

ALBANY PARK

PSALM 9:9

*The Lord will be a stronghold for the oppressed . . .
in times of trouble.*

NEIGHBORHOODS

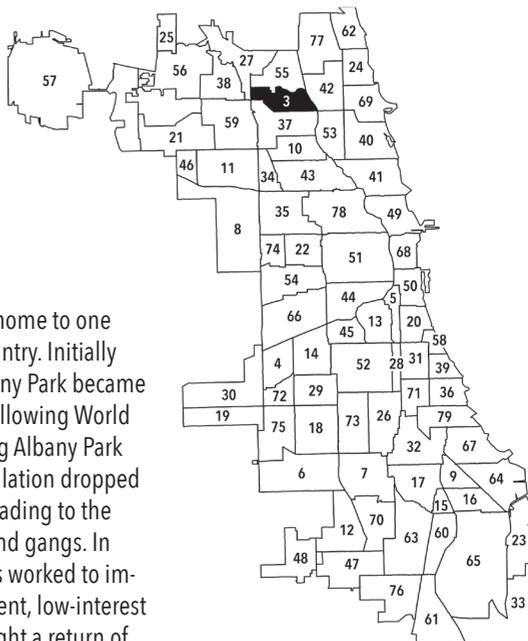
Albany Park, Mayfair, North Mayfair,
Ravenswood Manor

DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian (12.7%), Black or African American (4.3%),
Hispanic or Latino (51.0%), White (30.2%)

LEARN

Annexed to Chicago in 1893, Albany Park is now home to one of the most ethnically diverse zip codes in the country. Initially settled by German and Swedish immigrants, Albany Park became home to a number of Russian Jews after 1912. Following World War II, many Jewish families moved north, leaving Albany Park during the economic and social decline. The population dropped drastically as homes and stores became vacant, leading to the development of illegal drug trade, prostitution, and gangs. In response, city government and other corporations worked to improve Albany Park through streetscape development, low-interest loans, and financing packages. These efforts brought a return of residents and an increase in property values. In 1990, Albany Park became home to the largest number of Korean, Filipino, and Guatemalan immigrants in Chicago and became known as the “Ellis Island” of Chicago. The population continues to shift as Korean immigrants move to northern suburbs.¹



PRAY

As one of the most ethnically diverse neighborhoods in Chicago, Albany Park is a community of many religions. Pray for truth to reign in the hearts of the people and the gospel to break through cultural boundaries and strongholds.

There are several churches and organizations that are working with the refugee population. Pray that God would give them favor and the necessary resources to serve the refugees.

Many churches have been recently planted to address the diversity in this neighborhood. Pray that their efforts would take root in the lives of the community residents.

Pray for those that are marginalized in this community, such as the homeless and undocumented residents. Pray that they may reestablish connectedness to family, employment, and schooling.

¹ Neary, Timothy B. Albany Park. Encyclopedia of Chicago. <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/36.html>.

ARCHER HEIGHTS

REV. 21:2-4

*... the new Jerusalem ... God shall be among them ...
there shall no longer be any death ...*

NEIGHBORHOODS

Archer Heights

DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian (0%), Black or African American (1.4%),
Hispanic or Latino (67.8%), White (30.1%)

