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Stoneham, Mass. First Congregational Church records, 1728-1889. RG5190

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English

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Congregational Library & Archives

14 Beacon Street

Suite 200

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	5
Administrative Information	5
Controlled Access Headings	6
Technical Requirements	7
Bibliography	7
Collection Inventory	7
Church records	7
Parish and Financial records	8
Ministerial records	10

Summary Information

Repository:	Congregational Library & Archives
Creator:	First Congregational Church (Stoneham, Mass.)
Creator:	Osgood, James, 1705-1746
Title:	Stoneham, Mass. First Congregational Church records, 1728-1889.
ID:	RG5190
Date [inclusive]:	1728-1889
Physical Description:	1.09 Cubic Feet (1 box)
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The town of Stoneham was incorporated in 1725. A vote in 1726 provided for the building of a meetinghouse and the First Congregational Church was organized in 1729. The first pastor was Rev. James Osgood who was ordained in September 1729. Rev. John Cleaveland was pastor from 1785 until an ecclesiastical council dissolved his relationship with the town in 1894. The second meeting house was constructed in 1803 and the third in 1840. This collection contains the early records the Church. Included are church records of meeting minutes, vital statistics, parish and financial records, and ministerial records.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Stoneham, Mass. First Congregational Church records, 1728-1889, RG5190. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Historical Note

The town of Stoneham, previously known as Charlestown End, was incorporated in 1725. A vote in 1726 provided for the building of a 1,440-square-foot meetinghouse however the First Congregational Church itself was not organized until July 1729, with thirteen founding members, when the first church covenant was read and adopted. The first pastor was Rev. James Osgood, a 24 year old Harvard graduate from Salem, who was called in October 1728, and ordained in September 1729. Osgood served until his

death in 1746 and was replaced by John Carnes, who was dismissed from his position in 1757. John Searl succeeded Carnes in 1758, followed by the ordination of John Cleaveland Jr. in 1785.

Rev. John Cleaveland Jr. was the son of Rev. John Cleveland of Essex, a separatist minister who served as a chaplain in the French and Indian War and the American Revolution. Cleaveland Jr., unable to pay for a college education, was instead taught by his father. His pastorate at Stoneham was his first ministry. Cleaveland's ministry began amicably. With the opening of the Stoneham Circulating Library, which was kept at the parsonage, Cleaveland became the town's first librarian. Cleaveland's relationship with the church's members remained favorable until the passing of his wife in 1793. Following his wife's death, Cleaveland married Elizabeth Evans, his housekeeper. The reaction to this marriage was negative; at various times Cleaveland found the door to the meeting house nailed shut, the seat of the pulpit covered in tar, and the tail of his horse cut off. While the church itself supported Cleaveland, the town consistently did not, refusing to raise his salary and going so far as to shutter the meeting house so that public worship could not be held there. An ecclesiastical council called late September 1794 dissolved Cleaveland's relationship with the town and church.

Several pastors were called after Cleaveland, and in 1803 the town voted for the construction of a new, larger, meetinghouse. A bell for the new meetinghouse's belfry was purchased in 1810 with money raised through subscription, and a Sabbath-school was established in 1816. The second meetinghouse burned to the ground in 1840. That same year, at the cost of \$5,500, the third, and final, meeting house was constructed. An example of Greek Revival architecture, the third meeting house was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1984.

The First Congregational Church in Stoneham, UCC, continues to serve the local community today.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents

This collection contains the early records of First Congregational Church in Stoneham, Massachusetts. Included in this collection are church records of meeting minutes, vital statistics, and membership rolls; parish and financial records, including salary and capital expenses; and documents created by ministers who served the church, including commonplace and account books from James Osgood, and sermons from an unnamed minister, most likely John Stevens who served in both Stoneham and Haverhill. Of particular note is the Osgood family's account book which contains not only the accounts of Rev. James Osgood, but also records of his wife, Sarah Osgood's, household and other expenses.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

This collection has been arranged into three series. Within each series, the materials have been organized chronologically.

Series 1: Church records, 1728-1840

Series 2: Parish and Financial records, 1803-1889

Series 3: Ministerial records, 1728-1827

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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

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Acquisition Information

Collection gifted to the Congregational Library & Archives by the First Congregational Church in Stoneham, June 2014; Accession: 2014-39.

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, February 2016, using DACS second edition. Additional processing and update to ArchivesSpace by Zachary Bodnar, July 2018.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- Account books.
- Baptism and church membership.
- Baptismal records.
- Church records and registers.
- Clergy -- Appointment, call, and election.
- Clergy -- Relocation.
- Excommunication.
- Marriage records.
- New England's Hidden Histories.
- Pews and pew rights.
- Ordination.
- Ordination sermons -- Early works to 1800.
- Sermons, American.
- Sermons, American -- Early works to 1800.
- Cleaveland, John, 1749-1815
- First Congregational Church (Stoneham, Mass.)
- Osgood, James, 1705-1746
- Stoneham (Mass.) -- Church history.

