## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF TRANSFORMING THE MINISTRY

# A SUNDAY SERVICE TO CELEBRATE THE PASSAGE OF THE

WOMEN & RELIGION RESOLUTION
JUNE 1977

Prepared by:

Geri Kennedy and Sarah Skovlund in consultation with Rosemary Matson, Pacific Central District

#### Twenty-Five Years of Transforming the Ministry 1977 Women & Religion Resolution

#### **A Sunday Service**

This booklet has been compiled as a starting point for preparing a Sunday service dedicated to the 25 years since Women & Religion Resolution was passed and the changes that have come to our denomination as a result.

You may use the exact text and program or modify it to more closely resemble the format used at your own congregation.

The information on women graduating from the ministry is from the Starr King School of the Ministry in Berkeley, California. For those closer to Meadville Lombard, you may want to do some research into the history of women seminarians there and incorporate that into your service. We have enclosed a listing of the women who graduated from Starr King for your reference. If any of these women are known to your congregation, the information can be woven into your program. As an example, Margo Tyndall was the RE director for several years at the UU Fellowship of Redwood City where this service was originally presented and so we made note of the fact that when she graduated in 1969, she had been only the 4<sup>th</sup> woman to do so since 1949.

It is good if someone has a copy of the blue, *Hymns for the Celebration of Life*, published in 1964. You may also want to track down a copy of the small, green *Hymns in New Form* for *Common Worship*, published in 1982. These can be held up for display during the appropriate parts of the service.

The page with the Resolution should be printed to accompany the orders of service and with the Seeds of Change printed on the back.

We chose to sing "Standing Before Us", written by Carole Eagleheart as our closing hymn. There is information in the packet to obtain permission for making copies and for sending compensation to Carole for her wonderful words and music.

It is recommended that the presentation and readings be shared among several women as there is a lot of text in the service and it is more dynamic to listen to more than one voice.

Please feel free to use this as a springboard for creating a service that is meaningful for your congregation and most of all have a good time!!

Geri Kennedy, Sarah Skovlund and Rosemary Matson, Pacific Central District

(If you would like a Microsoft Word version of the text to ease your editing to fit your own congregation, please send an e-mail request to gerilou@aol.com.)

#### Twenty-Five Years of Transforming the Ministry 1977 Women & Religion Resolution

Prelude (We suggest that the prelude be a strongly traditional "old church" or a slow classical piece, to establish the feeling of services of many years ago. Then a little lighter for offeratory and cheery if you have a postlude.)

**Opening Words** — Our opening words are from our 1964 UU Hymnal, Hymns for the Celebration of Life, #498 A Covenant for Liberals, written by Walter Jones Jr.

"Mindful of truth ever exceeding our knowledge and brotherhood ever exceeding our practice, reverently we covenant together, beginning with ourselves as we are, to share the strength of integrity and the heritage of the spirit, in man's unending quest for reality and love."

Lighting of the Chalice – (While the person is approaching the chalice, speaker explains that the lighting of the chalice is a fairly recent innovation in UU churches, introduced from women's circles and consciousness raising groups.) Please join me in saying the words while \*\*\* lights the Chalice.

#448 (from the new hymnal) "We gather this hour as people of faith, with joys and sorrows, gifts and needs. We light this beacon of hope, sign of our quest for truth and meaning, in celebration of the life we share together." Christine Robinson.

Welcome: We come together to celebrate the good works of women and men in the UU Association, its member congregations and societies and the accomplishments of the Women & Religion Task Force. We come together today to celebrate together the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the Women & Religion Resolution and all the transformations that have stemmed from that Resolution since 1977. We come together to speak and to listen. We come here because we know that we will be heard and understood. We come together on Sunday mornings to share comfort and support and celebrate or community.

We welcome all who come today. If you are here for the first time and would like to stand and introduce yourself, please do so now. Please join us in the social hall following the service for coffee and conversation.

