

Profiles of ACC Pastors & their Ministries



*By Nora O. Howard, February 8, 2022
ACC Historian
Historian, Town of Avon*

PASTORS (Alphabetical)

Where the record is clear as to a pastor's status (such as 'settled') it is included below

Archer, John Clark	1912 - 1913
Ayres, Milton G.	1877 - 1878
Bankosky, John Arthur (Settled)	1964 - 1968
Bassett, William E.	1876 - 1877
Bounton, Warren Hussey (Settled)	1986 - 1996
Case, Francis H.	1830- 1840
Cassity, Donna (Interim)	2016 - 2017
Chenault, Martha (Interim/Designated)	2011 - 2016
Clark, Frederick J.	1913 - 1914
Clark, John Paul	1929 -1932
Colton, Henry Martyn	1855 - 1857
Connolly, Howard Garfield	1907 - 1908
Croft, Charles Pitman (Settled)	1871 - 1875
Curtiss, George William	1864 - 1868
Curtiss, L. (Supply Pastor)	1878-1879
Rev. Dr. James Fairfield English (Interim)	1964 and 1969
Eggleston, Nathaniel Hillyer (Supply Pastor)	1875 - 1876
Falsey, Edward T. (Settled)	1996 - 2007
Fankhauser, Charles K. (Settled)	1896 - 1900
Fiske, Samuel Asa (Settled)	1900 - 1904
Fuller, Kenneth David (Settled)	2009 - 2011
Hamilton, William John, Jr.	1940 - 1942
Harp, William Albert	1910 - 1911
Horton, Roger Plant	1943 - 1944
Hubbell, Stephen (Settled)	1840 - 1853
Hylton, Burchard Abraham	1937 - 1940
Johanson, Ernest Jerome & Laura Lane Johanson (Settled)	1949 - 1964

Kamp, Wilbur W.	1923 - 1925
Kellogg, Bella	1819 - 1829
Kittell, Ronald Alan (Interim)	1995 - 1996
Knight, Ralph Edwin	1925 - 1927
Laney, Matt	2017 - 2018
Leitch, Andrew	1914 - 1917
McClary, George S.	1911 - 1912
McGregor, Dr. Ernest Frank	1904 - 1907
Manocchio, Donna	2017
Marshall, Henry Grimes	1869 - 1871
Mayes, Edward R. (Associate Minister/Licensed)	1965 - 1967
McClary, George S.	1911 - 1912
McCleery, Jennifer, Associate. Pastor	Jan. 2022 - present
Rev. Dr. McGregor, Ernest F.	1904 - 1907
James Wilbur Moulton (father of Joseph)	1918 - 1922
Moulton, Joseph Langdon (son of James)	1917 - 1918
Murphy, E.D.	1858 - 1864
Nierendorf, Erica (Transitional)	2018
Pearson, Cecil Eli	1926 - 1929
Pelc-Faszczka, Brenda (Interim)	2007 - 2009
Pope, Edward Vanstone (Student Pastor)	1942 - 1943
Reynolds, Levering III, Assistant Minister,	1966 - 1969
Schoonmaker, Theodore Carpenter	1969 - 1985
Seeley, Nicholas J.	1879 - 1895
Singer, Robert L. Jr. (Interim)	1985 - 1986
Smail, Charles, G.	1909 - 1910
Solimene, Christopher (Settled)	Oct. 2018 - present

Wheeler, John R.

1932 - 1937

Whittlesey, John Smalley (Acting Pastor)

1853 - 1854

Woodruff, Watson O.D.

1944 - 1949

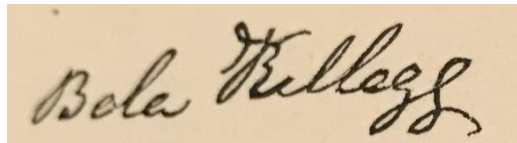
Avon Congregational Church Pastors

Chronological Order

Bela Kellogg

Pastor, September 7, 1819-September 2, 1829

Williams College, 1800



Rev. Bela Kellogg (1780-1831) was born in Amherst, Massachusetts on August 24, 1780, the son of Martin and Hannah Crocker Kellogg. He graduated from Williams College in 1800, and studied theology with Rev. Nathaniel Emmons of Franklin, New Hampshire. His name was probably pronounced “BEEla.” He married Lydia Candee (1778-December 3, 1843) on June 6, 1805. They had 5 children.

Williams College was the birthplace of the American Protestant missionary movement, which must have influenced Bela Kellogg. In 1806, a few years after Kellogg’s graduation, five students met at what came to be called the Haystack meeting, gathering at a haystack to discuss the spiritual welfare of people in Asia. Within four years of that meeting, some of these young men established the [American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions](#) (ABCFM). In 1812 the ABCFM sent its first missionaries to India.

Kellogg’s ministry probably began in 1809. In that year, Kellogg and his colleague Eliphelet B. Coleman (Williams College 1800; University of VT 1804) were appointed to a 6-month mission trip among new settlements in the western and northwestern parts of New York State. “Mr. Kellogg went upon the missionary ground and began his labors; but in a short time, through ill health, was obliged to desist from them.” His mission trip involved traveling among settlements, preaching, visiting families, schools, and the sick, attending conferences, conversing with people, especially youth and children, upon the concerns of their souls, and distributing tracts. Rev. Coleman reported back that the state of New York, west of the Genesee River, is “in a deplorable situation, in respect to morals, and greatly needs the labors

of missionaries.” Rev. Kellogg was ordained at Brookfield, CT, in 1813, and dismissed from that church in 1817.

Kellogg then went to New Haven County. From *Hartford Courant*, July 29, 1817, p. 1, online:

In Humphreysville, in the county of New Haven, the Rev. Bela Kellogg has labored 25 weeks. The number of families in this village is small, and several of these belong to other denominations. Little attention had been given to the public worship of God for many years. A church which once existed here had become extinct, as a church, and the things that remained seemed ready to die. The labors of this missionary have not been in vain in the Lord. Christians have been greatly revived and animated in the service and cause of their diving Master; the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, has been constantly extending in the face of much open and direct hostility; great solemnity prevailed among all classes of the community; the number of hopeful converts is more than thirty; a church has been organized in the village insisting of [89?] members with happy prospect of harmony and increase. A library of valuable religious books has been begun by the church, and such has been the interest excited, that the people have already raised money by voluntary subscription to support the preaching of the gospel among the m during the summer, and there is reason to hope that their future exertions will secure to them the blessings of a settled pastor. The effects of what the Domestic Missionary Society has done in this village on the state of morals, int eh sobriety, industry, regard to order and attachment to religious institutions, are strikingly obvious. No friend to the cause of truth and righteousness can know what this village was, and witness what it now is, without acknowledging the power and grace of God in the change. The good people say, ”that the reformation in the place is truly wonderful, that it is the Lord’s doings and marvelous in our eyes.” They express much gratitude to God both in their conversation and prayers for the institution and liberality of the Domestic Missionary Society, In proof of the gratitude which is felt, we subject the following:

Humphreysville, Lord’s-day, 27 May, 1817.

‘After public worship was closed, the church and congregation were requested to tarry. The object in view being stated, both the church and congregation unanimously voted, their most cordial thanks to the Domestic Missionary Society of Connecticut for their very kind and liberal assistance, in sending and supporting among them a preacher of the gospel, thro’ whose instrumentality & faithful labours, a church has been formed, and many should, as we have reason to believe, have been born into the kingdom of the blessed Emmanuel, who

will be his crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.” Bradford Steele, Moderator.’

We would here remark, that our Missionaries have been far from confining their labors to the Sabbath. They have all been much employed, during the week, in attending meetings for religious worship, in visiting schools, and also from house to house, and in conversing with individuals on the great subject of their own salvation.”

A pastor contemporary to Rev. Kellogg wrote that “In consequence of the feebleness of his vocal organs [he] devoted himself to teaching, [and] preaching occasionally as he was able. On recovering from the typhus fever his strength was so much greater than before that he devoted himself to preaching and was settled in Brookfield in 1813.” *[From Biographical Sketches of the Congregational Pastors of New England, by Rev. Emerson Davis, p. 45; online at archive.org (search word Rev. Bela Kellogg.)]*

Rev. Kellogg at the Avon Congregational Church

The first recorded meeting held in the new Avon Congregational Church (known as the Third Church in Farmington) meetinghouse was on September 7, 1819. Avon was then called Northington, a parish of Farmington. From October-December 1819, this newly established church of approximately 54 persons had raised about \$5,183. The congregation promised to establish a permanent fund to support the preaching of the Gospel. Rev. Kellogg was called on that same date, September 7, 1819, to settle as pastor. His salary was \$500 and ten cords of hard wood (sled length) to be delivered at his home. Bela Kellogg owned his own home, whereas subsequent pastors lived in the church’s parsonage.

Bela Kellogg’s instillation as pastor on November 3, 1819 was described in the diary of Rev. Thomas Robbins, of the East Windsor Congregational Church. The day before, Robbins rode from East Windsor to Northington with Deacon Amasa Loomis

[I attended] the installation of Mr. Kellogg. He appeared very well on examination. This small people have exerted themselves very much. In the evening Mr. Stebbins, of West Haven, preached. [On November 3] we had an agreeable installation. The day pleasant and the collection of people great. I gave the right hand of fellowship. Returned [to East Windsor].

The ACC Church *Manual* stated that “Nothing further of special interest seems to have transpired until 1838.” This can hardly be true, but there are no church minutes to provide information. The Farmington Canal, for example, was built and began operation during his pastorate, and the parish of Northington became the Town of Avon in 1830.

Mission Work of Bela Kellogg and Others

In early 1824, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions began to form “Gentleman’s Associations” and “Ladies Associations” in Connecticut and Massachusetts, for the purpose of supporting Christians in the missionary cause.

In Avon, Rev. Kellogg was the president of the Gentleman’s Association. Other members were Nathan Case, vice president; Charles Whittlesey, secretary; Obadiah Gillet, treasurer, and there were three unnamed “Collectors.” Mrs. Kellogg was president of the Ladies’s Association; Mrs. Amos Phelps vice president; Mrs. Dan Deming, secretary; Mrs. Goff, treasurer; and also three unnamed “Collectors.”

West Avon residents were equally active in separate Associations in that part of the parish. Rufus F. Hawley (son of Rev. Rufus Hawley) was secretary of the Gentlemen’s Association. In the Ladies’s Association, Mrs. Rufus F. Hawley was president and treasurer. At the church in Farmington, Rev. Noah Porter was president of the association in his parish, and his wife was vice-president of the Ladies’s Association. [*From The Missionary Herald, for the Year 1824, v. XX (online). Published by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions: Boston. Page 26.*]

Rev. Kellogg gave up his pastorate in 1829 due to ill health. He died April 30, 1831. On his gravestone in the East Avon Cemetery is this epitaph:

“There is rest in heaven. Rev. Bella Kellogg died Apr. 30, 1831 in the 18, year of his ministry. AE. 51. He was Decidedly a man of God and full of faith & the Holy Ghost. As a minister of the gospel, this heart glowed with love to his Redeemer. Rooted and Grounded in evangelical truth, he was bold, ardent and ... in his Master’s cause. His prayers & labors were abundant, his benevolence expansive & his end is peace in the armor of God, he met death and triumphed.”

On his wife Lydia’s gravestone in the East Avon Cemetery is the epitaph:

“She needeth no epitaph on Marble, for it is engraved in [characters?] Of love on many hearts.”



Children of Rev. Bela Kellogg and Lydia Kellogg

Cordelia Kellogg was born March 17, 1806. She married Avon Congregational Church deacon Dr. Alfred Kellogg, September 2, 1824. She died April 30, 1831, at age 25, on the same day as her father, Rev. Kellogg. The year of her son Lucius’ birth, 1831, suggests Cordelia’s death was due to childbirth.

Bela Crocker Kellogg was born April 27, 1811 in West Haven, CT and died September 30, 1892 in Avon. He was admitted to ACC membership on July 1, 1832. He learned the harness trade in Hartford, and became a merchant and farmer in Avon. He married Mary Bartlett (April 29, 1818-August 10, 1904) on October 15, 1839. The daughter of the pastor of the West Avon Congregational Church, Mary Bartlett Kellogg was admitted to ACC membership by letter from the West Avon church on January 26, 1840, and was an active member.

Bela C. became Avon’s postmaster on June 17, 1861, a position he held for 25 years. Bela c. and Mary had 6 children (baptized between 1841-1852).

Their daughter Mary Louisa (1851-1886) married Yung Wing (1828-1912) on February 24, 1876. They had met through Mr. Yung’s educational work in Hartford.

The wedding was performed in Avon (at the bride's family home) by Rev. Twitchell, pastor of Asylum Hill Congregational Church. Yung Wing (Yale 1854) was the first Chinese student to graduate from a United States university. His work was in furthering Chinese/American relations and he published *My Life in China and America* (1909). They had 2 children: Morrison Brown Yung and Bartlett Golden Yung. Bartlett was baptized at ACC on October 24, 1879. Yung Wing, a widower with "two motherless boys" was in Avon in 1889 to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of his in-laws, Bela C. And Mary Bartlett Kellogg.

Lucius Storrs Kellogg, born 1814, died June 21, 1822, age 9.

Mary Elizabeth Kellogg baptized October 28, 1821, and admitted to ACC membership on May 3, 1863. She died in Avon May 29, 1886.

Martha Kellogg baptized February 8, 1824.

