The Romanesque Revival style church also has influences of the Art Deco and is clad in multi-colored orange-colored brick with light-colored cast-stone trim.

The Pentecostal Church of Holiness (highlighted in black above) is located in Chicago's North Lawndale Community Area on the northwest corner of 15th Street and Keeler Avenue at 4208 West 15th Street.

the community, even as the parish's membership declined significantly between the 1970s and 2000s.

By 2005, monthly attendance at Our Lady of Lourdes parish had dropped to fewer than 100, which resulted in the Archdiocese's decision to close the church along with several other area churches with declining memberships. The church was initially rented in 2015 and then purchased in 2016 by the Pentecostal Church of Holiness, which has continued to provide educational access, equitable opportunities, and job training to residents, as well as working to strengthen the North Lawndale neighborhood.

The Pentecostal Church of Holiness is located at 4208 West 15th Street in Chicago's North Lawndale Community Area. The building is color-coded "orange" in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey (CHRS), which preliminarily identifies the church building as significant to the surrounding neighborhood.

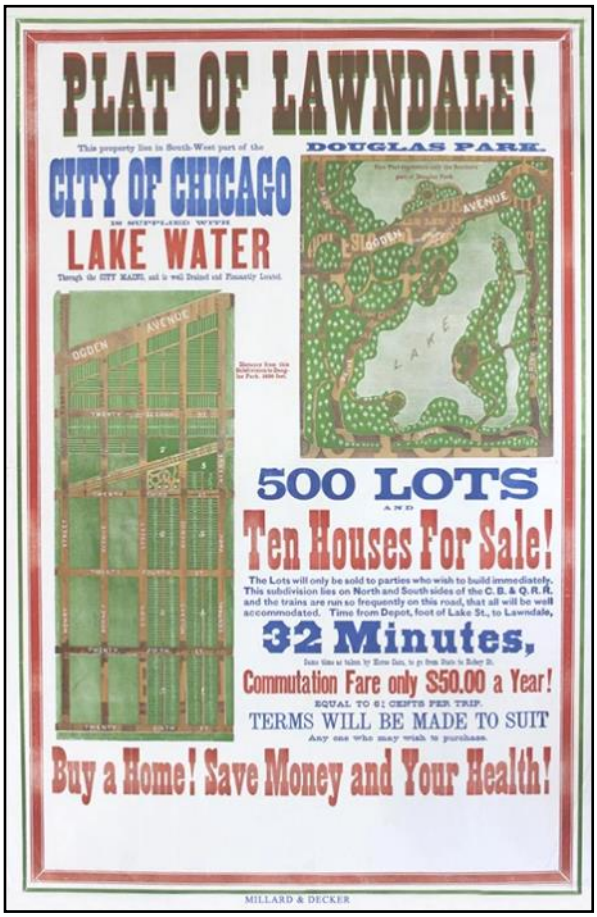
The Pentecostal Church of Holiness (formerly Our Lady of Lourdes) stands prominently on the northwest corner of 15th Street and Keeler Avenue. A tall corner bell tower visually anchors the church to the site.

North Lawndale and the Settlement of Czech Chicago

The Pentecostal Church of Holiness has served as a place of worship for Chicago's North Lawndale community and its Catholic parishioners since its opening in 1931. Over time, the church has grown and changed with the surrounding community but has maintained its mission and purpose to provide area residents with a place to worship and to come together.

Early Development of North Lawndale

North Lawndale is approximately five miles west of Chicago's Loop on the city's West Side. During the mid nineteenth century, the area lay beyond the borders of Chicago and was occupied by truck farms. Dutch and English farmers settled in the area and cultivated the fertile prairie land. A former portage trail between Lake Michigan and the Des Plaines River opened in 1848 as Southwest Plank Road (now known as Ogden Avenue), one the region's first wood-planked toll roads. However, it was not until the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad was extended through the area that farmland began to be subdivided into smaller suburban residential tracts. In 1869, the City of Chicago annexed a large tract of land west of the city bordered by Western Avenue on the east and Pulaski Avenue (historically known as Crawford Avenue) on the west. One of the earliest subdivisions was a residential suburb developed by the real estate firm of Millard & Decker, which called the subdivision "Lawndale." After the fire of 1871, new residents and businesses were attracted to the area. In addition, the city's boulevard system and Douglass Park (renamed for the abolitionist Frederick Douglass in 2020) were laid out and built during the 1870s.



At left is an 1870s advertisement for lots for sale in the newly established subdivision of Lawndale, which was created by the real estate firm of Millard & Decker just west of Douglas Park.

Special Collections, Chicago Public Library

Lawndale's open land and new residential tracts drew manufacturing companies to the area, which built large new factories. One of the first such plants that opened was the McCormick Reaper Works (later known as International Harvester). It built a new plant at 26th Street and Western Avenue in 1873 after their earlier plant burned in the fire of 1871. Additional manufacturers built factories along the South Branch of the Chicago River and north along Western Avenue and the St. Louis & Pittsburg Railroad right-of-way.

In 1889, the City of Chicago again annexed outlying lands, this time the largest single annexation in the city's history, which included over 125 square miles and over

225,000 residents. In North Lawndale, annexation shifted the city's western border farther west from Pulaski to the Belt Line Railroad that ran along Kenton Avenue (Kenton was later vacated exclusively for railroad use). By this time, Czech immigrants were settling in the area of Lawndale, west of Pulaski and between Roosevelt Road (historically known as 12th Street) and 16th Street.

Czech Settlement in Chicago During the Nineteenth Century

Czech immigrants began arriving in Chicago in the mid nineteenth century. Most arrived from the Czech lands of Bohemia and Moravia in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (these regions are part of the modern-day Czech Republic). Czechs left homelands seeking religious and political freedom, and were drawn to prospects of open land, jobs, and opportunities in the United States. By the late 1850s a small Czech neighborhood called Praha developed on the city's Near West Side in the area of Roosevelt Road and Canal Street. Czechs who maintained their national Catholic faith organized St. Václav (the first Czech Catholic parish in Chicago) and St. Wenceslaus Church in 1863. Because Catholicism was the national faith of Czech lands in Europe, immigrants, especially those seeking religious freedom, often rejected Catholicism once they arrived in the U.S. and turned either to other religions or became non-religious.

The Chicago Fire of 1871 destroyed both St. Wenceslaus Church and the Praha neighborhood. Displaced residents settled farther southwest and developed a community that became known as Pilsen, along 18th Street and Blue Island Avenue. Pilsen developed quickly during the 1870s and 1880s, with a variety of Czech-owned business, benevolent societies, organizations, schools, and several Catholic and Protestant churches. By the late 1880s, Pilsen had become Chicago's port of entry for new Czech immigrants. At the same time, Pilsen was growing overcrowded. Residents started leaving Pilsen in the late 1880s for new jobs and open land available in North Lawndale. Anchored by the broad Douglas and Independence Boulevards with their park-like medians, and with Douglas Park on its eastern border and Garfield Park to the north, North Lawndale had much more expansive green space than the older Pilsen neighborhood.

During the late 1880s, the real estate company of William Andrews Merigold (1850-1918), a Canadian immigrant, acquired acres of unimproved land in and around North Lawndale. Although the company was not the only investor in this area at the time, after the 1889 annexation of tracts west of Pulaski, the W. A. Merigold & Co. became one of the largest sellers of real estate in North Lawndale. Marigold agents hosted picnics to draw Czechs in Pilsen to Merigold's North Lawndale subdivision. To Catholic Czechs, the neighborhood that developed became known simply as "Merigold." Later the area also became known as *Novy Tabor* or New Camp. New Czech institutions opened in Merigold, such as the Slovanska *Lipa/ Sokol Tabor* (Czech Fraternal & Gymnastic Organization) at 13th Street and Karlov Avenue in 1890 (not extant), as well as new churches such as Our Lady of Lourdes. In addition to Merigold, another nearby Czech community included *Česká Kalifornie* (Czech California), in the vicinity of 26th Street and California Avenue, which expanded westward to Pulaski Avenue to form the Czech Lawndale-Crawford neighborhood.

W. A. MERIGOLD & CO.,
156-158 LaSalle Street. Telephone 976.
Real Estate Renting, Loans.
For Sale.
Lots and Acres on the beautiful high, wooded, ridge, on on the line of the Chicago Central R. R. Most beautiful sites for homes of any near Chicago. Convenient to Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific stations. Look at these properties. Terms easy.

W. A. Merigold & Co. was an important developer in the Lawndale area. The area in the vicinity of the Pentecostal Church of Holiness was largely subdivided and sold by the firm beginning in the 1880s.

The former Our Lady of Lourdes Parish acquired land from the firm on the northeast corner of 15th Street and Keeler Avenue, across from the current church.

