

## Harold A. Thomas Collection (AC147)

### ***Introduction:***

The Harold A. Thomas Collection contains documents, photographs, film slides, publications, and an audio CD pertaining information about Linwood Presbyterian and former senior pastor Harold A. Thomas.

### ***Descriptive Summary:***

Creator: William J. Ryann and Alicia M. Thomas

Title: Harold A. Thomas

Date Range: 1971-2003

Size: 0.209 linear feet (1 Box + OS)

Collection Number: AC147

### ***Donor Information:***

William J. Ryann and Alicia M. Thomas, August 25, 2025

### ***Citation Note:***

Harold A. Thomas Collection (AC147), Black Archives of Mid-America, Kansas City, Missouri

### ***Related Collections:***

AC104 Robert and Sue Wheeler Collection

AC121 The Kansas City Area Church Histories Collection

AC143 William J Ryan Collection

### ***Subjects:***

Local church

### ***Administrative Information:***

Reproduction Restrictions: Unrestricted

Access Restrictions: Unrestricted

***Biographical Sketch:****Harold Thomas-*

Harold Adolphus Thomas was born to Edith Herrietta Harper and Harold Randolph Thomas in 1935 in Bermuda. His siblings are Austin Randolph Thomas and George Eglington Thomas. He then immigrated to Rio de Janeiro Brazil before coming to the United States. His education consists of Howard university, Harvard Divinity School, and his Master of Theology from Princeton Theological Seminary. Before coming the Kansas City Thomas had 17 years of experience with education and ministry. Thomas was the first Black clergyman to be called to serve at a predominantly white Presbyterian church in Kansas City. He was described to led with humor, compassion, and emphasis on reconciliation. Thomas's unexpected passing was in 1977 during the Plaza flood. He was survived by wife Joanne Thomas and daughters Alicia, Coretta, and Jennifer.

***Historical Sketch:****Linwood Presbyterian Church-*

Linwood Presbyterian was formed in 1890, and the current standing building was constructed in 1923. During Linwood Presbyterian's years in service, they had many programs that helped the greater community as well as being a progressive space. Along with Harold A. Thomas, Hans Frick led many of these ministries, including the Fresh Air program which brought urban kids to the Rocky Mountains. In 1975 Linwood Presbyterian and Linwood United Methodist Church merged becoming Linwood United Church to help keep the churches running. However, After the construction of the U.S. Highway 71 the community fell into hardship. With a dwindling congregation the church had to make the hard decision to sell. The new owners stripped the building of its stained glass and wood working and left it a shell of what it once was. It was 35 years later in 2015 that the building was able to be bought back for the community to be a home for non-profits and community focused groups.

***Scope and Content Note:***

Oversized items are located in Flat File Cabinet #1 Drawer #3.

**Series 1: Linwood Presbyterian**

This series contains documents, photographs, film slides, a magazine, copied book chapter, and an audio CD. These are about Linwood Presbyterian as well as Harold A. Thomas's time there.

**Series 2: Harold Thomas Memorial**

This series contains a Resolution, film slides, and an article by Hartland Presbytery. These are in relation to Harold A. Thomas passing.

***Collection Inventory:*****Series 1: Linwood Presbyterian**

- f. 1 Fresh Air program
- f. 2 "Linwood Presbyterian Church 1890-1975" History Chapter
- f. 3 CD Sermon
- f. 4 Hans Frick: ordination and installation
- f. 5 First Membership directory 1975 [OS]
- f. 6 Presbyterian Survey Magazine June 1973
- f. 7 Stationary

**Series 2: Harold Thomas Memorial**

- f. 8 Resolution [OS]
- f. 9 Film Slides
- f. 10 Heartland Presbytery Article

**Processed by Katarina Hill, Intern Fall 2025, December 2025.**

**Sources:**

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<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/kansascity/name/esther-steen-obituary?id=4194119>.

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