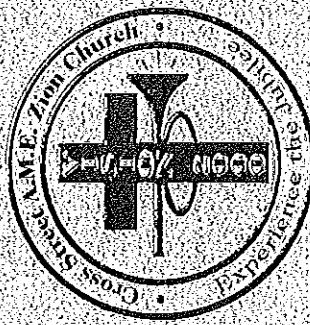


Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church

Struggles

Jubilee,

Vision



CROSS STREET A.M.E. ZION CHURCH  
160 CROSS STREET  
MIDDLETOWN, CT 06457  
(860) 344-9527

AN EXHIBITION AT THE LIBRARY  
WESTERN UNIVERSITY MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT  
JUNE 24 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2001

#### A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As two of Middletown's long-standing institutions, Wesleyan and Cross Street Church have shared 170 years of complex common history, both good times and bad. This catalog, like the exhibition it documents, tells the story of Cross Street Church's proud tradition, its roots that date back to the 1820s. It also explores the painful truth of times of struggle, particularly in the early years, when African Americans were denied opportunities for education and equal treatment. Today we celebrate together and look forward to an ongoing relationship as neighbors and friends with a common purpose. We wish Rev. Moses Harvill and all the members of Cross Street Church a happy anniversary, and many, many more.

Douglas Bennet, President  
Wesleyan University

The Church has overcome many nearly insurmountable odds. We have made it by the blood, sweat, and tears of those gone on before us. Pastors from Beman to the present have served as formidable leaders of the church and in the greater Middletown community. Rev. Beman, an avid abolitionist, became an important leader in the anti-slavery and temperance movements on state and national levels. Pastors succeeding Beman picked up the mantle and continued with the struggle. Cross Street Church has produced many clergy and lay leaders who serve our community with distinction for justice and equality. Many women and men embraced the struggle, and it is to their testament that we are witnesses to their dreams, for we have endured by the power and faith in the Lord.

#### A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

The Reverend Jehiel C. Beman, pastor of Cross Street Church, spoke on the success of the church in an Annual Conference in 1836: "The whole congregation seems to say truly this is the Lord's doing; O! that kind heaven may grant that the heavenly flame may spread till the stone that is cut out of the mountain without hands fill the whole earth; and to the only wise God be all the glory, honor and dominion."

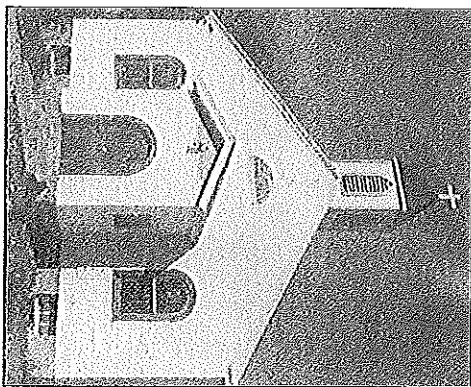
The heavenly flame continues to fill the whole earth as Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church celebrates 178 years of Christian Service. The A.M.E. Zion denomination and Cross Street Church were formed before the Civil War forced an end to the institution of slavery. The sole purpose for their formation was to secure a place for people of color to worship freely.

This is the "Season of Jubilee," a time for rejoicing in just how far we have come. We have come this far by faith leaning on the Lord. The Church marches on, building effective ministries in the new millennium. Today, we have over 40 ministries providing service for our children, youth, adults, and seniors.

The church stands as a source of spiritual strength for its congregation and Wesleyan University. Throughout the years, our paths crossed as both institutions grew and attained their goals. We celebrate the church, restoring hope to our community reaching the world through gifted and giving people. Yes, Jehiel Beman, "the whole congregation seems to say truly this is the Lord's doing..."

Thank you for joining us as we respect our past, celebrate the present, and invest in the future. Rev. Moses Harvill, Pastor  
Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church

## INTRODUCTION



Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church, built 1867.



Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church, built 1867.

Archivist and Head of Special Collections Suzy Taraba worked with Rev.

H Harvill to expand focus, and

researching the history of Cross Street Church poses many challenges. Relatively few original sources survive.

Many of the contemporary sources which document the history of Middletown, of Wesleyan, and of the anti-slavery, colonization, and temperance movements, and the underground railroad, provide a predominantly white perspective. Secondary sources sometimes offer conflicting accounts. Even such an important date as that of Cross Street Church's founding, which is reported in some sources as 1823 and in others as 1828, is uncertain. Nevertheless, there is nothing ambiguous about the impor-

tioner Kwame Ocansey joined the exhibition team, worked with other parishioners to uncover materials related to the church's history, and contributed the essay, "What's in a Name?". Addie Battle, widow of Rev. George Battle, and Salye V. Davage, widow of Rev. William Davage, loaned materials for the exhibition, as did Dione Longley of the Middlesex County Historical Society. Marie Clark, Ellen Cordes, Dione Longley, Jeffrey Makala, and Liz Warner provided valuable research leads. Rev.

Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church in Middletown, Connecticut, has a rich and complex history. Founded in the 1820s, Middletown's oldest African-American church has played important roles in the history of its town; of its neighbor institution, Wesleyan University; of African Americans in New England; of the social movements of 19th- and 20th-century America. This exhibition honors the legacy of Cross Street Church and explores its early years in the historical context of Connecticut before the Civil War. We then jump nearly a hundred years to look at the church during the heyday of the Civil Rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. The exhibition closes with a brief view of Cross Street Church today as it celebrates over 175 years since its founding and makes plans for its future in a new building.

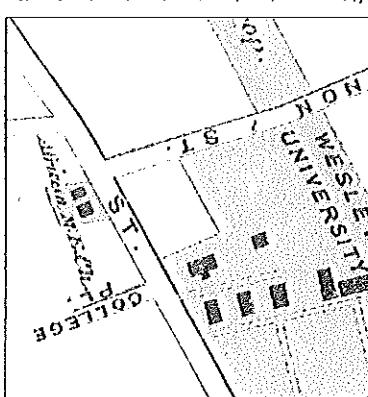
This exhibition has been a collaborative effort from its beginning. Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church Pastor Reverend Moses Harvill and Wesleyan University President Douglas Bennett decided to honor the 178th anniversary of the church by mounting an exhibition at Wesleyan's Olin Library.

history. Jebisi Beman, the church's pastor from 1831 to 1838, and his family were dedicated activists who were important figures not only in their church, but in their town, and in the abolition movement, the underground railroad, the temperance movement, and the quest for education and voting rights for people of color. The proud early history of Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church during the time of struggle has served as a model for new generations as the church celebrates its jubilee and its vision for the future.

re items to be exhibited. Suzy Taraba of Makala scanned the images for it, acaruso of Wesleyan's Office of Publications designed the catalog. Suzy signed and installed the exhibition.

#### GIN OF THE A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

an Methodist Episcopal Zion Church New York City in 1796. Just as, sever- s earlier, John Wesley founded the t Church in England in an attempt to re Church of England from within, : Zion Church grew out of a spirit of Despite Wesley's position to slavery championing of mistreated people, e and black, not all llowers remained s ideals. Although zope had been thodist tradition as first brought to by Wesley and his haries in the 1730s, hodists were often ated by their white The church, by then known as the t Episcopal Church, granted preach- es to a few black men, but they were owed to preach, even to other black of the church. Preaching to white s was out of the question. These black were not allowed to join the Methodist ;, the church's decision-making body. Methodist churches, black worshippers iated from white members and were it in the church gallery rather than in



"City of Middletown," Beers' County atlas of Middlesex, Connecticut, detail.

York.

William Miller, and several other black men who worshipped at the John Street Church. This group of men began meeting at James Varick's home at 4 Orange Street in lower Manhattan to worship together. They soon began to make plans to form their own church, and in October, 1796, they rented a house on nearby Cross Street. Most of the leaders of this first A.M.E. Zion church were free men, but slavery was still legal in New York, and many church members were slaves. James Varick, Abraham Thompson, and June Scott were the first black men to be ordained Methodist ministers in New

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In the late 18th century, two distinct groups of black Methodists, one in Philadelphia, and one in New York City, formed their own churches. Both groups initially took the name African Methodist Episcopal Church. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church had its origin in New York, under the leadership of James

Varick, Abraham Thompson, June Scott, William Miller, and several other black men who worshipped at the John Street Church. This group of men began meeting at James Varick's home at 4 Orange Street in lower Manhattan to worship together. They soon began to make plans to form their own church, and in October, 1796, they rented a house on nearby Cross Street. Most of the leaders of this first A.M.E. Zion church were free men, but slavery was still legal in New York, and many church members were slaves. James Varick, Abraham Thompson, and June Scott were the first black men to be ordained Methodist ministers in New

From its earliest beginnings, the A.M.E. Zion Church has been known for its spirit of reform and activism. In the 19th century, the church was in the forefront of the antislavery movement. Several of the best-known black abolitionists, including Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth, joined the A.M.E. Zion Church.

#### AFRICAN AMERICANS IN MIDDLETOWN

When Middletown's Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church was founded, slavery was still legal in Connecticut. In 1820, 97 slaves and 7,844 free people of color lived in the state. According to the 1830 census, Middletown's population was 6,892. Of these residents, 209 were people of color, all of them free. Freedom, however, did not automatically bring basic rights. Education and voting rights were hard to come by in Connecticut in the early 19th century.

Middletown's earliest group of settlers was all white. But as early as 1661, black slaves from Barbados have been documented living in Middletown. By the mid 1700s, Middletown was Connecticut's largest city, and over 200 slaves lived here. At least two slave dealers had offices in Middletown in the 1770s. The 1790 census documents 167 African Americans in Middletown, 110 of whom were slaves, and 57 of whom were free. A series of laws offered freedom to limited numbers of black people. A 1792 law freed all Connecticut slaves between the ages of 25 and 45, and a 1797 law held that no person of color born after August 1797 would remain enslaved after the age of 21. Although there were no more slaves in Middletown by 1830, slavery was not fully abolished in the state until 1848.

five years later, in 1838. Although the exact date of its beginning is not certain, we do know

that several African-American men from Middletown assembled in the Cross Street home of Asa Jeffrey, a seaman, and his son, George W. Jeffrey, a laborer. Rev. James Anderson, a Methodist minister from New Haven, served as the first preacher, and the founding trustees were Asa Jeffrey, Joseph Gilbert, John Hamilton, Ebenezer DeForest, and George W. Jeffrey. Cross Street Church was one of the earliest black churches in Connecticut and the first in Middletown. Its original church building was completed in May, 1830, on a lot purchased from Henry Paddock a year earlier. This first church was located on the South side of Cross Street, facing what was then the head of Mt. Vernon Street, on a site that is today occupied by the Wesleyan University Science Center.