LEARN

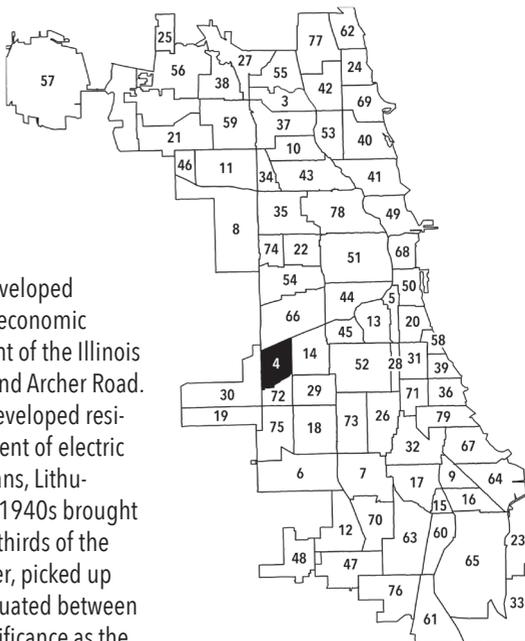
During the 1850s, Archer Heights remained undeveloped swampland, home to few settlers. There was little economic development in the area despite the establishment of the Illinois & Michigan Canal, the Chicago & Alton Railroad, and Archer Road. After the turn of the century in 1900, spectators developed residential sections of Archer Heights. The establishment of electric streetcars by 1906 created an influx of Poles, Italians, Lithuanians, Czechs, and Russian Jews. The 1930s and 1940s brought industrial and commercial growth and about two-thirds of the area became industry. Residential growth, however, picked up again following World War II. The population fluctuated between 1950 and 1990 with the decline of Midway's significance as the main airport in Chicago. During this time, the population remained notably consistent in composition. At the end of the twentieth century, 60 percent of Archer Heights was for manufacturing and bulk transportation facilities, 30 percent was residential, and 10 percent was commercial. The character of Archer Heights remained consistent throughout the twentieth century as a mostly blue-collar, Caucasian, and industrial population. In the early twenty-first century, the population began to shift as a large number of Hispanic families moved into the neighborhood.¹

PRAY

As the social landscape of this neighborhood changes rapidly, the residents are experiencing racial and language barriers. Pray for churches to come alongside the people and help alleviate the tensions.

There are many families that have been displaced and fragmented in this community. Pray for stability and that they would discover their belonging as members of the family of God.

Pray for young people to stay in school and stem the tide of high dropout rates in this community. Pray for teachers and administrators to persevere and inspire students to see the value of education.



¹ Keyes, Jonathan J. Archer Heights. Encyclopedia of Chicago. <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/60.html>.

ARMOUR SQUARE

PROVERBS 14:31B

He who is gracious to the needy honors Him.

NEIGHBORHOODS

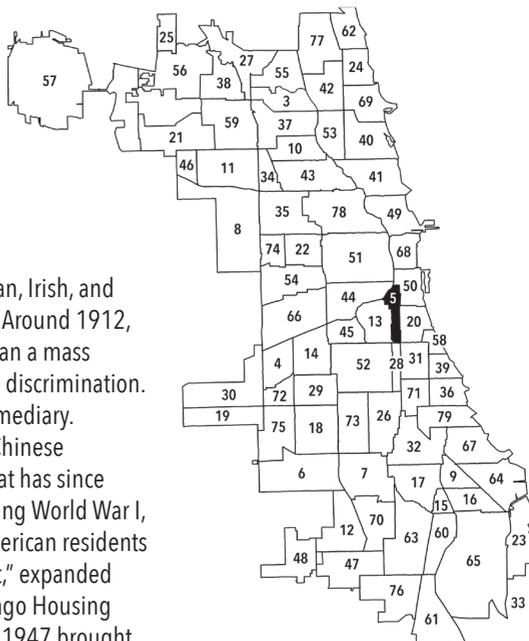
Armour Square, Chinatown, Wentworth Gardens

DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian (67.9%), Black or African American (9.1%), Hispanic or Latino (3.7%), White (16.5%)

LEARN

Armour Square found its beginnings when German, Irish, and Swedish immigrants arrived during the Civil War. Around 1912, Chinese living on the south edge of the Loop began a mass movement southward, encountering severe racial discrimination. They were forced to do business through an intermediary. The H.O. Stone Company acted on behalf of fifty Chinese businessmen, securing leases on buildings in what has since become a major tourist attraction in Chicago. During World War I, the narrow corridor that was limited to African American residents on Chicago's South Side, known as the "Black Belt," expanded into the southern section of Armour Square. Chicago Housing Authority's construction of Wentworth Gardens in 1947 brought the population in the area to an all-time high. However, the demolition brought about for the construction of the Dan Ryan and Stevenson Expressway resulted in a steady decline in population. The distinctive Chinatown and Wentworth Gardens has made Armour Square the diverse environment it is today.¹



PRAY

Pray for the long-term development of the community as a new generation of leaders are taking over and starting to emerge.

