

Grace Methodist Episcopal Church (Haverhill, Mass.) Records, 1845, 1854-2009

Collection Summary

Reference Code:	MRQ, US.
Repository:	Special Collections, Haverhill Public Library, Haverhill, Massachusetts.
Call Number:	MSS 83
Creator:	Grace Methodist Episcopal Church (Haverhill, Mass.)
Title:	Grace Methodist Episcopal Church (Haverhill, Mass.) Records
Dates:	1845, 1854-2009
Size:	4.5 linear feet (10 boxes, 1 volume)
Language(s):	Collection materials are in English.
Abstract:	The Grace Methodist Episcopal Church of Haverhill records document the activities, memberships, financial transactions, pastoral activities, and social activities of the church in the 19 th and 20 th centuries.

Organizational History

Early History

As early as 1806, Methodists in Haverhill, Massachusetts, worshipped in the West Parish meeting house. Their first preacher of record was Abraham D. Merrill of Salem, New Hampshire. The first attempts of Methodists to hold regular meetings in the center of the town did not occur until 1830. Meetings were held every other Sunday for six months in the Masonic Hall on Water Street near Ferry Way. The Rev. Mr. Robins was the preacher. Interest in Methodism increased and by July of 1836, they were able to establish regular weekly services, held in Academy Hall on Winter Street. Preaching was done by itinerant preachers for a year. Then Samuel Norris was sent by the New Hampshire Conference to the Haverhill Mission for six months to organize the Methodists in the village. The church was started in the spring of 1837 with 42 members, and the Conference supplied the preachers. In the next year the membership grew to 150.

In 1839, some members of the Methodist Church left to join the Winter Street Church. By 1842, the church had nearly 200 members.

In the fall of 1843, meetings were moved to the new Union Hall, at the rear of Rufus Slocum's old tavern with the Reverend Blodgett and the Reverend Ezekiel Stickney. There the church

languished for about a year and in 1844, while Rev. C. H. Chase was pastor, it ceased to exist. Some members transferred to the Salem church, others joined a different denomination in the village.

In August 1851, Rev. Moses M. Chase came to Haverhill from Salem, New Hampshire, and was able to revive interest among Haverhill Methodists by holding meetings in the form of classes, with 25 people gathering in homes. Six months later on 14 February 1852, they began holding regular services in Athenaeum Hall with about 40 people in attendance. The Rev. William I. Case of Salem became the preacher and in May 1852, a Sunday School was organized. In June, Rev. James Pike was appointed to the Haverhill Mission. His congregation increased to approximately 60 to 100 members. He was succeeded by the Rev. G. W. H. Clark. Use of the town hall was granted for services by vote of the town meeting in March of 1853.

First Methodist Society

On 3 March 1853, the society was legally organized as the "First Methodist Society in Haverhill, Mass." The 38 members immediately built a church on Winter Street next to the Town Hall, at the cost of \$10,000. The dedication service took place on 16 February 1855. It was known as the First Methodist Church until it was renamed the Wesley Methodist Church in about 1880. Membership continued to increase and the building soon became too small. Years of discussion and planning for expansion passed.

In April of 1866, a group of ten men purchased a lot of land farther west on Winter Street that could become the site of a new church building. The Ladies Sewing Circle voted to raise \$5000 to pay for the new site. The people could not agree on a choice of procedure for providing more spacious quarters. The group of ten church leaders, in April 1869, purchased the adjacent estate. There was much discussion about whether to form a second society, to have a new church built, or for the old society to remain united and rebuild on a larger scale. Up to 1890, there were many members added to the congregation, but then a decline began and in 1906, Wesley Church merged with its offshoot, Grace Church. Some of its members went instead to the Winter Street Baptist Church and other churches. The building was sold to the Nazarene Pentecostal congregation.

Grace Methodist Episcopal Church

In 1870, 26 members of the First Methodist Church who separated from it immediately secured a place of assembly and worship. The first religious service of the Second Methodist Episcopal Society was held 6 March 1870. A Sunday School was started that same day with 152 attendants. Evening prayer meetings were held. Money was raised for a church library. By April, 74 people were received into the new church by a letter from the First Methodist Episcopal Church. Rev. Lorenzo D. Barrows was appointed as the pastor.

