

Inventory of the

Congregational Church of Batavia
Batavia, Illinois

Records

In the

Regional History Center

RC 82

INTRODUCTION

Reverend Arthur Christofersen deposited the records of the Congregational Church of Batavia in the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on January 27, 1981. Additional records were added on various dates by the church archivists.

Property rights in the collection are held by the Congregational Church of Batavia; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 10.50; 57 digital files (2.87MB)
Number of containers: 22
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 82

SCOPE AND CONTENT

Recording an important aspect of Batavia history, the records of the Congregational Church document the establishment and history of one of the oldest churches in Kane County. Church/Congregational Society minutes (1835-1966) comprise the major series of the collection detailing church business concerns such as acceptance of members, committee appointments, church repairs, and reports from the church treasurer and various church organizations. Trustee meeting minutes (1933-1990) supplement the church minutes with financial reports, stewardship plans, and committee reports. Although the collection lacks a comprehensive series of financial records, several church and trustee treasurer's account books record expenditures and donations of church members.

Building records comprise a small series in the collection; only materials documenting the construction of an education facility in 1966 are available. Architectural correspondence, construction proposals, and stewardship promotional materials reveal building alterations made during 1965 and 1966. Numerous oversize architectural drawings detailing construction plans for the project are also contained in the collection.

A fourth series in the collection comprises church organization records. Minutes and committee reports from groups such as the Ladies Aid Society, Women's Fellowship, and Delta Alphas outline the service and social orientation of these organizations. Church bulletins (1942-1974) supply further information on church group functions as well as listing the orders and themes of Sunday services.

In addition to church records, the collection includes records of several prominent church members. Personal materials and diaries of Amelia Brown, church clerk from 1881-1929, record the activities and thoughts of a respected church servant. J.G. Brown's correspondence and Civil War military records (1845-1869) provide insight into the lifestyle of a young man during the

uncertain years of the mid-nineteenth century. These materials also include over forty portraits of various church members. Letters of transfer and dismissal (1835-1920) from various churches across the nation reflect the congregation's constant growth throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

A series of addenda were added at a later date which expands on the content of the previously donated records to 2016.

Persons interested in the early history of Illinois Congregationalism will find that the records of the Congregational Church of Batavia provide a valuable addition to the documentation of regional Congregational church history. The Regional History Center holds other Illinois church history collections including Unitarian Fellowship, DeKalb (RC 13); First Congregational Church, DeKalb (RC 17); First Methodist Church, DeKalb (RC 24); St. Paul's Episcopal Church, DeKalb (RC 55); First Lutheran Church, Rockford (RC 83); Salem Lutheran Church, Sandwich (RC 84); Trinity Lutheran Church, Mt. Morris (RC 104); and Wheatland-Salem United Methodist Church (RC 119). Several local church histories can be found in the Center's reference book collection as well.

See RC 311 of the Big Woods Congregational Church, a branch of the Batavia Church, for additional information.

The DVD in Addendum 4 has been copied to V:\ARCHIVES\RCElectronicArchives\RC 082 Batavia Congregational Church. Access is available to researchers in the Center's reading room.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

On August 8, 1835, Reverend N.C. Clark and Reverend Ralph Gridley organized the Church of the Big and Little Woods with fourteen members in Thompson Paxton's home southeast of Batavia: This group affiliated with the Presbyterian Church. During the first five years of the Church's existence, members worshiped in their homes or in the schoolhouse without a permanent minister. In 1840, fifty-three persons of all denominations subscribed over \$400 for a church building. Because of the large number of nonmember donors, the membership created a Congregational Society to include all subscribers regardless of denomination. Society members enjoyed representation on the church board of trustees. The Batavia townspeople dedicated the new building on January 29, 1841. By late 1842, Reverend Lucian Farnum became the first permanent pastor. The church served various needs of the community by permitting other denominations to worship on the premises and providing the building for use as the first district school. In 1843, the church members voted to change their affiliation from Presbyterian to Congregational, renaming their church the Congregational Church and Society of Batavia.

