

A Guide to Archives for Local Covenant Churches

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The Commission on Covenant History

A Guide to Archives for Local Covenant Churches is available online at the Covenant Archives and Historical Library website, www.northpark.edu/brandel-library/archives, and at the Covenant website, CovChurch.org.

Printed versions are available through CovBooks.com, or if Internet access is not available, by calling 800-621-1290.

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Introduction

Welcome and thank you for taking time to think about your local church and archiving. As you focus on the ministries of your church, you may not realize that your day-to-day work is what builds the larger story of your congregation. Whether it is young or old, large or small, rural or urban, your church is different from any other, and its story is important. It is one of many Covenant churches, each having a special place in the whole denomination. Its story needs to be remembered and shared. The best way to preserve your congregation's history is through a church archives. A well-organized archives program bridges generations, paying tribute to those who have gone before, connecting their contributions to the current life of the church, and providing important resources for both the present and the future.

Often a congregation begins to think about collecting and maintaining records when an important milestone such as an anniversary approaches. Interest and energy directed at recalling and preserving a congregation's history are key components to a successful archives. It is important to embrace such opportunities to focus on the archives and help build a stronger interest in the history of the congregation.

This guide was developed to help you establish and maintain an archives program. It builds on an earlier work by Beth Stordahl, "Guidelines for Local Covenant Church Archives and Photograph Preservation," written in 1987. Much has changed since then. Archivists and historians who were once called on to preserve traditional paper and print materials now must consider the long-term preservation challenges of digital images and recordings, email correspondence, and websites. Information created using emerging technology is not stable enough for us to confidently store it for ten, twenty, fifty, or one hundred years. We need to find ways to borrow from tried and true preservation methods to secure our most important documents in this time of transition. In this way we can be more certain that we are preserving the history of yesterday and today in order to tell our story in the future.

This guide will help you select, process, and store your archives, giving direction on how to handle documents, print and digital photographs, websites, and artifacts. It is designed to be used with *A Guide to Collecting Oral History for Local Covenant Churches*, which encourages and helps congregations gather stories and oral histories. Both resources are available online at the Covenant Archives and Historical Library website, www.northpark.edu/brandel-library/archives, and at the Covenant website, CovChurch.org. Printed versions are available through CovBooks.com, or if Internet access is not available, by calling 800-621-1290. Additional resources are listed on pages 14 and 15.

Where to Begin

The first step in developing an archives is to appoint an archivist and/or an archives committee to be responsible for the collection. An archivist or archives committee will seek out documents, photographs, recordings, publications, and other materials that can and should be saved in order for the congregation to tell its history through future generations. They will establish policies and practices for collecting and organizing (processing) the material, keeping it in appropriate storage, and making it available for people to use.

The archivist and archives committee members should be genuinely interested in the congregation and its history. They should enjoy tasks like organizing, inventorying, and making church records available for research. They should understand how the church is organized and the function of the staff, board members, and groups. And they should be trusted to be involved in maintaining confidential records. Most archival records are invaluable and irreplaceable; therefore those who care for them should be mature, dependable, and knowledgeable.

Selecting Material

As you establish your archives, determine what the church has already collected. A survey of the collection will identify the kinds of things the church has found important to preserve over time and give you a basis for decisions to maintain the collection in the best possible way.

Your church's archives may contain paper documents, photographs, audio/video recordings, art and artifacts—any material that helps to tell the story of your church through time by answering who, what, where, when, how, and even why. Items will likely include publications, photographs, member records, meeting minutes, correspondence, monthly and annual reports, histories, titles, deeds, contracts, daybooks and calendars of pastors, church newspapers, newsletters, bulletins, programs, and records of special groups.

Spend time looking through the church building for materials that may have been stored in closets, cupboards, desks, file cabinets, basements, even the furnace room. Contact former clergy or staff to learn more about where documents were stored. Announce in your bulletin or on your website that you are collecting archival material. Members may be thrilled to donate scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, and photographs from church events.

Records Management Policy

To ensure the proper development and treatment of the archives, establish a records management policy that addresses the following:

- When do records become part of the church archives?
- What are the steps for bringing materials into the archive collection?
- How are donations handled?
- How and where will the collection be stored?
- Who has access and when?

These last two points are especially important because archival records are irreplaceable. The policy should address access issues, including locked storage and a procedure for loaning the materials. Archival items should not be removed from the church premises. Another important issue to clarify is the condition of the archival space because stored records must be inspected periodically for atmospheric or vermin damage.

