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Springfield, Mass. East Congregational Church records, 1925-2019. RG5490

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Congregational Library & Archives

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Summary Information

Repository:	Congregational Library & Archives
Creator:	East Congregational Church (Springfield, Mass)
Title:	Springfield, Mass. East Congregational Church records, 1925-2019.
ID:	RG5490
Date [inclusive]:	1925-2019
Physical Description:	0.53 Cubic Feet (2 boxes)
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	East Congregational Church began in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1921 under the leadership of Reverend Dr. Orville T. Fletcher. Four years later in May of 1925, the first service at East Congregational Church was held, led by Rev. Myron Fowell. The church was originally operating on the second floor of the Central Hall building from 1925-1929, and relocated to their new Community House upon its completion in 1929. Rev. Donald Simpson was called to service in 1948, and during his time he led numerous religious education initiatives and events for the community. The new church building was completed in 1957, where the church continued to serve its community until its closure. This collection contains records of baptisms, marriages, deaths, and church membership from the East Congregational church. The records include meeting records, and accounts of the establishment of the church in 1925.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Springfield, Mass. East Congregational Church records, 1925-2019, RG5490. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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Biographical / Historical

East Congregational Church began in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1921 under the leadership of Reverend Dr. Orville T. Fletcher. Rev. Fletcher, who was the Pastor of the Park Congregational Church in Springfield, had originally began a Sunday school in East Springfield that amplified the area's existing need for a church. Four years later in May of 1925, the first service at East Congregational Church was held, led by Rev. Myron Fowell. The church was originally operating on the second floor of the Central Hall building from 1925-1929, and relocated to their new Community House upon its completion in 1929.

The Community House was central to the church, as it housed their Sunday school that continued to grow in attendance over the years. The Sunday school started by admitting first grade through high school aged children, with the addition of a kindergarten class started under Rev. Donald Simpson, who was called to service in 1948. Rev. Simpson also initiated a Pastor's class on weekdays for those under 13, which was continued in the following decades by instructors from the church. While their focus remained on involving children in religious education, in the late 1950's, Rev. Simpson started an educational program for adults called "Through the Bible in a Year", which aimed to increase the biblical knowledge of the adult members of the church.

During the year of 1956, the kindergarten and nursery were relocated to the nearby Bowles School temporarily while the new church was being built. The new church was later completed in 1957.

The church utilized Pilgrim Press materials belonging to their own denomination in the early years of the church. Later, they opted to use "Faith and Life Curriculum of the Westminster Press", of which materials were organized around three central themes of Jesus Christ, The Bible, and The Church. In 1960, they switched to the United Church Curriculum that was promoted by the Christian Education Committee, with the goal of finding curriculum suitable for children of all ages. As of 1975, the church stated that they were using a more Bible central curriculum in comparison to that of the United Church Curriculum. The church continued to serve its community in Springfield until the time of its closure

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Scope and Contents

This collection contains records of baptisms, marriages, deaths, and church membership from the East Congregational church in Springfield, Massachusetts. The records include meeting records, and accounts of the establishment of the church in 1925.

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Arrangement

Materials have been arranged in chronological order by start date.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Restrictions on Access

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

Restrictions on Use

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Acquisition Information

Materials were donated to the Congregational Library & Archives by the Southern New England United Church of Christ in January 2024; ACC# 2024-04.

Processing Information

Processed by Rachel Groh, February 2024, using DACS.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Baptismal records.
- Church membership.
- Church records and registers.
- Marriage records.
- Necrologies.
- East Congregational Church (Springfield, Mass)
- Springfield (Mass.) -- Church history.

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
Church register , 1925-1947	box 1	volume 1
<u>Separated Materials:</u> Separated Materials The "Materials from church register, 1926-1950, undated" were removed from this volume for preservation. Materials were removed from pages 29, 93, 99, 125, and 257.		
Materials from church register, 1926-1950, undated	box 1	folder 1
<u>Separated Materials:</u> Separated Materials These materials were removed from the volume "Church register, 1925-1947" for preservation. Materials were removed from pages 29, 93, 99, 125, and 257.		
Donald A. Simpson pastoral record, 1944-2001	box 1	volume 2
<u>Separated Materials:</u> Separated Materials The "Materials from Donald A. Simpson pastoral record, 1961-2000" were removed from this volume for		

preservation. Materials were removed from pages 129, 145, and 221.

Church register, 1945-1962	box 1	volume 3
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Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

The "Materials from Church register, 1949-undated" were removed from this volume for preservation. Materials were removed from pages 1, 5, and 216.

Materials from church register, 1949-undated	box 1	folder 2
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Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Materials in this folder were removed from the volume "Church register, 1945-1962" for preservation. Materials were removed from pages 1, 5, and 216.

Materials from Donald A. Simpson pastoral record, 1961-2000	box 1	folder 3
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Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Materials in this folder were removed from the volume "Donald A. Simpson Pastoral record, 1944-2001" for preservation. Materials were removed from pages 129, 145, and 221.

Church register, 1963-2019	box 2	volume 1
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Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

The "Materials from Church register, 1971-undated" were removed from this volume for preservation. The materials were removed from pages 1 and 261.

Materials from church register, 1971-undated	box 1	folder 4
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Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

Materials in this folder were removed from the volume "Church register, 1963-2019" for preservation. Materials were found on pages 1 and 261.

Church register, 1995-2001	box 2	volume 2
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