Reading from A God Who Looks Like Me by Patricia Lynn Reilly, (Ballantine Books, pub. 1995, pgs. 52, 53 & 58)

"By the time we reached grade school, God had been given a gender. The God who was spoken of on the playground, in the neighborhood and at holiday times was "he". And even if our family was not religious, the God they railed against had a name and a gender. While I was working on this manuscript, a friend asked me the title of my book. I told him that the working title was "The Feminine Face of God". He responded, "I don't believe in God, so his face is of no consequence to me." I replied, "It's interesting to me that the faceless God you don't believe in has a gender." Imagine this man as a father, what words would his children have heard as he let them know of his nonbelief. The face of the God he didn't believe in would linger within their memory, and that God was male. We had no choice, the God of our religious past was male. And yet within the religious institutions of our childhood, whether Catholic, Protestant, of Jewish, we were taught that God does not possess a body and can be neither male nor female. Our teachers told us that God is a spirit. This was a confusing message when you consider that in the Catholic Mass we were confronted with at least fifty pronouns and images referring to God as male. And from the Hebrew Scripture and Protestant Bible, read regularly in church or synagogue, we heard verses such as "God rested from all his work which he had done in creation".

I realize that I'm treading on dangerous ground when I call into question the exclusively male language and imagery for the divine that permeate our religious and cultural life. For many the male God of traditional religion has been a rich and meaningful concept. And the roots of these God-words reach deep into the Hebrew and Christian traditions. However, these traditions also teach that God is beyond human naming and imagination. Thus I carry out this questioning not as a heretic but in compatibility with the original teachings of traditional religion. It is my work among women that gives me the courage to call for an examination of the images and words for God that we heard in our childhoods and continue to hear today. It is these words and images that have shaped our sense of ourselves. Women have been excluded from the divine."

**Presentation:** Most UU member congregations have used several hymnals over the years. Beginning in 1934 we sang from "Hymns of The Spirit" In that book, all of the hymns and readings were written by men.

From 1964 to 1994 "Hymns for the Celebration of Life" was used, where our opening reading can be found. In this book, 20 hymns, out of 327 total were either authored or translated by 17 women. Most of the responsive readings

were written by men. Whole sections of hymnal have titles such as "Man," "Love and Human Brotherhood," and "The Arts of Man." Even when the section title does not refer to men, the vast majority of the hymns still used male identified language. Here are some of the first lines from hymns and readings from that hymnal:

"All men are brothers, though we have grown strangers to one another"

"Rich is the man who lives in today, filled with the problems and promises of his own times."

"Blest is the man who sets his soul's desire upon a dream"

"When in his thoughts the start and planets roll, how marvelous appears the mind of man"

There are many more examples.

Change began in the early 80's after the Resolution. Many congregations began to use the small green Hymns in New Form for Common Worship which was published as an interim while work could begin on a completely new hymnal. Here is a quote from its preface, "We seek to move beyond gender in the language of our worship. The old patriarchal forms are contrary to present needs and ideals. If any person in a congregation feels excluded by words sung or spoken in unison, the words fail to express the intended community. If religious language perpetuates views of the divine or the human in purely masculine forms, it runs contrary to our best understanding".

Please rise as you are able and join us in singing the one of those 20 hymns from the 1964 hymnal written by a woman, *Now is the Time Approaching*, by Jane Laurie Borthwick. The hymn, #209 is printed in your order of service.

Presentation: By the mid 1970's, the women's movement was in full swing and the women in the UU congregations began to feel left out by the language in the hymnal, by the lack of women in the ministry and for those few women who were in seminary, the lack of women instructors. It was uncommon to see women in leadership roles in congregations, even here in the Bay Area. Rosemary Matson, the first co-chair of the Continental Women & Religion Task Force, created as a result of the Resolution, tells of her struggles to be listed in the Starr King School directory as Rosemary, not Mrs. Howard Matson.

At Starr King School for Religion in Berkeley, California, one of the two Unitarian Universalist Seminaries, a total of 7 women graduated between 1949 and 1975!! Beginning in 1976, women began to make up higher percentages of the graduating classes in seminary and today more than 51% of the UU ministers are women.

In 1977, Lucile Shuck Longview, a laywoman from First Parish UU in Lexington, MA realized that although the Unitarian Universalist Association, our denomination's governing body, had passed three resolutions that promoted equality for women, nothing had been passed that addressed the role of religious myths which perpetuate women's secondary status in society and within UU congregations. She drafted a business resolution to be presented at General Assembly to be held in Ithaca, New York in June of that year. In order to have the resolution included on the agenda, signatures from at least 10 members from each of 25 different societies to sign a petition. The resolution was placed on the agenda with the support of 548 women and men from 57 societies from around the continent.

