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CELEBRATING
50
YEARS
OF
FELLOWSHIP



SPirit of LIFE: CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF FELLOWSHIP

INTRODUCTION

“Spirit of Life” is one of our Fellowship’s favorite hymns, perhaps reflecting the growing interest in spirituality expressed by our congregation in the 1990s. It is also a prominent theme of the UUFR 50th anniversary commemorative quilt. The graphics in this booklet are images from the quilt, including “spirit of life” in multiple languages and symbols of world religions. Artists in our Fellowship, led by Georgia Springer, made the quilt. We appreciate their sharing the graphics, especially those of Janine Maves. For the cover design, Michele McIntosh worked with Georgia’s original sketch for the quilt.

Creating this history has been a collaborative affair. Contributors included five former UUFR presidents, our own minister, a member who is a UU minister, and members who make their living writing, editing and designing. We’re proud of our team! We divided the task into the five decades. Jim Hunt wrote the 50s, and Jim Quinn, the 60s. Margaret Ann Link and Barbara Michos did the 70s, while Diann Irwin and Jerri Meisner compiled the 80s. A group from the Young Adult UUs combined for the 90s, with contributions from Tracy Hollister, Kristin Mahato, Claude Martin and Leslie Shaw. Ellen MacMillan edited these five decades into a single thread. Julie Denny-Hughes and Leslie Shaw reviewed the final draft, with many good suggestions. Michele McIntosh designed and laid out the entire booklet. We also acknowledge the help we got from the 40th anniversary history, written in 1989 by Betty Brown with help from Virgil Hinds.

We designed this as an informal history to be read easily and enjoyed. The membership committee will use it in new members’ packets. We also hope you find occasion to flip through its pages from time to time, to draw strength and inspiration from how far we have come since 1949.

— Bill Finger, History Project Coordinator

50 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP: UUFR PRESIDENTS

49-51 George A. Penny	65-66 Margaret Ann Link	76-77 Barbara Jobe Michos	86-87 Ken Dorsey
51-53 L.H. Jobe	66-67 James T. Quinn	77-78 John Goodman	87-88 Barbara Green
53-55 Iola Moore	67-69 Ray Noggle	78-80 James T. Quinn	88-90 Erika Fairchild
55-57 Robert Hentz	69-70 David A. Link	80-82 Joyce (Barbare) Todd	90-92 Bill Norman
57-58 Robert Wickboldt	70-71 Robert H. Ward	82-83 Betty Brown	92-94 Erik Dyke
58-60 Dale Blosser	71-72 Glenn Miller	83-84 John Jaquette Harriet May	94-96 Gayle Fitzgerald
60-62 Joe Cox	72-73 Alan Downing	84-86 Mary (Payne) Nooe	96-98 Jerri Meisner
62-63 Glenn McCann	73-75 R. Devereaux Munn		98-99 Diann Irwin
63-65 John Voorhees	75-76 Maragaret (Thompson) Baucus		99-00 Ann Howe

50 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP: UUFR MINISTERS

79-82 Rev. Frances West	87-98 Rev. Morris Hudgins	99-present
83-84 Rev. Roberta Wood	<i>Interns</i>	Rev. Julie Denny-Hughes
1985 Rev. Don Vaughn	<i>John Graves</i>	
85-86 Rev. David Scheyer	<i>Julie Denny-Hughes</i>	
	<i>Marcia Curtis</i>	
	<i>Lillie Henley</i>	
	<i>Carol Jackson</i>	



I AM A UNITARIAN: 1949

In the summer of 1949, two women attending a sewing meeting at Raleigh's Wiley School in Cameron Park became acquainted and their conversation turned to church affiliation.

"I am an Episcopalian," said the first woman.

"What is your denomination?"

"I am a Unitarian," answered Mrs. Harriet Doar, the society editor of the *News and Observer*.

"Then you must meet my sister," the first said. "She is also a Unitarian."

The Episcopalian's sister was Iola Moore, and she soon met Harriet Doar. Having heard of the new fellowship program of the American Unitarian Association (AUA), they decided to try to organize a fellowship in Raleigh. In the fall of 1949, Monroe Husbands, the head of the fellowship program, came from Boston to meet with a small, interested group. Fourteen persons met at the Sir Walter Raleigh Hotel November 14, 1949, and organized the Unitarian Fellowship of Raleigh, the thirty-third in the nation and one of the first in the South. Three others signed later, making 17 charter members.

