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## **Chelsea, Mass. First Congregational Church records, 1841-2012. RG5514**

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Congregational Library & Archives

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

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## Summary Information

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**Repository:** Congregational Library & Archives

**Creator:** First Congregational Church of Chelsea (Chelsea, Mass.)

**Creator:** Winnisimmet Congregational Church (Chelsea, Mass.)

**Creator:** Central Congregational Church (Chelsea, Mass.)

**Creator:** Plymouth Congregational Church (Chelsea, Mass.)

**Creator:** Third Congregational Church (Chelsea, Mass.)

**Title:** Chelsea, Mass. First Congregational Church records, 1841-2012.

**ID:** RG5514

**Date [inclusive]:** 1841-2012

**Physical Description:** 5.22 Cubic Feet (6 boxes, 2 flat files)

**Language of the Material:** English .

**Abstract:** The First Congregational Church in Chelsea began as the Winnisimmet Congregational Church in Chelsea, MA in 1841 with Rev. Isaac P. Langworthy as pastor. In 1851, the church split into the Broadway Congregational Church which renamed itself as the Central Congregational Church in 1871, and the Winnisimmet Congregational Church which built a new edifice on Chestnut St in 1852. In 1874, the Winnisimmet Church changed its name to the First Congregational Church and in 1877, a group split off to form the Third Congregational Church in Chelsea. In 1905, the First and Third Churches united to become the First Congregational Church in Chelsea and built a new building on County Rd in 1906. In 1946, the Central Church closed and remerged with First Church. After declining membership and funds in the 2000s, the church sold the County Rd building to the city of Chelsea, but the members of the church remain active in the community even without their own building. This collection depicts the administration, history, and activities of the First Congregational Church in Chelsea with the records containing programs, annual reports, financial records, member records, committee minutes and records, correspondence, pastoral records, photographs, pamphlets, ledgers, and blueprints.

## Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Chelsea, Mass. First Congregational Church records, 1841-2012, RG5514. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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## Historical Note

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The First Congregational Church in Chelsea, MA began as the Winnisimmet Congregational Church in 1841 with a sabbath school, ladies benevolent society, and ordination of its first pastor, Isaac P. Langworthy being organized in the same year. The church grew rapidly in its first decade to the point that it decided to colonize itself with Rev. Langworthy, a group of members, the church records, and the name moving to a new building in 1851 while the remaining members became the Broadway Congregational Church. The Broadway Church later changed its name to the Central Congregational Church in Chelsea, MA in 1871. The members that moved and remained as part of the Winnisimmet Church built the Chestnut St edifice in 1852 with the dedication in May 1852. In 1857, some members split from the church to form the Plymouth Congregational Church which only lasted until 1859. In 1858, the second pastor, Rev. Albert H. Plumb took over the pulpit from Rev. Langworthy. In 1874, the name of the church changed to First Congregational Church in Chelsea, but it was often still known colloquially as the Chestnut St church. In 1877, another group of members left to form the Third Congregational Church in Chelsea. However, changing populations and resources needed to support their respective congregations caused the First and Third Churches to work closely together after 1900 until they decided to officially unite in 1905 as one church under the name First Congregational Church in Chelsea with services continuing in Third Church's Reynolds Ave building. The last services in First Church's Chestnut St building were held in June 1905 before the building was sold. In 1906, the first pastor of the united church, Rev. Charles N. Thorp, was called and a new church was built on County Rd with a dedication in 1907 to accommodate the growing membership.

In 1946, the Central Congregational Church in Chelsea closed with many of its members and a large portion of its funds going to the First Congregational Church. In 1961, the church voted to join the United Church of Christ. As the 20th century continued, the church grew and changed according to the changes in the Chelsea community before seeing a decline in membership and funds in the beginning of the 21st century. In 2024, the church sold the County Rd building to the city of Chelsea for use by the school district. The current status of the church is ambiguous given the lack of building for regular services and activities, but the members remain active in the Chelsea community.