Bela C. and Mary Kellogg's Children
(Grandchildren of ACC's first pastor, Bela Kellogg)

- 1) Edward Wilberforce, baptized July 1841
- 2) John B., baptized September 1843
- 3) Charles Alexis, baptized September 1, 1844
- 4) Wallace Bela, baptized May 5, 1848
- 5) Jane Bartlett, baptized Feb. 28, 1851
- 6) Mary Louisa, born July 26, 1851, baptized April 30 1852;
admitted to ACC May 3, 1863. Died May 28, 1886.

Sources for Rev. Bela Kellogg

Missionary work in *The Missionary Herald at Home and Abroad*, v. 6, reporting on the Massachusetts Missionary Society, 1809-1810, p. 138, online.

Allen's *American Biographical Dictionary*, at UCC Hartford archives.

ACC Church Manual, 1915.

Kellogg family gravestone, East Avon Cemetery.

50th anniversary in *Hartford Courant*, November 21, 1889, p. 6.

Church Abstract records online for ACC.

Biographical Sketches of the Congregational Pastors of New England, by Rev. Emerson Davis, (1798-1866) p. 45, online at archive.org - search word Rev. Bela Kellogg.

Kellogg family details in *Commemorative Biographical Record of Hartford County*, v. 1., p. 401, ed. J.H. Beers & Co., 1901, online.

Thomas Robbins. *The Diary of Thomas Robbins*, p. 801, online.

The Hartford Courant: Sept. 10, 1919. Online. "Avon Will Long Remember Church's 100th Anniversary."

This Description of Rev. Bela Kellogg was recalled by Dr. E. W. Kellogg who heard about his grandfather when he was 12 years old, from Thomas Bishop. Bishop told him "He was a very grand man and a most useful one in this town. He was everyone's friend and nothing pleased him so much as to do a kindness for a neighbor. He was a great friend to everyone, especially the boys. No boy ever kept his cap on his head when Mr. Kellogg was there so great was their respect for him."

Rev. Kellogg's records of the Third Church in Farmington, p. 8-10, include his Call to ACC as pastor, and his response. His dismissal for ill health is on pp. 116-119. (ACC Archives)

Connecticut Church abstracts for ACC (online), dismissed from ACC on Sept. 2, 1829, pp. 22-23.

John Trumbull. *The Memorial History of Hartford County, 1633-1884*, v. 2. Boston: Edward Osgood, 1886. (ACC Archives)

A Kellogg descendant in 2018 pronounced Rev. Bela Kellogg's name as "Beela" in conversation with Jeannie Parker of Avon. An oil painting of Rev. Kellogg was on view at ACC's 100th anniversary in September 1919, owned by Dr. Edward Wilberforce Kellogg, as noted in *The Hartford Courant* on Sept. 8, 1919.

Photographs of gravestone and of signature by Nora Howard.

Francis Hiram Case

Pastor, 1830 - April 28, 1840

Yale Theological Seminary, 1822

(In the same Yale class as Rev. Edward Beecher, brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe)

The church's second choice for pastor at this time was Rev. Francis H. Case, (born Canton, CT, October 1, 1797). He was called to be pastor of ACC in the fall of 1830 and was installed December 22, 1830. He stayed for a decade. Rev Case had joined the Canton Congregational Church in 1817. He had been licensed to preach on October 1, 1823, after examination by the Consociation and Rev. Thomas Robbins. (The first choice for pastor had been Rev. James H. Francis, but he declined the call.)

A later ACC pastor, Rev. James Moulton, described Rev. Case's ministry. At the beginning, he said, Rev. Case "found himself in the midst of a marked revival of religion. During the following winter, after this installation, he labored with the zealous hope of a newly-settled pastor, endeavoring to wake up the drowsy church and to secure revived Christian life and activity among its members. In the following spring when the sleeping earth was awakening to new life and the frosts of winter were yielding to the warm and genial influence of sun and shower, the blessed Spirit...moved...." The revival continued through the spring and summer, and in 1831-1832, fifty-four persons joined the church.

Rev. Case's other pastorates were in Canton, Connecticut and Whitewater, Wisconsin. He died December 20, 1872 in Wisconsin, at age 75. His wife Lucinda Case died in 1883 in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Sources: *Hartford Daily Courant*, February 19, 1884, online for Whitewater and Canton. James Francis in Eggleston, 1876; Moulton, 1919 *Historical Address*. Licensed to preach in *Diary of Thomas Robbins*, p. 941, online. *Third Church in Farmington records*, pp. 81, 123, 222+. Records of ACC call in ACC archives.
Photograph: Rev. Case's gravestone, Oak Grove Cemetery, Whitewater, Wisconsin.
Findagrave.com



Stephen Hubbell

Settled Pastor, December 16, 1840-July 1, 1853

Yale College, 1826
Yale Divinity School, 1829

Rev. Hubbell was born April 22, 1801 in Wilton, CT and died March 3, 1884.

He was called to ACC on December 16, 1840, and installed December 31, 1840. During his pastorate, ACC established the Avon [East] Temperance Society in 1843. Rev. James Moulton in his 1919 *Historical Address* noted how Rev. Hubbell's embrace of Dr. Lyman Beecher's temperance movement was successful in "checking the tide of

intemperance that had become a curse to hundreds of communities in our land.” He said Rev. Hubbell had welcomed reformer John B. Gough to ACC.

In 1845, the state legislature approved ACC’s name change from the United Religious Association of Farmington, to “The Ecclesiastical Society of East Avon.”

Rev. Hubbell held mid-week and neighborhood prayer meetings throughout the parish “held at early candle-light.”

The Hubbell pastorate was marked by a controversy that led to his dismissal. In 1853, his wife Martha Stone Hubbell published her novel, *The Shady Side, or, Life in a Country Parsonage*. The story was about the life of a minister’s family in a small town, and the church’s unwillingness to pay the pastor a livable salary.

Church members recognized themselves in the book, and an Ecclesiastical Council in May 1853 was called to deal with to the uproar. In attendance were ministers and delegates from surrounding towns. Rev. Hubbell delivered his 19-page Farewell Sermon on June 26, 1853, in which he reviewed his 12 years at ACC. He was dismissed five days later on July 1, 1853.

The Hartford Courant’s obituary for Rev. Hubbell described the controversy: *The Shady Side* “was beautifully written and aptly and truly pictured real life in a country parish.” The author was “very highly cultivated, her taste most refined and her nature too keenly sensitive for the rougher aspects of a country parish.” The book “created quite a sensation in parish circles.”

Rev. Hubbell had been pastor of the church in Mount Carmel (1830-1836) and the church in Wolcotville/Torrington 1837-1839). After leaving ACC he was pastor at the North Stonington Congregational Church ((1853-1869 and again in 1878) and Long Ridge/Stamford (1869-1873).

Rev. Hubbell’s son William Stone Hubbell (1837-1930) graduated from Yale in 1858. He served in the Civil War, and received the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1894 for bravery in action.

William was about three years old when his parents moved to Avon. He wrote years later in a letter to the church about the time it was struck by lightening. After his father “pronounced the benediction he came down from the pulpit and stood by the communion table. Suddenly there was a crash, a blinding flash filled the church and many women shrieked and fainted.I considered it the most entertaining service I had ever attended, and as no one was seriously hurt, I [favored] its frequent repetition.”

He also said that “the ladies of the church pieced and presented to [my father] what was then known as a rising sun bed quilt. It contained fifty or 75 blocks, a light

circle on a dark background, and in each circle the name of one of the makers was inscribed in her own handwriting.”

William said that his father allowed him, as a boy, to attend a first Wednesday of the month Training Day. There was a sham fight between the Avon Greene and the Bushwackers of West Avon, on the Farmington Meadows, “where they were not likely to hit anything.” His father allowed him to attend because it was “probably the last militia parade which will ever be seen in the state of Connecticut.... It was scarcely ten years later that my father was placing his hand on my head in blessing, and bidding me god speed as I went out to fight for my country in the War of the Rebellion. I remained in the service three years and after the battle of Gettysburg there was a report that I had been killed, which was published in the *Springfield Republican* with an obituary, which I have been trying to live up to ever since.”

Sources: Moulton, Historical Address, pp. 6-8. Quilt in Hartford Daily Courant, August 31, 1915, located in ACC archives Hubbell file. Biography and newspaper clippings at UCC Hartford Archives in ACC file. Shady Side summary in Warren Bouton dissertation, pp. 19-26, ACC Archives. Farewell Sermon, ACC archives. William Stone Hubbell and Medal of Honor in Bulletin of Yale University, 1931, Obituary Record of Graduates of Yale University, online. Militia practice fight in The Hartford Courant, August 31, 1915, p. 16. online, a story reported when William was visiting ACC in 1915.

John Smalley Whittlesey
Acting ACC Pastor, 1853-1854

Yale Theological Seminary, c. 1852



Rev. John Whittlesey was born in 1812 and grew up in New Britain. Strong influences on his character were his grandfather, Dr. John Smalley, pastor of the New Britain parish of Farmington, and his father, Deacon David Whittlesey, state legislator and a 'conductor' on the Underground Railroad. Rev. Whittlesey was strongly anti-slavery, having been moved by the plight of the Africans of the ship *Amistad* who lived in Farmington in 1841.

John's brother William attended Yale, where classmate Asa Turner changed the Whittlesey brothers lives. Asa Turner brought Congregationalism to Iowa, and the Whittlesey brothers wanted to be part of that movement. William encouraged six of his nine siblings to move west, including his brother John. Rev. Whittlesey and his wife Eliza, with several of their children,

lived on a small farm as one of the first dozen white families in the new settlement of Durant in mid-1856, under the auspices of the American Home Missionary Society. Some of the settlers were Andover seminary graduates who arrived in 1843 at the request of Asa Turner, and founded other congregations across Iowa. They founded what became Grinnell College. Whittlesey would have known John Brown and his armed followers in "Bleeding Kansas."

Three infants of Rev. Whittlesey and Eliza had died in Connecticut. Within a few days in late 1859, three more of their children died in Iowa - Eliza, 14, Mary, 9, and Charles, 8. The two remaining sons, John and David, enlisted in the Wisconsin infantry regiment in 1861. Their eagerness to defend the Union must have affected their father's decision to join the army. He was chaplain to about 1,000 men of the 11th Regiment of Iowa Volunteers.

Captain Whittlesey cared for the regiment during the winter in Missouri. At one point, there were 240 sick soldiers and 33 of these died under his care. He wrote to his brother on Feb. 28, 1862 that all he did for three months was care for the sick and attend funerals. He also wrote home about slavery. "No pen can describe the debasing influence of slavery, on both the slave & his master.... The whole system is debasing in the last degree. It would be the greatest mercy which could fall upon both classes if the whole thing could be broken up. God grant that this war may do it."

Rev. Whittlesey was with the 11 Regiment at the Battle of Shiloh in Tennessee, April 6-7, 1862, where both sides suffered over 25,000 casualties (killed, wounded, captured, missing). The chaplain died on May 11, 1862 at his home in Durant, Iowa of typhoid fever and pneumonia. His son David, 21, had died on April 19. His sole surviving son, John, was discharged for disability on May 28, 1862.

On June 7, 1862, the *Daily Gazette* published a letter sent a week earlier from the 11th Iowa camp in Corinth, Mississippi. It described Rev. Whittlesey as a “good, brave man. He exposed himself freely to danger at the battle of Pittsburg Landing [Shiloh] to aid and relieve the wounded.”

The Genealogy of the Whittelsey-Whittlesey Family (1898) called him “a man of ardent piety and untiring zeal, of sanguine temperament, whole-hearted and self-sacrificing.”

Rev. Whittlesey also served churches in Trumbull, Bethel, and New Britain. He is buried in the Oak Hill Cemetery in Janesville, Wisconsin alongside family members.

Sources: *The Cedar County Historical Review*, Cedar County Historical Society, Tipton, Iowa, July 2014. “Durant’s Pioneer Pastor and Civil War Chaplain John S. Whittlesey,” by Daniel G. Clark (emailed to Nora Howard from Mr. Clark, November 2018). Photograph (portrait, no facial hair, with large black bowtie) from ancestry.com; Moore’s notes on church history at UCC Archives, Hartford. Civil War in *Contributions to Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. II., p. 139. *Daily Gazette* letter sent from Corinth May 28, 1862.

