

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106  
(203) 566-3005

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM  
For Buildings and Structures

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
TOWN NO.:		SITE NO.:	
UTM: 18	/	/	/
QUAD:			
DISTRICT:	S	NR:	ACTUAL POTENTIAL

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME: Common: First Church of Christ Congregational Historic: same
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 190 Court Street
4. OWNER(S): The First Ecclesiastical Society PUBLIC  PRIVATE
5. USE: Present: Church Historic: same
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road:  yes  no  
Interior accessible:  yes, explain religious use  no

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Gothic Revival DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1871-1872
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):  
 clapboard  asbestos siding  brick except facade  
 wood shingle  asphalt siding  fieldstone  
 board & batten  stucco  cobblestone  
 aluminum siding  concrete: type: \_\_\_\_\_  cut stone: type: brownstone  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_ facade  
(coursed ashlar)
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:  
 wood frame:  post and beam  balloon  
 load bearing masonry  structural iron or steel  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_
10. ROOF: type:  
 gable  flat  mansard  monitor  sawtooth  
 gambrel  shed  hip north wing  round  other \_\_\_\_\_  
material:  
 wood shingle  roll asphalt  tin  slate  
 asphalt shingle  built up  tile  other: \_\_\_\_\_
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 135'x80'
12. CONDITION: Structural:  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated  
Exterior:  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY: Location:  on original site  moved, when: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alterations:  no  yes, explain: Rear wing added (1926); spire, pinnacles, dorm-  
ers removed
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:  
 barn  shed  garage  other landscape features or buildings: \_\_\_\_\_  
 carriage house  shop  garden
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:  
 open land  woodland  residential  scattered buildings visible from site  
 commercial  industrial  rural  high building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This large building, located a short distance from Main Street, is in an area consisting principally of commercial buildings from various periods. Although some are similar in materials, the surrounding rectangular buildings contrast with the church's distinct vertical Gothic style. This church is flanked by a mid-nineteenth century building once used as its parish house and a two story commercial building.

17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Architect: C.C. Nicholas of Albany, New York Builder: \_\_\_\_\_  
18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This church, built in 1871-72, is the fifth meeting house of The First Ecclesiastical Society, the oldest religious organization in Middletown. Traditionally, this church's congregation has been composed of many prominent city residents. Since this building's erection, its membership has included Woodrow Wilson and state governors Frank B. Weeks and Owen V. Coffin. Notable church pastors were Azel W. Hazen (pastor 1868-1919), author of a history of the church and Douglas Horton, the succeeding pastor who later became Dean of the Harvard Divinity School.

This Gothic Revival edifice was designed by C.C. Nicholas of Albany, New York. A six-bay buttressed brick main section encloses a modest interior with a plaster vaulted ceiling. The facade is of brownstone and derives a distinctly textural effect from the contrast of its rock faced ashlar walls with the smooth finished stone of its window and entrance moldings. The elements of the central facade are symmetrically arranged; over the large pointed arch portal are three pointed arch tracery windows. A square buttressed brownstone tower is incorporated into the southwest corner of the facade. The spire damaged in the

(see continuation sheet)

**PHOTOGRAPH**

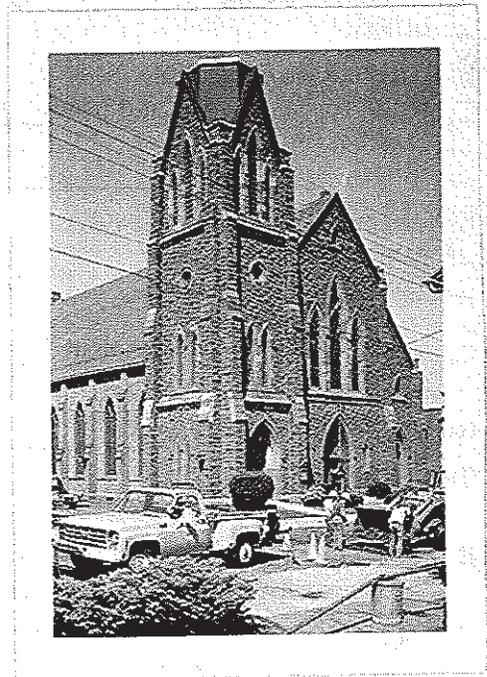
photographer: Robert Svec  
date: 9/78 view: south  
negative on file: Roll 31, #13

**COMPILED BY:**

name: Robert Svec date: 3/78  
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust  
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Middletown Land Records; Middletown Probate Records; A.W. Hazen, A Brief History of the First Church of Christ (1920); The Middletown Tribune: Souvenir Edition (E.F. Bigelow, 1896); 1874 Beers Atlas; 1877 Bailey Map; Robert Clark, historian, First Church of Christ Congregational

**20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:**



**21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:**

none known     highways     vandalism     developers     other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 renewal     private     deterioration     zoning     explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

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C ONTINUATION SHEET  
It n number: 18 Date: 3/78

First Church of Christ Congregational  
190 Court Street, Middletown, Ct. 06457

hurricane of 1938 and accompanying pinnacles have been removed, thus somewhat reducing the original vertical emphasis of the building.

This church is one of a number of Gothic Revival churches built of brownstone and/or brick in Middletown during the 1860's and 1870's. These churches exemplify the vigorous religious involvement and relative prosperity of the city in that era.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Item number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 1/90

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