State Council of Churches records4492713

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Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary

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Table of Contents

Summary Information 3
Biographical / Historical 3
Scope and Contents 4
Arrangement 5
Administrative Information 5
Related Materials 6
Controlled Access Headings 6
Burke Library record group: 7
Collection Inventory 7

Summary Information

Repository:	Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary
Creator:	Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America
Title:	State Council of Churches records
ID:	4492713
Date [inclusive]:	1943 -- 1974
Physical Description:	5 linear feet 5 linear feet; 10 boxes
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	This collection contains records of the state councils of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, including bulletins, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, correspondence, annual meeting minutes, and reports from New York, Ohio, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Alabama, California – Nevada, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Minnesota, Oregon, Texas, Vermont, Virginia and Washington.

Preferred Citation

Item description, WAB: State Council of Churches Records, 1943-1974, box #, folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Biographical / Historical

The ecumenical movement and the formation of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America in the early twentieth century influenced church federation movements on the state level. State councils were founded to serve primarily as instruments of cooperation between denominations which had little direct contact with each other. They did not deal with theological or ecclesiological questions, but rather their objective was to manifest the common purpose of the churches, to express unity within the church and to recognize that there are things that are done more effectively together state-wide. The state councils function on a level between local councils and national councils with coverage determined by the geographical

boundaries of the state in which it functions. The role of state councils was clarified in a pamphlet written by the Association of Council Secretaries in 1957. It states, "The functions of a state council are determined first of all by its constituent membership… in contrast to the functions of local councils that bring local congregations into a cooperative relationship… a state council relate[s] the churches of a given state to state-wide agencies and endeavors. A state council is also an agency by which the churches carry on programs that need supervision and coordination beyond the boundaries of local councils." These functions can include research studies, encouraging cooperative work of the churches, extending Christian fellowship on a state-wide basis, and representing "Protestant – Orthodox Christians of a given state in legislative matters emerging at the state capital and in similar concerns in the national Congress and the United Nations." The basic role of the state councils is to enable its members to "manifest their oneness in Christ in the geographical community." However, a state council also plays a role within the world-wide ecumenical movement, which is "to enable each part of the church to work properly with every other part, to the end that the Body of Christ—the Church—may be upbuilded in love." Kessler and Kinnamon's book Councils of Churches and the Ecumenical Vision asserts state councils contribute to the dialogue of the ecumenical movement by providing a "place where trust can grow, where divisive issues can be discussed, [and] where reception of the results of [those] dialogues can be encouraged." According to the National Council of Churches website the tone of these dialogues are "different when [they are] grounded in a particular community with shared needs and concerns. "Issues like poverty, immigration, racial justice, environmental justice, healthcare reform, and gun violence…are no longer abstract policy ideas," but they affect each person within those communities. State councils are rooted in their regional communities therefore, they are "uniquely positioned" to respond to these shared issues. This sharing of experience, personnel, resources and support through the state council of churches point individual church bodies "beyond themselves to the eschatological vision of shalom." (Kessler and Kinnamon)

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Scope and Contents

This collection contains records of the state councils of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, including bulletins, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, correspondence, annual meeting minutes, and reports. Regional ecumenical and interfaith organizations came together under the umbrella of their respective state council of churches. Rooted in local communities and able to respond to needs specific to their regions, councils were agencies of cooperation focused on service and Christian unity. New York, Ohio, Massachusetts and New Jersey form the bulk of the collection; other state councils include Alabama, California – Nevada, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Minnesota, Oregon, Texas, Vermont, Virginia and Washington. Of note within the New York material are records ertaining to the New York City Protestant council, which was a large regional council serving the local needs of the city. The Ohio collection is a large run of the Ohio Christian News dating from 1946 to 1971. The Massachusetts records also contain a large run of the state council's newsletter Christian

Outlook and copies of annual reports. The New Jersey records contain reports of its annual meetings from 1958 to 1974.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Arrangement

This collection is arranged alphabetically.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

PDF converted to EAD and description updated by Leah Edelman. 2021-02-07

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Access

The following boxes are located offsite: Box 1-10. Please note that requests for use of boxes held in offsite storage must be made three business days in advance.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The exact provenance of this collection is unknown.

