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Jersey City, N.J. First Congregational Church records, 1859-1972. RG0723

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Congregational Library & Archives

14 Beacon Street

Suite 200

Boston, MA 02108

Business Number: 617-523-0470

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URL: <http://www.CongregationalLibrary.org>

Table of Contents

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Summary Information | 3 |
| Historical Note | 3 |
| Scope and Contents | 4 |
| Arrangement | 4 |
| Administrative Information | 5 |
| Controlled Access Headings | 5 |
| Technical Requirements | 6 |
| Collection Inventory | 6 |
| Administrative records | 6 |
| Membership records | 8 |
| Ministerial records | 9 |

Summary Information

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Repository: | Congregational Library & Archives |
| Creator: | First Congregational Church (Jersey City, N.J.) |
| Title: | Jersey City, N.J. First Congregational Church records, 1859-1972. |
| ID: | RG0723 |
| Date [inclusive]: | 1859-1972 |
| Physical Description: | 2.39 Cubic Feet (5 boxes, 1 folder) |
| Language of the Material: | English . |
| Abstract: | The First Congregational Church in Jersey City, New Jersey, was first gathered in 1841 though it was not until 1858 that the church was formally organized. The first church building, called the Tabernacle Church, was constructed in 1863. A new church building was purchased in 1896 and a new church was constructed in 1904. Due to declining membership, the church was dissolved in 1970. This collection contains records related to the administration, history, and membership of the First Congregational Church. The records include meeting minutes, correspondence, legal documents, vital records, and ministerial records. |

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Jersey City, N.J. First Congregational Church records, 1859-1972, RG0723. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Historical Note

The First Congregational Church in Jersey City, New Jersey, was first gathered in 1841 by a group of people originally from New England. However, due to the church's support of abolition, the church did not flourish and may have temporarily dissolved in the intervening years. A new effort to gather a church was begun in 1857 and the First

Congregational Church was formally organized on April 14, 1858. Services were variously held at rented locations throughout Jersey City including Lyceum Hall, Park Hall, Metropolitan Hall, Franklin Hall, Hedding Methodist Episcopal Church, and a former Unitarian church building. The church's first church building was constructed in 1963 and was called the Tabernacle Church.

In 1896, following growth in church membership, the church purchased the South Bergen Reformed Church and the land it was on. On this site, a new church building was constructed in 1904. Land was also purchased across the road from the site in 1900 and on that land the People's Palace, a community center, was built.

By the 1960s the church's membership was waning and in 1970 the church officially dissolved.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents

This collection contains records related to the administration and history of the First Congregational Church in Jersey City, New Jersey, as well as records related to the members of the church. The collection includes record book and records of meetings, important vital records for members of the church, financial records, records related to the church building, legal and governance documents, and records related to the ministers of the church.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

This collection has been arranged into the three series listed below. Within each series, materials have been organized first by chronological order and then by topic so that closely related materials are listed in sequence.

Series 1: Administrative records, 1859-1972

Series 2: Membership records, 1898-1972

Series 3: Ministerial records, 1910-1970

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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URL: <http://www.CongregationalLibrary.org>

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

No acquisition information is available for this collection.

Processing Information

This collection was partially processed circa 1996; no finding aid was ever produced. The collection was fully processed by Zachary Bodnar, August 2023, using Describing Archives: A Content Standard.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- Baptismal records.
- Church buildings.

- Church finance.
- Church membership.
- Church records and registers.
- Clergy -- Appointment, call, and election.
- Contracts for deeds
- Deacons -- Congregational churches.
- Jersey City (N.J) -- Church history.
- Legal documents.
- Marriage records.
- First Congregational Church (Jersey City, N.J.)

Technical Requirements

A cassette reader is required in order to access cassette materials.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Collection Inventory

Administrative records, 1859-1972

Physical Description: 36 Files

Physical Description: 4 Volumes

Physical Description: 1 Cassettes

Scope and Contents

This series contains records related to the administration and organization of the First Congregational Church in Jersey City, New Jersey. This series includes church records, meeting minutes, legal documents, correspondence, annual reports, wills and bequests, governance records, financial records, and records related to the church's buildings and property.

| Title/Description | Instances | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Governance records, 1859-1966 | box 2 | folder 1 |
| Deeds and mortgages, 1896-1942 | box 2 | folder 2 |
| Church records, 1897-1944 | box 2 | volume 1 |
| Miscellaneous building records, 1897-1941, 1969 | box 1 | folder 24 |
| Miscellaneous financial records, 1902-1951 | box 1 | folder 25 |
| Legal documents, 1908-1950 | box 2 | folder 3 |
| Trustee's communications, 1914-1933 | | |

| | | |
|--|-------|-----------|
| | box 3 | folder 1 |
| Trustee's communications, 1915-1941 | box 3 | folder 2 |
| Special programs , 1916-1917 | box 1 | folder 26 |
| Renovations, 1916-1924 | box 1 | folder 27 |
| Wills and bequests, 1925-1957 | box 2 | folder 4 |
| Board of trustees minutes, 1925-1943 | box 5 | volume 1 |
| Board of trustees minutes, 1943-1945 | box 3 | folder 3 |
| Board of trustees minutes, 1946-1950 | box 3 | folder 4 |
| Board of trustees minutes, 1951-1954 | box 3 | folder 5 |
| Board of trustees minutes, 1955-1958 | box 3 | folder 6 |
| Board of trustees minutes, 1959-1962, 1965 | box 3 | folder 7 |
| Board of deacons minutes, 1927-1935 | box 1 | volume 1 |
| Board of deacons minutes, 1935-1947 | box 1 | volume 2 |

Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Loose materials from this volume were separated and placed in the folder Board of Deacon's minutes, 1948-1952.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-----------|
| Board of deacons records, 1948-1952 | box 1 | folder 28 |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-----------|

Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Materials in this folder were removed from the Board of Deacons minutes, 1935-1947, volume. Original order has been maintained.

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-----------|
| Board of deacons minutes, 1956-1958 | box 1 | folder 29 |
| Board of deacon's minutes, 1959-1965 | box 2 | folder 5 |
| Society minutes, 1932-1953 | box 4 | folder 1 |
| Society financial reports, 1935 | box 1 | folder 39 |
| Society meetings, 1941 | box 4 | folder 2 |
| Clerk's correspondence, 1942-1971 | box 1 | folder 30 |
| Clerk's correspondence, 1961-1972 | box 1 | folder 31 |
| Church meeting minutes, 1944-1949 | box 4 | folder 3 |
| Church meeting minutes, 1951-1957 | box 4 | folder 4 |
| Church meeting minutes, 1960-1970 | box 4 | folder 5 |

| | | |
|--|----------|------------|
| Annual reports, 1950-1955 | box 1 | folder 32 |
| Annual reports, 1956-1959 | box 1 | folder 33 |
| Annual reports, 1960-1964 | box 1 | folder 34 |
| Annual reports, 1965-1969 | box 1 | folder 35 |
| Histories, 1951, undated | box 1 | folder 36 |
| Renovations, 1960-1961 | box 1 | folder 37 |
| Church mergers, 1966 | box 1 | folder 38 |
| Council minutes, 1966-1970 | box 4 | folder 6 |
| Tabernacle Congregational Church separation, undated | box 2 | folder 6 |
| Committee of 20 report, undated | box 5 | Cassette 1 |
| Main floor seating chart, undated | folder 6 | |

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Membership records, 1898-1972

Physical Description: 14 Folders

Scope and Contents

This series contains records related to the members of the First Congregational Church in Jersey City, New Jersey. This series includes vital records such as records of marriages, deaths, baptisms, admissions, and dismissions.

| Title/Description | Instances | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Vital records, 1898-1951 | box 1 | folder 1 |
| Vital records, 1899-1969 | box 1 | folder 2 |
| Dismissions, 1898-1966 | box 1 | folder 3 |
| Dismissions, 1939-1942 | box 1 | folder 4 |
| Dismissions, 1942-1945 | box 1 | folder 5 |
| Marriage records, 1908-1968 | box 1 | folder 6 |
| Marriage records, 1920-1937 | box 1 | folder 7 |
| Membership records, 1913-1963 | box 1 | folder 8 |
| Admissions, 1915-1917 | box 1 | folder 9 |
| Year book reports, 1929-1940 | box 1 | folder 10 |
| Miscellaneous vital and membership records, 1941-1972 | box 1 | folder 11 |
| Membership list, 1951 | box 1 | folder 12 |

| | | |
|--|-------|-----------|
| Membership correspondence, 1951-1960 | box 1 | folder 13 |
| Paul R. Hunter marriage and funeral records, 1957-1967 | box 1 | folder 14 |

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Ministerial records, 1910-1970

Physical Description: 9 Folders

Physical Description: 1 Object

Scope and Contents

This series contains records related to the ministers of the First Congregational Church in Jersey City, New Jersey. The biographical files contain correspondence, programs, photographs, and other documents related to their time as minister at the church.

| Title/Description | Instances | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Hary L. Everett biographical files, 1910, 1940 | box 1 | folder 15 |
| Ben F. Wyland biographical files, 1941 | box 1 | folder 16 |
| Llewelyn Arnold Owen biographical files, 1941-1946 | box 1 | folder 17 |
| Herman Van Lunen biographical files, 1946-1952 | box 1 | folder 18 |
| William Nisbet biographical files, 1947, undated | box 1 | folder 19 |
| Sprigg Harwood biographical files, 1952 | box 1 | folder 20 |
| Paul Hunter biographical files, 1962 | box 1 | folder 21 |
| James E. Linter biographical files, 1963-1966 | box 1 | folder 22 |
| Russell D. Custer biographical files, 1970 | box 1 | folder 23 |
| John L. Scudder bookplate, undated | box 5 | object 1 |

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)