

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Wiley United Methodist Church

and/or common Wiley Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church

2. Location

street & number 504 Lookout Street _____ not for publication

city, town Chattanooga _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district Third

state Tennessee code 047 county Hamilton code 065

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Trustees of Wiley United M.E. Church; John Dodds, Chairman of Trustees

street & number 504 Lookout Street

city, town Chattanooga _____ vicinity of _____ state Tennessee 37402

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hamilton County Courthouse

street & number Georgia Avenue

city, town Chattanooga _____ state Tennessee 37402

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Chattanooga-Hamilton County
Landmarks Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1976 _____ federal state county local

depository for survey records Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission

city, town Chattanooga _____ state Tennessee 37402

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Wiley Memorial Methodist Church is located in Chattanooga's downtown area at the corner of Fifth and Lookout Streets, fronting to the west on Lookout Street. The building is irregular in shape having a rear choir stand and two front entrance areas each with a tower. The church is of brick construction laid in stretcher bond. The plan of the building is simple with each entrance opening into a vestibule which opens into the main auditorium. At the east end of this auditorium is the choir stand.

The building sits on a one-story coursed, rubble limestone foundation. This basement area is used for classroom space. The windows are triple hung sash with two over two panes. The basement is entered from the north side through double doors topped with arched leaded glass. The basement contains a large open area with rows of steel supports. The floor covering is wood over concrete.

The most distinctive architectural feature is the Gothic arch which is used repeatedly. The north, south, and west sides are treated identically: two identical stained glass arched windows with tracery flank a large arched tracery window and above this window is a small, almost triangular tracery window. The large window on the facade (west side) has been covered with a wood panel due to portions of the window being broken. At each corner of the building is a small brick ornamental buttress-type support with stone caps. The roof is cross-gabled and steeply pitched. Each of its four gables has compound raking trim. In the peak of each gable is a decorative wooden triangle. Each wooden triangle has recessed panels that form two small triangles that flank three central arches.

The rear (east side) has a one-story choir stand. The rear also uses circular and arched windows, but in irregular patterns. There are lancet windows in groups of two and three. On both the northeast and southeast corners are simple arched entrance areas. There are end interior chimneys in the three rear gables.

The facade has a central landing that leads to two side staircases that are each located in a tower. The staircases are of stuccoed block construction. Both staircases have carved stone balusters. The main tower at the northwest corner is square with large arched openings on each of its three exposed sides. These openings have been bricked in. The lower level of this tower on the north side has lancet windows in a group of three; above these windows is a circular tracery window. The two exposed sides of the southwest corner tower have a tracery window in a circular design. On the south side of this tower are lancet windows in a group of two. Although not identical, each of the doors leading into the towers uses a Gothic arch, and within this arch is a rectangular door with tracery windows creating an arched effect. Accenting the doors and windows are radiating brick headers in either double or triple rows.

The interior remains virtually unchanged including the wooden plank flooring. The walls are plastered above vertical beaded wainscotting. The carved woodwork includes the matching chancel railing and the railing of the choir stand. The modified cathedral ceiling of the sanctuary is of wood construction. Wiley Memorial has retained its original pipe organ purchased in 1887 for the new building. It is a self-contained two manual Kilgen with tracker action. It has twelve stops and three couplers and an expression pedal. It has approximately ten ranks of pipes. Although the organ is now powered by electricity, it retains the bellows handle used to pump the bellows to provide wind for the instrument.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1886-1888 **Builder/Architect**

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The property located at 504 Lookout Street has long been a significant site in Chattanooga's history. This site served as the center for community life for Chattanooga's early settlers and a building here was called the "Little Log Schoolhouse." One of the earliest meetings held here in 1838 resulted in the name of the town being changed from Ross's Landing to Chattanooga. In 1847 a Methodist church, a frame building framed in Soddy, Tennessee, and floated down the Tennessee River to Chattanooga, was built just south of the present structure. Also referred to as the "Pepperbox" Church because of its shape, it was in continuous use until the outbreak of the Civil War. After the 1863 battle of Chattanooga, it was used as a hospital and prison by the Confederate Army and later as a military prison by the Federal Army. The church was so damaged that after hostilities were over it was sold for \$1,000 to Negro Methodist Episcopalians in 1867, reputed to be the first such black congregation in East Tennessee. The trustees active in this transaction were Mark Craven and Mark Holder along with the first pastor, Reverend Houston.

The membership of this congregation began plans for a new building and laid the foundation for a brick building on the north side of the old building in 1886. On December 5, 1887, the old building burned as a result of arson. At that time plans called for the new building to be completed by the summer of 1888 at a cost of \$18,000. The construction of this building was a joint effort by all the membership with men and women working side by side. During Reverend Tate's term (1901-1909), the congregation purchased a pipe organ, the first black church in Chattanooga to have one. Today it is possibly the oldest organ still in use in Chattanooga.

As one of Chattanooga's oldest remaining church buildings, Wiley Memorial stands as a tribute to one of East Tennessee's earliest black congregations. As such, this Gothic Revival structure, regal and beautiful, attests to the ingenuity, patience and persistence of these ex-slaves whose combined efforts brought forth this magnificent work of art.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Chattanooga Observer, 25 July 1947.
 Chattanooga Times, 7 December 1887, 20 May 1956, 29 August 1965, 25 January 1978.
 City Directories 1886-1895.
 Gault, Virginia, "Pipe Organs in the Chattanooga Area." Independent Graduate Study, University of Tennessee Chattanooga, 1978.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .31
 Quadrangle name Chattanooga, Tenn. Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>6</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>7</u> <u>9</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification The property nominated is an irregular shaped tract which measures approximately 110 feet by 124 feet. It is bounded as follows: beginning at the southeast corner of Lookout Street and Fifth Street (the northeast corner of the tract); thence east approximately 124 feet; along Fifth Street; thence south approximately 45 feet;

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mamie D. Julian

organization Wiley Memorial M. E. Church date October 1978

street & number 5034 Swann Road telephone 615-894-4090

city or town Chattanooga state Tennessee

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Hayden

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 6/1/79

For NCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature] date 2/1/79
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: John H. Gilmore date July 30, 1979
 Chief of Registration

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUN 5 1978
DATE ENTERED	A.F. I

CONTINUATION SHEET

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Over the years there have been few alterations to this building. The alterations that have occurred primarily concern the towers. The northwest tower's spire, for many years believed to be the highest in the city, has been removed due to its weakened structural condition, and its second floor arched openings have been infilled with brick. The southwest tower has had its bell and bell tower removed. The original slate roof has been replaced with composition shingles. In January 1978 the building was condemned due to the unstable condition of the roof. Currently, the congregation is using the facilities of another church in Chattanooga while making preparations to rehabilitate this building for continued use by the congregation.

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Plat Books of Chattanooga: 1889, 1914, and 1928

White, J. Bliss. Biography and Achievements of the Colored Citizens of Chattanooga, 1904.

Item Number 10 - Verbal Boundary Description and Justification - Page 2

thence west approximately 14 feet; thence south again approximately 65 feet; thence west approximately 110 feet; thence north along Lookout Street to the beginning.

The property nominated is the entire tract owned by the congregation of Wiley Memorial United Methodist Church.