

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

- BUILDING NAME: Common: Memorial Chapel Historic: same
- TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY: Middlesex
- STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): High St. (College Row between Church and Washington)
- OWNER(S): Wesleyan University PUBLIC  PRIVATE
- USE: Present: Religious and academic Historic: Chapel
- ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road:  yes  no  
Interior accessible:  yes, explain church  no

DESCRIPTION

- STYLE OF BUILDING: Gothic Revival DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1869-71
- MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):  

<input type="checkbox"/> clapboard	<input type="checkbox"/> asbestos siding	<input type="checkbox"/> brick
<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> asphalt siding	<input type="checkbox"/> fieldstone
<input type="checkbox"/> board & batten	<input type="checkbox"/> stucco	<input type="checkbox"/> cobblestone
<input type="checkbox"/> aluminum siding	<input type="checkbox"/> concrete: type: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cut stone: type: <u>brownstone</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____		
- STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:  
 wood frame;  post and beam  balloon  
 load bearing masonry  structural iron or steel  
 other: \_\_\_\_\_
- ROOF: type:  
 gable  flat  mansard  monitor  sawtooth  
 gambrel  shed  hip  round  other steeple  
 material:  
 wood shingle  roll asphalt  tin  slate (several colors)  
 asphalt shingle  built up  tile  other: \_\_\_\_\_
- NUMBER OF STORIES: 2 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 84'x60'
- CONDITION: Structural:  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated  
 Exterior:  excellent  good  fair  deteriorated
- INTEGRITY: Location:  on original site  moved, when: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Alterations:  no  yes, explain: 1916, first and second floors opened up; 1938, steeple blown off in hurricane
- RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:  
 barn  shed  garage  other landscape features or buildings: University  
 carriage house  shop  garden campus green to east
- SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: University campus  
 open land  woodland  residential  scattered buildings visible from site  
 commercial  industrial  rural  high building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This brownstone building is a member of a row of older Wesleyan buildings known as "College Row." Arranged in a line along the west side of the University campus green, this row is the traditional focus of the campus, and constitutes one of Middletown's best-known sights. The high elevation of the site adds to the prominence of this row of buildings.

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

Thirteen stained glass memorial windows  
Interior decoration incorporates many religious symbols

SIGNIFICANCE

Architect: possibly G.B. Keeling Builder: Caleb Johnson & D.N. Arnold

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This chapel was erected in 1868-71 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Methodism and the thirteen Wesleyan affiliates who lost their lives in the Civil War. \$60,000 was donated for the project, and the cornerstone was laid on July 15, 1868, the same day Rich Hall to the south was dedicated. The design of the chapel, attributed to G.B. Keeling, displays many stylistic elements characteristic of the post-Civil War Gothic Revival. A steeple tower with pinnacles is placed at the northeast corner of the facade. Pointed arch windows with tracery, arched entry porch, and steep gables are other typical elements which this chapel shares with several contemporary churches in Middletown.

In 1938 a hurricane damaged the multi-colored slate roof and blew the spire completely off at the base of the clock tower. This damage was soon repaired and the clock restored. In 1916 the interior, which consisted of two floors with the chapel on the second floor, was renovated by Henry Bacon. The two floors were merged, providing a single large audience room with galleries in which to conduct services. The interior decoration at this time was done by Horace Moran of New York. The present interior utilizing many Christian symbols. dates from 1958, and was designed by Leslie Nobbs, a church architect from New York.

PHOTOGRAPH

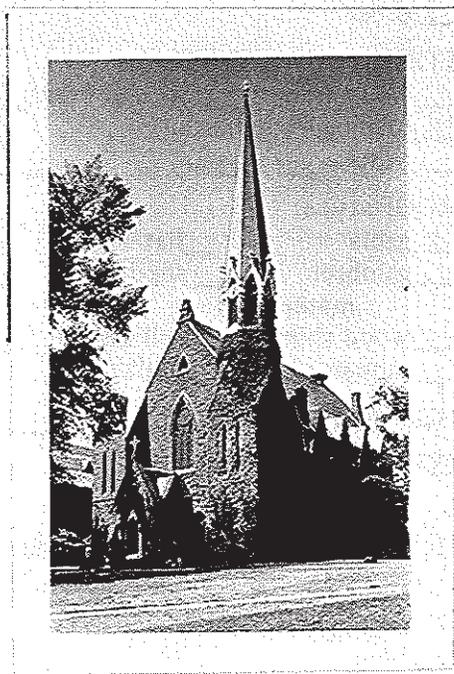
photographer: Roger Sherman  
date: 5/78 view: southeast  
negative on file: Roll 24, #13

COMPILED BY:

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19. SOURCES: Connecticut Historical Commission Survey, 1970; History of Middlesex County (Chicago: J.H. Beers, 1884); Various articles and photos in "Memorial Chapel" file, Wesleyan Archives; 1874 Beers Atlas; 1877 Bailey Map

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:



21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

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