



Austin Seminary Archives, Stitt Library

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FORT SMITH (FORT SMITH, ARK.) RECORDS, 1926-1944

Descriptive Summary

Title: First Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith (Fort Smith, Ark.) records

Dates: 1926-1944

Accession Number(s): 1992-001

Extent: 4 inches

Language: Materials are written in English.

Administrative History:

The First Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith was established in 1846. During the period 1925-1944, it was in the Presbytery of Washburn, the Synod of Arkansas. From 1925 through June 1932, Rev. Frank Pearson Anderson was Pastor. He established a youth group and youth choir. In 1928 the group Men of the Church was organized. From September 1932 through 1951 the Rev. J. W. Hickman, a graduate of Austin College, was Pastor. During his tenure, he reinstated midweek services and vespers services and organized Union services with the Methodist Church. In 1933 a city-wide interdenominational home visitation and religious survey was accomplished. Hickman is noted for bringing in guest speakers such as Dr. Henry Sweets and Gypsy Smith, Jr. In 1939 a major remodeling of the Church building was done. From 1925 to 1934 the church membership grew from 597 to 787.

The Women's Auxiliary began as We Girls in 1868, and subsequently was known as King's Daughters. This latter group merged with the Ladies Aid and Missionary Society in 1918 to form the Women's auxiliary which, after 1949, was known as the Women of the Church. The aim of the Women's Auxiliary was to "promote spiritual, social and financial welfare of the church; and to increase intelligent interest in world-wide missions." A major activity of the group was the publishing and reprinting of a popular cookbook.

Scope and Contents:

The records of the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith are divided into two subgroups. The first subgroup contains the operating records of the church and consists of three series. The first series, *Administrative Records 1926-1944*, is mainly made of lists of tithers, family altars and persons having special training and statistical reports compiled by the church concerning its membership activities. Series II,

Financial Records 1926-1939, is divided into three sub-series. The first subseries contains *General Financial Records 1926-1939* for the church. The second subseries comprises the bulk of this group, namely budget statements and some correspondence for the *Church Benevolent Funds, 1928-1939*. The third subseries is a group of documents concerning a *Sunday School Building Fund 1929*. Series II is *Printed Material 1929-1939* from the church and the Synod of Arkansas. The second subgroup collects the records of the women's Auxiliary of the church into a single series, *Records 1925-1937*, the majority being statistical reports.

Related Collections:

For a list of other collections at the Austin Seminary Archives with information on this congregation, see the Index to Congregational History Materials.

Restrictions:

Materials are available by appointment only. Contact the archivist for details.

Index Terms:

First Presbyterian Church (Fort Smith, Ark.)
Women of the Church (Presbyterian Church in the U.S.)

Preferred Citation: First Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith (Fort Smith, Ark.) records, 1926-1944, Austin Seminary Archives, Stitt Library, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Inventory:

<i>Box</i>	<i>Contents</i>
B001	Group I: Church Records Series I: Administrative Records: <i>3/4 inch. Arranged chronologically. Mostly copies of statistical reports sent annually to the Presbytery. Also dated and undated lists of tithers, family altars, and persons having special training.</i> Administrative records, 1926-1944 Series II: Financial Records, 1926-1939: Subseries I: General Financial Records: <i>1/2 inch. Arranged chronologically. Budget statements for the Church as a whole and a few handwritten tally sheets.</i> Financial records, 1926-1939 Subseries II: Benevolence Funds: <i>2 inches. Arranged chronologically. Monthly and annual budget statements, letters concerning allocation of funds.</i> Benevolence funds, 1928-1931

Box **Contents**

Benevolence funds, 1932-1934

Benevolence funds, 1935-1939

Subseries III: Sunday School Building Fund:

1/4 inch. Budget statements and list of donors

Sunday School building fund, 1926

Series III: Printed Materials:

1/4 inch. Includes church directory, flyers, yearbooks, programs, copies of Arkansas Broadcaster

Printed materials, 1927-1939

Group II: Women's Auxiliary:

1/4 inch. Completed statistical questionnaires, budget, report of activities, and list of members

Women's Auxiliary records, 1925-1937