

# HISTORIC CHURCHES OF KANKAKEE COUNTY

SELF-GUIDED WALKING AND DRIVING TOUR



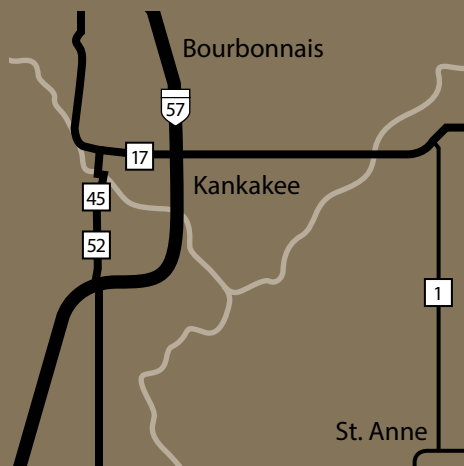


## HISTORIC CHURCHES OF KANKAKEE COUNTY

The Kankakee County Convention & Visitors Bureau invites you to visit our historic churches on this self-guided walk-and-drive tour. Kankakee County's history and cultural life is directly tied to the many church congregations that were founded here in the 1800s. Six of these historic churches surround the Beaux Arts county courthouse in downtown Kankakee and are viewable as a walking tour. The nearby Riverview Historic District showcases late nineteenth and early twentieth century custom-built homes including Frank Lloyd Wright's early Prairie Style architecture. Located a short drive away are three other churches in St. Anne and Bourbonnais. Experience the traditions and enjoy the beautiful architecture, stately steeples and stained glass windows of our nine historic churches that represent the spirit of commitment our early settlers had in establishing our area as a viable community.



Find more info about each church and an extensive photo gallery at [visitkankakeecounty.com/churches](http://visitkankakeecounty.com/churches).



## DOWNTOWN KANKAKEE



## HISTORIC CHURCHES

PAGE

- |          |   |    |
|----------|---|----|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Asbury United Methodist Church</b> (1868)<br>196 S. Harrison Ave., Kankakee  | 2  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>First Presbyterian Church of Kankakee</b> (1855)<br>371 E. Court St., Kankakee                                     | 4  |
| <b>3</b> | <b>First Presbyterian Church of St. Anne</b> (1893) ▶<br>334 St. Louis Ave., St. Anne                                 | 6  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Maternity B.V.M. Church</b> (1858) ▶<br>308 E. Marsile St., Bourbonnais  | 8  |
| <b>5</b> | <b>St. Anne Catholic Church</b> (1872) ▶<br>230 N. 6th Ave., St. Anne   | 10 |
| <b>6</b> | <b>St. Patrick's Catholic Church</b> (1894)<br>428 S. Indiana Ave., Kankakee  | 12 |
| <b>7</b> | <b>St. Paul's Episcopal Church</b> (1900)<br>298 S. Harrison Ave., Kankakee   | 14 |
| <b>8</b> | <b>St. Paul's Lutheran Church</b> (1888)<br>348 E. Merchant St., Kankakee   | 16 |
| <b>9</b> | <b>Wildwood Church of the Nazarene</b> (1864)<br><i>(Formerly First Baptist Church)</i><br>425 E. Court St., Kankakee | 18 |

## OTHER HISTORICAL SITES

- |           |   |    |
|-----------|---|----|
| <b>10</b> | <b>Frank Lloyd Wright's B. Harley Bradley House</b><br>701 S. Harrison Ave., Kankakee | 20 |
| <b>11</b> | <b>French Heritage Museum at the Stone Barn</b><br>165 N. Indiana Ave., Kankakee      | 20 |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Kankakee County Courthouse</b><br>450 E. Court St., Kankakee                       | 20 |
| <b>13</b> | <b>Kankakee County Museum</b><br>801 S. Eighth Ave., Kankakee                         | 21 |
| <b>14</b> | <b>Kankakee Railroad Museum</b><br>197 S. East Ave., Kankakee                         | 21 |
| <b>15</b> | <b>Riverview Historic District</b><br>Kankakee (see map detail at right)              | 21 |



## ST. ANNE



## TOUR LEGEND



Locations with this icon can be reached on foot from the centrally located Courthouse in Downtown Kankakee.



All locations with this icon are within a short drive of each other.



## ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1868



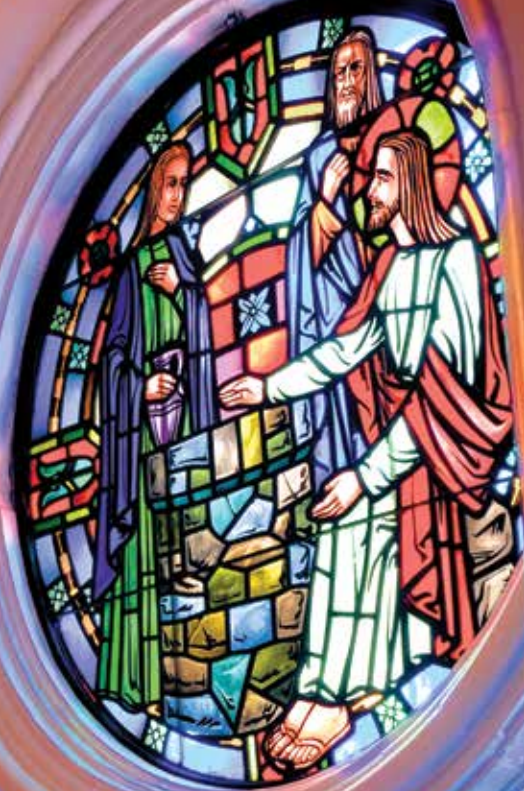
196 S. Harrison Ave.  
Kankakee  
815-933-4408

