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Brookfield, Ill. First Congregational Church records, 1894-2013. RG5583

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Congregational Library & Archives

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Summary Information

Repository:	Congregational Library & Archives
Creator:	First Congregational Church (Brookfield, Ill.)
Creator:	First Congregational Church (Grossdale, Ill.)
Title:	Brookfield, Ill. First Congregational Church records, 1894-2013.
ID:	RG5583
Date [inclusive]:	1894-2013
Physical Description:	2.58 Cubic Feet (5 boxes)
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	<p>The First Congregational Church of Brookfield, Illinois, was formally gathered on November 25th, 1894. Construction on the church building was completed in 1897. The building underwent renovations in 1907, 1919, 1938, and again in 1947. The church was expanded in 1955 to support the Sunday school and create community focused spaces. The church joined with the United Church of Christ in the early 1960s. The church dissolved in 2013; the church building continues to function as a church today. This collection contains records related to the administration and membership of the First Congregational Church. The collection also contains records from auxiliary groups, especially from the Women's Fellowship, as well as contains membership records, including membership lists and directories, and vital records.</p>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Brookfield, Ill. First Congregational Church records, 1894-2013, RG5583. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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Historical Note

The village of Grossdale, Illinois, was first settled in 1889 with the sale of lots by real estate investor Samuel Eberly Gross. The First Congregational Church was formally gathered on November 25th, 1894. Rev. J. C. Meyers became the first minister of the church in 1895; he was quickly proceeded by Rev. George H. Grannis in 1896. That same year, plans for the construction of a church building were put into motion. Construction on the church building began in March, 1897, and the dedication service for the new building was held a few months later on May 23. The village of Grossdale changed its name to Brookfield in 1905. The church building, with support from congregations in La Grange, Western Springs, and Hinsdale, underwent significant repair work in 1907 to fix the building's foundation and heating plant.

During World War I, the Men's Club presented speakers on topics related to the war effort. In 1919, the church underwent renovations to once again repair the furnace; the effort was supported by "Furnace Parties" which raised part of the cost of the renovation. A plan to merge with the Methodists in Brookfield was considered around 1920 but ultimately did not come to pass. In 1922, the church purchased a house adjacent to the church building to be used as a parsonage. Additional plots of land were purchased in 1927 to support a significant expansion of the church's facilities but this expansion never came to pass.

In 1938, the church building underwent some remodeling to support the purchase of a pipe organ in hopes that the organ music would refresh and improve worship services. Following the purchase and installation of the organ, the church underwent additional renovations to raise the church, create a recreational center, and redecorate both the interior and exterior of the church. 1938 also saw the formation of the church's Friendship Club. In 1943, the Ladies Aid Society and the Amafeurasia, a missionary group, merged to form the church's Women's Fellowship. During World War II, the church's Social Action Committee published a the "Bits o' News" newsletter which facilitated connections between the parish and those from the church serving during the war.

Another significant renovation took place in 1947, this time with the purpose of making the building "the most useful and architecturally beautiful building in Brookfield." This once again saw the building's exterior redone and the interior refurbished. The plan to expand the church was revisited again in 1955 with a proposal to build a new parsonage, remove the old parsonage, and build a new wing of the church dedicated to the Sunday School which was facing significant crowding issues. Unlike the 1927 plan, these expansions came to fruition.

The church continued to serve the Brookfield community in the decades after. It joined the United Church of Christ in the early 1960s. The church dissolved in 2013 with its final service held on May 19th. The Women's Fellowship continued to exist alongside the church until the church's dissolution. The church building was sold and continues to function as a church today.

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Scope and Contents

This collection contains records related to the administration and membership of the First Congregational Church in Brookfield, Illinois. The majority of the records are administrative in nature and include meeting minutes for the church council and trustees. The collection also contains records from auxiliary groups, especially from the Women's Fellowship (also called the Dorcas Chapter), and committees of the church, such as the building renovation committee and the social action committee. The collection also contains a small amount of records related to the activities of the church's Sunday school. The collection also contains membership records, including membership lists and directories, and vital records such as baptismal records, marriage records, and necrologies.

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Arrangement

Materials in this collection have been arranged into the three topical series listed below. Materials within each series have been arranged into chronological order by start date.

Series 1: Administrative records, 1894-2013

Series 2: Committee and auxiliary group records, 1894-1993

Series 3: Membership records, 1940-2012

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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

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.

