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**MSS-09-006
North Taunton Baptist Church**

Historical & Biographical Note: The North Taunton Baptist Church was first established as the Free Will Baptist Society in the residence of Jeremiah and Hannah Bassett in 1747. Although many early records were lost in two separate fires in 1859 and 1900, some records persist from this time. Construction on the first meeting house for the society began in 1767 on the corner of Bay and Field Streets, where Rev. William Nelson served as the first minister from 1772 to 1795. The church underwent division in 1819, when a group of Calvinistic Baptists split from the North Taunton Baptists to form the Winthrop Street Baptist Church.

The present church was built in 1836 and 1837 on land deeded to the Free Will Baptist Society. Several renovations have taken place since then to update and maintain the building, including re-dedications of the church in 1892 and 1933. The North Taunton Baptist Church celebrated its 250th Anniversary in 1997.

Scope & Content Note: This box contains church records, correspondence, event programs, information on pastors, and newspaper articles regarding the First Free Will Baptist Society/North Taunton Baptist Church ranging from 1834 to 1997.

Series Description: This series contains one box with three books and five folders.

Inventory:

Box:	Folder:	Contents:
1	1	Handwritten book, "Records of 1 st F.W. B. Church in Taunton, Mass. organized in 1822," containing records of the Free Will/North Taunton Baptist Church from June 13, 1822 to April 3, 1841
	2	Handwritten book containing: the personal journal of Rev. Nelson Rich 1834-1896, pp. 5-19; records of Sermons, Baptisms, Marriages, and Funerals, pp. 100-255; and a Journal of Prominent Events, 1887-1894, pp. 260-261
	3	Book, Bible with noted in front J. W. Rich, December 25, 1878
	4a	Receipt for forty-nine dollars and sixty-four cents to Jeremiah Bassett, Taunton, November 25, 1837
		Receipt for three expenses to Jeremiah Bassett from Nathaniel K.

		Randall, October 16, 1837
		Receipt for fees to Jeremiah Bassett from Nathaniel K. Randall, October 4, 1837
		Receipt to Jeremiah Bassett from Nathaniel K. Randall for the Building Committee of the First Free Will Baptist Church, Taunton, September 14, 1837
		Receipt to Jeremiah Bassett from Nathaniel K. Randall for the building of the First Free Will Baptist Church, Taunton, September 8, 1837
		Receipt to Jeremiah Bassett from Nathaniel K. Randall for the Building Committee of the First Free Will Baptist Society, Taunton, August 21, 1834
		Receipt to Jeremiah Bassett from Nathaniel K. Randall for the Building Committee of the First Free Will Baptist Society, Taunton, July 24, 1837
		Receipt to Jeremiah Bassett from Nathaniel K. Randall for the Free Will Baptist meeting house, Taunton, June 26, 1837
		Receipt to Jeremiah Bassett from Nathaniel K. Randall for the Building Committee of the First Freewill Baptist Society, Taunton, May 12, 1837
		Receipt to Jeremiah Bassett from Nathaniel K. Randall for the Building Committee of the First Freewill Baptist Society, October 30, 1837
		Receipt to Jeremiah Bassett from Nathaniel K. Randall for building the meeting house, October 17, 1837
		Booklet, program for "The Amateur Drama Among the Breakers," written on reverse, "Played at the North Taunton Baptist Church December 15, 1874
		Handwritten bound booklet, "Preamble and Constitution of The Mite Society," August 27, 1851 to 1862
		Handwritten bound booklet, The Ladies Sewing Circle, Book 2, September 1869-February 1890
		Two sheets copied from p. 546 of <i>History of the Town of Norton from 1669-1859</i> , regarding The Baptist Society of Taunton and The Baptist Church in Norton
		Six sheets, correspondence and notes regarding The Baptist Society in Taunton, April 8, 1837 to February 24, 1841
		Note regarding quarterly dues for the First Free Will Baptist meeting house, Taunton, April 18, 1841
		Note on the marriage of David Austin Bassett and Naomi Wallace, the first at the church edifice, with an attached note from Reverend Mr. Folsom, April 19, 1840
		Five deeds for pews in the Free Will Baptist Society Meeting House in Taunton, January 1, 1838
		List of officers for the Auxiliary Missionary Society of North Taunton, April 1882
		Letter from Bennett & Fuller to Andrew R. Bassett regarding the sale of the church and lot of the Free Will Baptist Society, Taunton, June 26, 1874
		Seven sheets, program and speech for the Reopening of the Free Baptist Church of North Taunton, October 27, 1892
		Four sheets, notes on The Rededication of the Church, October 27, 1892

