

# Guide to the Ecclesia Ministry Records

RG 332



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2024

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Yale Divinity Library  
409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5301  
divinity.library@yale.edu  
<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

**CALL NUMBER:** RG 332

**CREATOR:** Wyman, Deborah Little

**TITLE:** Ecclesia Ministries Records

**DATES:** 1985–2019

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 6 linear feet (14 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English (Latin script)

**SUMMARY:** This collection documents Ecclesia Ministries, an inner-city outreach ministry begun in 1994, and the spiritual formation and writings of Ecclesia founder Rev. Deborah Little Wyman, whose vision for “street ministry” grew out of her desire to minister to the unhoused community in the Back Bay neighborhood of Boston. Papers, photographs, and sermons provide insight into weekly Sunday worship beginning in 1996 with an outdoor worship service at the fountain at the Boston Common. The unhoused community that gathered came to refer to their weekly outdoor church space and community as “common cathedral.”

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.332>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.332>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Deborah Little Wyman, 2023.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Preferred Citation

Ecclesia Ministries Records (RG 332), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Deborah Little Wyman received an M.Div. from General Theological Seminary in New York in May 1994, was ordained as a deacon in the Episcopal Church on June 4, 1994, at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston, Massachusetts, and a priest on October 14, 1995, at Emmanuel Church in Boston. Rev. Little Wyman's exposure to the writings of Central and South American liberation theologies in the early 1980s was formative to discovering her call to the priesthood and the conception of Ecclesia Ministries. Ecclesia Ministries was founded on Little Wyman's vision of Jesus' life of ministering to the poor and her desire to engage in what she called "street ministry," which she would ultimately imagine existing outside of the traditional four walls of a church building.

Unofficially, Ecclesia Ministries began following Rev. Little Wyman's ordination as a deacon, when she began to go out onto the streets daily with a backpack of sandwiches and supplies, with the intention of building relationships. A small group gathered for Holy Communion at the Boston Common on Easter Day in 1996, inaugurating the first of many consecutive Sundays of worship followed by a simple meal and fellowship. The growing community included unhoused and housed folks, staff, volunteers, and interns to support Ecclesia's emerging ministry.

Common cathedral, named as such by its community, was pivotal to the organization that would become Ecclesia Ministries. Radical hospitality was central to Ecclesia's street ministry, which included pastoral care, teaching and study, community engagement, and outdoor worship services and other programming throughout the week. Liturgy was adapted from the Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church, and Holy Communion was celebrated weekly. In 2004, Ecclesia Ministries received additional funding, enabling "Come and See," providing programming and support for affiliate ministries.

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## Scope and Contents

These papers offer an overview of the founding and implementation of a vibrant, ecumenical organization supporting and uplifting the lives of unhoused people through sacramentally-focused ministry and relationships. The collection is divided into two series; Series I, Ecclesia Ministries, which documents the creation and work of Ecclesia Ministries, and Series II, Deborah Little Wyman, which includes papers relating to her spiritual formation and work in ordained ministry.

Series I, Ecclesia Ministries, subseries Administrative Records, traces the mission and theological framework in the organization's founding and beyond. This subseries additionally includes financial and fundraising records, correspondence, and other foundational particularities, such as information on the origins of the altar and cross used at common cathedral. Series I, Ecclesia Ministries, subseries Staff, Volunteer and Attendee Records, documents the faces of common cathedral, including written reflections and testimonies from participants, highlighting the centrality of community building to the organization. Series I, Ecclesia Ministries, subseries Affiliate Program, documents Ecclesia's witness and expansion beyond Boston to a variety of additional localized sites. This includes affiliate directories, correspondence, training materials, and media coverage. Series I, Ecclesia Ministries, subseries Program Documentation, contains liturgical materials from common cathedral including bulletins, sermons, and sermon notes from the 1990s to 2010s organized according to the liturgical year, due to an effort to preserve the liturgical centrality of the organization and its founder. This series also documents "Come and See," which facilitated the development and training of street ministries in additional cities. Series I, Ecclesia Ministries, subseries

Publications and Publicity, includes newsletters and promotional materials generated by Ecclesia. Series I, Ecclesia Ministries, subseries Collected Materials on Ecclesia, contains magazine and newspaper articles written about the organization's work. The bulk of media coverage on Ecclesia was collected and organized chronologically in a series of bound portfolios; see "Ecclesia Clippings" Volumes 1-6, spanning the years 1994-2010. Series I, Ecclesia Ministries, subseries Audiovisual Materials, includes photographs of common cathedral worship services and fellowship taken by staff and participants, in addition to audio and visual recordings documenting program.