Circuit riders brought Methodism to Kankakee in 1836 and held services in various buildings in Kankakee until the minister in 1855, a former stone mason, headed construction of a two-story brick building for worship. The current sanctuary is part of that original structure, making it one of the three oldest buildings remaining in Kankakee included in this tour. The other two are the First Baptist Church (now the Wildwood Church of the Nazarene, #9) and the Lemuel Milk Carriage House (or Stone Barn, #11). In 1922 the original sanctuary was altered to add the graceful and unique balcony seen today.

2



Stained glass windows and the unique horseshoe-shaped balcony were added to the original sanctuary in 1902.





# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KANKAKEE

1855



371 E. Court St.  
Kankakee

815-939-3546

[firstpreskankakee.org](http://firstpreskankakee.org)

From a humble meeting of twenty people in 1854, an original wooden church was built in 1855, on land donated by the Illinois Central Railroad with the clause: if it is not used for a church, ownership reverts back to the railroad. The third pastor, J. K. Barnard was father to George Grey Barnard, the famous sculptor, whose Rodin-influenced works are known the world over, in addition to comprising one gallery in the Kankakee County Museum. During the 1930s and 40s thirteen dynamic art-glass windows were put in place in the sanctuary. The Last Supper window on the south wall was installed in 1944.

4



The bronze bell in the tower weighs more than 2,000 pounds and is rung by hand every Sunday.





## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ST. ANNE

1893



334 S. St. Louis Ave.  
St. Anne  
815-427-8430

Father Charles Chiniquy helped found St. Anne with French Canadian settlers recruited by a newspaper ad. When he broke from the Catholic Church, nearly all the 1000 parishioners joined him. After a bitter battle with the Catholic Diocese over the old church ownership, where a lawyer named Abraham Lincoln defended Father Charles, the new church was built on a design secured by a firm in Philadelphia based on the concept of a building that could be built by congregation members themselves. With generous subscriptions of money and labor from its members, this red brick church went from ground breaking to dedication in less than nine months.

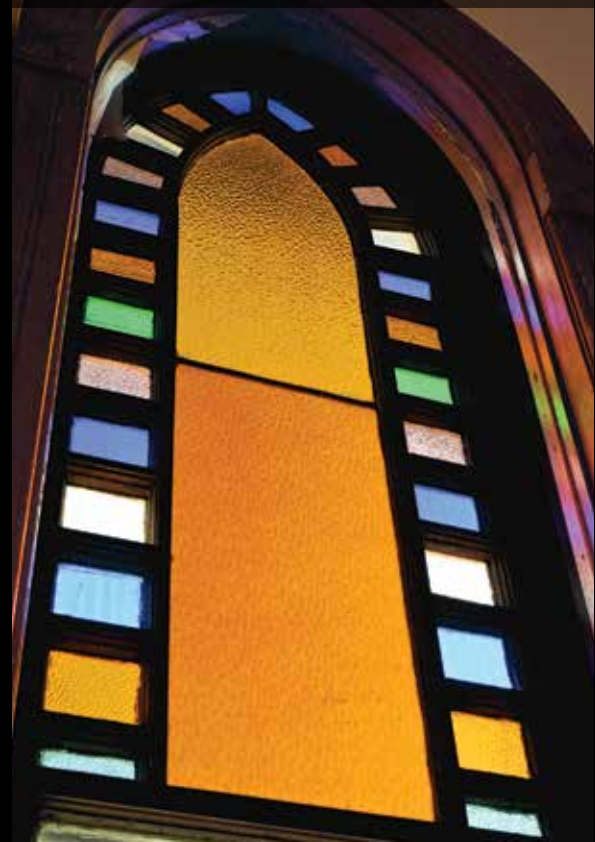
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Sunday worship services were conducted in French until 1917 since most of the charter members came from Quebec, Canada.





