

# Dedication Ceremony for Inez Buis (1918–2024)

Ceremony delivered online at the [Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Harford County](#)

Rev. Jaye Brooks, Mark Davis, Dyrck Van Dusen, Kay Saucier, Marlene Lieb & Ted Buis

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## Abstract

A small dedication ceremony was held for Inez Buis, a founding member and longtime contributor to UUFHC.

**Mark Davis:** I'd like to welcome everyone today to join us for this dedication on behalf of Inez Buis. She has had a profound impact on our congregation over the many, many years which she was a member. And we're fortunate today that we'll get a chance to hear a little bit about her contributions and the way that she's enriched our congregation.

So to start off with, I'd like to welcome Reverend Jaye to come up and just give us some opening words.

**Rev. Jaye:** Thanks, Mark. And if you'll light the chalice, these opening words are from Marge Piercy, from her poem, "To Be of Use."

I want to be with people who submerge in the task, who go into the fields to harvest and work in a row and pass the bags along, who are not parlor generals and field deserters, but move in a common rhythm when the food must come in or the fire be put out. The work of the world is as common as mud. Botched, it smears the hand, crumbles to dust.

But the thing worth doing, well done, has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident. Greek amphoras for wine or oil, hoppy vases that held corn are put in museums, but you know they

were made to be used. The pitcher cries for water to carry and a person for work that is real.

Today, we gather to dedicate a plaque celebrating Inez Buis, a person who did work that is real, who lived her values through her choices, her efforts, and her generosity.

**Mark Davis:** Okay. Thank you, Reverend Jaye.

First person that we're going to have come up and speak to us is Dyrck, and he will share some of his memories of Inez.

**Dyrck Van Dusen:** I met Inez initially in January of 1989 when we joined the church. And she was clearly a leader and a friend and a caring soul in our congregation.

She loved music. She was crazy about music. And I'll talk a little bit about that.

I got to know her much better when we decided to move and to build this church, because she was still the leader. She was very much involved in the planning and in helping us put everything together to get it to work. And I think Glenn [Brown] could attest to that, too. He was involved. She donated generously to the church. And we spent much time together planning and making decisions that needed to be to make it get done.

It was very, very controversial among some of the members, and so it was really a complex thing to be able to build this place. When it was done, she surprised all of us by donating an organ to the church. We should have known.

She loved music. She's a good singer, really was. As far as I know, she's the only one that ever played that.

But it's kind of a pity, because she was very, very good at it. It was very enjoyable listening to her with the organ. She loved that media and played it often.

So she pushed to have others use it, and we did get a few people that tried it out. But I think the piano was still preferred by most folks. And me, I'm somebody that played a trombone, so it wouldn't have helped them at all for any of that.

During the time that I was treasurer, I actually got to see her quite a few times. At that time, she was living in a senior center. And I would call her, talk to her, visit her around pledging time and all that kind of stuff.

She was really a generous giver, really helped our budget and everything all the time. Each time that I connected with her, she would ask about the organ. And I have to say that I lied.

I didn't have the heart to tell her that it was used very little. It would have broken her heart.

Inez was one of us: a key leader when I first met her, and a great friend as I got to work and know her. She is missed.

**Mark Davis:** Thank you, Dyrck.

Next, I'd like to have Kay come up and share some of her memories and memories with her children as well.

**Kay Saucier:** When we started coming to UUFHC in September 1984, when we were still on Lee Way, one of the first people I remembered was Inez Buis. As a music lover, I was impressed by the way she played the piano at our services as she did most Sundays. She played in an ancestor of the piano we have now. And when we moved to our present location, she purchased the

organ and alternated between playing the piano and organ.

My children became budding musicians in the fourth grade, daughter Roxanne on the flute, and son Stephen on the oboe. As they progressed, they wanted the opportunity to play during services, and Inez was happy to help them present the preludes, postludes, or even sometimes hymns in the best way possible. She also guided other budding instrumentalists and accompanied them too. She usually guided them on pieces they learned, but also suggested other pieces that would be perfect for an upcoming service.

Besides school band lessons, my children took private lessons. My son's oboe teacher was thrilled that Stephen would have the opportunity to perform in public. Inez's guidance helped them feel comfortable playing in front of an audience.

Besides working with students and adult soloists, Inez accompanied our first choir formed when Reverend Alice Blair Wesley was minister. Back in 1993, as part of UUFHC's first *Coming of Age* program, two students, Micah Van Dusen and Ryan Stehlik, son of Judy Walkley, interviewed Inez to fill one of the program requirements. It's available on the [website](#) where you can listen, or if the sound is too fuzzy, you can read the [transcript](#).

I learned that one impetus for Inez and her husband John to join our Fellowship back in 1957 was religious education for her children. So helping children learn was very important to Inez. The [history project](#) available on our [website](#) lists Inez and John as founding members of UUFHC.

We have many reasons to honor the legacy of Inez today.

**Mark Davis:** Thank you very much, Kay. And now I'd like Marlene to come up. And Marlene will talk to us a little bit about Inez's contributions to the greater community as well.

**Marlene Lieb:** Good morning. Some of you never met or knew Inez. But those of us who

had the honor of sharing time with her knew she was a gem. She was a constant presence at UUFHC, always kindly, quietly, and generously supporting our mission and goals.

As Dyrck and Kay reminded us, lthough she was a librarian for Harford County Public Schools for 25 years, she had a deep love of music, sharing that love and musical talent with all of us.

And Dyrck, I have to say you didn't lie. Because when Richard Schroeder was here, he was very grateful that we had the organ. And he did play it quite a bit on Sundays.