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## Scope and Contents

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This collection contains records depicting the administration, history, and activities of the First Congregational Church in Chelsea, MA. The records include annual reports, programs, newsletters, manuals, directories, member transfers, committee minutes and records, Sunday school records, women's union records, correspondence, pastor and pastoral supply records, financial records, and legal records. The collection contains ledgers, photographs, posters, blueprints, pamphlets, member cards, and notebooks.

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## Arrangement

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This collection is arranged into four series with series 4: Administration and history, 1841-2012 being furthered arranged into three subseries. The series and subseries are arranged chronologically by start date.

**Series 1:**Auxiliary groups, 1841-2010

**Series 2:**Member records, 1859-1975

**Series 3:**Publications, 1878-1971

**Series 4:**Administration and history, 1841-2012

*Subseries 1:*Annual reports, 1874-1975

*Subseries 2:*Board and committee records, 1851-2002

*Subseries 3:*Pastoral relations, 1851-1971

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## Administrative Information

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### 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. The library reserves the right to restrict access to identifying information.

### 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 First Congregational Church in Chelsea, MA in July 2024; 2024-19.

### Processing Information

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

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Corporate minutes.

- Church finance.
- Photographs.
- Women -- Religious life.
- Programs
- Church correspondence.
- Clergy -- Appointment, call, and election.
- Church management.
- Church management--Handbooks, manuals, etc.
- Soldiers -- Photographs
- First Congregational Church of Chelsea (Chelsea, Mass.)
- Winnisimmet Congregational Church (Chelsea, Mass.)
- Central Congregational Church (Chelsea, Mass.)
- Broadway Congregational Church (Chelsea, Mass.)
- Plymouth Congregational Church (Chelsea, Mass.)
- Third Congregational Church (Chelsea, Mass.)
- Langworthy, Isaac P. (Isaac Pendleton), 1806-1888
- Plumb, Albert H. (Albert Hale) (1829-1907)
- Houghton, Ross C.
- Sahakian, William S.

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## Collection Inventory

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### Auxiliary groups, 1841-2010

#### Scope and Contents

This series contains records from the various groups and organizations at First Congregational Church including the women's union, sabbath school, christian endeavor, and mother's club. The records include annual reports, minutes, member lists, record books, and other documents.

Title/Description	Instances	
Ladies benevolent society annual reports, minutes, and members, 1841-1852	box 1	folder 1
Sabbath school annual reports and minutes, 1878-1900	box 1	folder 2
Church school miscellaneous, 1907-1949	box 1	folder 3
Christian endeavor society members and minutes, 1938-1951	box 1	folder 4
Mother's club minutes, 1958-1977	box 1	folder 5
Church school superintendent resignation, 1963	box 1	folder 6
Mother's club minutes, 1977-1980	box 1	folder 7
Winnisimmet union minutes, 1979-1991	box 1	folder 8
Winnisimmet union minutes, 1991-2010	box 1	folder 9

Winnisimmet union church fair planning, 2001-2008                      box 1                      folder 10

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## Member records, 1859-1975

### Scope and Contents

This series includes vital statistics for the members of First Congregational Church including member cards, membership transfers, baptisms, and addresses.

Title/Description	Instances	
Member transfers, 1859-1949	box 4	folder 1
Former member cards, 1905-1965	box 6	folder 1
Member transfers, 1909-1975	box 1	folder 11
Address list, 1910	box 1	folder 12
Baptism records, 1912-1942	box 4	folder 2
Member records, 1917-1973	box 1	folder 13
Baptisms by Rev. Hickox, 1942-1947	box 1	folder 14

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## Publications, 1878-1971

### Scope and Contents

This series includes records published by or for the church including manuals, directory and annual record pamphlets, programs, newsletters, and event cards.

