

FINDING AID FOR
Yvonne Seon Papers



Meadville Lombard Theological School Archives
Unitarian Universalist Sankofa Special Collection
610 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL, 60605
(773) 256-3000 ext. 629

Collection Description

Title: Yvonne Seon Papers

ID: MLTS.US.5005

Creator: Chappelle-Seon, Yvonne

Date Range: 1983-2014

Extent: .5 linear feet (1 half box)

Language(s): Materials entirely in English.

Scope and Content: This collection contains the personal papers of Unitarian minister, activist, and African American Studies scholar Reverend Dr. Yvonne Seon. It includes correspondence, sermons, ministerial organization and congregational papers, photographs, and other writing. The collection dates from 1983-2014.

Arrangement: This collection is arranged alphabetically by folder title. Box and folder numbers function as unique identifiers for any digital surrogates of materials. [e.g. B1.F1]

Biographical Note: Born in Washington, DC on December, 20 1937, Rev. Yvonne Seon (née Reed) is a pioneer in African American Studies curriculum development and the first African American woman to be ordained as a Minister in the Unitarian Church. She received a B.A. with honors from Allegheny College in 1959 and was a Woodrow Wilson Fellow at American University where she earned a M.A. in political science in 1960. She also holds a Ph.D. in African American Studies from Union Graduate School (1974) and a Master's degree in Divinity from Howard University (1981). In 1960 Seon met Patrice Lumumba, leader of the then newly independent Congo who offered her a job in his new government. Seon accepted and served as secretary of the Inga Dam project for two years.

While in school at Union Graduate School, Seon became the first director of the Bolinga Black Cultural Resource Center at Wright State University. She returned to Washington, D.C., in 1972 to work for Congressman Howard Diggs. When still a graduate student, Seon was drawn to the Unitarian Universalist Church. She completed her divinity studies in 1981 and was ordained that year

by the Reverend David Eaton at All Soul's Unitarian Church in Washington, DC. Later, she founded on Capitol Hill the first "intentionally diverse new start congregation" in the denomination, and was chosen by her peers as President of Capitol Hill Group Ministries from 1986-1988. She was the Organizing Minister at Sojourner Truth Congregation of Unitarian Universalists from 1986-1990. Seon has been active in the UUA, serving on the Board Task Force on Campus Ministry, Board Task Force on Young Adult Ministry, was an organizing member of the Network of African-American UUs, and participated in the founding meeting of African-American Unitarian Universalist Ministries (AAUUM).

Subjects and Index Terms: African American Unitarian Universalists -- Washington (D.C.) -- 20th Century
Unitarian Universalist churches -- Clergy
Unitarian Women

Restrictions: This collection is open for research use.

Processed by: Sarah Levine, May 2016

Inventory

Box 1 - MLTS.US.5005.B1

Box 1 Folder 1	Celebrations	1988-2004
Box 1 Folder 2	Coalition of African American UU Organizations	ca. 1991
Box 1 Folder 3	Correspondence	1984-2014
Box 1 Folder 4	Covenant Christian Community	1992-2005
Box 1 Folder 5	Garden of Gethsemane Congregation	undated
Box 1 Folder 6	Meditations and Poems	ca. 1983-2007
Box 1 Folder 7	Ministerial Search Packet	1990
Box 1 Folder 8	Photographs	undated
Box 1 Folder 9	Sermons	ca. 1985-1992
Box 1 Folder 10	Sojourner Truth Congregation	1988-1990
Box 1 Folder 11	UUA, SCLC, and Miscellaneous	1985-2008
Box 1 Folder 12	UU Sankofa Project Archives	2003-2007