Now, for those of you who have never been to General Assembly, imagine some of the conversations we have here at (insert name of your congregation here) when we are discussing business issues among our (insert number of members in your congregation here) or so members. Then expand that to the 1,000 or so UU's deciding on the governing issues for our entire denomination back in 1977. Lots of conversation and controversy. Well, when the resolution came before the representatives at General Assembly, only one amendment was made from the floor, that being, to require that the UUA President give an annual report on the progress of the implementation of the resolution. Then the women and men present gave unanimous approval.

**Responsive Reading:** Let us read the resolution together. (resolution read as a responsive reading)

The intent of the resolution went beyond the mere correcting of language to be more inclusive and the balancing of the male/female ratios in denominational hiring, appointing and electing. It did not mean just more women ministers – it meant transforming the ministry.

Please rise as you are able to sing # 123 from our new hymnal.

Offering: (your congregation's standard offeratory words)

Sharing of Joys and Sorrows: Many changes began to appear in UU services across the continent. Carolyn McDade, who wrote the hymn we just sang, Spirit of Life, joined with Lucile Longview in 1980 to create the Water Ceremony a version of which we have been celebrating here each September\*. (\*This may need editing to suit your own congregations practices.) Our Principles and Purposes were reworded. Community building elements were created for worship services. The sharing of Joys and Sorrows came into being to help us know that we belong to a caring community. It is a time for paying special attention to each other as we share what is in our hearts. It is a time to celebrate what is in each other's lives. I invite anyone who wishes to share a personal joy or sorrow from your week or offer the name of someone you would like us to hold in our hearts and minds.

(Time for individual sharing.) Let us take the next few moments to pause and reflect in silence the joys and sorrows that have been spoken along with those that have remained unspoken.

**Presentation:** You may wonder why there seems to be a focus on the hymnals this morning. It is because this is one of the most public of our "faces" that we show to people on Sunday mornings. This was recognized by the denomination and one of the major projects undertaken as a result of the Resolution was the creation of our new hymnal. A commission of 8 women and men, chaired by Rev. Mark Belletini created. *Singing the Living Tradition* took 5 years to complete. New hymns were added. Old hymns were reworded. Readings were added. It became more inclusive of women and it expresses a fuller range of the spiritual imagery found in UU congregations.

**Song:** We shall now sing the recast version of Now the Time is Approaching, #144 in our 1993, Singing the Living Tradition hymnal.

Presentation: Surprisingly, in 1997, the UUA board of directors decided that all of the goals of the Women & Religion Resolution had been accomplished and the Women & Religion Committee created by the Resolution was sunsetted. In spite of this, the women across the continent continued to meet and develop programming for the General Assemblies. In January of 2002, the UUA board voted to accept the application from Continental Women & Religion to be granted affiliate status again.

Although we have benefited greatly as a denomination from the implementation of the resolution as you can see from the Seeds of Change page on the other side of the Resolution, there are still issues here in the UU world that require the attention of a Women & Religion Task Force. As in society in general,

UU's need to remain diligent in working to recognize women as equal persons. In our administration at the Unitarian Universalist Association, headquartered in Boston, there is a Young Adult and Campus Ministry office, an Office of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Trangender Concerns, an office for International Relations, and Faith In Action's office for Diversity and Justice. Where is the Office for Women's Issues? For the past few years, following each session of the business meeting during the business portions of our General Assembly deliberations there is an evaluation process that monitors and reminds us of those comments that had been made during the discussion that had not been inclusive, whether from gender, racial, ageist or other perspective, in order to heighten awareness for us all. The same is not true for other presentations at GA. During General Assembly in Cleveland, 2001, one of the speakers at the Service for the Living Tradition, an annual event at General Assembly where both new ministers and ministers who have retired or have passed away are acknowledged, and which is attended by 75% or more of those at GA commented that he was among the second oldest professions in the world -acomment which elicited snickers among the audience. Is prostitution really funny? Also in Cleveland, in his closing comments, our new President of the UUA, William Sinkford, rather than following the example of those who put together our new hymnal, chose to use the male identified "Lord", rather than the more genderless "God". There are still times when language and actions are not respectful of women in our denomination, but we have certainly come a very long way.

What are women working on now as we continue to transform the ministry? The Women's Federation has recently established the Margaret Fuller Award, a grants program to encourage accessible projects in UU feminist theology. The Women's Heritage Society publishes a calendar each year celebrating the lives of UU women. UU Women and Religion has encouraged a new study course about to be published, "Unraveling the Gender Knot – Understanding our Patriarchal Legacy". Perhaps in the near future we will even elect the first woman president of the UUA!!