Supplies

You will need a good supply of time and patience to organize your archives. Sorting and processing documents and photos is a fascinating and enriching experience but it is also time-consuming and, at times, like detective work.

In addition to time and patience you will need some basic office supplies—pencils, staple removers, and plastic paper clips. You will also need archival supplies, including acid-free copier paper, acid-free file folders, and acid-free archival boxes or acid-free bankers boxes. If you have fragile papers that you want to preserve, you will also need Mylar or polypropylene (inert plastic) sleeves. Archival supplies are available from several distributors, including many office supply stores, and online.

Acid-free folders. Most acid-free file folders are imprinted with a pH reading of 8.5. Neutral is 7.0. A reading below 7.0 is acid and above is alkaline, which is desirable because it helps to neutralize the acid in the paper stored in the folder.

Acid-free archival storage boxes. Paper files can be kept in file cabinets if you have them. As an alternative, you can use archival storage boxes. An advantage to using these reinforced document boxes is that they are small enough to allow easy access to the records and no heavy lifting is required in removing them from the shelves. These boxes are available with or without a pull string. Be sure to get the pull string, which makes removal from the shelves much easier.

Acid-free bankers boxes. A less expensive alternative to archival storage boxes are bankers boxes with separate lids. They are delivered flat and are easily assembled. They hold at least twice as much as archival storage boxes. Be aware that they become extremely heavy when filled with documents.

Arranging Your Material

As you collect and prepare the material for the archives, organize it in a way that it is both readily accessible and will allow you to easily add to the collection. The following example of a record series collection illustrates how you might categorize your files in archival storage boxes. The material is generally arranged chronologically with newer material in the later boxes within each series. This system of arranging your material is designed to enable you to add a subject to the appropriate series if a new collection of documents becomes available. There is no fixed limit to the number of boxes allowed in a series. When the first box is full, start a new box numbered Box 2.

Minutes—Series 1

- 1-1 Congregational (first box is labeled 1-1 Box 1; the second is 1-1 Box 2, etc.)
- 1-2 Board meetings

Correspondence—Series 2

- 2-1 To and from church office and pastor
- 2-2 To and from church chairperson

Publications—Series 3

- 3-1 Bulletins
- 3-2 Church newspaper
- 3-3 Annual reports
- 3-4 Directories
- 3-5 Special programs
- 3-6 Brochures produced by the church

Financial Records—Series 4

- 4-1 Financial files
 - Destroy cancelled checks and invoices after seven years, or at an agreed upon interval.*

Church Register—Series 5

- 5-1 Membership
- 5-2 Baptisms
- 5-3 Weddings
- 5-4 Confirmation class records

Historical Features—Series 6

- 6-1 Church buildings: building contracts, titles, site studies, history of the building
- 6-2 Congregational history
- 6-3 Biographical: previous pastors, individuals of the congregation
- 6-4 Conference histories and programs
- 6-5 National Covenant histories and programs, including *Covenant Yearbooks*
- 6-6 Church organ

Subject Series—Series 7

- 7-1 Diaconate minutes and records
- 7-2 Trustees minutes and records
- 7-3 Board of Christian education, Sunday-school records and minutes
- 7-4 Committees: minutes of all church committees
- 7-5 Women's groups: Covenant Women
- 7-6 Men's groups: Covenant Men
- 7-7 Church youth groups: Young People's Society, Kid's Klub, Hi League
- 7-8 Branch work

Photographs—Series 8

- 8-1 Pastors
- 8-2 Church building
- 8-3 Music, choral, and instrumental groups
- 8-4 Confirmation classes
- 8-5 Recreational: picnics, camps

Oral Histories—Series 9

- 9-1 Recorded interviews and transcriptions

Audio/Visual—Series 10

- 10-1 Recordings of special services/events

Objects/Artifacts—Series 11

- 11-1 Inventory and documents pertaining to objects: paintings, church furniture, stained glass windows, baptismal fonts, communion sets, etc.
- 11-2 Small artifacts

Processing

Files should be arranged in the order in which they were originally generated. This arrangement helps you find the specific items, just as a secretary could find them when they were in the office. Records must be grouped according to the office or administrative unit that created them, and the arrangement imposed by the creators should be preserved in the church archives.

Become familiar with the subject matter of the documents you are working with. The material may already be in folders and labeled according to subject and date. In this case you can simply transfer the papers into a new acid-free folder and label it (with a pencil) with the subject and date along with the record series number, box number, and a folder number. (Again, files can also be kept in file cabinets.) Before you close the file, take time to remove metal paper clips and staples, and replace them with plastic paper clips. Photocopy newspaper clippings and then remove the originals—the acid content of newsprint will deteriorate other paper in the file.

