STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005
HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM
For Buildings and Structures

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

DESCRIPTION
7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Gothic Revival DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1869-71
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
   _ clapboard _ asbestos siding _ brick
   _ wood shingle _ asphalt siding _ fieldstone
   _ board & batten _ stucco _ cobblestone
   _ aluminum siding _ concrete: type: _ x cut stone: type: brownstone
   _ other: _
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 _ round _ x other _ steeple
    _ material: _ wood shingle _ roll asphalt _ tin _ x slate (several colors)
    _ asphalt shingle _ built up _ tile _ other: _
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 2 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 84' x 60'
12. CONDITION: Structural: _ excellent _ x good _ fair _ deteriorated
    Exterior: _ excellent _ x good _ fair _ deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY: Location: _ on original site _ moved, when:
    Alterations: _ no _ x yes, explain: 1916, first and second floors opened up; 1938,
    steeple blown off in hurricane
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
    _ barn _ shed _ garage _ x other landscape features or buildings: University
    _ carriage house _ shop _ garden _ campus green to east
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: University campus
    _ open land _ woodland _ residential _ x 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  view: southeast
date: 6/78  negative on file: Roll 24, $13

COMPILLED 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: __________________________