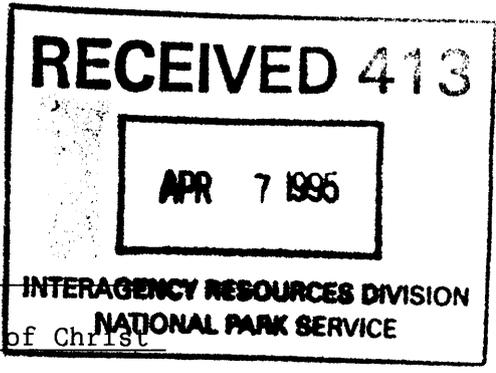


USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form, Multiple Property Listing  
Historic Synagogues of Connecticut



1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Ahavas Sholem Synagogue

Other Name/Site Number: Thomas Chapel of the Church of Christ

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 30 White Street Not for publication: NA

City/Town: New Haven Vicinity: NA

State: CT County: New Haven Code: 009 Zip Code: 06519

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property	Category of Property
Private: <u>x</u>	Building(s): <u>x</u>
Public-Local: <u>   </u>	District: <u>   </u>
Public-State: <u>   </u>	Site: <u>   </u>
Public-Federal: <u>   </u>	Structure: <u>   </u>
	Object: <u>   </u>

Number of Resources within Property

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

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: NA

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: Historic Synagogues of Connecticut



Ahavas Sholem Synagogue, New Haven, CT

**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic: religious structure Sub: synagogue  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Current: religious structure Sub: church  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. DESCRIPTION**

Architectural Classification: 20TH CENTURY REVIVAL  
Neo-Classical Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Materials: Foundation: CONCRETE  
Walls: BRICK  
STONE/Limestone  
Roof: built-up  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.**

**Exterior**

Ahavas Sholem Synagogue faces northeast in a densely developed early 20th-century neighborhood of one-, two-, and three-family frame homes in central New Haven. It is the only non-residential building in the block. Ahavas Sholem Synagogue shares with Beth Israel Synagogue the distinction of being located in a quarter of the city where many Jews lived during the early 20th century.

The Ahavas Sholem structure is a compact masonry building of brick with limestone trim in the Neo-Classical Revival style. (Photograph 21) The brick of the front elevation is buff/gold color with surface of parallel ridges, but on the side and rear elevations is the usual red brick. The first floor of the facade is faced with rusticated limestone ashlar; the second-story front windows also are dressed in limestone; the dressing continues the rustication of the first floor. Granite steps lead up to a central entrance, with double door, flanked by windows, all of which are components of a two-story triple-round-arched arcade formed by the limestone. The keystones are incised with a foliated motif. Over the door the central spandrel states in Hebrew the name of the synagogue, the fact that the Askenazic mode of prayer is followed, and the year of construction (Photograph 22). The central and western second-story windows are glazed with the Magen David; the eastern window has been replaced. A similar large round-arched window on the east elevation is glazed in the same manner.

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**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Nationally:\_\_\_ Statewide:\_\_\_ Locally: x

Applicable National Register Criteria: A\_\_\_ B\_\_\_ C x D\_\_\_

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A x B\_\_\_ C\_\_\_ D\_\_\_ E\_\_\_ F\_\_\_ G\_\_\_

Areas of Significance:	Period(s) of Significance		Significant Dates
<u>ARCHITECTURE</u>	<u>1928</u>	<u>1945</u>	<u>1928</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Significant Person(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.**

**Architectural Significance**

Ahavas Sholem Synagogue is significant architecturally because it is an example of a neighborhood synagogue with an elaborate facade. The gold-colored striated brick, limestone rusticated ashlar, and extensive Judaic iconography of the facade demonstrate a determined design effort directed, with considerable success, toward establishing a Jewish presence in the streetscape. With the exception of the east second-floor window, the facade appears to be intact.

The rustication, round-arched openings, and pedimented roof line of the front elevation establish the style of the synagogue as Neo-Classical Revival. The basic design

Ahavas Sholem Synagogue, New Haven, CT

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: less than one

UTM References: Zone Northing Easting Zone Northing Easting

A	<u>18</u>	<u>4573710</u>	<u>672450</u>	B	__	_____	_____
C	__	_____	_____	D	__	_____	_____
E	__	_____	_____	F	__	_____	_____

Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property is described in the New Haven Land Records at volume 2367, page 644.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property encompasses land that has gone with the building since it was erected.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: David F. Ransom, Consultant, reviewed by John F.A. Herzan, National Register Coordinator

Org.: Connecticut Historical Commission

Date: August 26, 1994

Street/#: 59 South Prospect Street

City/Town: Hartford

State: CT

ZIP: 06106

Telephone: 203 566-3005

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At the roof line, a central stepped and arched pediment is embellished with an inset stone Magen David; a Decalogue is centrally inset in the Magen David. Smaller flanking arched pediments are incised with Magen Davids above Decalogues. The roof line is finished with a molded limestone coping. The side and rear elevations have irregular small-pane fenestration; some windows are arched; some are rectangular; some have colored glass; some are infilled. On the rear there is a small one-story projection to house the ark.

**Interior**

The consultant was unable to gain access to the interior of the synagogue.

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of 19th-century historic Connecticut synagogue architecture is maintained by the characteristic triple round-arched arcade. Broad wide steps still lead up to a double door in a triple opening in the manner established by the first building to be constructed in Connecticut for a synagogue, Temple Beth Israel, Hartford.

### Historical Background

Ahavas Sholem Synagogue is associated with an Orthodox congregation which was organized to serve the neighborhood and which disbanded when the Jewish population moved away. White Street is part of an area of several square blocks just southwest of downtown New Haven that formed a strong Jewish neighborhood early in the 20th century. The Orthodox practice of walking to worship encouraged the building of synagogues, including Ahavas Sholem, within the neighborhood and contributed to their disuse when Jews moved away.

Congregation Ahavas Sholem, formed in 1912 and incorporated in 1921, built its synagogue in 1928. It was the only small congregation in New Haven to conduct a Talmud Torah. After services were discontinued in the late 1960s, the memorial plaques were given to Congregation Young Israel and the torahs to Congregation Beth Israel (see separate registration form).

Ahavas Sholem Synagogue now serves as the Thomas Chapel of the Church of Christ.

### Registration Requirements

Ahavas Sholem Synagogue qualifies under Criterion C for inclusion in this multiple property listing as an urban building constructed as a synagogue in Connecticut by meeting the following requirements:

- Constructed as a Jewish house of worship
- Located in an urban setting
- Exhibits integrity of design and workmanship
- Constructed prior to 1945

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Jewish Historical Society of New Haven, RG 2, Box 1.

Preston Maynard, Historical and Architectural Resource Survey of New Haven, Statewide Historic Resources Inventory, Hartford: Connecticut Historical Commission, 1986, Form #1000.

New Haven Assessor's Records.

David F. Ransom, "1843\*1943 - One Hundred Years of Jewish Congregations in Connecticut: An Architectural Survey - 5603\*5703," Connecticut Jewish History, 2(Fall 1991)1.

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: Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_