

Greater Minneapolis Interfaith Fair Housing Program Collection

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Collection number: B504, Accession # 1995.053.0001-.0001

Collection repository: Hennepin History Museum
2303 Third Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Collection title: Greater Minneapolis Interfaith Fair Housing Program Collection

Dates: 1959-1965

Extent: 1 box

Creator: Louise Walker McCannel

Language of material: English

Processed by: Sophie Hunt, 2019

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY

The Greater Minneapolis Interfaith Fair Housing Program promoted “residential dispersion,” or neighborhood desegregation, in Minneapolis and its surrounding communities between 1959 and 1964. It focused on promoting tolerance among white residents through such activities as education, pledge campaigns for sellers and lenders, and supporting social action groups within religious congregations. In addition to addressing housing discrimination in greater Minneapolis, the program served as an experimental model for similar efforts nationwide.

The leadership for this nonprofit included executive director James A. Tillman, Jr., and chair Louise Walker McCannel, along with a board of men and women representing various religious traditions. McCannel, the granddaughter of the Minneapolis lumber baron Thomas Barlow (T. B.) Walker, had previously held a position as curator of the Walker Art Center and was active in numerous other social issues. Tillman was an African American PhD candidate in sociology, who had worked in intergroup relations in the foreign service and university settings before being hired to direct the Greater Minneapolis Interfaith Fair Housing Program. His work as executive director included publishing a wide range of writing: articles for scholarly journals, manuals and guides, and updates describing the work of the program.

The program grew out of the Minneapolis Mayor’s Commission on Human Relations. During its first three years, it received most of its funding from the Christian Council for Social Action of the United Church of Christ, with other large donations from the Walker Foundation, the

Mayor's Commission, and Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church. In 1963, when the program's initial grant from the United Church of Christ expired, the Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church (both predecessors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) voted to increase their financial support. Additional contributions came from Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, and Jewish congregations.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Greater Minneapolis Interfaith Fair Housing Program Collection houses organizational records from the full span of this nonprofit's existence, from 1959 to 1965. The materials originally comprised nine volumes: Corporate Minutes and Records (folder 1); Records (folders 2-4); a collection of writing by James A. Tillman, Jr. (folder 5); two copies of Exhibits Portfolio (folders 6-15); and fiscal year books from the organization's second, third, and fourth years (folders 16-27). They are now arranged in folders following this original order. The year books were created by Louise Walker McCannel, chair of the Greater Minneapolis Interfaith Fair Housing Program board.

The collection is arranged in three series with no sub-series. The series include:

- Series 1: Organizational meeting minutes and records
- Series 2: Exhibits Portfolio
- Series 3: Louise McCannel year books

Together, these materials document the creation, activities, struggles, and eventual dissolution of a nonprofit that addressed racial discrimination from a private, interracial, and faith-based perspective when this issue was also at the forefront of state and national politics. Thanks to the program's involvement with religious communities, it is also a useful resource on the activities of Protestant and Jewish congregations in Minneapolis and its suburbs.

ACCESS

The collection is open for researches and has no restrictions.

COPYRIGHT

The researcher assumes the responsibility for ensuring copyright is followed. When and where possible the archive will provide information related to the copyright owners, but it will be the responsibility of the researcher to ensure copyright laws are followed. Requests for permission to publish material in this collection should be directed to the Archivist.

RELATED MATERIAL

Minnesota Historical Society:

- Greater Minneapolis Interfaith Fair Housing Program. Records, 1946-1989 (bulk 1959-1965): contains correspondence, minutes, financial records. These build on, and may in some cases duplicate, the contents of the present collection.
- Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches Collection: see especially Box 26, which contains information on the fair housing campaign of 1960-1963.
- T. B. Walker Foundation and Related Foundations Collection: describes Walker funding for other work by James A. Tillman, Jr.

COLLECTION INVENTORY

Series 1:

Folder

- 1 Corporate minutes and records, 1960-1964
- 2 Records - executive committee and board meeting minutes, 1959-1965
- 3 Records - financial records and progress reports, 1959-1963
- 4 Records - program proposals, 1959-1961
- 5 James A. Tillman, Jr. writing, 1962-1963

Series 2:

Folder

- 6 Exhibits Portfolio – Exhibits 1-2, circa 1962
- 7 Exhibits Portfolio – Exhibits 3-7, circa 1962
- 8 Exhibits Portfolio – Exhibits 8-12, circa 1962
- 9 Exhibits Portfolio – Exhibit 13, circa 1962
- 10 Exhibits Portfolio – Exhibits 14-22, circa 1962
- 11 Exhibits Portfolio (duplicate) – Exhibits 1-2, circa 1962
- 12 Exhibits Portfolio (duplicate) – Exhibits 3-7, circa 1962
- 13 Exhibits Portfolio (duplicate) – Exhibits 8-12, circa 1962
- 14 Exhibits Portfolio (duplicate) – Exhibit 13, circa 1962
- 15 Exhibits Portfolio (duplicate) - Exhibits 14-19, circa 1962

Series 3:

Folder:

- 16 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 2, September-December 1960
- 17 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 2, January-June 1961
- 18 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 2 – James Tillman writing, 1960-1961
- 19 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 2 – annual report, September 1961
- 20 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 3, September 1961-February 1962
- 21 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 3 – Tillman, “Suggested Guide,” 1962
- 22 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 3, March-August 1962
- 23 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 3 (duplicate), September 1961-February 1962
- 24 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 3 (duplicate) – Tillman, “Suggested Guide,” 1962
- 25 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 3 (duplicate), March-August 1962
- 26 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 4, September 1962-April 1963

- 27 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 4, May-August 1963
- 28 Louise W. McCannel year book, Year 4 – Task force materials, November 1962-August 1963



"This publication was made possible in part by the people of Minnesota through a grant funded by an appropriation to the Minnesota Historical Society from the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. Any views, findings, opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the State of Minnesota, the Minnesota Historical Society, or the Minnesota Historic Resources Advisory Committee."