FATHER DIVINE.
Father Divine papers, circa 1930-1996

Emory University
Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library
Atlanta, GA 30322
404-727-6887
marbl@emory.edu

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Father Divine.
Title: Father Divine papers, circa 1930-1996
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 840
Extent: 7.75 linear ft. (15 boxes), 29 oversized papers (OP), 3 extra-oversized papers (XOP), 7 oversized bound volumes (OBV), and AV Masters: .25 linear feet (1 box)
Abstract: Papers relating to African American evangelist Father Divine and the Peace Mission Movement including correspondence, writings, photographs, printed material, and memorabilia.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access
Special restrictions apply: Due to preservation concerns, some of the scrapbooks (OBV1-4) are closed to researchers.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction
All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

Separated Material
Pamphlets, monographs and periodicals included in the collection have been cataloged separately. These materials may be located in the Emory University online catalog by searching for: Father Divine.

Source
Purchase, 1997, with subsequent additions.

Citation
[after identification of item(s)], Father Divine papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

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Collection Description

Biographical Note
Father Divine, formerly known as George Baker Jr., is believed to have been born around 1879 in Rockville, Maryland. While the early life of his father, George Baker Sr., is unclear, his mother, Nancy, had previously been a slave. After leaving Rockville around 1899, he noticed that African American churches were often not socially active and decided that the influence of the church could be used to enact social change. After years as an itinerate preacher, he settled in New York during World War I and eventually founded The Peace Mission Movement, which provided relief to the poor and sought to break down segregation by eliminating among followers all use of words related to race or color. He also taught his followers to reject the idea of an afterlife. Instead, Father Divine encouraged his followers to strive for eternal life on Earth by finding unity with God's internal spirit. The Peace Mission was and is a celibate community and followers strive to live pure lives in harmony with one another. He and his followers believe that he is the Messiah and Savior of humankind.

His first wife Peninniah, better known as Mother Divine, died in 1943, but Father Divine saw her as reincarnated in Edna Rose Ritchings whom he married in 1946. In 1965, Father Divine died; however, his followers believe that he "laid his body down" as a judgment on humankind for ignoring his teachings, Mother Divine and many followers believe that his spirituality is still present and that he made the supreme sacrifice for humans and will eventually resurrect himself.

Scope and Content Note
The collection consists of materials relating to Father Divine and the Peace Mission Movement from circa 1930-1996. The collection includes correspondence, printed material by and about Father Divine, photographs, ephemera, financial ledgers of the Divine Hotel Riviera (Newark, New Jersey), scrapbooks, and audiovisual materials.

The correspondence includes letters to and from Father Divine and his many followers from 1935-1971. The printed material consists of a variety of materials including brochures; postcards; International Peace Cards (which many of Father Divine's followers carried with them for protection); anniversary announcements; and programs from Peace Mission Movement events. The photographs contain images mostly of Father Divine, Mother Divine and their home, Woodmont (Gladwyne, Pennsylvania).

Ephemera includes mostly handmade objects created by Father Divine's Rosebuds including booklets and notebooks containing his teachings, buttons, banners, pennants, and some art work. The financial ledgers of the Divine Hotel Riviera located in Newark, New Jersey, contain a list of lodgers and the rates they paid; as well as expenses incurred by the hotel from 1950-1954. The scrapbooks contain clippings from The New Day (1934-1935, 1951-1955) and the New York News (1933-1935); message cards; and The New Day Reading Class of Unity Mission Church Bible Institute, Excerpt Book, September 24, 1963. The audiovisual material includes cassette recordings of the "Word of GOD Revealed" program read by Mother Divine and songs by the
Rosebud Choir and a phonographic recording of "Father Divine Praise Medley" and "Excerpts from Righteous Government Meeting, November 9, 1939."

