The American Theological Society Records Collection

Collection Summary

Creator: American Theological Society
Dates: 1948-2006
Extent: 6 boxes, 3 linear feet
Language(s): English
Repository: Princeton Theological Seminary Library. Special Collections.

Historical Information

The American Theological Society was established in 1912 as the Theological Society with 28 members. William Adams Brown was the first president. The name was changed in 1926 to the American Theological Society. According to its constitution, the Society's purpose "shall be to promote the interests of present-day constructive theology, by the holding of meetings for the discussion of theological problems and for the furthering of acquaintance and fellowship among those working in this field, and by arranging for co-operation in theological investigation."

The Society's first meeting was held April 1912 at Union Theological Seminary in New York. Annual dues were $4 until 1930, when they were increased to $5. Women were admitted as members in 1936. Two or more issues papers were distributed to members prior to meetings. In 1947 members adopted the following statement:

"The American Theological Society is a professional society consisting primarily of theological scholars who feel themselves to be in the Christian tradition and who desire to engage in friendly discussion of problems that are mainly systematic. Theology is understood to include systematic, historical and Biblical disciplines and the philosophy, psychology and history of religion. The historical and descriptive disciplines in this context are considered primarily as the source of the materials for the discussion of systematic problems. That the maximum number of members be 65."

Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, New Jersey, has hosted the American Theological Society each year since 1980.

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**Scope and Content**

The collection consists of historical background materials and organizational records plus issue papers, articles, and reports written by ATS members. Chronological folders include member correspondence and memos for that year as well as annual meeting notices, schedules, agendas, reports, and minutes; treasurers’ and financial reports; membership lists and nominations.

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**Subjects**

Theology--Study and teaching--United States.

American Theological Society

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**Administrative Information**

**Preferred Citation**

The following is the acceptable citation for publication: The American Theological Society Records Collection, Special Collections, Princeton Theological Seminary Library.
Provenance

In March of 1996 the Society selected the Princeton Theological Seminary Archives to be the official repository of its records. Dr. Geoffrey Wainwright, who was ATS secretary from 1987 to 1995 and later president from 1996 to 1997, sent the initial deposit, which extended from the late 1950s up to 1996. John D. Godsey of Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., added to the collection in 2003. In 2007, Peter Slater, ATS secretary, transferred one box containing meeting minutes from 2000 to 2006, and St. Mark’s Library of the General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church in New York donated two additional boxes.

Access

There are no special restrictions to access of this collection. It may be examined by library patrons under the normal rules and conditions of Special Collections.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged chronologically.

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