		Three sheets of a poem, "How I Earned my 'Steeple Dollar'"
		Notes on the church development and history from Nelle Rich French
		Sixteen sheets, Foreword and Reminiscent Poem at the rededication of the North Taunton Free Baptist Church by Mrs. Esther J. Howe, October 27, 1892
		Tax notification from the City of Taunton Treasurer and Collector of Taxes to the Baptist Society for 1893, May 7, 1894
		Three handwritten sheets, a poem written for the presentation of a bed quilt made by Miss Almira Pratt to Mrs. K. J. Rich, September 21, 1897
		Biographical notes on Rev. John Nelson Rich (1834-1905) by N. R. French
		Seven handwritten sheets, "The Future of the North Taunton Free Baptist Church and later adapted to the birthday celebration of Rev. J. N. Rich," February 24, 1895
		Two typed sheets, biographical notes on Rev. J. Nelson Rich (1834-1905)
		Four handwritten sheets, "Poem for Mr. Rich's 10 th Anniversary," December 1897 by George Everett Lincoln
		Seven handwritten sheets, "Written and read by Geo. E. Lincoln upon the occasion of Mr. Rich's 10 th anniversary," 1897
		Six handwritten sheets for Mr. J. N. Rich
	4b	Two typed pages, By Laws of Taunton Baptist Church, May 7, 1901
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping for the new pastor of the North Taunton Free Baptist Church, Rev. Manning Phillips Tobey, July 1905, with a written transcription of the article
		Three handwritten pages, "Members when Mr. Tobey came 1905" and other notes on church membership
		Program for entertainment at No. Taunton Free Baptist Church, "Two College Tramps" and "A Blind Attachment," May 5, 1909
		Four handwritten sheets of a poem, "Our Soldier Boys" for Howard R. Bassett's reception, March 4, 1918
		Seven handwritten sheets, "Outline of History" of the North Taunton Baptist Church, 1767-1925
		Handwritten copy of subscription given for electric lights in the parsonage, Christmas 1926
		Church Book notes, 1919-1932
		Two invitations to the rededication of the North Taunton Baptist Church, November 9, 1933
		Three sheets, Programs for the Rededication Service of the North Taunton Baptist Church, November 19, 1933
		Four handwritten sheets, "History of the North Taunton Baptist Church," copied from a letter of Thomas Lothrop to Mrs. Lucinda L. Lincoln
		Four handwritten sheets, "Data of the First Church in North Taunton," copied from a letter of Thomas Lothrop to Mrs. L. L. Lincoln
		Christmas card from Rev. Manning P. Tobey
		Handwritten sheet, Form used in safeguarding Church funds
		Three handwritten sheets, Young People's Union of Winthrop Street Baptist Church meeting, May 1934

		Letter of resignation of Mr. Tobey as pastor of the North Taunton Baptist Church with three notes attached, 1937
		Reply of the North Taunton Baptist Society to Rev. M. P. Tobey's letter of resignation as pastor of the church, March 22, 1937
		Biographical notes of Rev. Manning Phillips Tobey
		Five handwritten sheets, story written by Mrs. Ethel B. Manson for Rev. Manning Tobey at the reception celebrating his long pastorate, May 5, 1937
		Letter from W. Douglas Swaffield of Winthrop Street Baptist Church to Mrs. Manson recommending Mr. Owen Thompson as pastor of North Taunton Baptist Church, 1937
		Letter from Hugh A. Heath, General Secretary of the Massachusetts Baptist Convention, to Mrs. C. A. Field, June 15, 1937
		Letter from Heather L. Rice to Dr. Heath concerning Mr. Thompson as pastor of the North Taunton Baptist Church for a year, July 14, 1937
		Note of receipt from the Massachusetts Baptist Convention of the North Taunton Baptist Church Society, July 1937
		Four handwritten sheets, notes on Mr. Thompson's pastorate
		Handwritten poem to Mrs. Owen D. Thompson, January 20, 1939
		Two sheets, Entertainment program at North Taunton Baptist Church, June 21, 1939
		Program for "Songs, Anthems, Sette Pieces & Fugues of ye Olden Time" at the Union Meeting House, Whittington Hill, June 3, 1938
		Program for the Annual Union Thanksgiving Service of the North Taunton Baptist, East Raynham Baptist, and Congregational Churches of Raynham, November 20, 1938
		Fifteen typed pages, poem found in Louis Howard's barn about the North Taunton Baptist Church, written by Charles Lee Basset Sr., typewritten by Mary Elizabeth Mason, 1936
	4c	Two booklets, "A View into Two Hundred Years of Church Life in North Taunton 1747-1947," North Taunton Baptist Church
		Letter from the Prudential Committee to "friends of the church," Taunton, March 1, 1940
		Program for the Service of ordination of Owen Doyle Thompson, Winthrop Street Baptist Church, Taunton, June 23, 1940
		Letter from Ethel B. Manson, H. Louise Rice, and Bertha L. Bassett to "Friends of the Church" regarding the church's repair, August 1940
		Nine handwritten pages, list of Subscribers to Repair Fund, February 1, 1941
		Letter from Owen D. Thompson to members of the church regarding donation to the North Taunton Baptist Church, April 18, 1941
		Note on Rev. Mrs. Jennie Dunham, June 2, 1941
		Three handwritten pages, notes on societies associated with the North Taunton Free Baptist Church
		Nine newspaper clippings on one page regarding the North Taunton Baptist Church, 1939-1942
		Card for the Community Sunday Vespers at North Taunton Baptist Church
		Four pages regarding the announcement of Rev. Manning P. Tobey,

