



REVEREND SHARON K. DITTMAR, MINISTER

Rev. W.H.G. Carter Racial Justice and Reconciliation Scholarship

William Henry Gray Carter, a grandson and namesake of Arkansas' first elected African-American state legislator during post-Civil War Reconstruction, was a Unitarian minister, community spokesperson and leader in Cincinnati. In addition to his ministry, he ran a second-hand clothing store, an alcohol-free pool hall (also used as the site for free holiday meals for any members of the community), sold real estate and was a Pinkerton detective. Rev. Carter ran for City Council in the late 1920's and led a march on City Hall in the early 1930's to demand a food program for his hungry neighbors.

Rev. Carter, one of this nation's earliest African-American Unitarian ministers, was not accepted into the established Unitarian community in Cincinnati at the time of his ministry. He was virtually ignored and received no help from the local Unitarian churches or the American Unitarian Association as he strove to bring liberal religious thought to Cincinnati's poorest neighborhood.

In recognition of this neglect and oversight, First Unitarian Church held a Reconciliation Service with nearly 100 descendants of the Rev. and Mrs. Carter in January 2001. At that time, First Unitarian Church established the Carter Memorial Fund to provide limited, one-time emergency financial support to families with young children, or to support educational opportunities not otherwise available for minority students.

Since 2001, the fund has provided emergency rental or utility assistance to several families, supported three college student counselor/internships for the West Cincinnati Presbyterian Church summer youth program, purchased African-American biographies for the Whittier School Library, subsidized two scholarship students to take the Historic Black Colleges spring tour and supported a Hughes High School class to visit the Memphis Civil Rights Museum. This fund is replenished each January with a dedicated offering at the church. The Carter Fund continues to accept applications for individual emergency assistance and projects from teachers, social workers and church members. In 2005, the fund awarded two scholarships of \$1,000 each. First Unitarian Church is proud to award this scholarship.