Series II, Deborah Little Wyman, focuses on her discernment, spiritual formation, ordination, published writings, and personal unpublished writings that impacted the creation of Ecclesia Ministries. While Rev. Little Wyman's vocation is indistinguishable at times from the organization she founded, this series contains sermons, writings, and public speaking opportunities occurring beyond her work at common cathedral, though often witnessing to the work of Ecclesia Ministries. Series II, Deborah Little Wyman, subseries Biographical Documentation, includes administrative records on Rev. Little Wyman's ordination in the Episcopal Church and materials relating to her writing and vocation. Series II, Deborah Little Wyman, subseries Writings, begins with early writings in the form of journal entries and focuses on personal history and goals, spiritual formation, supervised ministry fieldwork, and reflections on her emerging life in ministry. Other writings include final papers and theses for her MDiv and DMin degrees, such as her DMin thesis *Church Under the Tree*, a collection of oral histories narrating her experiences in street ministry. The bulk of the materials in this subseries are sermons preached by Rev. Little Wyman from 1989-2013, occasionally accompanied by a service bulletin, after which follow other public speaking engagements spanning from 1995-2014, and liturgies and planning notes for weddings, funerals, memorials, baptisms, and ordinations not connected to common cathedral. Finally, copies of Rev. Little Wyman's published works are included; her book *Home Care for the Dying* (1985), a chapter titled "Theology of the Poor" in *Handbook of U.S. Theologies of Liberation* titled (2004), and various published articles from 1998-2000. Series II, Deborah Little Wyman, subseries Correspondence, notably includes correspondence with David E. Johnson, former bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, and expresses her disappointment with the church's decision not to take a stance on the issue of blessing same-sex marriages. Series II, Deborah Little Wyman, subseries Collected Materials is largely comprised of sermons, liturgies, and bulletins from services attended by Rev. Little Wyman.

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## Arrangement

- I Ecclesia Ministries, 1996 - 2019
- II Deborah Little Wyman, 1985 - 2011

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Ecclesia Ministries, 1996–2019

Administrative Records		
b. 1, f. 1	Legal documentation and mission statement	2006
b. 1, f. 2	Statements and writings on founding	1996–2001
b. 1, f. 3	Programmatic correspondence	1996–2010
b. 1, f. 4	Fundraising	2000–2003
b. 1, f. 5	Fundraising	2004
b. 1, f. 6	Financial documentation, Ecclesia Mission Fund at Boston Foundation	2012–2013
b. 1, f. 7	Financial documentation, Ecclesia Mission Fund	2015–2016
b. 1, f. 8	<i>Street Stories</i> mailing list	n.d.
Staff, Volunteer, and Attendee Records		
b. 1, f. 9	Common Cathedral operational materials and resources for staff	1998–2002
b. 1, f. 10	Common Cathedral attendees and associates lists and contact information	1999–2005
b. 1, f. 11	Materials relating to the work of Gary Huber	1999–2007
b. 1, f. 12	Community meeting notes	1998–2000
b. 1, f. 13	Seminary interns	2003, n.d.
b. 2, f. 1	Retreat documentation	1998–2001
b. 2, f. 2	Servant leadership retreat documentation	2002
b. 2, f. 3	Theological reflection and pastoral care meeting materials	2000
b. 2, f. 4	Common mission team meeting materials	2001–2004
b. 2, f. 5	Common Cathedral community writings and reflections	1997–1999
b. 2, f. 6	Common Cathedral community writings and reflections	2000–2006
Affiliate Program		
b. 2, f. 7	Programmatic documentation	2004–2012
b. 2, f. 8	Affiliate directories	2015, n.d.
b. 2, f. 9	Correspondence	2007–2014
b. 2, f. 10	Articles about affiliates	2005–2012
b. 2, f. 11	Street ministry training materials for affiliates	n.d.
Program Documentation		