***The Real Estate and Building Journal,* June 11, 1892: 757.**

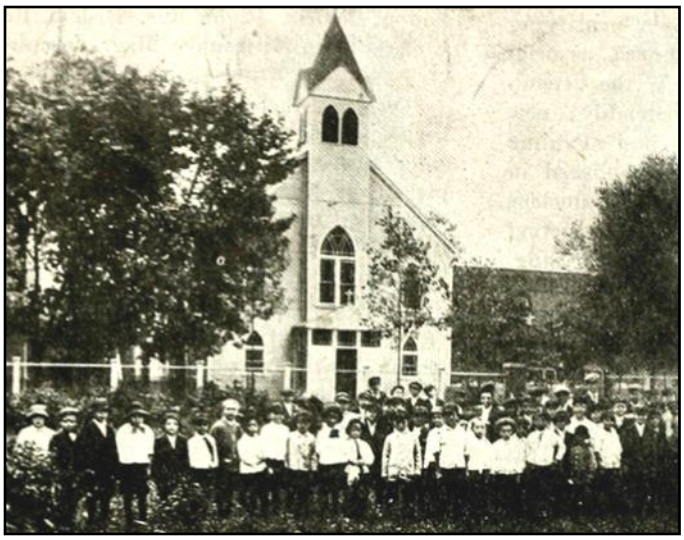
Beginnings as Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

Parish Founding and Growth, 1889 to 1930

In 1889, Merigold & Co. agent Francis Vokoun acquired three lots for a new Bohemian Catholic church on the east side of Keeler Avenue at 15th Street, across from the current site of the Pentecostal Church of Holiness. An additional three lots were acquired for the church site by Rev. Joseph Molitor, who was the pastor of St. Václav Parish. Vokoun organized a new benevolent society, which held bazaars to help finance the new parish. In 1892, Archbishop Patrick A. Feehan gave permission to establish Our Lady of Lourdes parish to serve the Czech Catholics who were moving into North Lawndale. The parish was named after a series of apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in and around Lourdes, France in 1858. All services for the new parish were held in the Czech language. Proceeds from the benevolent society contributed to the construction of a $6,000 wooden church building on Keeler, which opened in October 1892. The new church had two ground-level classrooms and an upper-level sanctuary with seating for 374. It was led by Rev. John Nepomucene Jaeger, who at the time was pastor of St. Procopius Church, which stands at 18th and Allport streets in the Pilsen neighborhood. An 1892 account of the church's opening in *The New World* reported that:

> *The new Church of Our Lady of Lourdes … is for the use of the Bohemians who are now very numerous in that vicinity, indeed all through the city. This is the eighth church in Chicago for the use of the people of this nationality.*

Our Lady of Lourdes parish continued to grow into the twentieth century and served an area bounded by Van Buren Street on the north, Cermak Road on the south, Long Avenue on the west, and Western Avenue on the east. (The parish is distinct from the historically English-speaking Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, which was also organized in 1892 in the North Side Ravenswood neighborhood; this parish built an extant limestone-clad church at Leland and Ashland avenues in 1914, which was moved and expanded in 1929). The Czech-speaking Our Lady of Lourdes parish on South Keeler Avenue continued to expand during the late 1890s and early 1900s. A new larger wooden school and a rectory were built beside the church in 1897 (demolished), and in 1904 an brick school with apartments for the school's sisters was built on 15th Street (extant). The continual expansion of the church site over time kept the parish in constant debt.



The Czech-speaking Our Lady of Lourdes Parish was established in 1892 and built a frame church on the east side of Keeler Avenue, north of 15th Street (not extant). At left, children of the parish school pose in front of the original church building around 1905.

The Archdiocese of Chicago: Antecedents and Development **(Des Plaines, IL: St. Mary's Training School Press, 1920): 436.**

At right is a view of the intersection of Keeler and 15th Street, looking northeast.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish grew during the 1890s and 1900s with the addition of classrooms. The frame church is on the left in this 1906 photograph. The extant brick school addition on the right was built in 1904.

Archdiocese of Chicago's Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Records Center.

At left is a view looking south along Karlov Avenue from 15th Street in 1906. The caption reads: Typical street in the heart of Merigold—15th and Karlov.

The neighborhood was briefly known as Merigold after the real estate investor William A. Merigold who subdivided and sold much of the land in the area.

Archdiocese of Chicago's Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Records Center.

The greater North Lawndale neighborhood continued to grow as well. By 1900, Chicago's Czech population was claimed to be the largest outside of Prague, Czech Republic and Vienna, Austria. Two additional parishes, St. Finbarr at 14th Street and Harding Avenue in 1900 and St. Attracta Church at 13th Street and 48th Court in Cicero, were founded to serve the increasing numbers of Catholic families (both church buildings have been replaced by modern churches). In 1902, the extension of the Douglas Park Branch of the Metropolitan West Side Elevated Railway (now the Pink Line) from Western to Pulaski prompted additional residential development of houses and flats in the area. The line was again extended to Cicero in 1907. The added transportation lines, as well as the availability of new jobs, contributed to a housing boom and the arrival of families of Irish and Polish descent. Sears, Roebuck & Co. built its vast mail order facility and administrative offices at Homan Avenue and Arthington Street in 1905 (a designated Chicago Landmark). Czech schools and institutions dotted the entire neighborhood. The *Frantisek Palacky* or the Czech Freethinkers School built a brick school building in 1909 at 1525 South Kedvale Avenue. A second Freethinker school was built at 2548 South Homan Avenue in 1911. In 1912, the elite club *Ceska Beseda* (Bohemian Club) opened at 3659 West Douglas Boulevard.

Rev. Alois J. Mergl (1871-1943).
***The Archdiocese of* Chicago:436.**

Reverend Alois J. Mergl (1871-1943), who was born in Vysoké Mýto, Czech Republic, became pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes in 1906. He was one of the church's longest serving pastors and led it through two significant periods, including neighborhood changes and the Great Depression. In the late 1910s Czech families started leaving the neighborhood for the western suburbs of Cicero, Berwyn, Riverside, and Brookfield. At the same time, Russian Jewish families moved into North Lawndale from the congested neighborhood around Maxwell and Halsted streets. They arrived in the community for the same reasons that had drawn Catholic Czechs at the turn-of-the-century. The influx of new residents significantly offset the Czech population that had left for the suburbs.

Between 1910 and 1920, North Lawndale added 18,000 residents, the majority of whom were Orthodox Jews with Eastern European roots who were migrating west from the Maxwell Street area and were settling in North Lawndale as the community's "second generation" neighborhood. North Lawndale had newer housing and small flat buildings than did the Maxwell Street neighborhood. Its buildings were typically larger and had more modern interiors that allowed for more gracious living. New residents acquired remaining vacant land and built large, multi-unit apartment buildings that could accommodate greater demand for housing. By 1920, Orthodox Jews were the dominant population in the community.

Despite cultural and religious changes in the greater North Lawndale neighborhood, Our Lady of Lourdes continued to serve a large and strong Catholic parish. In 1921, Pastor Mergl succeeded in paying off the church's outstanding debt, which he accomplished through the generous donations of parishioners. The church's success could also be seen in its thriving school, which had begun with 30 students in 1892 and had 225 by 1921. The school offered a variety of coursework, including business courses and language classes to reinforce the Czech language. The first graduate of Our Lady of Lourdes School was ordained as a reverend in 1925.

By 1930, North Lawndale had become the largest Jewish community in the city, with over 112,000 or 46 percent of the community's population being comprised of Orthodox Jews. Over

forty Orthodox synagogues were located in Lawndale, with six along Douglas Boulevard alone. The neighborhood's main commercial street, Roosevelt Road, was lined with stores, offices, and theaters. To the north, Sears, Roebuck & Co. continued to expand its giant mail-order campus which provided thousands of jobs, many for North Lawndale residents. To the west stood the Western Electric complex, another large employer, across the city border in Cicero. Campbell's Soup, Zenith Radio Corporation, and Sunbeam also had large factories in the area. Graceful greystones and handsome apartment buildings lined Douglas and Independence boulevards, while typically smaller houses and two- and three-flats could be found on side streets. Transportation to downtown was convenient with two branches of the Metropolitan West Side Rapid Transit Co. lines serving the neighborhood; these are now the CTA Blue and Pink lines.

Construction and Design of the Church Building

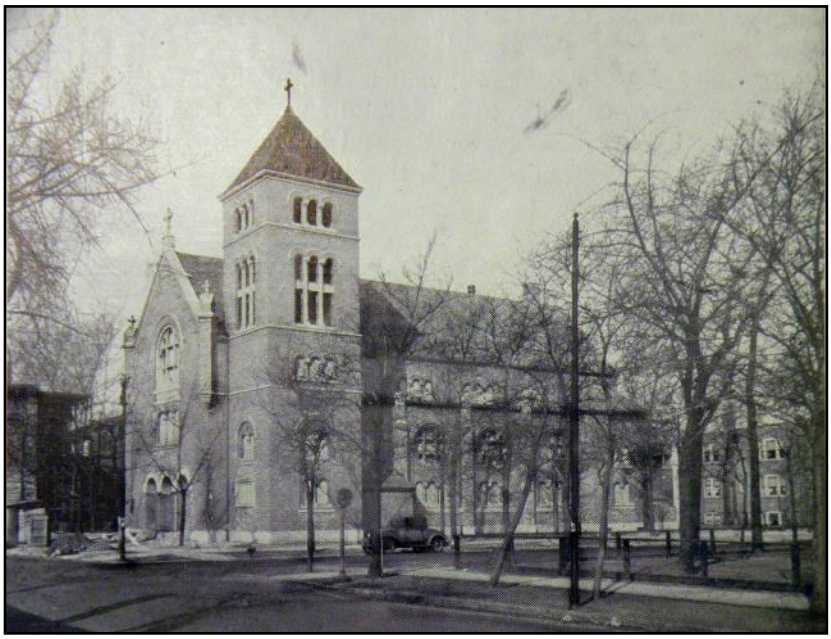
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish had long prepared for its future and purchased land near the church for anticipated needs. Between 1909 and 1910, Pastor Mergl negotiated the purchase of six lots along Keeler at 15th Street across from the parish's frame church. Mergl used the site to raise sheep, but in 1928 the church's Holy Name Society proposed the idea of building a new church to the pastor. Serious preparation for a new church soon commenced with the proposed church planned to be built on the six-lot corner site. Fundraising dinners and parishioner donations were collected through 1931, by which point over $42,000 had been collected. Although the Great Depression significantly stalled or ended construction projects across the city, its overall effect was to reduce construction costs. As a result, the Archbishop Cardinal George Mundelein approved a loan to the parish of $25,000 for the construction of a new church. Despite this funding, Pastor Mergl also contributed his personal funds to cover construction expenses. Ultimately, although construction costs declined, some materials needed to be substituted for less costly materials. This may explain why cast-stone was used for all exterior trim in place of limestone, and why similar polished cast-stone became a key interior finish in place of marble.

The parish selected Prussian architect Louis Guenzel to design the new church. Church histories note that Pastor Mergl may have influenced the design of the church building to resemble a church that he attended in his hometown. Guenzel's design was not explicitly historical in influence. In addition to referencing the Romanesque Revival style, it also presents a seemingly Modern simplicity with its clean lines and round sanctuary windows with bold amber and clear art glass. The church cost $73,000 and was planned to have auditorium seating for 500 parishioners. In addition, an 80-foot-tall tower was to anchor the church at the intersection of Keeler and 15th Street.