"The purpose of this Fellowship is to bring religious liberals into closer acquaintance and cooperation in order to foster liberal religious attitudes and living," stated the constitution adopted that day.

CHARTER MEMBERS

Alfred Ainsley

Lydia Ainsley

Harlan C. Brown

Helen A. Brown

Harriet Doar

Jane Doar

Max R. Garcia

L.H. Jobe

Mrs. L.H. Jobe

William H. Lawley

T. H. Mitchell

Iola Moore

George A. Penny

Frances S. Powell

James W. Powell

William H. Semple

Eula Williamson



WHAT DOES "ANY" MEAN? THE FIFTIES



1949

Harriet Doar and Iola Moore invited friends to form a new Unitarian fellowship. Fourteen persons attended the initial meeting at the Sir Walter Raleigh Hotel.

Nov. 17, 1949

Fourteen persons signed the charter; three signed later, making 17 charter members.

Dec. 7, 1949

The American Unitarian Association accepted the Unitarian Fellowship of Raleigh as the 33rd fellowship in the country and one of the first in the South. Meetings began in various buildings on the NCSU campus.

“Any person may become a voting member” of the Fellowship, according to a draft of the first bylaws. During an early discussion of those bylaws, a man asked, “What does ANY mean?” Chairman of the bylaws committee, founding member L.H. Jobe, answered emphatically, “ANY means ANY.” The questioner left immediately, and the group moved forward. This unequivocal statement was the first of many anti-segregation and civil rights stands taken by the Fellowship in its early years.

Homes and various buildings on the N.C. State University campus became our meeting sites in the early 50s. The Fellowship held discussions every other Wednesday night, the beginnings of our still-going book discussion group. “It was usually 12 to 15 people,” recalled Betty Wiser, an early member still active in the Fellowship. “We had lots of stimulating discussions and sometimes a guest speaker. We began meeting on Sundays when there was pressure to have a Sunday school for the children.” The once-per-month Sunday services began in 1956, and the Sunday school started the next year.





“We started in the YMCA on the N.C. State campus, one huge room with a sea of chairs we pushed around to make islands of usable space,” said Betsy Cox, who started the children’s program. By 1959, there were enough children to fill three rooms, just in time to move into our first building.

A PENNY FOR A BUILDING

The Fellowship’s first building fund began in 1955, with a penny tossed in an ashtray. By 1959, the fund had grown to \$4,000, enough for a down payment on a house at 119 Hawthorne Street near N.C. State. Five men signed the note for the purchase, but four of them moved out of town, leaving Joe Cox as the only signatory still a member. The Fellowship lived up to its financial obligation and paid off the note.

The Fellowship began to take shape around denominational and social action projects. In 1952, the fellowships of Chapel Hill, Durham and Raleigh sponsored “The First Unitarian Institute,” with guest speakers including AUA President Frederick May Eliot and noted Unitarian minister Rev. A. Powell Davies of Washington, D.C. Another Carolina Unitarian conference was held in Raleigh in 1959.

From 1954 to 1959, the Fellowship sponsored its first social action project, establishing a milk fund for a needy African-American family. Also, Bettye Traywick represented the Fellowship on the Raleigh Council on Preparation for Integration.

1955

First building fund began with a penny tossed in an ashtray. It grew to \$4,000 by the end of the decade.

1957

Betsy Cox started the religious education program with three children.

1959

First building, a house at 119 Hawthorne, was purchased.



GROWING UP: THE SIXTIES



The sensuous, scary 60s were trying times. Our nation was enmeshing itself in an unwanted land war in Asia; a president was assassinated; North Carolina was writhing in the throes of integration; and IBM was moving on Raleigh. Each left its indelible imprint on the young teen named the Unitarian Fellowship of Raleigh. It was, perhaps, our coming-of-age decade.

1960s

The Fellowship published a resolution supporting the sit-ins and boycotts of segregationist restaurants.

