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Boston, Mass. Union Congregational Church records, 1822-1984. RG0031

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Congregational Library & Archives

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Summary Information

Repository:	Congregational Library & Archives
Creator:	Union Congregational Church (Boston, Mass.)
Title:	Boston, Mass. Union Congregational Church records, 1822-1984.
ID:	RG0031
Date [inclusive]:	1822-1984
Physical Description:	3.27 Cubic Feet (3 boxes, 2 folders)
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	The history of the Union Congregational Church begins with the formation of the Essex Street Church in 1819. In 1822, owing to a disagreement with the church's pastor, a minority of the church withdrew from the Essex Street Church and reformed the Union Congregational Church. The church was substantially rebuilt in 1840 and a new church building was constructed at the corner of Columbus Avenue and West Newton Street in 1870. In 1907, the Berkley Temple Congregational Church merged into the Union Congregational Church. In 1948, the Union Congregational Church merged into the Old South Church. This collection contains the administrative and membership records of the Union Congregational Church and includes meeting minutes, financial ledgers, legal documents, vital records, and records of church activities.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Boston, Mass. Union Congregational Church records, 1822-1984, RG0031. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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Historical Note

The history of the Union Congregational Church begins with the formation of the Essex Street Church in 1819. The church was first formed in Boylston Hall and then moved to the Essex Street location which was constructed later in 1819. In 1822, owing to a disagreement with the church's pastor, James Sabine, the majority of the congregation returned to the Boylston Hall with Sabine to reform as the Essex Street Presbyterian Church. A minority of the church remained with the church building on Essex Street. With financial support from the Old South Church and Park Street Church, and new members transferring from the Old South Church, Park Street Church, and a church in Braintree, the Union Congregational Church was formally organized in 1822.

Samuel Green was installed as the first minister at the Union Congregational Church in 1823. During his pastorate, which ended in 1834, approximately 600 new members were added to the church's membership. In 1826, along with the Old South Church and Park Street Church, the Union Congregational Church helped to erect the Hanover Street Church, whose first minister was Lyman Beecher. In 1827, eighteen members of the Union Congregational Church agreeably split with the church to help form the Pine Street Church.

The church was substantially rebuilt in 1840. In 1868, the church's prudential committee was empowered to buy land at the corner of Columbus Avenue and West Newton Street. Construction on a new church building was completed in 1870. In 1907, at the recommendation of an ecclesiastical council, the Berkley Temple Congregational Church, whose history began with the formation of the Pine Street Church in 1827, merged into the Union Congregational Church.

Demographic changes to the South End of Boston caused major financial hardship for the Union Congregational Church throughout the first half of the 20th century. The Old South Church provided significant financial assistance during this time, however, by 1948, it was clear that the church could not remain solvent. In 1948, the Union Congregational Church merged into the Old South Church.

Ministers of the Union Congregational Church

Samuel Green	1823-1834
Nehemiah Adams	1834-1878
Henry M. Parsons	1870-1874
Frank Warfiel	1876-1881
R. R. Meredith	1883-1887

Nehemiah Boynton	1888-1896
Samuel Lane Loomis	1896-1907
Allen A. Stockdale	1907-1913
Ernest Graham Guthrie	1914-1925
Herbert A. Jump	1927-1932
Dwight J. Bradley	1934-1937
Fred D. Bennett	1938-1944
Ferdinand J. Loungway	1945-1948

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Scope and Contents

This collection contains the administrative records of the Union Congregational Church, in Boston, as well as records of the church's membership and church activities. The collection contains administrative meeting minutes, vital records, such as records of marriages and baptisms, membership lists, financial documents and ledgers, legal documents and deeds, church histories, records of two church auxiliary groups, and select Sunday service programs.

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Arrangement

This collection has been arranged into the five series listed below. Materials within each series have been arranged primarily by chronological order and secondarily by topic, when appropriate.

Series 1: Church records, 1822-1984

Series 2: Pew records, 1822-1905

Series 3: Financial and legal records, 1840-1949

Series 4: Membership records, 1876-1973

Series 5: Histories and programs, 1906-1945

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Suite 200

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Restrictions on Access

Access to this collection is unrestricted and open to the public.

Restrictions on Use

Items in this collection are subject to U.S. Copyright Law. It is the responsibility of the researcher to determine the copyright status of collection items and to secure any permissions necessary for their reproduction and publication. Requests for permission to publish material must be discussed with the archivist or librarian.

Acquisition Information

Materials were initially donated to the Congregational Library & Archives at an unknown date; no accession number. The volume of worship programs was donated by Hubert E. Beckwith in March, 2019; 2019-22. Additional materials related to the merger between the Union Congregational Church and the Old South Church were acquired in an accrual of materials from the Old South Church; 2022-13.

