

THE ARCHIVES OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH ACQUISITION AND HOLDINGS POLICY

Mission

The mission of The Archives of the Episcopal Church is to observe and honor the history of The Episcopal Church and to assist the faithful in fulfilling the Baptismal Covenant.

Acquisition Objectives

The acquisition policy of the Archives derives from its canonical mandate to document the Church's official, institutional life and other historical dimensions of the Church as a community of faith and as individuals called to serve. The Archives carries out its mission by: (1) acquiring and preserving records of enduring value; and (2) turning the records into useful tools of knowledge for its leadership, members, and the public. The Archives holdings represent the Church's institutional and cultural memory. They shed new light on transformations in structure, process, and program as the Church responds to its missionary calling in every age. The Archives develops its holdings as a resource for teaching and evangelism. It uncovers the history of the Episcopal Church for critical insight, celebration, and to explore the diverse narratives of its larger Christian mission.

Acquisitions Strategy

The Archives carries out a program of professional archives management and records administration for national Church institutions under Canon I.5.1. The Archives' acquisitions strategy is to document both the formal and informal areas of Church life in order to gain a more complete historical record. It actively acquires records produced in the course of official business by the General Convention and the national Church's corporate body, known as the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA. These official records are strengthened by documentation on individual members, including the private papers of exemplars of leadership, witness, or profound ministry. Other sources are solicited to enrich the official transcript and include such forms as audio recordings, photo images, circulated statements, electronic communication, artifacts, and memorabilia.

The Archives actively acquires records that document the defining activities of Church life: domestic and world mission, Christian teaching and education, liturgy and worship, social relations and advocacy, evangelism, lay and clerical leadership and models of ministry, administration and stewardship, ecumenical partnerships, spirituality, community building, and the Church in public affairs. In most cases, records are received from a Church agency as an intact body of documentation, but there are situations where the Archives may attempt to create a comprehensive gathering of primary and original secondary materials where an historical movement can be traced to many sources and outlets, such as the Episcopal Church publications collections, documentation on liturgical reform, or religious education curricula.

The Archives of the Episcopal Church operates under the supervision of a Board and exists as an official agency of the General Convention and, as such, documents the variety of Anglican experiences without partiality or favor. It holds in regard all those who seek access to the past whether to promote an informed institutional perspective, to fulfill an individual research interest, or to advance an appreciation of the historical dimension of the Church's mission. The Archives endeavors to work with related Church bodies such as seminaries and historical societies to support regional, local, and organizational collections of archival material not directly related to the national Church field.

Holdings Profile

The General Convention

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| House of Bishops and Deputies
General Convention. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ The General Convention is understood to include the Bishops and Deputies, the secretariats of the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies, the executive office of General Convention including the presiding officers of the Convention, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Registrar, the Historiographer, the Recorder of ordinations, the Custodian of the Book of Common Prayer, and other official agents and appointed representatives. |
| Canonical Bodies of the General Convention | <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Interim bodies that are empowered by the General Convention in canon law are documented in the holdings. These include all committees, commissions, boards and agencies as well as the disciplinary bodies for presbyters and bishops. |
| Official agencies authorized by General Convention | <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Certain official agencies are recognized by General Convention as operating independently for purposes of carrying out duties in a specific area of accountability. These are separately incorporated bodies such as the Church Pension Fund (<i>see Canon I.8</i>), Forward Movement Publications, the Episcopal Relief and Development, and the Episcopal Church Foundation. The Archives recognizes its responsibility for the care of the historical records of official General Convention agencies. |
| Individuals in service to the General Convention | <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Many individuals serve the General Convention in a voluntary capacity. The Archives documents the official Church-related activities of these individuals. If appropriate to fully appreciating their ministry, the Archives will try to include a fuller biographical record. The Archives actively acquires the records of individual bishops and will receive the historical papers of any member of the House of Bishops provided that an attempt is first made to secure custody of official diocesan records with the appropriate jurisdictional body. |
| The Dioceses of the Church | <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ The constituent parts of the General Convention are the Dioceses and Provinces that are represented therein and derive their jurisdictional authority through the Constitution and Canons of the Church (<i>see Constitution Art. 1</i>). The Archives collects important and required documentation on the state of the Church's Dioceses in the annual journals of diocesan convention or council. It supplements the journals and annual reports with other official statements and publications. The Archives consults with Dioceses to establish local archival repositories and to prevent the permanent alienation of records from the custody of the Church. Where local resources do not permit, the Archives will accept records for deposit while permitting the Diocese to retain title (<i>GC Resolution 1994-A011</i>). The Archives will assume custody of the archives and records of any diocese that shall be disestablished by the General Convention. The Archives will actively collect security copies of historically valuable diocesan records for purposes of preservation and access. |
| The Provinces | <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ The Archives will be the repository for the historical records of the nine Provinces of the Episcopal Church, including the Episcopal Churches in Europe. |
| Records of congregations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Congregations are normally expected to maintain their historical records. The Archives collects certain historical writings, research, and publications. The Archives will accept congregational archives that are in danger of being lost to the Church or destroyed. The Archives will consult with local congregations to establish safe and secure storage for archival materials within the parish grounds or elsewhere through a custodial relationship that preserves the congregation's title and ownership. |