Native American children protesting segregated schools in Harnett County lived with seven Fellowship families and attended a Catholic school in Raleigh.

We began the 60s in our newly acquired house at 119 Hawthorne Street. We thought, “at last, no more pillar-to-post in finding meeting space.” Such was not to be the case. The house was fine for 32 members, but we kept growing.

Every time we created additional space, new members would join. We removed a wall in the living room to provide more seating; then the wall between the living and dining rooms had to go. Next came the wall at the west end of the living room, and we enclosed some outside space. While this was being done for the adult group, the second floor began as the Sunday school room, but soon we were in the basement moving walls and putting in flooring.

UNITARIAN AND UNIVERSALIST

It wasn't real estate that was increasing membership — it was community involvement, expansion of the Sunday school, diversity and quality in the Sunday



morning adult and children's programs, along with active involvement in regional and national Unitarian and Universalist organizations.

Our Fellowship voted in favor of the consolidation of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America in 1961. In 1963, we officially became the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Raleigh.

In the fall of 1963, meetings began every Sunday for both adults and children. Adult meetings included music, announcements, a presentation by a member or invited speaker, and discussion followed by coffee. Our Sunday programs were enhanced by the congregation's individual and collective involvement in the social issues of the decade.

CIVIL RIGHTS ADVOCATE

In 1960, the congregation adopted a resolution supporting the black students' sit-in demonstrations at lunch counters and sent the resolution to the mayor of Raleigh. In 1966, the Fellowship was asked to be a sponsor for a speech by Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. to be held at Reynolds Coliseum. At a special meeting of the Fellowship in August, three new members joined so a quorum could be achieved, and a close affirmative vote was passed.

In 1966, the Fellowship was active in other civil rights initiatives. We sponsored and furnished staff for a study hall program in Halifax Court, a large public housing project. Members also took into their homes Native American children



1960s

Margaret Ann Link became the first paid religious education director.

We became the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Raleigh when the two denominations merged.

A lot on Wade Avenue was bought for \$21,000





who attended Catholic school in Raleigh in protest of segregation and poor schools in Harnett County.

1967

With other churches, we formed Raleigh Inter-Church Housing (RICH Park), borrowing a million dollars to build 100 apartments in West Raleigh for low-income families. UUFR's investment was \$2,000. Method Day Care, a spin-off, still operates at Pullen Baptist Church.

Adults began meeting at the YMCA because the RE program, now 80 children, needed all the space in our house.



COMMUNITY ACTION

A large, successful community action endeavor was the development of RICH (Raleigh Inter-Church Housing) Park Apartments in the Method Community. Rev. Charles Ward, minister of the First Baptist Church on Wilmington Street, approached the religious community of Raleigh to provide leadership in easing the housing needs for low-income families in the city. UUFR, along with the United Church of Christ, First Baptist Church, Martin Street Presbyterian Church and First Cosmopolitan Church each gave \$2,000, formed a non-profit corporation, and secured a \$1,000,000 loan to develop the project. Each church continues to provide members on the board of directors. The loan will be retired in 2009, and this corporation will own real estate worth several million dollars.

An outgrowth of RICH Park was the Fellowship's participation in the establishment of Method Day Care Center, which began in a church across from the housing development. We provided economic support in the 60s and continue to provide board representation.

THREE FIRSTS

In 1965 on the N.C. State campus, Susan Belle Hedrith was the first child to be dedicated by UUFR. Our first marriage ceremony was performed the same year in the Fellowship House when the Rev. Collins Kilburn united Mr. and Mrs. Stanton

Hoegerman. The following year, the first memorial service was held in the Danforth Chapel at N.C. State for a beloved member, Richard Pinkerton.

During this time, the Fellowship began to consider calling its first minister. That, in itself, was always a subject for spirited debate. We received planning and consultation assistance from both lay and professional leaders of the denomination as we grappled with our growth and our future.

Diligently, we searched for new space, but found none we could afford. In 1966, local financing allowed us to purchase the 2.1 acres on our current Wade Avenue site. It cost us \$21,000.

YOUTH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Youth Religious Education was a catalyst for our growth in the 60s. Many parents, disgruntled with the dogma of conventional religion, sought a more liberal experience for their children, as well as for themselves.

