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W91-1041. Coughenour, Robert A. (1931 -).
Papers, 1977-1990. 2.00 linear ft.



Abstract

Graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Pittsburg Theological Seminary, Western Reserve University, and Case Western Reserve University; ordained by the Pittsburg Presbytery (1960) and transferred to the Reformed Church in America's Classis of Zeeland in 1977; served on the faculty at Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA (1962-1969), Hope College (1969-1975), Western Theological Seminary (1975-1994) and until 1996 as the Director of Connects (Western's continuing education program); served as minister for Natrona Heights Presbyterian Church (1962); Wolf Creek U.P. Church West Liberty U.P. Church (1963-1967); West Elizabeth U.P. Church (1967-1968); Ellwood City Presbyterian Church (1968-1969). His special interest in archaeology in Jordan and Israel and early iron mining and smelting activities in Jordan eventually led him to serve on the Board of Trustees of the American Center of Oriental Research in Amman, Jordan. The collection includes a large number of copies and originals of all types of correspondence generated and received by him and kept in chronological order during his tenure at Western Theological Seminary through 1990. Typical of his correspondence are many letters from current and former students, former and current colleagues in ministry and teaching, letters expressing deep appreciation for his services, conviction of colleagues abroad that he would be a good candidate for the presidency of several liberal arts colleges and of a theological seminary, Fellowship Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan, and letters involving relationships with colleagues in the Middle East in regard to archaeological projects with which he was associated. The 1999 additions to the file include sermons and messages, outlines and other materials also relating to his work at Hope College and Western Theological Seminary.

Accession No: W91-1041
Provenance: Robert A. Coughenour
Donor: Robert A. Coughenour
Processed by: John H. Maassen, October 1994; March 1999

Biography

Robert A. Coughenour was born in Youngwood, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, a railroading town in the coal hills of Western Pennsylvania. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and taught high school band and choral music at Pine Township High School in Heilwood, Pennsylvania, before being drafted to the U.S. Army. He served in the 69th Infantry Division from 1954-1956. His service assignment was to sing with the direct the Fort Dix Soldiers' Chorus, a professional group, which sang on the weekly TV show *Soldier Parade*, a prime-time Sunday night show hosted by Arlene Francis in New York for ABC-TV, Channel 7, and singing on the Kate Smith Show in Philadelphia on alternate weeks.

After military service, Coughenour returned to teach music at Greensburg High School, Greensburg, Pennsylvania, later attending Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh,

Pennsylvania, graduating *cum laude*, in 1960. He was ordained to the gospel ministry of the United Presbyterian Church at Wallace Memorial U.P. Church where he served as Minister of Christian Education. Later, he served in a four-church rural parish, and in a single pastorate town church, all in Western Pennsylvania. Called to teach at Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, he began his graduate study for the Th.M. in New Testament at Pittsburgh Seminary with Professor Markus Barth as his mentor. During his faculty tenure at Westminster College (1962-1969), Dr. Coughenour served the following congregations: The Natrona Heights Presbyterian Church (interim minister, summer 1962), Wolf Creek U.P. Church and West Liberty U.P. Church (Stated Supply, 1963-1967), West Elizabeth U.P. Church (Stated Supply, 1967-1968), Ellwood City Presbyterian Church (Stated Supply, 1968-1969). He later earned the M.A. at Western Reserve University and the Ph.D. at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

In 1968, Coughenour came to Hope College to teach in the Department of Religion. While at Hope, he received the Den Uyl Faculty Scholarship, was the Rosensteil Fellow at Notre Dame University in 1973 and was awarded the H.O.P.E. award by the senior students of 1974.

In 1975, Coughenour accepted the invitation of the Board of Theological Education of the Reformed Church in America (RCA) to become the successor to Lester J. Kuyper as Professor of Old Testament at Western Theological Seminary. In 1978, he transferred his ordination credentials to the Zeeland Classis of the Reformed Church in America and in 1982 was honored by election to the fourth office of the RCA, Professor of Theology, by the General Synod of the Reformed Church. From 1982 to 1986, he was Academic Dean of the Seminary.

