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**W88-0037.10. Dykstra, John A. (1886-1968). Papers, 1915-1968.  
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Western Theological Seminary

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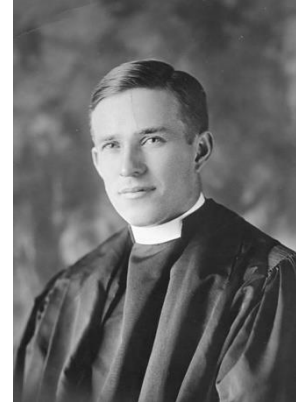
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**W88-0037.10.** Dykstra, John A. (1886-1968).  
Papers, 1915-1968. 5.00 linear ft.

### Abstract

Hope College class of 1909, New Brunswick Theological Seminary class of 1912, and minister of the Reformed Church in America from 1912 until 1968. Materials include sermons, prayers, radio messages, articles, and correspondence, and material on Irene Dykstra.



Accession No: W88-0037.10  
Provenance: John A. Dykstra  
Donor: Irene Dykstra  
Photographs: 5 images (Box 1; 1 digital)  
Processed by: Chad A. Boorsma, March 1994  
Leon Witteveen, October 2002

### Biography

John Albert Dykstra was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on June 10, 1886. After graduating from Central High School in Grand Rapids in 1905, he attended Hope College and graduated in 1909. Heeding a call to the ministry, he enrolled in New Brunswick Theological Seminary in New Jersey. After graduating in 1912, he was ordained as a minister of the Reformed Church in America (RCA). In 1924, Dykstra was awarded the Doctor of Divinity degree from Hope College. He also did graduate work at Princeton Theological Seminary from 1909-1910.

Dykstra married Irene Staplekamp in 1913. They had two children, John Dean and William Dwight. John Dean followed in his father's footsteps and was ordained an RCA minister in 1943.

Dykstra's first charge was pastor of First Reformed Church in Catskill, New York, where he served from 1912-1917. He then moved to New York City and pastored the Hamilton Grange Reformed Church. After declining two calls to Central Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, he finally accepted their invitation in 1919 to become their pastor. For the next 36 years he served the growing downtown congregation until his retirement in 1954. Central's consistory declared him "minister emeritus" following his retirement, and he and his wife were also appointed church historians in 1955. Along with being church historians, the Dykstras were commissioned by the consistory to write a history of the congregation, which was published in 1968.

Due to his excellent preaching ability and leadership style, Dykstra became well-known throughout the city and the RCA. He was elected president of the RCA's General Synod in 1939 and served a number of years on the Board of Domestic Missions and the Board of Trustees of Hope College. In 1946, he was the featured speaker on CBS's "Church of the Air" broadcast, with music being provided by Central's Senior Choir. Dykstra was also knighted into the Order of Orange-Nassau of the Netherlands in 1950 for his work for the Dutch in World War II and was listed for many years in *Who's Who in America*.

John A. Dykstra died on July 12, 1968, following a heart attack.

## Scope and Content

The John A. Dykstra papers consist of material from 1915-1968. Included in the collection are sermons, prayers, radio messages, funeral messages, articles, graduate work at Princeton Theological Seminary, lecture notes on sermon delivery, speeches, correspondence, and material about his wife, Irene Dykstra.

The strength of this collection is the large number of sermons, which cover nearly all of Dykstra's ministry. Most of the messages were preached either in Hamilton Grange Reformed Church in New York City or Central Reformed Church in Grand Rapids. The first series of sermons is organized according to the scripture on which the message is based. This series is arranged by the order of the books of the Bible. The second series is arranged by the topic of the sermon, since most of these sermons have no scripture passage listed. These messages are arranged alphabetically by topic.

For additional information on John A. Dykstra, please see H88-0049, which is the Hope College collection on Dykstra.

## Container List

### Box 1

Articles, 1939-1956, n.d.  
Biographical Material, 1939-1968  
Central Reformed Church, Bulletins/Promotional Material, 1931-1961, n.d.  
Clipping, *Grand Rapids Herald*, 1943  
Correspondence, 1919-1968, n.d.  
Dedication Booklet, Dykstra Hall, 1967  
Dykstra, Irene, 1934-1962  
Funeral Messages/Tributes, n.d., 1940-1954  
Hamilton Grange Reformed Church (Bulletins), 1918-1919  
Knighthood, Program and Clipping, 1950  
Lecture Notes on Sermon Delivery, n.d.  
Pastoral Internship Study, n.d.  
Photographs, John A. Dykstra (4 images)  
Prayers  
    Hope College, n.d., 1944-1948  
    Miscellaneous, n.d., 1944-1954  
    Pastoral, 1943-1954  
    Radio, n.d., 1932-1956  
Princeton Theological Seminary (graduate work), ca. 1909  
Radio Messages, 1936-1950  
Recognition Service for Reverend John A. Dykstra, DD, 1961 (audiotape cassette and digital)  
Sermons (classified by scripture, 56 folders)  
    Genesis, n.d., 1919-1953  
    Exodus, n.d., 1916-1954