Many immigrants are mainland Chinese students coming to America specifically for an education, which provides a window of opportunity to share the gospel with these students during their short time here.

Praise God for the work He is doing through a number of Christian social service agencies and churches in the community that provide ESL services, job training, and tutoring classes.

Recently, Chinatown businesses have gained the interest of foreign investors, with new and different understanding of business than the traditional. Pray that tensions among people in business would be mediated and resolved.

Pray that the underground issues and tensions, especially trafficking, would be addressed and not tolerated by the community.

¹ Solzman, David M. Armour Square. Encyclopedia of Chicago. <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/71.html>.

ASHBURN

TITUS 3:14

*And let our people also learn to engage in good deeds
to meet pressing needs . . .*

NEIGHBORHOODS

Ashburn, Ashburn Estates, Beverly View, Crestline, Parkview, Scottsdale, Wrightwood

DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian (0.8%), Black or African American (49.2%), Hispanic or Latino (31.5%), White (17.6%)

LEARN

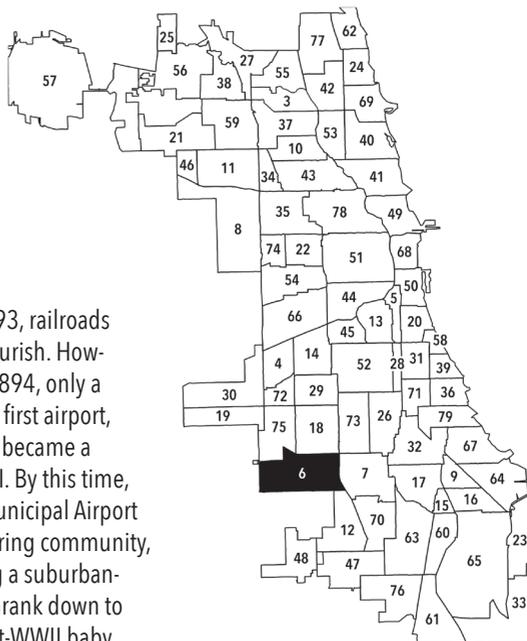
Following Ashburn's annexation to Chicago in 1893, railroads were built in hopes that the community would flourish. However, Ashburn was slow in development, and by 1894, only a few homes and residences were added. Chicago's first airport, Ashburn Flying Field, was opened in 1916, which became a training camp for Signal Corps during World War I. By this time, Ashburn's population had grown to 1,363. The Municipal Airport (now Midway) then opened in 1927 in a neighboring community, and Ashburn Field closed in 1939, later becoming a suburban-style mall. Although the population of Ashburn shrank down to 731 during World War II, the automobile and post-WWII baby boom led to rapid growth in the community, with the population peaking at 47,161 in 1970. The majority of the population was white until a new racially mixed neighborhood, Maycrest, formed. During the 1960s, neighborhoods integrated with the help of Greater Ashburn Planning Association (GAPA), which worked to minimize racial strife over school desegregation. Ashburn has maintained an extremely high homeownership rate, with retirement housing to help families age in the same place.¹

PRAY

Praise God for the ethnic diversity in the community. Pray for cultural sensitivity and continued peace among the residents.

Pray for the local high school which, though underresourced, brings together young people from many socioeconomic backgrounds.

Praise God that this community has not experienced the instances of violence and gang activity of neighboring communities. Pray that these patterns of safety would continue in Ashburn. A once vibrant church presence has waned in recent years. Pray for a renewed focus on the part of the body of Christ.



¹ Meyer, Sherry. Ashburn. Encyclopedia of Chicago. <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/85.html>.

