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Brockton, Mass. Porter Congregational Church, 1800-1979. RG5395

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English

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Congregational Library & Archives

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Summary Information

Repository:	Congregational Library & Archives
Creator:	Porter Congregational Church (Montello, Brockton, Mass.)
Title:	Brockton, Mass. Porter Congregational Church, 1800-1979.
ID:	RG5395
Date [inclusive]:	1800-1979
Physical Description:	2.01 Cubic Feet (4 boxes)
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	<p>The Porter Evangelical Church in North Bridgewater, later the Porter Congregational Church in Brockton, was established in 1850 by members who left the First Parish Congregational Church over ecclesiastical differences. The church purchased a building just north of the First Parish Congregational Church in 1851 and the building was further renovated in 1883, 1925, and 1950. The Wendell Avenue Church and Waldo Congregational Church were both formed out of area missions administered by the Porter Church. In 1980, the Porter Congregational Church merged with the First Parish Congregational Church, South Congregational Church, and Waldo Congregational Church to form the Christ Congregational Church in Brockton. This collection contains the administrative, financial, historical, and ministerial records of the Porter Congregational Church, as well as the records of many church groups. Included in the collection are vital membership records, church and society records, committee and group records, and correspondence.</p>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Brockton, Mass. Porter Congregational Church, 1800-1979, RG5395. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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Historical Note

During the 1840s, Rev. Paul Couch, minister at the First Parish Congregational Church in North Bridgewater, began to liberalize some of the more traditional teachings and traditions of the church. In response, some members of the church called for Rev. Couch to resign. Over the course of two years between 1948 and 1950, members of the liberal and orthodox wings of the church debated over Rev. Couche's position. Ultimately Rev. Couch did not resign and his continued service was maintained by the church. In response, approximately 70 names of persons interested in forming a new church were collected on February 12, 1850. An ecclesiastical council was called for March 6 and from that meeting the Porter Evangelical Church was formally gathered. John F. Norton was installed as the first minister of the church and stayed for a year. In 1852, Charles L. Mills was installed as pastor.

The newly formed congregation initially met at Tyler Cobb's Hall; their first meeting was held on March 10, 1850. In order to purchase land for a church, the Porter Society was formed on March 20, 1850. In 1851 the society purchased and renovated an old building on Main Street just north of the First Parish Congregational Church. In 1869 the top of the church spire was destroyed during a wind storm. The steeple was repaired in 1883 while the church itself underwent a major renovation and expansion project.

The Church Work Committee was formed in 1885. Its initial function was to assist the pastor and provide help to the Porter Church's parishioners. However that mission quickly expanded to include the management of Brockton area missions to provide sanctuary spaces for poor and disenfranchised citizens in the north-east of Brockton. Out of that mission both the Wendell Avenue Church, which began as the Wendell Avenue Chapel, and the Waldo Congregational Church, which began as the Montello Mission, were established in the mid-1890s.

At some point in the mid-1910s, the church name changed to The Porter Congregational Church. The church building was again renovated in 1925 as part of planned anniversary activities. The renovation also included the construction of a new steeple. The renovations also included the construction of a multi-purpose recreational building behind the church. There were further renovations completed in 1950 as part of the centennial celebrations. In 1980, the Porter Congregational Church merged with the First Parish Congregational Church, South Congregational Church, and Waldo Congregational Church to form the Christ Congregational Church in Brockton. The Porter Congregational Church building is now the headquarters for the Keys of The Kingdom Tabernacle of Prayer For All People, International.

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Scope and Contents

This collection contains the administrative, financial, historical, and ministerial records of the Porter Congregational Church, as well as the records of many church groups. The records also provide valuable context for the creation of the church out of a doctrinal dispute with the First Parish Congregational

Church. Included in the records are record books of the church and parish, vital member records, financial records, records relating to the construction of the church, records of various church groups and the Sunday school, orders of worship, and ministerial correspondence.

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Arrangement

This collection has been arranged into the four series listed below. Within each series, materials have been arranged, primarily, in chronological order by start date, and secondarily, by topic.

Series 1: Church and society records, 1847-1979

Series 2: Financial and building records, 1800-1960

Series 3: Church committee and group records, 1850-1923

Series 4: Ministerial records and church services, 1800-1950

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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

Materials were donated to the Congregational Library & Archives by the Porter Congregational Church in 1980. Materials were separated out of RG0037 in March, 2019; Accession 2019-04.

Processing Information

Originally processed by Sandra Sudak in 1990. Additional descriptions by Jessica Steytler in 2002 and 2006. Fully reprocessed and redescribed by Zachary Bodnar, March 2019, using DACS Second Edition.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

In 1980, the First Parish Congregational, South Congregational, Porter Congregational, and Waldo Congregational Churches merged into a single entity, the Christ Congregational Church. The records of all four churches are held at the Congregational Library & Archives:

Brockton, Mass. First Parish Congregational Church records, 1738-1980.

Brockton, Mass. South Congregational Church, 1835-1979.

Brockton, Mass. Waldo Congregational Church, 1896-1980.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Baptismal records.
- Church bells.
- Church finance.
- Church group work.
- Church libraries.
- Church membership.

- Church records and registers.
- Installation (clergy).
- Pews and pew rights.
- Sunday school music.
- Sunday schools -- Records.
- Women -- Societies and clubs.
- Brockton (Mass.) -- Church history.
- Porter Congregational Church (Montello, Brockton, Mass.)
- Montello (Brockton, Mass.) -- Church history.
- North Bridgewater (Mass.) -- Church history.
- Waldo Congregational Church (Brockton, Mass.)
- Wendell Avenue Congregational Church (Brockton, Mass.)

