

The Archive of Women in Theological Scholarship
The Burke Library
Union Theological Seminary

Finding Aid for

The Re-Imagining Community Records, 1988-2000



Finding Aid prepared by: Leslie Reyman, May 2001
Revised by: Elizabeth Russey, July 2002

Summary Information

Creator: The Re-Imagining Community, 1993-
Title: The Re-Imagining Community Records
Inclusive dates: 1988-2000
Bulk dates: 1993-2000
Abstract: An Ecumenical Christian movement working to challenge patriarchy in the church and society. Newsletters, publications, videotapes, audiotapes, and copies of records related to the conferences of the Re-Imagining Community; minutes, publications, and miscellaneous records of the governing board of Re-Imagining.
Size: 3.0 linear feet
Storage: Onsite storage
Repository: The Burke Library
Union Theological Seminary
3041 Broadway
New York, NY 10027
Phone: 212-280-1502
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Email: archives@uts.columbia.edu

Administrative Information

- Provenance: The Re-Imagining Community donated its records to the Archives of Women in Theological Scholarship in 1999. A subsequent donation of material was made in 2001.
- Access restrictions: Some files in Series III concerning conference registrations and scholarship applications are restricted until 2018. The remainder of the collection is unrestricted.
- Preferred Citation: item, folder title, box number, The Re-Imagining Community Records, Archives of Women in Theological Scholarship, The Burke Library, Union Theological Seminary

Organizational History

The Re-Imagining Community is a grassroots, ecumenical movement that was organized to challenge what it sees as a patriarchal church hierarchy, promoting justice and equality in the church and society as a whole. The Community centered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, calls for the revitalization of the Christian church.

The Re-Imagining Community is an outgrowth of a “global theological colloquium” held in November 1993 in Minneapolis, Minnesota that gathered women, scholars, and church leaders together to address the goals of the World Council of Churches report, *Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women*. Mary Ann Lundy, who worked in the national office of the Presbyterian Church, first had the idea to hold the conference five years earlier in 1988. As Lundy began to garner support for her plan, a group of women at a retreat in Minnesota chose the name “re-imagining,” trying to capture the idea of a new image in the church. A group of nearly 150 volunteers, both clergy and laypersons, worked together to plan, produce and implement the Re-Imagining Conference. It drew more than 2,000 people from around the world. The conference was sponsored by the Minnesota, Greater Minneapolis, and St. Paul Area Councils of Churches and supported partially with funds from several denominations.

In 1993 the *Christian Century* listed the heightened involvement of women in the church as one of the top ten religious stories of the year. Unfortunately, the Re-Imagining movement has encountered hostility and backlash from groups within several denominations, including the United Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church (USA). They, and other conservative critics, charged that the conference was heretical and sought to prevent church funds from supporting any further Re-Imagining activities. The PCUSA called for the resignation of Mary Ann Lundy in 1994.

Ironically, it was these actions that sparked the call to continue the Re-Imagining experience. In February 1994, nine women friends met and drafted a statement to the press, “A Time of Hope, A Time of Threat.” Over 800 endorsements followed. After a number of discussions and debates, in September 1994, the Re-Imagining Community was incorporated with a coordinating council of lay and clergy volunteers to continue the work begun in 1993.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The records of the Re-Imagining Community consist of organizational newsletters and other publications; audio and videotapes of conferences; copies of minutes, financial records, and correspondence.

