

ARCHIVAL POLICY MANUAL

Historical Foundation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, Inc.

I. INTRODUCTION

As the official repository of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, the Historical Library and Archives of the General Assemblies holds in trust for these denominations much of their recorded history. (For the purpose of clarity, use of the term Cumberland Presbyterian Churches in this document, will refer inclusively to the separate, sister denominations known as the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America.)

It is the responsibility of the Historical Library and Archives to house, preserve, protect, and maintain the records of the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches so that present and future church members, administrators, historians, and other researchers may have access to them.

Whenever possible, the Historical Library and Archives of the General Assemblies of the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches shall ascribe to the Code of Ethics for Archivists as formulated by the Society of American Archivists.

In order to carry out its purposes and responsibilities, the Historical Library and Archives shall be operated under the policies recorded in this manual as approved by the Board of Trustees of the Historical Foundation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. These policies are interpreted and implemented on a day-to-day basis by the Director. They may be changed and/or amended only by action of the Board of Trustees.

II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Historical Library and Archives of the General Assemblies of the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches is the official repository for the historical materials related to the Cumberland Presbyterian denominations. In order to keep alive the heritage of our faith, its purposes shall be:

1. To aggressively collect, preserve, and make reasonably available, materials relating to the cultural, socioeconomic, theological, and institutional history of the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches.
2. To provide a vehicle to facilitate access to those materials for individuals and organizations inside and outside of the denominations.
3. To provide for interested persons a centralized research center for the denominations.
4. To facilitate access to those materials for individuals and organizations outside the Cumberland

Presbyterian Church, in as much as, facilities, budget, staffing, and other constraints permit.

5. To serve as a clearing house for information on the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches.

6. To encourage and foster the creation of materials relating to the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches to the extent available resources permit.

III. RECORD MANAGEMENT POLICY FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA AND THEIR AGENCIES

Preamble

Whereas the official records and correspondence of all the agencies of the General Assemblies including program boards, institutions, commissions, and committees comprise a substantial, unique, and irreplaceable part of the written records of the people called Cumberland Presbyterians, and

Whereas there is presently the danger that such records, scattered as they are in numerous places under various conditions, can be easily destroyed by fire, vandalism, or carelessness, and

Whereas the absence of any policy regarding the preservation of these records contributes to the present situation:

Therefore, the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, in order to provide for the better preservation of this portion of the written documents of their heritage, adopt the following *Records Management Policy* for themselves and their agencies:

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to give direction to and provide for the orderly collection and preservation of the records of the General Assemblies and agencies created by their action through deposit of these records in the Historical Library and Archives of the General Assemblies.

B. SCOPE

Organized bodies included under the terms of this policy shall be (1) the General Assemblies of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, the offices of the General Assemblies, and the General Assemblies' Executive Committees, (2) all permanent general assemblies boards, commissions, and committees, and (3) all temporary commissions, committees, task forces, etc. created by action of both or either of the general assemblies.

C. RECORDS TO BE DEPOSITED

Records eligible for deposit include the following: 1. Official minutes and registers 2. Legal documents including charters, by-laws, deeds, titles, leases and other descriptions of property, contracts for construction, blue prints, plans and specifications 3. Financial records including audits, mortgages, and financial ledgers of final entry 4. Annual reports 5. Official correspondence

D. TIME OF DEPOSIT

Records such as minutes and reports duplicated for distribution and publications issued periodically are to be deposited as they are issued. Documents of the general assemblies meetings are to be deposited as soon as possible after the printed minutes are issued. Legal documents and audits are to be deposited as they are concluded. In the case of bound volumes of original minutes, each agency

should take care to deposit such volumes promptly after their conclusion. Financial ledgers of final entry shall be submitted as soon as they are no longer needed for current reference by an agency, but no later than five years after their closing. Official correspondence shall be deposited as soon as it is no longer needed for current reference, but normally no later than five years after issuance.

E. ACCESS

All records produced by the General Assemblies and their agencies are the property of the General Assemblies. However, the General Assemblies recognize that they have entrusted to each agency, and especially to each incorporated board, a unique responsibility for determining the necessary confidentiality of official minutes and correspondence. Therefore, access to such minutes and correspondence deposited in the Historical Library and Archives shall be limited by policies adopted by each agency. Records whose access falls under the limitations imposed by such policies shall be kept in locked files. These files are to be unlocked for research only to officers of the respective agency or to persons who present written authorizations signed by officers of such an agency.

F. RESPONSIBLE AGENCY

The agency responsible for the collection and preservation of the records of the General Assemblies and their agencies shall be the Historical Foundation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America. Through its Board of Trustees and staff, the Historical Foundation shall take care to see that the above mentioned records are collected, filed, and safely housed. It shall be diligent in seeing that the confidentiality of records as established through this policy and the policies of each particular agency is preserved. In its annual report to the General Assemblies, the Historical Foundation shall report the effectiveness of this policy, the compliance of the various agencies with its provisions, and any recommendations for changes in its provisions.

G. COMPLIANCE WITH THE POLICY

It is assumed that all agencies will comply with this policy, at least on their executive administrative level. That is, that originals or copies of all annual reports, final audits, and minutes of the governing board will be deposited in the Historical Library and Archives. However, it is understood, that some boards and agencies have adequate means of in-house preservation of records and/or records which cannot be transferred from the office of origin. Therefore, compliance with this policy as a whole, and the extent to which the agency participates beyond the executive level, is left to the discretion of the particular agencies and their chief administrators with the explicit understanding that no bulk record group shall be destroyed without first consulting the Historical Foundation Board of Trustees or its staff.