Singing: Please join now in singing Standing Before Us. The words are in your order of service. Between verses, we invite you to call out the names of those women who have been important in your lives.

Closing: Please remain standing and join hands for the closing words: Let us live each day in celebration of ourselves acting in equal partnership in transforming our world and bringing meaning to our lives. May we all search our own lives for the roots of patriarchy and dig them out. Go in peace, return in love and know that you are not alone. Blessed be.

# Sunday, March 10, 2002 Order of Service

Caring and Sharing

\*Singing

#144 "Now is the Time Approaching"

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beings will prove to be the most significant expansion of human rights in the latter part of the Twentieth Century." "I am convinced that liberation of women as full-fledged human

Chalice Lighting **Opening Words** Walter Jones, Jr. Hymns for the Celebration of Life, Beacon Press, 1964 Barbara White, President of Mills College #498 "A Covenant for Liberals" "Prelude in F Minor" J. S. Bach Takako Sato, piano Geri Kennedy Postlude Presentation \*Singing Transforming the Ministry Part II "Standing Before Me" from the insert

in celebration of the life we share together. sign of our quest for truth and meaning, with joys and sorrows, gifts and needs We gather this hour as people of faith, We light this beacon of hope, --Christine Robinson Joni Reid \*Please rise as you are able \*Closing Words

Carolyn Chaney Sarah Skovlund A warm welcome to our visitors. If you are new to our Fellowship, please sign the red guest book in the foyer and join us after the service for coffee and fellowship in the Social Hall.

Assistive Listening Devices are available at the back of the sanctuary. Please turn off any electronic equipment (pagers, cellular phones, etc.)

We welcome all persons, regardless of race, ethnicity, or national origin, gender or gender identification; affectional preference or sexual orientation; age; physical or mental challenge; or social, economic, or marital status

Center of Interest—Pat Crawford Special Thanks this Sunday to

Greeters—Eduardo Pretell, Wendi Okun Yard Crew— Bill Thomas Coffee—Janette Rabin Sound—Fred Murata Setup—Allen Perry

≧

#123 "Spirit of Life"

Offertory

\*Singing

\*Singing

Presentation

Transforming the Ministry Part II

Presentation

Twenty-Five Years of Transforming the Ministry

1977 Women & Religion Resolution

Sarah Skovlund

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Geri Kennedy

"Now is the Time Approaching"

from the insert

excerpt from A God Who Looks Like Me

by Patricia Lynn Reilly

Words of Welcome

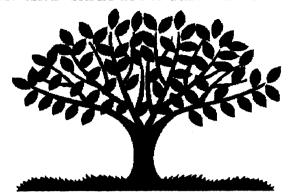
"Harmony of the Angels" J. Bergmuller

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#### SEEDS OF CHANGE

inspired by

THE WOMEN AND RELIGION RESOLUTION OF 1977



#### Important dates:

- Women & Religion Resolution passes unanimously at GA Ithaca, New York
- First annual meeting of W&R conveners and friends- Grailville, Ohio 1979
- 1980 Convocation for feminist theology
- 1985 Passage by UUA General Assembly, adding to sources of UU tradition: Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.
  - UU Principles rewritten to include: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.
- Shirley Ranck's Cakes for the Oveen of Heaven curriculum published by the UUA 1986
- WomanQuest: continental gathering of UU women envisioning inclusivity 1990
- New UU hymnal Singing the Living Tradition published with gender-inclusive language and 1993
- 1994 Elizabeth Fisher's Rise Up and Call Her Name curriculum published by the UUWF
- UUA honors Resolution initiator Lucile Longview & Rosemary Matson at GA, Phoenix, AZ 1997
- 1998 Tom Owen-Towle & January Riddle's The Bridge Called Respect: Women and Men Joining as Allies curriculum published by UUA's Skinner House UUWF's Ministry to Women Awards go to Longview & Matson at GA, Rochester, NY: both are commemorated at National Women's Hall of Fame, Seneca Falls, NY
- Activity continues, including church services, workshops, retreats, conferences, curriculum development, concerts and song-writing, and advocacy. District W&R conveners and friends continue to meet annually to plan and support further implementation of the Resolution.