The trustees voted on 23 May 1870, to erect a new building on the lot already obtained. Ground was broken in August, and the cornerstone was laid in September. The architect, J. B. Samuels of Boston, designed the new building for a seating capacity of 700. The cost was \$55,790. By 1871, membership was 118 and Sunday School membership was 250. A fund of

\$6,000 was quickly raised by the Sunday School for an organ for the sanctuary. The name was changed to Grace Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1893, another group of Methodists living on Mt. Washington organized the Third Methodist Episcopal Church in Currier Square. In 1906, it merged with the First Methodist Episcopal congregation as a part of Grace Church, resulting in a membership of 560 people. Membership eventually peaked in 1937 at 1,000. In 1939, three branches of Methodism in the United States merged. The name adopted was The Methodist Church. Consequently, Grace Methodist Episcopal Church became Grace Methodist Church.

By the mid-1950s, the church members began to feel that a smaller building would be less burdensome to maintain and that a location in a residential neighborhood would be preferable. In 1958 the society purchased the Gale Hospital property at a cost of \$5,000. On 1 October 1961, there was a ground-breaking ceremony at 471 Main Street and the cornerstone was laid on 16 December 1962. Construction of the building was completed in 1963. The first service was held on 29 September 1963 in Fellowship Hall. In 1969, the Lena Gardner Memorial organ was purchased.

Attendance and membership gradually increased until the 1970s. Members began to consider the possibility of continuing with the original plan for a sanctuary on the front part of the property. The final vote on 18 June 1978 was for the conversion of the Bertha A. Walker Parish Hall into a permanent sanctuary and other modifications of the roof and in the kitchen and Sunday School rooms. These renovations were completed in October. The building was further improved in 1980 by the erection of a pitched roof and a small steeple above the front porch.

In 2003, the Grace United Methodist Church merged with the People's United Methodist Church of Bradford, Massachusetts, to become the Good Shepherd United Methodist Church. As of 2021, Good Shepherd was still active and the pastor was David Hoyt.

Succession of Ministers (partial)

L. D. Barrows (1870-1871)
Wilbur F. Crafts (1872-1873)
A. E. Drew (1874-1876)
Leon C. Field (1877-1879)
M. V. Prince (1880-1881)
Frank. K. Stratton (1881-1883)
William Ramsden (1883-1884)
Otis Cole (1885-1886)
C. J. Fowler (1884-1886)
Henry H. French (1887-1889)
C. W. Miller (1889-1891)
C. J. Fowler (1891-1894)
Elmer E. Reynolds (1895-1897)

Elwin Hitchcock (1898-1901)
Merritt C. Pendexter (1901)
Herbert D. Deetz (1902-1907)
Nelson G. Lyons (1907-1912)
Charles C. Garland (1913-1916)
Hiram William Hook (1917-1925)
Harry O. Martin (1925-1929)
Edward A. Durham (1929-1934)
Harold Daniel Hawver (1934-1936)
Leroy W. Stringfellow (1937-1939)
Clement B. Yinger (1940-1944)
Raymond S. Proudfoot (1945-1951)
Oscar M. Polhemus (1951-1954)
Luther E. Tyson (1954-1958)
Jonathan W. King (1958-1961)
Norman T. Allers (1961-1966)
W. Ralph Bruce (1966-1971)
Calvin Warburton (1971-1975)
Robert Crabtree (1975-1983)
Charles L. Banks (1987-1994)
Peter K. H. Chyung (1994-)

Arrangement

Series 1. Administrative, 1854, 1869-2002, undated

Series 2. Financial, 1845, 1854-1861, 1870-1872, 1889-1908, 1919, 1928, 1948-1996, undated

