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Falmouth, Mass. First Congregational Church, records, 1731-1790. RG4930

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English

DACS2 - 2013

Congregational Library & Archives

14 Beacon Street

Boston, MA 02108

info@14beacon.org

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

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Summary Information

Repository:	Congregational Library & Archives
Creator:	First Congregational Church (Falmouth, Mass.)
Title:	Falmouth, Mass. First Congregational Church, records, 1731-1790.
ID:	RG4930
Date [inclusive]:	1731-1790
Physical Description:	0.06 Cubic Feet (3 reels, 1 folder)
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	<p>On October, 10, 1708, the First Congregational Church in Falmouth, was formally gathered and Josiah Metcalf was ordained as the church's first minister. The first meeting house was probably built between 1690 and 1700 and was replaced by the second meeting house in 1717. The third meeting house was constructed in 1750 and the fourth, and final, meeting house was constructed in 1796. In 1821, 77 members withdrew to form the East End Church in Hatchville and in 1833, 9 members withdrew to form the North Falmouth Congregational Church. Now a member of the United Church of Christ, the First Congregational Church in Falmouth continues to serve the local community. This collection contains a single volume of early church records and includes both church meeting minutes and vital membership records.</p>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Falmouth, Mass. First Congregational Church, records, 1731-1790, RG4930. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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Historical Note

Though the town of Falmouth, Massachusetts, was incorporated in 1686, the town did not have a formal congregational church until over 20 years later. The town's inhabitants largely belonged to the Congregational Church in Barnstable and worshiped in Falmouth at a "branch church." The first minister

of the Falmouth community was, Jonathan Dunham, a lay preacher, who served from about 1677 to 1684. He was followed by another lay preacher, Samuel Shiverick, a Huguenot refugee, who served from about 1687 to 1703. The first meeting house was probably built between 1690 and 1700. In 1707 Josiah Metcalf was called to serve as the minister. On October, 10, 1708, the First Congregational Church in Falmouth, was formally gathered and Josiah Metcalf was ordained as the church's first minister. He served as the minister until his death in 1723. In 1717 the second meeting house was constructed to replace the first. Construction on the third meeting house, known as the meeting house on the green, was completed in 1750 after eight years of discussion during church meetings.

A church library was established in 1789. By 1791 the church building was in disrepair; the fourth, and final, meeting house constructed to replace the 1750 building, was completed in 1796. The church purchased a bell from Paul Revere for the new building; the bell is still housed at the church today. In 1821, 77 members withdrew over theological differences with Rev. Henry Lincoln and his adoption of a particularly strict Confession of Faith. They formed the East End Church in Hatchville. Even after Rev. Lincoln was forced to resign in 1823, the church continued to lose members over his theological beliefs, with many being dismissed to the Methodist Episcopal Church in Falmouth. In 1824 the church established a Sunday school. In 1833, nine members withdrew to form the North Falmouth Congregational Church; it appears that these members disagreed with the church's adoption of a strict temperance resolution. In 1837 the first church missionary society was founded. In 1857 the meeting house was deconstructed and rebuilt, with significant changes done to the steeple, windows, and pews, on its present location.

The First Congregational Church in Falmouth continues to serve the local community and is now a member of the United Church of Christ.

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Scope and Contents

This collection contains a single volume of church records from early in the church's history. These records primarily document the admissions of new members, marriages, and baptisms which took place at First Church. Also included are records of church meetings and, to a lesser extent, records of correspondence regarding the call of their new minister, Rev. Isaac Mann, in 1780.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Conditions Governing Access

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Acquisition Information

Loaned to the Congregational Library & Archives, November 2009, by the First Congregational Church in Falmouth, Massachusetts; accession 2009-12.

Custodial History

This collection was microfilmed by the Northeast Document Conservation Center in 2009.

Processing Information

Redescribed by Sari Mauro, September 2013, using DACS Second Edition. Reprocessed by Zachary Bodnar, July 2019, using DACS Second Edition.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Baptismal records.
- Church membership.
- Church records and registers.
- Marriage records.
- New England's Hidden Histories.
- Falmouth (Mass.) -- Church history.
- First Congregational Church (Falmouth, Mass.)

Technical Requirements

A microfilm reader is required in order to access microform materials. One microfilm reader is available to the public upon request.

To access digital user's copies via online-interface, a java-enabled web browser is required. Internet Explorer 8.x and later, Firefox 5.x and later, Opera 12 and later, Safari 5.x and later, or any version of Google Chrome are recommended.

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Bibliography

Long, Margaret G. *The Treasured Heritage of the First Congregational Church of Falmouth*. Falmouth: 1958. 17.11.1 F19.40 FirCC

Showalter, Douglas K. "First Congregational Church and the 1812 Quissett Revival." *Spiritsail* 23, no. 1 (2009): 3-12. 17.11.1 F19.40 FirCC

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Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances
<p>Church records, 1731-1790</p> <p><u>Digital Copies:</u> Digital Copies</p> <p>These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are available to view online. A transcription of the church records can be viewed along side the digital reproductions.</p>	<p>box NEHH- folder 23 Small 1</p>
<p>Microfilm records, 1731-1790, 2009</p> <p><u>Conditions Governing Access:</u> Conditions Governing Access</p> <p>Only the service copy is available for library use. The archival master and print master copies are restricted for preservation purposes.</p> <p>Scope and Contents</p> <p>These microfilmed church records include copies of the physical materials within the collection: Church records, 1731-1790.</p>	<p>reel Service Copy</p> <p>reel Archival Master</p> <p>reel Print Master</p>