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Spreading the Word Poster

Jessica Leming
AUC Robert W. Woodruff Library

Christine S. Wiseman
AUC Robert W. Woodruff Library

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Spreading the Word:

The Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library received a generous grant in 2015 from the National Endowment for the Humanities to broaden access to under-represented humanities collections through a project entitled, Spreading the Word: Expanding Access to African-American Religious Archival Collections of the Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library. The Libraries’ Archives and Digital Scholarship Collaborative (LADC) is collaborating to organize, describe, and digitize fourteenth collections of rare materials that document African American religion spanning from the 1930s to the 2000s. These unique collections comprise varied formats, including correspondence, sermons and speeches, research files, photographs, and audio and video recordings, which document theologians and scholars, as well as Christian and Islamic ideologies.

Project Snapshot:

- **14 Collections**
- **4,224 Works posted**
- **108 Countries reached**
- **1,146 Audio and video tapes**
- **5,078 Photographs**
- **475 Linear feet of materials**
- **10,070 Downloads**

**Education**

- James P. Brawley
  - Dr. James P. Brawley (1894-1985) was the president of Clark College from 1941 to 1965. He wrote the history of the College in Clark College: Legacy, and served as President Emeritus on the college’s Board of Directors until his death. Outside of his work with Clark College, Brawley was an active member of the Methodist Church. He served on the President’s Council of the Methodist Board of Education as well as several boards, commissions and committees related to social action and concerns. He worked to integrate the church through the elimination of the Central Jurisdiction of the Methodist Church. Photographs feature images and events from the life of James P. Brawley, events around campus at Clark College, and images most likely used in class instruction.

- James H. Costen
  - Dr. James H. Costen was Presbyterian minister and educator, and served as president of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) from 1983 to 1997. In 1996, he helped to found the Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary. Dr. Costen, who also served as the Dean of the Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary, was primarily known as a Black theologian of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This series dates back to 1867 and the founding of Freedman’s College in North Carolina. The school created specifically to educate newly freed slaves. This collection is comprised of hundreds of handwritten sermons, sermons and speeches, research files, photographs, and audio and video recordings, which document theologians and scholars, as well as Christian and Islamic ideologies.

- C. Eric Lincoln
  - Dr. C. Eric Lincoln was best known as a distinguished scholar, writer and lecturer on the sociology of Black religion, race and ethnic relations in the United States, as well as an authority on the Nation of Islam and African American Muslims. This collection is a significant resource for studying African American religion and culture. It includes programs from worship services, funerals, events and church anniversaries, church histories, minutes from national and regional associations, and correspondence related to the segregation and subsequent turmoil that followed the closing of Central City in Macon, Georgia. This collection is comprised of hundreds of handwritten sermons that reference current events of the day, presidents, and political leaders among the more traditional sermons.

- Martin Luther King Jr. Fellows in Black Religious Studies
  - The Martin Luther King Fellows in Black Religious Studies is a fellowship was founded in 1971 for the purpose of developing literature, curriculum, and bibliographical materials in the area of Black Church practice at Colgate Rochester Divinity School. The collection of correspondence, curriculum materials, minutes, media, research documents and audio and video materials provides significant context for the project’s history. Included within the collection are photographs of Fellows on campus, minutes of meetings, sermons, letters, and audio and video tapes provide insight to fellows’ through lectures, sermons, speeches, and interviews – one featuring a man speaking from the perspective of Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois.

**Homiletics**

- Robert Penn
  - Robert Penn was a member of the ITC Faculty during the 1970s. A graduate of Clark College and the ITC, Penn was a Baptist pastor in Georgia, Kansas, and Indiana, and served as a chaplain during World War II. He was active in missionary efforts in Africa, and upon his retirement from preaching, he joined the ITC Faculty as director of ITC’s research program. This collection is comprised of personal diaries, sermon notes, speeches, correspondence to keep his students engaged.

- Bishop Howard Dell
  - Bishop J. Howard Dell was a Senior Bishop in the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) in Georgia, and was appointed Overseer of the Northern Georgia Jurisdiction. A pioneering minister, Dell broadcast his sermons from his pulpit in Macon, Moultrie, and Bainbridge, Georgia. He was reportedly the first African American to appear on television in Albany, Georgia. This collection contains over 700 audio tapes and audio reel-to-reel, and photographs. Listen to the enthusiasm of the interactions with the congregation during the sermons (Blacks Pentecostal churches are known for these interactions), and some of the current topics of the time that Dell and other guest speakers reference Henry Louis Ford. Dr. James H. Cone, President of Clark College from 1941 to 1965, served as President Emeritus on the college’s Board of Directors until his death. Outside of his work with Clark College, Brawley was an active member of the Methodist Church. He served on the President’s Council of the Methodist Board of Education as well as several boards, commissions and committees related to social action and concerns. He worked to integrate the church through the elimination of the Central Jurisdiction of the Methodist Church. Photographs feature images and events from the life of James P. Brawley, events around campus at Clark College, and images most likely used in class instruction.

