

From the Hampshire Gazette and Northampton Courier  
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Destruction of the Congregational Church by Fire

We have sad intelligence to report this week, bor "Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised Thee, is burned up with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste." This prophecy of Isaiah, uttered more than 2500 years ago, was verified last Saturday by the destruction of the Congregational church edifice in Worthington by fire.

A fire had been built by the sexton to warm the church, at about 11 o'clock A.M., for the funeral service of Mrs. Polly Burr, that was to be held at 2 P.M. In a little while he returned to replenish the fire, when he discovered that a part of one of the stoves had fallen in and the building was on fire. He did his utmost to extinguish the flames, but it appears that the fire had reached within the ceiling and was running up the steeple, which was soon enveloped in flames. The wind was blowing a gale at the time and as there was no hope of saving the house, a rush was made, as soon as help arrived, to save the church furniture.

As no one dared to enter the room at the regular entrance, as the bell was directly over it and liable to fall at any moment, a window was crushed in and George Russell entered and merely succeeded in saving the large Bible and hymn book, then seized the marble top table and dragged it a little way, but the suffocating smoke overcame him and he was compelled to abandon it and escape for his life. The communion service was kept at Mrs. Russell Bartlett's and was saved. All else was destroyed--bell, organ, chandelier, lamps, clock, desk, Sunday School library, tables chairs, hymn books, and Sunday School singing books.

There was an insurance of \$7000 on the building which will partly cover the loss. The church was built in 1825 and thoroughly repaired and remodeled in 1870, and in 1876 the steeple was repaired and the house repainted and a new bell put in, and it was considered the most beautifully designed and attractive house of worship on the hills of Western Hampshire county. A few sad worshippers gathered last Sunday at the town hall, opposite where the church stood, and a solemn and impressive service was conducted by Deacon L.F. Stevens ( as the pastor was absent on his vacation) and a sermon was read rom the text found in Jeremiah 12:5 . Regular services will be held in the town hall for the present.