Acquisition Information

Materials were donated to the Congregational Library & Archives by the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ in December 2024; accession number 2024-46.

Custodial History

Materials in this collection were given to the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ, likely at the time of the church's closing. There is no further documentation on how the materials arrived at the Illinois Conference.

Processing Information

This collection was processed by Zachary Bodnar, January 2026, according to the rules of Describing Archives: A Content Standard.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Baptismal records.
- Church membership.
- Church records and registers.
- Marriage records.
- Necrologies.
- Scrapbooks.
- Soldiers -- United States -- Correspondence.
- Women -- Societies and clubs.
- Brookfield (Ill.) -- Church history.
- First Congregational Church (Brookfield, Ill.)

- First Congregational Church (Grossdale, Ill.)
- Grossdale (Ill.) -- Church history.

Collection Inventory

Administrative records, 1894-2013

Scope and Contents

This series contains records related to the administrative functions of the church. This series includes meeting minutes for the church council and trustees, financial records, constitutions, and other church records.

Title/Description	Instances	
Minute book, 1894-1907	box 3	volume 1
Minute book, 1907-1914	box 1	volume 2
Miscellaneous financial records and correspondence, 1908	box 2	folder 1
Minute book, 1915-1923	box 1	volume 3
Miscellaneous church and membership records, 1919-1922	box 2	folder 2
Church records, 1923-1943	box 1	volume 4
Minute book, 1944-1957	box 3	volume 3
Church records, 1945-1958	box 1	volume 5
Trustee records, 1954-1959	box 1	volume 10
Miscellaneous church records, 1957	box 2	folder 3
Council meeting minutes, 1958-1965	box 1	volume 6
Constitutions, 1959, 1965	box 2	folder 4
Trustee records, 1960-1969	box 1	volume 11
Church records, 1961-1965	box 2	folder 5
Council meeting minutes, 1966-1969	box 1	volume 7
Council meeting minutes, 1970-1974	box 1	volume 8
Council meeting minutes, 1974-1975	box 1	volume 9
Council meeting minutes, 1975-1978	box 4	volume 1
Council meeting minutes, 1978-1982	box 1	folder 1
Council meeting minutes, 1982-1985	box 4	volume 2
Council meeting minutes, 1985-1989	box 4	volume 3
Council meeting minutes, 1989-1991		

	box 4	volume 4
Council meeting minutes and records, 2004-2007	box 1	folder 2
Council meeting minutes and records, 2011-2013	box 2	folder 6

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Committee and auxiliary group records, 1894-1993

Scope and Contents

This series contains records from both auxiliary groups and committees of the church. The series includes women's fellowship records, a social action committee scrapbook related to soldiers in World War II, meeting minutes for the building renovation committee, and records from the church's Sunday school.

Title/Description	Instances	
History of the women's fellowship, 1894-1945	box 2	folder 7
History of the women's fellowship, 1894-1972	box 1	volume 1
Friendship club records, 1938-1946	box 2	folder 8
Sunday school records, 1939-1945	box 3	volume 2
Social action committee World War II scrapbook, 1942-1944	box 5	folder 2
Social action committee World War II loose materials, 1943-1945	box 5	folder 1
Miscellaneous Sunday school records, 1945-1946	box 2	folder 9
Congregational players scrapbook, 1948, undated	box 5	folder 3
Stewardship and benevolence committee records, 1958-1988	box 1	volume 12
Women's fellowship records, 1965	box 2	folder 10
Women's fellowship events and newsletters, 1968	box 2	folder 11
Women's fellowship constitution and by-laws, 1968	box 2	folder 12
Dorcas chapter records, 1968-1993	box 3	volume 4
Women's fellowship yearbook, 1969-1971	box 2	folder 13
Building renovation committee records, 1970	box 2	folder 14

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Membership records, 1940-2012

Scope and Contents

This series contains records related to the membership of the church. The series includes yearbooks and directories, baptismal records, marriage records, transfer records, membership lists, and necrologies.

Title/Description	Instances	
Yearbook and directory, 1940, 1969-1980, undated	box 2	folder 15
Church membership, 1953-2012	box 1	volume 13
Marriage records, 1988-2005	box 2	folder 21
Transfers and dismissions, 1992-2011	box 2	folder 16
Baptismal records, 1993-2012	box 2	folder 17
New members, 1994-2009	box 2	folder 18
Necrologies, 1995-2011	box 2	folder 19
In memoriams, 1997-2012	box 2	folder 20

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