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Sturbridge, Mass. Separatist Congregational Church personal records, 1749-1762. RG0971

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English

DACS2 - 2013

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Summary Information

Repository:	Congregational Library & Archives
Creator:	Separatist Congregational Church (Sturbridge, Mass.)
Title:	Sturbridge, Mass. Separatist Congregational Church personal records, 1749-1762.
ID:	RG0971
Date [inclusive]:	1749-1762
Physical Description:	1 Folder
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	The Separatist Church in Sturbridge, Massachusetts, was formed in 1747 after 15 members of the Congregational Church in Sturbridge left the church. The separatists refused to pay ministerial taxes and in response the town aggressively attempted to collect the taxes by forcibly taking possessions, livestock, and imprisoning at least 5 of the separatists. In 1749 the Separatist Church was reformed as the Baptist Church in Fiskdale. This collection include personal records relating to the separation and the personal reasons the separatists either left the Congregational Church, or wished to rejoin.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Sturbridge, Mass. Separatist Congregational Church personal records, 1749-1762, RG0971. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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Historical Note

The Separatist Church in Sturbridge, Massachusetts, and also known as the Strict Congregational Church, was formed in 1747 after 15 members of the Congregational Church in

Sturbridge, including two deacons, left the church in May. By November the Separatist Church was formally gathered and in September of 1748 the first minister of this church was called.

The reason for the split was likely over a difference of belief between the parishioners and the Congregationalists. The split may have also been encouraged by a Baptist preacher from Brimfield. The separatists refused to pay ministerial taxes due since they had their own church and claimed Baptist beliefs. However the town did not recognize the separatists as "regular Baptists" and so began to aggressively collect the back taxes. Physical possessions and some livestock were forcibly taken from some of the separatists and at least five were briefly imprisoned.

In 1749 the separatists reorganized as the Baptist Church in Fiskdale, Massachusetts. A few of the separatists returned to the Congregational Church at later dates. The Baptist Church in Fiskdale, Unitarian Church in Sturbridge, and Congregational Church in Sturbridge all merged in 1922 to form the Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale which continues to serve the local community today.

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Scope and Contents

This collection includes a series of personal records relating to the formation of the Separatist Church in Sturbridge, Massachusetts. The records dated 1749 are formal letters written by some of the separatists to the Congregational Church formally providing written testimony for their reasons for leaving the church. The two documents created after 1749 were written by separatists who, after separation, wished to rejoin the Congregational Church. Those documents are akin to confessions which would have been read to the whole parish.

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Arrangement

Items in this collection have been arranged in alphabetical order by the author's last name.

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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

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Acquisition Information

No acquisition information is available for this collection.

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

Processed by Zachary Bodnar, June 2019, using DACS Second Edition.

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Related Materials

Separated Materials

A single document in this collection, a letter from Rev. Joshua Paine to parishioner Miriam Newell admonishing her for her lack of attendance, has been removed from this collection and transferred to the Sturbridge, Mass. Congregational Church records, 1736-1871, RG5194. As of June 8, 2022, the exact location of this item within the Sturbridge, Mass. Congregational Church records, 1736-1871 is unknown. This item has been digitized and may be viewed in the [digital archive](#).

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Controlled Access Headings

- Church controversies.
- Church records and registers.
- New England's Hidden Histories.
- Congregational Church (Sturbridge, Mass.)
- Separatist Congregational Church (Sturbridge, Mass.)
- Sturbridge (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.

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Bibliography

Steven, Raymond. *Highlights of 250 Years of the Congregational Society of the Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale*. Sturbridge: 1986. 17.11.1 S787.3 FedCSF

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Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances
Personal records, 1749-1762 <u>Physical Description:</u> 11 Items	
Blanchard, Sarah, 1749 <u>Digital Copies:</u> Digital Copies This personal record was digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are available to view online .	
Blanchard, Stephen, 1749 <u>Digital Copies:</u> Digital Copies This personal record was digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are available to view online .	
Collor, Hannah, 1749 <u>Digital Copies:</u> Digital Copies This personal record was digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are available to view online .	
Corey, Hannah, 1749 <u>Digital Copies:</u>	

Digital Copies

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

Corey, John, 1749

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

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Marten, Sarah, 1749

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

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

Morse, David, 1749

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

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Perry, Johnathan, 1749

Digital Copies:

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Ward, Naomi, 1762

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

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

Wood, Sarah, 1755

Digital Copies:

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