		former pastor of North Taunton Baptist Church, as Pastor Emeritus, February 8, 1942
		Letter from Owen D. Thompson to Mr. Tobey on naming Tobey Pastor Emeritus, February 10, 1942
		Two sheets, letter from M. P. Tobey to Mr. Thompson in thanks, February 12, 1942
		Copy of letter above from M. P. Tobey to Mr. Thompson in thanks, February 12, 1942
		Report of results of fundraising appeal started in August 1942
		Ten handwritten sheets, "Items concerning church history and community events not included in booklet," 1943
		Notes regarding Mr. Thompson's resignation, 1944
		Notes on church communities and events, 1944
		Letter to the Chairman of the Farewell Reception Committee, North Taunton Baptist Church, from Harold and Anita Pickett, May 1, 1944
		Draft of Reception Program for Mr. Thompson, May 7, 1944
		Second draft of Reception Program for Mr. Thompson, May 7, 1944
		Third draft of Reception Program for Mr. Thompson, May 7, 1944
		Two sheets, Mr. Haudrece draft of Reception Program
		Notes and photocopy of newspaper clipping regarding the resignation of Mr. Thompson and the succession of Chaplain Roy Reece
		Notes on Special Events and Services, 1883-1937
		Five typed sheets on the history and records of the North Taunton Baptist Church, 1832-1944
		Four handwritten sheets, Creed for baptism and list of church baptism records
		Letter from Lucy E. Grosvenor to Ms. Rice, May 24, 1947
		Letter from Roy E. Reece to the North Taunton Baptist Church, September 17, 1947
		Invitation card to the Two Hundredth Anniversary Service at North Taunton Baptist Church, October 19, 1947
		List of "Contents of box at Historical Hall" on the Constitution and By-Laws of the church, May 4, 1948
		Copy of list of "Contents of box at Historical Hall" on the Constitution and By-Laws of the church, May 4, 1948
		Letter to "the members and friends of the North Taunton Baptist Church" on their 200 th Anniversary from Owen D. Thompson, October 19, 1947
		Letter to "the members and friends of the Baptist church at North Taunton" on their 200 th Anniversary from Manning P. Tobey
		Note on the death and funeral of Manning P. Tobey
		Two copies of a poem about North Taunton Baptist Church by Mrs. Fanny D. Field
		Program for the Two Hundredth Anniversary Observance, October 19, 1947
		Ten typed sheets, "North Taunton Baptist Church Constitution and Bylaws," adopted May 4, 1948
		Card and note on the proposal of a community-parish house built by the Community Men's Club at North Taunton Baptist Church, February 17, 1949