AUBURN GRESHAM

PHILIPPIANS 1:4

... always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Auburn Gresham, Gresham

DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian (0.1%), Black or African American (98.3%),
Hispanic or Latino (0.7%), White (0.4%)

LEARN

Auburn Gresham was annexed to Chicago in 1889 comprising German and Dutch settlers. Later, Irish settlers moved to the area and grew to 21 percent of the population. Near the end of the 1950s, African Americans began leaving the overcrowded corridor on Chicago's South Side referred to as the "Black Belt" and moved into the neighborhoods surrounding Auburn Gresham. To address the developing racial tensions, churches and civic organizations formed the Organization of Southwest Communities (OSC) in 1959. Their goal was to implement stable racial integration by maintaining property values, eliminating racist stereotypes, and preventing violence. However, in the 1960s, crime grew at a fast pace. Simultaneously, the population of Auburn Gresham increased dramatically. With national and citywide movements and riots, many white residents left the region. By 1970, Auburn Gresham was settled by a 69 percent African American population. While the OSC was unsuccessful in maintaining integration, the transition from a majority white to a majority black population was more peaceful than might have been otherwise.¹

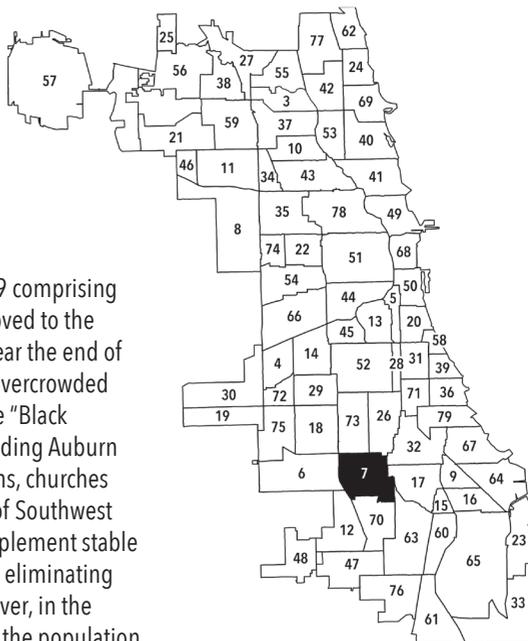
PRAY

Pray for increased educational opportunities for children and teenagers.

Pray for the body of Christ in this community to be empowered in the gospel to provide an example for the neighborhood.

Pray for parents in this community to become more involved in the lives of their children.

Pray for a break in the poverty, violence, and crime prevalent in the neighborhood.



¹ McMahan, Eileen M. Auburn Gresham. Encyclopedia of Chicago. <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/88.html>.

AUSTIN

LUKE 19:41

He saw the city and wept over it.

NEIGHBORHOODS

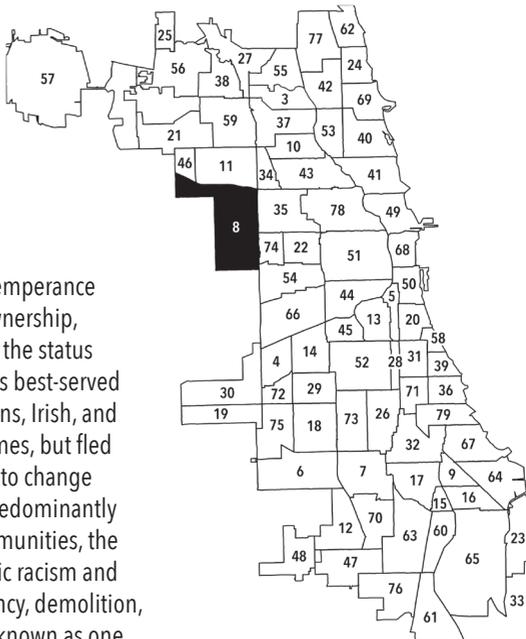
Austin, Galewood, The Island

DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian (0.4%), Black or African American (84.7%),
Hispanic or Latino (8.3%), White (5.9%)