Bibliography

The book of the Chronicles of the Porter Congregational Church on the occasion of the One-Hundredth Anniversary 1950. Brockton: 1950. 17.11.1 B78.33 ChrCC

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Collection Inventory

Church and society records, 1847-1979

Physical Description: 21 Files (8 volumes, 13 folders)

Scope and Contents

This series contains the administrative records of both the church and parish, as well as vital membership records. Included in the series are record books for the church and parish that contain meeting minutes, records of votes, and membership records. Also included in the series are the records of the standing committee, annual reports, historical sketches, clippings, and records related to the genesis of the Porter Congregational Church.

Title/Description	Instances	
Sepparation documents, 1847-1848	box 2	folder 1
Church and parish records, 1850-1860	box 4	folder 1
Photostat church records, 1850-1861	box 4	folder 2
Church records, 1850-1886, 1850-1929	box 1	volume 1
Church records, 1886-1906	box 1	volume 2
Society records, 1850-1875	box 1	volume 3

Correspondence, 1850-1939	box 2	folder 2
Doctrinal pamphlets, 1856-1872	box 2	folder 3
Clippings, 1876-1971	box 4	folder 3
Standing Committee records, 1887-1901	box 1	volume 5
Standing Committee records, 1901-1910	box 1	volume 6
Standing Committee records, 1911-1923	box 1	volume 7
Standing Committee records, 1923-1930	box 1	volume 8
Register of members, 1887-1929	box 1	volume 9
Annual reports, 1892	box 2	folder 4
75th anniversary time capsul signatures, 1925	box 4	folder 4
Historical sketches, 1925, 1975	box 4	folder 5
Annual reports, 1969-1974	box 2	folder 5
Annual reports, 1975-1979	box 2	folder 6
Membership lists, undated	box 2	folder 7
Constitution and by-laws, undated	box 2	folder 8

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Financial and building records, 1800-1960

Physical Description: 11 Files (1 volume, 10 folders)

Scope and Contents

This series contains records relating to the finances of the church as well as the records relating to construction and maintenance of the church building. Included in the series are financial ledgers, pew records, architectural drawings, and in-depth accounts of the money spent and collected to build the church building.

Title/Description	Instances	
Memorial gifts, 1800-1950	box 3	folder 1
Pew deeds, 1827-1851	box 4	folder 6
Treasurer's book, 1850-1877	box 1	volume 4
Building committee records, 1850-1852	box 3	folder 2
Construction account book, 1850	box 3	folder 3
Construction bills and receipts, 1850-1851	box 3	folder 4
Account of contributions, 1850-1852	box 3	folder 5
Purchase of bell, 1850-1854	box 4	folder 7

Pew plan, 1851	box 3	folder 6
Financial records, 1857-1960	box 3	folder 7
Porter tower drawings, undated	box 3	folder 8

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Church committee and group records, 1850-1923

Physical Description: 20 Files (13 volumes, 7 folders)

Scope and Contents

This series contains the operational records of church groups and non-governing church committees. Also included in the series are records relating to the church's Sunday school.

Title/Description	Instances	
Society for Parish Affairs and Business, 1850	box 3	folder 9
Porter Female Association records, 1850-1885	box 1	volume 10
Ladies Benevolent Society records, 1886-1900	box 1	volume 11
Woman's Missionary Society records, 1874-1880	box 1	volume 18
Woman's Missionary Society records, 1880-1887	box 1	volume 19
Woman's Missionary Society records, 1887-1891	box 2	volume 1
Woman's Missionary Society records, 1891-1899	box 2	volume 2
Woman's Missionary Society records, 1894-1904	box 2	volume 3
Constitution and by-laws of the sunday school, 1877	box 4	folder 8
Young People's Society record book, 1878-1884	box 1	volume 12
Young People's Society, 1882-1891	box 3	folder 10
Adult Department certificate, 1884	box 3	folder 11
Church Work Committee financial records, 1887-1892	box 1	volume 13
Church Work Committee financial records, 1893-1915	box 1	volume 14
Church work committee reports and receipts, 1893-1918	box 3	folder 12
Records of the Church Work Committee, 1893-1904	box 1	volume 15
Records of the Church Work Committee, 1904-1914	box 1	volume 16
Records of the Church Work Committee, 1914-1923	box 1	volume 17
Sunday school library catalogue, undated	box 3	folder 13
Lessons in Sacred Music for Sabbath Schools, undated	box 3	folder 14

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Ministerial records and church services, 1800-1950

Physical Description: 11 Folders

Scope and Contents

This series contains records relating to ministers, the installation of ministers, and special church services. Included in the series are orders of worship for special anniversaries, dedications, and installations, correspondence with potential interim pastors, obituary poems, and a hymn manuscript.

Title/Description	Instances	
Leach family papers and photographs, 1800, 1804	box 3	folder 15
Obituary poems, 1831-1834, 1855	box 3	folder 16
Packard family legal and financial records, 1838-1842	box 4	folder 9
Ministerial correspondence, 1850-1852	box 3	folder 17
Pulpit supply, 1850-1854, 1868-1869	box 3	folder 18
Dedication services, 1851-1924	box 3	folder 19
Installation services, 1852-1948	box 4	folder 10
David Howard correspondence, 1871-1872	box 3	folder 20
Orders of worship, 1874-1950	box 3	folder 21
Rev. Z. T. Sullivan photograph, 1880	box 3	folder 22
Hymn composed by Dan Huntington, undated	box 3	folder 23

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