Henry Martyn Colton
Acting Pastor, March 22, 1855-April, 1857

B.A., Yale College, 1848

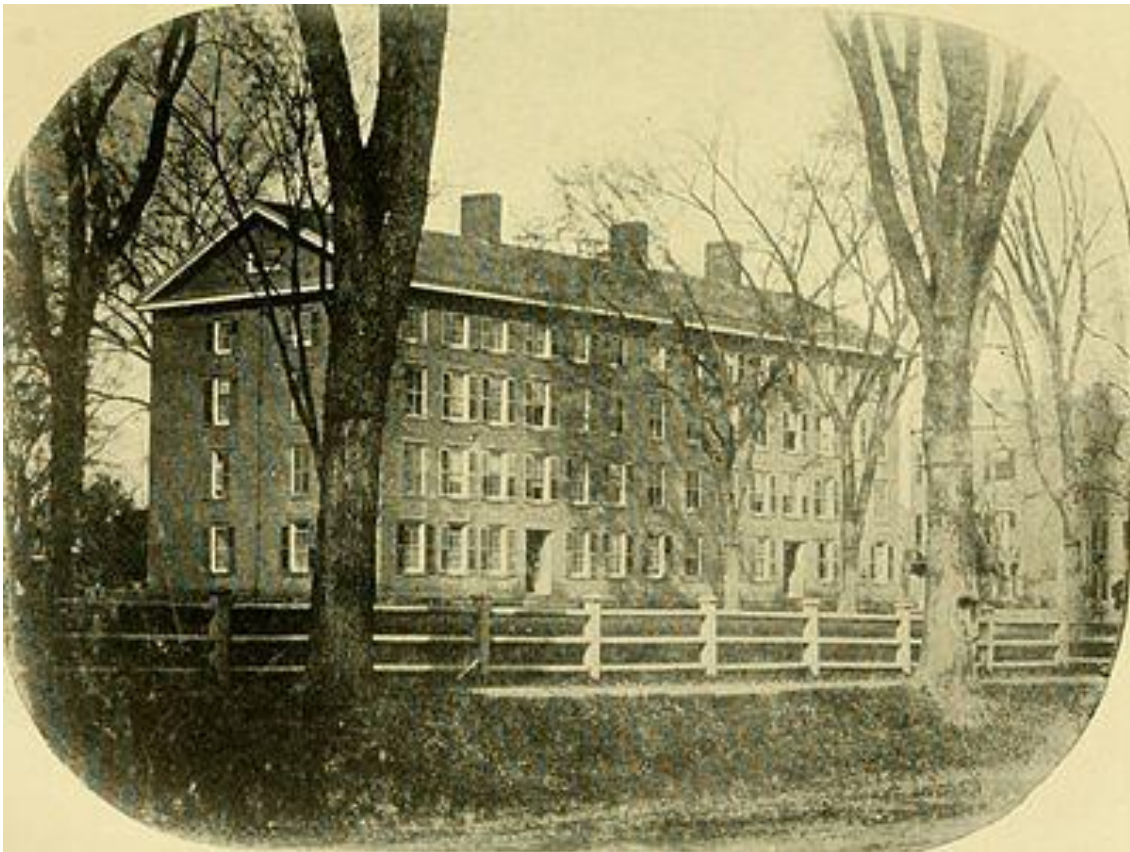
Yale Theological Seminary, c. 1852

Henry Colton was born November 5, 1826 in New York. He was the son of Rev. George Colton (Yale College 1804). After graduating from Yale College in 1848, he remained for another year as a Berkeley Scholar, studying philosophy and language, and then spent three years at the Yale Theological Seminary. He married Lucy Tuttle of New Haven on October 25, 1852.

Rev. Colton's first pastorate was at the First Congregational Church of Woodstock, CT (1852-1855). His second pastorate was at ACC. He was admitted to ACC membership on July 5, 1855, by letter from Woodstock, CT. He was dismissed in 1857 to the church in Middletown, where he lived for the rest of his life. He ran a classical school in Middletown and began operation of the "Yale School for Boys" in New York City, which he operated until his death.

He died June 2, 1872, and is buried in Grove Street Cemetery, New Haven.

Sources: Supply pastor in *Memorial History of Hartford County*, p. 6. Obituary Record in



Graduates of Yale College, 1872 July, p. 60. Photograph of Yale Theological Seminary dormitory, completed 1836, from wikipedia.

E. D. Murphy

Pastor, April 18, 1858-May 24, 1864

Union Seminary College, New York City, 1852



Rev. Murphy was called to ACC on April 18, 1858 and installed June 8, 1859. The installation sermon was delivered by Reverend and Professor Hitchcock of New York, and the installation prayer was by Rev. Dr. Noah Porter of Farmington. Rev. Murphy's college reunion class report in 1860 stated that he had settled "at Avon, Conn., the town which had been immortalized by the wife of his predecessor, under the name of "Shady Side," but he was happy to say that the "shades had all departed."

During his pastorate, ACC built a conference room on the north end of the meeting house. Rev. Murphy organized a local Temperance Society (following on the heels of an earlier one). There was a nationwide revival and 30 people joined ACC. The average Sunday congregation in 1859 was 229 people, and in 1862 membership reached 166. Rev. Murphy left in 1864 to work for the United States Christian Commission, at "the urgent call of the state committee." *The Hartford Courant* reported in 1864 that he was dismissed from ACC "a his own request on Tuesday. We understand that he intends traveling through the State, speaking [on] behalf of the Christian Commission - to be followed by an agent soliciting funds for its aid."

Sources: Installation in the *Congregational Quarterly*, v. 1, p. 319. *Eighteenth Anniversary of the Associated Alumni Report of Union Seminary College*, May 10, 1860, online in *The New York Times*. Christian Commission, conference room, and revival in James W, Moulton, *Historical Address*, pp. 7-9 (ACC Archives) *Hartford Courant*, May 28, 1864, p. 2 for dismissal. *Photograph online* (straight tie, curled hair over ears, suit) courtesy Katie T. Kukiolczynski, Avon Free Public Library research assistant.

George William Curtiss

Settled Pastor, December 5, 1864-September 15, 1868

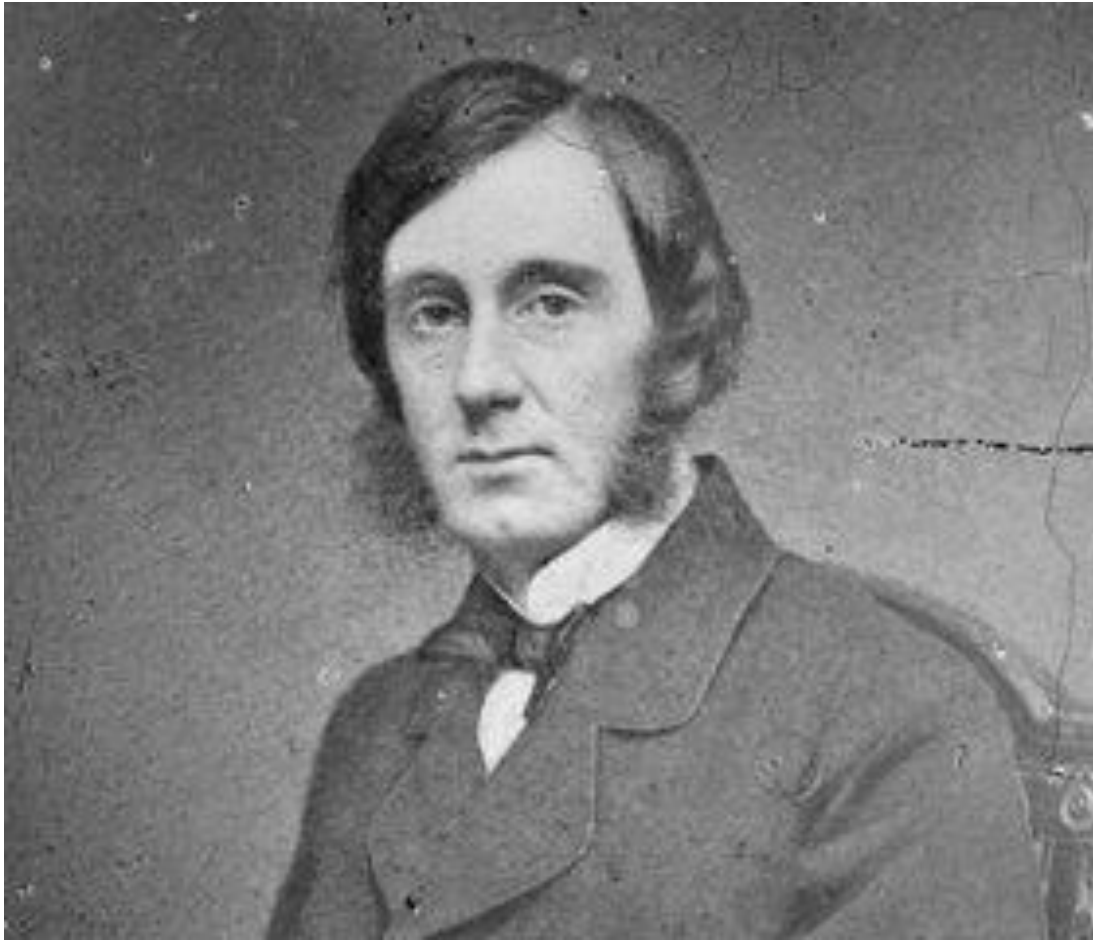
Andover Theological Seminary



HENRY G. MARSHALL

Chaplain of the House

Rev. Henry Grimes Marshall, Chaplain of the House of Representatives, and was born January 2, 1839. He is the son of (Grimes) Marshall. He graduated from Yale University in 1861. He entered the ministry in September, 1868, on graduation from the Middlebury Sem., and has held Congregational pastorates at Middlebury, Cromwell, and Hampton. On August 1, 1870, he married Crosby, of Danbury. They had one son: William Grimes Marshall, born 1870, who is now assistant professor in Sheffield Scientific School. On August 29, 1874, he married Annette L. (Emerson) B. Dr. Samuel A. Marshall, born May 6, 1877. Mr. Marshall served in the Army of the Rebellion, August 4, 1862, in the 15th C. of First Lieutenant of the 29th C. V. (colored), and was promoted to Captain of Company I, 29th C. V. (colored), and was brevetted as a. a. a. G. on the staff of General William C. Gilman. A. G. Smith, Chaplain of the House of Representatives.



Rev. Curtiss was called as ACC pastor on December 5, 1865, and installed June 26, 1866. He and his wife Elvira were admitted as members of ACC on December 24, 1865, by letter from the Congregational Church of Union, CT. He was later pastor of the Harwinton Congregational Church (1869-1877) and of the Congregational Church of Union (1903-1904).

Rev. Curtiss was asked to come to ACC for one year, and then agreed to stay longer. He was an honorary member of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

Sources: Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut, v. 2., pp. 289, 431. American Board in Fifty Third Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, online. Two photographs (one with his name on it; other seated from chest with long sideburns, courtesy of Katie T. Kukiolczynski, Avon Free Public Library research assistant.

Henry Grimes Marshall

Acting Pastor, December 6, 1869-December 1871

Yale College, 1860

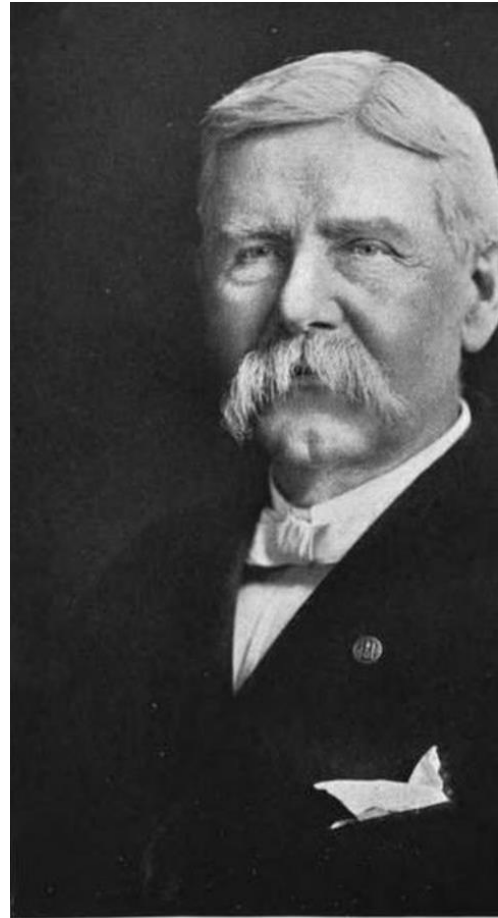
Andover Theological Seminary, 1868

Rev. Marshall was born Jan. 2, 1839, in Milford, CT. He married Mariette Crosy in 1869 and they had one son, William, born in 1870.

He was admitted to ACC membership January 29, 1871, by letter from First Congregational Church of Milford. His salary was \$1,000 and did not include the parsonage. The *Legislative History and Souvenir of Connecticut* (p. 293, online) noted that "His pleasing qualities and intellectual ability as a preacher have gained for him a large number of friends. He later served churches in Charlemont, Massachusetts, and in Connecticut in the towns of Middlebury, Cromwell and Hampton.

Rev. Marshall enlisted in the Civil War August 4, 1862. He served in the Fifteenth Connecticut Volunteers. He was promoted to First Lt., 29th Ct. Volunteer Infantry Regiment (Colored) on Feb. 16, 1864. He became captain of the 29th's Company I, on Jan. 31, 1865. (Colored). He was mustered out October 1865.

A remarkable collection of his letters during the war, from 1862-65 are at the University of Michigan in the James Schoff Civil War Collection. Grimes was a keen observer of the experience of the soldiers, and of the religious life in the regiment. He also wrote about battles, poetry, music, women's roles, and, surprisingly, botany. Says the University archivist, Marshall's words provide "insight into the workings of the mind, but also the workings of the heart.... his correspondence ranks among the outstanding collections in the Schoff Civil War Collections, providing a sensitive and deeply introspective view.



We would like to know if he wrote about Private Leverett Holden, an Avon resident and soldier in the CT. 29th, whose grave is beside ACC.

He was chaplain of the Connecticut House of Representatives. He died October 11 or 12, 1918, age 79.

Sources: *Hartford Courant*, obituary, October 13, 1918, online, with grainy photo of him. *Legislative History and Souvenir of Connecticut*. vol. 8, by William H. Taylor. Information about his papers and letters during the Civil War, in collection of the William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan. The online finding aid to this includes a long biography. Black and white photo (long white mustache) is from this source.

Charles Pitman Croft

Acting Pastor, February 1, 1871- April 6, 1875

Wesleyan College (now Wesleyan University) 1869
Yale Theological Seminary

Rev. Croft was born in 1844 in Putnam Valley, NY, and died Nov. 16, 1921. Before coming to ACC, Rev. Croft was the minister at the Simsbury Methodist-Episcopal Church, and expected to change churches every three years. To avoid leaving an area they loved, he changed denominations. He was ordained at the Avon Congregational Church on February 1, 1871. His annual salary was \$1,000 with use of the parsonage.

