

BETHANY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (FOXBORO, MASS.)

Records, 1779-1974.

6 linear ft. (6 boxes).

No access restrictions.

Deposit, ca. 1964.

RG 78

Congregational Library
14 Beacon Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
617-523-0470

Processed February 1990

by Sandra Sudak

Request information on copyright from the archivist.

Foxboro, Massachusetts
Bethany Congregational Church

Microfilm inventory:
Filmed: ? pre-1980

Reel 1: 1. Church Records I. Minutes 1779-1799
2. Church Records IV. Minutes 1821-1855
3. Church Records III. Minutes 1800-1823
4. Church Records V. Minutes 1855-1878
5. Society Minutes, Warrants 1855-1897
6. Church Records VI. Minutes 1878-1910
7. Church Records VII. Minutes 1910-1915
8. Executive Council. Minutes 1915-1931

Reel 2: 1. Register. Minutes & Members 1915-1932
2. Register. Minutes & Members 1932-1953
3. Pew Assignments (Deed Book) 1856-1858
4. Society Treasurer's Book 1856-1920
5. Members & Baptisms 1779-1799
6. Members & Baptisms 1794-1855
7. Members 1779-1915
Catalogue of pastors & deacons 1786-1914

not located
(Did not film front
of volume to 1860)

An Overview of the Early History of the Foxboro Congregational Church

In 1778 the people of a portion of Dorchester successfully petitioned the General Court of Massachusetts for incorporation as the town of Foxborough. A year later twenty-nine people formed the Congregational Society and in 1779 gathered the first church, the Church of Christ in Foxborough. Church services were conducted in the meetinghouse on the Common. The proximity of the Common to their homesteads resolved the inconvenience of traveling to neighboring Stoughtonham and Wrentham for Sunday services.

Rev. Brett was chosen as the first temporary minister of the Church of Christ in Foxborough, 1778-1779, and Rev. Thomas Kendall was called to be the first permanent minister, 1779-1800. A schism in the congregation occurred during second minister Rev. Daniel Loring's pastorate. An indeterminate number of church members gathered in Seth Robinson's house and worshipped apart. In regard to the congregation's split see CR I and CR II 1804-1806. The congregation was reunited in 1806 and worshipped together in the meetinghouse with Rev. Thomas Williams. During these years disciplinary action was taken against a large number of members, ca. 1800-1879. These are documented primarily as letters: see CR Letters of Discipline. In 1820 the congregation adopted a body of articles of faith, "The Covenant, Doctrinal Articles and Articles of Discipline . . ." Rev. Thomas served until 1821. He was well-liked and only poor health forced him to resign in 1821. The congregation was then without a minister until 1824.

During the years 1821-1824 the congregation's movement for financial independence was sufficiently strong to expand its diaconate to a board of five. To the traditional duties were added the funding of the minister's salary and raising of money by subscription for a new brick church building. The building was constructed in 1823. Rev. Williams was recalled to deliver the dedication sermon. The construction of the new church building necessitated the organization of a Board of Trustees for purposes of bonding.

Records of the Bethany Congregational Church (UCC), Foxboro, MA

The Bethany Congregational Church was founded in 1779 and was incorporated in 1915. The church records prior to that date which were prudential in nature are part of the subgroups Parish Records (PR) or Society Records (SR). The majority of the records in the Bethany Congregational Church collection pertain to non-prudential or ecclesiastical activities. These ecclesiastical records comprise the subgroups Church Records (R) and Church Vital Statistics (CVS). All subgroups in this finding aid are arranged and inventoried at the folder and hollinger box levels.

The records of the ministers are continuous and related, and constitute a single subgroup. The minister's correspondence is arranged chronologically. Where Church and Society Records merge and overlap chronologically they are noted as Church Records / Society Records (CR/SR).

A small subgroup of the records of the activities documenting church development is listed immediately at the beginning of the Bethany collection. Note that three items in the subgroup are originals; the other items are copies. The originals are: the Covenant, the Committee Report for the Separation of Church and Parish, and the Certificate of Incorporation. This is noted in the inventory.

