

The Congregational Church



The Evangelical Congregation church was formed in 1856, when more conservative members of the Unitarian church (First Parish) sought a return to their Trinitarian origins. This disagreement had been growing within the First Parish since the 1830s, as the ministers increasingly drew the parish toward Unitarianism. Dissenters within the parish sought a return to the orthodoxy of the Puritan church. The effort to form the new congregation was led by Dr. Josiah Noyes, Needham's physician; he and his wife, Elizabeth Hunt Noyes, are the first two names on the parish covenant.

The first Congregational meeting house was built in 1859 on the corner of Chapel Street (hence the name); this small chapel served until 1886, when the congregation had raised enough money to purchase land on the corner of Linden Street and built a large new church. The old chapel was torn down in 1928 when Chapel Street was enlarged.

The wooden church burned down in 1924, and was replaced by a new brick church. This structure served until 1955, when the church was enlarged to its present form and the former brick sanctuary became the parish hall.