- The Executive Council**
- Board of directors and officers.
 - The Executive Council serves as the board of directors of the corporation (the DFMS). It is the policy-making authority accountable to the General Convention for the business and mission of the national Church. The records of the Executive Council are maintained by the Archives. Governance records of the Executive Council include the work product of all its appointed committees, officers, and agents (*Canon I*).
 - Sponsored programs
 - The Archives also documents special programs funded or authorized by the Executive Council. These include such contemporary entities or programs as the United Thank Offering, the Women of the Church, Jubilee Ministry, and Partnership in Mission.
- The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the PECUSA (DFMS)**
- DFMS officers, employees, agents, and consultants
 - The DFMS operates the business and program of the national Church. It is accountable to the General Convention and its board of directors is the Executive Council. Its membership is every baptized member of The Episcopal Church. The Archives is the repository for the records and archives of the DFMS and has management responsibility for the security and retention of current records of the DFMS. The records include documentation created by staff in the Episcopal Church Center and its several field branches, remotely stationed staff, special agents and officers, consultants, missionary personnel, and others with contractual responsibilities to the organization.
 - Mission Personnel and the Anglican Communion
 - The Episcopal Church performs mission activity and conducts business in foreign lands. Documentation on these DFMS activities includes gathering personnel records as well as the personal papers of individual missionaries, published records of jurisdictions in partnership with the national Church, publications and public statements of the Anglican Communion, including the ACC and the Lambeth Conference, and other instruments of teaching that arise from within the Communion.
 - Models of leadership
 - The Archives documents the lives of individual Episcopalians whose contributions to the Church represent models of ministry, examples of extraordinary witness, or whose life work offers an enduring contribution to the Church's teaching mission.
 - Diversity
 - The place of those whose voices have been forced to the margins of the Church's community life are important to the Archives. Those who have been discriminated against by race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, class or other cultural categorization can find their voice if invited to be included. The Archives is committed acquiring the fullest possible record of our diverse body.
 - Episcopal Church organizations
 - The Archives acquires the records of Episcopal Church organizations that have a national scope or whose impact has wide influence on the Church. These organizations are involved a variety of liturgical, fellowship, mission, advocacy, and social service vocations. They include, for example, the archives of religious orders, the Associated Parishes, The Witness Inc., Integrity Inc., the North Conway Institute, the Cathedral Films, and the Evangelical Education Society. Church-wide organizations add depth to our understanding of the Church as a grass roots community encountering the process of dynamic change.
- “To further the historical dimension of the mission of the Church”**
- Special Collections
 - The holdings of the Archives are augmented by collections that originate from a variety of informal settings and relationships with donors. They include published or printed materials or reconstructed from disparate sources. In some cases (e.g., the Prayer Book and Liturgy Collection), the Archives attempts to preserve an aspect of the Church's material and intellectual culture. The Archives supplements its primary source material with a selective library on Church history, governance, and ecclesiastical topics, and

books authored by significant Church spokespersons. Photographs, works of art, artifacts and occasional memorabilia expand the Archives capacity to teach through exhibit and publication.

Records Normally Outside the Acquisition Policy of the Archives

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| Records of local mission and ministry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Archives is authorized to acquire records and other materials that specifically document the life and work of The Episcopal Church. It does not normally accept records that are not in some way related to the national or international activities of the Episcopal Church unless they have broader impact or demonstrate how the local Church brings its message and influence to bear on other areas of society in novel ministries. |
| Seminaries, schools, and local organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Archives does not acquire the archives of affiliated Church agencies that are normally expected to support their own archival resources. These agencies include the seminaries of the Church, Church schools, and local social service organizations. Likewise, the Archives would not normally solicit the private papers of tenured faculty members provided that the theological school agreed to acquire and make these records accessible as part of an archival program. |
| Diocesan Archives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Dioceses that exercise their responsibility to manage and care for their records and archives will be supported by the national Church Archives in those ways that mutually advance the historical and legal interests of The Episcopal Church. The Archives will not normally collect archives that belong with the local Church provided that custody, care, and access can be reasonably assured. |
| Parochial Archives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Parochial records should remain in the legal custody of the local parish. The Archives will support congregations in their attempts to properly care for these historical resources, including finding suitable off-site storage that does not involve alienating title to the records. The Archives will also use technology to replicate key parochial records when the information can be reliably authenticated and preserved. |
| Secular notables | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Archives will not accept the secular records of notable Episcopalians who have not had visible and compelling leadership roles in Church life. |
| Personal records | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Archives does not acquire the personal records of employees. Personal records are materials created outside the conduct of business or the employee's assigned duties. |
| Divided collections | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Whenever possible, the Archives will preserve the provenance and order of an archive. The Archives will seek to avoid dividing archival collections between repositories. Donors occasionally act on the belief that research is made easier if their archives are placed with separate institutions by topic or activity. In keeping with archival theory and practice, the Archives will work to keep a record group or personal papers intact. |
| Artifacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Archives will not accept artifacts or works of art not suitable for exhibit. |
| Trade publications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Private book collections are not acquired by the Archives. The exceptions to this policy are Books of Common Prayer or the Hymnal, books written by or about a donor, works of Church history, publications of the Episcopal Church or one of its agencies, reference works, and other titles that support the research collections. |