

## PRESS RELEASE

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## ROSENBERG LIBRARY OFFERS GLIMPSE INTO HISTORY OF AN ISLAND INSTITUTION

The Rosenberg Library is pleased to announce the opening of the First Presbyterian Church Records to the public for research. The collection, the second donation of its kind to the Library from the First Presbyterian Church of Galveston, is a complement to and extension of items currently held by the Library.

Organized in 1840, the First Presbyterian Church of Galveston is one of the oldest congregations in Galveston. The church's history echoes that of Galveston, and the current collection gives researchers insights into the beginnings and growth of the island and its history.

The current collection features official church documents, meeting minutes, membership rolls, bulletins and church newsletters. By using the collection, researchers can trace the official history of the church during most of the twentieth century.

Research files compiled by former pastor John T. McCrea—minister of the church from 1961-1969—and church member Retta Lou Weber are a unique feature of this collection. Both avid historians, Mrs. Weber and McCrea created extensive research in tracing the history of the church. Weber incorporated her work was used in the 1993 official church history *Lively Stones: A History of the People Who Built First Presbyterian Church, Galveston, Texas, 1840-1990*. Researchers looking for an informative history of the island and a longstanding Galveston institution will find numerous tidbits the city's colorful history within Mrs. Weber's research.

The collection also holds books written by Wil R. Johnson, minister of the church from 1922-1952. Johnson's personal study bibles, with numerous notes written in the margin, are a written record of his personal spiritual journey and his reflection on his faith.

The Galveston and Texas History Center is open Tuesday- Saturday from 10am to 5pm to the public. For more information, contact Archivist Laura Finger at 763-8845 x 127, or visit the Library's website at [www.rosenberg-library.org](http://www.rosenberg-library.org).