



The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**Father Divine collection**

1932-1992

Sc MG 828

Processed by Janice Quinter, September 2010.

## Summary

**Creator:** Father Divine

**Title:** Father Divine collection

**Date:** 1932-1992

**Size:** 0.88 linear feet (3 boxes)

**Source:** Gift of Ariel Rethburn, November 2008.

**Revision History:** Finding aid updated by Lauren Stark.

**Abstract:** Father Divine (aka George Baker) was an African American religious leader and founder of the Peace Mission movement. The Father Divine collection consists primarily of material related to the broadcasting of Father Divine's sermons and messages over two radio stations.

**Preferred citation:** [Item], Father Divine collection, Sc MG 828, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Processed by Janice Quinter, September 2010.

**Separated Materials:**

Transferred to the Art and Artifacts Division: stamps

Transferred to the General Research and Reference Division: booklets

Transferred to the Moving Image and Recorded Sound Division: audio and moving image materials. For more information, please contact the division at [schomburgaudiovisual@nypl.org](mailto:schomburgaudiovisual@nypl.org) or 212-491-2270.

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs

**Related Materials:**

Father Divine material, Miscellaneous American Letters and Papers, Sc MG 76, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

## **Creator History**

Father Divine (ca. 1876-September 10, 1965), aka George Baker, was an African American religious leader and founder of the Peace Mission Movement. In the 1930s, the period of greatest membership, there were about 160 Peace Missions in North America and Europe, with the bulk of them located in New York. During the Depression, the largest Mission was in Harlem. The majority of Father Divine's followers in this mission were Black migrants from the South and immigrants from the Caribbean; however, in other areas of the country, such as California, white membership predominated.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Father Divine collection, 1932-1992, consists primarily of material related to the broadcasting of Father Divine's sermons and messages over two radio stations in Washington State in the 1950s, and their publication in *The New Day*, the organization's weekly newspaper (1936-1992).

The collection contains the church discipline, constitution, and by-laws for Father Divine's Circle Mission, 1941, as well as correspondence between Father Divine and one of his disciples in the Peace Mission Extension in Seattle, who made arrangements for broadcasting his sermons and messages on radio station KRKL. The correspondence, 1947-1961, discusses the radio scripts and spiritual matters. A significant portion of the collection is comprised of sermons and messages, 1932-1959. Some are original transcripts; others were retyped and published in *The New Day* in the 1970s-1990s. The collection also includes broadcast schedules along with openings remarks and prologues to sermons and testimonials given during Father Divine's sermons and messages on radio station KRKL, Kirkland, Washington, and other broadcasts from Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada in the 1950s. Printed material includes booklets describing the beliefs and proper behavior expected of the membership.

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

African American clergy  
African Americans -- Religion  
Authors, Black  
Church and social problems -- United States  
Race relations -- Religious aspects

### **Names**

Father Divine  
Peace Mission Movement

## Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Circle Mission, Inc 1941  
Includes church discipline, constitution, and by-laws.  
Correspondence 1935-1961
- b. 1 f. 2 To Robert MacDonald (Grace Truth's husband) 1935  
Photocopy.
- b. 1 f. 3 To Grace Truth regarding spiritual matters 1947-1961
- b. 1 f. 4 Peace Mission Extension, Seattle, Washington 1950-1951
- b. 1 f. 5 Broadcasts on radio station KRKL, Kirkland, Washington 1950-1951
- b. 1 f. 6 Mother Divine to Grace Truth 1957
- b. 1 f. 7 Broadcasts on Radio Station KNBX, Seattle, Washington 1957-1958
- b. 1 f. 8 To Grace Truth regarding property 1958-1960
- b. 1 f. 9 *The New Day* 1979-1992
- b. 1 f. 10 Father Divine peace stamps in 13 envelopes undated  
Father Divine's messages 1932-1934
- b. 1 f. 11 1932
- b. 1 f. 12-14 Verbatim transcripts 1933-1934  
Sermons 1933-1958
- b. 1 f. 15-17 *Published in The New Day (copies)* 1933-1954
- b. 2 f. 1-2 Also includes quotes published.
- b. 2 f. 3-5 KRKL, Kirkland, Washington 1950-1952  
Includes sermons and messages, introductions, and related correspondence.
- b. 2 f. 6-7 Radio broadcasts, Vancouver, British Columbia 1957-1958  
Includes opening remarks and prologues; also published in *The New Day*.
- b. 3 f. 1 United Peace Mission Nurses 1956
- b. 3 f. 2-3 Bible lessons with notes by Grace Truth  
Includes 3 notebooks.
- b. 3 f. 4 Printed matter 1983  
Includes "Rosebuds", Lily-buds', and Crusaders' Creeds" and Father Divine's "Righteous Government Platform and Libel Suit" regarding comparison with Jim Jones.  
Scrapbooks  
Scrapbook I
- b. 3 f. 5 1956-1968
- b. 3 f. 6 *The New Day portions* 1940-1964
- b. 3 f. 7 Scrapbook II 1961