Coughenour's publications include *Enoch and Wisdom: A Study of the Wisdom Elements of Ethiopic Enoch*, which he wrote in 1972; *For Me To Live: A Festschrift for James L. Kelso*, which he edited in 1973; a monograph entitled *The Fifteen Churches of Umm-el-Jimal*, as well as one hundred eight articles and numerous reviews for biblical, theological and ecclesiastical journals. Coughenour has lectured in colleges and seminaries and in such diverse settings as the American Center of Oriental Research in Jordan, the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research in Collegeville, Minnesota, and the British Museum in London.

Scope and Content

The Robert A. Coughenour Papers consist of a large number of copies and originals of all types of correspondence generated and received by him and kept in chronological order during his tenure at Western Theological Seminary through 1990. Typical of his correspondence are many letters from current and former students who express deep appreciation for his role in their development. He had a rapport with students who years after graduation wrote to him of their personal triumphs and concerns. Also typical is correspondence in the same vein with former and current colleagues in ministry and teaching. He often served as a reference for students and others seeking admission to graduate schools or appointments as pastors. He was in demand in the West Michigan area as a supply pastor and as a teacher of adult Church School classes as evidenced by letters expressing deep appreciation for his services. Other letters reflect the conviction of colleagues abroad that he would be a good candidate for the presidency of several liberal arts colleges and of a theological seminary. Correspondence also reflects a deep appreciation and involvement of the Coughenour family as members of the Fellowship Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan. Among the more technical are letters involving relationships with colleagues in the Middle East in regard to archaeological projects with which he was associated.

The 1999 additions to the file include sermons and messages, outlines and other materials also relating to his work at Hope College and Western Theological Seminary.

Container List

Box 1

Apocryphal Literature

Ballad of Manasseh, A Poem by Joy Tobin
Inter-testament History Notes and Paper
Wisdom of Solomon Outline
Sirach paper and notes
Maccabean Literature paper and notes
Josephus "War of the Jews" notes
Judith paper
Testament of the Patriarchs
II Esdras paper and notes
Martyrdom of Isaiah paper
Psalms of Solomon Paper
Jubilees Paper

Articles and Papers (13 folders A-Z)

A

Advent, Wisdom's Way Church Herald (hereafter CH) 12/2/83
ACOR letter on DSS, copper scroll correspondence with Pierre Bikai at ACOR
What's So Important About Abraham? A four session teaching tool
The Ahitophel Syndrome 10/10/78
Amman-Naur Road Survey (for USAID) 25 September 1986
Astrology papers (three published papers) CH
American Beliefs lectures// Hope College Summer Institute, 1972
Notes for Middle East Peacemakers published in 1992
Worship As A Learning Occasion a meditation on Apocalyptic lit.
Seminar Papers on Apocalyptic Literature
Ascension Day Service 5/12/88

B

Places of Worship in the Bible, Pss. Seminar
What's New in Biblical Archaeology? 10/3/84
Biblical View of "Mankind"
Biblical Motifs in "Cry the Beloved Country" 1975
Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry, Outline
Biblical Content Examination for WTS entrance, 1984
Martin Buber, A paper 1978 41 pp.

C

Children at the Lord's Table MSS for Theological Commission
On the Canaanite Extermination a paper 1958
Cheap Shots and the Gospel, a WTS chapel meditation
Committal Service for Steve Gordon 5/14/88
Constellations and Confessions / MSS for Astrology papers
Conversation on Israel in the Bible for Ref Rev.
Fullness of Life in Christ Col. 2:11,12
The Covenant Theme
Coughenour on The Westminster College Seal
Coughenour family tree, 1975
Chicken Little and the Word a paper
Cosmic Christ, In Him All Things Hold Together Lecture/ Inauguration as Dean

