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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

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Business Number: 617-523-0470

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

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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

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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

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.

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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.

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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
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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	

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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

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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

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