An RE Committee was established in 1961. Lyle Stehman served as chair and John Voorhees served as co-chair and RE Director. About 45 children enrolled; the average attendance was 30. Over the decade that number expanded to 100 children. The 1969-1970 budget included \$500 for a professional religious education director. Margaret Ann Link was our first paid RE director. We were bursting at the seams on Hawthorne, so adults began meeting at the YMCA. But in 1968, the Y's restrictions against black membership led us to terminate that arrangement and again look for space.



1968

Because of the Y's segregation policies, we stopped meeting there. Adults moved to the Raleigh Little Theatre.



GROWTH AND TRANSITION: THE SEVENTIES



1971 and 1974

Additions to the Hawthorne house enabled the congregation to meet again under one roof.

Mid 1970s

Hymn singing began and a recorder group began.

In the beginning of the decade, adults were meeting in the Raleigh Little Theatre, with the youth program taking all of Hawthorne Street. But the theater location was too remote and began to affect membership. We started by moving back to Hawthorne Street and developing plans for a new building on Wade Avenue. Because a new building was too expensive, we settled for still another remodeling of the Hawthorne Street house.

The 70s were truly the decade of lay leadership. New developments covered all aspects of the Fellowship's life: expanded adult and children's ministry, support systems for members such as extended families and youth programs, expanded social activities, deepening ties with denominational activities, and continued social action projects. Hymns were sung for the first time at UUFR services.



As the adult ministry needs expanded, Rev. John Frazier, professor at Shaw University in its Ministry without Walls, conducted services, and our member Jim Hunt, a UU minister, also contributed through much of the decade. Jeri Miller, a lay person, added services on drama, art and lifestyle issues. She involved 25 members in Sunday programs in one year. She also incorporated the children in programming, including one memorable program, *Family Portraits*, a play about Jesus' family life.

In the growing RE program, children learned about UU thought, our environment and their place in it, and world religious traditions. We also added the UUA curriculum, *About Your Sexuality*, for teenagers.

LAY LEADERSHIP

Expanded programming for members included an extended family program, nurtured by Fred Thompson and others. Alan Downing began a series of encounter groups, following the new human potential movement. An evening youth program, based on the UUA's Liberal Religious Youth program, began with Lynn Thompson Wheal helping to get the program running. The youth contributed to many social action projects, including staffing a peace booth at the State Fair and participating in the CROP walk against hunger.



1970s

“Extended families” formed to support each other, encounter groups met, circle dinners and other social activities expanded with many international dinners.



GROWTH AND TRANSITION: THE SEVENTIES

Social activities expanded with a series of international dinners, developed by June Preston and continued by Jessica Farrell and others. A tradition began to use the profits from these events to buy equipment for the kitchen. The circle dinner tradition began, where members brought potluck dishes to other members' homes in order to get better acquainted. For several years, there was an annual May Fair organized by Gwyneth Andrews, held at Greg Peck's Toad Hall Farm.



The Fellowship also became more involved with denominational activities. It hosted several district workshops, with Dale Blosser and Margaret Ann Link serving as district presidents. Alan Downing served as chair of the Southeastern UU Summer Institute and Margaret Ann began working on national UUA committees.

1970s

About Your Sexuality curriculum began for teenagers.

We paid off the loan on the Wade Avenue property and formally burned the mortgage.

Even when funds were tight in the 70s, support for social action projects continued, including the Total Life Center, camping scholarships and Vietnamese Boat People. The latter project led to the adoption of the Ly family through Lutheran Family Services. The nine-person family arrived in 1980, after weeks on board ship and months at a refugee camp in Hong Kong. We established a committee to help with housing, food, clothing, jobs, schools, social services, transportation, and money. We stayed involved with the Ly family for 18 months, helping them to get established in this country before they moved to San Jose, California, in 1981.



Though funds were tight, we also fulfilled our obligation to pay off the Wade Avenue lot by 1977, 10 years after it was purchased.

Fellowship milestones in the 70s included: the death of founder Iola Moore in 1973 and our 25th anniversary celebration a year later. In 1975, "Raleigh Raccoon," made his appearance in the Hawthorne Street house's attic. This "pet" became a symbol for the Fellowship for many years and remains the mascot of the Religious Education program.

