



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Manuscript Collections

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH (SAINT PAUL, MINN.):
An Inventory of Its Records at the Minnesota Historical
Society**

OVERVIEW

- Creator:** First Baptist Church (Saint Paul, Minn.).
- Title:** Church records.
- Date:** 1849-1999 (bulk 1849-1940).
- Abstract:** Records of the first Baptist church organized in Minnesota Territory, documenting its history, administration, and the activities of its auxiliary organizations.
- Quantity:** 5.25 cu. ft. (5 boxes).
- Location:** See Detailed Description section for box locations.

HISTORICAL NOTE

The First Baptist Church of Saint Paul traces its origins to July 1847, when Harriet E. Bishop, a teacher and Baptist missionary from Vermont credited with starting the first public school in St. Paul, opened the first Sunday school in the city. Early in 1849 the American Baptist Home Mission Society, in response to a request from Bishop, sent the missionary pastor John P. Parsons to St. Paul to establish a Baptist church. Parsons and Bishop worked together to achieve this end, and a church was formally organized on December 29, 1849, when twelve men and women, including Bishop, adopted articles of faith and a church covenant. A constitution and bylaws were adopted on January 26, 1850.

Initially the congregation met in Bishop's Sunday school building. A small meetinghouse was built in 1850-1851 at the top of what became known as Baptist Hill, on the present site of Mears Park in downtown St. Paul. This building was succeeded by a stone chapel on Wacouta Street near Eighth Street that opened in January 1862 and was dedicated in October of that year. A larger stone structure, erected nearby at Ninth and Wacouta streets, was dedicated in May 1875.

The First Baptist Church of Saint Paul and three other churches organized the Minnesota Baptist Association in September 1852. In August 1859 delegates from the St. Paul church participated in the formation of the Minnesota Baptist State Convention.

The First Baptist Church established a number of mission stations in St. Paul during the 1870s and 1880s, including the Park Avenue Baptist Mission.

There is additional information on the history and development of the church in the collection.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS

The collection includes church histories and historical and biographical sketches (1874-1999); scrapbooks (1867-1945) containing newspaper clippings, programs, pamphlets and other print materials, correspondence, photographs, tickets, and other memorabilia; church manuals (1859-[19--]); correspondence and related records (1853-1941); pastoral sermons and addresses (1862, 1921); minutes (1849-1939) of meetings of the congregation, deacons, and trustees; membership records (1849-1936); financial records (1857-1941); narrative and statistical annual reports of the church (1856-1940); and minutes, membership and financial records, annual reports, correspondence, instructional materials, and newsletters of women's societies (1851-1943), women's home and foreign mission circles/societies (1875-1898), young adult, youth, and children's groups (1881-1920), and the Sunday/Bible school (1871-1930).

Also present are records of two related organizations: a minute book (1877-1890) of the Minnesota Baptist Association and a record book (1890-1892) of the Park Avenue Baptist Mission.

ARRANGEMENT

These records are organized into the following four sections:

- Church History
- Church Administration
- Auxiliary Organizations
- Related Organizations

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Preferred Citation:

[Indicate the cited item and/or series here]. First Baptist Church (Saint Paul, Minn.) Records. Minnesota Historical Society.

See the Chicago Manual of Style for additional examples.

Accession Information:

Accession numbers: 6836; 8547; 15,795

Processing Information:

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Catalog ID number: 1730379

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Church History

Location	Box	
147.C.19.2F	1	<p>Printed histories, 1889-1999.</p> <p>Includes histories issued by the church in connection with its fortieth (1889), fiftieth (1899), seventy-fifth (1924), and eighty-fifth (1934) anniversaries.</p> <p>Manuscript histories and historical and biographical sketches:</p> <p>Historical sketches of the First Baptist Church and the Minnesota Baptist Association by Harriet E. Bishop, 1874, 1877, 1879.</p> <p>“History of the First Baptist Church of St. Paul and Societies. By Mrs. H. E. Bishop.” 1874-1880. 1 volume.</p> <p>Historical sketches of the First Baptist Church and biographical sketches of church members, undated and 1899.</p> <p>History (draft) and historical sketches of the First Baptist Church, 1924.</p> <p>Biographical sketches of First Baptist Church members, 1902-1924.</p> <p>Historical sketches of the First Baptist Church and biographical sketches of church members, 1931-1940.</p> <p>Commemorative programs, 1899-1999.</p>
142.E.18.4F	5	<p>Scrapbooks:</p> <p>1867-1913.</p> <p>1914-1945.</p> <p>1908-1911, 1923, 1997-1998. 1 dismantled volume in 4 folders inside a phase box.</p> <p>Materials compiled during and pertaining to the pastorate (1908-1911) of Harold Pattison. At the beginning of the scrapbook there is correspondence (1997-1998) relating to the donation of the volume to the church by Pattison’s granddaughter, as well as a photograph (1923) of Pattison.</p>
147.C.19.2F	1	Newspaper clippings, 1923-1929.

