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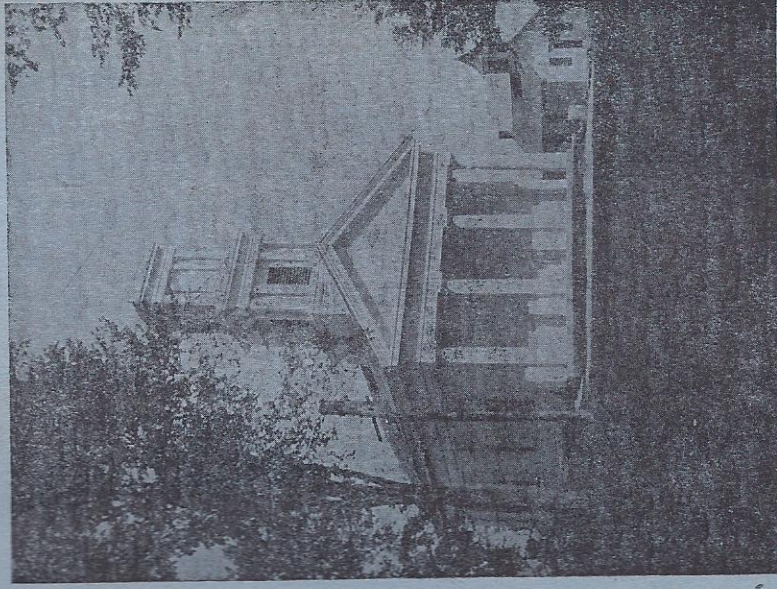
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First Congregational Church

WINCHESTER CENTER, CONN.

1768

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C H U R C H   D I R E C T O R Y

*of the*

First Congregational Church

WINCHESTER CENTER, CONN.

✦

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✦

Rev. Forrest Musser  
*Minister*

TELEPHONE WINSTED 257-R-3

*Compliments of*

— The —

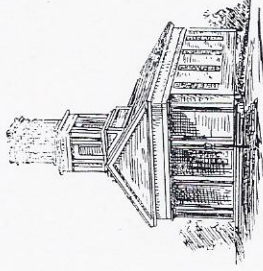
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Busiest Store



Lead on O Church Triumphant,  
Undaunted thru the years  
Remembrance of our father's deeds  
Shall banish all our fears.  
Their prayers in us are answered,  
Their faith we make our own;  
We pledge our lives to garner  
The seeds which they have sown.

Lead on O Church Triumphant,  
At home or o'er the sea;  
We pledge to follow onward,  
Where'er the need may be.  
With Father, Son and Spirit,  
We fear no enemy.  
Guide us aright thru coming years  
Thou Holy Trinity.



## Pastoral Message to Friends and Church Members

✠

OUR primary purpose in presenting this booklet to the members and friends of the Church is to acquaint all concerned with the purposes of the Church and its organization in the past. We note with deep appreciation that since the Colonial days the Church has been the central organization in the community. A proper perspective of the history of our own Church inspires us to further influence and power.

The Church has left its imprint upon the minds and hearts of all with whom it has come in contact. On account of the pioneer spirit which the early fathers of this community possessed, religion has become more real. These forefathers sought first the kingdom of God and their labors have borne fruit.

Another purpose of this year book is to illustrate the scope of the Christian work in the community. The primary concern of the Church is evangelism and worship. The building is merely a place where the members meet to worship God in fellowship. This institution has used an educational method to propagate the Christian ideals within the community. In the missionary endeavors of the members there is a serious attempt to live up to the commandment of Jesus, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." The world has become the field of Christian endeavor and Winchester has always contributed liberally in bringing "peace on earth and good will toward men."

These pages might well open our eyes to the future. Our hope in a Christian society of love rests in the hands of the members of the Churches throughout the world. If this hope is to be realized, we need to continue working in the same spirit of enthusiasm with which this organization began. We catch a glimpse of the growth of the Christian spirit in the past and present achievements of the Church and this ought to inspire us to strive more diligently to continue progressively to establish the Kingdom of God upon earth.

In closing I extend my personal thanks to all those who have made this publication possible.

Sincerely yours,

FORREST MUSSER.

## A Statement of Faith

✠

While Congregationalists do not have an official creed the following declaration, adopted at Kansas City in 1913 is the accepted statement of the Winchester Congregational Church concerning faith, polity, and fellowship.