In September 1931, a groundbreaking ceremony was held, marking the beginning of construction. With the cornerstone laid in November, construction proceeded through 1932. Frank Sedlak's Sons masons and general contractors completed the exterior masonry walls by January 1932. The interior was finished and decorated by The Burke-Adams Company by mid-June 1932. Finally, on June 18, 1932, the last Holy Mass was held at the parish's original wood frame church, and the following day the Blessed Sacrament was brought in a solemn procession of clergy and parishioners to the alter of the new church. The event was celebrated with organ music played on the parish's original organ, which was dismantled from the old church and reinstalled in the new sanctuary (it was later replaced with an electronic organ). The parish's old church was remodeled into a parish hall, and the new church was dedicated on September 25, 1932.

At right is a photograph of the groundbreaking for the parish's new church in September 1931.

Archdiocese of Chicago's Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Records Center.



The exterior masonry of the church building was completed by January 1932. By March, when the photo at left was taken, the interior finishing and decoration was well underway.

Archdiocese of Chicago's Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Records Center.

On June 18, 1932, the last Holy Mass was held at the Parish's original frame church. At right, a procession the following day brings the Blessed Sacrament to the alter in the new church.

Archdiocese of Chicago's Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Records Center.

The Architectural Style of the Pentecostal Church of Holiness

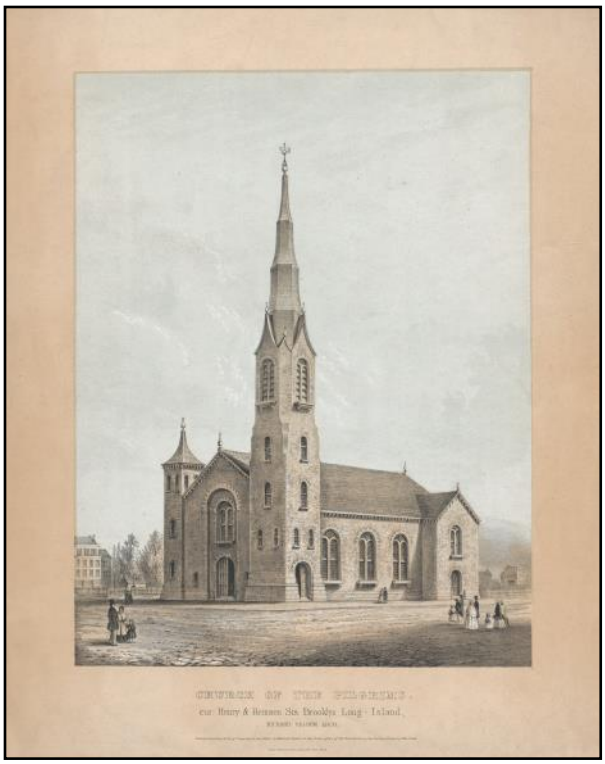
Designed by Louis Guenzel and completed in 1932, the Pentecostal Church of Holiness (formerly Our Lady of Lourdes) is a handsome and refined example of the Romanesque Revival architectural style. The building's clean lines and simplified details reflect the bold modernism of the Art Deco style.

The Romanesque Revival style was introduced in the United States during the mid nineteenth century. Its primary influences were the eleventh and twelfth century architecture of Europe, which in turn was inspired by the architecture of the ancient Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire, and the Italian Renaissance. Overall, this revival style features heavy, often asymmetrical stone or brick construction, deeply recessed windows and entries, and towers. Wide, rounded arches are an important identifying feature, often resting on squat columns. Decorative foliate and Classical inspired detail may be found.

The Romanesque Revival style can be organized into a few similar sub-categories that developed during the nineteenth century. One of the earliest revivals of Romanesque architecture was during the early nineteenth century in the German-speaking European lands that included Germany and portions of modern-day Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland. The style, which became known as the *Rundbogenstil* (round arch style) developed in reaction to the popularity of the Gothic Revival style as a new German national style of architecture. The style's combination of Neo Classical and Byzantine styles, characterized by rounded arches over windows and doors and the use of corbeled arcades along roof lines, created a visual symbol for a new German national identity. Although it contrasted with the Gothic Revival, the style often incorporated the rich natural ornament of the Gothic style. The *Rundbogenstil* is very similar to the Romanesque Revival, but it is not strictly an historical revival of a past architectural style. Instead, the *Rundbogenstil* was intentionally created as an eclectic blend of historical styles. Its use was tied to nationalism and was promoted primarily by German architects. During the nineteenth century, the style was applied to a variety of building types, including government buildings, institutions, train stations, churches, and synagogues. The style spread throughout Germany and Europe alongside the Romanesque Revival and was introduced in the United States by the mid 1800s.

In the United States, the Romanesque Revival was championed during the early nineteenth century as an American style of architecture. It was advocated as being both honest in its design and better adapted to the country, unlike the Greek Revival style that was popular at the time. One of the first acknowledged Romanesque Revival style buildings completed in the country is the extant Church of the Pilgrims in Brooklyn, New York by Richard Upjohn and completed in 1846. A second example completed in 1851 was James Renwick Jr.'s design for the Smithsonian Institution Building in Washington, D. C. By the mid nineteenth century, the style was adapted to a variety of building types and could be found in major cities and towns across the country.

In Chicago, some of the earliest examples of the Romanesque Revival were designed by immigrant German architects, many of whom immigrated to the United States during the mid to late nineteenth century seeking new opportunities and to escape the unsettled political conditions in Germany and later religious persecution. Their designs largely reflected the eclectic mix of historical styles represented by the national identity of the *Rundbogenstil*. These early buildings were completed primarily during the mid to late nineteenth century. They



The Pentecostal Church of Holiness was designed in a refined Romanesque Revival style. The style is based primarily on architecture of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but was revived in the early nineteenth century.

The style became a national architectural style in Germany during the early to mid nineteenth century and was known as the *Rundbogenstil* or the "round arch style."

Romanesque Revival is characterized by heavy, asymmetrical masonry walls, towers, and recessed windows with round arches.

One of the first known examples of the style in the United States is architect Richard Upjohn's extant Church of the Pilgrims in Brooklyn, New York completed in 1846.

The Edward W. C. Arnold Collection of New York Prints, Maps and Pictures, Bequest of Edward W. C. Arnold, 1954. Metropolitan Museum of Art.

In Chicago, the Romanesque Revival style was promoted primarily by German architects. At right is the Marine Bank building designed by Edward Burling and Frederick Baumann in 1854. The building stood on the northeast corner of Lake and LaSalle streets, but was destroyed during the fire of 1871.

Neat rows of paired windows with round arch windows define the building.

E12307, Architecture Photograph Collection, Ryerson and Burnham Art and Architecture Archive, Art Institute of Chicago.

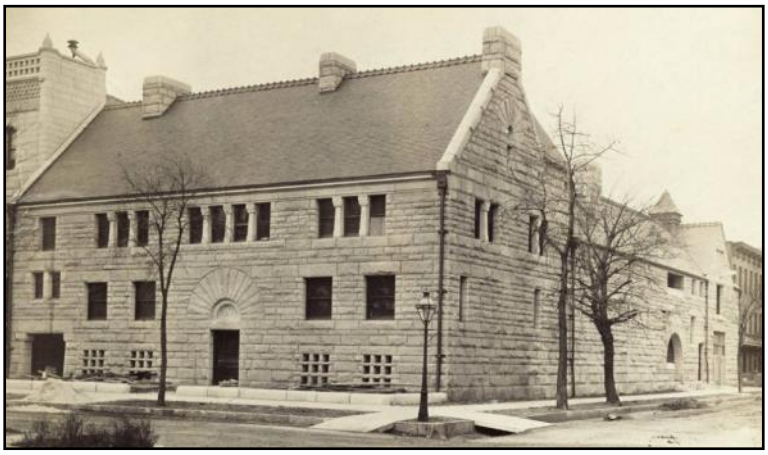
Examples of the German Rundbogenstil abounded in Chicago during the mid nineteenth century. This round arch style was applied to many building types.

At right, in 1869, early Chicago architect Augustus Bauer designed this brick building with round arches and a round oculus window as a schoolhouse for the Second German Zion Church. It stood at 1352 S. Union Ave. near Maxwell Street until 2013.

History of the First Roumanian Congregation of Chicago, 30th Anniversary (1929) 7.

Old Saint Patrick's Church at Des Plaines and Adams streets exemplifies the German round arch style. The church was designed by architects Asher Carter and Augustus Bauer and completed in 1854.

Architecture Lantern Slide Collection, Ryerson and Burnham Art and Architecture Archive, Art Institute of Chicago.



The Romanesque Revival style was popularized by architect Henry Hobson Richardson during the late nineteenth century. His interpretation retained the boxy asymmetry of the Romanesque, while making round arches and columns more substantial and massive. The style Richardson Romanesque applies to buildings of his and similar design.

Above is Richardson's Glessener House, which was completed in 1887 at 1800 S. Prairie Ave (a designated Chicago Landmark).

Architecture Photograph Collection, Ryerson and Burnham Art and Architecture Archive, Art Institute of Chicago.

featured largely flat facades that were enlivened by prominent round arched doors and windows, corbelled cornices or shallow blind arcading along gable ends. Some limited natural Classical or Gothic ornament was also often employed in designs. A few examples include Edward Burling and Frederick Baumann Marine Bank of 1854 (northeast corner of Lake and LaSalle streets, destroyed during the fire of 1871), Augustus Bauer and Asher Carter's Old St. Patrick's Church of 1854 (northwest corner of Des Plaines and Adams streets, extant), Bauer's 1869 First German High School (1352 South Union Avenue, demolished), and Bauer's mansion for wagon-maker Peter Schuttler completed in 1874 (1028 West Adams, demolished).

The Romanesque Revival style has frequently been compared with the grand works of architect Henry Hobson Richardson, who designed heavy, rusticated buildings with large arches and contrasting stone facades that have earned him the distinction of his own Richardson Romanesque style of architecture. In Chicago, Richardson's works include the Glessner House, which was completed in 1887 at 1800 South Prairie Avenue and is a Designated Chicago Landmark. However, Richardson's style is distinct within the Romanesque Revival, and is different from the German-inspired *Rundbogenstil*.