Numbers, 1921-1949  
Deuteronomy, n.d., 1916-1950  
Joshua, n.d., 1919-1949  
Judges, n.d., 1916-1954  
I & II Samuel, n.d., 1919-1948  
I Kings, 1916-1949  
II Kings, n.d., 1917-1948  
I & II Chronicles, n.d., 1923-1945  
Nehemiah, 1950  
Job, n.d., 1916-1948  
Psalms, n.d., 1916-1953 (2 folders)  
Proverbs, n.d., 1915-1952  
Ecclesiastes, n.d., 1917-1933  
Song of Solomon, n.d., 1929-1952  
Isaiah, n.d., 1918-1954  
Jeremiah, n.d., 1943-1953  
Lamentations, 1945-1946  
Ezekiel, 1946-1947  
Daniel, n.d., 1931-1950  
Hosea, n.d., 1947  
Amos, 1916-1933  
Obadiah, 1917-1930  
Jonah, 1916-1933  
Micah, 1945  
Habakkuk, 1923-1944  
Zechariah, 1922-1947  
Malachi, n.d., 1928-1947  
Matthew, n.d., 1916-1954 (2 folders)  
Mark, n.d., 1916-1946

Box 2

Sermons (cont.)

Luke, n.d., 1916-1954  
John, n.d., 1916-1954 (2 folders)  
Acts, n.d., 1921-1954  
Romans, n.d., 1944-1946  
I Corinthians, n.d., 1916-1954  
II Corinthians, n.d., 1917-1950  
Galatians, n.d., 1916-1950  
Ephesians, n.d., 1915-1954  
Philippians, n.d., 1916-1954  
Colossians, n.d., 1918-1949  
I Thessalonians, 1916-1934  
I Timothy, n.d., 1930-1954  
II Timothy, n.d., 1919-1950

Titus, n.d., 1927-1935  
Philemon, 1931  
Hebrews, n.d., 1918-1949  
James, n.d., 1945-1952  
I Peter, n.d., 1921-1953  
II Peter, n.d., 1919-1935  
I John, n.d., 1919-1948  
Jude, 1930  
Revelation, n.d., 1916-1952  
Sermons (classified by subject, 2 folders)  
Apostles' Creed, n.d., 1917-1953  
Ascension, n.d., 1921-1933  
Baptism, 1923  
Bethlehem, n.d.  
Blessings, 1923  
Christ, n.d., 1917-1923  
Christian Education, n.d.  
Christian Endeavor, n.d.  
Christmas, n.d., 1915  
Church, 1916-1919  
Communion, n.d., 1933-1950  
Conduct, 1916  
Divorce, n.d.  
Easter, n.d., 1917-1925  
Education, n.d.  
Enthusiasm, 1924  
Faith, n.d., 1921-1924  
Heidelberg Catechism, 1916-1933  
Home, n.d.  
Ideals, n.d.  
Immortality, 1920  
John the Baptist, 1916  
Judgement, 1922  
Missions, n.d., 1921  
Modernism, n.d., 1921  
Morals, n.d.  
Palm Sunday, 1931  
Patriotism, n.d., 1921  
Pentecost, n.d.  
Power, n.d.  
Prayer, n.d.  
Prohibition, n.d., 1916  
Saints, 1917  
Spring, 1923  
Stewardship, 1925-1948  
Thanksgiving, n.d., 1952

Trials, n.d.  
Youth, n.d., 1917  
Speeches, n.d., 1917-1942  
Study on the Psalms, n.d.

Box 3

Book of Common Order, 1946  
*Heavenly Days*, by John A. Dykstra, 1944 (2 copies)

Box 4

Audio Record Discs  
Radio Recording of Central Reformed Church of Grand Rapids Service, May 30,  
1948 (3 items)

Box 5

Diplomas  
Irene Judith Stapelkamp, Hope College Preparatory School, June 1908  
John Albert Dykstra, New Brunswick Theological Seminary, May 16, 1912

Oversized (See WTS Oversized Collections)

Photographs  
11th Session of General Synod, Reformed Church in America, Asbury Park, New  
Jersey, June 1923 (1 image; 1 panoramic)  
Unidentified Group of Men at New Brunswick Theological Seminary, n.d. (1  
image; 1 panoramic)