Begin with the oldest papers in the front and more recent files toward the back. On the outside of the box (or drawer) label the contents with a pencil or an archival quality label. You should also include the record series number. Once you have a number of boxes labeled you might want to index the materials. This can be done using index cards, a table format in a word processing document, or a spreadsheet.

Container List

It is helpful to include in each box a list identifying the documents and their proper order. This list includes the box number and the file folder number. On the following page is a sample of a container list.

To make your archives easily accessible to researchers, compile copies of your container lists in a binder

and/or organize them in a folder on the archives computer. Be certain to update your binder and computer files with new container lists when materials are processed. Researchers can browse through the container lists to learn about what material is available and where to find it without digging through boxes.

Container List—Box 1

FOLDER TITLE	DATE	BOX	FILE
Church Materials (Early History)	1883-1955	1	1
Constitution, Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation	1951	1	2
Church Meeting Minutes	1870-1880	1	3
Church Meeting Minutes	1890-1894	1	4
Church Meeting Minutes	1895-1901	1	5
Church Meeting Minutes	1902-1905	1	6
Church Meeting Minutes	1906-1912	1	7
Correspondence to Pilgrim Covenant Church Regarding Membership	1931-1957	1	8
Correspondence to Pilgrim Covenant Church Regarding Membership	1957-1975	1	9
Correspondence from Pastor to Others Regarding Membership	1938-1976	1	10

Preservation Practices and Tips for Your Space

- Place correspondence and other documents in acid-free file folders and acid-free document boxes.
- Use only pencil, no pens or markers, when working with archival records and labeling boxes. Labels on folders will eventually dry up and fall off. It's best to mark folders with pencil.
- Remove all metal paper clips, pins, staples, and rubber bands from documents. Metal fasteners rust and stain paper, and rubber bands generate sulfuric acid which damages paper. You can use stainless steel staples and paper clips or plastic paper clips.
- Do not use Scotch tape or masking tape to mend documents. The tape will eventually leave a permanent mark on the paper. The glue from the tape may become fluid and gummy, seeping onto other records and damaging them as well.
- Store fragile papers in Mylar or polypropylene (inert plastic) sleeves to prevent destruction through handling. These sleeves are available from archival supply companies.
- Inspect records occasionally for damage due to vermin or atmospheric conditions and take corrective action as needed.
- Use caution with any small electrical appliances in close proximity to archival documents.
- Food and drink should never be present in the archives.

Storage

The ideal storage space of a church archives is a fireproof, locked room that has a controlled climate. If possible the temperature should be about 65 degrees Fahrenheit, and the humidity should be in the range of 45 to 55 percent. This provides the best environment for the preservation of documents and books. There are

many easy-to-use temperature and humidity sensors available for purchase online.

Use noncombustible and noncorrosive shelving. Raw wood is especially harmful to photos and certain wood finishes can initiate deteriorative chemical reactions in photographs and film. If you have to use wood shelves, seal them with several coats of polyurethane varnish. Storage furniture or shelving is best constructed with materials such as anodized aluminum, stainless steel, or steel with baked-on enamel finish.

Protecting your archival material from exposure to sunlight or excessive artificial light is also important. Keep curtains or blinds closed if the room has windows.

It is a rare church building that provides an extra room fitting all those criteria, so do the best you can. If a fireproof room is not available, the essential records may be stored in fireproof cabinets that can be locked. The cabinets themselves should be placed in an area that will not be affected by heat or humidity fluctuations. There should be adequate table space in the room or nearby for processing records and for doing research. It should be a space that is enjoyable to work in, and it is most useful if a computer is handy.

Displaying Archival Materials

When records are on display for certain occasions, such as an anniversary, choose a display area that may be lighted when necessary for viewing and darkened for the balance of the time. Light, especially sunlight, can cause fading and deterioration of papers. Excessive exposure to light should be avoided for all documents. You may want to limit the period for display in order to keep documents in good condition. In the interest of security, records should be exhibited in a locked viewing case. If your display includes old photographs, consider making copies and using them instead.