Title/Description	Instances	
Winnisimmet church annual record and directory pamphlets, 1872-1874	box 6	folder 2
Annual record and directory pamphlets, 1874-1900	box 6	folder 3
First and third church manuals, 1878-1912	box 1	folder 15
Third church bulletins and event cards, 1885-1905	box 1	folder 16
Central church annual record and directory pamphlet, 1898	box 6	folder 4
Third church directory, 1905	box 6	folder 5
Programs, 1906-1908	box 1	folder 17
Programs, 1909-1910	box 1	folder 18
Programs, 1911	box 1	folder 19

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Programs, 1912	box 1	folder 20
Programs, 1913	box 1	folder 21
Programs, 1914	box 1	folder 22
Programs, 1915	box 1	folder 23
Programs, 1916	box 1	folder 24
Programs, 1917	box 1	folder 25
Programs, 1918	box 1	folder 26
Programs, 1919	box 1	folder 27
Programs, 1920	box 1	folder 28
Programs, 1921	box 1	folder 29
Programs, 1922	box 1	folder 30
Programs, 1923	box 1	folder 31
Programs, 1924	box 1	folder 32
Programs, 1925	box 1	folder 33
Programs, 1926	box 4	folder 3
Programs, 1927	box 4	folder 4
Programs, 1928	box 1	folder 34
Programs, 1929	box 1	folder 35
Programs, 1930	box 1	folder 36
Programs, 1931	box 1	folder 37
Programs, 1932	box 1	folder 38
Programs, 1933	box 2	folder 1
Programs, 1934	box 2	folder 2
Programs, 1935	box 2	folder 3
Programs, 1936	box 2	folder 4
Programs, 1937	box 2	folder 5
Programs, 1938	box 2	folder 6
Programs, 1939	box 2	folder 7
Programs, 1940	box 2	folder 8
Programs, 1941	box 2	folder 9
Programs, 1942	box 2	folder 10
Programs, 1943	box 2	folder 11

Programs, 1944	box 2	folder 12
Programs, 1945	box 2	folder 13
Programs, 1946	box 2	folder 14
Programs, 1947	box 2	folder 15
Programs, 1948	box 2	folder 16
Programs, 1949-1951	box 2	folder 17
Programs, 1955-1971	box 2	folder 18
Newsletters, 1956-1961	box 2	folder 19

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## Administration and history, 1841-2012

### Scope and Contents

This series contains records relating to the administration and history of the church including annual reports, pastoral relations, and the church's administrative boards and committees. The records include reports, minutes, correspondence, invitations, resumes, record books, sermons, photos, posters and wall hangings, honor rolls, plans, financial records, legal records, histories, yearbook reports, anniversary records, military service photos from WWII, treasurer's and clerk's records, and publicity.

## Annual reports, 1874-1975

### Scope and Contents

This subseries contains handwritten and printed annual reports from various groups and persons within the church presented at the annual meeting.

Title/Description	Instances	
Annual reports, 1874-1878	box 4	folder 5
Annual reports, 1909-1910	box 4	folder 6
Annual reports, 1910-1911	box 4	folder 7
Annual reports, 1911-1912	box 4	folder 8
Annual reports, 1912-1913	box 4	folder 9
Annual reports, 1913-1914	box 2	folder 20
Annual reports, 1914-1915	box 2	folder 21
Annual reports, 1915-1916	box 2	folder 22
Annual reports, 1916-1917	box 4	folder 10
Annual reports, 1917-1918	box 4	folder 11
Annual reports, 1918-1919	box 2	folder 23