Church Administration

Location	Box	
147.C.19.2F	1	<p>Church manuals, 1859-[19--].</p> <p>Each manual may include the church covenant, mission and declaration of faith, constitution and bylaws, names of</p>

members and officers, schedule of church meetings, an annual report, and the pastor's anniversary sermon.

Church bulletins, 1895-1916.

Church correspondence and related records:

Undated and 1853-1941. 4 folders.

Seventy-fifth anniversary, 1924.

Eighty-fifth anniversary, 1934.

Pastoral sermons and addresses, 1862, 1921.

Includes the sermon and address delivered by John D. Pope at the opening of the church's new stone chapel (January 1862) and at its dedication (October 1862).

Church record book, 1849-1867.

Includes minutes, December 1849-1867; information on members (name; date and method of reception; date dismissed, dropped, excluded, or died; and remarks), December 1849 – January 1862; constitution and bylaws, 1850, 1853, 1856 (revisions); and financial records, 1851-1852.

Membership record books:

Within each chronological period indicated below, names are grouped alphabetically by the first letter of the members' surnames and are listed chronologically within each alphabetical grouping. Each entry gives the member's surname and given name; date and method of reception; date dismissed, dropped, excluded, or died; and remarks.

1849-1874.

1849-1888, 1849-1898, 1849-1911.

147.C.19.3B 2

Member transfer records, 1852-1936. 9 folders.

Chronologically arranged certificates, notices, and letters regarding dismissal, recommendations, reception, and transfer.

Miscellaneous membership records, undated, 1864, [19--]-1936.

The 1864 record is a list of "names of Colored members received on experience Feb. 3rd 1864."

142.E.18.4F 5

Pew diagram, 1887-1889. 1 item in 1 folder.

147.C.19.3B 2

Church minute books:

Annual reports submitted at annual meetings of the congregation during the years 1892-1928 were attached to the minute book pages. Beginning in 1929, these reports were filed separately (see Church reports, below).

1868-1877.

1878-1887.

1888-January 1903.

- 142.E.18.4F 5 January 1903 – January 1939. 1 volume in 1 box.
Records removed from church minute book January 1903 –
January 1939, undated and 1912-1920.
Items formerly attached to the volume pages with rusty
paper clips and some loose items inserted in the
volume pages, removed and filed in the folder for
preservation.
- 147.C.19.3B 2 Church reports:
Annual reports of the First Baptist Church to the Minnesota
Baptist Association, 1856-1857; the Twin City Baptist
Association, 1917-1930; and the Minnesota Baptist
Convention, 1931-1936.
Reports submitted to the Minnesota Baptist
Association are narratives; those submitted to the latter
two organizations are statistical.
Annual reports of the church administration, committees, and
auxiliary organizations:
Primarily reports submitted at the congregation's
annual meeting (usually held in January) covering the
previous year's activities; they are dated and filed
according to the year they were submitted.
Church clerk and committee reports, 1859-1873.
Auxiliary organization reports, 1910-1915.
Miscellaneous reports, 1914-1915.
Church administration reports, 1929-1934.
Auxiliary organization reports, 1928-1941.
- 147.C.19.4F 3 Church administration and auxiliary organization reports,
1935-1940 (mimeograph copies).
Board of Deacons. Minute books:
1878-March 1890.
April 1890-1896.
1915-1917.
Board of Trustees. Minute books:
1858-1884.
1937-1941. 1 dismantled volume in 1 folder.
In addition to minutes, the dismantled volume includes
monthly reports of the church treasurer.
Church treasurer:
Ledger, 1857-1904. 1 volume in 1 folder.
Miscellaneous financial records, undated and 1855-1886,
1912-1941.
Committee of Supervision. Minute book, 1896-1914.
Committee members included the pastor, deacons,
superintendent of the Bible school, and the church clerk.

Auxiliary Organizations

In addition to minutes, the minute books of the auxiliary organizations frequently include a constitution; reports; membership and financial data; correspondence; and programs, pamphlets, and other print materials.

