St. Patrick's Church sits on the west side of Main Street just north of Maple Avenue. The rectory, similar in design, is visible to the north. An open field exists to the west.
This building reflects characteristics of the Arts and Crafts style due to its cobblestone exterior. Two small enclosed entry porches extend off the east elevation. Note the large leaded window in the south wall. The flared roof also found on the enclosed porches is an unusual architectural feature.

In 1916 Adrian K. Wadsworth sold St. Patrick's Church Society the land for this building (FLR 77:626). In 1922 Father Francis B. Nolan of St. Justin's Church in Hartford designed this building. It is said that men of the parish dug the cellar and brought the stone from Fragan's farm in West District. The work was supervised by R. F. Jones, and the church was dedicated on June 11, 1922.


Photographer: K. J. Istok  
Date: 5/85

View: W  
Negative on File: 13:7A

Name: Ruth A. Bedrosian  
Date: 2/86

Organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust

Address: 27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT

Threats to Building or Site:  
- None known
- Highways
- Vandalism
- Developers
- Other
- Renewal
- Private
- Deterioration
- Zoning
- Explanation
OWNER'S NAME: CHURCH SOCIETY, ST. PATRICK'S

1950 - Church

ADDRESS: 12 Main Street & Maple Street

DATE BUILT: 1921-2 FOR: St. Patrick's Parish

ARCHITECT: Fr. Francis B. Nolan, Pastor St. Justin's Church, Hartford
MASTER-BUILDER: Work supervised by R.F. Jones; Woodwork by Geo. Schultz

FORMER OWNERS: Men of the Parish dug the cellar and brought the stone from Fagan's farm in West District. The church was dedicated June 11, 1922. Previous to that date, after the cellar was completed, church was held in the cellar hall. Rev. M. Ernest Wilson, first Pastor of the new church, lived in the present Lucien B. Day house until the Rectory was built ca. 1924.

REFERENCES:
112 Main Street
St. Patrick's Church.

This church was preceded by St. Patrick's Mission, which was pictured on page 113 of the Farmington Book, and stood in what is now the center of Farmington Avenue, probably just about south of the building known as 1 Waterville Road.

That mission building had been built sometime in the 1830's as a storehouse for goods shipped by way of the Farmington Canal, later housing a clock shop, and purchased for mission use by the Rev. Patrick Duggett in 1868.

Prior to the acquisition of that building the Catholic Mass had been said in the house which shows to the rear in the photo of the John Flood house which still stands at 521 Farmington Avenue, also pictured on page 113 of the Farmington Book.

This parish was continued under the jurisdiction of Plainville until the fall of 1918, when it became an established parish itself, and plans began to be made for a church. The land for a new church was probably purchased from the Wadsworth family. Mrs. Hurlburt says of its earlier owner, on page 375 of "Town Clerks":

"Moses Ventrus lived where now stands St. Patrick's Church on Main Street. He bought the land partly of Nathaniel Watson, John North and Matthew Woodruff, with land 'formerly of Nicholas Mason, later of Thomas Barnes' on the south. Moses Ventrus' son Moses lived there also. Moses Sr. died in Farmington 1697. He was made a freeman of the colony May 1651".

St. Patrick's Church, at its present site just north of Maple Street, facing east on Main Street, was built in 1921 and 1922, planned by Architect Father Francis B. Nolan, the construction supervised by R. F. Jones, the woodwork done by George F. Schultz of West District, a "great builder, who had a great feeling for his work". Men of the parish dug the basement and put in the foundation, bringing stone from West District. Much of it came from the farm of Daniel Lyons on Meadow Road, a mile or so west of the railroad track, but lots of it also came from the stone fences of the farms of Joseph Fagan, Joseph Cope and Arthur Saunders, all of Plainville Avenue. It is said that Arthur Saunders also bequeathed some 20 or 25 acres of land opposite Fagan's farm (now Westwood's golf course).

The writer regrets that he did not make a study of the building of the church, and who were most involved, but he did not while he was in Farmington, and feels that he could not make it thoroughly enough from Florida.