Series 3. Pastoral, 1871-2007, undated

3.1 Pastors' Papers, 1871-1872, 1889-1977, 1987-2007, undated

3.2 Membership, 1897-1898, 1916, 1934, 1940-2001, 2006

3.3 Newsletters, 1945, 1952-2002

3.4 Programs, 1871-1881, 1907, 1920, 1930-1987, 2004-2006, undated

Series 4. Church Social Activities, 1878, 1893, 1908, 1914-1917, 1923-1987, 2006-2009, undated

Series 5. Other, 1857-1878, 1891-2006, undated

Scope and Content Note

The Grace Methodist Episcopal Church of Haverhill, Massachusetts, records document the activities, memberships, financial transactions, pastoral activities, and social activities of the church in the 19th and 20th centuries. Series one contains administrative records such as This series contains deeds, correspondence, board of trustees meeting minutes, building committee records, annual reports, architectural plans, and information about mergers. Series two contains subscriptions, bills and receipts, mortgages, bequests, fundraising campaign materials, correspondence, a budget brochure, an audit, and other financial documents. Series three

contains mostly news clippings about ministers, but also includes a pastoral letter, an invitation to services, some Christmas cards, a list of pastors, church conference material, a study of Methodism in Haverhill, Vision Task Force material, membership directories and lists, baptism records, record books, certificates of transfer, a membership certificate, Christmas memorials, newsletters used to communicate with church members, programs for services held at the church, and programs for events, such as concerts and plays, held at the church. Series four contains records of various church groups such as Sunday School, women's groups, and theatrical groups. Series five contains news clippings, histories of the church, programs, a printer's plate, a wall calendar, photographs, blank stationery, admission tickets, images, slides, and more.

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation:	[Item Identification], Grace Methodist Episcopal Church (Haverhill, Mass.) Records, MSS 83, Special Collections, Haverhill Public Library, Haverhill, Massachusetts.
Custodial History:	Unknown.
Acquisition Information:	The "Records of Meetings of the Leaders and Stewards of 1 st ME Church" was a gift of Charles Potter (#212596). One copy of the History and Directory dated 1891 (#3243) is on loan from the Haverhill Historical Society. The provenance of the rest of the material is unknown.
Processing Information:	Processed by Tamara Gaydos, 2021. Revised by Elizabeth Smith, 2025.
Access Rights:	Collection is open for research.
Phys. Access Restrictions:	None.
Tech. Access Restrictions:	The Haverhill Public Library does not own equipment required for viewing of the slides.
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Related Collections:	None.
Separated Material:	Books and other printed material were separated from the collection and cataloged separately.
Conservation Notes:	Newspaper clippings were photocopied onto archival quality paper. Paper clips and staples were removed.
Subjects:	Church buildings Church bulletins Church finance

Church history
 Church membership
 Church youth groups
 Clergy
 Crafts, Wilbur F. (Wilbur Fisk), 1850-1922
 Deetz, Herbert D., 1869-1927
 First Methodist Episcopal Church (Haverhill, Mass.)
 Good Shepard United Methodist Church (Haverhill, Mass.)
 Grace Methodist Episcopal Church (Haverhill, Mass.)
 History--Massachusetts—Haverhill
 Methodist church buildings
 Pews and pew rights
 People's United Methodist Church (Bradford, Mass.)
 Third Methodist Episcopal Church (Haverhill, Mass.)
 Women--Societies and clubs
 Worship programs

Collection Inventory

Series 1: Administrative, 1854, 1869-2002, undated

This series contains deeds, correspondence, board of trustees meeting minutes, building committee records, annual reports, architectural plans, and information about mergers, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Deed for First Methodist Episcopal Church, 1854	6	1
Specifications for Winter Street church building, 1869-1870	6	2
Building Committee, correspondence and agreements, 1870-1871, undated	1	1
Deed for Winter Street property, 1880, 1891, 1894, 1899	6	3
"Records of meetings of the leaders and stewards of the First ME Church Haverhill, Mass.," 1885-1894	1	2
Board of Trustees minutes, 1903-1914	1	2A
Consolidation with Third Methodist Church, 1906	1	3
Correspondence, 1906, 1921-1925, 1931, 1945, undated	1	4
Trustees' meeting minutes, 1906-1955	9	Vol. 1
Trustees' by-laws, 1909-1910	1	4A
Corporation name change, 1947	1	5
Planning Board report, 1948	6	4
Bound annual reports, 1949-1996 [12 volumes]	10	
Building permit, 1951	6	5

