Finding aid for the St. Mary's Episcopal Church Records

Collection number: 99.106

Descriptive Summary
Title: St. Mary's Episcopal Church records
Dates: 1895-2007
Collection number: 99.106
Collection Size: 40.8 linear feet (29 boxes, 2 garment bags, 1 oversize scrapbook, 3 oversize frames)
Repository: Japanese American National Museum (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Los Angeles, California 90012
Creator: St. Mary's Episcopal Church (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Creator: Yamazaki, Reverend John Misao
Creator: Yamazaki, Reverend John H.M.
Abstract: The collection contains correspondence, reports, photographs, and printed materials from 1895 to 2007. Materials are related to St. Mary's Episcopal Church, and include administrative documents and activities of the church as well as biographical information and office files of two of its pastors, Reverend John Misao Yamazaki, and his son Reverend John H.M. Yamazaki. Many series include materials in Japanese.
Access
By appointment only. Please contact the Collections Management and Access Unit (collections@janm.org). Advanced notice is required.
Publication Rights
All requests for permission to publish, reproduce, or quote from materials in this collection must be submitted to the Collections Management and Access Unit at the Japanese American National Museum (collections@janm.org).
Preferred Citation
Acquisition Information
Acquired in 1999 as a gift of Dr. Mark Yamazaki.
Processing Information
The collection was originally processed by Meghan Potter in 2010. The collection contents were verified, more detail was added to the container list, and a finding aid created in 2017 by Jamie Henricks.
Historical Note
The church has been known as St. Mary's Japanese Mission, St. Mary's Mission, and St. Mary's Episcopal Church during its long history. Biographical information taken from the St. Mary's website (http://stmarys-la.org/lang/en/history/) and from collection contents:
Founded in 1907 by Mary Louise Paterson, a former missionary to Japan, St. Mary’s began as a mission to minister to Japanese immigrants in Los Angeles. The Reverend John Misao Yamazaki, himself an immigrant from Japan, was the founding vicar of the Episcopal Mission. During this period, many of the parishioners lived within the neighborhood of the church. St. Mary’s served as a hub of community activities for the Japanese-American community and served to help Japanese immigrants assimilate into the American culture. Since many of the members of the congregation were Issei, first generation from Japan, services were conducted in both Japanese and English.
During World War II, as a result of Executive Order 9066, a majority of the congregation was evacuated to internment camps. While in the camps, The Reverend John Misao Yamazaki and his son, The Reverend John H. M. Yamazaki, continued their ministry, conducting services in the barracks of the camps. The World War II experience is an important part of St. Mary’s history as it bonds many members of the congregation.
At the end of the War, many of those interned returned to the Los Angeles area. Since the majority of the Japanese families sold or gave away their homes before internment, many in the Japanese-American community had nowhere to live. St. Mary’s became a refuge and resource center for them. St. Mary’s opened up the church and the vicarage was used as a
hostel for those without housing. St. Mary’s also re-established a Boy Scout Troop, which remained active until 1969, and the Girls Friendly Society, which continued until 1982.

The Reverend John H. M. Yamazaki, affectionately known as Father John, succeeded his father as the second vicar of St. Mary’s in 1946. At that time, the congregation was made up of twelve active families. In 1956, St. Mary’s achieved parish status in the Diocese of Los Angeles, and The Reverend John H. M. Yamazaki was called as St. Mary’s first rector. He continued in that capacity until he retired in 1985.

The church celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2007, and continues to hold services as of 2016.


Scope and Content
The collection contains correspondence, reports, photographs and photo albums, and printed materials from 1895 to 2007. Materials are related to St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, and include administrative documents and activities of the church as well as biographical information and office files of two of its pastors, Reverend John Misao Yamazaki, and his son Reverend John H.M. Yamazaki. Other materials include files on building a new church building in 1931 (including neighborhood resistance), six folders of issues of the Poston Chronicle camp newspaper, and a number of photographs of church groups such as kindergarten classes and boy scout groups. An album of wedding photographs from the 1910s through the 1980s is included. Five folders of parishioners’ resettlement surveys is included, which contains information about individuals relocating, their occupations, perceived need of government assistance, and major property and tools owned. Many series include materials in Japanese. Also included are vestments of Reverend John H.M. Yamazaki, including robes, a clerical collar, multiple stoles, and other accessories.

Related Materials
Another church collection held by the Japanese American National Museum (which also includes information about resettlement of parishioners) is the West Adams Christian Church collection, 2005.136.

Arrangement
The collection is divided into series by type of material. The arrangement from initial processing in 2010 was kept, and two series were added (series 6 and 7) during processing in 2017.

Series 1: Administrative Files, 1920-2007
Series 2: Church Activities, 1930s-1994
Series 3: Miscellaneous, 1917-1995
Series 4: Subject Files, 1942-1996
Series 5: Photographs, 1895-1990s
Series 6: Objects and Memorabilia, ca. 1920s-1970s
Series 7: Printed Materials, 1900-1987

Indexing Terms
St. Mary’s Episcopal Church (Los Angeles, Calif.)
St. Mary’s Mission (Los Angeles, Calif.)
St. Mary’s Japanese Mission (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Japanese Americans--Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945
Church archives
Christianity
Los Angeles (Calif.)--Church history--20th century

Container list for the St. Mary's Episcopal Church records.