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Boston, Mass. Bowdoin Street Church records, 1824-1867. RG0806

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Congregational Library & Archives

14 Beacon Street

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Business Number: 617-523-0470

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Summary Information

Repository:	Congregational Library & Archives
Creator:	Bowdoin Street Church (Boston, Mass.)
Creator:	Hanover Street Church (Boston, Mass.)
Title:	Boston, Mass. Bowdoin Street Church records, 1824-1867.
ID:	RG0806
Date [inclusive]:	1824-1867
Physical Description:	1.31 Cubic Feet (2 boxes)
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	Hanover Street Church was dedicated and opened its doors on March 1st, 1826. After the original meetinghouse burned down in 1830, it was moved to Beacon Hill and reopened as the Bowdoin Street Church on May 15th, 1831. Due to declining membership, the meetinghouse was put up for auction on December 13th, 1861. By June 17th, 1863, it had sold to the Church of the Advent and the Bowdoin Street Church was dissolved. This collection contains records, documents, and correspondence pertaining to the parish and members of the Bowdoin Street Church. It includes articles of faith, financial records, meeting minutes, ministerial records, member directories and memoranda, records of applicants, admissions, and dismissions, examining committee notes, and correspondence from members and other Boston area churches.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Boston, Mass. Bowdoin Street Church records, 1824-1867, RG0806. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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Historical Note

In January 1825, members of Old South, Park Street, and Union Churches met to plan a meetinghouse to serve the Northern section of Boston. This meetinghouse came to be Hanover Street Church, which was dedicated and opened its doors on March 1st, 1826. Reverend Lyman Beecher was installed as pastor on the 21st of that month, after having formerly worked assisting the pastors of Old South, Park Street, and Union Churches.

In 1830, Henry Ward Beecher was admitted to be a member of the church. On February 1st of that same year, the original meeting house burned down. It was decided to move the church from the North End to Beacon Hill, leading to the opening of the house of worship for the Bowdoin Street Church on May 15th, 1831. On September 26th, 1832, Reverend Lyman Beecher was dismissed from his position as pastor after answering the call to take charge of Lane Theological Seminary in Ohio. That same day, Reverend Hubbard Winslow was installed in his place.

Reverend Edwin Johnson was installed as pastor in June 1859. He served at Bowdoin Street Church until his resignation in September 1861 after declines in membership led him to look elsewhere. He then answered the call to serve Hammond Street Church in Bangor, Maine. On December 13th of that year, the meetinghouse of the church was put up for sale in an auction.

By June 17th, 1863, the meetinghouse was sold to the Church of the Advent and the Bowdoin Street Church was dissolved. In 1883, it was sold to the monastic order known as the Society of St. John the Evangelist and became the Mission Church of St. John the Evangelist. Since 1985, it has served as a Parish Church in the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

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Scope and Contents

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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. Collection Boston, Mass. Hanover Street Church records, 1825-1826, 1832, RG4853 has been merged into this collection, which also has no acquisition information.

Processing Information

This collection was processed by Mary Morgan, July 1981; reprocessed by Lisa Plato, October 1996; reprocessed by Adrianna Keller-Wyman, March 2026, according to the rules of Describing Archives: A Content Standard.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Church closures
- Church committees
- Church correspondence.
- Church finance.
- Church membership.
- Church records and registers.
- Clergy -- Appointment, call, and election.
- Legal documents.
- American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions
- Beecher, Lyman, 1775-1863
- Boston (Mass.) -- Church history.
- Bowdoin Street Church (Boston, Mass.)
- Hanover Street Church (Boston, Mass.)
- Johnson, Edwin, 1826-1883

Collection Inventory

Administrative records, 1825-1863

Physical Description: 2 Volumes

Physical Description: 14 Folders

Scope and Contents

This series contains administrative records from Bowdoin Street Church. These include articles of faith, financial records, meeting minutes, ministerial records, and documents relating to the administration, founding, and function of the church.

Title/Description	Instances	
Hanover st church founding records, 1825-1826 <u>Physical Description</u> : 1 Folder	box 1	folder 26
Articles of faith, 1825-1828, 1832-1861	box 2	volume 1
Rev. Lyman Beecher installation and resignation, 1826, 1832 <u>Physical Description</u> : 1 Folder	box 1	folder 27
Financial collection for ABCFM, 1835, 1847-1858	box 1	folder 15
Bowdoin st church documents, 1846	box 2	volume 2
Receipts, 1854-1862	box 1	folder 14

Standing committee rules, 1856	box 1	folder 18
App for funds, 1858	box 1	folder 16
Reverend E.R. Webb declining call, 1858	box 1	folder 19
Reverend Edwin Johnson installation and resignation, 1859-1861	box 1	folder 20
Home mission receipts including ladies of Bowdoin st church, 1861	box 1	folder 17
Sale of property, 1861	box 1	folder 21
Meeting minutes for supplying pulpit, 1861	box 1	folder 22
Notes, meeting minutes, reports, 1861-1863	box 1	folder 23
Obits for Salome Keep and Lyman Beecher, 1863	box 1	folder 24
Sunday school teacher's story, undated	box 1	folder 25

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Membership records, 1824-1864

Physical Description: 4 Folders

Physical Description: 12 Volumes

Scope and Contents

This series contains records and documents related to membership from Bowdoin Street Church. This includes member directories, records of applicants, admissions, and dismissions, and a memoranda with index. Also included is an assortment of examining committee notes on applicants for membership, spanning 1824-1863.

Title/Description	Instances	
Examining committee , 1824-1827	box 1	folder 1
Applicants for membership, 1825-1860	box 1	volume 3
Memoranda of members part A, 1825-1863	box 1	volume 1
Memoranda of members part B: index, 1825-1863	box 1	volume 2
Examining committee, 1828-1831	box 1	folder 2
Examining committee, 1831-1837, undated	box 1	folder 3
Examining committee, 1833-1837	box 1	volume 9
Examining committee, 1837-1842	box 1	volume 10
Examining committee, 1842-1860	box 1	volume 11
Membership directory, 1843	box 1	volume 4
Membership directory, 1847-1849	box 1	volume 5

Examining committee and membership related forms, 1854-1855, undated	box 1	folder 4
Membership records, 1856-1861	box 1	volume 6
Admissions and dismissions, 1856-1864	box 1	volume 8
Examining committee, 1860-1863	box 1	volume 12
Membership records, 1861-1862	box 1	volume 7

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Correspondence, 1852-1867

Physical Description: 9 Folders

Scope and Contents

This series contains correspondence to and from the Bowdoin Street Church, much of which is in regard to the 1863 circular announcing the forthcoming closure of the church. Included is the 1863 circular, correspondence from members, and letters missive and other correspondence from churches in the Boston area.

Title/Description	Instances	
Member correspondence, A-D, 1855-1866	box 1	folder 5
Member correspondence, E-H, 1855-1866	box 1	folder 6
Member correspondence, J-M, 1852-1866	box 1	folder 7
Member correspondence, N-T, 1855-1867	box 1	folder 8
Member correspondence, U-Z, 1856-1866	box 1	folder 9
Letters missive from Boston area churches, 1856-1861	box 1	folder 11
Other correspondence from Boston area churches, 1857-1862	box 1	folder 12
Misc. correspondence, 1858-1862	box 1	folder 13
Member transfer circular, 1863	box 1	folder 10

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