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# Ladies Industrial Society of Hancock First Congregational Church Records MS-981

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English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical  
Collections

1400 Townsend Drive

Houghton 49931

[copper@mtu.edu](mailto:copper@mtu.edu)

URL: <http://www.lib.mtu.edu/mtuarchives/>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections
<b>Title:</b>	Ladies Industrial Society of Hancock Congregational Church Records
<b>ID:</b>	MS-981
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1893-circa 1984
<b>Physical Description:</b>	0.45 cubic feet 1 box
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Mixed Materials [box]:</b>	1
<b>Abstract:</b>	Collection, circa 1893-circa 1984, documenting the history of the Hancock First Congregational Church and its affiliated Ladies Industrial Society.

### Preferred Citation

MS-981, Ladies Industrial Society of Hancock First Congregational Church Records, Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections, Houghton, Michigan.

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## Historical Note

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The First Congregational Church of Hancock was officially established on September 20, 1862 under the leadership of the Rev. Thomas Eliakim Bliss. In January 1863, the congregation dedicated its first church building. Unfortunately, this home would be short-lived, falling victim to the devastating Hancock fire of April 11, 1869. The people of the church were undaunted, however, and continued to gather on Sundays at a surviving schoolhouse until the basement of the rebuilt structure was sufficiently complete for them to meet there.

Fire was inextricably linked not only to the history of the First Congregational Church but to its Ladies Industrial Society. Perhaps the intimate knowledge of fire acquired in the 1869 Hancock blaze inspired an even deeper compassion among the women when they heard of the disaster suffered by Peshtigo, Wisconsin, in October 1871. With that town in ruins and its people destitute, the ladies of the congregation banded together to send clothing south. In a history written to celebrate the church's seventy-fifth anniversary, Dr. James Fisher noted that "five poor families and one orphan girl were provided for and thus the good work of what later became the Ladies Industrial Society was started." The society emphasized charitable work and practical and financial support to the local church. After the building burned down a second time in 1917, for example, the group took it upon themselves to repay a construction loan from the Congregational Church Building Association. Members also provided furnishings for the kitchen and dining room, among other improvements.

In 1969, the First Congregational Church of Hancock merged with the First Presbyterian Church of Houghton, forming the Portage Lake United Church near the Michigan Tech campus. The church building in Hancock was sold and razed that year.

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## Scope and Contents

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Collection, circa 1893-circa 1984, documenting the history of the Hancock First Congregational Church and its affiliated Ladies Industrial Society. Materials include roll books, meeting minutes, anniversary documents for the church, and constitutions of the society.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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## Conditions Governing Access

Available for use in the Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections.

## Processing Information

Emily Riippa, 02/18/2019

## Conditions Governing Use

Various copying restrictions apply. Guidelines are available from Michigan Technological University Archives & Copper Country Historical Collections.

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## Related Materials

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### Related Materials

Researchers studying the history of the First Congregational Church in Hancock may also wish to consult MS-054: Portage Lake United Church Records. As the successor to the Congregational Church, which merged with Houghton's First Presbyterian Church, Portage Lake United inherited substantial documentation related to the Hancock organization.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Congregational churches
- Hancock (Mich.)
- Women -- Societies and clubs -- Michigan -- Hancock
- Minutes
- Correspondence
- Printed ephemera
- Attendance records
- Anonymous

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## Collection Inventory

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Title/Description	Instances	
Constitutions, circa 1893	box 1	folder 1
Ministry pamphlets and bulletins, circa 1984	box 1	folder 2
Anniversary materials and building notes, 1912, 1962-circa 1974	box 1	folder 3
Meeting minutes, Jun 1930-1935	box 1	folder 4
Meeting minutes, Jan 1936-Jan 1948	box 1	folder 5
Roll book, 1932-1947	box 1	folder 6