

Guide to the Matthew Walker Clair, Jr. Papers 1921-1965



Matthew Walker Clair, Jr. Papers

1921-1965

1.98 cubic feet

gcsh.ms.569

The purpose of this finding aid is to help you understand the nature of this collection and to assist you in the retrieval of material from this collection. The following pages contain a brief biographical history of the person, or persons, who created or collected these papers, followed by a general description of the collection in the scope and content note. If more detailed information is warranted then series descriptions also appear. The container listing appears last and is the listing of material in each box, or container, of this collection. To request material you need to turn to the container listing section. It is essentially a listing of file folders, or artifact items, in the collection. Each folder, or item, has a call number associated with it. Each folder also lists the inclusive dates of the material in the folder. On the material request form list both the call number and the folder, or item, title. Use a different line for each folder, or item, requested. When your request sheet is complete, or full, bring it to the archivist and the material will be retrieved.

Biographical Note

Matthew Walker Clair, Jr. (1890-1968) was a Methodist Church bishop. He received his B.A. from Howard University in 1915, a bachelor of sacred theology from Boston University in 1918, and a doctor of divinity from Gammon Seminary in 1936.

Clair's first appointment was to Bedford, Virginia in 1918, and this was followed by appointments in Martinsburg, West Virginia, in 1919; Roanoke, Virginia, in 1920; Daytona Beach, Florida (1924-1925); and Denver, Colorado (1925-1928). In 1929 he was appointed to the Board of Home Missions. Clair was professor of Practical Theology at Gammon Theological Seminary from 1936 until 1940, when he became pastor at St. Mark Church in Chicago.

During World War I Clair served as a United States Army chaplain. Elected to the episcopacy by the Central Jurisdictional Conference in 1952, he was sent by the Council of Bishops to review and appraise Methodist work in several parts of the world. He visited Africa in 1954, Singapore in 1956, Central and South America in 1958, and Europe in 1961.

Clair was a member of several church wide organizations. He also served as president of the Board of Trustees of Philander Smith College. In 1964, after eight years as the bishop in charge of the work of the Central Jurisdiction, Clair retired.

Scope Note

This collection pertains mostly to Clair's service as Bishop of the Central Jurisdiction. Most of the collection consists of correspondence, incoming and outgoing, pertaining to conferences and specific churches within the Central Jurisdiction, reports and minutes. Some of the outgoing correspondence was written by Clair's secretary while the Clairs were traveling in 1961. There also are many copies of correspondence neither to, nor from Clair.

While most of the materials were produced during Clair's his years as bishop, there are a few pieces that date from the 1920's, '30's, and '40's. There is material pertaining to the controversy over the realignment and desegregation of the Central Jurisdiction. The printed matter in the collection includes annual conferences bulletins, books and pamphlets on race issues, and communism in the Methodist Church.

Arrangement

Material has been arranged in the following manner.



Series: Central West Conference

SUBSERIES: CORRESPONDENCE.

SUBSERIES: MINUTES, REPORTS, SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS.

SERIES: COLLEGE OF BISHOPS.

SERIES: CORRESPONDENCE TO AND FROM INDIVIDUALS.

SERIES: COUNCIL OF BISHOPS.

SERIES: GENERAL FILES.

Series: Lexington Conference

SUBSERIES: CORRESPONDENCE.

SUBSERIES: MINUTES, REPORTS, SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS.

SERIES: LOCAL CHURCHES.

SERIES: PHOTOGRAPHS.

SERIES: PRINTED MATTER.

SERIES: SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE.

Access Restrictions

One personnel file in the collection is closed until 2035.

Preferred Citation

When citing material from this collection please use the following format: Direct reference to the item or its file folder, Matthew Walker Clair, Jr., Papers, United Methodist Church Archives - GCAH, Madison, New Jersey. Do not make use of the item's call number as that is not a stable descriptor.

Subject Terms

Additional Creators - Personal

Sonnenday, Margaret.

Additional Creators - Corporate

United Women of Missouri.

Subject Names - Corporate

Methodist Church (U.S.). Central Jurisdiction

Methodist Church (U.S.). General Conference

Subject Topics

African American Methodists

African Americans

Race relations-Religious aspects.