This marked the beginning of autonomy for the church, the interdependence of the church and town in Foxboro ending just ten years before statewide disestablishment in Massachusetts. Church membership grew steadily during the 1800's and so did the number of church organizations to meet the expanding services called for. A Sunday school was established in 1830 and soon thereafter men's and women's social organizations. The various women's groups consolidated into the Women's Union during the early 1920's. Of course these functions required the expansion of the church's physical space and several major construction efforts were made: see CR for documentation.

A brief table of organization "Administrative outline" of the Bethany Congregation Church ca. 1965 is located in the Miscellaneous section of this inventory.

Revision - January 18, 1989

Records Storage Boxes were inventoried at the folder and Höllinger box level. The following items were not located, but might possibly be located within the contents of other files.

Box 5	(p. 4)	Constitution	1954	copy
Box 2	(p. 5)	Ministers Correspondence		
		Raymond Worster	1940-1950	
		W.E. Gilroy, interim	1949	
Box 1	(p. 7)	Letters of Discipline		
		ca. 1862-1889		
		1877-1879		
Box 4	(p. 10)	Clerk's Records. Annual Reports	1899-1919	
		Yearbook Schedules	1928	
Box 6	(p. 11)	Women's Union Misc.	1954	

CR

Records Storage Box 5.

Covenant	original	1779	Hollinger Box 1
Constitution	copy	1855	Hollinger Box 1
Committee Report on Separation of Church and Parish	original	1910	Hollinger Box 1
Certificate of Incorporation	original	1915	Hollinger Box 1
Constitution	copy	1954	
Revisions of Constitution		1954-1974	
Revisions of Constitution		1954-1974	
Revisions of Constitution		1954-1974	
Revisions of Constitution		1954-1974	
Covenant	copy	1820	
Confession of Faith & Covenant	copy (4)	1856	
Manual (The Creed, covenant, & Discipline...)	copy (4)	1867	

Revised February 1990

Ministers Correspondence	1779-1970	Records Storage Box 2
Kendall, Thomas	1779-1800	
Loring, Daniel	1804-1806	
Skelton, Thomas	1807-1816	
Williams, Thomas	1816-1821	
Pierce, Willard	1824-1839	
Poor, D.J.	1840-1847	
Barnes, William	1847-1854	
Garette, E.Y.	1854-1857	
Dickinson, N.S.	1858-1869	
Paine, Bernard	1871-1876	
Angier, M.B.	1879-1881	
Woodbury, Webster	1882-1885	
Tracy, Alfred E.	1885-1888	
Sharp, Robert	1889-1892	
Flagg, Samuel W.	1893-1900	
Evans, Edward	1901-1907	
Butterfield, Claude A.	1907-1912	
Lawson, Ellsworth W.	1913-1920	
Cullens, Archibald	1921-1930	
Martin, Harold Edgar	1930-1939	
Worster, Raymond	1940-1950	
Gilroy, W.E.	interim	1949
Sargent, Martin U.B.		1950-1955
Snowdon, Glenn	assistant	1958
Weaver, Stephen		1955-1963
Massachusetts Council of Churches. Weaver, Stephen, executive chairman, correspondence, minutes, misc.		1963-1964

Ministers Correspondence	1779-1970	Records Storage Box 2
Weaver, Stephen	1955-1965	
Metropolitan Boston Association, Committee on the Church. Weaver, Stephen, executive chairman, correspondence, committee reports, membership lists	1963-1967	
Burlingame, Roger F. associate	1960-1961	
Symonds, Jerry D.	1965-1967	
Benbow, John M.	1968-1970	
Metropolitan Boston Association, Committee on the Church. Benbow, John M. chairman, committee reports, misc.	1966-1969	

CR

1942-1963

Records Storage Box 2

Annual Reports	1942-1943
Annual Reports	1945-1946
Annual Reports	1948-1955
Annual Reports	1958-1961
Annual Reports	1862-1964

