

Life and Work movement

Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work (Stockholm, 1925)

Continuation Committee of the Conference (1926-1930)

Universal Christian Council for Life and Work (1930-1938)

Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State (1937)

In the history of 20th century Christian ecumenism, the Life and Work movement represents the attempt of Protestant and Orthodox churches to reach consensus on the church universal's practical role in society. The movement began with a preliminary conference held in 1920 in Geneva, and culminated in two world councils: one at Stockholm in 1925, and another at Oxford, England in 1937. In between, a loosely constructed Continuation Committee, and then a formally constituted Council for Life and Work, maintained the ideals of the movement. Its formal end came in 1938 when it was incorporated into the preliminary founding stages of the World Council of Churches.

The Ecumenical Library's archival documentation of the Life and Work movement consists primarily of pamphlets published by its several, changing constitutive bodies, and by other organizations commenting on its work. The literature is arranged in 9 archival boxes, and 9 smaller folders, according to the schema below. Books on the movement's history can also be found by searching the online catalog under appropriate headings.

#1 [folder]: Documents preliminary to the Stockholm conference

1. Records of the Preliminary Meeting to Consider a Universal Conference of the Church of Christ on Life and Work, Geneva, Aug. 9-12, 1920 [2 copies]
2. Records of the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work: Minutes of the Meeting at Peterborough, England, April, 1921; Minutes of the Meeting at Halsingborg, Sweden, Aug. 1922.

3. American Section of the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work:
Condensed Minutes of the Meeting at Philadelphia, Nov. 1923.
4. Announcements of the Universal Conference of the Church of Christ on
Life and Work.
 - a. Unnumbered, undated announcement
 - b. Announcement II, undated [2 copies]
 - c. Announcement III, 1924

#2 [box]: Reports of Commissions to the Stockholm conference

1. American Section
 - a. Report of Commission I: The Church's Obligation in View of God's Purpose for the World [3 copies]
 - b. Report of Commission II: The Church and Economic and Industrial Problems [3 copies]
 - c. Report of Commission III: The Church and Social and Moral Problems [4 copies]
 - d. Report of Commission IV: The Church and International Relations [4 copies]
 - e. Report of Commission V: The Church and Christian Education [5 copies]
 - f. Report of Commission VI: Methods of Cooperative and Federative Efforts by Christian Communions [2 copies]
2. Report of Commission III: The Church and International Relations [in French, German, and English; 2 copies]
3. Report of Commission V: Methods of Cooperative and Federative Efforts by the Christian Communions [in French, German, and English; 3 copies]

#3 [folder]: Delegates to the Stockholm conference

1. List of Delegates [in French, German, and English] [2 copies]

#4 [folder]: Handbooks to the Stockholm conference

1. Official Tours to the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work at Stockholm.
2. Handbook [to the conference] [in French, German, and English; with map of Stockholm]

#5 [folder]: Message of the Stockholm conference

1. The Message of the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work [in folded sheets; 3 copies]

#6 [box]: Contemporaneous Interpretations of the Stockholm conference

1. Understanding: Being an Interpretation of the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work..., by Charles Henry Brent. New York: Longmans, Green, 1925. [4 copies, also cataloged in book collection]
2. Die Eiche: Vierteljahrsschrift für soziale und internationale Arbeitgemeinschaft, 13:4 Munich: Christian Kaiser, 1925 [the issue reports on speeches and discussions at the conference; in German]

#7 [box]: Minutes of the Continuation Committee of the Stockholm Conference

1. Minutes of the Meeting of the Continuation Committee, Aug. 26-30, 1926, Berne Switzerland [2 copies]
2. Minutes of the Meeting of the Continuation Committee, July 20-23, 1927, Winchester England
3. List of Members [attending the] Life and Work Continuation Committee, Winchester, July 20 to 25. [1 folded sheet]
4. [Announcement of the Continuation Committee meeting in Prague, 1928; including statements dated 1-30-28] [2 copies]
5. Minutes of the Meeting of the Continuation Committee, Sept. 2-5, 1928, Prague, Czechoslovakia. [4 copies]
6. Minutes of the Meeting of the Continuation Committee, Sept. 5-9, 1929, Eisenach, Germany. [2 copies]

7. Minutes of the Meeting of the Continuation Committee, Sept. 1-5, 1930, Chexbres, Switzerland [includes Constitution of the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work]

#8 [box]: Publications of the International Christian Social Institute, Geneva

This institute was founded in 1927 by the Continuation Committee of the Stockholm conference, to further mutual understanding among Christians, and to explore the social-ethical tasks of the church.

