Records of the Second Congregational Church, South Deerfield, Mass., 1818-2016
PVMA Library

Scope and Content Note:

The Second Parish church in the village of Bloody Brook, now known as South Deerfield, was founded in 1818 as the “Second Parish Congregational Church of Deerfield” after obtaining legislative approval. Since the 1780s, residents in the southern half of the town of Deerfield had been demanding an alternative to traveling north some 6 miles to worship in the village of Deerfield, or crossing the Connecticut River to the church in Sunderland, which many joined in 1808 after a theological rift in the First Parish Church.

A school house served as a meeting place before the construction of a church building in 1821. That building was moved to its present location on North Main St. in 1848. Internal family disputes within the congregation beginning in 1844 led to seven families leaving the church in 1848. They formed the Orthodox Congregational Church of South Deerfield, also known as the Monument Church, as the meetinghouse was erected just east of Bloody Brook monument. The two churches operated independently until 1865, when members of both congregations voted to re-unite. The newly formed Congregational Church of South Deerfield was enlarged to take the combined congregations. Later buildings, including a chapel across the street, a parish house for the minister, and additions to the main meetinghouse followed. The last service to be performed in the South Deerfield Congregational Church was held in January 2017, just shy of its 200th anniversary.

The Monument Church stood idle for several years, but was sold to the Catholic diocese in 1871 and came to serve a predominantly Irish congregation. The church was subsequently moved closer to the village in 1891, where it ultimately became the home of St. James Roman Catholic church. Saint James and the adjacent parish house were sold in 2008 and are now in private hands.

The church records encompass all aspects of the Church’s functions. These include Sabbath school, ministry, council minutes, orders of worship, records of births and baptisms, annual reports, cultural events, youth groups, financial affairs, and membership records. It is important to keep in mind when utilizing the records that prior to 1891, before the church was incorporated as a legal entity under Massachusetts law, two entities were responsible for the church as a whole: the church as a functioning congregation was led by the minister, deacons, standing committee and various lesser committees. These offices were held by individuals who had been admitted to the church after making a formal profession of their faith. They ran the services, engaged in missionary work, established rules and carried out church discipline. Many residents of South Deerfield attended the Congregational Church, but were not formal members. All financial matters were handled by a separate Congregational Parish Society that was responsible for maintaining the physical structures – meetinghouse, horse sheds, parsonage, etc. The Parish Society paid the minister, custodian, bell ringer, repaired the facilities and approved all other expenditures. The records of both the church and the parish...
society were a gift of the Legacy Committee of the Congregational Church of South Deerfield in December 2016.

**Container List:**


Vol. V. Records of the Congregational Church of South Deerfield – Commencing with a meeting to incorporate, May 14, 1891 – October 27, 1910

Vol. VI. Records of the Congregational Church of South Deerfield – Commencing with the annual meeting, December 29, 1910 – December 31, 1925

Vol. VII. Records of the Congregational Church of South Deerfield, January 1926 – January 2, 1949

Vol. VIII. Minutes of the Church Council, June 24, 1954 – November 22, 1966


"Second Congregational Parish Book. No. 2nd. Record of Parish Deeds, 1821" (bound vol.)

"Records of Parish Deeds, Pews, 1848-1856" (bound vol.)

"Parish Records, Vol. II, April 1870-May 1891" (bound vol.)

"Board of Deacons Chairperson's Handbook"

"Getting to Know You," columns, from The Lamplighter, 1995-2004, with index

"Our Church Guests," register, 1958-1972

Sabbath School library records, 1887-1902. In Peloubet's Complete Sunday School Library Register

"Demographic Study for the Congregational Church of South Deerfield, Mass., June 2001"
Box 1: Records of the Orthodox Congregational Society (Monument Church), S. Deerfield:
Fol. 1: Deed and correspondence, 1866; 1879
Record book of the Orthodox Congregational Society, S. Deerfield, Oct. 1848-March 1864 (1 bound vol.)
"Records of the Monument Church," 1848-1860 with later lists of members, funerals, baptisms, etc.; 1861-62 (2 bound vols.)

Records of the Second Congregational Church, S. Deerfield:
Fol. 1: Warrants and votes, 1827
Fol. 2: Petitions, proposals, 1817; undated
Fol. 3: Financial records, 1829-1832 and undated
Fol. 4: Building committee account book, 1848; land deed, 1856
Fol. 5: Sunday school, 1890; undated
Fol. 6: Women’s Missionary Society meeting book, 1936-1941
Fol. 7: Miscellaneous, 1877-1979
Record book of the Sabbath School Association, Oct. 1867-Dec. 1881 (1 bound vol.)

