



Austin Seminary Archives, Stitt Library

STOTTS (JACK LEVEN) PAPERS, 1956-2005

Descriptive Summary

Title: Jack Leven Stotts papers

Dates: 1956-2005

Accession Number(s): 2009-008

Extent: 2 feet, 11 inches of manuscript material and 22 audio cassettes

Language: Materials are written in English.

Biographical Note:

Jack Leven Stotts (1932-2008) was a Presbyterian pastor, educator, and administrator in Texas and president of the McCormick Theological Seminary (1975-1985) and the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary (1985-1995). Stotts was born in Dallas, Texas, in 1932. He earned a B.A. from Trinity University in San Antonio in 1954, a B.D. from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago in 1957, and an M.A. and Ph.D. from Yale University Divinity School in 1965. First ordained as assistant pastor at First Congregational Church, Wallingford, Connecticut, he then moved to the University of Tulsa as chaplain and professor. He became pastor of First United Presbyterian Church in San Angelo, Texas, and then was appointed in 1963 to the McCormick Seminary faculty, where he served as a professor of Christian ethics. He served as dean of the McCormick Seminary from 1974-1975, and as president from 1975-1985. In 1985, he became president of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Under Stotts' leadership, the number of students in masters'-level programs doubled, the number of faculty increased, and the McCord Community Center was constructed. After his retirement from the presidency in 1995, Stotts served as the theologian-in-residence at Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago from 1996-1997.

The Presbyterian Church in the United States and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America reunited in 1983, and the following year, Stotts was appointed chairperson of the Special Committee to Prepare a Brief Statement of the Reformed Faith for the Presbyterian Church; this group was tasked with drafting the first confession of faith for the newly reconsolidated denomination. The result was "A Brief Statement of Faith," approved by the 203rd General Assembly in 1991 for inclusion in the Book of Confessions. Other committee members included Joanna M. Adams, Juventino R. Ballesteros, James D. Brown, Jane Dempsey Douglass, Roland M. Frye, Brian A. Gerrish, M. Douglas Harper, Jr., George H. Kehm, T. Andrew Kim, Jorge Lara-Braud, John H. Leith, Clarice J. Martin, Edward B. Newberry, William

Placher, Nancy J. Ramsay, Jack B. Rogers, George W. Stroup III, Ann B. Weems, David Willis-Watkins, Antoinette C. Wire, and staff members Elizabeth Meirs and Margarethe B.J. Brown.

In addition to his work as preacher, lecturer, and administrator, Stotts published numerous articles as well as three books: "Believing, Deciding, and Acting" (Geneva Press, 1968), "Shalom: The Search for a Peaceable City" (Abingdon Press, 1973), and "A God to Glorify: Reflections on Christian Vocation" (Austin Seminary, 1996).

He married Virginia Grafa and had three children: Stuart, Nancy, and Anna. He died in 2008, at the age of 75.

Scope and Contents:

Sermons, lectures, essays, minutes, agendas, correspondence, drafts, notes, pamphlets, and audio cassettes (1956-2005), arranged in two subgroups, shed light on Jack L. Stotts' career as an ordained Presbyterian minister and as president of the McCormick Theological Seminary and Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary (1956-2005), and document the work of the Special Committee to Prepare a Brief Statement of the Reformed Faith (1984-2005), of which Stotts served as chair.

Subgroup one: Jack L. Stotts is arranged in eleven series that reflect Stotts' pastoral and academic activities. The bulk of the materials are notes and drafts for sermons, lectures, and essays, both published and unpublished, but the documentation includes printed materials and audio recordings. The sermons (1979-2005), arranged by book of the Bible, document Stott's wide-ranging intellectual and spiritual interests. Topics of these sermons include issues in Presbyterian leadership, the future of the Presbyterian faith, hospitality toward strangers, hope, prayer, friendship, and the identity of Christ. The lectures (17 folders, 1960-2004 and undated) and essays (2 folders, 1977-1992 and undated) are arranged chronologically and illuminate Stotts' engagement with contemporary political and social issues such as the Human Genome Project, aging, sexual orientation, and religion in American culture. In keeping with his role as a seminary president, Stotts produced essays on Christian financial responsibility, theological education, evangelism, ethics, and management.

Subgroup 2: Special Committee to Prepare a Brief Statement of Reformed Faith (BSRF) is arranged in nine series, grouped by form and function: meetings, drafts, correspondence, essays, notes, bylaws, press releases, pamphlets, and clippings. All dated material in this subgroup is arranged chronologically in order to reveal the evolution of the BSRF document and the working process of the BSRF Committee. The majority of these records are minutes, agendas, and notes pertaining to the meetings of the BSRF Committee (13 folders; 1984-2005), including two meetings of the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1989 and 1990 at which the Committee presented its work. The meetings series includes documentation on the formation of a Special

Committee of Fifteen to review the work of the original BSRF Committee in 1989-1990 (1 folder). The drafts series (3 folders; 1988-1990 and undated), containing revisions of the documents with markings by various committee members, illuminates the working relationships among members and their individual contributions. The correspondence (4 folders; 1985-1996) includes letters to and from Stotts, members of the committee, and other Presbyterian clergy and laity. Several general essays on confession (2 folders; 1985-2005), written by Stotts and members of the committee, are included, as are notes and other materials that Stotts and the committee referenced as they completed the BSRF document (7 folders total).

