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# Northbridge, Mass. Centre Congregational Church records, 1782-2011. RG5030

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English

DACS2 - 2013

Congregational Library & Archives

14 Beacon Street

Boston, MA 02108

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

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Congregational Library & Archives
<b>Creator:</b>	Centre Congregational Church (Northbridge, Mass.)
<b>Creator:</b>	First Congregational Church (Northbridge, Mass.)
<b>Title:</b>	Northbridge, Mass. Centre Congregational Church records, 1782-2011.
<b>ID:</b>	RG5030
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1782-2011
<b>Physical Description:</b>	3.45 Cubic Feet (4 boxes)
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Abstract:</b>	<p>The town of Northbridge, Massachusetts, was incorporated in 1772 and the First Church in Northbridge was established in 1782. The first meeting house was constructed in 1774. In 1834 a significant portion of the congregation withdrew to form the Congregational Church of Whitinsville (now the Village Congregational Church). The second meeting house was constructed in 1836. In 1879 another contingent of the church's members withdrew to form the Rockdale Congregational Church, though both churches shared a minister until 1897. Around the turn of the century the name for the First Congregational Church in Northbridge was changed to Centre Congregational Church. The second meeting house was destroyed by a fire on February 12, 1932. The Centre Congregational Church joined the United Church of Christ in the early 1960s. The church dissolved in 2011. This collection contains the administrative, financial, and visual records of the Northbridge Centre Congregational Church and its auxiliary organizations.</p>

### Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Northbridge, Mass. Centre Congregational Church records, 1782-2011, RG5030. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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## Historical Note

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The town of Northbridge, Massachusetts, was incorporated in 1772 out of lands which had previously been a part of Mendon and then later Uxbridge. In 1773 the town voted to begin construction on a meeting house and in 1774 construction on the first meeting house was completed. Due, at least in part, to the American Revolutionary War, no Congregational church was formally gathered until 1782. The First Congregational Church in Northbridge was established on June 6, 1782 and John Crane was ordained as the first minister on June 25, 1783. Rev. Crane served as pastor of the church until 1832.

In 1833 the First Congregational Church established a Sunday school. In 1834 a significant portion of the congregation from the southern section of Northbridge, known as Whitinsville, withdrew to form the Congregational Church of Whitinsville (now the Village Congregational Church). In 1835 the first meeting house was demolished and construction on the second meeting house was completed the following year. In 1879 another contingent of the church's members withdrew to form the Rockdale Congregational Church. Both churches were served by the same pastor until 1897 and both churches remained closely united throughout their histories. In 1885 the Ladies Auxiliary group was founded; this organization was later renamed the Ladies Aid Society.

Around the turn of the century the name for the First Congregational Church in Northbridge was changed to Centre Congregational Church. In 1922 the church rejected a proposal, put forth by the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society, for the Centre Congregational Church to merge with the Rockdale Congregational Church. The second meeting house was destroyed by a fire on February 12, 1932. After the fire, the Centre Congregational Church worked closely with the Rockdale Congregational Church and shared a pastor; this formal relationship lasted until 1952. Construction on the third, and final, meeting house was completed in 1836 and the building was dedicated on October 22, 1836. In 1940 the Church Society was officially dissolved and Centre Congregational Church was formally incorporated. In 1952 Rev. Clayton H. Witt resigned from Centre Congregational Church but not from the Rockdale Congregational Church; the formal relationship between the two churches was officially ended shortly after Rev. Witt's resignation.

The Centre Congregational Church joined the United Church of Christ in the early 1960s. In 2011 the Centre Congregational Church dissolved, following financial difficulties, and was absorbed by the Rockdale Congregational Church.

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## Scope and Contents

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This collection contains the administrative, financial, and visual records of the Northbridge Centre Congregational Church. Included within this collection are the records of the church and parish, guest

books, membership lists, financial records, collection records, extensive records from the Ladies Aid Society, and photographs.

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## Arrangement

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This collection has been arranged into the four series listed below. Within each series, materials have been primarily arranged in chronological order by start date. Materials that are very closely related, by either subject matter or a temporal connection, have been grouped together.

