

United States Department Of The Interior  
National Park Service

National Register Of Historic Places  
Registration Form



1170

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. Luke's Episcopal Church

other names/site number St. Luke's Episcopal Church

2. Location

street & number 111-113 Whalley Avenue not for publication NA

city or town New Haven vicinity NA

state Connecticut code CT county New Haven code 009 zip code 06515

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 09/22/03  
Signature of certifying official Date

J. Paul Loether, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the  
National Register  
 See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the  
National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] 11/21/03  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

St. Luke s Episcopal Church

New Haven, CT

Name of Property

County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
<u>1</u>	<b>Total</b>

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)  
N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Religious facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Religious facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century revivals/Late Gothic Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone, Concrete

roof Slate shingle

walls Limestone, Brick

other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

St. Luke's Episcopal Church  
Name of Property

New Haven, CT  
County and State

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations  
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

ETHNIC HERITAGE/Black

### Period of Significance

1905-1950

Significant Dates

N/A

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

See Item #8

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

St. Luke s Episcopal Church, New Haven  
Name of Property

New Haven, CT  
County and State

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property   1  

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	672780	4575480	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Mary Dunne, Preservation Services Officer

organization New Haven Preservation Trust date 3/24/03

street & number 934 State St. telephone (203) 562-5919

city or town New Haven, state CT zip code 06507

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## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

### Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church, New Haven  
Name of Property

New Haven, CT  
County and State

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Property Owner**

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name St. Luke's Episcopal Church

street & number 111-113 Whalley Avenue

telephone (203) 865-0141

city or town New Haven, CT zip code 06515

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**St. Luke's Episcopal Church, New Haven  
New Haven County, CT**

**Section 7 Page 1**

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**Description**

Built in 1905, Saint Luke's Episcopal Church is located just west of the downtown area in New Haven, Connecticut, at 111-113 Whalley Avenue. The New Haven architectural firm of Brown and von Beren designed the church in a late Gothic Revival style. Considerably less ornate than the Victorian Gothic style, the more streamlined features of the late Gothic Revival style include a tall, central crenellated tower, arched entrance, and refined use of materials (Photograph 1,2,3).

The nave block of the church presents its gable end to the street. A fourstage crenellated tower projects from the façade, flanked by two 1-story wings that house the narthex. A rear block, also with a roof ridge perpendicular to the street but stepping down, houses the chancel area. The exterior materials consist of red brick with decorative horizontal bands of Indiana limestone, and light-colored pressed brick stringcourses, creating a polychromatic palette. Window surrounds have accents of patent-hammered limestone. The roof is slate. A one-story flat-roofed hyphen connects the northeasterly elevation of the church to a 2-story building added in the mid-twentieth century (Photograph 4).

The main block of the church is composed of the narthex, nave and chancel with few decorative exterior features; the crenellated tower projecting from the façade presents more detail and ornament. The base of the tower contains rectangular entrance doors set into an arched opening with patent-hammered limestone voussoirs. The entry is flanked by a pair of buttresses that extend from the base of the building to the peak of the tower. The buttresses step back at intervals and at each setback there is a limestone accent with a trefoil pattern carved in relief. The trefoil motif is repeated in other elements of the tower including the window arches and tower finials. The entry arch has a limestone drip molding terminating in carved volutes (Photograph 5).

Above the entrance is decorative label molding, which outlines the entrance arch surround and visually extends the keystone. The molding encloses an ornate rendering of the letters IHS, a symbol commonly found on Christian churches, representative of the Latin phrase "Jesus Hominum Salvator" (Jesus, Saviour of Man). Flanking the IHS symbol, outside the molding, are two engaged, fluted colonettes, each with a foliate capital.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**St. Luke's Episcopal Church, New Haven  
New Haven County, CT**

**Section 7 Page 2**

---

At the base of each colonette is a small cherub with wings, carved in limestone (Photograph 5).

