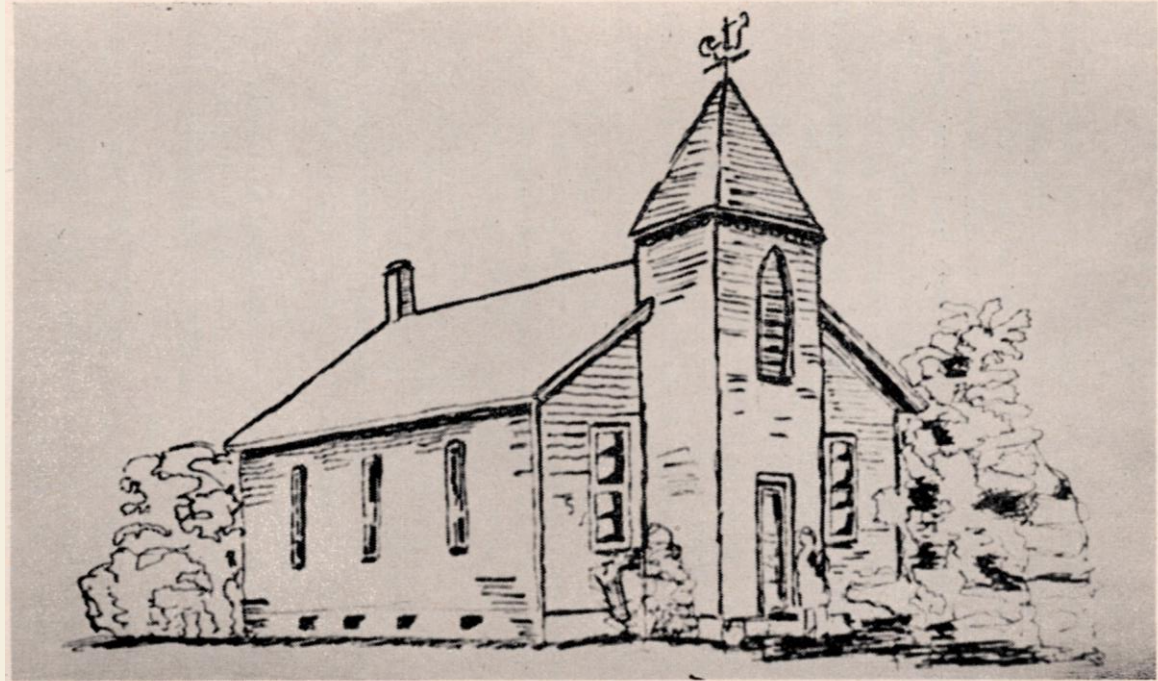


# *A CHANGING CHURCH*

*A History of St. John's Lutheran  
Church*

# *In the Beginning*

- Tolleston, Indiana was planted in the mid 1850s by George Tolle, who designated a plot of land to be used specifically for Church purposes
- Area was largely inhabited by German Lutheran immigrants
- Church developed a Lutheran parochial school
- Annexed into Gary in the early 1900s



An old print of the first church, 1868, at that time the only church north of the Calumet River in Lake County. It was later converted into a school

# Gary, Indiana

- 1960s saw a period of White Flight in the Calumet Region
- Existing discriminatory housing practices meant African Americans living in Gary were already concentrated in separate neighborhoods
- They did not have the same opportunity to follow the factory jobs out of Gary
- Overall, the city saw significant turns in racial and economic demographics

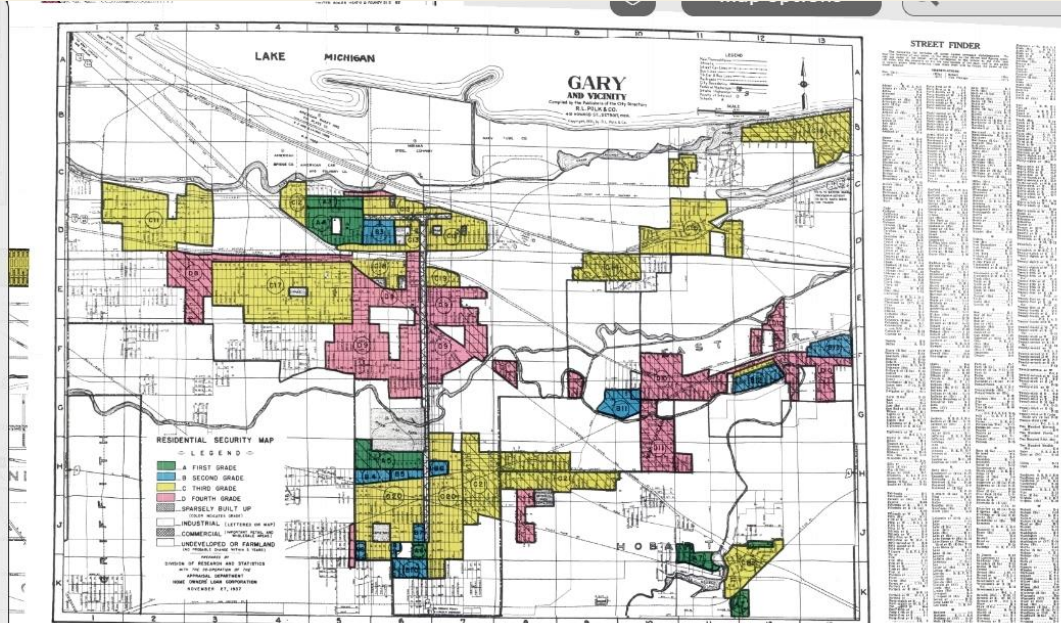
## Lake Co. Gary, IN

### Areas by Grade

Area	Grade
8%	A "Best"
8%	B "Still Desirable"
49%	C "Definitely Declining"
34%	D "Hazardous"

### Demographics

111,719	Total Population (1940)
15.5%	Foreign-born white



This map shows a 1931 “grading” of Gary’s neighborhoods, with hazardous and declining neighborhoods containing black Americans or foreign-born whites. See University of Richmond’s “Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America”.

<https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=13/41.618/-87.343&city=lake-co.-gary-in>



# *Open Doors, Closed Minds*

- Karl Lutze served as St. John's interim pastor in 1961
- Canvassed door-to-door to invite people to the church
- Effort joined by the next resident pastor, Norman Brandt
- For awhile, the congregation existed as a mixed group
- Some congregants opposed integration of the church (see Lutze, *Of Walls and Doors*)
- Brandt was an advocate for racial justice in other parts of ministry





The 1969 Vacation Bible School class attendance reached nearly four-hundred.



# *Conclusion*

The ability of the church to survive the drastic changes in racial and economic demographics following White Flight was due to the church's historical presence as a community locus, but one that was able and willing to serve the community thanks to the active role that church leadership played in the integration of the church.

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