

In order to improve access to more of the existing holdings of Western Archives copies of a number of preliminary finding aids are being made available. These preliminary finding aids, some of which were prepared many years ago, vary in degrees of completeness, detail and accuracy. Some provide only basic box listings of the contents of a fonds or a collection, while others provide additional background material. All are intended to be the starting point for access to the records and they should not be considered a definitive source of information on the full nature and contents of the fonds or collection. Questions about the information provided in the preliminary finding aids should be directed to archives.services@uwo.ca

University of Western Ontario Archives

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Bethesda East United Church Fonds. – 1879, 1909-1974 (predominant 1934-1974). – 30 cm of textual material.

Administrative History:

Bethesda East United Church (1869-1976) was founded as the New Connexion Methodists on the Birr Circuit, or Pastoral Charge. The Rev. Mr. Currie, the first of over 30 ministers employed by Bethesda, travelled 10 miles to get there each week until Richard Hobbs of Plover Mills donated a parcel of his land on Lot 26, Concession 3 in 1869 to erect a permanent structure for the church which, until then had held services in a log school house. In 1875 it became part of the Thorndale Circuit as Wesleyan Methodist. It was not until 1925 when the United Church was formally established that the church became Bethesda East United. In 1954 a church hall was added to the main building. It was finally demolished c. 1975. The congregation then became part of the Thorndale United Church congregation.

Scope and Content:

This fonds consists of three series' containing the records of Bethesda East United Church, Thorndale, Ontario. The first series is Church Administration and it contains minute books for the church and several of its women's organizations. They are very well kept accounts of the meetings associated with Bethesda East. The second series is Financial Records and it contains several Treasurer's books outlining the church's financial state for approximately three decades. The third series is Ephemera and it contains a few items such as Orders of Service and church history items. At some point, the earlier records of the church were destroyed, although it is not known how or when, exactly. Therefore, almost all the items date after the 1930's. There are also several items that relate to the building itself, including the church's closing.

Title based on the contents of the fonds.

Donated to the J. J. Talman Regional Collection c.1976.

Series 1: Church Administration. – 1879, 1934-1974. – 16cm.

This series consists of materials related to the administration of the church and several of the groups within the congregation. There are several minute books for Congregational Meetings, United Church Women meetings, Women's Missionary Society meetings and others. Also included are several items concerning the church building, such as deeds of land, an insurance form and correspondence and other items concerning the closing of Bethesda East. There are also sketches of the addition c.1954 and a plan of the area surrounding the church building.

Series 2: Financial Records. – 1936-1974. – 13cm.

This series consists of materials related to the finances of the church and several of the groups within the congregation. The majority of the series is made up of Treasurer's Books, sometimes called "Missionary and Maintenance Fund" books. There are some for the United Church Women, Women's Missionary Society, and the Bethesda East Treasurer. Also in this series are a number of financial and annual reports, outlining the general financial state of Bethesda East and Thorndale United Churches until 1960. By 1962 Zion United Church was also added to the circuit and therefore included in the reports. The report for 1961 is missing and so it is unknown if Zion was included then. The reports are called "Financial Reports" from 1950-1965 and "Annual Reports" from 1966-1972. There are also several other financial items such as receipts, tax assessments and promissory notes.

Series 3: Ephemera. – 1967-1972. – 1cm.

This series contains a few items such as Orders of Service, a letter concerning church history and a United Church Women Report for several different churches including Bethesda East.

Bethesda East United Church Fonds

Box 5611

Appendix A

Series 1: Church Administration. – 1879, 1934-1974.

File/Item	Date(s)	Volume/Item
Bethesda East Property	1879, 1954-1968	1 / 1
Church Closing	1973-1974	1 / 2
Congregational Minutes	1909-1951	1 / 3
Congregational Minutes	1939-1976	1 / 4
United Church Women Minutes	1962-1964	1 / 5
United Church Women Minutes	1969-1972	1 / 6
Women's Auxiliary Minutes	1948-1961	1 / 7
Women's Missionary Society Minutes	1934-1942	1 / 8
Women's Missionary Society Minutes	1947-1961	1 / 9
Other Minutes	1946-1973	1 / 10

Bethesda East United Church Fonds

Appendix A

Series 2: Financial Records. – 1936-1974.

File/Item	Date(s)	Volume/Item
Church Treasurer's Books	1936-1948	1 / 11
Church Treasurer's Books	1949-1961	1 / 12
Church Treasurer's Books	1962-1973	1 / 13
Church Treasurer's Books	1963-1973	1 / 14
Mission Band Treasurer's Book	1948-1961	1 / 15
United Church Women Treasurer's Books	1962-1974	1 / 16
Women's Missionary Society Treasurer's Books	1945-1961	1 / 17
Financial Reports	1950-1965	1 / 18
Annual Reports	1966-1972	1 / 19
Receipts	1954-1972	1 / 20
Financial Ephemera	1950-1974	1 / 21

Bethesda East United Church Fonds

Appendix A

Series 3: Ephemera. – 1967-1972.

File/Item	Date(s)	Volume/Item
Ephemera	1967-1972	1 / 22