

Gretchen Leppke Papers,
1972-2004, n.d.

Creator: Gretchen Leppke (b. 1927 – d. 2019)

Extent: 2.75 linear ft.

Location:

Processor: Laura McDowell, April 18, 2008

Administration Information

Access Restrictions: None.

Usage Restrictions: Copyright was transferred to the Women & Leadership Archives upon the donation of material. Copyright to secondary published works is retained by the original authors.

Preferred Citation: Loyola University Chicago. Women & Leadership Archives. Gretchen Leppke Papers. Box #, Folder #.

Provenance: The materials were donated to the Women & Leadership Archives by Gretchen Leppke on August 27, 2003, June 16, 2004, and July 6, 2004. Accessioned as WLA2004.17 and WLA2004.37. Material donated on August 27, 2003 was separated for the Women, Ministry, and the City records. Accessioned as WLA2003.21.

Separations: Less than .5 linear feet of duplicates and extraneous materials were removed and discarded.

See Also: Gretchen Leppke Collection at the University of Chicago; Women, Ministry, and the City. WLA2003.21.

Biographical/Administrative History

Gretchen Buenger (Leppke) was born on September 26, 1927, one of two daughters of architect Edgar Walter Buenger and homemaker Gertrude Weber Buenger. Involved in several extracurricular activities, Buenger graduated from Rochester High School in 1945. Her numerous high school accolades included membership in the honor society, and election to vice president of the student council. Buenger was active at an early age in candy striping, the Walther League of the Lutheran Church, and Republican politics. Buenger enrolled in the University of Minnesota where she became involved in Gamma Delta (Lutheran student organization), All University Council, Mortar Board, and Amity Among Nations. In 1949, Buenger was awarded the Order of the Gopher, an honorary award for leadership. In the summer of 1949, she traveled to Sweden with Amity Among Nations, deciding to live and work in Sweden after the trip from August 1949 to June 1950.

In September, 1955, she married Delbert Max Leppke. Gretchen Leppke became a stay at home mom for nearly two decades, caring for her two children, Kevin and Karen. The family moved to Evanston, IL in 1966 and Gretchen remained an active member of the Evanston community for the rest of her life. During this time, Leppke continued her involvement in charitable and political organizations such as the Lutheran Church, the Women's Republican Club, Cub Scouts, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, calling herself "a professional volunteer." Her church involvement increased in 1972 when Leppke joined the Lutheran Women's Caucus, the feminist branch of the Lutheran Church. At this time, Leppke also returned to school. She earned a Master of Arts in Urban Studies from Loyola University Chicago in 1974 and a Master of

Theological Studies from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago in 1982. Leppke's enthusiasm in transitioning from her role as a homemaker to one as a scholar and activist organizer was inspired by the feminist movement. Leppke credits Betty Freidan's book "The Feminine Mystique" as one important motivator. Her feminist ideology grew stronger as a student. "I was shocked. I remember one time storming around the halls wanting to burn down the library for some of the stuff I read there about the weaker sex," Leppke remarked.

Leppke served as national President of the Lutheran Women's Caucus from 1979-1985. She became the administrator of Women, Ministry, and the City from 1983-1987(8) and served on the organization's board until about 1993. Leppke also organized and ran the Women of Faith Resource Center from 1988-1994, an organization created after the conference "Women of Faith – Same Journey: Different Paths." In addition to church and feminist activism, Leppke briefly worked on a proposed book of essays about Lutheran women during the 1980s. Gretchen Leppke's intellectual and professional pursuits primarily included Lutheranism and feminism, both locally and globally.

Gretchen Leppke passed away on Jul 10, 2019.

Scope and Content

The original collection and addendum were consolidated and reprocessed to create The Gretchen Leppke Papers. This consolidation reduced redundancy and increased the level of access to the collection. These papers consist of four series and 3 subseries; they span from 1972 to 2004. The folders are arranged alphabetically within the series and folder contents are arranged chronologically.