The architectural style of the Pentecostal Church of Holiness is generally designed in the Romanesque Revival style. But the German influence of the *Rundbogenstil* is evident in the building's flat brick south façade, its profusion of round arched windows and doors, round arched window hoods above pairs of windows, limited foliate Gothic ornament, and simplified

gable end brickwork, which appears to echo shallow blind arcading. Yet, the church building also clearly includes historicist elements of the Romanesque Revival, including its triple arched front doorway with wide squat columns, corner campanile or bell tower, and its asymmetrical design. At the same time, the overall design appears simplified and almost streamlined in its delivery.

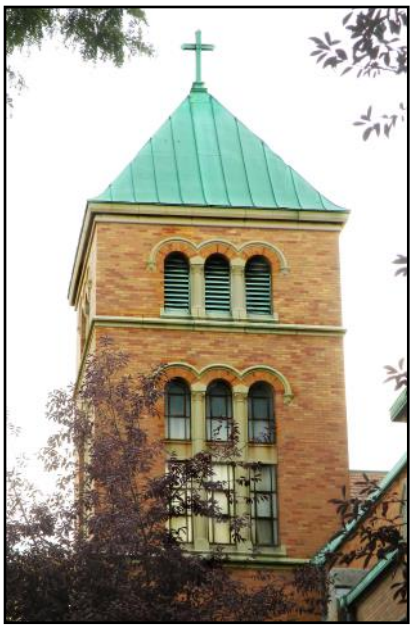
During the early 1930s, when the church was built, the modern style that later became known as Art Deco was becoming popular internationally. The style developed in the period following World War I and was popularized by the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* (International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts), which was held in Paris in 1925; it was prominently introduced in Chicago during the city's World's Fair of 1933. The bold lines and curves of the Art Deco exemplified luxury and faith in technological progress. It was the height of design during the inter-war period. The style also developed around new building technologies, such as reinforced and decorative concrete. Cast concrete or cast-stone is an ancient material that was revived during the nineteenth century. Buildings designed in the Art Deco style often employed the material in place of more expansive traditional carved stone or terra cotta, which was used less often by architects by the 1930s. The Pentecostal Church of Holiness displays the use of cast-stone both inside and out. All of the building's exterior light-colored ornament looks like carved stone but is in fact a modern use of cast concrete. The main rose window and the ocular windows along the east and west sides feature reinforced cast concrete mullions that support steel-framed windows. The interior features cast concrete that is finished to look like marble. Overall, the building exhibits the Romanesque Revival style, but also reflects the national German style of the *Rundbogenstil* and the modern simplicity and technological advancement of the Art Deco style.

Exterior Description of the Church

The Romanesque Revival style church building holds a visually prominent location at the northwest corner of 15th Street and Keeler Avenue. It has a rectangular footprint with a gable roof that is oriented north to south and is covered in red-hued cast-stone shingles with copper flashing and gutters. The main entrance and stairway face south onto 15th Street. Overall, the church is clad in multi-hued, orange-toned face brick and is trimmed with contrasting cast-stone trim that features a fine white aggregate. An 80-foot-tall bell and stair tower with a pyramidal copper roof and cross stands at the southeast corner of the church, while a secondary stair tower stands at the church's southwest corner. Both towers are detailed with double and triple sets of narrow arched windows. The bell tower is detailed with cast string courses and has louvered arched openings at the very top.

The main south-facing façade is nearly symmetrical. A flight of cast-stone steps leads up to the main entrance, which has three double wood doorways with arched stained-glass transoms. The outer two transoms depict the Greek letters *X (chi)* and *P (rho)* in gold glass, which are the first two letters of "Christ" in Greek. The middle transom depicts the Christogram "IHS" that symbolizes Jesus Christ. Cast-stone Romanesque style columns separate the doorways. Above the entrance is a triptych of arched windows, separated by Romanesque style columns, with steel framed casement windows with amber and clear art glass.

The façade is capped by an Art Deco style-rose window with a cast-stone frame. The rose window, which mirrors the design of the windows along the east and west sides of the church, resembles a large, streamlined quatrefoil. The art glass is very simple and is primarily



The Pentecostal Church of Holiness (formerly Our Lady of Lourdes) was designed in the Romanesque Revival style with influences of the Art Deco in its simplicity and use of cast-stone. Single and triple round arches, round windows, a corbelled brick front gable, and overall form give this church its Romanesque Revival appearance.

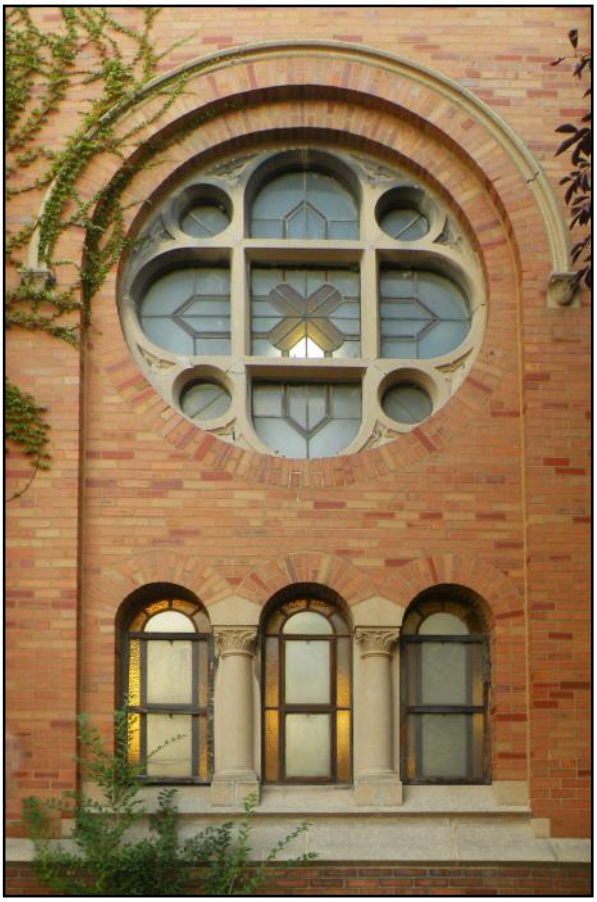
Top left: A tall bell tower rises above the corner of the church and is capped by a copper roof with a copper cross.

Top right: cast-stone trim and cast details enliven the church's front façade (south) and sides. The corners of the gable have small square turrets that are topped by Gothic style finials.

Bottom: The east side of the church is lined by rows of round oculus windows and triple sets of round arch windows with wide columns.

composed of large sections of clear textured glass, with narrow strips of amber glass that lead away from a central X-pattern. Above the rose window there is a plain cast-stone drip mold with foliate brackets. Gothic finial-capped tourelles frame the south-facing gable-end façade, which has a stepped brick pattern and cast-stone coping along the gable. The twin stair towers flank the south façade, and both have cast-stone plaques with dedication inscriptions in Latin. Twin arched stair windows are positioned above the dedication plaques.

The east and west sides of the church are largely mirror images of each other and primarily enclose the church's large sanctuary. The east and west elevations of the sanctuary's tall central nave are recessed behind the outer walls of the side aisles. Four bays of windows separated by brick piers define the side aisle elevations. Each bay has a lower trio of narrow arched casement windows, with an ocular window that is similar in design to the front rose window. The recessed elevations of the nave feature trios of narrow arched windows. At the north ends of the east and west elevations there are small stair towers with hipped roofs and pairs of arched windows.



Top left: The east and west facing side windows are round and round arched. All have modern amber and clear stained glass steel sashes. The designs are modern and are set within cast-stone frames.

Top right: The front façade has two plaques. This plaque commemorates the 900th anniversary of the birth of St. Wenceslaus (c. 929), the patron saint of the Czech people.

Bottom right: The church's main entrance is lined by three double wood doors that are separated by wide columns. Round arched transoms above the doors feature stained glass panels that symbolize Jesus Christ.

The interior of the Pentecostal Church of Holiness is modestly finished and ornamented in the Romanesque Revival style.

Left: The main south entrance opens into the narthex, which has square pilasters topped by ornate plaster Corinthian capitals. Cast-stone wainscoting lines the lower walls. Doors opposite the main entrance lead into the main sanctuary, while side doorways connect to the balcony stairs.

Above: Wood-framed plaster panels decorate the tops of doors throughout the church. All feature a motif of kneeling sheep with a cross.

The church's main sanctuary has a tall, barrel-vaulted nave that is flanked by aisles. Colonnades with cast-stone columns and plaster capitals divide the nave and aisles. Facing north.

At the rear or north end of the church, the gable end has a five-sided bay with round windows that encloses the sanctuary's apse. Just north of the church is an attached two-story rectory that was completed 1954 (the addition is not part of this designation).

Interior Description of the Church

The interior of the Pentecostal Church of Holiness is modest yet remains remarkably intact. Inside, the church is organized over two main levels and a balcony. The main entrance at the south end opens into the narthex or entry hall, which accesses twin balcony staircases at the east and west ends of the building. The narthex is a rectangular space that occupies nearly the width of the building and serves as the main entrance. It is finely finished with Modern original cast-stone wainscoting and plastered upper walls and ceilings. Original doors at each end of the narthex lead to the two balcony stairs. Arched decorative plaster panels featuring Christian motifs top doorways throughout the church.

A main doorway opens into the spacious sanctuary, which has a soaring three-story central nave with a barrel-vaulted ceiling. Cast-stone columns with ornate plaster Corinthian capitals form colonnades that divide the central nave from flanking aisles. At the north end of the sanctuary, opposite the main entrance and balcony is the apse and wood-paneled alter area.

Architect Louis Guenzel

The design of the Pentecostal Church of Holiness is directly attributed to **Louis Frederick Albert Gottlieb Guenzel (1860 – 1956)**, or Louis Guenzel, who was a prominent member of Chicago's German community. Guenzel was born in Köslin, Prussia, which is part of modern-day Poland, and immigrated to the United States in 1892. Guenzel arrived in Chicago to work as a draftsman in the offices of Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan. He was one of dozens of German-born architects who came to Chicago during the nineteenth century, and one of several who arrived during the years leading up to the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. Guenzel's involvement in Chicago's architectural history reflects the significant contributions of German-born Chicago architects, including Frederick Baumann, Augustus Bauer, Dankmar Adler, Fritz Foltz, W. August Fiedler, Adolph A. Cudell, Paul Gerhardt, and Peter J. Weber, among many others.