## MATERNITY B.V.M. CHURCH

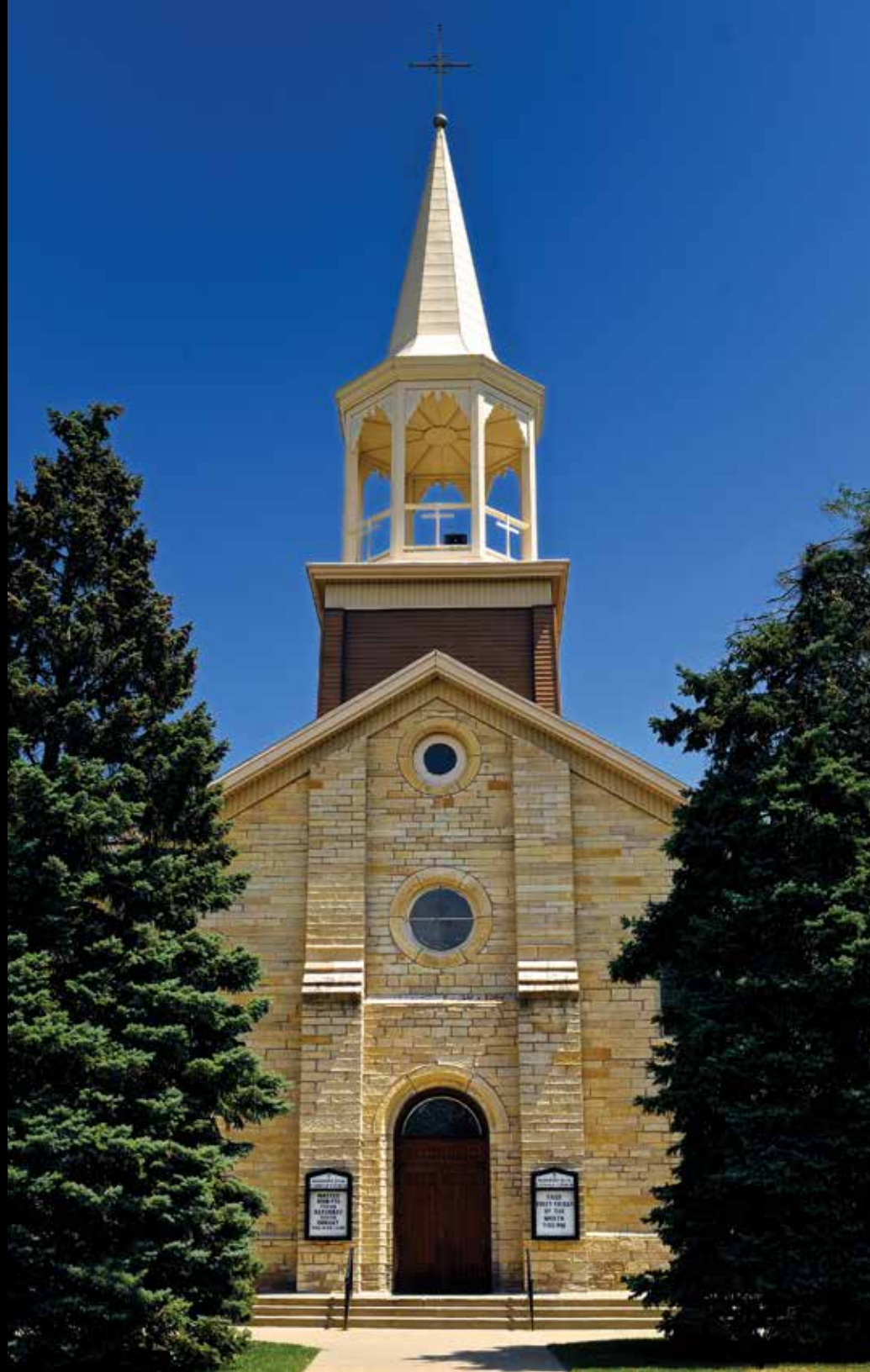
1858

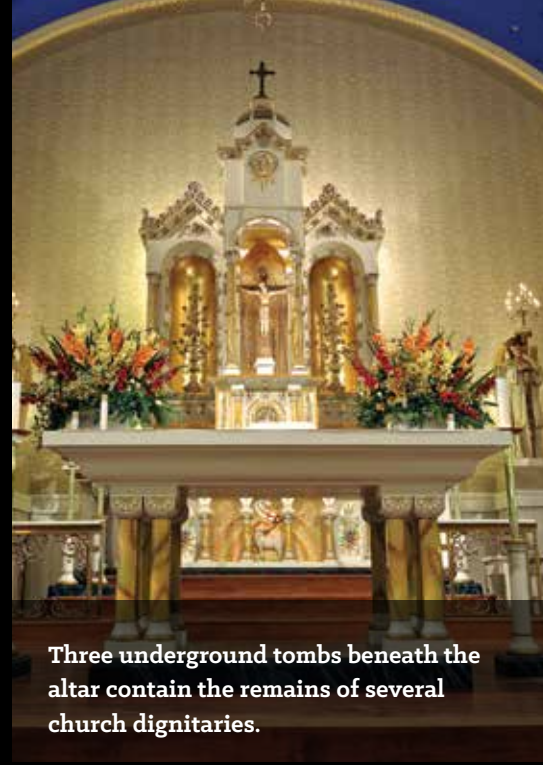


308 E. Marsile St.  
Bourbonnais  
815-933-8285  
mbvmchurch.org

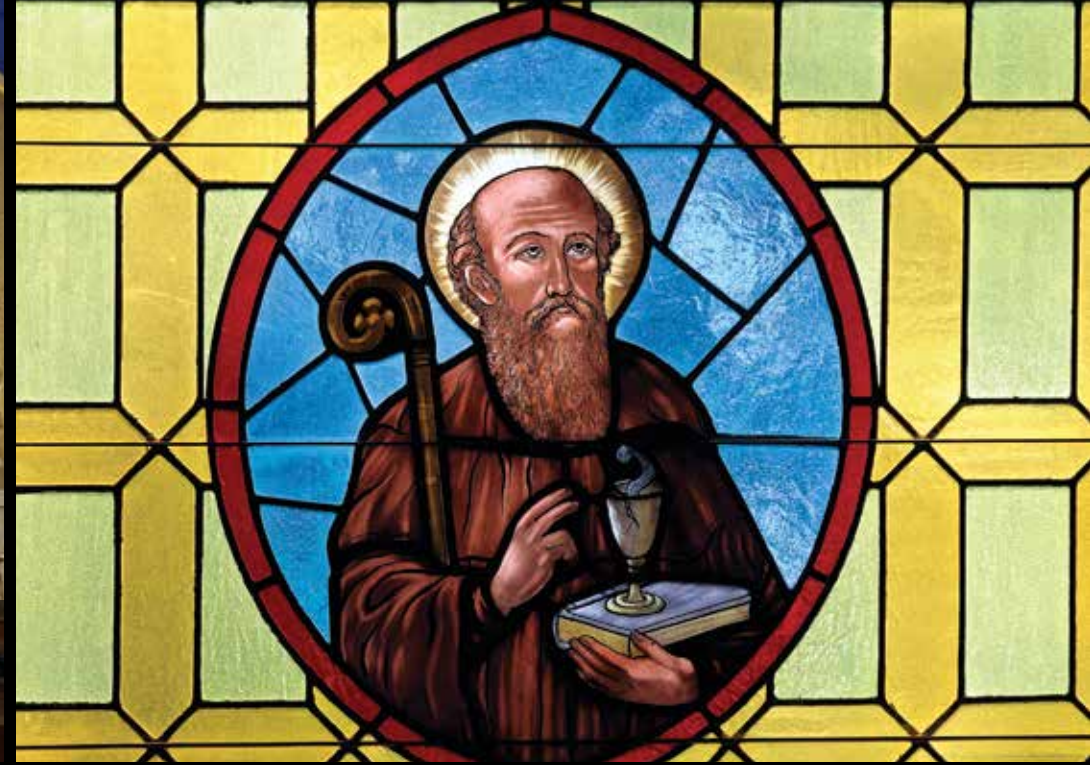
This church was built in the French-Canadian architectural style with locally quarried limestone to resemble the churches the original parishioners saw in their native Quebec. However, the completed design was somewhat smaller and less embellished than the original plan. Three tombs are placed underneath the altar of the church. In one of these is Sister Ignace, the first member of the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame to die in the United States. She was one of the three Sisters brought down in 1862 to provide higher education to the area in what later became known as St. Viator College, which was ultimately sold to Olivet Nazarene College in the 1940s.

8





Three underground tombs beneath the altar contain the remains of several church dignitaries.





