

**The Burke Library Archives, Columbia University Libraries,
Union Theological Seminary, New York**

William Adams Brown Ecumenical Archives Group

Finding Aid for

City Council of Churches Records, 1909 – 1970



Credit to WAB: City Council of Churches Records, Box 4, Folder 10,
The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Finding Aid prepared by: Rebecca Weintraub, September 2012
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Summary Information

Creator: City Council of Churches
Title: City Council of Churches Records
Inclusive dates: 1909 – 1970
Bulk dates: 1930 – 1970
Abstract: The City Council of Churches was an ecumenical organization that focused on Christian and church unity at the local level. Among the materials included in the collection are annual reports, bulletins and newsletters, and pamphlets.
Size: 6 boxes, 3.00 linear feet
Storage: Onsite storage
Repository: The Burke Library
Union Theological Seminary
3041 Broadway
New York, NY 10027
Email: burkearchives@library.columbia.edu

Administrative Information

- Provenance:** The papers are part of the William Adams Brown Ecumenical Library Collection, which was founded in 1945 by the Union Theological Seminary Board of Directors. The materials in this collection document the modern Ecumenism movement on the city level.
- Access:** Archival papers are available to registered readers for consultation by appointment only. Please contact archives staff by email to burkearchives@library.columbia.edu, or by postal mail to The Burke Library address on page 1, as far in advance as possible. Burke Library staff is available for inquiries or to request a consultation on archival or special collections research.
- Access Restrictions:** The collection is unrestricted to readers. Certain materials, however, are in a fragile condition, and this may necessitate restriction in handling and copying.
- Preferred Citation:** Item description, William Adams Brown Ecumenical Library Archives: City Council of Churches Records, box #, folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

History

The mid-twentieth century was a significant period in the development of the Ecumenical movement in the United States. In 1950, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America gave way to the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. According to Ruth Rouse in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, the unity of eight then-separate national councils, among them the Foreign Missions Conference, the Council of Church Women, and Council for Religious Education, “practically organized all aspects of the Churches’ common life in an ecclesiastically-constituted organ of common action.” This development, along with the creation of the World Council of Churches in 1948, was a significant one for the ecumenical movement for much of the same reason. For the first time, there were two denominationally-connected groups with common goals of creating Christian unity in both doctrine and action.

These goals are reflected in the City Council of Churches Records and illustrate their execution on a local level. The Constitution for The Federation of Churches of Christ in Albany, New York, for example, stated its object as the development of “the spirit of Christian fellowship and to promote through cooperative effort the spiritual, moral, social, and civic welfare of the community.” Similarly, The Council of Churches of Buffalo and Erie County state one of their objects as concerning itself “with all those interests that concern the churches, especially those matters of mutual helpfulness and community influence...” These objectives manifest themselves in the activities of each city council represented in this collection, be it in regards to matters of religious education, race relations, or social welfare.

Sources:

Sources from the collection itself and:

Ecumenical Movement. In *Encyclopedia of American Religious History*, edited by Stephen R. Prothero, Gardiner H. Shattuck, and Edward L. Queen, 346-348. New York: Facts on File, 2009. PDF e-book.

Rouse, Ruth. "Other Aspects of the Ecumenical Movement." In *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, edited by Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill, 599-641. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967.

Short, Frank. "National Council of Churches." In *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1948-1968*, edited by Harold E. Fey, 93-113. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967.

Collection Scope and Content Note

This collection is organized alphabetically by city. Among the types of materials in the collection are Administrative materials, including constitutions, by-laws, and policies (the earliest material in the collection being the constitution of the Inter-Church Federation of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania); Annual Reports and Meetings; Bulletins and Newsletters; and Pamphlets, such as event programs and informational brochures. The materials address and discuss a variety of issues, many of which are common across the cities represented in the collections. Such topics include religious education, social welfare and action, youth, and race relations.

Processing

Metal clips and staples were removed from materials and folded items were flattened. 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.

Further Sources

The William Adams Brown Ecumenical Library Archives include many collections that document the ecumenical movement. Related collections held at Burke include those of the Council of Churches of the City of New York as well as the State Council of Churches. For more information, see the website at <http://library.columbia.edu/content/libraryweb/indiv/burke/archives/wabrown.html> or by contacting archives staff by email burkearchives@library.columbia.edu.