Above the band of decorative molding is a pair of quarreled windows with trefoil arches. The limestone window surround is quoined and is flanked by a pair of engaged fluted colonettes. Above the hood molding is a cross carved in limestone with ornamental carved volutes at each terminal point as well as at the midpoint of its staff (Photograph 5). The paired window pattern (but not its decorative surround) is repeated on the east and west side of the tower.

Centered above the cross further up the tower is a single quarreled window with trefoil arch, set in a lancet arch opening with limestone voussoirs. The window has a canted stone sill (photograph 2). This fenestration pattern is repeated symmetrically on the east and west side of the tower.

In the upper portion of the tower is a tracery screen with ornamental iron grillwork set in an arched opening with limestone voussoirs and a denticulated stone sill. In the keystone of the arch is the head and wings of a cherub in carved limestone (Photograph 6). This fenestration pattern is repeated on all four sides of the tower.

The roofline of the tower is crenellated and accented with limestone finials with carved trefoils. A stone gargoyle projects from each of the four corners of the tower (Photograph 7). Horizontal bands of limestone and light colored pressed brick stringcourses are another decorative element of the tower.

The main block of the church is constructed of red brick with a slate roof. The side elevations have six bays, separated by brick buttresses. Each buttress is capped with canted molding. Within each bay is a pair of stained-glass windows with limestone tracery. A cast stone water table runs along the building about 5 courses above the foundation.

An International-style addition (1964) is connected to the east side of the building by a one-story hyphen. The two-story addition has a flat roof and is constructed of red brick and cinder block (Photograph 8). It currently houses the administrative offices of the parish as well as some of its social ministry programs.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**St. Luke's Episcopal Church, New Haven  
New Haven County, CT**

**Section 7 Page 3**

---

The interior of the church extends the design program of the exterior with polychromatic brick work and the trefoil motif repeated in its architectural elements. The interior of the church retains its original floor plan and furnishings, with the exception that two small rooms originally used for choir rooms have been combined to form a small chapel (Figure 1). The original floor is intact, although carpeted. Pews and chancel furniture are original and in good condition. The walls are light-colored pressed brick with polychromatic courses accenting certain elements including the stained glass window arches. The hammerbeam roof is made of exposed and finished North Carolina stained pine (Photographs 9,10). The exterior trefoil motif is repeated inside with the same pattern carved into the ribs of the vaulted ceiling and in finials along the hammerbeam.

A separate archway leads to the chancel (Photograph 10). The vaulted ceiling of the chancel is constructed of stained and finished pine. The walls are stained pine paneling and light-colored pressed brick. Chancel furnishings, including the altar and choir seating are carved from light colored maple. The chancel was originally screened from the nave in accordance with liturgical requirements. It was placed in view of the congregation in the mid-twentieth century. To the left of the chancel is an organ recessed into the wall, installed during the 1980s. The organ pipes are mounted behind the wall and also on the south wall of the church beneath a tripart stained-glass tracery window (Photograph 9). The same window arrangement is repeated above the altar (Photograph 10). Three doors leading from the tiled vestibule to the nave are set in compound archways (Photograph 10). Stained-glass windows along the east and west walls depict scriptural stories and memorial dedications. The interior is exceptionally intact both in regard to original materials and general condition.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

St. Luke's Episcopal Church, New Haven  
New Haven County, CT

Section 8 Page 1

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**Statement of Significance**

St. Luke's Church is historically significant because of its important association with the history of the African American community in New Haven. St. Luke's is the second Episcopal Church formally established in New Haven, especially notable because it separated from Trinity Church on the Green to form an entirely African American congregation. St. Luke's descends from one of four such churches formed in New Haven during the early 1840s by African Americans of different denominations who separated completely from churches of predominantly white worshippers. Their current building was erected in 1905 and is both a physical representation of the parish's success in overcoming early social and financial struggles to become an active and thriving community presence, and an important part of the ongoing history of the parish.

St. Luke's Church is architecturally significant as an exceptionally well-preserved example of Late Gothic Revival architecture. Designed by the New Haven architectural firm of Brown and von Beren, it is representative of the firm's body of significant works in New Haven. It is also a particularly distinctive example in New Haven of the late Gothic Revival style. Among other New Haven churches of the early twentieth century, St. Luke's stands as a particularly well-executed example of the style. The well-preserved interior also contributes to the building's architectural significance.