		Three sheets, "The Friendly Caller" church newsletter, April 1950
		Booklet, "A Minimum Salary Plan for Massachusetts Baptist Pastors," 1951
		Letter from the Massachusetts Baptist Convention to the Church Treasurer, December 6, 1951
		Notes on bank accounts for the North Taunton Baptist Church
		Letter to The Chairman of the Board of Deacons to The Commission on Evangelism, Massachusetts Baptist Convention, January 26, 1952
		Tax form for the North Taunton Baptist Church by Bertha A. Bassett to The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1952
		Program for service at the North Taunton Baptist Church, April 25, 1954
		Leaflet for the Bazaar at North Taunton Baptist Church, October 18, 1958
		Booklet for The Cotton Pickin' Jubilee at the North Taunton Baptist Church, with a handwritten expense report, April 6, 1959
		Letter of Easter greetings to the congregation from William E. Blake, pastor of North Taunton Baptist Church, April 14, 1960
		Pamphlet, "How to Create Evangelistic Atmosphere"
		Three programs for the North Taunton Baptist Church Two Hundred and Twenty-fifth Anniversary Observance, October 22, 1972
		Letter to the Trustees of North Taunton Baptist Church from Muriel Eickhern
		Program for "Taking the Count: A Farce Comedy in Three Acts" by Vivian Mayo
		Notes on assorted receipts and expenses
		"The Friendly Caller" church newsletter for the Dighton First Baptist and North Taunton Baptist Churches, May 1948
		Program for "Everybody's Crazy" presented by The In-Betweeners of the North Taunton Baptist Church
		Two programs for the One Hundred Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Founding of the Winthrop Street Baptist Church, Taunton, June 18, 1944
		Note on papers and receipts from the Historical Hall by Bertha A. Bassett, Taunton
		Seventeen printed sheets, "A View Into Two Hundred Fifty Years of Church Life in North Taunton," 2002
	5	Three handwritten sheets, copy of the deed of the Free Will Baptist Church Property, October 18, 1836
		One typed and one handwritten copy of Original Deed of a Pew sold to Bezar Lincoln, 1838
		Two handwritten sheets, copy of Deed of North Taunton Baptist Parsonage, June 18, 1850
		Two typed sheets, copy of Deed of North Taunton Baptist Parsonage, June 18, 1850
		Three typed sheets, copy of quitclaim of land by Benjamin W. Lincoln and Braddock Field to the Freewill Baptist Society in Taunton, July 29, 1891
		Copies of bequests to the Free Baptist Church at North Taunton from

		Henry Crocker, died January 1916, and Mrs. Lucinda L. Lincoln, died February 20, 1924
		Two handwritten sheets, copies of bequests to the Free Baptist Church from Henry Crocker, died January 1916, and John M. Field, died March 4, 1925
		Copy of the bequest to the North Taunton Baptist Church from John M. Field, died March 4, 1925
		Handwritten sheet, lists of bequests to the church, 1916-1942
		Letter for the receipt of a donation by Florence B. Welch, Howard R. Bassett, and Ethel B. Manson to the Massachusetts Baptist Convention in trust for the North Taunton Baptist Church
		Letter from the Massachusetts Baptist Convention to Mrs. Ethel B. Manson, February 15, 1944
		Letter to Mrs. Amanda Lincoln from the North Taunton Baptist Church in thanks for a gift of a parcel of land behind the church, May 11, 1954
		Letter to the North Taunton Baptist Church from Gordon M. Owen, Counsellor at Law, notifying them of the bequest of Charlotte B. Field to the church, May 22, 1959
		Letter and copy of the bequest to the North Taunton Baptist Church in the will of Charlotte B. Field, from Gordon M. Owen Counsellor at Law, to Mrs. Bertha A. Bassett Treasurer of the church
	6	Photocopy of newspaper clipping, "Neighborhood Convention: Interesting Meeting Occurs With Somerset Church"
		Photocopy of newspaper engraving, 1880
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping of poem, "The following lines were read at the rededication of the North Taunton Free Baptist Church," October 27, 1892
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping, "Memorial Service to Rev. J. N. Rich," April 1905
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping, "Noted Educator Dies in Maine Home: W. E. C. Rich Was Oldest Living Graduate of Bates"
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping, "Mrs. Field Has Letter Filled with History: Interesting Message Sent to 'Aunt Nancy' on Field Street on the Occasion of Her Ninety-third Birthday—Post Card Shower also a Feature," May 4, 1917
		Photocopy of newspaper clippings, "Holy Week Services For Protestant Churches Are Opened On Monday Night: Rev. C. Leonard and Rev. Winston L. King Preach at Union Meetings Held in Two Churches in the Taunton District," April 12, 1928
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping, "Field Will Makes Bequest of Land to the Baptist Church: Congregation at North Taunton to Own Famous Clambake Site that has Been Used Many Years. Whitley Will Filed," January 23, 1931
		Photocopy of newspaper clippings, "Field Will Makes Bequest of Land to the Baptist Church," January 23, 1931; "Bequest Left to No. Taunton Baptist Church"
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping, "No. Taunton Church Memorial Service Sunday Afternoon"
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping, "Church Again Consecrated to Good