A MINISTER: YES OR NO?

With the building issue settled temporarily, the Fellowship undertook the other great challenge of its life, the gradual transition from a purely lay led group to one led by a minister. This process unfolded through an energetic decade of new programming and with transition assistance from the Unitarian Universalist Association

In 1976, UUFR participated in a Ministerial Counseling Program. Ministers from Atlanta and Columbia, S.C., led workshops, Sunday services, and encounter groups to help us understand the minister's role. Dev Munn led our first search committee, with members Barbara Michos, June Preston, Rosanne Pack, Jim Quinn and Jule Shanklin.

"Many members wanted to remain a lay led congregation," recalled Quinn. "It was not a sure bet that we would accept the minister. But we went on with the search process." The congregation sought a half-time minister. After the candidate, Rev. Frances West, spent her candidating week with us, a heated discussion ensued.

"Frances West came and gave her sermon," Quinn said. "We all liked her. We had a business meeting after her sermon, and she got about a 94 percent approval. But those who voted against her made it clear they were voting for lay leadership and were not voting against her – because they liked her."

As the decade ended, Frances West became our first minister. She held regular Sunday night potluck suppers in her home to get acquainted with our still small congregation. She encouraged us to build on the Wade Avenue property, and we formed a building committee. At the end of the decade, the building was underway, and we were preparing for our move to Wade Avenue and for our fourth decade of life.



1979

We hired a half-time minister, Rev. Frances West.



INTERNAL TRANSITION: THE EIGHTIES



1981

We moved to our new building on Wade Avenue with 160 members.



Our greatest challenge in the 80s may have been transitioning from a solely lay led congregation to one with a full-time minister. Like the “Me” generation portrayed by the media, our congregation focused more on internal business and adjustments and less on the outside community. Yet, this decade saw growth in buildings, ministry, and programming. Accomplishments were the work of many people. But we faced conflicts and challenges, leaving the congregation with a greater sense of community.

Five ministers served UUFR in the 80s: Rev. Frances West, who had become our half-time minister in May 1979, left in early 1982 to return to family in Atlanta.



The congregation grew under her ministry, and she worked with the board and the rest of the leadership in beginning to develop the role of a minister at UUFR. Before she left, we had moved into our new building on Wade Avenue. When a search committee was selected for Rev. West's successor, UUFR decided it needed a full-time minister.

Rev. Roberta Wood was called as our first full-time minister in May 1983, but left after a little more than a year. Traditions begun during her tenure were the sharing of joys and concerns at Sunday services and providing pastoral care and counseling. She and our congregation struggled mightily with defining the minister's role. Her early resignation proved divisive for the Fellowship.

1983

Rev. Roberta Wood became our second minister, the first to be full-time.

In order to promote congregational healing and to learn more about the minister-congregation relationship, UUFR participated in an interim minister program while we searched for our second full-time minister. Rev. Don Vaughn served us briefly before choosing to leave the ministry altogether, and then Rev. David Scheyer arrived to serve as our second interim minister. Under his leadership, we examined our feelings about a full-time, professional minister and learned to work towards a shared lay and professional ministry.





1985-87

Interim ministers Rev. Don Vaughn and Rev. Dave Scheyer served as we searched for a new full-time minister.



Rev. Morris Hudgins was called to be our second full-time minister in December 1986. UFR was Morris' third congregation, and he came to us in 1987 with a clear idea of ways the congregation and the minister could and would work together. Morris served UFR for 11 years.

MARCHING TO WADE

A major accomplishment of the 80s was the February 1981 move to 3313 Wade Avenue. "Moving" Sunday found the congregation parading from the house on Hawthorne Street to the new building. We carried our banner proudly in front of the procession. Important items such as the wooden replica of Raleigh Raccoon, given by Betsy Cox, and the mummy, left over from some Youth Religious Education project, were carried through the streets. We planted a hawthorn tree near the new building to remind us of our Hawthorne Street heritage.

