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## Watertown, Mass. West Precinct Church covenant, 1709. RG0994

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This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on June 12, 2019.

English

DACS2 - 2013

Congregational Library & Archives

14 Beacon Street

Boston, MA 02108

[info@14beacon.org](mailto:info@14beacon.org)

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

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## Table of Contents

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Summary Information .....	3
Historical Note .....	3
Scope and Contents .....	4
Administrative Information .....	4
Controlled Access Headings .....	5
Technical Requirements .....	6
Bibliography .....	6
Collection Inventory .....	6

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Congregational Library & Archives
<b>Creator:</b>	West Precinct Church (Watertown, Mass.)
<b>Title:</b>	Watertown, Mass. West Precinct Church covenant, 1709.
<b>ID:</b>	RG0994
<b>Date:</b>	1709
<b>Physical Description:</b>	1 Folder
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Abstract:</b>	In 1696 the residents of the town of Watertown, Massachusetts, voted to support two meeting houses; the West Precinct Church, was established in 1696 to serve the western section of the town. The first meeting house, a repurposed building from Newton, was assembled in 1722. In 1738 the town of Waltham was incorporated from the West Precinct of Watertown and the church was renamed to the First Parish in Waltham. In 1838 the First Parish merged with the Second Religious Society. In 1958 the First Parish merged with the First Unitarian Church to form the First Parish Church in Waltham, Universalist-Unitarian. This collection contains a manuscript copy of the 1709 version of the covenant of the West Precinct Church.

### Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Watertown, Mass. West Precinct Church covenant, 1709, RG0994.  
The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Historical Note

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In 1696 the residents of the town of Watertown, Massachusetts, voted to support two meeting houses. The First Church, which was established in 1630, became the church in the East Precinct. A new church, the West Precinct Church, was established in 1696 to serve the western section of the town, which was largely a farming community. The first physical structure to hold the parish was built in 1696. By 1722 the first church building had become unsuitable for the congregation; that year a disused building from

Newton was purchased, disassembled, and reassembled in Waltham to become the first meeting house. In 1738 the town of Waltham was incorporated from the West Precinct of Watertown and the West Precinct Church became the First Parish in Waltham. By 1767 the congregation had once again outgrown the meeting house and before the end of 1768 the second meeting house was constructed and in use.

By 1813 the First Parish in Waltham was either fully Unitarian or heavily moving towards Unitarianism. The Second Religious Society in Waltham formed in 1813, likely in response to the ecclesiastical direction of the First Parish. In 1820 this society split again with one half forming the First Congregational Church, also known as the Third Trinitarian Society, and the other half retained the name, Second Religious Society, but adopted Unitarianism. In 1838 the Second Congregational Society merged with the First Parish to become the only Unitarian congregation in Waltham. At that time the newly merged congregation built the third meeting house.

In 1933 the third meeting house was destroyed by a fire. The fourth meeting house, designed by Allen & Collens from Boston, was built on the foundation of the third meeting house. The fourth meeting house, a Classic Revival structure, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. In 1958 the First Parish merged with the First Universalist Society of Waltham to become the First Parish Church in Waltham, Universalist-Unitarian. This church continues to serve the local community today.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Scope and Contents

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This collection contains a manuscript copy of the 1709 version of the covenant of the West Precinct Church in Watertown, Massachusetts.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

Congregational Library & Archives

14 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02108  
[info@14beacon.org](mailto:info@14beacon.org)

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

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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.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Church records and registers.
- Covenants (Church polity).
- New England's Hidden Histories.
- First Parish in Waltham (Waltham, Mass.)
- Waltham (Mass.) -- Church history.
- Watertown (Mass.) -- Church history.

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## Technical Requirements

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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](#)

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## Bibliography

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"History." First Parish in Waltham. Accessed June 12, 2019. <http://www.walthamuu.org/history>.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Collection Inventory

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Title/Description	Instances
Covenant, 1709 <u>Digital Copies:</u> <b>Digital Copies</b>  These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are <a href="#">available to view online</a> .	box NEHH- folder 15 Small 1