THE FOUNDING OF CROSS STREET A.M.E. ZION CHURCH IN MIDDLETOWN

The A.M.E. Zion Church in Middletown may date back as early as 1823, not long after James Varick and his cohorts left the Methodist Episcopal Church for good. Many sources, however, suggest that the first meetings began

Cross Street Church grew alongside its neighbor, Wesleyan University. In the early years of both the church and the University, Wesleyan students, many of them already experienced ministers, often preached or led Sunday school classes at the church. They also collected a small library for the church members. By 1867, the congregation had outgrown the original 39' by 31' church, and a new, larger church was erected on the same site. A parsonage was built next door to the church in 1889. In the early 1920s, Wesleyan expanded, adding the Hall

Memorial Laboratory of Chemistry, which was

To facilitate the university's expansion, it was moved further west on Cross Street, and the parsonage was torn down.

#### 'SIN A NAME?' BY KWAME OCANSEY

ave Saul, Malcolm Little, Kunta Kinte, Danilovitch Demsky, Norma Jean son, Frizzell Gray, Francis Nwia-kofi ma and Caesar in common? All these al figures changed their names. came Paul. Malcolm Little became X. Kunta Kinte refused to be called and paid dearly for his stubborn, ing nature. Issur Danielovitch Demsky Kirk Douglas. Norma Jean Mortenson, own as Norma Jean Baker, became Monroe. Frizzell "Pee Wee" Gray is Kweisi Mfume, President and Chief ve Officer of the NAACP and former of the Congressional Black Caucus. Nwia-kofi Ngonlonma became Kwarne ah, the first president of Ghana, the first nation south of the Sahara to gain independence from the British. Caesar became Beaman, the first documented member lecticut's Beman family.

Nkrumah was born on a Saturday in ber, 1909. Since he was born to native parents of the Akan ethnic people of old Coast (which became Ghana on the ent of independence), he was stuck e one name he could never change. Every Alkan person comes into the with the "day/gender" name which s part of his or her soul.

ne after his 23rd birthday, an epiphany i Frizzell "Pee Wee" Gray by the collar

one of those parts of Baltimore that don't make it into any tour book, where he spent his time hanging on the streets, without purpose or hope. But unlike many of the other boys in the hood, he was driven to make something of himself, to find a way to make his neighborhood and his world a better place to live. He started with the basics. "Pee Wee" had to go. He needed a name that would give clarity to his new purpose. A great-aunt visited the west coast of Africa and, at his request, brought the name back. He wanted several so he could mull them over and choose just the right one. But she brought back just one. "I was a little disturbed, but I could never let her know that," Mfume says. "She explained the name, its derivation. She pronounced it. She explained why she had selected that one name and I kind of huffed and stormed away as politely as I could. I thought about it some more and, before I knew it, understood exactly why she had chosen that name and why, in fact, that would be the name I would choose." Kweisi and Mfume are words from Ghana, in West Africa. Kweisi means conquering. Mfume, son of kings. Kweisi Mfume: he took it.

Caesar was a slave in Colchester, Connecticut. By agreeing to serve in the Revolutionary War in place of his white master, John Isham, Caesar won his freedom. The story handed down through the generations is that Caesar chose not to take the surname of his former master. Instead, he chose his own name, because he wanted to "be a man." Caesar Beman was the first of the family to bear this proud name, and the first in America to be free. His legacy lived on through his son, Jehiel, and through later generations of the family. Most records cite the name as Beman, but others use the spelling Beaman, Bemon, Beamon, Bemont, or even

#### JEHIEL BEMAN, COMMUNITY LEADER

Jehiel Beman, a free man of color from Colchester, was called to be the first regular pastor of Cross Street Church. Both of Jehiel Beman's parents, Sarah and Caesar Beman, had been slaves. In Colchester, Jehiel Beman worked as a shoemaker and an itinerant minister. He joined the New York Conference of the A.M.E. Zion Church in 1830 and was soon appointed head of the Connecticut charges. Upon their arrival in Middletown, Rev. Beman and his family became strong leaders of the town's growing African-American community.

Jehiel Beman and his wife, Fanny, had seven children, Leverett, Amos, Sarah, Lydia, Harriet, Martha, and Aaron. Fanny died not long after the family moved to Middletown. Rev. Beman then married Nancy Scott. To make ends meet, Jehiel Beman operated a shop on William Street with his son, Leverett Beman. Shortly after Jehiel Beman came to Middletown, he built a house across the street from his church.