Our sense of pride and community was strong, and we were soon crowded. As the congregation grew and we had more and more visitors, we planned to expand the building. A capital fund drive began in the fall of 1983, two weeks after Rev. Wood's resignation. Although the original plan called for expanding the meeting space and YRE classrooms, we built a large RE classroom instead.

Within a short time of Morris Hudgins' arrival, Sunday service attendance regularly stretched the capacity of the main room. Two Sunday services became standard and eventually Youth Religious Education was part of both services.

Church membership grew from 154 adults and 75 youth in 1980 to 268 adults and 150 youth by 1989. The membership committee expanded its services to include a welcome table and greeters, New UU classes, circle dinners, and a more active care committee to serve members in their times of need. These services strengthened the sense of belonging, and as the membership increased, so did congregational activities and groups.

There were regular social events throughout the year. Many smaller groups, such as a book group and a bridge group, formed or gained in membership. There was a very active singles group whose presence was felt by the congregation as it spearheaded various activities and provided leaders for committees and the board.

SHARED MINISTRY

As the congregation's leadership learned to work with a professional minister, we worked to clarify roles and responsibilities. We developed job descriptions for the Board of Directors, which was composed of the chairpersons of the major standing committees. Training in topics such as making decisions by consensus and effective leadership was offered. The congregation began sending representatives to district conferences and The Mountain, a retreat center, for training. Morris helped strengthen the tie to the Thomas Jefferson District, and we learned to use the support it could offer us.



1987

*Rev. Morris Hudgins
arrived as our minister
and served for 11 years.*



INTERNAL TRANSITION: THE EIGHTIES



1980s

Three Asian families relocated to Raleigh by the Fellowship with the help of Lutheran Services.

The RE program also grew in size and programming. Director of Religious Education Diann Irwin, although paid for only one-third time, instituted many changes in the early 80s. The children began to have worship services of their own and began sharing the opening minutes of the adult services.

Dianne Hain became DRE in 1985, and the position was expanded to halftime in 1988. A planned three-year cycle governed Sunday school instruction with one year studying Unitarian Universalism, the next Judeo-Christian traditions, and the third World Religions. The Coming of Age program was initiated for high school youth to help youth explore and study their personal beliefs as they related to Unitarian Universalism. The high school group Young Religious Unitarian Universalists and a middle school group also met regularly. Training for Sunday school teachers became a yearly event. Intergenerational retreats were sponsored by YRE and were fun times for all ages. The course, *Parents as Resident Theologians*, was offered regularly.



OUTREACH INITIATIVES

Although congregational efforts generally turned inward during the 80s, many members were involved in social action, individually and as a congregation. Morris was a visible social action force in the community and encouraged participation in social action efforts outside the congregation. He was involved in

several area ministry groups and supported community-based social action programs. He also had an office at N.C. State University and created a UU connection with the students there.

The congregation provided meeting space for an AIDS support group, helped to staff an overflow shelter for homeless men, and began support groups for the families of lesbians and gays. Our support and partnership with the YWCA Day Care began during this time.

Sunday morning services reflected a rich variety ranging from formal sermons by ministers to informal sharing or discussions. The choir, under the capable leadership of Loretta Mershon, performed several times a month. Our music program also featured a harpist, our own bassist, Erik Dyke, and occasionally a professional pianist.

The 80s continued the growing pains for UUFR. When the land became available, we purchased two acres adjacent to our original Wade Avenue site, and a *temporary* portable classroom arrived to expand space.

Every area of church life had undergone challenges and changes, but for those of us who lived through that time of our history, it was a time of renewed commitment to our shared denomination and local community. The decade ended with plans being developed for a new building.



1980s

Church membership grew from 154 adults and 75 youth to 268 adults and 150 youth.



REFLECTION AND RENEWAL: THE NINETIES



1990s

Rev. Hudgins initiated intern minister program with John Graves, Julie Denny-Hughes, Marcia Curtis, Lillie Henley, and Carol Jackson serving over the years. John died of AIDS and his ashes were among the first scattered in our Memorial Garden.

Interweave and AIDS care team became active.

The 90s have been a decade of beginnings and change for UUFR. This statement can be made about our previous four decades, but the difference is in how we now define our community, how we are composed, and what we want as we move forward. A reorganization of our leadership structure, a deliberate, thoughtful planning process, continued growth, and a change in ministers marked this decade of reflection and renewal.

