



Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry

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May 2023

From Our Executive Director & Senior Minister



The transformation of our Meetinghouse - Boston's oldest surviving wood-frame church building, and its newest Landmark - is a sight to behold. We've repaired the shutters, fixed the steeple clock, restored the historic organ, and now transform the interior into a center for arts and humanities. Over time, our project has gained momentum and attention. It's at the center of our vibrant Roxbury neighborhood.

Less visible are the hands doing the actual transforming - the Painter's Pride workers stripping every pew, and scraping peeling plaster; the masons repairing brownstone steps and basement walls.

It's like so much of the work at the UU Urban Ministry. For each of our programs and

events and webinars that shine a light on justice, there are the people who quietly work behind the scenes, making this work possible.

As spring arrives in full with its blossoming flowers, I give thanks for the hands that planted them - and for every single worker, volunteer, and quiet helper who makes our work possible.

In faith,

Mary Margaret

[Click Here to Support the UU Urban Ministry](#)

Behind the Scenes at the Urban Ministry

Every aspect of the UU Urban Ministry, and the Meetinghouse and our campus, runs due to the commitment and dedication of our people. Very often, this is work done behind the scenes and with little fanfare. So we are using part of this newsletter to tell some of those stories.

Meetinghouse Clock Winders



Left to right: Mark, Andrea, Rashaun, Daniel (holding clock), Peter, Ama, Juan, and Ernest

We recently held an appreciation dinner for the members of the First Church Clock Winders Guild (pictured above). If you have ever wondered how the clocks on the Meetinghouse keep accurate time, or why the bell rings

on the hour - every hour - the people in this photo are the answer.

Ofentimes, when the doorbell rings at the UU Urban Ministry office, it will be one of our clock winders. To keep the Meetinghouse clock running takes frequent attention, and our clock winders give their time and energy to keep the clock running - and accurate.

The photos on the right show one of the Meetinghouse clocks from the exterior, as well as the geared mechanisms behind the clock that are wound and kept in running-order by the members of the First Church Clock Winders Guild.

We are grateful for their time and commitment!



Restoring Roxbury's Meetinghouse - In Photos



Part of the current work on the Meetinghouse includes repairing the stone steps as well as building a new accessible ramp.



Before and After: On the right, a row of untouched pews covered in plastic, and on the left, a row where painting has begun.

New Fixtures in the Peace Garden

Recently, Luke Fitzpatrick, a member of [First Church in Belmont](#) who is working to become an Eagle Scout, brought a team of helpers to our campus to install two beautiful new trellises [that he constructed] in the peace garden.

We are grateful to Luke and everyone who came out with him to conquer the rocky soil to install the garden's two new beautiful trellises. We wish Luke all the best as he works to become an Eagle Scout!



Program Updates

Tours Program



The UU Urban Ministry's Tour Program has officially launched!

This Saturday, historian Thomas Plant led a walking tour that explored the different trees in John Eliot Square, from a historical perspective. It was great to welcome both friends from our member congregations and Roxbury neighbors to enjoy the experience.

The Tours Program offers a variety of tours that include looking at the public art in Nubian Square and learning about the educational institutions in Roxbury. The Spring/Summer schedule is on the Tours page of our website. Check it out [HERE](#).

Roxbury Youth Programs (RYP)

Everyone Eats!

This semester, the Roxbury Youth Programs (RYP) students planned a community event with a social justice theme. They developed the theme, reached out to potential supporters in the community, and organized the day-of activities.

On Saturday, RYP's students held the event in our greenspace called "Everyone Eats" - a community gathering and fundraiser with a focus on food justice, systems, and insecurity. They collected canned goods for a local food pantry, and also gave guests vegetable plants to take home.

Thank you to all of those who came out to support RYP.



Upcoming Engagement Opportunities

Help Us in the Garden

On Saturday, May 13th, at 10am, we will be

working to get the peace garden ready for spring.

Although it's already beautiful, we need some planting and weeding and would welcome some help.

Can you join us? If you can join us or have any questions, [email Vinnie Myles](#).



In the News

From the Meetinghouse to Westminster Abbey

Our friend, Reginald (Reggie) Mobley, world-class countertenor, frequent performer in the Meetinghouse, and member of the Meetinghouse Restoration Committee, joined the UK's Monteverdi Choir this past weekend to sing during the Coronation of King Charles III.