**Series 1:** Church and society records, 1782-2011

**Series 2:** Financial records, 1815-2011

**Series 3:** Clubs and organizations, 1909-1998

**Series 4:** Visual materials, 1869-2002

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

Congregational Library & Archives

14 Beacon Street

Boston, MA 02108

[info@14beacon.org](mailto:info@14beacon.org)

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

### Restrictions on Access

Access to this collection is unrestricted and open to the public.

### Restrictions on Use

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Digital Reproductions are protected by copyright and/or related rights. You are free to use the Digital Reproductions in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. In addition, no permission is required from the Congregational Library & Archives for educational uses. For other uses, you need to obtain permission from the Congregational Library & Archives. For additional information regarding copyright, please consult the Congregational Library & Archives' [Digital Collections Copyright & Use](#) policy.

## Acquisition Information

Materials were donated to the Congregational Library & Archives, October 2011, by the Northbridge Centre Congregational Church; no accession number.

## 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

Originally processed by Christina Prochilo, 2012. Reprocessed and redescribed by Zachary Bodnar, July 2019, using DACS Second Edition.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Church bells.
- Church finance.
- Church membership.
- Church records and registers.
- Guest books.
- Music in churches.
- New England's Hidden Histories.
- Sunday school teachers -- Photographs.
- Sunday schools -- Photographs.
- Women -- Societies and clubs.
- Centre Congregational Church (Northbridge, Mass.)
- First Congregational Church (Northbridge, Mass.)
- Northbridge (Mass.) -- Church history.

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## Technical Requirements

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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

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Hackett, Peter. *Manual and History of the Centre Congregational Church, Northbridge, Mass.* Northbridge: 1962.

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## Collection Inventory

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### Church and society records, 1782-2011

Physical Description: 26 Files (11 volumes, 15 folders)

#### Scope and Contents

This series contains the administrative and important membership records of the Centre Congregational Church and the Church Society. Included in the series are administrative record books, important publications, correspondence, records related to anniversaries, newsletters and programs, guest books, and membership records.

Title/Description	Instances	
Church records, 1782-1836	box 1	volume 1
Church records, 1835-1904	box 1	volume 2
Church records, 1905-1982	box 1	volume 3
Church records, 1952-1982	box 1	volume 4
Church records, 1982-2000	box 1	volume 5
Society records, 1814-1908	box 1	volume 6
Society records, 1910-1940	box 1	volume 7
Confessions of Faith, 1833, 1867	box 3	folder 5

Letters of dismissal, 1891-1911	box 2	volume 1
Church manual, 1906	box 3	folder 6
Church attendance records, 1940-1950	box 3	volume 19
Guest book, 1952-1982	box 3	volume 14
Guest book, 1982-2007	box 3	volume 15
Dissolvement of Rockdale and Centre Congregational Churches partnership, 1952	box 1	folder 1
List of officers and committees, 1956	box 3	folder 7
Membership list, 1957	box 1	folder 2
Church manual and history, 1962	box 3	volume 17
Ushers' report cards, 1967-1979	box 3	folder 8
Bicentennial records, 1981-1982	box 3	folder 9
Rev. Gordon C. Merten program notes, 1981-1983	box 3	folder 10
Village Congregational Church 150th Anniversary , 1984	box 3	folder 11
<u>Separated Materials:</u>		
<b>Separated Materials</b>		
These materials were removed from the Church records, 1952-1982.		
Organ rededication concert, 1985	box 3	folder 12
Centre Church brochures, 1986, undated	box 3	folder 13
Member directory, 1993	box 3	folder 14
Newsletters, 2006-2009	box 3	folder 15
Newsletters, 2009-2011	box 3	folder 16
225th anniversary service, 2007	box 3	folder 17

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## Financial records, 1815-2011

Physical Description: 22 Files (17 volumes, 5 folders)

### Scope and Contents

This series contains the financial records of the Centre Congregational Church and Society. Included within the records are extensive accounts of collections taken during each Sunday service.

