

*Living
the
Liberal Religious
Dream*



The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
of Raleigh

1949-1989

LIVING THE LIBERAL RELIGIOUS DREAM:

a History of

The Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Raleigh

1949 - 1989

PREFACE

Our story is made up of the stories of many people, people who dreamed, planned and worked to establish and expand a liberal religious community in a largely restrictive environment.

Not everyone who gave their talents, time and devotion can be named in this short history, although some who served as officers or in special ways will be made known; but all will be commemorated by this small volume. Our first forty years belong to them. Our next forty years will be because of them.

In preparing this chronicle, I relied frequently upon the work of L.H. Jobe as he led a 1967 committee. His preparation of many by-laws, changes to by-laws coupled with his retelling the stories of our past have helped to keep our organization on track.

Betty Cox has also left a legacy with stories of our Sunday School beginnings; creative poems and skits describing events and sometimes members.

Our surviving charter members, Helen Brown and Eula Williamson, have refreshed our past events with personal memories.

The story continues to unfold. May the chalice continue to be lit in our places of worship for forty times forty years to come.

November 1989

Betty Brown,
Chronicler
Assisted by
Virgil Hinds

DEPARTMENT OF UNITARIAN EXTENSION AND CHURCH MAINTENANCE: *Leading Deacons* GRANT A. BUTLER
 Associate Director, MUNROE HUSBANDS • Assistant, VIRGINIA CRAIG • Minister-at-Large, REV. LON RAY CALL

Unitarian Fellowship
 AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

25 Beacon Street *Raleigh* Boston & Massachusetts

Harriet Doar 104 E. North St. Raleigh

Iola Moore Avents' Ferry Rd. "

Lydia Ainsley, Sir Walter Hotel

Alfred Ainsley Sir Walter Hotel Raleigh

L.H. Jobe 2206 Hope St. "

George Penny 517 Stany Street "

Eula Williamson C-5 Grosvenor Gardens "

James W. Powell 1805 Wilshire Ave Raleigh.

Frances S. Powell "

Max R. Garcia N.C. State College, Raleigh, N. C.

Helen A. Brown 3217 Merriman Ave. Raleigh

Jane Doar 104 E North St. Raleigh

Harlan C. Brown 3217 Merriman Ave. Raleigh

Mrs. L. H. Jobe 2206 Hope St.

William H. Semple 3018 Leonard St. Raleigh

T. H. Mitchell Apt. 11-F, Vetroitte

William H. Lawley 203 Cleveland Ave.

Signatures of Charter Members: Harriet Doar, Iola Moore, Lydia Ainsley, Alfred Ainsley, L.H. Jobe, George A. Penny, Eula Williamson, James W. Powell, Frances S. Powell, Max R. Garcia, Helen A. Brown, Jane Doar, Harlan C. Brown, Mrs. L.H. Jobe, William H. Semple, T. H. Mitchell, and William H. Lawley.

1949: The Year of Our Beginning

When Iola Moore and Harriet Doar met in Raleigh in 1949, something was bound to happen.

They started our fellowship!!

Miss Moore was a Unitarian from Plainfield, New Jersey and Mrs. Doar, a Unitarian from Charlotte, North Carolina.

In the fall of that year the two called some friends and other interested people together for a meeting at the old YMCA on State College campus. Monroe Husbands from the AUA (American Unitarian Association) came down from Boston to explain accreditation procedures.

At a follow-up meeting on November 14 at the Sir Walter Hotel, fourteen people signed the by-laws and elected officers: George Penny, president; Harriet Doar, secretary; and Eula Williamson, treasurer. Counting three people who signed the by-laws after the November 14 meeting, 17 people became charter members.

December 7, 1949; the Unitarian Fellowship of Raleigh was accepted by the AUA as the 33rd fellowship in the U.S..

A photo-static copy of the charter members' signatures is included in this history.

A photograph of six original members, taken some years later, appears after this chapter.

A L.H. Jobe anecdote tells of his response to a question regarding the use of "any" in the by-laws section on membership. "Any person may become a voting member....."

What does "any" really mean, a man asked. "ANY means ANY!", pronounced Mr. Jobe. The man got up and left.

This unequivocal statement was the first of many anti-segregation and civil rights stands taken by the fellowship in the fifties and beyond.

"The purpose of the fellowship is to bring together religious liberals into closer acquaintance and cooperation in order to foster liberal religious attitudes and living."

Thus, the statement of purpose at the heart of our first by-laws was also our declaration of religious freedom.



Six of the charter members. Left to right: seated; Eula Williamson, Iola Moore; standing; Harlan Brown, Helen Brown, L.H. Jobe, Lizzie Jobe.

THE FIFTIES:

Freedom of Belief and Expression

The fifties were exciting times for the new religious entity in town. Especially alternate Wednesday evenings. Those were designated Fellowship discussion times.

- Ah, discussion -- the great Unitarian forte!!
- + Other religions.....
- + Unitarianism.....
- + Current topics of controversy.....

In the beginning, meetings were in members' homes. Later, rooms in Riddick, Withers Hall and the YMCA on North Carolina State College campus were sites for meetings.

Minutes of early fifties meetings yield lengthy descriptions of speakers and their subject matter and sketchy information about fellowship business wanting attention.

Discussion, discussion, always discussion. Harriet Doar, secretary, commented after one such Wednesday discussion session: "The usual unity in diversity was apparent."

The love of free play of individual thought and concern permeated every aspect of fellowship life and still provides common ground for diverse opinion and experience-sharing.

Our present Wednesday Book Discussion Group descends directly from those first Wednesday evening meetings.

In 1956, once-per-month Sunday services began. Ritual, hymn-singing and worship (Iola Moore's pet projects) added to the style of these services.

Later, Betsy Cox commented; "Iola Moore was adamant in her quest for meaningful ritual, a continuity encompassing the true sense of tradition."

Sermons were from the AUA (American Unitarian Association). Members read these sermons (and other materials) to the audiences on a rotating basis.

