

# Appoquinimink Friends Meeting House (Odessa, Delaware)

## Bethel AME Church (Indianapolis, Indiana)

### **Appoquinimink Friends Meeting House (Odessa, Delaware)**

The Appoquinimink Friends Meeting House, [built] in 1783, is located in a community where a strong Quaker antislavery movement existed. Two members of the congregation, John Hunn and John Alston, were two Underground Railroad "station masters." John Hunn helped several fugitive slaves who were in the care of "conductor" Samuel Burris to escape through Delaware and into Pennsylvania to freedom in 1844. Turned in to local law officials by neighbors who lived near Hunn, the two men were sued by the owners of the fugitive slaves for loss of their property under the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793. Hunn was fined \$2,500 which forced him to sell his farm. Burris was sentenced back into slavery but was later purchased from the auction block by a Philadelphia antislavery activist. John Alston worked with his cousin John Hunn, to help fugitive slaves escape to freedom. In 1841 Alston wrote in his diary: "O Lord...enable me to keep my heart and house open to receive thy servants that they may rest in their travels..."

### **Bethel AME Church (Indianapolis, Indiana)**

Originally founded in 1836 by William Paul Quinn and Augustus Turner, the church, then known as "Indianapolis Station," started with a small congregation that met in Quinn's log cabin. By 1848 the church had 100 members and became active in the antislavery movement, often harboring fugitive slaves en route to Canada. Their promotion of the antislavery movement and their activities in the Underground Railroad were not well received by some members of the local community. Supporters of slavery are believed to be the cause of the fire that destroyed the church in 1862. The congregation raised money to rebuild the church in 1867. Bethel also played an important role in the community after the Civil War. Bethel opened schools for African Americans throughout the city, and a kindergarten was at one time operating in the church building.