Revised Jan. 18, 1989

CR	Records Storage Box 1	
1.1 ✓ Church Records I minutes	1779-1797	Bound Volume
1.3 Church Records II minutes	1804-1805	B.V.
1.2 Church Records III ^{IV} minutes ✓	1800-1823 1821-1855	B.V.
1.4 Church Records V minutes	1855-1875	B.V.
Baptisms	1860-1878	B.V.
1.6 Church Records VI minutes	1878-1910	B.V.
1.7 Church Records VII minutes	1910-1915	B.V.
2.1 Church Register I minutes, also V.S.	1915-1931	B.V.
2.2 Church Register II minutes, also V.S.	1932-1953	B.V.
Letters of Discipline	ca.1800-1810	
Letters of Discipline	1835-1847	
Letters of Discipline, Deacon Rhodes	1818, 1832	
Letters of Discipline	ca.1862-1889	
Separation of Randolph	1818	
Articles of Faith	1820	
Letters of Discipline	1877-1879	
Relations for Communion	ca.1793-1850	
Relations for Communion	ca.1793-1850	
Relations for Communion	ca.1793-1850	
Relations for Communion	ca.1793-1850	
Relations for Communion	ca.1793-1850	
Letters of Dismission Received	ca.1800-1860	
Letters of Dismission Received	ca.1875-1901	
Letters of Dismission Received	ca.1870-1920	
Letters of Dismission Received	ca.1870-1920	
Letters of Dismission Received	ca.1897-1922	
Letters of Dismission Received	ca.1900-1910	
Letters of Dismission Received	1877-1922	
Letters of Dismission Sent	1875-1897	
Letters of Dismission Sent	1897-1922	
Letters of Dismission Sent	1953-1958	
Correspondence concerning Membership	1875-1890	
Correspondence concerning Membership	1891-1899	
Correspondence (to church and/or clerk)	1878-1899	

CVS	1779-1799	Records Storage Box 3	
<i>2.5 members + Baptisms</i>		<i>? Location</i>	
2.6 Members, Baptisms fragmentary	1794-1860	B.V.	
2.7 Members	1786-1913	B.V.	
Membership Directories	1867 1868 1875 1898 1903 1972 1973		
Library Catalogue	1865		
Baptisms	1879-1914	B.V.	Hollinger Box 2
Horace Carpenter's notebook members	1915	B.V.	Hollinger Box 2
Horace Carpenter's notebook members	1915	B.V.	Hollinger Box 2
SEE ALSO			
CR			
2.1 Church Register I, B.V.	1915-1931	Records Storage Box 1	
2.2 Church Register II, B.V.	1932-1953	Records Storage Box 1	

SR

Records Storage Box 3

Pew Assessments minutes, appointment of deacon to provide ministers salary and subscription for brick meetinghouse

1, 5	Minutes	copies of warrants	1855-1897	
2, 4	Society Treasurer's	Account Book	1856-1920	
	"	" " "	1895-1908	
	Horace Carpenter	ST/CT correspondence	1900-1919	
	Pew Assessments	receipt stubs	1830	b.v.
	Pew Assessments	receipt stubs	1830-1856	
	Tax Assessments		1885-1889	b.v. Hollinger Box 2
	Pew Assessments		1887	b.v. Hollinger Box 2
	Pew Assessments		1896	b.v. Hollinger Box 2
	Pew Assignments		1819-30	
2, 3	Pew Assignments		1856-1858	b.v.
	Pew plan		n.d.	

SR/CR

Records Storage Box 3

	Receipt book		1891-1892	
	Receipt book		1929-1930	Hollinger Box 2
	Receipt book		1929-1935	Hollinger Box 2

Parish Records

Records storage box 3

Parish Tax

1830 b.v. in folder

Parish calls to vote

ca. 1830-1891

Parish Treasurer's records

ca. 1827-1845

Warrant for collecting parish tax

1830

Parish Tax

1840

Revised February 1990

CR		
Annual Reports of Clerk, Treasurer, Sunday School	1878-1898(incomplete)	
Clerk's Records. Annual Reports	1899-1919	
Yearbook schedules	1928	
Clerk's Records. Horace Carpenter	1904, 1910-1914	
Includes some baptismal and membership statistics		
Clerk's records. Horace Carpenter		
Reports of the Clerk and Treasurer	1920	
Report of the Clerk	1921,1923	
Clerk's Records. Elsie Pease . 3 items	1917	
Treasurer's Annual Reports	1900,1906,1912,1913 1916-1919	
Treasurer's Account Book	1930-1938	B.V.
Treasurer's Notebook	1966-1972	B.V.
1.8 Executive Council. Minutes	1915-1931	B.V.
Executive Council. Correspondence	1956-1959	
Executive Council. Correspondence	1960-1961	
Executive Council. Correspondence	1961-1969	
Board of Trustees. Records	1873-1920	
Board of Trustees. Correspondence	1922-1923,1941	B.V.
Board of Trustees. Correspondence	1951-1956	
Board of Trustees. Correspondence	1952-1956	
Board of Trustees. Correspondence	1958-1962	
Board of Trustees. Correspondence	1963-1970	
Trustees Account Book	1937-1942	B.V.
Board of Deacons	1951	
Board of Deacons	1959-1963, 1974	
Finance Committee	1927-1936	
Finance Committee	1955-1956, 1959	
Finance Committee	1955-1959	
Finance Committee	1967-1969	
Finance Committee	1971	
Clerk's Records	1950-1963	
Building Committee	1942-1962	
Building Committee	1942-1962	
Building Committee	1942-1962	
Building Committee	1942-1962	
Building Committee	1942-1962	
Building Committee	1947-1960	