Processing Information

Processed by Thomasin Kellermann in April 1988. Reprocessed by Zachary Bodnar, November 2023, using Describing Archives: A Content Standard.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

The Congregational Library & Archives holds the Boston, Mass. Pine Street Church records, 1827-1907, RG0029, collection. The Pine Street Church was gathered in 1827, partially by members drawn from the Union Congregational Church. In 1907. The Pine Street Church, renamed the Berkeley Temple Congregational Church, merged into the Union Congregational Church.

The Congregational Library & Archives holds the Boston, Mass. Old South Church records, 1659-2012, RG0028, collection. The Old South Church provided significant financial assistance to the Union Congregational Church during the early 20th century and in 1948 the Union Congregational Church merged into the Old South Church.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Baptismal records.
- Christian union.
- Church finance.
- Church membership.
- Church records and registers.
- Legal documents.
- Marriage records.
- Pews and pew rights.
- Worship programs.
- Berkeley Temple Congregational Church (Boston, Mass.)
- Boston (Mass.) -- Church history.
- Essex Street Church (Boston, Mass.)
- Old South Church (Boston, Mass.)

- Union Congregational Church (Boston, Mass.)

Bibliography

The One Hundredth Anniversary of the founding of Union Church, Boston, 1922. Boston: 1922.
17.11.1 B65.5 UniCB

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Collection Inventory

Church records, 1822-1984

Physical Description: 11 Volumes

Physical Description: 14 Folders

Scope and Contents

This series contains records related to the operation and administration of the Union Congregational Church. Included within the series are meeting minutes, reports, committee records, by-laws, and records related to the merger of the Union Congregational Church into the Old South Church. This series also contains some records of the Union Church's Women's Association and the Corner Stone Class for Men.

Title/Description	Instances	
Index to church records, 1822-1828	box 2	volume 1
Church records, 1822-1844	box 2	volume 2
Church records, 1844-1882	box 2	volume 3
Church records, 1882-1915	box 2	volume 4
<u>Separated Materials:</u>		
Separated Materials		
The Declaration of trust, 1888, was removed from this volume and foldered separately for preservation.		
Church records, 1915-1927	box 1	folder 2
Church records, 1927-1936	box 1	folder 3
Church records, 1927, 1948, undated	box 1	folder 4
<u>Separated Materials:</u>		

Separated Materials

Materials in this folder were removed from the volume of Church records, 1936-1948, from between pages 98 and 99, for preservation purposes.

Church records, 1936-1948

box 1

volume 6

Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Materials were removed from between pages 98 and 99 of this volume and placed in the folder titled Church records, 1927, 1948, undated, for preservation purposes.

Standing committee records, 1883-1894

box 1

volume 1

Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Materials were removed from between pages 66 and 67 of this volume and placed into a new folder titled Church and standing committee meeting minutes, 1888, for preservation purposes.

Church and standing committee meeting minutes, 1888

box 2

folder 1

Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Materials in this folder were removed from the Standing Committee records, 1883-1894, volume, between pages 66 and 67, for the purposes of preservation.

Standing committee records, 1895-1909

box 1

volume 2

Standing committee records, 1909-1922

box 1

volume 3

Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Materials were removed from between pages 230 and 231 of this volume and placed in the folder titled Standing committee meeting requests, 1922, for preservation purposes.

Standing committee meeting requests, 1922

box 1

folder 5

Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Materials in this folder were removed from between pages 230 and 231 of the volume of Standing

committee records, 1909-1922, for preservation purposes.

Standing committee records, 1922-1940	box 1	volume 4
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Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Materials from the volume were removed to the folder titled Standing committee letter to Massachusetts Congregational Conference and Missionary Society, undated, for preservation purposes.

Standing committee records, 1940-1949	box 1	volume 5
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Declaration of trust, 1888	box 1	folder 1
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Scope and Contents

This item was removed from the Church records, 1882-1915, volume for the purposes of preservation.

Board of deacons responsibilities, 1901	box 2	folder 2
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Corner Stone Class for Men records, 1908-1925	box 1	volume 9
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Corner Stone Class for Men records, 1914-1921	box 1	folder 16
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Standing committee rules, 1927	box 1	folder 6
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By-laws, 1929, undated	box 1	folder 7
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Annual meeting, 1935	box 1	folder 8
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Union Church's Women's Association prospectuses, 1937-1944	box 1	folder 17
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Miscellaneous merger and historic documents, 1948-1984	box 1	folder 9
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Standing committee letter to Massachusetts Congregational Conference and Missionary Society, undated	box 1	folder 10
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Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Materials in this folder were removed from the volume of Standing committee records, 1922-1940, for preservation purposes.

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Pew records, 1822-1905

Physical Description: 2 Volumes

Physical Description: 4 Folders

Scope and Contents

This series contains pew deeds, pew records, and pew diagrams for the Union Congregational Church.