Title/Description	Instances	
Treasurer's book, 1815-1897	box 1	volume 8



Society account book, 1815-1913	box 1	volume 9
Church treasury account book, 1835-1876	box 2	volume 2
Church treasury account book, 1840-1901	box 2	volume 3
Treasurer's book, 1897-1927	box 2	volume 4
Account book, 1945-1950	box 1	folder 3
Collection records, 1946-1950	box 2	volume 5
Collection records, 1950-1953	box 2	volume 6
Collection records, 1954-1957	box 2	volume 7
Collection records, 1958-1961	box 2	volume 8
Collection records, 1962-1965	box 2	volume 9
Collection records, 1966-1969	box 2	volume 10
Collection records, 1970-1973	box 2	volume 11
Collection records, 1974-1977	box 2	volume 12
Collection records, 1978-1981	box 2	volume 13
Collection records, 1983-1986	box 2	volume 14
Collection records, 1988-1991	box 2	volume 15
Collection records, 1993-1997	box 2	volume 16
Collection records, 2003-2005	box 2	folder 1
Collection records, 2006-2007	box 2	folder 2
Collection records, 2008-2009	box 2	folder 3
Collection records, 2010-2011	box 2	folder 4

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## Clubs and organizations, 1909-1998

Physical Description: 23 Files (19 volumes, 4 folders)

### Scope and Contents

This series contains records related to the various clubs and organizations that were administered by members of the Centre Congregational Church. The majority of this series is records related to the Ladies Aid Society which was active throughout the twentieth-century. Also included in the series are records related to Christian Endeavor and the Community Association.

Title/Description	Instances	
Ladies Aid Society records, 1909-1925	box 3	volume 1
Ladies Aid Society records, 1925-1938	box 3	volume 2

Ladies Aid Society records, 1938-1942	box 3	volume 3
Ladies Aid Society records, 1941-1952	box 3	volume 4
Ladies Aid Society records, 1943-1950	box 3	volume 5
Ladies Aid Society records, 1950-1958	box 3	volume 6
Ladies Aid Society records, 1952-1959	box 3	volume 7
Ladies Aid Society records, 1958-1965	box 3	volume 8
Ladies Aid Society records, 1965-1971	box 3	volume 9
Ladies Aid Society records, 1971-1985	box 3	volume 10
Ladies Aid Society treasurer's book, 1912-1930	box 2	volume 17
Ladies Aid Society treasurer's book, 1922-1934	box 2	volume 18
Ladies Aid Society treasurer's book, 1929-1948	box 2	volume 19
Ladies Aid Society treasurer's book, 1951-1977	box 2	volume 20
Ladies Aid Society treasurer's book, 1984-1998	box 2	volume 21
Ladies Aid Society club membership, 1931-1933	box 3	volume 11
Ladies Aid Society president's notes, 1959-1969	box 3	volume 12
Ladies Aid Society president's notes, 1969-1971	box 3	folder 1
Ladies Aid Society constitution and by-laws, undated	box 3	folder 2

Separated Materials:

**Separated Materials**

These materials were removed from the Ladies Aid treasurer's book, 1929-1948.

Christian Endeavor treasurer's book, 1909-1921	box 3	volume 13
Christian Endeavor booklets, 1910, 1931	box 3	folder 3
Worcester South Christian Endeavor Union correspondence, 1932-1933	box 3	folder 4

Separated Materials:

**Separated Materials**

These materials were removed from the Christian Endeavor treasurer's book, 1909-1921.

Community Association financial records, 1955-1964	box 3	volume 16
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**Visual materials, 1869-2002**

Physical Description: 17 Files (1 volume, 16 folders)

## Scope and Contents

This series contains visual materials related to the church and its members. Especially prominent are photographs of Sunday School students and teachers. Most of the materials are photographs, though the series also contains postcards and a physical piece of the church's old bell.

Title/Description	Instances	
Choir photograph album, 1869	box 3	volume 18
Rev. James H. Childs, 1894	box 4	folder 1
Susan B. Childs, 1894	box 4	folder 2
Sunday School class and teachers, 1908	box 4	folder 3-4
Inside Northbridge Centre Church, 1932	box 4	folder 5-6
Four boys, circa 1935	box 4	folder 7
Choir members, circa 1940	box 4	folder 8
First meeting house site, 2002	box 4	folder 9
Postcards, undated	box 4	folder 10
Tavern house, undated	box 4	folder 11
Second meeting house, undated	box 4	folder 12
Baby Thatcher, undated	box 4	folder 13
Sunday School students and teachers, undated	box 4	folder 14
Sunday School students and teacher, undated	box 4	folder 15
Piece of old church bell, undated	box 4	folder 16

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