

Meeks, Edward Meeks "Pope" Gregory, papers

Edward Meeks "Pope" Gregory papers
1967-1995

Title Statement

Meeks, Edward Meeks "Pope" Gregory, papers A Guide to the Edward Meeks "Pope" Gregory Papers, 1967-1995 M 346

Subtitle: A Collection in Special Collections and Archives, James Branch Cabell Library, M 346

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

M 346

Unit ID

/repositories/5/resources/161

Unit Date

1967-1995

Mixed Materials

1 (box)

Language

English

Creator

Gregory, Edward Meeks, 1922-1995

Extent

1.77 Linear Feet

Repository

VCU James Branch Cabell Library

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection is open to research.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Preferred Citation

Box/Folder, Edward Meeks "Pope" Gregory Papers, Accession Number M346, Special Collections and Archives, James Branch Cabell Library, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Biographical Information

The Reverend Edward Meeks "Pope" Gregory (1922-1995) was a humanitarian, who fought racism and advocated racial and sexual equality long before they were widely accepted in Richmond, Virginia. Gregory is also recognized for holding the first gay marriage ceremony in Virginia, in August 1978, on the lawn of St. Peter's Church in Richmond.

Gregory, a Richmond native, attended St. Christopher's School and graduated from the University of Virginia (UVA) in 1947 with a bachelor's degree in English. He later did graduate work in English at both the University of Virginia and George Washington University. Gregory received a master of divinity degree in 1954 from Episcopal Theological Seminary in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and a doctor of ministry degree from the University of the South in 1977.

In 1955, Gregory was ordained a priest and served at St. Mark's Church in Richmond, as well as a youth adviser for the diocese the following year. In 1969, he was appointed vicar of St. Peter's, a mission on Church Hill. In break with tradition, Gregory gathered his parishioners around a carved, round altar for his services there. During the 1970s, when women were forcefully making their way into a previously all-male Episcopal priesthood, he invited an illegally ordained woman to celebrate Communion with him. Gregory served St. Peter's until 1979 when he left Richmond to become chaplain and teacher of English and Social Studies at rural Christ Church School, an Episcopal academy in Middlesex County. In 1990, he retired and returned to Richmond.

Gregory served as president of the Richmond-Petersburg Council on Human Relations and the Richmond Area Council on Human Relations. He helped to start the Daily Planet, which serves the homeless, and was also the advisor to Dignity/Integrity, a national organization with local chapters to homosexuals sponsored by his diocese and the Catholic Diocese of Richmond.

Gregory died Wednesday, January 25, 1995, in a local hospital after a brief illness. He is buried in Richmond's Hollywood Cemetery. At Gregory's request his memorial stone bears the Latin inscription, "Pontificeamus," in English, "Let us build bridges," the mission of his ministry and life.

Scope and Contents

The materials in this collection range from 1967 to 1995 and include correspondence with local churches and individuals; organizational files from the Commission of Human Sexuality and the Commission on Human Relations, Dignity / Integrity; photographs; and publications that encompass gay activism at local and national levels during the 1970s.

Keywords

Gay activists -- Virginia -- Richmond
Gregory, Edward Meeks, 1922-1995
Episcopal Church -- Clergy

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in seven series: Series I. General Correspondence, Series II. Commission on Human Sexuality Files, Series III. Commission on Human Relations Files, Series IV. Dignity / Integrity, Series V. Miscellaneous Organizational Files, Series VI. Photographs, Series VII. Publications, and is highlighted by Gregory's organizational involvements.

Description of Subordinate Components

Series 1: General Correspondence, 1976-1991

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46336

Catholic Diocese, 1977-1979, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46343

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Clinton R. Jones (the Reverend Canon), 1978-1979, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46344

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Fortunato-Schwandt, 1976, 1978

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46345

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Miscellaneous, 1978, 1991

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46346

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

William Heisler, 1977-1979

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46347

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Series 2: Commission on Human Sexuality Files, 1976-1978

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46337

Correspondence, 1977-1978, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46348

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Publications: Clippings and Journal Excerpts, 1977-1978, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46349

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Publications: Reports, 1976-1978, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46350

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Series 3: Commission on Human Relations Files, 1975-1979

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46338

Correspondence, 1977-1979, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46351

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Ordinances, 1975, 1979, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46352

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Publications, 1978

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46353

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Series 4: Dignity / Integrity, 1971-1981

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46339

Correspondence, 1971-1979, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46354

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Publications: Clippings (Journal and Newspaper, 1975-1977, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46355

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Publications: Newsletters, etc., 1975-1981

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46356

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Pamphlets, 1976-1981, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46357

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Publications: Reports, etc., 1973-1979, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46358

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Series 5: Miscellaneous Organizational Files, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46340

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Miscellaneous Organizational Files, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46359

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Series 6: Photographs, 1976-1978

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46341

Pope Gregory [sign and street], Richmond, VA, photo by Bob Swisher, August, 1978

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46360

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Pope Gregory [sign and church], Richmond, VA, photo by Bob Swisher, August, 1978

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46361

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

St. Peter's Church [with altar built by Gregory], Richmond, VA, photo by Bob Swisher, August, 1978

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46362

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Bob Swisher and Pope Gregory, Christ Church School, Middlesex Co., Virginia, June, 1986

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46363

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Series 7: Publications, 1967-1995

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46342

Clippings, 1976-1979, 1995, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46364

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Journals and Journal Excerpts, 1977-1978, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46365

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Miscellaneous, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46366

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Newsletters, 1977, 1978, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46367

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Pamphlets, 1967-1968, 1976-1978, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46368

Mixed Materials 1 (box)

Miscellaneous Oversized Publications, 1976-1980

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/46369

Mixed Materials 2 (box)