



ArchivesSpace
a community served by LYRASIS

Salem, Mass. Tabernacle Church records, 1743-1858. RG5122

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on July 18, 2019.

English

DACS2 - 2013

Congregational Library & Archives

14 Beacon Street

Boston, MA 02108

info@14beacon.org

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

Table of Contents

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Summary Information | 3 |
| Historical Note | 3 |
| Scope and Contents | 4 |
| Arrangement | 4 |
| Administrative Information | 5 |
| Related Materials | 6 |
| Controlled Access Headings | 6 |
| Technical Requirements | 6 |
| Collection Inventory | 7 |

Summary Information

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Repository: | Congregational Library & Archives |
| Creator: | Tabernacle Church (Salem, Mass.) |
| Creator: | Third Church (Salem, Mass.) |
| Title: | Salem, Mass. Tabernacle Church records, 1743-1858. |
| ID: | RG5122 |
| Date [inclusive]: | 1743-1858 |
| Physical Description: | 0.44 Cubic Feet (1 box, 1 folder) |
| Language of the Material: | English |
| Abstract: | Tabernacle Church of Salem, originally known as Third Church of Salem, was formed after a split from First Church in 1735. This collection contains the early records of the church, including meeting minutes, pew taxes and apportionments, and financial records. Of particular note are records pertaining to ecclesiastical council proceedings. |

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Salem, Mass. Tabernacle Church records, 1743-1858, RG5122. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Historical Note

Tabernacle Church in Salem, Massachusetts, traces its historical roots back to 1629 with the founding of First Church of Salem. In 1735, the First Church Pastor Samuel Fisk was dismissed from his position by ecclesiastical council. A group of parishioners followed Fisk from First Church, built a new meeting house, and met also under the name First Church until 1762 when they were compelled by the colonial legislature to change their name to "Third Church of Christ in Salem." In 1774 the great fire of Salem burned the Third Church meetinghouse to the ground. A replacement meetinghouse was built in 1777 and was copied from the Tabernacle in Moorfields (London) made famous by its association with George Whitefield, leading to the nickname "Tabernacle Church."

It was during the building of this meetinghouse that strife drove a portion of the Third Church congregation to split and form South Church of Salem in 1775. Originally also referring to themselves as "Third Church," the South Church later rejoined Tabernacle Church in 1924.

In 1781 the proprietors of Third Church were reincorporated as "The proprietors of the meetinghouse and Land where the Reverend Doctor Nathaniel Whitaker now preaches." Reverend Whitaker was removed from office in 1784 by ecclesiastical council. Another split occurred in 1802 when a portion of Tabernacle Church left to form a Presbyterian church.

In 1812, the Tabernacle Church came to the fore-front of Congregational consciousness when it became the church from which the first six Congregational missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions were commissioned.

In 1834 the proprietor of the church were once again reincorporated, this time as "The Proprietors of the Tabernacle Church."

The Tabernacle Congregational Church, UCC, continues to serve the Salem community today.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents

This collection contains the early records of Tabernacle Church of Salem, Massachusetts. Records include financial accountings, church meeting minutes and votes, and pew apportionments. Of particular note are records of ecclesiastical proceedings, particularly those relating to the turbulent tenure of Reverend Nathaniel Whitaker.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

This collection has been arranged chronologically.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Congregational Library & Archives

14 Beacon Street

Boston, MA 02108

info@14beacon.org

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.

Digital Reproductions are protected by copyright and/or related rights. You are free to use the Digital Reproductions in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. In addition, no permission is required from the Congregational Library & Archives for educational uses. For other uses, you need to obtain permission from the Congregational Library & Archives. For additional information regarding copyright, please consult the Congregational Library & Archives' [Digital Collections Copyright & Use](#) policy.

Acquisition Information

Materials gifted to the Congregational Library & Archives, November 2013, by the Tabernacle Church in Salem Massachusetts; Accession 2013-19.

Accruals

Additional accruals are expected for this collection in the form of full-text transcription. There is no anticipated date for this accrual.

Processing Information

Originally processed by Sari Mauro, December 2013. Additional processing and description by Zachary Bodnar, August 2018, using DACS Second Edition.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Related Materials

Related Materials

Additional archival materials related to the Salem, Mass. Tabernacle Church are held by the [Phillips Library at the Peabody Essex Museum](#). For more information, view the collection's [finding aid](#). Some of these materials were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project and may be viewed [online](#).

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- Church controversies.
- Church finance.
- Church records and registers.
- New England's Hidden Histories.
- Pews and pew rights.
- First Church (Salem, Mass.)
- Salem (Mass.) -- Church history.
- South Church (Salem, Mass.)
- Tabernacle Church (Salem, Mass.)
- Whitaker, Nathaniel, 1732-1795

Technical Requirements

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.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Collection Inventory

| Title/Description | Instances | |
|---|-----------|----------|
| Book of records, 1743-1833 <u>Digital Copies:</u> Digital Copies These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are available to view online . | box 1 | volume 1 |
| Scope and Contents | | |
| This record book contains records of membership, church meeting minutes, church discipline and baptisms. Of particular note are a series of charts documenting pastoral visits to parishioners. These charts contain census-like data on the household, including number and age of people living there. This volume also contains historical accounts pertaining to the church's difficulty with Dr. Nathaniel Whitaker. Additionally, the volume contains transcribed copies produced in 1833 of records dating from 1783-1805. | | |
| Financial and pew records, 1760-1782 <u>Physical Description:</u> 3 Items | folder 5 | |
| Scope and Contents | | |
| This folder contains oversized financial records including a pew chart, an expense report, and a balance report. | | |
| Whitaker controversy records, 1772-1785 <u>Digital Copies:</u> Digital Copies These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are available to view online . | box 1 | folder 1 |
| Scope and Contents | | |
| There was a lengthy dispute between the church's first pastor and its proprietors regarding Rev. Whitaker's conduct and salary, as well as the decision of the congregation to end their affiliation with the local Presbytery and return to Congregationalism. These records document that dispute. | | |
| Financial and land records, 1773-1796, 1858, (1773-1796) | box 1 | folder 2 |
| A plan or scheme for erecting a Tabernacle or house of divine worship..., 1774 | box 1 | folder 3 |

Church records, 1775-1789

box 1

folder 4

Church records, 1778-1796

box 1

volume 2

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are [available to view online](#).

Scope and Contents

These records contain meeting minutes, pew valuations, membership lists, calls to church meetings, and records pertaining to Dr. Nathaniel Whitaker, then-pastor of Tabernacle Church, discussing ministerial salary.

Proprietor's records, 1795-1849

box 1

volume 3

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are [available to view online](#).

Scope and Contents

This record book contains records of meeting minutes and votes, standing committee minutes, lists of donations, copies of warrants, pew valuations and taxes, and records pertaining to the sexton's and minister's salary.

Covenants, 1795, undated

box 1

folder 5

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

This church covenant was digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are [available to view online](#).

Scope and Contents

A covenant lays out doctrines agreed upon by the congregation, usually at its founding. This document is a copy of the covenant made in August 1795.