Brass candlesticks with her name inscribed were Miss Moore's gift to enhance the worship services.

Officers were elected in spring meetings. An important and influential new chair was added. The program chair!

Money was collected as needed for such things as:

- + contributions to AUA...
- + The Southern Regional Conference...
- + a milk fund for a local black family...

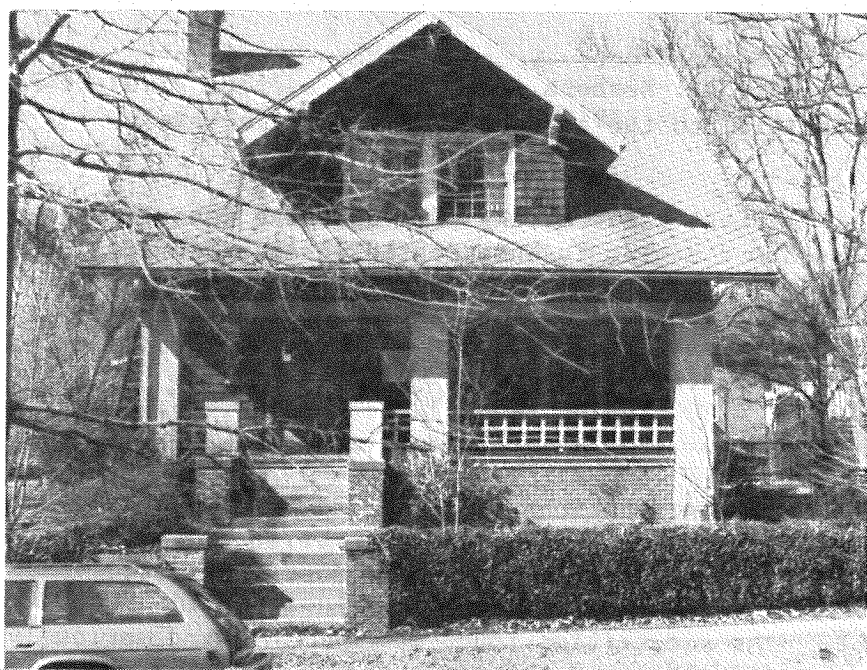
The mid-fifties found members thinking seriously about a building of their own.

Our first building fund started with a penny tossed into an ashtray. Dale Blosser tossed the penny and challenged the others to begin a building fund in 1955. By 1959, the penny had grown to more than \$4,000.

The house at 119 Hawthorne Road was purchased that year.

The prior owner of Hawthorne Road house was suspected of running a numbers racket. Naturally, Hawthorne Road neighbors were suspicious of Unitarian members Clinton and Reba Clevenger as they toured the property.

"How many in your family?" one asked. Dr. Clevenger replied, "Oh, 'bout forty, I reckon."



The House at 119 Hawthorne Road

(Actual membership was twenty-two.)

This brown-shingled house on Hawthorne Road was our home for twenty years. The house had five rooms upstairs while downstairs there was space for meetings, kitchen, and an office.

Five men signed the note for the final purchase of the house.

- + Joe Cox....
- + C.B. Clevenger...
- + Dominic Tringali....
- + Carter Fuller....
- + Robert Hentz....

Personal circumstances caused four of the signatories to move out of town. Joe Cox was stuck holding the note.

The fellowship lived up to its financial word and paid the loan off within a few years.

How many children does it take to start a Sunday School? How about five?

A few members thought five was fine and volunteered to be teachers. "We started in 1957," said Betsy Cox, "in the YMCA on N.C. State campus, one huge room with a sea of chairs which we pushed around to make islands of usable space."

By 1959 there were enough children for three classes. We really needed our own building.

Teachers were emphasizing a style of learning relating to home, family, and other elements of the child's environment. Lots of art and craft activities. Stories, songs, puppets, games, etc.

Once, our children operated puppets of their own making to dramatize the story of Joseph. The play was shared with the adults.

Steward Puppet searched the twelve brothers for Joseph's missing cup. "Y'all ain't got it," he announced as he searched each brother. "Y'all ain't got it."

When he came to Benjamin's sack, he shouted, "Y'ALLS GOT IT."

Our small, fledgling group of predecessors mustered a number of special events:

In 1951, Rev. John H. Morgan, minister of the Unitarian Church in Charlotte, N.C., presented the first Unitarian service in Raleigh.

The following year, the combined fellowships in Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill, sponsored "The First Unitarian Institute," featuring two prominent Unitarian ministers, Dr. A. Powell Davies and Dr. Frederick May Eliot.

"One of the big events of our young life," recorded Dr. Robert Hentz, "was the sponsorship of a talk by Ralph Blanchard at the United Church, which turned out to be a [nice] success." Blanchard was author, lawyer, editor, lecturer, and well-known Unitarian and Humanist.

In 1959, the Raleigh Fellowship hosted the Carolina Unitarian Conference. It was held at State College YMCA. 48 delegates from Carolina Unitarian societies attended.

Organizational expansion and improvement was on our board's agenda in the late fifties. Additions to our board were:

- + Vice-chairman....
- + Director of R.E.....
- + various standing committees....

Dale Blosser, chairman of the board in 1958-59, stated;

"I wish to emphasize and promote committee government and individual participation in all that the group undertakes." He went beyond his goal and had 33 people working on committees.

Remarkable!! Our so-called active roster listed 22 members.

The library of 1958 contained 18 titles. Reba Clevenger was our first librarian.

By 1989, gifts and purchases had increased our library collection to more than 300 titles.

By the end of the fifties decade the numbers had closed on or surpassed Clinton Clevenger's "'bout forty, I reckon" estimate for the size of his "family".

THE SIXTIES

Exploring the Possibilities

"If twenty-two people could buy the [Hawthorne Rd] house, sixty-five people ought to be able to swing this [deal]."

That was Dale Blosser speaking at a general meeting of the fellowship in 1965. He was talking about buying land and constructing a building.

Similar words expressed the determination of members as they took on many other challenges during the sixties.