## Program Documentation (continued)

	Ecclesia manual	
b. 3, f. 1	"Street Church: A Companion Guide"	n.d.
	Common Cathedral bulletins, sermons, liturgy, and notes	
b. 3, f. 2	General liturgical materials	1990s–2010s
b. 3, f. 3	General liturgical materials	1990s–2010s
b. 3, f. 4	General liturgical materials	1990s–2010s
b. 3, f. 5	Christmas	1999, n.d.
b. 3, f. 6	Lent and Palm Sunday	1996–2002
b. 3, f. 7	Maundy Thursday	1997–2003
b. 3, f. 8	Good Friday and Stations of the City	1997–2003
b. 3, f. 9	Easter Sunday	1997–2014
b. 3, f. 10	Confirmation and baptism	n.d.
b. 3, f. 11	Memorial services	1997–2000
b. 3, f. 12	Prayers and blessings	2002, n.d.
b. 3, f. 13	Liturgy for staff and volunteers	1996, n.d.
b. 3, f. 14	Sermon planning and collected materials	1999–2000, n.d.
b. 4, f. 1	Sermon planning and collected materials related to Good Friday	1993–1996, n.d.
b. 4, f. 2	Lent reflections	1999
	Outreach program	
b. 4, f. 3	"Come and See"	2005
b. 4, f. 4	"Come and See"	2006
b. 4, f. 5	"Come and See"	2007
b. 4, f. 6	"Come and See"	2008
b. 4, f. 7	December Ecclesia Ministries gathering	2008
b. 4, f. 8	"Come and See"	2009–2011
b. 4, f. 9	"Come and See"	2013–2019
	Publications and Publicity	
b. 4, f. 10	Newsletters and promotional materials	1997–2005
	Collected Material on Ecclesia	
b. 4, f. 11	Articles	1994–2001

## Collected Material on Ecclesia (continued)

b. 4, f. 12	Articles	2003–2012
b. 4, f. 13	Art and ephemera	
b. 5, f. 1	"Ecclesia Clippings Vol. I"	1994 November– 1997 January
b. 5, f. 2	"Ecclesia Clippings Vol. II"	1997 February– 1998 March
b. 5, f. 3	"Ecclesia Clippings Vol. III"	1998 March– 2000 June
b. 5, f. 4	"Ecclesia Clippings Vol. IV"	2000 September– 2001 December
b. 6, f. 1	"Ecclesia Clippings Vol. V"	2002 January– 2004 March
b. 6, f. 2	"Ecclesia Clippings Vol. VI"	2004 April–2010 February
Audiovisual Materials		
Photographs		
b. 6, f. 3	"Gary Huber Fall 1996 mixed"	1996
b. 6, f. 4	"1996-1997"	1996–1997
b. 7, f. 1	"Easter/Palm Sunday 1998"	1998
b. 7, f. 2	"Baptisms June 26 '98: Adil Hanza, Roy, Paul Kirovac"	1998 June 26
b. 7, f. 3	"Adelynrood Retreat July 20/21 '98"	1998 July 20– 1998 July 21
b. 7, f. 4	"Thank you party June 14 '98, Georges Island outing Summer '98, Blue Hills outing Fall '98"	1998
b. 7, f. 5	"November '98, Christmas '98, January '99"	1998 November– 1999 January
b. 7, f. 6	Photographs by Yale students	2010s
Videotapes		
b. 8	Videotapes	
Audiotapes, DVDs		
b. 9	Audiotapes, DVDs	



**Series II: Deborah Little Wyman, 1985–2011**

## Biographical Documentation

b. 10, f. 1	Personal and CV	1996
b. 10, f. 2	Educational documentation	1993–2000
b. 10, f. 3	Ordination materials	1994–1995
b. 10, f. 4	Related to work at St. John's	
b. 10, f. 5	Ford Foundation Project on Innovative Leaders	2000–2002
b. 10, f. 6	Rockefeller writing residency	2005
b. 10, f. 7	Articles about Deborah Little Wyman	1985–2018

## Writings

Containing sermons, reflections, and notes.

