



Guide to the Jeanne Audrey Powers papers

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Summary

Collection Title:

Jeanne Audrey Powers papers, 1904-2017

Creator:

Powers, Jeanne Audrey

Source:

Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture

Abstract:

Reverend Doctor Jeanne Audrey Powers is a retired prominent activist clergywoman who was one of the first women to be ordained in the United Methodist Church. She is a longtime advocate for ecumenism and inclusiveness within the church. She was the highest-ranking UM church official to come out as gay in 1995. The collection contains materials documenting Reverend Doctor Powers' personal and professional lives including correspondence, writings, family history, education, committee work, sermons, travels and activism.

Extent:

75 Linear Feet (137 boxes)

Language:

English

Collection ID:

RL.10181

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m1h64h>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Jeanne Audrey Powers Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

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Background

Scope and Content

The Jeanne Audrey Powers papers span the dates 1904-2017 and contain files documenting her personal and professional lives including correspondence, writings, family history, education, committee work, sermons, travels, and activism.

The collection is arranged into the following series: Professional Papers, Personal Papers, Print Material, and Re-Imagining Movement. The Professional Papers series contains the following subseries: Conferences/Workshops/Schools, Ecumenical and Interreligious Work, Correspondence and Writing, and Activism. Two additions to the collection from 2015 (2015-0177) and 2017 (2017-0171) are organized into the same four series.

Biographical/Historical

Jeanne Audrey Powers was born in 1932 and raised in Mankato, Minnesota. She graduated from Minnesota State University in 1954, and the Boston University School of Theology in 1958. Powers was one of the first women ordained at the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in 1958. Among her leadership positions within the church, Rev. Dr. Powers served as associate general secretary of the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns (GCCUIC). In 1972, she created the Committee on the Status and Role of Women. The group advocates for the full participation of women in the church. Powers was also heavily involved with the Reconciling Ministries Network. Founded in 1982, it "strives to transform the world by living out the Gospel's teachings of grace, love, justice, and inclusion for all of God's children." The group seeks to assist Methodists of all sexual orientations in their religious experiences. Powers also helped organize the 1993 Re-Imagining Conference, which aimed to encourage all churches to address worldwide gender inequities. During Powers' sermon at the Fourth National Convocation of Reconciling Congregations in 1995, she announced to the crowd that she had been a lesbian all of her life. She framed this as "an act of resistance to false teachings that have contributed to heresy and homophobia within the church itself." She received support from the GCCUIC, but criticism from church conservatives, who tried to force her into retirement. In response, Powers issued a statement saying that she would not speak further about the matter, but also would not retire early.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Processed by: Rachel Sanders, 2015. Michelle Runyon, 2019.

Accessions described in this finding aid: 2011-0139; 2011-1003; 2012-0106; 2015-0177; 2017-0171

Acquisition Information

The Jeanne Audrey Powers papers were received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a gift in 2011-2017.

Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the copyright section of the Regulations and Procedures of the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

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- Feminism -- Religious aspects -- Christianity
- Goddess religion

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- Lesbian activists -- United States
- Lesbian feminism -- United States
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- Mankato (Minn.)
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- Women in Christianity -- United States -- History
- Women in the Methodist Church
- Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture
- Re-imagining Community
- Powers, Jeanne Audrey

Collection Inventory

Professional Files, 1959-2011 and undated

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Ecumenical and Interreligious Work

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Scope and Contents

Contains documents relating to Powers' work on issues such as racism, sexism, suicide, inclusivity, women in the church, clergywomen, feminism, AIDS, and LGBT issues in the United Methodist Church.

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The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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Scope and Contents

The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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Scope and Contents

The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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Scope and Contents

The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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Scope and Contents

The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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Scope and Contents

The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

Correspondence, pt. 1, 2001-2003

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Scope and Contents

The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

Correspondence, pt. 2, 2001-2003

Box 133

Scope and Contents

The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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Scope and Contents

The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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Scope and Contents

The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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Scope and Contents

The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

Correspondence, pt. 2, 2002-2005

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Scope and Contents

The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

Correspondence, pt. 1, 2003-2004

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Scope and Contents

The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

Correspondence, pt. 2, 2003-2004

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The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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The majority of these letters are Christmas cards or some other type of annual update letter from friends.

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Well Springs: A Journal for United Methodist
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Scope and Contents

Includes a piece written by Jeanne Audrey Powers.

Well Springs: A Journal for United Methodist
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Scope and Contents

Includes a piece written by Jeanne Audrey Powers.

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