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# Paul S. Sanders Papers

1937-1972

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Read collection overview

Minister of the Methodist Church, lecturer, author, and Assistant and Associate Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Includes mainly handwritten or typescript notes for lectures and sermons and the typescript drafts, printers' proofs, correspondence, notes, and permission forms leading to the writing and publication of books and essays. Also contains correspondence; class notes taken as a student; course materials used as a professor; typescripts of theses; correspondence and typescript draft of unpublished book on the Bible as literature; book reviews; correspondence and organizational materials reflecting participation in LAOS (Layman's Academy for Oecumenical Studies, Amherst, MA), and other church-related activities; notebook of funeral records; and miscellaneous biographical items.

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**Massachusetts (West)**

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## Background on Paul S. Sanders

Paul Sanders, minister of the Methodist Church, lecturer, and educator, was born in Alabama in 1918. He held a B.A. in English from the University of Alabama in 1939, a B.D. from Emory University in 1942, a S.T.M. from Union Theological Seminary in 1947, a Th.D. from Union Theological Seminary in 1954, and an M.A. in English from the University of Massachusetts in 1965.

In 1942, Sanders was ordained to the Methodist ministry. He resigned from the ministry in 1960 and became a lay member of the Episcopal Church. In 1943 he was assistant minister in Columbus, Georgia and, from 1943 to 1946, he was a chaplain in the Navy. While in the reserves he was called again to serve from 1950 to 1952. In between his periods in the military he was associate minister and then pastor of St. Luke's Methodist Church, New York.

Sanders' career in education began in 1953 when he tutored Church History at Union Theological Seminary. He went on to become Assistant Professor of Religion at Amherst College from 1954 to 1958. He was Associate Professor of Church History at Vanderbilt University Divinity School from 1958 to 1960. From 1964 to 1966 he served as a visiting lecturer in Religion at Smith College. Finally, he taught as an Assistant and Associate Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts from 1965 until 1971, when he went on sabbatical. While at the University of Massachusetts, his most successful course was "The Bible as Literature".

From 1962 to 1969 Sanders was associated with the Layman's Academy for Oecumenical Studies, based in Amherst, Massachusetts. He served as a lecturer, instructor, and, during the years 1962 to 1964, he was associate director.

His most important writing and lecturing was done while he pursued his career in education. Other than his Th.D. thesis, Wesley's Sacramentalism in the Evolution of Early American Methodism, Sanders' writings include a book of essays he edited entitled Twentieth Century Interpretation of the book of Job, and an unpublished manuscript on "The Poetry of the Book Psalms", unfinished at the time of his death in 1972.

## Scope of collection

Bulk of the papers include handwritten and typescript notes for lectures and sermons, and the typescript drafts, printers' proofs, correspondence, notes and permission forms leading to the writing and publication of books and essays. Also biographical materials, correspondence, class notes taken as a student, course materials used as a professor, typescripts of theses, typescript draft of unpublished book on the Bible as literature, book reviews, correspondence and organizational materials reflecting participation in Laymen's Academy for Oecumenical Studies and other church-related activities, and notebook of funeral records. Major areas of interest in the writings include John Wesley, Methodism, church history, worship, and Bible study.

Records of the Laymen's Academy for Oecumenical Studies reflect Sanders work and activities for that organization and are held in Special Collections and University Archives, MS 20.

## Arrangement

This collection is organized into six series:

Series 1. Biography, 1940-1970

Series 2. Correspondence, 1944-1967

Series 3. Notes, 1937-1970

Series 4. Published Works and Manuscripts, 1946-1972

Series 5. Sermons, 1940-1960

Series 6. Subject File, 1961-1969

## Series descriptions

### Series 1. Biography

1940-1970

Arranged chronologically.

It includes diplomas, resumes, record of funerals, military citations, course schedules and more.

Two photographs of Sanders were separated from this series and placed in the University of Massachusetts photograph collection.

### Series 2. Correspondence

1944-1967

Arranged alphabetically according to the last name of the person or by the title of the corresponding organization.

Contains general correspondence. There is also some printed material that relates to or clarifies certain correspondence.

### Series 3. Notes

1937-1970

Contains class notes taken while Sanders was a student, and lecture notes written while he was a professor, and lay lecturer. There are also some printed materials, handouts, newspaper clippings, etc., which relate to and add relevance to the notes. Unfortunately, he left very little material from his association with the University of Massachusetts. The material includes a noncredit course in religion given at the Newman Center in 1955, proposals for a course in the study of the Bible as literature, plus some notes he had on classes other than the one he taught on the Bible.

Class notes he took as a student at the University of Massachusetts have been separated from his papers and placed with the English department papers (1964-1965). Correspondence relating to the notes and lectures has been kept with the related materials.

### Series 4. Published Works and Manuscripts

1946-1972

Arranged in two subseries: Book Material and Essay Material. Book Material is arranged chronologically according to publication date, or dates present on the unpublished material (an exception being the essays edited for Twentieth-Century Interpretation of the Book of Job which are arranged alphabetically according to author surname). Essay Material is arranged alphabetically according to the title of the published essay.

Included in this Book Material subseries are student theses; Twentieth-Century Interpretation of the Book of Job; and an unpublished manuscript for "The Poetry of the Book Psalms". Book reviews exist in this Essay Material subseries, arranged according to the journal they appeared in, and thereafter, according to the last name of the author of the work reviewed.

Correspondence relating to the essays, book reviews, and the major works remains with the related material.

### Series 5. Sermons

1940-1960

They are arranged alphabetically according to religious event, subject, or sermon title.

Consists entirely of sermons written during Sanders' ministry.

### Series 6. Subject File

1961-1969

The arrangement is alphabetical according to subject.

Includes organizational material from the Layman's Academy for Oecumenical Studies (LAOS) and MRI. Included as well is material on the topics of teaching religion and religion in public education.

Correspondence relating to these subjects remains with the associated material.

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University of Massachusetts Amherst. Department of English.

### Contributors

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