By 1856, growth of population and industry in Batavia increased the congregation's size and resources. The membership voted to construct a second church building in 1855 and raised

\$8,000 in subscriptions. Builders substituted native Fox Valley limestone as the primary construction material in place of the standard wood frame. At the final cost of \$13,401 the membership dedicated the new church on September 1, 1856. A violent storm blew off the church steeple in 1877 and it was not replaced until 1974. The congregation added a new Christian Education unit to the building in 1966.

During its 146 year history, the Congregational Church of Batavia responded to the needs of its members through worship services, baptisms, and marriages. Dedicated to Christian Education, the church's Sunday School and Pilgrim Fellowship provided religious instruction to children aged three to seventeen. In addition, church organizations such as the Women's Fellowship and Ladies Aid Society sponsored many charitable functions and enlightened members on various topics ranging from missionary work to spiritual fulfillment. Today, the Congregational Church of Batavia continues to hold a respected place in the Batavia community.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Batavia (Ill.)
 Batavia Congregational Church
 Brown, Amelia
 Brown, J.G.
 Church of the Big and Little Woods
 Congregational Church (Batavia)
 Congregationalists
 Diaries, 1840-1869
 Diaries, 1870-1909
 Diaries, 1910-1960
 Kane County (Ill.)
 United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	
1	1	Histories, 1935 (1956-1974)	
	2	Anniversary Booklets, (1915-1956)	
	3	Pageant Scripts Depicting Church Organization, 1935, 1956	
	4	Constitution and Bylaw, 1941-1982	
	5-8	Minute Books, 1835-1966	
	9	Church Use Regulations, 1953	
	10	Congregational Church Society Minute Books, 1840-1869	
	11	Subscription and cash book, 1855-1861	
	12-14	Board of Trustees Minutes, (1933-1944), 1969-1976	
	15	Board of Trustees Treasurer's Account Books, 1855-1864	
	16	Board of Trustees Financial Records, (1863-1877), (1919-1935)	
	17	Annual Reports, 1873, 1910-1939	
	18	Correspondence, 1900, (1934-1967)	
	19	Committee Correspondence, 1964-1965	
	20	Correspondence Concerning Church Pastors, (1861-1906)	
	21	Treasurer's Reports, (1863-1972)	
	22	Gift and Bequest Records, (1955-1964)	
	23	Committee Reports, (1955-1967)	
	24	Register of Pastors, (1835-1967)	
	25	Officer List, 1835-1968	
	26	Clerk Records, (1963-1966)	
	27	Building Centennial Plans, (1953-1956)	
	28	Building and Parsonage Improvement Records, (1949-1966)	
	2	1	Heating Plant Improvement Records, 1958-1959; Heating Plant Pledges, 1942
		2	Architect Building Proposal, 1964-1965
		3	Architect Building Plans, 1965
		4	Architectural Correspondence, 1965-1966
		5	Building Fund Correspondence, 1965
6		Stewardship-Building Plans and Worker Lists, 1965	
7		Contractor's Building Materials Lists, 1965	
8		Building Fund Pay Vouchers, 1965-1967	
9		Stewardship-Building Campaign Records, 1967-1968	
10		Real Estate Correspondence, 1964	
11		Insurance Records, (1947-1968)	
12		Budget Proposal, 1968	
13		Annual Meeting Agendas, 1954, 1967, 1970-1971	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	
2	14	Miscellaneous File, (1963-1965)	
	15	Loyalty Day Speech, n.d.	
	16	Resolution on Slavery, 1843	
	17	Bell Correspondence, 1871-1872	
	18	Subscription Lists, (1856-1875)	
	19	Insurance Invoices, (1843-1876)	
	20	Petitions of Congregation, 1870, 1902	
	21	Forms of Admission, 1878, 1889, 1969, n.d.	
	22	Manual of Congregationalism, 1904	
	23	Mission Society Receipts, (1864-1888), 1943	
	24	Church Furnishings and Windows Histories, 1967	
	25	Organ History, (1843-1949), 1958	
	26	Boy Scout Troop Agreement, 1934	
	27	Will of Albert T. Jackson, 1954	
	28	Music Book, (1907?)	
	29	Education Building Dedication Booklet, 1966	
	30	Significant Pastoral Sermons, 1885, 1905, 1974	
	31-34	News Clippings, 1929-1960	
	36-37	Membership Transfer and Dismissal Letters, (1834-1921)	
	38	Membership List, 1966	
	39	Biographical Sketches of Church Leaders, (1957-1969)	
	40	Member Histories, (1835-1916)	
	41	Forty Year Members List, 1967	
	42	Attendance Record, 1959-1974	
	43	Safety Deposit Box Inventory, 1964	
	3	1-16	Bulletins, (1928-1979) Ladies Aid Society:
		17-18	Minute Books, (1905-1931)
4	1	Minutes Books, (1931-1943)	
	2	Dues Book, 1932-1935	
	3	Guide, (1926-1931)	
		Delta Alpha:	
	4-5	Minutes, 1919-1934	
	6	Membership Register, 1835-1979	
	7	Congregational Sabbath School Record Book, 1856-1859	
	8	Congregational Sunday School Record Books, (1864-1886)	
	9	Congregational Missionary Society Minute Book, 1904-1925	
		Women's Fellowship:	
	10	Minute Book, 1969-1972	
	11	Membership Directories, (1965-1978)	
12	Men's Bible Class Minute Book, 1908-1914		