#### Seeds of Feminist Thinking:

- Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS) formed
- UUs ACTING to Stop Violence Against Women formed
- Support of a woman theo/thealogy student in Transylvania
- Safe Congregation Program and Resolution
- Scholarships for impoverished bright students in Western Kenya
- > The UU Women's Heritage Society formed > More and more women in seminaries and More and more women in seminaries and on faculties of Unitarian Universalist seminaries
- > Introduction of rituals now familiar: water ceremony, sharing joys and sorrow; altars and
- > Rich selection of feminist theo/thealogy books published by Beacon Press
- Retreats and workshops, groups and conferences healing, support, social justice, feminist theo/thealogy
- > Retelling of biblical narratives from feminist perspective
- Awareness of relationship with the environment and ecological feminism
- Non-hierarchical shared leadership; shared ministry
- Women meeting all over the world, struggling and celebrating together

#### Vision for the future:

Working together to end hierarchical oppression, which undermines our vision of a world of peace and justice with respect for the interdependent web of all life.

WHEREAS, a principle of the Unitarian Universalist Association is to affirm, defend, and promote the supreme worth of every human personality, and the use of the democratic method in human relationships; and

 $\it WHEREAS_{\it P}$  great strides have been taken to affirm this principle within our denomination; and

WHEREAS, some models of human relationships arising from religious myths, historical materials, and other teachings still create and perpetuate attitudes that cause women everywhere to be overlooked and undervalued; and

WHEREAS, children, youth and adults internalize and act on these cultural models, thereby tending to limit their sense of self-worth and dignity;

- THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the 1977 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls upon all Unitarian Universalists to examine carefully their own religious beliefs and the extent to which these beliefs influence sex-role stereotypes within their own families; and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the General Assembly urges the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Association to encourage the Unitarian Universalist Association administrative officers and staff, the religious leaders within societies, the Unitarian Universalist theological schools, the directors of related organizations, and the planners of seminars and conferences, to make every effort to: (a) put traditional assumptions and language in perspective, and (b) avoid sexist assumptions and language in the future.
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the General Assembly urges the President of the Unitarian Universalist Association to send copies of this resolution to other denominations examining sexism inherent in religious literature and institutions and to the International Association of Religious Liberal Women and the IARF (International Association for Religious Freedom) and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the General Assembly requests the Unitarian Universalist Association (a) to join with those who are encouraging others in the society to examine the relationship between religious and cultural attitudes toward women, and (b) to send a representative and resource materials to associations appropriate to furthering the above goals; and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the General Assembly requests the President of UUA to report annually on progress in implementing this resolution.

The Women & Religion Resolution was passed unanimously by the Unitarian Universalist Association at its General Assembly 1977, Ithaca, NY.

#### 1180 VT Route 22A Bridport, VT 05734 802-758-2549 ceagle4@aol.com

March 9, 2002

Dear Geri,

I'm FAXing you a copy of "Standing Before Us", since it sounds like you need it right away. I sell them for \$5.00 per copy of the sheet music, which I believe is the same price it would be to order it through Dorothy Emerson at the UU Women's Heritage Society. If the quality of the FAX isn't good enough, let me know and I'll mail the copy to you. You can send your check made out to "Carole Eagleheart".

I'm also FAXing my standard Permission Form for Non-Profit Reproduction. (Every time the song is copied for a congregation, these are the rates.)

Hope your service goes well!

Warm wishes,

Carle

Carole Eagleheart

## Permission Request Form for Non-Profit Reproduction of Songs

Your name:

Your address:

Your telephone number:

Your e-mail address:

Non-profit group you represent:

Name of song you would like to copy:

Number of copies you wish to make:

Rates for copying as of August, 2001:

Prices are subject to change. Rates are in US \$. Canadian or other international checks need to be drawn on a US bank.

Copying both words and music: \$1.00 per copy

Copying words only: \$10.00 for up to 100 copies; \$5 for each additional 100 copies

The following information needs to be included on each copy printed:

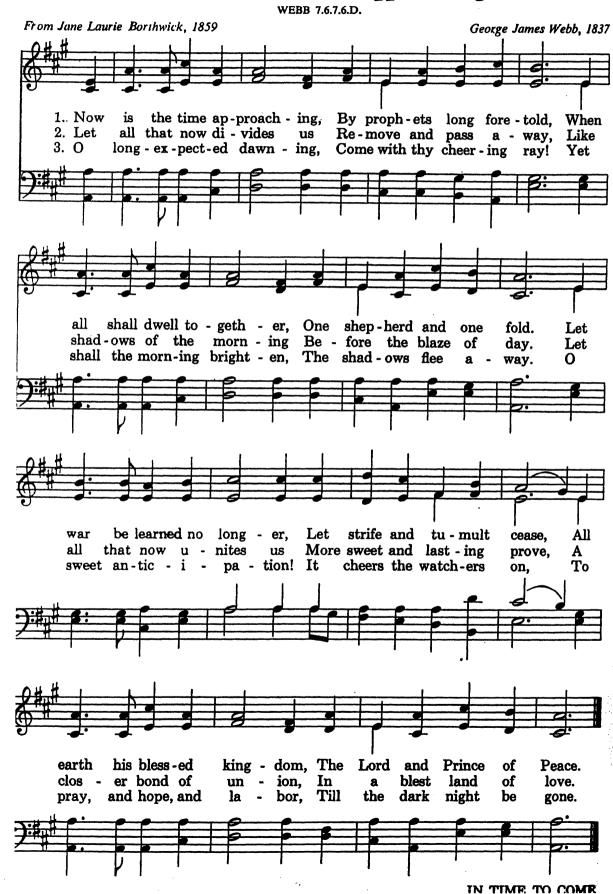
Carole Etzler Eagleheart, copyright symbol ©, copyright date published by Eagleheart, 1180 VT Route 22A, Bridport, VT 05734

Please make a copy of this form and send with your payment to:

Carole Etzler Eagleheart 1180 Vermont Route 22A Bridport, VT 05734 802-758-2549 ceagle4@aol.com

Thank you for your support. It's really important to me as I work to create new songs. I would love to hear from you about how this music has touched your life.

### 209 Now Is the Time Approaching



Standing Before Us words and music by Carole Etzler @ 1983 Chorus Standing beforc making us strong -help us adom --Londing their long --Sharing a sion -sharing a dream --go to verse Touching our thoughts, touching our lives, like a deep-flowing stream lives, like a deep-flowing Touching our thoughts, touching our stream --

> Carole Etzler Eagleheart 1180 Vermont Route 22A, Bridport, VT 05734 802-758-2549—ceagle4@aol.com

copy only with permission of the composer:



These are the women who
joined in the struggle,
Angry and gentle and wise.
These are the women who
called us to action,
Who called us to open our eyes.

- These are the women who
  nurtured our spirits,
   The ones on whom we could depend.
   These are the women who
  gave us their courage,
   Our mentors, our sisters, our friends.
- 4. These are a few of the women who led us. We know there have been many more. We name but a few, yet we honor them all, Those women who went on before.

1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955		1956	
Peterman	S. Wright	Crane Durr Edmunds Kent	Fordon Fresco O'Brien	Ericson Lewis P. Raible	Barr Morris	Kelhan Kelley		Thaw	
1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963		1964	
Gehrmann C. Raible Weller West	D. Brown Mead Rutledge Sawyer Weck	Doss Howard	Beebe Bridges Cook Hillyard Leggitt Repp Walke	Fulghum Helligas Hudson Lindley Vanstrom	Blackburn Doughty Stoll Turner Ulrich Vit Kochendoer	Sengha Westor			
1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970		1971		
Kojan Sammons Selth	Corrado Graulich Harris Stork	Hadley Lynn Moore Ockert Perry Scheyer Van Buren	Goldthwaite H. Wilson Howell Clark Champagne	E Christia Fairfiel Fraser VTyndall	d Kaufn Neff Peter Pross Schol	Kaufmann Neff Petersen Prosser Scholefield D. Wilson		en (GTU)  cer martin  inlay  ott ger mington  ls  Vright	
1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977		1978	3	
Greenlee Holt Knabe Murphy Traylor	Dickerson Goodwillie Greer L'Herrou McGee Marks Richard Thelander	Alexander Atkinson Boardman- Kraft Dencker Dyne Jenkins Nichols Steinmetz Sherak- Howard	Beaudrault Goddard Isaacs Maynard Sylvester Thompson Wuensch	Bond Bortin WFabrican WForest WForsey WLepore, F Lepore, F WMendelso Mitchell Rosen WRuhs WRzepka Schuler Skewes-O Upson VanHande Wiggins WZuniga	WHitch Kaise WKarpl WKeip ohn Potte	ts Bri ncock Dip er ₩Fal les Har wHel er ₩Ran w/Shi		letini ody pel coner ris ler	

1949-1978 Graduates from Starr King School of the Ministry