In 1894, Guenzel left Adler & Sullivan and began his own architectural practice, while concentrating on building his client base within the German community. He was a member of several German-American clubs, including the Richard Wagner musical society (in which he sang) and later the Germanistic Society of Chicago, both of which introduced him to potential clients. One of Guenzel's earliest works was a proposed club and headquarters building for the German Department of the Chicago Association in 1894. During the late 1890s, Guenzel expanded his practice and partnered with Harley Seymour Hibbard (1868-1957), and then in 1898 with Arthur Hercz (1867-1941).

Guenzel was a strong proponent of design and safety. In 1903, following a catastrophic fire at the Iroquois Theater, Guenzel became one of several investigators of the tragedy. He was commissioned by the German Government and produced a detailed report in 1904 assessing the building's design failures and the need for proper egress in buildings.

Guenzel practiced again alone during the first decade of the twentieth century. He designed residences and developed rental properties across Chicago, which he would sell to investors. IN 1906 he designed a single-story office building in the Prairie School for the Chicago Mill and Lumber Company at 936 to 940 West Chicago Avenue. By 1908, Guenzel had become quite wealthy and maintained both a home in Glencoe and a townhouse in the city. In 1908, he designed a suburban residence for lumberman Herman Paepcke, who was also a fellow director of the Germanistic Society. A year later, Guenzel was married to Paepcke's daughter Alice, with whom he moved into a large apartment that Guenzel had completed in the progressive and increasingly popular Prairie School movement. The 1909 building stood on Chestnut Street at Mies Van der Rohe Way (demolished for Water Tower Place) in the Streeterville neighborhood. It was one of several investment properties that Guenzel acquired in the neighborhood west of Michigan Avenue, which was an area that was created artificially by filling in the lake during the 1890s. Guenzel contributed to the area's development and even built his office on Chestnut Street across from his apartment.

In 1912, Guenzel partnered with architect William Eugene Drummond (1876-1948), who had worked with Louis Sullivan and later with Frank Lloyd Wright. Drummond's style reflected his experience with Wright and he designed buildings in the Prairie School. An example of Guenzel & Drummond's work includes the River Forest Women's Club of 1913 (526 Ashland Avenue, River Forest).

Guenzel continued practicing alone starting in 1915. He designed a wide range of buildings including industrial structures, residences, and churches. The Lorimer Baptist Church at 7257-7259 South St. Lawrence Avenue was completed in 1921 and reflects Guenzel's expression of the Prairie School. Beginning in the mid 1920s, Guenzel shifted stylistically away from the Prairie School and embraced popular revival styles. Two of his larger works include the Renaissance Revival style apartment building at 40 East Delaware in 1926 and the refined Classical Revival style LaSalle Court Apartments (later known as the Maple Hotel) at 1100 North LaSalle Street in 1930. The following year he designed the Romanesque Revival and Art Deco style Pentecostal Church of Holiness.

Guenzel designed several buildings in the Streeterville neighborhood, including these Prairie School apartment buildings at 179-195 East Chestnut Street in 1909 (demolished).

He and his wife had a town home in Chicago at 195 East Chestnut (left).

"The Work of Guenzel & Drummond," *The Western Architect*, February 1915: plate 14.

Louis Guenzel (1860-1956).

***Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 15, 1956: 63.**

Architect Louis Guenzel's early work tended to reflect the progressive Prairie School, which was gaining popularity during the first decades of the twentieth century.

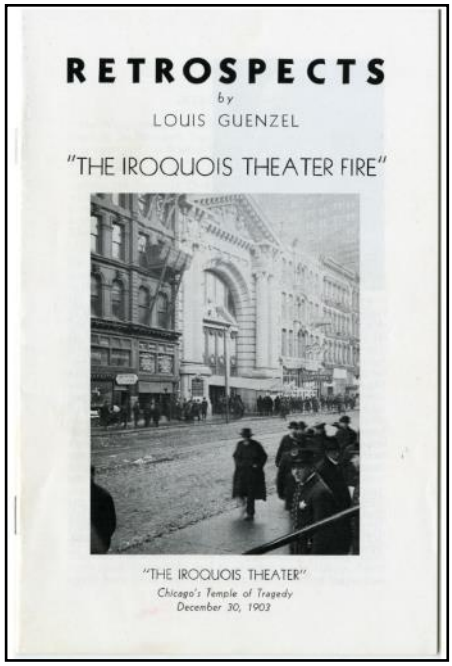
At left is the Lorimer Baptist Church designed by Guenzel and completed in 1921 at 7257-59 S. St. Lawrence Ave. It is now called Park Manor Christian Church.

Google Streetview, November 2018.

At right is the office for the Chicago Mill and Lumber Company at 936 to 940 West Chicago Avenue. The extant commercial building was built in 1906 and has some Prairie School influences combined with simplified Classical style ornament.

"The Work of Guenzel & Drummond," *The Western Architect*, February 1915: plate 14.

During the 1920s, Guenzel began design buildings in newer, modern styles. Above is the LaSalle Court Apartments built in 1930 at 1100 N. LaSalle. Apartments.com



Guenzel not only designed buildings, but was also an advocate of human life and safety. In 1904, he published a critical report in German outlining design issues that contributed to the loss of life at the Iroquois Theater fire. His report (at left) was republished in English in 1945. A year later he assessed a tragic fire at the LaSalle Hotel (demolished).

Guenzel, *Retrospects* (Chicago, 1945).

By the 1930s, Guenzel had become very successful and had moved his city residence to an apartment in a new luxury lakefront apartment building at 219 East Lake Shore Drive (a designated Chicago Landmark). Guenzel continued to practice architecture through the 1940s and remained an advocate for design of safe buildings. He republished his assessment of the Iroquois Theater fire disaster in 1945 and wrote an assessment of another fire tragedy in 1946 at the famed LaSalle Hotel in the Loop (not extant). That same year, he expanded his consideration of human life by self-publishing a booklet titled *Medical Ethics and Their Effect Upon the Public*, which critiqued the medical profession.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and North Lawndale: 1933 to 1974

The decades following the completion of the new church building saw great demographic change within the North Lawndale neighborhood, which were also felt in the Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. By the 1940s, the parish switched to English as its primary language because new members from other areas of the city were gradually replacing the church's Czech-speaking parishioners. Although the church began planning for expansion during the 1950s, rapid demographic changes saw the neighborhood change from predominantly white to African American by 1956. Subsequent disinvestment inflicted by discriminatory policies weakened the neighborhood and led to the neighborhood's population decline. During this period, the church shifted from serving as a beacon of Czech culture and community to becoming an important anchor for the greater North Lawndale community. Several church programs and initiatives addressed issues of job and life in North Lawndale.

In 1933, following the dedication of the new church building for the Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, the parish's old frame church was converted into living quarters for sisters who taught at the parish school (the original frame church was demolished in 1959). The school stands across from the church on the northeast corner of 15th Street and Keeler Avenue. Amidst the deepening Depression, the church's men's social and the mothers' clubs sponsored an annual parish carnival to both brighten spirits and to raise funds for the parish. The carnival, which was held on a large plot of parish-owned land a block to the south at 16th Street, remained a popular annual treat through the end of World War II. The funds raised helped repay debt owed for the church's construction. During this time, the prevalence of the Czech language declined as second- and third-generation family members made English their primary language. In 1937, after holding all sermons and announcements in Czech, the church began holding some services in English, including special English-only Sunday Mass.

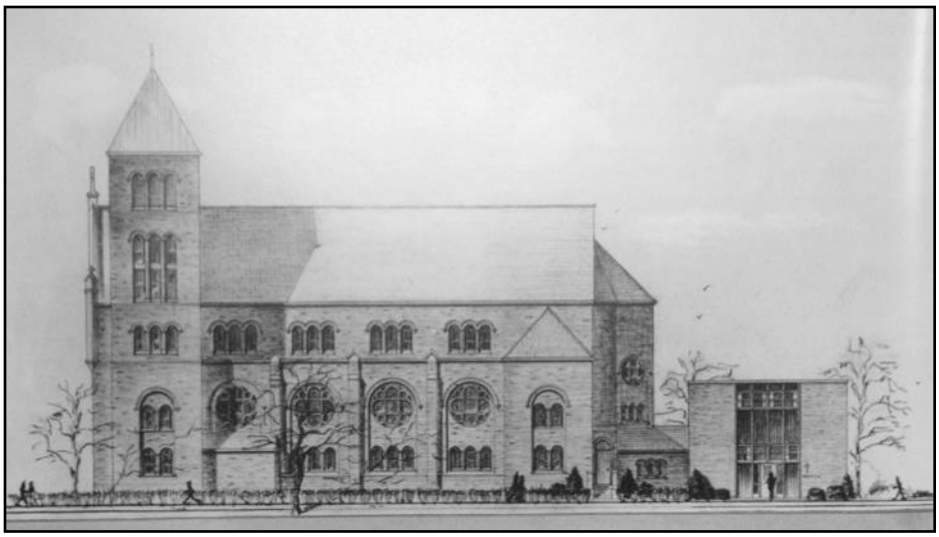
In 1938, under Adolph Hitler and the Nazi party, Germany occupied Czechoslovakia (modern-day Czech Republic and Slovakia) as part of their extermination of native Czech people. In September 1938, Britain, France, and Italy signed an agreement in Munich, Germany ceding control of the western Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia to Germany. By March of the following year all of the modern-day Czech Republic was under Nazi control. The loss of Czechoslovakia's independence was greatly disturbing to Our Lady of Lourdes Pastor Mergl, who organized a parish fundraising initiative for the relief of Czechoslovakian families. Between 1938 and 1942, the parish raised significant funds for Czech families. Pastor Mergl died in 1943.