1. Studien und Dokumente, Heft 1: Die Fortsetzungsarbeit der Stockholmer Weltkirchenkonferenz, by Adolf Keller, 1929. [2 copies; a 3d copy is issued as "Separatabdruck aus der Internationalen kirchlichen Zeitschrift Bern, Heft 2, 1929]
2. Studien und Dokumente, Heft 2: Soziale Programme der Kirchen und freier religiöser Organisationen, 1929
3. The Churches and Sailors' Missions and the Welfare of Seamen [with preface by Oskar S. Bauhofer, Secretary of the Institute], 1929.
4. Studies and Documents, no. 3: The Churches and the Welfare of Seamen [with preface by Adolf Keller, General Secretary of the Institute], 1930 [2 copies]
5. Studies and Documents, English Series, no. 4: The Churches and Present-Day Economic Problems [Conference of Christian Social Workers, London, July 12-17, 1930], 1930. [6 copies].
6. Life and Work: Bulletin des internationalen Sozialwissenschaftlichen Instituts der Weltkirchenkonferenz für praktisches Christentum, no. 1, May 1927. [in German, French, and English]
7. Life and Work: Bulletin des internationalen Sozialwissenschaftlichen Instituts der Weltkirchenkonferenz für praktisches Christentum, no. 2, Nov. 1927. [in German, French, and English][2 copies]
8. Life and Work: Bulletin of the International Social Institute, no. 3 (Mar. 1928) [in German, French, and English]

9. Life and Work: Bulletin of the International Social Institute, no. 4-5 (July 1928) [in German, French, and English]
10. Life and Work: Bulletin of the International Social Institute at Geneva. English edition. Nos. 6-10 (Dec. 1928-May/June 1930)
11. Report of the Year 1927-1928

#9 [folder]: Constitution, Bye-Laws, and Directories of the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work [founded 1930, in Geneva]

1. Constitution and Bye-Laws [undated; 2 copies]
2. Constitution, Bye-Laws, and Membership [undated; 2 copies]
3. Membership and Directory of Addresses [printing date, 31-3-37]

#10 [box]: Minutes of Executive and Council meetings of the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work

1. Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee, Cambridge, England, Aug. 22-29, 1931
2. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council, Geneva, Aug. 11-13, 1932.
3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee, Novi-Sad, Yugoslavia, Sept. 9-12, 1933 [4 copies]
4. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council, Aug. 24-30, 1934, Fano [3 copies]
5. Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee, Chamby s. Montreux, Switzerland, Aug. 18-22, 1935 [3 copies]
6. Minutes of the Council, Aug. 21-25, 1936, Camby sur Montreux.

#11 [folder]: Publications of the Research Department of the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work

In 1931, the International Christian Social Institute was reorganized in conjunction with the Research Department of the Council.

1. The Churches and the Stabilisation of Easter, 1933 [2 copies]
2. The Churches and the Reform of the Calendar, 1935

#12 [folder]: Ephemera associated with the Universal Christian Council on Life and Work

1. The Newly Chosen President of the Universal Christian Council: The Reverend William Adams Brown [1 folded sheet]
2. Brief Answers to Nine Questions About the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work [1 folded sheet]