Microfilming and Scanning for Preservation

Your congregation might consider preserving the most important records by microfilming them. That might sound like an antiquated concept in the midst of the digital revolution, but microfilming has been the most reliable way to preserve and access documents. The technology for viewing microfilmed copies of records has not changed from its original form. New microfilm readers allow the user to save and even email the image as digital data, and yet the image is still viewed on a machine that is simple to operate and does not require upgrading the filmed copy. Libraries, archives, and research centers still use microfilm for preservation.

One full reel of 35-millimeter microfilm (the standard size) will hold about 2,000 pages of letter-size material, or somewhat fewer newspaper pages. Duplicate reels of the microfilmed documents may be sent to the Covenant Archives and Historical Library at North Park University in Chicago.

There are commercial microfilm production companies, but make sure the quality of their work is good. The negatives are your property and production companies usually do not store negatives, so you will have to find a safe storage place away from your archives, or you can send them to the Covenant Archives.

Many congregations discuss scanning documents and saving the digital data on a computer hard drive, a network server, or saving them on CDs or DVDs. Preserving archival materials through scanning or digitizing has not yet been proven superior to preserving documents and photographs in their original medium. The Covenant Archives strongly recommends that you do not destroy significant original documents.

Technology is changing rapidly. There is no guarantee that the CDs that you burn today will be accessible in seventy-five, fifty, or even five years. The space required on network servers to store all the documents we create is often overwhelming when the church changes computer systems or even gets a new computer. Documents stored on the hard drive of a particular computer are at grave risk of being lost, since the life span of a hard drive is less than five years.

Some organizations may subscribe to offsite or “cloud” servers and store files, digital photographs, and other media in online storage sites. Saving digital data, whether on disks, external drives, or online storage sites, takes a great deal of maintenance and commitment for long-term success. You must check that digital data remains accessible each time you upgrade your computer software or hardware. As members, pastors, and staff change, digitized material can be forgotten, passwords to online storage accounts may not be passed on to new managers, and continuing to upgrade digital software may cease to be a priority.

Digitization as a method of preserving documents, images, sound, and video should be approached as any archival collection project. A common archival mantra for digitization is to scan and save with a plan. Scanning material may be useful in some ways, but your church should keep its commitment to collect paper and print originals in your “old-fashioned” archives.

Websites and Email

Websites and emails are integral to church operations and communications, and are, therefore, part of a church’s records.

Print samples of your web pages from time to time as a record of your congregation’s online presence. Print them on acid-free paper and file them in a folder in the record series for publications. If you want to preserve the sample on disc, the archival recommendation at this time is to save your web pages as PDF files on a CD, DVD, or an external hard drive or server. An archival disc should be clearly marked with a photo/disc safe marker and be accompanied by an inventory of its contents and filed in a folder in the publications record series, just as you would a paper publication.

Email communication should be approached in the same way as you would other correspondence that is generated in the course of conducting church business. Not many email messages have enduring value, but some are significant as they relate to important matters in the church. These emails should be printed out and saved in a correspondence folder along with other important correspondence. If your church is committing to electronic or digital archiving only, make sure to save important email correspondence in a common file format, such as Microsoft Word or as a PDF.

Photograph Preservation and Storage

Church photographs should be preserved to complement the documents and records in the archives. Those of particular interest are photos of the church building, the congregation, the pastors, special groups (confirmation classes, Sunday-school groups, choirs, other musical groups, etc.), and significant services, gatherings, or events. You may feature old photographs on your website or use them in event invitations or other church publications.

Print and digital photographs are more historically significant when they are identified with names,

dates, locations, and occasions. Be intentional about gathering that information. Conducting an oral interview with an older church member using copies of old images as the interview focus is one way to gather stories and label photos. Another way is to host a photo labeling party. Invite a group of members to meet and look at copies of photos together, to reminisce and identify unlabeled photos. Make photocopies of the images and your guests can write directly on the paper.

Consider making an inventory of your photograph collection by assigning a number to each photo. Create an accompanying list that includes a description for each photo. If you make this list on a word processing document or a spreadsheet the list then becomes key word searchable. When your inventoried collection includes hundreds or even thousands of photos, this can be a valuable search tool. Save an up-to-date printed list in the first file of the photograph record series. Indicate on which church computer the list is available.

Print Photos

Identify all photos with a date, location, and occasion, including names of people in the picture. If possible label picture on the back, writing lightly in pencil or archival quality photograph marking pens. Do not press hard as this will result in permanent damage to the front side of the photo. The ink from ballpoint and fountain pens can bleed through the photograph, and felt tip pens take a long time to dry and can leave marks on other photos if they are stacked together.

