

Second Baptist Church Collection Finding Aid

Cambridge Historical Commission
831 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Tel. (617) 349-4683
Fax. (617) 349-3116
E-Mail. histcomm@cambridgema.gov

Prepared by: Molly Alexander

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Languages: English

Historical Sketch

In 1824 a number of East Cambridge Baptists, most notably Enos Reed, tired of traveling to Charlestown or Boston for services, arranged to a Sunday school and preach one evening a week in the Putnam schoolhouse. In 1827, they decided to establish the Second Baptist Church in Cambridge with the Rev. John E. Weston as its first pastor. Almost immediately they erected a wooden meeting on the northeast corner of Cambridge and Fourth streets, the third church in East Cambridge. In 1837 the church burned to the ground. In January 1838, a new brick church was dedicated on the same site. It was constructed quickly with no architect and very little money, so the new building was plain but substantial and had 82 pews seating 500 people. In 1868 the building was renovated, and in 1890 Boston architect Walter T. Paine raised the building 3 feet to increase the capacity of the basement and built an addition with a parlor, study, robbing room, and baptistry. In 1917 the new Italian Catholic congregation of St. Francis of Assisi bought the church from the Baptists.

Scope and Content

The records in this collection divide into roughly three groups: by-laws and incorporation documents; financial records including some receipts; and business correspondence, mostly regarding candidates for pastor c. 1904-1905. The inclusive dates of these records are c. 1883-1908. This covers only a short period of the churches ninety-year history, but covers a range of business records and gives insight into the workings of the church at the time.

Folder List

- By-laws and incorporation documents
- Financial records and business correspondence
- Business correspondence – candidates for pastor

Provenance

Cambridge City Clerk transferred to the Cambridge Historical Commission in 2002.

Related Sources

History of the Second Baptist Church, Cambridge, Mass. By John Whiting Donallan. Lawrence, Mass.: Geo. S. Merrill & Co. c. 1866.

Cambridge Historical Commission. "315-325 Cambridge St., St. Francis / Second Baptist Church" folder, filed under "EC Cambridge Pkwy. – Otis St."

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