## ST. ANNE CATHOLIC CHURCH

1872

230 N. 6th Ave.  
St. Anne  
815-427-8265

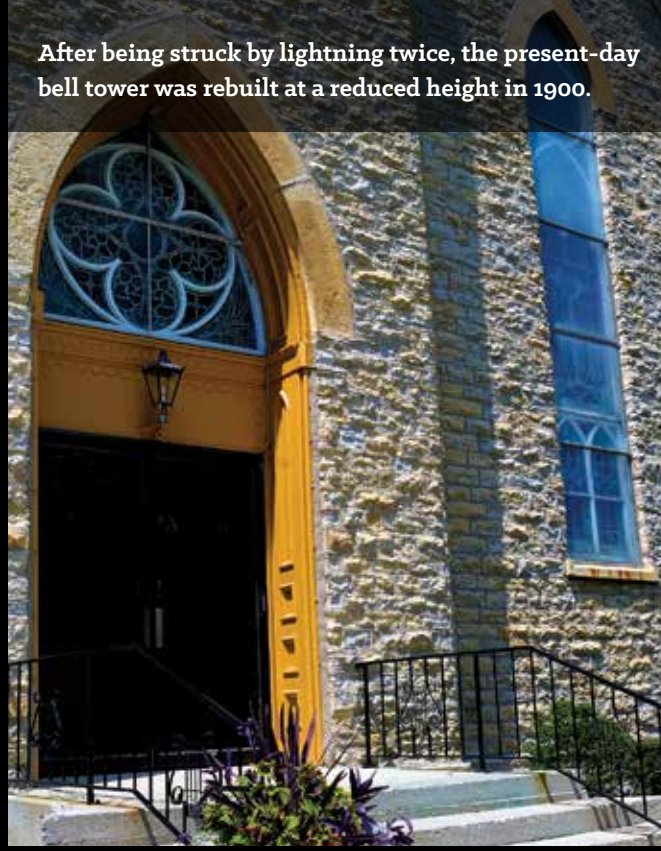


The church construction was overseen by Chicago architect J. T. Fortin, ensuring that the locally-quarried limestone transported by parishioners recreated a style reminiscent of the Gothic churches they grew up with in French Canada. Every year since the first train of pilgrims was brought to celebrate a novena of Masses in 1887, the St. Anne Catholic Church holds a novena from July 18 to July 26 that includes the display of their authenticated relic; a finger bone of St. Anne acquired in 1894. The novena has been the occasion of many blessings, both spiritual and physical as testified by the canes, crutches and wheelchairs left behind.

10



After being struck by lightning twice, the present-day bell tower was rebuilt at a reduced height in 1900.





## ST. PATRICK'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

1894



428 S. Indiana Ave.

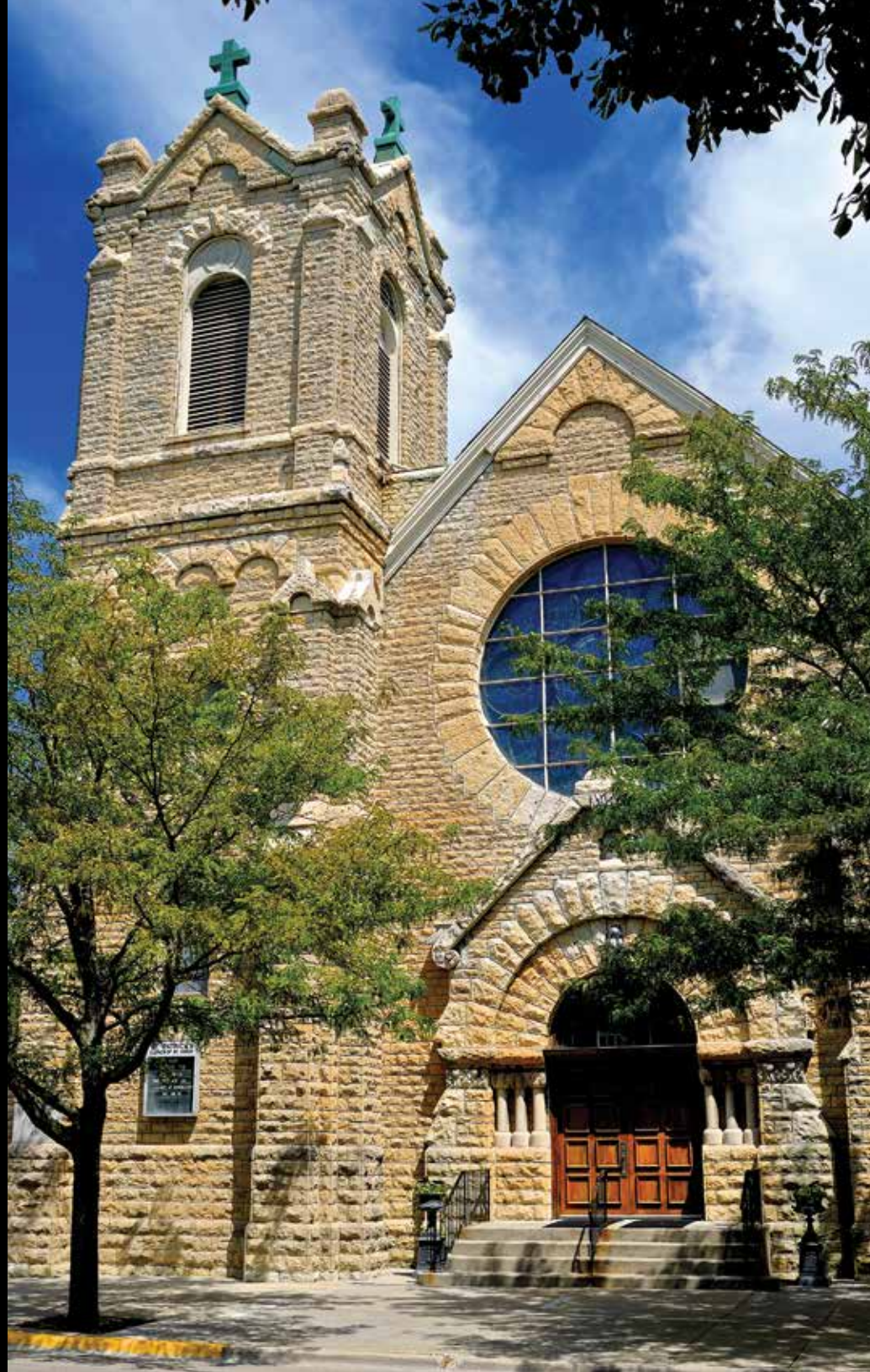
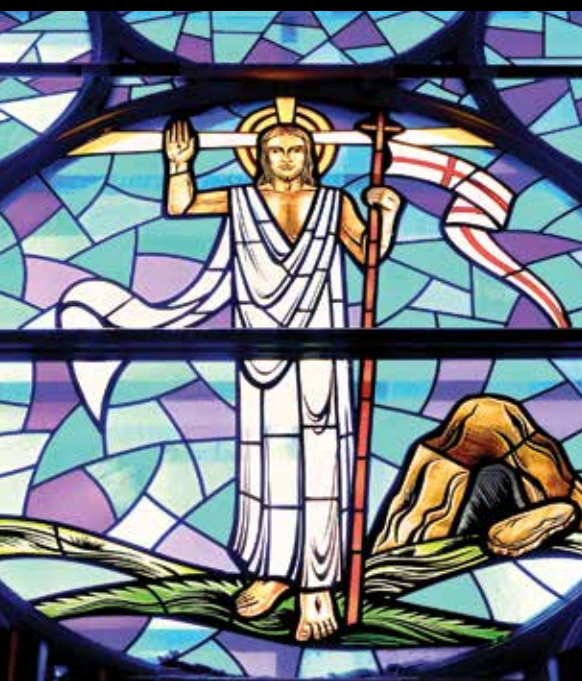
Kankakee