Location	Box	
147.C.19.4F	3	<p>Ladies Sewing Society. Minute book, 1851-January 1857. 1 volume in 1 folder. The January 1857 entry is minutes of a meeting of the Ladies Benevolent Society.</p> <p>Ladies Benevolent Society. Minute book, 1858-1862. 1 volume in 1 folder.</p> <p>Ladies Society: Minutes books: 1868-1872. 1 volume in 1 folder. 1879-1889.</p> <p>Correspondence, reports, and related records, undated and 1863-1890, 1904. An 1876 quarter-centennial report recounts the history of the Ladies Society and its predecessor organizations, the Ladies Benevolent Society and the Ladies Sewing Society.</p> <p>Woman's/Women's Society. Minute books: 1913-1926. 1927-1940. Beginning in ca. 1935, the organization is referred to in the minutes as the Women's Society.</p>
149.J.2.6F	4	<p>Women's Society, Executive Board. Minute book and minutes, 1937-1943. 1 volume and 1 file in 1 folder.</p> <p>Woman's Home Mission Circle. Minute books: 1875-August 1884. 1 volume in 1 folder. September 1884 – January 1891. 1 volume in 1 folder.</p> <p>Woman's Foreign Mission Circle. Minute book no. 2, June 1879 – August 1885. 1 volume in 1 folder.</p> <p>Minute book. 1 volume and 2 files in 1 folder. Record of the Woman's Foreign Mission Circle/Missionary Society, [September] 1885 – December 1890, pp. 1-121; and the Committee on Women's Missionary Work [foreign and home missions], January 1891-1892, pp. 122 ff.</p> <p>The files, which follow the volume in the folder, include loose reports and print materials relating to studies in foreign missions that previously were inserted in the volume pages, and materials relating to the Mission Study Class, 1890.</p>

Committee on Women's Missionary Work [foreign and home missions]. Minute book, 1893-1898. 1 volume in 1 folder.
Young Women's Tuesday Club. Minute book, 1911, 1915-1920.
Optimist Club. "Optimist Booster," 1914-1915.
Newsletter of a club for young men.

Baptist Young People's Union (BPYU). Minute book, 1898-1908.
1 volume in 1 folder.
Sabbath School. Treasurer's record book, 1857-1860.
Sunday School. Superintendents roll books, 1871-1872; 1880. 2 volumes in 1 folder.
Attendance records.

Bible school. Minute books:
These volumes are a continuation of the Sabbath School and Sunday School records. In addition to minutes, they include a variety of related manuscript and print materials attached to the volume pages.

1888-1899.

1903-April 1924.

May 1924-1930.

Records removed from Bible school minute book May 1924-1930, 1926-1929.

Items formerly attached to the volume pages with pins, as well as some loose items inserted in the volume pages, removed and filed in the folder.

Willing workers. Newsletter, 1881-[1883?].

Willing Workers was a children's group in which participants were taught about mission work.

Related Organizations

Location	Box	
149.J.2.6F	4	Minnesota Baptist Association. Minute book, 1877-1890. 1 volume in 1 folder. Park Avenue Baptist Mission. Record book, 1890-1892. 1 volume and 1 file in 1 folder. The file, which contains loose items formerly inserted in the volume pages, includes an historical sketch (1890) of the mission.

RELATED MATERIALS

Additional materials relating to the First Baptist Church of Saint Paul and to some individuals associated with it are available in the Minnesota Historical Society print, sound and visual, and manuscript collections.

CATALOG HEADINGS

This collection is indexed under the following headings in the catalog of the Minnesota Historical Society. Researchers desiring materials about related topics, persons or places should search the catalog using these headings.

Topics:

African American Baptists -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Baptist associations -- Minnesota.
Baptist church buildings -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Baptist women -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Baptists -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Baptists -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul -- Societies, etc.
Baptists -- Missions.
Church finance -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Church records and registers -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Church work with children -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Church work with young adults -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Church work with youth -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
City churches -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Home missions -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Religious education -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Sunday schools -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Vacation schools, Christian -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Women in church work -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.
Women in missionary work -- Minnesota -- Saint Paul.

Places:

Saint Paul (Minn.) -- Church history.
Saint Paul (Minn.) -- Statistics, Vital.

Persons:

Beeman, Hulbert G., 1872-1916.
Bishop, Harriet E., 1817-1883.
Buttrick, Wallace, 1853-1926.
Cavender, Abram H. (Abram Holmes), 1815-1906.
Conley, John Wesley, b. 1852.
Cross, Henry, b. 1840.
Mabie, Henry Clay, 1847-1918.
McDonald, Archibald M.
Merrill, Daniel D. (Daniel David), 1834-1896.
Parsons, John P., b. 1851.
Paterson, Robert A. (Robert Adams).
Pattison, Harold, d. 1965.
Pope, John D., 1829-*ca.* 1926.
Randall, Sarah, A. O., 1843-1902.
Richter, C. Harold.
Stilwell, Herbert F., b. 1856.

Torbet, Andrew M., b. 1813.

Organizations:

Baptist Young People's Union of America.
Minnesota Baptist Association (1852-1891).
Minnesota Baptist Convention.
Minnesota Baptist State Convention.
Park Avenue Baptist Mission (Saint Paul, Minn.).
Twin City Baptist Union (Minn.).

Types of Documentation:

Church records.
Photographs.
Sermons.