Store photos with other archival records in a cool, relatively dry, locked room. Remember, light quickly fades old photographs, so take care when displaying them to minimize exposure. Do not use transparent tape, masking tape, rubber cement, or white glue to repair, mount, or label photos. They can damage photographs.

Store photos in Mylar or polypropylene (inert plastic) sleeves or acid-free folders. Leave one end of the sleeve open for ventilation. Do not use plastic envelopes to store photographs.

Do not place photos in adhesive photo albums. The adhesive can be harmful to photos, and after a period of time, the photos are not removable from the pages. The paper in many albums is highly acidic and pictures should not be kept in them.

Framed photographs that appear to be in good condition behind glass should remain framed. Include framed pieces in your artifact collection. (See page 13.)

Wear cotton gloves (available at camera stores or archival supply distributors) when handling photographs and negatives. Fingerprints leave lasting marks on photos, resulting in irreversible damage.

Digital Photos

Digital photography provides greater flexibility in storing, labeling, and captioning. Using the latest imaging software you can attach key words, event names, dates, locations, and names of people to the photo files. This will then allow you to search and sort your photos by those variables.

You will need to collect photo files to a reliable storage device (such as a hard drive or flash drive) or to an online storage site that is backed up routinely. Backups can be made using an external hard drive. For added protection keep back-up copies in an offsite location and use preservation-quality media to save your photos.

Print copies of historically important digital photographs with archive-quality ink on high-quality paper in order to ensure preservation. Add them to your print photograph collection.

Hosted websites like Flickr or Facebook are not reliable storage devices. There is no guarantee that

social networking sites will remain indefinitely. If the only copy of a photo is on a Facebook page that is deleted, then this important document will be lost forever.

Audiovisual Materials

To get the most out of your church's audiovisual collection, it is essential that you label and organize it. This includes old formats like VHS, Beta, films on reels, slides, and even digital recordings. When you label or describe material, be certain to include all important information to make it possible to retrieve the material when needed. Identify the occasion, participants, date, length, and location of the recording. A short summary of the contents with key words can be helpful.

Not many recordings are valuable enough to become part of your archival collection. Successfully managing a large archival collection of audio-visual materials is more than a full-time job. Identify historically significant recordings to duplicate and digitize to ensure that a copy is preserved in the audiovisual records series of your archives.

Successful long-term storage of audiovisual recordings requires attention to temperature, humidity, placement, and light exposure in the storage environment. Consult the recommended sources in the bibliography for the most current recommendations.

Original recordings are very important. You should keep them (on their original reels, VHS, or vinyl) even if you decide to digitize the recordings. There will be improvements to the current digital file we now use. The best quality transfer or conversion of sound and images results from accessing the original recording. For example, you may have transferred a recording from a reel to VHS or audiocassette in the past. When you digitize the recording, you will get the best picture and sound quality if you go back to the original recording instead of using the second-hand recording to make the digital file. The same rule will apply to converting sound and image to future media formats. So keep those original recordings and keep them well-labeled and preserved.

Objects and Artifacts

Most objects from an earlier time are not worth saving, but significant pieces such as baptismal fonts, stained-glass windows, communion sets, and other memorabilia can serve as a connection to the past. Sometimes such objects are saved when a church moves or renovates and are incorporated in the new building or design.

The record series arrangement suggested on pages 6-8 assigns Series 11 to objects/artifacts. This box should contain an inventory of items in your church with historical significance, including objects that are still in use. If items are small, you can include them in a box in Series 11. The inventory list should indicate the location in the church of other items. The inventory can be organized as an index assigning a number to each item and including categories such as the following:

- Item number (Artifact #1, etc.)
- Title or subject of item
- Artist or photographer (for framed photographs)
- Date of creation (if known)

- Medium (furniture, oil painting, communion tray, etc.)
- Provenance (list the chronology of owners and locations the item has seen in its lifetime)
- Description (information regarding use of item, size, color, distinguishing features, framed, etc.)
- Condition (be sure to describe clearly any wear and tear or if the item remains pristine)
- Location (e.g., Series 11-2 Box 1, or hanging in the pastor's office as of date)

Closing Church and At-Risk Archives

Every church archives tells an important story and provides a valued perspective into the history and identity of the Covenant Church. While each church is responsible for maintaining its own archives, there are occasions in which the transfer of materials to the Covenant Archives can be arranged. If your church is closing, contact the Covenant archivist. The Covenant Archives will also occasionally accept archival collections in the case of a merger, or if they are at risk of being damaged or destroyed. For guidance in any of these situations, please contact the Covenant Archives and Historical Library at 773-244-6224 or archives@northpark.edu.