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Arrangement Note
Arranged by record type.
Container List

Correspondence

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Printed material by and about Father Divine

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<td>3</td>
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<td>Article, Divine, M.J., &quot;Blessed are the Pure of Heart,&quot; <em>Metaphysical News</em>, February 1, 1933</td>
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<td>Article, &quot;Father Divine in Los Angeles, Southern California Parade, April 21, 1936</td>
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<td>Article, &quot;Father Divine Newspapers Refuses to Print the Truth,&quot; <em>The Iconoclast</em>, June 1, 1937</td>
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<td>Article, Lanyon, Walker, &quot;Father Divine,&quot; <em>The Rally</em>, June 1934</td>
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<td>Booklet, includes &quot;The Rosebud's Creed,&quot; the &quot;Lily-Bud's Creed,&quot; and the &quot;Crusaders' Self-Discipline,&quot; no date</td>
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<td>Booklet, includes &quot;A Rosebud's Prayer&quot; and other verses</td>
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Broadsides, Patriotic Outing, Demonstration and Mass Meeting, Divine Greenkill Park (Kingston, New York), October 12, 1941

Brochures, Father Divine

Brochures, Father Divine's Science Class, circa 1974 and 1975

Brochure, Unity Mission Church Home and Training School (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 100th Anniversary, 1893-1993

Brochures, Woodmont

Business card, Reverend M.J. Divine

Business card, Peace Movement Mission followers

By-Laws, United Peace Mission Nurses, no date

Calendar, 1948

Calendar (date book), 1975

Calendar, 1975

Calendar, Divine Lorraine Hotel (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 1962


Certificate, Completing the Reading of the Old Testament, Sister's Bible Class, January 24, 1959

Certificate, United States Treasury Department, War Finance Program, 1945

Christmas cards, Divine Fairmont Hotel (Jersey City, New Jersey), no dates

Christmas and New Year cards, Father and Mother Divine

Constitution and By-Laws, Circle Mission, Church Discipline, no date

Constitution and By-Laws, Peace Center, Church Discipline, no date

Feathers of Woodmont (2)

First day covers addressed to Mother Divine, 1969-1972

Flowers of Woodmont (6)

Flyer, "Mottoes Given in Sayville," no date

Flyer, "Short Talk by Rev. M. H. Divine," no date

Graduation card, no date

International peace cards, no date

Invitation, Independence Day Luncheon, Woodmont, July 4, 1976

Invitations, Wedding anniversary, 1950-1996

Invitations, Woodmont Celebration, September 10-13, 1970 [includes a map of Peace Mission properties around Philadelphia]

Letter, Facsimile of President Lyndon Johnson's letter to Father Divine regarding the Voting Rights Address, March 26, 1965

Letterhead, includes Father Divine (2), Circle Mission Church of Philadelphia and Training School, Divine Tracy Hotel (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), and Unity Mission Church, Home and Training School, Inc. (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)
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<td>Menu, Circle Mission Church (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 27th Anniversary Banquet, April 28, 1974</td>
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<td>Menu, International Peach Banquet, 1953</td>
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<td>Menu, International Peach Banquet, 1954</td>
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<td>Menu, United Mission Church (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 28th Anniversary Banquet, April 29, 1974</td>
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<td>Menu, United Mission Church (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 31st Anniversary Banquet, April 29, 1977</td>
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<td>Menu, United Mission Church Home and Training School (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), Review Celebration of the Anniversary of Father and Mother Divine, April 30, 1970</td>
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<td><em>The New Day</em>, Vol. VI, 1942 (covers only)</td>
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5 21 **The New Day**, Vol. VII, 1943 (covers only)
5 22 **The New Day**, no date (back covers only)
5 23 Newspaper clippings, 1935-1952
6 1 Placards, no date
6 2 Poem, "The New Creation"
6 3 Postcards, Divine Tracy Hotel (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)
6 5 Postcards, Father and Mother Divine
6 6 Postcards, Woodmont
6 7 Proclamations, International Universal Interracial Holiday, April 29, 1948
6 8 Program, Father Divine's International Peace Mission Schools, 1961-1978
6 9 Program, Father Divine's Nazareth Mission Church (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), September 27, 1952
6 10 Program, International Youth Day, August 20, 1950
6 11 Program, Righteous Government Convention (New York, New York), January 10-12, 1936
6 12 Program, Unity Mission Church, Home and Training School, Bible Institute, February 15, 1947
6 13 Receipts, United States Savings Bonds [Father Divine follower Love of Matthew], 1934, 1943
6 15 Resolution, Circle Mission Church congratulates Eisenhower upon his election as President, January 21, 1953
6 17 Signs
6 18 Song, "Father Divine's Greetings to the Universe," no date
6 19 Song, "Now We Have a Righteous Government, 1936
6 20 Song, "Songs Celebrating the Holy Marriage of Father Divine to His Spotless Virgin Bride, April 29, 1946"
6 21 Stamps, Peace Mission Movement
OP1 Stamps, Peace Mission Movement