Just after beginning as pastor of ACC, he married Julia Mather (1833-1911) on April 19, 1871, in the Simsbury Congregational Church (where she was a member). Around 1873, Julia inherited her aunt's homestead in Weatogue, the Mather-Phelps House.

After leaving ACC, Rev. Croft did mission work at the Warburton Chapel for the Center Church of Hartford. He supplied pulpits at the First Congregational Church of Torrington (1876-1880) and Watertown. He was supply pastor of the First Congregational Church of Willimantic (1889-1890) and on the Simsbury Free Library's



board.

He was later pastor of the Terra Haute, Indiana church for about four years, resigning due to health. Returning to Connecticut, he preached throughout Hartford County, performing weddings, christenings and funerals.

In 1905, the Mather-Phelps House opened in Simsbury as a community center for lectures and gatherings. Simsbury was indebted to the Croft's for their support of this community endeavor.

Simsbury was a center of suffrage activity, and Rev. Croft strongly supported the movement to give women the vote. Newspaper excerpts show his commitment.

From the *Hartford Courant*, online:

Feb. 13, 1913, Middletown: Pleased with the success of the campaign in this city last week, Mrs. Emily Pierson, the state organizer of the Connecticut Woman's Suffrage Association, has decide to organize a suffrage league here some time this week....”

August 2, 1914: Suffrage speakers are at Simsbury's Chautauqua Week. “The people of Simsbury have been on the tip toe of expectancy to hear the suffrage speakers....”

June 28, 1914: The National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage held its annual meeting at the home of Mrs. Arthur M. Dodge, the president, in Simsbury on Thursday. This is the first time that the national association has held an annual meeting outside of New York, which has always been the center for its official activities.” Representatives came from CT, NY, NJ, RI, Mass, Pa.

Oct. 15, 1914: Mrs. Thomas N. Hepburn was among speakers going from town to town to speak on Suffrage...”In the town hall at Avon...Miss Alyse Gregory and Miss Isabella Sandeim were in charge.”

Nov. 21, 1915: Simsbury was organizing a Suffrage League. “Simsbury, for several years, has had workers prominent in both the camps of the suffragists and the antis, but until now no move has been made to enlist the rank and file in either movement..... a meeting of those who are interested will be held in about a week and a league formed and officers chosen....**Rev. Charles P. Croft** of Weatogue has been a prominent suffrage sympathizer, and would have been a valuable aid in organizing the league, but **Mr. Croft** has taken a house at Convent, N.J. for the winter.

Nov. 19, 1916: *The Hartford Courant*, online, reported that **Rev. Croft** attended the Equal Suffrage League Convention in New Haven. He was one of the

delegates or alternates. When the League responded to the Roll Call, he carried the banner and headed the delegation.

Dec. 3, 1916: *Courant* online: **Rev. Charles P. Croft** of Weatogue and the Simsbury, Equal Suffrage League, have arranged for a reception in the Neighborhood House Tuesday afternoon. The officers and directors of the Simsbury League will form a reception committee. Those interested in suffrage in the towns of Avon, Granby, West Hartford, Farmington and Canton have been invited to attend...The meeting is planned as a get together meeting of all those interested in the suffrage cause.

Jan. 16, 1920: *Courant* online: Delegates to Chicago Women's Suffrage Association Convention in Chicago: Convention to be held Feb, 12-18 was discussed at this meeting in South Windsor at home of Mrs. Nathaniel Jones.. ...delegates chosen - (none from Avon). Among those present at meeting were (from Avon: Mrs. J.W. Alsop, Mrs. W.C. Chidsey, Mrs. Fayette Lusk.

THIS PART NOT ON THUMB DRIVE I GAVE PASTOR CHRIS in 2020
Frank Hadsell Diary, February, 1874: "The Rev. C.P. Croft came to this church in 1872. He was a very able man and gave great satisfaction to every one except a few old members who thought he was too sensational. Men who had never been to church went to hear Mr. Croft and he was doing really good work, but the carping and faultfinding caused him to resign in 1875.

There upon there were several who declared they would never go to church again and I think they did not. I was a Sunday school scholar when he came to Avon and we had a Christmas tree in the church in 1872. When all the gifts had been taken off my name had not been called. So Mr. Croft gave me a nice pocket bible which I still have."

Sources: Photograph man seated with cane, posted on findagrave.com. Nora Howard contacted the person who posted it and learned he/she had sold it. We don't know its location now. James W. Moulton, *Historical Address*, p. 9; *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, p. 457. Hadsell Diary, Avon Free Public Library History Room.

Nathaniel Hillyer Eggleston

Supply Pastor, 1875-1876

Yale College 1840, Yale Seminary 1843





Rev. Eggleston was born in Hartford, Connecticut, on May 7, 1822, the son of Nathaniel Eggleston (1790-1839) and Emily Hillyer (1797-1874).

After graduating from Yale College in 1840 and Yale Seminary (now Yale Divinity School) in 1843, he was pastor of the Congregational Church in Ellington, Connecticut, from 1845-1850. He also served in Brooklyn, New York; Chicago, Illinois; Madison, Wisconsin; and Stockbridge, Massachusetts. He was a founder of the American Congregational Union and the Chicago Theological Seminary. His teaching career included an appointment at Williams College and the establishment of a family school in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

On September 3, 1876, Rev. Eggleston gave a Memorial Sermon at the Avon Congregational Church based on Psalm 102. v. 18: *This shall be written for the generations to come*. He said that “The early records of [ACC], under its present organization, have been lost, and their place can be supplied only imperfectly by the records of the Society connected with it.”

He gave his sermon 11 years after the Civil War's end. He said about slavery that "The voice of religion and Humanity have spoke out together upon the subject and God by his wonder working proficiency has in his own way within these last few years delivered our own beloved land from the sin and curse of slavery."

He spoke about change. "The people now come up on Sunday...over well built carriageways and in carriages and waggons (sic) whose elegance would have been an astonishment to our ancestors of a hundred years ago. They come to a house [ACC] cushioned and carpeted and well-warmed in the severest weather. Frescoed walls and perhaps illuminated windows gratify the taste for the beautiful. All is pleasant and comfortable."

Eggleston was chief of the Bureau of Forestry (now the United States Forest Service) in Washington D.C. from 1883-1886. He married Sarah Ann Winship on July 30, 1844. He died on August 24, 1912.

Sources: Moore's notes about ACC at UCC Archives, Hartford. *Memorial Sermon 1876*, unpaginated, original at UCC archives, Htfd; ACC has copy. William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Finding Aids for Eggleston Family Collection 1772-1924, online. Image in oval from "French in Name Only" website, Sept. 30, 2016. Photographs, from internet, shows man in round portrait, and also in top hat and apron, courtesy Katie T. Kukiolczynski, Avon Free Public Library research assistant.

William E. Bassett

Supply Pastor, 1876-1877

Rev. Bassett was a Methodist licentiate. He was dismissed as pastor of the North Church in Plainfield in 1859. He was pastor at the Second Congregational Church of Manchester (1860-1863), the Warren Congregational Church (1863-1875), and East Canaan Congregational Church of Christ (1882-1884).

Sources: Methodist licentiate in Moore's handwritten notes about ACC, at the UCC Archives, Hartford; *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 2., pp. 178, 231, 306, 437.

Milton G. Ayres Supply Pastor, 1877-1878

Yale College or Seminary

L. Curtiss Supply Pastor, 1878-1879

Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut lists him as "I. Curtiss." (v. 2, p. 178)

Nicholas J. Seeley Settled Pastor, February 25, 1879-November 12, 1895



In the late 1850s, Rev. Seeley resided at Ballston Spa, Saratoga County, New York. In May 1878, *The Churchman* reported that he was “late recruit of the church of Our Saviour, Plainville, having renounced the minister of the Church [He] has been deposed by Bishop Williams for causes not affecting his moral character. Mr. Seeley has united with the Congregationalists.”

He was installed at ACC on February 25, 1879. The church’s Young People’s Society of Christian Endeavor was established during his pastorate. Rev. Seeley enthusiastically supported Missions, Home and Foreign, and temperance.

After retiring from ACC, 16 years into his pastorate, Rev. Seeley continued to live in Avon. For the next fifteen years, he gave ACC his presence, prayers, money, and time. Rev. Ernest McGregor (ACC pastor 1904-1907) said that “Father Seeley was a spiritual host and friend to whom I was indebted for many kindnesses.”

Rev. Seeley’s daughter Laura married Prescott Woodford, son of ACC member Chester R. Woodford. Rev. Seeley is buried in the East Avon Cemetery, adjacent ACC.

Sources: Description of Seeley in James W. Moulton, Historical Address, 1919, pp. 9-10; Society in ACC’s church Manual, 1915, p. 18. New York address in Journal of Proceedings of the Protestant Episcopal Church (1856). Uniting with Congregationalists in The Churchman, v. 37. p. 565, online. Photograph (white collar wings. Thinning White hair) courtesy of Katie T. Kukiolczynski, Avon Free Public Library research assistant. Photo shows portrait of him, with tie and vest and white hair.

Charles K. Fankhauser
Settled Pastor, May 6, 1896-May 1900

Yale University, 1896



Rev. Fankhauser was born in 1867 and died Sept. 30, 1962. Rev. Moulton wrote in his *Historical Address* (1919) that while Rev. Fankhauser “was living in what was then the parsonage, the house now occupied by Mr. Sherman W. Eddy and family, a fire broke out in his study, during a brief absence, from a lighted lamp resulting in a personal loss of manuscripts and other valuables that could not easily be replaced. “ One wonders if this also meant that church papers were lost.

Rev. Fankhauser introduced the envelope system of raising money for the church and society expenses. (The system since 1819 had been to raise money by auctioning off specific pew seats annually to highest bidder.) At the departure of Rev. Fankhauser, ACC “Resolved, That we extend to Mr. Fankhauser...an expression of our keen regret at parting with him, and that we convey to him our heart-felt thanks and sincere gratitude for valuable services rendered both as pastor and citizen, and an assurance of our lasting appreciation of his ministrations throughout this community.” ACC was Rev. Fankhauser’s first and only pastorate. He went on to work in business and became a banker in New York City. Moving to the western states he worked in government. His wife was Katherine Fankhauser.

Sources: James W, Moulton, *Historical Address*, 1919, pp. 10-11. Avon Free Public Library History Room has his calling card. Photograph shows man with beard and cane, seated.

Samuel Asa Fiske
Settled Pastor, 1900-April 1904

Amherst College
Hartford Theological Seminary

Rev. Fiske was born in Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts, on August 5, 1875. He was ordained at ACC (his first pastorate) on October 10, 1900. In attendance were representatives from the First Congregational Church in Hartford. Rev. Fiske was later pastor of the Georgetown Congregational Church in Redding (1904-1906) and the

Berlin
Congregational
Church (1906-
1931).



Rev. Moulton wrote in 1919 that during Rev. Fiske's pastorate, "The wheels of church life, on the whole, ran smoothly and effectively

while he was here, some of you are ready to affirm.... Both smoothness and effectiveness were attained in no small measure by his

marked social qualities, which he consecrated to the welfare of church and community." Rev. Moulton described Saturday afternoon meetings which Rev. Fiske established to benefit all ages of church and community. "Young people and adults united to produce programs of recitations, declamations, original papers and essays. Mr. Fiske and the boys, and men older than himself too, used to play games and do stunts together at the parsonage and in other parts of the parish. ...the tendency of all this was to draw people toward the church, toward higher ideals of life, and even toward Christ."

He married Louise Case on June 14, 1905 in Hartford. He died on January 1, 1931. His obituary noted that "He endeared himself to everyone, young and old,... through his graciousness, courtesy, and beneficent spirit...." The Berlin Congregational Church had a memorial service for Rev. Fiske on November 6, 1932.

Sources: *Contributions to Ecclesiastical History*, pp. 178, 181, 249. Obituary at UCC Archives, Hartford. *Historical Address* (1919) by Rev. James W. Moulton, pp. 11-12. Ordination in *Yearbook of the First Church of Christ in West Hartford*, online. Cemetery photograph and death date from findagrave.com; *Arms Cemetery, Shelburne Falls, MA. Photograph of ACC with inset photo of Rev. Fiske, 1901-1904.* ACC Archives and on Ct. Digital Archive. The program from his memorial service is at the Berlin Congregational Church, with a photograph.

Rev. Dr. Ernest Frank McGregor

Pastor, November 30, 1904-June 1, 1907

Yale Divinity School: 1904; M.A., 1906; Ph.D., 1910.

Ernest McGregor was a missionary during his teen years in Newfoundland. He came to the United States for his education.

He graduated from the University of Minneapolis, Minnesota with a B.A. degree. In the fall of 1901, he entered Yale Divinity School, and graduated in 1904 with the degree of B.D. He entered the graduate school at Yale where he received the Master of Arts degree in 1906 and Ph.D. in 1910.

Rev. McGregor was described as having “long struggled for prison reform.” His first pastorate was at ACC, where he was ordained on November 30, 1904. Rev. Moulton, who attended the ordination, wrote that one council member intimated that Fiske was “not perfectly sound in some of his doctrinal views,” but this person said that “He gives strong evidence that his heart is right, and I trust in time his brain will wheel into line with it.” Rev. Moulton wrote that “Mr. McGregor is now an honored servant of the Lord - one who from the outset has been climbing up in the ministerial profession.”