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](#)

Bibliography

Stevens, Judge. *Historical Sketch of the First Congregational Church in Stoneham*. Stoneham, 1929.
17.11.1 S75.2 FirCC

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Collection Inventory

Church records, 1728-1840

Physical Description: 6 Files (3 volumes, 3 folders)

Scope and Contents

This series contains the early church records of First Congregational Church in Stoneham, Massachusetts. Included in this series are records of church meeting minutes, marriage records, baptismal records, and statements of faith.

Title/Description	Instances
Church records, 1728-1798	box 1 volume 1

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 volume contains church meeting minutes, including record of the call to Osgood as settled pastor, articles of faith, records of church discipline, including censure,

membership records, baptismal records, and marriage records.

Statement of faith by John H. Stevens, 1795	box 1	folder 1
Articles of Resolution, 1798	box 1	folder 2
Church records, 1798-1840	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

This volume contains church meeting minutes, membership records, baptismal records, ecclesiastical council notes, and lists of financial donations.

Marriage record, 1801	box 1	folder 6
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Separated Materials:

Separated Materials

These materials were separated from the volume "Marriage records, 1828-1831" to be housed separately.

Marriage records, 1828-1831	box 1	volume 3
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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 volume is comprised of marriage, death, and baptism records. There is also a record of a bequest to the church and congregation.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Parish and Financial records, 1803-1889

Physical Description: 7 Files (6 volumes, 1 folder)

Scope and Contents

This series contains the financial records of First Congregational Church in Stoneham, Massachusetts. These records include pew deeds and pew tax records, meeting minutes, records pertaining to the replacement of the church bell and the purchase and installation of a new furnace, and committee reports.

Title/Description	Instances	
Parish records, 1803-1876	box 1	volume 7

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 volume contains quit-claim deeds for pews, financial record, minutes, other pew deeds, and bills of sale. Of particular note is a non-contemporaneous index inserted into the front of the volume.

Records of the Treasurer, 1827-1856	box 1	volume 4
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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 volume is comprised of financial records pertaining to the parish treasury. Records include names of recipients and the purpose of the payment as well as date.

Parish records, 1827-1856	box 1	volume 8
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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 volume contains parish meeting minutes and records of votes, committee reports, information on the replacement of the church bell, and records pertaining to the purchase and installation of a furnace.

Financial records, 1827-1872	box 1	volume 9
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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 volume includes financial records such as records of taxes for the support of the parish and pew taxes.

Financial records, 1828-1868

box 1

volume 10

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 volume is comprised primarily of financial records of the church and its subscribers. Also included are committee reports and notes on church finances, including an assessment and mortgage for the parsonage.

Deeds to Pews, 1841-1867

box 1

folder 3

Parish records, 1856-1889

box 1

volume 9

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 volume is comprised of meeting minutes, meeting warrants, pew sale records, financial records, officer and member lists, admissions, dismissions, and correspondence. Also included is a Rev. William Batt's resignation and Rev. D. Augustine's acceptance of the position as replacement, as well as records of his installation. The records end with Rev. Augustine's dismissal.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Ministerial records, 1728-1827

Physical Description: 5 Files (3 volumes, 2 folders)

Scope and Contents

This series contains personal account books, records, sermons, and realia created and kept by ministers of First Congregational Church in Stoneham, Massachusetts.

Title/Description

Instances

James Osgood's book, 1728-1731

box 1

volume 6

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

Kept by James Osgood, First Congregational Church's first pastor, this book contains pages of "remarkable things," accounts of salary Osgood received in Salisbury, a list of moneys paid to creditors, sermon notes, and books received by Osgood. The volume also contains birth/baptismal records kept in a different hand.

James Osgood's neckwear, 1729

box 1

folder 4

Osgood account book, 1740-1796

box 1

volume 5

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 is an account book of the Osgood family, including James Osgood's expenses and Sarah Osgood's expenses, most of the household expenses for foodstuffs (including rum, chocolate, and butchery services) and clothing goods (including sewing supplies, silk, whale bone, and stays).

Ordination sermon, 1785

box 1

folder 7

Sermons, 1798-1827

box 1

folder 5

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 are 14 sets of sermon notes. Each sermon is handwritten in a separate pamphlet. The sermons are unattributed with multiple dates and locations, indicating reuse by the pastor. Rev. John Stevens may have been the author of some or all of these sermons.

List of Sermons

- 1 Psalm 116:7 – first preached July 1, 1798
- 2 Luke 24:30 – first preached August 14, 1803
- 3 Isaiah 8:17 – first preached April 29, 1804
- 4 Sermon with no citation – first preached January 4, 1807
- 5 Zachariah 1:5 – first preached February 12, 1809
- 6 Acts 9:6 – first preached December 12, 1809
- 7 1 Peter 5:7 – first preached October 3, 1813
- 8 Philippians 4:8 – first preached May 23, 1819
- 9 Ecclesiastes 8:5 – first preached January 2, 1820
- 10 2 Peter 1:1 – first preached July 1, 1821
- 11 Philippians 1:23 – first preached December 7, 1823
- 12 Deuteronomy 32:5-6 – first preached April 1, 1824
- 13 Jeremiah 21:8 – first preached January 22, 1826
- 14 Ezekiel 37:11-13 – first preached December 28, 1827

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)