Box 2: Fol. 1: Adult Study
   Fol. 2: Annual meetings - announcements, minutes, etc.
   Fol. 3: Board of Deacons
   Fol. 4: Building Committee
   Fol. 5: Bylaws
   Fol. 6: Church attendance
   Fol. 7: Church closure
   Fol. 8: Church Council
   Fol. 9: Church Council meeting highlights
   Fol. 11: Church facilities, use of
   Fol. 12: Church history
   Fol. 12: Church school
   Fol. 13: Church yearbook reports
   Fol. 14: Committees (misc.)
   Fol. 15: Conferences, workshops, events
   Fol. 16: Confirmation
   Fol. 17: Correspondence, 1949-1985
   Fol. 18: Correspondence, 1986-2007 and undated

Box 3: Fol. 1: Deacons meetings
   Fol. 2: Death & dying
   Fol. 3: Finances
   Fol. 4: Franklin Assoc., Mass. Conference of Churches
   Fol. 5: Franklin Co., Senior Services lawsuit
   Fol. 6: Fund raising
   Fol. 7: General Council of Congregational Christian Churches
   Fol. 8: "Kitchen Theology"
   Fol. 9: Ladies Aid Society
   Fol. 10: Mass. Conference Worship Commission
   Fol. 11: Membership
   Fol. 12: Memorial Funds/Gifts, A-F
Box 4:  
Fol. 1: Memorial Funds/Gifts, S-W  
Fol. 2: Memorial Funds/Gifts, G-J  
Fol. 3: Memorial Funds/Gifts, K-R  
Fol. 4: Nominating Committee  
Fol. 6: One hundred fiftieth anniversary  
Fol. 7: Ordination sermons  
Fol. 8: Organ  
Fol. 9: Pastoral Counseling Center  
Fol. 10: Pastoral search/compensation review  
Fol. 11: Pastors (reports, etc.)  
Fol. 12: Pew Bibles  
Fol. 13: Physical plant  
Fol. 14: Safe Church policy  
Fol. 15: Senior Church School  
Fol. 16: Senior Pilgrim Fellowship  

Box 5:  
Fol. 1: Special Meetings, announcements/minutes  
Fol. 2: Tandem Club  
Fol. 3: Trustee meeting, 1995  
Fol. 4: Trustee minutes/reports  
Fol. 5: Vacation Bible School  
Fol. 6: Wedding certificates  
Fol. 7: Youth forum  
Fol. 8: Youth Rally, 1974-1975  
Treasurer's ledger, 1961-1964 (bound vol.)  

"New Beginnings Assessment" (2013) (spiral-bound vol.)  
"Parish Self-Appraisal, June 25, 1987"  
Parish Self-Appraisal binder  

Box 6:  
Plays, 1993-2013, performed by Fellowship Players, Uncommon Players. Programs, publicity materials, photographs, correspondence, financial statements, etc.  

Box 7:  
Church Council reports, 1954-1966 (bound vol.)  
Church Council reports, 1968-1979 (bound vol.)  
Annual reports, 1977-2015  
Church Directory, 1990; 2004; 2006  
"The Covenant" (lesson booklet)  

Box 8:  
Ladies Aid Society, reports 1934-1941 (bound vol.)  
Ladies Aid Society, reports 1941-1952 (bound vol.)  
Ladies Aid Society, reports 1952-1960 (bound vol.)
Ladies Aid Society, reports, 1967-1972 (bound vol.)
Ladies Aid Society, Treasurer's Book, 1947-1975 (bound vol.)

**Box 9:** Records of the In-Between Club
- Vol. 1, May 1956-April 1961
- Vol. 4, April 1982-May 1988
- Misc. folder

Orders of Worship, 1968-1979

Sabbath School record books, 1867-1881

Sabbath School record books, 1882-1886. Kept in Hoyt's Improved Sunday School Record Book

Sabbath School record books, 1887-1889; 1893; 1896. Kept in Peloubet's Complete Sunday School Record Book


Sabbath School record books, 1890; 1892; 1893; 1897-1909; 1913-1916. Kept in Southworth's Complete Sunday School Record Book

Sabbath School record book, 1916

*The United Church Lamplighter* (newsletter), Jan., Feb., Dec., 1969; March-May, 1970; April-June, 1971

*Lamplighter* (newsletter), 1987-2016

Floor plans: Additions and Alterations to South Deerfield Congregational Church, Nov. 2003; Dec. 2007