

The Archive of Women in Theological Scholarship  
The Burke Library (Columbia University Libraries)  
At Union Theological Seminary

Finding Aid for

**George W. Barrett Papers, 1969-2003**



Photo courtesy of: <http://www.stalbanswestwood.com/barrett.htm>

Finding Aid prepared by:  
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Updated for web by Kristy Riggs, 2010

**Summary Information**

Creator: Bishop George West Barrett, 1908 - 2000  
Title: George Barrett Papers, 1969-2003  
Inclusive dates: 1969-2003  
Bulk dates: 1974-1999  
Abstract: Bishop George Barrett, retired as Bishop of Rochester, 1970; irregularly ordained Episcopal women priests in Washington D.C. 1975.  
Correspondence, publications and audio/visual materials related to Washington irregular ordinations.  
Size: 2 boxes, 0.75 linear feet,  
Storage: Onsite storage  
Repository: The Burke Library  
Union Theological Seminary  
3041 Broadway  
New York, NY 10027  
Phone: 212-851-5612  
Fax: 212-851-5613  
Email: [archives@uts.columbia.edu](mailto:archives@uts.columbia.edu)

## Administrative Information

- Provenance:** Alison Palmer donated this selection of Bishop Barrett's papers to the Archives of Women in Theological Scholarship in May 2008. Bishop Barrett had given these papers to Reverend Palmer shortly before his death to dispose of at her will. Tina Barrett's written letter of agreement to the disposition of these papers is included in the collection. The bulk of the papers belonging to Bishop Barrett's papers are to be found at the Episcopal Church Archives in Austin, Texas.
- Access:** Archival papers are available to registered readers for consultation by appointment only. Please contact archives staff by phone, fax or email [archives@uts.columbia.edu](mailto:archives@uts.columbia.edu), as far in advance as possible.
- Access Restrictions:** The collection is unrestricted.
- Preferred Citation:** Item description, box #, folder #, George Barrett Papers, Archives Of Women in Theological Scholarship, (Columbia University Libraries), The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, New York.

## Biography

George W. Barrett was born in Iowa City, Iowa in 1908. His family soon moved to Pasadena, CA where he grew up. Barrett received bachelor degrees from UCLA and the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, MA. He also studied at Occidental College and the General Theological Seminary in New York. In 1936 he married Emma Dee Hanford, a marriage which later ended in divorce. Barrett served as rector of St. Mark's, Upland, CA, St. Luke's in Monrovia, CA and St. James's in Los Angeles. In 1963 he became Bishop of Rochester, NY.

Barrett strongly advocated for justice and peace in the church and society. In 1965-66, Barrett led the national Episcopal Church's House of Bishops Committee on the place of women in ministry. He was an ardent supporter for women's ordination in the Episcopal Church. On September 7, 1975, he ordained four women (Eleanor Lee McGee, Alison Palmer, Betty Powell Rosenberg and Diane Tickell) in a highly controversial ceremony held at St. Stephen and the Incarnation in Washington D.C. He was temporarily banned from acting as minister, but his actions were an integral step towards the Episcopal Church's approval of women's ordination at the General Convention in 1976.

In 1970, Barrett retired as Bishop of Rochester and moved to California. In the same year, he married Bettina Tvede Barrett. In 1979 he became the Bishop in Residence at St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Los Angeles. Barrett later became the Bishop in Residence at Trinity Church in Santa Barbara. He died in December 2000 at the age of 92 of renal failure following his decision to discontinue dialysis.

## Collection Scope and Content Note

The Papers consist of personal and professional correspondence and publications. Topics include the ordination of the Washington Four, female ordination and transcripts and ordinances from the Episcopal Church. The correspondence includes newspaper clippings, church newsletters and statements made by Barrett and other church leaders. Publications include books and audio cds by Bishop Robert L. DeWitt, audio tapes by Barrett and Alison Palmer and video tapes by Barrett.

The collection is housed in 2 boxes:

- **Box 1: Correspondence, 1974-1999 (1 box, 0.5 lin.ft.)**  
This series contains personal and professional correspondence. Due to the sensitive clinical nature of much of the material, this series is restricted. Arrangement is chronological.
- **Box 2: Publications, 1971-2001 (1 box, 0.25 lin. ft.)**  
Series 2 contains publications and audio/visual materials by Bishop Barrett, Rev. Alison Palmer and Bishop Robert DeWitt. Also included are newspapers from 1975.

## Processing

When the Burke Library acquired Bishop Barret's papers, an attempt was made to maintain the original order of this selection of his papers. However to enable clarity of access, correspondence was arranged into chronological order. Folded materials were flattened. Newspaper clippings were photocopied on acid free paper. Staples, rubber bands, and metal clips were removed. All materials were placed in acid-free folders and boxes.

**Contents List**

## Box Folder Contents

1	1	Donation Deed and Correspondence, 2007-8
1	2	Correspondence: 1974
1	3	Correspondence: Jan-July 1975
1	4	Correspondence: Aug 1975
1	5	Correspondence: Sept 1975
1	6	Correspondence: Oct-Dec 1975
1	7	Correspondence: 1976
1	8	Correspondence: 1977
1	9	Correspondence: 1978-1999
1	10	Correspondence: undated
2	1	Issues of <i>Episcopal Diocese, Washington Diocese, de-liberation</i> , Nov-Sept, 1975
2	2	Alison Palmer interviews Bishop Barrett, May 1994: 2 Audio Cassette Tapes
2	3	George Barrett Video tapes: <i>George Barrett: From the Barrett Center and Benevolent Subversion: The Ordination of Women</i>
2	4	Robert L DeWitt Audio CDs: "One Man's Maine" and "Interview"; Booklets: re: Alzheimer's