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Trustees' meeting minutes, 1955-1970	9	Vol. 2
Demolition of the Gale building, agreement, 1958	6	6
Building Committee, members, meeting minutes, 1958-1965	7	1
Building Committee, correspondence, 1958-1965	7	2
Building Committee, forms, miscellaneous, data on bids, 1961-1965	7	3
Building Committee, news clippings, contract, treasurer's reports, inventory of equipment and furnishings, 1962-1965	7	4
Annual report, 1959	1	6
First floor architectural plans, 1961	1	6A
Trustees' meeting minutes, 1971-1983	9	Vol. 3
Building plans, 1976	6	7
Seating plan and pew end details, architectural plans, 1978	1	6B
Trustees' meeting minutes, 1983-1989	9	Vol. 4
Officers, 1986-1987	1	6C
Board of trustees and administrative council meeting minutes, 1993	1	7
Board of trustees and administrative council meeting minutes, 1994	1	8
Board of trustees and administrative council meeting minutes, 1995-1996	1	9
Merger with People's United Methodist Church, 2002	1	10
Public statutes of Massachusetts relating to Grace M. E. Church's trustees' duties, undated	1	10A

Series 2: Financial, 1845, 1854-1861, 1870-1872, 1889-1908, 1919, 1928, 1948-1996, undated

This series contains subscriptions, bills and receipts, mortgages, bequests, fundraising campaign materials, correspondence, a budget brochure, an audit, and other financial documents, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Bills and receipts, 1854, 1861, 1870-1872, 1889-1892, 1906-1908, undated	1	11
Mortgage for Winter Street, 1858	6	8
Weekly collecting book, 1870-1871	9	Vol. 5
Subscriptions, 1870-1872, undated	1	12
Notes and other financial documents, 1845, 1858, 1870-1872, 1893, 1903, undated	1	13
Discharge of mortgage, 1903	7	5
Receipt of proceeds from sale of First Methodist Episcopal Church, 1908	7	6
Bequests, 1908, 1919, 1928	7	7

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Treasurer's correspondence, 1917, 1948, 1958, 1972	7	8
Bills and receipts, 1951, 1961	1	14
Fundraising campaign materials, 1951, 1960, 1968, 1985, undated	1	15
Mortgage, 1964	6	9
Building fund, financial reports, 1975-1978	7	9
Budget brochure, 1978	1	16
Annual report, 1988	7	10
Annual audit, 1996	7	11
Expenses/receipts, undated	7	12

Series 3: Pastoral, 1871-2007, undated

This series consists of four subseries: 3.1, Pastors' Papers; 3.2, Newsletters; 3.3 Membership; and 3.4 Programs.

Subseries 3.1: Pastors' Papers, 1871-1872, 1889-1977, 1987-2007, undated

This subseries contains mostly news clippings about ministers, but also includes a pastoral letter, an invitation to services, some Christmas cards, a list of pastors, church conference material, a study of Methodism in Haverhill, and Vision Task Force material, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Wilbur F. Crafts , pastoral letter, 1872; news clippings, 1920-1922	1	17
Frank K. Stratton , news clippings, 1927	1	18
Otis Cole , news clippings, 1896, 1915, 1922	1	19
Invitation to services, Otis Cole, pastor, undated [1885-1886]	1	20
George W. Farmer , news clippings, 1903, 1934	1	21
William Ramsden , news clipping, 1928	1	22
Henry H. French , news clippings, 1928-1929	1	23
Elwin Hitchcock , news clippings, 1900-1901, 1919	1	24
M. C. Pendexter , news clipping, 1901	1	25
Herbert D. Deetz , news clippings, 1902-1907; letter, 1906; note, 1909	1	26
Nelson G. Lyons , news clippings, 1907, 1913	1	27
Charles C. Garland , news clippings, 1916, 1936	1	28
Hiram William Hook , news clippings, 1923-1925	1	29
Harry O. Martin , news clippings, 1925, 1929	1	30
Edward A. Durham , news clippings, 1929-1930, 1947	1	31

