

# METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH. ILLINOIS CONFERENCE. Illinois Conference records, 1867-1917

Emory University  
Pitts Theology Library  
1531 Dickey Drive, Suite 560  
Atlanta, GA 30322  
404-727-4166

---

---

## Descriptive Summary

**Creator:** Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Illinois Conference.  
**Title:** Illinois Conference records, 1867-1917  
**Call Number:** Manuscript Collection No. 012  
**Extent:** 2 cubic ft. (2 legal archives boxes + 1 oversize box)  
**Abstract:** Contains minutes and statistics of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, Illinois Conference.  
**Language:** Materials entirely in English.

---

---

## Administrative Information

### Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

### Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

### Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Methodist Episcopal Church South, Illinois Conference records, Archives and Manuscript Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.

### Processing

Processed by Anita K. Delaries, April 1984.

---

---

## Collection Description

### Biographical Note

In 1845, as a result of North-South tensions, the Methodist Episcopal Church conferences in the Southern states withdrew to form the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. For the most part the choice to remain with the Methodist Episcopal Church or to join the Methodist Episcopal

*Emory Libraries provides copies of its finding aids for use only in research and private study. Copies supplied may not be copied for others or otherwise distributed without prior consent of the holding repository.*

Church, South was obvious. Churches in states that would later be known as the Confederacy seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Illinois Conference was an exception.

The organization arose out of the tension between abolitionist Methodist Episcopal Republicans loyal to their Illinoisan in the White House and Methodist Episcopal Democrats, many of whom were emigrants or the children of emigrants from Southern states. The church became a political and ideological battleground. The Democrats, unwilling to enthrone themselves with the Northern cause, often found themselves unable to contend with the abuse directed against them. The result was the forced or voluntary separation of many of them and subsequent establishment of independent organizations. On January 1, 1864, the first meeting to interchange views was held in Lacon, Illinois. Out of this meeting was established the Illinois Christian Association. That same year another group, the Evangelical Church, organized in Salem, Illinois. Their reaction against the ugly political atmosphere of the churches from which they were separated was such that they forbade political discussions in churches, from the pulpit or in conventions. Learning of each others existence the two groups met and decided upon reorganizing into the Christian Union of Illinois.

Soon after the group's name again changed to Christian Union Church, and it was Methodist in both doctrine and polity. Their first General Council meeting was held in Clinton, Illinois in 1866. Responding to an invitation extended by Jacob Ditzler on behalf of the Christian Union Church, Bishop D.S. Doggett of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South visited the Council. In 1867 the members agreed to join the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The Records of the Illinois Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South are divided into two series: Conference Minutes and Conference Statistics. The first series, Conference Minutes, includes minutes from the year 1867 to 1881 and 1886 to 1917. The second series, Conference Statistics, includes statewide statistics from 1886 through 1909.

The records document the very early history of the Illinois Conference at a time when the nation and national denominations were struggling with the effects and consequences of the Civil War. The unpopularity of a church in the North that aligned with the Methodists in the South is obvious. The records in this collection provide evidence of their motives, problems and results.

## Container List

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Content</b>
1	1	Conference Minutes, 1867-1881
3	1	Conference Minutes [Oversize], 1886-1982
3	2	Conference Minutes [Oversize], 1893-1897
3	3	Conference Minutes [Oversize], 1889-1902
1	2	Conference Minutes, 1902-1913
2	1	Conference Minutes, 1913-1917
2	2	Statistics, 1886-1889
2	3	Statistics, 1890-1893
2	4	Statistics, 1893-1897
2	5	Statistics, 1898-1901
2	6	Statistics, 1902-1906
1	3	Statistics, 1907-1909

---