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Joe Allen Wilson Papers, 1960-1981

Joe Allen Wilson

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**Joe Allen Wilson
Papers, (1960-1981)**

Center for Restoration Studies
Manuscripts #510

Abilene Christian University Special Collections and Archives
Brown Library
Abilene Christian University
Abilene, TX 79699-9208

23 January 2021

About this collection

Title: Joe Allen Wilson Papers

Creator: Joe Allen Wilson, (1923-2007)

Identifier/Call Number: Center for Restoration Studies Manuscripts #510

Physical Description: 0.5 linear feet (1 box)

Dates (Inclusive): 1960-1981

Dates (Bulk): 1960-1981

Location: Center for Restoration Studies

Language of Materials: English

Scope and Content Note: Seven folders of sermon notes, research materials, and print materials from Joe Wilson and various Churches of Christ.

Biographical Note: Biographical note provided by Joe Allen Wilson's family:

Joe Allen Wilson was born on 01 Aug 1923 in Vian, Sequoyah County, Oklahoma as the first child of Edgar Wilson and Mittie May Tackett. His father, Edgar, was a deacon at the Central church of Christ in Muskogee, Oklahoma, where he was one of the regular song leaders. Joe was baptized at that same congregation on 26 Jul 1936, at the age of 13. The beginning of Joe's preaching career is best described by himself in his memoirs, as follows:

"My desire to preach God's word dates back to soon after I was baptized. Brother Cleon Lyles, the preacher at Central in Muskogee at that time, had a men's training class on Monday nights to instruct in leading prayer in public, serving the Lord's Supper, reading scriptures in public, and making talks on Bible topics. One Wednesday night each month those who could be persuaded to do so were asked to give a short talk. I had overcome stage-fright by making short talks in the men's training class.

I grew in confidence in reading scripture for Brother Lyles' sermons, leading prayer, and helping serve the Lord's Supper. I made several short talks in the men's training class and upon encouragement from Brother Lyles, preached my first sennon before the congregation on August 29, 1939. That was soon after my 16th birthday.

Brother Lyles helped me with preparing and outlining a sermon that I entitled 'Ask, Seek, And Knock,, based on Matthew 7:7,8. I practiced giving it several times, and thought it was about 20 minutes long. But when I preached it before the congregation I

got a good case of stage-fright. In what seemed like a short time, and in short sentences, and shortness of breath, my sermon lasted only 10 minutes.

The following Sunday one of the elders of the congregation (I have forgotten which one) asked me to go preach for a small congregation that met at the Eastern edge of Muskogee at a community called Hyde park. After that I was asked to go preach at Eufaula (70 miles south of Muskogee). They were without a preacher and would pay my bus fare to come. I preached both Sunday morning and Sunday night, rode the last bus that night back to Muskogee, arriving at 11:00 P. M. This became a regular routine for me that continued for several months. The bus fare was 50 cents each way. After that I preached sometimes for the church at Oktaha or at Wainwright. The congregation at Wainwright was composed of women. I did the teaching, the preaching, the song leading, and serving the Lord's Supper.

Following that I became one of Brother Johnny Osborn's "preacher boys" whom he took on Sunday nights to preach and conduct services at several school houses around Muskogee.

When our family moved to the McElhaney dairy near Fort Gibson I began preaching for the congregation at Fort Gibson. This continued during my last two years in high school. I taught a Bible class on Sunday morning, preached at the worship hour, taught a young folk's class on Sunday evening, and preached at the worship. I taught a Bible class again on Thursday night (our mid-week meeting), and preached on Saturday nights at the evangelistic service."

After high school graduation, when Joe was 19, he married Velma Alzona McElmurry, daughter of Bascum Monroe McElmurry and Pearl Francis Youngblood, on 14 Aug 1942 in Muskogee. He then began preaching at the C Street congregation in Muskogee.

In the summer of the following year (1943), Brother J. A. McNutt, who was a summer fill-in preacher for Brother Lyles at Central in Muskogee, persuaded Joe to enroll at Freed-Hardeman Christian College in Henderson, Tennessee, for further preparation to preach. After one year, he accepted a preaching job in West Memphis, Arkansas. His daughter, Glenna Rhea, was born while there. Glenna later married Donny Bennett, son of Weldon Bennett, who was himself a long time gospel preacher and teacher at Abilene Christian University.

And so began a 65 year preaching career. Between the years of 1946 and 2000, Joe preached at congregations in Muskogee, Sallisaw and Fort Gibson, Oklahoma; Wasco , Shafter and Morro Bay, California; Roswell, Clovis, Artesia, Las Vegas, Portales, and Logan New Mexico; as well as Baird and Flatwood, Texas.

Beginning in 1970, Joe made several missionary trips to Ghana, West Africa. All three of Joe and Velma's children, Glenna, Tommy and Allen, graduated from Abilene Christian University. Joe's last "official" sermon was preached at Flatwood, Texas, 27 May 2005. Joe died on 22 Jan 2007 in Abilene, Texas.

Administrative Information

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Using this collection

Processing Status: Processed

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Arrangement of Materials: The papers are housed in seven folders.

Separated Materials: None.

Subjects and Keywords

Churches of Christ -- History -- 20th century

Churches of Christ -- History -- Texas

Churches of Christ

Sermons

Inventory

Box 1

[First Folder] Finding Aid

The Life of Christ in 52 Lessons

Notes on Hebrews

Peter

Sermon outlines [from red binder]

Loose sermon outlines and print materials

Research materials and sermon outlines

Church of Christ directory, Logan, NM

Funeral sermons, poems materials

Sermon notes from binders

Sermons used at Logan