



# Finding Aid for the Dorn family papers collection 536

---

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on July 16, 2025.

Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Prepared by Jennifer Andrew

Grand Rapids History Center

Grand Rapids Public Library

111 Library Street NE

Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

Business Number: 616-988-5497

[localhis@grpl.org](mailto:localhis@grpl.org)

URL: <https://www.grpl.org/history/>

---

## Table of Contents

---

Summary Information .....	3
Biographical / Historical .....	3
Scope and Contents .....	4
Administrative Information .....	4
Controlled Access Headings .....	5
Collection Inventory .....	5
Dorn family .....	5
Harold R. Bishop .....	6
Redeemer Lutheran Church .....	6

---

## Summary Information

---

<b>Repository:</b>	Grand Rapids History Center
<b>Source - dnr:</b>	Martin, Denise
<b>Title:</b>	Dorn family papers
<b>ID:</b>	collection 536
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1929-1993
<b>Physical Description:</b>	.25 Linear Feet 1 box
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .
<b>Abstract:</b>	Redeemer Lutheran Church was founded in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1929. The first pastor was Herbert P. Dorn, who served until 1956. Dorn's granddaughter, Denise Martin, donated this collection of papers. Most notably, it contains photographs of the construction of Redeemer Lutheran Church in 1940, including the cornerstone dedication service, and the teardown of the house that served as the church before the new building. Those researching the Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, or specifically, Redeemer Lutheran Church, will find this collection of interest, as well as family researchers interested in Herbert P. Dorn and his family.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Biographical / Historical

---

Redeemer Lutheran Church, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, began in 1928 as The Lutheran Mission in a storefront at 1954 S. Division Ave, run by Herbert P. Dorn, a seminary student from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. The church was formally organized on March 12, 1929, with Dorn as its first pastor. After eleven years, first in the storefront and then in a house at 1905 Madison Avenue, a new building was constructed in 1940 and opened in January of 1941.

Herbert Paul Dorn was born in Fort Wayne, Indiana, to Louis W. and Marie (Roeder) Dorn in 1904. In 1925, he graduated from Concordia College in Fort Wayne. He married Anna Rippe in 1928. After relocating to Grand Rapids, Herbert and Anna had six children: Guinevere (1930-2017), Monica (1932-2012), Gretchen (1934), Herbert (1936), Rosalind (1939), and

Miriam (1944-1923). Dorn served as pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church until 1956, when he took a position as assistant librarian at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. Herbert died in Fort Wayne in 1985, followed by Anna in 1993. They are buried at the Concordia Lutheran Cemetery there.

Harold R. Bishop (1900-1975) served for many years as the organist and choir director of Redeemer Lutheran Church after a vaudeville career. Bishop was also a piano and organ instructor. Accomplished organist, Guinevere Dorn, daughter of Herbert and Anne Dorn, studied under him for twelve years before continuing her studies at the University of Michigan. As a whole, the Dorn children were musical and likely instructed by Bishop as well.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Scope and Contents

---

This collection contains numerous photographs, most notably of the construction of Redeemer Lutheran Church in 1940, along with the cornerstone dedication service and the teardown of the house that served as the church before the new building. In addition, there are photographs of the church's pastor, Herbert P. Dorn, his family, and the first confirmation class of Redeemer Lutheran Church. Also included in the collection are newspaper clippings about Harold Bishop and correspondence from Bishop to the Dorns, as well as letters to Monica (Dorn) Jennings and her family from close family friend, Arletta Billings.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Publication Statement

Grand Rapids History Center

Grand Rapids Public Library

111 Library Street NE

Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

Business Number: 616-988-5497

[localhis@grpl.org](mailto:localhis@grpl.org)

URL: <https://www.grpl.org/history/>

## Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was donated by Denise Martin, daughter of Monica (Dorn) Jennings and granddaughter of Herbert P. and Anna Dorn; accession 2025.024

## Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open and available for researcher use.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Controlled Access Headings

---

- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History
- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- Church history
- Music -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids
- Martin, Denise
- Dorn, Herbert P. (1904-1985)
- Redeemer Lutheran Church
- Bishop, Harold (1900-1975)

---

## Collection Inventory

---

Dorn family		
Title/Description	Instances	
Photograph of Herbert and Anna Dorn with unidentified woman and two children, 1946	Box 1	Folder 1
Three unidentified people in a boat, on an unknown lake	Box 1	Folder 1
Grand Rapids Chicks yearbook, 1947	Box 1	Folder 2
Letters to Monica (Dorn) Jennings and family from Arletta Billings, enclosed photographs of Dorn family and newspaper clipping, 1993	Box 1	Folder 3
Newspaper article about Springer Jewelers, unknown and undated publication	Box 1	Folder 4

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Harold R. Bishop

Title/Description	Instances	
Grand Rapids Press clipping, 1954	Box 1	Folder 5
Newspaper clipping from unknown and undated publication	Box 1	Folder 5
Letter from Bishop to Herbert and Ann Dorn written on newspaper ad for the musical Sweet Charity on Broadway, 1966	Box 1	Folder 5

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Redeemer Lutheran Church

Title/Description	Instances	
Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church - house at 1905 Madison SE, 1940	Box 1	Folder 6
Construction of the church building, 1940	Box 1	Folder 7
Laying of the cornerstone service, A.P. Marutz preaching, September 8, 1940	Box 1	Folder 8
Completed church building	Box 1	Folder 9
Herbert Dorn in the sanctuary, undated	Box 1	Folder 9
Church bulletin February 7, 1993	Box 1	Folder 10
Rev. Herbert Dorn with first confirmation class, undated: Mildred Robinson, Lucille Tetzlaff and Hazel Timmermann	Box 1	

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)