

# Mini-History: The 1999 "Chalice Relay"

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Today's holiday service features a pageant that is about **light**. So for today's mini-history I'm going to tell a story about a special light-- our congregation's chalice light and how 16 years ago we carried that light across Ann Arbor-- more than 6 miles from our old church to this church.

Our chalice flame is very important to us. Our chalice lighting words say that the flame is a symbol of the harmony and energy and warmth of our community.

16 years ago, when we were planning to move to a new church building, we had a problem to solve. We wanted to move chairs and artwork and books and computers. But we also wanted to make sure to bring along the harmony and energy and warmth of our community. That's a little harder to figure out how to package up and move-- But we came up with plan.

On January 17th, 1999 at the end of our very last Sunday service in our old church, we **didn't** blow out the flame on the chalice like we usually do. Instead, we picked up the chalice (the old one was smaller than the current chalice) and we walked the chalice down the aisle to the back of the church, out the door and down the street. Over 100 grown-ups and kids came outside and began walking together, carrying the chalice to the new church. 24 people took turns carrying the chalice so that no one's arm got tired. Some people drove along in their cars and honked their horns and took pictures of us.

We were cold and tired when we finally got to this church, but there were people already here in our beautiful new kitchen making hot chili, cornbread, hot chocolate & coffee to warm us up.

Our plan worked! We gathered up harmony, energy and warmth from our old church into the chalice flame and together we carried it to this building, where the light of our shared community burns bright.



-- presented Dec 14, 2014 by Sandy Simon