IV. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Although the policy manual is specific about the types of materials which should be collected by the Historical Library and Archives, it is, by design, written in broad and general language as to the subject areas which should be the targets of acquisition. As has been stated earlier in this manual, it is the objective of the Historical Library and Archives to aggressively collect, preserve, and make reasonably available, materials relating to the cultural, socioeconomic, theological, and institutional history of the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches. It is the responsibility of the Director to interpret that objective as it applies to specific items and collections of materials offered to the Historical Library and Archives or otherwise acquired by it.

1. Materials collected by the Historical Library and Archives of the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches shall normally be restricted to the types of materials encompassed by the term "archives": official records, personal papers, manuscripts, scrapbooks, minutes, diaries, speeches, sermons, memoirs, daily calendars, address books, dissertations, theses, research papers, and other memorabilia; printed materials including, but not limited to, books, catalogs, newsletters, newspaper and magazine articles, bulletins, periodicals, proceedings, annuals, pamphlets, booklets, maps, music, and posters; audio-visual materials including, but not limited to filmstrips, sound recordings on various media; audio recordings on various media; graphics works, including, but not limited to, photographs, slides, works of art, videotapes and movie film; micro-reproduction materials, including, but not limited to, microfilm, microfiche, micro-opaque, and microcard; and computer media of all types, including but not limited to, magnetic, optical, digital, and printed. Materials should not be refused because the Historical Library and Archives does not currently possess the equipment necessary to facilitate information access in a particular format so long as future access is anticipated and reasonably assured. For example, relevant and pertinent manuscripts on magnetic diskette should be accepted even if the Historical Library and Archives does not currently own the computer systems necessary for access.
2. The Historical Library and Archives shall not acquire any materials which it cannot properly maintain, preserve, and make reasonably available in an ethically reasonable period of time because of limitations of funds, staffing, expertise, environmental protection requirements, space limitations, or other constraints. Decisions concerning the acceptance of items shall be made in the judgment of the Director within the guidelines of this policy statement and in consultation with the Board of Trustees of the Historical Foundation. Where contest of that judgment is made or additional interpretation is required, original materials immediately and directly relative to the life history and theology of the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches shall always have precedence over other materials in regard to the implementation of this policy.
3. The Historical Library and Archives collection is not considered to be a museum collection and will not normally contain items considered to be realia or artifacts. Such items offered to the Historical Library and Archives will be rejected unless the Director considers them to be of significant importance to the preservation of the history of the denominations. Such decisions for acceptance shall be made only when space, funds, staff, expertise, and facilities are sufficient to make acceptance reasonable and prudent. Exceptions to this policy will normally be made only for items of limited size. When the decision of the Director is contested by a potential donor or others, the Director shall refer the matter to the Board of Trustees of the Historical Foundation for a final decision.
4. Donations to the collection of the Historical Library and Archives shall be accepted at the discretion of the director within the guidelines of this manual. The Board of Trustees of the Historical Foundation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America shall serve as a court of final appeal. The Director is charged with the responsibility of creating a well balanced collection which serves the needs of the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches within the restraints of facilities, space, staffing, expertise, budget, and other such constraints. Therefore, difficult and unpopular decisions will often have to be made in order to further the ultimate goals of the denominations and the Historical Library and Archives.
5. Whenever possible, a Donor Agreement form shall be obtained for each item or collection of items

received by the Historical Library and Archives. A copy of the agreement shall be maintained in perpetuity in such a manner that consultation may be made in a timely and efficient manner.

6. Because of restrictions placed upon appraisals by federal income tax regulations, the staff of the Historical Library and Archives is not permitted to make official appraisal of donated items for income tax or other purposes. The Director will assist donors in obtaining such appraisals at the donors' expense.

V. DE-ACQUISITIONS POLICY

Although it is the normal policy of any archives to maintain materials for perpetuity, there are circumstances which arise making the continued maintenance of certain items neither wise nor prudent. Materials which are considered by the Director to be duplicative, superfluous, deteriorated, incompatible, or otherwise found to be disposable may be removed from the collection within the limitations placed upon such removal by this section.

1. Before materials are withdrawn the Director shall consult the original Donor Agreement to determine if any stipulations were specified by the donor which would limit and/or prohibit de-acquisitions.

2. In cases where de-acquisitions was limited or prohibited by the donor, the materials in question shall be returned to the donor or to her/his legal heir. If such return is not considered practical by the Director, approval for other disposition of the item(s) shall be obtained from the donor or her/his heirs in a procedure approved by the Board of Trustees of the Historical Foundation and legal counsel.

3. A complete record of de-acquisitions shall be maintained by the Director.

4. All funds received from the sale of materials which have been de-acquisitioned will be used to benefit the Historical Library and Archives.

5. The Director, other employees of the Historical Library and Archives, members of the Board of Trustees of the Historical Foundation, and their families are prohibited from obtaining materials which have been de-acquisitioned by the Historical Library and Archives.

VI. SERVICES OF THE HISTORICAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

1. The archives staff will encourage access to the collections in keeping with the established policies and guidelines of the Historical Library and Archives. The primary function of the Historical Library and Archives staff is to collect, organize preserve, protect, and make available for research, materials documenting the history and development of the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches. However, the staff cannot perform a substantive research role.

2. Access to records may be limited by specific policies established by the Director in accordance with the general philosophy of the Board of Trustees of the Historical Foundation and in consideration of the requests of donors, the condition of the materials, or other considerations deemed worth.

3. The primary clientele of the Historical Library and Archives are the individuals and organizations

of the Cumberland Presbyterian Churches. Services to other individuals and organizations will be limited by the director to those which can be reasonably performed within the constraints of staffing, expertise, budget, etc.

4. Although the collection of the Historical Library and Archives is open to those who are performing genealogical research, reference support for such endeavors cannot be provided by the staff through any medium.

HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

ARCHIVES