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Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society records, 1786-1954. RG0120

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Congregational Library & Archives

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Summary Information

Repository:	Congregational Library & Archives
Creator:	Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society
Creator:	Maine Congregational Charitable Society
Title:	Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society records, 1786-1954.
ID:	RG0120
Date [inclusive]:	1786-1954
Physical Description:	.97 Cubic Feet (3 boxes)
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	This collection contains various records from The Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society which formed on March 24, 1786, when their Act of Incorporation was passed and signed. The Society served and continues to serve as financial support for widows and children of deceased Congregational ministers, and this is reflected in the collection in the form of grant applications, correspondence with beneficiaries, and financial statements.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item] in the Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society records, 1786-1954, RG0120. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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Historical Note

Beginning as a fund within the Massachusetts Convention of Congregational Ministers, The Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society formed on March 24, 1786, when their Act of Incorporation was passed and signed. After incorporation, the Society maintained a close relationship to the Convention who continued to contribute funds to the Society. The aim

of the Society was to provide annual financial relief for widows and children of deceased Congregational ministers.

In the early 19th century, Congregationalism in New England split into two distinct wings. The Charitable Society continued to serve both without interruption, and still currently serve both the families of Unitarian Universalist and United Church of Christ ministers. Shortly after 1820 when Maine achieved statehood, a separate Maine Congregational Charitable Society was incorporated, although today the funds given to the Massachusetts Society support families in both states.

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Scope and Contents

This collection contains various records created by the Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society from its inception in 1786. It is comprised of financial and administrative records.

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Arrangement

The Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society records have been arranged into the two series listed below. Within each series materials have been primarily arranged in chronological order by start date. When appropriate, similar and continuous materials have been grouped together.

Series 1: Finances, 1787-1917

Series 2: Administration, 1786-1954

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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

Originally processed in June 1992. Re-processed by Jenny Giri, October 2025, using DACS Second Edition.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

Additional records related to the Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society can be found at the Harvard Divinity School Library, bMS 00504 and the Massachusetts Historical Society, Ms. N-511.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Charity
- Church societies.
- Clergy
- Congregationalism--New England
- Corporate minutes.
- Correspondence.
- Financial Statements
- Widows--United States--Economic conditions
- Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society
- Maine Congregational Charitable Society

Bibliography

"An historical sketch of the Convention of the Congregational Ministers in Massachusetts : with an account of its funds, its connexion with the Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society, and its rules and regulations, MDCCCXXI. (1821), 9.3 2047. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA."

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Collection Inventory

Finances, 1787-1917

Physical Description: 14 Items

Scope and Contents

This series contains financial records in the form of both paper reports and 2 volumes. This includes Treasurer's Reports, donation information, and beneficiary information.

Title/Description	Instances	
Bequest Information, 1787-1857	box 1	folder 2
Financial Statements, 1810-1821	box 3	folder 2
Financial Statements, 1822-1839	box 1	folder 3
Financial Statements, 1841-1860	box 1	folder 4
Financial Statements, 1861-1875	box 1	folder 5
Financial Statements, 1877-1896	box 1	folder 6
Financial Statements, 1896-1917	box 1	folder 7
Beneficiary Information, 1817-1856	box 1	folder 8
Beneficiary Information, 1858-1873	box 1	folder 9
Beneficiary Information, 1867-1871	box 1	folder 10
Beneficiary Information, 1880-1885	box 3	volume 2
Beneficiary Information, 1886-1899	box 1	folder 11
Beneficiary Information, 1886-1903	box 3	volume 1
Beneficiary Information, 1901-1917	box 1	folder 12

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Administration, 1786-1954

Physical Description: 17 Folders

Scope and Contents

This series contains internal administrative records such as committee reports, acts of incorporation, by-laws, and meeting minutes. It also contains all correspondence with beneficiaries and members, including grant applications sent by families of deceased ministers.

Title/Description	Instances	
Internal Policies & Membership, 1786-1889		

Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society records, 1786-1954. RG0120

	box 1	folder 1
Miscellaneous, 1807, 1813	box 3	folder 10
Assorted Meeting Minutes, 1820, 1829	box 3	folder 6
Correspondence with Maine Congregational Charitable Society, 1821-1839	box 3	folder 3
Committee Reports, 1851-1852, 1862	box 3	folder 7
Internal Administration, 1860-1903	box 3	folder 4
Administrative Correspondence, 1867-1903	box 3	folder 5
Correspondence with Massachusetts Convention of Congregational Ministers, 1868-1893	box 1	folder 13
Applications, 1948	box 2	folder 1
Applications, 1949	box 2	folder 2
Applications, 1950	box 2	folder 3
Applications, 1951	box 2	folder 4
Applications, 1952	box 2	folder 5
Applications, 1953	box 2	folder 6
Applications, 1954	box 3	folder 1
Committee Reports, undated	box 3	folder 8
Death Notices, undated	box 3	folder 9

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