815-932-6716

[stpatrickkankakee.com](http://stpatrickkankakee.com)

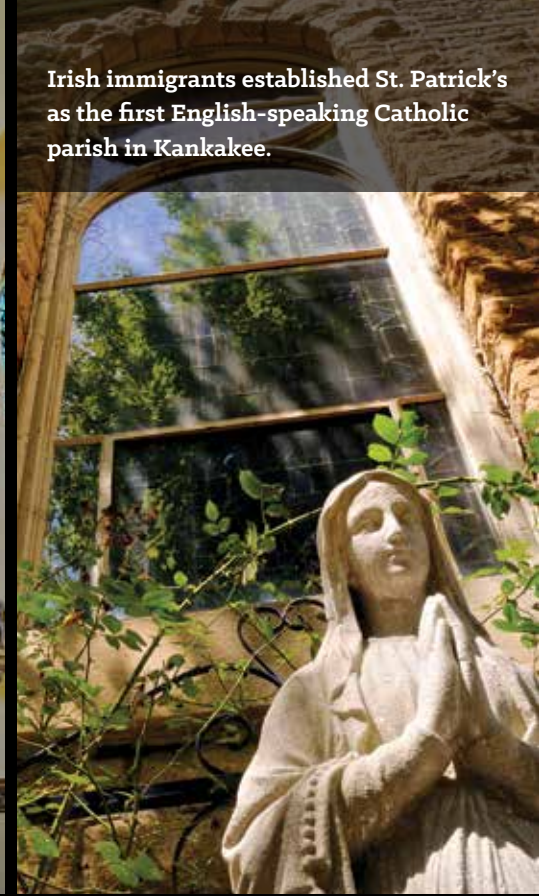
This Romanesque style limestone building was designed to seat 600 worshippers; the Irish immigrants that settled wanted to establish the first English-speaking Catholic parish in Kankakee County. Originally built with electricity and centrally heated by steam—quite an accomplishment for 1894—it boasted a circular stained glass window 15 feet in diameter above the entrance which was the largest in the city at the time. Other beautiful stained glass windows in the church depict the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church, as well as the four evangelists — Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

12





Irish immigrants established St. Patrick's as the first English-speaking Catholic parish in Kankakee.





## ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

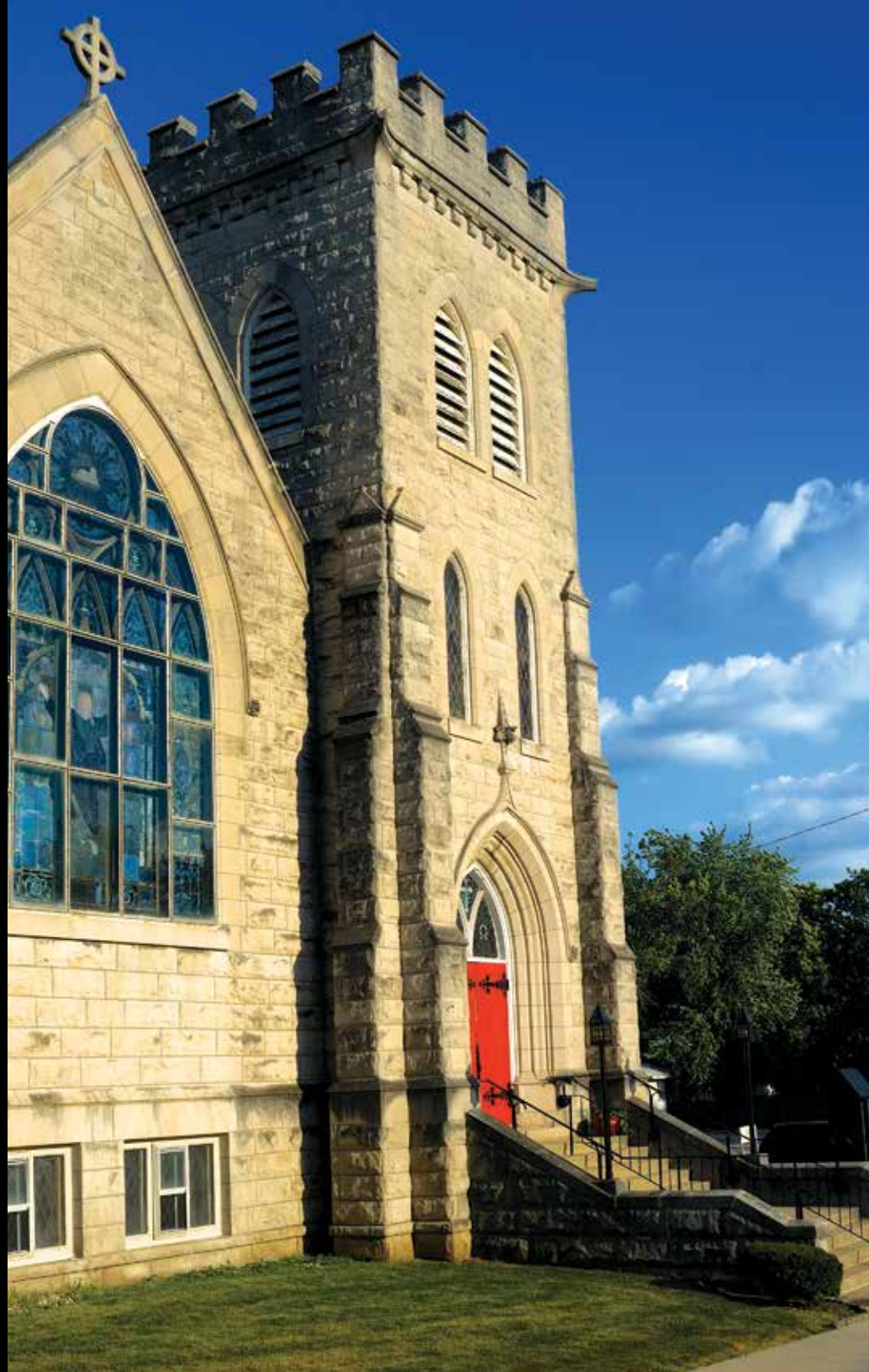
1900



298 S. Harrison Ave.  
Kankakee  
815-932-6611  
[episcopalkankakee.org](http://episcopalkankakee.org)

The prominent red doors set in Bedford Stone blocks define this Norman style church originally designed with a steeple-free tower. Although founded in 1863 to minister to the local French Canadian families, it did not make its home at this location until 1900. However great effort was taken to ensure the baptismal font, brass altar cross, the altar book, vases and even the rope bell came over from the original location. Of special note are the stained glass windows with the largest, the Ascension, to the west; the south windows depict the four evangelists; the north windows are Old Testament patriarchs; and the two sanctuary windows are of the Annunciation and the Epiphany.

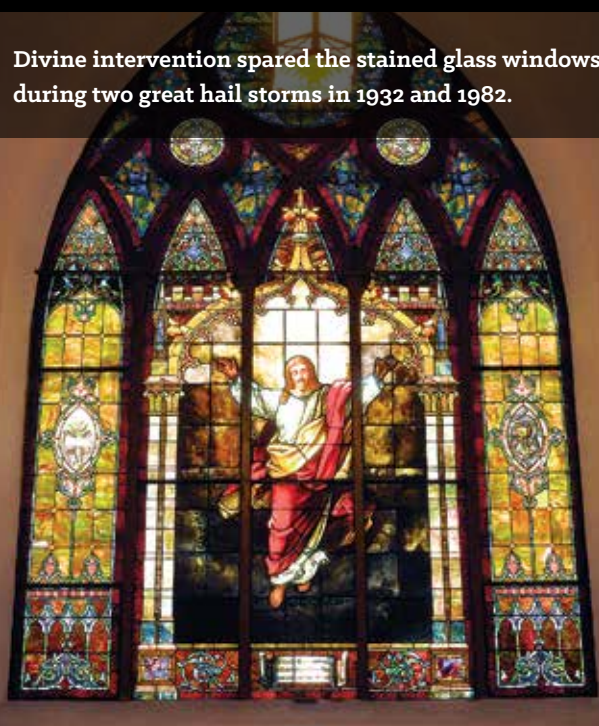
14







Divine intervention spared the stained glass windows during two great hail storms in 1932 and 1982.





## ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

1888



348 E. Merchant St.  
Kankakee  
815-932-0312  
stpaulslutheran.net

In the late 1850s several Lutheran families left Germany to find homes in the little town of Kankakee, Illinois. The first church was built in 1864, however, after a series of fires, several churches were built and rebuilt until this limestone one was constructed in 1888. Perhaps this is the reason why a ghost was reported to haunt the area until 1899. Seen by several residents, *The Kankakee Gazette* reported the ghost scaled the perpendicular side of the church and disappeared over the roof crest with a low, mocking laugh. Despite these hardships, the worshippers stayed true to their roots and conducted services in German until the late 1940s.