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	6	
4	13	Congregational Couples Club Minutes, 1959-1964		
	14-15	Young People's Society for Christian Endeavor Committee Reports, 1894-1898		
	16	Christian Endeavor Newsletter, 1926		
	17	Christian Outreach Minutes, (1865-1909) (1967-1976)		
	18	Fox River Congregational Club Minute Book, 1888-1895		
	19	Librarian's Catalog, n.d.		
	20	Amelia Brown Personal Effects, (1881-1919)		
	21	Amelia Brown Cash Book, 1894-1897		
	22	Amelia Brown Memo Book, 1894-1927		
	23	Amelia Brown Memorial Items, (1888-1930), 1974		
	24	J.G. Brown Correspondence, (1845-1885)		
	25	J.G. Brown Military Records, 1863-1910		
	26	Mary Brown Children's Books, 1829		
	5	1	Brown Family Portraits: 1911	
2-4		Brown Family Diaries, (1856-1871)		
6	1-3	Brown Family Diaries, (1874-1911)		
	4	Unidentified Diary, n.d.		
	5	Photographs, (1877-?), (27)		
	6	Church Sketches, n.d.		
	7	Pastor Portraits, n.d. (4)		
	8	Group Portraits, (1909-1956) (7)		
	9	Member Portraits, (1870-1892) (12)		
	10	Member Portraits, 1889-1899 (7)		
	7	1	Member Portraits, n.d. (9)	
		2	Brown Family Portraits, n.d. (7)	
3		Bissell Family Portraits, 1891 (4)		
4		Coffin Family Portraits, n.d. (7)		
5		Hulbert Family Portraits, n.d. (2)		
6		Van Arsdale Family Portraits, n.d. (2)		
7		I.S. Stephens Portraits, 1866 (4)		
8		Congregational Manse and Unidentified Photographs, n.d. (6)		
9		Batavia Institute Papers, (1856-1859)		
10		History of Batavia, 1965		
11		Organization of Geneva Congregational Church, 1849		
12		<u>The Fox Valley Mirror</u> , 1935		
13		History of Fox Valley Congregationalism, 1937		
14		Histories of Various Illinois Churches, (1934-1968)		
15		Bulletins from Various Churches, (1945-1956) Microfilm:		