**Faith**—"We believe in God the Father, Infinite in wisdom, goodness and love; and in Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord and Saviour, who for us and our salvation lived and died and rose again and liveth evermore; and in the Holy Spirit, who taketh of the things of Christ and revealeth them to us, renewing, comforting, and inspiring the souls of men. We are united in striving to know the will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures, and in our purpose to walk in the ways of the Lord, made known or to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church of Christ to proclaim the gospel to all mankind, extending the worship of the one true God, and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, and the realization of human brotherhood. Depending, as did our fathers, upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the transformation of the world into the kingdom of God; and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and the life everlasting.

**Polity**—"We believe in the freedom and responsibility of the individual soul, and the right of private judgment. We hold to the autonomy of the local church and its independence of all ecclesiastical control. We cherish the fellowship of the churches, united in district, state and national bodies, for counsel and co-operation in matters of common concern.

**The Wider Fellowship**—"While affirming the liberty of our churches, and the validity of our ministry, we hold to the unity and catholicity of the Church of Christ, and will unite with all its branches in hearty co-operation; and will earnestly seek, so far as in us lies, that the prayer of our Lord for his disciples may be answered, that 'they all may be one.'"

# Hours of Worship and Church Calendar



## WEEKLY MEETINGS Sunday

Morning Worship ..... 10:45 A. M.  
 Sunday School ..... 11:45 A. M.  
 Evening Worship ..... 7:30 P. M.  
 Christian Endeavor ..... 7:30 P. M.

## Thursday

Choir Meeting ..... 7:30 P. M.

## BI-MONTHLY MEETINGS

### Wednesday

Ladies' Benevolent Society

### Thursday

Young Women's Club

# Church Officiary



**Minister**—Rev. Forrest Musser.  
**Deacons**—(Without time limit) Willis L. Wetmore, Edward L. Humphrey.  
**Junior Deacons**—(For two years) Theron Bronson, Wallace Pendleton.  
**Church Clerk**—Elliott P. Bronson.  
**Church Treasurer**—Wallace Pendleton.  
**Sunday School Superintendent**—Lester Hurlbut; Assistant, Mrs. Forrest Musser.

## COMMITTEES

**Committee on Evangelism and Worship**—Forrest Musser, Willis L. Wetmore, Edward L. Humphrey, Theron Bronson, Wallace Pendleton, Mrs. Willis L. Wetmore, and Mrs. Lester Hurlbut.  
**Missionary Committee**—Mrs. E. L. Humphrey, Theron Bronson, Mrs. Francis Goodenough.  
**Educational Committee**—Lester Hurlbut, Mrs. Forrest Musser, Mrs. E. L. Humphrey, Mrs. Lester Hurlbut.



# Church Organizations



THE ECCLESIASTICAL SOCIETY  
 Stuart Bronson ..... Treasurer  
 Fred Beecher ..... Secretary  
 Theron Bronson, Elliott P. Bronson, Willis Wetmore  
 Society's Committee

LADIES' BENEVOLENT SOCIETY  
 Mrs. Willis L. Wetmore ..... President  
 Mrs. Cora Beecher ..... Vice-President  
 Mrs. E. B. Bronson ..... Treasurer  
 Mrs. Stuart Bronson ..... Secretary

THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR SOCIETY  
 William Porter ..... President  
 Theron Bronson ..... Vice-President  
 Katherine Bronson ..... Secretary-Treasurer

## COMMITTEES

Program  
 Forrest Musser, Dorothy Hurlbut, Kingsley Beecher

## Social

William Porter, Gertrude Avery, Katherine Bronson

## Flower

Elsie Kott, Alice Bronson, Bessie Bronson

## Music

Katherine Bronson, Annista Pinney, Ethel Lupein

## Athletic

Forrest Musser, Kingsley Beecher

## LADIES' BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

The earliest records of a Woman's Society in Winchester was in 1820 when the women of the town organized The Female Benevolent Society. To quote from Article 2nd of its constitution—"The object of this society shall be to unite Christian feelings and to concentrate the charities of individuals in the common cause of the Divine Redeemer, by collecting money and clothing for the charitable establishments in this state, also for needy individuals among ourselves and elsewhere, as they shall be enabled by their funds." The first membership list had fifty-four names on it and many of the women now belonging to the present society are direct descendants of these women.

In 1858 a new constitution was adopted and the name of the society changed to The Ladies' Benevolent Society of Winchester Center and such it remains today, though more commonly spoken of as The Ladies' Aid.