Contents list

Box	Folder	Contents
		Albany, 1947-1954
1	1	Administrative, 1948-1951
1	2	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1947-1954
1	3	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1948-1953
1	4	Pamphlets, [19??]-1948[?]
1	5	Weekday Church School, [19??]-1951
1	6	General, [19??]-1951
		Bridgeport, 1945-1953
1	7	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1946-1951
1	8	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1947-1953
1	9	Church Directory, 1950
1	10	Events, 1950-1951
1	11	Pamphlets, 1947-1952
1	12	School of Religion [Bridgeport Area Leadership Training School], 1945-1952
1	13	Toward...A Church Strategy for Metropolitan Bridgeport, 1947
		Buffalo, 1942-1957
1	14	Administrative, 1942-1951
1	15	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1944-1954
1	16	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1947-1957
1	17	Pamphlets, 1946-1952
1	18	General, [19??]-1950
		Chicago, 1945-1955
1	19	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1945-1953
1	20	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1949-1955
1	21	Pamphlets, [19??]-1943
		Cleveland, 1953-1970
2	1	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1953-1970
2	2	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1953-1970
		Detroit, 1943-1954
2	3	Administrative, 1943-1946
2	4	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1947-1954
2	5	Detroit Council of Religious Education, 1947
2	6	Pamphlets, [19??]-1951
2	7	War Emergency Commission Report of Progress, [19??]
2	8	General, 1947-1954
		Hartford, 1946-1954
2	9	Administrative, 1948
2	10	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1946-1953
2	11	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1946-1953
2	12	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1947-1954
2	13	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1947-1954

Box	Folder	Contents
		Hartford (cont'd)
3	1	Church Study of Metropolitan Hartford Connecticut, 1947
3	2	Department of Christian Education, 1950-1954
3	3	Department of Social Service, [19??]-1953
3	4	Events, [19??]-1954
3	5	Pamphlets, [19??]-1954
3	6	Youth Council, 1949-1954
3	7	General, 1949-1952
		Los Angeles, 1945-1963
3	8	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1945-1955
3	9	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1945-1955
3	10	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1945-1955
3	11	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1947-1962
3	12	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1947-1962
		Church Welfare Bureau, [19??]-1949
4	1	Church Welfare Bureau, [19??]-1949
4	2	Clergy Advisory Committee, 1952
4	3	Correspondence, 1952-1963
4	4	Ecumenical Conference, 1953
4	5	Ministers' Convocation, 1952-1957
4	6	Pamphlets, [19??]-1954
4	7	General, 1955-1958
		Louisville, 1944-1954
4	8	Administrative, [19??]-1954
4	9	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1947-1953
4	10	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1947-1954
4	11	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1947-1954
4	12	Church Promotion Kit, 1953-1954
4	13	Directory of Churches, 1948-1954
4	14	Events, 1949-1954
4	15	Interdenominational Survey of Metropolitan Louisville, Kentucky, 1944
4	16	Pamphlets, [19??]-1954
4	17	General, 1947-1954
		Philadelphia, 1909-1967
4	18	Addresses, 1952-1953
4	19	Administrative, 1909
4	20	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1947-1953
4	21	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1947-1967
4	22	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1947-1967
4	23	Pamphlets, [19??]-1957
		Pittsburgh, 1953-1964
5	1	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1953-1964
5	2	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1953-1964
5	3	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1953-1964

Box	Folder	Contents
		Pittsburgh (cont'd)
5	4	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1953-1964
		Saint Louis, 1947-1955
5	5	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1947-1955
5	6	Correspondence, 1952-1953
5	7	Institute on Aging, 1953
5	8	Pamphlets, 1946[?]-1952
5	9	Red Cross, 1953
5	10	General, 1953
		San Antonio, 1952-1954
5	11	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1954
5	12	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1953
5	13	Directory of Churches and Ministers, 1952-1954
5	14	Pamphlets, 1953
5	15	Voters' Guide, 1953
5	16	General, 1953
		San Francisco, 1944-1953
5	17	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1945-1953
5	18	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1946-1947
5	19	Pamphlets, 1944-1948
		Washington, D.C., 1937-1954
6	1	Administrative, 1942-1951
6	2	Annual Reports and Meetings, 1943-1954
6	3	Audio-Visual Division, 1949-1951
6	4	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1937-1954
6	5	Bulletins and Newsletters, 1937-1954
6	6	Christian School in the Nation's Capital, 1946-1951
6	7	Department of Research and Church Planning, 1949-1951
6	8	Department of Social Welfare, 1948-1951
6	9	Events, 1950-1951
6	10	Pamphlets, [19??]-1953
6	11	Race Relations, [19??]-1951
6	12	Yearbook and Church Directory, 1936, 1951
6	13	General, 1937-1951