The black neighborhood around the church grew. In 1847, Leverett Beman purchased several lots in the area of Cross Street, Park (now Vine) Street, and Knowles Avenue, and resold them to other black people. In addition to his tireless work on behalf of the abolition and temperance movements, Jehiel Beman organized meetings of all "colored citizens of Middletown" to encourage them to work together for common causes, particularly

organized conventions of black people throughout the state.

A lifelong advocate of schooling for African Americans, Jehiel Beman wrote eloquently about the importance of education. In 1831, he solicited funds to found a black college in New Haven, but this plan was strongly opposed by white New Haven citizens, and the college did not come to pass.

In 1838, Jehiel Beman was called to lead Boston's A.M.E. Zion church, and he left Middletown. He became president of the Temperance Society in Boston. Throughout his life, he traveled extensively in New England and beyond, working against slavery, and helping to establish black churches and schools. Jehiel Beman returned quite often to Middletown, where his son, Leverett, remained with his family. In 1854, he moved back to Middletown, where he died in 1858.

#### ABOLITION, COLONIZATION, AND THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Slavery was a burning issue in New England in the 1830s. In 1831, the same year that Jehiel Beman brought his family to Middletown and Wesleyan University was founded, William Lloyd Garrison began publishing his antislavery paper, *The Liberator*. Garrison's famous call to join the abolitionist cause appeared in the January 1<sup>st</sup> issue: "I am aware, that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth,

"I do not wish to think, or speak, or with moderation. No! No! Tell a man his house is on fire to give a moderate tell him to moderately rescue his wife hands of the ravishe; tell the mother dually extricate her babe from the fire which it has fallen — but urge men not to use in a cause like the present. I am in it—I will not equivocate — I will not — I will not retreat a single inch — and I BE HEARD!"

ion was indeed heard in Middletown, as elsewhere. The New England Anti-Slavery Society (later known as the American Slavery Society) was founded in Boston in and the cause spread throughout the in response to Garrison's call. Within years, there were twenty-nine anti-slaverys in Connecticut alone.

on made a tour through Connecticut in 1833, where he visited his friends, the s, and the A.M.E. Zion church. He "On Wednesday morning I took the o Middletown, I saw the Rev. J.C. Beman few other colored friends, and it was with ch difficulty as reluctance, I tore myself heir company."

Beman was tireless in his fight against

: A founding member of the Middletown

lavery Society in 1834, he became one of managers. Both of his sons, Amos and tt, were also active in the cause. Clarissa , who married Leverett in 1834, was one : founders of Middletown's Colored Anti-Slavery Society in the same year. group was one of the earliest women's onist societies in the United States. Street Church was so closely allied with ti-slavery movement that it was known . . . .

A more hidden aspect of the abolitionist movement was the underground railroad. Several Middletown citizens, both white and black, served as underground railroad conductors, sheltering slaves who were fleeing the South in search of freedom in Canada or elsewhere. With the passage of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law, the need for the underground railroad increased. Along with prominent white citizens Jesse Baldwin and Benjamin Douglas, Jehiel Beman and his second wife, Nancy, served as underground railroad conductors after they returned to Middletown in 1854, and perhaps before. Cross Street Church was very likely a way station on the railroad. Jehiel Beman wrote to Frederick Douglass from Middletown on September 7, 1854: "The Underground Railroad, by the way, is in good repair, and our office is open for business . . . at all hours, either day or night . . . "

In a town as large as Middletown, there were bound to be divergent views. Middletown was home to abolitionists, both black and white, as well as to pro-slavery factions, and to those who believed that black emigration to Africa held the answer to ending racial strife. In 1835, Cross Street was the scene of an anti-black, anti-abolitionist riot. Leverett Beman wrote that Cross Street was "crowded with those worse than Southern bloodhounds."

Some white Middletown citizens supported the idea of colonization. Wesleyan's first President, Willbur Fisk, believed that slavery was wrong, but maintained that the solution to the problem of slavery lay in the voluntary emigration of blacks to Africa, rather than in the abolitionist movement. Fisk was an active member of The Middletown Colonization Society, as was Classics professor Daniel Whedon. Despite the intense rhetoric of the colonization movement,

people from Connecticut sailed to Liberia. Between 1820 and 1857, the American Colonization Society sent fewer than 10,000 black people back to Africa. Most black Americans, including the Bemans, deplored the activities of the Colonization Society. In the summer of 1831, black people gathered at the Cross Street Church to protest colonization. Amos Beman was elected secretary of the group, and wrote, "Why should we leave this land, so dearly bought by the blood, groans and tears of our fathers? Truly this is our home, here let us live and here let us die." Although the colonization movement was largely a white cause, a few African Americans believed in the hope of a better future in Liberia. One prominent black man from Hartford, Augustus Washington, wrote eloquently about the importance of freedom, wherever it might be found. Washington emigrated to Liberia, where he used his camera to document the people who had moved there.