For 112 years this organization has been one of good works, helping the needy at home, aiding in the necessary improvements of the church buildings and parsonage and giving to both Home and Foreign Missions.

The present Ladies' Aid meets on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at the chapel and has an annual sale in July or August.

## MRS. STUART BRONSON

### YOUNG WOMEN'S CLUB

Another organization of value to the church is the club of young married women, which meets at the homes of the members every other Thursday afternoon. Various projects contributing to the support of the church are undertaken by this group. Annual sales are included in its activities.

Once each month the club meets for a social evening, which time the husbands of the members share in the dinner and entertainment. In the few years since its organization, this club has proved itself an important part of the church and community.

## THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR SOCIETY

The Christian Endeavor Society has been fulfilling an important need in the lives of both young and old people in the community. The committees of the organization cover a large variety of duties.

The program committee arranges programs once every two weeks throughout the year. These programs include discussions upon topics of social and personal interest. In these meetings young and old are grappling with the problems which come in making practical the Christian ideals.

The social committee provides parties and entertainments in which all can find recreation and pleasure. Social events are an important part in making the work of Christian endeavor more enjoyable.

The flower committee has certain special duties to perform such as, decorating the church on Christmas, Easter and Children's Day. This part of the work might well include the beautifying of all the church services with the color and fragrance of flowers.

The music committee plays a valuable role in providing music for all occasions. Music has the emotional power to transfer thought from the realm of reason to the realm of feeling. Music is a powerful tool to use in Christian endeavor.

The society organized an Athletic Committee this year for the first time. The organization feels that wholesome sports are a valuable field of endeavor for all Christians. Since there are a large number who are interested in the various sports, the society is attempting to stimulate these games with the Christian spirit.

With these many duties the Christian Endeavor is coping with the whole of life.

The physical, intellectual, spiritual and the social are all touched by the energetic work of the Christian Endeavorers.

## A Favorite Hymn



Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;  
Wean it from earth, through all its pulses move;  
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as Thou art,  
And make me love Thee as I ought to love.

I ask no dream, no prophet ecstasies,  
No sudden rending of the veil of clay,  
No angel visitant, no opening skies;  
But take the dimness of my soul away.

Hast Thou not bid us love Thee, God and King?  
All, all Thine own, soul, heart, and strength, and mind;  
I see Thy cross—there teach my heart to cling:  
Oh, let me seek Thee, and oh, let me find.

Teach me to feel that Thou art always nigh;  
Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear,  
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh;  
Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.

Teach me to love Thee as Thine angels love,—  
One holy passion filling all my frame;  
The kindling of the Heaven-descended Dove,  
My heart an altar, and Thy love the flame.

—G. Croly, 1854.



## Historical Sketch

Compiled by Mrs. E. L. Humphrey from Boyd's "Annals" — Goodenough, "Clergy of Litchfield County" — G. F. Goodenough, "Sketch of Pastors" — Bronson's "A New England Village Green," and other sources.

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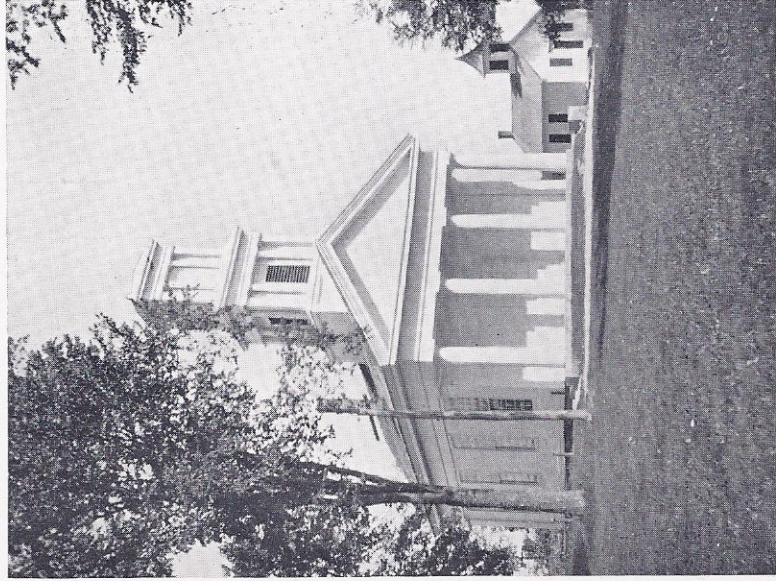
**THE FIRST ECCLESIASTICAL SOCIETY** of Winchester was formed by the General Court of the Colony of Connecticut in 1768. The following year, 1769, a small, low, steep-roofed building was erected for a church. The Congregational Church was organized October 30, 1771, by Rev. Nathaniel Roberts, of Torrington, and Ammi Ruhamah Robbins, of Norfolk, with fourteen members, eight males and six females.