Following the passing of Pastor Mergl, the parish began a new period of transition. Student enrollment in Our Lady of Lourdes school, across from the church on the northeast corner of Keeler and 15th, grew during the 1940s. At the same time, planning for the Congress Expressway (I-290, renamed the Eisenhower Expressway in 1964) had commenced in 1935, and the first nine parcels for the proposed route were acquired in 1942. Families with children living in the path of the expressway began relocating to North Lawndale. The increase in students prompted the construction of a four-classroom brick addition to the school, which was begun in 1949 and opened in 1951. A new rectory at the north end of the church was completed in 1954. That same year, a new church and school complex was proposed to replace existing buildings in order to meet growing demand, but new parish debt prevented the project from beginning.

During the 1950s, the North Lawndale neighborhood rapidly changed from being predominantly white and Jewish to an African American neighborhood due to the migration of African Americans from the South and from Chicago's south side. In the 1940's, post-war industrial expansion in Chicago and the opening of new manufacturing jobs attracted an increasing number of Southern African Americans who became the foundation of Chicago's African American industrial working class. Prior to World War II, Chicago's African American community was largely geographically constrained to a narrow corridor on the city's south side called the "Black Belt." Families arriving in the city were allowed to settle in this overcrowded district, located along State Street from 22nd to 31st streets at the turn of the twentieth century, which rapidly grew to an area covering neighborhoods between Lake Michigan and Interstate 90/94 from 39th to 95th streets by the 1950s. Seeking housing elsewhere in the city was not an easy prospect at the time due to redlining, racial intolerance, and discrimination. However, Lawndale was one neighborhood outside of the "Black Belt" that was open to integration, and was more open to African Americans than other Chicago neighborhoods. Families seeking better opportunities began moving from the overcrowded "Black Belt" into Lawndale, and eventually, families started moving directly from the South to the Lawndale neighborhood as well.

By the late 1940s, nearly 1,500 African Americans lived in Lawndale. Liberal organizations such as the Jewish People's Institute (JPI) supported the framework of integration, and in 1950 formed the North Lawndale Citizens Council to organize residents, invest in local businesses, and work on making Lawndale a "'pilot community' for interracial living." Despite outward support for integration, Lawndale's Jewish community, along with the neighborhood's Polish, Italian, and Czech communities, rapidly began leaving. As families left, real estate opportunists exploited white homeowners' fears and profited by buying properties cheaply and selling homes at inflated prices to African American families. At the same time, local industrial employers offered few jobs to African Americans. Most of their employees were white, and they commuted into Lawndale from other areas of the city. North Lawndale's rapid demographic transition was met with conflict. There was decreasing availability of jobs for African Americans, exploitive housing practices, and increasing resistance and racial retaliation by whites.

By 1955, North Lawndale's population was predominantly African American. Most residents who were moving into the neighborhood were displaced from the city's older and congested south side neighborhoods (primarily neighborhoods in the "Black Belt"), which were significantly redeveloped by Urban Renewal projects. That same year, several of North Lawndale's Jewish organizations moved to new Jewish enclaves in Rogers Park and Skokie. Similarly, members of the neighborhood's Czech community also largely abandoned the



Our Lady of Lourdes Parish grew during the 1940s and early 1950s. During that time, the parish built a new addition to its school in 1949 and a new two-story rectory to the north of the church. Neither the extant rectory nor the extant school are part of this landmark designation.

Archdiocese of Chicago's Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Records Center.

neighborhood. The move of the Czech community led to a steep decline in membership at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. The number of families registered at the church diminished from 900 parishioners around 1950 to 125 parishioners in 1956.

In October 1962, Our Lady of Lourdes Rev. James F. Cermak and Rev. Clarence Lennon of Lawndale Presbyterian Church (1908 South Millard Avenue, extant) formed the organization Lawndale Clergymen in Christian Action. The group was comprised of 21 white and black ministers and priests "working together for community peace and progress in a neighborhood noted for racial strife." It distributed an open letter to the community that read:

> *"We have now begun to take action on the problems of housing code enforcement, police protection, interracial harmony, and youth welfare… It is up to you, who make up the life of these churches, that we write this letter. It is not easy to live in Lawndale. God desires you to … be his spokesman against the evils of prejudice and corruption."*

As Father Cermak worked with community church leaders to constructively address issues of inequity and inequality within the neighborhood, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish became the spiritual home for dozens of African American Catholic families. In 1964, the church ceased to be identified as a Czech or "Bohemian" church in the annual *Official Catholic Directory*.

Our Lady of Lourdes and Bishop Michael R. Dempsey: 1965 to 1974

In January 1965, Rev. Michael Ryan. Dempsey (1918-1974) became the pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes and continued and expanded the neighborhood programs begun under Rev. Cermak. Rev. Dempsey was born in Chicago and grew up in the Logan Square neighborhood. After being ordained as a priest in 1943 at St. Mary on the Lake Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois, he served as pastor at other churches in the city before transferring to Our Lady of Lourdes. Throughout his service as pastor and Bishop, Rev. Dempsey was often described as being deeply concerned about the systems that create poverty. He was quoted in the *Chicago Defender* as saying, "I want to dispel the myths about the poor. I want to root out poverty. I want justice for all men and women…not charity. I have a hunger and thirst for justice, and the Lord promised that it will be satisfied."

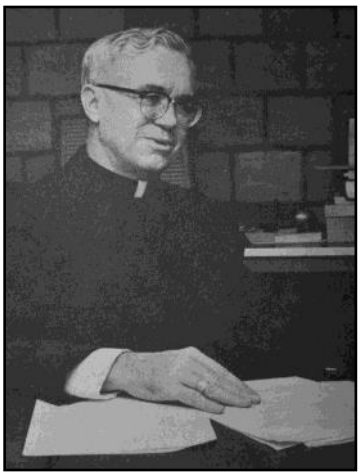
By the mid 1960s, the effects of racist housing policies and exploitive real estate investors, combined with limited jobs and disinvestment, left North Lawndale as one of the poorest neighborhoods in the city. Faced with growing unemployment in the community, Rev. Dempsey began implementing a series of employment and development programs within the parish. One of the most important was a community employment agency that was initially called Lawndale for Better Jobs (LBJ – this also happens to be the initials of President Lyndon B. Johnson). The idea was proposed by Monroe Sullivan, who was the assistant director of the Catholic Interracial Council (CIC), which was organized in Chicago in 1948. With a $4,000 budget from the city's newly opened Chicago Committee on Urban Opportunity, the agency attempted to connect available jobs with unemployed area residents. Local employers were asked to provide job openings and to simplify their job applications. At the same time, the agency recruited both unemployed and underemployed men and women from throughout the community. According to Sullivan, who directed the agency, "most of our applicants come from within three blocks of the school. This is important to people to whom 25 cents for carfare is no little thing." Although many of North Lawndale's existing industrial jobs had been long out of reach for African American workers, the agency succeeded in placing over 300 people in the workforce by 1966.

The success of Lawndale for Better Jobs led to its expansion across the city through allied faith-based organizations. Rev. Dempsey met with leaders from Chicago's Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths to form an employment office called Tri-Faith Employment and Training Project, which opened seven job centers across Chicago, including a main office at Our Lady of Lourdes. The program, Rev. Dempsey said, "is completely directed by residents of the area who recognize the plight of the jobless." In January 1967, the Parish and the jobs program gained national recognition when it was visited by Vice President Hubert H. Humphry as part of a tour of programs in Chicago that supported President Johnson's "war on poverty." Humphry, quoted in the *Chicago Daily Defender*, said that Tri-Faith was, "a marvelous example of what can be done with poverty funds when the people work with dedication and concern for the people they serve." Tri-Faith became one of the city's most successful job placement programs, with over 93,000 placements citywide between 1966 and 1973. The program's success contributed to Rev. Dempsey's consecration as Bishop by Pope Paul VI in 1968. Bishops typically do not serve as pastors, but his presence and position at the church reflected the significance of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish.

Rev. Dempsey's effort in alleviating poverty through employment led him to work with church lay leaders to organize a series of "self-help" programs, job training classes, a parish credit union in the rectory, and other initiatives to help residents maintain financial security. In 1970, Dempsey was made director of the National Campaign for Human Development, which helped finance a variety of self-help programs across the county.

Later History: 1974 to 2015

The community programs initiated by Rev. Dempsey continued to be supported following his death in 1974. Several clubs and organizations were formed at the church, including a School Board, a Liturgy Committee, and block clubs. In addition, outreach initiatives continued to provide job training and food for the poor.

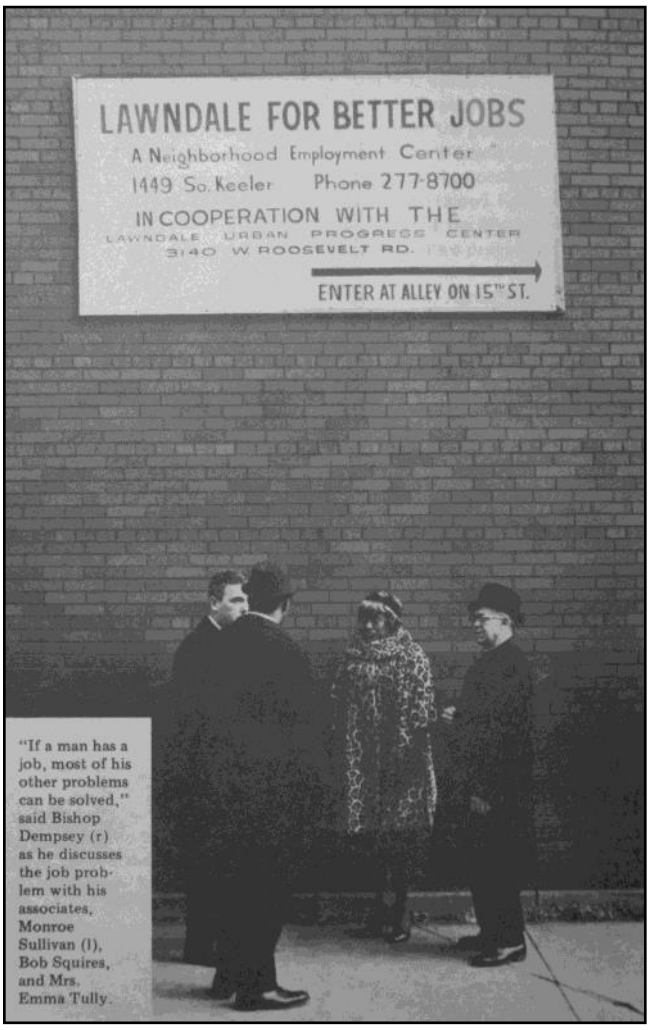


Bishop Michael R. Dempsey (1918-1974)

Burke, *The Bishop Who Dared* (1978):88.