**Photographs**
7 1 Father Divine, no date
7 2 Father Divine, 1930s-1940s
7 3 Father Divine, 1950s-1970 (8 x 10)
Father Divine papers, 1930-1996

Manuscript Collection No. 840

Father Divine, 1950s-1970s (small)

Father Divine, oversized

Father Divine, oversized

Mother Divine (Peninniah), no date

Mother Divine (Edna Rose Ritchings), no date

Mother Divine (Edna Rose Ritchings), 1950s

Mother Divine (Edna Rose Ritchings), 1960s

Mother Divine (Edna Rose Ritchings), 1970s

Father and Mother Divine (Peninniah), 1930s

Father and Mother Divine (Peninniah), oversized

Father and Mother Divine (Edna Rose Ritchings), no date (1 of 2)

Father and Mother Divine (Edna Rose Ritchings), no date (2 of 2)

Father and Mother Divine (Edna Rose Ritchings), 1940s

Father and Mother Divine (Edna Rose Ritchings), 1950s-1960s (8 x 10)

Father and Mother Divine (Edna Rose Ritchings), 1960-1962

Father and Mother Divine (Edna Rose Ritchings), 1963-1966

Father and Mother Divine (Edna Rose Ritchings), 1971-1974

Father and Mother Divine (Edna Rose Ritchings), oversized

People, International

People, Others

People, Rosebuds

Places, Circle Mission Church (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

Places, Circle Mission Church Home and Training School of California (Los Angeles, California)

Places, Divine Lorraine Hotel (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

Places, Divine Peace Mission Hotel (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

Places, Father Divine's Peace Mission (New York, New York)

Places, Holy Communion Table, various locations

Places, New York County Courthouse, 1935

Places, New York County Courthouse, 1937

Places, New York County Courthouse, Divine followers protesting ruling of Judge Benedict D. Dineen, March 1940


Places, Sayville, New York

Places, Sayville, New York residence, 76 Macon Street

Places, Sorority Peace Mission Democratic Evangelical Home (Newark, New Jersey)

Places, Ulster County (New York), 1929

Places, Woodmont (Gladwyne, Pennsylvania), exterior
| 8 23 | Places, Woodmont (Gladwyne, Pennsylvania), interior |
| 8 24 | Places, Woodmont - Shrine to Life (Gladwyne, Pennsylvania) |
| 8 25 | Places, Unknown |
| 8 26 | Photograph album: Charles O'Reggio, Buffalo, New York, 1935 |

