



Since its incorporation in 1875, Russell Library has become a jewel in Middletown's crown, offering everything from concerts to children's stories, from writing programs to computer classes, from reference help to digitizing older media, and, of course, thousands and thousands of books.

Originally a church, Russell Library was established by Frances Russell in memory of her husband, Samuel. Purchasing the Episcopal Church of the Holy Trinity on the corner of Broad and Court Streets, Mrs. Russell remodeled it in the Roman Gothic Style. Mrs. Russell made extensive renovations to the church building, and then presented it to the City of Middletown as a public library in honor of her late husband. Although Middletown had boasted several private lending libraries dating from the 1700s, Russell Library was the city's first true public library, open to all citizens without cost on April 5, 1876.

In 1930, the Hubbard Room was added, and in 1972 the Children's Library (originally the First Federal Saving and Loan Association of Meriden) was remodeled.

In 1983, the original church and the Children's Library (located in the old bank) were connected. Two of the original stained glass windows were reinstalled in the new main peak and in the Children's area. Access was improved by the addition of an elevator and ramps. The combined buildings surround a beautiful inner courtyard, the site of concerts and other events. Lovely outside gardens have been subsequently installed.