Series 1: Autobiographical and Professional Information, 1974-2004, n.d., Box 1

Contains papers written by Leppke about her life, general correspondence about religion, academic papers from graduate school, and materials relating to her proposed book about Lutheran women.

Series 2: Women of Faith Resource Center, 1987-1995, n.d, Boxes 1-2

Contains the organizational papers of the Women of Faith Resource Center (called the Women's Place Resource Center beginning in 1994). Included are promotional materials, correspondence, membership lists, documents relating to conferences and public program planning, and board meeting agendas and minutes.

Series 3: Subject Files, 1972-2001, n.d., Boxes 2-5

Include secondary information relating to organizations Leppke belonged to. Secondary materials also include educational pamphlets. There are three subseries and each is arranged alphabetically.

Subseries 3A: General; Subseries 3B: United Nations, and Subseries 3C: Women and Religion.

Series 4: Audiovisual material, 1987-1992, n.d., Boxes 5-6

Includes audio taped lectures on the subject of power and religion as well as numerous photographs of Leppke, the Women of Faith Resource Center, the Women's Place Resource Center, conferences, and public programs these organizations were involved in.

Subjects:

Feminism

Global Women's Activism

The Lutheran Church

Women and the Church

Women of Faith Resource Center

*Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago*

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Series 1: Autobiographical and Professional Information, 1974-2004, n.d.			
1	1	Autobiographical Information	1980, 2003-2004
	2	General Correspondence	1978, 1991
	3	Academic Papers and Bible Study	n.d.
	4	Proposed Lutheran Women Book: Plans	1980, n.d.
	5	Proposed Lutheran Women Book: Correspondence	1974, 1979-1981, 1992, n.d.
	6	Proposed Lutheran Women Book: Research, Henrietta Lund	n.d.
Series 2: Women of Faith Resource Center, 1987-1995, n.d.			
	7	Board of Directors: Correspondence, Agendas, and Minutes (1 of 3)	1988-1989
	8	Board of Directors: Correspondence, Agendas, and Minutes (2 of 3)	1990-1994
	9	Board of Directors: Correspondence, Agendas, and Minutes (3 of 3)	n.d.
	10	“The Church and the Spirituality, Sexuality, and Socialization of Young Girls,” Report of the WOFRC	1993, n.d.
	11	Conference: “Women of Faith – Same Journey: Different Paths”	1986, n.d.
	12	Conference and Public Programs: “Weaving Women’s Stories”	1991-1993, n.d.
2	1	General Correspondence (1 of 3)	1987-1989
	2	General Correspondence (2 of 3)	1990-1994
	3	General Correspondence (3 of 3)	n.d.
	4	Membership Lists	1987, 1989, 1994, n.d.
	5	Organizational Information	1990-1992, n.d.
	6	Public Programs and WOFRC Promotional Materials, (1 of 3)	1988-1989
	7	Public Programs and WOFRC Promotional Materials, (2 of 3)	1990-1995
	8	Public Programs and WOFRC Promotional Materials, (3 of 3)	n.d.
Series 3: Subject Files Subseries 3A: General			
2	9	Global Hunger	1977, 1979, 1985
	10	Global Women’s Work and Gender Awareness	1979, 1985, 1989, 1995

Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Dates</u>
2	11 12	Liberation Theology Philippine Women	1972, 1980, 1982, n.d. 1985, n.d.
3	1 2	The Sisterhood is Global Institute Women's Roles, Rights, and Resources	1995-2000, n.d. 1973-1995, n.d.
Subseries 3B: United Nations			
3	3 4 5 6 7	Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing (1 of 3) Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing (2 of 3) Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing (3 of 3) Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing, Correspondence Nairobi Conference	1994-1996 1995-1996, n.d. 1987, 1993-1996 1995 1984-1986
4	1 2	United Nations Decade for Women UNIFEM	1980-1994, n.d. 1994-1997
Subseries 3C: Women and Religion			
4	3 4 5 6	Abortion and Reproductive Rights The Community of Women and Men in the Church Gender Roles and Feminism in the Church Inclusive Language	1979-1981 1980-1993, n.d. 1972, 1985-1987, 1993, n.d.
5	1 2	The Pentecost Partnership: Combatting Sexism Surveys	n.d. 1973, 1979, n.d.
Series 4: Audiovisual Material, 1987-1993, n.d.			
	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	Miscellaneous Photographs Negatives Parliament of World Religions Photographs Rush of a Mighty Wind Pentecost Celebration Photographs Weaving Women's Stories Photographs Women of Faith Conference Pictures (1 of 2) Women of Faith Conference Pictures (2 of 2) Women of Faith Resource Center Founders Photographs Women, Ministry and the City Photographs and Negatives Women's Place Resource Center Photographs	1988, 2000-2001 1989 1993 n.d. 1991, n.d. 1986 1986 n.d. 1992, 1994 1994
6	N/A	Bettenhausen Lecture Tapes	n.d.

Gretchen Leppke Papers
Addendum 1
1954-2009, n.d.

Creator: Gretchen Leppke (b. 1927 – d. 2019)

Extent: 2 linear ft.

Processor: Beth Loch, June 2012

Administration Information

Access Restrictions: None

Usage Restrictions: Leppke transferred all of her rights of copyright to her materials to the Women and Leadership Archives.

Preferred Citation: Loyola University Chicago. Women and Leadership Archives. Gretchen Leppke Papers Addendum 1. Box #, Folder #.

Provenance: Gretchen Leppke donated her materials to the Women and Leadership Archives on May 4, 2010 (WLA2010.09).

Separations: .65 linear ft. of materials were removed from the collection including .15 linear ft. of duplicate music sheets, litanies, National Women's History Project posters, and articles and .5 linear ft. of Chinese brochures, journals, and magazines about women in third world countries.

See Also: The original Gretchen Leppke Papers and the Women, Ministry & the City Records at the Women and Leadership Archives.

Biographical History

Gretchen Buenger (Leppke) was born on September 26, 1927, one of two daughters of architect Edgar Walter Buenger and homemaker Gertrude Weber Buenger. Involved in several extracurricular activities, Buenger graduated from Rochester High School in 1945. Her high school honors included membership in the honor society, and election to vice president of the student council. Buenger was active at an early age in candy striping, the Walther League of the Lutheran Church, and Republican politics. Buenger enrolled in the University of Minnesota where she became involved in Gamma Delta (Lutheran student organization), All University Council, Mortar Board, and Amity Among Nations. In 1949, Buenger was awarded the Order of the Gopher, an honorary award for leadership. In the summer of 1949, she traveled to Sweden with Amity Among Nations, deciding to live and work in Sweden after the trip from August 1949 to June 1950.

In September, 1955, she married Delbert Max Leppke. Gretchen Leppke became a stay at home mom for nearly two decades, caring for her two children, Kevin and Karen. During this time, Leppke continued her involvement in charitable and political organizations such as the Lutheran Church, the Women's Republican Club, Cub Scouts, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, calling herself "a professional volunteer." Her church involvement increased in 1972 when Leppke joined the Lutheran Women's Caucus, the feminist branch of the Lutheran Church. At this time, Leppke also returned to school. She earned a Master of Arts in Urban Studies from Loyola University Chicago in 1974 and a Master of Theological Studies from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago in 1982. Leppke's enthusiasm in transitioning from her role as a homemaker to one as a scholar and activist organizer was inspired by the feminist movement. Leppke credits Betty Freidan's book "The Feminine Mystique" as one important motivator. Her

feminist ideology grew stronger as a student. “I was shocked. I remember one time storming around the halls wanting to burn down the library for some of the stuff I read there about the weaker sex,” Leppke remarked.

Leppke served as national President of the Lutheran Women’s Caucus from 1979-1985. She became the administrator of Women, Ministry, and the City from 1983-1987(8) and served on the organization’s board until about 1993. Leppke also organized and ran the Women of Faith Resource Center from 1988-1994, an organization created after the conference “Women of Faith – Same Journey: Different Paths.” In addition to church and feminist activism, Leppke briefly worked on a proposed book of essays about Lutheran women during the 1980s. Gretchen Leppke’s intellectual and professional pursuits primarily included Lutheranism and feminism, both locally and globally.

