

# Finding Aid for the Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church records Collection 504

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Grand Rapids History and Special Collections

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Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

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URL: <https://www.grpl.org/research/history/>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Grand Rapids History and Special Collections
<b>Source:</b>	Grandville - Jenison Congregational Church
<b>Title:</b>	Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church records
<b>ID:</b>	Collection 504
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1838-2019
<b>Physical Description:</b>	1 Linear Feet 2 boxes
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .
<b>Abstract:</b>	The Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church began as an Indian Mission School, along the banks of the Grand River. In 1889 the church became The First Congregational Church of Grandville and Articles of Incorporation and Association were adopted. Around 1903 the Congregational Church of Jenison was organized and a frame building erected in 1905. In 1935 the First Congregational Church of Grandville and the Jenison Congregational Church formally merged to become the Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church. The Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church records include Articles of Association, meeting minutes and membership lists, Sunday school records, dedication service bulletins, church directories, anniversary booklets and histories.

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## Biographical / Historical

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An Indian Mission School, along the banks of the Grand River, and run by Leonard Slater, eventually became the First Congregational Society of Grandville in 1838. Its Articles of Faith and Covenant were adopted on April 25, 1839 and a building erected in 1855. In 1889 the church's name became The First Congregational Church of Grandville and Articles of Incorporation and Association were adopted.

Due to a lack of leadership the church closed for a few years from 1903 until 1907. During this time the Congregational Church of Jenison was organized and a frame building erected in 1905. By 1925 the Jenison Church was struggling due to the loss of its aging congregation. A young

graduate of Chicago Theological Seminary, Harold T. Janes, was called to serve as pastor and was successful in reviving the church.

In 1907 Rev. Mortier C. Bullock was sent by the Congregational Union of Grand Rapids to reopen and reorganize the First Congregational Church of Grandville. The church grew and membership was 130 by 1912. A new church building was constructed in 1916. From 1907 through 1923 the Grandville and Jenison Congregational Churches shared a pastor but not a building.

In the 1930s a doctrinal and governmental controversy erupted in the First Congregational Church of Grandville resulting in by-laws amended to ensure only a minister sympathetic to the doctrines and practices of the Congregational Church would serve the church.

In 1934 discussions of a merger of the Congregational Church of Jenison and the First Congregational Church of Grandville began. The churches began meeting in the Grandville building in 1935. On April 22, 1935 the churches formally merged and became the Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church. The Rev. C.H. Stowe was called to serve the new church.

A fire destroyed the church on New Year's Day in 1944 and the bell was all that survived. A new, all purpose building was built on Henry Street in 1948. In 1961 the church voted to become a part of the United Church of Christ. Shortly thereafter a new church sanctuary was built and completed in 1964, where the church bell was placed in the tower.

In 1994 the membership voted to drop membership in the United Church of Christ and join the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference. In 2010 the church dropped their affiliation with the CCCC and voted to have no affiliation with a national organization.

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## Scope and Contents

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The Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church records includes Articles of Association, meeting minutes and membership lists, Sunday school records, dedication service bulletins, church directories, anniversary booklets and histories.

Those researching the history of Grandville and Jenison, Michigan and/or Congregational Church history in West Michigan may find this collection of interest. Genealogy researchers whose family members attended the Grandville-Jenison Congregation Church, or either of the churches who combined to create it, may find these records of interest as well.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

The Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church records were donated by Sue Waalkes, Historian of the Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church.

Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church, 2013.032

Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church histories and directories, 2019.018

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Church records and registers -- Michigan
- Grandville (Mich.)
- Religion
- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- Church history
- Grandville - Jenison Congregational Church

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## Collection Inventory

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Title/Description	Instances	
Sunday School, 1868-1885	Box 1	
Sunday School, 1908	Box 1	Folder 3
Minutes and Membership, 1838-1869	Box 1	Folder 1
Minutes and Membership, 1868-1907	Box 1	

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Minutes and Membership, 1907-1916	Box 1	
Minutes and Membership, 1917-1934	Box 1	
Minutes and Membership, 1923-1936	Box 1	
Minutes and Membership, 1903-1924	Box 1	Folder 2
Society, 1863-1891	Box 1	Folder 4
Correspondence, notes and receipts, 1885-1931	Box 1	Folder 5
Articles of Association , 1891	Box 1	Folder 6
Articles of Association, undated	Box 1	Folder 6
Histories, 1931-1933	Box 1	Folder 7
Centennial article and history, 1938	Box 2	Folder 1
Dedication service, 1949	Box 2	Folder 2
New building campaign booklet, 1960	Box 2	Folder 3
Dedication of new addition, 1965	Box 2	Folder 4
History of the Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church booklet and order of worship, 1968	Box 2	Folder 5
The Memorial Mosaic Panels booklet and photograph, 1970	Box 2	Folder 6
Order of worship and list of memorials , 1977	Box 2	Folder 7
Mortgage burning booklet, 1977	Box 2	Folder 8
Sesquicentennial materials, 1988	Box 2	Folder 9
175th Anniversary calendar and history, 2013	Box 2	Folder 10
Church directories 2004, 2009 and 2014	Box 2	Folder 11
Beary Best Recipes, 2000	Box 2	Folder 12
History and current membership, 2019	Box 2	Folder 13
Pastors, Officers, Membership, Baptisms, Marriages, Adult Baptisms, 1953-1962	Box 2	