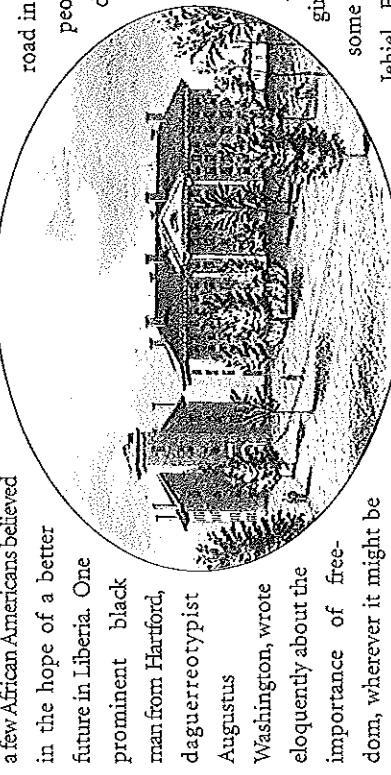
#### THE WESLEYAN CONNECTION

Despite their proximity, relations between Wesleyan and Cross Street Church were not always neighborly. The dedication of some prominent members of the Wesleyan community to the colonization movement was not the only point of contention. Amos Beman, the second son of Jehiel and Fanny Beman, aspired to a college education. But in 1833, black stu-

Charles B. Ray, who later became an activist clergyman and the editor of *The Colored American*, was the first black student to enroll at Wesleyan, in the fall of 1832. Ray was poorly treated by white students, and he left after less than two months. In reaction to this experience, Wesleyan's Joint Board of Trustees and Visitors passed a resolution on October 10, 1832 "that none but white male persons shall be admitted as students of this institution." The resolution was in force when Amos Beman wanted to study at Wesleyan.

Despite the strength of the anti-slavery movement and the underground railroad in Connecticut, black people were often denied an education. In 1831, Prudence Crandall had opened her school in Canterbury to African-American girls, to the outrage of some of her neighbors. Jehiel Beman worked to recruit students for the school. But as a result of the violent protests against it, the Connecticut Assembly enacted a law in 1833 prohibiting out-of-state black people from being educated in Connecticut. This law remained on the books until 1838.

Samuel P. Dole, a dedicated abolitionist student and a member of the Wesleyan Class of 1837, tutored Amos Beman three times a week in Dole's room in North College. Samuel Dole had come to Wesleyan from Wilbraham, Massachusetts, where he was already active in the anti-slavery movement. Writing to President Fisk before he enrolled at Wesleyan



Wesleyan University ca. 1833.

Charles Ray. What or whether Willbur  
otte back is not known. Samuel Dole  
e displeased again. After six months of  
mos Beman received a threatening letter  
a group of Wesleyan students. It read:  
own, October 5th, 1833

Beman.—A number of the students of  
iversity deeming it derogatory to them-  
; well as to the University, to have you  
r colored students recite here, do here-  
you to desist from such a course; and if  
to comply with this peaceable request,  
; by the Eternal God, that we will  
forcible means to put a stop to it.

OF US

Fisk was away at the time. Although  
r was shown by Samuel Dole to mem-  
ios Beman left Middletown. The  
ie Wesleyan faculty, nothing was done,  
of US" who wrote the letter were a  
it vocal minority of the seventy stu-  
hen enrolled at Wesleyan. The  
ty was condemned by William Lloyd  
i, a wide range of abolitionist societies,  
y New England Methodists. The reso-  
against black students at Wesleyan was  
d on August 25, 1835, too late for  
eman. No black students enrolled at  
n for nearly two decades. The first  
ident to graduate from Wesleyan was  
risk Burns, Class of 1860, the son of the  
Methodist bishop. The first African-  
n student to graduate was Thomas E.  
ll, Class of 1862.

s mistreatment at Wesleyan, Amos  
left for Hartford, where he taught  
He later moved to New Haven, where  
long and distinguished career as the

Like his father Amos Beman devoted his life to  
anti-slavery and temperance activism. His  
scrapbooks, which are housed at the Beinecke  
Library at Yale University, attest to his lifelong  
devotion to the cause of education and voting  
rights for African Americans.

#### TEMPERANCE

The spirit of reform that was so strong in the  
1820s and 1830s extended beyond racial issues.  
The temperance movement, which promoted  
abstinence from alcohol, was also prominent.  
As American consumption of alcohol increased  
significantly at the turn of the 19th century, so  
did the reaction against its negative effects.

With the founding of the American  
Temperance Society in 1826, the movement  
took off. Within five years, there were 2,220  
temperance societies in the United States, with  
170,000 members who had taken a pledge of  
abstinence. Much of the activity of temperance  
reformers was centered in churches of various  
denominations. The A.M.E. Zion church  
strongly supported temperance.

Temperance was particularly popular in New  
England. Again, the Beman family was active  
in the cause. In 1833, Jehiel Beman founded  
the Black Home Temperance Society of  
Middletown. He served as the organization's  
president, while his son Leverett served as  
treasurer and Amos was secretary. Jehiel  
Beman was nearly as dedicated to temperance  
as he was to abolition. In 1836, he founded the  
Connecticut State Temperance Society of  
Colored People, and he later served as that  
organization's president and general agent. In  
part because of the efforts of the Beman family,  
the temperance movement was especially  
strong among black people in Connecticut.

#### THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

During the Civil Rights movement of the late  
1950s and 1960s, both Cross Street Church and  
Wesleyan became involved in another period of  
sweeping social reform. In early 1963, the  
NAACP organized a march from the North end  
of Main Street in Middletown to South Green.  
Black and white citizens, including those from  
Cross Street Church and from Wesleyan,  
marched together in support of civil rights for  
African Americans. In August of the same year,  
Middletown citizens, including Capt. Edward  
Jackson, Middletown's first black policeman  
and a Cross Street Church member, participated  
in the March on Washington to protest  
racial discrimination and show support for  
civil-rights legislation that was pending in  
Congress. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered  
his stirring "I Have a Dream" speech at the  
March on Washington.

Rev. King visited Wesleyan several times during  
the early 1960s, and spoke to audiences of stu-  
dents, faculty, staff, and townspeople. In May  
1964, he gave the baccalaureate address and  
received an honorary doctorate. Rev. King's  
ties to Connecticut dated back to his teenage  
years, when he came North to work in the  
tobacco fields in the summer. His ties to  
Wesleyan began with his friendship with John  
Maguire, a religion professor, who had been  
Rev. King's assistant before beginning his  
teaching career. John Maguire and David Swift,  
also a religion professor and an authority on  
19th century African-American activist clergy-  
men, joined the Freedom Riders and traveled  
to the South. On March 14, 1965, a civil rights  
protest of over 400 demonstrators marched on  
Middletown's Main Street. Following a three-  
day conference at Wesleyan, protesters from  
Congress on Racial Equality (CORE), Students

Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and  
the Northern Student Movement were joined  
by over 100 Middletown citizens, both black  
and white.

Rev. William Davage, pastor of the Cross Street  
Church from 1948 to 1955, founded the  
Greater Middletown Negro Youth Scholarship  
Fund, a program to help black high school stu-  
dents go to college. This fund, which began in  
1965 and lasted for 25 years, helped about 50  
students get an education. Members of the  
board of directors included Wesleyan profes-  
sors Edgar Beckham and Wilbert Snow, as well  
as Cross Street Church members. In the same  
year, Wesleyan began to recruit African-  
American students actively.

#### CROSS STREET A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

TODAY

Today, Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church is  
thriving, with nearly 350 church families.  
Under the leadership of pastor Rev. Moses  
Harvill, the church is in a period of celebration  
and renewal. Plans for a new, larger building  
are underway. With a series of anniversary  
events spanning several years, the church's  
illustrious history is being explored and shared  
and re-enacted. In 1996, the Cross Street  
Players, the church's theatrical troupe, presented  
"Judgement Day" a play adapted to include  
scenes from the early years of the church in  
Middletown. A history walk also helped make  
earlier times come alive.

Cross Street Church remains dedicated to  
being an active, central part of the Middletown  
community. An extensive outreach ministry  
serves Wesleyan University, Rocky Hill  
Veterans, I Have a Friend Youth Center, Long  
Lane School & Vincent DaPanil Plaza

1 and school

1 and school

WHAT CAN COLONIZATION DO?

- Church members worked on the  
d ship recreation. From the youngest  
members in the Buds of Promise choir  
at the Colors of Culture festival to sen-  
iors in the Seniors' Ministry, from lay members  
. Harvill, Middletown's Cross Street  
Zion Church stays true to the ideals of  
ders.

**EXHIBITION CHECKLIST**

**INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

Frederick W. Beers. "City of Middletown" (1) from Frederick W. Beers. *County atlas of Middlesex, Connecticut: from actual surveys*. F.W. Beers, 1874. Middletown col-  
Special Collections & Archives,  
University. Gift of Clarence S.  
orth.

Frederick W. Beers. "Part of the City of  
town" map (34) in *County atlas of  
es, Connecticut: from actual surveys*.  
ark: F.W. Beers, 1874. Middletown col-  
Special Collections & Archives,  
n University. Gift of Clara Van Vleck.

4. "City of Middletown in 1835" in David  
Dudley Field. *Centennial Address ...*  
Middletown, CT: W.B. Casey, 1853.  
Middletown collection, Special Collections &  
Archives, Wesleyan University.

5. Connecticut. *Acts and Laws of the State of  
Connecticut, in America*. New London: Printed  
by Timothy Green, 1784. Special Collections &  
Archives, Wesleyan University.

6. Photograph, ca. 1981, of Cross Street A.M.E.  
Zion Church, built 1867. Loaned by Cross  
Street A.M.E. Zion Church.

7. Frederick Douglass. *Narrative of the life of  
Frederick Douglass, an American slave*. Boston:  
Published at the Anti-slavery office, 1845.  
Special Collections & Archives, Wesleyan  
University.

8. The New England Conference Commemorates  
the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church  
Bicentennial Celebration, 1796-1996. Loaned by  
Rev. Moses Harvill.