Title/Description	Instances	
Pew plan, 1822	folder 1	
Pew plan, 1841	folder 2	
Pew deeds, 1843-1848	box 2	folder 5
Pew deeds, 1869-1884	box 3	folder 15
List of pew holders, 1905	box 3	folder 16
<u>Separated Materials:</u>		
Separated Materials		
Materials in this folder were removed from the volume List of names of assigned sittings and locations, undated, for preservation purposes.		
List of names of assigned sittings and locations, undated	box 2	volume 8
<u>Separated Materials:</u>		
Separated Materials		
Materials were removed from this volume and placed into the folders titled Pew diagram, undated, and List of pew holders, 1905, for preservation purposes.		
Pew diagram, undated	box 3	folder 17
<u>Separated Materials:</u>		
Separated Materials		
Materials in this folder were removed from the volume List of names of assigned sittings and locations, undated, for preservation purposes.		
Pew assessments and taxes, undated	box 3	volume 9

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Financial and legal records, 1840-1949

Physical Description: 8 Volumes

Physical Description: 25 Folders

Scope and Contents

This series contains financial and legal records for the Union Congregational Church. The series contains ledgers, records related to bequests and various funds, a ledger for the Sabbath school, receipts, and

mortgages. The series also contains financial and legal records related to the merger of the Union Congregational Church into the Old South Church.

Title/Description	Instances	
Miscellaneous financial records, 1840-1852	box 2	folder 6
Miscellaneous financial records, 1840-1852	box 2	folder 7
Miscellaneous financial records, 1841-1854	box 2	folder 8
Church fund record book, 1841-1929	box 3	volume 1
Church funds account book, 1841-1873	box 3	volume 2
Church funds account book, 1873-1916	box 3	volume 3
Bills paid, 1843	box 3	folder 1
Vouchers for payment, 1845	box 3	folder 2
Bills paid, 1846	box 3	folder 3
Bills paid, 1847	box 3	folder 4
Bills paid, 1848	box 3	folder 5
Bills paid, 1849	box 3	folder 6
Bills paid, 1850	box 3	folder 7
Bills paid, 1851	box 3	folder 8
Bills paid, 1852	box 3	folder 9
Bills paid, 1852	box 3	folder 10
Bills paid, 1853	box 3	folder 11
Bills paid, 1854	box 3	folder 12
Mortgages, 1882-1888	box 3	folder 13
Treasurer's report, 1884-1889	box 2	folder 9
Indenture, 1887	box 2	folder 10
Berkeley Temple trust deed, 1902, 1907, 1942	box 2	folder 11
Treasurer's ledger, 1907-1912	box 3	volume 4
Treasurer's ledger, 1907-1914	box 3	volume 5
Treasurer's ledger, 1913-1920	box 3	volume 6
Treasurer's ledger, 1914-1920	box 3	volume 7
Old South Society grant applications, 1909-1941	box 2	folder 12
Sabbath school ledger, 1914-1921	box 3	volume 8
Corporation document, 1915	box 2	folder 13
Bequests, 1936-1940	box 2	folder 14

Sara D. Lane trust records, 1941-1950	box 2	folder 15
Old South Church merger legal documents, 1948-1949	box 2	folder 16
Legal records, 1948-1949	box 3	folder 14

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Membership records, 1876-1973

Physical Description: 4 Volumes

Physical Description: 4 Folders

Scope and Contents

This series contains vital records related to the members of the Union Congregational Church. The series contains baptismal records, marriage records, and lists of church members.

Title/Description	Instances	
Membership records, 1876-1948	box 2	volume 5
<u>Separated Materials:</u>		
Separated Materials		
Materials in this volume were removed to the folder titled Assorted Sunday programs, 1926-1939, undated, for preservation purposes.		
Membership list, 1886-1948	box 1	folder 11
Baptismal records, 1892-1948	box 1	volume 7
<u>Separated Materials:</u>		
Separated Materials		
Materials were removed from this volume and placed into the folder titled Baptismal inquiries, 1959-1973, for preservation purposes.		
Membership list, 1894	box 2	folder 3
Vital records, 1895-1948	box 2	volume 6
Membership list, 1907	box 2	folder 4
Marriage records, 1912-1948	box 2	volume 7
Baptismal inquiries, 1959-1973	box 1	folder 12
<u>Separated Materials:</u>		

Separated Materials

Materials in this folder were removed from the volume of Baptismal records, 1892-1948, for preservation purposes.

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Histories and programs, 1906-1945

Physical Description: 2 Volumes

Physical Description: 3 Folders

Scope and Contents

This series contains records relating to the history of the Union Congregational Church and programs for worship and special events held at the Union Congregational Church.

Title/Description	Instances	
"Items of Union Church History", 1906	box 1	volume 8
Assorted Sunday programs, 1926-1939, undated	box 1	folder 18
<u>Separated Materials:</u>		
Separated Materials		
Materials in this folder were removed from the volume Membership records, 1876-1948, for preservation purposes.		
History speeches, 1937	box 1	folder 13
"Snap-shots of 1939", 1939	box 1	folder 14
Sermons and special programs, 1942-1948	box 1	folder 15
Worship programs, 1944-1945	box 3	volume 10

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