During his pastorate, the church received a large copy of the American Revision of the Bible from a friend, a communion service with individual cups and table linen from Mrs. Millard (afterwards Mrs. Thompson), and the mahogany table which said Rev. Moulton, “stands at my right.’ This is likely the communion table still in place, 2019.

After ACC, he was pastor of the First Church of Christ in Clinton. He became pastor of the First Congregational Church on the Green at Norwalk in 1907 and served for 30 years. He wrote hymns, including two in 1925: Thy Children Thee Adore and O Blessed Day of Motherhood, and in 1932, Lift High the Triumph Song Today.

He returned to ACC to help celebrate the church’s centennial in September 1919, according to the *Hartford Courant* (Sept. 8, 1919, p. 6, online.)

Rev. McGregor died in 1946 at age 66, three years after he retired, at his home in Clinton.

Source: Bible and ordination in James W. Moulton, *Historical Address*, 1919, p. 12. Newspaper clippings in ACC Scrapbook No. 2. Prison reform in Connecticut Prison Association and the Search for Reformatory Justice, by Gordon Bates, p. 162, online.

Howard Garfield Connolly

Pastor, July 15, 1907-November 1, 1908

Bethany College (West Virginia) 1891; Yale 1908

Charles M. Smail

Pastor, June 6, 1909-May 29, 1910

William Albert Harp

Pastor, June 12, 1910-June 18, 1911

Bethany College (W. Va), B.A., 1891
Union Theological Seminary, 1909-1910
Yale Divinity School, B.D., 1911



Rev. Harp was born March 10, 1866 in Indiana, and died January 24, 1944 in Sarasota, FL. He was ordained in the Disciple of Christ Church in Bethany in 1891. He married (1) Ida Chadwick in 1893 and their son was William, Jr., She died in 1894. He married (2) Blanche Groves in 1899 in Springfield, Ohio. Rev. Harp also served churches in Macon, Georgia, Denver Colorado, Portsmouth and Springfield, Ohio, Florida, and New York City. He was president of the Florida Christian Missionary Society. He retired in 1942.

Sources: *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 2, p. 178. Photograph, shoulders up, with white hair and mustache, from ancestry.com.

George S. McClary
Pastor, July 2, 1911-June 2, 1912

Yale University, 1910

Rev. McClary was a Disciple of Christ from Geneva, Illinois, ordained in the Disciples of Christ Church in 1905. He stayed at ACC for less than a year. *The Hartford Courant* (online, and in detail) reported on May 27, 1916, that after four years as pastor of the church in East Hampton, Rev. McClary resigned due to an improper relationship with a parishioner. He had been considered “one of the best pastors which the church has ever had, and was highly respected both by members of his own denomination and others.” Rev. McClary, it was reported, “had received several calls from churches in the West.” In 1922, according to the Congregational Yearbook, he was with a church in LaSalle, Illinois.

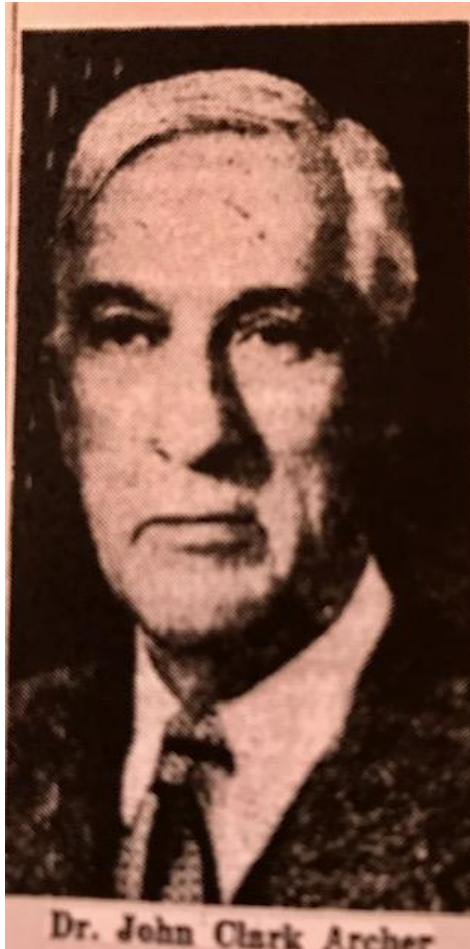
Sources: *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 2, p. 178.

John Clark Archer
Pastor, June 9, 1912-June 15, 1913

B.A., Hiram College, 1905

Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Arts, Yale, 1914.
Graduate study at Harvard, 1914-1915. Ph.D., Yale, 1922.

Rev. Archer was born December 23, 1881 in Maryland. He was ordained in the Disciples of Christ Church in 1905. He was pastor in Newton Falls, Ohio, 1905-1907, and married Cathaline Brewster Alford on Feb. 26, 1906. He was an educational missionary in Jabalpur, India, 1907-1911. He was Manager of Christian Mission Press, 1909-1911.



In 1904, Franklin M. Sperry of Avon allowed players to use his land as a ball park, today known as Sperry Park. In 1905 the field was plowed and seeded and the first organized baseball team acquired uniforms. ACC pastor Rev. J.C. Archer played on the team in 1913. At this time, Yale Divinity School students came to ACC from New Haven on the Saturday evening train, stayed at the Avon hotel (across West Main Street from ACC), preached Sunday morning, and returned to school in the evening.

Rev. Archer was one of those Yale students in Avon. He “preached strong, interesting, meaty sermons, and made a well planned effort to reach the Italian population by having a church service for their special benefit on Sunday afternoons with Italian speakers, in the main, from Hartford. This service was continued with large attendance for several months, then a Catholic priest specially interested in the community began to interfere, and soon after the services were dropped.”

During World War I, from 1917-1918, he was educational secretary of the Young Men’s Christian Association with the British-Indian Army in Iraq. In 1919, he was at Yale University as assistant

professor of missions.

After ACC, he wanted to become one of the best-known authorities on the religions of Asia, particularly India. He retired from Yale in 1950 after 35 years on the faculty of the Divinity School.

At Yale he held several positions: lecturer, 1915-1916, assistant professor, missions, 1916-1924, secretary of the divinity School, 1920-1950, associate professor,

1924-1927, professor missions and comparative religion, 1927-1932, and professor of comparative religion, 1932-1950. He became professor emeritus in 1950. He was a lecturer at the Hartford Seminary, 1919-1922, 1933, and 1935-1936. He taught at Chautauqua Summer Schools, 1920-1922, at the Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, 1926, at Khalsa College, Amritsar, India, 1937. From 1923-1936 he was treasurer and chairman of the publication committee of the American Oriental Society. Rev. Archer was the author of books and articles, including *Faiths Men Live By* (his best-known writing, 1934) and *The Sikhs* (1947). He died in 1957. In the early 1900s, he was also assistant minister at South Church, Brockton, Massachusetts (1914-1915).

Sources: *Contributions to Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 2, p. 178; quote and work descriptions from Rev. James W. Moulton in *Historical Address*, 1919, pp. 12-13. Baseball in Avon with Archer in MacKie, *Avon*, 201. "Prabook [or Praybook] online. Photograph and information from *New York Times*, July 8, 1957 online.

Frederick J. Clark

Pastor, 1913-1914

Yale

Rev. Clark was a Methodist, as noted by the term "M.E." in Moore's notes at the UCC Archives, Hartford, in the Avon Congregational Church file.

Andrew Leitch

Pastor, February 15, 1914-July 1, 1917

Yale University: B.A.; M.A., 1911
Doctor of Divinity, Yale, 1914

Rev. Leitch was born Dec. 16, 1885 in Glencoe, Ontario, Canada. He attended Yale while serving at ACC. An article in the *Hartford Courant* called him a trailblazer.

“Minister is Ordained Just as Christian: The Rev. Andrew Leitch, a Yale divinity student, stands alone as a new type of minister. He has just been ordained at a service held in New Haven, and ordained merely Christian. On the examination he was asked if he believed Jesus Christ to be Lord and Saviour, if he accepted the Bible as the word of God, and if he would pledge to preach Christ and the Gospel as contained in the Scriptures. He gave the pledge, but unlike all other men ordained to the ministry, he gave no pledge of loyalty to the doctrines and authority of any organized church.” He was ordained by Rev. Dr. Charles R. Brown, dean of the Yale School and a Congregationalist, and the Rev. Dr. Peter Ainslie of Baltimore, former president of the General Convention of the Disciples of Christ, and at that time chairman of that body’s Commission on Christian Unity. Noted the *Hartford Courant* “It is admitted that fifteen or twenty years ago a minister of these bodies, taking part in such a service, would bring scandal and controversy.... At least that much progress toward unity has been made. The new minister, of a new type, will continue his studies at Yale.” (Jan. 26, 1913, p. 23 online)

On Easter Sunday, 1915, Rev. Leitch spoke on “The Message of the Lillies” and each Sunday school child received a potted plant in bloom. (*Hartford Courant*, April 7, 1915, online, p. 16.)

In November, 1916, Rev. Leitch officiated at the funeral of the 10-year old Anita Louisa Alcott, who died of typhoid fever. *The Hartford Courant* described her as the daughter of Mrs. and Mrs. Herbert Alcott of Avon and the niece of author Louisa May Alcott’s brother, Amos Bronson Alcott. The little girl’s direct connection to the author of *Little Women* is unlikely, as Louisa’s only brother died as an infant. Anita Alcott’s funeral was held at the family home in Avon in 1915. Said the *Courant* “One of the most touching incidents of the funeral was when each of the classmates of the little girl beside the grave dropped white carnations, one by one, into the grave upon the casket.” Burial was in the East Avon Cemetery. (*Courant*, Nov. 10, 1915, p. 10, online.)

Rev. James W. Moulton said in his 1919 *Historical Address* that Rev. Leitch tried to increase attendance at ACC. “Because of a small attendance at the evening service, he decided to try a new venture to see if it would draw the people out. This was the People’s Sunday Evening Service, with Herbert McIntyre as president. There were programs, social activities and music. The program was a “good educational meeting with the best speakers possible and the best music available. These ideals were carried out beyond the dreams of anyone, with the result that the church was well filled every Sunday evening, when a good, instructive address was delivered by some Yale or Hartford man. Social meetings were held once a month and attained great success.”

Rev. Leitch spoke about the work of Jane Addams of Hull House, in Chicago, at an evening meeting (somewhere in Avon) according to the *Hartford Courant* (Feb. 23, 1915, p. 13 online).

He was scout master of the Avon Boy Scouts, according to a newspaper article in the *Hartford Courant* on June 22, 1916 (p. 22, and August 2, 1916, p. 18) online). He returned to ACC to help celebrate the church's centennial in September 1919, according to the *Courant* (Sept. 8, 1919, p. 6, online.)

It also appears that he was a professor of Philosophy and Psychology at Bethany College, Bethany, West Virginia, according to the Yale University Student List online for 1922.

Sources: James W. Moulton, Historical Address, p. 13. Other churches in Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut, pp. 296, 467, however, the dates given for other pastorates conflict and/or overlap: Rev. Leitch served at the First United Church of Woodbridge (1915-1921) and the Killingworth Congregational Church (1917-1918). These two pastorates overlap, so perhaps during World War I he was also filling in at Killingworth.

Joseph Langdon Moulton, (son of next pastor)

Student Pastor (Ordained at ACC), September 17, 1917-1918

Bates College, 1915

Hartford Theological Seminary, 1918

Rev. Joseph Moulton was born January 2, 1892, in Middle Haddam, CT. (His father James was the next pastor of ACC.)

Joseph Moulton was raised in the First Congregational Church of Canton Center. In July 1914 he married Florence Hooper Langdon (1894-1956), his classmate at Bates College. They had four daughters.

He was called as a student pastor to ACC, and remained until his graduation from Hartford Seminary about eight months later in May 1918. At his ordination on May 24, 1918 at ACC, he and his wife were commissioned as foreign missionaries under the auspices of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, now the United Church of Christ Board for World Ministries. It was "one of the very significant events in the history of this church," wrote his father James in 1919.

Dr. Arthur Gillett of the Hartford Theological Seminary performed the commissioning service at ACC. Dr. Gillett was a member of the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Music was by the Hartford Seminary Quartet.

The Moulton's departed from San Francisco in November 1918, with a life appointment to work in India. In the 1920s they lived in several towns in India:



Ahmednagar (February 6, 1919-November 1920), Satara (1920-1922), and Rahuri (1922

until at least 1924 and possibly longer). Three of their four daughters were born in India between 1919-1923.

In India, Rev. Joseph Moulton was pastor, advisor, and social worker; he and his wife supervised village schools, organized literacy classes, and helped pastors and villages with economic development. They served together in the Marathi Mission of western India until Florence Moulton's death in 1956. He wrote a book about the Marathi Mission, *Faith for the Future*, about the mission from 1913-1963.

After retiring in 1961, Rev. Moulton visited Connecticut churches to talk about missionary work in India. In 1968 he was living at the Walker Missionary Home in Auburndale, Massachusetts, and planning his third trip to India since retirement, "to keep in close touch with what is going on in that fascinating country."

Rev. James Moulton wrote about his son, saying that while he (Joseph) was at ACC, Joseph "thought he saw a large opportunity to serve God and his fellow men, but he was confident that much larger opportunity awaited his efforts in the Marathi Mission India. He was also confident that he and his companion were divinely called to go to that field; consequently, they were glad of the opportunity to contribute their mite to the salvation and uplift of India's millions. While he was here [at ACC] his heart was rejoiced, like many of yours, to see a goodly number of young people unite with the church by letter and profession of faith. Only once, if the record is correct, in all the history of the church previous to 1918 have 22 little children been baptized in a single year. Last year 22 were baptized on one Sunday morning by my son."