- The sixties decade was characterized by:
- + rapid expansion of the Sunday School...
 - + high quality and broad diversity of Sunday morning adult programs...
 - + active participation in regional and national Unitarian Universalist organizations...
 - + a vigorous role in community service...

Following the merger of the Unitarian and Universalist denominations in 1961, our name became the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Raleigh, Inc. (Incorporation actually took place in 1959).

Meeting space once again became critical because both Children's Sunday School and the adult discussion group were growing. The fact that they met simultaneously didn't help at all.

In April of 1967, the adults moved into a room at the Hillsborough Street YMCA, leaving the whole Hawthorne Road house to the Sunday School.

80 children were enrolled. Average attendance was 63-65. Even the basement was renovated to add classroom space.

In the early sixties, members pitched in to paint, repair, furnish and decorate the Hawthorne Road house. Subsequently a fire escape, new furnace, roof repair and electrical work were effected. But our

fellowship was relentlessly outgrowing our first house.



Officers for the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship gather outside their meeting place following Sunday morning's service. They are (front row, left to right) Mrs. Irene Chang, Hugh Fordyce and Joshua Lee; and (second row, left to right) Jim Quinn, Mrs. Margaret Ling and Sid Addelman.

Members shopped for a lot on which to construct a building.

In 1966, with an adult membership of 90, representing 54 families, our predecessors contracted to buy the large wooded lot on Wade Ave. The cost was \$21,000. A building planning committee was appointed and Quinn-Wiggins was retained as architects. A design for the building was approved in 1968.

Meanwhile, as a lay led group, members realized that certain civil acts and ceremonies require ordained professionals. A committee studied such ceremonies as child dedications, marriages and memorials and made certain recommendations:

- + Child dedications can and should be handled by members.
- + Marriages would be solemnized by a local minister, namely, Rev. Collina Kilburn of the United Church of Raleigh.
- + No specific ceremonies were proposed for memorial services, the committee feeling that no one would use such a prepared ceremony.

"We will offer the house free (for marriages) and suggest that the people give the minister at least \$10."

Susan Belle Hildreth was the first child to be dedicated. The site was the YMCA, State College campus, in 1965.

The first marriage ceremony was performed in the same year, Rev. Kilburn officiating. Mr. and Mrs. Stanton Hoegerman were the couple and the site was the Hawthorne Road Fellowship house.

The first memorial service was for a well-loved member, Richard Pinkerton, and was held in Danforth Chapel on the NCSU campus in 1966.

Guidance and advice from seasoned, professional religious leaders were sought from time to time during the sixties. Talbot Pearson of the Unitarian Laymen's League and his wife Marion, who had religious education experience, spent February of 1965 in

Raleigh at the invitation of the fellowship for an agreed upon fee and subsistence.

The Pearsons contributed in a number of areas. Talbot Pearson spoke from the pulpit at several Sunday morning services, helped to develop a new statement of purpose and suggested new organizational options.

Marion Pearson applied her skills to train and assist Sunday School teachers.

The consultant arrangement came about quite naturally following a visit the Pearsons made while traveling through Raleigh. The arrangement was not, however, arranged within the regular channels of Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) regional and national offices.

The UUA staff grumbled, and much correspondence was required to mend fences.

Monroe Husbands, from the UUA in Boston, who had guided the formation of the Raleigh fellowship, was a source of information and help and revisited Raleigh in 1966.

Rev. Manuel Holland, Thomas Jefferson District Executive, came to assist with building problems and R. E. needs during the sixties.

Rev. Arthur Olsen and his wife, through the UUA Minister-at-Large Program spent three months in Raleigh speaking, being available to committees and individuals and generally acquainting members with what it is like to have professional participation. Discussions began as to whether to call a minister and thus become a "church."

Did you notice that these outside consultants arrangements went through official, designated channels?

A decade passed before a minister was called.

James D. Hunt, a Fellowship member and a UU minister, officiated at many marriage and memorial ceremonies over the years when we were without a settled minister of our own.

"The Sunday School should be the biggest challenge of the Fellowship." Helen Martof, R. E. Chair, said in 1965. This proved to be the case.

In 1961, an R. E. Committee was established with Lyle Stehman as chair.

John Voorhees became co-chair as well as R.E. Director.

40-45 children were enrolled, and about 30 came every Sunday.

The 40-45 children became a 100 children by the end of the decade.

Betty Davenport, R.E. director in the mid-sixties, persuaded the congregation to provide a stipend for the director. The stipend of \$500 was budgeted for the 1969-70 fiscal year.

The teacher cadre began with five volunteers in 1959. By 1969 the cadre had expanded to: 10 classroom teachers; 4 resource specialists in music, dramatics, creative writing and worship; plus 6 regular substitutes

From the start, the R. E. curriculum was rich and varied.

R.E. Children learned about our environment and their place in it. They learned about various religious traditions and myths along with UU thought. Regional UUA training sessions upgraded the R.E. Director's skills.

An active Liberal Religious Youth (LRY) group formed in 1969 after Lynn (Thompson) Wheel attended a conference on LRY. Alan Downing was the first adult advisor.

For the sixties, the format for adult education offered was a prepared talk followed by discussion. Subjects ranged from such disparate topics as "Man and His Environment" to "Family Portrait (a Junior High dramatic presentation). The first Sunday of each month was generally more formal and took on the aspect of a worship program.

Early in the sixties most programs show-cased member talent. Gradually more outside speakers were called on, including UU ministers.

Members almost never had enough discussion time. They tried to discuss past the designated time for discussion. The coffee hour (slyly called Unitarian communion) was an effective way to extend discussion time.

According to Gerald Folden, 1969 Program Chair, programs were planned to "avoid typical religious elements out of respect for the individuality of beliefs."

Such thinking took into account that most members have mainline religious backgrounds from which they dissented and subsequently sought and found acceptance for their new beliefs in our UU groups.

Over the years, few members have been lifelong Unitarians. State Senator Roy Rowe is one of these rare ones. He also had the unique experience of attending a Unitarian school at Shelter Neck, N.C..