CR	Records Storage Box 4
Building Fund Committee	1947-1949
Architects, Steinhardt and Thomas	1960
Correspondence and contract	
Parsonage Building Committee	1963-1964
correspondence, newsletters	
Barton Memorial Chapel	1953
correspondence with Korslund	
World Service Committee	1956-1962
World Service Committee	1956-1962
World Service Committee, misc.	1952, 1953, 1956

CR		Records Storage Box 6	
Frances Thompson	correspondence	1951-56	
Bethany Men's Class		1939	
Foxboro Men's Corporate Communion		1956-59	
Laymen's Sunday		1950-63	
Anniversary & Homecoming Plans		1954, 1959	
Foxboro Planning Board Master Plan		1958	
Realty Investment Analysis Report		1967	
Bicentennial Plans		1978-1979	
Christian Endeavor Society			
minutes, constitution		1851	
membership list		1900-28	b.v.
minutes, correspondence, Kings		1908	
Daughters Circle, Helpful Circle			
Ladies Charitable Society		1844-69	b.v.
minutes, constitution, members			
Ladies Benevolent Circle	minutes	1872-99	b.v.
	"	1913-15	b.v.
Woman's Union	minutes	1915-21	b.v.
	"	1921-23, 25	b.v.
	"	1929-38	b.v.
	"	1939-52	b.v.
	"	1952-59	b.v.
	"	1959-62	b.v.
	"	1962-68	b.v.
	calendars	1916-21, 1929-30, 1933-38, 1939-40, 1941-56, 1957-58, 1965-67, 1969-70, 1976-77, 1978-70, 1980-81	
	Brief History	ca.1950	b.v.
	Misc.	1954	
	Members, constitution	1940s	1 folder
	Annual Reports	1943-57	1 folder
Women's Board for Foreign Missions		1891-19-9	
	"	1890-92	b.v. Hollinger Box 3
Ladies' Missionary Society		1893-1907	" "
Women's Missionary Society		1908-1916	" "
Y.P.S.C.E Treasurer's Book		1887-1894	b.v.

CR

Records Storage Box 6

Sunday School correspondence, reports	1840-1927	
Sunday School Day Book	ca.1860	B.V.
Sunday School Attendance Books	1945-1946	B.V.
Sunday School Attendance Books	1947-1948	B.V.
Sunday School Attendance Books	1948-1949	B.V.
Bethany Day Nursery and Kindergarten	1953	
Couple's Club	1966-1967	
misc. correspondence, roster, minutes announcements		

Revised Jan. 18, 1989

Miscellaneous

Records Storage Box 5

"Bethany Bell" bulletins (regular) and anniversary issues	1954-
Horne House	1950
Anniversary black and white photos committee minutes	1954, 1959
Architectural Plans of Dirlam and Korslund	1951-1953
Architectural Plans of Steinhardt and Thomas blueprints, elevations	1960-1961
Eliza Leonard's Deed	1898
Peter Munson question of title of house	1928
Daniel Carpenter's donation of clock	1920
Administrative Outline	ca.1965
Susan E. Curtis' donation	ca.1920-1940
Architectural Plan of Rolland D. Thompson Baroque organ box	1961
Receipts. A Sampling from donations to various religious and mission organizations	1890s
Photo album of the Bethany Garden Chapel & magazine	
Poem "A Dream" (supposedly written by Otis Paine at Foxboro). copy	ca.1804
Church Guest Book	1952-1961
Scrapbook, Bethany Pilgrim Fellowship	1953-1956