On June 7, 1968, Rev. Joseph Moulton and his family celebrated his 50 years in the missionary field in India, with a banquet at ACC in his honor. The church's annual report that year noted that the fact that 'Joe' was commissioned in our Church made it double enjoyable. He gave us a witty and wonderful review of 50 years."

Rev. Joseph Moulton died September 21, 1987. His gravestone is inscribed "43 years in India" and Florence Moulton's gravestone is inscribed "37 Years in India."



History of the Marathi Mission

Online history (below) from *American Marathi Mission Records*, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York. MRL3.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) established their first foreign mission with the American Marathi Mission in Bombay December 21, 1813. It was the first protestant mission in Western India and spread into hundreds of villages. The mission center moved from Bombay to Ahmednager in 1831 because it was closer to the center of Marathi County.

The mission did a number of things for the community. By 1911, Christians were attending church and school, learning academic subjects, practical farming, basic medicine and industry including carpentry and weaving. Aiding famine and plague victims and beginning a women's Bible training school increased the goodwill towards the Marathi Mission. Colleges and a theological institution were created by the Marathi Mission in the late 1800s to mid-1900s. It created an institution for care of the blind, as well as a leper colony in 1899 at Sholapur. Although the number of Christians was growing, caste prejudices and the scarcity of Christian leaders continued to be an issue for the organization.

The move for Indian independence led to a downturn in relations between Indian Christians and missionaries. In 1922 the Marathi Mission created an Indian Mission Board to help give locals more independence over their Christianity. India gained its independence from Britain in 1947 and Christianity is still the country's third-largest religion.

Sources: *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 2, p. 207.
James W. Moulton, *Historical Address*, pp. 13-14. Gravestones in ancestry.com.
Farmington Valley Herald, "planning to return to India to keep in close touch," June 13, 1968.
Commissioning service program in ACC Scrapbook No. 2. And in James W. Moulton, *Historical Address*, 1919, p. 14. There is a biography of Rev. Joseph Moulton at the UCC Archives in Hartford. Banquet at ACC, 50th anniversary of commissioning, *ACC Annual Report for the Year 1968*, p. 1. Photograph of family from the Moulton passport application, July 1924, online at ancestry.com. Photograph of Rev. Moulton and Florence Moulton from ACC archives, green scrapbook.

James Wilbur Moulton (father of previous pastor)

Pastor, July 7, 1918-May 7, 1922

Yale College, School of Religion, 1890

Before ACC, Rev. James Moulton was pastor of the Second Congregational Church, Middle Haddam (1890-1899), the North Madison Congregational Church (1899-1902) and the First Congregational Church Canton Center (1902-1908). He held pastorates in Vermont and New Hampshire, and retired from the Congregational Church in Worthington, MA. He moved to Gotham, Maine around 1928, at age 65. He died April 9, 1928.

Rev. and Mrs. James W. Moulton's daughter, Mary (Carl W.) Phelps, 56, a native of Middle Haddam, died suddenly in Jodaikanal, India. Her death was reported by the American Board of Foreign Missions and reported in *The Boston Globe* Sept. 9, 1939.

Sources: *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 2, pp. 178, 207, 304, 312. Family relationship, father/son, in James W. Moulton, *Historical Address*, p. 13. His birthdate not on findagrave.com. Obituary at the UCC Archives, Hartford. Boston Globe online at newspapers.com.

Wilbur W. Kamp

Pastor, November 1922-June 28, 1925

Hartford Theological Seminary

Rev. Kamp was a Quaker (Society of Friends).

Source: *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 2, p. 178. Historical Hartford Courant, Hartford Seminary reception, Feb. 19, 1923.

Ralph Edwin Knight

Pastor, September 17, 1925-1926

Rev. Knight was a Quaker (Society of Friends). Before coming to Avon he was pastor at the First Congregational Church of Canterbury (1923-1925).

Source: *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 2, p. 178, 205.

Cecil Eli Pearson

Pastor, October 5, 1926-1929

George Fox College 1922 (formerly Pacific College)
Hartford Seminary, 1929, Boston University,
doctorate, 1947

Rev. Pearson was born in Jonesboro, Indiana on March 15, 1899. He was a Quaker (the Society of Friends). In 1919, he resided in Oregon and his occupation listed on his passport application and draft registration card for World War I was 'farmer.' He spent one year in American Friends' Reconstruction (World War I) in France. His thesis at Hartford Seminary was on "Movements Towards Union in the Society of Friends." At Boston University his doctoral thesis was on "Prophecy and

Apocalypse
in the Old
Testament."

In 1925, the year before coming to Avon, he married Mary Pennington (1899-1976), the daughter of his professor (Levi Pennington) at Pacific College. When Rev. Pearson left the Avon Congregational Church in 1929, he went to New Providence, Iowa. He was also pastor of churches in Massachusetts (Lynn and Swansea), and New York. Sometimes Mary Pearson would preach, although it is not documented that she preached at ACC. Rev. Pearson retired from the ministry by 1940. He died March 24, 1982 in Buffalo, New York, and is buried in the Quaker Cemetery in Queensbury, NY.



Sources: Thesis reference in Quaker Crosscurrents, Three Hundred Years of Friends, p. 230, online ancestry.com. *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 2., p. 178. findagrave.com. The U.S. Census (1920, 1940). More in *Quaker Life*, May 1982 and the *Friends Journal*, May 15, 1982. Photograph from ancestry.com. George Fox College information from George Fox University Archives, "George Fox College Life, June 1982" (1982). George Fox College Life. Book 61. Photograph of young man with hair slicked back with white shirt is from ancestry.com; family group of 5, at front right is Cecil Peterson, 1950s, from ancestry.com.

John Paul Clark
Pastor, September 8, 1929-August 7, 1932

Adrian College, Michigan



Hartford Seminary

Rev. Clark was born in Coshocton County, Ohio, on May 21, 1887. He married Goldie McFarland on August 22, 1918. Before coming to ACC, Rev. Clark was pastor at North Granby. After ACC he returned to his native Ohio, and served three churches in rural Zanesville, Ohio. He was pastor of the Ohio Conference of the Methodist Church for 30 years. He was a member of the Men's Brotherhood and Bible Class, the Lion's Club, and taught the Friendly Sunday School Class.

He died on Dec. 23, 1956 in Bluffton, Ohio, and funeral services were at the First Methodist Church of Bluffton. The family requested that flowers be omitted and donations given to the cancer fund.

Sources: ACC Archives: Newspaper clippings in the Green Scrapbook No. 1 at ACC. Handwritten biography in Scrapbook No. 4 (1954-1964). Small round photograph "1931" from ACC archives.

John R. Wheeler

Settled Pastor, October 1932-June 1937

McGill University

Rev. Wheeler (on right, with two others in this 1937 photograph) was born in Vermont and was pastor of the United Church in Fitch Bay in Canada. When he was called to ACC, there were delays in his immigration. His long residence in Canada made it difficult to prove he was a U.S. citizen and obtain a passport. When he moved to Connecticut, he planned to study for a Ph.D. at Hartford Theological Seminary. The ACC Archives has five of his sermons.

At his farewell reception at ACC, he commented on politics in Canada and the evening closed with the singing of Auld Lang Syne. After ACC, Rev. Wheeler worked as



a missionary in Saskatchewan, Canada.

Sources: *Hartford Courant*, newspaper clipping dated 1932 in Green Scrapbook at ACC. Clipping from 1937 in Scrapbook No. 2. Sermons in the ACC Green Scrapbook (two sermons for 1932; three sermons for 1933). Photograph of 3 men at sign: ACC Archives, on Ct. Digital Archives.

Burchard Abraham Hylton

Pastor, September 1, 1937 - May 1940

McMinnville College, Oregon. B.A.

Newton Theological Seminary, Bachelor of Divinity and Doctor of Divinity

Hartford Seminary, Master of Arts

Rev. Hylton, a Methodist, was born October 26, 1882, and was from Lacrosse, Washington. While at ACC, he worked on his doctor of philosophy degree at Yale, majoring in religious education.

He was ordained in 1916 at Pocasset, Cape Cod, where he held his first pastorate for two years. He then served for 19 years in Washington State churches. In 1940, Rev. Hylton said that “our [Avon] community is rapidly becoming suburbanized.”

“Burchard was a courageous social and religious prophet, processing and independent spirit, a quiet manner, but a forthright delivery and a determination to speak the word of God. He was soundly rooted in Christ, to whom he gave his highest allegiance and service. He never raised his voice, was mild in manner, never criticized others but quietly pursuing the course of right as he saw it.... He had dogged persistence and unbounded patience. One of the most Christlike men ever known in attitude and manner. Gentle and yet persistently clinging to his beliefs in social and religious fields.” He died July 24, 1973 at age 90.



Sources: ACC Annual Report, 1939-1940, pp. 186-191. Newspaper clipping in *Hartford Courant*, 1937, Scrapbook No. 2 at ACC. Burchard’s courage quote from findagrave.com. Photograph from internet (Hands in coat pocket).

William John Hamilton, Jr.

Settled Pastor, September 1940-1942

Ordained & installed at ACC, October 21, 1941

Bates College, 1937
Hartford Theological Seminary, 1941



Rev. Hamilton was born on Nov. 12, 1914 in Lynn, Massachusetts. He received a scholarship to West Point but chose the ministry. He entered Hartford Theological Seminary in 1937 and the following year was an assistant at the First Congregational Church of Hartford.

In 1940, the *Hartford Courant* reported on his call to ACC. “He comes highly recommended and if he accepts the call will continue his studies in Hartford this winter.”

Rev. Hamilton was ordained at ACC on October 21, 1941. Ten area ministers participated in the ceremony. His wife was Geraldine MacLean Hamilton (1922-2007), and they were married at the Avon Congregational Church. She had graduated in 1938 from the Hartford Seminary Foundation.

In early 1942, Rev. Hamilton was on leave from the Avon Congregational Church, serving as an Army chaplain with the 11th Armored Division. Captain Hamilton resigned as ACC pastor in early 1943. He wrote a letter to the church asking the members to “Hold to Faith.” A newspaper clipping in the ACC archives noted that he tried to resign as pastor “when he went into the Army as a chaplain, but the church would not accept it.” He wrote now that he thought the best efforts of a pastor were handicapped by holding a temporary position at this time. His resignation was accepted with regret at a vote of the church on Sunday morning. (March 1943).

He received the Bronze Star Medal for Heroic Conduct as a chaplain, as reported in the *Hartford Courant* on June 9, 1945. Between December 1944-May 1945, read the citation for the medal, "...he deliberately chanced enemy artillery fire in order to minister to wounded soldiers...[and his] words of comfort were of great value to the soldiers awaiting evacuation." In this photograph, Rev. Hamilton is in ACC's



pulpit, wearing a collar and a cross.

He was later pastor of the Grand Avenue Congregational Church in New Haven (1945-1948), pastor in West Roxbury, Massachusetts (1948), pastor of the First Church in Benton Harbor, Michigan (1956-1957), and pastor of a Pasco, Washington church. He died in Berrien, Michigan on December 7, 1957 of injuries sustained during his military service in France.

Sources: *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 2, p. 143, 178. Newspaper clippings about wedding and chaplaincy in Scrapbook No. 2 at ACC, *Hartford Courant* article. "He comes highly recommended" in *Hartford Courant*, August 1940. Bronze star in *Hartford Courant* online, June 9, 1945. Resignation letter in ACC Archives scrapbook. Photograph with arms outstretched in pulpit, undated, from ACC archives.

Edward Vanstone Pope

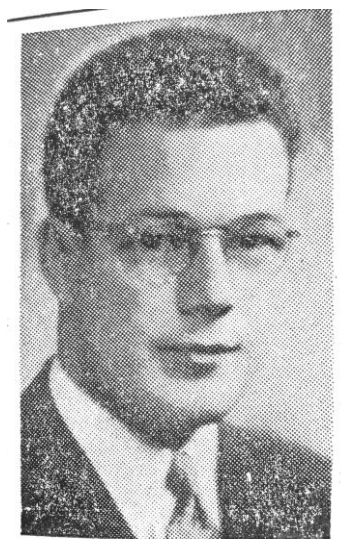
Student Pastor, October 1, 1942-September 19, 1943

Wesleyan University
Hartford Theological Seminary, Bachelor of Divinity

Edward Pope was born in New York City in 1915. From 1938-1940, he served in the American consulate at Stuttgart, Germany. He returned to the United States in 1940 and entered Hartford Theological Seminary.

In 1942, Edward Pope was at the Northfield Congregational Church. While at ACC his job was mainly to preach, as he was a full time student. He was ordained at ACC on Sunday, September 19, 1943. After one year at ACC, the Hartford Theological Seminary awarded him the William S. Thompson Fellowship for two years of graduate study in the United States or abroad. He planned to study at Yale or Columbia.

He married to Eleanor E. Walker on June 12, 1943, at the Hartford Seminary Foundation. He died August 10, 1999 in Florida.



Roushon Photo.
EDWARD V. POPE.

Sources: Student Pastor in *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut* (v. 2, p. 178); ACC's annual report. Photograph and information from ACC Archives, Scrapbook No. 2.

Roger Plant Horton

Student Pastor, September 26, 1943-February 27, 1944

Bates College, 1940

Studied at Universities of Heidelberg and Munich

Hartford Seminary



Roger Horton (1918-2002) was “raised up” in the Church of the Redeemer, Congregational, in New Haven. He spent a short time at ACC when he was 25 years old, and was ordained in 1944. He served churches in Boscawen, New Hampshire, Portland, Maine; Glenolden, Pennsylvania. In 1969, he celebrated ten years as pastor of St. James United Church of Christ, Hamburg, NY. He retired from full-time ministry in 1984. Rev. Horton was moderator and chairman of the board of the Pennsylvania State Conference for his denomination. When the United Church of Christ was formed, he served as moderator and board chairman for the New York Conference. He was chairman of the church and ministry committee of the Western (N.Y.) Assn. of the United Church of Christ. He was married to Frances Davies Horton for 58 years.