Music, taped and live, became regular fare on Sunday morning programs. Members Lynda Arrington played the piano and Don Adcock performed on the flute frequently. "This year, for the first time in our history, we sang hymns." So stated our 1965 Annual Meeting minutes. "The majority agreed that the experience had been a success."

Until 1967 Sunday programs were scheduled through May or June, depending on when public schools dismissed for the summer. In the summer of that year, Sunday evening discussions were held that dealt with poetic works along with topics of current interest.

The Raleigh Times, in describing a Fellowship service noted, "Hearty applause came following the talk." This custom continues to this day and applause often follows live music or dramatics, as well.

Minister's sermons were exceptions to this rule. Some members feel applause disturbs the atmosphere of worshipful contemplation and therefore refrain from applauding.

Another distinguishing feature of Fellowship services is spontaneous laughter following humor. Solemnity for the sake of solemnity has never caught on.

The turbulent years of the sixties saw the Fellowship involved in championing many issues:

- + civil rights....
- + fair housing....
- + equal employment opportunities....
- + military draft counseling....

Many times our discussions inspired letter writing campaigns to local, state and national officials in favor of:

- + voting rights and equal job opportunities in government....
- + student sit-down strikes at lunch counters....
- + opposition to the death penalty....

Indian children from Harnett County, who were protesting segregation in their schools, attended Catholic schools in Raleigh and lived in the homes of

member of this fellowship until the controversy was settled.

Ray Noggle, president in 1968, terminated our rental of a YMCA room for Sunday services; blacks were being denied membership in its Athletic Club.

Two outstanding Fellowship services to the community were the Halifax Court Study Hall Project and Raleigh Interchurch Housing, Inc. (RICH).

The Halifax Court Study Hall Project was planned and staffed by Fellowship members. Several rooms in the library at Halifax Courts were utilized.

Our staffers supervised children from disadvantaged homes in Halifax Courts three evenings a week, thus improving the quality of the young students' homework. Over a period of several years, many children gained a quiet place to study supported by caring, helpful adults.

Raleigh Interchurch Housing was a project of five churches, three black congregations and two white ones, including the UU Fellowship of Raleigh. One hundred low-income qualifying apartments were built on Method Road financed with federal funds. Each participating church contributed \$2,000. Both black and white persons became occupants in 1970.

These five churches will have joint, clear ownership of the apartments when the mortgage is retired in 2009. The apartments may well be worth over \$4 million, by then.

This project is highly successful and a model for similar ones. Our Fellowship supplies four representatives for the governing board. Our own James Quinn was very active in organizing the project and later became its architect.

The following resolution was issued by the Fellowship as it pledged its support for RICH: "Man's quest for safe, decent and sanitary shelter has long been a concern of the Church, and is a concern of (the) Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Raleigh."

Following the start of RICH operations, the fellowship participated in establishing Method Day Care Center for children of this housing project.

We provided substantial economic support for Method Day Care Center during the sixties. We continue to maintain one of our members as representative on the Method Day Care Center's board of directors.

Financing for our own Fellowship building did not come as easy as raising the \$2,000 for RICH or for providing economic support for Method Day Care Center.

The AUA turned down our request for a low interest loan to purchase the house. Later the Plandome Society of New York declined to loan money for our Wade Ave. building project. We first had to secure a local bank loan.

Our members then raised their building support to \$12,000. In spite of this, difficulty with long term financing persisted.

Success!! In 1966, we succeeded in purchasing the Wade Avenue property for \$21,000 via a local loan. Paid it off in ten years to the day. How is that for long term money raising?

Day to day needs were another matter. The following reprieve was described by Janice Lee, secretary, in 1967: "The board gasped with unbelief when the treasurer reported that no bills had been submitted during the preceding two weeks -- and was almost overcome, when the Book Shop manager, Margaret Ann Link, actually returned \$25 of a \$75 loan."

The \$75 loan was used to buy materials from Beacon Press (the UUA press). This was the start-up of our Book Shop.

This was a time of economic frustration. Members' thoughts returned to calling a minister.

Special dinners, rummage sales, craft sales; many such events generated funds for the budget.

But, sometimes we relaxed with strictly social gatherings. No thoughts about the budget. Things like theater parties, picnics at Reedy Creek State Park, Thanksgiving parties, and Christmas parties.

Throughout the sixties, our predecessors faithfully paid their dues to UUA and the T.J. District. We forged a reputation for responsibility in meeting our financial needs and to living up to our commitments.

These amazing sixties members always looked ahead and assumed responsibility for the future of our community as well as their own organization.

The SEVENTIES The Heyday of Lay Leadership

Gwyneth Andrews was asked by the board in 1973 to keep the annual May Fair small because time and energy were simultaneously being required for the construction of the new building.

When the seventies decade began, adult members were meeting at the Raleigh Little Theater so as to leave the Fellowship (Hawthorne Road) house solely for children's R.E. programs.

The struggle to overcome crowding was at a critical stage. Efforts were repeated again and again to raise and borrow money for construction of a building on our Wade Avenue lot.

Quinn-Wiggins architectural firm had been retained and they submitted drawings for a handsome building. We approved the plans.

Seventy families pledged a total of \$20,000 to a building fund. Contractors bids were called for.

In the end the project failed for lack of local bank funding. Frustration!!!

Remodeling the Hawthorne Road house was the 1974 temporary solution to the space crisis. Blosser-Boone was the architect and Louis Skelton was the builder.

The expanded and refurbished house served us well until 1979.

Now, furnishing the remodeled house adequately and keeping it clean and repaired kept our members busy.

Glenn Miller suggested that each member buy a chair for the meeting room. A good many chairs were provided in this way.

Families were assigned their weeks for cleaning duty. When your family's week came up, your name appeared in the newsletter.