9. Record of sale of land by Henry Paddock to  
trustees of African Methodist Episcopal Church,  
Middletown, March 17, 1829. Photoreproduction  
from town records loaned by Rev. Moses Harvill.

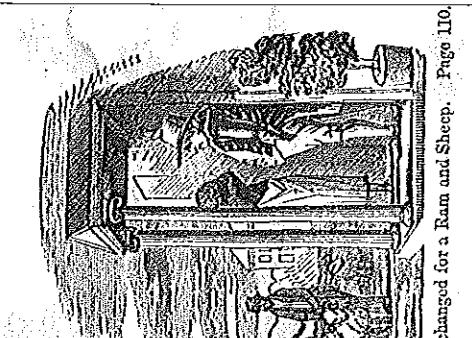
10. James Varick. Photoreproduction of portrait.

**JEHIEL BEMAN AND ABOLITION,  
COLONIZATION, AND THE  
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD**

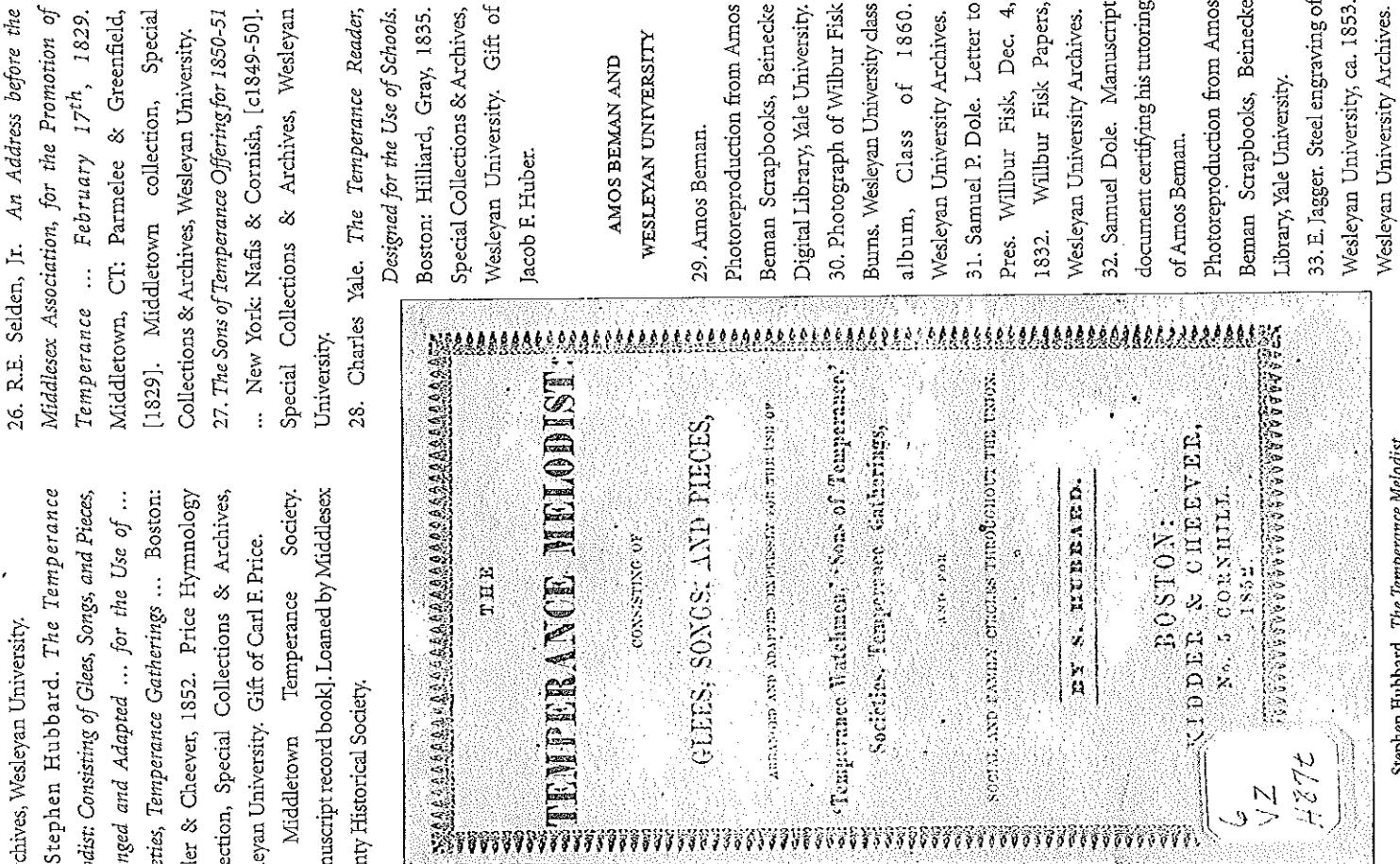
11. *The Anti-Slavery Record*, vol. I, No. 11,  
November, 1835. Special Collections & Archives,  
Wesleyan University.

12. Jehiel Beman. Photoreproduction of litho-  
graph portrait.

13. Boston Female Anti Slavery Society. *Report*.



Source. Picture of Slavery in the United States exchanged for a Ram and Sheep. Page 110.