LEARN

Henry Austin purchased 470 acres in 1865 for a temperance settlement named "Austinville" in which home ownership, tree-lined parkways, and gracious living would be the status quo. By 1920, Austin had become one of Chicago's best-served commuter neighborhoods. Germans, Scandinavians, Irish, and Italian families settled and built churches and homes, but fled during the 1960s when the demographics began to change dramatically. By 1980, Austin's population was predominantly African American. Like many other West Side communities, the neighborhood experienced the tragedy of systemic racism and white flight through housing disinvestment, vacancy, demolition, and the loss of jobs and commerce. It is currently known as one of Chicago's roughest neighborhoods, stricken with illegal drug and gang activity. Yet, there is hope for the future as Austin experiences signs of recovery through neighborhood churches and organizations.¹



PRAY

Pray against violence in the community, which has seen an increase in recent years due to domestic violence, drugs, gang activity, and school closures. In fact, Austin has become known as one of Chicago's most dangerous neighborhoods.

Pray for the many single-parent families, especially the struggles many women face who are left raising families by themselves. Pray for a stronger commitment to family.

In 2013, the Chicago Public School System started closing down almost fifty schools in Chicago. Several of these schools are in Austin. Pray for stability within the community during this time of transition in the school system.

Pray for the various churches in Austin to reach out to the community by getting involved in people's lives by addressing both physical and spiritual needs.

¹ Martin, Judith A. Austin. Encyclopedia of Chicago. <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/93.html>.

AVALON PARK

LUKE 24:49

... stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Avalon Park, Marynook, Stony Island Park

DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian (0.3%), Black or African American (98.1%),
Hispanic or Latino (0%), White (0.4%)

LEARN

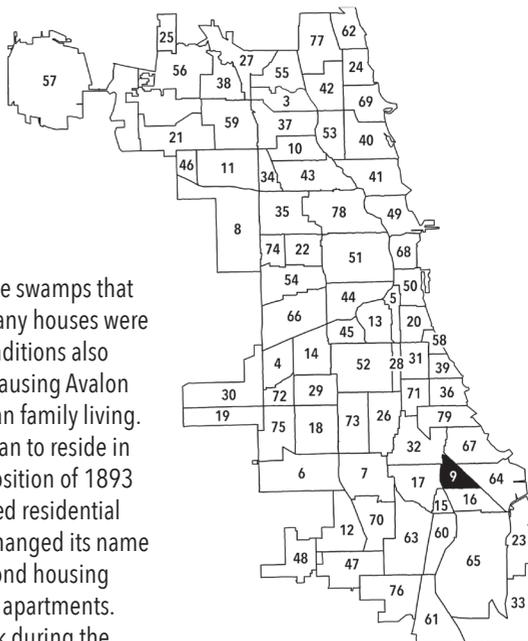
One of the unique attributes of Avalon Park are the swamps that used to occupy this territory. To avoid flooding, many houses were built on stilts during early settlement. Swamp conditions also discouraged attempts at permanent settlement, causing Avalon Park to serve as a site for waste disposal rather than family living. By the 1880s, German and Irish descendants began to reside in the community. Also, the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 and the installation of drainage in 1900 stimulated residential growth. Then, in 1910, the former "Pennytown" changed its name officially to Avalon Park. The 1920s brought a second housing boom of single-family brick bungalows and a few apartments. African Americans began to move into Avalon Park during the 1960s and made up 96 percent of the population by 1980. They did not experience the same ravages white flight usually brought, enabling owner-occupancy rates to remain consistently over 70 percent in recent decades.¹

PRAY

The Nation of Islam has a strong presence in the broader community in Avalon Park. Pray for young African American men to discover their true identity in Christ.

Numerous businesses in the neighborhood are struggling, making the availability of local job opportunities scarce for the residents. Pray for economic renewal of the community.