Resources

Print and Online Materials for Managing Your Archives

Hunter, Gregory S. *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives: A How-to-Do-It Manual*. 2nd ed. How-to-Do-It Manuals for Librarians. No. 122. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2003.

Ritzenthaler, Mary Lynn and Diane Vogt-O'Connor. *Photographs: Archival Care and Management*. With Helena Zinkham, Brett Carnell, and Kit Peterson. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2006.

Wind, James P. *Constructing Your Congregation's Story*. *Congregational Resource Guide, 2010*. www.congregationalresources.org/constructing-your-congregations-story

Yakel, Elizabeth. *Starting an Archives*. The Society of American Archivists. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996.

Library of Congress Preservation Directorate, www.loc.gov/preservation

Search the website for online brochures including the following:

Preservation Directorate Brochure Series

The Deterioration and Preservation of Paper: Some Essential Facts

Caring for Your Collections

Care, Handling, and Storage of Books

Care, Handling, and Storage of Motion Picture Film

Caring for Your Photographic Collections

Emergency Drying Procedures for Water Damaged Collections

Guide to Preservation Matting and Framing

Preserving Works on Paper: Manuscripts, Drawings, Prints, Posters, Maps, Documents

Cylinder, Disc, and Tape Care in a Nutshell

Caring for Your Family Treasures
Preparing, Protecting, Preserving Family Treasures
Preserving Your Digital Memories

Northeast Document Conservation Center, www.nedcc.org

Search the website for online brochures including the following:

Temperature, Relative Humidity, Light, and Air Quality: Basic Guidelines for Preservation
Storage Methods and Handling Practices
Care of Photographs

Archival Supplies

Archival supplies are rarely available at general office supply stores. The following distributors should cover all your archival supply needs.

Gaylord Brothers

www.gaylord.com

7282 William Barry Boulevard, Syracuse, NY 13212

Phone in U.S.: 800-962-9580, Fax in U.S.: 800-272-3412

Phone in Canada: 800-841-5854, Fax in Canada: 800-615-3779

Hollinger Metal Edge

www.hollingermetaledge.com

6340 Bandini Boulevard, Commerce, CA 90040

Phone: 800-862-2228, Fax: 888-822-6937

9401 Northeast Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22408

Phone: 800-634-0491, Fax: 800-947-8814

info@hollingermetaledge.com

Light Impressions

www.lightimpressionsdirect.com

P.O. Box 2100, Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

Phone: 800-975-6429, Fax: 800-975-6429

customerservice@ncd-brands.com

University Products Inc.

www.universityproducts.com

517 Main Street, Holyoke, MA 01040

Phone: 800-628-1912, Fax: 800-532-9281

info@universityproducts.com

About the Covenant Archives and Historical Library

The Covenant Archives and Historical Library contains the administrative records of the Evangelical Covenant Church and North Park University. Collections include the correspondence, minutes, and reports of various denominational and university departments, as well as the records of numerous Covenant churches, pastors, and institutions. Of note are microfilmed records of 355 Covenant churches founded before 1930. Personal papers of individuals include manuscripts, correspondence, diaries, oral histories, and other documentary material. In addition, the Archives has extensive collections of indexed photos, audio- and videotapes, and microfilms that document the activities of the Covenant Church and North Park. The Historical Library, a collection of approximately 3,000 monographs and periodicals, includes the published works of the denomination, Covenant authors, and Swedish-language newspapers relating to our history. Much of the material written before 1930 is in Swedish.

Individual member church records are collected and made accessible only when a congregation ceases to exist or is unable to care for its own records. Transfer of records must be arranged in advance by contacting the Archives.

The Covenant Archives was created by official action of the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church in 1935. The Archives has been housed at North Park since 1953. Originally located on the second floor of Nyvall Hall, today it is part of the F. M. Johnson Archives and Special Collections in Brandel Library. Its mission is twofold: to provide access to the collections and to ensure they remain available in the years to come.

Covenant church pastors, staff, and archives committees are encouraged to contact the Archives with questions or concerns about their collections.

Patrons are welcome to use the Archives by appointment. If you have any questions, or wish to make an appointment to visit or research, please contact the staff.

Covenant Archives and Historical Library

F. M. Johnson Archives and Special Collections

North Park University

3225 W. Foster Ave., Chicago, IL 60625

Phone: 773-244-6224

archives@northpark.edu

www.northpark.edu/brandel-library/archives