**Ephemera**

- **OP7** Banner, "Peace, Virtue, Remember Thy Creator, Father Divine, in the Days of Thy Youth, Rosebuds"
- **OP8** Pennant, 12th Anniversary, Peace, It's Wonderful
- **OP9** Pennants (11)
- **OP10** Poster of Father Divine
- **OP11** Poster: "American Youth," no date
- **OP12** Poster: "Chester R. Thomas for Councilman," no date
- **OP13** Poster: "Divine Lorraine hotel delegates," no date
- **OP14** Poster: "Divine miracle proves the greatest virtue," no date
- **OP15** Poster: "Elevate your mind, escalate Divine," no date
- **OP16** Poster: "Father Divine is He who was to come," no date
- **OP17** Poster: "Father Divine's Crusaders," no date
- **OP18** Poster: "Father is marching on!" no date
- **OP19** Poster: "Father is Reigning Now!" no date
- **OP20** Poster: "For all who have sinned," no date
- **OP21** Poster: "God is Science and Science is God!" no date
- **OP22** Poster: "God," no date
- **OP23** Poster: "I will unify the world of science," no date
OP24  Poster: "Prejudicial decision against Father Divine," no date
OP25  Poster: "The Staple Singers" no date
OP26  Poster: "The State of International Peace," no date
OP27  Poster: "Three cheers for MJD saving democracy," no date
OP28  Poster: "Truth. Justice." no date
XOP2  Poster: "We are proud to bear Father's name!" no date
XOP3  Poster: "Young America, Father Divine solves your problems positively," no date

Financial ledgers: Divine Hotel Riviera (Newark, New Jersey)
11  1  August 14, 1950-March 3, 1951
11  2  September 23-December 18, 1951
11  3  December 19, 1951-March 16, 1952
11  4  March 18, 1952-June 12, 1952
11  5  June 13, 1952-September 3, 1952
11  6  September 5, 1952-November 27, 1952
11  7  October 23, 1953-October 26, 1954

Scrapbooks
12  Scrapbook 1, The New Day clippings, 1934-1935
13  Scrapbook 2, The New Day clippings, 1934-1935
OBV1  Scrapbook 3: The New Day clippings, 1951-1955 [RESTRICTED]
OBV2  Scrapbook 4: The New Day clippings, 1951-1953 [RESTRICTED]
14  1  Scrapbook 7: Message cards and brochures, no date
14  2  Scrapbook 8: The New Day Reading Class of Unity Mission Church Bible Institute, Excerpt Book, September 24, 1963

The New Day particular series of articles (bound)
15  1  Messages of Father Divine, January-April 1939
15  2  Messages of Father Divine, January 2-March 20, 1941
15  3  Messages of Father Divine, June 11-August 20, 1942
OBV6  "The Portal of Life Eternal," July 31-November 27, 1971
15  4  "Righteousness Marches on," August 4, 1939-February 20, 1941
15  5  "Righteousness Marches on," August 1, 1940-July 3, 1941 (reverse order) [also include June 20, 1936 issue of The Spoken Word]
OBV7  "The Word of God Revealed," June 15, 1974-November 22, 1975
Audiovisual

AV1 - Rosebud Choir, April 5, 1934 (C-1) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc003][Reading Room access only: id bc017]

AV1 - Rosebud Choir, Inspirational Christmas Songs (CS-26) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc02c][Reading Room access only: id bc03h]

AV1 - Sacred Praises, Woodmont (CS36-1) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc04n][Reading Room access only: id bc05s]

AV1 - "This Grace Wherein I Stand" (CW8) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc06x][Reading Room access only: id bc072]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW2) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc086][Reading Room access only: id bc09b]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW6) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc0bg][Reading Room access only: id bc0cm]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW8) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc0dr][Reading Room access only: id bc0fw]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW12) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc0r4][Reading Room access only: id bc0s8]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW18) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc0td][Reading Room access only: id bc0vj]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW19) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc0wp][Reading Room access only: id bc0xt]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW23) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc0zz][Reading Room access only: id bc106]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW26) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc11b][Reading Room access only: id bc12g]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW30) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc13m][Reading Room access only: id bc14r]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW31) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc15w][Reading Room access only: id bc161]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW32) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc175][Reading Room access only: id bc189]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW34) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc19f][Reading Room access only: id bc1bk]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW35) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc1cq][Reading Room access only: id bc1dv]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW41) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc1f0][Reading Room access only: id bc1g4]

AV1 - Word of GOD Revealed, Program (CW50) [original: audio cassette]  
[Reading Room access only: id bc1h8][Reading Room access only: id bc1jd]

AV1 - Father Divine Praise Medley (side 1) and Excerpts from Righteous Government Meeting, November 9, 1939 [original: 78 RPM]