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## First Congregational Church, Washington, DC

MSRC Staff

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH RECORDS  
Collection 35-1

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June 1980

## Scope Note

The members of the First Congregational Church of Washington, D.C. Were largely responsible for the founding of Howard University in 1867. Of the seventeen original incorporators of the bill which established the Howard University, fourteen belonged to the First Congregational church including Gen. Oliver Otis Howard, for whom the University was named.

The Church has a history of liberal policies on segregation and for many years it was the only place in Washington where Howard University was allowed to hold its commencement services.

The First Congregational Church was very influential. Before the original building was built, the Congregation used to hold services and meetings in the U.S. House of Representatives, probably due to the influence of its first pastor, Dr. Charles B. Boynton, who was also the chaplain to the House of Representatives.

The collection includes seventeen items, spans one-half linear foot. The records date from 1865 to 1870, and include addresses and sermons, official documents such as the by-laws, resolutions and programs. Of particular interest is a holographic resolution concerning the attitude of the church relative to the admission of colored members. There are two newspaper clippings relating interesting history of the church.

## Series Description

- Series A**  
Box 35-1  
**Addresses, Statements, Sermons**  
Addresses, statements, and sermons mostly for specific occasions or events, some from the pastor to the members and one on charges about the pastor.
- Series B**  
Box 35-1  
**Documents**  
Printed by-laws of the church (with holographic corrections), resolutions, minutes and proceedings.
- Series C**  
Box 35-1  
**Programs**  
Printed programs from specific events held by the church.
- Series D**  
Box 35-1  
**Clippings**  
Two clippings relating historic information on the church one specifically on the relationship of the church and the founding of the Howard University.

## Container List

### **Series A    Addresses, Statements, Sermons**

Box

Folder

35-1

- 1 Add. by Maj. Gen. O.O. Howard & Rev. Edwin Johnson at the Laying of the Cornerstone of the 1st. Cong. Church - Washington, D.C. 1866
- 2 Circular letter - by Charles B. Boynton, pastor, Nov. 1, 1867.
- 3 Circular letter to the Brethren - Oct. 24, 1868.
- 4 Sermon - Thanksgiving Sermon by Rev. C.B. Boynton, P.D. Chaplain House of Representatives - Nov. 29, 1866.
- 5 Sermon - A duty which the Colored People Owe Themselves by Rev. Dr. b Boynton - Nov. 17, 1867.
- 6 Statement - The True Position of the First Congregational Church, Washington, D.C.
- 7 Statement - Charges & Specifications touching Dr. C.B. Boynton.

### **Series B    Documents**

- 8 Articles of Faith - Covenant on part of Candidates & Church, Riles & Usages of 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church, D.C.
- 9 By-Laws of the First Congregational Society of Washington.
- 10 Resolution adopted by First Congregation Church - Nov. 25, 1867 - Wm. Webb, Clerk.
- 11 Minutes of the Gen. Assoc. of Congregational Church & Ministers of N.J. with Constitution adopt: 6/2/1869.
- 12 Proceedings of the Ex-Part Council held at the First Congregational Church – Nov. 18-20, 1868.

### **Series C    Programs**

- 13 Program - Council to Recognize the Fellowships-of the 1<sup>st</sup> Congregation Church of Washington, D.C. - Nov. 15, 1865.
- 14 Program - Installation of Rev. Dr. C.B. Boynton - Oct. 4, 1866.
- 15 Program - Installation & Dedication First Congregational Church, Washington, D.C. - April 20, 1870.
- 16 Order of Exercises of the Laying of the Cornerstone of the 1st. Congregational Church - Oct. 4, 1866.

### **Series D    Clippings**

- 17 Clippings - First Congregational Church - D.C. - H.U. Hist.