The collection is organized into three series:

- Series I: Publications, 1994-2000 (0.5 lin. ft.)
This series consists of the Quarterly Newsletter, arranged chronologically and miscellaneous other publications.
- Series II: Audiotapes, 1993-1998 (0.5 lin. ft.)
Many of the sessions and speeches given at Re-Imagining Conferences were recorded on audiotape. This series contains 44 cassette tapes from various conferences. There was no conference held in 1997. Arrangement is chronological.
- Series III: Re-Imagining Event, 1988-2000 (1.25 lin. ft.)
This series consists of copies of organizational records pertaining to various aspects of the annual conference. It includes financial information, meeting minutes, correspondence, and program material. Arrangement is chronological and then topical within conference. **Access to files concerning conference registrations and scholarship applications are restricted until 2018.**
- Series IV: Administrative Records, 1994-2000 (0.75 lin. ft.)
This series consists copies of the general files, including correspondence, newspaper clippings, brochures, and committee minutes, of the Re-Imagining Community. The majority of the records concern the Coordinating Council, the governing body of Re-Imagining. Arrangement is topical by folder heading. Of particular interest in this series is the official document incorporating the "Re-Imagining Community." The majority of this series is restricted until 2018.

Processing

Folded materials were flattened. Newspaper clippings were photocopied on acid free paper. Staples, rubber bands, and metal clips were removed and replaced with plastic clips. All materials were placed in acid-free folders and boxes.

Contents List

Series I: Publications, 1994-2000

Box 1

Re-Imagining [1994-1999]
 “Re-Imagining God...Community...the Church” in *Church and Society* [1994]
Re-Membering and Re-Imagining, edited by Nancy J. Berneking and Pamela
 Carter Joern [1995]
*Made in Her Image: Exploring New Perspectives in the Bible and Christian
 History*
 Facilitator Guide [1997]
 Participant Resource Book [1997]
Bring the Feast: Songs from the Re-Imagining Community [1998]
Re-Imagining Journal [2000]

Series II: Audiotapes, 1993-1998

Box 1

Re-Imagining Conference
 1993 (24 cassettes)
 1994 (3 cassettes)
 1995 (6 cassettes)
 1996 (6 cassettes)
 1998 (15 cassettes)

Series III: Re-Imagining Event, 1988-2000

NOTE: Access to files concerning conference registrations and scholarship applications are restricted until 2018.

Box 1

“Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women”
 Evaluations [1994]
 Steering committee minutes [1988-1993] (3f)
 “Re-Imagining: Jesus, Christ, and Us”
 Evaluations [1994]
 Program [1994]
 Publicity [1994]
 *Registration [1994]
 “Soundings: Re-Imagining the Word” 1995 Conference
 Budget [1994-1995]
 Correspondence [1995]
 Committees
 Quest group [1995] (2f)
 Program Committee [1995]
 Evaluations and Thank-you letters [1995]
 Program [1995]
 Publicity [1995]

Series III: Re-Imagining Event, 1988-2000

Box 1 "Soundings: Re-Imagining the Word" (cont'd)

*Registration [1995]

Volunteers [1995]

Worship [1995]

Box 2

"Naming, Claiming, and Re-Imagining Power" 1996 Conference
Committees

Arrangements [1996]

Membership/publicity [1996]

Program Committee [1996]

Public Relations [1996]

Quest [1995-1996]

Ritual [1996]

Evaluations [1996]

Program [1996]

Publicity [1996] (3f)

"Re-Imagining Revival" 1998 Conference
Committees

Arrangements [1996-1998]

Fundraising [1998]

Planning ("Flow Committee") [1997-1998]

Evaluations [1998]

Exhibitors [1998]

Program [1998]

Publicity [1997-1998] (3f)

*Registration [1998]

*Scholarships [1998]

Speakers [1997-1998]

Volunteers [1998]

Box 3

"From Vision to Vessel" 2000 Conference

Evaluations [2000]

Program [2000]

Speakers [1999-2000]

Series IV: Administrative Records, 1994-2000

Box 1

Certificate of Incorporation [1994]

Coordinating Council

Correspondence [1994-2000] (6f)

Minutes [1994-2000] (7f)

E-Newsmail [1998-2000] (3f)

Faith Labs [1997-2000] (4f)

Series IV: Administrative Records, 1994-2000 (cont'd)

Box 2

Membership [1995-1997] (2f)
Public relations [2000]
Publicity [1995-1997] (4f)
Quarterly Worship [1999-2000] (2f)
Small Groups [1995-1999] (3f)
Worship [1998]