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Yarmouth, Mass. First Congregational Church records, 1729-1888. RG5403

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Summary Information

Repository:	Congregational Library & Archives
Creator:	First Congregational Church (Yarmouth, Mass.)
Title:	Yarmouth, Mass. First Congregational Church records, 1729-1888.
ID:	RG5403
Date [inclusive]:	1729-1888
Physical Description:	0.44 Cubic Feet (1 box)
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	<p>The First Congregational Church in Yarmouth, Massachusetts, was likely established in 1639. The first minister of the church was Marmaduke Matthews and the first meeting house was located in what is today known as Ancient Cemetery. In 1716, the second meeting house was constructed close to the location of the first. The third meeting house was constructed in 1830 and the fourth, and present, edifice was constructed in 1870. Members were dismissed from the First Congregational Church in 1727 and 1840 to form the East Second Church of Yarmouth and the South Congregational Church respectively. This collection contains both vital records and administrative records. The records include church meeting minutes, financial records, ordination and installation records, membership records, baptismal records, marriage records, and records of deaths.</p>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Yarmouth, Mass. First Congregational Church records, 1729-1888, RG5403. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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Historical Note

Due to a fire in 1674 no definite records exist that date back to the founding of the First Congregational Church in Yarmouth, Massachusetts. However, the accepted date for the establishment of the First Congregational Church is 1639, shortly after the settlement of the town. The first minister of the church was Marmaduke Matthews, originally of Swansea Wales. The original meeting house was located in what is currently called Ancient Cemetery.

During the pastorate of Daniel Greenleaf, in 1716, the second meeting house was constructed close to the location of the first. 33 members of the First Congregational Church were dismissed in 1727 so that they could form a church in the newly formed east precinct of Yarmouth. The East Second Church of Yarmouth later became the First North Trinitarian Church in Dennis and is now the Dennis Union Church. In 1766, during the pastorate of Joseph Green Jr., the second meeting house was enlarged in order to accommodate the growing congregation. During Timothy Alden's pastorate, the First Congregational Church started its first Sabbath school.

By 1830, the congregation had outgrown its meeting house again and so a new edifice was erected that year in Yarmouth Port. In 1840, 64 members were dismissed so that they might form another Congregational Church in West Yarmouth. Originally called the South Congregational Church, the church is now called the West Yarmouth Congregational Church.

In the summer of 1870 the first cornerstone was laid for the fourth meeting house of the First Congregational Church in Yarmouth. This building was dedicated on November 29, 1870. The First Congregational Church continues to worship in the fourth meeting house and continues to serve the local community to this day.

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Scope and Contents

This collection contains both administrative and vital records for the First Congregational Church of Yarmouth, Massachusetts in the form of both church and parish record books. The administrative records cover topics such as pews and pew deeds, church finances, records related to ordinations and installations, meeting minutes, council results, and committee records. The vital records contain membership records for admissions and dismissions, baptismal records, marriage records, and records of deaths.

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Arrangement

This collection has been arranged in chronological order by start date.

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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

Materials were temporarily deposited for digitization to the Congregational Library & Archives by the First Congregational Church of Yarmouth in June 2019; 2019-15.

Location of Originals

Materials in this collection are held and maintained by the First Congregational Church in Yarmouth, Massachusetts.

Digital Copies

Records within this collection were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions may be accessed online through our [digital archive](#).

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, November 2021, according to DACS 2019.0.3.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Baptismal records.
- Church finance.
- Church membership.
- Church records and registers.
- Installation (clergy).
- Necrologies.
- New England's Hidden Histories.
- Ordination.
- Pews and pew rights.
- Alden, Timothy, 1736-1828
- Cogswell, Nathaniel, 1796-1874
- First Congregational Church (Yarmouth, Mass.)
- Packard, Abel K. (Abel Kingman), 1823-1903

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

Manual of the First Congregational Church, Yarmouth, Mass. Yarmouth Port: Register Steam Job Printing Establishment, 1873.

"Our History." The First Congregational Church of Yarmouth. Accessed November 17, 2021, <https://www.fccyarmouth.org/history>.

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Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances
Church records, 1729-1861	
Scope and Contents	
This volume is a register which contains lists of baptisms, admissions, dismissions, and membership lists. The volume also contains the minutes of church meetings, the minutes of minutes related to ministerial calls and the choice of deacons, and a copy of the result of an ecclesiastical council meeting called for the dismissal of Nathaniel Cogswell.	
Parish records, 1805-1888	
Scope and Contents	
This volume of parish records contains financial records and records related to parish business. The records include clerk reports, collectors reports, ministerial calls, records related to the discussion of a new church building, and general financial records. The volume	

also contains records of pews and pew deeds and an interesting record verifying the church's affiliation as something other than Congregational for tax purposes.

Church records, 1822-1850

Scope and Contents

This volume of church records, which covers the entirety of Nathaniel Cogswell's pastorate, contains records relating to the ordination of Nathaniel Cogswell, admission records, dismissal records, baptismal records, marriage records, and records of deaths.