

**MANUAL OF THE FIRST  
EVANGELICAL  
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
IN CAMBRIDGEPORT**

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Manual of the First Evangelical Congregational Church in Cambridgeport by Various

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IN CAMBRIDGEPORT**



MANUAL

OF THE

*1st*  
First Evangelical Congregational  
Church

IN CAMBRIDGEPORT; *Mass.* —

CONTAINING THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH, ITS RULES,  
ARTICLES OF DOCTRINE, FORM OF ADMISSION,  
COVENANT, AND CATALOGUE  
OF MEMBERS.



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CAMBRIDGE:

Printed at the Riverside Press.

1870.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH.

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**T**HE First Evangelical Congregational Church formed in that part of the city of Cambridge usually called Cambridgeport, was gathered September 20, 1827. It consisted at its organization of forty-five members, most of whom, being residents of this place, had been previously connected with the Hanover Street Church, Boston, then under the pastoral care of Rev. Lyman Beecher, D. D.

A house of worship having been erected on Norfolk Street, it was solemnly dedicated to Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, on the day of the organization of the church. This house was built by subscription, and was held by the Deacons, *in trust*, for the use of the religious society worshipping in it, but subject, with certain restrictions, "to the ultimate and entire control of the church."

The first Pastor of the church, Rev. DAVID PERRY, was ordained April 23, 1829, and was dismissed at his own request, October 13, 1830. He was succeeded by Rev. WILLIAM AUGUSTUS STEARNS, who was ordained December 14, 1831, and continued his ministry till December 14, 1854, a period of twenty-three years; when the pastoral connection was dissolved, that he might accept the Presidency of Amherst College, to which he had been elected. The meeting-house was enlarged, to meet the wants of a growing society, in

1837, and again in 1840. The society being still incommoded for want of room, measures were subsequently taken for the erection of a new house of worship. Authority was obtained from the Supreme Court to sell the old house, with its furniture and appurtenances, and invest the proceeds in a new building, on conditions not inconsistent with the designs of the original donors. The additional stock necessary to carry this plan into operation having been subscribed for, the corner-stone of the new building, situated on Prospect Street, was laid, with appropriate religious services, on the 29th of July, 1851. The new meeting-house was dedicated on the afternoon of June 30, 1852. A sermon was preached on the occasion by the Pastor of the church, and Rev. Lyman Beecher, D. D., and Rev. Drs. Blagden and Adams, of Boston, took part in the exercises. The whole cost of the building, including land, furnishing, etc., was \$24,500.

This property is held by the Deacons of the church, and their successors in office, *in trust*, from whom the several pew proprietors receive the conveyance, by deed, of their respective pews. Under this organization, when it becomes necessary to settle a Pastor or colleague, it is the right and privilege of the church to nominate, and of the pew-holders to concur or non-concur; and upon their non-concurrence, the church nominate anew, until the parties agree; whereupon a call is extended to the Pastor elect. During the temporary absence or sickness of the Pastor, the pulpit is supplied by the church; and during a vacancy of the pastoral office, by a joint committee of five, to be chosen, three by the church, and two by the pew-owners. All questions of taxation are decided by the pew-owners.

After the dismissal of the Rev. Dr. Stearns, in December, 1854, the church remained without a Pastor till July, 1856, when the Rev. EDWARD W. GILMAN, from Lockport, N. Y., having received and accepted a call from the church to become its Pastor, entered upon the duties of his office, and was publicly installed on the 9th of September following. Mr. Gilman's ministry was continued till the 22d of October, 1858, when the pastoral connection was dissolved.

He was succeeded by Rev. JAMES O. MURRAY, of South Danvers, who was installed on the 1st of May, 1861, and dismissed on the 6th of February, 1865. In 1867, Rev. KINSLEY TWINING, of New Haven, Conn., was invited to become the Pastor, and was installed on the 12th of September of that year.

The number of members composing the church at its formation was, —	
Males, . . . . .	7
Females, . . . . .	38
	45
There have since been added, —	
By transfer from other churches, . . . . .	535
On profession of faith, . . . . .	396
	931
	976
Number dismissed to other churches, . . . . . 340	
“ deceased, . . . . .	168
“ excommunicated, . . . . .	12
	520
Present number, . . . . .	456
Males, . . . . .	139
Females, . . . . .	317



## PASTORS.

- Rev. DAVID PERRY, ordained April 23, 1829. Dismissed October 13, 1830.
- Rev. WILLIAM A. STEARNS, ordained December 14, 1831. Dismissed December 14, 1854.
- Rev. EDWARD W. GILMAN, installed September 9, 1856. Dismissed October 22, 1858.
- Rev. JAMES O. MURRAY, installed May 1, 1861. Dismissed Feb. 6, 1865.
- Rev. KINSLEY TWINING, installed September 12, 1867.

## DEACONS.

- WILLIAM FISK, chosen January 9, 1833. Died April 18, 1864.
- SAMUEL BARRETT, chosen January 9, 1833. Dismissed October 2, 1846.
- WILLIAM ADAMS, chosen July 3, 1846. Dismissed May 5, 1853.
- THADDEUS BOWMAN BIGELOW, chosen February 28, 1851. Dismissed December 19, 1856.
- WILLIAM DAVIS, chosen September 29, 1854.
- CALEB H. WARNER, chosen September 29, 1854.
- SUMNER ALBEE, chosen March 5, 1858.
- LUCAS B. GROVER, chosen April 24, 1868.
- HENRY N. TILTON, chosen April 24, 1868.

## ECCLESIASTICAL PRINCIPLES.

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**T**HE Christian Church is a union of all who are called and chosen through the Word and Spirit of God to be the possession of the Lord, who are united together by the public confession of a common faith in the Redeemer according to the command of Christ, and whose destination it is to promote each other's edification, and to coöperate towards the spread of their faith for the illumination, sanctification, and blessedness of mankind.

The Christian Church is in its essence an invisible society, held together by the invisible bond of the Holy Spirit, but visible in its manifestation, having an outward organization and polity, and distinguished by the presence of the Spirit in the hearts of its members, and by the ministration of the pure Word of Life and the Sacraments.

Any congregation of believers associating themselves together in this faith, and for these purposes, becomes, by the ordination of God and by the presence of the Holy Spirit, a Christian church complete in itself, independent and with jurisdiction over its own affairs.

The first church at Jerusalem formed itself in this way, according to the command of Christ, and in the power and bond of the Spirit. The other apostolic churches came into existence in the same manner.

The churches which walked in the ancient order of New England, founded their rights and their liberties on these principles. We have done the same, and organized an independent church on the "foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone" (Eph. ii. 20).

And while we are independent so far as relates to internal organization and to the administration of our local affairs, we mean to be governed in all matters of our own, and in those relating to other churches of our order, by the established principles of Congregational usage.

In common with other branches of the Christian Church, we believe that the Ministry is ordained of Christ, who "gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry" (Eph. iv. 11).

But we do not believe, as some do, that the power and authority of the church reside in the Ministry or flow through it, but that they belong to the church itself, and that the Ministry is given not to organize the brethren into a church, but to build them up as disciples, to secure an orderly ministration of the Word and of the Sacraments, and to be the natural head of the church in all its ministry.