Gretchen Leppke passed away on Jul 10, 2019.

Scope and Content

Gretchen Leppke, Addendum 1, Papers includes five series spanning the years 1954 to 2008 with undated material and consists of two boxes and digital material. The materials reflect Leppke’s involvement in liturgical services and the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. The collection includes correspondence, newsletters, photographs, newspaper and journal articles, book marks, liturgical music, and digital materials. The collection is organized alphabetically within each series.

Series 1: Liturgical and Women’s Equality Materials, 1954-2008, n.d., Boxes 1-2

Contains materials relating to liturgical celebrations and issues of women equality in religious institutions. There are articles about women’s ordination, Biblical women, equality of language, and liturgical services. Correspondence, newsletters, liturgical music, and poetry are also included.

Series 2: International Women, 1974-2009, n.d., Boxes 1-2

This series includes materials related to international women, a majority of the material relates to the Fourth United Nations Conference held in China in 1995. Articles about China and women’s rights abroad make up the majority of this series. It also includes two books, *Comparative Perspectives of Third World Women* and *Women in Changing Japan*.

Series 3: Photographs, n.d., Box 2, n.d.

This series is the smallest in the collection and contains photographs of an untitled event at Agape House.

Series 4: Digital Materials, 1985-1995, n.d.

This series consists of materials that are held digitally in the Women and Leadership Archives and are available to patrons on request. The materials include photographs of a needlepoint cross-stitching piece, an embroidered apron, and posters.

Subjects:

China

Feminism

Global Women's Activism

The Lutheran Church

United Nations

Women and the Church

Women China

Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Series 1: Liturgical and Women's Equality Materials, 1954-2008, n.d.			
1	1	Biblical Women Articles	1991
	2	Correspondence	1982, 2007, n.d.
	3	"Creative Woman"	1988
	4	Equality of Language Articles	1954-1981
	5	Equality of Language Articles	1982-2008, n.d.
	6	Handouts and Poems	1977-1995, n.d.
	7	Language Guidelines	1977, 1989
	8	Litanies, Liturgies, and Events	1983-2006, n.d.
	9	Liturgical Music	1976-2006, n.d.
	10	Newsletters	1994-1995, n.d.
	11	Study Guide: Using Inclusive Language Guidelines	1981
	12	"The Power of Language"	1975
	13	Women's Liturgy Services: St. Paul's Lutheran Church	1995-2008, n.d.
	14	Women's Ordination Articles	1970-2006, n.d.
Series 2: International Women, 1974-2009, n.d.			
	15	Amity Materials	1991, 1995, n.d.
2	1	Articles on Chinese Women	1974-1997, n.d.
	2	<i>Comparative Perspectives of Third World Women</i>	1980
	3	Fourth United Nations Conference on Women Materials	1995
	4	Religion in China Articles	1988-1995, n.d.
	5	United Nations Materials on Women	1984-1995
	6	"Women: Builders of Communities" Bookmarks	n.d.
	7	<i>Women in Changing Japan</i>	1976
	8	Women's Rights Articles	1989-2009, n.d.
Series 3: Photographs, n.d.			
	9	Agape House	1991
Series 5: Digital Material, 1985-1995, n.d.			
		Apron: "Woman's place is in the House . . .the Senate "	n.d.
		Needlepoint: "Women's Work Is Never Done"	n.d.
		Posters: Africa	1985, n.d.
		Poster: Middle East	1985-1995, n.d.

Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago

Poster: National Women's History Project	1992
Poster: Kenya	1985-1995, n.d.
Poster: Tibet	1985-1995, n.d.
Posters: 4 th World Conference on Women (9)	1995, n.d.
Posters: Educating Women (2)	1995
Posters: International Women (4)	1985-1995, n.d.