Like many other neighborhoods in Chicago, the community is a "food desert" with a lack of fresh fruits and vegetables for families resulting in an improper diet and health concerns. Pray for initiatives to educate residents in healthy eating patterns and for affordable alternatives.



¹ Best, Wallace. Avalon Park. Encyclopedia of Chicago. <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/97.html>.

AVONDALE

JEREMIAH 24:7

Seek the welfare of the city . . . pray to the Lord on its behalf . . .

NEIGHBORHOODS

Avondale, Jackowo, The Polish Village, Wacławowo

DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian (3.2%), Black or African American (2.5%), Hispanic or Latino (65.8%), White (27.0%)

LEARN

Avondale grew along Milwaukee Avenue and paralleling railroad lines, developing as a working-class community. Rapid growth began in 1889 following Avondale's annexation to Chicago. Transportation improved with the extension of street railway lines and the construction of the "L", providing means for commuting to the city for jobs. The rail lines and the river attracted industry in Avondale. The river banks once contained boatyards, brick factories, and an amusement park. Today, the industrial belt along the river is being replaced with luxury townhouses, condominiums, and shopping malls, leading to the loss of many industrial jobs that supported the working class for decades.¹

PRAY

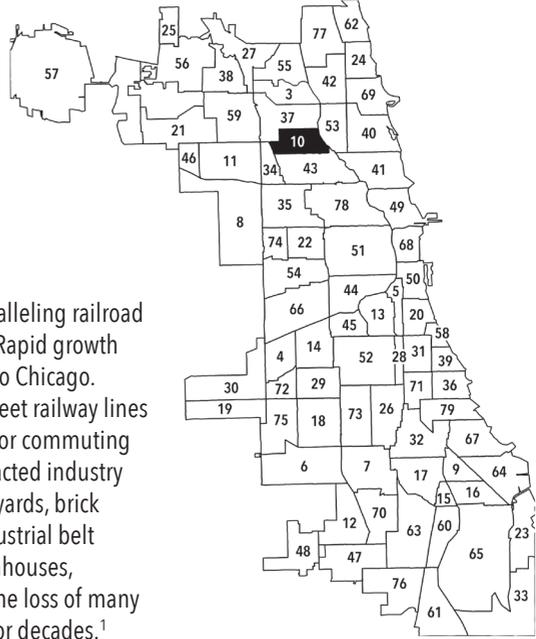
Praise God for the diversity found in Avondale. Pray for ongoing unity between groups of people as the neighborhood continues to change.

The community as a whole is under-churched, and many of those who are involved in the church are more connected culturally than spiritually. Pray for an increased presence of the body of Christ in this neighborhood.

Unemployment and underemployment is a very real struggle in this community. Many households have parents working two or three jobs just to make ends meet. Pray for the physical, social, and emotional needs of these families.

The schools in this neighborhood attempt to educate the students, but face overcrowding and language barriers. Pray that despite these hurdles, resources would be allocated and the needs of the students would be met.

Pray for new businesses to focus on this area as there is still a need for economic improvement in the community.



¹ Solzman, David M. Avondale. Encyclopedia of Chicago. <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/98.html>.

BELMONT CRAGIN

ISAIAH 30:18

For the Lord is a God of justice . . .

NEIGHBORHOODS

Belmont Cragin, Brickyard, Cragin, Hanson Park

DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian (1.8%), Black or African American (6.0%),
Hispanic or Latino (72.4%), White (18.6%)

LEARN

Belmont Cragin remained rural until 1882 when Cragin Brothers & Company, an iron processing plant, moved into the area. Job opportunities and rail service brought about a housing boom and an influx of settlers. Residents soon saw another boom when more factories in the 1920s were established in the area. The housing needs escalated, leading to the erection of bungalows, Cape Cods, and two-flats. The area continued to develop into the Post War years with the Chicago Transit Authority extension of its Belmont Street bus service and into the 1970s with continued construction of shopping malls and businesses. The Hispanic population also quadrupled from 1980 to 1990. Many Polish immigrants and businesses came to the area during these years.