For seventeen years our fathers worshiped in this building. It was not heated and the only warmth was from the "foot-stoves." The coals in these were replenished from the fireplace in the nearby "Sabba day" house.

On October 11, 1785, Dr. Josiah Everitt decided to the First Ecclesiastical Society of Winchester, for the sum of £1, 16s, and 3d (lawful money) a certain piece of land, containing 56½ rods "to build a meeting house on, for Divine Worship, and for a suitable green around the same." But the matter of location was not settled because "Danbury Quarter" situated in the northeast corner of the town, and settled by a colony from Danbury, Conn., thought they were entitled to the "meeting house." After much argument, a vote was taken to erect the meeting house on Dr. Josiah Everitt's land. The result proved a victory for the "Centre" by six votes.

I will say in passing that a large number from Danbury Quarter, taking with them the minister, Rev. Mr. Booge, went to New York State and founded Vernon Centre. The next year, 1786, a commodious church building was erected near the centre of the Green. The money for the building was assessed on the tax list, to be paid in pine boards, white wood clapboards, meat cattle, shingles or labor. The new church was large for those days—two stories in height and painted white.

This church was not heated until 1833, when Deacon Loomis installed a huge box stove with the pipe put through the side of the building, as there was no chimney. The assignment of seats was made according to social position, wealth and piety. No instrument music was allowed in the church for many years—but after much discussion and prayer over both man and fiddle, Deacon Lorrain Loomis was allowed to play a bass viol.



PRESENT CHURCH



The new meeting house in time became the old one, and in 1840 it was decided to build a new church edifice. "Squire" Isaac Bronson's residence was nearly back of the church and this annoyed him, so for the new church he leased to the Society the site of the present church. Some of the timbers from the old church were used in the new church.

In 1846 the elms on the Green were planted through the efforts of Rev. James Dill, then pastor of the church with "Father Marsh."

Following is the list of the ministers who have served the Winchester Church:

Joshua Knapp, 1772-1789.

B. V. Booge, 1790-1800.

Archibald Bassett, 1801-1806.

Thomas Robbins, D.D., 1806-1807.

Frederick Marsh, 1808-1851.

James H. Dill, 1846-1852.

John Cunningham, 1852-1854.

Ira Pettibone, 1857-1865.

William M. Gay, 1866-1869.

Arthur Goodenough, 1870-1921.

In the winter of 1921 James McCallum, of New Haven Divinity School, assisted Rev. Mr. Goodenough, D.D., beloved by him and all in the parish, now a missionary in Nanking, China. Suggested by Mr. McCallum, Ralph Austin, also a student at Yale, and who married Helen Mayo, the Winchester Center school teacher, did hard, faithful work in Winchester for three years; now preaching in Spring Valley, Wis.

A year of supplies, mostly students, among them Rev. Mr. Alsley and Rev. T. S. Tracy, a missionary in India.

From 1926-1929 Rev. Edwin Curtis.

1929-1931. A student, Rev. Jesse Smucker, with Mrs. Smucker, lived at the parsonage, and was much liked by the young people, and in his quiet way did much to bring comfort to the people.

In September, 1931, Rev. Forrest Musser was hired as part-time pastor, while he was studying at Hartford Seminary. Mr. Musser brought his bride from Ohio, where they were members of Mr. Smucker's church.

If space could be taken an extended account of the pastors would be of interest. Oddly enough, three of these span 150 years. Four died in Winchester. The first pastor, Rev. Mr. Knapp, is buried in Winchester and his grave marked by a stone given by his people. It fell to his lot to see his people through the whole revolutionary period. The second pastor, Rev. Mr. Booge, built the house, now the present parsonage. It has been said of Father Marsh that he was steady, faithful, plodding, conscientious and recommended especially the virtues of diligence, love and subordination to the divine will.