		Work: Rededication Service at the North Taunton Baptist Edifice Carried Out Yesterday With Program of Great Interest," November 20, 1933
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping, "Church Again Consecrated to Good Work: Rededication Service at the North Taunton Baptist Edifice Carried Out Yesterday With Program of Great Interest," November 20, 1933
		Photocopy of newspaper clippings with notes, Obituary and Funeral Services for Mrs. Jane C. Tobey, March 6, 1937
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping, "Ministers to Honor Rev. M. P. Tobey: Meeting Will Take Form of a Farewell to Senior Pastor," April 17, 1937
		Photocopy of newspaper clippings of Rev. M. P. Tobey, "Concludes Long Service in the Ministry," "Meeting Will Take Form of a Farewell to Senior pastor," "Farewell is Preached by Mr. Tobey," April 18, 1937
		Photocopy of newspaper clippings from <i>Carroll County Independent</i> , "Reception to Pastor at No. Taunton," May 6, 1937; "North Taunton Rev. Mr. Tobey Pastor Emeritus," July 8, 1942; "Church Open for Donation at Chickville," October 20, 1939
		Photocopy of newspaper clippings, "North Taunton Baptist Church Presents Program for Christmas on Sunday," "'Mother' Clark Still Gay at 88," December 17, 1938
		Photocopy of ten newspaper clippings about the North Taunton Baptist Church, September 1937 to May 31, 1939
		Photocopy of five newspaper clippings about the North Taunton Baptist Church, June 18 to October 24, 1939
		Photocopy of four newspaper clippings about the North Taunton Baptist Church, January to June 16, 1940
		Photocopy of four newspaper clippings about the North Taunton Baptist Church, August 4 to November 7, 1940
		Photocopy of newspaper clippings, "Thompson Ordained to Ministry," June 24, 1940; "Parishioners Say Good-bye to Thompsons," May 7, 1944
		Photocopy of eleven newspaper clippings about the North Taunton Baptist Church, November 14, 1940 to September 14, 1941
		Photocopy of nine newspaper clippings about the North Taunton Baptist Church, October 18, 1941 to March 28, 1942
		Photocopy of eight newspaper clippings about the North Taunton Baptist Church, July 2, 1939 to November 21, 1942
		Photocopy of nine newspaper clippings about the North Taunton Baptist Church, April 4, 1942 to April 2, 1943
		Photocopy of eight newspaper clippings about the North Taunton Baptist Church, May 1, 1943 to February 19, 1944
		Photocopy of twelve newspaper clippings about the North Taunton Baptist Church, unknown year
		Photocopy of two newspaper clippings, "Puritanism Needed," "Said Theodore Roosevelt"
		Photocopy of newspaper article, "North Taunton Baptist Church Observes 200 th Anniversary," 1947
		Photocopy of newspaper clippings, "Council of Churches Seeks to

		Promote More Interest in its Activities," May 1947' "North Taunton Church Has Meeting," 1947
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping, "Obituary: Rev. M. P. Tobey Minister Here for 32 Years," December 31, 1948
		Photocopy of newspaper article, "Memorial Gift Funds to Provide Church Re-decorating Program," 1952
		Photocopy of newspaper article, "Rev. William E. Blake Has Been Minister Forty Years," May 1952
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping, "Pastor's Daughter," June 1952
		Photocopy of newspaper clippings, "Baptist Church Appoints Ralph Handren Moderator," "Baptist Society Plans Supper"
		Photocopy of newspaper clippings, "North Taunton Baptists Elect 1955-1956 Officials," Baptist Church Elects Officers"
		Photocopy of newspaper clippings, "Have You Sent Your Contribution to the Building Fund of the North Taunton Baptist Church," October 25, 1957; "Baptist Fund Nears \$1,000,"
		Photocopy of newspaper clippings, "The Building Fund of the North Taunton Baptist Church," October 25, 1957; "Baptist Event Attracts 300," "Offering Set to Aid North End Church"
		Photocopy of newspaper clipping, "Addition Beginning," June 5, 1959
		Photocopy of newspaper article in <i>Taunton Daily Gazette</i> , "North Taunton Baptist Church Opened Doors 225 Years Ago," October 24, 1972
		Photocopy of newspaper article, "Church Has Many Memories for Harden," July 26, 1975
		Photocopy of newspaper article, "250 Years of Memories at North Taunton," October 25, 1997