We are proud of our friend, Reggie, and are grateful to have him as part of the team helping to make Roxbury's Meetinghouse a performance venue that our neighbors deserve. Westminster Abbey never sounded so good!



Reggie Mobley, performing in the Meetinghouse with Handel + Haydn

Boston's Newest Landmark



On February 28, 2023, First Church in Roxbury was officially designated a landmark in the City of Boston.

May is National Historic Preservation Month, a time of year when the historically minded celebrate the nationwide observance of American heritage that is recorded in the built landscape and other cultural resources.

The City of Boston's Office of Historic Preservation featured the First Church in Roxbury in their Spring Newsletter. [CLICK HERE](#) to check it out.

Upcoming Events

188th Annual Meeting



[188th Annual Meeting](#)

Thursday, May 25th; 6:00pm-7:30pm
via Zoom

Join us for the UU Urban Ministry's 188th Annual Meeting. Hear updates from our programs and departments from the past fiscal year, as well as the organization for the organization from Karla Baehr, chair of the board, and Mary Margaret Earl, executive director.

Whether you are a delegate, volunteer, or supporter, we encourage all those who are interested to join us on the evening of Thursday, May 25th from 6:00pm - 7:30pm. All event info can be found on our website. **Questions?** [Email Vinnie Myles](#).

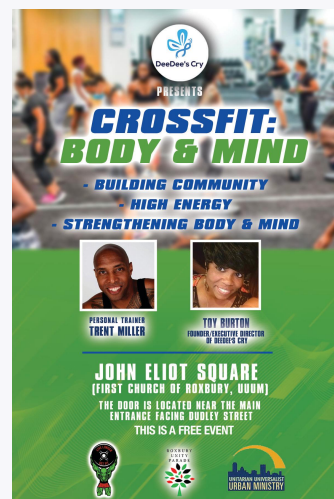
Free Crossfit Classes for All Ages

[Crossfit: Body & Mind](#)

Thursdays through May 11th
5:00pm - 6:00pm @ UUUM

Our friends from [DeeDee's Cry](#) are again hosting "CrossFit: Body & Mind" at the UUUM. These are free workout classes with personal trainer, Trent Miller. It's free. It's fun. It's at your own pace...and this is an intergenerational space.

If you're interested, join as at UUUM (10 Putnam St., Roxbury) and we'll move together!



In the Community

Pasta Dinner for Mother's Day Walkers

Thursday, May 11th @ 6pm
First Parish in Dorchester

Are you participating in the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute's Mother's Day Walk for Peace?

Our friends from [First Parish in Dorchester](#) will host walkers from area Unitarian Universalist churches for a pasta dinner and fellowship. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with UU's from neighboring congregations who are dedicated to the work of peace in our city.

RSVP: If you plan to attend, please [email Laura](#) at FP Dorchester.

Thank you, First Parish in Dorchester!



Dillaway-Thomas House

ED BULLINS
A TRIBUTE READING
from the Black Arts Movement to Roxbury Crossroads Theater

Featuring remembrances & selected readings by
Askia M. Touré, Jackie Davis, Akiba Abaka,
Dawn Simmons & Barbara Lewis.

THURSDAY, MAY 18 | 6-8 PM

Dillaway-Thomas House
183 Roxbury St
Boston, MA 02119

Doors open @ 5:30 PM.
Refreshments will be served.

RSVP BY May 12th to roxbury.heritage@mass.gov

FURTHER INQUIRIES ena.fox@mass.gov // kevinpaulgallagher@gmail.com

Sponsored by Roxbury Heritage State Park and spoKe, a Boston-based annual of poetry and poetics

Ed Bullins: A Tribute Reading Thur. May 18; 6pm - 8pm

Playwright Ed Bullins, a key figure in the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and 70s, moved to Roxbury in the 1990s. There he founded Roxbury Crossroads Theater and left a legacy for the Black theater community in Boston.

This event will feature remembrances and selected readings by Askia M. Touré, Jackie Davis, Akiba Abaka, Dawn Simmons, and Barbara Lewis.

Check out Dillaway's May-June full program calendar [HERE](#).

Words for your consideration...



I often wonder
what I'd do if
there weren't
any books
in the world.

—JAMES BALDWIN



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