## Unpublished and liturgical writings

b. 10, f. 8	"Life/work 89-99 fall-winter"	1989–1999
b. 10, f. 9	Ministry formation and field supervision	1989–1999
b. 10, f. 10	Ministry formation and field supervision	1989–1999
b. 10, f. 11	Graduate school essays	1991–1994, n.d.
b. 10, f. 12	Mexico journal	1998 January
b. 10, f. 13	"Church Under the Tree" D.Min thesis	2000
b. 11, f. 1	Sermons Further sermons and liturgical writings by Deborah Little Wyman are in Series I, Program Documentation.	1989–1993
b. 11, f. 2	Sermons	1994–1995
b. 11, f. 3	Sermons	1996 January– 1996 June
b. 11, f. 4	Sermons	1996 July–1996 December
b. 11, f. 5	Sermons	1997 January– 1997 June
b. 11, f. 6	Sermons	1997 July–1997 December
b. 11, f. 7	Sermons	1998 January– 1998 June
b. 11, f. 8	Sermons	1998 July–1998 December

## Writings &gt; Unpublished and liturgical writings (continued)

b. 11, f. 9	Sermons	1999
b. 11, f. 10	Sermons	2000
b. 11, f. 11	Sermons	2001
b. 12, f. 1	Sermons	2002
b. 12, f. 2	Sermons	2003–2005
b. 12, f. 3	Sermons	2006–2007
b. 12, f. 4	Sermons	2010–2011
b. 12, f. 5	Sermons	2012
b. 12, f. 6	Sermons	2013
b. 12, f. 7	Sermons	n.d.
b. 12, f. 8	Talks	1995–2000
b. 12, f. 9	Talks	2001–2004
b. 12, f. 10	Talks	2010–2012
b. 12, f. 11	Talks	2013–2014, n.d.
b. 12, f. 12	Wedding and covenant liturgies Including collected material for services.	1989–2006
b. 12, f. 13	Wedding and covenant liturgies	1998–2007
b. 13, f. 1	Funeral and memorial liturgies	1998–2010
b. 13, f. 2	Baptism and ordination liturgies	2002, n.d.
Published writings		
b. 13, f. 3	<i>Home Care for the Dying: An Authoritative, Reassuring Guide to Physical and Emotional Care</i>	1985
b. 13, f. 4	"Theology of the Poor" in <i>Handbook of U.S. Theologies of Liberation</i>	2004
b. 13, f. 5	"Street Stories" booklet An account of the origins and ministry of Common Cathedral.	n.d.
b. 13, f. 6	Articles Containing "Q: Should we give money to panhandlers?," "Found on the Street," and "Ministry on the Streets: Come and See."	1998–2000
Correspondence		
b. 13, f. 7	Personal correspondence	1989–2001, n.d.
b. 13, f. 8	Regarding ordination	1995

## Collected Materials

Containing articles and sermons by others gathered by Deborah Little Wyman.

b. 13, f. 9	Sermons and talks by others	1996
b. 13, f. 10	Weddings: sermons and liturgies	1992–2007
b. 13, f. 11	Funeral and memorial services: sermons and liturgies	1992–2020
b. 14, f. 1	Eucharist: liturgies	1987–2008
b. 14, f. 2	Baptism: liturgies and writings	1995, n.d.
b. 14, f. 3	Ordination and installation: sermons and liturgies	1993–2007
b. 14, f. 4	Lent: liturgies and writings	1991–1997
b. 14, f. 5	Lent: liturgies and writings	1993–1997
b. 14, f. 6	Holy Week: sermons and liturgies	1991–2004
b. 14, f. 7	Easter Sunday: sermons and writings	1993–2003
b. 14, f. 8	Feast Days: sermons	1993–1998
b. 14, f. 9	LGBTQ+ and AIDS: sermons and liturgies of healing, remembrance, prayer, and pride	1993–1994, n.d.
b. 14, f. 10	Topical gathered materials: domestic violence and addiction	1989, n.d.
b. 14, f. 11	Topical gathered materials: antisemitism	1992–1995, n.d.
b. 14, f. 12	Topical gathered materials: theological writing	2000–2007, n.d.

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Christian education  
Church and social problems  
City churches -- United States  
Interdenominational cooperation  
Liturgics  
Pastoral theology  
Women in church work

### **Genres / Formats**

Sermons

### **Names**

Wyman, Deborah Little

### **Acquired From**

Wyman, Deborah Little