

Finding Aid to the Martha's Vineyard Museum
Record Unit 143
The Edgartown Federated Church, 1895-2005
By Karin Stanley

Descriptive Summary

Repository: Martha's Vineyard Museum

Call No.

Title: The Edgartown Federated Church, 1895-2005

Creator: Karin Stanley

Quantity: 5.5 cubic feet

Abstract: This collection of documents from the Edgartown Federated Church consists of materials dated from roughly 1925, which is when the Congregational Church merged with the Edgartown Baptist Society to become the Federated Church. Documents include business and financial papers, membership records, publications, ledgers, and guest books. Newspaper clippings reflecting activities and the history of the church are also included.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information: The documents of the Edgartown Federated Church were acquired by the Martha's Vineyard Museum in _____ by _____.

Processing Information: Karin Stanley

Access Restrictions: Yes (Please consult with Archivist)

Use Restrictions: Yes

Preferred citation of publication: Martha's Vineyard Museum, Edgartown Federated Church, Record Unit 143.

Index Terms

Edgartown Federated Church
Edgartown Congregational Church
First Meeting House of Edgartown
First Church of Christ of Martha's Vineyard
Edgartown Baptist Society
Unity Club
Ladies Circle
Whale of a Sale
Mayhew Sunday
Mayhew Family
Hook and Hastings Organ
Dr. Henry Butman

Series and Subseries Arrangement

Series I: Institutional History

Series II: Baptist Society Records (separate from Federated Records)

Series III: Congregational Church Papers (separate from Federated Records)

Series IV: Church Minutes

Series V: Church Treasury/Financial Records

Series VI: Church Membership

Series VII: Administrative Records

 Subseries A: Records

 Subseries B: Anniversaries and Awards

 Subseries C: Organ

Series VIII: Guest Books

Series IX: Publications

Series X: Unity Club

Series XI: Clippings

Series XII: Multimedia

Historical Note

The history of the Edgartown Federated Church goes back to 1642, when Thomas Mayhew established the First Church of Christ on Martha's Vineyard. This church, also known as the Edgartown Congregational Church, became the Federated Church in 1925. That year the Edgartown Baptist Society and the Congregational Church merged. It has been speculated that due to dwindling membership and resources the two organizations joined forces. It appears the Congregational Church invited the Baptists to "unit with them in preaching services and prayer meetings. Later Federated Church records (1945) report, "our churches happily united in a federation by which we conserved our resources, advanced the cause of Christian unity and opened the way for our churches to do the work of the Kingdom in Edgartown more effectively." Although the congregations were united, two church buildings continued to be used. Members met for work and worship six months per year in each building. This continued until 1945 when the prospect of prohibitive renovations to the Baptist church united the congregation under one roof, that of the former Congregational church, now the Federated Church.

Today the church no longer keeps track of members' faith. In fact the church now includes members from other denominations. In 1991 Rev. John D. Schule remarked that this diversity keeps them strong, noting "We agree to disagree." The current church, built in 1828 by Frederick Baylies, Jr, is lovingly cared for. The history of the church is also celebrated with events marking the 100th, 300th, and 350th anniversaries of church presence in Edgartown.

Scope and Content Note

This collection of documents from the Edgartown Federated Church consists of business and financial papers, meeting minutes, member records, guest books,

news clippings, and publications. Many of the account books, church registers, and guest books are bound ledgers. Most of these documents date from 1925 or later, which is the year the Baptist Society and Congregational Church merged. Records relating to the Baptist Society may be found in Record Unit 342; records relating to the Congregational Church are located in Record Unit 341.

Information on the joining of the two congregations and the merger of the use of the two church buildings in 1945 may be found in Series I. Some Baptist Society Records, and Congregational Records remain separate in this collection and are located in Series II, and Series III, respectively. The Unity Club's records have remained intact, and begin prior to the 1925 merger.

Please note that there are restrictions of access and use to some of the Federated Church materials. Specifically, the donor has requested that a 24 year restriction be applied to post-1945 financial records. If a user is interested in accessing these materials, he/she will need to speak to the Museum's archivist. The archivist, in turn, will forward the user's petition to the appropriate members of the Federated Church.