November 20, 1972
Mrs. Hurlburt lists on page 191 of "Town Clerks", the Founders of the church:

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Cassells,
Thomas F. and Patrick Cassells,
James Collins,
Mr. and Mrs. T. C. Collins,
The T. C. Collins family,
Mr. and Mrs. John Curtin,
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Fagan,
The John Flood family,
Mr. and Mrs. William H. Foster,
The Misses Foster,
Julia Goss,
Mrs. Ellen Hunt,
John Long,
Timothy Long,
Mrs. Harry Leomis,
Lena McAuliffe,
Mr. and Mrs. Timothy McCarthy,
The Timothy McCarthy family,
Mr. and Mrs. P. S. McMahon,
Anna Muldoon,
Mr. and Mrs. William F. O'Neil,
Mrs. Mary Reardon,
Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rourke,
Edward J. Ryan,
Mr. and Mrs. John Ryan,
Mary J. Ryan,
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Ryan,
Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Scott,
Alice M. Wilson,

Mrs. Hurlburt goes on to say:

"Following Father Wilson's transfer to St. Mary's Church in Bridgeport, Reverend Henry Cassidy, who had seen service as chaplain in World War I, was installed as pastor. He was associate editor of the Catholic Transcript, and later removed to Norfolk, Connecticut. The Reverend James Barrett followed as pastor of St. Patrick's Church. He wrote several books, among them THE WINTER OF DISCONTENT. Ill health made it necessary for him to retire, and he later died. The present (1943) pastor is Reverend Austin F. Dignam, famous both for his wit, and for his love of the outdoors".

November 20, 1972
The Rev. Father M. Ernest Wilson was the first pastor of St. Patrick’s Church, and while it was being constructed he lived in the house which is known as 92 Main Street, renting it. The new church was dedicated on June 11, 1922.

Pastors following Father Wilson were: Fathers Henry Cassidy, James Barrett, Austin Dignam, Paul Dignam, James Kane and John Kelly. The latter is the present pastor, assisted by the Rev. Fr. Dawson Trenchard, who followed assistant pastors Rev. Richard Sherer and Robert Heffernan.

An article in the Hartford Courant of May 16, 1971, tells of Father Kelly:

"A native of New Britain, Father Kelly has been pastor of St. Patrick’s since November 1950, and has remained spiritual head of the church as it gradually tripled its membership.

"Father Kelly, who will observe his 66th birthday June 21, began his study for the priesthood at St. Thomas Seminary after graduating from St. Mary’s School in New Britain. After five years at St. Mary’s Seminary and University in Baltimore, Md., he returned to St. Thomas where he completed his final year as prefect. He was ordained in St. Joseph Cathedral in Hartford May 14, 1931.

"After a temporary assignment to the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Waterbury, Father Kelly became an assistant at St. Joseph’s Cathedral where he served 13 years. He enlisted as an Army chaplain in 1943 and, after his discharge with the rank of major, he was appointed assistant pastor of St. Joseph’s Church in New London, where he remained until his assignment here.

"He was feted by hundreds of parishioners on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of his ordination May 14, 1971.

"A highlight of the church basement reception, given jointly by the Catholic Youth Organization, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine and the Women’s Guild, was the presentation of a painting to Fr. Kelly. It was a scene of the Normandy coast where Father Kelly as an Army chaplain landed with invasion forces during World War II. He was awarded the Bronze Star for bravery in that battle, and the Purple Heart for wounds he received in the drive through France that followed. The painting was presented by president of the Women’s Guild, Mrs. Anne M. Lehman.

"Addressing those at the reception, including members of Father Kelly’s family, the Rev. Dawson Trenchard spoke of the parish expansion and how the workload mushroomed, "how Father Kelly led this parish through the difficult years of rapid growth and radical change'.

"Tonight we honor a priest, taken out of mankind and appointed to act for men in their relations with God", said Father Trenchard.

November 20, 1972