The area experienced a drop in manufacturing employment and a decline in retail activity in the 1980s due to shutting down of various plants. Residents organized home reinvestment and commercial development campaigns to confront the issues of unemployment and rising poverty.¹

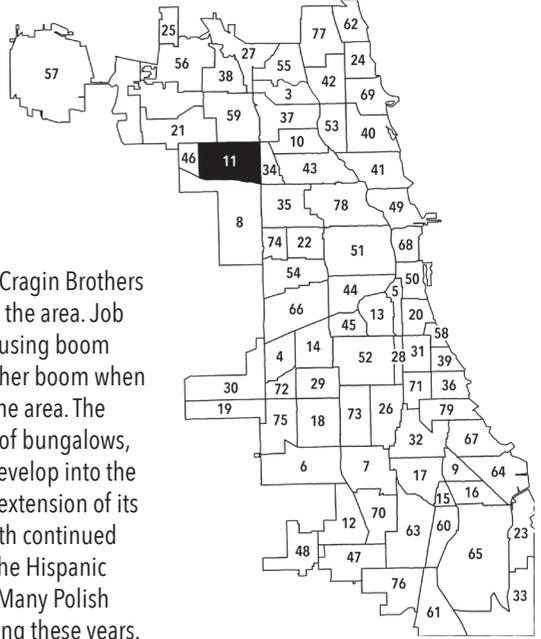
PRAY

Thank God for a local nonprofit housing agency that was awarded a grant to address neighborhood housing concerns. Pray for the stabilization of the housing market as this neighborhood has been impacted by the large number of foreclosures.

Pray for increased civic involvement and the formation of block clubs, such as neighborhood watch, that help to establish a deeper level of safety in the community.

Pray for increased literacy in English and that this will help raise the standard of living for many.

Many instances of domestic abuse take place in this community, many that go unreported because of issues related to immigration. Pray for guidance for the churches and agencies addressing these numerous instances of domestic abuse in this area.



¹ Perry, Marilyn Elizabeth. Belmont Cragin. Encyclopedia of Chicago. <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/129.html>.

BEVERLY

1 PETER 2:12

... they may on account of your good deeds ... glorify God ...

NEIGHBORHOODS

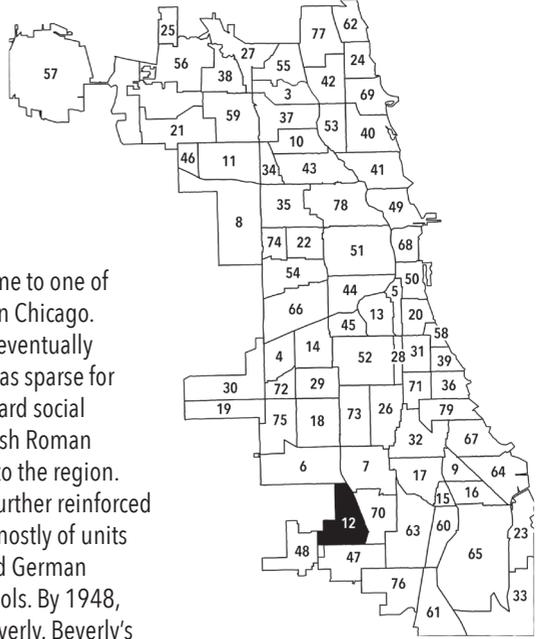
Beverly, West Beverly

DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian (0.5%), Black or African American (31.9%),
Hispanic or Latino (3.1%), White (62.6%)

LEARN

Beverly is a racially integrated neighborhood, home to one of the most stable middle-class residential districts in Chicago. Initially part of Washington Heights, Beverly was eventually annexed to Chicago in 1890, but its population was sparse for several decades. The community symbolized upward social mobility for European immigrants and later for Irish Roman Catholics and African Americans who migrated into the region. The community is primarily suburban in nature, further reinforced by Ridge Park. Consequently, housing consisted mostly of units for single families. In the 1920s, Irish Catholic and German Lutheran migrants established churches and schools. By 1948, Catholics became the largest denomination in Beverly. Beverly's population increased dramatically following World War II, mostly due to racial changes in neighborhoods like Englewood, Normal Park, and South Shore. In recent years, Beverly has experienced a slow decline in population and increased ethnic diversity.¹



PRAY

Beverly is one of the more diverse neighborhoods on the South Side. Pray for continued harmony among these different people groups.