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Annual reports, 1919-1920	box 2	folder 24
Annual reports, 1920-1921	box 2	folder 25
Annual reports, 1921-1922	box 4	folder 12
Annual reports, 1922-1923	box 2	folder 26
Annual reports, 1923-1924	box 2	folder 27
Annual reports, 1924-1925	box 2	folder 28
Annual reports, 1925-1929	box 2	folder 29
Annual reports, 1926-1927	box 2	folder 30
Annual reports, 1929-1930	box 2	folder 31
Annual reports, 1930-1931	box 4	folder 13
Annual reports, 1931-1932	box 2	folder 32
Annual reports, 1932-1933	box 2	folder 33
Annual reports, 1933-1934	box 2	folder 34
Annual reports, 1934-1935	box 2	folder 35
Annual reports, 1935-1936	box 2	folder 36
Annual reports, 1936-1937	box 2	folder 37
Annual reports, 1937-1938	box 2	folder 38
Annual reports, 1938-1939	box 2	folder 39
Annual reports, 1939-1940	box 2	folder 40
Annual reports, 1940-1941	box 2	folder 41
Annual reports, 1941-1942	box 2	folder 42
Annual reports, 1942-1943	box 2	folder 43
Annual reports, 1943-1944	box 2	folder 44
Annual reports, 1944-1945	box 2	folder 45
Annual reports, 1945-1946	box 2	folder 46
Annual reports, 1946-1947	box 2	folder 47
Annual reports, 1947-1948	box 2	folder 48
Annual reports, 1948-1949	box 2	folder 49
Annual reports, 1952-1954	box 2	folder 50
Annual reports, 1954-1955	box 2	folder 51
Annual reports, 1955-1956	box 2	folder 52
Annual reports, 1956-1957	box 2	folder 53

Annual reports, 1957-1958	box 2	folder 54
Annual reports, 1958-1959	box 2	folder 55
Annual reports, 1959-1960	box 2	folder 56
Annual reports, 1960-1961	box 2	folder 57
Annual reports, 1961-1962	box 2	folder 58
Annual reports, 1962-1963	box 2	folder 59
Annual reports, 1963-1964	box 2	folder 60
Annual reports, 1964-1965	box 2	folder 61
Annual reports, 1965-1966	box 4	folder 14
Annual reports, 1966-1975	box 2	folder 62

## Board and committee records, 1851-2002

### Scope and Contents

This subseries contains records from various boards and committees within the church including the advisory board, prudential committee which was renamed the trustees in 1969, the board of deacons, the building committee, the church committee, and the finance committee. The records include minutes, reports, correspondence, record books, and other related documents.

Title/Description	Instances	
Building committee minutes, 1851	box 2	folder 63
Third church church committee, 1887-1898	box 2	folder 64
Advisory board minutes, 1889-1891	box 3	folder 1
Deacons' minutes and records, 1897-1911	box 3	folder 2
Advisory board minutes, 1899-1901	box 3	folder 3
Prudential committee minutes, 1901-1920	box 3	folder 4
Deacons' election and terms, 1905-1911	box 3	folder 5
Prudential committee minutes, 1914-1938	box 5	folder 7

#### Separated Materials:

#### **Separated Materials**

Records were removed from this folder and placed into Prudential committee records, 1915-1937 for preservation purposes.

Prudential committee records, 1915-1937	box 3	folder 6
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#### Separated Materials:

## Separated Materials

These records were removed from Prudential committee minutes, 1914-1938 for preservation purposes.

Prudential committee minutes, 1926-1953	box 3	folder 7
Trustees' annual fund reports, 1932-2000	box 3	folder 8
Prudential committee reports, minutes, and correspondence, 1940-1953	box 3	folder 9
Advisory board minutes, 1951-1957	box 3	folder 10
Trustees' minutes, 1953-1982	box 3	folder 11-12
Finance committee appeals and offerings, 1965-1968	box 4	folder 15
Finance committee appeals and offerings, 1968-1984	box 4	folder 16
Trustees' minutes, 1982-2002	box 3	folder 13

## Pastoral relations, 1851-1971

### Scope and Contents

This subseries contains records related to the pastors of the church, the pastoral supply committee, and the ecclesiastical councils involving the pastors. The records include correspondence, resumes, invitations, reports, sermons, and other documents.

