

ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL CHAPLAINS RECORDS.

Association of Professional Chaplains records, 1946-1996

Emory University
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Collection Stored Off-Site

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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Association of Professional Chaplains Records.
Title: Association of Professional Chaplains records, 1946-1996
Call Number: Record Group No. 053
Extent: 1.0 cubic ft. (3 boxes)
Abstract: Consists of documents and audiovisual material related to the history of the College of Chaplains, formerly the Chaplains' Division of the American Protestant Hospital Association.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Collection stored off-site. Researchers must contact the Pitts Theology Library in advance to access this collection.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

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Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Association of Professional Chaplains Records, Archives and Manuscript Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.

Processing

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Collection Description

Biographical Note

The Association of Professional Chaplains formed in 1998 as a result of the merger of two predecessor organizations: the College of Chaplains (formerly known as the Association of Protestant Hospital Chaplains and the Chaplains' Division of the American Protestant Hospital Association) and the Association of Mental Health Clergy (formerly known as the Association of Mental Hospital Chaplains).

The College of Chaplains grew out of a gathering of seventeen hospital chaplains at the annual meeting of the American Protestant Hospital Association (APHA) in 1946. A survey of general hospitals conducted in 1945 by the APHA Commission to Study Religious Work in Hospitals had revealed that only 8% employed professional chaplains. The commission recommended that the APHA amend its constitution and by-laws to allow for a section of chaplains within the organization. The Chaplains' Division (sometimes referred to in records as the Chaplains' Section or the Association of Protestant Hospital Chaplains) formed as a result. Russell L. Dicks served as the organization's first president. By 1950, the organization had established professional standards and a certification process for chaplains. In 1968, the Chaplains' Division was renamed the College of Chaplains. Membership grew rapidly in the years following the name change, soon reaching 900. In 1971, the organization employed its first full-time executive director, Rev. Charles Phillips.

The Association of Mental Hospital Chaplains (AMHC) was founded in 1948 at a meeting of the American Psychiatric Association. J. Obert Kempson, a chaplain at South Carolina State Hospital, was its first president. Over the next two decades the AMHC developed the first inter-faith certification process for professional chaplains, certifying Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish chaplains. In the early 1970s the organization changed its name to the Association of Mental Health Clergy. By 1976 the AMHC had over 500 members. A part-time executive director, Rev. George Doeblner, was employed by the association.

By the early 1990s, membership in the AMHC had declined. The College of Chaplains invited the AMHC to consider a partnership, and a transition team was formed. In 1996 the College of Chaplains became independent of its parent organization, the American Protestant Hospital Association. This was the culmination of a decades-long trend toward greater independence for the College of Chaplains. The College and the AMHC formally merged at a joint annual conference in 1998, forming the Association of Professional Chaplains. According to its mission statement, the APC is "a multifaith association established to certify and serve its membership and to promote professional chaplaincy."

Scope and Content Note

The bulk of the records in this collection concern the history of the College of Chaplains, formerly the Chaplains' Division of the American Protestant Hospital Association (APHA). The archives of the Association of Professional Chaplains' other predecessor, the Association of Mental Health Clergy (AMHC), are maintained by the American Psychiatric Association.

The record group includes a book of APHA Chaplains' Division minutes dated 1946-1964; an incomplete run of conference proceedings from 1973-1983; and a file of various historical documents from both the APHA and the College of Chaplains from 1948 to 1991. This historical

file was originally contained in a three-ring binder, but was removed and placed in two acid-free folders for preservation reasons. The original order of the file has been maintained, and there is a table of contents in Box 2, Folder 11.

There are several folders with material on the cooperation between the APHA and the College of Chaplains, which began in 1993 and culminated with the formation of the Association of Professional Chaplains in 1998. These include newsletters and annual meeting materials. Of particular interest are items related to the 50th anniversary of the College of Chaplains in 1996, including items from a display commemorating the anniversary, photographs, and programs from the 1996 annual conference.

The record group also includes twelve VHS videotapes with recordings from 1993-1996. Included are recordings of annual conference sessions as well as oral history interviews of individuals who were leaders of the APC's predecessor organizations. There is also a 21 minute video on the history of the College of Chaplains, titled "Glimpses of Our Past: The College of Chaplains' 50th Anniversary, 1946-1996." For more information on the contents of specific videotapes, see the container list below.

Container List

Box	Folder	Content
1		American Protestant Hospital Association Chaplains' Division, Minutes, 1946-1964
2	1	College of Chaplains, 50th Anniversary Display, 1996
2	2	College of Chaplains, 50th Anniversary Photographs by John R. Thomas
2	3	College of Chaplains, Annual Convention Proceedings, 1972
2	4	College of Chaplains, Annual Convention Proceedings, 1973
2	5	College of Chaplains, Annual Convention Proceedings, 1975
2	6	College of Chaplains, Annual Convention Proceedings, 1977
2	7	College of Chaplains, Annual Convention Proceedings, 1983
2	8	College of Chaplains, <i>The Caregiver Journal</i> , 1996
2	9	College of Chaplains/Association of Mental Health Clergy, Annual Meeting, 1996
2	10	College of Chaplains/Association of Mental Health Clergy, Newsletters, 1995-1996
2	11-12	Historical File [includes table of contents], 1948-1991

VHS Videotapes

3		Oral History Interview, Dr. Granger Westberg, 1993 October 13
3		College of Chaplains 48th Annual Meeting, Milwaukee, WI. Worship Service; Russell L. Dicks Memorial Brunch; Banquet and Awards; Presidential Luncheon and Address; Business Meeting, 1994 April 30-May 1
3		College of Chaplains 48th Annual Meeting, Milwaukee, WI. Retired Chaplains' Breakfast Meeting with Past President Don Gum, 1994 May 1
3		Oral History Interviews, Keith Keidel and David Belgium, 1994 May 1, 3
3		College of Chaplains Business Meeting; Banquet and Awards; Presidential Lunch; Introduction of Russell L. Dicks Memorial Breakfast; Closing Worship, 1995 March 19-21
3		College of Chaplains Interview Series with Past Presidents, Ron Ropp and Elaine H. Lehr, 1995 March 21
3		Oral History Interview, Dr. Leicester R. Potter, 1995 July 6
3		College of Chaplains 50th Annual Meeting, Opening Celebration, 1996 February 17
3		College of Chaplains and Association of Mental Health Chaplains, Master Tape, 1996 February 18-20
3		College of Chaplains 50th Annual Meeting, 25th Annual Russell L. Dicks Memorial Breakfast, 1996 February 20
3		College of Chaplains 50th Annual Meeting, Distinguished Service Award Recipient Harvey Berg, 1996 February 21

- 3 “Glimpses of Our Past: The College of Chaplains’ 50th Anniversary,
 1946-1996.” Running time: 21 minutes
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