A word picture of Rev. Ira Pettibone describes him as a gardener, teacher and preacher at once; always busy, quiet and helpful, tall and straight, knowing Indian dialects and wood lore; ingenious in little ways for the work. Watching the sap boil with him sometimes meant a story—the boy who helped with the sugaring said, "I never understood why such a stern man attracted children so much; but it was true."

Arthur Goodenough, D.D., still lives in the hearts of many who will read this sketch; so I will just give this testimony—"He loved men for what they were and early in his ministry gave up trying to make them what he wanted them to be, but tried to understand how to help them make themselves what God planned them to be."

The celebration of the 40th, 45th and 50th anniversaries of the pastorate of Rev. Arthur Goodenough were noted events in our church history, and the Sunday services connected with the 150th celebration of the town was of great interest, as at that time the tablet in memory of the installed minister was unveiled. During that week also was given the pageant witnessed by thousands and showing forth the town and church history of 150 years.

A Christian Endeavor Society was organized soon after that movement started. Mr. Goodenough's testimony, "I just lean on my young people," proves that the Society was active. Today the children of these members are helping to carry on.

A record of Winchester Church would not be complete without mention of the Ladies' Aid Society, organized over one hundred years ago for the purpose of doing missionary work and caring for the interests of the Society. The amount of service work, and upkeep of church property, the meeting of the missionary appointments, proves that they have carried out the objects for which the time-honored organization was born.

May the spirit that wrought in and with the fathers and mothers abide today.

## Church Membership Roll



### LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WINCHESTER (CHRONOLOGICAL) APRIL 15, 1932

Carrie M. Bronson, July 6, 1873  
 Mrs. Frances P. Bronson, November 6, 1880  
 Mrs. Sarah B. Dayton, November 3, 1881  
 Mrs. Sarah E. Goodenough, November 4, 1882  
 Mrs. Ella S. Starks, May 6, 1883  
 Francilla J. Goodenough, May 6, 1883  
 Helen E. Goodenough, May 6, 1883  
 Mrs. Annista H. Pinney, May 6, 1883  
 Herbert V. Johnson, May 6, 1883  
 Charles C. Dayton, May 6, 1883  
 Mrs. Cora S. Beecher, January 1, 1885  
 Mrs. Emma M. Andrus, July 6, 1885  
 Andrew L. Johnson, July 6, 1885  
 David B. Neth, May 1, 1887  
 Mrs. Lizzie E. Church, November 7, 1886  
 George S. Beach, July 1, 1888  
 Mrs. Julia E. Beach, July 1, 1888  
 Mrs. Etta J. Dayton, July 1, 1888  
 Mrs. Jennie E. Mundry, July 1, 1888  
 Mrs. Ella F. Northrop, May 5, 1889  
 Frank L. Dayton, May 5, 1889  
 Horace J. Burr, May 5, 1889  
 Willis L. Wetmore, September 1, 1889  
 Mrs. Mary B. Johnson, March 1, 1891  
 Mrs. Sarah J. Clark, July 5, 1891  
 Tunis Goodenough, November 5, 1893  
 Edward L. Humphrey, November 5, 1893  
 Mrs. Helen H. Stannard, November 5, 1893  
 Mrs. Hattie B. Humphrey, November 5, 1893  
 Mrs. Augustine D. Merchand, May 6, 1894  
 Mrs. Mary Y. Platt, May 6, 1894  
 Charles D. Wetmore, May 6, 1894  
 Mrs. Bessie M. Bronson, November 4, 1895  
 Mrs. Marjorie B. Brett, January 2, 1897  
 Mrs. Florence N. Wetmore, January 2, 1897  
 Stuart R. Bronson, January 2, 1897  
 Mrs. Margaret Y. Mundry, March 7, 1897  
 Mrs. Grace S. Raydenbow, January 2, 1898  
 Lynne J. Stumpf, May 1, 1898  
 Mrs. Anna M. Johnson, March 5, 1899  
 B. Virgil Johnson, March 5, 1899  
 Fredrick C. Harrison, January 7, 1900  
 Wallace G. Pendleton, January 7, 1900  
 Mrs. Bertha H. Hart, March 4, 1900  
 Mrs. Elena G. Pendleton, March 4, 1900  
 Sherman S. Bronson, May 6, 1900