Restrictions:

Materials are available by appointment only. Contact the archivist for details.

Processing Information:

This collection was processed in Fall 2009 by a group of students enrolled in Dr. David Gracy's introductory archives course at the University of Texas at Austin School of Information.

Index Terms:

Stotts, Jack L.--Archives.
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.
Fourth Presbyterian Church (Chicago, Ill.)
McCormick Theological Seminary.
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)--General Assembly.
Brief Statement of the Reformed Faith for the Presbyterian Church.
Presbyterian Church--Clergy.
Sermons, English.

Preferred Citation: Jack Leven Stotts papers, 1956-2005, Austin Seminary Archives, Stitt Library, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Inventory:

Box **Contents**

H004a **Subgroup 1: Jack L. Stotts:**

Sermons:

Drafts, notes, church bulletins, and clippings (1979-2005 and undated) are physically arranged in biblical order by chapter and verse; nevertheless, they have been listed here in alphabetical order by church to facilitate searches by church name. They form the bulk of the papers related to Jack Stotts' career as a seminary president and ordained Presbyterian minister. In some cases, the church bulletin from the worship service where the sermon was preached has been included, and, occasionally, correspondence concerning the sermon. Although many of

Box **Contents**

National Korean Presbyterian Council, June 29, 1994

Williamsburg, November 1994

1996-1999:

Austin College, April 11, 1996

April 25, 1996

Rochester, MN, February 7-9, 1997

Covenant Network of Presbyterians, Charlotte, NC, June 15, 1998

Christ Episcopal Church, San Antonio, TX, February 17, 1999

2000-2001:

New Orleans, LA, November 20, 2000

Corpus Christi, TX, April 4, 2001

Covenant Network Conference, November 2, 2001

2003:

February 25, 2003

April 22, 2003

Synod of Mid America, August 8-9, 2003

St. Louis, MO, October 17, 2003

Covenant Network, November 1, 2003

2004:

Covenant Network, November 5, 2004

Undated:

A-G

H-P

R

S-W, unidentified

H004b

Essays:

A small component of the Stotts subgroup, this series contains final copies of essays written by Stotts (2 folders, 1977-1992 and undated), arranged chronologically. Of particular interest is an essay from 1992 titled "A Seminary President's Reflections on Being a Seminary President," in which he discusses his career leading up to and including his appointments as the president of the McCormick Theological Seminary and the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

1977-1992

Undated

H004b

Educational Materials:

This series (4 folders, 1956-1996) is divided into two subseries, the bulk of which is made up of "Charges to the Graduating Class" given to the

Box **Contents**

McCormick Theological Seminary, the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and others. The second subseries includes Stott's school paper titled "Christian Ethics" from December 4, 1956 as well as a syllabus and class schedule notes for a course titled "Theology of the Reformed Confessions" from 1995. Both subseries are arranged chronologically.

Commencement Speeches:

1976-1985

1986-1992

1993-1996

Assorted, 1956-1995

H004b

Notes:

This series (1 folder, 1994-2004 and undated) contains handwritten and typed notes, including a poem titled "Hope." These papers are arranged chronologically.

Notes, 1994-2004 and undated

H004b

Personal Correspondence:

This series contains 1 letter, dated September 24, 1984 from "Jim" of the University of Chicago Divinity School, expressing his sadness that Stotts will be leaving for Austin, TX.

Letter, September 24, 1984

H004b

Pamphlets:

This series (1 folder, 1975-1992 and undated) contains pamphlets, mailers, and a biblical study guide and is arranged chronologically.

Printed material, 1975-1992 and undated

D048b

Audio cassettes:

Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation School for Pastors, Hastings, NE, 1998

H004b

Subgroup 2: Special Committee to Prepare a Brief Statement of the Reformed Faith (BSRF)

Meetings:

Minutes, agendas, reports, notes, financial statements, clippings, and printed materials are arranged chronologically and document the meetings of the Special Committee to Prepare a Brief Statement of the Reformed Faith (13 folders; 1984-2005). Minutes make up the bulk of the documentation and include information about the issues discussed, research undertaken by the committee, progress toward consensus on the BSRF document, and the content and structure of accompanying prefaces and concordances. The minutes of each meeting contain a high

Box **Contents**

1985-1988
1989
1990-1991
1993-1996 and undated

D048a

Essays:

The essays (2 folders; 1989-2005) are arranged alphabetically by author, with those by Stotts making up approximately half of the items. The majority of the others were written by members of the BSRF Committee, but the series includes several essays written in reaction to the BSRF by clergy and parishioners.

Stotts, 1994-2004 and undated
Other, 1989-2005 and undated

D048a

Assorted Brief Statement of Reformed Faith material:

Stotts' notes, 1988-1990 and undated
By-Law fragments, undated
Press Release fragments, undated
Pamphlets, 1989-1991 and undated
Introductory Guide materials, 1990 and undated
Newspaper clippings, 1989-1993 and undated
Assorted material, 1980 and undated