Individuals were taking responsibility for a variety of things:

- + Freeke Kohl silk-screened panels for two windows in the meeting room addition.
- + Susanna Clark made Roman shades for the remaining windows.
- + "The problem of taking care of the trash each Sunday was solved when Margaret Thompson volunteered to do it."
- + "Dave Link volunteered to be responsible for setting up the chairs for Sunday meetings."
- + "Henry Lynn repaired the leaky roof."
- + "Mary Lou Shanklin planted and landscaped."

Meanwhile, the house was finding more and more community uses such as Partners, Hopeline, Raleigh Artists, Parents Without Partners, and others.

Sunday morning adult programs continued to be diverse. Certain of these themes; namely evil, personal philosophy, decision-making, morals and ethics, life experiences, and heroes; became so popular that they extended their runs by becoming discussion series.

Jeralee Miller, our imaginative Program Chair, involved 25 members in Sunday program presentations in one year. Miller's Sunday discussion programs extended into summers.

Sometimes Jeralee Miller had to field complaints about programs.

Our board reviewed its policy on programs. "Our pulpit is an open forum; controversial topics are often addressed; we can't guarantee never to offend anyone."

"Karen Braucher raised [the] question as to whether discussion is necessary at every service. No, a discussion may not be necessary if the service is inspirational in character, they decided."

More live and recorded music was added to worship services, mostly in these ways:

+ The music chair took on the task of securing musicians.

+ Glenn Miller installed a new audio system. He managed and operated the tape recorder and provided taped music. Sunday mornings always started with Glenn arriving to set up the audio equipment.

+ In the mid-seventies, Ruth Noggle, possessing a love of music coupled with long experience in choir singing, gathered together willing members in order to practice hymns to be sung in Sunday services.

Some members objected to certain words in certain hymns but Ruth maintained that "the spirit of the music was the most important thing." The hymn-singers became a choir. Music was scrounged or ordered from UUA. The choir was called on to sing regularly. Loretta Merston followed Ruth as choir director and has continued her able and dedicated service to the present.

Loretta led a workshop on learning how to play the recorder. It was a popular workshop. A handful of people continued playing together, Soon they called themselves the Transylvania Pipers, and under Loretta's direction, played at various functions in Raleigh. The Pipers still practice on a regular basis.

A Decorations Chair was added to coordinate floral and artistic adjuncts to the Sunday services. Photographs by Jerome Kohl graced the covers of many of the Sunday morning orders of service.

The Statement of Purpose was reviewed and revised in 1971. It reflected the setting of new goals and directions of our Fellowship:

"The purpose of this Fellowship shall be to provide through fellowship, the experience and knowledge necessary for the formulation of a religion or philosophy based on freedom and responsibility of belief, reason and the evaluation of ideas."

One concept of the 1969 by-laws was reaffirmed. "Any person may become a member of this Fellowship who is in sympathy with its purpose and program, as signified by his (sic) signature on the membership roll."

During the seventies, an attempt to degenderize our by-laws was voted down.

A number of new services to members began in the seventies:

- + Fred Thompson initiated several extended families, groups of members meeting informally for friendship and personal satisfaction.

- + Alan Downing sponsored evening encounter groups.

- + The Social Committee began the custom of Circle Dinners, where new and old members shared a potluck meal and exchanged ideas.

"Never resting on their laurels (and rarely resting at all) the Social Committee" put on costume parties, luaus, picnics, pig pickin's, Thanksgiving dinners, and Christmas dinners. Sharing food and conviviality; fine forms of fellowship.

June Preston, Social Chair early in the seventies, initiated a number of gala international dinners featuring ethnic foods. They were outstanding social events and earned money for the purchase of needed kitchen equipment.

The Fellowship was indeed a lively, friendly place. New members and visitors were welcomed at all events. Growth was natural.

In the 1978 Annual Report, President John Goodman wrote, "While some would argue the advisability of growth, in many ways it is essential, due to the fluidity of our membership. I love it [growth] because of the constant influx of new people with their particular view-points and talents."

For children, whose numbers grew from 65 at the end of the sixties to 75 at the end of the seventies, the Hawthorne Road house was an exciting place to be.

Dot Ward became Director of Religious Education in 1970. The director's stipend had improved to \$720.

Dot had six committee members and twenty-three teachers to cope with up to fifty children on Sunday mornings.

Margaret Ann Link, who followed Dot as R.E. director, instituted worship services before individual classes.

The About Your Sexuality curriculum from Beacon Press became a very popular course and was presented several times to junior and senior high youth and nine-to-eleven year olds.

In the "Church Across the Street" program, Fellowship Junior High students exchanged visits with their counterparts in other churches and temples.

The Liberal Religious Youth (LRY) went through several cycles during this period. Fred Thompson started a Youth-Adult Committee (YAC) to review and resolve common problems.

Guidelines were drawn up for LRY activities including a ban on alcohol and drugs and requiring the presence of adult chaperons at all LRY functions.

Our young people started a coffeehouse at the Fellowship with music, readings, etc. Difficulties arose from the behavior of a few teens. The board withdrew its support.

- At various times, the LRY:
- + painted the house....
 - + worked at the Peace Booth at the N.C. State Fair....
 - + took charge of the adult Sunday morning coffee hour....
 - + participated in the CROP Walk....
 - + attended Lower South Federation meetings....

Lynn Thompson Wheal was elected president of this group in 1971.

Someone once suggested that the LRY meet in the attic. Instead, the attic became a refuge for broken furniture, old curriculum propa, and a large raccoon (Raleigh Raccoon), who came into and out of the attic in mysterious ways.

Raleigh Raccoon arrived late in the seventies and was destroying the attic and its contents. We called the Humane Society to set a trap.

One Sunday evening during an LRY meeting, loud thumping and bumping sounds came from the attic. Raleigh Raccoon was frantically trying to get out of the trap.

Police were called. They removed the raccoon and promised to give the animal a rural home.

Betsy Cox immortalized Raleigh Raccoon as a symbol of the spirit of our Fellowship. She made a banner using the raccoon as a symbol and presented a carved wooden raccoon to the Fellowship.