**Historical Background and Significance**

In early nineteenth-century New Haven, black residents were subjected to discrimination in many social and civic areas. They were not allowed to vote, they were educated in separate schools, excluded from public eating houses, and despite education or training were generally relegated to manual labor jobs. Segregation in the churches was not unusual as black worshippers sat in separate sections or stood along the wall during services.

Although the early abolitionist movement in the northeast, and New Haven in particular, concerned itself with improving the social standing and institutions of African Americans, separate treatment in churches proved increasingly intolerable. Beginning in the 1820s, there were scattered and informal attempts to organize separate churches. In 1824, Simeon

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

St. Luke's Episcopal Church, New Haven  
New Haven County, CT

Section 8 Page 2

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Jocelyn, a white abolitionist and member of the Center Congregational Church, helped to form the African Ecclesiastical Society and obtained a meeting house for worship on Temple Street with Jocelyn officiating as minister. In 1829 the group was formally recognized as a Congregational church. A direct descendent of the church is the United Church of Christ, now housed in a 1968 church on Dixwell Avenue.

Lack of organization, financial support, and the ability to find qualified pastors provided for a tenuous history of organization among other black worshippers until the 1840s, when Methodist, Baptist and Episcopal churches were formed. Black worshippers in increasing numbers had been meeting separately from the white congregation of Trinity Church since the 1820s and in 1844, they formally organized as St. Luke's Protestant Episcopal Church. The Episcopal Church officially recognized St. Luke's, and Trinity Church allowed the group to use its lecture room and chapel on Gregson Street. Neither that building nor the street on which it stood exists today. Gregson Street, later known as Gregson Alley, was located between Chapel Street and George Street where the Chapel Square building (1965) stands today.

Saint Luke's has the distinction of being the second Episcopal Church formally established in New Haven, and the first established by black parishioners. One of the founding officers of St. Luke's Church was Alexander DuBois, grandfather of author W.E.B DuBois. By the late 1840s, support for the use of the Gregson Street Chapel was waning and the group began to think about finding a permanent place of worship. In 1852 the congregation purchased the property of the Negro Baptist Society on Park Street between Crown and George Street and worshipped there for several decades.

In 1894 St. Luke's celebrated its fiftieth anniversary by beginning a building fund for a larger church. Betsey Roberts, a laundress and member of the church, made a bequest of \$5,000 to St. Luke's to purchase the land for the building. Another member, Lucy H. Boardman, gave \$18,000 to the fund. These donations together with proceeds from the sale of the Park Street church to the Swedish Methodist Episcopal Society helped to fund the construction of the church on Whalley Avenue. The cornerstone was laid on February 15, 1905. A succession of dedicated and active pastors took St. Luke's into the twentieth century and helped the church grow to become a valuable social asset to New Haven. In the early twentieth

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

St. Luke's Episcopal Church, New Haven  
New Haven County, CT

**Section 8 Page 3**

---

century, various church guilds were established to provide food, shelter, clothing, and visitation for parishioners in need. Outreach beyond the church to the New Haven community included providing scholarships, after-school tutoring for children, and education and social services for unwed teen mothers. In 1964, Trinity Church of Newtown was so impressed by its social ministry, that it funded the building of the Parish Hall (photograph 8).

Much of the church's historical significance is rooted in the early struggles of New Haven's African American residents to gain respect and independence in houses of worship. However, the current church is an important part of the ongoing history of St. Luke's Episcopal Church. The Whalley Avenue church is also the only physical vestige of the history of St. Luke's Episcopal Church (other than Trinity Church on the Green). The church in which the parish worshipped on Park Street was later demolished and a twentieth-century apartment complex stands there now.