34. Letter to Amos Beman, signed "Twelve of Us," 1833. Photoreproduction from Amos Beman Scrapbooks, Beinecke Library, Yale University.
35. *The Wesleyan Olla Podrida.* No. 4, July 1862. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University, 1862. Wesleyan University Archives.
36. Wesleyan University. *Accounts of Alumni Record.* [Manuscript, 1869-70]. Wesleyan University Archives.
37. Wesleyan University. Joint Board of Trustees and Visitors. *Minutes,* Oct. 10, 1832. Wesleyan University Archives.
- CIVIL RIGHTS**
38. Carolyn Caprioglio. "Jackson Remembers, Keeps the Dream Alive." Clipping from *Middletown Press*, August 28, 1993. Loaned by Addie Battle.
39. Photograph of Rev. and Mrs. Davage with Julian Bond. Photoreproduction loaned by Sallye V. Davage.
40. The Greater Middletown Negro Youth Scholarship Fund brochure. Photoreproduction loaned by Sallye V. Davage.
41. "The Greater Middletown Negro Youth Scholarship Fund Presents Voices, Inc." [concert program]. January 6, 1966. Photoreproduction loaned by Sallye V. Davage.
42. Photograph of Rev. Martin Luther King preaching at Wesleyan University baccalaureate ceremony, May, 1964. Wesleyan University Archives.
43. *The Middletown Black Journal*, vol. I, no. 6, June 1970. Edited and published by Rev. William Davage. Photoreproduction loaned by Sallye V. Davage.
44. "Reception at Honors College Sunday Evening ..." Clipping from Middletown Press, Jan. 1966?]. Photoreproduction loaned by Stephen Hubbard. *The Temperance Melodist ...*
45. "Rev. King Calls for End of Segregation; Cage Rally Heats of Negroes' Progress." *The Wesleyan Argus*, January 16, 1962. Wesleyan University Archives.
46. Wesleyan Committee for The Greater Middletown Negro Youth Scholarship Fund. Typescript letter from David Swift, March 15, 1965. Wesleyan University Archives.
- CROSS STREET CHURCH TODAY**
47. Ceremonial ground-breaking shovel for new church building, May 15, 1981. Loaned by Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church.
48. Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church. Flyer for Black History Month and Wesleyan University

- Day, [2001]. Loaned by Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church.
49. Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church. *Jubilee Gifts Capital Fund Campaign*, 2001-2003 [pamphlet]. Loaned by Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church.
50. Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church. Jubilee Gifts Capital Fund Campaign, 2001-2003 [pledge card]. Loaned by Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church.
51. Senator Christopher Dodd. United States Senate Proclamation Honoring Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church on its 175th Anniversary. 105th Congress, 2nd Session, vol. 144, no. 80, June 18, 1998. Loaned by Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church.
52. "Judgement Day." Clipping from *Middletown Press*, June 20, 1996. Loaned by Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church.
53. Cara Matthews. "Career Change Brings Minister to City Church." Clipping from *Middletown Press*, August 23, 1993. Loaned by Addie Battle.
54. Photograph of Wesleyan University student members of Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church, 1999. Loaned by Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church.
55. "Wesleyan University Students and Alumni." Photoreproduction from Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church. *Jubilee Gifts Capital Fund Campaign*, 2001-2003 [pamphlet].

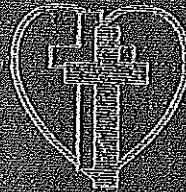
1990. Middlesex County Historical Society.
3. Louis R. Mehlinger. "The Attitude of the Free Negro Toward African Colonization" in *Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 1, No. 3. (Jun., 1916), pp. 276-301.
4. David B. Potts. *Wesleyan University: 1831-1910: Collegiate Enterprise in New England*. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1992.
5. Horatio T. Strother. *The Underground Railroad in Connecticut*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, c1962.
6. David E. Swift. *Black Prophets of Justice: Activist Clergy Before the Civil War*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, c1989.
7. Jan R. Tyrell. *Sobering Up: From Temperance to Prohibition in Antebellum American, 1800-1860*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979.
8. William J. Walls. *The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church: Reality of the Black Church*. Charlotte, N.C.: A.M.E. Zion Publishing House, [1974].
9. Elizabeth A. Warner. *A Pictorial History of Middletown*. Norfolk, VA: Donning, for the Greater Middletown Preservation Trust, c1990.

Samuel P. Dole  
1976

I am enclosing herewith a copy of the manuscript which we sought to write this article. We failed to get it done in time, because we had no time available. However, we hope you will find it useful. It is as accurate as we can make it.

#### SOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Black Women's League of Middletown, Connecticut. *Black Perspectives on Middletown: A Collection of Writings About the Black Experience in Middletown, Connecticut*. Middletown, CT: Black Women's League, 1976.
2. Kathleen Housley. "Who Can Blot Out the North Star?" The Bernans – Four Generations



Trust in the  
Lord with  
all thine heart;  
and lean not  
unto thine own  
understanding.



In all thy ways  
acknowledge  
Him, and He  
shall direct thy  
paths.

PROVERBS 3:5, 6

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