Sources: Student pastor in *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 2, p. 178; New Haven church reference is on page. 341. Hartford Theological Seminary is in ACC Scrapbook. Information also on newspapers.com and Bates College alumni records. High School yearbook photograph from ancestry.com,

Rev. Dr. Watson Woodruff

Pastor, 1944-August 31, 1949

Wesleyan University, 1904
Hartford Theological Seminary, 1907
Wesleyan University, honorary Doctor of
Divinity, 1932



Watson Woodruff was born in St. Louis, Missouri on December 26, 1880. He graduated from Wesleyan University in 1904, and served as an Army chaplain during World War I.

His first pastorate, for 10 years, was at the Congregational Church in Lynn, Massachusetts. He was associate pastor of the South Congregational Church of New Britain (1907-1911), and pastor (and pastor emeritus) at Center Congregational Church, Manchester (1921-1944). He served on the Hartford Theological Seminary board and was president of the Congregational Association of Connecticut.

His wife was Edna Spurr Woodruff (1883-1973), a graduate of Boston University, class of 1905. They were married June 27, 1916, and had three daughters, Jean, Elizabeth and Margaret.

An article in *The Congregationalist* noted that Rev. Woodruff's "method was quiet and unassuming, but effective" and that he "has ever sought to lead the whole church into the habit of quiet personal evangelism...bringing more and more adults into open allegiance to the master."

Rev. Woodruff came to Avon after his position at Center Church in Manchester. He took the Avon position because of ill health. He retired due to ill health also. After his last sermon in late July, 1949, the church served an old-fashioned New England dinner on the church lawn for 300 people. In retirement the Woodruffs lived on Nod Road in Avon. He died October 17, 1958. A memorial service was held at ACC on October 19, 1958.

Sources: *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, vol. 2, pp. 289, 305, 326. *Hartford Courant*, October 18, 1958. *The Congregationalist*, vol. CVI, Sept. 29, 1921, p. 417. *Hartford Courant*, June 6, 1949. Photograph (headshot, shoulders up, clean-shaven) from Connecticut Digital Archives, from the ACC Collection.

Ernest Jerome Johanson & Laura Lane Johanson
Settled Co-Pastors, September 1, 1949-April 30, 1964

Carthage College, 1922 and University of Wisconsin, Master's Degree, 1925 (EJJ)
Smith College, 1923 (LLJ)
Hartford Seminary (both)
Oxford University (both), 1927-1929



Photograph at ACC Pulpit (unpainted).
L-R: Rev. E. Jerome (Jerry) Johanson, James Work, Dick Merkle, Rev. Laura Johanson.
ACC Archives & Ct. Digital Archives

E. Jerome Johanson was born in Chicago on December 9, 1898. Laura Lane Johanson was born in Mt. Vernon, New York on October 30, 1900. She was the daughter of Rev. Charles Stoddard Lane, who was pastor of the Unionville (CT) Congregational church from 1884-1888.

Laura Lane Johanson was raised up in First Church of West Hartford. She graduated from Smith College in 1923. The Johanson's met at Hartford Seminary. They were ordained together in 1925 at the Congregational Church of Brookfield. They were co-pastors of the Laconia Congregational Church in New Hampshire (1929-1935).

They both attended Oxford University in England. At Oxford Laura Johanson studied for her B.A. and Jerry Johanson received his Bachelor of Literature in 1929. Jerry Johanson did graduate work at Oxford, and studied in Germany (1928 and 1938). During World War II, Gerry Johanson was chair of the Protestant Committee for Displaced Persons.

They were installed as co-pastors of ACC on November 30, 1950. Jerry Johanson took a sabbatical from ACC during February-August, 1951 at the University of Lund in Sweden. Laura Johanson was sole pastor at ACC during his sabbatical.

Jerry Johanson was professor of Theology and Christian Ethics at Hartford Theological Seminary (1935-1952). During their ACC pastorate, the sanctuary was home to stranded travelers during the 1955 flood, when Red Cross Flood Relief Headquarters were set up in the church rooms. Both became Pastors Emeritus of ACC.

E. Jerome Johanson died September 10, 1973 in Brunswick, Maine. Laura Lane Johanson died July 3, 1982.

Sources: Red Cross in *Onward* by Rettig, p. 10. Photograph in ACC Archives. *The New York Times*, obituary for EJJ, Sept. 12, 1973.

Rev. Dr. James Fairfield English

Interim pastor 1964 (and 1969)

Trinity College, 1918



Hartford Theological Seminary, 1921

Rev. Dr. James English served during World War I in the Army. He was ordained in 1921. He held pastorates at several other Connecticut churches (Elmwood, Putnam, and Manchester, New Hampshire). He was Connecticut's chief Congregational executive for over 25 years, a "pastor to pastors and "friend of churches." He was trustee of the Hartford Seminary, treasurer and general superintendent of the CT Conference of Congregational Christian Churches, editor of the *Congregational Connecticut* magazine, co-author of *Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of Connecticut*, v. 2, and minister emeritus and historian of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ. He died in 1976. *Photograph from ACC Archives and on CT Digital Archive, in ACC section. L-R: Rev. Laura Lane Johanson, pastor emeritus of ACC; Rev. Dr. James English; Ted Schoonmaker, pastor of ACC; Rev. E. Jerome Johanson, pastor emeritus of ACC. At the 150th anniversary of ACC, Sept. 21, 1969.*

Sources: "Pastor to pastors" and "friend of churches" in his obituary.

John Arthur Bankosky

Settled Pastor, September 13, 1964-November 17, 1968

Cedar Crest College
Muhlenberg College, 1952



Hartford Seminary, 1955

Rev. Bankosky was born in New Britain, Connecticut, and ordained at First Church New Britain in 1955. From 1954-1957, he was director of social work for the Greater Hartford Council of Churches. He was pastor of West Parish Congregational Church of W. Barnstable, MA (1959-1964) and president of the Cape Cod Council of Churches.

Rev. Bankosky had these associate and assistant ministers:

Edward R. Mayes

Licensed, Associate minister in Christian Education, 1965-1967
Vanderbilt University; Andover Newton Theological School, Hartford Seminary
Foundation.

Levering Reynolds, III

Assistant Minister, Sept. 1966 - Feb. 28, 1969. Installed January 1966.

Sources: Photographs: Black and white photograph at Christmastime of Rev. Bankosky; family after his installation at ACC. l-r: son Paul, Frances Bankosky, daughters Joan and Gail. Both from ACC Archives & Scrapbook No. 5 of 1964-1974.

Dr. James Fairfield English

Interim pastor again, January 6, 1969

Theodore (Ted) Carpenter Schoonmaker

Settled Pastor, September 1969-1985

Boston University School of Education, B.A., 1942

Chicago Theological Seminary, M.Div., 1945

Rev. Schoonmaker was born on August 27, 1921, raised in Amherst, Massachusetts, and was valedictorian of the Amherst High School Class of 1938. He was ordained as a parish minister in the United Church of Christ in Boston on October 11, 1945. During his career of over 40 years, he served four other churches



Susan and Sara.

Rev. Schoonmaker's pastorate was one of the two longest in ACC history, tying with that of Rev. Seeley, of 16 years. Rev. Schoonmaker's assistant for about six months when his doctor said he could not talk, was Rev. James B. Yee.

besides ACC: assistant minister at the Mount Vernon Church, Boston; associate minister at the First Congregational Church, Akron, Ohio, pastor of the Dublin Community Church, Dublin, Ohio, pastor of the First Church in Weymouth, Massachusetts. Ted was loved for his sense of humor, his unique blend of outrageousness and wisdom and his gift of bringing people together and helping them to believe in themselves.

During his ACC pastorate, the church celebrated its 150 anniversary. There was a special worship service on September 21, 1969, and an afternoon Festival of Music. Rev. Schoonmaker retired after leaving ACC and was installed as ACC Minister Emeritus in 1987.

He died at age 81 on March 19, 2003 in Black Mountain, North Carolina. He was survived by his wife, Hazel of Black Mountain, North Carolina, and their daughters

ACC held a Memorial Service for Pastor Emeritus Rev. Schoonmaker on March 29, 2003. The church annual report described him as “A calm and steady influence



when we needed those qualities the most.”

Sources: Information from his obituary. Color photograph at ACC Pulpit by F. Dwight Douglas, November 1983, and black & white photograph, are both from ACC Archives. “Calm” influence in Annual Report for the year 2003, p. 5.

Robert L. Singer, Jr.

Interim pastor, December 1, 1985-1986

Harvard University, 1958

Yale Divinity School, 1961

Rev. Singer was born July 17, 1931 in Philadelphia. He served in the Korean War. His other Connecticut pastorates were in Newtown, Easton (1966-1972), and Middle Haddam. He served churches in Massachusetts (Hingham, associate Minister; and Marion). His wife Rev. Barbara H. Singer was pastor of East Hampton Congregational Church. He died November 25, 2016.

Source: Hartford Courant obituary online, Nov. 29, 2016.

Warren Hussey Bouton

Pastor 1986-1996

Andover Newton Theological Seminary, 1979
Hartford Seminary, Doctor of Ministry, 1993



wife Brenda, October, 1993, from ACC Archives.

Rev. Dr. Bouton, a native of Nantucket, Massachusetts, was born in 1953 and graduated from Westminster College. He married Brenda Bouton in 1977, and was ordained in the United Church of Christ on June 24, 1979. He was Minister to Youth at the Trinitarian Congregational Church in North Andover, Pennsylvania (1977-1979), and pastor of The Community Church in Pepperell, Massachusetts (1979-1986). He also served in New Jersey. He completed his doctoral dissertation in 1993 while at ACC: "A Model for Reflection Upon the Healing of Trauma in the Avon Congregational Church.

Photograph of Rev. Bouton with his

Robert Alan Kittel

Interim pastor, September 1, 1995-1996

Graduate Theological Union, Doctorate 1976

Rev. Kittell was from Hamden, CT.

Edward T. Falsey

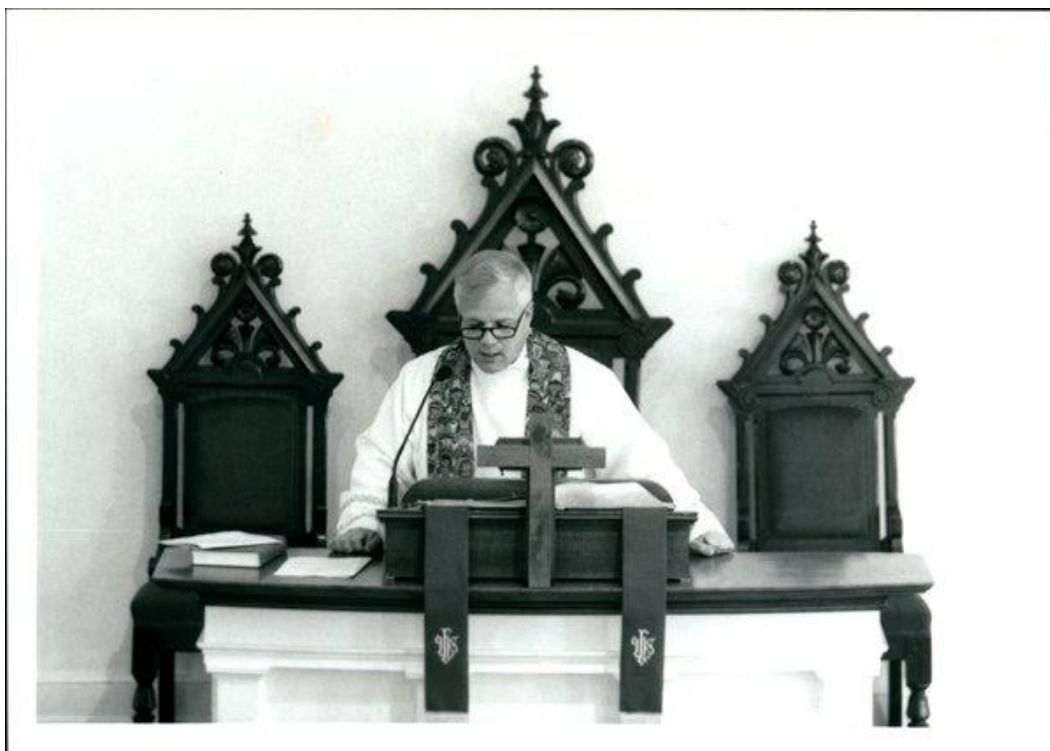
Settled Pastor, November 1, 1996-August 30, 2007

Cornell University, 1979
UCONN School of Law, Juris Doctor, 1983



Yale Divinity School, 1992

Rev. Falsey was born in New Haven. His pastorate of 11 years saw many improvements and changes. Church members served in mission work in Guatemala; a prayer chain was begun, and the Jennie Boswell Garden, honoring her work in Christian Education, was planted near the office. The memorial garden was established. The nursery school built a new playscape, and the church office began to use the internet to communicate with members, including mailing the Sunday bulletin to all the members.



The Facilities Review Committee, established in the Spring of 1999, assessed the space needs for the present and future. With a formal vote on Oct. 14, 2001, the congregation began to proceed with construction: removing the 1953 addition and replacing it with the new Parish Center. It was dedicated on October 6, 2002.

