

**ARTICLES OF FAITH AND
COVENANT OF
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
WEST BARNSTABLE, MASS.**

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VARIOUS

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THE WEST BARNSTABLE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

ARTICLES OF FAITH
AND
COVENANT
OF THE
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,

WEST BARNSTABLE, MASS.

WITH

BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCH, REGULATIONS,
AND CATALOGUE OF MEMBERS,
MAY, 1892.

Compiled by REV. H. E. THYGESON, Pastor.

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A BRIEF HISTORY
OF THE
WEST BARNSTABLE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

In the year 1616, this church was organized in the city of London, England, by Rev. Henry Jacob, who had been a minister of the Church of England, and had left it because of its errors and corruption. Being subject to persecution he left his native land for Leyden, Holland. Here he consulted the celebrated John Robinson, who was a dissenter like himself, and who had because of persecution moved with his church, a dissenting congregation, to Holland, in 1608.

After varied experiences on the continent, Mr. Jacob returned to England where he gathered together the most intelligent of the Puritans, and opened to them a plan to set up a separate congregation, that they might enjoy the ordinances of Christ in a more pure manner. Having set apart a day of prayer and fasting for divine blessing on their undertaking, and making open confession of their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and solemnly covenanting with each other in the presence of God to walk in all of his ordinances. Thus the foundation was laid of the First Independent Congregational Church, by that name, in England.

After its organization, Mr. Jacob was its pastor for eight years. Owing to violent persecution against him and his church, in 1624, he left it in England and came to America where he soon died.

The Rev. John Lothrop, in 1625, became its second pastor, he also was a dissenting minister from the English Church, he continued its pastor for about seven years. In the Spring of 1632, Mr. Lothrop and his congregation were discovered worshipping in a house belonging to one Mr. Humphrey Barnet, by a servant of the Bishop, and forty-two of them with Mr. Lothrop were apprehended and cast into prison. Here they continued for about two years, when they were released on bail, all except Mr. Lothrop. After many efforts for his relief he finally petitioned to the king, who granted a release on the condition that he would leave the kingdom. He came to New England, in 1634, with thirty-four of his church and congregation, and settled in Scituate. In 1639 he moved with a majority of his church and people to Barnstable. Here he continued pastor of the church until his death, Nov. 8th, 1653. The whole period covered by his ministry was twenty-eight years, including nine in England, five in Scituate, fourteen in Barnstable.

It is not known how many members there were in the church when Mr. Lothrop died.* During the ministry of Mr. Lothrop, it is known that there was a revival of religion and many were added to the church.

*The above statement has been made by previous writers, and afterwards the same writers have claimed to give the exact number of all who have united with the church. The Old Records only give a copy of a list of 153 persons who were baptized by Mr. Lothrop. These may have been counted as members of the church. Undoubtedly many of them were.

After the death of Mr. Lothrop the church was destitute of a pastor for about 10 years. We learn from Freeman's History of Cape Cod, Vol. 2, page 263, "That a Mr. William Sergeant officiated for a time, also a Rev. John Smith is reported to have officiated for a while," and a Mr. John Mayo of Eastham supplied as a teacher. From the following note there appears to have been but little union in the church during these ten years: "Plymouth Church records," "Nov. 1654. The unhappy difficulties that fell out in the church at Be (Barnstable) had such an ill influence on the church at Plymouth, that together with the unsettledness of the church, and the going away of divers of its members, yea, of the most eminent of them, it was the means of the unsettlement of that holy man of God, Rev. John Reynor its Pastor." Freeman's History, Vol. 2, page 262.

The Rev. Thomas Walley was ordained as pastor in 1663. He continued in that capacity for 15 years. In the Old Church Records it is written of him: "The Lord was pleased to make him a blessed peacemaker, and improved him in ye work of his house here, till March 28th, 1678, being Lord's day morning, about forenoon meeting time, and then he called him out of his earthly tabernacle into that house not made with hands."

We have no record of baptisms, or members received by Mr. Walley. When Mr. Russell began his labors there was found to be seventy-four members and one hundred and seventy-two baptisms. How many of these were baptized and admitted to the church during Mr. Walley's ministry is

not known, for there is nothing in our records to show. We have but a very little recorded by Mr. Walley.

Five years after the death of Mr. Walley, in 1683, Rev. Jonathan Russell was ordained. He continued as pastor until his death, February 2nd, 1711, a period of twenty-eight years. During his ministry one hundred and seventy-one were added to the church, and four hundred and fifty-two received baptism. His son Rev. Jonathan Russell succeeded him in his pastoral office. He was ordained in 1712. He was a faithful minister until his death, September 10th, 1759, a period of forty seven-years. During that time two hundred and forty-two were added to the church, and five hundred and sixty-three received baptism.

In 1715 the Old Church was divided. The following copied from the Old Records shows the results of the division :

“In Feb. 1716 we had a council when leave was given by y^e Chh to y^e Breen concerned in the New Meeting-house to get a suitable person to dispense y^e Word to them till such a time as y^e town should be divided into precincts which was some time after, and then they put me upon making my choice which precinct I would chose to be of and preach too. The motion was made by some particular persons. This was in April 1718, but my reply to them was that when each precinct had once met the Engaged to fulfil the town contract then I would make my choice. But the West End not having the meeting house ready did nothing So it was Aug. 1719 before I took my choice and the first of my preaching in the West meeting was on Thanksgiving day Nov. 1719. And then the Old meeting-house being deserted y^e pp below of y^e East precinct went out for a

minister Deacon Childs went and obtained Mr. Welstead who tarryd with them about six weeks, and then went home. After him they had several ministers preached, some of them were called in order to settle att length Mr. Green of Boston was called upon probation."

Aug. 1760, Rev. Oakes Shaw was ordained and succeeded Mr. Russell. His ministry covered a period of forty-six and a half years.

He died February 11th, 1807. During his ministry two hundred and forty were admitted to the church and three hundred and sixty-six received baptism.

Rev. Enoch Pratt was ordained October 28th, 1807. He continued his ministry until October 8th, 1835, and at his own request was dismissed. During his ministry two hundred and forty-four were admitted to the church and three hundred and eighty baptized.

May 18th, 1836, Rev. Alfred Greenwood of Boston was ordained pastor. He was dismissed May 5th, 1840. Ten were admitted to the church and nine baptized.

October 28th, 1840, Rev. Thomas Riggs was installed pastor, and dismissed August 22nd, 1842. Three added to the church and eight baptized.

Rev. Alonzo Hayes was ordained pastor May 24th, 1843. During his ministry twenty-two were added to the church and twenty baptized. He was dismissed July 9th, 1850.

Rev. Ebenezer Chase supplied the pulpit for seven months in 1850. In 1852, the Old Church built in 1717 was re-modeled, and re-dedicated November 18th, 1852. December