D

DSS *Holland Sentinel* Article + Was Jesus an Essene?
Kerygma of Deuteronomy 1995
Divided Kingdoms a research project at Pgh Seminary, 4/3/58
Doctrine of God lecture notes Fall 1957

E

Education for a Faith-Full Journey WTS RCA Educator's Conference Keynote
Lecture, Oct. 1980
Book of Enoch 11/28/66 paper and notes
Establishing a World-View for the 1980s PakSak winter 1981
Exegesis of Gen. 21:8-14 for Noel Freedman 12/16/63
Enoch and Wisdom an excerpt from the book by RAC pp. 119-124

F

Fifteen Churches of Umm el-Jimal MSS
Fullness of Life in Christ
From an Angel's Angle Poiema 12/4/84

G

Genesis 3:20-24 Before Abraham and Sarah
Excerpts from "The Holy Spirit and Justification in Galatians" by RAC
A Critique of the books of Donald E. Gowan, a lecture at Pgh Seminary

H

Hearing and Heeding, Ref Rev. article 1987
Heart of Christmas, a poem
Historical Context of Habakkuk and Hebrew Helps for Habakkuk
"Shape and Vehicle of Puritan Hermeneutics" Ref Rev. 1976
Personal Reflections on the Meaning of Hope, a response to the HOPE award
from Hope College, 1974
History of Israel Course outline

I

Inclusive church paper and correspondence 1988
Inter-testament history notes 1959
Introduction of RAC to WTS Board, 9/75

J

A Perspective on Justice in a Wisdom Context
The Anti-Rationalist Movement in Medieval Judaism
Just Wondering, Poema

K

A Tribute to James L Kelso July 1, 1978
Also// A Tribute to James L Kelso for ASOR March 1979
Also// Biblical Archaeology MSS of Kelso Tribute by David McCreery

L

Life at Donnelly 1973
The Donnelly Experience 1973

M

Maccabean Literature
Meaning Evaders CH July 1978
Meditation for Virginia and Lewis Beem June 3, 1994
A Musing on the Ways of Providence Poema 10/18/76

N

NRSV: A Review for Perspectives May 1990

O

Out Where the Beat Goes On Ref Rev. MSS
On Being Dean as of October 8, 1982 (a hundred days) Poema

P

Piety is Not a Four Letter Word July, 1, 1984
The Palm Sunday Tradition
Preaching in Lent 1982 WTS seminar on preaching with SAR
Preaching in Lent 1984 WTS seminar on preaching with DJ Bruggink
The Problem of My Professional Career
Progress and the Pith Helmet CH 10/19/1984
Program Possibilities and listing of possible topics for lectures and presentations
Preaching the Old Testament for Gary Wilterdink's preaching class/WTS
Introduction to the Prophets, Lecture notes WTS
Psalm 12 paper "Generation of the Lie" published 1976

R

Rhythms of the Church Year, Keynote Speech for Christian Educators, Feb 5, 1994

Rashi: medieval interpreter Lecture at Michigan Academy of Arts and Letters, 1973

A Rosewood Kaleidoscope
Retreat for Christian Growth

S

Success Factors 1974 speech for National Honor Society West Ottawa HS

Scene of Jesus' Arrest Mar 25// devotional Study

Sin and Anxiety/ a paper

T

They Did It With Mirrors! 1987

Taking the Fifth Seriously CH Nov 7/1986

What It Looks Like to Be a Teacher 1979

U-Z

A View of Value from a Servant of Yahweh Ref Rev. 1971

Wardeh Report 1976

Wardeh Lecture at the British Museum 1984

Wisdom is the Principal Thing CH 1976

Beginnings in Wisdom Perspectives, 1990

Wisdom for Today Camp Byron conference series August 1984

Wisdom in Transition Chapter III of A Thread of Wisdom /RAC

Wisdom Literature of the Bible 13 lessons for SS Guide, 1984

A Proposal for the ATLA Bibliographic Series Wisdom Lit. 1750-1988 RAC and Paul Smith

The Wisdom Stance of Enoch's Redactor Journal for the Study of Judaism XII, Nos. 1,2.