Our organization has always depended on pledging units (mostly family units) for a major portion of its support. The number of pledging units doubled during the seventies while the budget grew from \$10,000 to \$23,525.

Pledges aren't always enough. So Unitarians created fund raisers and more fund raisers such as selling peanuts at N.C. State Fairs, socials, yard sales, church fairs, and goods and services auctions with members contributing goods and services.

Funding all the services our Fellowship offered was touch-and-go but our assistance to community projects was always forthcoming. Method Day Care Center and RICH received substantial economic support during the sixties. Others benefiting from our assistance: Total Life Center (TLC), Coalition, Cameron Park Association, camping scholarships, and Vietnamese Boat People.

Often, the best support was in the form of personal contributions of time in such community projects as Partners, CROP Walk, picnics and Sunday evening worship times at Women's Prison, Hopeline, and Peace Booth at State Fair.

An intense and extended project aimed at keeping pregnant girls in school was presented to the school board by the Social Action Committee. Emerson Snipes was the chair.

Our committee studied the program extensively and tried to coordinate it with the school administration. Finally, the school administration took the project under advisement. Some time later, the school system began a program for pregnant students.

We maintained our ties with T.J. District and our denomination through attendance at R.E. workshops, district meetings, and General Assemblies.

- + The Fellowship hosted several district meetings.

- + Dale Blosser and Margaret Ann Link served as district presidents.
- + Margaret Ann was secretary and also on the nominating committee.
- + June Preston and Wolfgang Haddon were district board members.
- + Margaret Thompson was elected to the district nominating committee.
- + Alan Downing served as chair of the Southeastern Unitarian Universalist Summer Institute (SUUSI).
- + Margaret Ann served on the UUA Committee on Appraisal.
- + Dues to the district and UUA were always prompt.

Rev. John Burciaga, UUA Ministerial Consultant reported in 1977 that the Raleigh Fellowship struck him "as being one of the strongest groups he has seen, and it appeared to him that our Fellowship is ready to take on another challenge."

The challenge he was referring to was calling a minister, thus fulfilling a spiritual need, for which a majority of the Raleigh Fellowship had expressed a desire. Earlier discussions had been directed at such short term solutions as:

- + finding suitable ministers who were available to speak on Sundays...
- + contracting a minister to speak on a monthly basis...

When Rev. Roger Sizemore, another UUA consultant, held workshops and informal discussions with members in 1976, the issue of professional leadership became even more intense.

The board decided to put the question to the congregation in the form of a questionnaire. The majority of members favored calling a part-time minister. The board voted to call a part-time

minister. While they were at it, they voted to set up yet another building fund. The year was 1976.

Dev Munn chaired our first Search Committee. The Committee presented Rev. Frances West as a candidate. Rev. West was elected and began work March 1, 1979. The contract limited her to speaking from the pulpit no more than once or twice per month.

An unwritten understanding was that no vestments would be worn for Sunday services. A Ministerial Liaison Committee was formed and our by-laws adapted to reflect an organization with a part-time professional minister in place.

Working out arrangements that work was..... challenging. Some of the elements were:

- + a strong and vital lay leadership...
- + lay leadership's strong insistence on an equal share of the pulpit...
- + the part-time nature of the professional leadership...

The chalice was faithfully lit for Sunday morning services. We came to expect a more liturgical tone from the Sunday programs. After a beautiful Christmas Eve candlelighting service, Tom Tull remarked: "Fellowship members seem ready for a few more ritual-istic events per year."

Rev. West supported and encouraged an effort that culminated in the construction of our present building at 3313 Wade Avenue. Boisseau Design Group was architect and Singleton, the builder.

Rev. West perceived the nature of the change taking place in our fellowship as one of moving from a uni-cell to a multi-celled group and saw her role as one of helping the congregation fulfill its dreams.

The EIGHTIES
Attaining Professional Leadership

The eighties began with an almost full-service program:

- + a minister, serving the community as well as the congregation...
- + strong lay leadership...
- + member participation in a broad range of activities...
- + a high quality religious education program for youth...
- + building plans to culminate in a beautiful new structure...

How well were our 154 members coping with all these elements in 1980? Rev. David Scheyer, interim minister, in his 1987 evaluation of the Fellowship wrote that it is:

"a basically very 'healthy' congregation, one with the resources and commitment capable of making it a prime example of the best we have to offer."

One major commitment was to establish and maintain a ministerial presence. Rev. West stayed long enough to encourage and support the construction of a new building.

She contributed to a myriad of programs:

- + NCSU Campus Ministry...
- + ACLU...
- + Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights...
- + local Ministers' Association...
- + consultant minister for the Winston-Salem Fellowship...
- + monthly minister's suppers to bring small groups of members together for getting to know their minister personally...

Rev. West resigned in January 1982 to pursue other goals.

A new Search Committee, chaired by Ray Noggle was promptly initiated.

This time, the search was for a full time minister.

Again, the stipulation was that the minister be responsible for a maximum of two services per month.

Rev. Roberta Harrison Wood accepted the congregational call and began her ministry May 1, 1983.

- + Strongly committed to caring for members in need, she reported ninety-five pastoral visits in 1984.
- + She instituted Women in Religion workshops.
- + She conducted brief children's worship segments at the beginning of adult Sunday services.
- + Expression of members' Joys and Concerns became a part of Sunday services.
- + Minister's Sunday suppers were continued.

Unfortunately, friction developed between Rev. Wood and a significant number of Fellowship members; it was never successfully managed.

The Ministerial Relations Committee and our Fellowship board were at odds over how to resolve the problems.

All members were invited to express their opinions.

The T.J. District Executive was asked to mediate but, in the end, Rev. Wood resigned to halt further polarization of the congregation.

The call to the congregational meeting, which accepted her resignation, read in part:

"We have all been through a very difficult and sad experience. It is important that the congregation understand that both Roberta Wood and the board are in agreement on the settlement. This despite the many concerns that we all have about how we arrived at this point."