As the 90s began, we were in the middle of a building campaign to construct the main Fellowship building. With the hard work of many members, the building was completed. On Christmas Eve 1992, we held our first service in the new Fellowship Hall.

Soon membership was increasing The temporary portable classroom remained a part of our lives, and we faced significant work to make our grounds pleasurable and serviceable. Under the leadership of Ruth Adams, Judy Dorsey, and others, a





1990s

Partner Church program established with church in Iszlo, Romania. Visits exchanged between congregations.

Partner relationships established with St. Ambrose Episcopal Church in Raleigh and All Souls, Unitarian Universalist Church in Durham.

1993

With 340 members, we moved to a second building, Fellowship Hall, on the Wade Avenue site. The older building, Peace Hall, housed the YWCA daycare, RE programming and community events.

grounds improvement plan was developed and begun. It included the site of our Memorial Garden, spearheaded by Margaret Ann Link.

REORGANIZATION

The congregation and its leaders decided that the old Board structure – with every committee chair serving on the Board – had become burdensome. Nearly a year of planning and discussion brought a new structure that included program and administrative councils to feed information to a smaller, more focused Board of Directors. Soon after, a deliberate long-range planning process began. From it evolved new vision and mission statements the congregation adopted. They helped direct the work of the Fellowship.

Our minister, Rev. Morris Hudgins, led the Fellowship's community focus. He was active in the Raleigh Minister's Association, the Wake County Coalition for the Homeless, the Good Offices Minister for the Thomas Jefferson District, a member of the chaplaincy staff at North Carolina State University, and a member of the Rex Cancer Center Clergy Conference Board of Directors.

In 1991, UUFR established a partnership with one of the Hungarian-speaking Unitarian churches in the Transylvania region of Romania. We raised money for the Iszlo church in order to supplement the minister's low salary and to repair the ancient stone structure. Visits to UUFR from the Iszlo minister, Sandor Varga,



and his family, and trips by Morris and members of UUFR to Iszlo solidified the bonds between our two congregations.

SPIRITUALITY AND CARING

1995

Professional music director Bill Yocum joined the staff.

UUFR's Memorial Garden was completed and dedicated.

1997

Cottage meetings, a part of our planning process, showed a strong interest in increased spirituality.

Adult enrichment class began meeting on Sunday mornings.

The long-range planning process included cottage meetings held in 1996. Many of us expressed a hope for increased spirituality in the life of our community. At the urging of Morris, a group led by Pat Feltman, Shelley Colvin and Linda McCarley worked with a committee of many others to plan the first All Fellowship Spirituality Retreat. Its purpose was as a community-building event where members and friends could discuss and share spiritual beliefs and practices. It would also be an opportunity for all to participate in intergenerational activities. The successful weekend retreat was held at Camp Sertoma in April 1998. It was replicated in 1999.

UUFR's adult religious education offerings had been present throughout the 90s but infrequent and uneven. In 1997 under the chairmanship of Jim Flanagan, the adult program began regular discussions groups every Sunday morning. It became known as the Adult Enrichment Class and filled a need for learning and discussion felt by a number of our adult members.

The 90s also brought strengthening and growth to the young adult group known as Young Adult Unitarian Universalists. They began holding monthly meetings called Unitarian Universalist Expressions, a forum to discuss articles, art, philosophy, other world religions, new age and ancient topics such as acupuncture.

The Care Committee, as it existed in 1990, served the purpose of helping in emergency situations such as illnesses, accidents and deaths. In 1994, the





committee was revitalized to take care of pastoral needs while Morris was on sabbatical leave. After the cottage meetings, it became clear that many Fellowship members continued to feel left out in times of need. With the leadership of intern minister Lillie Henley and the support of member Arlene Jarvela, a Care Umbrella was created. Arlene led the effort for the last two years of the 90s as a reemphasis on our caring for each other took hold.

Lay ministry has been a strong tradition at UUFR, but the 90s brought the need for more than one full-time minister. In 1990, with a membership of 288, Morris Hudgins was in his third year as minister. Within two years, we gained our first intern minister, John Graves, who worked with the Fellowship for several years before dying of AIDS. Following John were interns Julie Denny-Hughes, Lillie Henley, Marcia Curtis and Carol Jackson.