## Church Membership Roll

Mrs. Lena T. Bronson, May 6, 1900  
Louis J. Marchand, May 6, 1900  
Mrs. Minnie B. Dayton, May 6, 1900  
George L. Chapman, July 2, 1900  
Mrs. Myrtle C. Hotchkiss, July 2, 1900  
Ella D. Clark, September 2, 1900  
Theron N. Bronson, May 5, 1901  
William C. Johnson, January 6, 1901  
Mrs. Agnes B. Marsh, November 3, 1901  
Louis F. Dougal, March 2, 1902  
Lester R. Hurlbut, September 7, 1902  
George F. Moses, May 6, 1906  
Mrs. Edna G. Johnson, May 6, 1906  
Mrs. Florence B. Hurlbut, July 1, 1906  
E. Mabel Johnson, July 1, 1906  
Mrs. Emily M. Heady, July 1, 1906  
Mrs. Ina P. Schuman, July 1, 1906  
Mrs. Anna M. Dupey, July 1, 1906  
Myron M. Johnson, July 1, 1906  
Otto Wald, July 1, 1906  
Wilbur B. Bronson, July 2, 1907  
Joseph F. Marsh, September 1, 1907  
Mrs. Louise L. Johnson, November 3, 1907  
Susan D. Nash, July 5, 1908  
Mrs. Jennie H. Hurlbut, October 29, 1908  
Emma M. Wald, October 29, 1908  
Myra Belle Chapman, January 3, 1909  
Mattie L. Clark, January 3, 1909  
Allan J. Marsh, July 3, 1910  
Florence M. Bailey, July 3, 1910  
Fredrick S. Beecher, July 3, 1910  
Mrs. Blanche M. Beecher, July 3, 1910  
Helen M. Bronson, July 3, 1910  
Mrs. Olive B. Beecher, September 4, 1910  
Lillian R. Johnson, September 4, 1910  
Mrs. Lila G. Griswold, November 6, 1910  
Florence M. Pinney, November 5, 1911  
Mrs. Mildred F. McGauley, November 5, 1911  
Louise Pettibone Smith, December 31, 1911  
Elliott P. Bronson, March 2, 1913  
Samuel Earl Pinney, March 2, 1913  
Mrs. Lois P. Conlon, May 3, 1914  
Mrs. Alice B. Bronson, September 2, 1917  
Raymond C. Goodenough, September 2, 1917  
Herbert P. Dayton, September 2, 1917  
Ralph J. Bronson, May 4, 1919  
Birdsey M. Bronson, May 4, 1919  
Winthrop T. Bronson, May 4, 1919  
Robert G. Wetmore, May 4, 1919  
Mrs. Elizabeth Nickerson, April 16, 1922  
Marion L. Beecher Phillips, April 16, 1922  
Casil W. Beecher, April 16, 1922

## Church Membership Roll

Lillian J. G. Turbarg, April 16, 1922  
Abel S. Beecher, April 16, 1922  
Clarence S. Beecher, April 16, 1922  
Arthur E. Nickerson, April 16, 1922  
Mrs. Julia C. Nickerson, April 16, 1922  
Mrs. Mabel A. Goodenough, April 16, 1922  
Dorothy Hurlbut, July 1, 1923  
Leroy Hurlbut, July 1, 1923  
Winifred Hurlbut, July 1, 1923  
David Avery, November 4, 1923  
Harold Hack, November 4, 1923  
Addie Oliver, November 2, 1924  
Mrs. Julia A. Dayton, August 8, 1926  
Mrs. Adelaide Bronson, March 6, 1926  
Roland C. Cook, January 1, 1928  
Belle Bowman, January 1, 1928  
Mrs. Carrie Cook, January 1, 1928  
Kenneth Hurlbut, April 20, 1930  
Francis Hurlbut, April 20, 1930  
Kingsley Beecher, April 20, 1930  
Donald Beecher, April 20, 1930  
Roy Johnson, April 20, 1930  
Berthylie Thoeman, April 20, 1930  
Katherine Bronson, April 20, 1930  
Mrs. Gertrude Avery, April 20, 1930  
Mrs. Alice Nelson, April 20, 1930  
Elsie Melissa Kott, April 20, 1930  
William Francis Porter, April 20, 1930  
Ralph I. Lane, July 13, 1930  
Mrs. Florence Lane, July 13, 1930  
Mrs. Alice Thoeman, April 5, 1931  
Francis B. Goodenough, April 5, 1931  
Mrs. Annie J. Dayton, April 5, 1931  
Charles Avery, April 5, 1931  
Forrest Musser, March 6, 1932  
Mary Elizabeth Musser, March 6, 1932



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