Lawndale for Better Jobs later developed into the Tri-Faith Employment and Training Project. Above, Bishop Dempsey and four community members discuss and plan the jobs program.

Chicago Defender, April 21, 1973: 25.



The successful organization Lawndale for Better Jobs (LBJ) was organized and operated from the basement of the Our Lady of Lourdes Parish School.

Burke, *The Bishop Who Dared* (1978):82.

In 1967, Vice President Hubert Humphrey visited Chicago and Lawndale for Better Jobs at the church. The photo at left shows Bishop Dempsey in the center facing Humphrey on the left.

Burke, *The Bishop Who Dared* (1978):83.

Interior view of the sanctuary and alter in the 1960s.
Pentecostal Church of Holiness.

Interior view of the church's narthex and main entrance on Palm Sunday in 1973.
***Chicago Defender*, April 21, 1973: 25.**

During the 1970s, the church retained significant debt from the construction of its rectory in 1954. A series of successful fundraisers were held to reduce debt and to create a fund for needed building repairs. The church hosted annual sales of repairable damaged furniture donated by Carson, Pierre, Scott & Company through 1985 and eventually became financially self-sufficient without the need for subsidies.

As the 1970s progressed, the parish and the greater North Lawndale neighborhood began losing population. The destruction of significant numbers of businesses along Roosevelt Road and residential buildings in the neighborhood in reaction to the assassination of Dr. King in 1968 left North Lawndale weakened. Many remaining businesses were forced to close and several area industrial employers either shut down or moved away. By 1970, nearly 75 percent of local stores and businesses had closed. International Harvester shut its facility in 1969, followed by Sunbeam, Zenith, and Sear's factories. Diminished employment options contributed to a rapid drop in North Lawndale's population, which continued to decline into the 1990s. The parish also saw many of its parishioners move away.

Despite declining membership, the parish remained active. New programs, such as the Community Action Group, were organized to address problems affecting the whole community, including jobs and housing. At the same time, the church continued to sponsor community events, including the Parish-Council Annual Dinner Dance, Annual Parish Picnic, and an annual Spring Fashion Show. In 1992, Our Lady of Lourdes parish celebrated its 100th anniversary and was visited by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin.

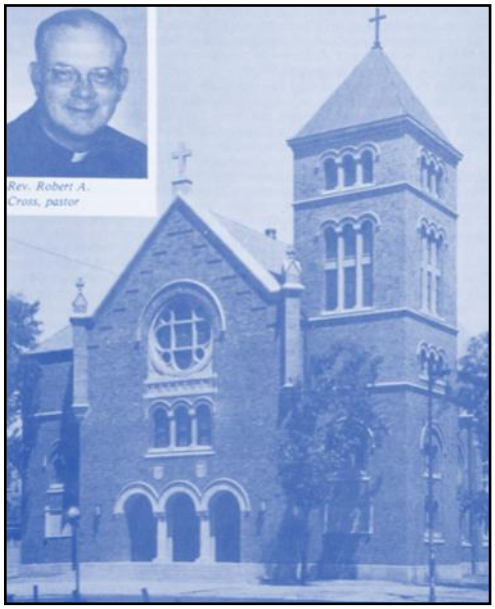
By 2005, the parish had continued to lose membership and had a total of fewer than 90 parishioners. Due to declining membership, the Archdiocese decided to close the parish. The church was deconsecrated and relieved of its religious features, including the Stations of the Cross. During the early 2000s, Chicago experienced a building boom. Some property owners

attempted to profit by selling land to developers. The Archdiocese offered the church building and rectory for sale as a possible residential development site. In 2006, the building was sold to a private Baptist church, which occupied the church until 2012.

A group of area residents led by Pastor Dr. Chaun L. Johnson, acquired the church building in 2016, after learning that it was for sale, and founded the Pentecostal Church of Holiness. Several members had once belonged to the Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and wanted to revive the church and its significance to the community. The church is committed to rebuilding the North Lawndale community and continues to work to provide equitable opportunities for residents and to strengthen the neighborhood.

In 1992, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish celebrated its 100th anniversary and was visited by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin.

Pentecostal Church of Holiness.



View of the church circa 1980. At the time it was headed by Rev. Robert A. Cross.

***A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago* (1980) 707.**

Criteria for Designation

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sections 2-120-620 and -630), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a preliminary recommendation of landmark designation for an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art, or other object with the City of Chicago, if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for designation," as well as possesses a significant degree of historic integrity to convey its significance.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Pentecostal Church of Holiness be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Value as an Example of City, State, or National Heritage

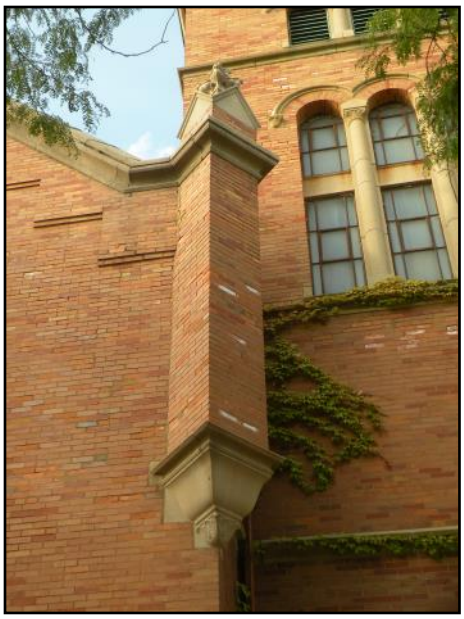
Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.

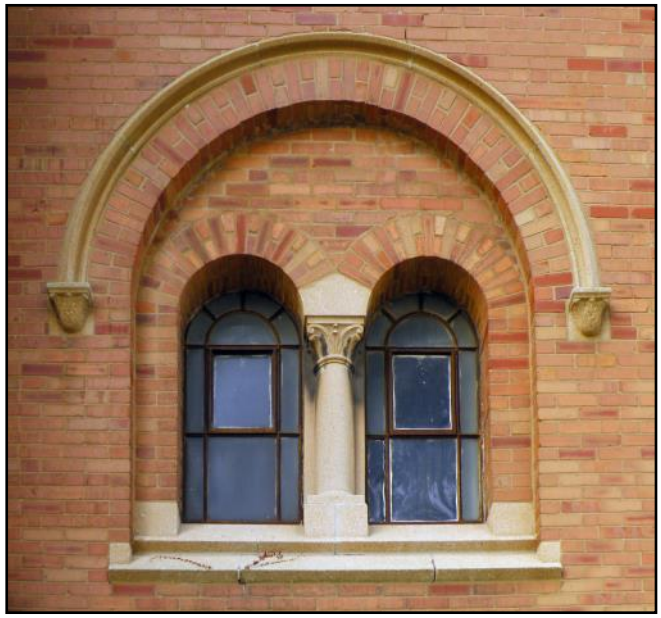
- The Pentecostal Church of Holiness (formerly Our Lady of Lourdes Parish) has had a long history at 4208 West 15th Street. From its founding in 1892 by a small group of Czech parishioners, to its growth and construction efforts in 1932, to its presence in the North Lawndale community during the 1960s Civil Rights era, to the present-day congregation, the church exemplifies the important role that religious congregations have played in the cultural and social history of Chicago's neighborhoods.
- The Church reflects the history of North Lawndale as a neighborhood that was partly developed and influenced by the settlement of Czech ethnic immigrants and Czech Americans for whom the church served as an important part of cultural life.
- The Pentecostal Church of Holiness is strongly associated with the significant community involvement of Bishop Michael Dempsey, who implemented several employment and job training programs through the parish with the guidance of neighborhood leaders. His efforts led to a citywide program, which was visited by Vice President Hubert H. Humphry and succeeded in over 93,000 job placements between 1965 and 1973.

Criterion 3: Significant Person

Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

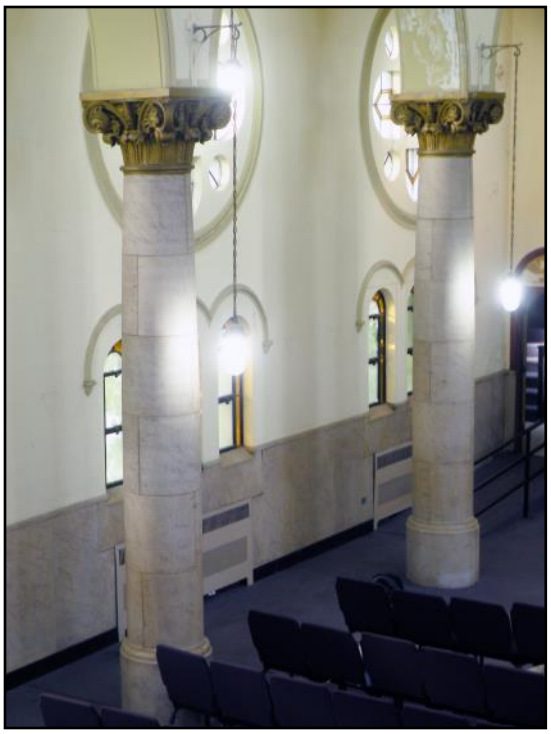
- Bishop Michael R. Dempsey (1918-1974), pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes at Keeler Avenue and 15th Street from 1965 to 1974, was a significant Catholic bishop whose activities were important in the history of Chicago. Bishop Dempsey was committed to the poor and underprivileged of the North Lawndale neighborhood and to those in need across the country. His efforts in establishing programs for employment and job training helped thousands of Chicagoans during the 1960s and 1970s.
- Bishop Dempsey was consecrated as Bishop in 1968 by Pope Paul VI. Dempsey's elevated position as a Bishop was unusual because Bishop typically do not serve as pastors, but his presence and position at the church reflected the significance of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish.