**Theology**

- Robert Penn
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**Church Life**

- Isaac R. Clark
  - Dr. Isaac R. Clark - Professor and administrator, Clark served as Professor of Homiletics and Culture Education, Registrar, and Director of the Summer Session at the Interdenominational Theological Center from 1962 to 1999. He was a lifelong member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Clark’s collection reflects his academic career through course materials, administrative records, and materials related to conferences and class lectures. The recordings are of various chapel services and special programs at the accumulated Interdenominational Theological Center including a history of the ITC by Dr. Harry R. Michaud. Audio recordings present Clark as a passionate professor who used his wit and sometimes outrageous statements to keep his students engaged.

- Hercules Wilson
  - Hercules Wilson was a Presbyterian minister born in 1883 in North Carolina, and was a graduate of the theological seminary at Biddle University (now known as Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary). Wilson was the first minister of the Brooklyn Presbyterian Church. A professor of theology at the current first United Presbyterian Church in metropolitan Charlotte, North Carolina. This collection is comprised of hundreds of handwritten sermons that reference current events of the day, presidents, and political leaders among the more traditional sermons.

- Levi and Jewell Terrill
  - Husband and wife, Levi and Jewell Terrill, were long-time Baptist workers. Levi Terrill, a Morristown graduate, was pastor of the First Bryan Baptist Church in Savannah, Georgia, and the Zion Hill Baptist Church in Atlanta. He was the president of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia from 1959 to 1971, and vice president of the NBCUSA from 1969 to 1971. Jewell Terrill, an Atlanta University Normal School graduate, served the largest predominantly African American denominations in the United States, both locally and nationally in many capacities, including Assistant Recording Secretary of the Women’s Convention Auxiliary of the NBCUSA, and president of the Women’s Convention Auxiliary of the NBCUSA. An interesting part of this collection are reports, land deeds, and correspondence relating to the creation and subsequent turmoil that resulted from the closing of Central City in Macon, Georgia that was organized by the GMBCGA.

- Robert Penn
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- Atlanta-Rome District: Georgia North Region, 6th Episcopal District of the CME Church
  - The Methodist Episcopal Church South was an outgrowth of Methodism that was formed in 1821 to provide for the religious needs of African Americans that were converted to Christianity by slave masters devoted to have and control their own church. This desire led people to start these costed independent religious organization - the Colored Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church. The Atlanta-Rome District consists of 34 churches in Atlanta and surrounding areas. The collection includes materials related to church worship services, funerals, events and church anniversaries, church histories, minutes from national and district annual conferences, and photographs.

- Anna E. Hall
  - Anna E. Hall was alumnus of Clark University (now Clark University), and was a missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Liberia, Africa from 1906 to 1931. She was the first African American to graduate from the New England Deaconess Training School in Boston, and became a deaconess and licensed minister in the Methodist Church. This collection consists of personal diaries, sermon notes, speeches, correspondence, newspaper clippings, and photographs detailing her life’s work and missions.

- Levi and Jewell Terrill
  - Husband and wife, Levi and Jewell Terrill, were long-time Baptist workers. Levi Terrill, a Morristown graduate, was pastor of the First Bryan Baptist Church in Savannah, Georgia, and the Zion Hill Baptist Church in Atlanta. He was the president of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia from 1959 to 1971, and vice president of the NBCUSA from 1969 to 1971. Jewell Terrill, an Atlanta University Normal School graduate, served the largest predominantly African American denominations in the United States, both locally and nationally in many capacities, including Assistant Recording Secretary of the Women’s Convention Auxiliary of the NBCUSA, and president of the Women’s Convention Auxiliary of the NBCUSA. An interesting part of this collection are reports, land deeds, and correspondence relating to the creation and subsequent turmoil that resulted from the closing of Central City in Macon, Georgia that was organized by the GMBCGA.

- Society for the Study of Black Religion
  - The Society for the Study of Black Religion is “an organization devoted to scholarly inquiry about the Black religious experience, particularly from a Christian standpoint.” Founded in 1972 in New York City, this professional society is largely comprised of people engaged in active teaching and research about African American religion. Audio and video tapes feature prominent scholars and educators such as C. Eric Lincoln, Major J. Jones, Paul Murray, James Cone, and Comet West. Speeches and presentations cover a broad range of topics such as liberation theology, African American religion and culture, Black feminism, religious “cults”, and religion in the Caribbean and Africa.