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	7
7	1 box	Abstract and Title, 1935	
	1 box	Church/Congregational Society Minutes, (1835-1902) Membership Lists, 1842-1843 Sunday School Record Book, 1864-1865	
<u>ADDENDUM</u>			
8	1	Church History, 1835-1985	
	2	Historical Booklet Commemorating the Centennial of the Batavia Congregational Church, 1935	
	3	A Brief History of the Big Woods Congregational Church, Naperville, IL	
	4	Church Brochures, n.d.	
	5	Church Mergers, 1960-1961	
	6	Centennial Celebration, June 14-16, 1935	
	7	Sesquicentennial Celebration Pageant, September 28, 1985	
	8	History of Church Antiques, n.d.	
	9	Forty-Five Years a Parish Minister by Ray T. Caldwell, 1957	
	10	Paper by Rev. Porter French, n.d.	
	11	Gustafson, John; Memoirs, 1953, 1974-1978	
	12	Bicentennial Poster, 1976	
	13	Constitution, 1991	
	14	Constitution Revision, n.d.	
	15-16	Correspondence, 1946-1992	
	17-18	Annual Reports, 1968-1992	
	19	Yearbook Reports, (1963-1973)	
	20	Probate Papers, 1928-1956	
	21	Bank Book, 1873-1876; Chicago Relief Fund Account Book, 1871	
9	1	Budgets, (1936-1973)	
	2	Financial Records, (1936-1973)	
	3-4	Treasurer's Reports, (1974-1988)	
	5	Financial Secretary Reports, (1937-1957)	
	6	Loan Data, 1971-1975	
	7	Mortgage Loan, 1972-1973	
	8	Minister Salary, 1972	
	9	Memorial Fund and Gifts, 1892-1952	
	10	Burnham Memorial Fund, 1978	
	11	Carney-Hawse Endowment, 1990	
	12	Stewardship Committee, 1873, 1968-1972	
	13	S.S. Stewardship, 1992	
	14	Annual Financial Campaign, 1976-1979	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
9	15	Church Boards and Activities, 1993-1994
	16	Board of Trustee, Minutes, 1920-1933
10	1-7	Board of Trustee Papers, Minutes, Treasurer's Reports, Finance Secretary Reports, (1945-1974)
11	1-2	Board of Trustee, Minutes, (1977-1990)
	3	Board of Trustee, Correspondence, 1936-1971
	4	Board of Trustee, Trust Deed, Mortgage Loan, Investments, 1942-1957
	5-9	Diaconate Minutes, (1953-1990)
	10	Board of Christian Education, Annual Report, 1970
	11	Board of Christian Education, Minutes, 1988, 1990
	12	Christian Outreach, Minutes, (1975-1990)
12	1-2	Church Council, Minutes, (1971-1991)
	3	Past Moderators Committee, 1986
	4	Pulpit Committee Material, 1949-1962
	5	Special Personnel Committee, 1979
	6	Ushers Reports, 1984-1989
	7	Logos Program, 1991
	8	Thursday School, (1974-1979)
	9	Mayflower Circle, 1969-1970
	10	Pilgrim Fellowship, 1969-1970
	11	Women's Fellowship Directories, 1974, 1976-1977
	12	Women's Fellowship, May Fellowship Board, May 1977
	13-16	Women's Fellowship, Minutes, (1944-1959)
	13	1-4
5		Building Fund Treasurer's reports, 1943-1944, 1948-1957
6		Dedication of New Church Wing, New Steeple, Organ, and Rededication of Church Building, 1956-1974
7		Plat, 1964
8		Service reproduction and distribution, 1972
9		Steeple plans, 1973
10		Cornerstone, list of contents, 1974
11		Church Architectural Drawings, 1948, 1973 (5)
12		Church Rendering, Church School Addition
13-14		Church Directories, (1970-1992)
15		Pictorial Directories, 1980, 1990, 1993
16		Church Members
17		Lucile Gustafson 75th Anniversary of Membership, 1990
18		James A. Clark Retirement Banquet, April 29 1992