#13 [box]: Documents preliminary to the Oxford conference

1. Church, Community, and State: A World Issue, by J. H. Oldham, 1935.
2. The Church and the World Crisis: Studies looking toward The World Conference on Church, State, and Society, to be held at Oxford..., by Charles H. Corbett [undated].
3. What the Oxford conference of 1937 may mean for the life of the church: A paper prepared ... for the use of the American delegates, by William Adams Brown [undated].
4. The Issues at Oxford: A Report, by the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work [results of a poll on issues to be addressed at conference]
5. Information Service, Saturday, June 19, 1937: Oxford Conference number, by the Dept. of Research and Education of the Federal Council of Churches
6. Communications over Church and Community ..., by Ecumenical Council in the Netherlands: Commission for Study of the Subjects Proposed for Discussion at the Oxford Conference [undated].
7. The Church, Community and State: A Series of Books prepared for the World Conference to be held in Oxford ... [undated, 1 folded page]
8. The World Conference on Life and Work, Oxford, July 12 to July 26, by Amerop Travel Service [a tours brochure]

#14 [box]: Publications of the Oxford conference

1. Delegates' handbook
2. Notes on devotional sessions and suggestions for prayer
3. "Suggestions for Prayer," from A Call to Prayer [2 excerpted pages]
4. Convocation, July 17, 1937 [in Latin]
5. Service of worship, July 19, 1937
6. Service of worship, July 20, 1937
7. Programme [for July 20, 1937] [1 folded sheet]
8. Service of worship, July 23, 1937
9. Closing service of thanksgiving and dedication, July 25, 1937
10. Conference hymn book...drawn from Communio
11. Draft report on The church and the state [Section II]
12. Draft report on The church and war [section V; 2 copies]
13. A Message from the Oxford conference to the Christian churches [1 folded sheet]
14. The Message and decisions of Oxford on church, community, and state [published by the New York office of the Council; 2 copies]
15. Official reports of the Oxford conference [published by Willett, Clark and Co., Chicago and taken from the Official report, by J. H. Oldham, which is cataloged in book collection; 2 copies]
16. Church and race: what was said at the World Conference on Church, Community, and State, held in Oxford.....: Extracts from The Message to the Christian churches [and from] The report and supplementary statement on church and community. [1 folded sheet]
17. Publications [list of Conference-published books; 1 folded sheet]

#15 [folder]: Delegates to the Oxford conference

1. List of delegates, published by the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work
2. Who's Who from North America at the World Conference on Church, Community and State, Oxford, England, 1937

3. Geographical Classification of American delegates..., compiled for the Joint Executive Committee of the American sections of the Life and Work and Faith and Order movements, by Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

#16 [box]: Contemporaneous Interpretations of the Conference

1. Conference of Life and Work (Church, Community and State), Oxford, July 1937: First general article, by Basil Mathews [8 typed pages]
2. Conference of Life and Work (Church, Community and State), Oxford, July 1937: Second general article, by Basil Matthews [17 typed pages]
3. "The Churches in Council: Oxford, Edinburgh, Hangchow," by William Paton, reprinted from International Review of Mission, July 1937.
4. The World Conference on Christian Life and Work: A Brief Review of the Conference and the Reports of the five sections, by Frank C. Atherton.
5. Highlights of Oxford, by Henry Smith Leiper [3 copies]

#17 [box]: Aftermath of the Oxford conference

1. Oxford Conference Study Series, based on The Message and Reports of the Oxford Conference on Church, Community, and State:
 - Church and Community [2 copies]
 - Church and the Economic Order [2 copies]
 - Church and Education [2 copies]
 - Nature and Function of the Church [2 copies]
 - Universal Church and the World of Nations [2 copies]
 - Church and State [2 copies]published by the Universal Christian Council, New York.
2. That they go forward: An impression of the Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State, by Eric Fenn, London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1938.
3. On from Oxford and Edinburgh: What communities have done to present the message of these world conferences of 1937, by the Joint Executive

Committee [of the American sections of the Life and Work and Faith and Order movements].

#18 [folder]: Preliminaries to the World Council of Churches

1. Report of the Committee appointed in pursuance of resolutions adopted by the authoritative bodies of the Life and Work movement and the Faith and Order movement, in August and Sept. 1936 [dated July 8th-10th 1937]
2. After Oxford what? [1 folded page]
3. Preliminary steps forwarding the proposal of Oxford and Edinburgh for a World Council of Churches [3 copies]
4. Oxford and Edinburgh 1937: Two significant world conferences, issued by the National Preaching Mission of the Federal Council of Churches
5. The Great advance [2 copies]