Rev. Falsey initiated the annual Blessing of the Animals. The first class of Stephen Ministers was commissioned. After the events of September 11, 2001, the church opened the sanctuary for a day of prayer and mourning, and held a candlelight vigil. A joint service was held with the West Avon Congregational Church.

In 2005-2006, the church helped sponsor refugee families from Ethiopia and Afghanistan. The new faith-based Avon Nursery School opened in 2006, and the church adopted a Safe Church policy. Also in 2006, there was an anniversary dinner marking Rev. Falsey's decade of ministry, and 160 people attended. *Photograph at pulpit, 2000 (also on Ct. Digital Archive); in his church office with his teddy bears, by Nora Howard, October 16, 2016. ACC Archives.*

2007-2018

ACC welcomed six interim pastors and one settled pastor during this transitional time of faithful worship and discerning of the church's future. [See below for profiles.] Accomplishments in 2007-2018 included robust worship services, extensive outreach programs (including Simply Smiles and IRIS), steeple repairs, Nursery School playground expansion, the renovation of 12 West Main to contain a two-bedroom apartment, overhaul of the organ, installation of new red pew cushions, celebrating a decade of being a Stephen Ministry Church, starting First Friday Dinners for the community (2010), publication of *Catch'd on Fire* (biography of Avon's 2nd minister), and a 2-year Bethel Bible series class.

In addition, these statements were enacted during Rev. Martha Chenault's pastorate, after several years of planning, research, meetings and collaboration.

Mission, Vision, Core Values and Guiding Principles

Approved June 1, 2014

The mission of the Avon Congregational church is to enable people to know God's unconditional love and to be a community of faith helping one another to live as Jesus Christ lived and taught." The Vision is that "We will be an open, caring, and growing community As we explore new and proven spiritual pathways we will encourage one another to discover our unique significance in God's world. We will worship work and celebrate together joyfully. Using our gifts to reach out to others, we will create a world of Compassion, peace and justice.

Statement of Inclusion

Adopted May 19, 2015

In keeping with the life and teaching of Christ Jesus, we joyfully and unconditionally welcome all people of any age, gender, sexual orientation, race, culture, ability or social or economic status into our community of faith. We affirm the humanity of all people as unique individuals made in God's image. We also affirm the special gifts that each person has to offer. We invite all to participate in the full life of the church and covenant of our Christian community." It is based on John 13:34-35: *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. But this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love or one another.*

Governance & Ministries

Approved Nov. 1, 2015 & Implemented January 1, 2016

The "Steering Circle" governs the church, guiding the direction of the church. It ensures, through five ministries, the Pastor and other staff, that ACC fulfills its mission and vision. This structure replaced the former "Council" structure. This team-based structure of five ministries fosters greater community participation and continuity in ongoing worship. The five ministries are Welcoming, Nurturing, Worship, Outreach, and Support.

Brenda Pelc-Faszczka

Interim pastor, September 1, 2007-September 2009

Smith College

Yale Divinity School 1980

Doctor of Ministry, Chicago Theological
Seminary

Early in her career, Rev. Dr. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka was chaplain at Mount Holyoke College. A trained interim pastor, she served in Middletown, Rocky Hill, Hartford, South Glastonbury, Farmington, and Manchester. She was settled pastor of the Suffield Congregational Church for nine years, and is presently (2020) pastor of the First Congregational Church, Canton Center. *Photograph by Jeff Faszczka, Sept. 2018.*



Kenneth David Fuller

Settled Pastor, September 1, 2009-May 1, 2011

Harvard Divinity School, 1972



Rev. Fuller grew up in Plainville, CT, and was ordained at Williamstown Congregational Church in Massachusetts. He came to ACC from the Cleveland Park Congregational Church in Washington D.C., and was installed at ACC on June 13, 2010. He also served churches in Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. He died Feb. 23, 2021. *Photograph by Nora O. Howard, December 6, 2009, serving communion at ACC.*

Martha Chenault

Interim and then Designated Pastor, 2011-2016

Lexington Theological Seminary, 1980



Rev. Chenault, a native of Kentucky, graduated from the University of Kentucky. She was ordained in 1976 and served churches in Kentucky, Ohio and Michigan. Before coming to ACC, she was Designated Pastor of the First Congregational Church of Berea, Ohio. *Photograph by Nora O. Howard, June 27, 2011, in ACC pulpit.*

Donna Cassity

Interim Pastor, August 16, 2016-June, 2017

Northeastern Baptist Theological Seminary



Rev. Cassity served the First Congregational Church in Madison, and was a chaplain at Southern Connecticut State University. After ACC, Rev. Cassity was interim pastor at the Oxford United Congregational Church and First Church Norwalk. Pictured is Rev. Cassity with World War II veterans Marie Kretschmann (Navy decoder, 1943-1946) and Nicholas J. Lavnikovich (Navy medic, 1942-1945) receiving quilts from Quilts of Valor in recognition of their service. Looking on is Church Administrator Beth Ferrari. *Photograph by Robert Linderman, November 6, 2016.*

Donna Manocchio

Bridge Minister, July 2017-October 15, 2017

Andover Newton Theological School, 2004

Rev. Manocchio came to the ministry after a career at Aetna. She previously served the Rocky Hill Congregational Church and the Asylum Hill Congregational Church, from which she retired in 2016, and served as Chair of the Board of Hands on Hartford. *Photograph by Nora O. Howard, Dec. 3, 2017, in ACC Sanctuary.*



Matt Laney

Bridge Minister, October 16, 2017-January 7, 2018

Kenyon College
Andover Newton Theological School, 2004



Rev. Laney, from Maine, served churches in Vermont, Michigan and Connecticut. Prior to coming to the Avon Congregational Church he was senior pastor of the Asylum Hill Congregational Church (2011-2017). After ACC, he became senior pastor of the Virginia-Highland Church. He is author of a fantasy trilogy, *Pride Wars*, published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for Young Readers. *Photograph by Nora O. Howard, Dec. 17, 2017, in ACC sanctuary.*

Erica Nierendorf
Transitional Minister, 2018



Andover Newton Theological School, 2013

Rev. Nierendorf, ordained at First Church Simsbury on Dec. 8, 2015, was Acting Associate Minister at First Church of Christ, Simsbury (2012-2014) and Chaplain at Hartford Hospital, 2014-2018. *Photograph outside of ACC courtesy of Rev. Nierendorf.*

Christopher Solimene

Settled Pastor, October 2018 to the present

Long Island University



Yale Divinity School, 2016

Rev. Chris Solimene was raised on Long Island, N.Y. During the decade before coming to ACC, he served the United Church of Christ in a variety of church settings: Director of Youth for the First Congregational Church of North Madison, Director of Children and Families for the First Congregational Church of Guilford, Associate Minister for the First Congregational Church of Old Lyme, and most recently, Sabbatical Pastor for the First Congregational Church of Portland. He was a member of the First Church of Christ in New Britain while on the ordination track within the Central Association of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ. His ordination was at the First Church of Christ in New Britain in October 21, 2018.

Rev. Solimene completed his Master of Divinity at Yale Divinity School in 2016. He holds a Bachelor of Visual and Performance Fine Arts from Long Island University. He completed his Clinical Pastoral Education at Griffin Hospital, and received a Certificate of Professional Ministry from Hartford Seminary. He has produced and directed dozens of musicals, founded two theaters, and is a member of the Screen Actor's Guild. Chris and his husband Kent moved to Avon when Chris began his ministry at ACC. Called by the ACC congregation to be the settled pastor on Sept. 9, 2018, he began his ministry on October 1, 2018. *Photograph by Nora Howard. World Communion Sunday, October 7, 2018.*

Jennifer McCleery

Associate Pastor, January 2022 -
Yale Divinity School, 2017
Master of Education, Harvard University
Trinity College, B.A., Religious Studies

Jennifer received her Master of Divinity degree from Yale Divinity School, with a concentration was in Reformed Studies. While at Yale, she was the recipient of the Two Brothers Fellowship, a grant that enabled her to study in Israel and Palestine. In 2015, Jennifer won the Linda LeSourd Lader Prize, awarded to a student in the Reformed tradition who shows outstanding promise for leadership. While at Trinity College, she spent her junior year studying at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Jennifer and her husband Michael have three sons.



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Robbins, Thomas, *Diary of Thomas Robbins, 1796-1854*. Thomas Todd, 1886. Online.

Chronological list of Pastors as of 2022

Kellogg	1819 - 1829
Case	1830 - 1840
Hubbell	1840 - 1853
Whittlesey	1853 - 1854
Colton	1855 - 1857
Murphy	1858 - 1864
Curtiss, George	1864 - 1868
Marshall	1869 - 1871
Croft	1871 - 1875
Eggleston	1875 - 1876
Bassett	1876 - 1877
Ayres	1877 - 1878
Curtiss, L.	1878 - 1879
Seeley	1879 - 1895
Fankhauser	1896 - 1900
Fiske	1900 - 1904
McGregor	1904 - 1907
Connolly	1907 - 1908
Smail	1909 - 1910
Harp	1910 - 1911
McClary	1911 - 1912
Archer	1912 - 1913
Clark, Frederick	1913 - 1914
Leitch	1914 - 1917
Moulton, Joseph	1917 - 1918
Moulton, James (father of next pastor)	1918 - 1922
Kamp	1922 - 1925
Knight	1925 - 1926
Pearson	1926 - 1929
Clark, John	1929 - 1932
Wheeler	1932 - 1937
Hylton	1937 - 1940
Hamilton	1940 - 1942
Pope	1942 - 1943
Horton	1943 - 1944
Woodruff	1944 - 1949
Johanson, E. Jerome & Laura, co-pastors	1949 - 1964
James English (Interim, 1964)	
Bankosky	1964 - 1968
Mayes and Reynolds: Assistants/Assoc.	
James English (Interim again, 1969)	
Schoonmaker	1969 - 1985
Singer (Interim, 1985-1986); also assisting for about 6 months when Rev. Schoonmaker could not talk was Rev. James B. Yee.	
Bouton	1986 - 1996
Kittell (Interim, 1995-1996)	
Falsey	1996 - 2007
Pelc-Faszczka (Interim 2007-2009)	
Fuller	2009 - 2011
Chenault (Interim then designated, 2011-2016)	
Cassity (Interim, 2016-2017)	
Manocchio (Bridge minister, 2017)	
Laney (Bridge minister, 2017-2018)	

Neirendorf (Bridge minister, 2018)

Solimene
McCleery

2018 - Current Settled Pastor
2022 - Associate Pastor with Pastor Chris

Ordinations

Several ACC pastors were ordained at the Avon Congregational Church.

Samuel Asa Fiske	October 10, 1900	Pastor, 1900-1904
E.F. McGregor	November 30, 1904	Pastor, 1904-1907
Joseph Langdon Moulton	May 24, 1918	Pastor, 1917-1918
William John Hamilton, Jr.	October 21, 1941	Pastor, 1940-1942
Edward Vanstone Pope	September 19, 1943	Pastor, 1942-1943

Possibly Charles K. Fankhauser,
ACC was his first and only pastorate

Pastor, 1896-1900

The ordination of current pastor Rev. Christopher Solimene was held at his home church, the New Britain Congregational Church, on Oct. 21, 2018.

Ministers and Missionaries Raised Up at ACC

Edgar Brinckerhoff. Candidate for Licensure. ACC worked with Farmington Valley Association of the UCC leading to his ordination. (*ACC Annual Report for the Year 1968, p. 1.*)

William Stone Hubbell (Andover Seminary), son of Rev. S. Hubbell of ACC, spent much of his childhood and youth in Avon, and became a minister. [Moulton, H. Address, 1919, p. 14; Moulton's source was Eggleston 1876 sermon]]

Jeremiah Miller (Yale Seminary), son of Elijah and Chloe Allen Miller. Born Avon Nov. 12, 1805. Westfield Academy. Amherst College Class of 1831. Yale Theological Seminary, 1831-1835, class of 1834. Ordained at Westbrook, CT, February 1835. Supply pastor in Clinton, CT, 1834. Pastor in Westbrook CT (1835-1837) and Redding CT (1837-1840) and continued his ministries in Pennsylvania. Secretary of Philadelphia Sabbath Association (1847-1868). Died of paralysis in PA, July 27, 1871. Married to Ellen Tyler of Northford, CT, May 17, 1836. Five children. (*Biographical Record of the Alumni of Amherst College, 1821-1896, v. I., p. 79*; online; *Contributions to Ecclesiastical History, v. 2, p. 178.*) (after the 1860s because he is in vol. 2 of Red book, p. 178.

MISSIONARIES from ACC

Rev. Joseph Moulton (ACC pastor 1917-1918) and his wife were missionaries to India, 1918-1961. (She died 1956). **Mrs. Florence Moulton**, wife of Rev. Joseph Moulton. Missionary to India, 1918-1956.

Miss Lucelia Thompson: Avon Congregational Church records do not record if she was commissioned at ACC. Rev. James Moulton said in 1919 that it happened more than 50 years ago, and she died in 1864. So she became a missionary probably in the 1850s or early 1860s. Lucelia Thompson married Rev. W.P. Barker, and served at the Mahratta mission in India. She died Jan 27, 1864, age 34, at Pimplus, India. *Sources: James Moulton, Historical Address, pp.13-14; Missionary Herald, v. 60, Google Books online.*

Elizabeth Woodford: She joined ACC in 1832. She later married Lester Barber, who gave music lessons around Avon. He became a home missionary in Wisconsin. Source: *James Moulton, Historical Address, 1919, pp. 13-14.*

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