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
13	19	<u>The Tower</u> , (1958-1974)
14	1-3	<u>The Tower</u> , (1987-1993)
	4-9	Church Bulletins, (1974-1993)
	10	Programs, 1986, 1992, 1993
	11	Certificate - Tri City Family Services, 1987
	12	Boy Scout Charter and Rosters, 1916-1945
15	1-5	Newspaper Clippings, (1950-1993)
	6	Sketches by John Gustafson
	7	Thank You Notes to Thursday School from Alice Gustafson, n.d.
	8	Ink Rendering of Church by Adolph Wink and Christmas Card
	9	Notes of Appreciation, 1969-1971
	10	Report of United Church of Christ, 1969
	11	Articles of Faith, Names of Members of First or North Church of Christ in Portsmouth, 1842
		Photographs:
16	1	Church Photographs, 1939, n.d. (2)
	2	Aerial Views - Church Steeple, 1990 (6)
	3	Front Door - Poor Paint Job, 1990 (6)
	4	Church Steeple Removal, August 1, 1990 (29)
	5	Steeple Reinstallation, November 14-16, 1990 (57)
	6	Interior & Exterior of Church, 1991, n.d. (17)
	7	New Members, 1986-1987 (13)
	8-9	Members, 1987, 1989, 1990, n.d. (22)
	10	Members of the Year, Ellen Burnell, April 30, 1989 (6); Annual Meeting, April 30, 1979 (6)
	11	Banquet - Batavia's Citizen of the Year, Ruth Burnham, 1992 (7)
	12-14	Sunday School Classes, 1985-1991 (43)
17	1	Sunday School Classes, n.d. (8)
	2	Confirmation Sunday, June 3, 1990 & Confirmation Classes, 1986, 1991 (5)
	3	Children's Sermon, 1991, (3)
	4	Youth Choirs, 1989 (4)
	5	Junior Choir Photographs, 1939
	6	Pageant Players Photograph, April 11, 1923
	7	Children's Play - Golden Gate, n.d. (13)
	8	Sesquicentennial Balloon Launch, 1985 (1)
	9	Christmas Decorating, 1988 (17); Christmas Week, 1988 (13)

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
17	10	Christmas Decorating, 1990 (5)
	11	Spaghetti Supper, 1987 (4)
	12	Spaghetti Supper, 1988 (1); Church Picnic, 1988 (8)
	13	Surprise Party for Arnold, n.d. (6)
	14	Over/Under 30's Event, n.d. (7)
	15	Blue Angels Bowling, 1988 (8)
	16	Senior High Rafting Trip, 1988 (14)
	17	Senior Breakfast, June 10, 1990 (2)
	18	Ski Trip, n.d (1)
18	1	Youth Lock-In, December 1986 (6)
	2	Youth Lock-In, December 3, 1988 (2)
	3	Youth Trip, n.d. (9)
	4	3rd and 4th Graders Donation to Interfaith Food Pantry, 1985-1986 (3); Youth Raft Trip, June 1988 (5)
	5	Youth Program Photographs, 1990 (3)
	6	Elizabeth Circle, 1988-1989 (1)
	7	Delta Alpha Photograph, ca. 1940-1944
	8	United Church of Fox Valley, 1989 (7)
	9	Unidentified Church - interior n.d. (2)
	10	Negatives for Members, 1987 and Children's Play - Golden Gate (7 strips)
	11	Slides (19)
	Video	Replacement of Church Steeple, September 4, 1974
Oversize Drawer 16	4-6	Congregational Photograph, September 20, 1981 Architectural Drawings, (1934-1974) (44) Letters of Transfer and Dismissal, (1835-1866) J.G. Brown Correspondence, (1848-1856) Sketch of Batavia, Illinois, n.d.

ADDENDUM

19	1	Church Histories, (1965-1997), n.d.
	2	Sesquicentennial Anniversary, 1985
	3	175 th Anniversary, 2008-2009
	4	Dedication Ceremonies, (1949-2005)
	5	Building Centennial, 1956
	6	Constitution, 1993
	7-9	Annual Reports, (1928-2005)
	10	Christofersen, Reverend Arthur W. (1973-2004)
	11	Reverend French Resignation, (1938-1940)