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Harold D. Hawver , news clipping, 1934	1	32
Leroy W. Stringfellow , news clippings, 1943, 1977, undated	1	33
Clement B. Yinger , news clippings, 1939-1944, 1972; Christmas cards, undated	1	34
Raymond S. Proudfoot , news clippings, 1944-1951, 1961	1	35
Oscar M. Polhemus , news clippings, 1951-1954	1	36
Luther E. Tyson , news clippings, 1954-1958	1	37
Jonathan W. King , news clippings, 1958-1961	1	38
Norman T. Allers , news clippings, 1961-1966	1	39
W. Ralph Bruce , news clipping, 1966	1	40
Peter K. H. Chyung , news clipping, 1994	1	41
Robert E. Crabtree , memorial service program, 1994	7	13
Camp meeting lot deeds, 1871, 1889	7	14
<i>Directory of the New Hampshire Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church</i> (held at the Grace M. E. Church), 1902	1	42
Quarterly conference meeting minutes, 1906	7	15
List of pastors, undated [1950s]	1	43
<i>The Haverhill Study</i> [study of future of Methodism in Haverhill], 1957	7	16
New Hampshire Methodist Church Conference, program, 1953; daily newsletter, 1987; agenda, preparation and instructions, 1990	1	44
Vision Task Force retreat, 1999	7	17
Annual Report to the Charge Conference, 2001	7	18
Annual Church Conference [as Good Shepherd United Methodist Church], reports, 2004, 2007	1	45

Subseries 3.2: Membership, 1897-1898, 1916, 1934, 1940-2001, 2006

This subseries contains membership directories and lists, baptism records, record books, certificates of transfer, a membership certificate, and Christmas memorials, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Member directory, 1897-1898	2	1
<i>Directory and Manual of the Grace Methodist Episcopal Church</i> , 1916	2	1A
Membership certificates for Leola B. Becker, 1934, 1943	2	2

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Membership record book #14, 1940-1973	9	Vol. 6
Birthday Anniversary Calendar, 1942	7	19
Program and directory, 1959-1960	2	3
Baptism records, 1965-1992	7	20
Membership register #15, 1973-2001	9	Vol. 7
Index to membership record books, undated	9	Vol. 8
Member directories, undated [post-1966, 1974]	2	4
Notification of moved members, 1971-1975	7	21
Certificates of transfer, 1975-1994	6	10
Member directory, 1985	2	5
Christmas memorials, 1992	2	6
Membership lists, 1985, 1988, 1994	2	7
Good Shepherd United Methodist Church membership list, 2006	2	8

Subseries 3.3: Newsletters, 1945, 1952-2002

This subseries contains newsletters used to communicate with church members, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
<i>The Mercury</i> newsletter, 1945; <i>Parish News</i> , 1959; <i>Grace Methodist News</i> newsletters, 1961-1963	2	9
<i>Mustard Seed</i> newsletters, 1952-1954	Volume 1	
Newsletters, 1964-1966	2	10
Newsletters, 1967-1970	2	11
Newsletters, 1971-1976	2	12
<i>The Mid-Week Call to Worship</i> newsletters, 1974-1975	2	13
Newsletters, 1977-1979	3	1
Newsletters, 1980-1988	3	2
<i>Grace-Notes</i> newsletters, 1994-1999; <i>Grace Weekly News</i> , 1999; <i>Grace's Good News</i> newsletter, 2002	3	3