A Word to Graduating Seniors Holland Sentinel

Woe Oracles in Ethiopic Enoch Journal for Study of Judaism, Correspondence with Georg Fohrer and C. Vander Woude re:these articles

Zionism and the return to Palestine a lecture, 1991

Women in Ministry in the Old Testament, an outline for presentation 10/28/1975

Book Reviews

Certificates of honors and resolution

Correspondence, 1977-1996 (3 folders)

Correspondence re Christian Cartoon concept, 1984

Curricula Vitae (RAC)

Fiema, Z.T., Correspondence, c. 1970s

Funeral Services

Henry Tuls, Calvary Church

Paul Timmer, Hope College
Os Cook, August 29, 1994
Harpers Bible Dictionary, Article for 1970s
Homiletics, 1957-1958
International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Articles for
Mahanaim, A Search for, ca. 1979
Old Testament Theology
Old Testament Ethics, Fundamentals in, 1995
Pastoral Theology Notebook, 1959-1960
People to Stay Alive By, 1970
Poetry, by RAC
Preaching after Epiphany, 1985
Psalms, Studies in

Box 2

Robinson, H. Wheeler, A Tribute to, 1987
Sabbath, Institution of, 1974
Sabbatical, 1986-1987
Sermons and Message (3 folders)
 Folder 1
 Seminar Papers on Interpretation of Apocalyptic Literature
 Living as the Gifted (Lk 4:16-23; 1 Cor. 12:4-6)
 When Life Becomes a Grab Bag (John 10:10)
 Life With God in the Picture (Ps. 27)
 Labor Day Perspectives
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 The Bed's Too Short (Isaiah 28:20)
 Incarnate for a Reason (Hebrews 2:14,15)
 Important Resurrection Results (Cor. 15:3-5, 12-20-22, 55)
 Imperatives for Life (1Chronicles 28:9)
 Images of Life Series: Treasure of Life; The Way of Life; House of Living
 Stones
 Of Greatest Importance 1 Cor. 2:2 (RAC's First sermon)
 I denied Him (1st person sermon)
 How Long O Lord? – on Habakkuk
 History in the Midst of Holiness 11/6/94- Calvary
 Hope Heritage and Joy (Ps. 145:4-7: 1 Peter 1:3-9)
 The Heart of the Gospel (Acts 10:34-44)
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 They Did It With Mirrors (Exodus 38:8)
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 The Love of Life Controls Us (A message on Stewardship/ 2 hour
 presentation)

Listen to the Lyrics (Lk. 2:25-40)
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Fun House Mirrors and Me! (Baccalaureate Address WO High School,
1979)
Mid-Winter Melancholy – 1977 on Ecclesiastes

Folder 2

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New Names, New Faces, New Life
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Peers and Pressure (2 Tim 2:8-15)
A Pattern for Praise (Isa 12:1-6)
On Understanding Right Proportions (Isa 28:23-29; 2 Tim 2:1-7)
A Christian Spirituality for the 21st Century – An Anti-New Age Message
Reformed for What? From What? (Ephesians 1:3-14)
A Reason for Trust (1959)
If Christ has Not Risen...
The Role of Christian Education (1960)
Listen to the Lyrics (3) Speaking from Silence
Seven Last Word Series
Father Forgive Them (1993)
The Search for Stability
Witches, Goblins, and the Christian Faith
Wise Guys and Wisdom
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Standing on Holy Ground
Ways for Praise (Ps 33:1-12)
Water, Water Everywhere (Ex. 17:17; Ps. 95:1-11; John 4:7-15)
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Two Dogs Killed a Lion (Ps. 19:7; 1 Cor. 12:12-30)
Twins (John 20:19-31)
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Sustenance for Servants (Isa. 50:4)

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When Faith Yields New Life (Gen. 12:1-8; Roman 4:1-17)
Christian Freedom (1962)
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Charge to Mike Molenaar (1991)
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