

**MANUAL OF THE SOUTHPORT
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
IN SOUTHPORT, CONN. 1843-
1882**

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Manual of the Southport Congregational Church in Southport, Conn. 1843-1882 by Various

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
HISTORY,	5—16
HISTORICAL SKETCH,	6, 7
PASTORS AND DEACONS,	8
FIRST CONFESSION OF FAITH AND COVENANT,	9—12
STATISTICS,	13—16
CONFESSION OF FAITH AND COVENANT,	17—19
RULES,	21—23
ROLL OF THE CHURCH,	25—59
PRESENT OFFICERS,	26
MEMBERS,	27—59
INDEX,	61—69



HISTORY.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

IN THE YEAR 1639, ROGER LUDLOW, a magistrate or deputy-governor of the colony of Connecticut, came from Windsor, with a few families, to what was then called by the Indians *Unquowa*, and began the settlement of the town of Fairfield. These first settlers were soon joined by others from Concord and Watertown, Massachusetts.

Fearing God, they at once formed a church, known in the beginning as "The First Church of Christ in Fairfield," and afterwards as "The First Church of Christ in Fairfield of the Congregational Order." The following were the first nine pastors of this church:

JOHN JONES,	1644 to 1664.
SAMUEL WAKEMAN,	1665 to 1692.
JOSEPH WEBB,	1694 to 1732.
NOAH HOBART,	1733 to 1773.
ANDREW ELIOT,	1774 to 1805.
HEMAN HUMPHREY,	1807 to 1817.
NATHANIEL HEWIT,	1818 to 1827.
JOHN HUNTER,	1828 to 1834.
LYMAN H. ATWATER,	1835 to 1854.

Southport was for many years a part of the Fairfield parish. The people of Southport, having built a meeting-house in their own village in 1841, resolved at a meeting held February 18, 1843, to form a new church, and therefore called a council of five neighboring churches for March 7, 1843. This council organized "The Southport Congregational Church," with a membership of twenty-eight. The sermon in the afternoon was by the Rev. Lyman H. Atwater, of Fairfield. In the evening the House was set apart to the worship of God, the Rev. Dr. Nathaniel Hewit, of Bridgeport, preaching the dedication sermon. The church was received into the Fairfield West Consociation June 6, 1843.

Mr. Samuel J. M. Merwin was ordained the first pastor of the church December 18, 1844. He served the church more than fourteen years, and was dismissed at his own request May 3, 1859.

The Rev. Charles E. Lindsley was installed pastor February 29, 1860. By his own desire he was dismissed February 16, 1869.

The Rev. George E. Hill was installed pastor March 22, 1870. During his ministry the old meeting-house was removed, and a stone house of worship built in its place. This was dedicated February 2, 1876. The sermon, from Haggai II, 9, was preached by the Rev. Samuel J. M. Merwin. Other parts in the service were taken by the Rev. Dr. Lyman H. Atwater, the Rev. Charles E. Lindsley, and the Rev. George E. Hill. Near the close of that year Mr. Hill resigned, and he was dismissed December 27, 1876.

Mr. William H. Holman was called October 2, 1877, to supply the pulpit for one year, and began work with the church December 2, 1877. A call to the pastorate was given him May 14, 1878, and he was ordained minister of the church June 12, 1878.