

New Church of the New Jerusalem (Savannah, Ga.) records

Descriptive Summary

Repository:	Georgia Historical Society
Creator:	Gignilliat, Arthur M., 1904-1993.
Title:	New Church of the New Jerusalem (Savannah, Ga.) records
Dates:	1852-1973
Extent:	0.85 cubic feet (2 boxes, 2 folders)
Identification:	MS 2106

Biographical/Historical Note

The New Church of the New Jerusalem traces its beginnings to Manchester, England. There, in 1782, under the guidance of Reverend John Clowes, a society was formed to translate the religious writings of Baron Emanuel Swedenborg. Swedenborg, a Swedish scientist, believed that God had called him to form a new church based on a new, "inner" interpretation of the Bible.

This New Church originally made its way to the United States in 1784, when James Glenn began to spread the church's doctrine. However, Glenn was only able to convert two men into the church. The New Church's doctrines gained wider acceptance when a box of Swedenborg's books was sent to Philadelphia and regular meetings were scheduled. It was from these early meetings that the church's message eventually began to spread to other parts of the United States.

The New Church officially formed in Savannah in 1845. In 1889, a chapel was built on the corner of Drayton and Huntingdon streets. The Savannah chapter struggled throughout its existence to maintain a viable membership and eventually folded when the chapel was sold in 1950.

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of records from the church containing information on the history and general workings of the New Church in the United States and of the Savannah chapter of the church. The collection is a mixture of correspondence, legal documents, and assorted church literature, including constitution and by-laws. Also included are three images of the New Church in Savannah and in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Index Terms

Administrative records.
Bylaws (administrative records)
Church libraries--Book lists.
Church libraries--Georgia--Savannah.
Church membership--Georgia--Savannah.
Constitutions.
Gignilliat, Arthur M., 1904-1993.
Legal documents.
Letters (correspondence)
Local histories.
New Church of the New Jerusalem (Savannah, Ga.)
New Jerusalem Church--Georgia--Savannah.
Photographs.
Swedenborgians--Florida.
Swedenborgians--Georgia--Savannah.

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Material was acquired from collector, who was the last living member of the First New Church Society of Savannah.

Preferred Citation

[item identification], New Church of the New Jerusalem (Savannah, Ga.) records, MS 2106, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Arthur M. Gignilliat, 1982.

Restrictions

Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

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Sponsorship

Encoding funded by a 2012 Documenting Democracy grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

Container List

Box Fldr

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | 1 | New Church of the New Jerusalem
General Church information, includes Convention information and church doctrine |
| | | Southeastern Association |

Box Fldr

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | Southeastern General Information-history and founding of the Southeastern Association; 1958
Charter for the Southeastern Association |
| | 3 | Florida, mainly correspondence dealing with Florida churches, 1935-53, 1957 |
| | | Savannah Church |

Box Fldr

- 1 4 Bible notes, alphabetical listing of Bible readings
 - 5 Constitution, by-laws, and membership-1 ledger, undated
 - 6 Financial records, 1890-1922, 1907-1911
 - 7 General church information, includes copies of the Constitution and by-laws; assorted membership roles; newspaper clippings; and a 1957 list of church library books
 - 8 General correspondence, 1921-31, 1940
 - 9 Legal documents, 1900-23, 1949
- Library

Box Fldr

- 1 10 Donations; inventory; Sunday School library, 1874-75 and 1890-91
- 11 Book records, 1874-1909

Box Fldr

- 2 1 *The Nineteenth Century*, 1852
(examines the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg)
 - 2 Rules and constitution of Library; tract listings, 1874-1886
- Property

Box Fldr

- 2 3 Correspondences 1921-50, deal with the Savannah church's attempt to sell the chapel location property
- 4 Legal 1911, 1950, 1951, contracts on the church's property

Photographs

vm_box

- 1 New Church of Savannah. 1 exterior and 1 interior photograph of church

vm_box

- 2 New Church of St. Petersburg (Florida). Black-and-white postcard of exterior of church