

PROPERTY REPORT

Property ID: -1295280741

Property Name: United Methodist Church of Cranbury
Address: 21 N Main ST

Ownership: Private
Apartment #: ZIP: 08512

PROPERTY LOCATION(S):

County:	Municipality:	Local Place Name:	USGS Quad:	Block:	Lot:
MIDDLESEX	Cranbury township	Cranbury	Hightstown	23	64

Property Photo:



Old HSI Number:

NRIS Number:

HABS/HAER Number:

Description:

United Methodist Church of Cranbury at 21 North Main Street is a two-story, three-bay, four-pile, frame church constructed in 1848 and renovated in 1868 in the Gothic Revival tradition. The building has a large rear addition.

The church building consists of a front-gabled rectangular chapel plan building with an engaged entry tower and the rear addition. The roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles and features a return cornice on the front that creates a pediment. An expressed frieze includes a decorative wave feature. The wall surface is clad with wood clapboards. Large arched headed stained glass windows flank the tower; each window consists of two arched headed windows and an upper pane, with the window assembly located below an expressed drip mold.

The semi-engaged entrance tower dominates the view of the main elevation. The first floor contains a paired entrance with two Italianate style doors with an arched-headed upper panel and a square lower panel. Above the entrance, the second floor of the tower consists of a large louver located below an arched drip course and over four square tile. The tower's third floor is the belfry, which features a paired arched-headed louver on each wall above a cornice with dentils and a wavy frieze. The upper portion of the tower is the spire, a pyramidal-shaped element clad with asphalt shingles and featuring flared eaves.

The north elevation faces onto School House Lane. The molded cornice with its decorative frieze is visible at the top of the wall. The wall

Survey Name: Cranbury CLG Survey 2017

Surveyor: Kristen Herrick

Organization: RGA, Inc.

☒ (Primary Contact)

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is clad with wood clapboards. Four rectangular stained glass windows occupy the main floor of the building. The basement level is stucco-clad and features four double-hung windows (replacement units).

The south elevation faces onto a drive around the building. The molded cornice with its decorative frieze is visible at the top of the wall. The wall is clad with wood clapboards. Four rectangular stained glass windows occupy the main floor of the building. The basement level is stucco-clad and features three double-hung replacement windows.

The rear addition is a large classroom section extending the church core to the west. The two-story section has a gabled roof, an attached brick chimney centered on the west end, wood shingled walls with tripartite windows, and a concrete foundation. Character-defining elements of the building include a three-story central bell tower with a pyramidal roof, paired lancet stained glass windows with hood molds, and a rose window.

Setting:

United Methodist Church of Cranbury is sited on a rectangular parcel (Block 23, Lot 64) located on the west side of North Main Street in Cranbury Township, Middlesex County, New Jersey. The building is oriented with its primary elevation facing southeast and is set back approximately 10 feet from North Main Street. The parcel is bounded to the east by North Main Street and to the north by School House Lane. A concrete sidewalk, which runs along North Main Street, spans the east side of the parcel. An asphalt-paved parking lot is located to the rear of the building, accessed from School House Lane. United Methodist Church of Cranbury is located in a mixed residential and commercial neighborhood surrounded by properties dating from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century.

Registration and Status Dates:

National Historic Landmark?: ☐

National Register: 9/18/1980

New Jersey Register: 8/9/1979

Determination of Eligibility: 3/25/1977

Certification of Eligibility:

SHPO Opinion:

Local Designation: 9/26/1988

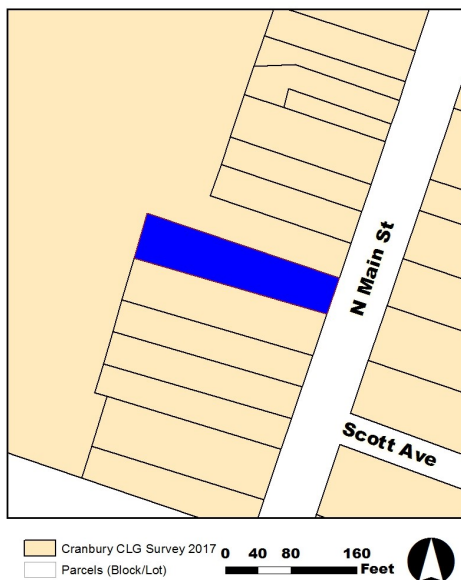
Other Designation:

Other Designation Date:

☒ Eligibility Worksheet included in present survey?