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	11
19	12	Pastoral Search, 1957, 1962	
20	1	Financial Reports, (1918-1995)	
	2	Christian Heritage Endowment Funds, n.d.	
	3	Fundraising, 1989, 2004, n.d.	
	4	Diaconate, 1991	
	5	Christian Outreach, 1995	
	6	Expanded Stewardship Program, 1991-1992	
	7	Ministry Groups, n.d.	
	8	Women's Fellowship Directory, (1952-1956)	
	9	Mother-Daughter Banquet, (1986-1992)	
	10	Smorgasbord, (1987-1992)	
	11	Women's Events, 1996-1997	
		Delta Alpha:	
	12	Program Books, 1936, 1939	
	13	Minutes, 1942-1943	
	14	Building Improvements, (1872-2008)	
	15	Steeple Publicity, 1973-1974	
	16	Parkway Press Proposal, 1992	
	17	Attendance, (1934-1994)	
	18	Membership Directory, 1984, 1997, 2003	
	19	Church Register, 1835-1950	
	20-28	(1996-2005)	
	29	Bulletins, 1994, 2003-2007	
	30	Church Activities, 1929-1933	
	31	Special Programs, n.d.	
	32	Elise Cottrell Article, 1981	
		Photographs:	
	33	Children, 1924 (1)	
	34	Church Building, n.d. (3)	
	35	Church Elders, 1908 (1)	
	36	Sketches of Church, n.d. (3)	
	37	Church Yard Sale, September 2001, (6)	
	38	Communion Holder, n.d., (1)	
	39	Easter Pageant, 1923, (2)	
	40	Miscellaneous Photos, n.d, (10)	
	41	Organ, 1956, (1)	
	42	Paxton Hall Ground Breaking, 2004, (4)	
	43	Recognition Service, October 7, 1923 (1)	
	44	Reverends, n.d., 1896	
	45	Steeple Repair, 1974, (16)	
	46	Stereopticon Slides [stereograph card] of Blown Off Steeple, July 5, 1877, (2)	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	12
20	47	Sunday School, November 1974 (1)	
	48	Members of the Church, September 20, 1981 (1)	
		<u>ADDENDUM</u>	
	49	History of Church, 1835-2010	
	50	Church Brochures and Programs, (1915-2008)	
	51	Boy Scout Troop 43 History and Charters (1933-2012)	
	52	Dedication Day Services Pamphlet, January 16, 1966	
	53	Church Memorial Garden Registration and Certificates, (1997-2006)	
	54	Congregational Church DVDs (2005-2012)	
	55	Church Directories, 2006, 2010	
21	1-4	<u>The Tower</u> (2007-2010)	
		<u>ADDENDUM</u>	
	5	Administrative Records, 2013-2015	
	6	Bulletins, 1985, 1998, 2008	
	7	Sesquicentennial Celebration, 1985	
	8	Church Music Committee, 1999-2000	
	9	Memorial Garden Records, 2014-2016	
	10	Candidating Sunday Worship and Meeting Reverend Yvette Eber, November 2013 [DVD]	
	11	Religious Architecture Tour, October 1, 2015	
	12	Boy Scout Troop 43 History and Charters 1927-2012	
		<u>ADDENDUM</u>	
	13	Local church Profile, 1987	
	14	Congregational Meeting Agenda, January 16, 1994	
	15	Financial Records, 1993-1994	
	16	Annual Reports 2007-2010, 2012	
22	1	Annual Reports 2013-2014, 2016	
	2	News Clippings (1989-2001)	
	3	Church Directories, 2015	
	4	Memorial Service Program for Reverend Charles S. Leeper, September 16, 1894	
	5	Bulletins: Memorial Service, May 26, 1895; Dedication Day Service, March, 28, 1926	

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	13
22	6	Woman's [Women's] Fellowship, Membership Directory and Constitution and By-laws, 1951-1952	
	7	Listening Session Committee Report, May 24, 2017	
	8	Fox River Congregation, 1901	
	9	<u>The Tower</u> (1994)	
	10	Boy Scout Troop 43 Charters and Clippings, 2010-2012	
	11	Elgin Association Annual Programs, 1908, 1914, 1917 Photographs:	
	12	Steeple Repair, 1974 (14)	
	13	Sesquicentennial, 1985 (15 slides)	
	14	Congregational Church video, slideshow [2 DVDs]	
Oversize Drawer 16	4	Church exterior without steeple photograph, ca. 1960s Reverend Ray T. Caldwell, Minister Emeritus certificate, September 8, 1957	