Title/Description	Instances	
Ecclesiastical councils, 1851-1919	box 3	folder 14
Rev. Isaac Langworthy, 1858	box 3	folder 15
Rev. Albert Plumb, 1858-1865	box 3	folder 16
Rev. A. J. Titsworth, 1878	box 3	folder 17
Rev. Ross Houghton, 1901-1902	box 4	folder 17
Rev. Charles Thorp, 1912-1920	box 4	folder 18
Rev. John Hastings Quint, 1913-1942	box 4	folder 19
Pastor candidate resumes, 1937-1942	box 3	folder 18
Rev. Edward Hickox, 1942-1947	box 3	folder 20
Pastoral supply report and correspondence, 1942-1948	box 3	folder 19
Rev. William Rowlands, 1948-1955	box 3	folder 21
Rev. Rowlands' sermon, 1951	box 3	folder 22
Rev. William Sahakian, 1955-1958	box 3	folder 23
Rev. Gerald Ciarcia, 1958-1963	box 3	folder 24
Rev. Harold Woodbury, 1970-1971		

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	box 3	folder 25
Building photos, undated	box 3	folder 26
Church maintenance and keys, undated	box 3	folder 27
Member photos, undated	box 3	folder 28
Record of quartettes, undated	box 3	folder 29
Reports, undated	box 3	folder 30
Winnisimmet chapel dedication, 1841	box 5	folder 1
Miscellaneous, 1847-1942	box 3	folder 31
Washington Ave naming, 1850-1907	box 3	folder 32
Church history, 1852-1908	box 3	folder 33
Plymouth church organization and installation, 1857	box 4	folder 20
Correspondence, 1876-1971	box 3	folder 34
Third church letters and financial records, 1878-1905	box 3	folder 35
Building photos, 1878-1908	box 5	folder 3
Central church organization, 1892	box 5	folder 4
Third church clerk's records, 1894-1902	box 3	folder 36
Third church budgets, 1897-1903	box 3	folder 37
Special event display, 1905-1941	box 5	folder 6
Building renovation and maintenance, 1906-1943	box 3	folder 38
Pledges and financial records, 1907-1944	box 3	folder 39
Photos and honor roll, 1908-1929	folder 2	
Photos and plans, 1908-1960	folder 8	
Central church's treasurer's book, 1909-1931	box 5	folder 8
Government correspondence, 1910-1943	box 3	folder 40
Yearbook reports, 1911-1950	box 3	folder 41
Church minutes, 1912-1955	box 4	folder 21
Estates, legacies, and restricted funds, 1914-1961	box 4	folder 22
Property committee rules and janitor duties, 1928-1955	box 3	folder 42
Brotherhood photo, 1930	box 5	folder 2
Treasurer's reports, 1931-1973	box 3	folder 43
Library record, 1933-1949	box 4	folder 23
Treasurer's correspondence and records, 1935-1950	box 3	folder 44

Military service photos, circa 1940s	box 3	folder 45
Budget, 1940-1974	box 4	folder 24
100th anniversary, 1941	box 3	folder 46
Officer ballots, 1942-1947	box 3	folder 47
Central church fund disposition, 1946	box 4	folder 25
Minnie Chapin appreciation, 1949	box 3	folder 48
Plans, 1951	box 5	folder 5
Church minutes, 1955-1982	box 4	folder 26
50th anniversary rededication, 1957	box 3	folder 49
Alumni banquet photos and labels, 1960	box 3	folder 50
Publicity, 1962-1969	box 3	folder 51
By-laws, 1968	box 3	folder 52
Yearbook report and preparation , 1970-1971	box 3	folder 53
Financial correspondence, 1972-1973	box 3	folder 54
Financial documents, 1975-1995	box 4	folder 27
75th anniversary , 1982	box 3	folder 55
Church minutes and reports, 1982-2012	box 4	folder 28
150th anniversary, 1991	box 3	folder 56
Financial documents, 1991-1994	box 4	folder 29
Financial documents, 1993-1996	box 4	folder 30
Financial documents, 1993-2001	box 4	folder 31
Financial documents, 1995-1997	box 4	folder 32
Financial documents, 1996-1998	box 4	folder 33
Financial documents, 1998-2000	box 4	folder 34

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