I am pretty sure that Inez served on the search committee when we called Reverend Alice Blair Wesley, who was the minister who helped us settle at our current location. By the time we built this church in 1995, Inez was already living at her retirement community. Many of you have heard that a small group from Lee Way did not relocate when we moved to this location. And they eventually built the church in Fallston.

Since Inez had a long history with the community on Lee Way, she financially supported both our congregation and the Fallston church, helping them settle into their new location. She continued to pledge to our Fellowship each year until her death in 2024.

Of course, we all know the very generous money she bequeathed to UFHC, enabling us to pay off our mortgage. Rob kept in contact with Inez over the years. And he said that she often mentioned her hope that we would pay off that "dang" mortgage. Well, Inez, you made that happen for all of us.

Kay talked about Inez's investment in our youth. But since those many years ago, she continued to invest in all of us, reaching beyond just those who knew her, but in all of you who are here today.

She would be happy to know that her years of service and generosity will go down as an integral part of our history and success. We owe it to Inez to keep her memory and spirit alive by investing our time, talents, and treasures in

honor of this woman who lived her UU values with love at the center for 106 years. Thank you all for being here today.

**Mark Davis:** Thank you, Marlene. And now we are very fortunate to have Ted, Inez's son, be able to come up and share some of his memories as well.

**Ted Buis:** Hopefully, you'll be able to hear me. So hello, everyone. I'm Ted Buis.

In case any of you are Dutch out there, figured with Dyrck. Do you know how to say my name correctly? "Buse" yes, yes.

OK. So nobody should ever need to worry about mispronouncing my name, because I do it all the time. My father, when he came to this country, decided he was born in Amsterdam.

He decided to Americanize it. His John became John. Buis became Buse.

Two vowels together, first one long, second one silent. Long u. That was his logic.

And also, but so much for my name. I want to thank everyone for recognizing my mother and her contribution to the UUFHC. She was the best mom I ever had.

I'm not going to talk that much about her, because that could go on for a very long time. I was going to talk a little bit about my memories of this group. And it started on Sundays at the Seventh Day Adventist church, somewhere here in Harford County. I've forgotten where. One time, I knew how to drive to it, but I've forgotten that at all. That was about 70 years ago, so it's been a while.

My memory's not perfect, but I certainly remember in the beginning, Charlie and Lois Reed, Arnie and Mary Woodward, the Lucases, the Bells, the Reuyls. There was a Dirk Reuyl, who was a member. It had the Bells, Margolis's, Peske's.

You might think that this wouldn't really be something that the church would have gotten involved with, or the Fellowship would have gotten

involved with, but Mr. Peske did a lot of climbing. And he took a group of us out up to Rock State Park and taught us the ropes and how to climb. And we went up to Sugarloaf Mountain and climbed the face of that.

So there was some great fun back then. Back then, there was no ministry. People took turns speaking whatever was on their mind. I remember one time, Dirk Reuyl just came and played music. So hey, my mother and father loved that. They loved music.

So it was classical music, but I spent a lot of time in Sunday school learning about the different religions. That was the one thing that I remember. We went out and went to a Baptist church and a Methodist church and a Catholic church.

That was all in Latin. Totally couldn't follow that, but I do remember getting up and down a whole lot. We actually even got into a Mormon church, which they normally don't allow, and experienced that service.

So there was no indoctrination, no judgments. Just exposing us to the various beliefs. And that included Hindu and Buddhist and Muslim religions.

But the last time I attended this group was on Lee Way. And it was 1970. So even that's been a while. It was a celebration of life for my father, who had passed away in March of 1970. My mother was 51 at the time. And my sister and I were off living our lives, out of the house, out of the nest.

And so UUFHC became an important social safety net for her. Her friends in the Fellowship were very important to her. They did their job well.

And so I want to thank you again for persevering and carrying on this tradition. And I hope you can continue to provide that support for those who need it. Thank you very much.

**Mark Davis:** And thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Okay, Ted, if you don't mind, if you join me over

here, we'll unveil the plaque. Yeah, absolutely. So here, I'll read the plaque for everyone.

You're welcome to come up and take a look at it. So it says,

We honor the memory of Inez Buis, longtime faithful supporter of local Unitarian Universalist congregations (plural, because she supported more than just ours). And we most gratefully acknowledge her very generous gifts.

So a reminder to everyone. We'll have this posted in the boardroom. And a reminder to everyone of the significant contributions, not only to our church, but you heard to the community as a teacher for 25 years, to our congregation, to our fellow congregation in Fallston.

Just very impactful, impactful life. So thank you very much. Thank you for being here.

Okay, now I'd like to ask Rev. Jaye to come up and share with us some closing words. And then we will have some refreshments. Always, always, refreshments.

**Rev. Jaye:** It's part of the sacred UU ritual. We extinguish this chalice and end this ceremony with closing words by Marge Piercy from her poem, "The Art of Blessing the Day". It's a celebration of people who, like Inez, focus their attention and focus their actions to bless each day.

The discipline of blessings is to taste each moment, the bitter, the sour, the sweet, and the salty, and be glad for what does not hurt. The art is in compressing attention to each little and big blossom of the tree of life, to let the tongue sing each fruit, its savor, its aroma, and its use. Attention is love.

What we must give children, mothers, fathers, pets, our friends, the news, the woes of others. What we want to change, we curse and then

pick up a tool. Bless whatever you can with eyes and hands and tongue.

If you can't bless it, get ready to make it new.

Bless Inez. Thank you all for being here.

**Mark Davis:** Thank you. Okay. And now everyone is welcome to adjourn and have some refreshments. Thank you very much for attending. ■