

History of Detroit Unity Temple 1916 - 2012

From a small gathering of students led by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, seeking to know God as their health, prosperity, freedom, and happiness in Kansas City, Missouri, Unity has grown as an international movement over the last 120 years. This was also the nature of the birth of Detroit Unity Temple. In 1916, a few students gathered around a courageous and deeply spiritual woman, Margaret Wood, in a small office space in the heart of downtown Detroit. With no attempt to build a large organization, and through simply working to help people know the Truth, growth was rapid. By 1925 hundreds of students were working together in the common goal of 'Practical Christianity'.

On June 24, 1925, Margaret Wood passed from this plane of life, leaving a firm foundation of faith for the great work that was to rise in Detroit. Following her passing, V.P. Randall was chosen to carry on as leader. On August 14, 1925, the Detroit Unity Center was incorporated as a religious, non-profit corporation. The new organization clearly stated its work was to recognize Jesus Christ to be the only Leader of the church and to more fully understand and obey the Divine Laws of life which He taught and demonstrated. On September 28, 1932, the name was officially changed to The Detroit Unity Association.

In 1935, the new leader appointed to carry the Unity work forward was Irwin E. Gregg. In the eight years of his ministry, the Unity work grew in consciousness and in members. In November of 1943, Dr. Herbert J. Hunt, a former Presbyterian minister who had organized a successful Unity Center in Toronto, Canada, was elected to the leadership of the Detroit Unity Association. In the fall of 1949, after six years of outstanding leadership, he accepted a call to leadership of the Unity Church of Truth, Spokane, Washington.

Through all the many years since its first organization the Unity work in Detroit had met in rented halls, offices, and ultimately for its Sunday meetings, in the Detroit Institute of Arts, main auditorium. During all this period there was a growing dream in the minds of students of a "home of our own." Obviously such a consciousness could not be denied. In December of 1949, Eric Butterworth accepted the leadership of Detroit Unity at a time when the harvest was ripe for reaping. Quickly the plans took shape, the substance poured in, and Unity Temple, "the dream of a home of our own" became a reality as the first services were held in Fellowship Hall on Thanksgiving in 1955.

During the 1960's and 70's, Charles Neal, Stan Hampson, Bud and Carmen Moshier, and Glenn Mosley served as senior ministers. Along with these senior ministers, many assistant and associates helped to build upon the work and dream started by Margaret Wood.

In 1975, David Williamson became the new senior minister, coming back to the home church where he had grown up during the 40's and 50's. In his 18 years as senior minister, Dr. Williamson led the expansion of programs, service, community outreach and global consciousness. In 1980, the former Christian Science Church across the street from the Temple was acquired to expand the church's ability to serve the community. In 1992, Argentina Glasgow joined the ministerial staff and served as an associate minister to Dr. Williamson. Dr. Williamson retired in 1993 and became Minister Emeritus.

In 1993, Argentina Glasgow created history when she became the first African American and first woman to be appointed to a senior ministerial position at Detroit Unity Temple. Under her leadership, Detroit Unity Temple continued to grow in spiritual consciousness and service to the community. During her tenure, Argentina led a team of lay ministers who provide support to key volunteer areas such as prayer, visitation, spiritual care and counseling, children's church, ushers and fellowship. She would become active within the New Thought movement as she was elected to the Board of Directors of the Association of Unity Churches International in 1997. Argentina became the fourth African American to serve as chair of the Association Board in 114 years. She has served on the Leadership Council for the Association of Global New Thought since 2000.

In 1996 held a gala 80th anniversary celebration, A Treasure Chest of Blessings. Former Detroit Unity minister Eric Butterworth was the keynote speaker.

On July 24, 2000 Dr. David Williamson, senior minister from 1975 to 1993, made his transition. A memorial service was held at Detroit Unity with hundreds of people from the Unity family and the Detroit community in attendance.

In 2001 we celebrated our 85th Anniversary with the theme, "85 Years of Unity in the Community – On Wings of Love." The featured keynote speakers were Rev. Jim Lee and Rev. James Trapp.

In July of 2005, Gregory Guice joined the ministerial staff. Together, Rev. Guice and Rev. Glasgow served as co-ministers where they sought to be a dynamic leadership team that would serve as a model for Unity churches worldwide.

In 2005, Detroit Unity introduced the Enrichment Giving Program (EGP). The program's goal was to build community, grow consciousness and raise money. The program used a team structure that sought to engage as wide a range of volunteers as possible. The connections offered through the team structure helped to build community and grow the membership. Major projects of EGP included the installation of an elevator, upgrading audiovisual equipment and kitchen facilities and the addition of office staff. In addition to funding these projects Detroit Unity tithed 10% of the funds raised from EGP to local and national community organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and UNCF.

In 2005, Detroit Unity donated money to the victims of the December tsunami and provided assistance and support to victims of Hurricane Katrina. In 2006, the Holistic Development Community Center (HDCC) worked with several apartment owners and business leaders in the Palmer Park area to form P4: A Positive Presence for Palmer Park, a community organization created to find creative solutions to community problems and challenges. A Prayer Walk was held in June in association with several Palmer Park area churches.

On October 1, 2006, Detroit Unity held a special celebration for its 90th Anniversary entitled, "90! Here We Grow Again!" The keynote speaker James Trapp, the first African American to be appointed to the position of President/CEO of the Association of Unity Churches. James Trapp

and Tom Zender, also from Unity Village, received the Temple Builder Award at the Gala Celebration.

In February of 2008, Rev. Gregory Guice stepped down as Co-Minister of Detroit Unity Temple and became the Senior Minister of Unity of Lake Orion. In March of 2008, Rev. Argentina Glasgow retired as Co-Minister of Detroit Unity Temple.

In January of 2009, Rev. EmmaLisa Hill was selected as the Temporary Minister. She led the congregation through the Church Peace Process.

In January of 2010, Rev. John Considine became the Senior Minister. In July of 2011, construction began on an elevator and in March of 2012, Detroit Unity celebrated its 95th Anniversary by celebrating the completion of the elevator construction. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held in June.

In July 2012, Rev. Gregory Guice returned to Detroit Unity as the Senior Minister. His vision is to make Detroit Unity Temple 'An Institute of Higher Spiritual Learning,' a major highlight of his 12-Point Enrichment Program.

The Palmer Park District of Detroit

Detroit Unity Temple is in the heart of the historic Palmer Park Area, located just west of Woodward, between McNichols (Six Mile) and Seven Mile Roads. The centerpiece for this area is Palmer Park, an urban park of hiking and biking trails, tennis courts and a public golf course, established over 100 years ago. After several years of decline, the park is now being revitalized.

With several apartment restoration projects now underway, in the Palmer Park Historic Apartment District as well as Palmer Park, Detroit Unity is excited about partnering with The People for Palmer Park, a non-profit organization committed to the preservation, reinvention, and revitalization of Palmer Park.

For more information about this beautiful historic area, please visit The People of Palmer Park website: <http://peopleforpalmerpark.org/about/>