Many neighborhood residents and retirees have been impacted by Chicago's budget challenges. Pray for the provision of their basic needs.

Pray for the stability of home values that have been hit hard by the recent housing downturn.

Many residents in this neighborhood are able to choose private schooling for their children. Pray that these schools would have a positive impact on the lives of the children.

¹ Skerrett, Ellen. Beverly. Encyclopedia of Chicago. <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/134.html>.

BRIDGEPORT

JOHN 17:21

... that they may all be one ... that the world may believe ...

NEIGHBORHOODS

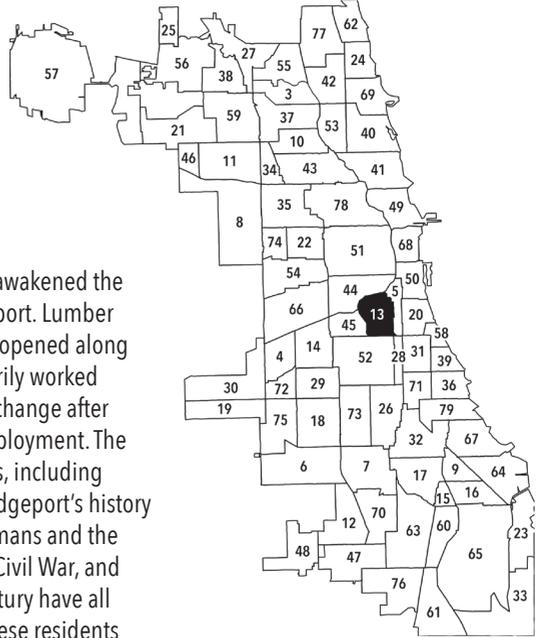
Bridgeport

DEMOGRAPHICS

Asian (32.4%), Black or African American (0.8%),
Hispanic or Latino (27.0%), White (38.5%)

LEARN

It was the Illinois & Michigan Canal in 1836 that awakened the first activity in the area of Chicago named Bridgeport. Lumber yards, manufacturing plants, and packinghouses opened along the river and canal as Bridgeport residents primarily worked in local industries. Residents began to see some change after the Civil War through municipal government employment. The neighborhood has also been home to five mayors, including Richard J. and Richard M. Daley. Also a part of Bridgeport's history is racial and ethnic conflict: clashes between Germans and the Irish in 1856, pro-Confederate rallies during the Civil War, and Polish and Lithuanian gangs in the twentieth century have all had their strife. The number of Mexican and Chinese residents has grown, as Bridgeport remains a largely working-class community. Because of its convenient geography in direct line to the Loop, Bridgeport maintains a high possibility for future investment and development. In addition, the rise of the artist community has started to have its stake in this growing neighborhood, changing the cultural climate of the area.¹



PRAY

As a growing ethnic community, Bridgeport is moving from a predominantly Irish and Italian community to a Chinese and Hispanic community. There is also a small pocket of Lithuanians living in the neighborhood. Pray for the emerging immigrant population and for their equal representation in the government.

Bridgeport continues to be the home of many of the city's workers and political leaders. Pray for wisdom and godly leadership in the government.

There are a number of Catholic churches as well as a Buddhist temple. Pray for the grace and truth of the gospel to penetrate the neighborhood and reach those who come from different religious backgrounds.

¹ Pacyga, Dominic A. Bridgeport. Encyclopedia of Chicago. <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/165.html>.