Genre

Clippings

Correspondence

Financial records

Minutes

Pamphlets.

Photographs

Publications

Reports

Occupations

Bishop.



Minister

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Container List

Central West Conference Correspondence

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-1:6	From Clair	1961-1964
1585-5-1:7	From Clair	1961-1964
1585-5-1:8	To Clair	1961-1962
1585-5-1:9	To Clair	1962-1964
1585-5-1:10	General	1961-1964

Minutes, Reports, Supporting Documents

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-1:1	Board of Trustees	1955-1960
1585-5-1:2	Cabinet	
1585-5-1:3	Cabinet	1958-1962
1585-5-1:4	Cabinet	1962-1963
1585-5-1:5	Cabinet	1963-1964
1585-5-3:6	Reports, minutes	1956-1963
1585-5-3:7	Reports, minutes	1963-1964
1585-5-3:8	Reports, minutes	1957-1964

College of Bishops

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-1:39	Mexico City Meeting	1962-1963
1585-5-1:40	Correspondence, supporting documents	1961-1963

Correspondence to and from Individuals

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-1:32	A. W. Davis	1963
1585-5-1:33	D. R. Fletcher	1961-1964
1585-5-1:34	Thomas Hancock	1949-1961
1585-5-1:35	P. D. Pembroke	1958-1962
1585-5-1:36	General Correspondence	1962-1963

Council of Bishops

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-1:37	Correspondence	1962-1963
1585-5-1:38	Reports, minutes, supporting documents	1960-1964

General Files

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-2:1	World Service Fund Reports	1960-1964
1585-5-2:2	Committee of Five	1961-1963
1585-5-2:3	Invitations: includes correspondence	1957-1964
1585-5-2:4	Travel	1961-1963
1585-5-2:5	Long Range Planning Committee; reports, printed matter	1957-1965
1585-5-2:6	Missouri Council of Churches: Correspondence, reports, minutes	1962-1965
1585-5-2:7	Ministerial transfers	1962-1964

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-2:8	Correspondence from abroad; includes letters from Clair's wife, Ethel, and Clair's secretary	1961
1585-5-2:9	Pastor's School: minutes, correspondence, brochure	1962-1963
1585-5-2:10	Miscellaneous sermons	1944-1964
1585-5-2:12	Miscellaneous reports	1962-1964

Lexington Conference Correspondence

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-1:11	General	1961-1964
1585-5-1:12	From Clair	1961-1964
1585-5-1:13	From Clair	1961-1964
1585-5-1:14	To Clair	1961-1963
1585-5-1:15	To Clair	1963-1964

Minutes, Reports, Supporting Documents

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-1:16	Cabinet	1953-1964
1585-5-1:17	Cabinet	1961-1962
1585-5-1:18	Cabinet	1961-1962
1585-5-1:19	Cabinet	1962-1963
1585-5-1:20	Cabinet	1963-1964

Local Churches

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-1:23	Fort Wayne, Indiana	1952-1962
1585-5-1:24	Bethel Church	1956-1965
1585-5-1:25	St. Louis Churches	1963
1585-5-1:26	Calvary Church, Cincinnati, Ohio	1961-1962
1585-5-1:27	Grace Church, Springfield, Illinois	1958-1964
1585-5-1:28	Saulters Church, Terre Haute, Indiana	1958-1964
1585-5-1:29	Wesley Chapel, St. Louis, Missouri	1963-1964
1585-5-1:30	Whitely Church, Muncie, Indiana	1962-1963
1585-5-1:31	York Street Church, Cincinnati, Ohio	1962-1963

Photographs

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-3:9	Various; Pastor's School, Pembroke, and Philander Smith; others unidentified	1935-1936

Printed Matter

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-2:13	Publications	1921-1934
1585-5-3:1	Publications	1939-1944
1585-5-3:2	Publications	1945-1947
1585-5-3:3	Publications	1948-1950
1585-5-3:4	Publications	1952-1964
1585-5-3:5	Publications	

Southwest Conference

Call Number	Folder Title	Date(s)
1585-5-1:21	Correspondence	1962-1963
1585-5-1:22	Minutes, reports, supporting documents, and some printed material	1962-1963