Special Collections at the Yale Divinity School Library include more than 6000 linear feet of archival material, archivally-treated pamphlet collections, and microform holdings. In 2017, the Divinity Library added numerous collections that were previously held by Andover Newton Theological School: see the Andover Newton Theological School collections page for more information.

Particular strengths of the collection are its documentation of the Protestant missionary endeavor, religious work among college and university students, and records related to American clergy and evangelists. The Divinity Library holds personal papers of numerous faculty members and a collection of memorabilia and publications related to life at Yale Divinity School, but the official archives of the Divinity School are deposited in the Yale University Archives.

For all original format archival collections there are online finding aids that describe and provide for retrieval of the material. These finding aids can be searched as a whole via Archives at Yale.

Browseable lists of Divinity Library special collections include microform collections as well as original format collections and therefore point to collections not listed in Archives at Yale. Brief descriptions of the collections are provided, with links to available online finding aids. See:

- Personal papers
- Archives of organizations
- Pamphlets and papers
- Missionary postcards, images, and ephemera

A geographical index is provided, but researchers are also encouraged to utilize keyword searching Archives at Yale as well as consult with the Special Collections Librarian in order to identify relevant materials.

Special Collections at the Divinity Library form part of the Day Missions Library, North America's preeminent collection documenting the missionary movement and world Christianity. Many of the China missionary papers held by the Divinity Library were acquired in connection with the China Records Project.

The Himalayan Mission Archive Collection was formed in 2008 when archives of four organizations and their umbrella association were transferred to Yale from the Centre for the Study of World Christianity at the University of Edinburgh. The Divinity Library also has notable collections of Missionary Bibles and Hymnals.

The Special Collections department also provides access to the Divinity Library's Restricted Circulation collection. Restricted Circulation materials are described in the Orbis catalog and include rare books and pamphlets as well as Divinity School faculty writings. All Restricted Circulation materials must be used in the Special Collections Reading Room on the ground floor of the library.