Custodial History

This collection is part of the William Adams Brown Ecumenical Library Archives, which was founded in 1945 by the Union Theological Seminary Board of Directors.

Processing Information

Bulletins, newsletters, and reports were cataloged by Lynn A. Grove on 1988-08-09. Metal clips were removed from materials, folded items were flattened, and bound materials were removed from their original housing. Materials were placed in new acid-free folders and boxes. Acidic items were separated from one another by interleaving with acid-free paper as needed. The finding aid was created by BreeAnn Midavaine in 2012 with the support of the Henry Luce Foundation, and edited by Leah Edelman in 2022.

Conditions Governing Use

Some material in this collection may be protected by copyright and other rights. Information concerning copyright, fair use, and reproduction requests can be consulted at Columbia's Copyright Advisory Office.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Related Materials

Related Materials

WAB: Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America Records, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Controlled Access Headings

- Local councils of churches
- Interdenominational cooperation -- United States
- Colorado -- Religious life and customs
- Alabama -- Religious life and customs
- Idaho -- Religious life and customs
- Illinois -- Religious life and customs
- Indiana -- Religious life and customs

- Massachusetts -- Religious life and customs
- Michigan -- Religious life and customs
- Minnesota -- Religious life and customs
- New York (State) -- Religious life and customs
- New Jersey -- Religious life and customs
- Ohio -- Religious life and customs
- Oregon -- Religious life and customs
- California -- Religious life and customs
- Nevada -- Religious life and customs
- Texas -- Religious life and customs
- Vermont -- Religious life and customs
- Virginia -- Religious life and customs
- Washington -- Religious life and customs

Burke Library record group:

William Adams Brown Ecumenical Library Archives

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
Alabama, Mobile, Bulletins and Meetings, circa 1949 --1956	box 1	folder 1
California – Nevada, 1953 --1967	box 1	folder 2
Colorado, 1960 -- 1967	box 1	folder 3-6
Illinois, Bulletin, 1943 -- 1970	box 1	folder 7-8
Illinois, Meetings, 1946 -- 1958	box 2	folder 1-3
Illinois, Evanston, 1957	box 2	folder 4
Indiana, 1955 -- 1970	box 2	folder 5
Maine, Greater Portland, 1945 -- 1950	box 2	folder 6
Massachusetts, Meetings, 1945 -- 1951	box 2	folder 7-8
Massachusetts, Meetings, Bulletin and Pamphlets, 1946 -- 1967	box 3	folder 1-8
Michigan, Washtenaw, 1969	box 4	folder 1
Minnesota, 1953 -- 1971	box 4	folder 2

New Jersey, 1953 -- 1974	box 4	folder 3-7
New York, 1944 -- 1971	box 5	folder 1-8
New York, Young Adult Meetings and Pamphlets, 1944 -- 1948	box 6	folder 1
New York, Otsego County, circa 1944 -- 1954	box 6	folder 2
New York, Protestant Council of the City of New York, 1946 -- 1969	box 6	folder 3-5
New York, Protestant Council of the City of New York, Brooklyn Division Papers, 1945 -- 1950	box 6	folder 6
New York, Protestant Council of the City of New York, Queens Federation Papers, 1947 -- 1950	box 6	folder 7
New York, Syracuse and Onondaga County, 1955 -- 1957	box 6	folder 8
Ohio, 1946 -- 1955	box 7	folder 1-6
Ohio, 1955 -- 1966	box 8	folder 1-6
Ohio, 1967 -- 1971	box 9	folder 1-3
Oregon, 1954 -- 1966	box 9	folder 4-6
Texas, 1965 -- 1970	box 9	folder 7
Vermont, 1972 -- 1973	box 9	folder 8
Virginia, 1944 -- 1953	box 10	folder 1-3
Washington, 1943 -- 1949	box 10	folder 4
Correspondence, General Call for Papers from WAB Library, 1951 -- 1954	box 10	folder 5