Subseries 3.4: Programs, 1871-1881, 1907, 1920, 1930-1987, 2004-2006, undated

This subseries contains both programs for services held at the church as well as programs for events, such as concerts and plays, held at the church, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Sabbath School first anniversary program, 1871	3	4
Programs, 1871-1873, 1880, 1907, 1920, 1930-1947	3	5
Dedication of the memorial windows, program, 1946	3	6
Programs, 1950-1953	3	7
<i>Souvenir Program with Activities of Dedication Week</i> , 1952	3	8
Programs, 1960-1999, undated	3	8A
Programs held at Grace Church, 1871, 1879, 1881, 1932, 1940-1959, 1966-1974, 2004-2006, undated	3	9
Memorial service, obituaries, 1999	7	22

Series 4: Church Social Activities, 1878, 1893, 1908, 1914-1917, 1923-1987, 2006-2009, undated

This series contains records of various church groups such as Sunday School, women's groups, and theatrical groups, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Haverhill and Bradford Sunday School Union, annual meeting program, 1878	3	10
Woman's Home Missionary Society, receipt, 1893	3	11
Massachusetts Sunday School Association, annual convention program, 1908, 1917	3	12
<i>The Eclipse Cook Book</i> by the Ladies' Circle, 1914	8	1
Invitation to hear a temperance speaker, 1916	3	13
Sunday School, weekly offering envelopes, 1923-1924	8	2
Scrapbook about plays and theatrical performances at the church, 1924-1947	5(OS)	
The Little Light Bearers enrollment card for Donald Murray, 1925	8	3
Home Missionary Society, bank passbook, 1931-1938	8	4
Ladies Aid Society, list of goods delivered, 1936	8	5
Grace Church Players and Epworth League programs, 1933-1939	3	14
Strive To Do Right (STDR) records, 1942-1954	4	1
KTP Class record book, 1908-1913	9	Vol. 9
History of the KTP class, 1910, 1958	4	2

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
KTP Class meeting minutes, 1963-1982	8	6
Missionary work of Francis and Patricia Grose, article, 1966	4	3
Women's Society of Christian Service records, 1967-1974	8	7
The Couples Club/Methodist Adult Fellowship in Action, scrapbook of two performances, 1972-1973	8	8
"The Jesse Tree," script, 1976	4	3A
United Methodist Women, "Yummy Sale" and other dinner tickets and news clippings, 1983-1987; program books, 2006-2009 [2 volumes]	4	4
Director of Music, position description, 1984	4	4A
Methodist Youth Fellowship, program, undated	4	4B
Explanation of the transfer of the Ladies Circle to Grace M. E. Church, undated	4	4C

Series 5: Other, 1857-1878, 1891-2006, undated

This series contains news clippings, histories of the church, programs, a printer's plate, a wall calendar, photographs, blank stationery, admission tickets, images, slides, and more, arranged chronologically.

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
News clippings, 1857-1878, 1891-1939	4	5
<i>History and Directory of the First Methodist Episcopal Church Haverhill, Mass., 1891; A History of the Grace Methodist Church Haverhill, Massachusetts, 1806-1952, 1952</i>	4	6
<i>A History of the Methodist Church in Haverhill, Massachusetts, 1806-1990</i>	8	9
News clippings, 1940-1962	4	7
Boston Methodist Social Union, program, 1942	4	8
Merrimac Valley Methodist Youth Fellowship, institutes programs, 1942-1944, undated	4	9
Printer's plate for newspaper photograph, 1944	4	10
History, 1946, 1969, 1987	4	11
Photographs, 1955-1995, undated	8	10
Scrapbook, 1958-1981	9	Vol. 10
News clippings, 1963-2006, undated	4	12
Description of organ, 1976	4	13
Wall calendar, 1987	4	14
Historical sketch by Mrs. S. A. Dow, undated	4	15
Bicentennial dinner admission ticket, 1984; admission tickets, undated	4	16

<u>Folder Title</u>	<u>Container Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>
Image of Haverhill Trade School calendar, 1965; Image on stationery, printed image, blank letterhead and envelopes, undated	4	17
Slides, undated	4	
[Memorial windows list], undated	6	11
Haverhill street plan, undated	6	12
Description of a Bible given by Mrs. Anna B. Davenport, undated	8	11