In the 90s, we hired our first professional music director, Bill Yocum. Before the decade's end, Bill was leading choirs during both services and providing thoughtful musical additions and accompaniment to Sunday services.

Again we turned our outreach to refugees. We helped bring a refugee from Burundi to North Carolina. Eraste Nzeyimana arrived in 1998 and lived with UUFR member Mary Watson Nooe before becoming a student at St. Augustine's College.

THE CONSTANT OF CHANGE

In February 1998, Morris announced that he had accepted a call to a congregation in Cincinnati, Ohio, and would be leaving in July. The Fellowship entered a process lasting more than a year to find a new full-time minister. During that transition, we called Rev. Michael Boblett as our interim minister,

1998

Rev. Hudgins was called to a new ministry in Ohio; interim minister Rev. Michael Boblett served while our search process was conducted.

First All Fellowship Spiritual Retreat held.

We became 420 members strong.

Elizabeth Swope became our first full-time Director of Religious Education, and our Youth Religious Education program became recognized as the largest in our district.



UUFR DIRECTORS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1957 Betsy Cox
1961 John Voorhees
66-70 Betty Davenport
70-73 Dot Ward
73-75 Margaret Ann Link
75-76 Loretta Mershon
76-79 Susan Goodman
79-85 Diann Irwin
85-91 Dianne Hain
91-94 Trish Mengel
1994–present
Elizabeth Swope

completed a ministry survey to aid in the selection of a new minister, and started discussions about our growth and facility needs.

In the end, we called an old friend, Rev. Julie Denny-Hughes, who had served as our student minister in the spring of 1995. One thing with which Julie did not return was her penchant for always wearing tennis shoes, but she did return with her warmth, life experience and the desire to be the full-time minister of a large Unitarian Universalist church. Julie joined us in Raleigh in August 1999.

1999 also became the year in which the congregation stated our intentional desire to be designated a Welcoming Congregation – one that welcomes all persons regardless of their sexual preference.

LARGEST IN THE DISTRICT

One area in which we have had explosive growth is our youth religious education program. It more than doubled and has become recognized as the largest in the Thomas Jefferson District. At the beginning of the 90s, one part-time staff position existed for the department. In the early 90s, Elizabeth Swope was hired as Director of Religious Education and before the end of the decade, she was a full time employee. Three part-time employees assist her in managing the 250-plus youth. Two new youth groups were formed in 1994: JustUUs for fifth and sixth graders and Little Women for third to sixth grade girls. In that same year the Coming of Age program was re-established.

As our religious education program for the youth has grown so has their involvement in the larger community. Along with several intergenerational services throughout the year, the youth are with the whole Fellowship for a





portion of the service every Sunday. In the 90s we held Youth Religious Education classes during both services year round.

Our summer services became full services, early and late, instead of the early service consisting of discussion time. With these changes and the yearning for more spirituality in our community life, our worship has become more fulfilling to the community as a whole.

HOPEFUL FUTURE

Two of our founding members – Eula Williamson and Helen Brown — were with us to celebrate our 50th anniversary.

“Unitarians find the good in any religion and make it a part of themselves,” 96-year-old Helen said in 1999 during a spunky conversation from her apartment at the Springmoor retirement community. In this Fellowship, “it’s how much you learn. That interests me a lot: learning and growing.”

As we move toward our next 50 years, we continue to learn and grow. We are more than 450 strong and we have many hopes – just as did our original 17 members. By the time the history is written for our 60th anniversary, we may have: built another story to our existing building, created more religious education programs to feed our hungry minds and souls, completed a Fellowship-wide social justice project, helped All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church in Durham get on its feet, and possibly seeded another fellowship in Cary or North Raleigh. In our community, what we set our sights upon can be achieved.

1999

UUFR designated a Welcoming Congregation open to all regardless of sexual orientation.

Rev. Julie Denny-Hughes, our former intern, was called as our third full-time minister.

UUFR celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Two charter members, Eula Williamson and Helen Brown, remained members for the golden anniversary.