*The Kankakee Gazette* reported sightings of a ghost near the church in 1899.





## WILDWOOD CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

1864



*(Formerly First Baptist Church)*

425 E. Court St.

Kankakee

815-933-2443

[wildwoodnaz.org](http://wildwoodnaz.org)

This church is a result of the dedication of the early settlers to have a place of worship. Not only did the Civil War double the costs of materials, but workers were in short supply. Additionally, the stone quarry filled with water every night preventing stone removal until it was drained. In the end, the parishioners came to the rescue, providing horse teams to run pumps 24 hours a day to keep the quarry dry and donated funds, often from their own pockets, to keep the workers on the job. In the 1960s the First Baptist Church of Kankakee sold the property and it is now known as the Wildwood Church of the Nazarene.





Construction of this church took place during the Civil War.



## **FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT'S B. HARLEY BRADLEY HOUSE**

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This famous architect introduced his Prairie Style during the early 1900s. The first two houses designed during this era are located in Kankakee next to each other in the Riverview Historic District. View the beautiful landscape that surrounds the tranquil Kankakee River. Tour the horse stable that has been renovated and transformed into a beautiful gift shop with Frank Lloyd Wright replicas, art and collectables. This fine gem awaits your visit to Kankakee. Unique river tours can be taken from this location.

**701 S. Harrison Ave.  
Kankakee  
815-936-9630  
wright1900.org**



## **FRENCH HERITAGE MUSEUM AT THE STONE BARN**

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The Lemuel Milk Carriage House (historically the Stone Barn) is now home to the French Heritage Museum. Learn about the French involvement in the history of the Kankakee River Valley—the first explorers and missionaries; the Coureurs de bois and fur traders, and the pioneer settlers from France, French Canada, and Belgium.

**165 N. Indiana Ave.  
Kankakee  
815-932-5279  
kankakeecountymuseum.com**



## **KANKAKEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

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This 1912 courthouse with its Beaux Arts–inspired dome dominates the downtown Kankakee skyline. A mural depicting scenes of the county’s history embellishes the dome’s ceiling. The Kankakee County Courthouse, built during the era when Beaux Arts architecture was popular, is a fine example of its style. This masterpiece is bordered by six historical churches that were built in the late 1800s. Bring your camera and capture an outside shot of one of Kankakee County’s beautiful treasures.

**450 E. Court St.  
Kankakee  
815-935-7390**





## KANKAKEE COUNTY MUSEUM

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History breathes life into your experience at the Kankakee County Museum and Historical Society. Founded in 1906, it is the oldest historical society in Illinois. The Museum Complex encompasses the historic Dr. A. L. Small house (1855), the Taylor one-room schoolhouse (1904), the three past Illinois Governors' Gallery, artist Bernard Shaw's permanent sculpture exhibit, Native American artifacts and the Column Garden outdoor exhibit. Discover an extensive collection of reminders of Kankakee's history. Don't forget to visit the museum's gift shop for memorable souvenirs.

**801 S. Eighth Ave.**  
**Kankakee**  
**815-932-5279**  
**[kankakeecountymuseum.com](http://kankakeecountymuseum.com)**



## KANKAKEE RAILROAD MUSEUM

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Instead of automobiles and planes, enjoy trains from the good old days. View the large operating model train display and railroad memorabilia housed in Kankakee's restored train depot. The museum also features a scale model replicating the city of Kankakee during the 1950s. A restored railcar and trolley can be rented for special events. The north end of the Historic Illinois Central Depot houses the museum that has three operating model railroad displays: N Gauge, HO Gauge, and O Gauge. See a 1900s trolley car, tour a 1964 Union Pacific caboose and explore a restored 1947 Pullman Car.

**197 S. East Ave.**  
**Kankakee**  
**815-929-9320**  
**[kankakeerrmuseum.com](http://kankakeerrmuseum.com)**



## RIVERVIEW HISTORIC DISTRICT

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Take a ride, walk or drive through one of Kankakee County's historic neighborhoods. Historic Riverview sits along the banks of the Kankakee River. Enjoy custom built, carefully-restored homes, some more than 100 years old including two of Frank Lloyd Wright's designs. Emory Cobb is credited for his efforts in establishing the Riverview Historic District. Nestled in the Historic District is beautiful Cobb Park. Cobb Park is the landmark where the popular tourist attraction, "Riverview Hotel" was built by Cobb in 1887. Visit the district's website for information about their annual holiday house walk.

**Kankakee**  
**815-922-1289**  
**[riverviewhistoricdistrict.org](http://riverviewhistoricdistrict.org)**



100 Marquette Place S.  
Manteno, IL 60950  
800-747-4837  
VisitKankakeeCounty.com

## Bourbonnais Bradley Kankakee Manteno Momence

KCCVB Historic Churches of Kankakee County 2500, 11/17

# Let's go for a drive!



Visit**Kankakee**County.com