

## Information Sheet

**R**      **First Presbyterian Church of Rolla (Mo.).**  
**668**      **Records, 1864-1997.**  
            **Fifteen volumes and two folders.**

### **MICROFILM**

This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri](http://www.shsresearch.org). If you would like more information, please contact us at [shsresearch@umsystem.edu](mailto:shsresearch@umsystem.edu).

These are records of the First Presbyterian Church at Rolla, Missouri. Included are minutes of meetings of the church Session, membership and marriage records, minutes of meetings of the Board of Deacons and the Board of Trustees, and church bulletins.

Under the direction of Rev. A. T. Norton, district secretary of Presbyterian Home Missions in St. Louis, the First Presbyterian Church of Rolla was organized on 14-15 May 1864. Twelve persons made up the congregation, which met in a former army quartermaster's building also being used as a public schoolhouse. The first public services were held in the Phelps County Court-house. The first members were Theophilus D. Griffith, Mrs. E. B. Lamb, Mrs. M. E. Faulkner, Mrs. G. E. Mountforth, Mary P. Guy, Martha F. Guy, Mrs. Amelia S. Perry, William H. Hazzard, Livonia E. Hazzard, Henry A. Robinson, and Daniel R. Parsons. Other important early members included George W. Wilson, Thomas Q. Emerson and William B. Tallman.

The earliest years of the church were difficult. Rev. Williston Jones, sent from St. Louis to take charge of the church in May 1865, found only three of the original members still in Rolla. Jones himself died at Rolla in November 1865. Despite early difficulties in maintaining membership and securing permanent pastors, the congregation erected its first building in 1869. The frame building at the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Olive streets was enlarged and remodeled in 1942. It served the congregation until 1963, when a modern brick building on east 10<sup>th</sup> Street was dedicated. The new facility included a large annex used for educational and social purposes. The church opened Rolla Presbyterian Manor, a retirement home, in 1974.

The First Presbyterian Church of Rolla was initially a part of the St. Louis Presbytery. It is now associated with the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and is a member of the Synod of Mid-Missouri (Kansas City), and John Calvin Presbytery at Springfield. The Chamberlain, Chapin, Dunivin, Farris, Followill, Heimberger, Hirsch, McCaw, Parsons, Seese, Soest, and Van-Wormer families have been prominent members of the church. More recent church officials and long term pastors included Hugh Berry, John Heagler, Carl L. Sadler, Edward Sowers, Rev. G. Scott Porter, and Rev. Warren H. Rutledge.

The records consist of minutes of meetings of the church Session, Board of Deacons, and Board of Trustees. Minutes of the Session begin with the organizational meeting in May 1864 and continue through December 1994. There are no Session minutes from 1878 to 1923. Volumes 1-2 contain membership records, but volume 8, the Church Register, is the most complete record of church membership in the collection. Other records include minutes of meetings of the Board of Deacons, 1968-1996; minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1987-1997;

marriage records, 1948-1967; church bulletins, 1954-1964; and a brief history of the church, 1976.

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First Presbyterian Church of Rolla

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### **Volume 1: Record book, 1864-1878**

14-15 May 1864 Organizational meeting at "school room." ["Ministerial history of church" says this was a former army quartermaster dept. building on Block 56, County Addition to Rolla. See 25 Oct 1868 for reference to services at "Mr. Allen's school house"] A. T. Norton, district secretary of Presbyterian Home Missions, was elected moderator. Twelve persons made up the first congregation. Theophilus D. Griffith was ordained the first elder of the congregation.

15 May 1864 Public services then held at the Phelps County Courthouse. Name: "First Presbyterian Church of Rolla, Missouri" Ask to be received into the St. Louis Presbytery.

6 May 1865 Williston Jones arrived to take charge of church by direction of Rev A. T. Norton. Found that elder and all but three of original congregation had moved away.

20 Nov 1865 Rev. Williston Jones, pastor, died at his home.

Pulpit filled temp by Rev. S. B. Shaw of Cuba; and by Rev. Philander Read, sent by StL Presbytery, until Feb 1867. In July 1867, Rev. W. L. S. Clark came from Little Piney to preach three times each month.

Nov 1867 George W. Wilson elected elder. Thomas Q. Emerson, clerk of session. H. W. Werth and H. Beal were elected as deacons; Thomas Q. Emerson elected elder.

[following p. 26] 20 July 1873 "Ministerial History of church" Rev. J. Addison Whitaker begins as pastor.

[pp. 88-90] 22 July 1876 Trouble between Pastor Whitaker and Elder Thomas Emerson.

[pp. 113-164] More trouble between pastor and Emerson, and trial by Session, 16 July—3 August 1877  
Emerson suspended from church.

[pp. 169-170 missing]

[p.171] 19 Jan 1878 J. Addison Whitaker resigns as pastor, but remained in position through 14 Apr 1878.

14 April 1878—end of minutes. Records inspected and approved by Presbytery in St. Louis, 17 April.

[pp. 174-191 blank]

Church register [separately paginated—only the following pages have been filmed:]

- [p. 1]. Register of Elders
- [p. 8] Register of Deacons
- [pp.18-71] Register of Communicants
- [pp.77-79] Register of Baptisms
- [p. 125] Register of deaths

### **Shelf List**

These are records of the First Presbyterian Church at Rolla, Missouri. Included are minutes of meetings of the church Session, membership and marriage records, minutes of meetings of the Board of Deacons and the Board of Trustees, and church bulletins.

Volumes 1-8: Minutes of Session and church membership records, 1864-1994

- Volume 01: Minute book, 14 December 1864—14 April 1878  
(membership records are at the back of the volume)
- Volume 02: Minute book, 15 May 1923—25 March 1945  
(membership records are at the back of the volume)
- Volume 03: Minute book, 1 April 1945—14 December 1958
- Volume 04: Minute book, 28 December 1958—28 July 1968
- Volume 05: Minute book, 4 August 1968—19 December 1982
- Volume 06: Minute book, 3 January 1983—9 March 1992
- Volume 07: Minute book, 13 April 1992—20 December 1994
- Volume 08: Church Register, ca. 1880s—1970s

Volumes 9-10: Minutes of meetings of the Board of Deacons, 1968-1996

- Volume 09: Minute book, 9 December 1968--21 February 1995
- Volume 10: Minute book, 21 March 1995--19 November 1996

Volumes 11-12: Minutes of meetings of the Board of Trustees, 1987-1997

- Volume 11: Minute book, 19 January 1987—6 May 1990
- Volume 12: Minute book, 18 September 1989—9 January 1997

Volumes 13-15: Marriage records, 1948-1979

- (indexes are at the front of volumes)
- Volume 13: Record of Marriages Solemnized, 1948—1955
- Volume 14: Record of Marriages Solemnized, 1956—1963
- Volume 15: Record of Marriages Solemnized, 1963—1979

Folders 1-2: Miscellaneous printed material, 1954-1976.

- Folder 1: *Presbyterian Progress*, 1954-1964
- Folder 2: *The History and Highlights of Recent Events at the First Presbyterian Church*, 1976

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### **Index Cards**

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