Series and Subseries Descriptions

Series I: Institutional History

Box 1 of 11

Folder 1: Reference

Folder 2: Merger Records 1925

Folder 3: Merger of Church Buildings 1945-1948

Folder 4: Correspondence relating to lease of Baptist Church

Folder 5: Dedication on Merger of Church Buildings

Series II: Baptist Society Records

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Folder 6: Baptist Society Records 1930-1960

Folder 7: Ledgerbook 1935-1942

Folder 8: Committee Notes 1931-1936

Folder 9: Checkbooks 1940-1943

Folder 10: Checkbooks 1943-1946

Folder 11: Financial Reports 1931-1933

Folder 12: Misc. Financial Papers 1936-1963

Folder 13: Baptist Society Members 1932-1969

Folder 14: Friday Club Minutes 1932-1934

Folder 15: Papers of Susan Bettle

Series III: Congregational Church Records (separate from Federated Records)

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Folder 16: Correspondence 1924-1926

Folder 17: Meeting minutes 1926-1971

Folder 18: Proprietors Records 1928-1960

Series IV: Church Minutes

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Folder 1: Church Minutes 1925-1947

Folder 2: Church Minutes 1947-1959

Folder 3: Church Minutes 1960-1969

Folder 4: Executive Committee Minutes 1963-1969

Folder 5: Executive Committee Minutes 1969-1972

Folder 6: Executive Committee Minutes 1973

Folder 7: Executive Committee Minutes 1973-1976

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Folder 9: Executive Committee Minutes 1979-1983

Folder 10: Executive Committee Minutes 1982-1983

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Series V: Church Treasury/Financial Records

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Folder 3: Bound Financial Ledger 1944-1946

Folder 4: Bound Financial Ledger 1946-1954

Folder 5: Bound Financial Ledger 1949-1959

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Folder 1: Bound Financial Ledger 1958-1962

Folder 2: Bound Financial Ledger 1963-1970

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Series VI: Church Membership

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Folder 3: Church Register 1937-1948

Folder 4: Church Register 1927-1965

Folder 5: Church Register 1941-1973

Folder 6: Member Lists

Folder 7: Baptism Records

Folder 8: Letters of Transfer 1923-1956

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Folder 1: Letters of Transfer 1957-1972

Series VII: Administrative Records

Subseries A: Records

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Folder 3: Wills

Folder 4: Sermons

Folder 5: Other Meetings

Folder 6: Building Contracts

Folder 7: Building Specification and Contract 1956-1958

Folder 8: Appraisals and Parsonage Inventory

Subseries B: Anniversaries and Awards

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Folder 9: One Hundredth Anniversary of Church Building 1928

Folder 10: Three Hundredth Anniversary of Founding of First Church of Christ on Martha's Vineyard 1942

Folder 11: Fortieth Anniversary of Merger 1965

Folder 12: Three Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of Church 1992

Folder 13: Mayhew Sunday, September 6, 1992

Folder 14: Awards

Subseries C: Church Organs

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Folder 16: Organ History

Folder 17: Hook & Hastings Organ Correspondence 1939-1985

Folder 18: Hook & Hastings Organ Repairs

Folder 19: Organist David Hewlett

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Folder 3: Guest Book 1946-1949

Folder 4: Guest Book 1949-1952

Folder 5: Guest Book 1951-1962

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Folder 1: Guest Book 1962-1967

Folder 2: Guest Book 1967-1969

Folder 3: Guest Book 1969-1974

Series IX: Publications

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Folder 4: Programs 1926-1997

Folder 5: Church Directories 1934, 2000

Folder 6: Newsletters 1982-1998
Folder 7: Publications from other churches
Box 9 of 11
Folder 1: Annual Reports 1952-1955
Folder 2: Annual Reports 1956-1959
Folder 3: Annual Reports 1960-1963
Folder 4: Annual Reports 1964-1967
Folder 5: Annual Reports 1969-1972
Folder 6: Annual Reports 1973-1975; 1981-1983
Folder 7: Annual Reports 1984, 1985,1987

Series X: Unity Club

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Folder 8: Club Minutes 1895-1902
Folder 9: Club Minutes 1962, 1963, 1970
Folder 10: Club Minutes 1976-1988
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Folder 1: Club Minutes 1990-1991
Folder 2: Ladies Circle Secretary's Book 1904-1913
Folder 3: Ladies Circle Secretary's Book 1913-1920
Folder 4: Secretary's Records 1963-1966
Folder 5: Secretary's Records 1967-1975
Folder 6: Bound Ledger Book 1950-1977
Folder 7: Treasurer's Book 1980-1985
Folder 8: Memorial Fund
Folder 9: Correspondence from Scrapbook 1941-1949
Folder 10: Assorted Papers
Folder 11: Assorted Papers

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Folder 1: Whale of a Sale 1959-1977
Folder 2: Printed Programs 1970-1979
Folder 3: News Clippings 1975-1979

Series XI: Newspaper Clippings 1927-2005

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Folder 4: Clippings, 1927-2995

Series XII: Multimedia

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Folder 5: Audio Tape, Bob Lynn 1992
Folder 6: Negatives and Slides
Folder 7: Photographs, Unity Club Crafters