☐ Is this Property an identifiable farm or former farm?

Location Map:



Site Map:

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Author:	Title:	Year:	HPO Accession #:	(if applicable)
Walsh, Ruth	National Register of Historic Places Nomination for the Cranbury Historic District, Cranbury Township, Middlesex County, New Jersey	1979		

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Heritage Studies	Preserving Historic Cranbury Village	1989
Chambers, John Whiteclay II	Cranbury: A New Jersey Town from the Colonial Era to the Present	2012
Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society	Property File, 21 North Main Street	

Additional Information:

More Research Needed? ☐ (checked=Yes)

INTENSIVE-LEVEL USE ONLY:

Attachments Included:

1	Building	0	Bridge
0	Structure	0	Landscape
0	Object	0	Industry

Historic District ? ☒

District Name: Cranbury Historic District

Status: Key Contributing

Associated Archeological Site/Deposits? ☐

(known or potential sites. If Yes, please describe briefly)

Conversion Problem? ☐ ConversionNote: 64

Date form completed: 6/29/2017

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BUILDING ATTACHMENT

Common Name: United Methodist Church of Cranbury

Historic Name: United Methodist Church of Cranbury

Present Use: Institutional, religious assembly

Historic Use: Institutional, religious assembly

ConstructionDate: 1848 **Source:** Walsh 1979

Construction Start Date: 1848 **Construction End Date:** 1868

Style: Gothic Revival

☒ Vernacular Style?

Form: Other

Physical Condition: Good

Type: Other

Remaining Historic Fabric: High

Roof Finish Materials: Asphalt Shingle

Stories: 2

Exterior Finish Materials: Wood, Clapboard

Bays: 3

Exterior Description:

See Property Form

Interior Description:

Not Accessible

Alteration Dates:

Alteration(s):	Circa Date:	Date Range:	Source:
Physical alteration	1868	to	Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society n.d.
Physical alteration	1916	to	Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society n.d.
Physical alteration	1958	to	Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society n.d.

Architect/Designer::

Date form completed: 6/30/2017

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ELIGIBILITY WORKSHEET - Properties

Property ID **-1295280741**

History:

United Methodist Church of Cranbury was constructed between 1848 and 1868 for a burgeoning Methodist congregation in Cranbury Township. The history of Methodism in Cranbury began in 1845, when the Reverend S.W. Hilliard, junior preacher at the Hightstown Methodist Episcopal Church, was invited to preach at the home of the Hamilton family in Cranbury, located at 31 North Main Street (Chambers 2012:90). Over the next two years, Hilliard's congregation grew, necessitating the movement of the place of worship to other, larger dwellings in Cranbury. In 1847, the congregation purchased the plot of land at 21 North Main Street from George Schanck for \$180. The cornerstone of the church was laid in 1848, and by 1849, the basement was finished and used as a place of worship. The church was officially completed and dedicated in 1851 (Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society n.d.).

During the church's first two decades as a place of worship in Cranbury, a Sunday school was established at the church saw a rising congregation and several pastors leading worship services. In 1868, the congregation raised money to expand and improve the church. The sanctuary was completed and a lecture room and bell tower were added. The improvements were completed by the end of the year and the building was rededicated in January 1869. In 1916, the church was again altered to accommodate the installation of a pipe organ in the sanctuary, including an enlarged alcove. A kitchen was also added to the building at this time (Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society n.d.).

In 1958, the rear addition was constructed. It contains classrooms, a large kitchen, and a "social hall" known as the Fellowship Hall (Cranbury Historical and Preservation Society n.d.; Chambers 2012:61).

Statement of Significance:

United Methodist Church of Cranbury at 21 North Main Street is one of the earliest religious institutions in Cranbury Township. The nineteenth-century building and its twentieth-century alterations represent the evolving needs of a steadily growing congregation, established in 1845.

Eligibility for New Jersey and National Registers: ☒ Yes ☐ No

National Register Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Level of Significance: ☒ Local ☐ State ☐ National

Justification of Eligibility/Ineligibility:

United Methodist Church of Cranbury at 21 North Main Street is individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion C for Architecture. The church is significant at the local level as an outstanding example of the central tower church form.

Total Number of Attachments: 1

List of Element Names: United Methodist Church of Cranbury

Narrative Boundary Description:

N/A

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