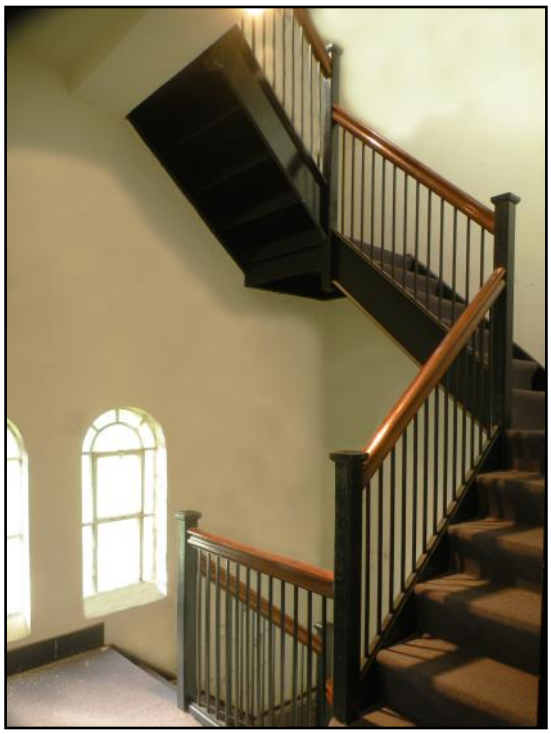




The Pentecostal Church of Holiness is a fine example of a neighborhood-scaled church. It was designed in the Romanesque Revival style with Art Deco influences.

The building retains its overall form and design and exhibits a high degree of craftsmanship in its traditional materials that include brick and cast-stone ornament.





The interior of the Pentecostal Church of Holiness is finely finished. All spaces feature decorative plasterwork. Cast-stone is used as a decorative cladding for to columns and serves as plain wainscoting. Decorative ironwork and woodwork are also exhibited throughout the church.

Detail of a window trio along the east aisle. Each window has two operable hopper-type sashes with a plain outer border of amber glass.

The light pinkish-grey colored cast-stone wainscoting has faux veining to make it look like Tennessee Marble, a stone that was popular for interior finishes during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

- The success of Bishop Dempsey's jobs programs caught the attention of Vice President Hubert Humphry who visited the program and church in 1967. Humphry's visit gave the program national attention.

Criterion 4: Exemplary Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- The Pentecostal Church of Holiness exemplifies the neighborhood-scaled ecclesiastical architecture executed in the Romanesque Revival and Art Deco styles. The multi-hued orange brick-clad and cast-stone trimmed building displays characteristic features of the style, including the columns, rounded-arch windows, round windows, and stained-glass windows with cast-stone ornamental tracery.
- With its brick walls and cast-stone details, the Pentecostal Church of Holiness demonstrates a high degree of craftsmanship in traditional masonry construction.
- The interior narthex, south stairwells, sanctuary, and apse all exhibit finely crafted finishes and ornament in a variety of traditional building materials, including, wood, cast-stone, metal, and plaster.
- The church building was designed by architect Louis Guenzel, a proficient Chicago architect who designed several buildings for German and Eastern European clients in Chicago.
- The Pentecostal Church of Holiness is finely-crafted with traditional building materials, including brick, cast-stone, slate, and pressed metal, and has handsome ornamental detailing, including cast window hoods, finials, brackets, and Romanesque Revival ornament.

Integrity Criteria

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value.

The Pentecostal Church of Holiness possesses excellent physical integrity of its exterior and primary interior spaces. The church has retained its original location at the intersection of Keeler and 15th Street from the time the church purchased the land in 1909 and built the church in 1932, until the present. The building's historic materials, including multi-hued orange face-brick accented with cast-stone, remain in place. The overall Romanesque Revival and Art Deco style-design of the building remains intact as expressed in its rounded-arch windows with streamlined tracery and stained glass, turrets, and vertical towers. The overall quality of the brick masonry, as well as the finely cast-stone details, exhibit a high degree of craftsmanship.

The building also retains very good interior physical integrity in its primary significant interior spaces, including the sanctuary and associated narthex and staircases, which retain their overall spatial volumes and historic decorative features, including decorative-metal light fixtures, wood trim, doors, plaster finishes, decorative plaster ceilings, and original steel-framed stained-glass windows.

Overall, the building displays a high level of integrity, with the design intent clearly evident in the church as it continues to express its historic associations and character-defining architectural features. The most significant alterations occurred in 2005 after the church was closed by the Archdiocese. One exterior change is the loss of an cast-stone cross that once surmounted the peak of the front (south) gable. Several interior elements including, but not limited to, the stations of the cross, statuary, and other objects, were removed. Finally, a pair of arched murals flanked the chancel arch in shallow recessed alcoves. These may have been removed or painted over.

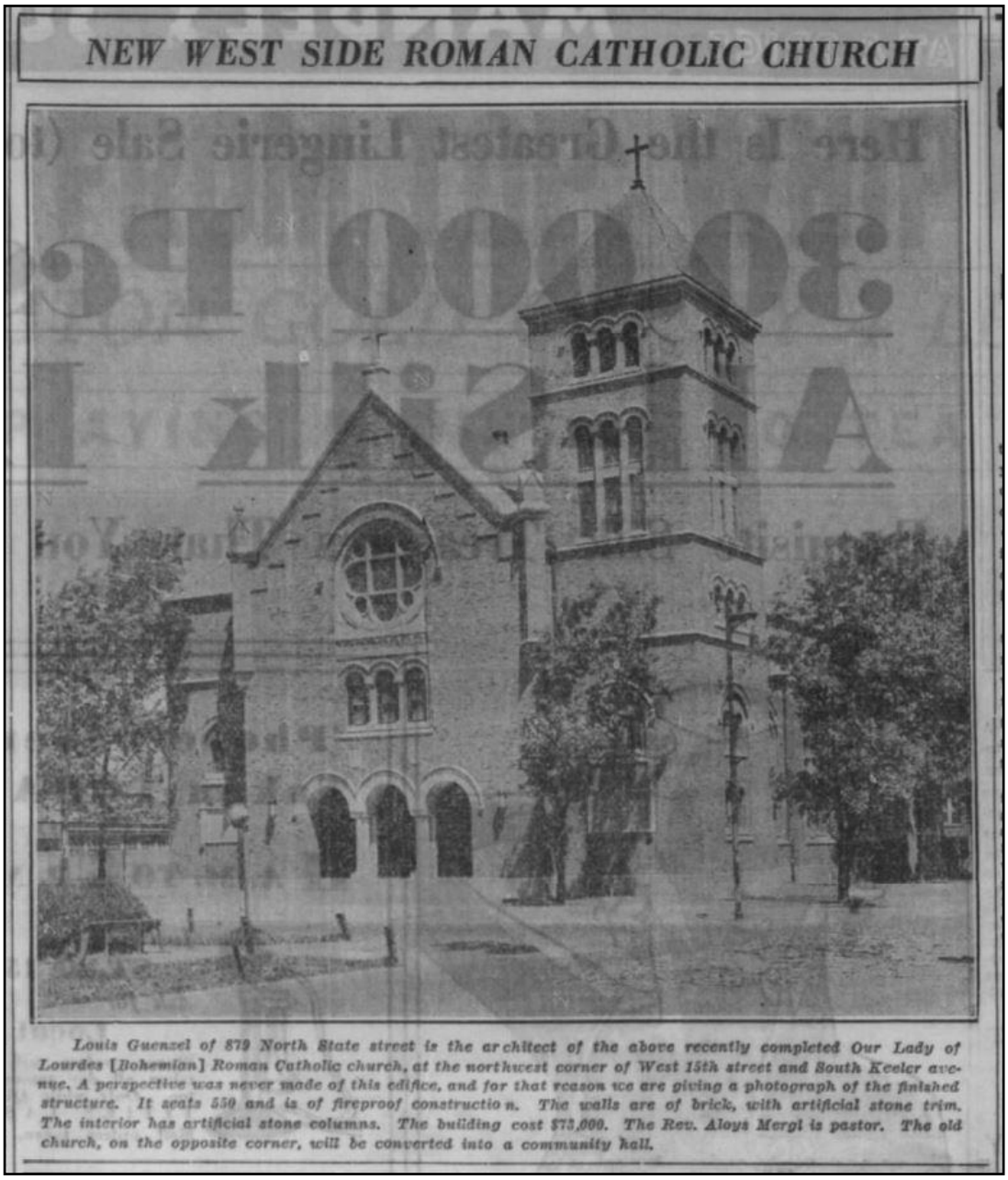
The current owner and congregation has continued to maintain the building and its original finishes and features. All windows are original steel-frame windows. Some have operable hopper-type sashes. All exterior doors and most interior doors are original. At the north end of the church is a two-story rectory that was completed in 1954 and is not considered to be contributing. Non-historic changes to the interior of the south staircases, narthex, and sanctuary include the replacement of flooring finishes, the addition of bathrooms in the stairwells at the ground-level, select new lighting, and the addition of audio-visual equipment. Despite these changes, the building retains its ability to express its architectural and historical value.

Significant Historical and Architectural Features

Whenever an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based upon its preliminary evaluation of the Pentecostal Church of Holiness, the Commission staff recommends that the significant features be identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Building; and,
- The two-story rectory addition completed in 1954 is specifically excluded from the significant features.



NEW WEST SIDE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Louis Guenzel of 879 North State street is the architect of the above recently completed Our Lady of Lourdes [Bohemian] Roman Catholic church, at the northwest corner of West 15th street and South Keeler avenue. A perspective was never made of this edifice, and for that reason we are giving a photograph of the finished structure. It seats 550 and is of fireproof construction. The walls are of brick, with artificial stone trim. The interior has artificial stone columns. The building cost $73,000. The Rev. Aloys Mergl is pastor. The old church, on the opposite corner, will be converted into a community hall.

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