Rev. Scheyer later pointed out that "there does appear to be a subtle opposition to 'being told what to do by the minister among some people.' Hardly surprising in a Fellowship with one foot back in the fellowship days. This attitude will continue to decline as more people discover that a minister (any minister) is not, by definition, some kind of threat, that his/her interests are really the same as their own."

After Rev. Wood resigned, the congregation moved quickly to call an interim minister, Rev. Don Vaughn. Rev. Vaughn resigned after nine months.

Rev. David Scheyer came in 1986. Meanwhile, the then current Search Committee, chaired by Karen Matteson, was following the process prescribed in the UUA guidelines for selecting and calling a new, permanent, full-time minister. An improved salary package gave the committee a broader range of candidates.

Rev. Morris Hudgins was called in December 1986 and began his work August 1, 1987.

A cooperative arrangement between the minister and the Program Committee allowed for greater flexibility in the number of Sundays each presided in the pulpit. A ministry of partnership and cooperation between professional and lay leaders was established.

Rev. Hudgins has been involved in community and denominational activities, such as:

- + NCSU Campus Ministry...
- + Wake Coalition for the Homeless...
- + Raleigh Religious Network for Gay and Lesbian Equality...
- + UU Minister's Association...
- + T.J. District Good Offices Person...

+ conducting regular staff meetings for disseminating information and coordination...

Many services are provided by all ministers who have served the Fellowship. Some of the more visible are:

- + Weddings...
- + child dedications...
- + memorial services...
- + counseling...

For the eighties, establishing professional leadership loomed large in the minds of our members.

Meanwhile, there was a second major commitment; financing and constructing a new building at 3313 Wade Ave.

After years of struggle; the plans, the financing and the timing converged to produce an attractive structure designed by Ken Boisseau Design Group and built by Gene Singleton, contractor.

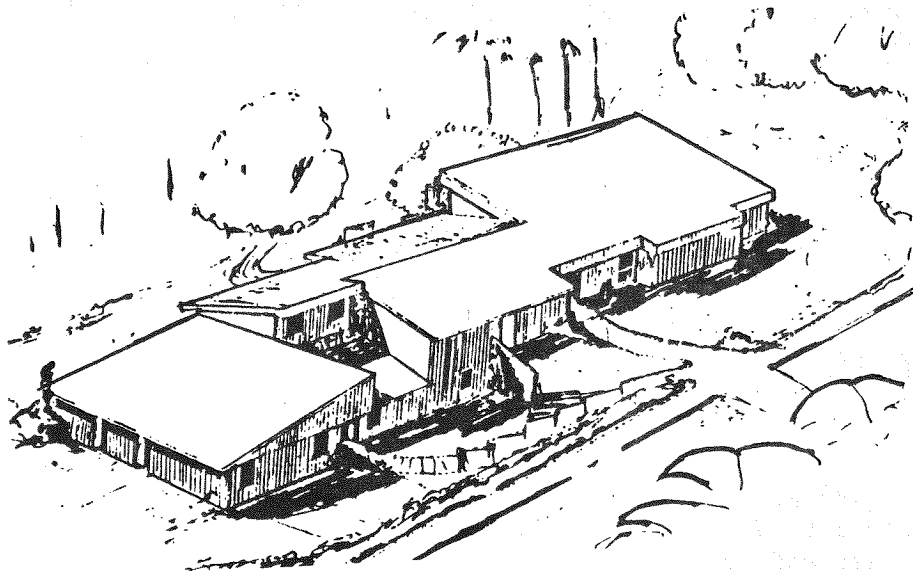
Paul Wright, Building Committee member, was on the site nearly every day, checking on construction details. A special contribution.

Ground was broken in October 1980; the congregation moved in mid-February 1981.

The start of a new chapter in the history of the Fellowship!!

To celebrate, we sang songs and planted grass seed and Rev. West spoke:

"there is excitement in beginning this venture....dreams of all that can be experienced here; of new people we will come to know, who, knowingly or unknowingly, will be indebted to those in the present congregation, who made this place possible for now and future times."



Design of building constructed at 3313 Wade Avenue

Members formed a procession from the Hawthorne Road house to the new building on Wade Avenue. It was Rev. West's idea. Each member carried an object from the old house to the new building. Betsy Cox carried the wooden raccoon mascot. Young people took turns carrying the mummy case.

The Hawthorne Road house was sold, there-upon to revert back to use by a family. As a reminder of our roots, a hawthorn tree was planted on the bank

facing the Wade Ave. entrance to the R.E. wing of the building.

Members pitched in to add finishing touches to the new building; paint, tile and carpet, room dividers, shelves, cabinets and counters, landscaping.

Elmo Jensen contributed the light for the front parking lot.

Joe Parker donated furniture and carpeting.

The Raleigh Arts Community donated the stained glass panel created by Becky Dixon to symbolize the major religions of the world.

Shirl Thomas made the sign at the entrance to the building.

Elaine Reed created a decorative plate for the new building.

WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT!! The congregation had hardly settled in before Sunday morning spaces were crowded again.

A new architect and a capital fund drive brought about a partial solution by adding a large R.E. room in 1987. Parking was also improved.

We also acquired the two-acre plot of land directly east of 3313 for possible future expansion. We set up a Land Use Committee, under Alan Spader's direction, to explore options for the use of the property.

Yet another Building Committee, a new architect, and more financial studies signal that the process continues.

In the meantime, one hundred and fifty children enrolled in R.E. can hardly wait for deliberations to be completed. A temporary portable classroom was installed in the summer of 1989 to ease crowding until the proposed expansion is completed.



Celebrating ground-breaking at the Wade Ave. lot; (left to right) Arnold and Marjorie Gelbin, Natalie Barbare, Joyce (Barbare) Todd, Rev. Frances West and Bill West.

But liberal religion was growing and there is a limit to what on site expansion will accommodate. The boards of UUF and Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (ERUUF) were collaborating to establish one or more new UU societies in the area. ERUUF was also experiencing growing pains.

