A Finding Aid to the
Erwin Herman Papers

Manuscript Collection No. 822
Collection Summary

Title Erwin Herman Papers
Collection Number MS-822
Repository The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
Creator Herman, Erwin, 1923-2008
Extent 1.4 linear feet (1 record carton, 1 Hollinger box)
Language of the Material English

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch
Erwin Herman was ordained at the Hebrew Union College in 1949. He began his rabbinical life in congregations in Winston-Salem, NC and Scranton, PA. In 1957, he joined the staff of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, serving as Director of New Congregations. He had a special passion for young people in congregations and in the growing network of Reform camps. In 1965, he became the director of the Union’s Pacific Southwest region centered in Los Angeles. He and his wife Agnes spearheaded a campaign to advance equal justice and gay rights within the Reform movement and beyond. Rabbi Herman was a strong supporter in establishing the first Jewish gay congregation in America, Beth Chayim Chadashim, in Los Angeles.

Scope and Content
The Erwin Herman papers consist of sermons dating back to his student days at Hebrew Union College. Also included are correspondence files pertaining to his rabbinic work, his work in gay rights as an AIDS activist, plus exchanges with colleagues and congregants, together with personal and miscellaneous items.

Arrangement
This collection is arranged in one (1) series: A. General.

Terms of Access
The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.

Preferred Citation
Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Erwin Herman Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-822. Erwin Herman Papers. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Provenance
Received from Agnes Herman, Lake San Marcos, Calif., May 2009.

Processing Information
Processed by Kevin Proffitt, September 2011.

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Index Terms

Subjects AIDS activists / Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders / Jewish camps / Jews -- California -- Los Angeles / Rabbis
Personal Names Herman, Erwin, 1923-2008
Corporate Names Beth Chayim Chadashim (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Media Sermons

Series A. General, 1947-2008

Box and Folder Listing
Box 1. Folder 1. Miscellaneous items including letters, messages, sermons, and speeches, 1953-1998
Box 1. Folder 2. Correspondence from Joe Glaser, 1991-1992
Box 1. Folder 4. Stahl, Sam, 1993
Box 1. Folder 5. Letters to Editors, 1981-1986
Box 1. Folder 6. Unfinished Business [includes book review and correspondence], 1983
Box 1. Folder 7. Flying Blind [includes copy of story and correspondence notes], 1983
Box 1. Folder 8. Correspondence about chaplaincy, 1950
Box 1. Folder 10. Service of Installation for Michael Mayerson, 1990
Box 1. Folder 11. Freehling, 1991
Box 1. Folder 12. Ark Dedication [Temple Beth David], 1989
Box 1. Folder 13. SDRA Retreat, 1986
Box 1. Folder 14. Palm Desert service, 1990
Box 1. Folder 15. On the Calendar [Rosh Chodesh sermon], 1982-1983
Box 1. Folder 16. The Yanov Torah [includes cassette tape], 1983, 2008
Box 1. Folder 18. Jewish Myths: Mystique or Mystery talk, 1992
Box 1. Folder 24. Miscellaneous printed materials, 1960s-1970s, undated
Box 1. Folder 25. Promise of the Future Sermon, 1960
Box 1. Folder 28. Rabbi Herman's Talks, 1976, undated
Box 1. Folder 29. "It Was a Close Shave" short story, 1983, undated
Box 1. Folder 30. "Long May It Wave" poem, 1984
Box 1. Folder 31. Story ideas, 1982-1983, undated
Box 1. Folder 32. Miscellaneous printed materials, 1952-1953, undated
Box 1. Folder 33. Rabbi Herman [Personal materials], 1966
Box 1. Folder 34. Herman Sabbatical, 1968-1969
Box 1. Folder 35. Founders Day, 1987
Box 1. Folder 36. Shtklich, 1970s-1980s, undated
Box 1. Folder 37. Shabbaton, 1989
Box 1. Folder 38. Las Vegas High Holydays, 1993
Box 1. Folder 39. Miscellaneous personal materials [includes photographs], 19802, undated
Box 1. Folder 40. AIDS awareness materials, 1980s
Box 1. Folder 41. Jewish National Post materials, 1980s
Box 1. Folder 42. AIDS Committee Meeting, San Francisco, 1988
Box 1. Folder 43. AIDS Committee, 1989
Box 1. Folder 44. Current AIDS Resources, 1989-1990
Box 2. Folder 1. AIDS Committee, 1987
Box 2. Folder 2. AIDS Committee, 1988
Box 2. Folder 3. AIDS Committee meeting, March, 1990
Box 2. Folder 4. AIDS Committee meeting, 1991
Box 2. Folder 5. AIDS Committee meeting, Chicago, 1991
Box 2. Folder 6. AIDS Committee meeting, 1992
Box 2. Folder 8. Homosexuality Resources, 1970s-1990s, undated
Box 2. Folder 9. Changing Family brochure, 1980s