**Architectural Significance**

The building is architecturally significant as an exceptionally preserved example of the Late Gothic Revival style of architecture. In the early twentieth century, the ornate expression of the Victorian Gothic gave way to a more streamlined form with subtle silhouettes and a more refined use of materials. The style is relatively rare among early twentieth century New Haven churches. The use of brick as a predominant building material, as opposed to cut stone, also distinguishes St. Luke's church architecturally. The significance of the church extends to the interior, which is exceptionally intact both in configuration and in furnishings. The design program is extended effectively and elegantly to the interior with polychromatic brick-work and repeating exterior trefoil motif. The original floor plan and furnishings contribute to the architectural and historical integrity of the building.

The church has architectural significance also because it is an example of work by the local architectural firm of Brown and von Beren, which dominated the domestic, civic, and commercial architectural market in New Haven from the late nineteenth century into the 1920s. David R. Brown, an apprentice of Henry Austin, had distinguished himself during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by his works of High Victorian Gothic style, for example his design of Trinity Lutheran Church (1870). Ferdinand von Beren joined

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

St. Luke's Episcopal Church, New Haven  
New Haven County, CT

Section 8 Page 4

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Brown's firm as an apprentice and later inherited the practice under the name of Brown and von Beren. In addition to designing impressive private residences in the newly developing turn-of-the-century neighborhoods of Westville, Prospect Hill, and upper Whitney Avenue, the firm added commercial and municipal buildings to the city's architectural landscape.

The practice did not design many churches in New Haven, however. Most notable are the 1904 remodeling of St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church (first built in 1855) in the Renaissance Revival style, and the Emanuel Lutheran Church (1927). St. Luke's Episcopal Church is a fine and representative example of the firm's body of work, which is distinguished by the elegant execution of popular styles, dominating an era in New Haven architecture portrayed by exuberance and splendor.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**St. Luke s Episcopal Church, New Haven  
New Haven County, CT  
Section 9/10 Page 1**

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**9. Major Bibliographic References**

Atwater, Edward E., ed. *History of the City of New Haven*. New York: W.W. Munsell and Company, 1887.

Brown, Elizabeth Mills. *New Haven: A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976.

"New Haven Building Department Records, 1906-Present." MS. On file at the New Haven Building Department Office.

*New Haven City Directories, 1844-Present*. On file at the New Haven Colony Historical Society and the New Haven Town Clerk's Office.

"New Haven Land Records, 1840-Present." On file at the New Haven Town Clerk's Office.

Osterweis, Rollin G. *Three Centuries of New Haven*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953.

Snyder, Jill M. *St. Luke's Episcopal Church 1844-1994*. New Haven: St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 1996.

Warner, Robert Austin. *New Haven Negroes: A Social History*. New York: Arno Press and The New York Times, 1969.

**Maps and Atlases**

*Atlas of New Haven, Connecticut Compiled by Streuli and Puckhafer*. Bridgeport, CT: Streuli and Puckhafer, 1911.

Beer, Frederick W. *Map of the City of New Haven and Fair Haven from Actual Surveys*. New York: Beers, Hellis and Soule, 1869.

Harley and Whiteford. *Map of the City of New Haven from Actual Surveys*. Philadelphia: Collins and Clark, 1851.

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundry encompasses the historic resource and is bounded according to the attached plot map provided by the New Haven City Plan Department.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary is drawn to encompass the historic resource, including the property it stands on and the mid-twentieth century addition. These buildines represent the historic and architectural significacne of the resource.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

St. Luke s Episcopal Church, New Haven  
New Haven County, CT

**Section Photo Page 1**

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List of Photographs

Photographer: Mary Dunne, New Haven Preservation Trust

Date 8/02-12/02      Negatives on File: Connecticut Historical Commission

1. 111-113 Whalley Avenue, camera facing NW
2. 111-113 Whalley Avenue, camera facing north
3. 111-113 Whalley Avenue, camera facing NE
4. 111-113 Whalley Avenue, camera facing north
5. 111-113 Whalley Avenue, camera facing north
6. 111-113 Whalley Avenue, camera facing north
7. 111-113 Whalley Avenue, camera facing north
8. 111-113 Whalley Avenue, camera facing north
9. 111-113 Whalley Avenue, camera facing south wall
10. 111-113 Whalley Avenue, camera facing north wall