There were significant developments in Religious Education for youth:

- + Our R.E. enrollment doubled (from seventy-five to one hundred and fifty) in the eighties.
- + Besides UU curriculum materials, several R.E. courses were locally developed.
- + Vandy Bradow created a series on international celebrations for three-to-five year olds.
- + A new course on UU history and thought was developed or use by all age groups except the nursery.
- + A program called "Getting to Know You" promoted exchanges of visits between classes and a sharing of experiences.

Diann Irwin, Director of R.E., realized the R.E. children were not involved in total Fellowship programming. She arranged for children to come as a group to the first portion of adult Sunday services on a regular basis.

Other significant improvements in R.E. were:

- + A permanent nanny was engaged so the tiny ones felt secure with a known friend each Sunday.
- + A playground in the wooded area to the east of the R.E. wing was built by members under the direction of Sam Gaither.
- + Later, a small play area just outside the nursery was set up for very young children.

The R.E. budget included a campership to The Mountain UU Camp and Conference Center for a deserving R.E. youngster.

Money for books for the R.E. library was budgeted.

Dianne Hain became R.E. Director in 1986. The position was expanded to half time in 1988.



Members and teachers of the Junior High class and the Nuclear Free Zone poster: (left to right) back row: Greg Peck, Jane Hunt, Ian Adrian, Ian Shanklin; middle row: Jeffrey Henkle, Kristin Jarvela, Brenda Godwin; in front: Josh McFeeters.

Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU), once called LRY, and the Junior High group took on community service projects, attended conferences and raised funds for their activities:

A Junior High R.E. class petitioned the membership to declare the Fellowship property a nuclear free zone. Their request was approved by the congregation in 1987. The Humane Society Animal Shelter received support from our young people.

A Senior High R.E. group painted murals in the nursery and Susan B. Anthony classrooms. They also:

- + often provided child care for congregational meetings...
- + served food at canvass dinners...

Intergenerational Retreats at Umstead Park became significant events that began in 1983 with Gigi Cooper as organizer. Children and adults camp, play, and worship together.

In 1987, our board reaffirmed the Fellowship's commitment to the larger community. Their stated long range goal was to "develop our Fellowship as a dynamic positive religious force in ourselves and our community."

In this decade, three Asian families were relocated in Raleigh by the Fellowship.

The Ly family (father, mother, 6 children, and another born shortly after their arrival) came to Raleigh Durham Airport on a snowy March day in 1980.

All the work involved in housing, feeding, clothing, health care, school attendance, teaching English and myriads of other things tested our commitment.

James Quinn, president, said; "This required the cooperation of the whole (Fellowship) added to the extraordinary efforts of a few."

The Lys moved to California. A Laotian family (father, mother and 2 children) replaced them in 1988.

Following shortly after the Laotian family; an Amer-Asian girl, her mother, stepfather and 2 stepbrothers.

Renate Thompson is the current chair of the Task Force on Refugees.

John Vorhees organized a support group for parents and friends of gays and a UU Gay and Lesbian group. Both met regularly in the Fellowship building.

An AIDS support group sponsored by The Lesbian and Gay Health Project, used a room in the building.

A major effort coordinated by Joel Watson provided supervision for the overflow shelter for homeless men in Raleigh during the month of December 1988. 75 members in shifts of three stayed overnight to monitor approximately 30 men.

The new professional ministerial presence did not decrease the volume of activities for the Program Committee. Perhaps the two major reasons were:

- + Members retained their interest in Sunday morning service topics.

- + For most of the decade, ministers were limited to two appearances in the pulpit per month.

Crowding and parking problems forced us to dual Sunday morning services in September 1988. The two programs often considered entirely different topics and were never duplicates. We never lack for program ideas or volunteers to speak.

The Program Committee provided themes in sociology, politics, religion, and the arts. Year-

round programming became the responsibility of the committee in 1983.

The choir, under the direction of Loretta Mershon, was featured several times per month in Sunday morning services. Other Special Musical Events were:

- + a family evening with Lee Knight...
- + two performances by Windfall...
- + two very successful fund raising concerts by Erik Dyke and his professional musician friends...

A Beautiful hand-quilted wall hanging featuring the UU chalice symbol was created and donated by Regina Liske.

Other Non-musical events:

- + Emily Copeland started the Fortnighters group, forerunner of once-per-month Soup and Salad get-togethers on Friday evenings.
- + Singles were organized by Emily Copeland and Mary Kilburn for friendship and recreation.
- + A Men's Discussion Group was initiated by Sam Gaither.
- + Several women's support groups met regularly.
- + The Bridge Group continued its once-per-month Wednesday evening gatherings.
- + Many non-UU groups met frequently in the building including a Women's Coffeehouse, Sierra Club, etc.

Many members have contributed their time and talents to help run the Fellowship. One name, however, appears on the roster of board members more often than any other. Barbara Michos has served in many important positions (President, Program Chair, Social Chair, Membership Chair) on ten different occasions.

The Membership Committee enjoys exemplary success. Membership has increased from 154 in 1980 to 268 in 1989 and is still growing.

For the Care Committee (within the Membership Committee), more members means the possibility that more people in the Fellowship who are in crisis or ill. Our plaudits to the Care Committee.

The Membership Committee provides "New U" classes designed to orient new people to UU history, organization and thought. "New U" classes are offered several times per year.

The Membership Committee promotes numerous Circle Dinners, small dinners held in members homes, to acquaint new members with older members.

In 1988, we developed our current statement of purpose:

"We encourage the sharing of joys and concerns, promoting social action to assist people in need, the appreciation of liberal religious thought, the betterment of human existence, and the necessity of tolerance. We are committed to peace, truth, love, equality, and the health of the natural world. The mission of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Raleigh is to provide the community with the opportunity to participate in a multi-generational forum of free expression in a climate of intellectual, spiritual and religious stimulation."

Now we turn the page to a new decade to be followed by a new century. New people will come, old ones depart, building plans progress, the history makers proceed.

"What's past is prologue."